

# AFTER SCHOOL

Artists: Gabriela Petre, George Bîzgu, Elena Pîrvu  
Curator: Raluca Oancea Nestor  
July 8<sup>th</sup> – August 28<sup>th</sup> 2016

Anca Poteraşu Gallery is pleased to invite you to the opening of the AFTER SCHOOL exhibition together with the graduate artists of the Bucharest National University of Arts: Gabriela Petre, George Bîzgu and Elena Pîrvu, curator Raluca Oancea Nestor. The opening takes place on Friday the 8th July, at 17:00h.

Unstable July. Stormy weather and heat waves. Your stomach crumples up in indigestions of uncertainty. Where have three years of university gone by? Is this the end or a new beginning? Openness or closure? Renunciation or vanishing points? Take a breath. You rest for a moment (be careful now, you can't measure it like some equivalent of a second.) You don't really know what is going to happen. A swarm of questions runs through your mind. It's not easy for an art graduate. The Arts, Art. Who can guarantee a sense of understanding these words anymore? Who cares about the meaning of *being an artist*, worse still, what does *Being* mean? Contemporary artist, human, individual. All of these words and their meaning are probably still buried in a boring textbook together with Heidegger and others.

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The present approach consists of three visual discourses on the above-mentioned state of being. Gabriela Petre, George Bîzgu and Elena Pîrvu are recent art-school graduates, specialized in painting. The three bring forward a series of existential investigations by replacing concepts with images in an inciting mapping of affective territories.

Within this context, Gabriela Petre works directly with affects in a straightforward manner within a labyrinth space, an anti-narrative one. By refusing to tell a story, the installation remodels an emotional scenography similar to the baroque hotel chosen by Resnais for *L'année dernière à Marienbad*. It is the same luxuriant, almost claustrophobic space, which favours a discourse on time, on memory and identity. Here, the image surpasses mere representation, in accordance to the Deleuzian theory on film, by redefining itself as an affection-image in a cinematographic space. In alignment with the Nietzschean thought, the project will reveal a crystal *self*, which, beyond any imperative of uniqueness, of stable territory, decomposes itself in multiple surfaces, masks worn by other masks, with *other voices, other spaces*.

George Bîzgu follows abstractization, a purging projection, a distillation process with or without alembic. By deconstructing his studio from the last three years, he generates an abstract space, a non-figurative one, a virtual enclosing which is dense and vital, but in the same time immeasurable. Here, the day-by-day objects are assigned new meanings beyond any intentionality, freed by any function that they might have. His artworks defy any interpretation, following Sontag's advice, beyond any conventional definition, a window remains a form able to transmit itself. At the end of this transformation questions arise on the way the artist relates to the subjective space of his studio and his works, assisted in the background by a more general questioning of the world as a simple sum of objects and meanings.

The circle is completed by Elena Pîrvu who resurfaces a discourse on identity disintegration in a fragmented world of functionality. Questioning the status of artworks in a world of utilitarian objects means also questioning the artists and indirectly, the contemporary individual.

The situation is not inescapable. Fragmented and alienated, decomposed in voices, masks and layers and brushed off in Photoshop, we find refuge in aesthetics. We experience the ludic force of art, enjoying the game, the sensuality of chaos, the fascination of the virtual. We play with forgetfulness, we erase and manipulate memories. We replace the tragic feeling with irony, we lose each other in the pleasures of appearances, only to retrieve ourselves again and again, more alive and more powerful.