

Natálie Kubíková
Opponet: Julie Bena
Grade: 1/ Vyborně

Natalie and I crossed paths several times during the last years. I was, since the beginning, very intrigued by Garage gallery project, and specifically in the area of the closing of Futura. Natalie had always the eye opened toward the outside which still for me represents a strong benefit for the Czech scene. I don't believe so much in 2023 in art scene isolation. So it was quite exciting to follow her program and see the paths in and out between the new generation of Czech artists and the ones abroad. I do think Natalie has really great eyes on contemporary art and that she is really able to build a sensitive and peculiar dramaturgy within her show, especially the one she curated at Gamu a few months ago called "Warm inflation".

Nevertheless, Natalie has an obligation for now, which is still to produce art in the frame of the cursus of an art school. So parallels to her curatorial practice, we started a discussion a few months ago around her project for the diploma. The project was firstly thought of as a performance taking based on Coco Fusco's work, then at some point, the project oriented itself more within the film medium. It is always complicated to understand how to do a first film, you always have the impression of knowing how to do (more or less), then generally, at the editing moment you realise that what you thought is not working as you wanted and you need from what you have to do something. That was at least my first experience and I do think the one of Natalie is not so far.

At the same time, it is maybe the most interesting moment, the one that is becoming the more 'plastic' one (regarding the definition of plasticity by philosopher Catherine Malabou). Indeed, we can play with the materiality of the film like a sculpture, you can sculpt the film taking it as material and give it a shape. By the cut, the repetition, the close up, the music, you can suddenly redefine the images, the content and twist it into some absurd minutes that can of course recalled the cinematographic Czech new wave. To shoot a film is something, but to write, conceptualise, direct, and play is again another type of relation toward the medium. I found the engagement of Natalie extremely courageous, even more when I know what all of this means.

I would like to point out a few things before leaving you. Natalie will continue in art, which is not the case of most of the students that are passing this diploma, because she is living for art. She is dedicating all her time to it, she is creating platforms for others to show, to meet, to speak, to listen. She is participating actively, already, in the Czech scene. She is travelling, finding an internship, always eager to see new things, to do new encounters, to see art. She is working with artists, organising a real life around her, which is the one we still believe in. Her attempt to do a film and to put herself on stage is a true experience that can't be ignored, either requested: within the long process of writing, thinking about you as a character, projecting yourself in a role, creating a crew: Dop, sound person etc. This Sunday, while I am writing, the film is still in process of editing, because as we all know, when you do a film you are never really in advance on the deadlines. And from the form I can see now I see very promising moments. In any case, Natalie gave her best for it, she was very invested in it, and this, parallelly to all her activities as curator and writer. So for all of these reasons, because I really believe in her work, I would give her the best grade.

Thank you
Julie Bena