



la Biennale di Venezia

54. Esposizione  
Internazionale  
d'Arte

Partecipazioni nazionali

*One Needs to Live Self-Confidently...*

THE CROATIAN  
PRESENTATION  
AT THE 54TH  
BIENNALE  
DI VENEZIA

ARTISTS: **ANTONIO  
G. LAUER** A.K.A.  
**TOMISLAV  
GOTOVAC**

& **BADCO.**

COMMISSIONERS &  
CURATORS: **WHAT,  
HOW & FOR  
WHOM / WHW**

VENUE: **ARSENALE**

**WATCHING**

# One Needs to Live Self-Confidently... Watching



The exhibition, *One Needs to Live Self-Confidently... Watching*, presents Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac and theatre collective BADco. from Zagreb. The art of Tomislav Gotovac is based on the idea of 'global directing', not only as applied to film directing, but also as it extends into everyday life. BADco.'s artistic practice, operating at the intersection of theatre, performance and dance, engages with a redefinition of the performative act, and of the established relations between the audience, performers and performance.

The focus of the exhibition is on a critical discourse based on the thematisation of the procedures of watching, modes of spectating, and the politics of attention, within exhibition conventions and beyond. The exhibition's stance is one that BADco. describes as *theatre by other means*, juxtaposing the artistic position of Tomislav Gotovac, the recently deceased artist considered a pioneer of body art, performance, and

structuralist and experimental film in the former Yugoslavia, with BADco. – 'Nameless Authors' Assoc.', a theatre collective that operates as an independent artistic initiative, organisationally similar to a number of precarious cultural initiatives formed in Croatia in the late 1990s and early 2000s in opposition to the dominant cultural policy. The exhibition is conceived as a field of friction between the coordinates of the art system and art's autonomy that involves the viewer in examining the work of spectating.



■ BADco., *Responsibility for Things Seen: Tales in Negative Space*, 2011,  
PHOTO: DINKO RUPČIĆ

The courage to open up towards the possibility not to see, is the proper tryout of the 'new, different order of things' and 'the crisis of thinking' that theatre & dance company BADco. is practicing since its founding in 2000. It was then that two dancers/choreographers and two dramaturgs founded the independent art company that was legally obliged to have a Croatian name. English word 'BAD' was thus reinterpreted as an acronym for the *Nameless Author's Society* (*Bezimeno autorsko društvo*). In this paradoxical twist, naming which un-names, they have anticipated their future tradition of opening up problems and endlessly deferring the end in the form of the solution to the interpretative situation. BADco. sees potentiality not as a mental ghost, but as a proper mode of existence.

Una Bauer, introduction to the publication *10x10x10*, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of BADco.'s work

The title of the exhibition, *One Needs to Live Self-Confidently... Watching*, a quote taken from Tomislav Gotovac, in many ways summarises Gotovac's artistic credo, but it is also a demand that governed the decision to engage with his works in the Croatian presentation at the Venice Biennale. It is an attempt to ask questions about the meaning and actuality of Gotovac's artistic life, which spanned five decades, or longer, if we consider that for him life and art posed a curious combination that guided his continuous striving to structure reality as art. What is the actuality of his work, his understanding of freedom and artistic autonomy? How should we look at the other side of the notion of the artist-rebel? Should we view his autonomy not only as individual engagement striving for more artistic freedom and experimentation, that produced impressive aesthetical coherence – which it certainly did, but also as autonomy that engaged with the blind spots of power in ways that are important for present times?

The statement *One Needs to Live Self-Confidently... Watching* is ubiquitous enough to include a demand for us to take *Responsibility for Things Seen*, which is the title of the site-specific installation by BADco. Conceptualising the absence of performers and the complex field of friction between a stage and exhibition space, their installation sets the spatial parameters of the exhibition. The transformation results in the suggestion of a performance space behind a door leading to the adjoining storage space, and the replication of this wall in the space. This spatial disposition complicates the meanings of stage and backstage, taking into account the selection and conditions of Gotovac's presentation. On the other hand Gotovac's works cannot escape the conditions and procedures set by BADco's installation, whose main interest lies in an examination of the 'much maligned capacity of images to capture our imagination'. Their installation transforms the exhibition space into an analytical laboratory for the examination of the power of images, mediated responsibility, different modes and conditions of viewing and their critical and transformative possibilities, using as its 'material' works by Tomislav Gotovac. But the installation also addresses a broader set of questions related to his presentation in the national pavilion as well as Gotovac himself, the cult figure of the Croatian neo-avant-garde, the 'radical' artist whose 'anarchistic' desire led him to uncompromisingly sacrifice his comfort



and success and whose works involving his naked body never ceased to shock. BADco.'s *Responsibility for Things Seen: Tales in Negative Space* is not a reaction or intervention into Gotovac's work, but takes 'Gotovac' as a problem around which it evolves, which is more than just an element of its 'site-specificity'.

Tomislav Gotovac's presentation includes his key structural and experimental films, and a series of photographs from the early 1960s through to the end of the 1970s. It downplays the recuperation of his opus within the narrative

of Croatian national art history and the usual clichés of the underrepresented dissident who fought for the freedom of artistic expression in the dark times of communist repression, as the story goes in the standard readings of the 'body in socialism'. The selection of his works attempts to accentuate specific procedures whose strict discipline and analytical possessiveness often trespassed into excess and transgression, to reinforce once again the systemic organising principle that underlies them, maintaining their autonomy as the ultimate responsibility



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a.  
Tomislav Gotovac,  
*The Forenoon of a Faun*,  
1963

"I can't imagine life without art and I couldn't imagine art without anarchism. I don't like it when people treat other people's lives anarchically, but to behave anarchically in art is the main condition for art to survive and keep moving, to escape fossilization. What is more perfect than Bach, Michelangelo, the Egyptian pyramids, the Greek columns, the Russian avant-garde and avant-garde film? They are it. What next? I think that people who open those small hidden holes on all levels in art are really the greatest anarchists and they are the ones who have to sacrifice their success and their comforts in life. Nothing will happen in art in any other way."

"Art is Reality", Tomislav Gotovac in conversation with Branka Stipančić, first published in newspapers *Vijenac*, 8.10.1998, № 123/VI, Zagreb

“Gotovac’s films are *carefully planned*, they are prepared according to a plan prior to filming. The plan is, therefore, a declarative property of his films and requires appropriate appreciation. The obviously planned features are the following: *the cinematic method* which is applied consistently throughout the film and the *area of the image* where the method is applied. *The planning of the method* is apparent in its *concision*, its *reduction*, and in its various forms of *repetition* and/or its *extended duration*. ... The repetition of chosen methods and the persistent (long term) application of the methods and/or repetition is not the only part of the plan, but also a means to ensuring that the plan (the conceptual treatment) of the model is unequivocally appreciated.”

Hrvoje Turković, “Tomislav Gotovac: Observation as Participation”, in the monograph *Tomislav Gotovac*, Croatian Film Clubs’ Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2003



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, S, 1966

to the self-devised and perfected system whose iron logic governed Gotovac’s life and art. The criticality and subversiveness of Gotovac’s life-long dealings with the material of his life, organised according to the principles of art and defined by his continuous interest ‘in what lies between him and his eyes’, is often



understood as stemming from a claim to carry the potentiality of a plurality of identities, ways of enjoyment capable of transforming and de-alienating the social body. But in the present time of capital consolidation and a renewed offensive by a neo-liberal doctrine that is offered as the only possible response to the financial crisis it generated, our understanding of ‘subversiveness’ clearly needs to be rethought. The exhibition invites us to look at Gotovac’s anti-humanist stance, his self-imposed discipline and endurance through ‘bad times’, his careful and constant delineation of friends and enemies, devices and strategies for enduring extreme systemic developments that will not change any time soon.

*Family Film I* (1971) and *Family Film II* (1973) include explicit scenes of the artist making love with his female partner, but it would be wrong to understand this in the lineage of a post-’68 understanding of sex as liberation, the embodiment of the principle of self-creativity and individual engagement, emancipatory, a de-alienating weapon. One should see those images as part of the artist’s obsession with repetition and systemic developments, what he called the ‘iron net’, a biopolitical regime that regulates diverse bodies and horizons of enjoyment. Characteristic structural elements are discernible in two other experimental films shown in the exhibition. *S* (1966) shows a male hand leafing through a Swedish erotic magazine, with city roofs in the background and a captivating jazz soundtrack, while the early structuralist film *The Forenoon of a Faun* (1963) juxtaposes ambivalent shots of human interaction with an almost abstract detail of a wall and cityscape. The accumulation of images, registering without intervention, reduction

and repetitiveness, ‘cataloguing’ the fragments of reality and finding systems in unexpected, unforeseen circumstances, a personal standpoint that resists narration, also characterises the photographic series *Metal Covers of the City of Belgrade* (1977), as well as *Cara Dušana 11* (1977), the latter a group of works that documents



Gotovac’s place of living in Belgrade from 1971 to 1979. Incidentally, this is also the location of the second *Family Film*. There are other slippery clues and unreliable threads, for example, motifs of hands, prominent in the movie *S* and repeated in the early photo series *Hands* (1964), in which the artist deals with the issues of montage and directing, and puts his body in a public space, or the motif of a (foreign) magazine from the same film, repeated in *Showing the Elle Magazine* (1962), a work of multifaceted conceptual anticipation, pointing to Gotovac’s long standing method of ‘making films with other means’. Although oppositions and contradictions are not resolved in these often misleading signs, they are helpful in navigating his works against linear and definitive readings.

This intention to evade definitive and directive readings comes to the fore in BADco.’s installation *Responsibility for Things Seen: Tales in Negative Space*. In a simple spatial gesture of wall replication, and the utilisation of a storage space behind the existing exhibition wall, the functions of spaces shift, and hierarchies between space and non-space, stage and backstage are blurred. In this spatial disposition five continuously active displays are installed, three of which are visible only through cutouts in the wall, while the other two are set on its replica, the salient and mighty presence of the wall. The films displayed use and combine material referring to the construction and displacement of the exhibition space, recordings of choreography performed in the previously empty exhibition, and of the movements of visitors in real time, as well as digitally manipulated and temporally dislocated recordings of viewers in the exhibition,

software-operated real-time-edited images from live feed from five cameras installed in the exhibition space, with prerecorded images of performers during the exhibition set-up. In every moment what is offered to the viewer is a construction that remembers, notes and anticipates, while the very act of seeing becomes



a subject, an obsession, a game, a problem, the same one that Gotovac attempted to solve by his ‘non-stop image’ principle, and systemic subjection of reality to the principles of film. BADco.’s installation incites performative events in an enclosed, seemingly protected (surveyed) and yet fragile space, showing no traces of the assumption that community is established through gestures that abolish the

“We’ve always had trouble with the kind of prescriptive opinion coming from certain curators or colleagues, which would dismiss any dancing that didn’t function interpretatively or conceptually. Thus we’ve often heard stories about how there’s too much dancing in our performances, or how our dancing is not clear enough (whatever that might mean). Like any other aspect of performance, dance has always been a part of our poetics, but it’s been differently instrumentalised, or alternatively, it would lose the function of the dominant frame and become noise, redundant, it would become just labour, or an intensity, etc. It is also true that our conceiving of choreography is conditioned by historical thinking about it and so since dance is one of the forms of our work in performance, we were interested not so much in what it means but in how it works. And another reason to re-examine choreographic thinking in other spheres, be they media or social, is bound up with our need to re-examine our relation to dance as labour today, when labour no longer necessarily results in manufactured material objects but rather—in services.”

Nikolina Pristaš, from a conversation with Marko Kostanić, published in the journal for performing arts theory *TKH* № 18 “Dance/Theories-Reloaded”, December, 2010

■ BADco., *Responsibility for Things Seen: Tales in Negative Space*, 2011, PHOTO: DINKO RUPČIĆ



dividing line between spectators and actors, staging instead the absence, making sense of activities already at work in the spectator. BADco.’s temporal gesture of manipulating absence as presence, of both performers and spectators, and our sense of time and ability to experience the present as opening to the future, demands nothing, steers nobody, yet makes clear that there is no such thing as neutral viewing. ¶

# Faun, Narcissus, Silenus. Tom.

Georg SCHÖLLHAMMER



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Paranoia* View Art, Hommage to Glenn Miller, Das Gläserne U Bot Krems-Stein, 1988, PHOTO: NINO SEMIALJAC

“Gotovac deals with nothing else than the unquenched need, with almost desperate effort, to push from him everything that would make him faceless, tame and limit him.”

Ješa Denegri, “The Individual Mythology of Tomislav Gotovac”, in the monograph *Tomislav Gotovac*, Croatian Film Clubs’ Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2003

## 1. BRIEF PROLOGUE:

### A TRIBUTE TO GLENN MILLER

★ I still have vivid memories of that nighttime performance, of the dramatically lit film set passing before my eyes, of those bizarre scenes looking like a shoot for a monstrous genre film whose plot remained but a fragment. An ageing, cynically grinning faun, hand raised in a dismissive greeting, sporting a fake Hitler moustache, a Tito star painted in red on his forehead, clad in a pilot outfit and sitting in a black Mercedes 600. Holding wooden theatre props, a hammer and sickle, in the other hand, he solemnly glides by in his 1970s state coach, through the doorway and into the nave of a medieval church. He is a



man of impressive stature, swinging the sickle as he steps out of the car and then crossing it with the hammer to create the emblem of socialism, after which he proceeds in dictatorial posture through the various stations of a stage set draped around the church interior: he takes a seat alone at a candelabra-laden table for a lonely banquet, pausing to ruminate; then, after posing in an empty wooden stretcher frame for a heroic portrait with dog, he sits down at an old German antique desk and strikes the pose of a head of state, talking on the telephone and gesticulating. Finally, he climbs up onto the desk and, legs planted wide apart, stretches his arms upward, crossing the hammer and sickle once again in a victory gesture. That is my first encounter with Tomislav Gotovac.

It sets me to thinking: What does it mean, this bizarre replica of Chaplin’s portrayal of the crazed dictator, full of distorted and twisted references to the instruments, scenes and gestures, to the illusionary world of classic narrative cinema? Have I been witness to a grotesque travesty of the post-punk provocations of *Neue Slowenische Kunst* and Laibach? Who is this performer who came out of an avant-garde in the former Yugoslavia, an avant-garde that in the mid-1980s vanished completely from the horizon of the art world in which the scene depicted here was enacted (an art world that was just seeing itself step away more self-confidently from the fringes of the Iron Curtain on its path westward)? The performance stayed in my memory as an erratic incident. But it did stay.

It was not until a few years later and after some reading that I realised that Ljubljana was more likely the student of this man and not vice-versa, and that this performance, *Paranoia* View Art (*Hommage to Glenn Miller*), presented in 1988 at the Donaufestival in Krems, Lower Austria, might have been meant as a sarcastically smiling salute to that city. And then I also understood that Tomislav Gotovac’s cynical commentary on totalitarianism was not directed only, as I had thought at the time, at Austria’s guilt-squelching and complacent present, this country that, 50 years after its ‘Anschluss’ to Nazi Germany still hid behind the facade of the neutral model nation between the opposing blocs – but that it was instead aimed homeward, at Yugoslavia, which, under the pre-modern nationalist rhetorics increasingly bandied about by the elites of its republics in

postmodern media scenarios toward the end of the 1980s, had begun to fall to pieces. War was on the horizon.

That this Tomislav Gotovac was well-known and esteemed in many diverse cultural realms was something I would only learn a few years later. I didn’t discover this through the contexts of visual art however – they were still too busy with the Rhineland and New York – but rather from Kurt Kren, the modest, shy hero of western avant-garde film. Had I heard about this Yugoslav, he asked me, who had shot and edited those wonderful incunabulas of European avant-garde film, of experimental, underground cinema, in the 1960s? *The Forenoon of a Faun* (1963); the trilogy *Straight Line* (*Stevens-Duke*), *Circle* (*Jutkevič-Count*) and *Blue Rider* (*Godard-Art*) (1964); or *Ella* (1966) – Tomislav Gotovac from Zagreb?

Admittedly, at that time I was not yet aware of how, in the references alone to these, my first two encounters with the person, name and work of Tomislav Gotovac, the most important fields of endeavour, themes and aesthetic reference figures of an oeuvre had unfurled that insisted on the possibilities of demonstratively leading a public life as an artist. Now, in retrospect, after having consumed his energy, it becomes all the more evident what an immense legacy he has left behind, an archive of inestimable dimensions. A system of references to two cultures: (*Stevens-Duke*), (*Jutkevič-Count*) and (*Godard-Art*), *Ella* – the Soviet cinema and Hollywood up to and including the 1950s (Sergei Yutkevich and George Stevens), the Nouvelle Vague (*Godard*), as well as all the Dreyers,

Bressons and Hawks, the Keatons, Gances and Pudovkins – and the films of Breckhage or Mekas; Jazz, here Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Ella Fitzgerald, especially Swing, which came to Europe in 1945 with the American relief forces and radios, providing a soundtrack for Gotovac’s anarchist lifestyle. It was a lifestyle marked in a very broad sense by an interest in movement, movement in lines, loops and spirals, not only in films but also in the curves that his work later took, in ritornelles and self-quotes, in the consistency with which for example he pursued his performative work using his own body; movement that also demonstrated radically ideologically mutating formations of a local public – alone, in pairs, in triangles and back to himself; movement in actions, performances, public displays. In artistic terms, this movement pursued methods of fragmentation, of displacement and reassembly, of roaming around and observing; i.e. movement of the eyes and of the gaze. And also the fact that Gotovac’s practice risked something much broader, much more volatile and dangerous, aiming at grounding an existence, at taking that emancipatory and yet libertine, anarchic path of the – publicly showcased – enjoying oneself at what one did, of which Foucault would later speak, is something that only gradually became clear to me.

## 2. TOM:

### CINEMA; JAZZ; MOVEMENT

In interviews, Tomislav Gotovac often spoke of the cinema as his initiation experience, of himself as a thirteen-year-old cinemagoer

“Gotovac’s films last longer than is necessary to appreciate the planned pattern, it is not here only to make the plan itself apparent, but to give chance to chance. Gotovac’s films always last ‘too long’ in the minds of the casual viewer because they are not directed at the casual viewer, rather they are directed at the loyal and committed viewer. The films last long so as to enable the committed viewer to become familiar with any given film, with its approach and ‘catches’, to enable the viewer to surrender to the unique type of emotionality it offers.”

Hrvoje Turković, “Tomislav Gotovac: Observation as Participation”, in the monograph *Tomislav Gotovac*, Croatian Film Clubs’ Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2003

■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Paranoia* View Art, Rethorical Images, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, 1990



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Elia*, 1966

and later cinephile, as a film person for whom the American and European cinema in the early postwar years opened up both an abyss and a lifelong fascination. He claimed to have found in cinephilia an enthusiastic counter-draft to postwar modernism with its soberly constructivist social concepts, and to the constricting forms of socialisation available in bureaucratically ossified socialism, which, despite the rhetoric of the Yugoslavian self-management ideology, he sceptically rejected. Watching films frequently, the same ones over and over again, analysing them, succumbing to them, was for him more than a ritual. It was a way of life. From this pursuit emerged an artistic manifesto for a paradigm change toward jouissance and toward individual immersion.

For the performance in 1988, Tomislav Gotovac had at the time given me the opaque title *Hommage to Glenn Miller*. This had little to do with music; it was instead a biographical reference to his own earlier cinematic/performative work *Glenn Miller 1* from 1977, an abstract, minimalistic showpiece of late structuralist film made up of 360-degree pans across a children's playground – and to one of the gods of his cinephilic pantheon, Anthony Mann. In concrete terms, he alludes here to a scene in Mann's *Glenn Miller Story* in which black-and-white documentary material from the Second World War is in experimental film fashion nightmarishly intercut into a scene, breaking with Hollywood conventions.

And although Gotovac had placed his own body at the centre of innumerable photographs and performances since the early 1960s, later mostly his naked body, many of which took place in actual public space, or at least always with reference to the publicness of his existence as an artist, at first it was mainly his films that laid the foundation for his international career and to which the local critics reacted with enthusiasm.

For example, *The Forenoon of a Faun*, a structuralist triptych about the idea of the fixed camera on a tripod (at eye level), a treatise with the sequences: frozen, pan, zoom in zoom out, but whose images seem to stem from the world of a situationist *dérive*. The voyeuristically observed movement of vaguely delineated figures on the sun terrace of a hospital is followed by a Wols-like gaze at the texture of a scratched wall and then, with all the erotic overtones of the rhythmic back-and-forth, a zoom onto a tree-lined intersection, with passersby and that consumer fetish of the era, the car (to which Gotovac incidentally later dedicated his own small study with the 1979 film *M*). Without making any reference to the materiality of the film, he provides the first scene with the wholly non-diegetic sound from Jean-Luc Godard's *Vivre sa vie*, and the second with sound from *The Time-Machine* by George Pal. It is not only in these allusions to the contextual power of sound, of music, within the cinematic, which in parallax to the structure of the film's visual space forms a second, basal, emotional realm, it is also when Gotovac speaks of films that he takes the position of the cinephile, almost an erotomaniac

of film, who is in love with the dark yet visible symbolic systems in film, displaced out of the narration and shifted to the structure of the camera position and movement, to the editing and framing and to the soundtrack and then connected with one another by the lines of the composition. He speaks with passion in favour of the formal microcosm, the fabric of a scene, fragments; of films as commentary on films, of Godard as commentator on Ford and Lang, of Bresson's reflection for example on Stevens. As a filmmaker, however, he does not set off on this search for traces in a heroic and abstract manner, in the style of the semiology-keen avant-garde, but instead builds into his rigidly constructed films *detours* into the concrete, into biography. In *29* (1967) it's the view of the back courtyard from the windows of his own apartment, while in other films, *detours* reveal his relish in the partial object, as well as his identification with and naive devotion to the structural experience of the cinema: *Circle* (*Jutkevič-Count*) features a single, long, spiralling, 360-degree pan upward from the roof of a house in Belgrade, as though it were a counterpoint to Hitchcock's beloved trope of the 360-degree tracking shot around his kissing heroes. Here once again, the experience relies on an awareness of the body. It is a fleeting and yet continuous experience, which is bound to a public and yet intimate setting that he revisits again and again: the cinema; because this one obscure object of desire is available nowhere else.

Out of this cinephilia develops his first practice: Gotovac photographs himself, and later has himself photographed, first in a series of melancholy existentialist self-portraits or decorated as a GI (*Heads*, 1960), then with naked upper body in the forest, posing as a leftist, impishly smiling Yugo beatnik, reading French *Elle* (1962) and demonstratively holding up as the epitome of the diametrically opposed chic and decadent middle-class lifestyle the section: Sports and Divertissements. Nearly a decade later, his own face is again featured in a series of pictures, showing him in profile, first as a bearded, long-haired satyr, then with half-shaven head and finally bald (*Heads*, 1970). This motif, too, becomes a recurring element of his work.

This is due to the fact that, as in Gotovac's films, the pictorial arrangement and links between the images seem to be subject to the polar swings triggered by the mobilisation of the cultural underground and system of references of the image, as the energetic potential of an oscillation or, more precisely, as a constant vibration. Even though the concept of the photographs may seem banal, and the placement of the camera in the films, their framing and editing, may appear straightforward and simple, that just causes them to get caught up all the more intricately in the combinatory system with its various rhythms – it is as though the works tell of both the conscious and unconscious aspects of their content.

The descriptive narrative form of Hollywood cinema (one might just as well add the adjectives 'illustrative' and 'figurative') is so fascinating



**“There’s one thing which cannot be explained easily, that is, I can’t explain it well... It was that we started to recognize – not the content of the films and not their genres, but the rhythm which every individual person brings, the lifeblood and breathing which that person gives to each film. You feel that behind every film stands – if the film is good – a person who is, for example, nervous, who enjoys pans, tracking shots, who is keen on close-ups, who has a certain rhythm of cuts... we talked about these things. The content interested us only in relation to a procedure.”**

“It is all a movie”, *A conversation with Tomislav Gotovac* by Goran Trbuljak, Hrvoje Turković, in the magazine *Film*, № 10-11, 1977, reprinted in the catalogue *Tomislav Gotovac*, Croatian Film Clubs' Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2003

■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Heads*, 1970, PHOTO: JUAN-CARLOS FERRO DUQUE

“The titles of my performances are really attempts at discharging the tension that certain directors and films elicited in me. I physically felt this tension and I thought about how to get it out of my system. Battery was charging, and electricity threatened – there was a danger that everything will explode. And then I was simply honest and I admitted that everything I do is related to what I have picked up along the way, especially in the cinema. People usually hide their role models and talk about their own genius. While great artists are influenced by life, I am influenced by art. And I simply wanted to use a para-language to articulate that. Every work I made is a kind of an essay. That is why my performances carry the titles of films, while some films, such as *Circle*, are deliberately ‘fine-arts.’”

“Art is Reality”, Tomislav Gotovac in conversation with Branka Stipančić, first published in newspapers *Vijenac*, 8.10.1998, № 123/VI, Zagreb

for Gotovac because it masks the severity and rigidity of his compositions. In many of his later works, which he enriches with quotes from Hollywood movies or which consist of such quotes (*Feelings*, 1999/2000; *Place in the Sun and Readymade*, 2000) he questions the categories of montage and sequence shot, takes issue with the representational functions of the cinematic image and deconstructs the space-formation concept of the ‘classic’ Hollywood film just like the New Hollywood and Nouvelle Vague directors he so admires, but, unlike them, he uses the structural means of experimental film to undertake his analysis. He marvels at Howard Hawks’ eye-level camera work, the strictness of his arrangements based on the number three, which will become a model for his forenoon of a faun. He mobilises the level



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Straight Line (Stevens-Duke)*, 1964

of description and narration against that of structural abstraction, and begins to read films, or film figures, as allegories of cinema as a whole, and to depict this microcosm as an allegorical one: take George Stevens for example – the material from whose films (such as *The Greatest Story Ever Told*) becomes for Gotovac an allegory for his own life: love, radio, the life of the outlaw who makes himself into a public figure in George Stevens’s adaptation of Theodore Dreiser’s *A Place on the Sun*. Although Gotovac launched his cinematic examinations with the question of movement in the narrowest sense, in films like *Straight Line*, which consists of a camera mounted in a fixed position in the driver’s cabin of a tram, emulating the primal scene of the cinema using one of its camera techniques, many other dimensions of cinema are likewise always involved: the technical and structural levels, film history, the emotions and thinking of the cinema.

His is a cinematic way of thinking, which penetrates far into the private realm and explicitly incorporates private aspects into the films. The movement of the naked body running through the cityscape of the Yugoslav capital Belgrade, an unexpected image that will later become one of the icons of Gotovac the performer. He calls this action *Streaking* (1971), which just happens to also be a term used to describe a process in film. This performance is a private after-image of his Samuel Beckett/Buster Keaton replica *Don’t know where we are going* (1966), which was still indebted to the theatre of the absurd and worked with Hitchcockian suspense motifs. In later versions as well, such as *Lying Naked on the Asphalt*, *Kissing the Asphalt (Zagreb, I love you)*, *Homage to Howard Hawks and His Film Hatari!* from 1981 – which of course refers very directly to the repressed connection between Catholicism and Fascism, which would be fractured again in the *Tudman* years – the action is incorporated into a broad cinematic context. Even the view from his own courtyard in *I feel all right* (1966) – Gotovac cites James Stewart in Hitchcock’s *Rear Window* as inspiration here – shows only at first glance the overt sequence of camera movement, while really alluding to a series of ‘shifts’ that, because they appear so profane and self-evident, can be addressed as images. Much more could be said about these works and their frameworks, which break with the linearity of what Gotovac gleaned from the immanent qualities of cinematic momentum. Many concepts of the moving image are discernible in this work in their dual constitution: no shot without phase frames, no perception and thinking without objects ‘cut out’ of reality, no film without photographic foundation and no aesthetic without preparatory elements and their embedding in a (for example narrative) form. The ‘true movement’ that Gotovac develops here always has two faces; it is not a simple alternative to representationalist misunderstanding, but rather one that the ‘cinematographic illusion’ recognises as necessary and from which it at the same time attains transcendent dimensions. Gotovac’s moving image always has a second face, though, because

it also points to the opening of the work, toward a social aspect that is not given.

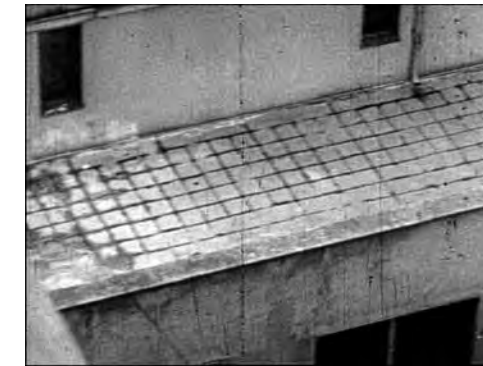
My reading of Gotovac’s 1988 performance presumably also got caught up in these kinds of concrements, entanglements and sediments of form, film history and contemporary criticism. And that is probably why it continued to haunt me, just like the glaring light illuminating the scene. Such concrements, whose recombinations keep that moment of fuzziness visible in which the make-up and structure of his aesthetic object – a gesture for example, viewed from a specific historical perspective – open up into a space for the imagination that is rife with references, are what Tom Gotovac was working on. And not, as a surface reading alone might indicate, on the scandal of nakedness, on provocation or exhibitionism. Tom’s love of himself and of the cinema, of the form of freedom harboured within it, Tom’s anarchy, went deeper than that.

### 3. POSTSCRIPT:

#### THE LOVER IN MANY GUISES

And then this body of Tom Gotovac – in the poses of his portraits and self-portraits, in the gestures and figures in which he shows himself publicly, sometimes grotesque and clownish, and then other times static, for example as a monument standing on the roof ridge of the neoclassical Zagreb Artists’ House (*Liberté, Fraternité, Egalité, Fuck it, the Fall of Bastille*, 1991) and makes himself base with his nudity – changes into a strange mood, into the mild, gentle modality of the melancholy, self-contemplating Narcissus. Gotovac pits the images of his own nakedness against the petit bourgeois sexual revolution of the 1960s in the double-standard-permeated Yugoslavia of the Tito years. He commented on these years in *S* (1966) as well, in which pinups and ‘Swedish’ porn magazines and their commercial figurations of sex are deployed to create a structural film that is no longer about the voyeuristic appeal of sexual activity for these media. A few years later, two additional smaller films appeared, which Gotovac called *Family Film I and II* (1971/1973). Back then they were probably superficially classified as sex films. The first one shows, like after-images of shepherds and nymphs, a striptease by a woman who was his lover at the time, and then he himself taking his clothes off in the woods and balancing eurhythmically. This is followed by a fellatio scene. In their temporality, the cinematic means Gotovac deploys in these observations of self likewise seem to constitute constant self-modifications of the form. They cling to what they shape – closely and flexibly.

The second ‘family’ film, made two years later, is succinctly titled *End of Love*. In terms of what is portrayed, initially this end is not shown. The short film begins with a scene of a couple in an improvised shower consisting of a simple tap in Gotovac’s tiny apartment, followed by a relaxed and tranquil sex act with autoerotic elements, and then ending back in the shower. And yet this banal dramaturgy, this level of representation, is riddled with something just as unportrayable as the fragility of the historical constellation of a



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Circle (Jutkevič-Count)*, 1964

sexual relationship. Gotovac and his cameraman Slobodan Šijan use a simple metaphor to capture this mood: the materiality of hair, which literally grows out of the blurriness of the space, whose soft, tousled quality encapsulates the moment, seeming like a new formula for the protagonists’ paradoxical search for a way out of their routines. Once again, the way Gotovac highlights these two elements, structure and emotion, plays a fundamental role here, particularly with respect to the self-perception of cinema and the ability of the cinematic image to modulate between various states and genres.

The same melancholy mood can be felt in a similar form in a work from the year 1987. Tom Gotovac photographs his mother’s apartment after her death, the inventory of an honest woman (*After Beška’s Death*); he relates this series to *Cara Dušana 11*, a series of photos of the Bohemian apartment where he lived from 1971 to 1979, which consisted of a large room looking onto a narrow turn-of-the-century courtyard in which the second *Family Film*, from 1973, the tragic end-of-the-relationship study, also takes place and winds up in its melancholy manner.

Gotovac is the lover, the lover in many poses, the mischievously grinning lover, always in an erotic relationship with himself and his media mirrors, the lover spun up in psychically dramatised role masks as eludes of an existence, an existence that always eludes the grasp; a singular satyr and faun, Narcissus and Pan – and finally Silenus (*Foxy Mister*, 2002). In the depictions of his body over the decades he captures the dominant states of cultural modalities, follows the intellectual, cultural and political currents that fuse during a specific historical period into the milieu of an era, illustrates the moments of crisis, just as he describes the emergence of a new kind of subjectivity. Gotovac’s inquiry into subjectivity is never purely self-reflexive, but rather always addresses at the same time the connection to a historical position and reflection.

The equal measures of fragility and cockiness that characterise Tomislav Gotovac’s work, the imperturbability of his working method, his rejection of any self-historicisation, are exemplary; a body that refuses any alien ascriptions and that tries to convey how more has been inscribed in it and continues to be inscribed there than can be explained with the help of theory, whether structuralist or neo-Marxist, psychoanalytical or deconstructionist; a body that won’t let itself be subjugated or articulated, but that strives instead to articulate its own experience and knowledge. It is your body, Tom, which you most recently dubbed Antonio Lauer, that speaks. Tom, you faun. Narcissus. Silenus. ☐

# Give Me a Problem!

Notes about BADco. 2007-2010

Bojana CVEJIĆ

*The ant understood that the producer could overtake power only if he occupied the site of the parasite.*<sup>01</sup>

★ I remember meeting BADco. in 2001 and they left me confused with regard to all that I then considered were matters of performance. At that time, European contemporary dance and theatre were deeply immersed in the polemics and politics of polarisation for/against spectacle, non-acting, choreography as opposed to dance, the transparency of a self-referential act, and other protestant gestures of renouncing representation. I came to Zagreb armed with some imperative questions such as: How can dance make one think? How can the need for recognition be subverted in a nineteenth century audience? How can we produce nothing so that 'they' must produce everything?... Seeing *Diderot's Nephew* revealed to me that there was more than one difference in position. And that BADco. was a group of dancers and dramaturges, plus a philosopher, who neither saw an urgency in acquiescing to the paradigmatically Western modernist claim for medium contemporaneity, nor loomed as a self-absorbed ludic face from/ of the East. Somehow, they *knew better*. For them, being nomadic meant staying at home in order to explore one's own foreign territories or 'countries' of work. One of these was Croatian performance art from the 1980s. By reworking *Man-Chair* by Damir Bartol Indoš into a reconstruction with 'dance variations', BADco. were, in 2000, appropriating a history which opened up the possibility of another future for Croatian performance. It was a 'manifesto of co-belonging', misrecognised both at home and abroad!<sup>02</sup> Misrecognition at home, i.e. the lack

<sup>01</sup> Manuscript from the performance *Changes (Promjene)* by BADco. (2007): "Monologue about Work".

<sup>02</sup> *Man-Chair (Čovjek-stolac)* is a performance by Damir Bartol Indoš that took place in 1982. In 2000, it was reconstructed under the title *Man.Chair*, or *Čovjek.Stolac* in Croatian.

of any substantial support by the city, which rejected everything that was not representing it, finally proved to be an advantage. It propelled the movement's autonomy, since all movements need continuity and duration in order to keep transforming themselves.

Speaking about BADco. today, it wouldn't suffice to focus on a few favourite examples of their work. Fourteen performances and six projects in seven years – even if a considerable opus – only form an open and fragmentary oeuvre. Each of their 'pieces' shows an entirely different set of relations between space, problem, and people involved, briefly: a different situation. From the *Confessions (Ispovijedi)*, 1999) to *Changes (Promjene)*, 2007), these situations have changed to the extent of becoming incomparably different – in the sense that none of them can be considered as representing one aesthetic, politics, or working method with which BADco. might be identified. Every performance and every element in that performance appear to be expressions that modify everything we may think BADco. is about. This makes it rather difficult for all those managing business and marketing, or representing politics in art: What is BADco. like? Where should we place it? What should we compare it to? How should we compare it to its non-coinciding, varying self?

Speaking about BADco. means tracing these heterogeneous movements as forces of expression that crystallise in singular points. The issues I will raise here are nodes through which ideas *qua* problems pass, rather than themes. Problems *qua* problems are the real objects of ideas, since having ideas entails posing, i.e. inventing or constructing problems as a category of knowledge and also as a category of being.<sup>03</sup> In order to grasp something that BADco. 'does', one shouldn't seek 'thoughts' in their content, but rather understand the situations that BADco. is creating in order to force one to think. Because thinking is not a natural possibility, but a

<sup>03</sup> Cf. Gilles Deleuze, 'The Image of Thought' in *Difference and Repetition*, London and New York: Continuum, pp. 129-167.

creation, while concepts are not evidences of common sense, but products of imagination, even fiction. Let us begin:

## GIVE ME A PROBLEM!

It is always problematic to recount what BADco.'s performances are 'about'. In *Diderot's Nephew, Or Blood is Thicker than Water (Diderotov nećak, ili krv nije voda)* there is a text, even more than that: there are references to two plays, *Rameau's Nephew* (by D. Diderot) and *The Death of Socrates* (which exists only as a synopsis for the 'perfect philosophy play' by the same author), but faith in the text is soon betrayed: the narrative is hollowed into an empty shell. Yet the performance is not voided; it teems with parallel worlds, whereby each performer develops the entire performance like a physical and emotional automaton. Systems of improvised action, formed around impossible or paradoxical movements, as well as extreme physical or emotional situations that each performer must face, compose a (model of a) world of compossible worlds without a vantage point (viewpoints being multiple *qua* performers).

The question of thematising a single problem or issue is not just a misleading shortcut; it is like cutting out a multiplicity of components and then trying to unfold relations, connections, and encounters, in which these components have merged, forming zones of indiscernibility and abandoning the simple linear causality between the ideas and the performing actions or materials behind them. Thus the title of the work *Memories are Made of This* (2006), becomes a joke when reversed: 'This (performance) is made of memories'. The performance is subtitled 'Performance notes', referring to the *Notes of F. Scott Fitzgerald*, a taxonomy of his notes accumulated over the years: 'Observations', 'Ideas', 'Scenes and situations', 'Conversations and Things Overheard', 'Feelings and Emotions', 'Anecdotes', 'Descriptions of Places Where I've Been', 'Things I Should Remember', etc.

An open-ended string of conversations, stories, statements, movements, radio voices, evergreen and jazz tunes, actions, film scenes, imaginary



■ BADco. *Man.Chair*, 2000,  
PHOTO: RATKO MAVAR

scenes, images, and spaces... is extended, while notes are shuffled, performers, subjects, and predicates exchanged. But what does F. Scott Fitzgerald, the American writer of the jazz age with *The Crack-Up*, a story he wrote in 1936, approaching the end of his life, as an intimate confession about his 'emotional bankruptcy', have to do with Dean Martin?

*No matter what he was doing, his biographer said, Dino has never had much interest in this world; he was "a menefreghista – one who simply did not give a fuck." He would never finish the songs he sang at his concerts. He'd sing the song halfway through and say: "No point in sing [sic!] the whole thing, you might not buy the record." Put your hand on my shoulder... But this is not Dino, this is Elvis. While Elvis is with us always, Dino returns only at Christmas time.*

Who was it, was it Pravdan Devlahović who said it (first)? I don't remember. What I remember is that at some point I was no longer sure whether those words and images were circulating for real, or I had dreamt them, which now strikes me as a kind of *déjà vu* or foresight, an awareness of something before you see it, the ability to see something from the past in its full technicolour glory<sup>04</sup> Of course, this sensation may have been evoked by substitution, a procedure that defines both metonymy and a kind of confusion of categories in dreams where a house can become two legs can become a word can become yellow. Unlike metonymy in poetry, which still leads to a metaphor or a symbol, the memory construed by a dream is concrete, which makes it all the more virtual, real but not actualised.

*I will dance (live) (shop) (stroll) so that every movement (payment) (step) I perform (walk), I never really perform (live) (pay) to the full, but interrupt with another movement (payment). I will not attempt to connect these interruptions. With the parts of my moving body (apartment)*

<sup>04</sup> The notion of prevision I owe to Liam Gillick, *Prevision: Should the future help the past?* See [http://www.unitednationsplaza.org/readingroom/Gillick\\_Prevision.pdf](http://www.unitednationsplaza.org/readingroom/Gillick_Prevision.pdf)



■ BADco. *Diderot's Nephew, Or Blood is Thicker than Water*, 2001,  
PHOTO: ART WORKSHOP LAZARETI

*(shop's architecture) (path) I won't form lines and planes; I will imagine that lines and planes have perpetually existed in this space (park). I will work (live) (shop) with (in) multiple (shop departments) parts of my body (apartment) simultaneously. I will not give in to inertia, but will impede it. I will not explore construction, but deconstruction of space into geometrical forms that strike me, speaking with contingency, from the exterior and motorise my body (habitation) (shopping). I will dance (pack my goods) (stroll) in the left-right-front-back directions, and in all combinations of those directions.*<sup>05</sup>

Substitution started at the entrance, where the performers were directing the audience into the theatre hall. Each one was describing a different space with a radically different architecture, according to the function of the space that the audience was supposed to see, or rather imagine: a shopping mall, a cultural centre, an underground railway, a housing project. They were not arguing, but rather complementing each other, or deviating in a conjunctive way of adding 'this... and then that...,' despite some funny matches or mismatches among their visions, or between these visions and the actual theatre hall we were standing in. By the end of that overture, the space had been overwritten and transcoded so many times that the audience could only have a generic memory of it. Perhaps the result was that kind of simultaneity or synchrony of images that is mobilised by new generic cities, which Rem Koolhaas has termed 'memories of memories: if not all memories at the same time, then at least an abstract, token memory'.<sup>06</sup> The same applies to a Dean Martin song, or a dialogue from Tarkovsky's *Stalker*, or an album of intimate photos of strangers. The memory or even nostalgia we might feel is actually a nostalgia for nostalgia, which isn't the same as recollecting the sensation of having had

<sup>05</sup> This text is the result of overlaying several texts performed in *Memories...*, where the words in brackets substitute each other in each of the texts.

<sup>06</sup> Quoted from the projection in *Memories...*

a sensation in the past, when you were affected by something. It is not a matter of loss or the victim-hood of ephemerality that performance takes pride in. In memory, time can slip into a future-past. Films and music, or some of their historical genres, but also home-media such as television, home-video, and photos, exercise that power of foresight, partaking in the sensorial, with no reference to the lived and the personal. I have never been in the 1950s or to the Grand Canyon, but I can evoke the way it feels. Did you read Karl May when you were a child?

'Give me a problem' spells out as: 'Give me a concept, then!', precisely because the concept is not given as a regulative idea or a proposition for the state of affairs or the possibilities of knowing. For instance, there is no pursuit of the essence of memory, or of our capacity of inferring about it. 'The concept is the contour, the configuration, the constellation of an event to come', Deleuze and Guattari wrote (WP: 32), because it extracts an event from the existing situation and sets up a new event at the same time: a crosscutting of a new situation. The conceptual methodology in choreographic practice usually assumes working out certain concepts that have been borrowed from a meta-linguistic discourse of theory (cf. 'language', 'text', 'deconstruction', 'becoming', 'body without organs', etc.). But for BADco., concepts are never represented, they are the events of problems, the expressive concepts. The construction amounts to invisible procedures, providing occasions for the spectator to make connections. Procedures are never demonstrated as knowledge that is aware of itself. For instance, when Krešimir Milkić and Sergej Pristaš perform a refracted dialogue of answers in *Memories...*, which act as questions generating new questions, we don't know that they are not talking to each other, that the questions are invented on the spot, as a consequence of answers obtained in a previously conducted interview. This 'disjunctive synthesis' is probably also at work in their movements: the performers pull out opposite points or strokes of lines in an often contradictory motion. Movement doesn't separate from the body or lead beyond it; instead,



■ BADco. *Man.Chair*, 2000,  
PHOTO: RATKO MAVAR

the body is glued to it, as a delayed tracking volume of the body in space. The text on the screen reads: *The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function.*

These connections necessarily pass through affections and perceptions, but what is expressed is not the chain of many causes, the destination of which should be the target of analysis/exegesis by the spectator, but the power of thinking, equal to the power of existing in the spectator: renewed or expressed. 'Give me a concept' screams out for:

#### GIVE ME AN AUDIENCE!

We might even start a new text here, one that would concentrate solely on the way in which the space and the audience are constitutive for BADco.; or maybe it is the reverse? The etymology of theatre defines it as a show established by having a witness in the audience (*teatron*). Nowadays the role of 'reception' has been widely stretched to include the notions of 'spectatorship', which emphasises the scopical regime of perception, and 'participation', which overstates the social part to be rehearsed. I do not exaggerate by claiming that with BADco. it is neither a matter of participation nor of activation. The audience is being constituted, or rather implicated. *Solo Me* (2003), a virtual duet of two actual intertwining solos, unfolds in a square arena of audience. The auditorium isn't just a frame, it is a tactile springboard for movement, a mirror of glances to exchange, a recorder of ears to be whispered in. Nikolina Pristaš and Pravdan Devlahović have developed a manner of approaching the audience by offering them something they didn't ask for. Nikolina stops before any spectator and starts snapping her fingers: 'What does it mean?'

With Nikolina still snapping her fingers, the woman replies:

'I don't know.'

Nikolina responds by snapping her fingers once again from the opposite direction:

'I don't know either, but here it comes again.' Addressing as an act dissolves and becomes a

cynical provocation, hijacking the audience. It implicates them in a kind of co-composition. In *FleshDance* (2004), the audience is sitting at an intimidatingly close distance from a wide white wall. Watching the three dancers using movement to hinge the horizontal (floor) and vertical surface (wall) can dismantle the organism in favour of the body, of flesh and nerve, only if the gaze acts as a camera: literally framing and de-framing a composition of figures, body parts, or wave-flows, traversing the tension between the bone and the flesh.

Having so far only suggested a conditioning between the audience and spatial set-up, a careful analysis of spaces, their uses, and spatialisation in BADco.'s projects would be needed still. However, a principle can be established: partly due to the fact of not having a regular hosting theatre, BADco. is always migrating within its own city. This deprivation enforces an affirmative, proactive approach. Instead of getting bored (and boring others) with a critical routine question: 'What is the readymade dispositif of the situation we are invited to?' or 'How should the territory be de-territorialized (and re-territorialized)?' – BADco. has integrated space as the first component into a situation where transformation should issue from.

*Deleted Messages* (2005) plays up the audience involvement in space to an extreme proportion: there's nothing to thematise, everything to include! A discreetly delineated territory is inhabited by both the performers and the audience, which simulates a quarantine (the performance usually takes place in abandoned shipyards or factories). The system where each performer performs his or her own material within a pre-given framework of five parameters (the genetic matrix which designates the type of movement, space, manner, image, and relation towards people and objects in space was imported from *Funktionen* by the German choreographer Thomas Lehmen) encourages exchanges and mutual infections among the materials/performers. The particular meets

the singular: while the performers, starting from their own particular movement/action materials, are heading towards the genesis of a shared code (all five parameters shared by all the performers) – as Niklas Luhmann would claim that only complexity (of mutations) can reduce complexity (leading to a new code) – the audience is organising itself by moving about the space at will. The interaction between self-organisation (operation + observation of the audience) and 'soft' control (surveillance through screening all movements as the collective behaviour of swarm intelligence) gives birth to singular contacts. Here, approaching the audience means investigating the collective/singular behaviour with regard to attention. There is a political sense in identifying attention with response: if 'attending' is translated as 'responding', then responsibility becomes less of a duty and more of an ability to respond. If BADco. engages in a politics of attention, then it is identifying attention with a degree of power expressed in one's capacity/disposition to be affected (acted upon) in plenty of ways.

#### AESTHETICALLY UNBURDENED

The fact that BADco. is sometimes regarded as a theatre collective, and other times as a dance company, can be accounted for by a lack of burden of questions in the Western legacy of modernism, a certain de-linking from Western modernism and its colonial discourse by many experimental art practices in the former Yugoslavia. By trying to explain the function and language of choreography in BADco.'s performances I arrived at the notion of 'aesthetic burden'. Such questions as 'why do you dance?' and 'why do you dance this' or 'like this', were often addressed to BADco., implying that 'this' be read in comparison with a style or idiom, an arrest of image on which to hook a meaning or conceptual determination of any kind. When the answers seem unsatisfactory – because 'this is like Forsythe' or 'this is conceptual dance' does not reveal the operation of this choreography – the very function of choreography in its mimetic



■ BADco. *1 poor and one 0*, 2008,  
PHOTO: MARC TWAIN



■ BADco. *FleshDance*, 2004,  
PHOTO: TOMISLAV MEDAK

logic is questioned. 'My movement adequates an idea' (adequates isn't the same as translate or exemplify), it poses a problem, I paraphrase Nikolina Pristaš, dancer and choreographer from BADco. Does this entail instrumentalising choreography against its autonomy? Does it mean rethinking and practicing choreography as an instrument to pose and solve problems, which wouldn't only be specific to dance, but would go beyond the discipline?

The choreography is called *Changes* (2006) by Nikolina Pristaš and BADco., and entails the transformation of environments of limited visibility that the audience is part of. Being physically part of it – as in a homogeneous purple block of light – means being implicated in the problem that this performance poses: being part of the relationship between parasites and environment. According to Michel Serres, for a parasite to seize control, it has to clear the space of other parasites; it needs to eradicate noise for the message to pass through silence. Serres's 'parasite' is a trope for Pristaš to first pose a specifically choreographic problem, but in such a way that it then immediately transmutes into a political concern. The problem addresses the double articulation of noise and message, or more specifically dance, noise and gesture in movement. In this choreography dancing develops through constant fluctuation between gestures and noise, or those other movements that tend to obscure the channel of communication. As Pristaš describes, at one point dance is just humming in the space (the word 'noise' in Serbo-Croatian isn't just the antonym of 'sound', the way Cage puts it, but also means 'humming'). Figures merge with the environment, constituting a shimmering background in magenta light. Dancers spin in pirouettes for 4 minutes 33 seconds and longer. Movements as noise don't produce cognitive meaning, but have intensity and effect.

Parallel to the dancing, a voice-over delivers a stream of text, a verbal channel through which various anecdotes and observations spin around the fable about the ant and the grasshopper, about labour and leisure, work and laziness.



■ Public presentation in the framework of *Shared Space - 5 years of BADco.*, Zagreb, 2005,  
PHOTO: IVANA IVKOVIĆ

These stories expand diagrammatically as the fable-parasite devours them; one of them is the famous anti-May 1968 speech by the leader of French ants (clearly, Sarkozy). While the voice-over runs as a smooth message, dance physically labours in the space. At a certain moment, a dancer speaks the following text:

"I am not a charismatic person. I am a hard worker, a pragmatic and a good ant. I beat all my competitors with work, love and kindness. My message to my rivals is that they can fight against me only with more work, love and kindness. All those poor fellows cannot knock down what I can build. The ant tried to persuade the cricket: I am the humblest ant in the world. There are not many like that. You show me another one in the ant-hill who works as much as I do and who is willing to sacrifice 16 hours a day and 363 days a year like me. I don't think there are many like that. You tell me if you know one if you are claiming that there is such an ant. Inside me emotions are not dead, I am not crude, pragmatic and a politician, sterile and castrated. I am still an ant."

This touching portrait of the dancer as a hardworking ant echoes what Andrew Hewitt pointed out in his brilliant theory of 'social choreography' – the dark side of the ideology of freedom operating in dance, or how the modern dance subject who experiences her truth in her own body becomes the best workforce, always ready for exploitation under the banner of experience. To pose the problem of labour and leisure in dance, *Changes* explores movement in its efficiency of communication, and its opacity of meaning. *Changes* is a choreography that instrumentalises its own means for positing a problem that might not only concern the discipline of dance. But to do that, it must dissociate itself from a certain modernist notion of dance and its aesthetic burden. Symptomatically, the opacity of *Changes* earned such labels as being conceptual with too much dancing, or the contrary, of being 'under-rehearsed', paying too little attention to the

body. This criticism fails to understand that this messy, nervous and hurried movement without idiomatic unity or signature, is indifferent to aesthetic demands. The choreography of *Changes* is simply aesthetically unburdened.

Unburdening from the principle of the aesthetic in Western dance demands the right of dance to denaturalise. This calls for many points of resistance, resistance to the natural, free&creative, to fluency and effortlessness, to entertaining a necessary relation to form, to the self-actualisation of the dancer, but also the self-actualisation of her community of spectators. All these could perhaps be subsumed under the mimetic logic of image, vision and visibility, as well as clarity, understanding, and judgment. Perhaps choreographing community ought to be rethought as choreographing an assembly, where the theatre dispositif equals the parliamentary, representational procedures for assembling. There are many ways of gathering, and choreography must explore conditions for spectators to construct their positions and perspectives in the situation. BADco.'s performances are choreographies in that sense. It will never suffice to approach them from a medium-specific perspective, trying to locate the 'what's contemporary' interest of theatre or dance about them, because this is simply not what they sell. Instead, they give the audience a problem to engage with, and this involves experimentation and work on both sides. To conclude these notes, I would like to stress that what distinguishes BADco. from many contemporaries with whom they share intellectual affinity and sophistication, is a political confidence in the intellectual and sensorial capacities of the spectators. Zero cynicism – quiet, spirited force. ¶





■ Heads, 1960,  
PHOTO: VLADIMIR PETEK

¶ 9 February 1937,  
born in Sombor,  
Yugoslavia.

**1956–1967**

¶ *Employment Action*,  
working as a clerk in  
a bank.

**1960**

¶ *Heads*, first  
photographic series.  
PHOTO: VLADIMIR PETEK

**1962**

¶ *Showing the  
Elle Magazine*,  
performance, Zagreb.

¶ *Death*, first film.

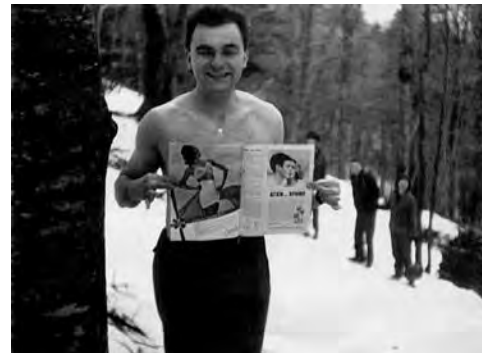
**1963**

¶ 1<sup>st</sup> Genre Film  
Festival/GEFF, Zagreb,  
film screenings, *Death*  
and *The Forenoon of a  
Faun*. 1<sup>st</sup> prize for *The  
Forenoon of a Faun*,  
2<sup>nd</sup> prize for *Death*.

**1964**

¶ *The Trilogy: Direction  
(Stevens–Duke), Blue  
Rider (Godard–Art) and  
Circle (Jutkević–Count)*,  
experimental 16 mm  
documentaries.

¶ Belgrade  
performances: *Suitcase*,  
*Trio*, *Hands*, *Posing*,  
*Filming the film  
Straight Line*, *Filming the film  
Circle*; *Filming the film  
Blue Rider*.



■ *Showing the Elle Magazine*, 1962, PHOTO: IVICA HRIPKO



■ *Happ our Happening*, 1967,  
PHOTO: MIHOVIL PANSINI

**1965**

¶ 2<sup>nd</sup> GEFF, film  
screening, *Blue Rider*,  
gold medal.

**1966**

¶ *Ella*, experimental  
16 mm film.

**1967**

¶ *Happ our-happening*,  
happening, Basement  
scene *Pavao  
Markovac*, Zagreb (in  
collaboration with  
Hrvoje Šercar and Ivo  
Lukas).

**1969**

¶ *T*, experimental  
documentary,  
8 mm film.

¶ *Peeping Tom*,  
feature, experimental  
35 mm film.



■ GEFF, 1970, DESIGN: MIHAJLO ARSOVSKI

**1970**

¶ *Fall on Stage*, action,  
Workers' University,  
Moša Pijade (part  
of the 4<sup>th</sup> GEFF  
programme), Zagreb.

¶ *Hair-cutting and  
Shaving*, action,  
Academy for Theatre,  
Film, Radio and  
Television, Belgrade.

¶ *The Sand of New  
Belgrade Part I* (in  
*Marina Abramović's  
atelier*), *The Sand of  
New Belgrade Part II*  
(in the open, object  
Danja Mirković),  
happenings, Belgrade.

¶ 4<sup>th</sup> GEFF, main prize.



■ *Heads*, 1970, PHOTO: JUAN-CARLOS FERRO DUQUE



■ With scenewriter Branko Vučićević  
at the opening of exhibition *Tomislav*,  
SKC Gallery, Belgrade, 1976



■ *Streaking*, Belgrade, 1971

**1971**

¶ *Streaking*, action,  
Belgrade.

¶ *Hair-cutting and  
Shaving II*, action,  
Academy for Theatre,  
Film, Radio and  
Television, Belgrade.

¶ *Family Film I*,  
documentary,  
8 mm film.

**1972**

¶ Acting in *Plastic Jesus*  
– a 35 mm feature film  
by Lazar Stojanović.  
The film is banned and  
those involved are  
harassed and sued.

**1973**

¶ *Family Film II*,  
documentary, Cara  
Dušana 11, Belgrade.



**1976**

¶ Graduated from the  
Academy for Theatre,  
Film, Radio and  
Television, Belgrade.

¶ First solo exhibition  
*Tomislav*, Gallery of  
the Student Cultural  
Centre (SKC), Belgrade  
(curated by Ješa  
Denegri).

**1977**

¶ Film retrospective,  
*The Films of Tomislav  
Gotovac*, Centre for  
Multimedia Research,  
within the programme  
of Yugoslavian  
Experimental Film,  
Zagreb.

¶ *Glenn Miller 1 (High  
school playground 1)*,  
experimental  
documentary,  
16 mm film.

“He has behind him today a work that, in its approaches and achievements, is involved in both the lateral currents and in the mainstream of the domestic art scene, and the art scene much wider afield. He is at once one of the living legends of the Zagreb, Croatian and one-time Yugoslav alternative culture, but he is also – however much this might offend someone – one of the elite landmarks (in the sense used by Radoslav Putar) in the new art history of the milieu. But he has also managed, investing himself without any reserves, managed to prove himself to himself, with himself, in himself, whatever anyone else thinks about him, good or evil.”

Ješa Denegri, “The Individual Mythology of Tomislav Gotovac”, in the monograph *Tomislav Gotovac*, Croatian Film Clubs' Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2003

■ *Reading the  
Newspapers;  
Listening  
to the Radio*, 1980,  
PHOTOS: SILVESTAR  
KOLBAS



**1978**

¶ *New artistic practice  
1966–1978*, group  
exhibition, Gallery of  
Contemporary Art,  
Zagreb.

¶ *New Tendencies 6*,  
group exhibition,  
Centre for culture and  
information, Zagreb.

¶ *Films of Tomislav  
Gotovac*, screening,  
Dom Śródownsk  
Twórczych w Łódźi,  
Międzynarodowy  
artystyczny, Łódź.



■ *Action 100 (Whistling)*, 1979, The Square  
of the Republic, part of the 10<sup>th</sup> Music  
Biennale programme, Zagreb, 12 May,  
12–13 hrs, PHOTO: SINIŠA KNAFLEC

**1979**

¶ *Works and Words –  
Experiment 79*, group  
exhibition, De Appel,  
Amsterdam.

¶ *Reading the  
Newspaper Daily  
Mail*, action, *Marina  
Abramović/Ulay Studio*,  
Amsterdam,  
20 December.

¶ *The Third Avant-  
Garde Film Festival*,  
screening, London.

¶ *Tomislav Gotovac,  
Films*, screening, Centre  
Georges Pompidou,  
Salle de cinema du  
Musée, Paris.

**1980**

¶ *Collages*, solo  
exhibition, Museum  
of Contemporary Art,  
Zagreb.

¶ *Tomislav Gotovac:  
Watching Television*,  
action-object, Zagreb,  
8 June.

¶ *Tomislav Gotovac,  
Films*, screening,  
Netherlands  
Filmmuseum,  
Amsterdam.

¶ *Reading the  
Newspaper*, action,  
Gallery Nova, Zagreb,  
12 February.

¶ *Listening to the Radio*,  
action, Gallery Nova,  
Zagreb, 1 April.

¶ *New Art Practice  
in Yugoslavia*, group  
exhibition, Erwing  
Gallery, George Paton  
Gallery, Melbourne.

¶ *Tomislav Gotovac,  
Films*, screening,  
Museum of Modern  
Art, Oxford.



**1981**

¶ *Lying Naked on the  
Asphalt, Kissing the  
Asphalt (Zagreb, I  
Love You!)*, homage to  
Howard Hawks and his  
film *Hatari!*, action-  
object, The Square of  
the Republic, Zagreb,  
13 November,  
12:00–12:07 hrs.

¶ *Telephoning*, action-  
object, Gallery of the  
Student Cultural  
Centre (SKC), Belgrade,  
5 April.

¶ *Hair-cutting and  
Shaving in Public  
Space III* (homage to  
Carl Theodore Dreyer,  
the film *Jean d'Arc*  
and *Maria Falconetti*),  
action-object,  
assistant: Zora Cazi-  
Gotovac, Trg Petra  
Preradovića, Zagreb,  
6 June, at noon.

**1983**

¶ *Other Side, European  
Avant-Garde Cinema  
1960–1980*, screening,  
American Federation of  
Arts, New York.



■ *Hair-cutting and Shaving in Public Space*  
(homage to Carl Theodor Dreyer, the film *Jean  
d'Arc* and *Maria Falconetti*), 1981,  
PHOTO: IVAN POSAVEC

**1984**

¶ *Death Mask +  
Cyrillic, Mummy, Sickie,  
Hammer and Red Star,  
Chimney Sweep, Street  
Cleaner, Sandwich-man  
with advertisement  
for Dinamo, Superman,  
Santa Claus*, actions,  
Republic Square,  
Zagreb.

**1986**

¶ *Retrospective of  
documents 1956–1986 –  
Paranoia View Art*, solo  
exhibition, Trešnjevka  
Community Centre  
Gallery, Zagreb.

¶ *Retrospective of  
documents 1956–1986  
– Paranoia View Art:  
Final Hair-cutting and  
Shaving* (assistant:  
Zora Cazi-Gotovac),  
*Sending all art and  
public cultural workers  
to three fuckin' hells*,  
action at the opening  
of the exhibition,  
Trešnjevka Community  
Centre Gallery, Zagreb,  
13 June.



**1989**

¶ *Avant-Gardes  
Yougoslaves*, group  
exhibition, Musée  
des Beaux-Arts,  
Carcassonne; Musée  
d' Art, Toulon; Musée d'  
l' Abbaye Sainte Croix,  
Les Sables d'Olonne.

¶ *Acting in Pretty  
Women Pass Through  
City*, feature film  
directed by Željimir  
Žilnik.

“The structure of *Faun* was grammatical. It was like a Jonas Mekas manifest of the underground, as a manifest offers... to make something which would be like a flag. I gave it the title *The Forenoon of a Faun* so that it could be that, but so that it was considerably different from Mallarme’s and Debussy’s *The Afternoon of a Faun* which I loved. It was, in fact, a remembrance of them. And to show it was nothing more than a movie which I watch in cinemas, I put Godard’s sound track in the first part, and George Pal’s sound track in the third part. And the author was in fact thinking of the film. And by putting morning, that in fact was longing, desire as at that time I couldn’t go out into the city in the mornings on ordinary working days, because I was working from seven to two in the afternoon. So that I didn’t even know Zagreb during those hours. My Zagreb was the afternoon, evening, night.”

“It is all a movie”, *A conversation with Tomislav Gotovac* by Goran Trbuljak, Hrvoje Turković, in the magazine *Film*, № 10-11, 1977, reprinted in the catalogue *Tomislav Gotovac*, Croatian Film Clubs’ Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2003



**1990**

¶ *Rhetorical Image*, group exhibition, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.

**1991**

¶ *Equality, fraternity, liberty, fuck it (the fall of Bastille)*, performance, HDLU, Zagreb, 14 July.

**1994**

¶ *Installation and Performances*, solo exhibition, Franklin Furnace Archive, New York.

**1996**

¶ *Tribute to Billie Holiday*, performance, KIC and Forum Gallery, Zagreb, 13 June.

**1998**

¶ *The Forenoon of a Faun at Avant-Garde Films and Videos from Central Europe*, screening, London.

¶ *Cityscape*, 33rd Zagreb Salon, Klovićevi dvori, Zagreb.



**1995 – 2005**

¶ *Action Weekend Art: Hallelujah the Hill*, with Ivana Keser & Aleksandar Battista Ilić, Zagreb.

**1999**

¶ *Body and the East*, group exhibition, Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana.

¶ *No Drugs, No Death*, performance, Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana.

**2000**

¶ *Glenn Miller 2000*, experimental documentary, 35mm film.

¶ *What, How & for Whom, on the occasion of 152nd anniversary of Communist Manifesto*, group exhibition, HDLU, Zagreb.

¶ *Recollection of Hoagy Carmichel*, experimental film.

¶ *Feelings I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII*, series of experimental films.

**2001**

¶ *Project Broadcasting: dedicated to Nikola Tesla*, group exhibition, Technical Museum, Zagreb.

¶ *Ausgeträumt*, group exhibition, Secession, Vienna.



■ *Foxy Mister*, 2002, PHOTO: TOMISLAV ČUVELJAK

**2002**

¶ *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon / Stars and Soldiers*, performance with Aleksandar Battista Ilić and Ivana Keser, Stadt kino, Basel.

**2002**

¶ *Dead Man Walking*, experimental film.

¶ *Here, Tomorrow*, group exhibition, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb.

¶ *In Search of Balkania*, group exhibition, Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz.

¶ *Misfits*, group exhibition, Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien, Berlin.



**2003**

¶ *Utopia Station*, group exhibition, 50th Venice Biennale, Venice.

¶ The Croatian Film Clubs’ Association and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb publish a monograph on Tomislav Gotovac’s work.

**2004**

¶ *Tomislav Gotovac*, solo exhibition, Le Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris.

**2005**

¶ Tomislav Gotovac changes his name to Antonio Gotovac Lauer.

¶ *Antonio Gotovac Lauer Birthday Performance*, Gallery Nova, Zagreb, 9 February.



**2006**

¶ *Art East Collection 2000 + 23*, group exhibition, Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana.

¶ *Kontakt ... works from the Collection of Erste Bank Group*, group exhibition, MUMOK, Vienna.

¶ *Steel Net*, solo exhibition, Studio Josip Račić, Zagreb.

¶ *Romantischer Konzeptualismus*, group exhibition, Bawag Foundation, Vienna.

**2008**

¶ *As soon as I open my eyes I see a movie*, group exhibition, Museum of Contemporary Art, Warsaw.

¶ *Krajiška 29*, solo exhibition, Gallery Waldinger, Osijek.



■ *Dead Man Walking*, 2002



■ Ivan Posavec, photos taken after Tom’s death in his apartment, Krajiška 29, Zagreb, 2010

“... his talent lies precisely in this ability to give accidental, incidental phenomena a systematic value. This is a feature of his relation to the world as such, the way he experiences the world cognitively, the way in which he orders the world around him and establishes his own position within it, and that is why it is present in everything he does, in his whole life: not only in his films, but also in his ‘performances’, his photographic work, his collages, his personal records... In contrast to the culturally standardised ways and forms of explaining life’s phenomena, Gotovac concentrates on dispersed, ‘accidental’ details and discovers that they are much more important, richer and more diverse than the purposefully emphasized details which are customarily held to be important and which usually attract our attention. According to Gotovac it is precisely this personal all-encompassing principle of systematising (structuring) all the casual information he finds important (which he calls *Paranoia-View Art* somewhat self-ironically, but convincingly), all that which offers a fresh understanding of the world, which makes him himself (and others by artistic proxy) more sensitive to the phenomena we have so much difficulty in addressing sensitively and emotionally in the conventional order of our culture and within well trodden paths of our own lives.”

Hrvoje Turković, “Tomislav Gotovac: Observation as Participation”, in the monograph *Tomislav Gotovac*, Croatian Film Clubs’ Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2003





■ *Diderot's Nephew, Or Blood is Thicker than Water*, 2001, PHOTO: ART WORKSHOP LAZARETI



■ *Solo Me*, 2002, PHOTO: LJUBO GAMULIN

Nameless Association of Authors



■ *Deleted Messages*, 2004, PHOTO: BERND UHLIG



■ *Memories are Made of This... performance notes*, 2006, PHOTO: TOMISLAV MEDAK



■ In rehearsal for *The League of Time*, Zagreb, 2009, PHOTO: TOMISLAV MEDAK



■ *SEMI-INTERPRETATIONS or how to explain contemporary dance to an undead hare*, 2010, PHOTO: LOVRO RUMIHA

2000

¶ BADco. is established by Goran Sergej Pristaš (dramaturge), Ivana Sajko (playwright), Nikolina Pristaš (dancer/choreographer) and Pravdan Devlahović (dancer/choreographer).  
¶ Performance *Man. Chair*, a collective project by the company.

2001

¶ Philosopher Tomislav Medak joins the company.  
¶ Performance *Diderot's Nephew, Or Blood is Thicker than Water*, directed by Goran Sergej Pristaš.  
¶ Nikolina Pristaš, Pravdan Devlahović and Aleksandra Janeva Imfeld make their first authorial work, twenty-minute choreographies collectively titled *2three4. 2* is presented in London as part of the Aerowaves selection, and wins first prize at Julidans in Amsterdam. *4* wins the Grand Prix in Luxembourg.  
¶ BADco. performs *2three4* and *Man.Chair* in Belgrade where they meet with young theorists associated with the performing arts magazine/project TkH-Walking Theory, specifically Bojana Cvejić, Ana Vujanović and Ksenija Stevanović.

2002

¶ Double solo choreography *Solo Me*, by Nikolina Pristaš and Pravdan Devlahović, a project that had its premiere at the international festival BIT Teatergarasjen (Bergen, Norway).  
¶ Performance *Persen*, directed and choreographed by Aleksandra Janeva Imfeld.  
¶ The *Watt+Eau* project, a collaboration between BADco. and the choreographers' platform *ekscena*, brings together choreographers and dancers with students of dramaturgy from the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb in the town of Grožnjan, Istria for a ten-day workshop.

2003

¶ Ana Kreitmeyer steps into *Diderot's Nephew, Or Blood is Thicker than Water* as a replacement for Aleksandra Janeva Imfeld.  
¶ Pravdan Devlahović's solo choreography *Walk This Way*.  
¶ Performance *RibCage*, a collective project by the company.  
¶ Performance *Mass (for Election Day Silence)*, directed by Ivana Sajko.  
¶ Ivana Sajko leaves the company.



■ BADco. *RibCage*, 2003, PHOTO: IGOR KRPAN

2004

¶ Dramaturge Ivana Ivković and dancer/choreographer Ana Kreitmeyer join the company.  
¶ Performance *Deleted Messages*, a collective project by the company.  
¶ Choreography *FleshDance* by Nikolina Pristaš.

“The basis for BADco.'s work is both theoretical and conceptual; about art and democracy, about borders and the subtle codes we send and receive. But what makes *[Deleted Messages]* a somewhat utopian experience is the feeling of living here and now. Take responsibility.”

Anna Ångström, *Dance with a genuine correspondence with the public*, Svenska Dagbladet, September 2005

2005

¶ A year of research marking five years of collective work culminating in a ten-day event *Shared Space* showcasing work by many of BADco.'s collaborators from different fields – Goran Petercol, Silvio Vujčić, D.B. Indoš, Marko Sančanin, Helge Hinteregger, Ivan Marušić Klif, Simon Bogojević Narath, Ivana Sajko, Aleksandra Janeva Imfeld, Oliver Imfeld – alongside performances from the company's repertoire, an exhibition and public discussions.  
¶ *Shared Space*, the first collaboration with Lovro Rumiha, a young student of theatre production.  
¶ *Corpositions* – a choreographic research project led by Nikolina Pristaš, bringing together a young generation of female choreographers.

¶ Publication of the four-channel DVD *Deleted Messages*.

¶ Members of BADco. are among the founders of PAF – Performing Arts Forum, Saint-Erme-Outre-et-Ramecourt, France.

2006

¶ Public space dialogue performance *Protest*, by Nikolina Pristaš and Ivana Ivković.  
¶ *Negotiation* – a dialogue performance within the framework of the *Dictionary of War* project, by Goran Sergej Pristaš and Ivana Ivković.  
¶ Performance *Memories are Made of This... performance notes*, directed by Goran Sergej Pristaš.



¶ Pravdan Devlahović's solo choreography *Gravidation*.

2007

¶ Dancer/choreographer Zrinka Užbinec joins the company.  
¶ Choreographic quintet *Changes*, by Nikolina Pristaš.  
¶ Research project *Symmetries – On Object Oriented Theater*, led by Tomislav Medak.  
¶ BADco. takes part in the performance *Art in the age of Knauf*, with collaborators from *Maska* (Ljubljana) and *TkH-Walking Theory* (Belgrade) at Documenta 12, Kassel, Germany.

¶ BADco. is one of the partners in the collaborative project platform *The Theatre* initiated by the architect Tor Lindstrand and the choreographer Mårten Spångberg, from the International Festival at Steirischer Herbst Festival in Graz, Austria.

¶ BADco. is one of the partners in *Black/North SEAS*, a three-and-a-half year European cultural platform initiated by Intercult (Stockholm), and co-organised by KIT (Copenhagen), Sfumato Theatre Laboratory (Sofia), Arts Council England (UK), Hotel Proforma (Copenhagen), Tromsø Kommune and the Treaty of Utrecht Cultural Programme.

2008

¶ Performance *1 poor and one 0*, directed by Tomislav Medak and Goran Sergej Pristaš.

“This egalitarianism of performing, directing and dramaturgy seems especially important because it presents one of the numerous ways in which the team of the performance fights for the scenic competence of each authorial personality, or rather for the undeniable scenicity of each embodiment.”

Nataša Govedić, *Speed of Light or Slowness of Hands*, Novi list, January 2009

2009

¶ Publication of the dvd *Whatever*, presenting text on the work of the company and projects by its members made outside of the framework of theatre production: a small-scale live intervention in public space, a performance-lecture, video work, a presentation of software-in-development, gallery exhibits, photography and the like.



¶ Performance *The League of Time*, a collective project by the company.

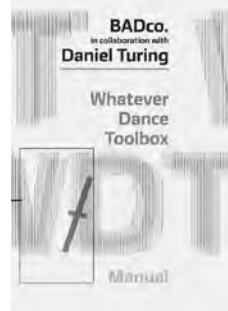
2010

¶ Producer Lovro Rumiha joins the company.  
¶ Choreography *Semi-interpretations or how to explain contemporary dance to an undead hare*, co-authored by Nikolina Pristaš and Goran Sergej Pristaš.  
¶ *Point of Convergence*, choreographic duet by Ana Kreitmeyer and Zrinka Užbinec.  
¶ BADco. members join other artists on the *Black/North SEAS* tour through Turkish cities Istanbul, Akçakoca, Ünye, Çamlıhemşin, Hopa, ending in Batumi, Georgia.  
¶ A ten-day laboratory brings together artists from the 6MIL collective and members of BADco. on the occasion of ten years of the company.

¶ BADco. is co-organiser of LABO21 – European Platform for Interdisciplinary Research on Artistic Methodologies, a partner project by BADco. (Zagreb), BUDA Arts Center (Kortrijk), Laboratorium (Antwerp) and the University of Circus and Dance (Stockholm), with the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union.

2011

¶ Publication of *Whatever Dance Toolbox* – a set of software tools designed for the analysis and development of dance and movement, developed in collaboration with Daniel Turing.



¶ *Algorithmic Reflections of Choreography: From Choreography to Software and Back* – a four-day international event comprising a symposium and workshops.

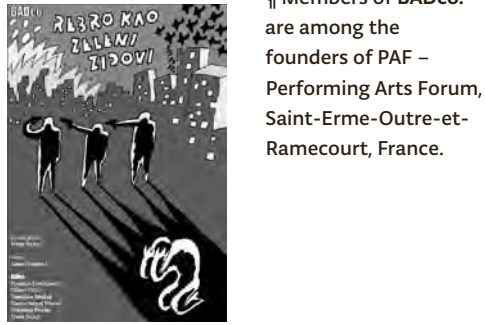
BADco.



20



SOLO ME



■ BADco. *1 poor and one 0*, 2008, PHOTO: DAMIR ŽIŽIĆ

21



(...) the entire body of work created and performed by BADco., are close to being a turning point in the context of present-day performance; they are a shift away from semiotic agency towards the capacities of experience. This Zagreb-based group appears to have consolidated neither its form of performance nor its realm of content, or even its mode of production. Their assured, conscious ignorance of the context dominated by regimes of display, combined with an internal exegesis, or rather an elaborate care of the self, has made them develop an emancipated set of technologies of contemporaneity. The practice of BADco., which transforms this noun into a verb, largely owing to the way in which they are constantly reconsidering their collaboration, is a constant process of coding and recoding. Thus, the practicing of BADco., which is in no respect void of or free from aesthetic values, ideologies, form, etc., but is nevertheless emancipated, consists of elaborating a system of ethics: specific in expression or medium, yet general with respect to its applicability.

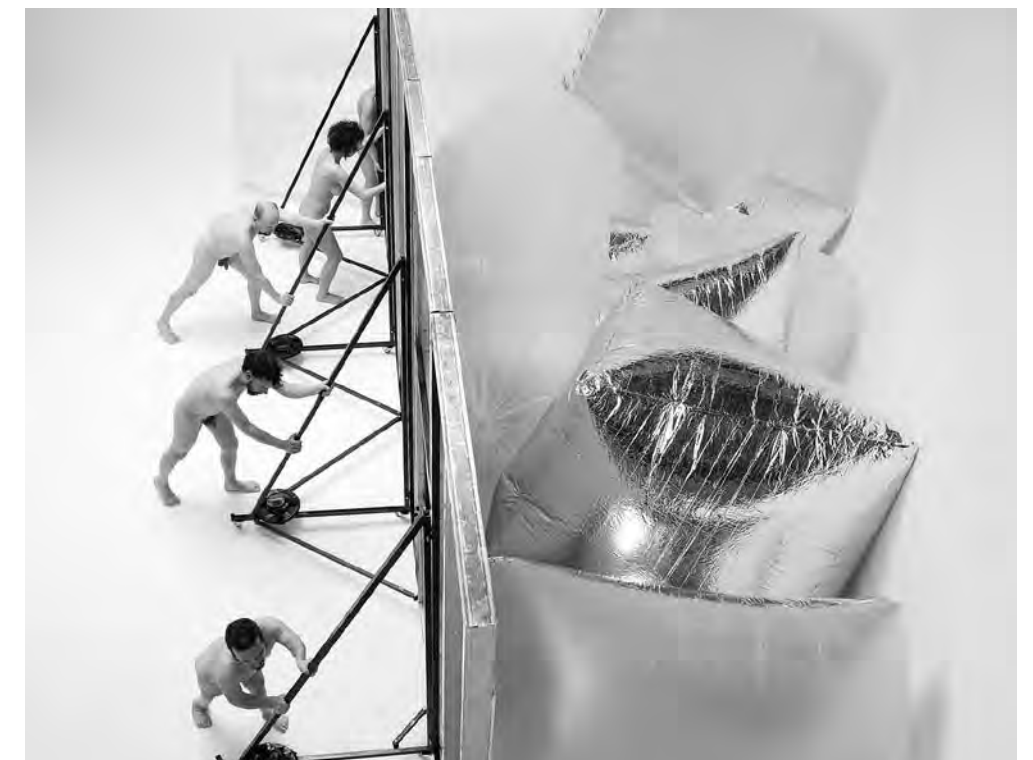
(...)



The different articulation of participation, or perhaps more adequately of attention, which is proposed in *Memories are Made of This... Performance notes*, implies new modes of subjectification, which are both political and existential. It is a kind of attention that shifts the perspective from defensive tendencies of structural allocation to a benevolent, heterogeneous allocation in dynamic resources, emphasizing the opportunity for a multiplicity of new modes of subjectification, which may apply to every engaged subject, independently of its hierarchical position, through equity rather than equality (which is a common watchword in theatre).

This differentiated mode of attention, combined with the insistence on multiplicity of experience in the used framework, addresses our understanding of privacy and its production/productivity, a privacy that can be understood both literally and metaphorically.

Mårten Spångberg, *Privacy in Accordance with "Memories are Made of This..."*, published in *Performance Research "On Choreography"*, Volume 13.1, March 2008



# List of Works • Floorplan Arsenale

## Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac

### The Forenoon of a Faun

1963, experimental documentary 16 mm film transferred to DVD, optical sound, b/w, 9 minutes  
CAMERA: Vladimir Petek & Tomislav Gotovac  
SCREENPLAY, DIRECTED, EDITING, PRODUCTION BY: Tomislav Gotovac  
Kinoklub Zagreb

This pioneering work of structuralist film stands as a manifesto of Gotovac's approach to art. The film embodies characteristic methods of his art practice such as: the appropriation of background sound from different sources (films, music, etc.); the consistent employment of consciously limited film/artistic procedures that structure the film/action; the reworking of cinematic ideas by classical film directors (such as Jean-Luc Godard and Howard Hawks) in a non-narrative structuralist language. The film was shot in three sequences using a static camera: the first shows a scene with patients on a hospital balcony and has a jazz soundtrack taken from the film *Vivre sa vie* by Jean-Luc Godard; the second zooms in on a detail of a peeling wall and the third zooms in and out at a city crossroads with pedestrians and cars, with the startling sound of a siren taken from the film *The Time-Machine* by George Pal. ¶

### S

1966, experimental documentary, 8 mm transferred to DVD, optical sound, b/w, 4 minutes  
CAMERA: Anđelko Habazin  
DIRECTED, PRODUCED BY: Tomislav Gotovac  
Kinoklub Zagreb

A male hand is leafing through a Swedish erotic magazine. There are city roofs in the background, and the camera zooms in on the naked female bodies. Again, a ready-made jazz soundtrack is an integral part of the work. The film reflects the author's interest in performing his own intimacy in a public space, one of the central themes of his future work. ¶

### Family Film I

1971, documentary, 8 mm transferred to DVD, no sound, b/w, 6 minutes  
SCREENPLAY, DIRECTED, CAMERA, EDITING, PRODUCED BY: Tomislav Gotovac

As we learn from the title, the film shows the artist and his lover at the start of their relationship. There is no script, no roles and no director. Technically, the work can be called 'a porn movie', but the equality of the partners, visible in the way they take turns in holding the camera and filming each other, is almost surprising in its mutual respect and uninhibited enjoyment. ¶

### Family Film II

1973, documentary, 16 mm film transferred to DVD, optical sound, b/w, 10 minutes  
CAMERA: Slobodan Šijan  
SCREENPLAY, DIRECTED, EDITING, PRODUCED BY: Tomislav Gotovac

The film is composed of a juxtaposition of several parts, almost as a triptych – it starts and ends with the lovers washing each other under the shower, while the central part takes place in a little room. But this time the filming is done by a third person, a 'neutral' and 'detached' observer is with them, and while the gentleness between the two partners is still evident, the sense of unrestrained joy and openness has gone. ¶

### Showing the Elle Magazine

1962/2011, series of 6 photographs,  
PHOTOS BY IVICA HRIPKO

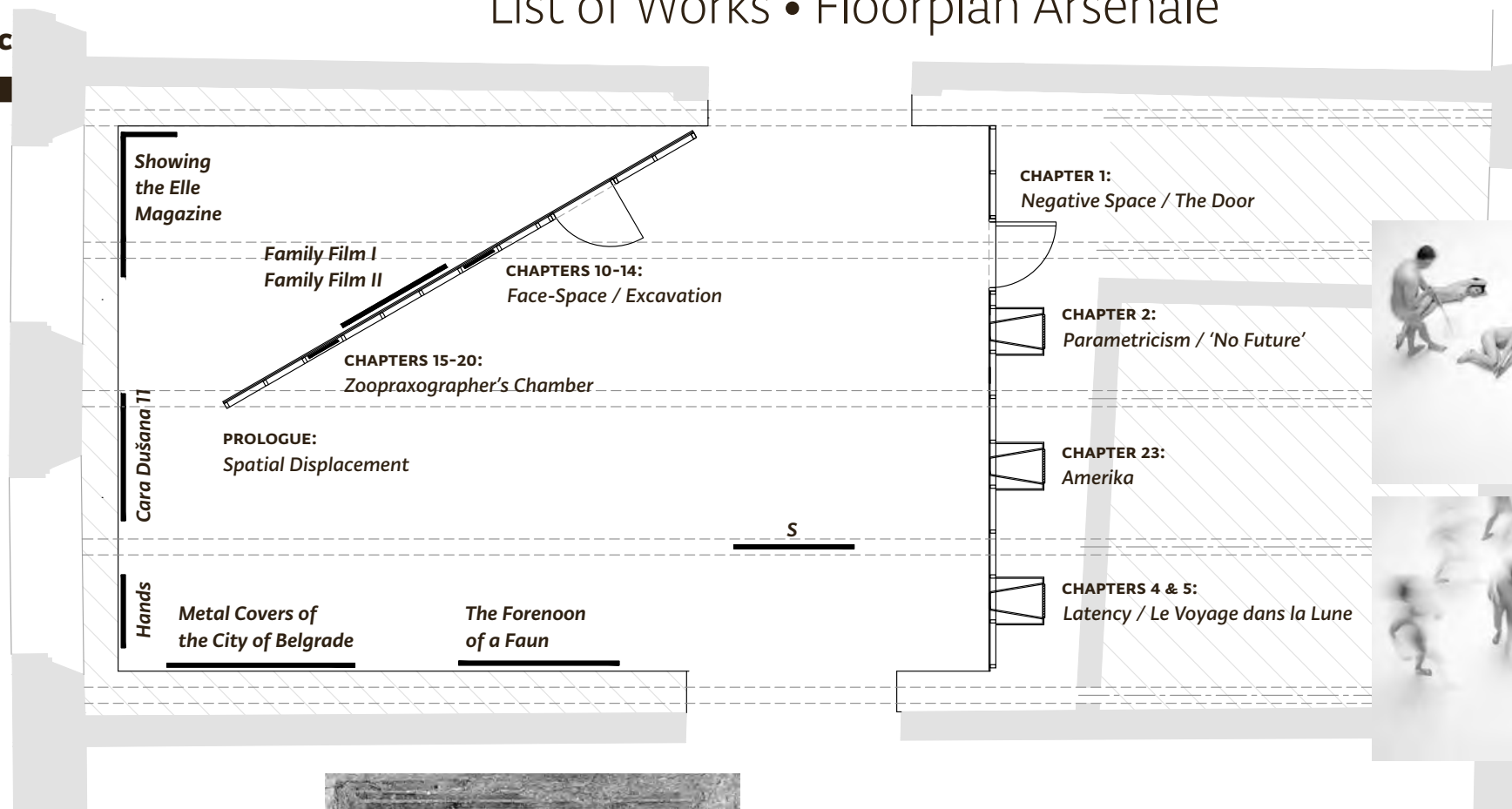
The series *Showing the Elle* is an important marker in Gotovac's performance-related work. It was the first public performance in which the artist used his own (semi)-naked body in a public space, a trademark of his future major performances. Performed at the popular Sijeme mountain, near Zagreb, *Showing the Elle* represents an early example of public performance in a local context. The medium of photography is not only used to document the performed action of showing the popular magazine to his friends and passersby, but he employs photography to direct the film by other stylistic means. ¶

### Hands

1964/2011, series of 3 photographs,  
PHOTOS BY PETAR BLAGOJEVIĆ-ARANDELOVIĆ

At the beginning of his career while he was still working as an amateur filmmaker, Gotovac was seldom in a position to make actual films, so he often used the medium of photography as a 'substitute' for film directing. *Hands* is an early series of photographic sequences which, along with the photo-series *Suitcase*, *Trio*, and *Posing*, all made in 1964 in Belgrade, emulates elements of performance, film and photography. Gotovac appears as a protagonist in these imaginary new-wave film stills, but he is not interested in disguise, narration or character play. *Hands* reveals the detail of the body – his hands interact and play a simple yet surprising game of hide and seek with the city. ¶

ALL WORKS COURTESY OF SARAH GOTOVAC



### Metal Covers of the City of Belgrade

1977/2011, series of 96 photographs,  
PHOTOS BY JUAN-CARLOS FERRO DUQUE

The series of photographs turns the omnipresent and yet almost invisible detail of metal street covers into strong visual signs that are indicative of Gotovac's method of reduction and repetition, of finding systems in unexpected, unforeseen circumstances. The series reflects his sensibility for obsessive visual collecting, a systematic catalogue of particular motifs of the surprising urban reality. ¶

### Cara Dušana II

1977/2011, series of 35 photographs,  
PHOTOS BY JUAN-CARLOS FERRO DUQUE

Meticulously organised and shot in a movie sequence characteristic of the artist's method, this series of photographs documents Gotovac's place of living in Belgrade from 1971 to 1979 while he was studying movie directing. ¶

The present times, ridden with the sustained crisis of capitalism, environmental catastrophes and the depletion of common resources, require a reordering of economic and political relations on a global scale. As is repeatedly echoed throughout our work: When there is not enough for everybody, there is no equitable order that can be negotiated. It can function only on the basis of active policing of differential entitlements and exclusions. Yet attempts to fathom the ongoing reordering of the global space and to imagine a different course of social development to the existing capitalist system run aground at the limits of representation of systemic totality and the fragmentation of agency within it. Even in the face of crass injustices, the collective capacity to imagine and project the common future remains captured in images, creating generalised desires, consumerist fragmentation of responsibility and a sense of public progress that are ultimately mobilised to sustain and maximise private profit. Our work reflects this conundrum using what's most immediate to us as theatre makers.

This work starts as a spatial gesture: an insertion of the outside space into the exhibition room. The back wall has been replicated in the space, and the non-space behind the original wall now populates the exhibition room. This non-space, found outside, might be any number of things – anything that can be imagined. For all we know it is a theatre scene, a stage – and this exhibition room might be just a backstage. But it's not quite that – it's a withdrawal of space, a double negativity: not quite this exhibition space, not quite a different place. Well, it could be anything that can be imagined, but many more things that cannot. Maybe a totality of global processes outside of this room that begs the question of how it can be represented.

This work endures as a temporal gesture: it records in images the comings and goings. Theatre, our line of work, always requires our presence. It cannot take place if we're not there. Imagine if we miss a flight! And here we remain in our absence. In recorded images – as you will too. And in images on screens you will see the presence of your absent fellow-visitors, just as you will perhaps witness the absence of your own presence. Become co-present in time with someone who is not with you in the space. The image is a time machine, a transport in time. It opens and forecloses the imagination of the future.

This work demands a scopic act: the much maligned capacity of images to capture our imagination and to supplant our sociality by its simulation is only commensurate with our capacity to always produce new images, new configurations and new disfigurements of images. Here it's no different. Produce images we did, attempted to create images differently we did. And, yet, things don't stop here. There seems to be something incomplete in images that coaxes out our action in the receptive act of viewing: our intent capacity to become captured, our passionate passivity in surrendering to our own hijacking, our engaged absorption in the intimacy of images. And it's not the sovereign, enlightened viewer that is the agent of this activity. Rather it's a beholder that loses her hold as she becomes immersed in an image and the image loses its clarity as she starts deciphering its detail, requiring a spiral of reading, a responsibility disturbed by the non-totalisable subject of the image.

## BADco.

### Responsibility for Things Seen:

#### Tales in Negative Space

2011, installation consisting of 7 segments:

- PROLOGUE: *Spatial Displacement*  
[replica of the back wall of the exhibition space] ¶
- CHAPTER 1: *Negative Space / The Door*  
[stage installation behind the door on the back wall, stage lighting] ¶
- CHAPTER 2: *Parametricism / 'No Future'*  
[photo film, b/w, loop] ¶
- CHAPTERS 4 & 5: *Latency / Le Voyage dans la Lune*  
[live video laid over pre-produced film, b/w] ¶
- CHAPTERS 10-14: *Face-Space / Excavation*  
[algorithmic film, real time editing of live video and pre-produced footage, b/w, interactive] ¶
- CHAPTERS 15-20: *Zoopraxographer's Chamber*  
[algorithmic film, real time editing of live video and pre-produced footage, b/w, interactive] ¶
- CHAPTER 23: *Amerika*  
[live processed video, b/w] ¶

COURTESY OF BADCO.

*Responsibility for Things Seen* is an evolving work, presented here in Venice as 'theatre by other means', consisting of the following elements that form an integral work:

- A door left open on the back wall of the exhibition space, suggesting an imaginary space behind.
- The replica of that same wall displaced into the exhibition space, letting the non-space outside into this room.
- Five video displays: three set behind the back wall and accessible through cutouts in the wall, and two on the displaced replica wall.
  - Three videos behind the back wall provide intimate cinematic accounts, each accessible only to one spectator at any one time. The first is a photo essay. The second is a mix of choreography of performers absent from the actual exhibition space and the inadvertent movement of exhibition visitors who are present. The third display shows a live camera shot processed by software subtracting or adding the human presence in the exhibition space.
  - Two interactive videos on the two replica wall displays show short cinematic narratives algorithmically edited in real time using pre-recorded material and live feed from cameras in the exhibition space.
- Intermittent choreographic interventions during the opening days of the Biennale. ¶

## Responsibility for Things Seen: Tales in Negative Space

# Dramaturgies *Of* Generosity

## The Theatre of BADco.

Florian MALZACHER

★ In the middle of a rather crowded space, on a stage cut off from the auditorium by the iron curtain. Squeezed in between others at a table, no way to see everything, always having to turn your neck to look at the other full tables, at the door on the opposite side where some kind of film noir action seems to be taking place, or at the small strip in front of a wall, which serves as a wide screen stage for dancing and cursing and projecting. Voices from radios, and voices from performers at the tables, almost whispering as if not to disturb anyone, barely audible across the tables, accompanied by some photocopies, but there is no time to really read or even understand them. *Memories are Made of This... performance notes*, the title of this work by BADco. from 2006, quotes a Dean Martin song, but for the moment it is uncertain if it is not the other way around: We are in the middle of a memory machine – but does it produce memories or is it fuelled by them? What then does it produce? More memories? As with the famous *Wunderblock* – a waxed blackboard for children to write on, used by Freud as a metaphor for human memory – you can no longer really decipher what is beneath the permanently re-written first layer. But you also cannot ignore it.

### TOO MUCH

There are at least two kinds of too much. One that annoys by exaggeration, that frustrates because you are never able to cope, that feeds you until you cannot swallow any more. Too much of ‘anything goes’, too much gluttony and mindless consumption. And there is too much as a thoughtful offer of possibilities. Not just accumulation but too much that offers choices, that empowers, that frees even when it is overwhelming. Too much that opens a field of thinking, associating, experiencing. Too much that takes its opposite seriously. Too much as a gesture of invitation and generosity.

### TASKS FOR GUESTS AND HOSTS

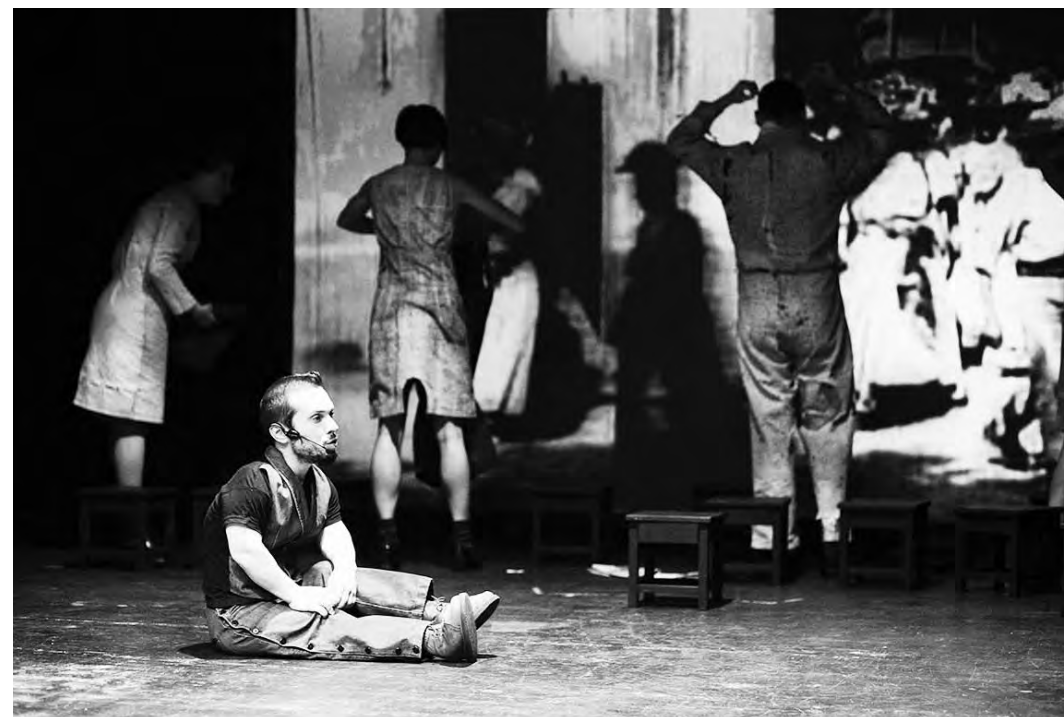
It is this gesture of sometimes overburdening generosity that characterises many of BADco.’s recent performances. And even though this attitude can be read as the continuation of a specific modernist theatre tradition aiming to lay out a wide semiotic field by producing an excess of signifiers, this is not the full truth. While the work of their predecessors (most famously

the New York neo-avant-garde antagonists the Wooster group and Richard Foreman, or in Europe – even though very different in style – the young Jan Fabre, Heiner Müller or Romeo Castellucci, to name a few) has its roots very much in an urge to liberate theatre from the primacy of text, from limitations by causal, linear narrations, by psychology, etc., BADco. takes it for granted that this prominent fight from the 1980s and early 1990s was won long ago. Not only do they use the booty of these struggles in whatever way they need to – they also add to it the attainments of the parallel, often ignored story of the arts and theatre in (South-) East Europe, and especially the former Yugoslavia.

While the often dogmatic, didactical style of new theatre forms of the late twentieth century mostly put the audience in front of the picture as though listening to a sermon, BADco. invites its guests to be so close that they can almost touch them, or even lures them right into the middle of the image. The audience is always an accomplice and part of the game when each performance creates its own strikingly specific and always different situation – to the point of adopting space, dramaturgy, style, so much to the respective tasks, that the individual pieces

often seem incomparable with each other. (The dance theorist Bojana Cvejić pointed out that this difficulty of pinpointing one recognisable aesthetic adds to the difficulties of selling the work to the Western theatre and art market). The focus on the ‘how’ of a performance wins over the ‘what’.

Each performance generates its own needs. This way the setting as structure and frame has become one of the core interests of BADco., sometimes even being the main character or topic of a work. By creating space (not only architecturally, but also dramaturgically, and most important: socially) rather than a narration, the collective claims the very centre of what defines theatre more than any other art form (despite all the supposed, so-called relational arts of recent years): Sharing space and (life-) time as a common experience and moment of true co-creation. Even if the audience, as in the choreography *FleshDance* (2004), is put in a frontal position, it is not kept outside since it is stretched alongside an extremely narrow stage, almost touching the performers, and having to constantly move their heads to follow the dancers, trying to get the full picture – which is always impossible since everybody is left



■ BADco. *1 poor and one 0*, 2008, PHOTO: DAMIR ŽIŽIĆ

“(...) with their last performances BADco. creates and reconstructs problematically productive situations impregnated by crucial historical paradigm changes from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (...) The subject from the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is an effect of the so-called *attention economy*. More precisely, its contribution to the production and circulation of values is defined through a specific function in the global flow of information, photos and news that serve the realisation and actualisation of the already created value. The subject’s role is presented as the central and irreplaceable in the global circulation of capital. The regimes of attention it is subjected to are what shapes its sensory and perceptive constitution.”

Marko Kostanić, *Liga vremena*, for Kazalištarije, Croatian Radio 3<sup>rd</sup> Programme

with his own specific perspective. *1 poor and one 0* (2008) is a game with cinematic views, constantly shifting the angles, stepping inside and outside the image while the audience is placed on opposite sides, watching not only the show but also closely watching each other, whereas in *The League of Time* (2009), the spectators mark the outside of a large playing field, feeling much more like watching a game in a gym than a drama in a classical black box.

That everybody receives and co-creates his own story is a truism not only in theatre theory since for some years (Meyerhold has already elevated the spectator to the role of ‘fourth creator’) – and still today, most contemporary theatre nonetheless wants to control the experience of their audience to the point of obsession, or to offer fake choices as is often done in so-called participatory theatre. The extent to which BADco. believes in the exact opposite becomes most obvious with *Deleted Messages* (2004), where the border between public and performers, between real and fictional space (another of BADco.’s leitmotifs), the choreographed and the spontaneous, are blurred to a degree where the show fundamentally risks itself and becomes just as dependent on

the behaviour of the audience as on the artists themselves. Performed in a vast, crowded space with only one person per three square metres, constantly moving between an also moving audience, *Deleted Messages* is generous up to the point of self-abandonment. Where so much responsibility is handed over, choreography can only survive in constant negotiation with rules that are difficult to understand and to follow: It is a risky invitation into an unknown situation. No easier task for the guests as for the hosts.

Theatre was always closely related to the self- and the re-presentation of society, it always mirrored, not only in its content but also in its form, the political structure to which it belonged. The Greek polis gathered in the Dionysus Theatre to negotiate their self-understanding as a community, in the Baroque, the monarch was the focus of stage and audience, and not by chance the awakening of the European middle-class was accompanied by the rise of bourgeois theatre as an aesthetic, but also very concrete, institutional, cultural and political phenomenon. In this context it is not surprising that BADco.’s work – with, for example, its recent interest in the idea of German *Volkstheater* of the eighteenth century as a concept for popular, working class



■ BADco. *1 poor and one 0*, 2008, PHOTO: DAMIR ŽIŽIĆ

theatre – is not only the result of revisiting and self-positioning within international theatre and art discourses. But that its understanding of space and the relation to the audience also have their very concrete roots in the situation of Croatia in the early twenty-first century, politically as well as aesthetically.

### METAPHORS FOR BUILDING THEATRE & SOCIETY

Following the death of the Croatian president Franjo Tuđman in 1999, many hopeful initiatives started in grassroots politics as well as in the arts. A net of NGOs spread over the capital of Zagreb, but also extended to other former Yugoslavian states: Artists and activists re-vitalised old connections and new alliances where official relationships were often poisoned to the level of hatred. Suddenly it seemed possible to put an end to the repressive, traumatic atmosphere of the war, and the semi-democracy that followed under Tuđman, with its strong, one-dimensional nationalistic attitude. A young generation of activists, artists and theorists started with enthusiasm and hope to create platforms and networks for production and presentation; for discourse, discussion, and international exchange. Everything was fluid, and the borders between theory and practice, art and activism were not strictly drawn. It was in this atmosphere, as well as the spirit of protest and opposition to the rigid conservative structures and hierarchies of the established theatre and art institutions, that BADco. was founded in 2000 as a collective of quite different characters and specialisations. What started as a single project collaboration between theatre dramaturge Goran Sergej Pristaš, playwright and dramaturge Ivana Sajko (who later left the group), and the choreographers and dancers Pravdan Devlahović and Nikolina Pristaš soon developed into a long-term work and research project. Philosopher and net activist Tomislav Medak then joined the collective, followed by the dancers and choreographers Ana Kreitmeyer and Zrinka Užbinec, the dramaturge Ivana Ivković, and more recently the production manager Lovro Rumiha. Since each project creates its own needs, it also requires specific invitations: Over the years BADco. has included the aesthetics and opinions of such different personalities as the light artist Goran Petercol (2, *FleshDance*, etc.), the composer Helge Hinteregger (*Man.Chair*, *FleshDance*, etc.), the multi-media artist Slaven

Tolj (*Changes*), the software programmer Daniel Fischer (*Deleted Messages*, etc.), and the architect Tor Lindstrand (*Memories are Made of This... Performance notes*) and many others.

The performances – currently more than a dozen – may well be the most visible markers in the artistic as well as the theoretical development of the group – but importantly their body of work also includes a set of software tools for the analysis and development of dance and movement (*Whatever Dance Toolbox*, 2008-11), several video works, installations, DVDs, texts by and about BADco., lecture performances, as well as curated events, and laboratories. In the same way that it is impossible to decide whether BADco. is a dance or theatre company, it is similarly difficult to separate their theoretical research from their practical work. Besides the projects and works that are clearly labelled BADco., and their close personal connection with the performing arts magazine *Frakcija* and the Centre for Drama Art – CDU (both founded by Goran Sergej Pristaš), the group also has a major influence on the Zagreb arts scene via its members as teachers, collaborators in other projects, activists and political lobbyists for culture.

The media- and self-reflective attitude of BADco.'s work, with its intensive research into “the protocols of performing, presenting and observing” is also constantly triggered by the social and artistic environment of Zagreb, where structures and relations continue to be undefined and need to be regularly re-negotiated. An environment where nothing is certain, where economics, politics and aesthetics are ever-changing and the financial situation is precarious not only for artists. More than ten years after the wave of optimism that followed



■ BADco. *Gravidation*, 2004, PHOTO: DAMIR GAMULIN



■ BADco. *Point of Convergence*, 2010, PHOTO: TOMISLAV MEDAK

Tuđman's death, Croatia is still not a member of the European Union and much of the initial spirit of hope has been lost. The independent scenes in Zagreb are characterised by a sense of exhaustion. Many initiatives have ceased to exist or are permanently under threat of closure. The fact that the Soros foundation, which played an influential role in Croatia between 1995 and 2006, has now returned to the country in the form of a ‘crisis fund’ is seen by many, cynically, as a sign that things really are on the edge. While many artists have left or are leaving the country to seek opportunities elsewhere, BADco. has – also through having a network of co-producers outside of the country – become a reliable and constant factor of the artistic scene, regionally as well as in Croatia. Its ability to maintain a group with eight core members distinguishes BADco. at a time when economic factors have produced a flood of solos and duos from most other companies in this scene – not only in South-East Europe.

#### BACK PROJECTION OF THE IMAGINATION

From the very beginning BADco.'s art was based on the belief that artistic work cannot be separated from the means by which it is achieved. Collaboration, and investigating different working methods, are an integral part of the artistic enterprise: How can theatre pretend to fight for a more just society, and at the same time base itself on strong hierarchies and dependencies? How can the production and exchange of artistic knowledge be communicated in ways that are no longer considered the correct means of address even in classrooms? Such works as *Deleted Messages* are reflections on theatre as much as on society. Whereas in the experimental theatre of the 1980s and 1990s, the notion of audience shifted from spectator to witness (as Tim Etchells, director of the influential British company *Forced Entertainment*, put it – following Chris Burden – following Brecht), *Deleted Messages* pushes the relationship even further, handing over much more active responsibility and inviting the audience to take the role of

collaborator. Society does not function by watching. F. Scott Fitzgerald's quote, used in *Memories are Made of This... performance notes*, brings to the fore what is crucial for BADco.'s theatre, but which can just as well be read as a metaphor for the difficulties of a society just learning how to use democracy: “The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function.”

Already the name is a statement: BADco., being the acronym for *Bezimeno Autorsko Društvo* (Nameless Association of Authors), believes that the group is more important than the individual artist, and at the same time strongly in the unique authorship of each member. This somewhat paradoxical idea of balance between collective and individualism might also be triggered by particular historic experiences, certainly it deviates from most concepts of contemporary Western collectives, with either their more romantic or more pragmatic approach. BADco. shares its name with a rock band that has existed since the 1970s – and despite the fact that there is no aesthetic connection, there is an affinity with the structural and hierarchical model proposed by the idea of bands in general: shared responsibilities, team spirit, common artistic goals, and the possibility of (at least in early punk) all being on stage despite different abilities and skills: From the outset of BADco.'s work, dramaturges and theorists were included as performers as much as the professional dancers. (The philosopher Tomislav Medak performed as early as 2002 in *Diderot's Nephew*). Obvious deficits in body and training are not seen as deficiencies but as strengths, different abilities are not assimilated, they remain visible, and focus attention on something other than virtuosity and technique. Performer presence goes beyond educational professionalism. BADco. proclaims, in its own words, a “collective authorship, where boundaries between the respective competencies of performers, directors, dramaturges become blurred and where performances reflect how the group transforms,

in multiple and diverse approaches, the initial artistic concern.”

It is perhaps one of the most beautiful dance duos of recent years when in *1 poor and one 0* the short-statured Tomislav Medak, together with the tall, full bodied dramaturge Ivana Ivković, dance an imaginary contact improvisation à la Steve Paxton that in reality neither of them is able to perform this way: Merely by describing precisely move after move. “I stand up, I stand tall, I offer you two points of support. One on my hand, and one on my thigh” – “I pose for a moment, I can't decide, uh, well, let's take the arm...” without ever touching each other. Images produced by our brain, projected back onto our retina. This back projection of the imagination is one of BADco.'s core techniques.

It is a duo that could not have been performed the same way by professional dancers; the inability to actually do the movements that are described produces the very gap that allows different and parallel interpretations to be evoked: It is a touching love story, a story of a carefully balanced relationship, as well as of relationships between human beings in general. And it is a story about the essence of the theatrical contract that has existed in different ways since the beginning of theatre: About the gap between representation, presentation and reality. And even more: This duo does not only delegate the movement completely to the imagination of the spectator (and by this, again, create a new space and a new interdependence between stage and auditorium); the very concrete descriptions of movements produce a neuronal mirror sensation in the one listening. It makes the audience dance along more than any real dance ever could.

#### THEATRE AS INVITATION

BADco. walks a thin line between clearly acknowledging its heritage (coming from a country in transition that has been socialist for more than forty years, from a region with a rich art history, the importance of which is still not fully recognised in other countries) on the one hand, and a strong connection

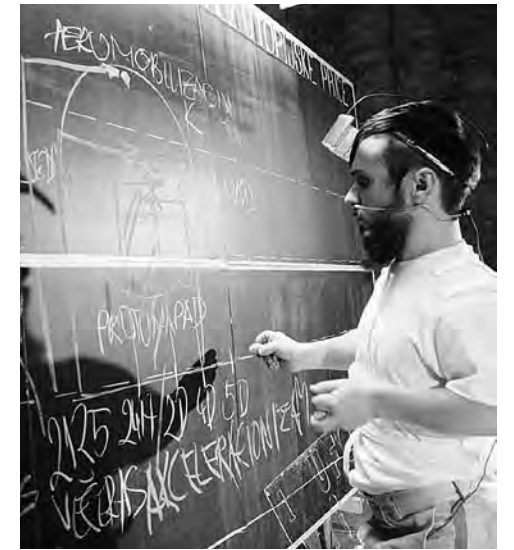


■ BADco. *Memories are Made of This... performance notes*, 2006, PHOTO: TOR LINDSTRAND

to particular aesthetical and philosophical discourses originating in Western Europe on the other. Perhaps Yugoslavia's location as a state between the geo-political blocs has prepared it a little for this in-between role – but it has its costs. Whereas in most Western countries, BADco.'s work is still labelled ‘Eastern’ (as if it needed protection through classification), in Croatia itself it is viewed with suspicion by many cultural institutions, programmers and curators.

BADco. has found its own way across the clearly defined borders of conceptual dance, post-dramatic theatre, etc. A way that means it is not always easy to be accepted in the world of festivals and contemporary performing arts venues, where the former West is still the main playing field, the main market. So again and again the group's experience is that – while in the performing arts scene their work is largely haunted by the image of being too complicated, too hermetic – a rather normal, mainstream oriented audience, for example at the National Theatre in Georgia, appreciates and reads their work in a very emotional and direct way. So BADco.'s work remains estranged from the theatre market on both sides, while at the same time they draw on Western media culture as well as East European art history: Their first work *Man.Chair* (2000) re-staged (together with the original author) a piece from 1982 by the performance artist and member of the – at that time – influential neo-avant-garde company *Kugla Glumište*, Damir Bartol Indoš. *The League of Time* is strongly influenced by Russian Constructivism and in the Venice Biennale they share the pavilion with the late Tomislav Gotovac.

This sense of not really belonging – that BADco. shares with colleagues from other former Yugoslavian states – can be both limiting and liberating. In a recent series of sessions held in Zagreb on the occasion of BADco.'s tenth anniversary, Bojana Cvejić highlighted a desire shared by many artists in the area: To act as host to others, to invite people into their own situations, to bring guests from abroad or nearby – a desire resulting from a precarious situation

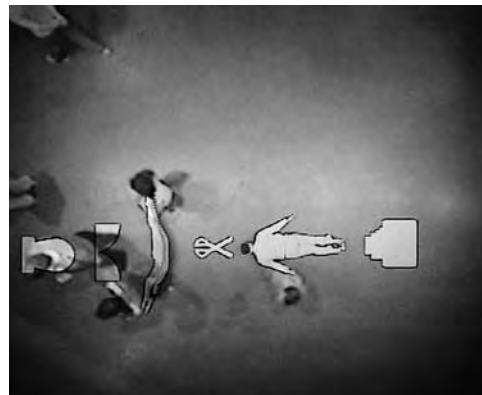
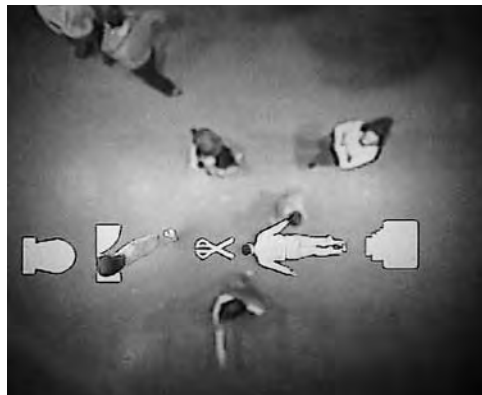
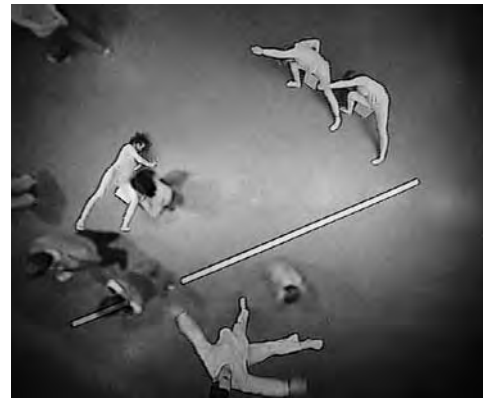
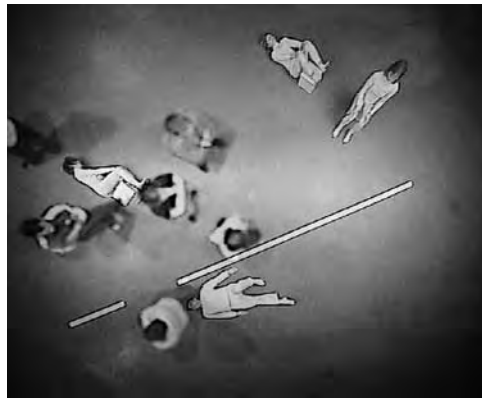


■ BADco. *The League of Time*, 2009, PHOTO: DRAŽEN ŠOKČEVIĆ

that implies always being dependent on others, always being treated as guests. Pursuing this idea, hosting implies a different relationship, a clearly defined space of one's own, a territory that is unique and different, attractive for others to visit. It frees them from the West's paternalistic attitudes, and historic threats from the East. It defines a field of thinking and acting beyond the given aesthetic and political paths. Whether all the banks are owned by Austrian and Italian companies, all the houses at the sea bought by the English and Americans: There is a territory of art that is not dependent on the European Union, that defines its own borders – a territory to which guests are invited on their own terms. It is for good reason that hospitality is one of the constituting elements of civilisation.

This concept of hosting defines both the work and working relationships of BADco. From the outset it has been used as a strategy for involving people from different contexts, disciplines, and countries in the work. By creating a very specific dramaturgy of generosity within unique performative environments of sharing, that, as well as artistic implications also produce a resistance towards a culture of accounting, consumer-capitalism, neo-liberal evaluation-ideologies or imperialistic development aid, BADco.'s aesthetic generosity avoids a superior attitude towards its guests, because it is equally demanding of both hosts and guests. It is a generosity that does not coddle but rather asks for contributions and active participation. It means: Work. Working together. As an audience we have to accept the invitation with all its implications. As masters of ceremony BADco. might not be the most casual hosts – but they are definitely concerned with taking their guests more seriously than most other contemporary theatre companies. So either we are willing to grasp whatever we can – or we walk home empty-handed. ¶

## Responsibility for Things Seen: Tales in Negative Space



As she peered through, the crowds were once again impatiently waiting for the light to turn green. Now that it did, they stormed across the street and continued along the line of buildings that seemed as if they were always there, instilling a sense that nothing was ever changing. Approaching the square, the line became increasingly broken by gaping voids of torn-down buildings, opening views onto the backside of the buildings all the way across. Topped masonry replaced by billboards announcing in the transparent shine of an architectural visualization a visitation of the future upon the unchanging present. She could clearly make out that the new structures will eat up the voids between the old ones, filling the long-forsaken inner spaces of unchange.

She could easily think back to the times when the development was spread across the city, spread across different functions. Particularly intense at the periphery. Nothing had to be built in a clearing between two buildings. The clearing could remain. Whatever new needed to be built could expand into new spaces. But at one point the space became the private domain. It started to contract and concentrate. Capital-driven development required capital-intense organization of space. It is only by concentrating, creating ever narrower circles of centrality, that scarcity could be maintained. The old center was now fragmented into micro-centers and the new micro-centers inserted into the interstices of former peripheries. Both became overrun by construction sites, mechanisation and building materials. But that was over now. There was no more demand for expansion by concentration either.

The architectural imagery. As things got worse, power cuts more frequent, political promises more in demand, hopes for change more desperate, architectural images became ever more present. Architecture in the public was now more imagery than it was actually architecture, the actual architecture was replaced by its promise. Things were announced and then faded away into the invisibility of private enclaves. Images were public, architecture was private. Mobilizing the collective imagination of the future so that the few could profit from the future. Future anxiety. She felt complicit, displaced.

The expropriation of the future through images of the future. That was the future of expropriation. For the expropriator the future was its exact opposite: he had to do away with the future – that unforeseeable future that always fails our capacity of prediction – and make sure it turns out not very different from what the profit scheme requires it to be. No future. She felt future anxious as her thoughts strayed away back to her complicitous project lying open on the desk. ¶





“Nudity means: I am what I am, what my mother gave birth to, ugly, fat, small dick, big dick... it doesn't matter. But if you want to deal with me, you should know! When a man is exposing his nudity, it is as if he is saying to others: ‘Why are you wearing clothes? Take off your clothes, let us compare’. That is an invitation to a *duel*, but in a passive way. I didn't rip off anyone's clothes, I just took off my own clothes.”

“Art is Reality”, Tomislav Gotovac in conversation with Branka Stipančić, first published in newspapers *Vijencac*, 8.10.1998, № 123/VI, Zagreb

HOME PORN MOVIE No 1:  
ŽELJKA & TOM  
IN GREAT LOVE!



“The invitation to see his recent films was a privilege, some kind of acknowledgement that I have matured enough as a film buff, and thus deserved to see his work. At that time Tom was shooting short experimental films on 8mm. Each of these films existed in just one unique print, and each screening's inevitable wear and tear was shortening the film's life. However, those were the golden years of 8mm film in Belgrade and Yugoslavia. *Kodachrome* reels could be bought, shot and sent abroad by regular mail to be developed (laboratory process was included in the price). After a week or two, the film would return, rolled on plastic reel with properly spliced white leader, ready to be projected.

And the projection was a miracle. Because the colors of *Kodachrome* film were like pearls thrown on to the grayness of this town. It was the only film emulsion with which *Kodak* had come close to the unsurpassed *Technicolor*. (...)

He took me in at the side entrance and through the kitchen into his little room. It

was late evening and we walked on tiptoes because he didn't want to disturb his hosts. He placed a small ‘Eumig’ projector on a stool and turned it on, without the film, to adjust the projection. Although the room was small, this sort of projector was designed for small spaces, and so the image on the opposite wall, only two meters away, was quite big. From the bag on the floor Tom took out two or three tin containers with films. The containers were medium sized 35mm film cans. He carefully opened one and showed me the contents. Inside, in small plastic bags were two rolls on plastic reels. One was 8 mm film he wanted to show me, and the other was the magnetic tape with the sound for the film. Everything was neatly labeled. In the can was also a grain of camphor ‘against moisture’, Tom explained. He skillfully handled the film, with precision one might not expect from a man of such robust physique. But when film was concerned Tom would become the most pedantic person in the world.”

Slobodan Šijan,  
“Film Bulletin 1976–1979”,  
*Vreme*, Belgrade, 2009



1971

25. maj 1971.



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac,  
*Family Film I*, 1971

“Gotovac's overall oeuvre, everything that he has in general achieved in art and life is an inseparable unit, which only for external and technical reasons can be tacked in (though not strictly divided into) separate areas such as constituted by the film medium and practices derived from the disciplines and legacies of the fine arts. Gotovac's film work will be dealt with by people thoroughly versed in this part of this work, but those who keep an eye on what might be called the artist's dealings in the area of fine art are also completely aware that film is crucial for Gotovac's work as a whole, that he was, as an artist in the extended sense of the concept, primarily brought up and formed on film, that film is not only a basic thread but leading thread, the very being, even of those works of his that are not practically manifested in the film medium. Even more than this, film in its endless diversity (with a very strict quality selection) has in the whole history of the medium become a genuine fascination and obsession in Gotovac's life from his earliest days, when as a boy he got an irresistible electric shock from the magic of moving pictures on the screen of the darkened cinema auditorium.”

Ješa Denegri, “The Individual Mythology of Tomislav Gotovac”, in the monograph *Tomislav Gotovac*, Croatian Film Clubs' Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2003

“Films and cinema were the places where I found my life, and then I simply identified reality with film. Reality was art to me. Those were the happiest days of my life, because everything that formed a part of the so-called life, I treated aesthetically. There are no good guys nor bad guys for me, they all play a role.”

“Art is Reality”, Tomislav Gotovac in conversation with Branka Stipančić, first published in newspapers *Vijenac*, 8.10.1998, № 123/VI, Zagreb

HOME PORN MOVIE No 2 :  
TOM & ŽELJKA  
THE END OF THEIR LOVE .



“Those in power actually enjoy in us because we are some sort of a freedom detector. They are showing off this so-called freedom whilst they travel around the world. It was like this with communists, it is like this with these guys now. I can't blame the government because I know that there is someone above them - someone is directing them too. I understand them to be the actors, while the scriptwriters and directors are somewhere else.”

“Art is Reality”, Tomislav Gotovac in conversation with Branka Stipančić, first published in newspapers *Vijenac*, 8.10.1998, № 123/VI, Zagreb



“Several years later, I got myself a 16mm Bolex camera. Tom asked me to photograph for him a ‘family movie’, as he said. At that time he lived in a huge, old building in Dušanova street. He rented a small room with separate entrance from the courtyard, up a narrow, winding stairs. During pre WWII noncommunist era, these were rooms for the maids and servants of the families who lived in luxurious apartments at the same floor. In the room: a large wardrobe, one bed, a table and a cabinet. The yellow canvas shade on the narrow window was always down. Under the bed was a rather large cardboard suitcase where, it was my impression, Tom kept the things important to him – films, art works.

Across the small hallway was the shared bathroom with toilet, it's ancient door and window frames were covered with a thick layer of brown paint. Above and below perhaps on the same floor, lived more tenants, but the separate entrance and stairway permitted him a measure of privacy which he did not have at the students dormitory where he lived before, or at friends places where he always had

to take care not to threaten the privacy of the others. (...)

We made a few shots of the huge building where he lived. Then a few with hand-held camera – it enters from the street into the building, goes through the courtyard, climbs the stairs to Tom's room. Tom's girlfriend was also there. Large, intelligent woman, completely enchanted with his charisma and ready to participate in any experiment Tom conceived. He explained that we shall first make a few shots of the bed, and then go to the bathroom to photograph. He came closer and conspiratorially said: ‘Old man, keep shooting, don't stop, whatever happens.’ They undressed and went to bed, naked. I start shooting, I took shots of the walls panning with the camera down to two of them in bed, while they caressed in this confined space I circled them, zooming, panning... The bed sheet fell down, Tom probably pushed it away, and I noticed that he had an erection. The girl slightly opened and he dived into her. I managed to photograph that too. They both had extremely light skin which glistened, dewy with sweat as their coitus went on under



23. septembar



Cara Dušana II, Dorćol

the soft flat light. When they finished making love, we went to the bathroom. They ran across the hallway wrapped in a blanket. I placed the light in front of the shower room and shot them through the open door, naked, enjoying happily, but I am not sure whether this light was properly placed and strong enough for the space, and because the bathroom and toilet were shared, we had to hurry up, someone could show up any minute and see what we were doing. And so the last foot of negative ran out. I had the impression that they both were happy because their love was finally recorded, and that they were excited because it was the utmost part of their intimacy. Tom's belief in cinema was infinite. Everything was subordinate to it.”

Slobodan Šijan,  
“Film Bulletin 1976–1979”,  
*Vreme*, Belgrade, 2009

■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac,  
*Family Film II*, 1973

“Suddenly I understood the nature of these films. As if Tom carried everything close to him in them. They were his virtual suitcase. Defense from the cruelty of the world. Wherever he was, it was enough to turn on his projector and watch his courtyard, people close to him, in one word: everything he loved. Dumps where he often had to live in Belgrade because of poverty, would disappear enlightened by these images of tenderness. Tom carried his world with him and these were in the purest sense of the term, ‘home movies’, since his eight mills were his home, the place he lived in.”

Slobodan Šijan, “Film Bulletin 1976–1979”, *Vreme*, Belgrade, 2009



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Cara Dušana 11*, 1977.

PHOTO: JUAN-CARLOS FERRO DUQUE

## Group Enjoyment

Tomislav GOTOVAC

### IN THE OPEN



Set a day in the week, Friday. Meet in the passage by the Dom Sindikata.

You know the place where there are beer crates and an old lorry. Meet under the window with iron bars through which you can see the central heating boiler (probably for the KOZARA cinema). Don't do any thinking yet. Walk down the passage, across Terazije, passing by the *Albanija*, to Zeleni Venac and then walk past the market and down to the railway station. Enter the station. It is probably five o'clock in the afternoon. In the kiosk to the right of the entrance buy the latest issue of *Čik*. Open it at the horoscope section. Now, how many of you are there? Alright. When was the third from the left born? Right. He's a Virgo. What does it say? It's alright, you can read it out loud. The important thing is the letter V in Virgo. Now go to the information desk and ask if there is a village whose name begins with V within a 49 kilometres radius (the person who is a Virgo was born in 1949), what the best connection is and when the train leaves. Buy the tickets. You have one hour and thirty-five minutes before the train is due to leave. Having quickly leafed through *Čik*, throw it away in case it should influence your train of thoughts, for it is about now that you begin thinking. Buy some sandwiches and go to the station lavatory, collectively. Stand in the middle of the room and watch the people enter, go to the toilet, button their trousers, spit. To protect female members of your group, put them in the middle, to avoid any possibility of them being abused by the clientele of the

public lavatory. You should arrange yourselves in such a way as to hinder the people who are entering and leaving as much as possible. Take out your sandwiches and slowly eat them. If the organs of the municipal police force have serious complaints, you should disperse and meet again at the same place a little later. Do this politely and carefully for to be taken to the police station and perhaps detained in an appropriate establishment (prison, madhouse) would not be good at this moment in time: it would spoil your plans. When you finally get thrown out of the lavatory, change your tactics. You have already been noticed as a group so you can no longer act or think/function as a group. Fix a meeting place: a spot on the platform where your train is coming in. Then disperse, going to different platforms, waiting rooms, buffets and in front of the kiosk, memorise a detailed description of one of your colleagues and start asking if anyone has seen him, giving any story you like. In doing so the most important thing is that you commit to memory the faces, behaviours, replies and dress of the people you ask. If during the course of all this you come across a particularly interesting man (it is strictly forbidden to question policemen for the reasons mentioned above) and if he gets into deeper conversation with you, asking why you are searching for such and such a person, the first thing you must do is find out if he is an agent, whether government or private. If he is a government agent (of course he will not have proof of his identity, but will ask you for your identity card), get rid of him

as politely as possible (violence is out). If you establish that he is a private agent (working for himself, they do exist) the use of force of the first degree is allowed. Remember it is not the quality but the quantity of the meetings that counts. When you get into the carriage take up two compartments. Although you could all fit into one compartment, separate out into two, one at each end of the carriage, and if possible near the lavatories. You should do all this so that other passengers who are not aware of your intentions can hear what you say to each other, passengers sitting in the other seats or passing by to get to the lavatory. During the course of the journey you should leave your compartment as often as possible in order to keep the others in your group informed in great detail of all that you have seen at the station and in order to create a jam in the corridor, getting in the way of those already there (because they have no room to sit down, to stretch their legs, or to exchange a flirtatious word or two). It is also necessary to peek very carefully (if the light is not on, switch it on), into the other compartments looking long and deep into the eyes of your fellow passengers. At every station ask what it is called (although you can clearly see the name written up on the station building), whether there is a water tap nearby and how long the train will be waiting there. Let us return to conversations: it is your duty to remember as precisely as possible the appearance of our interviewees at Belgrade Railway Station. When you give a detailed description of a person, try, through association



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Cara Dušana 11*, 1977, PHOTO: JUAN-CARLOS FERRO DUQUE



or introspection, to place them in a film you have watched and to remember the film's content. Talk about which landscape the film reminds you of and what colours you can see in that landscape. Would you like your boy or girl friend to wear clothes in that colour? What do you love or hate about the way your sweetheart is or about what he or she wears? What would you most like to give to this beloved person? Think of the film or films in which you have seen this object. Where and why in that film did man commit violence against his fellow man? If a murder was committed, were you sorry for the victim? Was there a lot of blood? Would you be able to kill, and why? From time to time you should go to the lavatory, not in order to relieve yourself but to have a cigarette, or, if you don't smoke, to read one or two of the notices or instructions pasted onto the lavatory wall. Get off the train and watch it going off into the distance. Bend your ear down to the railway tracks and don't get up until the sound of the train is completely lost (of course, some people will hear the sound of the train for longer than others). Ask about getting back, and if the village is a long way from the station, ask what the easiest and quickest way of getting there is. Let us assume you have found the village. Let us assume it is night, a clear night. Having ascertained how big the village is, where it is located in the countryside, pick a good, fairly large meadow. Start running, slowly at first then quicker and quicker. Run as long as you can, until you have a coppery taste in your mouth, until you feel your lungs are going to burst from coughing (if you are a smoker), keep running until you collapse from exhaustion. When you can no longer run, get together with the others. Each of you should tell a love story – in great detail, in images. Try to give a spatial rendering of how you imagine the story was played out. Find a fairly large country house and ask the owner if



you can come in. He will surely have some very good alcoholic beverage to offer. Make yourself comfortable and stop thinking. Drink yourself into a stupor. Fall asleep. Wake up early in the morning, pay your debts, say goodbye to the master of the house. Go out into the countryside: the sun is very low on the horizon and you don't feel well. Tell each other of your morning thoughts or the dreams you had the previous night. It is all the same. Pick up the paper and felt-tips pens you have already prepared and try to sketch the countryside. Try to think of those nearest and dearest to you: what are they doing at this very minute. Think of the atmosphere of a film you have watched. Gather round in a circle and taking it in turns utter the first word that comes to mind until your mouth is dry. Go to a house and ask where you can get some food. Naturally they give you some, they feed you. Go to the station in a round about way and peek into the country farmyards along the way, greeting the peasants. Wait for the train. Get into the last carriage and remain in the corridor. Look at the countryside. Finally, each makes his own way home. ¶

#### GROUP ENJOYMENT INSIDE

★ You have picked a largish room in a comfortable flat (belonging to one of you, or a good friend of yours). The room must be furnished with modern furniture. It should not have a chandelier, especially not in the middle of the ceiling, but one, or at most two, standard lamps with light green lampshades and one or two wall lights. The green wall must be covered in white, pale beige or pale green wallpaper with barely visible stripes on it. There must be no more than two pictures on the wall, life-size reproductions of paintings by Klee or Boticelli, for example, hung very low, framed in natural wood and without any glass. The floor should be completely covered by a pale brown carpet, the pile of which should be no thicker than 2-3 centimetres. There should be green linen roller blinds on the windows (the window should extend across the whole width of the room and should be hung with brown curtains of a soft, opaque material). There should be no more than two large, low, comfortable yellow armchairs and half a dozen largish brightly coloured cushions in various shapes for sitting or lying on, on the floor. A desk and a chair must be in a corner, somewhere out of the way. The cupboard is built into the wall, as is the bar, so that one barely notices them. Taking up most of the space is a huge, low, yellow couch, which can be pulled out to make a comfortable double bed, (on which to sleep, rest, or amuse oneself). On the wall above the couch, and that means very low, there is a shelf containing books, a gramophone and records, a tape recorder, statuettes, dolls, a telephone and other things (perhaps a small television set). There may be a few other things in the room like a pile of illustrated magazines, an ornamental plant, etc. The door to the bathroom goes off to the left. You now have to find a man and a woman neither too old nor too young (between 23 and 30 years old) willing and able to strip naked before you and to make love for the purpose of research. It is assumed, although it is not of any particular significance, that you have all at some time slept and had sexual contact with another person or several people, in the darkness, semi-darkness or in broad daylight, dressed, half-naked, or completely naked, on the floor, in water, or in bed. The possibility is not excluded that at the same time you were watching the whole procedure, if you had the desire or time, if you were not too absorbed by your partner, male or female or both, or in spite of that. Coordinate the date of your meeting in the flat with the menstrual cycles of the women members of the group, so that menstruation does not occur during those days. It is best for you to meet at about 10 o'clock in the morning. It is assumed that you will have slept long and well, that you did not have sex during the night, that you have bathed and changed your underwear, had a good and plentiful breakfast, used deodorant on your armpits and shaved everything you feel you need to shave. It is assumed that you are in a good mood, that you are not worried by anal needs, (you don't have indigestion) and that you don't have a headache. You enter the flat one by one.

The atmosphere is informal, you make yourself comfortable, help yourself to a drink, just to get into the general mood. You play the tape recorder quietly (you have beat, soul and jazz music on tape), you converse, you wait for everyone to arrive: until about 11 o'clock (in the morning, of course), which is the time the man and woman are due to arrive. You accept them as members of the group: you talk to them, offer them drinks. You find out how old they actually are, where they were born, what they do, what kind of music they like, and so on. The atmosphere is still informal in every way: you talk about anything that comes to mind, you're together, the time passes by. You pull down the (green) linen roller blinds, close the brown opaque curtains and light the standard lamps with the green lampshades. When you achieve the feeling that you've been in the room for a long time, when you lose the sense of time (but not also of space), and your couple (it is assumed that they desire each other), although aware of your presence, stop taking any notice of you, you start singling them out: watching them. You slowly turn the couch into a bed; cover it with a white sheet. You take up positions around the room, as the fancy takes you and where you find room (but not in the bath), to sit comfortably and where you have a good view of the bed. The man and woman are on the bed (as agreed) fully dressed. They caress each other, kiss, their (Indian) foreplay is long, drawn out, they slowly undress each other. This lasts quite a long time, you occasionally drink alcoholic beverages (within limits, making sure you don't become inebriated), the music plays softly. You change your viewing position, you don't have to be seated: you can stand too, but it is strictly forbidden to touch any of the other members of the group or show the mood you're in, so: no audio-visual commentaries. Your attention is focused on what is taking place on the bed, but from time to time you must take a look at the faces of the others (this is compulsory). You must assume a certain distance from the activities on the bed (if you can) and try to concentrate on your inner rhythm. The man and woman are now completely undressed and continue their lovemaking: they kiss each other all over their bodies. Turn off the lights in the room, leaving

only the wall light above the bed switched on (having earlier placed a spotlight in it). Penetration gradually occurs. You may look wherever you wish at that moment. It doesn't matter whether you enjoy it or feel revulsion – the important thing is that you should be present during the act. Orgasm is reached, presumably mutual orgasm (both the man and woman). They remain in each others arms for a short time, then part and rest, perhaps lighting a cigarette. Switch on the other lights, light cigarettes too (if you smoke), take some alcoholic beverage with ice and sit back comfortably in your places. The couple you have been watching pull the sheet around them and go off to the bathroom to bathe. You air the room, go into the kitchen and start collectively preparing lunch, using the things you have bought especially for this occasion. While preparing lunch try to remember the most disturbing accident you have ever seen or experienced, or a dead man you have seen, and everything in connection with this. Relate what you remember to the others (what the corpse looked like, from what causes he died, and so on). Prepare the food, call the man and woman (who have in the meantime put on bathrobes) and sit down to eat. Then wash the dishes, tidy the kitchen, put on some coffee, chat informally and return to the room. Pull the curtains and turn on the lights. You are drinking coffee and resting after lunch. The man and woman lie naked on the bed, resting. After a while they begin their lovemaking again. Prepare the tape-recorder for recording, turn off all the lights (so that it is pitch black) and sit around the bed. Do not converse, do not light up cigarettes, just concentrate on the sounds coming from the bed. Follow the sounds of coitus, of ruffling of the sheets, the breathing. After the orgasm (which you recognise by its characteristic sounds) turn on the light, switch off the tape-recorder and play a music tape. Have a drink, and while the couple goes off to bathe, take some tempera paints and sheets of white paper, and try to draw some abstract compositions. The freshly bathed man and woman come out of the bathroom (their skin is still damp) and lie down on the bed. You put down your paper and go up to them with brushes and paints. You start drawing whatever comes to mind on their bodies (small

flowers, psychedelic patterns). When you have covered their bodies take a camera loaded with a colour-reversal film and take pictures of them either individually or together, getting them to take up various poses, on or off the bed. Shoot three films like this (*Leica* format), go off into the bathroom and develop them. Make slides, take a semi-automatic slide-projector, black out the room and show the shots you have taken, discussing them as you go. Place the man and woman by the wall and project the slides onto them, while they move about, kiss, bend over. The man and woman go to wash off the paint, you air the room, rest, chat, turn up the tape-recorder. When the couple returns, wrapped in bathrobes, pick up the telephone directory and start ringing up your acquaintances or complete strangers, ask them about anything at all, joke with them, mess about. You must by no means be vulgar. When you have had enough ask the man and woman to make love again. Take the camera again, this time loaded with black and white reversal film and take pictures of the lovemaking from the most unlikely angles. Take pictures of those watching and of anything you want, even the titles of the books on the shelf, the telephone or the ornamental plants in pots, if you like. When the man and woman stop making love and go off into the bathroom to wash, you take pictures of them there too. Thank them for their trouble and see them to the front door. Develop the films, make slides, air the room, prepare supper. When you have had supper, make yourselves comfortable, prepare the slide-projector, put the tape with the sounds of lovemaking onto the tape-recorder and project the images. When you have had enough, and it will surely be very late now, call a taxi (having first tidied up the flat) and ask to be taken out to the suburbs somewhere, to Dedinje for instance. Wander about the streets for a while then each of you should make for home. ¶

BELGRADE, DECEMBER 1969

First published in *Group Enjoyment*, Anthology of New Serbian Short Stories, Belgrade: Književna omladina Srbije, 1972

“Everything is directed, everything is really some sort of a conspiracy.”

“Metaphor of Public”, Tomislav Gotovac in conversation with Suzana Marjanić, magazine *Frakcija* № 8, 1998, Zagreb





## Seeing it all – all the time

Renata SALECL

★ In Tomislav Gotovac's show organised by Moderna Galerija in Ljubljana in 2009 a series of the artist's films were projected onto the window of the gallery, which is situated on the main city road. Inside the gallery there were stacks of old newspapers – some organised like an archival pack and some looking like garbage that was about to be disposed of together with other rubbish, like old cigarette boxes and trash found in the streets. During the opening night, Tomislav Gotovac covered the pavement outside the gallery with more old newspapers and then placed two pots with paint next to them. Barefoot, the artist first dipped his feet into the paint and then walked into the busy street, navigating his way through the traffic while his feet were leaving coloured prints on the road. Drivers and pedestrians looked on in shock at the performance that was happening in this most unusual location. There was also a sense of danger, that a reckless driver might not adjust his speed and would injure the artist.

I took my son, who was then ten years old, and his friend, to the opening. When the two children were standing in front of the gallery window in which at that moment a scene of sexual seduction, showing a fully erect penis, was being played out, a woman next

to me commented that this scene might not be appropriate for the children. Paradoxically, although they were standing in front of the projection, the kids did not actually 'see' the film – they were engrossed in observing the artist who was walking barefoot among the cars driving on the busy street. The two children were demanding an explanation for the artist's act, they were deeply curious about the coloured marks his feet were leaving on the road. In their playful mood, they were pondering if they too would be able to engage in such a performance. Thus they examined the paints, looked at the strategy of how the artist kept as much paint as possible on his bare feet. They questioned how far into the busy road one might be able to walk until one was hit by a car. In the midst of all these dilemmas, the pornographic movie that was rolling in front of their eyes got no attention at all.<sup>01</sup> When at the end, I asked the kids what

<sup>01</sup> During the Ljubljana exhibition, however, many passersby were deeply concerned about the films that were projected onto the street. In the furious letters that some of them sent to the organisers of the exhibition and even to the Ministry of Culture which sponsored the event, they were mostly concerned about the impact that images of a sexual nature might have on children, as if there was moral pollution associated with public exposure to Gotovac's films.

they thought the event was all about; their answer was that it was about someone trying to leave a mark on the road and staying alive.

Unfortunately, Tomislav Gotovac is no longer alive, but the exhibition in Venice is about the mark he left with his work. What kind of a trace did he want to leave? And what do we make of his archive of experimental films, collages, the photographs of his first performances and occasional interviews he left us with? Gotovac had an ambiguous relationship with archives, which is why in the show in Ljubljana, he was treating them both as rubbish (but as valuable trash, since he felt the need to place the archival material in the gallery) and as something that could be walked over and marked in a new way, with paint dripping from the artist's feet. Gotovac always maintained the distance between the 'accepted' symbolic meaning of particular objects and films, and the infinite new possibilities of how they might be seen. In the same way, he never made attempts to guide his interpreters in how they should observe him.

The distinction between what we see, what we want to see and how we imagine that an image might be seen by someone else has long been a subject of public and theoretical debate. Many artists, too, have been concerned with the question of what is the distinction between



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Gone with the Wind*, Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana, Ljubljana, 2009, PHOTO: DEJAN HABICHT

what they are seeing and the reality behind it. Thus Gotovac famously pointed out that he was constantly bewildered by what lies between his eyes and what he was seeing. Already as a child, he was obsessively going to the cinema, often watching the same film again and again. His passion for watching continued, and as he points out in an interview: "When I went to the movies, I wouldn't go to entertain myself, I would go to work. For me film was reality. That is why I revel in watching, that is why my every gaze is a film, as soon as I open my eyes – a film. When I look at something, I am creating once again. Here Bresson and Dreyer are no longer important, I am creating on the basis of those things which they gave to me, and I know, when I say that a film must be viewed ten times, that that is the truth, because I change, and then the film changes as well. In the end, I have been watching *A Place in the Sun* for 25 years and every time I know it is different, as the viewings were different."<sup>02</sup>

Gotovac was concerned with the changes that happen in the process of viewing and that relate both to the observer and the object observed. It seems that he was specifically excited by the uncertainty that the process of observation involves. Paradoxically, many people find that such uncertainty provokes anxiety, which is why they organise their process of viewing by clinging to a steady point of view and also creating a distance from what is observed. From traumatic examples of engagements in war, it is well-known that some participants find a release for their anxiety by observing the scene of violence as if it were a movie. They behave as if they are observing a made up image and

<sup>02</sup> "It is all a movie", *A conversation with Tomislav Gotovac* by Goran Trbuljak, Hrvoje Turković, in the magazine *Film*, № 10-11, 1977, reprinted in the catalogue *Tomislav Gotovac*, Croatian Film Clubs' Association, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2003, p. 299.

that they are not really in the picture. For some people, the very presence of the camera offers a protective shield from the reality they are part of but hope that they are not actually involved in. Thus, some war photographers feel that the very fact that they are taking pictures of violence helps in their perception that they themselves are not in danger of being killed. Here, the camera acts as a mechanism of framing that allows the individual to observe reality and retain the sense that one is not affected by what one sees.<sup>03</sup>

In contrast, Gotovac was always excited precisely by the effect of images as if they were reality, and by observing the emotional changes

<sup>03</sup> For more on anxiety and perception see: Renata Salecl, *On Anxiety*, London: Routledge, 2004.



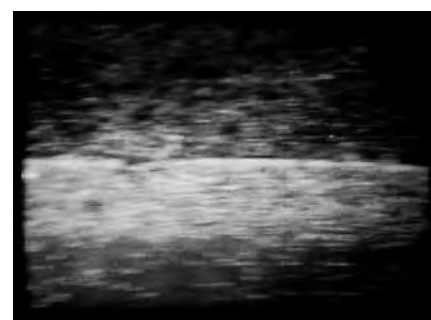
■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Gone with the Wind*, Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana, Ljubljana, 2009, PHOTO: DEJAN HABICHT

that a continuous bombardment by images generated in him. By using himself as the object of observation, he differs very much from artists who in the past were interested in images by considering how they affect others and how these responses might be recorded. One example is Mexican photographer, Enrique Metinides,<sup>04</sup> who used the camera to depict how events were reflected through the eyes of observers. In his numerous photographs of accidents, he often focuses on how witnesses of a traumatic scene behave. In his youth Metinides was also very much affected by films, wanting to record how the eye of the observer functioned as a mirror in which the scene of the accident would be visible and potentially recorded in a film. Here, too, there is a desire to create a distance between the event and its presentation.

For Gotovac, however, the camera is not a protective device, but rather a mechanism that allows re-working. As such, it functions like a robot, an extension of one's brain. Here the plasticity of the mind (the many different pictures the brain might construct from what it sees and what it imagines) is supplemented by the machine (the camera), which adds another dimension in this attempt to capture everything, all the time.

Already Gotovac's early works try to capture a multitude of perspectives, which is why he so often shoot the same scene again and again, or resorted to long tracking shots where he tried to capture reality from various points of view. His well-known attempt to do so is the film *Circle* (1964) where Gotovac attaches a camera to a roof

<sup>04</sup> See: Renata Salecl, *Choice*, London: Profile Books, 2010.



and films the reality around it in a 360-degree circle. This work has often been compared to the film *Le région central*, which Michael Snow made in 1971, where the artist's idea was also to capture reality in its totality. In the history of experimental film, Russian director Dziga Vertov made obsessive attempts to capture as many images of real life as possible and produce what Gilles Deleuze called "cinema as machine assemblage of matter-images".<sup>05</sup>

However, if Vertov was interested in a collage of images moving from one to another, Gotovac wanted to capture reality as a continuum, telling the same story in a different form. An obvious comparison is Kurosawa's *Rashomon*, which for Gotovac is the same story told four times. As he says in an interview, when he saw the film: "I was entranced by this one tracking shot: the sun penetrating through the leaves, and the track just goes on and on."<sup>06</sup> But as he points out later, after seeing the film a number of times, he was not interested at all in the story it was telling, since it was as if the content disappeared and all he was left with was the form: "After the tenth viewing of *Rashomon* you no longer have anything to say about content. It was at that time that I began to look at Michelangelo's sculptures and all at once you realize that Kurosawa was a European child inspired by Debussy, Ravel, someone who knows Italian Renaissance painting and sculpture, who knows film ... You see ... when Toshiro Mifune lies down, you notice that it's Michelangelo's sculpture – Awakening, literally interpreted. Later it runs through your head ... What kind of things are those!?"<sup>07</sup> Here, again, we see the homage, an admiration of artists throughout the history or art and film. Ultimately, Gotovac himself acts as a disciple for all these great masters. It is the statues, music and films that he tries to re-enact in his own work. He uses his own body as a sculpture, where previous forms of art have left traces. When he walks naked around Zagreb, or when at various stages of his life he shows his body, it is as if he is making himself into a public statue, reminding us of Michelangelo and other artists who have displayed impressive male figures in public places.

42

The possibility of capturing continuity recurs again and again in Gotovac's work. His 1964 film *Pravac (Sa pravcem, oko pravca)*, which can be translated as *Direction (With Direction, Around Direction)*, shows a continuous shot taken from a tram – we see an endless journey and never ending rails. Two decades later he produces what is almost a remake of that film when he shoots a tram journey in Trieste. Here, however, the people on the train, their discussions, and the artist himself, are also part of the film. Now it appears that the journey is not only about capturing endless movement, but also human interactions that take place during the journey. In the film *Don't ask where we are going* (1966), there is again an attempt to capture movement. This time we see the back of a moving man, but

<sup>05</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986, p. 85.

<sup>06</sup> Gotovac, *ibid.*, p. 285.

<sup>07</sup> *Ibid.*

we do not know whether he is walking away or coming towards us. His movement is opaque for most of the film until at the end there is only a moving head that is covered by a cross, which later turns into a swastika. The film *Ella* from 1966 also involves a moving train; the image is supplemented by the mesmerising voice of Ella Fitzgerald.

Of all these films it is *Circle* that attempts to capture the reality of our observation of the world in the most perfect way. However, in this film Gotovac hopes to show something that is beyond representation. It is as if the whole film revolves around the void – no matter how reality is recorded, by moving the camera in a circle and by slowly moving it upwards so that more and more of the world becomes visible – what escapes representation is the very point of view from which it is observed. Gotovac tries to transgress the fact that we usually see the world through a particular frame. His reality becomes circular. However, the void that is beyond representation is the very point from which the camera and thus also we, the observers, see the world. In an attempt to show it all, to make a complete image of the world around us, and thus, in some way to symbolise everything, the void from which we record reality cannot be represented within the image itself. The frantic production of multiple circular images of reality around us cannot make up for this essential lack of representation.

In his attempts to represent the unrepresentable, Gotovac often resorted to images of sexual organs. For example, when he depicts an erect penis it is as if he also tries to show something that escapes human control. Similarly when he shows a vagina, it is as if he tries to represent the unrepresentable – another version of the void, which is at once seductive and horrifying.

Gotovac was not only interested in recording reality and the void behind it, but also in showing how others before him attempted this and the work they produced. His films often have the appearance of collages that include quotes, extracts of images and music as references and tributes to other film directors and musicians who have inspired him. In the *The Forenoon of a Faun* (1963), we have three sections shot by a fixed camera: the first shows the balcony of a hospital with patients, (with sound track from the film *Vivre sa vie* by Jean-Luc Godard), the second is a scraped wall and the third is a crossroads with pedestrians and cars (with sound taken from the film *The Time-Machine* by George Pal). In the film *Straight Line (Stevens-Duke)* (1964) we have the tram rails that are filmed from the moving tram with a fixed shot and the movie is accompanied by Duke Ellington's music. *Blue Rider (Godard-Art)* (1964) shows the people that the artist and cameraman met by chance in the restaurants, inns and coffee houses of Belgrade, and the images are supplemented by the sound track from the American TV series *Bonanza*.

43



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Glenn Miller 1 (High School Playground)*, 1977

■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Glenn Miller 2000*, 2000

As an art form, collage attempts to capture the multitude of representations. For example, in Picasso's many collages that show the image of the guitar we have excerpts from newspapers supplemented by pictures of music scores and abstract forms that allude to the image of the instrument. Each of the separate elements has a particular meaning, as has the composition as a whole. The newspaper clippings are not just remnants of time – the very news they report on, the way that news is cut out, which characters remained and which did not, all create a particular meaning, as well as a viewing experience. However, in Gotovac's work, collage has a different purpose. In the way he uses the work of other artists (the music of Glenn Miller, Ella Fitzgerald, or the films of Kurosawa, etc.) there is a strong sense of his respect for these people. It is as if Gotovac is able to produce his own work not by distancing himself and surpassing the artists that came before him, but by admiring them.

Admiration and love are the two emotions that Gotovac often focuses on. However, in his dealings with love, he does not try to depict what this fascinating feeling is all about, but rather looks at the sidelines of love; music, city settings, human faces, Hollywood movies, etc. Love is often in the title of a work, but in the film itself, we see empty streets, the naked artist standing on the roof of a building, the face of a beautiful woman, old cars, etc. The film *I can't give you anything but love* (1996), in addition to the images mentioned also shows the artist nonchalantly playing with his erect penis, as if it is a prop with which he has no emotional connection. In contrast to the fake sexual excitement depicted in pornographic films, here we have the bouncing of the erect penis as if it were a mechanical toy that invokes no particular emotions in the person to whom it belongs or in the viewers who observe it.

In the performance entitled *Hommage to Billie Holiday 1915-1959*, which was part of Gotovac's retrospective in Le musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in 2004,<sup>08</sup> love is epitomised by the continuous playing of the song "She is my soul. In every man there is a woman part. In me, that's Billie." And in the film *Circle* (1964) we have the seductive sound of Count Basie, with the songs *Sent for you yesterday* and *Here you come today*. However, in the film *Glenn Miller* (2000), which was shot with a camera attached to a car, ceaselessly moving in a circle, the admiration of Glenn Miller's work is epitomised only in the title, while there in none of Miller's music in the film, just the sound of the city and the car.

For Gotovac, life is perceived like a movie. He is not only an observer of films, film is also the way he lives his life and looks at life around him. He says: "I do not make a distinction between



■ Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac, *Gone with the Wind*, Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana, Ljubljana, 2009, PHOTO: DEJAN HABICHT

life and film. I don't know if I can explain this ... I am now watching. I am watching a movie..."<sup>09</sup>

How Gotovac took the actual act of living as a form of performance can be observed in his explanation of why from the years 1956 until 1967 he worked as a clerk in a bank and called this his Employment Action. This decision to take an ordinary job was the result of his dissatisfaction with studying architecture. Although, this change of career coincided with his desire to separate himself from his parents and to take care of himself financially (and especially to earn money to support his passion for going to the cinema), he reinterpreted these very mundane reasons for employment as performance. Gotovac explains this decision to get an ordinary job also as a desire to be independent:

"what I simply wanted was to do everything on my own. I had had enough of 'directing' from school, from my parents, from others. I wanted to make my own movement. ... I tried to get closer to film. I wanted to be with it non-stop."<sup>10</sup>

In Gotovac's work the perception of life as art has been intrinsically linked to the idea of endless repetition. (Paradoxically, his first action – working in a bank already had repetition as a theme, since as a clerk he needed to endure a routine where the same tasks were repeated again and again.) In Gotovac's films repetition occurs, with the same types of scene being shot again and again. One repeated scene is showing one's body naked. Throughout Gotovac's long artistic career we see the obsessive exposure of his own body. The fascination that he has with his own sexuality is particularly apparent in the way he likes to change his body by cutting his

hair, sometimes shaving his head completely, and in various ways playing with his beard. He is, however, even more fascinated by the changes in his sexual organ. A number of Gotovac's films alternate images of him naked, his penis flaccid, with images in which we can see the penis fully erect. When the camera focuses on the erect penis there is, however, a feeling that Gotovac views erection as a particular kind of performance. As regards male and female sexual relations, Gotovac's films contain a number of depictions of the artist's erect penis undergoing fellatio, as well as him performing cunnilingus on his partner. In both cases, the visual component of how these scenes are shot by the camera contrasts with the usual structures of pornographic films. First, we have no voice or noise related to these scenes. Without the usual sounds of moaning that we get in pornographic films, the scenes of fellatio and cunnilingus in Gotovac's work appear rather non-erotic. It is more that the artist tries to show the penis as a sculpture and the female sexual organ as another visual structure. He seems to express his delight in exploring the compositional possibilities of exposing the sexual organs rather than the feelings that the two protagonists might have experienced during the time of the erotic act.

In 1972 and 1973 Gotovac made two homemade pornographic movies that illustrate how sexuality is depicted sculpturally. The first, *Family Film I* (1971), shows the artist and a woman called Željka at the start of a relationship. We learn from the title of the film that this is a big love. The sex scene between the two protagonists shows the erect penis in the act of penetration. Everything between them is exposed. There is a feeling of openness in the relationship and a sense of wonder between the two. The second *Family Film* (1973), however, is entitled *The end of the relationship*. Once again we see the two protagonists naked. The film starts with them in the shower washing each other,

<sup>09</sup> Ibid., p. 282.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 284.

and then moves to a bed in a small dormitory-like room. Again we have a sex scene, but this time the only thing that is visible is the artist's behind rhythmically moving during penetration. The sexual act has become purely mechanical. The openness between the two partners is gone, as is the expression of wonder and a willingness to expose oneself to the other.

Although Gotovac's films often show naked bodies and sexual scenes, he is actually critical about filmmaking that tries to depict sexual acts. In an interview he says:

"It's really stupid to show fucking in film, just because the film in itself is a fuckfest. ... Jean d'Arc is pure sex. ... *Place in the Sun* – that reeks of sperm."<sup>11</sup>

His conclusion is that a good film actually does not need to show sexual scenes, because one already gets sexual pleasure from the very structure of the film, the scenes it creates and the feeling it gives the viewer. What creates the pleasure is the way film tries to enact the very rhythm of sexuality and not how it actually shows or talks about it.

Gotovac's well-known statement is that as soon as he opens his eyes in the morning, he is watching a film. However, since he cannot present his eyes to the crowd and say what he is seeing, he has the urge to produce films – to show again and again what he is seeing, always doing this in a new way.

When asked in an interview if that also means that a person can watch only one film their whole life, he agreed with this suggestion and added to it:

"That is what I am trying to say. This isn't something I thought up. This was said by Faulkner, that here are ten books that he reads constantly, his whole life. But what is more important is whether you have watched something or not. What you will say about it is unimportant."<sup>12</sup>

I guess that Gotovac would say that how we speak about his work is far less important than the act of watching it. Throughout his life he refused to be categorised or incorporated into canons of contemporary art. It is as if he was a rebel his whole life, but didn't like the idea of this being his public identity. He was someone who very much followed his own desires. He refused to give them up to satisfy those of the Other, the social network where he could have achieved recognition were he to play the game of the art market. Similarly he did not want to be perceived as a martyr of communism, although the film *Plastic Jesus* (1971), in which he plays the main role was the most famous banned political film in the former Yugoslavia.

At the very end of his life, the popular media in Croatia wanted to create another symbolic role for him by picturing him as a poor, unrecognised artist whose greatness the state did not acknowledge, which is why he

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 289.



■ Ivan Posavec, photos taken after Tom's death in his apartment, Krajiška 29, Zagreb, 2010

ended up being penniless and ill in a shabby old people's home. However, even then Gotovac refused the proposed stereotyping – this time as a victim of state ignorance. When a journalist and photographer visited him in the retirement home, taking pictures of his ailing body and the unremarkable room he shared with people who seemed to have ended up on the margins of society, Gotovac did not play the expected game. He viewed the situation in which he found himself as nothing extraordinary. It almost seems as though he was involved in another action, similar to his ten-year-long employment as a simple clerk in a bank.

In 2005, Gotovac changed his name to Antonio G. Lauer. This act was supposed to be a tribute to his mother whose maiden name was Lauer. However, if on the one hand this appears as another homage to someone he admired, on the other, it also creates a distance from the symbolic persona that Gotovac by that time had already become. It is as if by changing his name, once again he wanted to avoid being categorised. With his final act of renaming, he again retained the void between what is seen and marked, and how what we observe and try to categorise escapes clear social symbolic parameters. ¶

■ BADco., *Responsibility for Things Seen: Tales in Negative Space*, 2011, PHOTO: DINKO RUPČIĆ



“The attempt to convey what BADco.’s performances are ‘on’ is a litmus test for what kind of company they are. This tiny word ‘on’, the cavity in the letter ‘o’, open mouth refusing to speak, they will make you toil. You can begin to describe their performances again and again, and every sentence you utter will be as correct as vague, true but irrelevant, accidental, unimportant, but never essential. Their ability to be evasive, to metaphorically ‘slip through our fingers’, is paradoxically enabled by their very precise and strategically determined actions on stage. Their performances are not ‘on’ anything, neither is anything ‘on’ their performances. A feeling haunts you that by agreeing to experience BADco.’s performances *on their own terms*, you have found yourself in a mechanism that changes the matrix each time you manage to grasp it, a mechanism which self-regenerates as an autopoietic machine.

With each new production, BADco. is more intricately rhizomatic; with each new production each performer becomes more sensitive to others and to the audience, seducing us all or rather, ‘leading (us) astray’ (*seducere*).”

Una Bauer, introduction to the publication 10x10x10, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of BADco.’s work

**ANTONIO G. LAUER** a.k.a. **TOMISLAV GOTOVAC** (1937-2010) was an avant-garde film director and performer. He graduated in film directing from the Academy of Theatre, Film, Radio and Television in Belgrade. Gotovac made his first performances, films, collages and series of photographs in the early 1960s. His artistic activities combined visual art, the avant-garde, experimental, documentary and feature films, performance, body art and conceptual art. In addition to various individual and group exhibitions, performances and experimental film practices, Gotovac showed his films at local and international film festivals. In 2005, he changed his name to Antonio Lauer. The Croatian Film Clubs’ Association and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb published a monograph on his work in 2003. ¶

**BADco.** is a Zagreb-based theatre collective. The collective, a confluence of interests in choreography, dramaturgy and philosophy, is nowadays made up of Pravadan Devlahović, Ivana Ivković, Ana Kreitmeyer, Tomislav Medak, Goran Sergej Pristaš, Nikolina Pristaš, Lovro Rumiha and Zrinka Užbinec. Since it was founded in 2000, it has systematically focused on theatrical and dance performance as a problem-generating rather than problem-solving activity - questioning the established ways of performing, representing and spectating. BADco. approaches the theatrical act as an unstable communicational exchange, a complex imaginary, challenging the spectator to look beyond the homogenising media reality and reclaim her or his freedom of spectating. ¶

**WHAT, HOW & FOR WHOM / WHW** is a curatorial collective founded in 1999 and based in Zagreb, Croatia. WHW has been involved in a wide range of production, exhibition and publishing projects. Since 2003, WHW has been curating the programme of Gallery Nova in Zagreb. In 2009, WHW curated the 11th Istanbul Biennial entitled *What Keeps Mankind Alive?*. ¶

**BOJANA CVEJIĆ** is a performance maker and theorist who also works in contemporary dance and performance as a dramaturge and performer. She has published in performing arts, music and philosophy journals, magazines and anthologies, and is the author of two books, most recently *Beyond the Musical Work: Performative Practice* (IKZS, Belgrade, 2007). Her own performance work includes directing five experimental opera performances 1995-2008, and most recently Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* (BITEF, Belgrade). She is completing her PhD (*Performance after Deleuze: Creating ‘Performative’ Concepts in Contemporary Dance in Europe*) at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy, London. Since September 2009, she has been teaching contemporary dance and performance theory at Utrecht University. ¶

**RENATA SALECL** is a philosopher and sociologist working as a senior researcher at the Institute of Criminology in the Faculty of Law, the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. She is a visiting professor at Cardozo School of Law and at the LSE. Her most recent books include *On Anxiety* (Routledge, London, 2004) and *Choice* (Profile Books, London, 2010). She often writes about contemporary art, and works with the Slovene choreographer Mateja Bučar. ¶

**FLORIAN MALZACHER** is co-programmer of steirischer herbst festival in Graz, Austria. He has worked as a theatre journalist and has taught at the Universities of Vienna and Frankfurt. As a dramaturge he has collaborated with Rimini Protokoll, Lola Arias and Nature Theater of Oklahoma, among others. His publications include books on *Forced Entertainment* and *Rimini Protokoll* as well as on *Curating Performing Arts*. Florian Malzacher lives in Zagreb and Graz. ¶

**GEORG SCHÖLLHAMMER** is a writer, editor and curator based in Vienna, Austria. He is co-founder of the journal *Springerin - Hefte für Gegenwartskunst* in Vienna, head of *tranzit.at* and chairman of The Jülius Koller Society (Bratislava). From 2004 to 2007 Schöllhammer was editor-in-chief of *Documenta 12* and conceived and directed *documenta 12* magazines. Forthcoming and recent exhibitions and projects include: *Moments* (ZKM, 2012), *Soviet Modern* (AZW, Vienna, 2012), *Sweet Sixties* (2011, ongoing), *L’Internationale* (Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; MACBA, Barcelona; Moderna galerija, Ljubljana and MuHKA, Antwerp, 2011, ongoing), *Manifesta 8* (2010), *KwieKulik*, (BWA Wrocław, PL, 2009) and the 6th Gyumri International Biennial of Contemporary Art (Gyumri, ARM, 2008). ¶



The Croatian presentation at the 54<sup>th</sup> Biennale di Venezia

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia

## One Needs to Live Self-Confidently... Watching

ARTISTS: **Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac & BADco.**

COMMISSIONERS & CURATORS: **What, How & for Whom / WHW**

VENUE: **Arsenale**

ARCHITECT: Ana Martina Bakić  
LIGHTING DESIGN & SCREENINGS: Alan Vukelić  
PRODUCTION ADVISOR, INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE: Green Spin  
PRODUCTION MANAGER & COORDINATOR: Luca Volpin  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANT & PHOTO DOCUMENTATION: Ivan Kuharić  
PROJECT ASSISTANTS: Arina Balenović • Ana Seba  
PHOTO PRODUCTION GOTOVAC - LAUER: Boris Cvjetanović

**BADCO. TEAM:**  
SOFTWARE & INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION: Daniel Turing  
CINEMATOGRAPHY & STILL PHOTOGRAPHY: Dinko Rupčić  
CAMERA ASSISTANT: Hrvoje Franjić  
VIDEO EDITING: Iva Kraljević  
COSTUMES: Silvio Vujičić  
ADDITIONAL PERFORMER: Ivo Kušek  
ARCHITECTURAL VISUALISATION: Antun Sevšek  
DRAFTSMEN: Igor Pauška • Slaven Josip Delalle  
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT: Valentina Orešić  
MODELLERS: Lidija Živković • Ivana Hribar • Barbara Radelj  
PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS: Dinko Rupčić • Ivan Kuharić  
PROPS PRODUCTION: Zagreb Youth Theatre workshop

The exhibition is realised in collaboration with the Croatian Film Clubs’ Association and Zagreb Youth Theatre.

The project is financed by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia  
Additional support from the City Office for Culture, Education and Sports, City of Zagreb

EQUIPMENT SPONSOR: AVC • Zagreb



THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS & ORGANISATIONS:  
Svebor Andrijević • Aleksandar Battista Ilić • Petar Blagojević-Arandelović • Vlasta Binički • Mile Blažević • Mladen Burić • Croatian Cinematheque • The Croatian Embassy in Rome • Culture Centre Novi Zagreb – Remetinec • Boris Cvjetanović • Tomislav Čuveljak • Ješa Denegri • Branko Dimitrijević • Damir Gamulin Gamba • Helge Hinteregger • Ivica Hripko • Ana Janevski • Vanja Joka-Brkljačić • Edin Karamehmedović • Siniša Knaflec • Ivana Knez • Silvestar Kolbas • Ivo Kušek • Tor Lindstrand • Jasminka Lokas-Strpić • Petar Milat • Tina Modrušan • Multimedia Institute • Diana Nenadić • Igor Pauška • Bojana Piškur • POGON – Zagreb Centre for Independent Culture and Youth • Ivan Posavec • Nino Semialjac • Vera Robić Škarica • Slobodan Šijan • Darko Šimičić • Davorin Rumiha • Nevena Tudor-Perković • Hrvoje Turković • Goran Trbuljak • Josip Vranjković • Dubravka Vrgoč • Stevan Vuković

Many thanks to everyone involved in the thought and production processes of both the exhibition and the publication. Additional thanks are due to the Croatian Film Clubs’ Association for allowing material from the monograph *Tomislav Gotovac* (2003) to be used in this publication. The quotations used are reprinted in their original, unedited form.

WHW is particularly grateful to Sarah Gotovac and Zora Cazi-Gotovac for their trust and generosity in sharing Tomislav Gotovac’s works.

This publication is produced in conjunction with the Croatian presentation at the 54th Biennale di Venezia.

PUBLISHER: **What, How & for Whom / WHW**  
Slovenska 5/1 • HR-10000 Zagreb  
whw4whw@gmail.com

EDITORS: **What, How & for Whom / WHW**  
[Ivet Čurlin • Ana Dević • Nataša Ilić • Sabina Sabolović]

COPY EDITOR: Jane Warrilow  
PROOF-READING (BADCO. TEXTS): Susan Jakopec  
TRANSLATIONS: Una Bauer • Jennifer Taylor

TEXTS BY: **Bojana Cvejić**  
**Tomislav Gotovac**  
**Florian Malzacher**  
**Renata Salecl**  
**Georg Schöllhammer**

ARTISTS’ TEXTS: **BADco.**  
**WHW**

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF: Art Workshop Lazareti • Aleksandar Battista Ilić • Petar Blagojević-Arandelović • Tomislav Čuveljak • Juan-Carlos Ferro Duque • Damir Gamulin • Ljubo Gamulin • Sarah Gotovac • Dejan Habicht • Ivica Hripko • Ivana Ivković • Siniša Knaflec • Silvestar Kolbas • Igor Krpan • Tor Lindstrand • Ratko Mavar • Tomislav Medak • Mihovil Pansini • Vladimir Petek • Ivan Posavec • Lovro Rumiha • Dinko Rupčić • Nino Semialjac • Dražen Šokčević • Marc Twain • Bernd Uhlig • Damir Žižić

DESIGN: Dejan Kršić 4WHW  
TYPOGRAPHY: Brioni • Typonine Sans Pro [NIKOLA DJUREK]  
PRINTED BY: Tiskara Zagreb  
PRINT RUN: 20,000  
ISBN 978-953-55951-2-0  
June 2011, Zagreb



CITY OF ZAGREB

BADco. is co-organiser of LABO21 – European Platform for Interdisciplinary Research on Artistic Methodologies, a partner project between BADco. (Zagreb), BUDA Arts Center (Kortrijk), Laboratorium (Antwerp) and the University of Circus and Dance (Stockholm). With the support of the Culture Programme of the European Commission.



This publication reflects only the views of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

<http://croatia Venice2011.whw.hr>



**Antonio G. Lauer a.k.a. Tomislav Gotovac**

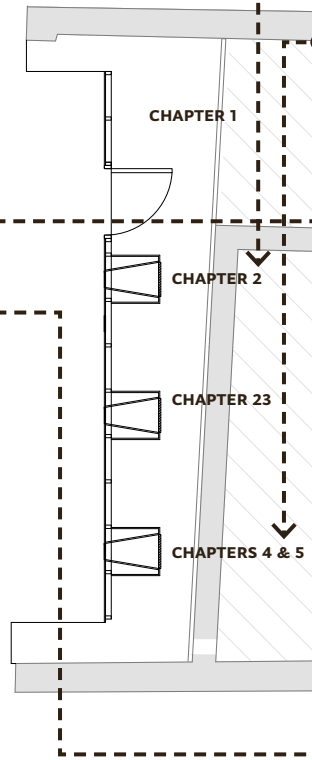
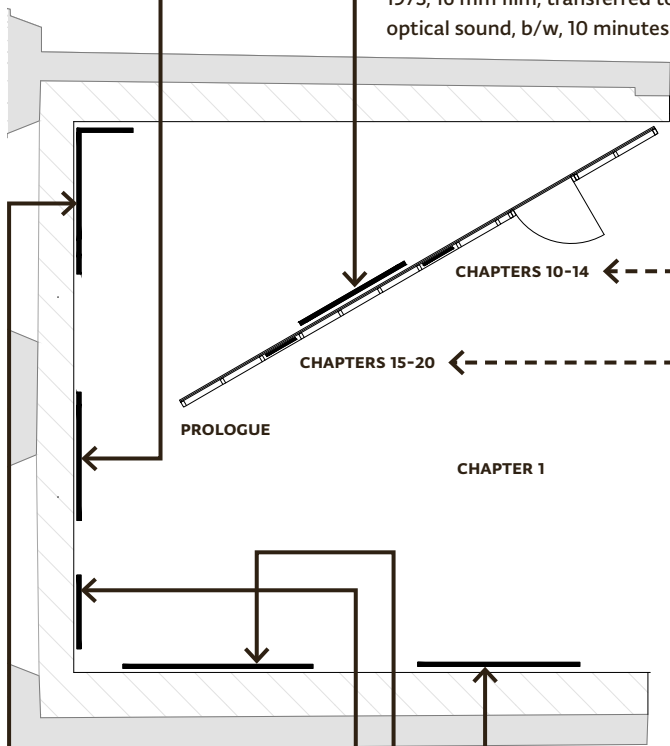


**Cara Dušana 11**  
35 b/w photographs, 1977 (2011)  
PHOTOGRAPHER: JUAN-CARLOS FERRO DUQUE

**Family Film I**  
1971, 8 mm film, transferred to DVD, no sound, b/w, 6 minutes

**Family Film II**  
1973, 16 mm film, transferred to DVD, optical sound, b/w, 10 minutes

**S**  
1966, 8 mm film transferred to DVD, optical sound, b/w, 4 minutes



**Showing the Elle Magazine**  
6 b/w photographs, 1962 (2011)  
PHOTOGRAPHER: IVICA HRIPKO



**The Forenoon of a Faun**  
1963, 16 mm film transferred to DVD, optical sound, b/w, 9 minutes



**Hands**  
3 b/w photographs, 1964 (2011)  
PHOTOGRAPHER: PETAR BLAGOJEVIĆ-ARANĐELOVIĆ



**Metal Covers of the City of Belgrade**  
96 b/w photographs, 1977 (2011)  
PHOTOGRAPHER: JUAN-CARLOS FERRO DUQUE

**BADco.**

**Responsibility for Things Seen: Tales in Negative Space,** 2011, installation consisting of 7 segments:

- PROLOGUE: Spatial Displacement**  
[replica of the back wall of the exhibition space] ¶
- CHAPTER 1: Negative Space / The Door**  
[stage installation behind the door on the back wall, stage lighting] ¶
- CHAPTER 2: Parametricism / 'No Future'**  
[photo film, b/w, loop] ¶
- CHAPTERS 4 & 5: Latency / Le Voyage dans la Lune**  
[live video laid over pre-produced film, b/w] ¶
- CHAPTERS 10-14: Face-Space / Excavation**  
[algorithmic film, real time editing of live video and pre-produced footage, b/w, interactive] ¶
- CHAPTERS 15-20: Zoopraxographer's Chamber**  
[algorithmic film, real time editing of live video and pre-produced footage, b/w, interactive] ¶
- CHAPTER 23: Amerika**  
[live processed video, b/w] ¶

COURTESY OF BADCO.

ALL WORKS COURTESY OF SARAH GOTOVAC