

PRESS RELEASE

One+One

Photography, Live Art and Videos by Natalia Mali and Heiner Mühlenbrock

30 May – 20 June 2008

Private view on 30 May 2008 at 7pm

Performances on 30 May 2008 at 8:30pm and 1 June 2008 at 3pm

Other viewings by appointment only: info@artillerie-projekte.org

artillerie is pleased to present *One+One*, a joint exhibition by Russian performance artist Natalia Mali and German filmmaker Heiner Mühlenbrock. Marking the launch of artillerie as an experimental project space, *One+One* offers a look at the transformative and ephemeral nature of self-representation.

In their first collaborative piece, *One+One* (2008), Mali and Mühlenbrock show a series of photographic diptychs constructed out of material which they performed, photographed and selected for this show. In searching for an 'essential image' that describes a woman in space, they intentionally chose a form of a diptych where an intimate portrait of a woman is contrasted with a second image from her everyday life. The loose connection between these images provokes a sense of alienation and disorientation, drawing attention to the nature of viewing with an intention to destroy the verbal meaning of the image itself. The aesthetic of this piece is continually redefined by the outsider's gaze, creating playful juxtapositions open for personal interpretation.

The performative/voyeuristic aspect of *One+One* continues with Mali and Mühlenbrock's video work, *Can't Take My Eyes Off You* (2007, 15 min), first performed at the Container Arts Project in Rome. Accompanied by ten different versions of the title song, Mali amalgamates experiences of women trafficked from East to West, finding a common language between representation and consumption. The container – typically used for shipping, storage or waste – becomes the stage of collective experience of shipped, recycled and disposable female bodies.

In a segment of her video- and text-based performance *I Hire You To Do My Homework* (2008), first performed at the Performa 8 International Performance Art Festival in Istanbul, Mali reads a monologue based on Roland Barthes' *Lovers Discourse*, Molly Bloom's soliloquy from Joyce's *Ulysses* and her own writing in her adopted persona of a prostitute. In inhabiting Molly's physicality, Mali evokes a restorative process of love.

Natalia Mali quotes Jean-Luc Godard's *Vivre sa Vie* as an important influence on her work. Certainly, by portraying both one woman's pragmatic decision to become a prostitute as an illusory act of free will (embodied by Godard's Nana) and dehumanizing acts of human trafficking fueling prostitution markets in the West, Mali offers a resonating look at a suspended eternal 'present' where spectacles of filth and cleansing, sale and art, further dissolve in an alienated daydream of pleasure.

artillerie

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Heiner Mühlenbrock is a German filmmaker best known for his films *Okay Okay – Der Moderne Tanz* (1980) with Christoph Dreher, *Pictures of Germany / Deutschlandbilder* (1984) with Hartmut Bitomsky and *The Ice-Cold Eye* (1982). His collaborations include video works with Heiner Müller, Jonathan Meese, Nick Cave and others. Mühlenbrock's work, in media ranging from 35mm, 16mm and 8mm film to camcorder, surveillance and digital video, provokes reflection on disengaged, impersonal observation and complicity of the viewer.

Natalia Mali, born in Makhachkala (Republic of Dagestan) in 1971, has been working as photographer, video and performance artist since the mid-1990s. She has exhibited and performed internationally, and lives and works in Moscow, London and Berlin.

artillerie is an interdisciplinary arts venue committed to experimentation in visual arts, performance, film, literature and music. Located in Berlin's gritty yet vibrant Wedding district, artillerie is a project run by a non-profit group of volunteers and art activists.

Alexandra Lazar, May 2008

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