

*Living dangerously with Roxane Borujerdi*

In a way we are always at work. It matters little if we are out shopping, sleeping, earning or eating, it is always work. There is no time to be political. How can we be if we are caught in an endless series of mundane performances that make up the banality of our lives? Why should art be any different? It is not! After all, an artist has no time to do anything else but produce art. Work, art and life forever conflated; performance and production inseparable. It is here where we find them; workers who set up their experiments; those who seek to take the time they do not have to forge their own emancipation. What better place to set up such experiments than at THE HOSPITAL CLUB.

For emerging artist ROXANE BORUJERDI this spruced up working class vaudeville holds the perfect abode for her enigmatic array of situational performances laced with a touch of burlesque further accentuated by her own unique brand of comic styling. Her exhibition *Out of the Blue* showcases the end of her residency at the club.

She walks in too quietly to be noticed by anyone, hiding under her timid persona, apologising for coming on time. Her nerves a heavy contrast to the rebellious nature and revolutionary terror that haunts a lot of her performances. Perhaps she is still performing, perhaps not? Either way she has all the hallmarks of a charming femme fatale. It is hard not to be seduced by her performances. Her work stands almost as an apprenticeship to the equally enigmatic polish video artist ARTUR ZMIJEWSKI despite her unfamiliarity of his work. More a scientist than an artist her performances are defiant demonstrations that reveal the impossibility of controlling our environments. In her performances we see everyday mundane chores become interrupted by unpredictable accidents, chaotic moments of pure chance that undermine any attempt of working effectively. Whether her performances are attempts at making statements, narratives, knowledge and meaning, mimicry, representation, interpretation, identification, punctuation or translation there is always an element of disruption that refuse simple ideas from becoming their eventual visual occurrence.

However it would be too naive to think that such accidents were negative. Just as it would be too restrictive to think that just because the automaton of work breaks down that in its place the worker is offered some temporal truth about themselves. Rather we must state that Roxane's performance holds a more radical twist. Her performances define the comedic structure par excellence; that mysterious moment when the laws of physics fail to determine the social subject; where workers are no longer up to simple tasks yet somehow always succeed. In her *Promenade Piece* e.g. she seeks to translate a text from one language to another without having read it before. Her constant hesitations, verbal struggles and stutters as she copes with being lost in translation reveal the hidden absurdity that lies at the heart of languages. In all such slippages and all such disruptions something comes *out of the blue*; the kernel of pure enjoyment, the moment the Jenga tower falls with delightful failure (like her *Le Commissariat*). Thus her performances provide us with a glimpse of the poetic absurdity that exist in banal and functional places. For Roxane, performance stands not for the failing of work but rather for those rare moments when performance *succeeds* in failing to work. Its aim is to make people respond more creatively to their everyday environment.

There is a definite childlike violence to all of her challenges. She obscurely goes about encountering those objects in her environment that we adults have now simply come to accept as inherent. Such experiments defined the nature of her residency at the club. One suspects however that as she now leaves for bigger environments she will naturally experiment with ever more significant objects pushing her challenges to the level of iconoclasm. With such dubious thoughts in mind it is safe to suspect that Roxane will either go down in memory as an awe-inspiring revolutionist or a bludgeoning tyrant.

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