



# **Critical Effect & Intensity of Affect**

Analyses of art productions of Zoran  
Todorović

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## On contexts and identifications of artistic activity of Zoran Todorović – shortcuts/fluxes in the epoch of transition and globalism →

Experimentation with ourselves is our only identity.<sup>1</sup>

If postmodern cultures of late capitalism, from Western Europe and USA to Australia and Japan, are identified as cultures of the *first world*, and former colonized cultures of Africa, Asia and South America as cultures of the *third world*, then societies – states, cultures – which were identified as societies of real socialism<sup>2</sup> may be called the *second world*.<sup>3</sup> The idea of the “second world” is very heterogeneous concept which, from culture to culture – from one country to another – is realized in very different ways and which has consequences for human life and for formation of potentialities of performing a human life.

After establishing revolutionary government and after revolutionary dictatorship of the party immediately after Second World War and during the '50ies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in all real-socialism societies there comes a period of transformation of party's revolutionary government into bureaucratic and technocratic organisation of the society under the auspices of liberalized and bureaucratized party elite. Roughly speaking, regardless of certain differences, late socialism, from USSR to Yugoslavia, is determined by weakening of state and party centralism and by creation of possibilities for establishing illusory or less illusory autonomies of the art. During the '80ies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, technobureaucratic institutions of late real-socialism were considerably liberalized and re-directed towards the reform of real-socialist societies in terms of Western liberalism or national-democracies.<sup>4</sup> After the fall of Berlin Wall and the breakdown of Warsaw Bloc, in Eastern and Middle Europe there occurs an establishment of the so-called post-socialist or transitional period. The exception is certainly SFRY, whose transitional period begins with disintegration

<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972–1990*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1995, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Of course, it is possible to speak about different of real socialism, from state socialism of Soviet type, through Chinese revolutionary socialism determined by the concept of 'cultural revolution', to Yugoslav self-management socialism.

<sup>3</sup> Aleš Erjavec, „Drugi svet“, iz: *K podobi*, Zveza kulturnih organizacij Slovenije, Ljubljana, 1996, p. 121-124.

<sup>4</sup> Aleš Erjavec, „Kulturna dominantna ter kulturna identiteta Drugega sveta“, u: „Drugi svet“, iz: *K podobi*, Zveza kulturnih organizacij Slovenije, Ljubljana, 1996, p. 124-134.

of federal state and with civil wars. All these processes, when we speak of Serbia, may be considered as “entropical” if related to offered paradigms and ideals or goals of real socialism, but also as “entropical” in relation to integrity of the economic-political system which enters the transitional turn towards recycled capitalistic – liberal – society. In entropical late socialism in Serbia, during late '70ies, in *self-destructive* post-socialism of late '80ies, and during '90ies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there emerge different and opposed conceptions of high art: national-realisms within classical painting and classical public sculpture, *pro-Western* eclectic, transavantgarde and neo-expressionistic postmodernisms, then *modernism* after *postmodernism* as a reaction to eclectic arbitrariness of postmodernity, then *political art* oriented towards the *symptom*, or the art of retro-avantgarde *styles*, then again, *new-media art* and practices in function of the culture, etc. ... At stake here is multitude, in fact multiplying of strategies/tactics and positionings that correspond to them in relation to functions of art in contemporary world. At stake here is multiplying of possibilities, the metastases of possibilities, a kind of schizophrenic map of simultaneous incomparable forms of expression, creation and production of art. In criticism and history of contemporary art one speaks of the *time of untransparency*.<sup>5</sup> Art in Serbia, after the fall of Berlin Wall, again became *political* or perhaps, and rather, *anthropological*, not necessarily being, in terms of its thematism, meta-political, meta-ideological and meta-representational in modernistic way.

Serbian art after the fall of Berlin Wall most often does not reflect social content indirectly, through its thematicity, but directly, immediately, through organization of signifying economy itself, whose only secondary outcome is thematicity.<sup>6</sup> Thus the art does not display itself as some kind of *pre-human chaos*, indeterminate abyss of nature, or some kind of primary source, i. e. the origin of art as the truth or the beauty, but as particular practice, and this means the signifying practice within obvious social demands, expectations and actions directed towards production, exchange, consumption and, of course, towards putting into effect, that is, performing, different social and individual identities. In other words, development of contemporary Serbian art, from autonomy of modernism and disinterestedness of eclectic postmodernisms towards obtaining social functions of mediations between *possible worlds* (center, margins, transitional formations, non-transitional formations) influenced the art itself, and this means the possibilities of its material formulations. Formulations of classical painting and sculpture are replaced with formulations of open informational work which itself is an “event” on a site-specific place or

<sup>5</sup> Ješa Denegri, *Devedesete: teme srpske umetnosti (1990–1999)*, Svetovi, Novi Sad, 1999; Dejan Sretenović (ed.), *Art in Yugoslavia 1992–1995, SCCA*, Beograd, 1996; and: Branislava Anđelković, Branislav Dimitrijević, Dejan Sretenović, Borut Vild (eds.), *O normalnosti: umetnost u Srbiji, 1989–2001*, Muzej savremene umetnosti, Beograd, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> „Umetnost, družba/tekst“, *Razprave problemi*, št. 3-5 (147-149), Ljubljana, 1975, p. 1-10. Translated in Serbo-Croatian in: *Polja*, br. 230, Novi Sad, 1978, p. 10.

itself is an inscription of sedimented traces of culture "of" some site-specific place. This is the reason why ontologically oriented interpretations of these contemporary artworks are not given in terms of aesthetics or art theory, but in terms of informational society, politics, culture, medicine, etc., etc. Contemporary art is made "of" material traces (meanings) and effects (affects) of practices or behaviours within culture and society in relation to body and toward bodies of the actors. Ontology of artwork is not determined by the presence of the form – the matter which is formed – but by the resistance and entropy of forms which are the effect of catenation, i. e. of contexts of confrontation. Contemporary art is thus, above all, political<sup>7</sup> art, i. e. art as political intervention in some context towards some people within incomparable instances of humanness. In other words, there is the transition from the tactics of creating or naming the sensory forms to re-articulation of the forms of life (situation of the body, the existence, the behaviour) within informational field of constructing and performing social reality through indexing specific identities or the form of life.<sup>8</sup> This art does not acquire its political identification through representation of an explicit political theme, attitude or iconically oriented sign (visual, auditory, verbal text), but on the ground of the order of arranging, archiving and classifying erased traces of European incomparable identities or discourses in a completely curatorially oriented and comparable manner. Artist that can be identified through the notion of "the artist in the age of culture" takes numerous and characteristic functions of the curator or the anthropologist on himself/herself<sup>9</sup>: he/she is the organizer of mediatic spectacle and the archivist of informations about art and in art. Thus contemporary art can be both, the representing of erased traces of differentiating European cultures, and the constitution of ideal multi-European scheme of the relationship of singular investment and universal gain. There is no play of territories, but the function of economy: production, exchange, and consumption, which as an erased trace is an artistic code or the work which annihilates itself as art, and confirms the possibility of European identity of differences on the "level" of cultures. Art is the function of culture, although, and this is the fundamental paradox of actuality, it still "remains" art, no matter that it had lost specific traditional phenomenal features of the work of art with the "aura", obtaining the appearance of mass-and-technomediatic representation, communication and the exchange of informations in the society of mass consumption. Art has, in terms of its sensory phenomenalities, functions and effects, come out from the reservation or autonomous context of the art into public cultural and mediatic sphere. But, in addition, contemporary art had

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, catalogue of Documenta 11 exhibition, Kassel, 2002.

<sup>8</sup> Giorgio Agamben, „Form-of Life“, in: Paolo Virno, Michael Hardt (eds.), *Theory out of Bound – A Potential Politics*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1996, p. 151.

<sup>9</sup> This is a characteristic identity: curator was a representative of the social and the cultural in the art through the institution of the museum, and the artist in the age of culture is a representative of "the artistic as cultural system: in the structures of society (i. e. specific micro-cultures).



Zoran Todorović (ed.), *Materijal – Energija*, published by author, Beograd, 1996.

remained in relation to discourses of art, i. e. to starting and home art institutions, to sub-texts of evolutions of art identities and communication channels of art which are represented or presented through communication channels of mass-mediatic culture in constructing or realizing of everydayness.<sup>10</sup> This is crucial and determining paradox of art and culture at the turn of 20<sup>th</sup> century into 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this context of Serbian art there act very different and, most often, competency oriented artists – such as Živko Grozdanić, Milica Tomić, Tanja Ostojić, Mirjana Đorđević, Vera Večanski, Uroš Đurić, Stevan Markuš, Nikola Pilipović, Marija Vajda, Zoran Naskovski, Dejan Grba, Vesna Tokin, Dejan Anđelković, Jelica Radovanović, association *Absolutely*, and platform *kud.org*, Vladimir Nikolić, Dragan Jovanović, Dragomir Ugren, Predrag Miladinović, Vladan Jeremić, Ivana Smiljanić, Danijela Bogičević, Aleksandra Zdravković, and others.

Zoran Todorović, from his first works in which he has ceased to deal with issues of painting/sculpture – for example, *Untouchable*, from 1992–1996 – has rearranged his art work, or art activity, from cultural-textual to existential-affective practice of biopolitical character.

<b>Untouchable</b> or <i>Material – Energy</i>	1994: Jugoslovenski bijenale mladih, Vršac; 1995: Studentski kulturni centar, Beograd; 1996: BIS, CZKD, Beograd; 2002: Remont- review, Remont, Beograd	property: artist
series of metal plates connected to high voltage	exhibition	gaze
between plates there occurs spark discharge, an electric arc	installation	corporeal relation to installation danger if the high-voltaged surface is touched

Art can be, it might be said, political act of resistance and resisting within affective modes or situations of life, and not on the level of political programmatic or anti-programmatic statements, attitudes, slogans and programs.

<sup>10</sup> One might compare completely different exhibitions that are oriented towards presentation of "the art in the age of culture" and find out that they do not look like art exhibitions (neither as exhibitions of traditional art, nor as experimental modernistic art, or eclectic postmodern art); rather they look like some archives of the systems of constructing, recording, classifying and exchanging informations. On the other hand, there is always the "sub-text" or the "discourse" of assurance which say: yet, in spite of everything, it still is in the field of the identifications of art. See: *Manifesta 1–3, 1996–2000*; Branislav Dimitrijević, Branislava Anđelković, Dejan Sretenović (eds.), *Konverzacija, Muzej savremene umetnosti*, Beograd, 2002; or: *Documenta 11\_Platform 5: Exhibition – Catalogue*, Cantz, Ostfildern-Ruit, 2002.

The matter that is important here is “emitting singularities” which in their versatility and disconnectedness put into question coherences of given or assigned rational and pragmatic political concepts by means of which the life is conducted. In the work *Untouchable*, metal surface with spark discharge draws the gaze and it is as if the gaze puts in motion the haptic desire to touch the lethal surface. It is an event and it must be resolved.

## Biopolitical character of the work/activity of Zoran Todorović or immanent criticism of conceptual art in terms of singularity of performing the event within life situations →

My wounds exist before me. I was born to embody them.<sup>11</sup>

In relation to international art practices, Todorović’s artistic work has occurred in time of untransparency, at the end of postmodern pluralism and at the beginning of global cultural mediatic-artistic and curatorial-artistic practices. At stake are art practices which are based on introducing “new media” into traditionally defined context of art disciplines of painting and sculpture, and then on introducing artistic creative, critical, artistic and behavioral-performing practices in the realm of cultural work and activity.

Sensory phenomenality of the concept of life as “non-organic” power is utterly essential for him.<sup>12</sup>

New media is the name for different art practices based on innovational work with art media and non-art media. New-media art practice is the name, basically, for introduction of non-standard media into standardized and traditionally

<sup>11</sup> Joe Bousquet, *Les capitales*, Le Cercle du Livre, Paris, 1955, p. 103.

<sup>12</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972–1990*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1995, p. 6.

closed art discipline. For example, experimental and exploratory introductions of photographic, film, video or “digital/cognitive” work into the contexts of painting and sculpture are identified as new media. New media is also the name, for example, for all those hybrid art practices which originate through combination of several media (mixed media, multimedia, polymedia, extended media, art and technology, computer art, cyber art, etc.). New media is, finally, the name precisely for those art practices which are based on programming of art work (computer art, digital art, cyber art, biotechnological art). Definition of “new media” as programmable art practices on the level of experimental or utilizing work is the feature of new-media art in the age of globalism, since programmability appears as globally totalizing practice of arranging and performing of the art work between high and popular culture. Zoran Todorović, however, has performed, in the field of “new media”, one very specific move that can be represented by the following model:

new media	live performance	cultural contexts
techno-devices video digital photograph	on the body of the other with bodies of others	private public
products, effects or procedures of old or new social mass- technologies	one's own body	singular context universal context
documentation of an artwork as 'representative' of the event		

In other words, Todorović is not fascinated with new technologies and their effects within art as expressions or achievements of the “new”, he is rather some kind of introvert user or a consumer<sup>13</sup> of “new mediatic” or socio-technological practices while performing critical singular behavioral event, the intensity and the effect of which are presented in vivo or are documented or mediated within the system of communication or of exhibiting in worlds of art. For Todorović, “new media” appear twofoldly, as “devices in art” (from spark discharge to sound gun, or from digital camera to micro-camera or video editing) and as “products of mass social technologies” (hypnosis, serums, medications, plastic surgery leftovers, procedures of plastic surgery, diets, behavioral relations in the street, racial issue, sexual work, etc.). Todorović, in addition, stages the art work as “live

<sup>13</sup> Boris Groys, „The Artist as an Exemplary Art Consumer”, in: Erjavec, A. (ed.), „Aesthetics as Philosophy – XIXth International Congress of Aesthetics – Proceedings I”, *Filozofski vestnik*, št. 2, ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 1999, p. 87-100.



performance” through which new media or social technologies are introduced into specific performing situation of potentiality which corresponds to *life situations*. He stages the performing situation either as intervention on the bodies of other people (authorial experimentation with intervening otherness<sup>14</sup>) or on his own body (traditional model of artist's body as both the object and the subject of art<sup>15</sup>). Performing event occurs within “privatness” and is going to be mediatically presented to the public, or performing event occurs within the public where it involves an interaction with biotechnology and functionality of human bodies of the collaborators in the art project or of present spectators who are brought to the reflection of their own *intimacy* within the public itself. Relationship of the private and the public – of the intimate and the common – is explicitly elaborated as constitutive atmosphere of potentiality of the event of the artwork.



### The Bride performed 1998.

1999: Bojan Štokelj, *Fotografija u Maloj galeriji Cankarjevog doma, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana*;  
2006: *Hybrid-Imaginary: image and/or the screen about the image in the epoch of media, Museum of Contemporary Art of Vojvodina, Novi Sad.*

property: artist

Naked body of the model (artist Tanja Ostojić) covered with the veil and with living flies on it.

photo performance  
documents

fearfulness  
erotism  
potentiality of pain

However, every event is singularity: complete singleness here and then in relation to behaviour of human body (behaviorality), but also, and further, to potentiality of giving the form to life here and then in relation to artist's intention to confront the audience/spectators with the event outside of their usual lives in a situation which is serious and real as any other human situation. The singular is exactly what is occurring as an event here and then in its specificity and differentiability from presupposed clichés and generalities. Every event goes the way from unrepeatable and incomparable

singularity, which is the dimension of performed event, to singular instance in some family of possibilities, which is the regime of documentation. Todorović does not work with final number of “representations” of singularities and with representational text which promises generality and anticipates universality of the human itself. On the contrary, he works with singularity which might potentially occur within any textually representable context of culture and thus, through singularity, he initiates the potentiality of universality. His artworks do not symbolize universality, do not narrate about some “big” or “true” universality, but put into effect the possibility of singular event always and everywhere, i. e. in any conditions and circumstances of life. For his work the universality is not important on the level of the “logic of senses”. It is always the matter of singularity of performing the artwork in some interval of time, space and life. Yet, everything he does in some moment of place and living becomes exhibited and exposed to some effect within the system of art: directly as the **event** and indirectly as the **document**.<sup>16</sup> Referential, and thus the potential relationship of the event and the document is essential for his art practice which, in contradictory manner, confronts “the situation of the spectator as the witness” and “the situation of the spectator as the reader”. The **witness**<sup>17</sup> is in the middle of the event and he/she testifies about the credibility of his/her “presence” (being-in) and about his/her “participation” (being-with) in the event initiated by Todorović in the world of art. The **reader** is outside of the event, in front of the “tableau” which, through visual-verbal means, mediates the concept of the “work-event” and the “referential documents” about the event. The **witness** and the **reader** are related to the same work of art: what is the affect of testifying does not coincide with what is the effect of reading. One can notice the essential difference between the phenomenal and the signifying – which fatally separates the “event” and the text.

The emphasized and acting moment of separation of the event and the text as related to *enframing*<sup>18</sup> (Ge-stell) of the work of art into the world, makes Zoran Todorović a characteristic and immanent critic of conceptual art in its historical terms<sup>19</sup> and in relation to diachronic developments of conceptual art in the epoch of post-modernity and the epoch of globalism.<sup>20</sup> The artist enframes, or stages the artwork in the way which is close to conceptual art, and this means as “the project” of presupposed work of

<sup>14</sup> Jacques Lacan, „Subjekt i Drugi: otuđenje”, in: XI seminar – Četiri temeljna pojma psihoanalize, Naprijed, Zagreb, 1986, p. 217-230; (Jacques Lacan, “The Subject and the Other: Alienation”, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*).

<sup>15</sup> Vilabi Šarp, „Body Works / Pre-kritički, ne-definitivni pregled nedavnih najnovijih dela u kojima se koristi ljudsko telo, ili njegovi delovi”, iz: Vladimir Kopicl (ed.), *Telo umetnika kao subjekt i objekt umetnosti, Tribina mladih, Novi Sad, 1972*, p. 1-9.

<sup>16</sup> Boris Groys, „Umjetnost u doba biopolitike – od umjetničkog djela k umjetničkoj dokumentaciji”, in: Neda Beroš (ed.), *Boris Groys: Učiniti stvari vidljivima – Strategije suvremene umjetnosti, Muzej suvremene umjetnosti, Zagreb, 2006*, p. 7-28.

<sup>17</sup> Giorgio Agamben, „Svjedok”, in: *Ono što ostaje od Auschwitza – Arhiv i svjedok (Homo Sacer III)*, Biblioteka Anti-Barbarus, Zagreb, 2008, p. 19-28.

<sup>18</sup> Martin Heidegger, „Pitanje o tehnici”, in: *Uvod u Heideggera, Centar za društvene djelatnosti omladine RK SOH, Zagreb, 1972*, p. 105.

<sup>19</sup> Ursula Meyer, *Conceptual Art, A Dutton Paperback, New York, 1972*.

<sup>20</sup> Germano Celant, *Un-Expressionism – Art Beyond the Contemporary, Rizzoli, New York, 1988*; and: *Documenta 11\_Platform 5: Exhibition – Catalogue, Cantz Publishers, Ostfildern-Ruit, 2002*.





art which might be performed but, on the other hand, doesn't have to be. However, he is not interested in semiology<sup>21</sup> and epistemology<sup>22</sup> of the procedure of enframing and performing of the singular work from the project, which was the core of historical conceptual art, but is interested in potential or real affect/affects that the event of performing of the work of art, in its singularity, here and then, produces within and among human lives. Todorović displays the "concept" and the "project" of the work of art as functional instruments by means of which one achieves the goal: **and this means intervening and intersubjective affectations of the performer and the spectators in an extraordinary existential situation.** For example, in the work *Gypsies and Dogs* Todorović puts in motion the relationship of the project, the concept and the event in relation to the document.



Gypsies and Dogs	not exhibited, 2007.	property: artist
Work was shot with specially designed micro-camera which was, in form of a collar, carried by children-beggars and stray dogs. Recorded during summer and autumn of 2007.	documents, snapshots video recording board with photographs	role of accident in obtaining concrete image  political incorrectness  intensity of movement of the human and the animal

The work *Gypsies and Dogs* is quite clearly conceived, there is the assumption of what is to be expected from the concept itself: the trace of arbitrariness of the behaviour of Roma children and dogs in the public space. The artwork, enframed or staged in this way, has its own precise conceptual directness towards transgression and reinvestigation of the field of cultural values and norms of political and racial correctness in contemporary transitional societies. On the other hand, this work is not the work with a message of particular ethics or political attitude; it is the "problematic title" of the work that resemanticize what is seen on video-screen or on the board with photographs. The camera itself was attached on the body of the child or the dog and what was seen on the video-screen

21 Katarin Mile, „Konceptualna umetnost kao semiotika umetnosti“, in: Mirko Radojičić (ed.), „Konceptualna umetnost“ (tema), Polja, br. 156, Novi Sad, 1972, p. 8-12; Ian Burn, Mel Ramsden, „The Role of Language“, in: Gerd de Vries (ed.), *On Art – Artists' Writings on the Changed Notion of Art After 1965*, M. DuMont Schauberg, Köln, 1974, p. 90-94; Victor Burgin, „The Absence of Presence: Conceptualism and Post-modernisms“, in: *The End of Art Theory / Criticism and Postmodernity*, Humanities Press International INC., Atlantic Highlands, N. J., 1987, p. 29-50.

22 Art&Language, „De Legibus Naturae“, in: *Art&Language: Texte zum Phänomen Kunst und Sprache*, DuMont, Köln, 1972, p. 240-276.

or on the board is just what the eye of the camera sees during an unplanned and most often quite accidental motion in space. Gaze of the camera, controlled by randomness or – more precisely: motion of the "forms of life", is recorded and offered to the gaze which, through reading of the title of the work, "knows" whose body is at stake in the work-performance itself. Severe and dramatic artwork in which quite apparently unmotivated image puts into play fundamental contradictions of racial identity and racism in transitional national societies. Intensity of the work originates from the difference between the image and the text, more precisely, between named "form of life" and sensory displayed "form of life" of the animal and human being, i. e. the animal with the device and the human being with the device in the context which is always rigorously political – the context of the society in transition.

## Post-productional potentialities of Todorović's artwork: versatility of the phenomenality of the work →

Todorović's artistic strategy may be recognized as post-productional<sup>23</sup> practice. Post-productional practice here, in this context of the artistic work, means the establishing of the zones of versatile activities which stem from one presupposed project and its effects, and from interactions with art, cultural, or social potentialities of the performing, interactions or transformations of life situations, ranging from performance to new-media presentations in the public of the society itself. We are talking here about essential transformation of human work, from the domain of "creation/production" of the piece, characteristic for modern industrial capitalism and real socialism, into "organization" and, so-called, "immaterial work"<sup>24</sup> of complex mediatic and existential organization of the life, which is characteristic for unstable and changeable horizon of cognitive capitalism.<sup>25</sup> We are talking here about hybrid fields of the affectation in new-media intervening systems of the "production" of corporeal and thereafter life effects of human existence.<sup>26</sup>

23 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction*, Lukas & Sternberg, New York, 2002.

24 Paolo Virno, *Gramatika mnoštva – Prilog analizi suvremenih formi života*, Naklada Jasenski i Turk, Zagreb, 2004.

25 Carlo Vercellone (ed.), *Kognitivni kapitalizam, Politička kultura nakladno-istraživački zavod*, Zagreb, 2007.

26 Matko Meštrović, *Raspršenje smisla – Doktrinarni svijet na izmaku?*, Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, Zagreb, 2007.

Certain theorists, from Nicolas Bourriaud to John Roberts, point out that we have entered into the realm of art labour which may be labeled as art after the strategies of 'ready made'.<sup>27</sup> Strategies of 'ready made', from Duchamp's presumptions of the "usage" of everyday or usual, common usable object as an artwork, have led from "conceptualization of the art"<sup>28</sup>, in Neo-Dada, Fluxus, and conceptual art, to strategies and tactics of "appropriation" of sensory and semantic traces of culture in post-modernity, from transavantgarde to neo-conceptualism.<sup>29</sup> This complex 20. century's paradigm of the "ready made" is grounded on the importance of the "concept" and the "meaning" as opposed to sensory representability (mimesis) or sensory expressibility (expressionism). On the contrary, today, artists, such as Zoran Todorović, have overcome strategies of the 'ready made' and moved to the procedures of the affect of singular event. French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, with quite different motives and reasons, was pointing out that there are no general ideas, that there are always only singular ideas within the specific domain of the event. Contemporary artists, in a similar way, are interested in the effect and the effectivity of the particular, singular event within the specific context, with all affects and intensities which one event may produce with its mediatic, biological or social engagement. Curator and theorist of art, Nicolas Bourriaud thus explicitly points out that contemporary post-productional art is linked with the event of human society<sup>30</sup> – let's add, of human life and human lives in micro- or macro-sense. Contemporary art is realized, or performed, similarly to realizations, or performings, of situations within contemporary society. This similarity lies in the fact that it is structured on the basis of "narratives" and "immaterial" scenarios, which are confirmed and translated by and through life styles, relations towards situations of entertainment, practices of sexual, consumeristic or political enjoyment, institutionalizations of the production of scientific and economic horizons of humanness, and also by and through ideologies as instruments of ordering, controlling and regulating the everyday life. This change, or mutation of the "artistic" itself may be explicitly displayed through elaboration of the scheme of forms of "art labour" from modernity to the epoch of globalism:

mimesis	impression	expression	appropriation	affect
tradition	modernity	modernism	postmodernity	globalism transition
image	image	image	object	event
presentation	externalization of the impression	research	ready made conceptualisation citation simulacrum copy recycling	new media performing of biotechnology
classicism realism	impressionism postimpressionism symbolism	expressionism abstract expressionism neoexpressionism	Dada neodada fluxus conceptual art postmodern neoconceptual art	situationisms art in the age of culture new media art in the epoch of globalism
				ART PRACTICES OF ZORAN TODOROVIĆ which lead to affect, intensity, rupture of meaning

It may be said that every work of art tends to effect, or cause the affect in aesthetic or anti-artistic sense, but that only some artworks – those which appear in the epoch of globalism/transition, i. e. of cognitive capitalism – are engaged in production and post-productional distributions of events and corresponding affective situations, as the crucial problem of art formation or the very performing of the forms of life. Todorović deals with the visibility of forms of life, he realizes this by working on the body of another artist who thus becomes the object of his project.

<sup>27</sup> John Roberts, *The Intangibilities of Form – Skill and Deskilling in Art After the Ready Made*, Verso, London, 2007.

<sup>28</sup> Sylvère Lotringer, „Doing Theory“, in: Sylvère Lotringer, Sande Cohen (eds.), *French Theory in America*, Routledge, New York, 2001, p. 145-146.

<sup>29</sup> Achile Bonito Oliva, *Transavantgarde International*, Giancarlo Politi Editore, Milano, 1982; Germano Celant, *Un-Expressionism – Art Beyond the Contemporary*, Rizzoli, New York, 1988; Miško Šuvaković, *Konceptualna umetnost*, MSUV, Novi Sad, 2007.

<sup>30</sup> Nicolas Bourriaud, „When screenplays become form: A User's guide to the World“, in: *Postproduction*, Lukas & Sternberg, New York, 2002, p. 45.



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Galerija Konkordija: Izlagačka praksa kao kulturno-politička strategija, Muzej savremene umetnosti, Beograd, 2004.



Correction/Portrait	2004: Galerija Konkordija: Izlagačka praksa kao kulturno-politička strategija, Muzej savremene umetnosti, Beograd.	property: artist
Plastic surgery operation; correction of ears position of the artist Živko Grozdanić is performed. Grozdanić's portrait is photographed before and after surgical intervention.	performing of surgical intervention posing while taking a photograph photographs	surgery correction of body

Instances of “performing the forms of life” and “affective intensity of the forms of life” may be found in various art practices, from activism<sup>31</sup> (artivism), through bio art<sup>32</sup> and new-media art<sup>33</sup> to radical performance.<sup>34</sup>

Art of *artivism* is based on behavioral engagement of the artist and active interventions of the artist and the collaborators/participants in the field of micro- or macro-socialness from political through gender to everyday activity.

Bio Art is organized around complex artistic, scientific and social interrelations in creating “organic” or “live” artistic sample as the work of art or as the event within artistic project.

New-media informational art practices are based on research, provocation or performing of the event by means of technical systems of communication.

Radical performance is related to artistic performings through which critical behavioral, corporeal or organic situations and events are provoked, on the body of the artist or the bodies of collaborators/participants during the performance.

<sup>31</sup> Aldo Milohnić, „Artivism”, in: „Performing Action, Performing Thinking” (temat), *Maska*, št. 1–2 (90–91), Ljubljana, 2005, p. 15–25.

<sup>32</sup> Eduardo Kac, *Signus of Life – Bio Art and Beyond*, The MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 2007; Melentje Pandilovski (ed.), *Art in The Biotech Era*, The Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide S.Aust, 2008.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Y. Levine, Ursula Frohne & Peter Weibel (eds.), *CTRL [SPACE] – Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, The MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 2002; Stephen Wilson, *Information Arts – Intersections of Art, Science, and Technology*, The MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 2002.

<sup>34</sup> Amelia Jones, Tracey Warr (eds.), *The Artist's Body*, Phaidon, London, 2000; Francesca Alfano Miglietti, *Extreme Bodies – the Use and Abuse of the Body in Art*, Skira editore, Milano, 2003.

Artistic work of Zoran Todorović moves within all of these potential fields of performing, from activism, through bio art and new-media practices, to radical performance. However, he is not fascinated with what is new or different in the activism, bio art, new media or radical performance themselves, but directs his attention to critical, border and extraordinary event of corporeal affectation of the subject within specific social context. Todorović works not only with physical affects of the body of the performer or the collaborator/participant, but works with micro-social and, not so often, with macro-social effects of the physical affect on the body or with the body of the performer or the collaborator/participant. His artistic work is, in other words, structured within the field which ranges from the “affect of the body” to “cognitive situating” of the individual and intersubjective micro-social order.

Aspects and models of aspects of Todorović's art work which were described are essentially biopolitical in terms of biopolitics as social technology<sup>35</sup> of “the formation” of human life. For human life is not something that living being bears “in itself”, it is rather an inscription – more precisely, a singular event of inscribing – of this being into a life situation, i. e. into the lifetime as well as into the life space as something unrepeatable, something genuine: always different and changeable in the middle of the world (nature and society).

## Affect in the field of individual/social events of the art ➤

Zoran Todorović situates art work inside the gap between the content and the effect: the text and the affect. The content is immaterial narrative which initiates his art work by means of symbolic or direct speech, for example, about pain, hearing damage, stretching of the body, irritation/stimulation of the skin, consumption of human tissue as food, the gaze from the vagina, motion of the camera which is attached to the body of human being or the dog, etc. ... The effect is the consequence, or rather consequences, of the affect or, more precisely, of the intensity of the affect of the performed event on particular, singular body of the performer, collaborator/participant or the audience/spectators, or, on

<sup>35</sup> Michel Foucault, „The Birth of Biopolitics”, in: Paul Rabinow (ed.), *Michel Foucault: Ethics – Subjectivity and Truth*, Penguin Books, London, 1997, p. 73–79.



certain public opinion of the micro-society or the macro-society. In Todorović's work characterizations of the affect, the intensity and the duration of the affect are essential, that is, the effects which living body receives/endures or just takes over; or, in other words, essential are the consequences of socialness which is confronted with controlled, directed performings of critical, provocative, painful or unexpected event in the context of everydayness or in the context of the world of art. The role of the affect, the intensity and the duration of the affect brings closer his art work to interpretations of Deleuzian philosophy, although Zoran Todorović with his work always in fact points out the singular experience rather than intellectual interpretation and direct illustration of philosophical, theoretical, political or literary references. It might be said that he deliberately works with the difference of the content and the effect in the middle of the potentiality of some singular event of life within specified contexts of culture.

Philosophical-theoretical digression. When the philosopher Gilles Deleuze and the psychoanalyst Felix Guattari begun the critique<sup>36</sup> of the role of the signifier and shifted attention from dialectical relationship of the signifier and the signified in the sign to the role of the machine which produces fluxes, they had put into question post-structuralist semiology and thus the theory of text as the production of meaning among meanings of culture. The image of singular event involved in the work of the machine which enables the transition from "the meaning as mediator" to "intensity as experiential outcome" was offered to radical antiessentialism of post-structuralist textualism. A theoretization of the effect(ivity) in contrast to offering, shifting and reading of the meaning was offered. The exposure of the body to the effect(ivity) (to duration of the intensity of the affect) is enframed or staged in contrast to intellectual ciphering and deciphering of public, secret, artistic, political, cultural or any other meanings or signifying functions.

Something is happening and this event acts with its intensity on the body regardless meanings, context, understanding of the spectator or the listener. The effect(ivity) is recognizable and leaves a material mark regardless the interpretation and interpretations that will follow. The fact that someone swallowed a piece of human flesh, or soaped one's own body with the soap made of human fat during the opening of the exhibition, remains "without symbolic justification", it happened in a singular situation among some people and for some people. The project *Agalma* is one of the most complex of Todorović's works. It is a project of transference of the matter (fat from the body of the artist himself) into the product of personal hygiene (the soap), thus the means of which is

36 „Žil Delez i Feliks Gatari o Anti-Entiedipu", in: „U spomen Žilu Delezu" (temat), *Ženske studije*, br. 4, Beograd, 1998, p. 63.



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introduced into the procedure around which the public spectacle will be built: taking the bath at the exhibition/festival and the using of the soap made of human matter.



<b>Agalma</b>	<b>2003:</b> Last East European show, Muzej savremene umetnosti, Beograd; <b>FONA Festival,</b> Muzej savremene umjetnosti, Rjeka; <b>2004:</b> National Review of Live Art (NRLA) new territories, Glasgow; <b>Muzej savremene umjetnosti,</b> Zagreb; <b>2005:</b> NRLAM 05, Perth, Australia; Art Space, Sidney, Australia; <b>Infant,</b> International Festival of Alternative and New Theatre, Novi Sad.	
By means of surgical operation a fat was removed from the body of the artist. A soap was made of this fat. Public bathing of spectators was organized, with the use of this soap. Soap was sold to spectators at an auction.	performing photo documentation	performing of a complex postproductional practice, from surgical operation, through primitive technology of making the soap, to public bathing with the use of the soap  performing of complex relationship of spectacle, privateness, exhibitionism and fetishism of hygiene

*Agalma* is offered as a complex system which subjects the presupposed, given texts of culture, in which this art project is taking place, to activity of the event: to participation in the play of exchange of the matter in the field of gaze. In other words, the turn from "cultural text", as the representative of the event, to immanent live event, the event itself, which is beyond the influences of the presuppositions of transcendence, became important at one moment. The pure immanence itself of the event is LIFE.<sup>37</sup> In fact, it is everything that is a produced physical effect, which acts with different intensities on the body, on the bodies, on relations of bodies in a particular, singular space and time. If

37 Gilles Deleuze, „Immanence: A Life", in: *Pure Immanence – Essays on a Life*, Zone Books, New York, 2001, p. 27.



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Branislav Dimitrijević, Branislava Anđelković, Dejan Sretenović (eds.), *Konverzacija*, Muzej savremene umetnosti, Beograd, 2002, p. 102-103.

such a way of thinking is applied to the concept of Todorović's art, then his art work may be seen as *something* which is linked with the problem of the effect, particularly the intensity of the effect on human body in the process of perception and affectation – here the event with its consequences on life becomes independent from artist's intentions: "affectation is independent from creator due to self-positing of the created, which is preserved in itself".<sup>38</sup> The idea of "affectation" might also be connected with the concept of "attraction". Attraction is drawing attention caused by the performer, the spectator or the collaborator/participant to the event to which living body is related.

But, before anything else, about the affect! Concept of the affect must be distinguished from the concept of the emotion. The emotion is an affect with certain specified content: emotion of sorrow because of the loss of a dear person, emotion of joy because of the victory in some sport competition, etc. Affectation is *only* the effectivity or the effect of the intensity which has some outcome on the spectator, the listener, the reader or the collaborator/participant without pointing to a distinct content of the emotion. For example, Todorović's work *The Laughter* is a characteristic instance where one might demonstrate the essential difference between the affect and the emotion.



Laughter	2001: exhibition <i>Konverzacija</i> , Muzej savremene umetnosti, Beograd.	
<p>„N2O laughter apparatus“, a device which enables letting out in outer space of the gas which causes the laughter. Effect of the gas to human nervous system causes laughter (5 seconds exposure) and hysterical attack (8 to 10 seconds exposure) .</p>	<p>performance</p>	<p>intervention with chemical means which cause irritation/stimulation of human organism</p> <p>affectation of human body, without emotional content or cultural condition, occurs</p> <p>gas brings the body into a state of laughter, but laughter is not emotional, it is chemically and physiologically affected</p>

38 Žil Delez, Feliks Gatari, „Percept, afekt i pojam“, in: *Šta je filozofija?*, IK Zorana Stojanovića, Sremski Karlovci, 1995, p. 206; (Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari, „Percept, Affect, and Notion“, *What is Philosophy?*).

Todorović was interested in caused, or provoked physiological reaction in which there is only laughter as an affected body, and not as an effect of the content of psychological/emotional state of joy of an individual, of a social gesture of the identification of the group of like-minded persons, etc. Affectation is thus, in a general sense, an intensity of the effect of the event. The idea of the "affect" as an emotion without content is derived from *Ethics*<sup>39</sup> of Baruch de Spinoza, and elaborated in Bergson's philosophy<sup>40</sup> of sensuousness. The idea of the affect and the affectation leads towards the concept of sensory intensified effect(ivity) which signifies a transition from the "position of the subject as cultural text" to the "position of the corporeal or intercorporeal event with consequences".<sup>41</sup> The point here is phenomenistic expectation from the event and its intensities of the effect to senses, and to the body of the listener, spectator, collaborator/participant. Art work, for example, as the *text* or *semiological model* does not exist in itself as the text itself, or as located and isolated semiological model, but it is the text only in relation to other texts which it absorbs into itself, thus transforming delayed, actual and potential meanings of culture.<sup>42</sup> On the contrary, the art work as the "event", that which appears or displays itself as singular event *here and then*, is only that which is, in certain space and time, constituted of single percepts and affects which may produce and which produce the intensity with all subsequent possible references. Laughter is a consequence of the intensity of the effect of affective chemical substance. Affect appears, or displays itself as *an interruption*<sup>43</sup> of operative procedures and controls of the reason. The interruption confronts the artist, the performers, the collaborators/participants and the spectators or the audience, with that which *can no longer be reduced* to the concept, which appears as the intensity of the effect(ivity) of chemical materials on the body, and this means that there is the experience put in motion within the life situation which leads to the alteration of that situation. Intensity in this context is "singularity" capable to generate the actual case. This actual case, or the series of cases, is also carried out, or performed in Todorović's video work *Noise*.

39 Baruh de Spinoza, „O ljudskom ropstvu, ili o snazi afekta“, in: *Etika – Geometrijskim redom izložena i u pet delova podeljena*, Kultura, Beograd, 1970, p. 173-246; (B. de Spinoza, *Ethics*).

40 Žil Delez, *Bergsonizam*, Narodna knjiga, Beograd, 2001; (G. Deleuze, *Bergsonism*); Žil Delez, *Pokretne slike*, IK Zorana Stojanovića, Sremski Karlovci, 1998; G. Deleuze, *The Movement-Image*).

41 Žil Delez, Feliks Gatari, „Percept, afekt i pojam“, p. 206.

42 Victor Burgin, „Tea with Madeleine“, in: Burgin, V., *The End of Art Theory / Criticism and Postmodernity*, Humanities Press International INC., Atlantic Highlands, N. J., 1987, p. 96-109.

43 Brian Massumi, „The Evolutionary Alchemy of Reason“, in: Marquard Smith (ed.), *Stelarc – The Monograph*, The MIT Press, Cambridge Ma, 2005, p. 182.



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Thomas Y. Levine, Ursula Frohne & Peter Weibel (eds.), CTRL [SPACE] – Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother, The MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 2002, p. 144-145.



### Noise

**1998:** BELEF, Barutana, Beograd;  
**1999:** Istok-Zapad, CZKD, Beograd;  
 Urban Feelings – Urban Fact,  
 Forum Stadtpark, Graz; Kibla,  
 Maribor; STOP THE WAR NIGHT,  
 Graz, Austria; Public District,  
 Usti nad Labem, Ceska Republika;  
 Video umetnost u Srbiji, CSU, Bitef  
 teatar, Beograd; **2000:** Dossier  
 Serbien, Akademie der Kunste,  
 Berlin; 13 Instant Video, Manosque,  
 France; Oktobarski salon, Beograd;  
 Media Art in Serbia, Zentrum für  
 Kunst und Medien, Karlsruhe; Media  
 Art in Serbia, IFA Galerie, Berlin;  
 Media Art in Serbia, Montevideo/  
 Time Based Arts, Amsterdam; Le  
 mois du FILM DOCUMENTAIRE,  
 Lille; **2001:** Dosje Srbija, Muzej  
 25. maj, Beograd; Tranzition, Cluj,  
 Rumania;  
 etc...

property: Museum of  
 Contemporary Art, Belgrade

Video work recorded with an  
 “open” camera which enabled  
 leaving messages in public places:  
 plaza in downtown Belgrade,  
 psychiatric hospital, prison.  
 There were instructions put in  
 front of the camera: “What do  
 you have in your throat?”, and  
 “Press the button and record your  
 message”.

exhibiting  
 video screening 30'

marking of border situations  
 by means of which a  
 potentiality of social field is  
 outlined

transition from presentation  
 of critical expression to self-  
 presentation

role of document about the  
 intensity of affect

The setting and participation of the people who happened to be on the site (public space, hospital, prison) determined the forms of expression, i. e. presentations by means of seemingly neutral camera which, as some kind of mirror, invokes the subject to display herself/himself to herself/himself and then to the other/s. Intensity of

the affect – we are talking now about art project *Noise* – is accidental and depends on instantaneous reaction of ‘examinee’-participant to the chemically active matter which causes laughter.

## Radical performance: danger and exposure – subject versus organism →

Activity of Zoran Todorović, regardless the media or the combination of media which he employs, is linked with ideas and notions of Performance Art. He works with the concept and the event of “performing” (the act which constitutes the event) and “the performance” (event which is performed and which thus happened).

Notion and notions of the performance art are polysemantic and vague in their numerous actual or retrospective usages, applications and performings, in various theories and histories of art in 20<sup>th</sup> century. The notion and the term of performance art are conceived by the end of ‘60ies and at the beginning of ‘70ies within neo-avantgarde tactics, more seldom within strategies, of transformations and overcomings of closed boundaries of defining the visual, above all, highly modernistic art work, and thus also of defining the visual arts as the arts based on creating or making or producing authentic, completed and finished paintings and sculptures as pieces which are understandable in themselves. Then, in late neo-avantgarde, the idea of the performance art was theoretically-interpretatively and historically-retrospectively applied to various open, experimental, processual and actional art works, which were conceived and performed as the event.<sup>44</sup> We are talking about completely different events: private behaviour of the artist which is named as an artwork, or the first person talk of the artist, the cabaret show, the festival, the evening show, stage or non-stage performance, open work (*opera aperta*), action (*Aktion*), actionism (*Aktionismus*), event, happening, paratheatre, multimedia, intermedia, mixed media, expanded media, body art, spectacle as an artwork, etc., etc. ... Then, late neo-avantgarde concept of the performance art is interpretatively, anticipatory, and programmatically, or more precisely, hegemonistically applied to entirely different postmodern artworks which were based on and performed through the concept and realization of the event. Indeed, the idea of the

<sup>44</sup> Miško Šuvaković, *Pojmovnik suvremene umjetnosti*, Horetzky, Zagreb, 2005; and: Miško Šuvaković, *Paragrami tela/figure*, CENPI, Beograd, 2001.



p. 36-39

Ješa Denegri, Miško Šuvaković (eds.), *Prestupničke forme devedesetih*, Konkordija, Vršac, 1998, p. 56-57.

performance art is, this means, interpretatively applied to the concepts and phenomena of the performance of the event in quite different institutions and disciplines of art. The idea of performance art is applied in music, literature, in radiophony, in film, photography, theatre, dance, opera, art practices oriented towards cultural work, in electronic mass media (television, video, Internet). It is necessary, in fact, to emphasize that the notion of performance art didn't originate through syntheses of various procedures of individual arts, thus becoming a kind of new multi-disciplinary, integrating supra-discipline of new art. The notion and the concept of performance art is applied, most often, to incomparable art practices belonging to various diachronic and synchronic contexts which identify the act of realization of the work, or the event of the phenomenality of the work, as an event-as-an-artwork. Attention is shifted from completed/static object, or the piece, as the finished product, to performing as the process or intensity of the effect in art and culture. Artwork of performance art is, most often, a heterogeneous event which is situated in entirely subjective, social and historical moments of late capitalism and its hegemonies directed towards the second-post-socialist and third-post-colonial world/s, or in other words, in specific situations of actuality of cognitive capitalism in the epoch of globalism. Within thus described context, the idea of radical performance may be seen as intentional work in hybrid fields of critical, subversive and provocative formation, presentation and provocation of the forms of life, as in performing practices of Hannah Wilke, Stelarc, Orlan, Ron Athey, Franko B, Stahl Stenslie, and others.

Todorović's work is indeed a performing one, it is the performance, although he himself, most often, does not perform the event in front of and for the spectators/audience. He produces and performs the production, or more precisely, the post-production of the situation and the event which leads to provocation and perversion of objectivity and utility of institutional scientific experiment or social normativity as an existential horizon of contemporary cultures. His works, performed as installations of objects (series of plates with spark discharge – *Material or Energy*), machines (dangerous sound – *Gun*), situations or events (preparation and serving of food made of parts of human body which is gained from "leftovers" during plastic surgery operations – *Assimilation*), are not the event or the happening, but tactical actions aimed to uncover the rationality of scientific research as spectral divergences and metastases of "the science" beyond discourses of its idealizations.



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<b>Gun</b>	1998: Galerija Studentskog kulturnog centra Beograd; <i>Prestupničke forme</i> , Konkordija, Vršac.	destroyed
Acoustic instrument produces sound of 130 DB strength and 10 Hz frequency. Installation of sound instrument accompanied with a warning: "Attention! Danger! Exhibition visitors should not spend time in the gallery more than 30 minutes".	Installation Rolled Iron, 1000x70cm, 130DB and 10Hz	exposure of body to invisible and inaudible effect of physical, i. e., acoustic affect

and



<b>Assimilation</b>	1998: <i>Živi akt</i> , Multimedijalni centar K.I.B.L.A. Maribor; 2002: <i>L Break 21</i> , Kapelica, Ljubljana; 2004: <i>Eat it</i> , Kampnagel, Hamburg; 2006: S.C. Gallery; Zagreb; 2008: <i>Ars Electronica Festival</i> , Ecology of techno mind, Lentos Art Museum Linz.	
Public consuming of food made of leftovers of human body during plastic surgery operation	performance photodocumentation	confrontation with cultural and social taboo of taking food made of human body

These are really complex processes of putting the affect in motion between enframed "sample" of the event and the audience which finds itself in a dangerous space (*Gun*) or the spectators/audience which is put face to face with the choice either to take or not the food made of human skin and flesh (*Assimilation*). The artist is some kind of the producer and the organizer, although perhaps a kind of the "therapist-activist" – or the *catalyst*, who presents the performance of the work-experiment through the project (the way the work is performed), through the program (why the work is performed), through the concept (how to present/represent intentions and effects in their concordances



and contradictions), and through affects (intensity of the effect of the event by means of which the project is performed as the singularity in relation to performers, the spectators/audience and collaborators/participants).

Artist is outside of the work. He regulates and deregulates "the work" (installation, machine, situation, body, flesh or the event) through production and organizational modes of the performance, although mentally, behaviorally and existentially he confronts himself with unexpected, dramatic and spectral consequences of his own "idea" within contradictions of the materiality of actual world. In a lucid, occasionally cynical manner, he demonstrates that there is no art without consequences. His experiments put him in situations which he didn't anticipate and which are the effect of complex responses or interactions which various social micro- or macro-systems, relations or confrontations of the participants give or have regarding his "samples" or "symptoms". His work is basically the following: investigation/research of the possibilities of the project which is supposed to bring about the affect. He didn't manage to realize certain works. For example, he didn't find any "collaborators" for the project which included the serum that broadens hearing range who would subject themselves to the treatment. The project based on one month long diet which was exercised by the artist himself is not finished because the artist broke his leg and had to be treated medically himself.

In Zoran Todorović's performances at stake are *regulations* of motivation and demotivation of the relationship with the body (with anatomy or/and the figure, with physiology or/and system, with system or/and bibehaviorality), and not with causal and mimetic systems of the relation of "human being" and "nature". Todorović takes on the role, in fact authorial function of the subject of motivation and demotivation of isolated life or life-forming sample of the event. He thus demonstrates that today in culture there is no authority of the order of "natural" (Darwin's) or "social" (Marx's) laws of evolution or history, but an order of constructing bio-social algorithms and their socially situated intentional, unintentional, conscious or unconscious performings. Performed situation or event are not the expressions of his states of body/mind, but rather the constructions of isolated, located and indexed event which in fact is the symptom of danger, uncertainty, transformation, possibility of creating micro-socialness and critical problematization of cohesive mechanisms of socialness, that is, of individuality within socialness.

In his work at stake is alienation or estrangement, because he works with decentering of human reason (*deeper, meta-meaning*) and with pointing out to literal event or the situation of the affect, or to the relation which has no justification in great humanistic meta-language of truth, love, justice, and beauty. On the contrary,

Todorović performs the provocation of great meta-languages of humanism (science, technology, religion, politics, sexuality, everydayness, culture, art) through creation of "small" or "localized", i. e. *singular* excesses: construction of the machine which creates sound waves of dangerous frequency, serving of food made of human skin and human flesh, exposure of the body to insects, usage of the serum which alters certain sensory features of the body, role of hypnosis in liberating sexual frustrations, provoking of racial identity. Todorović's world is not the world of integration of human principle into a meaningful evolution of man in the world; rather, it is the world of dissolving the idealities and, of course, "necessary lie" of great humanistic constructions of reality in which there function organisms which become individuals and individuals which become cultural and social subjects. Todorović confronts performers, collaborators/participants, and spectators with uncertain literalness, for example, of pain, and with certainty of cultural articulation of every unspeakable and unknowable encounter with pain or danger, within the system of values of a particular society, culture or even civilization. There is no pain itself or the danger itself, but the pain or the danger itself are polysemantic "abject currencies" of investment into the construction or deconstruction of social reality by means of which forms or just mere potentialities of individual and/or collective life are performed.

At stake here is, also, *the absorption*, since the human body is involved/brought in/introduced into the complex system of production of the possible world which semantically, behaviorally and, indeed, existentially takes over and takes in "human being" into the play of transformation (the technology of transformation or at least the technology of provoking its stability) from the "being" into the "symptom". Todorović's work belongs to those art practices which, during '90ies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, overcome or critically subvert the "strategies" or "tactics" of the so-called *art in the age of culture*. Art practices which work with mechanisms of culture are directed towards "appropriation" or "identification" of cultural texts (memories, identities, phantasms, objects of individual or collective desire, representatives of power). Todorović, on the contrary, instead with appropriations, works with "absorptions": with 'introductions into', with becoming, performing, affectation, cruelty of expression,<sup>45</sup> etc. It is as if Todorović tests the boundary between the human and the inhuman, or as if he goes further towards the question whether distinguishing between the human and the inhuman is possible at all? He demonstrates that the inhuman and the human are the parts of human play of performing/exercising the power of the real as the phantasm, as the concept, but as the experience as well. Todorović does not work with science or art in the manner of the scientist or the artist, but also not in the manner of "culture

<sup>45</sup> Catherine Dale, „Cruel / Antonin Artaud and Gilles Deleuze“, in: Massumi, B. (ed.), *A Shock to Thought – Expression after Deleuze and Guattari*, Routledge, London, 2002, p. 91.

worker”, meaning as the author-producer of situations and events in which science and art are provisional – but always powerful – frameworks for signifying testings of the individual; rather, Todorović acts as some kind of “artist-terrorist” or “artist-therapist”, or to put it in some other way, as “artist-magician” or “artist-voyeur”, who brings the common, traditional normality of individual life or culture to some affective border situation, or some critical situation. Provoking and testing of the boundaries and critical potentialities of governing and ruling over the “forms of life” may be both the completely cold alienated neutral testing, as in science, as well as ecstatic “hot” consumption and uncontrolled exchange of the bodies (effects of bodies) like in orgiastic feasts.

Todorović’s work within art is investigative, it is research, because he goes through phases of initiation, conceptualization, contextualization, articulation, performing and taking over the consequences of situations and events which are completely unpredictable in advance. He deals with critical relations of art, science and micropolitics, because he provokes open, unstable and, most often, dangerous (abject, injurious, lethal) symptoms of arranging the individual and social field of existence and behaviorality. At stake here are *open symptoms* because they include potentialities of unpredictability. This unpredictability which occurs in alleged predictability of taking into account of scientific and technical procedures is fundamental effect of putting into motion the mechanisms of “the dangerous” and “the horrifying” as the provocation of the socially acceptable, the normal, or “the natural”. In an alleged certainty of scientific *steps* he promises the uncertainty of existential confrontation of the concrete body with all-encompassing and invisible system. He offers to us the possibility of acquiring the experience of fear, insecurity and, certainly, of the whole range of motivated states of mind, from abjection to horror. Indeed, at stake here are dangerous “works of art as symptoms” because the participants in investigation/research are exposed to potential, real or fictional, danger (injury, transformation of the body or bodily capabilities, transgression of customary norms of social performances of the body, etc.). Art is for Todorović an “exceptional polygon” – *affectational laboratory* – of investigations/research and locating/positioning of different objects, situations or events into a clear, readable form of expectations of decentered experience as the knowledge about the experience of danger, pain, bodily change or exposure to governing/ruling over the body. For example, when he inserts micro-camera into the vagina of a stripper (*Staring*), thus recording the external world from the interior of human body, he annihilates “the idea” of the striptease as the offering of ideal-phallic body as an object of visual or even haptic enjoyment in the body of a woman-object, and offers the displacement of the aesthetic-erotic towards the pornographic-organic.



p. 50-51

Miško Šuvaković (ed.), *Sintakse smrti*, Muzej grada Beograda – Konak kneginje Ljubice, Beograd, 2001.



<p><b>Staring</b> recorded 1998.</p>	<p>2001: <i>Sintakse Smrti</i>, Konak Knjeginje Ljubice, Beograd; <i>Međunarodno Biennale Mladih</i>, Zagreb; 2003: <i>RE DISCOVER</i>, Muzej istorije Jugoslavije, Beograd.</p>	<p>property: artist</p>
<p>By means of micro-camera which was put into the vagina of a striptease dancer outside world was recorded.</p>	<p>exhibition video</p>	<p>relationship exterior – interior, inversion of gaze; centering of the genital</p>

Thus the place of discomfort is centered, which leads from eroticized confusion (looking from the “pussy”) to horrified gaze in front of the invisible, the castrated, the void, the interior. So the pornographic should not be understood in terms of moral or mere genre categorization of the artwork, but in terms of the intention to center one “hidden detail” of the body to its obscene presence and realization through the eye of the camera. Obscene presence of the “absent” does not have the legitimacy of “the place of the enjoyment of the gaze”, but of the organ which provokes the gaze and makes it impossible for the gaze to slip into *innocent* bourgeois enjoyment in idealized erotic smooth body-of-the-woman-as-an-object-of-desire. Todorović moves observer’s gaze from the object-of-desire to the gaze which looks from the “organ”, and thus *gets out*<sup>46</sup> of the subjectivity into the biological versus the spatial. In this artwork the anatomic-body-of-erotism and the organ-of-physiology-sexuality are confronted in a miraculous way, by means of digital micro-camera, in a relation of the outside and the inside.

For Todorović, science and technology are complex multitude of archeological, historical, actual or predictional procedures, contexts, institutions, effects and, certainly, powers of knowledge. All these various phenomenologies of knowledge may be removed from their basic context – positive scientific purposefulness and meaning – into the realm of precarious work and questionable realization of the event, of the positive and negative possibilities of production of micro-realities and physiological, anatomical, subjectual and social reactions to them.

<sup>46</sup> Michel Foucault, “The experience of the Outside”, („The Thought of the Outside”), in: James D. Faubion (ed.), *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology – Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*, Penguin Books, London, 1994, p. 149–154.

Todorović's art work has the characteristics of "micro-politics" because it is political, and this means performative and intervening in relation to social constructions of identities, norms, values and modes of expression/representation, that is, of behaviour. This "micro" which goes with *political*, in fact means that Todorović does not deal with big meta-politics of the struggles of social classes, big real-political issues of racial, national or generational ideologies of everyday life, but rather with politics of "micro-climates", isolated and presented in the world of art as the segment of the world of culture within versatility of life formations in the society. All this happens in a specific epoch – we're talking about actual transition of 20<sup>th</sup> century into 21<sup>st</sup> century, when all firm boundaries between art, culture and society are erased and lost, so at stake here is "art" which is outside modernistic autonomy and thus becomes the sample or the symptom of realization or derealization of interests and power between people. In such circumstances his work is transgressive, since it provokes, inverts the utility of public discourses of expectations from and about culture and, most often, makes it indeterminate, even spectral. Today it is not the work which apparently violates some essential or inessential social law – system of rules of behaviour and of political correctness /PC/ – that is transgressive, but it is the work which, through its affectational effects demonstrates that "social law" is the real and only site of transgression. Todorović's seemingly cold and rationally planned works confront the spectator or the spectator-participant with fundamental insecurity, even care (*Sorge*),<sup>47</sup> in front of what he/she found himself/herself in, and in front of what expects him or her. *The event makes us insecure in the world and makes the world around us insecure.* For Todorović, expressive outcome of an artwork is not the expression of artist's internal states, but is the effect of the system of rationality and utility which displays its imperfections, roughness, resistances, deficiencies, hollows, voids, concealments, idealizations and censorships within the production of *affectational event*. Affectational event is the field of discharge – which according to Brian Massumi can be described as follows: "before flash there is only potentiality in the continuum of intensity: the field of potential particles".<sup>48</sup>

Todorović's artworks are not quite privileged "innocent" and aesthetically centered artworks, as related to safe and favoured, most often disinterested observer, as a person who enjoys in an artwork, i. e. the piece, installation, situation or event. Todorović, on the other hand, uses the privilege of the world of art to perform "problematic", "exotic" or "dangerous", that is, in general, an "unpleasant" work – he could not have realized such work without the legitimacy of contemporary art world, and this means "the world of

<sup>47</sup> Martin Heidegger, „Briga kao bitak tubitka“, in: *Bitak i vrijeme*, Naprijed, Zagreb, 1988, p. 205-262; (Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*).

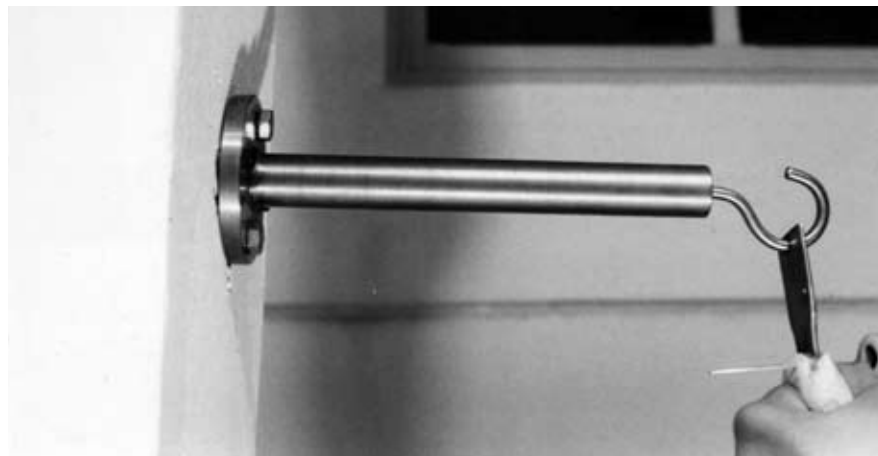
<sup>48</sup> Brian Massumi, „Introduction: like a thought“, in: *A Shock to Thought – expression after Deleuze and Guattari*, Routledge, London, 2002.

art" as the polygon of non-utilitarian, radical, provocative, excessive or dangerous experimental events. All participants (curators, critics, spectators) know that the matter here is a dangerous art event, meaning the event that has no "normal" or "usual" artistic-aesthetic characteristics. But, the matter here is also the research, or the experiment with "situations" and "events" of culture, science or biopolitics, located in the space of art which, after Duchamp and after conceptual art, is understood as a realm of political, cultural, scientific, religious, sexual, etc., affects. These experiments and researches do not have a determined, firm position within utilitarian social disciplines. On the other hand, when the observer enters the "space" or the "para-institution" of Todorović's work he/she is no more neutral or safe observer with aesthetic distance, or more exactly, he/she is not aesthetically privileged and located in the realm of "disinterested" or "conceptual" reception of the artwork itself as the work to be looked at, to be experienced as artistic, for example, in modernism, but is taken in, or introduced into the situation which is in some way unpleasant, risky, dangerous or at least problematic for him/her as an organism (influence on his/her psyche, on ethical, political, religious attitudes) and for him/her as the subject (he/she is not only the subject who looks at, touches the artwork or listens to it, but he/she is the subject who is resemanticized in the work itself as the collaborator, participant, or the object).

In one of his letters Todorović writes: "Element of danger, unpleasantness, etc., carries out one quite concrete matter, let's say – a mediatic one, it takes the observer into the image, more precisely, it makes him/her an actor of the event, i. e. it puts him/her into some relation with it, and it is precisely what enables the work to fall out from the field of the aesthetic, because, to put it simply, this privileged observational position is lost. Therefore, it is a functional device". And this is one of the crucial determinations of Todorović's concept of the artwork; for him, artwork is not "a sensory phenomenality / a concept" to be contemplated about, but is the instrument of reactualization of chosen samples of existential or experimental (real or fictional) reality for human being (body, organism, mind).

For an artist like Zoran Todorović it is not important to offer an artwork as the work itself or the work as an excess within the culture, but to demonstrate, by means of the "work" (installation, machine, situation or event, or complex institutional or para-institutional strategies or tactics) how *minor*<sup>49</sup> or dominating paradigms within contemporary societies are activated, and to enable that concrete bodies confront themselves with effects of these activations or their redirections.

<sup>49</sup> Mišel Fuko, „Predavanje od 7. januara 1976. godine“, in: *Treba braniti društvo – predavanja na Koleč de Fransu iz 1976. godine*, Svetovi, Novi Sad, 1998, p. 23; (M. Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*).



In one of his artworks Todorović makes food out of human flesh (*Assimilation*), but he is not a cannibal as surrealists<sup>50</sup>, and Vienna actionists<sup>51</sup> in '60ies and '70ies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century "acted" or "simulated"; rather, in his work, in "this meat for eating" an institutional origin of the meat is inscribed, namely the fact that it is the leftover of medicine industry of plastic surgery. He does not work with the very sensory phenomenologies of the meat, or with the event of the consumption of human flesh, but with the field of events which includes complex institutional "micropolitical" traces, values, relations, promises and censorship – and which includes, also, different regimes of the affects, for the participant, the artist and the spectators/audience. In another work he performs the situation in the gallery where nude women are posed as objects (*Bite*): they hold themselves with their own teeth on teeth-holders, thus hanging, "floating" above the floor.

Bite	1997: Galerija Meander, Apatin; 2006: Političke tela, Galerija Doma omladine, Beograd.	
Naked woman hanging on a chain which is attached on a ceiling. In her teeth she has a rubber bite-holder; whole body weight is given through the bite.	photographic performance photographs exhibition	arbitrary event demonstration of body effort nudity oralness exposure to gaze

At first sight it seems that at stake here is the project which presents the effort of the body to hold itself above the ground with the strength of the jaws. But beside this seemingly absurd and exhibitionistic play – "naked-body-effort-floating-hanging-endurance", there are also characteristic micropolitical plays:

- the artist uses female body as an object;
- it is not just any female body, but the body of a prostitute, i. e. a rented body;
- it is not just any body of a prostitute, taken from "an alternative system" of prostitutional exchange of "goods" (body designated by the system of prostitutional institutions);
- there is a work with specific context of post-socialist province (work is realized in Apatin, a town in Vojvodina, northern part of Serbia, during sanctions and isolation of FR Yugoslavia), and with secret/public life in the small town, and

- it is not just any body of the prostitute which was rented from the system of universal prostitution, but the body of Eastern-European, Romanian prostitutes, during their temporary work in Serbia – a body for sale in the epoch of post-socialism.

All of these micro-political denotations/connotations point out that Todorović indeed works with biopolitical mechanisms of governing: how the body on existential and phenomenological level endures the strategies and tactics of governing/power, domination, surveillance, punishment and appropriation. There is no other goal in this work than to expose the rented body to the effort, for the sake of the effort itself, which becomes visible.

Todorović's works appear as horrifying, amoral, cynical and destructive, but also as something which is offered in terms of the common sense: it is just that what is seen. His works display the system of the science and the politics as a system of the perversion "itself"<sup>52</sup> – for Todorović, what is very meaningful for science or the politics of everydayness, in fact is just an empty place or objectness of an instantaneous and temporary enjoyment whose function is to be without function ... His perverting and his manipulating of the science and technology, and also of the politics, is an affective provocation of the "norm" according to which the function determines the meaning – that society, in the name of the higher goal, can legitimately do whatever, whenever and wherever, while establishing the relation between biological and political existence of "the human".<sup>59</sup> Todorović's construction of "perversity", taken from "privatness" and "sexuality" confronts the spectator-participant with the perversion of social machines of power which can justify just everything in the name of the big, projected idea, metaphysical truth, of the project of realization of universal morality, stability of metalanguages of social epistemology, political goal ... His work is, therefore, the production of the inversions of science and politics in the field of art as the symptoms of culture/society between individual and social event of the exchange of affects. Todorović's work is biopolitical, because all of these operations (strategies and tactics) have consequences, and act upon the body itself ... his work is an event for the body with consequences or, perhaps, with traces of complex systems of power within contemporaneity. Biopolitical body is the body with consequences HERE and NOW, the life which is never oneself/pure or, in other words, "bare life".

<sup>50</sup> Meret Oppenheim, *Breakfast in Fur*, from 1935, or: *Spring Feast*, from 1959. See: Adrian Henri, „Spectator-involvement: Europe and elsewhere”, in: *Environments and Happenings*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1974, p. 60-61.

<sup>51</sup> *Sammlung Hummel, Wiener Aktionismus*, Mazzotta, Milano, 2005.

<sup>52</sup> Giorgio Agamben, „Musliman”, in: *Ono što ostaje od Auschwitzta – Arhiv i svjedok (Homo Sacer III)*, Biblioteka Anti-Barbarus, Zagreb, 2008, p. 59.





la Biennale di Venezia

**53. Esposizione  
Internazionale  
d'Arte**

Partecipazioni nazionali



MUZEJ SAVREMENE  
UMETNOSTI VOJVODINE