

Dessislava Terzieva

между другото

Solo show

June 14 – July 14, 2024

Opening: June 14, Friday, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. in the presence of the artist

Sarieva @ DOT Sofia, 46 Bratya Miladinovi Str, Women's Market, Sofia, Bulgaria

Visiting hours: Wednesday – Saturday, 2:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Every time I try to throw away a pair, she tries to "save" it, to repair it, to fill a cushion with it, tie a garbage bag or filter home-made juice – she can find tens of different uses for old stockings or pantyhose. It's like she still lives in the fifties.
Slavenka Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism & Even Laughed*, 1991

Sarieva/Gallery is pleased to present the solo show *„между другото“* (*in between the other*) by young Bulgarian-American contemporary artist Dessislava Terzieva. The exhibition will take place within the space of Sarieva/Gallery at DOT Sofia.

Dessislava employs collage, painting, sculpture, installation, performance, presenting her works in galleries, public spaces and independent organizations. Her work is essentially borderline and communicates through a gentle artistic language, in order to engage with social issues.

The author was born in Sofia and emigrated to Detroit. She received her BA in Political Science from Oakland University and her MA in Sculpture – from Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2021. It was there that she was awarded Best Thesis. Dessislava says that when she was working on her bachelor's thesis, she began collecting cut-outs from her father's magazines Time and National Geographic and turning them into collages – "It was a way to convey the information I was studying at the university in Political Science and express it without resorting to any verbal medium". Her graduation was the offset of her nomadic existence between Mexico, Sofia and Detroit. This exerted an impact on her artistic process and the choice of materials employed.

For her first exhibition at Sarieva/Gallery the artist does not prepare the artworks in advance, but chooses to create them on site in Sofia. Unlike artists who work for months in a studio on a particular artwork and then put it on public display, Dessislava's life across three countries during the last three years has led her to alter her working process. For example, she brings materials from Mexico and Detroit to Sofia, and once she arrives in Bulgaria, she gets everything she needs from the neighborhood and the Women's Market. This particular mix of places is autobiographical, but at the same time refers to globalized reality, migration and mass commerce.

The exhibition *„между другото“* presents hybrid objects which exist between past and present, rooted in cultural traditions and everyday observations along city streets. The materials used by the author are household objects taken out of context, suggesting the curiosity and passion of getting to know the other, the desire to collect things, learn and compose stories, the strolls through the colorful Women's Market of Sofia and the typical Mercados of Mexico. The approach to the art object is playful, easily changing and replacing the connotations of the real objects and their functions.

Some of the artworks in the exhibition are documentary, serving as quotes of the household reality itself: black rubber overshoes with scratched-out lottery tickets for insoles, an old TV set covered with a lace tablecloth, while others are allegorical – an egg carton wrapped in a print of a city view at sunset, the typical papel picado garlands used for the Day of the Dead in Mexico whose colored paper is here replaced by tabloid newspapers and patterns of traditional Bulgarian embroidery.

„I'm like a sponge – I collect materials and visual inspiration wherever I go. Over large periods of time, I explore the subtle differences and the universal similarities between places, cultures, people. And when the right moments comes, I squeeze everything out of me.

Although it happens quickly, this working process is deliberate, intuitive and boils down to an attempt to tap into the psychic energy which ultimately indicates when a particular artwork is completed. The results are both amusing and sentimental, delicate, yet also deep" – says Dessislava Terzieva about her working mode.

The problems she focuses on are: What happens to all the things that get lost in translation? Can something be misunderstood and still remain true? Do we fear the future by conserving the past?

In this connection, a very characteristic and hardly translatable Bulgarian expression was chosen as the title of the exhibition. On the one hand "by the way" is used in the sense of something that happens among other things; on the other, it is a synonym of "however", i.e. of something which breaks off or suspends other things. Although semantically approximate, these nuances can significantly alter the meaning. Several English expressions refer to the meaning of "by the way", but slightly differ in their usage: the translation of by the way stands closer to the meaning of "however"; incidentally means "by the way" in the sense of something that happens "by chance"; and among other things usually implies something as part of a larger group of similar things, i.e. "among the rest".

In the context of traditional everyday life in Bulgaria, this expression is used neutrally and without any negative connotations. In the context of Dessislava Terzieva's exhibition it characterizes the South-Balkan folk psychology and the penury-embedded creativity. The author refers to the way of doing things in everyday life in the Balkans, the way people work and even the way of organizing her own exhibition.

The title is also a reference to the poetics of relation of the French sociologist, historian, philosopher, writer and playwright Édouard Glissant which is primarily concerned with the ways in which different cultures encountering one another in contingent historical circumstances transform themselves and each other into new and unforeseeable entities.

Dessislava Terzieva's exhibition at Sarieva/Gallery shows the blissful misfortune of the 1990s generation in its sentimental wavering between the visual symbols of the past. It is also a visual search for the possibilities of determining, in the continuous state of translating one thing into another, the need for migration from one place to another, as well as of the state between unconditioned and biased interpretation.

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[Dessislava Terzieva](#) is a Bulgarian-American contemporary artist born in 1989 in Bulgaria, currently living between Detroit, Sofia and Mexico City. She earned a BA in Political Science from Oakland University and an MA in Sculpture from Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2021 where she won the Museum Purchase Award and her work was accessioned into the permanent collection of Cranbrook Art Museum. Prior to attending Cranbrook, Terzieva became a prominent figure in the Detroit art scene, exhibiting in off-site locations, curating independent spaces, and executing interactive and immersive installations in the public sphere. In 2021, she founded FIDANA Foundation, a non-profit organization facilitating contemporary art and artistic interventions in public spaces based on pre-existing infrastructure. Terzieva has exhibited in the United States and internationally, including: Manifesta 14 in Pristina, Kosovo; Citronne Gallery in Athens, Greece; ART-O-RAMA in Marseille, France; KO-OP in Sofia, Bulgaria; Swimmingpool in Sofia, Bulgaria; Punta Gallery in Sofia, Bulgaria; College for Creative Studies - Center Galleries in Detroit, Michigan; Sculpture Center in Cleveland, Ohio; Æther Haga in Amsterdam, Netherlands; Huron Art Space in San Francisco, California; Mönchskirche in Salzwedel, Germany; Guck mal Günther, Kunst in Lenzburg, Switzerland; International Biennale of Santorini in Santorini, Greece; Cranbrook Art Museum in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. She has been awarded a residency at Hestia (Serbia), Bedsuy Art Residency (New York), Atelierhaus Hilmsen (Germany), and World of Co (Bulgaria).

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