

Fokus Grupa: Občutek za delo



Fokus Grupa: A Taste for Work



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**21. 6. – 13. 7. 2014
Galerija Škuc, Ljubljana**

**Kustos:
Vladimir Vidmar**

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**Curated by:
Vladimir Vidmar**



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Kaj je v resnici osnovni neuspeh umetnosti danes? Kje se nahaja bistvo njene neizpolnjene obljube o boljšem svetu? Slovenska teoretičarka umetnosti Bojana Kunst¹ je potencialni odgovor artikulirala v povezavi s paradoksom, da je podoba umetnika pravzaprav idealna paradigma postfordističnega delavca, ki proizvaja s kognitivnimi in afektivnimi močmi v fleksibilnih delovnih razmerah brez ločevanja med delovnim in prostim časom.

Prav čas kot nevralgična točka splošne prekarizacije, ki jo simbolizira podoba umetnika, je v središču razstave *Občutek za delo* reškega umetniškega kolektiva Fokus Grupe. Čeprav skupina produkcijske razmere v sodobnem umetniškem svetu tudi sicer pogosto postavlja pod drobnogled, je ta projekt zgoščena refleksija postfordistične investicije v kreativne moči človeka.

Aktivna vloga umetnosti pri spreminjanju sveta je polna paradoksov, skorajda ironije, o čemer najbolj priča dolgo 20. stoletje. Začne se z eksperimenti zgodovinskih avantgard, predvsem ruske, ki v iskanju

¹ Bojana Kunst, *Umetnik na delu*, Maska Ljubljana 2012, str. 124

What is really the main shortcoming of art today? Where is the essence of its unfulfilled promise of a better world? According to Slovenian art theoretician Bojana Kunst¹, a possible answer can be formulated with regard to the paradox that the artist personifies the ideal of the post-Fordist worker who produces using cognitive and affective powers in flexible working conditions without making a distinction between work and free time.



Time is the neuralgic point of general precarisation symbolised by the image of the artist, which is the focus of the exhibition *A Taste for Work* by the Fokus Grupa art collective.

While the collective has often been preoccupied with examining production conditions in contemporary art, this project is a concise reflection on post-Fordist investment in individual's creative abilities.

Art's active role in changing the world is riddled with paradox, almost irony, which was most evident in the long 20th century. It began with the experiments of the historical avant-gardes, particularly the Russian avant-

¹ Bojana Kunst, *Umetnik na delu*, Maska Ljubljana 2012, p. 124

novega človeka briše tisto, kar razume kot buržoazno razmejitev zasebnega in javnega življenja.

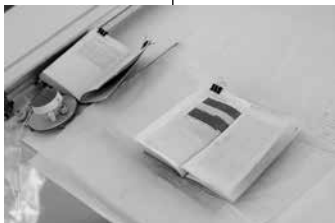
Avantgarda izvaja ta projekt konsistentno, pri čemer jo zanima tudi oblikovanje vsakdanjih predmetov.

Projekt Fokus Grupe zato sledi načrtom Aleksandra

Rodčenka in njegovih učencev ter rekonstruira dva kosa pohištva, multifunkcionalna predmeta, s kakršnimi je hotel Rodčenkov krog revolucionarizirati vsakdanjik in prebiti oklep zasebnega kot zatočišča preživetih buržoaznih navad. V središču tega obračuna je postelja, simbolni prostor malomeščanske intime in prokreacije. Postelja zato postane *kamfplatz*, bojno polje ideološkega obračuna ruske inteligence s t. i. *bytom*, malomeščanskim vsakdanjikom.

Tem obračunom z zasebnostjo spalnice sledi v svojem tekstu *Remaking the Bed* literarna teoretičarka Olga Matich, ki izvore tega preizpraševanja najde v delih ruskih nihilistov, zgodnjih socialistov in simbolistov druge polovice 19. st². Njihove pogosto zasanjane in utopistične ideje dokončno prizemljijo ruska

² Olga Matich, "Remaking the Bed: Utopia in Daily Life," v *Laboratory of Dreams: The Russian Avant-Garde and the Cultural Experiment*, ur. Olga Matich and John E. Bowlt, st. 60-64



garde, whose quest for a new man strived to erase what it understood as the bourgeois separation of private and public life. As the avant-garde implemented this idea consistently, it inevitably started to redesign everyday objects. In their project, Fokus Grupa follow the

designs of Alexander Rodchenko and his students, and re-construct two pieces of furniture, multi-functional objects that sought to revolutionise everyday life and break through the shell of the private sphere as the refuge of outdated bourgeois habits. The central point in this battle is the bed, a symbolic space of bourgeois intimacy and procreation. Therefore, the bed becomes the *kamfplatz*, a battle field for the ideological war of the Russian intelligentsia on the so-called *byt*, the everyday life of petit bourgeoisie.

The war on the privacy of the bedroom is examined by the literary theoretician Olga Matich in her text *Remaking the Bed*, where she traces ideological continuity to the works of the Russian nihilists, early socialists and symbolists in the second half of the 19th

² Olga Matich, "Remaking the Bed: Utopia in Daily Life," in *Laboratory of Dreams: The Russian Avant-Garde and the Cultural Experiment*, ed. Olga Matich and John E. Bowlt, pp. 60-64

revolucija in avantgardna gibanja, ki v iskanju novega človeka in njegovega *novega byta* vzvišen idiom simbolizma vrnejo k realnosti produkcijskih razmer³. Večnamenska postelja in delovna miza, ki ju po načrtih Rodčenkove šole reartikulira Fokus Grupa, sta v izvirnem kontekstu nastopali (vsaj deklarativno, saj ne vemo, če sta kdaj res bili v širši uporabi) kot povzetek dolge linije poskusov revolucije tradicionalnega

vsakdana. Avantgardni eksperiment je z emfatičnim preoblikovanjem vsakdanjika meril na transgresijo starega: multifunkcionalnost pohištva v tem kontekstu odseva učinkovitost novega človeka in je v očeh avantgarde emancipatoren koreografski moment. Prav to dimenzijo poudari Fokus Grupa v delu *Exercising Novy Byt*. Priročna zložljivost pohištva Rodčenkovega kroga implicira (sinhrono?) gibanje človeških teles pri spreminjanju njegove namembnosti, ki ga ponazorita člana Fokus Grupe v dveh serijah fotokolažev. Koordinirani gibi na fotokolažih nas z združevanjem elementov priročnikov za uporabo pohištva in telovadbe pripeljejo do ključnih vprašanj revolucionariziranja vsakdana z novim, učinkovitejšim človekom. Če naprej sledimo

³ Ibid., str. 64

century². Their frequently dreamy and utopian ideas were concretized by the Russian revolution and avant-garde movements, as their quest for the new man and his new way of life, *novy byt* brought elevated symbolic discourse back to the material reality of production conditions³.

In their original context, the multi-purpose bed and desk, re-articulated by Fokus Grupa in accordance with the designs of Rodchenko's circle,

were a culmination of a long series of attempts to revolutionise traditional everyday life (at least in principle, as we do not know if they ever were in wider use). The avant-garde experiment with an emphatic re-designing of everyday life sought to transgress the old: in this respect, the multi-functionality of furniture reflects the efficiency of the new man, which was seen as emancipatory by the avant-garde. This aspect is highlighted by Fokus Grupa in their work *Exercising Novy Byt*. The very practical foldable furniture designed by Rodchenko's circle implies the (synchronous) movement of human bodies when changing the furniture's designated purpose, which is demonstrated by the two members of Fokus Grupa in two series of photo collages. By combining

³ Ibid., p. 64



Bojani Kunst⁴, zgodovina plesa nazorno kaže prehod na nove paradigme. Medtem ko koreografi fordističnega Zahoda zgodnjega 20. stoletja kot odgovor na poudarjeno racionaliziranje tovarniškega gibanja odkrivajo svobodno, spontano in »naravno« gibanje individualnih teles v prostem času, se v oblikujoči se komunistični državi ta zgodovina vpisuje povsem drugače. Revolucionarna Rusija se v državo oblikuje v času izrednega vpliva taylorizma, ki ga emfatično sprejema, vendar z ideološko nasprotno interpretacijo. Sinhrono gibanje delavcev postane v kontekstu (post)revolucionarnega iskanja novega človeka in (predvsem) družbe transformativni element preraščanja reakcionarne individualnosti.



Če citiramo Kunstovo, gre za idejo, »da so lahko načini proizvodnje prepleteni s spreminjanjem družbe na splošno«⁵. Prav to je dimenzija Rodčenkovih kosov za novega človeka, na kateri gradi Fokus Grupa v delu *Exercising Novy Byt*. Transformativna družbena koreografija revolucionarne države izbriše ločnice med tovarniškim delom in zasebnim življenjem,

⁴ Bojana Kunst, *Umetnik na delu*, Maska Ljubljana 2012, str. 90-95

⁵ Ibid., str. 95

elements of instruction manuals and physical exercise, their coordinated movements lead us to crucial issues connected to revolutionising every day life through a newer, more efficient human. As Bojana Kunst⁴ argues, the history of dance clearly demonstrated transitions to new paradigms. While choreographers in the Fordist West of the early

20th century discovered the uninhibited, spontaneous and "natural" movement of individual bodies in free time as a response to the rationalisation of movement in factories, the new Communist state had a completely different history. Revolutionary Russia emerged at the same time as the extraordinary influence of Taylorism, which was emphatically accepted, but with an ideologically opposite interpretation. In the context of the post-revolutionary quest for the new man and (in particular) society, the synchronous movement of workers became the transformative element of overcoming reactionary individualism.

Kunst argues that it is an idea that "the modes of production are intertwined with the general transformation of society"⁵. This

⁴ Bojana Kunst, *Umetnik na delu*, Maska Ljubljana 2012, pp. 90-95

⁵ Ibid., p. 95

delovnim in prostim časom; telo tako postane locus družbene spremembe. Vendar je to tudi točka, ki jo Fokus Grupa prepozna kot začetno možnost novega, še splošnejšega izkoriščanja potenciala delavca, ki ga 70 let kasneje vpelje postfordistična paradigma. S temi se zapiše zadnje poglavje genealogije današnjih proizvodnih razmer. Nove strategije izkoriščanja črpajo iz običajnih afektivnih, komunikativnih in kreativnih človeških moči, med katere sodi tudi človeško gibanje, ter iz enotenja dimenzije časovnosti, ki postaja povsem podvržena produkciji.

Zgodovina optimizacije gibov in dela kot razporeditve teles v času in prostoru izredno nazorno kaže polastitev eksplicitno emancipatornega avangardnega projekta novega človeka in nastavke za njegovo še bolj dosledno eksploatacijo, s čemer se ironično sklene krog avantgardnih eksperimentov.

Skoraj stoletje pozneje se paradokсна postfordistična reartikulacija nadaljuje z apropiacijo avantgardnega načela v pisarniški opremi, ki poskuša s kombinacijo delovnega gibanja in svojevrstne »pisarniške telovadbe« omogočiti, da je telo čim dlje sposobno služiti kapitalu. Zato mesto na razstavi *Občutek za delo* najdejo tudi t. i.

aspect of Rodchenko's pieces for the new man is explored by Fokus Grupa in the work *Exercising Novy Byt*. The transformative social choreography of the revolutionary state eliminates the separation between factory work and private life, work time and free time, and the body becomes a place of social change. This point is identified by Fokus Grupa as an opportunity for a new and more general exploitation of the worker's potential, which was to be introduced by post-Fordist paradigm 70 years later. It is with this that the genealogy of existing production conditions is concluded: the new strategies of exploitation draw on general affective, communicative and creative human abilities, including movement, as well as on the uniformity of the temporal element, which is becoming completely subjugated to the dimension of production.

The history of optimising movement and work in terms of arranging bodies in time and space clearly demonstrates the appropriation of the explicitly emancipatory avant-garde project of the new man and potential for even more consistent exploitations, which ironically completes the circle of avant-garde experiments.

Almost a century later, its paradoxical post-Fordist re-articulation appropriates the avant-garde principle through

klečalniki, množično proizvedeni stoli, vpeljujoč film *What could Possibly Incite Human Beings to Undertake Tedious, Tiresome, Tasks?*, ki meditativne velikonočne obrede prepleta s fragmenti knjige Michela Houllebecq'a *Platform*. Knjiga postane predmet minucioznega rokodelskega angažmaja umetnikov, ki v zamudnem, monotonem početu šrafirajo in s črnim grafitom pokrivajo velike odseke besedila. Po tem umetniško obrtniškem obredu ostane napol enigmatičen umetniški objekt, ki gledalcu ponuja pogled na črno polje, ki se kot meander vije skozi knjigo, bralcu pa ostanejo samo fragmenti besedila, ki lucidno opisujejo idealne in manj idealne akterje postfordistične tržne arene. Fokus Grupa tako formalno in hkrati performativno citira hrvaškega umetnika Julija Knifera in njegovo preizpraševanje modernističnih paradig napredka z neutrudnim ponavljanjem motiva. Zdi se, da se zamudnost ponavljajočega se giba spogleduje z zdavnaj preživetimi produkcijskimi modeli, hkrati pa prav ta proces na ravni besedila ogoli optimalne modele dela v postfordizmu.



Film nadaljuje to raziskavo ter se s sopostavljanjem ritualnih opravil in leposlovnih odlomkov

office furniture, seeking to preserve the body's ability to serve capitalism as long as possible by combining working movement and particular "office workouts". Therefore, the exhibition also features mass-produced kneeling chairs, introducing the film *What could Possibly Incite Human Beings to Undertake Tedious, Tiresome, Tasks?*, which combines the meditative rituals of Holy Week and excerpts from Michel Houllebecq's *Platform*. The book is subject to a minute, dexterous engagement by the artists, who perform tiresome, monotone work by hatching and shading large chunks of text. The artistic

laborious ritual results in an enigmatic art object, which provides a view of a black field meandering through the book, and the reader is left with only those fragments of a text lucidly describing ideal and less ideal actors in post-Fordist market arena. In this

respect, Fokus Grupa formally and performatively quote the Croatian artist Julije Knifer and his examination of modernist paradigms of progress through incessant repetition of the same motif. The tedious repetitive movement seems to flirt with outdated models of production, while presenting the optimal working models of post-Fordism at the level of text.

o nematerialnem delu sprašuje o izginotju ločnice med gibanjem teles pod vplivom racionalne organizacije dela in gibanjem prostega časa. Morda lahko ritualni motiv filma beremo v luči poudarjene vidnosti dela v poznem kapitalizmu: delo kot način samorasti je samo po sebi vrednota (kariera) in se nenehno kaže, izvaja pred očmi drugih. Vendar ritualno gibanje množice teles v filmu *What could Possibly Incite Human Beings to Undertake Tedious, Tiresome, Tasks?* poraja še druga vprašanja postfordističnega dela, in sicer tista, ki so praviloma v fokusu Fokus Grupe. Tu je problematika dela v okviru sodobnega umetniškega sistema postavljena pod drobnogled. Prizori prevodov na filmskem platnu na razstavi Občutek za delo evocirajo kulturni »arheprizor« filmske zgodovine, množice, ki v prvem filmskem posnetku v zgodovini, s katerim brata Lumière dokumentirata odhod delavcev iz (fordistične) tovarne po končani izmeni. Zanimivo je, da se na isti prizor sklicuje Hito Steyerl v članku *Is Museum a Factory?*, v katerem sledi premeščanju projekcij političnih in eksperimentalnih filmov iz kino dvoran v prostore sodobnih muzejev. Medtem ko je klasična kino dvorana s svojim zaprtim prostorom, predpisanim položajem teles in kolektivno



The film continues with this exploration; by juxtaposing ritual chores and Houllebecq's literary fragments on immaterial labour, the work questions the disappearance of the separation between body movement induced by the rational organisation of labour, and the movement of free time. Perhaps the ritual motif can also be interpreted in terms of the visibility of labour in late capitalism, where work is considered a means of self-fulfilment and, consequently, a value in its own right (career), which is performed before the eyes of others. However, the ritual movement of the mass of bodies in the film mentioned above raises other questions on post-Fordist work, those otherwise explored by Fokus Grupa. The focus is on the issue of work within the contemporary art system. Scenes of processions on the film canvas evoke the cult archetypal film scene, the crowd which was recorded in the first film take in history, when the Lumière brothers documented workers leaving the (Fordist) factory after their shift ended. Interestingly, the same scene is evoked by Hito Steyerl in the article *Is the Museum a Factory?*, where she examines the transfer of screenings of political and experimental films from cinemas to contemporary museums. While classic cinema theatre operated on the same principles as a factory with

izkušnjo dogajanja sledila istim načelom kot tovarna, pomeni premestitev kino izkušnje v muzejske prostore spremembo paradigme cinematske politike⁶. Gledalci, ki prihajajo in odhajajo v sodobne muzeje,

niso množica, temveč *multituda*, saj novi prostori ne organizirajo več koherentne skupine ljudi, temveč sprejemajo tiho, atomizirano množico sodobnosti, ki niha med pasivnostjo in pretirano stimuliranostjo. Klasični (politični) kino je izobraževal, izzival akcijo, postreprezentacijska izkušnja muzeja pa organizira množico, ne da bi ji pridigovala⁷. Kako torej razumeti poetične, dekontekstualizirane posnetke filma *What could Possibly Incite Human Beings to Undertake Tedious, Tiresome, Tasks?* Gre za izkušnjo sodobnega gledalca kot delavca, ki v frakturirani, nepopolni semantiki muzeja kot družbene tovarne pogrešano politično izkušnjo javnega prostora nadomešča z bežno in priložnostno produkcijo družbenosti na temu namenjenih umetniških dogodkih. Steyerlova⁸ zato pravi, da tovarne od časov bratov Lumière nismo



its enclosed space, prescribed position of bodies and collective experience, the transfer of the cinema experience to museums transforms the paradigm of cinematic politics⁶. The viewers who visit contemporary museums are not a crowd but a *multitude*, as venues do not organise people into coherent groups, but accept the quiet atomised contemporary multitude, which

shifts between passivity and over-stimulation. The classic (political) cinema educated and challenged people into action, while the post-representation experience of the museum organises the multitude without preaching⁷. How are we to understand the poetic, de-contextualised images of the film *What could Possibly Incite Human Beings to Undertake Tedious, Tiresome, Tasks?* It is the experience of the contemporary viewer as a worker, who replaces the lack of political experience of public space in the fractured, incomplete semantics of the museum as a social factory with the fleeting and opportunist production of the social aspect

⁶ Hito Steyerl, *Is a Museum a Factory*, na: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/is-a-museum-a-factory/>, zadnji dostop 7.9.2014

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁶ Hito Steyerl, *Is a Museum a Factory*, retrieved from: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/is-a-museum-a-factory/>, on 7.9.2014

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

niti zapustili: ta pripomba je veliko več kot samo ironični komentar na dejstvo, da so sodobni muzeji dobesedno prevzeli prostorne hale industrijske dobe. Morda smo izstopili iz fordistične tovarne sinhronega gibanja produkcije in vstopili v družbeno tovarno, kjer so naše komunikacijske, kognitivne in afektivne izkušnje del kapitalističnega stroja proizvodnje vrednosti brez kakršnega koli emancipatornega potenciala.

Osrediščenje postfordističnih produkcijskih načinov na tisto, kar je skupno človeštvu⁹, močno prevrednoti emancipacijsko silo kreativnosti, v katero je verjela umetnost 20. stoletja, ki tako postane temeljna sila kapitala. Na to dejstvo s kančkom sarkazma namiguje tudi video *Une fenêtre sur le monde*, ki kaže na hibridno mešanje kontekstov delovnih opravil in sprostitve prek ustvarjalne igre s pisarniško opremo na oknih poslovne četrti Pariza. *Une fenêtre sur le monde* spremlja sprehod skozi La Defense, korporativno srce francoske prestolnice, skozi uniformni svet arhitekture jeklenih skeletov in stekla, čistih ulic in mudečih se japijev. Vendar nenadni zasuki kamere ujamejo presenetljive izbruhe »kreativnosti« na oknih poslovnih



⁹ Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1993, 44.3.

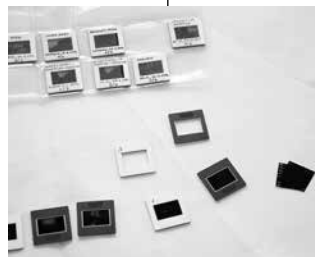
at specific art events. Steyerl⁸ argues that we have not even left the factory of the Lumière brothers, which is more than just an ironic comment on the fact that contemporary museums literally took over large industrial plants. We may have left behind the Fordist factories of synchronised production movement, but have in turn entered the social factory, where our communicative, cognitive and affective experiences are part of the capitalist machine of value production with no emancipatory potential.

Post-Fordist production methods have focused on what is common to humanity⁹, which has greatly re-evaluated the emancipatory force of creativity believed in by the art of the 20th century, making it a driving force of the capital. This fact is also hinted at with a bit of sarcasm by the video *Une fenêtre sur le monde*, which points to a hybrid mixture of contexts of working tasks and relaxation through creative play with office paraphernalia on the windows in the business district of Paris. *Une fenêtre sur le monde* follows a walk through La Defense, the corporate heart of the French capital, through the uniform world of architecture of

⁹ Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1993, 44.3.

poslopij: pisane podobe sestavljene iz barvnih samolepljivih listkov razbijajo sivino okolja. Kamera tukaj (slučajno?) ujame je še en niz fenomenov postfordistične transformacije dela. Video je namreč bil posnet leta 2011, v času tako imenovanih »vojn s samolepljivimi listki«, s katero so korporacije preusmerile ustvarjalni impulz in delovne frustracije svojih zaposlenih v pozitivistični ritual *team buildinga*. Tako se v perfidnem »rahljanju« korporativnega delovnika pred nami odpre nedosegljiv cilj: zlagana samoukinitve dela v čistem ustvarjanju.

Zato ne preseneča, da je bilo izhodišče razstave *Občutek za delo* anahronističen element Rousseaujevega dela *Sanjarjenja samotnega sprehajalca*, kjer so filozofske refleksije predstavljene s sproščenimi opisi avtorjevih botaničnih sprehodov po naravi. Kot reformulacija Rousseaujevih »sanjarjenj« je nastala serija performativnih sprehodov, na katerih so se avtorji z različnimi sogovorniki na različnih lokacijah pogovarjali o problematiki časa v kontekstu prekarnega dela. Zanimivo je, da performativni sprehodi potekajo kot precizni *reenactment* Rousseaujeve geste: tako kot filozof med sproščenim preživljanjem prostega časa opravlja svojo poklicno vlogo,



steel and glass structures, clean streets and rushing yuppies. Yet sudden turns of the camera capture surprising outbursts of "creativity" on office widows: colourful images made from post-it notes break the monotony of the environment. The scenery caught by the camera (by chance?) is yet another phenomenon of post-Fordist transformation of work. The video was shot in 2011, during the so-called *post it* wars, with which corporations channelled the creative impulse and working frustrations of their employees into positivist *team building* ritual. In perfidious "relaxation" of

corporate working day an unattainable goal is flaunted: a supposed abolishment of work through transition into pure creativity.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the exhibition as its starting point evokes the anachronistic element of J. J. Rousseau's *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, where Rousseau made philosophical elaborations through descriptions of his botanical walks in nature. The re-formulation of Rousseau's reveries led to a series of performative walks, where the artists discussed the issue of time in the context of precarious work at different locations with different people. Performative walks were rather precise re-enactments of Rousseau's movement: just like

»filozofira«, tudi umetnika v prijetnem kramljanju s svojimi sogovorniki izvajata svoje delo, umetniški projekt. Zato delo *Herbarij* že s svojo strukturo problematizira delovne pogoje v kreativnih (in drugih) poklicih, ki ga pogovori natančneje vsebinsko členijo kot *case studies*. Edini dokument teh nezabeleženih pogovorov je herbarij, v katerem so ob izbranih rastlinah na mestih za botanične taksonomske podatke navedeni ključni koncepti obravnavanih tem transformacije dela in časa prek, kot pravi Bojana Kunst, »stalne in brezobzirne aktualizacije potencialnosti, kjer je oblika, sama časovnost(...), povsem pogojena z lastno finalizacijo«¹⁰.

To obsesivno smotrno naravnost preizprašuje delo *Perfect Lovers*, ki se kot reformulacija Gonzalez-Torresove kritike heteronormativne ekonomije partnerstva spremeni v grafikon Ownove paradigme o osmih urah za delo, sprostitve in počitek, ki ga današnja zgostitev časa sploh ne prepozna v istem registru. Delo namreč sestavlja stenski uri. Vsaka je razdeljena na 12 enot, kar pomeni, da sta za izpolnitev Ownovega normativa potrebni dve osebi. Ta element



¹⁰ Bojana Kunst, *Umetnik na delu*, Maska Ljubljana 2012, str. 78

the philosopher performs his professional role while relaxing during his free time, the artists produce their work, the art project, through a series of leisurely chats with friends and colleagues. Thus the very structure of the work *Herbarium* questions the hybrid nature of time in the working conditions of creative (and other) industries, while the conversations function as case studies providing more detailed examinations. As the conversations were not recorded, the only document registering their occurrence is a herbarium. Instead of taxonomic details, the herbarium's sheets list crucial concepts that appeared in the conversations while discussing the transformation of work through, as argued by Bojana Kunst, "constant and ruthless actualisation of potentiality, where form, the temporality itself (...), is conditioned by its own finalization"¹⁰.

This obsessive goal-orientation is questioned by the work *Perfect Lovers*, which re-formulates Felix Gonzalez-Torres's critique of hetero-normative economy of partnership transforming it into a graph of Owen's paradigm of eight hours' labor, eight hours' recreation,

¹⁰ Bojana Kunst, *Umetnik na delu*, Maska Ljubljana 2012, p. 78

ekonomske dimenzije partnerstva, ki je pogosta preokupacija Fokus Grupe, ponuja v kontekstu razstave *Občutek za delo* nadaljnji ekskurz v smeri refleksije sodelovanja v postfordistični paradigmi dela. V njegovih okvirjih smo priče neizogibnemu imperativu sodelovanja oziroma, kot pravi Bojana Kunst¹¹, ekscesa sodelovanja. Ekscesnost te zahteve izhaja iz dejstva, da sodelovanje danes ne ustvarja kolektiva, temveč je pogoj, da se na stalno spreminjajočem se zemljevidu dela sploh pokažemo kot vidni. Ta premislek je posebej zanimiv premislek v kontekstu, ki ga izpostavi Fokus Grupa z delom *Perfect Lovers*, saj je fenomen sodelovanja tesno povezan z mobilnostjo in prožnostjo sodobnega dela, neprekinjeno produkcijo skozi izmenjavo sporočil, odnosov, znakov in jezikov¹². Partnerstvo tukaj deluje kot vadišče za vstop v profesionalne in poklicne odnose na delovnem mestu, vendar je tudi samo kraj proizvodnje, saj današnja produkcija vrednosti črpa iz najsplošnejšega zaklada človeških zmožnosti in nikakor ne specificira, kje naj bi se ta proizvodnja vrednosti dogajala.

¹¹ Ibid., str. 73

¹² Ibid., str. 73

eight hours' rest, which is not recognised in the same register of today's condensed time. The art work consists of two wall clocks: since each has only 12 units, it takes two people to make Owen's standard possible. This element of economic dimension of partnership, which is often examined by Fokus Grupa offers another line of reflection on cooperation in post-Fordist work paradigm. In this context, there is an unavoidable imperative to cooperate or, as formulated by Bojana Kunst¹¹, an excess of cooperation. The excessiveness is based on the fact that today cooperation does not generate a collective, but is a necessity, enabling us to become visible on the ever changing work map. In the context of *Perfect Lovers* this is particularly interesting, as the phenomenon of cooperation is closely linked to mobility and flexibility of contemporary work and continuous production by exchanging messages, relationships, signs and languages¹². Partnership functions as a training camp for professional relationships at the workplace, but is also a place of production in its own right, as today's production of value draws from the widest pool of human abilities and never specifies where it is to take place.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 73

¹² Ibid., p. 73

Položaj umetnika v produkcijskem procesu je gotovo osrednje zanimanje Fokus Grupe. Umetnik predstavlja privilegirano mesto vpogleda v libidinalne investicije najsodobnejše različice poznega kapitalizma, saj je problematična točka projekcij upov o optimalnem izkoriščanju življenja – v svoji občosti in celovitosti – pri proizvodnji vrednosti. Paradoksalno pa kot idealna paradigma postfordističnih sanj o neskončni fleksibilnosti z izkoriščanjem kreativnih, afektivnih in kognitivnih zmožnosti človeka postane nekdo, ki je kot hedonistični zajedalec najpogosteje izključen iz ekonomije, ki jo zgledno uteleša.

The position of the artist in the production process is a central focus of the Fokus Grupa. As a traumatic spot in which hopes of optimal exploitation of life in the production of value are projected, the artist presents a privileged point of insight into libidinal investments of the newest version of late capitalism. Paradoxically, the artist as the ideal paradigm of post-Fordist dreams on infinite flexibility realised by exploiting the creative, affective and cognitive abilities of individuals is labeled hedonistic parasite and as such most often excluded from the economy that it embodies so exemplarily.

Dela

Works

Excercising Novy Byt

Delo *Excercising Novy Byt* je sestavljeno iz dveh kosov rekonstruiranega pohištva, nastalega na podlagi načrtov Aleksandra Rodčenka in njegovega učenca Nikolaja Soboleva, in dveh fotokolažev navodil za uporabo pohištva. Pisarniška miza in kavč/postelja sta primera večnamenskih predmetov, ki jih je Rodčenko načrtoval v prvih letih po ruski revoluciji v okviru poskusov preoblikovanja vsakdana in ustvarjanja novega, učinkovitega človeka. Rekonstruirano pohištvo spremljajo fotokolaži, ki se zgledujejo po navodilih za uporabo in navodilih za vaje.

Pohištvo je izdelal Andrej Zavodnik.

Excercising Novy Byt consists of two pieces of reconstructed furniture made after designs by Alexandr Rodchenko and his pupil Nikolai Sobolev, paired with two sets of photo-collages made as instructions for the use of the furniture. An office table and a sofa/bed are multifunctional objects designed in the first years after the Russian Revolution as part of an attempt to redesign the everyday life and help create a new efficient human. The reconstructed furniture is accompanied by photo collages that borrow the form, both from user manuals and body exercises.

Furniture manufactured by Andrej Zavodnik.





















What could Possibly Incite Human Beings to Undertake Tedious, Tiresome, Tasks?

Film *What could Possibly Incite Human Beings to Undertake Tedious, Tiresome, Tasks?* združuje zgodbo iz fragmentov knjige umetnika *Platform* z osebnim doživljanjem dela in dokumentarnimi posnetki praznovanja velikonočnega tedna. Motiv za povezovanje besedila o delu s krščanskim obredom je podobnost med podobami rituala in prvo filmsko dokumentacijo ljudi med delom ali ko zapuščajo delo. Povezava med ritualom in delom je očitna tudi zaradi vse večje utrujenosti udeležencev med osemurnim prehodom.

Brala: Nika Mišković

Snemalca: Tamara Dugandija in
Bojan Mrđenović

Zvok: Boris Rakamarić

Besedilo po romanu *Platforma*
Michela Houellebecqa
pripravila Fokus Grupa

Montaža in režija: Fokus Grupa

Leto: 2014

Trajanje: 13'47 "

Film *What could Possibly Incite Human Beings to Undertake Tedious, Tiresome, Tasks?* combines the narrative drawn from sections of the artist book *Platform* focusing on personal experience of work with documentary footage of meditative rituals of the Holy Week. The impetus to couple text about labour with the Christian ritual is the similarity between the images of ritual and early cinematic realizations that document bodies during, or when leaving work. The correlation of ritual and work is also apparent in the increasing fatigue of participants during their eight-hour walk

Voice: Nika Mišković

Cinematography: Tamara Dugandija and
Bojan Mrđenović

Sound: Boris Rakamarić

Text by Fokus Grupa, based on a novel
Platform by Michel Houellebecq

Editing: Fokus Grupa

Year: 2014

Duration: 13'47"



Introduction (Michel)

I'm forty I'm not married. I usually wear a grey suit and sober ties, and I don't look particularly cheerful. I work for the Ministry of Culture. I plan the financing of events.

What had I produced in forty years of my existence? To tell the truth, not very much. I had managed information.

After serious but hardly distinguished studies, I had quickly found a career in the public sector. My salary was very reasonable, standing untroubled on the sidelines through successive policy changes. I was courteous, well-mannered, well-liked by colleagues and superiors; my temperament, however, was less than warm and I had failed to make any real friends.

About Marie-Jeanne (Michel)

Marie-Jeanne is my colleague; together we work on exhibition proposals, together we work for the benefit of the contemporary arts. She is a woman of thirty-five, with lank blond hair, her eyes are very light blue; I know nothing about her personal life.

Within office hierarchy, she has a position slightly senior than mine; but this is something which she ignores - she likes to emphasize team work. Although strictly speaking Marie-Jeanne does nothing, her work is, in fact, the most complicated job: she has to keep with abreast of movements, networks, trends; having assumed a level of cultural responsibility, she constantly runs the risk of being thought reactionary, even obscurantist; this is an accusation from which she must defend herself and the institution. She is also in regular contact with artists, gallery owners and the editors of obscure reviews. These telephone calls keep her happy, because her passion for contemporary art is real.

About himself (Michel)

At the office I continued to do bare minimum. Office work isn't very difficult - you simply have to be reasonably meticulous and be decisive. I had rapidly realized that you did not necessarily have to make the right decision, it was sufficient, in most cases, to make any-old-decision, as long as you made it quickly. If you work in the public sector, at least.

About artists and art market (Michel)

Most of the artists I knew behaved exactly like entrepreneurs: they carefully reconnoiter emerging markets, they try to get in fast. They had been at the same few colleges, they were cast from the same mould. There were some differences, however: in the art market, innovation was a grater premium than in most other professional sectors; artists often worked in packs or networks, in contrast to entrepreneurs who were solitary beings surrounded by enemies - shareholders ready to drop them at a moment's notice, executives always ready to betray them.



About herself (Valerie)

I work in the tourist industry.
I do almost all my work by phone.

About Valerie's studies

She passed her continuous assessment without the slightest effort.
At the same time, she enrolled in a course which would give her the equivalent of university diploma in literature and human sciences.
Once she had passed her BTS, she began a masters' in sociology.
Here too she was quickly disappointed.
It was an interesting field, there must have been discoveries to be made; but the methodologies suggested to them and the theories advanced seemed to her to be ridiculously simplistic.
She quit her course halfway through the academic year without a qualification and found a job as a travel agent.
After a couple of weeks, just as she was about to rent a studio flat, she realized: the trap was sprung; from now on she was in the world of work.

About Valerie's work in the tourist industry

She proved to be a very good saleswoman.
It wasn't difficult, all you had to do was get the customers to talk a bit, take an interest in them.

Then the management had offered her a position as assistant tour planner in their head office in Paris.
It was at that point that her career really took off.
They had put her in a team with Jean-Yves Frochot, a young business graduate who basically knew nothing at all about tourism.
He took to her immediately, trusted her and although in theory he was her boss, he gave her a lot of room for initiative.

About Jean Yves

I still could not understand his ambition, the furious energy he invested in making a success of his career.
It wasn't for the money I don't think.
Neither was it out of commitment to the company, nor from a more general altruism.
His ambition existed in its own right, it couldn't be pinned down to the one specific source.
It was probably more like the desire to build something, rather than the taste for power or competitive nature.
The social reward bestowed on him was a large salary; under other regimes it might have taken a form of an aristocratic title, or of privileges like those accorded to the members of the nomenklatura;
I didn't get the impression that it would have made much difference.
In reality, Jean-Yves worked because he had a taste for work; it was something both mysterious and clear.



IT work habits

A number of young business graduates - some of them still students - had thrown themselves headlong into market speculations without ever considering looking for paid employment.

Quite frequently, they formed groups or clubs in order to be able to make more substantial investments.

They lived with their computers, worked in shifts twenty-four hours a day, never took holidays.

Bestseller 1

The hero was young lawyer with a bright future, a talented, good-looking boy who worked eighty hours a week; The hero's wife wasn't bad either, even if she didn't work eighty hours a week; Thank God the lovebirds didn't have any children...

About the development of the company

Novotel-SIEH had been founded in 1966 by Gerard Pelisson and Paul Dubrule - one a graduate of the Ecole Centrale, the other completely self-taught - using capital borrowed entirely from family and friends.

In August 1967, the first Novotel opened its doors in Lille.

In 1972, the chain already numbered thirty-five hotels.

In 1983, the company changed its name to Aurore group.

In January '97, Paul Debrule and Gerard Pelisson resigned the presidency of the group which they ceded to Jean-Luc Espitalier, a graduate on the Ecole Normale d'Administration, whose career was described by the financial magazines as 'atypical'.

Bestseller 2

This time the hero wasn't a lawyer but a young computer genius who worked a hundred and ten hours a week.

His wife, on the other hand, was a lawyer and worked ninety hours a week: they had a kid...

About the character (German CEO)

They knew it was him.

The solid, stocky body,

the gleaming scalp,

the open expression,

the vigorous handshake:

everything about him radiated ease and enthusiasm.

You could imagine him eagerly throwing himself into each new day,

leaping out of bed,

doing half an hour on an exercise bike before driving to the office in his spanking new Mercedes,

listening to the financial news.



About sex tourism (Michel)

I was vaguely conscious at that moment of being at the beginning of something; I estimated that potential clients might run to 80 per cent of Western adults. But I knew that people sometimes find it difficult, strangely, to accept simple ideas. As women attach more importance to their professional lives and personal projects, they'll find it easier to pay for sex too.

Dialogue (Michel and Valerie)

(A:) I've thought about your idea

(A:) What I'm worried about is how feminists will react.

(B:) Obviously, we could do some focus groups, test the market...

About Valerie and Jean Yves (Michel)

They were intelligent,
competent,
much-admired in their industry;
but they could not afford to make a mistake.
To fail in this stage would not be the end of their careers:
Jean-Yves was thirty-five,
Valerie, twenty-eight;
they would be given a second chance.
But the industry would not forget that first blunder,
they would have to start again at a significantly lower level.

About Valerie (work related stress)

She herself coped with a punishing workload,
methodically and with a sort of cold determination; she regularly took decisions without consulting him.
It was something she was not really used to, and at times I sensed she felt lost, uncertain;
the board of directors would not get involved, affording them complete freedom.

(B:) But you work too much Valerie. You have to get something out of it.

(A:) If you don't move forward, you're dead.

(B:) And it never ends?

(A:) I don't think so, Michael.

(A:) I'm well paid,

(A:) I work in an industry I understand;

(A:) I accept the rules of the game.

She would come back from work so exhausted that she hadn't the energy to make love.
In a sense, she was still innocent, protected from human reality by her insane working hours,
which left her barely enough time to do the shopping, sleep, start again.



Dialogue (Michel and Valerie)

(A:) I'm not ambitious Michael...

(A:) Like all of the inhabitants of western Europe, I want to travel. What I really want is to be a tourist.

(C:) What about you, Michael, what are you going to do here?

Resignation (Michel)

The response closest to the truth was probably something like 'Nothing':
but it's always difficult to explain that kind of thing to an active person.

I wrote a letter of resignation to the Ministry of Culture.

What could possibly incite human beings to undertake tedious, tiresome tasks?



Platform

Platform je *readymade* z grafičnimi intervencijami na roman *Platforma* Michela Houellebecqa. V poteku zgodbe nam glavni junak Michel predstavi različne ljudi, ki delajo v različnih sektorjih. Dobimo podatke o času, ki ga preživijo na delovnem mestu, njihovem družbenem in razrednem ozadju, delovnih razmerah in strokovnih ambicijah. V vsej knjigi je glavna zgodba zakrita, tako da ostanejo samo še podatki o delu.

Platform is a *readymade* object with graphic interventions, a paperback copy of Michael Houellebecq's novel *Platform*. Following the storyline, the main character Michael introduces us to different people who work in various sectors; we receive data about the time they spend at work, he tells us about their social and class background, working conditions and professional ambitions. Throughout the book, Fokus Grupa conceals the principal narrative, leaving only information about work.

Platform

Michel Houellebecq

By the author of
Atomised
Platform
Michel Houellebecq

'Reading Houellebecq is
like being caught up in
a tropical storm: you are
blown away by the ferocity
of his imagination'
Observer

The work of "The
... ..
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... ..

[illegible]

Others — all who are concerned with the situation of the students in the Third World — have been very active in helping them. I've got a friend who can get me a job as a waitress in Paris; I can continue my studies there.



At 8.30 a.m. on the dot, Jacques Maillot slams the door of his house on the Boulevard Blanqui in the 13th arrondissement, straddles his moped and begins a journey across the capital from east to west. Direction: the head office of Nouvelles Frontières on the Boulevard de Grenelle. Every other day, he stops at four or five of the company's agencies: 'I bring them the latest brochures, I pick up the

post and generally take the temperature,' explains the boss, full of beans, always sporting an extraordinary multi-coloured tie. It's a crack of the whip for the agents: 'On the days after my visit, there's a tremendous boost in sales at those agencies ...'

... who could have predicted in 1967 that a small business set up by a handful of student protestors would take off like this? Certainly not the thousands of demonstrators who, in May 1968, marched past the Nouvelles Frontières office on the Place Denfert-Rochereau in Paris. 'We were in just the right place, right in front of the cameras ...' remembers Jacques Maillot, a former boy scout and left-wing Catholic by way of the National Students Union. It was the first piece of publicity for the company, which took its name from John F. Kennedy's speech about America's 'new frontiers'.

A passionate liberal, Jacques Maillot successfully fought the Air France monopoly, making air transport more accessible to all. His company's odyssey, which in thirty years had made it the number one travel agency in France, has fascinated the business press. Like FNAC, like Club Med, Nouvelles Frontières – born at the dawn of the leisure society – might stand as a symbol of the new face of modern capitalism.





This time, the hero wasn't a lawyer but a young computer genius who worked a hundred and ten hours a week. His wife, on the other hand, was a lawyer and worked ninety hours a week: they had a kid. This time the bad guys were a 'European' company which had resorted to fraudulent practices in order to corner a market. Said market should have been the territory of the American company for which our hero was working.



this year the tenants were a couple of architects.



...the writers simply write about the things they're interested in, not what interests their readers.'

'Economically, that shouldn't be viable; normally things are done to satisfy the customer's tastes.'

'Maybe it does satisfy the customers tastes.'

She pondered it. Maybe it was so simple. The writers simply write about the things they're interested in, not what interests their readers. Economically, that shouldn't be viable; normally things are done to satisfy the customer's tastes. Maybe it does satisfy the customers tastes.

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...the writers simply write about the things they're interested in, not what interests their readers.'

'Economically, that shouldn't be viable; normally things are done to satisfy the customer's tastes.'

'Maybe it does satisfy the customers tastes.'





Strictly speaking, the girls didn't solicit; but you could invite one of them to have a drink with you, talk a little and in due course pay the establishment a bar fee of five hundred baht to take the girl to your hotel, after negotiating a price. For a whole night, I think the price was about four or five thousand baht – about a month's

salary for an unskilled Thai worker; but Phuket is an expensive resort.



'With *Atomised*, you could see that Houellebecq was headed for greatness. With *Platform* he has attained it. The book is a stunning achievement'
Evening Standard

Michel is a civil-servant at the Ministry of Culture. When his father is murdered, Michel takes a leave of absence to go on a package tour to Thailand. Infuriated by the shallow hypocrisy and mediocrity of his fellow travellers, only the awkward Valerie attracts his attention. Too bashful to pursue her, Michel prefers the uncomplicated pleasures of Thai massage parlours and sex with local women.

Back in Paris, he calls Valerie and they plunge into a passionate affair, which strays into S&M, partner-swapping and sex in public. Michel quits his job, and tries to help Valerie and her boss, Jean-Yves, in their ailing travel business, by offering travel packages based on sex tourism in the Third World. When their project comes to fruition and the three return to Thailand, Michel discovers that sex is neither the most consuming nor the most dangerous of human passions...

'Reading Houellebecq is never deflating; it is, rather, a source of constant inspiration and delight. Would that we could produce his like in England' *Observer*

'A brilliant novel' Anita Brookner

Fiction



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Cover photograph
© Mark Askie

Platform

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Herbarium

Precious *far niente* was the greatest and the principal of these enjoyments, which I wished to taste with all its delights; and all I did during my stay was, in effect, no more than the delicious and necessary occupation of a man devoted to an idle life.

Rejecting now all works of labour, I must have one of amusement which pleased me, and which was attended with no more trouble than an idle fellow desires. I undertook composing the *Flora Petrinsularis*, and describing every plant in the island, without omitting one, with particulars sufficient to employ the remainder of my life.

In consequence of this grand project, every morning, after breakfast, which we all took together, I set out, a magnifying glass in my hand, and my *Systema Naturae* under my arm, to visit a part of the island I had divided for this purpose into small squares, intending to go over them, one after the other, in each season.

Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*

Projekt *Herbarium* temelji na performativnih sprehodih, na katere je Fokus Grupa povabila ljudi, ki se s problematiko prekarnega dela ukvarjajo v okviru svoje prakse, jo izkušajo pri svojem delu ali oboje. Med sprehodom Fokus Grupa in gosti nabirajo cvetlice za herbarij. Na mestu, kjer so navadno navedeni taksonomski podatki o rastlinah, se pojavijo informacije o pogovorih, ki so potekali kot edina obeležitev dogodka. Pred sprehodom je narejen posnetek lokacije sprehoda brez protagonistov. Teme pogovorov so bile spolni predsodki pri prekarnem delu, pomanjkanje prostega časa, izčrpanost ... Projekt *Herbarium* poustvari sprehode, ki jih je v svoji knjigi *Sanjarjenja samotnega sprehajalca* opisal Jean Jacques Rousseau in so kot nekakšna hvalnica počasnemu ritmu, sprehajanju in pristočasju.

Herbarium project consists of performative walks, to which Fokus Grupa invites people who relate to the questions of precarious work in their own practice, or as workers who experience it on their own skin, or both. During the walk, Fokus Grupa and their guest/s pick flowers for the herbarium. In cases where one would normally find botanical information, classification of plants, here one can find information about conversation that occurred, which remains as the only document of the event. Before the walk one image of the location of the walk is taken without protagonists in them. The conversations range from gender bias in precarious work, lack of free time, exhaustion... The *Herbarium* project is a sort of re-enactment of the walks described by Jean Jacques Rousseau in his book, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, a praise to the slow pace, walking and leisure.



WALK
INFORMATION

sample N° 2/3
 location MARJAN PARK,
SPLIT, CROATIA
 time SATURDAY /
30 NOVEMBER 2013 / 11:00 - 14:00
 participants RAFAELA DRAŽIĆ
(FREELANCE DESIGNER), FOKUS GRUPA
 conversation WORK DOES NOT
 notes ALLOW HER ENO-
UGH TIME FOR THE CONSUMPTION
OF THE CITY / RELATIONSHIP TO
WORK - CHRISTIAN ETHICS - GUILT
TRIP / SHE IS HAPPY WITH HER
LIFESTYLE WITH EXCEPTION FOR
HER UNHEALTHY DIET / HEALTH
AND PENSION INSURANCE - HAS
IT TROUGH "ZUH" BUT DOES NOT
CARE ABOUT IT - TAUGHTLESS - SHE KNOWS



WALK
INFORMATION

sample N° 4/3
 location UNIVERSITY CAMPUS /
TRSAT / RIJEKA
 time WEDNESDAY /
CHRISTMAS / 25 DEC 2013 / 15:10 - 16:45
 participants MILIJANA BABIC /
(FREELANCE ARTIST) / FOCUS GRUPA
 conversation LOCATION IS
 notes CHOSEN AS A
PLACE WHERE MILIJANA WORKS AS A
PER PROJECT - CONTRACT WORK SINCE
2007 / SHE STARTED AS PART-TIME WORK AT
SCULPTURE DEPARTMENT WHERE SHE
FINED SCHOOLER PLACED TO WORKING AT
WORK - NEVER GOT EMPLOYED PERM-
ANENTLY / SHE NOW WORKS AT ONE
WITHIN EU PROJECT FOR NEW MEDIA
DEPARTMENT / SHE WANTS TO GET PERM-
ANENT EMPLOYMENT IN ORDER TO
ATTAIN MORE RIGHTS AS A WORKER



WALK INFORMATION

sample N° 1/3
location NOVI BEKOVA /
DESUETE - ZAGREB
time SATURDAY /
21 DECEMBER 2015 / 11:30 - 12:30
participants SASA SIMPRAGA
(CULTURAL WORKER) / FOKUS GRUPA
conversation SASA MOVES TRO-
notes OLD THE CITY
EXCLUSIVELY BY FOOT, HE DOES SO
SINCE HIGH SCHOOL / HE DID NOT
CHOOSE THIS OUT OF PARTICULAR
ATTITUDE, HE SIMPLY PREFERS
WALKING TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT OR
DRIVING A CAR OR RIDING A
BIKE / IT REQUIRES TAKING INTO
ACCOUNT THE TIME NECESSARY TO
REACH A CERTAIN DESTINATION



WALK
INFORMATION

sample N° 1/3
location REGENTS PARK,
FRIEZE FAIR LOCATION, LONDON
time SUNDAY / 25
SEPTEMBER 2013 / 15:30 - 17:40h
participants LILLY HALL, MARINA
DOULIS (CURATORS), FOKUS GRUPA
conversation LONDON ART SCENE
notes OR SCENES /
STRUCTURE OR HIERARCHY OF
CALVERT 22 GALLERY / UNPAID
WORK WITHIN THE ART SYSTEM /
UNPAID WORK WITHIN E-FLUX
ORGANIZATION / CARTIER AWARD
AS LEGISLATION OF THE
FRIEZE ART FAIR / WAGE
ECONOMY VS AWARD ECONOMY /
JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU, NANCY LUST



WALK
INFORMATION

sample N° 3/3
location RNA / ZADAR /
STARTING FROM THE UNIVERSITY
time THURSDAY /
25.05 2014 / 15.00 - 17.40
participants VALERIJA BARBA
(SENIOR ASSISTANT & RESEARCHER) / POKSANDI
conversation WE TALKED ABOUT
notes THE EXHAUSTION
THRESHOLD WOMEN OFTEN HAVE
AROUND 30'S / ABOUT GIVING UP
AND REMAINING IN THE
PROFESSION / ABOUT FAMILY
SUPPORT / MUTUAL EMPOWERING
THROUGH WORKING IN PAIRS
OR COLLECTIVES / ABOUT DIFFERENT
SORTS OF CAPITAL AND THE MUTUAL
EXCLUSION / ABOUT PRESTIGE

Walk

Žepna knjiga umetnika *Walk* obsega vse vnose za besedo »walk« (in sorodne besedne zveze) iz izdaje slovarja Oxford English Dictionary iz leta 1989. Vsak vnos je na svoji strani, da lahko gledalec upočasni in se osredotoči na posamezni termin, česar postavitve v slovarju ne omogoča. »Walk« kot hoja, sprehod kaže na dejavnost hoje ter politični in umetniški potencial, ki izhaja iz lingvističnih in kulturnih pomenov besede.

Knjigoveštvo: Iva Gobić

A pocked-sized artist book *Walk* is comprised of all the inputs for the word Walk (and related phrases) from the 1989 edition of The Oxford English Dictionary. Every input has been given an individual page to enable the viewer to slow down and focus on each particular term in a way that dictionary layout doesn't allow. Walk points to the action of walking and its political and artistic potential, stemming from linguistic and cultural meaning(s) of the word.

Book binding by: Iva Gobić

SECOND EDITION

J. A. SIMPSON *and* E. S. C. WEINER

VOLUME XIX
Unemancipated—Wau-wau



1989

[illegible]

I. Action or manner of walking.

1. a. An act or spell of walking or going on foot from place to place; *esp.* a short journey on foot taken for exercise or pleasure. Phrase, *to take a walk*, (a) also *fetch*, rarely *make a walk*, and (somewhat *arch.*) *to take one's walk(s)* to make such a journey; (b) to 'receive one's marching orders', to be dismissed; freq. *imp.* in formulas of impatient dismissal, sometimes in extended form; sometimes *transf.*; also, to 'walk out' in a labour dispute (WALK *v.*¹ 13 b). *U.S. slang.*

f. = *sponsored walk* s.v. SPONSORED *ppl.* a. 2.

2. a. A procession, ceremonial perambulation.

†1. *fig.* (a) ? To be successful. (b) To be a substitute, 'pass', 'go' *for*. *Obs.*

†4. a. To go about in public, live, move (in a place or region). Also of animals: To range, be found (in a place). *Obs.*

walkne, obs. form of WAKEN *v.*, WELKIN.

'walk-off. [f. *vbl. phr. to walk off*: WALK *v.* 18 c.]
An act of walking off: **a.** From a stage.

Perfect Lovers

Delo *Perfect Lovers* reformulira delo Felix Gonzales-Torresa z intervencijo, preoblikovanjem sprednje strani ure v tortni grafikon. Delo z ekonomskega gledišča naslavlja vprašanje časa in koncept partnerstva. Pri času gre manj za meditacijo in bolj za nekaj, kar se lahko meri, deli ali preda v uporabo. Idealen dan, ki si ga je želelo delavstvo 19. stoletja – *osem ur dela, osem ur rekreacije, osem ur počitka* – je predstavljeno na dveh urah.

Perfect Lovers is an appropriation of Felix Gonzales-Torres work with an intervention, a redesign of the front side of two clocks into pie-charts. The work approaches both the question of time and the idea of partnership, through an economic lens. In an attempt to represent an ideal workday, which the 19th century proletarian desired; *Eight hours labor, Eight hours recreation, Eight hours rest* the required time has to span two clocks.

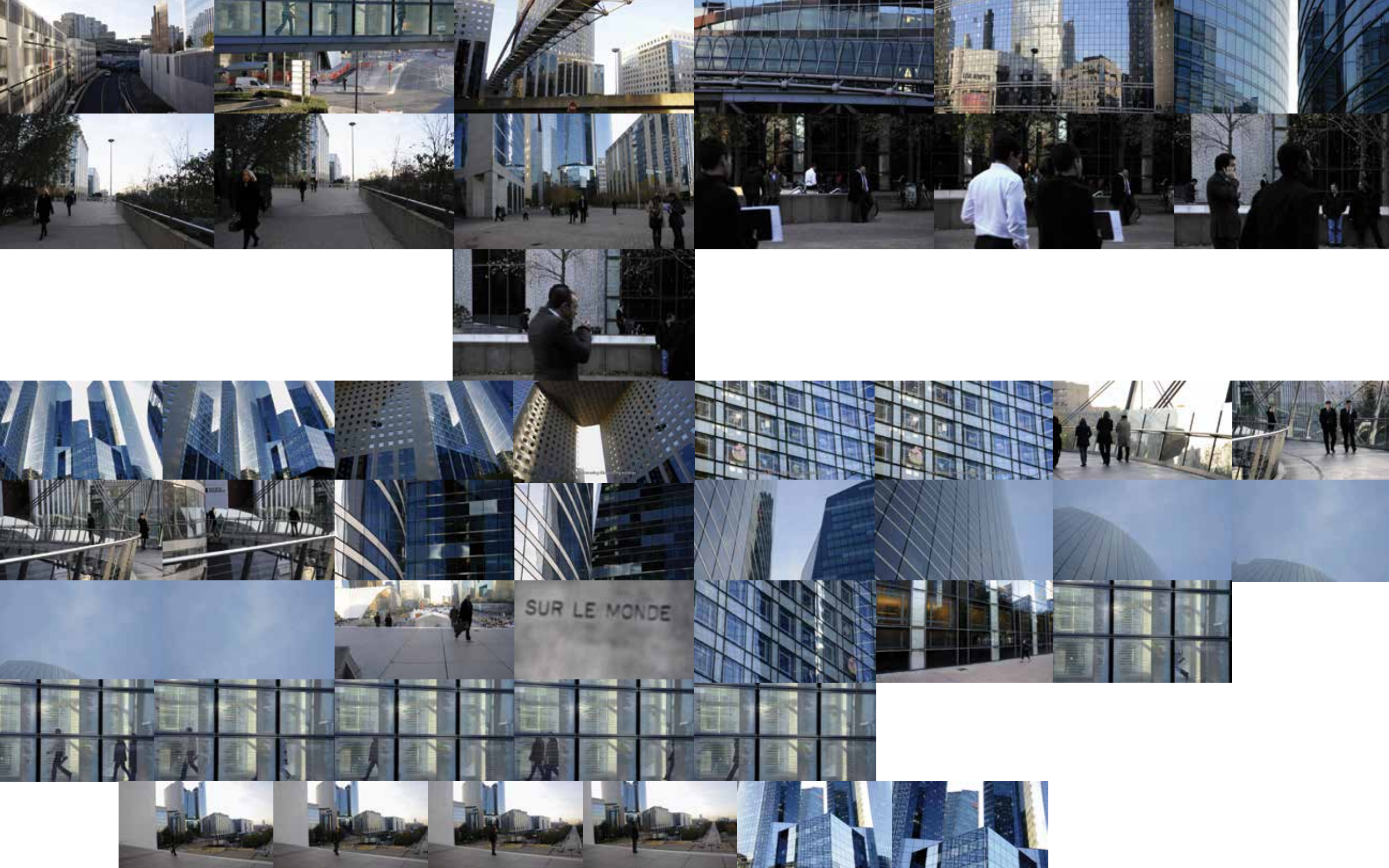




Une fenêtre sur le monde

Une fenêtre sur le monde je dokumentarec, v katerem spremljamo sprehod skozi La Défense, poslovno četrt Pariza. Delo v La Défense se skriva za steklenimi površinami. Novembra 2011 je Fokus Grupa med snemanjem slučajno ujela takrat aktualen fenomen, sled tako imenovanih vojn s samolepilnimi lističi oziroma umetniških del s samolepilnimi lističi na steklenih površinah stavb korporacij, kjer gre za ustvarjalno igro s pisarniško papirnato galanterijo.

Une fenêtre sur le monde is a documentary video of a stroll through La Défense business district in Paris. The type of work that is conducted there is concealed behind glass surfaces. In November 2011 during its stroll, Fokus Grupa coincidentally captured, a very novel phenomenon, a trace of the so-called “post-it wars”. Post-it “artworks” created by office staff on the glass surfaces of corporate buildings represent a kind of hybrid combination of working tasks and relaxation through creative play with office paraphernalia.







**Postavitev
razstave**

**Exhibition
display**



FOKUS GRUPA

**OBČUTEK
ZA DELO**

**A TASTE FOR
WORK**

21. 6. — 13. 7. 2014

**ŠK
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RIJA
STARI
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01 251 65 40**

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Biografija

Biography

Umetniški kolektiv Fokus Grupa, ki živi in dela na Reki na Hrvaškem, sta leta 2009 ustanovila Iva Kovač in Elvis Krstulović. Ime sta povzela po raziskovalni metodi, ki se uporablja tako za neodvisne raziskave kot v odnosih z javnostmi. Njuna kolaborativna in interdisciplinarna praksa se giblje med vizualno umetnostjo, oblikovanjem in kuriranjem, v njenem središču pa je raziskovanje ekonomskega in političnega okvira umetnosti. Umetniške strategije, ki jih skupina uporablja, prevzemajo politične oblike, a ne da bi postale reprezentacijske podobe "politične umetnosti". Fokus Grupa se osredotoča na odnose med umetnostjo in njenimi javnimi manifestacijami v kontekstu kulture, estetike ter družbenih in ekonomskih vrednot. Skupina raziskuje inherentne oblastne odnose v umetnostnem sistemu, v okviru tega pa izsleduje njihove ekonomske, prostorske in pravne posledice. Skupina nenehno širi meje svojih del v tiskane medije, film in instalacije, dela na papirju, razprave, delavnice in besedila.

Fokus Grupa je sodelovala na številnih razstavah, festivalih, konferencah in rezidenčnih programih. Samostojne razstave: *People Love Monuments*, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow; *Prijedlog spomenika novom (inter) nacionalizmu*, Galerija Miroslav Kraljević, Zagreb; *I Sing to Pass the Time*, Galerija Gitte Bohr, Berlin. S svojim delom sta se predstavila na skupinskih razstavah: *Coexistence*, Piramida Envera Hoxhe, Tirana; *Dissent and Certainty*, Kunstpavillon, Innsbruck; *What if the Doubt in a Space is the Doubt of the Space*, Macro, Rim; *Politike znotraj*, Center za sodobne umetnosti, Celje; *Draga umetnost*, MSUM, Ljubljana; *Dear Art*, Calvert 22, London; *Arte: Affari, Lavoro o Perditempo*, Furini - Arte Contemporanea, Rome; *THT@MSU Award*, MSU, Zagreb; *Ogledalo časa*, Galerija Škuc, Ljubljana; *Overlapping*

Fokus Grupa is an artist collective based in Rijeka, Croatia, founded by Iva Kovač and Elvis Krstulović in 2009. Borrowing their name from a contested research method, used equally for independent research as for PR purposes, they point to the social, economical and political frames of the art field. Their practice is collaborative and interdisciplinary, and it includes art, design and curating. Artistic strategies they use take political shape, without becoming a representational form of 'political art'. Fokus Grupa concentrates on the relations between art and its public manifestations, in terms of working culture, aesthetics, and social and economic exchange values. Their work investigates the inherent power structures of the art-system. To this effect, they explore its economic, spatial and legal implementations. The collective tries to expand the boundaries of their artwork, using printed matter, films and installations, works on paper, discussions, workshops and texts.

Fokus Grupa participated in numerous exhibitions, festivals, conferences and residencies including solo shows: *People Love Monuments*, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow; *A Taste for Work*, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana; *A Proposal for the Monument to the New (Inter) Nationalism*, Miroslav Kraljević Gallery, Zagreb; *I Sing to Pass the Time*, Gitte Bohr Gallery, Berlin; group shows: *Coexistence*, Enver Hoxha Pyramid Tirana; *Dissent and Certainty*, Kunstpavillon, Innsbruck; *What if the Doubt in a Space is the Doubt of the Space*, Macro, Rome; *Politics Within*, Contemporary Art Center, Celje; *Dear Art*, Calvert 22, London; *Arte: Affari, Lavoro o Perditempo*, Furini - Arte Contemporanea, Rome; *THT@MSU Award*, MSU, Zagreb; *Dear Art*, MSUM, Ljubljana; *The Mirror of Time*, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana; *Overlapping Biennial*, Bucharest; *Disorder*, New Art Exchange Gallery, Nottingham; *Volume*

Biennial, Bukarešta; *Disorder*, New Art Exchange Gallery, Nottingham; *Volume Collection*, MMSU, Reka; *15. bienale mladih umetnikov iz Evrope in Mediterana*, Solun; *Qui Vive*, Moskovski mednarodni bienale, Moskva; *Labyrinth 09, Writings and Observations*, Botkyrka Konsthall, Švedska. Projekcije: *Rencontres Internationales*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; *Rencontres Internationales*, Gaîté Lyrique, Paris; *Director's Lounge*, Naherholung Sternchen, Berlin; *25FPS*, Zagreb. Konferenca: *Parasites and Prophets*, tranzit.ro, Bukarešta; *Playschool Kunsthof*, ZHDK, Zürich; *re.act.feminism*, Galerija Miroslava Kraljevića, Zagreb; *Kuriranje kot kritične prakse*, MSUV, Novi Sad. Rezidence: *SharedSpace: Retreat* Riga, New Theatre Institute in Latvia, Riga and *SharedSpace:Retreat* Helsinki, KIASMA, HIAP, Helsinki; *Cite Internationale des Artes*, Paris; SAP2009, Seoul.

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