



Photo: Linda Fuchs, Courtesy the artist & Supportico Lopez

Ola Vasiljeva
"Gold Is the Metal with the Broadest Shoulders"
 Supportico Lopez
 22.6. – 29.7.2017

Ola Vasiljeva's "Gold Is the Metal with the Broadest Shoulders" explored the question of what an exhibition is. What, for example, distinguishes an exhibition from an installation? Vasiljeva's works derived their significance less from their own individual properties than from the dynamics they established with the space and with each other. Her large gestural drawings on paper seemed to engage the metal sculpture at the centre of the space in a dialogue that (almost) melded them together to form a single, spatially dispersed work. One was left with the sense that to see any of these works in isolation would diminish it so drastically as drain it of its most fundamental meanings, which accrue from a discourse of lines, placement and materials. At the same time, the show was not an "installation" in the classic sense of the term: it was defined by the connections it refused as much as by those it generated. Peering into the strange, hollowed-out wooden structure at the centre of the gallery – part wardrobe, part living space,

part dreamscape – in which an array of costumes could be seen from a variety of obstructed and incomplete angles, viewers were forced to construct their own psychic ligatures to connect shapes, objects and marks. The resistance to easy interpretation here and elsewhere in the show saved it from the danger of being weighed down with too much hermeneutics. That said, the press materials suggested the show was about notions of community. This, too, seemed fitting: like this exhibition, a community cannot be reduced to its individual members without enacting a kind of violence and voiding their relationally constructed specificity. Above all, Vasiljeva's exhibition proposed that the production of meaning is a participatory act, and that legibility arises from interdependence and hence is always fragile.

William Kherbek