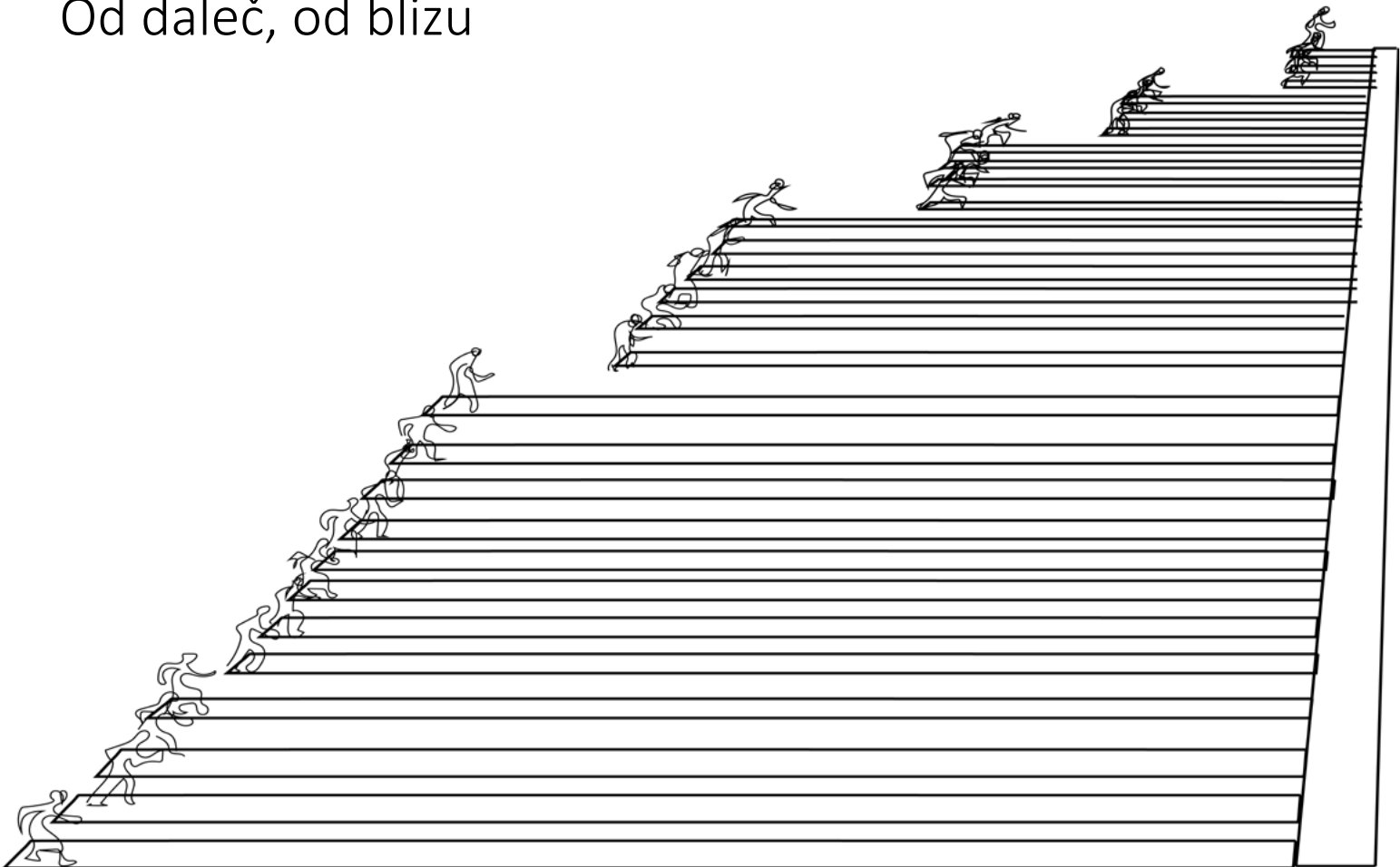


JULIJ BORŠTNIK IN KATJA OBLAK:
Od daleč, od blizu





JULIJ BORŠTNIK IN KATJA OBLAK:

Od daleč, od blizu / From afar, from up-close

Prostorska postavitve / Spatial installation

8.–29. 12. 2023

IZ RADOVEDNOSTI. POGOVOR S KATJO IN JULIJEM

Julij, v spremnem tekstu h kipu *Moderna projekcija* si napisal (na razstavi), da so v sredini 20. stoletja mnogi misleci pričakovali, da bodo večini ljudi »problemi ekonomske nujnosti praktično odvzeti« (ekonomist John M. Keynes, 1930), »da se bodo tovarne v nekaj letih izpraznile in da se bo človeštvo zne bilo teže dela in jarma nujnosti« (filozofinja Hannah Arendt, 1958), da bo imel »vsak posameznik možnost uporabiti moč znanstvenega védenja in oblikovati svoj obstoj na podlagi resničnega človeškega občutka za življenje« (Radovan Richta, 1965–68). Nakar nadaljuješ: »Od osemdesetih let dalje so se stvari obrnile precej drugače. Delovni dan se ni skrajšal, prav obratno. Delež slabo plačanih mest je narasel, dobro plačanih pa padel. Nadzor nad velikim delom tehnološkega razvoja pa se je še močneje skoncentriral, lastniško in fizično, v rokah peščice.« Kaj misliš s tem? Ali ne živimo danes bolje in svetovno gledano bolj povezano kot na primer v šestdesetih ali sedemdesetih?

Julij: V povprečju dodobra industrializiranih dežel zagotovo, verjetno tudi v splošnem svetovnem povprečju. Vendar primerjava različnih zgodovinskih obdobij statično, glede na absolutno skalo, ne pove dovolj. Družbeno povprečje tudi ne. Človeštvo živi skozi čas in zgodovina je kot nepregledno velikanski tok dogodkov sestavljen iz množice podtokov (ki si pogosto nasprotujejo). Smiselno je gledati dinamično in primerjati relativno.

Od obeh revolucij s konca 18. stoletja, francoske in industrijske, učinkovitost dela, tehnološka in organizacijska, neprestano raste. To pomeni, da ista količina vložnega dela proizvede vse več dobrin. V sredini 20. stoletja sta bili rast produktivnosti dela (ki je vsota njegove učinkovitosti in intenzivnosti) ter rast kompenzacije dela (neto plača + dostop do zdravstva, šolstva in socialnega varstva) medsebojno zvezani. Vsaj v dodobra industrializiranih deželah. Hkrati je padal delež revnih in tudi ekonomske razlike med družbenimi razredi.

V sedemdesetih letih v Veliki Britaniji in ZDA, v kontinentalni Evropi, Japonski in še kje pa v devetdesetih, pa se je zgodil med rastjo produktivnosti in kompenzacijo razhod. Medtem ko produktivnost še naprej vztrajno raste, od sedemdesetih let je narasla za več kot dvakrat, je rast kupne moči močno zaostala. Delež revnih se je povečal (govorimo o Evropi, ZDA ...), razlike med bogatimi in revnimi pa so dramatično poskočile. Ta razhod upodablja kip *Moderna projekcija*.

Keynes, Arendt in mnogi drugi misleci iz sredine 20. stoletja, ki so živeli v času, ko sta bili rast produktivnosti in kompenzacija dela zvezani, so samoumevno predpostavili, da bo še naprej tako. Če bi to držalo, bi bile za naš čas napovedi o triurnem delavniku (za preživetje) in osvoboditvi dela od jarma nujnosti logične. Vendar so pozabili vštetiti **razredno silo**. Produktivnost dela še naprej raste, njegova vrednost pa se je začela razlirati vse manj na široko skozi družbo ter vse bolj »navzgor«, k bogatim in vplivnim, kjer se kopiči v obliki koncentracije nadzora nad financami, nad pogoji tržne menjave – posledično pa tudi nad državnimi politikami, pogoji dela, tehnološkim razvojem, pretokom informacij ...

Na začetku 21. stoletja je ameriška kuratorica Helen Molesworth z razstavo *Working ethics (Delovne etike)* opozorila na spreminjajoče se pogoje umetniškega dela od petdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja dalje, ki so posledica sprejemanja administrativnih zmogljivosti in menedžerskih veščin s strani umetnikov, kar se kaže v prednosti konceptualnih procesov pred ročno proizvodnjo. Prehod je razdelila v štiri med seboj povezane in zgodovinsko prekrivajoče se kategorije: **umetnik kot menedžer in delavec, samo kot menedžer, umetnik kot »ustvarjalec izkušenj« in končno kot »ustvarjalec prostega časa«, kjer nasprotuje delu samemu. Bi se lahko prepoznal v kateri od teh kategorij ali vidiš povsem nov pristop, ki ga narekuje sodobnost?**

Julij: V odnosu med (likovnim) umetnikom in delom mi najbolj bije v oči sprememba, ki se je začela, če prav vem, z Michelangelom, dokončala pa v 19. stoletju. V srednjem veku in zgodnji renesansi je bilo umetniško delo vedno vnaprej naročeno za določen namen, po vnaprej dogovorjeni ceni, sorazmerno s količino vložnega dela in materiala. Michelangelo pa je na stara leta začel delati kipe brez naročil, sledeč izključno notranjemu imperativu, kar se kipom močno pozna: so očitni sad drznega eksperimentiranja. Ta način – najprej izdelava, šele nato določitev cene posameznega kosa skozi pogajanja s kupci – je do 19. stoletja postopoma prevladoval. Cena umetniških del se je tako razvezala od količine vložnega dela in materiala. (Znan je van Goghov primer: slikal je po močnem notranjem imperativu, slike pa se, kljub naporom njegovega brata, niso prodajale. Kasneje so postale astronomsko cenjene.) Skratka, gre za selitev vrednotenja umetniških del. Postala so fluktuirajoča vrednost (od nič pa do ogromno), ki je »osamosvojena« od vsote vložnega dela. Ta prehod je bil soroden in časovno vzporeden z drugim še veliko bolj vplivnim prehodom: z vzpostavitvijo vrednostnih papirjev, katerih cena fluktuirala na finančnih trgih glede na pričakovano vrednost v prihodnosti.

Danes smo še vedno pretežno v tem načinu. Materialne pogoje dela hkrati močno krojijo institucije, kot so galerije, muzeji, skladi, ministrstva ... V Sloveniji že desetletja vlada pristop, da umetniki za svoje delo od galerij zelo pogosto sploh niso plačani, velikokrat niti za stroške materiala. O tovrstnih problemih je žal slišati z mnogih koncev sveta. Torej: umetnik opravi po notranjem imperativu mnogovrstno in negotovo delo »na kredit«, katerega ceno nato krojijo institucije, investitorji in ljubitelji (pogosto je nič, včasih ogromno).

Konec šestdesetih in v začetku sedemdesetih so si umetniki v Zahodni Evropi in ZDA prizadevali z zasedanjem galerij in muzejev ta okvir spremeniti. Prizadevali so si pridobiti kolektivni nadzor nad pogoji dela in se kot avtonomni ustvarjalci neposredno povezati s publiko. (Ni jim uspelo.)

Stvar, ki vztrajno sije skozi opisane kolobocije vrednotenja umetnosti, je vera v njen potencial preseganja: seči prek sočasnih norm koristnega početja. Čez ustaljene samoumevnosti dojemanja. Onkraj horizonta svoje dobe. To pa zahteva zmožnost samosvojesti. Ta pa avtonomijo.

Že nekaj časa se oba s Katjo Oblak intenzivno posvečata tudi izobraževanju, med drugim sta skupaj s kiparko Anjo Kranjc in Kulturnim domom Nova Gorica leta 2016 ustanovila uspešno delujočo Likovno šolo v Mestni galeriji Nova Gorica. Kaj je po vajinem mnenju danes pomembno pri učenju likovnega jezika in generacij, preobloženih z informacijami, na splošno?

Julij: Najpomembnejša lastnost učitelja, mentorja, je, da njo samo oziroma njega samega prežema živa radovednost. To je najboljše vabilo v pokrajine vednosti. Živa radovednost pa na poti spoznavanja nujno potrebuje še dve stvari: prvič, zmožnost usmerjene pozornosti ter drugič, veliko prostora za avtonomno udejstvovanje.

Model šolstva, ki še vedno močno prevladuje v osnovnih in srednjih šolah, je iz konca 18. in 19. stoletja. Razvijal se je vzporedno s tovarnami. Prvo splošno šolsko obveznost je uveljavila Prusija, sočasno s pričetkom industrijske revolucije v Angliji. Oba procesa sta si delila princip podreditve množice človeških bitij enotnemu redu (kar je lastno tudi vojski in zaporom). Skozi 20. stoletje so šolske prakse postale manj nasilne, kar pa je ostalo nespremenjeno iz 19. stoletja, je pristop učitelja kot tistega, ki usmerja malo množico učencev. Postavi se med učence in vednost kot vratar ter jih po vnaprej izdelanem redu pita z zalogaji znanja ter kroti impulze po avtonomni radovednosti. Splošno šolstvo je seveda neprecenljiva dobrobit, kar pa ne pomeni, da je vsak model šolanja že tudi dovolj dober.

Problem učitelja kot vratarja sem močno čutil skozi lastno šolanje. Jasno artikulirati pa mi ga je pomagal šele uvid iz teksta *Nevedni učitelj* Jacquesa Rancièreja: obstaja jasna razlika med treningom usmerjene pozornosti in sproščanjem poti živi radovednosti. Prevladujoči model te razlike ne zazna. Kot da sta učenje in trening pozornosti isto. Ta zmota ubija živo radovednost. Živa radovednost in zmožnost avtonomnega delovanja pa sta ključni za reševanje izzivov, pri katerih je treba smiselne cilje šele definirati. Kar je še posebej aktualno v današnji dobi, ko poglavitni (ekonomski) izziv postaja soodločanje o tem, kako usmerjati *nakopičene produktivne moči* k smiselnim, nesamodestruktivnim ciljem. Izziv, soroden usmerjanju presežnih moči divjega bika.



Razredna dirka / Class race
2023, papir / paper, 130 cm x 100 cm x 5 cm

Katja, v svojem delu se že dolgo obračaš k naravi. Ne le, da iz nje črpaš in se vanjo umeščaš, na svoj ekološko ozavešeni način se spopadaš tudi z onesnaženjem, predvsem v smislu medsebojnih odnosov ne le med ljudmi, temveč tudi do rastlinskega in živalskega sveta. Pri tem se zdi, da te, za razliko od postmodernega pojava živali v umetnosti, zanima predvsem umetnost stika z živaljo. S performansi in plesom si morda najbolj neposredno posegla v sodoživetje z drugim, in kot pravi stara modrost: raje kot da spreminjaš svet, spremeni, kaj čutiš do njega, in svet se bo spremenil. Kako tvoje izkušnje performansa vplivajo na tvoje zблиževanje/povezanost z živalmi in oboje s kiparstvom?

Katja: V performans sem vstopila prek butoh plesa in ga razumem kot budno prisotnost ustvarjalca, ki z določeno zgodbo in namero s polnim zavedanjem vzpostavlja tok dogajanja, pri katerem je občinstvo v veliki meri vabljeno k sooblikovanju le-tega. To dimenzijo neposredne prisotnosti v trajanju sem iskala pri kiparstvu najprej prek spomina in v sledeh v raznih materialih, kiparski odtis (telesa) pa mi je omogočal, da sem lahko jasneje izrazila vzdušje, ki ga je moč doseči s performansom. Začela sem graditi prostor za telo prek fragmentarnih odtisov najprej svojega telesa in potem v sodelovanju z drugimi. Tanke, namensko fragmentarne papirnate odtise teles je gledalec lahko dopolnjeval z lastno percepcijo (učinek performansa).

Zame je do okolice občutljiv performans (ali kip) tisti, ki ga ustvarjalec na svoji poti do cilja (nastopa, kipa, risbe) izbrusi in pri sebi izdelava do te mere, da vzpostavlja avtentične in univerzalne vsebine, ki lahko odpirajo drugačne poglede, in na tej poti ne rani sebe, drugega ali okolja, ampak obratno, dopusti celjenje. Pri mojem načinu ustvarjanja sem morala zato včasih dolgo čakati, da sem zgradila dobre izkušnje in okoliščine in si potem upala iti v smer, ki od mene zahteva specifični pogum. Naučila sem se, da so strah in druga nelagodna občutja ob ustvarjalnem delu (le) kazalci, kaj je na vrsti, da prerastem, in obenem pod temi zahtevnimi občutji najdem tisto smiselno in dobro v sebi, s čimer sebe in svoje delo lahko rešim in tako vsebine posredujem naprej. Tak način razumem kot ekološki, občutljiv do okolice in navadno vključuje različna sodelovanja.

Zadnja leta so me osebni izzivi vpetosti v različne vloge (materinstvo, več pedagoškega dela) še bolj kot običajno povabili v opazovanje in poglobljanje v okolje narave. V umetnosti želim zdaj graditi tudi prostor, v katerem je možen bolj neposreden stik z gozdovi, rastlinami (*Naj kod zasadam bore*, 2021) in živalmi.

V prvi polovici 20. stoletja, recimo na slikah Giovannija Fattorija ali kipih Franceta Kralja, sta človek (kmet) in žival na isti likovni in semantični ravni. Kraljev kip na Muzejskem trgu so zaradi tega stika prepoznali celo kot izrojeno umetnost in ga uničili. Tvoje delo pa govori hkrati o razdalji in razliki, ki sta posledica industrializiranega kmetijstva, kot o bližini, ki pa ni več delovna, temveč čustvena. Kako bi opisala to iskanje stika? Kaj lahko prinese človeku, živali in nenazadnje umetnosti?

Katja: Mirnost (statičnost) in veličastnost kravjih teles me kot kiparko preseneča in navdušuje že desetletja, vedno me je zanimal stik z njimi. Večkrat sem krave doživljala kot živa kiparska telesa na travnikih. Kot otrok, rojen v sedemdesetih letih, sem bila izključno hranjena s kravjim mlekom (takrat niso preveč promovirali dojenja, v vaškem okolju pa je bilo kravje mleko neprimerno bolj cenjeno kot mlečni nadomestki za človeške dojenčke). Ob osebnih vzgibih pa se odpirajo seveda tudi vprašanja problematičnega družbenega odnosa do teh živali in kako ljudje ravnamo z njimi v okviru mlečno-mesne industrije.

H kravam zavestno pristopam kot k izredno čutečim bitjem. Ob tem se kot hči kmečko-delavskih prednikov skušam otresti pogleda na »živino« in poglobiti odnos. So neverjetno komunikativne živali, predvsem mlade telice in bikci. Zelo so radovedni, ob mojih obiskih velikokrat »pridejo pozdravit« k pašniški ograji. Če jih dovolj dolgo in mirno opazujem, rišem, fotografiram, včasih pustijo, da pridem bližje in jih pobožam.

Osnovni likovni jezik mi je v veliko oporo, ko skušam izraziti dialog, ki ga iščem in negujem ob teh načrtovanih srečanjih. Tu so odtisi bolj posredni, saj nimam namena odlivati živali, ker je ne znam vprašati, ali bi v tem procesu želela sodelovati. Vem pa, da je zame smiselno skušati vzpostavljati ta človeško-kravji, kiparsko-performativni dialog in dopustiti, da me spremeni, ter upati, da gre posledično za prispevanje k bolj občutljivemu odnosu tudi v širšem pogledu.

Pogovarjala se je dr. Vesna Krmelj



Pašnik / Pasture

Zajem slike iz videa, barvice, tempera, fotografija /
Image capture from video, tempera, photograph, 2023

OUT OF CURIOSITY. A CONVERSATION WITH KATJA AND JULIJ

Julij, in the text accompanying your sculpture *Modern Projection* (at the exhibition) you wrote that in the mid-20th century many thinkers expected that “problems of economic necessity will be practically removed” for most people (economist John M. Keynes, 1930), that in a few years “factories will be emptied and man liberated from the burden of labouring and the bondage to necessity” (philosopher Hannah Arendt, 1958), that “every individual would have the opportunity to use the power of scientific knowledge and to shape his existence on the basis of a true human sense of life” (Radovan Richta, 1965-68).

And then you continue: “From the 1980s onwards, things have turned out quite differently. The working day has not been shortened, quite the opposite. The proportion of low-paid jobs has risen, while the proportion of well-paid jobs has fallen. And control over much of technological development has become even more concentrated, both in terms of ownership and physical power, in the hands of a few.”

What do you mean by that? Are our lives not better and, globally speaking, more connected today than, say, in the 1960s or 1970s?

Julij: Certainly, if one looks at the averages in highly industrialised countries, and probably the world average in general. But comparing different historical periods statically, on an absolute scale, does not say enough. Nor does an average for a whole society. Humanity lives through time; and history, like an opaque vast current of events, is made up of a multitude of (often contradictory) undercurrents. It makes sense to take a dynamic perspective and carry out a comparison in relative terms.

Since the two late-18th-century revolutions, the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, labour efficiency has been growing continuously, in both technological and organisational terms. This means that the same amount of labour input produces more and more goods.

In the middle of the 20th century, the growth of labour productivity (which is the sum of labour efficiency and labour intensity) and the growth of labour compensation (net wages plus access to healthcare, education, and social care) were correlated – at least in highly industrialised countries. At the same time, the proportion of the poor was falling, as did economic disparities between social classes.

But, starting in the UK and the US in the 1970s, and continuing in continental Europe, Japan, and elsewhere

in the 1990s, the link between productivity growth and compensation broke down.

While productivity continues to grow steadily, more than doubling since the 1970s, purchasing power growth has lagged far behind. The proportion of the poor has increased (we are talking about Europe, the US, etc.), and the gap between the rich and the poor has widened dramatically.

This is the divergence I have depicted in the sculpture *Modern Projection*.

Keynes, Arendt, and many other mid-20th-century thinkers, who lived in a time when productivity growth and labour compensation were correlated, naturally assumed that this would continue to be the case. If this were true, their predictions for our time of a three-hour workday (no more than that needed for survival) and the liberation of work from the yoke of necessity would be logical.

But they forgot to account for **class power**. While labour productivity continues to grow, the value thereof has been flowing less and less widely through society and more and more ‘up’ to the rich and the powerful, where it accumulates in the form of concentrated control over finance, over the terms of market exchange – and consequently over state policies, working conditions, technological development, the flow of information, etc.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the American curator Helen Molesworth staged the exhibition *Work Ethic* to draw attention to the changing conditions of artistic work since the 1950s resulting from artists’ adoption of administrative capacities and managerial skills, as reflected in the preference for conceptual processes over manual production. She divided the transition into four interrelated and historically overlapping categories: the artist as manager and worker, the artist as manager alone, the artist as “experience maker”, and finally “quitting time”, where the artist is opposed to labour itself. Would you put yourself in any of these categories, or do you see a completely new approach now, one dictated by contemporary trends?

Julij: What strikes me most about the relationship between the (visual) artist and their work is the change that began, I believe, with Michelangelo and was completed in the 19th century. In the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance, a work of art was always commissioned in advance for a specific purpose, at a

pre-agreed price proportionate to the amount of labour and materials that it required. When he was older, however, Michelangelo began to make statues without a commission, motivated by a purely internal imperative. What is striking about these statues is that they are clearly a product of bold experimentation. This method – first making, then setting the price of each piece through negotiation with the buyers – gradually came to prevail by the 19th century. The price of an artwork was decoupled from the amount of invested labour and material. (Van Gogh is a well-known example: he painted according to a strong inner imperative, and despite his brother's best efforts, the paintings did not sell. Eventually, however, their valuations became astronomical). In short, it is a migration of the value of works of art: they have a fluctuating value (from zero to enormous) that is "independent" of the sum of the labour invested therein. This transition was related to, and concurrent with, another much more influential transition – the creation of securities whose price fluctuates on the financial markets according to their expected future value.

Today, this is still the prevailing mode. At the same time, the material work conditions are strongly determined by institutions such as galleries, museums, foundations, ministries, etc. In Slovenia the approach for decades has been that artists are very often not paid at all for their work by galleries, often not even for the cost of materials. Unfortunately, we hear about these problems in many parts of the world. So, the artist, through an inner imperative, makes a multifaceted and precarious work "on credit", the price of which is then dictated by institutions, investors, and fans (often zero, sometimes gargantuan).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, artists in Western Europe and the US sought to upend this framework by occupying galleries and museums. They attempted to gain collective control over the conditions of their work and to connect directly with the public as autonomous creators. (They failed.)

The thing that persistently shines through this morass of art valuation is the belief in its potential to transcend: to reach beyond the contemporary norms of useful labour, beyond the established self-evidence of perception, beyond the horizon of one's era. And this requires a capacity for self-sufficiency – which in turn requires autonomy.

For some time now, both of you have also been deeply involved in education, including with the creation of the successful Art School at the Nova Gorica City Gallery in 2016 together with sculptor Anja Kranjc and the Nova Gorica Cultural Centre. What do you

think is important today in teaching visual language and, in general, teaching generations overloaded with information?

Julij: The most important quality of a teacher, of a mentor, is that she or he is imbued with a lively curiosity. This is the best invitation to the landscapes of knowledge. A lively curiosity, however, needs two other things on the path to knowledge: the capacity for focused attention, and plenty of space for autonomous pursuit.

The model of education that still strongly dominates primary and secondary schools dates back to the late 18th and 19th centuries. It developed in parallel with factories. The first universal compulsory education was introduced in Prussia, at the same time as the Industrial Revolution began in England. Both processes shared the same principle of subordinating a mass of human beings to a single order (which is also the principle inherent in the army and prisons). Throughout the 20th century, educational practices became less violent, but what has remained unchanged since the 19th century is the approach of the teacher as one who directs a small group of students. He or she stands between students and knowledge like a gatekeeper, stuffing them with morsels of knowledge according to a preconceived order and taming any impulse towards autonomous curiosity.

General education is, of course, an invaluable asset. But that does not mean that just any model of education is good enough.

I experienced the problem of teacher as gatekeeper strongly throughout my own school years. It was not until I came across certain insights in Jacques Rancier's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* that I could articulate it clearly: there is a clear difference between training for directed attention and clearing the way for a lively curiosity. The dominant model, however, does not detect this difference. It is as if learning and training for attention are the same thing. This fallacy kills lively curiosity.

But lively curiosity and the capacity for autonomous action are key to tackling challenges where meaningful goals have yet to be defined. This is particularly relevant today, when the principal (economic) challenge is to co-determine how to channel *accumulated productive forces* towards meaningful, non-self-destructive goals. It is a challenge akin to channelling the surplus strength of a wild bull.

Katja, you have long been turning to nature in your work. Not only do you draw inspiration from it and place yourself in it, but in your own ecologically conscious way you also tackle pollution, especially

in terms of interrelationships, not only between people but also with the plant and animal worlds. In this respect, it seems that, unlike in the postmodern phenomenon of the animal in art, you are primarily interested in the art of contact with the animal. Performance and dance are perhaps your most direct interventions into co-existence with the other, and as the old wisdom goes: rather than changing the world, change how you feel about it and the world will change. How does your experience in performance influence your approach to and connection with animals, and how do they both affect sculpture?

Katja: I entered into performance through *butoh* dance and I perceive it as the awake presence of the creator, who, with a certain story and intention, and with full awareness, establishes a flow of action where the audience is very much invited to co-create it. I have sought to create this dimension of direct presence and duration in sculpture, initially through memory and by using various materials. The sculptural imprint (of the body) allowed me to express more clearly the atmosphere that can be achieved through performance. I started to build a space for the body through fragmentary prints, first of my own body and then in collaboration with others. The thin, deliberately fragmented paper prints of bodies can be supplemented by the viewer's own perception (the performance effect).

For me, an environmentally sensitive performance (or a sculpture) is one which the creator, in pursuing the goal (be it a performance, a sculpture, or a drawing), fine-tunes and finalises in his or her mind to the extent that he or she then creates authentic and universal content that can open up different perspectives, and along the way does not injure the self, the other, or the environment, but on the contrary, allows for healing. In my way of creating, I have therefore sometimes had to wait a long time to build up good experiences and circumstances to then dare go in a direction that requires specific courage from me. I have learnt that fear and other uncomfortable feelings when doing creative work are (nothing more than) indicators of what it is that I must outgrow next, and in doing so, to find underneath these challenging feelings that which is meaningful and good in myself, which I can use to save myself and my work, and thus pass on. I see this as the ecological way, a way that is sensitive to the environment and usually involves various collaborations.

In recent years, the personal challenges of being involved in different roles (motherhood, more teaching work) have invited me to observe and immerse myself in the natural environment even more than usual. In art, I now also want to build a space in which more direct contact with forests, plants, and animals is possible (such as in *Shall I Plant Some Pine Trees There*, 2021).

In the first half of the 20th century, for example in the paintings of Giovanni Fattori or the sculptures of France Kralj, man (farmer) and animal are on the same visual and semantic level. Kralj's statue in Museum Square was even designated as degenerate art and destroyed because of such a connection. Your work, on the other hand, speaks of both the distance and the difference resulting from industrialised agriculture – rather than of a closeness – that no longer has to do with labour but is instead emotional. How would you describe this search for connection? What can it bring to people, animals – and art?

Katja: The stillness (motionlessness) and majesty of cow bodies has surprised and fascinated me as a sculptor for decades and I have always been interested in having a connection with them. I have often experienced cows as living sculptural bodies in meadows. As a child born in the 1970s, I was fed exclusively cow's milk (breastfeeding was not much promoted at that time, and in the village environment cow's milk was infinitely more valued for human babies than formula). Alongside personal motivations, there are of course also questions about the problematic social relationship with these animals and how we humans treat them in the context of the dairy and meat industry.

I consciously approach cows as highly sentient beings. As the daughter of ancestors who were farmers and workers, I try to shake off the "cattle" view of cows and deepen my relationship with these animals. They are incredibly communicative, especially the young heifers and bulls. They are very curious, often coming to say hello along the pasture fence when I visit. If I watch them long enough and calmly, drawing, taking photographs, they sometimes let me come closer and pet them.

The basic visual language is a great help to me when I try to express the dialogue that I seek and nurture in these planned encounters. Here the imprints are more indirect: I have no intention of making a cast of the animal, because I don't know how to ask it if it would like to participate in this process. But I do know that for me it is meaningful to try to establish this human-cow, sculptural-performative dialogue and allow it to change me, and to hope that this is a contribution to a more sensitive relationship between humans and animals in the broader sense.

Conversation led by Vesna Krmelj, PhD

Desno / right:
Zgodovinsko razvejišče & njegove silnice /
Historic Crossroad & its Force Fields
2023, talna postavitev / send floor layout,
300 cm x 200 cm x 20 cm



soDLOČANJE / nakopičene proizvodne sile

coDECISION / Accumulated Productive Forces

MODERNA / množična proizvodnja & hierarhične množične institucije

MODERN / Mass Production & Mass Hierarchical Institutions



ZEMLJIŠKO GOSPOSTVO / kmetijstvo, delitev dela, nadzor

LANDLORDSHIP / Agriculture, Tasks-division & Land Control

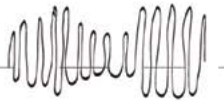
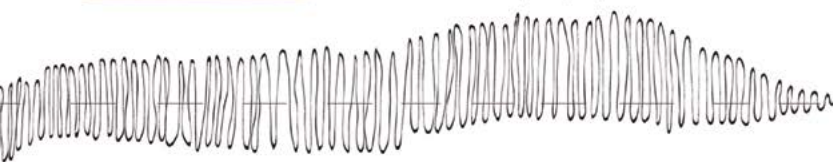
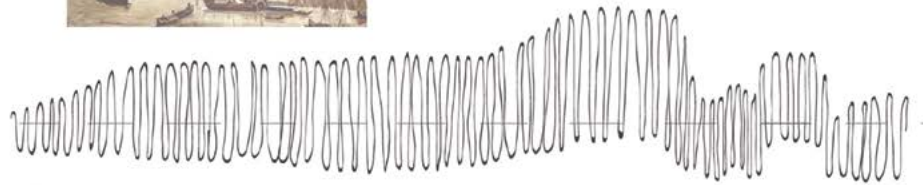
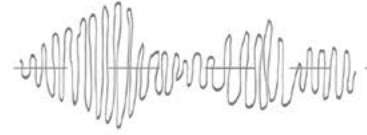


40 000 pr.n.š./bc

10 000 pr.n.š./bc

Fazni prehodi 2D – dolgi rok / Phase Transition 2D – Long-term

tisk na papir / print on paper, 2023



Neofeudalism

udomačitev ognja, izpopolnitev orodij, vznik umetnosti

Domestication of Fire, Sophistication of Tools & ART

13. st./13th c

19. st./19th c

20. st./20th c

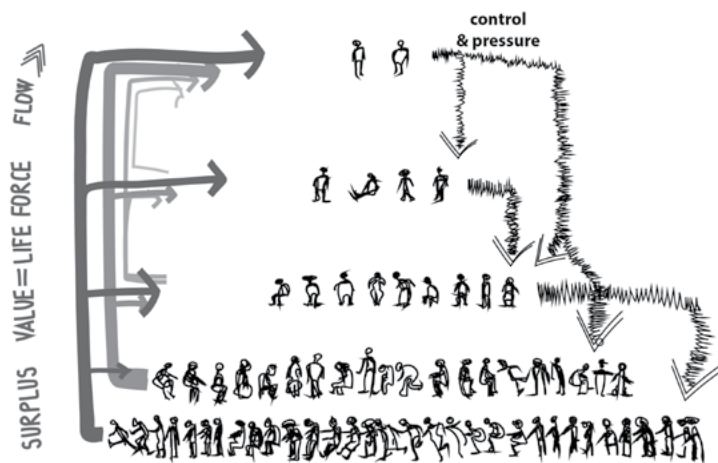
21. st./21th c



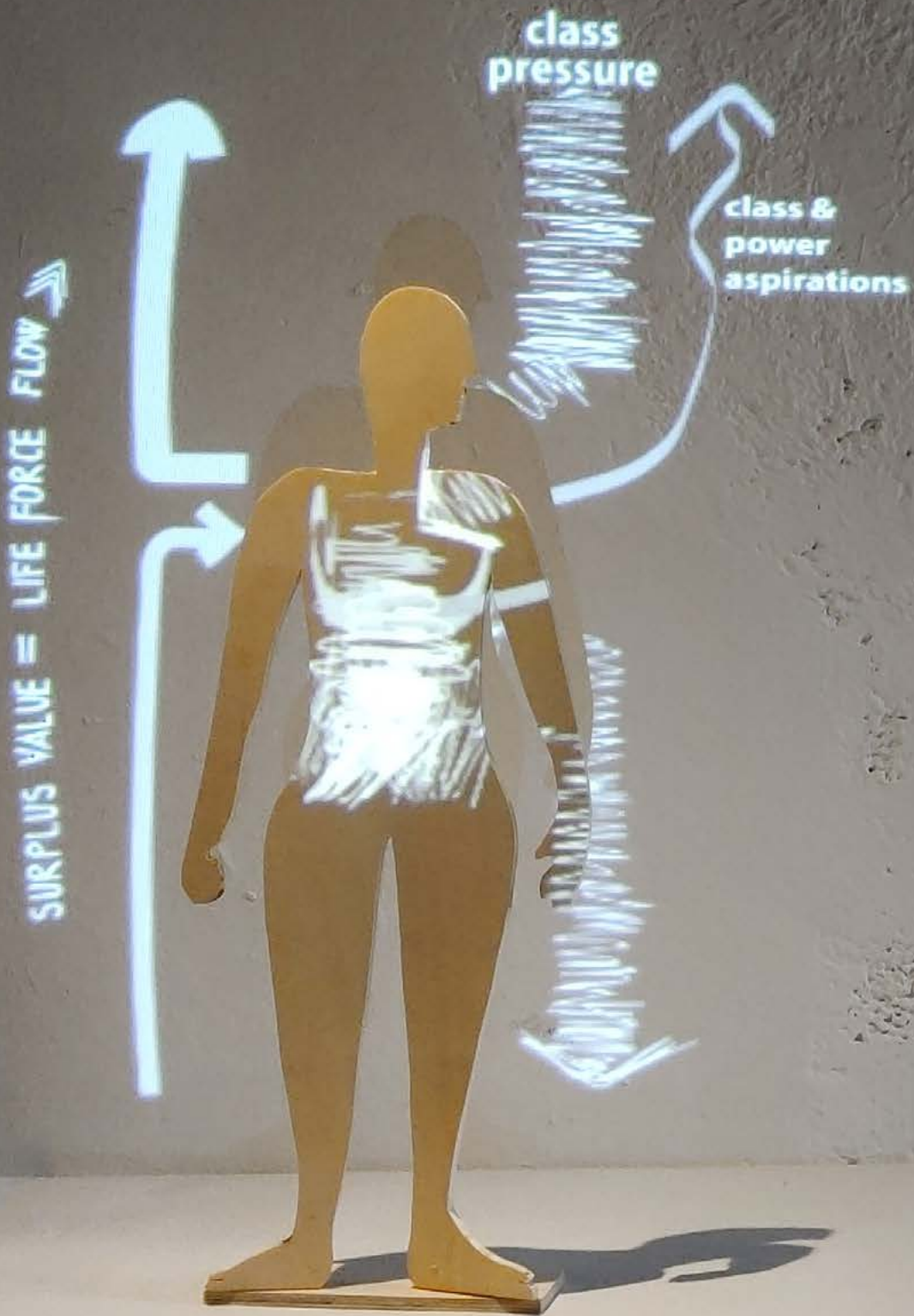
Fazni prehodi 3D - od 1320 do danes / Phase Transition 3D - from 1320 to the present
2022, karton in vrvi / cardboard and strings, 500 cm x 180 cm x 40 cm



Brezrazreden tok presežne vrednosti / Classless Surplus value Stream
skica / sketch

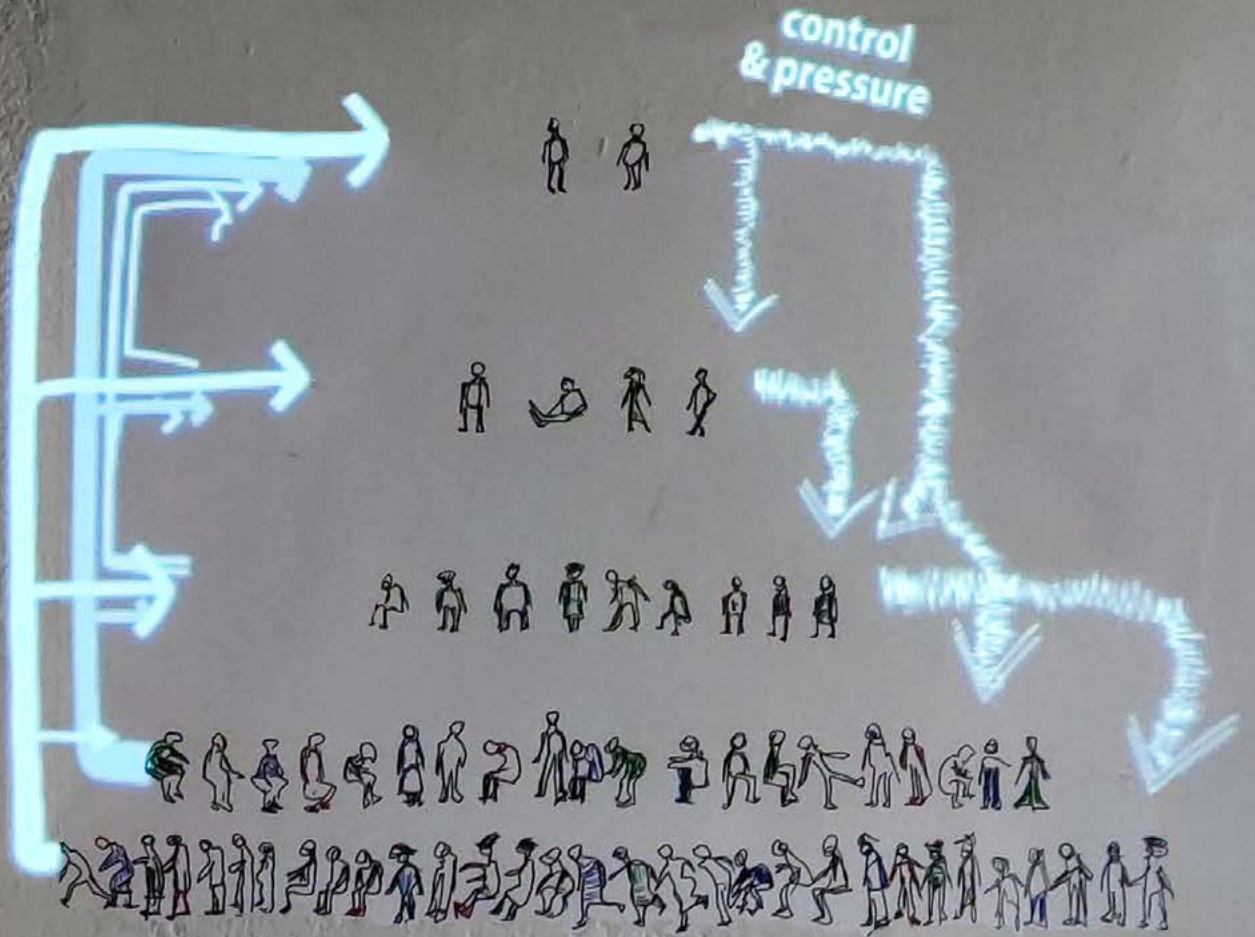


Razred & tok presežne vrednosti / Class & Surplus value Stream
skica / sketch

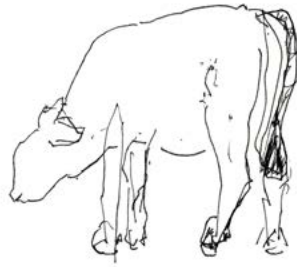
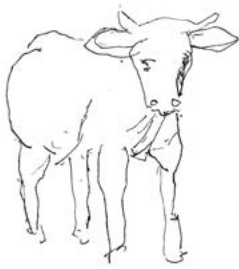


Razred & tok presežne vrednosti /
Class & Surplus value Stream
prostorska postavitve / spatial layout,
175 cm x 400 cm

SURPLUS VALUE = LIFE FORCE FLOW







Telesa / Bodies,
Risba, glina / drawing, clay, 2023

J U L I J B O R Š T N I K

Julij Borštnik (1977, Ljubljana) je leta 2001 vpisal kiparstvo na Akademiji za likovno umetnost in oblikovanje v Ljubljani. Leta 2005 je prejel mednarodno nagrado za umetnike ESSL Award. Leta 2006 je prejel študentsko Prešernovo nagrado ter sodeloval na Trienalu sodobne slovenske umetnosti U3. Študij kiparstva je zaključil leta 2007. Leta 2008 je vpisal diplomski študij filozofije, ki ga v sodelovanju z Univerzo v Novi Gorici izvaja Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU.

Že med študijem kiparstva je jasno nakazal povezanost svoje umetniške prakse z intenzivnim proučevanjem teorije. V svojih delih artikulira logiko prevladujočih ekonomskih procesov ter principe vstopanja sprememb v družbeno stvarnost s ciljem osvetliti logiko in maneverski potencial prelomnega obdobja, v katerem smo se znašli. Deluje skozi medije kiparstva, postavitve v prostor, vizualnih 2D in 3D konceptualnih shem, dokumentarnega filma, videa, animacije in ilustriranega performansa.

V letih od 2003 do 2011 se je aktivno pridružil pionirskemu projektu ustanavljanja mednarodnega rezidenčnega umetniškega centra Art središče na Goričkem. Leta 2016 je skupaj s kiparkama Katjo Oblak in Anjo Kranjc ter v sodelovanju s Kulturnim domom Nova Gorica ustanovil Likovno šolo v Mestni galeriji Nova Gorica, v kateri deluje kot mentor. Od leta 2011 poučuje tudi v LICE Galerije Miklova hiša v Ribnici.

Zadnja leta se je predstavil na samostojnih razstavah *Fazni prehod (1)* v Galeriji Miklova hiša (Ribnica 2022), *Narava & jaz* v Galeriji Srečišče (Ljubljana 2020, v sodelovanju s Katjo Oblak), *Osnovni gradniki logike (1)* v Galeriji Alkatraz (Ljubljana 2019), *Dva preloma: renesančni in moderni* v Galeriji Vipavski Križ (2019), *Prerod* v Galeriji Kemijskega inštituta (Ljubljana 2018, skupna razstava s Katjo Oblak) in drugih.

V Galeriji Miklova hiša v Ribnici od 2022 izvaja delavnice za dijake na temo aktualnih razstav. V letih 2022 in 2023 je bil soavtor in koordinator projekta obveščanja o stanju delovnih pogojev, ki so ga izvedli društvo Stvarnost, Delavska svetovalnica, Gibanje za dostojno delo in socialno družbo ter Radio Študent.

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Julij Borštnik (1977, Ljubljana) enrolled in sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana in 2001. He received the ESSL Award, an international prize for artists, in 2005 and the Student Prešeren Prize in 2006, when he also participated in the U3 Triennial of Contemporary Slovenian Art. In 2008, he enrolled in postgraduate studies in philosophy at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, conducted in cooperation with the University of Nova Gorica.

During the course of his sculpture studies, a clear connection emerged between his artistic practice and his intensive study of theory. His works articulate the logic of the prevailing economic processes and the principles of change entering social reality. His aim is to illuminate the logic and the potential of the disruptive period in which we find ourselves.

He works in sculpture, spatial installations, visual 2D and 3D conceptual schemes, documentary, video, animation, and illustrated performance.

From 2003 to 2011, he was actively involved in a pioneering project that led to the creation of an international residential art centre, the Goričko Art Centre. In 2016, together with sculptors Katja Oblak and Anja Kranjc and in cooperation with the Nova Gorica Cultural Centre, he founded the Art School at the Nova Gorica City Gallery, where he works as a mentor. Since 2011 he has also been teaching at the Mikl House Gallery's Centre for Fine Arts Education in Ribnica.

In recent years, his solo exhibitions have included *Phase Transition (1)* at Mikl House Gallery in Ribnica (2022), *Nature & Me* (in collaboration with Katja Oblak) at Srečišče Gallery in Ljubljana (2020), *Basic Bricks of Logic (1)* at Alkatraz Gallery in Ljubljana (2019), *The 2 Breaks: Renaissance and Modern* at the Vipavski Križ Gallery (2019), and *Rebirth* (a joint exhibition with Katja Oblak) at the Gallery of the Chemistry Institute in Ljubljana (2018).

He has been mentoring workshops for students at the Mikl House Gallery since 2022. That same year and in 2023, he was a co-author and coordinator of a project raising awareness of work conditions carried out by the Creativity Association, the Workers' Advisory Service, the Movement for Decent Work and a Social Society, and Radio Študent.

More at julijborstnik.eu.
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KATJA OBLAK

Katja Oblak (1975, Ljubljana) je leta 2008 diplomirala na Akademiji za likovno umetnost in oblikovanje v Ljubljani, smer kiparstvo, pri prof. Matjažu Počivavšku in docentu Jiřiju Koćici. Raziskovanje v polju kiparstva posveća telesu in percepciji le-tega v sodobnem prostoru, odnosu do drugih (teles) in odnosu do narave.

V svojih projektih obićajno išće vsebinam ustrezna (prostorska, ćustvena, medsebojna) vzdušja ali razpoloženja, ki jih izvede s prostorskimi postavitvami. Materiali, ki jih pri delu uporablja in so ji blizu, so predvsem papir, glina in kamen, poleg kiparstva v klasićnih materialih pa tudi video, grafika, umetniški performans in poezija. Pri svojih ambientalnih postavitvah pogosto sodeluje z drugimi ustvarjalci z različnih področij umetnosti in znanosti. Zadnja leta pri svojem delu vse bolj prehaja k telesom v naravi, kot na primer na razstavi *Naj kod zasadić bore* (2021).

Med drugimi se je v zadnjih letih samostojno predstavila v galerijah: Galerija Veselov vrt (Ljubljana 2021, skupaj s plesalko in koreografino Julijo Pećnikar), Razstava na prostem v okviru festivala Bućno (Lesno Brdo 2018, skupaj z J. Boršćnikom), Galerija Kemijskega inštituta (Ljubljana 2018, skupaj z J. Boršćnikom), Savinov likovni salon (Źalec 2016, skupaj s slikarjem V. Omanom), Kibela (Maribor 2015, skupaj s plesalcem in koreografom R. Fukuharo), Galerija Srećišće (Ljubljana 2015, skupaj z R. Fukuharo), Galerija BoŹidar Jakac (Kostanjevica na Krki 2014), Galerija Schlifmühlgasse 12-14 (Dunaj 2013) itn. ter na mnogih skupinskih razstavah in performansih: Galerija Srećišće (Ljubljana 2023), Vetrijski dvor (Maribor 2021), Dvorec Novo Celje (Źalec 2017), Mestna galerija (Ljubljana 2016), Mestna galerija (Piran 2016), Galerija Velenje (2015), Galerija Schlifmühlgasse 12-14 (Dunaj 2014), Galerija LoŹa (Koper 2014), Galerija Rika Debenjaka (Kanal 2014) itn. Posveća se tudi ućenju na področju kiparstva in vizualnih umetnosti. Med drugim je nosilka predmeta Visual arts na mednarodni srednji šoli Vector International Academy v Ljubljani.

Za svoje delo je prejela več priznanj. Od leta 2009 deluje kot samozaposlena na področju kulture. Razstavlja in izvaja performanse doma in v tujini.

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Katja Oblak (1975, Ljubljana) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana in 2008, majoring in sculpture under professor MatjaŹ Poćivavšek and associate professor Jiř Koćica.

Her research in the field of sculpture focuses on the body and the perception of the body in contemporary space, its relationship to other (bodies), and its relationship to nature. In her projects, she usually searches for atmospheres or moods (spatial, emotional, mutual) that are appropriate to the subject matter, which she implements through spatial installations. The materials she uses and which are close to her heart are mainly paper, clay, and stone. In addition to sculpting using traditional materials, she also works in video, printmaking, performance art, and poetry. In her ambient installations she often collaborates with other artists from different fields of art and science. Her work has recently increasingly turned to bodies in nature, for example in the exhibition *Shall I Plant Some Pine Trees There* (2021).

In recent years she has presented her work solo at various venues, including Veselov Vrt Gallery in Ljubljana (2021, together with dancer and choreographer Julia Pećnikar), an outdoor exhibition at the Bućno Festival in Lesno Brdo (2018, together with J. Boršćnik), KI Gallery in Ljubljana (2018, together with J. Boršćnik), Savin's Art Salon in Źalec (2016, together with the painter V. Oman), Kibela in Maribor (2015, together with the dancer and choreographer Ryuzo Fukuhara), Srećišće Gallery in Ljubljana (2015, together with R. Fukuhara), BoŹidar Jakac Gallery in Kostanjevica na Krki (2014), and Schlifmühlgasse 12-14 in Vienna (2013). She has also been part of group exhibitions at Srećišće in Ljubljana (2023), Vetrijski Dvor in Maribor (2021), Novo Celje Mansion in Źalec (2017), Ljubljana City Gallery (2016), Piran City Gallery (2016), Velenje Gallery (2015), Schlifmühlgasse 12-14 (2014), LoŹa Gallery in Koper (2014), Riko Debenjak Gallery in Kanal (2014), and others.

Katja also teaches sculpture and visual arts, including as visual arts chair at the Vector International Academy in Ljubljana.

A freelance cultural worker since 2009, she exhibits and performs in Slovenia and abroad and has received several awards for her work.

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NOVA GORICA

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URNIK:

od ponedeljka do petka od 9. do 13. ure in od 15. do 19. ure

Ob sobotah od 9. do 12. ure.

Ob nedeljah in praznikih zaprto.