

27 January - 3 March, 2018

# GLUKLYA

*Behind the Carnival*

27 January – 3 March

Opening 27 January 5 – 7 pm

Gluklya and Theo Tegelaers from TAAK will talk about the project 'Behind the Carnival of the Oppressed Feelings' on 27 January at 3 pm.



*Embracing All the Strange*, 2017, HD video 14 min,

In *Behind The Carnival* at AKINCI, Gluklya investigates her experiences in the Amsterdam Bijlmer Bajes, a notorious former prison that controversially served as temporary housing for refugees. During a year's period that Gluklya collaborated and interacted with the refugees who are waiting for their permanent residency status in this former prison, she developed her *Language of Fragility*; a playful method of learning Dutch by trying to find new visual forms of expression for emotions which are difficult to convey because of language barriers. These sessions resulted in the *Carnival of the Oppressed Feelings*, a performative demonstration which took place in October 2017 in Amsterdam. Together with the refugees and volunteers costumes, masks, music and objects were developed with the aim to express fear, vulnerability, loneliness and what it feels like to live in a former prison. With this carnivalesque performance Gluklya wanted to give refugees a face and a voice in the public domain.

In our show, Gluklya directs the attention to the process leading up to the Carnival, in which the artist and the refugees met each other in a Kafkaesque set of restrictions and obstructions due to faltering communication. At AKINCI, Gluklya presents a multi-faceted installation which reflects on the idea of society as a prison, a system of control that penetrates all levels of private and domestic life. In search of her question what effects a system of control might have on an individual's body and subconsciousness, Gluklya leads the viewer through a labyrinth of 'cells' constructed in the gallery filled with visions of despair, humor and hope.

Gluklya addresses the topic of the Carnival as it provides her the tools to investigate the frontiers of the private and public as well as strategies to understand the dynamics of a group. In her research Gluklya refers to Michail Bakhtin, a Russian intellectual, who described the phenomenon of the Carnival as a pageant without footlights and without a division into performers and spectators. Prohibitions, restrictions and hierarchical structures that determine ordinary life are suspended during Carnival. According to Gluklya, Carnival can therefore be considered as an element of freedom and hope.

*Natalia Pershina-Yakimanskaya (artist name Gluklya) is considered as one of the pioneers of Russian Performance and Feminist artistic practice. At present she lives and works both in her birth town Petersburg and in Amsterdam. Gluklya cofounded the artist collective 'The Factory of Found Clothes' (FFC) – using conceptualized clothes as a tool to build a connection between art and everyday life. In 2012, the FFC was reformulated into 'The Utopian Unemployment Union', a project uniting art, social science, and progressive pedagogy, giving people with all kinds of social backgrounds the opportunity to make art together. In her projects, Gluklya addresses the personal stories of her characters, analysing them and revealing the conflict between political systems and a person's inner world. Gluklya has recently exhibited a.o. in 'All the World's Futures', curated by Okwui Enwezor at the 56th Venice Biennale, Manifesta 10 Public Programme, MMOMA Moscow, MUMOC Vienna, Shedhalle Zurich, ACC Galerie Weimar, HOME, Manchester, Pratt Institute New York, MOMA New York (talk).*

**UPCOMING: Gluklya will present her work in the exhibition 'Positions', curated by Charles Esche, at the Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven in December 2018.**

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