

umjetnost na granici postojanja art on the edge of being

▼ U suštini, sve što čovjek ima to je njegovo *ja*. To *ja* je sunce s tisuću zraka u njegovu trbuhu. Ostalo ne znači ništa.
(Pablo Picasso)

Slaven Tolj jedan je od rijetkih umjetnika koji relativiziraju tvrdnju Berislava Valušeka kako "hrvatska umjetnost u svijetu postoji samo u Hrvatskoj". Prijelomni Toljev projekt je iz 1991. godine (na *16. bijenalu mladih* u Rijeci), interslikovna instalacija pod nazivom *AY, AY, AY, assemblage* kiparskog stalka s kaktusom ("kaktus je greška", izjavljuje kasnije umjetnik) te reprodukcije Giorgioneove *Uspavane Venera* na kojoj je umjetnik intervenirao vlastitim tjelesnim tekućinama. Venera, neprikosnoveni ikonički znak, *trademark* za karnalnu ljepotu i femininu zavodljivost, poprskana je umjetnikovom spermom kao ilustracija mehanizama imaginacije, ali i ironična reakcija (tzv. Pavlovljevi refleksi) na povijesnu konvenciju realističnog slikarstva. Antun Maračić opisuje Toljev projekt kao "opori arte povera - konkretizam". "Ovim radom autor stavlja građansko slikarstvo u funkciju duplerice" (Ademir Arapović).

I u drugim svojim radovima na tragu *Nove umjetničke prakse* (fotografije, video projekcije, ambijentalne i video instalacije i performans ne-akcije, ili agresivnog diskursa) ovaj umjetnik "rugalačkog senzibiliteta" (kakvim ga definira Nada Beroš) tzv. libidinalnom umjetnošću razgrađuje seksualne i somatske inhibicije te problematizira nekomunikaciju, subjektivnost percepcije i objektivnost sjećanja, stvarnost i meta-stvarnost metodom citatnosti-aproprijacije, redizajna-alteracije, ili repetitivnim umnažanjem motiva.

Prema Alexandru Malou, valja ponuditi "periferiju kao alternativu". *Mise-en-scène*, tematsko dvorište Toljevih (*time-and-site-based, Kontext-Kunst*) projekata je uvijek Dubrovnik, mitemi mediteranskog društva, "geometrija ulica Grada i prazni prostori" kao scenografija za eliptičan motiv *Et in Arcadia ego*: Toljeva umjetnost *mekog ruba* prožima se s "traumatičnim realizmom" (termin Halla Fostera) stvarnosti (prije svega stvarnosti rata), kao terapijski instrumentarij za iskazivanje cijelog registra emocija i *collagea* senzacija. *Art is like medicine - it can heal* (Damien Hirst).

Fight or flight ratna konjunktura okvir je Toljevih projekata koji su *pietas* poginulim prijateljima. *Bez naslova*, djelo iz 1992.

● "Essentially, the only thing a man could possess is his own *self*. That *self* (Ego) is the sun shining with thousands of rays inside of his belly. Nothing else matters."
(P. Picasso)

Slaven Tolj is one of few artists relativising Berislav Valušek's statement according to which "Croatian art in the world exists only in Croatia". Tolj's crucial project was made in 1991 (at the *16th Youth Biennale in Rijeka*), an inter-pictorial installation titled *AY, AY, AY*, an assemblage of pedestal and a cactus ("cactus is an error" declared the artist afterwards) and a reproduction of Giorgione's *Venus asleep*, on which the artist intervened with his own corporal liquids. Venus, the sacrosanct iconic symbol, the trademark for carnal beauty and feminine seductiveness was spattered with artist's semen as an illustration of mechanisms of imagination, at the same time being an ironical reaction (so called Pavlov's reflex) to a historical convention of realistic painting. Antun Maračić described Tolj's project as "a rough arte povera-concretism". "In this work the author uses bourgeois painting as a centerfold" (Ademir Arapović).

As well as in his other works, on the scent of *New artistic practice* (photographs, video showings, ambiance & video installations and non-action performances, or of aggressive discourse), by his so called libidinous art this artist of "mocking sensibility" (as he was defined by Nada Beroš) analyses sexual and somatic inhibitions and problematizes non-communication, subjectiveness of perception, objectiveness of memory, reality and metareality, using a method of citation-appropriation, of redesign-alteration, or repetitive multiplying of motifs.

According to Alexander Malo, it is necessary to offer "a periphery as an alternative". *Mise-en-scène*, thematic field for Tolj's projects (*time and site based, Kontext-Kunst*) is always Dubrovnik, mitem of Mediterranean society, "geometry of streets of the City and its empty spaces", which are used as a scenography for an elliptical motif *Et in Arcadia ego*. Tolj's *soft edge* art interpenetrates with a "traumatic realism" (Hall Foster's term) of reality (first and foremost the reality of war), as a therapeutic instrument used to express a whole register of emotions and a collage of



Slaven Tolj





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godine, sastoji se od fotografije i zastave. Crno-bijela fotografija Straduna, zaštitne drvene oplata koja zakriva Orlandov kip te hrvatske zastave koja se vijori u kontrastu sa svjetlinom neba, nadena je u kameri lateralne žrtve rata Pava Urbana koji je, fotografirajući, poginuo u granatnom napadu na Grad na crkveni blagdan 1991. Detalj s Urbanove fotografije, vjetrom zgužvanu zastavu, Tolj je izveo-sašio od viskoznog materijala prema arhetipu, ali monokromnu, boja reduciranih na bijelu i nijanse sive i tako je dekomponirao, odnosno reducirao, oduzevši joj njezine simbolične državne boje i time nazivnik državne zastave (amblema). Alteracija bandiere može značiti "glorifikaciju, ali i subverziju države", a "tamo gdje prestaje država započinje čovjek" (Nietzsche). Državna zastava i Toljeva monokromna zastava svezane u čvor, rad vernakularno-političke ikonografije prikazan je 1999. na izložbi o umjetnosti i kulturi postkomunističke Europe *After the Wall*, u organizaciji Moderna Museet u Stockholmu. U Dunaújvárosu 1997., Toljev *site-specific* rad *Who by fire* sastoji se od para drvenih jarbola za zastave, nagorjelih pri vrhu. Koplja sondiraju i sakupljaju energiju interijera koji prelazi u otvoreni ambijent prožimajući se s *outdoor* vegetacijskim zelenilom preko staklene zidne plohe. U uličnu instalaciju *Public space* 1999. u Ústí nad Labem, opet su integrirane zastave, ovoga puta država Hrvatske i BiH, spuštene "na pola koplja", a tu su i tzv. obavijesni sandučići s presnimkama s ekrana kompjutorski simulirane utakmice, na kojima igrači oba tima odlaze s terena snuždeni. U toj igri svi su izgubili.

Na *Bijenalu mladih Mediterana* u dvadesetpetminutnom performansu pod nazivom *Dubrovnik-Valencija-Dubrovnik* Tolj poseže za stereotipom razodijevanja pred publikom. Umjetnik ostaje nag do pa-

sensations. "Art is like medicine-it can heal" (Damien Hirst).

Fight or flight wartime situation is a framework for Tolj's projects representing pietas to perished friends. *The Untitled*, Tolj's work from 1992 has been composed of a photograph and a flag. Black & white snapshot of Stradun, showing a protective wooden coat hiding Orlando's statue, and a Croatian flag waving in a contrast to a bright sky, was found in a camera of Pavo Urban. He was the lateral victim of war, killed while photographing in the shelling of the City on a church holiday in 1991. A detail from Urban's photo, the Croatian flag creased by wind, Tolj has made out-sewed up in viscose, according to the archetype, but monochrome, flag's colours reduced to black and nuances of grey. In that way the artist decomposed or rather reduced the flag, depriving it of its symbolic national colours and adequately its national tricolour's denomination. The alteration of the bandiera could signify "a glorification but also a subversion of the state" and "at the point where the state disappears, appears a man" (Nietzsche). The national flag tied with Tolj's monochrome one, a work of vernacular-political iconography was shown in 1999 at *After the Wall*, the exhibition of art and culture of post-communist Europe, organised by Moderna Museet in Stockholm. In Dunaújváros in 1997, Tolj's *site-specific* work *Who by fire* consisted of a pair of flagpoles partly burned at the top. The flagpoles probe and accumulate the energy of the interior, which is becoming the open ambience by interpenetrating outdoor vegetation green through the vitreous wall surfaces. Once again flags were incorporated in a street installation titled *Public space*, in Ústí nad Labem in 1999, this time the national flags of Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina, flying at half-mast.

sl.2: S. Tolj, *Hrana za preživljavanje / Food for Survival*, Helsinki 1993.



sa skinući dvanaest slojeva odjeće (Tolja, koji dolazi direktno s ratišta, ovim činom simulira regrutacijski postupak). Na svakom je odjevnom predmetu kumulativno prišiveno po jedno dugme više - crno žalobno dugme, tzv. korotno puće, vanjski znak oplakivanja poginulih prijatelja. Od tuceta dugmadi prišivenih na posljednji svučeni komad odjeće Tolja je otrgnuo jedno te ga koncentriranom gestom iglom i koncem aplicirao na vlastitu kožu, na grudi, kao ironizirani motiv ordena u "civilizaciji ljudi bez grudi" (kako je vidi Nietzsche). Gotovo ritualno samopovrjeđivanje (učestalo među istočnoazijskim narodima) fizički je ekvivalent *duševne* boli (*Arma Christi*). Radikaliziranjem umjetničkog čina kroz ispitivanje izdržljivosti ljudskog tijela Tolja koristi gramatiku boli body arta, primarno bečkog akcionizma.

Perfomans *Hrana za preživljavanje* Tolja je izveo sa suprugom Marijom Grazio 1993. u Helsinkiju na festivalu perfomansa *Kula babilonska* - o umjetnosti kao "zadnjoj mogućnosti komunikacije". Video-snimke razaranja Dubrovnika bile su predikatom festivalskih događanja. Perfomansom s biografskom polazišnom točkom ("proizašao je iz radikalne situacije stvarnosti", riječima Janke Vukmir) Tolja preispituje mehanizme umjetničke prezentacije. Muž i žena jukstaponiranih razodjevenih poprsja premazuju tijelo *Drugog* ciničnim civilizacijskim proizvodom, alimentarnom smjesom ("Überlebens-Nahrung") koju vade direktno iz konzerve, prstima, potom se hrane s tijela *Drugog*. Prah iz konzerve postaje jestiv tek u dodiru s tjelesnim sekrecijama. Performeri, interaktivni dijelovi autarkične bračne zajednice (Tolja i radovi uvijek su bazirani na stvarnom), usredotočeni su na međusobnu nedijalošku komunikaciju čiji nosioci su njihova tijela-subjekti, a u koju publika, iako prisutna, nije uključena. Na ovu intim-

So called info-boxes were also provided, containing re-recordings from display, of the computer-simulated football match showing dispirited players of both teams leaving the pitch. They all lost this game.

In a twenty-five minute performance titled *Dubrovnik-Valencia-Dubrovnik* at *Mediterranean Youth Biennale*, Tolja uses a stereotype of undressing in front of the audience. The artist remained naked to the waist after stripping twelve layers of clothes one by one (Tolja, coming directly from the battlefield in that way simulates recruitment procedure). On each piece of clothes there is one more button - black mourning button, cumulatively sewn on, as an outward sign of mourning over perished friends. When he stripped the last piece of clothes, with dozen of buttons applied, Tolja tore off one to attach it by concentrated gesture, using a thread and a needle, to his own skin, to his chest. In such a manner he treated with irony the motif of medal in "a civilisation of chest-less people"(Nietzsche). Almost ritual self-violating (very often among the East Asian peoples) is a physical equivalent to an anguish of *soul* (*Arma Christi*). By radicalising the artistic act through examining the endurance to pain of a human body, Tolja uses a grammar of pain of body art, primarily Wiener Aktionismus.

A performance entitled *A food for survival* Tolja performed with his wife Marija Grazio in 1993 in Helsinki at the festival *Tower of Babel*, concerning art as "the last possibility of communication". Video images of the ravage of Dubrovnik were the background of the festival happenings. Tolja re-examines the mechanisms of the artistic presentation by doing a performance with a biographical starting point ("derived from a radical situation in reality" in words by Janka Vukmir). A husband and a wife, waist naked and juxtaposed, smear over the



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nu, ali i socijalnu situaciju u kontekstu Grada pod opsadom, primjenjive su odrednice (*riječi-kišobrani*, termin Jean-François Lyotarda) body-art, fizički teatar, intuitivna procesna umjetnost, post-akcionizam. Životinjski čin hranjenja navođen instinktima - "izumom što ga je stvorila bespomoćnost pred smislom zbilje" (Johan Huizinga), metafora je grčevite borbe za preživljavanje, no jednako je snažan moment žrtve za Drugoga (jer bića smo, prema klasičnoj filozofiji, negdje između zvijeri i bogova). Projekt govori o nadilaženju distinkcije između primarnih (fizičkih) i sekundarnih (psiholoških) potreba. Zaista, "ljudska se sloboda pojavljuje samo tada kada je čovjek sposoban transcendentirati svoju prirodnu, životinjsku egzistenciju i stvoriti novo jastvo za sebe. Simbolična početna točka toga procesa samostaranja jest borba do smrti za čisti prestiž" (Francis Fukuyama). Rad govori o relativnosti bliskosti i distance; uz Jastvo, tu je i Drugi, njegovo dostojanstvo, različitost, pluralnost i nemogućnost raspolaganja njime. Istovremeno, pokreti i radnje performerera neodoljivo nalikuju na ekspresiju seksualnosti i želje, ljubavni čin kao prokreativni princip života u svakodnevici umiranja (kao i u ratu, prema Proustu "svaki zaljubljeni čovjek poznaje bol"). Nesreća, warholovski prevedena u umjetničko djelo, ne izaziva nužno žaljenje u gledatelja.

Na izložbi *Meeting point* SCCA u Sarajevu 1997. godine Tolj je izveo prozaičan konzumacijski *site-specific* performans. Budući da se program izložbe odvijao u *kafani*, u ljetnoj *bašti* Čulhan, Tolj je sjedio u kavani sam za stolom, pušio te pio mješavinu travarice i šliivovice. Podnaslov ovog

body of the Other a cynical civilisation product - an alimentary blend (*Überlebens-Nahrung*), taking it out directly from a can with their fingers, and then feed from the body of the Other. The powder blend taken out from the can becomes edible only when mixed with body secretions. The performers, interactive parts of autarchic conjugal community (Tolj's works are always based on reality) are concentrated upon a mutual non-dialogic communication carried out by their bodies-subjects and the audience, although present, does not participate. This intimate, but also a social situation coming from a context of the City under siege, could be determined (in *words-umbrellas*; a Jean-François Lyotard's term) as Body art, Physical theatre, intuitive Process art, Post-Actionism. An animal act of feeding guided by instincts - "an invention derived from a sense of helplessness in front of sense of reality" (Johan Huizinga) comes as a metaphor for convulsive struggle for survival. Equally powerful moment is the sacrifice for the Other (because we are the creatures somewhere between beasts and gods, according to classical philosophy). The author's intention is to surpass distinctions between primary (physical) and secondary (psychological) needs, indeed "a human freedom appears only at the point when a man is capable to transcend his natural animal existence creating thus a new self-being for himself. A symbolic starting point of that process of self-caring is a struggle to death for pure prestige" (Francis Fukuyama). The work deals with relativity of intimacy and distance; beside Self there is also the Other, his dignity, diversity, plurality and also impossibility to have him at disposal. At the same time gestures and actions of performers irresistibly resemble to an expression of sexuality and desire, a love act as a procreative principle of life in the situation of everyday death (as well as in war, "every man in love knows pain" according to Proust). A misfortune, in Warholian manner translated into the work of art, does not necessarily provoke bystander's pity.

At the exhibition *Meeting point* by SCCA in Sarajevo in 1997, Tolj performed a prosaic consumer performance. Since the exhibition program was located in the traditional café, in the aestival garden *Čulhan*, Tolj was just sitting alone by the café table, smoking and drinking a mixture of herb and plum brandy. The subtitle of this *self-cater-*

sl.3: S. Tolj, performance *Globalizacija / Globalisation, Body and the East*, Galerija Exit, New York, 2001.

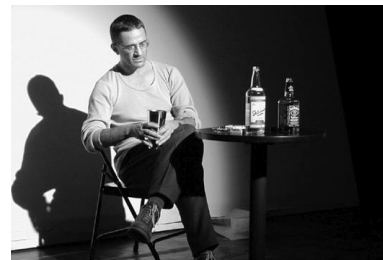
self-cattering performansa je *Čekajući Willija Brandta*. Kavana je na ovim prostorima "mjesto gdje se rješavaju stvari", ispijanje rakije istovremeno je ritualna i simbolička gesta, korelat druženju. Korištenje dviju vrsta (*brands' mix*) rakije (jedna se destilira na Mediteranu, a druga na kontinentu), ali i njihovo miješanje, metafora je relacije elementarnih energija Dubrovnik-Sarajevo (uostalom, nema povijesti bez zemljopisa). Toljev *real-time* performans ironizira stereotip asocijalne društvenosti umjetnika kojemu je kavana atelje, koji se formira u razdoblju svjetske boli. Prema Bertrandu Russellu "procesi su ti, ne proizvodi, koji bi trebali biti oblikovani". Simulacija kavanske *genre-scene* svodiva je pod Baudrillardovu teoriju po kojoj je moderna doba proizvodnje, a postindustrijska postmoderna simulacije (umjetnost moderne u Adornovu smislu je definirana kroz umjetničko djelo; prema Fereyabendu postmoderna je sinonim za *anything goes*); umjetnik postmoderne, naime, dokida ručni rad "u studiju punom posudica s bojom" (riječima Christosa Joachimedes). Svladavanje tehnike i "slikarsko-kiparske alatke potisnute su mentalnim pristupom" (Nada Beroš).

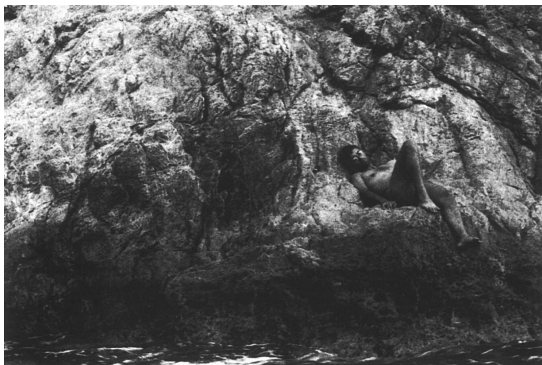
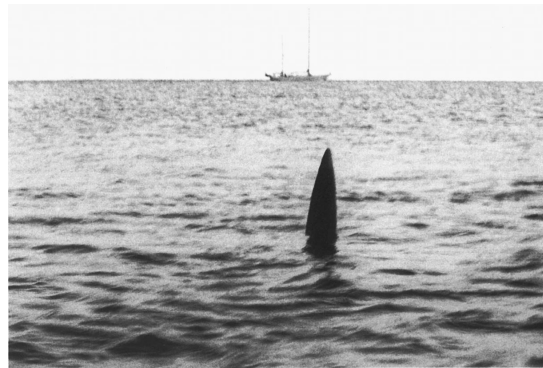
Na izložbi 1998. Galerije Emil Filla *Black and Blue* (naziv je "sastavljen" od plavetnila Mediterana i crnila urbanog organizma uništenog industrijom, češkog grada Ústí nad Labem koje je mjesto intersekcije, odnosno održavanja izložbe), Tolj je izveo performans (*bihevioralna umjetnost, performans meta-ponašanja*) u kojemu je, sjedeći u kutu galerije, indiferentan prema publici, popušio cigaretu (opušak bacivši na pod), sažvakao nekoliko komada žvakaćih guma i ispljunutu dobivenu smjesu gume i vlastitih izlučevina zaljepio na poledinu stolca s kojeg je potom ustao i otišao. Usta su, prema Janosu Szoboszlaiju, tjelesna demarkacijska točka, istovremeno fizička i duhovna kapija jedne osobe, primarni veznik majke i djeteta, ali i ljubavnika. Suha žvakaća guma iscrpila je umjetnikove sokove, ritimizirano žvakanje otežava mu disanje, bivajući izraz istovremeno želje za samodestrukcijom i kontrapunktirajuće želje za oslobođenjem.

Prema Marini Abramović "tjelesno" umjetničko djelo prenositelj je energije koja gledatelje treba dovesti u stanje suglasja tijela i duha, stanje "sada i ovdje". Tolj u performansima od gledatelja zahtijeva produktivnu percepciju, što može biti i indiferentno promatranje koje dovršava umjetni-

ing performance was *Waiting for Willy Brant*. In this part of the world a café is "a place where the things are being settled"; to drink out brandy is ritual and symbolic gesture at the same time, correlative to a companionship. The use of two sorts of brandy (*brands' mix*), one being distilled in the Mediterranean, the other on the Continent) as well as their mixing, is a metaphor for the relation of elementary energies of Dubrovnik - Sarajevo (after all, there is no history without geography). Tolj's *real-time* performance ironies a stereotype formed in a period of *Weltschmerz*, of asocial sociability of an artist to whom his café is also an atelier. According to Bertrand Russel "it is the processes, and not products, to be shaped". Baudrillard's theory, treating modernism as an era of production, and post-industrial postmodernism as a period of simulation (in Adorno's terms the art of Modernism is defined by the work of art; according to Fereyabend postmodernism is a synonym for *anything goes*) explicates the simulation of café *genre-scene*. An artist of postmodernism, namely, revokes handiwork "in a studio filled with paint pots" (by words of Christos Joachimedes). Mastering technique and "painting-sculptural tools are replaced with mental approach" (Nada Beroš).

At the *Black and blue* exhibition in Emil Filla Gallery in 1998 (the title of the exhibition was *composed* of the Mediterranean blue and blackness of urban organism, devastated by industry, of the Czech town Ústí nad Labem being the field of intersection, or rather the exhibition site) Tolj carried out a performance (*behavioural art, performance of meta-behaviour*) in which he was sitting in the corner, indifferent towards the audience. He smoked out a cigarette (having thrown a cigarette butt on the floor), he chewed up a few pieces of chewing gum and then stuck on a back of the seat the spited out compound of the gum and his own secretions. He then stood up from the seat, and left. A mouth is, according to Janos Szoboszlai, a corporal demarcation point, at the same time physical and spiritual gate to a person, a primary conjunction between the mother and the child, as well as between lovers. The dry chewing gum drained up artist's juices, the rhythm of chewing makes his breathing difficult, at the same time being the expression of desire for self-destruction, and contrapuntal will for liberation.





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čko djelo. "Publika postaje sve više aktivni sudionik u iščitavanju poruke djela, a sve manje pasivni konzument uživatelj estetike i potrošač eventualnog spektakla, jednako kao što se umjetnik sve više koristi znakovima stvarnosti i njima manipulira, a sve manje proizvodi umjetničke objekte" (Janka Vukmir). Pritom su performer i publika jasno odvojeni. Performer nije glumac, on ne predstavlja Drugog, njegova aktivnost je intimna i solipsistička, uz minimalnu režiju događaja. Na tjednu performansa *Javno tijelo* u Zagrebu 1997. godine Tolj je izveo *peep show* performans, zahtijevajući od publike prepuštanje voajerskom nagonu. Umjetnikovo tijelo se obrisno naziralo pod plahtom, kraj njega je stajala djevojka plaćena da bude naga. Dakle, njih dvoje su izlagali svoja tijela "na različite načine i iz različitih pobuda: egzistencijalnih nasuprot artističkim". Performansom *S u četverokutu* iz 1990. u Galeriji proširenih medija autor propituje distinkciju između stvarnosti i predstave zahtijevajući od gledatelja "motrenje sna" dvoje ljudi (Slavena Tolja i Marije Grazio, njegove supruge) koji spavaju svatko na svojoj polovici bijele postelje.

Još jedan performans Tolja sa suprugom razlaže temu ljubavi i/ili seksualnosti te simetričnog odnosa spolova. U projektu *Uzlazak* iz 1989. Slaven i Marija su nepomično sjedili, udaljeni jedno od drugoga, na

According to Marina Abramović, a "corporeal" work of art is an energy transmitter that should bring a spectator to a state of harmony of body and mind, the state of "now and here". What Tolj demands from an audience in his performances is the productive perception. It could even be an indifferent observing, that could complete the art production. "More and more the audience becomes an active participant in interpreting the work of art, and less a passive aesthetics consumer and a consumer of potential spectacle, as much as an artist increasingly more uses signs of reality and manipulates them, and less produces art artefacts" (Janka Vukmir). In this matter the performer and the audience are strictly separated. The performer is not an actor, he is not representing the Other, his activity is intimate and solipsistic, and only slightly planned. In the week of performance *Public body* in Zagreb in 1997, Tolj performed a *peep show* performance requiring from the spectators to let themselves to their own *voyeuristic* instincts. The artist's body under the sheet was visible in dim outline; standing beside him was a girl paid to be naked. They both exhibited their bodies, but in different ways and inspired by different motifs: existential motives in contrast to artistic ones. With performance *S in a quadrilateral*

sl.4: S. Tolj, *Uzlazak / Ascending*, Dubrovnik, 1989.

nasuprotnim stijenama u uvali Pile, on u uvali, nag, ona, naprotiv, ogrnuta pelerinom na stijeni isturenoj prema pučini. Tijekom pet sati performansa postepeno je izranjao iz mora, nadolaženjem oseke, falusoidni drveni klin čija je potpuna vidljivost obilježila kraj performans ne-akcije (kao deskripcije stanja, a ne reprezentacije). Punktirajući krajolik, dižući se i spuštajući poput energije plime i oseke, falus je os koju povezuje muški i ženski lik međusobno i s "virtualnim" mediteranskim ambijentom (krajolik, *genius loci*, fingira *osmi*, ženski ud). Svojom siluetom, međutim, drveni klin podsjeća i na kòsu, orude Smrti. Interakcija prostora i percepcije postignuta je korištenjem pejzažne konfiguracije i nenasilnom intervencijom u njoj, prema Maračiću, "u najboljoj tradiciji *Fluxusa*". Tolj kasnije izjavljuje: "...moj je zadatak radikalizirati i svoje postupke i vlastitu umjetničku praksu. Blizak mi je *Fluxus* - Beuys i Duchamp su prebrzo zaboravljeni..." Performans *Uzlazak* je potom translociran u kontinentalni pejzaž zagrebačkog Maksimira.

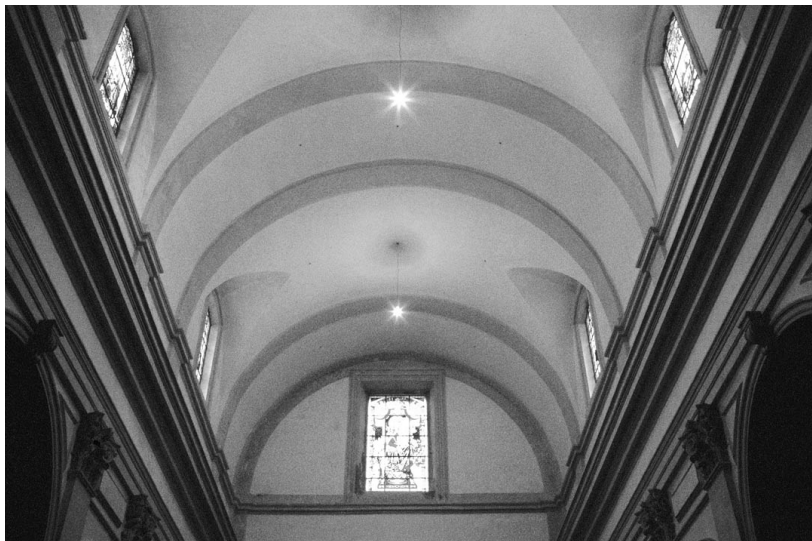
Interhistorični *Tal* iz 1990. godine nazvan je po antičkom mitskom gorostasu koji je, onemogućujući dolaske i odlaske s otoka, držao Kretu u stanju stagnacije prisposobivom suvremenoj situaciji Dubrovnika, nekoć pomorskog i trgovačkog diva. Tolj koristi akumulativnu snagu predmeta, *in situ* objekata na Stradunu: brončanih kipova (tzv. *zelenaca*) u dvorištu Sponze i njihovih brončanih kopija na vertikali gradskog zvonika, kao najizrazitije arhitektonske forme. U performansu koji traje od ponoći do podneva Tolj kleči ispod zvona izlažući se razornoj buci (zvuk zvona ima moć egzorcizma i očišćenja, štiti od zla i bolesti) na svaki puni sat, pri čemu se polukružno okreće naizmjenično prema moru i prema gradu. Istovremeno mu se javlja Marija koja stoji ispred kipova u Sponzi. Kroz sinhroniju, ali i konfrontaciju pokreta muškarca i ženskog glasa projekt govori o antipodnoj (ali i konvergentnoj) muškoj i ženskoj energiji. Postavlja se pitanje da li je za objektivizaciju lijepoga potrebno dati nešto u zamjenu, da li je to ljudsko tijelo-žrtva, odnosno je li zamisliva estetika bez prijetnje smrću. Istovremeno, ženin zov svjedoči o sudbini usamljenih supruga u gradu pomoraca.

"Demistifikacijom i dematerijalizacijom umjetničkog volumena kao takvog", riječima Sandre Križić Roban, stvarajući umjetnost na rubu postojanja, Tolj fizički ukida vlastiti rad, izostaje "tijeelo umjetnosti".

al in 1990 in the *Gallery of expanded media* Tolj re-examined the distinction between reality and presentation, he was asking from the audience to "watch the dream" of two persons (the artist himself and of his wife Maria Grazio), sleeping on separated sides of white bed.

Another Tolj's performance with his wife analysis the subject of love and/or sexuality and also a symmetrical relation between sexes. In the project *The ascent* from 1989, Slaven and Marija were sitting still, far away from each other on the opposite rocks in the Pile inlet. He was in the inlet, nude, she, on the contrary wrapped in pelerine, was on the rock protruded towards the open sea. During five hours of performance, as the low tide was coming, a phallic shaped wooden wedge was gradually protruding out from the sea and its total visibility marked the end of the performance of non-action (as a description of a condition and not a representation). Marking the landscape, rising up and coming down with an energy of ebb and flow, the phallus is an axis linking a male and a female figure with each other and with a "virtual" Mediterranean ambience (the landscape, *genius loci*, feigns the eighth, female limb). By its silhouette, however, wooden wedge bears a resemblance to a scythe, a tool of Death. An interaction of space and perception was achieved by using a landscape configuration and by non-violent intervention in it, "in the best tradition of Fluxus" according to Maračić. Tolj declared afterwards: "... my determination is to radicalise both my actions and my artistic practice. Fluxus is close to me - Beuys and Duchamp had been forgotten too fast...". The performance *The ascent* was subsequently translocated in a continental landscape of the park Maksimir in Zagreb.

An inter-historical *Tal* from the year 1990 was named after the ancient mythical giant who was preventing comings and goings on the island, and in that way kept Crete in a state of stagnation comparable to a contemporary situation of Dubrovnik, once a powerful maritime and mercantile giant. Tolj uses a cumulative power of objects, *in situ* objects on Stradun: bronze statues in the yard of Sponza palace, and their bronze replicas on a vertical of a municipal bell-tower, being the most expressive architectural form. In the performance that continued from midnight to



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tj. umjetnina. Toljeva je umjetnost zasnovana prije svega na "neopisivo osjetljivoj percepciji" (termin Janke Vukmir), detekciji i potom transpoziciji, redizajnu stvarnosti u heteronomnom odnosu prema *slučaju* i *intuiciji*. Umjetnik doslovno preuzima, proglašavajući ih vlastitim djelom, predmete koji "pamte energiju Grada" i druge nadene predmete koje izdvaja iz njihove okoline (fizički ili mentalno), dekontekstualizira ih, da bi potom pomno istražio suodnos osnovnog elementa s novim prostorom u koji je implantiran; čime objašnjava "zašto ponovo, iako sam, recimo, normalna osoba, premeštam stvari iz prostora u prostor".

Uvođenje i obrada zbiljskih svakodnevnih predmeta (*das grosse Reale*), jednako su obilježili umjetnost 20. stoljeća kao i nepredmetna - apstraktna umjetnost (*das grosse Abstrakte*). Izlažući *ready mades* poput morskih pasa u otopini formaldehida kao kontradiktorne metafore za agresivnost i vitalnost, ali i smrt i konzervaciju, Tolj provodi defetishizaciju umjetničkog predmeta. Toljev rad na *Global Checkpointu* u organizaciji SCCA 1995. godine instalacija je koja se sastoji od isluženih dućanskih tendi, svojevrsnih metafora mediteranskog pejzaža. Na površini impregniranog platna u formalnoj i sadržajnoj jednakosti vidljivi su tragovi izloženosti suncu, golubljeg izmeta i gelera kao ratnih suveniru. Catherine David, umjetnička voditeljica *Documente X* u Kasselu 1997., odbacivši "umjetničku praksu (tzv. "Benetton-efekta") čiji se estetski i politički potencijal zlopotrebljava u smislu služenja instrumentalizirajućoj i spektaklu orijentiranoj kulturnoj industriji",

midday Tolj was kneeling under the bell, exposing himself to a destructive noise (the sound of the bell has the power of exorcism and purification, and protects from evil and disease) on every full hour, while making semicircle turns alternatively towards the sea and the town. At the same time Marija gives sign of herself, standing in front of statues in Sponza. Trough synchronism, but also a confrontation of gestures of man and a female voice, the project deals with an antipode (but also a convergent) male and female energy. The question poses itself, is it necessary to give something in exchange for the objectification of beauty, is it a human body-sacrifice, or rather is it possible to conceive aesthetics without threat of death. At the same time woman's call testifies of a fate of wives being lonely in a town of seamen.

"By demystification and dematerialization of artistic volume as it is", in words of Sandra Križi Roban, by producing art on the edge of existence Tolj physically revokes his own work, what is missing is "the body of art" or rather *objet d'art*. Tolj's art is based primarily on "a indescribably sensitive perception"(a term of Janka Vukmir), detection and subsequently on transposition, redesign of reality, in a heteronymous relationship with *an incident* and *an intuition*. The artist literally takes over, declaring them as his own art works, the objects which are bearing memory to "the energy of the City" and some other found objects which he takes out (physically or mentally) of their environment. He puts them out of context in order to research attentively an interrelation of the primary element and a new space in which it had been implanted; by which the author explains "why, although I am, so to say, a normal person, I move objects from place to place".

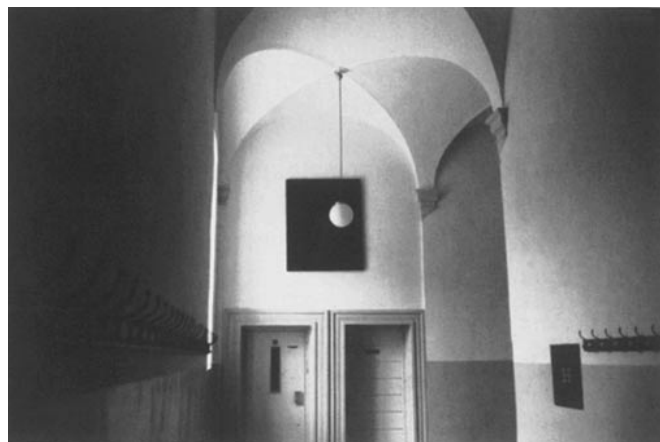
Introduction and elaboration of real everyday objects (*das grosse Reale*) equally characterised the art of the 20th century as a non-representational art - an abstract art (*das grosse Abstrakte*). Tolj's activities on exhibiting ready-mades, such as sharks in a formaldehyde solution being a contradictory metaphor for aggressiveness and vitality but also for death and conservation, have a purpose to de-fetish an object of art. At *Global Checkpoint* organised by SCCA in 1995 Tolj exhibited an installation made of outworn store awnings, specific metaphors for Mediterranean landscape. In formal and substantial equality, visible on the surface

pozvala je Slavenu Tolja (čiji je rad vidjela na *Checkpointu*) da izlaže, kao jedini (ali ne i prvi; prije njega su na Documenti izlagali Sanja Iveković i Dalibor Martinis) hrvatski umjetnik među 116 zastupljenih (neovisno o nacionalnom ključu), u prostoru “nedavne ruševine” Kulturbahnhofa, rezidualnom pre-

of waterproofed linen are traces of exposure to sun, pigeon droppings and shrapnel vestiges as souvenirs of war. Catherine David, the art director of *Documenta X* in Kassel in 1997, having renounced “the artistic practice (of so called Benetton effect) whose aesthetic and political potential is



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dvorju starog željezničkog kolodvora kao jednoj od izložbenih postaja. Pod jedrast čelično-stakleni svod inženjerske arhitekture 19. stoljeća Tolj je kolažnim *cut-and-paste* postupkom “ugradio” anakroničnu instalaciju *Bez naziva* (znači bez subordinacije onome sadržanom u naslovu), dvije stropne loptaste svjetiljke iz dubrovačkog jezuitskog samostana (Nada Beroš duhovito dvosmisleno konstatira kako je Toljev rad “zauzeo najviše mjesto na izložbi”, na granici neprimjetnosti, gotovo skriven od publike). U entropijskom “duhovitom kontrastu” s omotom moćnog sakralnog ambijenta, tim jeftinim, serijski proizvedenim artiklima zamijenjeni su originalni skupocjeni lusteri sklonjeni u ratu zbog detonacija. “Kada me videno dugo muči, kao što je slučaj sa spomenutim lampama, na tragu sam djela”, objašnjava autor. Korištenje *ready-madea* je, prema Walteru Benjaminu, posljednja legitimna kompozicijska metoda dvadesetog stoljeća. Svjetiljke-globusi istovremeno su odvojene, ali i povezane energijom električne struje. Srodnu instalaciju Tolj izlaže u *Kunsthalle* u Bremenu 2001. godine. U izduljenoj prostoriji na suprotnim krajevima koje su vrata postavljene na cilindričnim nosačima par reflektora opremljenih senzorima, okrenutih prema vratima i jedan od drugoga. Pojavom posjetitelja u okviru vrata aktiviraju se *spot lights*, no nastave li se posjetitelji pravocrtno kre-

getting misused in a way of serving to a manipulative cultural industry oriented towards spectacle”, called Slaven Tolj (after seeing his work at *Checkpoint*) to exhibit as the only (but not the first, Sanja Iveković and Dalibor Martinis were exhibiting at *Documenta* before him) Croatian artist among 116 represented (without regards to the national key) in the “recent ruins” of *Kulturbahnhof*, residual hall to a railway station as one of exhibition areas. Under the sail-like vault of the 19th century engineer’s architecture made of steel and glass, Tolj “built in”, using a collage cut and paste method, an anachronistic installation *Without title* (meaning - without subordination to a subject-matter of a title), two round ceiling lamps from the Jesuit monastery in Dubrovnik (Nada Beroš ingeniously and ambiguously stated that Tolj’s work “has taken the highest position at the exhibition”, bordering upon the imperceptibility, almost hidden from the audience). In an entropic “ingenious contrast” with an envelope of potent sacral ambience, with those cheap serial products were replaced original valuable chandeliers, put away during the war on account of detonations. “When something I have seen torments me for a long time, as it happened with these lamps, I am on the scent of my next work” explains the author. According to Walter Benjamin, the use of ready-made is the last legitimate compositional method of the twentieth cen-

sl.5-7: S. Tolj, *Bez naslova / Untitled*, Jezuitska crkva sv. Ignacija / Jesuit church of St. Ignacije, Dubrovnik, 1996., foto / photo: A. Opalić

tati prema centru prostorije nađu se u mraku, u turobnoj situaciji nemogućnosti susreta.

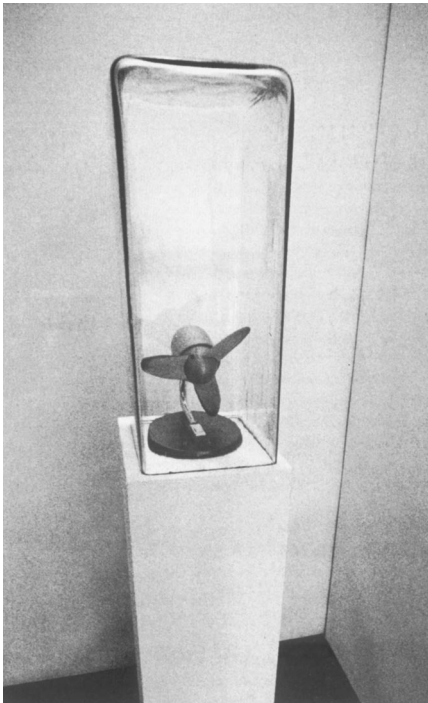
Izložba "kondenziranih znakova" za ustajalost, nepomičnost, *Buba-buba velika* održana je u *Umjetničkoj galeriji* u Dubrovniku 1994. godine. Na zidu od dasaka kakvim su tijekom rata zaštićivani spomenici, a potom su se našli u novoj funkciji obnove deset je parova polaroid fotografija (trenutnih, instant, ne trajnih) na kojima su u istim dubrovačkim eksterijerima snimljeni roditelji i njihova djeca, u paranoidnoj situaciji fizičke sličnosti, ali i zaleđenog fenotipa: djeca i roditelji dugo žive zajedno, imaju iste zanate i zanimanja i rade u istim poduzećima. Rad je sazdan na konvenciji portretnog *genrea* kao fiziognomijski opit koji sugerira osjećaj predestinacije, nemogućnosti svake promjene, predstavljajući kolektivne strukture i socijalne odnose. Punjena sova ušara čiji je latinski naziv sadržan u nazivu izložbe translocirana *composition trouvé* - dekor obješenih i ispuhanih balona te niski uglavnom ugašenih lampica koje su ostale visjeti na Stradunu dugo nakon božićnih blagdana, indeksiraju *postfestum* stanje, entropiju, materijalno i mentalno klonuče: *buba-buba velika* noću slijeće u Grad ne bi li se nahranila golubovima. Treća soba Galerije redimenzionirana je, montažnim parapetima svedena na oveću kutiju u kojoj je ventilator u pogonu ispod staklenog zvona. Dobivenu sliku zagušljivosti i umnožene klaustrofobije neutralizira širom otvoren prozor s kojeg se otvara pogled na more i Lokrum. Time se simbolički dokida hermetičnost tradicionalističkih izložbenih prostora u duhu post-strukturalizma koji zahtijeva dokinuće muzeja. Prozaični epilog izložbe je vizija ventilatora kojim se rashlađuje prodavačica u samoposluživanju iz kojeg je posuđen.

Instalacija u *Galeriji proširenih medija* 1999. je na razini ideje vrlo blizu kraja procesa "obespredmećenja" umjetnosti. Autor je impostirao dinamični vijenac u podnožju rebara kupole galerije postavljanjem štapićastih svežnjeva simulirane eksplozivnosti. Pažnju promatrača preusmjerio je na "suhu" činjenicu izložbenog prostora, priželjkujući sugerirano razaranje jer bi svjetlo, zrak i prostor nasrnuli u galeriju da nema pritiskajuće neprozirne plombe kupole.

Prekinute igre iz 1993. samo-realiziran su projekt, *image trouvé*, i jedan od najboljih primjera Toljeve perceptualno-konceptualne umjetnosti (pritom je percepcija

tury. Lamps - globes are at the same time isolated, but also linked by the energy of the electric power. Tolj exhibited a similar installation in *Kunsthalle* in Berlin in 2001. In a longitudinal room with doors on its opposite sides, on cylindrical supports is placed a pair of reflectors provided with sensors, directed towards doors and one from the other. Appearance of a visitor in the doorframe activates spotlights, but if visitors proceed in a straight line towards the centre of the room, they will find themselves in a dark, in a gloomy situation of impossibility of encounter.

An exhibition of "condensed symbols" for backwater, standstill, *Buba-buba big* was held in *Art Gallery* in Dubrovnik in 1994. On wooden panels, such as used in the war for protection of monuments and afterwards in a reconstruction of the City, there are ten pairs of Polaroid photographs (instantaneous, instant, of short duration) showing parents and their children in the same exteriors of Dubrovnik, in a paranoid situation of physical resemblance and a frozen phenotype: children and parents live together for a long time, concern themselves with same crafts and professions, work in the same companies. Tolj's work is built on a convention of portrait genre as a physiognomic experiment suggesting a feeling of predestination, impossibility of any change, representing collective structures and social relations. Stuffed horned owl which Latin name is also the title of exhibition, translocated *composition trouvé* - a decor of hanging, blown out balloons and a string of mostly extinguished light bulbs remained hanging above Stradun for a long time after Christmas holidays, index a *postfestum* situation, entropy, material and mental exhaustion: during the night *buba-buba big* descends in the City to feed on pigeons. A third room of the Gallery is redimensioned and reduced to a largish box by means of prefabricated parapets, and there is a fan operating under the glass bell. The attained impression of suffocating atmosphere and multiple claustrophobia gets neutralised by wide-open window offering a view of the sea and Lokrum. That way symbolically gets abrogated the hermetism of traditional exhibition areas in a spirit of Post-structuralism and its call for repeal of the institution of museum. A prosaic epilogue of the exhibition is a vision of fan, used by a saleslady to refresh herself in a supermarket from which it was borrowed originally.

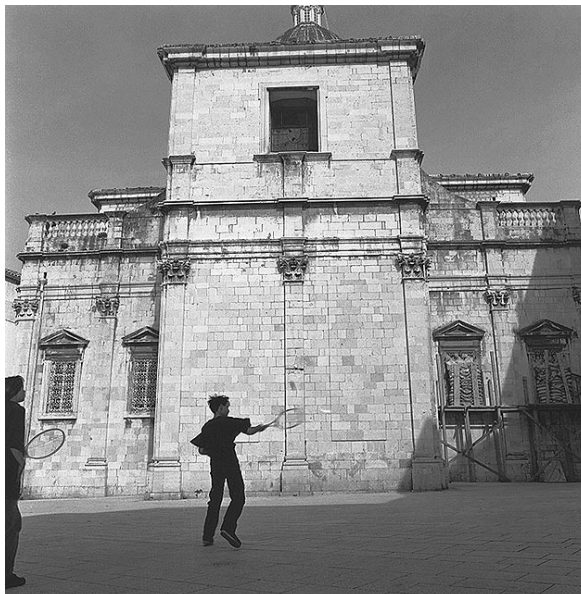


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sl.8: S. Tolj, *Bubo-bubo maximus*, detalj / detail, 1994.

metafora za umjetnički proces). Medij umjetničkog “djela” (prema Fredericu Jamesonu suvremena umjetnost je i drugo, osim samih “djela”) su dokumentacijski *cross-zoom* snimci katedrale i *snapshots* dječje igre, udaranja loptice teniskim reketom. Teniske loptice zarobljene viticama *foliacé* kapitela na fasadnom platnu dubrovačke katedrale parabola su prekinute dječje igre u Gradu, radikalno transformiranom uslijed opresivne proze ratne svakodnevice. Loptice kaptirane sakralnom renesansnom *architecture parlante* (termin Boulléea), slika su poviješću zarobljene suvremenosti; istovremeno, loptice su dezintegracijski *fitting-pieces*, objekti od sintetičkih materijala korišteni u suvremenim sportovima kao metafora potrošačkog kiča, baš kao i plastično cvijeće u crkvenim interijerima. Profanizaciju sakralnog motiva, iskazujući carravaggiovsku religioznost, Tolj provodi i ranim *Oltarima tišine* sastavljenim od utilitarnih elemenata vertikalno naslaganih stolica.

Na poližanrovskoj i intermedijalnoj izložbi 1998. u zagrebačkom *Muzeju suvremene umjetnosti* Tolj se bavi odnosom umjetnosti i socijalne svakodnevice. Hermetične “nađene priče” iz novinskih napisa, do nas posredovane fotografijama koje percipiramo na rubu svijesti (“...daljina i blizina, te život pokraj i u raskoraku s drugima međusobno su neprestano isprepleteni”, objašnjava Sandra Križić Roban), iz kojih isijava zajednički nazivnik praznine (*vanitas*) kao usamljenosti i kao odsustva, prevedene su u kontekst umjetnosti (autor promišlja: “Jesam li dovoljno bolno osjetio tu situaciju da mogu to koristiti?”). Protežni motiv izložbe je tijelo, mrtvo, opsceno ili napušteno: na novinskoj fotografiji je starac (fizionomijom i šešikom slični Beusyu), kojeg su potomci izbacili na stubište. U dramatičnom perspektivnom skraćanju na slici iz novina je tijelo uzvanika poginulog na otvorenju dubrovačkog hotela *Excelsior*, bisera oficijelnog turizma, zbog neizvedene ograde stepeništa. Naslov izložbe *4,5 t* odnosi se na novinski članak o sveopćoj pauperizaciji oslikanoj jadikovanjem lubeničara koji, da bi zaradio novac za noć plaćene ljubavi u hotelskoj sobi, mora prodati 4,5 tona lubenica. Tu je poredbu Tolj vizualno konkretizirao istovarivši točno toliko tona lubenica na pod galerije (kao korlat polaroid presnimkama televizijskih slika zavodljivih djevojaka). Lubenice su humorni element, svojim tržišnim erosom



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An installation in the *Gallery of expanded media* in 1999 on the conceptual level is very close to the end of the process of “disembodiment” of art. The author imposed a dynamite garland under groins of the gallery’s dome, rod-shaped bunches of simulated explosiveness. He refocused observer’s attention to a “dry” fact of the exhibition space, wishing for suggested destruction because light, air and space would burst into the gallery if there is no pressuring, opaque seal of the dome.



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Interrupted games from 1993 is a self-realised project, *image trouvé*; it is one of the best examples of Tolj’s perceptual-conceptual art (in this matter perception is a metaphor for artistic process). A medium of a work of art (according to Frederic Jameson, a contemporary art is also something different than just “artworks”) are documentary cross-zoom photos of the cathedral and snapshots of children’s game of striking the ball with a tennis racket. Tennis balls captured in tendrils *foliacé* on the front capitals of the cathedral are the parable for the interrupted children’s game in the City radically transformed by the oppressive prose of daily life in war. The balls captured by Renaissance sacral *architecture parlante* (Boullée’s term) are the image of contemporaneity captured by history, being at the same time disintegrative fitting-pieces, objects made of synthetic materials used in contemporary sports as a metaphor for a consumer kitsch, quite like plastic flowers in churches. Tolj practised a profanation of sacral motifs, expressing reli-

sl.9-10: S. Tolj, *Prekinute igre / Interrupted Games*, 1993., foto / photo: A. Opalić



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parafraza su klasičnog slikarskog motiva mrtve prirode. Druga ambijentalna instalacija *Tako lijepo, tako pusto...* (naslov je ironična inverzija krilatice kojom su češki turisti pozivani na ljetovanje u Hrvatsku) izložena u okviru kustoskog projekta *Mala zemlja za veliki odmor* (Galerija ŠKUC u Ljubljani 2000.), sastoji se od neonske reklame - isluženog mobilijara jednog dubrovačkog restorana, te ugašenog televizijskog ekrana u čijem kadru se ocrtava svjetlosni krug isijavan iz stolne svjetiljke - kao simulacija prenaplašeno estetiziranog motiva zalaska sunca s razglednica hrvatskih turističkih gradova (praznih 1990-ih) kao utjelovljenja zemaljskog raja.

Toljev ambijent s izložbe *Cinema Sarajevo* u Celju, s Majom Brajović i Danicom Dakić, preseljen je na izložbu *Nothing*, "od ničega prema nuli" (Sunderland, 2001.). Ambijent tornatoreovskog naziva *Kino Jadran* sastoji se od "suhe" projekcije, bez filma (jedini izvor svjetlosti u prostoriji je titravi svijetli kvadrat projiciran s "osmice"), zvuka projektora, teških neprozirnih zavjesa

giousness in Carravaggio's manner, also in his early work *Altars of silence* composed of utilitarian elements of vertically piled up chairs.

At the inter-media exhibition (of multiple genres) in 1998 in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, Tolj's concern is the relation between art and social daily life. Hermetic "found stories" from newspapers articles which we perceive indirectly through photographs, on the margin of consciousness ("...distance and closeness, living side by side and at odds with others, are permanently reciprocally interlaced" explains Sandra Križić Roban), radiating a joint felling of void (*vanitas*) as solitude and absence, are translated into the art context (the author meditates: "Have I felt this situation with ache to be given the right to use it?"). The light-motif of the exhibition is a body, dead, obscene or abandoned: on a photograph from newspapers is old man (his physiognomy under the hat bears a resemblance to Beuys), his children have thrown him out on the staircase. There is another photo from newspapers, in dramatic perspective reduction there is a body of a guest who get killed by accident during the opening ceremony of the hotel Excelsior in Dubrovnik, a pearl of official tourism, because the staircase was left without balustrade finished. The title of the exhibition *4,5 t* refers to a newspapers' article on general pauperisation, illustrated by lamentation of a watermelons salesman who, to earn a money for a night of paid love in a hotel room, has to sell 4.5 tons of watermelons. That comparison Tolj had visualised by unloading exactly that much watermelons on the floor of the gallery (as a correlate to Polaroid re-shots of TV scenes with seductive girls). Watermelons are the humoristic element and with their market Eros they are a paraphrase of traditional painting motif of a still life. Another ambient installation *So beautiful, so vacant...* (the title is an ironic inversion of slogan calling Czech tourists to spend summer holidays in Croatia) exhibited at the curatorial project *A Small Country for a Big Vacation* (Škuc Gallery in Ljubljana, 2000), was composed of neon sign - an outworn mobilijar of one restaurant in Dubrovnik, and a monitor of switched off TV, being a frame for the circular reflection of light shining from a table lamp - a simulation of over-aestheticized postcard motif of sunset from Croatian tourist destinations (vacant during

sl.11: S. Tolj, 11.09.2001., video rad s izložbe *Suspense* / video from the exhibition *Suspense*, Slavonski Brod, 2001.

koje uvode mirisnu dimenziju ambijenta (miris ustajalosti), zbijenih redova stolica na preklop koje se, međutim, ne mogu rastvoriti i rabiti. U katalogu izložbe otisnut je odlomak teksta Janke Vukmir *Perceptual Art* o Slavenu Tolju; tekst je na hrvatskom, tako da je za posjetitelje izložbe samo dekorativni motiv.

Na recentnoj izložbi *Suspense* u okviru projekta *Granice* u Slavonskom Brodu Tolj izlaže video rad koji se sastoji od dva kadra. Statična kamera bilježi umjetnika koji nad drvenom daščicom na kuhinjskom stolu nožem guli neobičan krumpir u obliku srca (još jedan *nađeni objekt* u Toljevu *kabinetu kurioziteta*), afektivnog organa kao metafore duha i simbola profane ljubavi. U *igrokazu* emocije neuzvraćene ljubavi ili gore, zavisti koja *izjeda srce*, srcoliki krumpir Tolj pažljivo guli i premješta u rukama, da bi ga na kraju nemilosrdno raspolovio i izrezao na tanke ploške te ispržio u tavi. ▼

the nineties) as an image of paradise on Earth.

Tolj's ambiance installation at the exhibition *Cinema Sarajevo* in Celje, with Danica Dakić and Maja Brajović, was re-shown at an exhibition *Nothing*, "from nothing to zero" (Sunderland 2001). The ambiance, in Tornatore's manner titled *Cinema Jadran*, consists of a "dry" projection with no film (the only source of light in the room is a flickering square of light projected from an "eight"), a sound of cinema projector and heavy, non-transparent curtains adding a new odour dimension to the ambient (the smell of staleness), and closed lines of flap chairs impossible to open and use. In an exhibition catalogue there is an impression of the paragraph of text on Slaven Tolj, *Perceptual Art* by Janka Vukmir; the text is in Croatian language, to visitors being just a decorative element.

At the recent exhibition *Suspense* being a part of the project *Borders*, Tolj exhibited a video work consisted of two frames. A static camera records the artist while peeling an unusual heart-shaped potato (one more *found object* in Tolj's *cabinet of curiosities*), above a kitchen board. Heart is an affective organ being a metaphor for spirit and a symbol of a profane love. In a play on emotion of un-returned love, or worse envy eating one's hearth out, Tolj is peeling carefully and transposes from hand to hand the heart-shaped potato, only to finally cut it in half mercilessly, slice it into thin pieces and then fry it up in a pan. ●

prijevod / translation: Silva Kalčić

→ Silva Kalčić - povjesničarka umjetnosti i likovna kritičarka. Živi i radi u Zagrebu.
Silva Kalčić - art historian and critic. Lives and works in Zagreb.