

TKO SAM JA KOJI GLEDAM? FOTOGRAFIJA DEVEDESETIH U HRVATSKOJ

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VICULIN

WHO AM I WHO'S WATCHING? CROATIAN PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE 1990S

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SAŽETAK: Tekst se bavi fotografijom devedesetih godina u hrvatskoj umjetnosti. Polazi od teze da je u Hrvatskoj fotografija tek u devedesetima dosegla poziciju punopravnog umjetničkog medija. Specifičnost vremena i medija proučava na radovima koje smatra referentnim za razumijevanje podjednako nove uloge fotografije, kao i transformirajućih događanja Hrvatske devedesetih. Izuzimajuću ratnu fotografiju u doslovnom smislu, autorica predstavlja radove koji se ipak vrlo eksplicitno referiraju na složena gibanja dramatičnog desetljeća. Tako odabrane fotografije Mia Vesovića, Antuna Maračića, Ivana Faktora, Ivana Posavca, Petra Dabca, Borisa Cvjetanovića, Darka Bavoljaka, Sandra Đukića, Josipa Klarice i Željka Jermana različitim oblikovnim principima generiraju složenu sliku desetljeća.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: umjetnost, fotografija, Hrvatska, devedesete, ratna fotografija, vrijeme, virtualitet, Mio Vesović, Antun Maračić, Ivan Faktor, Ivan Posavac, Petar Dabac, Boris Cvjetanović, Darko Bavoljak, Sandro Đukić, Josip Klarica, Željko Jerman

Devedeset i prve Mio Vesović iz taksija kojim ulazi u New York okida sekvenciju fotografija. Na povećane fotografije Zvonko Maković upisuje tekst koji ritmizira ulazak *intrudera* u multidimenzionalno tijelo Grada: „(...) Evo nas, dakle, tu smo. Pomaci se dešavaju samo vani, a vani netko sabire dojmove koje ću prisvojiti (snimak 21). (...) Prizori su bili bezbrižna proizvodnja. Netko ih je pomicao na nevidljivoj ekranu i taj netko bio mi je nedokučiv (snimak 24) (...)“.

MIO VESOVIĆ, NEW YORK, 1991.

MIO VESOVIĆ, NEW YORK, 1991.

In 1991, Vesović shot a series of photographs from the taxi that was bringing him to New York City. Zvonko Maković enlarged those photographs and added a text that rhythmicized the entry of an “intruder” into the multi-dimensional body of the City: “(...) We’ve arrived, so we’re here. Shifts occur only out there, and there is someone outside collecting the impressions that I’m going to appropriate (shot 21). (...) The scenes were carelessly arbitrary. Someone was playing them on an invisible screen and that someone was inaccessible to me (shot 24) (...)” That time and place, together with their protagonists, symbolically marked the entry into the 1990s, an era that would assert photography as a favourite form of art in the new millennium. Now you may say: Well, that happened back in the 1970s! In fact, the process itself started even earlier, but it was prolonged and only in the late 1990s managed to achieve a substantial shift in people’s consciousness. Of course, such a change could not occur in a moment, and it would not be completed within a limited amount of time, but the point of powerful symbolic charge, such as the one that we’ve just mentioned, clearly set the direction for and defined the nature of the oncoming shift. Indeed, it was throughout the 1990s that photography was taking its position as an important and special phenomenon in contemporary art,

Vrijeme, mjesto i akteri simbolično obilježavaju ulazak u devedesete, vrijeme koje će potvrditi fotografiju kao miljenicu arta novog milenija. Reći ćete, pa to se dogodilo još sedamdesetih. Proces je počeo i prije sedamdesetih, samo je bio dugotrajan i tek je krajem devedesetih proizveden ozbiljan pomak u svijesti ljudi. Naravno, niti se promjena stanja može dogoditi u jednoj točki niti će se dovršiti u ograničenom vremenskom roku, no točka snažnog simboličnog naboja kao što je ova koju smo upravo naveli jasno upućuje na pravac i vrstu promjene koja je u tijeku. Zaista, još tijekom cijelih devedesetih trajalo je pozicioniranje fotografije kao važne, osebujne, ne samo ravnopravne, nego često i dominantne pojavnosti suvremene umjetnosti. To je jedno od onih mjesta gdje se dogodila velika promjena u svijesti ljudi i danas je gotovo nemoguće sjetiti se da je prije petnaestak godina još uvijek bilo prisutno problematiziranje pozicije fotografije u korpusu autentičnog umjetničkog izraza.

Budući da se upuštam u nesagledivo polje, morat ću potražiti točke preokreta te principom karakterističnih mjesta ucrtati mrežu složenih gibanja dramatičnog desetljeća. Devedesete je u Hrvatskoj obilježio rat! I kada bismo išli po omjerima kvalitete i kvantitete, sigurno bi prevladala ratna fotografija, no ona je priča za sebe. Ostat ćemo na refleksima rata koji obilježavaju cijele devedesete.

not only equal to others, but often dominant as well. It is one of those moments in which a huge change occurred in people’s minds, and today it is almost impossible to imagine that some fifteen years ago someone could still question the position of photography within the body of authentic artistic expression. Since I am venturing into a field that is not easily overviewed, I will have to look for the turning points and map the complex movements of that dramatic decade by applying the principle of characteristic places. It was a decade of war in Croatia! And if we proceeded by estimating the proportions of quality and quantity, war photography would most certainly prevail, but that is a story in itself. We will remain with the reflections of war that marked the 1990s as a whole.

Maračić’s photograph called **0A**, shot at Nova Gradiška on 13 December 1991 with the naive dramatic quality of a blurred zero shot, for which he was arrested by the military police,¹ opened up the issue of a very special shift in meaning, which only photography can show directly. Perhaps it was precisely that circumstance which definitely introduced photography, here and then, into the sphere of art. Torn between the veracity of its referent and the strikingly multi-layered emotional and intellectual story that it alone could transmit, photography became an

ANTUN MARAČIĆ,
0A - NO GRAD DEC 16 1991.

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Maračićeva fotografija **OA**, zabilježena u Novoj Gradiški 13. prosinca 1991., naivnom dramatičnošću zamućenog nultog snimka, zbog kojega su ga vojni policajci priveli,¹ otvara temu sasvim posebnog značenjskog pomaka, onoga koji samo fotografija može neposredno pokazati. Možda je to baš ono što će fotografiju, ovdje i tada, definitivno uvesti u sferu umjetničkoga. Raspeta između istinitosti svog referenta i začudno slojevite emocionalno-intelektualne pripovijesti koju samo ona može prenijeti, fotografija postaje nezamjenjiv medij u brutalnoj direktnosti ratnoga vremena. Autor **OA**, Antun Maračić, tada je u svom popratnom tekstu raspon između bolno surovog snimljenog prizora i ljepote podivljialoga imaginarnog opisao riječima: „(...) to je subrealizam kao resurs života. To je život koji pobjeđuje smrt!² I zaista, ono što postavljam kao ključno pitanje u ovom tekstu odnosi se upravo na to nepodudaranje prikaza i prikazanog, na trenutke i razloge kada

razorna istinitost prizora postaje sasvim irelevantna, kada fikcija definira imaginarno kao jedino moguće mjesto osobne opstojnosti u nedirnutim otiscima zastrašujuće zbilje.

Na koji način besmislenost rata potiče intenzitet života? Na koji način fotografije tih najmračnijih vremena nose neospornu, svima vidljivu afirmaciju onoga što nam je najvrednije na svijetu? Na spomenutoj Maračićevoj fotografiji s lijeve su strane vidljivi vojni policajci koji će ga privesti zbog snimanja na posve ispražnjenoj ulici. Obavijeni mlječnom svjetlošću prvoga snimka oni trče kroz drvored ulicom što se gubi u daljini. Snovito! Kao da je blagost fotografije izbrisala okrutnost trenutka. Ili sam trenutak i nije bio grub, nego samo besmislen, iskorijenjen iz vremena i prostora? Nestvaran? Fiktivan zbog nulte pozicije na filmu?

Na seriji fotografija snimljenoj tri dana poslije, 16. prosinca 1991., nema gotovo nikoga, samo osmrtnice. Na jednoj vidimo lik koji

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ANTUN MARAČIĆ,
OA - NO GRAD DEC 13 1991.

ANTUN MARAČIĆ,
OA - NO GRAD DEC 13 1991

indispensable medium in the brutal directness of the war.

Antun Maračić, the author of **OA**, described the span between the painfully crude scene that he shot and the beauty of the imaginary gone wild in a text that accompanied his work: "...it is subrealism as a resource of life. It is life that conquers death!"² Indeed, what I would like to raise as the crucial issue in this text is precisely the discrepancy between representation and the represented, the moments and reasons in which the devastating veracity of the scene becomes completely irrelevant, where fiction defines the imaginary as the sole place of personal survival in the untouched imprints of the frightening reality.

In what way does the senselessness of war enhance the intensity of life? How do photographs from those darkest times carry the unquestionable and universally obvious affirmation of what we

value most in the entire world? Maračić's photo shows a few military policemen to the left, those that would arrest him for taking photographs in a street that was left completely empty. Wrapped in the milky light of the first shot, they run among the trees on a street that disappears in the distance. How dreamy! As if the mildness of photography had erased the cruelty of the moment. OR perhaps the moment itself was not even cruel, but merely senseless, eradicated from time and space? Unreal? Fictitious because of its zero position on the film tape?

In a series of photographs shot three days later, on 16 December 1991, there is almost no one, only obituaries. One of the photos shows a person going away, between the symbolic figure of a slanting clock and an advertising pole, which now serves to announce deaths. The slanted street clock, its iron legs seriously

odmiče između simbolične figure nakrivljene ure i oglasnog stupa na kojem se sada oglašavaju umrli. Nakrivljena ulična ura čije su željezne noge ozbiljno uzdrmane preuzela je ulogu glavnog aktera. Ona je biće! Ona je ranjeno tužno biće nakrivljene glave. Živimo u svijetu agresivnih pojedinaca! Prisutnost ure potencira prazninu i muk. Ura je ono što zamukne kad život stane. Ona upućuje na onu jednu jedinu dimenziju u kojoj se može odviti život. Vrijeme je to koje otvara prostor mogućnosti. A ovdje je vrijeme zaustavljeno, zaustavljena je mogućnost!

Fotografija sama preuzima ulogu onoga tko postoji u vremenu, tko se samosagledava i time otvara polje razvoja. Pred nama je fotografija, sekvencija, prizori u nizu. Smislenost dodira Maračićeva imaginarnog, sekvencionirane strukture fotografskog niza i strašne neukrotivosti ratne zbilje na neki sasvim neobičan način proizvodi mir i dobru misao. Pitam se kako.

Ivan Faktor je 1994. nagrađen godišnjom nagradom SCCA za niz od 9 fotografija nastalih te iste zime 1991. godine: „Bilo je to najtužnije vrijeme grada, nakon pada Vukovara (kada se vjerovalo da je Osijek sljedeći)“,³ kaže Faktor. On hoda ulicama grada snimajući mokre pločnike. Tako provodi dane. Pogled kroz tražilo kamere njegov je način da preživi, da ne poludi od besmislenosti ubojite agresije koja ga okružuje. Snimljeni će materijal potresena svijest spremno prihvatiti kao restrukturiranu realnost koja lako prekriva nepojmljivi besmisao rata. Naime, Ivan Faktor cijeli svoj umjetnički rad zasniva na tom usporednom realitetu filma i svakodnevice gdje film preuzima vodeću ulogu! Film je stvarniji od stvarnosti! Budući da ima shvatljivu strukturu, fiktionalnu mogućnost razvoja i stabilno je usidren u imaginarno, paralelni filmski realitet postaje spasonosni štit pred nadirućim užasom rata. Na fotografijama koje su snimljene s ekrana televizora, što je standardni faktorovski marš kroz medije

IVAN FAKTOR,
EINE STADT SUCHT EINEN MORDER 1931.-1991.,
1994.



IVAN FAKTOR,
EINE STADT SUCHT EINEN MORDER 1931.-1991.,
1994

IVAN FAKTOR,
EINE STADT SUCHT EINEN MORDER 1931.-1991.,
1994.



IVAN FAKTOR,
EINE STADT SUCHT EINEN MORDER 1931.-1991.,
1994

shattered, has become the main character! It is a living being! A wounded, sad being with its head slanting. We live in a world filled with aggressive individuals! Its presence enhances the void and the silence. The clock is what falls silent when life stops. It indicates that single dimension in which life can go on. Time is what opens up the space of possibilities. And here that time has been stopped, the possibility has been stopped!

Photography itself has adopted the role of someone who exists in time, reflecting upon himself and thus opening up the field of progress. What we have in front of our eyes is a photograph, a sequence, scenes lined up in a row. The sense of touch in Maračić's imaginary, in the sequenced structure of his photographic series and the impossibility of taming the war situation, produces peace and good thoughts in quite a peculiar way. I wonder how.

In 1994, Ivan Faktor received the annual award of SCCA for a series of nine photographs made in the same winter of 1991: "Those were the saddest times for the city, it was after the fall of Vukovar (when we believed that Osijek was next)," as Faktor said.³ He was walking through the city, photographing the wet pavement. He was passing his days that way. Looking through the camera viewer was his way of survival, of staying sane in the senselessness of lethal aggression that surrounded him. His shattered mind was readily accepting the recorded material as a restructured reality that easily covered the unthinkable senselessness of war. Ivan Faktor, namely, based his whole artistic opus on that parallel reality of film and everyday life, in which film took over the leading role! Film had become more real than the reality itself! Owing to its comprehensible structure and the fictional possibility of progress, the fact that it was firmly

kao oblikovni princip, on utiskuje titlove na njemačkom s riječima monologa ubojice iz Langova filma *M: Idem ulicom i osjećam da me netko prati. Ali to sam ja sam...* Film se trebao zvati *Mörder unter uns* – Ubojica je među nama! Utiskujući titlove na njemačkom Faktor uspostavlja alternativnu stvarnost, filmsku realnost fikcije. No ta je drugostupanjska realnost ponovno izmaknuta, jer titlovi na njemačkom jeziku gotovo ne postoje na filmu,⁴ oni upućuju na nepostojeće, oni ponovno otvaraju propadalište besmisla jednako strašno kao i tužbalica nemoći dječoubojice iz Langova filma.

„Uključujem svoju ratnu VHS Panasonic desetku. Isključujem zvuk filma. Snimam iz ruke, gledam i... oslušujem. Već sam tada tvrdio da je naš rat više audio, nego video. Bilo je važno slušati: koji kalibar, s koje strane, udaljenost...“, tako Faktor opisuje nastanak svojeg rada *Blade Runner*.⁵ Fotografirati rat kao gluhu sliku filma

na ekranu televizora? Faktor stvarnost promatra kroz kameru. Na ekranu se vidi prekriveni simbol isključenog zvuka. Ratna VHS Panasonic desetka bilježi detonacije i tišine među njima, no Faktor aktom fotografiranja ponovno anulira zvuk ostavljajući filmičnost prizora. On svojim radom bilježi multidimenzionalnost zbilje koja svoje različite aspekte poput vizualiteta ili zvuka ne rasprostire na istovjetan način. Zato tišina isključenog zvuka na televizoru prapreferenta dopire do mene kroz gluhoću fotografije kao trećeg nivoa ostvarivanja stvarnosti. Ili četvrtog, tko će ga znati? Rat je ipak neosporan, dakle: rat, *Blade Runner*, film, televizor, kamera, Faktor, titl, fotografija. Zvuk rata ulazi u registar umjetničkog rada dok je u polju vizualnosti samo televizor i *Blade Runner*. O tome doznajemo guleći slojeve nastanka fotografija. U nivou filma je laganim titranjem kamere u snimljenom materijalu prisutan onaj koji gleda kroz kameru. On je taj koji postoji u realitetu rata.

IVAN FAKTOR,
RIDLEY SCOTT, *BLADE RUNNER* (1982.),
1991.-1993.



IVAN FAKTOR,
RIDLEY SCOTT, *BLADE RUNNER* (1982.),
1991.-1993.

anchored in the imaginary, the parallel reality of film had become the protective shield against the advancing horrors of war. On photographs that were shot from the TV screen, which was a standard way for Factor of marching through the media as an artistic principle, he imprinted subtitles in German with words from the killer's monologue from Lang's *M: I am walking through the streets and I feel someone is following me. But it is myself...* The film was to be called *Mörder unter uns* – The killer is one of us! By inserting German subtitles, Faktor established an alternative reality, a cinematic reality of fiction. And yet, that second-degree reality was displaced again, since there were almost no German titles on film at the time.⁴ Thus, they indicated the non-existent, reopening the abyss of senselessness equally terribly as the child killer's lamentation of powerlessness in Lang's film. "I am turning on my wartime Panasonic VHS 10. I am turning off

the sound. I am shooting free-hand, watching and... listening. At that time I was already sure that our war was audio rather than video. It was important to listen: which calibre, from which direction, the distance..." – thus Faktor described the making of his *Blade Runner*.⁵ Photographing the war as a mute image of a film playing on the TV screen? Faktor observed the reality through the camera. The symbol of sound turned off could be seen on the screen. The wartime Panasonic VHS 10 was recording detonations and silences between them, yet Faktor re-eliminated the sound in his photographic act, leaving only the cinematic nature of the scene. In his work, he documented the multi-dimensionality of the reality, which did not distribute its various aspects, such as the visual or the sound, in an equal way. That is why the silence of the arch-referential television set, with its sound turned off, reaches me through the deafness of photography as

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Ali u vizualitetu fotografije dominira priča i *Blade Runnera*, priča o fotografijama koje simuliraju sjećanja na događaje koji se nisu dogodili. A fotografija sve to sadrži i vrlo glasno pita: Što je stvarno? Ivan Posavec tek nam je nedavno pokazao nekoliko briljantnih serija tvrdo dokumentarnih ratnih fotografija. Ali Posavčeva dokumentarnost nadilazi samu sebe. Godina 1991., trenutak opraštanja roditelja s mladima koji u tom trenutku početka rata potpuno besmisleno nose mrsku uniformu JNA. Potpuna strava nemoći i loše slutnje. Kako se zagrliti? Roditelji koji putuju s jednog kraja Jugoslavije na drugi ne bi li što? Zadnji put ih zagrliti? Dogovorili bijeg? Odveli ih kući? Sve je nemoguće. I ti roditeljski poljupci jednako su strašni kao i opasači i *oprtači* na plećima tih mladih muškaraca. Posavčev pogled prodire kroz sve slojeve.

Naše su nemoći pred njegovim objektivom toliko razotkrivene da se zaista neočekivano pretvaraju u svoju suprotnost. Ogoljeni do kraja sa svim svojim slabostima i nemoćnim željama mi postajemo neucjenjivi!

Posavčeva je fotografija u registru zabilježene, dokumentirane stvarnosti koja se odvija tu pred našim očima naizgled vrlo tradicionalna. No, kao i on osobno, njegova se radosna staloženost i tradicionalistička prozirnost brzo pokazuje kao ne baš toliko snažno dokumentarna. Ništa se nije dogodilo, ništa nije ni prepravljeno ni ispušteno. Ali je slijedom vlastite bezuvjetne vjerodostojnosti situacija promijenila polaritet. Pozitiv je postao negativ, stvarnost je postala fikcija. Po tko zna koji put fikcija je postala istinitija od realiteta.

IVAN POSAVEC, NA KRAJU PUTA, 1991.

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IVAN POSAVEC, AT THE END OF THE ROAD, 1991

the third level on which the reality has been accomplished. Or the fourth one, who knows? War is undeniable, so the sequence runs as follows: war, *Blade Runner*, film, TV set, camera, Faktor, subtitle, photograph. The sound of war enters the register of artwork while the visual field contains only the TV set and *Blade Runner*. We can know it by peeling off the layers in which the photograph was made. On the level of film, the person watching through the camera is present in its slight shaking. He is the one existing in the reality of war. But the visual aspect of photography is dominated by the story of *Blade Runner*, a story about photographs that simulate memories of events that never happened. And the photograph contains all that, and asks at the top of its voice: What is real?

It was only recently that Ivan Posavec showed us several brilliant series of hard-core documentary war photographs. But the

documentary aspect surpasses itself. The year of 1991 was the time when parents had to part with their young sons, who were wearing the hateful uniform of Yugoslav People's Army when the war broke out. The utter horror of helplessness and premonition. How to hug each other? The parents travelling to the other end of Yugoslavia to do what? Hug their children for the last time? Arrange an escape? Take them home? Everything was impossible. And those parental kisses seem equally terrible as the belts and slings on the bodies of those young men. Posavec's gaze has penetrated all those layers. Our moments of helplessness is so completely bared before his lens that they truly unexpectedly turn into their opposite. Bared to the bone, with all our weaknesses and impotent yearnings, we become resistant to all sorts of blackmail!

In the register of documented reality that happens here, before our

Mladići skaču obučeni u uniforme, sada hrvatske vojske. Oni su *hommage* Robertu Capi, oni su bića iz novoga svijeta. Posavčevi snimci imaju produženo ili čak trajno djelovanje. Postavljeni su tako da snagom iskrenog, razotkrivenog, krvavog i nepojmljivo običnog iritiraju najosjetljivija mjesta svijesti. Ta se mjesta vezuju u mreže trajnih podražaja.

Pamtit ćemo Posavčeve podražaje, a ne stvarna lica ljudi – jer oni su odabrani da budu zapamćeni. Lagano iritantni, često mame osmijeh, demistificiraju, razbijaju strah i ubrzavaju puls. Ironična slika rasturene *Budućnosti* poslužila je Darku Bavljaku kao slojevit i sugestivan ikonički oblik. Osim formalne zanimljivosti jednoga znaka potrošena atmosferskim i ratnim eksponiranjima te njegove ironične izbušenosti, razbijenosti, izgrizenosti, otopljenosti

i razorenosti na svim materijalnim i značenjskim oblicima, priča je zanimljiva i na razini same riječi. Vrijeme u kojem se mnogo toga zvalo *Budućnost*, mnogo neprimjerenog sadržaja kitilo se tim u našem vremenu krajnje problematičnim terminom. Danas gotovo da i s futurorom kao glagolskim vremenom imamo problema. Kada kažem *učinit ću to* i ili *tamo ću otići* osjećam se nelagodno, kao da se neprimjerenom ponašam, kao da izgovaram nešto što pristojan svijet ne govori. Za nas danas, *budućnost* je nešto čemu prilazimo u rukavicama. Ne uzimamo je zdravo za gotovo! Naše su perspektive drugačije, naše su *budućnosti* drugačije. A one socijalističke *Budućnosti* koje obilježavaju Bavljakovi znakovi definitivno se bojimo. Tako je razoreni natpis ne samo simbol besmislenog razaranja, nego je Bavljakov odabir lingvističkog

DARKO BAVOLJAK, *BUDUĆNOST*, 1992.

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DARKO BAVOLJAK, *FUTURE*, 1992

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eyes, Posavec's photographs seem rather traditional. But as in his person, the cheerful composure and traditionalist transparency soon turn out to be something else than documentary. Nothing has happened, nothing has been rewritten or left out. However, owing to its own unconditional veracity, the situation has changed its polarity. Positive has become negative, and the reality has turned into fiction. Like so many times before, fiction has become truer than the reality.

Young men jump about dressed in uniforms, now those of the Croatian Army. They are a sort of homage to Roberto Capa, beings from the new world. Posavec's shots have a prolonged or even permanent effect. They have been set up so as to irritate the most sensitive segments of the mind with their power to be genuine, revealing, bloody, and unthinkable ordinary. Those

segments then connect into networks of permanent stimuli. We will remember Posavec's stimuli rather than the real people's faces – since they were chosen to be remembered. Slightly irritating, they often make us smile, they demystify and dispel our fears, and accelerate our pulse.

The ironic image of a devastated *Future* features in Darko Bavljak's work as a complex and suggestive iconic form. Besides the formal appeal of a symbol that has been worn out in atmospheric and wartime use, as well as its ironic erosion, fragmentation, jaggedness, dissolution, and devastation on all levels of material and meaning, the story is also interesting on the level of the word itself. In those times, in which many things were called *Future*, lots of inadequate issues were adorned with that utterly problematic term. Today we almost have problems

znaka svojim ikoničkim potencijalom u fotografiju unio cijelu paradigmu rastočenog vremena koje je imalo predviđenu budućnost. Taj agresivni, ukazom nametnut optimizam bitan je sadržaj tih fotografija. One se ne referiraju samo na razaranje ili na cinični pogled na budućnost, one se referiraju i na vrijeme kada je budućnost morala postojati. I kada je imala prepoznatljiv već zadani oblik.

Boris Cvjetanović tako snima briljantnu seriju fotografija *Radnici* koja na licima ljudi bilježi isti kontekst zaboravljene budućnosti. Onaj koji gleda i čiji pogled fotografija bilježi smješten je na

suosjećajnoj, ali ne i participatornoj poziciji. Seriju radnika Cvjetanović snima tijekom osamdesetih i devedesetih te ona zaista sažima i na sadržajnoj i na formalnoj razini oblikovne principe dvaju desetljeća kao i njihovo pretapanje. Angažirana dokumentarnost zabilježenih prizora i događaja u osamdesetima natopljena je dirljivom iskrenošću. Istinom? U svakom slučaju mi im vjerujemo! U tim je prizorima toliko stvarnoga života da se čine kao da bi nas potopili i preuzeli kad bismo im se dovoljno približili. U devedesetima moja je, ili bolje rečeno Cvjetanovićeva pozicija promatrača naglašena. Nema više neutralne dokumentarnosti.

BORIS CVJETANOVIĆ, IZ SERIJE *RADNICI*

I



BORIS CVJETANOVIĆ, FROM THE *WORKERS* SERIES

with the future tense. When I say *I will do it* or *I will go there*, I feel embarrassed, as if behaving improperly, as if uttering something that decent people would never say. For us today, future is something that we treat with velvet gloves. We do not take it for granted!

Our perspectives are different, and our futures are different. And as for those socialist *Futures*, indicated by Bavoľjak's signs, we definitely fear them. Thus the damaged inscription is not only a symbol of senseless devastation; Bavoľjak's choice of this linguistic sign, with its iconic potential, has introduced a whole paradigm

of corroded time that had its predicted future. That aggressive optimism, imposed by an order, is an essential element of these photographs. They do not refer only to devastation or to a cynical view on the future, but also to the times when future had to exist. And when it had a recognizable, prescribed form.

Boris Cvjetanović has shot a brilliant series of photographs called *Workers*, which document the same context of a forgotten future on people's faces. The one who is watching and whose gaze is documented on a photograph has a position that is emphatic, yet not participatory. Cvjetanović shot his series of photographs

Slastičarke su promatrane. Na njih je položen naš pogled i one to znaju. Mi promatramo kroz oko fotografa. Sada su pozicija i narav vizure determinirani. Perspektiva je osviještena kao ključni sadržaj i ne može se natrag u nevinost *dokumentarizma*.

Petar Dabac kaže da kada je počeo rat ili kada se on početkom devedesetih tek slutio, on osjeća potrebu da samo bilježi sve oko sebe, ono što vidi i ono što se događa. Takozvanu *idiot* kameru Dabac počinje upotrebljavati već krajem osamdesetih, no ona je u devedesetima osvojila sav njegov fotografski prostor. Ne snima više ničim drugim! Što je tu ključno osim brzine reagiranja i

stalne prisutnosti u džepu fotografa? Zašto bi Dabčevo snimanje *idiotom* bilo nešto što je značajno za fotografiju devedesetih? Koja je to primarna vrijednost, koji je to bazični koncept kojem se on vraća odabirući tip kamere koji uskraćuje fino podešavanje. *Idiot* je brutalno direktan i zapravo nije sličan našem načinu viđenja. Budući da je *idiot*, ne može izdvojiti važno od nevažnoga. Zato svim stvarima daje podjednaki tretman. Teži im pružiti jednaku količinu svjetla i jednaku oštrinu. Upotreba takve kamere vraća nas bazičnom karakteru fotografske slike kao mehaničkog otiska. Ističe njezin akcidentalni karakter. Potencira ono što je Annie Le

PETAR DABAC, *LIEBER PERO*,
SEGMENT FOTOGRAFSKOG DNEVNIKA, 1990.-1995.



PETAR DABAC, *LIEBER PERO*,
SEGMENT FROM A PHOTO DIARY, 1990-1995

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with workers during the 1980s and 1990s, so it comprises, on the level of both content and form, the artistic principles of the two decades, including their overlapping. The engaged, documentary character of the recorded scenes and events from the 1980s is imbued with touching sincerity. With truth itself? In any case, we believe them! There is so much true life in those scenes that we feel they may overwhelm and overtake us if we come too close. The 1990s, however, emphasized my position – or rather, Cvjetanović's position – of an observer. The attitude was no longer neutral or documentary. The patisserie salesgirls are

watched. Our gaze has been laid upon them and they know it. We are seeing them through the photographer's eye. The position and nature of the perspective have been determined. It has been asserted as the key content and cannot return to the naiveté of *documentarism*.

Petar Dabac once said that, when the war began or its onset could be sensed in the early 1990s, he felt the need to simply document everything around him, what he saw, and what was happening. He began using the so-called *point-and-shoot* camera as early as the late 1980s, but in the 1990s it conquered

Brun tako lijepo izrekla nazivajući fotografiju nezgodom, sudarom dvaju svjetova, svijeta samoga i pogleda koji na njega upravljamo. On tih godina zaista snima sve: i juhu s knedlima i jutro na praznom trgu i ženu koju voli i prijatelje koji piju i svoje izložbe i ceste kojima se vozi. Snima lijepa lica djevojaka, snima grafite po ulicama i izderane izborne plakate. Ukratko, ne snima ni samo ono što mu je važno ni samo ono što mu ništa ne znači. Dakle nema emocionalnog naboja, nema ni ikoničkog ni aikoničkog znaka, nema ni supstancije. Ovoga puta to nije ni označavanje negativnog konceptualnog prostora. Ne nalazimo zajednički nazivnik snimljenome, znači ne vidimo što je ono što je snimljeno. Originalni sadržaj je snimljen, iako nije ni prizor ni emocija ni

znak. A nije ni njihova odsutnost. Petar Dabac devedesetih razvija koncept koji jasnije i svjesnije nego ikad pokazuje narav fotografije kao mehaničkog otiska ljudskog pogleda. Zato tako nekontrolirano mijenja fokuse svoga zanimanja. Zato jer se ne bavi materijalnom potkom fotografije već mogućnostima koje ona donosi ljudskoj misli. Petar Dabac pristupa fotografiji kao onomu ključnom mediju iz kojega su poslije nastale pokretne slike i sve ostale virtualne stvarnosti.

Istovremeno se Sandro Đukić na digitalni način bavi fotografijom stvarnijom od stvarnosti. Iako je binarno iščitavanje slikovnog zapisa beskrajno uzbudljivo i donosi jednu sasvim specifičnu spoznajnu količinu u slici pohranjenih podataka, nemojmo dati da nas zavede.

PETAR DABAC, *LIEBER PERO*,
SEGMENT FOTOGRAFSKOG DNEVNIKA, 1990.-1995.



PETAR DABAC, *LIEBER PERO*,
SEGMENT FROM A PHOTO DIARY, 1990-1995

his entire photographic space. He was no longer photographing with anything else! What was crucial there, apart from the speed of reaction and the constant presence of the camera in the photographer's pocket? Why would Pero's photographs taken with a point-and-shoot be something crucial for the photography of the 1990s? What was the primary value, the basic concept that he was going back to when choosing a camera that deprives the photographers of fine adjustments? Point-and-shoot camera is brutally direct and actually does not resemble our way of looking at things. Since it is "idiot-proof", it cannot tell important from unimportant. So it treats all things equally. It strives to give them an equal share of light and sharpness. The use of such camera brings us back to the basic character of the photographic

image as a mechanical imprint. It emphasizes its accidental nature. It enhances what Annie Le Brun meant when she fittingly called the photograph an accident, a clash of two worlds, the world itself and the gaze we direct at it.

In those years, Dabac was really interested in everything: a noodle soup, a morning on an empty square, the woman he loved, his friends drinking, his exhibitions, the roads he travelled. He was shooting pretty girls' faces, street graffiti, torn election posters. Briefly, he was shooting neither only what he cared for nor what he didn't care for. Thus there is no emotional charge, no iconic or non-iconic sign, no substance. This time there is even no circumscription of negative conceptual space. We cannot find any common denominator for his photos, which means that we do not see what was photographed. The original

Upečatljivo je da je Đukićevo ispitivanje fotografije i svega što mehanička slika nosi na istoj liniji kao ono Petra Dabca, iako su po pojavnosti te serije fotografija vrlo različite. Ako Dabac ostavlja otisak svog pogleda, Đukić ostavlja otisak svoga lica u snimljenom krajoliku, pretvarajući ga tako u virtualnu stvarnost. Nezaustavljivim nizom takozvanih dnevnčkih slika Petar Dabac otvara taj isti nestabilni i protočni svjetonazor koji će obilježiti Đukićevo protračavanje kroz sve zamislive pejzaže zemaljske kugle u *Putu oko svijeta u 100 dana* (1990.–1992.). U kasnijem nizu situacija s prijateljima on ide korak dalje simulirajući nepomičnim stavom širom raširenih očiju zaustavljeno vrijeme fotografske slike. Ali prevara ne uspijeva, vrata su već otvorena i, kako kaže Christine Buci-Glucksmann, nove tehnologije virtualiteta pokrenule su ključne povijesne transformacije koje dotiču sve umjetničke prakse: proizvele su prijelaz iz kulture objekta i stabilnosti u kulturu protoka i nestabilnosti. Zato su transparentnost i fluidnosti mogle biti postavljene kao glavne premise i u umjetnosti i u arhitekturi.⁶ Da bismo uspostavili što cjelovitiju sliku tog sasvim posebnog desetljeća, moramo se sjetiti što tada rade Željko Jerman ili Josip Klarica. Oni u određenom smislu predstavljaju suprotan pol ovom razbujalom virtualitetu mehaničke slike. Zaronjeni duboku u alkemiju materijalne pojavnosti, upućuju na dvostruku prirodu fotografije: njezinu pojavnost i njezinu stvarnu prirodu. Opstojnost tih paralelnih postojanja ne negira neosporno iskustvo da se ne

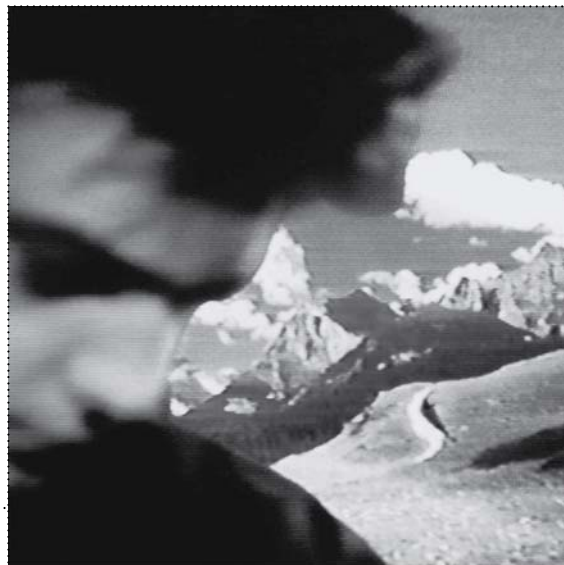
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content was recorded even though it was neither a scene nor an emotion, or a symbol. And the same goes for their absence. In the 1990s, Petar Dabac developed a concept that was revealing the nature of photography as a mechanical imprint of the human gaze more clearly and more consciously than ever before. That is why he changed the focus of his interest so abruptly. Because he was not into the material basis of photography, but the possibilities that it offered to human thinking. Petar Dabac approached photography as that crucial medium which later gave birth to the moving images and all the other virtual realities.

At the same time, Sandro Đukić was using the digital image to create photography that was more real than the reality. Even though binary interpretation can be extremely amusing and leads to a quite specific insight into the quantity of data that an image contains, we should not let it seduce us. It is striking that Sandro's exploration of photography and all that the mechanical image contains is on the same line with that of Petar Dabac, even though their photographic series are very different in appearance. While Dabac was leaving a trace of his own gaze, Sandro was leaving an imprint of his face in the photographed landscape, thus transforming it into a virtual reality. In his unstoppable flow of the so-called diary photos, Petar Dabac opened up the same kind of instable and permeable worldview that marked Sandro's swift passing through all possible landscapes of the world in his *Journey around the World in 100*

SANDRO ĐUKIĆ, *PUTOVANJE OKO SVIJETA U 100 DANA*,
1990.-1992., LJUBAZNOŠĆU SANDRA ĐUKIĆA



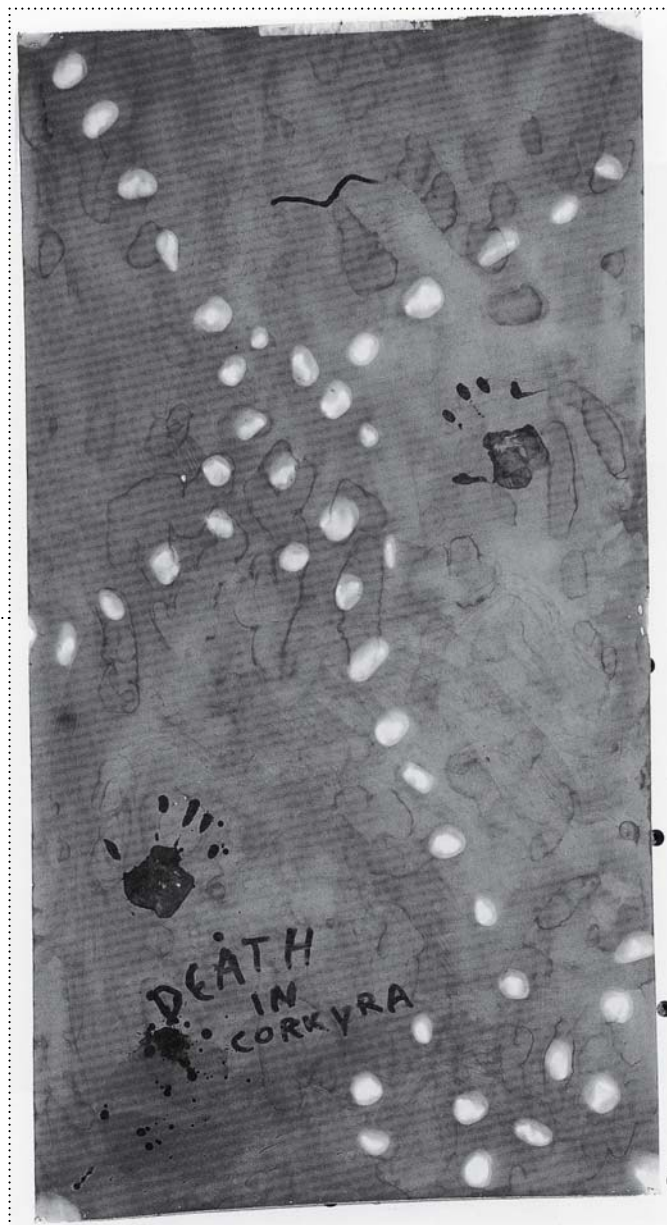
SANDRO ĐUKIĆ, *JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD IN 100 DAYS*, 1990-1992, COURTESY OF SANDRO ĐUKIĆ

mogu ni spoznati ni doživjeti u istom trenutku. Naime, i Jerman i Klarica, opet dvojica autora krajnje različitih fotografskih radova, bave se sposobnošću fotoosjetljivog srebra da sačuva svjetlosni zapis. Dakle onime što svjedoči o događaju mehaničkog utiskivanja.

Željko Jerman u svoju primarnu fotografiju slikanu kemikalijama na fotografskom papiru tih godina dodaje lica voljenih ljudi te je tako snažno sidri u realni vremenski trenutak. Godine 1997. on snima drugi dio svoga projekta *Moja godina?* obilježavajući kao glavni sadržaj svoga rada poziciju s koje je promatramo/ poimamo svijet. Klarica u devedesetima još uvijek sam izrađuje svoje fotomaterijale, dajući time mehanički dobivenoj slici manualno pripremljenu podlogu. On usporava vrijeme i podiže gustoću stvarnosti radeći na velikim negativima koje pretvara u fotografiju isključivo kontaktnim kopiranjem. Tako smo u fotografijama Jermana i Klarice dobili dva visoka nivoa materijalnosti: jedan ekspresivni i slikarski i drugi *nepodnošljivo* vjeran otisnutom isječku stvarnosti.

Na rubu novog desetljeća javlja se nova generacija koja će drugačijom energijom nastaviti iz neartikuliranog samorazumljivog tkiva fotografije izvlačiti posebnosti ovog medija esencijalno drugačijeg od drugih. Ili, kako je to ustvrdio Mangelos još sedamdesetih, da fotografija predstavlja „(...) rješenje dualističkog shvaćanja svijeta, pa je nova civilizacija i po

ŽELJKO JERMAN,
SMRT NA KORČULI (KORČULA),
1995.



ŽELJKO JERMAN,
DEATH IN CORKYRA (KORČULA),
1995

MARINA
VICULIN

days (1990-1992). In a later sequence of scenes with friends, he took a step further and simulated, with his immobile stance and eyes wide open, the halted time of the photographic image. But the illusion fails, the door has been opened, and – as Christine Buci-Glucksmann has written – the new technologies of virtuality have triggered crucial historic transformations that affect all art practices, causing a shift from the culture of objects and stability into the culture of flow and instability. Owing to that, transparency and fluidity could be established as the main premises in both art and architecture.⁶

In order to create a largely complete image of that very special decade, we must recall what Željko Jerman and Josip Klarica were doing at the time. In a certain sense, they represent the opposite of this blooming virtuality of the mechanical image. Immersed deeply into the alchemy of material appearances, they indicate the double nature of photography: its appearance and its true nature. The endurance of these parallel existences does not counter the undeniable insight that they cannot be known or experienced at the same moment. Both Jerman and Klarica, as two authors with completely different photographic opuses, deal with the capacity of photosensitive silver to retain a light recording. In other words, with what testifies of the event of mechanical imprint.

In those years, Željko Jerman added faces of the people he loved

tome nova što nakon fotografije gubi manevarski prostor između duha i materije, odnosno oslobađa se svih dilema duha i tijela“.⁸

¹ Antun Maračić, „No–grad i njegov subrealizam“, u: *Ispraznjeni okviri, iščezli sadržaji, 1991-1994*, IdealImago, Zagreb, 1996., 40.

² Ibid.

³ Ivan Faktor, *Prvi program*, katalog izložbe, Galerija Klovićevi dvori, Zagreb, 2010., 62.

⁴ Za njemačko su govorno područje filmovi u pravilu bili sinkronizirani.

⁵ Faktor (bilj. 3), 56.

⁶ Christine Buci-Glücksman, *La folie du voir, Une esthétique du virtuel*, Galilée, Pariz, 2002.

⁷ Radovi Željka Jermana u vlasništvu MSU, Zagreb: *Moja godina, 1977, Moja godina II, 1997*.

⁸ Dimitrije Bašičević, „Konzekvence fotografije, 11. Digresija o kulturi i umjetnosti sedamdesetih godina“, u: *Inovacije u hrvatskoj umjetnosti sedamdesetih godina*, katalog izložbe, GSU, Zagreb, 1982., 85.

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to his primary photography, produced by applying chemicals to photo-paper, thus anchoring it firmly in the actual moment. In 1997, he shot the second part of his project called *My Year*,⁷ emphasizing as the main content of his work the standpoint from which we observe/understand the world. Klarica was still producing his own photo-materials in the 1990s, thus supplying a manually prepared support to his mechanically obtained image. He slowed down time and increased the density of reality by working on large-format negatives, which he turned into photographs exclusively by means of contact copying. Thus, in the photographs of Jerman and Klarica we can see two high levels of materiality: one expressive and painting-like, another *unbearably* faithful to the imprinted segment of the reality. At the turn of the decade, a new generation emerged, which continued with a different type of energy to extract specificities from the unarticulated and self-contained tissue of photography, a medium that is so much different than all the others. Or, as Mangelos stated back in the 1970s, photography came to represent “(...) a solution for the dualist understanding of the world, so that the new civilization was also new in that, with photography, it lost the elbow room between spirit and matter, liberating itself from all dilemmas related to the spirit versus the body.”⁸

¹ Antun Maračić, “No-grad i njegov subrealizam” [The Non-City and its subrealism], in: *Ispraznjeni okviri, iščezli sadržaji, 1991-1994* [Emptied frames, lost substances, 1991-1994] (Zagreb: IdealImago, 1996), 40.

² Ibidem.

³ Ivan Faktor, *Prvi program* [First programme], exhibition catalogue (Zagreb: Klovićevi Dvori Gallery, 2010), 62.

⁴ In German-speaking areas, films were normally synchronized.

⁵ Faktor (as in n.3), 56.

⁶ Christine Buci-Glücksman, *La folie du voir, Une esthétique du virtuel* (Paris: Galilée, 2002).

⁷ Works by Željko Jerman, property of the Museum of Contemporary Arts Zagreb: *Moja godina* [My year], 1977; *Moja godina II* [My year II], 1997.

⁸ Dimitrije Bašičević, “Konzekvence fotografije, 11. Digresija o kulturi i umjetnosti sedamdesetih godina” [Consequences of photography, 11th digression on culture and art in the 1970s], in: *Inovacije u hrvatskoj umjetnosti sedamdesetih godina* [Innovation in Croatian art during the 1970s], exhibition catalogue (Zagreb: GSU, 1982), 85.