

### **A Forceful Beginning at 2020: TRUTH/S and TERRORISM**

2020 Home Gallery continues terrorizing the system with another two exhibitions launched at the beginning of this year, one at Vlad Nanca's place and the other one at Tom Wilson's Sex Trade Gallery. Probably, due to the slow-motion recognition of Romanian contemporary art, spaces like 2020 Home Gallery will become necessary-to-go-through before stepping out into the big world. When I heard about Liliana Basarab's exhibition, entitled TRUTH/S, I was curious to see how an artistic manifestation can find its way in a private space. I wanted to see the something itself. So, this being my first home gallery experience, I began by observing the pure social act. And what was revealed to me wasn't any different from what was going on in Liliana's video. People of different ages coming, in this case, from all areas of the cultural spectrum, met in the house of a dedicated-to-the-cause Romanian artist. They weren't playing Charades in front of the camera, like the subjects in Liliana Basarab's video, aiming to suggest the word "truth", but their gathering expressed the fact that contemporary art is an integral part of a country's problems of cultural identity.

Liliana Basarab's approach of the modern principles of esthetics, the first one captured being beauty (the series of postcards "Imagine Beauty!") was an attempt to generate an un-perverted way of communication, through which subjects were facing reality by playing different games. The artist took part at the discovery of a whole range of truths, with personal relevance to the participants. The conclusion is that in the 21st century, there is no chance for an equalizing esthetics and there are as many truths (and beauties) as many people on the planet. I'm wondering how would things look like if somebody played with the concept of sublime.

The next day, Vlad Nanca materialized his preoccupations towards terrorism in a homonym exhibition, placed strategically with a day before the first free elections in Irak. In the hallway, photographs of a continuous line painted on different types of walls, were intended to resemble some images that became obsessive to the author while watching images from Putin's visit to Beslan hospital after the school seige. A small projection of what has been the combination between The People's House and The Nation's Cathedral is hidden behind the door, forgotten and powerless. An entire wall is dominated by ten prints representing members of several terrorist groups (Ku Klux Klan, E.T.A., I.R.A.), a lady wearing a beauty masque, the Formula 1 pilot, Michael Schumacher.

Vlad Nanca didn't act this time in the way he has accustomed us. He put his personal experience on the hanger for a while, coming to terms with a major problem, from the position of a person who wasn't touched directly by this plague that is terrorism. An exhibition with this theme was a perfect match in an apartment situated in the centre of Bucharest. While we stay safely indoors, in an inspiring surrounding, drinking a glass of wine and listening to some quality electro music, there are people confronting face to face with terrorists. This explains the paradoxal juxtapose of the relaxed woman, the powerful winner or the traditional masque with the images of some harmful terrorists.

These two exhibitions demonstrate that the young Romanian artists have overcome the period entirely dedicated to criticizing the degrading state of a country that is in an on-going process of eliminating the toxins of an oppressing regime and have renewed their vows towards art, showing that "art knows no limits", as René Block once declared.

*[Liliana Basarab's 'Imagine Beauty! Truth/s' exhibition was at 2020 Home Gallery on 28 January 2005 and Vlad Nanca's 'Terrorism' was at Sex Trade Gallery on 29 January 2005]*