



OUT OF LIFE

Sentenced to the cursed, though only apparent, freedom, overloaded with a stream of everyday news, suspended between the reality of marketing and the world of the media, tainted with intensive work – we are running away. Are we really trying to escape it all, and if so – where are we going?

Do the information society and culture based on indirect communication bring us closer to one another, or rather draw us farther and farther away? Do the devices which we gather around ourselves – mobile phones, notebooks, data storage devices – make our life easier or more complicated?

What do we gain by creating substitute realities? How do we do it? Why do we choose virtual worlds, the cogs of Baudrillard's simulacrum? When do we cross the borders, when do we cease to touch our ordinary reality?

These are the questions we – me, curator Nina Kassianou and the artists of the *Out of Life* exhibition – asked ourselves.

Krzysztof Candrowicz

OUT OF LIFE

Curator

What does it mean to be 'out of life'? As a feeling, as a state of mind, as a real fact, as an expression of someone's disposition?

Does it mean beyond reality? And what is reality? Personal and natural surroundings appear to be compressed into an absurd picture... Everything we see appears to be alive, but is it? Is what we see true or do we perceive the world as we want it to be? 'What are the limits of the 'inside' and where does the 'outside' begin?.

We seem unable to see beyond the artificial environment which we have created and in which we are trapped. It has successfully replaced nature. Don't we live in nature anymore? Do we live beyond it? Nature may have become the source to sustain this artificial or 'new' world alive. Countless questions may be asked, as this is a complex issue constantly mutating in space and time.

"The times, the age, the fashion, morality, the passion," exclaimed Baudelaire, expressing his own image of modernism. What about today?

Technology, entertainment and the web are changing the increasingly globalised reality. Our bodies are changing and so is our insight of time. Even the objects around us are changing, and with them the interpretations and definitions we apply to them, the people, their gestures, the attitudes. The way we perceive and reflect about them is also transforming. What is real today, then?

The history of photography as defined by Roland Barthes is a history of looks and gazes. Behind every photograph, each record of the immediate reality, increasingly new and complex horizons arise which may reveal different aspects of another personal world. Therefore, we believe that photography plays an important role in answering all these questions.



What is proposed in the *Out of Life* exhibition is looking at the specific ways of photographing as gazes that mark new paths, enticing us into looking at how the world is seen by others, through different eyes than ours.

Illusion, enchantment, the unknown are forms encompassed in this eye which sees the different, seeks the alternative.

And it is not just a look erring from reality or fascinated by the imagination, but a look open to new diverse sights of the world, secrets and lies amazing for us that make us wonder. Through them, we create an even more close relationship with reality.

The photographs of the 12 artists presented in the *Out of Life* exhibition are documents unfolding and illustrating enclosed microcosms wrapped in mystery, darkness and ambiguity. Sometimes, they depict situations that seem incidental or marginal, or, conversely, persistent and repetitive like little obsessions.

These are products of firm beliefs, they have clarity and consistency, but are not compelling, on the contrary, they flow, seeking our cooperation and support.

They are narratives or fictitious mental 'landscapes' that lure us to see not so much a bygone moment, but something that surprises the patterns of our perception and thought.

It's the unorthodox or outlandish, the bizarre or cruel, what is beneath the surface, "the difference that binds the real with its depiction", "the meditation of the look behind the camera", or else the imagination of the photographer which creates a new today, through innumerable moments, the visual imagery, and ultimately the photography itself.

The photo projects presented in this exhibition represent all these qualities, they have this sense of the new which is already here... which has already been born and is developing in front of us.

We can feel the freezing silence of space and gazes in Adam Jeppesen's and Michael Cevoli's work , we can experience situations of isolation in Anastasia Tailakova's, we can slowly wander on new unpredictable lurking places in Daria Tuminas', in Kai-Uwe Gundlach's, in Bownik's, we can look for lightness as a reaction to the weight of life in Lucia Ganieva's, we can relate to the environment and nature in Gábor Kasza's, we can swing in the quiet enchantment of Ellen Kooi, and the tenderness of Ange Leccia, we can handle moments that are hiding fear for what is unfamiliar and uninterpreted in In Sook Kim's and Karsten Kronas's photographs.

As Baudrillard wrote "the illusion is not opposed to reality," so these pictures link the unlimited imagination and infinity of sensible reality, or both together with the endless visual possibilities of creative photography.

Nina Kassianou
OUT OF LIFE
Curator