

Ai am looking away, Ai head upturned to the stars. The swan, the towel, the rock, the foot, the gargoyle - the labyrinth of cosmos.

A solo show by Dorota Gawęda und Eglė Kulbokaitė

14. - 21. January 2017

In their practice artists Dorota Gawęda and Eglė Kulbokaitė often employ avatars and/ or invented linguistic constructs in order to explore the possibility of a differently assembled agency. *Ai* am looking away, Ai head upturned to the stars.*- is a poem and exhibition that exists with the framework of Agatha Valkyrie Ice. Created in 2014, at the very beginning of the project Agatha Valkyrie Ice was to us a virtual alter-ego, an open-ended script, a social-media entity, a live-feed on becoming-real and becoming-virtual, an evolution of forms, relations of matter as well as form and the intervals between, a consideration directed towards the idea of post-gender allowing a multiplicity of voices to take part in collective performance. The avatar has a multitude of pragmatic uses: Agatha is a companion species, here to think with and to invent a body and a sexuality of one's own. Agatha is immersed in a constant process of becoming; a loop of re-posting, re-staging and re-appropriating expressed in textual form, on social media as well as IRL. Ai's character is articulated in the world of materials through installation, via sculptural objects or within molecular constellations of odors produced for the virtual body. Agatha Valkyrie Ice is a curator, an artist, the language Ai uses, an artwork, a collaborative endeavor or space of enquiry. As a nomadic identity Agatha Valkyrie Ice is an avatar in a permanent state of impermanence. Agatha Valkyrie Ice was an experiment towards the alternate language and understanding of gender, towards defining one's own personality in relation to the surrounding communities. This thought experiment led Agatha to evolve from a fictional postgender character confined framework of social media platforms to an artistic strategy to explore contemporary parallels in identity and artistic production.

**Here we use the pronoun Ai: Ai has a content that does not distinguish itself from other things or beings, because the me subject is either pure negativity or a splitting movement; it is consciousness. There's no more self, me. We are all Ai. Ai is Ai. No subject. No desire. Used instead of I/ you/ he/ she/ it/ her/ his/ they/ them/ etc. 'Ai' (in hiragana あい, in katakana アイ, in kanji 愛, 藍, 亜衣) is a Japanese feminine given name. Ai could mean love, affection (愛), or indigo (藍). Ai is the main character of the Ursula K. Le Guin story The Left Hand of Darkness. Ai is, of course, Ai.*

Dorota Gawęda (PL) and Eglė Kulbokaitė (LT) are an artist and writer duo based in Berlin (DE) and Basel (CH). Both are 2012 graduates of Royal College of Art in London and founders of *YOUNG GIRL READING GROUP* (2013-) and *Agatha Valkyrie Ice* (2014-), currently co-directing OSLO10 project space in Basel. Recent shows include: *Who Are You?*, SALTS, Basel; *Whistles of Surfaces*, Point Centre for Contemporary Art, Nicosia, Cyprus; *Corazón*, BB5000 Studio, Milan, Italy; *Memory*, Loyal, Stockholm; *A Thousand Friend: part 2*, New Jorg/exo exo, Vienna; *Boat Rage #7*, Berlin Biennale 9; *Hellstrom Chronicle*, Barbara Weiss, Berlin; *Agatha Valkyrie Ice: Perma-permadeath*, LISTE, Basel; *BODY HOLES*, Berlin Biennale 9; *Abstract Sex*, CCS Bard, NY, USA; *Episode X/Chapter 3: Bedroom*, Art Monte-Carlo, Monaco; *YGRGS*, Art Geneva, Switzerland; *The Death of an Avatar: Mycological Twist/Riverside/Rust*, Riverside, Bern; *YGRG 96,98,101* Kunsthalle Zurich; *CO-WORKERS*, Le Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris; *The Blue-Grey Wall*, Physics Room, Christchurch, New Zealand; *Times Flies Like an Arrow, Fruit Flies Like a Banana*, Cultural Foundation of Tinos, Greece. Gawęda's and Kulbokaitė's writing has been published as part of *JUNGLE JUICE N°4*, Supernova Éditions, 2016; *Intersubjectivity: vol.1 : language and misunderstanding* edited by Lou Cantor and Abraham Adams, Sternberg Press, 2016; *Petunia 7*, Orlando, 2016 (ISSN: 2112-566X); *SFS: Institut for Success*, edited by Anne Weile Kjaer, SYSTEMET, 2016; and several online publications including *aqnb*, the art markets, brand new life, the Museum of Post Digital Cultures. Upcoming exhibitions include: *Schaufenster*, Kunstverein Dusseldorf (solo); *Conradi*, Hamburg/Brussels (solo); *Editorial Vilnius* (solo); *Sodu 4*, Vilnius (solo); *Kunsthalle Basel*.