



**POJAM *UNDERGROUND*  
U UMJETNOSTI  
U SRBIJI DEVEDESETIH**

NIKOLA  
DEDIĆ

**THE NOTION OF  
*UNDERGROUND*  
IN SERBIAN ART  
DURING THE 1990S**

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**SAŽETAK:** U tekstu se analizira jedan od fenomena umjetnosti devedesetih godina u Srbiji kojeg je tadašnja kritika označila terminom „underground umjetnost“. Ovaj se fenomen postavlja u odnos s novom figuracijom u umjetnosti desetog desetljeća, odnosno *underground* umjetnika prema nasljeđu konceptualne umjetnosti i veze koje ovi autori ostvaruju s popularnom, prije svega rock i punk glazbom.

**KLJUČNE RIJEČI:** underground umjetnost, nova figuracija, lowbrow, pop art, novi val

**Umjetnost devedesetih**

Devedesetih godina 20. stoljeća dolazi do raspada onoga što je nekadašnja jugoslavenska umjetnička kritika označavala kao „jugoslavenski umjetnički prostor“, a nacionalistička ideološko-politička platforma u određenoj mjeri postaje dominantni jezik nekadašnjeg jugoslavenskog kulturnog konteksta. Suvremena umjetnost, barem onaj njezin antinacionalistički, kritički i internacionalno orijentirani dio, na različite se načine pozicionirala u odnosu na nacionalni *mainstream*: u Srbiji devedesetih u umjetnosti, na primjer, često dolazi do stvaranja neke vrste političkog umjetničkog jezika koji će u duhu političkog „angažmana“ težiti dekonstrukciji vladajuće nacionalističke ideologije iz doba postsocijalizma; suprotno

tome, pojedini umjetnici težit će stvaranju posve nepolitičkog, formalističkog jezika u području proširenog poimanja slikarstva i skulpture, anticipirajući na taj način indirektnu, gotovo utopijsku kritiku spomenute ideologije (različiti oblici neoformalizma, neominimalizma i radikalne apstrakcije). Najzad, jedan je od značajnijih fenomena kritike nacionalne platforme devedesetih i pojava umjetnosti *undergrounda*: formulirana tijekom osamdesetih godina (s pojavom novog vala kao karakterističnog subkulturnog fenomena), a predstavljajući i jedan od mogućih oblika „subverzivnog“ umjetničkog djelovanja u idućem desetljeću, ta se umjetnost formirala u spoju najčešće figurativno orijentiranog slikarstva, rock i punk muzike, u pripadnosti autora mljevu „omladinskih subkultura“ i njihovu svjesnom izboru položaja društvene margine, alternative kao osobnog i profesionalnog stava.

**Underground i nova figuracija**

Taj fenomen figurativnog slikarstva koje se razvija preplićući se s popularnom kulturom i muzikom u Srbiji lokalna umjetnička kritika označit će terminom „beogradski underground“. Riječ je o tezi koja se odnosila na postupke koji ne predstavljaju tipičan i očigledan primjer stvaranja izravno anagažirane, politizirane umjetnosti, nego se termin odnosi na tumačenje umjetničkih postupaka koji su referencijama na popularnu i rock kulturu,

**Art of the 1990s**

In the 1990s, what Yugoslav art critics used to describe as the “Yugoslav art space” was disintegrating, and the nationalist ideological and political platform became, to a certain extent, the dominant language of the formerly Yugoslav cultural context. Contemporary art, or at least its anti-nationalist, critical, and internationally oriented segment, adopted various positions as to the national mainstream: in Serbian art, for example, the 1990s were often characterized by the creation of a sort of political language of art, which strove to deconstruct the prevailing nationalist ideology of the post-socialist era in the spirit of political “engagement”; contrary to that, some artists began creating an entirely non-political, formalist language within the extended understanding of painting and sculpture, thus anticipating an indirect, almost utopian critique of the abovementioned ideology (various types of neo-formalism, neo-minimalism, and radical abstraction). Eventually, one of the most important phenomena in the criticism of the national platform in the 1990s was the “underground art.” It emerged in the 1980s (with the “new wave” as a characteristic subcultural phenomenon), and represented one of the possible forms of “subversive” artistic activity in the following decade as a fusion of mostly figuratively oriented painting and rock and punk music. Its authors belonged to the milieu of “youth subcultures” and

consciously chose position on the social margins: it was the alternative as a personal and professional stance.

**Underground and new figuration**

Local art critics gave this phenomenon in figurative painting, which in Serbia evolved in close connection with popular culture and music, the name of “Belgrade underground.” It was a term that referred to procedures that did not represent a typical and obvious way of creating directly engaged, politicized art, but used their references to popular and rock culture, their “urban” self-mythologization and the insistence of their artists that they belonged to a particular alternative, subcultural milieu, to attempt an indirect discussion of the context of crisis, warfare, and general social hypocrisy. Therefore, these practices were not directly political; it was art whose authors used the strategy of “active escapism,” as Lidija Merenik has called it. She has used this phrase to denote the creation of a “parallel fictional reality and very personal stories that would have never come into existence without being motivated in the existential reality as such, which was able to surpass the fiction itself.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, these were artistic procedures that originated in the sensibility of the new wave in the 1980s, and could be described as a specific form of “urban alternative.”<sup>2</sup> Branislava Anđelković and Branislav Dimitrijević have accurately identified that sensibility of

„urbano“ samomitologizaciju i inzistiranje umjetnika na pripadnosti određenom alternativnom subkulturnom miljeu težili indirektnoj problematizaciji konteksta krize, ratova i opće društvene hipokrizije. Riječ je, dakle, o praksama koje nisu izravno političke, odnosno o umjetnosti čiji autori upotrebljavaju taktiku, kako to objašnjava Lidija Merenik, „aktivnog eskapizma“. Pod ovom frazom Merenik podrazumijeva kreiranje „paralelne fiktionalne stvarnosti i sasvim ličnih storija koje, opet, nikada ne bi nastale da nemaju (nisu imale) povoda u samoj egzistencijalnoj stvarnosti, koja je nekada uspevala da nadmaši i samu fikciju“. <sup>1</sup> U pitanju su, dakle, umjetnički postupci koji svoje porijeklo traže u senzibilitetu novog vala osamdesetih, a koji se mogu okarakterizirati kao specifičan oblik „urbane alternative“. <sup>2</sup> Taj senzibilitet „beogradskog undergrounda“ precizno prepoznaju Branislava Anđelković i Branislav Dimitrijević u svom tumačenju srpske umjetničke scene devedesetih: termin *underground* u lokalnoj, beogradskoj urbanoj mitologiji tako odzvanja „posebnom vrstom kulturne pregnantnosti. Postoji neka osobena vrsta ponosa zbog različitih oblika ‘duhovnih afilijacija’ koje su se putem ‘omladinske kulture’ ostvarivale između Beograda i velikih zapadnih gradova, koji su bili mesta produkcije radikalne ‘subkulture’ kada je reč o alternativnoj rok muzici, umetnosti grafita, načinu odevanja, narkoticima i uopšte ‘kreativnom’ provođenju svakodnevice. Tu se pre svega misli na London, Njujork ili Berlin (...) u Beogradu je stvorena

ZORAN MARINKOVIĆ,  
FRIZERSKI SALON, 1989.

ZORAN MARINKOVIĆ,  
A HAIRDRESSER'S SHOP, 1989

ZORAN MARINKOVIĆ,  
13.12.87, 1989.

ZORAN MARINKOVIĆ,  
1987/12/13, 1989

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the “Belgrade underground” in their interpretation of the Serbian art scene in the 1990s: according to them, the term *underground* resounded with “a special sort of cultural significance. There was a peculiar pride because of the various forms of ‘spiritual affiliations’ which were emerging in ‘youth culture’ between Belgrade and the major Western cities as the sites of production of a radical ‘subculture’ when it came to the alternative rock music, graffiti art, clothing, drugs, and generally ‘creative’ ways of spending one’s everyday life. Those cities were primarily London, New York, and Berlin (...) In Belgrade, a part of young population was developing powerful awareness of the fact that participating in the so-called underground was a special type of creative attitude, which supplied a genuine alternative to all other forms of cultural production, to the extent that they began to mystify that underground as a special form of ‘elite’ or ‘high’ culture, which was the basic paradox and denominator of that construct.” <sup>3</sup> In the 1980s, that scene gravitated towards SC Belgrade, Akademija club, and *Omladinske novine*, and in the 1990s towards the cultural centre Rex and Radio B92. Art critics would interpret the work of numerous artists within that construct, the most prominent among them being Srđan Đile Marković, Miodrag Grujić Fleka, Uroš Đurić, Stevan Markuš, Zoran Marinković, Saša Marković Mikrob, Nenad Racković, and certain videos and para-theatrical performances of actress Sonja Savić and the *Supernaut* group.

snažna svest dela mlade populacije da je participiranje u tzv. ‘undergroundu’ posebna vrsta kreativnog stava kojim se stvara istinska alternativa svim drugim oblicima kulturne proizvodnje, do te mere da ‘underground’ počinje da se mistifikuje kao neki poseban oblik ‘elitne’ ili ‘visoke kulture’, što je osnovni paradoks i osnovni imenitelj ovog konstrukta“. <sup>3</sup> Riječ je, dakle, o sceni koja je osamdesetih gravitirala prema beogradskom SKC-u, klubu Akademija i *Omladinskim novinama*, a za vrijeme devedesetih prema kulturnom centru Rex i radiju B92. Radove brojnih umjetnika kritika će tumačiti u okviru tog konstrukta, a među njima su najznačajniji Srđan Đile Marković, Miodrag Grujić Fleka, Uroš Đurić, Stevan Markuš, Zoran Marinković, Saša Marković Mikrob, Nenad Racković, kao i pojedini videoradovi i parateatarski nastupi glumice Sonje Savić i grupe *Supernaut*. Devedesetih godina Miomir Grujić pokrenut će značajan projekt *Urbazona* kojim će eksplicitno definirati načela beogradske underground umjetnosti: radilo se o više uzastopnih izložbi održanih u Galeriji Doma omladine 1993. godine na kojima su sudjelovali Srđan Đile Marković, Uroš Đurić, Stevan Markuš, Danijel Glid, Jelica Radovanović, Dejan Anđelković, Saša Marković, Dobrivoje Krgović, Talent, i dr., a koje su popraćene nizom koncerata, radioemisija i akcija. <sup>4</sup> Fleka će možda najpreciznije definirati značenje fenomena alternative, točnije *undergrounda* u srpskoj i beogradskoj kulturi devedesetih;

In the 1990s, Miomir Grujić launched an important project called *Urbazona*, which explicitly defined the principles of Belgrade’s underground art. It consisted of several subsequent exhibitions, which took place at the Gallery of Youth Centre in 1993 and featured Srđan Đile Marković, Uroš Đurić, Stevan Markuš, Danijel Glid, Jelica Radovanović, Dejan Anđelković, Saša Marković, Dobrivoje Krgović, Talent, and others. The exhibitions were accompanied by a series of concerts, radio programmes, and actions. <sup>4</sup> Perhaps it was Fleka who defined most accurately the significance of this alternative as a phenomenon, or rather the meaning of underground in Serbian and Belgrade culture during the 1990s. According to him, underground can be defined as “a state of mind dictated by the times and the need of individuals searching for their individuality.” <sup>5</sup> As he once stated, the strategy of urban alternative implied an attempt of building up an alternative, parallel, or even utopian space, independent from the space of official institutions and ideology, whereby he defined his own position as that of a “misfit” artist-outsider. That hypothesis of his about Belgrade’s underground in the 1980s and the early 1990s is perhaps best illustrated by the paintings of Belgrade artists during that period, and may be worth quoting in full: “The newly established jargons express most directly many common features of subcultural and topical issues in art: OBSCURITY, DECADENCE, HEDONISM, AGRESSION, EXHIBITIONISM,



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STEVAN MARKUS,  
BEZ NAZIVA, 1994.

UROŠ ĐURIĆ, DVA NAJVEĆA SRPSKA SLIKARA  
U BRIŠUĆEM LETU, 1990-91.

STEVAN MARKUS,  
UNTITLED, 1994

UROŠ ĐURIĆ, TWO GREATEST SERBIAN PAINTERS  
IN SWEEP FLIGHT, 1990-91



NARCISSISM... this list could go on and on, since the inventory of actual examples is endless. Of course, all these features are a reaction to the given social and cultural context, as well as its product. And that context is marked by a crisis, an existential strait, confusion in life and culture. The diminished possibilities of participation in such a society actually induce new subcultural 'waves', just as the diminished possibilities of participation in such culture produce new artistic reactions. The utopian attempt at building a new, parallel, alternative, and in this case complete and adequate system of values, which will successfully counter the existing one, guides both the member of a subcultural group and the 'misfit' artist to adopt the marginal positions of an OUTSIDER. Being an outsider is a state that conceals a potential, capable of liberating an essentially new quality.<sup>76</sup>

Speaking of Srđan Đile Marković, the main sources for his underground paintings were artistic phenomena such as (and I am saying this with utter reserve) the American pop art, German social art of the 1920s, underground comics, and especially Californian lowbrow art (that is, pop-surrealism, as this phenomenon has also been defined in the underground art of the 1980s). The main difference that separated Belgrade's underground painting from the tradition of American pop art was the fact that the latter was ideologically indifferent and based on the typically postmodernist principles of scepticism, irony, and

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UROŠ ĐURIĆ, ŽENA KOJU VOLIM  
ĐA SREĆEM, 2002.

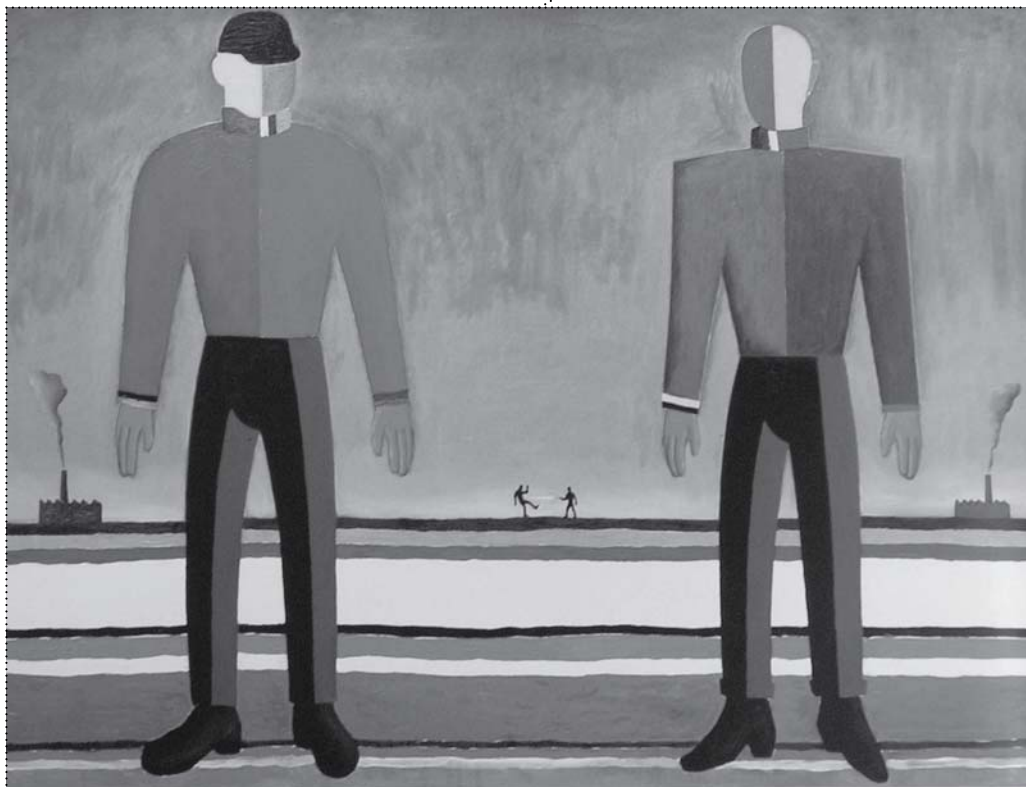
UROŠ ĐURIĆ, BESPREDMETNI AUTONOMIZAM - UBISTVO ILI DVA  
NAJVEĆA SRPSKA SLIKARA UMIRENA SVOJOM VELIČINOM, 1997.

UROŠ ĐURIĆ, A WOMAN  
I LIKE TO MEET, 2002

UROŠ ĐURIĆ, POINTLESS AUTONOMISM-MURDER, OR: TWO GREATEST  
SERBIAN PAINTERS SHOOTED BY THEIR GREATNESS, 1997

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vrednosti koji bi se uspješno suprotstavio postojećem, odvodi pripadnika podkulture grupe kao i 'neprilagođenog' umjetnika do marginalnih pozicija AUTSAJDERA. Outsajderstvo je situacija koja krije potencijal sposoban za oslobađanje esencijalno novog kvaliteta.<sup>6</sup>

Kad je riječ o Srđanu Điletu Markoviću, osnovna ishodišta njegova *underground* slikarstva jesu umjetnički fenomeni kao što su (krajnje uvjetno) američki pop art, njemačka socijalna umjetnost dvadesetih godina, *underground* strip i naročito kalifornijska *lowbrow* umjetnost (odnosno, pop-nadrealizam, kako se ta pojava u *underground* umjetnosti osamdesetih još označava). Osnovna razlika koja beogradsko slikarstvo *undergrounda* odvajava od tradicije američkog pop arta leži u činjenici da je pop art u ideološkom smislu indiferentan i njeguje tipično postmodernistički princip skepticizma, ironije i političke ambivalentnosti.<sup>7</sup> Za razliku od toga, *underground* umjetnici u svojim radovima često teže nekoj vrsti političkog komentara: upotreba estetike masovnih medija, prije svega plakata i karikature, naglašeni nihilizam kad je u pitanju prikazivanje aktualnih društvenih kretanja, tematika društvene margine, socijalnog „podzemlja“, prikazivanje života gradskog proleterijata (koje je u *underground* umjetnosti transponirano u milje urbanih omladinskih subkultura), rušenje estetskih, etičkih i naročito seksualnih tabua, *off* društvena pozicija, distorzija oblika na nivou stila, estetika ružnog, odnosno

prikazivanje „naličja“ svakodnevice u kojoj dolazi do raspada društvenih vrijednosti – sve su to postupci koji se po prvi put mogu prepoznati u slikarstvu umjetnika kao što su Otto Dix ili pak Georg Grosz, pripadnika *Nove objektivnosti* (*Neue Sachlichkeit*) u vajmarskoj Njemačkoj dvadesetih godina prošloga stoljeća.<sup>8</sup> Ipak, jedan od najznačajnijih referentnih okvira slikarstva Srđana Đileta Markovića je fenomen kalifornijske *underground* figuracije 80-ih i 90-ih godina, poznate pod nazivima *lowbrow* umjetnost, odnosno pop nadrealizam. Riječ je o umjetnicima koji u svojim slikama spajaju izvjesna iskustva pop arta, punk muzike, *hot-rod* ulične kulture, alternativnog stripa, estetike filmova B-produkcije, crtanih filmova, ilustracije, i sl. Među prvima koji usvajaju maniru *lowbrow* slikarstva su nekadašnji *underground* strip crtači poput Roberta Williamsa i Garyja Pantera; nakon određenog vremena takav pristup prerastao je u neku vrstu pokreta skoncentriranog prije svega na alternativnu scenu u Los Angelesu. Termin *lowbrow* upućuje na suprotstavljenost takvog slikarstva „visokoj“ umjetnosti koja djeluje unutar galerijskog sistema i dominantnog umjetničkog tržišta (tj. tradicije postkonceptualističke umjetnosti).<sup>9</sup>

### Underground i konceptualna umjetnost

Većina spomenutih umjetnika (Marković, Đurić, Markuš, Marinković) djeluje u području figurativnog slikarstva (izuzetak je Nenad Racković koji se izražava u mediju performansa i

SRĐAN ĐILE MARKOVIĆ,  
DOBRI PORTIR, 2003.

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SRĐAN ĐILE MARKOVIĆ,  
A GOOD DOORMAN, 2003

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political ambivalence.<sup>7</sup> Contrary to that, underground artists often aspired to a sort of political commentary in their work by using the aestheticism of the mass media, primarily posters and caricature, by expressing overt nihilism with regard to the representation of actual social processes, by dealing with the typical issues of the social margins and the “underground”, by presenting the life of urban proletarians (transposed in underground art into the milieu of urban youth subcultures), by abolishing the aesthetical, ethical, and especially sexual taboos, by adopting the so-called “off” social position, by distorting forms on the level of style, and by embracing the aestheticism of ugliness, that is, by depicting the “reverse” of everyday life, in which social values have declined – all of these procedures having been first recognizable in paintings by artists such as Otto Dix or Georg Grosz, representatives of the *New Objectivity* (*Neue Sachlichkeit*) in the Weimar Germany of the 1920s.<sup>8</sup>

However, one of the most significant referential frameworks for paintings by Srđan Đile Marković was the phenomenon of Californian underground, which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, and was known as *lowbrow* art or pop surrealism. Its artists merged experiences such as pop art, punk music, hot-rod street culture, alternative comics, the aestheticism of B-movies, cartoons, illustration, and so on. Among the first ones who adopted the manner of *lowbrow* painting were the former authors

of underground comics, such as Robert Williams or Gary Panter; after a while, this approach evolved into a sort of movement that was primarily related to the alternative scene of Los Angeles. The term “lowbrow” indicated their opposition to the “high” art, which operated within the system of galleries and the dominant art market (i.e. the tradition of post-conceptualist art).<sup>9</sup>

### Underground and conceptual art

Most of the abovementioned artists (Marković, Đurić, Markuš, Marinković) were involved in figurative painting (with the exception of Nenad Racković, who expressed himself in the medium of performance and installation, and Sonja Savić, who was active in the fields of alternative theatre and video art), which is why the sources of their artistic procedure included, besides pop art, the legacy of trans-avantgarde from the 1980s, underground comics, and a phenomenon known as *figuration libre* (*free figuration*). However, Belgrade's artists from this period reveal different attitudes towards the legacy of conceptual art: Srđan Đile Marković, for example, as well as artists close to him, adopted an outspokenly critical stance regarding the legacy of conceptualism from the 1970s. Their accentuated anti-conceptualism was based on the legacy of postmodernism and the *new painting* as the central phenomenon in the art of the 1980s, and it was also influenced by the atmosphere of Belgrade's *New Wave*,



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instalacija, dok će Sonja Savić djelovati u području alternativnog teatra i video arta) te se kao izvor njihovih oblikovnih postupaka, uz pop art, može navesti i naslijeđe transavangarde 80-ih, *underground* strip kao i fenomen poznat pod nazivom *figuration libre* (*slobodna figuracija*). Međutim, za beogradske umjetnike toga doba indikativan je različit odnos prema naslijeđu konceptualne umjetnosti: Srđan Đile Marković, na primjer, kao i njemu bliski umjetnici, zauzet će naglašeno kritički stav u odnosu na naslijeđe konceptualizma 70-ih godina. Njihov naglašeni antikonceptualizam temelji se na naslijeđu postmodernizma *nove slike* kao središnje pojave umjetnosti devetog desetljeća, a obilježen je i atmosferom beogradskog *Novog talasa* kojom dominiraju različiti oblici neoekspresionizma, kao i reinterpretacije klasične štafelajne slike. Antikonceptualistički stav karakterističan je i za *underground* umjetnost u cjelini, a posebno za kalifornijsku alternativnu scenu 80-ih i 90-ih godina; figurativno *underground* slikarstvo s antagonizmom se odnosi prema naslijeđu apstrakcije visokog modernizma i teoretskog intelektualizma konceptualizma i umjesto toga teži eklektici, dekorativnosti i parodiji.<sup>10</sup> Nešto drugačiju poziciju prema konceptualizmu zauzet će još jedan značajan predstavnik fenomena „beogradskog *undergrounda*“ – Uroš Đurić. Za razliku od Markovića, Đurić će, iako 90-ih također radi u maniri novog figurativnog slikarstva, upravo naglašavati kontinuitet naslijeđa konceptualizma.

Branislava Anđelković i Branislav Dimitrijević u Đurićevoj umjetnosti pišu kao o „post-konceptualnom“ slikarstvu koje se ne može interpretirati na nivou opozicije figurativno-apstraktno (kao primjer spomenuti kritičari uzimaju Đurićevo referiranje na Maljevičeve apstraktne slike koje karakterizira postupak „ikoničkog prepoznavanja“).<sup>11</sup> Tu vezu s konceptualom ističe i sâm Đurić: „Ja koristim figuraciju kao što je Dišan koristio ready-made. Figuracijom se služim dvoznačno. I nisam figurativni slikar. Ja sam čisti konceptualista.“<sup>12</sup>

Đurić će, zajedno sa Stevanom Markušem, definirati tezu o tzv. „autonomističkom slikarstvu“. Osnovne karakteristike autonomističkog slikarstva su već spomenuto referiranje na popularnu rock kulturu, intertekstualno povezivanje s primjerima iz povijesti umjetnosti (prije svega Maljevičevim suprematizmom) i naročito naglašavanje umjetnikove ličnosti te isticanje privatne mitologije. Slikarstvo autonomizma je „najdalje provelo proces upisivanja autora/subjekta u tekstualnu mrežu slike. Kroz autoportret, kao Đurićevo i Markuševu privilegovanu formu iskazivanja svog ličnog principa, autor/ subjekt je uveden u sliku upravo po načelu koje proklamuje Barthes – kao protagonista narativa koji su katkada sasvim čitljivi, a katkada zamršeni, do gotovo potpune neraspjetivosti (...) Način na koji Đurić barata takvim tipom prikazivanja otkriva i snažnu konceptualnu osnovu koja na slikama predstavljenu figuraciju čini funkcionalnom,

SRĐAN DILE MARKOVIĆ,  
NOĆ, 1999.

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SRĐAN DILE MARKOVIĆ,  
NIGHT, 1999

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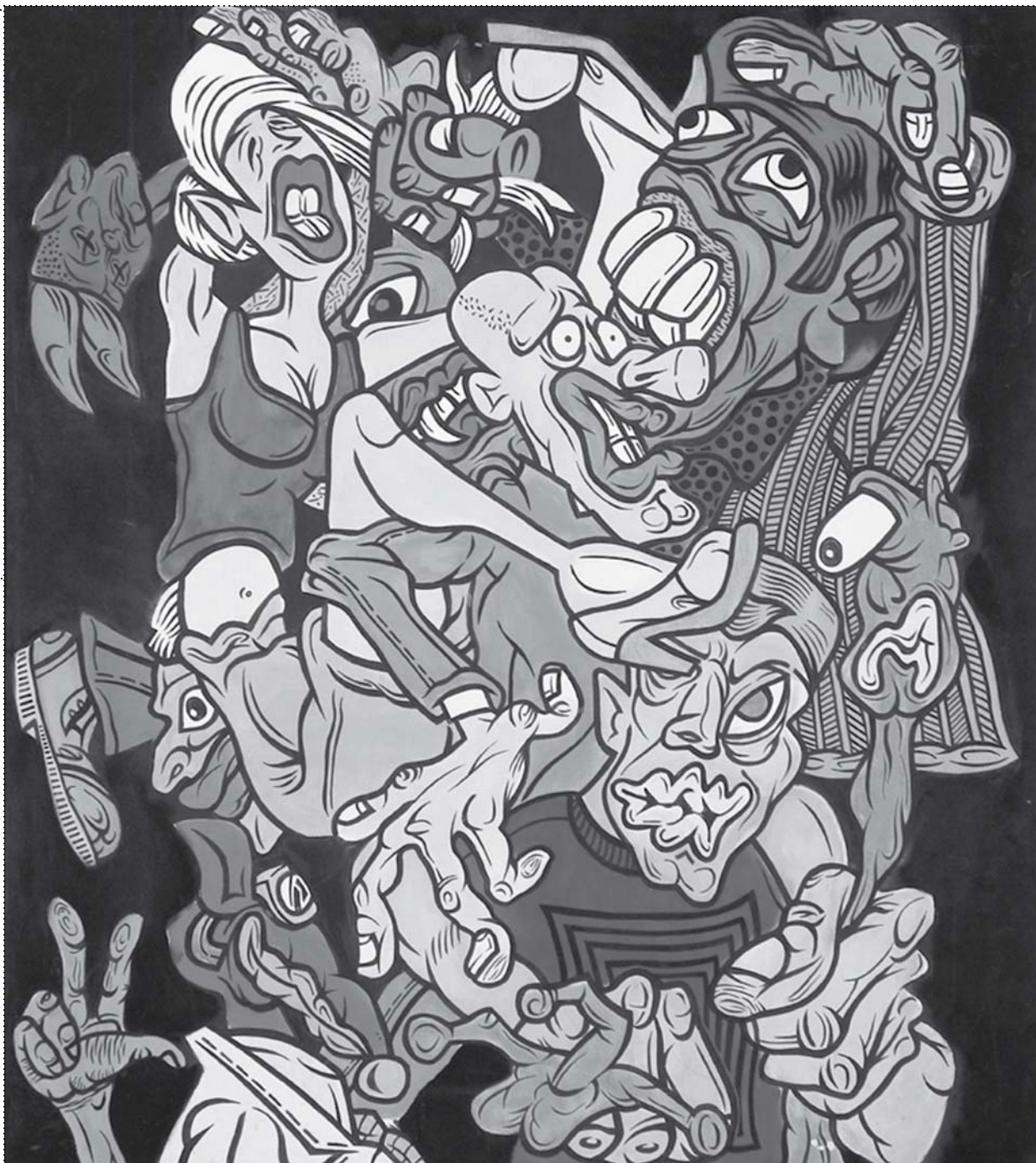
which was dominated by various forms of neo-expressionism and sought to reinterpret the classical easel painting. Anti-conceptualist stance was also characteristic of the underground art as a whole, especially the Californian alternative scene of the 1980s and 1990s; figurative underground painting viewed with antagonism the legacy of abstraction that was typical of high modernism and the theoretical intellectualism of conceptualism, tending instead towards eclecticism, decorativeness, and parody.<sup>10</sup>

A somewhat different position towards conceptualism was adopted by another important representative of the “Belgrade underground”: Uroš Đurić. Unlike Marković, he would, although painting in the manner of new figuration in the 1990s, emphasize precisely the continuity of conceptualist legacy. Branislava Anđelković and Branislav Dimitrijević defined Đurić’s art as “post-conceptualist” painting, which cannot be interpreted on the level of the figurative-abstract opposition (as an example these art critics mention Đurić’s references to Malevich’s abstract paintings, characterized by the procedure of “iconic recognition”).<sup>11</sup> This link with conceptual art has also been emphasized by Đurić himself: “I use figuration as Dišan used ready-made. My use of it is ambiguous. And I am not a figurative painter. I am a pure conceptualist.”<sup>12</sup>

Together with Stevan Markuš, Đurić forwarded a hypothesis of the so-called “autonomist painting.” Its basic features would be the abovementioned reference to popular rock culture, intertextual links with examples from art history (above all with Malevich’s Suprematism), and especially its emphasis on the artist’s personality and private mythology. Moreover, autonomist painting “carried out the process of inscribing the author/subject into the textual network of the image. Through self-portrait, which was Đurić’s and Markuš’s preferred form of expressing their personal principles, the author/subject was inserted into the painting precisely according to the principle proclaimed by Barthes – as a protagonist of narratives that are sometimes quite readable, and at other times complicated almost to the impossibility of their resolution (...) The way in which Đurić dealt with this sort of presentation also reveals a powerful conceptual basis, which renders the figuration present in his paintings functional, placing it in the service of expressing the materialization of his personal principle.”<sup>13</sup> Such painting has also been described as “urban iconic painting” and “post-pop art”. The art of Zoran Marinković stands close to that of Marković, Đurić, and Markuš, but even though he played in a rock band called *Bjesovi*, the link between painting and rock culture was not that evident in his work. As an artist, he primarily relied on the experience of the so-called “social” figurative painting.

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i stavlja je u službu izražavanja i materijalizacije svog ličnog principa.<sup>13</sup> Za opis takvog slikarstva korišteni su još termini „urbano ikoničko slikarstvo“, kao i „postpop art“. Donekle blizak Markoviću, Đuriću i Markušu bit će i rad Zorana Marinkovića, kod kojega, iako će nastupati u okviru rock sastava *Bjesovi*, veza između slikarstva i rock kulture neće biti toliko vidljiva, nego će se taj autor prije svega nadovezati na iskustvo „socijalnog“ figurativnog slikarstva.

### Underground i rock glazba

Ono što povezuje sve te relativno različite autore jest i njihova veza s popularnom muzikom: Uroš Đurić će tokom 80-ih nastupati s punk sastavom *Urbana Gerila*, Zoran Marinković će biti član sastava *Bjesovi*, Nenad Racković će biti blizak punk kulturi, a kasnije, u svojim VJ nastupima i techno muzici.<sup>14</sup> Ipak, možda je najznačajnije djelovanje sastava *Supernaut*, koje će nastajati u kombinaciji sa slikarstvom (u umjetnosti frontmena Srđana Đileta Markovića), odnosno video arta i alternativnog teatra (u djelovanju glumice Sonje Savić). Ovdajšnja kritika će u muzici *Supernauta* prepoznati elemente psihodeličnog rocka, punka, *new wavea*, različite elemente elektronske i *industrial glazbe*, a već letimičnim preslušavanjem dosad objavljenih albuma mogu se prepoznati utjecaji sastava i autora kao što su *Kraftwerk*, *Dr. Feelgood*, *The Stooges*, *The Cramps*, Rockyja Ericksona,

Richarda Hella, Johnnyja Thundersa (u djelima punk sastava *New York Dolls* i *The Heartbreakers*), Billyja Childisha, koji će se, slično Markoviću, također baviti slikarstvom, kao i elektronskog, protopunk sastava *Suicide*. Nastupi *Supernauta* i Sonje Savić 90-ih godina nastajali su na raskrižju, ili bolje rečeno u međuprostoru kazališta u tradicionalnom smislu, *happeninga*, performansa, rock koncerta i slikarstva. Takve akcije uglavnom predstavljaju primjer neverbalnog teatra – glumci svojim tijelima stvaraju slike, a akcija je dopunjena kompjuterskom animacijom i rock koncertom. Uzore za takve happeninge *Supernaut* i Sonja Savić traže u slikarskim avangardama 20-ih i 30-ih godina s posebnim naglaskom na njemačkom socijalnom ekspresionizmu te s ciljem stvaranja angažiranog teatra na tragu socijalne umjetnosti.<sup>15</sup>

Sonja Savić realizirat će i značajne radove u mediju videa koji se uklapaju u upravo iznesenu tezu o „beogradskom undergroundu“. U svojim videoradovima ona se nadovezuje na kritičku tradiciju videoumjetnosti od šezdesetih godina nadalje, točnije, na kolaž i de-kolaž u okviru procesuiranja slike, pri čemu se, kako primjećuju Anđelković i Dimitrijević, stvara vizualni jezik od multitekstualnih izvora, „bilo da se oni generišu ili pronalaze u obliku video-redimejda.“ Ti radovi realizirani su kao videospotovi te predstavljaju neku vrstu kvazimuzičkog spota koji karakterizira vrlo brza montaža. U tom smislu videoradovi Sonje Savić euforična su kombinacija slike i zvuka, pri čemu pojedini elementi

SRĐAN ĐILE MARKOVIĆ,  
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### Underground and rock music

What connects all these relatively different authors is their link to popular music: in the 1980s, Uroš Đurić performed with the punk band *Urbana Gerila*, Zoran Marinković was a member of *Bjesovi*, and Nenad Racković stood close to punk culture, and later, in his VJ shows, to techno music as well.<sup>14</sup> However, perhaps the most important factor was the activity of *Supernaut*, which was born in a fusion of painting (through the art of its frontman Srđan Đile Marković), video art, and alternative theatre (through actress Sonja Savić). In *Supernaut's* music, Serbian art critics have recognized elements of psychedelic rock, punk, new wave, and various forms of electronic and industrial music, and even a quick sampling of their albums reveal influences of bands and artists such as *Kraftwerk*, *Dr. Feelgood*, *The Stooges*, *The Cramps*, Rocky Erickson, Richard Hell, Johnny Thunders (while he was in punk bands *New York Dolls* and *The Heartbreakers*), and Billy Childish, who painted somewhat like Marković, as well as the electronic proto-punk band *Suicide*. Shows of *Supernaut* and Sonja Savić in the 1990s took place at the intersection, or even in the interspace between theatre in the traditional sense, happening, performance, rock concert, and painting. Such actions were mostly examples of non-verbal theatre – actors created paintings with their bodies, and the action was complemented by computer animation and a rock concert.



rada predstavljaju karakterističan oblik videoperformansa, „često sa egocentričnim ali negde i auto-ironičnim premisama, dok je drugi preuzet iz naglo umnoženog video materijala preuzetog sa komercijalne televizije ili video traka“. Radi se o pokušaju da se pomoću medija videa napravi odmak od komercijalne logike televizije „putem karakteristične ‘parazitske’ strategije koja smatra manipulaciju postojećim vizuelnim materijalom pogodnom formom društvene kritike. Video rekorder postaje isto tako bitno sredstvo video umjetnosti kao i video kamera, a čitav projekt se stvara u montaži i tako evociraju iskustva ranog avangardnog filma“.<sup>16</sup> Fenomen *underground* umjetnosti zbog navedenih razloga bit će još jedna od tendencija u razvoju umjetnosti u Srbiji tijekom 90-ih godina; pritom treba napomenuti da *underground* nije koherentan i jasno prepoznatljiv „pravac“ ili „stil“ u umjetnosti navedenog razdoblja. Radi se prije svega o senzibilitetu autora koji primarno djeluju u području figurativnog, reprezentacijskog slikarstva te manjim dijelom performansa i videa; zajednička im je povezanost s popularnom muzikom kao i s različitim oblicima popularne kulture (stripom, grafitima, reklamama, omladinskom subkulturom, filmom). Umjetnička kritika toga doba je pojam „undergrounda“ iskoristila kao deskriptivni i operativni termin za tumačenje i interpretiranje tog specifičnog senzibiliteta; na taj način, umjetnost „beogradskog undergrounda“ još je jedan od elemenata pluralne i eklektične scene koja se razvijala u uvjetima tadašnje „umjetnosti

u zatvorenom društvu“ i koja je na svoj način reagirala na kulturni, ideološki i politički kontekst krize i postjugoslavenskih ratova.

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Models for such happenings can be found in the painting avant-gardes of the 1920s and 1930s, with a particular accent on German social expressionism and with the aim of creating a socially engaged theatre in the wake of social art.<sup>15</sup> Sonja Savić also created important video pieces, which fit very well into the suggested hypothesis of a “Belgrade underground.” In her video art, she continued the critical tradition of video art that began back in the 1960s, more precisely, to collage and de-collage in the framework of image processing, which, as observed by Anđelković and Dimitrijević, created a visual language from multi-textual sources, “generated or given in the form of video ready-mades.” These pieces were realized as video clips and represented a sort of pseudo-musical clips characterized by very fast montage. In that sense, videos by Sonja Savić were a euphoric combination of image and sound, whereby certain elements had a characteristic form of video-performance, “often with egocentric and sometimes with self-ironic premises, appropriated from rashly multiplied video materials taken over from commercial television or video tapes.” These were attempts at stepping away from the commercial logic of television with the help of video “by applying the characteristic ‘parasite’ strategy, which considers the manipulation of pre-existing visual material to be a suitable form of social critique. The video recorder thus becomes an equally essential tool of

video art as the video camera, and the whole project is created in montage, thus evoking the experiences of early avant-garde cinema.”<sup>16</sup>

For all these reasons, the phenomenon of underground art was yet another tendency in the evolution of art in Serbia during the 1990s, whereby it should be noted that underground was not a coherent or easily recognizable artistic “movement” or “style”. It was primarily a matter of sensibility in artists who were primarily active in the field of figurative, representational painting, and to some extent performance and video; their common feature was their link with popular music and with various other forms of popular culture (comics, graffiti, advertisements, youth subculture, cinema). Art critics of the period used the term “underground” as a descriptive and operational term for interpreting that specific sensibility; in this respect, the art of “Belgrade underground” was yet another element of the pluralist and eclectic scene that evolved in the circumstances of “art in a closed society,” which reacted in its peculiar way to the cultural, ideological, and political context of crisis and post-Yugoslav wars.

<sup>1</sup> Lidija Merenik, „No Wave: 1992-1995“, u: *Art in Yugoslavia 1992-1995*, Fond za otvoreno društvo – Centar za savremenu umetnost, Beograd, 1996., 10.

<sup>2</sup> O Novom valu (*novom talasu*) u Srbiji vidjeti u: Ninoslava Vičentić, „Opšte odlike umjetnosti i uloga medija: iznošenje društveno-angažovanog stava beogradskog *Novog talasa*“, *Kultura*, 133, decembar 2011., 328–338.

<sup>3</sup> Branislava Anđelković, Branislav Dimitrijević, „Poslednja decenija: Umetnost, društvo, trauma i normalnost“, u: *O normalnosti. Umetnost u Srbiji 1989–2001*, katalog izložbe, Muzej savremene umetnosti, Beograd, 2005., 9–127.

<sup>4</sup> Miomir Grujić Fleka, „Urbazona – Energija 93“, u: *Urbazona 1993-1995*, Beograd, 1995.; Ješa Denegri, „Fenomen Urbazona“, u: *Devedesete: teme srpske umjetnosti*, Svetovi, Novi Sad, 1999., 139–142.

<sup>5</sup> „Škola teških udaraca“ (intervju s Miomirom Grujićem Flekom i Srđanom Điletom Markovićem), *Evropljanin*, 4/18, Beograd, lipanj 1998.

<sup>6</sup> Miomir Grujić, „Medutim... umetnost... zar ne?“, u: *4F*, Beograd, 1984., 5; citirano prema: Ješa Denegri, „Miomir Grujić“, u: *Osamdesete: teme srpske umjetnosti*, Svetovi, Novi Sad, 1997., 170.

<sup>7</sup> Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real. The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts/London, 1996., 99-127.; Sylvia Harrison (ed.), *Pop Art and the Origins of Post-Modernism*, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Steve Plumb, *Neue Sachlichkeit 1918-33: Unity and Diversity of an Art Movement*, Rodopi, Amsterdam-New York, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Kirsten Anderson (ed.), *Pop Surrealism. The Rise of Underground Art*, Ignition Publishing/Last Gasp, San Francisco, 2004.



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<sup>10</sup> Ta teza se odnosi prije svega na fenomen kalifornijske „lowbrow“ umjetnosti, odnosno fenomen pop nadrealizma i umjetnike kao što su Robert Williams, Glenn Barr, Tim Biskup, Alex Gross, Todd Schorr, Eric White, idr. Ti autori djeluju uglavnom u području narativnog, figurativnog slikarstva i u svojoj umjetnosti uglavnom upotrebljavaju ikonografiju B-filmova, stripa, televizije, punk muzike i generalno popularne kulture.

<sup>11</sup> Branislava Anđelković, Branislav Dimitrijević, „Poslednja decenija: Umetnost, društvo, trauma i normalnost“, u: *O normalnosti. Umetnost u Srbiji 1989–2001*, katalog izložbe, Muzej savremene umetnosti, Beograd, 2005., 9–127.

<sup>12</sup> Danijela Purešević, „Uroš Đurić“, u: Grupa autora, *Pogled na zid, 1994–1996. Umetnici i kritičari*, Fond za otvoreno društvo, Centar za savremenu umetnost, Radio B92, Beograd, 1996., 24.

<sup>13</sup> Stevan Vuković, „Lični umetnički eksperiment“, Uroš Đurić, *Radovi/ Works: 1989-1997*, autorsko izdanje, Beograd, 1998., 4–29.

<sup>14</sup> Vidi u: Olivera Erić, „O video-džeingu i performansu Nenada Rackovića“, *Kultura*, 131, lipanj 2011., 158–172.

<sup>15</sup> Detaljnije o nastupima *Supernauta* u: Nikola Dedić, *Niže nego ljudski: Srđan Đile Marković i underground figuracija*, Vujičić kolekcija, Beograd, 2011.

<sup>16</sup> Branislava Anđelković, Branislav Dimitrijević, „Poslednja decenija: Umetnost, društvo, trauma i normalnost“, u: *O normalnosti. Umetnost u Srbiji 1989–2001*, katalog izložbe, Muzej savremene umetnosti, Beograd, 2005., 9–127.

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SRĐAN ĐILE MARKOVIĆ,  
JURIŠ, 2010.-2011.

SRĐAN ĐILE MARKOVIĆ,  
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odlike umetnosti i uloga medija: iznošenje društveno-angažovanog stava beogradskog *Novog talasa*” [General features of art and the role of the media: transmitting the socially engaged attitude of Belgrade’s New Wave], *Kultura* 133 (December 2011), 328-338.

<sup>3</sup> Branislava Anđelković and Branislav Dimitrijević, “Poslednja decenija: Umetnost, društvo, trauma i normalnost” [The last decade: art, the society, trauma, and normality], in: *O normalnosti. Umetnost u Srbiji 1989–2001* [On normality: art in Serbia, 1989-2001], exhibition catalogue (Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005), 9-127.

<sup>4</sup> Miomir Grujić Fleka, “Urbazona – Energija 93” in: *Urbazona 1993-1995* (Belgrade, 1995); Ješa Denegri, “Fenomen Urbazona” in: *Devedesete: teme srpske umetnosti* [The 1900s: Issues in Serbian art] (Novi Sad: Svetovi, 1999), 139-142.

<sup>5</sup> “Škola teških udaraca” [The school of hard blows] (interview with Miomir Grujić Fleka and Srđan Đile Marković), *Evropljanin* 4/18 (June 1998).

<sup>6</sup> Miomir Grujić, “Međutim... umetnost... zar ne?” [However... art... right?], in: *4F* (Belgrade, 1984), 5; quoted from: Ješa Denegri, “Miomir Grujić,” in: *Osamdesete: teme srpske umetnosti* [The 1980s: Issues in Serbian art] (Novi Sad: Svetovi, 1997), 170.

<sup>7</sup> Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real. The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1996), 99-127.; Sylvia Harrison (ed.), *Pop Art and the Origins of Post-Modernism* (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Steve Plumb, *Neue Sachlichkeit 1918-33: Unity and Diversity of an Art Movement* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2006).

<sup>9</sup> Kirsten Anderson (ed.), *Pop Surrealism. The Rise of Underground Art* (San Francisco: Ignition Publishing/Last Gasp, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> This hypothesis refers primarily to the phenomenon of Californian “lowbrow” art, that is, to the phenomenon of pop surrealism and artists such as Robert Williams, Glenn Barr, Tim Biskup, Alex Gross, Todd Schorr, Eric White, and others. They were mainly active in the field of narrative, figurative painting and largely used the iconography

of B-movies, comics, television, punk music, and generally of popular culture in their art.

<sup>11</sup> Branislava Anđelković and Branislav Dimitrijević, “Poslednja decenija: Umetnost, društvo, trauma i normalnost” [The last decade: art, the society, trauma, and normality], in: *O normalnosti. Umetnost u Srbiji 1989–2001* [On normality: art in Serbia, 1989-2001], exhibition catalogue (Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005), 9-127.

<sup>12</sup> Danijela Purešević, “Uroš Đurić,” in: VA, *Pogled na zid, 1994–1996. Umetnici i kritičari* [A view of the wall, 1994-1996: Artists and critics] (Belgrade: Open Society Fund, Centre for Contemporary Art, and Radio B92, 1996), 24.

<sup>13</sup> Stevan Vuković, “Lični umetnički eksperiment,” in: Uroš Đurić, *Radovi/Works: 1989-1997* (Belgrade: author’s edition, 1998), 4-29.

<sup>14</sup> See Olivera Erić, “O video-džeingu i performansu Nenada Rackovića” [On the VJ-ing and performance of Nenad Racković], *Kultura* 131 (June 2011), 158-172.

<sup>15</sup> For more details on *Supernaut’s* shows, see: Nikola Dedić, *Niže nego ljudski: Srđan Đile Marković i underground figuracija* [Lower than human: Srđan Đile Marković and the underground figuration] (Belgrade: Vujičić Collection, 2011).

<sup>16</sup> Branislava Anđelković and Branislav Dimitrijević, “Poslednja decenija: Umetnost, društvo, trauma i normalnost” [The last decade: art, the society, trauma, and normality], in: *O normalnosti. Umetnost u Srbiji 1989–2001* [On normality: art in Serbia, 1989-2001], exhibition catalogue (Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005), 9-127.