



Sariev Gallery, Plovdiv

Presents:

Mariela Gemisheva

MY FAVORITE BOUDOIR

Solo exhibition

7 September – 15 October

Opening: 7 September, 7 pm.

Mariela Gemisheva is one of the most emblematic figures on contemporary Bulgarian art scene, who has been actively participating in it for the last 15 years. Some of the definitions that characterize her are: art-designer, performer, avant-garde and visual artist. She defines herself as a fashion designer and an artist.

“My Favorite Boudoir” exhibition in Sariev Gallery develops a project from 2008 entitled “My Favorite Boudoir Garment”, which represents an object-garment-sculpture. It is a commentary upon the type of live sculpture installations that the audience does not interact with as in Vanessa Beecroft’s creation work on one hand and Sylvie Fleury’s compositions, who uses luxurious products and turns them into a shopping fetish. In “My Favorite Boudoir” exhibition in Sariev Gallery Mariela Gemisheva comments indirectly upon the presence of the body in Vanessa Beecroft’s work and its absence in Sylvie Fleur’s by exploring the two principles of existence. She analyzes the presence and absence of the body, the process of transformation of an art-work.

“My Favorite Boudoir” exhibition has three consecutive stages:

1st stage. Installation – during the opening of the exhibition

The installation represents a stylized lady’s boudoir with an object-garment as a basic component, which is exposed on a dummy in the center of the gallery space. The walls are “decorated” with 7 drawings – A3 format and a mirror with the same size. A handbag deformed especially for the show is also a part of the installation.

2nd stage. Performance PEEP SHOW – in the Night of Museums and Galleries – Plovdiv

The garment-sculpture is turned into a bed, and the space – into a tumbled boudoir; then the artist enters the gallery, dressed ceremoniously; puts off her clothes, prepares herself for sleeping and falls asleep for 4 hours. All this is being watched by the audience and recorded with a camera, installed on the ceiling of the gallery. The record is projected at the gallery window, which reminds of the mirror wall in the peep show boxes. At the end of the performance somebody from outside has to wake the artist.

3rd stage. Boudoir composition – after the Night of Museums and Galleries – Plovdiv

After the PEEP SHOW performance in the gallery will stay the tumbled boudoir without the presence of the artist’s body and all the accessories and the video-record from the performance.

In “My Favorite Boudoir” exhibition Mariela Gemisheva manipulates with themes central for her creative work: the status as a fetish and a handed down value; its discussing and changing into something which is also fetishist but in a different context. Dialectical metamorphoses are expressed in the three stages of the exhibition.

In the first stage the stylized lady’s boudoir, the garment-statue, the drawings, the handbag represent all that is womanish, turned into a fetish, but lacking the person. The garment reminds of the Venetian carnivals and the celebrating of anonymity, while the Japanese model of the girdle reminds of the clothing of a geisha (a woman who serves, without being personal). There is also an ironical hint to the long lasting of the fetish expressed through the everlasting synthetic materials.

The second stage – the PEEP SHOW performance represents the demonstrative breaking down of the status quo and the ceremonious participation of the author as an object. The transformation of the garment-statue into a bed, the messing up and the framing of a real boudoir, imply a human presence. With the ritual undressing before the audience and the make-up removing the artist prepares herself for the initiation of sleeping. In this second part of the performance the body becomes inactive and gets the role of an object-sculpture and at the same time is an antipode to the sculpture-garment from the first stage. It can be associated with the fairytale about the Sleeping Beauty – the sleeping seen as a temporary death of the body and the camera as an impartial narrator and witness. The audience outside the gallery, who watches the video record appears as a subjective interpreter. This one who wakes the artist at the end brings the body and the person back to life after the initiation of sleeping. Mariela Gemisheva parodies the clichés and plays with the models in the psychoanalysis, which is an approach characteristic of her creative work.

The third stage – The boudoir composition comprises elements from the previous stages, but forms a new meaning level. In the tumbled boudoir after the PEEP SHOW the body is absent – a reference to the first stage, but now there is a video record that is a memento of the body presence during the performance-culmination. In this stage the object synthesizes the absence of the body, the signs left after its presence and the recorded events. The manipulation with the transformation of an object – with or without the presence of a body in three consecutive stages, puts the question about time measuring by the presence-absence of the person.

This version of the art-work hasn't been presented till now.

Mariela Gemisheva was born in Kazanlak, Bulgaria. Lives and works in Sofia.

M.A. in Design from the Academy of Architecture, Design and Arts, Prague. PhD in Visual Arts from the National Academy of Arts, Sofia. Since 2000 - a member of the Institute for Contemporary Art – Sofia. Lecturer in the National Academy of Arts, Sofia, subject "Fashion design". Awarded for Avant-garde Fashion Design of the Academy of Bulgarian Fashion. Nominated for "Women of the year 2008" by Gracia magazine.

Selected solo exhibitions:

- 2009 - "**Old Fashion Fashion**", /the Story of a Private Wardrobe/
fashion performance, Sfumato theatre laboratory, Sofia
- 2008 - "**Self-portrait**" photo and video installation, Czech Cultural Center, Sofia, curator Iara Bubnova
- 2007 - "**Spider House**", art fashion performance in MAK, Wine, Curator Jasmin Ladenhoufen
- 2006 - "**Theatrical girls**", art fashion performance and photo installation, The Red House, Sofia
- "**Spider house**", art fashion performance in National Academy of Arts
- 2005 - **Art Fashion seminar**, "Kleiderkunst", Goethe-Institut Sofia
- 2004 - "**Fish Party**", performance, ATA Center / ICA – Sofia
- 2003 - "**Fashion Fire**", performance, Fire and Emergency Safety, Sofia,
- 2002 - "**Out of Myself**", photo and video installation, Sofia Art Gallery, curator Iara Bubnova
- 2001 - "**Out of Season... Out of fashion**", catalogue presentation, Czech Cultural Center, Sofia
- 2000 - "**Spring – Summer, Autumn – Winter**", Ata Center for Contemporary Art, Sofia,
Curator Iara Bubnova
- "**Surprise**", fashion show, Czech Cultural Center, Sofia
- 1999 - "**Out of Season. In Search of New Felinity**", fashion show – matinee,
Central Market Hall, Sofia
- 1998 - "**My Wedding Dress on the Roof**", fashion show-performance on the roof of
6 Shipka Str. Gallery, Sofia
- 1997 - "**Dessert**", experimental fashion show, Sofia Art Gallery
- 1996 - "**Experiment 2**", experimental fashion show, XXL Gallery, Sofia
- "**Photo-Fashion in three days**", Ata-ray Gallery, Sofia
- 1994 - "**Unisex – summer '94**", collection, avant-garde fashion show, La Strada Theater, Sofia