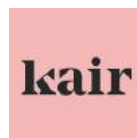


Artist Exchange Program between Youkobo & ECoC, Activity Report

Youkobo × KAIR 2018



Youkobo Art Space, Tokyo



Contents

• Exchange program with Kosice Artist in Residence (KAIR) Hiroko Murata / Youkobo Art Space

• Outline of activity in 2018

• Essay from Artists 2018

1) “Kamen joshi and urban loneliness” Svetlana Fialová

2) “About the experience in Kosice” Tomoko Hojo

-KAIR

-Youkobo Art Space

Exchange program with Kosice Artist in Residence (KAIR)

Hiroko Murata / Youkobo Art Space

The exchange program with KAIR started in 2013. From Japan, 2013: Juka Araikawa, 2014: Manabu Kanai and Michiko Tsuda, 2016: Hiroe Komai, and 2018: Tomoko Hojo were dispatched. On the other hand, from Slovakia, 2013: Erik Sile, 2014: Boris Silca, 2016: Ladeck Brousil, and 2018: Svetlana Fiarova stayed at Youkobo. Of course, Japan and Slovakia have very different geographical conditions and historical backgrounds. Slovakia is an inland country surrounded by the Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine, Hungary and Austria. In the First World War, it merged with the Czech Republic as the Czechoslovakia Republic, became independent from Austria and Hungary, and happened in 1989. Independent from the Czech Republic as Slovakia in 1993, starting with the velvet revolution, it has been less than 30 years before. Japan is an island nation that has been fortunately maintaining peace for over 70 years after World War II.

It doesn't matter if that is the case, the artists enjoyed the difference, and at least they were actively working on their own research and creative work.

It is very pity, Ms Zuzana Tóthová leaved from KAIR office who was a good understanding of the artists, will move and become an advisor this year, I would like to wish her success in the future work in Prague. Also, I would like to say our sincerely and thankful to her for her big efforts in the exchange program.

Outline of activity in 2018



From Japan to Slovakia

Tomoko Hojo · Sound Artist

Residency Period : October 1 ~ November 30, 2018

Exhibition : November 28 ~ December 4, 2018 “Lost and Found” at Kotoľňa

From Slovakia to Japan

Svetlana Fialová · Artist

Residency Period : December 1, 2018 ~ January 31, 2019

Exhibition : January 23 ~ 27, 2019 “I love you” at Youkobo

Activity Report Meeting

This meeting was held on January 25th, 2019 during an exhibition at Youkobo, and was well attended by artists from both countries and a large number of art professionals. In the meeting, presentations were also given by the artists—from Finland and Japan respectively— who joined the Finland AIR exchange program.

Kamen joshi and urban loneliness

Svetlana Fialová

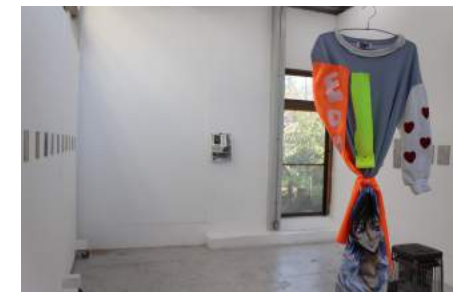
During my residency at Youkobo Art Space, I tried to discover more about the social structure of Japanese society, and the role and status of women in particular. This work was coupled with my ongoing artistic research into the sources of male supremacy and gender stereotypes. I tried to learn more about Japan's history, the role of Onna Bugeisha in Edo and Meiji period, the shunga erotic art and its depiction of women, the Dekora girls and other subcultures known for breaking the rules and strong self expression, but one aspect of Japan's pop culture stood out the most.

I became almost obsessed with the phenomenon of 'Idols'. Idols represent the dark side of the Japanese pop culture. This massive industry is getting bigger and drives crowds crazy. After trawling the vast depths of internet and watching hours of documentaries, I had to go and see it for myself: at first, Japan's young idols look cool, fun and somewhat strange. At first I thought, these young girls are just trying to make some extra cash and follow their dreams, nothing wrong with that, but most fans who follow these groups are middle aged men. As idols, young girls will then have to please creepy dudes at 'hand-shake' events. The idea here is that women are objects to be fetishised, products marketed to old men. It reinforces the idea that to be successful, a girl should comply with male expectations.

The residency has helped me to dig deeper into various layers of Japanese pop culture and its representation of women, both contrary to, and in a close relationship with Western pop culture and visual language. What connects these worlds is the fact that they're both symptoms of a social spectacle where the advancement of technology and the internet is replacing human intimacy. I tried to tell 'short stories' about specific borderline situations where tension, abuse and mutual beneficial behaviour meet with longing for connection and togetherness. My works are a reflection of the process of 'trying to understand', achieved through both interacting with local residents and freely observing and perceiving the everyday reality.

Svetlana Fialová

In her practice, Svetlana Fialová continually develops drawing as a medium, while she tries to push its customary boundaries and confute speculations about its exhaustibility. Fialová likes to appropriate formal features of national and world history of fine arts and blend them with current visual trends. Usually, her own life and stories come to the thematic foreground alongside such topics as (self) mythology, irony, pop culture, feminism, gender and body image. Spontaneous inspiration from media and everyday banality mixes with a deep, harsh self-criticism, the boundary between which blurs and subsequently turns into two viewpoints of the same thing. Compositionally multilayered works that are full of specific iconography and immanent metaphors are often shrouded in mystery with a strong psychological profile.

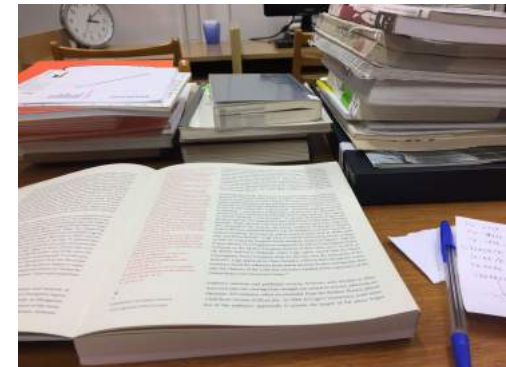


About the experience in Kosice

Tomoko Hojo

Although I have been to other Western European countries a couple of times so far, this stay in Slovakia is the first opportunity to visit and stay in East Europe. I had never heard about Slovak art scenes or artists related to my major, Sound Arts and Experimental Music, and none of my friends have experience to be this country. Thus, my preparation for Slovakia started without any info and only things I could rely on were pure curiosity in my mind and tips available through the internet.

The project I planned was using the archival materials in Slovakia. By researching mainly photographs and audio of the past performances or events and I highlight the differences between documented or non-documented moments, events and objects. I also do re-imagine and re-create the possible sounds or things out of this emptiness or silence. Even though the frame of the project was determined, I worried about several things, like 'what kind of materials can I get?', 'I am not able to read Slovak but will it be realistic to do research there?' and 'how close I could come to achieving my objectives in a limited time?'. Luckily, I could encounter the fantastic artist through the introduction by Zuzana, a director of the KAIR. His name is Milan Adamčiak, Slovak intermedia artist born in 1946 in Slovakia. Adamčiak's career was started from mid 60s and his range of activities was quite wide. He was active not only as performer, composer and musicologist but also concrete poet, self-instrument builder and visual based artist. Many of his works have unconventional style and it has similarities to American experimental musician John Cage or Fluxus. The piece 'Water Music' performed in 1970 is one of the significant examples, as this let both performers and audiences swim in the swimming pool. I was really impressed by its various innovative works, then started to conduct researches about him.



The researches I did in Slovakia were two interviews to Michael Murin, an artist and researcher, has a deep connection to Adamčiak, and to Lucia Gregorova Stach, a curator of retrospective at the Slovak National Gallery [SNG] in 2017. This was fruitful time and could dig into works and its background and his personality. I had also visited library and archive at SNG. One of the memorable episodes was the fact that he was forced to work as an amateur artist in 70s and 80s, the period that communist party had strong power. He couldn't present own works openly since he was working at the University, so he continues to create artworks on the weekend at home and shared it with his colleague time to time. Sadly, the half of his works were dispersed or lost, as people given the work by Adamčiak didn't find it valuable. Based on these researches, I created two visual works, an audio-visual work and the score I created during the stay and its performed/composed audio, and exhibited at the exhibition 'Lost and Found'.

The days I spent in Kosice were wonderful. Kosice was small city but there are lots of cultural facilities and galleries, so I had often visited events with my coordinator, Ivana. It was also great that I could share my spare time with my Ukrainian flat mates, Vitali and his wife Anna. We talked a lot about the daily things, the art, the future dream and the political issue, and also cooked together. Unfortunately, there were no enough time to travel neighbor countries, then I wish I get another chance to do a project in Eastern Europe someday.



Tomoko Hojo

Tomoko Hojo is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher working within the field of experimental music and sound art. Through the experiences of performing historical avant-garde musical works, current works explore site-specific sound work referring to archival materials, field recordings and storytelling. She has completed two Masters's degrees by 2015, in Sound Arts at the London College of Communication and in Creativity of Arts and the Environment at Tokyo University of the Arts. She has written about the pre-history of Sound Art in Japan from 1950s to 1970s, focusing on exhibited sound works created by artists having their origins in music, published in the book, *After Musicking*, edited by Yoshitaka Mōri - Tokyo University of the Arts Press. She has an ongoing collaborative project with Swiss-born sound artist Rahel Kraft, their work *Reborn Sounds* highlights the individual hidden, private relationship between sound and place through interviews with local community. Their next work will be presented in March 2018 at Contemporary Art Center, Nairs, Switzerland. She also coordinates and performs as part of Tokyo based Ensemble for Experimental Music and Theater - EEMT, which explores questions around theatre and notation, propounded by John Cage. She is an Overseas Research Fellow supported by Pola Art Foundation in 2017-2018, and a visiting researcher at CRiSAP, London College of Communication, University of the Arts London.

K.A.I.R. Košice Artist in Residence

International artist-in-residence program K.A.I.R. Košice Artist in Residence was implemented in 2011 as one of the key projects within the frame of “European Capital of Culture” by the NGO “Kosice 2013”. After the European Capital of Culture year, the NGO transformed to Creative Industry Košice, an organization, where K.A.I.R. had stable ground to develop the international activities and network of partners. In 2016, KAIR became an independent association.

The residency program is for artists from all over the world and out of all artistic disciplines and expressions. We give them the possibility to work in the inspiring environment of Košice’s singular cultural surrounding to realize art projects, collaborate with the agile local art scene and present themselves to the local and national public.

We choose artists based on open calls in cooperation with our international partners. Until now, we have sent and invited artist from different countries like e.g. Poland, Germany, Georgia, Ukraine or Japan. We can host 3 artist at the same time to encourage exchange and support the dialogue between different scenes. In Kosice, we provide accommodation, studios, financial and production support.

<https://www.kair.sk>



Youkobo Art Space

Youkobo Art Space manages an Artist-In-Residence Program (AIR) providing accommodation and studio space to artists for a set period of time, and a non-profit studio and gallery for creating and the presentation of new work by Tokyo-based artists, while also promoting community engagement through art and culture. As a 'studio ('kobo') for 'you' ('you' in Youkobo meaning 'play' in Japanese), Youkobo aims to create a space which gives many people the opportunity to experience art and culture on a more familiar level by supporting the autonomous activities of artists. To date, 300 overseas artists from 50 countries have been welcomed to Youkobo, and exhibitions of over 250 Japan-based artists have been held in what has become a place for rich cultural exchange. (As of March, 2019)

<http://www.youkobo.co.jp>

