

Miroslav Zdovc: Contextualising the Archive



Miroslav Zdovc: kontekstualiziranje arhiva

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SAŽETAK

U ovom se članku prikazuje i analizira studija slučaja stvaranja fotografskog arhiva u muzejskom kontekstu te načini kontekstualizacije naizgled marginalnog i beznačajnog fotografskog materijala. U središtu rada je osobna fotografska arhiva Miroslava Zdovca (1929.–2009.), istaknutoga slovenskog profesionalnog fotografa i umjetnika koji koristi fotografiju, a koji, međutim, nije dobio zasluženo mjesto u lokalnoj i regionalnoj povijesti fotografije i umjetnosti. Stoga je njegov opsežni opus, koji je gotovo nestao iz javnosti, trenutačno u procesu revizije i reevaluacije. Njegova opsežna arhiva uključuje raznoliku građu: osobne snimke, dokumentarne fotografije, dokumente o umjetničkim djelima i (vlastita) fotografska umjetnička djela. Ovaj članak tako predstavlja projekt u nastajanju u sklopu kojega kustosi Galerije Božidar Jakac – Muzeja moderne i suvremene umjetnosti u Kostanjevici na Krki provode postupke katalogizacije, vrednovanja i, napokon, izlaganja njegova golemog opusa. Članak također donosi pregled najznačajnijih elemenata Zdovcove umjetničke prakse koja se protezala od 1950-ih do 1990-ih godina te se mijenjala i razvijala u skladu s istodobnim tendencijama u fotografiji i umjetnosti.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI

Miroslav Zdovc, vizualna umjetnost, fotografija, arhiv, muzej, povijest umjetnosti

ABSTRACT

In this paper a case study of constructing a photographic archive in a museum context, and the ways of contextualising seemingly marginal and insignificant photographic material, is being showcased and analysed. The focal point of the paper is the personal photographic archive of Miroslav Zdovc (1929–2009), a prominent Slovenian professional photographer as well as an artist using photography who, however, did not receive a deserved place in local and regional history of photography and art. Therefore, his extensive body of work that has nearly disappeared from the public eye is now in the process of being reviewed and re-evaluated. His extensive archive consists of diverse materials: personal imagery, documentary photographs, documents of artworks, and (his own) photographic artworks. The paper thus presents the project in the making in which the curators of Božidar Jakac Gallery – Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Kostanjevica na Krki have been conducting the process of cataloguing, evaluating and finally showcasing his immense body of work. It also brings forward the most significant elements of his artistic practice that spanned from the 1950s to the 1990s, and which was changing and developing in accordance with the concurrent tendencies in photography and art.

KEYWORDS

Miroslav Zdovc, visual art, photography, archive, museum, art history

BRINGING DOWN THE "ARCHIVE FEVER"

Sl. / Fig. 1 Miroslav Zdovc,
Sestre / Sisters, 1949



Miha Colner

Galerija Božidar Jakac – Muzej moderne i suvremene umjetnosti, Kostanjevica na Krki
/ Božidar Jakac Gallery – Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Kostanjevica na Krki

In the following paper, I will present, discuss and analyse the creative practice of Miroslav Zdovc (1929–2009), a distinguished and critically acclaimed photographer from Slovenia who despite a number of exhibitions and publications in the past has not received profound evaluation in the local and regional history of photography, since his oeuvre has never been available in its entirety. Therefore, his extensive body of work that has in the past decade nearly disappeared from public notion is now in the process of being reviewed and re-evaluated. Furthermore, Zdovc's rich legacy, namely his extensive photographic archive, can serve as a useful example of how to posthumously (re)construct one's oeuvre in a museum environment and how to contextualise such diverse photographic material. An archive of photographs, containing around 10.000 negatives and prints, was recently donated to Božidar Jakac Gallery — Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Kostanjevica na Krki (GBJ) in a fairly disorganised state, without properly determined historical context and with poor systematisation of materials. Zdovc's photographs were widely published and exhibited, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, however, his extensive archive contains numerous unpublished images that are nowadays rather difficult to contextualise. The task of classifying and interpreting these photographs is now part of the research of the museum curators.

Examining and evaluating the materials has not been an easy task since the photographer nearly disappeared from the collective memory and history of art after his withdrawal from active artistic life (in the late 1980s) and, ultimately, after his death (2009). Zdovc was a professional photographer as well as an artist using photography who actively worked and exhibited from the 1950s until the late 1980s. The material that was donated to the GBJ collection by his heirs is utterly diverse: personal imagery, documentary photographs, documents and reproductions of artworks, and photographic artworks. Furthermore, the material was either in the form of negatives (documentation) or exhibition prints (artworks). While some of the photographs had been well documented and could be referenced through publications and catalogues, there were also many for which one could not determine original purpose. In order to review, systematise, interpret and archive these photographs, the curators had to examine and assess them, as well as to find sources and references; however, due to a lack of sources for certain images in publications and mass media, the curators often had to resort to unconventional tactics, such as oral testimonies of Zdovc's contemporaries and collaborators, and comparisons of his photographs with actual historical events in order to contextualise some of his materials.

Since Zdovc has not (yet) been widely examined in academic circles and in the museum context, the information about his life and work remains scarce, reduced to a few texts in exhibition catalogues, newspaper articles and a short entry in the overview publication on the history of Slovenian photography.¹ In that overview, he was described as a photographer who was formed in different post-war decades



Sl. / Fig. 2 Miroslav Zdovc, *Iz moje doline / From My Valley*, 1965

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and who constantly passed through diverse phases that reflected tendencies in local art and photography. Besides his numerous portraits, he often took on the task of finding photographic equivalents of typical painterly motifs, such as nudes, landscapes or figurative pictures. However, it was only his artistic practice that has been described, stylistically positioned and interpreted in the history of photography in Slovenia.

Zdovc's body of work had to be viewed and evaluated from different angles in order to classify it and include it in the museum collection. While examining his archive, the curators came across diverse materials that cannot be assessed unambiguously as artworks. Art museums in Slovenia have not had extensive experience in archiving, evaluating and cataloguing such photographic materials, and there is no generally adopted system prescribing how photographic materials in museum collections and archives should be treated. Even within the wider field of museology, there is no consensus on how to process photographs; instead, there are several approaches and principles in place that differ depending on the nature of a particular museum. In case of GBJ the photographs that are identified as works of art shall become part of the museum's art collection, and the images that are determined as documentary and referential material shall be placed in the extensive photo archive. However, it is utterly difficult to make such a sharp classification.

However, to properly comprehend the technical and conceptual issues that came about in the process of archiving his photographs, it is inevitable to learn about his life, the socio-political circumstances of his time and place, and his photographic practice. Zdovc was a photographer who worked in different fields simultaneously; he was a documentarian of the local art scene and a reproduction photographer for art institutions, while he also often showcased his photographic artworks in galleries and museums. He tried to keep the different aspects of his work separated; however, they were constantly and inevitably overlapping. Therefore, he commonly documented artists in their studios, art events and random fragments of everyday life in his immediate surroundings, while he photographed various motifs for artistic purposes, keeping the meaning of this imagery much more ambiguous and subtle.

In retrospect, many of his photographs seem to be ambivalent since it was often not possible to determine their original intention even though they would eventually be exhibited or published. They could serve as documents of a certain time and place, as well as artworks addressing the topical issues of everyday experience. The early photographs of Zdovc from the 1950s and 1960s seem to follow the general tendency of the black-and-white aesthetic of deep contrasts and ambivalent meanings while keeping the motifs firmly in the realm of *verism*. Therefore, some of his images could reference Italian neorealism because of their direct engagement and straightforwardness. Moreover, his early published or exhibited photographs were informed

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Kovič, "Za fotografijo", 14.



Sl. / Fig. 3 Miroslav Zdovc, *Grofica iz Štanjela / Countess of Štanjel*, 1968

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Sl. / Fig. 4 Miroslav Zdovc, *Otvorenje izložbe / Exhibition opening*, Ljubljana, 1970-e / 1970s

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by engaged narratives of social injustice, that was common in concurrent photojournalism, which could be ascribed to the *Zeitgeist* of post-war Europe.

This reference is somewhat expected and logical given the timeframe of Zdovc's life. He was born in 1929, and he became a photography apprentice rather young, in 1943, amidst the turmoil of World War II, in the photo studio of Josip Pelikan in Celje, Slovenia, who was a typical professional and studio photographer. Studio Pelikan documented the occupation of the town of Celje by the forces and authorities of the Third Reich (1941–1945), marked by the repression of the Slavic-speaking populations and a number of atrocities.² However, the role of Zdovc as an intern in this process is not completely clear. He worked in the Pelikan Studio until 1947 when he finished his apprenticeship and started working independently.³ The changed socio-political circumstances in post-war Yugoslavia undoubtedly influenced Zdovc in his creative practice as he made his first steps into the so-called art photography; at first, he pursued a distinctive documentary style of social realism where he documented issues of ephemerality, transience and vanishing, with unmistakable echoes of Pictorialist romanticism and idealism.



Sl. / Fig. 5 Miroslav Zdovc, *Duba Sambolec sa svojim kipom / Duba Sambolec with her statue*, 1970-e / 1970s

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After working in the Fotolik studio in Ljubljana and the National Liberation Museum in Maribor, he was employed as a photographer at the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana in 1954, which, naturally, brought him closer to the developments in visual arts. In 1969, he was employed as a photographer at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, which further enabled him to be closely connected to the world of art.⁴ During that time, he became a close colleague and a collaborator of a number of locally-based visual artists, some of them being prominent figures on the art scene as well as some young and emerging artists who were still studying at the academy. Zdovc did not only reproduce their works and document their exhibition openings, but he also often photographed the process of their artistic creation. In 1968 he became a member of a progressive group of photographers that operated in the framework of the ŠOLT camera club in Ljubljana which offered a rather new aesthetics of grainy and contrasting black-and-white photography which reflected on the gloomy experience of that time, resembling the Yugoslav black wave cinema.

In 1979, he quit his job at the academy and became an independent artist and photographer doing commercial work, mostly for the fast-developing marketing and advertising industry in Slovenia and Yugoslavia. At that time, mounting work obligations and ever-grander commissions made him hire assistants who supported him on photo shoots. As there was not an abundance of trained photographers (at that time, the university course of photography did not yet exist in Ljubljana), he first turned to students at the Academy of Fine Arts. His first assistant and collaborator was the then-young painter and printmaker Marko Gosar, an artist who commonly used photography in his artistic practice. The collaboration was short-lived, though, as Gosar moved

to the US, and therefore, he was replaced by photographer Boris Gaberščik, who worked with him until Zdovc's retirement in the early 1990s.

Perhaps incited by the vivid production of ŠOLT camera club, Zdovc dedicated more time during the 1970s and 1980s to his artistic practice, which has been developing since the late 1940s. In the 1950s and 1960s, his photographs that were made outside of his professional ventures and for artistic purposes were still classic black-and-white images of strong contrasts showcasing dry moments of reality; he photographed the remnants of archaic lifestyles that were not yet touched by the wave of modernisation that was in full swing in the post-war decades. Portraits of seemingly random people and photographs of everyday situations on streets or in bars were testimonies of a time that was inevitably and irreversibly changing. With a certain level of nostalgia and melancholy, he documented the process of vanishing, transience and transformation. In order to achieve these formal effects, he consciously resorted to the archaic Pictorialist aesthetic and merged it with the objective documentarian and humanistic approach of engaged post-war photography. Such developments might have been influenced by the dry photojournalist sensibility of his fellow photographers, such as Joco Žnidaršič and Leon Dolinšek.

One of the most intriguing works from his early oeuvre is a photograph entitled *Countess of Štanjel* (1968), where he depicted an anonymous beggar in the village of Štanjel in western Slovenia. It is a so-called photograph with a context; the viewer can recognise certain clues in the picture and, if familiar with its date, also the wider socio-political context of the motif. The face of the woman hides an entire geography of meanings and memories, the ones that one may never know and understand, but given her age, it can be concluded that she probably went through both world wars that brutally ravaged this area.⁵

This particular work shows the diversity of his practice and his unorthodox perception of what he considers a gallery piece. The *Countess of Štanjel* is a classic documentarian photograph that could easily, in an appropriate context, be published in a newspaper or a picture magazine, independently or accompanied by a text. And that very doubt of the original intention has always been present in the process of archiving Zdovc's oeuvre.

In the mid-1970s, he started using colour photography for artistic purposes, which was, at that time, commonly seen as blasphemy in the world of the so-called art photography; in the 1970s, photographers were still typically making a distinction between commercial and artistic use of photography: colour photography was widely considered as appropriate for commercial purposes, namely advertising and glossy magazines' editorials, while black and white photography was considered a medium of photojournalism and the "art photography". In that aspect, he distanced himself from the ŠOLT camera club aesthetics even though by that



Sl. / Fig. 6 Miroslav Zdovc, *Gabrijel Stupica u svom studiju / Gabrijel Stupica in his studio*, 1970-e / 1970s

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² Richter, *Josip Pelikan: Kronist mesta Celje*, 22–23.

³ Kerbler, "Življenjski podatki", *Miroslav Zdovc*, 10.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁵ Colner, "Countess of Štanjel", 2020.

⁶ Members of ŠOLT camera club took different paths in their careers: Milan Pajk was an art photographer and university professor, Joco Žnidaršič and Tone Stojko were photojournalists for *Delo* and *Mladina* newspapers, respectively, Miroslav Zdovc was a professional photographer, while Janez Korošin and Tihomir Pinter remained amateur photographers though working, publishing and exhibiting extensively.

time many members took their own paths in their creative practices, some becoming professionals, the other remaining leisure time photographers.⁶

However, Zdovc did not follow the tendencies of colour photography that started almost simultaneously appearing among less orthodox photographers in the US, such as Stephen Shore or William Eggleston,⁷ but was using it in a rather traditional manner, based on elements of both, “straight” modernist photography and Pictorialism. His pictures mostly depicted solitude, decay, passing and archetypal images of archaic landscapes. The element of colour was not introduced because of the artist’s intention to follow the trends but rather because of his need to experiment with different possibilities of the medium. The decision for colour photography was consciously provocative for a fairly conservative visual arts and photographic scene in Slovenia and Yugoslavia, where mainstream “art photography” was reduced to the activities of camera clubs, while the visual art scene (still) looked down on photography as a medium of lesser importance in comparison with traditional artistic media.

His photographs from that period were often focused on places that were not yet touched by industrial and technological progress. Like Pictorialist photographers of the late 19th century, he ignored the overwhelming reality of the modern era and was primarily interested in rural landscapes that unmistakably showed signs of human presence, but mostly without images of people. However, the rural agricultural landscape is by no means “natural”; on the contrary, it bears signs of the cultivation of the land and struggles against the elements of nature. On the other hand, photographs of old decaying houses, barns or old train coaches address nature’s power to take back control whenever humans abandon a place. The work entitled *Springtime Waters* (1976) evokes Pictorialism but also introduces a distinctive modern angle, while picture entitled *Lost Illusions* (1978) follows the conventions of “straight modernist photography” with highly ambivalent meanings. The image of solitude in the park, with the empty bench in the foreground, could acquire much more sinister undertones with the burning fire and billowing smoke in the background, or could be simply viewed as a romantic depiction of spring awakening and new beginnings.

Zdovc started actively and consciously working as an artist around the period when he came to work at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana, i.e., in the late 1960s. The closeness of ongoing learning and creative process among young students might have been a great inspiration for his own work. When it came to exhibiting, his approach was also highly ambivalent. He selected quite unusual photographs for exhibitions from a large pool of seemingly unrelated motifs; on the one hand, there were portraits, nudes and landscapes, and on the other hand, he picked seemingly unrelated documents of everyday life. Among his photographs that were blown up to gallery-sized prints, one can therefore see snapshots from his studio visits, portraits of



Sl. / Fig.7 Miroslav Zdovc, *Uspavana sfinga / Sleeping Sphynx*, 1978

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known and unknown people, street scenes, pastoral landscapes, and intimate photographs such as nudes. Many of the photographs could be identified with the time and place of the particular event in which the photographer took part and documented it, such as exhibition openings or private parties; others are marked by timelessness as they do not bear any signs of a wider context. Such a diversity of formal and conceptual approaches makes it seem as if he was making a kind of an intimate diary. Through his photographic imagery, one could probably trace the events of his life.

Since there were a number of exhibition photographs left among his legacy after his death, it is also possible to study different approaches that he took in the process of printing and mounting the works. For exhibition pieces, he commonly did not develop his negatives in the darkroom, but instead, he enlarged and printed them in photo studios; therefore, his works were usually printed in large formats, mounted on hardboard or wooden board that often resembled paintings due to their size and texture. Moreover, Zdovc did not strictly determine the formats of original photographs. He exhibited his works in different variations; he cropped the images freely, changed colours in post production and sometimes even physically intervened on the surfaces of photographs. In his legacy, one can thus find the same but never identical images with different cropping and colour scale. Due to his inconsistency it is difficult to determine the original frames and formats of his works; photographs from his catalogues were therefore taken as a reference point but this applies only to a part of the exhibition prints.

His artistic practice was undoubtedly thriving in the 1970s and 1980s when his works were widely exhibited and reflected on in Slovenia and Yugoslavia. His first major individual exhibition took place in 1971 in Mestna galerija (City Gallery) in Ljubljana, where he showcased selected photographs from the past twenty years. His body of work caught the attention of art critics and he was praised as a diverse and prolific photographer who merged a straight documentary approach with romantic and poetic photography aesthetics.⁸ Later in the 1970s, he became acclaimed as an “artist using photography” due to his obsession with capturing pure abstract motifs of the dilapidated remnants of human activity, such as close-ups of old beehives, train coaches, street signs and decayed walls.

One of the most important features of Zdovc’s colour photography turned out to be the genre of landscape, which was recognised as a quintessential motif of both traditional and modern art in Slovenia. Since the period of Impressionism, which appeared in the Slovenian cultural milieu rather late, in the first decade of the 20th century, the genre of landscape played an important role in the local history of art.⁹ Unlike bigger and expansive imperial cultures that were based on national mythologies and important historical figures, the main bond with the cultural identity, namely language and folk traditions, was the countryside, where the rural population in the 19th and early 20th century was

⁷ Cotton, *The Photograph as Contemporary Art*, 11.

⁸ Mesesnel, “Fotografija kot trenutni umetniški odziv”.

⁹ Mrak, *Miroslav Zdovc*, exhibition catalogue, 4.

mostly Slavic-speaking as opposed to the prevalent German-speaking urban population. The landscape has thus been a central feature of Slovenian (visual) culture and art since the period of nation-building in the 19th century, and in the field of photography, the influences of Pictorialism have lasted to the present day. Therefore, Zdovc's colour photographs with soft focus and pastoral imagery seem to be typical in the given geographical and cultural context.

As much as Pictorialist photography has been considered art in the late 19th and early 20th century, in the Slovenian milieu, this status has been maintained deep into the modern period and is still reflected nowadays in contemporary photography. Furthermore, Zdovc was also perceived as an "artist using photography" across the wider territory of Yugoslavia. Critics often related his "artistic touch" to photography to the fact that he worked as a photographer in the Museum of Modern Art and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana, where he got acquainted with tendencies in fine arts.¹⁰ Above all, such interpretations of his works show the traditionally unequal position of photography throughout the 20th century within the field of visual arts, in comparison with traditional artistic media such as painting, sculpture and printmaking. Furthermore, critics also often praised his bold use of colour, which they often compared to concurrent painting, and his stylisation of certain motifs to pure signs.

One of his most notable exhibitions took place at GBJ in 1986, where a comprehensive overview of his artistic oeuvre was showcased. The selection of works for the show demonstrated that his perception of what is considered (photographic) artwork was utterly diverse and subjective. The exhibition was a mixture of his documentary snapshots, inevitably taken out of the wider context, various portraits and experimental attempts in landscape photography. In a way, his approach was (unwittingly) open: he did not showcase the entire series but combined works from different periods in a coherent entirety.

That small retrospective was also the first attempt to systematise and classify his artistic practice. The exhibition catalogue offered a selection of texts about his work in the past fifteen years, indicating that Zdovc was one of the major figures on the local photography scene. He was labelled as an artist who managed to breach formal photographic aesthetics and reach the level of pure visual effects. His practice in the 1950s was characterised by traditional, emotional and romantic photography. The 1960s enabled him to open up his conceptual frameworks that were based on documentary photography while he expanded the notion of this genre. The 1970s were again dedicated to his exploration of landscape and the human figure while being deeply influenced by topical currents in painting.¹¹ In the 1980s, his practice became even more diverse, and he often created mixed-media works such as a combination of photography and graphic prints, drawings and collages. In one of his last published series *Mixal* (1984) he explored technique of collage by attaching pieces of fabric¹² to photographs making



Sl. / Fig. 8 Prikaz u časopisu Spot / Review in the Spot magazine, 1973



Sl. / Fig. 9 Prikaz u časopisu Spot / Review in the Spot magazine, 1973

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them appear like quintessential media images. It is as if he aimed to analyse and question ways of seeing in the visually-based modern society.

However, some of his artworks were focused on an interdisciplinary approach and unconventional combinations even back in the 1970s. In an article in the *Spot* magazine¹³ in 1973, close connections between photographer Miroslav Zdovc and Slovenian painter Rudi Španzel were discussed. They were both representatives of new artistic tendencies that appeared in the 1970s when Zdovc started experimenting with staged photography, and Španzel started painting in the style of photorealism. Their collaboration was straightforward as they complemented each other while both took part in the process of photo shooting; Španzel purposely used photographs made by Zdovc as templates for his paintings.¹⁴

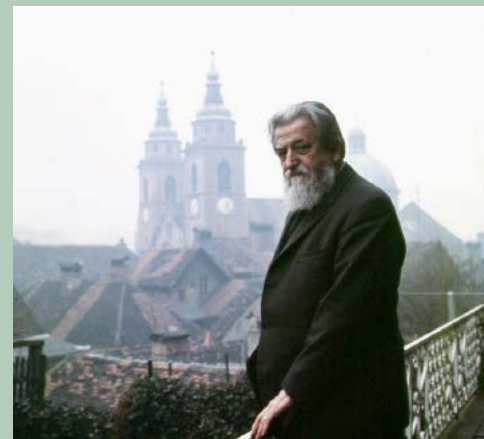
Despite his omnipresent position on the art scene and a couple of exhibition catalogues and articles in the press, cataloguing and evaluating the artistic practice of Zdovc inevitably pointed out the issue of the lack of available sources, especially for his documentary images. The most significant material is undoubtedly the donated photo archive itself, but among the multitude of photographs, many are left without their wider historical context.

In the process of curating an exhibition several years after his death and an even longer period after the end of his active artistic and professional career, one is faced with only bits and pieces of his creative practice. One way of contextualising his oeuvre within a wider social and cultural context is to draw comparisons with other artists and photographers of this period. The project of evaluating and cataloguing his photo archive and curating an exhibition is constantly being questioned through the larger context of his time and place. In order to strengthen the presence of Zdovc in the local history of art, his works shall be juxtaposed with the works of artists and photographers that influenced him or were influenced by him; these were his former teachers, collaborators, apprentices, friends, colleagues or simply interlocutors.

When it comes to photography, Zdovc came from a very traditional background. He started in a photographic studio and later worked in probably every possible aspect of photography. His artistic practice was consequently rather traditional as he sought a specific aesthetic of the "art photography" that was, at that time, closely related to the activities of a widespread network of camera clubs. However, his legacy is much more diverse; unlike him, younger photographers whom he influenced were commonly working within the realm of neo-avant-garde photography or what is now often called contemporary photography. They were his creative partners, collaborators and colleagues such as Marko Gosar, Boris Gaberščik and Tomaž Gregorič. The latter did not work as his assistant but knew Zdovc in his formative creative period when the two had profound discussions about art.

- 10 Stepanov, "Likovni dnevnik, Fotografija kao povod in cilj".
- 11 Bassin, *Miroslav Zdovc, exhibition catalogue*, 4–5.
- 12 Sosič, *Fotografije, Ob mojstrovih osemdesetletnici*, 12.
- 13 *Spot* was an iconic and influential art and photography magazine that was published in Zagreb in the period of 1972–1978 and edited by curator Radoslav Putar.
- 14 Bassin, "Miroslav Zdovc & Rudi Španzel", 29–30.

Besides conceiving an exhibition, there is also the task of including Zdovc's work in the museum collection and photo archive of GBJ. Here, things become slightly more complicated. The curators at the museum have been faced with very diverse materials in terms of their genre and function, as well as in terms of technique and carrier of photographs. There are negatives, prints, framed and mounted works from exhibitions. Moreover, the curators came upon diverse materials which have to be meaningfully organised; there are several types of work in his archive: artworks that can easily become part of the museum collection, documentary photographs, which are great archival and referential material, reproductions of artworks that were made for publications or archives, and other ephemera.



Sl. / Fig. 10 Miroslav Zdovc, Božidar Jakac, 1980-e / 1980s

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To examine, organise and evaluate the entire life of the photographer, which came in several boxes, inevitably led to certain ethical and conceptual questions: What to do with personal photographs that were clearly not intended to be published? What to do with his photographs and artworks that never made it to be published? Are the curators entitled to rediscover and publish the works that the artist might not have finished? What to do with the documentary images that he did not manage to develop and were not selected for publication?

These are some fundamental questions that the curators are faced with in the process of organising, analysing, interpreting and archiving the body of work of Miroslav Zdovc. According to different views of different museums, there are several options on disposal; however, there are no clear rules or principles on how this should be done. Predominantly the curators have been faced with two almost conflicting views. Art museums, such as GBJ, differentiate between works of art and documentary photographs, while, for instance, history museums advise a different approach, that is, to treat all the materials equally as museum artefacts. However, since Zdovc made a clear distinction between his documentary photographs and photographs as artworks, the curators almost have a moral obligation to follow the artist's principle and act accordingly. But that leaves the curators with an utterly difficult task: to determine which of his photographs are works of art and which ones are not.

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