

On Becoming a Doll Maker

Bulgarian transcript:

Мария: Интересното нещо, което мога да кажа за себе си е, че аз не съм художник, не съм приложник дипломиран. Имам някакво такова кратичко обучение, изкарано за това, което правя, то по-скоро е за ръчно тъкания текстил и то е при нашия майстор. По професия съм икономист, след това правист, и в крайна сметка си правя кукли по цял ден, защото това ми е интересно, това ми харесва, и това мога да правя най-добре.

Интервюиращ: А как започна всичко?

Мария: Със първите кукли започна случайно, и след това вече след като първите бяха излезли на яве и на бял свят, просто една така нее... нехубава такава случка ме накара да продължа и да се докажа и да повярвам сама, да повярвам че мога да бъда най-добрата и да покажа нещо интересно и уникално на хората, което никога няма да видят. И така, така се появиха големите кукли по образи на живи хора. На база...

Интервюиращ (показва): Малки и големи.

Мария: Да. На база експеримент в самото начало и после вече се постарах да понауча за анатомията на човешкото лице. Нямах учебник на български между другото, не можах да си намеря, и един учебник на руски четох. И така... Сега вече куклите на Мария са познати по цял свят, особено тези които могат да се правят по образи на ...по снимка нали на истински хора. Не съм срещнала човека, който още може да ги прави друг, много ще ми е интересно някой ден, но това беше моят начин да изляза напред и така... Обичам си работата много. Много ми е забавно, интересно е и за другите и съм един щастлив човек, защото цял ден си играя с кукли и с преждички шарени и хората ми се радват.

English translation:

Maria: One interesting thing that I can say about myself is that I am not an artist, I do not have a degree in applied arts. I have [received] some brief training for what I am doing, but it has more to do with [working] with hand woven fabrics. I have a degree¹ in Economics, also in Law, and in the end, I make dolls all day because that is what interests me, that is what I like, and that is what I do best.

¹ Lit. trans. "my profession is" – "По професия съм." This is a typical expression is used to refer to one's educational qualifications. Many people in Bulgaria do not work in a field related to their degrees, so this expression can be used to describe one's degree or profession.

Interviewer: But how did everything start?

Maria: [Things] started randomly with the first dolls, and after the first few had been born², one... bad event made me continue [making them] and showing something interesting and unique to the people, which they had never seen.³ And that is how the first big dolls modeled after real people appeared. Based on...

Interviewer (shows on camera): [You have] big ones and small ones.

Maria: Yes. [The dolls] were born out of experimentation in the very beginning, but later on I made an effort to study the anatomy of the human face. There were no textbooks in Bulgarian, by the way, I could not find any, so I read one Russian textbook. That's it... Nowadays, Maria's dolls are well known all over the world, especially the ones that are modeled after the images of... in real people's likeness. I have yet to meet another person who can make them, I'm very interested [in meeting them] one day, but that was my own way of getting ahead and that is about it... I love my job very much. I have a lot of fun, it is also interesting to others, and I am one happy person because I play with dolls all day, and with colorful yarns, and I entertain people.

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² The interviewee is using the popular Bulgarian expression “излизам на яве” (which means to be brought out into the open – it can be used for secrets too), and its equivalent “излизам на бял свят” which means to be brought into existence, or brought into the world, signifying birth (can be used literally and metaphorically).

³ Lit. trans. “they will never see” – in the future tense – “никога няма да видят.”