

# Back to the Square!



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# Back to the Squ- are!

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# *Back to the Square?*

**Ivana Hanaček  
and Ana  
Kutleša**

In the key institutions of the globalised art-world, art from ex-Yugoslav countries is represented primarily through the work of a few select artists whose careers were built during the peak of the socialist welfare state in the 1970s. Meanwhile, in these countries on the periphery of Europe, socially engaged and contextual artistic practices began to emerge questioning the restoration of capitalism. Strongly embedded in the social context, with the local public as their target audience and shaped by an uncompromising rejection of aestheticisation, these practices are hard to translate into the white cube. In international presentation, nuance can easily be lost in translation and the complexity of these practices reduced to simplified, often exoticised images.

Therefore it is necessary to invest special effort in unwrapping the social and political context in which the art intervenes. How have the broader political processes shaped the conditions of art production, and how have they changed its audience? How does the space in which the art appears, be it institutional or urban, transform? Lastly, how has the dominant discourse affected the way artists treat certain topics? The need to start from questions such as these can be seen as an intervention in the western-centric discourse of the global art-world, which too often leaves out analysis of broader economic, political and social conditions, appropriating art from the periphery without real interest for the context which shaped it.

In that sense, the book you hold in your hands is a specific case study, focused on recent artistic practices in the public space of post-socialist Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. Since the works in question have stepped beyond the protection of gallery walls, into the fabric of the city, a multi layered contextualisation was necessary to understand them and to translate them into printed media.

The works gathered in this book meet at the intersection of art, activism and urban research. They were produced as part of the UrbanFestival 13 Back to the Square! project, which took place in Zagreb and the nearby towns of Križevci and Ivanec. UrbanFestival was launched back in 2001, following the intense liberalisation of the field of cultural and a boom of festivals as a form of production. Still, from the very beginning it had its own, somewhat subversive position. With outspokenly anti-festival activity, UrbanFestival began to invest its resources in the production of socially sensitive artworks for public space, rather than representational pieces, thus positioning itself as a counterpoint to the dominant paradigm of the festivalisation of culture. Its 13th and final incarnation, presented here, spanned from 2013 to 2015 in order to give more room to artistic experimentation, the working process, the complexity of content and freedom of form, rather than the attractiveness of the final product.

Artworks presented in this book are a reflection of this policy, making them heterogeneous in their formats, strategies, and topics. What they all have in common is the aspiration to discuss the city square as a political space using artistic tools, and showing that there is an alternative to its strategic de-politicisation. However, Back to the Square! as the festival's main topic and title need not be taken literally; instead, interventions were often conceived for the public sphere in general, whereby the square was understood as a symbolic site of collective politicisation.

The three year duration of the project made it possible to have thematic diversification as well as to return to some specific lines of research. The book's structure reflects this working method. In order to highlight cohesive links within its content, as well as to create room for further research, we have abandoned chronology as a system of organisation and instead have divided the artworks into thematic chapters, adding texts that position the artistic practices in relation to the broader social, political and economic transformation of the territory of former Yugoslavia. The fall of the Berlin wall and the collapse of the Eastern Block marked the beginning

of the disintegration of the socialist Yugoslavia (1945–1992). For the newly created nation-states, Croatia included, this meant the allegedly inevitable restoration of capitalism and the so-called transition period: a one-way street from socialism to capitalism. The conservative right wing government which ruled the country during the war and post-war years, was replaced at the beginning of 2000s by a liberal, so-called left, social-democrat one. The shift brought culture wars to the fore, reducing conflicts to questions of identity and world view, while the neo-liberal economic agenda, pushed forward by both sides, went unquestioned. At the same time, deindustrialisation and privatisation of means of production and common goods, as well as the marketisation of all social spheres, including artistic and cultural production, remain driven by this agenda.

Different aspects of questioning these agendas and their effects are presented here through thematic chapters. We begin with the democratisation of politics, continue with the artistic treatment of the migrant policy in the European Union, public monuments, parasite collectives as performance strategy, de-industrialisation, and end again with democratisation – this time the democratisation of cultural production. The contributors belong to various generations of artists, performers, architects, (art) historians, musicologists, dramaturges, curators, and journalists. Contributions range from artists' statements, to play-scripts, interviews and essays which analyse topical issues against the historical backdrop (and vice versa).

Although visuals have emerged from the artworks created during the festival, we have consciously avoided the abundant use of photo-documentation, since the presented works were not intended to be visually attractive, but instead to demonstrate outspoken performativity and complexity of public space. We have therefore included, along with photography, leaflets and posters that reflect various mediation strategies targeted at the local public, as well as materials produced during the working process.

The majority of contributions refer exclusively to our local context, offering to an interested reader a deeper insight into the relationships between art and the transitional society. Still, many of the processes discussed here are not restricted to post-socialist countries. Moreover, this analysis of our own socialist heritage has emancipatory potential for the future and is an important contribution to the critique of capitalism at a global level.



*The first chapter questions the role of youth in contemporary politics, in which all power is concentrated on the parliamentary benches. How has youth come to be labelled as “disinterested” and “apolitical” and how is this connected with the process of reverse democratisation in the political sphere that we are faced with today? In these circumstances, we have organised a Banner Workshop as an attempt to use design for the visual articulation of the political message formulated “from below”, in youth initiatives whose political action is itself reduced to a limited, advocacy-orientated field of the civil society. Artist Željka Blakšić has taken a different path by engaging in an artistic exploration of the possibilities of politicising primary-school girls through playing and singing in public space. Simple protest songs, composed for this purpose, were performed in several city squares in Zagreb in an aestheticised form, which distinguished them considerably from the traditional, largely people’s music created for public protests. Still, this performance can be associated both with the genre of protest songs, which is probably the optimum method for transmitting political ideas, and with broader issues of the history of progressive models in politics and the role of youth in political life. The first chapter includes two essays: sociologist and music critic Ičo Vidmar has raised the question of the relationship between music and socio-political movements, as well as artists’ responsibility to react, to relate to the political movements, and to fight for the right cause. Activist and journalist Nikola Vukobratović has offered a comparative overview of the history of socialisation and politicisation of youth under socialism and during the transition period, rejecting the dominant myth of youth as “disinterested” and “apolitical”.*

# Whisper, Talk, Sing, Scream

## Željka Blakšić

### PERFORMANCE

Ban Jelačić Square, Dolac,  
Varšavska street, Kvaternikov  
Square, The Old Market in  
Dubrava  
6–14. 9. 2013

### PERFORMERS

Petra Biškupec, Lorena  
Cvitkušić, Helena Habulan,  
Marta Jurišić, Hana Mahmuljin

### COLLABORATORS

Barbara Matejčić, Petra, Marko  
Pogačar, Selma Banich, Crvena  
akcija, Hrvoje Jurić, Marko  
Marković, Adam Semijalac,  
Vlatka Blakšić (lyrics), Maja  
Katić (drama teacher), Igor  
Lumpert (music), Vlatka Blakšić  
(costume design)

### PARTNER

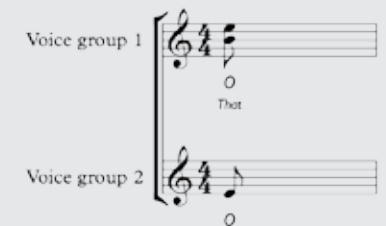
Children's Theatre Dubrava

Exploring the ways in which class and gender divisions in society can be articulated through music, the artist collaborates with local activists, independent journalists, and other artists in order to compose protest songs broadcasting the stories of marginalised people in society. She endorses various aspects of the same struggle – including disenfranchised workers, young people who have lost their right to education, and people who do not fit the idea of heterosexual normativity – using music for new waves of mobilisation and for expanding the horizon of political struggle. In a performance using play and children's songs, girls aged 10–12 performed in public space, breaking the common stereotype that children are unable to grasp what goes on around them and girls should conform to traditionally female (pre)occupations, linked to the private, never to the public sphere. The artistic procedure in which the weak – children, moreover girls – represent the weak, manifested in the choice of subject, form, and the performers, subverts the usual position, the established yet often invisible mechanisms of the dominant ideology to which the youngest members of society are permanently exposed. The performance also had an outspoken educational character, since the preparation process confronted girls with a different view of society.

that love, love  
is no different love  
because that love, love  
is everybody's love  
(as nursery rhyme, loudly, clapping at the same time)  
and it's no it's no  
sick no, no  
'cause nature is the one  
who makes the rules all alone  
(as nursery rhyme, whisper)  
and it's no it's no  
sick no, no  
(as nursery rhyme, going louder) (pause)

## LJUBAV (Love)

Blakšić/Lumpert



Children protest songs, musical score by Željka Blakšić & Igor Lumpert

11 *mf*  
 Jer pri ro da je ta ko ja pi še pra vi la Jer pri ro da je  
 'cause no tu re is the one who makes the rules all alone 'cause no tu re is

*mf*  
 Jer pri ro da je ta ko ja pi še pra vi la Jer pri ro da je

14 *ff*  
 ta ko ja pi še pra vi la I ni je ni je to ni je to bo les no  
 the one who makes the rules all alone And it's no no sick no no si ck

*ff*  
 ta ko ja pi še pra vi la I ni je

18 **C**  
*f* Jer lju bav lju bav ta ni je ni šta dru kči ja Jer lju bav lju bav ta dr ži sr  
 That lo ve lo ve is no diff e re nt lo ve 'cause love lo ve that love is ev ery

*f* Jer lju bav lju bav ta ni je ni šta dru kči ja Jer lju bav lju bav ta dr ži sr

23  
 ca sva či ja I ni je ni je to ni je to bo les no I ni je ni je to  
 bo dy's love And it's no no sick no no si ck And it's no no sick

ca sva či ja I ni je ni je to ni je to bo les no I ni je

27  
 ni je to bo les no Jer pri ro da je ta ko ja pi še pra vi  
 no no sick 'cause no tu re is the one who makes the rules all

les Jer pri ro da je ta ko ja pi še pra vi

30  
 la Jer pri ro da je ta ko ja pi še pra vi la  
 alone 'cause no tu re is the one who makes the rules all alone

la Jer pri ro da je ta ko ja pi še pra vi la

33 **D**  
 I ni je ni je to  
 And it's no no sick

vo lje ti ne bi tre ba lo bo lje ti A vo lje ti ne bi tre ba lo bo lje ti A vo lje ti ne bi tre ba lo  
 lo vi ng sh ouldn't be pa in full And lo vi ng sh ouldn't be pa in full And lo vi ng sh ouldn't be

37  
 ni je to bo les no I ni je ni je to ni je to bo les no  
 no no si ck And it's no no sick no no si ck

bo lje ti A vo lje ti ne bi tre ba lo bo lje ti A vo lje ti ne bi tre ba lo bo lje ti A vo lje ti ne  
 pa in full And lo vi ng sh ouldn't be pa in full And lo vi ng sh ouldn't be pa in full And lo vi ng sh

41  
 no

bi tre ba lo bo lje ti A vo lje ti ne bi tre ba lo bo lje ti A vo lje ti ne  
 wouldn't be pa in full And lo vi ng sh ouldn't be pa in full And lo vi ng sh

44 *fff*  
 Jer zna lju bav zna Vo lje ti mo ra ju sr ca sva  
 'cause love love knows the way We need it each and ev er y day

*fff*  
 bi tre ba lo bo lje ti Jer zna lju bav zna Vo lje ti mo ra ju sr ca sva

# Šivamo (Sewing)

Željka Blakšić

**INTRO**

1 *ff* Š I V A M O ŠI VA  
S E W I N G S E W I

**A** **B**

1 MO NG

2 *fff* ŠI VA MO ŠI VA MO  
SE WI NG SE WI NG

3 Tj ela nas iz da ju Tj ela nas iz da ju Tj ela nas iz da ju Tj ela nas iz da ju  
Bo dies get ting wea ker Bo dies get ting wea ker Bo dies get ting wea ker Bo dies get ting wea ker

4 Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck

5 Drm Drm Drm Drm Drm Drm

10

2 ŠI VA MO ŠI VA MO ŠI VA MO ŠI VA MO  
SE WI NG SE WI NG SE WI NG SE WI NG

3 Tj ela nas iz da ju Tj ela nas iz da ju  
Bo dies get ting wea ker Bo dies get ting wea ker

4 Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck

5 Drm Drm Drm Drm Drm Drm

**C**

14

2 *fff* ŠI VA MO ŠI VA MO ŠI VA MO ŠI VA MO  
SE WI NG SE WI NG SE WI NG SE WI NG

3 Tj ela nas iz da ju Tj ela nas iz da ju Tj ela nas iz da ju Tj ela nas iz da ju  
Bo dies get ting wea ker Bo dies get ting wea ker Bo dies get ting wea ker Bo dies get ting wea ker

4 Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck Ck

5 Drm Drm Drm Drm Drm Drm

We are sewing tailored suits for ministers but do not get our salaries  
Enforcement, credit installments, blocked accounts, unpaid bills

Salary 2257 kunas  
Jubilee Award for 35 years of work 4000 kunas, I didn't get it  
My two salaries are less than an average Croatian salary  
And even that I didn't get, they still owe me those two salaries

The temperature in the factory is over 40 degrees  
Our sweat dripping on the silk  
We bind towels around our necks  
We have to work more and faster, more and faster, more and faster

Factory owner says he will expand factory capacities, hire more workers  
People think we just sit around the sewing machines  
But our work effects our spine, and arms, and legs and eyesight, and spine, and arms,  
(Everyone stays silent)

(they say all together in a calm voice)  
Textile workers don't live long enough to enjoy their pension days.



# KORAK (Step)

Željka Blakšić  
aka Gita Blak

160

Voice group 1

Voice group 2

4

7

10

13

*pp*

*pp*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*ff*

*ff*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

Ko rak po Ko rak po Ko rak po

Step by Step by Step by

Ko rak po Ko rak po Ko rak po

Step by Step by Step by

Ko rak po ko rak po ko rak po

Step by step Step by Step Step by Step

Ko rak po ko rak po ko rak po

Step by Step Step by Step Step by Step

Ko rak po Ko rak po Ko rak po

Step by Step Step by Step Step by Step

Ko rak po Ko rak po Ko rak po

Step by Step Step by Step Step by Step

# Znanje nije roba (Knowledge is not a commodity)

Željka Blakšić

*marcato*

Voice

(humming)

At exactly noon, students  
took over the management of the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb  
blocking the teaching process.

Students organized their own Service of Public Order  
to insure the safety of the students and faculty assets.  
By taking over the management of the faculty students protest against the  
commercialization of the education, and the key message is that:  
knowledge is not a commodity!!!

Students categorically demanded complete fulfillment of their rights.  
They were ready for a radical and uncompromising action.  
At this point, the revolt still continues and is rapidly spreading.  
Moving force of this huge movement and the biggest discovery of the blockade is Plenum.  
Not only the most democratic,  
but the only effective instrument of the revolution.

5

Voice

*ff*

Zna nje ni je ro ba Zna nje ni je ro o ba

Know ledge is not a commo ty Know ledge is not a commo di ty

9

Voice

Zna nje ni je ro ba Zna nje ni je ro ba

Know ledge is not a commo ty Know ledge is not a commo dity



# Banner Workshop

**Nina Bačun  
and [BLOK]**

The workshop explores the possibilities of subverting the festival budget by investing in the production of visual communication for activist groups and organisations, which are already active in public space but need this form of (visual) empowerment. Banners (and other visual materials: leaflets, stickers, etc.) produced during the festival programme continue their existence in public space beyond UrbanFestival. The workshop is moderated by product designer Nina Bačun, known for her detachment from dominant design approaches; her cooperation with small local producers of traditional objects in rural areas and with factories that have survived the transition period; as well as for her designs for children toys with a clear political agenda.

Cooperation has also been established with the group of FC Zagreb 041, the White Angels, who struggle against fascism, homophobia, and racism in football stadiums; and the Women's Front for Work and Social Rights, founded by members of various union trades and civic groups as a reaction to the negative results of the neo-liberalisation of society, including pauperisation and the visible threats to social progress.

**WORKSHOP**  
September, October 2014

**COLLABORATOR**  
Goran Jovanović (design of  
jerseys for the FC Zagreb 041)





**UJEDINJENI PREGOVARAMO**  
**PODIJELJENI MOLIMO**

# *From the Youth Labour Brigadiers to Football Hooligans: Socialisation and Politicisation of Youth in Socialism and the Transition Period*

**Nikola  
Vukobratović**

<sup>1</sup> Koča Popović, Sava Kovačević, Arso Jovanović, Kosta Nađ, and Ivan Gošnjak were all between 30 and 36 years of age at the beginning of WWII, whereas Josip Broz Tito, who was internally called “Stari” (“the old one”), was 49.

The fact that the partisans participating in the Yugoslav People's Liberation Struggle (NOB) were aged on average only 21 will surprise the readers of today. Since many of the military leaders of the People's Liberation Army (NOV) had participated in the Spanish Civil War or served (more rarely) as officers of the former royal army, they were mostly aged thirty or older at the beginning of World War II<sup>1</sup>. The average age of common partisans shows that many, upon joining the NOV, would not have been considered adults today, or at least would be considered very young adults – and thus the death of the partisan hero Boško Buha at the age of sixteen no longer seems as shocking as has been remembered in popular culture.

In fact, what is striking about the partisans' age is that nowadays people of a similar age are largely considered not only to be very young, but also generally “apolitical” or, in the most optimistic views, “pre-political”. Although reports

of human rights organisations regularly remind us that the participation of minors in wars is still rather common<sup>2</sup>. However, the People's Liberation Movement (NOP) was not merely an armed group or a paramilitary formation, but a political movement where the participants, besides learning to read and write or learning a craft, underwent a basic political education. The “People's Army” claimed not only the democratic legitimacy of a government, but also the role of the main agent in a fundamental political and social reconstruction of the state. In other words, the NOP prepared its young recruits and volunteers to be subjects in a new form of political power and a profound social transformation.

Naturally, there is a huge gap between us today and the early 1940s, which does not only result from the passage of time, but also from enormous social and demographical upheaval. In the 1940s, the demographic structure of Yugoslavia would today indicate a “Third World country”, meaning that

<sup>2</sup> The UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) forbids the recruitment of children under 15 and has been accepted by all the member states except for the USA and Somalia. An additional protocol (2002) raised that age to 18. The minimum age for recruitment to the NOV was 16.

most of its population consisted of rural youth. In pre-war Yugoslavia, less than 10% of the population lived in the cities; according to the latest census, today that figure stands at over 55%. The average age of Croatia's inhabitants has increased from under 30 in the pre-war period, to over 40 today.<sup>3</sup>

However, the demographic imperative is not the only aspect that has been influencing the notion of the role of youth in politics. In the Communist Movement, this understanding was closely related both to the idea of progress, immanent to the movement, and to the concept of the revolution as the beginning of building up a new society. Namely, the task of "cutting the umbilical cord" with the exploiting system and the inevitable "birth pangs" of socialism were most logically entrusted to those who were least connected to the world that was about to disappear. The "new people" of socialism were necessarily the young.

## The Path to a Democratisation of Politics and Back

In the meantime, the young have turned from being the pillars of the system into its systematic problem, above all through their persistent hesitation to become involved in the political process and their weak participation in the choreography of the so-called parliamentary democracy. Today, the political process, largely orientated towards "election campaigns", rarely even aims at the particular mobilisation or regular activity of any segment of the population, except on "election day". On the other hand, 20th century politics underwent a process resembling the orbit of a boomerang. Namely, at its very beginning a dramatic democratisation of politics took place, directly related to the struggle for the introduction of universal suffrage.<sup>4</sup> Before that, politics had been somewhat of a "hobby" for rich men, whose status as participants in the political process, despite the more or less formal abolition of feudalism, was guaranteed by their family inheritance and their possessions. The involvement of the rest of the population in "public affairs" was a direct consequence of a long-term struggle, especially of that which was at the time called the "social-democratic movement", and for which the achievement of universal suffrage in most countries was a strategic priority. However, ceding before the pressure of democratising politics also meant "releasing the genie from the bottle" – the conservative ruling class found it increasingly difficult to preserve the status quo against

<sup>3</sup> *Hrvatski geografski glasnik* [Croatian geographical bulletin] 11–12/1 (June 1950); Croatian Bureau of Statistics (dzs.hr)

<sup>4</sup> Suffrage for men was introduced in Germany in 1871, in the Austrian part of the "double monarchy" in 1907, in Italy in 1912, and in Britain in 1918. However, although most men could now vote, their votes were not equally valid and the "lower classes" were classified into several degrees.

the massive workers' movement. Thus, a considerable part of the 20th century evolved under the banner of mass politics, very often violent and frequently exclusive, always relying on the largest participation possible. The first conservative responses to socialism were popular nationalism, the so-called Christian socialism (Christian Democracy) and, especially in this region, the now long-forgotten ideology of "agrarianism".<sup>5</sup> Later on, they were all very efficiently substituted by the new weapon of those who advocated the existing social order – fascism. Each of these movements, despite their conservative or reactionary orientation and together with the workers' movements, pursued mass politics in its own way: by founding cultural, sports, educational, and other associations, and by creating their own security networks and instruments of physical force. Their members and sympathisers did not weigh their voting options on the election day, but had participated since their early youth or even childhood in the activities of "their" movement, socialising it through and thus building up members' loyalties.

## Everything for the Youth, Without the Youth

This form of participation was with time substituted through the concept of the "voter" as a free consumer who makes judgements about the political market and cynically opts first for this party, and then for that party. Loyalty and involvement in a political party beyond the eventually given "vote" at the elections is considered as nothing more than a career-orientated move of an ambitious individual who has decided to put his abilities to a test in "public matters" rather than a private company – which incurs an adequate amount of contempt. Instead of increasing its circle of sympathisers and recruiting members through cultural and sporting activities, the political party of today places its hopes in an outsourced PR agency instead, which is supposed to present its list as the most attractive brand on the market. If politics has become less visibly violent, it is so primarily because the entire process has become "systematised" and firmly anchored itself on the parliamentary benches, taking good care not to spill over from the institutions.<sup>6</sup>

In this sense, it seems that nobody has caught the "Zeitgeist" better than the youth. When faced with "products" that prove their quality exclusively through advertising campaigns, cynicism is the inevitable attitude that "new

<sup>5</sup> The term "agrarianism" refers to the peasant political movements that played a prominent role in several Eastern-European countries between the two World Wars, including Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. Its Yugoslav representatives were the Agricultural Party and to some extent the Croatian Peasant Party.

<sup>6</sup> The return of politics into the "marble corridors" – the so-called civil society – insists on an absolute acceptance of the state monopoly over violence and at the same time on its own limitation to the "endorsing" role in politics.

consumers” have been forced to adopt. Contrary to the lamentations of political scientists and sociologists that “the youth of today is interested in nothing,” its indifference cannot be interpreted (as implicitly suggested) as a consequence of a demographic transition in which we would face the new generation of “treasured children”, wealthy and secure individuals whom society protects from social problems and necessities by eternally prolonging their adolescence. On the contrary, the dramatic demographic decline in Croatia is directly correlated to the “economic transition” and the related growth of the unemployment rate (especially among the young), combined with the loss of elementary social security.

However, the repeated evocations of “our youth” into political discourses and social commentaries illustrate something else as well – the fact that the concept of youth in politics is still relevant. In the popular media polls carried out shortly before Croatia’s accession to the EU, for example, there was an evident paradox in the demographic profile and motivation of the voters. The poll mostly attracted elderly citizens, who were also predominantly positive about the EU, whereas the young stayed away or (in great majority) voted against. At the same time, one of the main arguments for the elderly voters when voting in favour of the EU at the referendum was “a better perspective for the young.”<sup>7</sup> This means that the young continue to be a “stake” in politics even when they refuse to participate, and that the position of youth shows that the idea of the necessity of progress stubbornly persists despite the actual steep decline that we face on a daily basis.

## Architects of Socialism

The evolution of youth in socialism and transition – from the pillar of the regime to a systematic problem, that is, from the emblematic Labour brigadiers to football hooligans – results from a series of contradictory tendencies within the Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav societies. The phenomenon of Youth Labour Actions (ORA), mass public works done by volunteers, is a good illustration of my point. It was one of the most typical institutions of the former system, the sources of which are easily misinterpreted (in accordance with the now popular theory of “totalitarianism”) as a specifically communist model of mobilising and controlling the population. The idea of pseudo-militarised voluntary

<sup>7</sup> Ivor Balen and Andrej Petrak, *Stariji glasali za, mladi protiv EU* [The elderly voted for, the younger against the EU], *Novi list* (23 January 2012).

work building up the public infrastructure indeed has its forerunners in similar initiatives in the Soviet Union, from the Civil War onwards. But even if the mass organisation in post-war Yugoslavia indeed initiated the mobilisation of youth without a precedent, the work brigades were by no means the first uniformed mass movements in this region, for example the Sokol movement, or the Peasant Security and the less paramilitary Peasant Concord, related to the pre-war Croatian Peasant Party.

Moreover, the mobilisation of labour in case of disasters (which is the term best describing the situation in post-war Yugoslavia) had its counterparts in Western countries, especially as part of the “war effort” during and after World War II. However, even if the first wartime and post-war Youth Labour Actions, such as the ones at the railway routes of Brčko-Banovići and Šamac-Sarajevo, did play an important role in the economy regarding the need for transporting the coal more easily, it is clear that the role of voluntary work gradually diminished with the development of mechanisation and the growing complexity of engineering. This did not mean that the Labour Actions disappeared; on the contrary, they survived until the late 1980s. What changed was their function – as their economic utility decreased, their socialising and politicising function were purposefully reinforced. Permanently present in the form of “short courses”, the so-called ideological function is what kept the ORA alive. Even though physical work, of course, did not disappear, with time it was supplemented in importance by sports activities, lectures, and bonfires.

As can be presumed, and has been confirmed by many testimonies collected among the participants in the ORA, the brigadiers’ motivation was social and political at the same time, with no need for separating the two aspects. In other words, even if participating in the ORA was socially recommendable and implied the possibility of advancing more easily within society, this was not necessarily more important than the opportunity of staying away from one’s overcrowded home and from parental control, of travelling across the country and meeting lots of young people of both sexes.<sup>8</sup> Considering the growing inequalities within the socialist federation between the north-western and south-eastern regions, as well as generally between the urbanised/modernised regions and the so-called “passive” ones, obviously the perspective of voluntary labour as a substitute for a summer spent at the sea was appealing primarily to young people who had less opportunity to travel

<sup>8</sup> One should perhaps mention as an anecdote that the “first love” is explicitly mentioned in the unofficial hymn of the ORA, “Hey, Hay, Brigades.”

and to meet others, or to advance socially. It is no wonder that the progress of the modernisation project made participation in the ORA appealing especially to those segments of youth who originated from rural and less developed parts of Yugoslavia.

## Unemployment and Distinction

The distinction between urban youth, whose parents profited from modernisation, and rural youth from the passive regions, who could still hope for some significant advancement during their lifetime, escalated in the 1980s, in parallel with the economic crisis that was persistently kindled by the liberalisation recipes invented for its abatement. This dynamic led to the emergence of another emblematic phenomenon in Yugoslavia: the famous *New Wave*. Without wishing to enter more deeply into these secondary issues, such as the definition of music styles or the prehistory of subcultures in Yugoslavia, we will say a few words on the New Wave insofar as it was a mass phenomenon and an explicitly urban one, often characterised by an ironic detachment from the state-sponsored modernisation project.

The aversion of the New Wave towards *peasant rock*, the term used for the Yugoslav counterpart of stadium rock as embodied in bands such as YU grupa or Kornji grupa, imposes itself as an illustrative example as the latter often dedicated their strikingly popular songs in praise of projects such as the ORA or generally patriotic subjects. The New-Wave groups, on the other hand, had new topics, occasionally engaging in an implicit polemic against the established rock bands. At the same time, these new bands inherited from their “peasant” counterparts the model of financing through the official infrastructure of the Socialist Youth. Even their detachment from the state project did not necessarily immediately take on the form of explicit anticommunism, such as expressed later by some of its key figures,<sup>9</sup> but rather engaged in playing with the permitted and the prohibited in a system that was (in)directly financing the New Wave. Good examples of this are the song *Maljčiki* (Malchiki) or the title of a legendary compilation album: *Artistička radna akcija* (Artistic Labour action),<sup>10</sup> which obviously (ironically) referred to the phenomenon of the ORA and established a distinction between the aesthetic tastes and preoccupations of various segments of youth.

Even though the New Wave was a complex and contradictory concept, it has often been used randomly for very

9 In an interview for Belgrade’s magazine *Ritam* [Rhythm] (1990), former members of VIS Idoli named Dimitrije Ljotić, ideologist and leader of Serbian fascism during the 1930s and 1940s, as a historic figure they would have liked to meet. Two of the band’s members, Nebojša Krstić and Srđan Šaper, later became prominent in the Democratic Party.

10 The same album contains songs by short-lived bands ironically called *Urbana gerila* (Urban Guerrilla) and *Radnička kontrola* (Workers’ Control), whose members mostly made their careers in other bands, such as *Ekaterina Velika* or *Partibrejkers*.

11 It is accidental that the emergence of the New Wave has become a crucial constitutive myth of the post-Yugoslav liberal middle classes as a proof of progressiveness, cosmopolitanism, and “keeping pace” with the world, which we allegedly once did.

12 Cf. e.g. Susan L. Woodward, *Socialist Unemployment: The Political Economy of Yugoslavia, 1945–1990*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995)

13 In 1990, Željko Ražnatović – Arkan, a collaborator of the secret service and later the leader of paramilitary formations and a mafia man, was a prominent member of the football fan group “Delije”. At the same time and shortly before the decisive elections in Croatia, the transparent “BBB for HDZ” (Bad Blue Boys for the Croatian Democratic Union) regularly appeared at the Maksimir stadium in Zagreb.

different styles in music, publications, or simply cool “places to go out,” with many hagiographies of the phenomenon published over the past fifteen years in print or film, it is easy to agree at least on one thing: it was a subcultural mass movement of urban youth with new sensibilities and a new self-awareness. Thus, before it became a merely musical phenomenon, the New Wave was an expression of a new model of mass socialisation in a specific segment of Yugoslavia’s younger population, which emerged in the midst of crisis of the system and expressed a detachment with regard to the official modernisation narrative, at the same time – paradoxically – using a considerable part of the system’s infrastructure. Whereas the emergence of this new sensibility has mostly been understood by its apologists as a symbol of a new era, which aimed at expanding the limits of freedom and abandoning “single-mindedness”<sup>11</sup>, it should instead be seen as a reflection of the growing class differences after the state had gradually abandoned the progress-oriented economic models and an increased unemployment that triggered a new exodus from the rural areas in the 1980s, causing tensions between the young locals and the newcomers, differing primarily in their cultural preferences.<sup>12</sup> In that sense, the New Wave imposed itself as a transitional model of youth socialisation, carrying the contradictions of society in which it had emerged and heading fast towards its own disintegration.

## Antisocial Socialisation

During the late 1980s another mass phenomenon, a more durable one emerged: the Ultras Movement. Regarding the now already rather long and complex history of this subculture in the region, we have decided to use it here only as a conclusive illustration. Somewhat later than the New Wave and often including entirely different sociological categories of urban population, the Ultras Movement evolved into an outspokenly self-assured subculture shortly before the dissolution of Yugoslavia, with its own publications, fashion, code of conduct, jargon, and preoccupations. As a new platform for youth socialisation, it attracted the attention of already existing or emerging political factors in those decisive and precarious years.

If the terrific boom of the Ultras Movement in the late 1980s led to its use in the project of redistributing the forces in the transition period<sup>13</sup>, it still predominantly and



primarily posed a problem for all regimes. This subculture has endured to the present day, maintaining its status as a problematic yet popular hub of youth socialisation despite its relative weakening since the “golden age” of the late 1980s. Despite the police and media’s repeated slogan that “hooligans have nothing to do with football”, antisocial behaviour and violence have been as integral in this subculture as loyalty to a city or a football club. And if exposure to physical injury or prosecution have been potentially demoralising factors when considering joining the subculture, they have also been efficiently compensated through the rare opportunity of mass action and a sort of solidarity among their peers, even if it is based on affected machismo.

This need for an informal, if antisocial kind of mass socialisation needn’t surprise us – after all, the transition period knows no “youth”<sup>14</sup> and the state has no reason to retain or finance an infrastructure for a population segment on the basis of age. Young people have dispersed into a multitude of subcultures that often, although informally, reflect the growing class differences that tend to render any other logic meaningless. Thereby the Ultras Subculture remains an attractive space for socialisation and politicisation for a growing sector of the population that cannot undergo such processes through official education or the workplace.<sup>15</sup> As wrong as it may be, the reactionary political attitudes “on the terraces” are an expression of protest against the “elite”, which understands its own political correctness as an instrument of class distinction. In this unarticulated protest of the losers against the “winners” of transition, the Ultras have become a sort of “anti-brigadiers of transition.” Whereas the brigadier status of their socialist counterparts was a sign of personal and social evolution and progress, the hooligan of today embodies a desperate young person whose antisocial stance quite adequately corresponds to the lack of interest in him or her on the part of society.

**14** In Croatia, even the term *omladina* (“youth”) has been stigmatised along with a considerable part of the vocabulary under the famous accusation that it was “Serbian”.

**15** According to the EU statistics, unemployment among the young people in Croatia amounted to 52.8% in 2013.

# *Bread and Roses: On Music and Social Protest*

Ičo Vidmar

In terms of musical expression, what are the common characteristics of such a varied list of musicians and groups as Fela Kuti, The Clash, Woody Guthrie, Bob Marley, Bob Dylan, Violeta Parra, Public Enemy, Mercedes Sosa, Frederic Rzewski, Inti-Illimani, Miriam Makeba, Dead Kennedys, Victor Jara, Phil Ochs, Thomas Mapfumo, Joan Baez, Gil Scott-Heron, Manu Chao and Caetano Veloso? Various music encyclopedias and reviews classify them all as protest singers, socially committed musicians who have incorporated political commentary into their music and lyrics, drawn attention to social issues, advocated publicly this or that just cause. Some of them have been part of large social movements, or have even embodied them or given them voice. They have enjoyed popularity and respect, but have also experienced hatred, censorship, imprisonment, beatings, exile, or have been, in the case of Chilean *Nueva Canción* singer Victor Jara, killed for their political beliefs or actions.

The purpose of this article is to discuss “protest song” or “protest music” in relation to social and political movements. Throughout history, music has always been a powerful channel for political ideas, a commentator, companion and motivator of social movements, or a loudspeaker for protests and rallies – loud events by themselves. And yet, in fact, the vast majority of the music people make, above all popular music, speaks of something else: popular songs, or hit songs, are most often musicalised formulas of falling in love, expressions of intimate longing or desire, modern romantic lyrical mass-use creations.

Aijaz Ahmad, an Indian Marxist and poet writing in Urdu, offered an interesting comment on the results of a questionnaire distributed among contemporary American writers in an interview he gave for the online magazine *Full Stop*. Like their sector colleagues in 1939, respondents were asked whether literature had any kind of “responsibility to respond” to current global upheavals. Most of them were hesitant, the phrase “to feel responsible to do something” acting as a moral imperative. This imperative was effective at the time of the global fight against fascism, only to fade, or come up against a wall, during the Cold War, the time of explicit anti-communism and the censorship which accompanied it. Acclaimed South African poet and campaigner against apartheid Dennis Brutus claimed this was his duty as a citizen, not a poet. Ahmad adds that today, “the prevailing notions about the ‘creative imagination’ are so libertine and romantic, in a bad sense, as to verge on mysticism. ‘Literature’ — and of course its twin, *art* — is now the one area of human expression where the most absolutist idea of freedom prevails; you can say absolutely anything you want, and if anyone objects to your saying it, that person must be an anti-Enlightenment bigot who stands opposed to the most fundamental of all freedoms, namely the right to literary expression. No other kind of writing enjoys such a sacralised space in the collective imagination — not by a historian, economist, journalist, politician. In this liturgical atmosphere of virtually divine freedom for literature, speaking of *responsibility* is little short of madness.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Michael Schapira, “Aijaz Ahmad”. *Full Stop*, 1 Jan. 2012. <http://www.full-stop.net/2012/05/01/interviews/michael-schapira/aijaz-ahmad/> (last accessed on 17 April 2015).



Ultimately, in spite of the dominant ideology of limitless creative freedom, everything depends on the kind of life the artist lives. If artists are rising to the challenges of their time, their art will invariably respond to them regardless of their stand on creative freedom. Many musicians are doing so, creatively and responsibly, while many more are not, nor do they care.

## Revived Tradition of Labor Songs

During the recent public protests in the USA and Slovenia, two musicians made their own versions of old American protest labor songs. Each of them incorporated a dormant musical piece of the history of social struggles into their respective environments, making it topical again at a time which calls for the support of history, for answers, for admonition at least. With his band Ceramic Dog, the New York avant-garde guitarist and composer Marc Ribot reworked a song based on the 1911 poem Bread and Roses, while the Ljubljana-based singer-songwriter Katarina Juvančič recorded *Na kateri strani si?*, her Slovenian version of the 1931 song *Which Side Are You On?* Both songs originate in the era of workers' and – broadly speaking – social struggles in the USA, both have gained international recognition, they have found their place in popular culture and have been reworked in other world languages. They have been sung by anonymous singers, workers' associations, popular singers, folk protesters, rockers, avant-garde musicians. They have invariably been used and brought back to life whenever a fight was fought for a just cause, typically at times of strained social relations when the need arose to draw on the somewhat forgotten, but inevitably revived tradition of popular resistance and the desire for social change. Carrying a universal message of emancipation struggles, the songs have warmed people's hearts and filled them with passion. Although we like to forget this, musicians and other artists with a vocation for creative imagination are vital in sharing the broader collective memory which is passed on and preserved by means of increasingly mobile and universally accessible music. The two aforementioned musicians have justified their choice of songs.

This was Marc Ribot's comment: "The idea (of the song) was to celebrate the September anniversary of Occupy Wall Street. Bread and Roses is an old labor song written during the great 1912 strike of textile workers in Lawrence,

**2 The Lawrence strike brought together 25,000 practically unorganised migrant textile workers, nearly half of which were women, who spoke 45 different languages. It was a "social revolution in parvo", and it was strongly a singing movement. The Wobblies' slogan "Bread and Roses" was not so much about sheer wage demands – allegedly owed to women with their sensibility ("Roses"), but marked the start of the radicalization of wage demands in American mass industrial unionism as opposed to the demand of conservative craft unions united in the AFL for "bread and butter". The workers' struggles of the Wobblies took place not just in factories, they concerned families, working-class and ethnic communities, housing, sexuality, leisure, entertainment, the areas into which capital spread its mechanisms of domination. The Wobblies asserted an alternative slogan: "the right to be lazy"; used songwriting and singing as a means to articulate workers' struggles, subverted the existing cultural forms, and had a sardonic sense of humor. For a history of this "other" labor movement, see Gisela Bock, "Drugo"delavsko gibanje v ZDA od 1905 do 1922 (ŠKUC/Filozofska fakulteta: Ljubljana, 1987) and Tomaž Mastnak's introduction to *K dekonstrukciji spontane sociologije delavskega gibanja*, 209–238.**

**3 Marc Ribot, interview with the author. New York, 8 January 2013.**

Massachusetts. The workers were known as 'Wobblies', or members of the Industrial Workers of the World.<sup>2</sup> We changed the music and a few of the lyrics – (we figured anarcho-syndicalists wouldn't mind) – but the sentiments are the same. When we went to the big demonstration in Foley Square, NYC, last fall (in 2011, author's note), workers' trade unions seemed to be getting along just fine with the kind of young smart-asses who started Occupy. Then our band went on an international tour and somehow it felt silly to play our usual set while so much was happening on the street. So we played our version of Bread and Roses instead. We don't know what the future holds, but this song honors those unforgettable moments."<sup>3</sup>

The Ceramic Dog's Bread and Roses is a powerful, noisy avant-garde punk cover. In terms of music, all that is left of the original is part of the lyrics and the chorus line – the slogan from a sign carried by textile workers in the great march a hundred years ago: "Give us bread, but give us roses too." Somewhere at home, Ribot still keeps his old IWW membership card. He became a member as a young man earning his living by working in industrial plants while studying music. The first time he sang the song in public was when New York musicians protested against the deteriorating financial conditions for musicians in New York music clubs. Nowadays, concert audiences of all generations recognise the song and somehow make it through the chorus line, where singing is intentionally polyphonic, scattered with delayed starts, intermittent shouts; unlike the unison and uniform renditions of meticulously organised and conducted choirs.

This is what Katarina Juvančič said of her more conventional folk arrangement *Na kateri strani si?*: "In 1931, housewife Florence Reece wrote it out on a kitchen calendar, very likely in anger and humiliation. She used the tune of a Baptist hymn. The sheriff and his hired men had been terrorizing her husband, a miner and union organiser. In the original, the lyrics urged the workers to decide whose side they were on – the side of the workers and the banned trade unions, or the side of corrupt local leaders, governors, company heads. To this day, the song has lost none of its social bite. Dejan Lapanja and I have had it on our concert set list since 2009, when we first started performing. When we sang it during the occupation of the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana in the autumn of 2011, poet Boris A. Novak reminded me again that it would be a good idea to translate it. After the first Maribor uprising and the first protests in Ljubljana (in December 2012), there was no more wavering. The song was adapted to the time

and the situation. It is our duty as singer-songwriters to reflect on social tectonics through our art. The second reason I chose this song was its melodic and harmonious structure. It is simple and easy to remember, with no redundant words. I stayed true to the original in that I avoided complicated phrases, especially so that as many people as possible could sing it. I kept the word 'workers' in the lyrics, to honor the original, but mostly because I don't think of workers in the traditional sense of the word, but as anybody who works."<sup>4</sup>

## Anti-elitism and the Question of Class Distinction

Let us provide another example related to the dissolved Occupy movement. On 1 May 2012, May Day, a rally was organised in New York City which included a long march of protesters, "armed" with guitars and other instruments, towards a stage in Union Square in Lower Manhattan. The assembled Occupy Guitarmy, led by Rage Against the Machine's Tom Morello, announced the list of songs they intended to rehearse and perform later during the march and at the concert. The set included the following protest songs: Woody Guthrie's This Land Is Your Land, Sergio Ortega's El Pueblo Unido, Willie Nile's One Guitar, Morello's World Wide Rebel Song, Which Side Are You On? and the traditional We Shall Not Be Moved.<sup>5</sup> Half of the songs were from the time of the "standard repertoire" of the protest song, which emerged as a genre as part of the folk movement in the early 1960s, first in the USA and subsequently in other countries across the world. Structurally and formally, all these songs resemble folk songs, which entice into participation, into a collective response to the call of the singer on stage, enhancing the sense of solidarity during their performance.

Of the songs on the list, El Pueblo Unido (Jamás Será Vencido!) stands out both by its Spanish lyrics and its origin. A song of the Chilean *Nueva Canción* folk movement from June 1973, it was originally intended as a song of support for the program of the democratically elected socialist government in Chile, spreading its mobilization slogan "The People United Will Never Be Defeated". After the military coup, President Allende's execution in September 1973, and the repression of General Pinochet's regime, the latter announcing the arrival of global neoliberalism, using any means, the song became the anthem of the Chilean resistance movement. Very rapidly it grew international, the *Nueva Canción*

movement of socially committed protest songs – which drew on folk music traditions, including indigenous Indian traditions – spreading from Latin America to all corners of the world since the 1960s. Its influence was particularly strong in former European mother countries, Portugal and Spain, which at the time were authoritarian military dictatorships.

There are a number of parallels between *Nueva Canción* and the protest folk music of North America, but even more dissimilarities, attesting to differences in the social reality and contexts in which the two movements were formed by the politically liberal, left-wing middle-class urban youth and intellectuals. One of the paradoxical features of *Nueva Canción* was its frequent use of ballad, protest styles typical of the folk protest song of its northern neighbor to express its nationalistic opposition to U.S. cultural imperialism. Another feature was that despite its anti-elitism it was associated with urban educated youth, and was by its musical styles – from ballads to harmonised, standardised renditions of Andean songs – inherently bourgeois.<sup>6</sup>

## Agitator vs. Outcasts

With regard to the (American) protest song, one still relevant position is that of sociologist Serge Denisoff, who, when it comes to contemporary history, distinguished "magnetic propaganda songs" of the first half of the 20th century from "rhetorical protest songs" of the 1960s. Under this functional typology, magnetic propaganda songs have an evident political function: to persuade. The way to win people outside the movement is to identify the challenges and indicate the apparent solution: joining a union, a strike, a political organization, resistance to the occupying power. In the USA and elsewhere alike, this form of protest song has drawn on fixed popular patterns, including the call and response pattern used in religious, worship songs, i.e. the forms that aim to transform, directly and symbolically, a passive listener into an active participant. The lyrics of these songs are simple, indicating a solution, with music entirely subordinate to the message or the outright propaganda slogan such a song would contain.

The rhetorical protest song characteristic of the folk music of the 1960s is more descriptive. It is typically sung by outcasts. When giving a critical description of a situation, it is not necessarily suggesting solutions or even actively

<sup>4</sup> Katarina Juvančič, interview with the author (by email). Ljubljana, 14 January 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Jenny Pelly, "Occupy Wall Street, Music and Protest". *Pitchfork*, 2 Jan. 2012. <http://pitchfork.com/news/46379-report-occupy-wall-street-music-and-protest/> (last accessed on 22 March 2015).

<sup>6</sup> Peter Manuel, *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1988) 68–72.

7 Serge R. Denisoff, "Protest Movements: Class Consciousness and the Propaganda Song". *The Sociological Quarterly* 9, 2, 1968, 245.

8 This could be said for a wide range of African-American music genres, particularly jazz and its anti-assimilationist styles from bebop to free jazz. It also applies to the segment of art music, composed or improvised, and the musicians who wrote "political music". An example of the latter is pianist and composer Frederic Rzewski, who in 1975 composed a series of variations on *The People United* (*El pueblo unido jamás será vencido*). This one-hour "political piece" is considered one of the most difficult, virtuosic and jovial compositions in the contemporary piano repertoire. It is a piece of "human realism", which was Rzewski's 1970s term to describe his "conscious choice of techniques for the establishment of communication, not alienation, /.../ which is a dismissal not of the avant-garde style at all costs", but particularly of composers' dry formalism. In his work, Rzewski has always explored a specific social theme, a current or historic event, for instance the Attica Prison riot. See Kyle Gann, "Making Marx in the Music: A Hyperhistory of New Music and Politics". *New Music Box*, 1 Nov. 2003. <http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/making-marx-in-the-music-a-hyperhistory-of-new-music-and-politics/6/> (last accessed on 10 November 2014).

9 Tomaž Mastnak, "K dekonstrukciji spontane sociologije delavskega gibanja". *"Drugo" delavsko gibanje v ZDA od 1905 do 1922*. Ed. Gisela Bock. (ŠKUC/Filozofska fakulteta: Ljubljana, 1987, p. 209–238)

attempting to win "external observers" to its side. It has a kind of social realism about it, often conveying an individual feeling of discontent with the situation and social alienation. According to Denisoff, the evolution of the American protest folk song in the period 1945–1964 suggested an apparent decline of propaganda songs and their growing association with a limited range of issues and specific events. Propaganda songs as a reflection of class consciousness were disappearing together with the diminishing class-relatedness of social and political movements. Their decreasing use was a sign of the dwindling power of labor movements in the USA, a phenomenon which opened the door to the emergence of rhetorical protest songs.<sup>7</sup> The first downside of this term is its exclusive focus on the lyrics, disregarding its musical arrangement, the broader musical aesthetic elements and the ways the song can be performed in a given time and place. After all, is it possible to have an instrumental protest song credited with this kind of social significance?<sup>8</sup> The second downside is its disregard for a broader historical context as this could shed light on the relationship between protest music and social movements in American society. In this sense, the contrasting example of (constructing) folk music with its broader implications for the rock culture, global popular culture, and locally specific music genres, is instructive.

As shown before, with a specific purpose in mind, Marc Ribot took a protest IWW unionist song and controversially linked it to the Occupy movement. Indeed, what brought the American protest song into the contemporary age was the IWW, a phenomenon which used songs to organise uneducated immigrant industry workers. The main IWW songwriter was Joe Hill. In 1909, his very popular agitation and propaganda compilation, *Little Red Songbook*, was published and given to all new members of the Industrial Workers of the World. At the time, the Wobblies had a major discussion about the role of songwriting and singing in articulating workers' causes, and the slogan of their explicitly contradictory anti-educational debate was "Songs vs. Education". One of the reasons the Wobblies created such an important chapter of U.S. labor history is their songs, their traveling speakers, marches and parades. They built their distinct form of cultural expression, and allowed pluralism in forms of thought, which could easily match the social and political theory of the European labor movement. This was not a case of a systematic domination of one theory. They opened up the space of the social, and in their struggle for leisure moved beyond the usual dualism of economy and

politics.<sup>9</sup> The IWW was defeated by the opposition (the state, capitalists, opportunistic craft unions) in the economically prosperous 1920s.

Unionism and the protest song gained new momentum at the time of the Great Depression of the 1930s. This is the era in which the song reworked by Katarina Juvančič originates. Songs about difficult times go back to Woody Guthrie, a key representative of the genre and a bridge between Hill's propaganda songs and the protest folk song movement of the 1960s.

The cultural policy of the U.S. pre-WWII Popular Front, the radical wing of the broader New Deal coalition of President Roosevelt, was particularly supportive of the genres that originated in oral traditions, African-American and rural narratives and musics. Under the significant influence of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA), the Popular Front fought a culture war in two never-ending battles: the battle for a democratic national culture, and the battle to put an end to the superiority of high culture, which considered popular culture to be low culture.<sup>10</sup> According to Simon Frith, the American folk revival of the 1930s was based on a contradiction, celebrating "spontaneous folk creations", which were judged by outsiders, by urban performers. The CPUSA played a pivotal role in defining "the people", its music policy shifting from a new kind of song, which could be identified with workers, to "native folk consciousness and tradition – a treasury of the people's art". In other words, the party considered rural music the most suitable means of expression for urban workers; the party's intellectuals became "people's artists" by singing "folk songs" dressed in clothes typical of rural proletarian from Oklahoma. What changed was the tactics, not the cultural position: "correct" songs were still correct in so far as they built a sense of class solidarity. The authenticity of music was judged by its effects rather than its sources. A model folk performer, Guthrie made his music for an urban, educated and politicised audience, articulating with it his vision of the "Oakies" for the New York left-wing milieu. The radical tradition of American folk music was therefore created by metropolitan and left-wing bohemians. In spite of the political use of nostalgia it is still acknowledged that within the folk movement musicians managed to keep alive a popular music that was politically and musically defined in its relationship with commercial pop. This was decisive in the emergence of the New Folk movement in the 1960s, as well as in the continued establishment of rock as youth counterculture.<sup>11</sup>

10 Stanley Aronowitz, *Roll over Beethoven. The Return of Cultural Strife* (Wesleyan University Press: Hanover, 1993, p 185–202)

11 Simon Frith, *Sound Effects. Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock'n'Roll* (Pantheon Books: New York, 1981, p. 27–29)

## Rock: “High” Art or the Music of Rebellion?

During World War II, the labor and union movement was paralyzed, only to be defeated after the war in the Cold War and Red Scare climate of McCarthyism, when any act of protest was considered un-American. At that time, both Guthrie and Pete Seeger were blacklisted for their alleged links to the Communists. Nevertheless, the two founded People’s Song, a band that criticised both the government’s Cold War policy and racial segregation in the American South, performed in small student venues, and wrote folk ballads that would become model New Folk songs. It was not until the 1960s that students became more politically active; for them, folk was one of the few ways of expressing political views. It suited their political cause, and was used for the kind of cultural purposes African-American music was used by its listeners. The two causes and music genres joined in the struggle for civil rights, this and the Vietnam War being the most frequent themes of protest songs.

The main difference between younger and older generations of protest song performers was the level of their personal involvement. For Pete Seeger, songs were a weapon in the fight he had already joined. Younger singers like Bob Dylan wrote songs as social commentary, as “rhetorical protest songs” covered by mass media. The ideological folk community frequenting metropolitan coffee houses, clubs and festivals found increasing regard for originality. Dylan was valued for his individual genius, his personal insights, his unique voice and style, dense poetic forms and rambling melodic structures – the same applies to his electric sound – which made audience participation, an essential element in the first period of the new “simple” folk music of anonymous singers of the early 1960s, virtually impossible. On the basis of these new folk conventions and accentuated individualism, rock could claim to be a “high” art form.<sup>12</sup>

Rock is proverbially deemed to be the music of rebellion (most often of the young generation against the generation of its parents, or as a counterculture form). Playing a decisive role in interpreting rock in the USA of the 1960s was a group of influential journalists/critics, who considered culture and politics to be inevitably connected. Politically, these authors sided with the New Left, perceiving it as a generational movement where rock and roll as a sign of radical hope was an integral part. They were the intellectuals of the culture, altering the traditional American perception of a “radical” as one fighting for economic justice, campaigning for the idea of social equality, and

identifying, in terms of doctrine, with anarchism, socialism or communism. They were both participants and observers of the rock revolution. With them, the idea of progress was replaced by the experience of duration, giving way to appraisal of the presently experienced moment and the protraction of the experience of rock when “mind and body merge with the music”, especially if this merger was vividly effected by drug use. In other words, as an anti-war movement the movement opposed state policy, while at the same time supporting the legalization of drugs, and rejecting the discipline of work and the nuclear family as this could lead to the reassertion of the dominance of the time the movement claimed for itself. For instance, in the 1970s Greil Marcus, one of the leading American writers on rock, no longer spoke of rock and roll as a youth culture or counter culture, but simply as an “American Culture”, a “democratic art”, constructing the myth of the (national) popular music of America.<sup>13</sup> This shift contains a trace of the struggles of the U.S. Popular Front’s cultural policy for a democratic national culture. In 1978, when rock had already lost the attributes of a special movement of radical hope and its ties with the mass social movements of the 1960s had been severed, while punk had proclaimed ‘no future’, Marcus and his colleagues wrote a collection of essays, creating some sort of a canon of rock music. They unearthed old “expressions of rock avant-garde”, favoring the groups and artists that delved into the music underground or to the edges of urban environment. They celebrated detachment, distance, sexual ambiguity, and appreciated irony. At the forefront was the idea of “avant-garde rock”, of “anti-art art” as cultural opposition with no political connotations. This perception of rock was an early reflection of the process to drive a potential force of radical hope into the underground of musicians and listeners. The same story was seen to repeat itself in many of the music genres torn between mass production and being potentially socially subversive.

## From Irony to Censorship

Deena Weinstein wondered why rock produced so few protest songs, noting that this says a great deal about rock music as such. She offered an elaborate explanation: there are relatively few protest songs in rock compared to other songs; protest songs that do exist aren’t widely heard; and protest songs that are heard aren’t understood as protest songs.<sup>14</sup>

In his lyrical content analysis, Frith provides a convincing argument against the separation of song lyrics from how

<sup>13</sup> Greil Marcus, *Mystery Train. Images of America in Rock ‘n’ Roll Music* (Omnibus Press: London, 1977, p. 7–8)

<sup>14</sup> Deena Weinstein, “Rock Protest Songs”. *The Resisting Muse: Popular Music and Social Protest*. Ed. Ian Peddie (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2006, p. 3–16)

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 30–31.



songs are performed. Lyrics should be analyzed as speech acts, as musical acts; song words are not about ideas (or content), but about their expression. Frith points to the historical fate of some “protest songs”. He, too, warns that in pop terms, these function to convey slogans rather than ideas. The paradox here is that the political power of a pop song – as a slogan – bears no firm relationship to its intended message. Irony as a lyrical strategy often seems to be doomed to failure. One of the most controversial examples is the fate of Bruce Springsteen’s *Born in the USA*, a song the Republican U.S. President Reagan attempted to hijack for his election campaign. The lyrics tell of a boy from a working class family who is sent to fight in Vietnam and comes back to nothing, to a depressive climate – a standard formula in American popular films and songs. The lyrical theme was also tied to Springsteen’s star persona – rather than his own, this was the story of the people he identified with and chose to represent, as indicated by his iconography on stage and album. The entire record did, then, attempt to tell a certain truth about war veterans, to be an expression of political realism. But formally, the song is organised around a chorus line – “Born in the USA”. This is a musical phrase which, in rock convention (its texture, its rhythmic relentlessness, its lift), is not bitter but triumphant. For a rock listener, the sense invoked by the song is not that of the irony of the chorus line, but its pride and assertiveness. It was, therefore, no surprise Reagan wanted to use it. Although the author dismissed this reading, the American flag and the celebration of American working-class masculinity could also serve to confirm such an interpretation of this “protest song” and its reception in performance.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, with regard to protest music attention should also be drawn to various forms of systemic pressure, internal creative blocks and ideological barriers, in other words, forms of censorship in society. In relation to censorship and the expression of freedom in music, Martin Cloonan points to censors attempting to interfere, either pre- or post-publication, with the artistic expression of popular music artists with a view to stifling or altering that expression. Censorship is practiced everywhere: in the music industry, on the radio, on television and the Internet, in live performances (issues here include noise, public order, the song content, improper behavior of fans). Censors include religious organizations, pressure groups (viewers’ and listeners’ associations, even feminist and gay groups), the press, and political parties.

The key distinction is between *manifest* and *latent* censorship. Manifest censorship is imposed by a repressive state

apparatus; it is characteristic of patterns of social domination in totalitarian regimes, even though these patterns can also be found in more democratic societies. In this regard, one of the first signs of increasing social tensions is the growing efforts of various social groups to censor music and other fields of art. Latent censorship (in fact, self-censorship), on the other hand, seems to be reserved for the so-called liberal democratic societies, Western bourgeois democracies, in other words the societies we consider normal owing to a functioning market, whose effects are counter balanced by bodies outside the market (private patronage, public subsidies, etc.).<sup>16</sup> This “normality”, however, is invariably open to debate. Referring to a limited commercial potential of music (one of the ways for record companies, the media, retail outlets, concert organisers to limit the scope of its expression), the free market usually appears to be the decisive censor. Indeed, in the Western world commercial reasons, the ever-present argument of agents in the music industry, act as the most effective censorship.

## The Culture of the Unsatisfied Against the Culture of Self-satisfaction

What I had in mind when I started writing this article were the recent ideologically heterogeneous mass protests in Slovenia, a massive strike against the corruption of the political class and the peripheral version of European neoliberalism. Music was a constant companion of these protests, but also what gave them meaning and character. Not even the collective memory of the past, invoked during a protest by the singing of an ancient Partisan song of freedom, a Latin American song of rebellion, or an old hit by a local singer-songwriter, is integral, uniform, or unequivocal. Oblivion forms part of it, either as a product of systemic social amnesia or an ideological barrier. A song – particularly its melody and rhythm, their outlines calling to mind the lyrics – is what brings this torpid past back to life, carries it into the present. At that point, the turbulent popular culture communicates that it is precisely the culture of the unsatisfied against the culture of self-satisfaction that is at the heart of it; that it strives for a better life, and that life can be changed. According to Frith, the truly popular is always something remarkable, something that is not mundane and cannot be described in terms of records sold or audience impressions. Nor likes on Facebook. It is because of this that it is also “non-popular”. As is a revived protest song from another time and place that rocks, be it at a mass protest or in the privacy of home.

<sup>15</sup> Simon Frith, *Performing Rites. On the Value of Popular Music* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1996, p. 165–166)

<sup>16</sup> Martin Cloonan, “Popularna glasba in cenzura v Britaniji” [Popular music and censorship in the UK]. *Časopis za kritiko znanosti*, XXVII, p. 195–196: 225–251.



*One of the key issues today is the refugee crisis – the way in which the European Union has been dealing with the migration wave from impoverished and war-stricken countries of the global South. Cities with a long tradition of immigration have been the sites of protests by self-organised refugees, such as the Viennese activist Mohammad Numan, whose views expressed in an interview conducted by artist and journalist Davor Konjikušić close this thematic section. The influx of refugees to Croatia is, however, a new situation, and a long-term solution would require bypassing the wider framework of repressive policies promoted by the EU and establishing new forms of solidarity. The refugee question has also been intensely present in the art world, which often shows a romanticised and mystified image of migrants. This thematic section presents works produced at UrbanFestival, which use various strategies. The first work discusses the problematic aspects of artistic work with the refugees, bringing the spatial dimension of the symbolic representation of dominant ideology into the focus of attention, while the other abandons artwork production and redirects the festival resources to a forum intended for the networking and self-organisation of refugees. The subject of city square is thus understood symbolically, as it implies a forum, a site of debate, and a political space.*

# *Square of Europe: Blind Spot*

**Davor  
Konjikušić**

PRESS CONFERENCE &  
ACTION IN PUBLIC SPACE,  
POSTER SERIES  
Square of Europe  
20. 6. 2014

PARTNER  
Center for Peace Studies

\* Municipal authorities refused to give out the official permission to mount the photo installation. Therefore the work was realised as a series of jumbo posters set on different locations in the city centre, and a press conference/action in front of the European Commission premises on the Square of Europe.

The starting point is the official Template for Checking the Validity of Biometric Photographs, which has been imposed on the photographers' studios by the Ministry of the Interior with Croatia's entry to the European Union. Following the instructions given, I produced photographic portraits of asylum seekers, consciously making mistakes. Allowing a minimum of facial expression to reveal their personality, I refused to deprive them of all individual traits or reduce them to archival data. By altering the power relations, I explored the role of the photography as a political instrument for control and surveillance.

By exhibiting the photographed faces of asylum seekers in public space, which I consider to be the place where social antagonisms come to the fore most clearly, I wanted to make the immigrants visible at least on a symbolic level. I raised the question of their status and position, and in a wider context of the restrictive immigrant policy of the EU and the relationship between the centre of Europe and the European periphery in which we live. I am building up my installation on the future site of the Square of Europe\*, which I experience as a soft spot in Zagreb's urban space. The square is perceived as a site of power, making the coexistence of the power of private capital and European institutions visible, whereas its public function remains purely declarative.



Jumbo poster at the central green market Dolac, photo by Damir Žižić

# *Refugees in Europe on Struggles, Organizing and Solidarity*

**Petja  
Dimitrova**

**SOCIAL FORUM**  
Youth Center Dugave  
17. 4. 2015

**PARTICIPANTS**  
Tea Vidović / Center for  
Piece Studies, Inayat Jiskani,  
Mohammad Numan / Refugee  
protest camp Vienna, Rex  
Osa / The VOICE refugee  
forum Germany, JD / MigSzol  
– Migrant Solidarity Group of  
Hungary, No Border Movement  
Serbia and Croatia

**PARTNER**  
Center for Piece Studies

Europe has a problem with refugees. This problem resides in its migrant policy. The joint system of refugee camps, established in 1997, aims to secure the external borders of the EU. Thermal cameras; taking fingerprints according to Dublin I, II, and III regulations; security agencies such as Frontex; mass deportations; resolutions on “safe states”; refugee centres resembling prisons, such as those in North Africa and Ukraine; violent push-back operations at the borders; isolated processing centres, refugee camps, work and movement prohibition; new legal paragraphs used to criminalise migrants and refugees – this is the desperate “vision” of this xenophobic policy backed up by racism. International norms for refugee protection have been losing efficiency. People seek security in the EU, but if their asylum claim is rejected, they can end up with nothing: no home, no money, and without the right to work and stay within the EU.

“We demand our rights”, “We’ll rise”, “Stop deportations”, “We are here to stay” – these are only some of the slogans used by refugees and migrants at protests in the streets of European cities. In Hamburg, Berlin, Amsterdam, Calais,

Ceuta, Melilla, Athens, Vienna and elsewhere, those who have managed to cross the EU border are becoming more and more visible and louder in demanding their rights.

What is the situation in Croatia? Refugees keep coming and many are here to stay. What rights and options do they have? What problems and struggles must they face? What subjects are active in the field? What can we learn from the refugee movement in the EU regarding self-organisation, resistance, and solidarity? Good life for everyone in Europe – what would that be?

Therefore, I have initiated a project for the UrbanFestival in which I am exploring the formats and resources for merging and reflecting together upon art, activism, politics, and civil society. The project consists of two parts: a poster campaign and a social forum featuring activists from four European countries with different experiences: Germany, Austria, Hungary, Serbia. The aim is to use presentations, debates, and film screenings to exchange experiences and to elaborate a joint strategy, as well as to articulate the refugee-related problems in a broader community.





**Refugees in Europe on struggles, organizing and solidarity**  
 Refugees in Europe on struggles, organizing and solidarity  
 Social forum, Youth Center Dugave, Dom Dugave, Sv. Mateja 70a  
 April 17 2015, Friday 4 P.M.

"We demand our rights," "we'll rise," "stop deportations," "we are here to stay" – these are only some among the slogans used in the protests of refugees and migrants in the streets of European cities. In Hamburg, Berlin, Amsterdam, Calais, Ceuta, Melilla, Athens, Vienna and elsewhere, those who have managed to cross the EU border are becoming more and more visible and louder in demanding their rights. — **What is the situation in Croatia?** Refugees keep coming and many are here to stay. What rights and options do they have? What problems and struggles must they face? What subjects are active in the field? What can we learn from the refugee movement in the EU regarding self-organization, resistance, and solidarity? Good life for everyone in Europe – what would that be? — **UrbanFestival** and artists and activist **Petja Dimitrova** invite you to join us at social forum on migrations at Youth Center Dugave on April 17.

#### Programme

##### 4:00 – 5:45 P.M. Presentations

- 4:00 – 4:30 P.M. Center for peace studies, Croatia
- 4:30 – 5:00 P.M. Inayat Jiskani, Croatia
- 5:00 – 5:45 P.M. Mohammad Numan, Refugee protest camp Vienna, Austria

##### 5:45 – 6:30 P.M. Dinner break (cooking for you: Okus doma / Taste of home)

##### 6:30 – 9:30 P.M. Presentations

- 6:30 – 7:15 P.M. Rex Osa, The VOICE refugee forum Germany
- 7:15 – 8:00 P.M. No Border Movement, Serbia and Croatia
- 8:00 – 8:45 P.M. JD, MigSokol — Migrant Solidarity Group of Hungary

##### 8:45 – 9:30 P.M. Discussion, exchange of thoughts

On the following day, Saturday April 18 after 5 P.M., join us in Medika (Pierottijeva 11) for "**Day against borders**", discussions, cooking and party organized by No Border Croatia.

Organized by [BLOK] in collaboration with Center for Piece Studies.  
 Supported by Youth Center Dugave.  
[www.urbanfestival.blok.hr](http://www.urbanfestival.blok.hr)

# *Refugees Self-organising: the Viennese Example*

**Davor  
Konjikušić**

Mohammad Numan is a co-initiator of Refugee Protest Camp Vienna, a movement that has become a good example of self-organization in which the refugees have articulated their problems regardless of the human rights discourse. Invited by artist and activist Petja Dimitrova, Numan has participated in the social forum of UrbanFestival titled *Refugees in Europe on Struggles, Organising, and Solidarity*. On this occasion, he was interviewed by artist and journalist Davor Konjikušić.

Late in 2012, a wave of refugee protests swept over the European Union, including Austria. Refugee Protest Camp was launched in the refugee camp of Traiskirchen, a small town situated some 40 kilometres south of Vienna. There is a former artillery school for cadets in the very heart of the city, built in 1900, which today houses the Federal Centre for Asylum Seekers (Bundesbetreuungsstelle für Asylwerber), in direct competence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The former Austro-Hungarian casern was put back to use in 1956. Now it is a place where migrants live in terrible conditions and suffer police brutality. Police raids often happen outside the legal framework, which has been repeatedly brought to public attention by the migrants themselves, as well as by activists and political groups working with asylum seekers. On Wednesday, November 24, 2012, dissatisfied with their living conditions, the slowness of asylum granting and frequent deportations, around 200 migrants launched a public demonstration for the first time, which took the form of a 25-kilometre long protest march towards Vienna.

In Sigmund Freud's Park, at the very centre of the city, the migrants built tents and created a genuine refugee camp. They demanded better living conditions for all migrants, no more transfers to isolated mountainous areas, new interpreters, basic assistance for all refugees regardless of their legal status, and an end to forced deportation. According to Austrian statistics, as many as four out of five refugees, despite satisfying all formal requirements, fail to obtain the asylum. The Austrian authorities mostly deport them back to the countries from which they had originally fled, which results

in prolonged suffering, misery, and violence, often ending in the deported person's death. One of the key demands of the self-organised Refugee Protest Camp Vienna was to erase asylum seekers' fingerprints from the official data base, in case Austria rejected their asylum application, which would allow them to turn to another EU member state.

The protest did not take place without police repression. Around a hundred participants were arrested and as many as eight asylum seekers were subsequently deported. The authorities did their best to criminalise the entire movement, accusing individual migrants of being active on the black market and involved in human trafficking. Charges were raised against several persons, but were eventually dropped as unfounded.

**DK We can start with your involvement in Refugee Protest Camp Vienna. The issue of political self-organisation has been one of the key issues in the migrants' struggle for their rights. They rarely manage to organise themselves, primarily out of fear that their engagement might affect the outcome of their asylum seeking and end in deportation.**

**Mohammad  
Numan**

At that time, very few people at the Traiskirchen camp spoke German or English. They mostly spoke Farsi, Urdu, or Pashtu, so they couldn't understand each other even if they lived in the same room. People come from various countries and have different life stories, they do not trust each other. None

of them has a job or money to survive. At that time we were all wondering what to do, as nobody cared for our demands. The food situation was really bad. They fed us practically like dogs. At first, we began to protest in the kitchen and within the centre. I was in contact with *No Border*, a group from Serbia, and they referred me to similar activist groups in Austria. When I met them for the first time, as well as the representatives of various political organisations in Vienna, primarily students, they were very open and friendly. After that, I tried to explain to others at the centre that I had met some people who could offer us assistance. At that time, a minor protest against the deportations began, but we were not informed about it. We did not communicate properly with each other. At the same time, we got to know that they were planning to transfer us to a camp high in the mountains, where there was literally nothing. We didn't want to be taken there. We tried to protest at the camp, but the police came at once and everything ended in half an hour. Three of my friends, including a minor from Afghanistan, were arrested and taken to the deportation centre. I realised that we would not be able to operate that way. I realised that we had to organise a protest in the city and try to bring as many people as possible. The protest had to be public. The idea immediately got support from the Student Union and the young leftists. I asked people at the camp whether they wanted to join such a protest. Many were hesitant. I told them that the police were arresting us at the camp already and that we had to gain visibility. If we got arrested in a public place, it would have some effect.

**DK How many persons worked on organising the protest at the time?**

**MN** At the very camp, there were some ten persons at the time. Everyone had a friend in another room. Thus, we began to spread the information from one room to another, and eventually we gathered some fifty persons who were ready to demonstrate publicly. I was in charge of the finances and of providing the support of various groups in Vienna. The idea was that we should first drive to the city to protest. For many, it would have been the first time to see Vienna, but it remained inaccessible as the return ticket cost 12 euro and the monthly allowance was 40 euro. Eventually, some 100 persons decided to go anyway. After the protest, many wanted to stay in Vienna, since they felt safer there than

back at the camp. They were aware that the police couldn't just arrest people like that. The migrants were suddenly motivated and they wanted to do something. Nevertheless, we decided to go back to Traiskirchen and keep talking to people. All our discussions were transmitted from one floor to another and thus we could obtain feedback. At that time, they threw me out of the building for having spent 72 hours outside of the camp. I had to travel to Vienna as I was in charge of the logistics.

**DK But the authorities knew all the while what you were doing at the camp?**

**MN** They didn't know. At that time, they didn't understand what was going on. It seemed like people were talking and playing cards. There is a rule that light must be turned off after 10 p.m., but people were sitting together in larger rooms. We tried to find out about the situation in other centres. Then we came to the idea that we wanted to organise a march.

**DK It is very difficult to coordinate various ethnic groups, to unify people, and to define the common goal. How did you choose who would lead the protest and what the decision-making structure would be?**

**MN** Everything in our movement started as friendship. First we talked to our friends, whom we knew and trusted, and we invited them to join. Then those friends talked to their friends. There was already a protesting group from Somalia, but it mostly gathered people from one region, who were very well connected. By transmitting messages from friend to friend, our movement started to grow. At the same time, there were migrants who did not support us. They accused us of using the protest to improve our own position, to get a positive answer to our asylum application. Some were mocking us openly.

**DK Who helped you on the Austrian side?**

**MN** On the one hand, it was the students, and on the other political activists fighting for the rights of migrants, theoreticians, the green and the unions, the socialist, leftist party, in fact, all leftist political fractions. The meeting about the

organisation of the march lasted for 12 hours. The Turkish community was also present and offered us support. We had the Somalis, the Turks, the Pakistanis, the Afghanis, and other groups all sit together. When people decided that they wanted to march, we decided that they should march. In the meantime, we tried to get back those people who had been transferred to the centres in isolated parts of the country.

**DK How did you manage to get such broad support, given that it is almost impossible to get the members of various leftist factions to sit at the same table, from the social democrats to the anarchist groups?**

**MN** Yes, that's impossible. But at the very beginning, while we stayed at Sigmund Freud's Park, even though there was no media coverage of our action, people began approaching us spontaneously. People went to the supermarkets and took food that the merchants wanted to throw away merely because its expiry date was close, and they brought it to us. Everyone decided to help us from the outset, regardless of the faction they belonged to. We also started to collect donations, and those who could not come to the protest decided to support us with money. We were also financed by parliamentary parties. People were united through the idea of helping the refugees.

**DK In the local campaigns in Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia, the parties in power bribed some of the migrants in order to manipulate them for their own goals. How did you manage to avoid that, especially after receiving money?**

**MN** It's true that we received the money, but our political goal was only about the migrants. We refused to talk about anything else. If a political party wanted to say something, they could say only that they "demanded human rights for the migrants." However, the financing was not public, it happened behind the closed doors. I had very many conflicts with various politicians, they were not happy with my criticism against them. I told them: if you want to speak out, don't do it in the parliament. Stay with us and speak about us at the camp. Some wanted to speak out, others not. Also, those politicians who came to us could speak only as private persons, not on behalf of their parties, and they found it quite hard.

**DK What I would like to know is, how did you manage to break the information blockade?**

**MN** We started to write media reports with detailed information on how the protests were going on. We also had our own blog, maintained by a group of people consisting of both Austrian citizens and migrants who questioned people on how they felt, what their rights were, what they demanded. But the real media attention started when we entered the church.

**DK What strategies did the authorities use against you? At one point, they started to criminalise your protest by accusing you of being human traffickers, and eight persons got arrested and deported.**

**MN** This criminalisation was preceded by several exhausting meetings with us. I had meetings with the minister of the interior, the cardinal of Vienna, the director of Caritas. They wanted to get rid of us with various promises. The protest had been going on for a month already, and the government representatives had stopped talking to us. It was also snowing. At that point, we decided to enter a nearby church, the Votivkirche, and then the authorities really started to respond. Christmas was in four days and there were sixty refugees in the church. They offered us place to sleep outside of the church, at a Caritas shelter, but we didn't go there, only the Somali refugees who were sleeping on the street at the time. Caritas threw them out of the shelter at once, as they saw that they did not get us, who were still occupying their church. We talked about the deportation problem with the Ministry of the Interior, but they refused us with the explanation that each case must be considered separately. The protest had been going on for two months by the time and we also started a hunger strike. We were completely exhausted. We didn't know what to do next. Then we moved to the Servite monastery. Before we moved to the church, the camp was brutally demolished by the police, and they gradually started forbidding people to join us in the protest or to spend a night with us. Everyone was illegalised and deportations to Hungary began.

**DK Can we say that this was the point at which the protest started to lose momentum?**

**MN** That's right.

- DK **But what would you say today, what has the protest achieved and what do you considered to have been its weak points?**
- MN Eighteen people were granted an asylum and many others avoided deportation, their cases are still being processed. As the protest was prolonged, people were exhausted and disappointed. Some even left Austria. In fact, Caritas managed to use the weaknesses of our protest better than anyone else. They managed to manipulate people by offering individual help and lawyers. They played on the personal level. Another outcome of the protest has been the recent action of the Somalis, who are planning to occupy some housing facilities in Vienna, as well as an action in front of the UNHCR building. As for the second part of your question, I would never again divide people in ethnic groups. There were separate groups of Moroccans, Pashtu, Punjabis...
- DK **In what way has this action politicised you?**
- MN I have never wanted to become a politician, but if you think that speaking out about the reality is politics, then I am a political person. I don't care who is in power as I am not an Austrian citizen. It is something that the Austrians should worry about, not me. Even though I pay my taxes in Austria, I am spending money from my own state, since I am not allowed to work here.
- DK **When it comes to artistic work with migrants, the problem is always that these people are objectified by the artists, who enjoy all the civil rights and control the final product.**
- MN This has been an important issue for me. Ordinary persons cannot become visible easily. Within our movement, there were artists who were constantly producing artworks, drawings, in order to show people what was going on. If one wants to make the migrant story visible, I think that's important. Of course, some people want to make a career out of it, but there are others who don't, that depends on the person. For example, I find it easy to speak in public, but there are others who find it hard, for this reason or another. That's why they have delegated their power of speech to me.

- DK **In the developed countries of Western Europe, migrants are also exploited as labour force. They work in bad conditions, enjoy few rights as workers, and are far less paid than the citizens of these states. What is the situation in Austria?**
- MN If a person has no regular status and papers, he or she will undoubtedly look for a job on the "black" market. If one is hungry, one will do anything to survive, be it by resorting to crime or by working as a slave. Migrants can only get a job as seasonal workers, who are also paying taxes. I can't understand why we are allowed to do only short-term jobs, not work for a longer period. I also can't understand why Austria allows refugee girls and women to work as prostitutes, but they are not allowed to work at the bar.
- DK **It is not the situation only in Austria. Many migrant women are forced into prostitution, and many of them are minors. That is another issue that you've been dealing with...**
- MN Migrants are doing various jobs for 5 Euro per hour, which is below any standard in Austria. Women are allowed to offer sexual services because Austria has some use of it. People want entertainment and they have done something to get it. Around 80% of prostitutes are migrants. They are in a worse position than any other asylum seeker, since nobody wants to talk about that. The Ministry of Health does not want to help them in any way and the police refuse to investigate cases of human trafficking. The government doesn't do anything substantial. Austria is not only double-faced, it can be four-faced when dealing with one and the same case. Human traffickers profit immensely from these girls. If migrants cannot work in other professions, prostitution should be banned. As it is now, the state turns out to be the principal human trafficker, since it has made it impossible for them to look for a different job.
- DK **We are witnessing a situation in which migrations are becoming a crucial humanitarian and political issue, which various states are trying to solve by imposing restrictive policies. Rescue missions are only a small part of the operations and fail to solve the problem systematically. What do you think, how should Europe position itself with regard to the migration problem?**



**MN** If you are asking me personally, so far I haven't experienced any justice. I am sitting here in Europe, but there is no justice for me. All these academic stories of human rights should stop. Human rights do not exist for us. There is no Geneva Convention for me and UNHCR cannot do anything. They told us that they had only five workers. All this has become a great business, where all these organisations, such as the Red Cross, Caritas, and UNHCR make money on refugees.

**DK** **During your stay in Croatia, you have met lots of migrants. What is your opinion on this population, what impression have you got?**

**MN** I can sense that they are going to protest as well, since their living conditions are much worse than those in Austria. Of all the 1400 people living at Traiskirchen, only 200 joined the march, and only 60 stayed until the end. I think it needs time, but they will protest.



*Understanding the city square as a physical space, one of its defining elements is often a representative public sculpture. Artworks presented in this section deal with various modes of deconstructing this genre, which in Zagreb's case is predominantly a figuration based on the still vital tradition of representing "famous personalities". In the shadow of these "dead white men", one can easily notice the link between public sculpture and the dominant ideology. In the urban seminar Zagreb's Squares Don't Remember Women, this relationship has been analysed from the feminist perspective. This topic is further developed in the text written by its co-author, art historian and researcher Sanja Horvatinčić. In her interpretation, the (im)possible monument to women's emancipation would be a huge screen that was hiding the monumental figure of viceroy Jelačić for about a month in the summer of 1947, which has been expelled from the official art-historical narrative. Thus, a peasant woman with a gun in her hands covered the royal favourite in charge of suffocating public revolts. Photomontages created during the project by Goran Sergej Pristaš and Mila Pavićević, form a visual contribution to this section. Here the two iconographies have merged: the smiling partisan woman with the gun and contemporary Zagreb with viceroy Jelačić back on his pedestal.*

# *Monument to Protest*

**Marko  
Marković**

PERFORMANCE  
Franjo Tuđman Square  
13. 9. 2014

*Monument to Protest* is an action in which a monument is erected to the “common man” and to all those who understand the importance of fighting for one’s own rights and the rights of others. It is dedicated to all those brave women, men, young and old, who raise their voices and occupy the streets. This living monument is intended to encourage people to get actively involved against the repressive measures of the apparatus in power. The action is a sort of invitation to self-organised resistance. Our duty is to draw attention to irregularities and social issues, to suggest solutions and to demand answers. It is our responsibility and our duty to resist economic inequality, class differences, intolerance, and other repressive forms and measures imposed by the ruling structures.



Author and participant performing the monument, photo by Srđan Kovačević



# Zagreb's Squares Don't Remember Women

**[BLOK], Sanja  
Horvatinčić  
and Mario  
Kikaš**

URBAN SEMINAR  
starting from Tito's Square  
13. 9. 2014

Among the authors of sculptures adorning the public spaces of Zagreb, women have been in considerable minority. Sculptures commemorating women – genuine historic personalities – are even fewer: there are only seven of them. This hypothesis on the invisibility of women has been corroborated by the available statistical data: they are recorded as the authors of only 11% of public sculptures, and even a fleeting glance at the current revival of monuments in Zagreb clearly shows that the appreciation of the female contribution to progressive social relations is (still) being systematically minimised. Sociological research on the position of women artists in Croatian society reveals some disturbing facts: only women from the privileged social classes have access to artistic education, and even though their presence in institutes of higher education has increased during the past decades, they mostly remain unemployed after they have completed their formal education (by as much as 60%).\*

With the intent of adopting a critical position towards the class and gender-related policies of creating memory in Zagreb's public space, we have organised an urban tour that aims at reading the public monumental sculpture of Zagreb in order to offer some guidelines for analysing the patriarchal patterns of representation. During a two-hour walk through the city centre, we will search for and visit those (rare) monuments that commemorate famous women, many of them hidden in passageways or inconspicuously positioned on façades, far from the representative spaces of squares. We will also consider those sculptures – made exclusively by male artists – in which the traditional depiction of Arcadian motifs and allegories, such as Longing, Waiting, Timidity, or Concern have served to legitimise the public depiction of passive, naked female bodies. We are also interested in the thematic preoccupations of women sculptors such as Marija Ujević Galetović and Ksenija Kantoci, as well as the historical and political circumstances in which their work has been placed in public space. If one considers the perhaps most well known public sculpture by Marija Ujević Galetović, her Miroslav Krleža, it raises some issues concerning the representation of literary authors, both men and women, through public sculpture. Thus, the tour will also include the only public monument in Zagreb dedicated to a female writer, which does not only testify to the repressive canon in terms of gender, but also reveals a lot about the treatment of literary genres that are not considered high or elite culture. The monument to Marija Jurić Zagorka thus emblematically represents the process of her canonisation as a literary author, a writer of popular literature, and eventually as a feminist who has become a sort of symbol or personification, perhaps even a mother figure for our contemporary feminism.

The tour also includes visits to lost and preserved examples of publicly presented female protagonists of the anti-fascist struggle and the socialist revolution, which appeared in public urban spaces after World War II. Besides showing the progressive representation of women in terms of gender, these monuments raise the question of how genuine the implementation of the idea of women's emancipation was in the socialist society of former Yugoslavia.

Eventually, the aim of the tour is to see how a systemic critique of various systems, both those with the power to directly dictate trends, as well as educational ones which reproduce the social mechanisms for the subjection of women, can pave the way for a different reading of public space.

\* The statistics taken from Sanja Kajinić, "Spomenici – rodno mapiranje prostora na primjeru Zagreba" [Monuments: Gender-related mapping of space, the case of Zagreb], in: *Rodno/spolno obilježavanje prostora i vremena u Hrvatskoj*, ed. Jasenka Kodrnja (Zagreb: Institute of Social Research, 2006).

# Zagrebački trgovi ne pamte žene.

Urbanfestival 13  
Natrag na trg!

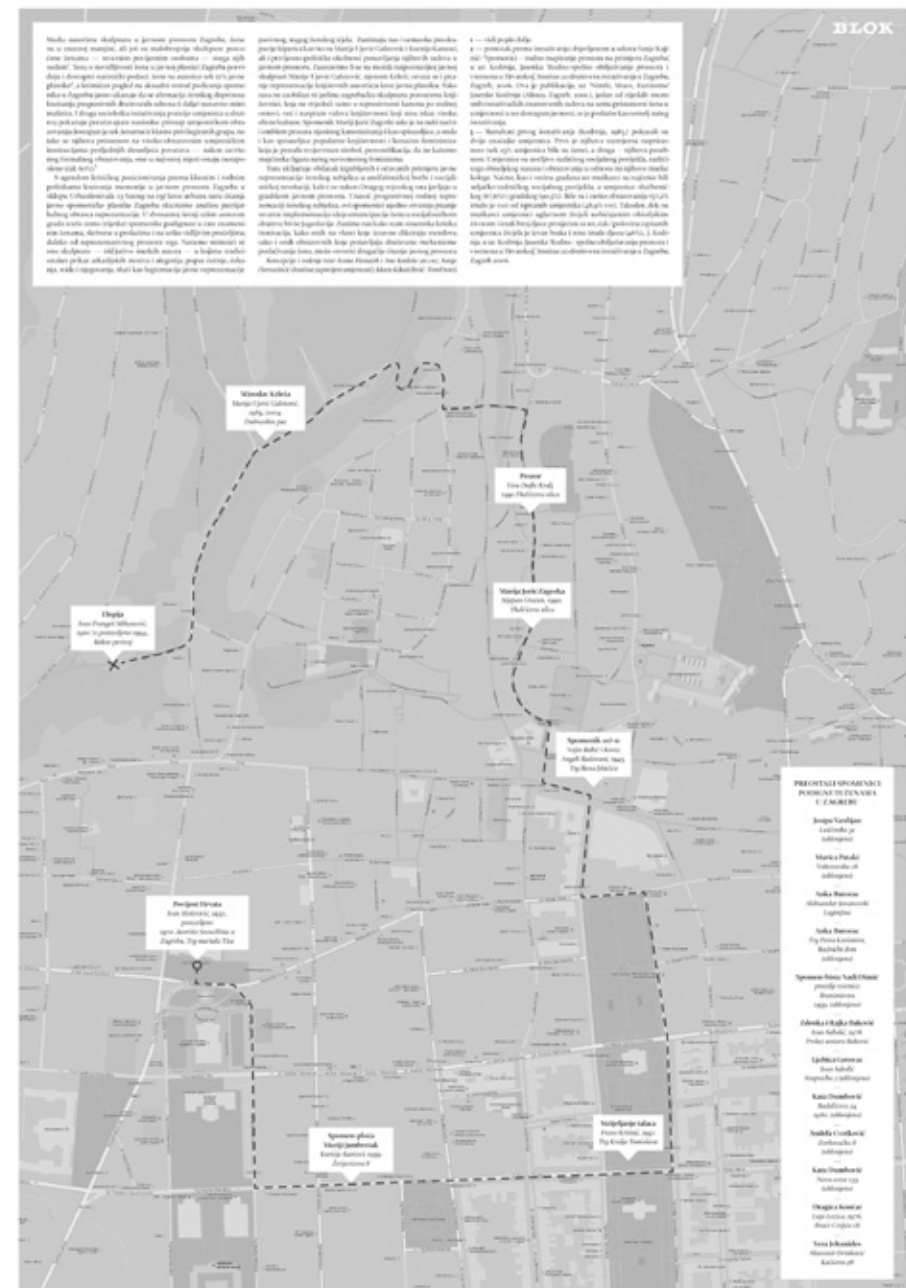
Urbana tura  
subota, 12.9.2014. 10-11 sati  
Početak ture na  
Trgu maršala Tita  
kod skulpture  
Povijest Hrvata

★JA SE PONESIM  
TIM ŠTO STOJIM  
NA ČELU ARMije U  
KOJOJ IM A OGR-  
MAN BROJ ŽENA ★  
JA MOGU KAZATI  
DA SU ŽENE U OVOJ  
BORBI PO SVOM  
HEROIZMU PO SVO-  
JOJ IZDRŽLJIVOSTI  
BILE IJESU NA PRVOM  
MJESTU I U PRVIM  
REDOVIMA I NA-  
ŠIM NARODIMA  
JUGOSLAVIJE ČINI  
ČAST ŠTO IMAJU  
TAKVE KĆERI  
TITO

**Urbana tura**  
subota, 13. 9. 2014. u 11 sati  
Početak ture na  
Trgu maršala Tita  
kod skulpture  
Povijest Hrvata

★ JA SE PONAŠAM  
TIM ŠTO STOJIM  
NA ČELU ARMIRANE  
KOJOJ IMA OGRO-  
MAJ BROJ ŽENA ★  
JA MOGU KAZATI  
DA SU ŽENE U OVOJ  
BORBI PO SVOM  
HEROIZMU PO SVO-  
JOJ IZDRŽLJIVOSTI  
RILE I JESU NA PRVOM  
MJESTU I U PRVIM  
REDOVIMA I NA-  
ŠIM NARODIMA  
JUGOSLAVIJE ČINI  
ČAST ŠTO IMAJU  
TAKVE KĆERI  
TITO

TITO

[illegible]

Poster with map of the tour, photo taken from Croatian State Archives, design by Dario Dević & Hrvoje Živičić

# *Liberation of Zagreb, Notes for Reconstruction*

**Goran Sergej  
Pristaš and  
Mila Pavićević**

**WORKSHOP, EXHIBITION,  
AND INTERVENTION IN  
PUBLIC SPACE**  
From Sava Bridge  
to Kvaternik Square  
5–14. 5. 2015

**COLLABORATORS**  
second year MA students of  
photography at the Academy  
of Dramatic Arts, University  
of Zagreb Dario Belić, Nikola  
Šerventić, Dino Šertović i Ino  
Zeljak, Tutorship: doc. art Darije  
Petković and teaching assistant  
Jelena Blagović

**PARTNER**  
Academy of Dramatic Arts

The 70th anniversary of the liberation of Zagreb from fascism is also the 70th anniversary of a film known in the history of Yugoslav cinema as Newsreel no.1. Using this material, both the edited version and the “raw” footage, as well as the photographic documentation of Zagreb in the days around the Liberation, a group of authors has placed the images into a new context, thus raising questions not only about the transformation of the city and the political circumstances that lead to it, but also the transformation of the cinematic and photographic medium itself.

Therefore, the exhibition has been mounted in a deserted urban space instead of a classical gallery. It presents archival photo and video materials, as well as video collages and montages resulting from the manipulation of (moving) images, sound, and text. For the time of its duration, the locations where the Liberation Army entered the city (the Vlaška–Draškovićeve–Jurišićeva–Frankopanska–Savska route) will be sites of various interventions and their documentation will return to the exhibition space in the form of film recordings, thus continuing to explore the contradiction in filming between May 8, 1945 and May 8, 2015.

Case 1: Zagreb, early May 1945. The Nazi and Ustasha army is retreating from the city. Several filmmakers, mostly pioneers of the Croatian cinema, are hiding film materials and equipment that the occupying army intends to take with them. Some of the equipment is transferred from the then building of state production to private homes, but it is impossible to hide everything. Therefore the filmmakers take their cameras, go out into the streets, and film the departure of Nazi and Ustasha soldiers from Zagreb. In order not to be noticed, they camouflage the cameras on windows

or act as if they were fleeing themselves. Sometimes they even use the retreating soldiers to help them transfer the film equipment to the place where they intend to shoot. Film director Branko Marjanović, who is located in the city centre and decides the shooting localities, is coordinating the entire action. On May 8th, the partisan army enters the city and the filming continues. The mistrusting partisans occasionally stop the civilians carrying cameras, but the detained cameramen respond with the password: “Florian knows everything!” Even though there is no Florian and the password has been invented among the filmmakers, a name behind the action regulates the situation. The filmmakers are set free. This is how the historic document referred to in literature as the “Liberation of Zagreb” is created.

Case 2: The cameramen are preparing to leave for the liberated territory to help shoot propaganda materials for ZAVNOH (State Antifascist Council for the People's Liberation of Croatia). They collect cameras, photo-materials (chemicals and paper), winter equipment, and medicines. As soon as they receive orders, they set off. It is at this time when the leading Ustasha guard for “raising the morale” among the few followers is established. They take with them journalists, cameramen, and even a photo-reporter. A higher authority orders Milan Pavić to “volunteer” as an undercover agent, to observe and document everything he sees in order to submit a detailed report later on. He is told that his group would wait for him in order to take him to join the partisans in the liberated territory.

The project uses photographs by Milan Pavić from the Collection of Photographs, Photographic Equipment, and Postcards at the Zagreb Municipal Museum, as well as film material from the Croatian Film Archive.





"Liberation of Zagreb, Notes for Reconstruction", photo-collage  
series by Dario Belić, Nikola Šerventić, Dino Šertović and Ino Zeljak























# *Erased: On the Circularity of Misogyny on the Example of Female Representation in the Public Space of Zagreb*

**Sanja  
Horvatinčić**

*Somewhere high up, in the zone below the roof of four-storeyed historicist buildings, or above their robust transoms and lintels. In the zone of time that has been stopped, of deep shadows and dimmed street noise: that is where these scantily clad, mythological stone maidens chat and whisper surrounded by garlands, palm trees, and acanthus leaves.<sup>1</sup>*

A brief analysis of the discourse of this excerpt, which describes the male view of female representation in the medium of decorative sculpture in Zagreb's facades, will serve as a mental exercise for approaching the issue of the spatial distribution of female figures and the reproduction of women's narratives in public space. As early as the turn of the 20th century, the logic of architectural functionalism that underpin the modernist paradigm forbade all ornamentation in historicist and secessionist buildings, denouncing it as superfluous to such an extent that it was sometimes equated with crime<sup>2</sup>. A hundred years later, the female aspect of the repertoire of this marginal and often anonymous sculptural

<sup>1</sup> Višnja Slavica Gabout, review of *Djeve sa zagrebačkih pročelja* [Maidens from Zagreb's facades] by Vladimir Vučinović (Skener studio: Zagreb, 2004)

<sup>2</sup> As early as 1908, Adolf Loos, architect and theoretician of architecture, expressed this attitude succinctly in the title of his lecture *Ornament and Crime*.

production was popularised by the use of the photographic lens and described with striking metaphors, collocations, and expressions, the likes which will be mentioned more than once in this analysis. The spatial markings that the author used to describe the position of reliefs on the facades of representative buildings may be interpreted as a metaphor for the marginal position of female representation in the entire spatial and temporal network of public urban space ("below", "above", "[in] the shadow", "dimmed"). The description continues with a spatial-temporal metaphor alluding to the temporal universality of gender stereotypes ("zone of time that has been stopped"), perpetuated in a circular return to the misogynous cultural tradition, whereas the term "stone maidens" resounds with a longing for fossilising gender power relations. Their conversation has been reduced to "chat[ting] and whisper[ing]", and their naked bodies – surrounded by "garlands, palm trees, and acanthus leaves" – to a mere aesthetic addition to the socio-political functions of public institutions and bourgeois residences.



## On Multileveled Oppression

Nevertheless, contemporary documentation of female presence in monuments and public sculpture, or in naming public areas in Zagreb, has not been reduced to such poetic descriptions of urban 'maidens'. Whether as a critical reaction or as an inherent part of the transition crisis of using and managing public space, an increasing interest in systematizing and classifying public sculpture in Zagreb can be noticed in the past decades, including – albeit only sporadically – some critical readings of the politics of public space. Thus, there is a relatively broad spectrum of research results and presentation formats at our disposal, ranging from conservationist documentations and listings<sup>3</sup>, to professional tourist guides<sup>4</sup> and projects of mapping Zagreb's monuments, to scholarly analyses<sup>5</sup>, and new interpretations of women's urban history.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, inspired by the need for documenting the consequences of passive and active devastation of public monuments to the People's Liberation Struggle, the Socialist Revolution and the Workers' Movement, including the devastation of memorial landscapes as a result of historical revisionism during the past two decades, important progress has been made in re-assessing this segment of public sculpture in Zagreb as well.<sup>7</sup>

The data used in our analysis have been largely taken from the guidebook *Spomenici i fontane u gradu Zagrebu* [Monuments and Fountains of Zagreb], the most comprehensive overview of public sculpture created and preserved before 2007: more than 630 monuments spread over an area

3 In the socialist period, listing public sculptures in Zagreb were primarily directed at the corpus dedicated to the People's Liberation Struggle, the socialist revolution, and the workers' movement. Cf. *Zagreb grad heroj: spomen obilježja revoluciji* [Zagreb, the City of Heroes: Memorials to the Revolution], ed. Stipe Ugarković and Ivan Očak (Zagreb: August Cesarec, 1979); *Spomenici i spomen obilježja radničkog pokreta i narodne revolucije u Zagrebu* [Monuments and Memorials Dedicated to the Workers' Movement and the People's Revolution in Zagreb] (Zagreb: Regional Institute of Monument Conservation in Zagreb, 1981).

4 The most comprehensive and exhaustive is the one from 2007, which has therefore served as a basis for my analysis. Cf. *Spomenici i fontane u gradu Zagrebu: vodič* [Monuments and Fountains in Zagreb: A Guide], (Municipal Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage and Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Glyptothèque: Zagreb, 2007)

5 See the collection of articles *Rodno/spolno obilježavanje prostora i vremena u Hrvatskoj* [Gender and Sex-related Marking of Space and Time in Croatia], ed. Jasenka Kodrnja (Institute for Social Research: Zagreb, 2006)

6 Cf. Barbara Blasin and Igor Marković, *Ženski vodič kroz Zagreb* [Women's guide through Zagreb] (Zagreb: Meandar and B.a.b.e., 2006).

7 Cf. chapter on the city of Zagreb in *Rušenje antifascističkih spomenika u Hrvatskoj 1990–2000*. [Demolition of Antifascist Monuments in Croatia, 1990–2000], ed. Juraj Hrženjak (Zagreb: Union of Antifascist Veterans and Antifascists of Croatia, 2002), 219–347, as well as *Sjećanje je borba: spomen*

*obilježja Narodnooslobodilačke borbe i revolucionarnog pokreta na području grada Zagreba* [Remembering is Struggle: Memorials of the People's Liberation Struggle and the Revolutionary Movement in the Zagreb Area], ed. Mario Šimunković and Domagoj Delač (Zagreb: Union of Antifascist Veterans and Antifascists of Croatia, 2013), which deals exclusively with monuments dedicated to the People's Liberation Struggle in Zagreb.

8 The list is part of the *Listing of Public Monuments* issued by the Municipal Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage, revised in 1998 and later complemented with the data on newly erected monuments. However, it ignores sections of museum holdings, donations to the City, or private collections exhibited in the open, as well as architectural sculpture, chapels/oratories, crucifixes, and monuments in Zagreb's graveyards, as the authors have considered those to be out of their scope.

9 Sanja Kajinić, "Spomenici – rodno mapiranje prostora na primjeru Zagreba" [Monuments: Gender-related Mapping of Space in Zagreb], in *Rodno/spolno obilježavanje prostora i vremena* (as in n. 6), 109.

10 Ibid. p. 111–112.

11 Ibid. p. 110.

12 Cf. Jasenka Kodrnja, "Rodna/spolna hijerarhija javnog prostora, ili žene u nazivima ulica i trgova u RH" [Gender/Sex-related Hierarchy of Public Space: Women in Street and Square Names in the Republic of Croatia], in: *Rodno/spolno obilježavanje prostora i vremena* (as in n. 6), 86–87.

of 640 m<sup>2</sup> throughout 17 districts of Zagreb<sup>8</sup>. However, this voluminous body of monuments has so far remained without an adequate critical analysis, and so have the socio-political context and cultural policies in the background of its creation and heterogeneity – there have been no fresh readings of particular thematic units or the symbolical positioning of motifs in urban landscape, and the problem of their politically motivated construction, removal, or demolition have likewise been largely ignored. The gender aspect of designing and inscribing social memory into public space has been equally bypassed, despite the fact that previous research pointed to an exceptional under-representation of women's monuments and authors in Zagreb. Sanja Kajinić's analysis from 2006 led to the conclusion that the gender-related presence of monuments and sculptures dedicated to women in Zagreb "obviously shows the level of gender inequality, which is deeply anchored in Croatian society and considered socially acceptable to such an extent that one rarely questions this lack of awareness about the city as a space that reflects its living discrimination and inequality."<sup>9</sup> Her research results have shown that 14.3% of public sculpture related to the female gender contains less than five examples dedicated to historic women.<sup>10</sup> Even though Kajinić's corpus and methodology do not entirely correspond to the needs of my analysis, one should certainly take into account comparative gender analysis, which I have not been able to do in great detail. Namely, the total ratio of male and female authors who have participated in the making of public sculpture in the city of Zagreb is 127:16. The corpus of sacral monuments largely consists of a disproportional number of recently erected monuments to meritorious Christian figures, whereby female gender remains represented exclusively through the Virgin Mary in her symbolic role as a mother and Croatian national patron. According to Kajinić, the reason for this continuing trend of the negligible presence of monuments dedicated to women or produced by women is "the oppressive nature of institutions and cultural practices that have created this situation, as well as the complete lack of challenge to this status quo."<sup>11</sup>

Similar reasons can be identified in the small percentage of public areas named after women<sup>12</sup>, whereby the prevalence of either gender should also be considered in regard to their centrality within the urban texture: whereas central streets are usually dedicated to male figures, female names are commonly found at the periphery. Up to 2001, not a single central street in Croatia had been named after a female figure, and the only square dedicated to a historical woman

13 In the period from 1990–2001, as many as 38 female names have been erased, mostly those related to the People's Liberation Struggle and the antifascist movement (Kata Pejnović, Anka Butorac, Kata Genzić, Kata Grdak, Ljubica Gerovac, Nada Dimić, and others). Despite some new streets named after women, the total of female names, especially those referring to historical figures and politically active women, has been considerably reduced as compared to the socialist period. Ibid. p. 99.

14 See <http://www.jutarnji.hr/stefica-je-miskecu-slomila-srce--poludio-je--poceo-piti--zavrsio-kao-prosjak--ona-se-udala-za-bogatog-nijemca-/922221/> (last accessed on 23 April 2015).

15 Saša Šimpraga, "Po ženama je nazvano samo jedan posto zagrebačkih ulica" [Only 1% of Zagreb's streets are named after women], *Novosti* 770 (2014), <http://www.novosti.com/2014/09/sasa-simpraga-po-zenama-je-nazvano-samo-jedan-posto-zagrebackih-ulica/> (last accessed on 23 April 2015).

16 The next widely present category includes sacral figures (29.4%), women from the history of People's Liberation Struggle (11.8%), history of the Croatian tradition (8.2%), and women scientists (3.5%). Cf. Jasenka Kodrnja (as in n. 13), 65.

was Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić Square in Slavonski Brod. This practice is most conspicuous in case of Zagreb as the centre of social, economic, and political power, where the presence of "female" streets and squares – including a considerable percentage of fictional characters – is only 5.8%. Among the 54 squares in Zagreb, only three bear a women's name and only one of them has been named after a historical figure (Katarina Zrinska Square)<sup>13</sup>.

In this respect, the "case" of The Baković Sisters' Passage, the only street named after female personalities in the heart of Zagreb, is particularly telling. Even though it is an extremely short and narrow section of the pedestrian zone, the names of murdered participants of Zagreb's antifascist movement, Zdenka and Rajka Baković, were from 1990–2009 substituted by that of beggar Miškec, a largely forgotten urban legend from the period before World War II<sup>14</sup>. This act of renaming does not only indicate a lack of gender policies in the naming of public urban areas, but the fact that such conscious erasure of the memory of women's participation in revolutionary activities during World War II, blocks the possibility of a positive attitude towards women's political struggle and emancipation during that period. The transitional practice of complete obliteration of the social memory of female antifascists and female communists, privileged in socialism through the practice of street naming, has recently been "mitigated" by ghettoizing them to the city's periphery. Even though civil initiatives of this type always act out of necessity of repairing the quantitative aspect of the under-representation of female memory in public space, by neglecting the symbolic aspect of its urban distribution they basically perpetuate the dominant spatial policy that marginalizes women's memory in public space<sup>15</sup>.

## Constrained, Nurses, Caregivers

The thematic presence of female names in Zagreb's streets and squares involves a considerable number of fictional characters, mostly protagonists from literature written by men<sup>16</sup>. The same trend can be observed in monumental sculpture: prominent urban localities are reserved exclusively for literary figures such as Dora Krupićeva from August Šenoa's historical novel *Zlatarevo zlato* [Goldsmith's gold], who can be seen in two symbolically important places in Zagreb: next to the Stone Gate and in the courtyard of the Academy of Fine Arts. In the analysis performed for the urban tour *Zagreb's Squares*

*Don't Remember Women*, we have decided to resort to three categories of women's presence in public space as monumental or decorative sculpture: as authors of public sculpture, as fictitious/symbolic/decorative representations, and as monuments dedicated to historical women.

An interesting conclusion resulting from such classification is that female sculptors rarely participate in the symbolic-spatial representation of women in public space: the only example of a "female" monument dedicated to a historic woman is the relief portrait and memorial plaque dedicated to Marija Jambrešak, work of Ksenija Kantoci from 1939. The three other cases in which female authorship "coincides" with the subject matter are: the monument to female prostitution (*Window* by Vera Dajht-Kralj, 1991); the monument to children's suffering in World War II (*Mother and Child / Memorial to the Children of Kozara and Potkozarje Taken to Concentration Camps* by Jasna Bogdanović, 1987); and the monument to motherhood (*Mother's Lap* by Mila Kumbatović, 1980; stolen in 2012).

The treatment of "female topics" by male authors generally resorts to the traditional motif of a mother and child: originally sacral model that is used in the secular context as a symbol of female reproductive and didactic function in society. It appears at least fourteen times in several variants (breastfeeding, playing), even though these sculptures have been placed in Zagreb's urban space in different, often opposed ideological circumstances. Thus, in the socialist period, despite the legal and social emancipation of women, this subject continued to perpetuate established gender roles, acquiring new ideological layers in the process. It was, namely, through the traditional socialising role of the mother that the foundations of "brotherhood and unity" were consolidated as one of the constitutive ideas of socialist Yugoslavia. As observed by the feminist historian Lydia Sklevicky, "the logic of affective links, emphasised in the dyadic link between mother and child, serves as a symbolic image that emphasizes the common fate of our peoples and also as the motivation to offer solidarity and aid to women and children from other regions, whereas motherhood, burdened by actual difficulties (...) can motivate struggling for a new society. During the war and even more intensely after it ended, the 'mothers of (fallen) soldiers' were greatly praised; symbolically, the mother mediated between the People's Liberation Movement and the (son) soldier."<sup>17</sup>

Nevertheless, the nude figure has always been the prevailing mode of inscribing the female gender into Zagreb's

17 Lydia Sklevicky, *Konji, žene, ratovi* [Horses, women, wars], (Women's Infotheque: Zagreb, 1996, p. 43)

18 In case of using national symbols, the female figure is subject to new interpretations. Thus, Ivan Meštrović's *History of the Croats*, originally created in the context of interwar pan-Slavism, is today interpreted as an "unsurpassed and unique symbol of the Homeland. Meštrović shows the homeland as a modest, dignified, and strong woman, whom he entrusts with preserving our heritage, our tradition and identity. Meštrović did not represent this keeper as a fully armed, equestrian king with his sword raised in battle, but rather through the sublime figure of a mother!" Andro Krstulović Opara, "Meštrovićeva Povijest Hrvata – jedinstveni i neponovljivi simbol Domovine" [Meštrović's *History of the Croats*: An unsurpassable and unique symbol of the Homeland], [http://www.mhas-split.hr/Portals/0/docs/mestrovic\\_prilog.pdf](http://www.mhas-split.hr/Portals/0/docs/mestrovic_prilog.pdf) (last accessed on 23 April 2015).

public space: even though a sculptural genre of classical provenance, its frequency often justified by the commissioners' conventionality and the traditional patterns of formal sculptural training, it should be reemphasised that its continuity in Zagreb's public space both reflects and perpetuates prevailing social and gender relations. In Zagreb's squares, streets, and parks, this subject occurs at least sixteen times in various formal and morphological variations and interpretations. Mostly these are full figures or torsos, more rarely body parts that represent the female body in metonymy (such as *Legs* by Zvonimir Lončarić, 2006). Moreover, this corporal aspect of representation is often complemented by the stereotype of "female psychology", reflected in sculpture names such as *Constrained*, *Waiting*, *Shame*, *Longing*, and alike, or the essentialist notion of the "generic" (*Angelija*, *Dunja*, *Grozdana*) or "mythical" woman (*Diana*).

Fully clad women normally serve the male political subject (such as in *History of the Croats*<sup>18</sup>, *Widow*, the personification of homeland in the monument to Ante Starčević, the woman with children in the monument to the victims of the Croatian Liberation War in Sesvete) or is depicted performing apolitical, often banal activities, their function in public space exclusively aesthetic in nature. The social effect of such representation is yet another "contribution" to perpetuating gender stereotypes (*Dancer*, *Tennis Player*, *Woman with a Wheelbarrow*, *Woman with an Umbrella*, *Rose Garden-er*). In the thematic repertoire of Zagreb's public sculpture, only one depiction of a woman involved in intellectual work can be found (*Girl with a Book* by Frano Kršinić, 1941, in its present place since 1981), whereas the joint presentations of woman and man are reduced to romantic topics (*Newly Wed*, *In Love*, *Love Journey*).

## Female Authorship as Class Privilege

The spatial density of fictitious/symbolic/decorative representations of women is most conspicuous in representative cultural and political institutions of the City and the State: the building of the Academy of Fine Arts and the park of Presidential Palace. Moreover, it is in these localities that most depictions of naked, passive female bodies are found, as well as women in the role of wives, breastfeeders, and mothers. One should also note the fact that the publicly accessible part of the collections in these institutions includes not a single sculptural work authored by a woman.

19 Cf. Jasenka Kodrnja (as in n.13)

20 These monuments are as follows: *Execution of Hostages* (Frano Kršinić, 1954), *Monument to the Fallen Partisans of Ciglenica* (Tomislav Ostoja, 1971), *Memorial Relief for the Graphic Workers Fallen in the People's Liberation Struggle* (Rudolf Ivanković, 1955), and as many as four monuments that have been removed: *Monument to the Fallen Members of the Union of Banking, Insurance, Trade, and Industrial Workers in Yugoslavia* (Ivan Sabolić, 1958), *Monument to the Students, Professors, and Workers of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry Fallen in the People's Liberation Struggle* (1951), *Monument to the Soldiers from Prvomajska Factory Fallen in the People's Liberation Struggle* (Luka Musulin, 1961), and *Monument to the Fallen Soldiers of Vrapče*.

On the other hand, women as authors are best represented in modernist building complexes constructed during the socialist period (Pioneers' Park, Zagreb Fair), and somewhat more moderately in Zagreb's recreational zones (the Sava River Promenade, Jarun Lake). Sculptures by women artists mostly take their motifs from nature (*Great Fiery Flower*, *Light*, *Bird*, *Flight into Space/Seagull*), archaic/symbolic/abstract sphere (*Time Wheel*, *Totem*, *Poetry of Space/Stairs*, *Pillar of Festivity*, *City/Barrow*) or "socialist" topics (*Pillar of Production*, *Hand Offering Friendship/Greeting*). Their realisation was made possible by a system of jury-evaluated public commissioning, as well as by sculptors' communities and festivals, which are no longer part of the policy that defines public space.

Artistic interpretations of male historical figures in the city centre have rarely been entrusted to the female imagination, and even when that is the case, the possibility of affirmation and of obtaining such "prestigious" commissions have been closely related to the artist's social class, personal merits and relentless persistence. In regards to the problem of female authorship in public sculpture as a socially and materially defined category, one should point out the results of the Institute for Social Research from 1985, which have shown that male artists largely originate from peasant and working-class families, whereas female artists come from white-collar (67.6%) and urban families (90%), which leads to the conclusion that the possibility of achieving a social and class "breakthrough" are far more limited for women, especially when it comes to their affirmation through public monument commissions.<sup>19</sup>

## Systematically Removed

With the exception of the memorial relief dedicated to Marija Jambrešak, women emerged as a political subject in Zagreb's urban public space only after World War II, either through portraits of real historic personalities (such as antifascist heroines) or by including women into the collective scenes of warfare, revolution, or working-class topics.<sup>20</sup> However, the individual representation of woman was limited not only by the conventional format of the bust, but also, as a rule, spatially bound to educational institutions (schools and kindergartens), which "softened" the socialist imperative of equally representing male and female political subjects, by establishing spatial and symbolical links to the



traditional role of mother and educator. But even with this controlled inscription of women's history into public space, the rejection and fear of ideologically and gender-wise opposed iconography, led in the early 1990s to the systematic removal of female busts as part of the ritual monumental "cleansing" which Zagreb was not spared from<sup>21</sup>. Unfortunately, despite the recently awakened interest in antifascist monuments and Zagreb's cultural memory, it is rarely mentioned that women have been perhaps the greatest victims of revisionism in public space. Since 1990, the faces of most historic women linked to Zagreb, whose number was negligible even at that time, have been erased: among the 77 busts of popular heroes, 12 were dedicated to women (Nada Dimić, Marica Pataki, Josipa Vardijan, Ljubica Gerovac, Dragica Končar, Zdenka Baković, Rajka Baković, and Kata Pejnović, as well as Anka Butorac and Kata Dumbović, who had two busts each). If we add the relief dedicated to Anđela Cvetković, the number of monuments commemorating female participants in the Revolution and the People's Liberation Struggle was three times higher than the total number of memorials to women erected before 1945 and after 1990<sup>22</sup>. Today, Zagreb is a city with only seven monuments dedicated to historic women, which is only one among the numerous symptoms of re-traditionalising both public and private spheres, a process that went hand in hand with the restoration of capitalism in Croatia along with its defamation of the socialist regime.

What are today's prospects of social "rehabilitation" for these dozen of defaced political activists? Considering the consequences of radical change in social memory and the construction of new ideological narratives over the past 25 years, one can hardly expect that restoration and conservation would reaffirm their social and historical significance, especially since the memory of the meaning of people's struggle and the political engagement of these women had been socially fossilised even before the destruction of their busts. Gender emancipation brought about by the mass participation of women in the People's Liberation Struggle and the construction of the new social order after the War gradually had lost its original potential and became subject to the fulfilment of the primary goals of Yugoslav socialist society, based on class equality. Female participation in the War was socially and politically acknowledged, yet without emphasizing the gender aspect of the struggle. This was reflected in an interesting way in the artistic representation of popular heroines, which never moved past the traditional monument types, primarily busts. Whereas the male history of the People's Liberation Struggle,

**21** In Zagreb, more than half (55.32%) of the 432 memorials (monuments, memorial plaques, and busts) erected in the period from 1945–1990 have been demolished or removed, not counting the renaming of 125 public institutions (87.57%) and 238 streets, squares, and other public areas (70.62%), which served as the utilitarian bearers of public memory in the socialist regime. Šimunković and Delač (as in n. 8), 492–495.

**22** Before World War II, the only monument was the memorial relief of teacher and feminist Marija Jambrešak (1939). In 1990, the statue of feminist, journalist and author Marija Jurić Zagorka was inaugurated, and in 2000 and 2001 the memorial busts of painter Slava Raškaj and scientist Vera Johanides.

with protagonists such as Ivan Goran Kovačić, Stjepan Filipović, or Ivo Lola Ribar, inspired original artistic interpretations, raising the individual partisan biographies to the level of abstract, universal symbols, women normally remained in the realm of the particular, documentary recording of authentic faces and the corresponding biographies. I will therefore use a brief and almost forgotten gender-based intervention into the symbolic epicentre of Croatian culture and politics to reflect on the (im) possibility of a monument to women's emancipation.

## An (Im)possible Monument to Women's Emancipation

*An Event happens when the excluded part appears on the social scene, suddenly and drastically. It ruptures the appearance of normality, and opens a space to rethink reality (...) Only in an Event can the excluded part be visible. An Event succeeds in representing a part which is previously unrepresented. This unfolding of new representations from an Event produces Truths, Subjects, and new social systems. (...) Existing hierarchies and value-statements must be destroyed, or falsified, by the Event. Such an act is taken to disrupt reality on a material level, because the formal arrangement underlies the material structure of a particular reality. It does not change the elements of the situation. Rather, it changes the structure of the situation, by forcing it to include a new element.*<sup>23</sup>

Present-day reaffirmation of the meaning of women's emancipation during and after World War II requires an understanding the People's Liberation Struggle as an "event" in Badiou's sense of the word, realised through the process of international antifascist struggle and the socialist revolution as the beginning of "establishing different class relations and a transition to communism."<sup>24</sup> It is only by returning to the "event" that one can rethink the original content of a monument and consider the possibility of its political and social re-actualisation. It is therefore important not only to insist on the physical preservation and restoration of monuments, but also to understand and critically reflect upon all the socio-political and ideological parameters of their creation and their previous "life", conditioned as they were through the complex and changeable system of Yugoslav politics and culture of remembrance. Thereby I am referring to adopting a critical position as to the gender policies of the socialist society, variously reflected through the different phases of Yugoslav culture of remembrance: "By strictly observing the rules of ideological,

**23** Andrew Robinson, "Alain Badiou: The Event," *Ceasefire Magazine* (2014), online at <https://ceasefiremagazine.co.uk/alain-badiou-event/> (last accessed on 23 April 2015).

**24** "The new and socialist Yugoslavia was an event in Badiou's sense of the word. That event had primarily two dimensions: the international antifascist movement, which was the foundation on which new Yugoslavia was constituted (as Yugoslavia was neither nation nor language), and the social revolution (see Buden /2003/, Kirn /2010/, and Pupovac /2006/)." Gal Kirn, "Sjećanje na partizane ili misao o partizanstvu?" [Remembering the partisan or the idea of the partisans?], *Novosti* 547 (2010), online at <http://www.novosti.com/2010/06/sjecanje-na-partizane-ili-misao-o-partizanstvu/> (last accessed on 23 April 2015).

25 R. Jambrešić Kirin and R. Senjković, “*Puno puta bi vas bili izbacili kroz vrata, biste bila išla kroz prozor nutra: preispisivanje povijesti žena u drugom svjetskom ratu*” [*Many times they would kick you out through the door, but you would come back through the window: Rewriting the history of women in World War II*], *Narodna umjetnost: hrvatski časopis za etnologiju i folkloristiku* 42/2 (2005), 116.

26 According to the official statistics, 43660 women actively – with a gun in their hands – participated in the antifascist struggle in Croatia during World War II, and 40150 lost their lives as civilians. Mario Šimunković, *Partizani kakve do sada niste vidjeli* [Partisans as you have never seen before], exhibition catalogue (Zagreb, Union of Antifascist Veterans and Antifascists of Croatia, 2013), 39.

27 Kirin and Senjković, “*Puno puta bi vas bili izbacili kroz vrata, biste bila išla kroz prozor nutra: preispisivanje povijesti žena u drugom svjetskom ratu*” (as in n. 29), 117.

28 Ibid. p. 118.

29 Josip Jelačić (1801–1859): viceroy from 1848 to 1859 under Austro-Hungarian ruler Joseph I, sculpture by Anton Dominik Fernkorn erected in 1866 on the main square of Zagreb. In July 1945, preparations started for removing the statue of viceroy Josip Jelačić from the square of the same name, which was a year later renamed into Republic Square. For two years, the monument was concealed behind wooden planks on several occasions, decorated with various artistic motifs – made by Croatian artists who would later become

class, and gender correctness, the post-revolutionary historiography was rewriting history *a posteriori* through its narration of the original and thorough integration of women into the workers’ communist, and partisan movement.”<sup>25</sup> Thus, despite the mass participation of women in World War II<sup>26</sup>, the authentic female experience of the People’s Liberation Struggle often remains untold, while the dissolution of the Women’s Antifascist Front (AFŽ) in 1953, and the fact that women were only rarely present in the leading military structures, indicate that the post-war distribution of power did not proportionally reflect male and female participation in the War and the Revolution.<sup>27</sup> In later phases, as signs of crisis appeared in the socialist regime, representation of women in the popular media was often reduced to romanticised narratives and to creating gender stereotypes about female participation in the War.<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, one should base a contemporary reaffirmation of social memory on the “event” itself, rather than its various subsequent mediated and transferred forms. If in the social and political sphere we can today identify the event with the People’s Liberation Struggle, let us in the sphere of female representation in Zagreb’s public space declare a forgotten and nameless object as its counterpart. I have decided to call this object *An Impossible Monument to AFŽ*. (illustration p. 70)

It is one of those temporary monumental constructions with sculptural features that were constructed in Zagreb’s main square between 1945–1947 as a form of propaganda, with the obvious aim of concealing the ideologically undesirable monument to viceroy Josip Jelačić, whose counterrevolutionary role in suppressing the Hungarian Revolution of 1848 had no place in the Marxist evaluation of Croatian national history and its protagonists<sup>29</sup>. This act indicates the radical revolutionary character of the newly formed social and political atmosphere of the early post-war period, which was on the formal level, in conspicuously large and robust wooden constructions, manifested as a direct opposition to the schematized academic realism of Fernkorn’s equestrian sculpture.

prominent – before it was finally removed in July 1947. Cf. Boris Kukić, “Uklanjanje Jelačićeva spomenika 1945.–1947.” [Removing the statue of Ban Josip Jelačić, 1945–1947], unpublished paper held at the conference *Ban Josip Jelačić (1801 – 1859 – 2009)* – *Novi prinosi*

*za život, djelo i ulogu bana Jelačića, prigodom 150. godišnjice smrti* [Ban Josip Jelačić (1801 – 1859 – 2009) – Recent research on the life, work, and role of Ban Jelačić, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of his death], Zagreb, Croatian Institute of History, 20 November, 2009.

30 When it comes to the authorship of these sculptural elements, a daily newspaper reports on collective work of a group of artists, members of the OLIKPROP (Department for Art Propaganda, People’s Republic of Croatia Government’s Presidency). “Iznad Jelačićeva spomenika postavlja se 14 m visoki obelisk”, *Vjesnik*, 20.7.1945. Sculptors such as Vojin Bakić and Kosta Angeli Radnovani, were most certainly part of this artist collective, however, they cannot be prescribed the whole authorship, as claimed in some of the existing sources, Darko Bekić: *Vojin Bakić ili kratka povijest kiposlavije*, (Profil International: Zagreb, 2006., p. 80)

31 Andrew Robinson, “Alain Badiou: The Event,” *Ceasefire Magazine* (2014), online at <https://ceasefiremagazine.co.uk/alain-badiou-event/> (last accessed on 23 April 2015).

32 Cf. Andrew Robinson, “Alain Badiou: The Excluded Part and the Eventual Site,” *Ceasefire Magazine* (2014), online at <https://ceasefiremagazine.co.uk/alain-badiou-excluded-part-eventual-site/> (last accessed on 23 April 2015).

On the occasion of the 1st Congress of the Croatian AFŽ in 1945, the construction was complemented with plaster reliefs of colossal female figures with weapons and agricultural tools as their attributes<sup>30</sup>. The importance of this visual experiment resides primarily in the emancipatory potential contained in the unprecedented form of public representation of The Woman as a political subject. It was the first time that The Woman, depicted on the one side of the screen holding weapons and on the other with agricultural tools, was presented both as a participant of the military triumph and the member of the working class: that is, as an equivalent agent in building up the new socialist society. This type of official representation of female equality in the medium of monumental sculpture is undoubtedly an authentic document of the post-war gender and class emancipation of women.

However, as any real “event” it remained only a brief episode, documented by photographs. According to Badiou, the “excluded” social group – as women definitely were in this region before World War II, at least in the political and juridical sphere – can become “included” only if the situation radically changes, and that is what the socialist revolution, accomplished through People’s Liberation Struggle, actually did.<sup>31</sup> Even though socially belonging to the public sphere of Zagreb, women were not included in it before the War, which is, among other things, evident from the analysis of their presence in the medium of monumental sculpture as presented above – and what is present, yet excluded, cannot be publicly represented.<sup>32</sup>

In the context of representing women in Zagreb’s public space, the “event” that should be remembered is certainly the construction of the *Impossible Monument to AFŽ*. The fact that in that particular, relatively brief historical moment, it was possible, in the most representative public area of Zagreb, to create a monumental double depiction of The Woman as a soldier – the one who participated in the country’s liberation – and as a worker – responsible for building up the new society – in order to cover another monument which is the paradigmatic example of male hegemony over public space, speaks clearly enough of a revolutionary act *par excellence*, as it was covered by colossal female figures that were neither naked nor beautiful, and certainly not ornamented with garlands and acanthus leaves. Nevertheless, one should not ignore the patronisation that was latently present in this act, as it gleamed through Tito’s quotation on the side of the construction, announcing that the emancipatory zeal would soon become passive and that ideological monitoring over gender policy would continue, remaining in male dominance even in the most avantgarde moments of female history in this city.



*In cities today, public space has been subjected to consumption and spectacle. Artistic or design interventions offering different modes of socialisation in the city, or trying to render urban space more functional on a micro-level, are bound to get co-opted and become yet another product of city branding. How should we avoid this trap and use the strategy of parasitism cleverly enough to make it function as a true affirmation of public space as a common good – that is the issue on which various artists reflected upon in this chapter. Whether it is a radio drama broadcast from a clandestine sender hidden in a shopping mall, workshops on observation and imagination, or micro-performances in prohibited and strictly controlled zones, these actions have revived the subversive strategy of the Trojan collective. Using the tested Achaean trick, hidden within the masses (of consumers), they have, as dramaturge and theoretician Nina Gojić concludes, invented artistic performances that are suitable for the “open wounds of post-socialist squares”.*



# *Exercising the Uninhabitable*

**Selma Banich**

*But if we at any moment, in the middle of the city, actively reject our domestication, and the imposed social roles, and decide to live guided by our passions, desires, and whims, if we become unique and unpredictable beings... we will, at that moment, be wild.\**

## **WORKSHOP**

Kvaternik Square, Grgo Martić Square, Gubec Cross, Croatian Nobles' Square, Square of Europe, Jelačić Square, Cvjetni Square, St Mark's Square, French Republic Square, Sava Bridge, 21–27. 10. 2013

\* Feral Faun, "Nature as Spectacle, the Image of Wilderness vs. Wildness", in: *Feral Revolution* (Elephant Edition: London, 2000/2001)

The workshop will explore the physical space of an urban square and its reformulation into a volume of endless spatial utopias. Through a series of simple tasks, we will try to activate the space, in this case the space is one of Zagreb's squares, reflecting on it from an entirely new perspective; differently than we are used to employing in everyday life. In order to be able to embody ourselves in the space of the uninhabitable, we must try to understand its possibilities beyond the actual, generalised definitions of the purpose, symbols, and forms of representation, exploring what that space may be in relation to that which it presumes to be. We will then approach the individual understanding of its spatial potential and our own attitude towards it liberated from the duty of representing its primary function, meaning, and ideology. The uninhabitable square metre will then have the chance of becoming a freely imagined circle.















# *The Trojan Collective*

## LIGNA

### PERFORMANCE /

#### RADIO PLAY

Cvjetni Square

14. 12. 2013

### PERFORMERS

Petar Cvirn, Danijel Ljuboja,  
Nikša Marinović, Mirjana  
Sinožić, Lukrecija Tudor

### COLLABORATORS

Davor Rocco (sound), Vesna  
Vuković (German translation)

Who has the right to define the space of a city? In recent years, the heart of Zagreb has been the scene of various battles and this question has been posed repeatedly. History's winners didn't tire of leaving monuments to their triumphs: they dug holes, built malls and erected expensive apartment buildings. To celebrate this victory, the unstoppable spread of commercial zones turns the streets into spaces of spectacle. Nobody can deny that the architecture of the city presents unmissable facts. But there is no building, no site that can serve only the purpose for which it was built. Therefore, the Trojan Collective offers an exercise in practical architecture criticism. It asks its participants – who can be anybody – to temporarily appropriate a space in the inner city of Zagreb by introducing new movements, gestures and usages into it. However, the Trojan Collective will remain invisible: like the ancient Greek visitors of Troy, it knows how to disguise itself, and how to become invisible under the veil which covered the flaneurs of the 19th century: the masses.





**LIGNA**  
**The Trojan Collective**  
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**Introductory loop**  
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- 1: Welcome to Centar Cvjetni!
- 2: You're listening to the Trojan Collective.
- 4: The performance will begin in just a moment.
- 3: Please be patient for just another minute or so.
- 1: First we want to give you a few instructions.
- 3: You are in a private room which is under surveillance by security guards and video cameras to prevent any unplanned events from occurring.
- 2: This is why it is important for the Trojan Collective not to be discovered.
- 3: Make sure that the radio you carry with you is not too noticeable.
- 1: Nowadays lots of people wear headphones, yet radios have become less commonplace.
- 4: The Trojan Collective takes place beneath the radar of the authorities, unfolding its own unique logic in a space devoted solely to consumerism.
- 3: Try to behave just like all the other passers-by.
- 2: Stroll around on your own or with one other person, but not in a larger group.
- 4: Ignore other listeners unless your movements dictate the opposite.
- 2: Can you already see other participants of the Trojan Collective?
- 1: Do not pay them any attention.
- 2: You will not be asked to behave in any way that violates the rules and regulations of the mall, you are simply to act in an unexpected way.
- 1: Nevertheless, it is possible that a security guard will approach you and request you to leave the mall, for whatever reason. If you do not comply, it is possible that you will face prosecution for disturbing the peace.

**Introduction**  
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- 2: Walk about a bit, familiarise yourself with your surroundings.
- 3: Take a look around.
- 2: Is there a place more tranquil than this?
- 1: People are milling about, window-shopping and buying Christmas presents for their loved ones.
- 3: And yet, the construction of this shopping centre had been protested for years.
- 2: Many citizens of Zagreb couldn't make peace with a private investor being aided by the mayor in claiming urban space.
- 1: Who does the city belong to?
- 4: After the plans were made public, 55,000 people signed the petition against the centre's construction.
- 2: 5,000 people took to the streets in January 2008. This was followed by further protests and actions against the demolition of old buildings, digging up the city's centre in order to build an underground parking lot and against new buildings being raised.
- 4: The works were finally stopped in January 2010. The shopping centre's opponents blocked the building site. The neighbourhood picked up the pace of their work: the inner courtyard was abuzz with the sounds of saws, drills and hammers day and night. State Administration knew nothing of this until one night the door opened and
- 2: - a giant wooden animal was brought into the street. A Trojan horse.
- 3: A gift from the Right to the City group to the mayor of the city of Zagreb, Milan Bandić.
- 1: 50 Greek men once crammed into a wooden giant, to emerge into a dark night, open the door to the Greek army waiting outside, and cause the fall of Troy.
- 4: 50 citizens of Zagreb were needed to wheel a vehicle five by seven metres in size under the cover of darkness onto Varšavska Street. There was no-one hiding inside this horse - just a rather clear message:
- 2: The same way the soldiers once stealthily penetrated the impregnable fortress of Troy, mayor Bandić smuggled his own private and commercial interests into the highest public office in Zagreb.
- 3: An entire shopping centre: a Trojan horse!
- 4: Unlike the citizens of Troy, the mayor didn't welcome the wooden horse. The police cut it down into

smithereens. However, Bandić had his revenge later on. The shopping centre was finished in the meantime and officially opened under police protection, when suddenly, in the middle of Cvjetni Square there appeared:

- 2: - another Trojan horse - this time made out of flowers and branches instead of wooden planks.
- 4: A gift from the mayor to the citizens of his city. There were no fearless warriors lurking in the bowels of the beast. One could only find a mailbox, inviting the citizens to leave notes with their suggestions for designing Cvjetni Square. Anyone could take part and address their message to the government.
- 2: The horse stayed there for a few months and patiently let the citizens feed it their suggestions. Then someone set it on fire. A Trojan horse hasn't been seen in Zagreb ever since.
- 4: As stated on the administrator Hoto Group's home page, today Cvjetni Square is
- 1: "an uncontested part of the urban fibre of Croatia's capital".
- 2: Seeing as the erected architecture was now a mere fact producing its own everyday life, soon everyone lost their interest in the struggle and the question of "who does the city belong to":
- 1: "most of what has happened on Preradovićeve [sic] Square in the recent past will soon be forgotten, as its distant past has also been slowly forgotten".
- 2: As it says in the shopping centre's advertising material.
- 4: However, there are still those who claim that the story hasn't yet been concluded. As a sign, they say, the Trojan horse shall return to the centre of Zagreb for the third time. In the time of Advent, the time of deep awareness, when the shopping fever is at its peak.
- 2: It shall return, but not as an animal - and it won't be made of wood or flowers.
- 1: The Trojan horse will return to this world as a human.
- 4: Not only as a single man. Rather, as many. As a collective.
- 2: 50 people, unarmed, but well networked. All of them listening to the radio.
- 1: The Trojan Collective.
- 3: Keep wandering about.
- 2: Stop mid-step for a fraction of a second. Almost as if you were going to trip.
- 3: Continue walking quite normally.
- 2: There is no wooden womb to protect you from other people's

looks. There is no night to cover up your plan.

- 4: However, the Trojan Collective cannot be noticed with the bare eye. Its members are scattered in the crowd. They are enveloped in the veil of everyday life.
- 1: The conspiracy of flaneurs.
- 2: Any second now -
- 3: - stop a bit -
- 2: The veil could lift.
- 3: Take two steps to your right,
- 2: Only to -
- 3: Take a step backwards -
- 2: - fall again.
- 3: Keep walking.
- 2: If Cvjetni is one of many urban planning Trojan horses of mayor Bandić, the time has come to rein these horses in.
- 4: Therefore, the goal of the Trojan Collective isn't to be discovered as soon as possible and be ejected by securityguards according to the routine protocol. That would only prove that the control regime functions well. Much like the conspirators inside the Trojan horse, the Trojan Collective wants to change a space - albeit subtly - and enable a different sort of everyday life there.
- 3: In order to accomplish this, we have to explore the centre's everyday life.
- 2: Lean against a wall, window or, best yet, one of the balustrades in the middle of the hallway.

## I. Everyday Life

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### 1: 1. *The Theatre of Cvjetni Centre*

- 3: Look around you.
- 2: Perhaps you're waiting for someone.
- 4: Perhaps you simply wish to examine the architecture closely.
- 2: Can you recognise the allusions to Parisian passages, those dazzling, seductive consumerist temples where the flaneurs used to get lost in the floods of the masses?
- 2: Place your right palm on a wall, window or balustrade.
- 1: Whatever you do, you're a part of the staging present here every single day.
- 2: If you now place your left leg in front of your right so that your legs are crossed, you are doing something that is repeated here over and over again.

1: The mall always features the same play - it is only the actors who are different.

2: Now place your right leg in front of your left. Scratch your ear using your right hand. (anticipating an objection) This is not meant to be a secret signal but simply an everyday action.

1: In shopping malls, the dramaturgy of capitalism has created an intimate theatre for itself.

2: Now run the same hand through your hair.

1: Every gesture looks as if it has been carefully rehearsed in advance.

2: Put down your hand and scratch your itchy nose with your left hand.

1: Everyone's playing their main roles.

2: Place your right hand back on the wall, shop window or balustrade.

3: Everything is designed for maximum visibility - the rooms, the commodities in the shops, the people.

2: Please close your eyes.

1: What other theatre could be performed here?

1: **2. Metamorphosis.**

3: Open your eyes and come over to a reflective glass closest to you. Come closer.

1: Is the hairdo still holding?

2: You have to look as inconspicuous as possible with every single step!

3: Observe the passers-by passing a long way behind you in the mirror. Pick a person, find an opportune moment - and follow them at an acceptable distance.

2: Where do you think the person comes from? What nationality is he? What social background? What is his character?

4: Some people think you can tell this from a person's clothing, physique or facial expressions.

2: How does the person place his feet? How quickly is she walking through the mall? Does she have a particular destination, or is she just strolling around?

3: Stumbling can reveal what a person is thinking.

- (Pause, Music)

2: Please do not leave the mall! If the person you are following leaves, continue your research on another person.

4: Now look for someone in the crowd whose motives are completely unclear to you. What sort of people come here? Whose aims are obvious, and of whom could

you not tell at first glance what they are doing here? That is the person you are looking for.

3: Age and gender are irrelevant.

4: Follow the person and intensify your research. Take steps when the person you are following takes steps. Watch his hands.

3: Without being noticed!

4: Imitate his gestures.

2: If the person notices you, find someone else.

4: Become the person's living reflection.

1: Can the way a person walks be completely mastered?

4: Could we stand on other feet, walk using other legs?

2: How much does the person you're following raise their knees? -

3: How are they stepping? -

1: How do they move their arms? -

4: How do they hold their shoulders? -

3: How do they hold their head? -

2: Become the other completely and investigate their position, their character - and their destiny.

4: What kind of secret could these steps hold?

3: Does the person have a gesture specific to them? Everyone has one!

2: Observe carefully, find the gesture and

3: Repeat it several times. Become the other person entirely.

- (Music)

2: Stop.

4: Parisian passages came to existence as the new urban spaces of public life. Private profiteers built a stage for the new bourgeoisie class coming into power: citizens emerged from the hustle and bustle of the street into a protected luxury goods market.

2: But the biggest luxury consisted of playing their own role in the play of bourgeois society.

4: However, what does that look like in Centar Cvjetni?

1: **3. Disappearance.**

3: Does the outside not exist? Some corner where the reflectors of this theatre cannot penetrate? Some place where one could become invisible?

2: Try to find a place where nobody can discover you!

1: No camera!

2: No security guard!

4: No shop owner!

3: Make yourself impossible to find. Perhaps there is no perfect hiding place, but surely you can find somewhere where you are safe from most glances.

1: The passers-by enjoy presenting themselves, their movements and their consumerism in the bright lights of the mall.

4: They have no choice.

2: The shopping mall is the production plant of the subject.

1: This sounds like a promise. Would not quite different productions of the subject be possible?

3: The collective of shoppers at the house of dreams retracts to its inside, the dream of happiness. The Trojan Collective follows it inconspicuously and waits.

2: The dream waits in secret for an awakening.

1: Which transformations of the house of dreams are conceivable?

3: No architecture has a single purpose. What will happen to Centar Cvjetni if the speculation of enjoying consummation isn't realised in Croatian society?

2: You have a piece of paper with you. Get it out and take hold of your pen.

3: Peer out from your hiding place! Look into the future!

1: What other use can you imagine for this mall?

4: An aquarium?

3: A skate park?

1: A tropical house?

2: A museum of desires?

4: Or something quite incredible, rather impossible - something that couldn't be realised at this point, but perhaps in an entirely different time?

2: In just one or two words, jot down your vision for the future of this architecture.

1: What do you wish for?

2: What could this place be used for if it was liberated from its commercial purpose?

3: Carefully fold up the piece of paper. Your wish should not be visible to others!

2: Put the piece of paper away, but don't forget it!

3: Make yourself visible again.

1: The first American shopping malls were conceived by Victor Gruen as social centres. They were not intended to house only shops and ice-cream parlours, but also libraries and theatres - covered areas in which time stood still.

2: An underground realm of eternity and immortality.

3: Adopt other people's steps.

1: This idea was never implemented. Instead, Victor Gruen

designed the interiors of the malls in such a way that visitors would lose sight of any objective. They become entranced by the rhythm of the many thousand steps which, like a magic drum, keep the passers-by in motion. In this trance, they are guided from product fetish to product fetish, spellbound by the Gruen effect.

#### 1: 4. *Distraction*

3: Please stop walking.

2: Carry on walking!

3: Do not allow yourself to focus on anything. Allow your vision to become blurred, like the light.

4: Fall into a trance. Turn towards a shop and.

3: Stand still.

4: Focus on a product as if your eyes were a beam of light.

2: Continue walking!

4: Stop focusing on one particular thing again.

3: Stand still!

1: As a result of the mall, a new perception became established.

2: Carry on strolling.

1: The malls must never give passers-by the feeling that they are entering an inner space, as these are only entered with a purpose, a recognisable intention.

3: Stand still. For ages.

2: Carry on walking in order to kill time.

1: Anyone who enters a mall is seeking distraction.

4: Let your eyes wander.

3: Stop!

4: Focus your eyes.

2: Continue walking!

3: Stop!

2: Carry on!

1: This abrupt switching between an almost bored losing of oneself in the endless array of goods on offer and the-

3: Stop!

1: Sudden concentration on a single product, that is new.

4: The passer-by approaches a particular product and wonders where it comes from. Who manufactured it? And where? In a factory? By hand? Under what conditions? Or was it simply a machine? How was it transported here? How, wonders the distracted passer-by, do commodities attain their value? All at once the passer-by no longer sees the benefit offered by the commodity; instead, the shop seems more like a



Pharaoh's grave and the commodity appears like a hieroglyph of society which - if it could only be deciphered - would open up an entirely new world to him or her...

2: Are you dreaming? Dream while walking!

1: And already the passer-by continues on past.

#### 1: 5. *The commodity*

2: The Trojan Collective is as scattered about as the consumers and goods in stores.

**Choir of commodities (1-5):** Come closer. Enter a shop.

1: It is the commodities in the shops that are speaking.

**Choir:** Cross the threshold! Do not hesitate!

Give in to your first impulse. Pick up an item.

Which one will you take?

5 (**a commodity**): "I'm the most beautiful!"

2 (**a commodity**): "No, I'm the most beautiful, buy me!"

5 (**a commodity**): "I'm cheaper, take me home with you."

4 (**a commodity**): "If you take me, you'll be happy forever."

1: Make your decision.

**Choir of commodities:** Come on, pick an item!

5 (**a commodity**): "You will find your true self in me."

1: The commodity in your hand is speaking.

5 (**a commodity**): Cradle me. Stroke softly over my surface. Look at me from all sides. Which way is up? Where is my head? It's not so easy, as we commodities always stand on our heads. Please gently stroke my head. Give me a name. Hold me to your ear. (whispering) I am not what you think. I am not merely a thing, I am hours of work made concrete. Take another look at me. You can be reflected in me: you and I - we need to sell ourselves: I must sell myself as a commodity and you must sell your labour. Put me back again please - no, not on my head! Turn me around! And turn your back on me. Try to catch the glances of those passing by. Smile at them. (whispering) When you work, you create added value. As a reward for forgetting that you are in this way partly responsible for producing the world's wealth, you can buy things like me. But I am not a thing! I am a social relation, just as you are. (challenging) Have you drawn attention to yourself yet? Which is your best side? Flaunt it! You must get the shoppers on your side, without being intrusive. (haltingly, thoughtfully) But if we are social relations, must we always produce only added value? I, the commodity, and you, the human being, are in the same position. Our fate is tied to one another.

3: Can we not dream of quite different social relations?

## II. *Changing spaces*

**Choir of commodities (1-4):** For the liberation of all commodities! People and things! Everywhere! Commodities of the world, unite!

3: Look out into the aisle of the mall.

1: Capital is by no means the invisible centre that dictates the method of production. The entire society is its portrait.

3: Head towards the store's exit. Stop at the doorstep. Look outside.

1: The relationship with the commodity has not only become visible, it has become the only thing we see.

3: Close your eyes.

2: The investigation of everyday life in the mall is over.

4: The time has come for the Trojan Collective to change spaces.

2: With your eyes closed, take a step out into the aisle.

4: Welcome to Centar Cvjetni.

3: Open your eyes again.

1: What shall we do with the mall?

2: Continue walking.

1: There are no obligations. There is only the pleasure of dispersion.

4: Changing spaces happens within a different repetition of everyday occurrences.

#### 2: *Recognizing the others.*

3: But try not to arouse suspicion.

4: The space is still controlled by forces that wish to preserve the previous order.

1: Exchange secret signs. Yawn when you meet others from the collective.

3: Don't give the others away.

2: Yawn back when you see someone yawning at you.

1: On the entire planet is the same night, the same day.

5: Everything is a commodity. Our surfaces. Your movements, the space around us.

4: You move simultaneously and in a coordinated manner.

**Choir of commodities:** How can we associate with one another?

5: Goods and people – against the character of a commodity.

1: *Dispersed organisation.*

- 2: The impact on passer-by trajectories is the most important means of mastering space.
- 3: Which other streams of movement can be generated?
- 2: When you meet each other, show each other new routes.
- 4: Point upwards when you want your fellow internationalist to go one level up. Point downwards to send him one level down. Point forwards or backwards, left or right, to indicate a direction on the same level. Every time you meet, exchange these signals, but do it inconspicuously, as if incidentally.
- 3: Whatever happens, follow the finger signals you are given!
- 2: If you want to make your counterpart stop, simply wink at that person.
- 1: Briefly but clearly.
- 4: If you are sent to a shop window, remain standing there for a moment. Take a look at the goods on display. Then carry on walking through the mall and wait for the next signal you are given.
- 3: Give the signals in as subtle a manner as possible.
- 4: Eliminate any expression of will in your gesture.
- 2: The revolutionary floats through the crowd like a passer-by in the mall.
- 4: Allow yourself to be guided by the signals you are given.
- 3: Don't only show the direction to the person heading your way, but also the way they should walk. Quickly or slowly. Staring at a window or the mall's ceiling.
- 2: Lose yourself in the labyrinth of secret signs.
- 4: Things which don't come to the fore in political events, or only barely manage to do so, mature in cities; they are the finest instrument, sensitive to live historic flickering.
- (Music)

1: *Desire exchange*

- 3: You carry with you a piece of paper stating your vision for the future of the mall.
- 2: The vision doesn't only belong to you.
- 4: Get it out.
- 3: Surreptitiously, so nobody notices!
- 1: Identify yourself to another member of the Trojan Collective by yawning.

- 3: Now exchange the secret messages. You will be given a secret message in return for yours.
- 2: It is not intended for you. Carry on strolling. Approach the next agent, reveal your identities to each other and
- 4: pass on the secret message.
- 2: Hide the note that you are given in your hand and continue on your separate ways and –
- 3: pass it on to another person.
- 3: Pass it on to someone else once again. Exchange the notes as often as possible –
- 3: without anyone noticing.
- 4: Use sign language to agree on secret meetings. In shops, in dark corners. Exchange messages – and walk on.
- (Music)
- 3: Hide the last note you were given somewhere about your person so that you can find it again, but nobody else can.
- 4: The distance between people in the mall is regulated without anyone noticing.
- 2: This way the space for consumption remains neat.
- 1: Nothing scares us more than being touched by an unfamiliar person.

2: *The uncanny gathering.*

- 2: The Trojan Collective is being trained in exceeding this limit!
- 3: When you notice one or two other members of the collective, approach them and walk on with them.
- 4: Can you find the other members of the Trojan Collective?
- 3: Then walk a little way together with them.
- 1: The first step of control is to separate people.
- 3: Come even closer together!
- 4: For a short time, form a gang.
- 2: The person walking at the front determines a movement – something in line with everyday life: twisting an arm, adjusting a jacket, perhaps a minimal delay in taking a step.
- 4: The people further back mimic the movement and pass it on.
- 3: Don't stay on your own. Keep moving. Remain unpredictable.
- 4: Keep mimicking the movement.
- 2: Dismiss the group. Scatter in all directions.
- 4: Crowds which disperse for no conceivable reason – only to gather someplace else – are more shameful than any other form of gathering.
- (Music)

- 2: The visitors to the mall are dreaming. They discover that all their dreams will come true, without any effort on their part, so long as they maintain the somnambulistic distance between one another.
- 1: But what dreams might come true if we joined together?
- 2: Gather together in temporary groups once again. Make the distance between each other disappear.
- 2: Approach one another.
- 4: Form groups of two, four, eight.
- 2: Always keep moving.
- 4: The person walking at the front determines the gesture, the others mimic and change its shape.
- 3: When does dispersion become a gathering?
- 2: The front becomes the back, the back becomes the front.
- 1: Turn on your heel and walk on in the opposite direction.
- 3: When does your collective movement become a demonstration?
- 4: Keep sharing your gestures within the space.
- 2: Disperse once again before you get close enough to touch.
- 4: Mingle with the passers-by once more.
- 1: The passage is dreaming. In its dream, it finds itself in Vienna in a single leap. And its hallways lead straight to Paris.
- 2: Move closer to each other - form a temporary gathering once more.
- 3: Move like a swarm through the aisles of the mall. Approach the invisible centre between you and then allow yourself to be pushed to the edges of the group again.
- 2: The outside becomes the inside, the inside becomes the outside.
- 1: Turn on your heel once more. Keep walking.
- 3: Get as close to the centre of your group as possible.
- 1: Even closer?
- 2: Don't let yourselves get caught!
- 3: Run away!
- 2: Hurry apart as if you had never been a group!
- 4: The crowd descends in front of the flaneur like a veil: it is the newest opiate of the lonely.
- 3: Disappear in the crowd.

2: *The multiplicity of steps.*

- 4: The pace of passers-by decides whether the passage will fail or succeed. If it's too quick, no-one stops to enter a store and purchase something. If it's too slow, laziness spreads about - and there's still no trade.

- 2: Adjust your steps to the rhythm.  
- (Beat)
- 2: The beat now corresponds to the average pace at Centar Cvjetni.
- 4: If the average pace is too quick, all the pretty windows with goods will fly by the rushing passers-by without dazzling them. The stimulus to shop will not be awakened in the passers-by.
- 3: We will now accelerate the rhythm.
- 4: Please adjust your pace to the beat.
- 3: Can you feel how the lure of the shops is diminished?
- 4: It's but a minute, a single step can set fire to the forces of attraction, because a moment later, a step further, the passer-by is standing in front of some other store... As if their eyes were taken away by force, they have to stare upwards and stop until their gaze returns.
- 2: Quickly, the increase in pace affects other passers-by and there is a growing sense of unrest.
- 4: Please slow down.
- 2: It is only possible to influence the speed because people have already been forcibly robbed of their time.
- 1: You are now walking more slowly than the average pace.
- 2: The shopping malls reimburse the stolen time in the form of commodities, which are here in abundance.
- 3: Each window represents a century of working time -
- 1: In the shopping malls of the 1950s, the average time people spent shopping increased from 20 minutes to four hours.
- 3: Take a look around.
- 1: Free time in abundance! Everything is inviting you to forget yourself and spend hours and hours in idleness.
- 2: Walk even more slowly.
- 1: There are no clocks to remind you that life still goes on outside.
- 4: It is a particular pleasure to walk slowly through busy streets. One is engulfed by the urgency of the others, like bathing in the surf of the sea.
- 3: Walk more quickly again.
- 2: You are now walking just a little faster than the others.
- 2: The stream of passers-by must not become too slow.
- 1: Otherwise it might come to a halt.
- 3: Reduce your pace.
- 2: The Gruen-effect is already losing its grip over people.
- 3: Slow down even more.
- 1: Where does this strolling end, and where

does unwelcome lingering start?

- 2: Move so slowly that you no longer appear to be walking with any purpose.
- 4: For a while in 1840, it was fashionable to take tortoises for walks in the arcades.
- 1: Anything seems possible when the control is removed.
- 3: Sneak through the shopping mall. Walk on tiptoes.
- 2: Stand still.
- 1: The world already dreams of such a time.  
In order to actually live it, it only needs to become fully conscious of it.
- 4: In the passage, that peculiar thing, Troy and the Trojan horse simultaneously, the reign of unitary time is already abolished.
- 2: Go backwards.
- 1: Its regime is enforced with difficulty by security guards.
- 3: Allow the people and shops around you, the entire world as we know it, become smaller and smaller – until they disappear completely.
- 4: Passages are monuments to no-longer-being. The past works within them with a passion.  
And no other part of them pushes on as much as their name: “passages”.
- (Music)
- 2: Go forwards again. Accelerate your pace. Keep to the rhythm.
- (fragmented beat)
- 4: In flanerie, we simultaneously notice everything that might have happened only in this particular space. The space hints to the flaneur:
- 2: Well, what might have happened inside me?
- 1: Each step opens up new space in impossible time.
- 1: Situationists proposed hurrying so quickly between the glass palaces of the inner cities that their facades shatter as a result of the accelerated view.
- 2: Skate along the reflective floor, transform the mall into a skating rink.
- 1: Are you really carried by the Centar Cvjetni sheen as you pirouette? Have a go at it!
- 2: Don't stop spinning!
- 4: Polish the marble floor even more, so it can be clean, as is its true nature!
- 3: Dance!
- (Music)
- 3: The revolutionary project of a classless society implies the withering away of the social measurement of time

in favour of a federation of independent times – a federation of playful individual and collective forms of irreversible time that are simultaneously present.

- 2: Stand still.

### ***Ending***

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- 1: The time to liberate the mall from private ownership and to liberate the dreams of this house of dreams forever still does not appear to have come. The flow of time still cannot be interrupted – and all work time abolished. But the dream has already begun.
- (Music)
- 2: You have been given a piece of paper containing a secret message.
- 4: Its time has now come.
- 2: Go somewhere where you cannot be observed and open the secret message.
- 3: Read what it says.
- 2: A fragment for the programme of The Trojan Collective.
- 3: Go a few steps further. Remember the wish from the note.
- 4: Hide the note when nobody's looking – someplace where it won't be found straight away.
- 3: What future reader will find this message in a bottle?
- 1: Will it survive until the building is demolished?
- 3: Walk on inconspicuously.
- 2: Take out the coin you have with you.
- 4: Will the wish come true?
- 1: Anyone who leaves everything behind can wish for anything.
- 2: Hold the coin tightly in your hand.
- 3: When you let the universal equivalent fall – in this irreplaceable moment a wish can come true.
- 2: Wait for a moment! We will give you a signal!
- 4: Remember that it is not usual to give something away without getting something in return.
- 3: Nobody must notice anything.
- 2: Not even you yourself!
- 4: Try not to think about the coin any more, think only of the wish!
- 1: Now!
- 3: Perhaps the wish will come true.
- 2: Stop what you are doing and stick one arm out in front of you.



1: Turn your palm upwards.  
2: Your limbs freeze in an enigmatic gesture.  
1: And humans are nothing other than a symbol among the stars.  
2: Carry on walking!  
3: Something is happening.  
2: The movement is becoming an event.  
2: Stop. Stick your arm out again, your palm facing upwards.  
1: And as they stood there and no longer had anything left, some stars suddenly fell from heaven and were many hard smooth pieces of money. They collected together the coins and were rich for the rest of their days.  
2: Carry on strolling.  
1: Can you see one of the coins on the floor?  
2: Leave it where it is.  
1: The coins twinkle on the floor. Your wishes can be read in the constellation of the coins  
4: The commodities shine in the shops, every commodity represents a different wish. The mall is a prison of unrealised wishes, a promise of a different, playful time.  
2: Every season, with its latest creations, brings the secret stoplight signals of things to come.  
3: Applaud the things to come. Applaud – not too quietly. Applaud the future. Louder! Stop.  
2: Wander through the house of dreams as if nothing had happened.  
1: There is no reason to rush. Nobody is waiting for you – and you? You no longer have to expect anything, you can practice being idle. Some wishes only come true when you stop expecting them. The Trojan Collective thus propagates boredom, this warm grey blanket with its glowing silk lining.  
3: We wrap ourselves in this blanket when we dream.  
4: Yawn. Place your hand over your mouth.  
1: Yet who is able to turn the lining of time outwards in a single movement?  
4: Yawn again.  
1: How can boredom be practiced?  
2: Take your time.  
4: The streets are the collective's flats.  
3: Find a spot, sit down. Wherever you wish. Feel right at home.  
4: The collective is an eternally restless being, forever on a move, which experiences, learns and understands so much between the walls of houses, as much as the individuals protected inside their own four walls.

3: Quiet down. Direct yourself towards your flat!  
4: The passage is the collective's salon. Here, more than anywhere else, the street is seen as a furnished interior inhabited by the crowds.  
2: What future use could be imposed on it?  
3: How could we realise all the wishes at the same time?  
4: Each epoch doesn't only dream of the one which follows it immediately, but also rushes to greet its awakening in its dreams.  
1: It carries its own end within and develops it through cunning.  
2: However, sometimes it needs a bit of assistance.  
4: In the earthquakes affecting the market economy, in the monuments to the bourgeoisie, we take to recognising the ruins ahead of their final fall.

4: You're listening to the Trojan Collective.  
2: We sincerely thank you for your participation.  
3: The text was spoken by:  
4: **Petar Cvirn**  
2: **Mirjana Sinožić**  
1: **Danijel Ljuboja**  
3: **Lukrecija Tudor**  
5: **Nikša Marinović**  
1: Please leave the passage. The Trojan collective might return at any point. The piece can be found on the UrbanFestival web-site.  
2: And please return to MAMA.

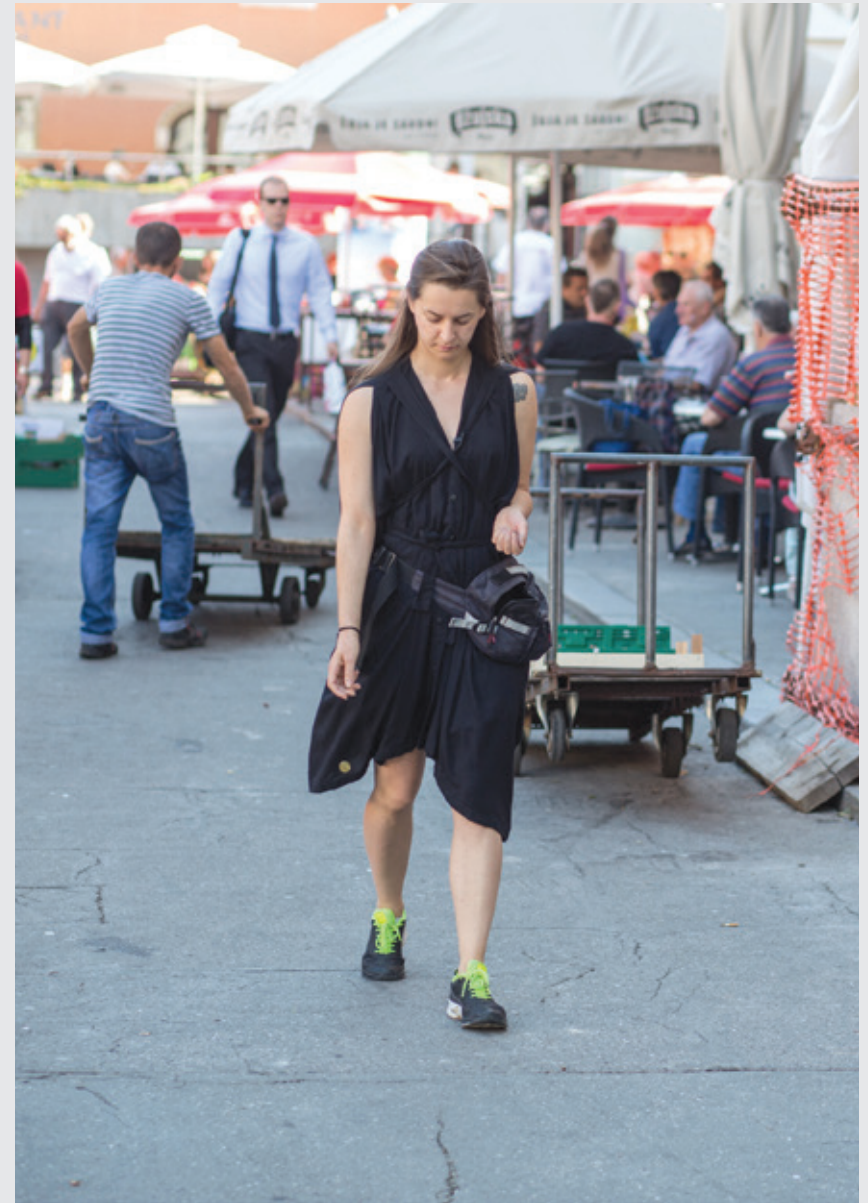
# *Nature vs. Society*

## **Nina Kurtela**

Given the current processes of commodification affecting nature and natural resources, to what extent is it still possible to see nature as wilderness and a virginal sphere in which the (economic) categories established by society cease to be valid?

Nature vs. Society consists of walking from the centre of the urban texture – the central square – towards the northern edge of the city, and then further to the forest. I mark the route as I progress, leaving traces. In reference to the story of Hansel and Gretel, which was canonised by the Grimm brothers in the Romanticist period, I leave coins along the way instead of pebbles and breadcrumbs, which serves to explore the possibility of abolishing the value of money along with the change in the environment through which I am walking. In the city itself, especially its centre, which represents economic and political power, the coins still retain their exchange value: they are accessible to everyone and open up the space for interaction. At the periphery of the city, where the urban area gradually fades away, the value of money is questioned; eventually, in the forest, it may be abolished completely, at least on a symbolic level, though not necessarily on the literal one.

**PERFORMANCE**  
from the Square of Europe  
to the hills of Sljeme  
16. 7. 2014

















# Zagreb: Shops, Terraces, Tourists, Squares

**Katerina  
Duda**

ALTERNATIVE TOURIST  
GUIDE FOR THE LOCALS,  
A DISTRIBUTION ACTION  
Europe Square, Kaptol, Ban  
Jelačić Square, St Mark's Square,  
Flower Square, King Tomislav  
Square, Croatian Nobles' Square  
16–31. 8. 2015

Taking the form of a tourist guide through seven squares in the centre of Zagreb, the work comments upon the transformation of the city owing to the growing impact of tourism. This alternative guidebook, intended primarily for the locals, is distributed daily in selected city squares. Everyone is invited to pick up their copy, talk to the artist about public space in the city centre, and share their view of the transformations tourism has caused.

In an attempt to stratify the population of city centres, sociological studies in Germany identified the so-called S-groups as residents in the city centres up until the 1980s. The S-groups consist of the poor, singles, foreigners, and the elderly. However, in the 1970s and 1980s, changes in the lifestyle and professional orientation of the middle classes attracted the A-groups to the inner cities: lawyers, architects, and academics.\*

Along the same line of logic, Katerina Duda has detected a new group, which – unlike the groups from sociological

studies – does not consist of social groups alone. It is the T-group: tourists, shops, and terraces. As the city centre has become increasingly used for commercial activities and private apartments for the visitors, the original inhabitants have been gradually evicted from the old historical centre. Thus, the evolution of tourism has had a direct impact on the structure of the city centre, with a significant rise in the number of hostels, souvenir shops, cafes, restaurants, and private lodgings.

The walk, intended for Zagreb's residents, focuses on various squares in the city centre. Walking through the narrow passages that remain between the terraces of cafes and restaurants, and in the squares that now barely exist, one may ask what has become of that public space in which everyone should be able to participate, regardless of one's gender, age, or class; a space that would offer room for various activities and various uses.

After all, to whom does the city centre belong?

\* Andrej Holm: *Wir bleiben alle! Gentrifizierung – Städtische Konflikte um Aufwertung und Verdrängung* (Münster: Unrast-Verlag, 2010)



















# *The (In)Credible Performance at St Mark's Square*

**Zrinka  
Užbinec**

**PERFORMANCE**  
St Mark's Square  
1. 9. 2015

**PERFORMERS**  
Ana Kreitmeyer and  
Zrinka Užbinec

How should one move a body in a particular space, especially a space pregnant with history?

From the history of political struggles, antagonisms, and direct conflicts that have taken place on St Mark's Square, I have chosen an almost forgotten action by a group of women, one that has been erased from the dominant narrative, which happened in the spring of 1903: ignoring the prohibition of gatherings, these women organised an anti-monarchic protest. Various accounts of the event stem from a single author, Marija Jurić Zagorka, herself a participant. One of the sources directly linked to the protest is her dramatic text, a popular play in five acts titled *Evica Gubčeva*, which she wrote while in prison that year. Theoreticians have interpreted the play as a pamphlet on Zagorka's socialist ideas and her specific understanding of feminism\*. The link between *Evica Gubčeva* and the protest has been established through the interpretation of various records, each rather different and even contradictory in nature; which lead to the questioning of the (in)credibility of performance, as the process of recording, transcribing, and inscribing has been used here as the choreographic basis for collective action

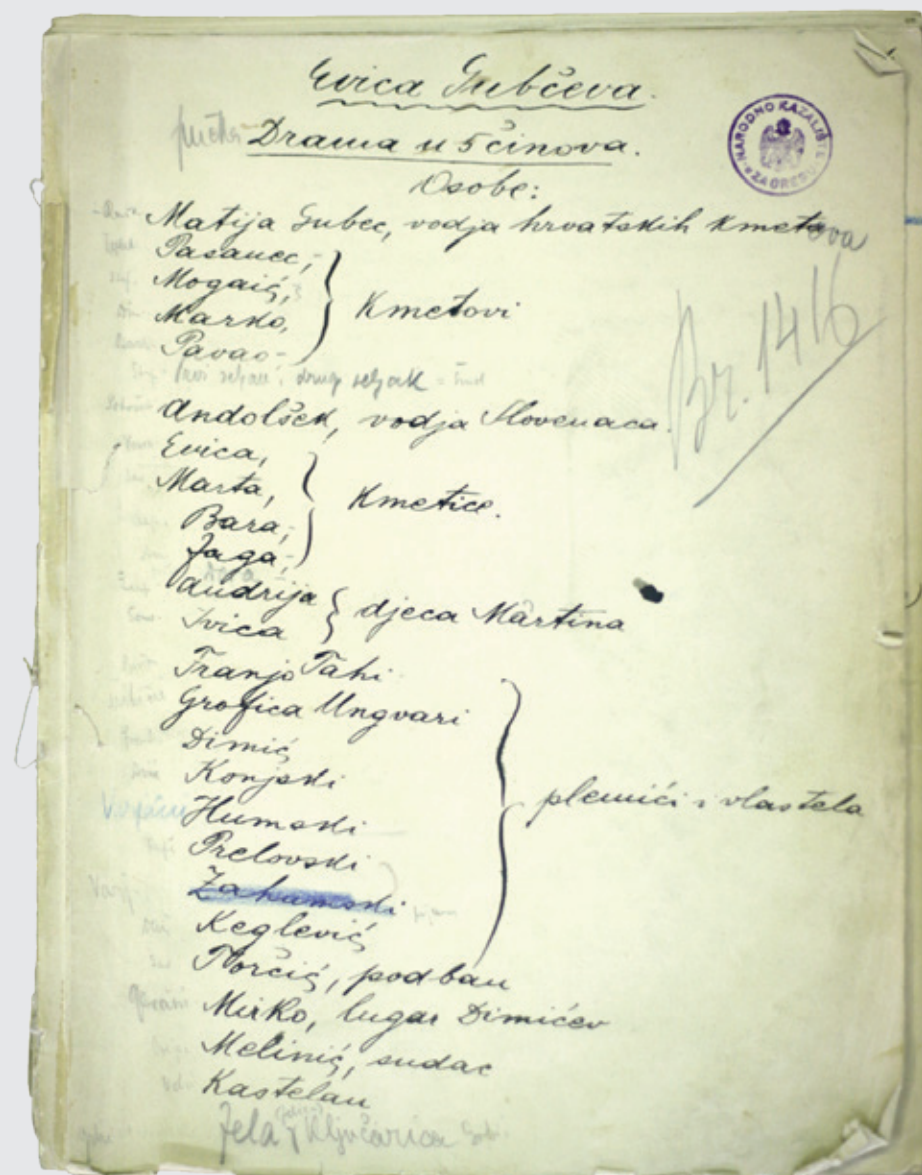
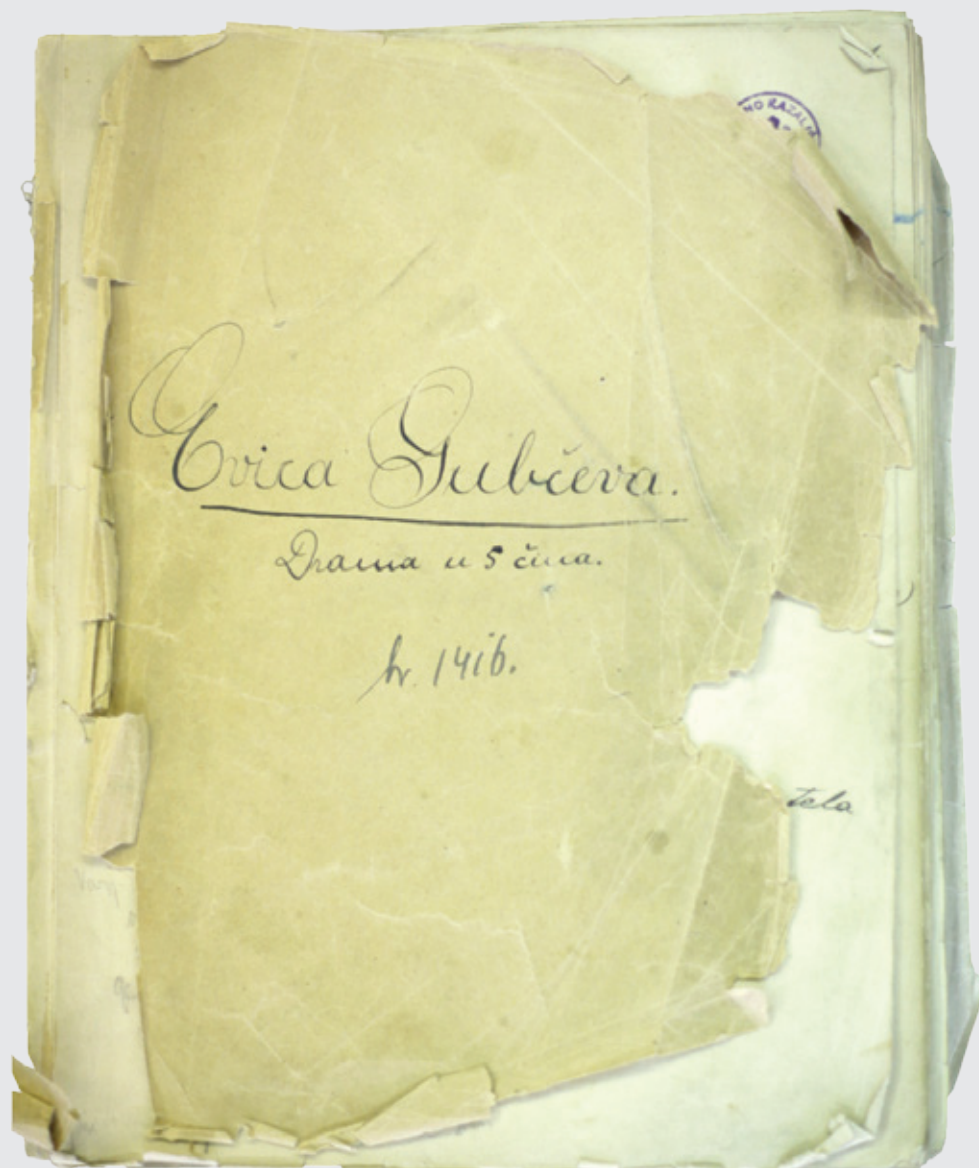
\* Natka Badurina, "Kako je osobno postalo političko u Zagorkinoj Evici Gupčevoj" [How personal became political in Zagorka's *Evica Gupčeva*] in: *Mala revolucionarka: Zagorka, feminizam i popularna kultura*, ed. Maša Grdešić (Centar za ženske studije, 2009)

and enactment. The (in)credible performance on St Mark's Square started as an act of transcription. Since the play was never published in print and was performed only once in Zagreb owing to censorship, the only remaining copy is a manuscript preserved at the Institute for the History of Croatian Theatre. A group of women has transcribed the text together bit by bit during their organised visits to the Institute. Their journey to Opatička Street took them over St Mark's Square, which meant that each act of traversing the square became a small action of inscribing the female body into a space that has been dominantly marked as a site of male political history.

The performance, consisting both of individuals performing interventions and a collective action, featured: Selma Banich, Andreja Gregorina, Lana Hosni, Ana Kreitmeyer, Mila Pavićević, Ivana Rončević, Natalija Škalić, and Jasna Žmak.

On Tuesday, September 1, at 7:55 a.m., two members of the group (Ana Kreitmeyer and myself) engaged in an act of retranscription – we repeated the individual inscriptions and constructed a collective choreography as an attempted (in)credible performance on St Mark's Square.





Script of "Evica Gupčeva" by Marija Jurić Zagorka, kept at The Institute for the History of Croatian Literature, Theater and Music (Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts), photo by Matija Kralj



Podčasnik  
lasnik

Podčasnik

Glasnik

Tamnica

Sluga a tamnica

Kmeti, kmetice, plešnici, vojnici, sluga,  
Prvi se čim odigrava u Tahievom dvoru,  
drugi u selu Stubici, treći pred Tahiem,  
viši dvorom, četvrti u sumi na putu  
u Chsed grad, peti u Tamnici Chsed,  
gradskoj. Doba: god. 1573.

Zlostne čove i Rhovri -  
Iskol pristit. Zvonice na stolu -  
2. Iscevyaka geruca sa kul.  
Rhovri sa spisi na stolu -  
eva Iscevyaka jelo sa sluga -  
brvena svjetiljka upaljeno.

Nov - mjesecina

Zvonice

Lin prvi

Opajna dvorana u Tahia, bogato rasvijetljena

Prizor prvi

Grofica i Tahie

Tahie

(Uključeno seće po dvorani)

Grofica

(Opjidi u naslonjaci. Heda dragulje, što  
ih drži u ruci, ustuknuta.) Oh - za dragu,  
je bih dala sve na ovom svijetu! Zlate  
grofe, što je ideal mog života? Imati  
od svih velikašica najljepše dragulje.

Tahie

(Stane pred groficom) A grof Tahie - (udvorno)  
bit će sećan moć li vam taj ideal oživiti,  
troriti. (Opel se zamisliti. Stanka)

Grofica

Kad da biste dobre volje?

Tahie

Kiposte - varate se.

Grofica

Ne ja se nikada ne varam. Pa i ja  
sam zlovoljna. Ovdje je doduše lijepo  
raskošno, ali do zla boga dosadno. Oh -  
na dvoru! Tamo je moj život imao ne-  
ku svrhu. (Priporjeda veselo) Ja sam  
naime među svim dvorskim gospodja-  
ma najljepša, pa Rad je Rakova dvor-  
ska svečanost, onda se grozničavo na-  
tjećemo. Sve bi me dvorjankle htjele

# *Parasites in the Open Wounds of Post-socialist Squares*

**Nina Gojić**

Did Joseph Beuys in some unusual way anticipate the emerging musealization of communism in his work *Wirtschaftswerte*,<sup>1</sup> published in 1980? The gesture by which he transferred and exhibited objects produced in the “non-capitalist economy” of East Germany to a Western context probably did not do much more at the time than reassert the binary opposition of the Cold War: he displaced some objects that functioned as material evidence of an anti-capitalist economy and exhibited them in a context that opposed it, in order to criticise the latter.

## **To Begin with: Paradoxes**

From today’s perspective, his choice of objects with an expiry date has connotations that the artist could not have counted upon, while a cynic would consider it historical irony. This imaginary cynic would also say that even the gesture of transferral is insufficient to challenge the very nature of economic exchange between two very different, yet not entirely opposite, systems. However, what proves to be genuine (art) historical irony is that Beuys’ gesture has been co-opted by

<sup>1</sup> *Economic values* (author’s remark).

<sup>2</sup> Boris Buden, “U cipelama komunizma – nekoliko napomena o mehanizmu postkomunističke normalizacije” [Walking in communism’s shoes: Some remarks on the mechanism of post-communist normalization], *Up&Underground* 7/8 (Zagreb: Bijeli val, 2004), p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

the discourse of post-communism, which has deprived it of any counter-discursive effect that it may have had in 1980.

In post-communist discourse, the idea of “normalisation” occupies a central place. The problem is that it implies a tacit acceptance of the neoliberal formula of linear progress: a one-party system, which is by definition non-democratic, is normalised in the transition and becomes adopted as the “hegemonic standard”<sup>2</sup> of liberal democracy, as Boris Buden has succinctly written. However, this logic is easy to counter with historical facts, for example, workers’ self-management, but for the time being it is more important to examine the political imprecision of the term “post-communism”. It originates, namely, from a contradiction that is essentially temporal: post-communism follows the decline of existing socialism and testifies to the “impossibility to come to terms with that past.”<sup>3</sup> However, the prefix “post” misses the point, as it denies that communism remains the name of an unfinished emancipatory project. According to Buden, the museums of communism, which have multiplied since the time of his writing, expose society to the unsolved post-communist attitude towards its past. The nature of that relationship is essentially one of fetishistic stereotyping,<sup>4</sup> and we know



that fetish is by definition an *object*. That is precisely is the trap that Beuys fell into back in 1980. Namely, the museums of communism follow the same iconic logic that he was following by relying on objects as factors in the critique of capitalism. The museums of communism reduce ideas to artifacts and tame those artifacts by using one of the two formulas of simplification: either uncritical nostalgia or unambiguous condemnation along the lines of historical revisionism.

However, as Mark Fisher has shown when elaborating on his idea of capitalist realism, the power of the capitalist “system of equivalence” derives from the fact that it can assign monetary value to all cultural objects.<sup>5</sup> If we agree with Fisher, we will see that this feature of capitalism is particularly manifest in the transition period we are in, although not (yet) as a feature, but rather as a process. In that context, one should note the statement of the Pula Group in their preface to the collection of essays on *The City of Post-Capitalism*, where they say: “the transition has become the everyday situation of our country.”<sup>6</sup> There we can see another paradox: a temporal category implying a linear progress in time has become a situation, which suggests a halt in time. This sort of temporal deviation fits very well to the overall atmosphere of capitalist realism from the viewpoint of Fisher. However, the emancipatory charge of his theory is in his call to disclose the realism of capitalism as unsustainable, that is, to show that “capitalism’s ostensible ‘realism’ turns out to be nothing of the sort.”<sup>7</sup> Thereby he calls our attention to the main task of any emancipatory policy, which is that it must always remain devoted to presenting its possible future and that it “must make what was previously deemed to be impossible seem attainable.”<sup>8</sup> If I remember well, when participating in Ligna’s performance *The Trojan Collective*, and when the voices in our headphones told us to note down on a piece of paper our own visions of the architectural future for the shopping mall at Cvjetni Square, I wrote “a museum of capitalism.”

## Collective Parasitism

Ligna’s aforementioned gesture is a common poetic feature of all performances in public space which I will address here. An invitation to imagine an alternative to the current state of affairs is a direct implementation of a strategy of imagination that is also the essence of Fisher’s call to deny capitalist

5 Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism* (Winchester: Zero Books, 2009), p. 4.

6 Pulska grupa (ed.), *Grad postkapitalizma* [The city of post-capitalism] (Zagreb: Centre for Anarchist Studies, 2010), p. 13.

7 Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism* (Winchester: Zero Books, 2009), p. 16.

8 Ibid. p. 23.

9 Ibid. p. 8. Fisher was, of course, referring to the famous statement of Margaret Thatcher.

10 Activists of the Right to the City initiative brought the large wooden sculpture of the Trojan horse to Varšavska Street as a symbolical complement to the protests against the construction of the shopping mall and the subterranean garage. It was allegedly a case of private-public partnership, in which the private investor used the public resources for his own interests.

11 Bojana Cvejić and Ana Vujanović, *Public Sphere by Performance* (Berlin: b\_books, 2012).

12 Ibid. p. 20.

realism and the doctrine of the “lack of alternatives”.<sup>9</sup> However, it is important to note that Ligna entrusted the actualisation of that strategy to a collective whose attribute “Trojan” has unambiguous connotations for anyone who knows at least something about the recent struggle in Zagreb for the right to the city.<sup>10</sup> As the voices in this radio-drama reminded us in a documentary style, the wooden horse that the activists of the Right to the City initiative gave to Zagreb’s mayor symbolised the way in which his policy was (once again) devastating public space by secretly installing his private interests into a public institution. The radio-drama also reminded us of the way in which the mayor took over the metaphor of the Trojan horse and proved himself to be a champion of kitsch: his gift to the citizens included not only a new shopping mall with a subterranean garage, but also a horse made of flowers and containing a mailbox to collect the suggestions and complaints of the citizens, thus completing his performance of pseudo-democracy. Ligna, however, used the radio-drama to repurpose the semantic charge of the Trojan horse for the third time. Moreover, what we see here is an interesting inversion, which allows us to discuss the relationship between engaged art and activism, insisting that these are two separate domains. Ligna’s members appropriated the symbolic strategy of activism and translated it into an organisational model for their audience. The Trojan horse ceased to be a symbol and became an actual collective – a conspiring multitude of flâneurs who performed and produced subjectivity that was different to the one imposed by the given space. We came not to shop, we came only in order to behave in unexpected ways. We came to be parasites trying to assert the idea of the public good. This principle of affirmative parasitism is linked to the aforementioned method of collective imagination and also links Ligna’s performances with those of other authors (Selma Banich, Katerina Duda, Zrinka Užbinec, Nina Kurtela) at UrbanFestival 13; it is also inseparable from the specificities of the post-Yugoslav type of transition.

A collective in a performance that exists within a collective of accidentally present users of public space confirms multivocality and dissent as basic preconditions for being together and as such supports Bojana Cvejić and Ana Vujanović’s hypothesis that performance in the public sphere is governed by (political) ideology.<sup>11</sup> In their book *Public Sphere by Performance*, the authors insist on the term “society” instead of “community” as the only thing that members of a community have in common is the world, understood simply as a world in which they *must* live together.<sup>12</sup> Cvejić

and Vujanović infer their hypothesis from a diagnosis of the crisis in the public sphere, which is manifested in two parallel processes: the neo-liberalisation of public space and mistrust of the mechanisms of representative democracy.<sup>13</sup> The transitional context I am referring to illustrates their hypothesis that the paradigms of individualism and collectivism have shaped the public spheres of both capitalist relations and socialist societies; in other words, they function as their “epistemological and aesthetical foundations.”<sup>14</sup> What follows is that, just as outspoken individualism introduces disturbances within the dominant discourse in socialism, thus collective parasitism functions in the transitional and capitalist societies as a contribution to political innovation in terms of producing a subject. Cvejić and Vujanović have chosen two theoretical paradigms in order to analyse the processes by which the public establishes itself through collective visions of social order: Andrew Hewitt’s social choreography and Victor Turner’s social drama. Even though space limits prevent me from explaining these concepts in detail, it should be noted that both rely on the idea of ideological corporeality. Everyday interactions are, in fact, enactments of incorporated rituals that produce their own ideological foundations.<sup>15</sup> The authors have pointed out that the dramatic theatre of classical Aristotelian tradition relies on agon and antagonism, and the post-dramatic traditions on fragmentation, multiple perspective, and the dispersion of conflict.<sup>16</sup> In terms of attitude towards the political, they have concluded that post-dramatic theatre is closer to the modern agonistic theory of democracy as formulated by Chantal Mouffe, who understands the political as a site of power, conflict, and antagonisms, yet advocates the sublimation of the political, whereby antagonism must be transformed into agonism by asserting the positive aspects of conflicts and their affective motives, promoting liberalism and pluralism at the same time.<sup>17</sup> Regarding this aspect, Cvejić and Vujanović raise the question of how to understand agonism in our deeply antagonistic capitalist society, indicating that pluralism is already inscribed into the ideological premise of liberal democracy, which prevents genuine social conflicts from escalating into social drama by dissipating them into the post-dramatic pluralism of endless present.<sup>18</sup> Since neoliberal society has already institutionalised its plurality, dissipated and atomised its conflicts, the post-dramatic paradigm turns out to be more adequate for understanding the discursive predispositions that it is based upon, since it uses the same vocabulary and

13 Ibid. p. 13.

14 Ibid. p. 52.

15 Ibid. p. 58.

16 Ibid. p. 89.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid. p. 90.

the same mode of performance.<sup>19</sup> For this reason, the authors endorse a return to the interpretative model of social drama, which brings back visibility to genuine conflicts. The paradoxes continue: the conclusion of Cvejić and Vujanović is that neoliberalism in the public sphere enacts its own plurality only insofar as the structural premises of that plurality remain unchallenged.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, we need the collective performances of parasites, with their anti-discursive interventions within the transitional consensus. The workshop *Practicising the Uninhabitable* by Selma Banich resulted in a proper handbook on how to apply different, yet unobtrusive types of behaviour in the public space on a daily basis. Knowledge produced during the workshop became an open structure for all future additions and uses of city squares. One may say that the instructions from the handbook, which was titled *Slovarica [Alphabet book]*, advocated bringing back visibility to actual conflicts and tensions as a precondition for democracy, which has also been discussed by Cvejić and Vujanović. Indeed, the subtle gestures of intervention, such as drinking coffee with friends next to the terraces of cafes, which occupy public space and charge their services, or sitting in any unexpected place and documenting the surrounding social choreography, challenge quite simply the scenarios of regulated behaviour. A similar strategy has been adopted by Nina Kurtela, a participant in the workshop of Selma Banich, whose performance *Nature vs. Society* sought to find a sphere in which to challenge money-based economic exchange. In her performance, there is no collective present, rather, it is hinted that a yet unformed community is looking for its potential utopia in the sphere of “nature” as separate from, or opposite to the “urban” sphere. The term nature is understood here as an escapist ideal rather than a sphere that we are always part of, including the possibility of directly influencing our own environment. When speaking of various forms of multitude, it is important to consider the statement of Bruno Latour that nature today implies “drastic collectivity,”<sup>21</sup> which means that we must be aware of our world consisting of both forest landscapes and toxic waste, and that the spheres marked by these two tropes are by no means separate. If we combine this perspective with the hypotheses of Cvejić and Vujanović, it becomes clear that we are already included in our world; the question is simply how we establish our relations with all the elements it consists of.

An awareness of the configuration of our environment is manifest in Katerina Duda, in whose work the local

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Quoted in: Timothy Morton, *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 17.

population of Zagreb takes over the function of parasites. After an exhaustive research on the processes through which Zagreb's city centre is adapted to the growing demands of tourists, Duda organised guided tours for the locals sightseeing in their own city. The strategy of over-identification with the form of behaviour that the artist has tried to critically examine, has resulted in subtle disturbances in the choreography of the city, similar to those advocated by Banich. Duda has approached the local population in several different ways: by halting casual passers-by and talking to them in squares that have been appropriated or taken over by various interest groups, by taking a walk with those who expressed an interest, or by leaving city guides in places where anyone could find them and explore the altered landscapes on their own. During the walks, the participants-parasites were invited to disturb the regulated rhythm of Zagreb's city centre by engaging in minimal interventions, for example by using a measuring tape to measure the ratio between the terraces of cafes or restaurants and the width left for freely moving around in the public space. Moreover, while walking, the parasites met with a discontinued, that is, revisionist presentation of Zagreb's history as offered to the tourists, which is as problematic as the museums of communism mentioned at the beginning of this text. In this version, the period from 1945–1991 is mentioned only fleetingly and associated with false data, such as claims of the neglect of the ecclesiastical heritage at Kaptol. On the other hand, some continuities are established by force: for example, the popularisation of Advent, which was virtually non-existent in the public sphere until recently, while today, under the mask of revived religious traditions, it is used to gain profit in new ways by privatising the public space and charging for its use. The problem of discontinuity is enhanced by the fact that tourism is discussed at the time when the process of adaptation to the tourist demand is still ongoing, which brings us back to the paradox of "transition as a condition". Zrinka Užbinec's subject is the forgotten or tacitly ignored, specifically feminine history of Zagreb. Commemorating a group of women who protested in 1903 against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in St Mark's Square, the women's collective copied the only manuscript of *Evica Gubčeva* – a play written by Marija Jurić Zagorka (a participant of the protest) and preserved at the Institute for the History of Croatian Theatre. In the context of various parasitic collectives, both implicit and actual, it is important to note that the performance started at 7:55 a.m., five minutes before the end of the legal ban on

public gathering in St Mark's Square. The site is pregnant with meanings that have triggered reactions by both Užbinec and Duda, but from two different perspectives. Whereas Duda has focused on the ironic fact that tourists, who are by definition not the population of Zagreb, gather collectively in St Mark's Square without any of the feelings of alienation or prohibition felt by the locals, Užbinec has emphasised another form of prohibition: the absence of female dissent from the collective memory. Thus, by making the artistic decision to start the performance five minutes before the ban was lifted, she invited an act of civic disobedience that established a link between her group and her audience-parasites. *The (In)credible Performance in St Mark's Square*, viewed with regard to its formative phases and frameworks of reference, has established a sort of typology for various transgressive collectives.

## “What is Missing or Could be There”<sup>22</sup>

Eventually, let us look back to the work of Joseph Beuys mentioned at the beginning and juxtapose it to the open structures used by Ligna, Selma Banich, and Katerina Duda. *The Trojan Collective*, *Alphabet Book*, and the *Guide for the Local Population* can be activated at any given moment, regardless of their authors. Contrary to Beuys' "evidence" of another type of economy, these handbooks for exploring the everyday life find their fulfillment in the fresh use of a perhaps as yet unformed collective, whose super-inscriptions have not yet happened. Besides, all these performances have evaded the trap of aestheticising politics, and by reversing the logic of parasitism function as a means of emancipation. Participating in such temporary parasitic collectives makes us aware of the type of civic engagement that we can practice at any time, rather than performing a single act at an art event for which we have sacrificed a moment of our lay-time in order not to have to do it again. Parasitic collective performances of actual people in actual spaces insist on reclaiming the public sphere: not as an abstraction, but as a site of struggle for the idea of future.

22 The title of this chapter has been taken over from *Slovarica [Alphabet book]* that was the result of the workshop *Exercising the Uninhabitable* by Selma Banich.





*The workshop and art projects that we present in this chapter analyse the de-industrialisation processes in relation to the production of public space, raising crucial questions of the representation of workers in the context of art in the post-socialist period. If one accepts the hypothesis that the artists should turn from being passive observers and become active participants of social change, substituting compassion for solidarity, it is inevitable to discuss and reflect upon the processes that inform the sphere of cultural and artistic production. Starting from this premise, curator and art critic Vesna Vuković has indicated the dangers of interpreting art as a superstructure. It is only with a systemic understanding of the production relations within the art sphere that one can create a basis for constructing solidarity and for abandoning the artistic treatment of workers either as victims or as some sort of supernatural beings.*

# *From the Revolution Square to the Square of the Victims of Transition*

**Dafne  
Berc and  
Aleksandar  
Bede**

**WORKSHOP**  
Miroslav Kraljević Gallery  
7–8. 6. 2013

The workshop is open for architects, artists, journalists, activists, researchers, designers, and all those who are interested in the issue of transition in public spaces. It discusses the function of the square in a modern city through theoretical texts and a local example – Franjo Tuđman Square in Zagreb.

On the first day, we read texts by Sharon Zukin, Jordi Borja, and Manuel Castells, discussing the public space in today's economic and political circumstances, including the privatisation process and the creation or dissolution of communities through urban spaces. Having mapped the crucial issues, on the second day of the workshop we turn to the specific case of Franjo Tuđman Square, which has recently returned to the attention of urban planners, architects, urban researchers, and the general public, after a presentation by architect Nenad Fabijanić about its "renewal". With the help of press-clipping and texts on the history

of the square, we reflect on its meaning and function then and now, and track the symptomatic (official and unofficial) changes in its nomenclature: from the "French (Revolution?) Square" to the "Square of the Victims of Transition". Keeping in mind the proposed project, the real-estate speculations and the intentional destruction of the Kamensko textile factory situated on the west side of the square, as well as the destructive consequences that this governing strategy has had for the social and economic life of the city, we open the discussion about the square's future. What sort of programs, efforts, and practices will have the potential of building up the city in order to make (or maintain) this square a truly public one? The joint reflection on this issue during the workshop is intended to create visual or textual drafts for proper actions or intervention (artistic, political, social, architectural...) in that segment of the city.



**U RUDOLFOVOJ VOJARNI  
TREBAO BI BITI MUZEJ  
DOMOVINSKOG RATA, RUŠI  
SE ZGRADA OPĆINE, A SA  
ZAPADNE STRANE PARKING  
JE NA TRI KATA ISPOD ZEMLJ**

[illegible]



# *Križevčanka / Woman from Križevci*

**Selma Banich  
and [BLOK]**

The intervention is a comment on the processes that shape the present-day town of Križevci. The title refers directly to the name of the renowned factory, which was shut down during the process of privatisation along with the other factories that formerly defined this industrial town. The starting point of this artistic intervention has been taken from the women's history of Križevci (as "Križevčanka" also means "a woman from Križevci"), which mentions Magda Herucina, a woman who managed, owing to a political decision by the empress, to avoid being executed under the framework of a systemic persecution, subjugation, and dispossession of women. Who are the modern women of Križevci, and where are they – the Magdas of today? What are the contemporary mechanisms that deprive them of their social and economic rights, taking away their common property and common spaces in this new round of dispossession? These are the questions that we seek to answer by resorting to the urban space of Križevci. Every town has its own "Križevčanka", every downfall is masked by a renewal: thus, the deindustrialisation is accompanied by the so-called embellishment of the main square of Križevci, which has blocked any potential for producing the common in that space.

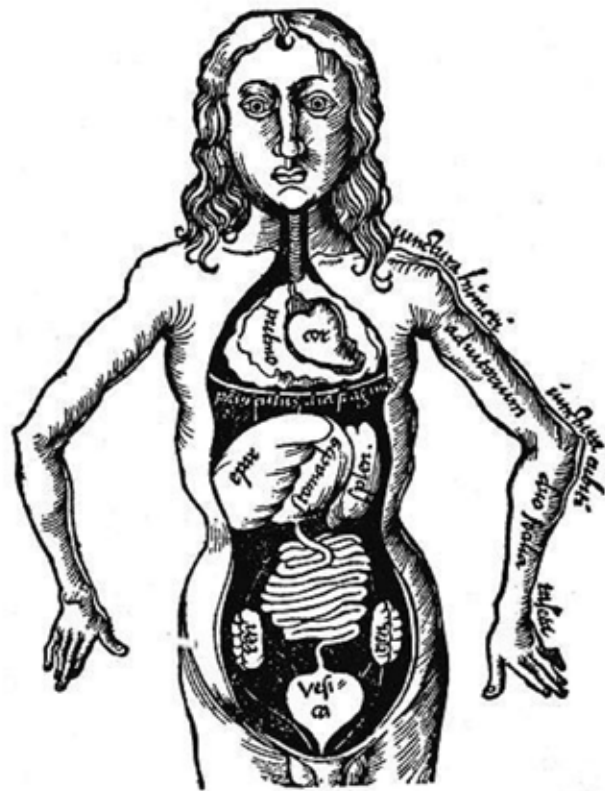
INTERVENTION IN  
PUBLIC SPACE  
Strossmayer Square, Križevci  
4. 4. 2014

PARTNER  
Culture Shock Festival, Križevci



Selection from the poster series "Križevčanka", design by Selma Banich and [BLOK].  
"Peace to the huts! War on the palaces!"

# KRIŽEVČANKA



Od 10.852, samo 2.908  
Križevčanki ima prihode od  
stalnog rada.

# KRIŽEVČANKA



SPALJENA  
NA OVOM TRGU

# *Factories to the Workers!*

## KURS

With the participation of KURS, an artistic duo dedicated to the production of murals for urban public spaces, the outspokenly temporary interventions into public space at the UrbanFestival have ceded before a seemingly regressive form – mural painting. The contemporary mural is part of the strategy for beautification and a very successful mechanism of “reviving derelict façades”, thus branding the city; however, in different political circumstances it used to serve as a way of informing the illiterate masses, of translating a politically and socially engaged message into a visual language that was accessible to all and legible to all. Can we imagine murals, in the current social and political context, that would reinterpret this tradition and at the same time avoid the trap of co-opting the aesthetics of resistance into the processes of commodification of public space? Can the mural painting of today step out of the artistic and aesthetic sphere and become part of the wider social struggle? KURS has attempted to answer this question by intervening into the interior walls of a factory hall with the intention of making it a part of the proletarian struggle rather than merely its decoration. The factory in question is ITAS (Factory of Tools and Machines Ivanec), a remnant of Prvomajska, a former metallurgical giant, that in 2005 encouraged the workers’ struggle in order to prevent the dissolution of production and to occupy the factories. The model of workers’ shareholding, which ITAS keeps evolving, helps the workers to defend the factory from the inside, to the present day.

MURAL  
ITAS Prvomajska Factory, Ivanec  
Mural opening: 6. 5. 2015

By painting a mural at ITAS Prvomajska factory in Ivanec, we primarily wanted to support the workers’ organisation and struggle, which resists the logic of the market and the interests of gross capital. The aim has been to use our labour in order to join the workers’ struggle and to contribute to its development and empowerment. The intervention contradicts today’s view of mural painting as a tool of aestheticisation and decoration; it does not romanticise the struggle of ITAS’ workers, but becomes its integral part. The decision on positioning the mural within the factory resulted from our wish to address the workers by offering them something that brings the workers’ collective and the workers’ self-management to the fore. It is supposed to send a clear message to all the visitors to the factory: “ITAS is its workers.” In order to describe how we see our position as artists, we will paraphrase Walter Benjamin: our task is to fight rather than to decorate; it is to become actively involved rather than to be mere observers. In a broader sense, the mural in ITAS’ factory represents the inevitability of struggle in developing progressive models of management through workers’ collectives. That struggle does not take place in factories alone: it must spill over to other spheres of the society, to the fields of art and culture, and cannot build up a sustainable materials base without the industrial production and without reflecting on the new models of labor.





The opening of the mural, photo by Kristijan Smok

# *Supernatural and Real Beings: The Working Class in the Contemporary Art of Transition*

**Vesna  
Vuković**

*It is not for the poet to care about the construction cranes.<sup>1</sup>*

Along with Yugoslavia and socialism, the figure of The Worker disappeared from the public sphere as a symbol of labour, the bearer of the socialist project, and the constitutive element of the working class. Representations of work, especially industrial, were erased from the ideological field as capitalist reality leaves no room for revealing the social relations it rests upon: therefore, work was pushed into the private sphere, which stopped any possibility of a collective identity amongst the working class.

Nevertheless, the Croatian art world has been showing increasing interest in The Workers' Question in recent years, especially with the onset of the global economic crisis. The beginning of such concerns could be identified as the exhibition "What, How and for Whom," which the curatorial collective of the same name organised in 2000 for the 152nd anniversary of The Communist Manifesto. Exhibits that have resonated most and have had a strong impact on the language of activist art are Nada Dimić File by Sanja Iveković and Nama – 1908 employees, 15 department stores

<sup>1</sup> Nikolai Alekseevich Klyuev, from his debate with Majakowski.

by Andreja Kulunčić. By producing a model of the factory building and preserving the neon inscription from its façade, Sanja Iveković linked the erasure of memories of the National Liberation Struggle and the socialist revolution with the current economic transformation. At the same time, searching for a solution, she organised free legal counselling for workers and tested the production of designer memorabilia to be offered for exchange or sale. Nama – 1908 employees, 15 department stores by Andreja Kulunčić was a series of posters exhibited in the public space, which used the visual language of an advertising campaign to communicate the brutal statistics behind the bankruptcy of this trading giant. It should be emphasised that the artwork resulted from a prolonged period of collaboration with the Nama trade unions. This work remained invisible to the public, and was in the local context – at least to my knowledge – the first example of such a collaboration.

<sup>2</sup> The artist spent eight months with the workers, talking to them and explaining his artistic practice in order to persuade them to participate.

The same procedure – the dialogical method<sup>2</sup> – was used by Igor Grubić in his series of photographs entitled "Angels with Sooty Faces" from 2006, which showed the miners of Kolubara whose strike in 2000 heralded the fall of



Milošević's regime. The artist treated the workers as angels: in his carefully focused photographs, he added wings drawn into the background of the sooty figures, implying – according to the author – their “clean hands” and “clear conscience”. Whereas the socialist representation of the worker as a “hero of labour” was based on socialism as a project, the modern representation – lacking such a political background – could function only within the ethical register. The struggle of the working class, understood as “clean”, “modest” and “honest”, was thus opposed to the “corrupted” and “greedy” entrepreneurs of the transition period. Art managed to bring the figure of The Worker back to the public sphere, but that return was inevitably defined by the changed socio-political circumstances. The socialist representation of the worker as a hero was cleansed of all existential aspects, yet had a clear symbolic function. In a society that was no longer socialist, such symbolic function was impossible; we have come to a representation of the worker who can only be a supernatural being or, as we shall see later on, a victim.

### Far From a (Joint) Struggle

Among the artworks focusing on The Workers' Question, the most representative case is certainly that of the 2010 strike by the women workers of Zagreb's textile factory Kamensko. The women were not permitted to protest within the factory walls, and so were forced to strike in the square at the front of the factory. Having obtained support from the students of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and later the organisations Right to the City and Green Action, the struggle of Kamensko's workers found resonance in the wider public. At the time, it became the subject of many artworks, ranging from performances to visual arts and literature, and the women workers also became part of the mainstream by participating in the International Women's Day celebrations on March 8th with pop-stars Ana Rucner and Zdenka Kovačiček. Their strike on the date that symbolised the emancipatory struggle of *working* women became instead just another object of entertainment, a commodity for wider circulation, far from a call to (joint) struggle. Eventually, in the summer of 2015, Goran Ferčec's play *Women Workers on Hunger Strike* was performed during the Rijeka Summer Nights theatre festival as part of the production of the *fringe ensemble* from Bonn; the long path through artworks was thus finalised by an entry into an international, European project.

The penetration of transitional reality into the art sphere should be welcomed, but not embraced uncritically, without raising several basic questions that concern the scope and the impact of artistic involvement with workers' issues – regarding not only the workers' struggle, but also the art field – as well as inserting various buffers against the penetration of arguments from the ethical register. The 2011 performance *Unbreakable Threads: Women Workers in Culture for the Women Workers in Textile Industry*, in which various female actors and musicians from the Kvarner region hosted the women workers of Kamensko under the guidance of director Lenka Udovički, took place in the Adriatic hotel in Opatija, a small tourist town on the seaside. A review of this “shattering” performance reads: “In front of Opatija's audience, the ‘women of Kamensko’ ceased to be a mere headline from the TV news. They acquired the shape of genuine persons, actual human beings... they had the voice, face, and figure of a textile worker who had spent thirty years at the machine and then – ended up protesting in the street.”<sup>3</sup> Leaving aside the question of the presence of the real persons – the protagonists of the events – on stage, who by being so placed necessarily become a representation, even if a representation of themselves, one should wonder about the impact of making the audience *sympathise* with the unenviable situation of the workers. Does such empathy have a politicising function or is it merely an instrument to wash away the class guilt, providing that one can guess the class structure of Opatija's theatre audience? That one does not count the working-class audiences needn't particularly be emphasised, and one should not hold the authors responsible for that, since it is not a matter of the authors' intention, but a result of cultural and institutional policy. The performance found its target in politicians: those who are never accessible even though they have accepted a mandate of representation; and addressed them rather masochistically: “It is a pity, however, that those whom this performance concerns are never present in the audience. They seem to be watching a more entertaining performance somewhere [else]...”<sup>4</sup>

One could also invert the interpretation of this last statement and conclude that it referred to the workers, and that the performance, instead of calling for compassion and the rule of law, aimed to create an alliance between those who had been affected by the same problem. Those, however, did not need a lesson in compassion, as was evident from the comment of a visitor who had managed to ascend in terms of culture and class, but whose parents had been

3 *Novi list* (7 April 2011), <http://www.novilist.hr/Kultura/Ostalo/Neraskidive-niti-radnica-u-kulturi-i-tekstilnih-radnica-Opatijce-nisu-ostavile-ravnodusnim> (last accessed on 17 July 2015).

4 *Ibid.*



affected by the privatisation process: "I don't need theatre to show me what happened, I've had it at home for the past ten years." What they did need, however, was an insight into the wider economic and political reasons for these transformations, in order to begin to understand their own position within the system; this understanding being the only firm foundation for building workers' solidarity.

## Commercialising the Industrial Experience

Long before art and the artistic involvement in workers' issues, there was de-industrialisation. During the 1970s, the west, suffering from economic problems and decreasing profits, simply lowered costs by expanding production to the east and the south. In the former socialist countries, de-industrialisation occurred after 1990 and the restoration of capitalism occurred under altered, globalised conditions. Even if the reasons remain somewhat unclear, the consequences are painfully evident: hundreds of thousands of shuttered workplaces, a rise in unemployment, the decline of former industrial towns – even if one stops there, without even touching upon the issues of further privatisation on infrastructure, resources, and welfare services, or the increased class differences. In this context, one must ask quite directly: do we need another work of art to show us that industry has been destroyed and workplaces closed, and that sites once created by industry are now largely dead? The answer is simple: no. We don't need that. Then what is the effect of this positioning of art on the side of the workers? Artistic positioning on the side of the proletariat, at the time when the workers' struggle is lost and risks for artists are negligible, can only serve to feed their aura of activism. Or, as Benjamin once stated when criticising German expressionist activism: one could hardly gain a more comfortable position from a more uncomfortable situation.

While the fascination with socialist industrial heritage grows – both in art and in academia – closed factories are increasingly being turned into cultural venues, in accordance with the recipe for culturally driven urban regeneration: mostly museums, cultural centres, and artist studios. Thus, Zagreb has its Lauba, People and Art House, located in the former Zagreb Textile Mill; the History Museum is about to move into the empty Zagreb Tobacco Factory;

and several other industrial plants have been converted into sites for independent cultural scene: Pogon – Centre for Independent and Youth Culture Zagreb and Močvara club are both located in the former Jedinstvo factory. This very direct link between art/culture on one side, and industry, or rather de-industrialisation, on the other, has nevertheless attracted little interest, except as a biographic note in the description of these institutions. In their rooms, one does not find signs of regret at the devastated industry, or a representation of socialist industrial heritage in the form of museological narrative; instead, they mostly celebrate the venues as new sites of culture and creativity. Art (and culture in a broader sense) is a place to realise one's individual talent and enterprise, and never a site of labour, even when openly situated within the framework of the so-called creative industries. In a creative industry, professional ambition is happily combined with personal fulfilment (this form of creative work is a classic middle-class aspiration) and this manoeuvre obscures working conditions, divisions, and the resulting antagonisms, neutralising the instruments needed to articulate workers' demands.

Even when discussing the context in which it occurs, as was the case in 2014 with the "Biennial of Industrial Art" – an international art festival organised by Labin Art Express, in a former coal mine in Labin, Istria, and is planned to take place in other localities with an industrial history in Istria besides Labin and Raša in the future (Pula, Plomin, Kanfanar, Rovinj) – art nevertheless becomes an instrument in the process of commercialising the industrial experience. Industrial work and modernisation in the context of socialist Yugoslavia are handed over to artists for a fundamental aesthetic overhaul, and then transformed, purified into cultural heritage to become an attractive offer to tourists and a part of cultural industry. In the process of cultural regeneration, socialist industrial work has been erased, while projects set in devastated factories have found their place in the wider European project.

Rare cases of extra-institutional attempts at defining the broader coordinates of socialist industrial labour and its organisation, such as *The Invisible Sisak: The Ironworks Phenomenon* by artist Marijan Crtalić, sooner or later crush against the wall built by over two and half decades of marginalising the working classes and of applying the ideology of cultural and capitalist renewal. Representation of (industrial) workers and workers' issues in such circumstances requires both a different language and different relations. Instead of being linked to tourism, the art practice concerned with

socialist industrial labour and its organization should find a way to establish a connection to workers' communities, as long as they still have living experience within their organisation, which capitalism has been dissolving with success.

## Contradictions of Activist Art Practices

However, the aim of this text is not to reveal the extra-institutional aesthetics of activism or to discuss the problematic position of artists as the benefactors and ideological patrons of tortured and hungry workers, but to outline the historical logic and contradictions of activist art practices, and eventually, based on an analysis of altered production conditions in the field of art and culture, to propose prospects for the futures. That is why the examples given above are important as a contextual background for presenting the two artworks that I will refer to in the remainder of this text. However, before we turn to these new examples in order to establish a diagnosis and to raise questions that will bring us to the prospects that I have just promised, one should take a closer look at the production conditions within the art field. The structural changes it has experienced open up the possibility of making a formal analogy between the workers and the artists, such as was not possible earlier. The reason for this impossibility lies in the fact that in socialism, culture was referred to as the superstructure, a sphere in which the reproduction of social relations should take place, while the concept of the base was not approached with equal concern. On the other hand, we can agree that "If one seeks to understand the realities of the cultural process, it is of the utmost importance to look at the concept of 'base' [...] the actual production relations that correspond to the level of development in the material production forces."<sup>5</sup>

In the 1970s, both the fields of art and higher education opened up, and art academies became accessible to the general public. This expansion of the production base went hand in hand with the public financing of art as a public good, as part of the welfare state. The artists embraced the possibility of teaching art as they sought to avoid the art market and still earn a living. This development reduced the class differences within the art field, at least for a while. However, the disintegration of the welfare state; along with the transformation of production relations; de-industrialisation;

5 Raymond Williams, "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory," in *Culture and Materialism* (London: Verso, 2006), p. 33.

the relocation of production to the East and the South; and the prevalence of the service economy, broke the illusion of preserving autonomy with regard to the dominant production relations. Those who believed that they could avoid the market by entering academia became service providers in the education market. If that was not entirely clear in the 1970s, it is more than obvious today, owing to the privatisation of education and the parallel increase in the number of private academies, as well as extra-institutional, project-based, and self-organised forms of education. But what happens to this mass of educated professional artists, a surplus that will never manage to enter the artistic establishment, regardless of the explosive expansion of the field? They will remain a reserve army of artistic labour that the American artist and writer Gregory Sholette has called the "dark matter" of the art world: that which reproduces either by giving it social validity or by securing profit with its labour and consumption. Becoming and remaining part of the art world involves engaging in cultural tourism (visiting international biennials and exhibitions: the prevalent format in the globalised art world), buying books and magazines, and attending conferences, courses, and other educational programmes. Briefly, becoming and remaining a part of the art world has become expensive and thus increasingly inaccessible to the general public. Moreover, this surplus of educated labour, supported by the ideology of "personal fulfilment", has opened up room for intensified exploitation: volunteering is now a frequent form of work, mostly under the cover of learning through practice, gaining experience, or simply staying close to artistic celebrities and being present at important events.

It is now beyond all doubt that culture – and art along with it – has been integrated in the sphere of production. In other words, class conflict now dominates the sphere of cultural production; it is no longer a reflection or superstructure, which forces artists to go elsewhere to proclaim their solidarity with the proletariat. A representative approach to the workers' question as seen in the artistic treatment of the struggle of Kamensko's women workers means exactly that: a return to the definition of culture/art as a superstructure. And not only that: it also means understanding the artists as a class, a creative class that is more far-sighted and more intuitive, a class of benefactors offering a hand of solidarity. It is this rejection of seeing culture/art as a sphere of class antagonism that is preventing solidary alliances within the field, as well as beyond the cultural sector.

## Avoiding the Patronisation Trap

Let us now have a look at the two artworks I mentioned before, which will help us see the prospects implied by the above analysis. The first, titled “Ship=City”,<sup>6</sup> was an action in the public space, in the form of a series of messages projected onto the glass façade of the former Bank of Rijeka, today’s Erste Bank. Concisely expressed in the formula “Ship=City”, the idea was to present – by means of images, slogans, and data – the site and the function of this industry, now awaiting privatisation. Visual and textual messages, created in collaboration with activists, artists, journalists, workers, trade unionists, and anarcho-syndicalists, emphasised the importance of the shipbuilding industry in the city of Rijeka. The decision was made to refuse to romanticise or victimise the workers, and to attempt to build an argument against the story of the necessity of privatising the failed industrial giant. It was also intended to bring culture and its production base into the story, all for the sake of creating a connection and a union between these apparently unconnected sectors. It was, of course, an informal and improvised network, a model rather than a practice, since in order to create a practice one would have had to find a way to maintain and reproduce such a union. Nevertheless, the experience was crucial as it positioned the art practise in an open and dynamic field where falling into the trap of ideological patronisation was simply not an option.

The mural painting *Factories to the Workers* by the artist duo KURS, produced at the ITAS factory, presented the chronology of the workers’ struggle and their taking over the Ivanec plant of the former Prvomajska factory. What made it so exceptional was that it was not painted on the outside, but on an interior wall of the factory, as a direct message to the workers. The artists described their standpoint in the following way: “Our task is not to decorate, but to fight, not to play the role of observers, but to become actively involved.” Their active involvement was explained by their wish to eternalise the struggle of the working classes for the younger generation of workers. Namely, the workers of ITAS did manage to stop the privatisation of the local plant by taking over control of it, however the factory remains subject to market relations, which regulates both the production relations and the producers themselves. The constant memory of the struggle, in the static form of a painting, is therefore a reminder that the struggle is far from over.

6 Action in public space (authors: [BLOK] and Rafaela Dražić), performed on 3 May 2013 in the framework of *Copula*, a programme of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rijeka.

Placing the mural inside the factory meant a coexistence in labour – of the workers at their machines and the artists on their scaffold. This shared working space became a site of extraordinary socialisation, and – more importantly – a place where the established positions could be challenged more easily than in highly representative exhibition venues. In this case, the artists were not untouchable creators, as they were present in the workers’ living space where the historical struggle was taking place. This was manifested most clearly in a comment made by a worker in the documentary video<sup>7</sup> as he was observing the painting process and talked with the authors: “Down here, you should leave some space for the comments!”

To be sure, one needs far more than a single standpoint to understand the complex relations discussed in such artworks. On the one hand, the artists are steeped in prejudices regarding the autonomy, talent, and creation ex nihilo, while on the other, they lack proper knowledge and methodology. Neither of them is unattainable. One should admit something else: building up politics has required the crossing of many a river. Art has never had such rivers to cross, with some notable exceptions such as the historical avantgarde – which, however, enjoyed the political support of the Communist Party, whereas today’s contemporary art operates in a fragmented political field. This, again, brings us back to de-industrialisation, since massive political parties grew in the wake of massive industrialisation. Present-day politics looks completely different, and so does present-day production, organised as it is as small companies and services. The question of organisation in such small-scale/urban production is the question of all questions. To start with, it should suffice (even artistically) to state, quoting Brecht, that the good were not defeated because they were good, but because they were weak.

7 Accessible at Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/129014132> (last accessed on 20 July 2015).





*The last chapter starts with a square in a local neighbourhood that we have temporarily turned into a cinema for the local community. This format was a starting point for exploring modes of cultural democratisation (in terms of both mediation and production) that can be traced back to the time when cultural production functioned independently of market logic. The inherited infrastructure, which can be found in the central squares of many neighbourhoods in Zagreb, has imposed itself as the starting point for this kind of research: cultural centres and people's universities, created in the framework of the socialist project; as well as similar institutions from the 1920s and 1930s. One such is Zagreb's Cinema club, which still exists and stands for cinematic production free from market relations. After World War II, it became part of the complex network of amateur clubs in which cultural production was democratised in a way that nowadays seems hardly imaginable. The image of Zagreb in the interwar years has been expressed by historian Stefan Treskanica, as "a few lessons from proletarian pedagogy." This was the time when the Workers' Library was inaugurated, a progressive institution that, despite all the contradictions of insisting on cultural production during the rise of fascism, made a significant impact on the education of leftist youth. It is not by chance that the square on which it stands bore Lenin's name until the first wave of revisionist cleansing. The text of journalist Branimira Lazarin brings fresh insights into this slow, yet persistent transformation from cultural centres for the people, to focal points of urban culture and factories for creative industries.*

# *Hood Cinema*

## [BLOK]

**PUBLIC SCREENINGS**  
Old Trešnjevka Park,  
The Old Market in Dubrava,  
Square of People's Protection  
in Remetinec  
11. and 12. 7. 2014, 12. 6. 2015

**PARTNERS**  
Children's Theatre Dubrava,  
Cultural Center Trešnjevka,  
Cultural Center Novi Zagreb

Cinema Bratstvo in Zagreb's neighborhood of Dubrava, cinemas in Trešnjevka such as Buhara, Triglav, or the factory cinema Končar, are only a few among the cinemas that have been closed down and forgotten. Exploring the role of the polycentrically organised cultural production within the urban texture, we have organised an open-air cinema which serves on a micro-level as a tool that will help reconquer the public space for collective use.

In 2014 screenings are thematically focused on histories of the neighborhoods of Trešnjevka and Dubrava with the aim of opening up a space for the discussion on spatial transformations. In Old Trešnjevka Park we are screening the documentary "Ghosts of Zagreb" directed by Jadran Boban, with the introduction by historian Josip Jagić and followed by a Q&A with the author. The documentary "On the Edge" by the director Tomislav Žaja is showing at The Old Market in Dubrava, followed by the talk with the local residents.

In 2015 *Hood Cinema* is coming to Remetinec, in the very centre of the neighborhood, to the National Protection Square. This public area, now crammed with disused cars, has completely lost the character as a meeting point

that it once had. By temporarily transforming it into an open-air cinema, we are suggesting a different use and experience of this space, affirming the square as a place of socialisation. Thereby the format of a cinema is an overt reference to the former Remetinec Cinema, closed down only a few years after its inauguration. Although there is a cinema in today's Remetinec, it is part of a shopping mall and as such is not really perceived as a "hood cinema." Therefore, we have organised a free screening, open for all, in cooperation with the Cultural Center Novi Zagreb as the main agent of cultural production in and for the neighborhood. It is not by chance that the film and the subsequent panel talk discuss the issues of neighborhoods and housing: it is the feature film "That's the Way the Cookie Crumbles" (directed by B. Gamulin and M. Puhlovski, 1979), which speaks of the housing issues in the context of socialism, when the housing development Remetinec was built as the first district of Novi Zagreb. It is for this reason that we have chosen the locality to open a discussion on life in the privatised city of today and the possibility of choosing different housing policies. Iva Marčetić and Antun Sevršek from the initiative Right to the City will give an introduction to the film viewing.



The Hood Cinema in Trešnjevka, photo by Damir Žižić



# *Lenin on Krešić*

## **Sonja Leboš**

After the so-called “age of the founders” in the 1880s, the morphological structure of Zagreb was most intensely altered in the 1920s and 1930s. Many stories about Zagreb as it was in those times have already been partially told, but the one about the largest square in the city has remained untold. However, the aim of our urban tour “Lenin on Krešić” is not only to tell the story of the morphology of a city district that was new in the 1920s and 1930s.

The story of Krešimir's Square, or Lenin's Square (as it was called for some decades) is also a story of the newly created social and intellectual movements of the times, the relationship between capital and urban morphology, the struggle for the city that was going on at the borderline between ideologies and everyday life, between the silence of the libraries and reading halls on the one hand, and noisy public spaces on the other. For many buildings in Zagreb we know who their owners are (or used to be), but do we know who actually produces (or produced) the space?

URBAN TOUR  
Krešimir's Square  
II. 10. 2014

In those times, same as now, struggle for the city was going on along various lines of thinking and doing. It was possible to negotiate the city and to establish institutions that are still considered progressive today, such as the Workers' Chamber, which houses the public library Božidar Adžija. This is where we will start our tour.

*Lenin on Krešić* is not about endorsing a return of busts and statues, but rather a call for reflecting on the city from various standpoints of thinking and doing. We have inherited an exceptionally good morphological structure, as well as good programmatic guidelines for meaningful urban planning. Having analysed the present regime of use, the question that we want to raise now is precisely programmatic in nature: What does the largest square in Zagreb look like today and how do we want to use it?

This is not a question that can be answered by a single person. It is a question that is meant to trigger a process of negotiation in a community of equal agents in our urban reality.



"Untitled", photo-essay by Boris Cvjetanović showing the renaming from Lenin's Square to the Square of the King Petar Krešimir IV, 1990





# *Cinema in the Making: from Dusk till Dawn*

**Isa  
Rosenberger**

**INTERVENTION**  
Franjo Tuđman's Square  
10–11. 7. 2015

**COLLABORATORS**  
Vedran Šuvar (selector) and  
Daria Blažević

**PARTNER**  
Kinoklub Zagreb

\* Anna Schober, *The Cinema  
Makers, Public Life and the  
Exhibition of Difference in South-  
Eastern and Central Europe since  
the 1960s* (Intellect Ltd., 2013)

*From Dusk till Dawn* is a homage to amateur film production, past and present. The beginnings of cine-amateurism in Zagreb go back to 1928 when Maksimilijan Paspas founded a film section in the Zagreb Photo Club, a few years later the film section became a separate club, Kinoklub Zagreb.

Since its very beginnings, film was created with the enthusiasm of amateurs. Until today a place of prolific production, Kinoklub Zagreb is one of the oldest still existing cine clubs in the world whose activity is strongly relying on the principle of democratisation of the means of (film) production. In its long history Kinoklub Zagreb was always a place for innovation and experimentation, for example GEFF (Genre Experimental Film Festival), 1963–1970, came about from “anti-film” discussions held in Kinoklub Zagreb at the beginning of the sixties.

On July 10 2015, Kinoklub Zagreb and UrbanFestival 13 will occupy one night long the Franjo Tuđman's Square: *From Dusk till Dawn* will present a selection of films from several decades – all produced at Kinoklub Zagreb – dealing with the city and the public space as “a space always already populated by often conflicted feelings, imaginations, projections and projects.”\*



# *A few Lessons from Proletarian Pedagogy: The Case of Božidar Adžija and Zagreb between the Two World Wars*

## **Stefan Treskanica**

<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom of Yugoslavia was a state in Southeast Europe and Central Europe, that existed during the inter-war period (1918–1939) and first half of World War II (1939–1943). It was established by the Treaty of Versailles by the merge of the provisional State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs (itself formed from territories of the former Austria-Hungarian Empire) with the formerly

Zagreb between the two world wars was a city of turbulent social changes and class contradictions, a city expanding and growing, an economic centre of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia<sup>1</sup>, and a site of experimentation in the workers' movement, popular culture, and social welfare.

It was in the 1920s that Zagreb experienced the most intense demographic growth in its census history, its population increasing from 108,674 (1921) to 185,581 (1931). The number of newcomers amounted to almost three quarters (74.7%) of the total urban population; for comparison, in 1991 the ratio was only 49.7%.<sup>2</sup> Even though the living and working conditions were extremely modest for most of the population – between the railway tracks and the river Sava, people lived “like in Congo” – the influx of pauperised peasants remained constant.

independent Kingdom of Serbia. The Kingdom was officially called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, but the term “Yugoslavia” was its colloquial name from its origins. In 1929 the king Aleksandar I Karađorđević dissolved the National Assembly and forbade the work of political parties and unions, as well as political gatherings. By the end of the year, the official name of the monarchy was changed to Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The period from 1929 to early 1930s is called the 6 January Dictatorship and is characterised by further tightening of already unstable social and political relations.

## **Proletarian Zagreb**

The city promised – at least in the 1920s – work and social mobility, even if not always for the first generation. Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, a key researcher on this topic, presented this social reality in a succinct and accurate way: “There was always something to do, since someone was always sick or dying.”<sup>3</sup> The truth of working conditions at the time is evident from the reports of the labour inspection: as for the construction and hygiene in workshops, the heating, illumination, and ventilation, as well as the safety measures “in factories, apartments, bathrooms, clothing, etc.,” the situation “did not improve” with time. An extreme case was reported by an inspector in Zagreb: “The worst exploitation has been that of children employed in a glass factory (15 boys and 5 girls younger than 14), who had to work in heat of around 50°C.”<sup>4</sup>

2 Ivo Nejašmić, “Populacijski razvitak Zagreba” [Demographic development in Zagreb], *Sociologija sela* 32/1–2 (1994), 6–7.

3 Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević, “Socijalni slojevi i uvjeti života u južnom dijelu Zagreba u međuratnom razdoblju (1918–1941.)” [Social stratification and living conditions in south of Zagreb between the two World Wars (1918–1941)], *Hrvatske vode* 18/73 (2010), 225 (hereafter: MKD, Socijalni).

4 Božidar Adžija, “Izveštaj Inspekcije Rada za godinu 1924.” [Report of the Labour Inspection for 1924], *Radnička zaštita* 7/11–12 (1925), 512–516. Quoted from the reprint: Ivan Perić, Božidar Adžija: izabrana djela [Božidar Adžija: Selected works] (Split: Književni krug, 1989), 301 and 303 (hereafter: Perić).

5 Josip Horvat, “Zapisci iz nepovrata: Hrvatski mikrokozam između dva rata, 1919–1941” [Notes from Nowhere: Croatian microcosmos between the two World Wars], *Rad JAZU* 400 (1983), 224 (hereafter: Horvat).

6 Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević, “Obrisi strukture radničke klase međuratnog razvoja u svjetlu privrednog razvitka” [Structural outlines of the working class in the interwar period, with regard to economic development], in: Leopold Kobsa et al. (ed.), *Revolucionarni radnički pokret u Zagrebu između dva svjetska rata* (Zagreb: IHRPH, 1968), 122 (hereafter: MKD, Obrisi).

7 Goran Hutinec, *Djelovanje zagrebačke Gradske uprave u međuratnom razdoblju (1918–1941.)* [Activity of Zagreb's municipal administration between the two World Wars], doctoral diss. (University of Zagreb, 2011), 137.

8 Horvat, 222.

These were the consequences of “progress” in post-war context, when enterprises and financial institutions multiplied, the periphery prospered, and extra profits and instant gain were counted upon “both by bank directors and by petty profiteers who smuggled some dozens of kilos of bacon or pork fat into Austria.”<sup>5</sup> Regulation was a nasty word at the time. Late in 1931, with the fall of the leading Zagreb bank, the communal economy collapsed as well, leaving 29.5% unemployed and 8.5% only partially employed.<sup>6</sup> Recovery was hard and the interventions of municipal and state authorities too slow and feeble. Thus, early in 1932, city councillor Svetozar Rittig tried to alleviate unemployment and solve the acute housing and sanitary crisis with a single sleight of hand by proposing that the river Sava should be regulated and its embankments repaired or newly constructed. Those participating in the works would obtain land “across the river”, in Kajzerica (the general formula was 100 acres of evenly partitioned land plots with infrastructure for 1000 families). Rittig's plan was accepted by municipal authorities, but owing to the communal policy of minimal interventions, austerity, and cuts, the project remained unrealised. Although a partial land division of Kajzerica took place only shortly before World War II, and the dams were strengthened and reconstructed after the great flood of 1964, the plans to make the Sava navigable through Zagreb remain a dream to the present day.<sup>7</sup> Larger land plots across the river were “urbanised”, but only in the framework of socialist modernisation in the 1950s, under the mandate of mayor Većeslav Holjevac.

## Reformist (and Revolutionary) Zagreb

In spring 1919, as noted by the publicist writer Josip Horvat, there was a shortage of coal – and therefore electric light – in the city, and famine plagued Zagreb “[the] same as our southern regions.”<sup>8</sup> There was a shortage of everything: fat, milk, sugar, and other basic victuals. At the first democratic elections in spring 1920,<sup>9</sup> communist Svetozar Deliće was appointed the mayor of Zagreb, but would hold the office for three days only. In autumn 1920, a peasant revolt was crushed “with drastic retaliation... dozens of thousands of peasants were arrested and brutally beaten.”<sup>10</sup> Late in that December, royalist repression was formalised by the Proclamation (the basic anti-communist law) and then by the State Protection Act (1921). For most leftist forces, this

9 Not quite democratic, as the municipal election order ignored most women and also men with less than a year of continuous residence in the city (for the active election right) or three years (for the passive one). For more details, see Zdenka Šimončić, “Mjesna politička organizacija SRPJ (k) Zagreba i izbori za Gradsko zastupstvo u Zagrebu 21. ožujka 1920. godine” [Local political organization of SRPJ (k) Zagreb and elections to the City Council on 21 March 1920], in: Leopold Kobsa et al. (ed.), *Revolucionarni radnički pokret u Zagrebu između dva svjetska rata* (Zagreb: IHRPH, 1968), 177–178.

10 Marijan Stilinović, “Revolucionarni dani u Zagrebu 1919. i 1920.” [Zagreb's revolutionary days in 1919 and 1920], *Razlog* 6/1 (1966), 85 (hereafter: Stilinović).

11 SDS HiS was the second oldest workers' party among the South Slavs (Bulgarian RSDS was founded several months earlier, in summer 1894) and the third oldest organization of this type – the first one among the Slavs – in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Cf. Dušan Bilandžić et al. (ed.), *Komunistički pokret i socijalistička revolucija u Hrvatskoj* [The communist movement and the socialist revolution in Croatia] (Zagreb: IHRPH, 1969), 28–29.

12 HR-HDA 1372, MG-21/III-34, testimony of Tatjana Marinić

meant the beginning of a prolonged era of “underground and ebb.” Nevertheless, taking action was possible: in trade unions, workers' institutions, cultural and educational associations, student organisations, the Friends of Nature society, and so on.

Speaking of Zagreb's leftists, they gathered at first in Ilica no. 55, headquarters of the Social-Democratic Party of Croatia and Slavonia (SDS HiS).<sup>11</sup> While numerous schisms, revolutions, unifications, and turbulences produced a complex leftist scene, Ilica no. 49 became a parallel communist centre. An activist remembers: “We were all coming to Ilica no. 55 as it was the centre of trade unions and everything was happening there, even after the segregation began. Then, at the very beginning, some students organised themselves. I was among them. August Cesarec was our president and Ognjen Prica the treasurer. We began discussing theoretically, studying theory, and so on. ... Later on, the situation crystallised – in 1919, when they started returning from the Soviet Union. ... When the Proclamation came, we were somehow not sure about what Communist Party was. ...] We were frequenting a café at the corner of Frankopanska Street, we had a club up there. This is where women were meeting and where questions were discussed, since we still didn't have our own trade union – we still didn't have Ilica no. 49 and were no longer allowed to the rooms at no. 55.”<sup>12</sup> At first, the social democrats from Ilica no. 55 participated in the new government (in the ministries of social policy and agrarian reform, as well as various workers' institutions). Late in 1920, the revolutionary faction finally split from the centre group, and the centre joined the social democrats, appropriating their infrastructure after the ban of communism. In the period between the Proclamation and the State Protection Act, some members of the Communist Party attempted to assassinate the king, and managed to assassinate the minister of the interior, Milorad Drašković. The assassinator, Alija Alijagić, was defended by Ivo Politeo, an independent socialist and, along with Svetozar Rittig, a progressive city councillor from the ranks of the bourgeoisie. Following these events, communism entered an era of fierce underground struggles between various factions, its most visible legal organisations in the 1920s were the Independent Unions and their satellite Independent Workers' Party.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the situation on the (leftist) cultural scene of Zagreb became complex as well.



Along with Miroslav Krleža<sup>13</sup> as its inevitable protagonist – dictating the tempo – there were several other circles: the group from the Institute of Hygiene; the club of Dr Beno Stein and Vera Stein Erlich (Working Group for Adlerian psychology and the natural scientists of the Brichta-Richtmann-Podhorsky line); professional and amateur actors from the People's Theatre and the Drama Studio; literary writers and authors of social literature; the Astra club; architects, urban planners, and visual artists from the Grupa Zemlja [Earth Group] and Working Group Zagreb; Students' Sociology Society; and the leftist social democrats gathered around Božidar Adžija.<sup>14</sup>

The reformist Zagreb was indeed vigorous, only the limitation imposed by the regime did not allow it to spread its wings. Thus, in a lecture organised by the People's Theatre early in February 1933, urban planner and architect Vladimir Antolić emphasised the urgency of planning and socialism in solving communal issues: "Encouraging and promoting urban development, organising transportation – these things cannot be successful without planned collective initiatives. Private and individual efforts will always be guided by desire for personal gain, disregarding collective social interests. That is why, as long as urban development remains based on private property, we shall be stuck in a permanent state of unplanned constructions and chaos."<sup>15</sup> The background of Antolić's diagnosis was the actual state of interwar Zagreb, tortured by the crisis of the 1930s, as I have described above. Or, as a reporter of The Voice of Trešnjevka observed at Christmas 1932: "Here every fourth person dies of tuberculosis and we struggle against this widespread disease from year to year. But all this struggle will remain futile as long as we keep ignoring the fact that, besides meagre nutrition, the main cause and trigger of tuberculosis is unhealthy and overcrowded housing."<sup>16</sup>

The Earth Group and Working Group Zagreb helped in highlighting the intensity of class differences:<sup>17</sup> "Whereas in Trešnjevka a single-room apartment of only a few square meters may house a crowd of 8–12 persons, in luxurious apartments a family of five will often have at their disposal five rooms, a kitchen, a bathroom, and two toilets. In villas, a single person will sometimes inhabit several rooms. ... And as for the bad impact of unhealthy housing on the condition of our children, one should mention the following: Rachitic children have been recorded in apartments consisting of

- one room with a stove: 54%
- one room and a kitchen: 39.9%
- two rooms and a kitchen: 6%

"Not only that we who live at the periphery (about 50 thousand persons) must bear with these miserable and desperate unsanitary conditions,<sup>18</sup> which poison our health; we must also pay for them dearly, proportionally far more than those who live in the city centre or the luxurious parts of Zagreb. In 1928, revenues from private houses were 10%, in 1929 – 15%, in 1930 – 20%, and in 1931 – 25% and more. Thus, while our income has been drastically reduced in the past few years, the revenues of house owners have been increasing. And when the tenants ask for smaller rents, the "poor" house owners appeal to the state and claim that their property is being encroached upon. [...] If we compare the size of the rent and the profit, we must conclude that a working-class family in Zagreb pays twice as much for their accommodation than workers in other countries, in Western Europe, who live in better apartments. [...] The tenants [in Zagreb] must give more than a half of their total income for the rent. Such a building is worth 9500 dinar on the average and brings 80% net interest on the invested capital to its owner. [...] A resolution proclaimed at a tenant meeting in Belgrade shows that the housing situation there is even worse than here in Zagreb. Their monthly rent often amounts to more than 66%, and sometimes as much as 75% of the total income of an employee in a private or public company."<sup>19</sup>

Statistics were "one of the most important weapons [of the proletarians] in their struggle against the capitalist class," as a working-class newspaper wrote at the time.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, reliable statistics (at least to an extent to which it could be provided by the institutions of social welfare) were crucial in mobilising the public and raising the awareness of the working classes. This was the context of artistic interventions such as that of the Earth Group, and such activities were also supported by Božidar Adžija, the co-initiator of many of our workers' institutions.

## The Adžija Case

Božidar Adžija was born in 1890 in Drniš and became politically active early in life: as a secondary-school student in Split, he participated in protests against (Italian) irredentism, which resulted in his expulsion. Before World War I, he graduated from law school in Prague and was about to graduate from

13 Miroslav Krleža (1893–1981) – author, editor, and cultural worker. he was one of the key figures in the Yugoslav Worker's movement and Yugoslav modernity in general. His early political work was influenced by Lenin. He was the key protagonist in the conflict around the autonomy of art (and autonomy from Moscow in general) which began in the late 1920s and reached its peak in 1939 with the debates in and around Krleža's literary magazine *Pečat* [Seal].

14 Cf. Zorica Stipetić, *Argumenti za revoluciju – August Cesarec* [Arguments for a revolution: August Cesarec] (Zagreb: CDD, 1982), 277–278.

15 *Glas Trešnjevke* [The Voice of Trešnjevka] 2/9 (25 February 1933).

16 *Glas Trešnjevke* 1/13–14 (24 December 1932).

17 It was the Third Exhibition of Zemlja (Art Pavilion, late in 1932). For more details, see Tamara Bjažić-Klarin, "Radna grupa Zagreb – osnatak i javno djelovanje na hrvatskoj kulturnoj sceni" [Working Group Zagreb: Its foundation and public activity on the Croatian cultural scene], *Prostor* 13/1 (2003), 46–50.

18 The slow and sporadic/limited changes at the periphery of Zagreb, a situation that lasted until the beginning of social modernisation, is also documented in the history of a school in Trešnjevka: "The school building had access to the water and electricity system from the beginning. It had warm water and built-in showers, and many students washed themselves there, since most homes in Trešnjevka did not have running water." The school was built in 1939 and was a project by Ivan Zemljak, a prominent reformer. Cf. History of Matija Gubec Primary School, <http://goo.gl/gB6BqG> (last accessed on 20 October 2015).

19 *Glas Trešnjevke* 1/13–14 (24 December 1932).

20 "Statistika" [Statistics], *Radnička štampa* 50 (1923). Cf. Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, *Radni slojevi Zagreba* [Zagreb's working classes] (Zagreb: IHRPH, 1973), 385.

21 Adžija did not really know Lenin for quite a while and did not even consult his work when writing on the October Revolution (1928), since “Lenin’s works that he ordered while working on the book were confiscated by the police.” Cf. Dinko Foretić, “Božidar Adžija: život i djelo” [Božidar Adžija: His life and work], in: *Božidar Adžija, Članci i rasprave* (Zagreb: Glas rada, 1952), 150.

22 The People’s Front of Yugoslavia was an organisation of antifascist and democratic masses in Yugoslavia which created an alliance between the Communist Party, the trade unions, the “left wings” of the peasant parties, youth, university students, cultural, educational, and sports societies, different professional associations and national liberation movements under the auspices of civic parties. The main platform was: the destruction of the 6th January Regime, equal rights for the nations of Yugoslavia, preventing the burden of crisis being placed upon the people and improving the economic position of the working masses at the expense of the rich.

23 The autonomous region of Banovina was a formal attempt to solve the so called Croatian Question within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Established just before the beginning of World War II (August 1939) it was comprised primarily of today’s Croatia with some parts of today’s Serbia (the region of Vojvodina) and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The capital of Banovina was Zagreb. Banovina stopped existing during the Nazi occupation when the Independent State of Croatia (Croatian acronym NDH) was established (April 1941), a quisling regime led by armed forces called Usthas.

the Trade Academy when the war interrupted his studies. Inspired by Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, Adžija attended Edvard Beneš’ lectures. He spent the war at military courts in Dalmatia (Sinj, Šibenik, Dubrovnik). In 1918, he was involved in the unification of Yugoslavia. After the arrival of the Italian army, he left Dalmatia and moved to Zagreb (1919), participating in the local leftist movement during the hot period of schism, in which he joined the anti-revolutionary fraction<sup>21</sup> of Vitomir Korać, who promoted him to the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party and appointed him to the post of editor in the party journal *Sloboda* [Liberty]. Late in 1919, Adžija visited Prague again in order to study the Czechoslovakian experience of building up the social welfare system.

Adžija was an open proponent of antifascism from the time of his article published in *Nova Evropa* [New Europe] (November 1922); he was particularly concerned with the implications of fascism for the workers’ movement. Against the background of economic crisis, Hitler’s rise to power, and deviations in the local social-democratic movement in the mid-1930s, he entrusted his “unswerving democratic integrity” to the Communist Party. Adžija’s joining the Communist Party coincided with the beginning of new line, the People’s Front<sup>22</sup>, formally established at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. Adžija’s party tasks included editing the journals *Pregled* [Review] (1934/35), *Odjek* [Echo] (1935), *Novi list* [The New Review] (1937), *Naše novine* [Our Gazette] (1939), *Izraz* [The Expression] (1939), and *Politički vjesnik* [Political Bulletin] (1940). He was arrested on several occasions in connection to these activities (1936, 1938, and 1939), the last time immediately before the dissolution of the country, when the government of Banovina handed him over to the Usthas.<sup>23</sup> He was shot together with nine of his comrades early in July 1941, in the forest of Dotrščina.

## Social Welfare: Culture and Education

Culture and education played a prominent role in Adžija’s public activity, since he considered them crucial for the quality of life of the working classes. However, before that or simultaneously, one had to solve the issue of general social welfare and ensure that the workers’ rights were respected: “Long working hours, physical exhaustion, the high probability of sickness or accidents, and miserable wages – these are the main obstacles for widespread education among the working classes. Isn’t setting the requirement of maximum

working hours to eight per day primarily directed at giving the workers enough time ... to have the possibility of fulfilling their historical task, which is to seek and demand new forms of culture, and to ask for their active participation in producing culture?”<sup>24</sup>

One of the institutions expected to promote this approach was the Museum of Work. Adžija modelled it upon Gesellschafts- und Wirtschaftsmuseum in Vienna, with the intention of using new methods of presenting data, specifically Otto Neurath’s Isotype, as well as the other new media such as films and slides. Adžija ordered a text by Leon Steinitz for *Radnička zaštita* [Worker Protection] on the Vienna Method of Pictorial Statistics and printed several reproductions of Neurath’s Isotype. This took place in 1928, two years after the inauguration of the Workers’ Library and Reading Room, and a year after the foundation of the Workers’ Academy. Adžija proposed similar projects to Workers’ Chambers throughout Yugoslavia, but they never came to fruition (except in Novi Sad to some extent). He also travelled to Vienna and Munich to survey the state of their local workers’ institutions. Problems occurred, both due to the deficit of finances and of personnel,<sup>25</sup> but the programme was at least partly saved by an initiative of the School of Public Health to establish a Museum of Hygiene. Six years later, in December 1934, the results of the SUZOR (Central Office for the Insurance of Workers) and the School of Public Health’s investigation into hygiene in the workplace were presented at the Zagreb Fair. In 1936, Adžija’s exhibits also found their place in SUZOR’s building as part of its permanent collection, but by that time their initiator had already taken a different path, between imprisonment and revolution.

SUZOR, SBOTIČ (Union of Employers in Banking, Insurance, Trade, and Industry), and the Zagreb’s Workers’ Chamber (or rather Zagreb’s Culture and Education Department) were Adžija’s principal institutions. SUZOR was founded as the central body and the carrier of social (health and retirement) insurance for the entirety of interwar Yugoslavia, while SBOTIČ was considered as one of the lesser, yet progressive independent trade unions. The Workers’ Chamber was supposed to operate as a self-managed organisation of workers (and employees), with the possibility of launching “initiatives for the improvement of economic, social, and cultural position of workers.”

All these institutions were established in 1922 for the benefit of workers following the turbulent years immediately after the war. And even though legislation concerning

24 Božidar Adžija, “Za radničku prosvjetu” [For the education of workers], *Radnički glasnik* 9/17–18 (1 May 1930), 3.

25 Vera Mudri-Škunca hinted at some other deficits as well, but without the written records on the work of the Culture and Education Committee at Zagreb’s Workers’ Chamber it is difficult to tell what she was referring to. Cf. Vera Mudri-Škunca, “Radnička biblioteka u Zagrebu između dva rata: prilog povijesti Kulturno-prosvjetnog odjeljenja Radničke komore” [Workers’ Library in Zagreb between the two World Wars: A contribution to the history of the Culture and Education Department at the Workers’ Chamber], *Vjesnik bibliotekara Hrvatske* 12/1–2 (1966), 6 (hereafter: Škunca).

work (and social welfare) in interwar Yugoslavia was relatively progressive (as it was modelled upon that of the Weimar Republic), in practice it was practically ignored. Police and surveillance forces – otherwise very zealous – did not overly concern themselves with workers' welfare. Adžija also expressed his opinion on these points.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, something could be done there: many things depended on local circumstances, on the individuals sitting in the Workers' Chamber and in other organisations, and on the diligence of social workers. Adžija may have been an extreme force in a positive direction, but he was aware of the limitations of his actions: "One should not underestimate, much less negate the significance of social and political legislation for the working classes, for raising class awareness, and for understanding class struggle, since – as much as social policy is a product of capitalist development and its production relations – it does not result from capitalism automatically, but is born in hard labour, as a legacy of long and fierce social and class struggles. [...] It is a circumstance that the workers' movement should particularly keep in mind."<sup>27</sup>

Adžija worked at SUZOR and SBOTIČ as the secretary of the union from July 1922 until late 1926. That same year, he moved to the Workers' Chamber, where he became the head of the Culture and Education Department, and then from late 1930 until his death he worked again at SUZOR as the head of the Legal Department. He used much of the infrastructure of these institutions for public purposes, founding new cultural and educational institutions, holding courses, organising exhibitions and lectures, and editing SUZOR's journal *Radnička zaštita* (1925–1928) and the Workers' Chamber's *Socijalna misao* (1928–1933).

26 Thus, a report from 1926 says: "Even the beginning is terrible: only 9079 companies were checked, which means that, according to the strict regulations of the Labour Inspection Act, the inspections did only 1/8 of the work they were supposed to do. And only 1/4 of the workers were reported as working in safe conditions [...] If one takes into account this sloppiness and negligence on the one side, moreover concerning the state and its social duties, and the

attitude of the employers on the other, which – according to the report of the central labour inspection (p. 10) – culminated in this: 'During 1925, several major cases were noted in which the workers did not receive their wages. In some of them, the state itself was the employer, and due to administrative inertia it could not raise loans for the payment in time. Nevertheless, the wages were paid with a minor delay. A far more interesting case is that of certain

entrepreneurs who created an entire system out of not paying their workers...' then one can imagine the economic and social situation of our working classes. The comfort that the central inspection grants to the workers, namely that they can raise charges against the unpaying employers at the civic court, is rather weak." Božidar Adžija, "Izveštaj Inspekcije Rada za godinu 1925." [Report of the Labour Inspection for 1925], *Radnička zaštita* 8/9–10 (1926), 445.

27 "Mogućnosti socijalne politike" [Options in social policy], *Socijalna misao* 6/1 (1933). Quoted from the reprint: Perić, 211.

28 The library is also the historically best analysed aspect of Adžija's cultural activity, largely in two articles published some fifty years ago: the abovementioned one by Vera Mudri-Škunca and that of Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, "Djelovanje Božidara Adžije na kulturno-prosvjetnom uzdizanju zagrebačkih radnika: rad Kulturno-prosvjetnog odsjeka Radničke komore u Zagrebu (1927–1930)" [Work of Božidar Adžija on the cultural and educational progress of Zagreb's workers: The activity of Culture and Education Department at the Workers' Chamber in Zagreb (1927–1930)], in: Franjo Buntak (ed.), *Iz starog i novog Zagreba IV* (Zagreb: MGZ, 1968), 283–300 (hereafter: MKD, *Djelovanje*).

29 As for the apprentices, "most craftsmen employed a considerable number, since they were a free workforce" (MKD, *Obrisi*, 126).

30 Škunca, 10.

In the universal memory and the texture of the city, Adžija is remembered in the name of the public library at Krešimir Square no. 2 (the former Lenin Square), an institution that, despite all the insufficiencies and contradictions that accompanied the process of its foundation (1926–1930), helped create a specific, leftist intellectual climate.<sup>28</sup> The social group who benefited most were the young communists, who frequented the library more than anyone else, according to the statistics. They would later play the key role in the antifascist resistance and the revolution of 1941–1945. The membership structure late in 1931 was as following:

- Students: 258
- Employees: 214
- Metal workers: 70,
- Apprentices in various industries: 32<sup>29</sup>
- Housewives: 32
- Free professions: 31
- Trade assistants and textile workers: 18
- Factory workers: 13
- Teachers: 13
- Nurses and laboratory technicians: 13
- Transportation workers and employees: 13
- Journalists and writers: 10
- Carpenters: 9
- Wardens and porters: 7
- Dental technicians: 7
- Actors: 7
- Tanners: 7
- Architects: 6
- Innkeepers: 6
- Graphic workers: 6
- Professors: 5
- Bakers: 4
- Musicians: 4
- Merchants: 3
- Barbers: 3
- Glaziers: 2
- Apothecaries: 2
- Managers of construction companies: 1
- Theologians: 1
- Waiters: 1<sup>30</sup>

In his reformist work, Adžija encountered many obstacles, which were not only external (lack of finances) or internal (political divisions within the workers' movement), but also resulted from his particular idea of education – which may be described as a peculiar, ambivalent cultural elitism.



31 That is, again, understandable regarding the intensity of patronizing tendencies in the context of Viennese social-democratic experiment, which was a great source of inspiration for Adžija. Cf. Helmut Gruber, *Red Vienna: Experiment in Working-Class Culture 1919–1934* (New York – Oxford: OUP, 1991), 63.

32 The conflict would surface in 1935, triggered by the initiative for the foundation of the National Front and the Unified Workers' Party, and the participation in the first elections after the 6 January Dictatorship. Adžija managed the external activities of the main initiative committee. On that occasion, Krleža raised the question whether the social democrats that one was supposed to join forces with were not mere phantasms, and whether it was not the peasant or the plebeian who was the actual subject of change in the Yugoslav/Croatian circumstances? (Written in the form of theses for internal use, published in the revised edition of 1953.) At the same time, Krleža wrote his *Ballads of Petrica Kerempuh*, the (most effective) answer to the social literates and an apotheosis of the plebeian genius.

33 Škunca, 26.

34 Minutes from the session of the Culture and Education Committee, 8 February 1928. Cf. Škunca, 19.

35 Škunca, 19.

Adžija was appalled by cheap, popular books and supplied the library with progressive, mostly scholarly literature, largely untranslated (primarily in German) and systematically purchased from private collections. As stated above, this had a positive effect on the progress of youth and the dynamics of Zagreb's (leftist) intellectual scene. Nevertheless, the question remained: what about the basic target of this institution, namely the (manual) worker? The very argument and conviction that the worker should be "civilized" and raised to a "higher cultural level"<sup>31</sup> sounds somewhat haughty especially with regard to Krleža's simultaneous ideas about encouraging the plebeian creative impulse.<sup>32</sup> As for popular literature, it started playing a more prominent role from 1938, when the library moved to its new, spacious rooms in the Workers' Centre at Krešimir/Lenin Square no. 2 (before that, the library and the reading hall had moved often, owing to the growth of their holdings and membership, and the resulting inadequacy of rooms). In 1938, membership increased at the double rate of previous years (432 new members), access to the reading hall became more liberal, and they even considered introducing taxation on borrowed books, modeled after the Ljubljana's library system, only in a more modest version. A great handicap of Ljubljana's library – in terms of public and social function – was its commercialisation which had resulted from the necessity of self-financing. The management of Zagreb's library's greatest fear was that it would come under the supervision of the Ministry of Education (which may "impose their control regarding the acquisition of books"<sup>33</sup>), this eventually happened in 1932. Four years earlier, Adžija was struggling with the "lumpenproletarians": "The reading room is full of visitors every single day, but few among them come to actually read the newspapers. Most of them engage in activities that do not belong in a cultural institution, such as playing various games, selling and buying old things, and so on, which leads to conflicts, quarrels, and even fights."<sup>34</sup> Police interventions were frequent (of course, not only because of "playing cards and selling things"), and then on January 1st, 1929, "luckily" the reading room was temporarily closed down, this was fortunate "as it would prevent the police from encountering public gatherings in those dangerous times (the beginning of the 6 January Dictatorship)."<sup>35</sup>

In the framework of the Culture and Education Committee, Adžija also organised some less successful excursions, lectures, and theatre performances. Mira Kolar Dimitrijević argued that his greatest problem was the conflict with the

Independent (communist) Trade Unions over the management of the Workers' Chamber, as the communists decided at one point to boycott all activities of this sort.<sup>36</sup> However, Adžija was also not on the best of terms with the (reformist) General Workers' Union, who attacked him for trying to organise a trip to Ljubljana and a lecture on the origins of coal.<sup>37</sup> Adžija's troubles didn't end there; he had difficulties conceiving the programme and choosing the lecturers, since only language courses were well visited, the German ones exceptionally well. Another interesting point has been made by Toma Milenković, who has done comparative research on the Yugoslav socialists during the 1920s, and argued that Slovenian socialists and their organisation Svoboda were particularly successful in the field of culture and education because they placed a continuous emphasis on the basic education of workers (focussing on basic literacy), whereas "socialists in other parts of Yugoslavia insisted on studying the theory of socialism."<sup>38</sup> Moreover, Svoboda placed more emphasis on sports. To be sure, it was far superior to other cultural and educational institutions in terms of organisation as its tradition went back to the prewar period and also it managed to preserve the unity of its membership regardless of factions.<sup>39</sup>

## The Genie from Adžija's Bottle

Exploration of cultural and social action pursued by Božidar Adžija may not be impossible today, but it is certainly rather difficult. A researcher of the mid-war period, or of the worker's struggle, will undoubtedly encounter institutional fragmentation, general disorder, and difficulties in accessing sources. The fact that some – essential – work has been done in this field, but the results have been erased, only contributes to the level of scholarly frustration. For the needs of this article, for example, I wanted to consult the records of the Culture and Education Committee in today's Božidar Adžija Library, but was kindly told that no such materials existed there. I am indebted to the library's personnel for helping me consult the materials which remain. Afterwards, I tried on several occasions to access materials related to the Culture and Education Department (and the Worker's Committee as its central body) at the Croatian State Archive, but was likewise kindly told that they did not know anything about them. According to the old (and orderly) call numbers in the archive of the Institute of the History of the Workers'

36 It was in March 1927. Cf. MKD, Djelovanje, 294.

37 MKD, Djelovanje, 295.

38 Toma Milenković, *Socijalistička partija Jugoslavije (1921–1929)* [Socialist Party of Yugoslavia (1921–1929)] (Novi Sad: ISI, 1974), 524 (hereafter: Milenković).

39 Milenković, 522.

40 Božidar Adžija,  
“Socijalizam i inteligencija”  
[Socialism and intelligentsia],  
*Socijalna misao* 3/1 (1930), 16.

Movement in Croatia, said materials should be part of the holdings of the Workers' Chamber of Croatia and Slavonia (presently HR HDA 1258), but the fragmentary inventory of the holdings does not mention them. Some of this material is supposed to be kept in the 870 boxes that the archive moved from the main building to the palace of Kerestinec near Zagreb, which was used as a prison camp during the WW2. I have ordered and checked some of these boxes but found nothing. It should be noted that, on March 31st 1941, Adžija was arrested and imprisoned in Kerestinec along with 25 comrades; later he, along with nine others, would be returned to Zagreb, only to be executed in the woods on the city fringes.

Regardless of the neglected and/or destroyed materials from Adžija's work, the genie from his bottle should still be alive, as “today's intelligentsia is also born and lives in the working world” and also “needs to emancipate itself from capital, [...] it should finally gather enough courage to take that path.”<sup>40</sup>

# *Cultural Centres: From Enlightened Politics to a Strategic Asset*

**Branimira  
Lazarin**

\* This text is based on the series of essays called “Culture in the Neighbourhood,” published on the Forum website during October, November, and December 2014. The author had undertaken field research for the purposes of this series and conducted numerous interviews with the employees of cultural centres in Trešnjevka, Maksimir, Travno, Dubrava, and Peščenica, which have served as a basis for the conclusions presented in this text (editor’s remark).

This is an attempt to analyse the past, present, and future of Zagreb’s municipal cultural centres, with special emphasis on the questions raised in three particular cases: the district centres of Trešnjevka, Dubrava, and Peščenica.\* These questions are posed from a wider perspective, which is defined by the break in the socio-political context and the post-socialist turn in the programming and financing of art. Even though the answers are far from simple, one thing is sure: the status of cultural centres and attempts to create cultural and artistic programmes inspired by the democratisation and the decentralisation of art during the post-socialist transition have been seriously threatened.

The first difficult question when reflecting on the present situation of cultural centres in Croatia concerns those citizens who barely know of the existence of such institutions, understand their purpose, or even notice their impact in the local environment. If one defines cultural centres in the broadest, yet most precise sense of the word, that is, as elements of cultural infrastructure in the local community, the initial question will be about the choice of analytical focus: what and how much is needed to create the minimum of a collective experience?

Municipal cultural centres are undoubtedly assets for the local community and its collectives, but at the same time can be inconsistent and their purpose poorly defined.

Therefore, the question of (re-)establishing a relationship between cultural centres and their users seems to be the most important point here. However, the dynamics of such interrelations are far from simple or logical to present. On the one hand, cultural centres are always crowded, as the arena for the practice of “culture of leisure” and extracurricular activities in the neighbourhood. On the other hand, these institutions remain barely visible in the panorama of urban cultural events and are perceived as an alternative to high culture.

This double-edged situation appears evident in the general image of the city and the urban reality of its development. However, taking into account the complex contextual history of cultural centres, their socio-political framework, and the way they were financed, during the socialist period and afterwards, one suddenly jumps from a bird’s-eye view to a worm’s-eye one: where the field of culture seems muddy and slippery.

The choice of perspective proves fatal, in the latter, many things remain “unclear” in the debate on cultural centres. Most professionals active in the field of culture (or so-called cultural production) experience the impact of “stable infrastructural culture” in the municipal centres of Zagreb, as rather comfortable. This has led to the recent intensification of the rhetoric in this debate: who defines the



relationship between such institutions and their users? Or, more accurately: who has the right or the privilege to direct the development of cultural centres?

## Historical Overview

In the beginning, and in the future plans for cultural institutions under socialism in Croatia, there was no controversy about their programming and management. Cultural centres in Croatia were established in the 1970s as a “project for the decentralisation and the democratisation of culture” modelled upon the French example of André Malraux’s “cultural centres”. Socialist modernism (in terms of architecture, urban planning, various arts, and humanities), which was conceptually close to Malraux’s cultural policy as enlightened social policy, reached its pinnacle in Yugoslavia during the 1970s.

During the 1960s, Malraux launched various highly organised projects (restorations of artworks, debates on modern art, bringing cultural practices closer to the local communities), thus introducing the idea of modernity to French culture as a national policy; artistic and urban modernism in Yugoslavia evolved in the specific Yugoslav conditions of cultural autonomy as an important and valuable cultural policy.

The practice of establishing cultural centres in urban districts, that is, urban planning “from below”, was also present in Germany during the 1970s, where a vigorous “new cultural scene” emerged in the wake of alternative movements. Almost all German cities, depending on community cultural policy, cultivated some form of “arts and crafts” at the core of the new neighbourhood scene. This encouraged amateurism, citizen participation in artistic creativity, and all sorts of gatherings over cultural and political issues. German cultural centres were linked to the ideal of “culture from the bucket bottom,” neighbourhood community spaces that could be easily organised by the local population and were financed “from above”, from the municipal offices for culture.

Cultural centres in Croatia were founded as a proof of the country’s cultural socialist modernity. Cultural centres were largely modernist in their architecture and art, even though modernism cannot be defined as the “official aestheticism” of the Yugoslav socialist system during the 1970s. Financed “from above”, through municipal budgets, these centres came from the idea of strong neighbourhoods

and the premise of casual gathering of the local population. Samoupravne Interesne Zajednice for Culture (SIZ – a self-managing community of interest) financed local, neighbourhood culture, while events at city level were sponsored by USIZ (associated self-managing community of interest) and the Municipal Cultural Foundation.

During this time, there was a sense of responsibility in artistic and creative education: in local primary schools, almost every school had its own musical choir or orchestra, a modelling workshop for technical education, a dance group, an art section, or a collaboration with local visual artists. Cultural centres were therefore a logical continuation in a different place. Students, senior citizens, and workers after their shift was over – were the target audiences for these centres from the very outset.

However, the original intent became blurred as early as the 1980s. It happened at the same time as the educational system was gradually, yet irreversibly abandoning the (“progressive”) systematic music, dance, and artistic training in primary schools.

After the University Olympics of 1987, the decadence of the system was becoming quite tangible in Zagreb. The chaos did suddenly gave birth to various cultural (and media) genres of the so-called youth scene, but the general purpose of cultural centres was still visible only in traces, as if barely programmed at all. And that, indeed, was the case.

With the war of the 1990s, the institutional activity of cultural centres was completely extinguished. Fortunately, the municipal covering of their overhead expenses was not suspended, even though programmes were not being supported at this time. Cultural centres, as an urban infrastructural element with visibly rusty and neglected functionality after twenty years of poor maintenance, survived the war period as an ad hoc site for the needs of the local community. Thus, one may say that, even during the war, cultural centres were able to adapt themselves to the actual situation and to live on as neighbourhood centres, even if they now had a completely different function to their original purpose of cultural production (in the strict sense of the term).

## Cultural Centres as a Strategic Asset?

In Croatia, (only) 44 cultural centres are in operation today, and they are not coordinated at a national level. Each centre is managed by its local community, and – in the current

generally pauperised conditions – defines its working conditions in a completely individual way.

In Zagreb, there are 13 cultural centres (including the so-called people's and worker's universities, which is a somewhat broader term), only a half of them operating in accordance with their primary purpose of being open for the local population (and with programmes that are either free or offered at a symbolic price).

It was only in 2000 that the municipal administration of Zagreb decided to evaluate, in detail, the work and programmes of all cultural centres financed by the Municipal Office for Culture in Zagreb. This attempt at “managing the infrastructure” by means of “softly forced cooperation” has remained the only historical achievement of modern cultural policy at the municipal level in Zagreb.

The review miserably failed owing to the manipulation of bureaucratic paperwork, but it showed the characteristic arrogance of the cultural centres' administrative bodies. Municipal finances assigned to culture in the institutional sectors had dual roles. Regularly assigned overhead expenses were used for salaries; while the programme budget was decided by public competition at city level. And so, while the salary and overhead expenses flourished, there was hardly any progress in terms of programme strategies. The programme quality does not matter as long as we carry on!

The hesitating municipal administration of Zagreb, on the other hand, guided by the “implicit” cultural policy, could never find the (political) will to change the mandate of cultural centres. In fact, the administration was not even interested in the problematic actualities of the centres' neglected architecture, and much less in the affect various district transformations had had. Since the 2000s, Zagreb's municipal bureaucracy has operated through official letters, public competitions, and a fluctuating number of employees, yet the deeper problems inherited from 1980s have simply not been solved.

The situation changed considerably with Croatia's entry into the EU. The EU's neoliberal agenda had no understanding of Croatia's (clientist) combinations of local practices in institutional culture. The cultural centres were good examples of “urban cultural infrastructure”, and so were strong candidates for subventions from the EU funds. Eventually, all cities of the EU member states had to elaborate a cultural strategy: cultural centres were again becoming a solid strategic asset. A powerful bureaucratic lever which

could also shift the interest of local cultural policy towards the peripheral neighbourhood problems. Why would that be good? Or, in what sense would that be bad?

## The Field Situation

Several cases of living culture observed “in the field”, when visiting Zagreb's cultural centres, reveal their problematic, spectral nature and the consequences of long years of neglect by the local policies. Generalisation is unfair, as each neighbourhood has its own circulation system, structure, and “needs” of its local population: the neighbourhood literally shapes and defines the character of its cultural centre, rather than vice versa. Therefore the specific bias of its audience for a particular artistic genre is a consequence of the given infrastructural situation rather than “strategic planning”.

Thus, CEKATE – Cultural Centre Trešnjevka – was founded in 1979 “to cater for the needs of workers and their families in terms of spending their leisure time”. The concentration of strong industries (factories such as Tesla, Končar, Gumara Čavić, and others) demanded an adequate cultural centre. For that which our local libertarians have often derided as the present-day “romanticisation of socialism,” implying an unrealistic comparison (in the public, the media, and analytical academic discourse) of the working rights and habits of workers in socialism vs. capitalism, the example of CEKATE functions like a prototype. Facts about serious and strategic cultural planning for industrial workers, such as was present in Zagreb and other Croatian cities and towns (Sisak Ironworks is the model case) before the 1990s, are bound to seem not only romanticist, but completely incredible to the young worker of today.

CEKATE was profiled as an exemplary modern urban cultural centre. This was facilitated by the dense population of Trešnjevka neighbourhood and its relative proximity to the city centre; as well as the careful planning and inclusively of the centre's programme, with universal social and human topics that went beyond the (imaginary) boundaries of the neighbourhood. In the socialist period, there was no “network of cultural centres” like today's KvARTura, which connects Zagreb's cultural centres across different neighbourhoods, but there was a network in Trešnjevka that connected five factories and five district sectors through programme coordinators.

Today, more than 150 thousand of Trešnjevka's inhabitants gravitate towards CEKATE. Despite its spatial limitations, programmes alternate in dense rhythm, owing to successful EU funding applications and a continuous influx of funding from the city which covers overhead expenses.

Cultural Centre Dubrava has also been relying on EU funding from the beginning of their availability in Zagreb during the 2000s, but nevertheless barely makes ends meet and have great difficulties in continuing their opulent programme. Since the early 1970s, when the "planned construction" of a large multifunctional centre in Dubrava was introduced with great pomp, the authorities had not managed to solve the dubious ownership of the land plot on which the monolithic building "sprouted up" in the 1980s. Owing to these circumstances, this disfunctional building has been swallowing the budget allocated to its senseless maintenance for three decades, and could not serve the users adequately although located in a densely populated neighbourhood, because the city was not its sole and rightful owner.

Today, Cultural Centre Dubrava is a massive organisation with a considerable number of employees (as many as 33), and a history of clientist and financially spurious business transactions under its former management. Nevertheless, its various cultural programmes (from language courses and exhibitions at the Gallery to its school of animation, which has brought it fame) are fully booked and there is not enough resources to accommodate all the local demo-rock bands and folklore groups.

Since the 1990s, the dynamics of the cultural centres that cannot meet the demands of increasing visitor numbers (Dubrava, Trešnjevka, or Novi Zagreb) reveal a fatal lack of coordination between the centres and local committees – coordination which was present in the (former) municipalities. For example the Cultural Centre Peščenica, and the impossibility of establishing meaningful communication with the local committees, which are institutionally rather neglected, makes it very difficult to operate in a district which has been ruined by the total de-industrialisation of Zagreb in the 2000s.

Paradoxically, the Cultural Centre Peščenica has left a considerable mark on artistic modernism in the city: the Gallery of Events during the 1980s, with its directors Branka Hlevnjak and Vedrana Kršinić, which systematically presented important local visual artists; as well as in its spacious halls/classrooms, which manifestly reflect the difference

between the status that artistic and cultural work enjoyed in 1955 (when the centre was founded) and today. Even though the general public largely knows of Cultural Centre Peščenica because of its theatre KNAP (Kazalište na Peščenici, meaning The Theatre in Peščenica), an ambitious programme of dramatic amateurism and experimental theatre, the centre's everyday activities nowadays mostly consist of language courses and art workshops for school-children and (to a lesser extent) for senior citizens. Similar to other cultural centres in Zagreb, the one in Peščenica lacks the finances to offer its programmes for free, so it asks for a (minimum) fee and fills the budget by subletting (in fact, sub-subletting!) its rooms, which are owned by the city. They have so far failed to attract the local Roma community, or perhaps to find the money to organise a programme for them at the centre. The centre does not apply for EU funding even though "they know they should". They are aware of the depressive outlook of their district, which was once the "industrial heart of the city" with more than 60 thousand employed workers, but has turned into a demoralised and pauperised wasteland. When looking at Peščenica from the large windows of its cultural centre, you hardly have the feeling of being in the midst of a flâneur's dream.

## From Popular Culture to Urban Chic

Generally speaking, the problem of cultural centres could be reduced to a basic line about the prevailing casual discourse of "cultural experts": the plausibility of everyday cultural activities for the common man in the irregular rhythm of neighbourhoods. What is so interesting then in this urban cultural category? If an analysis of the availability of cultural activities to certain (social, class) categories is not interesting – then what is?

With the new "concern about the programmatic variety" of cultural centres, the municipal administration does not care at all for this kind of classification of its users, even with a far-fetched premise that someone would actually be willing in the near future to undertake a detailed and targeted analysis. Of course, the programmes receiving funding from municipal administration of Zagreb are very well known. Richly financed programmes such as the Croatian Musical Youth, chamber and other municipal orchestras, and other cultural associations and institutions that are sponsored by the City, will be used by the municipal administration as an



alibi, a sort of replacement for the “strategic programming” of cultural centres. They will claim that this ensures “better availability” of the programmes, while completely disregarding the existing programmes of particular cultural centres.

Since there is no proper strategy that would solve the administrative anomalies or the managing and programmatic operability of the district centres according to the needs and proven affinities of their audiences, the City wants to intervene as it is used to, “from above”, in the same way as it has financially ensured their basic existence.

Cultural centres are often dismissed by the professional cultural elites as minor forms of “popular culture” or as “noble amateurism”, which shows an arrogant lack of understanding. The reason for this attitude lays in the fact that the employees of cultural centres enjoy secure employment, a privilege that has been long dead and buried by contemporary cultural practices and the swift changes in concepts, staff, and programmes. The cultural precariat is rightfully embittered at the impossibility of changing personnel and ensuring the general porosity of the system. What is problematic, however, is the way this just bitterness is expressed: as a call for “better” culture for the local community as determined by “contemporary” standards.

To conclude that the complex existing programmatic, systemic, and personnel baggage of cultural centres could be gradually solved by “better and more contemporary” programme coordinators, regardless of the current crowds flocking to these venues and the inherited rights of their users, would lay bare a dangerous degree of class divisions. Cultural centres are definitely not a form of urban chic, but could be remodelled by the municipal administration, if it made financial sense to do so. Whether this means repairing an old roof or building a new one – at least on the level of major strategic projections, it should all be reduced to the building foundations.

# Biographies

**Nina Bačun** (1981) works with product design, set design, visual communications, exhibition design and self initiated concepts. She is devoted to teamwork and interdisciplinary approach, and has been part of the Oaza collective since 2012. Through lectures, workshops and presentations she aims to contribute to the production and presentations of design in innovative ways, in Croatia and abroad. After finishing Design Study at The Faculty of Architecture of Zagreb, in 2001 she obtained an MA degree in Experience Design, with interdisciplinary studies at Konstfack University, College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Stockholm. Her works were included, published and awarded at numerous local and international exhibitions of design.

**Selma Banich** (1979) is a performance artist living and working in Zagreb. She is the author of numerous works conceived individually or in collaboration with other artists, groups and initiatives. She works in the field of contemporary dance, performance and action in public space, as well as with cinema and theatre. She is also engaged with informal education and research work. A co-founder and long-standing programme coordinator of eksцена – Experimental Free Scene, platform for education and research in performing arts. She is an author and performer of projects with the Zagreb based group OOUR. Artistic collaborator and performer of projects by the Rijeka based group Trafik, member of the Institute for Catastrophy and Chaos, performer in projects by Chicago based group Every house has a door. In reflecting and presenting her work, Banich always chooses ethics over aesthetics, empathy over utopia, art over politics and nature over culture, thus spanning a context in which she learns daily, creates and takes part in the organisation of work.

**Aleksandar Bede** (1986) studied architecture and urban planning/urbanism at the University of Novi Sad, Serbia. He is currently a PhD candidate in urbanism at the Università Iuav di Venezia, Italy. His research concerns the projects of urban and territorial modernisation from the age of Yugoslav socialism in the region of Vojvodina and the condition of these projects today in terms of local, regional and global peripherality. He collaborates with cultural, theoretical and political collectives such as New media center\_kuda.org and Grupa za konceptualnu politiku. Together with Dafne Berc and Luciano Basauri of Zagreb based organisation Analog he has published the book *Latency in the City: Voids in Novi Sad* (2012).

**Dafne Berc** (1970) studied architecture at the University of Zagreb and at the Berlage Institute (BI), Netherlands with a masters degree advanced design and urban planning 2000. Up until 2011 she was teaching at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb. Currently she is a PhD candidate at Escola Tecnica Superior d'Arquitectura de Barcelona. In 2007, together with Chilean architect Luciano Basauri she founded Analog, organisation for research and design in the expanded field of architecture and urban planning.

**Željka Blakšić a.k.a. Gita Blak** (1982) is a visual artist living and working in New York. Her interest lies in possibilities and peripheral areas of different media by merging visual and audio. She works across multiple disciplines; the constants in her practice are 16mm film, video, sculpture and performance. Recent exhibitions include Gallery Augusta, Helsinki; District Kunst- und Kulturförderung, Berlin; AIR Gallery, NY; Active Space, NY; Gallery of SESI, Sao Paulo, Brazil; The Kitchen, NY and The Khyber Centre for the Arts in Canada. She is a recipient of the A.I.R. Gallery Fellowship Program for emerging women artists, The District Kunst Award in Berlin 2013; New York Foundation for the Arts Residency 2012, Paula Rhodes Award 2010 in New York City and many others.

**Petja Dimitrova** (1972) is an artist born in Sofia and has been living in Vienna since 1993. Her artistic practice is situated between fine arts and political/participatory cultural work. She teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. She is a member of the "Network for Critical Border and Migration Regime Research". Until 2014, she was the artistic director of the Festival WIENWOCH. She is an associate editor (together with Bobadilla/Güres/Achola and Del Sordo) of "Sketches of Migration: Postcolonial Enmeshments, Antiracist Construction Work" and of "Regime: How Dominance Is Organised and Expression Formalised" (together with Egermann/Holert/Kastner/Schaffer). She is also a member of the Initiative 1st March – Transnational Migrant Strike Day.

**Katerina Duda** (1989) mastered Animated film and New Media at the Academy of Fine arts (2015), and she mastered Sociology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb (2014). In her work she combines social practice art, actions and interventions in public space, as well as essays in the form of an artist books and video. Her approach is always site-specific, meaning that it begins by thinking about the context, the space given and its users,

and adjusting the piece for its specific audience. Her recent research is focused on tourism and the transformation of urban environments and life in cities that it causes. She has participated in several group exhibitions, projects and exchange programmes. She lives and works in Zagreb.

**Nina Gojić** (1989) holds an MA in International Performance Research from the University of Amsterdam and the University of Warwick and an MA in Performance Dramaturgy at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb, University of Zagreb. She works as a freelance dramaturge, publishes essays in performance theory and is part of the editorial board of *Frakcija*, a journal of performing arts.

**Ivana Hanaček** (1981) is a curator, pedagogue and researcher. Since 2010, she has been a member of the curatorial collective BLOK. She co-curated four editions of the Urban-Festival (from 2010 to 2015). She is a regular contributor for the Croatian Radio Channel 3 and a member of the editorial board of the monthly magazine *Le Monde Diplomatique* (Croatian edition). She co-curated several larger group exhibitions in Croatia and abroad.

**Sanja Horvatinčić** (1986) is a PhD candidate at the Post-graduate Study of Humanist Sciences, Art History programme, at the University of Zadar, since 2011 works as a Research Assistant at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb. She is the executive editor of the journal *Život umjetnosti*, and a team member of the scientific project ARTNET led by dr. sc. Ljiljana Kolečnik. She is the author of several scientific papers, and has given a number of scientific and popular public lectures on memorial sculpture/architecture in Yugoslavia and Europe after World War II.

**Mario Kikaš** (1987) is a political activist and precarious cultural worker, born in Mostar. He is a member of the Organisation for the Workers' Initiative and Democratization where he acts as a editor-in-chief of the magazine *RAD*. As the author of theatre and literary reviews and comments, he collaborates on a permanent basis with the web portal *Kulturpunkt* and biweekly magazine *Zarez*. His essays have been published in the Croatian edition of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, web portals *Bilten* and *Vox-feminae*, as well as on the Third programme on Croatian radio. During 2014 and 2015 he was guest lecturer at the educational programme of the Center for Women's Studies and a collaborator on several projects

organised by [BLOK]. His academic papers were published in the magazines *Studia Ethnologica Croatica*, *Frakcija* and *Teorija koja hoda/Walking Theory*. His specific fields of focus are performing arts with a special emphasis on the treatment of labor in art.

**Davor Konjikušić** (1978) was born in Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He holds MA degree in photography from the Academy of Dramatic Art in Zagreb, where he also completed his BA studies in cinematography. His artistic work questions the relationship between public and private, the intimate and the socio-political. He has been interested in the role of the photographic medium in establishing the relations of power and control, as well as the use of photography as an instrument of repression. Lately his works focus on the topic of migration, exploring different artistic strategies that could be used to uncover the antagonisms of contemporary society, those emerging from the centre-periphery relation as well as those based on class relations. He seeks to affirm the field of art as a space of political intervention and participation.

**KURS** (Miloš Miletić i Mirjana Radovanović) was established in 2010 in Belgrade. The group uses the methods of cultural production, to comment on wider social problems, acting mainly through the production of murals, illustrations and wall newspapers. Its main goal is the production of educational and engaged content rendered in visual language. Although primarily linked to art as a way of expression and articulation, their activity aims to take part in wider political struggles and make alliances with leftist organisations from different social spheres. Their recent work includes the production of the mural *Fight, Knowledge, Equality* on The Students' Day (Students' day takes place on the 4th of April, in commemoration of the April Protests in Serbia in 1936), the mural *20 of October* on the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Belgrade from fascism, the mural *Factories to the Workers!* in the ITAS factory in the Croatian town of Ivanec. Since 2013 they have published wall newspapers and have collaborated with various authors to tackle current social topics from a progressive perspective.

**Nina Kurtela** (1981) works cross-disciplinary through research and creates her art between various disciplines including the visual and performing arts. Her work is therefore often multidisciplinary and site-specific, engaging specific



communities, questioning monetary values, or exploring the notions of exchange through which different social relations are established. She explores the ways in which different actions of the body and especially the specific social, cultural, and urban spheres determinate human behaviour, influence our experience, and affect us. Kurtela often uses situations from everyday life and places them into a different context in order to render them visible and expand their meaning. Over the past several years she has been actively exhibiting her work across Europe through solo exhibitions, group exhibitions, film festivals, screenings, theatre/dance/performance festivals and venues. She received several awards and scholarships for her work.

**Ana Kutleša** (1985) is a curator and researcher. Since 2009, she has been a member of the curatorial collective BLOK. She co-curated five editions of the UrbanFestival (from 2009 to 2015). She collaborates with several Croatian magazines, radio-shows and web-portals devoted to culture and art critique. As a guest teacher on the collegium Media and the City she collaborates with the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Zagreb.

**Branimira Lazarin** (1971) is a journalist from Zagreb. She collaborates with web portals such as *Forum* or *Bilten* publishing essays and comments on cultural policy, music and education. For the weekly magazine *Novosti* she covers the field of cultural on a permanent basis.

**Sonja Leboš** (1967) is an urban anthropologist, founder of the Association for Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Research (UIII), in which she has launched several projects of urban and cultural research, as well as platforms for investigating the cultures of remembrance and politics of memory, which she has been linking with the production and distribution of contemporary cultural, artistic, and scholarly practices. She has authored and co-authored a number of exhibitions (*City Ever Grayer*, Goethe Institut 2000; *The Haunted Architect*, Glyptothek 2012; *Urban Equipment*, HDD 2010, Gredelj 2013), as well as performative media installations (*Mnemosyne – Theatre of Remembrance*, MSU, 2010; *Cyber-cinematography*, Zagreb, Rijeka, Belgrade, Korčula, Split, 2007–2012). She has been working on her PhD dissertation at the University of Zadar, the working title is *The City on Film, Film in the City*.

**LIGNA** exists since 1997. The group consists of the media- and performance artists Ole Frahm, Michael Hueners and Torsten Michaelsen, who have worked at the Freies Sender Kombinat (FSK), a public non-profit radio station in Hamburg, since the early nineties. Bi-weekly they provide a program called Lignas Music Box, which asks the listeners to call in and play their favorite songs via the telephone. The common theme throughout LIGNA's works is that they regard their audience as a collective of producers. In a temporary association it can produce unforeseeable, uncontrollable effects that challenge the regulation of a space.

**Marko Marković** (1983) graduated with a degree in painting from the Art Academy in Split in 2007, and then from the Faculty of Pedagogy at the University of Zadar in 2009. His artistic practice is based on the use of different media: video, installation, ambient, performance and happening, whereby he often chooses the public space as his environment. His work is known for critical reflections of social relations. He is an art director of the international performance festival DOPUST – Days of Open Performance, which takes place in Split, as well as the front man of the performative punk/noise/electro band Ilija & Zrno Žita [Elijah and the Grain]. From 2012 to 2014 he worked as assistant at the Matthew Barney Studio in New York, and since 2015 he teaches performance and public space intervention at the Institute for Contemporary Art IZK of the Faculty of Architecture in Graz, University of Technology. His work has been presented at numerous exhibitions, festivals and public programs. Since 2015 lives and works in Vienna.

**Mila Pavičević** (1988) holds an MA in Performance dramaturgy from the Academy of Dramatic Art in Zagreb. As a dramaturge she has worked both in institutional theatres in Zagreb and on the freelance scene. She is a member of the Centre of Drama Art and a part of the editorial board for the performing arts magazine, *Frakcija*. Her primary field of interest is dance dramaturgy and materialist philosophy. She collaborates with many choreographers in Croatia and in Berlin including: Irma Omerzo (HR), Zrinka Užbinec (HR), Bruno Isaković (HR), Sergiu Matisa (RO/DE), Helenu Botto (DE), Selma Banich (HR), Iva Nerina Sibila (HR).

**Goran Sergej Pristaš** (1967) is a dramaturge, a co-founder and member of BADco., the performing arts collective. He is an associate Professor at the Academy of Dramatic Arts,

University of Zagreb. He was the program coordinator at the Centre for Drama Art (CDU) from 1995 till 2007; the first editor-in-chief (1996–2007) of *Frakcija*, a magazine for the performing arts. Together with Bojana Cvejić, he co-edited *Parallel Slalom. A Lexicon Of Non-aligned Poetics* Tkh Beograd / CDU Zagreb, 2013, and with Tomislav Medak he co-edited *Time and (In)Completion: Images And Performances Of Time In Late Capitalism*, BADco. Zagreb 2014. He was one of the initiators of the project Zagreb – Cultural Kapital of Europe 3000. With his projects and collaborations (BADco., *Frakcija*) he has participated at Venice Biennale 2011, Documenta 12, ARCO and numerous festivals and conferences.

**Isa Rosenberger** (1969) uses video works, installations and projects in public space to examine radical political changes and their social and economic consequences. By juxtaposing subjective views and everyday biographies with canonised representations of history, Rosenberger examines the construction of reality and the power of images related to it, seeking to allow established stories to be reflected upon anew. Rosenberger studied at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and at the Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht. Her works have been exhibited at numerous group and solo exhibitions in Austria and internationally. She is based in Vienna.

**Stefan Treskanica** (1989) is a historian from Zagreb. As guest editor he collaborates with the student magazines *Pro tempore* and *Čemu*. His texts and essays are published in biweekly magazine *Zarez* and magazine *RAD*. He has taken part in the work of ISHA (International Students of History Association) and worked with the network Media and Memoria in South-Eastern Europe. His interests are social history and the theory of history. Together with [BLOK] and Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung for South East Europe he conceived *Cartography of Resistance*, an urban seminar on the topic of the Resistance Movement in Zagreb from 1941 to 1945 on the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Zagreb from fascism.

**Zrinka Užbinec** (1981) is a dancer and performer with interest in choreography. She is a member of performance collective BADco. and was until 2013, one of the coordinators of Experimental Free Scene (ekscena), an independent organisation established to promote contemporary dance and other forms of performing arts. She was educated at the School for Contemporary Dance “Ana Maletić” and has participated

in many dance workshops in Croatia and abroad. Her work experience includes collaborations with authors and groups such as: Oliver Frljić, Llinkt!, Marmot / Irma Omerzo, OOUR, Rajko Pavlič, Matija Ferlin, and Aleksandra Janeva Imfeld. She has coauthored several dance projects. Often giving classes in contemporary dance, she also holds workshops with other BADco. members in Croatia and abroad. She holds a degree from the Faculty of Economics, University of Zagreb.

**Ičo Vidmar** (1961) is sociologist of culture, independent music journalist, translator, lecturer, columnist and radio host. He has been working as a music critic, in radio and print, for most of the main Slovene media. He taught the sociology of culture and sociology of popular music at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, and was writer of more scholarly essays on contemporary culture for various academic publications. From 1990 onwards he was a host of a regular radio show on Radio Študent, Ljubljana, dedicated to jazz, blues, improvised music, African music and music of African diaspora. He is a member of IASPM. In 2010 he was a co-founder of the internet music magazine *Nova Muska*. He holds a PhD from the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, thesis title: “Independent musical formation and the right to the city: the case of new downtown music in Lower Manhattan”.

**Nikola Vukobratović** (1985) is a journalist, editor and activist, he works for the Croatian edition of *Le Monde Diplomatique* and regional socialist Internet portal *Bilten*. His interests include critique of post-socialist transition and the history of the workers’ movement. He lives and works in Zagreb.

**Vesna Vuković** (1975) is a curator and researcher in the field of socially engaged art, a member of the curatorial collective [BLOK] and a freelance interpreter. From 2007 to 2011 she was a guest lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb, and then from 2012 to 2013 at the Art Academy in Split. She publishes reviews, essays and comments in periodicals in Croatia and abroad, as well as on the Third programme of Croatian radio, where she is one of the editors of the show Reality of Space. She edited several publications in the field of contemporary art.

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# BLOK

[BLOK] is a curatorial collective which operates at the intersection of art, urban research and political activism. Our projects are designed and realised as platforms for collective work of artists, curators, researchers, political activists and anyone interested in the politics of space, production of commons, democratisation of culture and reflection of artistic practices from the perspective of their social and production conditions.

Operating continuously since 2001 [BLOK] has designed and produced projects in public space, lectures, exhibitions, long-term research projects, publications, and has also taken part in public debate on the neoliberal transformation of public space and institutions, as well as the struggle for their democratisation.

Since 2016, the collective has been running BAZA (eng. base), a venue for the production of contemporary art, education and activism.

## DONORS

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*Although Back to the Square! is a book that comes to us as the final product of the 13th Urban Festival, it is everything but the mere documentation of the finished process, put between the covers and laid aside on the bookshelf. Instead, it is an opening, showing the trajectory for the future and proving page after page that to engage with the society one has to not only start from working in public, but stay with the public, in public space. In the privatized post-socialist discourse, holding in hands a proof of concept that strategies of going out to the square can work, seems a little, but means a lot.*

— Dubravka Sekulić

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