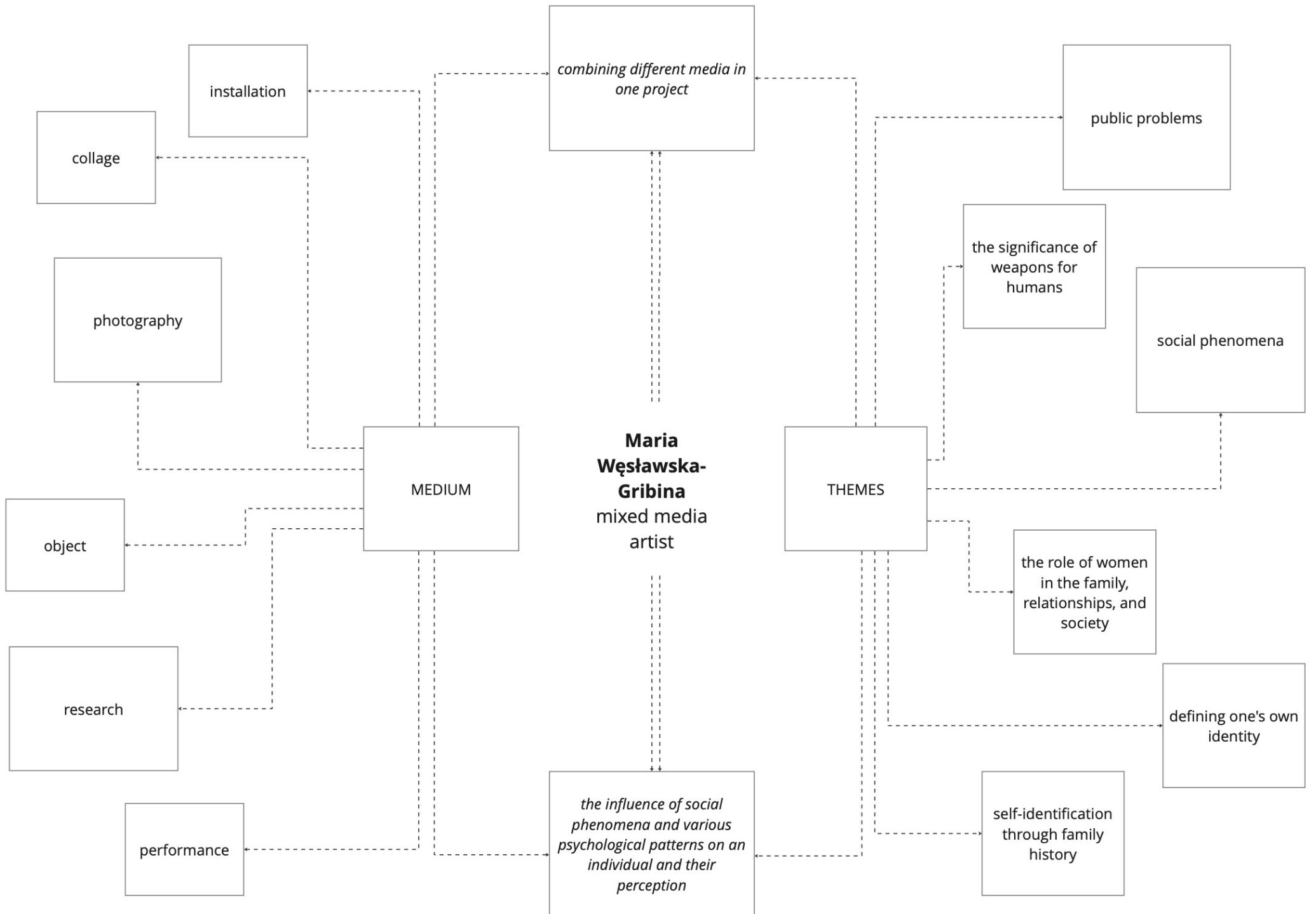


Maria Węstawska-Gribina

Portfolio 2024



**Bio:**

I was born in Moscow into an artistic family. Since 2006, I have worked under the pseudonym Maria Ionova-Gribina, which I changed in 2021 in honor of my Polish roots. I am a graduate of the Magdalena Abakanowicz University of the Arts in Poznań. I currently live and work in Poznań.

Statement:

I am an intermedia artist. I express myself through installation, object, collage, and most importantly, photography. I draw from the experience of documentary photography, often blurring the line between documentary and contemporary art. I enjoy combining multiple media in one project and their interaction. The results of this process are important and interesting to me. In my work, I primarily start from myself, my background, and my experience. I am not interested in distinguishing whether something is a personal subject or a public issue. I am concerned with the impact of social phenomena and various psychological patterns on an individual and their perception. I particularly work with themes of self-identity, family, and the sense of self through family, the roles of men and women in marriage, relationships, and society. I often use portrait and self-portrait. I am also interested in people's attitudes toward weapons.

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

2024

- Azyl, Rodriguez Foundation, Poznań, PL
- Incubator, Szczur Gallery, Poznań, PL

2016

- Only a game?, Photobiennale, MMOMA, Moscow, RU

2015

- Guys, MMOMA, Moscow, RU
- Fathers, Biennale “Fashion and Style in Photography”, MMOMA, Moscow, RU
- Nearly Like Other Girls, Biennale “Fashion and Style in Photography”, MMOMA, Moscow, RU

2013

- Nearly Like Other Girls, Festival Fotoparad, Uglich, RU
- Natura Morta, project “Russian artists in Magleheme”, Magleheme, SE

2012

- Natura morta, Festival “Femme Feast”, Artplay, Moscow, RU

2011

- Loneliness, MMOMA, Moscow, RU

2008

- Magleheme — a place on earth, Aoseum, Åhus, SE
- Start, program “Debut”, MMOMA, Moscow, RU

Selected Group Exhibitions:

2023

- Welcome to my humble home, Przystanek Pireus, Poznań, PL

2022

- ShowOFF Section 2022 special mentions, Krakow Photomonth Festival, PL

2021

- Konstruktor Fathers, Zerno Photogallery, Saint-Petersburg, RU
- Natura Morta, Mink Festival, online, GR

2020

- Museum of Self-Isolation, Museum of Moscow, Moscow, RU

2019

- Family values, Museum of Moscow, Moscow, RU
- The Coming World: Ecology as the New Politics 2030–2100, projekt Human Hotel by Wooloo collective, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow, RU

2018

- My pretty. Hair, MMOMA, Moscow, RU

2017

- Rodchenko School. New Generation of Russian Art. Photography and multimedia, Krinzinger Gallery, Vienna, AT
- They, the exhibition of the winners of the “Direct View” competition, the Culture Center of Lublin, PL

2016

- 3 to 3. Color, Gallery A3, Moscow, RU

2015

- Sub observationem, MMOMA, Moscow, RU
- Origin of Species, MMOMA, Moscow, RU

2013

- Siberia in the Eyes of Russian Photographers, Katzen Arts Center, Waszyngton, USA
- Russian artists in 11 Magleheme, Magleheme, SE
- Portrait naw!, National History Museum, Hillerød, DK

2012

- Rejected Reality, III Moscow International Biennale for Young Art Exhibition, Artplay, Moscow, RU
- Entourage, Student ArtProm, Artplay, Moscow, RU
- Fotoboloto, Lumiere Brothers Center for Photography, Moscow, RU

2011

- Magleheme — the Place on the earth, MMOMA, Moscow, RU

2010

- Zones of Estrangement, Gallery Land of Tomorrow, Lexington, USA

- Swedish family, Art Museum in Uppsala, SE
- Projection of reality, Red October, Moscow, RU
- I Biennial of Modern Art of South of Russia, project “Swedish family”, Rostov-on-Don, RU

2009

- My love, my friends, MMOMA, Moscow, RU
- III Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, project “Swedish family”, MMOMA, Moscow, RU

Education:

- Magdalena Abakanowicz University of the Arts in Poznań
- Karl Faberge Art School / Moscow
- Moscow Academy of Education Natalia Nesterova / Moscow
- Moscow Academy of Photography / Moscow
- School of Contemporary Art at Moscow Museum of Modern Art “The Free Workshops” / Moscow
- The educational program of the Objective Reality Foundation (Course mentors: Bjarke Myrthu and Lucian Perkins)
- Workshops: Rena Effendi, Georgy Pinkhasov, Platon, Martin Parr

Experience:

- I lectured at the School of Contemporary Art «FREE WORKSHOPS» at the Moscow Museum of Modern Art MMOMA
- I taught the course “Photography for beginners” at the Academy of Photography / Moscow
- I taught the School of Contemporary Photography in Moscow
- I am the author of educational programs

Collections:

- Moscow Multimedia Art Museum MAMM
- Museum of Moscow
- private collections USA, RU, SE

Selected Publications:

The Times - 11/09/2012
 Courrier International - #1103-1104, 22/12/2011-04/01/12
 The Gurdian - 09/06/2015
 Süddeutsche Zeitung Magazin - 13/08/2014

Marie Claire Korea - 2015
 Focus Magazine - #44, 2012
 Bird in Flight - 06/03/2015, 12/08/2015, 04/07/2016, 19/04/2019
 BBC Russian News 17/04/2020
 Internazionale - #936, 17/02/2012
 Die Zeit - #46, 08/11/2012, #14 27/03/2013
 Gazeta Wyborcza - 03-04/03/2012
 Novaya Polsha - 2021
 Meduza - 2014, 2015, 2020, 2022, 2024
 Business Punk - 2013
 Pecado - #13, 2014
 Ignat - 02/07/2014
 Rolling Stone Russia - 05/2013
 Forbes Russia - #12 2012, #2 2016
 Russian Reporter - #35 2011, 09/2012, 02/2013, #38 2013, #3 2016
 Thames& Hudson - Frozen Dreams, November 21, 2011



Azyl

object | 2 photos | 2024

“Azyl”(Asylum) is a metaphor for a shelter for humanity, a refuge from violence and war.

In the “Azyl” project, one of the key topics of my interest is the legal situation of women in relation to society and the state, especially in the contemporary context, as political and military tensions escalate. I am particularly interested in the contribution of women to the processes of preventing, resolving, and stopping conflicts, the use of feminist methods of activism in this area, and artistic strategies for discussing this topic.

I invited women from various Slavic nations, including Poles, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Russians, and anyone willing, regardless of nationality, background, age, and gender, to join the collaborative work; the participants created a net resembling a camouflage net used in warfare. For the creation of the net, I deliberately chose colors and shades close to the color of human skin. I explain the choice of “skin color” as follows - the color of the skin symbolizes nakedness, and therefore vulnerability, intimacy*. Women engaged in weaving the net together inevitably remind of ancient artisans who often embroidered, knitted, and sewed together, as frequently reflected in myths and fairy tales. Mythology has socio-cultural significance; myths help preserve and transmit traditions, history, and cultural heritage, uniting people around shared values and strengthening social bonds. It can be said that myths, like place and society, are also our context. I perceive the common Slavic heritage as an important factor contributing to the shaping of discourse in an understandable and close language, which may promote unity. I work with Slavic themes because they are close to me as a representative of Slavic culture. Moreover, Slavic countries, located near the conflict zone, such as

the war in Ukraine, are drawn into this situation. Examples of such situations can be generalized and applied to similar situations in the world related to warfare - e.g., Palestine/Israel, Armenia/Azerbaijan, etc., as well as in the context of other cultural and social communities. Furthermore, similarities can be identified in the mythologies of various nations, which complement and enrich my research. Social cohesion and the thread of understanding that emerges in the process of collective creative work aim to lead a difficult discussion on the current political and war situation and our roles in it.

The “Azyl” project is a step towards solving the situation using the feminist concept. In my project, I combine the ideas of Laura J. Shepherd on the need to “listen to women” and the experiences of artist-activists working and creating within the craftivism art movement, who emphasize the importance of cooperation.

Preventing violence is a difficult task, and stopping the war is even harder. By drawing parallels between Slavic mythology, handicrafts, the role of women, and activism, I want to draw attention to the importance of the female voice in resolving and preventing armed conflicts. The object created together is a witness to the dialogue and social interactions between women, giving them a voice and becoming a metaphorical symbol of a sanctuary where everyone is guaranteed safety and shelter.

*As is known, the spectrum of skin colors is vast, ranging from pale pinks to dark browns. However, the use of the term “flesh tone” and fabrics with a limited range of colors cannot be called intolerant in my project, as I am working within a specific “Slavic” context and choose these colors as closer and more comprehensible.



Exhibition Documentation, Rodriguez Foundation
Objekt: 200 x 350 cm, textile



Exhibition Documentation, Rodriguez Foundation









49 x 90, digital print



70 x 110, digital print



Inkubator

object | video | eggs/chicks | 2024

My project is dedicated to themes such as the living and the artificial, the miracle of life, the mechanisms of birth and reproduction, and our interactions with the digital world. The project also addresses the struggle for existence, for a place in this world.

In today's context, it is impossible not to notice the rapid pace of artificial intelligence development and its presence in almost every sphere of life. Large corporations like Google, Apple, and Facebook have previously sought to expand physical and digital space to grow their operations. With the advancement of artificial intelligence, their ambitions have only increased. Huge servers continue to expand, consuming physical space, energy, and data, including our own. One of humanity's main concerns is losing control over artificial intelligence.

I decided to compare server rooms and servers to chicken farms and incubators. The comparison seems not only visually similar but also has an interesting analogy. Chickens, whose population exceeds the human population threefold, are

among the most common birds in the world. From an evolutionary perspective, they have effectively adapted to life on Earth while being kept in captivity. It is worth noting that recent studies indicate that chicken bones will be a leading fossil for the Anthropocene.

In an incubator, real chicks develop and hatch; however, the incubator merely supports this process, not creating life but helping it to manifest. Artificial intelligence, on the other hand, independently shapes the chick from scratch, extracting matter from chaos and gradually creating life from digital "atoms." However, this is not real life but rather an imitation.

Can we compare the incubator to a surrogate mother and artificial intelligence to Mother Nature? In both cases, the chick would not appear without human intervention. What role do we play? Creators? Fertilizers? Perhaps we also represent something like artificial intelligence?

Or could it be that we are the artificial intelligence ourselves?





Exhibition Documentation, Szczur Gallery
Eggs in an incubator, from which chicks hatch



Exhibition Documentation, Szczur Gallery



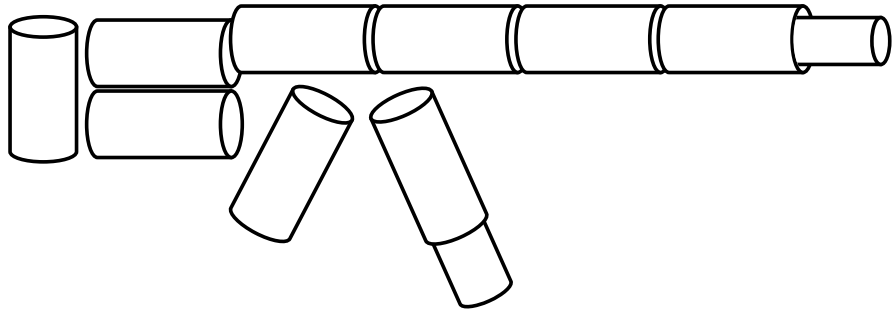


Screenshot from the video,
link to watch https://youtu.be/K-cnruP5f1s?si=dW_qOVwt_Dtxxr3P



KALASHNIKOV

GEVÄR



Kalashnikov IKEA

object | product manual | sales listing
| 2023

In September 2022, IKEA held its final sale, after which the store completely left Russia. Over 22 years of operation, Russians came to appreciate and love the quality, functionality, and design of IKEA products. I fully understand the sadness of ordinary people over the closure of the store network in the country (I even understand the crowds on the last day of the sale). However, it was hard for me to understand and accept the buzz in traditional media and social media.

“Girls, share what’s best to buy at the IKEA sale, what’s not available in other stores, we’re going there for the opening tomorrow” – all Russian social networks and chats were full of such questions.

The level of news about IKEA’s closure and final sale almost surpassed the level of news about the war in Ukraine. In news programs and social media, we saw a real clash of the capitalist model of society with wartime activities.

My project was a reaction to this phenomenon. For me, the situation seemed absurd, and thus my project is also entirely absurd. I believe that a store leaving the country cannot be more important than a military invasion of a foreign country.

What could be less significant than a toilet paper roll? Such a roll is useless,

ridiculous, and associated with the toilet. At best, it is used by children in art classes and for crafting. This material and its connotations were the best fit for the object I created.

The project consists of three equally important parts: the object, the manual, and the listing on Avito.

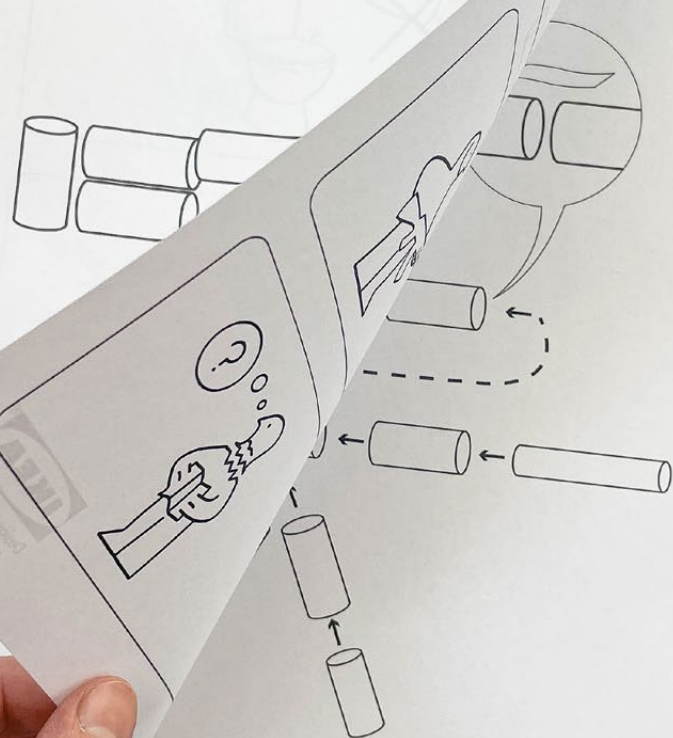
(Avito is a website similar to OLX or eBay, where people buy and sell everything. Avito became the main platform for the secondary sale of IKEA products after the store closed in Russia. People specifically bought items during the sale to later profit from them. Currently, under the keyword “IKEA” on Avito, there are about one and a half million listings (on OLX and eBay up to 50-100 thousand). Therefore, I decided to place a listing there and make it part of the project, giving people the opportunity to reflect, and maybe even rethink their attitude towards the war.

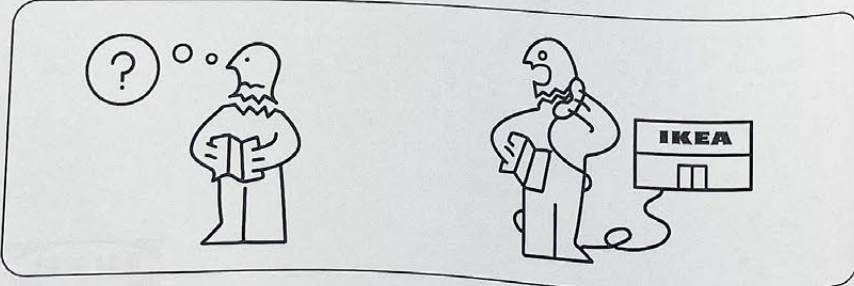
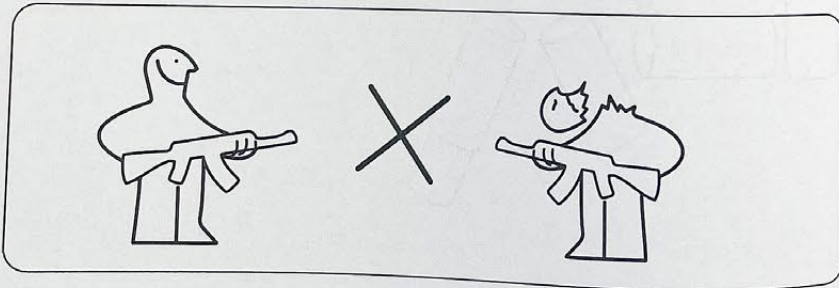
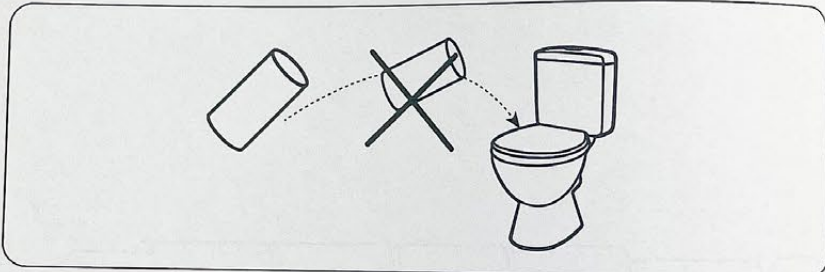
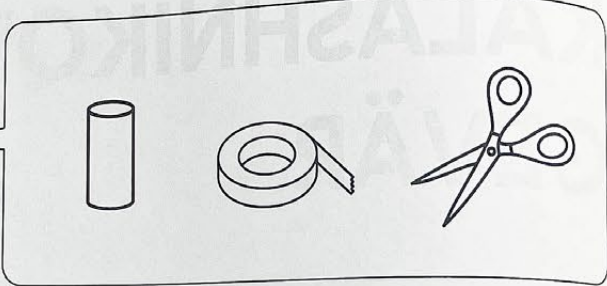
The manual is an equally important part of the project. The work began with it. I was inspired while browsing a children’s book with craft ideas. I decided to create something similar for adults. The very idea of a craft book for adults might seem quite strange, and I liked that. Then the idea of the book turned into an absurd manual and an absurd object.



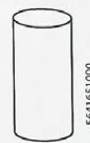
object: paper, plastic, 28 x 28 cm

KALASHNIKOV GEVÄR





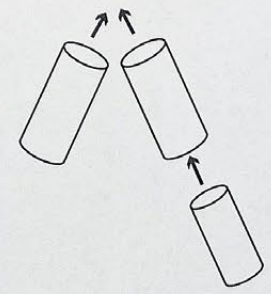
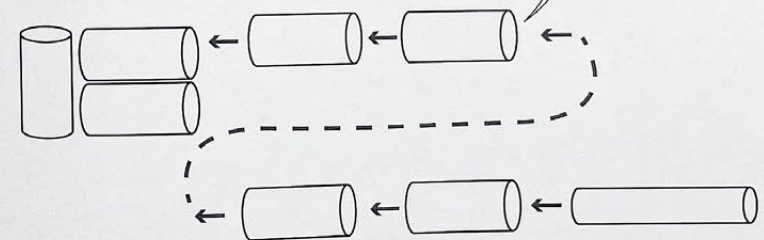
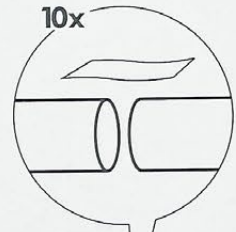
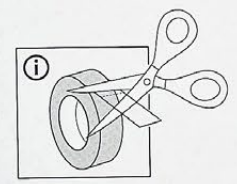
8x



1x



1x



avito.ru

Для бизнеса Карьера в Авито Помощь Каталоги Польза Вход и регистрация Разместить объявление


Avito Все категории Поиск по объявлениям Найти Во всех регионах, радиус

Главная > Для дома и дачи > Мебель и интерьер > Другое

Автомат Калашникова Икея

550 Р

Добавить в избранное Добавить заметку



Без звонков
Пользователь предпочитает сообщения

Написать сообщение

Пользователь
5,0 ★★★★★ 1 отзыв
Частное лицо
Документы проверены Эковклад: -30 кг CO₂

Подписаться на продавца

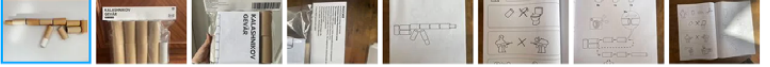
Спросите у продавца

Здравствуйте! ➔

Ещё продаёте? Торг уместен?

Отправите Авито Доставкой?

Когда можно посмотреть?



Translation of the ad text on Avito: Original Kalasznikow Gevär (IKEA), brand new, unopened packaging. Modern, minimalist design, high-quality paper. We had two of these - no complaints, we are extremely satisfied. Selling due to moving.



My Family Album

2 objects | digital collages printed
analog | found photo | 2022-2023

The project is primarily dedicated to the issue of self-identification, my personal and family history, and memory. It addresses the physical existence of photography as a material source of information and the possibility (or impossibility) of obtaining and correctly interpreting this information.

In search of my Polish identity, fully aware that I will never be a true Pole, I created a new history for myself – my own family album. I used old Polish photographs found at a flea market and private childhood photos.

While searching for old photos, my attention was particularly drawn to one picture: a little girl in a Polish folk costume. I decided to make such a costume for myself. I sewed this costume based on the idea of outfits for paper dolls and inspired by images of theatrical costumes. For me, they are not real either – they are just a created image.



digital collage printed analog 7.5 x 11 cm



digital collages printed analog



digital collage printed analog 7.5 x 11.5 cm





digital collage printed analog, 5 x 7 cm
object: fabric, emulsion, analog print, 120 x 140 cm





Locaring

30 photos (varying dimensions) | 16 objects | 5 found objects | exhibition documentation (documentation is part of the project) | 2019-2021

“Locaring” — from Latin “locatio” — location, position and “ring” — a roped-off area.

In the summer of 2019-2021, I lived a few weeks in a small town in Russia where my husband’s family lives. In the old house, from where the family history comes, I created a series of still lifes and self-portraits, working with the aesthetics of space and the culture of the place, retelling the history of the house.

In a number of absurd still lifes, I used objects preserved in the house, giving them a new meaning instead of the long lost one. I built compositions following the traditions of post-minimalist sculpture. Old dishes, electrical appliances and packaging evoke a feeling of recognition and nostalgia in the post-Soviet viewer. With standard production, scarcity of goods and lack of variety, most household items were the same for everyone. This inevitably gives still lifes new shades of meaning, depending on who is looking at them.

And then i tried to “try on the house” on herself, dressing up in clothes found in a closet and taking pictures in ridiculous poses that affirmed the presence of life in and around the house, but without defining the form and character of a particular time.

I also created several objects. This is the 70 years old house. Dividing layer by layer, I removed seven layers of wallpaper from the wall. It turned out that the wallpaper was updated once every ten years. Everyone who lived in this house died, I made objects in the form of photographs on tombstones.

ShowOFF Section 2022 special mentions.













found objects





objects: wallpaper, cardboard, acrylic paint, 14 x 18 cm



Only a game?

16 photos | varying dimensions |
2014-2020

Almost all types of modern weapons have toy copies. Nearly every small boy has at least one toy pistol, gun or wooden sword.

I have three sons. When my older boys were growing, I did not think seriously about the issue of toy weapons – I did not buy them specifically for my children, but guns somehow got into our house (someone gave them to play, someone gave them as a gift).

At some point, I realized that we already got a whole stock of various toy weapons – pistols, machine guns, rifles, swords, daggers. After that, I started working on the project.

Some parents try to protect their children from toy weapons, arguing that there is no need to bring up aggression in a child. Others, on the contrary, encourage games of war, referring to the fact that a boy needs to be raised a real

man, he must feel strong in order to protect his loved ones, his family and country.

Initially, I made a series only about boys, it was closer and more relatable to me. But then the girls' mothers started texting me telling their daughters also like to play with weapons. At that time I did not interview the children and did not write down their names, thereby showing only the image, I did not care who the child was. I found the subjects of these photographs on the Internet, inviting children to pose with their favorite toy weapons. I gave them complete freedom: what toy to choose, what pose to take. Did these images turn out aggressive and belligerent? Or do we find them sweet, since for us this is only a game?

This project is in the MMAM collection.











NATURA MORTA

16 photos (varying dimensions) |
2010-2013

I found these dead animals during bicycle rides to the sea in the summer. I wanted to find a way to save them for world of art. They were so unprotected...

One or two days more and they would be eaten by worms. I remembered my childhood. When I with my brother found a dead mole, bird or bug we buried them on the border of a forest. And we decorated the grave with flowers and stones.

Why we did it that way? Probably it was a children's curiosity, our first studies of mortality.

In this project I work with my childhood memories and with the subject of life and death. All animals died naturally or after accidents with cars. The flowers were gathered near dead animals and in my garden.











Fathers

16 photos (varying dimensions) | 2014

Is a visual that explores how Russian men identify themselves through parenting. Childless young men are invited to be photographed without being informed about the theme. They are introduced to Maria's children and asked how they would spend time with them as if they were their parent and to share their thoughts on fatherhood.

The idea came to Maria when her fellow photographer asked her to take his picture for a self portraits project. He asked Maria to make the picture as personal as possible. Portrait also had to reflect them both as artists. For Maria contemporary portrait is a lot about investigation.

It has to answer or rather raise some questions. After thinking about it for a while, she has decided to assign him a role of the father of her children. That's how the project began. "We do know much more about mother-child relations than we do about fathers", Maria says, "how they interact with children, how that affects childhood development and how it reflects on both men and children". Research on fathers is a fascinating field of study, which currently tends to raise far more questions than it

answers, but while couples share many of the concerns about having children men have their own distinct worries. Today, potential fathers who are scared of commitment are the attribute of modern western society.

"Russian men are more immature than European men, for example", Maria says. Statistics do show that the average marriage age in Russia has increased by 3 years since 90's. But is it because it takes more time for a man to grow into parenting or has Russian institute of marriage transformed into "western model" with higher average marriage age and less premature marriages? Maria let's a viewer decide by accompanying the images with quotes of her subjects.

The resume she makes for herself is that nothing is permanent; she is absolutely sure that men who are scared of the idea of a child today could become great fathers in the future. "It's also so much about love, the majority of men I photographed said they were ready to marry a woman with kids from previous marriage if they were in love".

For the record, though divorced, Maria is not currently looking for a father for Luka and Fiodor.









THE PORTRAIT WITH A LOVER

19 photos (varying dimensions) |
2016

The project continues the theme of the behavior of a man in the society and in dealing with people. The author asked her friends and strangers to imagine their ideal photo with their lovers and to send a sample. What will be the pose of the couple? What will they do? How will they look like? Who will take more space? Who will be better seen? There is a stereotype that women like “romantic” pictures of lovers. And what pictures do men like? The artist is interested in what pictures men like, from the overall plot to the plastic of bodies. Then she makes another photograph of the scene, playing the characters with her friends. The woman is always the same, it is the author, but men are different. It turns out that one man simulates the sample desired by another. They together create a catalogue and arrange the sent samples.















Prawie jak inne dziewczyny

19 photos | 10x10 cm | mixed media
| analog printing | 2012

I found these dead animals during bicycle rides to the sea in the summer. I wanted to find a way to save them for world of art. They were so unprotected... One or two days more and they would be eaten by worms.

I remembered my childhood. When I with my brother found a dead mole, bird

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In this project I work with my childhood memories and with the subject of life and death. All animals died naturally or after accidents with cars. The flowers were gathered near dead animals and in my garden.

The project is part of the MMAM collection





<https://m-w-g.com>

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