



DOGODEK KOT PRIVILEGIJIRANI MEDIJ
NA PODROČJU SODOBNE LIKOVNE UMETNOSTI /
THE EVENT AS A PRIVILEGED MEDIUM



**Marcello Maloberti - *Die Schmetterlinge essen die Bananen*
(Metulji jedo banane / The Butterflies Eat the Bananas), 2010/2011.**

Performans izveden pred Moderno galerijo v Ljubljani / Performance carried out in front of the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana.
(Zgodiljenje umetnosti in javnosti / Courtesy of the artist and MGLC, fotografija / photo: Jaka Babnik.)





DOGODEK KOT PRIVILEGIRANI MEDIJ NA PODROČJU
SODOBNE LIKOVNE UMETNOSTI / THE EVENT AS A
PRIVILEGED MEDIUM IN THE CONTEMPORARY ART WORLD
/ ur. / ed. Beti Žerovc

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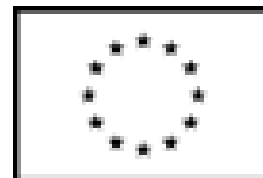
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UVODNIK

BETI ŽEROVC

Pričujoča številka *Maske* prinaša prispevke s simpozija *Dogodek kot privilegirani medij na področju sodobne likovne umetnosti*, ki je 4. in 5. novembra 2011 potekal v okviru 29. grafičnega bienala v Moderni galeriji v Ljubljani.¹ Ker je bil simpozij integralni del bienala, najprej nekaj besed o bienalskem kontekstu. Bienale je bil v celoti posvečen fenomenu umetniškega dogodka in je imel namen preizpraševati naravo tega danes zelo popularnega medija na likovnem področju tako z bienalsko razstavo kot s spremljevalno teoretsko platformo. Pri slednji ni bil namen ujeti fenomen umetniškega dogodka v neko definicijo, temveč dva meseca razpravljati o njem, ga motriti in osvetljevati z različnih strani, ponujati različne, tudi povsem nasprotno poglede nanj in – idealno – na koncu o njem vedeti več. Ob tem se nismo želeli izogniti dejstvu, da je likovno področje v trendu »podogodkovljenja« usklajeno s številnimi drugimi področji in s tem namenom so tudi bienalski teoretski dogodki vsebinsko zajemali zelo široko, časovno pa so se zvrstili »od splošnega k specifičnemu«. Za boljše razumevanje te strukture naj omenim dvoje pomembnejših, simpoziju predhodnih dogodkov.

Večji uvodni teoretski dogodek bienala je bil *Maraton predavanj in pogovorov o fenomenu dogodka*,² posvečen široki interdisciplinarni obravnavi dogodka kot splošnega družbenega fenomena. Na njem so eminen-

1 <https://29graficnibienale.wordpress.com/simpozij/> V publikaciji niso vključeni referati vseh predavateljev, ki so se udeležili simpozija; dodani so tudi trije avtorji, ki so sodelovanje na simpoziju najprej potrdili, nato pa so ga zaradi objektivnih razlogov odpovedali. Sven Lütticken in Roger Sansi sta svoja prispevka poslala, s Simonom Colemanom pa sva o vprašanjih, ki naj bi jih obravnaval na simpoziju, naredila intervju.

2 <https://29graficnibienale.wordpress.com/2011/10/01/maraton-pogovorov-in-predavanj-o-fenomenu-dogodka-1-del/> Na blogu je objavljen del maratonskih predavanj.

tni predstavniki slovenskih medijev, državne uprave, Cerkve, nevladnih organizacij, gospodarstva, umetnosti in različnih znanstvenih ved poskušali pojasniti, za kakšne namene v svoji dejavnosti uporabljajo dogodke in kaj želijo z njimi doseči, ter razmišljati o tem, kam pelje očitno zelo obširni fenomen »podogodkovljenja« sodobnih življenj. Na maratonu so se med področji pokazale številne – pričakovane in nepričakovane – povezave; jasno se je na primer izrisalo, kako intenzivno se danes na številnih področjih razvijajo različni profili »ritualnih strokovnjakov«, ki dogodke konceptualizirajo, režirajo in skrbijo za njihovo izvedbo, ter da imajo ti pri svojem delu precej skupnega.

Serija pogovorov z umetniki je bila namenjena usmerjenemu preizpraševanju njihovega osebnega prakticiranja umetniških dogodkov. Poudarek je bil na vprašanjih, zakaj in kako je prav dogodek tako ustrezeni nosilec za njihove namene in poetike, kaj jih na dogodka tako privlači, da ga uporabljajo raje kot tradicionalne likovne medije. Pogovori so bili zastavljeni v nacionalnih okvirih ali v okvirih določenih umetniških centrov kot poskusi detekcije trenutnega razvoja in stanja medija umetniškega dogodka na izbranih območjih globalnega umetnostnega zemljevida.

Simpozij *Dogodek kot privilegirani medij na področju sodobne likovne umetnosti* je bil zastavljen izrazito interdisciplinarno in je iz različnih znanstvenih perspektiv reflektiral fenomen dogodka, tako umetniškega kot neumetniškega, na likovnem področju danes. O name-nih simpozija verjetno najbolje govori koncept, s katerim sem strokovnjake povabila k sodelovanju:

Evropske institucije za sodobno likovno umetnost v zadnjih letih organizirajo izredno veliko najrazličnejših dogodkov; večje tudi po več deset na teden. Dogodki so sicer lahko zelo različne narave – to so vodstva, delavnice, otvoritve, zabave pozno v noč, znanstveni simpoziji, predavanja, najrazličnejši umetniški dogodki itd. –, a kljub temu so očitno postali pomembna ponudba in način komunikacije med umetnostno institucijo in različnimi javnostmi okoli nje. Od institucije za sodobno umetnost se danes pričakuje »živost«, kar vzpodbuja – nekoliko paradoksalno – na eni strani nenehne spremembe pri formi, vsebini in formatu dogodkov (vsebinska, oblikovna in konceptualna diferenciacija, prostorsko in časovno raztezanje dogodkov itd.), na drugi pa standardizacijo, ki jo logično prinese njihova produkcija in dobava po tekočem traku. Dogodki –

tako neumetniški kot umetniški – se pri tem tudi izvajajo v istem okolju in pred podobnim občinstvom, podobno so producirani, medijsko napovedani in obravnavani, predvsem pa jih v institucijah snujejo, producirajo in kombinirajo v programe isti ljudje.

Diskurz likovnega področja deloma odseva takšno stanje, saj se že dolgo pospešeno in zavzeto suče okoli dogodka, njegovih potencialov in vseprisotnosti. Vse opaznejša postaja tudi njegova pomanjkljivost, in sicer da tematizira predvsem le izbrane umetniške dogodke, manj pa tiste, ki to niso oziroma nimajo tega nominalnega predznaka, čeprav številčno v institucionalni ponudbi dogajanja umetniške dogodke verjetno presegajo in se v končni fazi z njimi zlivajo v nekakšen skupni »govor« umetnostne institucije.

Simpozij se bo zato poskušal na splošni ravni spoprijeti z dogodkovno usmerjenostjo likovnega področja in likovnih institucij in se čim bolj celovito vprašati po tem, kaj pravzaprav pomeni takšen splošni trend spreminjanja narave delovanja likovnih institucij, ki so še pred nekaj desetletji predvsem mirno in tiho razstavljale »statično« likovno produkcijo na stenah in podstavkih.

V tem okviru bosta obravnavani zlasti dve soodvisni temi.

1. Institucije za sodobno umetnost nenehno vabijo obiskovalce in se z njimi zapletajo v najrazličnejše interakcije, zato postajajo prostor novih socialnih struktur, v katere želijo vpeti posameznika oziroma ga dejansko tudi uspešno vpenjajo, sodeč po velikem odzivu obiskovalcev. Interakcija, ki jo vzpostavlja likovna institucija prek dogodkov, danes zajame vse od velikega dela občasnih, »laičnih« obiskovalcev razstav do posameznikov, ki prihajajo v galerijo tudi večkrat na teden in jih galerijsko dogajanje trdneje formira v specifične skupnosti. Dogodek se pri tem kaže kot medij povezovanja, zdi se, da ima veliko moč in vlogo pri formiranju začasnih ali trajnejših skupnosti.

2. Institucije oziroma njihovi kuratorji različne dogodke sestavljajo v pravilne vzorce, v nekakšne uravnotežene institucionalne diskurze. Kaže se namreč, da morajo imeti večje institucije mešan program s podobno ikonografijo in vsebinami, ozke tematske ali druge specializacije pa pripadajo le malim razstavnim prostorom. »Dogodkovni govor«

takšne institucije povsod po svetu zajema praviloma širok, a identičen spekter tem – od skrajno »negativnih« (nasilje, pornografija itd.) do »pozitivnih« (»reševanja in izboljševanja sveta«, obdarovanja gledalcev itd.) –, pri katerem umetniške dogodke razlagalni in teoretski dogodki zaokrožajo v nekakšno »uravnoteženo dieto«, povsem standardizirano zgodbo. Govori institucij se razlikujejo le kot kalejdoskopske slike, pri čemer različni vzorci vselej nastajajo iz istih sestavnih delov. Sistem očitno teži k vedno večji reproduktibilnosti dogodkov in ponavlja na različnih koncih sveta identične umetniške in teoretske ter razlagalne dogodke.

Zanimalo nas bo, kakšen govor in ikonografija tako nastajata in zakaj. Kakšne skupnosti tako nastajajo in zakaj? Kako se oboje vključuje v splošno delovanje družbe in deluje kot sodobni ideološki aparat?

Zdi se, da je likovno področje v tem pogledu povsem nerefleksirana struktura, čeprav ima njegova dogodkovna produkcija zaradi velikega in še vedno naraščajočega števila institucij izredne razsežnosti. V tem kontekstu velja še izrecno poudariti, da umetnostne institucije v zadnjih desetletjih ne le hranijo in razstavljajo sodobno umetnost, temveč to (s preostalim dogajanjem vred) tudi naročajo in producirajo. Ker so tako postale naročnik sodobne umetnosti podobnega tipa in razsežnosti, kot sta bila nekoč le še plemstvo in Cerkev, se zdi natančnejši razmislek o tem, kaj takšni procesi pomenijo, toliko bolj nujen.

Ker se več avtorjev v svojih besedilih sklicuje na bienale oziroma bienalski katalog, je potrebno dodati, da so vsi že nekaj mesecev pred simpozijem ta katalog dobili na vpogled v pdf formatu. S to gesto sem želela dati zelo interdisciplinarni družini raziskovalcev možnost, da se čim bolj »uglasimo«, sami pa so se odločili, ali bodo ta material oziroma usmeritev upoštevali ali ne.

V pričujoči publikaciji bienalski kontekst dodatno vzpostavlja izbor fotografij umetniških dogodkov, izvedenih na bienalu. Fotografije nam je prijazno posredoval organizator bienala Mednarodni grafični likovni center, za kar se mu, tudi v imenu Maske, najlepše zahvaljujem.³

Še opomba glede vrstnega reda objavljenih prispevkov. Ker je bilo moje besedilo simpozijski uvodnik, sem ga tudi v publikaciji postavila na začetek, nadaljevala pa sem z nizanjem, ki bi bilo lahko tudi drugačno. Med besedili ni linearne, sosledične povezave, saj je ponudba za objavo simpozijskih besedil v Maski prišla naknadno in ta sprva niso bila naročena z mislijo na publikacijo. Tematska številka revije Maska je nastala zaradi pripravljenosti predavateljev, da so si vzeli dodatni čas za oblikovanje pisnih prispevkov. Za dobro voljo in trud se jim še enkrat iskreno zahvaljujem.

³ *Dogodek – The Event. 29. grafični bienale – The 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts*, Peter Kisin, Beti Žerovc (ur.), Ljubljana: Mednarodni grafični likovni center, 2011. Podatki in opisi projektov, ki so predstavljeni na fotografijah, so objavljeni v katalogu; posnetke nekaterih med njimi je moč videti v dokumentarni oddaji *Platforma – 29. grafični bienale* (avtorica oddaje Polona Balantič, režiser Slavko Hren). <http://tvsllo.si/predvajaj/platforma-29-graficni-bienale/ava2.118371260/>

EDITORIAL

BETI ŽEROVC

TRANSLATED BY
RAWLEY GRAU

The present issue of *Maska* features contributions to the symposium *The Event as a Privileged Medium in the Contemporary Art World*, held at the Moderna galerija in Ljubljana, 4–5 November 2011, as part of the 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts.¹ Because the symposium was an integral part of the biennial, let me first say a few words about its context. This edition of the biennial was devoted in its entirety to the phenomenon of the art event, and its aim was to interrogate the nature of this currently very popular medium in the art field both in the main exhibition and through an accompanying theoretical platform. The latter was not intended to capture the phenomenon of the art event in some sort of definition but rather, over the course of two months, to discuss, examine, and illuminate it from various angles, to offer different and even quite contrary views on it, and, ideally, to ultimately learn more about it. At the same time, we did not wish to avoid the fact that, in this “eventification” trend, the art field was in accord with many other fields, so with this in mind, the biennial’s theoretical events encompassed a very broad range of content, while, in terms of their scheduling, they proceeded “from the general to the specific”. To give a better idea of this structure, let me mention two of the more important events that took place prior to the symposium.

The main introductory theoretical event was the *Marathon of Lectures and Discussions on the Phenomenon*

¹ For more information, see the symposium page on the blog of the 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana, <http://29gbljubljana.wordpress.com/symposium/>. Not all the papers presented at the symposium are included in this issue of *Maska*; also, there are three additional papers by authors who had initially confirmed their participation in the symposium but later had to cancel for various reasons: Sven Lütticken and Roger Sansi sent in their contributions, and I interviewed Simon Coleman on the topics that would be discussed at the symposium.

of the Event,² which was devoted to a broad, interdisciplinary examination of “the event” as a general social phenomenon. Distinguished representatives from the Slovene media, the state administration, the church, non-government organizations, the business world, the art world, and various scholarly fields attempted to explain the kinds of purposes for which events are used in their work and what people wish to achieve by using them. They also reflected on the question of where the clearly very wide-ranging phenomenon of the “eventification” of contemporary life might be leading. At the *Marathon*, many connections – both expected and unexpected – emerged between different fields; it became clear, for example, just how intensively today many fields are witnessing the development of various profiles of “ritual experts” who conceptualize events, orchestrate them, and see to their execution, and that these figures’ activities have quite a lot in common.

The series of conversations with artists was intended as a directed questioning of artists about the role of art events in their personal practice. The focus was on the questions of why, and in what way, the event has been such an appropriate vehicle for their aims and aesthetics, and what do they find so attractive in the event that makes them prefer it to traditional art media. The discussions were framed in national contexts or in the context of particular art centres, in an attempt to ascertain the current development and state of the medium of the art event in selected regions on the global art map.

The symposium *The Event as a Privileged Medium in the Contemporary Art World* was explicitly interdisciplinary in its design and reflected the phenomenon of the event, both artistic and non-artistic, in the art field today from a variety of scholarly viewpoints. The symposium’s intention is best summed up by the concept statement I used when I was inviting experts to participate:

In recent years, European institutions of contemporary art have been organizing an enormous number of the most diverse events, sometimes dozens of events a week at the larger institutions. The events are of very different natures – guided tours, workshops, openings, late-night parties, scholarly symposiums, lecture series, all sorts of artistic events,

and so on; nevertheless, it is clear that they have become a significant part of the institution's offering and a means of communication between it and the various publics around it. Today we expect a certain “liveliness” from the contemporary art institution, an expectation that (somewhat paradoxically) encourages, on the one hand, continual change in the form, content, and format of events (a differentiation in subject matter, design, and concept; the spatial and temporal extension of events; etc.) and, on the other hand, their standardization, which is the logical result of their “conveyor belt” production and delivery. Events – both artistic and non-artistic – are carried out in the same environment and before similar audiences; they are produced, publicized, and discussed in the media in similar ways; and most importantly, they are conceived, produced, and combined into programmes by the same people in the institution.

The discourse of the visual art field reflects this state of affairs in part. For a long time now, it has devoted much excited and enthusiastic attention to the event, its potential and omnipresence. But there is a gap in this discourse that is becoming increasingly evident: namely, it thematizes only selected artistic events and deals much less with other kinds of events – those that do not possess the nominal designation “art” – although within the institutional offering these probably outnumber the artistic events and, ultimately, merge with them in forming the total “speech” of the art institution.

The symposium, then, will try to come to terms, on a general level, with the event-orientation of the art field and art institutions; it will explore, as thoroughly as possible, the meaning of this general change in the nature of the work of art institutions, which only a few decades ago were calmly and quietly exhibiting “static” art production on walls and pedestals.

Within this context, we will discuss in particular two mutually dependent topics.

1. *The contemporary art institution continually invites people to attend things and enters into the most diverse kinds of interactions with them; thus, it is becoming the site of new social structures in which it seeks to involve the individual, and in fact is succeeding in this, to judge by the large response of visitors. Today the interaction created by the art institution through its events embraces everyone*

2 For more on the *Marathon*, see the biennial's blog, <http://29gbljubljana.wordpress.com/programme/marathon-of-lectures-and-discussions-on-the-event-as-a-phenomenon/>. A number of the *Marathon*'s talks are published (in Slovene), on the Slovene version of the blog, <http://29graficnibienale.wordpress.com/program/maraton-predavanj-in-pogovorov-o-fenomenu-dogodka/>.

– from the large segment of occasional “lay” exhibition-viewers to people who might visit the gallery several times a week and are shaped by gallery events more firmly into a specific community. Here the event shows itself to be a medium of connection that appears to possess great power, and play an important role, in the formation of temporary or more permanent communities.

2. Institutions, or rather their curators, join the different events in the right patterns, to create a kind of balanced institutional discourse. Indeed, it seems that the larger institutions need to have a mixed programme with similar iconography and subject matter, while narrow thematic or other kinds of specializations belong only to smaller exhibition spaces. The “event speech” of the larger institutions around the world spans a broad, but identical, range of themes – from the extremely “negative” (violence, pornography, etc.) to the “positive” (“saving and improving the world”, giving gifts to viewers, etc.) – with explanatory and theoretical events surrounding the artistic ones in a kind of “balanced diet” in a story that has been entirely standardized. The speeches of the institutions differ from one another only as kaleidoscope images do: the various patterns are always created from the same components. Clearly, the tendency in the art system is towards the ever-greater reproducibility of events, with identical artistic, theoretical, and explanatory events being repeated in different parts of the world.

We will ask ourselves such questions as: What kinds of speech and iconography are thus created, and why? What kinds of communities are thus formed, and why? How are all these things included in the general operation of society and how do they behave as a contemporary ideological apparatus?

The art field seems to be, in this sense, an entirely unreflected structure, although its event production has reached extraordinary dimensions thanks to the large and ever-growing number of art institutions. In this context, we should also emphasize explicitly the fact that in recent decades art institutions have not only preserved and exhibited contemporary art, but they have also been commissioning and producing it (along with all the other events). Because art institutions have thus become commissioners of contemporary art, similar in type and dimension to what the aristocracy and the church once were, it seems

all the more necessary to consider in precise terms what such processes mean.

Given that a number of authors refer in their texts to the biennial or the biennial’s catalogue, I should add that a few months before the symposium they were all sent a PDF version of the catalogue for their inspection. Through this gesture, I wished to offer this very interdisciplinary band of experts the chance to “harmonize” their papers as much as possible; they were the ones, however, who decided whether or not to take this material, or rather this focus, into account in their talks.

In the present publication, this context is further displayed by a selection of photographs of art events that took place at the biennial. The photographs have been kindly made available to us by the biennial’s organizer, the International Centre of Graphic Arts, for which, on behalf of *Maska* and myself, I would like to express our sincere gratitude.³

Let me add a further note about the order in which the published contributions are presented. Because my text served as the introduction to the symposium, I have placed it first here as well, but the texts that follow it are in a sequence that could have been different. There is no linear successive connection between the texts, since the offer to publish the symposium texts in *Maska* came only later and these contributions were not initially commissioned with publication in mind. This themed issue of *Maska* came about as the result of the contributors’ willingness to take additional time to reshape their talks as written articles. For their good will and effort I give them, once again, my heartfelt thanks.

3 Information and descriptions of the projects seen in the photographs are available in the catalogue: *Dogodek – The Event: 29. grafični bienale – The 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts*, Peter Kisin, Beti Žerovc (eds.), Ljubljana: International Centre of Graphic Arts, 2011. Clips from several of these events may also be viewed in the documentary broadcast *Platforma – 29. grafični bienale*, written by Polona Balantič, directed by Slavko Hren, Radio-Television Slovenia, 2011; available at <http://tvslo.si/predvajaj/platforma-29-graficni-bienale/ava2.118371260/> (in Slovene).



**Praxis (Brainard & Delia Carey),
Nova ekonomija / The New Economy, 2002-2011.**
Performans, izveden v MGLC v Ljubljani / Performance carried out at MGLC in Ljubljana.
(Z dovoljenjem umetnikov in MGLC / Courtesy of the artists and MGLC, fotografija / photo: Jaka Babnik.)



ZAKAJ NA LIKOVNEM PODROČJU RAZMIŠLJATI O UMETNIŠKIH DOGODKIH?¹

BETI ŽEROVC

- Ker je umetniški dogodek danes zelo aktualen izrazni medij na tem področju.

- Ker je na likovnem področju, ki je po »tradiciji in definiciji« zavezano statičnim delom, to je slikam in kipom, umetniški dogodek pravzaprav paradoks.

- Ker je prav zavoljo tega dobra vstopna točka v razmišljanje o spremenjeni strukturi in naravi likovnega področja, ki nas zanimata. Članek bo poskušal uvodoma načrtovati in na kratko opisati niz velikih sprememb, ki so se na likovnem področju zgodile v 20. stoletju, zlasti pa v zadnjih desetletjih, v drugem delu pa z analiziranjem umetniškega dogodka in njegove specifične vpetosti v področje ponuditi nekaj izhodišč za razmišljanje o potencialno možnem delovanju in učinkovanju te spremenjene strukture.

NOVO! INSTITUCIJE ZA SODOBNO UMETNOST

V svetu, v katerem so institucije, ki skrbijo za obravnavo in prezentacijo sodobne umetnosti, stalnica, si težko predstavljamo, da teh pred dobrimi sto leti še nikjer ni bilo oziroma jih je bilo le malo. Te institucije so različne – največkrat so to razstavišča –, geografsko pa so razširjene skoraj povsod po svetu; najgostejše zlasti v prostorih z različnimi variacijami neoliberalnega kapitalističnega sistema in dovolj visokim standardom. Institucije so lahko majhne in niti ne fizične, lahko pa predstavljajo tudi orjaške, izredno drage stavbne komplekse, ki so na najbolj cenjenih lokacijah prostorov, ki jih gradijo, v nekaterih primerih pa so tudi znameniti ar-

¹ Termin umetniški dogodek uporabljamo kot krovni termin za najrazličnejše, za občinstvo pripravljene dogodke (akcije, performanse, geste, hepeninge, interaktivne projekte ipd.), ki jih umetniki izvedejo v umetnostni instituciji, pa tudi za enake vrste dogodkov, ki se zgodijo zunaj galerije in občasno tudi brez občinstva, a praviloma zato, da bi se vpeli v identično umetnostno sfero.

hitekturni dosežki svojega časa. Izredno hitrost razvoja lahko ilustriramo kar s slovenskimi razmerami. Prvo slovensko samostojno in specializirano razstavišče za sodobno likovno umetnost je bilo zgrajeno in odprto v letih 1908–09. Po podatkih portala slovenskega Ministrstva za kulturo Culture.si pa je danes v Sloveniji več kot 130 razstavišč za sodobno oziroma tudi za sodobno umetnost.²

Ko gledamo nazaj, je očitno, da za takšen izreden institucionalni razvoj sodobna likovna umetnost *per se* in ljubezen njenih aktivnih privrženecv nista bili dovolj, temveč se je lahko zgodil zavoljo specifične vključenosti likovne umetnosti v pojem kulture in izrednega pomena, ki ga je slednja začela intenzivno pridobivati v 19. stoletju, nato pa je rasel in se razvijal vse do danes. Odrazil se je tudi strukturno, v premiku od stihijskega, mecenskega ali donatorskega pristopa h kulturi k trajno organiziranim oblikam in kulturni politiki z jasnimi nameni in cilji, pa tudi z instrumenti, pooblastili in finančnimi sredstvi za njihovo izvajanje.

Med bistveno opredeljujočimi momenti v razvoju omenimo nacionalizacijo in podržavljenje kulture, vse bolj razširjeno razumevanje kulture kot učinkovitega instrumenta za doseganje družbenega napredka in intelektualnega dozorevanja, pa tudi najrazličnejša drsenja kulture v smeri sekularne religije. Kulturo je politika že v 19. stoletju med drugim povsem jasno, čeprav ne vselej tudi glasno in domišljeno, dojemala kot (so)izvajalko številnih nalog v vse bolj sekularizirani družbi, ki jih je dotlej izvajala religija. Njeno področje naj bi bilo zlasti preprečevanje drsenja družbe v anomijo, in sicer z vzdrževanjem družbene kohezije in oblikovanjem kolektivnih vrednot ter družbenih reprezentacij.³ Dodajmo, da se je v 20. stoletju kultura ustalila še kot ključni medij organiziranega in stalnega reprezentiranja družb navzven ter postala nekakšna ustaljena mednarodna deviza v simbolni izmenjavi na svetovni ravni (kot »dar, ki terja vračilo«). Kultura se je tako ustalila kot široko področje, na katerem navzven in navznoter poteka stalno,

intenzivno reprezentiranje, kakšen je kdo ali si vsaj želi biti (izgledati), katere so njegove ključne vrednote (ali vsaj želi, da je videti, da so), nadalje kdo je s kom kompatibilen (ali pa tudi ne) itn.

Umetnost je v teh okvirih pridobila pomembno mesto. Verjetno med drugim zato, ker se je bila pripravljena aktivno vključevati v našete procese in se tudi usklajevati z nameni in cilji kulturnih politik, javnih ali zasebnih.

Če se vrnemo k institucijam za sodobno umetnost, je njihova dejavnost v univerzumu kulture splošno sprejeta in razumljena (še vedno) kot muzejska dejavnost ali vsaj po nekakšni analogiji z njo. Ne glede na to, da za razliko od drugih muzejskih institucij obstoječe gradivo in zatečeno zgodovinsko stanje nista tista, ki ju kurator za sodobno umetnost (običajno) retrogradno odkriva, pedantno raziskuje in predstavlja, temveč je čisti, racionalistični znanstveni pristop pravzaprav dojet kot neprimeren in celo ciničen. Kurator se na prvem mestu obnaša kot oboževalec umetnosti – on ne razstavlja, česar ne mara – in kot nekdo, ki je zavezan udeležanju pozitivnih družbenih vrednot. Kot primerni primarni motivi za odločitve pri razstavljanju so zato lahko uveljavljeni ljubezen, vera, politično prepričanje, občutek ...,⁴ predvsem pa je povsem sprejemljiva in uveljavljena tudi, lahko bi rekli kar »kontramuzealska« oblika delovanja, pri kateri institucija po kuratorjih pravzaprav generira likovno sceno, njene vsebine in produkcijo, saj vse to kurator prek institucije dobesedno naroča, producira in tudi plačuje. Sistem institucij za sodobno umetnost ima tako v muzealski sferi prepoznavno posebnost, da sam v veliki meri generira objekte lastne muzealizacije.⁵

NOVO! KURATORJI ZA SODOBNO UMETNOST

Z zadnjim odstavkom smo že krepko zagazili v fenomen posebnega sloja delavcev, ki skrbijo za delovanje institucij za sodobno umetnost, ki se je v 20. stoletju – zlasti pa v zadnjih desetletjih – praktično iz nič glo-

² Konkretno objavljenih podatkov o številu razstavišč, namenjenih izključno sodobni umetnosti, v Sloveniji ni bilo mogoče pridobiti in pri izračunu mi je prijazno pomagala urednica portala Alenka Pirman. Objavljeni podatki so na voljo za vsa razstavišča likovnega področja skupaj. V publikaciji *Kulturna politika v Sloveniji* v poglavju Likovna umetnost lahko preberemo: »Občasnih razstavišč je več kot 800, stalnih pa 254.« (*Kulturna politika v Sloveniji*, Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 1997, str. 179).

³ Francija je šolski primer utilitarnega razumevanja kulture v tem pogledu in verjetno so zato tukaj le nakazani procesi najbolje obdelani prav v francoski teoriji. Naštejmo nekaj aktualnih avtorjev: Jean Caune, Olivier Donnat, Claude Mollard, Alain Queminn. Francoska teorija eksplicitno obravnava tudi povezovalne, kakršna je na primer med uveljavitvijo ministrstev za kulturo kot državnih institucij in posledičnim razcvetom in porastom umetnostnih institucij, med njimi razstavišč za sodobno umetnost.

⁴ Izjava »Obožujem xy in ga zato razstavljam« se zdi smiselna. Izjava v smislu tradicionalnega kustosa, da želim pokazati, kaj se trenutno dogaja v umetnosti, gradivo pa pri tem ni nujno po mojem okusu, pa se zdi cinična. Torej kuratorji *par excellence* bolje delujejo, če niso objektivni.

⁵ Gre za zapleten sistem medsebojno povezanih institucij, kjer ene bolj »producirajo«, druge bolj »muzealizirajo«, večinoma pa počno tako eno kot drugo in, kar je zelo pomembno, zaposlujejo iste ljudi. (Denimo, kar sem produciral kot direktor Kunsthalle v petih letih, bom morda v naslednjih petih letih lahko muzealiziral, ko bom direktor muzeja za sodobno umetnost.) Opomnimo, da se seveda spreminjajo tudi ostale muzejske institucije in da je na likovnem področju aktiven in bistven faktor umetnostni trg. Ker se ne bomo spuščali še v ta aspekt, le opazka, da se institucionalni in tržni segment sodobne umetnosti v svojem delovanju ne izključujeta, temveč se podpirata.

balno namnožil v izjemne številke. H kuratorju in njegovim dejavnostim se bomo vrnili še kasneje, uvodoma pa bi radi kar najbolj poudarili, da tako danes praviloma stoji med sodobno umetnostjo in občinstvom – ki to običajno konzumira institucionalizirano! – poseben sloj posrednikov.

SPREMEMBA! UMETNIKI

Umetniška populacija je v 20. stoletju izjemno narasla, z neobvladljivim prirastkom zlasti v zadnjih dveh desetletjih. Velik del umetniške populacije se je opisanemu novemu stanju prilagodil in danes živi od oskrbovanja institucionalne mreže; pri tem velik del umetnosti nastaja dobesedno in izključno za institucije. Vzpostavitve širokega sloja institucij za sodobno umetnost je tako v zadnjih desetletjih naraščajoči umetniški populaciji prinesla nov način preživetja, pri katerem velik del omenjene (in tudi del kuratorske) populacije živi od različnih štipendij, rezidenc, predvsem pa razstavnih *per diemov* in honorarjev ter tudi institucionalnih odkupov. Pri tem je nujno omeniti, da, vsaj v evropskih državah, institucionalno priznanega umetnika praviloma podpira tudi država, saj je prav ekstenzivno razstavljanje ključno merilo za pridobivanje državnih bonitet in subvencij. Danes so tako lahko umetniki celo povsem neprisotni na »klasičnem« umetnostnem trgu, pa prav dobro živijo, čeprav sistem v daleč največji meri generira predvsem izmučene posameznike, ki živijo na robu, brez kakršnihkoli ekonomskih zagotovil za preživetje, razen udeležbe v projektih, ki jih držijo v rokah v danem trenutku.

Ključno se zdi omeniti, da je, ne glede na to, da je sodobni umetnostni sistem prav v zadnjih desetletjih iz umetnikov povsem očitno izoblikoval specifični, skrajno odvisni prekerni proletarijat, umetnik ohranil mitologizirano podobo iz preteklosti, s katero uspešno zalaga celotno področje. Sodobni umetnostni sistem tako še vedno sloni na izredno močni in privlačni mitologiji umetnika kot svobodnega subjekta, ki govori »iz sebe« in je v svoji družbi epistemološko in etično superioren, ter na veri, da sodobna umetnost pristopa k stvarjem nekonvencionalno, brez predsodkov, nepristransko, z veliko družbeno odgovornostjo, nemotivirano s sebičnimi interesi ipd.

NOVO/SPREMEMBA! IZRAZNI MEDIJI

V doslej opisani strukturi prosperirajo tudi povsem specifični izrazni mediji in prav z njo je bistveno pogojen razcvet tistih »netradicionalnih« likovnih medijev, ki so pri svojem izvajanju vezani na prostore in producersko podporo umetnostnih institucij. Ob tem je smiselno opozoriti, da so v tej strukturi vidno priljubljeni tisti mediji, ki lahko uspešno poskrbijo za potrebe institucij v smislu pritegovanja občinstva, mobiliziranja skupnosti ipd. Privilegirani medij te strukture se zdi pravzaprav kar razstava, ki je na prvem mestu kuratorjev medij,⁶ prav v tej strukturi pa je tudi umetniški dogodek iz, recimo temu, alternativne prakse postal globalno uveljavljena in priljubljena splošna praksa.

Ne glede na očitnost vseh teh sprememb se le malo razmišlja o tem, zakaj se nam je razvila (in se še razvija) prav takšna institucionalizirana struktura za sodobno likovno umetnost, zakaj tako gromozanska in tako hitro ter v kakšnem odnosu so njeni deli med seboj. Denimo v kakšnem odnosu je konkretni umetniški dogodek do konkretne kulturne politike, ki stoji za njim, ali v kakšnem odnosu je do konkretne verige skupinskih razstav in bienalskih ali festivalskih manifestacij, v katerih se znajde v svojem »življenju«. Torej, kako umetniški dogodek živi in biva v tem silnem toku, ki ga stalno proizvaja opisana struktura, in kaj pravzaprav regulira njegovo pojavljanje v njej. Kaj pomeni ta stalnost dogodkov in ali je smiselno razmišljati kar o specifični ritualizaciji področja? K slednjemu bi nas morda lahko navedlo tudi zanimivo dejstvo, da se ta neobičajna menjava statičnih eksponatov, kipov in slik z nekakšnim nenavadnim obredjem dogaja prav v enem od segmentov kulture, torej področja, ki se je, kot razloženo uvodoma, v družbi širilo med drugim prav na rovaš prevzemanja dejavnosti religije.

V naslednjem delu bomo zato nadaljevali v tej luči in nanizali nekaj razmišljanj o umetniškem dogodku kot o ritualu, o nekaterih njegovih specifičnih značilnostih

6 Razstava za sodobno umetnost je medij v konjunkturi: količinski porast razstavljanja je izreden, specializacije v okviru razstave (kuriranje, osvetlitev, razstavna arhitektura, uredništvo razstavnih katalogov itn.) so postale standard, razstavljanje se profilira v žanre itn. Razmišljanj o razstavi kot o izraznem mediju je vse več. Glede obeh točk glej Beti Žerovc, »Razstava kot umetniško delo, kurator kot umetnik; primerjava z gledališčem«/»The Exhibition as Artwork, The Curator as Artist: A Comparison with Theatre«, *Maska*, letn. XXV, št. 133-134, jesen 2010, str. 78-93.

ter o načinu njegove vpetosti v širšo strukturo, pri čemer bomo pozorni zlasti na možne primerjave z religijskimi strukturami.⁷

Zanimivo se zdi, da privlačnost umetniškega dogodka (tako za umetnike in občinstvo kot za kuratorje in institucije) v veliki meri temelji na elementih, ki se jih kot ključne poudarja tudi pri ritualu, kakršnega prakticirajo religijske skupnosti, kar je bilo v teoriji že večkrat omenjeno. Tudi sama lahko po večletnem raziskovanju fenomena umetniškega dogodka le potrdim, da je ta še vedno priljubljen prav kot medij, ki ima izredne zmožnosti učinkovite obravnave družbenih norm in to prav zaradi svoje močne sposobnosti mobilizacije ter aktivacije skupnosti. Ti sta bistveno višji kot pri kipu ali sliki, ki običajno nagovarjata individualno in ne spodbujata interaktivnosti.

Manj se zdi prisotno razmišljanje o umetniških dogodkih kot o obredju, v katerem, vsaj potencialno, lahko prihaja tudi do za udeležence nevsakdanjih psihičnih stanj in drugačnega zavedanje sebe ter okolice, hkrati pa se v njem stalno obhaja nek specifičen kompleks vrednot in resnic; med drugim se potrjuje naša vera v umetnost. In to ne glede na to, da izjemna privlačnost umetniškega dogodka očitno bistveno temelji prav v njegovi »mistični« zmožnosti ugoditve želji umetnostnega občinstva, da se mu zgodi nekaj nenavadnega in izjemnega tudi v smislu doseganja pristnega stika z umetnostjo, nekakšne neposredne soudeleženi v umetnosti, zadovoljitve težnje po iskanju avre ali česa podobnega. V dogodku je namreč, ne glede na to, s čim se ukvarja, prav neposredna konfrontacija občinstva z umetnostjo središčna in vselej prisotna tema – bistveni element dogodka je, da je z njim občinstvu omogočeno, da je neposredno zraven, ko se umetnost »dogodi«. Še več, ker je občinstvo pogosto celo soudeleženec v tovrstnih kreacijah, je zanj občutek »resničnega« dostopa k avratičnemu momentu lahko še dodatno potenciran. Zdi se, da so opisane vidike dogodka dobro razumeli že zgodnji avantgardisti, vse odtlej do danes pa se nizajo številna pričevanja občinstva in umetnikov/performerjev, kako ob dogodkih prihaja do posebnih občutij, celo nekakšne specifične »zadetosti« (t. i. performance high).⁸

7 Opozorila bi, da v nadaljnjem besedilu obravnavane vidike lahko zasledimo tudi v širokem spektru drugih in zelo različnih vej sodobnega življenja, vse od športa, gledališča, znanosti, do množičnega nakupovanja. Izolirane primerjave med področji se zdijo smiselne, če pripomorejo k boljšemu uvidu v obravnavane fenomene in spregledanju značilnosti, ki jih sicer težko zaznamo in opredelimo.

8 Občutja so praviloma opisana kot pozitivna. O značilnostih umetniškega dogodka in rituala, ki jih naštevam, smo izdatno govorili med 29. grafičnim bienalom na *Pogovorih z umetniki*. Umetniki so radi in navdušeno razpravljali o posebnih stanjih in občutjih, ki jih prinaša dogodek, niso pa želeli razpravljati o

Da se občinstvo kar nasploh udeležuje umetniških dogodkov v nekakšnem posebnem psihičnem modusu – sploh brez konkretnjših raziskav, ki bi to podprle –, nikakor ne bomo trdili, predvsem pa tega modusa ne znamo specificirati. Vendar mimo tega lahko izpostavimo še eno indikativno opažanje, da v nasprotju s statusnim sistemom, ki obvladuje naš vsakdanjik, v umetniških dogodkih težimo k posebnemu režimu, v katerem ne veljajo naš siceršnji družbeni status in obveznosti in to tudi, če smo do sodobne umetnosti sicer nekako v dvomih in kritični. Zdi se, da v umetniških dogodkih udeleženci prostovoljno in precej splošno težimo k homogeni skupnosti, enakosti in anonimnosti udeležencev, poslušnosti tistemu, ki vodi dogodek, in izvajanju navodil, naj so ta še tako trapasta ali mistična, ki jih v vsakdanjiku nikakor ne bi. V običajnem vsakdanjiku denimo ne dovolimo tujcem, da nam poljubljajo rane ali umivajo noge, niti ne razbijamo dnevnih sob ali sodelujemo v požigih. V umetnostnem dogodku pa celo dovoljemo, da se nas nadleguje, žali, trpinči in muči – ali to počnemo drugim mi sami.⁹

Situacija se v tem pogledu torej kaže nekako takole: umetnostni profesionalci in umetnostno občestvo splošno vemo, da brez sodelovanja in uprizoritve ni umetniškega dogodka in to sprejemamo. Manj pa se ukvarjamo s samim dejstvom, da prav ta uprizoritev (performativnost), tako kot pri ritualu sicer, temu – najsi »verjame« ali ne – verjetno daje dejansko moč učinkovanja, in razmišljamo o tem, kakšni so pravzaprav njegovi dejanski kratko- in dolgoročni učinki. Oziroma pri razmišljanju hitro zdrsimo k tradicionalističnim mišljenjskim vzorcem likovnega področja in dogodek osamimo iz strukture ter ga obravnavamo kot avtonomno umetnino. Ne dojemamo ga kot perpetuirano prakso, kot obredje, ki nas lahko precej redno spremlja skozi življenje, kaj šele, da bi ga na ta način mislili vpetega v širšo strukturo. Vendar, sploh če resno vzamemo, da ritualizacija ni preprost odsev družbene strukture, ampak je ena izmed sil, ki ustvarja in predeluje odnose v njej, ki ima vlogo tudi v spodbujanju in zaviranju družbenih sprememb, se takšno razmišljanje zdi nujno. Toliko bolj, ker umetniški dogodek danes praviloma ne nastaja na ulici ali v okviru nekaj redkih alternativnih prostorov, temveč se takšni dogodki izvajajo povsem organizirano in redno v

vprašanjih, ali in kako institucija takšna stanja instrumentalizira.

9 Da se občinstvo umetniških dogodkov upre le v skrajni sili, je na likovnem področju znano dejstvo, ki ga umetniki poznajo in tudi tematizirajo že vse od futurizma dalje. Na bienalskih *Pogovorih z umetniki* smo na to temo razpravljali ob performansu Siniše Labrovića *Kaznovanje* (2007, Galerija Miroslav Kraljević v Zagrebu), v katerem se je umetnik z vso silo brutalno udaril z bičem vsakič, ko je nek obiskovalec zapustil prostor dogodka. Na vprašanje, ali nihče ni poskušal prekiniti performansa ali mu vsaj odvzeti biča, je Labrović odgovoril, da ne, le, da se je performans časovno razvlekel na več kot dve uri in pol.

institucionaliziranem sistemu svetovnih razsežnosti, ki smo ga opisali prej.

Med drugim je ključno pretehtanje samega načina vpetosti umetniškega dogodka v strukturo, s čimer v zvezi se zdi vredno povezano izpostaviti dve opaznanji: naraščajočo strukturno podobnost institucionalne platforme za sodobno umetnost institucionalnim platformam različnih religij, najprej pa (sicer že omenjeno) dejstvo, da umetnostno polje predeluje tudi vse več vsebinskega repertoarja religijske sfere.

Vsebinsko gledano sodobna umetnost oziroma umetnostne institucije danes ponujajo številna sredstva za predelavo pozitivnih ali negativnih čustev, ki jih povzroča življenje v družbi. Seveda ne v odnosu do krščanske ali katerekoli druge tradicionalne verske dogme, temveč v povezavi z že opisano vero v umetnost kot višje dobro in umetnika kot subjekt, ki je epistemološko in etično superioren, ter v transformativno moč njegovih del. Prav umetniški dogodki so med umetniškimi mediji tisti medij, ki se res izdatno vrti okoli družbenih norm; izpostavila pa bi še, da pri tem naša negativna ali pozitivna čustva do teh norm predelujejo pogosto tudi v sorodnem metaforičnem jeziku, kakršnega goji religijsko obredje (na primer sorodna raba simbolov, »ponavljanje« kristoloških gest in delov krščanske liturgije, obredni požigi).¹⁰

Strukturno gledano pa se zdi ključnega pomena, da uvodoma opisano globalno mrežo institucij za sodobno umetnost vodijo »strokovnjaki« za sodobno umetnost (kuratorji in ne umetniki!). Ti v institucijah upravljajo program in sklicujejo skupnosti, da se udeležujejo pestrega stalnega dogajanja, ki je pretehtana mešanica »liturgičnih« umetniških dogodkov in dogodkov »eksegeze«, »kateheze«, »homiletike« (vodstev, predavanj, okroglih miz itn.). Ena ključnih podobnosti med sferama je torej prav v momentu, da je tako kot pri religiji, če ta deluje na metaforičen način predelovanja čustev, tudi v likovni sferi za nadzor nad »svetim« pooblaščen posebna skupina oseb (strokovnjakov: kuratorjev, pr-ovcev itn.), ki so usposobljene, da s korpusom metafor in konceptualnih abstrakcij vodijo »vernike« (občinstvo), t. j. tiste, ki svete ga ne interpretirajo, temveč se oprijemajo teh metafor in abstrakcij, ne da bi jih avtonomno predelali.¹¹

10 Za formulacijo vsebin v tem in naslednjem odstavku sem se oprla na delo Luise Accati, *Pošast in lepota: Oče in mati v katoliški vzgoji čustev*, prev. Irena Prosenc, Ljubljana: Studia Humanitatis, 2001, str. 115–215. Accatijeva precizno razdela, kako delujeta katoliški ritual in simbolika ter kako tudi v sodobnem času nismo imuni na te pretekle vzorce, saj jih v sodobni vzgoji čustev nismo nadomestili z novimi.

11 Občasno se tudi sicer na likovnem področju postavlja vprašanje: ali sploh sa-

Za razumevanje situacije je treba imeti ves čas v vidu tudi sodobno pozicijo umetnika, ki je v tem sistemu morda res deklarativno izredno izpostavljen, faktično pa je pravzaprav obstranska figura, ki mora dobesedno ostati v prekernem svetu družbene antistrukture in margine, ker, med drugim, umetnostno občestvo verjame, da prav v takšnem okolju in pogojih obstaja možnost vznika subverzivnih alternativ, porajanja novih metafor in podobnega. Umetniški dogodki, ki jih iz tega izjemnega bazena možnosti »povzdigne in prikaže« institucija, pa so nato njen nabor, pri čemer niso le premišljeno izbrani, temveč so nizani v ustaljeni tok in vedno tudi postavljeni na nekakšen enotni skupni imenovallec. Enotno so formatirani (medijska napoved, urejen prihod in odhod občinstva, varnostni ukrepi, dokumentiranje itn.), predvsem pa jih institucije vselej tudi interpretirajo. Zdi se, da ima dogodek v instituciji povsem predvidljivo pot. Vsakič znova vabi in vzpostavlja skupnost, v kateri praviloma poskuša vzbuditi močna čustva in učinkovanje. Zraven pa ima vedno tudi razlagalni del: medijsko napoved, kataložni zapis, predavanje ali pogovor, ki ga racionalizirajo in v umetnostnem univerzumu »pripenjajo, kamor sodi«. Kurator je v tem procesu njegov skrbnik, tisti, ki prevzema odgovornost (tudi pred sodiščem), predvsem pa je njegov prvi interpret in pravzaprav tisti, ki pripiše pomen ritualnemu dejanju; nerazumljivo obrazloži, razumljivo »prefigurira«, »tansfigurira« in podobno, predvsem pa poskrbi, da se vse dogaja v skladu z doktrino in mitologijo področja.

Moje besedilo nikakor ne želi izzveneti v popreproščeno enačenje sodobne umetnosti in religije. S primerjanjem in kontrastiranjem želi razmišljati o težje prepoznavnih in opredeljivih značilnostih likovnega področja. Kar želi biti najprej in na prvem mestu, pa je utemeljen predlog spremembe fokusa našega gledanja od posameznih dogodkov kot avtonomnih enot k celoviti praksi področja. In tudi na tej ravni se religija ponuja kot praktična primerjava, saj je kot nekakšen že vzpostavljen in vsem zlahka dojemljiv vzorec, kako sočasno in povezano brati strukturo in prakso ter njene posamične dele. Pri religiji nam ne pride na pamet, da bi posamične obrede brali povsem ločeno, avtonomno, ne da bi obenem imeli v glavi njihovo mesto v celostnem toku prakticiranja vere.¹²

mostojno dojamem in razumem stvari, ki so na neki razstavi, če se je udeležim, ali jih ne sprejemem kar po logiki, da jih je že kurator pogledal, razmislil, »konzumiral« in tudi užival zame? Zato tudi videov ni treba pogledati do konca, prebrati katalogov ...

12 Morda bi se bilo tudi smiselno pogostejše ozreti k religijskim ritualnim strokovnjakom po primerjalnem gradivu, saj je teorija o obredih, denimo krščanske cerkve, zaradi dvatisočletnih izkušenj z obredi prava zakladnica kompleksnega razumevanja delovanja po dogodkih v institucionalizirani strukturi, narave in učinkov performativnih dogodkov, kombiniranja različnih vrst dogodkov, spa-

Razširjena optika nam bo morda omogočila večje razumevanje, za kaj gre v tej strukturi kot celoti, bolje pa bomo razumeli tudi umetniški dogodek, saj ga ne bomo stalno motrili na ravni preseganja, temveč na ravni obhajanja in nas bo tako manj bolela tudi njegova »psevdo« narava. Trenutno smo preveč zazrti v del, kjer se dogodek vsakič znova napne k nečemu novemu, drugačnemu, učinkom v realnem življenju, premalo pa upoštevamo, da tudi če se dejansko ne zgodi nič pretresljivega, prav s tem napetjem udeleženi vsakič »prinesemo pred oltar« naše upanje po nečem več, našo vero v umetnost in umetniško svobodo,¹³ hkrati pa se ob tem spravljamo s težavnimi aspekti našega bivanja v družbi. Čar umetniškega dogodka tako ni le v tem, da se nas dotakne na točki, kjer smo najbolj »avantgardni«. Veliko bolj je v tem, da zagotavlja stabilen dotok nečesa, česar niti ne opazimo ali celo jemljemo za banalno, a še zdaleč ni: druženja, obhajanja, tolažbe, vzdrževanja iluzij o najrazličnejših možnostih, pranja krivde, ker v krivičnem svetu živimo na strani krivičnih, lepote prepuščanja upanju in podobnih prispevkov k znosnosti sveta.

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janja več dogodkov v večji dogodek in podobno. Denimo da maše, drugi obredi in zakramenti vere ne le predpostavljajo, ampak jo z besedami in dejanji tudi hranijo, krepijo in izražajo, da obredi in zakramenti delujejo po logiki performativnosti, to je »ex opere operato« (»iz samega dejstva, da je dejanje izvršeno«) in podobno so vidiki, ki jih liturgični ali homiletični učbeniki kot neizpodbitna dejstva prinašajo že uvodoma. Zdi se, da nas umetnostne protagoniste zmoti prav to, da cerkev nima nobenega dvoma o učinkovitosti teh praks, povsem prepričana se zdi, da enostavno ne gre drugače, kot da veruješ, tako kakor moliš – »Lex orandi, lex credendi.«

13 O izjemnem pomenu stalnega celebriranja in obhajanja umetniške svobode ter njunih dolgoročnih posledicah glej besedilo »Lepa svoboda« v Beti Žerovc, *Umetnost kuratorjev. Vloga kuratorjev v sodobni umetnosti*, Ljubljana: Znansvena založba Filozofske fakultete, 2010, str. 81–88.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN THE ART FIELD TO THINK ABOUT ART EVENTS?¹

BETI ŽEROVC

TRANSLATED BY
RAWLEY GRAU

- Because today the art event is a very pertinent medium of expression in this field.

- Because in the art field, which “by tradition and definition” is committed to static works, i.e. paintings and sculptures, the art event is, in fact, a paradox.

- Because, given this fact, the art event offers a good entry point for thinking about the changed structure and nature of the art field, which interest us. In the first part of the present article, I will attempt to outline and briefly describe the sequence of major changes that have occurred in the art field since the early twentieth century, and especially in recent decades; in the second part, by analysing the art event and its specific embeddedness in the field, I will suggest a few points of departure for thinking about the potential workings and effects of this changed structure.

NEW! INSTITUTIONS OF CONTEMPORARY ART

In a world where institutions that treat and present contemporary art have become a permanent reality, it is hard to imagine that a little more than a hundred years ago such institutions did not exist anywhere, or at least there were only a very few. Today these institutions are of different kinds, most often exhibition spaces, while geographically, they can be found almost everywhere in the world, most densely, especially, in regions that have some version of the neo-liberal capitalist system and a fairly high standard of living. The institutions may be small and even have no physical structures, or they may

¹ I am here using the phrase *art event* as a general term for the broad range of events organized for the public and carried out by artists in art institutions (actions, performances, gestures, happenings, interactive projects, etc.), as well as the same kind of events that happen outside the gallery and occasionally even without an audience, although almost always with the aim of being included in the same artistic sphere.

be represented by gigantic and extremely expensive building complexes that are located on the most valuable sites in the countries that build them and, in some cases, counted among the most famous architectural achievements of their time. To illustrate the extraordinary speed of this development we need go no further than Slovenia. The first Slovene independent exhibition space dedicated to the art of its time was constructed and opened in 1908–09. Today, according to statistics from the Ministry of Culture's website Culture.si, there are more than one hundred and thirty exhibition spaces that present contemporary art, either exclusively or as part of a broader programme.²

In retrospect it is clear that such an extraordinary institutional development cannot be explained solely by contemporary art itself and the devotion of its active supporters; rather, this can only have happened because of the specific inclusion of art in a certain notion of culture and because of the importance this notion has acquired, beginning in the nineteenth century and growing and developing right up to the present. This development is also reflected structurally in the shift from an uncontrolled, patronage- or donor-based approach to culture to permanent organized forms and a cultural politics with clear purposes and goals and with the instruments, authorizations, and financial resources needed to carry them out.

As centrally defining moments in this development we should mention the nationalization and state ownership of culture, the increasingly widespread understanding of culture as an effective instrument for achieving social progress and intellectual maturity, and also the many different ways culture has been drifting in the direction of a secular religion. Already in the nineteenth century, politics understood culture quite clearly – if not always explicitly and coherently – as, among other things, the (co)performer of numerous tasks in an ever more secularized society that had once been performed by religion. In this view, the cultural field was, in particular, supposed to prevent society from slipping into anomie, and it was expected to do this by maintaining the cohesion and shaping the collective values and representations of the society.³ We should add that, in the

twentieth century, culture established itself further as the key medium for the permanent organized outward representation of societies, becoming, in a sense, a fixed international currency for exchange on the global level (as a “gift that demands reciprocation”). Culture thus became established as a vast field in which there is constant and intensive representation taking place, both internally and externally, as to what one is or at least wishes to be (wishes to appear as), what one's central values are (or at least what one wishes them to be seen as), and further, who one is compatible with (or not), and so on.

Within these frameworks, art acquired an important place, probably, among other reasons, because it was prepared to be actively included in these processes and to align itself with the purposes and goals of cultural politics, whether public or private.

Returning to the subject of the contemporary art institution, its activity in the universe of culture is generally accepted and understood (even today) as being museological work or at least by analogy to such work. Nevertheless, in contrast to other museum institutions, the curator of contemporary art does not (usually) retroactively discover, meticulously research, and then present certain existing materials or actual historical situations; on the contrary, the pure rationalistic scientific approach is, in fact, viewed as inappropriate and even cynical. The curator today behaves, above all, as someone who adores art – he does not exhibit what he does not like – and as someone who is committed to the realization of positive social values. For this reason, love, faith, political conviction, feeling, etc., can all be given as legitimate and appropriate primary motivations for his decisions in organizing exhibitions.⁴ Most importantly, what we might call the curator's “counter-museological” form of working has become entirely acceptable and standard: here it is the institution, through curators, that actually generates the art scene, its content and production, which is all, quite literally, commissioned, produced, and even paid for by the curator through the institution. Within the sphere of museums,

2 It was impossible to obtain any concrete published statistics about the number of exhibition venues in Slovenia devoted exclusively to contemporary art; the website's editor, Alenka Pirman, very kindly assisted me with this calculation. Published statistics are available for all exhibition venues in the art field as a whole. In the book *Kulturna politika v Sloveniji* (Ljubljana: Faculty of Social Sciences, 1997), in the chapter on visual art, we find the statement: “There are more than 800 occasional exhibition venues and 254 permanent ones” (p. 179).

3 In this regard, France is a textbook example of a utilitarian understanding of culture, which may be why the processes that here are merely indicated have

been elaborated most thoroughly by French theorists; Jean Caune, Olivier Donnat, Claude Mollard, and Alain Queminn are a few of the current writers on the subject. French theory has also discussed such connections as, for instance, between the establishment of ministries of culture as state institutions and the subsequent flourishing and growth of art institutions, including exhibition venues for contemporary art.

4 The statement, “I adore X and that is why I am exhibiting him,” seems reasonable, while a statement in the style of the traditional art custodian – “I wish to show what is currently happening in art, even if the material is not necessarily to my taste” – seems cynical. Thus, contemporary art curators, especially, work better if they are not objective.

then, the system of contemporary art institutions has the distinction of being a system that, to a large degree, generates the objects of its own museological activity.⁵

NEW! CURATORS OF CONTEMPORARY ART

With this last paragraph we have already wandered into the phenomenon of a special layer of workers who see to the operations of contemporary art institutions, which since the start of the twentieth century, and especially in recent decades, have multiplied to incredible numbers from practically nothing. We will return to the curator and his activities later, but the main point we want to make now is that today, as a rule, there stands, between contemporary art and the public – who usually consume their art institutionalized! – a special layer of middlemen.

CHANGE! ARTISTS

The artist population experienced extraordinary growth in the twentieth century, expanding uncontrollably especially in the past two decades. A large part of the artist population have adapted to the new conditions I just described and today live off the care of this institutional network, with a large segment of art being produced, quite literally, exclusively for institutions. In recent decades, then, the creation of a broad layer of contemporary art institutions has brought this growing population of artists a new way of earning a living, in which a large part of them (and a portion of curators, too) barely scrape by on various grants, residencies, and, especially, *per diems* and honoraria for exhibitions, as well as institutional purchases. Here we should note that, in Europe at least, the institutionally recognized artist is also, as a rule, supported by the state, since extensive exhibiting is a key criterion for receiving state grants and subsidies. Today, then, it is even possible for artists to be completely absent from the “classic” art market and still live quite well; to a far greater degree, however, the

system mainly generates harried individuals who live on the edge of survival, without any economic guarantees for income outside of their involvement in whatever projects they happen to be doing at the moment.

It is important to note also that, despite the fact that the contemporary art system has, in recent decades in particular, very clearly turned artists into a specific and extremely dependent precarious proletariat, the artist has preserved his mythologized image from the past – an image he successfully lends the entire field. The contemporary art system, then, continues to rely on the extremely powerful and appealing mythology of the artist as a free subject who “speaks from his heart” and who is epistemologically and ethically superior in his society; it also relies on the belief that contemporary art approaches things unconventionally, without prejudices, impartially, with a great sense of social responsibility, unmotivated by self-serving interests, and so on.

NEW/CHANGE! MEDIA OF EXPRESSION

In the structure I have been describing, certain quite specific media of expression have also prospered; indeed, this structure is what provides the necessary conditions for “non-traditional” art media to flourish that are tied, in their execution, to the spaces and support of art institutions as producers. Here we should note that, within this structure, media that are able to cater successfully to the needs of the institutions – by attracting audiences, mobilizing groups of people, etc. – are clearly favoured. The privileged medium of this structure, in fact, appears to be the exhibition, which is, above all, a curator’s medium;⁶ it is within this structure, too, that the art event, once an “alternative” practice, as we might call it, has become a globally recognized and popular general practice.

5 We are talking about a system of mutually connected institutions in which some may do more “producing” and others more “museological work”, although most of them do both and, what is very important, they employ the same people. (For example, the work I produce over five years as the director of a Kunsthalle, I might then be able to work on museologically over the next five years, when I become the director of a museum of contemporary art.) We should remember that other museum institutions are, of course, also changing, and that the art market is an active and essential factor in the art field. As we will not here be exploring this aspect of things, let me note only that the institutional and commercial segments of contemporary art are not mutually exclusive in their functions but rather support each other.

Despite the fact that all these changes are quite obvious, very little thought has been given to why this particular kind of institutionalized structure for contemporary

6 The medium of the contemporary art exhibition is undergoing a boom: the numerical growth of exhibitions is extraordinary; specializations in exhibition-making (curating, lighting, exhibition architecture, catalogue editing, etc.) have become standard; specific exhibition genres are emerging; etc. Also, there are an increasing number of discussions about the exhibition as a medium of expression. On both points, see my article, “The Exhibition as Artwork, the Curator as Artist: A Comparison with Theatre”, *Maska* 25, nos. 133–134 (autumn 2010), pp. 78–93.

art has developed (and is still developing) today, why it is so enormous and developed so rapidly, and what the relationships are between its various parts. For example, what is the relationship between a certain concrete art event and the concrete cultural politics that stands behind it? What is its relationship to the actual chain of group exhibitions and biennials or festivals in which it finds itself during its “life span”? In other words, how does the art event live and exist within the powerful current that is constantly being produced by the structure we have described, and what in fact regulates its appearance in the structure? What does this constant presence of events mean, and should we be reflecting, in fact, on the specific ritualization of the field? We might be led to this last notion by, among other things, the fact that this unusual replacement of static exhibits, sculptures, and pictures by a kind of odd set of rituals is happening in one of the sectors of culture, that is, a field that, as was discussed in the introduction, expanded in society at the cost of taking on the work of religion.

In the section that follows we will continue in this light, bringing together reflections on the art event as ritual, on some of its specific features, and on the manner of its inclusion in the broader structure, all the while being particularly alert to possible comparisons with religious structures.⁷

Interestingly, the art event’s attraction (for artists and the public, as well as for curators and institutions) relies to a large degree on aspects that have also been stressed as central to the kind of rituals practiced by religious groups, as mentioned more than once in the theoretical literature. After several years of researching the phenomenon of the art event, I too can confirm that the event is still popular as a medium that has an extraordinary capacity for dealing with social norms effectively, in particular because of its great ability to mobilize and activate groups of people. This ability is significantly greater than in sculpture or painting, which usually speak to people individually and do not encourage interactivity.

Less present, it seems, is any thinking about art events as rituals in which, at least potentially, participants can also experience unusual psychic states and a different awareness of themselves and their surroundings; at the

same time, meanwhile, a certain specific complex of values and truths is constantly being celebrated – among other things, our faith in art is being affirmed. And this occurs despite the fact that, clearly, the extraordinary attraction of the art event lies, in essence, in its “mystical” ability to satisfy the art public’s desire to experience something unusual and exceptional, including in the sense of having genuine contact with art, a kind of direct co-participation in art, the fulfilment of the tendency to seek an aura or something similar. Indeed, in the event, no matter what its subject matter is, the public’s direct confrontation with art is a central and always-present theme: one of the essential aspects of the event is that it enables the public to be directly present when art “happens”. What is more, because the public is often a co-participant in such creations, the feeling of having “true” access to the auratic moment can be even more potent. These aspects of the event were, it seems, well understood by the early avant-garde artists, and from their time to today we find numerous testimonies by the public and by the artists/performers about the way certain special emotions are experienced at events, even a specific kind of “performance high”.⁸

We are not at all claiming that, in general, the public takes part in art events in a kind of special psychological modus – certainly not without more concrete research to back up such a claim; we are also not able to describe this modus in any specific detail. Nevertheless, we can note yet a further telling observation, namely, that in contrast to the status system that dominates our everyday world, in art events we tend to adopt a special regime in which our normal social status and obligations no longer carry weight; this is true even if we usually have our doubts about contemporary art and are critical toward it. In art events, it seems, the participants voluntarily, and quite generally, tend to form a homogeneous group, to respect the equality and anonymity of the participants, to obey the one who conducts the event, and to perform instructions, no matter how ridiculous or mystical they might be, doing things they would never do in their everyday lives. In ordinary life, for instance, we would not allow a stranger to kiss our wounds or wash our feet, nor would we tear apart a living room or take part in burnings. In the art event, however, we even allow ourselves to be yelled at, insult-

7 I should note that the aspects I discuss in the following paragraphs can be seen as well in a wide spectrum of other, and very different, branches of contemporary life, from sport, theatre, and science to mass shopping. Isolated comparisons seem wise if they contribute to greater insight into the phenomena we are discussing and to the perception of features that are otherwise difficult to see and define.

8 These emotions are generally described as positive ones. At the 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts, in the series *Conversations with Artists*, there was a great deal of discussion about the aspects of the art event and rituals that I mention. The artists spoke at length, happily and enthusiastically, about the special states of mind and the feelings produced by the event, but they did not wish to address the issue of whether and how the institution instrumentalizes such states of mind.

ed, tormented, and tortured – or we ourselves do these things to other people.⁹

In this regard, then, the situation looks somewhat like this: art professionals and the art public know, generally, that without participation and staging there can be no art event, and we accept this. We are less concerned, however, with the fact itself, namely, that this staging (performativity) is, as in ritual, the very thing that most likely gives the event – whether we “believe” or not – its actual power of effect, and we give less thought to what its real-life short- and long-term effects might actually be. Or rather, in our thinking about the event, we soon drift into the art field’s traditionalist patterns of thought, isolating the event from the structure and treating it as an autonomous work of art. We fail to see it as a perpetuated practice, a set of rituals that can, in a very regular way, follow us through our lives – and we certainly do not think of it as being embedded in a wider structure. But if we take seriously the fact that ritualization is not simply a reflection of the social structure but rather one of the forces that creates and processes the relationships within it, and which also plays a role in encouraging or hindering social changes, then such thinking seems essential, all the more because the art event today is not, as a rule, created on the street or in the context of a few rare alternative spaces, but rather, these events are performed in a totally organized, regular way within an institutionalized system of global dimensions, which we have described above.

Among other things, it is crucial to consider the way in which the art event is embedded in this structure; in this regard, it seems worthwhile to underscore two connected observations: the growing structural similarity between the institutional platform for contemporary art and the institutional platforms of different religions, and – a point we will consider first – the fact (already mentioned) that the art field processes, among other things, more and more topics from the repertoire of the religious sphere.

From the perspective of its content, contemporary art, or rather, art institutions, today offer numerous means for processing the positive and negative emotions

9 It is a well-known fact in the art world – one that artists have known and even thematized ever since the Futurists – that at art events the public puts up resistance only in extreme cases. We discussed this topic in the biennial’s *Conversations with Artists* series with regard to Siniša Labrović’s performance *Punishment* (at the Miroslav Kraljević Gallery, Zagreb, 2007). In this performance, the artist, brutally and with all his might, beat himself with a whip every time a visitor left the performance space. When asked whether anybody tried to interrupt the performance or at least take the whip away from him, Labrović said, no, and noted that the performance dragged on and on, for more than two and a half hours.

caused by living in society. This of course is not done in relation to any Christian or other kind of traditional religious dogma, but rather in connection with the belief in art as a higher good and the artist as someone who is epistemologically and ethically superior, as well as a belief in the transformative power of his works. Of all artistic media, the art event is the one medium that revolves around social norms in a truly abundant way; I would point out too that, in doing so, art events also often process our negative or positive feelings toward these norms in a metaphorical language that is not unlike the one cultivated by religious ritual (a similar use of symbols, the “repetition” of Christological gestures and parts of the Christian liturgy, ritual burnings, etc.).¹⁰

From a structural perspective, however, what seems key is the fact that the global network of contemporary art institutions I described at the introduction is managed by “experts” in contemporary art (by curators, not artists!). They are the ones who administer programmes and call together groups to participate in a variegated and constant series of events, which consist of a well-considered mix of “liturgical” art events and events of “exegesis”, “catechesis”, and “homiletics” (guided tours, lectures, round tables, etc.). One of the key similarities between the two spheres, then, is precisely the aspect that, as in religion – if religion operates by processing feelings in a metaphorical way – so in the art sphere, as well, supervision of “the holy” is assigned to a special authorized group of people (the experts: curators, publicists, etc.), who are qualified to lead “the faithful” (the public) and who use a certain corpus of metaphors and conceptual abstractions to do this; “the faithful”, meanwhile, do not themselves interpret the holy but, rather, grab hold of these metaphors and abstractions without processing them autonomously.¹¹

To understand this situation we must always also keep in mind the current position of the artist, who, although he may indeed be exceptionally emphasized in a declara-

10 In my formulation of the ideas in this and the following paragraph, I have relied on Luisa Accati’s book *Pošast in lepota: Oče in mati v katoliški vzgoji čustev*, Slovene translation by Irena Prosenc (Ljubljana: Studia Humanitatis, 2001), pp. 115–215 (originally published in Italian in 1998, and translated into English as *Beauty and the Monster: Discursive and Figurative Representations of the Parental Couple from Giotto to Tiepolo* (Florence: European Press Academic Publishing, 2006)). Accati very precisely analyses the way Roman Catholic ritual and symbolism function and how even in the contemporary age we are not immune to models from the past, since in our modern emotional education they have not been replaced by new ones.

11 In the art field, indeed, the question is asked from time to time: “Do I perceive and understand at all independently the things I see when I go to an exhibition? Or do I accept them simply on the rationale that the curator has already looked at them, thought about them, “consumed” them, and even enjoyed them, all on my behalf?” This is also why we feel no need to view the entire video, read the entire catalogue, etc.

tive way in this system, is in fact actually a secondary figure who must, literally, remain in the precarious world of the social anti-structure and the social margins because, among other things, the art public believes that only in such an environment and only under such conditions is it possible for subversive alternatives to arise, for new metaphors to be born, etc. But then, the art events that the institution “raises and presents” out of this extraordinary pool of possibilities are the institution’s selection; in the process, they are not merely chosen with deliberation but rather strung together in an established flow and also always placed in a common framework. They are formatted in a uniform way (with the media announcement, the orderly arrival and departure of the public, security measures, documentation, etc.), and most importantly, they are also always interpreted by the institutions. In the institution, it seems, the event has an entirely predictable path. Each and every time, it attracts and creates a group of people in whom it attempts to arouse strong feelings and make an impact. Additionally, it also always has an explanatory part – the media announcement, the catalogue description, a lecture or conversation – which presents the rationale behind the event and “puts it where it belongs” in the art universe. In this process, the curator is the caretaker of the event, the one who assumes responsibility (even before the courts); he is its first interpreter and, indeed, the one who ascribes meaning to the ritual act; he explains what is incomprehensible and “prefigures”, “transfigures”, etc., what is comprehensible. And most importantly, he makes sure that everything happens in accord with the doctrine and mythology of the field.

In no way do I wish my text to sound like some oversimplified equation between contemporary art and religion. Through this comparison and contrast, it seeks to reflect on aspects of the art field that are harder to recognize and define. First and foremost, it seeks to be a well-grounded proposal for shifting the focus of our gaze from individual events as autonomous entities to the practice as a whole in this field. And on this level, too, religion offers a practical comparison, as a kind of well-established and easily understood model of how to read, concurrently and connectedly, a structure and a practice as well as the individual parts of this practice. With religion, it would never occur to us to interpret the individual rituals as entirely separate and autonomous, without at the same time keeping in mind their place in the entire flow of religious practice.¹²

12 Perhaps it would be wise to turn more often to the experts on religious ritual for comparative material. After all, theoretical writings about the rituals of, for

A widened perspective will, perhaps, allow us greater understanding of what is happening in the structure as a whole; we will also better understand the art event, for we will not be observing it always on the level of transcendence but on the level of celebration, and will, therefore, also be less disturbed by its “pseudo” nature. Currently, we are too much focused on that segment where the event tenses itself for something new, something different, some real-life impact, each and every time, and we take too little account of the fact that, even if nothing momentous happens, in this tension we participants are each time “bringing before the altar” our hope for something more, our faith in art and artistic freedom,¹³ while at the same time, coming to terms with difficult aspects of our existence in society. The charm of the art event, then, lies not merely in the fact that it touches us at the point where we are most “avant-garde”. It is found much more in the fact that the art event guarantees a stable influx of something we do not notice or may even consider banal, though it is far from that: socializing, celebrating, being comforted, sustaining illusions about all sorts of possibilities, the cleansing of guilt – because in an unjust world we live on the side of the unjust – the beauty of yielding to hope, and similar things that help make the world bearable.

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instance, the Christian church are, because of the church’s two thousand years of experience with ritual, a genuine treasure trove of complex understanding about the way events operate in an institutionalized structure, the nature and effect of performative events, the combination of different kinds of events, the blending of several events into a bigger event, and so on. The ideas, for example, that the mass, other rituals, and the sacraments do not merely presuppose belief but also nourish, strengthen, and express it through words and actions; that rituals and sacraments operate through the logic of performativity, i.e. *ex opere operato* (“from the work itself the work is done”), and the like, are things that liturgical and homiletic textbooks present as irrefutable facts in their opening chapters. What seems to bother people in the art world is precisely the fact that the church has no doubt about the efficacy of these practices; it seems to be completely convinced that “you believe as you pray” (*lex orandi, lex credendi*) and that’s just how it is.

13 On the exceptional importance of constantly celebrating and commemorating artistic freedom, and the long-term consequences of this, see the essay “Lepa svoboda” [Beautiful freedom] in my book *Umetnost kuratorjev: Vloga kuratorjev v sodobni umetnosti* [Curatorial art: The role of the curator in contemporary art] (Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske Fakultete, 2010), pp. 81–88; the essay has been published in German as “Die Idee der ‘schönen’ Freiheit: Wie KünstlerInnen und KuratorInnen der dominanten Ideologie zuarbeiten”, *Springerin* 15, no. 1 (2009): pp. 18–22.

Tania Bruguera,
Tatlinov šepet št. 5 / Tatlin's Whisper #5, 2008/2012

Nenajavljeni dogodek / Veliki spletni dvorani Cankarjevega doma v Ljubljani
Unannounced event at the Grand Reception Hall of Cankarjev dom in Ljubljana
(Z dovoljenjem umetnice / MGLC / Courtesy of the artist and MGLC, fotografija / photo: Jaka Šabrinec)





DOGODEK IN NJEGOV DRUGI

SVEN LÜTTICKEN

PREVOD

PAVEL KOLTAJ

V zadnjih desetih ali petnajstih letih smo priča poplavi ponovnih uprizoritev »žive umetnosti« iz šestdesetih in zgodnjih sedemdesetih let 20. stoletja. Tovrstna dela opozarjajo na kulturne in družbene pretrse iz šestdesetih let 20. stoletja, ki so dosegli svoj vrhunec leta 1968, obenem pa potrjujejo, da umetnost še naprej sodi v ločeno sfero. Partitura dogodka* Alison Knowles z naslovom *#2 Proposition* (Predlog št. 2), ki daje napotek »Naredi solato«, je bila prvič uprizorjena na Institutu za sodobno umetnost (ICA) v Londonu leta 1962, kasneje tega leta pa še na festivalu Festum Fluxorum v Københavnu in Parizu.¹ Na eni izmed fotografij vidimo skupino izvajalcev pri pripravi solate v leseni skledi v enem izmed prostorov na ICA, ki je videti precej improviziran in pust. Nedavno so delo *Naredi solato* izvedli v dvorani Turbine Hall galerije Tate Modern in že napoved dogodka lahko služi kot opis tega, kar se je zgodilo: »Partitura dogodka gibanja Fluxus ima preprosto navodilo – *Naredi solato* – in ob tej priložnosti bomo naredili velikansko solato, sestavljeno iz zelene solate, paradižnika, korenja ter kumaric, začinjeno z olivnim oljem, zelišči in balzamičnim kisom, in jo postregli tri-

* Partitura dogodka je prevod za izraz »event score«, ki so ga skovali člani gibanja Fluxus. Zakaj natanko gre, morda najbolj jedrnatopisujejo besede iz njihovega delovnega zvezka, ki je v angleškem jeziku dostopen na: <http://www.deluxxe.com/beat/fluxusworkbook.pdf> in se prične takole: »Prvi primeri tega, kar je kasneje dobilo ime partitura dogodka, datirajo v čas znamenitih predavanj, ki jih je imel John Cage na njujorški univerzi The New School, ko so umetniki, kot so George Brecht, Al Hansen, Allan Kaprow in Alison Knowles, začeli ustvarjati umetniška dela in predstave v glasbeni obliki. Ena izmed oblik je bila tudi dogodek. Dogodke običajno notiramo s kratkimi verbalnimi zaznamki. Te note se imenujejo partiture dogodkov. V splošnem gre za predloge, trditve in navodila.« (op. prev.)

¹ V programu festivala Festum Fluxorum, tako v Københavnu kot v Parizu, je bila partitura navedena kot del koncerta št. 1, imenovana *Proposition* (Predlog). Dick Higgins se spominja, kako je v Københavnu na oder skočil »lačni Danec«, da bi ukradel nek korenček, Higgins pa ga je po glavi udaril z žlico, ki se je ob tem zlomila. Dick Higgins, »Auszug aus 'Postface'«, v Jürgen Becker in Wolf Vostell (ur.), *Happenings, Fluxus, Pop Art, Nouveau Réalisme. Eine Dokumentation*, Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1965, str. 182.

stoglavemu občinstvu. Predstava se prične s predvajanjem Mozartovega koncerta, sledijo zvoki sekljanja in spektakel metanja solate z mostu, nato pa začinjanje ter mešanje solate. Občinstvo lahko sodeluje v predstavi, tako da med poslušanjem Mozarta poje narejeno solato in s tem naznani konec predstave.«² Julia Robinson trdi, da je zgodnejša izvedba še lahko računala na ikonoklastični učinek, na šok, ki izhaja iz tovrstne generične predstave. Novejše različice pa potrjujejo dejstvo, da se časi spreminjajo, saj s tem, ko proces pripravljanja solate obogatijo z Mozartom, poudarijo njegovo muzikaliteto.³

Usoda predstave s solato Alison Knowles kaže na preoblikovanje umetniške sfere, ki podredi logiko umetnosti ekonomski racionalnosti tistega, kar je bilo nekoč imenovano kulturna industrija. To pomeni, da je nekoč avantgardni projekt – namreč napad na problematiko »avtonomije umetnosti« v korist širjenja estetike – privzel neko novo resničnost in sedaj oblikuje pogoje umetniškega dela. To tudi pomeni, da dogodek postane vodljiv in voden. Filozofije dogodka kljub svoji raznolikosti vedno poudarjajo njegovo anahronistično naravo. Dogodek sicer poruši obzorje neke družbe, a hkrati ostane do neke mere neizpolnjen, ne popolnoma udejanjen in kot tak preganja uresničeno prihodnost. Kljub temu pa se zdi, da so dogodki današnjega kulturnega gospodarstva dodobra zasidrani v sedanjosti. Zaradi tega se seveda pojavi sum, da imamo opraviti s psevdodogodki.

Daniel Boorstin je postavil svojo slavno teorijo psevdodogodka v knjigi *The Image* (Podoba) iz leta 1961 – z drugimi besedami, prav v trenutku, ko so dogajanja in dogodki postali najljubše intermedijsko izrazno sredstvo neoavantgarde. Boorstin se je osredotočil predvsem na novinarske konference in druge dirigirane predstave za novinarje; obsodil jih je kot manipulativne nedogodke, ki se pretvarjajo, da so dogodki; kot psevdodogodke.⁴ Ta izraz vsekakor odpira cel niz vprašanj. Prvo in najvažnejše je: Kdo odloča, kaj je kaj? Kar je za nekoga dogodek, je lahko za nekoga drugega psevdodogodek. Še zlasti zapleteno situacijo dobimo, ko misleca, kot sta Badiou in Žižek, resničnim zgodovinskim dogodkom postavita nasproti psevdodogodke, na primer nastop fašizma, ki po njunem izvajajo spremembe le zato, da lahko stvari v svojem bistvu ostanejo enake.⁵ Glede

na to, da je nacistem za *nekateri ljudi* nedvomno resničen dogodek, je trditev do neke mere vprašljiva, vendar pa tukaj nimamo opraviti z nestabilno dialektiko, znotraj katere *imajo izbire svojo težo*. Paradoksov ne moremo odmisлити; namesto da skušamo pozabiti na obstoj psevdodogodka, moramo paradoks dogodka in njegovega drugega razumeti kot zgodovinsko, torej nestabilno ter spremenljivo protislovje, protislovje v dialektičnem gibanju. Fredric Jameson pravi, da »razkritje paradoksa v smislu protislovja tvori resnično dialektično mišljenje kot tako.«⁶

V podkrepitev Jamesonove teze bom uporabil različne umetniške in teoretične pristope, ki so bili razviti v šestdesetih letih 20. stoletja, obenem pa tudi estetsko in filozofsko »dogodkoslovje«. Ne zanima me toliko dialektika dogodka in psevdodogodka na obči zgodovinski ravni (utemeljitev krščanstva s strani sv. Pavla ali oktohrska revolucija), temveč na precej ožjem področju: zanima me dogodek znotraj sodobne »kulture dogodka«. Ne glede na filozofijo, ki ji sledimo, Deleuzovo ali Žižkovo, predstavlja dogodek na nek način vedno nekaj *anahronističnega*; dogodek je lahko dogodek le tako, da prekinja čas. Dogodek ni nikoli popolnoma doma v sedanjosti, obstaja le prek svojega razhoda z redom sedanjosti, le tako, da poruši časovni horizont. Zdi se, da je v končni fazi prav to tisto, zaradi česar so dogodki v postfordistični različici kulturne industrije obsojeni na propad – kaj niso tovrstni dogodki usodno *zakoreninjeni v sedanjosti*? Uravnavajo čas in ustvarjajo intenzivne predele, kar pa je natančno njihova vloga v današnji ekonomiji časa. Gre za udomačene in načrtovane dogodke – torej psevdodogodke.

Boorstinova knjiga sicer nosi naslov *Podoba*, vendar pa avtor v svoji analizi daje velik poudarek dirigirani naravi psevdodogodkov. Kot medijski dogodki so psevdodogodki nečisti intermedijski dogodki. Tudi Deleuzova filozofija dogodka, ki jo je začel razvijati v šestdesetih letih 20. stoletja, prepoznava intermedijski status dogodka smisla. V svoji knjigi *Logika smisla*, v kateri se upira strukturalizmu, uporabi paradokse Lewisa Carrolla, da lahko nesmisle predstavi kot resnične dogodke smisla.⁷ Če se v tej knjigi dogodki dogajajo v jeziku, pa se Deleuzove knjige o Bergsonu in kinu osredotočajo na dogodke v podobah. Vendar pa se jezik v bergsonov-

2 »Naredi solato«, <http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/thelongweekend2008/14708.htm>.

3 Julia Robinson, »The Sculpture of Indeterminacy: Alison Knowles's Beans and Variations«, *Art Journal* 63, št. 4, zima 2004, str. 97–98.

4 Daniel Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, New York: Harper and Row, 1961.

5 Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology*, Lon-

don/New York: Verso, 1999, str. 138–139. Badiou uporabi enako razlikovanje, čeprav ne uporabi izraza psevdodogodek; nacizmu pravi »dogodek« (pod narekovajem) oziroma simulaker. Glej Alain Badiou, *Etika: razprava o zavesti o zlu*, Ljubljana: Problemi, 1996, str. 56–57.

6 Fredric Jameson, *Valences of the Dialectic*, London: Verso, 2009, str. 43.

7 Glej Gilles Deleuze, *Logika smisla* (1969), Ljubljana: Krtina, 1998, v celoti.

skem trajanju podobe-časa vrne kot govorno dejanje: v svoji analizi francoskega novega vala, za katerega je značilno »ponavljajoče se gibanje med govorom in podobo«, Deleuze opozarja, kako je v filmih, v katerih ni veliko dogajanja, »eterično govorno dejanje tisto, ki ustvari dogodek«. ⁸ V partiturah dogodkov Georga Brechta iz zgodnjih šestdesetih let 20. stoletja postane jezik *dogodkoven* na drugačen način: postane niz dvoumnih napotkov za bolj ali manj samovoljna dejanja. Praktično »dogodkoslovje«, kot so ga razvili Brecht in drugi umetniki, ki jih je navdahnili John Cage, je prav tako kritično in problematično kot deleuzovska filozofija. Na eni izmed kartic v delu Georga Brechta *Water-Yam* (Veliki jam) piše: »DOSTAVA. Rezervirano mesto. Na tem mestu je predvidena dostava Predmetov.« Takšno partituro lahko očitno uprizorimo na številne načine – lahko pa ostane takšna, kot je, kot neka partitura, ki venomer spodbuja k dejanjem, nikoli pa jih zares ne zahteva. Spodbuda ima lahko estetski čar, kot na primer deleuzovska retorika; spodbuja neštete priložnosti v *abstraktnem*.

Brechtova partitura dogodka *Exit* (Izhod), ki jo sestavlja ena sama beseda, prižene dvoumnost do skrajnih mej. Partitura je bila »uprizorjena« v obliki readymade znaka za izhod. *Izhod*, ki hkrati prikličje v spomin najbolj banalno in splošno dejanje – zapuščanje sobe – in splošni znak za zasilni izhod, je v svojih različnih dejanskih in potencialnih utelešenjih povsod in nikjer, je bolj ali manj trajno pust dogodek. ⁹ Brechtov fluxusovski film *Entrance to Exit* (Od vhoda do izhoda) zamejuje popolnoma optični dogodek (postopno spremembo odtenka emulzije) z besedama VHOD in IZHOD. Besedi, za kateri se zdi, da usmerjata, dajeta iztočnice, tako zamejujeta nedoločljiv vizualni dogodek. George Maciunas na enem izmed svojih diagramov, ki jih je naredil za gibanje Fluxus, Brechtu pripiše, da je v gibanje vpeljal »naravne dogodke«, ki pokažejo, da gre v primeru kvazinaravnega dogodka dejansko za dirigiran *pseudodogodek*. ¹⁰ V tem smislu dogodek gibanja Fluxus na avantgardi lasten način odseva pseudodogodka, ki jih analizira Boorstin. Za Oscarja Jacobyja in njegove sodelavce je bila povezava umetniškega dogodka in pseudodogodka nekaj očitnega, saj so v svojem manifestu *Media Art Manifesto* (Manifest medijske

umetnosti) iz leta 1967 zapisali, kako je njihova želja doseči, da bi novičarski mediji poročali o »neobstojećem dogodku« oziroma dogajanju. ¹¹ Uprizoritev dogodka ali poročanje o neobstojećem dogodku: saj ni razlike?

Obstaja fotografija, posneta leta 1962 na manifestaciji Kleines Sommerfest: Apres John Cage, v Wuppertalu (Nemčija), na kateri Carlheinz Caspari bere manifest Georgea Maciunasa z naslovom *Neo-Dada in Music, Theater, Poetry and Art* (Neodadaizem v glasbi, gledališču, pesništvu, umetnosti), ozadje fotografije pa predstavlja velik, na roke narisani Maciunasov diagram o časovni/prostorski umetnosti. Podoba se ponaša z določeno emblematsko kakovostjo; Maciunasov diagram namreč vnaša v postcageovski dogodek določen analitični element, ki ga sestavljajo bizarne kategorije (»grafična literatura«, »diagramatična glasba«), pod katerimi so razvrščena imena umetnikov. Podobno kot Deleuze se tudi Cage in Brecht usmerjata k naturaliziranju dogodka, da bi ga postavila v nasprotje z zgodovino – zgodovino, ki jo vidita kot umetno omejitev postajanja. Pred nedavnim je Branden Joseph Johna Cagea zagovarjal pred obtožbo, da »kvietistično sprejema 'življenje' in 'naravo' (Cageova najljubša izraza) kot nespremenljivi oziroma večni entiteti«. Opozoril je, da Cage »pojmuje stroj narave kot nenehen proces ateleološke in nehierarhične transformacije.« ¹² Tovrstno pojmovanje v sebi prav gotovo nosi osvobajajoč trenutek, vendar pa mora vsako smiselno dogodkoslovje predstavljati tudi zgodovinsko dialektiko.

Umetniški vodja gibanja, Maciunas, si je Fluxus zamislil kot revolucionarno umetniško gibanje v smislu sovjetskega konstruktivizma – dejansko je upal, da bo sovjetsko vodstvo zaradi Fluxusa zavrglo socialistični realizem. ¹³ Maciunas je visoko cenil Brechtovo delo *Izhod*: »Najboljše 'kompozicije' so kar najbolj neosebne, 'readymadi', kot je Brechtov *Izhod* – in sploh nam jih ni potrebno uprizorjati, saj se dogajajo vsak dan, brez 'posebnega' performansa. Ko bodo naši festivali postali popolni readymadi, se bodo samoukinili (nam pa ne bo več potrebno sodelovati pri njih)«. ¹⁴ Kot umetnost so bili za

⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, London: Athlone Press, 1989, str. 247.

⁹ Neko drugo partituro, *No Smoking* (Kajenje prepovedano), lahko podobno obravnavamo bodisi kot opis splošnega (ne)dogodka bodisi kot znak z neizprosnostjo, birokratsko zapovedjo. George Maciunas je oblikoval plakat, na katerem je videti napis »Kajenje prepovedano« kot uradno opozorilo, čeprav tipografija, ki jo uporabi, izpostavlja oblikovni vidik in je sporočilo zaradi nje težko berljivo – že samo branje/gledanje postane performativno. Maciunasova različica partiture *Kajenje prepovedano* je doživela objavo kot delo gibanja Fluxus okoli leta 1966.

¹⁰ George Maciunas, *Expanded Arts Diagram*, Fluxus edition, 1966.

¹¹ Eduardo Costa, Raúl Escari in Roberto Jacoby, »A Media Art (Manifesto)« (1966/67), v: Alexander Alberro in Blake Stimson (ur.), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge (Massachusetts)/London: MIT Press, 1999, str. 2–4.

¹² Branden W. Joseph, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage*, New York: Zone Books, 2008, str. 78. Glej tudi: Ina Blom, »Signal to Noise«, *Artforum* XLVIII, št. 6, februar 2010, str. 170–175. Potrebno je sicer dodati, da Joseph hkrati tudi kritizira implikacije Cageovega projekta, zlasti v svoji analizi postcageovskega dela Tonyja Conrada, ki Cagea v številnih pogledih »socializira« in historizira.

¹³ Glej razdelek »Seeing Red« (Gledati rdeče) v Emmett Williams in Ann Noël (ur.), *Mr. Fluxus: A Collective Portrait of George Maciunas, 1931–1978*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1997, str. 91–115.

¹⁴ George Maciunas v pismu Tomasu Schmitu, januar 1964, v: *ibid.*, str. 105.

Maciunasa preveč »avtonomni« celo festivali gibanja Fluxus. Vendar pa je postajalo v letih po Maciunasovi pripombi (v pismu iz januarja 1964) vse bolj očitno, da je avtonomija dogodkov in dogajanj gibanja Fluxus tarča tako notranjih kot zunanjih napadov, saj so popularno kulturo preplavili »dogodki« in »dogajanja« v službi stikov z javnostmi, oglaševanja in mode – preplavili so jo tudi politični psevdodogodki po vzoru novinarskih konferenc, na katere se je osredotočal Boorstin. Carrie Lambert trdi, da lahko boorstinovski psevdodogodek dejansko pojmuje kot nočno moro večine avantgardnih performansov iz tega obdobja – in da uprizoritev dela *Naredi solato* v galeriji Tate predstavlja še zlasti groteskno različico teh preganjalnih sanj.¹⁵

Morda je res, da »kultura dogodka«, ki jo je gibanje Fluxus ustvarilo na podlagi Brechtovih in drugih partitur dogodkov, sledi logiki psevdodogodka, vendar pa jo lahko pojmuje tudi kot *izvotljevanje* psevdodogodka, njegovo okleščanje, spreminjanje v dolgočasen nedogodek, v čakanje, ki je lahko osnova za nekaj. Znameniti koncert gibanja Fluxus, ki ga je v gledališču Audimax na univerzi v Aachnu 20. julija 1964 organiziral Tomas Schmit, je imel še zlasti močan čustveni naboj, saj se je odvijal na dan obletnice spodletelega atentata na Hitlerja, ki se je zgodil 20. julija 1944. Obeleženje se je pričelo z Goebbelsovimi glasom – »Ali želite totalno vojno?« –, ki ga je spremljal kratek komemorativni nagovor Bazona Brocka, vendar pa večina predstav na videz ni imela nobene zveze z zgodovinskim dogodkom. Ko je nekaj študentov, ki so pričakovali bolj participatorno dogajanje, zasedlo oder in jih je Joseph Beuys dobil po nosu, je nastala znamenita fotografija, na kateri je videti, kot da s krvjo oblit Beuys pozdravlja Hitlerja, kar je vodilo do javnega škandala in obtožb, da gre za skrunjenje spomina na moše z 20. julija 1944. V kontekstu povojne nemške družbe, ki si je s posvetitvijo Von Stauffenberg vneto prizadevala prikriti pristransko naravo svoje denacifikacije, lahko koncert v okviru gledališča gibanja Fluxus pojmuje kot nepremišljeno ponovitev zgodovinskega dogodka.¹⁶ Groteskna ponovitev zgodovinskih bojov je posledica dejstva, da je zgodovina znotraj zamejenega in vodenega časa načrtovanega dogodka postala problematična.

Lidwien van de Ven je v zadnjih letih po Evropi in Zdru-

ženih državah fotografirala vrsto manifestacij, povezanih z desničarskimi populistami in političnim islamom – manifestacije dveh velikih ustvarjalcev pretresljivih psevdodogodkov, ki podpihujejo medije. Na njeni fotografiji *Berlin, 02/10/2010 (Die Freiheit)* iz leta 2011 vidimo sobo z vrati, ki razkrivajo steno, okrašeno z oblaki in sloganom »Ljubimo svobodo« v različnih jezikih. »Die Freiheit« je ime obrobne nemške politične stranke, ki jo je v posnemanju veliko bolj uspešne stranke Partij Voor de Vrijheid (PVV; Stranka za svobodo), katere vodja je nizozemski populist Geert Wilders, ustanovil René Stadtkewitz. Van de Venova je fotografijo posnela v času, ko je Wilders v podporo nemški stranki obiskal Berlin – šlo je za polemični in kot tak uspešni medijski dogodek, ki je bil del Wildersove politike šoka. Van de Venova ne pokaže dejanskega Wildersovega nastopa, temveč samo prostor z množico glav, ki jo vidimo v spodnjem delu slike. Psevdodogodek je sestavljalo dirigirano ustvarjanje podob, Van de Venova pa je ponovno upodobila in predstavila kar sam psevdodogodek. Kljub temu, da so novinarske fotografije različnih medijev na različne načine zajele in diskurzivno umestile Wildersov nastop v Berlinu, je Wildersu in njegovim pristašem vseeno uspelo izsiliti vtis, da gre za dogodek, ki se mu ni moč izogniti. Pri Van de Venovi, ki je sicer fotografirala v okviru dogodka, ni pa se osredotočila na glavno zvezdo nastopa, pa nas njene protipodobe napeljujejo na alternativne scenarije in od scenarijev nepredvidene dogodke – prav tako kot fotografije iz filmov, ki po Rolandu Barthesu vsebujejo številne možne pripovedi. Kadar Lidwien van de Ven svojih fotografij ne objavlja v publikacijah, jih običajno razstavlja, tako da neposredno na steno prilepi velike povečave svojih del. Ko so na razstavi v londonski galeriji Bloomberg Space leta 2011 cenzurirali njeno fotografijo *Freiheit*, jo je Van de Venova nadomestila z belim pravokotnikom v več odtenkih.¹⁷ Van de Venova je že pred groteskno in podlo cenzuro družbe Bloomberg uporabljala bele in črne fotografije v več odtenkih, pa tudi prebarvane fotografije; v konkretnem primeru je zamenjava podobe *Freiheit* poudarila njen status nepodobe, spodletele podobe, podobe, ki ne sledi scenariju psevdodogodka – in kot taka predstavlja nek potencialni dogodek.

Z dialektiko dogodka in psevdodogodka se od sredine devetdesetih let 20. stoletja v številnih delih ukvarja

15 Carrie Lambert-Beatty, *Being Watched: Yvonne Rainer and the 1960s*, Cambridge (Massachusetts)/London: MIT Press, 2008, str. 26. Kar se tiče dogodkov gibanja Fluxus, sem še bolj skeptičen kot Lambert-Beattyjeva. Glej tudi: Sven Lütticken, »Event«, *Texte zur Kunst* 17, št. 66, junij 2007, str. 65–70.

16 Za podrobnosti o festivalu, s poudarkom na Beuysovem prispevku, glej: Uwe M. Schneede, *Joseph Beuys: Die Aktionen*, Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje, 1994, str. 42–67.

17 Pred tem so v galeriji Bloomberg Space odpovedali celotno razstavo Van de Venove, najverjetneje zaradi ukaza vodstva družbe Bloomberg, ki se ukvarja s finančnimi novicami in je pokroviteljica te umetniške galerije. Umetnica je za isti prostor pripravila drugo razstavo, ki je prav tako postala žrtev cenzure – tokrat ne v celoti, temveč samo ena podoba. Za podrobnosti o razstavi iz leta 2011 in fotografiji *Die Freiheit*, glej: Monika Sczawczyk, »Black, White and Grey Matters«, <http://afterall.org/online/black-white-and-grey-matters>.

tudi Eran Schaerf. Pri Schaerfovem projektu *Scenario Data* (Možni scenariji) gre za delo oziroma serijo del različnih oblik. Projekt temelji na tekstu, v katerem avtor združuje razglabljanja o naravi sodobnega gledališča z znanstvenofantastično pripovedjo, ki nosi v sebi številne družbene in politične reference. Schaerf uporabi citat iz članka v neki izraelski publikaciji: »Kaj pomeni predstava za novinarje? Je demonstracija, na kateri ljudje nosijo plakate, predstava? Ko ministrski predsednik napove, da bo imel svoj dramatični nastop na strankarski konferenci pet čez osmo, natančno takrat, ko se na televiziji začnejo poročila, je to predstava?«¹⁸ Novinarji hodijo na vnaprej načrtovane, dirigirane dogodke, ki se nato prodajajo kot novice. V projektu *Možni scenariji* avtor preiskuje omenjeni pojav s pomočjo (znanstvenofantastične) pripovedi. Ker je cilj »predstav za novinarje« ohranjanje zastavljenega zgodovinskega toka in minimalizacija nevarnosti, da bi presenetljivi dogodki pokvarili scenarij, se Schaerfov metascenarij ukvarja z uprizarjanjem in ponovnim uprizarjanjem zgodovine. Ali lahko igranje, ki je del psevdodogodka, postane politično dejanje, bežna afirmacija avtonomije? Vznik dogodka v šestdesetih letih 20. stoletja imamo lahko za simptom krize dejanja – konceptov dejanja, zlasti kolektivnih in revolucionarnih. Dialektika dogodka in njegovih drugih, nedogodka in psevdodogodka, postane še bolj zapletena, saj je treba preučiti tudi dialektiko dogodka in *dejanja*.

Film Schaerfa in Eve Meyer z naslovom *Pro Testing* (Pro testiranje) iz leta 2010 je sestavljen pretežno iz kroženja posnetka po skupini protestnikov, ki so opremljeni s plakati. Na večini plakatov so fotografije demonstracij v podporo akciji »Gaza Aid Flotilla«, ki jo je zaustavila izraelska mornarica. Protestniki so za ponovno uprizoritev dogodka uporabili veliko maketo ladje s turško in drugimi zastavami, ki jo zaustavijo pirati z izraelsko zastavo. Na koncu protest nasilno konča policija. Protestniki po navdihu belgijskega pesnika Broodthaersa vzklíkajo »bateau – tableau – drapeau« (ladja – slika – zastava) in razdeljujejo posnetke iz Broodthaersove knjige/filma *A Voyage of the North Sea* (Potovanje po Severnem morju). Demonstracija pred kamero je prav tako uprizorjena kot protest na slikah in čeprav iz različnih vzrokov oba dogodka odplavata daleč stran od »običajnih« protestov, ki jih je moč enostavno nevtralizirati. Kot v številnih delih Schaerfa, vključno s tistimi, ki jih je naredil z Meyerjevo, tudi v filmu *Pro testiranje* vidimo, kako se igralci in statisti spopadajo z dialektiko

dogodka in psevdodogodka. Njihovo delo izpostavlja paradoksalno dejstvo, da je dogodek danes najbolj viden prav v luči mutiranega psevdodogodka. Psevdodogodek začrtuje prizorišče, na katerem lahko pride do dogodka.

Sven Lütticken predava na Filozofski fakulteti Svobodne univerze (VU) v Amsterdamu. Področja njegovega raziskovanja so moderna in sodobna umetnost, umetnostna kritika, umetnostna in medijska teorija.

18 Citat, pripisan novinarju Eitanu Orenu, v: Eran Schaerf, *Blue Key: Journal for Demographic Design*, Köln: Walther König, 2002, str. 24.

THE EVENT AND ITS OTHER

SVEN LÜTTICKEN

The last ten to fifteen years have seen a spate of reenactments of “live art” from the 1960s and early 1970s. Such pieces are indicative of the cultural and social upheavals of the 1960s, which culminated in 1968, while at the same time confirm art’s continuing existence as a separate domain. An Alison Knowles event score called *#2 Proposition*, which gives the instruction “Make a Salad”, was first performed at the ICA in London in 1962, and later that year at the Festum Fluxorum festival in Copenhagen and Paris.¹ A photo shows a group of performers making a salad in a wood bowl in one of the ICA’s spaces in a rather improvised and low-key-looking manner. Recently, *Make a Salad* was performed at Tate Modern’s Turbine Hall, and the event’s announcement can also serve as a description of what came to pass: “This Fluxus event score simply instructs ‘Make a Salad’, and on this occasion a giant salad will be created from lettuce, tomato, carrot and cucumber, dressed with olive oil, herbs and balsamic vinegar, and served to an audience of 300 people. The performance begins with a Mozart concerto, followed by the sounds of chopping and the spectacle of the salad being thrown from the bridge, dressed and tossed. The audience are invited to participate in the performance by eating the salad created, whilst listening to Mozart performed, signalling the end of the piece.”² As Julia Robinson has argued, the earlier execution could still depend on an iconoclastic effect, on the shock value of this type of generic performance. Newer versions acknowledge the

1 The piece was listed as *Proposition* as part of concert no. 1 for the Festum Fluxorum both in Copenhagen and in Paris. Dick Higgins recounted that in Copenhagen, a “hungry Dane” burst onto the stage to steal a carrot, with Higgins hitting him on the head with a spoon, which broke upon contact. Dick Higgins, “Auszug aus ‘Postface’”, in Jürgen Becker and Wolf Vostell (eds), *Happenings, Fluxus, Pop Art, Nouveau Réalisme. Eine Dokumentation*, Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1965, p. 182.

2 “Make a Salad”, <http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/thelongweekend2008/14708.htm>.

passing of time by instead emphasizing the musicality of the salad-making actions by supplementing them with Mozart.³

The fate of Knowles's salad piece points to a transformation of the artistic sphere that subsumes the logic of art under the economic rationality of what was once called the cultural industry. This means that what was once an avant-garde project – namely, the attack on this problematic “autonomy of art” in favour of an expanded aesthetic – has now taken on a new reality and shapes the working conditions in art. This also means that the event becomes manageable and managed. Philosophies of the event, for all their divergences, stress its anachronistic nature. Shattering a society's horizon but remaining to some extent unfulfilled, incompletely actualised, the event haunts the future that came to be. However, the events of today's culturalized economy seem to be thoroughly at home in the present. This, of course, raises the suspicion that we are dealing with pseudo-events.

Daniel Boorstin famously theorized the pseudo-event in his book *The Image* from 1961 – in other words, at the very moment when happenings and events emerged as the privileged intermedia of the neo-avant-garde. Focusing mainly on press conferences and other scripted situations for the press, Boorstin decried these as manipulative non-events dressed up as events; as pseudo-events.⁴ The term certainly raises a number of problems. First and foremost: who decides which is which? One person's event is another's pseudo-event. This becomes especially tricky when thinkers such as Badiou or Žižek oppose genuine historical truth-events to pseudo-events, such as the advent of fascism, on the basis that the latter effectuates change only so that things can remain fundamentally the same.⁵ This is problematic to the extent that Nazism is clearly *some people's* truth-event, but we are not dealing with an unstable dialectic within which *choices matter*. Antinomies cannot be wished away; rather than trying to forget that the notion of the pseudo-event exists, we should treat the antinomy of event and its other as a historical and therefore unstable and mutable contra-

diction – a contradiction in dialectical motion. In Fredric Jameson's words, it is “the unmasking of antinomy as contradiction which constitutes truly dialectical thinking as such.”⁶

Here, I will use a number of different artistic and theoretical positions developed in the 1960s, aesthetic as well as philosophical “eventologies,” to substantiate this point. What interests me here is the dialectic of event and pseudo-event not on the grand historical stage (Saint Paul's founding of Christianity or the October Revolution) but on a much smaller scale: on events within contemporary “event culture”. Whichever philosophy of the event one adheres to, from Deleuze to Žižek, the event is always in some manner *anachronistic*, as the event can only be an event by virtue of interrupting time. It is never quite at home in the present, for it exists by virtue of its break with the present order, its shattering of the temporal horizon. It is ultimately this that seems to condemn the events in the post-Fordist version of the culture industry par excellence – for are not these events fatally *at home in the present*? They modulate time and create zones of intensity, but this is exactly their role in today's economy of time. They are domesticated and planned events – hence pseudo-events.

Boorstin's book was called *The Image*, but, in fact, his analysis places great emphasis on the scripted nature of pseudo-events. As media events, they are impure intermedia events. Deleuze's philosophy of the event, which he started to develop in the second half of the 1960s, also acknowledges the intermedial status of his sense-events. In his mock-structuralist *Logic of Sense*, he used Lewis Carroll as a purveyor of paradoxes, allowing him to present non-sense as the true sense-event.⁷ If in this book the event occurs in language, Deleuze's books on Bergson and on the cinema focus on image-events. However, in the Bergsonian duration of the time-image, language returns as the speech act: in his analysis of the Nouvelle Vague, which is characterized by a “to-ing and fro-ing between speech and image,” Deleuze notes how, in films in which nothing much happens in terms of action, “the ethereal speech act creates the event.”⁸ In George Brecht's event scores of the early 1960s, language becomes eventual in a different sense: it becomes a set of ambiguous instructions for more or less gratuitous acts. This practical “eventology,” as de-

3 Julia Robinson, “The Sculpture of Indeterminacy: Alison Knowles's Beans and Variations”, *Art Journal* 63, no. 4, Winter 2004, pp. 97–98.

4 Daniel Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, New York: Harper and Row, 1961.

5 Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology*, London/New York: Verso, 1999, pp. 138–139. Badiou makes the same distinction, but he does not use the term pseudo-event; he terms Nazism an “event” (in inverted commas) or a simulacrum. See Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, transl. Peter Hallward, London/New York: Verso, 2001, pp. 74–75.

6 Fredric Jameson, *Valences of the Dialectic*, London: Verso, 2009, p. 43.

7 See Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense* (1969), transl. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale, New York: Columbia University Press, 1990, throughout.

8 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, London: Athlone Press, 1989, p. 247.

veloped by Brecht and other Cage-inspired artists, is as crucial and as problematical as that of Deleuzian philosophy. One card in George Brecht's *Water-Yam* reads: "DELIVERY. An area is set aside. Delivery of Objects to the area is arranged." Such a score can obviously be actualized in any number of ways – or it can remain as it is, as a score forever suggesting but never quite necessitating actualizations. The suggestion can be aesthetically compelling, like that of Deleuzian rhetoric; it suggests infinite possibilities in *abstractum*.

Brecht's event score *Exit*, which consists of only that word, pushes the ambiguity to extremes. The score has been "performed" in the form of a readymade exit sign. Evoking both the most banal and common of acts – leaving a room – and a common sign for emergency exists, *Exit*, in its various actual and potential incarnations, is everywhere and nowhere, a more or less continuous low-key event.⁹ Brecht's Flux Film *Entrance to Exit* bookends a purely optical event (the gradual change in tone of the emulsion) with the words ENTRANCE and EXIT. An indeterminate visual event is thus bookended by framing words that seem to give directions, provide cues. One of George Maciunas's Fluxus charts credits Brecht with bringing "natural events" into Fluxus, but such elements show that the quasi-natural event is in fact a scripted *pseudo-event*.¹⁰ In this respect, the Fluxus event mirrors, in an avant-garde idiom, the pseudo-events analysed by Boorstin. This complicity between art event and pseudo-event was clearly perceived by Oscar Jacoby and his associates, who in their 1967 "Media Art Manifesto" announced that their ambition was to get the news media to report on a "nonexistent event" or happening.¹¹ Staging an event or reporting on a nonexistent event: same difference?

There is a photograph of Carlheinz Caspari reading George Maciunas's manifesto "Neo-Dada in Music, Theater, Poetry, Art" at the manifestation Kleines Sommerfest: Apres John Cage in Wuppertal (Germany) in 1962 with a large hand-drawn Maciunas diagram on time/space art as backdrop. The image has a certain emblematic quality, with Maciunas's diagram introducing an analytical element into the post-Cagean event,

creating various outré categories ("graphic literature," "diagrammatic music") and arranging artists' names under them. Like Deleuze, Cage and Brecht tend to naturalize the event, to oppose it to history – history conceived as an artificial constraint on becoming. Recently, Branden Joseph has defended John Cage against the accusation of a "quietistic acceptance of 'life' or 'nature' (two of Cage's favorite terms) as unchanging or eternal realms," pointing out that, for Cage, "nature's manner of operation" was "understood as an ongoing process of ateleological and non-hierarchical transformation."¹² There is certainly a liberatory moment in such a conception, but any theoretical or practical eventology worth its salt would also be a historical dialectic.

Fluxus impresario Maciunas conceived of Fluxus as a revolutionary art movement along the lines of Soviet Constructivism – and he seriously hoped to convince the Soviet leadership to ditch Socialist Realism in favor of Fluxus.¹³ Maciunas praised Brecht's *Exit*: "The best Fluxus 'composition' is a most nonpersonal, 'readymade' one like Brecht's *Exit* – and it does not require any of us to perform it since it happens daily without any 'special' performance of it. Thus our festivals will eliminate themselves (and our need to participate) when they become total readymades."¹⁴ For Maciunas, even Fluxus festivals were still too "autonomous" qua art. However, in the years following Maciunas's remark (in a letter from January 1964), it would become increasingly obvious that the autonomy of Fluxus events and happenings was under attack from without as well as from within, as pop culture was inundated by "events" and "happenings" in the service of PR, advertising and fashion – as well as the political pseudo-events on which Boorstin focused, exemplified by press conferences. The Boorstinian pseudo-event can indeed be seen as the bad dream of much of the avant-garde performance of this period, as Carrie Lambert-Beatty puts it – and *Make a Salad* at the Tate is a particularly grotesque version of this rarebit dream.¹⁵

9 Another event score, *No Smoking*, could likewise be seen either as a description of a common (non) event or a sign with a stern, bureaucratic command. George Maciunas designed a poster in which "no smoking" does seem to be an official exhortation, although the font chosen stresses the design aspect and makes the message difficult to read – the reading/looking becoming performative in its own right. Maciunas's version of *No Smoking* was published as a Fluxus edition ca. 1966.

10 George Maciunas, *Expanded Arts Diagram*, Fluxus edition, 1966.

11 Eduardo Costa, Raúl Escari and Roberto Jacoby, "A Media Art (Manifesto)" (1966/67), in Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (eds), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge MA/London: MIT Press, 1999, pp. 2–4.

12 Branden W. Joseph, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage*, New York: Zone Books, 2008, p. 78. See also Ina Blom, "Signal to Noise", *Artforum* XLVIII, no. 6, February 2010, pp. 170–175. It should be noted, however, that Joseph also critiques the implications of Cage's project through his analysis of the post-Cagean work of Tony Conrad in particular, which in many ways "socializes" and historicizes Cage.

13 See the "Seeing Red" section of Emmett Williams and Ann Noël (eds), *Mr. Fluxus: A Collective Portrait of George Maciunas, 1931–1978*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1997, pp. 91–115.

14 George Maciunas, letter to Tomas Schmit, January 1964, in *ibid.*, p. 105.

15 Carrie Lambert-Beatty, *Being Watched: Yvonne Rainer and the 1960s*, Cambridge MA/London: MIT Press, 2008, p. 26. Concerning Fluxus events, I'm more skeptical than Lambert-Beatty. See also Sven Lütticken, "Event", *Texte zur Kunst* 17, no. 66, June 2007, pp. 65–70.

While the “event culture” created by Fluxus on the basis of the event scores of Brecht and others may follow the logic of the pseudo-event, they can also be seen as voiding the pseudo-event, stripping it down, turning it into a boring non-event, into a wait that may prepare the ground for something. The famous Fluxus concert in the Audimax Theater of Aachen University on the 20th of July 1964, organized by Tomas Schmit, was particularly charged due to its taking place on the day of commemoration for the would-be Hitler assassins of July 20th, 1944. Proceedings began with Goebbels’ voice – “Do you want total war?” – and a short commemorative speech by Bazon Brock, although most of the performances were seemingly unconnected to the historical event. When a number of students who had expected a more participatory happening invaded the stage, Joseph Beuys got punched in the face, leading to the famous photo in which a bleeding Beuys appears to be giving the Hitler Salute and to a public scandal and accusations of besmirching the memory of the men of July 20th, 1944. In the context of post-war German society, which was eager to cover up the partial nature of its denazification by sanctifying Von Stauffenberg, this concert could be seen as an uncanny resurgence of a historical event in the theatre of Fluxus.¹⁶ History reared its head within the discrete and managed time of the planned event, leading to a grotesque reenactment of historical struggles.

In recent years, Lidwien van de Ven has photographed a number of manifestations associated with the populist right in Europe and the US, as well as with political Islam – two great producers of shocking pseudo-events that galvanize the media. Her photograph *Berlin, 02/10/2010 (Die Freiheit)*, 2011, shows a room with a doorway revealing a wall decorated with clouds and the slogan “We love freedom” in various languages. “Die Freiheit” (Freedom) is the name of a marginal German political party created by René Stadtkewitz in emulation of the much more successful Partij Voor de Vrijheid (PVV; Party for Freedom), led by the Dutch populist Geert Wilders, and Van de Ven’s photograph was taken at an announced Berlin appearance by Wilders in support of the German party – a highly controversial and thus successful media event, part of Wilders’ shock politics. Van de Ven does not show Wilders’ actual appearance, but the space itself, with a jumble of heads visible in the lower part of the image. If the pseudo-event involved the scripted production of images, Van de Ven

re-images and re-imagines the pseudo-event. While press photographs of Wilders in Berlin were captioned and discursively framed in different ways in different media, Wilders and his allies still managed to impose this appearance as an unavoidable event. Taken within the event but not focusing on its star performer, Van de Ven’s counter-image suggests alternative scenarios, and events that are not foreseen by scenarios – just as film stills, for Roland Barthes, contain many potential narratives. Apart from publications, Van de Ven’s photograph is usually shown as a large print pasted directly on the wall; when the *Freiheit* image was censored in a show at Bloomberg Space in London in 2011, Van de Ven substituted a white monochrome rectangle.¹⁷ As grotesque and despicable as the Bloomberg censorship was, in the past Van de Ven had already used white and black monochromes, as well as overpainted photographs, and, in this case, the substitution emphasized the status of the *Die Freiheit* images as a non-image, as a failed image, as an image that does not follow the pseudo-event’s script – and therefore as a potential event.

The dialectic of event and pseudo-event has also been examined in a number of works by Eran Schaerf since the mid-1990s. Schaerf’s *Scenario Data* is a work, or a series of works, that has taken different forms. It is based on a text that combines speculations on the nature of contemporary performance with a science-fiction fiction that includes a number of social and political references. As Schaerf quotes from an article in an Israeli publication: “What does a performance for the press mean? Is a demonstration where people carry posters a performance? When the Prime Minister schedules his dramatic appearance at the party conference for five past eight, exactly at the start of the news on TV, is that a performance?”¹⁸ Journalists go to pre-planned, scripted events; this is what passes for news. *Scenario Data* investigates this phenomenon with the means of (science) fiction. Since “performances for the press” are aimed at keeping history on its set course, on minimizing the risk of surprising events that upset the scenario, Schaerf’s meta-scenario investigates the staging and re-staging of history. Can the acting that goes into the pseudo-event become a political act, a

16 On this festival, and Beuys’s contribution in particular, see Uwe M. Schneede, *Joseph Beuys: Die Aktionen*, Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje, 1994, pp. 42–67.

17 Earlier, an entire show by Van de Ven at Bloomberg Space had been cancelled completely, presumably at the behest of the direction of Bloomberg, the financial news corporation that sponsors the London art venue. A different show was then prepared by the artist for this space, leading to another instance of censorship – this time involving one image rather than the entire show. On the 2011 show and *Die Freiheit*, see Monika Sczewczyk, “Black, White and Grey Matters”, <http://afterall.org/online/black-white-and-grey-matters>.

18 Quote attributed to Eitan Oren, reporter, in Eran Schaerf, *Blue Key: Journal for Demographic Design*, Cologne: Walther König, 2002, p. 24.

momentary affirmation of autonomy? The rise of the event in the 1960s can be seen as symptomatic of a crisis of the act – of notions of the act, especially in collective and revolutionary terms. The dialectic of the event and its non- and pseudo-eventual others has to be further complicated by investigating that of the event and the act.

Schaerf and Eva Meyer's film *Pro Testing* (2010) consists largely of a circular panning shot from the center of a circle of protesters holding up placards. Most of these show photos of a demonstration in favor of the "Gaza Aid Flotilla" that was stopped by the Israeli Navy. The protesters restaged the event in the form of a large model of a ship decked with Turkish and other flags being stopped by pirates with Israeli flags. This protest was in turn violently stopped by the police force. The protesters chant the Broodthaers-inspired trias of "bateau – tableau – drapeau" and images from Broodthaers' *A Voyage of the North Sea* book/film are handed out. The demonstration-for-the-film is as staged as the protest on the pictures, though for different reasons both are far from "regular", easily neutralized protest events. Like many of Schaerf's works, including those with Meyer, *Pro Testing* shows actors and extras engaging with the dialectic of event and pseudo-event. Their work stresses that today the event is, paradoxically, best viewed as a mutated pseudo-event. The pseudo-event delineates an arena in which an event might occur.

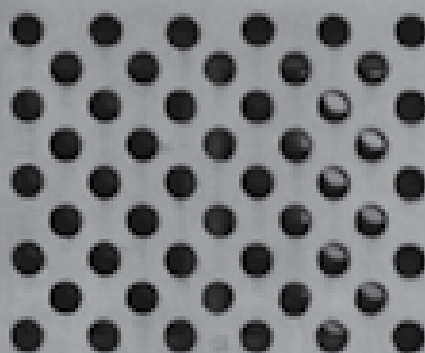
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MO

MODERNA GALERIJA

Moderna galerija
Muzej sodobne umetnosti
Ljubljana



San Keller,
San Keller Vas ponese k umetnosti / San Keller Carries You Up to Art, 2002/2011
Performans, izveden pred Moderno galerijo v Ljubljani / Performance, izveden in front of the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana
(Z dovoljenjem umetnika in MGLC / Courtesy of the artist and MGLC. Foto: Jaka Babnik.)



DATI PROSTOR, VZETI ČAS

RAZSTAVA MED DVEMA

SCENARIJEMA

WERNER HANAK-LETTNER

PREVOD

MOJCA DOBNIKAR

Charles-Antoine Coypel, novopečeni direktor francoske umetnostne akademije, je v pismu ob salonu leta 1747 izbruhal iz sebe jezo nad obiskovalci. Njegov obračun osvetljuje današnjo diskusijo o umetnosti, dogodku in sodelovanju obiskovalcev: »Sam trdim, da se v salonu, kjer so razstavljene slike, občinstvo spremeni dvajsetkrat na dan. Kar ob desetih zjutraj javnost občuduje, je opoldne javno obsojeno. Res, povem vam, v tem prostoru se lahko pojavi dvajset občinstev različnih razpoloženj in značajev v enem samem dnevu: včasih preprosto občinstvo, občinstvo s predsodki, muhasto občinstvo, zavistno občinstvo, občinstvo, ki hlapčuje modi, ki hoče, zato da bi presojalo, videti vse, proučiti pa ničesar. Lahko vam zagotovim, da bi bila končna bilanca teh občinstev neskončna. (...)«¹

V tem času je bil salon, pozneje epohalna bienalna razstava članov akademije, star deset let. Šele takrat se je lahko trajno uveljavil in postal zgled poznejšim salonom umetnostnih akademij po Evropi. Sicer je večkrat potekal že v 17. stoletju, kot stalna ustanova pa ni bil uspešen, ker so se umetniki o razvoju umetnosti raje sami pogajali s svojimi premožnimi, večinoma plemiškimi naročniki in zavračali soočanje s kritiko kolegov, sploh pa »občinstva«, ki so mu odrekli kakršno koli sposobnost kritike.

Teh »dvajset občinstev različnih razpoloženj in značajev« priča o prvih javnih skupinah obiskovalcev na razstavah. Pred sabo imamo nepokvarjeno, morda celo

¹ Charles-Antoine Coypel, »Dialogue de M. Coypel, premier peintre du Roi sur l'exposition des Tableaux dans le Salon du Louvre en 1747«, povzetek v: *Mercur de France*, november 1751, prev. in nav. v: Thomas E. Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris*, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000 (1985), str. 10.

naivno, vsekakor pa zelo diferencirano skupino, iz katere se je razvila javnost, ki je pozneje – v povezavi s pisci, kot je Denis Diderot, ki je postal eden od kronistov salonov – iz razstave naredila *ta* javni medij, kakršen je danes.

Toda kako naivni so bili v resnici obiskovalci? So sploh bili takšni ali pa so bili resnični naivci v takrat na novo konstituirajočem se svetu umetnosti bolj tisti, ki so se jim pustili presenetiti ali skoraj pregaziti?

Če prenesemo lastnosti takratnih skupin obiskovalcev v današnji čas, poskusimo pri tem še izklopiti stanovsko domišljavi filter direktorja akademije in jih primerjamo z aktivnim obiskovalcem, ki ga tu, na simpoziju *Dogodek kot privilegirani medij na področju sodobne likovne umetnosti*, terja veliko kolegov, bi skoraj lahko menili, da imamo pred sabo sanjsko občinstvo, ki si ga vsi želimo: kreativno, avtonomno in na nek način tudi anarhistično.

Od kod so prišli ti obiskovalci? So imeli kakšno agendo? Je bil morda njihov izrecni cilj zмести umetnike? Thomas Crow v svoji knjigi *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris*² opozarja na nekaj ključnega. Plastično pokaže, da so obiskovalci razstav, ki so s svojim prispevkom sredi 18. stoletja iz salona naredili izhodišče moderne razstave, svojo osnovno izobrazbo v zadevah sodelovanja dobili že prej na drugem kraju: v letnem sejmskem gledališču v St. Germainu. Na Foire de la St. Germain je bilo potujočim skupinam dovoljeno nastopati od konca 16. stoletja, toda šele sto let pozneje je religiozna revolucija priskrbela »sunek«, ki je radikalno povečal kakovost tamkajšnje gledališkoprodukcijske krajine. Razlog je bilo dejstvo, da so italijanske komedijante odpustili z dvora Ludvika XIV. Zaradi nenadnega pietetnega obrata Sončnega kralja je bila Comédie-Italienne, vajena dvora, prisiljena zapustiti deželo ali pa se vtihotapiti v pariško letno sejmsko gledališče. Veliko igralcev se je odločilo, da ostanejo v Parizu, privilegirana Comédie-Française pa se je začela tega, po sebi ubogega gledališča, zdaj bati kot konkurence, ki jo je treba jemati resno; opazovala ga je s stoterimi očmi in ga dala cenzurirati, na primer s prepovedjo javnega govora. Toda kmalu se je pokazalo, da takšne omejitve ne morejo šokirati ne pantomimično izšolanih protagonistov commedie dell'arte ne njihovega občinstva. Nasprotno – prepoved govora je še povečala pozornost, vpletla občinstvo in iz njega naredila soudeleženca. Pravzaprav je

stalno omejevanje oblasti povzročalo vse večjo priljubljenost umetnikov na letnih sejmi in večjo vpletenost gledalcev. Igralci so bili v premagovanju in izogibanju zapovedim in prepovedim neskončno ustvarjalni, gledalci pa so razvijali sposobnosti, s katerimi so inovacijam lahko sledili, jim prišli kar naproti. Ko se je prepoved javnega govora zmeščala v prepoved dialoga, so igralci razvili tehniko, s katero so dela uprizarjali kot navidezne monologe. Pri tem ni bil na odru nikoli več kot en igralec. Ko je povedal svoje do konca in izginil z odra, je prišel naslednji, povzel skriti dialog in dogajanje je tako teklo naprej.

Z vidika današnje komunikacije na razstavah, kjer se ob predmetih nahajajo tablice s pojasnjevalnimi napisi, je zlasti vredno omeniti tehniko t. i. *écriteaux*. *Écriteaux* so bile napisne table, na katerih so prenašali dele dialogov. Bile so nekaj podobnega kot vmesni napisi v nemem filmu. Igralci in občinstvo so skupaj obšli prepoved javnega govora, tako da so igralci svoje tekste prinesli pred sabo kot napise ter jih nato pred občinstvom glasno brali, kričali ali peli s pomočjo popularnih melodij. »K dejanskosti gledališča so sodili frontalnost skupin, njihov kontakt z gledalcem in pogosto odrska površina z rampo; ob tem še posebna atmosfera, ki nastaja iz čara vzajemnega vplivanja med igralci in občinstvom.«³

Te vrstice veljajo za francosko baročno gledališče na splošno. Za Théâtre de la Foire v Saint-Germainu pa so še posebej ustrezne. Kajti tu sta nastala posebna solidarnost med umetniki in gledalci ter zgled aktivne vloge občinstva ne glede na družbeni sloj; ta vzor je postal pomemben element nastajajoče javnosti, ki se je naprej razvijala v razstavnem prostoru salona v 18. stoletju in se potem razširila po ulicah in drugih javnih prostorih Pariza.

Gledano s tega zornega kota ni naključje, da je francosko občinstvo ob izteku baroka, potem ko je šlo skozi šolo francoskega gledališča in Comédie-Italienne, kjer je vzpostavilo stik z igralci, se naučilo odzivati nanje in ozavestilo lastno komunikacijsko moč, zdaj hotelo začeti to komunikacijsko igro tudi na razstavah: s slikami, ki pa se niso odzivale na nič, in z umetniki, ki so se skrivali za slikami in so se sprva odzivali zelo presenečeno, osuplo ter z užaljenim samopomilovanjem.

Če si pogledamo današnje obiskovalce razstav stare in nove umetnosti v tehničnih, političnih ali naravoslovnih

² Thomas E. Crow, str. 45 in nasl.

³ Klaus J. Lemmer, *Französisches Barock-Theater im Bild*, Berlin: Rembrandt Verlag, 1963, str. 9.

zgodovinskih muzejih, se vsekakor lahko vprašamo, kaj se je vendar zgodilo z obiskovalci v času po anarhističnem napadu »dvajsetih občinstev različnih razporeženj in značajev«. Tudi če lahko izhajamo iz tega – veliko sodobnikov priča o tem –, da se je »sound level« v muzejih v zadnjih desetletjih kontinuirano dvigoval, vendarle ne smemo spregledati, da so obiskovalci v zadnjih 250 letih doživljali utiševanje oz. razvoj samoomejevanja. Odgovor na to opažanje najdemo v 19. stoletju. Potem ko je Louvre leta 1793 z revolucionarnim sklepom mutiral iz gradu v muzej, je v 19. stoletju po vseh velikih evropskih mestih sledila gradnja muzejev, ki so bili deloma podobni gradovom, še bolj pa antičnim templjem, na primer Gliptoteka v Münchnu (1815) ali Nacionalna galerija v Londonu (1838). Tu so meščane sprejemali velikanski stebriščni gaji ter strašile ogromne vhodne dvorane in veličastna stopnišča in v teh templjih so spoznavali tako svojo svobodo kakor tudi njene meje. »Od človeka se pričakuje, da se bo vedel dostojanstveno.«⁴

Alexander Klein tako pojasnjuje ta civilizacijski proces v 19. stoletju: »Na muzejski razstavi je bilo treba v vsakem pogledu nadzorovati svoje gone. Opustiti je bilo treba glasno govorjenje, dotikanje eksponatov in tekanje. Za korektno vedenje v muzeju so bile značilne pridušnost, zmernost in diskretnost, torej vedenje, primerno za kvazisakralni kraj, vendar pa vedenja ni določal – kot denimo pri bogoslužju – nespremenljiv potek. Človek se je moral lepo vesti, bil pa je še naprej svoboden, skratka, prav v muzeju je bil meščan lahko meščan.«⁵

Ali torej v meščanu, ki je bil discipliniran v muzejskih katedralah, danes še vedno tiči anarhistično bitje obiskovalca pariškega salona? In ali je v 21. stoletju mogoče v njem prebuditi zaželenega aktivnega in samostojno sodelujočega obiskovalca?

Naj si še tako želimo pozitiven odgovor na to vprašanje, ga potiska v ozadje drugo, skoraj nasprotno vprašanje; namreč, ali muzej, razstava (ne glede na žanr) dejansko potrebujeta močnejše sodelovanje obiskovalca? Kot kurator se že dolgo sprašujem, ali je vseprisotna želja po večjem obiskovalčevem sodelovanju dejansko potreba tistih, ki obiskujejo muzej? Ali pa je to predvsem projekcija ali celo freudovski transfer s kuratorja in umetnika – ki imata danes deloma povsem drugačni vlogi kakor njuna kolega na francoski akademiji leta 1747 – na obiskovalce? Morda imajo obiskovalci bistveno ve-

čjo potrebo po tem, da bi sodelovali manj in ne več. Za to domnevo nimam empiričnih dokazov in poleg tega vem, da bi bilo verodostojno anketiranje obiskovalcev v tej smeri občutljivo početje, saj je že volja do odgovarjanja del sodelovanja, slednje pa je pač v veselje le posameznikom s posebnimi lastnostmi. Moja domneva, da si obiskovalci morda želijo manj in ne več sodelovanja, se mnogo bolj hrani iz mojih spoznanj o zakonitostih samega medija razstave.

Če si sistem razstave pogledamo natančneje, najprej spoznamo, da obiskovalci kot samostojni popotniki po razstavnem prostoru že kažejo pomembno aktivno lastnost: obiskovalci – v nemški oznaki zanje se skriva aktivna beseda »iskati«⁶ – eksistencialno vzdržujejo medij v teku. Brez njih – če se spomnimo »dvajsetih občinstev« v salonu – sistem razstave ne bi nikoli nastal.

V zvezi s temo simpozija, »dogodkom«, kaže medij razstave neko posebnost. Dinamika klasične razstave temelji na dualističnem sistemu. Po eni strani je predvsem statična prostorska konstrukcija. Zdi se, da ta konstrukcija miruje sama v sebi; zgolj čaka na obiskovalce, ki bodo v njej preživljali čas. Po drugi strani pa se na začetku statično-prostorske konstrukcije nahaja performativni, napol javni dogodek, označen kot »otvorenje«. Kot teatrolog, ki pozna visoko koncentracijo med gledališkimi premierami tako na odru kot tudi v avditoriju, sem se moral navaditi na ritual otvoritve razstave, ker sem moral najprej sprejeti, da pri tem dogodku nista v središču umetnost in tudi ne razstava, temveč socialni vidik; umetnosti tu ne opazujejo niti približno tako intenzivno kakor gledališko igro na premiernem večeru.

Je v sebi mirujoča razstava morda nasprotje dogodka? Razstava je dejansko najprej statični konstrukt, in prostor, v katerem poteka, je insceniran. Če smo natančni, razstava torej poteka na odru. Zanimivo pa je, da kuratorji, umetniki ali oblikovalci, ki postavijo ta oder s pomočjo arhitekture, grafike, objektov, umetnin, tekstov, osi pogleda, osvetlitve itn., to sceno z otvoritvijo že spet zapustijo. Dali so prostor in ga nato zapustili. Toda zapustitev prostora ne oslabi pozicije ustvarjalca razstave: nastopati v prostoru, v katerem se nič ne sme spremeniti, je mogočna pozicija, zlasti če imaš namestnike, ki kar najbolj natančno preverjajo upoštevanje pravil, ta pa med drugim pravijo, da se besedil ne sme spreminjati, razstavljenih reči pa ne dotikati. Danes se tem name-

4 Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals. Inside Public Art Museums*, London in New York: Routledge, 2002, str. 9-10.

5 Alexander Klein, *Expositum. Zum Verhältnis von Ausstellung und Wirklichkeit*, Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2004, str. 143.

6 Besucher – obiskovalec, suchen – iskati. [Op. prev.]

stnikom sicer reče »service team«, toda če pomislimo, da se jim je še pred kratkim v angleščini reklo »guards« in v nemščini »Aufseher«,⁷ potem vemo, da gre pri njihovi nalogi za *resno zadevo*.

Če kuratorji ob začetku razstave že zapustijo oder, pa obiskovalci, preden pridejo na razstavo, pustijo za sabo simbolni avditorij, kjer so njihovi kolegi v recepciji kulture, gledalci v gledališču in kinu oz. poslušalci koncertov še naprej v mnogo bolj pasivni drži. Vzamejo si čas, da nekaj naredijo iz prostora, ki jim je dan na razpolago. Za razumevanje sistema razstave je eksistencialnega pomena naslednje spoznanje: čas je na strani obiskovalca, ne na strani kuratorja. Obiskovalci k sistemu razstave prispevajo kategorijo časa. V sistem razstave ne vpeljejo zgolj časa; v veliki meri tudi ohranijo nadzor nad upravljanjem svojega časa. To lahko ponazorimo z vsakdanjim primerom, dobro poznanim ljudem, ki delajo v kulturi: predstavljajmo si nedeljo, ko je mogoče zadnjikrat videti razstavo, katere kurator je človek, ki ga dobro poznamo. Razstave seveda še nismo videli, zanimata pa nas, prvič, tema, in drugič, domnevno nova zasnova. In tretjič, prijateljstva s kuratorjem razstave nočemo postaviti na kocko. Na žalost pa moramo to nedeljo tudi še dokončati članek in se udeležiti družinskega praznovanja. Pohitimo torej v muzej, se zapodimo v galerijo in po 15–20 minutah mislimo, da smo videli dovolj, ker smo odkrili, da domnevno nova zasnova sploh ni tako nova. Naslednji dan nas vprašajo, ali smo videli razstavo, in mirne vesti lahko odgovorimo »da«. Pri tem je treba reči, da s svojim odgovorom nikakor ne goljufamo, kaj šele lažemo. Zgodbo, ki jo ponuja razstava, smo si sami povedali v 15–20 minutah. To je naša enkratna različica, ki nam je nihče ne more vzeti, čeprav so tisti, ki so vse natančno proučili, upoštevali vse možne povezave in asociacije z drugimi objekti, pozorno prebrali vsa besedila in celo s kolegi že med ogledom vznemirjeno razpravljali o stališčih, iz zgodbe potegnili več kakor mi.

Opis obiskovalca kot protagonista najdemo v konceptualnih razmislekih Jeana-Françoisa Lyotarda ob razstavi *Les Immatériaux*, katere kurator je bil leta 1985 v Centru Pompidou: »Obiskovalec je telo v gibanju. Kaj je cilj tega gibanja? Je podoben cilju 'vzgojnih romanov' 18. ali 19. stoletja? Naš mladi junak potuje po svetu, doživi vse mogoče pustolovščine, dopušča, da preskušajo njegovo inteligentnost, pogum in strasti, in potem se popolnoma 'formiran' vrne domov.«⁸

7 Čuvaji. [Op. prev.]

8 Jean-François Lyotard, »Les Immatériaux«, prev. v ang. Paul Smith, v: Reesa

V vsakem primeru poganja dogajanje obiskovalec s svojim gibanjem v času, ki ga prinese s sabo. Razstava – to postaja vse bolj jasno – sestoji iz dveh scenarijev; na eni strani iz zasnove, ki izvira od ustvarjalcev razstave in spominja na igralno predlogo *commedie dell'arte*, in na drugi strani iz obiskovalčevega sklepnega narativnega prispevka. Razstava je prostorsko-časovni konstrukt, ki ga sestavijo kuratorji in obiskovalci skupaj. In spominja na strukturo drame: v razstavnem prostoru pride do *konfrontacije* med *obiskovalcem*, ki se giblje po *odru* (insceniranem razstavnem prostoru) kot *gledalec* in tudi kot *akter*, in tam razstavljenimi *objekti*. Če na razstavi obstaja *drama*, potem poteka med *objekti*, predvsem pa med *objekti* in *obiskovalci*.⁹ Dialog med objekti in obiskovalci je *notranji dialog*, v katerem obiskovalec objektom posodi svoj glas v skladu s svojim znanjem in izkušnjami: »Objekti so igralci, oživi pa jih znanje.«¹⁰ Pri tem so stvari podobne likom na odru ali v filmu, njihova osvetljena površina in pogosto zatemnjena zgodovina pa razkrivata notranje protislovje, ki je nujno, da bi bil lik zanimiv.¹¹

Prej sem se vprašal, ali želja po večjem obiskovalčevem sodelovanju dejansko prihaja od obiskovalca. To stališče presprašujem zato, ker v modelu razstave kot drame, ki sem ga skiciral, postane jasno, da obiskovalcem že pripada izredno aktiven položaj v ravnotežju moči, ki nastaja na razstavi. Besedna zveza ravnotežje moči nakazuje, da tu deluje več sil: oblikovalci razstave, ki določajo več kot le témo, imajo seveda možnost, da na potek dogajanja – ki ga sicer v določeni meri nadzorujejo obiskovalci s svojim gibanjem, upravljanjem časa in pozornostjo – močno vplivajo z dramaturškimi in inscenirajočimi posegi. Z oblikovanjem in intenzivnostjo vsebinskih znakov na razstavi lahko obiskovalcu vselej sugerirajo večjo ali manjšo hitrost ali zahtevajo od nje več ali manj pozornosti.

Kljub vsem sugestijam pa ustvarjalci razstave ne morejo niti natančno usmeriti recepcije niti napovedati vedenja obiskovalcev. Za pripovedni čas – konkretno zira se s pozornostjo do predmeta, teksta, s hitrostjo v prostoru – je odgovoren obiskovalec. Recipienti lahko

Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson in Sandy Nairne (ur.), *Thinking about Exhibitions*, London, New York: Routledge, 1996, 4. izd., 2002, str. 159–173, str. 167; franc. izvirnik prvič objavljen v: *Art & Text*, 17, 1985, str. 47–57.

9 Prim. pogl. »Der Besucher und die Handlung«, v: Werner Hanak-Lettner, *Die Ausstellung als Drama. Wie das Museum aus dem Theater entstand*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2011, str. 104–138.

10 Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture. Tourism, Museum, and Heritage*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998, str. 3.

11 Prim. pog. »Das Ding als Charakter«, v: Werner Hanak-Lettner, *Die Ausstellung als Drama. Wie das Museum aus dem Theater entstand*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2011, str. 104–138.

celo ponovno prehodijo posamezne dele razstave, kar je svoboda, kakršne ni ne pri obisku gledališča ali kina ne koncerta, t. j. pri nobenem minljivem dogodku.

Obstaja pa popolnoma drugačen prostor, ki ga lahko uporabimo za primerjavo in tako prispevamo k razumevanju igre sil med ustvarjalci razstave in njenimi obiskovalci: plavalni bazen. Na prvi pogled deluje primerjava v tem kontekstu privlečena za lase, toda ker igro sil med ustvarjalci in obiskovalci razstave oz. upravljavcem in plavalcem reducira na povsem stvarno prostorsko raven, se izkaže za zelo nazorno. Predstavljam si plavalni bazen in odprt razstavni prostor brez vmesnih sten. Razstavni prostor in plavalni bazen imata bistveno skupno lastnost: imata vhod in izhod. Pri tem je vseeno, ali je vhod pri izhodu, ali je dvoje vrat oz. stopnic, ali plavalci sploh samostojno skačejo z roba in pridejo ven na drugem mestu. Odločilno je, da obiskovalci in plavalci v obeh »prostorih« med vhodom in izhodom opravijo pot, o katere poteku odločajo sami. Načeloma bi lahko rekli: tako na razstavi kot v plavalnem bazenu je njihova stvar, kaj počnejo med vhodom in izhodom.

Pa je res njihova stvar? Predstavljam si razkošen hotelski plavalni bazen, ki ga upravlja hotelska družba in uporabljajo hotelski gostje. Na eni strani plavanje urejajo predpisi, ki bi jih lahko označili za povsem izrecne, saj jih najdemo na hišnem redu ali napisih z navodili. Toda večino teh pravil tako ali tako poznamo; nič novega ni za nas, da v hotelskih bazenih ne smemo skakati z roba in se kopati goli, in prav tako ne, da se je na razstavi prepovedano dotikati slik in jesti sladoled. Toda na drugi strani onkraj teh izrecnih prepovedi in pravil v obeh prostorih obstajajo vplivi upravljavca prostora, s katerimi se mora plavalec/obiskovalec sprijazniti, ne glede na to, ali jih sploh zavestno zaznava ali ne. Gotovo je, da ima vsaka tehnična ali oblikovalska odločitev upravljavca velikanski vpliv na to, kako se plavalec/obiskovalec »razmahne« v plavalnem bazenu oz. v razstavnem prostoru. Prvi primer je temperatura vode. Odločitev upravljavca vpliva na to, koliko gostov gre v vodo, kako hitro plavajo in kako dolgo ostanejo v vodi. Pravila sicer vsem plavalcem dovoljujejo, da v odpiralnem času plavajo, kakor dolgo in kakor hitro hočejo. Toda temperatura 17 stopinj privabi v vodo le malo plavalcev. In tisti, ki vseeno gredo v bazen, ostanejo v njem le kratko, plavajo pa hitro.

Možnosti upravljavca bazena, da vpliva na plavalni bazen in s tem na tiste, ki plavajo, je veliko. Lahko si predstavljamo, da kopališki mojster s plavajočimi pregra-

dami razdeli plavalni bazen na proge, s čimer uravnava potek plavanja in v nekaterih primerih, podobno kot mrzla voda, celo poveča hitrost tistih, ki plavajo. Ta ukrep je podoben prostorski razdelitvi razstavnega prostora s postavitvijo vmesnih sten v hodnike in prostore. Nasprotni učinek, namreč upočasnjujoč, imajo topla voda, plavajoči fotelji in pijača, ki na robu bazena čaka na hotelske goste. Te ukrepe za zmanjšanje hitrosti spet lahko primerjamo z idejo razstavnega arhitekta, ki je denimo na razstavi o glasbi prazen prostor opremil z gugalniki in ozvočil z glasbo. Ne plavalcu ne obiskovalcu razstave ni treba sprejeti predlagane ponudbe. Plavalec lahko plava mimo plavajočih sedežev in pijače, če pa na sedežih ne kroži preveč neplavalcev v rožicah, lahko plava naravnost med njimi. Prav tako lahko obiskovalci občutijo ozvočen in z udobnimi sedeži opremljen prostor kot zapravljanje časa in ga prehodijo, ne da bi se ustavili; arhitektova ideja gre v nič in doživi zavrnitev. Veliko jih bo sprejelo ponudbo, nekateri ne. Ali obratno. Tu trčita drug ob drugega dva popolnoma avtarkična sistema, pri čemer ostaja odprto, kako se bo konflikt končal: naj se oblikovalcem razstav včasih zdi še tako lahko vplivati na obiskovalce, morajo vedno znova spoznati, da obiskovalci vedno znova uhajajo iz »začrtanih smeri«, da konec koncev vselej naredijo, »kar hočejo«.

Vsekakor je zame presenetljivo, da na srečanju *Dogodek kot privilegirani medij na področju sodobne likovne umetnosti* zagovarjam klasično razstavo. To je zagovor tega, da ponovno ozavestimo posebno formo klasične razstavne strukture. Ta daje na razpolago prostorski konstrukt, ki ga vedno znova prebudijo v življenje obiskovalci z vloženim časom ter svojim vsakokratnim ozadjem in trenutno situacijo. To je tudi zagovor tega, da ne dopustimo, da bi medij razstave kot drame, ki jo konstituira obiskovalec (po scenariju kuratorja), propadel v dramo, ki bi obiskovalca spet potisnila nazaj v auditorij, četudi le imaginaren. To se denimo lahko zgodi, če prevelik delež razstav sestavljajo mediji in videi, ki sami vnaprej določajo ritem in tako premočno obremenijo avtonomno obiskovalčevo upravljanje časa.

Toda zakaj so dogodki v umetnosti postali nedvomno pomembnejši? Nekaj spodbud za razmislek izhaja iz mojega modela razstavne drame. Morda so se obiskovalci naveličali samostojnega gibanja po prostoru. Tudi drugim »konsumantom v gibanju« prigovarjajo, naj vztrajajo, denimo pri nakupovanju, kjer jim obljubljajo dogodek nakupa. Možno pa je tudi, da kuratorji in umetniki nočejo več zapustiti odra, ki ga uredijo. Morda jim prisotnost njihovih del ni več dovolj, prisotni hočejo biti

tudi sami. Možno pa je, čisto preprosto, še nekaj – in s tem se vračam k dualističnemu sistemu razstave, ki ga konstituirata statično-prostorski konstrukt in dogodek otvoritvenega performansa: morda ta medij danes preprosto v vsakem pogledu potrebuje več otvoritev, da bi ostal dostopen obiskovalcem.

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GIVING SPACE, TAKING TIME

THE EXHIBITION AS A DOUBLE-BOUND SCRIPT

WERNER HANAK-LETTNER

TRANSLATED BY
ŠPELA DRNOVŠEK ZORKO

In a letter written on the occasion of the 1747 Salon, Charles-Antoine Coypel, the newly appointed director of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, poured out his anger at the Salon's visitors. His account sheds light on today's discussions about art, the event and public participation: "Myself, I maintain that in the Salon where the paintings are displayed, the public changes twenty times a day. What the public admires at ten o'clock in the morning, is publicly condemned at noon. Yes, I tell you, this place can offer twenty publics of different tone and character in the course of a single day: a simple public at certain times, a prejudiced public, a flighty public, an envious public, a public slavish to fashion, which in order to judge wants to see everything and examine nothing. I can assure you that a final accounting of these publics would lead to infinity. (...)"¹

At this point, the Salon, which was later to become an epochal biennial exhibition of members of the academy, was ten years old. It was only at that point that it could firmly establish itself and become a model for subsequent art academy Salons across Europe. It had, in fact, already taken place several times during the 17th century, but was not successful as a permanent institution: artists preferred to negotiate the progress of art with their own wealthy, mostly noble patrons, and rejected any encounters with the criticism of their colleagues, let alone "the public", which they saw as incapable of any form of criticism at all.

¹ Charles-Antoine Coypel, "Dialogue de M. Coypel, premier peintre du Roi. Sur l'exposition des Tableaux dans le Sallon du Louvre, en 1747", summarised in: *Mercur de France*, November 1751, trans. and cited in: Thomas E. Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris*, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000 (1985), p. 10.

These “twenty publics of different tone and character” bear witness to the first public groups of visitors at exhibitions. We have before us an unspoiled, perhaps even naïve, but certainly a very diverse group, which later evolved into a public, and which then – in connection with writers such as Denis Diderot, who became one of the chroniclers of the Salons – made the exhibition *the* public medium that it is today.

But just how naïve were these visitors, really? Were they naïve at all, or were the true naïfs those who allowed themselves to be surprised, practically trampled, by these actors in the newly forming art world?

If we transfer the characteristics of these groups of visitors to current times, at which point we also attempt to switch off the status-ridden, pompous filter of the art academy director, and compare them to the active visitor called for by a number of colleagues at this symposium, *The Event as a Privileged Medium in the Contemporary Art World*, we could almost say that we have before us a dream public, a public we all desire: creative, autonomous, and in some sense, anarchist.

Where did these visitors come from? Did they have an agenda? Was their explicit aim perhaps to confuse artists? In his book *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris*,² Thomas Crow points to something crucial. He clearly shows that those visitors to exhibitions, whose contributions in the mid-18th century turned the Salon into a starting point for the modern exhibition, received their primary education in participation earlier, and in a different place: at the annual theatre fair in St. Germaine. At Foire de la St. Germaine, travelling groups were permitted to perform up to the end of the 16th century, but it was only a hundred years later that the religious revolution provided the “surge” that radically increased the quality of the local theatre production landscape. The reason for this was the sacking of the Italian comedians from the court of Louis XIV. Due to a sudden pious turn on the part of the Sun King, the Comédie-Italienne, accustomed to the royal court, was forced to either leave the country or smuggle itself into the annual Parisian theatre fair. Many actors decided to remain in Paris, while the privileged Comédie-Française began to fear this, in a way depleted, theatre as a competitor that needed to be taken seriously; it observed it closely and began to enact censorship, for example by prohibiting public speech. But it soon became appar-

ent that such limitations could upset neither the pantomime-schooled protagonists of the commedia dell’arte, nor their audience. On the contrary – the prohibition of public speech only garnered them greater attention, and included the public by turning it into a co-participant. In fact, the constant restrictions imposed by the rulers brought about only greater popularity for the artists at the annual fairs, and greater involvement of spectators. Actors were infinitely creative in overcoming and avoiding the restrictions and prohibitions, while viewers developed the ability to follow these innovations and even meet them. When the prohibition of public speech was relaxed into a prohibition of dialogue, actors developed the technique of staging their works as apparent monologues. No more than a single actor was ever present on stage. When he had spoken his bit and disappeared offstage, the next actor took up the hidden dialogue and thus events continued to unfold.

From the point of view of communication at today’s exhibitions, where objects are accompanied by small plaques with explanatory text, it is particularly worth mentioning the technique of so-called *écriteaux*. *Écriteaux* were boards with text that broadcast parts of dialogue. They served a function akin to the intermediate text in silent films. Together, the actors and the public circumvented the prohibition of public speech as actors carried their texts before them like signs, and then loudly read, yelled or sang them with the aid of popular melodies. “The actuality of theatre included the frontal centrality of the groups, their contact with the viewer and frequently also the surface of the stage, which had a ramp; and along with that a particular atmosphere, which arises out of the wonder of a reciprocal influence between actors and the audience.”³

These words describe French Baroque theatre in general. But they are particularly pertinent for the Théâtre de la Foire in Saint-Germaine. For that is where a special sort of solidarity between artists and viewers emerged, as did the model of the active role of the public regardless of social status; this model became an important element of the emerging audience that first developed in the exhibition space of the Salon in the 18th century, and later spread into the streets and other public spaces of Paris.

Seen from this point of view, it is no coincidence that the French public, at the tail end of the Baroque, after

2 Thomas E. Crow, p. 45 and *ibid*.

3 Klaus J. Lemmer, *Französisches Barock-Theater im Bild*, Berlin: Rembrandt Verlag, 1963, p. 9. Trans. into English by SDZ.

it had graduated from the school of the French theatre and the Comédie-Italienne, where it established contact with actors, learned to respond to them and became aware of its own communicative power, now also wanted to begin playing this communicative game at exhibitions: with paintings, which responded to nothing, and with artists, who hid behind paintings and who at first responded with great surprise, astonishment, and offended self-pity.

If we look at today's visitors to exhibitions of old or new art, in technical, political or natural history museums, we can most certainly ask what happened to the public in the time following the anarchist attack of "twenty publics of different tone and character". Even if we accept that – as a number of contemporaries will attest – the "sound level" in museums has risen steadily in the past decades, we nevertheless cannot overlook the fact that visitors have over the past 250 years undergone a silencing, or rather, the development of self-limitation. After the Louvre mutated from a castle to a museum as a result of a revolutionary directive in 1793, the 19th century saw the construction of museums in all large European cities; museums that partially resembled castles but bore an even greater resemblance to ancient temples, such as the Glyptothek in Munich (1815) or the National Gallery in London (1838). Here, citizens were met by gigantic groves of pillars and intimidated by enormous entrance halls and majestic staircases, and it was inside these temples that they encountered both their freedom and its limitations. "One is [...] expected to behave with a certain decorum."⁴

This is how Alexander Klein explains this civilising process of the 19th century: "At the museum exhibition, it was necessary to control your impulses with every gaze. Talking loudly, touching objects and running, were all to be avoided. Good behaviour in a museum was characterised by mutedness, moderation and discretion, in other words, behaviour suitable to a quasi-sacred place, and yet this behaviour was not determined – as it was in the case of worship, for example – by an unchanging process. A person had to behave well, but he continued to be free, or rather, it was precisely in the museum that the citizen could be a citizen."⁵

Does the citizen who has been disciplined in the cathedrals of the museum today still contain that anarchist

pulse of the Parisian Salon visitor? And is it possible, in the 21st century, to awaken within him the desired active, autonomously participating viewer?

No matter how fervently we might wish for an affirmative answer to this question, it is relegated to the sidelines by another, practically opposite question: that is, does the museum, the exhibition (regardless of genre), truly require stronger participation by the visitor? As a curator, I have long asked myself whether the omnipresent desire for increased visitor participation does in fact represent a need felt by those who visit the museum. Or is it above all a projection, even a Freudian transferral from the curator and artist – who today play radically different roles than their counterparts at the French academy in 1747 – to the visitor? Perhaps visitors feel a greater need for participating less rather than more. I have no empirical proof for this position, and I also know that any reliable poll of visitors on this point would prove to be a sensitive issue, since even the willingness to provide answers is a form of participation that delights only individuals with certain characteristics. My assumption that visitors may perhaps desire less rather than more participation is far better supported by my realisations regarding the laws of the exhibition medium itself.

If we examine the system of the exhibition more closely, we first of all find that visitors as independent travellers through the exhibitory space already display an important active characteristic: visitors – in the German word, we can trace the active verb "to search"⁶ – existentially maintain the medium in progress. Without them – if we recall the "twenty publics" of the Salon – the system of the exhibition would never have occurred.

In relation to the theme of this symposium, "the event", the medium of the exhibition displays a sort of uniqueness. The dynamic of the classic exhibition is based on a dualistic system. On the one hand, it is above all a static-spatial construction. It seems that this construction remains suspended in itself; it merely waits for visitors who will spend time within it. But on the other hand, the beginnings of this static-spatial construction are accompanied by a performative, half-public event known as "the opening". As a theatrologist who has seen a high number of theatrical premieres, both on stage and in the auditorium, I had to accustom myself to the ritual of the exhibition opening, since I first had to accept that this

4 Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals. Inside Public Art Museums*, London and New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 9–10.

5 Alexander Klein, *Expositum. Zum Verhältnis von Ausstellung und Wirklichkeit*, Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2004, p. 143. Trans. into English by SDZ.

6 Besucher – visitor, suchen – to search. [Trans. note.]

event focuses neither on the art nor the exhibition, but on the social aspect; art here is not viewed with nearly the intensity that greets the theatrical performance on the evening of the premiere.

Is an exhibition that is stationary within itself perhaps the antonym of the event? The exhibition truly is, in the first instance, a static construct, and the space where it takes place is staged. To be precise, the exhibition thus takes place on a stage. But it is interesting that the curators, artists or designers who construct this stage with the aid of architecture, graphic design, objects, works of art, texts, axes of the gaze, lighting and so forth, with the act of the opening, once again depart from this scene. They give space, and then they leave it. But this leaving of space does not weaken the position of the exhibition's creator: to act in a space in which nothing is allowed to change is a formidable position, particularly if you have deputies who with the utmost care verify that rules are being followed, rules which, among others, state that texts cannot be altered and the exhibited things cannot be touched. Today these deputies may be called the "service team", but if we consider that until recently they were known as "guards" in English and "Aufseher"⁷ in German, we understand that their task is a serious affair.

If curators leave the stage already at the beginning of the exhibition, then visitors, even before they arrive at the exhibition, leave behind them a symbolic auditorium where their counterparts in cultural reception – viewers in theatres or cinemas, or listeners of concerts – retain a much more passive stance. They take their time to make something out of the space that is given over for their disposal. To understand the system of the exhibition, the following realisation is of existential significance: time is on the side of the visitor, not the side of the curator. What the visitors contribute to the system of the exhibition is the temporal category. They do not only introduce time into the system of the exhibition; to a large extent, they also retain control of managing their own time. We can illustrate this with an everyday example well known to those people who work in the domain of culture: let us imagine a Sunday, the last possible opportunity to see an exhibition curated by somebody we know well. Of course, we have yet to see the exhibition, but we are interested in, first of all, the theme, and second, the presumably new concept. And third, we do not want to imperil our friendship with

the curator. Unfortunately, on this Sunday we must also finish writing an article and attend a family gathering. We thus hurry to the museum, rush off to the gallery and deem, after 15 or 20 minutes, that we have seen enough because we have discovered that the presumably new concept is not so new after all. The next day they ask us whether we have seen the exhibition and we can say "yes" with a clear conscience. Here we must add that by giving this answer we are by no means cheating, let alone lying. We told ourselves the story that the exhibition offered us in 15–20 minutes. This is our unique version, which nobody can take from us, regardless of the fact that those who gave everything their careful attention, who took into account all possible connections and associations with other objects, attentively read all the texts, and excitedly discussed their opinions with their colleagues in the middle of the viewing, drew more from the story than we did.

We find a description of the visitor as a protagonist in Jean François Lyotard's conceptual reflections on the exhibition *Les Immatériaux*, which he curated in 1985 in the Centre Pompidou: "[T]he visitor is a body in movement. What is the aim of this movement? Is it similar to that of the 'character-forming novels' of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries? Our young hero travels the world, has all sorts of adventures, puts them to use to test his intelligence, his courage and passions, and then returns home fully 'formed'."⁸

In each case, the visitor drives the event with his movement in time, which he brings with him. The exhibition – this is becoming ever clearer – is composed of two scenarios: on the one hand, there is the concept, which stems from the creators of the exhibition and resembles the theatrical premise of the *commedia dell'arte*, and on the other, the visitor's final narrative contribution. The exhibition is a temporal-spatial construct constituted by curators and visitors in tandem. And it resembles the structure of a drama: in the space of the exhibition, we arrive at a *confrontation* between the *visitor*, who moves across the *stage* (the staged exhibitory space) as a *viewer* and also as an *actor*, and the objects exhibited therein. If *drama* exists at an exhibition, then it takes place between *objects*, but especially between *objects* and *visitors*.⁹ The *dialogue* between objects and visi-

7 Guards. [Trans. note.]

8 Jean-François Lyotard, "Les Immatériaux", trans. into English by Paul Smith, in: Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairne (eds.), *Thinking about Exhibitions*, London, New York: Routledge, 1996, 4th ed., 2002, pp. 159–173, p. 167; Fr. original first published in: *Art & Text*, 17, 1985, pp. 47–57.

9 Cf. "Der Besucher und die Handlung", in: Werner Hanak-Lettner, *Die Ausstellung als Drama. Wie das Museum aus dem Theater entstand*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2011, pp. 104–138.

tors is an *internal dialogue*, in which the visitor lends the objects his voice in accordance with his knowledge and experiences: “Objects are the actors and knowledge animates them.”¹⁰ Here things resemble characters on stage or in a film, while their enlightened surface and frequently opaque history reveal the inner contradiction that is necessary for a character to be interesting.¹¹

Earlier I asked myself whether the desire for greater participation on the part of the visitor truly stems from the visitor. I question this stance because it becomes clear in the model of the exhibition as a drama, which I have just sketched out, that the visitor already holds an extremely active position in the balance of power that emerges at an exhibition. The phrase balance of power indicates that a number of forces are at work: the creators of the exhibition, who determine more than just the theme, naturally have the opportunity to exert a considerable influence on the process of the event – which is otherwise to some extent controlled by the visitors, with their movement, management of time, and attention – with dramaturgical and staged interventions. With the shaping and intensity of thematic signs at an exhibition, they are always able to suggest to the visitor an increase or decrease in speed, or demand from him more or less attention.

Yet despite all such suggestions, the creators of the exhibition can neither precisely direct the reception nor predict the behaviour of visitors. The narrative time – which is made concrete by attention to the object, the text, by velocity in space – is the responsibility of the visitor. This recipient can even repeatedly traverse individual parts of the exhibition, a freedom unknown to the visitor of a theatre, cinema or concert, that is to say, of any transient event.

But there exists an entirely different space that we can use for comparison, and thus contribute to our understanding of the games of forces between the creators of the exhibition and its visitors: the swimming pool.

At first glance, the comparison appears far-fetched, but since it reduces the game of forces between the creators and the visitors of the exhibition, or rather the manager and the swimmer, to an entirely materially spatial level, it turns out to be very illustrative. I imagine a swimming

pool and an open exhibition space without any dividing walls. The exhibition space and the swimming pool have the same essential common characteristic: they have an entrance and an exit. It is immaterial whether the entrance is located at the exit, whether there are two sets of doors or stairs, whether the swimmers independently dive from the edge of the pool and emerge at a different point. What is decisive is that both visitors and swimmers in both “spaces” take a path between the entrance and the exit, a path which they themselves determine. In principle, we could say: at the exhibition and in the swimming pool, it is their business what they do between the entrance and the exit.

But is it truly their business? I imagine a luxurious hotel swimming pool, managed by an hotelier and used by the hotel guests. On the one hand, swimming is regulated by rules, which we could call entirely explicit, since they are generally found in the house rules or other instructive texts. Yet the majority of these rules are in any case already known to us; it is nothing new that we are not permitted to jump from the edge, or swim naked in a hotel pool, just as it is nothing new that touching paintings or eating ice cream is forbidden at an exhibition. But on the other hand, both spaces are also subject to the influence of the manager, who exists beyond these explicit rules and with whom the swimmer/visitor must come to terms, whether he is consciously aware of it or not. It is a given that any technical or design decision made by the manager has an enormous influence on how the swimmer/visitor “lets loose” in a swimming pool or exhibition space. The first example is the temperature of the water. The manager’s decision affects how many guests enter the water, how quickly they swim and how long they stay inside it. The rules might well allow all swimmers to swim for as long as they like during open hours. But a temperature of 17 degrees attracts only few swimmers. And those who enter the swimming pool regardless remain only for a brief time, and swim quickly.

The pool manager has a number of opportunities to exert his influence on the swimming pool, and thus on those who swim there. We can imagine him dividing the pool into lanes with the use of separators, with which he directs the course of the swimming, and in some cases, similar to the case of cold water, even increases the speed of those who are swimming. This measure resembles the division of the exhibition space into rooms and corridors with the erection of separating walls. The contrary effect, a decrease in speed, is effected by warm water, floating armchairs, and drinks that await hotel

10 Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture. Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998, p. 3.

11 Cf. “Das Ding als Charakter”, in: Werner Hanak-Lettner, *Die Ausstellung als Drama. Wie das Museum aus dem Theater entstand*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2011, pp. 104–138.

guests at the edge of the pool. Again, we can compare these techniques to the ideas that an architect applies to an exhibition about music, outfitting the empty space with recliners and piping in music. Neither the swimmer nor the exhibition visitor is forced to accept the suggested offerings. The swimmer can swim past the floating chairs and drinks, and if the chairs are not too full of intoxicated non-swimmers, he can swim directly among them. In the same way, the exhibition visitors may see a space filled with comfortable chairs and music as a waste of time and walk past it without stopping; the architect's idea amounts to nothing and is rejected. Many will accept the offer, some will not. Or the contrary. Here, two entirely autarchic systems collide where the question of victory remains undecided: no matter how easy it may sometimes appear to the creators of exhibitions to influence visitors, they must always recognise that time and again, visitors escape from the "chartered directions", and that, at the end of the day, they still do "what they want".

I most certainly find it surprising that I am defending the classic exhibition at an encounter entitled *The Event as a Privileged Medium in the Contemporary Art World*. It is a defence of the need to renew our awareness of the specific form of the classic exhibition structure. This structure offers a spatial construct that is time and again brought to life by visitors with their investment of time and their unique background and current situation. It is also a defence of not allowing the medium of the exhibition as a drama constituted by the visitor (according to the curator's script) lapse into a drama where the visitor is once again pushed into the auditorium, even if this is purely imaginary. This may, for example, occur when an overly significant part of the exhibition consists of media and videos, which determine rhythm in advance and thus place too large a burden on the visitor's autonomous management of time.

But why have events in art become indubitably more important? Some impetuses for reflection arise from my model of the exhibition drama. Perhaps visitors have grown tired of autonomous movement in space. Other "consumers of movement" are also exhorted to persist, such as in the case of shopping, which promises the event of the purchase. But it is also possible that curators and artists no longer want to leave the stage once they have set it. Perhaps the presence of their work is no longer enough and they also want to be present themselves. But something else is possible, something very simple – and here I return to the dualistic system of the

exhibition as constituted by a statically spatial construct and the event of the performative opening: perhaps what this medium needs in order to remain accessible to visitors is simply a greater number of openings.

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Božena Končič Badurina,
***Brez obrazov / No Faces*, 2009/2011.**

Performans, izveden v Moderni galeriji v Ljubljani / Performance carried out at the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana.
(Z dovoljenjem umetnice in MGLC / Courtesy of the artist and MGLC, fotografija / photo: Jaka Babnik.)

PROŽNA DRUŽBENOST SODOBNIH UMETNIŠKIH DOGODKOV

BOJANA KUNST

PREVOD

ALEKSANDRA REKAR

UVOD

Vžarišču pričajučega eseja je razmislek o participaciji in »aktivaciji« občinstva pri umetniških dogodkih in različnih performativnih akcijah, ki se v zadnjih letih z veliko hitrostjo množijo po umetnostnih galerijah in na muzejskih razstavah. Zdi se, da gre razcvet dogodkov na področju vizualnih umetnosti z roko v roki s spreminjanjem vloge občinstva, ki na raznolike načine doživlja premik od pasivnega opazovanja ali kontemplacije umetniškega dela k aktivaciji in participaciji. K tej razpravi želim pristopiti z dokaj specifičnega gledišča in se osrediniti na napor (v smislu delovanja in truda), ki ga občinstvo vложи, kadar je sestavni del umetniškega dogodka. Pokazati želim, da »trud« občinstva postane bistveni del sodobnega umetniškega dogodka. Seveda je dejavno sleherno občinstvo, kot je pokazal že Rancière v svojem ključnem eseju o emancipiranem gledalcu; med »pasivno kontemplacijo« in »aktivno participacijo« ni nikakršne kakovostne razlike.¹ Vendar pa obstajajo razlike, ko gre za načine, na katere kognitivni, energijski, telesni, diskurzivni ali emfatični napor občinstva konstituirajo dogodek. Ena od glavnih značilnosti sedanjih sodobnih umetniških dogodkov je središčna vloga »truda« občinstva, ki ga je mogoče povezovati tudi s splošnejšimi modusi sodobnega dela, zlasti z načini, znotraj katerih proizvodnje subjektivitete dandanes stoji v središču ekonomske proizvodnje.²

1 Jacques Rancière, »The Emancipated Spectator«, dostopno na http://www.bard.edu/mfa/summer/readings/documents/Ranciere_spectator.pdf.

2 Ko govorim o produkciji subjektivitete, se nanašam na delo Maurizia Lazzaratta, ki opaža, da je produkcija subjektivitete največji učinek kapitalizma in preprosto največje blago, ki ga ustvarjamo. Ta pojem tudi nadomešča pojem nematerialnega dela, ki ga je razvil pred leti, da bi opisal spremembe v kapitalistični proizvodnji. V: »Conversation with Maurizio Lazzaratto«, Public Editing, Session # 3, 23. junij 2010, v: *Exhausting Immaterial Labour in Performance*, skupna izdaja *Le Journal des Laboratoires* in *TkH Journal for Performance*.

Leta 2009 sem bila navzoča na umetniškem dogodku, ki lahko služi kot lep uvodni primer v tem eseju. Za potrebe zabave ob zaprtju festivala In-Transit v Berlinu je umetnik povabil kakih sto ljudi z ulice, naj se ji pridružijo; obljubil jim je brezplačno hrano in pijačo, pod pogojem, da nemudoma začnejo plesati in se zabavati ter dejavno vabiti vse druge udeležence, naj se pridružijo zabavi. To je bil brez dvoma najhitrejši izbruh plesa, ki sem ga kdaj koli videla na kaki zabavi, čeravno je bilo vse skupaj videti malce hlinjeno in ponarejeno. Vendar pa tisto, kar je dejansko konstituiralo dogodek, niso bili ljudje, najeti za to, da bi plesali; bistvo namreč ni bilo v tem, da bodo s svojim nastopom razkrili performativnost tovrstnih družabnih priložnosti. Veliko zanimiveje je bilo opazovati, kako je najetim plesalcem v resnici uspelo izveči podobno družabno vedenje tudi pri drugih udeležencih zabave, saj so se skorajda vsi hipoma in z veseljem predali skupni radosti in ritmu ter zavzeto plesali vse do poznih jutranjih ur. To, kar je ta ples dejansko preobrazilo v dogodek, je bilo prav družbeno in afektivno delo občinstva, njegovo predajanje, radost in prepuščanje toku, njegovo spogledovanje z ritmom in drugimi plesalci, njegova participacija; dogodek je sprožila sprememba, ki jo je ustvarilo občinstvo s svojim naporom in vložkom. Dogodek ni izšel iz tega, da je bil ples izzvan in aktiviran, da so ga uprizorili »začasni igralci«, marveč iz dejstva, da so si ga ljudje delili, z njim komunicirali in si ga izmenjevali ter skupaj plesali, da je dejansko oblikoval začasna zaveznitva in energijske tokove – radosten vložek ali dejaven odpor (odvisno od odločitve, ali se prepustiti toku ali ne). V tem pogledu sodobni dogodek **postavlja v ospredje** občinstvo. Ali z drugimi besedami, aktivirano občinstvo je tisto, ki uprizori delo; dogodek brez participacije občinstva ne bi bil popoln (dogodkoven).

V tem smislu je smotrno razmisliti o tem, kaj je v jedru sodobnega dogodka, to pa je socialni, afektivni in lingvistični trud občinstva. Besedo trud uporabljam namerno, kajti ne želim govoriti zgolj o specifičnem naporu, temveč tudi o izmenjavi moči, ki občinstvu odpre vrata v začasni javni prostor: njegov trud ustvari dodatno estetsko vrednost dogodka. Obenem občinstvo dela s svojimi družbenimi, kognitivnimi in čustvenimi veščinami, torej z veščinami, ki so središčne za sodobne oblike postfordistične proizvodnje. Med občinstvom in muzejem (ali kako drugo kulturno ustanovo, v kateri uprizarjajo umetniške dogodke) obstaja izmenjava dela; občinstvo s svojim trudom (z naklonjenostjo, s komunikacijo, ču-

stvi, z željami, napori, povezanimi z razpršitvijo, organizacijo, sodelovanjem ali izolacijo ...) opravlja delo in obenem uprizarja javnost sodobnega muzeja. Na drugi strani muzej omogoča in proizvaja platformo za javnost, kar stori s tem, da delo prepusti občinstvu. V tem smislu stoji umetnik nekje vmes – kot raziskovalec družbe in kognitivni eksperimentator, njegovo delo pa v čedalje večji meri kurira umetniška ustanova, z namenom, da bi pripadalo »specifični javnosti«.

II.

Če trdimo, da je vloga občinstva v sodobnih umetniških dogodkih v resnici njegov trud, da gre na njegovi strani za viden napor, vložen v dogodek, se moramo vprašati, ali lahko govorimo tudi o novih oblikah izkoriščanja? To vprašanje postane zanimivo zlasti zato, ker občinstvo sodobnih umetnostnih ustanov ni več organizirano skozi dispozitiv gledanja (posamezniki, ki pasivno opazujejo), kot tudi ni več prepoznavno kot zgolj organizirana skupnost ljudi ali reprezentacijska totaliteta specifične identitete. Občinstvo sodobnega muzeja se je utelesilo in oblikovalo skozi neskončno premeščanje, preštevanje in raznovrstne asemblaže, ki se lahko prikažejo in izginejo skupaj s posredovanjem, s potmi, ki jih ubira, ali z odločitvami, ki jih občinstvo sprejema na razstavi. Sodobne umetnostne ustanove se prej zdijo prostori, v katerih je družbena izkušnja razpršena, nepredvidljiva in nereprezentativna. Občinstvo prej spominja na neorganizirano vsoto bežnih in nestalnih gest, zaveznitv, privlačnosti in odbojnosti, strinjanja in nestrinjanja, na nekakšno vsoto bežnega ošinjanja del in razdrobljenih misli. Sodobni muzej potemtakem ne organizira pogleda, temveč prej razprši njegov učinek, in to je obenem razlog, zakaj sodobna razstava pogosto učinkuje kot kakofonični prostor z obilico pooblaščenja, interpasivnosti in prepuščanja toku (kar pa, mimogrede, na drugi strani ni povezano z izčrpanostjo).

Vloga sodobnega umetniškega dogodka je zelo pogosto tudi v zajetju življenjske sile takšne tihe množice in v njenem uprizarjanju kot »javnosti«, v tem, da mu občinstvo podeljuje politično, družbeno in afektivno razsežnost. Znotraj dogodka se ta nedoločna množica in njen razpršeni napor spremenita v javno (družbeno ali celo politično) silo.

To je tudi razlog, zakaj večina umetniških dogodkov, celo tisti najbolj »nematerialni« (denimo dela Tina Seghala), v resnici ni brez trdne osnove, kajti dogodke ute-

ing Arts Theory, št. 17, oktober 2010, dostopno tudi na <http://www.howtodothingsbytheory.info/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/tkh-17-web-eng.pdf>.

meljuje snovnost napora in človeške sile. V jedru estetske ureditve dogodkov je vselej človeška potencialnost: potencialnost človeške geste ali izkušnje življenja. Takšna izkušnja življenja je resnično družbena; celo kadar je razdrobljena, bežna in negotova, se kaže kot performativnost raznovrstnih družbenih gest, ki jih omogoči umetnikova ponudba, izpelje pa občinstvo v muzejskem prostoru. Te izkušnje se seveda lahko razlikujejo po količini vloženega napora, lahko so bolj ali manj močne, bolj ali manj prisotne, včasih domala neopazne in subtilne, spet drugič nasilne in deviantne, kljub temu pa je njihova razstavna vrednost enaka: stojijo v jedru dogodka in skozi se konstituira muzejska javnost. Beti Žerovc v svojem uvodu h katalogu 29. grafičnega bienala upravičeno poudari dejstvo, da dandanes številni muzeji in druga umetnostna prizorišča tovrstnih dogodkov ne le distribuirajo in kurirajo, temveč tudi prevzemajo vlogo njihovih producentov in organizatorjev.³ Vendar pa bi v tem kontekstu dodala, da muzeji in druge umetnostne ustanove s tem ne nadomeščajo tradicionalnih oblik pokroviteljstva nad umetnostjo in naročanja umetnin, pač pa se dejansko preoblikujejo v nove produkcijske sile, ki vse, česar se dotaknejo, preobrazijo – ne le v kulturo, temveč tudi v videz družbenega. Vse, kar je proizvedeno v muzeju, se že samo na sebi zdi »javno«; muzej namreč ponudi performativni ščit za preizkušanje raznovrstnih družbenih, afektivnih in kognitivnih potencialov sodobnega življenja.

Hito Steyerl piše, da sodobni muzej »korespondira z razpršenim prostorom družbene tovarne«.⁴ Muzej je še vedno prostor, namenjen proizvodnji, prostor izkoriščanja; v »muzeju kot tovarni« se še naprej nekaj proizvaja. Torej so to, kar se še naprej proizvaja, prav oblike družbenega, ki jih občinstvo ustvarja s svojim afektivnim in komunikacijskim naporom, s svojimi čuti, telesi in kognitivnimi sposobnostmi, ali kot zapiše Steyerl, z »estetskimi sposobnostmi in imaginarnimi praksami gledalcev«.⁵ V teh novih tovarnah še naprej poteka izkoriščanje; na eni strani je prisotno v storilnostno naravnani organizaciji muzejev kot »ključnih trgovin kulturnih industrij, zapolnjenih z zagretimi pripravniki, ki delajo brezplačno«.⁶ Toda ta storilnostno naravnana organizacija ni povezana zgolj z ustanovo, temveč tudi s tem, kako uprizarja svojo javnost, javnost, ki dela in

deluje z lastnim družbenim vedenjem in družbenimi razmerji. V tem smislu je vloga bujno razraščajočih se umetniških dogodkov, ki jih je dandanes zaslediti v muzejih, preobrazba umetnostnih ustanov v specifične proizvodne prostore, tovarne drugačnega tipa. Zato Hito Steyerl, ko parafrazira naslov prvega filma vseh časov, *Odhod iz tovarne* (Auguste in Louis Lumière, 1895), zapiše, da delavci pravzaprav nikoli ne zapustijo tovarne. Seveda tudi ni naključje, da številna prizorišča, namenjena sodobnim umetniškim dogodkom, dejansko domujejo v nekdanjih fordističnih tovarnah, ki so se po premestitvi fordistične proizvodnje v nezahodne države izpraznile. Ta nevidna in surovo izkoriščana delovna sila se občasno vrne v muzej, v novo, zdaj kulturno in popolnoma preoblikovano fordistično tovarno, da bi v njej nastopala (podobno kot v delu Santiaga Sierre z nezakonitimi imigranti, denimo v *250 cm Line Tattooed on Six Paid People*, 1999). Pri tovrstnih dogodkih, v katerih so tisti, ki opravljajo delo, ljudje *sans papiers*, nezakoniti delavci, begunci ali deprivilegirani ljudje, katerih obstoj je pogosto omejen na golo življenje, družbenost izvira iz odgovornosti in odpora občinstva teh sodobnih umetniških dogodkov. Njihov protislovni položaj dodatno poudarja dejstvo, da jih muzejska ustanova začasno plačuje z namenom, da bi pri občinstvu vzbudili odziv in vzpostavili »kritično javnost«. Stara proizvodna sila se vrne v muzej kot fordistični duh ter vzbuja občutek krivde sredi družabnega užitka na novih prizoriščih za proizvodnjo kulture. Zelo redko pa takšna vrnitev delavcev v resnici ustvari antagonizem, ki bi ogrozil samo ustanovo, antagonizem, ki bi skazil proizvodnjo javnosti. Tovrstno antagonistično in evokativno vrnitev duhov lepo razkrije spevoigra skupine Čto delat? z naslovom *Museum Songspiel: The Netherlands 20XX* (2011).⁷ V tej spevoigri skupina nezakonitih priseljencev poišče zatočišče v velikem razstavnem zaboju, zasnovanem za ulično umetnost in vključenem v muzej. Zdi se, da je muzej edina ustanova, v kateri se lahko izognejo deportaciji, kar direktorja muzeja in vse druge vpletene privede do nerešljivega problema. Ena od rešitev, do katere pride muzej, je pojasniti oblastem, da so ti ljudje v resnici najeti igralci, ki nastopajo v rekonstrukciji znamenitega revolucionarnega avantgardnega dela *Zmaga nad soncem*. Čeravno je rekonstrukcija nadvse uspešna in znova oživi revolucionarni duh, tako značilen za ta muzej (film je bil dejansko posnet v Van Abbemuseumu, ki ima velik »revolucionarni« sloves), igralce (oziroma begunce) pozneje aretirajo, to pa, kot na koncu videa

3 Beti Žerovc, »O umetniškem dogodku na umetniškem dogodku«, v: Peter Kisin in Beti Žerovc (ur.), *29. grafični bienale Ljubljana: Dogodek / The 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts: The Event*, Ljubljana: Mednarodni grafični likovni center, 2011, str. 13.

4 Hito Steyerl, »Is a Museum a Factory?«, *e-flux Journal* 7, junij-avgust 2009, str. 5/10, dostopno tudi na <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/is-a-museum-a-factory/>.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ozadje tega dela je nizozemska politika leta 2011, obenem pa se nedvoumno navezuje na nevarne spremembe, ki se obetajo v prihodnjem razvoju Nizozemske. Dosegljivo je tudi na <http://vimeo.com/channels/chtodelat>.

pove direktor muzeja, »nas v resnici ne zadeva«. Nobe-
nega dvoma ni, da aktivna reinterpretacija javnosti in
njene vzpostavljanja skozi začasno delo duhov ni več
možna; družbenost, kot je predstavljena na tem mestu,
postavi javnost v antagonistično protidržo, pravzaprav
zunaj muzeja. To seveda postavi ustanovo pod vprašaj
in nagovarja estetsko spektralnost proizvodnje politi-
čne subjektivnosti.

III.

Žarišče umetniških dogodkov se je torej premakni-
lo od avtonomije performerja ali geste k avtonomiji
občinstva, katerega število, skupaj z njegovim naporom
(sprejete odločitve, vedenje, kretnje in gibi, navzočnost
ali odsotnost) vzpostavlja delo; ti ljudje dejansko de-
lajo za umetniško delo. V tem smislu je Bourriaud pre-
cizen v svojem opažanju »relacijskega vidika sodobnih
umetniških del«, pri katerem umetnine niso le razum-
ljene kot trenutki družbenega, pač pa z raziskovanjem
odnosov družbeno tudi proizvajajo.⁸ Toda v tej proiz-
vodnji družbenega je nekaj, kar njegova analiza prezre.
To, česar ne poudari, je prav vprašanje izkoriščanja:
družbeni učinek, vložen v ustvarjanje občinstva sodo-
bne ustanove. To družbeno potemtakem ni a priori
emancipatorno (ali politično v Bourriaudovem smislu),
pač pa je del izkoriščanja, ki gre z roko v roki z drugi-
mi procesi izkoriščanja ljudi v tej postfordistični ob-
liki dela. Družbeno, ki je bilo tu proizvedeno, je namreč
nestalno, bežno, afektivno, obenem pa ne pripada, ne
vztraja, ni docela materializirano ali lokalno. To je rela-
cijsko družbeno, ki nenehno izpopolnjuje, vadi in raz-
vija načine, kako deliti svoja afektivna in lingvistična
vedenja, se o njih pogajati, jih igrati in kršiti. To pa se
ujema tudi s premiki v razumevanju vloge muzeja v
razmerju do javnosti, pri čemer je javnost po novem ra-
zumljena kot množstvo: »Umetnost gledamo, v različnih
oblikah kolektivnosti naseljujemo prostore umetnosti
in v tem procesu ustvarimo nove oblike vzajemnosti,
ki so prej razmerja med gledalci in prostori kot pa med
gledalci in predmeti. Onkraj skupnih kategorij razreda,
okusa, politične ali spolne usmerjenosti se ustvari nova
oblika 'MI'«. ⁹ Rogoff na tem mestu piše o performa-
tivnosti razmerij, o performativni funkciji opazovanja
in participacije, ki oblikuje pomemben del muzejske
javnosti, kjer pomen ni izkopen, marveč sodeluje v se-
danjosti. Toda četudi ta trditev razkriva premik muzeja

k bolj kolektivnim oblikam in upravičeno nagovarja
performativno razsežnost občinstva, je obenem na moč
problematična, če jo povežemo z bujnim razraščanjem
tovrstnih dogodkov. Ta »mi« sodobne javnosti je namreč
mogoče povezati z nevidnim delom, ki ga dandanes
občinstvo opravlja po muzejih in s katerim vrača živo
in spektakularno vrednost muzeju kot prostoru dejavne,
skupnostne, politične in uporniške sodobne izkušnje.

Navkljub živosti izkušnje, obiskovalčevi kolaborativni
participaciji in dinamičnosti izmenjave pa to ni ne av-
tentična (ki pogosteje šteje za »tradicionalno« dejanje
statičnega gledanja) ne osebna izkušnja; prej bi lah-
ko dejali, da je predvsem družbena izkušnja dogodka,
ki mora neskončno krožiti in se deliti; to je izkušnja, ki
že pripada kroženju lastne ekonomije. Prav zaradi tega
razloga mora biti izkušnja sodobnega umetniškega do-
godka naključna, začasna in nezavezujoča, pri čemer
obiskovalec pogosto izkuša svojo izkušnjo ter jo deli
z drugimi, vendar brez slehernega občutka pripadno-
sti ali odgovornosti. Umetnostne ustanove so v zadnjih
letih postale prostori družbenega in skupnostnih pro-
cesov, laboratoriji, ki na različne načine udejanjajo so-
obstajanje. Toda vprašanje je, ali ta premik družbene-
ga in oblikovanja skupnosti v sferi sodobne umetnosti
v resnici odpira možnosti za emancipatorno politično
artikulacijo in ali v sodobni umetnostni ustanovi najde
zatočišče za izginjajoče procese in možnosti življenja.
Izkoriščanje v okviru sodobnih umetniških dogodkov je
v tem smislu zelo podobno splošnejšim in vseobsegajo-
čim procesom subjektivizacije ter oblikovanju skupno-
sti v sodobnem kapitalizmu: vznika iz prilaščanja člo-
veške potencialnosti, človeških lingvističnih veščin in
afektivnih moči.

Dokaz za to trditev je mogoče najti v različnih tipih dela,
ki ga na teh dogodkih opravlja občinstvo in ki so zelo bli-
zu afektivnemu ter kognitivnemu delu nasploh. Recimo:
kratkotrajni trud občinstva, trud, ki komajda predstavlja
kak napor, je pogosto v središču sodobnih umetniških
dogodkov. Na drugi strani pa je obilo družbenega nasilja
– nekakšne vadbe delinkventnosti, prestopkov, odpora,
pogajanja –, ki ni prav pogosto surovo nasilje, pač pa
največkrat duševno, besedno in čustveno nasilje, ki od
občinstva zahteva določene veščine, izbiranje, spreje-
manje izzivov, navzočnost ali odsotnost, zavzetost ali
nezainteresiranost, to pa pomeni obilo popolnoma dru-
gačnih afektivnih veščin. Še ena veščina, ki je pogosto
uprizorjena na teh dogodkih, je izmenjava ter kroženje
darov in obveznosti, ki od občinstva znova zahteva delo
z afektivnimi močmi in zavzetost za »kritične« druž-

8 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relacijska estetika. Postprodukcija*, prev. Tanja Lesničar-Pučko, Ljubljana: Maska, 2007.

9 Irit Rogoff, »We – Collectivites, Mutualities, Participations«, dostopno na <http://theater.kein.org/node/95>.

bene situacije. Taki naporji so zelo blizu temu, kar danes pogosto imenujejo afektivno in kognitivno delo, pri katerem ljudje delajo s svojimi človeškimi potenciali, denimo da so »kronično otroška (igranje), prožna (raznovrstne socialne situacije) ali pa jezikovna bitja (sodelovanje pri pogajanju in izmenjavi)«. ¹⁰ Med lingvističnim, afektivnim in kognitivnim delom občinstva sodobnih umetniških dogodkov in sodobno vlogo muzeja kot razširjevalca in organizatorja teh oblik percepcije je opaziti tesne vzporednice, kar nas opomni tudi na problematiko nekaterih vidikov sodobne produkcije subjektivitete. V tem smislu ljudje iz občinstva sodobnega umetniškega dogodka delajo kot avtonomni delavci, ki danes pri svojem delu v okviru postfordistične proizvodnje tudi upravljajo s svojimi »afektivnimi, družabnimi in kognitivnimi veščinami.« ¹¹

Drži, da so dandanes sodobni umetniški dogodki povezani z močno željo številnih umetnikov, da bi emancipirali družbeno od produkcije, da bi vzpostavili novo javno sfero, da bi se vpletli v politične geste in se preizkušali v neposlušnosti. Toda obenem se prav ta želja ujame v razpršeni družbeni prostor muzeja, v katerem se sistematično razvija oddaljevanje od kapitalističnega sistema, vendar testna situacija le redko seže onkraj meja eksperimenta. V tem smislu »muzej ni javna sfera, pač pa prej postavlja na ogled svoj konsistentni manko«. ¹² Po mnenju Paola Virna je za ta manko značilna potreba po novi javni sferi: sferi, v kateri bi bilo ustvarjanje subjektivitete tesno povezano z ustvarjalno, politično in imaginativno neodvisnostjo od interesov kapitalistične proizvodnje. Znotraj sodobnih umetniških dogodkov participiramo pri kroženju izkušenj, ki je situacijska, abstrahirana in kratkotrajna, izkušnje, pri kateri le redko pride do sklepanja trajnih političnih zaveznistev. V resnici uprizarjamo javnost – javnost, ki kapitalizira ter porablja človeške in komunikacijske moči –, ki je v jedru manka javnosti. Kroženje izkušenj oblikuje množstvo obiskovalcev, ki imajo »sposobnost predvidevanja nepričakovanih priložnosti in naključij, ki jim bodo omogočile, da se bodo predstavili, da bodo šli v korak s svetom.« ¹³ Zadnji navedek je dejansko opis postfordističnega delavca, vendar ga zlahka lahko uporabimo tudi kot opis sodobnega občinstva umetniških dogodkov. Sodobne umetniške dogodke je torej mogoče

razumeti tudi kot nekakšno estetsko in socialno urjenje, poigravanje z oblikami družbenega in njihovo izkušanje, kot družbeno brez stalnosti, povezanost brez pripadanja. »To so veščine, ki se jih ljudje ne naučijo na delovnem mestu; dandanes se delavci tovrstnih zahtevanih veščin naučijo z življenjem v velemestih – s tem ko skušajo priti do estetskih izkušenj, ko sklepajo družabna razmerja ali si ustvarjajo mreže: delavci se vsega tega naučijo izključno zunaj delovnega mesta, v resničnem življenju sodobnega velemesta.« ¹⁴ V tem pogledu muzejska tovarna kot razpršeni družbeni prostor proizvaja specifično javno sfero brez javnosti, nenehno urjenje ter izmenjavo lingvistične, družbene in politične dejavnosti, vendar brez antagonizma trajne lokacije, brez antagonističnih posledic, ki bi izhajale iz družbenih naporov. Umetnik je tu nekdo, ki omogoči, tisti, ki pripravi razmere za komuniciranje in širjenje, to pa pomeni razdajanje njegove avtonomije občinstvu z namenom, da bi bil izkoriščen. V tem smislu sodobni umetniški dogodki niso v tolikšni meri povezani z obnovljeno potrebo po obredu, pač pa so vaje v družbeni profanosti in izrabljanju oblik družbenega: vaja v čisti profanosti dejstva, da naša družbena dejavnost nima več javne razsežnosti. V tem smislu je muzej družbena tovarna, v katero so se vrnili delavci, ali kot bi dejala Steyerl, ki je v resnici nikoli niso zapustili. V prvem filmu vseh časov, *Odhodu iz tovarne*, je posneto odhajanje delavcev skozi tovarniška vrata, njihovi delovni prostori pa ostajajo v temi. Zdaj se delavci vračajo v družbeno tovarno, ta prostor je čedalje bolj osvetljen, delo je čedalje bolj na ogled, uprizarjano. Toda osvetljeno je prav skozi prikaz manka: tisto, kar resnično manjka, je zunaj, še ena javna sfera, ki bi uporabila vse te družbene veščine in napore, da bi oblikovala novo politično subjektiviteto.

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¹⁰ Paolo Virno, »The Dismasure of Art«, *Open: A Precarious Existence. Vulnerability in the Public Domain*, Amsterdam: SKOR (Foundation Art and Public Space), št. 17, 2009, dostopno na: <http://www.skor.nl/article-4178-en.html>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Hito Steyerl, »Is a Museum a Factory?«, *e-flux Journal* 7, junij-avgust 2009, str. 5/10, dostopno tudi na: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/is-a-museum-a-factory/>.

¹³ Virno, *ibid.*

¹⁴ Virno, *ibid.*

THE FLEXIBLE SOCIALITY OF CONTEMPORARY ART EVENTS

BOJANA KUNST

INTRODUCTION

The main focus of this essay is to reflect on the participation and “activation” of the audience in contemporary art events and different performative actions, which have been rapidly multiplying in art galleries and museum exhibitions in recent years. The proliferation of events in visual art seems to go together with the change in the role of the audience, which is in diverse ways experiencing a shift from passive observation or contemplation of artistic work to its activation and participation. I would like to approach this argument from a rather specific perspective, focusing on the *effort* (in the sense of work and exertion) the audience is contributing when being part of art events. I would like to show how the “labour” of the audience becomes an intrinsic part of the contemporary art event. Of course, each audience is active and there is no qualitative difference between “passive contemplation” and “active participation”, as Rancière showed in his crucial essay on the emancipated spectator.¹ However, there are differences that exist in the ways in which cognitive, energetic, bodily, discursive or emphatic efforts of the audience constitute the event. One of the main characteristics of contemporary art events today is in the central role of the “labour” of the audience, which can also be related to the more general modes of contemporary working, especially with the ways in which production of subjectivity stands at the centre of economic production today.²

1 Jacques Rancière, “The Emancipated Spectator”, accessible at: http://www.bard.edu/mfa/summer/readings/documents/Ranciere_spectator.pdf.

2 With the production of subjectivity, I refer to the work of Maurizio Lazzarato, who observes how production of subjectivity is capitalism's biggest output and the single largest commodity we produce. This notion is also replacing the notion of immaterial work, which he developed some years ago to describe the changes in capitalistic production. In: “Conversation with Maurizio Lazzarato, Public Editing, Session # 3, 23 June 2010, in *Exhausting Immaterial Labour in Performance*, joint issue of *Le Journal des Laboratoires* and *TkH Journal for Per-*

In 2009, I happened to be present at an art event, which coincidentally can also serve here as a nice introductory example to this essay. For the closing party of the In-Transit festival in Berlin, an artist invited around hundred people from the street to join the party, promising them free food and drink under the condition that they start to dance and entertain themselves immediately and actively invite all the other participants to join in the party. This was no doubt the fastest eruption of dancing together I've seen at any party, even if it looked a bit feigned and artificial. However, what was actually constituting the event were not the people who were hired to dance; the point, namely, was not that they would, with their performance, disclose the performativity of such social occasions. Much more interesting to observe was how the hired dancers actually succeeded in evoking similar social behaviour out of the other attendants of the party, so that almost everybody immediately happily surrendered themselves to the common joy and rhythm and threw themselves deeply into the dancing until the late morning hours. What was actually transforming this dance into the event then was exactly a social and affective work of the audience, its surrender, joy and going with the flow, its flirting with the rhythm and other dancers, its participation; the event was triggered by the change the audience had produced with its effort and investment. The event arose not from the fact that this dance was provoked and activated, that it was performed by "temporary actors", but from the fact that it was actually being shared, communicated, exchanged and danced together, that it actually formed temporary alliances and energy flows, joyful investment or active repulsion (depending on the decision to go or not to go with the flow). In that sense, the contemporary event **foregrounds** the work of the audience. In other words, it is the activated audience that performs the work; the event would not be complete (eventful) without the audience's participation.

In that sense, it is relevant to reflect upon that what lies at the core of the contemporary event, and that is the social, affective and linguistic labour of the audience. I'm using the word labour intentionally because I would like to speak not only about the specific effort, but also about an exchange of forces that opens the entrance for the audience into the provisional public space: their labour produces the added aesthetic value of the event. At the same time, the audience works with its social, cognitive and emotional skills, exactly those skills that are also very central to the contemporary modes of Post-Fordist production. Between the audience and the museum (or other

cultural institution where events are performed) there exists an exchange of work: the audience is, with its labor (affections, communications, emotions, desires, efforts of dispersion, organisation, collaboration or isolation, etc.), doing the work and at the same time performing the public of the contemporary museum. On the other side, the museum is enabling and producing the platform for the public to emerge by giving away the work to the audience. In that sense, the artist stands in between as social researcher and cognitive experimenter, and his work is more and more being curated by the artistic institution in order to belong to a "specific public".

II.

If we claim that the audience's role in contemporary art events lies actually in its labour, that there is a visible effort from their side invested in the event, can we also then speak about new modes of exploitation? The question becomes intriguing especially because the audience of the contemporary art institution is no longer organised through the dispositif of watching (passive observation of individuals), as it is at the same time also not recognisable as only an organised community of people or a representational totality of a specific identity. The audience of the contemporary museum is embodied and formed through endless rearranging, renumbering and various assemblages, which can appear and disappear together with the negotiations, paths being made or decisions being taken by the audience in the exhibition. The contemporary art institution seems more to be a space where social experience is dispersed, incalculable and non-representative. The audience appears rather as a disorganised sum of fleeting and precarious moves, gestures, alliances, attractions, repulsions, agreements, disagreements, as a sum of glimpses of works and fragmentary thoughts. The contemporary museum then does not organise the gaze, but rather disperses its effect, and that is also why the contemporary exhibition often functions as a cacophonic space, with a lot of delegation, interpassivity and going with the flow (which, incidentally, is not connected, on the other hand, with exhaustion).

The role of the contemporary art event is very often in capturing the life force of such a silent mass and performing it as "public", it is giving to the audience the political, social and affective dimension. In the event, this unidentified mass and its dispersed effort is transferred into a public (social or even political) force. That's also the rea-

forming Arts Theory, No. 17, October 2010 (accessible also at: <http://www.how-to-do-things-by-theory.info/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/tkh-17-web-eng.pdf>).

son why most of the art events, even the most “immaterial ones” (like the works of Tino Seghal, for example), are actually not without solid ground, because the materiality of effort and human force is grounding the events. There is always a human potentiality at the core of the aesthetic arrangement of the events: the potentiality of the human gesture or an experience of life. Such experience of life is intrinsically social; even when it is fragmented, fleeting and precarious, it shows itself as performativity of various social gestures, enabled by the proposition of the artist and worked out by the audience in the museum space. These experiences can, of course, vary according to the degree of their effort, they can be more or less strong, more or less present, sometimes almost unnoticeable and subtle, sometimes violent and deviant; nevertheless, their exhibition value is the same: they stand at the core of the event and through them the public of the museum is constituted. In her introduction to the catalogue of the 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts, Beti Žerovc rightly stresses the fact that, today, many museums and art venues not only distribute and curate such events, but also take over the role of the producers and organisers of the events.³ However, I would add that, in this context, museums and other arts institutions are not replacing the traditional forms of patronizing art and commissioning artworks, but are actually reformulating themselves as a new productive force, where everything that gets touched gets transferred not only into a culture, but also into the appearance of sociality. Produced at the museum seems to be the “public” itself, with the museum offering a performative shield for rehearsing various social, affective and cognitive potentials of contemporary life.

Hito Steyerl writes that the contemporary museum “corresponds to the dispersed space of a social factory.”⁴ The museum is still a space for production, a space of exploitation; in the “museum as a factory”, something continues to be produced. Thus, what continues to be produced are exactly forms of sociality, produced by an affective and communicative effort of its audience, by the senses, bodies and cognitive capacities of its public, or, as Steyerl writes, the “aesthetic faculties and imaginary practices of its viewers.”⁵ There is still exploitation going on in these new factories; it is present on the one hand in the ways in which museums are productively organised: “as flagship stores of Cultural Industries, staffed by eager interns who

work for free.”⁶ But this productive organisation is related not only to the institution, but also to the ways in which it is performing its public, the public who works and acts with their social behaviour and social relations. In that sense, the role of the proliferating art events in museums today is in the transformation of the art institutions into specific production places, factories of a different type. That’s why Hito Steyerl, paraphrasing the title of the first movie ever made, *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory* (1895), writes that workers actually never exit the factory. And, of course, it is no coincidence that many venues for contemporary art events actually inhabit former Fordist factories, which became empty with the relocation of the Fordist production to non-Western countries. Occasionally, this invisible and brutally exploited workforce comes back to the museum, to the now cultured and highly redesigned Fordist factory, in order to perform (like in the work of Santiago Sierra with illegal immigrants, for example, in *250 cm Line Tattooed on Six Paid People*, 1999). In such events, when the ones doing the work are people *sans papiers*, illegal workers, refugees or disprivileged people, whose existence is very often reduced to bare life, sociality is evoked through the responsibility and repulsion among the public of these contemporary art events. Their ambivalent position is even more stressed by the fact that they are temporarily paid by the museum’s economy in order to evoke the response from the audience and constitute the “critical public”. The old productive force returns to the museum as a Fordist ghost, creating a sense of guilt in the middle of the social enjoyment of the new venues for the production of culture. But very rarely does this return of the workers actually create an antagonism, which would endanger the institution itself, an antagonism which would mess with the production of the public. Such an antagonistic and evocative return of the ghosts is, for example, very well disclosed in the new songspiel of the group Chto Delat?, entitled *Museum Songspiel: The Netherlands 20XX* (2011).⁷ In this songspiel, a group of illegal immigrants is seeking refugee in a large display case designed for street art incorporated in a museum. The museum seems to be the only institution where they can evade their deportation, which confronts the director of the museum and all the others involved with an unsolvable problem. One of the solutions found by the museum is to explain to the authorities that these people are actually hired actors who are performing in a reconstruction of the famous revolutionary and avant-gardistic work *Victory Over The Sun*. Even though the reconstruction is

3 Beti Žerovc, “On the Art Event at the Art Event”, in Peter Kisin and Beti Žerovc (eds), *29. grafični bienale Ljubljana: Dogodek / The 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts: The Event*, Ljubljana: The International Centre of Graphic Arts, 2011, p. 23.

4 Hito Steyerl, “Is a Museum a Factory?”, *e-flux Journal* 7, June–August 2009, p. 5/10 (accessible also at: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/is-a-museum-a-factory/>).

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 This work takes place against the background of Dutch politics in 2011 and it is clearly evoking dangerous political shifts in the future development of the Netherlands. It is accessible at: <http://vimeo.com/channels/chtodelat>.

very successful and again revives the revolutionary spirit so characteristic for the museum (the movie was actually shot in Van Abbemuseum, which has a famous “political” reputation), the actors (refugees) are arrested afterwards, which, as the director of the museum says at the end of the video, “doesn’t really concern us”. There is no doubt that the active reinterpretation of the public and constituting it through the temporary labor of ghosts is not possible anymore; the sociality rehearsed here is constituting the public exactly in the antagonistic contra-positioning, actually outside the museum. This, of course, puts the institution itself under question and addresses the aesthetic spectrality of the production of political subjectivity.

III.

The focus in art events has therefore changed from the autonomy of the performer or artistic gesture to the autonomy of the audience, whose members, with their different efforts (choices made, behavior, gestures and moves, with their presence or absence) are constituting the work; they are actually working for the work. In this sense, Bourriaud is precise in his detection of the “relational aspect of contemporary works”, where artworks are not only understood as moments of sociability but also produce sociability with exploration of relations.⁸ However, there is something crucial in this production of sociability that was overlooked in his analysis. What was not stressed is precisely the question of *exploitation*: the social effort invested to create the audience of the museum, to create the new dispersed and autonomous public of the contemporary institution. This sociability is therefore not a priori emancipatory (or political in Bourriaud’s sense), but is part of the exploitation, which goes along with other processes of human exploitation in the Post-Fordist mode of working. The sociability that is here produced is, namely, precarious, fleeting, affective, but at the same time not belonging, enduring, not really materialized or local. This is a relational sociability that is constantly improving, rehearsing and developing the ways in which our affective and linguistic behaviors can be shared, negotiated, played and transgressed. This also goes together with the shifts in the understanding of the museum’s role in relation to the public – where the public is being rethought as a multitude: “We do look at art, inhabit the spaces of art in various forms of collectivity and in the process we produce new forms of mutuality, of relations between viewers and spaces rather than between viewers and objects. Beyond

the shared categories of class, or taste or political or sexual orientations, another form of ‘WE’ is produced.”⁹ Rogoff is writing here about the performativity of relations, about the performative function of observation and participation that forms an important part of the museum’s public, where meaning is not excavated but takes part in the present. Even if this observation discloses the shift in the museum to the more collective forms and rightly addresses the performative dimension of its public, this statement, at the same time, is very problematical if we relate it to the proliferation of events. This “we” of the contemporary public can be related, namely, to the invisible labor that the audience today does in the museums and with that is giving back the live and spectacular value to the museum as a place of active, communal, political and resistant contemporary experience.

Despite the liveness of the experience, the collaborative participation of the visitor and the dynamism of the exchange, this is neither an authentic experience (which is more often ascribed to the “traditional” act of static looking), nor a personal one; rather, it is above all a social experience of an event that must be endlessly circulated and shared, it is the experience that already belongs to the circulation of its economy. For this very reason, the experience in a contemporary art event must be random, temporary and non-binding, while the visitor often experiences his experience and shares it with others without any sense of belonging or responsibility. Art institutions in recent years have become places of sociality and community processes, laboratories of various ways of practicing coexistence. But the question is whether this shift of sociality and community formation into the sphere of contemporary art really does open up possibilities for emancipatory political articulations or whether it finds in the contemporary art institution a museum refuge for vanishing processes and possibilities of life. Exploitation in contemporary art events is, in this sense, very similar to the more general and overwhelming processes of subjectivization and the formation of communities in contemporary capitalism: it springs from the appropriation of human potentiality, human linguistic skills and affective forces.

Evidence for that statement can be found in the different types of labour done by the audience in the events, which are very close to affective and cognitive labor in general. For example: the ephemeral labour of the audience, labour that hardly shows any effort, is very often in the centre of contemporary art events. On the other hand,

8 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Paris: Presses du Réel, 2002.

9 Irit Rogoff, “We – Collectivites, Mutualities, Participations”, accessible at: <http://theater.kein.org/node/95>.

there is a lot of social violence, a kind of rehearsal of delinquency, transgression, resistance, negotiation, which is not very often brute violence but more mental, linguistic and emotional, demanding from the audience specific skills of choice, challenge, presence or absence, investment or disinterestness, which means a lot of different affective skills. Another social skill that is performed in those events is the exchange and circulation of gifts and debts, which again demands from the audience to work with their affective forces and investments in “critical” social situations. Such efforts are very close to what is often called today affective and cognitive labor, where human beings are working with their human potentialities, like “being chronically childlike (playing), flexible beings (multiple social situations) or linguistic beings (participation in negotiation and exchange)”.¹⁰ A strong parallel can be drawn between the linguistic, affective and cognitive work of the audience in contemporary art events and the contemporary role of the museum as disseminator and organiser of these modes of perception, which also reminds us of the problematic aspects of contemporary production of subjectivity. In this sense, the audience works in the contemporary event as autonomous workers, who are nowadays working with their social, cognitive and affective skills in Post-Fordist production. “We need to gain a certain amount of autonomy in order to be exploited.”¹¹

It is true that contemporary art events today are connected to the strong desire of many artists to emancipate sociality from production, to establish another public sphere, to engage in political gestures and rehearse disobedience. However, at the same time, exactly such a desire is caught in the dispersed social space of the museum, where deviance from the capitalist system is being systematically rehearsed; however, the testing situation rarely flows over the borders of the experiment. In that sense, “the museum is not a public sphere, but rather places its consistent lack on display.”¹² This lack is by Paolo Virno characterised as the need for another public sphere: a sphere where the creation of subjectivity would be tightly linked with creative, political and imaginative independence from the interest of capitalist production. In contemporary art events, we participate in the circulation of experience, which is situational, abstracted and ephemeral, the experience where rarely enduring political alliances are formed. We are actually performing this public – a public which is capitalis-

ing and consuming human and communicative forces – at the core of the lack of a public. This circulation of experience forms then a multitude of visitors that has the “ability to anticipate unexpected opportunities and coincidences, to seize chances that present themselves, to move with the world.”¹³ This last quote is actually a description of a Post-Fordist worker, but it can easily be used for the description of the contemporary audience in art events. Contemporary art events can therefore be understood also as a kind of aesthetic and social training, playing and experiencing forms of sociality, a sociality without continuity, a relation without belonging. “These are the skills people don’t learn at the working place; nowadays workers learn such required abilities by living in big cities, by going for aesthetic experiences, having social relationships, creating networks: all things workers learn specifically outside the workplace, in real life in the contemporary big city.”¹⁴ The museum factory as a dispersed social place is in this sense producing a specific public sphere without a public, a constant training and exchange of linguistic, social and political activity but without the antagonism of an enduring location, without antagonistic consequences coming out of social effort. The artist is here a facilitator, the one who is enabling conditions to communicate and share, and this is giving away his autonomy to the audience in order to be exploited. In this way, contemporary art events are not so much related to the renewed need for the ritual, but are exercises in social profanity and exploitation of social forms: an exercise in the pure profanity of the fact that our social activity does not have a public dimension anymore. In that sense, the museum is a social factory into which workers have returned, or, as Steyerl would say, actually never left. In the first movie ever made, *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory*, the movement of workers leaving through the factory door is recorded, leaving the place of work in darkness. Now, the workers are returning to the social factory, and this place has become more and more illuminated, the work is more and more being showed, performed. However, it is being illuminated exactly through a display of a lack: that which is really missing is outside, another public sphere that would use all these social skills and efforts to form a new political subjectivity.

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10 Paolo Virno, “The Dismeasure of Art”, *Open: A Precarious Existence. Vulnerability in the Public Domain*, Amsterdam: SKOR (Foundation Art and Public Space), no. 17, 2009 (accessible also at: <http://www.skor.nl/article-4178-en.html>).

11 Ibid.

12 Hito Steyerl, “Is a Museum a Factory?”, *e-flux Journal* 7, June–August 2009, p. 5/10 (accessible also at: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/is-a-museum-a-factory/>).

13 Virno, *ibid.*

14 Virno, *ibid.*

**Franč Purg & Sara Heitlinger,
Privilegirane taktike 1 / Privileged Tactics 1, 2006.**

Delavnica Torba za krajo elektronsko zaščitene blaga – MGLC, Ljubljana / Workshop Bag for Shoplifting Electronically Protected Goods – MGLC, Ljubljana.
(Z dovoljenjem umetnika in MGLC / Courtesy of the artists and MGLC/fotografija/ photo: Jaka Babnik.)





METLARSKI DOGODEK: UMETNOST, LASTNINA IN SKUPNOST V LONDONU LETA 2011

ROGER SANSE

PREVOD

ALEKSANDRA REKAR

Namen številnih sodobnih umetniških dogodkov je doseči družbeni učinek, ki seže onkraj umetnostnih institucij. Takšen družbeni učinek pogosto temelji na pojmu skupnosti. Veliko se tudi govori, da naj bi bila umetnikova naloga podeliti skupnostim glas ali sredstvo reprezentacije. Umetniki ali umetniški kolektivi se bolj kot ustvarjalci ali »producenti« umetniških objektov predstavljajo kot posredniki oziroma tisti, ki skupnosti omogočijo, da se reprezentira. To težnjo umetniške prakse po kolektivni reprezentaciji so spodbudile javne institucije, ki so videle umetnost kot ključnega igralca svoje socialne politike. V Veliki Britaniji so »skupnostne umetnosti« vse od sedemdesetih let 20. stoletja dejavno promovirali Arts Council in številne javne ustanove.

V pričujočem članku bi rad razpravljal o nedavnem umetniškem dogodku, ki se je zgodil poleti 2011. V odziv na londonske izgrede minulega poletja je umetniško-aktivistična skupina organizirala »dogodek« čiščenja ulic, to, kar bom imenoval »metlarski dogodek«. Zdi se, da cilj metlarskega dogodka ni bil le očistiti ulic, temveč tudi obnoviti »občutek za skupnost«, ki so ga izgrede porušili. Menim, da ta primer postavlja v ospredje nekatera središčna vprašanja, ki jih odpirajo umetniški dogodki: njihove predvidene »družbene učinke« in razmerje do religioznih ritualov, pa tudi to, kako oboje usklajuje in uprizarja pojma moralnosti in skupnosti, ki sta si lahko skrajno nasprotna in tekmovalna. Toda preden se lotim tega primera, želim predstaviti nekaj splošnih razmislekov o samem pojmu »kolektivne reprezentacije«.

KULTURA IN ANARHIJA

Pojem »kolektivne reprezentacije«, ki se zarisuje na ozadju velikega dela skupnostnih umetnosti, je znan družboslovni koncept že vse od Durkheimovega, sto let starega dela *Elementarne oblike religioznega življenja* (1912). Durkheim je opazoval vznikanje kolektivnih reprezentacij v »trenutkih kolektivnega kipenja«, v katerih postane družba nekaj vidnega. Nemara lahko prav prek pojma kolektivne reprezentacije določneje spregovorimo o eni od tem, ki si jih zadaja 29. grafični bienale v Ljubljani, in sicer o razmerju med religijo in umetnostjo. Za Durkheima je bila »religija« zgolj splošnejši, elementarni, vendar seveda ne edini okvir proizvodnje kolektivnih reprezentacij. Pravzaprav je bila religija kot institucija za Durkheima, ki je bil zagovornik francoske sekularne republike, velikanski problem. Več kot stoletje, vse od francoske revolucije naprej, je v Franciji prihajalo do številnih poskusov vzpostavitve sekularne religije – religije brez bogov, temelječe na premisi, da ima religija, poleg obstoja ali neobstoja nadnaravnega, ključno funkcijo: s kolektivnimi reprezentacijami priskrbeti podobo družbe. Ta podoba družbe bi bila nujna za oblikovanje kakršnekoli kolektivne morale, moralnega reda, ki bi zmožni zadržati drsenje sodobne družbe proti temu, kar je Durkheim imenoval »anomija« (anomie). Anomija ni bila le anarhija, temveč neujemanje med posameznikom in družbo, tako dezorientiranost kot nepriznavanje družbenih pravil.

Vse od francoske revolucije je bilo za francosko državo podpiranje institucij *la culture*, umetnosti, eden od najboljših načinov, kako promovirati sekularno religijo, religijo države in državljanstva, ki bi se borila proti drsenju v anomijo. Tako je bila izumljena kulturna politika. V Angliji pa je bil Matthew Arnold navdušen zagovornik tega, čemur je pravil »Kultura«. Arnold je v svoji knjigi *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) svaril, da toga razredna delitev viktorijanske Anglije utegne pripeljati državo v anarhijo – kajti Angleži, je zapisal, ne poznajo pojma Države in nacije kot nekaj kolektivnega. Za Arnolda je bila »Kultura« zdravilo proti drsenju v smeri anarhije: kultura si prizadeva za enakost in odpravo razredov, da bi zagotovila skupno osnovo in skupne podobe, prek katerih se bodo lahko vsi razredi prepoznali kot del večje, enotne celote – nacije kot kolektiva.

Raymond Williams je v članku »A Hundred Years of Culture and Anarchy« (»Sto let kulture in anarhije«), napisanem leta 1969, opisal, kako zgrožen je bil Arnold nad izgredi, kakršni so izbruhnili po protestu julija 1866, ki

je zahteval volilno pravico za moške iz delavskega razreda – šlo je za t. i. »izgrede v Hide Parku«. Po Arnoldu je imela vlada dolžnost zatreti anarhijo in nered, kajti brez reda ne more biti nikakršne družbe, brez družbe pa ne človeške popolnosti. Williams se je sto let pozneje na to odzval z besedami: »Zavezanost razumu, utemeljenemu argumentiranju, pretehtanim javnim odločitvam ... zahteva še kaj več kot lahkotno retorično primerjanje s praksami demonstracij in neposrednega delovanja.«¹

Za Williamsa so izgredi vsebovali tudi »kulturo«; pravzaprav so bili izgredi v Angliji že dolgotrajna tradicija. O tem je pisal leto dni po letu 1968 in nekaj let po tistem, ko je E. P. Thompson izdal monumentalno delo *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), ki je bleščeče opisalo politiko in kulturo za številnimi izgredi, do katerih je prihajalo v Angliji 18. stoletja.

K temi kulture, anarhije in izgredov se bom vrnil pozneje. Na tem mestu ostaja vprašanje: čigavo družbo oziroma čigavo skupnost predstavlja kultura v Arnoldovem smislu? Kako in s kakšnim namenom? To nista novi vprašanji, vendar sta neizogibni, če nameravamo obravnavati umetniške dogodke, ki si prizadevajo predstavljati skupnosti in združevati ljudi, kakršen je bil tudi »metlarski dogodek«.

ANGLEŠKI IZGREDI, 2011

9. avgusta 2011 so se na različnih točkah v Londonu zbrale množice, ki so se odzvale na twittersko kampanjo »riotcleanup« za »poizgredno čiščenje«, ki jo je organiziral umetnik Dan Thompson. Množice so prinesle s seboj metle, zato so jih nekateri časopisi poimenovali »vojska z metlami«.² Thompson je v intervjuju za BBC povedal: »Sinočnje posnetke (8. avgust) gorečih nakupovalnih ulic in neodvisnih trgovin je bilo grozljivo gledati, zato sem hotel zasnovati obliko pomoči, ki bo hitra, preprosta in učinkovita.«³

Govoril je o izgredih, ki so se začeli 6. avgusta ponoči v Tottenhamu v severnem Londonu. Tottenhamski izgrede se je začel kot protest zaradi smrti mladega temnopoltega moškega, ki ga je ubila policija. Sprva se je zdelo, da gre za protirasistični izgrede, podoben brixtonskim izosemdesetih let 20. stoletja, vendar se je kmalu razbohotil in razširil na številne soseske v Londonu in drugih

1 Raymond Williams, *Culture and Materialism*, London: Penguin, 2005, str. 8.

2 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/in-pictures-14490167>

3 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-14456857>

mestih Združenega kraljestva, vanj pa so bili vpleteni ljudje različnih etničnih ozadij in starosti. Trgovine so oplenili ter jih skupaj z avtomobili in avtobusi požgali, nekaj ljudi pa do smrti povozili z avtom.

Dogodek, ki so ga pozneje poimenovali angleški izgredi, velja za najresnejši izraz civilnega nezadovoljstva v tej generaciji. Njegov rezultat je pet mrtvih (skupaj z žrtvijo policije, ki je sprožila izgrede) in več kot tri tisoč aretiranih. Kazni so bile drakonske: mlado samohranilko so zaprli, ker je sprejela darilo – ukradene kratke hlače.⁴ Mlada moška, ki sta spodbujala k izgredom s tem, da sta »dogodek« postavila na Facebook, sta bila obsojena na štiri leta zaporne kazni (mimogrede, ta »dogodek« je bil docela neuspešen, saj se na poziv ni odzval nihče).⁵

UNESCO se je uradno pritožil zoper zapiranje dotlej ne-kaznovanih mladoletnikov. Kot je bilo takrat rečeno, so bile kazni »eksemplarične«. Uradni odgovor vlade nje-nega veličanstva je prispel pozno (premier in londonski župan sta bila na dopustu), ko pa je, je bilo očitno: izgredi so bili zgolj in samo kriminal.⁶ Pogosto je bil uporabljen tudi izraz »nesprejemljivo vedenje«. Londonski župan Boris Johnson, ki se je nemudoma – vsaj pred kamerami – pridružil poizgrednemu čiščenju, je v živo izrecno dejal, da izgredniki za svoja dejanja »ne smejo več poslušati ekonomskih in socioloških opravičil«. Ko je Ken Livingstone, nekdanji londonski župan, omenil, da so ekonomska kriza in proračunski rezi prizadeli šte-vilne družbene sektorje, ga je Daily Mail obtožil cinizma in nemoralnosti.⁷ Uradni diskurz se je sukal okrog moralnih pojmov, kot sta dobro in zlo, in državljani, ki spoštujejo zakon, nasproti kriminalcem. Ali povedano z drugimi besedami, vlada in župan sta že od samega začetka poskušala zanikati, da bi imeli izgredi kakršenkoli pomen; poskušala sta zanikati okoliščine, ki so jih naredile za dogodek. Izgrede sta opisala kot ne-dogodek, nekaj, kar se ne bi smelo zgoditi, in dejala, da se tudi ne bodo več zgodili, če bo vlada, kot se je izrazil premier, »v polni meri uveljavljala zakon«.

Toda srednjeročno se vlada ni mogla izogniti »sociološkemu« ali, bolje rečeno, kvazisociološkemu zagovoru izgredov. Pravi argument bi prinesel odgovor na naslednje vprašanje: kaj bi lahko pojasnilo dejstvo, da obstaja precejšen del prebivalstva, ki ne spoštuje zasebne la-

stnine? Kriminalci niso bili samo kriminalci, običajni osumljenci, kajti za spremembo jih je bilo VELIKO, šte-vilni od njih pa so bili mladoletni. To ni bil preprosto krimi-nal, to je bilo nekaj več – statistično dejstvo. Nekate-ri vladni ministri so začeli oblikovati razredni diskurz. Sekretar za delo in pokojninsko blagajno, Ian Duncan Smith, je krivil socialno skrbstvo in razpad tradicio-nalne, dvostarševske družine (pogosto je omenjal od-sotnost »očetovske figure« v enostarševskih družinah). V razpravi je bilo rečeno, da sta odvisnost od socialne pomoči in enostarševske družine ustvarila podrazred neodgovornih posameznikov brez vsakršnega spošto-vanja zasebne lastnine. Minister za pravosodje, Ken Clarke, je ljudi, vpletene v izgrede, poimenoval »krimi-nalni razred«, »podivjan podrazred, ki je v vsem – z izje-mo materializma – odrezan od prevladujočih vrednot«, na kar se ne gre odzvati zgolj z boljšim uveljavljanjem zakona, temveč tudi s politiko, zlasti s šolskim siste-mom, ki bi jih naučil discipline. In naposled, sekretar za skupnosti in lokalno upravo, Eric Pickles, je izgrednike opisal kot neizobražen, nezaposlen podrazred.⁸ V vseh omenjenih primerih gre za stališče, da imamo opraviti s (pod)razredom kriminalcev, nemara ljudi, vendar podiv-janih, nikakor pa ne z državljani.

Ali gre za neizobražen najnižji razred ali podivjani po-drazred, niti ni tako pomembno; dejstvo je, da so s tem, ko so izgrede prepoznali kot izraz določenega družbene-ga razreda, določene konfiguracije družbene strukture, ki se je manifestirala pri tem dogodku, prepoznali tudi zgodovinskost angleških izgredov iz leta 2011 – to, da so bili ti izgredi dejansko pomemben zgodovinski dogodek.

VOJSKA Z METLAMI

Thompsonova pobuda za poizgredno čiščenje je s tem, ko je ustvarila protidogodek – to, čemur na tem mestu pravim metlarski dogodek –, ponudila hiter in eksplici-ten odgovor na dogajanje. Protidogodek pa ni smel biti zgolj »čiščenje« ulic, temveč je moral biti tudi simbo-len: podobe čiščenja so bile pomembnejše od samega čiščenja. Pravzaprav nekatere od teh čistilnih brigad v resnici niso mogle prav veliko očistiti, kajti to delo so opravile že mestne čistilne službe.

Thompsonovo pobudo so hitro prevzeli številni drugi ljudje, ki sploh niso vedeli, da je bil on tisti, ki jo je spro-

4 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/aug/19/riots-mother-looted-shorts-freed>

5 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/aug/16/facebook-riot-calls-men-jailed>

6 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/video/2011/aug/09/david-cameron-riots-criminality-video>

7 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/aug/10/riots-reflect-society-run-greed-looting>

8 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/sep/05/punishment-rioters-help?intcmp=239>

9 <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/communities/2038725>

žil. Njegova kampanja pravzaprav ni bila edina, ki se je poskušala odzvati na izgrede: začele so se tudi druge kampanje, kot so bila srečanja v soseskah, zidovi za lepljenje listkov s sporočili itn. Cilj vseh teh dogodkov je bilo sočasno ustvariti protidogodek in podobo protidogodka. Protidogodek si je nadvse očitno prizadeval za proizvajanje podob, kajti popolnoma jasno je bilo, da mora dogodek, če naj bo prepoznan kot tak, vzbuditi takojšen odziv v medijih in to na mednarodni ravni. Brez medijev ni dogodka.

V vseh primerih in vsi po vrsti so zelo spominjali na umetniške dogodke, ki so bili na 29. grafičnem bienalu opisani v smislu ekonomije daru – od prostovoljskega čiščenja ulic in zidu za »improvizacijsko sporočanje« s samolepilnimi listki, do skupnih obrokov itn. Čeprav ti protidogodki niso bili ravno umetniški dogodki, pa so nadvse večje uporabljali retoriko in metode umetniških dogodkov.

Sredi avgusta je Thompson ponudil zanimivo razmišljanje o poizgrednem čiščenju. Dejal je, da so bili tako izgredi kot poizgredno čiščenje, torej dogodek in protidogodek, oblika anarhije:

Anarhija, pravi Wikipedija, je lahko »popolna odsotnost oblasti ali politične organizacije,« vendar lahko pomeni tudi »socialno državo, za katero je značilna odsotnost državne uprave, oblastnika ali libertarizma«. Če je bilo torej brezzakonje ljudi, ki razbijajo izložbe, da bi ukradli trenirko ali požgali trgovine s pohištvo, anarhično, je bila prav taka tudi množica, ki je v torek – brez vsakršnih vodij in napotkov – vzela v roke metle in smetišnice ter se odpravila počistiti ulice. Nobenega manifesta niso podpisali, niti vnaprej dogovorjenih pravil ali stališč. Nihče jih ni vodil ali jim govoril, kaj naj naredijo. To je bilo na stotine posameznikov, ki so brez vodstva ali državnega poseganja zavzeli ulice in zasnovali nov način, kako početi stvari.¹⁰

Za Thompsona je anarhija nevtralna, tako kot tudi Twitter, je dejal, ki ga je mogoče uporabiti za slabe in za dobre stvari. Thompson je sklenil z naslednjo izjavo: »S tem bom nadaljeval, tako kot to počnem že od trinajstega leta – umetnost uporabljam za to, da povezuje ljudi.«

Thompson se že nekaj časa ukvarja s skupnostno umetnostjo. Je ustanovitelj kolektiva Revolutionary Arts, ki proizvaja številne raznovrstne dogodke, kot so »odprte hiše v Worthingu in Horshamu, poleg tega je z mladimi

naslikal orjaške murale, v galerijah, umetnostnih središčih ter praznih trgovinah in cerkvah je razstavil dela stotin umetnikov, izdal pesniško antologijo, z uporabo okolju prijaznih barv v ekološkem centru ustvaril ogromno panoramo, po soseskah prirejal umetniške festivale ter pošiljal umetnike in pesnike nazaj v šole, da bi s tem navdahnili tudi otroke«. Bržkone najzanimivejša pobuda kolektiva Revolutionary Arts je mreža Prazne trgovine (Empty Shops Network). Prazne trgovine delujejo na osnovi zamisli o uporabi izpraznjenih trgovin, ki jih obnovijo in izkoristijo kot začasne umetnostne prostore. Zamisel, ki stoji za Praznimi trgovinami, je oživitve nakupovalnih ulic v središču mesta, ki jih je prizadel vzpon veleblagovnic in nakupovalnih središč. V tem smislu je dokaj razumljivo, da se je Thompson čutil neposredno nagovorjen, ko je bil prek televizije priča plnenju trgovin v nakupovalnih ulicah po Londonu.

POIZGREDNO BELJENJE

Poizgredno čiščenje je bilo predmet ostre kritike aktivističnih mrež. V nekem blogu je bilo opisano kot poizgredno beljenje ali, z drugimi besedami, kot »zakrivanje« – poskušalo naj bi »počistiti svinjarijo«, še preden so bila zastavljena vprašanja o tem, kdo je navsezadnje odgovoren za izgrede. Avtorica bloga, ki piše pod psevdonimom dr. Sophia Himmelblau, pokaže na implicitne povezave med poizgrednim čiščenjem in »duhom blitza« med drugo svetovno vojno, ki je pravil, da je treba »ohraniti razsodnost in živeti naprej«, kar je v Angliji pogosto mogoče slišati v primeru nevarnosti in nesreč – zdi se, da to opredeljuje etos angleškega srednjega razreda: razsodnost, stoičnost pri soočenju z nesrečo. In vendar pravi: »Tega konkretnega problema ne bodo rešile umetnost in metle (...) To ni leto 1940, uničenja urbanega tkiva niso povzročile tuje bombe, marveč otroci iz sosesk metlarskih brigad.«¹¹

Sklicivanje na »skupnost« ob dogodkih, kot je poizgredno čiščenje, je problematično:

»'Skupnost', kot je bila predstavljena v nenehno ponavljanih prikazih dobrega državljanstva, bodisi v resnici obstaja, in v tem primeru so izgredekni v enaki meri njen sestavni del kot pometači – ali pa, nasprotno, v resnici ne obstaja, njen prikaz pa služi predvsem kot prikladna ideološka fikcija.«¹²

11 <http://universityforstrategicoptimism.wordpress.com/2011/08/10/riotcleanup-or-riotwhitewash/>

12 Ibid.

10 <http://www.artistsandmakers.com/article.php/20110812051756469>

Zdi se, da so dogodke, kot je poizgredno čiščenje, ustvarili pripadniki belega srednjega razreda, ki izključijo ali pome-tejo z demoniziranimi izgredniki, z izbruhom zla, označe-nega za podrazred, ki se ga je treba znebiti. Pravzaprav na koncu trdi, da dogodek »služi predvsem ločitvi med tisti-mi, ki – z besedami Henrija Lefebvra (in pozneje Davida Harveyja) – imajo 'pravico do mesta', in tistimi, ki je nima-jo, vendar tudi med tistimi, ki pričakujejo, da bodo obrav-navani kot državljani pod vladavino zakona, in tistimi, ki so izključeni zaradi svojega statusa ne-državljanov.«¹³

Še več, zdi se, da se prostovoljska narava poizgrednega čiščenja v popolnosti ujema z diskurzom »Velike druž-be« (»Big Society«), ki ga je vlada uporabila kot ideo-loško orodje za razdiranje socialne države: program Velike družbe v grobem predlaga, da bi številne javne službe (»Velika država«) nadomestilo prostovoljsko in dobrodelno delo. Londonski župan Boris Johnson se je dejansko zelo hitro polastil poizgrednega čiščenja.

Blog je bil deležen neverjetne količine odzivov, večino-ma izrazito negativnih; številni od njih so prišli od ljudi, ki so dejansko sodelovali pri čiščenju. Poudarili so, da množice, ki so se zbrale pri čistilnem dogodku, niso bile izključno bele in iz srednjega razreda ter da v resnici niso želele samo počistiti ulic, pač pa tudi obnoviti čut za skupnost. Vse to je najbrž res. Kljub temu pa je nedvo-umna tudi poanta dr. Sophie Himmelblau: še naprej drži, da poizgredno čiščenje ni oporekalo demonizaciji izgre-dnikov, marveč jo je s tem, ko je poskušalo pokazati »do-bro stran« skupnosti, v resnici celo okrepilo. In še naprej drži, da je skrajno težko določiti, na katero skupnost se nanašajo – in katero skupnost so izgredniki izdali.

SKUPNOST?

Pojem »skupnost« je v sodobni angleščini izrazito spo-ren, vendar se pogosto dozdeva, da gre za evfemizem za označevanje revnih sosesk, naseljenih z etničnimi sku-pinami. Včasih je uporabljen celo neodvisno od lokacije – zgolj v navezavi na etnične skupine, denimo »karibska skupnost«. Zelo redko pa slišimo, da bi pojem »skupnost« opredeljeval bogata območja, kot je Knightsbridge, ali da bi se nanašal na »belo skupnost« ali »belo angleško skupnost«. V vsakem primeru se zdi diskurz o skupnosti skrajno nezdržljiv z diskurzom o razredu; pravzaprav je bil v zadnjih desetletjih večinoma uporabljan za pri-krivanje diskurza o razredu. Skupnostne umetnosti, ka-

kršne so tiste, ki jih spodbuja Dan Thompson, so bile v Združenem kraljestvu vse od sedemdesetih let 20. stole-tja integralni del socialne države. Zelo nepošteno bi bilo reči, da so bile skupnostne umetnosti zgolj instrument nadomeščanja diskurza o razredu z diskurzom o sku-pnosti. Toda če opazujemo tradicijo kulturne politike, ki ji je v Angliji mogoče slediti vse do Arnolda, je dokaj očitno, da so bile skupnostne umetnosti del širšega kul-turnega in političnega projekta, ki naj bi ustvaril bolj ko-hezivno družbo, v kateri bi bile razredne razlike vsaj ne-koliko blažje ali, z drugimi besedami, v kateri bi večina ljudi sčasoma pripadala srednjemu razredu. Ta projekt socialne države je od druge svetovne vojne naprej vodila laburistična stranka; britanski srednji razred, kakršnega poznamo zdaj, pa se je v veliki meri oblikoval prav takrat – skupaj s svojimi miti o izvoru, ki naj bi bil duh blitza (»ohraniti razsodnost in živeti naprej« itn.). Zdi se, da samo konservativci povsem zlahka uporabljajo pojem »razred«, čeprav očitno samo zato, da se navezujejo na »manj kot razred«: »kriminalni razred«, »podivjani pod-razred« ... Ta tako imenovani podrazred je v resnici nastal kot posledica postindustrijskih neoliberalnih reform, ki so jih začele vlade Margaret Thatcher; te so množice in-dustrijskih delavcev pahnile v strukturno nezaposlenost in jim namenile kamuflirane različice »nadomestil«, s či-mer so dolgotrajno nezaposlene preobrazile v invalidne, nesposobne, samohranilce itn. Socialna država, ki je bila zasnovana z namenom, da delavski razred preobrazi v srednji razred, je ustvarila nišo strukturne neenakosti – med podrazredom, ki je živel od podpor, in srednjim ra-zredom, ki je zanje plačeval v obliki davkov. Vlade novih laburistov, ki so sledile vladam Margaret Thatcher, te politike niso pomembno spremenile, le podpore so bile višje. Generacijo pozneje so isti konservativci s svojim odkritim zavračanjem podrazreda in njegove »kulture podpor«, ki so jo sami ustvarili, postali priljubljeni pri srednjem razredu. Kriza iz leta 2008 je prinesla popoln izgovor za uničenje teh programov. Pod zastavo Velike družbe in krilatice »vsi smo v istem čolnu« je prišlo do največjih rezov na področju družbene porabe po drugi svetovni vojni. Prve, ki so jih ti rezi neposredno prizadeli, so bile mlajše generacije tako imenovanega podrazreda. Drakonsko zmanjšanje sredstev za londonsko mestno občino je pomenilo zaprtje večine mladinskih središč in javnih knjižnic. Leta 2010 je bil odpravljen izobraževal-ni dodatek (Education Maintenance Allowance – EMA), finančna shema, namenjena študentom in vsem, ki so po šestnajstem letu starosti opravljali neplačano delo. Leta 2011 se je najnižja šolnina na britanskih univerzah zvi-šala s 3.000 na 9.000 britanskih funtov. To je deloma veljalo za kompenzacijo, saj naj bi nadomestilo 80-od-

13 Ibid.

stotno zmanjšanje sredstev, ki jih dobivajo univerze za potrebe poučevanja. Odprava izobraževalnega dodatka in zvišanje šolnin sta bila v jedru množičnih protestov iz leta 2010, protestov, ki so tudi porodili nasilje. Zdi se, da se teh protestov nihče več ne spominja ali jih povezuje s poletnimi izgredi, v resnici pa je ta »dogodka« nemo-goče razumeti, če nanju gledamo ločeno. Val množičnih protestov proti zvišanju šolnin s konca leta 2010 – zlasti velike demonstracije novembra in decembra – je omrtvičil London. Prvi protest je dosegel vrhunec s kratkotrajno zasedbo sedeža konservativcev v Millbanku in s fotografijo, ki se je prebila na naslovnice številnih časnikov po vsem svetu, pogosto s pripisom »Anarchy in the UK« (»Anarhija v Združenem kraljestvu«), seveda pa ni manjkala niti omemba skupine Sex Pistols. Toda prizori nasilja, do katerega je prišlo tistega dne, so bili dokaj nedolžni, če jih primerjamo s tistimi, ki smo jih videli nekaj tednov pozneje, zlasti med velikimi demonstracijami 9. decembra 2010. Te demonstracije so policijske sile omejile (zaprle) na Westminsteri trg; nekateri so razbijali izložbena okna bližnjih stavb, prižgali nekaj ognjev in z grafiti popisali spomenik Winstona Churchilla. Policija na konjih je napadla demonstrante in nekatere od njih za več ur nagnala (zaprla) na Westminsteri most. Demonstracije niso imele nobenih očitnih posledic za vlado – ta ni umaknila zvišanja šolnin, vseeno pa je to bilo obdobje kipenja in mobilizacije, v okviru katerega je prišlo do številnih političnih pobud, ki so se očitno navdihovale pri umetniških dogodkih. Ena od takšnih je bila Univerza strateškega optimizma (University For Strategic Optimism – UfSO), skupina, ki je v trenutni politični in ekonomski situaciji uporabila situacionistične tehnike. Med njihovimi prvimi hudomušnimi potezami je bila zasedba bank, da bi tam imeli predavanja. Med boljše akcije UfSO pa sodi predavanje o nasilju, ki so ga v živo uprizorili med demonstracijami 9. decembra.¹⁴

Deloma navdihnjene z delovanjem UfSO so začele skupine, kot je UK Uncut, zasedati trgovine v lasti podjetij in že omenjenih bank, ki se izogibajo plačevanju davkov. Blogerka, ki sem jo omenjal, je članica UfSO. Protislovni odzivi na njeno pisanje lepo kažejo na protislovni položaj, ki so ga med aktivistično-umetniškimi skupinami sprožili poletni izgredi. Mnoge žali Sophiejino udrihanje po poizgrednem čiščenju kot delu pripadnikov belega srednjega razreda. Pa vendar je šlo v bistvu prav za to. Aktivistično-umetniške skupine, ki so organizirale UfSO in UK Uncut, izhajajo iz srednjega razreda. To so ljudje, ki bi lahko (in nemara tudi so) delali pri projektih,

kot so Prazne trgovine, in ki so nemara sodelovali pri poizgrednem čiščenju. To so ljudje, ki bi v banki priredili performans, vendar pa po vsej verjetnosti ne sodijo med tiste, ki bi oropali stavnico. Poletni izgredi so te ljudi v resnici postavili v težavni politični položaj.

Poletni izgredi so veliko bolj osvetlili razredno nasilje, ki je v angleški družbi postalo tako zelo očitno: eksplicitni napad konservativne vlade na tako imenovani podrazred postavlja v zelo težak položaj tudi srednji razred. Zdi se, da sta mu na voljo dve možnosti: lahko se pridruži konservativcem, ki bodo pometli s »kriminalnimi razredi«, ali pa skupaj z njimi zapade v brezup.

SKLEP: IZGREDI IN RITUALI

Za konec bi se rad vrnil k štirim tematskim sklopom, znotraj katerih je 29. grafični bienale uvrstil umetniške dogodke: k velikodušnosti, nasilju, ritualu in praznini. Razumem, da to niso vzajemno izključujoče se ekskluzivne teme, kljub temu pa se mi kažejo kot dejansko različni vidiki tega, čemur bi antropologi rekli »ritual«. Prvič, Bienale v okviru teme »ritual« prinaša umetniške dogodke, ki se eksplicitno nanašajo na religiozne ceremonije – in to je v resnici pomemben vidik »ritualov«, ki so jih antropologi vselej preučevali; rituali niso nujno religiozne narave, v vseh primerih pa se nanašajo na nekaj, kar ni navzoče. Še bolj kot ta pa so v sozvočju z antropološkimi pristopi k ritualu druge teme: praznina, kot sem razumel, se nanaša predvsem na prostor in kontekst – na to, da ima sprememba prostora ali preobrazba prostora simbolne učinke; svet postavi na glavo, spremeni položaj subjekta. To je tudi središčna poteza ritualov, zlasti njihovega arhetipa, *les rites de passage*, ki so v resnici rituali premestitve iz enega prostora v drugi, v položaj liminalnosti, prehoda čez prag, mejo, prazno območje, kjer subjekt izgubi svojo identiteto, da bi dobil drugo. Kljub temu je nesporno, da je za ritual središčnega pomena druga tema – nasilje, vendar ne le zato, ker so rituali pogosto dejanja simbolnega nasilja, nalaganja resnice, pač pa tudi, bolj dobesedno, zaradi središčne vloge, ki jo ima žrtvovanje pri številnih ritualnih dejanjih. Kot pravita Mauss in Hubert, je žrtvovanje v svojem bistvu komunikacijsko dejanje. Tudi nasilje nasploh, bi lahko dejali, je komunikacijsko dejanje. Brezsmiselno nasilje ne obstaja. To pa me pripelje do zadnje – ali pravzaprav prve – teme Bienala: do velikodušnosti. To je središčna tema antropologije vse od Maussovega *Eseja o daru*. *Esej o daru* je v tridesetih letih 20. stoletja neposredno vplival na umetnike in intelek-

¹⁴ <http://universityforstrategicoptimism.wordpress.com/conference-on-violence/>

tualce v Franciji. Bataille si je v delu *La Part Maudite* (1949), v katerem ne predlaga nič manj kot politično ekonomijo, utemeljeno na obilju in razdajanju in ne na pomanjkanju in kopičenju, izposodil Maussove ideje. Maussov opis potlača kot izraza absolutnega preobilja in razsipnosti je bil središčen za Bataillovo razpravljanje. Batailla je fasciniralo to, čemur Mauss pravi »užitek razdajanja«.¹⁵ Batailla je zanimal ustvarjalni potencial samega *razdajanja*. Potlač je ključen za njegovo razpravo zato, ker porabo spremeni v javni spektakel.

Pod zelo močnim Maussovim vplivom so bili – prek Batailla – tudi situacionisti, ne nazadnje se je njihova revija imenovala *Potlatch*. Pri potlaču se jim je zdela šokantna in navdihujoča njegova očitna, spektakularna ekonomska iracionalnost: potlač je bil skrbno organiziran ritual razdajanja, pri katerem gostitelj podari gostom nešteta darila; včasih je bilo podarjenih stvari več kot gostov in v takih primerih so gostitelji svoja darila raje uničili, kot da bi jih obdržali. Bataille in situacionisti so v potlaču videli nasprotje kapitalistični akumulaciji – »užitek razdajanja«.

V resnici potlač ni bil zgolj ritual velikodušnosti. Vseboval je tudi vse druge teme, omenjene na Bienalu. Potlač je prav tako duhovni ali religiozni ritual, saj pove zgodbo o prednikih in družbenem položaju – namen darovanja potlačev je v pridobitvi družbenega položaja v razmerju do predniškega klana. Potlač se dotika tudi teme praznine: »postaviti hišo na glavo« in jo včasih celo požgati je v osnovi enako dejanje, kot ga opravi umetnik, ki izprazni galerijo. Pravzaprav mi je umetnik, ki je v devetdesetih letih v Barceloni pripravil enega od takih dogodkov – izpraznjenje galerije – povedal, da ga je navdihnil prav potlač. Naposled, in to je najpomembnejše, potlač je tudi dejanje nasilja. Potlači so bili nadvse tekmovalni: ljudje so podarjali potlače, da bi prišli do večje slave in višjega družbenega položaja kot njihovi sovražniki; destruktivni izid nekaterih potlačev pa je obenem končni izid tovrstnega tekmovanja. Pravzaprav je to rezultat zgodovinskega procesa: stiki z zahodnimi trgovci, do katerih je prišlo ob koncu 19. stoletja, so prinesli presežek blaga; zlasti odeje in baker, ki so bili nekoč nadvse dragoceni, so postali predmeti očitne uporabe za potlače. Če si želel preseči potlač svojega sovražnika, si moral izkazovati velikodušnost in radodarnost do te mere, da si bil zmožen celo požgati svojo lastnino in s tem pokazati vzvišenost. »Uničevanje lastnine« je razburilo britanske kolonialne oblasti v Kanadi, zato so potlač prepovedale. Tako misijonarji kot kolonialni upravitelji so v potlaču vi-

deli veliko oviro na poti do civilizacije – se pravi do kapitalistične civilizacije: staroselci, so govorili, ne čutijo nobene spoštovanja do zasebne lastnine.

Nasprotno pa so bili situacionisti navdušeni nad vsem, kar je bilo mogoče razumeti kot kljubovanje zasebni lastnini, manj pa so jih zanimali nasilni in hierarhični vidiki potlača. V resnici ima potlač dve plati – velikodušnost in produkcijo skupnosti, a tudi nasilje in reproduciranje hierarhije. Na vrhuncu šestdesetih let je Raoul Vaneigem zapisal:

Nezadostnost fevdalnega daru pomeni, da je treba ustvariti nove človeške odnose, ki bodo temeljili na načelu čistega dajanja. Na novo moramo odkriti užitek dajanja: dajanja zato, ker imaš tako veliko. Kako čudovite in neprecenljive potlače bo doživela premožna družba – naj ji je to všeč ali ne! –, ko bo premožna mlajša generacija odkrila čisti dar. Čedalje večja strast do kraje knjig, oblačil, hrane, orožja in nakita zgolj zaradi užitka, ki ga ponuja njihovo podarjanje, nam omogoči uzreti, kaj ima volja do življenja ponuditi potrošniški družbi.¹⁶

Za Vaneigema in situacioniste je bila kraja nedvomno politično dejanje – pravzaprav skrajno politično dejanje v družbi množične potrošnje. Za te avtorje težava množične potrošnje ni v »materializmu« ali nemoralnosti preobilja, marveč v kolektivni fikciji zasebne lastnine, v blagovnem fetišu.

Večina umetniških kolektivov, ki se dandanes ukvarjajo s skupnostno umetnostjo in spodbujanjem umetniških dogodkov, bi se prepoznala za neposredne naslednike situacionistov, in vendar bi le v redkih primerih šli tako daleč, da bi rop razumeli kot legitimno obliko političnega delovanja. Diskurz in praksa situacionistov sta se skozi desetletja umirila in umetniškemu delovanju omogočila, da je postalo kulturni servis. To samo po sebi seveda ni slabo – nasprotno, umetnost lahko nadvse učinkovito zagotavlja kulturne usluge. Toda v zdajšnjem položaju, ko so socialne ustanove, ki so skrbele za te oblike umetniške prakse, ogrožene, se jasneje kažejo protislovja in tako se lahko popolnoma dobronamerni dogodki, kot je poizgredno čiščenje, zdijo žalosten izraz vse večjega socialnega prepada, ki ločuje »skupnosti«, kakršne si poskušajo zamišljati.

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15 Glej Roger Sansi, "Marcel Mauss et le don dans l'art contemporain", v: *Revue du MAUSS*, 2010, št. 36.

16 Raoul Vaneigem, *Revolution in Everyday Life*, London: Action Books, pon. 1972 (1967), str. 39.

THE BROOM EVENT: ART, PROPERTY AND COMMUNITY IN LONDON, 2011

ROGER SANSI

Many contemporary art events intend to have a social impact beyond the art institution. This social impact is often framed around the notion of community. It is often said that the task of the artist ought to give voice or the means of representation to communities. The artist or the artistic collective ought to present themselves more as mediators or facilitators that enable the community to represent itself than as creators or “producers” of artistic objects. This drive of artistic practice towards collective representation has been stimulated by public institutions, which have seen art as a key player in their social policy. In Britain, since the Seventies, “community arts” have been actively promoted by the Arts Council and many public institutions.

In this paper, I want to discuss a recent art event that took place this last summer of 2011. In response to the London riots of this past summer, an art-activist group organised a cleaning of the streets “event”, which I will call “the Broom event”. The objective of the “Broom event” seemed to be not just to clean the streets, but to restore a “sense of community” after the disruption caused by the riots. This case, I think, brings to the fore some of the central issues that such art events raise: their predicted “social effects”, their relation to religious rituals, and how both conform to and perform notions of morality and community that can be highly contentious and contested. But before going into this case, I would like to make some general reflections on the very notion of “collective representation”.

CULTURE AND ANARCHY

The notion of “collective representation” that looms large in the background of much community arts has been a concept familiar in the social sciences since Durkheim’s centennial *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912). Durkheim looked at how collective representations emerge in “moments of collective effervescence”, in which society becomes a visible thing. Perhaps through this notion of collective representation we can address more specifically one of the themes that the 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana is proposing, the relation between religion and art. For Durkheim, “religion” was only the more general, elementary framework of production of collective representations, but of course not the only one. In fact, religion as an institution was a major problem for Durkheim, being a devout defender of the French secular republic. For over a century after the French Revolution, there had been several attempts to create a secular religion in France, a religion without gods, precisely on the premise that besides the existence or not of the supernatural, religion has one essential function: to provide, with collective representations, an image of society. This image of society would be necessary to build any kind of collective morality, a moral order that could contain the drift of contemporary society toward what Durkheim called “*anomie*”. *Anomie* was not just anarchy, but a mismatch between the individual and society, both a disorientation and a lack of recognition of social rules.

For the French state, the promotion of the institutions of “la culture”, the arts, after the French Revolution had been one of the best ways to promote a secular religion, a religion of the state and citizenship, that would fight the drift towards *anomie*. And so cultural policy was invented. In England, Matthew Arnold was an enthusiastic proponent of what he called “Culture”. In his book *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), Arnold warned that the rigid class division of Victorian England could lead the country to anarchy since the English, he said, had no notion of the State, the nation, in its collective. “Culture”, for Arnold, was the remedy to this drift toward anarchy: culture seeks to promote equality and to do away with classes, in the sense of providing a common ground and a common image through which all classes could recognise themselves as part of a greater unified whole, the nation as a collective.

In “A Hundred Years of Culture and Anarchy”, written precisely in 1969, Raymond Williams described how Arnold was horrified at riots, such as those which erupted in July

1866 after a protest to ask for the right of working class men to vote, the so-called “Hyde Park Riots”. For Arnold, the government had a duty to repress anarchy and disorder, because without order there could be no society, and without society there could be no human perfection. Williams responded, a hundred years later, that

“[t]he attachment to reason, to informed argument, to considered public decisions ... requires something more than an easy rhetorical contrast with the practices of demonstration and direct action.”¹

For Williams, there was also “culture” contained in riots; in fact, riots were a long-standing tradition in England. He was writing this a year after 1968, and some years after E. P. Thompson had published the monumental *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), which had brilliantly described the politics, and the culture, behind many of the riots that took place in England in the eighteenth century.

I will come back to the theme of culture, anarchy and riots later. At this point, the question remains: whose society, or whose community, is being represented by culture in Arnold’s sense? How and to what end? These questions are not new. But they are inevitable if we address art events with the pretension of representing communities, of bringing people together, like “the Broom event”.

THE ENGLAND RIOTS, 2011.

On August 9th of 2011, crowds gathered in different points in London, responding to the Twitter campaign “riot-cleanup”, organised by the artist Dan Thompson. These crowds carried brooms with them; some newspapers called them the “broom army”.² Interviewed by BBC, Thompson said that “the footage last night [the 8th of August] of high streets and independent shops burning was terrifying to watch and I wanted to find a way to help that was quick, simple and practical.”³

He was making reference to the riots that had started in Tottenham, North London, on the night of the 6th of August. The Tottenham riot had started as a protest against the death of a young black man at the hands of the police. Initially, it looked like an anti-racist riot, similar to the Brixton riots of the 80s, but it soon became much wider,

1 Raymond Williams, *Culture and Materialism*, London: Penguin, 2005, p. 8.

2 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/in-pictures-14490167>

3 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-14456857>

spreading through many neighborhoods in London and other cities in the UK, and involving people of different ethnic backgrounds and ages. Shops were looted and burnt, along with cars and buses, and some people were run over by cars and died.

The event, called the England Riots in its aftermath, constituted the most serious bout of civil unrest in a generation. The count is five dead (including the police victim whose death sparked the riots) and more than 3,000 arrested. The sentences were draconian: a young woman, a single mother, was jailed for accepting as a present a pair of stolen shorts.⁴ Two young men who incited people to riot by setting up “events” on Facebook were condemned to four years in jail (by the way, both “events” were totally unsuccessful, nobody answered the calls).⁵

UNESCO has officially complained about the jailing of youths under legal age without previous convictions. These sentences, it was said at the time, were “exemplary”. The official answer from Her Majesty’s government came late (the Prime Minister and the mayor of London were on holiday), but when it arrived, it was clear: the riots were criminality pure and simple.⁶ The expression “unacceptable behaviour” was often used. The mayor of London, Boris Johnson, who immediately joined (at least in front of the cameras) the riotcleanup campaign, explicitly said live that the rioters must “stop hearing economic and sociological justifications” for their actions. When Ken Livingstone, former mayor of London, noted that the economic crisis and the funding cuts had affected many sectors of society, he was accused of cynicism and immorality by the *Daily Mail*.⁷ The official discourse was framed in moral terms, good and evil, law abiding citizens against criminals. In other terms, the government and the mayor tried, from the very start, to deny that the riots had a meaning; they tried to deny their condition of being an event. The riots were described as a non-event, something that shouldn’t have happened, and that wouldn’t happen again if the government applied “the full force of the law”, in the words of the Prime Minister.

But some months after the events, the government could not abstain from producing a “sociological justification”, or better, a quasi-sociological justification, for the riots. The argument would be an answer to the following

question: What can explain the fact that there is a whole section of the population that does not respect private property? The criminals were not just criminals, the usual suspects; for once, there were A LOT of them, and many of them underage. This was not simply crime, it was something more, it was a statistical fact. Some government ministers started to elaborate a discourse on class. The Work and Pensions secretary, Ian Duncan Smith, blamed Welfare and the destruction of the traditional, biparental family (the lack of a “father figure” in single-parent families has often been referenced). Welfare dependence and single-parent families, the argument would go, have created an underclass of irresponsible individuals with no respect for private property. The Minister of Justice, Ken Clarke, qualified the people involved in the riots as a “criminal class”, “a feral underclass, cut off from the mainstream in everything but its materialism”,⁸ which should be addressed not just with better policing but with policy, essentially a schooling system that teaches them discipline. Finally, the Secretary of Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, described the rioters as members of an uneducated, unemployed underclass.⁹ All these voices describe an (under)class of criminals, perhaps human, but feral, in no case recognisable as citizens.

Uneducated subclass or feral underclass, it doesn’t matter so much; the fact is that by recognising that the riots are a manifestation of a certain social class, a particular configuration of the social structure that has been manifested through this event, they have come to recognise the historicity of the England Riots, that the riots were, indeed, a meaningful historical event.

THE BROOM ARMY

Thompson’s initiative with riotcleanup was proposing a quick, explicit response to this event, by producing a counter-event, which here I called “the Broom event”. This counter-event could not be just a literal “cleaning up” of the streets, but also had to be a symbolic one: the images of the clean-up were as or more important than the cleaning itself. In fact, some of these cleaning brigades could not actually clean much, since the council cleaning services had already done the job.

Thompson’s initiative was quickly taken over by many other people who didn’t even know he’d started it. And in

4 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/aug/19/riots-mother-looted-shorts-freed>

5 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/aug/16/facebook-riot-calls-men-jailed>

6 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/video/2011/aug/09/david-cameron-riots-criminality-video>

7 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/aug/10/riots-reflect-society-run-greed-looting>

8 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/sep/05/punishment-rioters-help?intcmp=239>

9 <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/communities/2038725>

fact, his campaign wasn't the only one that tried to react to the riots: other campaigns started, like neighbourhood gatherings, post-it walls, etc. The objective of all these events was to produce at the same time a counter-event and the image of a counter-event. The counter-event was very clearly seeking the production of images since it was very clear that to be recognized as such, the event had to have an immediate repercussion in the media at an international level. Without the media, there is no event.

And in all cases, they all looked very much like the artistic events that in this Biennial have been described in terms of a gift economy, from the voluntary service of cleaning the streets, to the "improvisational messaging" practices of hanging post-its on a wall, to the communal meals, etc. If these counter-events were not exactly art events, they used the rhetoric and the methods of art events very skilfully.

By mid August, Thomson made an interesting reflection on riotcleanup. He said that both the riots and the riotcleanup, the event and the counter-event, were both forms of anarchy:

Anarchy, says Wikipedia, may be "a complete lack of authority or political organization", but it can also mean "a social state characterized by a lack of a state, ruler, or libertarianism". So while the lawlessness of people smashing shop windows to steal trainers or burning furniture shops down was anarchic, so equally was the mob that, without any leaders or instructions, gathered brooms and dustpans and brushes and took to the streets to clean up on Tuesday. They hadn't signed up to a manifesto or an agreed set of rules or beliefs. Nobody was in charge of them, or told them what to do. They were hundreds of individuals who, without leadership or state intervention, took to the streets and worked out a new way of doing things.¹⁰

Anarchy, for Thompson, is neutral; so is Twitter, he said, which can be used both for bad and for good things. Thompson concluded with the following statement: "I will carry on, as I have since I was 13, using the arts to bring people together."

Thompson has been working in community arts for a while now. He is the founder of the "Revolutionary Arts" collective, which has produced many different kinds of

events: "open houses in Worthing and Horsham; painted giant murals with young people; exhibited work by hundreds of artists in galleries, arts centres, empty shops and churches; published a poetry anthology; used environmentally-friendly paint to produce a massive panorama in an eco-centre; managed community arts festivals; and sent artists and poets back to school to inspire children." Probably the most interesting initiative of Revolutionary Arts is the Empty Shops Network. Empty Shops works with the idea of using abandoned shops, restoring them and using them temporarily as art spaces. The idea behind Empty Shops is to revitalize high streets that have been affected by the rise of department stores or shopping malls. In this sense, it is quite understandable that Thompson felt directly interpolated when he witnessed on TV the looting of shops in high streets around London.

RIOTWHITEWASH

Riotcleanup was the subject of serious criticisms in activist networks. One blog described riotcleanup as riot whitewash, or in other terms, a riot "covering up" – attempting to "clean up the mess" before asking any questions about who was ultimately responsible for the riots. The author of the blog, by the pseudonym of Dr. Sophia Himmelblau, points to the implicit references of riotcleanup to the World War II "Blitz spirit", the "Keep calm and carry on" that can often be heard in situations of distress and adversity in England, which seems to define the English middle-class ethos: being sensible, stoicism in the face of adversity. And yet, as she says:

"Art and brooms isn't going to fix this particular problem (...) It's not 1940, the destruction of the urban fabric is not wrought by foreign bombs, but by kids from the broom-brigade's own neighbourhoods."¹¹

The claims to a "community" that events like riotcleanup are making are problematic:

"Either the 'community' presented in the continually replayed displays of good-citizenship genuinely exists, in which case, the rioters are as much a part of it as the sweepers, or alternatively, it doesn't actually exist and its appearance serves merely as a convenient ideological fiction."¹²

¹⁰ <http://www.artistsandmakers.com/article.php/20110812051756469>

¹¹ <http://universityforstrategicoptimism.wordpress.com/2011/08/10/riotcleanup-or-riotwhitewash/>

¹² Ibid.

Events like riotcleanup seem to be produced by a white middle class that excludes or sweeps away the demonised rioters, an outburst of evil, chastised as an underclass to be disposed of. In fact, she finally argues, the event:

“... serves primarily to divide those, who in the words of Henri Lefebvre (and later David Harvey), have ‘the right to the city’ from those who do not, but also from those who can expect to be treated as citizens under the rule of law, and those who are excluded by virtue of their status as non-citizens.”¹³

Furthermore, the voluntarism of riotcleanup seems to fit in perfectly into the “Big Society” discourse that the government has used as an ideological tool for the dismantling of the Welfare State: basically the Big Society programme proposes to replace many public services (the “Big State”) with voluntary and charity work. In fact, riotcleanup was quickly co-opted by London mayor Boris Johnson.

The blog received an enormous amount of responses, most of them clearly negative, many of them from people who had actually participated in the cleanups. They pointed out that the crowds that gathered under the clean-up event were not exclusively white or middle-class, and that they genuinely wanted not just to clean the street but also to restore a certain sense of community. All of this is probably true. And yet Himmelblau’s point remains clear: it is still true that riotcleanup didn’t challenge the demonisation of the rioters but actually reinforced it by trying to show the “good side” of the community. And it is also still true that it is highly problematic to identify what actual community they are making reference to, and what community were the rioters betraying.

COMMUNITY?

The meaning of “community” in contemporary English is highly contentious, but it often seems to stand as a euphemism for poor and ethnically populated neighbourhoods. Sometimes it is even used regardless of location – just in reference to ethnic groups, like “the West Indian community”. But in few cases will one hear of rich areas like Knightsbridge being defined as a “community” or any reference to the “White community” or the “White English community”. In any case, the discourse of community seems incompatible with the discourse of class, and has, in fact, been most commonly used in the recent decades to water

down the discourse of class. Community arts, such as those promoted by Dan Thompson, have been an integral part of the Welfare State in the UK since the 70s. It would be very unfair to say that community arts have just been instrumental in the replacement of a discourse of class by a discourse of community. But it is quite clear that, following a tradition of cultural policy that in England can be traced back to Arnold, community arts have been part of a larger cultural and political project to create a more cohesive society where class differences would at least lose their edge, or, in other terms, where most people would become middle-class. This Welfare State project has been led since World War II by the Labour Party, and it is mainly since then that the British middle class has been formed into what we know it as today, with its origin myths in the “Blitz spirit”, “Keep calm and carry on” and so forth... Only the Conservatives, in fact, seem perfectly at ease using the term “class”, though clearly just to make reference to the classless: the “criminal class”, the “feral underclass”... This so-called “underclass” actually emerged as the result of the post-industrial neoliberal reforms started by the Thatcher governments, which sent masses of industrial workers to structural unemployment, under the camouflaged version of “benefits”, transforming the long-term unemployed into the disabled, the unfit, the single parents, etc. A Welfare State that was designed to transform the working class into a middle class, creating a niche of structural inequality, between an underclass living on benefits and a middle class that was paying for them with their taxes. The New Labour governments that followed Thatcher didn’t change this basic policy, only improved the benefits. A generation later, the same conservatives have become popular amongst the middle class with their blunt rejection of the underclass and the “benefit culture” they created. The 2008 crisis has given the perfect excuse for the destruction of these programmes. Under the banner of the Big Society and the “we are all in this together”, the most aggressive set of cuts in public spending since World War II has been implemented. The first who have been directly touched by the cuts are the younger generations of this so-called “underclass”. The draconian cuts in the London councils have meant the closure of most youth centers, and public libraries. The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), a financial scheme applicable to students and those undertaking unpaid work after 16, was cancelled in 2010. In 2011, the threshold of the tuition fees to be paid at British universities was raised from 3,000 to 9,000 pounds. This was partially thought of as a compensation given to universities for the 80 per cent cut in the teaching budget. The cancellation of EMA and the increase in tuition fees were at the origin of massive protests in 2010, protests that also generated vi-

13 Ibid.

olence. Nobody seems to remember those protests now, or make a connection with the summer riots, but in fact, one cannot understand these two “events” independently. The wave of massive protests against the tuition fees in late 2010, especially two big demonstrations in November and December, brought London to a standstill. The first protest, culminated in the brief occupation of the conservative headquarters in Millbank and a picture that made the first page of many newspapers worldwide, often with the motto “Anarchy in the UK” and no shortage of references to the Sex Pistols, of course. However, the scenes of violence that day were quite tame if we compare them with what we saw in the weeks after, especially the big demonstration of December 9, 2010. There, the demonstrations were “kettled” (closed) in Westminster Square, and some demonstrators smashed the windows of the surrounding buildings, burnt some fires and graffitied the monument to Winston Churchill. The demonstrators were attacked with horses and some were “kettled” (closed) on the Westminster Bridge for hours. These demonstrations didn’t have any apparent direct effect on the government – which did not withdraw the increase in tuition fees; but this was a period of political effervescence and mobilization, where several political initiatives with clear inspiration in art events emerged. One was the University For Strategic Optimism, a group that was basically applying Situationist techniques to the current political and economic situation. One of their first pranks was the occupation of banks to make their lectures. One of the best things that the UfSO did was to hold a lecture on Violence, live at the December 9th demonstration.¹⁴

Partially inspired by the UfSO, groups like UK Uncut started to occupy shops owned by tax-dodging companies and banks. The blogger I just mentioned is a member of the UfSO. The contradictory reactions she got to her piece merely show the contradictory situation that the summer riots have provoked amongst activist/art collectives. Many felt offended by Sophia’s bashing of riotcleanup as white and middle-class. And yet, this was indeed the crux of the issue. The activist-artistic groups that organized UfSO or UK Uncut are middle-class, people who could have also worked (and perhaps did) in projects like Empty Shops, and who perhaps participated in riotcleanup. The kind of people who would organize a performance at a bank, but probably not the kind of people who would rob a betting shop. And the summer riots did actually put them in a difficult political situation.

The summer riots were putting in a much clearer spotlight the class violence that has become blatant in English society: the explicit attack by the Conservative government on the so-called underclass is putting the middle classes in a very difficult situation as well. They seem to have two options: either they side with the Conservatives to sweep away the “criminal classes”, or fall with them into hopelessness.

CONCLUSIONS. RIOTS AND RITUALS.

To conclude, I would like to come back to the four themes under which the 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts has classified art events: generosity, violence, ritual, emptiness. I understand these are not mutually exclusive themes, and yet to me they are actually different aspects of what anthropologists have called “ritual”. First, under the theme “ritual”, the Biennial proposes art events with explicit references to religious ceremonies, and this is indeed an important aspect of rituals, which anthropologists have always studied, as rituals don’t have to be religious but in all cases make reference to something that is not present. But more than that, the other themes also resonate with anthropological approaches to ritual. Emptiness, as I have understood it, seems to make reference essentially to space and context, how a change of place or the transformation of a space has symbolic effects; it turns the world upside down, it upsets the position of the subject. This is also the central feature of ritual, in particular of its archetype *les rites de passage*, which are essentially rituals of displacement from one place to another, in a situation of liminality, a passage through the *limes*, the border, the empty zone in which the subject loses her identity to gain another one. Yet another theme, violence, is unquestionably central to ritual, not just because rituals are often acts of symbolic violence, of imposition of truth, but also more literally because of the centrality of sacrifice to many ritual acts. Sacrifice, as Mauss and Hubert said, is essentially an act of communication. And violence, we could say, in general, is also an act of communication. There is no such a thing as meaningless violence. Which brings me to the last – or, in fact, the first – theme of the Biennial: generosity. That has been a central theme of anthropology since Mauss’ essay *The Gift*. *The Gift* became a direct influence on artists and intellectuals in France in the 1930s. Bataille borrowed Mauss’ ideas in his *La Part Maudite* (1949), where he proposed nothing less than a political economy based on abundance and expenditure rather than scarcity and utility. Mauss’ description of the “potlatch”, as a manifestation of absolute excess and prodigality, was central to Bataille’s argument.

¹⁴ <http://universityforstrategicoptimism.wordpress.com/conference-on-violence/>

Bataille was fascinated by what Mauss calls “the pleasure of spending”.¹⁵ Bataille was interested in the creative potential of *expenditure* itself. The potlatch is central to his argument precisely because it turns expense into a public spectacle.

The Situationists were also extremely influenced by Mauss, through Bataille – after all, their journal was called *Potlatch*. What they found shocking and inspiring about the potlatch was its apparent, spectacular economic irrationality: the potlatch was a carefully organised ritual of expenditure in which the hosts would give to the guests countless gifts; sometimes there were more things to give away than guests, and in these cases, the hosts destroyed their gifts rather than keeping them. Bataille and the Situationists saw in the potlatch the opposite to capitalist accumulation – “the pleasure of spending”.

In fact, the potlatch was not only a ritual of generosity; it also contained all the other themes mentioned in the Biennial. The potlatch is also a spiritual or religious ritual, since it tells a story of ancestry and rank, where potlatches are given away to acquire a rank, in relationship to an ancestral clan. The potlatch also touches on the theme of emptiness: “turning the house upside down”, sometimes even burning it, is basically the same act that the artist that empties the gallery. In fact, an artist who did exactly one of these events in Barcelona in the Nineties, emptying a gallery, told me that the potlatch precisely was an inspiration. Finally, and this is the most important thing, the potlatch is also an act of violence. Potlatches were competitive, people threw potlatches to gain more fame and rank than their personal enemies; and the destructive outcome of some potlatches is the final outcome of that competition. In fact, this is the result of a historical process: contact with Western traders in the late nineteenth century brought in a overflow of commodities, and blankets and copper, in particular, which were once highly valuable, became objects of conspicuous consumption for potlatches. To outdo an enemies’ potlatch, one had to show generosity and liberality to the extent of being able to burn their own property in order to show detachment. This “destruction of property” alarmed the British colonial authorities in Canada, who banned the potlatch. For both missionaries and colonial administrators, the potlatch was seen as a great obstacle to civilization – capitalist civilization, that is – the natives, it was said, had no respect for private property.

The Situationists, oppositely, were enthusiastic about anything that could be seen as a challenge to private property. But they were less interested in the violent and hierarchical aspects of the potlatch. The potlatch has, in fact, a double face, both generosity and the production of community, and violence and the reproduction of hierarchy. At the height of the Sixties, Raoul Vaneigem wrote:

The insufficiency of the feudal gift means that new human relationships must be built on the principle of pure giving. We must rediscover the pleasure of giving: giving because you have so much. What beautiful and priceless potlatches the affluent society will see – whether it likes it or not! – when the exuberance of the younger generation discovers the pure gift. The growing passion for stealing books, clothes, food, weapons or jewelry simply for the pleasure of giving them away gives us a glimpse of what the will to live has in store for consumer society.¹⁶

Stealing, for Vaneigem and the Situationists was clearly a political act, the ultimate political act, in fact, in a society of mass consumption. The problem with mass consumption for these authors was not “materialism” or the immorality of excess, but the collectively held fiction of private property, the commodity fetish.

Most artistic collectives that engage with community arts and who promote art events nowadays would recognise themselves as direct descendants of the Situationists, and yet, in few cases would they go so far as to understand robbery as a legitimate form of political action. The discourse and practice of the Situationists has been domesticated over the last decades to provide for an artistic practice that has become a cultural service. This in itself is, of course, not a bad thing – just the opposite – art can, in fact, be very effective in providing cultural services. But in the current situation, when the welfare institutions that fostered these forms of artistic practice are under threat, the contradictions arise more clearly, and so perfectly well-intentioned events like riot cleanup can appear as sombre manifestations of the growing social abyss that separates the “communities” they were trying to imagine.

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15 See Roger Sansi, “Marcel Mauss et le don dans l’art contemporain”, in *Revue du MAUSS*, 2010, no. 36.

16 Raoul Vaneigem, *Revolution in Everyday Life*, London: Action Books, 1972 [1967], p. 39.





Mark Požlep,
***Napalm Your Personal Disco*, 2010/2011.**

Performans, izveden na Metelkova ulici v Ljubljani / Performance carried out in Metelkova Street in Ljubljana.
(Z dovoljenjem umetnika in MGLC / Courtesy of the artist and MGLC, fotografija / photo: Jaka Bahnik.)

KAJ JE V DOGODKU?

HENRIETTA L. MOORE

PREVOD

ALEKSANDRA REKAR

Premišljevanje o umetnostnih dogodkih nam omogoča zastavljanje starih vprašanj na nove načine. Kaj umetnost naredi za nas? Kaj pričakujemo od umetnosti? Kaj si lahko obetamo, ko se odpravimo na umetniški dogodek? Umetnostne ustanove se vsekar zavedajo, da so se pričakovanja njihovega občinstva spremenila, kar je v veliki meri očitno v usmeritvi k participaciji. Oblikovala se je nenavadna oblika »demokracije«, v okviru katere ne sprašujemo več, kaj utegne umetniško delo zahtevati od gledalca/udeleženca/obiskovalca galerije – namesto tega se sprašujemo, kaj je tisto, kar ta zahteva od umetniškega dela. Eden od možnih odzivov je domneva, da je to, kar se zahteva od umetniškega dela, poistovetenje umetnosti z življenjem, zlasti z življenjem skupnosti. Umetniški dogodki vseh vrst so ključ do tega premika, ki obsega tudi premike, ki zadevajo oblike subjektifikacije. Zahteva po participaciji premore določen antropološki pridih, kot je očitno iz narave številnih sodobnih umetniških dogodkov in umetniških del, ki pogosto eksplicitno uporabljajo materiale in teme, ki imajo opraviti bodisi s fantazijami o drugosti (denimo fetiši, obred, eksorcizem) bodisi s fantazijami o povezanosti z »resničnim življenjem« (revščina, politični komentar, reševanje sveta). Pričujoči članek obravnava nedavne umetniške dogodke in umetniška dela ter preučuje vprašanje, kaj v zdajšnjem trenutku zahtevamo od umetnosti.

Umetniški dogodki so raznovrstni in se dogajajo v številnih prostorih vseh vrst, toda če razpravo omejimo na tiste, ki so povezani s sodobno umetnostjo, tedaj našo pozornost pritegne pojem *sodobnega*. V kakšnem smislu je sodobna umetnost sodobna; kaj ta lastnost, sodobnost, daje gledalcu/udeležencu? Biti sodoben po-

meni, da imaš singularno razmerje s svojim časom, da nisi zgolj v trenutku, pač pa ga obravnavaš z določene perspektive. To ustvari nenavadno razdaljo ali neskladje, kajti trditi, da je umetnost sodobna, ne pomeni, da je ustvarjena tukaj in zdaj, marveč prej namiguje na to, da stoji zunaj zgodovinskega trenutka svojega nastanka in priskrbi – če že ne dejanske kritike – vsaj gledišče, bežen pogled, trenutek vpogleda, punktum. Sodobno torej ni nikoli resnično stvar trenutka; ideja, po kateri nam ponudi neposreden dostop do sedanjosti, je zmotna, nemara fantazija. V resničnosti si lahko sodobna umetnost lasti ta status samo z zaznamovanjem sedanjosti kot arhaične, priključene temu, kar že velja za *passé*. To nas utegne približati pojasnilu, čemu obliko, ki jo ima sedanjost znotraj sodobne umetnosti, pravzaprav zaznamujejo podobe arhaičnega, primitivnega in nostalgичnega. Toda nemara obstaja še en razlog, zakaj je tako. Agamben meni, da je tisto, kar ovira neposreden dostop do sedanjosti, natanko to, česar iz določenega razloga (travma, presežek) nismo zmogli živeti ali imeti za zmožno življenje.¹ V tem smislu biti sodoben pomeni biti uglasen na sedanjost, ki je nismo zmožni v celoti naseliti. Menim, da je v naravi sodobne umetnosti, da nas ogradi od sedanjosti ali pa doseže, da sedanjost občutimo zgolj v partikularni obliki. Priskrbi nam niz fantazmatskih logik za obravnavanje tega, česar ne zmoremo živeti, za neživeto v nas.

Umetniški dogodek je za to obliko sodobnega prizorišča *par excellence*, saj dramatizira delovanje fantazije, ki je osrednja za vse oblike reprezentacije. Narava umetniškega dogodka se je v zadnjih štiridesetih letih dramatično spremenila: ponuja nova prizorišča in nove mehanizme za raznovrstne tipe interakcije z umetniškimi deli, pa tudi za raziskovanje fantazij o znanju, presojanju in želji. Z osredinjenjem na umetniški dogodek lahko prikažemo, kako se je začelo spreminjati naše razmerje do umetniškega dogodka. Umetnost performansa, denimo, je že ena od oblik umetniškega dogodka. Nekoč je šlo pri tem za opazovanje umetnika, ki se preoblači, si prebada telo ali se pretvarja, da je pes – zdaj pa gledalci/obiskovalci galerij od umetnosti performansa zahtevajo nekaj več. Želijo biti njegov del, želijo sodelovati, postati ustvarjalci, njegovi so-proizvajalci. Zahteva po osebni razmerju do dela je sestavni del demokratizacije umetnosti in umetnostnih prostorov, ki je potekala v dvajsetem in enaindvajsetem stoletju ter jo najbrž krepijo nove oblike združevanja in ustvarjanja pomena, ki jih ponujajo tehnologija in druge kulturne prakse, kot

sta Flickr in tvitanje. Zahteva po »biti na prizorišču« obsega nove oblike presoje, ki so odvisne od različnih tipov participacije in ki v tem smislu priskrbijo temelj politiki ljudi, demokratično vpletenost v umetnost. Nedavni zgled tega premika v smeri participacije bi bilo lahko delo *The Artist is Present*, ironično poimenovani performans Marine Abramović, med katerim so obiskovalci Muzeja moderne umetnosti v New Yorku sedeli nasproti negibne umetnice, kolikor časa so želeli. Marina Abramović je nepremično sedela na istem stolu od trenutka, ko je muzej odprl vrata, do tedaj, ko se je zaprl. Naslov dela pripravno kaže na dvojno premestitev. Kot je pričakovati pri umetnosti performansa, je prva v tem, da je fokus v večji meri na umetnici kot na delu, ali bolje rečeno, umetnica iz sebe dela umetnino. Pri drugi premestitvi pa ne gre za to, da bi jo opravil umetnik z umetnino, pač pa udeleženci z umetnikom. To ni prvič, da je Abramovićeva povabila gledalce, naj bodo sestavni del njenega umetniškega dela, vendar so ljudje do konca dogodka, vse do noči stali v vrsti, da bi lahko v njem tudi sodelovali. To, kar to delo ponuja gledalcu/udeležencu, je potencialno osebno razmerje z umetnostjo, vendar takšno, ki seže onstran gole presoje in nagovarja privlačnejšo fantazijo, pri kateri je užitek povezan s pomenom in z vrednostjo: »Tudi jaz sem umetnik.« »Tudi jaz lahko ustvarjam vrednost in pomen.«

Participacijo kot obliko demokratizacije neizbrisno zaznamuje užitek, tako užitek v potrošnji kot užitek pri izrabi prostega časa. Zahteva po participaciji je postala zaščitni znak umetnosti kot kulturne prakse prvih dveh desetletij novega stoletja. Občinstvo ni več zadovoljno zgolj s tem, da obiskuje muzeje, galerije in druge kulturne ustanove. Sodelovati želi na vse mogoče načine. Kulturne ustanove vseh vrst se dobro zavedajo spreminjajočih se zahtev svojega občinstva in tako so umetnostne ustanove zdaj prostori za izrabljanje prostega časa in druženje, prostori skupnosti. Velja pripomniti, da je ta demokratizacija umetnosti in kulture v največji meri nastopila, ko je tržni neoliberalizem pripeljal do cikla napredka. Muzeji, umetnostne galerije in drugi kulturni prostori so zadnjih dvajset let doživljali razcvet, vse bolj poučeno in dejavno občinstvo pa izkazuje ogromno zanimanje za kulturo. Pomembni muzeji in galerije po vsem svetu so zdaj orjaški prostori za preživljanje prostega časa. Tate Modern v Londonu ima tako skoraj pet milijonov obiskovalcev na leto.

Toda najnovejši umetnostni fenomen je umetnostni sejem. Umetnostni sejmi so poseben tip prostora/dogodka, ki ponuja še druge oblike interakcije s fantazijami,

1 Giorgio Agamben, *Nudities*, prev. David Kishik in Stefan Pedatella, Stanford (Kalifornija): Stanford University Press, 2010, str. 17–18.

povezanimi z védenjem in željo. Leta 2010 je bilo po vsem svetu 260 pomembnejših umetnostnih sejmov, ki jih je vse sponzoriral poslovni svet, med njimi proizvajalci modnih oblačil in pijač. Poleg del, ki so na ogled, takšni sejmi ponujajo dogodke in pogovore, a tudi slastno hrano in izbrane pijače. To so prostori čistega ugodja. Tovrstne sejme obiskuje ogromno število ljudi. Leta 2011 je na umetnostnem sejmu Frieze v Londonu sodelovalo 170 galerij, pritegnil pa je 60 tisoč obiskovalcev. Večina ljudi, ki obiskujejo umetnostne sejme, si ne more privoščiti kupovanja umetnin – kaj jih torej zanima? Kaj jim ponuja umetnost? Eden od preprostih odgovorov bi se glasil, da je umetnost postala oblika preživetja prostega časa, še ena oblika potrošnje v postmilenijskem kapitalizmu, ki si ga je prilastil trg. To zagotovo drži, vendar pa nas ne pripelje prav daleč, ko poskušamo odgovoriti na vprašanje, kaj umetnost naredi za nas kot subjekte. Kaj priteguje ljudi na umetnostne sejme in ne k drugim oblikam preživetja prostega časa? Očitno je, da se umetnost poigrava z razliko med fantazijo in resničnostjo. Oba, sodobna umetnost in umetnostni trg, sta v splošnem mesto mnogovrstnih fantazij z različnimi logikami, posamezniki pa razvijajo fantazije na individualne načine. Toda fantazije se povežejo pri vprašanju védenja in vrednosti, skrajno poosebljeno razmerje do njiju pa postane možno, ko umetnost in njeno presojanje postaneta del oblik subjektifikacije in ustvarjanja samega sebe, utemeljenih na procesih potrošnje. Umetnostni sejem je začasen prostor, ki dokaj odkrito trguje z idejo, da kot obiskovalec sodelujete v ekskluzivnem, če že ne zvezdniškem življenjskem slogu. Ne gre le za to, da na takih sejmih utegnate srečati zvezdnike vseh vrst; sodelovanje na njih priključuje spremljajoče fantazije o ustvarjanju bogastva, ustvarjanju nečesa iz nič, podobno kot pri zadetku na loteriji ali pa nemara prepoznanju novega Jeffa Koonsa. Imeti v lasti vednost je v sfantaziranem razmerju z vrednostjo, »biti dobro obveščen« pa potrjuje subjektovo mesto znotraj ekskluzivne skupine. Subjekt se poistoveti z drugim, tako z umetnikom kot ustvarjalcem pomena kot z zvezdnikom/zbiralcem/galeristom, ki ima v rokah ključ do tega, kako se vednost preobrazi v vrednost. Po tem scenariju je drugi mesto popolnega užitka, subjekt pa je pritegnjen v nadomestno potrošnjo tako drugega kot njegovega užitka. Za subjekt je ustvarjanje samega sebe vezano na neutrudno iskanje pomena in vrednosti, pri čemer ga vednost, bistrumnost in presoja kot oblike potrošnje postavijo znotraj razširjene naracije pomena, kjer ima iluzijo, da ustvarja pomen, ugotavlja vrednost in ustvarja bogastvo. Odtod zapeljiva moč umetnostnega sejma kot mesta uživanja.

Toda umetnostni sejem kot dogodek trguje z zapletenimi fantazijami *schadenfreude* – z nepopisno prijetno možnostjo, da utegnejo biti vsi izvedenci in bogati zbiralci v zmoti ter da se bodo dela, ki se zdijo dragocena, izkazala kot ničvredna, da arbitri okusa v resnici ne premorejo prave vednosti o vrednosti. »Je to umetnost?«, »Je to resnično?«, »Zakaj je tale reč toliko vredna?«, »Le kdo bi zapravljaj denar za kaj takega?« Umetnostni sejem je performativni prostor, v katerem se lahko izkaže, da je cesar gol. Participacija in presojanje torej ponujata sredstvi tako za poistovetenje kot za kritiko, ki skupaj dosežeta, da je fantazija o umetnosti kot resnično dragoceni še toliko prepričljivejša. Subjekt se poistoveti z dragocenostjo in s trošenjem denarja, vendar ju sočasno zanika. Vrednost kapitalizma leži v njegovi zmožnosti, da zaobjame lastne kritike. Nedavni primer tega je bilo videti na umetnostnem sejmu Frieze leta 2011: *Credit Card Destroying Machine* Michaela Landyja. Obiskovalec je naprosil, naj predajo svoje kreditne kartice, ki jih je nato nemudoma pogoltnila čudna naprava, izdelana iz prestav, žag, mehkih igračk in raznovrstnih najdenih predmetov. Ko je naprava na tla izpljunila ostanke kreditne kartice, je obiskovalec v zameno prejel risbo, ki jo je izdelala naprava, podpisal pa umetnik. Kot razmislek o ustvarjanju ter uničevanju vrednosti in bogastva projekt ni bil prav globokoumen, vendar se je zdelo, da obiskovalci uživajo v iluziji, ki jo je priskrbel: da so obenem kritiki in žrtve kapitalizma ter finančnih trgov. Absurdnost ustvarjanja vrednosti in umetnosti kot vrednosti je lepo zaobseglo dejstvo, da umetnine ni ustvaril umetnik, marveč stroj, in da je zatem prek dejanja podpisal neutemeljeno pridobila vrednost. Sam stroj je vaja v nostalgiji, je obenem retro in nekakšna sestavljanica, videti je kakor leteči stroj iz Studia Ghibli, ustvarjen za potrebe nostalgije anime. Toda tudi kritika kapitalizma, ki jo uteleša, je oblika nostalgije, saj tako ideal kot njegovo transgresijo uteleša na način, ki naposled okrepi ideal. Neko drugo delo na Friezu je bilo celo nedvoumnejše. Pri delu Christiana Jankowskega *The Finest Art on Water* je šlo za luksuzno jahto, spremenjeno v umetnino. V času sejma se je trgovec s plovili spremenil v galerista in dejansko je bilo nemogoče določiti, ali gre za instalacijo ali za del navtičnega sejma. Edina prava razlika je bila v ceni. Omenjena razkošna jahta sicer stane 65 milijonov evrov, kot umetnina pa je bila ocenjena na 75 milijonov evrov. Če je bilo to mišljeno kot kritika naše sokrivde v kapitalizmu ali kot komentar na visoke cene, ki jih zahtevajo za umetnine, je bila ironija vse preveč bežna, da bi bila privlačna.

Ena od stvari, za katere upamo, da jih bo ponudila so-

dobna umetnost – ena od definicij sodobne umetnosti – je, da bi morala biti nekakšno dejanje. Dejanje, ki zareže po naših fantazijah o sebi in o tem, kakšen je svet, ter doseže, da stvari uzremo drugače – da razkrije praznino v središču moči. Umetnost kot dejanje naj bi bila srečanje z resničnim – razkritje spodletelosti simbolnih, uveljavljenih oblik reprezentacije. Toda to, kar razkrijejo umetniški dogodki, je, da dogodek ni isto kot dejanje. Dejanje ni zgolj to, da nekaj počneš, temveč to, da to nekaj počneš z označevalci. Prav ta proces resignifikacije doseže, da svet uzremo v novi luči, priskrbi nam vpogled in postavi temelje za kritiko.² Umetnostni sejem Frieze je bil poln del, pri katerih proces resignifikacije ni pripeljal do ničesar novega. Elmgreenovo in Dragsetovo delo *The Fruit of Knowledge* je obsegalo šimpanza, ki je stal na kupu knjig (*coffee table books*) – skupaj s *Svetim pismom*, *O nastanku vrst* in *Uvodom v kitajsko ekonomijo* – in se zaman stegoval po banani, viseči malce zunaj njegovega dosega. Zdi se, da je delo simboliziralo vrednost in pomen, ki ga sejem obljublja vsakemu obiskovalcu – fantazijo vednosti. Gledalcu laska, češ da je nekdo, ki se spozna na umetnost, vendar to znanje ni novo, ni radikalno. *Sveto pismo*, Darwin itn. nas vodijo k uveljavljeni vednosti. V podobni smeri je Laure Prouvost pripravila serijo nepovezanih znakov, opremljenih z napotki, ki so vodili po vsem sejmu z namenom, da bi razbili prostor in okolje. Šlo je za majhne črne pravokotnike s kratkimi stavki, izpisanimi z belimi črkami: »Ta znak vas je videl prihajati«, »V idealnem primeru vas bo ta znak vzel v svoj objem«, »V idealnem primeru bo ta prostor kvadraten«, »V idealnem primeru bo ta znak tako plemenit, da bo pozabil na to, da je znak«. Bili so šaljivi, begajoči, nemara zamišljeni z namenom, da bi s tem, ko bi učinkovali kot niz dejanj ali znakov brez pravih referentov, preizpraševali oblike reprezentacije in zakoreninjene predpostavke. V idealnem svetu jih nemara tudi bi, vendar so namesto tega padli nazaj vase; ustvarili niso ničesar novega. To je bila skoraj zagotovo posledica tega, da so bili zasnovani z namenom poudarjanja izkušnje obiskovalcev, da so na sejmu, ter nago-varjanja njihove fantazije, češ da participirajo in premorejo vednost o ustvarjanju pomena.

Potreba oziroma zahteva po participaciji se zdi posledica ploščenja reprezentacije, omejevanja umetnosti na življenje, ne takšno, kakršno se živi, pač pa prej prežeto s fantazijami o drugosti kot mestu pomena in vrednosti. Primera tega trenda sta bili še dve deli na Friezu.

Aquarium Project Pierra Huygheja je bil živ ekosistem z morskimi bitji in rakovico iz reda deseteronožcev, ki so naseljevali repliko Brancusijeve skulpture *Speča muza*. Ta podvodni sanjski svet je bil nabit z nostalgijo, nemara umetnost kot »resnično življenje«. Tu participacija zahteva to redukcijo na življenje, na svet, kakršen je – celo tedaj, ko jo poskuša transcendirati. Peles Empire (Katharina Stoeber in Barbara Wolff) je predstavil *Noroc*³, rekonstrukcijo sobane v romunski graščini, ki je obenem služila kot bar. Prostor je vabil k zastavitvi očitnega vprašanja: »Ali je to bar, prostor, salon, umetnina, galerija?« Njegova širša različica pa bi se glasila: »Kaj je umetnost, kar življenje ni?« Ali bi bilo res pomembno, če tisti, ki so pili v baru, ne bi vedeli, da gre za umetniško instalacijo?

Tovrstno delo je sodobno v omejenem pomenu, da je eno z življenjem. Seveda, zaželeno je, da v kulturnih praksah obstaja poudarjena participacija in da mora biti možna brez vsakršnih zahtev po tem, da bi temeljila na specialističnem znanju. Vendar pa s tem ne želim povedati, da se je kapitalizem polastil radikalizma sodobne umetnosti, marveč to, da nova fantazija o dostopu do resničnega prek te fantazije o participaciji in ustvarjanju pomena povezuje dozdevno demokratično umetnost s *soi-distant* demokratično politiko. Ne moremo govoriti o singularnem razmerju do sodobne umetnosti, ki je seveda mesto raznovrstnih fantazij z različnimi logikami. Vendar pa menim, da se fantazije združujejo okrog pojma participacije, v novi obliki politike, pri kateri poistovetenje z zamišljenim drugim vzpostavlja temelj za družbeno preobrazbo. To obsega fantazmatsko različico nadvse dolgožive ideje, po kateri nam umetnost ponuja dostop do resničnega, nam »pove, kako je«, resnici daje obliko. Če se lahko strinjamo, da je ena od vlog fantazije ovirati ali otežiti politizacijo obstoječih družbenih razmerij, zadrževati ali preprečevati družbene spremembe,⁴ kako to deluje? Na kratko: rečemo lahko, da fantazija priskrbi narativne oblike, ki jih gledalci/udeleženci nezavedno ohranjajo, s čimer dosežejo, da so nesoglasja manj verjetna in manj vidna. Katere so te narativne oblike? V povezavi s sodobno umetnostjo obstaja vrsta križajočih se fantazmatskih logik, pri katerih so ideje o participaciji in ustvarjanju pomena navezane na razumevanje umetniške preobrazbe kot na dejansko mesto politične preobrazbe. To mesto je vselej postavljeno nekam drugam, na polje drugega, naj je ta drugi umetnik, izvedenec, lastnik galerije ali celo sama

2 Yannis Stavrakakis, »On Acts, Pure and Impure«, *International Journal of Žižek Studies*, št. 2, letn. 4, 2010. Dostopno na: <http://zizekstudies.org/index.php/ijzs/article/view/250/333>.

3 V romunskem jeziku z besedo *noroc* drugemu zaželiyo srečo, v rabi je tudi pri nazdravljanju. (Op. prev.)

4 Yannis Stavrakakis, »On Acts, Pure and Impure«, op. cit.

umetnina. Toda v številnih umetninah, ki jih zaposluje ukvarjanje z »resničnim življenjem« (revščina, klimatske spremembe in tako naprej) ter z družbenim drugim/izkoriščanim, drugim/razlaščenim, drugim/kulturno drugim, so očitni tudi novi vektorji in mesta drugosti. To ustvarja fantazijo o umetniku, ki ni le v stiku z resničnim, temveč tudi o umetnini, ki premore ali pa je vsaj zmožna prikazati neposreden dostop do drugih in do njihovih okoliščin. Širše gledano je tudi gledalec/udeleženec v stiku z resničnim, kar je zamišljena povezava z drugim, utemeljena na fantaziji o solidarnosti z obubožanimi in trpečimi. Pri tem je umetnost stvar fantaziranja o tem, da zaobsega nekaj, česar ni mogoče zaobseči: resnično resnično. Posledično sta pomen in užitek umeščena v drugem natanko zato, ker subjektu priskrbita fantazijo o resničnem.

Zelo običajna fantazmatska logika se oklepa ideje o umetnosti kot o nečem, kar daje moč ali glas. Recimo: *paraSite* Michaela Rakowitza je trajen projekt, v okviru katerega se umetnik posvetuje z brezdomci in nato gradi po meri izdelana napihljiva zavetišča, ki so povezana z oddušniki ogrevalnega sistema kake stavbe ali z ventilacijo klimatskih naprav. Ta dela ne priskrbijo le ogrevanega zavetišča, temveč tudi pritegnejo pozornost na težaven položaj brezdomcev in na fizične razmere, v katerih živijo. Sorodna logika je na delu tudi pri zamisli o umetnosti kot etnografiji, ki proizvaja dela, pogosto zasnovana na umetnikovem raziskovanju in njegovi neposredni povezanosti s posamezno skupnostjo. Na primer: *Forest Rising* Marjetice Potrč, otoška skupnost, ki lebdi na drevju ter obsega pristajališče za helikopter, šolo, ogrevano s sončno energijo, in satelitski krožnik, temelji na njenem delu z lokalno skupnostjo v brazilski državi Acre. Ta mogočen pogled na amazonsko življenje v enaindvajsetem stoletju je odziv na izsekavanje gozda in višanje vodnih ravni. Nanaša se tudi na nevarnosti globalizacije in klimatskih sprememb. Še pomembneje je, da portretira ruralno življenje kot možno rešitev problemov, povezanih s prihodnjim vzdržnim razvojem – z vizijo skupnosti na drugem koncu sveta, ki nam bo pomagala poiskati pot iz naših dilem. To je umetnost kot oblika politike, o kateri se fantazira kot o »resničnem življenju«. To fantazijsko razmerje do umetnosti je zaščitniško. Zahodnemu subjektu pomaga upravljati z njegovimi občutki in zamislili, pri čemer se izogiba zlomu, do katerega bo prišlo, ko bo treba prepoznati posledice, ki jih za našo blaginjo prinaša obravnavanje skrajnega neskladja med revščino/trpljenjem ter umetnostjo kot obliko ustvarjanja bogastva. Ogromno družbeno neenakost naredi znosno, saj ustvari fantazijo kritike, zasno-

vane na solidarnosti. To je drug način, kako doseči, da je prostočasna potrošnja umetnosti videti, kot da je povezana z reševanjem sveta. Užitek priskrbi skozi poistovetenje z drugim in idejo, da ukvarjanje s kritiko pomeni politiko. S tem ustvarja temeljno fantazijo našega časa, da s svojo zavezanostjo ukrepanju v zvezi s klimatskimi spremembami in degradacijo okolja rešujemo planet, kajti »v tem smo vsi skupaj«. Le da seveda nismo.

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WHAT'S IN AN EVENT?

HENRIETTA L. MOORE

Thinking about art events allows us to pose old questions in new ways: What does art do for us? What do we expect from art? What do we hope for when we go to an art event? Art institutions certainly recognise that the expectations of their audiences have changed, and a large measure of this is evident in the drive towards participation. A strange form of “democracy” has taken shape where we no longer ask what the work might demand of the viewer/participant/gallery-goer, but instead ask what it is that they require of the work. One possible response is to suggest that what is required is the identification of art with life, and particularly with the life of the community. Art events of all kinds are key to this shift, which also involves shifts in modes of subjectification. The demand for participation has a certain anthropological flavour to it, as is evident from the character of many contemporary art events and art works which often make explicit use of materials and themes that deal either with fantasies of otherness (for example, fetishes, ritual, exoticism) or with fantasises of engagement with “real life” (poverty, political comment, saving the world). This presentation discusses recent art events and art works and explores the question of what it seems in the contemporary moment that we demand of art.

Art events are of many kinds and take place in many different sorts of spaces; but if we confine our discussion to those which involve contemporary art, then our attention is drawn to the notion of the contemporary. In what sense is contemporary art contemporary; what does the quality of contemporariness do for the viewer/participant? To be contemporary is to have a singular relationship with one's time, not just to be of the mo-

ment, but to have a particular perspective on it. This creates a strange kind of distance or dissonance, since to claim that art is contemporary does not just mean that it is produced in the here and now but rather implies that it stands outside the historical moment of its production and provides, if not actual critique, then at least a vantage point, a sidelong glance, a moment of insight, a punctum. The contemporary then is never truly of the moment and the idea that it affords us direct access to the present is a misapprehension, perhaps a fantasy. In reality, the contemporary can only claim this status for itself by marking the present as archaic, as being affiliated to what is already figured as *passé*. This may go some way toward explaining why the form that the present takes within contemporary art is in fact characterised by images of the archaic, the primitive and the nostalgic. However, perhaps there is another reason why this should be so. Agamben suggests that what impedes direct access to the present is precisely that which for some reason (trauma or excess) we have not managed to live or to find liveable.¹ In this sense, to be contemporary is to be attuned to a present which we are not capable of fully inhabiting. Contemporary art has this character, I suggest, of blocking us from the present or making the present sensible to us only in a particular form. It provides a set of phantasmatic logics to deal with what we cannot manage to live, the unlived in us.

The art event is the scene *par excellence* for this form of the contemporary because it dramatises the work of fantasy which is central to all forms of representation. The nature of the art event has changed dramatically in the last forty years, offering new venues and new mechanisms for various types of interaction with art works, as well as for the exploration of fantasies of knowledge, discernment and desire. By focusing on the art event, we can begin to chart how our relation to art has been changing. For example, performance art is one kind of art event. It was once a matter of watching the artist dressing up, piercing the body, pretending to be a dog – but now viewers/gallery-goers demand something more of performance art. They want to be a part of it, they want to participate, become creators of meaning, co-producers. The demand for a personal relation to the work is part of the long process of the democratisation of art and art spaces through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and is probably sustained by the new forms of association and meaning-making that technol-

ogy and other cultural practices afford, such as Flickr and tweeting. The demand to be “in on the act” involves new forms of appreciation that depend on various types of participation, and in that sense provide the ground for a people’s politics, a democratic involvement with art. A recent example of this shift towards participation would be Marina Abramović’s ironically entitled performance work *The Artist is Present* in which visitors to the Museum of Modern Art in New York sat opposite the motionless artist for as long as they wished. She herself sat still on the same chair from the moment the museum opened until it closed. The title of the work usefully signals a double displacement. The first is that – as to be expected in a piece of performance art – the focus is on the artist rather than on the work, or rather that the artist makes of herself a work of art. The second displacement, however, is not just of the art work by the artist, but of the artist by the participants. This is not the first time that Abramović has invited viewers to be a part of her art work, but by the end of the run of her show people were queuing through the night to be able to take part in it. What this work offers the viewer/participant is a potentially personal relation to art, but one that goes beyond mere appreciation to address a more compelling fantasy where enjoyment is linked to meaning and value: “I too am an artist.” “I too can create value and meaning.”

Participation as a form of democratisation is indelibly marked with the pleasure both of consumption and of leisure. The demand for participation has become the hallmark of art as a cultural practice in the first decades of the new century. Audiences are no longer simply content to visit museums, galleries and other cultural institutions. They want to participate in a whole variety of ways. Cultural institutions of all kinds are well aware of the changing demands of their audiences and art institutions are now places of leisure, sociability and community. It is worth noting that this democratisation of art and culture more generally took place as the neo-liberalism of markets led to a boom cycle. Museums, art galleries and other cultural spaces have flourished in the last twenty years, and there is a huge interest in culture from an increasingly informed and active public. Major museums and galleries all over the world are now massive leisure spaces. For example, the Tate Modern in London has nearly five million visitors per year.

However, the most recent art phenomenon is the art fair. Art fairs are a distinctive type of space/event proffering yet other types of interaction with fantasies of know-

1 Giorgio Agamben, *Nudities*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella, Stanford (Calif.): Stanford University Press, 2010, pp. 17–18.

ledge and desire. In 2010, there were 260 major art fairs around the world, all of which were sponsored by business, including fashion and drink companies. In addition to the works being displayed, such fairs offer events and talks, as well as delectable food and excellent drink. They are places of pure enjoyment. Very large numbers of people visit these fairs. The 2011 Frieze art fair in London had 170 participating galleries and 60,000 visitors. Most people who go to art fairs cannot afford to buy works of art, so what are they interested in? What is art doing for them? One straightforward response would be to say that art has become a form of leisure, yet another form of consumption under post-millennial capitalism, co-opted by the market. This is certainly true, but as an explanation it does not take us very far in explaining what art does for us as subjects. What draws people to art fairs as opposed to other kinds of leisure experiences? Clearly, art plays with the distinction between fantasy and reality. Both contemporary art and the art market more generally are the site of multiple fantasies with different logics, and individuals develop fantasies in their own individual ways. But, where fantasies cohere is around questions of knowledge and value, and around the highly personalised relation to them that becomes possible once art and its appreciation become part of forms of subjectification and self-making premised on processes of consumption. The art fair is a transitory space that trades quite openly on the idea that, as a visitor, you are participating in an exclusive, if not celebrity, lifestyle. It's not just that you may see celebrities of all kinds at these fairs, but that participating in them invokes attendant fantasies of wealth creation, of generating something out of nothing, like winning the lottery, or perhaps spotting the next Jeff Koons. Being knowledgeable has a fantasised relation to value, and being "in the know" confirms the subject's place within an exclusive group. The subject identifies with the other, both the artist as meaning maker and the celebrity/collector/gallerist who holds the key to how knowledge transforms into value. In this scenario, the other is the site of pure enjoyment and the subject is engaged in a vicarious consumption of both the other and their enjoyment. For the subject, self-making is tied to a restless search for meaning and value, where knowledge, discernment and appreciation as forms of consumption place the subject within an expanded narrative of meaning where they have the illusion of meaning-making, of identifying value and creating wealth. Hence the seductive power of the art fair as a site of enjoyment.

However, the art fair as event trades in complex fantasies of *schadenfreude* – the hugely enjoyable possibility that the experts and rich collectors might all be wrong and work thought to be valuable will turn out to be worthless, that the arbiters of taste do not actually have the true knowledge of value. "Is it art?" "Is it real?" "Why is this stuff worth so much?" "Who would spend money on that?" The art fair is a performative space where the emperor may turn out to have no clothes. Participation and appreciation thus afford measures of both identification and critique, which together render the fantasy of art as intrinsically valuable much more persuasive. The subject identifies with value and the expenditure of money, but at the same time disavows them. The value of capitalism lies in its ability to embrace its own critique. A recent example at the Frieze art fair in 2011 was Michael Landy's *Credit Card Destroying Machine*. Visitors were asked to surrender their credit cards, which were immediately eaten by a strange contraption made up of gears, saws, cuddly toys and disparate found objects. As the remains of the credit card were spewed out onto the floor, the visitor received in return a drawing made by the machine, but signed by the artist. As a rumination on the creation and destruction of value and wealth, it was hardly profound, but visitors seemed to enjoy the illusion it provided of being both a critic and a victim of capitalism and financial markets. The absurdity of value creation and of art as value were neatly encapsulated by the fact of an art work produced not by an artist, but by a machine and then falsely acquiring value through the act of signature. The machine itself is an exercise in nostalgia, both retro and composite, it looks like a flying machine from a Studio Ghibli anime nostalgic. But the critique of capitalism it embodies is also a form of nostalgia, incorporating both the ideal and its transgression in a way which ultimately reinforces the ideal. Another work at Frieze was even more explicit. Christian Jankowski's work *The Finest Art on Water* was a luxury yacht turned art work. A boat dealer turned gallerist for the duration of the fair, and it was genuinely impossible to tell whether this was an installation or part of a boat show. The only real difference was the price. The luxury yacht normally costs 65M euros, but as an art work it was priced at 75M euros. If this was meant to be a critique of our complicity in capitalism or a comment on the high prices demanded for works of art, the irony was too transient to capture.

One of the things we might hope for from contemporary art – one of the definitions of its contemporary status – is that it should be a kind of act. An act that cuts across

our fantasies of ourselves and the way the world is and makes us see things differently – reveals the void at the centre of power. Art as an act is supposed to be an encounter with the real – a revelation of the failure of the symbolic, of established forms of representation. But, what art events reveal is that an event is not the same thing as an act. An act is not just a matter of doing something, but of doing something with signifiers. It is this process of resignification that makes us see the world in a new light, provides insight and lays the ground for critique.² The Frieze art fair was full of works where the process of resignification led nowhere new. Elmgreen and Dragset's work *The Fruit of Knowledge* consisted of a chimpanzee standing on a plinth of coffee-table books – including the Bible, *On the Origin of Species*, and *An Introduction to the Chinese Economy* – stretching vainly for a banana dangling just out of reach. This work seemed to symbolise the value and meaning that every visitor is promised at the fair – the fantasy of knowledge. It flatters the viewer as someone who knows about art, but the knowledge is not new, not radical. It opens us onto established knowledge, the Bible, Darwin, etc. In a similar vein, Laure Prouvost provided a series of random instructional signs throughout the fair intended to disrupt space and the environment. Each one was a small black rectangle with a brief phrase written in white: “this sign has seen you coming”; “ideally this sign would take you in its arms”; “ideally this room would be square”; “ideally this sign would be so generous it would forget it is a sign”. They were jokey, intriguing, meant perhaps to question forms of representation and ingrained assumptions by acting as a series of acts or signs without proper referents. In an ideal world, perhaps they would have; but instead, they fell back in on themselves, they made nothing new. This was almost certainly a consequence of being designed to enhance the visitors' experience of being at the fair, addressing their fantasies both of participation and of knowledge as meaning-making.

The demand or requirement for participation seems to have the consequence of flattening representation, reducing art to life, not as it is lived, but rather as it engages with fantasies of otherness as sites of meaning and value. Two further works at Frieze exemplified this trend. Pierre Huyghe's *Aquarium Project* was a live ecosystem with sea creatures and a hermit crab inhabiting a replica of Brancusi's sculpture *Sleeping Muse*. This

underwater dream world was full of nostalgia, but also a deliberate play on the theme of life as art, or perhaps art as “real life”. It is this reduction to life, to the way the world is, that participation demands even as it seeks to transcend it. Peles Empire's (Katharina Stoeber and Barbara Wolff) *Noroc* was a reconstruction of a room in a Romanian castle that also served as a bar. The space invited the obvious question: “Is this a bar, a space, a salon, an art work, a gallery?” A broader version would be: “What is art that life is not?” Would it really matter if those drinking in the bar did not know that it was an art installation?

Work of this kind is contemporary in the restricted sense of being at one with life. Of course, it is desirable that there is enhanced participation in cultural practices and that this should be possible without any requirement that this be based on specialist knowledge. However, the point I wish to make is not that the radicalism of contemporary art has been co-opted by capitalism, but rather that a new fantasy of access to the real links a notionally democratic art to a soi-disant democratic politics through the fantasy of participation and meaning creation. One cannot talk of a singular relation to contemporary art, which is, of course, the site of multiple fantasies with different logics. But where fantasies cohere, I suggest, is around the notion of participation in a new form of politics where identification with an imagined other constitutes the ground for social transformation. This involves a phantasmatic version of the very longstanding idea that art gives us access to the real, “tells us like it is”, gives form to truth. If we can agree that one of the roles of fantasy is to impede or make difficult the politicisation of existing social relations, to hinder or obstruct social change,³ how does this work? Very briefly, we can say that fantasy provides narrative forms that are sustained by viewers/participants unconsciously, thus making contestation less likely and less visible. What are these narrative forms? In relation to contemporary art, there are a series of intersecting phantasmatic logics where ideas about participation and meaning-making are tied to a view of artistic transformation as an actual site of political transformation. This site is always located elsewhere in the field of the other, whether this other is the artist, the expert, the gallery owner or even the art work itself. But new vectors and sites of otherness are also evident in the many works that deal with forms of engagement with “real life” (poverty, climate change and so on) and with the

2 Yannis Stavrakakis, “On Acts, Pure and Impure”, *International Journal of Žižek Studies*, no. 2, vol. 4, 2010. Available: <http://zizekstudios.org/index.php/ijzs/article/view/250/333>.

3 Yannis Stavrakakis, “On Acts, Pure and Impure”, *op. cit.*

social other/the exploited/the dispossessed/the cultural other. This produces a fantasy not just of the artist being in touch with the real, but of the art work as having or being able to demonstrate direct access to the other and their circumstances. By extension, the viewer/participant is also in touch with the real, an imagined connection with the other based on a fantasy of solidarity with immiseration and suffering. Art here is fantasised as capturing something that cannot be captured – the really real. Consequently, meaning and enjoyment are located in the other precisely because they provide the subject with a fantasy of the real.

One very common phantasmatic logic hinges on the idea of art as empowerment or voice. For example, Michael Rakowitz's *paraSite* is an ongoing project in which the artist consults homeless people and builds custom-built inflatable shelters that attach to the exterior outtake vents of a building's heating, ventilation or air-conditioning system. These works not only provide a heated shelter, but draw attention to the predicament of the homeless and the physical circumstances in which they live. A related logic works on the idea of art as ethnography and produces works that are often based on the artist's research and their direct involvement with a particular community. For example, Marjetica Potrc's *Forest Rising* is an island community floating in the trees, including a helicopter pad and a school with solar power and a satellite dish, based on her work with a local community in the state of Acre in Brazil. This powerful view of Amazonian life in the twenty-first century is a response to deforestation and rising water levels. It refers also to the dangers of globalisation and climate change. More importantly, it portrays rural living as a possible solution to the problems of future sustainability, a vision of a community on the other side of the world that will help us find a way out of our dilemmas. This is art as a form of politics fantasised as "real life". This fantasy relation to art is protective. It helps the subject in the west manage their feelings and ideas, avoiding the breakdown that would come from having to recognise the consequences for our well-being of tackling the extreme dissonance between poverty/suffering and art as a form of wealth creation. It renders massive social inequality tolerable because it creates a fantasy of critique based on solidarity. It is another way of making the leisure consumption of art look as if it's connected to saving the world. It provides enjoyment through an identification with the other, and through the idea that engagement with critique stands in for politics. It creates the ultimate fantasy of our time that in our com-

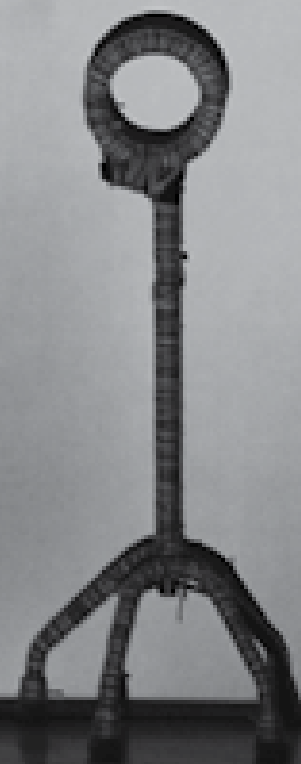
mitment to doing something about climate change and environmental degradation we are saving the planet because "we are all in it together". Except, of course, we are not.

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Shana Moulton,
Galaktični zdravilec lončkov II. / The Galactic Pot Healer II., 2010.

Performans umetnice v dvokanalni videoinstalaciji - Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana /
Performance of the artist in a two-channel video installation - Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana.
(Z dovoljenjem umetnice in MGLC / Courtesy of the artist and MGLC, fotografija / photo: Jaka Babnik.)



O ROMANJIH IN BIENALIH INTERVJU Z ANTROPOLOGOM SIMONOM COLEMANOM¹

BETI ŽEROVC

PREVOD

ŠPELA DRNOVŠEK ZORKO

Če razmišljamo o pomembnih dogodkih na področju sodobne likovne umetnosti, nikakor ne moremo mimo bienalov, ki danes predstavljajo ključne manifestacije na tem področju in pritegnejo izjemno pozornost. O tem, če (in kako) utečene bienalne razstave na področju sodobne umetnosti igrajo enako ali podobno vlogo, kot jo igrajo romanja in romarski kraji za različne religijske strukture, sem se pogovarjala z uveljavljenim raziskovalcem in interpretom romarstva in z njim povezanih fenomenov Simonom Colemanom. Coleman raziskuje tako zgodovino kot sodobni razvoj romarstva, veliko pozornost v kontekstu romanj pa posveča tudi vlogi umetnosti.

Z Johnom Elsnerjem sta v svoji knjigi o romanju² zapisala: »Romanje lahko dojamemo celo kot sestavljanje, kompozit raznovrstnih elementov – kot so npr. ritual, organizirana potovanja, predmeti čaščenja, kratkotrajne 'skupnosti', ki nastanejo na posebnih krajih, žrtvovanje časa in truda, prošnje in darovi, namenjeni svetim figuram –, pri čemer se vsi ti elementi pojavljajo tudi na drugih življenjskih področjih. Prav zato je romanje težko izločiti kot samostojni fenomen.« (str. 205) Romanja očitno ne moremo enoznačno opredeliti, prav tako težko opredelimo fenomen sodobnega množičnega organiziranja in obiskovanja umetnostnih bienalov. Kljub vsemu pa vse, kar naštevata, vsaj pogojno velja tudi za »bienalska romanja«. Bi lahko to komentirali?

Mislím, da moram najprej omeniti – in to bo odmevalo v večini mojih odgovorov –, da sva se z Johnom v citira-

¹ Intervju je potekal julija 2011 prek elektronske pošte.

² Za lažje referiranje so citati večinomazeti iz široko dostopnega vira: Simon Coleman in John Elsner, *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in the World Religions*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995.

nem odlomku poskusila oddaljiti od raziskav, ki romanje v glavnem dojemajo kot popolnoma »ločeno« dejavnost, ki bi jo lahko razumeli *sui generis*. Zmotila naju je predpostavka, da naj bi vsa romanja v različnih kulturah dojemali kot nekakšno istovetno početje, pa tudi pojmovanje, da je edina zares pomembna plat romanja njegov izrecno sakralni aspekt. Najin seznam značilnosti torej vključuje nekaj sakralnih dejavnikov, pa tudi takšne, ki morda nimajo nobene religiozne konotacije. Dejstvo, da romanje dokazljivo ne vključuje nobene dejavnosti, ki bi bila zares edinstvena, ne spodkopava le predstave o romanju kot nečem izrecno posamičnem, temveč bi moralo omogočiti tudi takšne primerjave, kot jih omenjate vi. Kaže namreč na to, da obstajajo vzporednice z drugimi kompozitnimi oblikami dejavnosti, ki prav tako vključujejo potovanja in razstavljanje materialne kulture, kot so na primer umetniški bienali.

Seveda pa je možno, da so romanja – ali pa umetniški bienali – z vidika sodelujočih pojmovana kot nekaj posamičnega, čisto ločenega od vsakdana, kar je pomemben dejavnik in ga moramo upoštevati. Kot družboslovci pa moramo preučiti tudi širše družbene in kulturne impulze, ki ljudi morda spodbujajo, da se udeležujejo dejavnosti, ki jih popeljejo do določenih dogodkov, občasno celo v oddaljenih krajih. Tu se mi zdi še posebej pomembna ideja antropologa Alfreda Gella o »metodološkem filistinizmu«, ki jo je razvil, ko je ugotavljal, s čim naj bi se ukvarjala antropologija umetnosti; najdemo jo recimo v eseju *The Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology* [Tehnologija čarobnosti in čarobnost tehnologije] (1992, v Coote in Shelton, ur.). Med pojasnjevanjem te ideje Gell opaza, da občinstvo ob obisku umetniške galerije ali muzeja pogosto začuti nekakšno estetsko, občudujoče strahospoštovanje, ki meji na religioznost. Takšno občudujoče strahospoštovanje je čudovit občutek, ne smemo pa domnevati, da imajo ljudje po svetu na splošno takšen odnos do tega, kar mi na zahodu imenujemo umetnost. Največji izziv za antropologe umetnosti – pa naj se ukvarjajo s tem, kako ljudje cenijo razstavo Picassovih slik ali zbirko predmetov iz Papue Nove Gvineje – je torej: kako se izogniti vplivu tega občutka občudujočega strahospoštovanja pri analiziranju kulturnih, družbenih in ekonomskih sil, ki so prisotne v ozadju produkcije in recepcije vsake »umetnine«. Na primer, sprejeti moramo, da so povprečna umetniška dela z vidika antropologije lahko prav tako zanimiva kot tista, ki jih običajno imenujemo »mojstrska«. Sam sem se recimo zanimal za britansko preraphaelitsko gibanje z vidika tega, kar sem ob njem lahko izvedel o viktorijanskih stališčih do perspektive,

pokrajine in izražanja krščanskih evangelijskih tem skozi umetniške razstave, pa čeprav večina preraphaelitske umetnosti v izvedbi še zdaleč ni mojstrska. Gell tudi sam pojasnjuje, da se njegov argument navdihuje pri že dolgo obstoječem načelu »metodološkega ateizma« v okviru študija religij: z drugimi besedami, gre za idejo, da mora raziskovalec ne glede na to, kaj morda sam veruje, sprejeti dejstvo, da je versko prepričanje predmet natančne družboslovne raziskave na podlagi domneve, da ni dobesedno resnično. Ko to domnevo sprejmemo, veliko lažje pokažemo, kakšen odnos ima religija do drugih družbenih grupiranj in hierarhij – ali kakor pravi Gell, da ne izhaja iz pogoja, da obstajajo verske resnice, ampak iz pogoja, da obstajajo družbe.

Meni vse to kaže, da je smiselno primerjati tako rekoč sveto dejavnost, kakršna je romanje, s tako rekoč sekularno dejavnostjo, kot je obisk bienala. Ampak le, če smo dovolj previdni ter ne potegnemo prestroge ločnice med sekularnim in svetim, in le če sprejmemo, da je »občudujoče strahospoštovanje«, ki ga ljudje morda občutijo, zgolj eno izmed izhodišč za analizo in ne njena sklepna točka.

Vablivo se zdi vzpostaviti nasprotje med tem »*sui generis*« pojmovanjem in »metodološkim filistinizmom«, in sicer v smislu delitve med pristopom do religije, ki ga zagovarjata Victor in Edith Turner v zelo slavnem delu, kot je *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* [Podoba in romanje v krščanski kulturi] (1978), ter stališčem, ki ga zagovarja Gell. Konec koncev sta Turnerjeva poskušala pisati kot vernika in antropologa obenem, njun pojem *communitas* (koncept romanja kot možnost za čisto versko izkušnjo v družbi drugih romarjev, ločeno od družbenih statusov in hierarhij vsakdanjega življenja) pa se je izkazal kot priljubljen med tistimi raziskovalci religije, ki so tudi sami verni. Pravzaprav mislim, kot bom omenil pozneje, da gre pri Turnerjevih za nekaj več, kot morda nakazuje ta enostavna opredelitev. Za zdaj pa bi rad problematiziral idejo, da bi morali romanja in bienale preučevati ločeno: obstajajo sicer razlogi, zakaj bi to storili, tako z vidika analitikov (v iskanju ločenih študijskih domen) kot z vidika praktikov (v iskanju dejavnosti, ki bi nas popeljale stran od vsakdanjega življenja), vendar nas pristop, ki zagovarja ločevanje, potisne preblizu tisti *sui generis* poziciji, ki sem jo omenil že prej.

Bienalne razstave igrajo v splošnem pozicioniranju sodobne umetnosti v današnji družbi zelo pomembno vlogo. Zavoljo svoje različnosti in stalnega vsebinsko-

formalnega spreminjanja skozi čas nam lahko pomagajo tudi uvideti, da z njimi pravzaprav v prvi vrsti »obhajamo« nekaj širšega in ne ravno ali ne samo tisto, kar je v umetnosti najbolj aktualno. Denimo, Jan Hoet je lahko naredil zelo »intuitivno« documento, Catherine David zelo »levičarsko« spolitizirano, naslednja bo spet lahko povsem drugačna in tako naprej. Je tako morda prav zato, ker na prvem mestu »obhajamo« nekakšne mistične temelje »Umetnosti« in njene ključne mitološke resnice/koncepte, kot sta umetniška svoboda ali avtonomija umetnosti?

Rekel bi, da se koncept »obhajanja« mističnih osnov umetnosti in valorizacija umetniške svobode in avtonomije približujeta turnerjanski podobi *communitas* ter ideji o neki dejavnosti kot *sui generis* – torej prav tistim usmeritvam, ki bi jih morali antropologi natanko preučiti, namesto da jih sprejemajo kot samoumevne. Takšne težnje kažejo na potrebo sodobnega sveta po religiji in umetnosti, ki bi bili očiščeni vsakdanjih strategij in družbenega življenja ter bi predstavljali neomadeževani dejavnosti, ločeni od političnih, ekonomskih in socialnih vidikov. Toda naloga antropologije je prav iskanje strateškega in družbenega, ne da bi pri tem prevzetno domnevala, da na ta način lahko pove vse, kar je moč reči o religioznih ali umetniških fenomenih. Naj torej s primerom poskusim pokazati, za kaj gre. Ko pozornost usmerim na krščanski romarski kraj Walsingham v Angliji, vidim romarsko središče, ki je navidezno idealen prostor za izražanje vere, ločen od vsakdanjega življenja. Nahaja se na oddaljenem koncu vzhodne Anglije, blizu obale, sredi prelepega podeželja, ki je videti, kot da se že stoletja ni spremenilo. Vidim tudi ceste, polne romarjev v svečanih procesijah; veliko jih očitno doživlja najgloblja verska čustva. Vse to predstavlja ganljiv izraz predanosti in občutenja vere, obhajanja ključnih verskih resnic. Če pa preusmerim perspektivo in razmišljam kot antropolog, opazim druge stvari. Vidim kraj, ki je že stoletja sporni del angleškega političnega in ekonomskega prostora, kraj, ki že od devetnajstega stoletja neti razprave o nekaterih najtežjih in najbolj osrednjih vprašanjih, s katerimi se v tej deželi sooča vera: kakšen odnos naj imajo rimski katoliki do anglikancev? Kako družbeni razred vpliva na vero? Zakaj vprašanja o spolu in spolnosti grozijo, da bodo razklala cerkev? In tako naprej.

Katera perspektiva natančneje izraža realnost romanja? Tega ne vemo. Z religiozne perspektive »nekaj večjega« nakazuje idejo o transcendentalni veri; z antropološkega vidika pa so družbeni in kulturni vplivi ter omrežja tisti,

ki vzpostavljajo Walsingham. Ena izmed implikacij antropološkega pristopa je, da mora zaokrožena raziskava Walsinghama seči dlje od tega, kar se dogaja v njegovih svetiščih; preučiti namreč mora, kako na to gledajo v drugih župnijah v Angliji in celo po vsem svetu. Raziskovalec mora seči dlje od idealiziranih izrazov verske enotnosti in opaziti, kako lahko ti izrazi nakazujejo širše in bolj kompleksne religiozne drže.

Če nekatere od navedenih točk prenesemo na to, kar ste rekli o bienalih, mislim, da mora biti raziskovalec tisti, ki se sprašuje, kakšno bi lahko bilo to »«obhajanje«, iz česa je sestavljeno »nekaj večjega« in kako se spreminja glede na posameznega udeleženca. Prav tako moramo upoštevati, kaj vse je vključeno v izvedbo bienala, med drugim ustanove in posameznike, ki so daleč od osrednjega prizorišča.

Kot ste omenili, je eden od zanimivih vidikov bienalov njihova spremenljiva vsebina. Tukaj naletimo na imperativ inovativnosti, ki zaznamuje umetniško izražanje in je v glavnem manj poudarjen pri romanju, kjer sta bolj cenjena utelešenje in posnemanje preteklosti. Seveda s tem ne mislim, da se romarski kraji ne spreminjajo neprestano – le to, da se spremembe ne vrednotijo na enak način. Romar ob vrnitvi v svetišče ne pričakuje, da bi podobo Device ali svetnika, ki je v središču tega kraja, od prejšnjega leta preoblikovali! Vprašanje sorazmernega poudarjanja izrecnega ponavljanja v odnosu do inovativnosti je tako eno izmed jasnih področij interesa, kadar hkrati preučujemo romanja in bienale.

Razlagate, da naj bi romarska središča delovala kot utelešenje mitske zgodovine svojega področja in omogočala privržencem, da udejanjajo elemente svoje vere v besedah, podobah in fizičnih gestah ter dejanjih. Bienalne inštitucije omogočajo podobno širok razpon dejavnosti, od kupovanja kulturnih predmetov in spominkov do značilnega gibanja po prostoru. Prav gibanje je eden izmed osnovnih dejavnikov romanja; praviloma se vsaka romarska pot konča s »predpisanim gibanjem po svetem kraju«. Nekaj podobnega velja tudi za bienalno razstavo: na koncu poti, po dolgem potovanju, se premikamo od enega do drugega kulturnega predmeta po predpisani trasi in če je le mogoče, nas pri tem zaznamuje prepustnica okoli vratu ali pa muzejska vrečka, polna »romarske« literature in spominkov ... Ali se vam ne zdi, da smo precej nezmožni (ali pa nas to celo ne zanima) prepoznati ritualni značaj teh dejavnosti?

Zelo pomembno je natančno določiti razpon dejavnosti,

tako pri romanjih kot pri bienalih, da se ne osredotočimo le na to, kar so na prvi pogled videti »osrednji« prostori in oblike vedenja. Nedvomno pa tako romanja kot bienali praviloma poskušajo pretvoriti širše, bolj razpršeno gibanje ljudi, ki pridejo od drugod, z označevanjem predvidene poti gibanja na določenih krajih in tako zagotoviti nekakšen nadzor nad načini gledanja, angažiranostjo, celo nad redom in merili ogledovanja. Paradigmski primer takšnega usmerjanja predstavlja *Velika razstava* v Kristalni palači v Londonu sredi 19. stoletja, kjer so obiskovalca spodbudili, da se giblje skozi evoliucijsko shemo civilizacij, ki se je končala z britansko. Z Johnom Elsnerjem sva v eseju o zgodnjih obiskovalcih samostana svete Katarine na Sinaju (*World Archaeology* 6[1], 1994) omenila tudi drug primer, kjer sva trdila, da so umetnost, arhitektura in ritual vsi usmerjali romarjevo gibanje skozi prostor.

Zanima me tudi to, kar ste omenili o ritualu kot nezavednem elementu vedênja. Zdi se, da sodi tako k ideji predpisanega gibanja kot k premiku od opazovanja »kultnih« predmetov do nakupovanja komercialnih predmetov, ki ga lahko opravijo udeleženci. Vse to kaže na modernistični pogled na ritual in ritualno kot tisto, kar udeležencu rituala odvzame tvornost, občasno morda tudi iskrenost. V tem smislu lahko morda razumemo prikrivanje ponavljajočega, ritualiziranega značaja teh dejavnosti pred udeležencem kot tisto, kar pripomore k ohranitvi ideje, da udeleženec doživlja nekaj edinstvenega. Čeprav to deloma res drži, ne smemo pozabiti na pomen ironije in skepticizma v odnosu nekaterih ljudi do romarskih krajev in bienalov, na njihovo zmožnost, da se »odmaknejo« od sebe in celo sprejmejo, da se prostovoljno, a zavestno pustijo voditi skozi prostor. To, kar tu omenjam, se mi zdi bolj zanimivo od standardnega koncepta postmodernistične ironije, pastiša. Gre bolj za idejo, da je posameznikova vpletenost lahko obenem globoko predana in globoko skeptična ali samozavedajoča. Ta pojav sem vsekakor opazil v Walsinghamu, med ljudmi, ki jih svetišča privlačijo, obenem pa se od njih počutijo odtujeni, in pravzaprav menim, da takega odnosa do ritualne udeležbe antropologi še nismo dovolj natančno preučili. Brez dvoma bi bilo to pomembno tudi za preučitev odnosa, ki ga imajo ljudje do bienalov, vse od kuratorjev pa do umetnikov in občinstva.

Najstarejši bienale na svetu, beneški bienale, ima še vedno poseben čar kljub dolgoletni kritiki umetnostnih profesionalcev na račun delovanja prek nacionalnih paviljonov. Vendar se vseeno vedno zdi, kot da (tudi kritični) umetnostni profesionalci zelo uživamo na otvo-

ritveni slovesnosti med sprehajanjem od paviljona do paviljona, pri čemer ti povsod poskušajo izročiti še kako »darilo« (informativno gradivo in pogosto tudi kako simpatično drobnjarijo) in te pogostiti. Dodatna prednost te bienalske strukture je, da postopek izbiranja kandidatov za nacionalni paviljon v vsakem lokalnem okolju že prej sproži veliko vznemirjenja, debat in pričakovanj. Ves čas poslušamo, da je beneški bienale zastarel, a meni se zdi, da izredno dobro služi svojim namenom. Ali se vam zdi, da imajo tudi romanja določene značilnosti, ki neko romarsko pot naredijo za še posebej in bolj priljubljeno?

Gibanje sem omenil že prej, rad pa bi dodal, da prizor, ki ga opisujete, torej veliko število paviljonov, predstavlja dodatno različico vključevanja ljudi v prostor: namesto linearne, usmerjene poti je tu razpon »virov« in doživetij, ki jih obiskovalec lahko izkuša in nabira na različne načine. To je precej podobno krščanskemu romarskemu kraju, ki sva ga preučevala z Johnom Elsnerjem v Walsinghamu, kjer se romarji na veliko načinov gibljejo med kraji in svetišči, ki so jim na voljo – kar je gotovo bolj kompleksno, kot bi sicer sklepali iz formalne procesije skozi prostor. Ampak tu bi zares rad poudaril, da tako bienali kot nekateri romarski kraji uporabljajo materialne simbole pri ustvarjanju občutka »preobilja«; v mislih imam neskončna sredstva, ki so obiskovalcu dana na razpolago tako, da se okrepi njegov občutek, da je prišel na kraj zgoščenega umetniškega ali religioznega izražanja. Prav to obilje in raznolikost ponudbe postaneta del izkušnje in se morda v materialnem smislu akumulirata v darovih, ki jih zbirajo na poti. (Takšno pojmovanje preobilja se udejanja tako v določenih konstrukcijah svetništva kot tudi v sekularni, romantični podobi umetnika.)

Vredno je dodati še nekaj o izboru kandidatov za paviljone; tu se mi zdi, da se pri bienalih združujejo elementi »iger« in »ritualov« v antropološkem smislu. Oboji se odvijajo v okviru določenih pravil in obnašanj. Vendar je pri igrah, vsaj v idealnem primeru, rezultat neznan, pri ritualu pa je idealno določen že vnaprej. Resnične situacije – vključno z bienali – združujejo oboje.

Nisem prepričan, da lahko posplošujemo, zakaj bi bile določene romarske poti posebne in priljubljene – razen takrat, ko opozarjamo na »širino« karizme (več o tem pozneje) in omenjamo, da »priljubljenost« pogosto obrodi »posebnost«, ker že samo število udeležencev povzdigne dogodek. Sam bi raje pozval k temu, da bi pogledali dlje od največjih, najbolj priljubljenih manifestacij romanja in

bienalov. Mikavno se je osredotočati na najpomembnejše kraje, toda če si želimo ustvariti natančno podobo celotne pokrajine obojega, moramo preučiti tudi bolj lokalne, specializirane manifestacije. Sestavni deli, cilji in oblike organizacije se lahko tudi razlikujejo.

Otvoritve, ki sem jih omenila, so seveda namenjene manjšemu krogu umetnostnih profesionalcev. A zdi se, da bienali dobro delujejo tako v razmerju do te najožje kot tudi do najširše umetnostne skupnosti. V zvezi s pomembnimi romarskimi središči sta z Elsnerjem zapisala: »Paradoksalno, bolj pomembno kot je sveto središče, bolj fleksibilni in številni so pomeni, ki jih vključuje«. Za opravljanje takšnih nalog naj bi bila zelo pomembna tudi široka karizma romarske institucije: »S tem, da so se sposobni prilagoditi romarjem iz številnih kultur in družbenih stanov, sveti kraji nudijo dostop do božanskih sil veliko večji in bolj raznoliki skupini privrženecv, kot je to mogoče pri vsakdanjem čaščenju. To 'popularno' plat, ki se kaže pri večini romarske dejavnosti, poudarja dejstvo, da sveta mesta omogočajo religiozna doživetja, ki niso vezana izključno na besedilno vednost: nasprotno, karizma nekega kraja ali človeka je 'prizemljena' in utelešena v oprijemljivih, pogosto čudodelnih predmetih, ki s tem, da se navidezno odzovejo na prošnje častilcev, ozdravljajo ali prenavljajo posamezna življenja ...« Kako s tega gledišča razumete bienalske kraje in institucije?

Torej, eden izmed argumentov, ki sva jih razvijala v tem odlomku, kaže na to, kar so ugotovili že drugi, in sicer, da so romarski kraji pogosto področja nesoglasij med ortodoksnim in popularnim, med utrjenimi hierarhijami in bolj nepredvidljivimi nabori privrženecv. Celo danes, ko je pismenost veliko bolj razširjena kot kdajkoli prej, se omenjena trenja izražajo tudi v tem, do kolikšne mere so tekstualno legitimirane interpretacije določenih krajev sprejete ali prezrte oziroma zavržene. Predstavljam si, da se takšna trenja na bienalih kažejo na drug način, ko se komentarji, ki jih spišejo kuratorji, umetniki in kritiki dopolnjujejo ali med sabo tekmujejo, obenem pa je možno, da se bolj malo tičejo tega, kako večina ljudi doživlja razstavo.

Če pogledamo bolj splošno, pa je sodobna antropologija doživela nov premik v smeri raziskovanja materialnosti, ki nas je privedlo do razprav o delovanju in tvornosti predmetov, vključno z umetninami, o navezavi med ljudmi in stvarmi, o družbenih življenjih predmetov in tako naprej. Recimo, ali predmeti, ki jih uporabljamo, tudi delujejo na nas? In kako je naš občutek jaza sestavljen iz

stvari, s katerimi smo obdani? Še več, ali te morda celo pripomorejo k oblikovanju naših osebnosti? Zdi se mi zanimivo, da materialnost v ritualnih dejavnostih raziskuje tudi Victor Turner v več besedilih, ki jih je napisal pred desetletji in vključujejo, a tudi prekašajo njegovo pisanje o romanjih. Pri Turnerju je pogosto v središču odnos med »pomenom« in »predmetom«. Vidimo, kako se njegova dobro znana teorija »dominantnih simbolov« nanaša na paleto pomenov, ki jih združuje en sam predmet. Vzemimo za primer podobo Device Marije, ki je v ospredju romarskega rituala. Lahko označuje in vključuje velik razpon pomenov, od abstraktnih konceptov materinstva ali čistosti do zelo razširjenih predstav o oskrbovanju z mlekom tako dejanskih kot spiritualnih otrok. Manj znana je knjiga *Celebration: Studies in Festivity and Ritual* [Praznovanje: študije slovesnosti in rituala] (1982), v kateri je Turner uredil in objavil eseje različnih avtorjev na temo »prazničnih« ritualnih predmetov s celega sveta, zbranih na razstavi v Smithsonianu, ki naj bi relativizirali to, kar je sam razumel kot ameriško težnjo k desakralizaciji predmetov. Po mojem nas Turner v tej knjigi spodbuja, da ne bi gledali le predmetov, ampak tudi onkraj njih, da bi poskusili razumeti, kako naj si jih predstavljamo v gibanju, vključene v družbene procese, ki lahko vsebujejo ples, čaščenje, agresijo itd. Morda si je težje predstavljati, kako se »gibljejo« umetnine, razstavljene na bienalu: konec koncev, ljudje okoli njih običajno ne plešejo. Kljub temu pa si ustvarimo načine gledanja umetnosti, vplivne oblike interpretacije in ocenjevanja itd., ki domnevno pripomorejo h konstituciji dela kot takega in jih ne moremo ločiti od njegovega vrednotenja.

Na pomembnih bienalih so neprofesionalni obiskovalci verjetno fizično še najbližje procesom, skozi katere umetnost postaja »velika umetnost«: najbližje so procesu kanonizacije ter posvečevanja umetniških predmetov in umetnikov. Morda se tega vsakdo ne zaveda na razumski ravni, neposredno, kljub vsemu pa je to zavedanje zelo prisotno; je v atmosferi, ki jo človek absorbira. Ali na umetniškem področju potrebujemo prisotnost »čudežnega« in če da, zakaj? Kakšne zgodovinske vzporednice bi lahko potegnili?

Gotovo opazamo, kako popularnost kot taka, ki naj bi domnevno le odražala moč predmetov in umetnikov, pripomore h konstituiranju te moči; medsebojni vpliv popularnosti in moči je razviden tudi v romarskih krajih. Obenem pa nas diskurz »veličine«, ki še vedno prežema opazen del umetnostne kritike in splošnega mnenja o umetnosti, popelje nazaj do nekaterih ugotovitev, ki sem

jih omenil v povezavi z metodološkim filistinizmom in potrebo po tem, da bi družboslovci prenehali z diskurzi o nematerialnosti in idejami o transcendenci, sublimnem ter celo čistemu geniju (velja omeniti, da mora biti genij zelo pogosto pojmovan kot »čist«), ki umetnost in religijo obravnavajo kot nekaj osamljenega. V tem smislu obstaja nekakšna vzporednica med umetniškim diskurzom o geniju (sposobnost, ki je nerazumljiva in je navadni človek ne more doseči) in predstavo, na katero pogosto naletimo na romarskih krajih, namreč, da so sveti predmeti ustvarjeni, premeščeni in najdeni na načine, ki se upirajo razumu. Sveti predmet kot *acheiropoietos* – kot ga najdemo pri nekaterih pravoslavnih ikonah ali pri Devici iz Guadalupe – je ena od manifestacij te nagnjenosti. Takšne predmete dojemamo kot preveč posebne, da bi jih lahko izdelale navadne, nenavdihnjene človeške roke.

Mimogrede, kot družboslovec sem zelo užival v sodelovanju z umetnostnim zgodovinarjem Johnom Elsnerjem, še posebej na romarskem kraju, kot je Walsingham, kjer razstavljene umetnosti, tudi če bi imeli zelo bujno domišljijo, ne moremo opisati kot »velike«. V določeni fazi raziskovalnega procesa sem moral Johna prepričevati, da so predmeti v Walsinghamu morda zares povprečni z vidika umetnosti, kljub temu pa so fascinantni v smislu družbenih in kulturnih meril. (Tudi on ravno ne mara preraphaelitov!)

Ker so bienalne razstave ključno shajališče »dostojanstvenikov« z likovnega področja, so zelo pomembne za izmenjavo in širjenje informacij ter oblikovanje novega diskurza v tem polju. Eksegeza se tudi sicer zdi eden ključnih vidikov bienalnih razstav (»romanja kot omrežja krajev, ljudi in tekstov«). Pomen dokumente je morda tako trden prav zato, ker je – za razliko od beneškega bienala – znana po tem, da nekako jasno zakoliči in nato široko predoči ne le trenutno najpomembnejšo umetnost, temveč tudi diskurz, ki je v tistem hipu najbolj »trendovski«. Ali bi lahko dejali, da na ta način bienali igrajo podobno vlogo kot romanja in romarski kraji?

Menim, da bienali učinkujejo kot pomembni kazalniki kakovosti in popularnosti razstavljene umetnosti, imajo pa tudi širši pomen za mesto, v katerem gostujejo. Nekaj podobnega se zgodi na romarskih točkah, kadar kraji, kot sta Lurd in Santiago de Compostela, postanejo neločljivo povezani s svetišči, ki jih gostijo. Sprašujem pa se, ali se primera razlikujeta s stališča širših institucionalnih svetov, na katere se opirata ti dejavnosti. Bienali združujejo svetove umetniške produkcije in razstavlja-

nja, turizma, financ itd., običajno se jim ni treba opredeljevati glede na eno samo, centralizirano ortodoksno. Po drugi strani lahko romanja izražajo oblike antinomične ljudske vere, ki so v ambivalentnem ali sovražnem odnosu do ortodoksno. Lahko si predstavljate, da so romarski kraji občasno odigrali vlogo referenčne točke za ljudsko vero. Santiago de Compostela v Španiji je dober primer kraja s starim krščanskim poreklom, čeprav je danes priljubljen v nadvse raznoliki skupini ljudi, med katerimi je veliko takih, ki se opredeljujejo kot duhovni iskalci, niti približno pa jih ne zanima organizirana religija.

Po vrnitvi domov profesionalni obiskovalec bienalnih razstav uveljavlja novosti, ki jih je tam spoznal, v svojem prostoru. Piše o tem, na nov, poseben način koncipira razstavo ali denimo povabi mladega umetnika, ki je svoj naraščajoči ugled potrdil z udeležbo na velikem bienalu. Ali so romanja igrala – oziroma še vedno igrajo – podobno vlogo pri širjenju novih svetniških kultov, novih liturgičnih oblik itd.?

Pomemben izziv za študije o romanjih je, kako natančno izslediti vpliv posameznih krajev preko njihovih geografskih meja. Jasno je, da lahko pomembna svetišča proizvedejo mimetične, manjše verzije samih sebe, razpršene skozi transnacionalno romarsko pokrajino. To je recimo zelo očitno v primeru diasporičnih romarskih krajin med hindujskimi priseljenci v Evropi in Severni Ameriki, ki v novih domovih poustvarjajo romarske svetove, ki odražajo indijsko spiritualno pokrajino. Skupaj z Vido Bajc in Johnom Eadeom sem poskusil opisati takšne procese s terminologijo fraktalov (npr. reprodukcija manjših verzij izvornika), da bi tako pojasnil dinamično nastajanje religioznih središč: v posebnem izvodu publikacije *Mobilities* (2007, letn. 2, št. 3) označujemo romanje kot nekaj, kar vključuje procese »mobilnosti« in »centriranja«.

Razvoj romarskih pokrajin je odvisen od kompleksnih odnosov med rekapitulacijo in inovativnostjo, tradicijo in novostjo: legitimnost se pogosto pridobi, kadar se vzpostavijo materialni stiki ali estetske vzporednice s pomembnim krajem, kot sta Lurd ali Varanasi. Walsingham je zgrajen na ideji – ali mitu –, da je njegovo osrednje svetišče natančna kopija Jezusove hiše v Nazaretu. Verjetno pa umetnostni poznavalci ustvarjajo drugačen odnos do bienalov, saj so (v kontekstih umetniške produkcije) estetske kontinuitete med umetniki sicer lahko razvidne, vendar pa je novost vseeno in že sama po sebi več vredna.

V zgodovini romanj so bile kritike tega pojava, ki so poudarjale njegove negativne plati, najbolj prisotne prav v zlatih dobah romanj. Dandanes, v zlati dobi bienalov, so tudi ti dogodki deležni ostre kritike, pri čemer se zdi, da najstrožje pripombe prihajajo prav s strani tistih, ki se jih najbolj intenzivno udeležujejo ali pri njih celo sodelujejo. Bi lahko kaj povedali o tem?

Z Johnom Elsnerjem sva opisala Walsingham kot nekakšen duhovni lonec na pritisk, in v tem smislu ga lahko dojemamo kot primer tistega, kar Eade in Sallnow – v navezavi na romarske kraje – imenujeta »preizpraševanje svetega«. S tem hočeta reči, da je v večjih svetiščih, kjer naj bi bila zbrana duhovna moč in kjer je tudi možno, da se v istem trenutku srečujejo zelo raznolike skupine, marsikaj v igri. Kraj, kot je Lurd, združuje izredno raznolike skupine ljudi, ki svetišče dojemajo kot osrednjo točko svojega pojmovanja vere, obenem pa lahko na različne načine razumejo pomen kraja. Ali gre, recimo, za sprejemanje nujnosti človeškega trpljenja (precej konzervativno cerkveno stališče) ali pa za nadaljevanje možnosti čudežnih intervencij v človeško življenje (ideja z dosti bolj radikalnim potencialom)? Obe strani sta lahko druga do druge izjemno kritični, prav tako sta lahko kritični do oblasti, ki v svetišču dopuščajo izražanje nasprotnih mnenj. Tu gotovo lahko potegnemo vzporednice z bienali, v smislu, da sta obe vrsti dogodkov preveč pomembni, da bi ju ignorirali. In v obeh primerih kritika ne prihaja le s strani tistih, ki so vložili čas in trud v to, da so tja prispeli, ampak se tudi preizkuša, da bi videli, če lahko odmeva na pomembnejšem odru. Tu lahko pomislimo na zgodovino ikonoklazma (še ena dejavnost, ki povezuje svet romanja in svet umetnosti), kjer je prav agresija nad predmeti pokazatelj njihove moči.

ON PILGRIMAGES AND BIENNIALS

INTERVIEW WITH ANTHROPOLOGIST SIMON COLEMAN¹

BETI ŽEROVC

If we think about the important events in contemporary art, we cannot ignore biennials, which today are among the key manifestations in this field and attract extraordinary attention. I spoke with Simon Coleman about whether (and in what way) the established biennial exhibitions in the contemporary art field play a role that is the same or similar to that played by pilgrimages and pilgrimage sites for various religious structures. Coleman researches both the history and the modern development of pilgrimage, and he has also devoted a great deal of attention to the role of art in the pilgrimage context.

You and John Elsner wrote in your book on pilgrimage:² “We may even regard pilgrimage as made up of a composite of different elements – such as ritual, organised travel, objects of veneration, the construction of temporary ‘communities’ at special sites, sacrifices of time and effort, requests and offerings directed towards sacred figures – all of which occur in other spheres of life. Precisely because these elements are present elsewhere, pilgrimage is difficult to isolate as a discrete phenomenon” (p. 205). Just as it is clearly difficult to isolate pilgrimage as a phenomenon, it is no less difficult to isolate the phenomenon of today’s mass organizing and visiting of art biennials. Even so, everything you list is also true for these “biennial pilgrimages”, at least conditionally. Could you comment on this?

I think the first thing to say – as it will resonate throughout many of my answers to you – is that in the passage

1 The interview was carried out by e-mail in July 2011.

2 For easier reference, the quotes are mostly from a single, widely accessible source: Simon Coleman and John Elsner, *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in the World Religions*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995.

you cite John and I were trying to get away from studies that tended to see pilgrimage as a purely 'set apart' activity that could be understood as *sui generis*. We were frustrated with the idea that all pilgrimages, across cultures, could be seen as somehow doing the same thing, but also with the notion that the only really important aspect of a pilgrimage was its overtly sacred aspects. So the listing of characteristics that we made includes some sacred features, but also some that do not have to have a religious connotation. The fact that pilgrimage arguably contains no single activity that is in itself unique not only undermines the idea of pilgrimage as set apart but should also facilitate the kind of comparison you suggest, indicating that there are parallels to be drawn with other, composite forms of activity involving both travel and display of material culture, such as art biennials.

Of course, pilgrimages – and art biennials, for that matter – may feel separate from the everyday from the point of view of participants, and this is an important factor to take into consideration. However, as social scientists, we also have to look at the wider social and cultural impulses that might encourage people to engage in activities that take them to particular events in sometimes faraway places. For me, an important idea here is the anthropologist Alfred Gell's notion of 'methodological philistinism' that he developed when he was trying to work out what anthropology of art should be about – as discussed for instance in his paper 'The Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology' (1992, in Coote and Shelton, eds.). In explaining this idea, Gell notes that when the public goes to an art gallery or museum, they often feel a kind of aesthetic awe bordering on the religious. This kind of awe is a wonderful feeling, but we should not assume that it reflects the way people around the world feel about what in the West we classify as art. So the great challenge for the anthropologists of art – whether they are looking at how people appreciate an exhibition of Picasso paintings or a collection of artefacts from Papua New Guinea – is to avoid falling under the spell of this sense of awe in trying to analyse the cultural, social and economic forces behind the production and reception of any 'artworks'. For instance, we have to accept that mediocre works can be just as interesting from an anthropological point of view as works conventionally seen as 'great'. In my own work, I've been interested in the nineteenth-century British Pre-Raphaelite Movement for what it could tell me about Victorian attitudes toward perspective, landscape and expressing Christian evangelical themes through art exhibitions,

even though most Pre-Raphaelite art is very far from great in its execution. Gell himself explains that as inspiration for his argument he draws on the long-standing development of the principle of 'methodological atheism' in the study of religion, in other words, the idea that, no matter what the personal convictions of the analyst might be, he or she must accept that religious beliefs are subjected to social scientific scrutiny on the assumption that they are not literally true. Once this assumption is made, it becomes much easier to show how religion relates to other social groupings and hierarchies – or as Gell says, that it derives not from the condition that religious truths exist, but from the condition that societies exist.

So all of this implies for me that it is reasonable to compare an ostensibly sacred activity like pilgrimage with an ostensibly secular activity like going to a biennale. But only if we are careful not to make too great a distinction between the secular and the sacred; and only if we accept that the 'awe' people may feel at both is one of the starting points of our analysis, not the end point.

It's tempting to locate the '*sui generis*' versus 'methodologically philistine' attitudes in terms of a division between the kind of approach to religion advocated by Victor and Edith Turner in a very famous work such as *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (1978) and the attitude expressed by Gell. After all, the Turners were attempting to write as both believers and anthropologists, and their notion of *communitas* (the idea of pilgrimage as containing the possibility of pure religious experience among pilgrims, divorced from the petty statuses and hierarchies of everyday life) has proved popular among analysts of religion who are themselves believers. In fact, as I'll mention below, I think there's more to the Turners' work than this simple characterization might imply. But for the time being I want to problematize the notion of isolating both pilgrimage and biennales as objects of study: there are reasons why we might want to do this as analysts (in search of a discrete field of study) and practitioners (in search of activity away from our everyday lives); but the isolationist approach pushes us too far towards the *sui generis* position that I've mentioned above.

Biennial exhibitions play a very important role in the general positioning of contemporary art in today's society. Because of their variety and constantly changing content and form over time, they can also help us see that, by going to them, we are actually, in the first place,

“communing” with something bigger, and not (or not only) with whatever is the hottest thing in art at the moment. For instance, Jan Hoet was able to do a very “intuitive” documenta, Catherine David a very “leftist” politicized one, and the next one might be something entirely different again, and so on. Is this perhaps because we are, in the first place, “communing” with the more or less mystical basis of “Art” and its key mythological truths/concepts, such as artistic freedom and the autonomy of art?

I'd say the notions of 'communing' with the mystical basis of art and the valorizations of artistic freedom and autonomy come close to echoing the Turnerian imagery of *communitas* and the idea of an activity as *sui generis* – very much the attitudes that anthropologists need to examine rather than take for granted. Such aspirations suggest the modern world's need for both religion and art to be purified from everyday strategizing and social life, to represent activities unsullied by political, economic, social considerations. But it is precisely the job of anthropology to look for the strategic and the social, without arrogantly assuming that in doing so we say all that there is to say about either religious or artistic phenomena. So let me try to give an example of what I mean. When I examine the Christian pilgrimage site of Walsingham, in England, I see a pilgrimage centre that seems to provide an ideal site for religious expression, divorced from everyday life. It is in a remote part of the east of England, near the coast, and located in a beautiful rural setting that looks like it hasn't changed in centuries. I also see its roads full of pilgrims solemnly processing in union with each other, many of them clearly experiencing the deepest religious emotions. All of this constitutes a moving expression of religious awe, of a communing with key truths of the faith. But if I shift perspective and think as an anthropologist, I start to observe different things. I see a place that has been a contested part of the political and economic landscape of England for hundreds of years, and a site that since the nineteenth century has fomented debates over some of the most central and difficult questions facing religion in the country: How should Roman Catholics relate to Anglicans? What is the effect of class on religion? Why are questions over gender and sexuality threatening to tear the established church apart? And so on.

Which of these perspectives conveys the reality of the pilgrimage more accurately? It's impossible to say. But from a religious point of view, the 'something bigger' being pointed to is the idea of a transcendent faith, while

from an anthropological point of view, it's the social and cultural influences and networks that make up Walsingham. And an implication of the anthropological position is that a fully rounded study of Walsingham needs to go beyond what happens at its shrines and needs to look at how it is viewed by parishes across England and indeed the world; and the analyst needs to go beyond idealized expressions of religious unity to see how these might actually point to a wider and more complex religious positioning.

If we take some of these points and apply them to what you are saying about biennials, I think it's the job of the analyst to ask what the character of the 'communing' might be – what the 'something bigger' consists of, and how it may vary according to the participant. We also need to see what goes into the making of a biennale, including institutions and individuals located far from the official site itself.

Having said all that, one of the interesting aspects of biennales is their changing content, as you note, and here we see an imperative towards innovation that marks such artistic expressions but is generally less marked in pilgrimage contexts, where embodiment of and mimesis of the past is more valued. That is not to say that pilgrimage sites are not changing all the time – just that change per se is not valued in the same way. A pilgrim would not return to a shrine expecting that the image of the Virgin or saint at the centre of the site had been remodelled from the previous year! So the question of the relative emphasis placed on explicit repetition vs. innovation is an obvious area of interest in looking at both pilgrimages and biennales.

Pilgrimage sites, as you explain, functioned as the embodiment of the mythic history of their field and made it possible for adherents to re-invoke the elements of their faith in words, images and physical gestures and actions (p. 205). Biennial institutions allow for a similar broad range of activities, from buying cult objects and souvenirs to the typical moving around the site. Movement, indeed, is one of the essential factors in pilgrimage; as a rule, every pilgrimage journey ends with the “prescribed movement around the sacred place”. Something similar is true of the biennial exhibition: at the end of the journey, after a long trip, we move from one cult object to another along a prescribed path and, if possible, we will be clearly designated by the entrance pass visible around our neck or by our museum bag stuffed with “pilgrimage” literature and souvenirs . . . Doesn't it

seem that we are quite incapable of, or even uninterested in, recognizing the ritualistic nature of these activities?

The range of activities in both pilgrimages and biennales is very important to pinpoint, so that we do not just focus on what appear to be the ‘central’ spaces and behaviours evident in either. But there is no doubt that both pilgrimages and biennales usually attempt to convert the broader, more diffused travel of people from elsewhere into marked forms of movement within certain sites, thus providing some kind of control over forms of perspective, engagement, even orders and scales of viewing. One of the paradigm examples of this kind of funnelling was provided by the *Great Exhibition* in the Crystal Palace in London in the middle of the nineteenth century, where the visitor was encouraged to move through an evolutionary scheme of civilizations, culminating in that of Britain. But John Elsner and I have also discussed another example in a piece we did about early visitors to the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai (*World Archaeology* 6[1], 1994), where we argued that art, architecture and ritual directed the pilgrim’s ‘progress’ through the site.

I’m also interested in your mention of ritual as an unconscious element of behaviour. It seems to go along with the idea of prescribed movement as well as the shift that participants may undergo, from observing ‘cult’ objects towards purchasing commercial ones. All of these point us towards a modernist view of ritual and the ritualized as that which takes away agency, and perhaps at times sincerity, from the ritual actor. In that sense, keeping the repetitive, ritualized character of such activities masked from the actor might be seen as helping to preserve the idea that they are having a unique experience. While there is something in that, we need also to bear in mind the importance of irony and scepticism in some people’s engagement with both pilgrimage sites and biennales, their ability to ‘stand apart’ from themselves and accept that they are willingly but also knowingly being guided through a site. What I’m discussing here is something more interesting than the standard idea of post-modern irony, of pastiche. It’s much more the idea that people’s involvement can be both deeply committed and deeply sceptical, or self-aware, at the same time. I have certainly found this phenomenon at Walsingham, among people who feel simultaneously distanced from and attracted to its shrines, and I actually think this is an attitude towards ritual participation that hasn’t been examined enough by anthropologists. I’ve no doubt that it would also be relevant to the examination of how peo-

ple relate to biennales, ranging from curators to artists to some members of the public.

The world’s oldest biennial, the Venice Biennale, still possesses a special charm, despite decades-old criticism from art professionals about the way it is structured by national pavilions. Even so, at the opening festivities, art professionals (even the critical ones) still seem to enjoy strolling from pavilion to pavilion, with people in every pavilion wanting to give you a “gift” (not only informational materials, but also, often, some cute trifle) and offering you something to eat and drink. An added bonus of the Biennale’s structure is that the process of selecting the candidates for the national pavilions has already, in each of the national environments, created a lot of excitement, discussion and anticipation. People always talk about how the Venice Biennale has become obsolete, but it seems to me that it serves its own purposes exceptionally well. Do you find that, in pilgrimages, too, there are certain features that make a given pilgrimage journey particularly special and popular?

I’ve talked a bit about movement above, but I’d add that the scene you describe of multiple pavilions presents yet another variation on how people engage with sites: rather than a purely linear, funnelled movement, we see here a range of ‘resources’ and experiences that the visitor can sample in different ways. This is quite similar to the Christian pilgrimage site of Walsingham in the UK that John and I have studied, where we’ve found that pilgrims tend to move between the different sites and shrines available in a huge variety of ways – and certainly in a more complex fashion than the formal processions through the site would suggest. But the point I really want to make here is how both the biennale and some pilgrimage sites can use material symbols to create a sense of ‘excess’, the idea of a plethora of resources being made available to the visitor in a way that reinforces the sense of coming to a major concentration of artistic or religious expression. The very plethora and variety of choice become part of the experience, and are perhaps materially accumulated in the gifts gathered along the way. (Notions of excess are also played out in some constructions of sainthood as well as in the secular, romantic image of the artist.)

It’s worth adding a note about the selection of candidates for the pavilions: here, I think biennales combine elements of both ‘games’ and ‘rituals’ as discussed by anthropologists. Both games and rituals proceed through the application of set rules and behaviours. However,

in games, the outcome is ideally in doubt, whereas in ritual, it is ideally predetermined. Real life situations – including those of the biennale – combine the two.

I'm not sure that it's possible to make generalizations about what might make pilgrimage journeys special and popular – except to point to the 'broadness' of charisma (see below) and to say that often 'popularity' can make 'specialness', as sheer numbers of fellow attendees can obviously heighten the event. But I would urge the need to look not just at the larger, more popular manifestations of pilgrimage and biennales. The temptation is to focus on major sites, but to gain a full picture of the total landscape of either we need to examine more local, specialized manifestations, as well. The constituencies, aims and forms of organization may well differ.

The openings I described are, of course, intended mainly for the smaller circle of art professionals. But biennials appear to function well not only in relation to this narrower group but also to the wider art community. Speaking of the major pilgrimage centres, you and Elsner have written: "The more important a sacred centre, paradoxically, the more flexible and numerous are likely to be the meanings it encompasses" (p. 208). To fulfil such tasks, you say, it is also extremely important that the pilgrimage institution has a very broad charisma: "By being able to accommodate pilgrims from many cultures and social stations, sacred sites make divine powers accessible to far larger and more varied numbers of adherents than is often possible in everyday worship. This 'popular' aspect of much pilgrimage practice is reinforced further by the fact that sites offer religious experiences that do not rely exclusively on textual knowledge: rather, the charisma of place or person is brought 'down to earth' and embodied in tangible, often miracle-working objects, which by appearing to respond to the requests of worshippers heal or renew individual lives ..." (p. 208). How do you see biennial sites and institutions in this regard?

Well, one of the points we were making there was to indicate, as others have, how pilgrimages are frequently sites of conflict between the orthodox and the popular, between established hierarchies and more unpredictable sets of adherents; even today, in an age where literacy is much more widespread than before, these tensions can also be expressed in the extent to which textually legitimated interpretations of sites are adopted or ignored/rejected. I imagine that these kinds of tensions may be evident in different ways at biennales, as commentaries produced by curators, artists and reviewers

complement or compete with each other but may also have little to do with the ways in which most people experience exhibitions themselves.

More generally, contemporary anthropology has seen a new turn towards examining materiality, leading to debates over the agency of objects, including artworks, connections between persons and things, the social lives of objects, and so on. For instance, do objects do things to us, as well as us using them? And how is our sense of ourselves constituted by the things that surround us, and moreover, do they perhaps also help to form us as persons? But I think it's interesting that an examination of the material in ritual action is also evident in much of Victor Turner's work, written decades ago, and including as well as going beyond his work on pilgrimage. In Turner, the key relationship is often between 'meaning' and 'object'. We see how his well-known theory of 'dominant symbols' refers to the range of meanings brought together in a single object. Take an image of the Virgin Mary at the centre of a pilgrimage ritual, for instance. It might signify and encompass a range of meanings, from the abstract notions of motherhood or purity to the deeply embodied idea of providing milk for literal as well as spiritual children. A less well-known work is Turner's edited volume *Celebration: Studies in Festivity and Ritual* (1982), which is a book of essays on 'celebratory' ritual items from around the world, brought together for an exhibition at the Smithsonian and intended to relativize what Turner sees as the American tendency to desacralize objects. I think, in this book, Turner is asking us to look at but also look beyond objects, to try to understand how they need to be imagined in motion and engaged in social processes that may involve dance, veneration, aggression, and so on. It's more difficult perhaps to see how art works presented at a biennale are in 'motion': people tend not to dance around them, after all. But we do construct ways of viewing art, influential forms of interpretation and valuation, and so on, all of which arguably help to constitute the work itself and cannot be divorced from how we value it.

At the important biennials, visitors from outside the professional art world are probably even closer, physically, to the processes through which art becomes "great art"; they are closer to the process of canonizing and consecrating art objects and artists. Perhaps not everyone realizes this in a rational, explicit way, but this awareness somehow seems very present; it's in the atmosphere you absorb. Does the art field need to feel the presence of the

“miraculous”, and if it does, then why? What are the possible historical comparisons?

We certainly see how popularity itself, ostensibly a reflection of the power of objects and artists, helps to constitute that power, and the two-way interaction between popularity and power is also evident at pilgrimage sites. At the same time, the discourse of ‘greatness’ that still permeates much art criticism as well as popular views of art takes us back to some of the points I was making about methodological philistinism, and the need as a social scientist to stand back from tendencies towards the isolating of art and religion as set apart through discourses of the non-material but also ideas of the transcendent, the sublime or indeed that of pure genius (it is notable that genius must so often be seen as ‘pure’). In this sense, there is a kind of parallel between the artistic discourse of genius (an ability that is incomprehensible and unreachable by the ordinary person) and the idea, common in pilgrimage sites, that sacred objects are somehow produced, relocated, found, in ways that defy the rational. The acheiropoetic character of the sacred object – as we see in some Eastern Orthodox icons, or the Virgin of Guadalupe – is one manifestation of this tendency. Such objects are somehow seen as too special to have been made by ordinary, uninspired human hands.

Incidentally, as a social scientist, I’ve had a lot of fun working with an art historian, John Elsner, on a pilgrimage site such as Walsingham, where the art on display cannot by any stretch of the imagination be described as ‘great’. Part of the process of research has indeed involved persuading John that objects at Walsingham are mediocre in artistic terms but fascinating in relation to social and cultural criteria. (He is not very keen on the Pre-Raphaelites either!)

Because biennials are a crucial gathering place for the “dignitaries” of the art world, they play a very important role in the exchange and dissemination of information as well as in the formation of the new general discourse in the field. Exegesis, too, seems to be one of the key aspects of biennial exhibitions (“pilgrimages as a web of places, people and texts”). documenta’s importance is so solid, perhaps, for the very reason that, unlike Venice, it is known for more or less clearly defining and then presenting to a wide audience not only the most important art but also the “trendiest” discourse of the moment. Is it fair to say that in this way biennials play a role similar to that of pilgrimages and pilgrimage sites?

I see biennials as acting as important indices not only for the quality and popularity of the art displayed, but also at a wider level for the city that hosts them. A similar process can happen with some pilgrimage sites, as places such as Lourdes and Compostela become inextricably linked with the shrines that they host. I wonder whether one point of difference lies in the wider institutional worlds that these two activities refer to, however. Biennales bring together worlds of artistic production and display, tourism, finance, and so on, but do not usually have to define themselves in relation to any single, centralized orthodoxy. Pilgrimages, on the other hand, may express forms of antinomian popular religion that have an ambivalent or hostile relationship to orthodoxy. You can see how pilgrimage sites have therefore sometimes acted as reference points for popular religion. The site of Santiago de Compostela in Spain is a good example of a site with ancient Christian origins but one whose present popularity involves a hugely differentiated constituency of people, many of whom may see themselves as spiritual seekers but not interested in institutionalized religion at all.

When an art professional comes home after visiting a biennial, she puts into practice in her own space the new ideas she learned at the biennial. She writes about these ideas; she comes up with a new, special concept for an exhibition; or she may, for instance, include a young artist who has confirmed his growing importance through his participation in a major biennial. Did pilgrimages play – do they still play – a similar important role in the spread of new cults of saints, new liturgical forms, etc.?

A major challenge for pilgrimage studies is precisely how to trace the influence of any site beyond its geographic borders. It’s clear that major shrines can be productive of mimetic, smaller versions of themselves, diffused through a transnational pilgrimage landscape. This is very clear, for instance, in the creation of diasporic pilgrimage landscapes among Hindu migrants to Europe and North America, who are recreating pilgrimage landscapes in their new homes that echo the Indian spiritual landscape. With Vida Bajc and John Eade, I’ve tried to describe such processes using the language of fractals (i.e. the reproduction of smaller versions of an original) to describe the dynamic emergence of religious centres in this way – we refer to pilgrimage as involving processes of ‘mobility’ and ‘centring’ in a special issue of *Mobilities* (2007, 2[3]).

The development of such pilgrimage landscapes

depends on complex relationships between recapitulation and innovation, tradition and novelty: legitimacy is often acquired through asserting material connections or aesthetic parallels with an authoritative site such as Lourdes or Varanasi. Walsingham itself is built on the idea – or myth – that its central shrine was an exact copy of Jesus's house in Nazareth. It may be, however, that art professionals create a different relationship to biennales, in contexts of artistic production where aesthetic continuities may be evident across artists, but where novelty in creation is more valued in and of itself.

In the history of pilgrimage, criticism of the phenomenon, which underscored its more negative sides, was most present precisely when pilgrimage was going through a golden age. Today, in the golden age of biennials, these events, too, are constantly encountering strong criticism, with the harshest comments, it seems, coming from those who most intensively attend or even participate in them. Do you have any thoughts about this?

John and I have described Walsingham as akin to a spiritual pressure cooker, and in this sense it can be seen as an example of what John Eade and Sallnow have referred to as 'contesting the sacred' in relation to pilgrimage sites. What they mean by this is that a lot is at stake in larger shrines, where spiritual power is believed to be concentrated, and yet where very different constituencies may be coming together at precisely the same time. A place like Lourdes brings together very different groups of people who see the site as central to their understanding of faith, but who may nonetheless understand the significance of the site in very different ways. Is it about accepting the necessity of human suffering, for instance (a rather conservative ecclesiastical position), or is it about the continuing possibility of miraculous intervention in human life (an idea with much more radical potential)? Both of these sides can be very critical of each other, as well as of the authorities who allow opponents' views to be expressed at the shrine. There are surely parallels with biennales in the sense that both kinds of events are too important to ignore. And in both cases, criticism is not only made by those who have invested time and effort in coming but is also being tested out to see if it has wider resonance on such a significant stage. We might think here of the history of iconoclasm (another activity that links the worlds of pilgrimage and art), where aggression towards objects is precisely an expression of the power of those objects.



Kasim Korudovic,
S.I.T.E. (Tuljenje v vsakdanu: Ljubljana) / S.I.T.E. (Screaming in The Everyday-Ljubljana) 2011
Serija neobvestnih performansov na različnih lokacijah v Ljubljani / A series of unannounced performances at various locations in Ljubljana
(Sodelovanje umetnika in Mestnega urada javno Jaka Babnik)



MEGADOODEK IN GLOBALNA KULTURA BIENALOV: *DAK'ART*, DAKARSKI BIENALE*

THOMAS FILLITZ

PREVOD

POLONA PETEK

Po letu 1984 in dobršen del devetdesetih smo bili priča ustanavljanju številnih umetnostnih bienalov; trenutno jih je precej več kot sto in velik del teh poteka v deželah na jugu.

Glede na ta ogromen uspeh bienala kot dogodkovnega formata bi v svojem prispevku rad obravnaval dve pomembni vprašanji: (a) Izvor tega specifičnega formata je sicer res v evropski kulturni zgodovini, del katere je bila leta 1895 tudi ustanovitev beneškega bienala kot dediča svetovnih razstav, toda kljub temu se lahko upravičeno vprašamo, ali ni zavajajoče, če vse te nedavno ustanovljene umetnostne bienale po vsem svetu obravnavamo zgolj kot kopije bienalov, ki jih je ustvaril evropsko-severnoameriški svet umetnosti.¹ (b) Če upoštevamo megadogodke, ki jih prirejajo sodobne kulturne industrije in med katere sodijo bienali, izjemno obiskane razstave, širjenje guggenheimovskega sindroma in številni festivali na vseh področjih kulture, se človek znajde v skušnjavi, da bi vse te pojave zmetal v isti koš, ki bi mu lahko rekli »globalna kultura spektakla«. ² Globalna kultura bienalov bi potemtakem tvorila impresivno mrežo reproduciranih globalno spektakularnih dogodkov z globalno delujočimi genialnimi kuratorji (kot so, denimo, Nemec René Block, nigerijski Američan Okwui Enwezor, Italijan Achille Bonito Oliva, Južni Korejec Hou Hanru in drugi) in medkulturnimi kuratorskimi odbori (to idejo je sprožil Gerardo Mosquera), ki bi jim sledili globalni tokovi »vsevednih zahodnih strokovnja-

* Zahvaljujem se organizatorjem *Dak'Arta*, dakarskega bienala sodobne afriške umetnosti, da so omogočili in prijazno podprli mojo raziskavo.

1 Okwui Enwezor, »Großausstellungen und die Antinomien einer transnationalen globalen Form«, v: *Berliner Thyssen-Vorlesung zur Ikonologie der Gegenwart 1*, München: Fink, 2002, str. 52.

2 Guy Debord, *Družba spektakla; Komentarji k Družbi spektakla; Panegirik: prvi del*, prev. Meta Štular in Tanja Lesničar Pučko, Ljubljana: Študentska založba, 1999 [1967].

kov za umetnost»,³ potujoči umetniki in mednarodno občinstvo samooklicanih kozmopolitskih posvečencev. Stallabrasovo mnenje o bienalih je kritično, češ da je njihov edini politični namen umestitev nekega mesta na politični in ekonomski zemljevid sveta in da je ta format »zgolj ena od puščic v tulu kateregakoli mesta, ki si želi biti globalno, oziroma – ravno tako pogosto – mesta, ki si za to prizadeva«.⁴

Osrednja poteza specifičnosti slehernega umetnostnega bienala je povezana predvsem z njegovo ustanovitvijo. Na prvem *Bienalu v Havani* (*Bienal de la Havana*) leta 1984 so bili na ogled le umetniki iz Latinske Amerike in s Karibov. Leta 1986, ko je bil prirejen drugič, se je ta bienale predstavil kot »osrednji« umetnostni bienale tretjega sveta in se osredotočil na sodobno umetniško produkcijo v Latinski Ameriki, Afriki in Aziji. Lucy Lippard trdi, da je ta bienale prehitel sprememba v evropsko-severnoameriškem svetu umetnosti, ki je takšno sopostavljanje umetniških del z vsega sveta uresničil šele leta 1989 z razstavo *Čarodeji sveta* (*Magiciens de la terre*) v Parizu.⁵ V kasnejših izvedbah je ta oblika postala temeljna lastnost bienala v Havani: »Havanski bienale utira pot v povezovanju umetnosti iz najrazličnejših dežel 'tretjega sveta'«.⁶

Nekdanji johannesburški bienale so zasnovali v post-apartheidskem obdobju. Prvič so ga priredili leta 1995, eno leto po prvih svobodnih volitvah v Južni Afriki. Po eni strani naj bi bil ta bienale spodbuda za sodobno umetniško produkcijo v Južni Afriki, po drugi strani pa naj bi se z njim Johannesburg vnovič umestil na kulturni zemljevid sveta. Žal pa je mestni svet že ob drugem bienalu leta 1997 preprečil vsakršno nadaljnje delovanje bienala, češ da ta ne upošteva lokalnih družbenih, političnih oziroma kulturnih razmer (glavni kurator je bil Enwezor). Politični razlogi so bili tudi gonilo ustanovitve bienala v južnokorejskem mestu Gwangju. Ta bienale, ki so za zasnovali leta 1995, obeležuje spomin na leto 1980, ko so se študentje uprli Chun Doo-Hwanovi diktaturi, upor pa je brutalno zatrla južnokorejska vojska – gwangjujski bienale je postal simbol južnokorejske demokracije.

Poleg tega, da sta uvedla razlikovanje med bienali gle-

de na zgodovinske okoliščine njihove ustanovitve, sta Block in Bydlerjeva skušala razviti tudi tipologijo bienalov. René Block razlikuje med beneškim (predstavitev ustvarjalnosti različnih nacij), sidneyjskim (izbor po kuratorskih temah), gwangjujskim (izbor umetnikov ni odvisen od zastopanosti nacij) in *Manifestinim* modelom (lokacija se spreminja).⁷ Charlotte Bydler pa ločuje med kapitalistično-filantropskimi bienali (Benetke pred drugo svetovno vojno, São Paulo, Sidney), bienali oziroma dogodki, ki so se pojavili v obdobju po drugi svetovni vojni (*documenta*, Benetke po drugi svetovni vojni, Havana, *Dak'Art* in grafični bienale v Ljubljani), in bienali, ki so »usmerjeni v fleksibilno proizvodnjo in naravnani k dogodku, kakršni so nastajali v devetdesetih letih dvajsetega stoletja in na začetku enaindvajsetega stoletja« (Istanbul, Gwangju, *Manifesta*).⁸

Sam pojem »globalne kulture« uporabljam kot poimenovanje za sistem umetnostnih bienalov na osnovi pomena, ki ga je pojmu pripisal Ulf Hannerz: globalna kultura konstituira globalno mrežo in ustreza organizaciji raznolikosti.⁹ V primeru bienalov razlike niti ne nastajajo niti niso organizirane v nekem središču, temveč mora odločitev za neki bienale – njegova specifičnost oziroma edinstvenost – nastati v specifičnem kraju. S pomočjo tega razumevanja globalne kulture nameravam poudariti, da je bienale format umetniškega dogodka, na katerega vplivajo globalni tokovi. To pa ne pomeni nujno, da so ta format povsod po svetu privzeli na podoben način, kar bi ustvarilo lokalne različice splošne strukture. Globalna kultura umetnostnih bienalov nikakor ni kultura vzajemnih tokov in enakopravnih odnosov in v sistemu pomembnost nekega kraja oziroma mesta, kjer poteka neki bienale, dejansko določa globalni svet umetnosti (umetnostni strokovnjaki, lastniki galerij, mediji, kozmopolitska občinstva in tako naprej).

Dominantni diskurzi evropsko-severnoameriškega sveta umetnosti pa svoje institucije – *Biennale di Venezia* ali *documento* v Kasselu, na primer – razumejo kot središča globalne kulture bienalov. Te prireditve diktirajo, katere umetnostne oblike bodo prevladovale v globalnem svetu umetnosti v prihodnjih letih in kateri umetniki bodo najvplivnejši – kar je pomemben vidik, kar se tiče politike in ekonomije globalnega umetnostne-

3 James Elliott, »Dakar: Real Action«, v: *Dak'Art 2000. 4ème Biennale de l'Art Africain Contemporain*, razstavni katalog, Dakar, 2000, str. 15.

4 Julian Stallabrass, *Art Incorporated. The Story of Contemporary Art*, Oxford in New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, str. 36.

5 Lucy R. Lippard, »Alles neu benennen! Unser Afro-Asian-Hispano Amerika«, *Kunstforum*, let. 118, 1992, str. 163.

6 Nelson Herrera Isla v: Susanne Boecker, »Uns ist das Risiko egal. Die Biennale von Havanna«, Susanne Boecker v pogovoru z Nelsonom Herrero Islo, direktorjem Centra Wilfreda Lama za sodobno umetnost, *Kunstforum*, let. 161, 2002, str. 430.

7 René Block v: Martin Glaser, »Vorwort. Preface. Interview René Block«, v: Museum Fridericianum Kassel (ured.), *Das Lied von der Erde*, Kassel, 2000, str. 4–11; Charlotte Bydler, *The Global Art World Inc. On the Globalization of Contemporary Art*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Figura Nova Series 32, Uppsala: Uppsala University Library, 2004, str. 150.

8 Bydler, 2004, str. 151.

9 Ulf Hannerz, »Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture«, v: Mike Featherstone (ured.), *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, London, Thousand Oaks in New Delhi: Sage Publishing, 1990, str. 237.

ga trga. S stališča dominantnih diskurzov so umetnostni bienali na jugu torej predvsem prizorišča medkulturne komunikacije, »znaki postkolonialne svetovne družine«.¹⁰ Po Enwezorjevem mnenju ta eksplicitna nenakost konstituira enega osrednjih paradoksov globalnega sveta umetnosti, kajti globalizacija je »razgalila mit trdnega sveta umetnosti«.¹¹ Po Chakrabartyjevem mnenju je takšen odnos tipičen za diskurze, ki so jim v sodobnem svetu podrejeni nekoč kolonizirani subjekti: slednji morajo biti poučeni o središčih in njihovih predstavnikih, medtem ko se središčem ni treba ubadati z izzivi periferije in lahko zatrejo njihove dosežke, ali pa te dogodke zreducirajo na nič več kot kopije svojih lastnih prireditev.¹²

Sam se bom oprl na Eisenstadtovo konceptualizacijo pojma »multiplih modern«¹³ in predlagal, da formata bienala ne gre razumeti kot nekaj za vselej fiksnega, temveč kot procesni pojem, ki se preoblikuje na vsakem posameznem prizorišču in glede na konkretno lokacijo. Pri tem se zdi bistveno vprašanje, ali je bienale zgolj spektakel, ki ga ustvarja globalni kapitalizem in čigar namen je konzumiranje umetniškega dogodka, ali pa prispeva k sodobnemu oporekanju razmerjem moči, ki jih določa evropsko-severnoameriški svet umetnosti. Enwezor bienale razume kot produkcijo »protihegemonskega / protinormativnega« pogleda in kot iskanje »novih razmerij moči in kulturnih prevodov«.¹⁴ Njegov namen potemtakem ne more biti zgolj vključevanje umetniških del ustvarjalcev s periferije (Afrika, Azija, Latinska Amerika, Oceanija) oziroma s tako razumljenih sekundarnih prizorišč umetniške produkcije v evropsko-severnoameriškem svetu umetnosti, temveč spoprijemanje z resničnim diskurzom o konstituiranju tistega, čemur nekateri strokovnjaki dandanes pravijo »globalna umetnost«, torej z diskurzom o konstituiranju povezav in tokov med sodobnimi umetniškimi produkcijami na različnih območjih sveta, ki so jih do konca osemdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja konstruirali kot oddaljena in drugačna od tistih, ki so bila vrednotena v skladu z zahodno umetnostno zgodovino.¹⁵

Problem postane jasen, če razmislimo o bienalu *Dak'Art*, proti kateremu je bilo na začetku enaindvajsetega stoletja uperjenih kar nekaj resnih kritik. Nekateri kritiki so trdili, da *Dak'Art* ne vsebuje »nikakršnega duha bojevitosti, ki bi se zoperstavljal dominantnim zahodnim središčem«, oziroma da se bienale sooča s »krizo namena«: »njegovi organizatorji ne vedo več, zakaj obstaja«.¹⁶ Toda te očitke so kritiki artikulirali v postkolonialnem umetnostnem diskurzu znotraj evropsko-severnoameriškega sveta umetnosti. Meni pa se *Dak'Art* zdi vpet v postkolonialno perspektivo in nehegemonski pogled. Sogovorniki (uradni zastopniki bienala, lokalni ustvarjalci) kot glavne cilje bienala navajajo več vidikov: *Dak'Art* naj bi bil afriška razstava *par excellence*, ki bi na ogled postavila najboljše v sodobni afriški umetnosti; s takšno umeščenostjo naj bi bienale sodeloval v globalni kulturi umetnostnih bienalov; regionalno in celinsko naj bi prispeval k tokovom vednosti o globalni umetnosti, k transnacionalni interakciji med umetniki in tudi k nadaljnjemu razvoju lokalnega sveta umetnosti.

V podporo tem trditvam bom v prvem delu svojega prispevka obravnaval zgodovino *Dak'Arta*. Dakarski bienale je nastal kot posledica zahtev in potreb lokalnih ustvarjalcev po platformi za razstave, ki pa bi po zaprtju *Musée Dynamique*, prvega muzeja moderne umetnosti v podsaharski Afriki, lahko delovala tudi kot prizorišče transnacionalnih umetnostnih debat. Poleg tega zgodovina kaže tudi neomajen interes sekretariata bienala in njegovih različnih odborov in komisij za utrjevanje že omenjenih ciljev bienala. V drugem delu se bom osredotočil na strukturo razstavnih prostorov, zlasti na prizadevanje za avtonomno razstavljanje umetniških del, ki jih ni mogoče videti nikjer drugje. *Dak'Artov* proračun nedvomno zelo vpliva na njegovo moč razstavljanja. To je postalo očitno zlasti leta 2008 in 2010 – v preteklosti je proračun znašal približno milijon evrov, leta 2010 pa so bila finančna sredstva, kot kaže, precej manjša.¹⁸ Kljub hudim finančnim omejitvam pa se je izbirna komisija zadnjega dakarskega bienala odločila za drzna merila izbire in za izključitev perspektiv zahodne umetnostne zgodovine. To bi moralo podpreti horizont *Dak'Arta* kot afriškega bienala, ki stremlji k ustvarjanju izzivalne platforme za sodobne vizualne umetnosti afri-

Cantz, 2011; Hans Belting in Andrea Buddensieg (ured.), *The Global Art World. Audiences, Markets, and Museums*, Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009.

16 Rashid Araeen, »Dak'Art 1992–2002: The Problem of Representation, Conceptualization, and Critical Evaluation in Contemporary African Art as Presented by the Dakar Biennale«, *Third Text* 62, št. 1, let. 17, 2003, str. 100.

17 Olù Oguibe, »The Future of Dak'Art?«, *Third Text* 66, št. 1, let. 18, 2004, str. 83.

18 Zaradi odredbe ministrstva za kulturo celotni proračun za leto 2010 ni bil objavljen. Za primerjavo, proračun *documente 12* (2007) je znašal približno osemnajst milijonov evrov.

10 Thomas McEvelley, *Arrivederci Venice. The Third World Biennials* (pregledi mednarodnih preglednih umetnostnih razstav tretjega sveta), <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-14875189.html>, 1993, str. 8. (18. april 2008).

11 Okwui Enwezor, »The Postcolonial Constellation: Contemporary Art in a State of Permanent Transition«, v: Gilane Tawadros in Sarah Campbell (ured.), *Fault Lines. Contemporary Art and Shifting Landscapes*, London: InIVA, 2003, str. 76.

12 Dipesh Chakrabarty, »Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History«, v: Salah Hassan in Ifitkhar Dadi (ured.), *Unpacking Europe. Towards a Critical Reading*, Rotterdam: Museum Bijmans Van Beuningen, NAI Publishers, 2001, str. 178–195.

13 Shmuel Eisenstadt, »Multiple Modernities«, *Daedalus*, št. 1, let. 129, 2000, str. 1–16; Shmuel Eisenstadt (ured.), *Multiple Modernities*, New Brunswick in London: Transaction Publishers, 2002.

14 Enwezor, 2002, str. 56, 59.

15 Glej, na primer: Hans Belting, Jacob Birken, Andrea Buddensieg in Peter Weibel (ured.), *Global Studies. Mapping Contemporary Art and Culture*, Ostfildern: Hatje

ških ustvarjalcev. Svoj prispevek bom sklenil z razpravo o tem specifičnem megadogodku kot postkolonialni kulturni coni v nastajanju, torej tako, da bom razkril njegove specifične protihegemonске in protinormativne horizonte, hkrati pa bom vztrajal pri njegovi vpletenosti v globalni svet umetnosti.

KRATEK ZGODOVINSKI PREGLED

Po obdobju predsedovanja Léopolda Sédarja Senghorja, v katerem je umetnost uživala močno podporo državne politike, je drugi predsednik Senegala postal Abdou Diouf, ki je dajal prednost družbeno-ekonomskim političnim zadevam, kar je hudo prizadelo področje umetnosti. *Umetniško vas (village des arts)* v dakarski četrti Colobane so septembra 1983 nasilno izpraznili.¹⁹ *Musée Dynamique*, ki so ga odprli leta 1966 in ki je hranil zbirke senegalske moderne umetnosti, je Senghor leta 1976 spremenil v plesno šolo. Diouf pa je plesno šolo leta 1983 zaprl in dve leti kasneje vnovič odprl muzej, nato pa je zgradbo leta 1988 dodelil vrhovnemu sodišču.²⁰

V obdobju političnih groženj je mlada generacija vizualnih umetnikov, ki so jo oropali najpomembnejše ustanove za razstavljanje, leta 1985 ustanovila ANAPS (*Association Nationale des Artistes Plasticiens du Sénégal*), torej Nacionalno združenje vizualnih umetnikov Senegala, in začela vsako leto organizirati enotedenski *Nacionalni salon vizualnih umetnikov (Salon National des Artistes Plasticiens)*, eno redkih priložnosti za ustvarjalce, da razstavijo svoja dela in tako postanejo vidni. Od leta 1986 naprej je združenje podpiralo »odločenost umetnikov, da se aktivneje vključijo v umetniško in kulturno življenje naše dežele«, ²¹ in terjalo strukturne prilagoditve. Leta 1989 je ANAPS artikuliral željo ustvarjalcev po umetniškem dogodku, v katerem bi domači umetniki lahko stopili v interakcijo z mednarodno umetniško produkcijo.²² Istega leta je predsednik Abdou Diouf napovedal ustanovitev bienala literarnih in vizualnih umetnikov, kar se je nato zgodilo decembra 1990.²³ Zadeva se je končala s hudimi trenji med obema skupinama kulturnih ustvarjalcev.

Leta 1992 je nastal *Dak'Art* kot bienale, posvečen izključno vizualnim umetnostim. V skladu z nameni vizualnih umetnikov je bil *Dak'Art* proglašen za »mednarodni umetnostni bienale«, kjer bodo na ogled umetniške stvaritve ustvarjalcev iz Senegala, Amerik, Evrope in Azije.²⁴ Pobudo in zamisel za ta dogodek so sicer dali senegalski umetniki, toda že od vsega začetka ga je nadziralo in organiziralo ministrstvo za kulturo. A tudi ta mednarodni format ni bil prepričljiv, zato so se strokovnjaki in avtorji ocene, ki jo je zahtevalo ministrstvo za kulturo, odločili za celinsko afriško perspektivo s panafriškimi povezavami, kar naj bi pripomoglo k boljšemu položaju *Dak'Arta* v globalni kulturi bienalov.

Glede na nove smernice naj bi *Dak'Art* postal razstava sodobne afriške umetnosti za globalni svet umetnosti. Obdobje do naslednjega bienala leta 1996 so porabili za rekonfiguracijo nekaterih struktur; tako so, denimo, ustanovili generalni sekretariat in znanstveni odbor, predvsem pa so novo usmeritev izrazili z novim imenom: *Dak'Art: Bienale sodobne afriške umetnosti (Dak'Art: biennale de l'art contemporain africain)*. Tej spremembi nikakor niso bili naklonjeni vsi senegalski umetniki. Kar nekaj ustvarjalcev, ki so sodelovali v pobudah za umetnostni bienale konec osemdesetih let, mi je povedalo, da je »vlada ukradla naš bienale«.²⁵

Kasnejši *Dak'Arti* so se posvetili predvsem distribuciji afriških umetnikov – več predstavnikov iz anglofonskih dežel in nekaj umetnikov, ki živijo v diaspori. Panafriško razsežnost so nadaljnje prireditve še stopnjevale, kot je jasno poudarila Sara Diamond, predsednica izbirne komisije šestega bienala leta 2004, v svojem pozdravnem nagovoru.²⁶

Glavno orodje teh sprememb in boljšega povezovanja z globalno kulturo bienalov je bila politika imenovanja članov izbirne komisije. Od leta 1996 naprej so bili zelo pozorni na to, da so v komisijo vključevali mednarodne umetniške kuratorje; tako so se v vlogi predsednika oziroma predsednice te komisije zvrstili Achille Bonito Oliva (Italija) leta 1998, David Elliott (Združeno kraljestvo/Švedska) leta 2000, Ery Camara (Senegal/Mehika) leta 2002, Sara Diamond (Kanada) leta 2004, Yacouba Konaté (Slonokoščena obala) leta 2006 – prvi predsednik iz afriške države, Magueye Kassé (Senegal) leta 2008 in Marilyn Martin (Južna Afrika) leta 2010.

19 Elisabeth Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow: Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal. 1960–1995*, Durham in London: Duke University Press, 2004, str. 143.

20 Abdou Sylla, »La tumultueuse histoire du Musée dynamique de Dakar«, *Africultures*, <http://www.africultures.com/php/index.php?nav=article&no=6746>, 2007 (31. oktober 2011).

21 El Hadji Sy, »Art Against Apartheid«, v: Clémentine Deliss (ur.), *Seven Stories: About Modern Art in Africa*, razstavni katalog, Pariz: Flammarion, 1995, str. 235.

22 Intervjuja z Viyéjem Dibo in Amadoujem Sowom, februar 2008.

23 Yacouba Konaté, *La Biennale de Dakar. Une esthétique de la création africaine contemporaine – tête à tête avec Adorno*, Pariz: L'Harmattan, 2009, str. 45.

24 Glej: katalog 1992.

25 Intervjuji leta 2008.

26 Sara Diamond, »Decision and Process: The International Selection Committee«, *Dak'Art 2004. 6ème Biennale de l'Art Africain Contemporain*, razstavni katalog, Dakar, 2004, str. 15.

Vključitev osebnosti iz globalnega sveta umetnosti in tudi poudarjena osredotočenost na celotno afriško celino in njeno panafriško razsežnost sta ustvarili trenja. Prvič, nekaj umetnikov in afriških strokovnjakov za umetnost je zaznalo nevarnost, da se bo tako izoblikovala evropsko-severnoameriška opredelitev sodobne afriške umetnosti. Drugič, *Dak'Art* ni bil več ekskluzivni dogodek za senegalske umetnike – leta 2010, na primer, so bila med šestindvajsetimi izbranimi umetniki razstavljena dela le dveh senegalskih ustvarjalcev. Mnogo tistih senegalskih umetnikov, ki niso bili nikoli izbrani, se je čutilo izključene iz uradnega dogodka, čeprav so sodelovali v prizadevanjih za ustanovitev tega foruma mednarodne interakcije.²⁷ Še leta 2010 je več umetnikov izrazilo svoje nezadovoljstvo nad temi okoliščinami in izjavilo, da je bienale popolnoma nekoristna institucija, kar se tiče njihovih lastnih umetniških prizadevanj in mednarodnega položaja.²⁸

Od leta 1996 naprej pa so razvoj bienalskega prostora spremljale še druge dejavnosti. Umetniki so začeli razstavljati svoja dela v javnih prostorih v Dakarju – v nedavno ustanovljenih galerijah, v mednarodnih kulturnih centrih, na sedežih podjetij, v zasebnih hišah in tako naprej. Te temeljno zasebne dejavnosti so spodbudile še eno institucionalno spremembo. Leta 2000 so se te razstave združile v tako imenovani prostor *Dak'Art »OFF«* in postale izjemno pomemben del krajine *Dak'Arta* (glej spodaj).

STRUKTURA DAK'ARTA

Organizacijska posebnost *Dak'Arta* je produkcija različnih razstavnih prostorov oziroma tistega, kar od leta 2000 naprej imenujemo *Dak'Art »IN«*. Središče je »Mednarodna razstava,« ki jo pripravlja izbirna komisija in ki poteka v *Musée Théodore Monod* v kompleksu *Musée de l'IFAN*. Izbrani umetniki, ki se predstavljajo v tem prostoru, se potegujejo za nagrade. Najpomembnejši med njimi sta (a) *Velika nagrada Léopolda Sédarja Senghorja* (*Grand Prix Léopold Sédar Senghor*, ki se je v preteklosti imenovala *Velika nagrada državnega vodje/Grand Prix du Chef de l'État*), ki jo podeljuje predsednik Republike Senegal, in (b) *Nagrada senegalskega ministrstva za kulturo* (*Prix du Ministère de la Culture du Sénégal*). Druge nagrade podeljujejo Frankofonija (*Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*) in druge mednarodne ustanove. Drugi prostor *Dak'Arta* so »Samostojne raz-

stave,« za katere so odgovorni posamezni kuratorji. Ta mednarodni prostor omogoča predstavitev umetniških del avtorjev, ki niso državljani nobene od afriških držav. Leta 2010 je bila v tem okviru v Nacionalni umetnostni galeriji (*Galerie Nationale d'Art*) organizirana razstava štirih haitijskih umetnikov z naslovom »Haitijska navzočnost« (*«Présence Haïtienne»*). Še en prostor je salon oblikovanja (*Salon du design*), ki je namenjen uporabnim umetnostim afriških oblikovalcev. Najpomembnejša nagrada na tem področju je *Nagrada ustvarjalnosti* (*Prix de la Créativité*). Toda ta prostor so leta 2010 začasno zaprli in sedaj presojuje o tem, kakšna naj bi bila njegov pomen in obseg. Poleg tega uradni program zajema tudi prostor za razpravljanje, za tako imenovana »profesionalna srečanja« (*rencontres professionnelles*), v bienalski vasi (*village de la biennale*) na vrtu kompleksa Musée de l'IFAN. Tu se vrstijo referati strokovnjakov (kot je bil, denimo, referat z naslovom »Kaj se obeta *Dak'Artu*« [*«Prospects for Dak'Art»*], ki ga je jeseni leta 2010 predstavila Youma Fall), razprave s člani izbirne komisije o njihovih merilih in izbirnih postopkih, okrogle mize (leta 2010 o »estetiki in teritoriju«) in tako naprej.

Kot sem že omenil, pod oznako *Dak'Art »OFF«* sekretariat bienala, zlasti umetnik Mauro Petroni, koordinira razstavljalne dejavnosti, ki v različnih prostorih Dakarja potekajo med bienalom. Vloga sekretariata je predvsem to, da za zainteresirana občinstva pripravi vodnik po razstavah (*guide des exposants*) oziroma vseh umetniških dogodkih. Umetniki od povsod, lastniki galerij, kulturni centri (francoski, nemški in tako naprej), umetniška vas (ki se sedaj nahaja poleg Stadiona Léopolda Sédarja Senghorja) in druge lokalne ustanove, ki sodelujejo pri platformi »OFF«, so vabljeni, da posredujejo podatke o času, lokaciji in trajanju svojih prireditev – ti dogodki včasih trajajo le en večer, včasih nekaj dni, včasih pa potekajo ves čas bienala, torej ves mesec.

Med leti 1996 in 2000 je bienale obsegal le nekaj tovrstnih intervencij in razstav (od šestnajst do petdeset), kasneje pa se je njihovo število zelo povečalo (po letu 2002 jih je bilo že več kot sto, leta 2010 pa skoraj dvesto); uradni del *Dak'Art »IN«* ostaja precej omejen (leta 2004 je bilo izbranih štiriinosemdeset ustvarjalcev, leta 2008 osemintrideset, leta 2010 pa šestindvajset), in to predvsem zaradi pomanjkanja finančnih sredstev. Nekaj strokovnjakov iz globalnega sveta umetnosti je opozorilo, da je dogodkov v okviru *Dak'Art »OFF«* preveč in, še posebno, da so v kakovostnem pogledu med njimi prevelika razhajanja. Koordinatorji platforme »OFF« in drugi predstavniki bienala so to kritiko upoštevali.

27 Konaté, 2009, str. 63f; intervjuji leta 2008 in 2010.

28 Intervjuji leta 2010.

Po eni strani je to polje visoke kakovosti: povabljeni tuji umetniki, lokalni ustvarjalci v prostoru »OFF«, ki so mednarodno uveljavljeni, lastniki galerij, ki zelo skrbno pripravljajo svoje razstave, pogosto kar dve leti vnaprej, in ugledni mednarodni kuratorji, ki jih včasih povabijo, da zasnujejo prireditve. Veliko intervencijo Ndaryja Loja, dobitnika *Velike nagrade Léopolda Sédarja Senghorja* (leta 2002 in 2008), na primer, so leta 2010 postavili na ogled na sedežu francoske transnacionalne korporacije Eiffage. Po drugi strani prostor »OFF« poveča vidnost umetnikov, ki so uveljavljeni predvsem lokalno in manj mednarodno, pri čemer je razpon umetniških slogov in žanrov izjemno širok. Ta mešanica daje temu prostoru specifičen horizont in vzdušje, zagotovo pa tudi pomembno popularno razsežnost. Po mnenju lokalnih organizatorjev je ta prostor vsekakor treba ohraniti. Pravzaprav posredni postopki izbire že delujejo, saj so osrednji razstavniki prostori rezervirani za polje visoke kakovosti.²⁹

Mnogi pomembni lokalni umetniki pa menijo, da veliko število razstav v okviru *Dak'Art* »OFF« pomeni njihovo vnovično osvojitve *Dak'Arta*.³⁰ Všeč so jim svoboda, ki jo uživajo v tem prostoru, njegov mednarodni značaj in dejstvo, da so tu v središču dejavnosti. Po njihovem mnenju so ti vidiki v nasprotju z nadzorom državnih funkcionarjev nad prostorom »IN«, v katerem sami nimajo nobenega vpliva na izbiro in pomembne odločitve in kjer se počutijo kot izgnanci, ki so jih pregnali na sekundarna prizorišča.

DAK'ART: POSTKOLONIALNA KULTURNA CONA V NASTAJANJU

Havanski bienale je kmalu našel edinstveni izraz. Začeni s perspektivo »tretjega sveta« so se organizatorji nato osredotočili na probleme človeške družbe in njene povezanosti z okoljem. To so sicer globalni problemi, toda bienale se jih je lotil z lastnim pristopom. V bienale so vključili številne različne oblike vizualnega izražanja, denimo arhitekturo, oblikovanje in grafične umetnosti. Poleg tega je osredotočenje na interakcijo med umetniki spodbudilo organizatorje, da so opustili vse nagrade. In končno se tudi zastopane umetnike izbira na osnovi specifične teme vsakega bienala, ne pa v skladu s kakršnimkoli evropsko-severnoameriškimi načeli klasifikacije.³¹

Dak'Art se je mučil – in se deloma še vedno spopada – z iskanjem svoje poti. Že od vsega začetka se njegovi kritiki pritožujejo, da nima zares panafriškega pristopa, da je njegova kuratorska logika pomanjkljiva in da preveč poudarja ustvarjalce iz frankofonskih afriških dežel.³² Ob drugem »bienalu sodobne afriške umetnosti« leta 1998 je umetnostna kritičarka Katya García-Antón zapisala, da »pošast kolonializma [nanj] meče temno senco,«³³ saj so si organizatorji prizadevali predvsem za to, da bi pritegnili umetnostne strokovnjake iz globalnega sveta umetnosti (torej iz Evrope in Severne Amerike), medtem ko afriškim strokovnjakom niso namenili kaj dosti prostora. Leta 2003 je Rashid Araeen precej mračno ocenil vse, kar je *Dak'Art* dosegel dotlej, in pri tem navedel, da bienale ne vsebuje nikakršnega kritičnega vrednotenja, da ne ponuja okvira za izmenjavo med afriškimi umetniki, da si ne prizadeva nagovoriti publike mesta in da v javnih prostorih ni razstavljenih nobenih del. Svojo kritiko je sklenil z vprašanjem: »Ali Afrika lahko uveljavi svojo neodvisnost oziroma razvije lastne smernice in vizijo v tem kontekstu, ne da bi se kritično spopadla s strukturami umetnosti, ki prevladujejo povsod v sodobnem svetu?«³⁴

Če dakarski bienale opazujemo kot zunanji opazovalci, se nam zares utegne zazdeti, da gre zgolj za še eno nizkoproročunsko kopijo evropsko-severnoameriškega modela bienalov ali, kar je še slabše, za spektakel, ki je le sam sebi namen. Vse je zgoščeno v prvem tednu po otvoritvi. Vrstijo se sprejemi državnih funkcionarjev, umetnikov in mednarodnih strokovnjakov, odvija se program »profesionalnih srečanj« (*rencontres professionnelles*). Tudi vsi dogodki v prostoru »OFF« so načrtovani za to obdobje, ker izven tega časovnega okvira mednarodna promocija dela nekega umetnika ni mogoča, podeljevanje nagrad pa se lahko ujema s tekmovanji umetnikov, kakršna se odvijajo na globalnem umetnostnem trgu in na številnih drugih bienalih kjerkoli po svetu.

Če se osredotočimo izključno na *Dak'Art* »IN«, se zdi kritika tako imenovanega elitističnega značaja bienala razumljiva: zdi se, da se podreja namenom globalnega sveta umetnosti, zanemarija pa interese senegalskih ustvarjalcev in širšega afriškega področja sodobne umetnosti (umetnikov, umetniških dogodkov, umetnostnih kritikov, lokalnih kuratorjev in tako naprej) ter sodelovanje lokalnega prebivalstva. V tej luči se *Dak'Art*

29 Intervjuji leta 2008 in 2010.

30 Intervjuji leta 2010; glej tudi: Konaté, 2009, str. 79.

31 Lilian Llanes, »Die Biennale von Havanna. The Havana Biennial«, v: Museum Friedericianum Kassel (ured.), *Das Lied von der Erde*, Kassel, 2000, str. 12–15;

Nelson Herrera Isla, v: Boecker, 2002, str. 431.

32 Brian Biggs, »Dak'Art 96«, *Third Text* 36, jesen 1996, str. 83f.

33 Katya García-Antón, »Dak'Art 98«, *Third Text* 44, jesen 1998, str. 87.

34 Araeen, 2003, str. 100.

zdi kot »kopičenje razstav«.³⁵

A vendar je ta predstava o kopiji evropsko-severnoameriškega modela bienalov preozka. Slišijo se glasovi, ki si prizadevajo utrditi in izpopolniti specifičnost *Dak'Arta* v globalni kulturi umetnostnih bienalov. James Elliott, predsednik izbirne komisije četrtega bienala leta 2000, takrat tudi direktor Muzeja moderne umetnosti v Stockholmu, je za *Dak'Art* predvidel prihodnost, v kateri bi bienale postal specifičen megadogodek v globalni kulturi bienalov: »[P]rireditve, kot je dakarski umetnostni bienale, [...] potrebujejo čas in zbrati morajo samozavest, da najdejo lastno pot in ne postanejo zgolj še en bienale v mednarodnem kontekstu, ki bi na ogled postavljali iste stvari kot vse druge prireditve po svetu; pa tudi razprav, ki jih spodbudijo te prireditve, si ne bi smela povsem prisvojiti industrija kritične teorije z vsevednega zahoda.«³⁶

Youma Fall oporeka omejenosti primerjav z evropskimi in severnoameriški središči, tako da poudarja drugačnost nalog, ki jih izpolnjuje dakarski bienale. Ublaziti mora pomanjkanje infrastrukture za razstavljanje, umetnostnega formiranja in pretoka informacij ter umetnostnih publikacij, informirati mora o produkciji sodobne umetnosti v Afriki in izven nje in tako naprej. Te naloge ne sodijo med naloge bienalov v Evropi ali Severni Ameriki.³⁷ Youma Fall omenja tudi zagon, ki ga je bienale dal razvoju umetnostnega trga v Senegal, zlasti za ustanavljanje galerij sodobne afriške umetnosti in za pojav zbirateljev,³⁸ kar so priznali tudi lastniki galerij, s katerimi sem se pogovarjal.

Moj argument, da se je *Dak'Art* treba lotiti s postkolonialne perspektive, temelji na zgodovini in strukturi tega bienala. Čeprav ministrstvo za kulturo že od vsega začetka nadzira ta dogodek in mu še vedno ne dopušča nikakršne avtonomnosti, ima *Dak'Art* močno orodje, s katerim lahko izoblikuje lastno specifičnost v globalni kulturi bienalov, namreč izbiro umetniških del. Vse izbirne komisije doslej so s svojimi merili izražale specifičnost tega dogodka, tako da so se posvetile sodobni afriški umetnosti in so se pri svojih odločitvah očitno zavedale potrebe, da ne reproducirajo vizij, ki bi bile podobne globalnemu krogu umetnosti.

Za deveti bienale leta 2010 je merila izbire določilo pet

članov komisije iz Južne Afrike, Nigerije, Senegala, Kameruna in Tunizije, potrdila pa sta jih tudi generalni sekretar in predsednik orientacijskega odbora. Merila so bila naslednja: (a) izbrati je bilo treba le umetnike, ki še nikoli niso sodelovali na tem bienalu; primerni so bili torej le ustvarjalci iz mlajše generacije; (b) namesto da bi govorili o diaspori ali o stalnem bivališču v neki afriški državi, kar je bilo zelo pomembno na preteklih bienalih, so tokrat izbrani umetniki morali imeti državljanstvo afriške države, ni pa bilo pomembno, kje bivajo; pomembne so bile tudi (c) estetska kakovost prijavljenih del in (d) mednarodnost ter izvirnost. Merila »afriškega bistva«, ki je bilo še leta 2004 izjemno pomembno, ni nihče niti omenil. Še pomembneje, strokovnjaki so opustili vsakršno obravnavo meril zahodne umetnostne zgodovine. Ta vidik in osredotočenje na mlado generacijo sta bila predmet vročih razprav na vrtu bienala.³⁹

Poleg tega je generalni sekretar pojasnil, da zgoščenost najpomembnejših dogodkov v prvem tednu ni povezana le s proračunom bienala, prav tako pa njen namen tudi ni čisti spektakel. Takšno stanje naj bi najbolje ustrezalo intenzivni izmenjavi med vsemi povabljenimi izbranimi ustvarjalci in njihovi interakciji s strokovnjaki in lastniki galerij, kar je za te umetnike precej izjemna priložnost, kot so potrdili tudi nekateri od sodelujočih ustvarjalcev. Tudi na podeljevanje nagrad so umetniki in organizatorji gledali z drugega zornega kota: nagrade umetnikom omogočijo, da živijo in delajo v drugih okoljih, da navezujejo nove stike in vstopajo v interakcije ter da so vpleteni v intenzivnejšo izmenjavo.⁴⁰

Če si ogledamo občinstvo, opazimo, da v prvem tednu *Dak'Art* prevladuje mednarodna publika. Toda ta slika se hitro spremeni. Ker so bili obiski vseh prizorišč popolnoma brezplačni, so se že ob koncu prvega tedna tam pojavili lokalni šolski razredi, njihovo število pa se je v naslednjih tednih še povečalo. *Dak'Art* dobi tudi popularno razsežnost, če prostora »IN« in »OFF« vidimo kot dva dela istega dogodka. Podoba *Dak'Arta* se tako lepo spoji s kulturno in popularno krajino Dakarja. Mauro Petroni in tudi sedanji generalni sekretar bienala, Ousseynou Wade, vztrajata pri tem popularnem značaju.⁴¹ In res je bilo mogoče ob otvoritvah umetniških prireditev v priljubljenih predelih Dakarja doživeti to, da so se lokalni prebivalci pomešali med umetnostne strokovnjake in zainteresirano umetnostno občinstvo – mnogo teh lokalnih ljudi pa ne bi nikoli obiskalo prireditev v okviru *Dak'Art* »IN«.

35 Youma Fall, »Dak'Art: Transplant or Adaptational Model?«, v: *Dak'Art 2010. 9ème Biennale de l'Art Africain Contemporain*, razstavni katalog, Dakar, 2010, str. 183.

36 Elliott, 2000, str. 15.

37 Fall, 2010, str. 182.

38 Ibid., str. 183.

39 Nekaj evropskih umetnostnih zgodovinarjev je bilo zelo kritičnih do eksplicitne opustitve zahodne umetnostne zgodovine.

40 Intervjuji leta 2010.

41 Intervjuji leta 2008 in 2010.

Seveda *Dak'Art* nikakor ni prizorišče odprtega izpodbijanja hegemonije evropsko-severnoameriškega sveta umetnosti. Razvil se je iz želje lokalnih umetnikov po razstavnem prostoru, ki bi okrepil njihovo udeležbo v globalnih tokovih in diskurzih sveta umetnosti. Dakarski bienale je postal forum, kjer je sodobna afriška umetnost postala vidna in kjer se o teh predstavah razpravlja izven hegemonskih diskurzov.

Argument o postkolonialnem prostoru, ki išče neodvisen položaj v globalni kulturi umetnostnih bienalov, se pravzaprav ujema z osrednjima izhodiščnima metaforama dakarskega bienala in Dakarja: Dakar kot križišče kultur in bienale kot razstava raznolikosti sodobne umetniške produkcije v Afriki, kot specifičen dogodek, znotraj katerega se seka mnogo različnih umetniških poti, ki tako postanejo vidne. Razstavni prostor »IN« je leta 2010 strukturirala še ena metafora – Mbembejev koncept »afropolitizma«. ⁴² Mbembe je ta koncept izoblikoval v opoziciji do preteklih in sedanjih nacionalizmov, ki nacionalne kulture konstruirajo kot neodvisne, homogene entitete. V nasprotju s takšnimi lokalnimi perspektivami Mbembe predlaga bolj transnacionalen pristop, ki v ospredje potisne zgodovinsko in sodobno pomembnost mobilnosti znotraj Afrike, pa tudi poti, ki vodijo navzven. ⁴³

Dak'Arta torej ni mogoče razumeti kot dogodek, ki se zoperstavlja hegemoniji evropsko-severnoameriškega sveta umetnosti. Pač pa poudarja relacijskost in se vzpostavlja kot kontaktna cona v smislu »hkratne navzočnosti, interakcije, prepletenih razumevanj in praks«. ⁴⁴ Imenovanje Yacoubé Konatéja iz Slonokoščene obale za glavnega kuratorja bienala leta 2006 je močan kazalec takšnega razumevanja in intenzivnega iskanja specifičnega statusa dakarskega bienala. ⁴⁵ Z izbiro te poti se bienale dobro vklaplja v splošno politiko države po razglasitvi neodvisnosti; Senegal je razglasil lastno kulturno specifičnost – spomnite se Senghorjeve ideologije črnstva (*Négritude*) –, hkrati pa si prizadeva na novo opredeliti odnos do nekdanjih kolonizatorjev. Vpogled, ki ga omogoča *Dak'Art*, potemtakem razkrije drugačne pomene dejavnosti in vidikov, ki so bili v luči kljubovanja evropsko-severnoameriškem svetu umetnosti deležni kritike. Seveda bi bilo mogoče doseči

še več, če bi obstajala politična volja. Kljub temu pa se bienale kot križišče umetniških produkcij vzpostavlja kot protihegemonski in protinormativen v odnosu do diskurzov in klasifikacij zahodne umetnostne zgodovine, kot spodbuda za regionalne umetnostne diskurze, pretok vednosti in razvoj lokalnega umetnostnega trga, medtem ko si prizadeva tudi za intenzivno vpletenost v globalno kulturo bienalov in v celotni globalni svet umetnosti.

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⁴² Ang. *Afropolitan, Afropolitanism* – sestavljanka iz »African« in »cosmopolitan«. (Ur. op.)

⁴³ Achille Mbembe, »Ein Kontinent in Bewegung. Vom afrikanischen Nationalismus zum »Afropolitanismus««, *Edition Le Monde Diplomatique: Afrika. Stolz & Vorurteile*, št. 5, 2009 [maj 2006], str. 19.

⁴⁴ Marie Louise Pratt, *Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London in New York: Routledge, 1992, str. 7.

⁴⁵ Glej tudi: Frank Ugiomoh, »Dak'Art 2006: Yawning Cultural Gaps in Fusing Landscapes«, *Third Text* 84, št. 1, let. 21, 2007, str. 94.

THE MEGA-EVENT AND THE WORLD CULTURE OF BIENNIALS: DAK'ART, THE BIENNALE OF DAKAR*

THOMAS FILLITZ

The years from 1984 until well into the 1990s witnessed a plethora of newly founded art biennials. There are well over a hundred at present, and a large number of them have disseminated in countries of the South.

Given this obvious success of the biennial format, I would like to deal with two major questions in my contribution: (a) while this specific format has its roots within European cultural history with the foundation of the biennial of Venice in 1895 as the offspring of the former world fairs, we may nevertheless wonder whether it is not misleading to consider all of these newly founded art biennials around the globe as mere copies of those produced by the European-North American art world;¹ and (b) considering the mega-events produced by the present cultural industries such as biennials, blockbuster exhibitions, the dissemination of the Guggenheim syndrome and the multiple festivals of any given cultural field, one is tempted to subsume all of these phenomena under the notion of a “global culture of spectacle”.² The global culture of biennials would therefore constitute an impressive network of replicated global spectacle-events with globally acting genius-curators (e.g. the German René Block, Nigerian-American Okwui Enwezor, the Italian Achille Bonito Oliva, the South Korean Hou Hanru, etc.) with intercultural curatorial boards (an idea launched by Gerardo Mosquera), which are followed by the global flows of “Western all-knowing art specialists”,³ travelling artists and an in-

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1 Okwui Enwezor, “Großausstellungen und die Antinomien einer transnationalen globalen Form”, in *Berliner Thyssen-Vorlesung zur Ikonologie der Gegenwart I*, Munich: Fink, 2002, 52.

2 Guy Debord, *La société du spectacle*, Paris: Buchet Chastel, 1972 (original 1967).

3 James Elliott, “Dakar: Real Action”, in *Dak'Art 2000. 4ème Biennale de l'Art Af-*

ternational audience of self-defined cosmopolitan initiatives. Stallabrass critically assesses biennials, that their only political objective is to position a city on the political and economic world map, and that this format “is merely one arrow in any would-be global city’s quiver – or, as often, in one that aspires to that status”.⁴

The main characteristic for the particularity of each art biennial is mostly related to each one’s founding. At its first edition, the *Bienal de la Habana* in 1984 exhibited only artists from Latin America and the Caribbean. In 1986, with its second edition, it re-positioned itself as the Third World Biennial, focusing on contemporary art productions in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Lucy Lippard argues that this biennial was ahead of developments in the European-North American art world, which only achieved such a juxtaposition of works of art from around the globe in 1989 with the exhibition *Magiciens de la terre* in Paris.⁵ In the following editions, this configuration became the characteristic of the Havana biennial: “The Havana biennial is the pioneer in the interrelation of art from all possible countries of the ‘Third World’”.⁶

The former biennial of Johannesburg was conceived for the post-Apartheid period and had its first edition in 1995, a year after the first free elections in South Africa. It was to act, on the one hand, as an impetus for contemporary art production in South Africa, and on the other, for putting Johannesburg back on the world culture map. The city council unfortunately stopped any further biennial activity during its 1997 second edition – the critique being that the biennial was not taking into consideration local social, political or cultural situations (the chief curator was actually Enwezor). Political reasons were also the driving force behind the foundation of the biennial of Gwangju in South Korea. Founded in 1995, it commemorates the upheaval of students in 1980 against the dictatorship of Chyu Doo-Hwan and the brutal oppression by the South Korean army – it became a symbol of South Korean democracy.

Besides discriminating between biennials according to the historical circumstances of their foundings, Block

and Bydler have aimed at developing biennial typologies. René Block differentiates between four models: the Venice model (national representations), the Sidney model (curatorial themes for selection), the Gwangju model (selected artists independent of national representation), and that of *Manifesta* (shifting location).⁷ Bydler suggests another one, the capitalist-philanthropic (Venice before WWII, São Paulo, Sidney), events that originated in the post-World War Two era (*documenta*, post-WWII Venice, Havana, Dak’Art and the biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana), and the “flexible production- and event-oriented variety of the 1990s and 2000s” (Istanbul, Gwangju, *Manifesta*).⁸

I actually use the notion of “global culture” for the system of art biennials as based on the notion’s meaning according to Ulf Hannerz: a global culture constitutes a global network and corresponds to an organisation of diversity.⁹ In this specific case, difference is not created or organised from a centre, but the decision for a biennial, its specificity or uniqueness, has to be produced in the particular places. By relying on this notion of global culture, I intend to underline that the biennial is an art event format that has been subject to global flows. This, however, does not necessarily imply that the format has been appropriated in a similar way everywhere in the world, thus producing but local variants to the general structure. To be sure, the global culture of art biennials is not one of reciprocal flows and egalitarian relationships, and the importance of a biennial’s place within the system is actually determined by the global art world (art specialists, gallery owners, media, cosmopolitan audience, etc.).

Dominant discourses of the European-North American art world, however, consider their institutions, the *Bienale di Venezia*, or *documenta* in Kassel, as the centres of the global culture of biennials. Each of these venues determines for the forthcoming years which art forms will be dominant in the global art world, which artists will be the most influential – an important aspect regarding the politics and economics of the global art market. Considered from such a dominant discourse, art biennials in the South then are rather characterised as sites of intercultural communication, as “signs of the

ricain Contemporain, exhib. cat. Dakar, 2000, 15.

4 Julian Stallabrass, *Art Incorporated: The Story of Contemporary Art*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, 36.

5 Lucy R. Lippard, “Alles neu benennen! Unser Afro-Asian-Hispano Amerika”, *Kunstforum*, vol. 118, 1992, 163.

6 Translation by the author (“Die Havanna-Biennale ist Pionier in der Zusammenführung von Kunst aus allen möglichen Ländern der ‘Dritten Welt’”); Nelson Herrera Isla in Susanne Boecker, “Uns ist das Risiko egal. Die Biennale von Havanna”, Susanne Boecker im Gespräch mit Nelson Herrera Isla, Direktor des Centro de Arte Contemporáneo Wilfredo Lam, *Kunstforum*, vol. 161, 2002, 430.

7 Block in Martin Glaser, “Vorwort. Preface. Interview René Block”, in Museum Fridericianum Kassel (ed.), *Das Lied von der Erde*, Kassel, 2000, 4–11; Charlotte Bydler, The Global Art World Inc.: *On the Globalization of Contemporary Art*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Figura Nova Series 32, Uppsala: Uppsala University Library, 2004, 150.

8 Bydler, 2004, 151.

9 Ulf Hannerz, “Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture”, in Mike Featherstone (ed.), *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, London – Thousand Oaks – New Delhi: Sage Publishing, 1990, 237.

postcolonial world family”.¹⁰ This explicit inequality constitutes, according to Enwezor, a major paradox in the global art world, as it is globalization “that has laid open the myth of a consolidated art world”.¹¹ For Chakrabarty, such a relationship is typical for the discourses to which the formerly colonised are subject in the present world: they have to know about the centres and their representatives, while the centres do not need to cope with the challenges of the peripheries, and may either silence their achievements or reduce them to mere copies of their own.¹²

Relying on Eisenstadt’s conceptualisation of the notion of “multiple modernities”¹³, I suggest to view the biennial format not as an ever-fixed one, but as a processual one that is remodelled with each edition and specifically in a particular location. The question as to whether a biennial is but a spectacle produced by global capitalism and aimed at the sole consumption of the art event, or contributes to present challenges to power relations determined by the European-North American art world, seems crucial. Enwezor considers it as the production of a “counter-hegemonic / counter-normative” gaze, and the search for “new relations of power and cultural translations”.¹⁴ The objective therefore cannot be just to include the art works of artists from the peripheries (Africa, Asia, Latin America, Oceania) or from the so-considered secondary sites of artistic production of the European-North American art world, but to engage in a real discourse on the constitution of what some scholars today call “global art”, i.e. the connections and flows between contemporary art productions from various regions of the world, which, until the late 1980s, had been constructed as being distant and different from those evaluated according to Occidental art history.¹⁵

The problem is apparent when considering Dak’Art, for which serious critiques were formulated in the early 2000s. Some claimed that it was lacking “any spirit of

struggle against the dominant Western centres”,¹⁶ or that it was facing a “crisis of purpose”: “its organizers no longer have any idea why it is there”.¹⁷ These critiques, however, are articulated from postcolonial art discourses from within the European-North American art world. I rather view Dak’Art as inscribed within a postcolonial perspective and a non-hegemonic gaze. As major intentions of the biennial, interlocutors (functionaries of the Biennale, local artists) mentioned several aspects: to be the showcase *par excellence* in Africa of the state-of-the-art of contemporary art in Africa, to participate from such a positioning in the global culture of art biennials, to contribute regionally and continentally to the flows of knowledge about global art, to the transnational interaction between artists, as well as to the further development of the local art world.

To support these arguments, I shall deal in the first part of my contribution with the history of Dak’Art. It grew out of the demand and need of local artists for an exhibition platform that could also serve for transnational artistic debates after the closing down of the *Musée Dynamique* – the first museum of modern art in sub-Saharan Africa. The history further shows a continual interest of the biennial’s secretariat and its various committees to forge the abovementioned commitments of the biennial. In the second part, I shall focus on the structuring of the exhibition spaces in particular to not subsume to the representation of artworks that could be seen anywhere. To be sure, Dak’Art’s budget tremendously influences its exhibiting power. This became particularly obvious with the last two editions in 2008 and 2010. Most of the time, the budget was around a million euros; but in 2010, it seems that the financial means were far less.¹⁸ Such heavy financial constraints nevertheless incited the selection committee of the last edition to decide on a courageous selection criteria – and to exclude perspectives of Occidental art history. These considerations should support the horizon of Dak’Art as an African biennial, one that aims at producing a challenging platform for contemporary visual arts of African artists. I shall end by discussing this particular mega-event as a postcolonial cultural zone in the making, i.e. by showing the specific counter-hegemonic and counter-normative horizons while insisting on the entanglement with the global art world.

10 Thomas McEvelley, *Arrivederci Venice: The Third World Biennials (reviews of Third World international art survey exhibitions)*, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-14875189.html>, 1993, 8. (Accessed on 04/18/2008).

11 Okwui Enwezor, “The Postcolonial Constellation: Contemporary Art in a State of Permanent Transition”, in Gilane Tawadros and Sarah Campbell (eds), *Fault Lines. Contemporary Art and Shifting Landscapes*, London: InIVA, 2003, 76.

12 Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History”, in Hassan, Salah and Iftikhar Dadi (eds), *Unpacking Europe: Towards a Critical Reading*, Rotterdam: Museum Bijmans Van Beuningen, NAI Publishers, 2001, 178–195.

13 Shmuel Eisenstadt, “Multiple Modernities”, *Daedalus*, 1, vol. 129, 2000, 1–16; Shmuel Eisenstadt (ed.), *Multiple Modernities*, New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2002.

14 Enwezor, 2002, 56, 59.

15 See e.g. Hans Belting, Jacob Birken, Andrea Buddensieg and Peter Weibel (eds), *Global Studies: Mapping Contemporary Art and Culture*, Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2011; Hans Belting and Andrea Buddensieg (eds), *The Global Art World: Audiences, Markets, and Museums*, Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009.

16 Rashid Araeen, Dak’Art 1992–2002: The Problem of Representation, “Conceptualization, and Critical Evaluation in Contemporary African Art as Presented by the Dakar Biennale”, *Third Text* 62, 1, vol. 17, 2003, 100.

17 Olù Oguibe, “The Future of Dak’Art?”, *Third Text* 66, 1, vol. 18, 2004, 83.

18 By order of the Ministry of Culture, the overall budget for 2010 was not published. In comparison, the budget for *documenta 12* (2007) was around 18 million euros.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

After the era of the presidency of Léopold Sédar Senghor, during which time art was strongly promoted by state policy, Senegal's second President Abdou Diouf was more informed by socio-economic political considerations, which heavily affected the field of art. The *village des arts* in Dakar's Colobane quarter was cleared by force in September 1983.¹⁹ The *Musée Dynamique*, inaugurated in 1966 and hosting collections of modern art of Senegal, had been transformed by Senghor in 1976 into a dance school. Diouf closed the latter in 1983, reopened the museum in 1985, and finally handed it over to the Supreme Court in 1988.²⁰

In these times of political threat, and being deprived of the most important institution in which to exhibit, a young generation of visual artists created ANAPS (the *Association Nationale des Artistes Plasticiens du Sénégal*) in 1985, and annually organised a one-week venue, the *Salon National des Artistes Plasticiens*, one of the unique occasions for the artists to exhibit, i.e. to produce visibility. From 1986 on, ANAPS addressed the artists' "determination to become more involved in our country's artistic and cultural life",²¹ and called for structural adjustments. In 1989, ANAPS expressed, among others, the artists' desire for an art event in which they could interact with international art production.²² In the same year, President Abdou Diouf announced the creation of a common biennial of authors and visual artists, which took place in December 1990.²³ It ended with heavy frictions between the two groups of cultural producers.

In 1992, Dak'Art as a biennial of exclusively visual arts was realised. In accordance with the intentions of the visual artists, Dak'Art was a "*biennale internationale des arts*", exhibiting works of art of artists from Senegal, the Americas, Europe and Asia.²⁴ While the artists of Senegal had given the impulse and idea for this event, it was from the outset controlled and organised by the Ministry of Culture. This international format nevertheless was not convincing, and experts as well as the evaluation report patronised by the Ministry of Culture

opted for a continental African perspective with pan-African connections, in order to better position the Biennale within the global culture of biennials.

According to the new considerations, Dak'Art was to be the showcase of contemporary art of Africa for the global art world. The years leading up to the next edition in 1996 were used to reconfigure certain structures, like the creation of the General Secretary, the Scientific Committee, and, above all, the reorientation was expressed with the new name "*Dak'Art: biennale de l'art contemporain africain*". Not all artists from Senegal actually welcomed this reorientation. Several artists who had contributed to the impulses for the art biennial in the late 1980s told me that "the government stole our biennial".²⁵

The following editions were mostly concerned with the distribution of African artists, i.e. more from Anglophone countries, and including some living in the Diaspora. The pan-African dimension was further enhanced in the forthcoming editions, as Sara Diamond, President of the selection committee of the sixth edition in 2004, clearly states in her welcome address.²⁶

A major instrument for these developments, and for a better connection to the global culture of biennials, were the politics of nomination for the selection committee. From 1996 on, great care was taken to get international art curators onto this committee, such as the presidents of these committees: in 1998, Achille Bonito Oliva (Italy); in 2000, David Elliott (UK-Sweden); in 2002, Ery Camara (Senegal-Mexico); in 2004, Sara Diamond (Canada); in 2006, Yacouba Konaté (Côte d'Ivoire) – the first president from an African country; in 2008, Magueye Kassé (Senegal); and in 2010, Marilyn Martin (South Africa).

The integration of personalities from the global art world, as well as the enhanced focuses on the whole African continent and its pan-African dimension, produced frictions. First, some artists and African art specialists perceived a certain danger in producing a European-North American definition of contemporary art of Africa. Second, Dak'Art was no longer an exclusive event for Senegalese artists – in 2010, for instance, works of only two Senegalese artists were exhibited from among the twenty-six artists selected. Many of those Senegalese artists who had never been selected felt excluded

19 Elisabeth Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow: Art, Politics, and the Avant-Garde in Senegal. 1960–1995*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004, 143.

20 Abdou Sylla, "La tumultueuse histoire du Musée dynamique de Dakar", *Africulture*, <http://www.africultures.com/php/index.php?nav=article&no=6746>, 2007 (Accessed on 31/10/2011).

21 El Hadji Sy, "Art Against Apartheid", in Clémentine Deliss (ed.), *Seven Stories: About Modern Art in Africa*, exhib. cat., Paris: Flammarion, 1995, 235.

22 Interviews with Viyé Diba and Amadou Sow, February 2008.

23 Yacouba Konaté, *La Biennale de Dakar. Une esthétique de la création africaine contemporaine – tête à tête avec Adorno*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009, 45.

24 See catalogue 1992.

25 Interviews 2008.

26 Sara Diamond, "Decision and Process: The International Selection Committee", *Dak'Art 2004. 6ème Biennale de l'Art Africain Contemporain*, exhib. cat., Dakar, 2004, 15.

from the official venue, while they were among those who had fought for this forum of international interaction.²⁷ Still, in 2010, several artists expressed their dissatisfaction with this situation and declared that the biennial was a totally useless institution for their own artistic endeavours and international standing.²⁸

From 1996 on, the developments of the biennial space, however, were accompanied by other activities. Artists started exhibiting their works in public spaces in Dakar, be it in newly founded galleries, at international cultural centres, at seats of enterprise, private houses, etc. These fundamentally personal activities furthered another institutional development. In 2000, these exhibitions were united in the so-called Dak'Art "OFF" space, which became an extremely important space in the landscape of Dak'Art (see below).

THE STRUCTURE OF DAK'ART

An organisational specificity of Dak'Art is the production of various exhibition spaces, or what has been known since 2000 as Dak'Art "IN". The main field is the "International Exhibition", subsumed to selection by the selection committee, at the *Musée Théodore Monod* in the *Musée de l'IFAN* complex. Artists selected for this space are subject to the allocation of prizes. The two most important ones are: (a) the *Grand Prix Léopold Sédar Senghor* (in former editions, the *Grand Prix du Chef de l'État*), offered by the President of the Republic of Senegal; and (b) the *Prix du Ministère de la Culture du Sénégal*. More prizes are awarded by the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* and other international institutions. Another space is the "Solo Exhibitions", which are under the responsibility of particular curators. This international space allows for presenting works of art of artists who have no citizenship of an African country. In 2010, it was dedicated to "Présence Haïtienne", an exhibition of four Haitian artists in the *Galerie Nationale d'Art*. Another space is the *Salon du design*, which is dedicated to applied arts of African designers. The most important prize in this field is the *Prix de la Créativité*. This space, however, was suspended in 2010 – it is subject to evaluation of its purpose and what its scope should be. Furthermore, the official programme includes a zone of debate, the "*recontres professionnelles*" in the *village de la biennale* in the garden of the Musée de l'IFAN complex. These are series of talks by specialists (such as

Youma Fall, "Prospects for Dak'Art" (Fall 2010)), discussions with members of the selection committee on their criteria and selection procedures, round tables (in 2010, on "aesthetic and territory"), etc.

As mentioned earlier, under the label Dak'Art "OFF", the Biennale Secretariat, in particular the artist Mauro Petroni, coordinates exhibition activities during the course of the Biennale in different spaces in Dakar. The Secretariat's role fundamentally consists in producing a *guide des exposants* as an orientation for interested audiences to all of the art events. Artists from anywhere, gallery owners, cultural centres (French, German, etc.), the *village des arts* (now next to the "*Stade Léopold Sédar Senghor*") and other local institutions participating in the "OFF" platform are invited to give information about the times and locations of their interventions as well as their duration – such events may take place for just an evening, for a few days or throughout the whole course of the Biennale, i.e. a month.

Beginning with only a few events between 1996 and 2000 (sixteen to fifty), the number of these exhibitions improved drastically in the following years – to well more than a hundred after 2002, reaching nearly two hundred in 2010 – while the official exhibition of Dak'Art "IN" remains largely restricted – eighty-four artists selected in 2004, thirty-eight in 2008, and twenty-six in 2010 – mostly due to financial shortcomings. Some professionals of the global art world have criticized that there are too many of these interventions, in particular having a huge scale of differences in quality. This has been acknowledged by the coordinators of the "OFF" and by other officials of the Biennale.

On the one hand, there is the field of high quality: invited artists from abroad, local artists in the "OFF" who are well known internationally, gallery owners who prepare their exhibits with much care and often two years in advance, or prominent international curators who may be invited to conceive shows. A large intervention by Ndary Lo, winner of the "*Grand Prix Léopold Sédar Senghor*" (2002 and 2008) was shown, for instance, at the seat of the French transnational corporation Eiffage in 2010. On the other hand, the "OFF" gives visibility to artists of lesser international and more local standing, with a huge variety of art styles and genres within this field. This mix conveys in this space a particular horizon and ambiance, and definitely an important popular dimension. According to the local organisers, it by all means must be retained. In fact, there are indirect se-

²⁷ Konaté, 2009, 63f; interviews in 2008 and 2010.

²⁸ Interviews May 2010.

lection processes, namely by reserving major exhibition spaces for the field of high quality.²⁹

For many local prominent artists, this huge number of exhibitions in the “OFF” corresponds to their re-appropriation of Dak’Art.³⁰ They enjoy the freedom that they experience in this space, its international character, and that they are at the centre of its activities. According to them, these aspects stand in contrast to the control by state functionaries of the “IN”, within which they have no influence on selections or on important decisions and where they partly consider themselves as banished to a secondary stage.

DAK’ART: A POSTCOLONIAL CULTURAL ZONE IN THE MAKING

The Havana Biennial quickly found a unique expression. Starting from a “Third World” perspective, the organisers of the editions went on to focus on problems of human society in its interrelation with the environment. Although these were global problems, the biennial imaged them from its own approach. Many different forms of visual expression were included within the biennial, such as architecture, design and graphic arts. Moreover, the focus on the interaction between artists incited the organisers to banish any awarding of prizes. Finally, artists are selected according to the specific themes of each edition, in no way conforming to any European-North American principles of classification.³¹

Dak’Art was and partly still is struggling to find its trajectories. At its beginnings, critics complained about the lack of a true pan-African approach, of a curatorial logic, and the much too strong emphasis on artists from francophone African countries.³² For its second edition as “*biennale de l’art contemporain africain*” in 1998, art critic García-Antón detected that “the spectre of colonialism cast a sombre shadow”, as the major interest consisted in bringing in art specialists from the global art world (Europe and North America), while African specialists were not able to give voice.³³ In 2003, Araeen drew a rather dark overall assessment of what had so far been achieved, naming, among other things: there is no critical evaluation, the Biennale is not a framework

for the exchange between African artists, there is no effort to address the city’s public and there are no works in public spaces. He ends with the question: “Can Africa assert its independence or develop its own direction and vision within this context without critically confronting the dominant structures of art around the world today?”³⁴

If we look at the Dakar biennial from the outside, we may actually think of it as just another low-budget copy of the European-North American biennial model – or even worse – as a spectacle unto its own ends. Everything is concentrated in the first week after the opening: receptions of state functionaries, artists and international experts are on the spot, and there is the programme of the “*rencontres professionnelles*”. Even all the events of the “OFF” are scheduled during this period, as there can be no international promotion of an artist’s oeuvre outside of this time frame; and the awarding of prizes may correspond to the competition of artists as practiced by the global art market and in so many biennials the world over.

Focusing solely on Dak’Art “IN”, the critique of the so-called elitist character of Dak’Art seems understandable: it appears as subsuming itself to the intentions of the global art world, while disregarding the interests of Senegalese artists, those of the wider African field of contemporary art (artists, art events, art critics, local curators, etc.) and the participation of the local population. In this line of argument, Dak’Art appears as an “accumulation of exhibitions”.³⁵

Such an imaging as a copy of the European-North American biennial model, however, is too narrow. There are those voices which assert the attempt to strengthen and refine the particularity of Dak’Art within the global culture of art biennials. James Elliott, president of the selection committee of the fourth edition in 2000, then director of the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm, envisions the Biennale on its way to becoming a specific mega-event within the global culture of biennials: “... manifestations such as the Dakar Biennale of Arts ... need to accumulate time and confidence to find their own paths and not become just one more Biennale on the international circuit which shows the same things as anywhere else; neither should the discussions which they generate be completely co-opted by the critical

29 Interviews 2008, 2010.

30 Interviews 2010; see also Konaté, 2009, 79.

31 Lilian Llianes, “Die Biennale von Havanna” [“The Havana Biennial”], in Museum Friedericianum Kassel (ed.), *Das Lied von der Erde*, Kassel, 2000, 12–15; Nelson Herrera Isla in Boecker, 2002, 431.

32 Brian Biggs, “Dak’Art 96”, *Third Text* 36, 1996, 83f.

33 Katya García-Antón, “Dak’Art 98”, *Third Text* 44, 1998, 87.

34 Araeen, 2003, 100.

35 Youma Fall, “Dak’Art: Transplant or Adaptational Model?”, in *Dak’Art 2010. 9ème Biennale de l’Art Africain Contemporain*, exhib. cat., Dakar, 2010, 183.

theory industries of the all-knowing West”.³⁶

Youma Fall argues against such a narrow consideration from European and North American centres by emphasizing the different tasks the Biennale fulfils. It has to remedy the lack of infrastructures for exhibiting, of art formation and information flows and of art publishing, it has to inform about the production of contemporary art in Africa and beyond, etc. These tasks are not on the agenda of a biennial in Europe or North America.³⁷ She further mentions the impetus the Biennale has given to the development of the art market in Senegal, in particular for the foundation of galleries for contemporary art of Africa, and the creation of collectors,³⁸ which was acknowledged by gallery owners that I talked to.

My own argument for considering Dak’Art within a postcolonial perspective is based on the Biennale’s history and on its structure. Although the Ministry of Culture has been controlling the event from the beginning, and still rejects any call for its autonomy, Dak’Art has a strong tool for creating its particularity within the global culture of biennials, the selection of works of art. Each selection committee so far has reflected with its criteria the specificity of the venue in dealing with contemporary art of Africa, and has been obviously conscious in its decision-making to not reproduce visions similar to the global art circuit.

For the ninth edition in 2010, the selection criteria were decided by the five members of the committee, from South Africa, Nigeria, Senegal, Cameroon and Tunisia, and acknowledged by the General Secretary and the president of the committee of orientation. These were: (a) to select only artists who had never participated in the Biennale, i.e. only artists of the younger generation were eligible; (b) instead of speaking of Diaspora, or of residency in an African country, aspects which were prominent in former editions, artists had to be citizens of African states, wherever they were living; (c) the aesthetic quality of the submitted works; (d) internationality and originality. The criterion of “African essence”, still most prominent in the 2004 event, was no longer mentioned. More importantly, the experts excluded any consideration of criteria of Occidental art history. This aspect, and the focus on the young generation, were hotly debated in the Biennale garden.³⁹

Moreover, the General Secretary explained the compression of the major events within the first week as having to do not just with the budget of the Biennale, and not with any pure intention of spectacle either: the present situation would best fit for an intensive exchange between all invited selected artists and their interaction with experts and gallery owners, a situation quite exceptional for these artists, as some asserted. The awarding of prizes, too, was viewed from another point of view by artists and the organisers: they are enabling artists to live and work in other environments, build other relations and interactions, be involved in a more intensive exchange.⁴⁰

When looking at the public, the international audience dominates the first week of Dak’Art. But that image changes quite rapidly. As visits to the venues are free for all, we could observe by the end of the first week local school classes on the premises, and their number would grow during the following weeks. Dak’Art also gets a popular dimension, if the “IN” and “OFF” spaces are considered as two entities of the same event. The image of Dak’Art then appears well-implanted within the cultural and popular landscape of Dakar. Mauro Petroni insists on this popular character, as does the Biennale’s active General Secretary, Ousseynou Wade.⁴¹ Indeed, at openings of events in popular districts of Dakar, one experienced local people mingling with art experts and interested art audiences – although many of these locals would not visit Dak’Art “IN”.

To be sure, Dak’Art is not an arena for the open contestation of the hegemony of the European-North American art world. It has grown out of the desire of local artists to get a space for exhibition that would enhance their participation in the global flows and discourses of the art world. It has become a forum for the visibility of contemporary art of Africa, and for putting those performances at debate beyond hegemonic discourses.

The argument of a postcolonial space, which searches for an independent positioning within the global culture of art biennials, actually corresponds to the major metaphors of the Biennale and Dakar from its beginnings: Dakar as a crossroad of cultures, and the Biennale as the showcase of the diversity of contemporary art production in Africa, as a particular event within which multiple, different artistic trajectories intersect and become visible. Another metaphor structured the 2010 “IN” ex-

³⁶ Elliott, 2000, 15.

³⁷ Fall, 2010, 182.

³⁸ Ibid., 183.

³⁹ Some European art historians very critically considered the explicit neglect of Occidental art history.

⁴⁰ Interviews 2010.

⁴¹ Interviews 2008, 2010.

hibition space: Mbembe's concept of "Afropolitanism". Mbembe formulated this concept in opposition to former and existing nationalisms, which are formulated for constructing national cultures as independent, homogeneous entities. In contradistinction to such local perspectives, Mbembe suggests a more transnational approach that foregrounds the historic and contemporary importance of mobility within Africa as well as its outward trajectories.⁴²

Dak'Art therefore cannot be viewed as struggling against the hegemony of the European-North American art world. Rather, it emphasizes relationality, it positions itself as a contact zone in terms of "copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices".⁴³ The appointment of Yacouba Konaté from Ivory Coast as general curator for the 2006 edition is a powerful sign of such a comprehension and the intensified search for its particular status.⁴⁴ In opting for such a path, the Biennale is well inscribed within overall politics of the state since independence, which asserted its cultural specificity – remember Senghor's ideology of Négritude – while aiming at redefining the relationship to the former coloniser. The view from within Dak'Art therefore unravels different meanings of activities and aspects, which had been critiqued from a struggle within the European-North American art world. To be sure, more could be realised if the political will were there. Nevertheless, as a crossroad of artistic productions, the Biennale constitutes itself as counter-hegemonic and counter-normative to discourses and classifications of Occidental art history and as an impetus for regional art discourses, for flows of knowledge and for the development of the local art market while seeking for an intensified entanglement with the global culture of biennials and the global art world as a whole.

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42 Achille Mbembe, "Ein Kontinent in Bewegung. Vom afrikanischen Nationalismus zum 'Afropolitanismus'", Afrika. Stolz & Vorurteile, *Edition Le Monde Diplomatique* 5, 2009, 19. (Original *Le Monde Diplomatique*, May 2006.)

43 See Marie Louise Pratt, *Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London and New York: Routledge, 1992, 7.

44 See also Frank Ugiomoh, "Dak'Art 2006: Yawning Cultural Gaps in Fusing Landscapes", *Third Text* 84, 1, vol. 21, 2007, 94.

Gregor Kregar,
Promocija / Promotion, 2011.

Instalacija (levo) s pakirani kipci kot darila na pralnih praških v supermarketu (desno) /
Installation (left) and statues wrapped as presents to go with washing powder at a supermarket (right).

(Z dovoljenjem umetnika in MGLC / Courtesy of the artist and MGLC, fotografija /
photo: Jaka Babnik in dokumentacija MGLC / documentation MGLC.)





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DAREŽLJIVE ZADEVE: O UMETNOSTI IN LJUBEZNI

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Umetnostni dogodki so očitno pogosto priložnost za darežljivost. Običajno dobiš zastonj kozarec vina; mogoče si deležen brezplačnega vrtenja glasbe ali videa; če imaš srečo, dobiš celo nekaj zastonj hrane. Toda vprašanje, ki se tu v resnici zastavlja, je: Mar ni umetnost že sama po sebi darežljiva praksa? In če je tako, kaj se zgodi z darežljivostjo, če iz umetnosti narediš umetnostni dogodek? Povedano drugače, kaj se zgodi, če eno darežljivo prakso (umetnost) podvržeš drugi darežljivi praksi (umetnostnemu dogodku)? Ali to povzroči še več darežljivosti? Ali morda manj? V nadaljevanju nameravam raziskati to vprašanje in si ga ogledati s politične perspektive.

LJUBITELJI IN UMETNIKI

Da bi razumeli bistveno potezo umetnosti, je profesionalno umetniško prakso koristno primerjati s prakso ljudi, ki sicer niso umetniki. Tako lahko lažje razberemo enega od temeljnih pogojev umetniške produkcije. Kaj je nujni element, ki ljudem, ki niso umetniki, omogoči, da začno ustvarjati umetnost? Obstaja temeljni pogoj – ljubezen, v najširšem pomenu besede:

- v erotičnem oziroma seksualnem kontekstu lahko opazimo, da neumetniki postanejo glasbeniki, ko so zaljubljeni in želijo peti pesmi svojim ljubljanim;
- v družinskem kontekstu vidimo, da otroci rišejo risbice, da bi razveselili svoje babice ali dedke za božič;
- med odraslimi prijatelji se pogosto zgodi, da nekdo za prijateljev ali prijateljčin rojstni dan napiše prelepo pesem, ki na zabaven način opiše slavljenčeve oziroma slavljenkine vrline in napake.

V vseh teh primerih, kjer umetniška produkcija nastaja iz želje, da bi ljubljene osebi nekaj podarili, opazimo tudi tri bistvene poteze, ki jih je v svojem eseju o daru opisal sociolog Marcel Mauss:¹

Prvič, dar ne sme biti koristen. Stvar, ki jo lahko ponudiš v dar, mora biti takšna, da je v običajnem, vsakdanjem življenju ni mogoče kar tako uporabiti. Sicer je res, da svojemu prijatelju za rojstni dan lahko podarim srajco, na primer, toda ta srajca mora biti nekaj posebnega. To ne sme biti srajca, ki bi jo prijatelj lahko brez težav nosil vsak dan, temveč ekstravagantna, svečana srajca iz bleščeče tkanine. Česar res nikoli ne smem storiti, pa je podariti svojemu prijatelju nekaj, kar resnično potrebuje. Če je moj prijatelj zelo reven, ne morem reči: »Hej, Peter, poslušaj, niti prebite pare nimaš – kaj če bi ti jaz plačal stanarino za december kot darilo za božič?« Na ravni obdarovanja se tu srečamo z nečim, kar bi lahko imenovali »abstrakcija« – oddaljenost od koristnosti, kar je prva bistvena poteza, ki je skupna obdarovanju in umetnosti.

Drugič, dar je vedno treba podariti. Če me, denimo, povabijo na poročno zabavo in za darilo kupim steklenico vrhunskega vina, potem pa žal prav tisti dan zbolim, se lahko zgodi, da bo ta steklenica v mojem stanovanju postala zelo neprijeten predmet, ki vzbuja sram in nelagodje. Mladoporočencema je ne morem več izročiti, prav tako pa je ne morem kar popiti. Steklenica tako postane obscen, trdovraten predmet, ki se upira prisvojitvi in vključitvi bodisi v njuno bodisi v moje običajno življenje. Prav to je v zvezi z umetnostjo pripomnil teoretik religije Klaus Heinrich, ki je zapisal:

»Tako kot zbiratelj ne zanima njegova zbirka in jo mora prenesti naprej – bodisi javnosti kot mecen bodisi na skrivaj v podzemne sefe – tako si kupec pohištva prizadeva za njegovo karseda hitro uničenje. Pojem »družbe odmetavanja« nas spomni na ustroj odvisnikove želje, na njegovo prikrito željo po uničenju.«²

Če se umetnostni zbiratelj, ki menda ljubi umetnost, kljub temu želi znebiti svoje zbirke, bodisi z izročitvijo mestu bodisi z zaprtjem v bunkerje, kjer je naslednjih nekaj stoletij nihče ne bo videl, je to jasen dokaz, da je umetnost prav tako neznosna in problematična kot steklenica, ki ni bila podarjena. (Mauss je opazil to pogubno, »strupeno« plat daru, ki jo oznanja nemški je-

zik, v katerem »gift«, angleški izraz za »dar«, pomeni »strup«.) Umetnost se, prav tako kot dar, izkaže za nekaj, kar je težko imeti v lasti. Obsega nekaj, za kar se zdi, da se upira vsem poskusom prisvojitve.

Tretjič, nujnost dajanja se pojavi natanko takrat, ko si nekaj prejel. Dajanje pomeni predajanje nečesa, kar si dobil. Takoj ko nezasluženo nekaj dobiš, moraš tudi sam nezasluženo obdarovati nekoga drugega. Sam sem to spoznal skozi drobne osebne izkušnje. Običajno se pri kosilu srečam z nekaj prijatelji. Nekega dne je eden od teh prijateljev povsem nepričakovano plačal račun za vse. To je bilo v tem kontekstu precej nenavadno, zato smo ga vprašali, zakaj je to storil. Pojasnil nam je, da je na nogometnih stavah pravkar zadel nekaj denarja in menil je, da ga mora zapraviti z nami. Zdi se, da se prav to dogaja v umetnosti. Pred nedavnim mi je neka slikarka povedala, da tega, da ji včasih uspe videti pokrajine na poseben način, ne razume kot svoj dosežek, temveč kot nezaslužen dar, zato se čuti primorano slikati svoja videnja, da ta dar preda še drugim. Sposobnost videti in slikati umetniki pogosto razumejo kot dar, njihova produkcija pa je torej poskus povračila kot njihov odziv na ta dar.

Tradicionalna umetnost ta občutek, da je umetnik prejel dar, izraža z mitološkimi pripovedmi. Mit o geniju, na primer, izraža tole: genij ni umetnik sam, ampak neka druga sila, ki ga občasno prevzame in se ga polasti kot nekakšen demon. Giorgio Agamben je pred nedavnim opisal to razsežnost drugosti, ki je inherentni del umetniške produkcije. Ko imajo opraviti z genijem, trdi Agamben, umetniki »posodijo svoje ustnice glasu, ki jim ne pripada.«³ Biti obdarjen z genijem pomeni imeti opravka z nečim, česar si ni mogoče prisvojiti, temveč je to treba predati naprej.

Drugi mit, s katerim skuša tradicionalna umetnost pojasniti to drugost, je mit *muzinega dotika*. Tudi tu torej naletimo na tesno povezavo med umetnostjo in ljubeznijo, ki se tiče pojasnjevanja začetnega trenutka umetniške ustvarjalnosti.

Seveda se nam pri racionalni obravnavi mitologij zastavlja metodološki problem. Mar naj bi mi, razsvetljeni ljudje, res prisluhnili in verjeli tem očitno predmodernim neumnostim? Ali pa bi jih morali preprosto opustiti, kar pogosto počne sodobna umetnost, ko pravi: »Nič takšnega ne obstaja, čemur bi lahko rekli genij. Zato se

1 Marcel Mauss, *Esej o daru in drugi spisi*, prev. Zoja Skušek, Ljubljana: ŠKUC in Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete, 1996.

2 Klaus Heinrich, *Anfangen mit Freud*, Basel in Frankfurt: Stroemfeld, 1997, str. 55.

3 Giorgio Agamben, »Genius«, v: *id.*, *Profanations*, prev. Jeff Fort, New York: Zone Books, 2007, str. 14.

varujte ustvarjanja genialne umetnosti.« Toda mar je to res racionalna metoda, če prepovemo nekaj, kar smo tik pred tem razglasili za nemogoče? Odgovor psihoanalize na ta metodološki problem je povsem jasen. Sigmund Freud bi dejal, da za obstoj mita vedno obstaja razlog. Mit torej prikladno nakazuje neko stvarnost, čeprav je ne zna pojasniti. Racionalna obravnava navidezno iracionalne mitologije torej pomeni iskanje odgovora na vprašanje, na kakšno realnost opozarja mit, in oblikovanje teoretskega pojasnila, ki bo nadomestilo mitološko »razlago«.

Na primer, občutek umetnikov, da svoje umetniške sposobnosti dolgujejo nekomu drugemu, je očitno mogoče pojasniti psihoanalitsko. *Transfer* ali prenos je psihoanalitski pojem, ki osvetli to realnost. Transfer je specifičen način povezovanja z drugim. V razmerju transferja zunanji drugi zavzame položaj, ki ga običajno zavzema neka notranja psihična instanca, denimo ideal jaza. Lahko bi torej dejali, da neko psihično dejavnost osebe prevzame »zunanji izvajalec«. Ti dve osebi nato vidno »odigrata« nekaj, kar se običajno odvija v psihi ene same osebe kot nevidna notranja psihična drama.

Z odpravo notranjega konflikta in s pridobitvijo zunanjega privrženca se za psiho odpre kar nekaj novih možnosti. Namesto da bi morala svoje moči porazdeliti, denimo, med ustvarjanje nečesa in kritiko prav te produkcije, se lahko psiha zdaj osredotoči le na eno stvar, recimo na produkcijo. Produkcija brez notranje kritike pa lahko postane neovirana, ogromna, manična.

Kot vemo, je ljubezen eden od načinov transferja. To nam pojasni, zakaj toliko ljudi lahko ustvarja umetnost le takrat, ko so zaljubljeni. Le v tem psihičnem stanju so sposobni sprostiti svojo neovirano, manično ustvarjalnost. Ne da bi zanemaril razlike med profesionalnim umetnikom in ljubečim amaterjem, si upam trditi, da je nekakšno ljubezensko razmerje nujno tudi za profesionalca – morda ne preprosto naključna ljubezen do ene same osebe, ki jo čuti amater, temveč splošno ljubezensko razmerje do nekega idealiziranega občinstva.

Specifična »manična« sposobnost za umetniško ustvarjanje se pojavi le takrat, ko so umetniki sposobni vzpostaviti takšno zvezo s tem drugim, ko so ga sposobni ljubiti. Ta sposobnost se nato prek drugega prenese nanje. In umetniki začutijo ta prenos, takoj ko začutijo, da drugi od njih nekaj pričakuje. Ko hočejo izpolniti to pričakovanje, so umetniki zaljubljeni.

Nelagodna posledica tega je, prvič, da umetniki ne govorijo z lastnimi glasovi in, drugič, da se plod tega razmerja kot rezultat transferja nato izkaže za neznosnega. Znosen postane le, če je izročen naprej, če se ga prenese na nekoga drugega. Zdi se torej, da je prenos tega produkta odziv na prenos (transfer), ki je spodbudil njegov nastanek. Dajanje je rešitev za zadrege obdarjenosti.

Te nelagodne poteze je po mojem treba imeti v mislih, ko govorimo o dogodkih v sodobni umetniški praksi. Obstaja dejstvo, pred katerim si ne smemo zatiskati oči; za namnožitev dogodkov v sodobni umetnosti obstaja en sam odločilni razlog. Ta razlog je preprosto dejstvo, da dogodki ustvarjajo številčnost – številčnost opazovalcev, obiskovalcev, navzočih ljudi. In dejstvo, da je številčnost tako pomembna, je posledica dejstva, da se nam tu ni treba soočiti z velikim, temveč stranskim zmagovalcem neoliberalne prikrajsanosti družb – in to je *birokracija*. Birokracija je stranski zmagovalec neoliberalne ekonomije. V vseh neoliberalnih družbah se je birokracija povečala – in to prav zavoljo varčevalnih ukrepov. Birokracija vsiljuje lasten jezik vsem poljem, ki jih skuša obvladovati. In tako smo namesto pri strokovnjakih, ki bi opazovali področja svoje ekspertize in s pomočjo kvalitativnih meril sprejemali odločitve o njih, pristali pri birokratih. Birokrati skušajo spremeniti jezike, ki so specifični za posamezna področja, in tem poljem vsiliti jezik, ki je razumljiv njim. Takoj ko dobijo birokrati oblast nad procesi, pa številčnost prevlada nad kakovostjo.

Na primer, birokracija vrednost univerzitetnih dosežkov meri le po številu študentov, ki so navzoči na univerzitetnih predavanjih, in po številu akademskih nazivov. Dejstvo, da nazivi, ki jih je danes čedalje več, teh študentov ne usposobijo za neko delo, pa ni več odgovornost birokracije. Seveda vsi ti novi diplomanti zdaj ostajajo brezposelni, ker se niso naučili nič pomembnega; na univerzi so morali biti le navzoči. Toda birokracija za to ne čuti odgovornosti.

Takoj ko birokracija prevlada nad nekim področjem, pride do preobrata med opisom in tistim, kar je opisano. Vprašanje se ne glasi več: »Kaj je pravi namen, čemu je namenjeno delovanje te prakse in kako jo lahko ustrezno pojasnimo?« Na prvo mesto zdaj stopi opis, v merila katerega nihče ne podvomi, nato pa je prakso treba spremeniti, da jo je mogoče tako lepo opisati. Birokracija se vedno sprašuje: »Kakšen opis zagotavlja obstoj in preživetje birokracije?« In prav takšen opis nato vsili stvarem, za katere trdi, da jih izboljšuje. Če se, denimo,

izkaže, da so številke najboljše merilo za preživetje birokracije, potem birokracija vsili številke univerzam ali muzejem. Nato je vse treba šteti, meriti s številkami. Če birokracija nekega dne izjavi, to so dobre številke, potem politiki (vsaj tisti šibki) lahko verjamejo, da je bil dosežen uspeh.

Zato se moramo dandanes spopadati z nekakšno birokratsko vsiljeno darežljivostjo. Ker morajo umetnostni prostori dokazovati številčnost svojih obiskovalcev, organizirajo čedalje več dogodkov. Ti dogodki pritegnejo obiskovalce in dejstvo, da si ti obiskovalci morda niso ogledali niti enega samega umetniškega dela, temveč so le popili kozarček vina ali malo zaplesali, nima nobenega vpliva na čudovite številke. Kaj pa to pomeni za polje umetnosti?

Kot sem že omenil, je transfer način ustvarjanja nečesa, česar si ni mogoče prisvojiti, in način soočanja s tem. Tisto, česar si ni mogoče prisvojiti, pa ima spet psihoanalitsko ime – *narcisizem*. Tisto, česar si ne moremo prisvojiti, je pravzaprav najbolj »naša« stvar, tako rekoč naša inherentna poteza. Tipičen primer takšne poteze oziroma narcisizma je naivnost; v naši kulturi je to, na primer, vera v obstoj Božička. Seveda bi bil za nas takšen narcisizem neznosen; želimo si ga le retrospektivno, kot najsrečnejše stanje duha, potem ko smo ga že pustili za sabo. Toda v družinskih obredih ta narcisizem znova oživljamo, s tem ko ga prenašamo. Naivna vera je tako pripisana drugim – starši jo pripisujejo svojim otrokom, ti pa jo pripisujejo tudi svojem staršem: da bi bili deležni ljubezni svojih staršev, se otroci obnašajo, kot da še vedno verjamejo v Božička.

To strukturo vzajemnega prenosa naivne vere lahko zelo jasno razberemo, ko otroci dosežejo starost kakšnih dvanajst let. Do tega trenutka slišimo starše, kako skrivaj tarnajo svojim prijateljem, koliko dela zanje pomeni božič, toda seveda ga je zavoljo otrok treba opraviti. Prav kmalu zatem pa se otroci začnejo pritoževati, ker morajo biti za božič doma, namesto da bi šli ven s prijatelji, toda seveda se je temu treba ukloniti zavoljo staršev.

INTERPASIVNOST: UGODJE DELEGIRANEGA UŽITKA

Tu torej naletimo na vzajemni transfer narcisizma, na eni strani precej odkrit, na drugi malce bolj prikrit. Užitek te naivne, narcisistične vere v obstoj Božička je torej

vedno prenesen na drugega. Za to vrsto užitka skozi drugega, za ta posredni, delegirani užitek, sem pred mnogimi leti skoval izraz *interpasivnost*. Pri interpasivnosti se užitek prenese na nekoga drugega. Narcisizem prenesemo na drugega, da bi ta drugi lahko užival namesto nas. To je osnovna formula interpasivnosti: *hočem, da drugi uživa namesto mene*. Zame je užitek neznosen, zato obupano iščem nekega drugega tepca, ki bo lahko užival namesto mene, in srečen sem, če ga najdem.

Interpasivno vedenje torej vedno vključuje neki »kot da bi«: starši se vedejo, kot da bi Božiček obstajal, otroci se obnašajo tako, kot da verjamejo vanj. In tako iluzija, ki jo obsega ta »kot da bi,« prav verjetno ne pripada nikomur. Nikomur ni treba zares verjeti. »Kot da bi« sam po sebi omogoča transfer oziroma cirkulacijo neznosne iluzije. To iluzijo ohranja na varni razdalji, tako da med posameznika in iluzijo postavlja nekega bolj ali manj fiktivnega naivnega drugega. (Oziroma, povedano drugače, med vsakega posameznika in narcisizem vrine narcisističnega drugega.)

Seveda se isti »kot da bi« pojavi tudi v umetnostnem dogodku (kot je lepo pokazala Beti Žerovc). In v umetnostnem dogodku je to povezano z bistvenim »kot da bi,« ker pravo soočenje opazovalca z umetniškim delom nadomestimo z majhnim, simboličnim stikom. Tudi to simbolično srečanje lahko opredelimo kot primer interpasivnosti. Nekdo drug je lahko prepričan, da je bilo to pravo opazovanje umetnine, ker so bili obiskovalci navzoči in so se umetniškemu delu torej približali. Obiskovalcem samim tega ni treba verjeti; lahko pa povsem upravičeno rečejo, recimo: »Na razstavi sem videl Naumanov video – torej, nejasno sem ga slišal iz drugega prostora, medtem ko sva s prijateljem pila vino na tem umetnostnem dogodku.« To je povsem primerno in upal bi si trditi, da je to osnovna oblika civiliziranega vedenja in kulture: temeljno neznosni značaj umetnine (katerega vzroki so že pojasnjeni) tako postane znosen. Z obnašanjem »kot da bi« opazovalci ohranjajo neznosne poteze umetniškega dela na varni razdalji. Česar si sami ne morejo prisvojiti, prenesejo na iluzijo prisvojitve (iluzijo, v katero morda lahko verjame neki naivni drugi). Ne da bi se umetniškemu delu preveč približali, imajo tako lahko korist od »kot da bi,« torej od iluzije stika, ki so ga vzpostavili.

Vse dobro znane zahteve, da bi si opazovalci zares morali ogledati umetniška dela, so torej v nekem smislu barbarske in zavajajoče, saj spregledajo bistveno dejstvo glede tega, kako je mogoče imeti od nečesa korist. Vse te zahteve, da bi opazovalci morali priti v nepo-

sredni stik z umetnino in z njo vzpostaviti interaktivni odnos, preprosto zanemarijo dejstvo, da korist – vsaj v kapitalizmu – ne izvira iz sodelovanja oziroma udeležbe v nečem. Ljudje, ki imajo v kapitalistični ekonomiji od nečesa korist, niso ljudje, ki v tej ekonomiji sodelujejo aktivno; korist imajo tisti, ki so pasivni, denimo oddaljeni delničarji, drugi tepci pa sodelujejo v nekem drugem prostoru. To načelo je treba uporabiti tudi na področju kulture. Ljudje, ki imajo zares korist od kulture, niso ljudje, ki aktivno sodelujejo in ki se umetninam neposredno približajo. Korist imajo tisti, ki vzpostavljajo in vzdržujejo neki civilizirani »kot da bi«. Interpasivni opazovalci so torej delničarski dobičkarji umetnosti.

Do te točke se umetnostni dogodek zdi precej civiliziran in zelo sodobna praksa, ki se ujema z glavnimi načeli kapitalizma. Ko se učinkovitost muzeja meri bolj ali manj le po številu obiskovalcev, je umetnostni dogodek popoln odgovor na ta neoliberalni standard. Omogoči povečanje števila obiskovalcev, ne da bi karkoli spremenil v »ekonomiji pozornosti« (kot je to poimenoval Georg Franck⁴) – torej v času, ki ga imajo za opazovanje na voljo opazovalci, in času, ki ga terjajo umetniška dela.

INTERPASIVNOST DOGODKA IN INTERPASIVNOST UMETNOSTNEGA MUZEJA

Kaj bi torej lahko bilo narobe z umetnostnim dogodkom? Dejal bi, da se problem nahaja prav v dejstvu, da interpasivnost dogodka zasenči ali celo uniči interpasivnost, ki jo že sam po sebi zajema umetnostni prostor, kajti muzej in galerija – tako kot gledališče, opera in tako naprej – za družbo že tako ali tako delujeta kot interpasivna medija: ustvarjata opazovanje namesto odsotnih opazovalcev. Dogodka ti ni treba obiskati, da bi slišal hrup videa Brucea Naumana iz sosednje sobe. Zadošča že, da veš, da je v mestu galerija, kjer prikazujejo ta video. Umetnostne institucije vsebujejo temeljno interpasivnost: če se tam nekaj dogaja, je tako, kot da je to nekdo že videl. Zato umetnostne institucije vsem ljudem ponujajo olajšanje, ker se tam vse umetnostne zadeve dogajajo delegirano. Že tu se začne kulturno delničarstvo.

Bistveni problem umetnostnega dogodka je torej dejstvo, da povzroči redukcijo – redukcijo, ki se tiče obsega tega delničarstva. Namesto da bi dobesedno vsakomur omogočil imeti delež v kulturi, dogodek to dopusti le

omejenemu številu ljudi. Le ljudje, ki so fizično navzoči, lahko postanejo delničarji tistega, česar niso videli, medtem ko muzej kot struktura sicer dopušča, da dobesedno vsi postanemo delničarji. Korist prinaša le za ljudi, ki so fizično navzoči – v sociološkem smislu bi bil to model skupnosti. Skupnost je kraj, kjer imajo lahko korist le tisti, ki so fizično navzoči – torej za omejeno število ljudi, ki se skoraj vsi poznajo med seboj, kot je to na umetnostni sceni. Neomejeno število delničarjev pa se ujema s sociološko formulo družbe. Zato bi dejal, da se reakcionarna razsežnost umetnostnega dogodka nahaja v dejstvu, da družbo zreducira na skupnost. Dogodek je podeljevanje delničarstva in umetnostnega državljanstva ljudem, ki so navzoči, drugim pa te lastnosti odreka. Dogodek je izključitev večine iz interpasivnega umetnostnega državljanstva; zaniikanje univerzalne človekove pravice do koristi od umetnosti skozi pasivno delničarstvo.

To pa vključuje tudi časovno redukcijo. *Dogodek* za umetnost pomeni tisto, kar je *projekt* (še ena neoliberalna domislica) za znanost – oba nadomestita stalno, univerzalno strukturo, ki služi družbi, s časovno omejenim in ekskluzivnim dogajanjem, ki služi le določeni skupnosti (kar seveda vključuje tudi vse neoliberalne posledice: prekarno delo, pogodbe za določen čas, negotova plačila in tako naprej).

Tu lahko vidimo politične posledice našega kratkega razmisleka. Vztrajanje pri ljubezni in transferju oziroma interpasivnosti kot nujnih pogojev umetnosti in kulture pomeni:

- prelom z birokracijo in njenim vsiljevanjem standardov
- in povrnitev človekove pravice do kulturnega delničarstva celotni družbi.

Robert Pfaller je filozof in profesor filozofije na Univerzi uporabnih umetnosti na Dunaju.

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⁴ Georg Franck, *Ökonomie der Aufmerksamkeit: Ein Entwurf*, München in Dunaj: Hanser, 1998.

MATTERS OF GENEROSITY: ON ART AND LOVE

ROBERT PFALLER

Obviously, art events are often occasions of generosity. You usually get a free glass of wine; you may get some free DJing or VJing; if you are lucky, even some free food. Yet the question, here, is whether art is not already in itself a practice of generosity. And if so, what happens to generosity if you make an art event out of art? In other words, what happens if you subject one practice of generosity (art) to another practice of generosity (the art event)? Does this bring about more generosity? Or maybe less? In the following, I want to investigate this question and look at it from a political perspective.

LOVERS AND ARTISTS

In order to understand a crucial feature of art, it is useful to compare professional art practice with that of people who normally are not artists. Thus we can more easily discern a fundamental condition of artistic production. What is the necessary element that lets people who are not artists start making art? - There is one fundamental condition: love - in its broadest meaning:

- in the erotic or sexual meaning, we can observe that non-artists become musicians when they are in love and want to sing songs for their beloved;
- in familial love, we can observe that little children make small drawings to please their grandmothers or grandfathers for Christmas;
- among adult friends, it occurs that someone writes for his friend's birthday a beautiful poem that funnily describes the virtues and vices of the birthday boy.

In all of these cases, where art production arises out of the

desire to make a gift to the beloved, we will also observe three crucial features, which sociologist Marcel Mauss has described in his essay on the gift:¹

First, the gift must not be useful. What you can present as a gift must be such that it cannot without difficulties be inserted into profane, everyday life. While it may be true, for example, that I can give my friend a shirt as a birthday present, the shirt still has to at least be a special one. Not a shirt that he can wear every day without problems; but rather a fancy party shirt with some glimmer to it. Anyhow, what I can never do is to give my friend something that he may really need. If my friend is very poor, I cannot say, “Hey Peter, listen, you are so poor – what if I pay your rent for December, as a Christmas gift?” On the level of gift making, we encounter here something that we may call “abstraction” – i.e. remoteness from utility, the first crucial feature that gift making has in common with art.

Secondly, the gift always has to be given. If, for example, I am invited to a marriage party and buy a fine bottle of wine as a present, but unfortunately fall ill on that very day, then that bottle may start a very unpleasant, embarrassing, uncanny existence in my apartment. I cannot hand it over to the married couple anymore, but I cannot just drink it either. The bottle has become an obscene, obstinate object that refuses appropriation and integration into either their or my ordinary life. The same has been remarked, with regard to art, by the theorist of religion Klaus Heinrich who writes:

“Just as the collector is not interested in his collection and has to transfer it – either, as a Maecenas, to the public, or, subterraneously to the underground safes – just in the same way the buyer of furniture aims at its fastest possible annihilation. The notion of “throw-away society” brings to mind the desire structure of the addict, the secret wish for annihilation.”²

If the art collector who apparently loves art still has a desire to get rid of his collection, either by handing it over to the city or to the bunkers where nobody will see it for centuries, then this proves clearly that art is just as unbearable and problematic as the gift bottle that has not been handed over. (Mauss has noted this malignant, “poison-like” side of the gift that is announced by the German language where the word “gift” means “poison”.) Art, just like the gift, proves to be difficult to possess. There is

something to it that appears to resist all attempts at appropriation.

Thirdly, the necessity to give occurs precisely when one has received. Giving means passing on what one has been given. As soon as one is undeservedly given something, one has to make an undeserved gift to someone else. I have learned this in small personal experiences. I usually meet some friends for lunch. One day, one of the friends all of a sudden invited all of us. This was quite unusual in this context, so we asked why. The friend explained to us that he had just won a small amount of money in a soccer bet, so he felt obliged to spend it together with us. The same seems to occur in art. Recently, a painter told me that she felt it to be nothing of her own merit but an undeserved gift to be able to see landscapes sometimes in a special way, and that she then felt obliged to paint this vision in order to pass that gift on to somebody else. The ability to see and the ability to paint are often perceived by artists as gifts, and their production is then meant as an attempt to make another gift in turn, as a response.

Traditional art has expressed this feeling of having received a gift in mythological narratives. The myth of the *genius*, for example, expresses this: The genius is not the artist himself but some other force that occasionally comes upon him and takes possession of him, just like a demon. Giorgio Agamben has recently described this dimension of alterity inherent to artistic production: when dealing with the genius, artists, Agamben states, “lend their lips to a voice that does not belong to them.”³ Being gifted by the genius means to deal with something that cannot be appropriated, but requires to be passed on.

Another myth by which traditional art has tried to account for this alterity is the myth of the *kiss by the muse*. Again, we encounter here the close relationship between art and love, when it comes to accounting for the initial moment of artistic productivity.

Of course, it is a methodological problem of how to deal with mythologies in a rational way. Should we enlightened people really lend our ears and brains to this apparently pre-modern crap? Or should we just dismiss it, as contemporary art often does when it says, “There is no such thing as a genius. So beware of making ingenious art.” But: Is it a rational method to prohibit something that we have just beforehand declared impossible? The answer of psychoanalysis to this problem of methodology

1 Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, transl. W.D. Halls, London: Routledge, 2002/1923.

2 Klaus Heinrich, *Anfangen mit Freud*, Basel/Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld, 1997, p. 55. Author's translation.

3 Giorgio Agamben, “Genius”, in *id.*, *Profanations*, transl. Jeff Fort, New York: Zone Books, 2007, p. 14.

is quite clear. Sigmund Freud would say: The myth has always got a reason for its existence. It therefore aptly indicates a reality, although it is not able to provide an explanation for it. Dealing in a rational way with a seemingly irrational mythology therefore means to find out what reality the myth points at, and to replace the mythological “explanation” by a theoretical one.

For example, the artists’ feeling of owing their artistic ability to somebody else can clearly be explained in psychoanalytic terms. The psychoanalytic concept that accounts for this reality is *transference*. Transference is a certain way of relating to the other. In a relationship of transference, the outside other assumes a position which is normally that of an internal psychic instance, for example, that of the ego-ideal. Thus, a psychic instance of one person gets, so to speak, “outsourced” to another person. Then two people visibly “act out” something that normally would have occurred within the psyche of one person, as an invisible internal psychic drama.

Getting rid of the internal conflict and having one of its partisans outside opens up quite a few new possibilities for the psyche. Instead of distributing its energies and sharing them, for example, between producing something and criticizing this very production, the psyche can now focus on just one thing, for example, production. Production alone, without internal criticism, can then become unrestricted, big, manic.

As we know, love is one mode of transference. This allows us to understand why many people only become able to produce art when they are in love. Only in this psychic state can they release their unrestricted, manic productivity. Without neglecting the differences between the professional artist and the loving dilettante, I would claim that a certain type of love relationship is also necessary for the professional – maybe not just an incidental love with a single person, as in the case of the amateur, but a love relationship in general with an idealized public.

The specific “manic” ability for art making only occurs when the artists manage to relate in such a way to this other, by loving this other. This ability is then transferred upon them by others. And the artists feel this transference as soon as they feel that others expect something from them. When they want to satisfy this expectation, they are in love.

The uncanny feature that arises from this is, firstly, that the artists do not speak with their own voices. And,

secondly, the product of this relationship, as a product of transference, then turns out to be unbearable. It can only be made bearable when it is passed on, when it is transferred to somebody else. The transfer of the product appears then to respond to the transference that had stimulated its production. Giving away is a solution to the predicament of giftedness.

These uncanny features, I think, have to be kept in mind when we speak about events in contemporary art practice. Now there is one fact about which we should not deceive ourselves; there is one crucial reason why we are facing such a proliferation of events in contemporary art. The reason is, simply, the fact that events produce numbers – numbers of observers, of visitors, of present people. And the fact that numbers are so important is due to the fact that what we have to deal with here is not the big winner, but a side winner of the neoliberal privation of societies – which is *bureaucracy*. Bureaucracy is a side winner of the neoliberal economy. In all neoliberal societies, bureaucracy has increased – precisely through austerity measures. What bureaucracy does is to impose its own language upon all the fields that it attempts to dominate. So instead of having experts observing and deciding about their fields of expertise, by applying qualitative criteria, we have bureaucrats. The bureaucrats try to transform that language and impose instead a language that is understandable to them. As soon as bureaucrats dominate the processes, numbers dominate quality.

For example, bureaucracy defines the value of university achievements only in terms of numbers of students present at university lectures and numbers of academic titles. Yet, the fact that the nowadays proliferating titles do not qualify these students for a job is no longer the responsibility of bureaucracy. Of course, all these new bachelors now remain unemployed because they did not learn anything meaningful, they only had to be present at the university. But this is not what bureaucracy feels responsible for.

So as soon as bureaucracy dominates a field, what this has to do with is a reversal between a description and what is being described. The question is no longer: “What is the real use, the proper functioning of this practice, and how can we appropriately account for it?” What now comes first is the account, the description, whose criteria are never questioned, and then the practice has to be modified so that it allows for a nice description. Bureaucracy always asks itself: ‘What is the description that guarantees our own existence and survival as bureaucra-

cy?’ And it is precisely this description it imposes upon the things that it claims to make better. If, for example, numbers are the best criteria for the survival of bureaucracy, then bureaucracy imposes numbers upon university or museum life. Everything then has to be counted in numbers. If bureaucracy one day says, these are good numbers, then politicians (at least, weak politicians) can believe that this was a success.

This is the reason why we nowadays have to deal with a certain bureaucratically imposed generosity. Since art spaces have to prove to have high numbers of visitors, they organize more and more events. These events bring visitors, and the fact that these visitors may not have looked at a single artwork, but have just drunk a glass of wine or danced a little bit, does not affect the beautiful numbers. So what does this mean for the art field?

As I mentioned before, transference is a way to produce something that cannot be appropriated, and a way to deal with it. That which cannot be appropriated has again got a psychoanalytic name to it – narcissism. What we cannot appropriate is the most “own” thing we know, ownness in itself, so to speak. A typical case of such ownness or narcissism is naïveté; for example, in our culture, belief in Santa Claus. Of course, such narcissism would be unbearable to us; we only desire it as a happiest state of mind retrospectively, once we have left it. Yet, in family rituals, we bring this narcissism to life again by transferring it. The naïve belief is then ascribed to others – parents ascribe it to their children, but children also ascribe such naïve belief to their parents as well: in order to get their parents’ love, they act as if they still believed in Santa Claus.

One can observe this structure of mutual transference of naïve belief quite clearly at the point when children reach about 12 years old. Up until then, one can hear the parents secretly complain to their friends about how much work Christmas is for them but that, of course, it has to be done for the children. Only a very short time later, the children start complaining that they have to be at home for Christmas instead of being able to go out with their friends, but, of course, this has to be done for the parents.

INTERPASSIVITY: THE PLEASURE OF DELEGATED ENJOYMENT

So what we find here is a mutual transference of narcissism, one more openly, the other more secretly. The enjoyment of this naïve, narcissistic belief in Santa Claus

thus always gets transferred upon the other. For this type of enjoyment through the other, such indirect, vicarious enjoyment, I have coined, many years ago, the notion of *interpassivity*.

In interpassivity, enjoyment is delegated to some other. We transfer the narcissism upon the other, in order to make the other enjoy in our place. This is the basic formula of interpassivity: *I want the other to enjoy in my place*. For myself, enjoyment is unbearable, so I look desperately for some other idiot who can enjoy in my place, and I am happy if I find one.

Interpassive behavior thus always involves a certain “as if”: parents act as if Santa Claus existed, children act as if they believed in Santa Claus. So the illusion contained in the “as if” might very well be nobody’s illusion. Nobody needs to be the real believer here. The “as if” alone allows for the transference, for the circulation of the unbearable illusion. It keeps this illusion at a safe distance, by putting some more or less fictitious naïve other between oneself and the illusion. (Or, in other words: it puts the narcissistic other between everybody and narcissism.)

Of course, the same “as if” also occurs in the art event (as Beti Žerovc has pointed out nicely). Also, in the art event, this has to do with a crucial “as if”: since we replace the real confrontation of the observer with the artwork by a small, symbolic contact. We can call this symbolic encounter again a case of interpassivity: Somebody else can believe that this has been a real observation of the artwork since the visitors were present and near to it. The visitors themselves do not have to believe this; yet they may quite appropriately say, “I have seen the Nau-man video in the exhibition – I mean, I heard it vaguely from the other room when I was drinking a glass of wine with my friend at the art event.” This is quite appropriate, and I would claim that this is the basic form of civilized behaviour and of culture: The fundamental unbearable character of the artwork (the causes of which have been explained before) is thus rendered bearable. By acting “as if”, the observers keep the unbearable features of the artwork at a safe distance. What they cannot appropriate themselves, they pass on to an illusion of appropriation (an illusion that some naïve other may believe in). Without getting into too close touch with the artwork, they can thus profit from the “as if”, from the illusion of contact that they have established.

All the well-known claims that observers should really see the artwork are therefore in a way barbaric and mis-

leading, because they overlook a crucial fact concerning profiting from something. All these claims that observers should get into direct contact with the artwork and that they should interact with it simply neglect the fact that profiting from something – at least in capitalism – does not stem from collaboration or from participating in something. The people who profit from something within the capitalist economy are not those who participate or collaborate actively in it; rather, it is those who are passive and figure as remote shareholders, while some other idiots collaborate in some other room. This principle should also be applied to culture. Those people who really profit in culture are not those who collaborate actively and get into direct contact with the artworks. Rather, it is those who establish and maintain a certain civilized “as if”. Interpassive observers are thus the shareholding profiteers of the artworks.

Up to this point, the art event appears as a quite civilized and very contemporary practice, matching the key principles of capitalism. When the efficiency of the museum is more and more measured by numbers of visitors, the art event is the perfect answer to this neoliberal standard. It allows for the increasing of the number of visitors without changing anything in the “economy of attention” (as Georg Franck has called it)⁴ – i.e. the time of observation available on the side of observers, and the time required by the artworks.

INTERPASSIVITY OF THE EVENT AND INTERPASSIVITY OF THE ART MUSEUM

So what might be wrong with the art event? I would claim: The problem with it lies precisely in the fact that the interpassivity of the event obscures, and even destroys, the interpassivity that the art space already has in and of itself – since the museum, the gallery, just like the theater, the opera house, etc., already work for society as interpassive media: they produce observation in place of absent observers. You do not have to attend the event in order to hear the noise from the Bruce Nauman video from the other room. Rather, it is sufficient to know that there is a gallery in the city where it is being shown. There is a fundamental interpassivity to the art institution: If something takes place there, it is as if somebody has seen it. Thus, these institutions give a relief to everybody, doing all the art things vicariously. Here, the cultural shareholding already starts.

4 Georg Franck, *Ökonomie der Aufmerksamkeit: Ein Entwurf*, Munich/Vienna: Hanser, 1998.

So the crucial problem with the art event here is the fact that it brings about a reduction – a reduction in terms of the scope of this shareholding. Instead of letting virtually everybody hold a share in culture, the event only lets a limited number of people hold a share in it. Only the persons who are physically present can become shareholders of what they have not seen, whereas the museum as a structure allows for the shareholding by virtually everybody. Profiting only for the people who are physically present – this would, in sociological terms, be the model of community. Community is the place where only those who are physically present can profit – a limited number of people who almost all know each other, like in the art scene. An unlimited number of shareholders, on the contrary, would be the sociological formula of society. So I would claim: The reactionary dimension of the art event lies in the fact that it reduces society to community. The event is the attribution of shareholding and artistic citizenship only to the people present, and a denial of these qualities to all others. It is the exclusion of the majority from interpassive artistic citizenship; a denial of the universal human right of profiting from art through passive shareholding.

This also involves a reduction in terms of time: The *event* thus represents for art what the project (another neoliberal invention) is for science – both replace a permanent, universal structure that serves society, with a temporal, exclusive happening that only serves a certain community (of course, with all of the neoliberal consequences, of precarious, limited contracts, uncertain payment, etc.).

Here we can see the political consequences of our short consideration: Insisting on love and transference, and interpassivity, as necessary conditions of art and culture means:

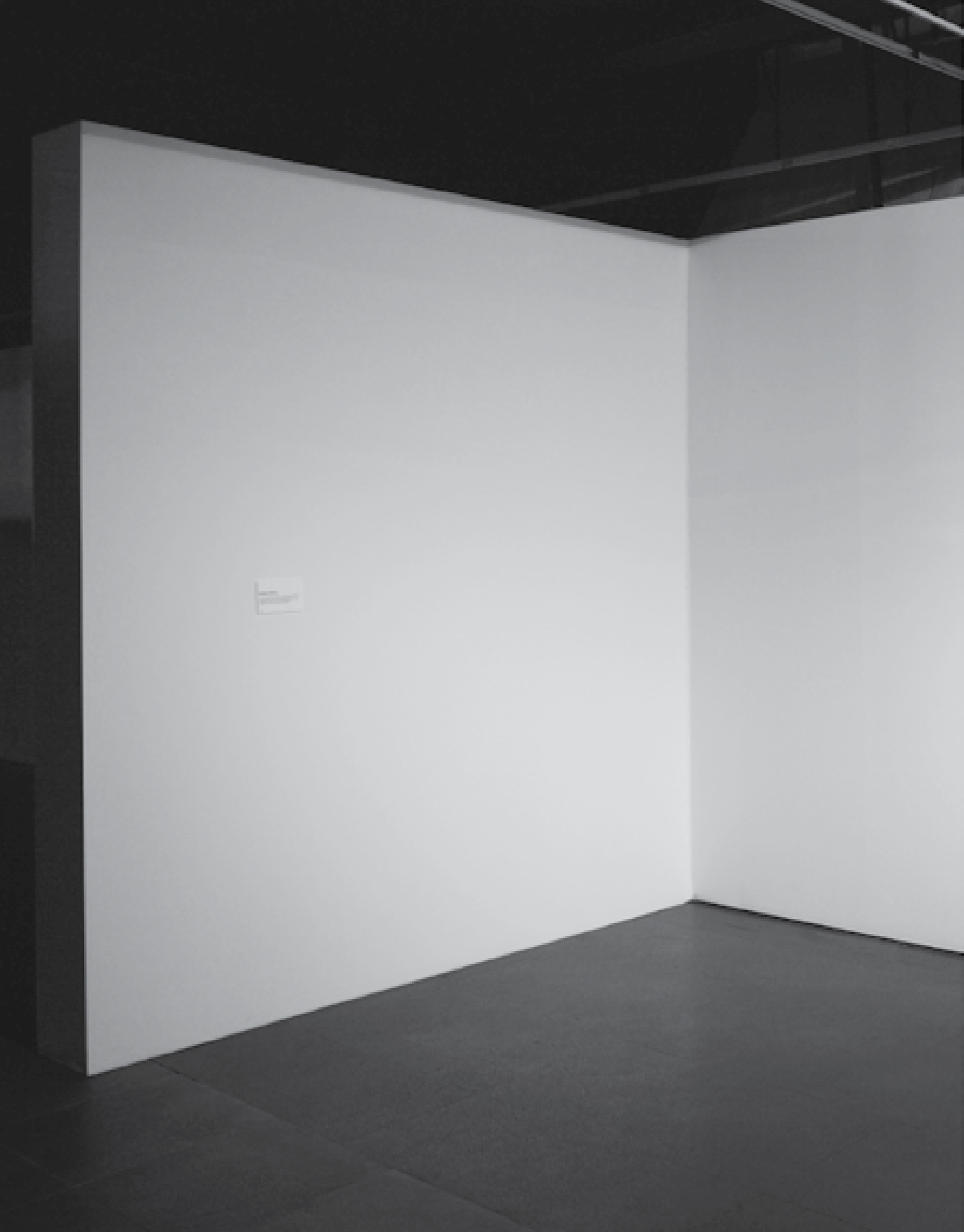
- to break with the imposition of bureaucracy and its standards;
- to give the human right of cultural shareholding back to the entire society.

Robert Pfaller is a philosopher and professor of philosophy at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna.

Bibliography

Robert Pfaller, »The Work of Art that Observes Itself: The Aesthetics of Interpassivity«, 1998. http://www.amberfestival.org/08/public/file_5.DOC.

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Robert Barry,

Prostori, v katere lahko pridemo in smo za trenutek »svobodni, da razmišljamo o tem, kaj bomo storili« (Marcuse) / Some places to which we can come and for a while 'be free to think about what we are going to do' (Marcuse), 1970

Galerija Jakopič, Ljubljana / Jakopič Gallery, Ljubljana.

(Z dovoljenjem umetnika in MGLC / Courtesy of the artist and MGLC, fotografija / photo: Jaka Babnik.)

POPRAVEK / CORRECTION

V prejšnji številki Maske (št. 145-146) smo pri članku Ixiar Rozas Voic(e)scapes - dva obraza iste frakture objavili napačne pripise k dvema fotografijama, objavljenima na straneh 81 ter 87. Objavljamo ju znova s pravimi podatki.

In the previous issue of Maska (Nos 145-146), the article by Ixiar Rozas Voic(e)scapes - Two Faces of the Same Fracture contained incorrect captions to the photographs, published on pages 81 and 87. Both photographs are published again here with the correct information.

Stran / Page 81:

Mónica Valenciano: Impregnaciones de la Srta. Nieve y guitarra

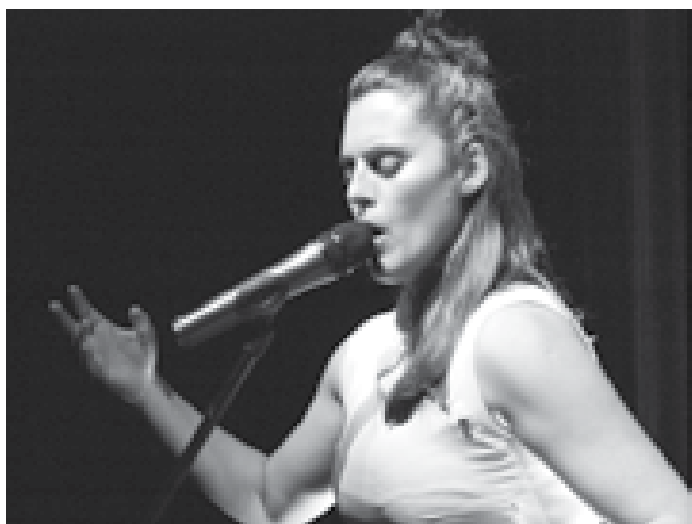
© Monica Valenciano



Stran / Page 87:

Filipa Francisco, Idoia Zabaleta: Bicho, eres un bicho, 2009

© Idoia Zabaleta, Filipa Francisco



Iz naslednje številke / From the forthcoming issue

PROJEKTIRANA ČASOVNOST / PROJECTED TEMPORALITY

KONČNO PRAVOČASNO SKUPAJ (PERFORMATIVNI DIALOG) / FINALLY TOGETHER ON TIME (PERFORMATIVE DIALOGUE) / Bojana Kunst,

Ivana Muller

NEKAJ VPRAŠANJ GLEDE LASTNOSTI ČASA / A FEW QUESTIONS REGARDING THE QUALITIES OF TIME / Raqs Media Collective

V ČRNEM BREZNU ČASOVNOSTI (O ZVOČNIH PROJEKTIH RIMINI PROTOKOLA) / IN THE BLACK ABYSS OF TEMPORALITY (ON RIMINI PROTOKOL SOUND PROJECTS) / Andre Schallenberg

URA OBRODI TISTO, ČESAR ČAS NE MORE (ČASOVNO ODMERJENE MISLI O GRŠKEM PREGOVORU) / 'AN HOUR BRINGS WHAT TIME CANNOT' (TIMED THOUGHTS ON A GREEK SAYING) / Danae Theodoridou

OSVOBAJAJOČI NEPOVRATNI IZBRISI (UMETNOST, PLASTIČNOST IN SPOMIN) / LIBERATING IRREVERSIBLE ERASURES (ART, PLASTICITY AND MEMORY) / Pia Brezavšček

ποιός είναι ο επόμενος;*

*¿QUIÉN SERÁ EL PRÓXIMO?



Ob dramatični grški zgodbi se vsi sprašujemo: **Kdo bo naslednji?** Bodite pripravljeni na nove drame v Maskini majici! / Considering the dramatic Greek story, everyone is asking: **Who is next?** Be prepared for new dramas in Maska's T shirt.

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*** WHO IS NEXT?**

NAZADNJE

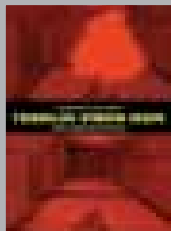
Informacije in naročila: ana.ivanek@maska.si.

IZŠLO

Alexander

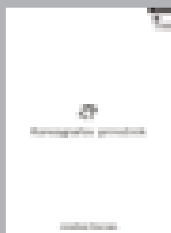
R.

Galloway www.maska.si



TEORIJA VIDEO IGER. ESEJI O ALGORITEMSKI KULTURI

Video igre so v zadnjih dvajsetih letih postale eden osrednjih kulturnih pojavov in danes po svoji popularnosti ter vplivu uspešno tekmujejo s starejšimi mediji, kot so film, televizija in popularna glasba. Galloway je eno osrednjih svetovnih teoretskih imen na tem področju. V knjigi obravnavani fenomen reflektira v različnih kontekstih – elektronske kulture, tehnologij, skozi njegove družbenopolitične implikacije ter v kontekstu drugih umetnostnih in kulturnih praks. Izdaja knjige v slovenskem jeziku pomeni edinstveno priložnost za slovenski prostor, da se seznani z vedno težje spregledljivim področjem teorije video in računalniških iger. Posebej za slovenske bralce je avtor napisal uvod ter v njem razširil svoj pogled na obravnavane teme. Knjigi je dodana spremna študija dr. Janeza Strehovca. **15 €**



Jonathan

Burrows

KOREOGRAFOV PRIROČNIK

Koreografov priročnik bralca vabi k raziskovanju načinov in vzrokov za pripravo plesne predstave. Mednarodno priznani plesalec, koreograf in učitelj Jonathan Burrows nam v navdihujočem in nenavadno spodbudnem nizu zgodbic razlaga, kako je mogoče pluti skozi ta kompleksni proces. Gre za osupljivo razmišljanje o osebni praksi in poklicni poti, ki se napaja iz petletnih izkušenj z delavnic, ki jih je vodil. Burrowsova odkrita in iskrena proza ponuja bralcu dostop do vrste vaj, razmišljanj, načel in idej o koreografiji, ki umetnikom in ustvarjalcem plesa omogoča iskanje lastnega estetskega procesa. Gledalcu plesnih in drugih predstav ponuja impresiven nabor vprašanj, s katerimi se vsaka predstava sooča, ko ga nagovarja. To je knjiga za vsakogar, ki ga zanima ustvarjanje predstav, ne glede na raven ali slog. To je knjiga za vsakogar, ki ga zanima ustvarjanje in delovanje sodobne scenske umetnosti. Skupna izdaja Maske in JSKD. **12 €**

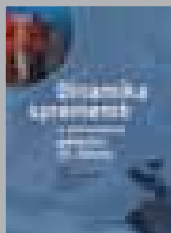


Marc

Augé

NEKRAJI. UVOD V ANTROPOLOGIJO NADMODERNOSTI

Knjiga *Nekraji. Uvod v antropologijo nadmodernosti* je temeljno delo urbane antropologije (izvirno objavljeno leta 1992 pri francoski založbi Seuil), ki je doživelo že številne prevode. V njej avtor tematizira aktualne pojave v sodobni globalni družbi; ukvarja se zlasti s prostori, ki jih imenuje nekraji. To so zanj letališča, nakupovalna središča, hoteli, avtoceste itn. V teh ambivalentnih prostorih poteka nenehno gibanje, potrošnja, komunikacija; v njih ni sorodnih simbolnih povezav, ni igre identitet. Obstajajo kot prehodni, anonimni, funkcionalni prostori, ki jih zaznavamo le parcialno in nepovezano. Nasprotni pol nekraja zanj predstavlja antropološki kraj, ki je nosilec identitete, razmerij in zgodovine ter si ga najlažje zamišljamo v obliki konkretnega prostora, ki za nekoga predstavlja pomembno simbolično vozlišče kulturnih pomenov, spominov, doživljajev, izkustev (npr. žrtveni oltar, rojstni kraj, javni trg ipd.). Gre za prvo knjižno objavo tega avtorja v slovenščini. Knjigi je dodana spremna študija



dr. Matjaža Uršiča. **15 €**