



Open Source Gallery, Inc - 501(c)(3) organization  
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For press inquiries, please contact us at [contact@opensourcegallery.org](mailto:contact@opensourcegallery.org)

## MONIKA DROŻYŃSKA | *LATTE CAPITALISM: Letters as a Source of Resistance*

**April 13 – May 24, 2024**

**Opening Reception: April 13th, 7-9pm**

**Gallery Hours: Thurs + Fri: 4-6pm, Sat + Sun: 2-6pm**

Open Source Gallery is pleased to present *Latte Capitalism: Letters as a Source of Resistance*, a project by Monika Drożyńska.

For many years, Drożyńska has used hand embroidery on fabric as historical, political, and social commentary exploring feminist, ecological, economic, and migratory and refugee issues in Europe. Her work deconstructs and expands the boundaries of words and language by creating inter-language bridges between seemingly unconnected grammars.



Monika Drożyńska, Latte Capitalism. Image courtesy of the artist.

Drożyńska's ongoing research is concentrated on migratory movements and the resulting linguistic multiculturalism. Utilizing letters, words, and slogans from various languages including Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian, Drożyńska's embroideries speak to the politics of identity, memory, power structures, and various forms of resistance. Her works often utilize phonetically similar words that are found in more than one language and banned letters as discursive ornaments, political symbols which stitch cloth into historical-political-mystical essays.

The phrase Latte Capitalism combines Polish post-war historical orthography with a contemporary Russian pro-war propaganda symbol to transform the term "late capitalism." Following the Yalta Conference in 1945, the north-eastern parts of modern Poland, which had been German before the war, came under the jurisdiction of the USSR. A rumor spread in the region that Russians would exterminate those with double letters in their surnames, which they considered to be a signifier of aristocracy, so many people removed a letter and later were not permitted to restore it. The "Z" in "Capitalism" refers to the Z painted on Russian military vehicles involved in the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, which has become a pro-invasion symbol in Russia and has been critically referred to as a "zwaztika" by opponents. The resulting term, Latte Capitalism, highlights late capitalism's return to privilege, elitism of the aristocracy, and unethical actions, all hiding behind a pint of soy latte.

For her exhibition at Open Source, Drożyńska has created a series of embroideries that utilize languages such as English, Afrikaans, Georgian, Hebrew, Morse code, and Braille and incorporate iconography taken from sign language, road and evacuation signs, prison tattoos, and constellations. Through this collage of languages and symbols, Drożyńska creates new hybrids of abstract symbolic structures which resist the hierarchies and one-dimensionality that normative language produces.

Monika Drożyńska, b. 1979 Poland is a visual artist, embroiderer, and activist, who is interested in language, which she explores using hand embroidery on fabric. She has pioneered embroidery techniques in contemporary art and textiles in public space. Drożyńska received a PhD from the Academy of Fine Arts Krakow Poland. She has collaborated with the Zachęta National Gallery of Art, the Center for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, the Contemporary Museum in Wrocław, Mumok in Vienna, the Ludwig Museum in Budapest, Bozar in Brussels, Sotheby's in Tel Aviv. She has works in the collection of Bunkier Sztuki, National Museum in Krakow, MocaK Museum of Contemporary Art in Cracow, National Museum in Kiev, Lentos in Austria.

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