



Venice, 03-02-2016

## Dispossession [Biographies]

**Tomasz Opania** (b. in 1970 in Gliwice, Poland) mainly works with sculpture, installation and performance, art in public space and design. He builds "vehicles of art", objects, tools and other inventions that reverse the optics of art and turn the viewer into an equally important and active participant in the creative process. He perceives his practice as a commentary on current affairs and reality as such, and he constantly casts doubt on elements of reality. He uses a variety of techniques and often invents new ones for the needs of a single project or action. He studied at the State Higher School of Fine Arts, where in 1994 he defended his diploma in Professor Leon Podsiadły's studio. In 1993 he received a scholarship from the Ministry of Culture and Sport, and in 1994 – from the Swiss government as part of the "For Young Artists" programme (Ecole Supérieure d'Art Visuel in Geneva). He is a lecturer at his alma mater, where he also teaches sculpture, Actions in Public Space, and Multimedia Presentation Techniques. From 2012 to 2014 he was Head of the Department of Art Mediation. His most important exhibitions include: *Right Now the Same Wind is Blowing into our Hair*, Input-Output Gallery and public space of Izmir, Turkey (2014); *Supermarket 2014*, Kulturhuset, Stockholm (2014); *Tree*, Design Het Budapest, Polish Institute, Budapest (2013); *Horizonte*, Museum der Fotografie, Goerlitz, Germany (2012); *Up To You*, SURVIVAL 10, "Oławka" stadium, Wrocław, Poland (2012); SURVIVAL 4, central railway station, Wrocław (2006).

**Szymon Kobylarz** (b. in 1981 in Katowice, Poland) is a painter and visual artist who makes installations, sculptures and objects. He pursued Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Katowice, which he finished with honours in 2007 and where he works as a lecturer. He lives and works in Katowice, and is connected with ŻAK | BRANICKA Gallery in Berlin. His major exhibitions include: *Slapstick!*, Kunstmuseum, Wolfsburg, Germany; *Establishment as a Source of Suffering*, Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw; *ECHELON70*, Kordegarda Gallery, Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw; *Civil Defense*, ŻAK | BRANICKA Gallery, Berlin; *The Power of Fantasy*, BOZAR – Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels. Every year, he takes part in international art fairs, such as ARTISSIMA in Turin and VIENNAFAIR in Vienna. His works have been often shown in Poland and abroad.

**Susanne Keichel** (b. in 1981 in Dresden, Germany) is a photographer and visual artist. She obtained Diploma in Fine Arts / Photography under Prof. Tina Bara, HGB Leipzig, where she is now a postgraduate student. In 2006 she received DAAD scholarship (Hiwar Fanni TransArt, Cairo). Her major exhibitions include: *Zwischenzeit* (with Karen Weinert), Bautzner69, Dresden, Germany; *SCHAU* (with Annetkatrin Döll), Temporary Space for Contemporary Art, Dresden; *Drei, drei, drei, bei Issos Keilerei, erster erster*, Berlin Diplomasstellung, HGB Leipzig, Germany; *Garten*, Projektraum am Weissen Hirsch, Galerie Grafikladen, Dresden; *Viaggio in Italia*, Werkschauhalle Baumwollspinnerei, Leipzig, Germany; *Der Kamera standhalten*, Werkstatt Wort 33, edited by Christoph Türcke, Institute of Book Arts, HGB Leipzig; *Re-united*, Maxim Gorki Theater, Berlin, and Nato, Leipzig; *Birds Openin*, Kunsthau, Hamburg; *Der Konflikt zwischen Wort und Bild*, Goethe-Institut, Cairo; Oederaner Straße, Dresden.

**Małgorzata Miśniakiewicz** (b. in 1987 in Wrocław, Poland) is an art historian, curator and writer. She is working on her PhD at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, where she is researching alternative networks of artistic exchange in socialist countries, focusing on the concepts of collaboration, solidarity and dialogue. She has also worked on projects related to art in public space and participation in contemporary art. She has cooperated with White Cube Gallery, Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Santa Cruz in Bolivia, Wrocław Contemporary Museum in Poland, ArtTransparent Foundation, Biennale de Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Galeria Miejska in Gdańsk. She holds an MA in Art History from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London (Global Conceptualism taught by Prof. Boris Groys and Prof. Sarah Wilson), a post-graduate Diploma in Culture Management from the Warsaw School of Economics, and she has also attended the Institute for Advanced Studies in Warsaw.



**Michał Bieniek** (b. in 1980 in Milicz, Poland) is an artist and curator exploring the issues of an individual's identity and sense of belonging (social, mental and intellectual). He analyses the social roles that he performs himself. He is interested in the phenomenon of public space. Bieniek graduated from the Department of Painting and Sculpture of the Academy of Fine Arts in Wrocław, and since 2010 he has been studying Curating Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art (Research Student by Project, MPhil/PhD). He has received two scholarships of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage. He has also been awarded the Marshal of Lower Silesia Prize and Gazeta Wyborcza's WARTO award. He was among the laureates of the "Young Poland" competition held by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. As an artist, he mostly makes installations and videos; he also writes critical texts.

Bieniek has been President of the Board of the ART TRANSPARENT Foundation for Contemporary Art, founder and General Curator (together with Anna Kołodziejczyk) of the SURVIVAL Art Review, curator of the international festival "Art with a Past", curator of a series of interventions in the public space "Among the Islands" as well as initiator, coordinator and supervisor of the Mieszkanie Gepperta contemporary art gallery in Wrocław. In September, 2011, he curated the Polish edition of Thierry Geoffroy's Emergency Room within European Congress of Culture in Wrocław.

The annual SURVIVAL Art Review, which he runs, is among the most important artistic events in Wrocław. The Review is intended to introduce the problems raised by young artists into the social discourse and to provoke the visitors to respond. SURVIVAL's artists take up the challenge posed by the urban jungle and carry out their projects in abandoned places, public buildings and open spaces. They are stimulated by the urban agglomeration whose space abounds with meanings.

**Dorota Nieznalska** (b. in 1973 in Gdańsk, Poland) works with sculpture, installation, photography and video. In her early practice she often used religious symbols to combine Poland's potent Catholic tradition with men's domination in the society. She also referred to notions connected with identity, sexuality, and stereotypical gender roles. Recently she has been interested in social and political relations in the context of violence. She is involved in research projects concerning memorial sites, traces of memory/oblivion, and history. In 2013 she received PhD in Sculpture at the Intermedia Department of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, where she now works as Assistant Professor at the Transdisciplinary Studio of the Department of Sculpture/Intermedia. She has participated in over one hundred individual and collective exhibitions in Poland and abroad. She cooperates with the Wyspa Gallery and the Wyspa Progress Foundation. She has received numerous awards and scholarships, including: an award for the best diploma work – *The Germinations XI* residency scholarship in Hull, England; Mayor of Gdańsk Award for Young Artists and Scientists; residency scholarship from Kunstforum Ostdeutsche Galerie, Regensburg, Germany; scholarship of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage – twice; Marshal of the Pomorskie Province scholarship – twice; residency scholarship *Polish Kultursommer Scholarship 2010*, Kiel, Germany; 1<sup>st</sup> Prize of Gdańsk Art Biennial held under the title *Identity of the Place*, Galeria Miejska Gdańsk 2; residency scholarship HIAP – *Paths Crossing*, Helsinki, Finland; scholarship of the Minister of Science and Higher Education for outstanding achievements in art. Her works can be found in numerous collections in Poland and abroad.

**The Open Group** was founded in August 2012 in Lviv, Ukraine, by six young artists: Eugene Samborsky, Yuriy Biley, Anton Varga, Oleg Perkovsky, Pavlo Kovach, Stanislav Turina.

**The permanent members of the group are (2015):** Yuriy Biley, Pavlo Kovach (based in Lviv), Stanislav Turina (based in Mukachevo), Anton Varga (based in New York). However, the basic structure of The Open Group involves also temporary participants. The Group's work is based on research of the interaction and communication between people and space, artists and situations. The Open Galleries established by the artists are symbolic spaces that aspire to capture the intangible art factor and embrace the meaningful emptiness. Thus, the artists keep questioning the idea of art gallery and consider the condition of both – a gallery without an artist or an artist without a gallery. The Open Group members have been awarded multiple residencies and in 2013 received the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Prize of PinchukArtCentre in Kiev, Ukraine.

Selected exhibitions: *If only flies saw the show, does it mean that it actually happened?*, Art House Muzychi, Kiev region, Ukraine (2015); *Ars longa, vita brevis / documentation*, Dzyga Gallery, Lviv, Ukraine (2014); *Biography*,

PinchukArtCentre, Kiev (2014); PinchukArtCentre Prize shortlist exhibition, PinchukArtCentre, Kiev (2013); II long-term project *Temporary exhibition*, Korydor Gallery, Uzhhorod, Ukraine (2013); International Festival *Days of Performance Art*, Lviv (2013); *Contemporary Art Week*, Lviv (2012); Festival *Kredents*, Vinogradiv, Ukraine (2012).

**Thomas Kilpper** (b. in 1956 in Stuttgart, Germany) lives and works in Berlin. Kilpper studied Fine Arts at the Staatliche Kunstakademie in Nuernberg, Dusseldorf and Frankfurt am Main, and he teaches at the Art and Design Academy in Bergen, Norway. Throughout his career, Thomas Kilpper has engaged history and the public sphere with artistic interventions that reveal hidden or obscured political and social significances. He works with local neighbourhoods and people's stories, using his research to create a picture of a history that is more complicated than the official lines. He conceives his works as installation or performance to achieve large-scale visibility that provokes public dialogue. His work expands political dialogue, not only to include previously excluded voices at a local level but also to integrate these stories into an international history of resistance and work for justice.