

PRESS RELEASE**Exhibition: *After Work*****Curated by: Jen Kratochvil****Artists: Céline Condorelli, Ben Rivers and Jay Bernard****Duration: 09.12. 2022 – 15.02. 2022****Location: A WINDOW, Kunsthalle Bratislava**

Kunsthalle Bratislava is pleased to present a new exhibition entitled *After Work*. The collaborative exhibition orchestrates a composition of multiple voices. Céline Condorelli presents a series of sculptural works within a newly conceived site-specific installation, and looks at the complex fabric of social and political relations for which architecture provides a stage. The whole space is transformed into a viewing machine, neither a black box, nor the traditional white cube, but rather a space of dialogue and carefully staged and consciously formulated transparency. Ben Rivers comes in as an attentive observer whose 16mm camera documents a process of material transformation leading to an intervention in a public space – a space inhabited by the presence of curious non-human visitors. Last but not least, Jay Bernard's voice overarches Condorelli's physical work and Rivers' cinematographic language with a poetic text spreading through the exhibition space in large scale prints, and through the film's voiceover, depicting the most subtle notions of experiential sensations while interacting with the work.

The exhibition originates in Condorelli's commissioned playground in South London, conceived through a dialogue with local inhabitants and communities. Condorelli's interest in playgrounds is long-standing and stems from three main historical references: Aldo van Eyck's post-WWII modular playgrounds, which filled empty plots of war-damaged Amsterdam during the 1950s; the unrealized vision of Lina Bo Bardi for the Museum of Art of São Paulo, which was supposed to be surrounded by a playground; and Palle Nielsen's project "Model for a Qualitative Society" staged at the Moderna Museet, which was meant to be a space where only kids and no adults were allowed, a place where play took priority over all other social relations.

The process of creating the playground in South London, both conceptually and physically, as well as sketches presented in the projects entitled *Tools for Imagination and Equipment*, form a backbone of the exhibition *After Work*, which was presented for the first time at the South London Gallery in early 2022. The project has not only travelled to Bratislava, but has been spatially adapted to reflect the open dialogue between the gallery space and the surrounding SNP Square. Although originally conceived as a reflection on specific conditions and social and historical context of South London, the reflection on van Eyck's playgrounds finds easy reference and resonance with the history of its Eastern European counterparts. Which, like those in Amsterdam, have slowly found their way from the reality of the cityscape into the preserved time-capsules of design and architecture museums and history books.

After Work challenges the traditional distinctions between leisure and labour, it speaks of the boundaries between the private and the public and the soft tissues that connect them. It asks what the role of art might be, while attempting to unlearn and reimagine the bonds that society, culture and art can create together. What is the role of an artist, a poet, a filmmaker in all this? These questions remain in the background of the exhibition, somehow quietly, yet with a direct communal bond to the issues at hand.

The exhibition is accompanied by the online publication, edited by Denisa Tomková. It is already the fifth publication in a new publishing series, that provides further critical discursive thinking in the form of essays by international thinkers and writers. The texts are published bilingually: in the original English and also translated into Slovak for the first time. This publication is an exploration of playgrounds and how we learn about social structures from early childhood.

The first essay by Rob Withagen and Simone R. Caljouw, entitled 'Aldo van Eyck's Playgrounds: Aesthetics, Affordances, and Creativity', analyses Aldo van Eyck's playgrounds, designed and built between 1947-78 in Amsterdam. This essay importantly points out that van Eyck's playgrounds were never fenced in, which was meant to encourage children to engage with and to help one other, including the aspect of keeping each other safe. In her essay, 'Growing Sideways, or Why Children Appear to Get Queerer in the Twentieth Century,' Kathryn Bond Stockton proposes the concept 'growing sideways' instead of 'growing up', because she believes that 'growing up' is limiting in its understanding of human growth as it suggests that growth stops when we reach full physical stature. 'Growing sideways' is more complex, suggesting the richness and dynamic nature of subject's experiences and ideas. In her essay 'Women and Public Space', Jos Boys stresses the importance of understanding the stereotypical ideas that materialise in our man-made environment through the design of public spaces in post-1945 town planning. The publication also contains a poem by Jay Bernard, with the eponymous title *After Work*. The poem is displayed both as part of the exhibition installation on the gallery walls and as the video's soundtrack playing in the exhibition space. The *After Work* exhibition is a reflection on the relationship between work and free-time, and importantly encourages us to consider what 'after work' means and what are the subtle boundaries of this imaginary time frame.

FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM
/Kunsthallebratislava

WEBSITE
<https://kunsthallebratislava.sk/>

PRESS KIT
<https://kunsthallebratislava.sk/press/>

Press contact:
Jelisaveta Rapaic
jelisaveta.rapaic@kunsthallebratislava.sk
+421919066070