

NIKA KUPYROVA

Otis Rem - solo show

February 15, 2018 - March 23, 2018

SODA gallery

Courtesy of SODA gallery

Photo: Adam Šakový

Otis Rem

Otis Otis Rem

Otis Rem Otis Rem Otis Rem

Otis Rem Rem

Rem

Like an incantation, the title of Nika Kupyrova's exhibition Otis Rem can be repeated and varied, repeated and varied, repeated, varied and varied again. The linguistic elements of the poem constituted by such a process each function for themselves. They are autonomous. But "Otis" and "Rem" are also singular components of one and the same system. For only in their union emerges the power of the poetic formula. In the combination of the words, in their order and reordering, in the potential of permanent variability. The effect unfolds upon usage. Not the saying but the speaking yields reality.

Pseudo-Latin, everyday found object, readymade, malapropism. Like a spell that targets art production, like magic that haunts its gestures, the gestures of the manipulation of forms, the gestures of the manipulation of material. In both the virtual and truest sense of the word: handling. The handling becomes the artifice. Enchanting, always ambiguous. Otis Rem is like an abracadabra: universal, deployable in all times and spaces. Depending on the context, however, its usage leads to different results. A, B, C, D, the individual parts of the dynamic system in a temporary standstill. Fragmentary and modular, adaptive. A-Bra-Ca-Dabra. With intention, on purpose—yet unpredictable.

Abra abracadabra

I wanna reach out and grab ya

Abra abracadabra

Abracadabra

Everything is how it is, but nothing is how it appears. Art of deception. In the exhibition Otis Rem the artist plays with the elements akin to how she anticipated in the magic formula of the title. Modular. A found object here, a repetition there, a colored mark on the floor here, a variation of the same signifier on the object there, the traces of real contact here, the illusion generated by the contact there—here and there, now and then. Only in the conflation of the parts does the exhibition take form, only in the shared space is there meaning, only in the shared time the elements spend with, toward, and against each other permits reflection. No matter how you twist and turn it.

Nika Kupyrova does not use art as a knowledge system operating in secret. No belief in miracles, no skepticism out of principle. On the contrary, the artist bares her methods, clear and simple. Like a diviner, she unfolds her deck of cards, her hand swiping skillfully across the table. Gently, she places down card after card. An nondescript noise accompanies the movement. Time and again, glitches sneak in. Everything needed for a performance is there; the floodgates of the imagination are open. With each card face showing upwards, the artist dismantles a piece of the illusion she had tried to construct just before. The exhibition becomes amusement architecture, the showcase a show, individual deception becomes collective hallucination. The deck could be reshuffled at any moment; a play ready for the stage, without secrets—with much entertainment.

Otis

Otis Rem Rem

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Otis Rem

Text: Franz Thalmair