

TITLE OF WORK: Duba

ARTIST: Shaarbek Amankul

YEAR PRODUCED: 2006

MEDIUM: Video

DURATION: 6 min 56 sec

EDITION: 1/6 + 2AP

Shamans are healers who use traditional practices to cure people of ailments, triggering natural forces on a subconscious level to help overcome illness. On screen, there's only a close-up of a face - the fascinating physiology of a trance - a shaman performing a ritual. The title of the work 'Duba' means 'cleaning the soul'. In Kyrgyz culture scientific explanations can be ineffective since many people do not trust logic. The realm of informal medicine and inexplicable phenomena is often more convincing than science. This era of complex conditions of social upheaval and rapid changes within the fields of technology and communication lead to feelings of inadequacy and a loss of identity. People therefore turn to shamans to obtain treatment for their illnesses. The irrational is a form of restoration lost identity. [Shaarbek Amankul]

TITLE OF WORK: Sham

ARTIST: Shaarbek Amankul

YEAR PRODUCED: 2007

MEDIUM: Video

DURATION: 4 min 21 sec

EDITION: 1/6 + 2AP

Like “Duba”, this work documents a cleansing ritual. The unconventional appears most likely to gain a foothold in the Post-Soviet Era of no fixed paradigms. In this place, they believe in and hope for miracles. And only the shaman can enter a trance. In this state of mind, they read prayers, they yawn and cry from excitement; they scream and belch from sicknesses of both body and mind. Strange how they meditate, scratching and beating one another. And afterwards, according to credible sources, they often don’t remember what happened to them. They will conclude that everything happened by the will of higher powers. Once they’re purified and blessed like this, they can live on more peacefully.

ARTIST'S CV

Shaarbek Amankul (b. 1959. Lives and works in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan) is a curator and interdisciplinary artist working with a variety of media: ceramic, sculpture, installation, performance, video and photography, in addition to conceptual research projects. Amankul holds art and history degrees from the Kyrgyz State University of Culture and Arts (1980) and Kyrgyz National University (1989), respectively. Amankul founded the international artist group Art Connection (2001-2006), the first the art initiative in Kyrgyzstan focused on environmental issues. Amankul's conceptual and curatorial work also includes the extensive art platform *B'Art Contemporary*, which he founded in 2007 to instigate a critical arts dialogue between the communities of Central Asia and the global art world. B'Art Contemporary, amongst the very first contemporary art initiatives in Kyrgyzstan, is an artistic research platform which considers art as an essential facilitator of critical dialogue on environmental, social, economic and cultural issues faced by the societies of Central Asia. To continue his mobile art practice and artistic research, in 2011 Shaarbek Amankul founded the *Nomadic Art Camp*, a series of nomadic art projects in Kyrgyzstan, using the practice of the traditional way of life of nomads as a source of inspiration for contemporary art practices. The project, continuing to this day, focuses on the relationship between art and the political, economic and social processes at the intersection of issues of globalization, migration and bio-cultural diversity.

EDUCATION

- 1980** Kyrgyz State University of Culture and Arts
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- 1989** Kyrgyz National University
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 Project Stoa 169**
Polling, Germany
(Sculpture Park opening to the public 2022).
- 2020 Waldwolfwildnis**
Haus Beda, Bitburg, Germany
- Shamanism and Contemporary Artists**
Gallery 46, London, UK
- 2019 Water(Proof)**
Federation Square Melbourne, Australia
- Planet Art Festival of Nature**
Kühlhaus-Berlin, Germany
- Water(Proof)**
MOMENTUM, Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin, Germany
- Collection**
Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- 2018 Posttotal**
Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- 2017 Flight of a Blind Eagle**
Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

- 2015 Balagan! Contemporary Art from the Former Soviet Union and Others Mythical Places**
Kühlhaus-Berlin, Germany
- 2014 Call and Response with George Steinmann**
Kunstmuseum Thun, Switzerland
- 2013 Crossroad: Contemporary Art from Central Asia & Caucasus**
Sotheby's, London, UK
- Introspection**
Ya Gallery, Kyiv, Ukraine
- Video from Elsewhere**
Edinburgh, UK
- 2012 "Reformat" International Festival of Videoart**
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- International Festival of Independent Cinema**
Tahskent, Uzbekistan
- 2011 Between Heaven and Earth: Art from the Centre of Asia**
Gallery Calvert 22, London, UK
- Video and Performance Art Festival**
Ramallah, Palestine
- 2009 22nd Les Instants Vidéo Festival**
Marseille, France
- Changing Climate: New Media and Video Art from Central Asia**
Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna
- The View from Elsewhere**
Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney
Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art Brisbane
- Biennale Cuvee**
OK Center for Contemporary Art, Linz, Austria
- Zindan/Vatan/Duba**
Kunsthalle/Spiegel Lothringer13, München, Germany

2008 2nd Singapore Biennale

2007 Intersection

Modern Art Gallery, Ulan Bator, Mongolia

2005 Central Asian Pavilion

51st Venice Biennale/videoarchive, Italy

2003 43rd Premio Suzzara

Galleria Civica d'Arte Contemporanea di Suzzara, Italy

2002 Transforma

Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland

No-Mads Land

Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany

1999 Art in Action

Oxford, UK

1998 World Contemporary Art 98

Los Angeles, USA

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUMS

2010 International Terracotta Art

Eskishekir, Turkey

2009 International Sculpture and Land Art

Bad Tolz, Germany

Art Hub / New Silk Road

Bangkok, Thailand

2007 Intersection: Contemporary Art

Ulan Bator, Mongolia

1997 Ceramic in Architecture UNESCO
Samarkand, Uzbekistan

1996 Urban Ceramic
Tashkent, Uzbekistan

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

2019 International Colloquium in Contemporary Philosophy and Culture
“Home & Journey around the Globe”
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Asia Art Space Network Forum
Gwangju, South Korea

2017 Culture Summit
Abu Dhabi, UAE

2014 General Assembly of International Academy of Ceramic
Dublin, Ireland

2010 CIMAM Annual Conference
“Common Ground for Museums in a Global Society”
Shanghai, China

2007 10th Istanbul Biennale Conference
“International Discourse vs. Local Vibrancy: Challenges and Opportunities
in the Practice of Art in Central Asia”
Istanbul, Turkey

CIMAM Annual Conference
“Contemporary Institutions as Producers in Late Capitalism”
Vienna, Austria



INTERNATIONAL ARTIST RESIDENCIES

2020 MOMENTUM Artist-in-Residence

Berlin, Germany

2011 International Artist Residence Villa Waldberta

Feldafing, Germany

CECArtslink Global Art Lab

New York / San Francisco, USA

2005 Vermont Studio Center

Johnson (VT), USA

Print Graphic Academy

Austria

2003 International Artist in Residence Krems

Austria

1998 Berkshire Artist's Settlement

West Stockbridge (MA), USA

1989-91 The House of Art Foundation USSR

Latvia