



**GORAN
PETERCOL**

**NE BRINI O POETICI, ONA ĆE DOĆI SAMA
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Fotografija: Duhravka Rakoci

GORAN PETERCOL

Goran Petercol rođen je u Puli 1949. Između 1963. i 1969. pohađao je Pomorski fakultet u Bakru i plovio na brodovima trgovačke mornarice. Godine 1975. diplomirao je na Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti u Zagrebu. Godine 1978. završio je dvogodišnji diplomski studij u Majstorskoj radionici Hrvatske akademije, Zagreb. Radio je kao likovni urednik za enciklopedije i leksikone Leksikografskog zavoda u Zagrebu. Od 2007. do 2014. predavao je na

Akademiji primijenjene umjetnosti u Rijeci. Živi u Rijeci i Rovinju. Od 1975. izlaže radove fokusirane na procesualnost, dosege, konvencije i subverzije čistoće konceptualnih struktura. Sa svjetlosnim instalacijama započeo je 1985. godine. Petercol djeluje s materijalnim i nematerijalnim oblicima, prostorom i međuprostorom predmeta, spontanim i kontroliranim umjetničkim procesima koji se prvenstveno bave problemom samog stvaranja.

Goran Petercol was born in Pula in 1949. Between 1963 and 1969, he attended the Maritime College in Bakar and sailed in the merchant navy. In 1975 he took his BFA in the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb. In 1978 he completed two-year graduate studies in the Croatian Academy Master Workshop, Zagreb. He worked as art editor for the Lexicographic Institute in Zagreb. From 2007 to 2014 he lectured at the Academy of Applied Art in

Rijeka. He lives in Rijeka and Rovinj. Since 1975 he has been exhibiting works focusing on reaches, processuality, conventions and subversions of the purity of conceptual structures. He created his first light installations in 1985. Petercol operates with material and intangible forms, space and interspace between objects, spontaneous and controlled artistic processing that primarily deals with the problem of creation itself.

SKLADIŠTE MOGUĆNOSTI

Razgovor Sabine Schaschl i
Gorana Petercola, kolovoz 2019.

SSCH: Prva tvoja izložba koju sam imala prilike vidjeti bila je ona u Galeriji Grite Insam u Beču, negdje sredinom 1990-ih. Još se uvijek živo sjećam serije "skulptura" na zidu — ti ih nazivaš svjetlosnim instalacijama — sastavljenih od svjetla, mjedjenih štapića i čeličnih žica izravno postavljenih na zid. Pažnju mi je odmah privukao minimalistički karakter tih radova, upotreba toliko reducirane količine materijala koji opet uspijeva proizvesti tako osjetilni doživljaj koji se razlikuje ovisno o tome gdje promatrač stoji. Iako ovo nisu tvoji najraniji radovi, zanima me smatraš li ih ključnima u svome djelovanju ili pak djelima koja oblikuju poseban čvor na crvenoj niti kompletnog opusa.

GP: Da, osjećam ih kao neku prekretnicu. Svjetlo je promijenilo recepciju mojih radova i otvaralo mi postupno prostor za nove koncepte. Općenito, osamdesetih je malo umjetnika radilo sa svjetlom. Radove sa svjetlom i sjenama započeo sam 1985., a izložio sam ih na samostalnoj izložbi u Galeriji suvremene umjetnosti u Zagrebu i na *Trigonu* 1989. Tada sam sreo Gritu Insam i u Beču kod nje 1990. imao prvu samostalnu izložbu. U prvih deset godina sve sam radove sa svjetlom, iako su nastajali na različitim konceptima, nazivao *Sjene*. Taj naziv nisam prevodio na engleski, tretirao sam ga kao ime. Htio sam umanjiti snagu riječi *sjena* jer sam je osjećao potrošenom, što me odbijalo. I samo svjetlo doživljavao sam ambivalentno. Privlačilo me jer mi je omogućavalo stvaranje nekog reda za koji nisam bio odgovoran, a odbijala me njegova prejaka zavodljivost od koje nisam mogao pobjeći, ali, istina, u nekim sam je slučajevima volio upotrijebiti.

SSCH: Zanimljiva mi je ta ambivalentnost — svjetlo je zanimljiv nematerijalni materijal, u mnogim slučajevima definitivno zavodljiv, ali iz određene perspektive i prilično učinkovit, što se tiče uporabe. Kada govoriš o redoslijedu, željela bih znati malo više o tom procesu. Ako sam ispravno shvatila, definiraš geometrijske, sustavne točke na koje postavljaš metalne štapiće ili oblikovane žice, nakon čega nastale sjene postaju integralni konceptualni elementi. U nekim svojim tekstovima spominješ elemente koji ne proizvode sjene. Ne bacaju li svi predmeti ili elementi sjenu? I nije li položaj svjetla odgovoran za postojanje sjene, a taj položaj definiraš ti?

GP: Iako katkad koristim postojeći izvor svjetla, u većini ga slučajeva postavljam iznova. Dakle, najprije bih fiksirao svjetlo, zatim bih u osvijetljenom prostoru postavio neki objekt pri čemu je nastala sjena koja se, ovisno o udaljenosti od izvora svjetla, mogla mijenjati. Prihvaćao sam dobivene smjerove protezanja sjena, njezine oblike, duljine kao razmak između dvaju elemenata. Zapravo, prihvaćao sam neku vrstu samoorganizacije rada koja me oslobađala da o svemu odlučujem. Nakon početnih pretpostavki sam sam odlučivao kada i kako dovršiti rad. Sjene koje su se vidjele kao tamne crte dovršavao sam tako da sam na krajnju točku takve crte postavljao metalni štapić nagnuvši ga u položaj u kojem više nije stvarao sjenu. Na neki sam način prekidao razloge za daljnju samoorganizaciju rada. U seriji *Sjena* imam desetak koncepata unutar kojih sam različito tretirao radne elemente. U seriji u kojoj sam elemente slagao duž kontura zamišljenoga geometrijskog lika (pravokutnik, krug, trokut itd.), katkad bih taj lik iscrtao sjenama, katkad bih stao na pola puta i dovršavao rad spajajući krajeve sjene žicom koja tvori luk. Na taj način nisam dobio sjenu koju bih mogao nastaviti jer

se nije protezala dalje. U seriji radova bez sjene, u polje svjetla postavio bih, na primjer, žicu, zatim bih po crti njezine sjene postavio metalne štapiće u položaj u kojemu ne stvaraju sjenu. Na prvi pogled gledatelj nije bio siguran pripada li sjena koju vidi žici ili štapićima. Dakako, vrlo je brzo mogao otkriti istinu jer ga se i nije namjeravalo prevariti.

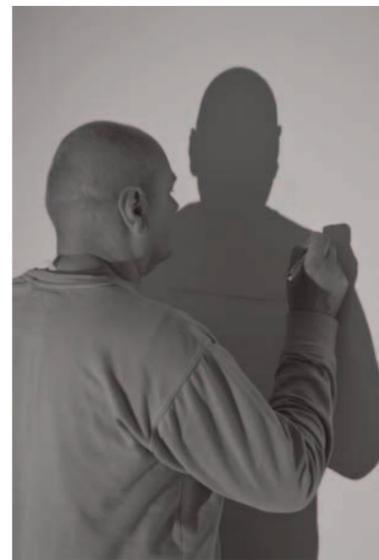
SSCH: Aspekt samoorganizacije rada vrlo je zanimljiv. Kako je onda moguće izraditi pripremne crteže za svjetlosne intervencije? Postoje crteži instalacija čije su sjene u boji. Znači li to da možeš unaprijed planirati i koncipirati oblike sjena i njihove boje? Je li i slučaj imao ulogu u tom procesu?

GP: Riječ je o skicama za svjetlosne instalacije sa sjenama u boji. Kada se dva svjetla komplementarnih boja preklope, osvijetljena je podloga više ili manje bijela, na njoj se sjene objekta pojavljuju u dvije boje (crvena i tirkizna). Ako se te sjene preklope, preklopljena sjena gubi boju, postaje skoro crna. Pri postavljanju koristio sam se skicama kako bih mogao rekonstruirati ideju. Skice bih mogao usporediti s ulogom notnog zapisa. Obično bih na stolu, držeći elemente u ruci, isprobavao sjene nastale pomoću dva svjetla komplementarnih boja i ucrtavao njihove položaje na papir. To mi je prethodno postavljanje bilo potrebno zato što sam rad s jednim svjetlom mogao zamisliti, a u radovima sa sjenom u boji uglavnom to nisam mogao, bili su mi prekomplikirani. Sa svakom se izvedbom mijenjaju odnosi, duljine sjena, ali to ne utječe na ideju. Zbog različitih pozicija svjetla, njihove pripadajuće pravilnosti doživljavamo kao slučajnost.

SSCH: Iz tvoje biografije doznala sam da si pohađao Pomorsku školu i plovio na brodovima trgovačke mornarice prije nego što si se počeo baviti umjetnošću. Je li se u određenom trenutku dogodio rez? Kada si ostavio pomorstvo iza sebe i počeo studirati umjetnost? Ili je taj prijelaz bilo postupan? Nakon što sam to pročitala, gledajući neke tvoje crteže i svjetlosne instalacije nisam prestala razmišljati o iskustvu plovidbe. Svjetlosni odrazi i oblici sjena naročito ostavljaju dojam da je vizualno iskustvo plovidbe našlo put u tvoju umjetnost. Ima li u tome istine?

GP: Privlačili su me New York, Rio de Janeiro, Yokohama, Casablanca... U ono vrijeme, i još s osamnaest godina, to sam mogao jedino kao pomorac. Istodobno me privlačila umjetnost, nisam ni znao koja. Nisam mislio ostati na brodu. Sigurno da sam boravkom na moru stekao određeno iskustvo, možda pojačan osjećaj za prazan prostor, za prostor koji je između nečega, to mogu tek nagađati. Isto tako, mogu pretpostaviti da je to osjećaj putovanja od točke A do točke B, to jest da svako putovanje negdje mora završiti. U radu postupam slično, polazim od nečega konkretnog pa od toga idem u nekom određenom smjeru, zatim na nekome mjestu skrećem u nešto drugo... i na kraju stanem. U radovima sa sjenama ta se putanja materijalizira u sjenama koje stvaraju konačan niz. Iako je statična, sjena ipak sadrži kretanje, smjer protezanja. Da je putovanje završilo dajem do znanja tako da zaustavim proizvodnju sjene. Nisam siguran u izravnu vezu plovidbe i *Sjena*. Kada govoriš o atmosferi, koju kažeš da osjećaš, jednako tako mogu reći da je možda povezana s time što sam živio u malome provincijskom mjestu sa skromnom noćnom javnom rasvjetom. Te vizure grada snimio sam tijekom dviju noći 1963. (ni prije ni nakon toga). Negative sam pronašao prije nekoliko godina, razvio fotografije i shva-

Fotografija: Robert Sošić



“ Svjetlo sam doživljavao ambivalentno. Privlačilo me jer mi je omogućavalo stvaranje nekog reda za koji nisam bio odgovoran, a odbijala me njegova prejaka zavodljivost od koje nisam mogao pobjeći.



Obojene površine, 1977.
Vodena boja na kamenu, Rovinj
Kvadrat naslikan desnom
rukom, te kvadrat slikan lijevom
i desnom rukom istodobno.
Fotografije: Dubravka Rakoci

tio da sam snimao svjetlo. Na neki su način te fotografije potvrđivale da moje zanimanje za svjetlo nije bilo slučajno. SSCH: Proučavala sam tvoje rane radove nastale za vrijeme studija na Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti u Zagrebu. Dvije metode su mi se učinile vrlo zanimljivima jer su postojale od samog početka, a, prema mome mišljenju, i dalje su sastavni dio tvog rada. Prvo što sam primijetila bila je stilaska raznolikost u crtežima. Minimalistička izvedba portreta s tek nekoliko linija koegzistira s kompaktno usmjerenim gustim kružnim linijama koje ispunjavaju oblik lica. Druga opservacija odnosi se na prisutnost kontrasta svjetla i tame u tvojim ranim radovima. Slika *Bez naziva* (1976.) odmah me podsjetila na Goyinu fresku sa psom koji se utapa, u kojoj kontrast svjetla i tame naglašava emocionalnu dramu. Jesu li te zanimale povijesno-umjetničke reference?

GP: Crtati crnim na bijelom papiru ili suprotstaviti sjenu i svjetlo, postupci su koji čine učinjeno vidljivim. Takvim postupkom dobiva se kontrast koji nosi neku vrstu dramatičnosti. Koristio sam je u studentskim radovima (slika iz 1976. koju navodiš još uvijek pripada duhu studentskih radova). Nakon 1975., međutim, radio sam na umanjivanju dramatičnosti. Forme sam odvajao od njihovih konvencionalno pripadajućih značenja. Na primjer, crteži *Preslikavanja* (zima 1975./76.) u kojima sam preslikavao prethodno izvedene geste na način da im nove tek formalno nalikuju, kao da su nastale unutar koncepta gestualnog slikarstva. Postupkom preslikavanja oduzeo sam im pripadajuću energiju, spontanost, određenu ekspresivnost. U *Stilizacijama* sam postupak stiliziranja izveo toliko formalno da je izgubio svoj smisao u svođenju stiliziranog oblika na svoju vizualnu bit. Katkad bih prvi oblik izveo crnom bojom, a stilizirao ga bijelom, katkad crno s crnim na bijeloj podlozi. Tu sam emocionalnu dramatičnost, koja proizlazi iz prirode suprotstavljanja, nastojao zadržati u sloju u kojem se stvari jednostavno vide. Ono što bi moglo upućivati na nešto više, nastojao sam oduzeti ili bar umanjiti. Osim u samome radu, metodom suprotnosti znao sam se koristiti kako bih izašao iz područja jedne vrste radne problematike i otvorio drugu. Nakon niza varijanti, novi rad sadržavao je neku suprotnu pretpostavku. Možda je u osnovi više riječ o zasićenju nakon predugog rada unutar istog koncepta nego o želji za novim, o gubitku motivacije za nastavljanje sličnog. To je mogao biti razlog promjene stila u spomenutim crtežima. U *Negativima* sam, na primjer, sjene osvjetljavao pretvarajući ih u oblike osvjetljenih površina, a nakon toga sam u *Svjetlu*² oblike svjetla dodatno osvjetljavao. Nakon što sam sjenu pretvarao u oblik svjetla, nastavio sam s pretvaranjem svjetla u jače svjetlo,

pretirao sam je kao sjenu iako je bila svjetlo. Zapravo reagiram na vlastite radove koji ponavljanjem u jednom trenutku počinju graditi konvenciju, zato mi je bio potreban novi rad od kojega bih, recimo to tako, ozdravio. Što se tiče povijesno-umjetničkih referenci, nekako, nisam se svjesno vezivao ni za što. Čak ni kada sam studirao i volio rad nekog umjetnika ili ideje nekog umjetničkog pokreta. Ili je to bilo vezano uz neki konkretan radni problem, ali nije utjecalo na moju umjetničku poziciju. U Zagrebu sam proveo velik dio života, to je i razlog što u njemu nalazim tradiciju meni bliske umjetnosti. Čak sam o tome razmišljao pokušavajući doći do nečega što bi govorilo o samoj sredini, jer je ona to proizvela, bar sam tako mislio. Katkad su me privlačili radovi umjetnika s kojima nisam mogao naći vidljive poveznice. Također, u desetak godina, između sedamdesetih i osamdesetih, intenzivno sam se družio s umjetnicima iz Podrume i Prostora proširenih medija, izlagačkih prostora koji su vodili umjetnici i ja s njima.

SSCH: Pretpostavljam, dakle, da je proces “ozdravljenja” cjeloživotni proces — baš kao i umjetnički. Čini se da si od figurativnog crteža i slikarstva prešao na apstraktni i nefigurativni rad. Promjena se dogodila 1975. Jesu li kolaži iz 1974. premostili prijelaz od figuracije prema apstrakciji?

GP: Ono što me na Akademiji zaista zanimalo bilo je shvatiti što je to slikarstvo. Ne baš sve, nesvjesno sam trasirao neki put koji mi je bio blizak. Praksom sam potvrđivao jesam li uistinu razumio koncept u okviru kojega sam slikao. Obično se nakon desetak, katkad i više slika u jednoj seriji, nešto pomaknulo, išao sam dalje. Iako sam se kretao prelazeći iz koncepta u novi koncept, uvijek bih se našao u situaciji da radim unutar poznatog u umjetnosti. Zato svoje slikanje za vrijeme studija nisam osjećao kao umjetnost koju bih mogao izlagati. Nisam ni izlagao. Tako sam osjećao. Vježbao sam. Na kraju studija došao sam do apstraktnog slikarstva koje i dalje nisam osjećao kao umjetnost, već kao vježbu. Bio sam svjestan da radim u području potrošenih konceptata, svejedno sam ih učio. Nisam ih mogao preskočiti jer su proizlazili iz moje prakse. Preskočiti — u što? Bio sam strpljiv i znao sam da neću ostati unutar njih. Tek sam nakon Akademije, s *Preslikavanjima* stekao osjećaj da mogu izlagati. Nisam osjećao bitnu razliku između figuracije, kolaža i apstrakcije. Kolaži su nastali s idejom da ako slikajući nanosim materiju uljene boje na podlogu, mogu lijepiti i papire, novine... jer su materija koja također ima svoju boju. Nisam osjećao veliku razliku. Ipak, na Akademiji nisam gubio vrijeme. Dapače, puno sam naučio, ne tehnike, raditi slike... već naći

“ Reagiram na vlastite radove koji ponavljanjem u jednom trenutku počinju graditi konvenciju, zato mi je potreban novi rad od kojega bih, recimo to tako, ozdravio.

misao u materiji umjetnosti. Raul Goldoni, u čijoj sam klasi diplomirao, osim što je vodio praksu, poticao je svijest svakog studenta o vlastitom radu. Znao je reći da napišemo nekoliko redaka o tome što radimo, da napisano ne trebamo nikome pokazati, ali da napišemo.

SSCH: Spomenuo si da si s kolegama umjetnicima vodio izlagačke prostore galerije Podrum i Prostora PM. Pretpostavljam da bismo to danas nazvali prostorima kojima upravljaju umjetnici. Možeš li reći nešto više o tome? Radio si kao kustos ili kokustos, ako sam ispravno shvatila. Tko su ti bili kolege? Kakve ste izložbe postavljali? Kada i zašto se prestalo s time?

GP: U sedamdesetima su klasični mediji pod utjecajem konceptualne umjetnosti prestali biti u prvom planu. U Podrumu se izlagala konceptualna umjetnost, performansi, fotografije, vizualna poezija, video i primarni ili analitički radovi. Prepisujem imena s plakata prve izložbe: Boris Demur, Vladimir Dodig, Ivan Dorogi, Ladislav Galeta, Tomislav Gotovac, Vlado Gudac, Sanja Iveković, Željko Jerman, Željko Kipke, Antun Maračić, Vlado Martek, Dalibor Martinis, Marijan Molnar, Goran Petercol, Rajko Radovanović, Mladen Stilinović, Sven Stilinović, Josip Stošić, Goran Trbuljak, Fedor Vučemilović. Iako se ta umjetnost povremeno izlagala, ipak je njezina pozicija bila marginalna. Zato su umjetnici različitog umjetničkog interesa imali razlog za okupljanje. Nije bilo neke dominantne struje jer su ti umjetnici već imali definirane umjetničke pozicije. Nije bilo koproducenata, a, koliko se sjećam, prijedlozi kustosa prihvaćeni su samo za dvije tematske izložbe. Prostor smo, nakon godine intenzivnog rada, morali vratiti kolegama koji su nam omogućili da se njime služimo. Nakon tog iskustva tražili smo drugu mogućnost. Našli smo je u Hrvatskom društvu likovnih umjetnika u Zagrebu. Najprije smo uz slikarstvo, grafiku i kiparstvo uspjeli uvesti nove medije, a zatim smo dobili svoj prostor, Prostor proširenih medija. U Podrum sam bio pozvan, a Prostor PM-a sam organizirao zajedno s kolegom Damirom Sokićem, uz pomoć umjetnika Stevana Luketića iz Društva. Dok je Podrum s neformalnim član-

stvom bio više zatvoren, Prostor PM-a bio je otvoren za izlaganje, uz uvjet da se ne izlažu klasični mediji. Iako sam uz Sokića formalno vodio izlagački prostor, to se vođenje sastojalo u tome da smo izvjesili prazan papir na koji su se zainteresirani umjetnici zapisivali za izložbu. Zanimljivo je da se nisu javljali autsajderi. Svaki je ponedjeljak bilo otvorenje, izložba je trajala do srijede i tako tri godine, zatim se program nastavio s voditeljem Mladenom Stilinovićem. Prostor PM-a održao se do danas kao Galerija proširenih medija, preseljena u drugi prostor, s kustosom.

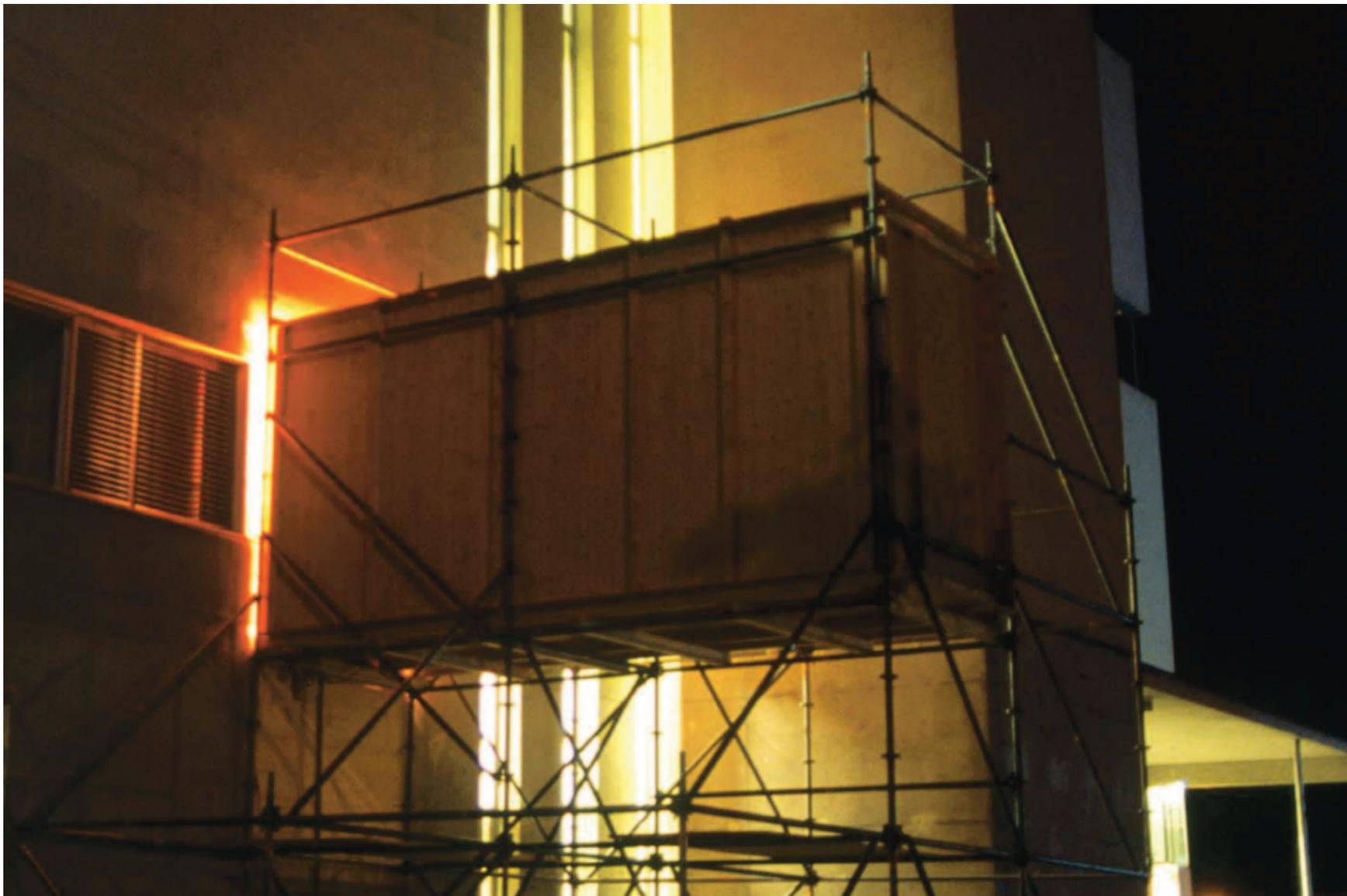
SSCH: U mnogim si djelima eksperimentirao s različitim mogućnostima unutar parametra koji si sam sebi postavio. U *Obojene površine* (1978.) desnom rukom si naslikao kvadrat na stijeni, zatim još jedan kvadrat lijevom i desnom rukom, a u *Presavijenom uglu papira* (1977.) ugao si presavio desnom rukom, jednom u gornjem desnom uglu i jednom u donjem desnom uglu. U seriji recentnih radova, *Polovice* (2015.) nacrtao si oblik, ali si onda polovicu izbrisao, a u prostorno specifičnom radu *Polovice* (2016.) osvjetlio si dvorac u Münsteru dopola. Kako se ti radovi mogu tumačiti: kao mogućnosti u odabranom jeziku ili varijacije na temu?

GP: Htio sam izbjeći određivanje granica prema vlastitom osjećaju. Zapravo time izbjeći stvaranje za koje sam osjećao da pripada tradiciji. Zato sam koristio doseg ruke koji mi je određivao kada stati s povlačenjem crte, koji će oblik imati bojenje površine ili kako će izgledati zahvat na papiru. Slično sam dobivao i mjerenjem. Opisat ću postupke u crtežu *Polovice* iz 2015. Položenom rukom na papiru povlačim crtu ne pomičući ruku; doseg mi određuje njezinu zakrivljenost i završetak. Dužinu dosega ne mogu znati unaprijed pa zato tek kada je dovršen mogu izmjeriti polovicu, brišem je, jer u ovom crtežu radim s polovicama. Nastavljam sličan postupak s još jednim dosegom crte. Zatim ravnalom povlačim crtu prema jednom uglu papira i na polovici stanem. Tu nemam polovicu koju bih trebao brisati jer mi je razmak poznat. Dovršavam crtež sličnim postupkom prema drugom uglu. Ili, u drugom primjeru, pročelje dvorca u Münsteru osvjetlio sam dopola. Zamislimo da sam zgradu dvorca osvi-

“Preuzete forme imaju svoju logiku nastanka. U tom smislu nisu slučajne, dio su stvarnosti koju nisam želio mijenjati. Privlači me to njihovo pripadanje stvarnosti, pa i činjenica da nisam odgovoran za njihov nastanak.

Polovice, 2016
Svjetlosna instalacija
Projekcija svjetla na pola
fasade Dvorca Münster
Fotografija: Deni Šesnić





In & Out, 2003.
Svjetlosna instalacija
izložba *Blut & Honig*,
Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg, Vienna

jetlio po nekom osjećaju. Ne mogu ni zamisliti koliko bi to bilo besmisleno. Mjerena polovica omogućuje da se osjeća rad. Da sam radio po osjećaju, stvorio bih neki oblik na pročelju. Privlačili su me i razmaci između stvari. Ne određujem te međuprostore iako ih koristim u svojim radovima. Oni su dani. Mogao bih zaključiti da nije riječ o varijacijama, već da potvrđujem potencijale u odabranom jeziku.

SSCH: Prostore između dviju stvari tretiraš kao što bi neki umjetnici boju ili koji drugi materijal. Dakle, negativno i pozitivno ili odsutnost i prisutnost jednakovrijedna su umjetnička sredstva u tvojim konceptima. Međuprostor tretiraš na “konkretan” način. Dolazeći iz ambijenta Museuma Haus Konstruktiv, prisjećam se Thea van Doesburga koji je definirao “konkretno” u manifestu iz 1930., u kojem navodi da “ništa nije konkretnije nego neka linija, neka boja, neka površina”. U tvom slučaju trebalo bi dodati još nekoliko kategorija kao što su svjetlo, sjena, prostor.

GP: Rad s prostorom između zida i vrata izveo bih jednako kao s klasičnim materijalom, jednakovrijedni su. Kad majstor popravlja slavinu u kupaonici, ima popis potrebnog materijala na kojemu je svaka stavka jednako važna, jer bez bilo koje od njih ne može dovršiti posao. Kada netko gleda prostor razmaka i neki klasičan materijal sa strane, izvan radnog procesa, naravno da mu izgledaju kao nešto različito. Vjerujem da je Theo van Doesburg razmišljao o konkretnom u kontekstu radnog procesa. Svejedno je radi li se o komadu betona, zamišljenoj liniji, dijelu prostora, sjeni ili napisanoj riječi. Ako posegnem za njima, postaju konkretni. Inače ih ne bih mogao obuhvatiti i na neki način preseliti u rad.

SSCH: Spomenuo si postupak odabira forme iz nečega što već postoji, poput geste iz crteža/slike, kao proces koji je izveden automatizmom, nesvjesno. Nakon toga si preslikavao tu formu ili pronašao sjenu koju si onda fotografirao i projicirao te reproducirao nekoliko puta na različitim mjestima. Koristiš li se tim metodama kako bi odabir oblika prepustio slučaju?

GP: Preuzete forme imaju svoju logiku nastanka; u tom smislu nisu slučajne, dio su stvarnosti koju nisam želio mijenjati. Iako sam ih više ili manje slučajno odabrao, nisam to osjećao kao nešto bitno. Privlačilo me to njihovo pripadanje stvarno-

sti, pa i to da nisam odgovoran za njihov nastanak ili, kad je riječ o gesti, činjenica da je gesta nešto što pripada prošlosti i postoji u stvarnosti kao nešto dovršeno, slično kao i sjena. Zanimalo me nešto od čega tek mogu započeti svoj dio rada. Najprije sam ih preselio u svoj rad. Kad sam ih htio mijenjati, nisam ih preoblikovao (osim u *Preslikavanjima*). To jest, nisam htio da postanu rezultat moga stvaranja, već sam to činio tako da ostanu to što jesu. Na primjer, povećao sam ih za pet centimetara ili bih ih umanjio za polovicu. Razlika između mog dijela i dijela koji sam preuzeo vidljiva je.

SSCH: Prije si spomenuo da si većinu života proveo u Zagrebu. U jednom radu — *In & Out* (2003.) za izložbu *Blut & Honig* u Essl Museumu u Klosterneuburgu izradio si dodatni prostor uz postojeći izložbeni prostor, novu “kapsulu” i napisao da si umjetnik s Balkana koji ne stvara balkansku umjetnost. Jesi li osjećao da život i rad u Zagrebu podrazumijeva zapostavljenost od međunarodne umjetničke scene?

GP: U izjavi da sam “umjetnik s Balkana koji ne stvara balkansku umjetnost” ima puno humora. Reagirao sam na svoje opažanje da se na umjetnost s prostora bivše Jugoslavije gleda kao na umjetnost obilježenu lokalnim kontekstom i da međunarodna scena od umjetnika s ovih prostora očekuje određenu vrstu stavova i tema, kao da ne dijelimo zajedničku umjetničku tradiciju s umjetnicima sa zapada Europe. Konkretno, kao da europska umjetnička tradicija pripada samo zapadu, a mi smo na nju izgubili pravo. Da ne ulazim dublje u temu, naveo bih samo situaciju u Zagrebu u vrijeme socijalističkoga društvenog poretka koji danas iz ideoloških razloga mnogi zaboravljaju, čemu se mogu protiviti jer sam to vrijeme živio. U Zagrebu se 1961. počeo održavati Muzički bijenale na kojem su uz domaće kompozitore gostovali Cage, Stockhausen, Stravinski, Berio, Maderna, Globokar, Kagel, Nono, Reich. Od 1961. do 1973. održavale su se manifestacije Novih tendencija unutar kojih je 1968. uvedena sekcija za kompjutere i vizualna istraživanja, a 1973. sekcija konceptualne umjetnosti. Od stranih teoretičara su sudjelovali Argan, Kulterman, Nike, Moles, a od umjetnika grupa Zero, GRAV, Nul, Manzoni i Colombo. Zagrebačke umjetnike i ne spominjem, iako su neki pripadnici grupe Gorgona, umjetnici koji su sudjelovali u Novim tendencijama, i Zagrebačka škola crtanog filma već tada bili međunarodno priznati.

“ Na umjetnost s prostora bivše Jugoslavije gleda se kao na umjetnost obilježenu lokalnim kontekstom. Međunarodna scena od umjetnika s ovih prostora očekuje određenu vrstu stavova i tema, kao da ne dijelimo zajedničku umjetničku tradiciju s umjetnicima sa zapada Europe. Kao da europska umjetnička tradicija pripada samo zapadu, a mi smo na nju izgubili pravo.

Sve je to, dolaskom 1970. u Zagreb, utjecalo na moj rad. Osjećao sam zajedništvo i bliskost s tom umjetnošću, bez obzira na to odakle dolazi. Da se vratim na instalaciju *In & Out*. Kapsulu koju sam dodao zgradi Essl kolekcije, odmaknuo sam za pet centimetara od njezina pročelja. Kad sada razmislim o tome, možda sam nesvjesno progovorio o toj izolaciji koja je Balkanu nametnuta. Zašto pet centimetara? Polazio sam od sebe; riječ "pet" na hrvatskom znači broj 5, a ujedno je to i prvi slog mog prezimena ... i mjera koje sam se držao.

SSCH: Ovdje si spomenuo nekoliko bitnih stvari — pokret Novih tendencija koji je od međunarodne važnosti jer su se umjetnici iz različitih europskih zemalja ujedinili kako bi promišljali zajedničke ideje. Pretpostavljam da je pozadina socijalističkoga društvenog poretka i njegova stava prema umjetnosti potaknula umjetnike i kustose na akciju i, naročito, na konceptualne, političke i tehnološke transformacije. Bi li mogao reći da je serija izložbi poznatih kao Nove tendencije utjecala na tvoj umjetnički pristup?

GP: Ne bih to rekao. Iako su Nove tendencije stvorile pozitivnu klimu, nisu izravno utjecale na moj rad jer je riječ o drukčijoj vrsti istraživanja, usmjerenost na optičko nije me privlačila. Budući da sam u Zagreb došao pri kraju Novih tendencija, nekako sam ih tako i osjećao, kao povijest. Tek sam poslije otkrivao Knifera, Kristla, Srneca, Morelleta i druge. Da se vratim na društveni poredak. Važno je znati da u Jugoslaviji nije postojala represija socrealizma sovjetskog tipa jer je Tito raskrstio sa Staljinom vrlo rano. I u tome je posebnost ovog područja. Spomenut ću fenomen državnih spomenika posvećenih žrtvama Drugoga svjetskog rata koji su bili apstraktnoga modernističkog stila. Istraživanja na polju apstraktne umjetnosti započela su vrlo rano; spomenimo EXAT51 koji je bio prepoznat kao napredan. Grupa je 1952. pozvana na međunarodni *Salon Novih realista* u Pariz kao predstavnica Jugoslavije. Tu su i četiri izložbe pod nazivom *Saloni* (1954., 1956., 1959. i 1961.) organizirane u Modernoj galeriji (današnji Muzej moderne i suvremene umjetnosti) u Rijeci, koje su pokrenute kao smotra najnovijih istraživanja, mislilo se na apstraktni jezik umjetnosti.

SSCH: Zbog mog rada u Museum Haus Konstruktiv često sam suočena s pitanjima o političkom utjecaju nefigurativnih radova. Uopće se ne slažem da nefigurativna djela nemaju nikakvu političku važnost i zanima me tvoje mišljenje — osobito zbog političke okoline iz koje dolaziš.

GP: Puno je načina na koji se može izraziti političnost. Najjednostavnije je svrstavanje uz nešto što jasno iskazuje političke poruke. Primjećujem da se danas u umjetnosti koristi tekst kao zamjena za slikovnu priču kojom se figurativna umjetnost tradicionalno koristila kako bi slala političke poruke. Zapravo, unutar umjetnosti govori se više o mjeri političke važnosti jer je nemoguće napraviti nepolitičan rad. U stvaranju svjesno ili nesvjesno sudjeluje sve, uključujući i odnos prema društvu. Nefigurativni radovi su, što se toga tiče, u mnogo čemu slični s političkom važnosti glazbe. Osobno, izraz političkog stava vidim u odgovornosti za ono što činim, a o političkom utjecaju se ne brinem, njega ima više ili manje.

SSCH: U ranim dvijetisućitim godinama počeo si upotrebljavati svakodnevne predmete kao materijal za svoje instalacije. *Stolica u Nakon refleksije* (2007.) dio je rada u kojem osvjetljavaš prostor između stolice i zida. Ili, u drugom radu iz iste serije, upotrijebio si razbijen keramički tanjur i nekako proširio liniju razbijenog predmeta tako što si je ispunio debelom linijom materijala za punjenje koji se zove akrystal. U *Simetriji* (2009.) si upotrijebio vinsku čašu ispunjenu betonom i stavio je ispred zrcala. Čini se da si na neki način prešao s nematerijalnog materijala poput svjetla i sjene te vrlo laganih materijala poput žice i metalnih štapića na čvršći materijal koji si našao u svakodnevnom životu. Bi li se složio s tim i možeš li objasniti izbor materijala?

GP: Da, složio bih se. S jedne strane nakon uzastopnog korištenja svjetla došlo je do zasićenja. U jednom trenutku ko-

rištenje svjetla počeo sam osjećati kao konvenciju koja mi je prestala biti uzbudljiva. S druge strane, ako unutar konkretnog koncepta materijaliziram neke ideje sa svjetlom, to ne znači da više nemam prostora za ideje u drugim materijalima koji su konkretni. Kad to ne bih mogao, značilo bi da nisam razumio ili prihvatio širinu koju omogućuje taj koncept. Hoću reći, ako prihvaćam oblik i boju neke sjene kao materijal, razlog da ne prihvatim neki objekt kao materijal ne bi imao logičnog opravdanja, osim da je razlog skriven u mom egu. Tako sam osjećao, kao da tom odlukom upravlja moj ukus. To ne volim. Što se tiče izbora materijala, vodio sam se s jedne strane idejom da se njime lako rukuje i da je pogodan za realizaciju ideje, kao na primjer žice i metalni štapići u *Sjenama*; s druge, da su obični, nebitni, da ne odašilju velike poruke. U sedamdesetima sam radio s pakpapierima jer sam osjećao da su kvalitetni papiri kupljeni u specijaliziranim umjetničkim dućanima odvlačili rad u područje klasične umjetnosti. Privlačila me običnost papira, davala mi slobodu; s tim sam stavom odabirao papir.

SSCH: Puno tvojih radova izvedeno je u serijama. Je li razmišljanje u serijama metoda kojom se koristiš kako bi istražio varijacije na određenu temu, a da već u glavi imaš nekoliko mogućnosti kada započinješ s radom, ili serije evoluiraju dok ih stvaras? Negdje sam pročitala da govoriš o radovima koji se razvijaju iz već postojećih radova. Stoga se serija možda sastoji od radova koji proizlaze iz pitanja ili mogućnosti evociranih prethodnim radom.

GP: Serije razvijam izvedbom. Praksa me dovodi u nepredvidive situacije, dok s razmišljanjem imam osjećaj da se vrtim u polju vlastitog znanja koje je ograničeno. Uglavnom sam do novih koncepata dolazio ili percepcijom stvarnosti ili izvedenog rada. Ne osjećam da su to različite stvari jer kad je rad gotov, prelazi nevidljivu granicu i postaje dio stvarnosti. Na neki način ne vidim ga kao nešto svoje, već nešto što sam dodao tijelu svega što me okružuje. Zato sam, na primjer, mogao uzeti neki stari crtež i prebojiti ga pripadajućom stilizacijom. Tim se postupkom crtež nije više vidio, ali stilizirani oblik nije bio izmišljeni oblik. Prethodnog rada nema, ali je prisutan svojim utjecajem.

SSCH: Tema ili, točnije, metoda koja se u tvom radu ponavlja jest preslikavanje neke forme i ponavljanje ili mijenjanje u nešto drugo. Zanima me je li ta metoda preslikavanja ujedno i oblik oslobađanja od traženja ili generiranja forme.

GP: Da, u pozadini ponavljanja stoji to da ne tražim novu formu. I ponavljanje nikad nije doslovno, više je riječ o varijacijama unutar istog koncepta. Na neki način tako održavam svoju poziciju do trenutka kada mi se otvara izlaz u promjenu, u drugu poziciju. Toliko sam siguran da će taj trenutak doći, da mi je to čekanje postalo uobičajena metoda stvaranja. Najprije s nekim konceptom živim i radim, i ne znam u kojem smjeru mogu dalje, i nije me briga, ali znam da se može dalje. Bilo bi bahato i nerealno očekivati da će promjena uslijediti nakon svakoga dovršenog rada.

SSCH: Druga serija radova u kojoj tematiziraš proces traženja forme su *Stilizacije*. Spominješ stilizaciju, što znači stvoriti iluziju forme svedenu na svoju suštinu. Nisam sigurna razumijem li to.

GP: U *Stilizacijama* stvaram iluziju da podržavam konvenciju postupka stiliziranja nekog oblika. To je postupak iz slikarstva. Na primjer, kada slikar crta po modelu, to što vidi svodi na glavne crte i njih crta. Gube se detalji, a ostaje bitno. Taj sam postupak ovdje doslovno preuzeo. Imam model, a to je prolivena boja, crtež ili znak koji stiliziram. Svejedno je da li je oblik figurativan ili apstraktan, koristim njegove istaknute točke koje mi omogućuju stiliziranje, što zadovoljava smisao izvedbe. Ali time ne želim oblik približiti svojoj vizualnoj suštini. Ne želim stilizirati.

SSCH: S radom *Negativ* si 1995. sudjelovao na Venecijanskom bienalu. U toj seriji radova koristio si negative koji prikazuju

“Uglavnom sam do novih koncepata dolazio ili percepcijom stvarnosti ili izvedenog rada. Ne osjećam da su to različite stvari jer kad je rad gotov, prelazi nevidljivu granicu i postaje dio stvarnosti. Na neki način ne vidim ga kao nešto svoje, već nešto što sam dodao tijelu svega što me okružuje.



Simetrije, 2007 · Staklo, ljepilo
23 × 6,7 × 6,7 cm
Fotografija: Robert Sošić

“Različite oblike, količine i metode biram kao iz nekog skladišta iskustva. Pitanje kako ograničiti njihov izbor u mnoštvu mogućnosti, ulazi u samo stvaranje.

specifičan dio nekog prostora i projicirao ih u taj isti prostor, postavljajući stvarnost i fikciju u dijalog. Što odabireš kada imaš prostor s kojim radiš? Za instalaciju na Venecijanskom bijenalu izradio si svojevrstne svjetlosne stupove — možeš li reći nešto više o tome što si tražio.

GP: Kod *Negativa* bitne su jasne sjene u prostoru kako bih ih mogao prekriti istim oblikom svjetla, tj. sjene pretvoriti u oblike svjetla. Što sam tražio? Tim sam postupkom sjene učinio vidljivima. Stvarao sam događaj samo promjenom količine svjetla u sjeni, a oblike sam ostavljao onakvima kakve sam zatekao. Poslije sam u prostor postavljao izvor svjetla i u osvijetljeni dio uvodio elemente kako bih njihove sjene mogao pretvoriti u svjetlo. U Veneciji je danje svjetlo ulazilo kroz veliki prozor uz čiji su lijevi i desni rub uskoga vertikalnog pojasa bile sjene. Kada sam na te sjene projicirao svjetlo, dobio sam te svjetlosne stupove.

SSCH: U daljnjim verzijama projekcije dijapozitiva kao motiva, fotografirao si sjenu nečega što si pronašao u određenom izložbenom prostoru i projicirao tu sliku na to isto mjesto ili, drugom metodom, “poništi” si sjenu refleksijom uz pomoć zrcala. Kako odabireš metodu?

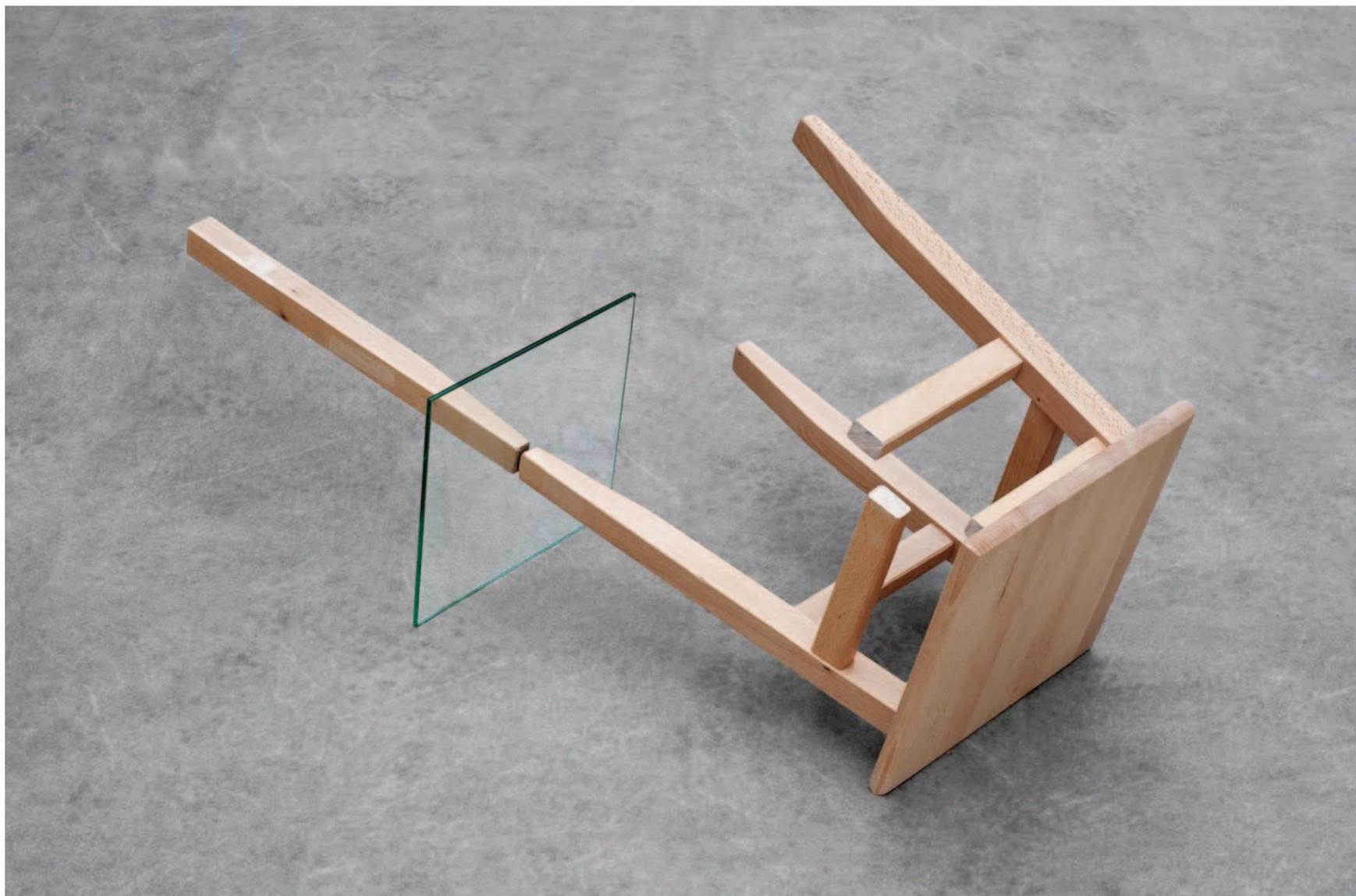
GP: Radovi u kojima sam zrcalima poništio sjenu prethodili su *Negativima*. Zapravo, riječ je o istom konceptu, samo što sam zrcala zamijenio projekcijom oblika pomoću dijaprojektora. Poslije sam i te radove sa zrcalima nazvao *Negativima*. U *Fleševima* sam oblik sjene odvajao od predmeta i projicirao ga kao oblik svjetla uz neki drugi postojeći oblik svjetla, na primjer uz prozor. Na taj je način jedno svjetlo dobilo drugi oblik svjetla, oblik koji je prethodno bio sjena; svjetlo je dobilo produžetak, kao što je osvijetljeni predmet produžen sjenom. Zadržao sam mehanizam odnosa objekt-sjena, ali me u ovom slučaju suprotnost svjetlo-tamno nije zanimala. Postojeći oblik selio sam na drugo mjesto, čime sam stvarao novi događaj.

SSCH: U tvojim najnovijim radovima zapažaju se različite metode kojima si se koristio u prethodnim radovima, primijenjene na jedan rad. *Simetrija i stilizacija umanjena za polovicu*

(2013.) jedan je takav primjer, ili *Simetrija, stilizacija* (2014.). i u drugom korpusu radova pod nazivom *Nizovi* koristiš različite oblike, količine i metode. Čini se — a sve si ih sam formulirao — da možeš birati iz skladišta mogućnosti. Misliš li da su te mogućnosti ograničene?

GP: Svjetlosnom instalacijom *Simetrija i stilizacija umanjena za polovicu* i drugim sličnim radovima u Galeriji Gregor Podnar, 2013. u Berlinu, htio sam pokazati radove u kojima su oblici različitih koncepata, kao da je riječ o dovršenim radovima, izvedenima jedan preko drugoga. U *Nizovima* su većim dijelom poredani jedan do drugog bez razmaka. Katkad su u istom *Nizu* izvedeni dijelom jedan preko drugoga, a dijelom jedan do drugoga. U oba je slučaja riječ o istoj vrsti misli koja, tako reći, prožima cjelokupno moje stvaranje. Različite oblike, količine i metode zaista biram kao iz nekog skladišta iskustva. Pitanje kako ograničiti njihov izbor u mnoštvu mogućnosti, ulazi u samo stvaranje. Na primjer, potrošenost, zasićenost nekim radnim postupkom; privlačnost ili odbojnost prema nekome *radnom* materijalu; prihvaćanje datosti prostora ili materijala koje uvodim u rad ili logike rukovanja materijalom; prepuštanje neke odluke umjetničkom ili društvenom kontekstu — sve su to osjećaji koje ne potiskujem, oni uz formalne postavke ravnopravno sudjeluju u stvaranju rada. Od slučaja do slučaja, sve navedeno ograničuje ili potiče izbor između velikog broja mogućnosti. Time gradim smisao rada, koji na neki način umanjuje ulogu formalizma. Nije mi svejedno na kojoj vrsti papira crtam, premda, gledajući formalno, trebalo bi biti svejedno. Katkad to zaista nije ni bitno. Kao i u životu, usprkos velikom broju formalnih poznanstava, emotivni život dijelimo s ograničenim brojem osoba. Hoću reći da metode koje su izvedene unutar čistih jezičnih modela omogućuju da s tom vrstom “formalizma” razumijevanje rada ide u jednom smjeru. Međutim, u stvaranju sudjeluje i prije navedeno, ono postoji i istodobno razumijevanje rada vodi u drugom smjeru. To mi je uvijek bilo bitno jer mi je davalo snagu da se upustim u formalne zahvate koji bi me zbog jednostavnosti mogli odvesti u banalnost. Da bih se od toga obranio, razumijevanje sam krenuo tražiti u drugom smjeru. Tek tada je cjelina rada dobivala smisao.

Simetrije, 2010.
Staklo, drvo
42 × 93 × 39,5 cm
Fotografija: Robert Sošić



A WAREHOUSE OF POSSIBILITIES

A conversation between Sabine Schaschl and Goran Petercol, August 2019

SSCH: The first exhibition I saw of yours was at Grita Insam Gallery in Vienna, which must have been in the mid-1990s. I still vividly remember a series of wall “sculptures” — you refer to them as light installations — consisting of light, brass sticks and steel wires mounted directly onto the wall. What immediately caught me was the minimalistic character of these works, using such a reduced amount of material and yet bringing out such a sensual experience, which differed also according to where the spectator was standing. Although these are not your earliest works, I was wondering if you consider these pieces as core pieces within your work or pieces that form a special knot on the red thread of your entire body of work.

GP: Yes, I feel them as a kind of turning point. The use of light changed the reception of my works, and also gradually opened up space for new concepts. Generally speaking, in the 1980s there were not many artists working with light. I started to work with light and shadow in 1985 and exhibited these works at a solo exhibition at the Gallery of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, and then at *Trigon* in 1989 when I met Grita Insam, and had the first solo exhibition at her gallery in Vienna in 1990. The first ten years I used to call all the works with light *Sjene* (*Shadows*), although they were based on different concepts. I didn’t translate that title into English, I used it as a name. I wanted to reduce the power of the word shadow because I felt it depleted, which repelled me. And regarding the use of light itself I felt ambivalent: I was attracted to it as it allowed me to create an order for which I was not responsible and at the same time its excessive seduction, from which I could not escape, repelled me. But to tell the truth, in some cases I liked to use it.

SSCH: I find this ambivalence interesting — light is an interesting immaterial material, seductive in many cases, but maybe from a certain perspective also quite efficient in terms of handling. When you talk about order, I would like to know more about this process. If I correctly understand it, you define geometrical, systematical points where you apply the metal sticks or shaped wires, and then the cast shadows become integral conceptual parts. In some of your texts you talk about elements that cast no shadow. Don’t all objects or elements cast shadows? Isn’t the positioning of light responsible for the existence of a shadow, with the positioning of the light defined by you?

GP: Although I sometimes use an existing light source, in most cases I set it up myself. So first, I fix the light, and then I place an object inside the illuminated space, producing a shadow that could change depending on the distance from the light source. I accept the obtained directions of the stretch of the shadow, its shape and length, as the distance between the two elements. In fact, I accept a kind of self-organization of the work that frees me from deciding everything. After these initial assumptions, I leave aside the decisions as to when and how to complete the work. When it comes to shadows that appear as dark lines, I finish them myself by placing a metal stick on the end point of the shadow (line), which I tilt so it no longer produces shadow. In a way, I interrupt the reasons for further self-organization of the work. Within the *Sjene* series, I have about ten concepts, within which I treat work items differently. In a series in which I arrange the elements along the contours

of an imaginary geometric figure (rectangle, circle, triangle, etc.), I sometimes draw a geometric figure with shadows, and sometimes halfway through, I stop and finish the work by joining the ends of the shadow with a string forming an arc. That way I do not have a shadow that I could continue because it does not extend any further. In a series of shadowless works, I place for example a wire in the field of light, and then line up the metal rods in positions where they do not produce shadows. At first glance, the viewer is unsure whether the shadow he or she sees belongs to the wire or the rods. Of course, one can discover the truth very quickly, because there was no intention of fraud either.

SSCH: The aspect of self-organization of the work is very interesting. How is it then possible to do preparatory drawings of light interventions? There are drawings of installations whose shadows have different colors. Does this mean that you can plan and conceptualize the form of the shadows and their colors beforehand? Does chance play a part in this process?

GP: These are sketches for light installations with colored shadows. When two complementary colors of light overlap, the illuminated background is more or less white, with the shadows of the object appearing in two colors (red and turquoise). When these shadows overlap, then the overlapped shadow loses color, becoming almost black. When setting this up, I used sketches to reconstruct the idea. I can compare these sketches with music notation. At my worktable with the elements in hand, I would try out the shadows created by the two lights of complementary colors and draw their positions on paper. I needed this pre-setup. While I could imagine a work done with one light, in color shadow work I really couldn’t do it, they were too complicated for me. Relationships and shadow lengths change with each performance, but that does not affect the idea. Due to the different positions of the light, we perceive their proper regularity as a coincidence.

SSCH: I saw in your biography that you attended the Maritime College and that you sailed on navy ships before you started with the arts. Was there a special moment, a cut, to leave behind sailing to go study art or was this a slow transition? Also, since I read this, I cannot stop thinking about your sailing experience when I look at some of your drawings and light installations. The reflections of light and the shapes of shadows especially give me the impression that the visual experiences from sailing found a way into your art. Is there any truth in this?

GP: I was attracted to seeing New York, Rio de Janeiro, Yokohama, Casablanca... and at that time, when I was eighteen years-old, this was only possible as a seaman. At the same time, I was drawn to art, but I didn’t know to which field. I never meant to stay on board. Surely, I had some experience staying at sea, there may be a feeling of empty space, of space in between, but I can only speculate about this. I can also assume it might be the feeling of a journey from point A to point B, i.e. that every journey must end somewhere. I act similarly in my work, starting from something concrete I go in a certain direction and at some point I turn in another direction, into something else... and finally, I stop. In works with shadows, this trajectory gets materialized in

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“ I am reacting to my works that, at one point or another start to build a convention, so I then need new work that would, let’s say, heal me.

shadows that create a finite sequence. Although the shadow is static, it contains movement, in the direction of the extension. When that journey is over, I let it know, I quit making shadows. I’m not sure about the direct connection between navigation and the *Sjene* series. When you talk about the atmosphere you feel, I can also say that it may be connected to the fact that I lived in a small provincial town, where at night public lighting was modest. I recorded these views of the city over two nights in 1963 (and never before or after that). A few years ago, I found these negatives, developed the photographs and realized that I was shooting light. In some ways the photos confirmed that my interest in light was not a coincidence.

SSCH: I was looking at some of your early works, which you did during your studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb. There were two methods I found very interesting because they were there from the beginning and in my opinion they are still an integral part of your work. The first thing I noticed is your stylistic diversity when you draw. The minimal style effectuating a portrait with a few lines, and the compact style filling up the shape of a face with several densely driven circular lines; both co-exist. A second observation was that the contrast between light and darkness was something evident in your early work. The painting *Untitled* (1976) immediately made me think of Goya’s fresco with the drowning dog, where the contrast of light and dark is responsible for the underlining of emotional drama. Where any art historical references of interest for you?

GP: Drawing with black on white paper or contrasting shadow and light are the procedures that make it visible. Such a procedure produces a contrast that bears some kind of drama. I used it in student artwork (the 1976 painting you refer to still belongs to my body of student artwork). However, after 1975, I worked to reduce drama. I separated forms from conventionally attached meanings. For example in the series of drawings *Copying* (winter 1975/76), I copied previously made gestures to make new ones that only formally resembled them, as if they were created within the concept of gestural painting. The copying process deprived them of associated energy, spontaneity, and any kind of expressiveness. In *Stylizations*, I performed the stylization so formally that it lost its meaning by reducing the stylized form to its visual essence. Sometimes I made the first shape in black and stylized it with white and sometimes with black on a white background. I have sought to contain this emotional drama stemming from the nature of opposition at the level on which things are simply seen. I tried to subtract or at least reduce that which might suggest something more. Except within the work itself, I could use the method of putting together oppositions to exit one type of formal problem and open up another. After a series of variants, the new work contained some opposite assumption. It may be more about resisting saturation after working too long within one concept and losing motivation to pursue something similar than wanting to go into the new. This may have been the reason for the stylistic changes in the drawings mentioned. In *Negatives*, for example, I illuminated the shadows by transforming them into shapes of illuminated surfaces, and then in *Light²*, I further illuminated the shapes of light.

After turning the shadow into a form of light I continued to convert the light into a stronger light; I treated it as a shadow even though it was light. In fact, I am reacting to my works that, at one point or another start to build a convention, so I then need new work that would, let’s say, heal me. As for art historical references, somehow, I was not consciously tied to anything. Not even when I studied and loved the work of an artist or the idea of an art movement, or was within a specific work problem, it did not affect my artistic position. I spent a great part of my life in Zagreb, which is why I felt the local art tradition so close to me. I even thought about trying to come up with something that would speak about the environment itself, because the scene produced it, at least I thought so. Sometimes I was drawn to the works of artists with whom I could not find any visible

links. Also, for a period of ten years, during the 1970s and 1980s, I intensively socialized with artists from the Podrum and PM Space, exhibition spaces hosted by these artists and myself.

SSCH: So, I suppose that the “healing” process is a lifelong process — just like the artistic process. It seems that you went from figurative drawing and painting into abstraction and non-figurative work. The year of this change was 1975. Were the collages you did in 1974 a kind of bridge from the figurative to the abstract?

GP: What interested me at the Academy was figuring out what painting is. Not all of it, as I unconsciously traced some path that related it to me. Through practice, I confirmed whether I truly understood the concept within which I was painting. Usually after a dozen pictures within a series, something moved, and then I moved on. Even though I was moving from one concept to another, newer one, I would always find myself working within the familiar in art. That is why I did not feel my painting was an art that I could exhibit. I didn’t exhibit. That’s how I felt. I was practicing. At the end of my studies, I came to abstract painting, which even then I did not feel as art but still as an exercise within my studies.

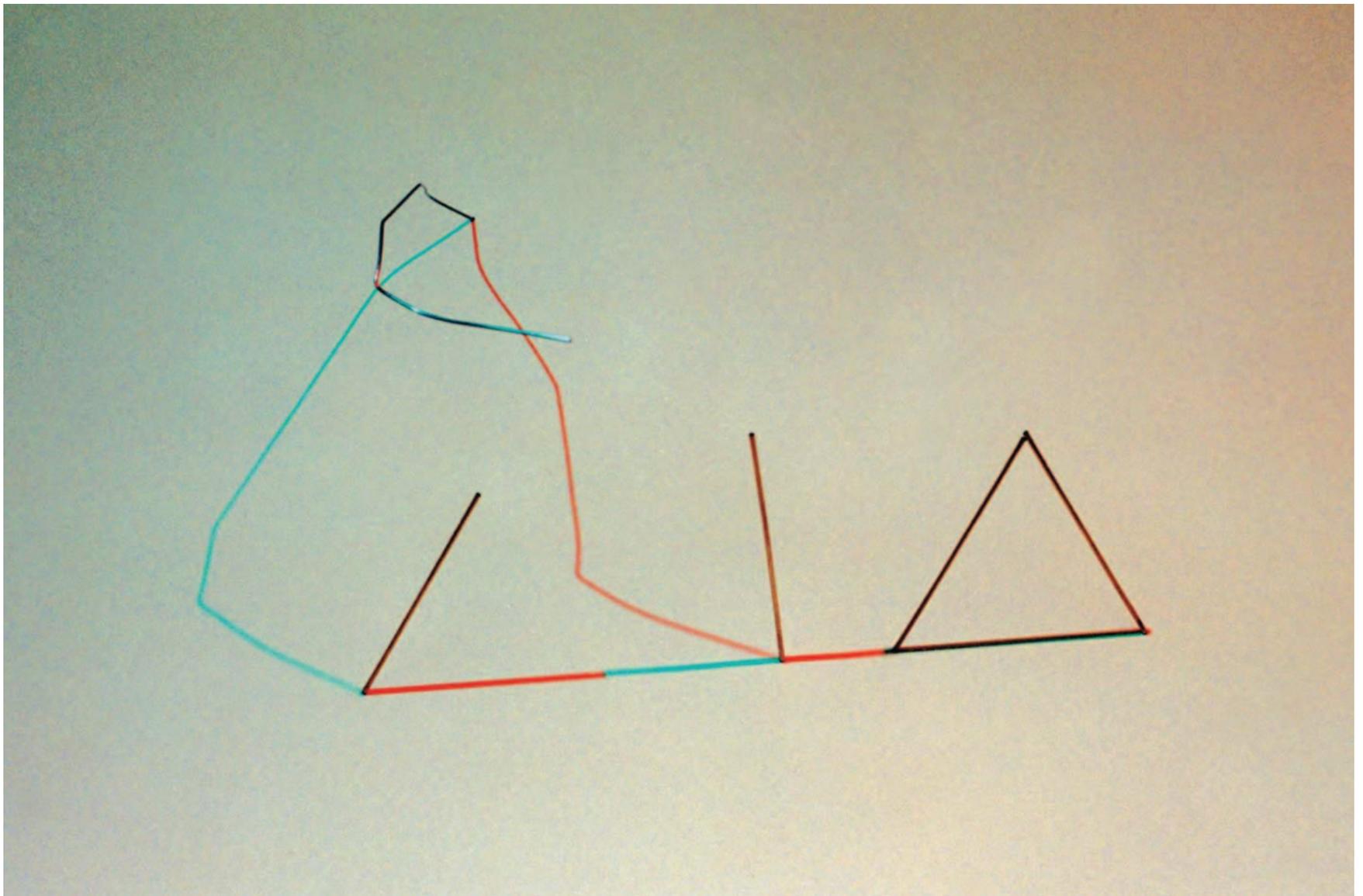
Though I was aware of working in a realm of depleted concepts, I was learning them anyway. I couldn’t skip them because they came from my practice. Skip to what? I was patient and knew I wouldn’t stay inside them. It was only after the Academy that I got the feeling that I could exhibit the series *Copying*. I did not feel a significant difference between figuration, collage and abstraction. The collages were created with the idea that when I paint, if I apply the substance of oil paint on a substrate, then I can also glue papers, newspapers... because they are also matter, which also has its own color. I didn’t feel much difference. Still, no time was lost at the Academy. On the contrary, I can say that I learned a lot, not techniques, making paintings... but finding the thought within the subject matter of art. Raul Goldoni, whose class I graduated from, in addition to leading the internship also fostered awareness in each student of their own work. He used to tell us to write a few lines about what we do, and that we did not have to show it to anyone, but just write about it.

SSCH: You have mentioned before that you were hosting exhibitions at the Podrum and PM Space together with artist-colleagues. I guess that today we would call them artist-run spaces. Could you tell me more about it? You had the role of a curator or co-curator, if I correctly understood. Who were your colleagues? What kind of exhibitions did you do? When and why did these initiatives end?

GP: In the 1970s, due to the emergence of conceptual art, classical media ceased to be at the forefront. At Podrum we exhibited conceptual art, performance, visual poetry, photography, video, and primary or analytical works. I list here the names from the poster of the first exhibition: Boris Demur, Vladimir Dodig, Ivan Dorogi, Ladislav Galeta, Tomislav Gotovac, Vlado Gudac, Sanja Iveković, Željko Jerman, Željko Kipke, Antun Maračić, Vlado Martek, Dalibor Martinis, Marijan Molnar, Goran Petercol, Rajko Radovanović, Mladen Stilinović, Sven Stilinović, Josip Stošić, Goran Trbuljak, Fedor Vučemilović. This art was only occasionally exhibited and its position was marginal. That is why artists of different artistic interests had a reason to gather. There was no dominant orientation because these artists had previously defined artistic positions. There were no co-producers, and curatorial proposals, as far as I remember, were accepted only for two thematic exhibitions. After one year of intensive work, we had to return the space to the colleagues who allowed us to use it. After that experience, we looked for another option. We found it within the Association of Croatian Visual Artists in Zagreb. At the board meeting, we first introduced new media in addition to painting, graphics and sculpture, and then we got our own space, the Expanded Media Space. I had been invited to join the Podrum,



Interspaces, 1985
Indian ink, cuts on wall-
paper · 50 × 300 cm
Private collection, Samobor
Photo: Jasenko Rasol



while I initiated the PM Space with my colleague Damir Sokić and the help of the artist Stevan Luketić from the Association. While the informal membership of the Podrum was more closed, the PM Space was open for the participation of others, under the condition that no classical media was exhibited. Although I was formally managing the exhibition space with Sokić, the management consisted of hanging a blank piece of paper on which interested artists listed their names for the future exhibition. Interestingly, no outsider ever applied. Every Monday there was an opening, the exhibition lasted until Wednesday and so it went on for three years, and then Mladen Stilinović took charge of the program. The PM Space has been maintained to this day as the Extended Media Gallery, and moved to another space, with a curator.

SSCH: In a lot of your works you were experimenting with the different possibilities given by a parameter, which was set by you. In *Color on Surfaces* (1978), you painted a square on a rock with your right hand and then another square with the left and right hand, in *Folded Corner of Paper* (1977), you folded a corner with your right hand, once at the top right corner and once at the bottom right corner. In a very recent series of works, *Halves* (2015), you drew a form, but erased half of it, and in a site-specific work, *Halves* (2016), you illuminated half of Castle Münster. How can these works be considered: as potentialities within a chosen language, or as variations of a theme?

GP: I wanted to avoid setting boundaries according to my feelings. In fact, with that I avoided any creation that I felt belonged to tradition. So, I used the reach of my hand, which used to tell me when to draw the line, what shape it would paint on the surface, or what the operation on paper would look like. Measuring produced similar results. I will describe the procedures in the 2015 *Halves* drawing. With my hand on a piece of paper I draw a line without moving the position of the hand; my reach determines its curvature and completion. I cannot know the length of the reach in advance, which is why it is only on completion that I measure half, and then delete it, because in this drawing I am working with halves. I continue a similar process with another reach of the line. Then, with a ruler, I draw the line toward one

corner of the paper and stop halfway. I do not have to delete half of it because I know the distance in advance. I finish the drawing with a similar procedure to the second corner. Or, in another example, I lit the facade of the Münster Castle halfway. Suppose I lit the building by feeling. I can't even imagine how little sense that would make. The measured half allows the work to be felt. If I had worked on feeling, I would have created a shape on the facade. Also, I am drawn to the spaces between things. I do not designate these spaces, although I use them in my works. They are given as such. I could conclude that it is not a matter of variations but of confirming the potentials within the chosen language.

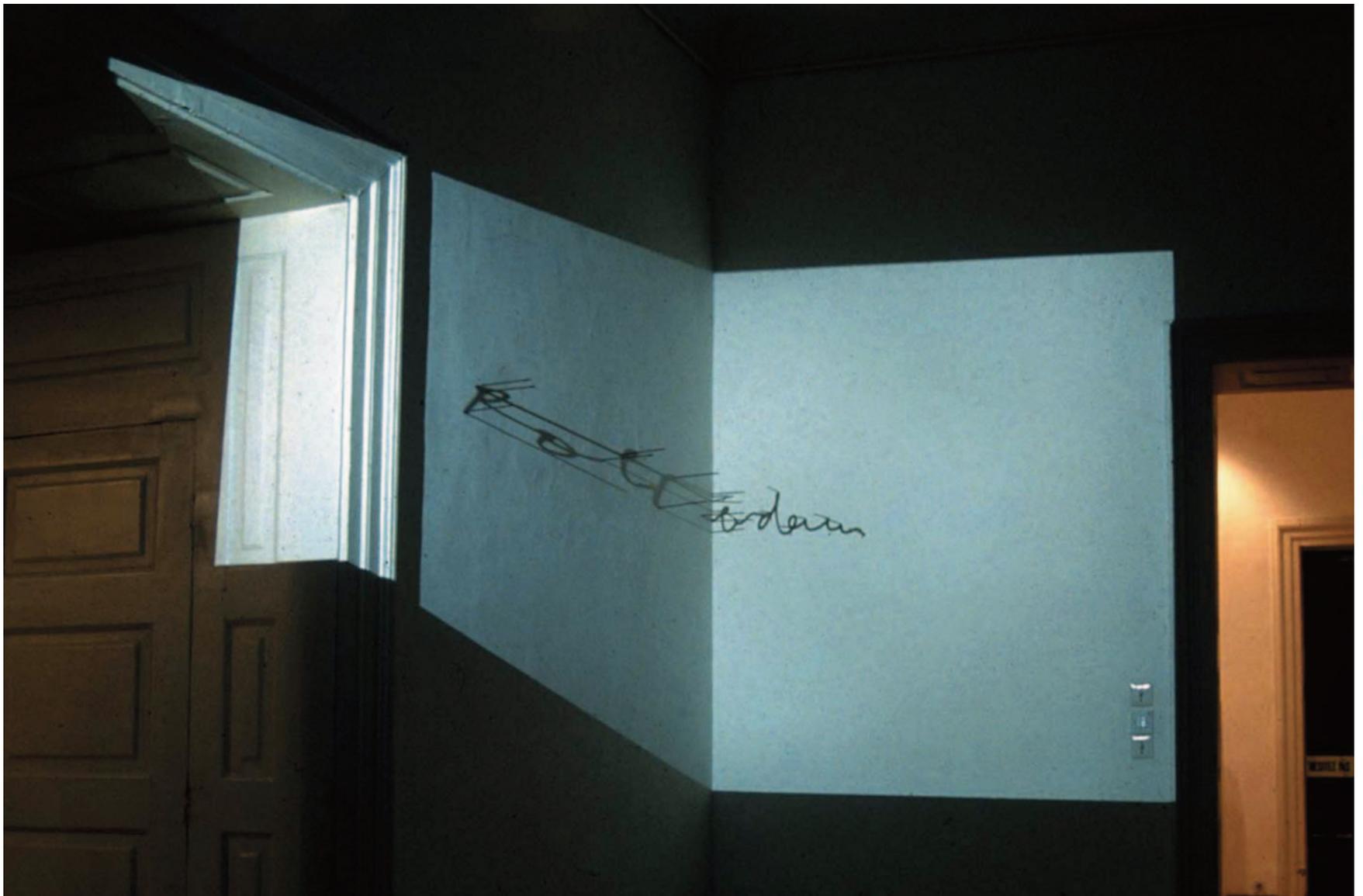
SSCH: You treat the spaces in between two things like other artists would use paint or another material. So, the negative and the positive or absence and presence are equal artistic means in your concepts. You treat the space in between in a "concrete" way. Coming from the background of Museum Haus Konstruktiv I recall Theo van Doesburg, who defined "concrete" in his writing from 1930 as "nothing is as concrete as a line, a color, a surface". In your case one would need to add a few more categories such as light, shadow, space.

GP: Working with the space between the wall and the door I regard as I would any classic material, they are equivalent. To repair a faucet in the bathroom, a repairman has a list of materials necessary, on which each item is equally important, because without one of them he cannot finish the work. When space and some classic material are viewed from the outside, outside the work process, of course they look like different things. I believe Theo van Doesburg defined a concrete result as being within the work process. It doesn't matter if it's a piece of concrete, an imaginary line, a part of space, a shadow, or a written word. If I reach for them, they become concrete. Otherwise I would not be able to capture them, and somehow move them into an artwork.

SSCH: You mentioned before the process of choosing a form from something that is already there, such as a gesture from a drawing/painting, as a process that was done in an automated condition and without conscious awareness. After this you meticulously copied this form, or you found a shadow,

Colored Sjene, 1998
Light, brass sticks
Dimensions variable

“The forms that were taken over have their own logic of origin, in that sense they are not accidental, they are part of a reality that I did not want to change. I was attracted to their belonging to reality, even if I was not responsible for their emergence.



Sjene Cities (Rotterdam), 1994
Transparencies, metal elements
Light installation at the Museum
of Contemporary Art, Zagreb

“The art from the territory of the Former Yugoslavia is viewed as art marked by the local context, and that the international scene expected of artists from this territory certain attitudes and topics, as though we do not share a common artistic tradition with Western European artists. It is as if the European artistic tradition belongs only to the West, and we have lost the right to it.

which you then photographed and projected and reproduced several times in different places. Do you use these methods in order to hand over the definition and selection of shapes and forms to chance?

GP: The forms that were taken over have their own logic of origin, in that sense they are not accidental, they are part of a reality that I did not want to change. Although I more or less randomly selected them, I did not feel randomness was important. I was attracted to their belonging to reality, even if I was not responsible for the emergence of their forms, or when it came to gestures, the fact that they are something that belong in the past and exist in reality as something complete, much like a shadow. I was curious about a basis from which I could just begin my work. I moved them into my work first. When I wanted to change them, I did not reshape them (except in the *Copying* series). That is, I did not want them to be the result of my creation, but I did it in order for them to remain what they were. For example, I would increase them by five centimeters, or I would reduce them by half. The difference between my part and the part I had taken is visible.

SSCH: You mentioned before that you have spent your life mostly in Zagreb. In one work — *In & Out* (2003), which you did for the exhibition *Blut & Honig* at the Essel collection in Klosterneuburg you created an additional space to the existing exhibition space, a new “box”, and you wrote that you are an artist from the Balkans who does not make Balkan art. Have you felt that living and working in Zagreb implied neglect from the international art scene?

GP: There is a lot of humor in the statement that “I am an artist from the Balkans who does not create Balkan art”. I responded to my observation that the art from the territory of the Former Yugoslavia is viewed as art marked by the local context, and that the international scene expected of artists from this territory certain attitudes and topics, as though we do not share a common artistic tradition with Western European artists. In particular, it is as if the European artistic tradition belongs only to the West, and we have lost the right to it. Not to go deeper into the subject, I would only mention this perception of the situation in

Zagreb at the time of the socialist regime, which many people have forgotten today for ideological reasons, I can oppose because I was living there at the time. The Music Biennale began in Zagreb in 1961, with international guest performances by composers including Stockhausen, Stravinsky, Cage, Berio, Maderna, Globokar, Kagel, Nono, Reich. From 1961 to 1973 editions of New Tendencies were held, to which sections for computers and visual research were introduced in 1968 and a section for conceptual art in 1973. Foreign theorists such as Argan, Kulterman, Nake, Moles, and the artists Zero, GRAV, Nul, Manzoni and Colombo attended. I am not even mentioning that artists from Zagreb, some of the Gorgona members, artists who participated in New Tendencies, and the Zagreb School of Animation, were already internationally recognized. I want to say that when I came to Zagreb in 1970, all this influenced my work. I felt a sense of community and closeness to this art no matter where it came from. To get back to the installation of *In & Out*, a capsule I added to the Essel Collection building, I moved five centimeters away from its façade, now I think I may have unconsciously spoken about the isolation imposed on the Balkans. Why five centimeters? Starting with myself, the word “pet” in Croatian means five and at the same time it is the first syllable of my last name... so this is a measure that I adhered to.

SSCH: You have mentioned some very important things here. The movement New Tendencies, with artists from different European countries who united in order to reflect on common ideas, is internationally important. I suppose that the background of the socialistic regime and its attitude towards the arts had driven artists and curators into action and especially into conceptual, political and technological transformations. Would you say that the series of exhibitions known as New Tendencies influenced your artistic approach?

GP: I would not say that. Although New Tendencies created a positive climate, they did not influence my work because they were focused on a different type of research, and the optical aspects did not appeal to me. I came to Zagreb at the end of the New Tendencies movement, and somehow it already felt like history. It was only later that I discovered Knifer, Kristl, Srnc, Morellet, etc. To return to the regime

— it's important to know that Tito broke with Stalin very early, so there was no Soviet style repression in socialist Yugoslavia. This is a peculiarity of this region. I would like to bring up the phenomenon of state monuments to the victims of WWII, which were built in abstract modernist style. Research in the field of abstract art began very early, with the EXAT51 group, which was recognized as progressive. In 1952 the group was invited to participate in the *International Salon of New Realists* in Paris to represent Yugoslavia. There were also four exhibitions called *Salon* (1954, 1956, 1959, 1961) organized by the Modern Gallery (today the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art) in Rijeka, which were launched as an overview of the latest research in art, and of abstraction in art.

SSCH: Because of my background working with Museum Haus Konstruktiv I am often confronted with questions about the political impact of non-figurative works. I absolutely disagree that non-figurative works have no political importance and would like to hear your view on this — given the political background you are coming from.

GP: There are many ways in which the political can be expressed. The easiest way is to stick to something that clearly expresses political messages. I notice that in art today, instead of the image, with which figurative art has traditionally been used to send political messages, text is used. In fact, it is often said that some work is non-political, but it is impossible to do a non-political work. Everything is consciously or unconsciously involved in creation, including the relationship with society. Personally, I see political responsibility in what I do, and I am not concerned with political impact, as it is always, more or less, present.

SSCH: In the early 2000s you began to use everyday objects as material for your installations. A chair in *After Reflection* (2007) is part of a work where you illuminated the space between the chair and the wall. Or, in another work in the same series you used a broken ceramic plate and you sort of extended the line of the broken object by filling it with a thick line of a filler material called acrytal. For *Symmetry*

(2009) you used a wine glass filled with concrete and placed it in front of a mirror. In a way it seems that you shifted from the immaterial materiality of light and shadow and very light materials such as wire and metal rods to more substantial materials found in your daily life. Would you agree on that and could you explain your choice of this material?

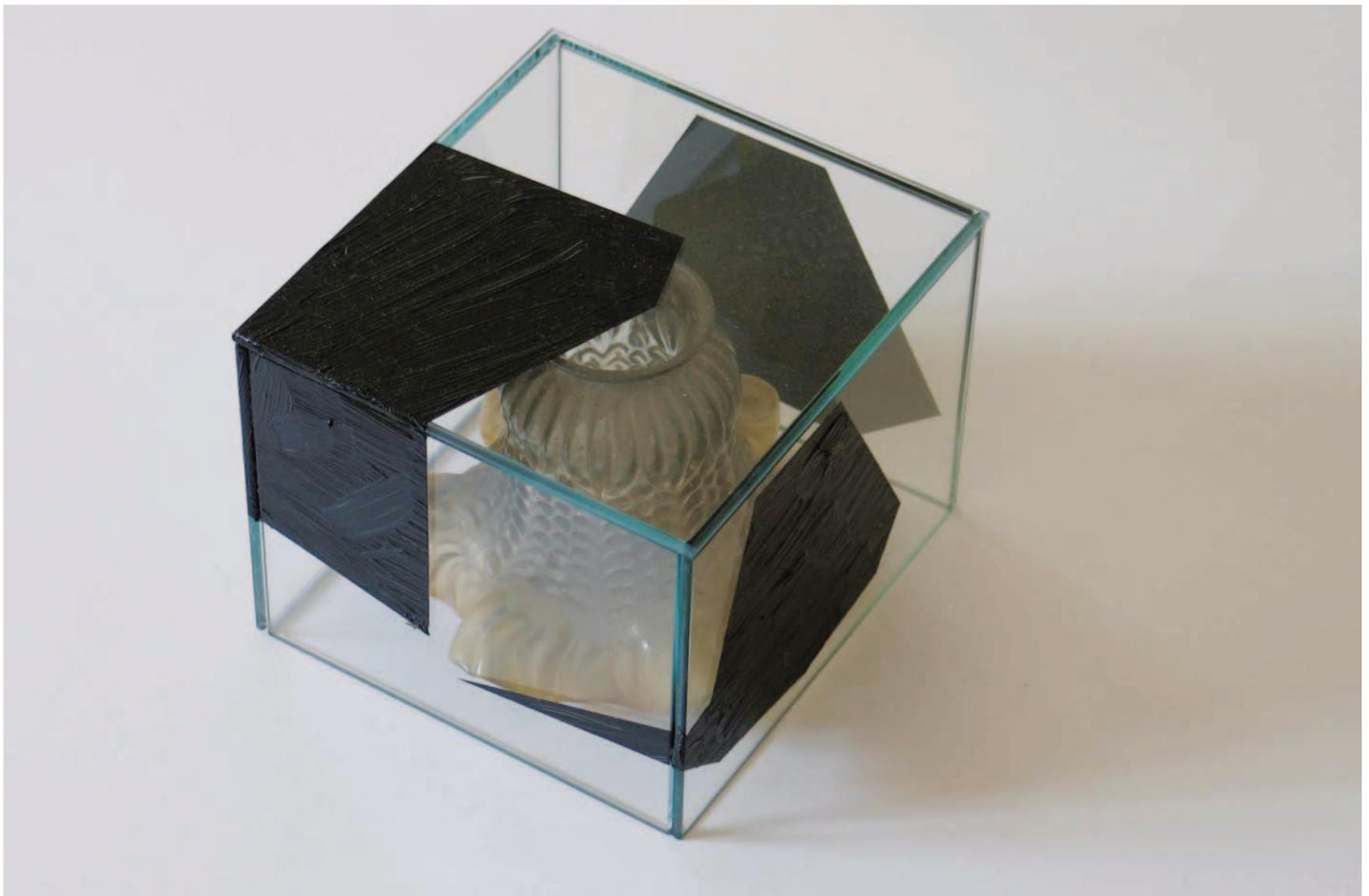
GP: Yes, I would agree. On the one hand, after much consecutive use of light, I had enough of it, and at one point the use of light began to feel like a convention that stopped being exciting to me. On the other hand, if I materialize some ideas with light within a concrete concept, it does not mean that there is no longer space to work in other materials that are concrete. If I couldn't, it would mean that I did not understand or comprehend the breadth that concept allows. I mean, if I accept the shape and color of a shadow as material, the reason for not accepting an object as material would have no logical justification, except by some reason hidden in my ego. I felt as if that decision would have governed my taste and I don't like that. As for the choice of material, I was guided, on the one hand, by the criteria that it is easy to handle and is suitable for the realization of the idea, such as wires and metal rods in *Sjene*, on the other, that they are ordinary, irrelevant, and do not send big messages. In the 1970s I worked with craft paper because I felt that quality papers bought at specialist art stores dragged me into the field of classical art. I was attracted to the plainness of this paper, it gave me freedom, and with that attitude I chose this paper.

SSCH: A lot of your works are works within a series. This thinking in series — is it a method in order to explore variations on a given theme, and you already have several possibilities in your head when you begin work on it, or does a series evolve in the making? I read somewhere that you spoke about works evolving out of existing works. So maybe a series consists of works emerging from questions or possibilities evoked by the previous work.

GP: I develop the series by performing. Practice puts me in unpredictable situations, but on reflection I have the feeling

“I came up with new concepts either through a perception of reality or the work performed. I don't feel like these are different things, because when the work is done, it crosses an invisible border and becomes part of reality. I no longer see it as something of my own, but as something that I have added to the body of everything that surrounds me.

Stylizations, 2013
Glass, lamp-shade, oil paint
15 × 16 × 12 cm
Photo: Robert Sošić



“ I choose shapes, quantities and methods as if from some repository of experience. The question of how to limit these choices from a multitude of possibilities deals with creation itself.

that I am revolving around inside a field of my own knowledge that is limited. Of course, this is difficult to separate out, but mostly I came up with new concepts either through a perception of reality or the work performed. I don't feel like these are different things, because when the work is done, it crosses an invisible border and becomes part of reality. In a way, I do not see it as something of my own, but something that I have added to the body of everything that surrounds me. So, I could, for example, take an old drawing and paint it with the appropriate stylization. With this process, the drawing is no longer visible, but the stylized shape is not a fictional shape either. The previous work is not visible, but it is present in its impact.

SSCH: A recurring theme, or rather method in your work is the copying of a form and either repeating it or transforming it into something else. I was wondering if this method of copying also is a form of liberation from searching for or generating form.

GP: Yes, the background of my use of repetition is that I'm not searching for a new form, and this repetition is never literal, it is more about variations within a single concept. I maintain my position until a change to another position appears. I'm so certain this moment will come that waiting for me has become a normal method of creation. First, I live and work with some concept, and I don't know what direction I can take, and I don't care, but I know that I can go on. It would be arrogant and unrealistic to expect that change will follow after the completion of each work.

SSCH: In another series, *Stylizations*, you thematize the process of searching for form. You spoke about stylization meaning to give the illusion of a form reduced to its essence. I am not sure if I understand this. In order to have an illusion of a form, doesn't the form need to be figurative, in order to generate an illusion?

GP: In *Stylizations* I create the illusion that I support the convention of a stylization process of some form. It's a painting process. For example, when a painter draws a model, what he sees he reduces to the main lines and draws them. Details are lost, but the relevant remains. I literally took on this process here. I have a model, which is spilled paint, a drawing or a character that I stylize. It doesn't matter if the shape is figurative or abstract, I use the prominent points that allow me to stylize it, which fulfills the meaning of the performance. But I do not want to bring a form closer to its visual essence. I don't want to stylize.

SSCH: You participated at the Venice Biennale 1995 with the work *Negative*. For this series of works you used a negative showing a specific part of a space and you projected this negative into this same space, putting reality and fiction in dialogue. What do you choose when you have a space you work with? For the Venice Biennale installation, you created some sort of columns of light — could you tell me more about what you were looking for?

GP: In *Negatives*, clear shadows in space were important, in order to cover them with the same shapes made of light, that is, in order to turn shadows into shapes of light. What was I looking for? I made this shadow process visible. I created the event by changing the amount of light inside the shadows, while leaving the shapes as I found them. Later, I installed a light source in the space and introduced elements into the illuminated part of the space so that I could turn shadows there into light. In Venice, daylight entered through a large window along whose edges, within a narrow vertical band, and alongside the left and right edges of the windows, were shadows. When I projected light into those shadows, I got those columns of light.

SSCH: In further versions with projected slides as motives you photographed the shadow of something that you found in a particular exhibition space and projected this image into that particular space, or in another method you “annulled” the creation of a shadow with a reflection using a mirror. How do you choose each particular method?

GP: The works in which I removed the shadow with the mirror preceded the *Negatives*. In fact, it's the same concept, I just replaced the mirrors with the projection of the shape using a slide projector. Later, I also called these mirror works *Negatives*. In *Flashes* I separated the shape of the shadow from the object and projected it as a form of light with some other existing form of light, for example a window. This way one form of light was given another form of light, a form that previously was a shadow; the light was given an extension, just as an illuminated object is extended by a shadow. I kept the mechanism of the object-shadow relationship, while in this case the light-dark contrast was of no interest to me. When I moved the existing form to another location, I created a new event.

SSCH: In your most recent works one can observe the different methods that you have used in previous works applied to a single work. *Symmetry and Stylization Reduced to Half* (2013) is such an example, or *Symmetry, Stylization* (2014). In another body of works, which you call *Rows* you also applied different shapes, quantities and methods. It seems — and you have formulated them all yourself — that you can choose from a warehouse of possibilities. Do you think there is a limit to all the different possibilities?

GP: With the light installation *Symmetry and Stylization Reduced by Half* and with other works of a similar kind shown at Gregor Podnar Gallery in 2013 in Berlin, I wanted to show works that were formed of different concepts as if they were completed works, that were then executed one over the other. In *Rows* they are mostly lined up without spaces. Within one “Row” they may be executed on top of one another and partially over one another. Both cases stem from the same kind of thought, which so to speak, pervades my entire creation. I really choose different shapes, quantities and methods as if from some repository of experience. The question of how to limit these choices from a multitude of possibilities deals with creation itself. For example the state of being worn out, satiated with some work procedures, attracted to or repulsed by some random material, or acceptance of the space or other materials introduced into the work, or the logic of handling the materials and then letting go of certain decisions related to artistic or social context — all these feelings are not suppressed, but rather they have formal positions and are equally involved in creating work. On a case-by-case basis, everything listed above limits or encourages choice within a wide range of options. Given that, I develop a sense of work that somehow diminishes the role of formalism. I do care about what type of paper I draw on, though when viewing it formally, it should all be the same. Sometimes it doesn't really matter. As in life, despite a large number of formal acquaintances, we share our emotional lives with a limited number of people. I mean that the methods that are derived within pure models for this kind of formalism make it possible to understand the work in one direction. However, within the creation process, these feelings above also participate, they exist and at the same time lead the comprehension of the work in another direction. This was always important to me because it gave me the strength not to be afraid of formal interventions that could, for their simplicity, lead me to banality. In order to defend myself against this, I started to look in another direction. Only then did the work as a whole make sense.

GORAN PETERCOL'S ECONOMY OF BEING

Chris Sharp

Sjene. The Croatian word for shadow. Anyone who encounters the work of Goran Petercol is going to come across this word a lot. It would seem to be pretty simple and straightforward, and in a way, it is, as is the majority of what Petercol does, at least ostensibly. The variety and multifariousness, however, that he manages to extract from this immaterial substance, and its opposite, light, is astonishing. It's as if he set out, with encyclopedic application, to exhaust all of the possibilities of light and darkness, presenting them in every possible permutation. And yet, the intrinsic modesty and economy of Petercol's practice would never allow him engage in the hubris of the encyclopedic. What he makes, although ambitious, is marked by an almost exemplary humility — a humility which, incidentally, becomes all the more exemplary in our time of ecological crisis.

This alleged humility can be located in the humbleness of his often everyday materials, the general ephemerality of his interventions, and his commitment to operating within the size of a given material, or the parameters determined by his own body. His is a practice which thrives on restriction, adhering to it with an almost fanatical zeal, while continually pushing up against its self-imposed boundaries. Indeed, his work could be seen to vacillate between a radical self-negation while nevertheless affirming the self. No matter how narrow, reductive, or procedural he renders the process, the fundamental idiosyncrasy of the self always shines, so to speak, through. This is of course most evident in works that feature mark making, but can also be seen through the entire practice by virtue of its reliance on procedure. If anything unites every aspect of the practice, it is less conceptualism or ideation than its commitment to procedure as a generative principle.

Take for instance the artist's paintings from the late 70s such as *Craft Paper* (1977), or *Rotations* from the same year. Painting on paper with acrylic, marks are made on the paper according to their systematic division and subdivision of the scale of the paper. Any so-called "creativity" is outsourced to or bracketed within delineation of the procedure. Creativity and its ego function, authorship are, at least ostensibly, subsumed in a preconceived course of action which is meant to preclude the assertion of the self. And yet, the application of the mark, in this case, the paint on the paper, nevertheless testifies to the presence of the human hand. Through the imperfect and uneven application of the line, the fact that it, the line, possesses an author becomes undeniable despite the relative detail of authorship.

That said, these so-called paintings are not about Petercol as an author, artist or personality. The work is a by-product of his almost complete withdrawal from its process, that which reduces the importance of his authorship to an absolute, yet human minimum. Collaborations from the same period push this virtual repudiation of authorship to the point of absurdity. I am thinking of *Dots* (1979), where Petercol invited seven colleagues to place a dot on a piece of

paper, exhibiting all eight together with attributing authorship to the dot, or say *Line*, in which he invited seven colleagues to draw a line in chalk on the sidewalk. In both instances, the particular dissolves in the general, and yet, the general, in order to function as such, requires the particular. It is the radical anti-monumental or anti-heroic humility of the gesture, and its means, that stays with me. This remains, for the most a constant though the entire practice.

The artist's interest in temporary, if fleeting modification goes all the way back to his "water paintings" on stone surfaces or rocks, again to the late '70s in Rovinj. These consist of the application of water-based paint on natural surfaces in the most rudimentary forms, such as a square and a circle. Located outdoors and exposed to the elements, their life span is necessarily brief, going on to exist only in photographic documentation of the intervention, long after it has disappeared — never mind the fact that these rudimentary interventions speak to the most fundamental and timeless impulse of art making.

Significantly, as if these modifications weren't fleeting enough, Petercol would go on to find an even more fugacious material and way of making art, light and shadow. Here his material, as it were, is truly immaterial. Petercol's light installations and *Sjene* works, run the gamut from the small, coat-hanger sized arabesques, to prodigious, building-size interventions. His sculptures are known to be activated by everything from the most negligible every day materials to large-scale light projections in a space. The small *Sjene* works are typically fashioned from malleable metal or small brass rods and specifically projected light and shadow. Liable to be drawings as much as they are sculptures, these works can describe lines on walls or cast no shadow at all, depending on the throw of light. For what is the artist's most monumental work, *Halves* (2016), he did nothing more than illuminate half the of the Schloss in Münster. At once circumscribing the monumental through sheer size and ultimately undermining it through the economy of means, this work modifies the building and our perception of the building upon which it takes place without permanently changing or adding anything at all.

Curiously, while the general economy of the work comes off as ecologically friendly, this is less a political position than it is a natural byproduct of a more spiritual course of action that dates back to the very origins of the work. In other words if the work seems ecologically mindful and low impact, it is not because it is trying to be that per se, but because of something else that takes place before that kind of specific personal politics is put into operation. And this is an ever present impulse to not assert the self, to deny, as humanly as possible, the ego and its desire to be celebrated at any cost. At the risk of presenting Goran Petercol as some kind of guru, I think there is much to be learned from this *modus operandi*. Not only learned, but perhaps even imitated, at least by many artists working today.

“His is a practice which thrives on restriction, adhering to it with an almost fanatical zeal, while continually pushing up against its self-imposed boundaries. Indeed, his work could be seen to vacillate between a radical self-negation while nevertheless affirming the self.”

Goran Petercol
*Don't worry about poetics,
they will arrive on their own*

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EKONOMIJA POSTOJANJA GORANA PETERCOLA

Chris Sharp

“Petercolova praksa razvija se na restrikcijama, štoviše, ona se priklanja restrikcijama s gotovo fanatičnim zanosom, a istodobno pokušava probiti samonametnute granice.

Sjene. Svatko tko se susretne s radom Gorana Petercola susrest će se i s ovom riječju. Čini se prilično jednostavnom i jasnom, i ona to na neki način jest, kao i većina onoga što Petercol radi, barem na prvi pogled. Međutim, bogatstvo i raznolikost što ih Petercol uspijeva izlučiti iz ove nematerijalne tvari i njezine opreke, svjetla, doista zadivljuje. Kao da je naumio, enciklopedijskim pristupom, iscrpiti sve mogućnosti sjene, svjetla i tame, predstavljajući ih u svakoj mogućoj permutaciji. S druge strane, suštinska skromnost i ekonomičnost Petercolove umjetničke prakse nikad mu ne bi dopustila da primjenjuje oholu enciklopedičnost. Ono što Petercol stvara, iako ambiciozno, obilježeno je gotovo uzornom poniznošću — poniznošću koja, igrom slučaja, postaje sve uzornija u naše doba ekološke krize.

Ova pretpostavljena poniznost otkriva se u nepretenoznosti materijala što svakodnevno okružuju Gorana Petercola, u sveopćoj efemernosti njegovih intervencija i njegovoj predanosti radu unutar zadanih parametara ili parametara koje određuje njegovo vlastito tijelo. Petercolova praksa razvija se na restrikcijama, štoviše, ona se priklanja restrikcijama s gotovo fanatičnim zanosom, a istodobno pokušava probiti vlastite samonametnute granice. Doista, njegov rad kao da fluktuirala između radikalne samonegacije i samoafirmacije. Ma koliko se njegov proces doima jednostavnim, reduktivnim ili proceduralnim, ono što je svojstveno sebstvu uvijek na neki način prodire na površinu. Ovo je, naravno, očitije u radovima koji uključuju ostavljanje traga na podlozi, ali vidljiva je u čitavoj njegovoj praksi, upravo zahvaljujući vlastitoj ovisnosti o procesu. Ako išta ujedinjuje sve aspekte Petercolove umjetnosti, to će prije biti predanost procesu, kao principu stvaralaštva, nego predanost idejama.

Uzmimo, na primjer, umjetnikove slike s kraja 1970-ih — *Pak papir* ili *Rotacije* iz 1977. Kod slikanja akrilom po papiru tragovi se stvaraju u skladu s vlastitim sistematskim podjelama površine papira. Svaka takozvana kreativnost predaje se u ruke procesu ili podliježe njegovim zakonitostima. Kreativnost i njezina funkcija isticanja ega, odnosno autorstva, barem se prividno uključuje u unaprijed osmišljenu radnju čija je svrha onemogućiti afirmaciju sebstva. Međutim, primjena traga, u ovom slučaju boje na papiru, ipak svjedoči o prisustvu ljudske ruke. U nesavršenom i nejednakom apliciranju linije neospornom se pokazuje činjenica da linija obuzima autora i njime ovladava, unatoč relativnom postojanju autorstva. Prema tome, ove takozvane slike nemaju veze s Petercolom kao autorom, slikarom ili ličnošću, nego su one nusproizvod njegovog gotovo potpunog povlačenja iz procesa, što svodi važnost autorstva na apsolutan, ali ljudski, minimum. Umjetničke suradnje što ih je Petercol u tom razdoblju ostvarivao odvođe ovo virtualno nijekanje autorstva još dalje, do točke apsurdna. Pritom mislim na *Točku* iz 1979., gdje Petercol poziva osam kolega da stave točku na komad papira te autorstvo pripisuje upravo

točki, ili, recimo, *Liniju*, gdje umjetnik poziva sedam kolega da vuku neprekinutu liniju kredom po pločniku. U oba primjera pojedinačno se rastvara u općem, a opet, da bi moglo funkcionirati kao takvo, opće treba pojedinačno. Upravo ova radikalna antimemorialna ili antiherojska poniznost geste i njezinih sredstava ostavlja najsnažniji dojam i ostaje nešto što se provlači kroz čitavu Petercolovu praksu.

Interes ovog umjetnika za privremenu, prolaznu modifikaciju seže još u doba njegovih “vodenih slika” na kamenim površinama i stijenama, nastalih krajem 1970-ih u Rovinju. U ovim slikama Petercol aplicira boju na bazi vode na prirodne površine, i to u najrudimentarnijim oblicima, poput kvadrata i kruga. Budući da se nalaze na otvorenom, gdje su izložene silama prirode, životni vijek ovih slika neizbježno je kratak, ali one nastavljaju postojati u fotografskoj dokumentaciji intervencije još dugo nakon što nestanu — bez obzira na činjenicu da se te elementarne intervencije obraćaju najiskonskijem, bezvremenskom nagonu stvaranja umjetnosti. Štoviše, kao da ove modifikacije nisu dovoljno prolazne, Petercol pronalazi još kratkotrajniji materijal i još kratkotrajniji način stvaranja umjetnosti — svjetlo i sjenu. Ovdje se njegov materijal doista pokazuje nematerijalnim. Petercolove svjetlosne instalacije i *Sjene* obuhvaćaju čitav jedan spektar, od arabeski veličine vješalice do intervencija veličine zgrade. Poznato je da Petercolove skulpture može aktivirati bilo što, od najobičnijih svakodnevnih materijala do golemih svjetlosnih instalacija u prostoru. Male *Sjene* najčešće su izrađene od savitljivog metala ili manjih mjedenih šipki te neobične projekcije svjetla i sjene. Ovi radovi, koji mogu biti i crteži i skulpture, mogu opisivati linije na zidovima ili uopće ne bacati sjenu, ovisno o tome kako pada svjetlo. Drugi radovi osvjetljavaju određenu arhitekturnu površinu koja je obično skrivena u sjeni. Naime, u svojem najmonumentalnijem radu, *Polovicama* iz 2016., Petercol nije učinio ništa drugo nego osvjetlio polovicu fasade dvorca u Münsteru. Opisujući monumentalno njegovu veličinu, i istodobno ga podrivajući ekonomičnom upotrebom sredstava, ovaj rad modificira i građevinu i našu percepciju nje; upravo na našoj percepciji rad i počiva, i pritom ne mijenja i ne dodaje ama baš ništa.

Zanimljivo, dok se općenita ekonomičnost ovog rada doima ekološki prihvatljivom, ovo nije političko stajalište nego prirodni nusproizvod duhovne radnje koja seže u sam početak rada. Drugim riječima, ako se rad doima ekološki osviještenim, to nije zato što on to pokušava biti, nego zbog nečega drugog što se odvija prije negoli se takva vrsta specifične osobne politike stavi u pogon. Ovdje je prisutan vječan poriv negiranja sebe, vječan poriv da se na najhumaniji mogući način suzbije ego i zatomi njegova želja da bude slavljem pod svaku cijenu. Pod rizikom da ću Gorana Petercola predstaviti kao kakvog gurua, tvrdim da se iz njegovog *modus operandi* može mnogo naučiti. Štoviše, može ga se i oponašati.



M M S U

Goran Petercol
*Ne brini o poetici,
ona će doći sama*
Muzej moderne i suvremene
umjetnosti, 22. 11. 2019.
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