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## Warsaw (Poland): Syrena means struggle!

by: xxx - October 15th, 2014



On September 17th 2014 our house in Wilcza Street 30 in Warsaw will be put on auction. On September 15th the court bailiff planned a viewing of the premises for potential buyers. Subject to auction are half the shares of the reprivatised estate, which the bailiff obtained from its former indebted owners, Krzysztof and Joanna Podsiadło. These persons simply did not pay after formally purchasing the house, however in the period of their ownership years-longed tenants were evicted and the condition of the house deteriorated. It is a case typical of the history of reprivatisation – the procedure of transferring of community-owned houses to private cleaners. Though investors promise ‚revitalisation’, their part is most often limited to speculation, eviction of the inhabitants, and selling off to further investors.

We occupied this house on the 10th of March 2011. The direct impulse was the news of the murder of tenant rights activist Jolanta Brzeska. Many people felt then that light forms of protest against reprivatisation and struggle for debt-free housing had been exhausted. During four years of occupation we breathed life into this house. Today, as before, 35 people live here, including six children. The oldest inhabitant is 75 years old, the youngest has just started pre-school.

Today the old order is knocking at our door. Court Bailiff Ryszard Moryc forgot to mention a certain fact while drafting the description of the auction – the PEOPLE. Persons inhabiting Syrena as well as groups supporting and supported by this place wish to send out a clear message – SYRENA STAYS.

We need Your support. Syrena is all of us and her defense depends only on us. The struggle for Syrena is the struggle for all the organisations who work here – Warsaw Tenants Association, Workers’ Initiative Union, Anarchist Black Cross, Warsaw Revolutionary Theatre, Amateur Opera Front, Punk Yoga, immigrant support and antifascist groups, bike workshop, silkscreen printing workshop, anarchist library, visual arts workshop, etc.

The case of our house is not an isolated one – it fits into the wider context of the housing situation in Warsaw and the whole country, where ca. 6,5 million people struggle with a housing poverty problem. Warsaw itself has 50,000 empty houses. The local authority, despite quickly ridding itself of the property it owns, still has more than enough empty buildings to house every person awaiting social housing now. Frequently, the people who are evicted from their flats are the same persons who took part in reconstructing the buildings they live in following the destruction of Warsaw in 1944. Half a century after that famous ‚social action’, people pushed into spiralling debt and forced to work for free.

Our struggle concerns not only this particular place. The defense of Syrena is a clear message, that people are ready to stand up for their rights. The effort we put into creating this place, the groups that work here, our lives and this city are not for sale! The situation is grave, but we are sure that together, we can win. We must mobilise for a solid struggle for matters that are important to us all.

All groups and persons active in Syrena are invited to intensify their actions during 11-19th october, and organise a week of action for Syrena! It is very important that You be present on the 15th October at 15:30 at Wilcza 30, to greet the court bailiff and potential buyers of the house, in order to show them how many we are and how strong our resistance will be. A movie clip will be shot in the meantime, so funny costumes will

be appreciated On 17th October at 11:30 under the court at Marszałkowska 82, is where the auction will take place. Lets gather strong and make some sonic terror!

Let the defense of Syrena be a signal to the authorities, and an inspiration for people to resist autonomously, decisively. Let's show that buying Syrena, you buy big trouble. The best way to defend we have is solidarity, which we understand as sisterhood and brotherhood in struggle, not symbolic declarations. The best form of defense is attack – uncompromising offensive on all fronts of our everyday struggle. What we ask each person and group is that You intensify Your actions – as radically as you can or want to. We proclaim the 15th October the day of direct action on solidarity with Syrena. You best know what targets to aim for. Let all actions be connected by the slogan 'Syrena means Struggle', grassroots character and lively resistance to systemic violence.

Let's show that we can self-organise, create spaces and initiatives, independent from the interests of politicians and real-estate owners. Let's show we are ready to defend ready to protect people and places and ideas that are important for us.

**SYRENA MEANS STRUGGLE!**

<http://syrena.tk/>

syrena znaczy walka!

