SIMON LEE

"Paulina Olowska: Questionnaire"

Paulina Olowska is an artist who lives in Raba Nizna, Poland and New York, USA. She selected works for 'Head-Wig (Portrait of an exhibition)', currently on show at Camden Arts Centre, London, UK, and her work is included in 'Moby Dick' at the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francsico, USA; 'Modernologies', Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Spain; and 'Paulina Olowska, Stephen G. Rhodes and Catherine Sullivan' at Metro Pictures, New York, USA. In 2010 she will have shows in the UK at Tramway, Glasgow, and, in collaboration with Bonnie Camplin, at Cabinet, London.

What is your favourite title of an art work?

Ceremonial Hat For Eating Bouillabaisse (1936) by Eileen Agar, of course!

What images keep you company in the space where you work?

Old black and white Eastern European movie posters, RussianVogue, Slovakian Elle, pictures of women tennis players, bizarre hats, hairdos, ladies, dandies and dogs, stills from John Cassavetes' films, cigarette advertisements and reproductions of works by Asger Jorn, Jakub Julian Ziółkowski, Cindy Sherman, Katharina Wulff, Ulrike Ottinger and Francis Picabia.

What was the first piece of art that really mattered to you?

Reproductions of Dutch paintings by Jan Steen or Dirck van Baburen used to frighten me so much! They were popular in the 1980s, and could be found in every Polish apartment.

If you could live with only one piece of art what would it be?

I just visited Leon Chwistek's exhibition 'Aquarelles' at the Fine Arts Society Gallery in Krakow; I could live with each one of them. What a charming, modest show.

What do you wish you knew?

How to speak French.

What should change?

Aggression.

What should stay the same?

Folk art.

What could you imagine doing if you didn't do what you do?

Being a Social Realist sculptor.

What music are you listening to?

Whatever Matthias Schaufler recommends.

What are you reading?

Viva, Piktogram and the Süddeutsche Zeitung.

What do you like the look of?

Ceramics.

What is art for?

For art is what.