

# ← KULTIVACIJA → NADZOR RAZVOJ

Delovanje Sorosovega centra za sodobne umetnosti – Ljubljana (1993–1999)

16. 5.–6. 6. 2019  
Galerija Škuc

Michael Brodsky  
Cirkulacija 2  
Vuk Ćosić  
IRWIN  
Marko Peljhan  
Nataša Prosenc Stearns

# ← CULTIVATE → CONTROL EVOLVE

Soros Center for Contemporary Arts – Ljubljana (1993–1999). Its Organisation and Impact

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**Svet umetnosti, šola za kuratorske prakse in kritičsko pisanje**, z razstavo **nadzor < kultura > razvoj** raziskuje Sorosov center za sodobne umetnosti – Ljubljana\*, ki je deloval med letoma 1993 in 1999 kot eden od programov Zavoda za odprto družbo.

Razstava se osredotoča na več segmentov delovanja Sorosovega centra, njegove mehanizme financiranja, razstavno dejavnost, usmerjanje umetnosti in sooblikovanje lokalne umetniške scene. Postavlja (si) vprašanja, ali je kultura novih okolij – tako z razdeljevanjem finančnih sredstev, ki spremenijo pogoje dela, kakor tudi s spodbujanjem razvoja specifičnih področij – lahko osvobodena ideološke indoktrinacije in ali zaradi partikularnih interesov vlagateljev že vsebuje elemente nadzora.

Razstavljena umetniška dela so bila v devetdesetih letih del programa t. i. letnih razstav Sorosovega centra, ali pa so nastala z dotacijami in potovalnimi štipendijami. Zarišejo referenčni okvir, ki nakazuje različne vidike delovanja centra, hkrati pa naslavljajo kultivacijo, ki so vsebna tako nadzor kakor razvoj. Delo *Uršula Noordung* kolektiva IRWIN s prisvajanjem marketinških strategij posnema lansiranje novega izdelka na trg. Interaktivna

video instalacija *Soba velikega brata* Nataše Prosenc Stearns tematizira nadziranje množic kakor tudi odločitev posameznika, da v procesu nadziranja sodeluje. Umetniki in umetnice so se v devetdesetih letih teme nadzora lotevali drugače kot danes, ko je nadzor subtilno vtkan v samo tkivo družbe in tehnologije nadzora. Deli *Prenos prekinjen* Michaela Brodskega in video *Park kulture* Marka Peljhan sta tako zgodnji premislek prav o nadzoru na spletu in v medijih. Na drugi strani Vuk Ćosić z delom *Dan v življenju omrežnega umetnika* razmišlja o delovanju zunaj ustaljenih mehanizmov financiranja in umetnostnega sistema. Izbor del zaokrožuje interaktivno zvočno delo *Spati – morda sanjati ...* kolektiva Cirkulacija 2, narejeno posebej za razstavo.

Umetniška dela so sopostavljena z arhivskim gradivom, analizo usmerjanja umetnosti in video intervjuji. Arhiv odstira pogled na delovanje ljubljanskega centra, ki je bil del mreže dvajsetih Sorosovih centrov (SCCA Network), ustanovljenih v devetdesetih letih v nekdanjih socialističnih in komunističnih državah srednje in vzhodne Evrope ter Sovjetske zveze. Mreža SCCA si je prizadevala vzpostaviti narativ sodobne umetnosti na "Vzhodu", kar je poskušala

The exhibition **control < cultivate > evolve** by the **World of Art, School for Curatorial Practices and Critical Writing** looks into the work of the Soros Center for Contemporary Arts – Ljubljana\*, which operated between 1993 and 1999 as one of the programmes of the Open Society Institute – Slovenia.

The exhibition focuses on several work segments of the Soros Center, its financing mechanisms, exhibition activity, art directions and co-creation of the local art scene. It sets (itself) questions as to whether the cultivation of new environments – both through the distribution of financial means and the consequent creation of different working conditions as encouragement in the development of specific areas – can be freed of ideological indoctrination and whether it already contains elements of control given the particular interests of its investors.

The exhibited artworks were either part of the so-called annual exhibition of the Soros Center in the 1990s or were produced with grants and travel grants. They establish a frame of reference that indicates the various aspects of the Center's work, while at the same time addressing

the cultivation that implicates both control and development. The work *Uršula Noordung* by the IRWIN collective refers to the launch of a new product with the appropriation of marketing strategies. The interactive video installation *Big Brother's Room* by Nataša Prosenc Stearns points to crowd control as well as the individual's decision to participate in the control process. In the 1990s, artists dealt with the issue of control differently than they do today when it is subtly ingrained in the very fabric of society and the technology of control. The two works, *Transmission Interrupted* by Michael Brodsky, and the video, *The Park of Culture* by Marko Peljhan, are therefore an early reflection precisely on the control over the world wide web and the media. Vuk Ćosić, on the other hand, considers working outside the established mechanisms of financing and the art system in his piece *A day in the life of a net.artist*. The selection of works is rounded off with the interactive sound piece *To sleep – perchance to dream* by the Circulation 2 collective, produced especially for the exhibition.

Artworks are juxtaposed with archival material, the analysis of directing art and video interviews. The archive provides an insight into the work

doseči z regionalnim povezovanjem, zgodovinenjem umetniških tendenc, zbiranjem dokumentacije o umetnikih in umetnosti, razstavami in projekti, lastno revijo za sodobno umetnost in financiranjem kulturne dejavnosti. Mreža je imela aktivno vlogo pri usmerjanju umetnosti, vzpostavila je vzporedne komunikacijske kanale ter spodbujala rabo novih medijev in tehnologij.

Mrežo SCCA lahko, kakor v besedilu *The Managed Avant-Garde* zapiše Octavian Eşanu, razumemo kot institucionalni mehanizem postsocialistične tranzicije, katerega primarna vloga je bila modernizacija umetniškega diskurza nekdanjih socialističnih držav in sodelovanje v procesu "normalizacije" – procesu, ki se v družbi, kjer se nadzor udejanja preko razpršene mreže moči in vednosti, utemeljuje predvsem na normah ekonomskega in družbenega napredka. Učinki težnje po pozahodnjem so bili v nekaterih okoljih bolj vidni kakor v drugih. Delovanje SCCA-Ljubljana pa je treba – zaradi specifičnosti lokalnega okolja z že obstoječo umetnostno infrastrukturo, kulturno in družbeno paradigmo – razumeti kot del širšega poskusa vzpostavljanja hegemonije v sodobni umetnosti.

\* Sorosov center za sodobne umetnosti – Ljubljana je bil leta 1993 ustanovljen kot eden od programov Zavoda za odprto družbo – Slovenija (OSI), ki je podpiral številne posameznike in posameznice ter nevladne organizacije (Ljudmila, Mirovni inštitut, idr.), v skladu s svojim poslanstvom promoviranja vrednot odprte družbe in zahodnih demokracij. Dejavni je bil na različnih področjih – od izobraževanja, medijev, kulture in umetnosti, civilne družbe, do zdravstva in humanitarnih dejavnosti. V državah, ki so šle v devetdesetih letih skozi politično in ekonomsko transformacijo, je poskušal vpeljati zahodni kulturni model, pri tem pa je kot eno od orodij uporabljal tudi sodobno umetnost. Vsi novo ustanovljeni centri so bili preslikava dokumentacijskega centra SCCA-Budimpešta, ustanovljenega leta 1984. Vsak center je ob ustanovitvi dobil priročnik s priporočili glede strukture in vsebin, ki so jih posamezni centri bolj ali manj dosledno prilagodili potrebam lokalnega okolja. Delovanje SCCA-Ljubljana je segalo na področja razstavne dejavnosti (letne razstave in projekti), raziskovanja, arhiviranja (dokumentiranje zgodovine videa), izobraževanja (Svet umetnosti), ključno pa je bilo podeljevanje podpor oz. dotacij likovnim projektom, dotacij za kuratorsko razstavo in dotacij za neprogramske stroške. Zaradi preoblikovanja Sorosovih fundacij so se leta 2000 SCCA-ji osamosvojili in začeli delovati kot nevladne organizacije, se pripojili večjim institucijam ali pa prenehali delovati. SCCA-Ljubljana se je preoblikoval v Zavod za sodobno umetnost SCCA – Ljubljana.

of the Ljubljana Center, which was part of the network of twenty Soros Centers (SCCA Network), established in the 1990s in the former socialist and communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The SCCA network had a tendency to establish a narrative of contemporary art in the "East", which it sought to achieve through regional networking, articulating artistic tendencies within a historical context, collecting documentation on artists and art, exhibitions and projects, its own magazine on contemporary art and the financing of cultural activities. The network played an active role in directing art, establishing parallel communication channels and promoting the use of new media and technologies.

The SCCA network, as Octavian Eşanu writes in *The Managed Avant-Garde*, can be understood as the institutional mechanism of a post-socialist transition whose primary role was the modernisation of the art discourse of the former socialist countries and the participation in the process of "normalisation" – a process that is in a society, where control is enforced through a scattered network of power and knowledge, primarily based on the norms of economic and social progress. The effects of the westernising tendency were more visible in

some settings than in others. Because of the specifics of the local environment with its already established art infrastructure, cultural and social paradigm, the work of SCCA-Ljubljana should be seen as part of a wider attempt to establish hegemony within contemporary art.

\* The Soros Center for Contemporary Art – Ljubljana was established in 1993 as one of the programmes of the Open Society Institute – Slovenia (OSI), whose mission was to spread the values of open society and the Western democracies by providing support to numerous individuals and non-governmental organisations (Ljudmila, Peace Institute, etc.). It was active in various fields – from education, the media, culture and art, civil society, to health and humanitarian activities. It attempted to introduce a Western cultural model in the countries that had undergone political and economic transformation in the 1990s, by using contemporary art as one of its tools. All the newly established centres were offshoots of the SCCA-Budapest documentation centre, established in 1984. Upon foundation, each centre received a guide with recommendations on the structure and content, which the individual centres adapted more or less consistently to the needs of the local environment. The work of SCCA-Ljubljana extended to the fields of preparing exhibitions (annual exhibitions and projects), conducting research, archival work (documenting the history of video) and education (World of Art). The distribution of support in the form of grants for art projects and a curatorial exhibition as well as non-programme costs also played a pivotal role. Due to the reorganisation of the Soros Foundations, the SCCA centres became independent in 2000. They began to function as non-government organisations, merging with bigger institutions, or they ceased to function. SCCA-Ljubljana was reorganised into the SCCA Center for Contemporary Arts – Ljubljana.

## nadzor < kultivacija > razvoj

### Delovanje Sorosovega centra za sodobne umetnosti – Ljubljana (1993–1999)

16. 5.–6. 6. 2019

Galerija Škuc, Stari trg 21, Ljubljana

Umetniki in umetnica: **Michael Brodsky, Cirkulacija 2, Vuk Ćosić, IRWIN, Marko Peljhan, Nataša Prosenč Stearns**

Kuratorka in kurator: **Jasna Jernejšek, Miha Kelemina**

Pri pripravi in izvedbi razstave sodelujejo udeleženske 17. leta šole Svet umetnosti: **Tia Čiček, Kristina Ferk, Katja Filovski, Lara Mejač, Anja Seničar, Rea Vogrinčič**

Oblikovanje in vizualna podoba: Vesna Bukovec

Snemanje in montaža video intervjujev: Toni Poljanec

Sodelujoče in sodelujoča v video intervjuju: Barbara Borčič, Vuk Ćosić, Miran Mohar, Saša Nabergoj, Lilijana Stepančič, Beti Žerovc

Opis del na razstavi: Tia Čiček, Kristina Ferk, Lara Mejač, Anja Seničar

Spremno besedilo: Jasna Jernejšek, Miha Kelemina

Analiza podeljenih dotacij: Tia Čiček

Pomoč pri pripravi analize: Asta Vrečko

Arhivsko gradivo: Moderna galerija, Ljubljana, Dokumentacija-arhiv

Foto dokumentacija: Arhiv SCCA-Ljubljana, Arhiv OSI Slovenija, Miha Fras,

avtorji in avtorice projektov

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Koprodukcija: Galerija Škuc

Razstavo podpirata: Ministrstvo za kulturo RS, Mestna občina Ljubljana,

Oddelek za kulturo.

Zahvala: Tomaž Kučer, Teja Merhar, Jana Intihar Ferjan/MG+MSUM,

Jure Sajovic/Galerija Kapelica, Samanta Foxx, Barbara Borčič, Vuk Ćosić,

Miran Mohar, Saša Nabergoj, Lilijana Stepančič, Beti Žerovc

## control < cultivate > evolve

### Soros Center for Contemporary Arts – Ljubljana (1993–1999).

#### Its Organisation and Impact

16 May – 6 June 2019

Škuc Gallery, Stari trg 21, Ljubljana

Artists: **Michael Brodsky, Cirkulacija 2, Vuk Ćosić, IRWIN, Marko Peljhan, Nataša Prosenč Stearns**

Curators: **Jasna Jernejšek, Miha Kelemina**

The exhibition was prepared and realized with the help of the participants of the World of Art School, Year 17: **Tia Čiček, Kristina Ferk, Katja Filovski, Lara Mejač, Anja Seničar, Rea Vogrinčič**

Exhibition design: Vesna Bukovec

Video interviews: Toni Poljanec

Interviewees: Barbara Borčič, Vuk Ćosić, Miran Mohar, Saša Nabergoj,

Lilijana Stepančič, Beti Žerovc

Artwork description: Tia Čiček, Kristina Ferk, Lara Mejač, Anja Seničar

Accompanying text: Jasna Jernejšek, Miha Kelemina

Grants analysis: Tia Čiček, with help of Asta Vrečko

Archive material: Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana, The Archives

Photo documentation: SCCA-Ljubljana Archive, OSI Archive,

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Coproduction: Škuc Gallery

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SCCA - LJUBLJANA  
Zavod za sodobno umetnost

