

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Sound of Silence: Art During Dictatorship



Oleg Yushko, from the series *Implications*, 2002-07

January 27 – March 10, 2012

Opening Reception, Friday, January 27, 6 – 8 pm

Artists:

antibrainwash.net
group *FAU*
Nikita Kadan
Alexander Komarov
Denis Limonov (Lime Blossom)
Marina Naprushkina
Ales Pushkin
Sergey Shabohin
Yauheni Shadko
Lena Soulkovskaia
Oleg Yushko

EFA Project Space

323 West 39th Street, 2nd floor
New York, NY 10018
between 8th and 9th Avenues

Gallery Hours: Wed through Sat, 12-6 pm

T. 212-563-5855 x 244
projectspace@efanyc.org
www.efanyc.org

Curator: Olga Kopenkina

EFA Project Space presents *Sound of Silence: Art During Dictatorship* from January 27 through March 10, 2012. Curated by Belarus-born Olga Kopenkina, this exhibition brings together nine of the most active Belarus artists and collectives, and their videos, posters, paintings and installations created in solidarity with popular protests.

Belarus President Lukashenka usurped governmental control seventeen years ago, and proceeded to turn Belarus, once culturally vibrant and working to reestablish its national identity, into a repressed and stagnant

dictatorship. In December, 2010, accusations against falsified presidential elections brought rise to a wave of peaceful protests throughout the country, which were, in turn unmercifully retaliated against by police and government forces.

Artists in Belarus began participating in the fast growing protest movement with new and bold actions that gained recognition throughout Europe despite the government's efforts to silence them. Today, many of these artists, who came of age under the dictatorship of Lukashenka, use their practice to challenge the status quo and contribute to the democratic movement, which expands far beyond the native land.

Sound of Silence is the first exhibition in New York City to survey the recent and powerful activities coming from this generation of Belarusian artists. It presents a range of installation, documentation and objects: from work generated by the collective www.antibrainwash.net, an artist-run activist website which features radical protest posters and materials that can be downloaded, printed and distributed; to **Marina Naprushkina's** constantly morphing installation "The Office of Anti-Propaganda," which presents images, objects, slogans and video footage exploring the illusory reality the Belarus government created through public campaign; to documentation of **Ales Pushkin's** outlandish staged performance confronting the cultural and political establishment that led him to immediate and constant arrest; to the Minsk-based group **FAU's** "Monopoly: The Belarusian Edition", addressing the dominance of economics over politics and culture, and allows game participants to assume the roles of government officials and win based on level of corruption; to **Yauheni Shadko's** expressionistic narrative paintings of recent political events.

Public Programs:

Sunday, January 29, 4 pm Free

Panel Discussion organized by the Polish Cultural Institute

Location: Austrian Cultural Forum

5th Avenue at 52nd Street.

Sound of Silence will be accompanied by a panel discussion organized by the **Polish Cultural Institute** and curator **Olga Kopenkina**. Participants include artist **Sergey Shabohin** (Minsk, Belarus), curator **Olga Kopenkina** (New York), philosopher and cultural critic **Nelly Bekus** (Warsaw), and President of Youth Section of Belarusian-American Association **Tatsiana Kulakevich** (New York). Critic and President of AICA, **Marek Bartelik**, will moderate the panel.

Thursday, March 1, 6:30 pm Free

Screening of the recently released documentary "**Belarusian Dream**"

by film-maker **Katherine Kibalchich**

Location: EFA Project Space

For more information on the exhibition and related programs, please email projectspace@efanyc.org or visit www.efanyc.org

EFA Project Space extends a special thanks to the Polish Cultural Institute for their support for *Sound of Silence*, and to the following individuals: Andreas Stadler (Austrian Cultural Forum); Jerzy Onuch (Polish Cultural Institute); Susan Kirby; and Maureen Connor and Elaine Angelopoulos.

Curator Bio

Olga Kopenkina is a curator and critic born in Belarus and currently living and working in New York City. From 1994 to 1998, she was an artistic director of The 6th Line gallery in Minsk, Belarus. She moved to New York in 1999 and graduated from the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College in 2001. Kopenkina has curated shows at BRIC Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; P.S. 122 Gallery, NY; Apex Art, New York;

the 1 Moscow Biennale; and the Anna Akhmatova Museum, St Petersburg, Russia. Her writings have been published in the *Moscow Art Magazine*, *ArtMargins*, *Rethinking Marxism*, *Modern Painters*, *Manifesta Journal* and others, as well as exhibition catalogues and books. Kopenkina has taught at the Tisch School for Arts and is currently an adjunct professor at the New York University Steinhardt School of Arts.

For press inquiries, please contact Michelle Levy at: michelle@efanyc.org

EFA Project Space, a program of the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, was launched in September 2008 with a focus on the investigation of the creative process, aiming to provide dynamic exchanges between artists, cultural workers, and the public. The Project Space presents exhibitions and programs in collaboration with a diverse range of organizations, curators and artists to provide a comprehensive and critical perspective on creative practices. A major aspect of the program's development is ongoing outreach to the myriad individuals and institutions effectively shaping culture today.

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts (EFA) is a 501 (c) (3) public charity. Through its three core programs, EFA Studios, EFA Project Space and the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, EFA is dedicated to providing artists across all disciplines with space, tools and a cooperative forum for the development of individual practice. www.efanyc.org

EFA Project Space is supported in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. Private funding for the program has been received from the Lily Auchincloss Foundation and Bloomberg Philanthropies.

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A Program of the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts

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