



# VESNA BUKOVEC IN ANA ČIGON: WORK IN PROGRESS. DECEPTIVE WORKING TIME

Exhibitions, Meduza Gallery, News

VESNA BUKOVEC IN ANA ČIGON: WORK IN PROGRESS. DECEPTIVE WORKING TIME |

Drawings and video – Open Doors 2024 |

Meduza Gallery, Koper, 21.06.2025–19.09.2025 |

Opening: Saturday, June 21, 2025, at 8 pm – Summer Museum Night |

Curators: Ana Čigon and Vesna Bukovec, Coordination: Tatjana Sirk



Ana Čigon, Snacking Mauling, 2024



Vesna Bukovec, The End of Capitalism, 2024

A critical view of work and contemporary forms of exploitation of workers, such as extended working hours, non-standard and insecure forms of work, curtailing workers' rights, hyper-production, and mindless demands for constant economic growth, the aim of which is not to improve the living standards of the most vulnerable, but to accumulate wealth in the hands of the wealthiest individuals, increasingly frequent occurrences of burnout resulting from the unlivable demands of neoliberalism, environmental pollution, etc. are themes and problems of today's society in its broadest sense and scope. The work in progress with a decentralized exhibition approach represents a multi-year artistic-curatorial research created by visual artists Vesna Bukovec and Ana Čigon in collaboration with curator Tia Čiček.

After the first public presentation titled *Work in Progress. Reflections on Communities Beyond Capitalism* at Galerija Škuc in 2022 and the subsequent exhibition with the performance *Work in Progress. Utopian Rest* at GT22 in Maribor in 2023, the third version of the project titled *Work in Progress. Deceptive Working Time* has emerged. It started with a reading circle around the book *Bullshit Jobs* by David Graeber, where the artists discussed with the interlocutors how the views on value and the valuation of work in the book resonate with their lives. In the research process, the artists also read the books *Restoration of Capitalism: Re-patriarchalization of Society* by Lilijana Burcar and the anthology *De-growth. Vocabulary for a New Era*. A documentary video *Deceptive Working Time* (2024) was created, in which Mag. Ajda Pistotnik from the Policy Lab organization presents perspectives on organizing work and society proposed by the de-growth movement. Professor Dr. Lilijana Burcar addresses the historical differences in working conditions for women in socialism and capitalism and presents the significance of systemic emancipation of women. The video was first presented at a screening and open discussion at the Škuc Gallery in Ljubljana in December 2024. Its revised version will be showcased at the Meduza Gallery. The video *Precariat of the World...* (2022) will also be on display, in which unionist Tea Jarc, classical philologist, anthropologist, and writer Dr. Svetlana Slapšak, and Jadranka Vesel from the engaged Research in the Social Economy (RISE) institute reflect on the position of contemporary workers, communities, past and future. In addition to the videos, drawings on paper and mind maps created during various stages of artistic research will be exhibited. The exhibition will culminate in a public discussion in September.

The work in progress is a development-oriented project, as its content and visual aspects cumulatively come together and incorporate new reflections and new exhibition elements at each stage. The uniqueness of this research-creative-reflective process arises from the inclusion of various media, group work, and learning. Active participants from different fields, later also visitors and other members of the interested public, are involved in the work process, helping to co-create the content parameters of the project and its development. Collaboration seeks to find answers to questions such as: How to move forward? What kind of future can we imagine and plan for? How to become and remain in solidarity and connected to one another? How must we transform ourselves and society for this?

Ana Čigon and Vesna Bukovec are socially critical and engaged artists. The main guideline in their work is the compactness of the research and creative process, where they insist on continuous learning and exploration through various approaches: organizing reading groups, conversations with experts and the interested public, collaboratively establishing conditions for the creation of artistic works and content accessible to a broader audience, which address everyday economic and social issues affecting a wide spectrum of people. Their research process is accompanied by a creative reflection, which is manifested in the creation of drawings, videos, and installations. Their research is purposefully directed at creating visions for the future that transcend apathy and the mindset that alternatives are no longer possible.

The project *Work in Progress. Deceptive Working Time* was created with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia.

\*The authors would like to thank Ajda Ana Kocutar, Lara Mejač, Hana Čeferin, Vasja Progar, Julij Borštnik, Alenka Sottler and Tia Čiček for their collaboration and sharing of reflections.

## BIOGRAPHY

**ANA ČIGON** (1982) completed her study in painting (2007) and her master's degree in video (2011) at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. She also earned a master's degree in Interface Cultures (2012) at The University for Arts Linz in Austria. She works in the fields of video, performance, and film. Her practice spans various media and is focused on socially critical topics; in recent years, she has primarily explored feminist themes, criticism of neoliberalism, and critiques of European refugee policies.

She has received numerous awards and nominations for her work. Among others, she is the recipient of the OHO Group Award (2009) and was a finalist for the Essl Art Award, the Henkel Slovenia Award (2010), and the Vordemberge-Gildewart Foundation Award (2011). Her films have been selected for competition programs at numerous international film festivals, and she has received several awards for animation, most recently a special mention from the professional jury at the Festival of Slovenian Film (2024).

She exhibits her work both in Slovenia and internationally. She has participated in group exhibitions at, among others, Istanbul Modern, Turkey; International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP), New York, USA; Apollonia- Échanges Artistiques Européens, Strasbourg, France; and in recent years also in Greece, Egypt, Argentina, and the USA. In Slovenia, she has taken part in group exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova (MSUM) and the Museum of Modern Art (MG) in Ljubljana, as well as at the City Gallery Ljubljana, Škuc Gallery, Alkatraz Gallery, P74 Gallery, SCCA, and other venues.

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**VESNA BUKOVEC** (1977) graduated (2002) and earned a master's degree (2006) in sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. She works in various media, with drawing, alongside video, taking a central role. Her projects address the consequences of neoliberal ideology, consumer-oriented society, socio-political realities, the role of women in contemporary society, and the refugee tragedy.

She is active in several fields: as an independent visual artist, as part of various art collectives, as a curator and exhibition organizer, and as a professional associate of the DIVA Station archive at SCCA-Ljubljana. She also works as a graphic and web designer for various non-governmental cultural organizations.

She presents her work both in Slovenia and abroad. In Slovenia, she has held numerous solo exhibitions and participated in many group exhibitions, including at the Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova (MSUM) and the Museum of Modern Art (MG) Ljubljana, the International Centre of Graphic Arts (MGLC), the City Art Gallery Ljubljana, Vžigalica Gallery, Škuc Gallery, Alkatraz Gallery, P74 Gallery, SCCA, the Carinthian Gallery of Fine Arts, the Gallery of Contemporary Art Celje, and other venues across the country. In recent years, she has participated in various international exhibitions, biennials, and festivals in Vienna, Graz, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Belgrade, Athens, Istanbul, Milan, Rome, The Hague, Berlin, Białystok, New York, and elsewhere.



## WORK IN PROGRESS. DECEPTIVE WORKING TIME

Exhibited works at the Meduza Gallery

1. **Ana Čigon, *Night Work and Snacking Mauling***, 2024, digital drawing
2. **Ana Čigon, *We Demand the Re-Collectivization of Care Work***, 2025, acrylic on the wall  
(above: *We demand the re-collectivization of care work*, crossed out below: *We demand paid care work*)
3. **Ana Čigon, *Extended and Shortened Workday With Equal Pay***, 2025, diptych, digital drawing
4. **Vesna Bukovec, *Definitions of Work***, 2025, ink drawing  
(above: Priest: Work is a value in itself / Worker: Exploitation of labor creates wealth / Capitalist: Capital creates wealth / Woman: Most work is care work; below: The contradiction of modern work: 1. Most people derive their sense of dignity and self-worth from working for a living. 2. Most people hate their jobs.)
5. **Ana Čigon, *Paid Maternity Leave Since 1920***, 2024, digital drawing
6. **Ana Čigon, *Work in Progress. Who among you?***, 2022–2025, series of drawings, felt-tip pen on paper  
(from left to right: Who among you is looking forward to Monday? Who among you is thinking about quitting? Who among you is earning a minimum wage? Who among you thinks that no one will notice your work? Who among you is satisfied with your job? Who among you wants a shorter workday? Which one of you has a lower salary than your male colleague? Which one of you is struggling to make ends meet with a pension?)
7. **Ana Čigon, Vesna Bukovec, Tia Čiček, *Precariat of the World ...***, 2022, video, 40'  
(speakers: Tea Jarc, dr. Svetlana Slapšak, Jadranka Vesel)
8. **Vesna Bukovec, *Universal Basic Income***, 2025, ink drawing  
(left: Enough for a dignified life + public healthcare + public education + affordable housing; right: Well-paid essential and difficult jobs. Abolition of unnecessary bureaucracy and bullshit jobs. I'm not going along anymore! Revolt against exploitation at workplace; below: Let's separate survival from work! Most people wouldn't sit around all day. Compulsive workaholics would more than make up for the downtime caused by some slacker.)
9. **Vesna Bukovec, *Feminization of Poverty***, 2024, digital print
10. **Vesna Bukovec, *Working Time***, 2024, digital print
11. **Ana Čigon, Vesna Bukovec, *Deceptive Working Time***, 2024/2025, video, 30'  
(speakers: dr. Lilijana Burcar, Ajda Pistotnik)
12. **Vesna Bukovec, *The End of Capitalism***, 2024, digital print
13. **Lilijana Burcar: *Restoration of Capitalism: Repatriarchalization of Society* | David Graeber: *Bullshit Jobs* | Giacomo D'Alisa, Federico Demaria, Giorgos Kallis: *Degrowth. A Vocabulary for a New Era***
14. **Participatory Work in Progress: Do you think your working hours, conditions and forms of work are decent? Do they allow you an appropriate amount of rest and relaxation? Under the selected drawing, write down your experience of modern forms of work in the form of a question that you would ask your colleagues.**

