

antonia  
majača

ispunjeno  
odsutnim  
filled with  
the absent



Oči su organski uzori filozofije - njihova zagonetka je da one ne samo da mogu gledati, nego su također u stanju sebe gledati prilikom gledanja... Dobar dio filozofijskog mišljenja zapravo je tek refleksija oka, dijalektika oka, gledanje-sebe-gledanja. Za to su potrebni reflektirajući mediji, zrcalo, površine vode, metali i druge oči, kroz koje biva vidljivim gledanje gledanja.

Peter Sloterdijk, *Kritika ciničnog uma*



The eyes are the organic prototype of philosophy. Their enigma is that they not only can see but are also able to see themselves seeing... A good part of philosophical thinking is actually eye reflex, eye dialectic, seeing-oneself-see. For this, reflecting media, mirrors, water surfaces, metals, and other eyes are necessary, through which the seeing of seeing becomes visible.

Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*

Razmišljajući o umjetniku, kustosu i kritičaru Antun Maračiću, isprva mi se nametnulo pitanje mogućnosti suverenog razmatranja stvaralaštva umjetnika koji svoje djelo uvjerljivo najjasnije sam opisuje i razjašnjava, evocirajući time u nas možda jedino osobenu pojavu Dimitrija Bašičevića Mangelosa.

Antun Maračić danas, nakon angažiranog dugogodišnjeg vođenja galerija *Prošireni mediji* i *Zvonimir* te kratkog, ali jednako dojmljivog djelovanja u Galeriji *Studentskog centra*, već četvrtu godinu uspješno vodi Umjetničku galeriju Dubrovnik. Umjetničko-kustosko-kritičarska konstelacija ipak je zasebna tema koju ćemo ovoga puta ostaviti po strani. Pokušat ćemo raščlaniti, ili bolje - sintetizirati, djela umjetnika izrazito snažna habitusa, autentične, samodosljedne i posve artikulirane umjetničke putanje.

Upravo je s Dubrovnikom Maračić već godinama snažno povezan i, sasvim sigurno, to je, pored Zagreba i Nove Gradiške, treći grad u svojevrsnom trolistu njegova opusa. Umjetnik je s ovim gradovima sustavno u dosluhu njegovanjem rubova njihove pojavnosti, koncentriranim uhođenjem nečega čega zapravo nema, što, neprisutno u obzoru, komunicira rječitije od konkretnog sadržaja koji izostaje. I uistinu su, kako je kritika već zabilježila, a sam umjetnik višestruko potvrdio vlastitim tekstovima, Odsutnost i Praznina nedvojbeno osovina njegova umjetničkog djela te ujedno i njegovo neosporno ontološko izvorište. Žarište Maračićeva koordinatnog sustava je Nepostojanje, odsustvo sadržaja kojemu umjetnik uvijek odijeva (prisvaja) drugo, nerijetko "rabljeno" ruho.

Tijekom gotovo tri desetljeća Maračić u svakoj fazi svoga djelovanja ostaje nepoko-

While reflecting upon Antun Maračić as artist, curator, and critic, I was at first confronted with the question whether it is at all possible to consider relevantly the opus of an artist who has most convincingly described and explained his own work by evoking the perhaps only extraordinary personality in this region, namely Dimitrije Bašičević Mangelos.

After he actively managed the *Prošireni mediji* and *Zvonimir* galleries for many years, as well as contributed briefly, but equally significantly to the activity of the gallery at *Studentski centar*, Antun Maračić is today director of the Art Gallery Dubrovnik and has occupied that office for the past four years. His singular combination of being artist, curator, and critic in one person is, however, a topic that deserves separate treatment. My aim is here to analyse, or rather synthesise, the work of this artist with an extremely powerful habitus and an authentic, consistent, and perfectly articulate artistic career.

It is precisely Dubrovnik that Maračić has been linked with for many years and it is, besides Zagreb and Nova Gradiška, the third city in a sort of triangle of his opus. The artist has been conspiring with these three cities by cultivating the margins of their appearance, by spying attentively upon something that is not really there, that is absent in their horizons, but speaks out more eloquently than the actual content that is missing. Indeed, as critics have noted before and the artist himself confirmed a number of times in his texts, the Absence and the Void represent the unambiguous axis of his artistic work and at the same time its undeniable ontological source. The focus of Maračić's system of

1. A. Maračić, iz ciklusa Lokrum / from the cycle Lokrum, prosinac-travanj / December-April 2000-2004





2. A. Maračić, *Iščezli sadržaj / A Vanished Content*, iz ciklusa *Ispražnjeni okviri/iščezli sadržaji / from the cycle Emptied Frames/Vanished Contents*, 1991-1994

3. A. Maračić, *Ispražnjeni okvir / An Emptied Frame*, iz ciklusa *Ispražnjeni okviri/iščezli sadržaji / from the cycle Emptied Frames/Vanished Contents*, 1991-1994

lebljivo vezan uz odabrane konstante - teme, interese, sredstva i metode - opetovano se potvrđujući zadržavanjem umjetničke dikcije, besprijeckorno koherentne, spontane, ali precizno definirane.

Već jednostavnim nabranjem naslova njegovih radova - ciklusa (*Ispražnjeni okviri, Iščezli sadržaji, Ispražnjene zlatarne, Usvojene slike, L'art en passant, No grad i njegov subrealizam, Usput spomenici...*) odaje se njihova pritiješnjost jednih uz druge, kao i zajednička im tendencija sublimnog iskliznuća iz realnog. U tim su naslovima imanentno zgusnuti čvrsti zajednički nazivnici autorova djela.

Počeci Maračićeva stvaranja obilježeni su nasljedovanjem konceptualne umjetnosti sedamdesetih, nerijetko uz naglašen element geste. U doba tzv. analitičkog slikarstva, kada se događa i jedna od najranijih autorovih slikarskih izložbi (s kolegama s Akademije i iz kulturnog *Poodruma*, Marijanom Molnarom i Željkom Kipkeom), već su uspostavljene neke premise koje imaju adhezivnu ulogu u sagledavanju cjelokupna opusa: ogoljavanje i demistifikacija umjetničkog čina, procesualnost, sukcesivnost, anti-artificijelnost, snažan faktor oduđenja te konačno - kasnije raslojen i fiziomorfološki elaboriran - element odsutnosti sadržaja koji se u ranim slikarskim radovima oslanja na tradiciju minimalizma.

Govoreći tako o *Slici u sedam dana*, autor 1976. godine objašnjava svoj postu-

coordinates is Non-existence, the absence of content, which the artist always invests with (attaches to it) other, often "second-hand" garments.

During the almost three decades of his activity, Maračić has in each of his phases remained resolutely bound to certain constant factors - topics, interests, means, and methods - repeatedly asserting himself by retaining his artistic diction, which is faultlessly coherent, spontaneous, and yet precisely defined.

The mere list of titles he gave to his pieces/cycles (*Emptied Frames, Vanished Contents, Emptied Jewellery Stores, Appropriated Images, L'art en passant, No Grad and Its Subrealism, Roadside Monuments...*) reveals how closely they are pressed together, as well as their common tendency to slip out sublimely from the reality. In these titles, the solid common denominators of author's work are immanently condensed.

The beginnings of Maračić's artistic activity were marked by the influence of the conceptual art of the 70s, often including an accentuated element of gesture. At the time of the so-called analytic painting, when one of his earliest exhibitions took place (together with his colleagues from the Academy and from the legendary *Poodrum*, Marijan Molnar and Željko Kipke), certain premises were established that play the adhesive role in surveying his opus in its entirety: stripping bare and demystification of the artistic act, the processuality, successiveness, anti-artificiality, a powerful surprise factor, and finally - later dissected and physically-morphologically elaborated - the element of absence of content, which in his early paintings builds upon the tradition of minimalism.

Speaking about his *Painting in the Seven Days of 1976*, the author explained his artistic procedure, which also reveals the character of the ready object, the painting: "The format of the canvas is horizontally divided into seven sections. On the first day, I cover the entire canvas with a transparent layer of white; on the second day, I skip the first section of the canvas, which contains my signature and the date; I cover the rest of the canvas with another transparent layer of white. Then I put my signature and the date on the segment that I have assigned to that day. I repeat this process until the end. Each segment has one more layer of white, which is visually

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A. M. IŠČEZLI SADRŽAJ, 1991-1994. Metakela 42, 22x26

pak u kojem istovremeno leži i značenje završenog objekta slike: *"Format platna horizontalno je podijeljen u sedam dijelova. Prvog dana čitavo platno pokrивam lazurnim slojem bijele boje; drugog dana izuzimam prvi dio platna koji je potpisan i datiran, a ostatak platna prekrивam drugim lazurnim bijelim slojem. Segment određen za taj dan također potpisujem i datiram. Isti proces nastavljам do kraja. Svaki sljedeći segment ima jedan bijeli sloj više, što je vizualno čitljivo. Svakodnevnu akciju ispunjavanja date površine potpisujem jer je smatram samostalnim činom."*<sup>1</sup>

Riječ je o čvrstom formalizmu uz imenovanje samog postupka i njegovu osviještenu demistifikaciju uz jednostavno "konstatiranje činjeničnosti dvodimenzionalne slikane površine".<sup>2</sup> Prisjećajući se minimalističkog slikarstva, mogli bismo ustvrditi da je Maračić možda najbliži krugu oko Marka Rhotka. Bliskost ontološkim dvojabama, egzistencijalističkoj krizi, najrazvidnija je u Rhotkovo izjavi kako svojim slikama ne izražava sebe, nego svoje ne-biće, a čije su prazne slike istovremeno tumačene kao *"pasionirana stanja otkrića da se jeste"*.<sup>3</sup>

Sukcesivnost, posvećenost, odustajanje od ikonografije, markiranje i legitimiranje svakog segmenta umjetničkog procesa svojim potpisom neizmjereno su važni elementi matrice koju redovito detektiramo i u Maračićevim recentnijim radovima. Ishodište pridavanja značenja legitimizacijom umjetničkoga potpisa nalazimo u tradiciji ready-made, model čije primjene Maračić izmješta konfiguracijom osobnih interesa i autentičnih prijenosa značenja. Potpisom ponekad ironično manipulira, koristeći naprosto mogućnost da kao umjetnik bude arbitar važnih pojava, da marginalnom, neprimjetnom i usputnom prida važnost ili ga osvijesti. Druga je najčešća, jednako tako minimalistička, tekstualna komponenta datacija. Pored grafizma vlastita imena, ona je isto tako čvrsta i relevantna oznaka realnog i općepriznatog sustava mjerenja vremena. No paradoksalno, istodobno je i provizorna, anonimna te katkad zadobiva ironijsku kvalitetu kao i umjetnikov potpis.

Takav postupak eksplicitno nalazimo u ciklusu *Ispražnjeni okviri/Iščežli sadržaji*, potom i u citatnosti *Usvojenih slika* te konačno u *Lokrumu* koji, posve različit po senzibilitetu, jedini ima istinski ključ sačuvan u dnevničkoj formi.

Tekstualnost, makar bila svedena na samo dva elementa koja umjetnik koristi,

*readable. I sign each day the surface that has been filled, because I consider this a separate act."*<sup>1</sup>

What we encounter here is solid formalism along with the identification of the very act, its conscious demystification through simple "observation of the factual two-dimensionality of the painted surface."<sup>2</sup> Recalling the painting of minimalism, we can observe that Maračić perhaps comes closest to the circle around Mark Rhotko. Tendency towards ontological doubts and existentialist crises is particularly manifest in Rhotko's statement that his paintings express his non-being rather than himself, as well as in the fact that his empty paintings have been interpreted as *"passionate states of discovering of being"*.<sup>3</sup>

Successiveness, dedication, renunciation of iconography, marking and legitimizing each segment of the process of artistic creation by his signature - these are extremely important elements of the matrix that we can regularly detect in Maračić's recent pieces. We find the source of attaching meaning to works of art by legitimizing them with artistic signature in the tradition of ready-made, but Maračić modifies the applications of this model by configuring his personal interests and authentic transfers of meaning. At times, he ironically manipulates his signature, simply using the possibility given to the artist to act as an arbiter in important moments, to give reality or

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<sup>1</sup> BORO IVANDIĆ, Radni stav, u povodu izložbe Ž. Kipkea, M. Molnara i A. Maračića u zagrebačkoj Galeriji Nova, u: *OKO*, 1979.

<sup>2</sup> isto

<sup>3</sup> HAROLD ROSENBERG, *Ogledi o američkoj posleratnoj umetnosti*, Novi Sad, 1997., 166.

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<sup>1</sup> BORO IVANDIĆ, Radni stav [Working attitude], at the occasion of the exhibition by Ž. Kipke, M. Molnar, and A. Maračić at the Nova Gallery, Zagreb, in: *OKO*, 1979.

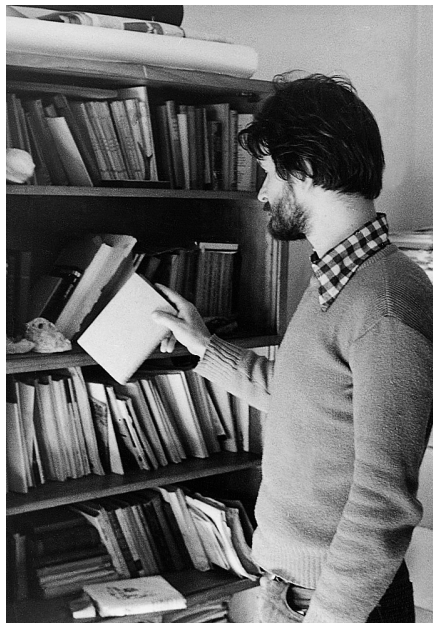
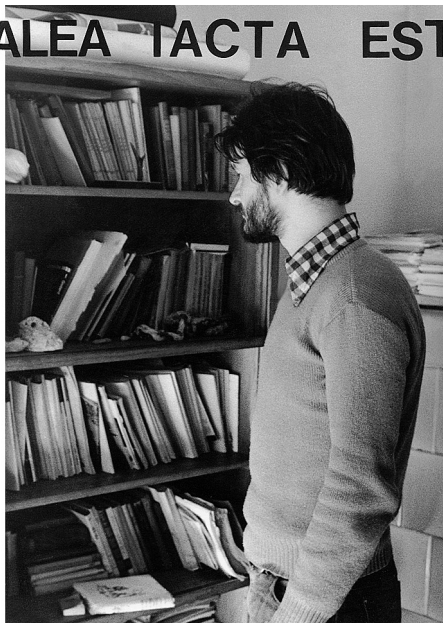
<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>3</sup> HAROLD ROSENBERG, *Ogledi o američkoj posleratnoj umetnosti* [Essays on Postwar American Art], Novi Sad, 1997, 166.





# ALEA IACTA EST



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proširena u vidu doslovnog citata ili kratkog teksta koji prati fotografiju (i uvijek predstavlja legendu), naputak je kako čitati figuralnost prikaza. U povezivanju tekstualnog i slikovnog materijala, odnosno u njihovu jednakovrijednom odnosu, nalazi se sjecište umjetnikove semiotike - to je uzorak kojim se vrši čin opovještivanja odabrane (bez)sadržajnosti.

Ukoliko bismo po dijakronijskom načelu nastojali objediniti i imenovati krugove Maračićeva djela, najrazvidnije bi se ukazale tri faze (pri čemu opet *Lokrum* ima zasebno mjesto). Prvu predstavlja rano analitičko slikarstvo, fotografska dokumentacija akcija i performansa s kraja sedamdesetih i početka osamdesetih. U tom razdoblju, koje počiva na jakoj konceptualnoj osnovi i izravno se nadovezuje na umjetnost prve polovice sedamdesetih, stalno je prisutno odustajanje od ikonografije. Takav postupak svoj pandan i prefiguraciju nalazi u odsutnosti sadržaja kod recentni(ji)h fotografskih ciklusa. Godine 1980. Maračić izlaže fotografsku dokumentaciju koja je svojevrsni manifest pridavanja važnosti banalnom, usputnom, neprimijećenom i u kojem su fotografije naprosto materijalni ostatak radnji kojih je - što nam se čini presudnim - autor sâm akter. U ciklusu fotografija dokumentiranih akcija duhovita, znakovita naslova *Alea Iacta Est*, kamerom bilježi manifestacije apsurdnih, egzistencijalistički obojenih pitanja koje si postavlja. Tako u

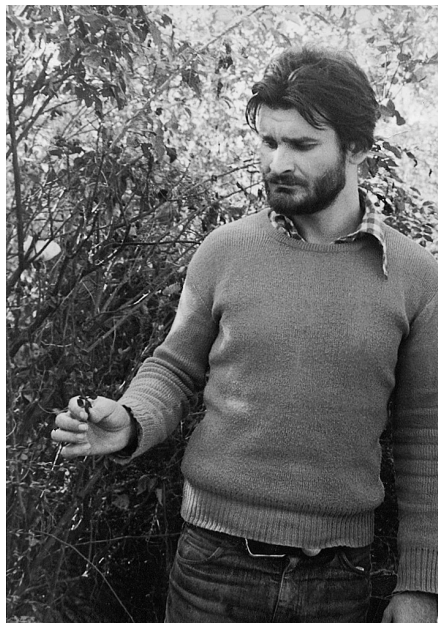
meaning to something marginal, inconspicuous, or ephemeral. The second frequent and equally minimalist textual component is the dating. Beside the graphism of his name, the date is just as solid and relevant indication of the real and generally accepted system of measuring time. Paradoxically, it is at the same time provisory and anonymous, sometimes adopting an ironic quality, similar to the artist's signature.

This procedure is explicitly present in the cycle entitled *Emptied Frames/Vanished Contents*, as well as in the quotational character of the *Appropriated Images*, and finally in *Lokrum*, which is entirely different in its sensibility and alone contains the true key in its diary form.

Textuality, be it reduced by the artist to only two elements, expanded through a literal quotation, or in form of a short text associated with a photo (always as its annotation), instructs us how to interpret the figurality of presentation. The combination of text and image, that is, their equivalence, is the crucial point of Maračić's semiotics - it is the pattern by which the chosen content(-lessness) is given a historical dimension.

If we made an attempt to classify and name Maračić's cycles according to the diachronic principle, we might end up with three evident phases (*Lokrum* retaining a place apart). The first is his early analytic painting, photo-documentation of actions

4-5. A. Maračić, *Alea Iacta Est*, fotodokumentacija performansa / photo-documentation of the performance, 1980



parovima fotografija pratimo trenutak odluka kao što su: slomiti grančicu drveta ili ne, uzeti ili ne uzeti knjigu s police te, možda najradikalnije, ustati ili ostati u krevetu... Prozaični prizori banalnih odluka otežani su sudbinskim, i to upravo tekstualnim, naglaskom sadržanim u čuvenoj rečenici.

Dokumentarni karakter i spontano prepoznavanje nadenih skulpturalnih i prostornih situacija već tada je karakteristično obilježje Maračićeva rada. Na primjer, u umjetnikovu objašnjenju *"Periodično sam nakon ustajanja snimao raspored stvari na mom stolu zatečen od prethodnog dana."*<sup>4</sup> rasvjetljuje se već posve porođena umjetnička paradigma koja epistematski dozrijeva u devedesetima: nenamjernost i sponta-

and performances from the late 70s and early 80s. In that period, his art rested on a solid conceptual foundation and directly built upon the art of the first half of the 70s; the artist kept turning his back upon iconography. This procedure found its counterpart and its prefiguration in the absence of content in his (more) recent photographic cycles. In 1980, Maračić exhibited photo-documentation that was a sort of manifesto of attaching meaning to the banal, the ephemeral, and the unnoticed - photographs were understood simply as a material remnant of actions performed (and this I consider crucial) by the author himself. In the photographic cycle of documented actions collected under the witty and meaningful title *Alea Iacta Est*, Maračić pinned down with his camera some manifestations of absurd, existentially coloured questions that he was putting to himself. Photographs thus appeared in pairs and the spectator could observe the moment of decisions such as: whether to break a twig or not, whether to take a book from the shelf or not, or perhaps the most radical one - whether to get up or stay in bed... The prosaic scenes of banal decisions were made difficult by the fatal (and moreover textual) accent contained in the famous sentence.

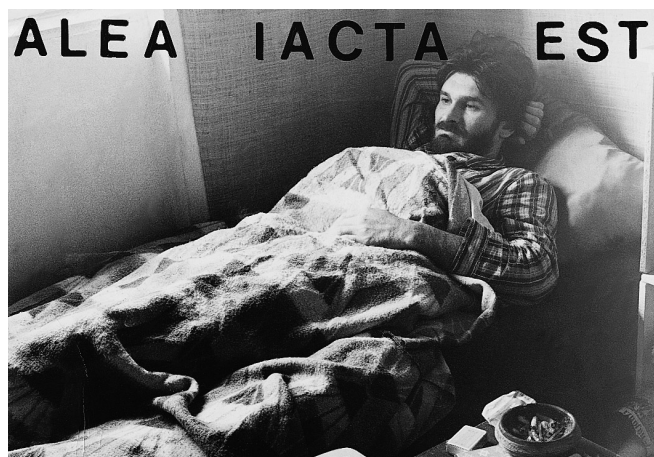
Documentary character and spontaneous recognition of preset sculptural and spatial situations was a characteristic feature of the early phase of Maračić's work. For example, his explanation *"I recorded periodically, after getting up in the morning, the order of things on my table that had remained there from the day before,"*<sup>4</sup> clarifies the fully formed artistic paradigm, which matured epistemically in the 90s:

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4 BORO IVANDIĆ, Antun Maračić, izložba u Galeriji Studentskog centra, u: *Studentski list*, 26. 12. 1980.

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4 BORO IVANDIĆ, Antun Maračić, at the occasion of the exhibition at Studentski centar Gallery, in: *Studentski list*, 26 December 1980.







<sup>5</sup> ANTUN MARAČIĆ, *Antun Maračić-Ichform*, katalog izložbe u Centru za kulturu Peščenica - Galerija Događanja, 1982.



<sup>5</sup> ANTUN MARAČIĆ, *Antun Maračić-Ichform*, catalogue of the exhibition at Centar za kulturu Peščenica - Događanja Gallery, 1982.

nost prepoznavanja i registriranja zatečenog (likovnog u nelikovnom, estetskog u nenamjernosti estetike...) stalna je odrednica njegova djela.

U kasnijim ciklusima, bez obzira na različitost postupka, osvještava se isto - naizgled beznačajno, usputno i neprimjetno. Ono što se, međutim, drastično mijenja, jest autorova uloga u činu, odnosno njegova odsutnost iz čina. U *Alea lacta Est* sam umjetnik proizvodi prozaičnost događaja i odluku koju potom bilježi i daje joj važnost. Ono što razlikuje ova dva razdoblja od kasnijih radova su manifestnost i dje-latnost vlastita subjekta putem očitovanja odnosa subjekt-objekt. U kasnijoj fazi autorova uloga lišena je izravnog angažmana, svedena samo na registriranje i obilježavanje prepoznatog. Umjetnik je tu naizgled gotovo isključivo dokumentarist koji svojom percepcijom stvarima "daje ime".

Prilikom izložbe-akcije-fotodokumentacije nazvane *Ichform*, Maračić objašnjava: "Jedan od oblika mog umjetničkog rada je i govor u prvom licu (*Ichform*). Koristim samog sebe kao medij pri čemu ponašanjem, prisustvom, akcijama, realiziram određene ideje u neposrednom odnosu s okolinom, odnosno kroz fotografiju (fotodokumentaciju)".<sup>5</sup> U *Jednosatnom stajanju s ogledalom na licu među eksponatima* iz 1982. godine ponovno problematizira pitanja promatrača i promatranog, onog koji gleda umjetničko djelo i procjenjuje ga,

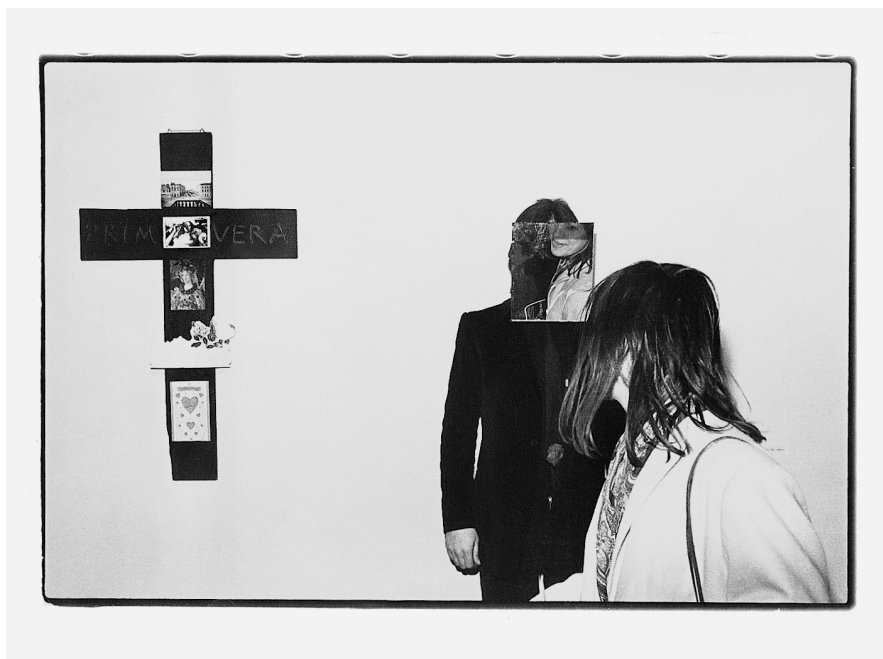
the non-intentionality and the spontaneity of recognizing and registering what has been given (the visual in the "non-visual", the aesthetical in the non-intentionality of aesthetics...) remains a constant determinant of his work.

In his later cycles, regardless of the variety of procedure, Maračić realizes the same thing - the apparently insignificant, the ephemeral, and the inconspicuous. However, what is drastically different is the role of the author in that act, that is, his absence from the act. In the cycle *Alea lacta Est*, it was the artist himself who made the event prosaic and created the decision that he subsequently noted down and gave it significance. What distinguishes these two periods from his later pieces are the manifestness and the activity of his subject through the exhibition of the subject-object relationship. In the later phase, the role of the author is deprived of all direct engagement; it is reduced to mere registering and marking of what has been observed. The artist seems to have an almost exclusively documentary role as the one who "names" things by perceiving them.

At the occasion of the exhibition/action/photo documentation entitled *Ichform*, Maračić explained: "One of the forms that my artistic activity takes is speaking in first person (the "*Ichform*"). I use myself as a medium and I realize certain ideas through my behaviour, my presence, and my actions, in direct interaction with my surroundings, that is, through photography (photo-documentation)".<sup>5</sup> In his *One Hour of Standing With a Mirror on My Face Among the Exhibits* from 1982, Maračić reconsiders the issues related to the observer and the observed, the one that gazes at the work of art and evaluates it, the subject and the object, whereby the image is here literally in the eyes of the beholder. The artist is still an active subject, who generates the event and provokes the reaction. However, it is crucial to note that this piece is remarkably personal: with a strong touch of existentialism, the artist throws off his own face and substitutes it with the reflection of another. It is a radical expression of selfdenial, as well as painful negation of one's own presence.

The developmental dynamics of Maračić's artistic process is also evident in the *Stone Paintings* and it culminated dramatically in the *Non-Existence*. The manifesto of that period of his personal presence

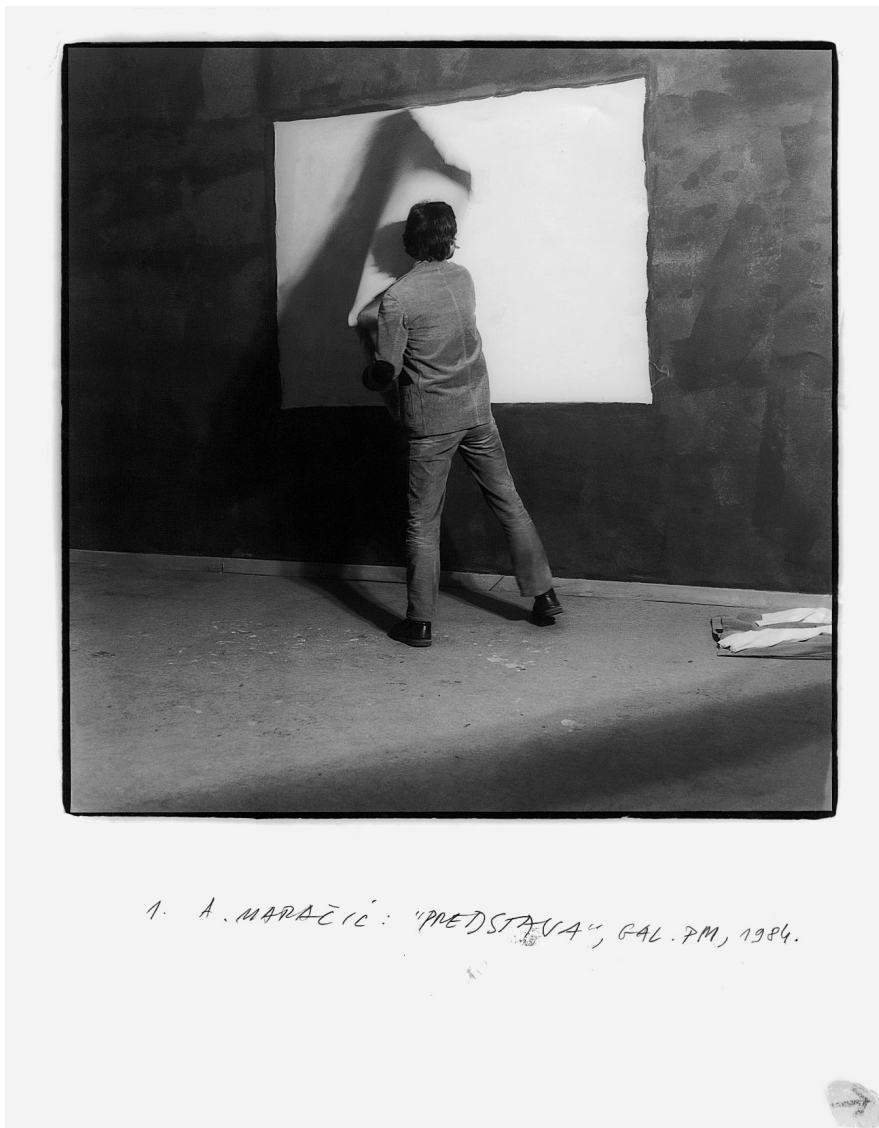
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subjekta i objekta, pri čemu je slika ovom prilikom doslovno u očima promatrača. Ovdje je umjetnik još uvijek djelatna i aktivan subjekt koji proizvodi događaj i izaziva reakciju. Za ovaj rad je, međutim, presudno to što je izrazito osoban: uz jak egzistencijalistički prizvuk umjetnik se lišava vlastitog lica i na njegovo mjesto stavlja odraz drugog. Radi se o radikalnom iskazu samoporicajanja, mučne negacije vlastite prisutnosti.

Dinamika razvoja ovog umjetničkog procesa ogleda se nadalje u *Kamenim slikama*, da bi dramatično kulminirala u *Nepostojanju*. Manifest tog razdoblja vlastite prisutnosti, koji u činu donekle posjeduje i prosvjetiteljsku nakanu, jest *Predstava* iz 1984. Riječ je o likovno-scenskom istupu koji je za cilj imao eksplicitnu demistifikaciju slikarskog (umjetničkog) čina. Na zidu galerije premazan crnom bojom bilo je položeno crveno obojano platno (ovakva dispozicija elemenata još je jedna potvrda formalne veze s minimalističkim slikarstvom i metodom umetanja plohe u plohu). Ispred slike je bio zaštitni muzejski konopac koji umjetnik u ključnom trenutku prelazi te - jednim potezom strgnuvši crvenu sliku s crnog zida - otkriva bjelinu kao neku vrst negativa.

Uloga i način prisutnosti autora kao subjekta mijenja se u drugoj polovici osamdesetih da bi se, kao rezultat analize vlastitog odnosa prema ratnoj situaciji, do kraja reartikulirala početkom devedesetih. Realan "izvanjski" događaj postaje u tom razdoblju dramatično prenapregnut; zlo je slobodno, a kocka je uistinu bačena (kako nam Maračić i doslovno pokazuje izrezujući tešku kamenu kocku iz platna zastave, simbolički navješćujući oslobođanje zla). Mučnina svjesnosti i nemoć subjekta čitljivi su već na prvim *Kamenim slikama* (1989./90.). U tim serijama "zastava" s apliciranim kamenim kockama ogleda se promijenjen, defenzivan odnos prema stvarnosti. Na lepršavu podlogu tkanine pričvršćen je kameni kvadar koji nosi metaforu prizemljenja, anksiozne potrebe za smirivanjem, ali ujedno je i način kojim se akumuliranoj frustraciji daje oblik. U kamenu - tvrdom, neprobijnom i statičnom - egzistencijalna je mučnina dobila oblik. Kamen je postao nosač kolosalnog bremena bivanja (ovdje i sada), kao i mogući katalizator iscjeljenja. Metaforom kamena te materijaliziranih oksimorona poput olovnih krila i prošupljenih zastava snažno je naglašena tragična nepodnošljivost vlastita



1. A. MARAČIĆ: "PREDSTAVA", GAL. PM, 1984.

was the *Performance* of 1984, which as an act had also some sort of didactic intention. It was a visual-scenic statement, the aim of which was the explicit demystification of the painting (artistic) act. The wall of the gallery was painted black and a red canvas was placed on it (such disposition of elements is another proof of the formal link with the minimalist painting and the method of setting one surface into another). There was a protective rope in front of the painting, which the artist stepped over in the crucial moment and - tearing off the red painting from the black wall with one swift move - revealed the whiteness as a sort of negative.

The role of the author and the way in which he was present as subject changed in the second half of the 80s and was final-

6. A. Maračić, *Ich Form*, fotodokumentacija performansa/akcije u Galeriji Događanja / photo-documentation of the performance in Događanja Gallery, 1982

7. A. Maračić, *Predstava / The Show*, performans/akcija u Galeriji PM / performance in PM Gallery, 1984





8



9

postojanja i egzistencijalistička dvojba - neodlučnost između bivanja i nebivanja, bitka i ničega.

Važnost negativnog prefiksa očigledna je u pojmovima koji se u Maračićevu opusu gomilaju, kako doslovno (no-grad, ne-postojanje), tako i posredno - asocijativno ili simbolički u sintagmama naziva (*Ubiti mrtvoga* (dvostruka negacija), *Ispraznjeni okviri/lšćezli sadržaji*, *Ispraznjene zlatarne*, *Usput spomenici...*).

Kamen je protagonist i amblematskog djela *Ambijent* iz 1991., u kojem je postavljanjem jedanaest betonskih kocki u nizu na istoj visini zida (pri čemu svaka kocka nosi po jedno crno slovo) oblikovana riječ *nepostojanje*. Nepostojanje je nedostatak postojanja, to je ne-bivanje, kao ne-bitak i kao ništa. Svijest o ništavnosti raščlanjena je pri tom na materijalitet kamenih kocaka. Kamen je otporan vječni grč koji otjelovljuje jezgru mučnine. Maračićevo *Nepostojanje* posve je minimalan iskaz činjenice da se zapravo ništa ne može reći. Parafraza je to radikalnog nihilizma koji ustanovljava da ništa ne postoji te da se, ako nešto postoji, o tome ne može znati, a ako se o tome i može znati, onda se o tome u konačnici - ne može govoriti. *Ništa* je neminovno povezano s nedostatkom nečega, s izostankom sadržaja, s odsutnošću i prazninom. Što je, međutim, praznina? Upravo u

ly re-articulated in the early 90s as a result of the artist's analysis of his standpoint at the time of war. The real, "external" event became dramatically overstressed in that period, evil was at loose, and the dice had indeed been thrown (as Maračić demonstrated literally by cutting a heavy stone cube out of a flag, in which act the setting free of evil was symbolically announced). The nausea of awareness and powerlessness of the subject could be seen as early as the first *Stone Images* (1989/90). These series of "flags" with applied stone cubes reflected a changed, defensive attitude towards the reality. A stone cuboid attached to buoyant fabric conveyed the metaphor of being dragged down and the anxious need of calmness, but it was at the same time a way to give shape to the accumulated frustration. Stone - that hard, impenetrable, and static material - gave body to the existential nausea. Stone became the carrier of the colossal yoke of being (here and now), as well as the possible catalyst of healing. Through the metaphor of stone, as well as the materialized oxymora such as wings of lead and perforated flags, Maračić emphasized powerfully the tragic impossibility to bear one's own existence and the existentialist dilemma - oscillation between being and non-being, between being something and being nothing.

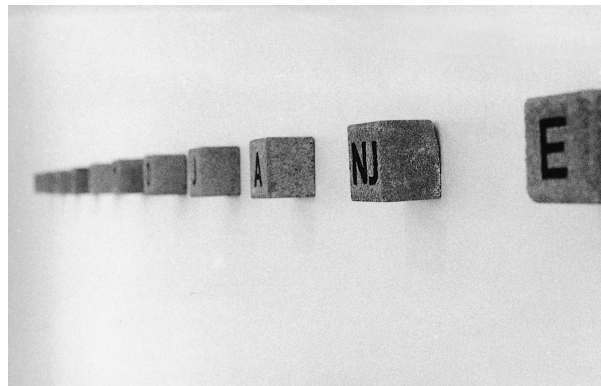
8. A. Maračić, iz ciklusa *Kamene slike* / from the cycle *The Stone Pictures*, 1991. Foto / photo: Boris Cvjetanović

9. A. Maračić, *Bez naziva* / No title, triptih iz ciklusa *Kamene slike* / triptych from the cycle *The Stone Pictures*, 1990

10-11. A. Maračić, *Nepostojanje* / *The Absence*, ambijent u Galeriji PM / *ambience in PM Gallery*, 1991



10



11

praznini prepoznamo potencijal sadržaja - bilo kojeg sadržaja koji može biti rođen. Sve je na nama. (Yves Klein tako 1958. priređuje *Le Vide Performance*, (*Praznina*), gdje se pozvani posjetitelji susreću s golim galerijskim prostorom koji sami pune emanacijom svojih emocionalnih sadržaja.)

Maračić je autor koji nenametljivo promatraču ostavlja prostor za dopunu sadržaja, indicirajući samo potencijalni karakter i značenje rada. Praznina je tu zapravo zbroj cjelokupne stvarnosti; radi se možda o ontologiji ničice u kojoj ona predstavlja ukupnost svega.

*No Grad i njegov subrealizam*, ciklus fotografija nastalih 1992. u Novoj Gradiški nakon artiljerijskog napada, prijeloman je rad u umjetnikovu opusu. U tom se ciklusu mučnina (ne)postojanja, nemoći i pustoši oslikava realnim motivima ikonografije ratne stvarnosti. Po prvi je put ovdje besadržajnost dokumentarističkim medijem fotografije vezana uz sadržaj realnog prostora i vremena. Mučnina je dobila svoju ikonografiju.

Fotografije su to praznih ulica u magli na kojima se u posvemašnjem sivilu ističu jedino bijeli okviri osmrtnica u porazbijanim vitrinama nekad namijenjenim kino plakatima. Na formalnoj razini te fotografije imaju, iako su preslika stvarnosti, izrazito slikarski, nadrealni, ili bolje rečeno pod-

The importance of the negative prefix is evident in coined words present in Maračić's work, regardless of whether they are meant literally (no-grad,\* non-being), indirectly (through associations), or symbolically, in the sintagms of his titles: *To Kill the Dead Man* (double negation), *Emptied Frames/Vanished Contents*, *Emptied Jewelry Stores*, *Roadside Monuments...*.

Stone also features in an emblematic piece entitled *Ambience* from 1991, in which the author placed eleven cubes of concrete in a line, at the same height, like a wall. Each cube bore a single black letter and they formed together the word *non-existence*. Non-existence is lack of existence, it is non-being, like not-being-something and like being-nothing. The awareness of nothingness was analysed in the materiality of stone cubes. Stone is the eternal and persisting cramp, which embodies the core of nausea. Maračić's *Non-existence* is an utterly minimal expression of the fact that one can not really say anything. It is also a paraphrase of radical nihilism, which claims that nothing exists and that, even if something exists, one can not know anything about it and therefore - eventually - cannot speak about it. *Nothing* is inevitably linked with the lack of something, the deficiency of content, the absence and the void. But what is void? It is precisely there

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\* *No-grad* evokes the meaning of a "non-city" and at the same time abbreviates the name of Maračić's native town, Nova Gradiška (translator's remark).



12-13. A. Maračić, Nova Gradiška, 16. prosinca 1991. / Nova Gradiška on December 16th, 1991, iz ciklusa *No grad i njegov subrealizam* / from the cycle *A No grad and its Surrealism*

realni karakter dechiricovske metafizičke tjeskobe, obavijene u tegobni sfumato ratom pogođenog grada.

Maračić u to vrijeme (1991.-1994.) na zagrebačkim fasadama uočava i fotografijom bilježi mnoštvo praznih okvira u kojima su ranije bile ploče tvrtki i ustanova. Konačno će ih i radikalno usvojiti te kao metodu primijeniti u nešto kasnijim *Usvojenim slikama*. Gašenjem djelatnosti nestaju i njima pripadajuće ploče, a ostali su samo prazni okviri iščezlih sadržaja. Ti se znakovi nepostojanja javljaju u raznim oblicima i dimenzijama, ponekad jedino kao izbljedenje pravokutne plohe. Maračić ove punktove odsutnosti fotografira te ih posvaja dodavanjem gravirane pločice s naslovom (*Ispraznjen okvir ili iščezli sadržaj*), svojim imenom i godinom nastanka (dakle, ponovno potpisujući i datirajući). Predmet nije preuzet iz svog matičnog konteksta i prenijet u prostor umjetnosti nego je, kako autor razjašnjava, "...ostao na licu mjesta, jednostavno je uočen i apostrofirao". Štoviše, potpisana je zapravo odsutnost predmeta, njegovo iščeznuće, praznina koja je ostala iza njega, ali potpisivanjem praznine okviru je vraćen sadržaj, novi mentalni sadržaj na koji je promatrač sada upućen.<sup>6</sup>

U srodnim *Ispraznjenim zlatarnama* (1991./99.) opetovana je poetika izravne, jasno vidljive odsutnosti: fotografirani su izlozi zlatarnica ispraznjeni za vrijeme rata,

that we recognize the potential of content - any content that might be generated. It all depends on us. (It is in this sense that Yves Klein organized *Le Vide Performance*, (*The Void*) in 1958; the invited spectators met with the naked gallery space and filled it themselves with the emanation of their emotional contents.)

Maračić is the sort of author who unobtrusively leaves to the spectator some space to be filled with content, indicating only the potential character and meaning of the work. The void actually becomes the sum of all reality, perhaps like the ontology of the zero, where it represents the totality of everything.

*No Grad and Its Subrealism*, a cycle of photographs made in 1992 in Nova Gradiška after an artillery attack, may be considered a breaking point in Maračić's opus, since he presented there the nausea of (non-)existence, powerlessness, and devastation in realistic iconographic motifs of wartime. It was the first time that contentlessness was linked through the documentary medium of photography with the content of real space and time. The nausea was given its own iconography.

The photographs showed empty streets steeped in fog. In that pervasive greyness, the only thing that struck the eye were the white frames of obituaries in broken showcases that had once served to exhibit movie posters. Although these photographs reflected the reality, at the formal level they possessed an expressly artistic, surrealist, or rather sub-realist character of De Chirico's metaphysical anxiety, wrapped in a gloomy *sfumato* of a town struck by war.

At that time (1991-1994), Maračić was observing the façades of Zagreb and documenting in photographs a great number of empty frames that had once contained plaques of business companies and institutions. Eventually, he would appropriate them radically and apply somewhat later as a method in his *Appropriated Images*. When a company is closed down, its plaque disappears as well, while the empty frames of vanished contents remain there. Such signs of non-existence appear in various forms and dimensions, sometimes merely as faded rectangular surfaces. Maračić photographed these points of absence and appropriated them by adding small plaques with engraved inscriptions (*Emptied Frame or Vanished Content*), his name, and the year (that is, again by sign-

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u kojima su ostala samo gola postolja za nakit. Na fiziomorfološkoj razini ta postolja zadobivaju skulpturalne kvalitete, a na metaforičkoj se, lišena vrijednosti (zlata), promeću u presliku sveopće opustošenosti, postajući - po Maračiću - amblem teškog vremena. U novogradiškim fotografijama element odsutnosti sadržaja nabijen je snažnim emocijama, osjećajima melankolije i nemoći, dok su *Okviri* i *Zlatarne* rasterećeni izravne ratne ikonografije. Ti ciklusi srodni su po doticanju političke situacije tranzicije i društvenih promjena.

Motivi koje Maračić redovito istražuje u svojoj osnovi posve su anonimni, oni su bilo koji, mogu biti bilo gdje jer su, kao paradigme, univerzalno čitljivi. U njegovoj umjetnosti nema ljudi, nego samo tragova čovjeka i njegova djelovanja ili nekog događanja. Tako je i u ciklusima *Usvojene slike* i *Usput spomenici*, u kojima se očituje novi senzibilitet post-ratnog razdoblja, revitalizirana osjetljivost na neprimjetno. Pritom je značenje marginalnog, ali znakovitog, zaogrnutu latentnom ironijom, bez opterećenosti ratnom stvarnosti. U *Usvojenim slikama* (2000.) umjetnik doslovno "usvaja" slike iz novinskih crnih kronika. Radi se o fotografijama mjesta poprišta delikta (zgrade, dvorišta, stanovi...) zajedno s originalnim novinskim legendama i komentarima, opisom događaja i potpisom fotografa koje Maračić povećava, otiskuje na čvrstom papiru te potpisuje kao grafike. "To su inače posve nezanimljivi dijelovi svakodnevnih ambijenata koji nikada ne bi bili uočeni ni snimljeni, kojima tek činjenica događaja daje važnost, vrijednost, napetost, uzbudljivost."<sup>7</sup> "To su mjesta odsutnosti, same praznine, anonimna mjesta koja su proizvedena u nosače sadržaja, poprišta događaja, a potom su postala mjesta fetiši, mjesta relikvije..."<sup>8</sup>, piše Maračić. Izvorni potpisi fotografija imaju jednako važnu ulogu, poprimajući zbog svoje izdvojenosti i izmijenjenog konteksta nerijetko humoran i bizaran ton, potencirajući očudenje prvobitnog sadržaja koji je, bez obzira na svoju eventualnu primarnu dramatičnost u novinskoj formi marginaliziran, potom izmješten, predimenzioniran i rekontekstualiziran. Istovremeno, to su ne-mjesta na kojima se nešto dogodilo, ali slika je načinjena *post festum* i na nama je da vizualiziramo sam događaj. Uz motiv preuzimanja sadržaja bez sadržaja, nenametljivo se također iznova osnažuje odnos slike i teksta te i ovdje naglašava priskrblijanje vrijednosti pomoću legitimiteta umjetničkog potpisa.

ing and dating them). Thus, the object was not taken out of its original context and transferred into the space of art, but rather, as the author explained, "...remained there on the spot; it was simply noticed and accentuated. Moreover, what was signed was in fact the absence of the object, its vanishing, the void that remained behind it, but when that void was signed, the frame regained its content, a new mental content to which the spectator was now directed."<sup>6</sup>

In the analogous *Emptied Jewellery Stores* (1991-99), Maračić again applied the poetics of direct, clearly visible absence: he photographed the showcases of jewellery stores that remained empty during the war, containing only naked jewellery holders. At the physical-morphological level, they acquired sculptural qualities, while at the metaphorical level they were deprived of all value (gold) and thus turned into a replica of overall devastation, becoming - according to Maračić - an emblem of the hard times. On photographs from Nova Gradiška, the element of absence was filled with strong emotions, feelings of melancholy and powerlessness, while the *Frames* and the *Jewellery Stores* were liberated from all direct iconography of war. These cycles correlated through the way they treated the political situation of transition and social changes.

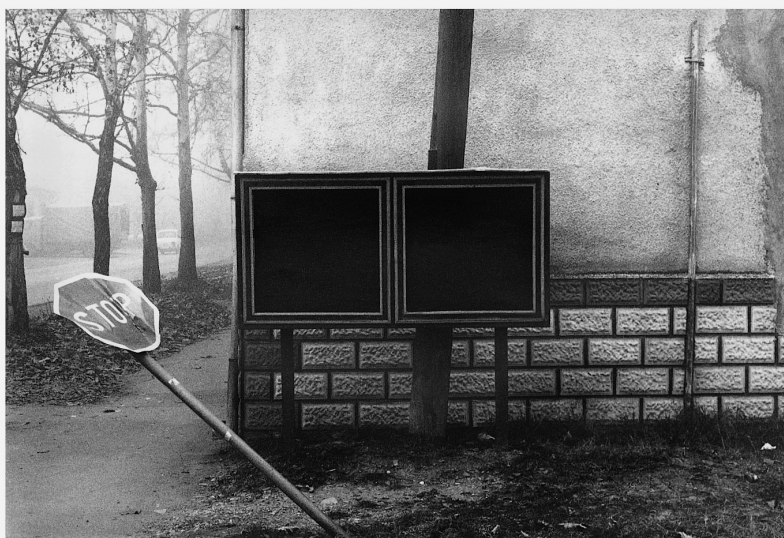
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<sup>6</sup> ANTUN MARAČIĆ, *Ispraznjeni okviri, iščezli sadržaji 1991-1994: fotografije, tekstovi*, Zagreb, 1996., 125.

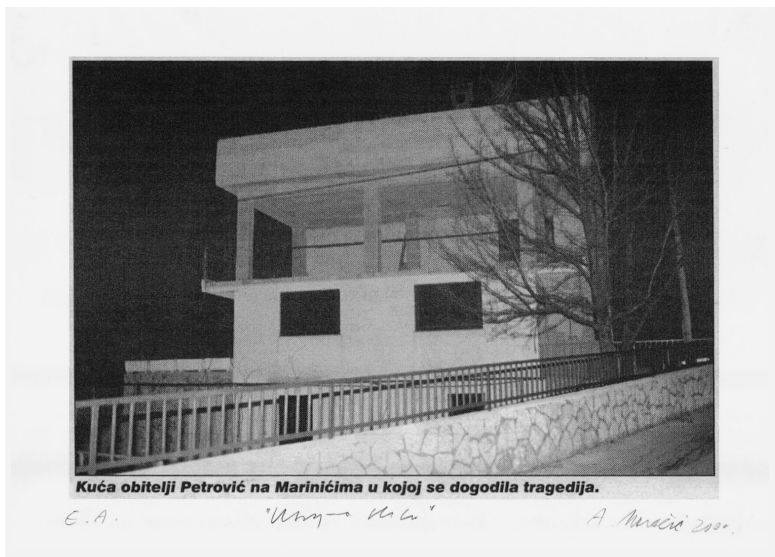
<sup>7</sup> SANDRA KRIŽIĆ ROBAN, Nenad Jerković, Boris Cvjetanović, Edita Schubert, Antun Maračić, u: *Katalog Galerije Križić Roban*, za 2000./01., 14.

<sup>8</sup> SANDRA KRIŽIĆ ROBAN (bilj. 7).

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<sup>6</sup> ANTUN MARAČIĆ, *Ispraznjeni okviri, iščezli sadržaji 1991-1994: fotografije, tekstovi* [Emptied Frames, Vanished Contents 1991-1994: Photographs and Texts], Zagreb, 1996, 125.



*Nova Gradiška, 16. 12. 1991. (foto: A. Maračić)*



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Motivika i simbolika (prostora) smrti prisutni su u većini Maračićevih radova, a u nekoliko su ciklusa izravna tema. Prvi se put neposredno javljaju u seriji fotografija novogradiškog groblja nazvanoj *Ubiti mrtvoga*, u kojoj su motiv posmrtni spomenici s fotografijama umrlih, oštećenih ili posve nestalih uslijed granatiranja. Na taj je način oblikovana jeza dvostruke smrti u kojoj čak i mrtvi bivaju nanovo ubijeni zatiranjem dokaza o njihovu postojanju, navješćujući krajnje nepostojanje. U ciklusu *Usput spomenici*, koji je ironijski kodiranom obradom sadržajno tragičnog predloška, kao i ukupnim senzibilitetom, možda najbliži *Usvojenim slikama*, fotografijama je registrirano nešto ovoga puta i doslovno usputno - fantomski bezgrobni spomenici poginulima na cesti, oznake smrti bez materijalnog sadržaja ali zasićene asocijativnim potencijalima.

Posve drugačijeg izvorišta i umjetničkog interesa fotografije su stabla u zagrebačkoj Ilici, brodova izvađenih nakon rata iz dubrovačkog podmorja te fotografije dubrovačkih klupa. Radi se o vizualnoj analizi konkretnih objekata - predmeta i njihove drastično distorzirane fizionomije. Ove su serije, bez obzira na njihovu referencu u prostorno-vremenskom kontekstu, najviše zabavljene fenomenologijom oblika i teksture. Na fotografijama stabla koje se bori s urbanom agresijom (ogradom, ciglom, žicom), iako uz personifikaciju borbe, najizraženija je ipak sama ekspresivnost oblika i bolna napetost materije jakih enformelističkih kvaliteta. Dubrovački brodovi - korodirane, solju izjedene (ponovno enfor-

Motifs that Maračić typically explores are in fact utterly anonymous, they are "whatever" and can be found anywhere, since they are paradigms and therefore universally readable. In his art, there are no people but rather traces of man and his activity, or traces of some happening. It is also the case with the *Appropriated Images* and the *Roadside Monuments*, which speak of the new sensibility of the post-war period, the revived sensibility for the inconspicuous. The character of the marginal, but significant remains thereby enveloped in latent irony, without any oppression by the reality of the war. In the *Appropriated Images* (2000), the artist literally "appropriated" images from the disaster pages of the newspapers. He took photographs from the crime scenes (buildings, backyards, apartments...) together with the original newspaper annotations and commentaries, descriptions of the event and the signature of the photographer, and then enlarged them, printed them on cardboard and signed as graphics. "Normally, these are entirely uninteresting parts of everyday environment that would never have been noticed or photographed; it was only the fact of the event that gave them importance, tension, and excitement."<sup>7</sup> "These were the places of absence, of the void itself, anonymous places that were transformed into the carriers of meaning, into the sites of events, and thus became places-fetishes, places-relics...",<sup>8</sup> Maračić wrote. Original signatures under the photographs play an equally important role, since their disconnection and the changed context often gives them a humorous or bizarre touch, enhancing the element of surprise in the original content that was, regardless of its perhaps primary drama, marginalized in its newspaper form and subsequently dislocated, resized, and re-contextualized. At the same time, these are non-places where something has happened, but the image was made *post festum* and it is left to us how we visualize the event. Beside the motif of taking over content without content, the relationship between image and text is unobtrusively reinforced, which accentuates the way in which the value was added through the legitimacy of the artist's signature.

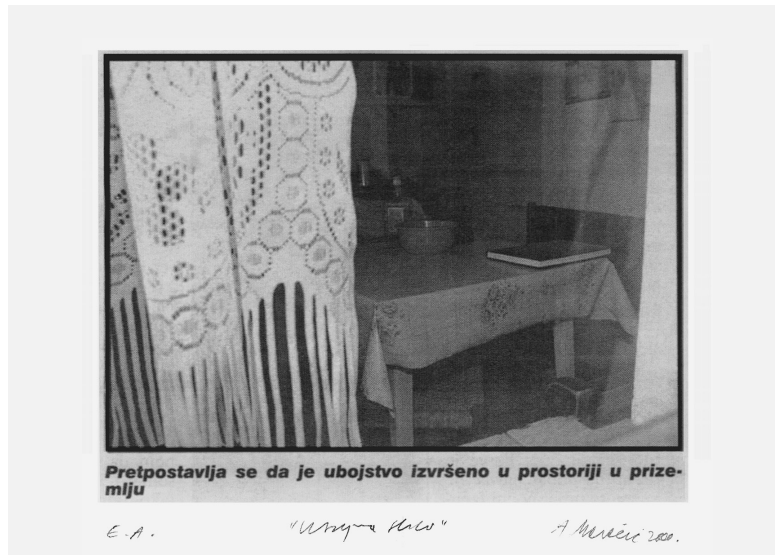
Motifs and symbols of (the space of) death are present in most Maračić's pieces, being the central theme of several cycles. They first appeared directly in a series of



melističke) teksture, optočeni grozdovima školjki imaju gotovo organsku morfologiju. Oni su fantomi lišeni svoje funkcije, koji nakon dvostruke negacije svoga prirodnog stanja (prvo ispod mora, a zatim nasukani na obali) i sami žive svoju "no-varijantu". Takve su i dubrovačke "ratne" klupe - neka-dašnja mjesta meditacije na istaku u more, okrnjene bombardiranjem, hendikepirani su oblici bez funkcije i sadržaja, tužni i neprijetni svjedoci svog vremena.

I konačno, podsjetimo na posljednji Maračićev rad, posve jedinstven po senzibilitetu i atmosferi. Nastao apsolutno spontan i posve nenamjernim bilježenjem, *Lokrum* je na neki način kruna, samozadovoljni šećerni cvijet koji podsjeća na višak, na slučajnost i na nježnu dokolicu, koji možda naznačuje povratak na boemsku samozabavljenost sadržanu u ranom dokumentiranju vlastitog koraka. Posve je samodostatan, larpurlartistički, deideologiziran i bez angažmana, čak i bez poruke koja ima referencu u stvarnosti. *Lokrum* nije ukotvijen u vremenu, pa čak ni u prostoru; on je bilo koji otok, gotovo arhetip. Fascinacija otokom i promjenjivim prizorom oko njega dospjela je na svijet posve spontano, od prvog dana Maračićeva preuzimanja vodstva Umjetničke galerije Dubrovnik i ulaska u ured s pogledom. Upravo u tom izostanku namjernosti, u nenametljivom praćenju jednog te istog kadra, leži njegova prozračnost i magična ljepota. Umjetnik ovdje ne odabire kadar, nego kao da je kadar odabrao njega. On je u tom procesu neprimijećen i posve statičan, a sva je pažnja sadržana u motivu ili, bolje rečeno, nije. Evelina Turković u predgovoru fotomonografije *Lokrum* primjećuje da otok, iako "najčvršći motiv, ipak nije središte zbivanja."<sup>9</sup> On je, naime, najmanje važan element u priči o njemu samome. Kadar nije i jest prazan, jer u velikoj zrcalnoj površini koja na sredini ima tamnu, tešku mrlju, nije nemoguće naći svoj vlastiti odraz. U njemu se krije ona refleksija oka, dijalektika oka, gledanje-sebe-gledanja.<sup>10</sup>

Na samom početku fotomonografije Maračić nepretenciozno bilježi: "Lokrum, kroz prozor. Neizbježno, počeo sam snimati... Frekvencija promjena nevjerovatna. Varijacije bez kraja." Zanimljivo je posvetiti se, naposljetku, upravo ovim autorovim kratkim zapisima, ponovno legendama uz fotografije koje ovoga puta u skladu s poetskim intimizmom rada, umjetnik sam ispisuje: "Oblačno, ali sve protkano svjetlom.



photographs from the cemetery of Nova Gradiška, entitled *To Kill the Dead Man*, the motif of which were the tombs with photographs of the deceased, which were damaged or entirely disappeared during the shelling of the town. In this way, the artist created the impression of the horror of double death, in which the dead were killed for the second time by having the evidence of their existence destroyed, which proclaimed their final non-existence. In the cycle *Roadside Monuments*, which is perhaps closest to the *Appropriated Images* with its ironically encoded treatment of the substantially tragic matrix, as well as in terms of overall sensibility, photographs recorded something that was literally "by the way" - the phantoms of tombless monuments for people killed in road accidents, those signs of death that possessed no material content, but were packed with associative potential.

An entirely different source and artistic interest lie behind the photographs of trees in the main street of Zagreb, Ilica, as well as those of ships extracted after the war from the sea near Dubrovnik, or of Dubrovnik benches. These photographs represent a visual analysis of actual objects, of their drastically distorted physiognomy. Regardless of their references in the context of space and time, these series largely focus upon the phenomenology of shape and texture. Concerning photographs of trees that resist urban aggression (fences, bricks, wire), the most meaningful aspect, besides the personification of fight, is the very expressiveness of forms and the painful tension in matter, which has strong, enformelist quali-

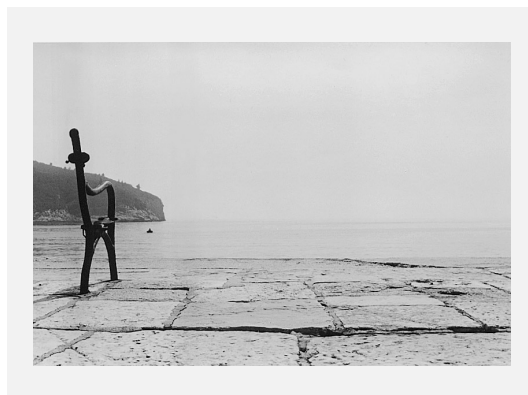
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<sup>9</sup> ANTUN MARAČIĆ, *Lokrum*, prosinac 2000. - travanj 2004., Zagreb - Dubrovnik, 2004.

<sup>10</sup> PETER SLOTERDIJK, *Kritika ciničkog uma*, Zagreb, 1992., 151.

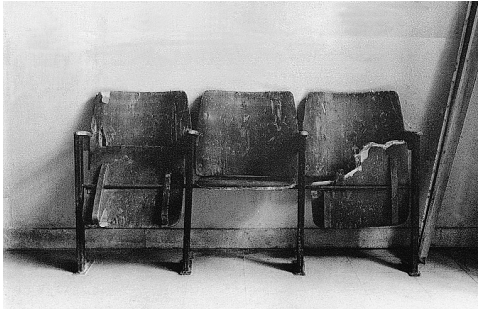
<sup>7</sup> SANDRA KRIŽIĆ ROBAN, Nenad Jerković, Boris Cvjetanović, Edita Schubert, Antun Maračić, u: *Catalogue of the Križić Roban Gallery*, 2000./01., 14.

<sup>8</sup> SANDRA KRIŽIĆ ROBAN (n. 7).



ties. The ships of Dubrovnik - corroded, salt-eaten textures (enformelist again), caught in clusters of shells, possess an almost organic morphology. They are phantoms deprived of their own function, which have suffered double negation of their natural state (first at the sea-bottom, and then stranded on the shore) and experienced their own "no-variant". The same goes for the "war" benches of Dubrovnik - once places of contemplation located on promontories, they were mutilated by bombs and remained mere handicapped forms without function or content, sad and inconspicuous witnesses of their time.

Finally, let us recall the last among Maračić's pieces, which is absolutely unique in its sensibility and atmosphere. It is entitled *Lokrum* and created by means of spontaneous and entirely unintentional documentation. In a way, it is the crown, the self-satisfied sugar flower that reminds of superfluity, accident, and tender idleness, perhaps heralding a return to the Bohemian self-centredness contained in the early documentation of one's path. It is entirely self-sufficient, a piece of *l'art pour l'art* that has no ideology and no engagement, even no message that might have any reference to the reality. *Lokrum* is anchored neither in time, nor in space, it is just an island, almost an archetype. Maračić's fascination with the island and the changing scenery around it developed perfectly spontaneously, in the first days when he took over the management of the Art Gallery Dubrovnik and entered his office with a view. It was precisely there, in that lack of intention, in the unobtrusive observation of one and the same sequence, that he found its transparency and its magic beauty. The artist did not choose the sequence; rather, it seemed that the sequence had chosen him. He remained unnoticed and completely static in the process, while all his attention was drawn to the motif - or perhaps it was not. In her preface to the photomontage "Lokrum", Evelina Turković observed that the island, even though "the most solid motif, is still not the centre of happening."<sup>9</sup> It is rather "the least important element in its own story." The sequence is not empty, but at the same time it is, since that large mirroring surface with a dark, heavy blot in its centre makes it perfectly possible to see one's own reflection. That is where one finds that "eye reflex, eye dialectic, seeing-oneself-see."<sup>10</sup>



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Iza otoka duga vodoravna pletenica oblaka." Iznad, rahla, vedrinom prošupljena masa oblaka. Ili: "Vedro, laki barokni oblaci iznad otoka, čudesni blok plavoga duž desne strane." U ovim se crticama krije jednadžba promatranja. One su šifra slikarskog pogleda kojim umjetnik vidi prizor u kadru i koji zapravo doslikava i završava. U ovim se vodiljama, pjesmolikim instrukcijama, čuti neizmjerena toplina, nježna privrženost promatranom. Umjetnički čin ovdje je uistinu rasterećen semantičke težine, to je (ne)pri-tajeni umjetnički "hedonizam". Sadržan je u samom procesu nesputane predaje ugodi oka, istovremeno suptilno napunjen onto-loškom sjetom koja se hrani i njeguje upravo putem posebno podešenih ticala. Otok se Maračiću dogodio. On je slučajan. I na kraju, odvažimo se, prizivajući Sartrea, ustvrditi da je sve slučajno. Slučajnost je apsolutna upravo stoga što u svemu imanen-tno obitava baš "savršena bezrazlož-nost." ▼

At the very beginning of his photo-monograph, Maračić notes down unpreten-tiously: "Lokrum, through the window. Inevitably, I began to take photos... The frequency of changes is unbelievable. Variations are endless." It is interesting to dedicate oneself to these brief notes of the author, which again serve as annotations to the photographs; this time, they have been written by the artist himself, in accordance with the poetic intimism of his work: "It is cloudy, but all interspersed with light. Behind the island, there is a long horizontal braid of clouds. Above, there is a loose mass of clouds, perforated by clear skies." Or: "It is sunny, with light baroque clouds above the island and a wondrous block of blue along its right side." These remarks conceal an equation of observation. They are the code of the painter's gaze, with the help of which he sees the scene in a sequence and which actually paints further and completes the picture. In these guidelines, in these poem-like instructions, one can feel immense warmth and tender attach-ment to the observed. The artistic act is here truly liberated from all semantic weight, it is the (un-)concealed artistic "hedonism". It is contained in the very process of unrestrained abandonment to the pleasure of the eye and at the same time subtly filled with ontological melancholy that feeds und grows precisely upon espe-cially adjusted feelers. The island just hap-pened to Maračić. It is accidental. Finally, we should be daring and state, invoking Sartre, that everything is accidental. This accidentence is absolute because everything immanently contains the "perfect pointlessness." ●

prijevod / translation: Marina Miladinov

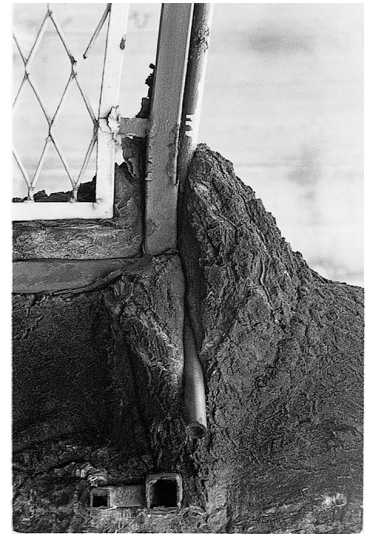
16. A. Maračić, *Klupe na Porporeli / The Benches on Porporela*, iz ciklusa *Dubrovačke klupe / from the cycle The Benches from Dubrovnik*, Dubrovnik, travanj / April 1993

17. A. Maračić, *Stolice u predvorju kina Jadran / The Chairs in the entrance-hall of "Jadran" cinema*, iz ciklusa *Dubrovačke klupe, Dubrovnik / from the cycle The Benches from Dubrovnik*, travanj / April 1993.

18. A. Maračić, *Stablo / A Tree*, Zagreb, Ilica / Ilica street, 1997

9 ANTUN MARAČIĆ, Lokrum, prosinac 2000. - travanj 2004. [Lokrum, December 2000 - April 2004], Zagreb - Dubrovnik, 2004.

10 PETER SLOTERDIJK, *Critique of Cynical Reason*. Trans. M. Eldred. Foreword by A. Huyssen, London, 1988, 145.



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→ Antonia Majača je povjesničarka umjetnosti, voditeljica Galerije Miroslav Kraljević u Zagrebu.

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