**Vlasta Žanić, Goran Škofić: *S druge strane / From the Other Side***

The artistic dialogue between Vlasta Žanić and Goran Škofić, which was established at the Extended Media Gallery during the 54th Zagreb Salon of Visual Arts, has taken place under the circumstances that build upon the last edition of the event. Namely, as winners of two equal Grand Prix prizes at the 51st Zagreb Salon – Vlasta Žanić for her performance *Pravo glasa/Right to Vote* (2016) and Goran Škofić for his experimental film, video installation *Na plaži/On the Beach* (2016) – they were given the opportunity to present their work in solo exhibitions within the next Salon. The collaboration definitely could, and did go off in different directions, because each of them reflects on performance, performativity, space and body in a different way, through different mediums and in different contexts, but the artists finally decided that they were not going to hold separate solo exhibitions, but create a collaborative work instead.

Over the years, Vlasta Žanić has created many works in what she sees as two complementary mediums – sculpture and performance. Up until 2001 she was mainly engaged in sculpture, after which she has been increasingly focused on introspective, self-referential and participatory performance/happening. Although she often engages in video performances, video and multimedia installations, the basis of her work is precisely this direct, live component of performance art which includes either the initial setup, staging a situation or a completely random audience, whereas video often remains as a documentation of a performance. In the awarded performance *Pravo glasa/Right to Vote,* performed at the opening of the last-year's Salon of Visual Arts, the artist, in collaboration with about fifteen performers who walked around the room carrying wireless speakers from which radio stations were broadcast in different and to us less familiar languages, created the work that, through a cacophony of different identities, introduced the voices of the Others and pointed to the acceptance of diversity.

Goran Škofić has used this live performative component to a much lesser extent. His primary mediums of expression are video works, video performances, photographs and site-specific multimedia installations, all characterized by a high technical and visual purity, (self-)representation of a multiplied human body by means of artistic media, manipulation of the represented bodies, mediums and space within and outside the artwork, as well as by the absurdity of repeating the same action or situation, humorous physical gags and (self-)irony, playing with the limits of the virtual and the real, using the potential of a soundtrack, etc. Thus, in the awarded experimental film *Na plaži/On the Beach* the artist's multiplied body is replaced by a multitude of different performative bodies of extras/actors dressed in black who, due to subjective frame and projection of realistic dimensions, seem as if they are leaving the exhibition space and, without hesitation, entering the unknown (sea) and disappearing.

The idea of creating a collaborative work/performance thus came from uniting Vlasta Žanić’s and Goran Škofić's artistic tendencies on two levels: on the first level their different artistic practices and specificities of their works complemented and merged with each other, and on the second level this idea built upon the narratives of the works awarded at the 51st Zagreb Salon. This was the context in which the work *S druge strane / From the Other Side* was created. As indicated by the title, the work is double defined on several levels and this duality is also embodied in the very structure of the work. One part of the work is the performance that will be performed at the opening of this year’s Salon, featuring about one hundred performers continuously walking in the same direction around the circular space of the Extended Media Gallery. However, the visitors will be able to watch the performance through the passage between the Ring Gallery and Extended Media Gallery. The space of the Extended Media Gallery, with this monumental procession – spatially separated and visible only in segments; depending on the different perspectives of the observers – thus becomes transformed into a different space, the space of performance, a transformation from everyday to artistic, place of (another) symbolic level.

Second part of the work is a copy of the real performance, a video installation projected on the screen mounted in the same passage between the galleries, which will be exhibited after the opening and which will feature, in full size and proportion of the space, the recording of the same event, in the same frame in which the observers could see it at the opening.

The duality of the work is evident from its description and title *S druge strane / From the Other Side,* but also from the physical separation of the space, both by limiting the participation of the audience and by closing the passage with the video installation. The space of the Extended Media Gallery becomes a symbolic space of another dimension and consciousness, where something as mundane as walking becomes defamiliarized. However, this is a staged situation, choreography of a circular movement of the participants in which the only sound is the one of resounding steps and which, regardless of whether we watch it from the perspective of the Ring Gallery, Barrel Gallery or on the video, remains strange. The circular movement itself is also multifaceted. In Vlasta Žanić's oeuvre circular movement, spinning, rotation, as well as movement as means of visualization of the energy, are inevitable elements of repetitive, cyclical processes of works in which rotation results in the loss of balance, in performing movements beyond the artist's control. On the other hand, Škofić achieves this cyclical movement and rotation through the technical and visual aspect of the work – loop in his video installations. Whereas the circular space of the Home of the Croatian Association of Artists, as well as of the Extended Media Gallery, often overpowers the exhibited works, in this work the architecture of the space is further emphasized and the work thus communicates with the environment.

The circular movement of the extras will certainly bring about different contemplative, meditative, but exhausting states that put the physical and mental fitness of the body to the test. Multiplied, numerous bodies from Škofić's works – now extras, might experience vertigo, loss of balance, just like in Vlasta Žanić's many works. Circular choreography, of course, does not just displace our perspective and proprioception of the performers, but in this repetitive movement, in repeating the performance, one can recognize the transformational, ritual role of performance, as well as the ritualized aspect of other social dramas created at the crossroads between life and art. The field of performance, as a liminoid field of transition and transformation from one artistic and social state to another, is manifested in circular movement, but also in the attempt to identify the participants of the performance, or in the subversion to the existing order and society in general. Namely, the subjects of this performance – the targeted group of participants, singled out from the social context, make an unusual scene on the one hand, and on the other it seems as if they are trapped in hours-long procession acting as living paintings, embodiment of individuals, but also societies that in a way lost their space, identity, direction of movement, and are waiting for a change or some event that will put a stop to the primordial cause of their aimless wandering. However, neither individuals nor this segment of society can leave the circle, they remain trapped in interspace and intertime, between conscious and unconscious, in an iterative event. At the same time, it is as if the subject of the performance expands the artistic context of both works awarded at the 51st Zagreb Salon – as if Vlasta's group of different identities in a constant search from *Pravo glasa/Right to Vote* also appears in this work, but in a somewhat different form, whereas the protagonists of the experimental film *Na plaži/On the Beach*, who disappear in the sea, now resurface in a different loop and in some other space. Like in other works by these artists, they go from role to role, from performance to video installation, from real to virtual space.

The collaboration between these two artists is thus multi-interconnected – forms, methods and experiences from their oeuvres and artistic explorations are repeated, as well as the narratives of the works from the last Salon, simultaneously creating a completely new artistic and social eventfulness. The real experience and its liminal doubles – performance and video installation in this seemingly simple and minimal process reveal a number of different readings, heterogeneous physical and mental states transmitted to space and to us as observers, and which truly represent the space and dimension and experience from the other side.

Patricia Počanić