



Press release

**ORSHI DRODZIK
It's All Over Now Baby Blue**

Opening Wednesday October 2th from 18.00 to 20.00 in presence of the artist

Exhibition October 2 - November 27,2013

The Gandy gallery is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition by Orshi Drozdik at the gallery in Bratislava.

The work of Orshi Drozdik (b,1946,Hungary) has played a significant role in the history of women's art across the international arts scene and has greatly influenced a generation of artists to follow.

Drozdik moved to Amsterdam in 1978, after graduating from the College of Fine Arts, in 1977 as a graphics major, and two years later she based herself in New York City. At present Drozdik works both in New York and Budapest, and is a professor at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts. She has exhibited at many of the foremost galleries across Hungary and abroad, and articles assessing her shows have been published in numerous prestigious art journals. Yet, Drozdik has continually engaged with the contemporary art scene in Hungary. The 1998 exhibition, article, and textbook titled *Strolling Brains*, for instance, greatly contributed to the spread of feminism in the country. Drozdik began her career in tandem with the Hungarian post-conceptual movement of the 1970s. As a harbinger she created her own theoretical and critical point of view, which was unique in the seventies cultural environment of Budapest. In the 80s, at the time of her emigration, building upon of her 70s working methode, she embraced poststructuralist critical discourse, that helped her to develop, the installation series, *Adventure in Technos Dystopium*, a theoretical and visual deconstruction of scientific representation. Therefore Drozdik's work can only truly be interpreted in the light of the poststructuralist discourse. Research, the demand for theory and its language, as well as the manifest representation of these in the work of art have been the ongoing driving force for her creative production. As a result, her chosen topic often unfolds in numerous variations and is presented in her polyvalent practice to reveal many aspects of the given problem.

A major point of departure for Drozdik's career took place while being student of the College of Fine Arts, Drozdik started to develop the chief concepts underpinning a work titled *NudeModell* and *Individual Mythology*. With this term Drozdik signified a unique set of values, which she felt were essential in her vindication of the current patriarchal social and artistic environment. The problematic of gender first caught her attention in an early nude drawing class, once deemed to be the basics of classical art education. Drozdik there observed the distinction of form between a man's and a woman's gaze and, taking this problem as her premise, she reflected on the paradoxical situation of the woman artist. The search for a feminine aspect, the definition of a woman artist is also markedly interwoven with the analysis of the relations between power and representation.

It's All Over Now Baby Blue

Drozdik's work series titled, *It's All Over Now Baby Blue*, refers to the modernist work of Malevich Black Square and Yves Klein nude-model-brush-works on canvas. This series followed her earlier painting series, titled *Lipstick Painting A'la Fontana*, from which four pieces were exhibited in 2004 group show, in the gallery. With the methodology of using painting routines - and attached artistic heroism -, modernist theory, she transforms the modernists' paintings into the colors of baby blue and baby pink. Referring to the mandatory gender history of the artists, their productions, and their visibility and art historical representations.

NudeModel

During a performance in 1977 the artist was drawing a nude model in a space separated by a sheet of gauze from the viewers, while simultaneously to this in the external space every night a different — male — artist or art historian opened the exhibition. Drozdik's role was multiplied in this piece: she took on the role of the viewer and the viewed alike, as well as that of the artist, while questioning the basics of fine arts training. The results of the research preceding the one-week performance as well as the point of departure of the analysis, the appropriated series of nude model photos she found in Hungarian Fine Art University archives. In this sense *NudeModel* photo show not only makes the original piece visible but Drozdik's working method and thought may also be mapped.

"In 1975/76 I have started to research the photo documentation of woman life nude model's positioning for studies in the Hungarian Academy of Fine Art, where I was a student at that time. Rephotographed the collected archived photos, and started to exhibit them, as my own work.

"...I have intended to legitimize my discovery: the *universal art* is divided into male and female point of view. *Universal art must be decoded*, my specific woman point of view must be legitimized." Drozdik, 1978



Nude Model, 1977. 60 x 145 cm. silver gelatin print. ed 5

The Individual Mythology 1975-77

Orshi Drozdik's work series titled *Individual Mythology* was created between 1975-77. The title refers to her attempts to re/define her identity as an artist, as a woman, as a citizen of Eastern Europe and Hungary. She needed to create her own mythology because "my identity was shadowed by lies and manipulations". In her experience of learning history obliterated facts were obvious, thus she needed to employ analytic investigation to define her artistic and personal identity.

"Drozdik grew up when fabricated history was often illustrated with altered photography, intending of changing the past in which unwanted persons were not only killed, but also removed from photographs. "

Examining history, made it easy for her to discover how images of woman were used in art history and how woman artists were excluded from art history. For the series of *Individual Mythology*, she had researched images in which she could examine the representation of power in history and how that could manipulate the formation of identity. In the series of performances she was projected the researched photography on her body, in her photography series she juxtaposed photo negatives and often projected several photonegatives to create an image as part of her individual mythology.



Orshi Drozdik: Individual mythology, Jalta, 1976. 21x29cm. silver gelatin. ed 5

Yalta Conference: Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin (Feb. 4–11, 1945), major World War II conference of the three chief Allied leaders, President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States, Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Great Britain, and Premier Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union, which met at Yalta in the Crimea.

Brains on High Heels, 1991

The installation of brains squeezed into a high heels marching around incessantly was set up for the 1992 Sydney Biennale with real shoes. The bizarre multitude of brains forced into tight shoes, the simple and symbolic meaning, the density and irony of the statue all have a similar effect on the viewer as one of the iconic pieces of surrealism, Meret Oppenheim's mug lined with fur from 1936: it is eye-catching and alarming at the same time.

The complex sexual meaning of *Brains on High Heels* forces us to contemplate our everyday prejudices. It refers ironically to normative gender roles. This piece, too, has several versions. A lover's confession in rhyme, as an attached love (letter) poem is also a part of this work, which Drozdik often applies as a tool for summarizing her works, as an alternative form of the theoretical approach.



Brain On High Heel 1991 bronze sculpture (edition of 12). 18x18x8cm

Please do not hesitate to contact the gallery for any further information.

We are looking forward to your visit in Bratislava.

Best Regards,

Nadine Gandy

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