

EXHIBITION REVIEW:

Adrian Florin Pop and Cătălin Regea: '35, Timișoara Garrison Command, 01.12.2024–30.01.2025, Curators Cristina Daju and Mihai Toth



With its suggestive title, the '35 exhibition by visual artist Adrian Florin Pop (b. 1978) and 1989 Revolution photographer, Cătălin Regea brings into focus the number of years that have passed since the fateful events, anticipating the idea of dividing time into 'pre-revolution' and 'post-revolution'. Given the fact that this event profoundly changed the fabric of Romanian society, I believe that this time division in the collective mind is more than justified. The commemorative and reflective concept of the exhibition fills and dominates the space of the garrison, extending into the cracks of the building, giving visitors the feeling that they have entered a complete space which ema-

nates, through every pore, strong feelings related to both the current political situation and meditating on the political and social events of the past.

The exhibition space was filled with a variety of pieces made in a multitude of media, from painting on and off canvas and photography to audio-visual installations and found objects, which brought a unique breath to the two collaborators' vision of a subject that has been hyper-discussed. Even if the predominantly approached aesthetic is one of thought chaos, where eclecticism, provocative colors, and paint splashes have a place of honor, the whole concept

was created on a well-documented archivist basis, where the photographs taken by Cătălin Regea, on which Adrian Florin Pop intervenes, often with tones of red, stand out and provide legitimacy to the entire manifestation.

I think the space fits very well with the idea behind the exhibition. The sheer size of the location allows artists to express their creativity without being constrained into a suffocating space. At the same time, the space allows the flow of multiple visitors without sacrificing the quality of their experience. Many of the pieces on display were completed within the building, they extend and bleed out on the walls and floor surrounding them. Adrian Florin Pop conceptualized and worked so that the space and location were an integral part of the exhibition, not just a simple anonymous support, a white cube...

I believe that the way the exhibition ironically portrays current political and social figures appeals to both a younger and an older audience. Young people can better understand the tragic events of the revolution when they are paralleled with the political absurdity of our times. It is difficult to choose a single favorite work from the exhibition, but the twenty canvases located on the wall in the stairwell had a rather strong impact. Only then did I truly understand the impressive display of artistic forces that I was about to witness on the upper floor of the building. Another thing that fascinated me was the way in which the concept of the exhibition transcended the limits set by the actual objects, transforming the entire garrison into a work of art. I don't think the exhibits would have the same impact if they were removed from this deeply interconnected relationship.

All in all, the exhibition was definitely worth seeing and it seems to me that it commemorates the Revolution of 1989 in a reverent way, while subtly criticizing politicians who have abused their power from then until now. At the same time, I think the exhibition also has a nostalgic side that appeals to individuals, especially since it is being shown in Timișoara.

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