

Ljubav kao protuiskušenje

Ljubav zapravo nije mogućnost, već više prelaženje nečega što je moglo izgledati nemoguće.

Alain Badiou, *Pohvala ljubavi*

Zar je ljubav postala prosta riječ? Zar je s vremenom, njezinim trošenjem od silne uporabe došlo do toga da se umjetnici ne usude pokazati je i koristiti? Ljubav prema kome? Prema čemu? Je li okamenjenost ljubavi postala prepreka našem razvoju ili ljubav, naprotiv, „protuoružje” kojime ćemo se suprotstaviti nasilju svijeta? Zašto danas propitivati riječ ljubav? Zato što je reprezentacija ljubavi postala mutna, a njezina slika delikatna. Mediji nam nude previše bljutavih, sladunjavih i razvodnjenih osjećaja koje ne možemo probaviti jer su varljivi, u neskladu spram moći ljubavi, spram njezine nerijetko paradoksalne visceralne snage, njezine sposobnosti prevrata i dokidanja uspostavljenog poretka.

„Ljubav zapravo nije mogućnost, već više prelaženje nečega što je moglo izgledati nemoguće.”¹

Uvako Alain Badiou govori o ideji ljubavi koju oblikuje i brani u eseju *Pohvala ljubavi* iz 2009. Esej je svojevrsni odgovor na istoimeni film Jean-Luca Godarda iz 2001. Dvojica angažiranih mislilaca prošlog stoljeća čiji je pogled na društvo i dalje jednako oštar. Uпустiti se u tumačenje ljubavi kada je velik dio života proživljen utoliko snažnije pogađa onoga tko tu misao prima jer se ona suprotstavlja lakoći. Lakoći da u samoći obgrliš vlastitu povijest i izdaleka promatraš svijet. A ono što nam Badiou nudi uistinu je „obrana ljubavi”, sa stajališta filozofa, odnosno „ponovno izmišljanje ljubavi”, da se poslužimo Rimbaudovom preporukom, i

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Love isn't a possibility, but rather the overcoming of something that might appear to be impossible.
Alain Badiou, *In Praise of Love*

Has love become a profanity? Has it reached the point where extensive use has worn it out so much that the artists are now reluctant to show or use it? Love for whom? For what? Has love become petrified and turned into a hurdle preventing our growth or, quite the contrary, a “weapon” for fighting against violence in the world? Why should we explore the world “love” today? It is because the representation of love has become vague and its image precarious. The media keep bombarding us with bland, corny, or diluted emotions that we cannot digest since they are treacherous, in discordance with the power of love and its often paradoxical, visceral force, its ability to perform sudden turns and defy the established order of things.

“Strictly speaking, love isn't a possibility, but rather the overcoming of something that might appear to be impossible.”¹

This is how Alain Badiou speaks of the idea of love, which he has formulated and advocated in his essay *In Praise of Love* (2009), a sort of response to Jean-Luc Godard's film of the same name from 2001. These two activist thinkers of the 20th century have not lost their edge when it comes to social issues. Venturing an interpretation of love when a major part of one's life is over leaves an even stronger impression on the recipient, since it avoids lightness in dealing with the topic – the lightness of embracing one's history in solitude and observing the world from a distance. What Badiou offers here is, in fact, an “apology of love” from a philosopher's standpoint, or rather a “reinvention of love”, if one follows Rimbaud's recommendation, at the very moment when love seems “under threat”.

Love as an Antidote

to u trenutku kada mu se čini da je ljubav „ugrožena“.

Vraćam se stoga onome što je nadahnulo moje viđenje ljubavi. Prije svega, ljubav je literarni susret s Flaubertovom *Gospođom Bovary*, Stendhalovom *O ljubavi*, s Hiroshimom Marguerite Duras i *Fragmentima ljubavnog diskursa* Rolanda Barthesa. No što je s prikazima ljubavi na slikama?

Dok se prisjećam posjeta Louvreu, pred očima mi se nižu prizori roditeljske ljubavi ili putene ljubavi zagrljenih parova, nježni i blagi pogledi ili divlja strast, prizori nevine ili strastvene ljubavi, te se spajaju kako bi sačinili konstelaciju ljubavnih tipologija. Od Leonardove *Bogorodice s djetetom i svetom Anom*, Correggiove *Venere*, *Satira i Kupida*, Lemoineova *Herkula i Omfale* preko *Psihe i Amora* Françoisa Gérarda i svih Venera, od kojih Cranachovu smatram vrhuncem, sva ta djela izravno se referiraju na moj pogled i na obećanje ljubavi čija je kruna, ne treba posebno naglašavati, slavno *Hodočašće na otok Kiteru* Antoinea Watteaua. Krhkost ljubavnog osjećanja koja tu treperi.

U mislima potom prolazim postavom Muzeja Pompidou, suvremenog pandana. A tu stvari postaju komplicirane. Brojna su djela Picassa i nadrealista koji doslovno proždiru svoje modele. Slika Otta Dixa, *Erinnerung an die Spielgelsäle von Brüssel*, no to je ljubav s cijenom gole prostitutke koja sjedi na koljenima njemačkog oficira. Možda bi Balthusova *Alice* mogla biti svojevrsna nova Venera, ali ona što ostavlja osjećaj gorčine.

Kada je riječ o prikazu onoga što bi se moglo povezati s ljubavlju, nasilje i/ili samoća idu ruku pod ruku. Čak i parovi više pokazuju razilaženje nego sjedinjenje, a pritom mislim na instalaciju Edwarda Kienholza *While Visions of Sugar Plums Danced in their Heads* ili čak na one lebdeće forme Uga Rondinonea u *The Evening Passes Like Other. Men and Women Float Alone*. Ne prkosi li toj mračnoj viziji kraha ljubavi tek Brancusijev *Poljubac*? Kada bismo gledali isključivo kroz prizmu djela iz kolekcije, odgovor bi bio tužno afirmativan. To bi značilo kraj reprezentacije ljubavi jer zapadno društvo kakvo je stvoreno tijekom posljednjih stoljeća funkcionira isključivo prema modelu individualnog razvoja, seksualnosti koja se zbiva u jedini čak i kada je u množini te je odmah zadovoljena. To je i tvrdnja Alaina Badioua u *Pohvali ljubavi*, no on time želi naglasiti snagu otpora koju ipak ne želi otkriti:

„No u današnjem je svijetu široko rasprostranjeno uvjerenje da svatko slijedi jedino svoj interes. Utoliko je ljubav protuiskušenje. Ako nije zamišljena tek kao razmjena uzajamnih prednosti, ili ako nije unaprijed proračunata kao rentabilna investicija, ljubav je uistinu to uzdanje u slučaj.“²²

Ljubav dakle nije statična, budući da se treba uzdati u slučaj. Tom uzvišenom konceptu ljubavnog slučaja pridružiti ću prije svega učinak šoka i fascinaciju ili pak njezinu suprotnost, zaslijepljenost koja se događa u ljubavi na prvi pogled. Prvo stanje ljubavi.

I will therefore return to what has inspired my own vision of love. First of all, love has been the literary encounter with Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Stendhal's *On Love*, Marguerite Duras' *Hiroshima, mon amour*, and Roland Barthes' *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*. And how about the representations of love in painting?

As I recall my visits to the Louvre, I can see in my mind scenes of parental love or the erotic love of embracing couples, tender and mild gazes or wild passion, scenes of innocent or voluptuous love, all merged in order to create a constellation of love typology. From Leonardo's *Virgin with Child and St Anne*, Correggio's *Venus and Cupid with a Satyr*, Lemoine's *Hercules and Omphale* to François Gérard's *Psyche and Amor* and all those Venuses, among whom I consider the one by Cranach to be the pinnacle: all these artworks directly relate to my gaze and the promise of love, crowned by – needless to say – the famous *Pilgrimage to the Isle of Cythera* by Antoine Watteau. The fragility of amorous encounter literally sparkles there.

Then I walk in my mind through the permanent collection of Centre Pompidou, the contemporary counterpart of the Louvre. Here things get complicated. There are many works by Picasso and the Surrealists that literally devour their models. Otto Dix's *Erinnerung an die Spiegelsäle von Brüssel* shows love with a price tag, a naked prostitute sitting on the knees of a German officer. Perhaps Balthus' *Alice* might act a sort of new Venus, but one that leaves you with a taste of bitterness. In depictions of anything that has to do with

love, violence and/or loneliness go hand in hand. Even couples seem to illustrate separation rather than unification, whereby I am referring to Edward Kienholz's installation *While Visions of Sugar Plums Danced in their Heads* or even the floating forms of Ugo Rondinone in *The Evening Passes Like Other. Men and Women Float Alone*. Is Brancusi's *Kiss* not the only work of art defying this dark vision of love apocalypse?

If we looked at this subject exclusively through the prism of artworks from the collection, the answer would be sadly affirmative. It would mean the end for all representation of love, since the Western society as it has become during the past few centuries functions exclusively according to the logic of individual growth and sexuality that happens in singular even when in plural, and must be satisfied at once. This is what Alain Badiou seems to argue in his book *In Praise of Love*, but his aim is to emphasize the power of resistance, which nevertheless remains unspoken:

“In today's world, it is generally thought that individuals only pursue their own self-interest. Love is an antidote to that. Provided it isn't conceived only as an exchange of mutual favours, or isn't calculated way in advance as a profitable investment, love really is a unique trust placed in chance.”²²

Love is therefore not static, since one must believe in chance. To this sublime concept of love chance I would like to add, first of all, the impact of shock and fascination, or else its opposite, the blindness that one is struck with when it comes to love at first sight. This is

Roland Barthes pak upotrebljava izraz „ushićenost” koju definira ovako: „Epizoda koja se smatra početnom (ali može biti i naknadno rekonstruirana) i u kojoj je zaljubljeni subjekt ‚ushićen’ (zarobljen i očaran) slikom voljenog objekta (pučki naziv: *ljubav na prvi pogled* ili *udar groma*; učeni naziv: *enamoracija*).”³ Ovdje je riječ o ambivalentnoj strani ljubavi, kao osjećaju istovremene snage i slabosti, kako to u knjizi *Figures du ravissement* analizira Marianne Massin.⁴ Badiou tu prvu fazu definira kao „ekstazu susreta”.⁵ Ljubav se tako kod određenog broja umjetnika pojavljuje kroz prizmu tog vizualnog šoka. To su umjetnici koji su pristali pokazati i progovoriti o zapanjenosti činom zaljublivanja. Oni koji su odlučili od toga napraviti umjetničko djelo.

Rad *Tuin (Vrt)* Rune Islam prvi mi pada na pamet. Instalacija na tri ekrana koja, ovisno o različitim točkama gledanja, dekonstruira isječak iz Fassbinderova filma *Martha*. Trenutak susreta muškarca i žene čiji intenzitet umjetnica želi uhvatiti. Razumjeti točan trenutak u kojemu se to događa ponavljanjem istoga kako bi ga pokazala i oživjela u uzajamnosti. Učiniti da umjetnost promatrača postavi u to stanje zapanjenosti kako bi ga mentalno izmjestila, postavila izvan njega samoga i ponudila mu da gotovo istovremeno iskusi dva pogleda. Dodir pogledom i, slijedom toga, pitanje koje je postavio Jacques Derrida: „Kada nam se oči dodiruju, je li dan ili noć?”⁶

Možda nam odgovor može dati *Je t'aime jour et nuit (Volim te*

dan i noć), naziv koji je Ange Leccia odabrao za svoju izložbu 2016. Njegov je cjelokupni opus svojevrsna himna ljubavi. Njegovo tumačenje *Poljupca* drugi je rad na koji pomišljam. Sklop dvaju kazališnih projektora, koji se nazivaju i *poursuites* (pratnja), s ružičastim svjetlom, postavljenih jedan prema drugom i zaslijepljeni svjetlom drugoga. Tijela su se približila i gotovo da se dotiču. U svakom slučaju, dodiruju se snagom svjetla što funkcionira poput milovanja. Prelazak u sjedinjenje. To će uvijek biti tek faza koja za Badioua ima značenje događaja:

„To je ono što nazivamo susretom. Tom susretu dajem na pomalo metafizički način status *događaja*, odnosno nečega što ne ulazi u neposredan zakon stvari.”⁷

Zaljublivanje nakon prvog vizualnog kontakta, gubitak orijentira od poljupca što spaja usne i stapa tijela, ljubav na prvi pogled kao unutrašnji potres od kojeg srce lupa u ritmu ljubavi. I ovdje mislim na *Heartbeat* Nan Goldin, na *I Am a Victim of This Song* Pipilotti Rist ili na *I Dream of kissing you over and again* Tracy Emin. Od vidljive površine do unutrašnjeg pulsiranja koje je pak nevidljivo. Ne mora nas čuditi što upravo umjetnice primjenjuju ljubav i govore o njoj bez kompleksa, otvoreno i bez zadržke. I što prihvaćaju preuzeti rizik ljubavi jer za Badioua to znači preuzeti rizik patnje.

Premda ove tri umjetnice eksperimentiraju time, one ipak sam koncept ljubavi okreću prema onome nakon zaljublivanja, drugim

the first stage of love. Roland Barthes uses the expression “ravishment”, which he defines in the following way: “The supposedly initial (though it may be reconstructed after the fact) during which the amorous subject is “ravished” (captured and enchanted) by the image of the loved object (popular name: *love at first sight*; scholarly name: *enamoration*).”³ Here we are speaking of the ambivalent side of love: the feeling of empowerment and weakness at the same time, as discussed by Marianne Massin in her book *Figures du ravissement*.⁴ Badiou has defined this first stage as “the ecstasy of encounter”.⁵ In some artists, love thus appears through the prism of this visual shock. These artists have agreed to reveal and speak about their astonishment with the act of falling in love. They have decided to turn it into a work of art.

The first such artwork that comes to my mind is *Tuin (Garden)* by Runa Islam. It is an installation consisting of three screens on which, depending on the perspective, she deconstructs an excerpt from Fassbinder’s film *Martha*. The moment of encounter between a man and a woman is of an intensity that the artist sought to capture. Her aim was to understand the exact moment in which it happened by repeating the same segment in order to show and restore it in its mutuality, allowing art to transpose the observers into the state of astonishment and displace them mentally, to transfer them beyond their own selves and make them experience two points of view almost simultaneously.

It meant touching by looking, relating to the question posed by Jacques Derrida: “When our eyes touch, is it day or night?”⁶

The answer may be in *Je t'aime jour et nuit (I love you day and night)*, a title that Ange Leccia chose for his exhibition in 2016. His entire opus is a sort of ode to love. His interpretation of the *Kiss* is the second artwork that comes to my mind. It consisted of two theatre projectors emitting pink light, also known as *poursuites* (accompaniment), placed vis-à-vis and blinded by each other, their bodies coming closer and almost touching. In any case, they touched each other with the power of light, like caressing. They were on their way to a union and this is always the stage that, for Badiou, has the significance of an event:

“This is what we know as “the encounter”. (...) And I would give this encounter the quasi-metaphysical status of an *event*, namely of something that doesn’t enter into the immediate order of things.”⁷

Falling in love at the first visual contact, losing one’s orientation after a kiss that unites the lips and merges the bodies, love at first sight as an internal earthquake that makes our hearts beat in the rhythm of love. Here I must think of Nan Goldin’s *Heartbeat* Nan Goldin, *I Am a Victim of This Song* by Pipilotti Rist, or *I Dream of Kissing You Over and Again* by Tracy Emin. From the visible surface to inner pulsation that is invisible. No wonder, it is the female artists who use love and speak of it with no complexes, openly and without reserve. And they agree to take the risk of love, since for Badiou this means taking the risk of suffering.

riječima, ne zanima ih događaj susreta kada se tijela stapaju, već osvještavanje razlike, nužne drugačijosti istinske ljubavi, u ovom slučaju ljubavi zaodjenute u bol u koju se ponekad pretvara. Badiou govori o „izgradnji svijeta na osnovi različitosti”⁸ čak i kada govori da se „ljubav odnosi na cjelovitost bića drugoga, a prepuštanje tijela materijalni je simbol te cjelovitosti”.⁹ Svaka na svoj način, ove tri umjetnice traže ljubav u svojim radovima čiji nam nazivi već mnogo govore. I premda one svjedoče o poteškoći ljubavi, njihovo nastojanje da je učine trajnom, da je upišu u vrijeme onkraj trenutka susreta, ono je što opet potvrđuje istinu ljubavi kakvu njihovi radovi stvaraju i pronose:

„Najzanimljivija točka, ustvari, nije pitanje ekstaze početaka. Ekstaza početaka postoji, ali ljubav je prije svega trajna konstrukcija. (...) Prava je ljubav ona koja trajno trijumfira, ponekad i teško, nad preprekama koje joj postavljaju prostor, svijet i vrijeme.”¹⁰

Otpor posredstvom ljubavi od pamtivijeka je upisan u čin zaljublivanja, baš kao što je autentičnost ljubavi upisana u njezinu dugovječnost. Pa ako bi trebalo navesti samo jedno djelo koje svjedoči o načinu na koji se ljubav u umjetnosti mora uvijek iznova izmisliti, odabrala bih knjigu *Liebe=Love* Hansa Petera Feldmanna. To je zbirka koja okuplja njegovu kolekciju crno-bijelih amaterskih fotografija. Tema: ljubav. To su parovi, osobe bliske jedne drugima koje se gledaju ili se ne dodiruju. Te stare fotografije mogu nam se

činiti zastarjelima ili nadidenima zbog crno-bijele tehnike, no one se ipak tim snažnije upisuju u bezvremenost.

„Blaga mjesečina i crne mjesečeve sjene 9. u osam i jedanaest sati imaju na mene jednako blagotvorni učinak kao u Milanu *during Mét's time*; samo nedostaju zvona svakih pet minuta što mi odjekuju u prsima.”¹¹

S francuskog prevela Nataša Medved

¹ Alain Badiou, *Eloge de l'amour* Paris, Flammarion, 2009., str. 72. Hrv. izdanje *Pohvala ljubavi*, Meandarmedia, Zagreb, 2011., 63; prev. Martina Kramer.

² *Ibid.* fr. str. 26, hrv. str. 22.

³ Roland Barthes: bilješke za *Fragments of love discourse* izložene na izložbi *Les écritures de Roland Barthes. Panorama*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2015. Hrv. izdanje. Roland Barthes, *Fragments of love discourse*, Pelago, 2007., 168; prev. Bosiljka Brlečić.

⁴ Marianne Massin, *Les Figures du ravissement. Enjeux philosophiques et esthétiques*, Paris, Grasset / Le Monde, 2001.

⁵ Alain Badiou, op. cit. fr., str. 30, hrv. str. 22.

⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Jean-Luc Nancy, le toucher*, Edition Galilée, Paris, 2000, 11. Citat Jean-Luca Nancyja, premda autor ne navodi izvor.

⁷ Alain Badiou, op.cit., fr. str. 38; hrv. str. 32.

⁸ *Ibid.*, fr. str. 32, hrv. str. 27.

⁹ *Ibid.*, fr. str. 44; hrv. str. 37.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, fr. str. 40–41; hrv., 34.

¹¹ Rim, 10. ožujka (dnevnik), u: Stendhal, *De l'amour*, Folio 1980., 486.

Even though these three artists experimented with the concept of love, they still turned it towards what happens after falling in love. In other words, they were not interested in the event of encounter, when the bodies merge, but in the realization of difference, the necessary otherness of true love, in this case love wrapped in pain, into which it sometimes turns. Badiou speaks of “the construction of the world on the basis of difference,”⁸ even when saying that “love relates to the totality of the being of the other, and the surrender of the body becomes the material symbol of that totality.”⁹ Each in her own way, these three artists have been looking for love in their artworks with telling titles. And even though they testify of the hardships of love, it is their effort to make it last, to inscribe it into a time beyond the moment of encounter, that confirms the truth of love such as established and transmitted by their work:

“In fact, it isn't the ecstasy of those beginnings that is remarkable. The latter are clearly ecstatic, but love is above all a construction that lasts. (...) Real love is one that triumphs lastingly, sometimes painfully, over the hurdles erected by time space, and the world.”¹⁰

Since times immemorial, resistance by means of love has been inscribed into the act of falling in love, just like the authenticity of love is inscribed into its longevity. And if one should name a single work that shows how love must always be reinvented in art, I would choose *Liebe=Love* by Hans Peter Feldmann. It is a book with his collection of amateur black-and-white photographs. Their subject: love. They show couples, persons close to one another who look at each other and do

not touch. These old photographs may seem outdated or surpassed because of their black-and-white technique, but this only helps transmit the idea of timelessness.

“Mild moonlight and black shadows of the Moon on the 9th at 8:11 have an equally soothing effect on me as in Milan during *Mét's time*; the only thing missing are the bells ringing every five minutes, resounding in my chest.”¹¹

Translated by Marina Schumann

¹ Alain Badiou, *Eloge de l'amour* (Paris: Flammarion, 2009), p. 72; Eng. ed. *In Praise of Love*, trans. Peter Bush (London: Serpent's Tail, 2012), p. 68.

² *Ibid.*, p. 26; Eng. ed. pp. 16-17.

³ Roland Barthes, notes for *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, presented at the exhibition *Les écritures de Roland Barthes. Panorama* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2015); Eng. ed. *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, trans. Richard Howard (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), p. 188.

⁴ Marianne Massin, *Les Figures du ravissement. Enjeux philosophiques et esthétiques* (Paris: Grasset/Le Monde, 2001).

⁵ Alain Badiou, op. cit., p. 30; Eng. ed. pp. 21-22.

⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Jean-Luc Nancy, le toucher* (Paris: Edition Galilée, 2000), p. 11. The author quotes here Jean-Luc Nancy, but without a reference.

⁷ Alain Badiou, op.cit., p. 38; Eng. ed. p. 28.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32; Eng. ed. p. 23.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 44; Eng. ed. p. 36.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41; Eng. ed. p. 32.

¹¹ Rome, March 10 (diary) in: Stendhal, *De l'amour*, Folio 1980, p. 486