doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/32/2025/4

IMAGES FOR THE POLITICS OF THE FUTURE

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INTRODUCTION by the Editor

Images incorporated into the visual arts from both art and philosophical, social and political discourse influence social perceptions and transform political practices.

The image plays a key role in artistic research and present-day artistic narrative strategies that look to the future. Images also participate in the process of building a revolutionary momentum. These images are creative, not reactive. It is a utopia that becomes reality. Moreover, images operate without violence.

Such an incredible revolution without violence took place in Gdańsk: the Solidarity revolution of the 1980s (1980-88), led by Lech Wałęsa. Today's Europe owes its developmental impulse and current political, social and economic form to this Solidarity revolution.

In the 1980s, during the Solidarity struggle, images were rare. Today we live in a flood of images. This flow of images is today's insurrectionary flow. The future revolution will be an image revolution.

Images for the Politics of the Future examines how artists use media such as moving and still images and transform them into artistic means using strategies such as:
found footage;
reuse;
recycling;
mixing and editing images;
documentary;
performativity;
critical citation;
interimage (by analogy to intertext in literature), and their combinations serve to create political statements and thereby project the future.

In her introductory article on the role of images in contemporary culture **"In the Aftershock of *Insurgent Flows. Trans*Decolonial and Black Marxist Futures,"** Marina GRŽINIĆ refers to her own films, which are based precisely on images. They use them to conduct the narrative. This narrative is both scientific in nature, because it is embedded in postcolonial discourse and refers to such postcolonial thinkers as Homi K. Bhabha and Achille Mbembe as the main

Sztuka i Dokumentacja nr 32 (2025) | *Art and Documentation* no. 32 (2025) • ISSN 2080-413X • e-ISSN 2545-0050 • doi:10.32020/ARTandDOC

figures of this discourse. At the same time, her film is activist in nature, it is a call for change at the level of dominant ways of thinking, i.e. the idioms of culture, because only intellectually equipped in this way will we be able to stand face to face with nationalism and populism. The arguments are images, a flood of images appearing in films, both documentaries and created images. Gržinić always works in teams, thus making them a collective voice that is a warning that this future may be dominated by images known from Europe's fascist past. On the political level, it is a critique of power that does not respect the principles of equality.

Articles by Maša GUŠTIN, "**Art on the Edge in Theory and Practice: Marina Gržinić, Necrorealism, and Retro-Avant-Garde"** and Jacek KOŁTAN, "**Late Emancipation in Late Modernity. Women's Protests in Times of Illiberalism"** are case studies of cultural situations that in certain historical periods of totalitarian rule expressed themselves in protests using images, in the absence of democratic mechanisms. In the first article, the author examines two cases: the neo-avant-garde in Slovenia (Ljubljana) in the 1980s (after Tito's death, when the processes of erosion of the Yugoslav state began) and the second case – Necrorealism, a trend in Bolshevik Russia (Leningrad) functioning in the same period of time. Both trends fulfilled the role of criticism of political power through film images and other media. On the other hand, Jacek Kołtan's article refers to posters – iconic images from the period of the legal functioning of the political and social movement Solidarity in Poland in the years 1980-81. They were compared with their derivatives – posters from 2016 and 2020, when the same images and symbols were taken over and seized by women's protest movements against the policies of the Catholic far-right ruling in Poland at that time, which restricted women's access to medical care in the name of ideological and religious power over their bodies.

Academic studies are supplemented by other texts providing additional arguments for the importance of images in discourses of equality culture. The text **"Fluid Interconnections: On the Film *Insurgent Flows* by Gržinić, Kancler, Pristovšek (2023)"** by Anahita NEGHABAT is a review of Gržinić's film *Insurgent Flows*; **'Second-Class' Citizen Positions and the Works of Gržinić/Šmid. A Sea of Traumatized Souls Stuck in the Post-socialist Era"** by Janusz CZECH is a report from the exhibition *Nothing New in the East*, which took place in A.K.T.; in Pforzheim (Germany), and **"Art is Creativity. But It Is Also an Institution. And Every Institution Is Power"** is a conversation with Mara Ambrožič VERDERBER, the director of Piran Coastal Galleries (OGP) in Koper/Piran (Slovenian Istria), on the functioning of a gallery that seeks to pursue a politically liberal program. These texts describe the realities in which artists function and realize their ideological postulates through images, and increase the pool of practical examples beyond those included in Gržinić's film.

All of the material presented in this thematic section shows, as through a lens, the functioning of images, which are tools of discourse, convincing arguments, evidence of the truth of research theses and positions expressed in discussions, and last but not least, real political actions.