

# POSTSKRIPTUM ZA JEDNU DAVNU IZLOŽBU (NOVE) FOTOGRAFIJE

Inicijativa pokretanja bijenalne priredbe pod nazivom *Nova fotografija* – koliko me sjećanje služi – pristigla je 1973. od vodstva Salona Rotovž u Mariboru, ponuđena je suradnji koju su spremno prihvatili Galerija suvremene umjetnosti iz Zagreba i Muzej savremene umetnosti iz Beograda. Selektorski odbor prve izložbe činili su Stane Bernik, Radoslav Putar i pisac ovih redova, izlagači su bili – izabrani od spomenutih izbornika – Ivan Dvoršak, Stane Jagodič, Zmago Jeraj (Maribor/Ljubljana), Petar Dabac, Željko Jerman, Enes Midžić (Zagreb), Mirko Lovrić, Tomislav Peternek (Beograd), a kojem je popisu Putar priključio Ahmeta Imamovića iz Sarajeva. No, ma koliko nastojala promovirati shvaćanja fotografije što su se u tadašnjem poimanju medija mogla smatrati „novima“, ta izložba je već uskoro bila u glavnini još uvijek estetske fotografije (s iznimkom Jermana), „nove“ tek u odnosu na klupsku i standardnu tzv. „umjetničku fotografiju“. Sa znatno više prava taj će atribut posjedovati sljedeća izložba (od ukupno tri u seriji) pod nazivom *Nova fotografija 2 – Fotografija kao umjetnost*, kojoj se kao organizatori i mjesta održavanja navode Centar za fotografiju, film i televiziju iz Zagreba, Muzej savremene umetnosti iz Beograda i Razstavni salon Rotovž iz Maribora. U ime svih triju spomenutih ustanova autorica izložbe, kojoj je uloga bila odabrati sudionike ne više s domaće (onodobne jugoslavenske) nego s tada aktualne međunarodne umjetničke (naglašavam umjetničke umjesto fotografske) scene,

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# POSTSCRIPT TO AN EXHIBITION OF (NEW) PHOTOGRAPHY LONG AGO

The initiative of launching a biennial event under the title "New Photography" – if I remember well – came in 1973 from the leadership of Rotovž Salon in Maribor. They offered cooperation that was readily accepted by both the Gallery of Contemporary Art in Zagreb and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade. The selection committee for the first exhibition consisted of Stane Bernik, Radoslav Putar, and the author of these lines, while the exhibitors – chosen by the aforementioned committee – included Ivan Dvoršak, Stane Jagodič, Zmago Jeraj (Maribor/Ljubljana), Petar Dabac, Željko Jerman, Enes Midžić (Zagreb), Mirko Lovrić, and Tomislav Peternek (Belgrade), to which list Putar added Ahmet Imamović from Sarajevo. But however much this exhibition sought to promote the understanding of photography that could be considered "new" with regard to the media used in those times, it still featured mostly aesthetical photography (with the exception of Jerman), which was "new" only with regard to the standard, so-called "artistic photography" as it was practiced in various photo-clubs. The attribute of "new" would prove far more deserved by the next exhibition (there were altogether three in the series), which was called "New Photography 2 – Photography as Art". Among its organizers and hosts, there were the Centre for Photography, Film, and Television Zagreb, the Museum of contemporary Art Belgrade, and the Rotovž Exhibition Salon in Maribor. In the name of all three institutions, the author of the exhibition, which no longer aimed at selecting its participants from the local scene alone (which

bila je voditeljica Galerije Studentskog kulturnog centra iz Beograda Biljana Tomić.

Što se to u svega dvije godine toliko krupnog i dalekosežnog dogodilo da je jedna izložba koja je, kao i prethodna, nosila i zadržala naslov *Nova fotografija*, sada zapravo bila posvećena aktualnim zbivanjima u svijetu suvremene umjetnosti (dakle umjetnosti u cjelini, nipošto jedino fotografije)? Kako bi se ponudio razložen odgovor na to pitanje, valja se sjećanjem vratiti u burne i uzbudljive rane sedamdesete godine minuloga stoljeća, prisjetiti se atmosfere tadašnje „nove umjetničke prakse“, pod kojim su se skupnim pojmom razumijevale pojave poput konceptualne umjetnosti, umjetničkih akcija u izvangalerijskim prostorima grada i prirode, dematerijalizacije umjetničkoga objekta, izravnoga govora tijela umjetnika/umjetnice „u prvom licu“, riječju „umjetničkoga ponašanja“, a što je sve nametnulo potrebu uvođenja i korištenja tehničkih, statičkih i pokretnih medija registracije umjetničkih zbivanja (fotografija, polaroid, kseroks, film, video) među legitimne operative postupke suvremenoga umjetnika. Promjena poimanja umjetnosti što je tada nastupila bila je, dakle, temeljnija i znatno dalekosežnija od pojave samo jedne umjetničke tendencije: posrijedi je, zapravo, promjena egzistencijalnih raspoloženja i u konačnici promjena ukupnoga svjetonazora pod izravnim i neizravnim utjecajima povijesnih zbivanja što se jednom riječju mogu obilježiti pojmom „šezdesetosma“ i njezinim posljedicama u



ULAY (UWE LAYSIEPEN),  
TETOVAŽA, 1972.

ULAY (UWE LAYSIEPEN),  
TATTOO, 1972

included all of Yugoslavia at the time), but included artists from the current international scene (I choose to speak of artists rather than photographers), was Biljana Tomić, manager of the Gallery at the Student Cultural Centre in Belgrade.

What happened in the course of only two years that was so huge and far-reaching that an exhibition that used and kept the title of “New Photography”, same as the previous one, was now actually dedicated to the current phenomena in the world of contemporary art (that is, art as a whole rather than photography alone)? In order to offer an insightful answer to this question, one needs to recall those tumultuous and exciting early 1970s, to remember the atmosphere of the “new artistic practice”, an umbrella term that included various phenomena such as conceptual art, artistic actions in public spaces and in nature, outside of the galleries, dematerializations of the art object, and the direct language of the artist’s body “in the first person” by using the words of “artistic behaviour”, all of which imposed the need of introducing and using various technical, static, and mobile recording media (photographs, Polaroid, Xerox, film, video) among the legitimate operational procedures of a contemporary artist. In other words, the change in understanding art, which was taking place at the time, was more complete and far-reaching than the emergence of a single artistic tendency: in fact, it was a change in the existential moods and eventually a change in the entire worldview under the direct or indirect influences of historical processes that can be

described by a single term of '68 and its consequences in almost all areas of contemporary art and culture. Tracing that process, we may conclude the following: practically any means of expression that was at the artist’s disposal, including the photographic and film camera, could be used as legitimate without any hesitation. Therefore, the selector’s task was to seek out all those numerous authors who used a camera in their artistic practice, continuously or temporarily, and yet as a mandatory operational instrument; to become acquainted with their work, contact them, and persuade them to exhibit. Even a mere glance at the list of participants at the exhibition, the scope and the results of the invested efforts seem almost incredible: judging from the catalogue, there were 76 participants with altogether 103 exhibits. It is difficult to single out any particular name, since almost all of them deserve to be mentioned, but I will list only those with outstanding international reputation: John Baldessari, Bern and Hilla Becher, Christian Boltanski, Jean Le Gac, Jochen Gez, John Hilliard, Ulrike Rosenbach, Katherine Sieverding..., protagonists of the phenomenon called “Narrative Art”: David Askevold, Bill Beckley, Robert Cummings, Roger Cutworth, and Roger Welch, then a strong Italian team (Cioni Capri, Fabio Mauri, Luihi Ontani, Franco Vaccari), participants from the US such as Marcia Resnick, Alan Sonfist, Al Souza, Ulay (who was the partner of Marina Abramović at the time); then artists from Eastern Europe, who were exhibiting for the first time in such numbers outside of their countries: Andrzej

skoro svim područjima suvremene kulture i umjetnosti. A tragom toga procesa kao zaključak slijedi: praktično svako izražajno sredstvo što umjetniku/umjetnici stoji na raspolaganju, tako i fotografska i filmska kamera, u načelu jest bilo dopušteno bez ikakva suzdržavanja.

Zadaća je selektorice bila, dakle, pronaći, upoznati njihov rad, kontaktirati, privoljeti na izlaganje brojne autore kojima je kamera u tadašnjim umjetničkim praksama postala stalnim ili privremenim, ali svakako obveznim operativnim instrumentom. Kada se danas tek letimice sagleda spisak sudionika te izložbe, upravo nevjerojatnim čini se zahvat i učinak obavljena posla: sudeći po podacima u katalogu okupljeno je 76 sudionika s ukupno 103 izložka. Teško je izdvojiti samo neka imena, zato jer bi skoro sva odreda zavrjedila biti spomenuta, no ipak evo barem onih s vrhunskom međunarodnom reputacijom: John Baldessari, Bernd i Hilla Becher, Christian Boltanski, Jean Le Gac, Jochen Gerz, John Hilliard, Ulrike Rosenbach, Katherina Sieverding..., protagonisti fenomena nazvanog *Narrative Art* David Askevold, Bill Beckley, Robert Cummings, Roger Cutworth, Roger Welch, slijedi jaka talijanska ekipa (Cioni Capri, Fabio Mauri, Luihi Ontani, Franco Vaccari), američki sudionici Marcia Resnick, Alan Sonfist, Al Souza, tadašnji partner Marine Abramović Ulay, po prvi puta izvan njihovih sredina u tako znatnom broju umjetnici iz Istočne Europe, poljaci Andrzej Lachowicz, Natalia LL, Janusz Hakka, Jolanda

Marcola, Zdzislaw Sosnovski, Česi Karel Miler, Jan Mlcoch, Jiří Valoch, Mađar Gabor Attalai, te nipošto na posljednjem mjestu domaći (tadašnji jugoslavenski) predstavnici nove umjetnosti sedamdesetih godina Marina Abramović, Jovan Čekić, Radomir Damjan, Braco Dimitrijević, Vladimir Dodig-Trokut, Nuša Srečo Dragan, Ivan Ladislav Galeta, Vladimir Gudac, Željko Jerman, Milenko Matanović, Slavko Matković, David Nez, Neša Paripović, Zoran Popović, Mirko Radojčić, Mladen i Sven Stilinović, Balint Szombathy, Miško Šuvaković, Raša Todosijević, Goran Trbuljak, Fedor Vučemilović, sudionici prve izložbe *Nova fotografija* Petar Dabac i Zmago Jeraj.

Golema većina prethodno spomenutih autora po svojoj vokaciji, profesionalnom i društvenom statusu jesu „umjetnici“, tek poneki od njih pristali bi nazvati se „fotografima“. Konceptija izložbe o kojoj je riječ inzistira, dakle, na načelnoj tipološkoj distinkciji između „fotografije umjetnika“ i „fotografije fotografa“, razlici koja se danas glavninom i s pravom smatra izlišnom i prevladanom. No u vrijeme priređivanja ove izložbe razdvajanje pojmova umjetnik, s jedne, odnosno fotograf, s druge strane, činilo se potrebnim zato što se pri tome inzistira na specifičnim svojstvima rada umjetnika koji se koriste medijem fotografije. Naime, ključna granična točka u toj distinkciji jest sljedeća: „fotografija umjetnika“ ne duguje estetskim fotografskim vrijednostima (vizualnoj privlačnosti snimka, tehničkoj savršenosti izvedbe i slično), umjesto kojih kriterija u prvi plan izbija analitički i

JERKO

DENEGRİ

Lachowicz, Natalia LL, Janusz Hakka, Jolanda Marcola, and Zdzislaw Sosnovski from Poland, Karel Miler, Jan Mlcoch, and Jiří Valoch from Czechoslovakia, Gabor Attalai from Hungary, and eventually our local, Yugoslav representatives of new art in the 1970s: Marina Abramović, Jovan Čekić, Radomir Damjan, Braco Dimitrijević, Vladimir Dodig-Trokut, Nuša Srečo Dragan, Ivan Ladislav Galeta, Vladimir Gudac, Željko Jerman, Milenko Matanović, Slavko Matković, David Nez, Neša Paripović, Zoran Popović, Mirko Radojčić, Mladen and Sven Stilinović, Balint Szombathy, Miško Šuvaković, Raša Todosijević, Goran Trbuljak, and Fedor Vučemilović, as well as the participants of the first exhibition of “New Photography”: Petar Dabac and Zmago Jeraj. Most of these participants were “artists” by vocation and by their professional and social status, and there were few who would have agreed to be called “photographers”. Therefore, the exhibition concept insisted on making a basic typological distinction between the “artists’ photography” and the “photographers’ photography”, a distinction that is today rightfully considered superfluous and outdated. However, at the time when the exhibition was taking place, this distinction seemed justified, because it insisted on the specific features of artworks produced by those artists who used the medium of photography. The crucial borderline in this distinction was the following: the “artists’ photography” does not owe anything to the aesthetical values of photography (the visual appeal of the shot, technical

perfection, and so on); instead of these criteria, the most important element is the analytical and self-reflexive approach, by which the artist who uses the medium of photography gets involved into testing the characteristics of his or her medium, just like a painter prone to the spirit of new art in the 1970s used the same analytical and self-reflexive approach in order to test the characteristics of (primary, elementary) painting. This proves that “new painting” and “new photography” were the characteristic phenomena of new art, which tested and questioned – both on the level of practice and on the theoretical level – its own activity in the surrounding “system of art” and “system of culture”, which eventually meant the specific social and political system. Another feature of the “artists’ photography” in the 1970s was the procedure of shooting scenes that were at the first glance realistic, although they were actually fictitious and fictional: it was, in fact, the photographic scene as a newly created “feigned reality.” Whereas a photographer almost regularly chooses and shoots what he finds in his surroundings, because he has discovered in it something common or unusual, trivial or exceptional, thus attributing it the aura of a “lucky moment”, an artist who uses photography carefully recreates the scene in order to discuss what the artist’s photography is or could be as a language or a medium. Such “artificial” character of the medium in the new art of the 1970s was considered a proof of the medium’s capacity to transmit thinking processes with

autorefleksivni pristup, čijim se posredništvom umjetnik koji se služi medijem fotografije upušta u provjeru osobina svoga medija, jednako kao što i slikar srodan duhu nove umjetnosti sedamdesetih načelno istovjetnim analitičkim i autorefleksivnim pristupom provjerava osobine (primarnog, elementarnog) slikarstva. A to potvrđuje kako se „novo slikarstvo“ i „nova fotografija“ kao karakteristični fenomeni nove umjetnosti sedamdesetih, zapravo, zasnivaju na temeljnim postulatima konceptualne umjetnosti, koja jednako na razini prakse i na razini teorije ispituje i preispituje vlastito djelovanje u okolnom „sustavu umjetnosti“ i „sustavu kulture“, što u krajnjoj posljedici znači i u korektnom društveno-političkom sustavu.

Još jedno svojstvo „fotografije umjetnika“ u sedamdesetim godinama sastoji se u postupku snimanja prizora koji na prvi pogled i po vanjskim osobinama podsjeća na realan, ali zapravo je fiktivan i fikcionalan: posrijedi je, dakle, fotografski prizor kao novonastala „fingirana realnost“. Dok, naime, fotograf skoro po pravilu bira i snima u svojoj okolici zatečeno i u njoj otkriva nešto obično ili neobično, trivijalno ili iznimno, pridajući auru „sretnoga trenutka“, dotle umjetnik koji se služi fotografijom prizor pomno re-kreira, kako bi time vodio raspravu o tome što fotografija umjetnika kao jezik i kao medij jest ili pak što može biti. Takvo se „umjetno“ svojstvo medija fotografije u sklopu nove umjetnosti sedamdesetih u to vrijeme smatralo dokazom sposobnosti toga medija da može biti prijenosnikom misaonih operacija s

izrazitim osobnim biljegom svoga autora. I napokon, još jedno od svojstava i uloga fotografije u novoj umjetnosti sedamdesetih jest ono vjernoga dokumentiranja umjetničkih postupaka poput performansa, tjelesnih akcija, intervencija umjetnika u prirodnoj i urbanoj sredini, kao i svih ostalih prolaznih događanja u vremenu i prostoru s onu stranu materijalno čvrstog i trajnog umjetničkog objekta. U tome trenutku primjena fotografije znatno proširuje raspone umjetničkih praksi izvan djelokruga klasičnih disciplina, a umjetniku dopušta otklon od manualnih i dopušta korištenje tehničkih pomagala, osim fotografije dodatno poput filma i videa. To prije što ovo posljednje suvremeni umjetnik sada legitimno može obavljati uz pomoć suradnika (snimatelja, montažera) koji mu u cijelosti rješavaju obavljanje operativnih postupaka ili mu u tome znatno olakšavaju. Danas se sve to čini potpuno razumljivim, no u jednom trenutku i u sasvim drugačijim prilikama valjalo je na domaćoj i međunarodnoj umjetničkoj sceni otkrivati i poticati protagoniste tih tadašnjih novih izražajnih mogućnosti, kako su to predočili sudionici i obavili organizatori ove serije triju povijesno važnih izložbi, *Nova fotografija 2 – Fotografija kao umjetnost*, priređenih u Zagrebu, Beogradu i Mariboru davne 1976. godine.

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a specific mark of their author. Eventually, another important feature and role of photography in the new art of the 1970s was that it accurately documented artistic procedures such as performances, body actions, interventions of artists into their natural or urban environment, as well as all those transitory events in space and time that took place beyond the materially stable and durable art object. At that moment, the use of photography considerably expanded the scope of artistic practices, taking them beyond the range of classical disciplines and enabling the artist to detach himself or herself from the manual by allowing him or her to use technical equipment, which besides photography included film and video. Moreover, these latter two could be now legitimately used by the contemporary artist with the help of his collaborators (the cameraman and the montage), who could perform the technical procedures in their entirety or at least facilitate them to a considerable degree. Today it all seems perfectly understandable, but there was a moment when, in completely different circumstances, the protagonists of these new means of expression at the international and local scene had to be sought out and encouraged, as the participants and organizers of this series of historic exhibitions under the title “New Photography 2 – Photography as Art”, organized in Zagreb, Belgrade, and Maribor, manifestly expressed and accomplished back in 1976.

BERND I HILLA BECHER,  
VODOTORNJEVI, 1980.

BERND AND HILLA BECHER,  
WATER TOWERS, 1980

