

Veronica POSTH

TIMEA ANITA ORAVECZ – MIGRATIONS INTO ART

Timea Anita Oravec lives and works in Berlin. She is an artist whose works of art are related to her own personal story and shed a light on what it means to be an immigrant today.

Facing bio and geo-political issues as a female artist coming from Eastern Europe, she plainly describes the practicalities involved in obtaining citizenship. Gaining permissions and following rules, she speaks clearly about the process to hand in all the necessary papers in order to obtain legal status.

The procedure is exhausting and sometimes even hard to accomplish since the bureaucratic requests are complicated and difficult to fulfil.

Arriving at an enervating mental and physical state in order to achieve what is needed, she makes clear through the use of diverse medium, how fatiguing is to move from some countries to others, been particularly critical towards practices of the European Community.

Oravec's latest works, presented in the 17th Serbian Art Biennial, *SEE Art Gates: States of Reality* curated by Marijana Kolarić, are a strong statement about the EU and in particular about political decisions taken by the policies of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his ruling Fidesz party. These decisions based on concepts such as 'national unification' and 'a central arena of power' direct towards a change of elites, power politics and an era of 'revolutionary circumstances'.

Considering this objectionable situation and looking at the right-wing movement spreading out through Europe, it is quite urgent to observe and question this worrying inclination.

Timea Anita Oravec reports her personal story as a migrant and considers aspects of legal/illegal migrations. Working on these issues she creates her work from the position of a witness denouncing illegitimate practices and unequal treatments.

Some of the artworks are made to reflect on the strongly arduous and in most of the cases tragically draining process of migration. To reflect the extremely distinctive and immensely respectable force these human beings have.

Through the works presented in the Serbian Biennial, she criticizes Hungarian political policy and she calls into question the equal rights and opportunities within the socio-political and cultural environment of the European Union.

Spreading out powerful and explicit messages in *Windless, Variations for the EU Flag Nr.1*, 2016, she uses multi-coloured kitchen knives stabbed into a wall to create the circle of stars of the European Union; the same circle, strongly explicative is created on another blue wall in *Windless, Variations for the EU Flag Nr.2*, 2016, using Japanese *shuriken* as shiny star-shaped weapons.

In the sculpture *Welcome to the EU*, 2016, the message is encircled or ‘crowned’ by a sharpened wheel of stars; again as a reminder of the actual treatment given to people who are trying to reach the chance of a better life.

The barbed-wire construction of the barrier along the border with Serbia is another urgent theme taken into consideration by Oravec. It has been made lying on the floor, formed by 10 metre long Nato Razor Wire with little gummy bears placed in between. Creating an analogy with the Berlin Wall (1961-1989) she underlines the absurdity of actual geo-political decisions, taken after such a recent, close and tragic event.

András Bozóki, Professor of Political Science at the Central European University (CEU) Budapest writes:

“The first Orbán government (1998–2002) used culture to strengthen its own power and the second one, by contrast, sees culture as a source of unnecessary costs and potential criticism. It does not engage in a cultural struggle because it does not want to argue.”

If culture is considered as a struggle, moreover it is the artistic work that speaks clearly about geo and bio political dynamics and Timea Anita Oravec is indeed one of those artists who is able and honest enough to report facts and denounce events which are highly condemnable from Ethical and Political perspectives.

Quoting again Prof. András Bozóki, it is important to remember that: “Democracy can only be preserved if, along with its values, a plethora of dedicated people help it thrive”. I firmly believe that political art can strongly help this process to proceed.



Timea Anita Oravec
Windless, Variations for the EU Flag Nr.1, 2016
Wall-Installation
Long: 300 cm x High: 200 cm x Depth: 30 cm
Wall painting: colour Pantone Reflex Blue, RGB: 0/51/153;
12 kitchen knives
installation view, 17th Art Biennial, Serbia, 2016
photo © Vladimir Pavic

Timea Anita Oravec
Windless, Variations for the EU Flag Nr.2, 2016
Wall-Installation
Long: 300 cm x High: 200 cm x Depth: 3 cm
Wall painting: colour Pantone Reflex Blue, RGB: 0/51/153;
12 Shuriken
installation view, 17th Art Biennial, Serbia, 2016
photo © Vladimir Pavic



Timea Anita Oravec
Welcome to the EU, 2016
Sculpture
Long: 115 x High: 153 cm x Wide: 100 cm
Welded iron
installation view, 17th Art Biennial, Serbia, 2016
photo © Vladimir Pavic