



SILVAN OMERZU

PREGLEDNA RAZSTAVA / A RETROSPECTIVE

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Silvan OMERZU

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Stare praške zgodbe

Silvan OMERZU

Prago slabo poznam. To je kmalu ugotovil vsak, ki me je obiskal. Vedno sem se zadrževal bolj v svoji soški. Obakrat, prvič v osemdesetih in drugič konec devetdesetih sem stanoval v starem delu, le kakšnih sto metrov stran od znane ure. Tako sem nakupoval v istih trgovinah in hodil v iste gostilne, seveda v tiste, ki so še ostale.

Pogrešal sem vinarno Narcis, ki je bila nekoč odprta vso noč in v kateri so opiti nekdanji džezisti proti jutru obvezno zaigrali prelepo *Življenje je le naključje*. Ali pa jih je zaneslo in so improvizirali, dokler jih ni šef ozmerjal. To je tisti Narcis, v katerem je vsako noč sedela že zelo postarana nekdanja lepota z belo napudranim, kot maska otrplim obrazom in z ogromnimi trepalnicami. In je govorila le nemško, proti jutru pa izginila skozi službeni vhod in nihče ni vedel, kam. Pogrešal sem leseno barako, v kateri so Vietnamci prodajali vsemogočo robo in imeli lokal s pijačo odprt podnevi in ponoči in so gostje po prekrokanu noči z natakarnjem vred spali z obrazi, naslonjenimi na mizah. Pogrešal sem tudi traško na vogalu in popravljalnico igrač malo naprej. Je pa na istem vogalu še vedno sedel star invalid in požiral meče ter si v nos porival dolge, debele žeblice, da so se mimo dočeli od gnusa umikali na drugo stran ceste. In še vedno je bila gostilna Pri dveh mačkah, kjer sem bil nekoč priča zelo zanimivemu pogovoru svojih dveh sosedov. Prvi je namreč razlagal, kako mu po umivanju las ostane še ravno dovolj šampona za pod pazduho. Drugi pa, da mu ga ostane dovolj za pod pazduho in še za spodaj.

Ni pa bilo več kavarne, v kateri so bili v prvem nadstropju plesi za starejše. In kjer so ob prvih zvokih orkestra starčki kot pobalini odskakljali po izbranke. In kjer so nekoč starčka, ki je preveč vneto plesal, na nosilih odnesli iz kavarne, on pa je še vedno milo gledal proti soplesalki, kot bi ji hotel reči, da naj kar počaka, saj bo takoj nazaj. Vendar ga ni bilo. Starčka sem poznal, stanoval je v sosednjem stopnišču naše hiše, in že naslednji dan sem videl nad vhodom viseti črno zastavo.

Pogrešal sem skupino gledališčnikov, s katerimi smo pol leta, vsak dan, brez honorarjev vadili predstavo, ki naj bi jo igrali v velikem vojaškem šotoru na otoku sredi Vltave. Vendar so jo po obveznem ogledu generalke prepovedali. Predstava je bila sestavljena iz starih praških zgodb, od katerih se mi je najbolj vtisnila v spomin naslednja:

Nekoč so v starem praškem samostanu razpisali natečaj za izdelavo kipa križanega Kristusa. Prijavilo se je veliko kiparjev in rezbarjev iz vse dežele. Vsi so si želeli naročila. Še posebej goreče pa si ga je želel reven rezbar, ki je dan za dnem, podnevi in ponoči iskal model s tako trpečim izrazom, ki bi ponazoril Kristusovo trpljenje. Po mesecih iskanja je končno našel zeleni izraz na obrazu bolnega in sestradanega berača. Odpešal ga je k sebi in mu dal jesti ter piti. Ko pa si je berač opomogel, je rezbar z grozo opazil, da se mu je trpeči izraz spremenil v hvaležni smehljaj. Rezbar je pobesnel in privezal berača na križ, ki ga je imel pripravljenega za poziranje. Trpinčil in stradal ga je, vendar brez uspeha. Minil je teden, berač pa še vedno ni imel dovolj trpečega izraza. Rezbar je postajal vse bolj okruten in nor. In ko je nekega dne veselo opazil, da berač spet dobiva svoj stari trpeči izraz, je ta dvignil trudno glavo, pogledal rezbarja, se nasmehnil in z nasmehom na obrazu izdihnil.

Old Prague Stories

Silvan OMERZU

I am not that familiar with Prague. This was immediately clear to anybody who visited me there. I spent most of the time in my neighbourhood. The two times I lived there, first in the 1980s, and then once again at the end of the 90s, I lived in the old part, a mere hundred meters or so from the famous clock. I would shop in the same shops and visit the same bars - the ones that were still there, of course.

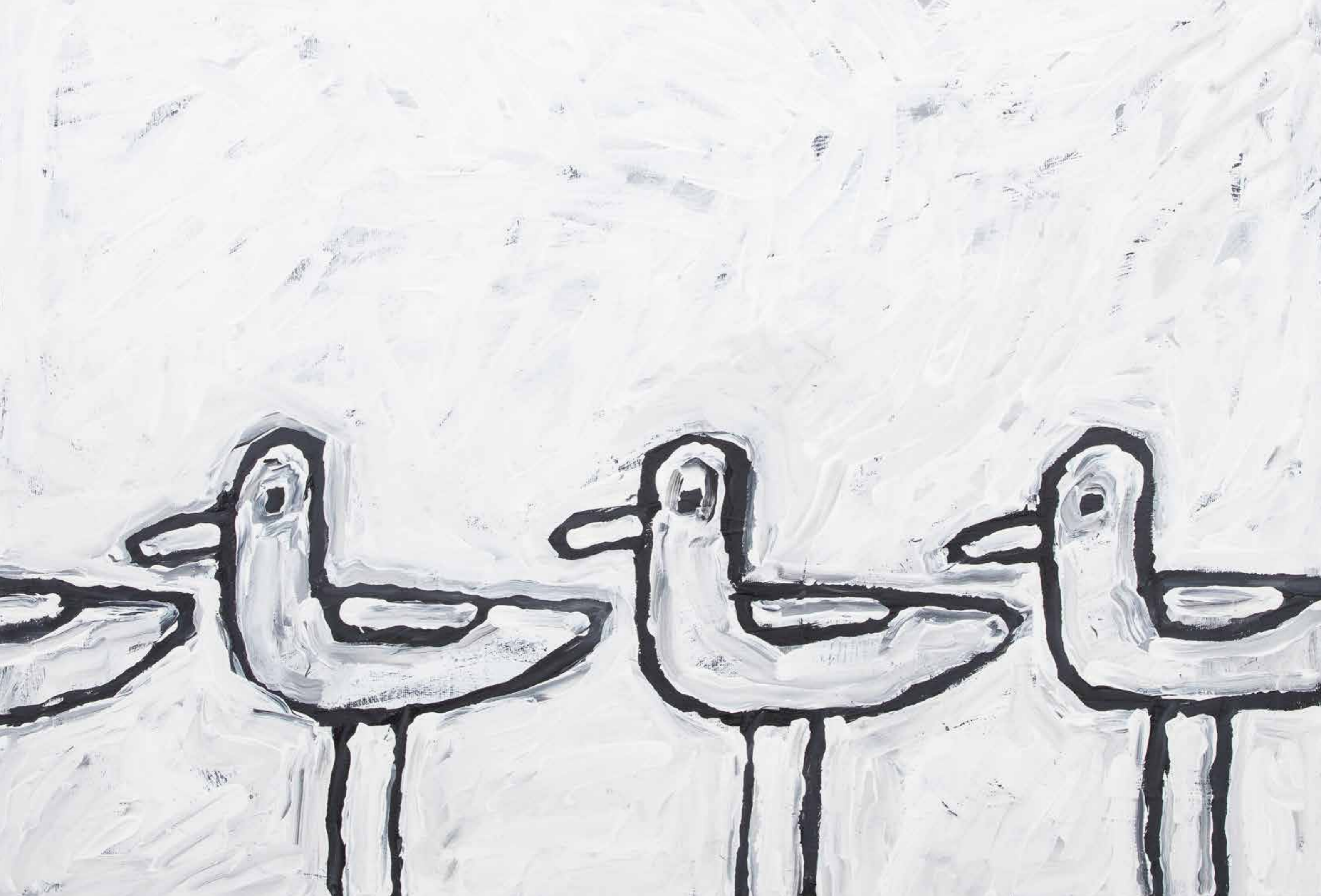
I missed the Narcissus vinery, which used to be open all night and which was a refuge for intoxicated elderly jazz musicians who always played the beautiful *Život je jen náhoda* as the morning started to show its face. Sometimes they were carried away and started improvising until they were told to stop by the boss. In this same Narcissus an old former beauty sat every night, with a white powdered face with long eyelashes, motionless as a mask. She only spoke German, and towards the morning she would disappear through the staff exit and nobody knew where she went. I missed the wooden hut, in which the Vietnamese sold all types of merchandise and had a bar that served drinks all day and night, and in the end the guests would, after an all-nighter, sleep with their faces on the tables, next to the waiter who did the same. I also missed the kiosk on the corner and the toy repair shop a few steps further. However, on that very corner, the old disabled man still sat and swallowed swords and pushed long, thick nails into his nose, making the passers-by cross to the other side of the road in disgust. The restaurant *U Dvo Koček (Two Cats)* in which I once witnessed an interesting conversation between two people from the neighbourhood, was also still there. The first one was explaining that when he washes his hair, he always has exactly the right amount of shampoo left to wash his armpits. The second one said that he always had enough for his armpits as well as for down under.

The café that used to host dances for the elderly on its first floor was no longer there. This is where old men would jump like young boys, grabbing

hold of their dance partners as soon as the orchestra played its first notes. This is where I once saw an old man, dancing vigorously until he was carried out of the café on a stretcher, and he was still looking longingly at his dance partner, as if he was trying to tell her to wait for him, for he will be back in a tick. But he never returned. I knew the old man, he lived in the house next to mine, and the very next day I saw a black flag flying above the entrance.

I missed the crowd of theatricals, with which we, for six straight months, day in, day out, with no pay, rehearsed a play, which we were supposed to perform in the large military tent on the island on the Vltava river. However, the performance was cancelled after the obligatory viewing of the dress rehearsal. The performance was created from old Prague stories, from which the following stuck in my mind:

A long time ago the old Prague monastery held a tender for a statue of Christ on the crucifix. A number of sculptors and carvers from all across the country applied. And all of them wanted to win this tender. But a poor carver was especially desperate to win the tender and day after day, day and night, he searched for a model with an expression of suffering that would reflect Christ's suffering. After months of searching, he finally found the expression he was looking for on the face of a sick and starving beggar. He took him to his place and gave him food and drink. As soon as the beggar was refreshed, the carver noticed in great terror that the beggar's suffering expression had turned into a grateful smile. The carver flew into a rage and tied the beggar to the cross that he had prepared for the posing. He tortured and starved him, but to no avail. A week had passed, and the beggar's expression still failed to reflect the suffering of Christ. The carver became increasingly cruel and crazy. One day he joyfully noticed that the expression of suffering was returning to the beggar's face, and as soon as he noticed it the beggar raised his head, looked at the carver, smiled and died smiling.



Razstava kot predstava

Za uvod v kostanjeviško veliko razstavo lutk, avtomatov, slik in risb je Silvan Omerzu postavil malo lutko, podobo Ivana Cankarja. Gre za enega izmed eksponatov, ki so nastali kot del likovne opreme ob razstavi leta 2018 v Cankarjevem domu, s katero so proslavili stoto obletnico smrti pisatelja, ki se je v zgodovino zapisal kot eden najboljših poznavalcev in kritikov slovenske družbe in njene duše. Majhna lutka sedi na stolčku ob mizici, vse troje je izdelano iz svetlega, surovega lesa brez dodane barve. Preprostost elementov je dovolj zgovorna, in čeprav pisatelj nima posebnih atributov, so že njegovi mogočni brki prepoznavni podpis, ki se je vtisnil v spomin vsakega učenca slovenske šole.

Zanimivo je, da je umetnik za začetek razstave izbral prav podobo pisatelja. Še posebej Ivana Cankarja, ki je v svoji prozi značaje in dogodke opisoval slikovito, ekspresivno in kritično. Pri tem je največkrat tako nazoren, da občutljivi bralec kakšen opis raje prebere bolj površno. Morda izpusti stavek ali dva in si zgodbo v svoji domišljiji sestavi tako, da je pomensko še vedno neokrnjena, vendar zanj manj realna. Tudi Silvan Omerzu je v začetnih letih svojega delovanja oblikoval figure z izmaličenimi potezami obličij, katerih izraznost je še poudarjal s kričeče rdeče obarvanimi usti in vranje črnimi očmi; oboje se je kar groteskno kontrastno izražalo na bleščeči beli površini lutkinega obraza. Pripovednost je tako pri obeh avtorjih, pisatelju in lutkarju, neposredno nazorna. Tovrstna zgovornost bralca in gledalca velikokrat čustveno močno obremeni in lahko se zgodi, da zgodba izgubi svoj prvotni pomen in avtorjev namen. Privlačna je le še

v prikazu karikiranih in humornih pripovedi, čeprav so njihova sporočila še tako resnična. Krutost stvarnega življenja je namreč dosegla tisto točko, ko se preprosto odločimo, da zgodbe ne bomo sprejeli, še več, da zgodba ne obstaja, je ni in se ne bo zgodila.

Ob stoti obletnici Cankarjeve smrti se je zvrstilo mnogo obeležij, s katerimi so obudili pisateljevo besedo in marsikdo je poskušal opozoriti na – pogosto prav grozljivo – aktualnost njegovih pronicljivih misli, ki pa večinoma ostajajo v zaprtih knjigah, pospravljenih na policah, brez kakršnegakoli učinka. Omerzujeve lutkovne predstave poskušajo ohranjati izvirne misli Cankarja in drugih avtorjev. Njegova likovna govorica zaživi tako na odru kot pozneje, ko lutke počivajo v depojih ali so razstavljene na policah kot umetniški likovni izdelki. Vendar se zdi, da ljudje ob njihovem ogledovanju, kakor ob branju v pisateljevih časih, »tavajo v mraku, za zmerom so jim zaklenjena vrata v svetlobo ...« /Piton/ Publikum se torej tudi po stotih letih ni predramil in Cankar je zapisal: »... tiste majhne oči so gledale naravnost name, zaspano, toda tako mirno in naravnost ...«¹ Verjetno se zato uvodno izhodišče skozi dramaturški lok razstave vedno bolj kaže kot njena rdeča nit: majhna figura pisatelja pred prazno mizo, na kateri ni papirja, v roki ni pisala. Pisatelj razmišlja o stvareh, ki jih nihče noče slišati, opisuje dogodke, ki se nikoli ne bi smeli zgoditi, opisuje značaje, za katere si želimo, da ne bi obstajali. To so temne plati, senčni karakterji. Ko se jih je pisatelj zavedel, je zastrigel z ušesi, nato pa jim v porog pokazal jezik: »Človekova senca je vedno temnejša nego je on sam!«²

¹ Ivan Cankar, *Publikum*, 1907.

² Ivan Cankar, *Hiša Marije Pomočnice*, 1904.



Prvotna, predvsem obrazna ekspresivnost Omerzujevih lutk se je postopoma izgubljala, dokler je ni izpodrinila nemost in čustvena brezizraznost, kar seveda kaže avtorjev ustvarjalni razvoj. Minimaliziranje izraznih sredstev je praviloma znak dozorevanja, ki zahteva od gledalca globlje čustveno in razumsko doživetje. Formalno nas spomni na dvoumnost oblikovanja v kiparstvu klasične antike, kjer je bil pripovedni poudarek na verodostojno popolni upodobitvi atletske postave, medtem ko je obraz ohranjal mirnost, neangažiranost, tudi če je telo prikazovalo fizičen napor. Idealni liki so idealni zgolj v prikazu mišic in brezhibne anatomije, njihova identiteta pa je ostala neznana, saj je bila očitno v tistem času nepomembna. Tudi Omerzu opušča detajle, ki izpričujejo značaj in doživljaj, podobe stilizira in razbarva do brezosebnega, uniformiranega. Figure ohranijo barvo materiala in zgolj sence, ki se

poigravajo na površini teles, ustvarjajo idejo živosti. Tovrstna stilizacija spominja na tehniko grizaja, s katero so slikarji, predvsem ob koncu srednjega veka, likovno tekmovali s kiparji. S posnemanjem barve kamna so v slikah dosegli neverjetno plastičen učinek. Podobe svetnikov so postale navidezno bolj otipljive in zato v duhovnem doživetju vernikov bolj žive. Grizaj jih je v prenesenem, simbolnem pomenu opozarjal na pomembnost kontemplacije in zavedanja, da je podoba, ki jo na oltarni sliki vidijo, zgolj opozorilo, vzpodbuda, naj se v svojih mislih in molitvah osredotočajo na božansko in ne na materialno. Tehnika grizaja je podobno protislovna kot lahko dojemamo Omerzujevo stilizacijo lutke: prav zato, ker sta jim odvzeta barva, obrazna in telesna mimika, so v gledalčevem doživetju še bolj zgovorne.

TEK ZA VOZOM (po Ivanu Cankarju), Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

RUN AFTER A CART (after Ivan Cankar), A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



Z izginjanjem nakazanih čustev se izgublja individualnost in njeni ideali, z izgubo zasebnosti izgublja pomen celotno telo in njegovo življenje. Na nepomembnost idealnega človeškega življenja ali bolje samega telesa je opozoril Kazuo Ishiguro v romanu *Ne zapusti me nikdar*.³ Če je kiparska nemost v upodobitvah grških atletov selektivno in avtoritativno poudarjala zgolj telesno lepoto in moč kot ideal dobe, ki jo je slavil tudi antični Rim z danes že izrabljenim rekom zdrav duha v zdravem telesu, so Ishigurovi liki prav tako morali ohranjati fizično zdravje, vendar zgolj zato, da so lahko brezhibno opravili nalogo, za katero so bili spočeti ali ustvarjeni: bili so namreč človeški kloni, katerih organi so služili kot nadomestni deli za običajne ljudi. Nema vdanost v poslanstvo, ki jim je bilo naloženo ob stvarjenju, je občutljivemu bralcu nepojmljiva in nedopustna. Po drugi strani pa avtorju kot opravičilo za čustveno (ne)angažiranost

pomaga v vseh časih preverjeno hinavsko načelo: česar ne vidimo, ne obstaja. Zato kloni preživljajo otroštvo in mladost na oddaljenih, osamljenih posestvih, proč od oči tistih, katerim bodo v določeni dobi svojega življenja brezpogojno predali svoje organe. Ti mladi kloni živijo kot dvojniki in od drugih ljudi se ločijo le po tem, da so neplodni. Torej obstajajo in hkrati ne obstajajo, so kot neizogibne sence, ki zagotavljajo eksistenco tistih, ki so jih ustvarili in bodo v nekem ključnem obdobju nujno potrebovali vsaj del njih.

Silvan Omerzu pogosto oblikuje lutke, gledališko sceno in režira predstave z motivi trpljenja in smrti. Kruto zgodbo lažje povemo ali sprejmemo, če je prikazana manj realno, vsaj oblikovno, zato je velikokrat zelo pripravna oblika senčno gledališče. Morda je zato tudi v Kostanjevici na Krki za uvod prikazal drobno senca voza, sedečih figur na njem in Francke,

³ Kazuo Ishiguro, *Ne zapusti me nikdar*, 2005, prev. Katarina Jerin 2006.

IVAN CANKAR, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

IVAN CANKAR, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



ki teče za vozom. Senčna skupina se premika, podobe počasi rastejo in z njihovim večanjem naraščata tudi groza in stiska, o katerih pripoveduje prisposodba dekletove težke usode. Prikaz je hkrati strašljiv in grotesken ter zato tudi smešen, s čimer se tesnoba seveda nekoliko sprosti. Hkrati se zavemo, da je trpeči um največjega slovenskega pisatelja imel tudi smisel za humor (podobno kot Silvan Omerzu). S stopnjevanjem velikosti senčne slike voza in uboge Francke se stopnjujejo tudi črne misli in krute, a realne Cankarjeve zgodbe, s katerimi je pisatelj zaman dvigoval zrcalo v obupni želji, da bi se slovenski narod v njem morda uzrl. Videz senčne podobe spominja tudi na stripovski oblaček, kjer vidimo ali preberemo misli junaka, v našem primeru Cankarja.

Franckina vztrajnost je prisposodba pisateljeve vztrajnosti in v hollywoodskem filmu, bi se obeh usmilili in jima dali še eno (in še eno ...) priložnost za srečo. Tako se moramo v zadnji sceni filma *Defending Your Life* (1991) nasmejniti in spomniti Cankarjeve Francke, ko upamo in verjamemo v uspeh glavnega junaka Daniela, ki teče za trolejbusom. Potem ko je umrl v prometni nesreči, se znajde v kraju *Judgement City*, ki predstavlja vice. Pred sodniki je devet dni zagovarjal svoje strahopetne življenjske odločitve in obsodijo ga na ponovno življenje na Zemlji, medtem ko pogumno prijateljico Julio pošljejo naprej v naslednjo bivanjsko razsežnost. Ko sta oba junaka že

vkrcana na trolejbusa, namenjena na različni destinaciji, se v Danielu prebudi neustavljiva želja in odloči se, da ne želi živeti brez Julije, zato skoči iz vozila, pri čemer ga stresa elektrika. Kljub bolečini steče med drveče trolejbuse in poskuša odpreti vrata tistega, na katerem je prijateljica, pri čemer ga ponovno stresa elektrika. Sodniki uvidijo, da je končno premagal strah in zato lahko odpotuje novim dogodivščinam naproti. Tudi Francka je doživela pomilovanje, ko je z že okrvavljenimi nogami padla; šele tedaj so se je romarji usmilili in dvignili medse na voz ter ji tako dali možnost, da se ji izpolni želja, obiskati cerkev na Gori. Nadaljevanje zgodbe je, kot vemo, nadaljevanje nesrečnega življenja.

Večina prizorov v *Judgement City* poudarja pomen počitka. Liki pogosto sedijo in se pogovarjajo o svojem preteklem življenju ali uživajo ugodnosti, ki jim jih mesto v preho

du ponuja – predvsem dobro hrano. Idejo umiritve ponuja tudi Omerzu, lutka Ivana Cankarja je posedel za mizo, brez kakršnegakoli pisalnega pribora, kot bi pisatelj zgolj razmišljal. V naslednjem prostoru pa je oblikoval skupino velikih lutk, sedečih ob mizi in na sredo velike mize umestil še mala omizja. Prispodoba velikega in malih omizij ponuja razlago razmišljanja o življenju: velike lutke so morda bogovi/sodniki, ki s svoje nebeške vzvišenosti opazujejo mala tuzemska omizja in ljudem dovoljujejo verjeti, da si z lastnimi odločitvami in dejanji krojijo življenje. Morda je omizje prispodoba za vice ali čakalnico, iz katere smo po smrti napoteni v drugo razsežnost bivanja, nazaj v življenje na Zemlji ali v izničenje?

Osnovni pomen mize je predvsem ideja skupnosti pri jedi. Ljudje so sprva verjetno jedli kar čepe ali sede na tleh. Hrana, kot osnovni vir preživetja, je bilo težko uloviti, pridelati ali najti, zato so verjel, da je pri tem sodelovala višja sila. Iz hvaležnosti za pomoč so v obliki obrednega žrtvovanja bogovom začeli darovati jedi. Spoštljivost in strah sta jim narekovala, da morajo darove privzdigniti od tal, umazane in nespoštovane materije, ki prekriva htonično negotovost strašljivega podzemlja. Postavili so jih na razne oblike miz, oltarnih oziroma žrtveniških menz in jo tako simbolično približali nebeškim višavam. Človek je hrano ponujal bogovom kot darilo, odpustek oziroma nujni delež, da jo je z njihovim dovoljenjem lahko tudi sam užival. Še danes je navada, tudi po krščanskem izročilu, da se pred obedom bogu zahvali za »vsakdanji kruh«.

Hrana sicer nudi ugodje, lahko pa je tudi zavajajoča in usodno spremeni življenje tistega, ki jo je kot tudi onega, ki jo postreže, kar je doletelo mitološkega arkadijskega kralja Likáona. Po eni izmed razlag zgodbe je v posmeh in preizkus, ali je Zevs/Jupiter resnično vseveden bog, temu postregel s človeškim mesom. Vrhovni bog se je zato kruto maščeval in kar vsemu človeštvu na zemljo poslal vesoljni potop.

V srcu ga bes neznanski pogreje, le Jupitra vreden: /... / Zdaj pa na zemeljski obli, ki s pljuski Nerêj jo obliva, moram vsevprek pogubiti ta rod umrljivi /.../ še meni, ki strele vihtim, ki vas vodim, vam vladam, past je nastavil Likáon, razvpit po okrutnosti svoji? /.../ Vest o tej dobi brezsrampi prišla mi je pač na ušesa; v želji, da gre le za laž, spustil sem

se z vrha Olimpa, šel sem po zemlji na pot, jaz – bog v človeški podobi. Dolgo bi trajalo, preden naštel bi vam vsa hudodelstva, širom razkrita: obtožbe bile so miléjše od dejstev. /.../ vstopim v arkádsko palačo, pod streho prav nič gostoljubno tega trinoga, že pozno, ko mrak se že v noč je prelival. Znamenja dal sem, da bog je prišel; med ljudstvom molitev brž je zakróžila; najprej Likáon pobožno čaščenje grobo osmeši in reče nato: 'Preveril bom javno, ali je bog ali smrtnik: resnica ne bo več dvomljiva.' V spancu me hotel je sredi noči umoriti zahrbtno: tak poizkus se mu zdi kot nalášč, da dožene resnico! Ni se le s tem zadovoljil; prerezal z bodalom je grlo enemu talcev, ki tja ga poslalo je ljudstvo Molósov: nekaj je udov, polživih še, v kropu do mehkega skuhal, drugo je spekel nad ognjem, tako kot pečenko na žaru. Jed je postregel na mize, a jaz z maščevalnim plamenom zrušil sem dom in penate, sokriva pregreh gospodarja. V beg jo ucvre od strahu in šelê na deželi, v tihoti, glásno zatuli; zaman govoriti poskuša: poteze spači mu krutost, ki v njem že tiči; krvoločno, klavec od nékdaj, plane na črede in spet se naslaja. Kožuh zamenja obleko, laktí spremene se mu v šape: zdaj je že volk in ohranja sledove nekdanje podobe; ves osivel je kot prej, obličje enako nasilno, lesk je v očeh prav enak, cel videz enako okruten.⁴

Po Ovidijevi pripovedi je torej kralj Likáon tudi v novi živalski podobi kot volk še ohranil človeške poteze in te so izdajale njegova krvoločna nagnjenja. Podobno antični mislec Aristotel omenja, da se že v Asirski knjižnici v Ninivah nahajajo zapisi, ki trdijo, da obrazne poteze, ki spominjajo na poteze določene živali, ne predočajo le značaja, temveč napovedujejo tudi človekovo prihodnost.

Dekleta so v romanu *Hiša Marije Pomočnice* starši privedli, ali tista najbolj bolna prinesli, v hiralnico, kjer jih je združila ista usoda. Vse so bile zlorabljene v krogu lastnih družin in v strašljivi stavbi, kjer končno najdejo zatočišče, čakajo samo še smrt. Cankar je nasilje nad njimi v začetku minulega stoletja naturalistično opisal, zaradi česar so ga zelo obsojali. Toda tudi sto let pozneje so pripovedi še vedno aktualne in boleče. Morda je prav zato Silvan Omerzu grozljive nadležne prikazni nočnih mor preoblikoval v antropomorfna telesa z živalskimi glavami ter jim tako dodal mitološko razsežnost. Nekatere izmed zgodb so namreč tako pretresljive, da jih lažje

⁴ Ovidij, *Metamorfoze*, I, prev. Barbara Šega Čeh 2013, str. 165–239.

HIŠA MARIJE POMOČNICE, Slovensko mladinsko gledališče, Gledališče Konj, Ljubljana, 2008. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

THE WARD OF OUR LADY OF MERCY, Mladinsko Theatre, Konj Theatre, Ljubljana, 2008. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



sprejmemo, če so predstavljene v svoji odtujenosti, kot da pripadajo nekemu tujemu, torej čudnemu, zgodovinsko in duhovno nestvarnemu svetu.

Volk, lisica, merjasec, bik in kozel, prikazni živali torej, ki so dobile v mitih, basnih in bestiarijih svoje zvečine negativne, človeku nevarne lastnosti in značaje, v galerijskem prostoru nemo sedijo odmaknjeni od omizja deklet, vendar njihova navzočnost ohranja zlohotnost neprijetnih resnic ranjevanja mladih življenj. Njihova mogočnost je primerljiva z upodobitvami egipčanskih bogov, ki so vladali življenju živih in mrtvih. Zavest Egipčanov sta najbolj zaposlovala smrt in strahospoštovanje bogov. Vse, kar so počeli za časa tuzemskega življenja, je bilo namenjeno večnosti, ki jim je bila določena po smrti. Kakšna pa bo, je bilo odvisno od njihovega družbenega stanu v tem življenju. Kadar so bogove upodabljali v obliki plastiki in v sedečem položaju, je ta poza vedno izražala absolutno moč. Kipi so sta-

tični, simetrični, strogo namenjeni čelnemu pogledu, njihove noge so vzporedne in roke tesno ob trupu. Telo je bilo pogosto predstavljeno v človeški obliki, medtem ko je glava praviloma posnemala katero izmed živali, kar lahko razumemo, saj so po egipčanskem verovanju bogovi imeli tudi živalske lastnosti, kot so fizična moč, sposobnost letenja, življenje pod vodno gladino, zmožnost vida v temni noči oziroma v podzemlju in podobno.

Naglavne maske v podobi živali so v predstavi nosili igralci in so kot nočne more vztrajno nadlegovale speča dekleta. V galerijskem prostoru pa jih je Omerzu namestil na lesene lutke, ki jih je oblekel v kostume in tako ohranil spomin na živo telo. Negativna moč živalske figure, ki predstavlja zlorabo, je nazorna zaradi veličastne drže, ki spominja na že omenjene upodobitve egipčanskih bogov, tako zaradi lesa, iz katerega so izdelane, kakor zaradi elegantnih kostumov. Prav nasprotno pa je krhkost deklet prikazana z izvotljeno obliko

PREPOVEDANE LJUBEZNI, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana, Gledališče Konj, Ljubljana, 2009. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

FORBIDDEN LOVES, Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Konj Theatre, Ljubljana, 2009. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



vanimi torzi, izdelanimi iz poliestra. Tako so v predstavi roke animatork vidne in predočajo bolečine, ki razkrajajo mlada telesa, v galerijskem prostoru pa zaradi transparentnosti materiala delujejo eterično, so skoraj kot privid, ki se bo zdaj zdaj razblinil. Lutke deklet sedijo ob mizi, kjer naj jedo vsakdanjo juho, tukaj si delijo pomaranče, piškote, kolače, jabolka, bombone ... dobrote, ki so jih prinesli starši in grofica. Tukaj jim razdelijo tudi svetniške podobice, da v molitvah ne bodo pozabile omeniti svojih dobrotnikov. Mizo je Omerzu prekril s hladno kovinsko površino, kar spremeni njen videz. Ni več predmet prijetnega združevanja in hranjenja, temveč spominja na prostor raztelevanja, na anatomovo secirno mizo.

Omizje z dekleti je umeščeno na sredo med živalske lutke in razpelo. Tudi slednje je narejeno iz poliestra in je skrčeno zgolj na prikaz odrešenikovega torza. Materialna enakost simbolično ponazarja izenačenje Jezusa z navadnimi smrtniki. Njegovo trpljenje je bilo človeško, saj je po svoji materi, Mariji Pomočnici, zavetnici in tolažnici občestva, prejel hkrati z božjo tudi človeško plat in zato naj predstavlja tolažbo tudi dekletom. V Omerzujevi postavitvi so na eni strani poganski liki in na drugi krščanska podoba predstavljeni kot spopad med potrebami telesa in duha ali boj med zemeljskim in nebeškim. Roman Ivana Cankarja je že zaradi svoje vsebine pridobil mitske razsežnosti, likovna oziroma lutkovna uprizoritev jih je še dodatno vizualno oplemenitila.

Od nekdaj so v vseh civilizacijah, posebej pa še danes, družbene razmere marsikatero mitološko zgodbo kot tudi ljudsko pripovedko preoblikovale, predvsem tako, da je tematika smrti izpuščena, motivi trpljenje pa omiljeni. Silvan Omerzu se v svojih predstavah loteva prav teh tem, vsebinsko brez izpuščanja in olepševanja, likovno pa izredno izostreno. Nekaj izbranih zgodb iz grške mitologije si je zamislil v predstavi, ki jo je naslovil *Prepovedane ljubezni*. Po vzoru Egipčanov so tudi Grki v svoj panteon umestili cvetni izbor značajev, med katerimi vidno izstopa vrhovni bog Zevs. Ta je pogosto prevzemal različne živalske ali celo nematerialne postave, predvsem ko je želel osvojiti kakšno ali kakšnega izmed zemeljskih lepotic ali lepotcev. Ni pa bil edini, ki si je tovrstne preobrazbe privoščil. V zgodbi o Minotavru je sam Pozejdon kot simbol vladarstva Minosu podaril velikega belega bika, ki pa je bil tako lep, da ga kralj Krete ni že-

lel žrtvovati Pozejdonu. Ta se mu je maščeval tako, da se je njegova žena Pazifaa usodno zaljubila v bika. Da bi se lahko z njim združila, ji je pomagal Dedal (Dajdal), ki je iz lesa naredil ogrodje trupa krave in čezenj napel belo usnje, na noge pa pritržil koleščke. Umetno kravo je potisnil na pašnik in pomagal Pazifai, da se je namestila vanjo. Bik ni prepoznal razlike in jo je naskočil. Iz njune zveze se je rodil pošastni Minotaver s človeškim telesom in bikovo glavo. Pošast je bila ljudožerska in zato toliko bolj strašna; vsakih devet let je zahtevala davek, sedem mladeničev in sedem mladenk, dokler je neustrašni junak Tezej ni ubil.

Podoba bika je v mitologijah vedno simbol obvladovanja, fizične moči, včasih tudi telesne lepote. Oboje prikaže Omerzu s svojima lutkama, lepega bika, v katerega se zaljubi Pazifaa in strašnega Minotavra ali bolje njegovo mogočno glavo, kot odraz krutega značaja. Tako kot v primeru krvoločnega kralja Likáona, spremenjenega v volka, se tudi v odnosu do hibridne pošasti zrcali prirojeni značaj človeka, tokrat predvsem različnih prebivalcev, ki so od nekdaj poseljevali sredozemske obale in otoke. Tako staroselci kakor priseljenci so se bali bikove neukrotljive, trmoglave krepkosti, a so jo hkrati cenili in občudovali. Strahospoštovanje je odražalo njihovo hotenje po preživetju, za katerega sta bila potrebna živalska moč in volja v vitalnem boju s silami narave, njenimi rušilnimi potresi, cunami in pošastmi, v katere so verjeli. Večni neusmiljeni boj za življenje, večplastno podan v kretskem mitu, še danes simbolizirajo bikoborbe.

Umetni izdelek, kravo, je Dedal posnel po naravi in jo oblikoval tako večče, da je z njo prevaral ne le človeka, ampak celo žival, naravo samo. Njegova spretnost, *tehne* oziroma *ars* kot umetnost in umetnost, je torej sposobna popolne utvare, posnetka resničnosti, ki je obenem varljiva past, podobna trojanskemu konju. Dedala so njegovi naročniki, ugledni kralji grških plemen, cenili in ga zaposlovali zaradi večšine posnemanja, a so ga hkrati zaradi rokodelske večšine tudi prezirali, saj je bila ta v antiki manj spoštovana in se z njo zaradi naporenega dela svobodni ljudje niso smeli ukvarjati. Toda Dedal jih je vedno znova očaral z *metis*, z moškim razumom in žensko zvijačnostjo, s pomočjo katerih se je spopadal z avtoritetami, kakršne poseblja Minos. Prepričan je bil, da lahko s tehnološkimi dognanji doseže prav vse, celo poleti proti nebu, dostopnemu samo bogovom. Zato je

AVTOMATI, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

AUTOMATONS, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



najprej oživil nepremične kipe, statične človeške figure. Odmaknil jim je roke od teles, razkoračil noge in jim odprl oči, s čemer jim je podaril vid, tisti čut, ki dokazuje življenje, nato jim je odprl usta, da spregovorijo. Kakor različni demiurgi v vseh civilizacijah je mrtvi materiji vdahnil duha, dušo, jih animiral, tako da njegovi kipi niso več kipi, ampak avtomati, ki jih poganja nek notranji razum. O robotih in umetni inteligenci je sanjaril že Aristotel, ki je želel, da bi vsako orodje lahko izvajalo ukaze, kakor, kot pravijo, so to počela Dedalova dela. Homer pa piše o Hefajstu, ki

v delu ima trinožnikov hkrati do dvajset, stali da vsi bi ob zidu, v močno zgrajeni dvorani. Zlata kolesa je dal jim, zdolaj, vsak sleherni nogi, v to, da sami po sebi drčali bi v zbornico božjo, potlej pa spet vračali domov se – čudno na pogled!

Ali pa ko si hromi božji kovač naredi

dve dekli, spod rok vodeč gospodarja, zlati, na svetu podobni postavicam živih dekličev: v njih razum je celo, je glas in sila gibalna, k temu od večnih bogov naučili sta del se umetnih. Trudoma sopeta mojstru ob strani...⁵

Tudi Omerzujeve lutke so pogosto umeščene na vozičke, stole ali mize s kolesi, s čimer pridobijo mobilnost. Stole, na katerih sedijo dekleta iz *Hiše Marije Pomočnice* je z dodanimi kolesi spremenil v invalidske vozičke ter tako nazorno omogočil, da se tudi tisto deklet, ki ji je bilo sicer gibanje zaradi krhkega telesa onemogočeno, lahko premika. Podobno kakor sta Hefajst in Dedal mehanizirala kipe in jih oživljala, je v sodobnem času nazorno opisal težnjo po vdihovanju življenja mrtvi stvari katalonski pisatelj v romanu *Marina*.

⁵ Homer, *Iliada*, prev. Anton Sovre 1950, str. 373 in str. 417.

⁶ Carlos Ruiz Zafón, *Marina*, 1999, prev. Veronika Rot 2014, str. 126.

⁷ Prav tam, str. 99–100.

⁸ Ivan Cankar, *Podobe iz sanj*, v *Gospod stotnik*, 1916.

Narava je kot otrok, ki se igra z našimi življenji. Ko se naveliča svojih polomljenih igračk, jih zavrže in zamenja za druge /.../ Naša dolžnost je, da pobere dele in jih na novo sestavimo.⁶

Zafónov roman opisujejo kot delo, ki zaznamuje prehod med svetom odraslih in mladine. Podobno lahko razumemo Omerzujevo lutkovno govorico, ki se žal v slovenskem prostoru, verjetno predvsem zaradi majhnosti, še ni uveljavila do mere, kot bi si to avtorjevo delo zaslužilo. Tako so odrasli praviloma zadržani do lutkovnih predstav, ki niso namenjene otrokom, ko pa si vsaj eno ogledajo, osupnejo.

Mehanizirane lutke, ali kot jih imenuje avtor sam – avtomati, se same premikajo po in na odru; ptiči mahajo s krili, velika lesena glava odpira in zapira oči, usta se odpro in skoznje prileze jezik, lutke se same sklanjajo, bobnar premika roke in udarja po bobnu ... Vsi ti stroji, mehanične naprave pomagajo ustvariti iluzijo realnosti v lutkovno gledališki predstavi. Čeprav se zavedamo, da gledamo lutke in njihove animatorje, naše domišljije sprostijo vizualne sprejemnike in zgodba zaživi v povsem svojstvenem domišljijem svetu. Dogajanje si vizualiziramo sami, podobno kot bi brali knjigo. Zato velikokrat podobe lutk pridobijo še kakšno oblikovno dimenzijo, ki je sicer v realnem avtorjevem prikazu na odru nikoli ni bilo.

Včasih se najbolj stvarne stvari zgodijo zgolj v domišljiji. /.../ Spominjamo se le tistega, kar se nikoli ni zgodilo.⁷

Mehanizirana lutka – avtomat ima še posebno moč prebujanja najbolj skritih koticov gledalčeve domišljije. Prav zato, ker je povsem tehničar, ker za njeno odsko oživitev ni potreben animator, ki je pravzaprav tisti, ki predstavlja dušo lutke, gre za objekte brez duše, ki pa imajo sposobnost premikanja, proizvajanja zvokov in opravljanja vseh funkcij, pri katerih so sicer potrebovale človeka. Zdaj delujejo same, brez duše ... ali pač ... znanost je danes razvita do te mere, da imamo pogosto občutek, da nas morda tako imenovana umetna inteligenca dosega oziroma že prekaša. Ustvarjanje pametnih robotov, ki osamljenim ljudem nadomestijo človeško družbo, istočasno pa opravijo še kakšno domače opravilo (posesajo in umijejo tla, dostavijo hrano na mizo in pospravijo... medtem pa brez težav s svojim lastnikom odigrajo še partijo šaha ali mu operirajo srce) so danes že

ustaljena praksa. V filmih pa nas že nekaj časa opozarjajo, da obstaja grozljiva možnost, da visoko razviti pametni robot ali človekov nadomestek lahko razvije tudi čustva in tako pridobi lastno dušo, kakor to prikazuje Spielerbergov *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* (2001). Upajmo, da gre zgolj za fikcijo!

Z idejo posedovanja lutkine duše se poigrava tudi Silvan Omerzu, ki v predstavah sodelovalno spaja aktivnost animatorja in strojnega mehanizma. Tako enkrat lutka »ima dušo« in drugič spet »je nima«? Vprašanje ponuja toliko odgovorov, kot je gledalcev predstave ali razstave. Spet je zgolj naš domišljijem svet tisti, ki si ustvari slikovito realno pripoved ali se zadovolji z minimalistično oblikovano podobo, ki jo sprejemamo zgolj skicozno, namenoma bolj površno, le zato, da morebiti občutljivega odjemalca ne prizadene preveč.

V mnogih zgodbah, katerih likovnih, lutkovnih in režiserskih poustvaritev se Silvan Omerzu loteva, je vprašanje odnosa do smrti. Ena takih je interpretacija črtice Ivana Cankarja *Gospod stotnik*. Omerzu je ustvaril kompleksno instalacijo ali bolj celostno umetnino, ki zahteva samostojen prostor in popolno angažiranost vseh gledalčevih čutov. Arhitekturna konstrukcija simbolizira voz, na njem so v hierarhičnem redu razporejene lutke, po stenah prostora pa se naokrog izrisujejo velike sence sicer drobnih senčnih lutk. Ob vznožju voza se najprej nahajajo mehanski bobnarji, v prvem nadstropju jim sledijo v strogem redu nanizane lutke, ki ponazarjajo mladeniče, izbrane rekrute, da se srečajo s stvarnikom, na vrhu konstrukcije pa dominira elegantna podoba gospoda stotnika. Ivan Cankar ga je opisal z naslednjimi besedami:

Prišel je do kraja, poslednjikrat je vzdignil palico, nato se je okrenil. Takrat sem videl njegov obraz in srce mi je utihnilo. Ta obraz je bil brez kože in mesa, namesto oči je bilo izkopenih v lobanjo dvoje globokih jam, dolgi, ostri zobje so se režali nad golo, silno čeljustjo. Stotniku je bilo ime Smrt.⁸

Srhljivi opis stotnika je Omerzu preusmeril v celostno doživljanje instalacije. Dosegel je enako pretresljive občutke stiske, kot jo začutimo ob usodi mladeničev. Paradoksalno pa je Omerzujev gospod stotnik predstavljen izredno elegantno, primerljiv s konjeniški spomeniki vojaških zmagovalcev, ki veličastno obvladujejo trge v mestih. Tesnobo mla



GOSPOD STOTNIK, Ivan Cankar in Evropa, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2018. Foto: Blaž Zupančič
SIR, CAPTAIN, Ivan Cankar and Europe, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2018. Photo: Blaž Zupančič



9 Ruiz Zafón, 1999,
str. 36-37.

deničev začutimo tudi zato, ker so umeščeni v sredo voza, kot bi bili vanj zaprti, kot da so njihova telesa že trupla, naložena na mrliški voz. Glavni poudarek celoti dajeta dve komponenti: zvok, ki ga proizvajajo lutke bobnarjev in sence, ki rišejo okostnjaške silhuete. Zvok bobnov narekuje ritem štetja padlih v boju, slišni mehanizem, ki roke bobnarjev dviguje in spušča, pa asociira na cviljenje in škripanje koles bojnih lafet, ki jih vojaki z veliko muko premikajo po bojiščih. Mrtvaški balet senčnih podob, ki kot obešenci nemo lebdijo na stenah dopolni glasovno kuliso in celostno zaključijo instalacijo. Omerzu je v *Gospodu stotniku* v želji motivirati oziroma vključiti gledalca kot aktivnega soustvarjalca v umetniško delo, naredil še en korak naprej.

Obiskovalci galerijskega prostora smo umeščeni v jedro instalacije: v sredini se nahaja voz z vsemi osrednjimi akterji črtice, gledalci se lahko prosto gibamo okoli voza in lutke občudujem z vseh strani, na stenah okoli nas pa se dogaja senčni mrtvaški ples. V sredo smo ujeti, podobno kot so ujeti mladeniči na vozu, smo del ponavljajoče se igre od začetka časov, že ko je Saturn začel žreti svoje otroke.

Vsebinska razlaga instalacije *Gospod stotnik* spomni na *Guernico*, morda najbolj slavno podobo, ki jo je leta 1937 naslikal Pablo Picasso in z njo želel opozoriti na grozote vojne, tiste najstrašnejše, bratomorne. Slika velikih dimenzij, s poenostavljeno na kubizmu temelječo risbo, ki prikazuje eksplozije bombne-

ga zračnega napada, jok in bolečino matere z mrtvim otrokom, tuljenje ranjenih konj in bikov, odtrgane in razmetane človeške ude ... popolni kaos. Enake občutke vzbujajo tudi Omerzujeva instalacija: zvoki, ki jih proizvajajo njegovi avtomati, so komaj slišni in kljub temu »preglasni«. Čeprav niso posnemovalni, ne posnemajo neposredno krika, joka, streljanja, ječanja, ampak so mehanski, kovinski in leseni, v njih slišimo vso bolečino vojne in osebnih dram. Zvočna oprema se optimalno organsko staplja z vizualnim dogajanjem. Omerzujeve figure imajo vedno lasten značilni, dogajanje dopolnjujoči glas, ki ni le dodatek, ampak jim podarja materialno identiteto: les, ki počti, ko pade na tla Talos, ki ga je v smrt pahnil njegov stric Dedal, hreščanje mletja zob in kosti v predstavi *Krabath* ali školepetanje mehanizmov pri *Gospodu stotniku*, kakršno se razodeva Janezu v kamniti votlini na Patmosu.

Kobilice so bile na pogled podobne konjem, pripravljenim za boj. Na glavah so nosile nekakšne zlate vence, njihovi obrazi pa so bili kakor človeški obrazi. Lase so imele kakor ženske, njihovi zobje pa so bili kakor levji. Imele so nekakšne železne oklepe, hrum njihovih perutnic pa je bil kakor ropot bojnih voz z mnogimi konji, ki drvijo v boj. Imele so repe, kakor jih imajo škorpionji, in žela. V repih so imele moč, da pet mesecev škodujejo ljudem. Za kralja nad sabo so imele angela brezna. (Raz 9,7-10)

Instalacija spominja na Picassovo sliko tudi zato, ker sta se oba avtorja odpovedala barvi, s čimer sta v omenjenih delih želela opozoriti na odsotnost življenja. Še bolj kot pri oblikovanju lutk je Omerzu zvest omejeni barvni lestvici v svojih slikah in risbah. Likovni izraz je namenoma zreduciran na dve nebarvi – črno in belo, čeprav si pri beli dovoli več izrazne svobode v rahlem niansiranju od hladne do tople bele, ki včasih postane že skoraj rumenkasta ali bež. Prav to subtilno niansiranje naredi sliko toplejšo, mehkejšo in spomni na barvo lesa, lesenih lutk, ki iz narisanih podob izhajajo in se vanje ponovno razblinjajo. Risba je morda za odtenek bolj asketska in namenoma minimalistično izrazna kot slika. Avtor pravi, da je v tako stilizirani risbi našel svoj

izraz – otroško preprosto in zato zgovorno podobo. Likovno skopa risba se zelo malo razlikuje od senčne slike ali senčne lutke, ki je avtorju tako ljuba.

Začetek in konec velike razstave, ki jo je Omerzu z najrazličnejšimi izraznimi sredstvi zrežiral kot predstavo, označuje prav senčna podoba. V prvi sobi nam naraščajoča senca še ohranja in vzbuja drobno upanje, da pa morda ... enkrat ... le ujamemo tisti voz in lepšo prihodnost, zase in za Francko. V zadnji sobi pa z vso težo treščimo ob tla, ob ključku se razblinijo vse iluzije. Mrtvaški voz z gospodom stotnikom na čelu nam odvzame vsako, še tako drobno iluzijo o sreči.

Torej pravijo, da ima smrt sle, ki hodijo naokoli po ulicah in iščejo nevedneže in puhloglavce, ki ne razmišljajo o njej. /... / Ko se kak tak nesrečnik sreča s slom smrti /.../ ga ta odpelje v skrito past. K vratom v pekel. Sli si zakrijejo obraz, da se ne bi videlo, da nimajo oči, temveč le dvoje črnih lukenj, v katerih mrgolijo črvi. Ko ni več možnosti za pobeg, si sel razkrije obraz in žrtev spozna grozoto, ki jo čaka ...⁹

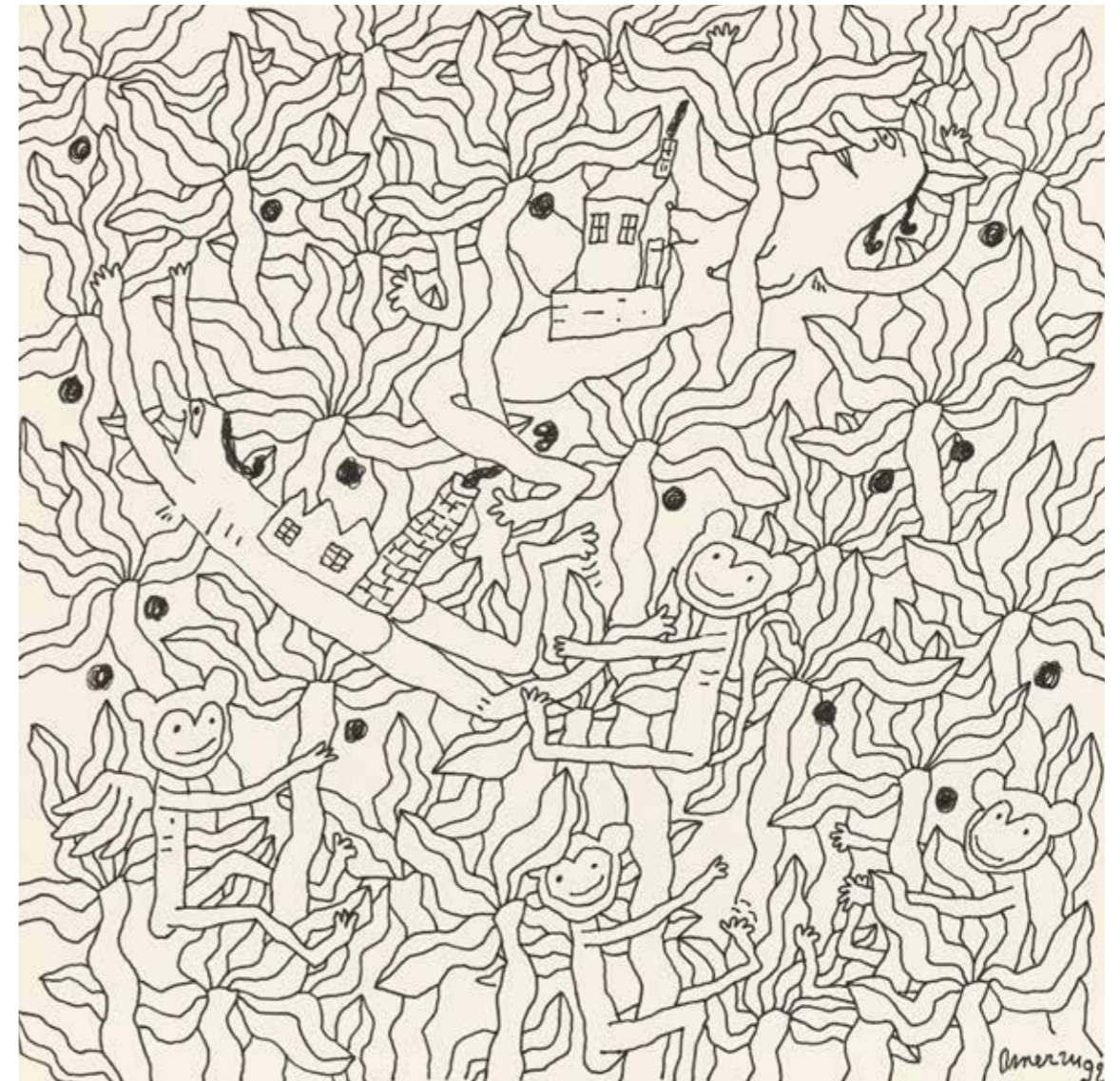


RAZSTAVA SILVANA OMERZUJA,
Bežigradska galerija, Ljubljana, 1988.
Foto: Jani Toroš

SILVAN OMERZU'S EXHIBITION,
Bežigrad Gallery Ljubljana, 1988.
Photo: Jani Toroš



BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 1992
UNTITLED, drawing, 1992



HUDIČ IN PASTIR,
Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana, 1992.
Foto: Lado Jakša

THE DEVIL AND THE SHEPARD,
Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, 1992.
Photo: Lado Jakša





RAZSTAVA SILVANA OMERZUJA, Galerija ARS, Ljubljana, 1993. Foto: Božidar Dolenc
SILVAN OMERZU'S EXHIBITION, ARS Gallery, Ljubljana, 1993. Photo: Božidar Dolenc

Exhibition as a Performance

At the entrance to his large exhibition of puppets, automatons, paintings and drawings in Kostanjevica na Krki, Silvan Omerzu positioned a small puppet of Ivan Cankar. This puppet is one of the exhibited pieces that were created for the 2018 exhibition in Cankarjev dom, which marked the centenary of the writer's death, who is considered to be one of the top experts and critics of Slovene society and the Slovene soul. The small puppet is sitting on a small stool next to a table; all three pieces are made from bright, raw wood, without any added paint. The simplicity of the elements is revealing in itself and even though the writer is not surrounded by any special attributes, his mighty moustache functions as a recognisable signature, as it has been imprinted into the memory of every Slovene pupil.

It is interesting that the artist decided to position the writer at the beginning of the exhibition. Especially as he chose Ivan Cankar, a writer known for describing the characters and events in his prose in a picturesque, expressive and critical manner. Some of his descriptions are so illustrative, that sensitive readers prefer to skip them. Sensitive readers might wish to leave out a sentence or two and compile the story in their imagination in such a way so as to not change the contents, but make them slightly less realistic. In his early years Omerzu also created figurines with deformed faces, the expressivity of which he further emphasised by bright red lips and raven black eyes, both of which functioned as grotesque contrasts on the shiny white face of the puppet. Both artists, the writer as well as the puppet maker, are extremely illustrative and direct narrators. Readers and visitors

often find such narration to be emotionally burdening, which often results in the story losing its original meaning and the intent of the artist. No matter how true its message is, the story remains attractive only in caricature depictions and humorous narrations. The cruelty of real life reaches the point at which we simply decide not to accept the story, even more, we decide the story does not exist, never did and never will.

Numerous events marked the centenary of Cankar's death; the writer's words were revived and many tried to draw attention to the – often scary – contemporariness of his insightful thoughts, which most of the time remain hidden within the books that are stashed on shelves. Omerzu's puppet plays try to preserve the original thoughts of Cankar and other writers. His visual language comes to life on stage as well as later on, when the puppets are placed to rest in depots or are exhibited on shelves as works of art. However, it seems that – similar to the readers in the time of the writer – people looking at the puppets 'wander around in darkness, the doors towards the light are locked for them forever...' /Python/ Publicum has not awoken, even after a hundred years and Cankar wrote: '... those small eyes looked right at me, drowsily, but peacefully and straight...'. It is likely that this is why the starting point of the journey through the dramaturgical arch of the exhibition is shown as the thread that keeps it all together: the small figurine of the writer in front of an empty table, with no paper in front of him and without a pen in his hand. The writer is contemplating things that nobody wants to hear, he is describing events

1 Ivan Cankar, *Publicum*, 1907.

2 Ivan Cankar, *Hiša Marije Pomočnice*, 1904.

NAPRAVITE MI ZANJ KRSTO, Gledališče Konj, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana, 1993. Foto: Jaka Varmuž

MAKE ME A COFFIN FOR HIM, Konj Theatre, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana, 1993. Photo: Jaka Varmuž



that should never have happened, characters that should have never existed. These are dark events and shady characters. When the writer became aware of them, his ears twitched, and he showed his tongue floutingly: 'The person's shadow is always darker than the person himself!'²

The original, especially facial expressiveness of Omerzu's puppets started gradually disappearing, until it was completely substituted by silence and lack of emotional expression, which revealed the artist's creative development. As a rule, minimizing the means of expression is a sign of maturing, which demands a deeper emotional and rational experience from the viewer. This reminds us of the ambiguity found in classic ancient sculptures, in which the narrative emphasis lay on the perfect depiction of the athletic body, while the face reflected tranquillity, lack of engagement, even when the body showed physical

strain. Ideal characters are ideal only in the presentation of their muscles and their flawless anatomy, while their identity remains unknown, as if it was not important at the time. Omerzu also likes to omit details that would express the character and experience, for he stylises the images and discolours them until they are impersonal, uniform. The figurines preserve the colour of the material and the notion of being alive is created merely by the shadows that are toying on the surface of their bodies. Such stylisation is reminiscent of the grisaille technique, with which painters tried to compete visually with sculptors, especially towards the end of the Middle Ages. By imitating the colours of the stone, they achieved an incredibly three-dimensional effect in their paintings. The images of saints became seemingly more tangible, which in turn, made them more alive in the spiritual perceptions of the believers. In a symbolic sense the grisaille drew attention

TEK ZA VOZOM (po Ivanu Cankarju), Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

RUN AFTER A CART (after Ivan Cankar), A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



to the importance of contemplation and the awareness that the image on the altar painting is merely a warning, an encouragement to focus on the godly in their thoughts and prayers and not on the material. The grisaille technique is similarly contradictory to our experience as Omerzu's stylised puppets are: it is because the colours and facial expression have been taken away that they are more telling to the viewer.

With the disappearance of emotions, the individuality and its ideals are lost, and with the loss of privacy the entire body and life start losing meaning. In his novel *Never Let Me Go* (2005) Kazuo Ishiguro drew attention to the insignificance of the ideal human life or the body itself. If the sculptor's silence in the depictions of the Greek athletes selectively and authoritatively emphasised the physical beauty and strength as the ideal of the period, which was also celebrated

in ancient Rome with what has by now become the clichéd saying *a healthy mind in a healthy body*, Ishiguro's characters also had to preserve their physical health, but merely so that they could perform the task for which they were conceived or created: they were human clones, who existed merely so that their organs could be harvested for replacement parts for normal people. The silent devotion to the mission that they were assigned to at their creation, is inconceivable and inadmissible to a sensitive reader. On the other hand, the author's emotional (lack of) engagement is often aided by the hypocritical principle: what is invisible to the eye, does not exist. This is why clones spend their childhoods on remote, lonely estates, out of view of those to whom they will, at a certain period in their lives, unconditionally hand over their organs. These young clones live as doppelgängers and the only thing that makes them different from other people is that they



IVAN CANKAR, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

IVAN CANKAR, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik

HIŠA MARIJE POMOČNICE, Slovensko mladinsko gledališče, Gledališče Konj, Ljubljana, 2008. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

THE WARD OF OUR LADY OF MERCY, Mladinsko Theatre, Konj Theatre, Ljubljana, 2008. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



are infertile. They exist and do not exist at the same time, they are shadows, which ensure the existence of those that created them and that will need at least a part of them at some point in the future.

Silvan Omerzu often creates puppets, theatre set design and directs performances that revolve around suffering and death. It is easier to share or accept a cruel story if its depiction is not overly visually realistic, thus shadow puppets often prove to be an appropriate form to use. Maybe this is why he - in his exhibition in *Kostanjevica na Krki* - decided to start with a small shadow of a cart, with figurines sitting in it, and *Francka* running behind. The group is moving, the shadows are slowly growing and as they become larger and larger, the terror and distress described in the parable of the girl's hardship also rise. The display is simultaneously scary and grotesque, which

is what makes it funny, which in turn slightly eases the anxiety. We also become aware that the anguished mind of the greatest Slovene writer had a sense of humour (similar to Silvan Omerzu). The ever larger shadows of the cart and the poor *Francka* make us feel an intensification in dark thoughts and the cruel, yet realistic story told by Cankar, with which he unsuccessfully tried to rise a mirror for the Slovenes to see themselves in. The shadow image is also reminiscent of the speech bubble in comic-books, in which we see or read the thoughts of the main hero, in our case Cankar.

Francka's persistency is clearly a metaphor for the writer's persistence. If this was a Hollywood film, we would feel sorry for both of them and give them another (and another...) chance to find happiness. In the final scene of the film *Defending Your Life* (1991) we have to

smile and recollect Cankar's *Francka*, as we hope and believe in the success of the main protagonist Daniel, who we see running after a trolleybus. Following his death in a traffic accident, he arrived at Judgement City, which is in reality purgatory. After spending nine days defending his cowardly decisions that he reached throughout his life to a panel of judges, he was sentenced to another life on earth, while his brave friend Julia was sent to the next level of experience. After the two heroes have boarded their respective trolleybuses, departing for different destinations, an overwhelming desire arose in Daniel who decided he didn't want to live without Julia, thus he jumped off the bus, and immediately received an electric shock. Ignoring the pain, he ran between the fast buses and tried to open the door of the one with his friend, only to be electrocuted again. The judges saw that he had finally overcome his fear and allowed him to set on a journey full of new adventures. *Francka* also experienced a reprieve when she fell with bloody legs; it was only at this

moment that the pilgrims showed pity on her and lifted her onto the cart, thus helping her fulfil her wish to visit the church. As we know, the story continues to depict a miserable life.

Most scenes in *Judgement City* emphasise the importance of rest. The characters often sit and talk about their past lives or enjoy the privileges that the transitory town offers - especially the good food. Omerzu also provides the idea of calm, for he placed the puppet of Ivan Cankar at a table, without any writing implements, as if the writer is merely contemplating. In the next space he laid out a group of large puppets sitting at a table, with smaller tables laid out in the centre of the large table. The metaphor of the large and small tables offers an explanation to the contemplation on life, as the large puppets could be gods/judges, who observe the small earthly tables from their heavenly haughtiness and allow the people to believe that they are in control of their lives with their



PREPOVEDANE LJUBEZNI, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana, Gledališče Konj, Ljubljana, 2009. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

FORBIDDEN LOVES, Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Konj Theatre, Ljubljana, 2009. Photo: Žiga Koritnik

AVTOMATI, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik
AUTOMATONS, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



decisions and actions. It is possible that the tale is a metaphor for the purgatory or a waiting room from which we are, once we die, sent to a different dimension of being, back to life on earth or into a void?

The main importance of the table lies in the idea of a shared communal meal. In the beginning people ate squatting down or sitting on the ground. Food, a necessity for survival, was hard to hunt, produce or find, which

³ Ovid,
Metamorphosis,
 pp. 170–240.

is why people believed they were helped out by a higher force. Grateful for the received help, they started offering gifts to the gods in the form of ritual sacrifice. Respect and fear forced them to lift the offerings from the ground, the filthy and non-respected matter, which covers the chthonic uncertainty of the terrifying underworld. They placed them on various shaped tables or sacrificial altars and thus symbolically lifted them closer to the heavens. People offered food to gods as a gift, an indulgence or a compulsory share, so that we could, with their permission, also enjoy the food. Even today people have the habit, also in the Christian tradition, of thanking god for the daily bread before they start eating.

Food provides the feeling of comfort, but it can also be misleading and decisively change the life of the one eating as well as the one offering the food, as was the case with the mythological Arcadian king Lycaon. According to one of the explanations of the story he wanted to ridicule or test whether Zeus/Jupiter was truly an omniscient god by offering him human flesh to eat. The supreme god opted for a cruel revenge and sent the great flood upon all people on earth.

WHEN the Father of the Gods, the son of Saturn, beheld this from his loftiest height, he groaned aloud /.../ he conceives in his mind vast wrath, and such as is worthy of Jove: /... / Now must the race of mortals be cut off by me, wherever Nereus roars on all sides of the earth /.../ And do you, ye Gods of Heaven, believe that they will be in proper safety, when Lycaon remarkable for his cruelty, has formed a plot against even me, who own and hold sway over the thunder and yourselves?" /.../ The report of the iniquity of the age had reached my ears; wishing to find this not to be the truth, I descended from the top of Olympus, and, a God in a human shape, I surveyed the earth. 'Twere an endless task to enumerate how great an amount of guilt was everywhere discovered; the report itself was below the truth. /.../

After this, I entered the realms and the inhospitable abode of the Arcadian tyrant, just as the late twilight was bringing on the night. I gave a signal that a God had come, and the people commenced to pay their adorations. In the first place, Lycaon derided their pious supplications. Afterwards, he said, I will make trial, by a plain proof,

whether this is a God, or whether he is a mortal; nor shall the truth remain a matter of doubt. He then makes preparations to destroy me, when sunk in sleep, by an unexpected death; this mode of testing the truth pleases him. And not content with that, with the sword he cuts the throat of an hostage that had been sent from the nation of the Molossians, and then softens part of the quivering limbs, in boiling water, and part he roasts with fire placed beneath. Soon as he had placed these on the table, I, with avenging flames, overthrew the house upon the household Gods, worthy of their master. Alarmed, he himself takes to flight, and having reached the solitude of the country, he howls aloud, and in vain attempts to speak; his mouth gathers rage from himself, and through its usual desire for slaughter, it is directed against the sheep, and even still delights in blood. His garments are changed into hair, his arms into legs; he becomes a wolf, and he still retains vestiges of his ancient form. His hoariness is still the same, the same violence appears in his features; his eyes are bright as before; he is still the same image of ferocity.³

According to Ovid's story king Lycaon preserved his human features even in his new animal appearance as a wolf, and it was these that revealed his bloodthirsty inclinations. Similarly, the antiquity thinker Aristotle mentioned that the Assyrian library in Nineveh kept records which stated that facial features, which are reminiscent of the features of certain animals, not only reveal the person's character but also predict his future.

In the novel *Hiša Marije Pomočnice* (*The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy*) the girls were brought or – in the case of the very sick – carried into the infirmary, where they were all joined in their shared destiny, by their parents. All of them were abused within their own families and awaited their death in a scary building, where they found their final refuge. Cankar described the violence they had to endure naturalistically, and he was condemned for this. But even one hundred years later, the stories are still current and painful, which could be the reason why Silvan Omerzu transformed the annoying monsters from nightmares into anthropomorphic bodies with animal heads and thus gave them a mythological dimension. Some of the stories are so shocking that it is easier for us to accept them if



they are presented in an alienated otherness, as if they belong to an alien, i.e. strange, historically and spiritually unrealistic world.

A wolf, a fox, a boar, a bull and a goat, animal apparitions, which in myths, fables and bestiaries usually depict negative characteristics, dangerous to people, sit removed from the table with the girls in the gallery space, but their presence reminds us of the unpleasant truth of the painful young lives. They could be compared to Egyptian gods, who ruled the lives of the living as well as of the dead. Egyptians were extremely preoccupied by death and in awe of their gods. Everything they did during their earthly lives was aimed towards eternity, which they would experience after death. Their afterlife depended on their social position in the earthly life. Gods sculpted in a sitting position always expressed absolute power, the statues were static, symmetric, intended strictly for a frontal view, their legs parallel and arms close to their bodies. In most cases their bodies were human, while their heads were often that of an animal, as according to Egyptian beliefs, gods had certain animal characteristics such as physical power, the capability of flying or living underwater, the capability of seeing in the darkness of the night or in the underworld and similar.

In the performance, actors wore masks in the form of animal heads and appeared as nightmares that persistently troubled the sleeping girls. In the gallery space, Omerzu placed these masks onto wooden puppets that he dressed into costumes, with which he preserved the memory of the living body. The negative strength of the animal figurine, which represents abuse, is expressive as a result of its majestic posture, which is reminiscent of the previously mentioned depictions of Egyptian gods, and is a result of the used wood and their elegant costumes. As a counterbalance, the fragility of the girls is shown through the hollowed torsos created from polyester. In the performance the hands of the puppeteers can be seen and they represent the pain that is eating through the young bodies, while in the gallery space, the transparent material makes them ethereal; they are almost a fantasy, which will disappear any moment. The pup-

pets of the girls are sitting at the table, where they are eating their everyday soup; this is where they share oranges, biscuits, cakes, apples, sweets...goods that their parents and the countess have brought. This is also where they are handed out the figurines of saints, so that they will not forget to mention their benefactors in their prayers. Omerzu covered the table with a cold, metal surface, thus changing its appearance. It is no longer an object of pleasant socialisation during a meal, for it has been changed into a space for dismembering, i.e. a mortuary table.

The table with the girls is placed in the centre, between the animal puppets and the crucifix. The latter is also made from polyester and has been reduced merely to the saviour's torso. The use of the same material symbolically reflects the equating of Jesus with mere mortals. His suffering was that of a human, as he received a human side from his mother, Mary Our Lady of Mercy, the patron and comforter of people, and thus he represents comfort for the girls. Omerzu's arrangement shows pagan characters on one side and the catholic icon on the other, presented as if they are prepared for a battle between the needs of the body and the spirit, or between the earthly and the divine. Due to its contents Ivan Cankar's novel obtained mythological dimensions, however, the puppets gave them additional visual enrichment.

Throughout history, and especially nowadays, people have transformed many a mythological story and folk tale, usually by omitting the theme of death, and softening the motif of suffering. In his performance Silvan Omerzu addressed these themes without omitting or beautifying the contents, instead he sharpened them visually. He chose a few selected stories from Greek mythology and presented them in the performance *Forbidden Loves*. Following the example of the Egyptians, the Greeks also included a selection of characters into their pantheon, amongst which the supreme god Zeus stood out. He often adopted various animal or even non-material forms, especially when he wished to win over a beautiful earthly woman or a handsome man. However, he was not the only one to use

GOSPOD STOTNIK, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

SIR, CAPTAIN, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik

transformations. In the story of the Minotaur, Poseidon offered a gift of a large white bull as a symbol of recognising Minos as the king of Crete, however, the bull was so beautiful that Minos did not wish to sacrifice it in Poseidon's honour. Poseidon thus decided to gain revenge by making Pasiphae, Minos's wife, fall desperately in love with the bull. Daedalus helped his friend Pasiphae with the bull by making a wooden frame of a cow's body, over which he stretched white leather, and placed little wheels on its feet. He pushed the artificial cow to the pasture and helped Pasiphae climb inside. The bull did not notice the difference and mounted the wooden cow. The relationship between the bull and Pasiphae resulted in the birth of the ghastly Minotaur, born with a human body and a bull's head. The monster was a man-eater which made it even more petrifying, and until it was slaughtered by the fearless Theseus, it demanded its due of seven young boys and seven young girls every nine years.

In mythologies the bull was always a symbol of control, physical strength, sometimes also physical beauty. Omerzu's puppet shows both, the beautiful bull with which Pasiphae fell in love and the terrible Minotaur or better his mighty head, a clear reflection of his cruel character. Similar to the example of the bloodthirsty king Lycaon, who was changed into a wolf, the relation towards the hybrid monster reflected the character of the people, mainly the various inhabitants who used to live on the Mediterranean coast and its islands. The original settlers as well as the new arrivals were scared of the bull's untamable, stubborn strength, which they also admired and respected. Their awe reflected their desire to survive, for which they needed animal strength and the will in the vital struggle with the forces of nature, its devastating earthquakes, tsunamis and monsters which they believed existed. The constant relentless struggle for life, passed on in the Cretan myth on multiple levels, is even today symbolised in bull fights.

Daedalus copied the artificial cow from nature and designed it so skilfully that he not only managed to fool people with it, but also an animal, nature itself. His skill, *tehné* or *ars*, was thus capable of a complete illusion, a reproduction of reality, which was also a deceiving

trap, similar to the Trojan horse. Daedalus' clients, respected kings of Greek tribes, valued Daedalus and hired him because of his skill to imitate, however, they also despised him for his handicraft skills, for any form of manual labour was not respected in antiquity and free citizens were not supposed to work hard. However, Daedalus always enchanted them with his *metis*, the male intellect, and female cunningness, which he used in his confrontation with the authorities such as Minos. He was convinced he could achieve anything with technological discoveries, even fly into the sky, which was reserved for the gods. First of all, he decided to bring statues, static figurines, to life. He moved their hands away from their bodies, placed their legs apart and opened their eyes, with which he gave them the power of vision, the sense that verifies life. Then he opened their mouths so that they could talk. Similar to various demiurges that can be found in all civilisations, he breathed the spirit, the soul, into dead matter, thus animating it, changing his statues into automatons propelled by an inner intellect. Already Aristotle dreamed of robots and artificial intelligence, for he wanted each tool to have the capability of obeying orders, in the same way as, at least that is what they say, the works of Daedalus did. Homer wrote of Hephaestus, who

**Full twenty tripods for his hall he framed,
That placed on living wheels of massy gold,
(Wondrous to tell,) instinct with spirit roll'd
From place to place, around the bless'd
abodes
Self-moved, obedient to the beck of gods:**

Or when the paralysed blacksmith to the gods made

**The monarch's steps two female forms uphold,
That moved and breathed in animated gold;
To whom was voice, and sense, and science given
Of works divine (such wonders are in heaven!)
On these supported, with unequal gait,
He reach'd the throne where pensive Thetis sate...⁴**

Omerzu's puppets are also often placed on carts, chairs or tables with wheels, which give them mobility. By adding wheels, he changed

the chairs used by the girls in *The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy* into wheelchairs, thus making it possible even for the immobile fragile bodied girl to move. Similar to Hephaestus and Daedalus who mechanised statues and brought them to life, the contemporary Catalan writer described the tendency to breathe in life to dead matter.

Nature is like a careless child playing with our lives. When it tires of its broken toys, it abandons them and replaces them with others /.../ It's our responsibility to pick up the pieces and rebuild them.⁵

Zafón's novel is described as a work that marks the transition between the world of youth and the world of adults. Omerzu's puppet language can be understood in a similar way, however, unfortunately it has not established itself to the extent the work deserves, most likely due to the smallness of Slovenia. As a rule, adults are reserved as regards puppet performances that are not intended for children, but are amazed as soon as they see one.

The mechanised puppets, or as their author calls them automates, move around the stage on their own accord; birds flap their wings, the large wooden head opens and closes its eyes and mouth, a tongue slips in and out of the mouth, the puppets bend over, the drummer moves his arms up and down, hitting the drum... All these machines, these mechanical apparatuses help create the illusion of reality in a puppet play. Even though we are aware that we are looking at puppets and puppeteers, our imaginations release the visual receptors and the story comes to life in a completely unique world of imagination. We visualise the events, similar as we do when we read a book. This is why the images of puppets often gain an additional design dimension, something that would never have happened in a realistic performance.

Sometimes, the things that are the most real only happen in one's imagination. /.../ We only remember what never really happened.⁶

The mechanised puppet – automate – has the special power of awakening the most hidden corners of the viewer's imagination. Because it is completely automated and does not need

a puppeteer – who usually represents the soul of the puppet (as these are soulless objects capable of movement, producing sounds and performing all functions for which they would usually need a person) – for it to come alive on stage. Now they can function on their own, without a soul... or... science has become evolved to the stage where we often have a feeling that the so-called artificial intelligence has already caught up or might have already even overtaken us. Creating smart robots that can function as substitutes for human company, while performing various domestic tasks (vacuuming and polishing the floor, setting and clearing the table... or playing a game of chess, or even performing heart surgery on their owner) have today become a settled practice. For quite a while films have been warning us about the terrible possibility that the highly developed smart robot or human substitute could develop emotions and thus obtain a soul, as shown in Spielberg's *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* (2001). Let's hope this is merely fiction!

Silvan Omerzu toys with the idea of possessing the puppet's soul, for in his performances he manages to establish cooperation between the puppeteer and the automated mechanism. Thus, the puppet 'has a soul' at certain times, 'and lacks one' at others? The question offers as many answers as there are visitors to the performance or exhibition. Once again, it is our world of imagination that creates a picturesque realistic narrative or remains satisfied with the minimalist image, which we carelessly accept as a sketch, so that it does not prove to hurtful to the sensitive viewer.

Numerous stories that Silvan Omerzu depicted in his visual, puppet and theatre recreations, deal with the issue of death. One of such stories is the interpretation of Ivan Cankar's novella *Sir, Captain*. Omerzu created a complex installation or one could say even a rounded work of art, which demands an independent space and total engagement of the viewer's senses. The architecture symbolises the cart, on which the puppets are organised hierarchically, while the walls of the space capture the large shadows of the otherwise tiny shadow puppets. Alongside the cart are mechanical drummers, while the puppets on the first floor, young men, chosen recruits,

⁴ Homer, *Iliad*, translated by Alexander Pope, 1899, p. 373 and p. 417.

⁵ Carlos Ruiz Zafón, *Marina*, 1999, p. 126..

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 99–100.



KRABAT, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana, 2014. Foto: Gregor Gobec
KRABAT, Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, 2014. Photo: Gregor Gobec

who will meet their maker, are neatly lined up. The top of the construction is dominated by the elegant image of the Captain. Ivan Cankar described him with the following words:

He reached the end, lifted his stick for the last time, and turned around. When I saw his face, my heart stood still. The skinless and fleshless face had no eyes, merely two holes dug deep into the skull, and long, sharp teeth smiling above the naked, robust jaw. The name of the captain was Death.⁷

Omerzu transformed the grotesque description of the Captain into the experience of the installation as a whole. He achieved a similarly shocking feeling of anguish as we felt at the faith of the young men. Paradoxically, Omerzu's Captain is presented as extremely elegant, almost comparable to the monuments of military victors on horses that majestically dominate town squares. The anxiety of the young men can be felt also because of their positioning in the centre of the cart, as if they were trapped within it, as if their bodies were already corpses, stacked on a hearse. The installation is emphasised by two components: the sound that is produced by the drummer puppets and the shadows that outline the silhouettes of the skeletons. The sound of the drums is dictated by the rhythm of the killed in battle, the mechanism that raises and drops the hands of the drummers brings to mind the squealing and creaking sounds of the wheels of battle carriages that soldiers move around the battlefields with great effort. The death-like ballet of the shadows, which silently float on the walls as hanging men, adds to the sound scenery and rounds up the installation. Omerzu took a step further in his desire to motivate and include the viewer to become a co-creator of *Sir, Captain*. Visitors of the gallery space find themselves at the very core of the installation: in the centre lies the cart with all the novella's main characters, and the visitors can move freely around the cart and admire the puppets from all sides, while the shadowy dance macabre is projected onto the surrounding walls. We are caught in the middle, similar to the young men caught on the cart, we are a part of a game that has been repeated ever since the beginning of times, since Saturn started eating his children.

The installation *Sir, Captain* brings to mind *Guernica*, possibly the most famous painting painted by Pablo Picasso in 1937, with which he wished to draw attention to the terrors of war, especially the ghastliest terror of them all, the terror of brother killing brother. The large painting, with a simplified drawing based on cubism, depicts explosions caused by an aerial bomb attack, the crying and the pain of the mother with a dead child, the howling of the wounded horses and bulls, the torn off limbs that had been thrown around... total chaos. The same emotions are brought up by Omerzu's installation: the sounds produced by his automates are barely audible and yet they are 'too loud'. Even though they do not directly imitate screaming, crying, shooting or groaning noises, they are mechanical, metal and wooden noises that reflect the pain of war and personal dramas in their entirety. The soundscape merges with the visual events optimally and organically. Omerzu's puppets always have a unique voice that adds something to the events, they are not merely simple additions, but function as a new material identity: wood snaps when Talos, who is thrown to his death by his uncle Daedalus, falls to the ground, the grinding teeth and bones crackle in the performance *Krabath*, while the mechanisms in *Sir, Captain* chatter, as revealed to John in the cave on Patmos:

The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces. Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle. They had tails with stingers, like scorpions, and in their tails they had power to torment people for five months. They have over them as king the angel of the Abyss. (Rev 9, 7-10)

The installation brings to mind Picasso's painting also because both artists decided not to use colours, with which they wanted to draw attention to the lack of life in the aforementioned works. Even more rigorously than in his puppet design, Omerzu sticks to the colour scale in his paintings and draw-

⁷ Ivan Cankar in *Podobe iz sanj* in *Gospod stotnik*, 1916.

⁸ Ruiz Zafón, 1999, pp 36-37.

ings. The visual expression is deliberately reduced to two non-colours, black and white, however, he allows himself greater expressive freedom in the nuances ranging from cold to warm white, which sometimes becomes almost yellowish or beige. This subtle nuancing makes the painting warmer, softer and brings to mind the colour of wood, wooden puppets, which arise from the drawn images and vanish back into them. The drawing is a nuance more ascetic, minimalistic and intentionally less expressive than the painting and the artist stated that he had found a unique expression in the drawings stylised as childish simple, narrative images. The visually meagre drawing is extremely close to the shadow puppet that the artist loves so dearly.

The beginning and end of the large exhibition that Omerzu directed as a performance through various means of expression, is marked by shadows. The ever-larger shadows in the first room preserve and raise a little hope that maybe... once... we might catch that cart and improve the future for ourselves and Francka. In the last room we hit the floor with full force, and at the end all illusions disappear into thin air. The hearse with the Captain at its front takes away even the slightest illusion of happiness.

Death has messengers who roam the streets in search of dimwits and numbskulls, people who never think about things like death and mortality. /... / When one of those unfortunate souls runs into a messenger of death, as he inevitably will sooner or later, he is led unwittingly into a trap. A door into hell. These messengers cover their faces to conceal the fact that they don't have eyes, only two black holes full of live worms. When it's too late for any possible escape, the messenger reveals his face and the victim realises the horror that awaits him...⁸



HOBIT, Gledališče Minor, Praga, 1994. Foto: Milan Janata
HOBBIT, Theatre Minor, Prague, 1994. Photo: Milan Janata

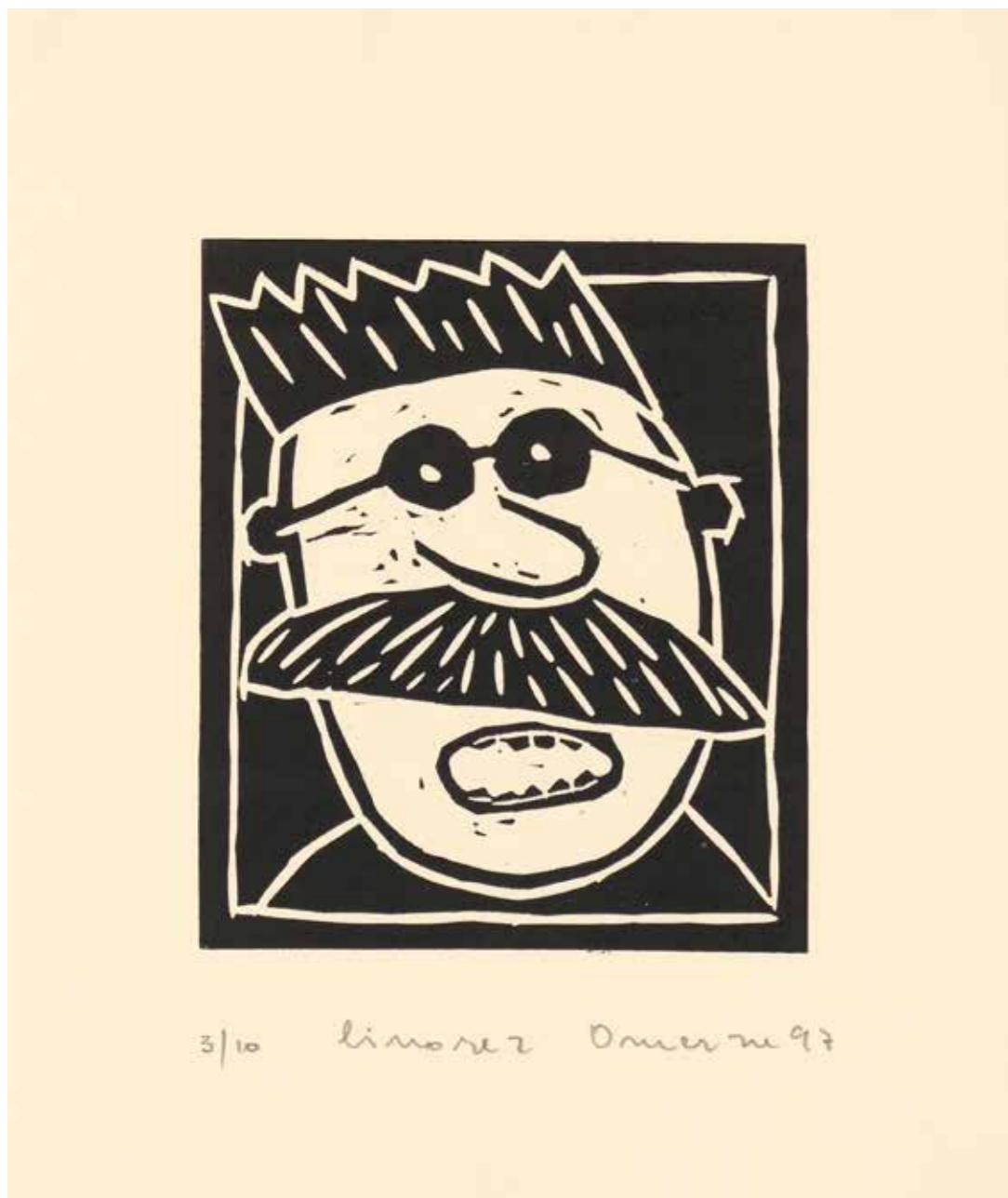
HAMLET, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, 1994. Foto: Aleš Debeljak
HAMLET, Association of Puppeteers, 1994. Photo: Aleš Debeljak



BELIN, Prešernovo gledališče Kranj, 1997. Foto: Žiga Koritnik
BELIN, Prešeren Theatre Kranj, 1997. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



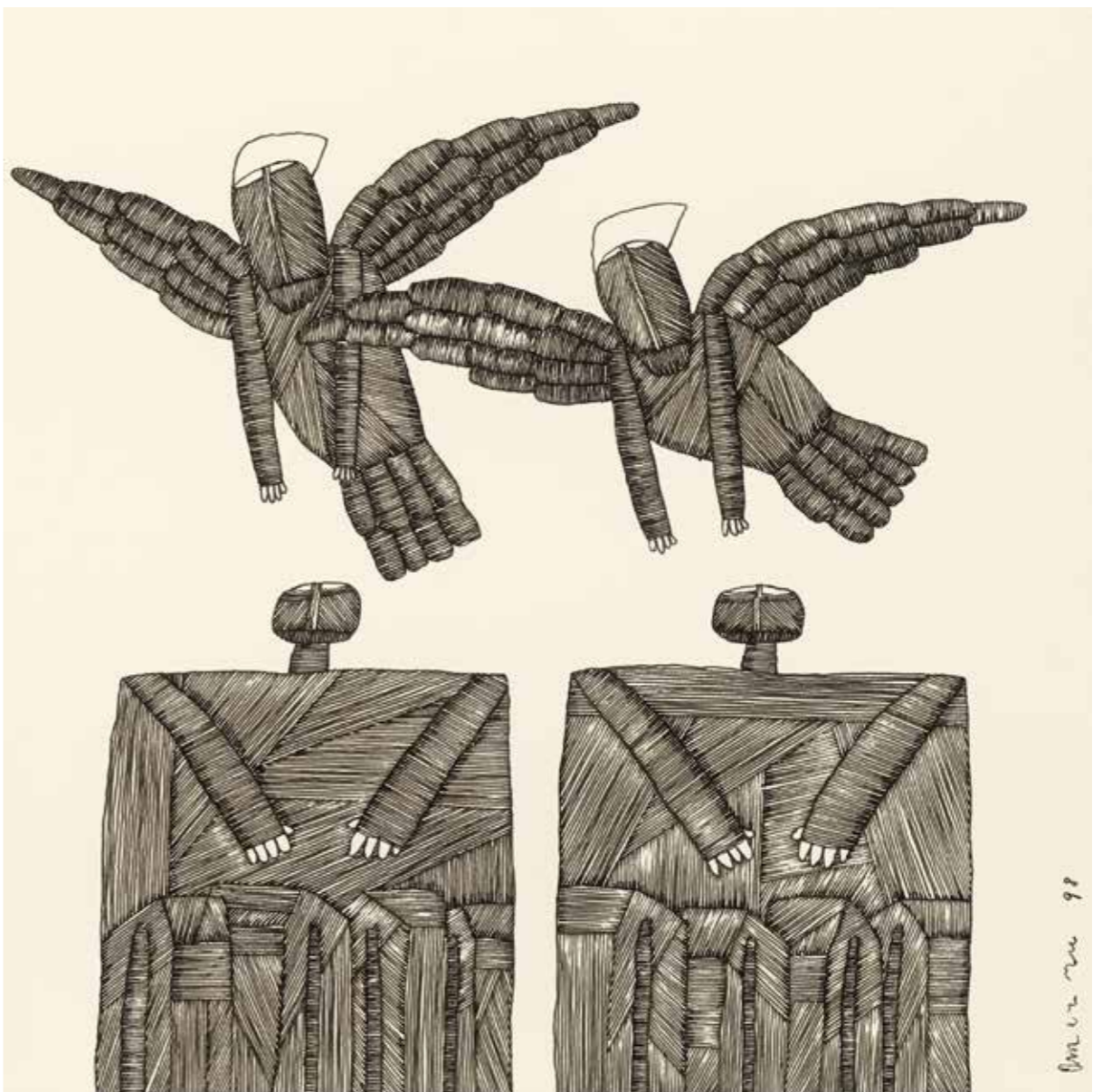
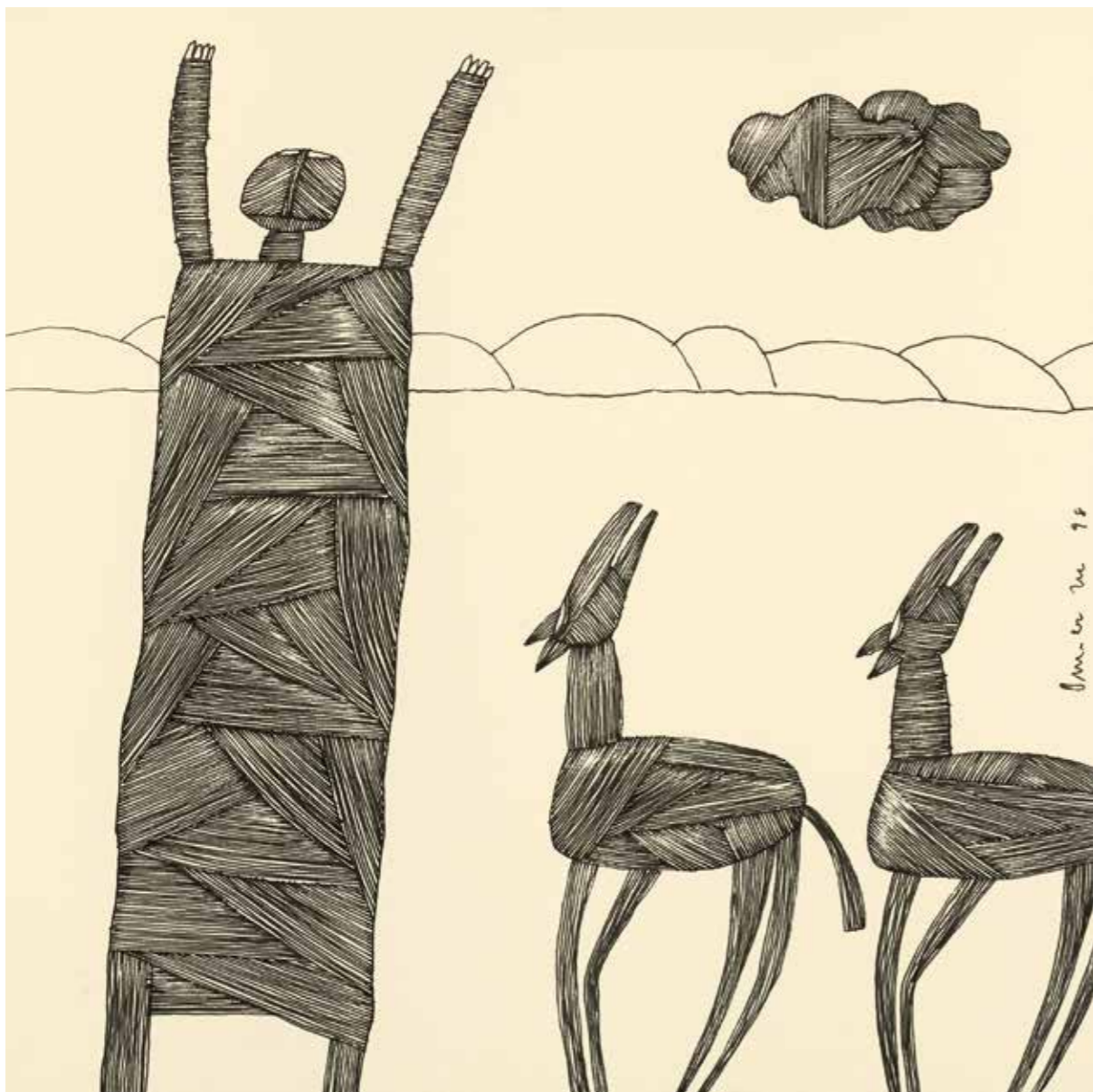
KRALJ UBU, Gledališče Konj, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana, 1998. Foto: Žiga Koritnik
KING UBU, Konj Theatre, Association of Puppeteers, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana, 1998. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



BREZ NASLOVA, linorez, 1997
UNTITLED, linocut, 1997



BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 1997
UNTITLED, drawing, 1997



BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 1998
UNTITLED, drawing, 1998

BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 1998
UNTITLED, drawing, 1998



ZLATA PTICA, Lutkovno gledališče Maribor, 2014. Foto: Boštjan Lah
GOLDEN BIRD, Maribor Puppet Theatre, 2014. Photo: Boštjan Lah

LUTKA IN SVET

Zadnje desetletje v lutkovnem ustvarjanju Silvana Omerzuja

SVET

»Omerzujeve lutke nam [...] odpirajo vrata v sodobni svet, ki je veliko več od preprostega lutkarstva, čeprav pri tem vztrajajo v čisti lutkovni preprostosti, ki je svet sama po sebi.« S tem stavkom smo zaključili obširen esej o lutkovni umetnosti Silvana Omerzuja ob njegovi razstavi v MGLC leta 2010, točneje, o desetletju njegovega lutkovnega ustvarjanja pred to letnico.¹ V pričujočem zapisu ne bo šlo drugače, kot da nadaljujemo tam, kjer smo takrat končali, vendar z zavedanjem, da se ne bomo mogli izogniti nekaterim ponovitvam že povedanega in poglobitvam v takratni razpravi nakazanega. A s tem ni navsezadnje nič narobe. Tudi lutkovna umetnost Silvana Omerzuja v desetletju, ki je sledilo, torej v tem, ki se z odprtjem nove razstave počasi končuje, izkazuje prav to: nadaljevanje začete, ponovitev doseženega, a vselej z izrazito poglobitvijo v takrat zgolj nakazano; in v tem je tudi njena stalna invencija.²

Iz zgoraj citirane misli izpostavimo dvoje: »sodobni svet« in svet lutke »sam po sebi« ter oboje postavimo v relacijo. Kakšno je razmerje med svetom kot takim in svetom lutke? To je namreč vprašanje, ki ga – slej ko prej nehoti – zastavljajo Omerzujeve lutke iz zadnjega časa, še posebej opazovalcu, ki je njegovemu lutkarstvu sicer brez pridržkov naklonjen, pri tem pa rahlo skeptičen do realnega dosega njegovih kontemplativnih, navznoter usmerjenih in navzven zaprtih figurativnih ali performativnih podob.

O obeh svetovih in njunem srečevanju je bilo v razmišljanju o lutkovni umetnosti že veliko povedanega. Prvi, bi lahko rekli, ki vzpostavlja razmerje med lutko in svetom v vsej svoji fizični in duhovni (pre)moči, je njen animator. Kolikor lutka že sama po sebi ne odraža zunanega sveta (najsí ga imitira, reproducira, reprezentira ali zgošča do bistvenega), pa za to poskrbi njen voditelj, ki iz tega sveta tudi neposredno prihaja in z njim – če ne drugače, s svojo usmerjenostjo v avditorij – vzdržuje nenehni stik. A o tem bi težko povedali kaj novega in vznemirljivega.³ Bolj zanimiv se zdi razmislek o »političnosti« same lutke, lutke po-sebi, o kateri že vemo, da ima pri Omerzuju poseben status in smo jo v svojem omenjenem zapisu skušali opredeliti predvsem iz ontološke perspektive ter opisati njeno performativnost.

Giorgio Agamben v svojem inspirativnem filozofskem eseju o liku iz *commedia dell'arte*, Pulcinelli, razmišlja o njem tudi s stališča njegove političnosti.⁴ Pulcinella, tako Agamben, ne more sneti svoje značilne maske, saj za njo ni nobenega obraza; Pulcinella je potemtaka samo ideja, za katero ni stvari. Zato je njegov princip delovanja šala, komični gag ali *lazzo*, ki nas zabava predvsem zato, ker je njegovo dejanje v trenutku, ko je na vrhuncu, prekinjeno. Dejanje, ki je že od zdavnaj prostor političnega, se torej v Pulcinellovih *lazzih* izkaže kot nedokončano, izgubljeno, brez substance. To pa ne pomeni, da je Pulcinella

¹ Blaž Lukan, *Omerzujeve lutke in njihova performativnost*, Silvan Omerzu, *Avtomati, lutke, igralci*, Ljubljana, Mednarodni grafični likovni center, 2010, str. 84.

² V času med leti 2010 in 2020 je Silvan Omerzu v slovenskem prostoru kot režiser in avtor lutk oz. njihove likovne zasnovе podpisal 11 uprizoritev, od tega 3 za odrasle in 8 za otroke.

³ Samo omenimo, da o animatorju razmišlja tudi Agamben, ki ga bomo v nadaljevanju še citirali, in sicer v zvezi z uprizorjenjem lutkovnega Pulcinelle. Tam animator lutki posodi svoj glas preko posebne piščalke, *pivette*, pravzaprav se mora z njeno pomočjo naučiti novega jezika, svojemu glasu pa se v resnici odpove; lutki v bistvu posodi svoj dih in na ta način v popolnosti utemelji svoje poimenovanje.

⁴ Giorgio Agamben, *Pulcinella or Entertainment for Kids in Four Scenes*, London, New York, Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2018.



⁵ Agamben, cit. delo, str. 66.

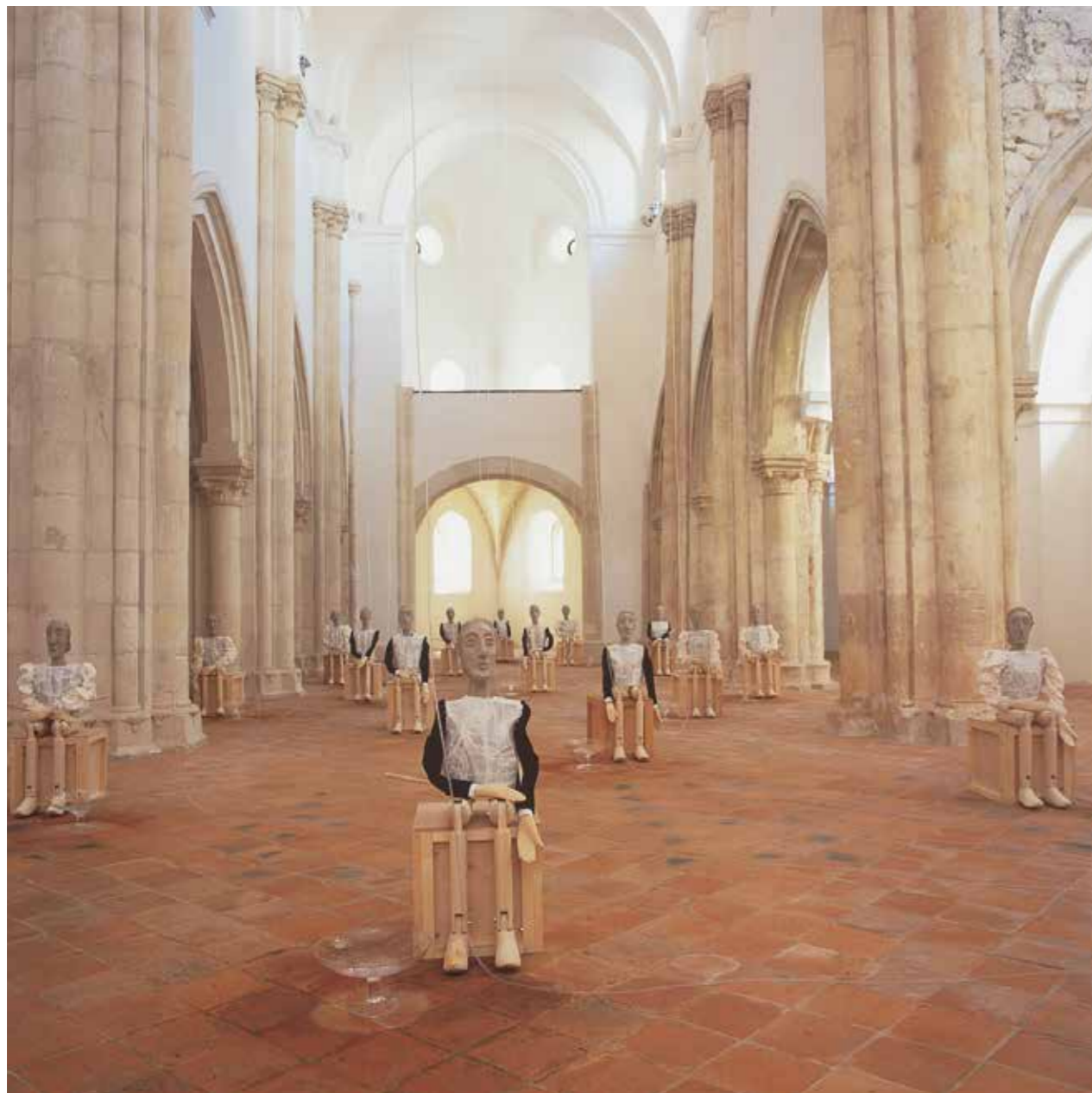
preprosto nepolitičen, saj naznanja in zahteva neko drugo političnost, ki se nič več ne nahaja v dejanju, temveč nam pokaže, česa vse je sposobno telo, ko vsako dejanje postane nemogoče. Pulcinella nas torej opominja, da obstaja političnost tudi onstran dejanja ali pred njim samim.⁵

Prenesimo povedano na Omerzujevo lutko. Ugotavljali smo že, da je ta najbolj »živa« v trenutkih svoje največje negibnosti, statičnosti, zgolj »sedenja« (za mizo). Takrat namreč izžareva največjo količino svoje potencialnosti, potencialnosti »življenja«. Tudi lutke iz Omerzujevega zadnjega obdobja učinkujejo substancialno. A kot da bi se v njih tista »nekdanja« statičnost še poglobila. Pravzaprav ne statičnost, temveč poglobljenost vase, usmerjenost »pogleda« navznoter, stik lutke z lastno substanco. Kar sledi, se sliši kot paradoks, a vendarle: kljub tej »absolutni« ponotranjenosti Omerzujeva lutka iz zadnjega časa kaže tudi (na) neko »površino«, zunanost, svet okrog nje.

Da Omerzu doseže tisto skrajno stopnjo lutkovne čistosti, mora lutko deteatralizirati, reducirati, odšteti od nje ne bistveno in ohraniti zgolj tiste njene poteze in (e)sence, ki – pred nevarno potopitvijo v odsotnost vsega – še omogočajo prepoznavanje in identifikacijo. Omerzu odvzema od (možnosti) spektakla kot udejanjenja forme, da bi udejanjil neko drugo možnost, možnost notranjega, mentalnega spektakla, eksterno naravnano spektakla obrne v interno, eksplozijo forme v implozijo vsebine. Njegov performans je navsezadnje de-formans, bolje, im-formans ali celo sub-formans, kjer je poudarek na usmerjenosti navznoter (*im*), v samo dno (*sub*) te notranjosti, kjer zunanost (*forma*) domala izgine, pri čemer pa pojem imformansa zaobsega tudi pojav potopitve (*imerzije*) vase.

SOLZE, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Foto: Boris Gaberščik

TEARS, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Photo: Boris Gaberščik



A kot smo že zapisali, Omerzujev teater ni nikdar poenostavljeno dualističen. Tako tudi v tem primeru lutkine forme ne nadomesti vsebina niti se obe ne ločita. Omerzuja vedno zanima lutkovna sinteza, tretja možnost ali »tretji status«, kot bi rekel Agamben. Prekinitev z zunanjim pri Omerzujju na prvi pogled resda pomeni izstop iz materialnega, fizičnega, družbenega reda lutke, vendar vselej tudi vstop v neki drug red, ki za razliko od prvega izrazito teži k individualizaciji, pravzaprav

k prevzemu lastne, osebne odgovornosti za navzočnost in delovanje v svetu, za novo »političnost«.⁶ Povejmo naravnost: Omerzujeva vizija (nove) političnosti je v resnici utopična, politika je v njegovem lutkovnem svetu mogoča samo kot Utopija, torej kot mi(s)tična dežela, pravzaprav otok, na katerem je mogoče delovati tudi brez delovanja, točneje z nemogočimi dejanji, tudi samo s »sedenjem za mizo«, z redukcijo vsake zunanje geste na minimum, pravzaprav do njene odsotnosti.

IVAN CANKAR IN EVROPA (postavitev v sodelovanju s Katarino Štok Pretnar), Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2018. Foto: Blaž Zupančič

IVAN CANKAR AND EUROPE (exhibition design in collaboration with Katarina Štok Pretnar), Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2018. Photo: Blaž Zupančič



⁶ O nekem drugem razmerju med vstopom in izstopom govori tudi Max Frisch v eseju o lutkovnem gledališču. Zanj lutka postane »živa«, ko izstopi iz svoje materialnosti, po analogiji z igralcem v dramskem gledališču, ki izstopi iz svoje fizičnosti v fikcijo lika. Naše razumevanje je drugačno: (Omerzujeva) lutka postane »živa« ravno z vstopom v svojo materialnost, sprašujemo pa se o njenem izstopu iz družbene realnosti. (Max Frisch, *O marionetah* (Iz dnevnika 1947), *Lutka*, Ljubljana, 1.2 (1966): str. 71–73).

S povedanim smo nevarno blizu hermetizmu, solipsizmu ali vsaj subjektivizmu, ki z zunanjim svetom pravzaprav nima prave zveze. Vendar bi bilo tako, če bi na Omerzujevo lutkovno umetnost gledali pristransko ali necelovito. Pogled na njegov opus, tudi tega iz zadnjega desetletja, namreč pokaže raznovrstne odgovore na izvirno vprašanje o »političnosti« njegovih lutk. V njem najdemo različne tipe lutk, kar pomeni različne tipe odzivanja na svet in izražanja svojega odnosa do njega. Če je v zadnjem času najbolj izrazil tip lutke, o kateri smo govorili do zdaj, torej lesene, maksimalno zbrane, v izrazu karseda reducirane lutke, za katero je najbolj značilen obraz-skulptura z izrazitimi očmi, ki se na prvi pogled zdijo slepe, torej »prazne« (pogleda), pa so v resnici polne, le da je njihov pogled obrnjen navznoter, in njena umeščenost »za mizo«, torej v marionetno pozo, ki izkazuje kar največ substance, pa ne smemo pozabiti na drugi tip omerzujevske lutke, po katerem je pravzaprav

celo najbolj znan: groteskne figure, ki izvira iz zdaj že legendarne predstave *Napravite mi zanj krsto* (1993), s poslikanim obrazom-risbo in zlasti z usmerjenostjo k dejanju, značilnemu za ročne lutke ali *commedio dell'arte*. Ta tip lutke prinaša v svoji lutkovni fenomenologiji pred gledalca dva odnosa do zunanje pojavnosti: kritiko in igro ali igrivost. Omerzujeva kritika je vselej zaznamovana s komičnim predznakom in variacijami komičnega, zbranimi v pojmu groteske, ki pa jih pred dokončnim padcem v (destruktivne) globine ironije varuje nedvoumna nagnjenost k igri in njeni nenehni kreativnosti. Oba primera Omerzujeve lutkovne tipologije nezmotljivo rekonstruirata po eni strani njegovo »intimno« vero in po drugi strani njegov avtentični dvom, pred gledalca pa prinašata svet, ki sega od uprizarjanja njegove groteskno popačene podobe preko kritike-kot-upora in umika v skrajni individualizem in solipsizem do vizije utopične »sprave«

in »miru«. Povedano z lutkovno prisposodob: njegova lutka opravi pot od izrazito vódene do popolnoma avtonomizirane lutke, ki dobi svoj specifičen odvod v lutkah-avtomatih; pot od lutke, ki jo požene v tek volja animatorja, do tiste, ki pravzaprav sama poganja v tek vse potencialne »animatorje«, torej dejanski svet, s katerim v svoji zbranosti komunicira.

Če govorimo o Omerzujevi lutkovni tipologiji, nimamo toliko v mislih različnih tipov lutk glede na možnosti njihovega vodenja – čeprav bi tudi ta pogled razkril specifično fenomenologijo njegovih lutkovnih svetov – temveč različne »antropološke stroje«, ki jih proizvede njegova lutkovna domišljija. Tako moramo obema zgoraj omenjenima tipoma dodati še dva tipa lutk-živali, ki nastopajo v njegovem gledališču: prvega predstavljajo živali iz lutkovnih predstav za otroke, ki sicer kažejo prepoznavne poteze omerzujevske lutkovne in likovne redukcije, vendar hkrati ustrezajo po eni strani otroški predstavnosti, po drugi strani pa tipološkim zahtevam vsakokratne fabule ali naracije. Drugi tip živali so predvsem naglavne lutke-maske iz njegovih predstav za odrasle, ki nadaljujejo linijo, denimo, iz *Prepovedanih ljubezni* (2009) in ki manifestirajo praktično identično kontemplativno zbranost kot njegove »človeške« lutke, glave ali maske (glej npr. figuro Cankarja na razstavi *Ivan Cankar in Evropa*; več o njej v nadaljevanju). Tretji segment Omerzujevega lutkovnega izraza so že omenjeni avtomati. Vmesno polje zavzemajo antropomorfne lutke (kot npr. v predstavi *Hiša Marije Pomočnice*, 2008), ki kombinirajo različne materiale, papirmaše, les in pleksi, njihova poglobljena značilnost pa je prosojnost, krhkost, »brezteslesnost« in svoj lutkovni naboj realizirajo šele v tesnem stiku z animatorjem, ki mu v »zahvalo« podarijo enako mero sublimnosti.

Kar se pri tem zdi pomembno podčrtati, je neka Frischeva misel, namreč o isti znakovni ravni človeka in nežive figure v lutkovnem gledališču.⁷ Ko obema dodamo še žival in avtomat, se pred nami razpre značilna omerzujevska estetska »demokracija«, ki pa resnici na ljubo ni nikdar zgolj estetska. Ob svoji specifičnosti so namreč vsi omenjeni tipi nosilci enako intenzivne, »enakopravne« misli, pri čemer je pri vsakem tipu na delu tudi nekakšna dopolnitev, tako v abstraktnem kot konkretnem smislu. Pravzaprav gre za hkratni proces redukcije in dodajanja, odštevanja in prištevanja karakteristik, izvirajočih iz »tujih« in na prvi pogled nezdržljivih svetov. Omerzu

tako najprej vsak tip reši odvečne, kar pomeni kanonizirane, predpostavljene, v bistvu ideološke navlake, nato pa ga dopolni s tistim, kar mu »manjka« do pomenske enakovrednosti, ki pa ne pomeni vdora nove ideologije, temveč predvsem razprtje pahljače enakih možnosti in odprtje idejne substance gledališča za vstop gledalčeve imaginacije. Svoji groteskni lutki odvzame tako karakter kot njegovo fantazmo, oboje zamenja z dejanjem in postavi v situacije, ki odražajo »specifične rabe teles«.⁸ Svoji kontemplativni lutki odvzame ves naturalistični *decorum* in jo izmodelira tako rekoč od znotraj, pri čemer njena notranjost ni nekakšen »avtorski« dodatek, temveč avtohtoni vznik, rezultat lutkine potopitve vase. Pri tem – to je nujno dodati – ji včasih dopusti tudi možnost odmika ali preboja toge, vnaprejšnje ideološke strukture, namreč zaznamovano gesto (izraz, grimaso, ponavljajoč se gib), ki jo poveže s komičnostjo prvega tipa in samodejnostjo lutke-avtomata in ki pomeni tako manifestacijo lutkine avtonomije kot implementacijo avtorskega komentarja (najboljši primer za to je že omenjena Cankarjeva glava z razstave, ki kaže jezik in miga z ušesi). Avtomatu, ki je že po aristotelovskem pojmovanju blizu živali, po Descartesovem pa tudi človeku oz. otroku, na videz odvzame človeško »polnilo«, njegovo misteriozno »telo«, in ga zamenja z »neživim« strojnim mehanizmom, ki pa, paradokсно, pomeni ravno zgostitev vsega »živega« in človeškega v eno samo avtomatizirano gesto. Preprost premik, obrat, dvig roke postanejo zagotovila življenja, ki nadomeščajo vso odvečno »človeško« prtljago, nanešeno nanj skozi stoletja. In maske-živali: čeprav očarajo z nekakšno nečloveško lepoto, jih skušamo počlovečiti, kar pa – razen v otroškem gledališču – bi bila napaka, ki ji Omerzu ne nasede in jim v enakovrednem, empatičnem kreativnem procesu podeli isto čezčloveško živost kot svojim človeškim figuram. Ta čezčloveškost po eni strani sodi v sklop omerzujevske vere v Utopijo, po drugi strani pa je v njej zaobsežen skrajni življenjski realizem, ki najde svoje idealno prizorišče ravno v (lutkovnem) gledališču.

K povedanemu moramo dodati dejstvo, da Omerzu v svojih predstavah ne vzpostavlja hierarhij niti v nekaterih drugih, povsem civilizacijskih kontekstih, na primer med moškimi in žensko, med odraslim in otrokom, med duhovnim in profanim, med resničnim in fiktivnim, pa tudi ne v estetskih, na primer med sencami in figuro, med igralcem in lutko, med ročno lutko in marioneto. Vse omenjeno tvori

⁷ Frisch, cit. delo, str. 72.

⁸ Agamben, cit. delo, str. 117.

⁹ Agamben, cit. delo, str. 65–66.

¹⁰ Alenka Zupančič, *Konec*, Ljubljana: Društvo za teoretsko psihoanalizo, 2019 (Zbirka *Analecta*), str. 124.

BESEDE IZ HIŠE KARLSTEIN, Lutkovno gledališče Maribor, Gledališče Konj, 2017. Foto: Boštjan Lah
WORDS FROM THE HOUSE KARLSTEIN, Maribor Puppet Theatre, Konj Theatre, 2017. Photo: Boštjan Lah



Omerzujev estetski in miselni *theatrum mundi*, o katerem smo nekoč že govorili in ki biva vzporedno s svetom, kot ga poznamo, z njim pa se tudi nenehno sporazumeva.

Pregled nekaterih temeljnih karakteristik Omerzujeve lutkovne ustvarjalnosti v zadnjem desetletju, ki bo nujno ostal fragmentaren, saj zaključeno koledarsko desetletje ne predstavlja hkrati tudi zaključenega kreativnega opusa, zaokrožimo tako, da si besede ponovno izposodimo pri Agambenu, ob tem pa posebej poudarimo Omerzujev izvirni dodatek. Ko Pulcinella ničesar ne pove, pravi Agamben, na ta način izgovarja nemožnost govorenja, in ko ničesar ne stori, udejanja nemožnost dejanja; s tem dokazuje, da je živeti življenje nemogoče in da je nemo(g) č(ost) pravzaprav politična naloga par excellence: posameznik lahko deluje samo onstran dejanja – ali pred njim, lahko govori samo onstran besede – ali pred njo, in lahko živi samo onstran življenja – ali pred njim ... Ta agambenovski *reductio ad absurdum* in za-

govor »politike brez polisa«,⁹ ki je v resnici politični projekt, Omerzu nadgradi z izvirno projekcijo v neko novo možnost, ki je pravzaprav možnost tega sveta, čeprav na videz utopična, torej v tem svetu odsotna – in čeprav je njena narava v bistvu *ekstimna*, v pomenu, seveda radikaliziranim, kot ta pojem preko Lacana opiše Alenka Zupančič: »...izključena notranjost ali vključena zunanost, intimna zunanost ali tuja intimnost ... sovpadanje nečesa najbolj notranjega, intimnega, in najbolj zunanjega, tujega; nekaj, kar po eni strani sodi k meni, po drugi strani pa mi je povsem tuje, gnusno.«¹⁰ Kaj je drugega Omerzujeva vse-enost, o kateri je bil govor, kot vzporedno bivanje groteske in kontemplacije, živali in otroka, intelekta in mehanike – vse pa podprto z njegovo prepoznavno avtorsko pisavo, ki zlasti pri lesenih lutkah zgladi robove, skrajnosti, napake in jih sežame v podobo sedečega, to emblematično figuro, ki bi jo lahko brez zadrege primerjali s slavno figuro Rodinovega *Misleca*. S to razliko, da si moramo ob sedečem, denimo, iz *Besed v hiši Karlstein* na

istem stolu in za isto mizo predstavljati tudi poskakajočo omerzujevsko figuro iz, denimo, *Salta mortale*, ki šele dopolni ta *circus vitiosus* njegovega lutkovnega kozmosa.

LUTKE

Povedano bomo skušali ilustrirati še z natančnejšim vpogledom v nekaj Omerzujevih lutkovnih produkcij iz zadnjega desetletja, ponovno fragmentarno in z nekaj skiciranimi zaključnimi poantami.¹¹

Uprizoritev *Stolp*¹² je nastala po neoromantičnem dramskem besedilu-dramski pesnitvi Iva Svetine, njeno izhodišče pa je nesrečna ljubezen in nato dolgoletna izolacija nemškega romantičnega pesnika Friedricha Hölderlina. Kakor že v podobno zasnovani uprizoritvi *Hiše Marije Pomočnice* (2008) je Omerzu tudi v *Stolpu* združil nekatere že preizkušene lutkovne in gledališke postopke v na prvi pogled hibridno, v resnici pa enotno dramsko-lutkovno uprizoritev. Težo dramskega dogajanja kljub vsemu nosijo igralci, ki pa so uokvirjeni in prepreženi z lutkovnim izrazom, npr. z vrsto bobnarjev-avtomatov, s senčnimi lutkami, s pomočjo katerih so uprizorjeni prizori sanj, blodenj, vizij, z leseno lutko s flavto ipd. Uprizoritev strastne, nemogoče ljubezni je zasnovana v igralskem smislu kot opazno distancirana, zadržana, toga pripoved, ki se s svojo redukcijo in markiranostjo približa možnostim lutkovnega gledališča, odraža pa nemara nedostopnost romantične ljubezni, kakor jo zrcali Hölderlinova tragična usoda, danes. Z enako zadržano, deskriptivno strastjo so uprizorjeni tudi prizori, povezani s temo revolucije in pesniškega zanosa. Igralci in lutke prehajajo iz prizora v prizor logično, lutkovni in igrani prizori se dopolnjujejo, povezuje pa jih tudi scenski element giljotine. – Morda bi iz uprizoritve lahko izluščili neki Omerzujev nezavedni komentar Hölderlinovega patosa, v katerem zazna podoben avtomatizem, kot ga ponazarja formacija bobnarjev-avtomatov, ki uvede in zaključí dogajanje. Kot bi tudi Hölderlina na začetku v gibanje (ljubezen) pognala neka (božanska?) roka, ki mu zdaj ne pusti, da bi se izmuznil nenehnemu ponavljanju istega in se bo ustavil šele, ko bo popustila tista vzgonska napetost, ki njegovo življenje dela tako neznosno.

Salto mortale, predloga je delo Nebojše Pop Tasića, je igra o smrti, pa tudi o prevzgoji, točneje, proizvodnji novega človeka.¹³ Kot že rečeno, se lutkovna tipologija *Salta* povezuje z Omerzujevimi najzgodnejšimi grotesknimi predstavami, čeprav se je od takrat likovna podoba tega tipa lutk že spremenila. Če so imele lutke v *Krsti oči* »na pecljih« oz. na vrhu glave in so bile nekje vmes (npr. pri *Don Juanu*, 1995 ali *Kralju Ubuju*, 1998) narisane na obrazno masko s surovo potezo, ploščate in podolgovate, so zdaj narisane na čelo in reliefno vtisnjene vanj, nekoliko spominjajoče na oči lesenih lutk iz njegovih kontemplativnih, refleksivnih, poetičnih predstav. Značilna zanjo so tudi usta, ki segajo od roba do roba obraza, gibljiva čeljust pa s svojim značilnim šklepetajočim odpiranjem asociira tako na njihovo pretirano zgovornost kot na pogoltnost. Kljub navidezni uniformnosti se lutke-tipi med seboj rahlo razlikujejo, predvsem po štrlečih nosovih. Temu tipu lutk, kot že rečeno, pripada dejanje, gibanje, še več, razuzdani, ekstatični »mrtvaški« ples, ki je ob tem tudi hrupen; njihov avtentični prostor je teater kot tak, njihovi postopki so poudarjeno teatralizirani. V žanrskem smislu se pred gledalcem mešata humanistična moraliteta in prevratna groteska, liki, sami po sebi že maske-brez-obrazov, pa so v posameznih prizorih še dodatno zamaskirani z maskami iz *commedia dell'arte*. Omerzujev primarni interes za velike ideje in končne resnice je tu spodkoppan, subverzija pa poteka tako na tematski kot lutkovni ravni. Najznačilnejši (metalutkovni) prizor v predstavi je nemara tisti z razstavljanjem in ponovnim sestavljanjem lutke-lenuha,¹⁴ pomenljiva pa je njena poanta z izjavo »Jaz nisem jaz«, paradokсна formula sodobnega individualizma in skepticizma od romantike naprej. – Lutkovni jezik *Salta mortale* je nemara kompleksnejši od njegovih predhodnic, ritem pa nekoliko bolj umirjen. Lutka tega tipa je bliže lutkovnemu objektu, saj je usmerjena neposredno v dejanje, v funkcijo, subjektivizirana je nemara zgolj njihova serija, nosilka generalne ideje uprizoritve. Uprizoritveni tok je v tem tipu predstav zaznamovan s prekinitvami, obrati, hipnimi menjavami ritmov, kontinuiteto pa vzpostavlja zlasti sproščena ludistična intuicija; kljub temu ta kaos pozna tudi logiko, tisti značilni omerzujevski občutek za red. Tudi ta uprizoritev na isto ravnino postavlja različne uprizoritvene postopke, tehnike, dimenzije, merila in razmerja, kar je, kot zdaj že vemo, že sicer značilnost totalnega lutkovnega gledališča Silvana Omerzua.

¹¹ Omerzu v svojih lutkovnih produkcijah praviloma nastopa v več vlogah: je režiser, dramaturg, avtor likovne zasnove lutk, scenograf, kostumograf, izdelovalec lutk. Pri opisu posameznih predstav njegove vloge ne bomo posebej omenjali, razumemo ga kot celovitega avtorja svojih uprizoritev.

¹² Ivo Svetina, *Stolp*, SMG, LGL, Umetniško društvo Konj, 2011/12.

¹³ Nebojša Pop Tasić, *Salto mortale*, LGM, 2011/12.

¹⁴ Mimogrede: ta prizor je dober primer za preverjanje emotivne moči lutkovnega gledališča, saj gledalec z razstavljenjo lutko sočustvuje približno tako kot z »zloračeno« živaljo ali otrokom na odru; za trpljenje (odraslih) ljudi je bolj neobčutljiv ...



¹⁵ Carlo Collodi, *Ostržek*, LGL in Umetniško društvo Konj, 2014/15.

¹⁶ Agamben, cit. delo, str. 39.

Od Omerzujevih otroških predstav iz tega obdobja bomo na tem mestu izpostavili samo *Ostržka*,¹⁵ in to zaradi prizora gledališča v gledališču, torej lutkovnega gledališča v lutkovnem gledališču, z liki iz *commedia dell'arte*, med katerimi srečamo tudi Pulcinello. Lutke -v-lutkah po eni strani poudarjajo lutkovno dimenzijo uprizoritve (v kateri spremljamo različne tipe lutk oz. animacije), pri čemer je lutka-v-lutki že sam lik *Ostržka*, lesene lutke. Po drugi strani kažejo na njihovo pravadno gledališko naravo (lutkovne elemente srečamo že v satirskih igrah, ki, po Agambenu, izpričujejo nečloveško poreklo gledališča kot takega),¹⁶ navsezadnje pa podvojitev lutkovnega poudari njegovo resničnost, sicer tudi formalno ali materialno specifično, vendar identično človeško substanco. Točneje, čez človeško substanco, saj tudi dramsko gledališče praviloma skuša seči čez meje človeškega. – V *Ostržku* Omerzu ostaja dosledneje v lutkovnih okvirih kot v svojih predstavah za

odrasle, čeprav tudi tu kombinira lutke z živimi igralci. Dokaz je zaključni prizor *Ostržkove* preobrazbe v dečka, ki je v uprizoritvi samo (pedagoško in z moralnim klicajem) povedan in praktično neuprizorjen, čeprav zlasti iz drugih Omerzujevih uprizoritev vemo, da ga veliko bolj zanima prehod iz človeka v lutko kakor obratno. Vemo pa tudi, da prehod iz človeškega v predmetno ne pomeni tudi njegove desubjektivacije, včasih je ravno nasprotno: šele redukcija v objekt, mehaniko, avtomatizem »človeka« re-subjektivizira, pa čeprav njegovo telo pri tem nepovratno izgine – najsi bo v enoznačni materialni polnini ali lutkovni praznini, votlini, prekriti z zasilno inčasno povrhnjico, »kožo«. Lahko bi rekli, da Omerzuja zanima tisto, kar je za lutko in pod njo (pa to nista niti animator niti oder), ob tem pa tudi sami mehanizmi prehoda, v katerih se odražajo notranja protislovja med lutko in svetom, nenehne izmenjave med zunanostjo in notranostjo v lutki, témi, snovi,



OSTRŽEK, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana, 2015. Foto: Miha Fras
PINOCCHIO, Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, 2015. Photo: Miha Fras

SVETNIK KRESPEL, Gledališče Konj,

Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev in Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2003. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

COUNCILLOR KRESPEL, Konj Theatre, Association of Puppeteers and Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2003. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



dobi, svetu. Čeprav zastarta in v ozadju – in čeprav, to je treba reči, le redko Omerzujeva intenca – je tudi ta topika politična.

Zadnja od predstav za odrasle iz preteklega desetletja je *Besede iz hiše Karlstein*,¹⁷ zasnovana po poetičnem besedilu pesnice, pripovednice in igralka Berte Bojetu. Besede so skorajda lutkovna instalacija, kjer je pomemben tako prostor izvedbe (Minoritska cerkev v Mariboru), v katerega je »logično« umeščena, kot tudi lutkovni objekti, s katerimi operira. Besede so lutkovna poema-psalm, v kateri se opisnost lutkovnega dogajanja menjava tako z živim kot s posnetim poetičnim dialogom med nastopajočima performerkami, dokler se poezija besed ne transformira v čisto lutkovno poezijo, ki jo simbolizira let serije lesenih ptičev-avtomatov. V *Besedah* Omerzu sooči igralko in lutko, pravzaprav več tipov lutk, kar je že preverjen postopek, preverja pa tudi medsebojni učinek telesnosti perfor-

merk, sublimnosti poezije in snovnosti lutk. Lahko bi rekli, da je lutka že sama po sebi, Omerzujeva kontemplativna lutka pa še posebej, poetična, torej da nosi in izžareva »poezijo«, vendar z *Besedami* Omerzu dokaže, da lutka lahko sobiva tudi s poezijo – in obratno, torej da poetične besede ne najedajo njene univerzalne substance, prav tako kot lutkovna »ilustracija« poeziji ne odvzame njene elementarne moči. Zdi se, kot da bi v predstavi spremljali trojno prilagoditev: igralki se prilagajata lutkam, lutke vstopajo v dialog z igralkama, vsi skupaj pa si nadevajo rahli plašč poezije. Priče smo – premešanemu – zaporedju sploščanja in plastifikacije, redukcije in podvojitve, subjektivnega izrekanja poezije in njene objektivne tišine. Ponovno je pred nami že omenjeni »tretji status« predstave, ki na gledalca ne učinkuje niti samo na igralski niti na besedni niti na lutkovni ravni, temveč na poetični sintezi vseh omenjenih elementov. – Morda pa se kljub »demokratični« nivelizaciji

¹⁷ Berta Bojetu - Boeta, *Besede iz hiše Karlstein*, LGM, Umetnostna galerija Maribor, Umetniško društvo Konj, 2017/18.

¹⁸ Agamben, cit. delo, str. 135.

¹⁹ *Ivan Cankar in Evropa*, Cankarjev dom, 19. junij 2018 - 28. februar 2019.

znakov (izbrisane so spolne, erotične, razredne, religiozne, estetske razlike) predstava na koncu »odloči« za eno uprizoritevno linijo: ker idealnega sveta ni, je združitev mogoča samo v utopiji, ki jo na oder prineseta živali oz. njuni maski. Živali nista tu niti kot osebi niti kot živali po-sebi, temveč kot simbola, ki sporočata dvoje: v življenju obstajajo meje, ki nas določajo, določajo našo svobodo, vendar jih je mogoče tudi prestopiti, preseči, pustiti za sabo. Seveda je okvir prestopa v *Besedah* poetični in ne politični in upor v predstavi je pasivni upor zgolj umik v besedo in simbol, celo neke vrste sublimacija, a možnost izhoda vselej obstaja. Še posebej močno asociira nanjo zaključni prizor z letom ptic-avtomatov, ki so negibno sedele v prostoru celo predstavo. Kljub potencirani zavesti o lutkovnosti ptic, celo o njihovem vidnem (in slišnem) avtomatizmu – ali pa ravno zato – ptice v gledalčevi receptivni zavesti v resnici poletijo! Njihov objektivni, zunanji odrski let je v resnici gledalčev notranji let, let navznoter, individualen, za vsakogar drugačen in v resnici samozadosten, a ravno zato »objektiven«. Prizor s pomnoženimi pticami, ki jim vidimo v drobje, za povrh pa pri vzgibnem aktu zalotimo celo njihovi animatorki ali »božanstvi«, in ki traja in traja, je idealen dokaz moči Omerzujeve lutke, ki iz svoje zunanosti nagovarja gledalčevo notranjost, hkrati pa je tudi sama na nenehni poti navznoter, kjer se naseli v njuno, gledalčevo in lutkino skupno gnezdo. »Ptičiči so tisto, kar hočemo reči,« je Bertin verz iz *Besed* in lepa ponazoritev samega bistva predstave in (lutkovne) umetnosti sploh: ta je tisto neizrekljivo, ki pa ga moramo s svojim neslišnim jezikom nenehno izrekat. Ali, povedano z Agambnom: »...ali ni vsa poezija – vsa umetnost – ravno to: odreči se svojemu glasu in se prepustiti neznanemu jeziku, ki ne pripada nam in ga ne proizvajamo sami?«¹⁸

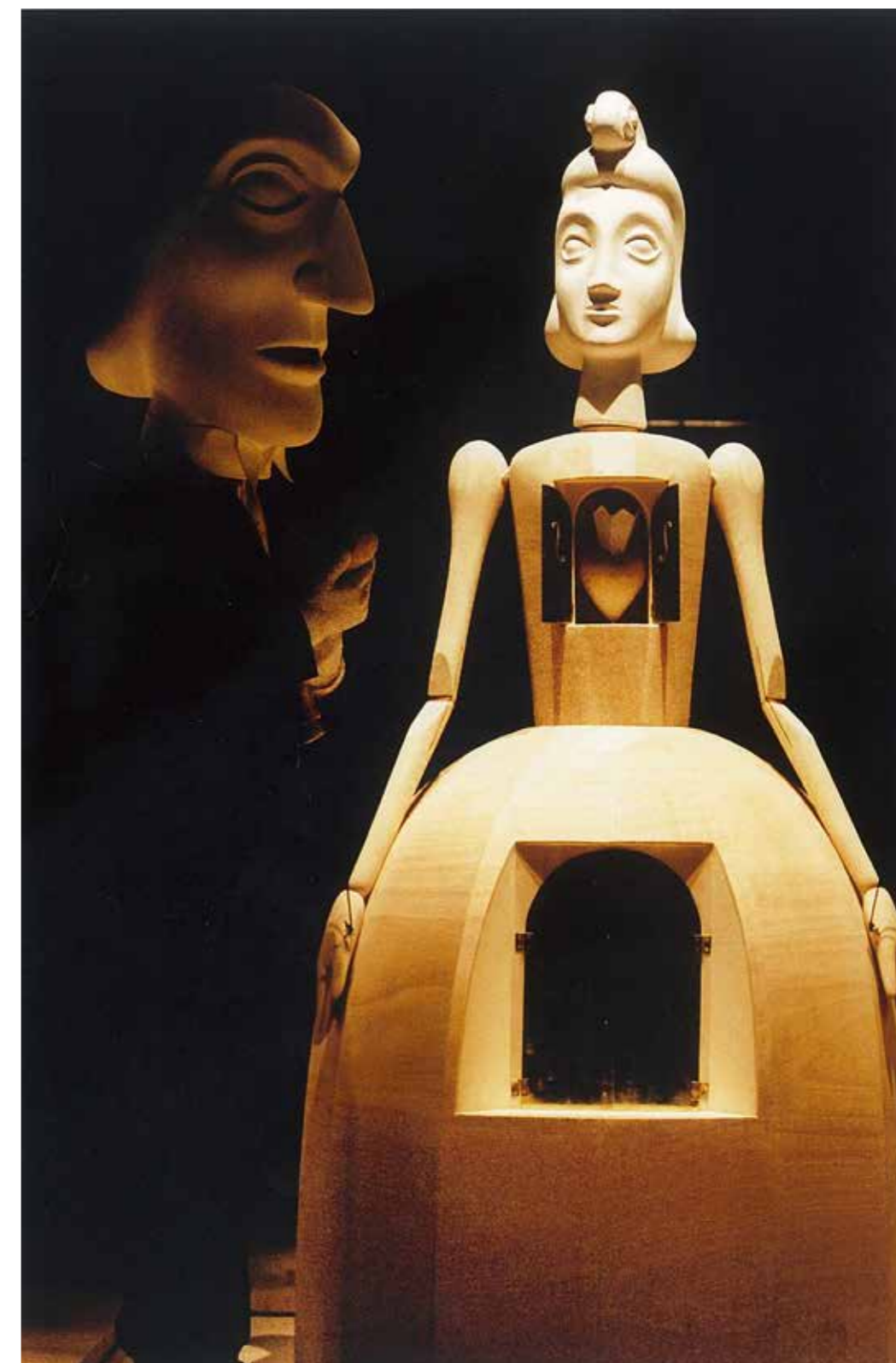
Za konec moramo omeniti še Omerzujevo vizualno podobo in postavitev (skupaj s Katarino Štok Pretnar) razstave *Ivan Cankar in Evropa*,¹⁹ saj njena postavitev učinkuje kot prostorska ali performativna instalacija. To je seveda vsaka prostorska postavitev kake razstave, vendar je Omerzu k postavljanju pristopil ne zgolj iz prostorskih ali likovnih, temveč (tudi) iz performativnih izhodišč. Na njej najdemo tipična omerzujevska omizja, avtomate

in lutkovne objekte, sence, vozičke ter mobilne instalacije (posebej omenimo monumentalno instalacijo *Podobe iz sanj*, pravo antologijo Omerzujevega lutkarstva). Pri nekaterih razstavnih predmetih, ki niso zgolj ilustracija razstavnega »dogajanja«, Omerzu poudari njihovo lutkovnost (npr. z vodilom, štrlečim v prostor, ki kliče k oživitvi). »Živa« je tudi že nekajkrat omenjena Cankarjeva glava, v kateri je združena tako Omerzujeva lutkovna misel kot ideja Cankarjeve razstave. V eno se namreč sestavita Cankarjeva vloga kronista politično, socialno, moralno in eksistencialno kaotičnega časa pred in med prvo svetovno vojno in Omerzujev čut za red, kombiniran z nezmotljivim poslušom za vse tenčine človeške komedije. Omerzujev Cankar nosi v svoji objektivi »praznini« več pomenov: je zvest »portret«, hkrati pa tudi Omerzujev rahlo humoren komentar nanj; lutkovno-kiparska upodobitev ne pomeni morebitne Cankarjeve degradacije do objekta, temveč ravno nasprotno, njegovo (ponovno) počlovečenje, pri čemer pa – paradoksnost – svoje lutkovnosti sploh ne skriva. Celotno poudarja jo, in to z obema akcijama, ki ju je »sposoben«, miganjem z ušesi in kazanjem jezika. Kar lahko razumemo najprej kot Cankarjev upor proti svojemu – in zdaj tudi našemu – času, po drugi strani pa tudi upor proti lutkovni formi, v katero je ujet, iz katere pa tudi niti po naključju noče izstopiti ... Skratka: Omerzujev Cankar je mnogoznačna lutkovna figura, »forma«, ki pa je več kot to, tudi že »vsebina«; pravzaprav je Cankar nenehna dialektična igra prehodov med formo in vsebino, med kanonom in invencijo, med šolsko zlorabo in intimno izkušnjo, s potencialno napetostjo, ki ždi v njegovem »mehanizmu«, hkrati pa tudi v pozivu k srečanju z »živim« Cankarjem – kje drugje kot v njegovi literaturi. To srečanje po vsem sodeč ne bo lahko niti ne zanesljivo uspešno, vendar mora biti izvedeno, saj se le na ta način lahko aktivira v lutki akumulirani bivanjski potencial in se razmerje z začetka našega razmišljanja lahko udejanji, lutka pa »sama po sebi« odpre vrata v naš »svet«, še več, celo prestopi vanj. – Lutka Silvana Omerzuja to zmore.



SVETNIK KRESPEL, Gledališče Konj, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev in Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2003. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

COUNCILLOR KRESPEL, Konj Theatre, Association of Puppeteers and Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2003. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



SNEGULJČICA, Gledališče Glej, Ljubljana, 2005. Foto: Nada Zgank
SNOW WHITE, Glej Theatre, Ljubljana, 2005. Photo: Nada Zgank

PUPPETS AND THE WORLD

An overview of the Past Decade of Silvan Omerzu's Puppet Creativity

WORLD

'Omerzu's puppets open up doors for us into a modern world that is much more than simple puppetry, although in doing so they persist in the pure simplicity of puppets, which is a separate world unto itself.' This sentence concluded the extensive essay on the puppet art of Silvan Omerzu, published for his 2010 exhibition in MGLC, an essay that dealt with the decade of his puppet creativity prior to that year.¹ This text will have to continue from where I finished last time, but with the realisation that I will not be able to avoid certain repetitions of what I have already stated and that I will dwell deeper into certain themes that I merely implied in the previous essay. However, there is absolutely nothing wrong with this. The puppets that Silvan Omerzu created in the decade that followed, i.e. in the decade that is slowly coming to an end with the opening of a new exhibition, shows a continuation of what he had started, a repetition of what he had achieved, but he always dwelled slightly deeper into what he previously merely implied; and this is where his constant invention lies.²

I should expose two points from the previously quoted thought: 'modern world' and the world of puppets 'unto itself' and place them into some sort of a relation. What is the relation between the world as we know it and the world of puppets? This is the question that is – sooner or later – inadvertently posed by Omerzu's more recent puppets, especially to

viewers who are inclined towards his puppets without any reservations, and yet sceptical as regards the realistic reach of his contemplative figurative or performative images, that are oriented towards the inside and closed to the outside.

A lot has been said about both worlds and the point in which they meet in the various discussions on puppet art. We could say that the first to establish a relation between the puppet and the world in all its physical and spiritual dominance, is the puppeteer. As the puppet itself does not reflect the outside world (whether it imitates, reproduces, represents or boils it down to the essential), the puppeteer – who comes from this world – takes care of this, and through the puppeteer the puppet maintains constant contact with the public – if not by anything else by its orientation towards the auditorium. However, it would be hard to say something new or exciting about this.³ The contemplation as regards the 'political' aspect of the puppet seems to be of greater interest, contemplating the puppet itself, which holds a special status in Omerzu, and in my previously mentioned text I have already tried to define this from the ontological perspective and describe its performativity.

In his inspirational philosophical essay on Pulcinella, a commedie dell'arte character, Giorgio Agamben considers the character's

¹ Blaž Lukan, *Omerzu's Puppets and their Performativity*, Silvan Omerzu, *Automatons, Puppets, Actors*, Ljubljana, Mednarodni grafični likovni center, 2010.

² Between 2010 and 2020 Silvan Omerzu either directed, made or designed puppets for 11 puppet performances, 3 of which were for adults and 8 for children.

³ Agamben, who I will quote again in the continuation, also talks about the puppeteer in relation to the performance of the puppet *Pulcinella*, in which the puppeteer lends his voice to the puppet through the use of a special whistle, *pivette*. In reality the puppeteer needs to learn a new language with the whistle, and thus he renounces his own voice; he thus gives the puppet only his breath.

⁴ Giorgio Agamben, *Pulcinella or, Entertainment for Kids in Four Scenes*, London, New York, Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2018.

⁵ Agamben, quoted text, p. 66.



political aspect.⁴ Pulcinella, wrote Agamben, cannot take off his characteristic mask, as he has no face behind it; Pulcinella is therefore merely an idea, with nothing standing behind it. Because of this he operates through jokes, gags or lazzis, which we find entertaining primarily because the act is interrupted at the very moment it reaches its peak. The action, which has always been a political space, is thus shown in Pulcinella's lazzis as unfinished, lost, without any substance. However, this does not mean that Pulcinella is apolitical, for he announces and demands a different politicalness, which is no longer located in the action, but shows us what the body is capable of when action becomes impossible. Pulcinella therefore reminds us that politicalness exists beyond action as well as prior to it.⁵

Let's apply this on Omerzu's puppet. We have already ascertained that this is the moment in which it is the most 'alive' in its stillness, in the static condition of merely 'sitting' (at

the table). This is when it radiates the most of its potentiality, the potentiality of 'life'. The most recent Omerzu's puppets function statically. But it seems that their 'former' staticity merely deepened. In fact, this is not staticity, but a deep insight, a look within, a contact between the puppet and its substance. What follows might seem like a paradox, but still: regardless of this 'absolute' internalisation Omerzu's recent puppets also show some sort of a 'surface', exterior, the world around it.

In order for Omerzu to reach an extreme level of puppet purity, he has to take away the theatre from the puppet, reduce it, take away the non-essential and preserve merely those lines and essences, which – prior to the dangerous immersion into the void of everything – enable recognition and identification. Omerzu moves away from the (possibility) of the spectacle as the actualisation of the form. In order to actualise another possibility, the possibility of the inner, mental spectacle, he turns the

SOLZE, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Foto: Boris Gaberščik

TEARS, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Photo: Boris Gaberščik

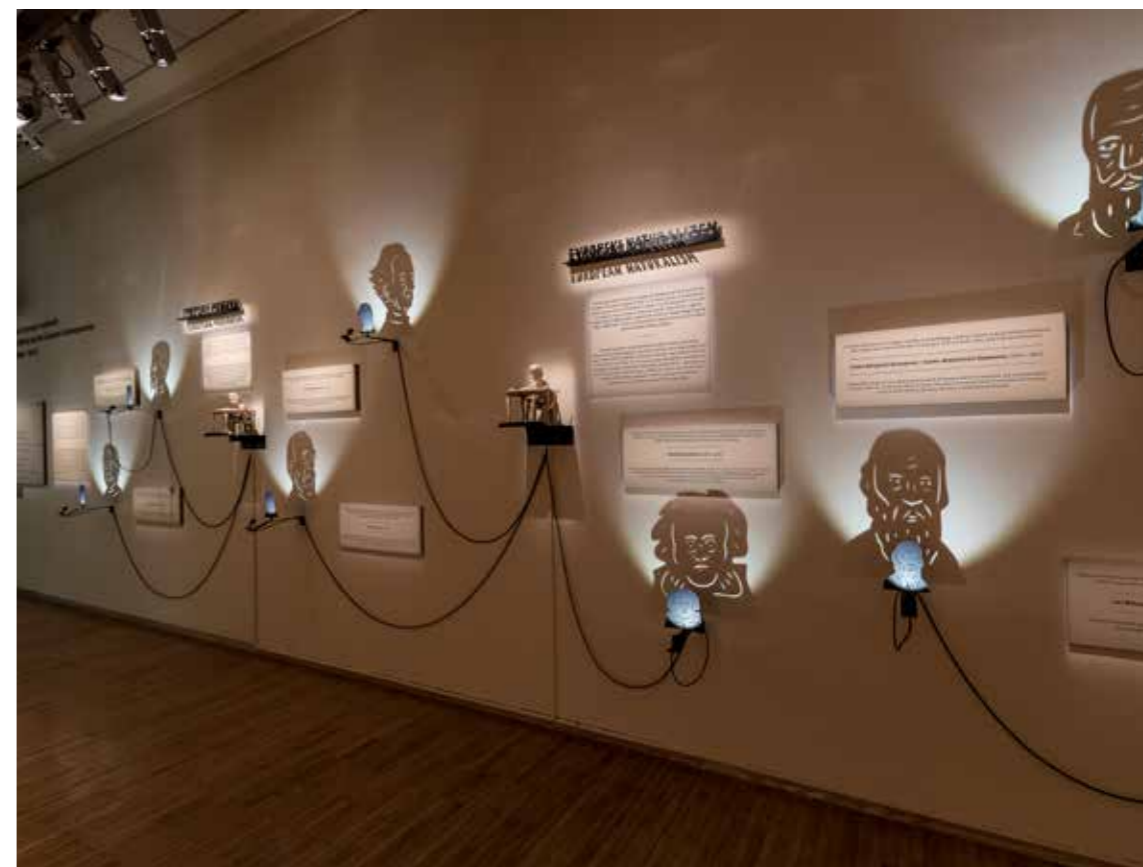


internal one, the explosion of form into an implosion of contents. His performance is after all a de-formance, or an im-formance or even a sub-formance, in which the emphasis lies on the orientation within (*im*), to the bottom (*sub*), the interior, where the exterior (*form*) almost vanishes, at which the idea of an im-formance also includes the phenomenon of submersion (*immersion*) into oneself.

However, as we have already ascertained, Omerzu's theatre is never simple or dualistic. Thus, in the case of puppets, form is not substituted by contents, not are the two separated. Omerzu is always interested in the puppet's synthesis, the possibility of the 'third status', as Agamben would say. At first glance, Omerzu's break with the exterior seems to mean he is stepping out from the material, the physical, social order of the puppet. However, it is always also an entry

IVAN CANKAR IN EVROPA (postavitev v sodelovanju s Katarino Štok Pretnar), Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2018. Foto: Blaž Zupančič

IVAN CANKAR AND EUROPE (exhibition design in collaboration with Katarina Štok Pretnar), Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2018. Photo: Blaž Zupančič



6 In his essay on puppet theatre Max Frisch also speaks about another relation between the entrance and the exit. In his view the puppet becomes 'alive', once it steps out of its materiality, similar to the analogy with the actor in the theatre, who steps from his physicality into the fiction of the character. My understanding is different: (Omerzu's) puppet becomes 'alive' when it enters its materiality, and I contemplate its exit from social reality. (My understanding of the actor's exit from the body into fiction is also different.) (Max Frisch, O marionetah, iz Dnevnika, 1947. *Lutka*, Ljubljana, 1.2 (1966): pp. 71-73).

point into some other order, which, opposed to the first, leans towards individualisation, or towards taking over personal responsibility for the presence and operation within the world, for the new 'political'.⁶ Let's say it as it is: Omerzu's vision of the (new) political is utopic, in his puppet world politics are feasible merely as a Utopia, as a mythological place, an island on which it is possible to function without functioning, or to be more precise, without impossible acts, even by merely 'sitting at a table', with the reduction of all external gestures to the minimum, to the point where they become absent.

This brings us dangerously close to hermeticism, solipsism or at least subjectivism, which do not have any actual connections with external life. However, this is what it would be like if we had a biased or incomplete view of Omerzu's puppet art. Looking at his opus, including his works from the last

decade, shows various and diverse answers to the original question as regards the 'political' aspect of his puppets. In it we can find various types of puppets, which represent various types of reactions to the world and express his attitude towards it. The most expressive type of puppets Omerzu has been making in the recent years has been the type that we have been discussing until now, i.e. wooden puppets, which are focused to the maximum while their expression is reduced to the minimum. Puppets that are best known for their face-sculpture, their expressive eyes, which appear blind at first glance, i.e. they are 'empty' (they do not seem capable of vision), however, in reality they are full, only that their vision is turned inwards as they are positioned 'at the table', i.e. in a marionette pose, which shows the most possible substance. However, we should not forget the other type of Omerzu's puppets, the type he is best known for, the grotesque figurines,

from the now already legendary performance *Napravite mi zanj krsto* (*Make Me a Coffin for Him*, 1993). These puppets have a painted (drawn on) face and are oriented towards action, characteristic of hand puppets or commedia dell'arte. This type of puppets bring into their visual phenomenology two attitudes as regards their exterior appearance for the viewer: criticism and playfulness. Omerzu's criticism is always marked by a comical connotation and a variation of the comical, gathered in the term grotesque, both of which are - before their final decline into the (destructive) depths of irony - protected by the unambiguous leniency to the game and its constant creativity. Both examples of Omerzu's puppet typology infallibly reconstruct his 'intimate' belief on one hand and his authentic doubt on the other, thus presenting a world that reaches from the depiction of his grotesquely skewed image through criticism as rebellion, retreat to extreme individualism and solipsism to the vision of utopic 'reconciliation' and 'peace'. Or, as told in a puppet metaphor: his puppet walks the path from an explicitly controlled to a totally automated puppet, which obtains its specific derivation in the puppet-automatons; the path from a puppet the motion of which depends on the will of the puppeteer, to a puppet that propels all potential 'puppeteers', i.e. the actual world with which it communicates.

When we talk about Omerzu's puppet typology, we do not have in mind the various types of puppets as regards the possibilities of controlling them - even though this would reveal the specific phenomenology of his puppet worlds - but the different 'anthropologic machines' produced by his puppeteering imagination. Thus, we have to add the two types of animal puppets that appear in his theatre to the two previously mentioned types: the first type are animals from puppet plays for children, which show recognisable traits of Omerzu's visual reduction, while meeting the demands of children's recognisability on one hand and the typological demands of the fable or narrative on the other. The second type of animals are mainly head puppets (masks) from his performances for adults, which continue the tradition from the *Forbidden Loves* (2009), and which manifest a practically identical contemplative focus to his 'human' figurines, heads or masks (for instance, look

at the figurine of Cankar made for the exhibition *Ivan Cankar and Europe*; more about this example in the continuation). The third segment of Omerzu's puppet expression can be found in the previously mentioned automatons. The space in between is filled by anthropomorphic puppets (for instance in the performance *Hiša Marije Pomočnice* (*The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy*, 2008), which combine various materials, such as paper mâché, wood and Plexi glass, while their main characteristics are transparency, fragility, 'lack of body', and they only fulfil their puppet charge in the close contact with the puppeteer, which they 'thank' with an equal measure of subtlety.

I would like to underline Frisch's thought as regards the shared significance of humans and inanimate figurines within puppet theatre.⁷ When we add an animal or an automaton to them, Omerzu's characteristic aesthetic 'democracy' opens up in front of us, and, if we are honest, this is never merely aesthetic. In their specifics, all of the aforementioned types carry similar intense 'equal' thoughts, at which every type has some sort of an addition at work, in the abstract as well as concrete sense. In fact, we are dealing with simultaneous reduction and addition, subtracting and adding characteristics that emerge from the 'alien' and at first glance unmergeable worlds. Firstly, Omerzu frees each type of its superfluous, i.e. assumed and ideological clutter, and then he adds to it whatever is 'missing' in order for it to reach equality in meaning. However, this does not mean an invasion of a new ideology, but a total opening of the spectrum of new possibilities and theatrical substance that the viewer's imagination can enter. He removes the character and phantasm from his grotesque puppet and replaces them with action, after which he places them in situations in which they reflect 'specific use of bodies'.⁸ He removes the entire naturalistic decorum from his contemplative puppet and models it practically from within, at which its interior is not some sort of an 'artistic' addition, but an autochthonous emergence, the result of the puppet's submersion. It should be said that he sometimes allows it to move away or break through the rigid, previously set ideological structure, i.e. the marked gesture (expression, grimace, repetitive movement), which links it to the comicality of the first type

⁷ Frisch, quoted work, p. 73.

⁸ Agamben, quoted work, p. 117.

BESEDE IZ HIŠE KARLSTEIN, Lutkovno gledališče Maribor, Gledališče Konj, 2017. Foto: Boštjan Lah
WORDS FROM THE HOUSE KARLSTEIN, Maribor Puppet Theatre, Konj Theatre, 2017. Photo: Boštjan Lah



and the automation of the puppet-automaton and which represents a manifestation of the puppet's autonomy as well as an artist's comment (the best example is the previously mentioned head of Cankar, which shows its tongue and moves its ears). He seems to remove the human 'filling', the mysterious 'body', from the automaton which Aristotle believed has almost animal-like qualities, while Descartes went a step further and considered it almost human or at least similar to a human child, and replaces it with an 'inanimate' mechanism, which, paradoxically, represents the thickening of everything 'living' and human into a single automated gesture. A simple move, a turn, the raising of a hand become declarations of life, which substitute all superfluous 'human' baggage applied over the centuries. As for the masks-animals: even though their non-human beauty has a certain charm, we try to humanise them, which - except in children's puppets - would be a mistake that Omerzu does not fall for and he thus creates them with equal empathy in the creative process and gives them the same

transhuman liveliness that he gives his human figurines. This transhumanity belongs to Omerzu's faith in utopia, combined with extreme realism of life, which finds its ideal scene in (puppet) theatre.

We should mention that in his performances Omerzu does not establish hierarchies neither in civilisational contexts, for instance between men and women, adults and children, between the spiritual and profane, real and fictitious, nor in aesthetic contexts, for instance between the shadow and the figurine, actor and puppet, a hand puppet and a marionette. All of the aforementioned forms Omerzu's aesthetic and contemplative theatrum mundi, both of which we have already discussed and that exist parallel to the world we know and that are in constant communication with it.

The overview of certain basic characteristics of Omerzu's puppet creativity over the last decade, which will remain incomplete, as the end of the decade does not necessarily repre-

once again concluded by Agamben's words, at which I will place a special emphasis on Omerzu's original addition. Agamben states that when Pulcinella fails to say anything, it expresses its incapability to speak, and when it does nothing, it expresses its incapability to perform actions; with this it proves that life is impossible and that this impossibility is in fact a political task par excellence: an individual can only function beyond the act – or before it, he can speak only beyond the word – or before it, and can live only beyond life – or before it... With an original projection Omerzu upgraded Agamben's *reductum ad absurdum* and advocacy of 'politics without polis',⁹ which is in reality a political project, into a new possibility, a possibility of this world. This appears seemingly utopic, i.e. absent from this world – and even though its nature is outmost in its essence, in its radicalised meaning, Alenka Zupančič (leaning on the words of Lacan) explains: '... the excluded interior or included exterior, intimate exterior or alien intimacy... the clash of something inner, intimate with something external, alien; something which, on one hand, belongs to me, while on the other, it is totally alien, disgusting.'¹⁰ What else is Omerzu's unity, which we have already discussed, than a parallel existence of a grotesque and contemplation, animal and child, intellect and mechanics – all of which are supported by his recognisable signature, smoothed corners, extremes and mistakes in his wooden puppets, all of which are integrated in the *sitting figurine*, this emblematic figurine, which could easily be compared to the famous Rodin's *Thinker*. However, when we look at the *Sitting figurine* from the *Words from the House Karlstein*, we need to imagine it sitting on the same chair and at the same table as the bouncing figurine from, for instance, *Salto mortale*, which completes this *circus vitiosus* of his puppet universe.

PUPPETS

I will attempt to illustrate my points with a detailed insight into certain puppet productions that Omerzu created over the last decade, which I will, once again, perform fragmentally and bring to a close with a few concluding thoughts.¹¹

The performance *Stolp (Tower)*¹² is based on the neo-romantic play – theatre poem written by Ivo Svetina. Its starting premise lies in the unrequited love and the long-lasting iso-

lation of the German romantic poet Friedrich Hölderlin. Similar as in the performance *The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy* (2008) Omerzu has merged certain tried puppet and theatre processes into what appears at first glance a hybrid, but is in reality a unified theatre-puppet performance. The weight of the dramatic events is carried by the actors, however they are framed and intersected by puppets, for instance by a line of drumming automatons, shadow puppets, a wooden puppet with a flute and similar, which are used to enact the dream, vision and delusion sequences. The enactment of the passionate, impossible love is based on a noticeably distanced, restrained, rigid narrative, the reduction of which comes close to the possibilities of puppet theatre, and could reflect the inaccessibility of romantic love, as reflected in Hölderlin's tragical faith. The scenes addressing the revolution and the poet's zeal are enacted with a similarly restrained, descriptive passion. The actors and the puppets move from one scene to the other logically, the puppet and acted scenes complement each other, and they are also connected by the stage element of the guillotine. – Maybe we could extract Omerzu's subconscious commentary of Hölderlin pathos, in which he recognises an automatism similar to the one reflected by the formation of the drummers-automatons, which introduce and conclude the events. As if Hölderlin was also pushed into motion (love) by a (divine?) hand, which does now not allow him to escape from the constant repetition of the same, and he will stop only once the initial tension, that is making his life unbearable, will diminish.

Salto mortale, based on the work by Nebojša Pop Tasić, is a play on death, but also on re-education, or to be more precise, the production of a new man.¹³ As previously stated, the puppet typology of *Salto mortale* is connected to Omerzu's earliest grotesque performances, even though the visual image of this type of puppets has changed since then. If the puppets in *Krsta* (Coffin) had eyes on 'stalks' or at the top of their heads, and were somewhere in between in *Don Juan* (1995) or *King Ubu* (1998), drawn on the face mask with a crude stroke, flat and elongated, they are now drawn on the forehead and imprinted onto it in relief form, somewhat reminiscent of the eyes of the wooden puppets from his contemplative, reflective, poetic performances. The mouths are also characteristic,

⁹ Agamben, quoted work, p. 65–66.

¹⁰ Alenka Zupančič, *Konec*, Ljubljana: Društvo za teoretsko psihoanalizo, 2019 (Zbirka Analecta), p. 124.

¹¹ In most of his puppet productions Omerzu appears in multiple roles: he is the director, the dramaturge, the author of the visual image of the puppets, set designer, costume designer, maker of puppets. I will not mention especially his role at the description of each individual performance, for he is understood as an overall author of his performances.

¹² Ivo Svetina, *Stolp*, SMG, LGL, Umetniško društvo Konj, 2011/12.

¹³ Nebojša Pop-Tasić, *Salto mortale*, LGM, 2011/12.

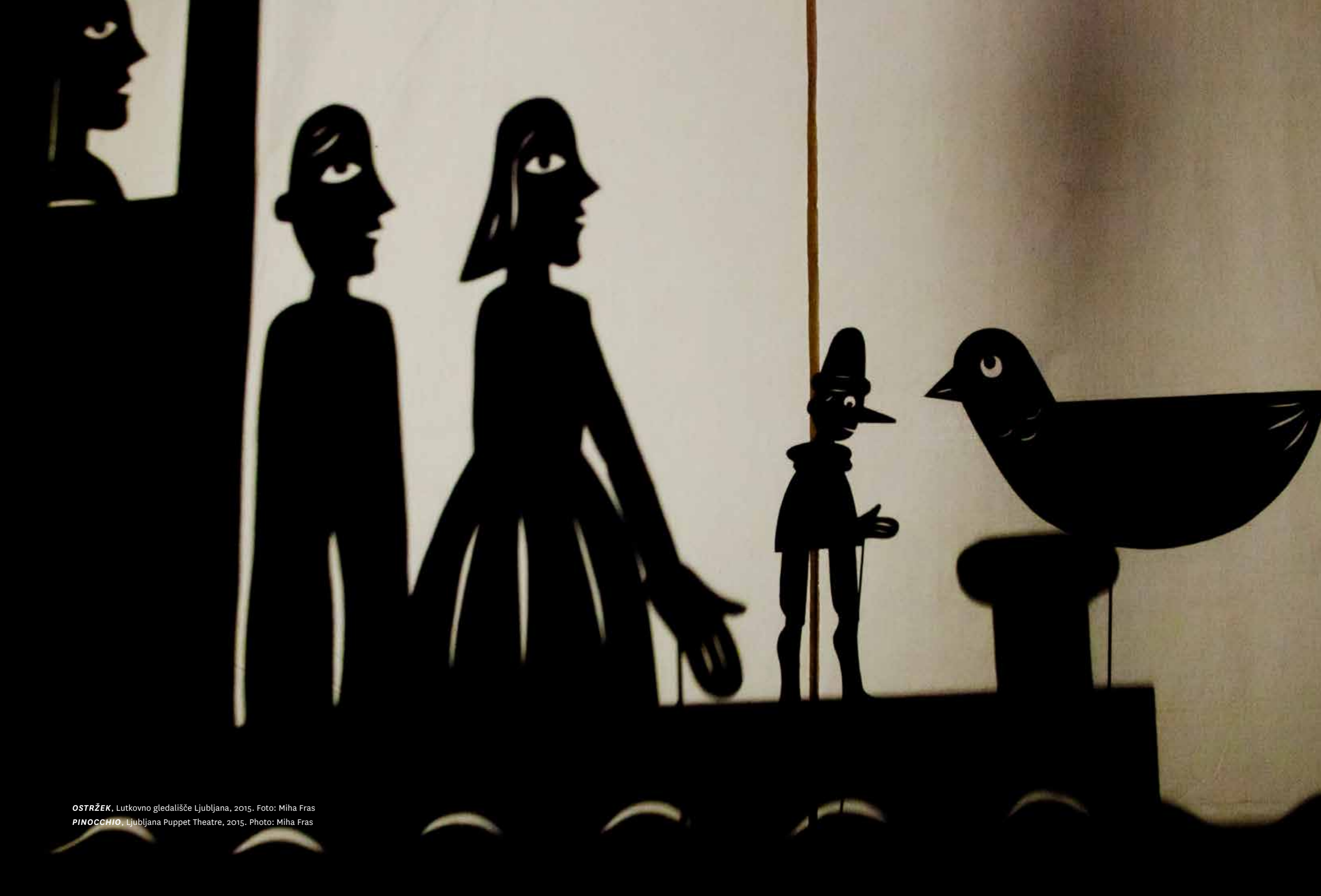


¹⁴ By the way: this scene is a good example for checking the emotional power of the puppet theatre, as the viewer with the disassembled puppet sympathises in roughly the same way as he would with an 'abused' animal or child on stage; however, the viewer would not show the same sensitivity for a suffering adult.

for they reach from one side of the face to the other, and the movable jaw with its characteristic chattering indicates their excessive talkativeness as well as their greed. Regardless of the seeming uniformity, the puppets differ from each other slightly, especially by their protruding noses. As already mentioned, this type of puppets represent action, movement, even more, the debauched ecstatic and noisy 'dance macabre'; their authentic space can be found in the theatre, as their processes are accentuated theatrical. As regards genre, we can observe a mixture of humanistic morality and a subversive grotesque, while the characters, masks without faces, are in individual scenes additionally masked with masks taken from commedia dell'arte. Omerzu's primary interest in large ideas and final truths is thus undermined, and we witness a subversion on the levels of the theme and puppets. The most characteristic (meta puppet) scene in the performance is most probably the one with the disassembling and assembling of the

SALTO MORTALE, Lutkovno gledališče Maribor, 2012. Foto: Boštjan Lah
SALTO MORTALE, Maribor Puppet Theatre, 2012. Photo: Boštjan Lah

puppet lazybones,¹⁴ while the point he makes with the statement 'I am not me' is a meaningful, paradoxical formula of contemporary individualism and scepticism that can be traced back to romanticism. –*Salto mortale*'s puppet language is perhaps more complex to that of its predecessors, and the rhythm is slightly more relaxed. A puppet of this type is closer to the world of puppets, as it is directed towards action, towards a function, maybe subjectivized only in its series, which is the carrier of the main idea of the enactment. The flow in this type of performances is marked by interruptions, twists, momentary changes in the rhythm, while continuity is predominantly established by a luddite intuition; however, the chaos has its own logic, i.e. the characteristic feeling Omerzu has for order. This performance places various processes, techniques, dimensions, measures and relations onto the same level, which is – as we now know – characteristic of Silvan Omerzu's total puppet theatre.



OSTRŽEK, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana, 2015. Foto: Miha Fras
PINOCCHIO, Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, 2015. Photo: Miha Fras

From Omerzu's performances for children from this period I will mention only *Pinocchio*¹⁵ at this point, because of its scene of the theatre within theatre, i.e. puppet theatre within puppet theatre, which contains characters from commedia dell'arte, including Pulcinella. On one hand, the puppets within puppets emphasise the puppet dimension of the performance (in which we can follow various types of puppets and animations), at which the puppet within a puppet is the character of Pinocchio, a wooden puppet, while on the other hand they show their ancient theatrical nature (puppet elements were present already in satire plays, which, according to Agamben, express the non-human origin of theatre as such).¹⁶ Finally, the duplication of the puppet aspect emphasises its reality, a formal or material specific, but identical to human substance, or, to be more precise, the transhuman substance, as the dramatic theatre as a rule tries to surpass human borders. – In *Pinocchio* Omerzu remains more consistently within the puppet frames than he does in his performances for adults, even though he combines puppets with human actors. In the final scene Pinocchio is transformed into a boy, which is in the performance merely (pedagogically and with a moral exclamation mark) told but not acted out in practice, even though we, especially from other Omerzu's performances, know that he is much more interested in the transition from human to puppet than the other way round. We also know that the transition from human into object form does not represent a de-subjectification, for it can sometimes be the exact opposite: it is only this reduction to objectivity, mechanics, that re-subjectifies the automatism of 'man', even if his body vanishes forever – whether this is in a single-meaning material filling or puppet void, or a cave covered with a provisory and temporal epidermis, 'skin'. We could say that Omerzu is interested only in what is behind or under the puppet (and this is neither the puppeteer, nor the stage), and in the mechanisms of transition, which reflect the inner contradictions between the puppet and the outside world, the constant exchanges between the exterior and interior in the puppet, darkness, matter, era, world. Even though it is veiled and hidden in the background – which is rarely Omerzu's intent – this topic is also political.

The last of the performances for adults from the past decade was the *Words from the*

House Karlstein,¹⁷ based on the poetical text of the poet, narrator and actress Berta Bojetu. Words are almost a puppet installation, in which the space of the performance (Minorite church in Maribor), into which it is 'logically' placed, is as important as the puppet objects with which he operates. *Words* are a poem-psalm, in which the description of the action is mixed with a live and a recorded poetic dialogue between the performers, until the poetry of words is transformed into pure puppet poetry that is symbolised by the flight of the birds-automatons. In *Words* Omerzu confronts the actress and the puppet, or the various types of puppets, which is a well-proven procedure; however, he also checks the reciprocal effect of the body quality of the performers, the sublime quality of the poetry and the materiality of the puppets. We could say that the puppet is in itself poetical, and Omerzu's contemplative puppet especially so, thus it carries and radiates 'poetry', but in *Words* Omerzu shows that the puppet can coexist with poetry – and vice versa, that poetic words do not corrode its universal substance, just as the puppet 'illustration' does not take away the elemental strength from poetry. It seems that this performance has a threefold adjustment: the actresses adjust to the puppets, the puppets step into dialogue with the actresses, and all of them together wear a light coat of poetry. We are witnesses to a mixed sequence of flattening and plasticisation, reduction and duplication, subjective poetry and its objective silence. Once again, we face the previously mentioned 'third status' of the performance, which does not influence the viewer merely on the acting, textual or puppet level, but on the poetical synthesis of all three mentioned elements. – In the end it might be the performance that 'decides' the performative line, regardless of the 'democratic' levelling out of the signs (all sexual, erotic, class, religious and aesthetic differences are erased): as there is no ideal world, the merger is possible only in an utopia, which is brought to the stage by the animals or their masks. The animals are not persons, nor animals in themselves, but symbols that communicate two things: our lives are defined by borders, they define our freedom, however, they can be crossed, surpassed, left behind. Of course, the frame of the transfer in *Words* is poetic and not political and the rebellion in the performance is a passive resistance, merely a retreat into the word and symbol, one could say even some sort of sublimation, but the possibility of an

¹⁵ Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio*, LGL and Umetniško društvo Konj, 2014/15.

¹⁶ Agamben, quoted work, p. 39.

¹⁷ Berta Bojetu - Boeta, *Besede iz hiše Karlstein*, LGM, Umetnostna galerija Maribor, Umetniško društvo Konj, 2017/18.

¹⁸ Agamben, quoted work, p. 135.

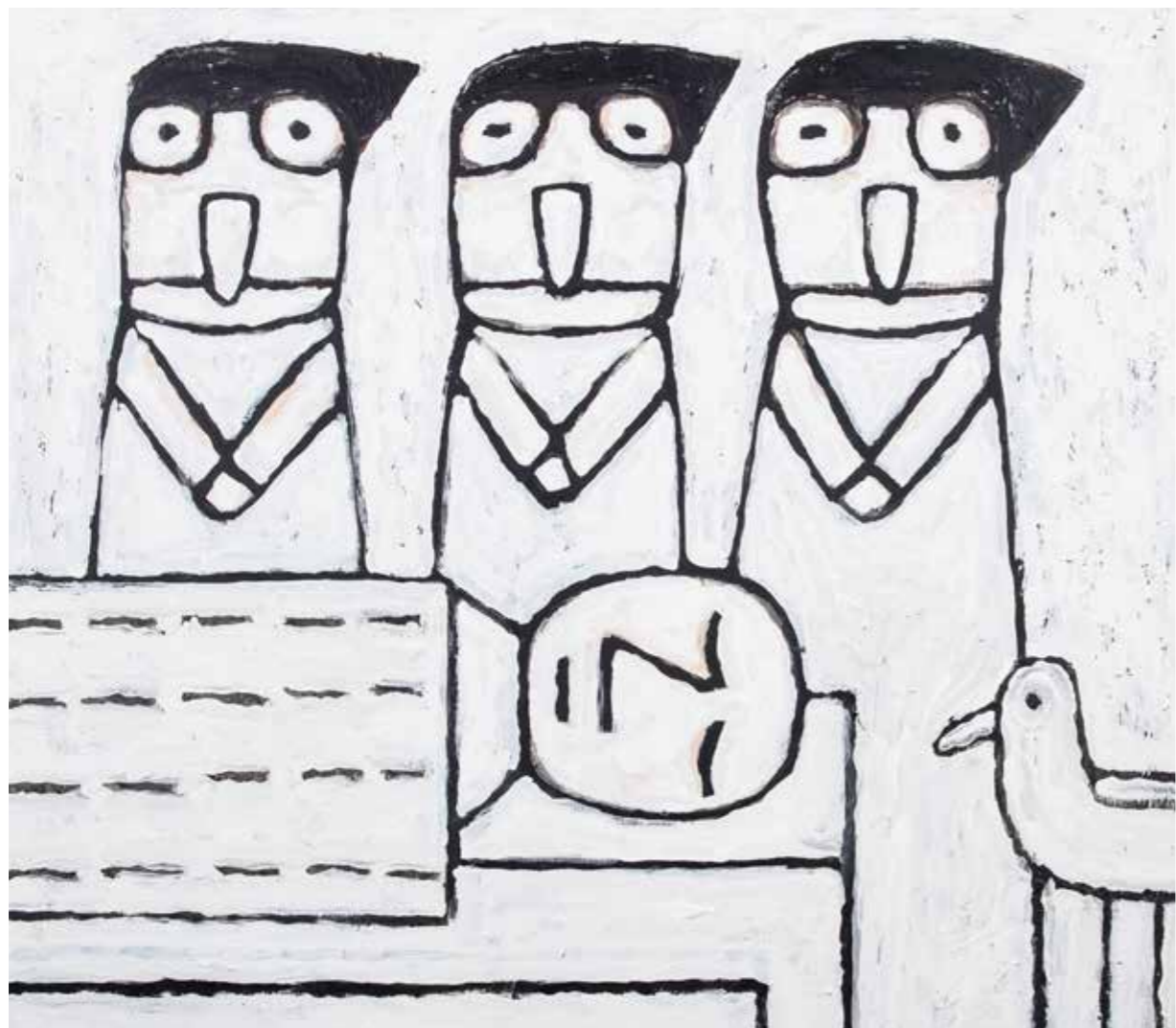
¹⁹ *Ivan Cankar in Evropa*, Cankarjev dom, 19 June 2018 – 28 February 2019.

exit is always present. Especially strong associations are produced in the final scene, when the birds-automatons, which have been sitting still throughout the performance, start to fly. Regardless of the intense awareness of the puppet qualities of the birds, even their visible (and audible) automatism – or maybe precisely because of it – the birds in the viewer's perception truly fly off! Their objective, external flight across the stage is in reality the viewer's inner flight, a flight within, original and individual as well as self-sufficient, but it is precisely this that makes it 'objective'. The scene with the multiple birds, of which we can see the insides, and on top of which we can see their puppeteers or 'goddesses' that create the movement that goes on and on, proves the power of Omerzu's puppets, which with their exteriors address the viewer's interior, while flying on their own constant path inwards, where they inhabit their, the viewer's and the puppet's shared nest. 'Birds are what we want to say,' is Bertha's verse in *Words* and a good depiction of the essence of the performance and (puppet) art in general: this is the unutterable, which we have to constantly utter with our silent language. Or as Agamben would say: »But isn't all poetry – all art – precisely the handing down of a voice and an unknown language that do not belong to us and that we nevertheless produce with childish little plays...¹⁸

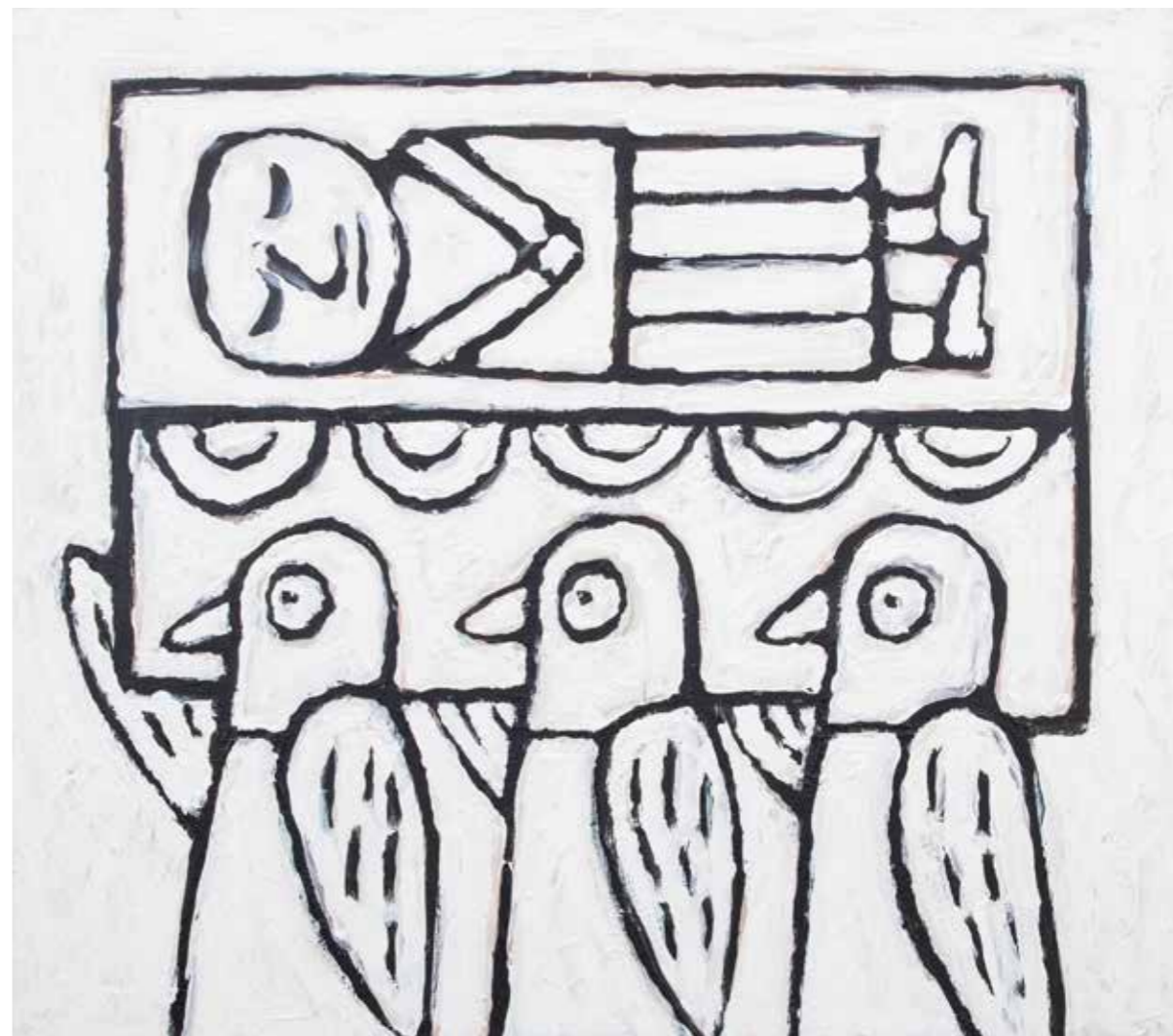
In the end I have to mention Omerzu's visual image and layout (together with Katarina Štok Pretnar) of the exhibition *Ivan Cankar and Europe*,¹⁹ as it functions as a spatial or performative installation. Of course, this holds true for any layout of any exhibition, however, Omerzu approached the layout not merely from a spatial or visual starting point, but also from a performative one. The exhibition included distinctive Omerzu's tables, automatons and puppet objects, shadows, carts and mobile installations (the monumental installation *Images from Dreams* deserves a special mention as it is a true ontology of Omerzu's puppet making). With certain exhibited objects, which were not merely an illustration of the exhibition 'action', Omerzu emphasised their visual aspect (for instance with a rod that was sticking into space and called out to be brought to life). The previously mentioned Cankar's head, which combines Omerzu's ideas of puppets with the idea of the exhibition on Cankar, is also 'alive'. The head merges Cankar's role of a chronicler of a politically, socially, morally and existentially

chaotic time before and during World War I with Omerzu's sense for order, combined with the unmistakable feeling for the variations in human comedy. Within his objective 'void', Omerzu's Cankar carries multiple meanings: it is a true 'portrait', as well as Omerzu's slightly humorous commentary of it; the puppet-sculpture depiction does not represent a degradation of Cankar to an object, on the contrary, it represents his (new) humanisation, at which he paradoxically does not hide his puppet side. He even emphasises it, with the two actions that he is 'capable of' - moving his ears and showing his tongue. This can be understood firstly as Cankar's rebellion against his – and now also our – period, and secondly as a rebellion against the puppet form, in which he is trapped and from which he cannot escape even if he wanted to... Omerzu's Cankar is an ambiguous puppet figurine, a 'form' which is more than just that, it is also 'contents'; in fact Cankar is a constant didactic game of transitions between form and contents, canon and invention, school abuse and intimate experience, full of potential tension that inhabits his 'mechanism', but at the same time also represents an invitation to meet the 'living' Cankar – where else but in his texts. This meeting will not be an easy one, nor will it necessarily be successful, but it has to take place, for this is the only way that the living potential accumulated within the puppet can be activated and the relation from the beginning of our text can materialise, while the puppet will open the door into our 'world', even more, it will step into it. – Puppets made by Silvan Omerzu can do this.



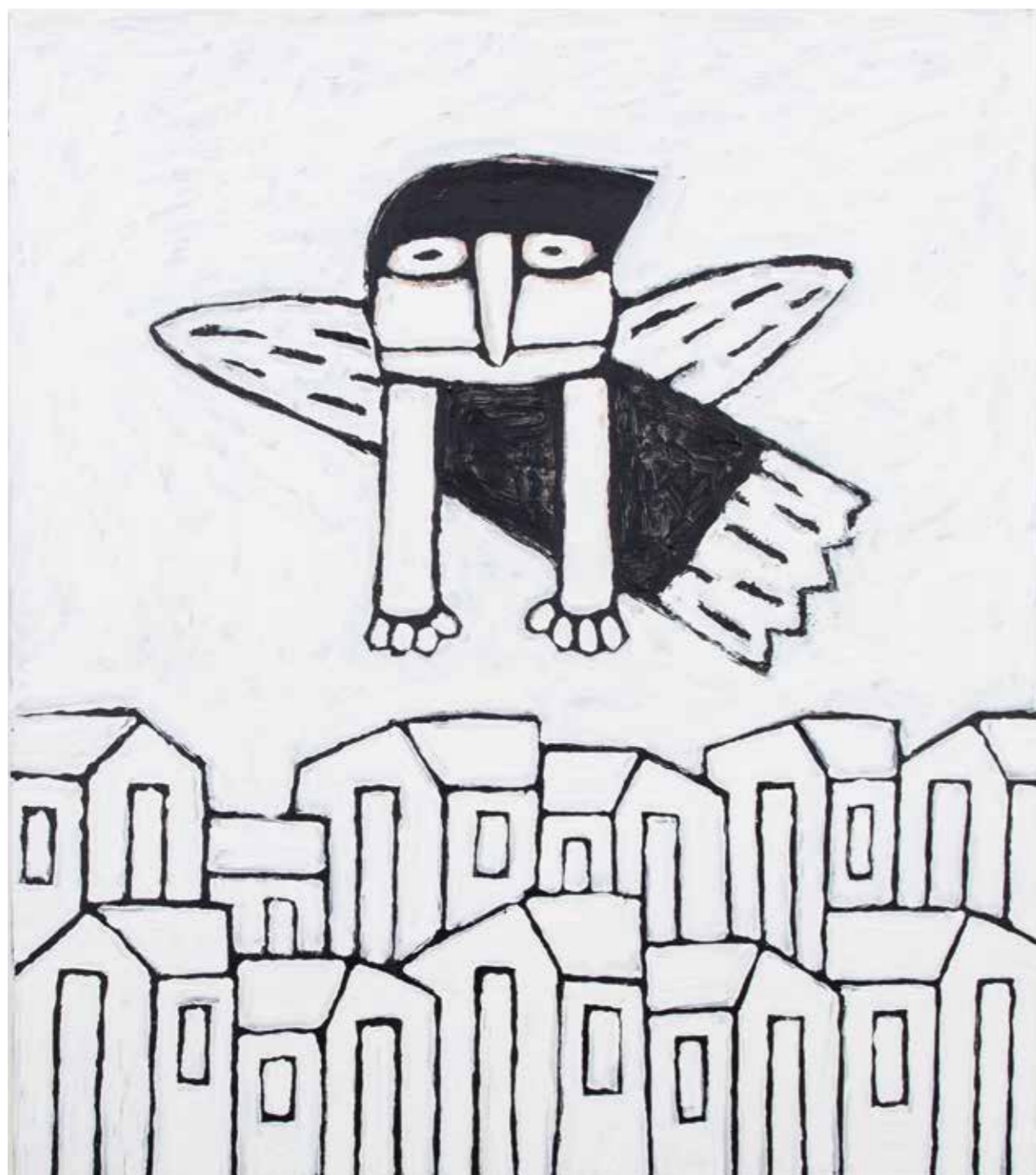


BREZ NASLOVA, slika, 2018
UNTITLED, painting, 2018



BREZ NASLOVA, slika, 2018
UNTITLED, painting, 2018





BREZ NASLOVA, slika, 2018
UNTITLED, painting, 2018



BREZ NASLOVA, slika, 2018
UNTITLED, painting, 2018



PREGLEDNA RAZSTAVA, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik
A RETROSPECTIVE, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



OMIZJE, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik
TABLE SCENES, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik





HIŠA MARIJE POMOČNICE, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

THE WARD OF OUR LADY OF MERCY, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



HIŠA MARIJE POMOČNICE, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

THE WARD OF OUR LADY OF MERCY, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik





AVTOMATI, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

AUTOMATONS, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik





AVTOMATI, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

AUTOMATONS, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik



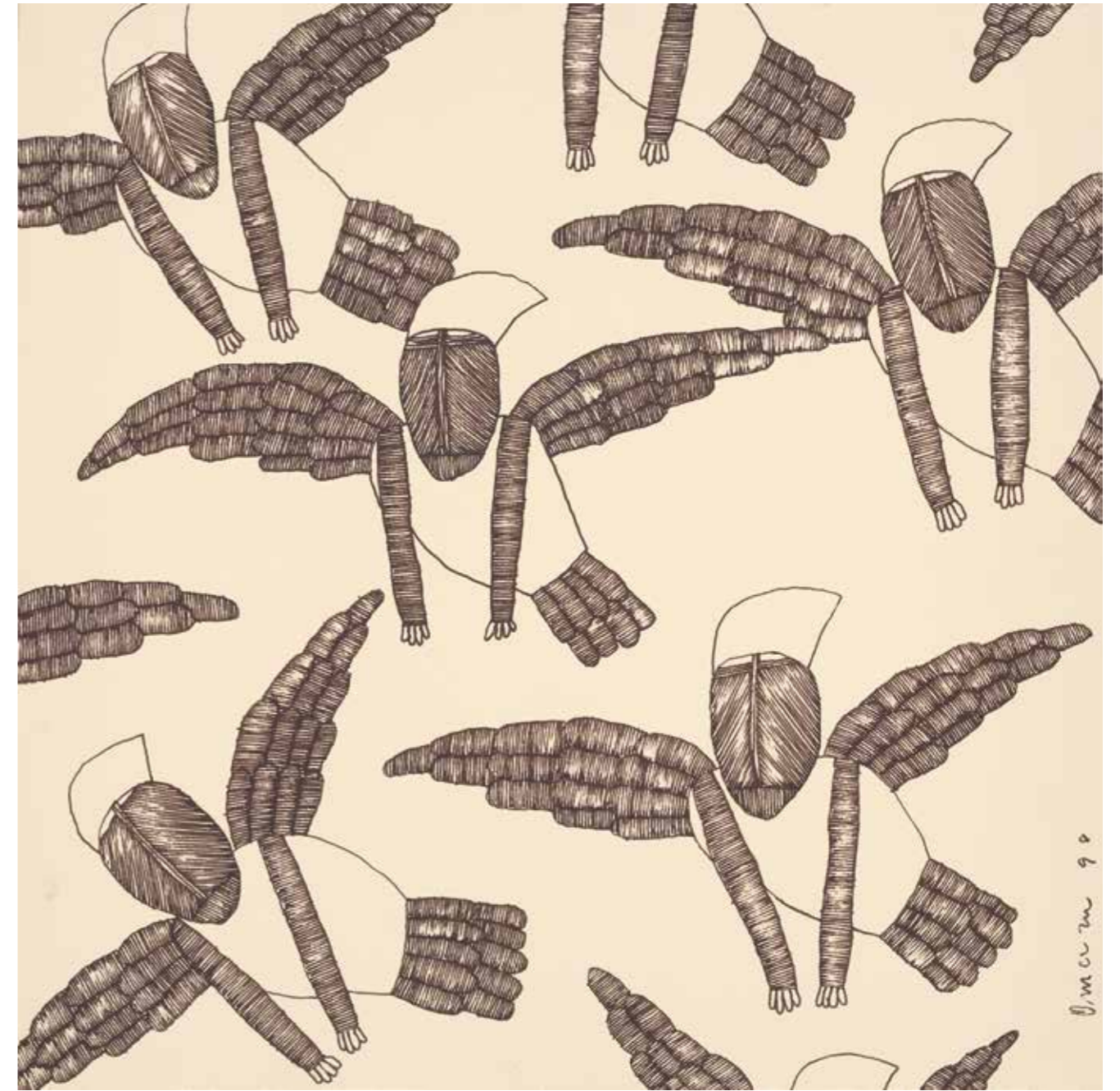


GOSPOD STOTNIK, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik
SIR, CAPTAIN, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik





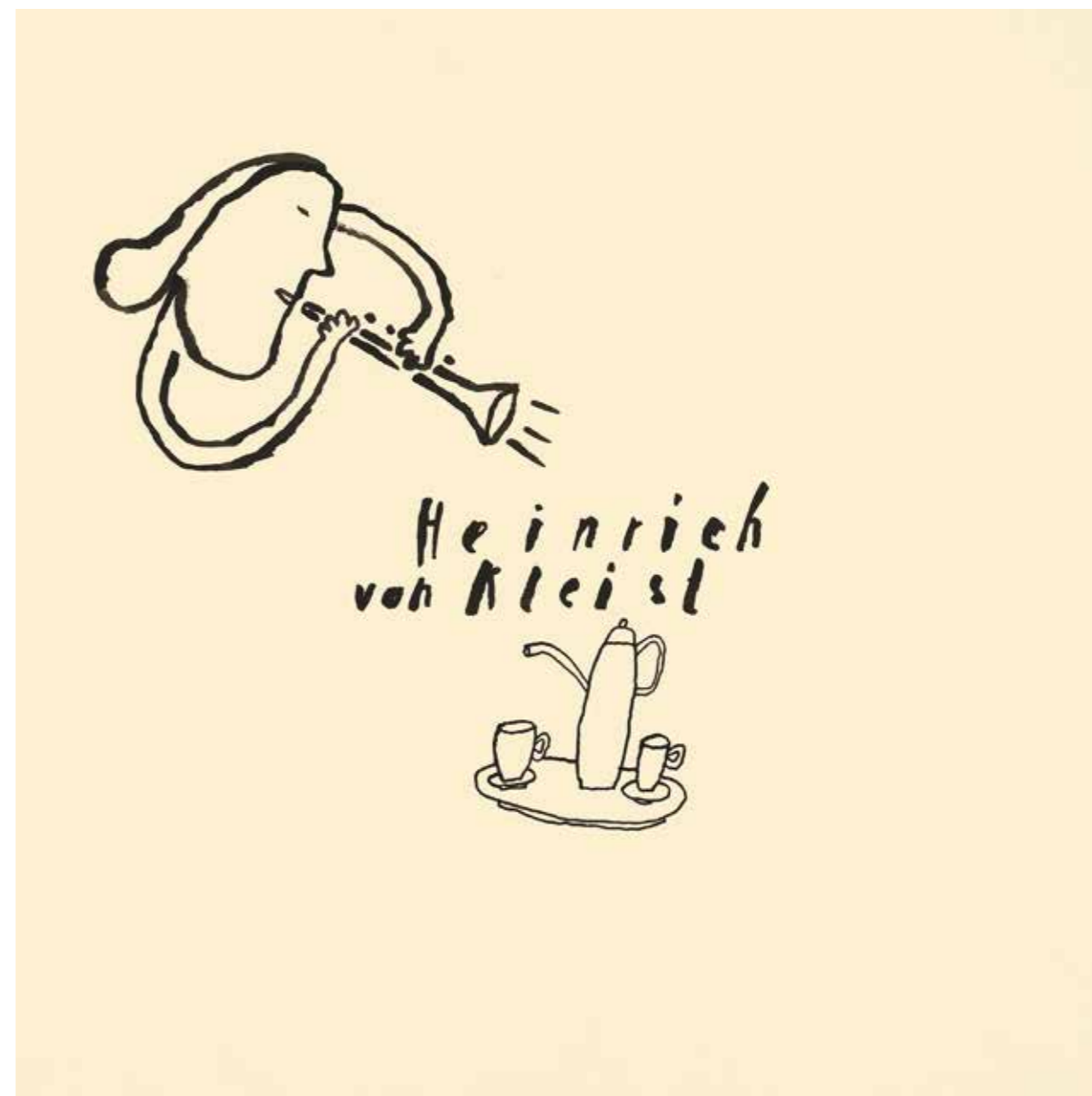
BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 2006
UNTITLED, drawing, 2006



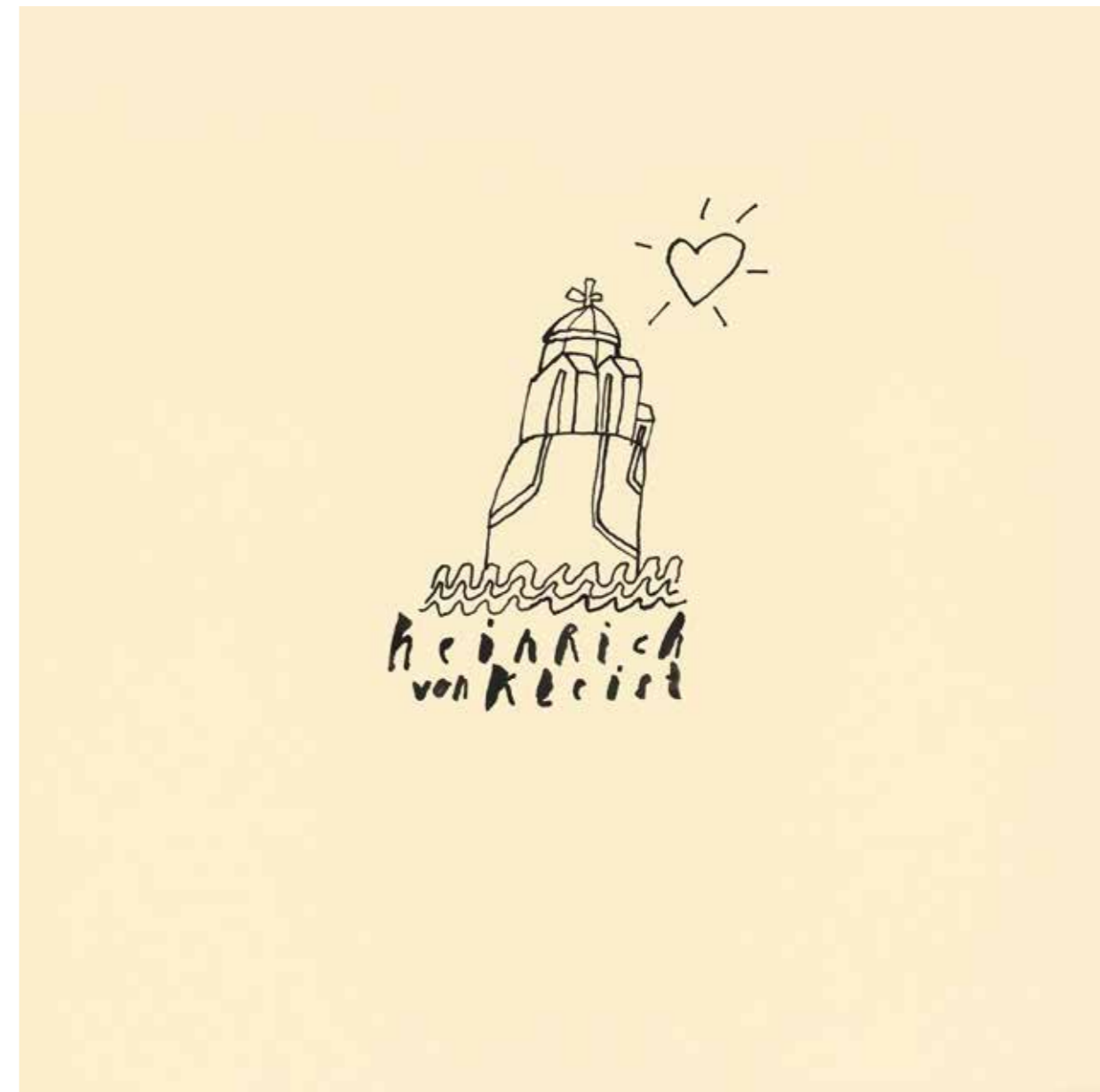
BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 1998
UNTITLED, drawing, 1998



BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 2006
UNTITLED, drawing, 2006



BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 2006
UNTITLED, drawing, 2006



BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 2006
UNTITLED, drawing, 2006

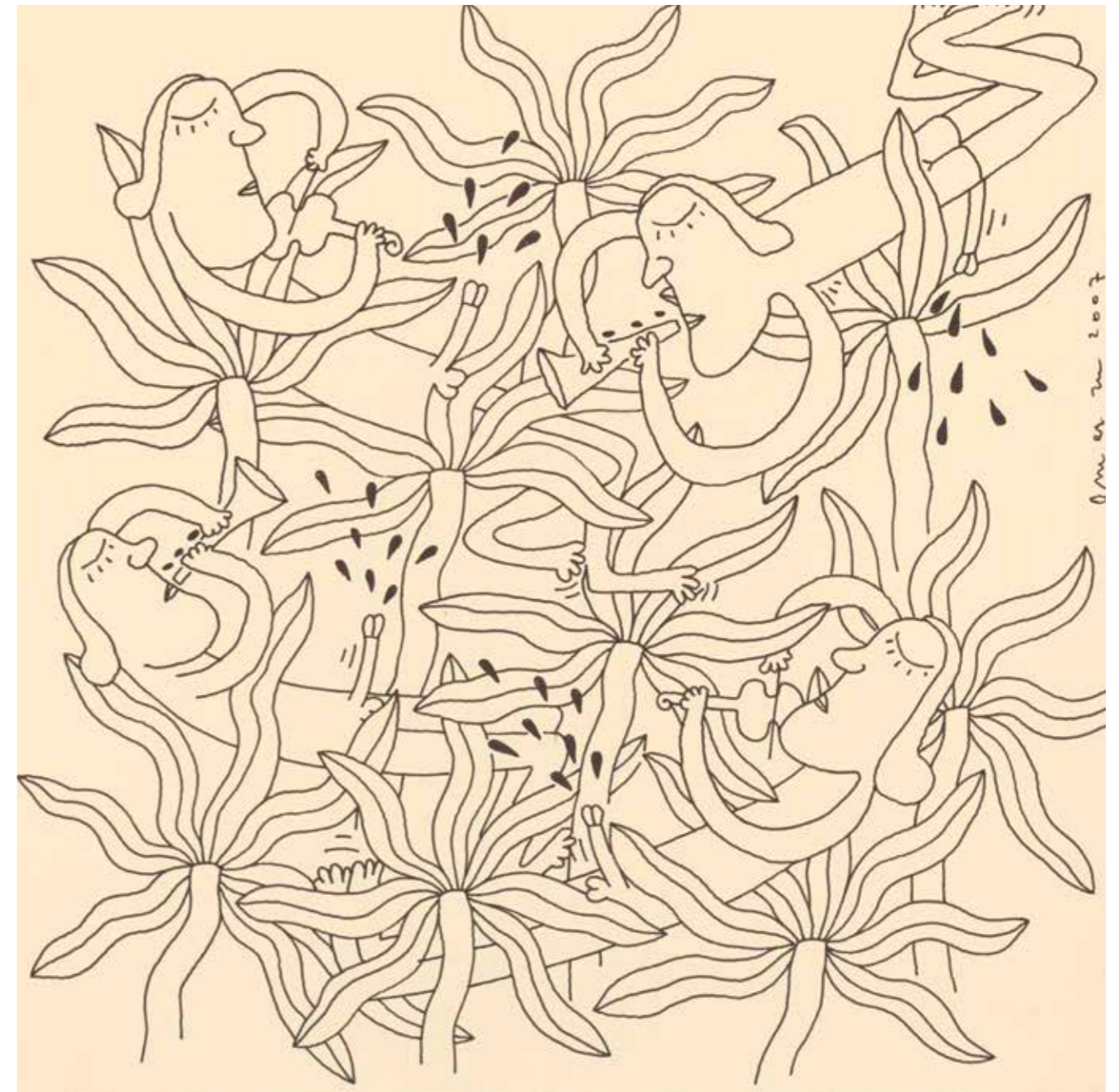
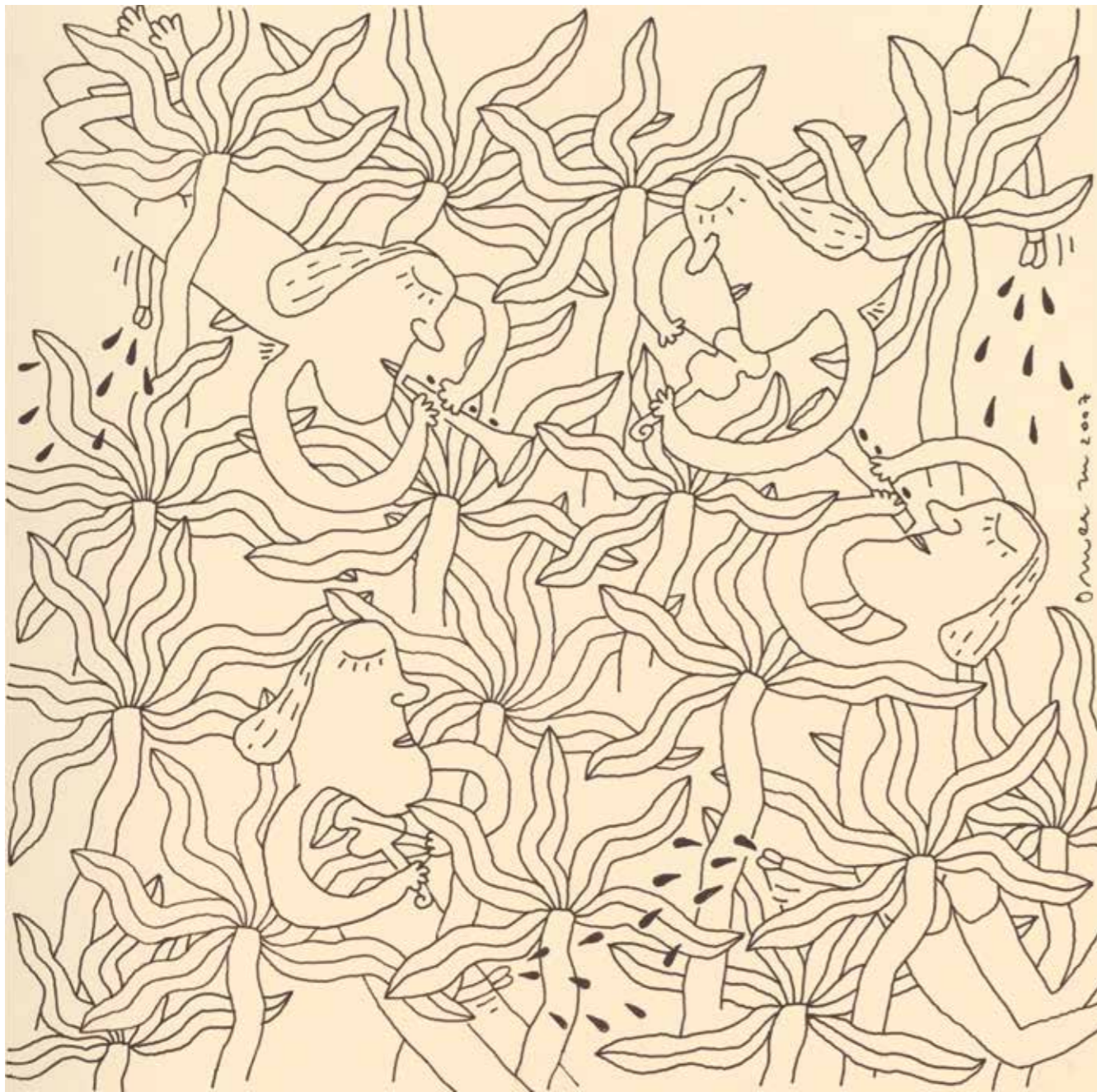
BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 2006
UNTITLED, drawing, 2006



BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 2006
UNTITLED, drawing, 2006



BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 2006
UNTITLED, drawing, 2006



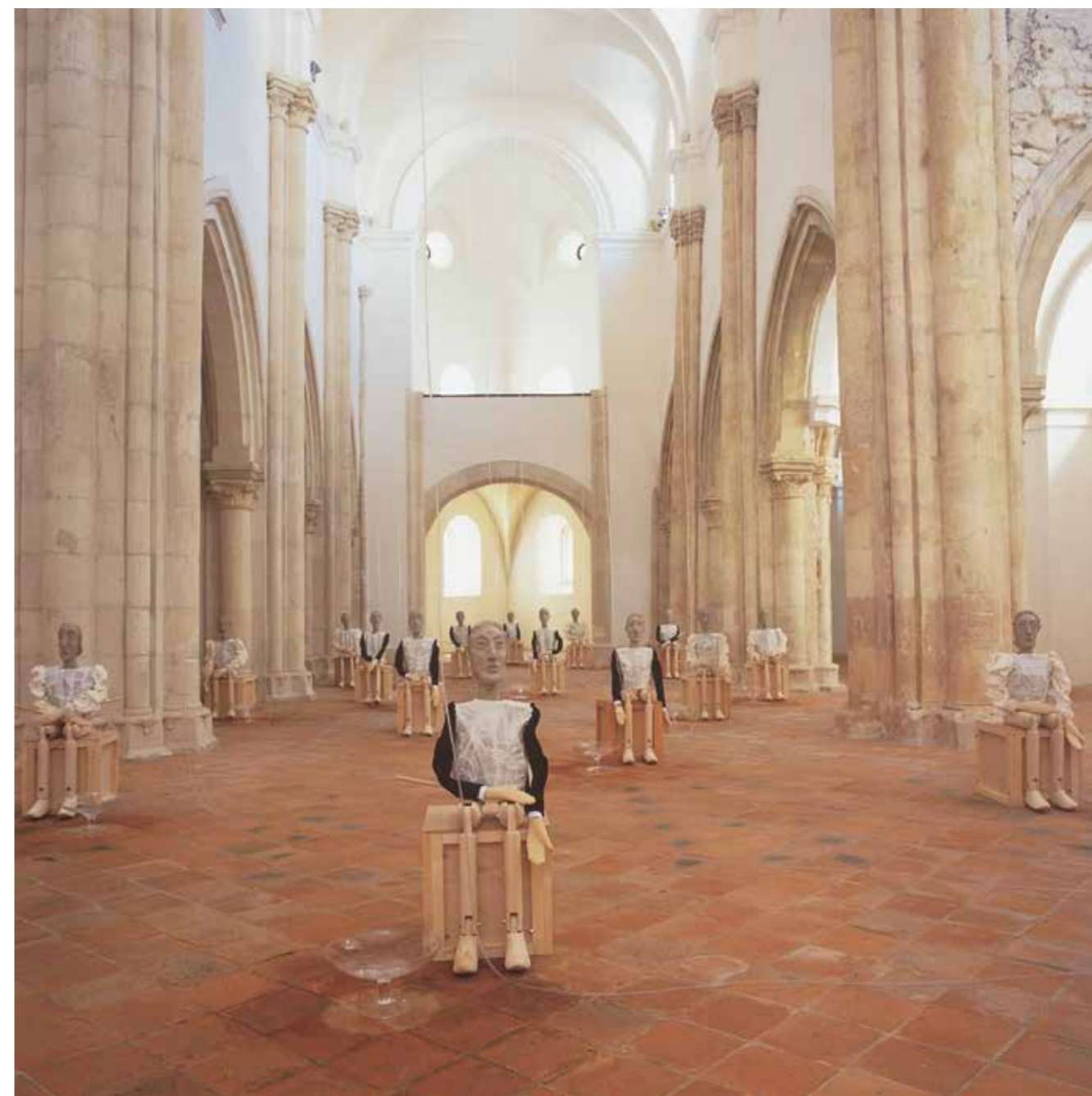
BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 2007
UNTITLED, drawing, 2007

BREZ NASLOVA, risba, 2007
UNTITLED, drawing, 2007



SOLZE, Galerija Božidar Jakac,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Foto: Boris Gaberščik

TEARS, Božidar Jakac Art Museum,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Photo: Boris Gaberščik



SOLZE, Galerija Božidar Jakac,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Foto: Boris Gaberščik

TEARS, Božidar Jakac Art Museum,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Photo: Boris Gaberščik



SOLZE, Galerija Božidar Jakac,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Foto: Boris Gaberščik

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Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Photo: Boris Gaberščik

SOLZE, Galerija Božidar Jakac,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Foto: Boris Gaberščik

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TEARS, Božidar Jakac Art Museum,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Photo: Boris Gaberščik

SOLZE, Galerija Božidar Jakac,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Foto: Boris Gaberščik
TEARS, Božidar Jakac Art Museum,
Kostanjevica na Krki, 2006. Photo: Boris Gaberščik



EVROPSKA IZHODIŠČA EUROPEAN BACKDROP

Jens Peter Jacobsen (1847–1885)

literaturo je vplivali z impresionistično in psihološko, v razmerju do umskih
naturalistično zasnovano prozo, še zlasti z romanoma *Grasa Marija* Grubiceva in *Niels Lykke*.
Jacobsen exerted influence on European literature in particular with his impressionistic and psychological
prose works examining the human milieu from a realistic and naturalistic perspective,
most notably the novels *Marie Grubbe* and *Niels Lykke*.

Wachtelstein's general European context. Katarina Štok Pretnar, and Katarina Štok Pretnar
drami Pava in Marjančič. Marjančič's general European context.
Mazrice Maisterička (1882–1911)
The most typical European technical paragraph. Katarina Štok Pretnar, and Katarina Štok Pretnar
Pavla in Marjančič. Marjančič's general European context.

Evropska izhodišča in spodb
European Backdrop an

EVROPSKA KLASIKA

IVAN CANKAR IN EVROPA (postavitev v sodelovanju s Katarino Štok Pretnar),
Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2018. Foto: Blaž Zupančič
IVAN CANKAR AND EUROPE (exhibition design in collaboration with Katarina Štok Pretnar),
Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 2018. Photo: Blaž Zupančič





OMIZJA, Mednarodni grafični likovni center, Ljubljana, 2009. Foto: Nika Autor

TABLE SCENES, MGLC - International Centre of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana, 2009. Photo: Nika Autor



S smrtjo na odru so vselej težave

Tenisači imajo svoj komolec, lutkarji svoj križ. Silvan Omerzu je dan pred intervjujem prenašal opremo in duša mu je zdrsnila v križni vretenec. Dobrodošli v marionetnem gledališču.

Že sama njegova prisotnost terja, da človek postane pozoren na avtomatizme vsakdanjega življenja. Pogovor v pravih razmikih preglašča zvon cerkve Jezusovega srca, v besedo sega ščeбетanje ptičev, teh avtomatov; preučevanje potez Omerzujevega obraza najverjetneje pade pod ornitologijo.

Njegove risbe uhajajo perspektivi - kot haikuji. Na njegovih Omizjih se ne pogovarja o dnevnih politiki. Cankarjevo ganljivko Hišo Marije Pomočnice prevede v etiko stroja. Igralcu izmakne ogledalo. Kleist je vselej nekje zraven. Naslednji na vrsti je avtomat avtomatov: kinematograf.

Omerzu ni lutkar, ni likovnik, ni gledališčnik. Je humanist, v kolikor humano vključuje avtomatično, mehansko, marionetno.

Eisenstein je nekoč vzkliknil, naj živi spajanje filma in kabukija. V imenu prepriha v tukajšnji kulturoferi gre vzklikniti: naj živi spajanje filma in Omerzujeve mehanike.

Pri pregledovanju dokumentacije o vas se zastavi vprašanje, koliko so se medijski opazovalci sploh približali vašemu gledališču?

Verjetno sodim bolj v intuitivni del. Jasno, da vse premislim, samo ne vem, ali sem najbolj pravi, da bi izrazil to, kar čutim v trenutku, ko nekaj počnem. Res je, da me v glavnem vsi jemljejo kot lutke lutkice. Tudi če vidijo, da greš v smer odrasle publike, je to še vseeno v polju gledališča, ki me morda ne zanima toliko, kot me zanima neki vmesen prostor. Ne vem, ali kdo razume, da težiš k temu, da se na odru čim manj dogaja.

Problem je najbrž že v dojetanju drugačnega tipa naracije?

Dramaturgi so pri nas izšolani za dramsko gledališče in iz njihovih vrst so ponavadi tudi kritiki. Dramaturgi lutkarstva tu ne obstajajo. Toda kritiki in teoretiki so mi bili konec koncev naklonjeni. Za tekste Lukana in Mikuža imam občutek, da so se približali tistemu, kar počnem.

Morda vas ne zanima toliko vmesen kot nevmesen prostor?

Mogoče. Začel sem od začetka. Ko sem prišel v Ljubljano, me je zanimal ta likovno-mehanski del, hotel sem imeti nekakšen laboratorij. Ko sem tu prvič prišel v stik z lutkami, sem bil razočaran nad tem, da so krenile v smer približevanja gledališču nasploh. Da niso izkoriščale tistega, kar je na njih fascinantno. Zaradi tega so me privlačile najstarejše predstave, kot je *Žogica Marogica*. Stari animatorji so bili vzgojeni bolj v smislu koncentracije,

animacije, da so padli noter in delovali v eno lutko, da so bili tudi oni mehanika. Podobno kot filharmoniki v odnosu do inštrumenta.

Žogica Marogica in dva filharmonika.

Fascinira me prizor, ko dedek in babica vrtita, udarjata in pojeta: »Imela sva boben in lajno.« Le dve mali figurici gresta prek odra ...

Kot Krambergerjevi opici.

Če bi to počela igralca, od tega ne bi bilo nič. Ljudje smo polni nekih čipov. Lutke so nastopale kot fetiši, talismani, vso to zgodovino imamo naloženo v sebi in se vsake toliko spomni v nas. Lutke niso otroške igrače, iz katerih bi delali gledališče.

Vaše gledališče, naj ta beseda zaenkrat ostane, predvsem ni teatralno.

Hotel sem kreniti prav od začetka lutkarije, od ljudskih začetkov. Za časa bivanja na Češkem sem našel neki kos teksta, fragment, iz katerega je nastala prva predstava *Napravite mi zanj krsto*, ki sva jo naredila z Janom Zakonjškom. Dolgo časa sem čakal, da bi to koga zanimalo. Lutke sem že naredil, strip sem že narisal ...

Koga ni zanimalo?

Od profesionalnih gledališč do skupin. Nič se jim ni zdelo zanimivo. Niti tema niti takšen teater. Prevladovalo je mnenje, da smo to že zdavnaj presegle. Meni so se ravno ta ljudskost, ki se je brusila skozi stoletja, samo prikazovanje, način kadriranja zdeli priložnost, da naredimo sodoben teater. Predstava je bila uspešna, dosegla je preboj. Šel sem skozi vse faze: ročna lutka, javajka, marioneta, potem vzhodnjaški način, križana lutka, ki se jo vodi od zadaj ... Napredovanje je bilo metanje stran vsega, kar se mi je zdelo odveč. Čistiti, čistiti, čistiti - v likovnem, tehnološkem, režijskem smislu.

Izpuščanje, omejitev, prepovedi. Predvsem to ni gledališče narcisizma. Da ima igravec opravka z lutko, je menda optimalna rešitev. Oba imata središče izven sebe: lutka središče gibanja, igravec središče pozornosti.

Ta narcisizem me strašansko moti. Nerodno mi je pred igralcem, težko ga gledam ob vsem tem izvajanju. Vendar hočem imeti lutko in igralca. Ker je lutka čista že sama po sebi, od

igralca pričakujem, da se bo tudi sam poskušal očistiti. Mislim, da bi bilo treba isto doseči v dramskem gledališču, delati na načinu igre, ki ne bi temeljil na silni gestikulaciji, mimiki.

Pri *Hiši Marije Pomočnice* bi lahko še čistil. Do Cankarja sem bil malenkost previden, vseeno je to beseda-beseda, hotel sem jo ohraniti. Pri dialogih se to dostikrat izgubi, bolje deluje pri monologih. Dobro sem imel rešeno ležanje, male kretnje, vstajanje, da tega ni bilo treba reševati z besedami.

Je o Kleistovem marionetnem gledališču mogoče govoriti kot o vašem manifestu?

Gre tudi za naključje. Ko sem se lotil predstave *Kleist*, tega teksta še nisem poznal. Presenetila me je podobnost med nama: milina, težnost, neizumetničeno gibanje lutke, če ji ga prepustiš. Vse to, kar me je že prej motilo pri igralcu. Pri *Kleistu* je bilo še kup drugih reči. Sila genija, ki je v njem in ki ga podi okrog. Nemoč počakati toliko časa, da bi se mu stvari normalno izpisale, občutek, da bo počil, preganjanje, bežanje pred premočno notranjostjo. *Kleista* bi lahko še petkrat naredil.

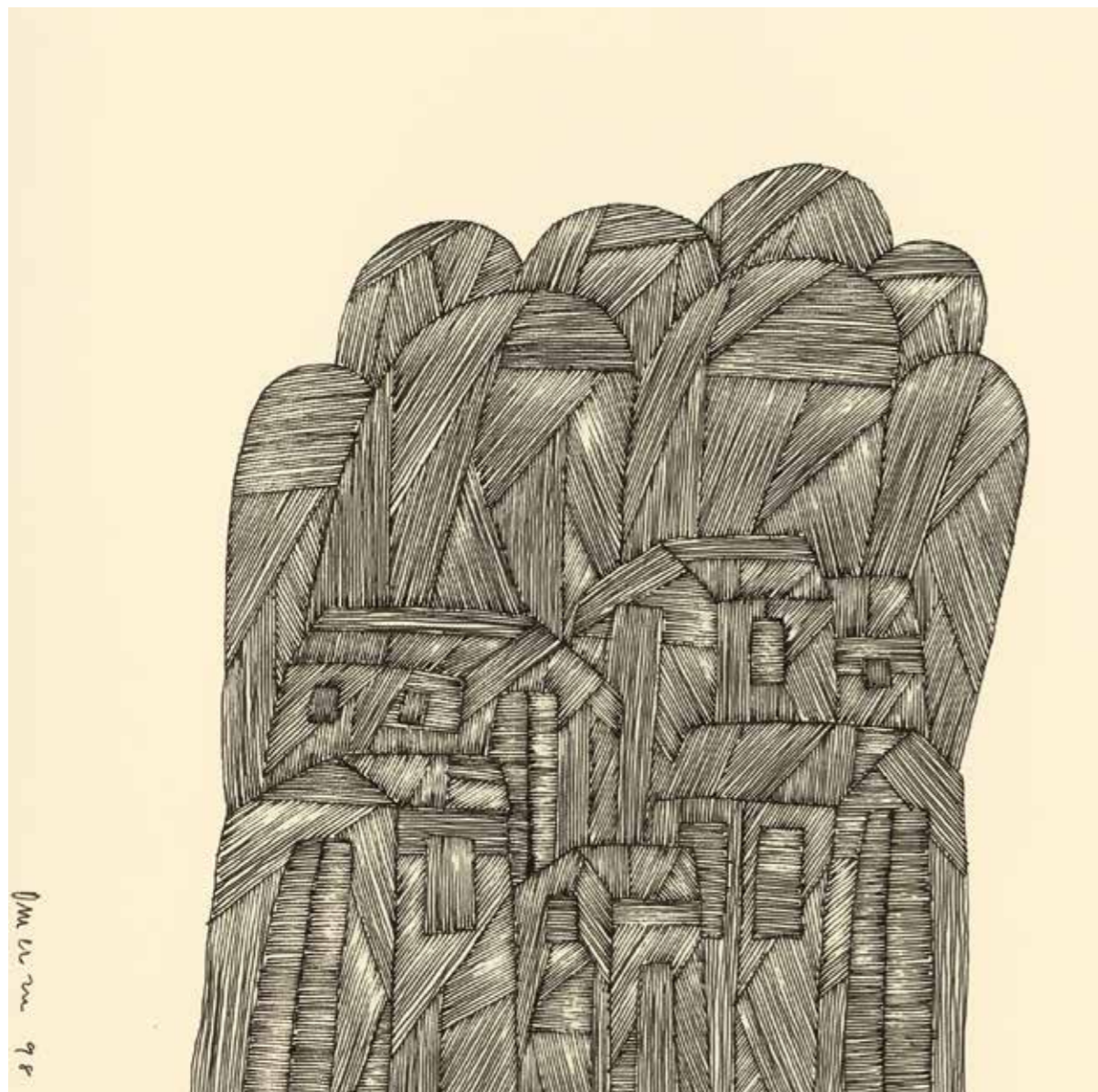
Naredite ga vsakič, ko naredite predstavo.

Ja. V *Kleistu* sem izločil vse, kar zanj ni pomembno. Ostal je jezik, čisti minimalizem. Prvič sem preizkusil potencial gibanja, ki je že v lutki. Ker je narejena za gib, ker ima pomagala, ker ima vse te sklepe, se mi je zazdelo, da je ni treba animirati. V predstavi se je slišal samo glas v offu, vendar je gledalec imel občutek, da se male figure premikajo, sam si je ustvaril gibanje, kakršnega si je želel.

Različni tipi lutk so različni tipi igralcev?

To so blazne razlike, glede na način obdelave in način animacije. Pri ročni lutki potisneš roko direktno vanjo, v gibanju je zelo hitra, agresivna, groteskna, humorna, lahko prijema rekvizite. Pri marioneti so vse te nitke in ritem, ki ni odvisen le od animatorja. Že sama po sebi je bolj lirčna.

Nimam take izbire ljudi, da bi lahko počel to, kar bi si želel. Potreboval bi studio, stalno ekipo, s katero bi delal na koščkih, ki bi jih sestavljal, na stvareh, ki me na lutki zanimajo. Blizu so mi vzhodni principi lutkarstva, predanost v bunrakuju, princip mojstrstva, ko trije animirajo lutko. Po petih letih se lahko preide z nog na roke, po desetih se začne delati na glavi.



Meniški režim.

Ja, tukaj nimamo nobenega potrpljenja, treba je narediti predstavo. Zanima me marioneta, ki bi bila vodena prek zapletenega mehanizma škripčevja. Več ljudi bi jo vodilo z različnih koncev, med njimi bi moralo priti do skupne igre, da bi se stopili v eno. Igralci bi vrvi vlekli na sceni, da bi se jih videlo, hkrati bi se videlo gibe marionete.

Še bolj kot realizem vas verjetno zanima resničnost gibanja?

Vselej so rekli, da naj bi lutka počela tisto, kar igralec ne more. Vendar mene ne zanima fantastika, da bi človek letel, temveč človeška figura, ki se giblje kot lutka. Skrivnostnost, drugačnost lutke, ki kot da je od drugje, od davno, od drugih civilizacij. Pri animatorju potrebujem veliko časa, da mu odstranim kup stvari.

Tudi z narcizmom lutkarja se je treba bojevati. Kleist je bil še prevelik optimist.

S tem je največ težav. Čeprav so zadaj, vseeno hočejo preko lutk ugajati in uganjati virtuoznost.

Marioneta je v običajnem pomenu pejorativna beseda. Pri vas je to polje potencialne svobode. Hiša Marije Pomočnice: ko dekleta zbolijo, nanese dualizem; so lutke in igralka. Za t. i. zdrave je dovolj, da jih odigrajo igralci.

Bolna dekleta so močno zaznamovana, vedo, da bodo umrla. Čeprav so tako mlada, da se smrti, tega, da te ni, povsem ne zavedajo. Zatekajo se k veri, v nebesa. Vendar če je človek tako zaznamovan, je že nekje onkraj oziroma vmes. Temu ustrezno sem jih vodil skozi predstavo. Bolezen sem hotel izčistiti na način, da ni natur preobložena. Tudi pri gibanju lutk se nisem trudil, da bi lutke hodile, kot da so bolne. Njihova bolezen izhaja iz načina, kako legajo, kako postavijo noge.

Zagotovo ne gre za preprosto dihotomijo na način: igralec je duša, lutka je telo. Čeprav je hkrati mogoče predvideti, da bo igralka, ko bo prvo dekle umrlo, zapustila prizorišče.

Z igralci sem moral reševati par stvari: prvo, dobiti ta občutek telo - duša; drugo, lutki ni treba igrati, da šepa ali da je bolna, ampak to lahko počne igralka namesto nje in s tem takoj pade v vlogo negovalke. Jo prime, jo dvigne, jo postavi, odpelje. S to belino, čistostjo, s kretnjami se ustvari občutek, da je podaljšek, da je duhovni del lutke. Dihotomija bi bila preenostavna, to sem hotel imeti pod kontrolo.

Kaj je potem tisto, kar v tem aranžmaju določa trenutek smrti? Mar telo pride do nekega stanja izčrpanosti, ko je treba stoično opraviti z življenjem?

S smrtjo na odru so vselej težave. Umiranje je lahko premočno in s tem preenostavno. Ljudi je mogoče ganiti, zato ne smeš biti prehiter. Pri prvem dekletu, ki umre, ki naredi samomor, sem na začetku imel ekspresivnejše ideje: lutka bi si prerezala žile in kri bi prepojila rjuho; vedel sem, da je to preobloženo. Prišel sem do trenutka, ko se lutka in igralka zazreta ena v drugo oziroma lutka opazuje, kako igralka odhaja, takrat sem šel na dušo - telo, kot

bi življenje odtekalo iz nje. Ravno zadnjič mi je nekdo, potem ko je doživel infarkt, pravil, da začutiš ta občutek odhajanja, čedalje slabši si. To sem skušal dobiti v pogledih med njima. Ali ko igralka govori; prej govori kot lutka, a od nekega trenutka naprej začne govoriti kot ona sama in jo lutka pogleda. S takimi malimi reči mi sem skušal doseči ganljivost smrti.

Ganljivost, ki ni afektirana.

Režisersko delo z igralci mi ni v užitek, ta čreva, da potegneš čim več iz njih, me ne zanimajo. Nerodno mi je, ko se ti ljudje odprejo in vržejo ven vso intimo. Zdi se mi, da bi jo morali obdržati zase. Zato verjetno delam z lutkami.

Pri interpretaciji teksta igralec redkokdaj prebere tako, da vznikne občutek. Je nekaj pesnikov, ki znajo interpretirati svoje pesmi. Zajc je bil takšen, tisti, ki jih znajo, so lahko sijajni. To bi rad od igralcev.

Vaša dramaturgija je nekakšno nizanje tablojev.

Stvari, ki jih počnem, so se mi verjetno zakodirale že v otroštvu. Ker sem živel v manjšem kraju, je bilo moje prvo srečanje z umetnostjo srečanje s cerkvijo. Od tod fascinacija nad vsemi temi podobami, strašljivimi kipi, ki te gledajo navzdol. Prikazovanje po kosih in tema križevega pota so najbrž od tega prvega vtisa, kasneje so se začeli filmi.

Kako so se začeli filmi?

Obstajalo je amatersko gledališče, spomnim se dveh, treh predstav, običajno operet. Najbolj se mi je vtisnila zavesa, ko je bila zaprta, kako sem komaj čakal, da se odpre, in gong, ki je vselej naredil dong dong dong. Zavesa se je odgrnila, čudežna škatla se je odprla.

Ob sredah, sobotah in nedeljah je bil film. Od grozljivk, detektivk do kavbojk. Starši niso delali problemov glede tega, kaj smem gledati. S prijateljem sva včasih pomagala kinooperatorju in sva smela biti v kabini. Dobili smo kamero in poskusili posneti indijanarico. Začelo se je razmišljanje, kako bomo zgodbo povedali s kratkimi prizori, kako jih bomo zlepili.

Kino Paradiž.

Moj oče je bil precej starejši, imel me je pri petdesetih. Še mlad je med obema vojnama



delal v rudniku v Belgiji in kasneje zbolel za silikozo. To je tisto, kar me spremlja, kar se vleče iz predstave v predstavo. Slutnja smrti, smrt. Bila sva strašno navezana drug na drugega. Ko je umrl, sem jih imel šestnajst, bil je moja zadnja avtoriteta. Zanimanje za umetnost je zavrtelo tudi to, da je bilo treba v šolo, se izučiti za poklic, v službo sem šel s sedemnajstimi. Hodil sem na elektro in izpadel nekoliko drugače, kot če bi v Ljubljani obiskoval oblikovno.

kateri filmi so vas pomagali formirati?

Italijanski neorealizem, ameriška sedemdeseta, Bergman, Tarkovski, to so bila močna leta, stalno smo hodili v kino. Poleg filma je bilo branje, v gledališče sem hodil mnogo manj. Spomnim se, ko sem prišel iz kina čisto ven iz sebe, kot bi se ga napil, ko ne veš, kako si prišel domov.

Vaša postavitev Solze v kostanjeviškem samostanu priključuje besede iz Andreja Rubljova: nič ni strašnejšega od sneženja v cerkvi.

Rubljev je gotovo eden tistih, ki sem jih videl večkrat. Tarkovski mi je zelo blizu. Sin nosi filme domov in sva jih veliko skupaj pregledala. Sem človek brez spomina, tako da lahko vsakega gledam trikrat. Glede Kostanjevice: pri vseh galerijah najprej vstopim v prostor, poskusim si vzeti čas in najti stik z njim. Se zamisliti v arhitekturo, zgodovinski in simbolni pomen objekta. V cerkvi takoj dobiš svetlobo in zvok, vstopiš v tišino. Vsi ti obredi, ki tečejo leta in stoletja enako, neprekinjeno kot stroj ob isti uri, iste maše, isti napevi. Tako je nanoslo kapljanje vode. Svetloba me je presenetila, uporabil sem jo, kot jo je uporabljala cerkev. Božanski učinki snopov, ki se zelo spreminjajo glede na oblake, vreme, jutro, večer, glede na to, od kod posije sonce. V enem dnevu se zaradi teh senc, teh svetlob zgodí marsikaj.

Spet meniška disciplina, strogost.

Ja, strogost, izčiščenost, ki jo menihi privedejo do maksimuma. Bil sem v Pleterjih, kjer jih je trenutno samo trinajst z vseh koncev sveta. Kustosinja je razlagala, da se po sedmih, morda desetih letih, ne morejo več premisliti, ne morejo več ven. Do takrat se še lahko, potem ne več. Človek si to težko predstavlja. Omejeni na minimalne pogovore, brez časopisov, radia, televizije. Le stalno v rituale: molitev, delo, meditacija ...

Kakšno vlogo igra Bog v vašem gledališču?

Težko ... nekje sem prebral, da lahko Boga v gledališču igra le Bog sam. Tako bi mogoče najlaže: moje predstave se ukvarjajo s tem, do kam iti. Kako človek poskuša postati Bog. Stvariteljska obsedenost. To je najbrž v človeku, da poskuša iti do še zadnjega mogočega oziroma nemogočega in tvegati, čeprav se že vnaprej ve, kaj je na koncu.

A občutek Božjega se razprostira skozi vse.

To občutje Božjega so trenutki, ko se ti zazdi, kot bi šel prepri skozi.

Prepih, (v)eter. Pri Tarkovskem sta veter in svetloba v intimnem razmerju, veter dviguje zaveso, svetloba sobe se spreminja. Kaj je z angeli?

Angeli so bili zame izrabljeni, naredil sem jih kot lutke in me potem niso več zanimali. V risbi sem jih spet našel, zanimalo me je, iz kakšne snovi so.

Iz kakšne snovi so?

To se vidi v šrafurah, kako in od kje pronica svetloba, kako teče linija, prišel sem do zanimivega prepleta ozadja, svetlobe, teme, črte. Zdi se, kot bi bili vaši angeli iz mišičnih vlaken, ki spomnijo na klobčič volne. En sam poteg in vse se razpusti v nič. Materija duha. V vseh predstavah se veliko ukvarjam z materiali. Zven med njimi, brez dotika. Vsak material te vodi po svoje, ima določeno obliko, ki jo je najlaže dobiti iz njega. Iz lesa drugače oblikuješ, kot gneteš glino ali klešeš kamen. Potem je tu še kombinacija materialov, občutek kovine - hladu, lesa - toplote, stekla - prosojno, neprosojno, s tem na odru ustvariš atmosfero. Ves čas predstave *Prepovedane ljubezni* se siplje pesek, zvok odhajanja, at-

mosfera, ki te naredi občutljivejšega za stvari, ki se odvijajo na odru. Igralcem včasih težko dopovem, da so mi svetloba, ki gre skozi oder, majhen zvok, droben premik enako pomembni kot glavna vloga.

Tudi gledalec je marioneta, ki jo je mogoče voditi.

Če je lutka voden stroj in če iz igralca delaš avtomat, je nujno, da tudi gledalec pade pod isti sistem.

Vas je kdaj strah lastnega gledališča?

Ne. Včasih lahko pobegneš predaleč in si zelo sam v tistem, kar počneš. Igralci bi mi morali verjeti. Najhuje je delati z dvomljivci, vsak bi nekaj po svoje. Že tako si ranljiv, ker tudi sam dvomiš.

Teologija Hiše Marije Pomočnice in drugih predstav je lahko razumljena tudi na način slovenske bipolarnosti?

Ja, eni razumejo v eno stran, drugi v drugo, s čimer sam nimam nobene zveze. Pri nas je to danes zelo moteče. Ne vem, kaj naj bi imel s to idiotsko delitvijo. Trenutno se je malo umirilo, ampak en čas je bilo nemogoče živeti v Ljubljani. Z ljudmi se nisi mogel več normalno pogovarjati, ne da bi te kam prišteli. Podobno je z branjem časopisov, to je hujskaštvo. Zato se umikam na vikend na Dolenjsko, kjer si bom uredil atelje.

Ker je tam nič?

Tam nimam z nikomer nič. V miru lahko počnem stvari, karkoli okoli umetnosti ali kaj drugega, letos poleti sem izdeloval brajde.

Nikdar si niste želeli biti emigrant.

deset, petnajst let nisem prišel blizu, da bi tu lahko počel karkoli. poklicali so me na češko, kjer sem naredil dve predstavi. a tam na premiero pridejo tuji ljudje. Med njimi so bili tudi tako imenovani pomembneži, enkrat je prišel Menzel, a to mi ni nič pomenilo, nisem ga poznal. Tukaj imam ljudi, za katere zelo rad vidim, da pridejo pogledat mojo predstavo, na katerih mnenje nekaj dam. Moram reči, da gledalce pridobivam, čeprav se ne trudim okoli tega. Ljudje povedo eden drugemu in se oblikuje določen krog, ki se širi. Imel sem občutek, da so mi v Pragi naklonjeni, ampak

konec koncev sem bil gost. Ko enkrat postaneš eden izmed njih, je drugače. Tudi nisem kakšen hud potovalec, v jezikih sem bolj slab. Raje se osredotočim na mikro.

Pri publiku in njenem navdušenju se človek hitro vpraša: »Le kaj sem storil narobe?«

Da bi delal univerzalne predstave, kjer bi vsak našel nekaj zase, to bi bilo zame zelo težko. Začetne so bile takšne, ampak sem točno videl njihov manko. Kje so tisti elementi, ki so narejeni za to, da publiko pridobiš na svojo stran. Mogoče jo je uloviti, kot je mogoče uloviti otroke.

Trenutek poraza; veš, da si goljufal.

Ja, veš. Spomnim se, ko sem bil mali in so me vlačili naokrog, da sem prepeval po proslavah. Imel sem tremo, nastopanje mi je bilo zoprno, a ko sem se znašel na odru, sem padel v to slast. Pel sem Violino Tzigano, partizanske pesmi in točno vedel, kako dvigniti glas, kako ga zatresti, koliko ga obdržati, do kje iti, da bodo mame zajokale. Tako mali sem bil in sem čutil, kje lahko manipuliram z njimi. Takrat sem prekinil s tem.

Specializacija je nevtralizacija. Vaše početje je preblizu točki nelagodja, bolje vas je spraviti pod lutkarstvo in pika.

Nedavno sem v galeriji Velenje razstavljaval risbe in Omizja. Hkrati sem v galeriji v avli uprave Gorenja imel še nekaj risb ter priredil avtomat iz Kleista. Sedel je v vozičku in vojaško salutiral z roko. Ker so tovarna strojev, se jim je zdelo fajn, dokler ni na dan otvoritve zjutraj izbruhnil štrajk. Uprava je avtomat odstranila, preveč jih je spominjala na to, da so marionete, skrbelo jih je, da ne bi delavci v tem videli neke simbolike.

Toda vi morate občutiti milino v avtomatičnosti?

Ko sem bil mali, sem v izložbi videl mehaničnega ptiča, ki je pomakal kljun v vodo. Kup ljudi se je ustavljal in gledal to gledališče z enim dejanjem. Kar ni nič takega. Že takrat sem razmišljal: od kod ljudem, da jih tako mala reč pritegne, da stojijo in gledajo? Ali kasneje Orloj v Pragi. Stojijo celo uro, da bo prišel čas, ko bo odbilo, in se bodo prikazale figure. Očitno imamo ta mehanizem v sebi, že z bitjem srca, občutje kozmosa, teh premi-

kanj. Da nas zanese, da razmislimo, ne od kje smo, ampak kaj nas vodi, kaj je ta sila, kako se odtrgati od nje, se sploh lahko ...

Hkrati vas privlači trenutek, ko avtomat odpove.

Enkrat so me z Vala 202 vprašali, ali me lahko uvrstijo med kandidate za Ime tedna. Bil je dan po volitvah, med nominirani je bil tudi Pahor. Rekel sem jim, da ni problem, in pozabil na to. Vedeli so, da bo zmagal, rezervirali termin, čakal je že na telefonu. Nakar sedim nekje v lokalu in me panično kličejo, da sem zmagal jaz, da jih je ujelo nepripravljene, da nimajo nobenih podatkov o meni, da so se Pahorju morali opravičiti ...

Kjer se pojavite, je izredno stanje in so marionete.

Bral sem in gledal grafike o obdobju po prvi svetovni vojni, ko so ljudje postali polavtomati, ko so jim manjkali vsi možni udje in so imeli že pol glave umetne, ko so delali vozičke iz vsega možnega. Ko je človek samo še kos, kos duha, in je vse ostalo že umetno, mehanika.

Če zanemarimo njegov individualizem; mar ni končna posledica Kleista totalna družba milih in usklajenih gibov? Koreografija Severne Koreje. Kot konec Mannove Čarobne gore, ko Hans Castorp po vsej tisti intelektualni drami brez delca zavesti prodira proti sovražnikovemu jarku?

Kleist je očitno imel hud problem v sebi. Po eni strani vojaška izobrazba, vzgojen kot izvrševalec ukazov, po drugi strani umetnik. V nekem obdobju se je to razklalo ...

Je bil razklan? Prej se zdi, da je bil še militantnejši od svoje vojaške družine, uležane v tradiciji in činih.

Kleista sem najmočneje začutil v točki njegovega silnega talenta, ki ni pripravljen počakati, da bi se stvari normalno razvile. V sebi je čutil, da je genialen, ampak za to je potreben čas. To je verjetno problem resničnih genijev, da nimajo potrpljenja, ne poznajo postopnosti. Takoj je hotel narediti genialno pesnitev, genialno dramo. To je tisto, kar pripelje do poka, kar ga zlomi. Silna ambicioznost in iz tega izhajajoča preganjavica, ogroženost od drugega, nezmožnost funkcioniranja. In spet njegova vojaška šola, ki je kot stroj.

Pri Mariji Pomočnici je najbolj fascinantna zmožnost lutk, da se prestopajo, korakajo same od sebe. Vojaški marš. Povsem samostojne so pri hoji.

Tu so najmočnejše, v zvoku, in ko se premikajo v skupini. Tu je Hiša najbliže taborišču, kako nekdo s čisto nemočjo samo klenk klenk. Tu je lutka fenomenalna, tu te stisne. Tega ne bi mogel z ničimer bolje izraziti.

Goethe je Kleistova antiteza, je, grobo rečeno, harmoničen, oportunističen tip genija. V zvezi s Kleistom se ni posebej izkazal. Vas Faust kljub temu mika?

Goethe ni toliko simpatičen, Kleist deluje močnejše, ker je čistejši v svoji misli. A je hkrati ta trpeči genij. Goethe je kot genij sfural življenje.

Imate težave z romantičnostjo Kleista?

Ja. Moj prejšnji del opusa je bil humoren, brutalen, nabit s seksualnostjo, hitrejši, ta drugi del je bolj razmišljujoč. To se mi poklapa z Goethejem, ki je imel prvi in drugi del Fausta. Pri človeku je normalno, da začne v drugi polovici življenja drugače razmišljati. Faust, pogodba s hudičem, vsekakor je tema za obdelavo.

Omenjate menihe, omenjate obsedence, kar priključuje Kierkegaardovo dialektiko med svetnikom-apostolom in genijem-umetnikom. Kleist je kombinacija obojega.

Malo vemo o tem, kako se to pojavlja pri menihih.

Misteriji sublimacije ...

Slišal sem o menihu, ki se mu je snelo in so ga odpeljali v norišnico. Dobil je neko silno moč, da je strgal vse prisilne jopiče. Štirje so ga skušali držati, a so frčali. Pobegnil je in v gozdu so ga našli obešenega.

Ali se lutka kdaj upre vašim nameram?

Ja. Včasih jim zamenjam vloge, ko jih že naredim. Vse manj težim k temu, da bi lutka nosila vnaprejšnje značajske poteze. Kot režiser skušam že vnaprej predvideti, koliko bo pridobila s tekstom, koliko z gibom. Poskušam doseči, da so si likovno čim enotnejše, da delujejo kot skupina in da jih med sabo ločim z malimi rečmi.

Res zveni kot laboratorij.

Koliko je treba animatorju odvzeti njegove lastne volje, da z lutko delujeta kot duo, da nista eden proti drugemu. Zdaj raziskujemo, kaj v bistvu poganja lutko, kaj ji da gib. Koliko lahko sama funkcionira, koliko potrebuje animatorja, koliko je animator animator in koliko je sam avtomat. Koliko stroj vodi stroj, kdaj je kateri bolj stroj in kdaj manj.

Descartes z okna opazuje, kako se po trgu sprehajajo klobuki in plašči. Vpraša se: »Je mogoče, da se pod njimi skrivajo avtomati?« Omerzu sloni na istem oknu in se vpraša: »Je mogoče, da se pod njimi skrivajo ljudje?«

Vzhodnjaki imajo senčno gledališče. Resda oni razumejo vso simboliko gibov, da lahko padejo noter, da se soočijo sami s sabo. Dostikrat se vprašam, če bi bil sposoben pasti v tako samoočiščevalnost, da bi prišel do resničnega mini-mini-minimalizma, ali si ne bi rekel: »Kje se mi da?«. Da bi samo svetloba šla čez oder. Do kje je to mogoče, kje je prava mera?

Prepričan sem, da vsaka lutka zaradi svoje likovnosti, tehnologije, v sebi že nosi specifičen gib, eden, ki je njen lasten. Ima jih toliko in toliko, ki so sprejemljivi, a eden je verjetno prav njen. Hotel bi ga najti.

Animatorjem skušam dopovedati: ker je lutka podrejena težnosti, je to treba izkoriščati. Gibi, ki so sami od sebe, so najbolj naravni. Marioneta se giblje navzdol, navzgor jo premika animator, a tudi ta navzgor ni ravno njegova volja, on lahko le dvigne, kako bo šla roka gor, je že spet tehnologija in spet težnost. Skušam jim privzgojiti občutek do stvari.

Tendenca nefigurativnega gledališča; Malevič gledališča?

Figuralika v gledališču me zanima, ker sem se ga najprej lotil kot likovnik. Najbliže mi je gledališče avtorjev, ki so tudi sami začeli kot likovniki: Bob Wilson, Jan Fabre, Romeo Castellucci, Josef Nadj ...

Robert Bresson, še en kleistovec, je bil prav tako slikar. Vaše predstave so filmske, montaža v njih je očitna, vas film zanima tudi eksplicitno?



Pelje me k filmu, stvari bom zdaj snemal. Mislim, da mi je bliže kot gledališče, ki me zanima kot enkratno dejanje, kot ritual, da gledalec sam premika lutke, ne da bi se to dogajalo na odru. Lukan je v *Peskarju* opazil, da je Nathanael sanjal more, a da jih, kot bi storili drugi lutkarji, nisem kazal. Bila sta le speči in glas v offu. Prepustil sem gledalcu, da si je more predstavljal sam. Kar je lutkarjem nepojmljivo; to je vendar edino, kar imaš na voljo, da prikazuješ sanjski svet.

Warholovska gesta: kazati spečega, brez sanj.

Izkoristiti to drugačnost, čudežnost lutke, pokazati njeno lastno življenje. Obstajajo ljudje, obstajajo lutke. Kdo pravi, da smo mi živi, in one ne? To so te skrivnosti, zaradi česar me lutke zanimajo, zaradi česar me zanima umetnost. Če bi vedeli, da je ta svet banalen, da bi prišli do neke resnice, da ne obstaja nič drugega, bi morda težje živeli ... tega nočemo vedeti.

Kaj je na filmu, kar je za vas neizogibnega?

Film je preveč ušel likovnosti. Ima svojo montažo, zoomiranje, s čimer prideš do nekaterih notranjosti, mehanizmov. Najlepši del je priprava. Vmes je ta ja in ne z igralci, nato sledi končni del, ki je tvoja intima. Montaža, sestavljanje.

Nabrale so se reči, za katere vem, da bi jih bolje prikazal s filmom. Seveda so to lahko filmi, za katere ne veš, kaj z njimi početi, kam to lansirati, a so art kosi.

Vsekakor alternativa gostilniškemu zgodbičarstvu slovenskega filma.

Slovenski film je imel nesrečo v tem, da je okrog filma na splošno več denarja in so se zraven prilepili precej napačni ljudje.

AVTOMATI, Pregledna razstava, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Foto: Žiga Koritnik

AUTOMATONS, A Retrospective, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki, 2020. Photo: Žiga Koritnik

Pri vašem gledališču je posebej dragoceno, da oder gledalcu ne pusti, da bi se znašel na njem. Nemožnost identifikacije. Sicer ne gledaš predstave, temveč vnovič svoje življenje, katerega zvezda si.

Ja, ukvarjam se s stvarmi, ki s tem nimajo neposredne zveze. Raje se odmaknem.

Eskapizem. Najverjetneje ne gledate šovov tipa Kmetija, vendar ste pravi ekspert zanje, če hočete ali ne.

Ujel sem 20 minut in bilo je zelo zanimivo. Arhur Štern je najbrž čisto bister fant, ampak že enkrat prej sem ga ujel v tem ... Ko je pevec Rudan zbil kolesarko, je izjavil, da ga razume, zakaj je pobegnil. Tako daleč je prišel na svoji poti do slave, da si ni mogel privoščiti nečesa takšnega. On, Štern, to ve, ker je bil sam na avdiciji za pevca Pop Design in je bil namesto njega izbran Rudan. Eni so lahko intelektualci, ampak je v njih toliko močnejša želja po nastopanju. Takoj bi prodali ves svoj intelektualni kapital za to, da bi stali na odru in bili občudovani. Vsi ti šovi so sestavljeni iz profilov, ki bi prodali dušo, da so lahko noter.

BTC Faust. Ne prodajajo duše za mojstrovinno, temveč za bestseller. Prodati vse za najmanjšo možno ceno.

Ja, ampak iz tega nastane tako močan teater absurda, da je takšnega težko sestaviti.

Potem gledaš teater absurda v gledališču in se sprašuješ, mar tega ni mogoče gledati vsak dan po televiziji - v šovih, ki so lucidnejši, ker odnosi poskrbijo sami zase. Tega ne moreš napisati.

Če se gledališče ne bo šlo česa drugega, si bo samo podpisalo svoj konec. Reality šov ga bo pregazil. To bo tudi zame bolj zanimivo.

Edino nelagodje, ki je dramskemu gledališču preostalo, so neudobni sedeži.

Interview with Silvan Omerzu

(originally published in the Sobotna priloga / The Saturday Supplement of the Delo newspaper, 19 December 2009)

There are always problems with death on stage

Tennis players have their elbows, puppeteers have their crosses. Silvan Omerzu was carrying equipment the day before the interview and his soul slipped into the lumbar vertebra. Welcome to the puppet theatre.

His very presence demands that one become attentive to the automatism of everyday life. The conversation is at regular intervals overpowered by the bell of the Church of the Heart of Jesus, the chirping of birds, of these automatic machines, encroaches into the word; the study of Omerzu's facial features most likely falls under ornithology.

His drawings escape perspective – like haiku. There are no discussions on daily politics at his Table Scenes. He translates Cankar's moving *The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy* into an ethics of the machine. He snatches the mirror away from the actor. Kleist is always somewhere nearby. Next in line is the automatic machine par excellence: the cinematograph.

Omerzu is not a puppeteer, he is not an artist, he is not a theatre man. He is a humanist insofar as he humanely includes the automatic, the mechanical, the marionette-like. Eisenstein once exclaimed, long live the fusion of film and kabuki. In the name of the draught in the local cultural sphere one could exclaim: long live the fusion of film and Omerzu's mechanics.

When reviewing the documentation about you, the question arises, how close did the media observers manage to get to your theatre?

I probably fall more into the intuitive part. Naturally, I consider everything, I just don't know if I'm the right person to express what I feel in the moment when I'm doing something. It's true that everyone essentially takes me as someone who works with dolls and dollies. Even if they see that you're going in the direction of an adult audience, it's still in the domain of the theatre, which may perhaps not appeal to me as much as some intermediate space. I don't know if anyone understands that you are looking to have as little happening on stage as possible.

The problem is probably already in the perception of a different type of narration?

Dramaturges are trained for dramatic theatre in our country, and the critics are usually in their ranks. There are no puppetry dramaturges here. But nevertheless, the critics and theoreticians have been well-disposed towards my work. I feel that the texts by Lukan and Mikuž have come quite close to what I do.

Maybe you're more interested in the non-intermediate rather than the intermediate space?

Perhaps. I began at the beginning. When I came to Ljubljana, I was interested in the artistic and mechanical part, I wanted to have a laboratory of sorts. When I first came in contact with the puppets here, I was disappointed that they were moving in the direction of approaching the theatre in general. That they didn't take advantage of what's fascinating about them. Because of this, I was attracted to the earliest perfor-

mances, such as *Žogica Marogica* (Speckles the Ball). The old animators were raised more in terms of concentration, animation, they became absorbed by and worked with a single puppet, they were part of the mechanics themselves. Similarly to the philharmonic musicians with their instruments.

Žogica Marogica and Two Philharmonic Orchestra Musicians.

I'm fascinated by the scene where grandpa and grandma spin, bang and sing: "We had a drum and a hurdy-gurdy." Just two tiny figures crossing the stage.

Like Kramberger's monkeys.

If actors did that, it would amount to nothing. Human beings are full of various chips. The puppets appeared as fetishes, talismans, we have all this history loaded in us and, every now and then, it remembers within us. Puppets are not children's toys that can be used to make theatre with.

Your theatre, let's keep that word for the time being, is primarily not theatrical.

I wanted to start off right from the beginning of puppetry, from the folk beginnings. During my stay in the Czech Republic, I found a piece of text, a fragment from which the first play, *Make Me a Coffin for Him* was produced, which Jan Zakonjšek and I did. I waited a long time for anyone to take an interest in it. I'd already made the puppets, I'd already drawn the storyline ...

Who wasn't interested?

From professional theatres to groups. Nothing seemed interesting to them. Neither the theme nor a theatre of this type. The prevailing opinion was that this had been exceeded a long time ago. To me, it was precisely this folk-like quality that had been honed over the centuries, its appearance, the way it's framed, that seemed like an opportunity out of which to make contemporary theatre. The show was a success, it made a breakthrough. I went through all the stages: hand puppet, Wayang stick puppet, marionette, then the oriental way, the string puppet on a cross guided from behind ... Progress came by discarding everything that I found superfluous. Cleanse, cleanse, cleanse – in the pictorial, technological, directing sense.

Releases, restrictions, prohibitions. Most importantly, this is not a theatre of narcissism. Having the actor deal with a puppet

is supposed to be the optimal solution. Both have a centre outside of themselves: the puppet, the centre of movement, the actor, the centre of attention.

This narcissism bothers me terribly. I'm embarrassed in front of the actor, I find it hard to watch him during all this performing. But I want to have the puppet and the actor. Since the puppet is cleansed in itself, I expect the actor to try to cleanse himself as well. I think the same should be achieved in dramatic theatre, focusing on the acting technique, which would not be based on strong gesticulation, facial expressions.

I could go on cleansing *The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy*. I was a little cautious with Cankar, however you turn it, it's still a word-word situation, I wanted to keep it. This is often lost in dialogues, it works better in monologues. I had good solutions for the lying down, the small gestures, the getting up, so this didn't have to be solved with words.

Can the Marionette Theatre by Kleist be considered as your manifesto?

This is also a coincidence. When I took on the Kleist show, I was not yet familiar with this text. I was surprised by the similarity between us: grace, gravity, the unadulterated movement of the puppets, if you leave it up to them. All of which had bothered me before with actors. There was also a bunch of other things with Kleist. The force of genius within him and which drives him around. The inability to wait long enough for things to show up in a normal manner, the feeling of bursting, the chasing, the running away from the inner forces that are too powerful. I could do Kleist five more times.

Do it every time you do a show.

Yes. With Kleist, I eliminated everything that didn't matter to him. What remained was the language, pure minimalism. For the first time, I tested out the potential of the movement that is already inherent in the puppet. Because it's made to be moved, because it has aids, because it has all of these joints, I felt that there was no need to animate it. In the show, only the voice of the narrator was heard, but the spectator got the feeling that the small figures were moving, he created the movement he wanted.

Are different types of puppets, different types of actors?

There are insane differences, depending on treatment and animation. With a hand puppet, you put your hand directly into it, it is very

fast in movement, aggressive, grotesque, humorous, it can hold props. With a marionette, there are all these strings and a rhythm that doesn't just depend on the animator. It's more lyrical in itself.

I don't have such a choice of people to be able to do what I want. I would need a studio, a permanent team to work with on the individual pieces that I would then put together, on the things that interest me in a puppet. I feel close to the eastern principles of puppetry, the dedication in the Japanese Bunraku puppet theatre, the principle of mastery when three people animate a puppet. After five years, you can progress from the legs to the arms, after ten, you can start working with the head.

Monastic regime.

Yes, we have no patience here, the show must go on. I'm interested in a marionette whose strings would be pulled by a complex pulley mechanism. Several people would handle it from different ends, they would have to come together in a joint performance so that they would merge into one. The performers would pull the strings on stage so that they would be seen, while the movements of the marionette would be seen at the same time.

You are probably more interested in making movement real than in realism?

It has always been said that a puppet is supposed to do what an actor can't. However, I'm not interested in the fantasy of man flying, but in the human figure that moves like a puppet. The mystery, the different nature of the puppet, which seems to be from elsewhere, from a long time ago, from other civilizations. I need a lot of time with an animator to eliminate a whole bunch of things from him.

The puppeteer's narcissism also needs to be fought. Kleist was too much of an optimist.

This is the biggest problem. Even though they're in the background, they still want to please and indulge virtuosity through the puppets.

The word marionette is derogatory in the usual sense. For you, this is a field of potential freedom. *The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy*: when the girls get sick, a dualism is implied; they are puppets on strings and actresses. Those labelled as healthy can be easily performed by actors.

The sick girls are heavily marked, they know they will die. Even though they are so young that they are not fully aware of death, of the notion that you no longer exist. They take refuge in faith, in heaven. However, if a person is marked like that, they are already somewhere beyond or in-between. I guided them through the show accordingly. I wanted to cleanse the illness in a way that it was not naturally overloaded. Also with the movement of the puppets, I didn't try to make the puppets walk as if they were sick. Their illness is indicated by the way they lie down, the way they position their legs.

It is certainly not a simple dichotomy in the manner: the actor is the soul, the puppet is the body. Even though it is at the same time possible to predict that the actress will leave the scene when the first girl dies.

I had to solve a couple of things with the actors: first, to get that body-soul feeling; second, the puppet doesn't need to appear as if it's lame or sick, this can be done by the actress instead, by which she immediately falls into the role of the caregiver. She holds her, picks her up, stands her up, takes her away. With this whiteness, purity, with the gestures, a feeling is created that she is an extension, that she is the spiritual part of the puppet. The dichotomy would be too simple, I wanted to have that under control.

What is it then that determines the moment of death in this arrangement? Does the body come to a certain state of exhaustion when it comes to stoically dealing with life?

There are always problems with death on stage. Dying can be too powerful and therefore too simplistic. People can be moved, so one shouldn't be too fast. I initially had more expressive ideas for the first girl who dies, who commits suicide: the puppet would slit her wrists and blood would soak the bed sheet; I knew it was over the top. I came to the moment when the puppet and the actress gaze at each other and the puppet watches as the actress leaves, this is when I went for the soul-body as if life were trickling out of it. Just recently, someone who had survived a heart attack told me that you get that feeling of leaving, you're getting weaker and weaker. I tried to get that in the gaze between the two. Or when the actress speaks; before she speaks like a puppet, but from a certain moment she begins to speak

like herself as the puppet looks at her. I used these small things to try and achieve the emotion of death.

Heart-rendering but not affected.

I don't enjoy directing with actors, I'm not interested in dragging the most out of them. I'm embarrassed when these people open up and throw out all their intimacy. It seems to me that we should keep it to ourselves. Which is probably why I work with puppets.

Actors rarely read the text in such a way as to evoke a feeling in their interpretation of the text. There are some poets, who know how to interpret their poems. Zajc was like that, those who know how to do that can be brilliant. That's what I want from the actors.

Your dramaturgy is like a series of tableaux. The things I do, have probably been encoded in me as a child. Because I lived in a small town, my first encounter with art came with my encounter with the church. Hence the fascination with all these images, the scary statues looking down at you. Showing things piece by piece and the theme of the Stations of the Cross probably stem from this first impression; the films came later.

How did the films start?

There was an amateur theatre, I remember two, three performances, usually operettas. I was most impressed by the curtain when it was closed, how I could hardly wait for it to open, and the gong that always made dong, dong, dong. The curtain pulled back, the miracle box opened.

Films were screened on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. From horror movies, detective films to westerns. My parents didn't make trouble with what I was allowed to watch. My friend and I sometimes helped the projectionist, so he let us stay in the booth. We got a camera and tried to make a film about the Red Indians. We started thinking about how we were going to tell the story with short scenes, how we were going to splice them together.

Cinema Paradiso.

My father was much older, he had me in his fifties. While still young, he worked in a mine in Belgium between the two world wars and later fell ill with silicosis. That's what accompanies me, what drags me from show to show. The premonition of death, death. We were terribly

close. I was sixteen when he died, he was my last authoritarian figure. The interest in art was also turned around by the fact that I had to go to school, train for a profession, I got a job at seventeen. I went to the electrical engineering school and turned out a bit differently than if I had attended the art and design school in Ljubljana.

Which films helped shape you?

Italian neorealism, American seventies, Bergman, Tarkovsky, those were the strong years, we were in the cinema all the time. Besides film, there were books, I didn't go to the theatre as much. I remember coming out of the cinema and being all over the place, like when you're drunk and you don't know how you got home.

Your installation *Tears in the Kostanjevica Monastery evokes words from Andrei Rublev: Nothing is more terrible than snow falling in a temple.*

Rublev is certainly one I have seen many times. I feel very close to Tarkovsky. My son brings films home and we have watched them together many a time. I'm a memoryless person, so I can watch each one three times. Regarding Kostanjevica: with all galleries, I first enter the space, try to take my time and find a contact with it. To contemplate the architecture, the historical and symbolic significance of the building. In the church, you immediately get light and sound, you enter into silence. All these rites that have not changed over the years, without interruption like a machine at the same hour, the same mass ceremonies, the same chants. This is how the dripping of water appeared. The light surprised me, I used it the way the church used it. The divine effects of the beams that vary greatly given the clouds, weather, morning, evening, depending on where the sun is shining from. Many things happen in a day because of these shadows, these lights.

Again, the monastic discipline, austerity.

Yes, the austerity, the purity that the monks bring to the maximum. I was in Pleterje, where there are currently only thirteen of them from all over the world. The curator explained that after seven, maybe ten years, they can no longer change their minds, they can no longer opt out. They can, up till then, but no longer after that. It's hard to imagine. Limited to minimal conversations, no newspapers, radio, television. Only constant ritual: prayer, work, meditation ...

What role does God play in your theatre?

Difficult ... I read somewhere that only God alone can appear as God in the theatre. So it might be easiest: my performances deal with how far to go. How man tries to become God. The obsession of being the Creator. It is probably inherent to man that he tries to go as far as it is possible or impossible and take the risk, even though he already knows in advance what awaits at the end.

But the feeling of the Divine spreads through everything.

This sense of the Divine appears in the moments when it feels as if a draught were passing through.

Draft, air (waves). In Tarkovsky's work, wind and light are in an intimate relationship, the wind raises the curtain, the light of the room changes. What's going on with the angels?

The angels had been exhausted for me, I made them as puppets and then I was no longer interested in them. I found them again in drawings, wondering what material they were made of.

What material are they made of?

This can be seen in the hatching, how and from where the light seeps in, how the line flows, I came to an interesting intertwining of the background, light, dark, line.

It seems as if your angels were made of muscle fibres, reminiscent of a ball of wool. One little tug and everything dissolves into nothingness. The stuff of spirit.

I place a lot of attention on the materials in all my shows. How they sound together, without touch. Each material guides you in its own way. It has a certain form that is most compliant to it. Wood is shaped differently to kneading clay or carving stone. Then there is also the combination of materials, the feeling of metal – cold, wood – warmth, glass – translucence, opacity, by which you create an atmosphere on stage. Sand trickles throughout the duration of the *Forbidden Love* performance. A sound of departing. An atmosphere that makes you more sensitive to the things that are taking place on stage. I sometimes find it hard to explain to the actors that a light passing through the stage, a small sound, a tiny movement, is just as important to me as the main role.

Even the spectator is a marionette that can be strung along.

If the puppet becomes a guided machine, and if you make an automatic machine out of the actor, it is imperative that the spectator also falls under the same system.

Are you ever afraid of your own theatre?

No. Sometimes you can run too far away and find yourself very alone in what you're doing. Actors should believe me. The worst thing is to work with sceptics. Everyone wants to do their own thing. You already feel vulnerable because you're full of doubts yourself.

The theology of The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy and other performances can also be understood as a Slovenian bipolarity?

Yes, some understand it one, others another way, but that has nothing to do with me. This really is a nuisance in our country nowadays. I don't know what I'm supposed to have to do with this idiotic division. At the moment it's calmed down a bit, but for a while, it was impossible to live in Ljubljana. You couldn't talk to people normally any more without being branded. It's similar with reading the newspapers. That's incitement. This is why I withdraw to the Dolenjska region for the weekends, where I'm going to set up a studio.

Because there's nothing there?

I have nothing to do with anyone there. I can do things in peace and quiet. Anything to do with art or anything else. This summer I made some trellises.

You never wanted to be an immigrant.

I didn't come close to being able to do anything here for ten, fifteen years. I got a call from the Czech Republic, where I did two shows. But there, foreigners come to see the premieres. This included VIPs. Once Menzel came, but it meant nothing to me, I didn't know him. I have people here that I really like to see come to my shows. People, whose opinion means something to me. I have to say, I'm gaining spectators, even though I don't bother about it. People talk to each other and a particular circle of people forms, which expands. I had a feeling the people of Prague held me in favour, but at the end of the day, I was just a guest. Once you become one of them, it's different. I'm not an avid traveller either. And I'm pretty bad at languages. I prefer to focus on the micro.

One is quick to ask with audiences and their enthusiasm: "What is it that I did wrong?"

Doing universal shows in which everyone would find something for themselves would be very difficult for me. The initial ones were like that, but I saw exactly what they were missing. Where are those elements that are made to get the audience on your side? It can be captured like children can be captured.

The moment of defeat; you know that you have cheated.

Yes, you know. I remember when I was a boy and they dragged me around to sing at ceremonies. I had stage fright, I hated performing, but when I found myself on stage, I fell into that delight. I sang Violina Tzigana, partisan songs, and I knew exactly how to raise my voice, how to shake it, how much to keep it, how far to go to make the mothers weep. I was so little, yet I felt where I could manipulate them. That's when I stopped doing that.

Specialisation is neutralisation. What you do is too close to the point of discomfort. It's better to file you under puppetry and that's it.

I recently exhibited my drawings and the *Table Scenes* at the Velenje Gallery. At the same time, I also had some more drawings in the gallery of the lobby of the Gorenje Management Board and adapted an automatic machine from Kleist. He was sitting in a wheelchair, saluting with his hand in a military fashion. Since they are a machine factory, they thought it was fine until a strike broke out on the morning of the opening day. The administration removed the automatic machine. It was too heavily reminiscent for them of the fact that they were puppets on strings. They worried that the workers might see some symbolism in it.

But you must feel a sense of grace in the automation?

When I was little, I saw a mechanical bird in a shop window dipping its beak into water. A bunch of people were stopping by to see this piece of theatre with one act. Which is really nothing in itself. Even then, the thought occurred to me: what do people, have in them for such a small thing to attract them, to make them stand and watch? Or later, the Prague Orloj. People stand for an entire hour for the time to come, for the clock to strike, and the little figures to appear. We must have this mechanism within us, already with the beating of the heart, the sense of the cosmos, of these move-

ments. To get us to think, not where we are from, but what guides us, what is this force, how to break away from it, if we can at all ...

At the same time, you are attracted to the moment when the automatic machine fails.

I was once asked by the Val 202 radio if I could be listed among the candidates for Name of the Week. It was a day after the elections, and Pahor was among the nominees. I told them it wasn't a problem and forgot about it. They knew he would win, they booked a time, he was already waiting on the phone. Then I'm sitting in a bar somewhere and they call me in a panic that I won, that they were caught unprepared, that they have no information about me, that they had to apologise to Pahor ...

There's a state of emergency and there are puppets on strings wherever you show up.

I read and looked at the graphic prints about the period after the First World War, when people became semi-automatic, when they had all sorts of limbs missing and half of their heads were artificial, when they made wheelchairs out of anything that would do. When man is just a piece, a piece of spirit, and everything else is already artificial, mechanics.

If we ignore his individualism; isn't the ultimate result of Kleist a total society of graceful and coordinated movements? The choreography of North Korea. Like the end of when Hans Castorp penetrates the enemy's ditch through all that intellectual drama without a fragment of consciousness?

Kleist obviously had a serious problem within himself. On the one hand, a military education, brought up as an executor of orders, on the other hand, an artist. At some point, this split ...

Was he split? Previously, he seems to have been even more militant than his military family, immersed in tradition and rank.

I felt Kleist most strongly at the point of his tremendous talent, unwilling to wait for things to develop normally. He felt inwardly that he was a genius, but it takes time for that. This is probably the problem of real geniuses, not having the patience, not knowing how to do it gradually. He immediately wanted to make a genius poem, a genius drama. This is what leads to a crash, a point of breaking. Fierce ambition and the resulting paranoia, feeling threatened by others, the inability to function. And again his military school, which is like a machine.

The most fascinating thing in The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy is the ability of the puppets to shift the weight of their feet, to march on their own. A military march. They walk completely unaided.

This is their strongest aspect, their sound, and when they move as a group. Here The Ward comes closest to a concentration camp, how someone with pure helplessness just does clank, clank, clank. That's what makes the puppet fantastic, that's where it's heart-rendering. I couldn't express that better with anything else.

Goethe is Kleist's antithesis, he is, roughly speaking, a harmonious, opportunistic type of genius. He did not really prove himself in relation to Kleist. Are you still tempted by Faust?

Goethe is not as congenial, Kleist is more powerful in his purity of thought. But he's this suffering genius at the same time. Goethe managed at life as a genius.

Do you have a problem with Kleist's romantic nature?

Yes. The previous part of my opus was humorous, brutal, loaded with sexuality, fast-paced, this second part is more considered. This coincides with Goethe, who had the first and second part of Faust. It's normal for a person to start thinking differently in the second half of life. Faust, the contract with the devil, this is certainly a subject to address.

You mention monks, you mention obsessives, which evokes Kierkegaard's dialectic between the saint-apostle and the genius-artist. Kleist is a combination of both.

We know little about how this occurs in monks.

The mysteries of sublimation ...

I heard about a monk who lost it and was taken to a madhouse. He got some tremendous power and ripped off all the straitjackets. Four people tried to hold him down, but they went flying. He ran away and was found hanging in the woods.

Does the puppet ever resist your intentions? Yes. Sometimes I switch their roles once I've already made them. I'm less and less inclined to making the puppet embody any predefined character traits. As a director, I try to predict

just how much it will gain with the text, how much with the movement. I try to make them visually as similar as possible so that they function as a group, and so that they are distinguished from one another by small features.

It really sounds like a laboratory.

It takes so much to remove the animator's will, to act as a duo with the puppet so that the two are not at odds with each other. We are now exploring what is it that actually drives the puppet, what gives it movement. To what extent can it function on its own, to what extent does it need an animator, to what extent is the animator an animator, and to what extent is he an automatic machine. To what extent does the machine drive the machine, when is one more of a machine and when less.

Descartes watches from a window as hats and coats walk around the square. He asks himself: "Is it possible that automatic machines are hiding under them?" Omerzu leans on the same window and asks: "Is it possible that people are hiding under them?"

In Asia, they have the shadow theatre. It is true to say that they understand all the symbolism of the movements so that they can get into it, they can confront their own selves. I often wonder if I would be able to get into such self-purification, to come up with a real mini-mini-minimalism, or if I wouldn't say to myself: "Can I be bothered at all?" To just let the light pass across the stage. How far is this possible, where's the right limit?

I'm convinced that every puppet bears its own specific movement within itself, one that is totally unique to it, due to its artistry and technology. It has a certain number of them which are acceptable, but there's probably just one that is its precise match. I'd like to find it.

I try to get through to the animators: since the puppet is subject to gravity, this must be exploited. The movements that come of their own accord are the most natural. The marionette moves in a downward motion, it is moved upwards by the animator, but even this upwards is not exactly his will, he can only raise it as much as the hand will be raised. It's back to technology again and back to gravity again. I try to instil them with a sense for things.

The tendency of the non-figurative theatre; the Malevich of theatre?

I'm interested in the figurative within theatre because I first took it on as an artist. I feel closest to the theatre of those authors who also started out as artists themselves: Bob Wilson, Jan Fabre, Romeo Castellucci, Josef Nadj ...

Robert Bresson, another Kleist follower, was also a painter. Your performances are cinematic, their editing is obvious. Are you also interested in film in any explicit way?

It leads me to film, I'm going to shoot things now. I think it's closer to me than theatre, which interests me as a one-time act, as a ritual for the spectator to move the puppets himself without it happening on stage. Lukan noticed with *Peskar* that Nathanael's dreams were nightmares, but that I didn't show them like other puppeteers would have done. There were only the sleeper and the voice of the narrator. I left it to the spectator to imagine the nightmares himself. Which is inconceivable to puppeteers. But actually, that's the only thing you have at your disposal, to portray the dream world.

Warhol's gesture: to show the sleeper, without dreams.

To take advantage of this difference, the wondrousness of the puppet, to show its own life. There are people, and there are puppets. Who says that we're alive and they're not? It is these secrets that make me interested in puppets, what makes me interested in art. If we were to know that this world was banal, if some truth were to emerge about there being nothing else, we might find it harder to live ... that's something we don't want to know about.

What is it about film that's inevitable for you?

Film has evaded art too much. It has its own editing, zooming, by which you get to certain inner cores, mechanisms. The most wonderful part is the preparation. In between you have this backwards and forwards with the actors, then the final part follows, which is your intimacy. Editing, composing.

Things have piled up that I know would be better portrayed with film. Of course, these could be films, but you don't know what to do with them, where to launch them, yet they are art pieces.

Definitely an alternative to the stories told in bars prevalent in Slovenian film.

Slovenian film had the misfortune that there was generally more money around film and a lot of wrong people got a whiff of it.

Something particularly invaluable about your theatre is that the stage doesn't allow the spectator to find himself on it. The impossibility of identification. Otherwise, you're not watching the show, but your own life again, whose star you are.

Yes, I deal with things that have nothing to do with that. I prefer to move away.

Escapism. You probably don't watch shows like The Farm, but you're a real expert on them, whether you like it or not.

I caught 20 minutes and it was very interesting. Artur Štern is probably quite a bright guy, but I've caught him in this once before ... When Rudan the singer hit a cyclist, he said he understood why he ran away. He got so far on his way to fame that he couldn't afford something like that. He, Štern, knows this because he auditioned as a singer for Pop Design and Rudan was chosen instead. Some may be intellectuals, but they have a much stronger desire to perform. They would immediately sell all their intellectual capital in order to stand on stage and be admired. All of these shows are made up of profiles that would sell their soul so they can be in.

BTC Faust. They aren't selling souls for a masterpiece, but for a bestseller. To sell everything for the lowest price possible.

Yes, but such a powerful theatre of the absurd comes out of it that it's hard to put one like that together.

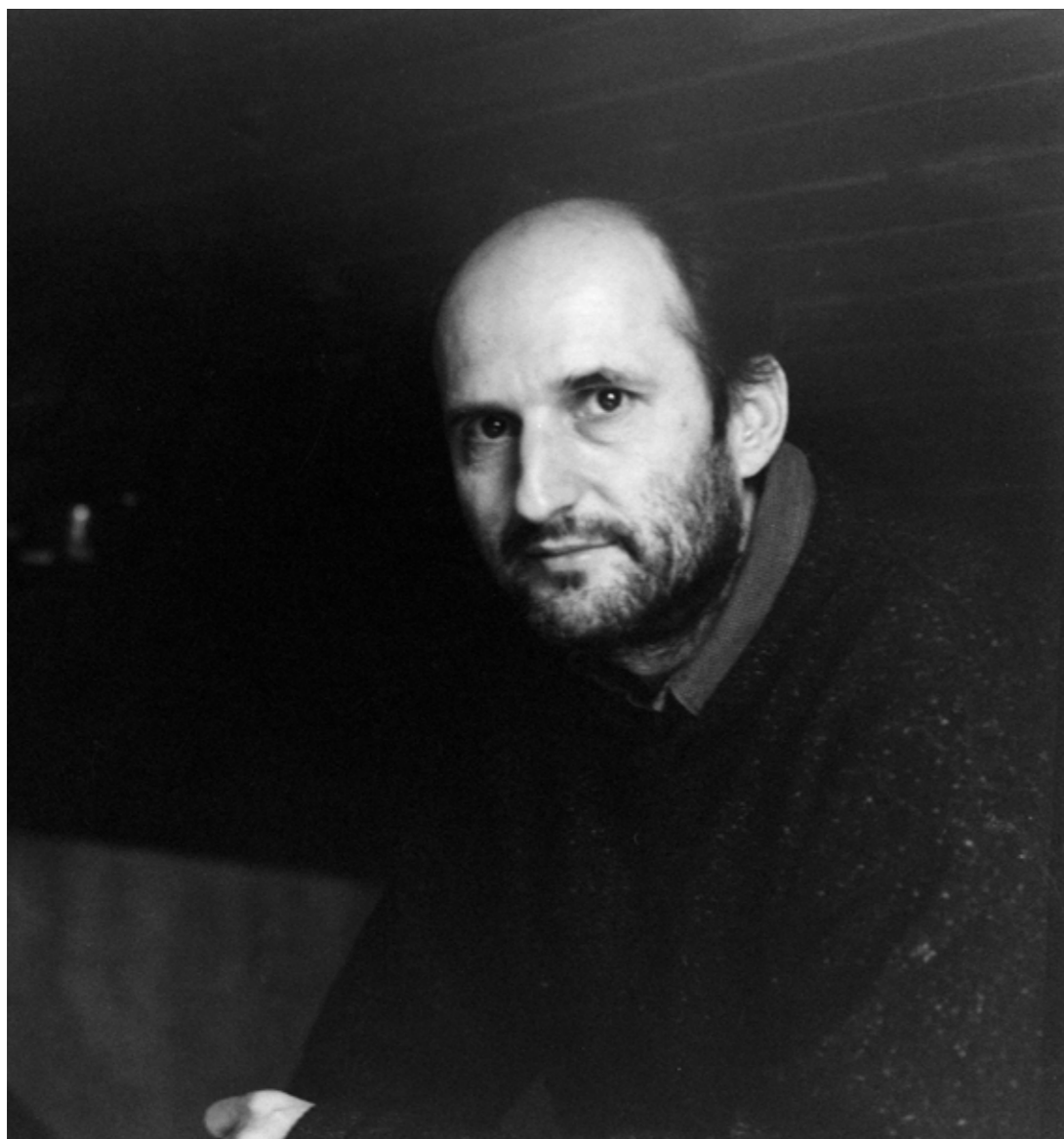
Then you watch The Theatre of the Absurd in the theatre and wonder if it isn't possible to watch it every day on television – in shows that are much more lucid because the relationships take care of themselves. You can't write that.

If the theatre won't go another way, then it's destined for its own end. The reality show will steamroller it. That will also make it more interesting for me.

The only discomfort that remains in dramatic theatre are the uncomfortable seats.



AVTOMATI, Obalne galerije, Galerija Loža, Koper, 2016. Foto: Janez Marolt
AUTOMATONS, Obalne galerije, Galerija Loža, Koper, 2016. Photo: Janez Marolt



Silvan Omerzu (1955, Brestanica) je slovenski režiser, slikar in lutkovni umetnik. Po študiju na pedagoški fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani je začel delati v Lutkovnem gledališču Ljubljana, leta 1983 pa je odšel na študijsko izpopolnjevanje iz lutkovne scenografije in oblikovanja lutk v Prago. V začetku 90. let je soustanovil neodvisno gledališče Konj v Ljubljani in bil stalni sodelavec osrednjega lutkovnega gledališča Minor v Pragi, nato pa je kot neodvisni ustvarjalec sodeloval z različnimi gledališči v Sloveniji in v mednarodnem prostoru, za katera je ustvaril številne odmevne predstave.

Njegovo ustvarjalno pot zaznamuje izrazita interdisciplinarnost, saj se kot ustvarjalec ni nikdar zavezal le eni umetniški disciplini ali mediju, temveč je hkrati deloval kot vizualni umetnik, scenograf, lutkar in gledališki režiser. Za njegovo umetniško prakso, ki se pojavlja tako na gledaliških odrih kot v galerijskih prostorih, so značilne kompleksne objektne instalacije, ustvarjene iz lesa in kombinirane z najrazličnejšimi materiali, ki prikazujejo ekspresivne in pogosto groteskne motive, v katerih se odražata subtilna družbena kritika in obešenjaški humor.

Ker je v njegovih lutkovnih in gledaliških projektih vizualna podoba ključnega pomena, se je pogosto predstavljal tudi v galerijskih prostorih. Za svoje vsestransko delovanje je prejel številne nagrade doma in v tujini, med drugim leta 2006 nagrado Prešernovega sklada. Omerzu danes živi in deluje v Ljubljani.

Silvan Omerzu (1955, Brestanica) is Slovenian-based theatre director, painter and puppeteer. After graduating from the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, he started working in Ljubljana Puppet Theatre. In 1983 he continued his studies in Prague, where he completed a specialist degree in puppet scenography and puppet design. After his return to Ljubljana, in the early 1990s, he cofounded independent theatre Konj (Ljubljana) and was regular collaborator of the central puppet theatre Minor (Prague); furthermore, he became an independent artist who has been working with different theatres in Slovenia and internationally for which he created number of critically acclaimed productions.

His productions were marked by distinctive interdisciplinary approach and he never committed himself to only one artistic discipline or medium; on the contrary, he has always worked as a visual artist, set designer, puppet maker and theatre director simultaneously. In his artistic practice that is being presented in theatres as well as in galleries, he creates complex spatial installations, made out of wood and various other materials, that showcase expressive and often grotesque motifs in which subtle social criticism and gallows humour are reflected.

In his puppet and theatre productions visual appearance is essential and therefore he has frequently showcased his work in galleries and museum. For his versatile and prolific work Omerzu received several awards, among other in 2006 major national award for arts, Prešeren Award. He lives and works in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

SAMOSTOJNE RAZSTAVE / SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1977

Galerija na gradu, Brestanica
Gallery at the Castle, Brestanica

1986

Zavod za statistiko, Ljubljana
Statistics Institute, Ljubljana
Galerija ZRMK, Ljubljana
ZRMK Gallery, Ljubljana
Knjižnica Jože Mazovec, Ljubljana
Jože Mazovec Library, Ljubljana

1988

Bežigrajska galerija, Ljubljana
Bežigrad Gallery, Ljubljana
Galerija Mlakar, Zagreb, Hrvatska
Mlakar Gallery, Zagreb, Croatia

1989

Galerija D'Art, Ljubljana
Gallery D'Art, Ljubljana

1990

Likovna vitrina, Nova Gorica
Art Window, Nova Gorica

1992

Galerija ARS, Ljubljana
ARS Gallery, Ljubljana
Galerija KUD France Prešeren,
Ljubljana
KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

1993

Galerija Labirint, Ljubljana
Labyrinth Gallery, Ljubljana
Galerija ARS, Ljubljana
ARS Gallery, Ljubljana

1994

Gledališče Minor, Praga,
Češka Republika
Theatre Minor, Prague,
Czech Republic

1995

Galerija ARS, Ljubljana
ARS Gallery, Ljubljana
Galerija KUD France Prešeren,
Ljubljana
Gallery of KUD France Prešeren,
Ljubljana

1997

Galerija ZDSLU, Ljubljana
ZDSLU Gallery, Ljubljana
Galerija Miklova hiša, Ribnica
Mikl House Gallery, Ribnica
Ekonomska fakulteta, Ljubljana
Faculty of Economics, Ljubljana

1998

Galerija Žula 2, Maribor
Žula Gallery 2, Maribor
Knjižnica Bežigrad, Ljubljana
Bežigrad Library, Ljubljana

2000

Galerija Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana
Mladinska knjiga Gallery, Ljubljana
KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana
KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

2001

Galerija Krško, Krško
Krško Gallery, Krško

2002

Bežigrajska galerija, Ljubljana
Bežigrad Gallery, Ljubljana
Galerija Sončnica,
Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana
Sunflower Gallery,
Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana

2005

Avtomati, Pretorska palača, Koper
Automatons, Praetorian Palace,
Koper

2006

Solze, Galerija Božidar Jakac,
Kostanjevica na Krki
Tears, Božidar Jakac Gallery,
Kostanjevica na Krki

2007

Solze, Kazemate, Ljubljanski grad,
Ljubljana
Tears, Kazemate, Ljubljana Castle,
Ljubljana

Solze, Maison du Spectacle -
la Bellone, Bruselj, Belgija
Tears, La Bellone - Maison du
Spectacle, Brussels, Belgium

2008

Ne-gib: poslušati z očmi, Muzej
krščanstva na Slovenskem, Stična
Non-Motion: Listening with Eyes,
Slovene Museum of Christianity,
Stična

Avtomati: gledališče smrti,
Galerija Kibela, Kibla, Maribor
Automatons: Theatre of Death,
Kibela Gallery, Kibla, Maribor

Lutke/risbe, Manzana 1 Art Gallery,
Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivija
Puppets/Drawings, Manzana 1 Art
Gallery, Santa Cruz de la Sierra,
Bolivia

2009

Omizja, Mednarodni grafični
likovni center, Ljubljana
Table Scenes, MGLC - International
Centre of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana

Risbe/lutke, Galerija Velenje,
Velenje

Drawings/Puppets,
Velenje Gallery, Velenje

Razstavišče Gorenje, Velenje
Gorenje Exhibition Grounds,
Velenje

Kulturnica - knjigarna - galerija,
Velenje
Kulturnica - Bookshop - Gallery,
Velenje

2010

Ilustracije, Galerija Lična hiša,
Ajdovščina
Illustrations, Lična hiša Gallery,
Ajdovščina

2012

*Razstava ilustracij iz knjige Ferija
Lainščka Cicibanija*, Galerija
Sončnica, Mladinska knjiga,
Ljubljana
*Exhibition of Illustrations from the
Feri Lainšček's book Cicibanija*,
Sunflower Gallery, Mladinska
knjiga, Ljubljana

Katera bo prva?, Galerija Krško,
Krško
Who will Be the First?,
Krško Gallery, Krško

2013

Hiše, Galerija Krka, Novo mesto
Houses, Krka Gallery, Novo mesto
Hiše, Galerija Krka, Ljubljana
Houses, Krka Gallery, Ljubljana

Ilustracije in lutke, Galerija
Ekonomske fakultete, Ljubljana
Illustrations and Puppets, Gallery
at the Faculty of Economic,
Ljubljana

2014

*Razstava ilustracij (pregled
ilustracij v revijah Ciciban in
Cicido)*, Stekleni atrij Mestne hiše,
Ljubljana

*Exhibition of Illustrations
(overview of illustrations in
Ciciban and Cicido magazines)*,
Town Hall - Glass Atrium,
Ljubljana

Suze, Gliptoteka Hrvatske
akademije znanosti i umjetnosti,
Zagreb, Hrvatska
Tears, Glyptothèque of the
Croatian Academy of Sciences and
Art, Zagreb, Croatia
Od skice do lutke, Bežigrajska
galerija, Ljubljana
From Sketch to a Puppet, Bežigrad
Gallery, Ljubljana

2015

Retrospektivna razstava lutk,
grad Sovinec, Češka Republika
*Retrospective Exhibition of
Puppetry*, Sovinec Castle, Czech
Republic

2016

Razstava lutk in slik,
Loža Koper, Koper
Puppet and Painting Exhibition,
Loža Gallery, Koper

2017

Risbe, lutke, avtomati,
Umetnostna galerija Maribor,
Maribor
*Drawings, Puppets and
Automatons*, Maribor Art Gallery,
Maribor

Solze in omizja, Lutkovno
gledališče Maribor, Maribor
Tears and Table Scenes, Maribor
Puppet Theatre, Maribor

2018

Ivan Cankar in Evropa,
Galerija Cankarjevega doma,
Ljubljana
Ivan Cankar and Europe,
Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

2019

Arthur Rimbaud Musée,
Charleville-Mézières, Francija
Arthur Rimbaud Musée,
Charleville-Mézières, France

SKUPINSKE RAZSTAVE / GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1978

Grupa ZOOF (Zaplatil, Ogrinc, Omerzu, Fistrič, Flajšman), Ilirska Bistrica
The ZOOF Group (Zaplatil, Ogrinc, Omerzu, Fistrič, Flajšman), Ilirska Bistrica

1983

Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana
Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana

1987

Jugoslovanski bienale mladih, Moderna galerija, Reka, Hrvatska
Yugoslav Biennial of Young Artists, Moderna galerija, Rijeka, Croatia
Zlato pero Beograda, Muzej uporabnih umetnosti, Beograd, Srbija

Golden Feather of Belgrade Award, Museum of Applied Arts, Belgrade, Serbia

Galerija Collegium Artisticum, Sarajevo, Bosna in Hercegovina
Gallery of the Collegium Artisticum, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Galerija Osten, Skopje, Severna Makedonija

Osten Gallery, Skopje, Northern Macedonia

Galerija Boro i Ramiz, Priština, Kosovo

Boro and Ramiz Gallery, Priština, Kosovo

Pionirska knjižnica, Ljubljana
Pioneer Library, Ljubljana

Anale slovenske risbe, Galerija ARS, Radlje ob Dravi
Annals of Slovene Drawing, ARS Gallery, Radlje ob Dravi

Ex tempore, Rogaška Slatina
Ex tempore, Rogaška Slatina
Triennale sodobne jugoslovanske risbe, Galerija likovne jeseni, Sombor, Srbija

Triennial of Contemporary Yugoslav Drawing, Artistic Autumn Gallery, Sombor, Serbia

Razstava sodobne jugoslovanske lutke, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

The Contemporary Yugoslav Puppet, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

1988

Razstava slovenskih likovnih umetnikov, Galerija Jakopič, Ljubljana

Exhibitions of Slovene Artists, Jakopič Gallery, Ljubljana

Dom kulture, Aleksinac, Srbija
Cultural Centre, Aleksinac, Serbia

Dom kulture, Trstenik, Srbija
Cultural Centre, Trstenik, Serbia

Ex tempore, Rogaška Slatina
Ex tempore, Rogaška Slatina

Zlato pero Beograda, Muzej uporabnih umetnosti, Beograd, Srbija

Golden Feather of Belgrade Award, Museum of Applied Arts, Belgrade, Serbia

1989

Galerija Jakopič, Ljubljana
Jakopič Gallery, Ljubljana

Zlato pero Beograda, Muzej uporabnih umetnosti, Beograd, Srbija

Golden Feather of Belgrade Award, Museum of Applied Arts, Belgrade, Serbia

Likovna kolonija, Galerija Krka, Novo mesto

Art Colony, Krka Gallery, Novo mesto

Dom kulture, Trestenik, Srbija
Cultural Centre, Trestenik, Serbia

Dom kulture, Krupanj, Srbija
Cultural Centre, Krupanj, Serbia

Galerija Collegium Artisticum, Sarajevo, Bosna in Hercegovina

Gallery of the Collegium Artisticum, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina

1990

Triennale sodobne jugoslovanske risbe, Galerija likovne jeseni, Beograd, Srbija

Triennial of Contemporary Yugoslav Drawing, Artistic Autumn Gallery, Belgrade, Serbia

1991

Velika galerija kulturnega centra, Novi Sad, Srbija

Large Gallery of the Cultural Centre, Novi Sad, Serbia

Majski salon, Galerija Jakopič, Ljubljana

May Salon, Jakopič Gallery, Ljubljana

Mednarodna razstava Ostavi trag, Galerija narodnog fonda, Beograd, Srbija

Leave Your Mark International Exhibition, Gallery of the National Fund, Belgrade, Serbia

1993

Muzej sodobne keramike, Resen, Severna Makedonija

Museum of Contemporary Ceramics, Resen, Northern Macedonia

Slovenski bienale ilustracije, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

Biennial of Slovene Illustration, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

1994

Majski salon, Galerija Jakopič, Ljubljana

May Salon, Jakopič Gallery, Ljubljana

Galerija Kompas, Ljubljana
Kompas Gallery, Ljubljana

1995

Majski salon, Galerija Jakopič, Ljubljana

May Salon, Jakopič Gallery, Ljubljana

2. *slovenski bienale ilustracije*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

2nd *Biennial of Slovene Illustration*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

Kvadriennale svetovne scenografije in kostumografije, Průmyslový palác, Praga, Češka Republika
Quadrennial of International Set and Costume Design, Industrial Palace, Prague, Czech Republic

1996

Lutke neinstitucionalnih gledališč, Kulturni center Janeza Trdine, Novo mesto

Puppets from Non-Institutional Theatres, Janez Trdina Cultural Centre, Novo mesto

Majski salon, Galerija Jakopič, Ljubljana

May Salon, Rihard Jakopič Gallery, Ljubljana

1998

3. *slovenski bienale ilustracije*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

3rd *Slovenian Biennial of Illustration*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

Scena in kostumi, Razstavní salon Rotovž, Maribor
Sets and Costumes, Rotovž Exhibition Salon, Maribor

1999

Kvadriennale svetovne scenografije, Průmyslový palác, Praga, Češka Republika

Quadriennial of International Set Design, Industrial Palace, Prague, Czech Republic

Bienale svetovne ilustracije, Bratislava, Slovaška

Biennial of International Illustration, Bratislava, Slovakia

Pogled 1, Lamutov likovni salon, Galerija Božidar Jakac, Kostanjevica na Krki

View 1, Lamut Art Salon, Božidar Jakac Art Museum, Kostanjevica na Krki

2000

Izbor ilustracij iz Bratislave, Ohita, Hokaido, Tokushima, Toyama, Kochi, Japonska

Selected Illustrations from Bratislava, Ohita, Hokaido, Tokushima, Toyama, Kochi, Japan

Podobe našega časa, Posavski muzej, Brežice

Images of Our Time, Posavje Museum, Brežice

Galerija Riemer, Slovenske Konjice
Riemer Gallery, Slovenske Konjice

2001

3. *slovenski bienale ilustracije*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

3rd *Slovenian Biennial of Illustration*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

Prvi hrvaški bienale ilustracije, Galerija Klovičevi dvori, Zagreb, Hrvatska

1st *Croatian Biennial of Illustration*, Klovičevi dvori Gallery, Zagreb, Croatia

3. *slovenski bienale ilustracije*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

3rd *Slovene Triennial of Satire and Humour Aritas*, Cultural Centre, Šmarje pri Jelšah

3. *slovenski triennale satire in humorja Aritas*, Groharjeva galerija, Škofja Loka

3rd *Slovene Triennial of Satire and Humour Aritas*, Grohar Gallery, Škofja Loka

Mir: razstava karikature, Istanbul, Turčija
Peace: Caricature Exhibition, Istanbul, Turkey

2002

3. *slovenski triennale satire in humorja Aritas*, Galerija Jakopič, Ljubljana

3rd *Slovene Triennial of Satire and Humour Aritas*, Jakopič Gallery, Ljubljana

2004

6. *slovenski bienale ilustracije*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

6th *Slovenian Biennial of Illustration*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

6. *slovenski bienale ilustracije*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

2005

Galerija Alkatraz, Ljubljana
Alkatraz Gallery, Ljubljana

2006

7. *slovenski bienale ilustracije*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

7th *Slovenian Biennial of Illustration*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

Prvi hrvaški bienale ilustracije, Galerija Klovičevi dvori, Zagreb, Hrvatska

1st *Croatian Biennial of Illustration*, Klovičevi dvori Gallery, Zagreb, Croatia

2007

Move Moment, Slovenski umetniki v ZDA in Kanadi, Washington, Chicago, Cleveland, Ottawa, Toronto, ZDA & Kanada
Move Moment: Slovenian Artists in the USA and Canada, Washington, Chicago, Cleveland, Ottawa, Toronto, USA & Canada
Lutke in plakati, Knjižnica Glinškova ploščad, Ljubljana
Puppets and Posters, Glinškova ploščad Library, Ljubljana
Mavrica/Rainbow/Hong, Peking, Kitajska
Mavrica/Rainbow/Hong, Beijing, China

2008

Razstava Sekcije ilustratorjev pri ZDSLU, Galerija ZDSLU, Ljubljana
Exhibition by the ZDSLU Illustrators' Section, ZDSLU Gallery, Ljubljana

2009

Razstava Sekcije ilustratorjev pri ZDSLU, Galerija Grad Podsreda, Podsreda
Exhibition by the ZDSLU Illustrators' Section, Podsreda Castle Gallery, Podsreda
Risba na slovenskem II 1940–2009, Mestna galerija Ljubljana, Ljubljana
Drawing in Slovenia II: 1940–2009, City Art Museum, Ljubljana

2010

9. slovenski bienale ilustracij, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
9th Slovenian Biennial of Illustration, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
Berljivo, Grubarjeva galerija, Ljubljana
Readable, Grubar Gallery, Ljubljana

2011

Risba v stripu na Slovenskem, Mestna galerija Ljubljana, Ljubljana
Drawing in Slovene Comics, City Art Gallery, Ljubljana
Kvari, kuariči, čubi, čubiči, razstava ilustracij, Galerija ZDSLU, Ljubljana
Kvari, kuariči, čubi, čubiči, exhibition of illustrations, ZDSLU Gallery, Ljubljana

2012

10. slovenski bienale ilustracije, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
10th Slovenian Biennial of Illustration, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

2013

Kvari, kuariči, čubi, čubiči, razstava ilustracij, Bovec
Kvari, kuariči, čubi, čubiči, exhibition of illustrations, Bovec

2014

100 let slovenske lutkovne umetnosti, Narodni muzej Slovenije, Ljubljana
100 Years of the Slovenian Puppetry Art, National Museum of Slovenia, Ljubljana

2016

Medvedi in medvedki, razstava ilustracij, Galerija Kresija, Ljubljana
Bears and Teddy Bears, exhibition of illustrations, Kresija Gallery, Ljubljana

2018

13. slovenski bienale ilustracije, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
13th Slovenian Biennial of Illustration, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

1994

Ivan Rob: *Deseti brat*, Založba Rokus
 Ivan Rob: *Deseti brat* (The Tenth Brother), Rokus

1995

Zlatka Levstek: *Glavna stran glave je obraz*, Založba Dan
 Zlatka Levstek: *Glavna stran glave je obraz* (The Main Side of the Head Is the Face), Dan
 Zlatka Levstek: *Zakajske*, Založba Dan
 Zlatka Levstek: *Zakajske* (Why Poems), Dan

1997

Meta Brulec: *Kroki*, Založba Karantanija
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki* (Crocky), Karantanija

1999

Fran Levstik / Josip Stritar: *Cvilimožek*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Fran Levstik / Josip Stritar: *Cvilimožek* (Squeaky Man), Mladinska knjiga

2000

Slavko Jug: *Počesane ribe*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Slavko Jug: *Počesane ribe* (Combed Fish), Mladinska knjiga
 Milan Dekleva: *Alica v računalniku*, Cankarjeva založba
 Milan Dekleva: *Alica v računalniku* (Alice in the Computer), Cankarjeva založba

2006

Katarina Sokač: *Zajčkov risalnik*, Založba Obzorja Maribor
 Katarina Sokač: *Rabbit's Cartoon*, Založba Obzorja Maribor

2009

Milan Dekleva: *Pesmarica prvih besed*, Založba Didakta
 Milan Dekleva: *Pesmarica prvih besed* (A Songbook of First Words), Didakta

2011

Patricija Peršolja: *Marta*, Založba Pivec
 Patricija Peršolja: *Marta*, Pivec
 Patricija Peršolja: *Moja nona*, Založba Pivec
 Patricija Peršolja: *Moja nona* (My Granny), Pivec
 Saša Eržen: *Prosta volja je najbolja*, Slovenska filantropija
 Saša Eržen: *Prosta volja je najbolja* (Free Will is the Best), Slovenian Philanthropy

2012

Feri Lainšček: *Cicibanija*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Feri Lainšček: *Cicibanija*, Mladinska knjiga

2013

Patricija Peršolja: *Moj nono*, Založba Pivec
 Patricija Peršolja: *Moj nono* (My Granddad), Pivec
 Patricija Peršolja: *Najina poroka*, Založba Pivec
 Patricija Peršolja: *Najina poroka* (My Granddad), Pivec

2014

Patricija Peršolja: *Hiša iz besed*, Založba Pivec
 Patricija Peršolja: *Hiša iz besed* (House of Words), Pivec
 Patricija Peršolja: *Tata zmaj*, Založba Pivec
 Patricija Peršolja: *Tata zmaj* (Daddy Dragon), Pivec

2017

Meta Brulec: *Kroki praznuje*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki praznuje* (Crocky Celebrates), Mladinska knjiga

2018

Meta Brulec: *Kroki in prijatelji*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki in prijatelji* (Crocky and Friends), Mladinska knjiga

2019

Gregor Strniša: *Vesolje*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Gregor Strniša: *Vesolje* (Universe), Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki spoznava barve*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki spoznava barve* (Crocky Learns Colours), Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki spoznava števila*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki spoznava števila* (Crocky Learns Numbers), Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki spoznava nasprotja*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki spoznava nasprotja* (Crocky Learns About Contradictions), Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki spoznava domače živali*, Založba Mladinska knjiga
 Meta Brulec: *Kroki spoznava domače živali* (Crocky Learns about Domestic Animals), Mladinska knjiga

1983

Jan Čapek: *Kako sta se kužek in muca igrala gledališče*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Jan Čapek: *Kako sta se kužek in muca igrala gledališče* (How the Puppy and the Kitten Played Theatre), Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana

1992

Jan Zakonjšek / ljudska: *Hudič in pastir*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Jan Zakonjšek / folktales: *Hudič in pastir* (The Devil and the Shepherd), Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana

1993

Meta Brulec: *Kroki, veliki krokodil*, Gledališče Jaz in ti, Ljubljana

Meta Brulec: *Kroki, veliki krokodil* (Crocky, the Big Crocodile), Jaz in ti Theatre, Ljubljana

Edmond Duranty: *Napravite mi zanj krsto*, Gledališče Konj, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

Edmond Duranty: *Napravite mi zanj krsto* (Make Me a Coffin for Him), Konj Theatre, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

1994

J. R. R. Tolkien: *Hobit*, Gledališče Minor, Praga, Češka Republika

J. R. R. Tolkien: *Hobit* (The Hobbit), Theatre Minor, Prague

William Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, Gledališče Konj, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, Ljubljana

William Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, Konj Theatre, Association of Puppet Artists, Ljubljana

1995

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart & Lorenzo da Ponte: *Don Juan*, Gledališče Konj, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart & Lorenzo da Ponte: *Don Juan*, Konj Theatre, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

1996

Jiří Menzel – Věra Eliášková: *Miša Kulička*, Gledališče Minor, Praga, Češka Republika

Jiří Menzel / Věra Eliášková: *Miša Kulička* (Bruin Furryball), Theatre Minor, Prague

1997

Feliks Dev (Janez Damaščan): *Belin*, Prešernovo gledališče Kranj, Kranj

Feliks Dev (Janez Damaščan): *Belin*, Prešeren Theatre, Kranj

1998

Alfred Jarry: *Kralj Ubu*, Gledališče Konj, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

Alfred Jarry: *Kralj Ubu* (King Ubu), Konj Theatre, Association of Puppet Artists, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

2000

Federico García Lorca: *Oltarček dona Christobala*, Gledališče Konj, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

Federico García Lorca: *Oltarček dona Cristobala* (The Little Altar of Don Cristobal), Konj Theatre, Association of Puppet Artists, KUD France Prešeren, Ljubljana

2001

Georg Büchner – Jan Zakonjšek: *Woyzeck*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Georg Büchner / Jan Zakonjšek: *Woyzeck*, Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana

2003

Alfred Jarry: *Kralj Ubu*, Zetski dom, Cetinje, Črna gora

Alfred Jarry: *Kralj Ubu* (King Ubu), Zetski dom, Cetinje, Montenegro

2004

Věra Eliášková: *Večni hodec*, Štok teatr, Šmihel, Avstrija

Věra Eliášková: *Večni hodec* (The Eternal Wanderer), Štok Theatre, Šmihel/St. Michael, Austria

2014

Otfried Preussler: *Krabat*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Otfried Preussler: *Krabat*, Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana

2019

Edmond Duranty: *Napravite mi zanj krsto*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Edmond Duranty: *Napravite mi zanj krsto* (Make Me a Coffin for Him), Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana



REŽIJE IN LIKOVNE ZASNOVE LUTKOVNIH PREDSTAV / PUPPET SHOWS: ART DESIGN

2000

J. & W. Grimm / Silvan Omerzu: *Rdeča kapica*, Gledališče Glej, Ljubljana

J. and W. Grimm / Silvan Omerzu: *Rdeča kapica* (Little Red Riding Hood), Glej Theatre, Ljubljana

2001

Michel de Ghelderode (priredba Silvan Omerzu): *Zbogom, princ*, Gledališče Konj, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev in Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

Michel de Ghelderode (adapted by Silvan Omerzu): *Zbogom, princ* (Farewell, Prince), Konj Theatre, Association of Puppet Artists and Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

J. & W. Grimm – Silvan Omerzu: *Janko in Metka*, Gledališče Glej, Ljubljana

J. and W. Grimm / Silvan Omerzu: *Janko in Metka* (Hansel and Gretel), Glej Theatre, Ljubljana

2002

Silvan Omerzu / po motivih Punch and Judy: *Kdo bo Jodlu nataknil zanko*, Gledališče Konj, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev in Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

Silvan Omerzu / from Punch and Judy motifs: *Kdo bo Jodlu nataknil zanko* (Who'll Catch Jodl?), Konj Theatre, Association of Puppet Artists and Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

E. T. A. Hoffmann / Silvan Omerzu, Sonja Miklaužič: *Peskar*, Gledališče Konj, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev in Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

E. T. A. Hoffmann / Silvan Omerzu, Sonja Miklaužič: *Peskar* (The Sandman), Konj Theatre,

Association of Puppet Artists and Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

Silvan Omerzu / po pravljici iz Tisoč in ene noči: *Ali Baba in štirideset razbojnikov*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Silvan Omerzu (from 1001 Nights): *Ali Baba in štirideset razbojnikov* (Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves); Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana

2003

Silvan Omerzu – po pravljici iz Tisoč in ene noči: *Ali Baba in štirideset razbojnikov*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Silvan Omerzu / from 1001 Nights: *Ali Baba in štirideset razbojnikov* (Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves); Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana

E. T. A. Hoffmann / Silvan Omerzu: *Svetnik Krespel*, Gledališče Konj, Društvo lutkovnih ustvarjalcev in Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

E. T. A. Hoffmann / Silvan Omerzu: *Svetnik Krespel* (Councillor Krespel), Konj Theatre, Association of Puppet Artists and Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

2004

Silvan Omerzu: *Ivana*, Društvo slovenskih skladateljev, Ljubljana

Silvan Omerzu: *Ivana*, Slovene Composers' Association, Ljubljana

2005

J. in W. Grimm / Silvan Omerzu: *Sneguljčica*, Gledališče Glej, Ljubljana

J. and W. Grimm / Silvan Omerzu:

Sneguljčica (Snow White), Glej Theatre, Ljubljana

Frank Lyman Baum / Andrej Jaklič: *Čarovnik iz Oza*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Frank Lyman Baum / Andrej Jaklič: *Čarovnik iz Oza* (The Wizard of Oz), Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana

2006

Meta Brulec / S. Omerzu: *Kroki in prijatelji*, Gledališče Konj, Ljubljana

Meta Brulec / Silvan Omerzu: *Kroki in prijatelji* (Crocky and Friends), Konj Theatre

Vinko Globokar: *Emigranti*, Festival Ljubljana

Vinko Globokar: *Emigranti* (Emigrants), Festival Ljubljana

Silvan Omerzu, *Po korespondenci H. von Kleista*, Slovensko mladinsko gledališče, Ljubljana

Silvan Omerzu (from the letters of H. von Kleist), *Kleist*, Mladinsko Theatre, Ljubljana

2007

Meta Brulec / Silvan Omerzu: *Kroki praznuje*, Gledališče Konj, Ljubljana

Meta Brulec / Silvan Omerzu: *Kroki praznuje* (Crocky Celebrates), Konj Theatre, Ljubljana

2008

Ivan Cankar / Silvan Omerzu: *Hiša Marije Pomočnice*, Slovensko mladinsko gledališče, Gledališče Konj, Ljubljana

Ivan Cankar / Silvan Omerzu: *Hiša Marije Pomočnice* (The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy), Mladinsko Theatre, Konj Theatre, Ljubljana

2014

Nebojša Pop-Tasić: *Zlata ptica*, Lutkovno gledališče Maribor

Nebojša Pop-Tasić: *Zlata ptica* (The Golden Bird), Maribor Puppet Theatre, Maribor

2015

Carlo Collodi – Silvan Omerzu: *Ostržek*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Carlo Collodi / Silvan Omerzu: *Ostržek* (Pinocchio), Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana

2016

Rotraut Susanne Berner – priredba Saša Eržen: *Karelčkove zgodbe*, Lutkovno gledališče Ljubljana

Rotraut Susanne Berner / adaptation Saša Eržen: *Karelčkove zgodbe* (Karlchen Stories), Ljubljana Puppet Theatre, Ljubljana

Charles Dickens – Silvan Omerzu: *Sanje o zvezdi*, Lutkovno gledališče Maribor

Charles Dickens / Silvan Omerzu: *Sanje o zvezdi* (A Child's Dreams of a Star), Maribor Puppet Theatre, Maribor

Meta Brulec: *Kroki*, Pozorište za decu, Kragujevac, Srbija

Meta Brulec: *Kroki* (Crocky), Children's Theatre, Kragujevac, Serbia

2017

Berta Bojetu Boeta: *Besede iz hiše Karlstein*, Lutkovno gledališče

Maribor, Gledališče Konj

Berta Bojetu Boeta: *Besede iz hiše Karlstein* (Words from the House Karlstein), Maribor Puppet Theatre, Konj Theatre

Meta Brulec: *Kroki in prijatelji*, Hiša otrok in umetnosti, Gledališče Konj, Ljubljana

Meta Brulec: *Kroki in prijatelji* (Crocky and Friends), House of Children and Art, Konj Theatre, Ljubljana

Ljudska: *Zlatolaska in trije medvedi*, Gledališče Konj, Lutkovno gledališče Maribor

Folktale: *Zlatolaska in trije medvedi* (Goldilock and the Three Bears), Konj Theatre, Maribor

Puppet Theatre, Maribor

NAGRADE / AWARDS

1993

mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, nagrada za predstavo *Hudič in pastir* (skupinska), Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, award for the theatre performance *Hudič in pastir* (The Devil and the Shepard), Zagreb, Croatia
mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, nagrada za predstavo *Napravite mi zanj krsto* (skupinska), Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, award for the theatre performance *Napravite mi zanj krsto* (Make Me a Coffin for Him), Zagreb, Croatia

1997

festival Klemenčičevi dnevi, nagrada za predstavo *Belin* (skupinska), Novo mesto
Klemenčič Days Festival, award for the theatre performance *Belin*, Novo mesto
mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, Grand Prix Milan Čečuk za najboljšo predstavo, za predstavo *Don Juan*, Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, Milan Čečuk Grand Prize for Overall Best Production, for the theatre performance *Don Juan*, Zagreb, Croatia
mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, nagrada za oblikovanje lutk za predstavo *Don Juan*, Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, Award for Puppet Design, for the theatre performance *Don Juan*, Zagreb, Croatia

1999

Nagrada na 4. slovenskem bienalu ilustracije, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
Award, 4th Slovenian Biennial of Illustration, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
2000
mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, Grand Prix za najboljšo predstavo, za predstavo *Kralj Ubu*, Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, Grand Prize for Overall Best Production, for the theatre performance *Kralj Ubu* (King Ubu), Zagreb, Croatia

2001

mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, nagrada za režijo za predstavo *Zbogom, princ*, Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, Award for Best Director, for the theatre performance *Zbogom, princ* (Farewell, Prince), Zagreb, Croatia
mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, nagrada za oblikovanje lutk za predstavo *Zbogom, princ*, Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, Award for Puppet Design, for the theatre performance *Zbogom, princ* (Farewell, Prince), Zagreb, Croatia
mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, nagrada za scenografijo za predstavo *Zbogom, princ*, Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, Award for Set Design, for the theatre performance *Zbogom, princ* (Farewell, Prince), Zagreb, Croatia

Lutkovni pristan, nagrada za likovno podobo za predstavo *Rdeča kapica*, Maribor
Lutkovni pristan, Award for Artistic Appearance, for the theatre performance *Rdeča kapica* (Little Red Riding Hood), Maribor
1. bienale lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, Grand Prix za najboljšo predstavo, za predstavo *Zbogom, princ*, Maribor
1st Biennial of the Institute of Puppet Artists, Grand Prize for Overall Best Production, for the theatre performance *Zbogom, princ* (Farewell, Prince), Maribor

2003

2. bienale lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, nagrada za dramatisacijo in režijo za predstavo *Peskar*, Maribor
2nd Biennial of the Institute of Puppet Artists, Award for Dramatisation and Best Director, for the theatre performance *Peskar* (Sandman), Maribor

2004

mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, nagrada za scenografijo za predstavo *Svetnik Krespel*, Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, Award for Set Design, for the theatre performance *Svetnik Krespel* (Councillor Krespel), Zagreb, Croatia

2005

3. bienale lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, nagrada za likovno podobo za predstavo *Svetnik Krespel*, Koper
3rd Biennial of the Institute of

Puppet Artists, Award for Artistic Appearance, for the theatre performance *Svetnik Krespel* (Councillor Krespel), Koper

2006

nagrada Prešernovega sklada za trilogijo *Misterij življenja in smrti* Prešeren Fund Award, for the trilogy *Misterij življenja in smrti* (Mystery of Life and Death), Ljubljana

2008

mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, nagrada za scenografijo za predstavo *Hiša Marije Pomočnice*, Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, Award for Set Design, for the theatre performance *Hiša Marije Pomočnice* (The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy), Zagreb, Croatia
mednarodni festival Lutke 2008, nagrada mali princ za najboljšo predstavo, za predstavo *Hiša Marije Pomočnice*, Ljubljana
Lutke 2008 – International Puppet Festival, The Little Prince Award for Overall Best Production, for the theatre performance *Hiša Marije Pomočnice* (The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy), Ljubljana

2009

5. bienale lutkovnih ustvarjalcev Slovenije, nagrada za izvirno prostorsko postavitev *Solze*, Šmihel
5th Biennial of the Institute of Puppet Artists, Award for Original

Spatial Installation, for the exhibition *Solze* (Tears), Šmihel/St. Michael, Austria
VI International Puppet Theatre Festival for Adults Pierrot 2009, nagrada za izvirnost in nove forme za predstavo *Prepovedane Ljubezni*, Stara Zagora, Bolgarija
6th International Puppet Theatre Festival for Adults – Pierrot 2009, Award for Originality and New Forms, Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

2010

nagrada za najboljšo likovno podobo za predstavo *Prepovedane Ljubezni*, Pécs, Madžarska
Award for the best visual design of the theatre performance *Prepovedane Ljubezni* (Forbidden Loves), Pécs, Hungary
Mednarodni lutkovni festival PIF, nagrada za likovno podobo in tehnologijo za predstavo *Prepovedane Ljubezni*, Zagreb, Hrvaška
PIF – International Puppet Festival, Award for Visual Design and Technology, for the theatre performance *Prepovedane Ljubezni* (Forbidden Loves), Zagreb, Croatia

2011

6. bienale lutkovnih ustvarjalcev Slovenije, nagrada za likovno podobo v predstavi *Prepovedane Ljubezni*, Maribor
6th Biennial of the Institute of Puppet Artists, Award for Visual Design of the theatre performance *Prepovedane Ljubezni* (Forbidden Loves), Maribor

2013

7. bienale Ustanove lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, nagrada za režijo v predstavi *Salto mortale*, Maribor
7th Biennial of the Institute of Puppet Artists, Award for Best Director, for the theatre performance *Salto mortale*, Maribor
7. bienale lutkovnih ustvarjalcev, nagrada za režijo v predstavi *Ti loviš*, Maribor
7th Biennial of the Institute of Puppet Artists, Award for Best Director, for the theatre performance *Ti loviš* (Chasing You), Maribor

2017

Festival Zlata iskra, nagrada za režijo v predstavi *Ti loviš*, Kragujevac, Srbija
Festival Golden Spark, Award for Best Direction, for the theatre performance *Ti loviš* (Chasing You), Kragujevac, Serbia

2019

10. bienale lutkovnih ustvarjalcev Slovenije, nagrada za dosežke na področju prostorske umestitve in celostne vizualne podobe za uprizoritev *Besede iz hiše Karlstein*, Maribor
10th Biennial of the Institute of Puppet Artists, Award for Original Spatial Installation and Overall Visual Design, for the theatre performance *Besede iz hiše Karlstein* (Words from the House Karlstein), Maribor



SILVAN OMERZU

Pregledna razstava / A Retrospective

Izdali in založili /

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