

Moscow museum of modern art



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Moscow Museum  
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# This edition accompanies the exhibition “Factory of Found Clothes/FFC. Utopian Unions”

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Moscow museum of modern art

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The Moscow Museum of Modern Art is pleased to present the Utopian Unions exhibition by the FFC art group. The exhibition is a part of the parallel program of the 8th Moscow International Biennale FASHION AND STYLE IN PHOTOGRAPHY 2013. The FFC art group (Factory of Found Clothes) is a unique phenomenon on the art scene. The radical art presented by two artists from St- Petersburg, Glyuklya and Tsaplya, goes beyond the art world and addresses the subject of relationships between different social groups. The Utopian Unions exhibition is about rethinking issues of gender and art, activism and politics in the modern world. The display includes works based on interaction among people who don't meet in

- 5 everyday life. This project was realized in several stages in different countries, where each time the FFC group created a new space for the interactive performance. The FFC group is searching for a new language, a new vocabulary, which can help to overcome the cynicism, apathy and loneliness inherent in the human experience in the era of mass consumerism. The Utopian Unions exhibition is an important project from both a social and a cultural perspective. The problems affecting artists now are as pressing as at any time in the past, and require rethinking. Artworks by the FFC group have been exhibited all over the world, and we are glad to present the Utopian Unions project to the public. This project combines the best of all the work that has been created during the existence of the art group.







## Manifesto

The place of the artist is on the side of the weak.

Weakness makes a person human, and it is by overcoming weakness that heroes are born.

We do not extol weakness, but rather appeal to kindheartedness and humanity.

The time has come to return compassion to art!

Compassion is an understanding of the weakness of others and a joint victory over that weakness.

You cannot call it sentimentality.

It is Freedom standing on the barricade with naked breast, defending the child in each of us!

You say that art is only for the very smart, that it's an intellectual game?

That there is no place left for true impact, that strong emotions belong exclusively to Hollywood?

It's not true!

Because in that case, art would be meaningless, cold, incapable of extending a helping hand.

Art is not an abstract game but an adventure; not cold rationalism, but live emotion.

The artist is not a genius, but a friend.

Rather than enacting didactic social projects, we must help people to stop fearing themselves, help them to accept themselves and grow better.

Society is made up of people.

Only by helping these people follow the path of self transformation, do we change society.

There is no other way.



Utopian Unions  
Wood, fabric, paint, handwriting  
With the participation of Alena Petite and Alexandra  
Gardt  
View of the installation  
Moscow Museum of Modern Art, 2013  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery, Amsterdam, NL



## Reinventing the Factory of Found Clothes A Conversation with Viktor Miziano

Viktor Miziano

The beginning of the “utopian union” between you, Gluklya, and you, Olga Egorova (aka Tsaplya), was laid in 1996 with your legendary performance *In Memory of Poor Liza*. Here we find the origins of the inclination in your work, so ingrained, to represent the feminine through the category of weakness, which you oppose to strength, which represents the masculine principle. You consolidated this counterpoint in your no less legendary piece *The Triumph of Fragility*, where a masculine platoon of sailors march brutally around Petersburg holding snowy white girl’s dresses. Your train of thought is natural: opposed to the Soviet model of emancipation, which guaranteed women civil rights and expected from them achievements in labor equal to those of men, you wondered about a women’s right to be aware of her feminine subjectivity per se. Subsequently, if I understand your

creative evolution correctly, you developed this category of weakness in two directions. On the one hand, you universalized it by stripping it of its gender boundaries and showing that a man could be weak as well, that his strength is a social construct imposed on him by traditional society. On the other hand, you politicized this category by extending it to social groups whose position in society is vulnerable.

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In this regard, I have two fairly provocative questions. First, I wanted to ask whether the apology for femininity as weakness reproduces the patriarchal economy of desire, which in fact imposed weakness on women and thus perpetuated their subalternity vis-à-vis men. Because even if one deconstructs the category of strength by disclosing male subjectivity’s involvement in the experience of weakness, isn’t this contrapuntal system of concepts—weakness vs. strength—itself a product of traditionalist culture?

You can refer to the gesture of heroism with which, in *In Memory of Poor Liza* (by jumping into the cold waters of Petersburg’s Winter Canal) and other pieces, you have overcome your own weakness as it were. But don’t such gestures fall under the Freudian diagnosis of “female hysteria?” Recall how your beloved Guattari criticized classical psychoanalysis as a means of reproducing traditionalist foundations! And if you derive your work from the image of Poor Liza, an image given birth by Russian Sentimentalism, then why do you ignore many other female characters who have represented women as strong—the femme fatale, the demonic woman, the vamp, etc.? After all, Julia Kristeva has argued that the desire to impute weakness to women is generated by men’s fears of the “abject,” that is, the uncanny and terrifying aspect they have always detected in the feminine. Hence my



second question, about the political aspect of your work: by marking social vulnerability as weakness, aren't you wounding the dignity of these social subjects? Aren't you depriving them of the stimulus and will to fight for their rights?

Gluklya

The main thing for us about *In Memory of Poor Liza* was not the issue of feminine weakness, but that we stood in solidarity with people in need. In other words, it was a leap from clothes to people. We thus questioned the limits of the aesthetic.

Second, the leap refers to the motif of the heroic deed, something quite important to us. We never wanted to say that women are weak or believe that is true. It was more a strategy of subversive affirmation or a matter of playing with clichés, with the notions of womanhood prevalent in society. If you translate our gestures into words, the message would rather be: *You think that women are weak, dear creatures. Okay, we'll put on white dresses and jump into a canal, playing the role of victims, but when we come back out of the water, the fun begins.*

As far as strong women characters go, in our latest installation, at the

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Moscow Museum of Modern Art, we in fact present dresses emblazoned with portraits of People's Will activists, including, for example, Vera Zasulich, the first Russian female terrorist. She was the subject of our installation at the show *DAVAJ!* in Berlin, where black boxes and dresses with wounds spoke of the individual's two views of herself—internal and external. In 2007, we made the film *Three Mothers and a Chorus*. Its protagonists are mothers, whom society tears apart by placing intolerable and contradictory expectations and claims on them.

The vamp is a type of woman whom we have always made fun of. There is so much hypocrisy and falsehood in women, which is not natural to them but comes from having to resist stupid patriarchal masculinity by lying to themselves and presenting themselves to the world in a way that doesn't match who they are. The same can also be said of manipulative strategies for managing men and families, which is the norm in Russia since the notion of equality does not exist here. However, in the film *Letters to the Ideal Beloved* (1996), Tsaplya and I appear as vamps, and we destroy and rip up dresses, set them on fire, and pour sulfuric acid on them.

Getting back to the subject of weakness, we broached this topic in our manifesto, which we wrote in 2002 during a residency in Sweden while reflecting on the change that had taken place in our outlook. This happened almost simultaneously with the creation of the group *Chto Delat*. The manifesto was published in the first issue of the group's newspaper.

Tsaplya

I remember now how the theme of weakness developed in our work. The fact is that we never talked only about an exclusively feminine weakness. Our weak-

ness isn't feminine at all, in fact; it is childish or, rather, adolescent. When we had only begun to work, at the dawn of our youth in the mid-nineties, we invented a persona whom we dubbed the Grammar School Girl. Our Grammar School Girl was definitely connected with all the real grammar school girls from the early twentieth century, only she was even more absurd. In our imagination, she drank vinegar to give herself an intriguing paleness and was ready to perform heroic deeds at the drop of a hat. For us, what mattered was that she was in a state of constant vibration, expectation, and instability, that on the inside she was both Poor Liza and Dostoevsky's Nastasya Filipovna (from *The Idiot*). For us, what mattered was that she either didn't know or didn't want to follow the rules, that she was more or less than herself, that she was always out of synch with herself. For us, the Grammar School Girl was the embodiment of fragility and vulnerability, the quality known as "weakness" in society, the weakness we're used to hiding and overcoming.

Otherwise, how does one survive in a world where, as the saying goes, "men don't cry?" In fact, from the outset we were more interested in the absurdity of a society in which vital, beautiful things had to be hidden and contemptuously dubbed weakness, than in the gender identity of this selfsame weakness. We always have considered weakness in its relation to strength. What, after all, is strength in our society? It's power, money, and cruelty. And what should be opposed to this strength? Another form of power and cruelty? We decided that no, it would be better for weakness to oppose strength. We imagined a form of weakness that could oppose strength. If you understand weakness in this way, then it cannot impede political struggle in any way. It's funny now to recall that Grammar School Girl of ours, who long ago melted into the past, but without her, many things in our work are unclear, for example, why the white dresses the sailors are holding are so small.

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Viktor Miziano

When explaining your work, you often refer to Augusto Boal and his *Theater of the Oppressed*, which largely derived from a belief in the liberating effect of familiarizing people with artistic action, with performative behavior. The concept of this form of theater is part of the avant-garde (or, to be more chronologically precise, the neo-avant-garde) tradition and is a product of modernist society, with its strict disciplinary regime. However, contemporary society has overcome disciplinary norms, and nowadays performativity and artistic flexibility are the norms of social behavior. How relevant in these circumstances are Boal's performative therapy? Has the new society of control that has replaced the disciplinary society forced you to make changes to this methodology?

Gluklya

Of course, it has, and thanks for the good question. In fact, we don't repeat Boal's concept. I talked about Boal in the absence of any ideas in Russia about



problems with the weak, for example, with migrants. Society has overcome disciplinary norms, but the exploitation of people has not diminished. It has not only acquired a different pattern, and so the relevance of such projects as theater for people in a vulnerable situation in society has not disappeared. But in Russia this could be quite interesting. I think that the emergence of a theater for migrants is quite timely. We plan to make the concept of “making the invisible visible” the basis of this theater, just as it was the basis of the Utopian Clothing Store, where using the technique of overcoming personal fears, participants submitted their own problems to general discussion. They made their fears visible and thus destroyed them. The person was liberated and simultaneously acquired friends, and this situation contributes, as we know, to uncovering one’s creative potential.

Tsaplya

I think that here we see the development of FFC’s use of performance. In our old performances we devised rules and conditions for games in which viewers and performers could change. These were adventures devised for one person, two

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people or a small group. Gluklya and I never thought about having thousands of people as our audience. For us, it was important to maintain intimacy, to have one-on-one conversations. This, by the way, nourished our belief that art can help people, meaning that it can literally have a therapeutic effect. We saw this with our own eyes. I think that in the new works dealing with migrants, which Gluklya is doing independently, she is continuing this tradition. The people involved in the performance are not just hired actors, but co-participants who get the invaluable experience of transformation or, at least, the possibility of transformation.

Viktor Miziano

At a certain point, your work began to coincide and overlap with that of the *Chto Delat* work platform, which you’re part of. Hence the appearance in your lexicon of the terms solidarity, comradeship, etc. And indeed, many of your works are based on the involvement of other people, on certain forms of creative collaboration, on creating communities. In contemporary art theory, there are other concepts appropriate in this case—interaction, cooperation, etc. I noticed your use of the term intimacy. Frankly, it is much more precise and contemporary, not only in relation to your works but also more generally to many works of this sort. Because organizing certain other forms of living not encompassed by the hegemonic biopolitical regime is not merely a psychological, but a political problem. We see before us so many examples of critically minded neophytes who in their practice remain proponents of neoliberal subjectivity with its emphasis on personal success, competition, grabbing someone else’s stuff, and so on. How is this collaborative intimacy created? How is it experienced? What sort of know-how does it offer, and how is it maintained?

Gluklya

Intimacy involves destroying and mutilating the other, on the one hand, and expanding consciousness and acquiring utopian horizons, on the other.

A child cannot be brought into the world pain-free, and if you love a person, you break them and change them, and they do the same to you. The same thing applies to the socially engaged education projects I'm working on now, as I continue to run FFC alone.

In 2006, I applied for and won a residency at the Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto, whose guiding principle is "socially responsible transformation." Studying there, I figured out lots of things, including the need to overcome neoliberal political correctness, which prohibits getting closer than ten meters away from another person. After all, private property is inviolable, and so is a person's inner world. But the fact is that the system abuses these concepts. People have long ago stopped being afraid of each other, not because they have respect for another person's world, but because man is wolf to man: you must do everything yourself, and it is your fault if you're a loser.

Mutual support and involvement in other people's lives is thus excluded and is possible only in the space of art. So then the question of producing unalienated relationships comes down to the question of the limits of norms for political correctness. FFC takes responsibility for going beyond norms. If the migrant doesn't come to the artist, then the artist goes to the migrant and offers their hand until a fight breaks out. But after the fight happens, that is when the precedent for art arises. We might also recall how we made our film *Everything Will Be Alright*, for which we invited young women to cry together. Only seven of the large number of women who had said they wanted to be in the film remained; all the rest simply couldn't imagine sharing a cry with people they barely knew. But the ones who agreed to do it came away with the invaluable experience of approaching the limits of understanding of what you can share with others, and what you can't.

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Tsaplya

Yes, intimacy really is an important practice for us. Despite the fact that Gluklya has been running the FFC project alone for the past few years (since 2010), our closeness continues. We are always looking for new ways of maintaining its tension. This includes our collaborative work in Chto Delat, and our friendship . . . But as Gluklya has already said, intimacy doesn't come for free, unlike solidarity, for example. Intimacy always has to be created, by overcoming conflicts and, sometimes, making compromises. It's like a dance. Intimacy is difficult, but it provides the necessary degree of tension in life. And without tension you can't make anything worthwhile.

Viktor Miziano

This last question is somehow the opposite of the previous one. For the past twenty years, we—meaning you in FFC, me in my work as curator and editor,

you and your friends in *Chto Delat*, and many other interesting creative figures we know—have been talking about and insisting on alliances and collectivity, about their creative and utopian potential. But what can we say about our singularity? Or have we gotten out of the habit of being ourselves? Do we know what it is? Do we have the categories and terms that would describe this know-how? After all, the world moves forward not only through group effort but also through personal commitment and obsession. Have you had a chance to reflect on this now that you have to run FFC more and more by yourself?

Gluklya

I try to combine work in groups and individual projects. I think this is possible, and the problem of choice is not relevant here, but analyzing the details of this strategy is beyond the scope of this interview.

But I think that completely calling it quits with collectivity would be a betrayal. I have the feeling that the dark conservative clouds hanging over the world are just waiting for artists to buckle under this intense pressure, fold up

15      their wings, and wander off dejectedly towards the art market. And then special friends clubs will be created, where for a steep fee a special worker will say to his unhappy client, “I’m your friend. I can talk with you for ten minutes, but after that the rate doubles.” To prevent this from happening, artists, even when working alone, have to correlate the search for their identity with societal needs.

Moscow, 2013

Translated by Thomas Campbell

Ekaterina Andreeva  
FFC Mythology

“I’m naked, but you’re not,” says one little girl to another in a video film by Natalya Pershina-Yakimanskaya. The powerfully poignant and painful inequality of human relationships, an inequality that everyone wants to conquer, tame or prettify, is concentrated in these words. The avant-garde’s call to abandon clothing, to expose oneself, to liberate oneself from the lie of disguise—a call made more than once in twentieth-century art—indicates an intention to play on the innate human desire for paradise, that is, a place to live where mutual understanding and acceptance would reign, where there would be no “communication breakdowns,” to evoke the contemporary idiom.

Since the mid-nineties, Pershina-Yakimanskaya aka Gluklya has worked as the Factory for Found Clothes (FFC), a duet with Olga Egorova (aka Tsaplya) that is enriched by the solo work of both artists. For over ten years, Pershina-Yakimanskaya has explored, created, and altered the karma of various vestments for the human body. In her work, clothing performs its main social function of not just covering the body but also telling about the person wearing it and generating their image. However, Pershina-Yakimanskaya (whose works any alternative fashion house would be proud of) implicates her dresses, jackets, and coats in stories that reveal that communicative function of clothes is not so straightforward, because individuals wear as it were secret pockets chockablock with sexual fantasies, fears, shames, and disappointments. Pershina-Yakimanskaya searches for signs of humanity in this volcanic discharge of emotions and physiology onto the surface of clothes.

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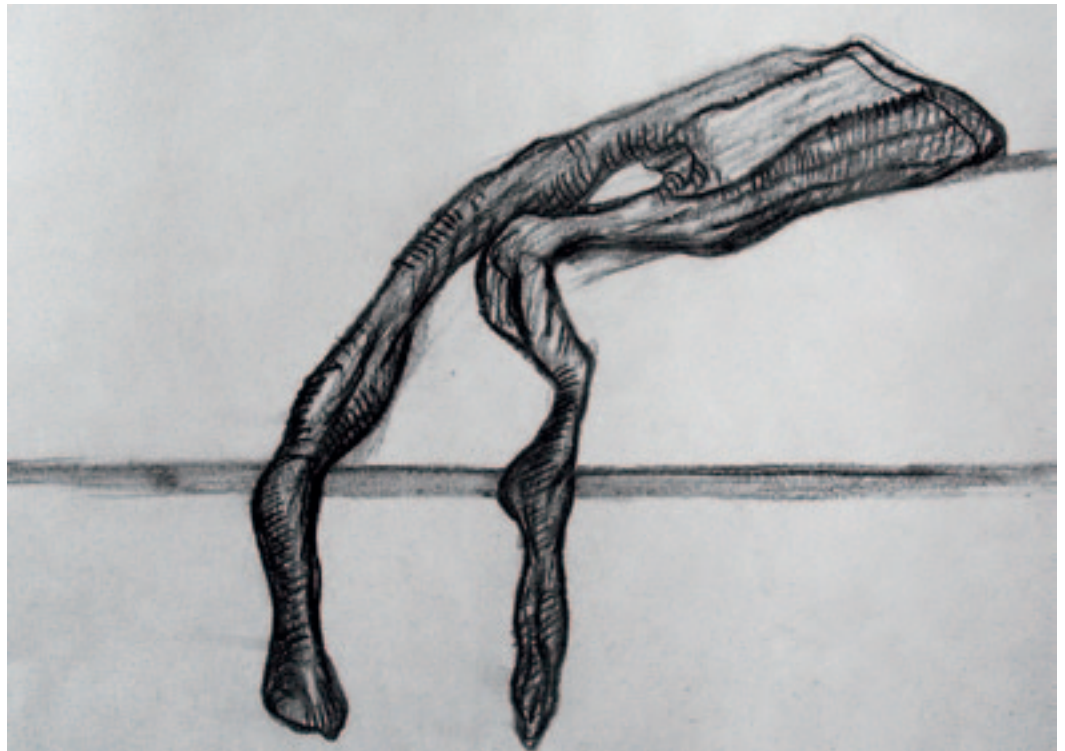


Sometimes You Can Be Too Hard, You Know?  
From the Series: “Clothes Café”  
2006  
Paper, watercolor  
60 x 90 cm  
Private Collection, Paris



In her installation for Anna Nova Gallery, Pershina-Yakimanskaya stages a scene in a café that figures as a metaphor for the communication process in terms of its contemporary social standards. Business suits sitting at tables dine on Lilliputian skirts, tights, scarves, and boots. The fact that the communication process is indistinguishable from consuming one's own kind is thus made tangible. The video playing in the café—habitual entertainment for its patrons—is in fact the film about the two little girls, who live in the green, natural world and wear angelic white dresses. But they come up with such stories that there is little doubt that in the future they either will disappear from the real world, like angels, or become regulars at the Clothes Café. Central figures in FFC's mythology are the “whites”—the artists themselves, dressed in hazmat suits, who during the group's performances render all forms of aid to people involved in the action. In the foreseeable future, the little girls from the film will either be saved by these redeemers and become “whites” themselves or dissolve in the adult world's blackness. By confronting dark suits with white dresses in the installation space,

Sometimes You Can Be Too Hard, You Know?  
From the Series: “Clothes Café”  
2006  
Paper, watercolor  
60 x 90 cm  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery, Amsterdam, NL



Menu.  
From the Series “Clothes Café”  
2006  
Paper, charcoal  
60 x 90 cm  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery, Amsterdam, NL

Belt That Didn't Want to Fasten Anymore.  
From the Series “Clothes Café”  
2006  
Paper, charcoal  
60 x 90 cm  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery, Amsterdam, NL



Let's say that we have unofficial salaries  
From the Serie "Clothes Café"  
2006  
Paper, watercolor  
24 x 32 cm  
Private Collection, Paris

Pershina-Yakimanskaya makes graphically tangible the border between childhood as fantasy and the regulated society of real people. She has been inspired by Walter Benjamin's short essay Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, in which he writes, "Because nature and childhood are absent, humanity can only be arrived at through a catastrophic process of self-destruction[.]"

The focus of Benjamin's essay is the two types of immortality available to us. One is achieved through the immortal youth (childhood) of life repeating itself. The other—through life that has been lost but rendered memorable, unforgettable, by crossing over into the space of art. The meaning of art as a means of experiencing the pleasure, suffering, and death of body and soul—that is, something not accessible to the mind—can be interpreted as follows. With all its attractions and concerns, the world of the dark suits plunges us into the unconsciousness caused by constant abuse of the senses and the encouragement of callousness. The awe of the "whites" brings us back from amnesia thanks to a particular sense organ responsible for preserving the memory of the humanity of everything given in the world, whether a dress or an animal or even the catastrophe of self-destruction. For all these things can become subjects of communication and communicability only within the field of human creativity. Thus, in one drawing by Pershina-

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\* Walter Benjamin. *Selected Writings* / Vol 1: 1913–1926, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2004). P. 81.

Kill the Dead Man Inside You  
From the Series "Clothes Café" etc  
2006  
Paper, watercolor  
18 x 24 cm  
Collection of Van Abbemuseum, NL





Yakimanskaya, a toy-like wolf addresses the viewer from the cloud of a white doll's dress, transmitting the energy of an affirmation posed as a question: "You can be so cruel, you know?" Like Diogenes, Pershina-Yakimanskaya's abiding concern is the question of humanity. But her art differs from the contemporary liberal take on art making, which is seen as a means of remedying social contradictions on the global and local scale. What matters to Pershina-Yakimanskaya is the anticipation of miracle or ecstasy (you will stop being cruel/you will go to unimaginable extremes of cruelty), the things that make art what it is by imparting unforgettable voices and images to the things of the world.

Translated by Thomas Campbell

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Belief in Dialectics  
From the Series 'Clothes Café'  
2006  
Paper, watercolor  
18x24 cm  
Collection of Van Abbemuseum, NL



She Has Arrived  
From the Series "Clothes Café"  
2006  
Paper, watercolor  
24 x 32 cm  
Collection of Ter Haar, NL



# In Memory of Poor Liza\_1995\_ *PERFORMANCE*

Performance dedicated to all who suffered from love.



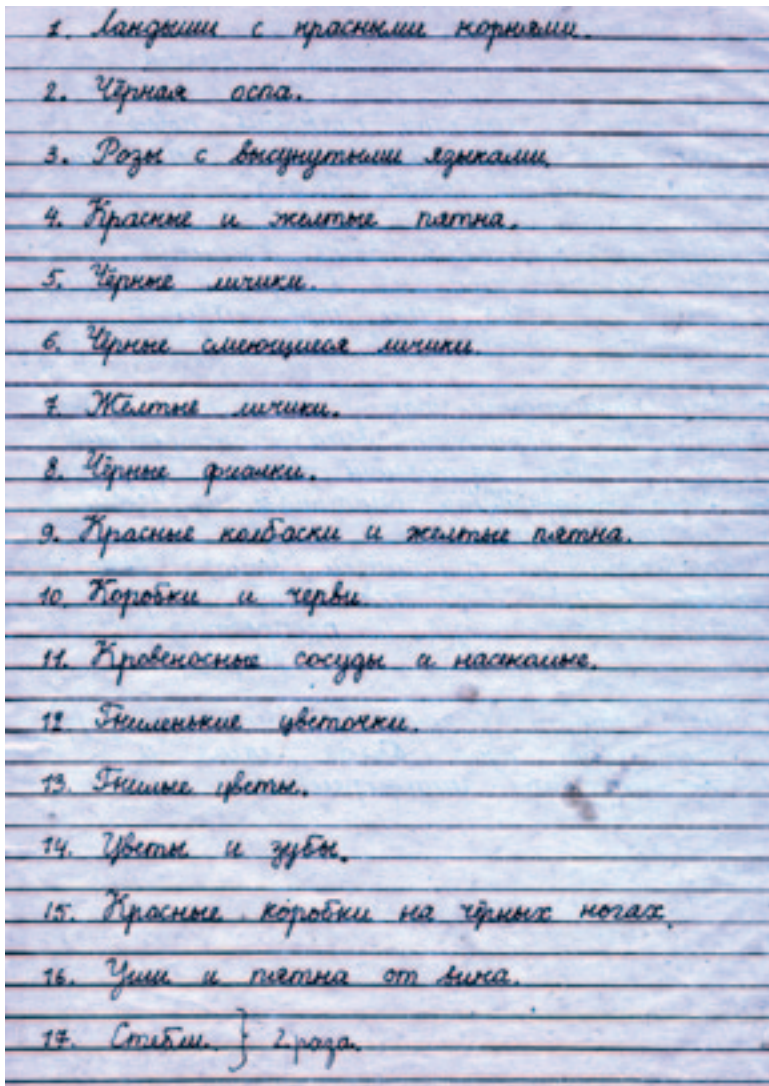
In Memory of Poor Liza  
1995  
Performance  
Winter Canal, Saint Petersburg



# Notes to the Ideal Sweetheart\_1996\_ VIDEO

This project suggests our readiness to go to the very end. We, like all girls in this world, dreamt of a love that would turn our life upside-down. And we decided to be ruthless with ourselves in our search for this love. Whenever our relationships didn't suit us, we tore them apart like a rag. At the end of the movie we die, which symbolizes our craving to reinvent ourselves. We have realized there is a need for pain, and that comfort is not for us. When you are in love, you always maim, you always tear someone apart; the person who doesn't accept this internally has never been in love and is just a cowardly Narcissus running away from reality.

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Dress Poetry  
1996  
Paper, ink  
29,7 x 21 cm

Notes to the Ideal Sweetheart  
1996  
Video stills  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

# The Whites\_1998–2005\_ PERFORMANCE

We have been using white chemical protection suits since 1998. First they became a part of the Psychoanalytical room performance at the SKIF festival in Saint Petersburg. The asexual style of our special clothes fit the tasks of this performance splendidly. The conversation between the artists and those viewers who were bold enough to undergo a session of psychotherapy proved to be successful largely because the patients entered into a dialogue with these strange, epicene creatures and felt like laughing as a result, and so the conversation was instantly permeated with the confidential intimacy required for the work. Wearing these chemical protection suits, we also undertook a series of interventions in the city environment called The Whites Have Come, which exists today in the form of photographic reports. We showed up in white suits for the first time at a Scottish bar in Glasgow, where The Whites strived to disrupt traditional British equanimity. Problematizing conventional ways and traditions, The Whites adored going to all sorts of places: to a Venetian biennale, to Red Square, to the exhibitions of great institutions. Our appearance, as if by the wave of a magic wand, changed everything that was obvious and challenged the established order. We exposed stereotypes of female and male behavior to scrutiny and we made public the fatal lack of everything childlike and pure.

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(on the previous page)  
The Whites  
Performance  
Red Square, Moscow, 2004

The Whites learn the hardships of  
a Russian hospital, Saint Petersburg, 2001

The Whites greeting a migrant,  
Saint Petersburg, 2001

Psychoanalytic Room of The Whites,  
Graz, Austria, 2005

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# Illegal crossing of the border between the Czech Republic and Germany\_1999\_ ACTION

The formal motive for our heroic act, our border crossing, was an invitation from our colleagues, a group of cyber-feminists, to participate in the OLD BOYS NETWORK at Documenta X. We were eager to participate in the project, but we didn't have time to get German visas. Besides, we were guided by a clear understanding of the value of empirical experience and of the need to move closer to reality. At that moment it was evident that the existing conventional borders didn't suit us and we had to look for our own objectives in the world of wild capitalism where only the strongest survive. We equipped ourselves with a map of the Czech Republic and went to the border beside a road full of prostitutes. We had been walking all day, with heavy knapsacks stuffed with talking clothes, fearless of the growing dusk (time as it is usually understood doesn't exist for romantics), and when the sun was drooping we went off the road and set forth into the forest. We embraced adventures dictated mainly by the shocked state we found ourselves in when it turned out we were alone in a dark forest filled with ghosts and the snarls of wild boars. We could not bear it and returned to the road. Thus our first attempt was a failure. We returned to Prague and visited Radio Liberty, from where we sent faxes to the cyber-feminists who were waiting for us. It took us several days to reconcile ourselves to the bitterness of defeat, at which point our conscience and the feeling of having abandoned our duty forced us to hit the road a second time. This episode was the turning point in our friendship. Since then, whatever happens, the cells of our bodies always remember that the feeling of your friend's hand is the absolute guarantee for the belief that **EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE.**

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Illegal crossing of the border between  
the Czech Republic and Germany  
1999  
Photo documentation



Karina Karayeva An extremely curious rhetoric connected to certain trends in art has emerged in the era of globalism. I wanted to ask you how the Factory of Found Clothes (FFC) has reacted to the shift away from individualism and towards collectivism. Or have you continued to work only with individualism? Tsaplya I can't recall our having worked all that much with the individual. Gluklya What do mean? Karayeva What I meant is that from my viewpoint, globalism has generated more work with the collective, while the individual has gone into retreat as a particular artistic practice. Meaning that individual statements do not emerge. What remains is circulation within collective consciousness, which displaces individual behavior in a way. Gluklya Do you mean subjective utterances? Karayeva And subjective

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utterances, too. Gluklya Meaning not topics everyone has in common, but individual statements, for example, Björk's husband—what's his name?—Matthew Barney, who plays with male subjectivity, yes? That's his thing. Karayeva No, I'm not saying it's somebody's thing. What interests me is this: you have always worked with some kind of collective unconscious and tried to push it through purely personal behavior. Has that now changed? Tsaplya That's news to us, because Gluklya and I have always thought that at first, in the mid-nineties, we talked only about ourselves and people close to us, but even then we used certain commonplaces of Russian culture. Back then we had this character, the Grammar School Girl. I'm





afraid to remember her today, but she did exist. Gluklya Karina has read [Alexander] Skidan's article. Tsaplya The Grammar School Girl was the part that exists inside every person's soul, their most fragile and elevated part, the part that is ready to do idiotic things and, simultaneously, perform heroic deeds. Gluklya That's exactly a personal statement. Karayeva But this character had nothing to with your historical memory? After all, she is quite determined historically speaking, or am I wrong? Gluklya Of course, the history is quite natural for us. Tsaplya Of course, because Gluklya was born in Petersburg, while I moved there and became an even bigger Petersburger, just like all newcomers to Petersburg. So this history was quite important for us at some point—all this decadence, seemingly outmoded nowadays, was then simply our source of nourishment. [Poet Mikhail] Kuzmin was our protagonist—or not even Kuzmin, but [his lover the writer Yuri] Yurkun, a Petersburg dandy. Dandies and grammar school girls—those were our heroes. But we can't take this seriously now. At the time, we worked with the Petersburg collective unconscious. Everyone was dreaming about this stuff, but we brought it to the surface, made it visible, injected a lot of irony and self-irony in it, and put it into circulation again. Initially, we thought that FFC was in some sense a secret order, because we and our friends constituted this group that went around without touching the ground, but then it occurred to us there was something natural about this. Karayeva Because there is a canon? Tsaplya A canon? No, canons and commonplac-

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Illegal crossing of the border between  
the Czech Republic and Germany  
1999  
Photo documentation



es are different things. This isn't a canon, but cultural commonplaces, which we have always greatly enjoyed working with. Gluklya There was just this community of friends, a narrow circle. Yes, it was a real ivory tower. Very cozy and very natural, basically. It's like what a young woman said to me recently, "I think [political] struggle is stupid." I think age plays a big role, meaning it's some kind of natural process. Tsaplya Around the year 2000, a change took place: we realized it was no longer interesting to talk about ourselves. For us, this was interesting discovery, because until then we had no clue that we lived amidst people who had their own lives, that there was such a thing as politics. At some point, we got going in this direction and began doing things that involved people completely different from us; for us, it was like these ethnographic expeditions to the people. Old men and

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women, even that video entitled *Trilogy*, where at first we got into contact with sailors. We, these Petersburg princesses, getting in contact with sailors! Something was happening, a change in our consciousness, when we really did turn to people and realize that we couldn't work only for ourselves. It's terribly boring. You have to work for others, for and with other people. Gluklya It was such a revolution! Tsaplya seduced a colonel. Intellectually, with her presence, so to speak. Tsaplya He was just blown away—he'd never seen such migratory birds in the wild before. Because people like us, dressed in the silks and velvets we still wore then, and colonels never intersected. It was a mutual seduction. Gluklya Tell us what you told him.





Tsaplya I don't remember exactly. Well, Charles Esche had given us a small budget for the project, and I said to the colonel that we had a small amount of money to spend. And he said, "My dear, I can do this for your sake, for the sake of art, and for my own pleasure, but I cannot do this for the money, because I'm a Russian officer." Gluklya Now it's an innocent joke, but then it was such a provocation! I remember that people would leave the [screening] room. Russian men would say, "How you've put men down!" Karayeva You disgraced their male honor! Gluklya It was a test of adequacy. But nowadays you couldn't do this: it is no longer possible to infiltrate the army. The film is thus a landmark for the perestroika and post-perestroika periods, because you can no longer do this nowadays. People are sent to jail for things like this nowadays. Karayeva So you didn't think through the situation? You just got in contact with this officer naturally, without any provocative actions in mind? Gluklya Why not? We had them. We really wanted to establish a rapport with the colonel. We have this naivety about us. But we didn't know whether he'd agree to work with us. It was certainly a risk. Karayeva So it was an action involving the crossing of conventional boundaries, which was typical behavior for you? Tsaplya The late nineties were a time when all boundaries had already been crossed. Gluklya But not in Russia. Tsaplya It was a time when post-

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modernism had already driven itself bonkers, when the boundary between art and life had become a real quagmire. We existed in a complete carnival: as artists, we'd wake up in the arms of an unknown poet or our favorite poet—it was an endless succession of masks. Art was produced by being there. There was something special about this. Western curators would come to town and say they'd heard that something was really happening in Petersburg. But we had absolutely nothing to show them, because they wanted to see a product, while [Petersburg art] was a form of living that went on in this continuous flow, a performance that had no beginning or end. Gluklya Actually, [the project with] the sailors [was] a first attempt to capture this somehow. This concept, when you leave behind no trace and no product, is called “virtuosos.” Tsaplya When Gluklya and I set out to cross this border,

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the main factor was its elasticity. For us, this was a shock. The border exists: it resists. It has to be crossed, but it behaves differently. We weren't able to cross it on the first try. Gluklya We were poorly prepared the first time we went. We got off the train and headed into the forest. Tsaplya We had bought a big map of the Czech Republic. Gluklya Naturally, we got lost there. We started hallucinating. Tsaplya Those weren't hallucinations—those were real wild boars. We had one pair of glasses for the two of us. I had taken along a telescope. We arrived at the last station before the border itself and saw we had a straight road ahead of us. It was twenty-five kilometers to



the border with Germany, and we were hoping that someone would pick us up on the road. But we hadn't taken into account that we were competing with prostitutes on this road. No one picked us up, because they thought we were poorly outfitted prostitutes. Gluklya Although it didn't really look like that. Tsaplya We were walking down the road, the sun is about to set, and so we decided we had to go into the forest. The forest consisted of pits, ditches, and fir trees. So we rushed off through the forest. We saw a tower on which a glowing beacon was revolving. We found a clearing, which we identified as the border. Gluklya We were interested in what the border looked like. We walked along thinking someone was watching us. It was a real Bildung. The forerunner of existentialism. Tsaplya The sun set in the east. We walked in the dark, and the ditches were waterlogged. Then a motorcyclist drove by. We remembered all the war movies we'd ever seen. Gluklya We were wet up to our knees, dirty, and hungry, so we decided it was time to go looking for other people. We carefully studied the area with the optical devices we had with us, and on the far side of the road we discovered a little house. It was surrounded by a group of children, and we thought that it was the border checkpoint. I said, "Tsaplya, it's kids!," but Tsaplya replied, "Those aren't kids. Those are garden gnomes." Tsaplya We went over to this place. It turned out to be a kiosk. Gluklya went up and gracefully asked the guy working there, "Excuse me, please, what country is this?" The man said, "This country is the Czech Republic." And so we understood we hadn't

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Illegal crossing of the border between  
the Czech Republic and Germany  
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Photo documentation

crossed the border. Gluklya began figuring out how to get to Germany. The man began making calls. Gluklya suggested going to spend the night in a brothel. I said that would happen only over my dead body. We found an abandoned house and went to sleep on the porch. It was this whole story. Gluklya We didn't sleep, but existed between sleeping and waking. Tsaplya We got on a train and made it to Prague. *Radio Liberty* supported us, saying we were real princesses. At the same time, we were sad, because the border hadn't succumbed to us, and so Gluklya and I tried to distract ourselves a bit by stealing pantyhose in a store in Prague. We walked around Prague for three days, sending dispatches via Radio Liberty. Then suddenly Gluklya said, "Natalia Vasilyevna (Gluklya's mother) won't forgive us." This was the last straw, because she is the invisible censor of our lives. We went and bought

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a map of the Czech Republic, woke up at five in the morning, and headed off on the very same train. When we crossed the border, we encountered the squirrels and deer we had already seen with our own eyes. Gluklya The Czech forest was shaggy, while the German forest was quite neat. The second time round, the border behaved completely differently. It's a different experience when you have crossed a border. Karayeva Suddenly, there is this very powerful leap from the daydreams of pampered young women to another direction, the artistic practice of the Chto Delat group. Tsaplya We are the founding mothers of the Chto Delat group, which appeared as a natural response to a lack. What happens inside you is not really that interest-





ing as a reflection of what is happening in society. It was not only we who had reached this conclusion but also our friends, for example, Alexander Skidan. The group was organized completely naturally. We were joined by Artemy Magun, who is younger than us, and David Riff. Maybe it had something to do with overall changes in life. For us, the last straw was the Petersburg tricentennial celebrations, when we suddenly looked around and realized what a lie was being perpetrated in our city. Putin said that Petersburg was the city of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great: he said nothing about the three revolutions that took place there and the Siege of Leningrad during WWII. That was all forgotten. And so we did the action entitled “We’re Leaving Saint Petersburg.” Gluklya We can’t link these things so directly, to say that we gave up the individual gesture and thus got into globalism. It wasn’t like that. It wasn’t so simple. The processes are more complicated. Because a lot of strategies .... Warhol faked his pieces, but the outcome was resistance. Tsaplya It would be interesting to know what you think of us. Karayeva I think that you are trying to detect the individual element within the collective work with which you’re actively engaged. And so I’d like to find out about the communities you encounter. Do you design these communities, or as artists do you just take readymade material and get involved in it? Or are you actually trying to disrupt it somehow and thus distinguish this community from the flow of universal historical, social, and civic contexts? Is destructuralization within the communities you

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Illegal crossing of the border between  
the Czech Republic and Germany  
1999  
Photo documentation

encounter important? Gluklya We take a handful of this community, deposit it in an experimental space, and look at it through a microscope to see whether empathy suddenly appears or whether it's a scandal that does. This isn't a predetermined outcome, but, in fact, a matter of drifting.

Moscow, 2013

Translated by Thomas Campbell

# 107 Fears\_Dedicated to Louise Bourgeois\_ 2001\_

*INSTALLATION AND PERFORMANCE*

There was an exhibition of Louise Bourgeois in Hermitage at that time and we could not ignore such a phenomenon; her art obviously was important for us. The installation consists of white dresses with internal organs printed on them (the pictures were taken from anatomical atlases). The performance was conducted in the style of a fashion show. The participants, however, were unusual: young girls, old women, pregnant women, women with physical disabilities, the stars of the St. Petersburg art scene, poets, transvestites and sailors. They were carrying internal organs made from real food. These were placed on tables and eaten up with great gusto by the spectators. The sound track for the show consisted of a list of human fears compiled by a psychoanalyst. This list was read by a computer robot. This performance posed the question of the concept of art as a focus of self-expression, expressing personal fears and desires, ignoring the social context.

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107 Fears. Dedicated  
to Louise Bourgeois  
Installation  
In the attic of The State Hermitage,  
Saint Petersburg, 2001

# The Triumph of Fragility\_2002\_*VIDEO*

We created a specific situation for a group of naval academy cadets, in order to show them the reverse of a politics based solely on force and power. At first the young men were embarrassed and even shocked by what was happening. We began talking to them straight from the heart and managed to convince them that this problem concerned them as well as us. We said, “The dresses that you need to carry are the most fragile ‘something’ of all, something hard to describe, that constitutes the essence of our life”. As a result, our conversation led to mutual understanding, and the young sailors participated in this performance creation with a feeling of sincere involvement and love.



The Triumph of Fragility  
Trilogy  
2002  
Video still  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL









The Triumph of Fragility  
Trilogy

2002

Video still

Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL





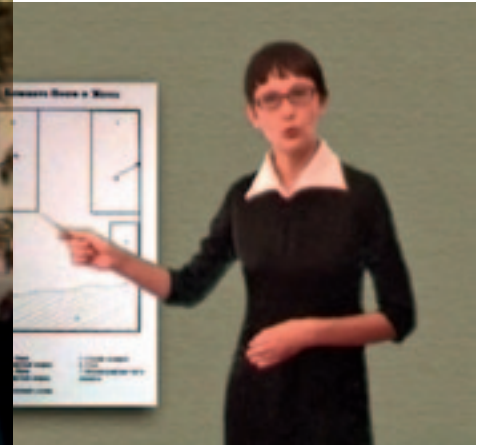
The Triumph of Fragility  
Trilogy  
2002  
Video still  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL



# Several Ways to Please Valya\_The Room of Vickie and Zhenya\_2003\_*VIDEO*

Vickie and Zhenya are two twin brothers who are in the process of changing their sex. They live in Norilsk, a small city in the far north of Russia. Their whole life has developed in the space of the small room they share. The film is constructed as a methodological manual for creating and arranging a living space and situating various objects there. The room of Vickie and Zhenya is examined as an ideal example of a space's capacity to tell a great deal about the women whose domain it is. The film is based on a video letter that Vickie and Zhenya sent to their friend Valya. Vickie and Zhenya got to know Valya at the clinic where they changed their sex. Since then, she has been a constant — though invisible — witness of their life. They report to Valya on all the changes they are going through in the process of their transfiguration into Beautiful Ladies.

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Several Ways to Please Valya. The Room of Vickie and Zhenya 2003 Video stills



# Utopian Clothing Shop\_

## 2004–2013\_

PERFORMANCE

This shop was created in order to remind people (be they men, women, girls or boys) that they are free, that there is true love on earth, and that they are not obligated to follow what others say, neither their parents nor the boss at work, but rather, they can find their own ways to solve all problems, their own way to exist in this world. Their internal world (including all weaknesses, fears, and illusions) is a treasure, despite the brutal reality of everyday life which often argues against this tenderness. In the store, there are very costly things (meaning things that are hard to part with), and, likewise, there are very cheap things. This is in keeping with a desire to make the store truly democratic. Because a costly thing can be given to any person as a reward for what he has achieved, or plans to achieve, in life. The

things in the store try to 40

engage the observer in a conversation about his or her desires, longings, unquenchable hopes and dreams. These things differ from ordinary objects in that they have already conversed with people (other people wore them, and the artist pondered over them).

They are wiser than ordinary things and, it follows, much closer to the human heart. It could be said that the FFC Shop sells things that are “inside out,” because unlike ordinary clothing that hides the sensitivities of its wearer by wiring him or her to the collective mindset, this clothing actually reveals it. By showing a glimpse of the wearer’s soul, it manifests a relationship to the world as to an ideal lover who understands and accepts you as you are, or even as more than you are. The FFC Shop functions as a teaching program, a cognate- analogue to the European “workshops,” including art therapies, that the

Trousers of a Soviet Father  
2005  
Fabric, embroidery, beads  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL



creators of FFC have developed over the course of many years in their practice. In keeping with this program, the store does not have ordinary salespeople; by way of contrast, there are therapists who are trying to reach a level of communication with the customers that can help them solve their problems and develop charisma as they find their own way of existing in society.

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I am cool  
2005  
Silk, embroidery, beads  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL



## Utopian Clothing Shop\_2004\_ PERFORMANCE

Natasha came to visit us once. She had known my grandmother, and would come to our house from time to time. Her life had been dramatic. She was born into a professor's family and had had a fairly happy childhood. But then everything went wrong. She married a despotic KGB officer from Latvia. He taught her to drink, fight, and cause trouble. Or at least that is what she told us. She had sold her apartment and moved to the countryside outside Petersburg. Those were difficult times: because of Perestroika, people in Russia starved during the nineties. She survived by selling vegetables. She would come and tell us stories about her husbands, about how they abused her and how she could never forget that and forgive them. Her grown daughter also constantly abused her. This lonely, tiny woman gave off a scent of unbearable melancholy and despair. She was like a discarded dress. She came and asked me to give her some kind of work. I decided to ask her to embroider a black spot on a dress: no one else would agree to do this because it would be hard to cover the space with beadwork. But this spot was very much like all the grudges she couldn't get out of her head. It seemed to me that if she pierced the surface of the dress a thousand times with a needle, then she might be able to free herself of her oppressive memories and be reborn for a new life. So one day she came over and her face was glowing. She told me that she had really enjoyed the work. She liked working this way. She liked the fact that someone was waiting for her work and admired it. This story was the beginning of our Utopian Clothing Shop project. But the thing that shows the awfulness of life is that Natasha set fire to herself in her house while dead drunk. Unfortunately, here art is nothing.





What Cannot Be Forgotten  
2004  
Silk, embroidery, beads  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

## Utopian Clothing Shop\_2004\_ *PERFORMANCE*

Our life, fate and personality are 70 or maybe even up to 95% determined by our education and by the character of our family relationships. A traumatic experience in childhood leaves an indelible mark on our souls for many years, sometimes making us live our lives according to someone else's scenario. Our life depends on to what measure we are able to comprehend and overcome the experiences of our childhood.



Dress of a girl caught in an accident  
2004  
Fabric, paint, hand-writing  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

# Utopian Clothing Shop\_2004\_*PERFORMANCE*

## Polly's Jacket.

Polly had a child when she was seventeen. The child's father, a nonconformist artist, straightforwardly warned Polly that he wouldn't have anything to do with her or her child. You can imagine what she had to go through after giving birth, especially since her mother isn't exactly mentally well. The letter on the jacket is addressed to an imaginary ideal lover who would rescue her from all her woes and bring happiness to her child.

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Hope Jacket  
2006  
Fabric, collage, hand-writing  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL





# Utopian Clothing Shop\_2004–2005\_ WORKSHOP

Clothes from Lena's Aunt is a particular project of the Utopian Clothing Workshop (UCW) At some point during the development of the Utopian Clothing Workshop project, the artists met Lena. She was from a small town and didn't have the money to pay the high rent that is typical for St Petersburg. She therefore moved in with her aunt. The aunt seemed a very nice person at the beginning, but later on started showing sadistic behavior. The UCW developed a plan to help Lena and her aunt. Together with Lena they created objects out of the aunt's old dresses (from the Communist period) and photographs from the aunt's albums, which they printed on cloth and sewed onto the clothes. When the work was done Lena showed her aunt the transformed clothes. The aunt was moved to tears when she saw her own clothes anew as she had not expected something so extraordinary. As a result of this event, she started psychoanalyzing herself in order to understand what had happened between her and her niece. After this intervention, with the help of UCW and the clothes they created, Lena was able to resist and at the same time understand her aunt better. The Utopian Clothing Workshop had succeeded in making them more aware of themselves and their situation.

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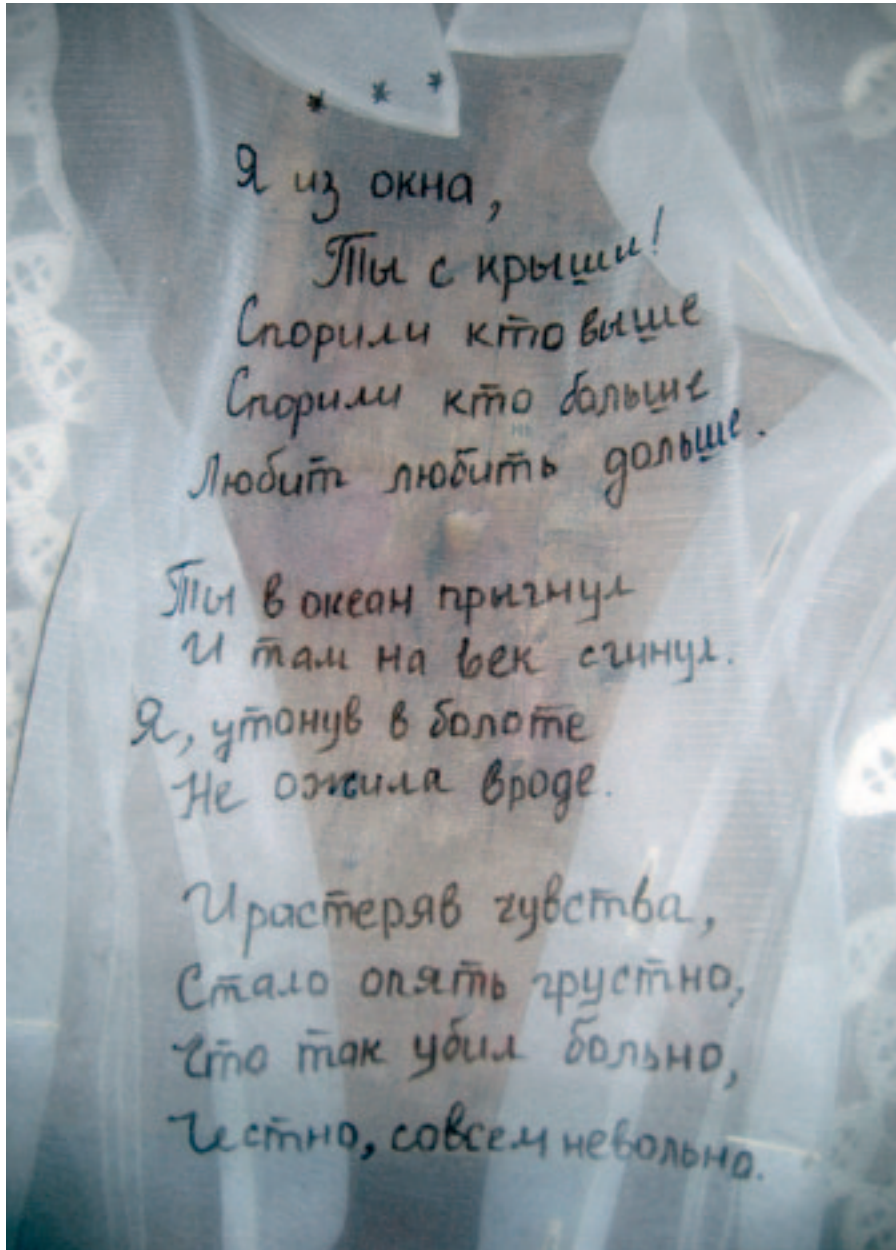
How We Helped Lena  
Whose Aunt Was a Sadist  
2004  
Detail  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL





How We Helped Lena  
Whose Aunt Was a Sadist, Workshop  
2004  
Detail  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL





Fragment of blouse with poetry  
by Olga Markovich  
2004  
Fabric, hand-writing  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

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Girl's World  
2004  
Fabric, hand-writing, serigraphy  
Girl's World  
2004  
Performance  
Art-center "Pushkinskaya, 10",  
Saint Petersburg





Utopian Clothing Shop  
Installation  
2005  
The 5 th Prague Biennale, Prague

Alexander Skidan  
Exercise for Girls No. 1  
Commentary to the video installation  
by Natalia Pershina-Yakimovskaya (Gluklya)

Some girls fall into the snow. First they fall all at once (wide shot: a glade or clearing in the forest), then separately (close-up allowing us to see their serene, almost “swooning” faces, the snow strewn with pine needles, details of their clothing). They are wearing colorful manifesto dresses (all have bare arms) over jeans, which lends them a certain “earthy” feel, yet produces an odd “jarring” effect. One has an embroidered, red beaded spot pulsating and fading over her heart. Another has a black velvet collar around her neck. Yet another has opened a pocket flap to reveal a photograph sewn to the hem of her dress. They fall into the blue snow in slow motion, with the relentlessness of an obsession. On one of the dresses we see the edge of a manuscript page turned inside out. It is difficult if not impossible to read the words: “Light Breathing?” The diary of Olya Meshcherskaya?

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Gluklya’s video refers to the Ivan Bunin story of the same name. However, the artist admits that it has only an “indirect and subjective” relationship to the story. For this reason (although the rationale behind it is intentionally “weak”), “Light Breathing” exhibits with refined somnambular tension the changes both in the artist’s oeuvre and in Russian society. It is no accident that in this video Gluklya treats the recurring image of the 19th century female student, or *gimnazistka*. It is the image she used early in her career as an artist and one that has become an integral part of her personal mythology.

In her *Screens* series (1993), the figure of the *gimnazistka* nostalgically referred to the Silver Age, that “lost paradise” whose refined, ambiguous eroticism, decadent chic and transgressive theatricality have now again hold—without ever having really lost—an attraction for the St. Petersburg bohemian crowd that,

after the dismantling of the Soviet Union and the (somewhat hastily) declared “end of ideologies” in a situation of postmodernist “wasteland of abundance.” Whereas Moscow (post)conceptualism continued to examine the ruins of Stalinist civilization, coming to terms with the trauma of the totalitarian past, Petersburg art, in contrast, drove the trauma deep within, preferring to use politically “neutral” non-Soviet cultural codes. Thus the *gimnazistka*

<sup>1</sup> Heroine of Ivan Bunin’s story *Light Breathing*, a girl who studies at a high school or gymnasium (hence the origin of the word *gimnazistka*).

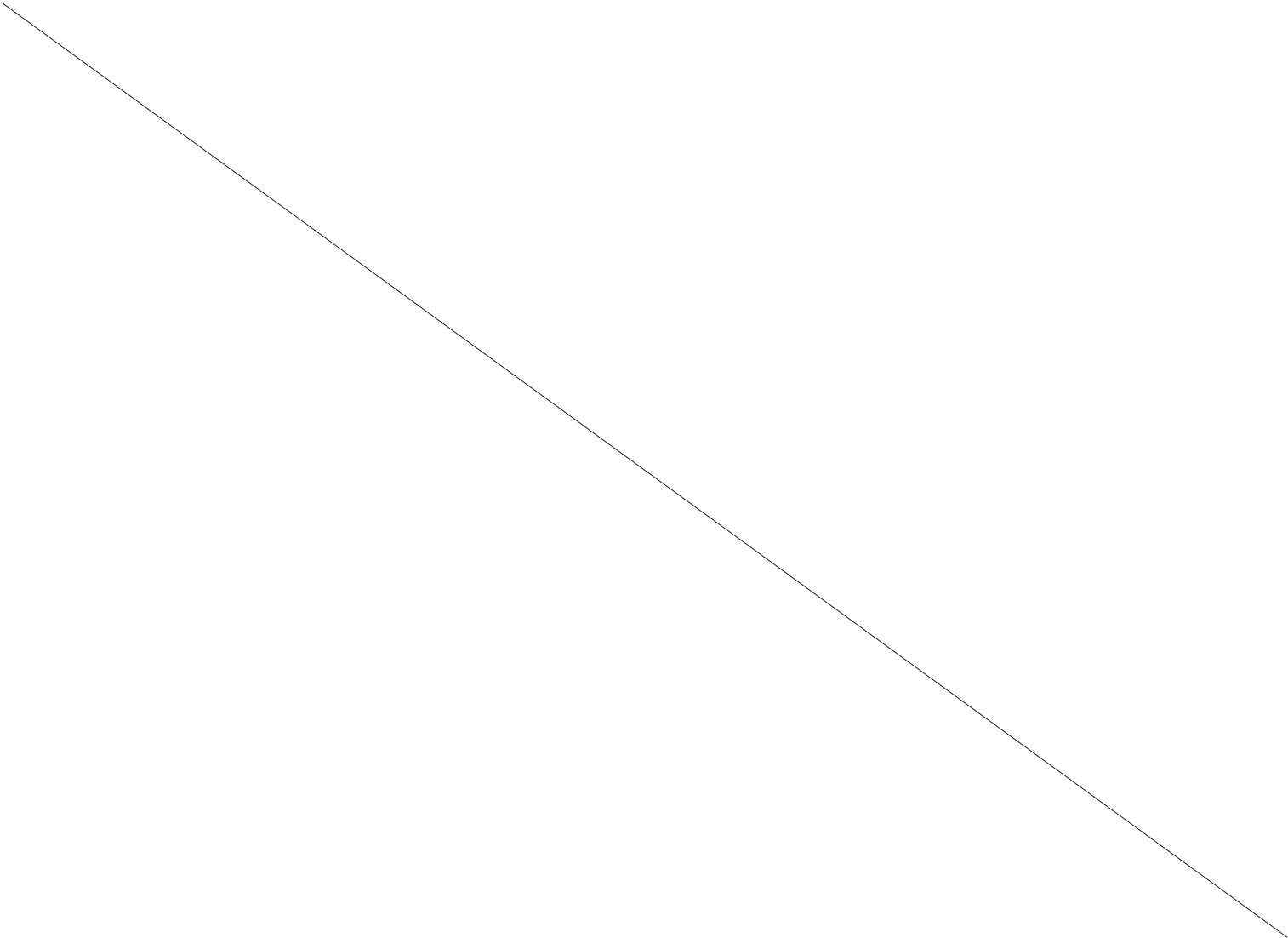
<sup>2</sup> At the same time, beyond the screen of Silver Age cultural mythology with its cross-dressing and ambivalence, the *gimnazistka* possessed a dual nature of another type due to her indefinite, “tentative” sex-role status. This status in turn came from the sexual and social referent (the feminine *-ka* ending) in the very word used to describe her. This word is aurally reminiscent of the *hymen* (the indicator of virginity; Hymen is the Greek god of marriage) that is also arranged and actualized through *screens* that in turn act as a membrane separating and at the same time uniting one (intimate) space with another.



3 The *Girls* are no less borderline, ambivalent beings than the *Whites*. Like the *gimnazistki*, the *Girls* retain the vacillating attribute of “maidenhead” and “virginity,” although modern usage has practically erased the words. This allows them to freely exchange one form of existence for another, to move from “eternal childhood” to “eternal femininity,” becoming at once assistants, objects of art, or full-fledged co-authors of FFC, as in the “Streetcar Named Desire” performance at which each “girl” conceived of and acted out her own performance at the tram depot.

4 *Tribute to Poor Liza, Appeasement of the Neva* and *Sweetness* at the Museum of Hygiene. Already at these shows we could see a departure from the space of museums and galleries for the «street.» This departure would become a conscious and programmatic one. In the 1990s it was more likely intuitive, but for that no less brave and innovative by bringing Petersburg content to the international context.





accumulated a rich tradition marked by a specifically Petersburg aestheticism. Today the Factory of Found Clothing (FFC) is populated by “girls,” not the “gimnazistki” whose link to the Silver Age at some point lost meaning and ceased to be relevant. The aesthetic coordinate system changed, it called for a more universal conceptual character not burdened by historical and cultural

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associations. It was at such a time that *The Whites* appeared

in the work of Gluklya and Tsaplya (Olga Yegorova). *The Whites* are the artist and her colleague dressed in biohazard suits that allow them to communicate more freely than usual. “When we put on the White suits we are no longer Olya and Natasha, we are neither men nor women. We are these beings called in to make space visible, to reveal what is hidden in this space.”

*The Whites* were first seen in Scotland (Street Level Festival, Glasgow, 1998), where they would appear in pubs, in the street, in people’s homes, and with a serious and solemn impassibility “reveal space.” Then, at the video festival in Croatia (Novi Sad, 1999), they invited a local panhandler to lunch with them at the gallery when the exhibit opened. This exploit marked an important shift in the creative identity of Gluklya and Tsaplya: from an autistic, morbid (Petersburg) aestheticism distancing itself from social specters and psychological wounds they took a step toward immediate contact with reality. *The Whites* have behaved differently ever since. They feed cleaning ladies (the *Come On, Berlin* exhibit, 2002) and hold psychoanalysis sessions (Graz, 2003; Moscow, XL Gallery). The performances of FFC have also undergone a structural change: sailors march through the city carrying white dresses, deep-sea divers and businessmen handle children’s clothing without fearing that they may seem indecent or ridiculous in doing so (*Triumph of Fragility*, 2002).

We can see the same transformation in the art dresses by Gluklya. Although she started with mute cocoon-like mantles with stigmata displayed on the surface of the circulatory system, with fal-



Gluklya and Tsaplya, “Manifesto of the Found Clothing Factory, Chto Delat? Newspaper, No. 1, 2003.

lopiantubes, heart ventricles and other internal organs attached, gradually she began to give them the voices of people telling real stories. She transitioned to making clothing with visual (text) and sound (recording) commentary. This is how the manifesto dresses came about, and diagnosis dresses disclosing the inner nature of their potential owners.

All of these strategic paths—immediate contact with reality, the practice of art therapy, psychoanalysis through play, the creation of a special space straddling the borders of art and social gesture, involving people from the most “prosaic” of professions in their activities—converge in Gluklya’s most recent project, the Utopian Clothing Store that opened at Pushkinskaya 10 in 2003. The dramatis personae of this project are girls who simultaneously act as fashion models, students and fashion designers who bring to the Store dresses and artifacts of their own making. They interact with visitors not as shop assistants but in the capacity of “sisters of mercy,” nurses who seek to identify symptoms and provide succor. It is in such manifesto dresses representing the perception of their own symptoms and problems that they participated in the filming of *Light Breathing*.

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After the first exhibits and performances, FFC began to be associated in Petersburg artistic circles (and not only there) with feminist art. Gluklya and Tsaplya were skeptical of such “negative” labels, which is not surprising. In the mid-1990s and even to some extent today Russians saw and see feminism as something aggressive and primitive. At that time it was only something people had heard of. The main corpus of theoretical works by western feminists had yet to be translated. Patriarchal post-Soviet society was extremely reluctant to accept the obvious, first and foremost its own patriarchal foundations and values the hegemony of which seemed to be a foregone conclusion. An imposed male viewpoint dominated the art scene and forced women artists, critics and curators to adopt male logic, and to assert themselves from a platform of power. However, in recent years there has been a break with such tactics, if not in society as a whole, then in the consciousness of certain women. At least in the consciousness of Gluklya and Tsaplya. Their *Manifesto* is evidence of this. The *Manifesto* fearlessly appeals to such “feminine” categories as “weakness” (as opposed to “strength”), “flesh-and-blood emotionality” (as opposed to “cold rationality”), “adventurous achievement” (as opposed to “abstract play”), “compassion,” “assistance” and even “fear” (“We don’t need edifying social projects, but a desire to help people stop fearing themselves”). An important image of the *Manifesto* is “the inner child,” which the art of compassion and the art of action strive to defend.

The “inner child.” This means the “weakness inside” and the “girl inside,” in everyone. The fig-



ure, a girl, above the concept of gender, falling into the snow with the relentlessness of an obsession, enacting a “little (theatrical) death,” as if casting a spell over it, invoking it and making it—death—a familiar and less dreadful ritual. And unbearably beautiful. Like a free fall, a fall into a freedom that is a place where the (no-longer)girl and (not-yet) woman can realize her hidden, genuine (?) desire: falling? “little (beautiful) death”? Freedom from what? From the prison cell of a room with its vulgar wallpaper and blue-collar uniforms hanging on the walls. From the ambiguity of one’s situation (in this and in any other room). From phobias and society’s rules. From alienation? Perhaps only for a time?

The artist’s comment that, “In doing our daily chores we can’t forget what is most important: light breathing,” suggests an answer to the question by figuratively suspending it in uncertainty.

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Hence the origin of the enchanting, excruciatingly disquieting aura that emanates from this work that combines flesh and body, the tangible and the imagined, the private world with that of politics, color that does not defile but, rather, leaves the pristine whiteness in a virginal state.

# The Scarlet Sails\_2006\_

VIDEO

The film is dedicated to Alexander Grin's immortal masterpiece, to be more specific — to the immortality of hope glorified in that work. A sail loft in the city of Kronshtadt, where sails were sewn for ships in earlier times as well. Old machines, lamps, trellis windows emanating light. Ten young women are sewing scarlet sails. The camera zooms in on the women's faces and large parts of the machines. The interaction of fabric and machines is one of the film's main themes. There is a state of expectation, hidden tension, alertness. The manufacturing of dreams has begun. The women's faces are serious and concentrated. Their mood is emphasized by the sounds of machines and by rusting noises. There is something erotic and sensuous in the mechanisms of the machines. The sound of the machines intensifies. Five old women enter the room. Their appearance is resolute, their eyes are gleaming. They are ready to accomplish a heroic feat. They stop in the middle of the room. The camera shows the faces of young women; one can perceive their vigilance and feel *the smile of Hitchcock* on them. The old women begin singing: *People, You Should Believe in Miracles...* Suddenly they attack the young women and begin to tear the scarlet sails out from them. A fight ensues. The old women are furious. They win and take the scarlet sails with them. The pier. The sea. The women take out the scarlet sails and stiffen in expectation.



# Three Mothers and a Chorus\_2007\_*VIDEO*

The film's structure is modeled on that of a Greek tragedy. Three mothers tell each other about their problems and the chorus, consisting of typical representatives of their society, judges them. Each of them has an opinion as to how a child should be raised. Even the child's voice, full of exigent and absolute love, sounds like a sledgehammer of responsibility. In this video FFC wants to draw the audience's attention to the problem of motherhood within the context of modern capitalism, which imposes absurd and irrelevant requirements on women.

*NATIONAL AWARD THE BLACK SQUARE*



Three Mothers and a Chorus  
2007  
Video stills





# Utopian Clothing Shop\_2008\_*PERFORMANCE*



Utopian Clothing Shop  
View of the exhibition,  
Art-center "Pushkinskaya 10",  
Saint Petersburg, 2008



# Everything Will Be Fine\_2008\_*VIDEO*

The idea to make a video film was born from the desire to help a friend of ours — a lady who was going through a very stressful time, because she had to reject her love for the sake of preserving her family. We suggested that seven ladies get together and weep. After that, a certain surprise lies in store for the viewer, a surprise that calls into question the gender norms imposed on us by society.

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Everything Will Be Fine  
2008  
Video stills





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I Get Up at 6 O'clock  
and Read Hegel  
2009  
Fabric, embroidery  
Collection G+W, NL



Utopian Clothing Shop\_2009\_ *PERFORMANCE*



Utopian Clothing Shop  
Blue Square Gallery Stand, Art Fair Slick,  
Paris, 2009

# Rendezvous in a Boutique\_2009\_ VIDEO

In our video “Rendezvous in a Boutique,” the aging heroine (played by Nina Gasteva) finds herself so near her limit that she is ready to completely change her life. She breaks off contact with her husband and heads to the boutique for a new dress which, she thinks, can help her. In the boutique, the voices of her repressed desires begin talking with her. She dances with items of clothing and, like Giselle, unable to resist the force of her fetishistic urge, ends the scene by joining in an act of copulation with a white dress, after which she dies.

Death here is of course merely the impetus to starting a new life. Our heroine goes out to meet people. The boundary of alienation is broken. Like a child, she asks people about what troubles her without fear for the consequences. Her condition has yet to reach a normal level of productivity, but there is some progress toward health. After all, people answer our heroine’s questions in full seriousness and with open hearts.

The video was made in collaboration with two sociologists, O. Chepurnaya and S. Iaroshenko, who helped us put together questionnaires to collect information on the public. Before writing the screenplay for the video we made a few interventions in Petersburg shopping centers together with the Iguan Dance theater without getting permission to do so from the authorities.

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## QUIZ

Do you like visiting shopping centers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

How often do you visit shopping centers?

- ☐ Once a week or more often
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Don't visit

You believe that a shopping center is the place for...

- ☐ Romantic rendezvous
- ☐ Meetings
- ☐ Recreation and entertainment
- ☐ Purchases
- ☐ Hard work

- ☐ Solitude
- ☐ Consumption pleasure
- ☐ Other

Most often you go to a shopping center for:

- ☐ Romantic rendezvous
- ☐ Meetings
- ☐ Recreation and entertainment
- ☐ Purchases
- ☐ Hard work
- ☐ Solitude
- ☐ Consumption pleasure
- ☐ Other

Age:

- ☐ Less than 10
- ☐ <16
- ☐ <20
- ☐ <25
- ☐ <35
- ☐ <45
- ☐ <60

Education:

- ☐ High school
- ☐ Vocational
- ☐ Vocational, unfinished college
- ☐ Completed college

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Gender:

- ☐ M
- ☐ F
- ☐ hard to say

Occupation

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Work
- ☐ Don't work

*You are welcome to leave your email so that we could inform you about our following performances:*

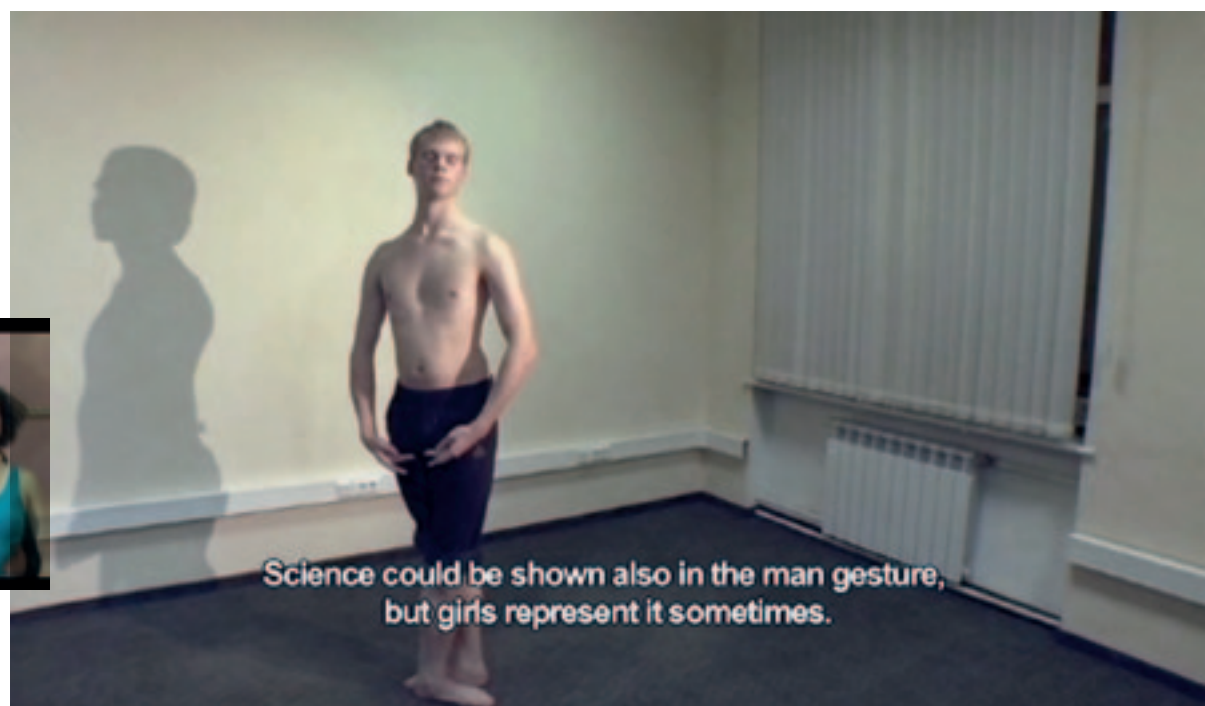




# Utopian Union of the Unemployed\_2009\_VIDEO

In this work we tried to imagine a Utopian perspective on the development of a social and artistic project that would allow us to help unemployed people. In this case, the unemployed are also a metaphor for resistance. When a machine stops working (let's assume that this is a metaphor for an unemployed person), it invariably opens up to possibilities of reinvention. An unemployed person is potentially open to everything new. In Russia, in contrast to European countries, there are no institutions to help those who have lost their jobs. If the artistic community organizes in the right way, they can pass on their talent and ingenuity to unemployed people, involving them in the creative process of self-educating and self-reinvention. This project also touches on gender issues, because it was created within the frame of a festival whose aim was to reconsider gender stereotypes. Before we began our work, we interviewed all the process participants, asking them how they viewed their ideal partner. The answers of the participants were naïve and very far removed from the notion of equality. Hence the structure of our videogame — it is a dance featuring a change of gender roles. After all, correct and balanced relations require daily efforts toward the goal of learning to understand another person. All models are open to us and new ones can be invented.

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A Utopian Trade Union of the  
Unemployed  
2009  
Video stills  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

# Utopian Clothing Shop\_2010\_*PERFORMANCE*



Parent's Dress  
2009  
Fabric, photoprint, fire marks  
This dress survived a fire in 2010  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL





Parent's Dress  
2009  
Fabric, photoprint, fire marks  
Detail  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL



Androgynous Dress  
2010  
Paper, starch, thread  
Fragment of the installation  
"Chto delat? (What is to be done?). The Urgent  
Need to Struggle", ICA London, 2010



Dress "Hear the Other"  
2010  
Textiles, foam  
With the participation of Alena  
Petite  
Collection of H&L Beunen,  
Netherlands

Dress "Communication Difficulties"  
2010  
Textiles, foam  
With the participation of Alena Petite  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery, Amsterdam, NL

# In Memory of Poor Liza\_2010\_ *PERFORMANCE*



Performance reenactment  
Together with Peter Vagemakers  
2010  
Amsterdam



# Resistance Strategies\_2011\_ INSTALLATION

In Winter 2011 the exhibition *Resistance Strategies. The strange don't surrender* by Gluklya (Natalya Pershinina-Yakimanskaya) was shown in the Saint Petersburg branch of the State Center for Contemporary Art.

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Photoshoot with “blockade children”  
Choir “Singing Hearts”  
Saint Petersburg, State Center  
of Contemporary Art, 2011  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

Olga Zhitlina

In the manifesto of the FFC (Factory of Found Clothes) you and Tzaplya write about sentimentality, but about a non-Hollywood type of it. How can an artist re-appropriate feelings from Hollywood?

Gluklya

We just wanted to work with feelings, and that's all. The statement was actually written as a form of polemic with those artists who are afraid of working with feelings because everything is appropriated by this dirty capitalist world. But if we follow that chaste path, it seems like we'll fall into the purely hermetic. Let's choose our own language (and aesthetics is a language), and let people learn this new language! And that leads to the question: "How

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will they actually learn it?" Maybe we should still leave some codes that will allow people to recognize themselves if they conceive a wish to share the artist's convictions?

Olga Zhitlina

It seems to me that in the exhibition *Resistance Strategies* you use the aesthetics of the absurd, almost trash. However, the people you're filming preserve their human dignity. How do you manage to do it?

Gluklya

Thanks a lot! I guess I just truly empathize with them. I never rank myself higher than others. I try to become the people whom I work with for some time, so that I can get the feel of



them, understand what they feel and how they live. The veterans, just like other people, wanted to find themselves in the zone of performance, because it's interesting to come to be in a space that isn't yours, that is different. And this proves that all of them are creative, lively people, capable of transformation, and not some "stalactites" that need to be put on the shelf and left alone because they are so old.

Olga Zhitlina

During the opening three old ladies — veterans — sang war songs. Weren't you afraid that they would appear ridiculous and silly?

Gluklya

I got rid of this fear after several projects, when people thanked us for what we did.

And — I have to say — we always move far beyond the limits of political correctness. Here we need to remember to keep a sense of humor, which is a very effective way of dealing with reality. Also, I think that the system has greatly succeeded in surrounding politics with a halo of inviolability, by which I mean that yes, we should respect the "Other," but this doesn't imply that under this mask we should, for example, artificially separate people from each other, so that we can control them. I seriously believe that new units of retirees and students can emerge and strengthen the damaged social tissue.

Olga Zhitlina

When you talk about the "weak", what should that be read as referring to? To the oppressed of Marx, who can't represent themselves, or to the Christian "blind and lame," needed mainly for the moral improvement of the subject helping

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them? Why do you resort to this category, and what do you think is the effect of designating divisions on the basis of such qualities as weakness and strength?

Gluklya

I mean the socially excluded — those who are made weak by the authorities. This division is necessary to show that we want not to flatter the powerful, but to help people who find themselves in a situation of oppression, so that there will be no doubt which side we are on.

Olga Zhitlina

Theorists (for example, Gayatri Spivak) have reached the conclusion that the oppressed can't speak for themselves, that they need to be represented by an intellectual, or an artist. But in your works you not only represent the "oppressed," but also represent one group of the "op-

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pressed" with the help of another group. For example, you try to put the speech of the retired into the mouth of students, the young; and the unemployed are represented by ballet dancers and vice versa. What's the aim of this double transference?

Gluklya

I think Foucault said that, and Spivak — the opposite, but it's easy to check that. What's the aim of this double transference? Gluklya I think Foucault said that, and Spivak — the opposite, but it's easy to check it. I do this because I think that the socially excluded need to unite. That way they will become stronger and will be able to resist the system. Because one of the things that make them weak is the fact that they have no place to meet or unite, except for the spaces organized by the authorities, and we can provide them with such a platform on the territory of art institutions. We now are engaged in building new horizontal connections, organizing situations.



Photoshoot with "blockade children"  
Choir "Singing Hearts"  
Saint Petersburg, State Center  
of Contemporary Art, 2011

# Resistance Forever\_

2011\_ *PERFORMANCE VIDEO DOCUMENTATION*

This performance is structured as a confrontation between two social positions presented by two written narratives as well as a physical confrontation between the participants. The participants do battle along the lines of the main idea of the performance, the conflict between the artist and the system. Needless to say, in the current political climate of a full frontal assault by the right wing it has become essential for artists to clearly define their social stance and principles. In the course of the performance the two participants physically confront each other while reading text passages. Participant number one (Gluklya) represents the Utopian consciousness of an artist. She reads a narrative about current events in Russia and the place of an artist in society. Participant number two (Thomas) reads corporate guidelines on conflict resolution in the work place. A set of rules was created 74 for the performance. The participants had the option of interrupting the action by pressing a red button. The button would set off an alarm accompanied by blinking lights. The first participant to press the button loses a point while his/her opponent gains one. While contemplating the nature of human communication explored in our previous project titled *Music is Here, Music is There*, we arrived at the conclusion that we are particularly interested in the interaction through conflict that is essential for generating a creative exchange of ideas. The amount of time that the performance took definitely contributed to the authenticity of our experience. The total duration of our performance was six hours (three hours a day for two days). Frankly, every minute of this encounter left bruises in its wake. Our bodies paid the price for our commitment to stage this experiment exploring the turbulent nature of human interaction. It is very important, we believe, to examine the juxtaposition of the idea of struggle/resistance versus the temptations of comfort. This commitment to struggle and nonconformity is becoming increasingly important in contemporary Russian society. It is particularly pertinent in Russia because the country is in the midst of a profound capitalist transformation where human interaction is often subsumed by the imperatives of naked power.

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Resistance Forever  
Together with Tomas Kasebacher  
Kunsthall Vienna, 2011  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL





## Interview with Gluklya and Yvonne Volkart

Yvonne Volkart

In your ongoing project *Utopian Unemployment* (since 2009) you usually get together different people in subaltern or precarious situations, like unemployed men in Russia for workshop Nr. 1 or asylum seekers in Switzerland for Workshop Nr. 4, mixed with ballerinas, and artists struggling to make their living. I have the impression that a lot is about the idea of learning from each other and sharing experiences and competence. Can you tell me something about your ideas and experiences of mixing these people with so different cultural, social and gender backgrounds ?

Gluklya

The main idea behind my work is that of uniting all those whom we call “the weak” in our FFC Manifesto (factoryof-foundclothes.org). By that we mean all the people who are deprived of their voices by the authorities, who are socially excluded in different ways. Women belong among them too. We introduce the “weak” term to emphasize a universalist attitude towards those people. A person of any class can become weak at any moment, that is why I don’t think it’s appropriate to call them “poor” or “oppressed”. The FFC’s view of classes is different from that of the *Chto Delat*. Obviously, artificially alienating people from one another benefits those in power, so the goal of art is to help them find a common language and join together, becoming stronger in their resistance. Such efforts have been made by many leftists: for example, in Augusto Boal’s *Theatre of the oppressed*, attempts were made to unite anti-racist and anti-sexist movements. The more numerous such ‘transversal intersections’ of different kinds of fighters are, the better.

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Yvonne Volkart

In your projects, you do not only cooperate with different people, but you also try to make an artwork with them, an artwork, dealing with their wishes and hopes, translating their (sometimes traumatic) experiences into something abstract and artificial. I was deeply touched of the multilayered performance *Dumped Dream* which performed not only the dreams of the asylum seekers, but also acted out various hierarchies, e.g. the gender gaps between the young male asylum seekers and the young beautiful ballerina, as well as the middle aged female artists acting as jurors. Can you tell us something about your basic ideas of these workshops and which role the final performance plays?

Gluklya

Performance is one of the most powerful strategies of bringing people together and transforming their phobias and fears into a constructive capacity to comprehend the flows of their desires and anxieties. Moreover, it is a very good means to deal with such stereotypes as *a not exactly young female artist*, for instance. The contemporary art system is designed for a sort of male robot, a supertough guy who is single and an egoist. How can artists-mothers fit in with that standard if they have to digress from serving the contemporary art machine to give birth and raise their children? Who will wait for the poor mummy to come back to the machine and work? Nothing to do, that ship has sailed, new trends have emerged, and to catch up with them you can travel to conferences and talks,

77 taking your baby with you—all this in case if you have a successful businessman for a husband and no brother artist with a biography similar to yours. And we all know that the vast majority of artists have such a life. How to resist that order?

I invited my wonderful friends, bright and subtle artists and great mothers to assume the role of judges of migrants' dreams. An artist must always help a fellow artist, resisting the capitalist manner of causing everybody to quarrel because of the competition in the art world.

In our Dumped Dreams performance, my friends, two of whom are themselves migrants from Russia and exactly the kind of mothers-artists trying to catch the ship that is sailing away, embodied three typical positions in the art world: an activist who calls out theatrically leftist clichés, an art dealer who is concerned with nothing save aesthetics, and a poet declaiming a very long poem no one can absorb. The performance was interrupted by their commentaries, every position was

exaggerated to show by means of irony the insufficiency of the art community's efforts to understand the other, to overcome indifference and narcissism. It was important for me to make two very distant worlds clash in the same performance space so as to uncover the system's controversy that is smooth at first sight but hideously overwhelming in reality.

Similarly, the mental stereotypes of a male migrant from Morocco and of a young female dancer from Zurich who studied in London and cannot find a place for her knowledge of modern dance are unlikely to intersect in real life. But we give them that opportunity and construct for them a performance situation in which, through the use of the utopian realism methodology, they can rethink their experience and develop their own behavioral codes and frames of mind. In that sense performance is first of all a practice of liberation and of personal make-up. It is an emancipatory project.

The structure of the performance is an invitation to a game. Usually I suggest the participants to perform a simple task in free format, e.g.: “Try to follow the ballerina and repeat all of her movements, but when she gets strongly carried away, you make some unexpected move that will confuse her, so that you switch roles after that.” Thus I set the beginning of the game, and then all the participants are free to complete or alter the performance structure at will. All I ask them is to maintain the equity, and if anybody in the group feels a lack of voice or some other sort of discomfort, they should express it as soon as they can, sharing their alarm with the others.

Yvonne Volkart

Although I had the impression, that there was a respectful as well as challenging atmosphere during your workshops, the role of the artist in such projects is not easy. How would you depict your role, what do you think is the interest of the people to participate, and what do you do to be not paternalistic or dictatorial?

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Gluklya

I have a very clear feeling, a confidence that all people are equal on some level, on some layer of their complex machine structures. As far as I remember, I’ve had that feeling ever since I was little. And that’s something that makes you happy: you just know that all the people are initially brothers and sisters, and everything else is illusion. And then I realized that if that feeling fades in you, it means you’re sick. That is the only thing that should be called a real sickness. You are responsible for that state of equality and happiness inside you.

It is that feeling of equality, the feeling that all people are brothers and sisters on some level, that makes me move towards defying existing hierarchies. I was happy to see a description of transversal strategies by Guattari, it gave me this nice feeling that my artistic intuition pointed me the right direction. I also like the Volxtheater Favoriten concept where the plays are interpreted freely, the collective production process has rejected the power of names altogether, the staging turned into plena and experimental rehearsals: “We all know that it’s much easier to live with a boss and a hierarchy, within a system of sticks and carrots, and we spit upon that knowledge.”

Thank you. For me it was extremely exciting to work with your institution too. It’s wonderful to have faced the true reality: to go to a school where they teach German to immigrants. It has been an adventure and a real challenge, because to implement something, you have to come very close to the object of your interest. That is the artist research that must precede every performance or video.



So we came to the school. It is situated at some distance from the city centre, although not really in the outskirts. The building is single-storeyed, like a big garage. We entered classroom after classroom, packed with people, stuffy (they didn't dare open windows because some neighbors said it bothered them), and made our speech. It really was similar to the experiments in the 20's: agitation among workers, teaching reading and writing skills to the kolkhoz members in the young country of USSR. As soon as you enter, silence and tension set in, black and tanned faces turn to you, and it depends on you, on how you speak about the project, on your ability to calm down and convince people, whether they are going to come and take part in your project or not. It's a challenge and a responsibility. In one classroom I felt they all were go-

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ing to come and we were going to build a new world. It was a very clear feeling that everything was going to be right. Then some people confirm that they'll come and then on the first day, they don't show up. And it's like you fall face down on the ground. I remember even crying at night, afraid that nothing would come out of all that. But I understood that they didn't come because they were afraid and unsure, not because they didn't want to be part of the experiment. Angela and I (it's very important to have such an angel-helper, it guarantees you about 70% of the success) went there again, took them all with us in our car and went together to the Shedhalle, making more stops by some relatives. I mean, you must try to walk in their shoes, albeit for a little while, try to live their lives alongside them.

We took them to the Shedhalle and they liked it there straight away and felt at ease. They didn't really want to retell their dreams, but they liked repeating the ballerina's weird movements very much. It took my breath away when they crawled after her like snakes on the floor, it was overwhelming because it depicted so clearly their actual position within the society: slaves who serve the rich class, doing all the dirty work. And at the same time they made me think about coiling snakes who will crawl up along the trees and into the sky someday.

All such projects have a painful aspect to them: time is too short. It's nervous work, when you activate all your reserves and do in 10 days what should have been done in 6 months minimum. Of course it's no good at all, it's like a kind of drug. On the other hand, I'll never forget these people and I'm deeply grateful to them for that experience because they helped me a lot to learn how to interact myself with that level

of happiness-bringing equality which tends to disappear from time to time, immersing the conscience into twilight, but only to return again.

But how do we know what impact our project had on them? Is that not the institution's task to watch over migrants in the future?

That's why I think a migrants' theatre should be organized as a platform for longer interactions with those people.

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Dumped Dreams  
2012  
Shedhalle, Zurich  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL





I suggested to migrants that they read the letter of Tatiana from Aleksandr Pushkin's novel in verse, *Eugene Onegin*. After all, Pushkin is our everything! It is important that foreigners come into contact with this touchstone, a real homage to multiculturalism! The dancers from a women's dance group read this letter aloud and the migrants repeat after them! Thus migrants are compared with Tatiana, a delicate provincial lady of the 19th century who performed an act of incredible audacity — she took the initiative of writing a letter to a man. It was an unheard-of, bold gesture at the time, highly reminiscent of the situation of migrants in contemporary Russia. That is, if the migrants are Tatiana, then Onegin, who coldly rejects her love (in the first part of the novel), is Russian society. The performance was devised as a two-sided reading exchange — first we read Tatiana's letter and the migrants repeat after us, then vice versa. As in the previous performances, I insisted that it should not only be about us teaching them something, but that they should also teach us something. The migrants were strongly opposed to this. It was much easier for them to follow orders from the producer. It became evident that the two weeks planned for the project would not be enough to dynamically transform their consciousness. So we managed only to read Pushkin, and we ended up with the picture our elite is eager to see: "We, the Russians, this great nation, teach you, the migrants, about the poetry of our great, lofty poet Pushkin." And a Utopian news message will inform us: "All the migrants entering Russia to work here must learn Tatiana's letter by Pushkin. Only then they will be allowed to enter our country's territory." Yet there is another layer of meaning that I attached to this performance. The point is that at the end of Pushkin's novel, Tatiana changes place with Onegin. Having rejected the love of a poor country girl, Onegin falls in love with her several years later, when she has begun to shine at high society balls. But it is too late: "she belongs to someone else and she will be faithful to him forever." In a similar way, the migrants, if they make an effort to free their consciousness, will be able to change places with us.



Tatiana's Letter  
2012  
Performance

Migrants reading Tatiana's Letter from the  
novel *Eugene Onegin*, Nizhniy Novgorod  
Part of the exhibition "The World is mov-  
ing", Austria-Russia, 2012

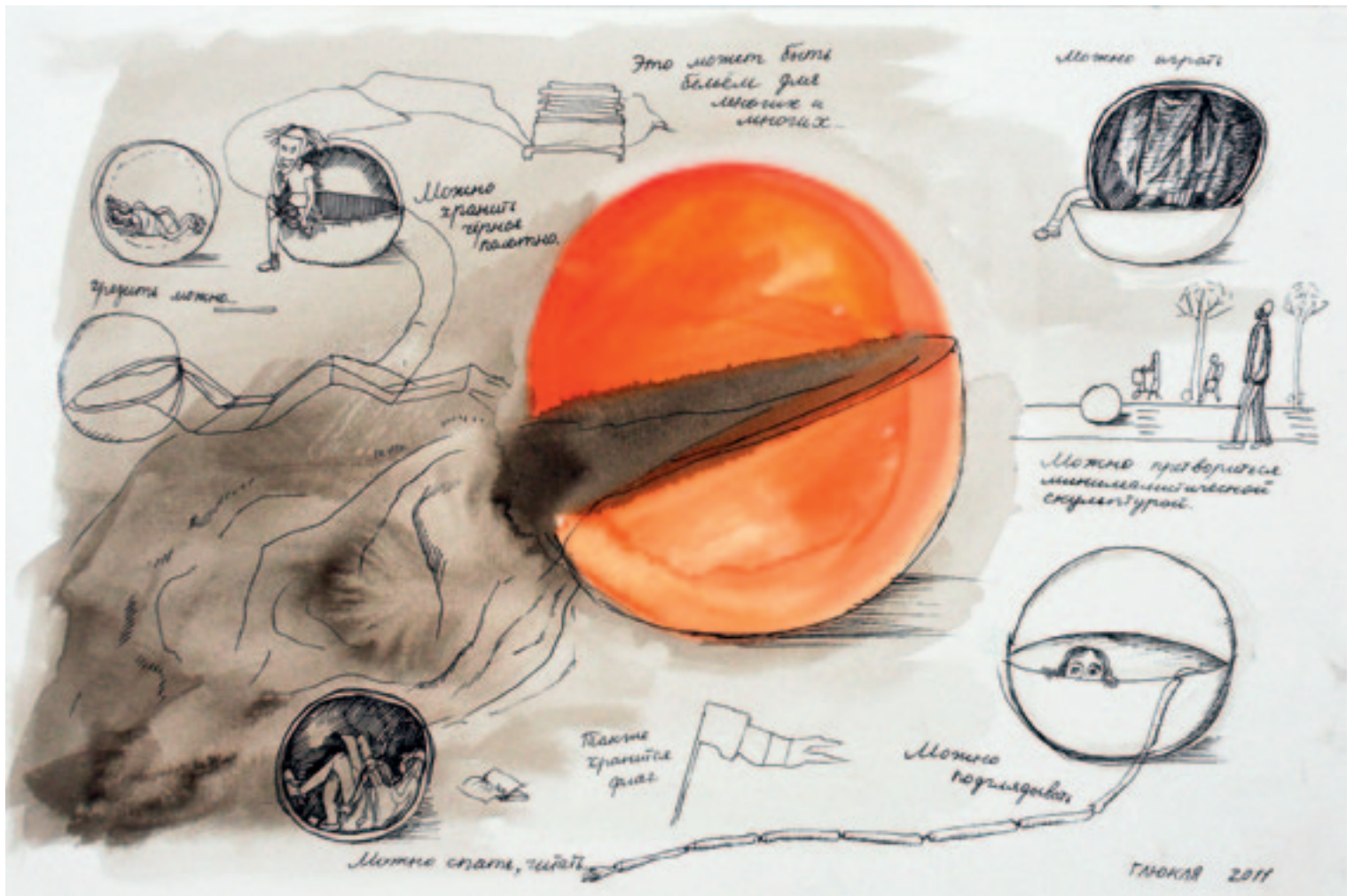


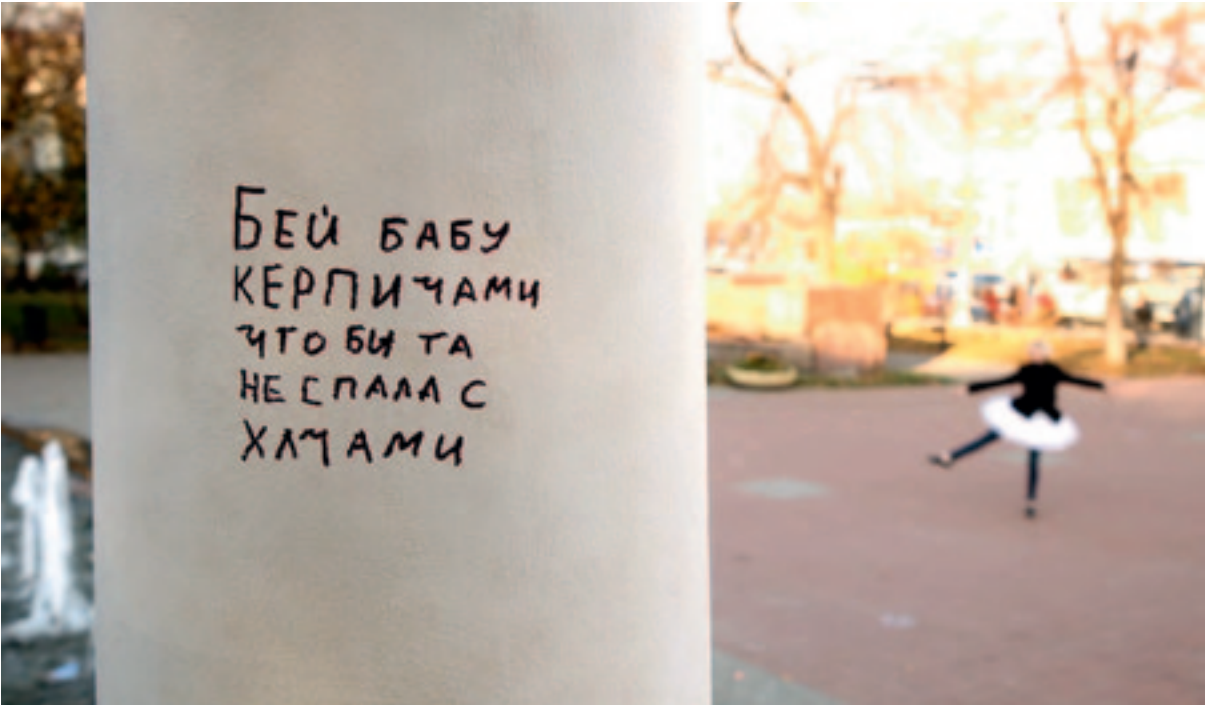
## Umid and Natasha\_2012\_*VIDEO*

Natasha is a Russian ballerina who dreams of establishing a new theater and finding a great love. She walks around the city in an elevated state of mind, talking to statues, janitors and such, whom she takes for her associates. Umid, a young man from Uzbekistan, notices Natasha at a market and falls in love with her. They walk together on the embankment, they teach each other dancing. Umid stands under Natasha's window dancing with her ballet-skirt. But their parents are against their union. Umid's father attacks him with a knife, Natasha's mother locks her up in her room. The ending is not a happy one, but it leaves a glimpse of hope. Natasha becomes a changed person, Umid joins a street theater troupe. Natasha's dream is fulfilled in a way, but only through her sacrifice. The video is made without sound, an homage to silent films. The film was shown to the public for the first time in Nizhny Novgorod. The video sequence was accompanied by a cello performance by the wonderful musician Alina Makhova.



Shelters for Migrants, 'The Orange',  
Sketch for the 'Netherlands XX', Chto Delat  
2011  
Ink, watercolor on paper  
30.5 x 45 cm  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL





Umid and Natasha  
2012  
Video stills  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL







# Utopian Clothing Shop\_2012\_ *PERFORMANCE*

This “Protest Dress” reminds us of the fight against Nazism. One part of the dress, the skirt, is from the time of the blockade. The other part is the shirt, with the fist that we painted on. The skirt was given to me by a woman who lived through the Siege of Leningrad 1941–1944. Her name is Natalia Venyaminovna. It represents a connection between our time and the time of the Second World War. The stance remains the same: resistance to xenophobia and fascism. I am not going to say that the Second World War and the struggles of our time are the same, but it is just strange that Russians fought the Nazis and now there are Nazi voices re-appearing.

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Protest Dress  
2012  
Textile, hand paint  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL



Protest dress



# The Strangers Never Give Up\_ 2011/2012\_

*INSTALLATION*







The Strangers Never Give Up  
2011/2012  
Installation  
As part of the exhibition "Chto Delat?"  
("What is to be done?"),  
Smart Smart Project Space, Amsterdam  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL



Against All Walls (Mara)  
2012  
Textile, hand paint  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

I have a dream: to see the emergence of a theater for migrants in Russia, operating continuously and enjoying support from state and private sponsors, so that migrants could visit it and perform in it as actors, or at least could get closer to the unalienated, free creative process. I am sure that artists can be organized so that they work together with migrants, changing each other and sharing their experiences with one another.

The video “Umid and Natasha,” which we created in Nizhni Novgorod as part of the exhibit “The World Is Moving,” is an attempt to get nearer to fulfilling this dream. The idea of creating specifically a ballet, with a simple, easily understandable scenario (the love of a migrant and a Russian ballerina, similar to the love of Romeo and Juliet) arose after doing

several performances with migrants and dancers (see the note on why I choose to work with dance—a fragment from the article by A. Artiukh and D. Solovyov-Fridman on the video “The Wings of Migrants”).

The ballet can tour the country, and it’s possible that through compassion toward the migrant Umid, people will slowly begin to get used to the idea of being similar to one another regardless of nationality.

In the past I conducted several performances with the common title of “Cultural Encounters,” where migrants met with ballerinas or modern dance experts, with the latter symbolizing the artistic community as a whole: “Trade Union of the Unemployed #1,” Russian-German Exchange Festival, Petersburg, 2009, “Trade Union of the Unemployed #2,” Blue Square, Paris, 2010, “Trade Union of the Unemployed #3,” Z-33, Bolwerk, Genk, Belgium 2010, “Dumped dreams,” Shaedhalle, Zurich, 2011, “The Wings of Migrants,” Petersburg-Amsterdam, 2012, and, finally, in Nizhni Novgorod in 2012.

Piotr Kropotkin in his book *Anarchy* writes as follows: “In the communist society a person will easily be able to have ten full hours of leisure time, and at the same time share in the general prosperity. And such leisure time is already a form of liberation from one of the hardest forms of slavery existing in our current bourgeois society. Leisure time itself represents a gigantic expansion of personal freedom.”\*

\* P.A. Kropotkin, *Anarchy: Collected works* / Ed. and preface by R.K. Balandin. M.: Iris-Press, 2002.

In our case, we cannot say that the migrants worked on our project in their leisure time (after all, we paid them even a bit more than they earned doing their usual work), so here it would be more appropriate to introduce a new category, leisure work, and I have quoted Kropotkin to show what I based this idea on when working on the Cultural Encounters project in many countries. By fighting to take back their free time, by symbolically stealing it from the migrants' employers, we fight for an area of freedom for them, one that can develop their imagination and help them understand their life situations.

The Wings of Migrants  
2012  
Video installation  
Moscow Museum of Modern Art, 2013  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL











The Wings of Migrants  
2012  
Video stills  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

## Denis Soloviev-Friedmann, Anjelika Artyukh Dance for All!

The problem of migration is one of the sociopolitical problems that have been stirring up the Western social conscience for the last few decades, generating all kinds of attitudes: from roaring optimism to deep disillusionment with the methods and strategies of Western state multicultural policy. The problem is all the more urgent for Russia which, unlike Western countries, does not have a detailed or long-term immigration policy. That is why sanguinary conflicts between people from different cultural backgrounds on the same territory arise regularly and lead to predictable consequences. In other words, fierce ethnic and cultural clashes and direct confrontations among various groups have become a regular cultural mechanism in Russia, at the price of the human right to life. Thus the state principle of divide- 96 and-conquer is implemented in Russia. Naturally, any productive cultural dialogue or social unity on the basis of diversity is out of the question. The core of the problem is the degradation of traditional forms of social unity and reconciliation. Russian linguistic, sociocultural and labor policy, based on the repression of dissidence, the maintenance of order through cruel coercion, and attempts to excise social problems from the sphere of public attention, do not solve the problem but only aggravate it. The discourse of power creates an acute deficit of communicative codes and leads to the disintegration of intercultural languages, and consequently, mutual understanding between representatives of different cultures. The Wings of Migrants, a social and critical video project, is concerned with searching for and exploring additional tools for intercultural exchange amid the extreme and dramatic Russian conflict of ethnocultural positions. For that purpose, the artists (director Natalya Pershina and producer Olga Sezneva) turn to the most primordial layer of human culture: dance. Migrant workers from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, who have in recent years become the main source of slave labor for the markets of wild Russian capitalism, enter into a dance dialogue with young and progressive majority-language speakers. By all appearances, the two groups understand each other fairly well. The dance is represented as the opposite pole from fear of the Other. This is what dance has in common with laughter: that it overcomes fear in ludic and poetical contexts. So it is no coincidence that the figure of fear in the Wings of Migrants project is represented by a jobless Russian worker, speaker of the dominant language and of the discourse of power. He accuses the Uzbeks of being the cause of his problems, and this inevitably





Name	Date	Cause of death
Faizov Zand	15.02.2001	Toxic effect of unspecified gases
Kadirov Davlat	31.05.2003	Murdered
Inoyatov Hursle	2.2011	Acute liver failure
Pulidov Tulun	02.01.2011	Burn shock
Usmonov Todgid	05.01.2011	Carbon poisoning
Usupov Unus	05.01.2011	Ethanol overdose
Ustanov Kulsat	07.06.2011	?
Hasanov Zafar	08.02.2011	Acute cardiac insufficiency
Boboev Talab	01.03.2012	Murdered
Ismoilov P.	07.09.2012	Traffic accident
Inramov N.	21.04.2012	Was hit by a car
Gufurov S.	14.08.2012	Unknown
Saidova Shani	15.01.2012	Unknown
Kasimov Said	02.01.2012	Injured wounds in the neck
Faizuloev Yek	06.02.2012	Accident
Zakirov A.	04.03.2012	Due to disease
Karimov A.	05.03.2012	Drowned
Kurbonov Rahman	13.05.2012	Hanging
Toshmatov	12.04.2012	Suicide
Parad		Murdered by a

The Russian worker who lost his job.



Costume of the Russian Worker Who Lost His Job  
2012  
Installation details  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

Costume of the Russian Worker Who Lost His Job  
2012  
Installation  
Detail

Costume of the Russian Worker Who Lost His Job  
2012  
Installation  
Detail



On the Death of Kaziboev  
Requiem Pyramid  
2012  
Mixed techniques on paper  
30x42 cm  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL



pushes the migrants into the sphere of language that carries 'low-class' status in today's Russian culture. And the dance grows from that 'low' level, expands and then breaks off, reminiscent of a medieval carnival with its inversion of the low and the high and its tendency to eliminate strict oppositions between the two. Dance as a communicative matrix is permeated with the sense of collective activity. In terms of evolution, dance is one of the most ancient social rituals of coming together. Dance, as well as music, is a phenomenon that not only allows one to identify with a certain social group, but also creates the group itself. Moreover, compared to verbal communication and verbal language, the language of dance is much less subject to ideological influence and gives room for more flexible social interaction than does the opportunity spectrum prescribed by the dominant

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ideology. Dance as a non-verbal communication system is flexible, culturally stable and mobile. Language and speech consisting of words and their meanings are not. Building up new cultural meanings involves dealing with new experiences and accepting the presence of another person in one's space. Meaning emerges from the difference between two points of view. Dance, as represented in the Wings of Migrants, bridges the functional distance more than adequately. It turns out that the multicultural environment is not only a space of conflicts but also one of production and the search for linguistic similarities and differences.

These reflections form the basis of the Wings of Migrants film, which brings together several artistic languages: from cinema and social theater to performance and modern dance. The range of social criticism expressed in the problems and



Unid's story part I, 2012

Gouache on paper

64,3x89 cm

Private Collection, Oirschot, The Netherlands



goals articulated by the project leads it far beyond the confines of art as such, however noble art may be. The project is a rare Russian example of a sociolinguistic strain in art, calling attention to the linguistic modeling of social processes. In this way, the Wings of Migrants project is concerned not with a single societal problem, but deals more generally with language as a social structure.

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Destroying factories, orange migrants  
2012,  
Monoprint on paper,  
61x 86 cm  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL





Umid's story part III, 2012  
Gouache on paper  
64,3x89 cm  
Private Collection, Oirschot,  
The Netherlands

Destroying factories, orange migrants  
2012  
Monoprint on paper  
61x 86 cm  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL



# Utopian Clothing Shop\_2012\_

INSTALLATION

AND PERFORMANCE



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Utopian Clothing Shop  
View of the installation  
MUMOK, Vienna, 2012

# Dedication to Pussy Riot\_2012\_ INSTALLATION

Gigantic scorched dresses represent a historical allusion, connecting the history of Pussy Riot's incarceration with medieval practices of burning women who were proclaimed witches and heretics. The medieval reference is not accidental here, because the contemporary state's persecution of artists for their anti-clerical performances can be compared with the archaic policies of the inquisition.

With the support of HIAP, Helsinki As part of the exhibition *Revolution in the Net* TOK SPB — the facilitator.

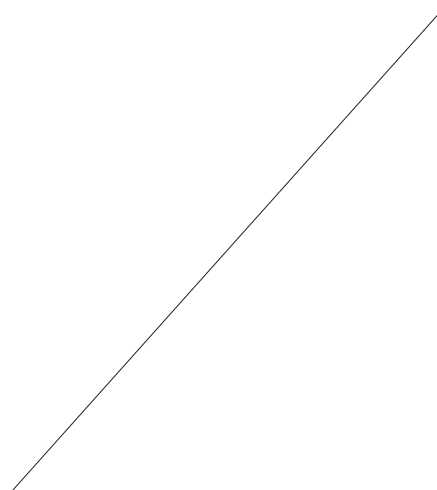
With the participation of *Olga Denisova\**

Olga Evgenyevna Denisova (The golden aiguille of Saint Petersburg)  
Born in 1982  
Olga lives and works in Saint Petersburg  
She is a participant in the *Utopian Clothing Shop* project

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Dedication to Pussy Riot  
2012  
Installation  
Fabric, dresses, fire, school desk  
View of the installation at Moscow Museum  
of Modern Art, 2013





Protest Demonstration\_2012\_PERFORMANCE

FFC clothes — participating in a demonstration against rigged elections.



Is It True That All of Us Are Like This Old

Rag?

2012

Textile, hand writing

December, 2012

Saint Petersburg

Protest Demonstration

December, 2012

Saint Petersburg

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Protest Dress  
2013  
Fabric, embroidery  
Embroidery by Olga Denisova  
Courtesy of AKINCI Gallery,  
Amsterdam, NL

Protest Dress  
2013  
Detail





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Utopian Unions  
2013  
View of the installation at  
Moscow Museum of Modern Art





The Tale About How Pensioners  
 Defended a Garden  
 2012  
 Fabric, painting







"Сон ф  
А. П  
Перво  
кавказ  
с 04.03.1



# Curriculum Vitae

FFC / Factory of Found Clothes /  
Saint Petersburg  
Initiated in 1995 by Natalya  
Pershina-Yakimanskaya (Gluklya)  
and Olga Egorova (Tsaplya)

2003  
join the creation of “Chto Delat?”  
platform  
Since 2010  
Gluklya is leading FFC in collabora-  
tion with different participants  
Since 2010  
live and work in Saint Peters-  
burg — Amsterdam

Personal:  
2013  
*Utopian Unions*/Installation/  
Moscow Museum of Modern Art/  
Moscow/catalogue  
*Sheep and Dreams*/video, perfor-  
mance/together with Susan Mor-  
land/Pushkinsky House/Adven-  
tures of Seeing/London

2012  
*Wings of Migrants*/Video, Instal-  
lation/AKINCI Gallery/Amster-  
dam/NL

2011  
*Pensioners Support*/Art Amster-  
dam/competition project depart-  
ment/Amsterdam/NL

2010  
*Re-enactment of Poor Liza*/Perfor-  
mance/together with Peter Wage-  
makers/Amsterdam/NL

2009  
The Greatest Idiot in New Zea-  
land/MIC Gallery, Snow White  
Gallery/Auckland/New Zealand

2008  
*Zoo*/video/Contemporary City  
Foundation/Moscow/Russia

2006  
*Scarlet Sails*/XL Gallery/Mos-  
cow/Russia  
*I am Naked, and You are Not*  
/Installation/Anna Nova  
Gallery/Saint Petersburg/  
Russia

2005  
*Birth of Daughter Asya*/Saint  
Petersburg/Russia

2004  
Gluklya & Tsaplya, Shop of Uto-  
pian Clothing/Installation/White  
Space Gallery/London/UK

2003  
*White's Psychoanalytical Room*/  
XL Gallery/Moscow/Russia

2002  
*Creation of the FFC MANIFESTO*  
*107 fears*/Performance, Instal-  
lation/Hermitage/Saint Peters-  
burg/Russia

2000  
*Birth of daughter Marfa*/Saint Pe-  
tersburg/Russia

1997  
*Illegal Crossing the Border*  
*between Czech Republic and*  
*Germany*/Action/Forest  
between Czech Republic  
and Germany

1996  
*Shop of the traveling things*/  
GEZ-21/Art Center Pushkinskya,  
10/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
*Nothing to Feed Butterflies*/  
Installation/Zoological museum/  
Saint Petersburg/Russia

1995  
*Podrugi (Crimea Travel of the*  
*Dress and It's Burning Out )*/  
Performance/GEZ-21/Art Cent-  
er Pushkinskya, 10/Saint Peters-  
burg/Russia

*In Memory of Poor Liza*/Perfor-  
mance/Winter canal/Saint  
Petersburg/Russia

Collective:  
2013  
*Memorial to the Hope*/Installa-  
tion/Love to Space/10<sup>th</sup> biennale  
in Krasnoyarsk/Russia  
*Wings of Migrants*/Screening/  
Politic of the social in Contempo-

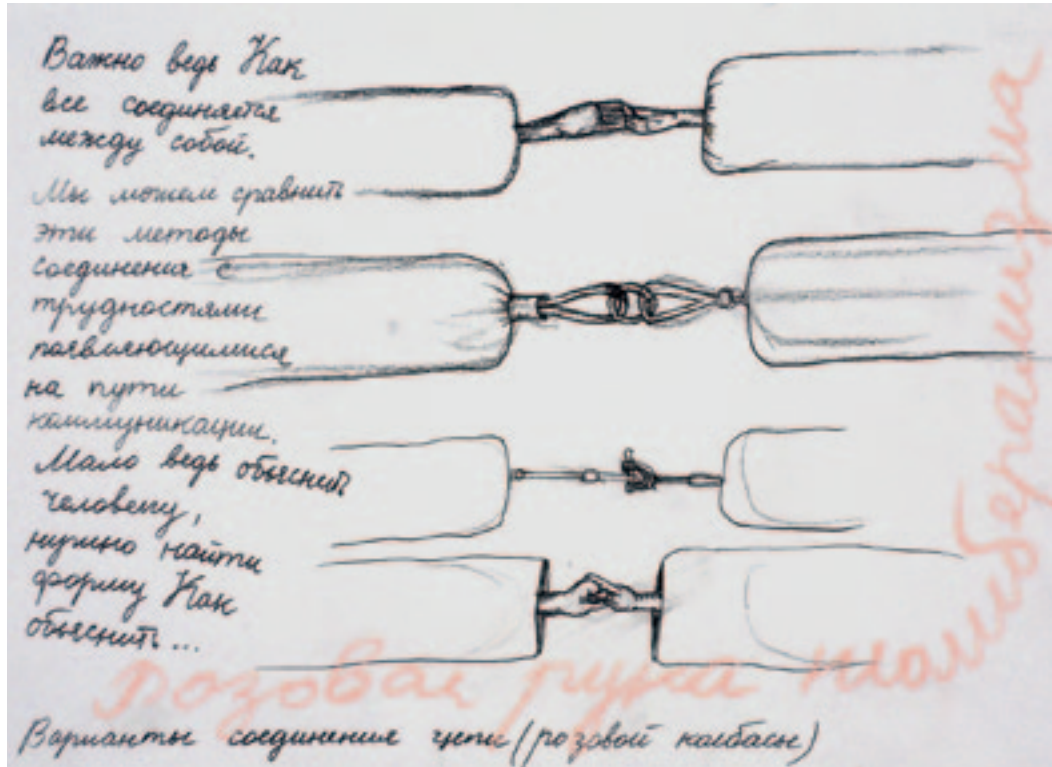
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rary art/Conference/Tate Mod-  
ern/London  
*Rendez-vous in Boutique*/Video/  
Living as Form, Nomadic version/  
FABRIKA/Moscow/Russia  
*\*Where has communism gone?*/  
Learning play/Former West/Haus  
der Kulturen der Welt/Berlin/  
Germany  
*\*The Translation*/Cabaret Vol-  
taire/Zurich  
*\*Without Reality There is No Uto-  
pia*/Yerba Buena Center for the  
Arts/San Francisco/USA

Valenki-ballet  
From the Series "Thinking About Songschpiel"  
"Chto delat?" Project

2012

Pencil on paper  
Private Collection, NL



\**Everyday Life*/Asian Art Biennial/Taichung/Taiwan  
\**The Fragile Beauty of Crisis*/Performance/New Manege/Moscow/Russia

## 2012

*Three Mothers and a Chorus*/Video/MUSAC/Leon/Spain  
*Utopian Clothing Shop*/Installation/Reflecting Fashion/MU-MOK/Vienna/Austria  
*Dedication to Pussy Riot*/Installation/Revolution in the Net/HIAP,

Cable Factory/Helsinki/Finland  
*How to Speak with Child about Communism*/Performance/together with Emily Newton/Carnegie Mellon University/Mattress factory/Pittsburg/USA  
*Umid and Natasha*/Video-research/DIE WELT BEWEGT SICH/Austria-Russia project/Nignii Novgorod/Russia  
\**Russian Forest*/video/The impossible Black Tulip of Cartography/Graphic/IMPACT Festival Exhibition/Utrecht/NL  
\**Believers*/ KOW Gallery/Berlin/Germany

## 2011

*Utopian Unemployment Union* N4/Performance/Dump time for a Practice of Horizontality/Zurich/Switzerland  
*Last Resistance*/Performance/collaboration with Thomas Kase-

bacher/Music here — music there/Kunsthalle/Vienna/Austria  
*Disappearing Girl*/Video-research/Kijkkrumte/Amsterdam/NL

\**What is to be done? Between tragedy and farce*/Installation, Video/Smart Project Space/Amsterdam/NL

\**What is to be done? Perestroika: 20 Years After, 2011–1991*/Kolonische Kunstverein/Cologne/Germany

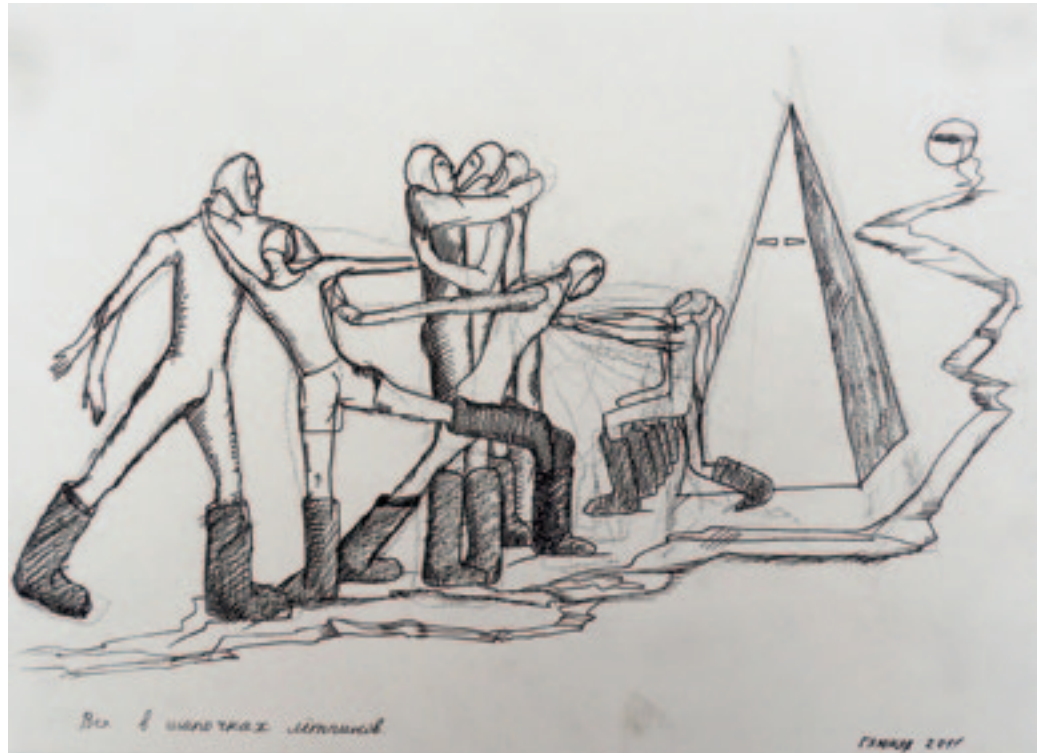
\**Lesson of discontent*/Staatliche Kunsthalle/Baden-Baden/Germany

\**The Global Contemporary, Art Worlds After 1989*/ZKM/Karlsruhe/Germany

## 2010

*Scarlet Sales*/Video/ "Etats de l-artifice"/Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris

Valenki-ballet  
From the Series "Thinking About Songspiel"  
"Chto delat?" Project  
2012  
Pencil on paper  
Private Collection, NL



*Clothes as Resistance/Performance/LGBT community festival*  
2/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
*\*Chto delat? (What is to be done?)* — The Urgent Need to Struggle/Institute of Contemporary Arts(ICA)/London/UK  
*\*The first Ural Industrial Biennale of contemporary Art*/Ekaterinburg/Russia  
*\*Vectors of the Possible*/BAK/Utrecht/NL  
*\*Scènes Centrales*/TriPostal/Lille/France  
*\*Invisible Borders*/Lille/France  
2009  
*Father-Transformer and Children Chorus* /Performance at the opening of 55th International Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen/Germany  
The Greatest Idiot in New Zealand/ MIC gallery/Snow White Gallery/Auckland/ New Zealand

*\*Plug in Nr.51 — Activist Club*/ Van Abbe museum/Eindhoven/NL  
*\*2nd Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art*/Thessaloniki/Greece  
*\*What Keeps Mankind Alive?* / 11th International Istanbul Biennial/Turkey  
*\*Contour 2009 — 4th Biennial of Moving Image*/Mechelen/Belgium  
2008  
*54th International Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen*/Germany  
*Three Mother and Chorus*/Video/ Inertia/W139/Amsterdam/NL  
2007  
*53rd International Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen*/Germany  
*Progressive Nostalgia*/KUMU Museum/Tallinn/Centro per L'arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci/Prato/Italy  
*Art Moscow Workshops*/Expo-park/Moscow/Russia

*Becoming a Mother*/Botkyrka Konsthall/Stockholm/Sweden  
2006  
*Utopian Clothing Shop*/Installation/ WAKE UP!/Rauma Biennale Balticum/Rauma/Finland  
*\*Self-Education*/National Center for Contemporary Art/Moscow/Russia  
*\*Contested Spaces in Post-Soviet Art*/Sidney Mishkin Gallery/New York/USA  
*Electric Visions*/Film program screenings/National Center for



Contemporary Art/Saint Petersburg/Russia and Baltic countries  
2005

*Speaking Dresses*/Installation/  
Human Project (special project in  
a frame of the 1 st Moscow bien-  
nale)/Central House of Artists/  
Moscow/Russia

*1960–2000 Collective and inter-  
active works in Russian art* (spe-  
cial project in a frame of the 1 st

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Moscow biennale)/State Tretyakov  
Gallery/Moscow/Russia

*Art-Robe: Women Artists at the  
Nexus of Art and Fashion*/UNE-  
SCO/Paris/France

*\*Russia Redux #1*/Schroeder  
Romero Gallery/New York/USA  
*Kronstadt Forever*/Site-specific  
project/Kronstadt/Russia

*The Strange people never Surren-  
der*/Installation/International Bi-  
ennale of contemporary art /Na-  
tional Gallery / Prague

*Light Breath*/Video-installation/  
HABITAT /VI International Art  
Exhibition Museum of Contempo-  
rary Art / Szczecin/Poland/cata-  
logue

2004  
Sound of music/Video/Boys and  
Girls/Zachenta Gallery/Warsaw/  
Poland

*Beauty and Beast*/Installation/  
Watch out! Contemporary Art  
from Saint Petersburg and Mos-  
cow/Contemporary Art Museum/  
Oslo/Norway

*Garden for the businessmen*/Per-  
formance/Festival of poetry and  
art/Stockholm/Sweden  
*VERA*/Installation/Bath Art Gal-  
lery/UK

2003  
Co-founding *Chto delat?* platform  
*Life! Aktuelle Kunst aus Peters-  
burg*/Forum Stadpark/Graz/Aus-  
tria

Horizons of Reality/MuHKA/  
Antwerpen/Belgie

*49th International Kurzfilmtage  
Oberhausen*/Germany

*New Start. Contemporary Art from  
Moscow*/Kunsthalle/Dusseldorf/  
Germany

*Plunder, culture as material*/  
Dundee Contemporary Arts/Scot-  
land/UK

*Projection*/Center for Contempo-  
rary Art/Nigny Novgorod/Russia  
2002

Creation of the FFC MANIFESTO  
*Baltic Babel*/Rooseum Center for  
Contemporary Art/Malmo/Sweden  
*Davay! Russian Art Now*/Berlin-  
Vienna

*Snegurochka*/Zachenta Gallery/  
Warsaw/Poland

*Female Artists in Russia of XV–  
XX centuries*/State Tretyakov  
Gallery/Moscow/Russia

2000  
*Birth of Daughter Marfa*/Saint  
Petersburg/Russia  
*Magic room*/Performance/Helsin-  
ki/Finland

*Eloisa and Abelard or 5 Heroic  
Acts of Submarine*/Performance/  
ProArte Institute/Saint Peters-  
burg/Russia

*Icon of the Whites*/Photo-collage/  
Dynamic pares/Russian museum/  
Saint Petersburg/Manege/Marat  
Gelman Gallery/Moscow/Russia  
*Secret Room*/Installation/Memory  
of the body/Saint Petersburg-Vi-  
enna-Helsinki

1999  
*FFC performance*/Street Level  
Festival/Glasgow/UK

1998  
*Love and War*/Art-Genda-98/  
Stockholm/Sweden

*Categories of Emotions of the  
Dress Poetry*/Installation/Man-  
age/Moscow

*Physical exercise*/Performance/  
Skif-3 festival/House of Youth/  
Saint Petersburg/Russia

1997  
*Diverse Movements of gymnasium  
girl*/Performance/Old Boys Net-  
work/Cyber-Femin-Block, Hybrid  
Workspace/Documenta X/Kassel/  
Germany

*Dress opera*/performance/ Labin-  
Art-Express/Labin/Croatia  
*Notes to the Ideal Sweetheart*/Vid-  
eo/GEZ-21/WFC/New York/USA

1996  
*Shop of the Traveling Things*/  
GEZ-21/Art Center Pushkinskya,

10/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
*Beneficiation of Neva*/Helicopter action, *Sweets in the museum of Hygiene*/Performance/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
*Lecture-Performance FFC*/Intervention/State University/philosophical department/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
1995  
*Podrugi/Crimea Travel of the Dress and It's Burning Out* /Performance/GEZ-21/Art Center Pushkinskya, 10/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
*In Memory of Poor Liza*/Performance/Winter canal/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
 Marked by \* are projects realized in the frame of *Chto delat?*

Grants and awards:

2013  
 \*Otto Runge residence/Hamburg/Germany  
2011  
 Sergei Kurexin Award/Last Resistance/Performance/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
2008  
 \*Grand Prix/Artist-Citizens/October Salon/Belgrade  
2008  
 First price for short movie/Film festival *Kinoshock*, Anapa, Russia  
2007  
 Art Prize/Black Square/Workshops of Art Moscow  
2007  
 Cite de s'Arts residence/Paris  
2007  
 Citadelarte Pistolletto Residence/

Bella/Italy  
2006  
 Nifca/Residency program  
2005  
 Artist residence/Kulturamp  
2004  
 Residency at Office for Contemporary Art/Oslo/Norway  
2002  
 Rave Stipendium at Neue Berlinische Kunstverein/Berlin/Germany  
2001  
 Cultur Contact residence/Vienna/Austria  
2000  
 Grants from ProArte Institute, Ford Foundation, Saint Petersburg, MamaCash Foundation/Amsterdam/NL  
1995, 1996, 1997  
 Grants from Soros Contemporary Art Center/Saint Petersburg/Russia

Teaching activities, selective:

2004-2006  
 Utopian Clothing Shop/Workshop/Art Center Pushkinskay, 10/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
2006  
 Workshop FFC/Bath Art Gallery/UK  
2009  
 Workshop FFC/Snow White Gallery/Auckland/New Zealand  
2008, 2010, 2012  
 Artist talk and video screening/Educational program for contemporary artists/PROARTE Institute/Saint Petersburg/Russia  
2009  
 Artist talk/Screening/Dusseldorf Academy/Germany  
2011

FFC Artist talk/Screening/Museum Reina Sofia/Madrid/Spain  
2013  
 Lecture/Screening/Carnegie Mellon University/Pittsburg/USA  
2013-2014  
 Seminar/ *Chto delat?* School/  
 Support by Roza Luxemburg Foundation/Saint Petersburg/Russia

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Selected list of works at the collections and archives:  
 AKINCI Gallery (Amsterdam, NL) / Oslo National Museum (Oslo, Norway) / Van Abbe Museum (Eindhoven, NL), Oslo Contemporary Art Museum (Oslo, Norway) / Zimmerli Art Museum (NJ, USA) / Mark Suchek (Ljubljana, Slovenia) / Archive of the Contemporary Conflict (London, UK) / Centro per 'arte contemporanea Luigi

Pecci (Prato, Italy) / State Center for Contemporary Art (Moscow, Russia) / Moscow Museum of Modern Art (Moscow, Russia) / Marat Gelman Gallery (Moscow, Russia) / XL Gallery (Moscow, Russia) / Moscow House of Photography (Moscow, Russia) / Museum Reina Sophia (Madrid, Spain), Museum of Contemporary Art (Belgrade, Serbia) / MUDAM (Luxemburg) / Van

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Abbeuseum (Eindhoven, NL) / KIASMA, Museum for Contemporary Art (Helsinki, Finland) / Disobedience, an ongoing video library / Index, the Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation (Stockholm, Sweden) / The Library of Museum of Modern Art (New York, USA)

Valenki-ballet  
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