

Karolina Wilczyńska, **Infrastruktura troski. Maintenance art Mierle Laderman Ukeles** – summary

This dissertation is devoted to the socially engaged artistic practice of maintenance art developed by Mierle Laderman Ukeles since the late 1960s in New York City. The main objective of the study is to examine how Ukeles's work – situated between conceptual art, performative actions, and institutional collaboration with municipal public services – reveals and reworks structural relationships between art, care work, infrastructure, and capitalism.

Maintenance art is analysed as a long-term artistic strategy in which the issues of care and reproductive labour – both private, public, and ecological – become tools of social critique and means of redefining the relationship between art institutions and the systemic conditions of their operation. The dissertation critically engages with dominant interpretations of maintenance art as a gesture of visibility or symbolic recognition of care work. Drawing on Nancy Fraser's theory of social reproduction and Marina Vishmidt's materialist analysis and infrastructural critique, the author argues that focusing solely on the politics of recognition neutralises the radical potential of this practice.

The dissertation presents Ukeles's actions in the context of successive social, economic, and ecological crises in New York City, highlighting their ambivalent entanglement with institutions as well as their potential to generate alternative imaginaries of social order. Particular attention is paid to maintenance art as a form of artistic speculation capable of envisioning systemic change within late capitalist infrastructures. The study offers a comprehensive and multi-layered approach to Ukeles's practice as an infrastructural one – rooted in the crisis of care, labour, and ecology – and as a critical intervention in the relations between production, reproduction, and the institution of art.