

Ch(K)ris(tin). Close Air Support

Smooth viscous light fills the space of the museum. What kind of light is this? Where is its real source? Why is it here and how can it affect us?

The project *Ch(K)ris(tin).Close Air Support* is a response to a proposal to reconsider the legacy of Vadim Sidur and to develop alternative modes of navigation and reflection in the space of the museum named after him.

Kirill Savchenkov is an artist working with complex systems of narratives. He focuses on historical and topical subjects, fragments of special knowledge (new media, military technologies, modern urban and net subcultures, etc.), as well as diverse artifacts - everything that constitutes together a rapidly changing agenda of our cultural consumption and intellectual engagement today. When they overlap and "stick together", these elements open up zones of mutual transit. Overproduction of information, accelerated velocity of communications, collapse of the traditional social institutions, and endemic expansion of gadgets, which re-organize social and perceptual experience of people - these processes form new strategies of survival, paradoxically combining the settings of transgression and mimicry. How to be someone you cannot be? Outlined by the author as an enclosed premise of the project, this is a question everyone probably faces today.

The installation, created by Savchenkov, is hinged on biographies of the British classic of Modernism Henry Moore, the Soviet nonconformist sculptor Vadim Sidur, and the veteran of the Afghanistan war, former Navy SEAL Kristin Beck, an officer of the American navy who made a transitioning. Scattered and aggregated in the exposition these stories unfold a sequence of semantic resonances. The military background of the sculptors and their experience of being wounded find expression in plastic experiments. A former machine gun regiment captain, junior lieutenant Sidur, throughout his life develops the problem of the merger of body and machine, moving further away from the official art "depicting life in the forms of life itself". Kristine Beck is a former special operations unit soldier, who participated in several modern military conflicts where special forces and high-precision technology systems were applied. Her former image as a "SEAL Team Six" operator is an attractive role model for the so-called "military phonies" (people with no combat experience but imitating military personnel). At the same time, there was another war going on inside her body for many years, a battle with gender dysphoria.

Closely related issues of oppression, technological development, gender and cultural identification evoke growing turbulence in theoretical concepts, practices, experiences, and both internal and external political clashes. A possible way to resolve them in a situation of historical confrontation between the two world systems was seen by artists of the twentieth century as apocalyptic. Both Moore and Sidur worked with the topic of total atomic warfare. In the later period of his work the latter directly appealed to the prospect of the death of humanity. His "Iron Prophets" and heroes of "Grob-art", created by the sculptor from details of various mechanisms, metal pipes and other elements of utilitarian material culture, were meant to be historical agents.

Today in a situation of the breaking crisis of "big narratives", reconsideration of relations between politics and technology, mind and body, military and civil, i.e. connection and

collision of everything with everything, the image of the future doesn't appear open. However, this doesn't mean that it unexists. On the contrary. Perhaps the future isn't just ahead, but, as accelerationist philosophers say, is "sprouting into the present."

What if the light, that is spread around, comes from there? Maybe it's a familiar glow of a thermonuclear explosion. Or probably it is a thermal background of a rational singularity, in which economic and gender contradictions, as well as related notions and meanings, are dismantled forever.

Yaroslav Aleshin

The author thanks Garage Museum of Contemporary Art for its scholarship program for young Russian artists 2017/2018 the funds of which were used to create the presented project. A special thanks to Daria Kalugina, Daria Getmanova, Ekaterina Kovalenko, Vasilij Sumin, Daria Pasichnik, Roman Glukhov and Ilya Volum.