PILA RUSJAN: PORTFOLIO
presentation of selected projects

2008-2014
In the works presented we are trying to find balance in various environments and situations which we make parallel to an intimate relationship of a couple. The exhibition consists of three works in three different media: a video loop of finding a balance under water, a poster diptych of a photo of us balancing leaned against each other cut into half for the gallery entrance and a kinetic sculpture made of wires of a couple holding each other not to fall, but always do.
Nora Gregor - Hidden Continent of Memory
three-channel fiction film on stage and videoscenographies fot a theatre play
(author of the play: Neda R. Bric)

The play is about an Austrian actor born in Gorizia who through her lifetime worked, among others, with Carl Th. Dreyer and Jean Renoir, but was PRIVATLY all the time in troubles because of her partners, family roots and the world situation in the time of World War I and II. In the film, which accompanies the stage story, we paralelly follow a contemporary story of a young journalist who is researching Nora’s life and at the same time his own roots.

Premieres:
SNG Nova Gorica, September 2014
SMG, Ljubljana, October 2014
Sauschpielhaus Graz, 2015
Teatro Rossetti Trieste, 2015
Reflection of the Unconscious
interactive spatial video

This work is a part of my exploration of various forms of video as images in time. My goal was to produce an endless and everchanging video as a standalone object. The object became a sink with reflections of water on the ceiling. It has an ultrasonic sensor which through an integrated microcontroller triggers a servo motor to react on the user’s distance so that the pattern on the wall is never the same.

Presented at:
School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Aalto University, Helsinki, 2014; Cimri, ne čimri, Gallery A+A, Venice, 2014; School of Arts, University of Nova Gorica, Gorica, 2014; MAP in Motion, Gallery Kortil, Rijeka, 2014; MAP in Motion, Gallery Alcatraz, Ljubljana, 2014; PixxelPoint, Nova Gorica 2014,
Chief Engineer’s Cabin, 16:32-19:48

time- and site-specific installation, Galeb boat, 4th July 2014

This piece was made on in Rijeka on Tito’s ex-military boat called Galeb, now parked in the city harbour. During a 5-days mobility I studied natural movement and light onboard to make a time- and site-specific installation which for me was an animated film, projecting more frames at once and constantly changing its position.

With colour filters and objects found on the boat I reshaped the sunrays’ reflections from the sea’s everchanging surface onto the chief engineer’s cabin’s ceiling. The shape, size and position of this reflection moved constantly during these three hours. In the end, direct sunlight shone into the bottle filled with water which made the whole cabin alive by movement.
Cimri, ne čimri (Flatmates)
exhibition of four authors: Tomaž Burlin, Noemi Veberič Levovnik, Valerie Wolf Gang and myself

The concept of the exhibition is for the four individuals (the artists) to set multimedia ambiental installations in the gallery as if they were living there as flatmates (Slovenian: Cimri). They divided the gallery into seven rooms by their functionality and interpreted them each in their own artistic way. As in a real shared apartment, they had to make compromises (on set-ups, light etc.), fight for their space for individual installations or even rethink a specific exhibited work regarding the one next to it. They literally lived in the gallery for one week prior to the opening and shared their process on the Famul VideoLab blog! (www.famulvideolab.wordpress.com)
Produced artworks:
Pick Me a Colour, interactive graphic
Reflection of the Uncounscious, interactive spacial video
Četrtek / Thursday
video mapping for a theatre play
(author of the play: Nina Šorak)

In Thursday, video mapping is done in the frame of specifically designed stage of theatre Glej in Ljubljana. It is an old black-coloured hall with archs. I used the shapes to make a feeling of wide (in the background), but still psychologically closed space (four columns in the stage itself).

The play is divided into 18 chapters, each of them divided by a change of a simulated projector slide. Each chapter represents a scene from a life of a couple. Some of them are more realistic and the video makes the space into a landscape, others give accent on the psychological states of the two characters; latest are accompanied with videos which support or even better extend those emotions.

In the end, the two protagonists take a rest and rethink it all by the ocean which flushes over the stage’s floor and reaches the audience.
Video zid / Video Wall
urban open-air video gallery (Ljubljana 2013)

Video Wall is a video installation on the street. It works as a temporary graffiti. It has been conceived in order to place my interactive video Girl with a pearl earring (2013) into the longest corridor I could get: a long narrow street. Later, I decided to make the installation into a gallery where other artists could present their works as well. In the season 2013 there was five videos presented:
- Girl with a pearl earring (2013) by Pila Rusjan
- Drink coffee with me in Venice (2013) by Valerie Wolf Gang
- States (2013) by Noemi Veberič Levovnik
- Direction-Free (2013) by Dunja Danial
- Coffee (2013) by Uška Djukić
In season 2014 I plan to invite international video artists to join us.

More on the project:
www.famulvideolab.wordpress.com

Location: Židovska ulica, Ljubljana, oktober-december 2013
Women and their relation to Sex

a part of video omnibus - Exquisit Corpse Video Project IV: Porn and Politics (Ljubljana / web 2013)

Exquisit Corpse Video Project (ECVP) is an international group of video artists, who collaborate through internet since 2008 and present their group projects all around the globe. This year’s theme was Porn and Politics, which has been till now presented in gallery Photon in Ljubljana and at Porny Days Film Festival in Zurich. My part deals with women’ relation to porn and sex in general. It includes a sound-mix of YouTube quotes from porn stars, young teenagers etc. with an imagery of home-video-like acted sex scene in slow motion.
Mapping Komiža Narratives
interactive documentary film (with Urška Djukić and Adam Whitehall; Komiža 2013)

Mapping Komiža Narratives is a collection of short audiovisual stories of Komižian inhabitants on island Vis in Croatia. The audiovisual narrative is designed into an interactive Vimeo channel where a viewer can browse the stories in his or her own sequences. The form is chosen in order to bring the viewer closer to our experience in Komiža: time is not linear. Happenings, narratives take you to other places and time thickens at that time. When some of the stories cross, it becomes a net, a map, a place one feels secure in.

Presented in group exhibition 2. Komiža, Komiža, Vis
Available at Vimeo: Passage Academy
Celebration of 100th Anniversary of renowned Slovenian writer Boris Pahor living in Trieste. The event consisted of five parts: audiovisual biography of Boris Pahor, dramatic part with video scenographies in 9 chapters, a talk with the writer, audiovisual congratulations to the writer and a live chorus for finale. Video scenographies were video footage and computer graphic imagery shot and generated specially for this event. Video shots of the city of Trieste, old historical photos and computer generated texts were the core of it.
Girl With the Pearl Earring
interactive video installation (Ljubljana / Gorizia 2013)

Girl with the Pearl Earring is an interactive video installation of a young woman walking her way into the unknown. Her stalker is the visitor himself. When the visitor comes close enough, she turns towards him: a part of her decides to make a step closer, the other part continues on her own. Video screen stands at the end of a long corridor, two sensors detect distance and direction of the visitor. When he walks towards the screen, video reacts. The protagonist is a revived Vermeer’s painting. I see her as a fragile, yet strong young female figure which is in an ambiguous position: deciding between individual life and partnership.

Presented at group exhibition at Miklova Hiša, Ribnica, in Video Wall urban gallery in Ljubljana, at PixxelPoint contemporary art festival in Nova Gorica and Gorizia and at Zametki - interdisciplinary platform in Španski Borci, Ljubljana. (photos from test installation)
City Voyeur
interactive video installation / performance (Graz 2013)

Eventhough we constantly complain about surveillance cameras and are afraid that today we are being watched on every step, we also like to watch and observe through a peeping hole. Technically, the installation consisted of funny-looking binoculars which were actually a periscope with a hidden webcam and IR lights in it. The Kunsthhaus screen was primarily showing air view of the center of Graz and every time a passer-by took a look through the binoculars, his or her eyes turned up on the Kunsthause screen - the voyeur was exposed.

Presentation:
Responsive Art in the Public Realm, AdriArt workshop, Kunsthaus Graz
An hour and a half of this opera and ballet concert was visually accompanied by video scenographies and visual narratives. The most important of the latest was the piece which was played with Swan’s Lake 2nd chapter and showed retired ballet dancers revisiting the new Opera house.
Freedom is always freedom of the one who thinks differently

video mapping (author of the performance: Neda R. Bric; Ljubljana 2012)

The performance speaks about women’ history and rights through nine actors representing important female activists. The nine actors speak through nine windows on a building. The visualisations extend their revolutionary thoughts and reveal their names.
The project springs from their own experience of loneliness in a foreign country and at the same time discusses the paradoxical situation of increasing solitude in a world characterized by intense communication aided by modern technologies. The interactive book and bed make up the audio-visual installation that creates an intimate and pleasant atmosphere, where visitors can browse through the book and choose their bedtime story. The stories that are projected onto the bed are presented in different forms and blur the line between reality and dreams.

(Yasmin Martin Vodopivec, MGLC 2012)

Presentations:
Traffic Jam @ Work, Treasure Hill Artst Village Taipei
Zgodbe za lahko noč / Bedtime Stories, Mednarodni grafični likovni center Ljubljana
Art Hall venue, Water Tower Art Fest Sofia
Zlitje stoletij / Fusion of the centuries

video scenographies and visual narratives (director of the event: Neda R. Bric; Ljubljana 2011)

Celebration of new Opera house in Ljubljana consisted of visualisations in space, on front and last video screen. The most complex was the last video narrative where ballet dancers, opera singers and orchestrants cut the red ribbon on the screen and appeared physically on the stage afterwards for the last scene of the red ribbons falling.
Kdor sam do večera potuje skoz svet (Simon Gregorčič)

audiovisual work and video scenographies (author of the play: Neda R. Bric; Nova Gorica 2011)

This theatre play is about Slovenian poet and priest Simon Gregorčič who lived in the end of 19th Century. There is a parallel contemporary story being told on screen. The five white cubes are set apart when the drama is being staged and put together when the audiovisual story on screen is being told.
Memories Re-enacted - #1: São Paulo
series of photo-diptychs (Ljubljana 2011)

How many things can we remember, if we close our eyes and go to another place with our thoughts? How can the Sun warm us up in the middle of a grey day and how much freezing water needs to be spilled to sense the tropical rain within?

The series of re-enacted memories starts with my experience of São Paulo. I did not bring back many photographs from there, but many impressions and memories. These formed into packages of feelings, which were stamped into me there and then and later became more complex. How to describe a moment, to which we are emotionally attached, to someone who was not present when it took place? What does a photograph of a real event mean to the viewer? And what about a photograph of a re-enacted memory of it? When does an experience form a story that we can narrate forward and onwards?

When I want to recall a memory that I did not write down or record, I remember the place that surrounded me then. I remember me in it; I am as a reflection of the surroundings. From these senses I then build up the whole situation. “When alone, I see myself from outside. Perhaps, I don’t look at the world, but I feel how the world sees me.” (South America, December 2010)

Presentations:
Exhibition of OHO Award Nominees, Galerija Vžigalica - MGML, Ljubljana
Memories Re-enacted - #1 São Paulo, Galerija Castanho Claro, Maribor
Memory (or something similar), Galerija Miklova hiša, Ribnica
Elisa, 5 is a video about the homeless problem in Sao Paulo. It has been filmed in the last days before 300 ex-favela families were thrown out on the streets from an occupied building in the center, even though the building has been empty for twelve years. This short video is about a girl, who ends up homeless on her 5th birthday.

Presentations (selected):
Traffic Jam #1, Matilha Cultural, São Paulo
Peripheral Vision, multimedia exhibition, Cuban House of Culture, Buenos Aires
Mapping the Memory 1999-2011, Galerija TukadMunga, Ljubljana
Po-vračanje / Re-Turn

two-channel videoinstallation (Ljubljana 2010)

Videoinstallation Re-Turn by Pila Rusjan is in an allegory of a relationship between an individual and a collective group. The group attacks, the individual adjusts. It represents one of those family dinners where the visitor of the exhibition forgets his personal convictions for a moment and starts to devour the tripes made by his mother in law with considerable disgust and in doing so adjusts to the group of the chomping relatives which is what was expected all along. However, the videoinstallation shows that the individual does not surrender to the group. The performer swallows food, but dines without pleasure. It is interesting that she persists in her discomfort and this is also why she remains undefeated. The group is trying to make a contact with her, but she is within their reach just every now and then. The performer endures and waits: this dinner too shall pass.

(Petja Grafenauer, Ganes Pratt 2010)

Presentations:
Metromeraggio, festival of short film and video, Trieste
Exhibition of ESSL Art Award Nominees, Moderna galerija, Ljubljana
Po-vračanje / Re-Turn, Galerija Ganes Pratt, Ljubljana
We are all Big Brother and Big Brother is just one of us
performance and site-specific videoprojection (Bitola 2009)

Leaders of society, or even more other icons of our time, seem superior to a random individual. They seem so far away, that they become dehumanised and are quickly connected to either good–perfect or bad–evil. In smaller amounts this appears in each group of people constructed in our society, no matter the size or field of interest; subsequently, it seems to the individual that some have the power and others do not. However, if the individual would somehow be aware of the weaknesses and discomfort of the so-called superiors, he/she could became aware of the fact, that they are human too, and that we all have equal predispositions; as much as we have the power to turn things our way, we are also equally responsible for our failures to do that.

Space: AKTO, Festival of Contemporary Arts, Bitola, Macedonia
Time: August 2009, Sunny, 37°C
Duration: 35 minutes

DAY 1 – Filming a performance on the main street of Bitola
I am standing in the middle of the street on a pedestal. The camera is constantly filming my close-up. As I am trying to show my superiority to the camera, the crowd walks by with feelings of total confusion. As I am standing still already for some time in the heat, my concentration is getting low. I start to jump out of my straight-faced act, which reviles the weakness in me.

DAY 2-5 – Projections of «the Superior»
In the upcoming evenings, projections of the Superior filmed on day one rule the same street.

Presentation:
AKTO, Festival of Contemporary Arts, Bitola, Macedonia
If Only ...

single-channel video (Ljubljana / Sarajevo 2009)

Sometimes, it’s like... You’re not even listening!
I think, If I do this, you will be happy...
I hate it when you do that!!
If I think how you think, perhaps I figure it out - ?
If only... The image of you in my head wouldn’t differ so much from reality...
If only, I could fall in love with you!

Predstations (selection):
Various exhibitions and festivals around the world in context of Exquisite Corpse Video Project II
Festival Imagem-Contato, Mostra SESC de Artes, São Paulo
Festival Narave, Bežigrajska galerija II, Ljubljana
We are burdened with the need to control our lives, we chase opportunities anxiously afraid of missing a moment, we document our every move so the slightest event will not go forgotten. We want to process, chew over, and spit out each fact, feeling, and discovery. But why not stop for a moment and just be? I abandon my most intimate space, my bedroom, and open its door to the public, leaving behind memories, realized and unfulfilled ideas, processed emotions and notes. These products take my place, so I as a person can draw back and just be.

I leave no trace, absorb nothing. Another being is free to join me.

Presentations:
City of Women - Contemporary Art Festival, at my home, Ljubljana
ArtFem.tv, on-line database for video and performance art, http://artfem.tv