

Agnė Jokšė: REALITY CRACKS

24 April – 23 August 2026

Agnė Jokšė's first solo exhibition in Sweden centres around a new film work titled *Careerist / Karjerist** (2026), in which a newly developed script, narrated as a voiceover by the artist, recontextualises visual footage filmed in a Lithuanian quarry several years prior. Conceptually and visually, the footage and voiceover align uncannily – seemingly too perfectly harmonized to not have been produced in tandem – adding to the quiet suspense of a reality that is becoming slippery and unreliable.

This uncanny sense of realities just out-of-sync is present in the exhibition not only through *Careerist*, but also in the 2022 video work *Daring Dreams / Ateitys ateis (Multiple Futures Will Come)*. Several elements in fact hold true in the two films: both forefront the artist's own body and voice, both use classical music as an anchoring device for personal and collective social memory, and both portray a sense of calm that is at odds with the violent events that form their backstory. *Daring Dreams* was shot on the eve of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Filmed inside a nondescript city-apartment, with crinkled sheets draped as surfaces for projection, images are layered using green screen techniques to juxtapose footage of the outside world against the close proximity of the group of actors within a domestic setting. The presence of bodies entangled at close range, at times captured through deeply zoomed-in recordings of facial expressions, results in an atmosphere both so intimate it verges on the claustrophobic: something is slightly off.

The film's original title *Karjerist** is a wordplay in Lithuanian, speaking to twin meanings: one being 'careerist', the other its near-homonym 'karjeras' meaning 'quarry'. The film's narrative obliquely unfolds from personal and political events related to the Cultural Revolt that took place in Lithuania in 2025, in which the artist had a vocal and visible role, and consequently became the target for an onslaught of threats and attacks from the country's far right movement. The film indirectly portrays the point where the fear and stress following the attacks has all but undone the protagonist's sense of reality. The quarry setting expands this sense of psychological breakdown to a physical scenography. A disorienting landscape of rock – a material that is metaphorically and literally familiar to us as a stable, solid support – is deconstructed into fragments, a terrain of rubble and gravel. The quarry's precipitous slopes evoke the familiar and unpleasant feeling of sliding in gravel or scree, losing one's foothold, as the ground shifts and no longer supports the weight of the body.

In one scene, the artist holds out her hand horizontally, palm down, to trace the undulating terrain of the quarry. But the line drawn as the hand moves doesn't follow the depiction of reality, but rather traces a different version. Continuity is difficult to pin down in both film works, creating a sense of confusion, lost faith in what is perceived as true.

Music plays a significant role in both film works, though with radically different connotations. In *Daring Dreams*, the swaying flows of Onutė Narbutaitė's 2014 opera *The Cornet* soundtrack the suspension of time and hovering possible futures. *The Cornet* was loosely based on Rainer Maria Rilke's wistful poem *The Lay of the Love and Death of Cornet Christopher Rilke*, with the libretto piece narrating the tale of lovers living through their last night before the break of the Austro-Turkish war. The parallels are clear, with the protagonists of *Daring Dreams* portraying a queering of the thematics in Rilke's original poem: a retelling of love, sex and camaraderie in the face of war.

Jokšė's film *Careerist* also opens with a classical piece of music – Jūra ('The Sea'), written by Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis, a composer and cultural figure widely commemorated in Lithuania in recent years in the build up to his 150th anniversary in 2025. The contemporary reworking of Jūra that is used in *Careerist* became a cultural call to arms – the anthem for the Cultural Revolt in 2025, and also the sonic memory of Jokšė's breakdown following her role in the political turmoil and the subsequent online persecution. The music choices for both filmworks give insight into Jokšė's autoethnographic methods – both pieces soundtracked her life during the urgent events prior to making each film.

In Jokšė's practice, language is used as an investigative tool for the artist's introspective process and a material output which reveals linguistic and systemic limitations. Through the script of *Daring Dreams*, Jokšė implements a countermodel to the gendered elements of grammar in Lithuanian, inscribing an alternative grammar. Within the universe of this filmwork, Jokšė's model becomes reality: a systemic shift. Yet Jokšė's work with language transgresses her filmscripts, and indeed the field of contemporary art. Her proposal for a non-binary Lithuanian language, which has been presented at linguistics conferences, disavows the gendered conjugations of verbs and noun endings, a technique she implements in speech through the "swallowing" of word endings. Gendered language is ingested, and the proposed alternative invokes other modifications and additions, reflecting the live evolution of language. The breaking down of language into its composite parts, like rocks into smaller stones, is a recurring strategy for Jokšė. Through text and image, Jokšė constructs new grammatical and linguistic frameworks to investigate and critically portray the conditions of language itself.

Agnė Jokšė (b. 1993) is an artist and writer currently based in Vilnius. Using the tools characteristic to autoethnography, Jokšė tells stories in which personal experiences and past events intertwine with contemplations of love, intimacy and friendship, as well as imaginative reflections. Jokšė's video and performative text works often investigate parallel histories, compassion, entangled relations, queerness and language.

Jokšė has exhibited at Palais de Tokyo; E-flux Screening Room New York; Kogo Gallery; Cell Project Space; Editorial; Kunsthal Charlottenborg; Whitechapel Gallery; GIBCA and the Baltic Triennial.