

Curators from East and Central Europe II**Elena Sorokina**

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Subjective Events, Sometimes Recorded

Opening: 24 October 2008, 8pm

The exhibition runs: 25.10.-16.11.2008, Saturdays to Sundays 2-6pm

Open also on Friday, 31 October 2008, 8-11pm

Workshop: 24 October 2008 (by appointment)

Guided tour: 2 November 2008, 3pm

In everyday language, an event is a notion that embraces two different meanings – a happening violating limits or, in the opposite, invigorating them. One is destructive, the other restrictive; one is closer to the chaos of a revolution, the other to a meticulously performed ceremony with a set of rules. The work in the exhibition focuses on the second meaning: initially, it comments on contemporary rituals or pronounced interest in social codes, which often re-emerge in times of crisis and insecurity. Through recording, staging, or enacting some examples of today's ritualistic behavior the artists examine how the so-called "flexible personalities" engage in a performance of specific and mainly self-imposed rules.

Ana Hušman, *Lunch*, 2008, videostill

The group **REINIGUNGSGESELLSCHAFT** observes visits to the newly built Japanese garden by the inhabitants of the Berlin district of Marzahn, **Alexander Vaindorf** looks into some unusual therapy sessions, **Katarina Zdjelar** films an amateur choir singing John Lennon's Revolution, and **Ana Hušman** mocks a perfect lunch with invited guests. We could say, the participants of or actors in these videos perform themselves while rehearsing some limits. In analyzing these voluntary "ceremonial behaviors" proliferating in today's order, which promote "limitless living and choosing", the artists in the show direct our attention to contemporary changes in the nature of limits and social prohibitions.

Introducing the notion of the "subjective event," – an experience which can't be proven and whose very existence is not certain – the exhibition circumscribes a field of tension between the mise en scene of the quotidian and intangible action as material for artists' work. **Yevgeny Fiks** enacts subversive gestures or interventions which are inconspicuous and almost invisible for the "general public." Using custom-produced stamps featuring faces of former leaders of the American Communist Party to pay his bills, Fiks turns a ritual of the capitalist world order – paying bills to corporations – into commemoration of the American Communist movement. **Kent Hansen** and **Jo Zahn** from DEM at tv-tv conduct an "emancipatory experiment", handing a camera to random groups. They conclude, however, that the films produced never exceed personal narratives. Finally, some work recontextualizes highly visible public happenings as some kind of subjective events. The footage of visits by heads-of-state to France, used by **Franck Leibovici**, or body searches at airports recorded by **Gulnara Kasmalieva** and **Muratbek Djumaliev** –change their possible readings through displacement. These rituals, observed by the artists, collapse into meaningless repetition, never becoming the action they promise to be.

Elena Sorokina, 2008

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Elena Sorokina is a Paris/Brussels based curator and writer. A Whitney ISP fellow, she recently curated "Petroliana" at the Moscow Biennial 2007, "Laws of Relativity" at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, and "On Traders' Dilemmas" at YBCA, San Francisco. She writes for Artforum, Moscow Art Magazine and other publications.