

Solo Show Olivia Mihălțianu
Cette histoire n'est pas fantastique

Friday, 25 October 2019 | 19.00h
25.10 – 07.12.2019

Anca Poterasu Gallery
26 Popa Soare, Bucharest
www.ancapoterasu.com

Olivia Mihălțianu focuses on the analogy between grafting and splicing, drawing a parallel between plant manipulation and film editing, both based on physically joining two materials. Experimenting with different photographic and video techniques, the artist worked with the surrounding gardens of Frac des Pays De La Loire in relation to the mysticism related to the history of Brittany and Transylvania, reflected in the quotes she uses from Jules Verne's *Le château des Carpathes*, where art, science and superstitions intertwine.

The installation *Cette histoire n'est pas fantastique* takes as a starting point the ancient grafting strategy associated with the most basic photographic technique, the cyanotype. Cutting the rolls of 35 mm films in order to produce text imprints on fabric, the artist also twists the purpose of the film medium, turning it into letters of Jules Verne's text. The cyanotypes are used as walls surrounding the projection space and creating a dialogue between the subject of the video and the images developed through the photographic printing process of cyanotype.

The first uses of cyanotype were in fact documenting plant's specimens and are the consequence of a direct contact, a trace of an object that had a physical presence on the receptive surface. The video projected in the space carefully documents the process of film projection – the way an image becomes real with the help of an apparatus –, the eucalyptus trees and their variations, and the natural process of inosculation – branches jointly growing together after touching one another.

At the same time, photos of Olivia's research inhabit the room, pointing towards inosculation as a natural phenomenon resembling a lot the grafting process employed by people for commercial purposes, but also sometimes as an aesthetic experiment. The newly formed tissues are based on a vascular strong connection that spontaneously occur and that is controlled and displayed by nature itself according to its inner rules.

The custom-made knife commissioned by Olivia to the artist Stoyan Dechev is placed in proximity of the projection, as a possible ambivalent instrument with multiple functions – cutting the tree branches or the film roll, or even acting as an archaic talisman, dating back to the first discoveries of grafting. The whole installation plays with duality and duplicates, as there are always mirroring images, double perspectives, two entrances, twin projections.

- Text by Diana Marincu

The artistic installation *Cette histoire n'est pas fantastique* was developed by Olivia Mihălțianu during her residency at FRAC des Pays de la Loire part of the XXXIle Ateliers Internationaux titled *Manufacturing nature / Naturalizing the synthetic* and curated by Diana Marincu in 2018.

Olivia Mihaltianu *1981 lives and works in Bucharest. The artist's approach is related to cross-media and process-oriented projects involving video, film, photography, object-making, installation and performance. Usually long-term projects, the works follow various visual aspects related to personal identity and social life in different cultures, political and economic situations, in a global and local context, by questioning topics such as: the role played by the artist today, archetypal human patterns, re-contextualization, and alienation. Working with specific locations, from urban fabric to deserted beaches and from mountain tops to isolated islands, filtering everything through iconic images inspired by cinema, video-art and photography, by using historic cameras and cutting-edge technologies, is an attempt to move freely through time, personal perceptions and social expectations.

The artist's recent work has been presented among others in exhibitions such as: Paris Photo 2019 with Anca Poterasu Gallery (2019); Anca Poterasu Gallery (2019); Tranzit.ro / Bucharest (2019); *WeTransfer: Art and Politics in the Appropriate Hands*, Timisoara (2019); Musée des civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée (Mucem), Marseille (2019); *Ex-east, The past and present stories of the Romanian avant-garde*, the French Communist Party Headquarters in Paris, Oscar Niemeyer building, France (2019); Contemporary Art Museum Athens (EMST), Greece (2018); Anca Poterasu Gallery Spinnerei Leipzig (2018); XXXIle Ateliers Internationaux FRAC des Pays de la Loire (2018); NADA Miami with Anca Poterasu Gallery (2018); *Rewind, Hoast* Independent Space Index festival, Vienna (2018); Art Encounters Contemporary Art Biennial, Timisoara (2017); 3rd Mediterranean Biennale, Israel (2017); LOOP, Barcelona with Anca Poterasu Gallery (2017); Artissima - Dialogues - with Anca Poterasu Gallery (2017); curated by, Vienna (2016 / 2011); Anca Poterasu Gallery (2019); Tranzit.ro / Bucharest (2015); WKW, Zigote Press, Cleveland (2014); *Reflection Center for Suspended Histories. An Attempt* at New Gallery, Romanian Institute of Culture and Humanistic Research for the 55th edition of the Venice Biennale (2013); Kunsthalle Krems, Factory (2013); National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest (2013); Salonul de proiecte, Bucharest (2012); Secession, Vienna (2010); Pavilion Unicredit, Bucharest (2009-2010); Young Artists' Biennial Bucharest (2010 / 2008); Contemporary Art Gallery - Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Romania (2008); NGBK, Berlin (2007-2008); KSAK, Chisinau (2007); Kunsthalle, Vienna (2004).

She has participated in various artist-in-residence programs including: MQ / Musem Quartier Wien Artist-in-Residence (2019); 32nd Ateliers Internationaux, Frac des Pays de la Loire (2018); Cleveland Foundation - Creative Fusion, Cleveland IL, USA (2014); AIR - Krems, Austria (2013); Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, France (2011-2012); KulturKontakt, Vienna, Austria (2011); Múcsarnok / Kunsthalle, Budapest, Hungary by Gulliver Connect (2010); Schafhof Europäisches Künstlerhaus, Freising, Germany (2008).

Olivia Mihălțianu's works feature in important international collections. A selection of these includes: FRAC des Pays de la Loire; EMST Contemporary Art Museum Athens; Robert and Renee Drake Collection; Galila Barzilai-Hollander Collection; Gianina and Tudor Greco Collection; Art Encounters Foundation Collection.