



Trafo – House of Contemporary Arts, Trafo Gallery

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Open: Tuesday to Sunday 4-7pm, performance days 4-10pm

Disassembled world

Trafo Gallery, Budapest
10.03. – 11.04.2010.

Participating artists: Sándor Bodó NAGY, Krisztina ERDEI, Gábor GERHES, NewCoop.

Taking as its point of departure the modus operandi of European cooperatives, the research and exhibition project of international collaboration explores the potentials and pitfalls of collective production. On the one hand, the title of the show refers to one of the significant incentives during the years of democratic transition: the promise of the big deal. On the other hand, it reflects on the original mission of collectives, which centred precisely on the ideals of community and sustainability as opposed to individual accumulation of wealth.

In accordance with the fact that the “message” in our consumption-dominated world appears ever more in the form of commodities, the project started with opening and operating a shop in Berlin-Neukölln, which sold the products of various cooperatives. In addition to shopping, the shop was the site of information exchange, providing publicity for the alternative economic models forming the backbone of the cooperatives. Diverging from the Berlin experience – which seemed to justify the opportunities of the “big deal” by the retail of co-op products – the Hungarian stage of the project takes place in a niche dominated by the still prevalent impact of post-war nationalization and the economic hardships caused by contemporary global capitalism.

The exhibitions on the two locations (Institute of Contemporary Art – Dunaújváros and Trafó Gallery – Budapest) present the research and personal reflections of Hungary-based contemporary artists.

Specific points in Sándor Bodó’s life have been earmarked by various cooperatives that had a definitive role: his childhood was spent under the aegis of her mother’s and grandmother’s workplace, the agricultural co-op of Súlysáp; he spent his apprenticeship at the carpenters’ co-op of Székesfehérvár; and a component of his diploma work was manufactured by the cooperative of flag makers and embroiderers of Budapest. Revisiting these three sites, Bodó’s latest work spans several decades. Research impregnated with autobiographical elements is not an easy task, and thus months of visits eventually led to acknowledging the distance. A film was shot at the cooperatives, based on staged group photographs. The curtain rises, the stage is revealed, and the characters take their positions in their own quotidian.

Krisztina Erdei’s photographs are a subjective documentation of visits to a cooperative involved in the exhibition. A journal of a glance that seeks the “non-representative”, peeping behind the offered sight, sensitive of minutiae. However, the artist’s glance lingered upon a found image: the setting of the archive photograph in question, may be familiar, taken in 1953 at a ceremony of the carpenters’ co-op of Székesfehérvár, yet it carries an element of the absurd, mixing solemnity with self-irony – perhaps because of the vegetables used as microphones. Krisztina Erdei staged a re-enacted version of this picture and had it photographed by a photographers’ co-op that had been established around the time the picture was taken, and invited as a model the former leader of the co-op, featured as a young man on the original photograph. The new photograph is the representation of representation, the imitation of historical context, at the same time addressing this loss of context and continuity.

Gábor Gerhes's project offered a singular opportunity for a cooperative of flag makers and embroiderers that is in recession and unable to adapt to changing market circumstances. The cooperative has been operating in downtown Budapest for decades. The artist offered their services to contemporary art collectors, inviting them to commission objects and depictions of their own fancy. Several decades of routine faced a new challenge, which offered a new terrain of creativity for the commissioners, and for the cooperative the introduction of new products and services that would mobilize their technical expertise. The role of the artist was basically bringing the affair to pass and coordinating the creation of images. He left the concept of the commissions to the collectors and the practical stages of the procedure to the co-op members.

The cooperative principle shows a lot of similarities with the operation of artist groups as forms of voluntary association, where member contribution may be intellectual or comprise collective work. Judit Fischer, Miklós Mécs and Csaba Vándor set out to found their own cooperative for the exhibition. However, the preparations have led them to realize that founding a church, likewise based on the devotion and voluntary cooperation of the members, seems to be a more feasible objective. They initiated the establishment of the "New Cooperative" Church, which sacralizes the co-op idea, ironically highlighting the thought that devoid of economic motivation, cooperativism remains a question of faith and conviction.

Everytime Everything for Everybody

ICA – Dunaújváros

06.03. – 02.04.2010.

Participating artists: Katarina SEVIC - Zsófia FRAZON, Andreas WEGNER

Institute of Contemporary Art

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Open: Daily from 10am to 6pm, except Sundays and Holidays.

Initiated by : Andreas Wegner

In collaboration with:

Kulturamt Neukölln, Berlin, DE

<http://legrandmagasin.coopseurope.coop/>

Curators in HUNgary: Franciska Zólyom, Nikolett Eröss

Partners:

ICA, Dunaújváros, HU

Univ. Jan Evangelista Purkyně, Ústí nad Labem, CZ

Trafó Gallery, Budapest, HU

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