Sunday Morning Pancakes is a social format called to life to save the art critic from permanently damaging his or her stomach. As we all know the important talks are being held with a glass of wine in a nice bar. But to the colleagues who, can not keep up with the intensity of the institutional art world, a good alternative might be to ask the artist for a round of Sunday morning pancakes...

Feel free to try this at home!

Vahram Muradyan and Sveta Bogomolova are two media artists living and working in Tartu. On the 22nd November they opened an exhibition at Tartu Art House. Their work, a table full of food, which is now slowly rotting, is many-sided and risky – either it is a total failure or the most conceptual piece of art exhibited in Art House in the past years. Vahram (who simply loves pancakes) refused to comment on the work in the after party of the opening, so there was no other choice as to ask them both for a round of pancakes.

Indrek: So You went to the exhibition yesterday? [Sveta Bogomolova could not attend the opening of the exhibition due to sudden illness of their daughter.]

Sveta: Yes, it was actually the day before yesterday. I have seen a lot of pictures of it. After the opening, even before Vahram had come home, a friend of ours has send us a video.

Vahram: I am sorry I lost my voice today.

Indrek: It happens… But its actually perfect. Because then nothing stays on the tape. Everybody else is talking, but you are not to be heard. Its actually in perfect coherence with the exhibition. It’s like the poster you made. When I have send it to the secretary of Art House to be send out with the press release, she called me back to say: “Is it this pink thing what I am supposed to send out?” And I say “yes yes, that one”.

An hour later I got myself too to the Art House when the print shop called: “Hey, there is something wrong with your file”. They did not believe it’s OK until I have sent a jpeg copy for proof.

Vahram: Next time let’s do the white one.

Indrek: I actually want to just brutally ask, what did you want to achieve? Why did you do it?
Vahram: Why did you want me to do the exhibition?

Indrek: First of all, there was a drop out in the exhibition schedule. And we wanted you to join the Tartu Artist Union and Toompere (head of the Union) said you needed to make an exhibition.

Vahram: First of all, we wanted to do something together. And we started to develop it. It took a month or so.

Šelda: But how did you plan everything? Because if you go to the exhibition now, it looks so perfectly rotten.

Vahram: No!?

Šelda: Yes! Just look at the flowers and everything. It seems like you knew how they will rotten.

Vahram: Well, you just imagine that this will look like this with that. This will get rotten, this will get stinky. But we where not nervous about that. There is left surprise for ourselves as well.

Šelda: That is the idea.
Šelda: But still you had some idea?

Vahram: Yea. We wanted fish and we wanted watermelon. Nuts.

Šelda: Was there any influence from the history of painting? Because I first thought that it looks like those fruit tables and tulips in old vanita paintings of 17th century.

Vahram: We were looking at some of them beforehand, yes.

Šelda: For example the tulips have now dried and taken this deformed shape which beautiful. That’s why I asked if you knew what they will turn like. Because it looked like the a perfect choice.

Vahram: We did not rehearse, so to say. We have brought the flowers in the last minute. Just felt they will match in perfectly.

Šelda: And the jazzy music?

Sveta: Before the exhibition Vahram was posting jazz to the Facebook event.

Vahram: Before there was anything, we already had this music. So maybe this music is the basis of it, the canvas. First you have this emotional part. First we wanted this nice beautiful love related thing there.

Sveta: Some of the music is from some Italian erotic movies, and if you look at the images that are on the YouTube video… some very funny pictures of half naked-ladies…
Šelda: The visual part of the exhibition reminded me first of all about the Netherlandic still-lifes, but the music went very nice together with the post-party situation. There was a glamorous party, now the party has ended, everybody has left but the music is still on.

Sveta: If you just look through the open door you can actually imagine people still being there, you can’t see them, but the music is on and you can imagine what’s happening there. And then you enter and start looking at it in this museum situation, then it becomes a still-life.

I grew up in St Petersburg and we were going to excursions to those palaces all the time, and every time there were those dining rooms with tables covered with beautiful dishes, but you could not touch them.

Indrek: How important was the last supper situation? Now that everybody has left, the party is over. How important is that the supper is over? You had the opening where everybody could eat, but now it is inaccessible, you can’t get to it. Its this museum situation that Sveta referred to. The party is over and you missed it. Margus Tamm had an excellent installation “This Was the Best Party. And I wasn’t there.” You entered the gallery, but you got nowhere. (http://youtu.be/kMlg-Ozw7m4).
Sveta: I told about this to Vahram. We were thinking about that a lot.

Indrek: The reason I am asking this is because of the situation, that its all rotting and its smelly and this dominates the feedback. So there is the question of what was behind it.

In the opening everybody was eating and asking questions, what will this exhibition be about. It will most probably be documented, and then it will be about us eating. But no. It turned out it's not about that. I am looking for the extra level, of what is going on there?

Vahram: You asked about the importance of this last supper...

Sveta: We knew that it will look like this, but we did not necessarily wanted it to look like this. The point is that you have to guess what was happening by what you see. For me the most important reference is the mutation of events in your memory. There was an event, and now its transforming in your memory.

Indrek: I really liked this museum parallel you made Sveta. There is this perfectly set up table, but what actually happened behind the table... We can write big books about it.

Sveta: But there are slightly different things. You come and you see, that something was happening before you, and thatsomething was happening without you. But if you are the other person who was at the opening and you come and see what has changed, the experience is different.
Vahram: We really did not want to discuss anything about the exhibition at the opening. But there were two kinds of people. There were those who just enjoyed it, and then those who were in the back analytically looking at what’s going on.

There are things that I am worried about, but I don’t know if I should. There were fewer glasses at the beginning, and then there were glasses added in the process. And this is one of the things that can wake me up at five o’clock in the night to think what am I going to do? What am I going to do? I never thought that there would be more glasses... I guess it’s OK.

Sveta: In the opening you shared the food with whoever is coming, there could have been homeless people. I guess that was important for me.

Indrek: So it’s not a private party like the last supper was.

Sveta: Yes it was totally not private.
Vahram: When you asked about the last supper and importance of it, there’s much in it to dig in. But as for the poster, I don’t think that the poster is important.

Šelda: Then why pink?

Vahram: I didn’t expect there to be much to think about.

Indrek: But for me the iconoclasm of the poster was important. In the sense, that it did not say anything about the exhibition.

Šelda: Yes, if it would have been white, it would have told a lot.

Indrek: But now it does not say a thing. It doesn’t even peer the authors’ names. It starts to work. You have a poster which is supposed to give information, but it doesn’t...

Šelda: Yes, but pink is a strong colour, not that it says something about the exhibition, but it’s is a colour with attitude.

Sveta: In the beginning we just wanted to do something cheerful. That’s how the eating thing came out. In the end, it’s not very cheerful for those, who have not been there to eat it all, I know. But it’s really difficult to make a cheerful thing, all the time there are some things that can be interpreted pessimistically, especially in this time of the year.

Indrek: But still, did you have in mind what you wanted it to be, and did it work this way.

Sveta: It was difficult to predict what it was going to look like. It depends on what dishes will be there, how it all will be organized. How people would react and how it all would get rotten. And many other things.

Indrek: It’s not the end yet. But I don’t think it will change a lot.

Sveta: Me neither.

Šelda: It would have been really nice if there were flies.

Sveta: It would have been nice if the door would have been closed, because then the odour would be stronger. You have seen what you seen, but you cant help thinking what it used to be. So getting strange because of the smell, enhances the effect somehow.