

SUMMER
TALE

SUMMERTALE

Katarzyna Kozyra's film "Summertale" which concluded the long-term series entitled "In Art Dreams Come True" was in itself a characteristic farewell to its heroes - Gloria Viagra, a drag queen from Berlin and Maestro, an opera vocal coach. Both of the characters appeared in Kozyra's work in 2003 upon the request of the artist herself - to teach her about "femininity". However, nearly in each project in this series - the films, performances and video installations - the artist questions our common beliefs about the "obvious" gender dichotomy and introduces multilevel distinctions which interfere with a simple classification of people according secondary or tertiary gender characteristics. It is worth noting that Kozyra had started this discourse in 1999 with the "Men's Bathhouse" project, for which she received an honorable mention at the 48th Venice Biennale. She marked the following stages with successive versions of the animated video installation "Rite of Spring" and "Dance Lesson" performance which are based on Vaslav Nijinsky's choreographic motifs to Igor Stravinsky's ballets.

After years of toying with various cultural clichés and playing with conventionalities, styles, forms and format of artistic practice, Kozyra films the bloody "Summertale" thriller, incorporating it to the style of a colorful fairytale in which she herself plays the character of an innocent orphan which is subject to the fascination of a group of female dwarfs. As the creators and homemakers of their ideal world, they try to conform and convert the newcomer to their norms and constraints. They however no longer see a place for Maestro and Gloria, as they do not fit the criteria for the standards and norms practiced in their world.

At present, the "Summertale" film serves as a starting point for Katarzyna Kozyra's new visual project. Additionally, it encompasses a series of original posters and a large-scale printout fastened on the facade of the Bałtyk office high-rise in Poznań. These new elements, created especially for this exhibition and shown to the public for the first time, constitute the artist's present-day commentary to her work from 2008.

Anda Rottenberg

17.06. - 18.08.2021

SUMMERTALE

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Exhibition production:



Partners:

KATARZYNA
KOZYRA
FOUNDATION



BAŁTYK

POZnań*

SUMMERTALE

1

I

*We are working since the morning, heigh-ho, tra-la-la!
Cleaning, sweeping and re-ordering, heigh-ho, tra-la-la!
Scrubbing, sewing,
Washing, folding,
Cutting, raking,
Dis-in-fecting, ha-ha-ha!
Cause we cannot stand the dirt
And we simply love to work! Heigh-ho, tra-la-la, bam!*

II

Zzzzzzzzz.... Zzzzzzzz.....

III

*Every morning when we wake
Some fresh air we must intake.
What do we see here today?
Such huge mushrooms! Are they fake?
Just how did they come about? We can barely figure out.
Creeping quietly, near we come...
What to do here? Poke them slightly with a stick,
Gosh it stinks! Pouring water ought to do the trick.*

Oh-oh-oh! Look right there!
 That mushroom there just moved so quickly!
 And this one's cap shifted completely!
 Oh, my! Newcomers! Unworldly and shiny!
 Are these guests a gift from our God almighty?

U

Guests are to be hosted. That is the tradition!
 Not even a toadstool can change our position!
 The house is in order, so the guests are welcome!
 We hide nothing from you so inside we beckon!
 Let us work! Let us clean!
 Let us wash and brush!
 So much to be done. But we have the powers.
 We must clean it all for these guests of ours.

UI

Clean up that man's face!
 We'll find him a place...
 And the lovely lady, this house she will garnish!
 The bestest of rooms for her we must furnish!

And the pleasant girl, lovely little orphan,
 What a strike of luck and to our good fortune,
 She is just like us - so she'll be dedicated!
 We must clothe and comb her, so domesticated!
 Then we shall put her in a stylish dress.
 On her head this bow surely will impress.
 Instantly a maxi-dwarfess we do now possess!

VII

Working right from dawn. And that's nothing funny,
 That's the only way that people make money!
 The orphan is with us working in the garden,
 Our plants will look gorgeous. This is quite a bargain!
 At the height of noon, strange sounds to our ears.
 Doth the man awaken, to our greatest fears:
 Dirty, unkempt ruffled... our respect he thus disowns!
 Sun already at its zenith and he only stretched his bones!
 Anarchy! This crude sight bothers our efforts!
 Hindrance! We'll eradicate this neck hurt!

VIII

Filth cannot be tolerated, filth must be adjourned!
 And our former discipline quickly be returned!
 So we have to call a meeting,
 To resolve this hopeless feeling.

*The order's rules are here at stake
Thus a strong poison we shall make.*

4

IX

*The job is done! The orphan sad!
A tragic song is heard and a grievant claim!
Grasping the dead man's body his lips at her aim,
Ripping from our reach,
She hugs him yet again!
Dear heavens! The corps lives! What? Too little venom?
The ingredients, though right, might not work so seldom.*

*This job wasn't done well, the day comes to its end
We'll fix this all tomorrow - no more play pretend!*

X

*The effects of our mistake are seen in the morning!
Here a trampled flower, veggie patches trodden!
The resurrected corpse is fumbling in the garden.
What about our beauty who's in the shrubs or missing,
Tapping with her heels she's standing while pissing!
So she's not a lady! Lies! How irritating!
With her face all made up she was imitating!
Falsehood, dirt and grime. Our mission isn't over!
We the dwarves are guardians! We love law and order!*

XI

5

Our war is holy! We have caught the corpse!
That was not so hard, lots of laughs of course.
Miss makeup and lipstick is also in the basement.
For all of her sins that is the perfect placement.
The orphan can't be trusted she'll be first to yelp
Shut her mouth at once, before she calls for help.
Tie her up as well, down the stairs she goes,
That's what must be done, all evil dispose!
She is still so young. We will teach a lesson,
How to keep things tidy, to this adolescent.

We will clean like always, there must be an order!
We will not wait until evil takes over!

XII

We are working since the morning, heigh-ho tra-la-la!
Cleaning, sweeping and re-ordering, heigh-ho tra-la-la!
Scrubbing, cutting, blood stains washing,
Sewing and embroidering, dis-in-fecting, ha-ha-ha!
The job is done!
Again the bird's song can be heard,
Instead that of the dreadful Sir!
For future generations to praise
That what no one can quite appraise
The defense of our home sweet home
From that of the evils unknown!
Heigh-ho, tra-la-la, bam!

XIII

6

*Oh, our dear little orphan girl,
Is there still sadness in your world?
Today the triumph finally comes,
So, don't think that more can be done!
You will not change us, don't believe it!
Never in this world will you achieve it!*

XIV

*Ooh, no!
The orphan has betrayed us
And into mushrooms she has made us!*