

Zdenko Bužek

TITO-BUŽEK



TITO - BUŽEK

Tito died 1980, and Yugoslavia officially had split in several independent countries 1990. Number of inscriptions "TITO" still are remaining as silent witnesses to the past all around the region of ex Yugoslavia, particularly besides the roads in-between the smaller towns, installed in the hills as they could be seen from big distances.

The inscriptions were made in different ways. There are ones painted with white color directly on the rocks, made of piled stones, partially dig in the land, empowered and made even with concrete or constructed with aluminum. At the entrance of the mine in Labin in Croatia there is an inscription "TITO" made of iron. During the 80-ties in front of my building in Zagreb there were 88 roses seeded in a shape of a star and in the middle there was a sign similar to one "Don't pass over the grass" saying "88 roses for comrade Tito" (as Tito lived 88 years).

Those inscriptions were never made spontaneously, they were always made by direct order from "above".

Zdenko Bužek

TITO & BUŽEK, POSTMODERNISTS?

"The things should be differentiated. Modernism has also beautiful works, but an abstract painting may only be used as a decoration and such a painting can only ornament a room. An abstraction can be used on that purpose but cannot be a tendency in painting that could negate the realistic creation."

Josip Broz Tito, an extract from speech,
Tako je govorio Tito, "Knjizevne novine",
Beograd, 15 May, 1990

TITO was the leader of ex Yugoslavia, the President of the country, Commander in Chief and Marshal of the National Army and the General Secretary of the Union of Communists.

"TITO" was also the inscription that was usually commissioned by the local party governments in order to praise the name of the leader. The main purpose of these inscriptions, to save the memory of his name to the eternity, was emphasized by building them as big and lasting as possible, therefore usually made of concrete and dug in the hills.

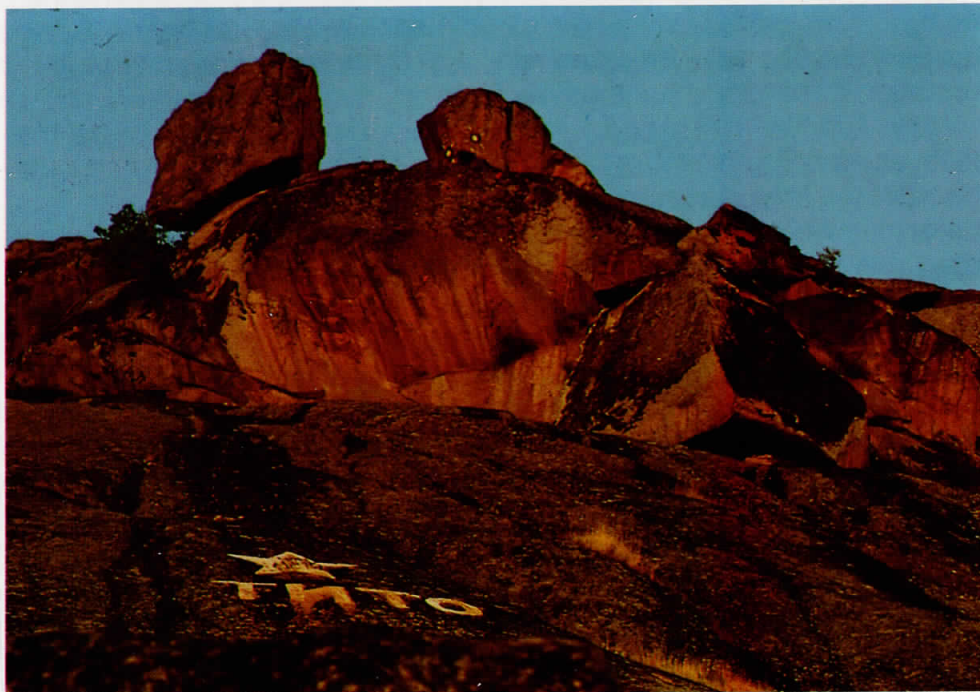
Those letters visible from far away were the main issues of the project "TITO-BUŽEK" by the artist Zdenko Bužek who questioned this phenomenon in a very authentic manner. Namely, the artist wrote/built his surname with similar letters made of the same material but in much smaller size in the backyard of a private house in Skopje thus avoiding the main effect and purpose of the original "TITO" inscriptions - the monumentality. The original environment and size was simulated only by the photographs taken at the site.

Besides the irony towards the megalomania of building monuments-names aimed for eternity the artist also makes a remark to the usual practice of land art projects that is also monumental in itself. Therefore, instead of linking his concept to the environment and its structural elements, he uses the turning points in the society, the process of transition as a starting point for stressing the paradoxical nature of the transformation from one to another ideology.

While Tito was claiming for art that deals with reality contrary to the abstract art concepts implying Marxist aesthetics applied in the critical theory of the Frankfurt school, the theory of postmodernism approaches the art similarly but in a new context. The criticism of the ideals and absolutes that were hidden within the abstraction and the modernistic minimalists desire for eternity as well as the parodying of the overestimated meaning of the signature of an artist by preserving it in a "monumental" form were the main targets and statements of this project. Equalizing the signature with the art work itself Bužek avoids the myth of inspired creation and need for the endeavor of the artist genius.

Suzana Milevska

photo: Robert Jankuloski



"TITO", colored stone, Mečkin grb, Prilep, Macedonia

photo: Robert Jankuloski



“BUŽEK“, concreted stone, 1997, 80x300 cm, backyard of the artist's studio, Vodno, Skopje, Macedonia

Biography

Zdenko Bužek, born on 07.03.1957 in Helsinki. In 1980/81 he entered the Faculty of Fine Arts in Skopje where he studied graphic art in the class of the Prof. Dragutin Avramovski-Gute. He graduated in 1984 from the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in the class of Prof. Ante Kuduz. Together with Nina Geštakovska Cvetkovska, Zoran Karagonov and Dijana Tomić Radevska, in 1985 forms the group "Circle" with which he exhibits continuously. As a member of the multimedia group "Udarna grupa Poskok", together with Nikola Iskra, Nebojša Stijačić and Petar Miučin he participated in happenings, performancea and video projections, on architecture exhibitions, mail-art and applied art in Zagreb, Belgrade, Crikvenica and Slavonski Brod.

He is an independent artist since 1985. He published two books of prose.

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Selected individual Exhibitions

- 1985 - Zagreb, Gallery "Vladimir Nazor"
 - Ohrid, The Cultural Center *
- 1988 - Zagreb, The Studio in the Gallery "Karas"
- 1992 - Zagreb, The Salon of the Gallery "Karas"
- 1993 - Zagreb, Gallery "Cekao"
- 1994 - Zagreb, His Atelier
- 1995 - Zagreb, Gallery "Miroslav Kraljevic"
 - Skopje, Gallery "Stobi" *
 - Skopje, The Cultural Information Center
- 1996 - Bitola, Art Salon of DLUB
 - Skopje, The Museum of the City of Skopje * (prize "Ljubomir Belogaski")
- 1997 - Skopje, project "Tito - Bužek" in the backyard of the artist's studio

- Maastricht *
- Zagreb, Galery "Matice hrvatske"

* with the group "CIRCLE "

Selected group Exhibitions

- 1986 - Zagreb: XVII Youth Salon;
 - Zagreb, XIV Show of recent Works of the members of SHDL
(Association of Fine Artists of Croatia)
- 1987 - Zagreb, XVIII Youth Salon
 - Rijeka: XIV Youth Biennial
- 1988 - Zagreb, XX Youth Salon
- 1989 - Zagreb, XXI Youth Salon
 - Bologna, Ljubljana: "Who are you Mr. Umpah Pah ?"
- 1990 - Zagreb, XV Zagreb Salon
- 1991 - Rijeka, XVI Youth Biennial
- 1993 - Berlin, Bonn, Brtonigla, Groznjan: "Kunstband durch Europa"
- 1995 - Skopje: "MAK GRAPH"
- 1997 - Skopje, "Cifte Amam 3"
 - Bitola, International Grafic Triennial
 - Labin, Galery "Lamparna": "Neighbours"

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Zdenko Bužek

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