ENG

Gluklya

The Shadow of Care

16 January - 28 February 2026

Gluklya, video still SHIG: The Union for Seamstresses and Artists, 2025, 23:23 min.

AKINCI is proud to present *The Shadow of Care*, a solo exhibition by Gluklya, unfolding from her long-term research in the Kyrgyz Republic since 2021. The exhibition examines care not as an unquestioned moral good, but as a contradictory force — one capable of protection, discipline, suffocation, and control. Gluklya's engagement with the notion of care emerged through her encounters with women working in the textile and fashion industry in Bishkek, a major center for garment production, primarily for export to the Russian market. Listening to the stories of seamstresses, she began to trace how care operates within systems of production: as concern, dependency, obligation, and exhaustion.

In clothing production, care is inseparable from regimes of domination — whether described as post-Soviet imperial continuities, neo-colonial extraction, or globalized capitalism. The laboring body is sustained only to remain productive. In this sense, care does not liberate; it maintains the structure. In her Manifesto of Care, Gluklya writes:

"When I think about Care,
an image appears: ivy climbing an old tree.
At first it seems tender, protective.
But slowly it tightens, suffocates.
The tree remains standing — hollowed out,
kept upright only by what consumes it."

At the center of the exhibition is the new film *SHIG*, developed in collaboration with BISCA (Bishkek School of Contemporary Art), a community of artists and activists in Bishkek. SHIG is a phonetic articulation of СДШИХ — the Union for Seamstresses and Artists — a word that circulates through the film as a mantra, binding voices, bodies, and gestures. The film documents a newly invented ritual: the burial of old textile remnants, symbols of overproduction, exhaustion, and

inherited violence. As Gluklya notes, only through this act of burial can another form of community begin — one not organized around extraction, visibility, or usefulness.

The exhibition space recreates the room of transformation seen in the film. Dresses and textile objects function as protagonists rather than artifacts. Among them are *Dress after the Fire*, an archival dress from *Utopian Clothes Shop* (2006), transformed by an unexpected fire in the artist's studio and *Sanatorium Towels*, felt and layered textiles infused with healing mud from the Soviet-era Aurora sanatorium. Other figures appear as bodies overtaken by labor: dresses crowned with sewing machines instead of heads, embodiments of alienation. Additional works incorporate machine embroidery derived from Gluklya's drawings and felting techniques developed through conversations with seamstresses about their work, fatigue, desires, and silences.

The exhibition culminates in the idea of a *Sanatorium for Seamstresses* — not a site of healing, but of reversal:

"We do not heal.
We reverse the direction of compassion.
The ones who were always helped
will now help.
The ones who were observed
will now observe."

The Shadow of Care asks what must be unlearned in order for care to become something other than a shadow — and whether such a transformation is possible at all.

Biography

Natalia Pershina-Yakimanskaya, known as Gluklya, is an artist whose practice spans installation, performance, video, text, and long-term research. Her work develops the concept of fragility — not as vulnerability or beauty, but as a form of invisible strength that resists systems of domination. Through personal stories and collective processes, Gluklya examines the conflict between political structures and the inner lives of individuals. Her projects often emerge from close collaboration, and her studio frequently becomes a temporary communal space where participants collectively producing garments, actions, and functional artistic objects. Gluklya's work is marked by tenting between indignation and hope. She proposes playful yet radical forms of resistance, using ritual, costume, and performative action to confront injustice and to generate empowerment. Between 2019 and 2025, Gluklya conducted extensive research in Indonesia and the Kyrgyz Republic, focusing on what she describes as the two natures of colonialism — Russian/Soviet imperial continuities and European colonial frameworks — with particular attention to the lives and labor of oppressed women in global production systems. A selection of solo and group exhibitions are: 'Threading the Needle', University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA (2025); 'Uncertain Domesticities', curated by Ina Bierstedt, House of Arts, Brno, CZ (2025); 'The Body Implied: The Vanishing Figure in Soviet Art', Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, USA (2024); 'To those who have no time to play', Framer Framed, Amsterdam, NL, curated by Charles Esche (2023); 'Clothes for Demonstration', Fashion Show, GLUKSMAN, Cork, IR, (2023); 'They are among Us', DENANZIATION, ACC Galerie Weimar, DE (2022); 'Propaganda Flowers, Botanical Revolution', curated by Laurie Cluitmans and Heske ten Cate, Nest, Den-Haag, NL (2021-22); 'Monument to Modern Slavery, disturbance: witch', ZAK, Berlin, DE (2020); 'Care about the Sun', Cristal Clear, Pera Museum, curated by Elena Sorokina, Istanbul, TR (2021); Fotogalleriet, Oslo, NO (2019); Intercultural Museum Oslo, NO (2019); 'Positions 4', curated by Charles Esche, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, NL (2018-19); Manifesta, Palermo, IT (2018); Garage Moskow, RU (2018); 'The Return Of Memory', HOME, Manchester, UK (2017); 'dis/order, Art and Activism in Russia Since 2000', Ludwig Forum für Internationale Kunst, Aachen, DE (2017); 'Hero Mother', Berlin, DE (2016); 'Debates on Division', Creative Time Summit, Lincoln Theater ,Washington DC, USA (2016); 'All the World's Futures', presenting 'Clothes for Demonstration Against the False Election of Vladimir Putin' (2011–2015), curated by Okwui Enwezor, 56th Venice Biennale, Venice, IT (2015).