

ivana
keser

marjetica potrč

voda,
komunikacija,
prebivalište

water,
communication
shelter

■ ■ Kao aktualna dobitnica prestižne nagrade Hugo Boss čiji su dobitnici prethodnih godina bili Matthew Barney i Douglas Gordon, upravo imaš izložbu u Guggenheim muzeju u New Yorku koji je i organizator dodjele ove nagrade. Što izlažeš u Guggenheimu?

Kad sam prije dvije godine postavljala izložbu u Worcesteru, kustosica izložbe Jessica Morgan upozorila me na članak o Južnoj Africi u New York Timesu. Na prvoj je strani bila fotografija jednostavne građevine u Kagisu, predgrađu Johannesburga, i taj primjer sada izlažem. To su dvije priče - jedna je *Skeleton house*, 5 x 7 m velika konstrukcija, druga je na brzinu postavljena baraka sa satelitskom antenom. *Skeleton house* sastoji se od betonske podloge, stupova i krova, a na rubu ima priključak za vodu i WC školjku. Kao i drugi moji radovi, taj projekt govori o uspješnosti individualne gradnje. Isto tako izlažem printove s fotografijama koji su različiti izvori za moj rad, tekstove, kao i dva predmeta koje također prate moji tekstovi. Jedan je predmet Philips odjeća s ugrađenim komunikacijskim sistemom, drugi je vaza iz Sarajeva koja je zapravo napravljena od prazne čahure protuavionske granate.

■ ■ Da se zadržimo na nagradi praksa dodjeljivanja ovakvih priznanja obično je usmjerena prema umjetnicima iza kojih stoje jaki umjetnički sistemi. Kako tumačiš to da se žiri odlučio za tvoj rad u konkurenciji umjetnika poput Vita Acconcija ili Maurizia Catellana.

Rekli su mi da su me predložila dva člana žirija: Carlos Basualdo in Kaspar König. Zbog toga sam i imala neke šanse. Inače, takva je nagrada čista lutrija. Bila sam sigurna da je neću dobiti.

■ ■ Čini se da je urbanizam, zato jer si školovani urbanist, znatno utjecao na tebe prije studija na likovnoj akademiji. Kada si se odlučila i što te je potaklo da kroz arhitektonske i urbanističke strategije analiziraš društvene mijene.

Dok sam studirala arhitekturu, urbanizam me fascinirao, no katkad mi se činilo apsurdnim. Apsurdno mi se činilo stajati nad listom papira i gledati dolje na plan grada kao svemoćnik koji ga uređuje. Negdje kasnije sam čitala Sartrea, koji je rekao nešto slično poput ovog: "Za Boga je

● ● As the recent winner of the prestigious Hugo Boss award, which, in preceding years, was received by Matthew Barney and Douglas Gordon, you are now exhibiting in the Guggenheim Museum in New York, which has also organized the presentation of this award. What are you exhibiting?

Two years ago, while occupied with preparations for an exhibition in Worcester, the curator Jessica Morgan drew my attention to an article on South Africa which had appeared in the New York Times. The title page showed a simple building in one of Johannesburg's suburbs, Kagiso, a model of which I am now exhibiting. Actually, my exhibition refers to two stories, one of which is the *Skeleton house*, a 5 m x 7 m large construction, and the other a quickly set up barrack with a satellite dish. The *Skeleton house* consists of a concrete basement, columns, a roof, and a supply point at the edge such as for water for a lavatory bowl. Like other works of mine, this project portrays successful individual construction. In addition, my exhibition includes prints of pictures, which represent various inspirational sources of my work, texts and two objects with accompanying texts. Of these two, one is a set of clothes by Philips with an integrated communications system, and the other a vase from Sarajevo, made from an empty anti-aircraft shell case.

● ● Let us focus on the award. Usually such awards are supposed to be presented to artists supported by powerful artistic institutions. How do you comment on the jury choosing your work in a competition with those by Vito Acconci or Maurizio Catellan?

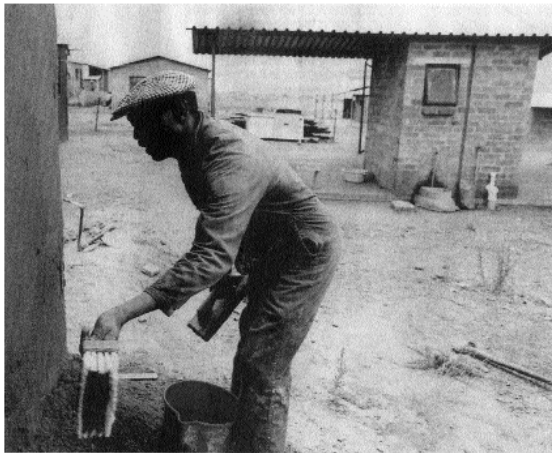
Supposedly, I was proposed by two members of the jury, Carlos Basualdo and Kaspar König. That was, therefore, the only way I had any chance at all. Otherwise such an award is a mere matter of luck. I was very confident of not receiving it.

● ● Before enrolling in the academy of fine arts you enjoyed an education in urbanism, which you have been extremely influenced by. When was it that you decided to analyze social trends through architectonic and urban strategies, and, above all, how did this idea come to you?

While studying architecture, I was fascinated by urbanism, which, however, sometimes struck me as absurd. Above all, it was absurd looking from above at a sheet

sl.1: M. Potrč, Kagiso: *Skeleton House*, 2000. - 2001.
Građevinski materijal / Building material, dimenzije promjenjive / dimensions variable
Installation at The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum for the exhibition: "Hugo Boss Prize 2000: Marjetica Potrč", New York, 2001.
Foto / Photo: Ellen Labenski





South Africa provides little more than a roof and frame for housing in Kagiso. The owner builds the rest.



2

dužina jednaka širini. Pogled odozgora ne govori o čovjekovu iskustvu nego pokazuje što si Bog o tome misli." Manje je ambiciozno bilo slagati opeke, raditi u vlastitom mjerilu ono što me je zanimalo. Kad promislim, dugo sam u zidovima vidjela samo svoje tijelo. Sad mi se to čini prilično zabavnim. Tek sam poslije, u Americi, uvidjela da se bavim arhitekturom.

■ ■ Tvoj se rad u nekoliko zadnjih godina doima jako angažiranim. Što misliš kolika je mjera političnosti tvoga rada?

Za mene je dobra suvremena umjetnost istovremeno i politična.

■ ■ U početku su tvoji radovi bili iščitavani više formalno, na razini skulpture ili objekta. Kako je tekao proces od tog objekta prema širem društvenom kontekstu tvojih razmišljanja.

U Ljubljani smo bili specijalisti za predstavljanje ideja, a ne objekata. Ja to još uvijek radim. Imam jednu izjavu od prije deset godina: "Ja ne radim predmete. Gradim zidove." Nakon političkih promjena činilo mi se zanimljivim što to nismo uvidjeli prije. Naime, prije devedesetih godina kipari su većinom govorili o predmetnoj umjetnosti, iako se uglavnom uopće nismo bavili predmetom. Naš je interes bio u metafori, poetičnosti i sličnom. To su sve pretežno zračne kategorije. Problem je u tome da si, ako govoriš općenito i o svemu, jako blizu tomu da ne govoriš ni o čemu. Do IRWIN-a u Ljubljani takoreći nije bilo umjetnosti koja bi imala nekakvu preciznu težnju. Kad se to dogodilo, odmah je nastao skandal.

of paper with a city map on it and feeling like the Almighty. Then later, I came to read Sartre, who said something like: "In the eyes of the Almighty length equals width. Looking from above does not imply man's experience, but God's standpoint". So piling up brick and working to one's own standards seemed less ambitious and, actually, interested me. Thinking about it, I have long been looking upon walls as upon my own body. Now, this seems very funny. Later in the USA, I decided to deal with architecture.

● ● During the last several years your work has appeared to be extremely committed. To what extent would you describe your work as political?

Good modern art, in my opinion, is political.

● ● In the beginning your works were interpreted rather formally and on the level of sculpture or object respectively. How did this object come to take on the broader social context of your reflections?

In Ljubljana we were specialists in representing ideas, not objects. Nothing has changed since then. There is a statement I made ten years ago: "I am not creating objects. I am building walls". After all the political changes, I wondered why we had not seen this before. Namely, before the 90's, sculptors were predominantly talking of object art, although we were not dealing with objects at all. Our interest was focused on metaphors, poetics, etc. These are predominantly abstract categories. The problem is when you are talking generally, mentioning everything, you are actually very close to saying nothing. Ljubljana, so to say, had not been acquainted with art

sl.2: M. Potrč, Kagiso: Skeleton House, 2000 - 2001.
 Građevinski materijal / Building material, dimenzije promjenjive / dimensions variable
 Installation at The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum for the exhibition: "Hugo Boss Prize 2000: Marjetica Potrč", New York, 2001.
 Foto / Photo: Ellen Labenski

Lijevo / Left: Slika izvor za / Source image for: Kagiso: Skeleton House.

Prije si spomenula političnost umjetničkog rada. U Ljubljani smo prije političkih promjena imali apstraktnu umjetnost, analitičku filozofiju i tako dalje - na to mi je nedavno skrenula pažnju Renate Salecl. Zanimljivo je da su umjetnici uglavnom formalnu apstrakciju razumjeli kao apolitičnu izjavu. Recimo: "Ako radim apstrakciju, to znači da si prljam ruke politikom." Naravno, upravo je taj stav bio voda na mlin politici, koja je vrlo rado vidjela umjetnike u svojim atelijerima kako razmišljaju o velikim i jako općenitim temama, a ne o nečem konkretnom.

■ ■ Kako ti vidiš odnos "subjekt - objekt" u pojedinim kulturama?

Amerikanci imaju prilično čvrstu predodžbu o objektu, znaku, ako hoćeš. Objekt je na neki način uvijek ogledalo subjekta objekt napraviš tako kako ga sam razumiješ. Jože Barši upozorio me da na japanskom jeziku postoji više izraza za pojam "ja" koji se upotrebljavaju u različitim kontekstima. Japanci jedni druge razumijevaju fluidno. "Ja" ne znači "ja sam", nego "ja" u odnosu s nekim - recimo s obitelji, zajednicom ili s poduzećem. Takve "necentrične" estetike podosta sam vidjela u video-radovima *Manifesta 3*, što mi se učinilo jako dobrim. To je naracija, a ne čvrste definicije, ne znak. Iako, kad promislim, u galerijama je s jedne strane još uvijek jako malo drugačijega pogleda, pogleda Trećeg svijeta. S druge strane nematerijalnost - ako hoćeš ideja - ima legitimno tijelo u certifikatu s kojim posluju galerije. Felix Gonzales-Torres i Robert Smithson su prodavali certifikate, a ne fizičke radove. To znači da se umjetničko tržište lako prilagođava, lako funkcionira drugačije.

■ ■ Koliku ulogu čovjek ima u tvojim radovima i kolika je uloga samog ljudskog tijela?

Ja sve radim u mjerilu čovjeka. U zadnje vrijeme dosta se bavim s individualnom inicijativom, onime što čovjek sam može napraviti, ili još bolje, izgraditi. Konkretno, kakve su strategije doseljenika u grad. Izdvojim primjere koji su mi zanimljivi i pokažem ih.

■ ■ Pojedini teoretičari tvoje zadnje radove tumače kao bavljenje problemima Trećega svijeta. Koliko se ti slažeš s tom tvrdnjom i koliko te uopće zanima ta problematika?

which would follow a precise tendency at all until Irwin. When it finally happened, it evoked a scandal immediately. You mentioned political, artistic work before. Recently Renata Salecl drew my attention to the fact that we had abstract art, analytical philosophy, etc. preceding political changes in Ljubljana. It is interesting that formal abstraction was mainly understood as an apolitical statement by artists. For example: "If I am dealing with abstraction I am not getting involved in politics". It was naturally this standpoint that served politics best, which was lucky to see artists sitting in their studios and reflecting on great themes of a general nature rather than concrete.

● ● What do you think of the relation subject - object in individual cultures?

Americans have a considerably rigid vision of the object, the sign, if you want to put it like that. The object is always a reflection of the subject, you create an object by your own comprehension of it. Jože Barši drew my attention to the Japanese language, which features several expressions for the term "I" to be used in different contexts. The Japanese fluidly understand each other. "I" does not mean "I am", but "I" in relation to somebody as family, community or firm. I have seen a lot of such "non-centrist" esthetics in the video works at *Manifesta 3*, which seemed very good to me. Narration instead of rigid definition, instead of signs. Though, when thinking about the galleries, there is still much too little of other aspects, aspects of the Third World. On the other hand, non-materialism - idea, if you prefer - has a legitimate nature in the certificates galleries do business with. Felix Gonzales-Torres and Robert Smithson sold certificates and not physical works. This shows the art market to be easily adjustable and to easily function differently.

● ● To what extent is man important in your work and what is the role of the human body itself?

Everything I do is with man as the standard. I have recently occupied myself with individual initiative, with what man can do on his own, or to put it better, what he himself might build. In concrete terms, what are the strategies of new arrivals to a city. I select examples intriguing to me, and present them.

● ● Several theorists interpret your latest works as dealing with problems of the

U Trećem su svijetu ljudi inventivni i uključuju nove načine postojanja. Upravo me to zanima. Pored toga, danas se prema Trećem svijetu ne možeš ponašati kao prema bijeloj mrlji na zemljovidu svijeta. Pola svjetskog stanovništva živi u gradovima, od toga najmanje trećina u favelama. Favele imaju drugačiju logiku nego projektirani gradovi. Regulativa im se mora prilagoditi, mora im izaći u susret. Većina mojih projekata govori upravo o tom međuprostoru, o odnosu između individualne inicijative i onih koji reguliraju, između virusa i autoriteta. O svom radu mislim na prilično jednostavan način. Ono što me fascinira u suvremenom gradu, to prenesem u galeriju. *East Wahdat: Upgrading Program* prikazuje bazičnu građevnu jedinicu koja sadrži sve funkcionalne potrebe jedne kuće. U Amanu su postavili takve građevne jedinice u neregulirano gradsko područje. Ljudi su potom sami izgrađivali kuće oko tih jedinica po svojoj volji. *Nerlidere: 24 Hour Ordinance* je drugi takav primjer. Pokazuje gradbenu strategiju u Nerlidereu, mjestu u Turskoj. Tamo vrijedi princip da zgrade izgrađene u roku od 24 sata do pod krov postaju legalne bez bilo kakvih prethodnih dozvola.

U posljednje mi se vrijeme na predavanjima događa da mi pripisuju romantičnost, čak egzotičnost. To mi se čini zanimljivim. Zamisli da imam predavanje u Amanu. Tamo mi ne bi postavljali takva pitanja. Osobno mislim da je egzotičnost pozicija onoga koji o favelama misli na određen način. Ja ne vidim romantičnosti u tome da ljudi uzimaju zemlju za sebe. Ali naravno, udobno zbrinutom europskom ili sjevernoameričkom posjetiocu muzeja to nije ugodno gledati. Pozicija ljudi u favelama ih ugrožava, zato ih žele ignorirati kao da ne postoje. Još do prije deset godina, u arhitektonskim su planovima favele bile ucrtane kao bijele ili zelene mrlje, kao parkovi. Ukratko, arhitekti su se pravili kao da favela uopće nije niti bilo. Danas se više nije moguće tako ponašati. Kvantiteta je učinila svoje. U gradove se svakodnevno doseli milijun ljudi.

■ ■ U zadnje vrijeme često upotrebljavaš fotografiju kao izvor za svoje radove. Isto tako često upotrebljavaš tekstove. Kakav te odnos između fotografije, teksta i arhitekture zanima.

Third World. To what measure do you approve of this assertion and are you interested in this issue at all?

People in the Third World are inventive and imply new ways of existing. That is exactly what attracts me. Apart from that, as concerns the Third World, today you cannot simply behave as if it was a white stain on the map. Half of the globe's population lives in cities and at least a third of that in favelas. Favelas are conceived by a different logic than planned cities. Governors have to adjust to them, they have to comply with them. The majority of my projects just refers to this interspace, to the relation between individual initiative and those who govern, the virus and the authority. I have a rather simple view of my work. What fascinates me in a modern city, I just transfer to a gallery. The *East Wahdat: Upgrading Program* shows a basic building unit encompassing all the functional necessities of a house. Such building units were placed in an unregulated city district in Amman, and shortly after that people were building houses all around these units, as they liked it. Another similar example would be the *Nerlidere: 24 Hour Ordinance*. It represents the building strategy in Nerlidere, a place in Turkey. There is a regulation there that buildings with roofs, constructed within 24 hours, become legal without any prior approval.

It has recently been happening in my lectures that I have been ascribed to romanticism, in fact exoticism. It seems interesting to me. Just imagine I had a lecture in Amman. I am convinced they would not ask me such questions there. Personally I think exoticism to be the standpoint of somebody who has such an attitude to favelas. I do not see anything romantic in people acquiring land. It is natural, however, that the quite well accommodated European or North American visitor to a museum is not quite pleased by such a sight. They feel jeopardized by the situation of the people in the favelas, so they tend to ignore them as if they did not exist. Ten years ago, favelas, like parks, were marked with white or green patches in architectonic plans, in short, architects pretended that favelas did not exist. To act like that is not possible anymore. Quantity has increased so. Cities are being flooded by a million new people daily.

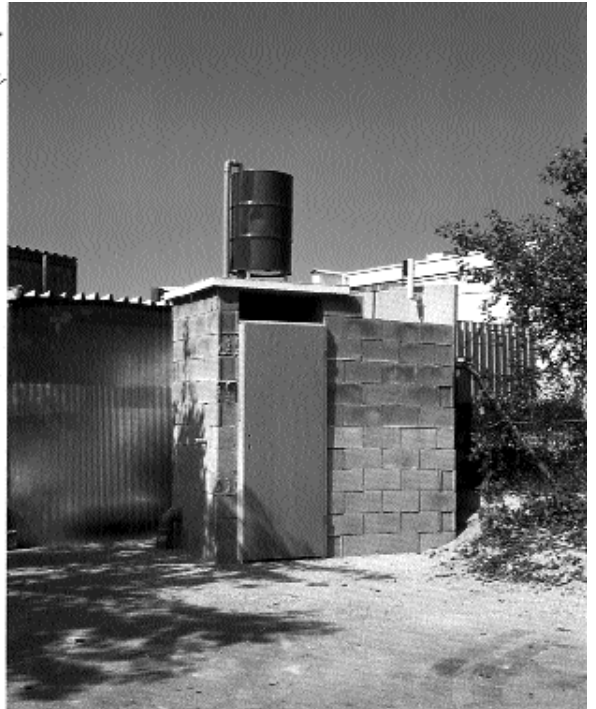
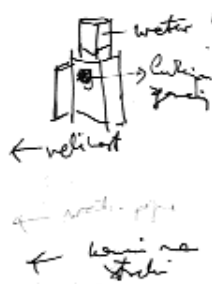
● ● You have recently based your work on photos, and also on texts. What is the rela-



Kamsharkle sheds in East Wahdat before the upgrading programme



The upgrading begins to transform the neighbourhood



3

Za tu ovu izložbu napravila seriju fotografija u kombinaciji s tekstovima. Fotografije su uglavnom izvori za moje radove koje prikupljam iz različitih publikacija ili s interneta, a ima nešto i mojih fotografija. Tekstovi uz njih su paralelne misli, a ne objašnjenje slike.

Goran Tomičić kaže kako je to koncept japanskog satorija.

■ ■ Misliš li da su planirane urbanističke strategije danas uopće potrebne?

Mislim da je prošlo vrijeme velikih poteza. Osobno vjerujem u male pomake, u zid dodan kući, a ne u planirani grad poput Brasílie. Sad sam se sjetila svog iskustva iz Chandigarha, koji je bio izgrađen u duhu Le Corbusierove misli. Meni se učinio prilično neupotrebljivim. Bila sam ondje sa svojim suprugom Milanom i svako malo bismo se izgubili u gradu. Nikad nismo znali u kojem smjeru idemo. Milan je fizičar, poznaje astronavigaciju i najjednostavnije smo se mogli orijentirati prema položaju sunca, a nikako prema logici grada. Toliko o funkcionalnosti. No, još nešto. Chandigarh je uglavnom izgrađen od betona a ne od opeke. Problem je u tome što je beton zaista neupotrebljiv u indijskom podneblju. Ljeti je kuća prevruća, a zimi prehladna.

■ ■ Ti u svojim radovima i tekstovima često analiziraš s jedne strane europski i

tion between photography, text and architecture that you are interested in?

For this exhibition I made a series of photographs combined with texts. The source of my work is mainly photographs, collected from various publications or the Internet, but there are also some pictures I took on my own. The texts are reflections parallel to these pictures rather than their interpretations. Goran Tomičić claimed that this was the concept of the Japanese satori.

● ● Do you think planned urban strategies are necessary at all today?

The times of great ventures are over, in my opinion. Personally I believe in low level progress, for example in a wall added to a house rather than a planned city, such as Brasílie. This reminds me of what I experienced in Chandigarh, built in the spirit of Le Corbusier. To me it seemed no good at all. I went there with my husband Milan, the city made us lost from one moment to the next, we never knew which direction we were going in. Milan is a physicist and he is well-acquainted with astronavigation, so we made the sun our point of reference instead the city's logic. So much for functionality. But, there is something else. Chandigarh was mainly made of concrete and not brick. The problem is that concrete is really unsuitable for the Indian climate. In summer houses are too hot and in winter too cold.

sl.3: M. Potrč, East Wahdat: Upgrading Program, 1999.

Gradevinski materijal / Building material, dimenzije promjenjive / dimensions variable
50 Years of Central European Art, Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna, Austria, 1999.

Collection of Allen Memorial Art Museum Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio / Oberlin Friends of Art Fund and Ruth Roush Fund for Contemporary Art, 2000.

Foto / Photo: Matija Pavlovec
Lijevo / Left: Slika izvor za / Source image for: East Wahdat: Upgrading Program



4

američki model suvremenog života, a s druge strane onaj većinskoga ostatka svijeta. Možeš li pobliže objasniti svoje viđenje međusobnog odnosa onoga što se uobičajeno naziva “razvijenim zemljama” i “zemljama u razvoju”?

Prije svega, umjetnička je publika prilično ograničena - taj se pojam uglavnom odnosi na europsku i sjevernoameričku publiku. Ta je publika naučena na određene kanone. Kakvu god drugu strategiju pokažeš, ona će je procesuirati kroz već postojeće uzorke. Moj projekt *Kagiso* su htjeli vidjeti kao “site-specific” primjer, iako on to nije. Ja pokazujem ideju, ne zanima me, recimo, kakve materijale doista upotrebljavaju u Johannesburgu. Jučer mi je prijatelj rekao kako Japanci svako malo rekonstruiraju svoje hramove, iako za to nema vidljive potrebe. Time zapravo rekonstruiraju ideju. Moja teza u odnosu na sve te svjetove o kojima govoriš je jednostavna. Globalizacijom se dogodilo to da se prostor zalijepio za tijelo. Daleko je zanimljiviji čovjek, a sve

● ● You have often analyzed the European and American model of contemporary life in your works and texts, and compared to that the major part of the rest of the world. Could you precisely explain your standpoint on the interrelation of what is usually called “the developed countries” and “the developing countries”?

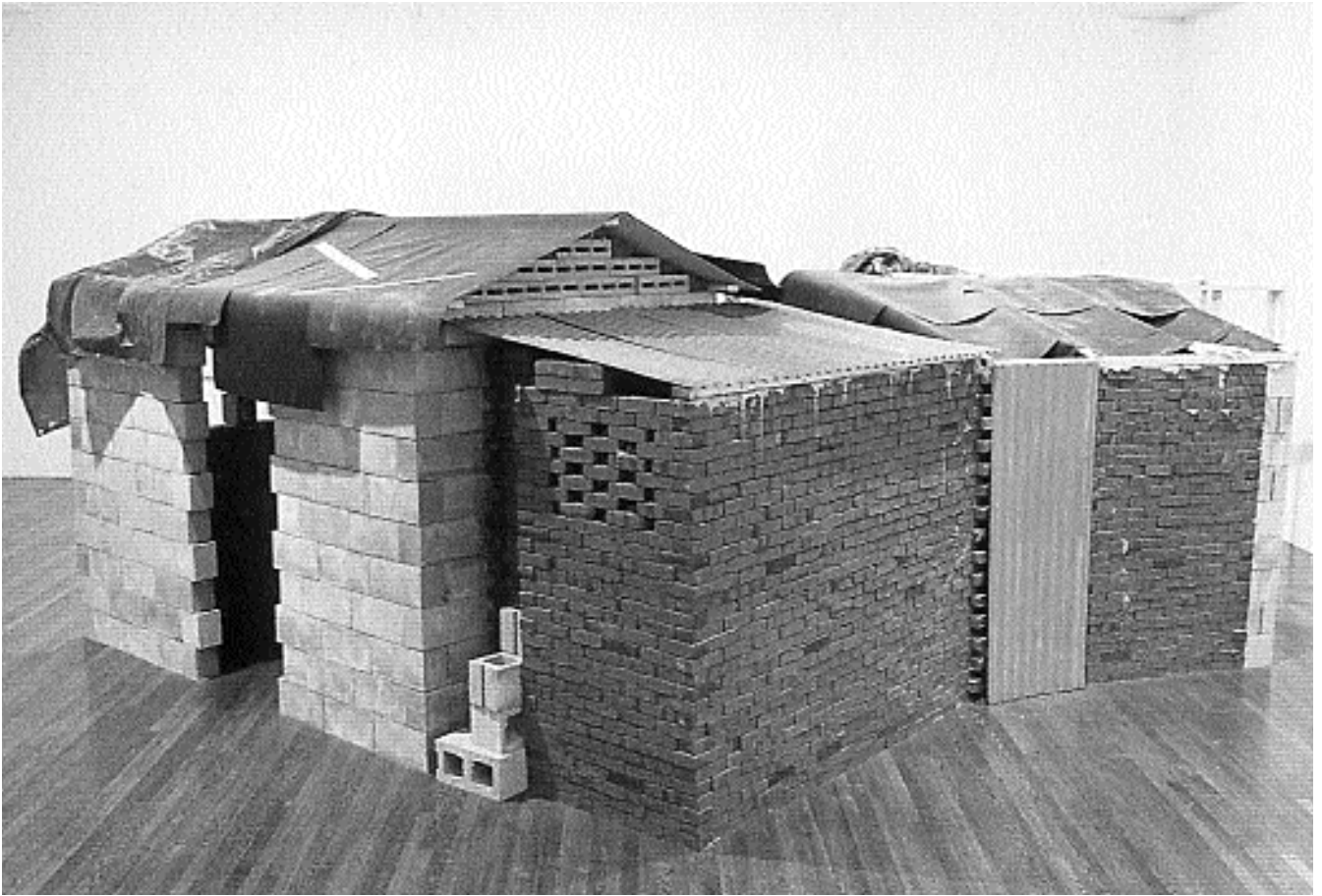
Above all, the artistic public is considerably narrow, predominantly the European and North American public. It has got used to specific canons. Whatever different strategy you present, that public is going to process it by means of already existing patterns. For example my project *Kagiso* was intended to be interpreted as a “site-specific” example, though it is not. It is just an idea I am presenting, I am not interested in what materials people really do use in Johannesburg. Yesterday a friend told me that the Japanese are constantly reconstructing their temples, though there is not any visible need for it. Thus they are actually reconstructing an idea. My thesis on all the discussed worlds here is absolutely sim-

sl.4: Slika izvor za / Source image for: *Nerlidere: The 24 Hour Ordinance*, 1999.

sl.5: M. Potrč, *Nerlidere: The 24 Hour Ordinance*, 1999.

Gradevinski materijal / Building material
Urban Visions, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, USA.

Foto/Photo: David Carmack.



5

je manje reprezentativnog prostora. Manji je udio države, a veći je udio individualne inicijative. Konkretno, da bi se osnovala nevladina organizacija, potreban je samo jedan čovjek. Manje je javnog prostora koji bi se razumio kao apriori pozitivan. To ne znači da je javni park nestao, samo je njegovo značenje manje. Stanovnici NYCHA (New York City Housing Authority) se, na primjer, trude postaviti zidove i vrata na javnu površinu ispred zgrada u kojima žive. Time se žele otarasiti javnog parka.

■ ■ Također često spominješ termin “gated communities” (getoizirane zajednice). Je li to svojevrsni obrazac suvremenog grada?

Lijep je primjer za to Južna Afrika nakon apartheida. Imaš “gated communities” gdje se ljudi segregiraju, odjeljuju, a također i “shantytowns” (nekontrolirana naselja) u kojima se naseljava većina doseljenika u gradove koji nekontrolirano rastu. Može se reći da su to dva dijametralno različita oblika. “Gated communities” su regulirani, a “shantytowns” su neregulirani.

ple. Globalization made space stick to the body. Man is far more interesting, representative space is shrinking. Individual initiative has surpassed the state’s share of such. In particular, only a single man is needed to establish a non-governmental organization. There is less public room understood a priori as positive. This does not mean that the public park as such has disappeared, it has just lost some of its significance. For example, NYCHA (New York City Housing Authority) inhabitants are striving to erect walls and doors in public places in front of the flats they live in. They really want to get rid of the public park.

● ● You often mention the term “gated communities”, too. Does it present a modern city’s specific pattern?

A good example would be South Africa after the apartheid policy. There are “gated communities” where people segregate, cut themselves off, and, there are “shantytowns” (uncontrolled settlements), places settled by new arrivals to cities, which are growing without control. They are two dia-



6

Meni je zanimljiva upravo činjenica kako su to najuspješniji oblici suvremenog grada i kako obje varijante proizlaze iz individualne inicijative. Tamošnji prostor jasno je privatiziran. U “gated communities” javni se park transformira u igralište za golf.

■ ■ Čini mi se da je fenomen favela kao izrazito slobodne i neizbježne egzistencijalne urbanističke pojave vrlo blizak i principu samog tvog umjetničkog rada i razmišljanja. Nalaziš li i ti u tome relacije ili sličnosti?

Što se mene tiče, moj rad opstaje radi podrške pojedinih ljudi, a ne države. A što se tiče favela, ja u gradbenim strategijama kao što je *Kagiso: Skeleton house* pokazujem nove razmjere moći u suvremenom gradu. Građevne jedinice poput *Skeleton house-a* nalaze se na pola puta prema nereguliranoj gradnji doseljenika. Pored toga, danas je postalo jasno da favele mogu dobro funkcionirati. Poznato je da stanari favela odbijaju preseljenja u socijalne stanove na rubovima grada. Radije nadograđuju svoju kuću. Pošto je to privremena gradnja, mogu je mijenjati vrlo brzo. Napokon, privremena će gradnja uskoro dominirati vizurom grada kao uobičajeni standard.

metrically opposed forms. “Gated communities” are being regulated, while “shantytowns” are not, and what greatly intrigues me, is that these two are the most successful forms of a modern city, both varieties of which are based on individual initiative. Naturally, the place there is privatized. In “gated communities” the public park is transformed into a golf course.

● ● The favelas as a rather liberal and inevitable existential urban phenomenon seem to be closely related to the principle of your own artistic work and way of thinking. Do you see any relationship or resemblance there?

My work, as far as I am concerned, continues due to the support of individuals and not governments. As for the favelas, I am showing new standards of power in the contemporary city by constructing strategies as, for example, the *Kagiso: Skeleton House*. Building units like the “Skeleton House” are half way to the non-regulated arrivals’ constructions. Besides, the favelas have shown they can function very well. It is known that the inhabitants of the favelas reject moves to council flats on the city’s outskirts. They rather build extensions to their houses. Being built but provisionally, such houses can be changed quickly. Eventually, provisional construction is

sl.6: M. Potrc, *The Core Unit*, 1997.
 Građevinski materijal / Building material.
 Skulptur Projekte in Münster,
 Landesmuseum Münster, Münster, Germany.
 Foto / Photo: Roman Mensing

Lijevo / Left: Slika izvor za / Source image for:
The Core Unit

■ ■ Kako objašnjavaš neizbježnost urbanističkih katastrofa u koje je “kreativno” upleten i sam čovjek? O tome govoriš u svoja *Dva eseja o izgrađenim katastrofama* (*Two Essays on Built Disasters*, 1998.). Povremeno analiziraš čak i turističku atraktivnost opustošenog grada.

Nema samo prirodnih katastrofa, nego također katastrofa kojima je uzrok sam čovjek, recimo ratovi. Naposljetku, urbano planiranje isto tako može biti katastrofa. Gradovi, pak, imaju vlastitu volju. Königsberg, današnji Kaliningrad, recimo, odupire se svakoj revitalizaciji, planiranoj rekonstrukciji i uređenju. Imala sam prijedlog da se grad preplavi vodom. Postao bi nešto poput Venecije. Ljudi obožavaju Veneciju, zar ne? Pored toga, tako će izgledati veći broj svjetskih gradova kad se digne razina vode na Zemlji uzrokovana posljedicama globalnog zatopljenja.

■ ■ U kojoj je fazi tvoj rad sada i u kojem će se smjeru razvijati?

Cijelo mi se vrijeme čini da uvijek radim isto.

■ ■ 2001. godinu provest ćeš u Berlinu kao stipendist Künstlerhaus Bethaniens. Kako vidiš taj grad, budući da se Berlin smatra najvećim europskim gradilištem i kulturnim potencijalom. Vidiš li u njemu neke nove obrasce ili samo one već postojeće?

U Berlinu postoje, na primjer, turističke ture po gradilištima, kao i po podzemnim kanalima grada. Takvi su turistički obilasci grada sve popularniji. Ljudi žele vidjeti šatorska naselja u Gaza Stripu i favele u Sao Paolu. Mora postojati razlog zbog čega je to tako. Danas uživamo u onome što nam se nekada činilo zastrašujućim i čudnim. Inače, prijatelje koji me posjete u Berlinu uvijek vodim u istočni dio. Taj je dio najmanje reguliran i zato najkreativniji.

■ ■ U svoje si radove uključila i wearable electronics (suvremeni high tech design odjeće u koju je već ugrađena elektronika). Kakav je odnos između takvog primjera u tvom radu i razmišljanja o bazičnim građevinama koje također upotrebljavaš. Čini se da “Treći svijet” nije egzotika jer u temeljnim potrebama ima dosta zajedničkog s “razvijenim svijetom”.

soon to dominate the vista of cities as the usual standard.

● ● How would you explain the inevitability of urban catastrophes, which man himself “creatively” interferes with? You discuss this in your two essays on built disasters (*Two Essays on Built Disasters*, 1998). Occasionally you even analyze the tourism attractiveness of devastated cities.

There are not only natural catastrophes, but catastrophes man himself is the cause of, for example war. Finally, urban planning may present exactly the same disaster. Cities dispose of their own will. For example Königsberg, today’s Kaliningrad, is resisting any revitalization, planned reconstruction and furnishing. My suggestion was to flood the city with water. Thus it would become a sort of Venice. People love Venice, don’t they? Besides, most of the world’s cities will look like that after the earth’s water level has increased as a consequence of global warming.

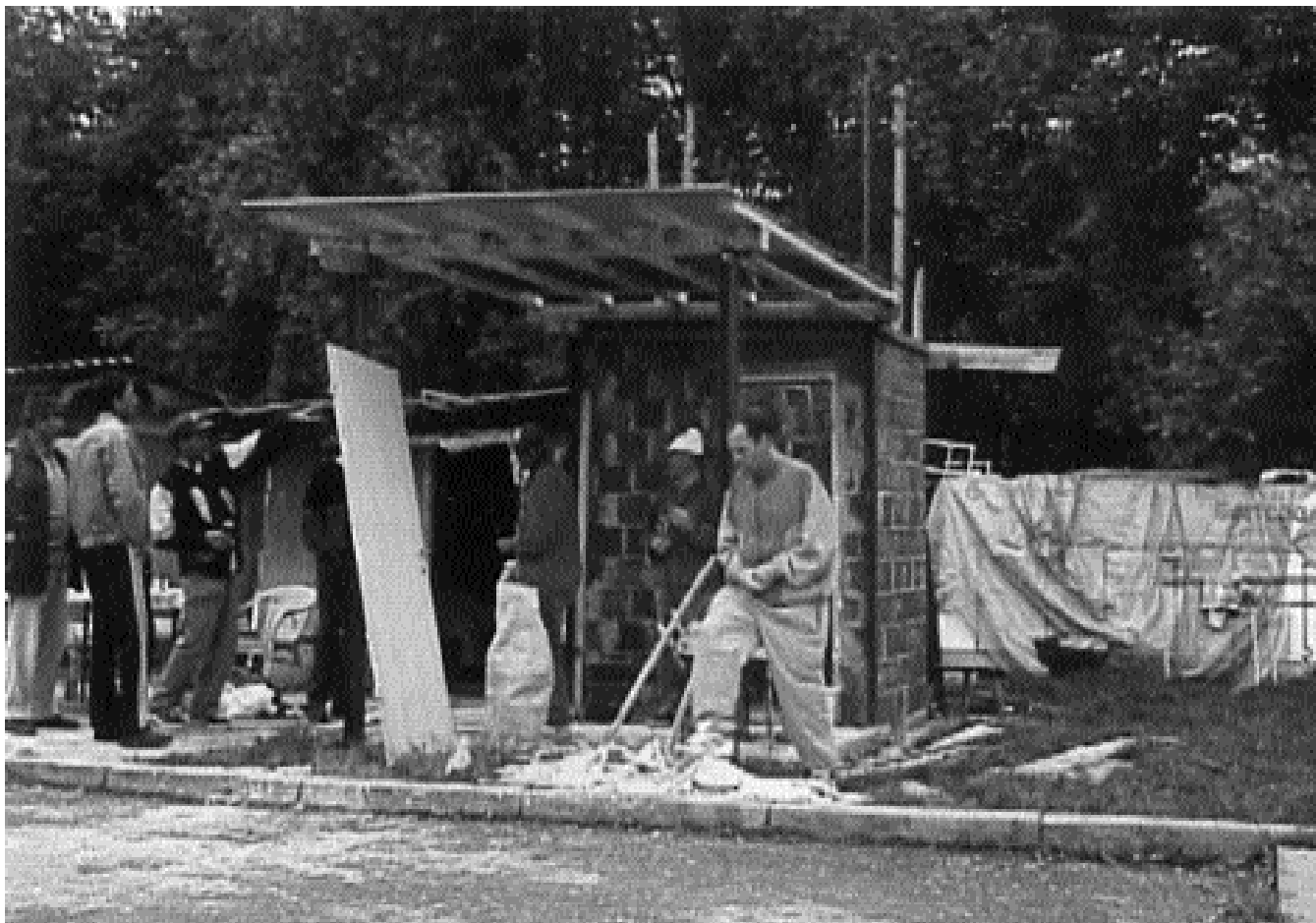
● ● In what phase is your work now and in what direction is it going to develop?

It seems to me that it is the same as I have been doing all the time.

● ● Due to a grant from the Künstlerhaus Bethanien you are going to spend the year 2001 in Berlin. What is your vision of Berlin, taking into consideration that it is regarded the greatest European construction site, as well as its cultural potential. Do you see new or just existing patterns there?

Berlin, for example, offers tourist tours to building sites as well as the city’s underground tunnels. Such city tours are gaining popularity. People want to see camps in the Gaza Strip as well as favelas in Sao Paolo. Surely there must be a reason for this. What once seemed frightful and queer, we are enjoying today. I actually always take friends visiting me in Berlin to the eastern part of the city. It is the least regulated part and therefore the most creative.

● ● Your works encompass wearable electronics (contemporary high tech clothes designed with built-in electronics). What is the relation between such a model in your work and reflections on fundamental buildings, which you also use? The “Third World” does not seem to be exotic, as in basic needs there is a lot in common with the “developed world”.



7

sl.7: M. Potrč, *House for Travellers*, 2000.
 Građevinski materijal / Building material.
 Manifesta 3,
 Ljubljana, Slovenija / Slovenia.
 Video dokumentacija / Video documentation:
 M. Potrč

sl.8: M. Potrč, *Magadan*, 1997.
 Građevinski materijal / Building material.
 Skulptur Projekte in Münster, Münster,
 Njemačka / Germany.
 Foto / Photo: Roman Mensing

Večeras sam gledala BBC; govorili su o novim strategijama interneta. Jedna je novinarka rekla da, recimo, upitaš li čovjeka u nekom naselju u Indiji što si on želi, obično odgovara da želi "vodu, komunikaciju i prebivalište". Zatim je dala ovaj primjer: kad nekoj ženi daš priključak za telefon, ona ga neće prodati, nego će prodavati pojedinačne telefonske razgovore. To znači da se zapravo ne radi o vlasništvu, nego o podjeli. S druge strane, zašto bi se čekalo na državu da uvede sve te telefonske linije. Ja sam, na primjer, u Ljubljani čekala na telefonski priključak sedam godina. Sam zapadni svijet razvio je strategije kao što je internet ili mobilni telefon, koji također mogu djelovati neovisno od centra. Mene fascinira bežična komunikacija. Na MIT-u su dokazali da je čovjekova vlastita tjelesna energija dostatna za proizvodnju energije potrebne za osobnu komunikaciju. Philips je razvio odjeću u koju su već ugrađeni računalo, telefon i

This evening I was watching the BBC and they were talking about the latest Internet strategies. A news reporter said that if you asked someone in a village, for example, in India, what they wished for, they would usually answer "water, communication and an shelter". Then she presented the following example: If a woman received a telephone line, she would not sell the line, but individual telephone conversations. So the issue is not property, but sharing. On the other hand, why wait for the government to introduce all those telephone lines. In Ljubljana, for example, I had to wait seven long years to receive a telephone line. The western world itself developed strategies like the Internet or the cellular phone, which may work independently of a center. Personally I am fascinated by wireless communication. At MIT it was proved that a human's body energy would suffice to produce the energy necessary for personal communication. Philips developed clothes with a built-in computer, telephone and



8

slično. Usput rečeno, odjeća s bežičnom komunikacijom nije ništa elitno, nije modni krik. Takvu odjeću upotrebljavaju američki terenski radnici. Znači, ona nije vezana uz intelektualnu elitu, nije vezana uz neki određeni prostor. Nije li to zanimljivo? Nema više objekata. Meni se ta ideja čini sličnom želji spomenutog čovjeka koji živi u naselju u Indiji. Prilično jednostavno - sve dolazi iz tijela i vraća se kao potreba tijelu - voda, komunikacija i prebivalište. ■

similar gadgets. By the way, clothes with wireless communication facilities are not elitist or the latest fashion at all. Such clothes are used by workers in the US when out in the field. In short, they were wearing it earlier than the intellectual elite, which is tied to a specific place. Isn't this interesting, there are no objects anymore. To me this idea is comparable to the wish of the person living in an Indian village. It is considerably simple, everything comes from the body and returns to the body as a need - water, communication and shelter. ●

prijevod / translation: Kornelija Džepina
lektura / translation editing: Dean DeVos

→ Ivana Keser - vizualna umjetnica i spisateljica. Živi i radi u Zagrebu.
Ivana Keser - visual artist and writer. Lives and works in Zagreb.