

THE DREAM OF MY LIFE

Women-artists from the Balkans

Ana Stojkovic
Aurora Dediu
Elena Panayotova
Jelica Radovanovic
Marija Vauda
Mirela Dauceanu
Monika Moteska
Monika Romenska

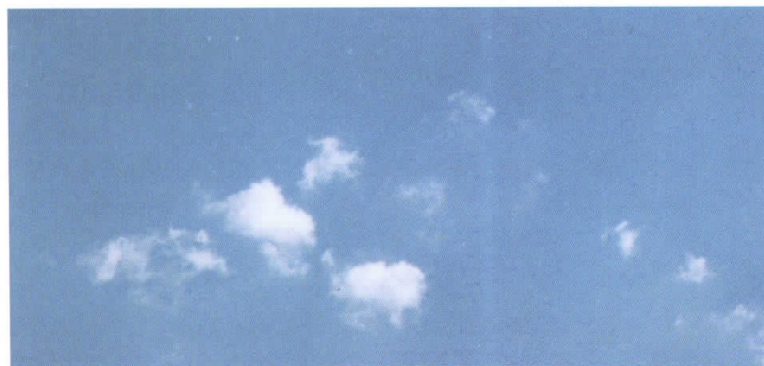


National Art Gallery
Sofia



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March – April 2001
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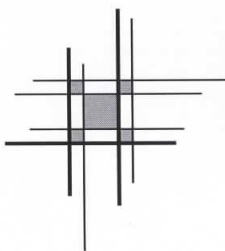
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- © Texts: Iskra Trayanova, Jasmina Cubrilo, Maja Canculovska
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- © Design: Jeana Kosturkova, Elena Panayotova
Editor: Iskra Trajanova
- © Translation: Nedyalka G. Chakalova, Mirjana Munisic,
Srdjan Simonovic, Vanda Perovic
- © English text editor: Nedyalka G. Chakalova
Prepress and layout: Stefan Stefanov

Biennial of Contemporary Visual Women's Art from the Balkans

Iskra Trayanova

Curator of the Exhibition

The creating of the Biennial of Contemporary Visual Women's Art from the Balkans is a long-term initiative whose geographic and temporal space is determined by the wish and active participation of international partners and of the zealous supporters of this idea.

The Biennial reveals the ambitions of the curatorial team to create a lasting and prestigious organisation which provides encouragement and an appropriate working environment for equal creative participation of women artists from the Balkan region, who are experimenting with innovative approaches in contemporary art. The need of the implementation of such a project is prompted by the wish to set up an informal network for new partnerships, contacts and professional exchange, based on the principle of

loyalty to every difference: national, social, cultural, religious and ethnic.

The first edition of the Biennial was opened at the National Art Gallery with the exhibition *The Dream of My Life*. The Project involves the participation of two artists from each of the following countries: Bulgaria (Elena Panayotova and Monika Romenska), Macedonia (Anna Stojkovic and Monika Moteska), Romania (Aurora Dediu and Mirela Duceanu) and Yugoslavia (Jelica Radovanovic and Marija Vauda). They were challenged to experiment in five pre-set themes and in specific media or objects, video art and installations. *Have Fun, The Noises of the House, The Kitchen – a Family Archive of Dreams, Good Girls/Bad Girls and Dances of the Archangels/A Garden of Flowers* refer to the interpretation of the general thematic framework of the "dream" in its various aspects: personal, intuitive, emotional, provocative and social. The first four Balkan countries to participate were not chosen randomly. They were selected because they share, to some extent, common trends in their socio-political, economic, social and cultural-psychological development. Although our cultures have had a different evolution in time,

we are still very close in our mentality, vitality and perceptions, which is also prompted by certain parallel similar processes in the contemporary art of each of our countries.

The exhibition has been conceived as a collection of personal stories about experiences in the "land" of dreams. Dreams are that reality which is created by desires. However, the artists do not propose irrational impulses for defending certain rights against pseudo-discrimination, or some violent emotional gestures for power. Instead, they present synthesised interpretative concepts of our notion about the "home" as a sacred space, as a hyper-sacral place of the symbolic investment for the realisation of those aspirations which determine our lives. The individual territory of the home is that imaginary, magic mirror, which can help us see ourselves just as we are, to see the other side as well, to make the alien and the strange appear close or at least comprehensible, to familiarise it through the readiness to share and experience it together.

There is a definite metaphor in this whole endeavour in which we are involved. It concerns directly or indirectly the issue of our being-in-the-



world. The great value of the dream is the possibility to imagine the present and/or the future in a different way. The dream marks the promise of the future, but it is also predetermined by the present. The dream is the prerequisite for hope, for expectations, for realisation. In the context of the challenges of today, the introduction of the vision of the Balkans as a shared future home could assist to the highest extent the reintegration of the contemporary Balkan cultures by preserving the rich diversity of our own achievements, while at the same time releasing ourselves from the excessive burden of their rather speculative and politicised nature. What can make our forward movement towards each other possible benefits from juxtaposition, not from opposition. Such an overall openness towards each other does not mean necessarily agreement, rather it requires testing and risking our own convictions, illusions and prejudices. The intention is to reveal not only the general "challenging" theme of this dialogue – the shared assumptions, commitments and intuitions – but also to manifest the different individual voices and their accents.

An exhibition of this type is only possible as a result of choice, and every choice is in itself partial and subjective. The aim of the project is actually set by the effort to visualise the image of the dream as a cultural phenomenon, with its intrinsic forms of pathos, passions and themes monumentalised and emanated in a very

the highest extent the candidly shared multiplicity of personal bias, the arbitrariness and the selectivity of the viewpoints of the artists themselves. Where are we? What are we striving at? What are we expecting? What is happening to us? Why is it happening in this way? These are essentially attempts at articulating the same type

certain sense, paradoxically and symbolically mystified and very superficial. Precisely around the happening and the experiencing of the value-based reading of the exhibition theme, a specific zone of discourse took shape, and it became the meeting place for different truths: about the traditional notions and the nostalgic-mythological



peculiar way by the cultures of the Balkans. Naturally, I am far from the thought that such an exhibition can reproduce the entire context of the problems. The only thing that it can achieve is to present a part of the contemporary verbalisation of the image of the dream by permitting to

of identification of what we are and what we are not, which – unfortunately – we have not yet succeeded in substantiating rationally and in raising it to the level of a critically involved dialogue. This is why, the idea about what we assume to know and/or not to know about each other is also, in a

mindsets, as well as about the really surmountable boundaries between us. This specific artistic action generated an exceptionally communicative reflexion. The interpretative impulse overcame the pure curiosity towards the information. The wish of the artists not only to find themselves in

that real form of togetherness through their professional, social and intellectual identification, but also to be accepted just as they are, became prominent. It would be natural to ask ourselves what exactly is being endorsed, and also how, where and why in this exhibition? What is that cherished place/state where it is nec-

Balkan woman. And precisely the contemporary conscience, which discerns that in this case this is a utopia, rationalises in advance the attitude to the home, transforming it not into the place of one's dreams, but into a concrete environment, into an everyday procedure, into a process, into living. The reality we find and the way in

The built space of autonomous meanings, the specific analogies and the intellectual constructs in the actual works literally touch the staged space of a familiar everyday reality, which gave the chance to the works of the artists to be transformed into a "context" of their own. Things become ostensibly "confused", intertwined and



essary to seek the key to the dream? In fact, we find ourselves entrained into the prolific energy field of the metaphor of home – that classical space/territory/place, which the history of our lands has created and predetermined as the only ever possible arena for the manifestation of the

which it creates the ostensibly trivial articulation of meanings, constitute the real and not the imaginary contemporaneity. In fact, it proves to be the real space – a place of the shared experience of the dream coming true. The challenge in this case is that the dreams occur here collectively.

complicated, remaining open to interpretation, being transformed into a game or into an autobiography. The exhibition that presupposed the cultivation of a dialogue situation relies entirely on a compelling interpretation. The artists are moving freely among a whole spectrum of different

argumentations and alternative strategies, whereby each of them develops moreover her own standards. The obvious fluidity and openness of the mindsets have also left their imprint on the specific approaches to the specific problems. They are sometimes nostalgic-romantic, although those that register a high degree of pragma-

self. This project appears to be radically individualistic. Its solipsistic language is disturbing and forces us to question our most customary and convenient convictions. The experiment of the "expressive liberation" proved to be a strategy of breaking with the falsely projected "we", with the ways in which we marginalise and suppress

never be able to eliminate violence entirely from the language, institutions and practices imposed by a "totalitarian" instrumental rationality does not exempt us from the commitment to responsibility, decision and choice. In other words, Vauda is not indifferent to the dream of creating norms of sharing and respect for the



tism and critical approach proved predominant.

For Marija Vauda the dream is an experiment of thought. It seems to be more of an attitude, a way to treat the present. The dream here is a shared value system that allows the artist to discover and/or to create her-

the differentiation of the "other one" who refuses to be guided, controlled and domesticated.

"Incommensurateness", "singularity" and "multiplicity" are the signs of a declared attitude of resistance to all forms of abstract totality and universalism. The conviction that we would

radical multiplicity, difference and uniqueness as fundamental characteristics of the human situation.

The works of Monika Moteska, Jelica Radovanovic and Anna Stojkovic also comprise of a similar type of ethical commentary, in the part where they narrate about the ways in which

people treat each other and themselves. The artists demonstrate sensitivity to the ambiguity and arbitrariness in our everyday commitments, and more specifically, in our everyday involvement in the otherness of other human beings. Their messages are intended to carry us beyond the logic

are not susceptible to reducing the "other" to "same". The dream of the liberation from the dark side of the social stereotype practices, which exercise a subtle control over our life and over our bodies, is visualised in a masterful manner. That suffered otherness, which is suppressed, which

right to live their life in accordance with the desires of their own unique nature. This is a type of ethics that aims at attaining an aesthetics of existence.

The works of Elena Panayotova, Monika Romenska, Aurora Dediu, Jelica Radovanovic and Mirela



of our traditional paradigms of thinking, action and feeling, predetermined by the binary gender difference. The works of art appeal for such type of attitude, whereby we would be sensitive simultaneously to the uniformity between the other person and ourselves, and to the differences, which

has experienced the torment of exclusion, is striving to be released, expressed and confirmed. This is obviously a demonstration of the understanding of the present-day individuals who are trying to "create themselves", who expect to attain their real potential, defending their intrinsic

Dauceanu offer an incursion into the routine of everyday existence, into the cosy, but nevertheless far too privatised sphere of the home. The apparent orderliness, the seemingly familiar domesticated happening, with its bitter-sweet small freedoms and big dependencies, demonstrates the mod-

ern urge to break the spell of the particular. The perspective from which things are perceived is the understanding of the "home" as territory legitimising a manifested form of togetherness, which shares the space of "here" and "now", itself generating intensity of sensory perceptions

the artists has set herself. The stable and predictable world exudes security, keeping alive the old hope that in the home the world is ordered and manageable. In fact, the dream of a refuge – a home for the home, protected space that you can inhabit, possess and control – comes true in

tion to update the experience of the past – but from a distance. The dream exists here not as a challenge to what has been already, but to the time that continues to flow and to pass us by. An attempt is made to make something whole out of the scattered fragments, to attribute permanence to the



(Dediu) and differentiating a place in which everything characteristic and personal may become dissolved, albeit for a certain time. In the concrete case this is not a defence of some social or personal autonomy, but rather a perception of the "home" as a means for attaining goals that each of

the "home". For Radovanovic, Dauceanu, Moteska and Panayotova the need to feel at home, to recognise your own environment and to belong to it, creates a bond of interdependence, firmly intertwined in the threads of heritage, memory and history. The nostalgic yearning prods the imagina-

episodic. The faded pages of the albums trace the accumulation of indelible events and memories creating history/identity. The world fitted into the ostensible diversity of photographs, objects, series of steps and words is paradoxically torn and fragmented. It bears only a part of the

history of past moments that hardly anyone can blend into totality. And it is the fixation of the inhabitant of the home to transform them according to his will and in some logical sequence, again woven from the same signs of the meanings. The latter trace back connecting lines between today and yesterday, whereby their mysterious intertwining is striving to make the past subordinate to the future. The intricate game, revealed most clearly in the works of Elena Panayotova, evokes surprise at the incredibly simulated codes and superpositions of inherited culture material. Here not only historical personalities, but also places, times, traces and events lack a solid contour. Could it be that the emblematic models, symbols and messages have lost their content, meaning and link to reality? Or is it only the personal selection of the artefacts of our own civilisation that creates today the mobile pieces of a constantly changing puzzle? Elena Panayotova is not interested so much in the actual commentary of culture, but mostly in the elusive contacts between art and everyday life, or more precisely – in the fluctuations and reassessment of the changes occurring in the world of art and in

life. A personal world, which – like every work of art – should seek, create, defend and guard its own raisons d'être and legitimacy. The crossing of the border of the world of established practice and routine provokes the imagination of Monika Romenska to create fictions and dreams of a nomadic way of life. The habitation of the place is substituted by the experiences of the wanderer. The tempting notion of feeling always on the move means to live in a future time. Predictability, reliability and monotony give way to the adventure-seeking spirit, which – as a synonym of freedom – is making a choice of what would make her truly happy. The dream for Romenska is as if you are living in the direction of attaining an existence that is fraught with risk and anticipation. Her experience in life suggests to her that the impossible may happen, that the probable may never happen, and that – moreover – something entirely new, surprising and unthinkable may appear. The dream for her is a potential option, which is more than reality. In a way so characteristic of the post-modern intuition she assumes that it would be good if dreams come true. The yearning for travelling is topical precisely

due to the resonance between the obvious elusiveness and indefiniteness of its content. Fixing of the destination of the travelling is avoided, thus keeping options permanently open.

Every dream is built of conventionalities. Each of them is a small universe of its own. Although dreams are unified in the exhibition, this does not deprive them of their great diversity, their different orientation, their different experience and their different mastering. Here we are encountering overt intentions to share something that is of common interest. We can get to know each other only when we meet, when we hold discussions and when we share experiences. After all, we are talking about a pragmatic construction, a prospect that should develop through the expression of numerous individual projects, of differences. In this sense, the exhibition is the real opportunity to pay tribute to the unique difference of the "other one" and at the same time of the commensurateness of that "other one" with us.

The Dream of My Life

Jasmina Cubrilo

"The Balkans are a mythical territory... Just as the Mediterranean can be called the cradle of human history, the same is true of the Balkans. I would like to stress that the Balkans are not only an ill-fated region, but also a region where strong traditions which shaped European culture fluctuate. The Balkans should not always be associated with something negative, although the word "Balkanization" always suggests a suicidal war."

Slobodan Snajder

"However, here in our parts, in Serbia, it is more than necessary to insist on the patriarchal as a concept and as a social fact, as it is necessary to make an epistemological cut that would allow the possibility of establishing a balance between the masculine and the feminine perceptions of the world and their respective, different conceptualizations."

Marina Blagojevic

The concept of *The Dream of My Life* exhibition covers two topics: both represent narratives that constitute identities, my own identity, as well as the identity of others who have participated, in one way or another, in the implementation of this project. Here we face two patterns, two stereotypes that provide the context for these "differences that hurt." On the one hand, there are the Balkans, a region defined by a series of geographic, historical, political, economic, cultural, religious and ethnic criteria, and most often by a combination of these. As the boundaries of the physical and the political geography do not actually correspond, many historians favour the political approach combined with cultural and historical factors. The Balkan paradox lies in the fact that although geographically a part of Europe, in cultural terms it constitutes, as Maria Todorova has pointed out, its "inner otherness," a space used, just like the Orient had previously been, as a storeroom of negative connotations, in contrast to which, as a logical consequence, the positive and self-righteous image of the West has been constructed.

On the other hand, in the heart of this different cultural identity, which the hegemonic Western discourse, politicizing cultural differences after it has proclaimed them essential, persistently perceives from a paternalistic, (pseudo-)benevolent viewpoint, we discern a new marginal position generated by patriarchal determinism, a production of another "inner otherness."

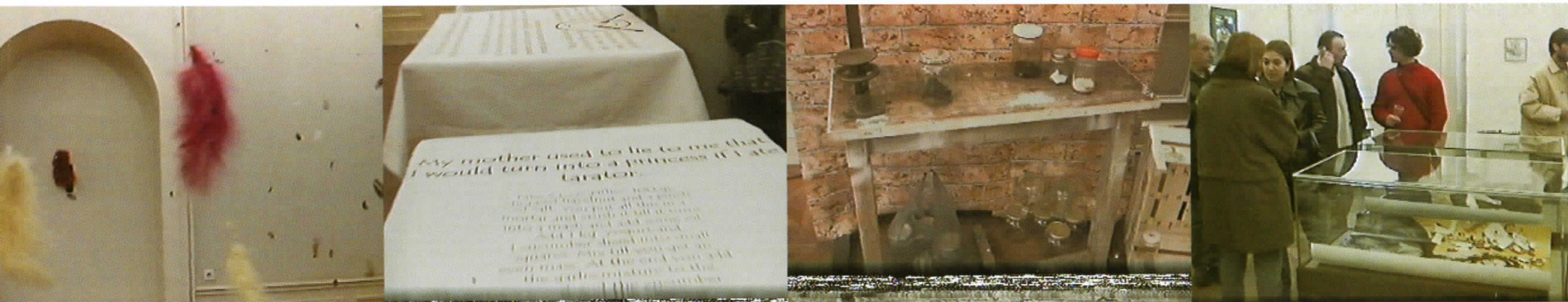
I hesitated for a long time over the text that was to be my contribution to *The Dream of My Life* project. As time went by, i.e., as it was becoming increasingly obvious that I was losing precious time in the attempt to reconcile my maternity with my other passions, needs, pleasures and duties, it became clearer to me that the works I was supposed to interpret were in themselves to a great extent interpretations of the context of the space in which I live and work. They were (re)constructing my space and turning it into a setting for a detective game of unveiling stereotypes, the usual, i.e. the "easier," by now "effete" solutions, legitimated by the very same power structures that have established this kind of legitimacy for their own protection.

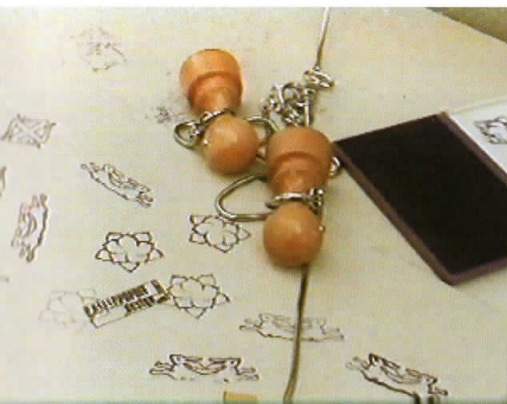


I was born and bred in a country which long held an ambivalent position as regards the space it occupies in the area. According to the attitude that was generally accepted in all circles except the scholarly ones, Yugoslavia was placed within the Danube or Mediterranean regions. The non-geographic, politicized posi-

tioning was also current and even more appealing, as it made Yugoslavia the elite of the non-allied movement, which emancipated the country from the political fate of its Balkan neighbors, divided according to the two remaining concepts, and thus, in a way, represented a materialization of the Cold War demarca-

tion-line. The country's "peculiarity," its difference from its Balkan neighbours, resulted from a social system that combined some elements of "soft" communism, just enough to please Western left-wing intellectuals, with some elements of market economy, freedom of speech and democracy for those disgusted by



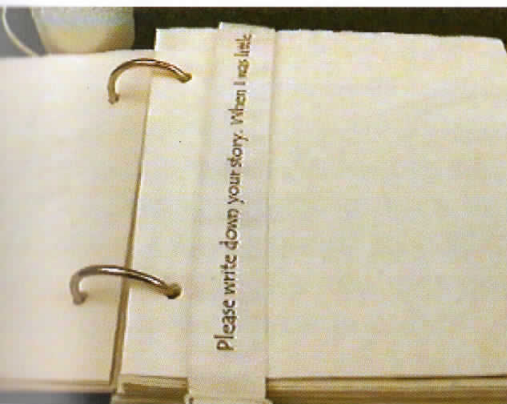


the Soviet/Eastern-European model. The proclaimed equality between the "nations and nationalities," as well as the support of countries struggling for independence from colonial powers, anticipated a sort of multicultural model, with all petrol, financial and other similar background transactions. It seems that the

awareness of the Balkan position of Yugoslavia became widespread at the moment when the West generalized the Yugoslav drama as a Balkan conflict, a Balkan war, a Balkan tragedy.

As Sonja Licht and Slobodan Drakulic have pointed out, during this time women mostly practiced

unconscious, generalized feminism as one of the ideologically necessary claims of emancipation, which before the 1980s very few of them were able to articulate. Although actually far from being full-fledged or well conceived, this emancipation nevertheless marked a great step towards regulating the legal status and pro-



tection of women and children. The previous legislation, in force from 1844 until 1946, i.e. from the moment when the Civil Code was adopted in order to protect the landowners' rights over the land they had recently acquired and to support the development of a modern, civil state, all the way to the socialist revolution, a woman was the property of her father or husband, and her legal position was equal to that of a minor, and it was considered that "a minor is any person unable or not allowed to dispose of their property: mentally deprived, squanderers declared such by court decree, vagabonds, those declared bankrupt, married women during their husband's life" (Article 920). According to other articles of this law, the husband is the head of the family who represents the wife and decides where she is to live, while the wife is obliged to obey his orders, to serve him and take care of the house and children; existence of male heirs excludes the female ones of the same lineage from inheritance, and the investigation of paternity is prohibited.

The end of World War II brought at least a declarative equality as

regards political and legal rights. Women were relatively equally treated as far as salaries and even the nature of the work they performed were concerned, but within the family, behind closed doors, the traditional order was preserved with rare exceptions. For one reason or another, mostly due to their asymmetrical position, women conceded to the traditional distribution of roles. It was a mixture of real and declarative equality, accompanied by a widespread belief that if women were not exactly equal, they would soon become so. In other words, there were two models that defined the needs of women – the so-called traditional, patriarchal one that mostly regulated the private sphere and the so-called emancipating but in fact no less patriarchal one, regulating the public sphere. The problem behind the concept of equality of women lies in the fact that it represents only one segment of a broader right to difference, and if we extract it from this broader context, it tends to turn into its opposite. As Luce Irigaray has pointed out, this is an obvious consequence of the fact that the limits of women's cultural space are determined by man as the

model of a human race in which women exist empirically, as natural entities without proper identity. Ex-YU women groped about, desperately searching for a balance between two contradictory ideas, inferiority and equality, attempting to understand (and accept) the concept of inferior equality.

There is yet another factor important for the construction of identity that needs to be mentioned: the reception of Western narratives and their representation, particularly in popular culture. The perception of Western culture had an ambivalent character, but – generally speaking – the West was a world more sophisticated than our own, a kind of utopian place sporadically accessible to ex-Yugoslavs of both genders through business trips, tourism, professional training, studying abroad, various international festivals, film and theatre... As part of this cultural importation came the Western construct of womanhood with all accompanying accessories that, although necessary and even crucial for the social verification of this concept, remained – on the whole – accessible only to a relatively small percentage of women.

With the outburst of nationalist xenophobia and the economic crisis, the 1990s in Serbia meant emotional and economic insecurity for women, exposing them to domestic, political, social and economic violence. The very right to (relative) equality was threatened. Women were expected to become machines for the mass production of new Serbs, which was also supposed to solve the growing problem of unemployment. In the anti-war movements of the 1990s, women far outnumbered men and the loudest voices raised also came from them. According to Sonja Licht and Slobodan Drakulic, their presence and good organization were the consequences of the socio-political mind-frame that had allowed their relative emancipation, and of the cultural and political activism of the self-conscious feminism inherited from the socialist period. There were also socio-psychological reasons, as the women from these parts generally embrace the idea that the preservation of the family is their responsibility.

At one point, Julia Kristeva wonders whether communism really transformed the psyche of Orthodox Christians if it did not fully eradicate

it. I would rather rephrase this question and ask whether socialism (communism) has transformed or eradicated the psyche of patriarchal men/women. Analysing the psychodynamics of the Holy Trinity, Kristeva in fact explained the specific character of the Orthodox patriarchal model, based on the unrestrained authority of the Father (God), which is beyond discussion, beyond criticism and beyond dispute. On the other hand, the famous "filioque" of the Catholic dogma, making the Father and the Son equals, announces the autonomy and independence of both the Son and the believers. The logical consequence of the Orthodox Christian *Per filium*, or the feminization of the Son, is a rigid androcentrism, the cult of the Father, the *pater familias*, the leader... Within such order of things, in Serbia, it seems justified to insist on the too unpopular, too big and sweeping term such as patriarchy, especially while the painful experience of the 'nineties still rankles. After all, things should be called by their real names, and the everyday experience testifies that the cultural model resulting from male dominance continues to

forbid/obstruct the feminine conceptualization of a *Weltanschauung*. Furthermore, this model is the main source of the so-called existential crises in women, generated, as Marina Blagojevic has pointed out, precisely by the conflict between women's individual needs and the social surrounding which does not recognize those needs to the point of annihilating them. In such circumstances, women's attempts to resist this social construct of womanhood only intensify the crisis. The question remains whether by now we may be able to discern the outlines of an adequate cultural framework that would warrant the respect of the right to difference, including the right to be a woman, determining at the same time how this right would be regulated in the period ahead of us, both *de jure* and/or *de facto*.

Do we share the same experiences, or are they merely similar or even completely divergent? This is my perspective, and – judging by the exhibited works – it corresponds to a great extent to the experience of the artists involved in this project. *The Dream of My Life* has to do with accepting the indeterminate, with permanent floating and selective

storing, with an attempt not to think institutionally, or rather to think in terms of gaps and openings between the official social processes of production and distribution of ideas. Eventually, these openings enable representation and encourage unconfined divergences; those are places where difference gives much more pleasure and infinitely less pain.

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Dream as an Instrument for Overcoming the Imposed Models

Maja Cankulovska

In line with all the economic and political changes that occurred in the traditionally patriarchal Balkans, the potential of women artists also came to its expression. The emergence of the special identity of women in this area followed a different and not so radical path as in the West, primarily because of the existence of socialism and communism, which brought almost equal relations in the function of the subjects. This was preceded by the traditional patriarchal model which, in spite of the tendencies of relegating the individuality of women to the house, nevertheless did not manage to limit their creative way of thinking. Without militant feminist gestures, women slowly succeeded in undergoing a transformation from passive to active subjects, ready to fight against all that is negative and to transmit their different perspectives and feelings for things from reality.

Although Balkan women are expected to have similar dreams, conditioned by the specific region, the participants in the exhibition *The Dream of My Life* responded in a different and completely individual way, and with a very successful approach, to the five sub-themes which correspond to the less romantic title of the exhibition: *Have Fun, The*

Noises of the House, The Kitchen – A Repository of Family Dreams, Good Girls/Bad Girls and Dances of The Archangels / A Garden Of Flowers. The authors from these four Balkan countries, using different media: photography, video, objects and installations, expressed their thoughts, desires and disagreement with the imposed models from our real world through various perspectives: personal/emotional, but also existential/social/political, and penetrated into the sphere of the Otherness, (self-)criticism, irony, egocentrism, melancholy, isolation, tradition, culture, society... In view of the different approaches of the authors to the given title, I decided to approach them individually.

Jelica Radovanovic expresses the fate of the creation of women's identity, which is due to their universal cultural identification, specific for the Balkans because of socialism. Religion provides one kind of identification, socialism another, and hence women from this region have double identification. She is erasing these imposed models and differences between men and women, and thinks that man does not necessarily have to be the father in the family, or woman – the mother. This is a kind of "obliteration" of the castrational Freudian complex imposed by the traditional understanding of issues.

Mirela Duceanu, through tactility and sensitivity of the objects specific to the "women's nostalgia", emphasizes

the tactility of the objects ("floating" feathers) and brings us to a special world of everyday women's dreams. Here one can feel the urge to achieve interactivity between the artwork and the audience in the atmosphere of the home, in which intimacy is totally exposed to the spectator. The visitor is deliberately provoked to take over a "peeping" role and to explore, touch and peek into someone else's space, to recognize it and to feel it as his own. With this the author points out the differences and similarities, but also the desire for communication.

The work of **Ana Stojkovic** is also based on the principle of interactivity, which is present in most of the works at this exhibition. In this case it is the clean and cold atmosphere of a classically set table for lunch, on which adventures from childhood are printed, which treat different kinds of relations – traditional, gender- and generation-related: food-kitchen, growing-breasts, girl-woman, father-daughter... This narration is repeated in a way in a notebook made of napkins and this "open work" wishes to establish a direct contact with the audience, to prompt the visitor to recollect and write down a story from his/her own childhood.

Elena Panayotova is dealing with the five sub-themes in different ways, and she is emphasizing the pure visual aesthetic experience. Her works are once static witnesses-shadows that suggest the presence of "the one that used



to be present", then they are critics of the consumer society, sometimes operating with its variability, etc., and, again, interactivity. In her works she is trying to explore the legacy of the cultural component and its meaning in our everyday life and actions.

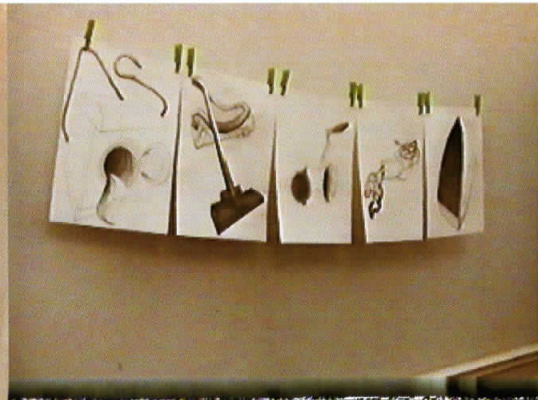
The photographs of **Aurora Dediu** function as a kind of visual diary in which interesting moments are collected; objects used in everyday life and familiar "conditions" with changed meaning and a new melancholic modu-

lation. These are documentary records of situations, places and spaces, in which she has focused on changing details, situations and ordinary objects, and creating her own space in which she rejects the reality that seems like an artificially made still-life.

Monika Moteska examines the positive and the negative aspect of dreaming, fulfilled and unfulfilled dreams, and the influence of the dreams of others on ours. Negative examples of dreaming are documentary

photographs, unfortunately not very retrospective: flowers and candles for the dead soldiers, symbolizing the sounds of war, which brings further dreaming to question, or the unfulfilled dreams of the transvestite Elvira to escape from his own "nature". On the other hand, there are positive examples of dreaming: laps in the water and heights, which ends this closed circle of human dreaming.

Monika Romenska uses variations of one topic (one drawing of a sailing





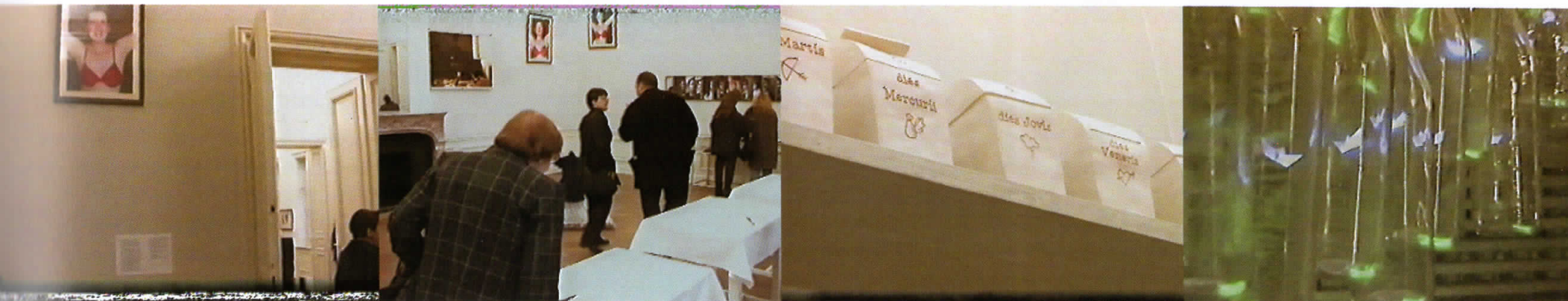
ship) with conceptual meaning, reacting differently to the title of each theme. Her desire for free conquest of unknown spaces, crossing borders and the everlasting wish for these dreams to become reality outgrows the limitations and, in a way, rejects the traditional and safe way of thinking.

Marija Vauda presents multiplied an almost identical "monochromatic" condition that shows the gray zones – the uninhabited zones (Verwerfung). In these marginalized and socially rejected

zones, life develops dynamically and they are important as a space where critical opinion is created. Although they are disconnected from society, these zones with isolated individuals are important for the better assertion and growth of the subject who cannot be reconciled with the passive acceptance of the imposed norms of acting.

Each of the authors in this exhibition gives a particular narration about the world of dreams that cannot be taken away from them. All of them are interconnected by the emphasized women's

discourse and the desire to become acquainted and to respect the dream of the Other. Also, dreams are very often used as an instrument against imposed models from the real world. According to their subconsciousness and self-analysis through the dream, aimed at fighting against everything negative, they have succeeded in opening themselves and in speaking freely about all topics that seem to restrict normal human existence, creative activities and communication.



What Importance for Women to Come to the Balkans

Dreams of My Life:
An Emancipated Voice
www.zetmag.org

Interview by David D'Agostino with
Marija Vauda, Monika Moteska and
Elena Panayotova

"There is a big potential for women artists to work together in the Balkans," said Monika Moteska from Skopje, "we don't know each other. It is often much easier to know what is going on in Western Europe than among ourselves."

Moteska is one of eight female artists who exhibited in the exquisite exhibit *The Dream Of My Life* at the National Art Gallery. Curated by Elena Panayotova, Iskra Trayanova and Monika Romenska the work includes two artists each from Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania and Macedonia, and represents the first time that such an event has taken place in Sofia.

Unlike most group shows here that are very disjointed, the intellectual and

aesthetic content among these eight artists flows gracefully between the four rooms this exhibit occupies. The viewer is touched by a harmonious rawness of emotion coupled with an underlying poetical sadness emanating from the realization that life is a mere construction of daily humdrum vicissitudes.

The ironic distrust of first-hand emotion, which prevails today in the contemporary art world, is countered in this work by the real experiences of women who have been confronted by isolation, violence, and healing. Unlike art in the West, which is becoming more and more visually self-centered, plastic and neon, this exhibit contemplates the grit of Balkan life – a life often defined by forces outside itself. It brings forward a uniquely fresh Balkan voice that artists in the West are not capable of depicting.

These women provide us with a female representation of life's physicality, danger, and mortality. Explains Moteska, "Women are more sensual than men artists, we are not afraid to open ourselves up to the questions of life; we show our bodies with no prejudice, we show our feelings. In Macedonia there are many women artists who show their works together."

Much female-focused art in the West, especially in America, revolves around issues of feminism. The Balkans somehow never experienced this phenomenon under communism, yet women still earned a more direct role in society.

"This work is not about feminism," said Elena Panayotova, a participating Bulgarian artist and curator of the exhibit, "in the Balkans feminism has never been that strong. You know we had Ottoman occupation for 500 years and it was dominated by men."

"We are equal to men. We earn the same amount of money. And yet we share our bodies, and desires," said Moteska.

"In Belgrade there is not much attention to women in art," explained Marija Vauda, "we are not separated from men, and sometimes this is good, sometimes bad. We need to address questions about art, about ecology, about the family. The American feminist Judy Butler said that women could choose their gender. We can behave like a man or a woman. We have different bodies, different points of view, and different influences. We are different!"

Vauda, of course, has lived through a deeply turbulent and often difficult recent Serbian history. "I lived for ten

years in isolation," she iterated. "This is my situation, my private situation. My only contact was through books or TV, there was no direct contact."

Panayotova said, "When we started this project, we went to the Sofia Soros library and began looking for artists. Most of them were so happy and surprised that we were reaching out to them! This is a beginning contact, we really do not know each other."

"This does not mean our art is not good!" said Moteska.

"Yes," explained Elena, "it is important to be ourselves and not try to imitate the West. We should not feel provincial, feel lower class, but must be emancipated with our own voice."

"In Serbia, among artists, there is not this rift between us and the West," said Vauda, "of course, I want to be recognized in the West, maybe to visit and feel the life, not the artist life, but the ordinary life. My work here is not any less important than if I were in London. The most important thing is to make good work that responds to my artistic questions."

Unlike her Serbian peer, Moteska has not experienced the same isolation living in Macedonia, "I do not feel we are so isolated. I think we know what is happening in the world. We are repre-

sented in Venice, Sao Paolo, Manifesta (international art biennials). Our aim is not to live abroad; we have very good artists, private galleries, and museums. Often the problem is more about money. In Skopje we have only two funding sources, Soros and Pro Helvetia. I don't know what the Americans do – there is no cultural dialog with them, I don't think there is a library."

Vauda did not feel, however, that the isolation she had to experience was necessarily bad, "I want to express this isolation in my work. It was a good experience, not unlike living in the South Pole, or going underwater. I am curious about everything, about every kind of experience. These ten years of sanctions were a very specific experience in my life. Our Balkan art could be fresh, we have to learn to use this feeling about ourselves."

"But there is no art market connected to what we are doing," lamented Panayotova, "the market in Sofia is only concerned about oil paintings."

The curators established five themes for the exhibit: Have Fun; Noises of The House; The Kitchen – A Repository of Family Dreams; Good Girls / Bad Girls; Dances of The Archangels / A Garden of

Flowers. Each artist responded to them differently.

Monika Moteska chose two photos of flower bouquets and candles that were placed in front of the Macedonian Parliament by women grieving the recent conflict with Albanian separatists. The photos are placed on the floor in a corner, just as the original flowers were placed on the ground. "I wanted to feel the noises in the house of the mothers of the dead soldiers, do they have some dreams?" Another work depicted a transvestite dressed up in a wedding gown, "His, or her dream is to be a woman, and for five minutes he was in this wedding gown and so happy to be a fulfilled woman; is he a bad girl, or good girl?"

Moteska also produced a video that showed a horse and a woman jumping into a pool, and then suddenly jumping out. It symbolized how we dive in and out of our dreams, often subsumed by the uncontrolled nature of our psyche where real fantasies cannot be fulfilled."

Elena described Moteska's work as beautiful, "I don't think art should be ugly, disgusting, it should not only be about the idea. Monika's work succeeds because of the idea and the aesthetic."

Vauda refused to create individual works responding to each sub-theme,



"my artistic desire was to produce an artistic item and I multiplied it. I used the German word for "refuse". In psychoanalysis it means territory or zone which is impossible to live in, but where we must live – a state of primal turbulence. The mattresses are little territories ... personal and alienated. It is about this isolation in Serbia, but also about freeing myself from it. The big photos above the mattresses represent victorious feeling – life in isolation leads to a fuller life, if we choose to feel this. The photos and the mattresses are one work with slight variations in feeling."

Vauda's work seems to link the entire exhibit into a cohesive whole. The mattresses speak out about life and death, confinement and freedom, ecsta-

sy and derangement. They haunt the show with visible feelings of grief and finding the personal space to release oneself from grief.

Elena's works are all very different. She includes photographs that only depict the shadows of objects; the viewer is left to wonder what the source of the shadow is. It challenges us to consider the source of all that we literally see, and where the truth in it is. We are creatures of the visible and rarely do we penetrate the surface, asking questions about what is governing our infantile perceptions. Another work juxtaposes blue painted shoes and pillows. These common objects are found in all houses. The artist asks what they mean, what kind of nostalgic noise they transmit to the universe. Shoes and pillows carry their own beautiful and terrible experience. They are objects we all need and desire. Her interpretation of a "bad girl/good girl" frames a typical girl placed in a glass coffin, surrounded by and perhaps suffocating from consumer products. This work plays on the indulgence of consumer products and how it turns women into artificial beings – people who are afraid of their natural beauty.

In conclusion Monika said, "it was great to meet artists from Serbia,

Romania and Bulgaria. We all want to thank Elena for this exhibition; it was very well recognized. Most importantly, we had money to realize our art work."

Panayotova explained, "we received money for materials from the Austrian State foundation KulturKontakt. We will now put together a catalog and try to create a biennial event. The next show will include women artists that this current group chooses."

Vauda said she wants the exhibit to visit Belgrade, "I will negotiate with officials there to support this. I know there is a desire, but we do have to find the money."

She concluded, "I learned that when art work is functioning somehow, it can work anywhere. I did not feel different here in Bulgaria, I imagined it like this."

These women, all coming from different academic and social backgrounds, were able to find some common ground. It is a place where contemporary Balkan identity is being transformed and new voices are emerging. *Dreams of My Life* is a delicate, yet convincing display of women who have been alienated because of political isolation, but are now beginning to communicate a necessary and exciting message about the Balkans for the rest of the world.



How long does it take
artists to get discovered?



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From : veramarin@hotmail.com

To : The Dreamers on the Balkans

Subject : HELLO.....

Date : Fri, 25 May, 2001 11:23:04 -0400

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Biennial of Contemporary Art in Sofia - Thoughts and Feelings

*As a guest from Romania, I was asked to give a presentation in one of the related events to the Biennial of Contemporary Art in Sofia. This was a very important opportunity for me to speak about my **thoughts and feelings** related to contemporary art. I am neither an artist, nor an art critic. I had this chance to be in the position of representing contemporary art consumers. For this reason, my presentation was a real challenge.*

I also had to present the situation of contemporary art in Romania. I have preferred to emphasize more on thoughts and feelings about contemporary art than about objective information on aspects related to the contemporary art scene in Romania. My decision was prompted by the fact that the situation of contemporary art is very similar in all Eastern European countries: financial problems, inertia at all organizational levels, the complex of periphery, the fight of a curator who wishes to organize a contemporary art event, the low interest of the Ministry of Culture, the condition of the artist who has to deal with old mentalities, with old institutional structures...

A contemporary art consumer in the eastern part of Europe faces the same frustrations as the artists that deal with contemporary art. There are very few exhibitions and very few publications.

I would not have had anything to do with contemporary art, if I did not have the chance to be in Lyon simultaneously with the contemporary art biennial which took place in a very important building for the history of architecture - les halles Tony Garnier ("Exotisme" - biennale d'art contemporaine - Lyon, August 2000). There I understood for the first time that

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contemporary art is fun, that it is concept more than anything else, that what counts is the message it delivers and not the form in which this message is enveloped.

That is how I started having feelings to contemporary art: I am sometimes amused, sometimes shocked, sometimes astonished, and there are times when I am proud of myself that I understood the message contained in the art piece in front of me. I touch, I smell, I hear, I feel a space - I let myself being fascinated, I play the game of the artist when I understand and even when I do not understand where I am being taken to.

The biennial in Sofia was for me another chance to experience all these thoughts and feelings related to contemporary art. Beside my thoughts and feelings towards the pieces exhibited, I have admired the organizers' courage to have this exhibition in the National Art Gallery. I have enjoyed the theme: by merely uttering these words - "the Dream of My Life" - nostalgia and wishes for the future are already felt and thought. I have spent a lot of time in the exhibition. I could see how the artists, all women, all very bright and sensitive, captured thoughts and feelings about:

- ordinary objects that we touch in our everyday life (Jelica's green table; Monika's pots);
- a strong desire to go away (Monika's boats, the letters from faraway places), of shouting loudly when we cannot stand it anymore (Marija's girl);
- the peace and silence of a home (Aurora's pictures);
- the hope for lightness and brightness (Mirela's colored feathers and sweet smelling roses);
- the references to history, religion and beliefs (Elena's continents, monuments of anti-quity and the sins, and the signs of the zodiac);
- the childhood memories (the little stories about kids' eating habits that Ana and all the visitors could tell);
- and many others...

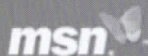
As is written in the invitation that I have received, the Biennial in Sofia brought me "a lot of positive energy", and it made me feel part of "the informal network and partnership among artists, art critics, curators, etc." Though I am in the "etc." category, I could easily become integrated, I have talked and I have listened, I understood and I made myself understood. I felt great. I think of it well.

Vera Marin

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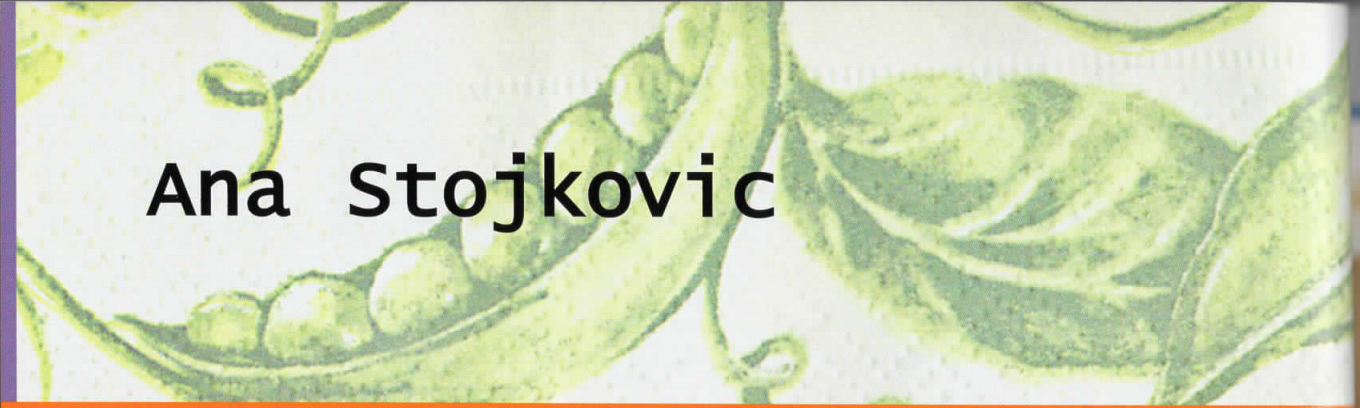
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dream (drēm) n. 1. A series of images, ideas, and emotions occurring in certain stages of sleep. 2. A daydream; reverie. 3. A state of abstraction; a trance; bemusement. 4. A wild fancy or hope. 5. An aspiration; ambition. 6. Anything extremely beautiful, fine, or pleasant. – v. dreamed or dreamt (dremt), dreaming, dreams. – intr. 1. To experience a dream or dreams in sleep. 2. To daydream. 3. To have a deep aspiration; hope for something. Used with of. 4. To consider something feasible or practical; conceive even remotely. Used with of: I wouldn't dream of going. – tr. 1. To experience an image sequence of in sleep. 2. To conceive of; imagine. 3. To pass idly or in reverie. Used with away. – dream up. To invent; concoct. [Middle English drem, dreem, Old English dream, joy, gladness, music.]

Ana Stojkovic
Aurora Dediu
Elena Panayotova
Jelica Radovanovic
Marija Vauda
Mirela Dauceanu
Monika Moteska
Monika Romenska

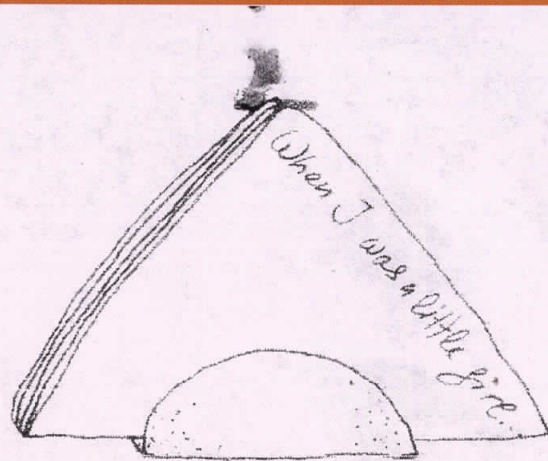
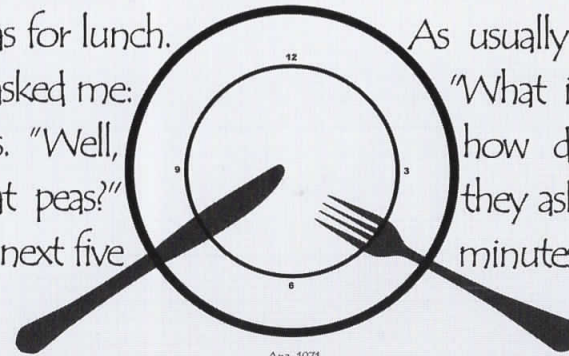
Ana Stojković

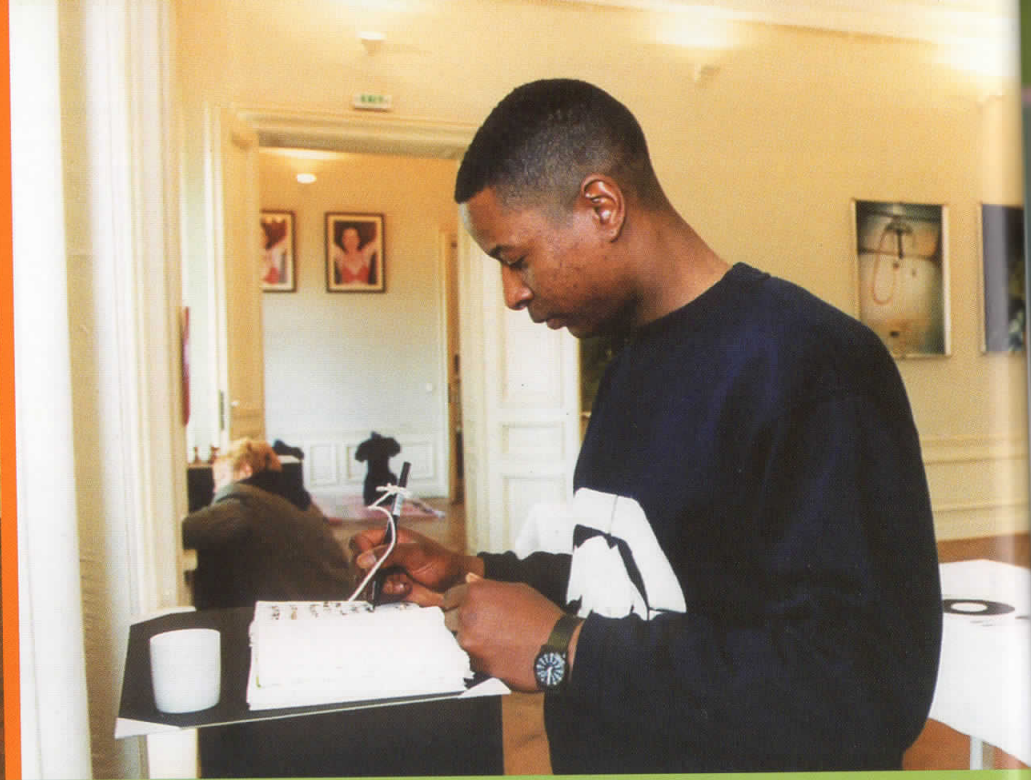
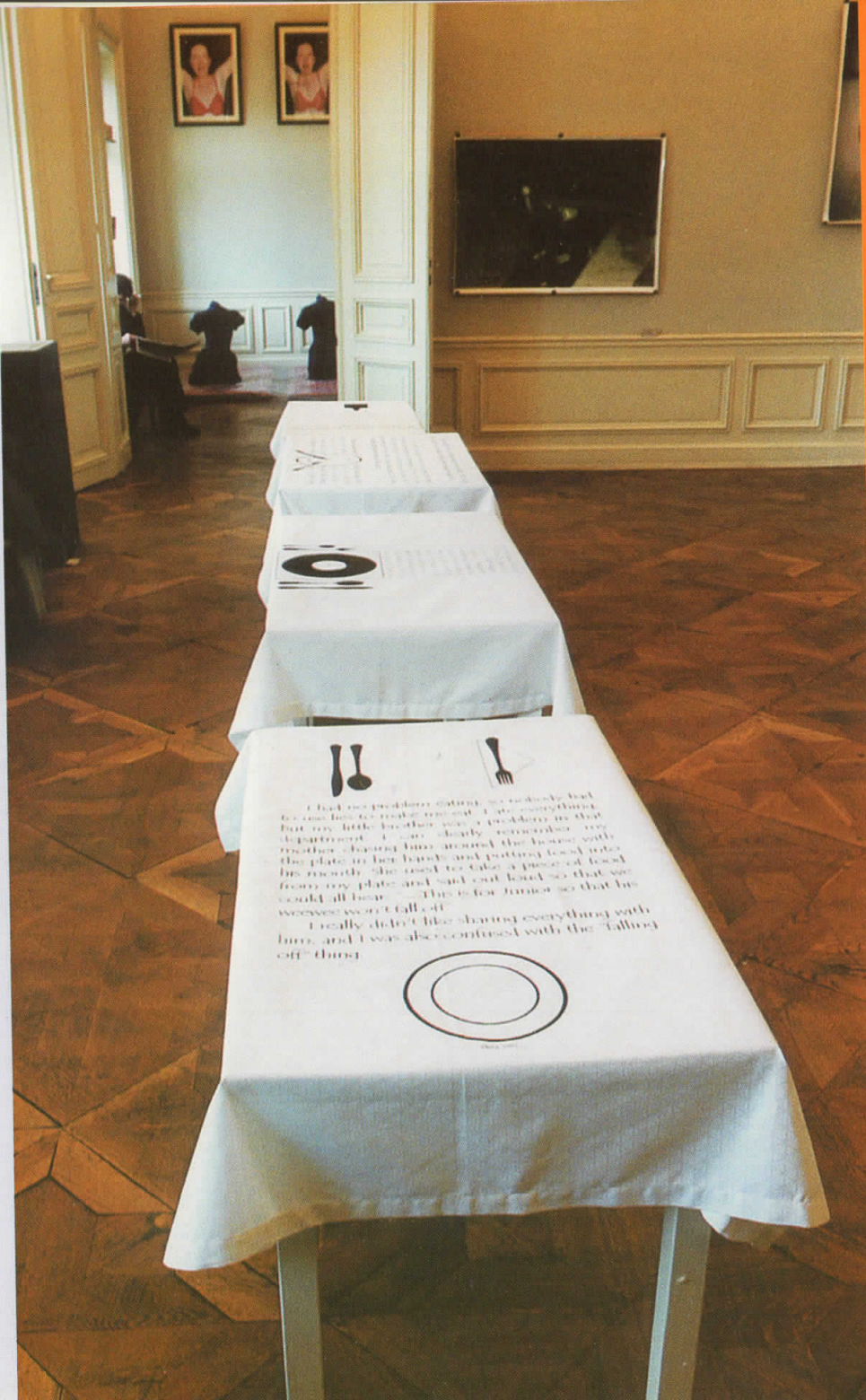


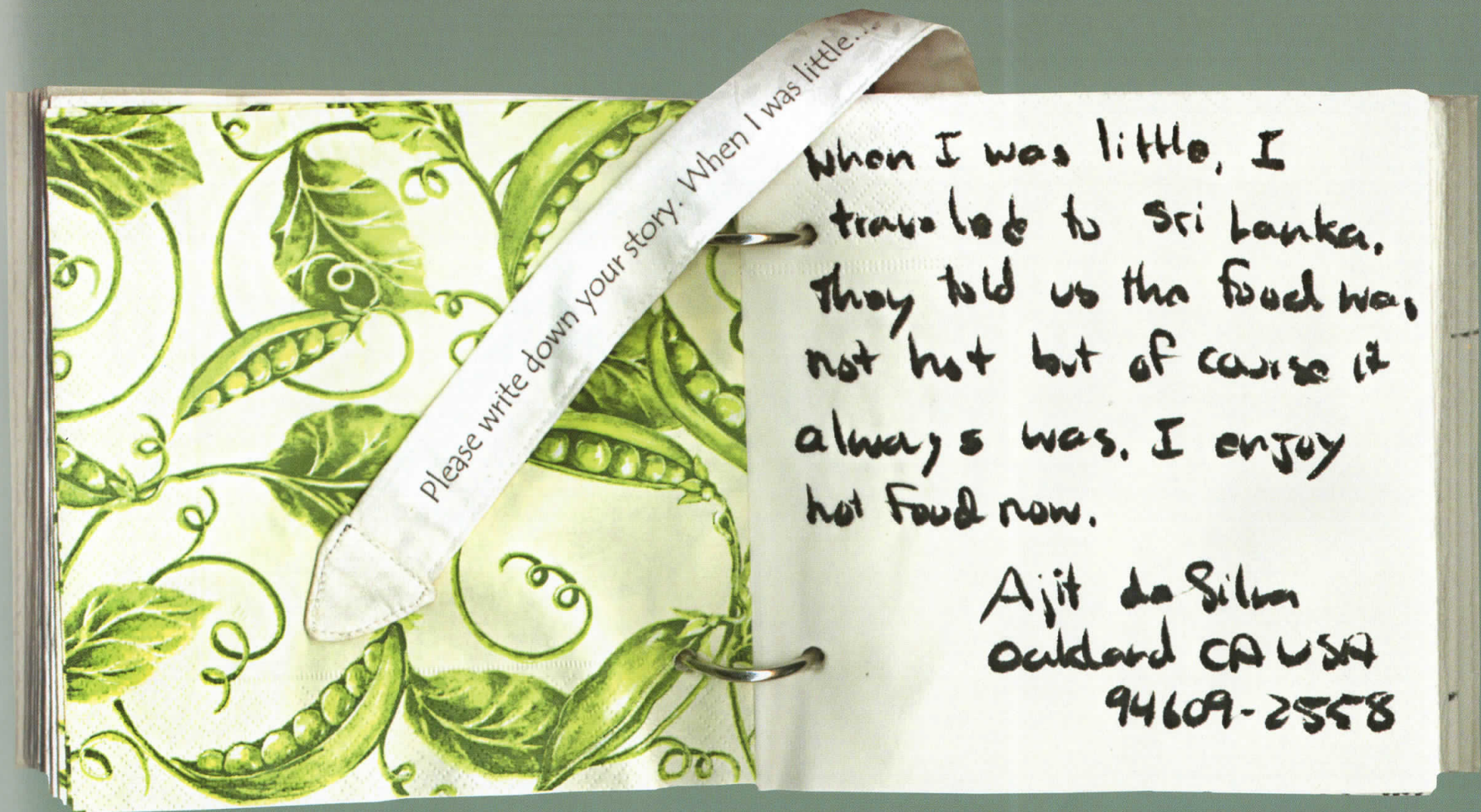
When I was a little girl I didn't eat anything. My parents had a lot of trouble with me, and every lunch used to turn into a drama of making me take a bite.

One day my father accidentally saw me in my room as I was placing oranges in my blouse and curiously observing the transformation of my body. He was very surprised by this action and the intimacy of the situation he caught me in, and in bewilderment told this to my mother. "You know what, Snežana..." She, of course, immediately got an idea how to make use of this situation.

That day we had peas for lunch. As usually I was playing with the food in my plate. They asked me: "What is it? You don't like the peas?" I rolled my eyes. "Well, how do you think to grow breasts if you don't eat peas?" they asked. "Really?" I responded with enthusiasm. In the next five minutes the plate was empty.



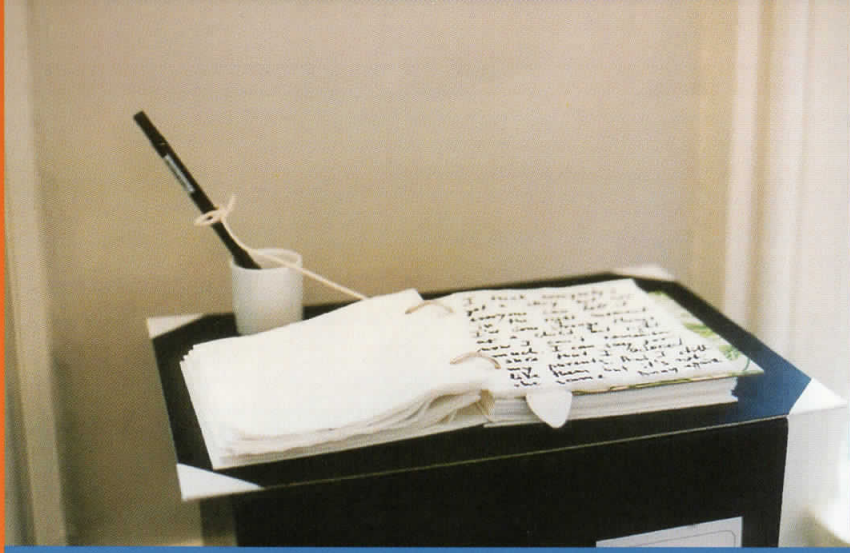




Please write down your story. When I was little...

When I was little, I
traveled to Sri Lanka.
They told us the food was
not hot but of course it
always was. I enjoy
hot food now.

Ajit da Silva
Oakland CA USA
94609-2558



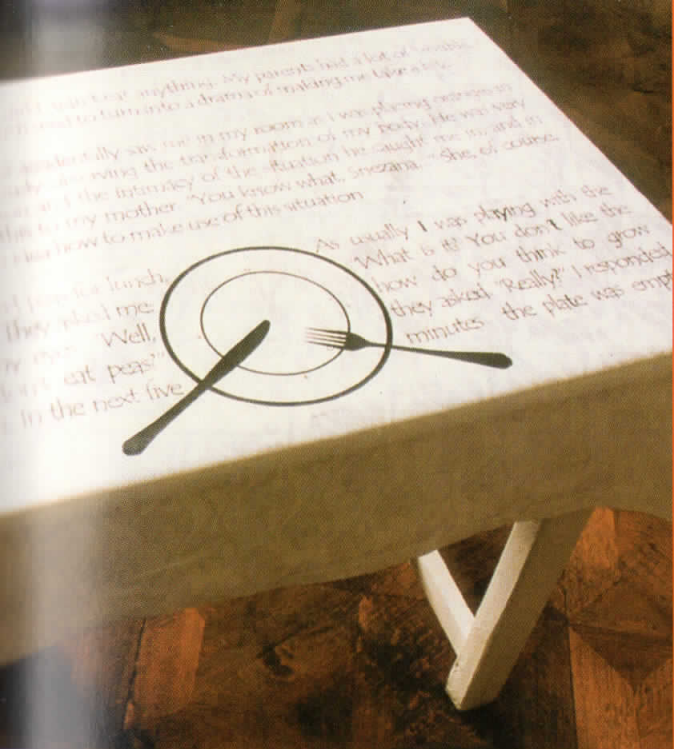
My mother used to lie to me that I would turn into a princess if I ate larator.

Take 5 to 6 garlics, 100 gr. chopped hazelnut and a pinch of salt. You put all this in a mortar and crush it till it turns into a mash and add some oil.

Add 1 kg yogurt and 1 cucumber sliced into small squares. Mix till you get an even mass. At the end you add the garlic mixture to the yogurt and the cucumber. Add some cold water and mix well. Add vinegar as desired.



Daniela, 1967




little like
in a room. There
force the
mouth.
not - now
eat!
- Sofia

* Kindertraum *

1kg Apfeelmus
200g: gebr. Haselnüsse
1 geschlagenes Eiweiß
2dl geschlagener Rahm
1 Schale von Zitrone

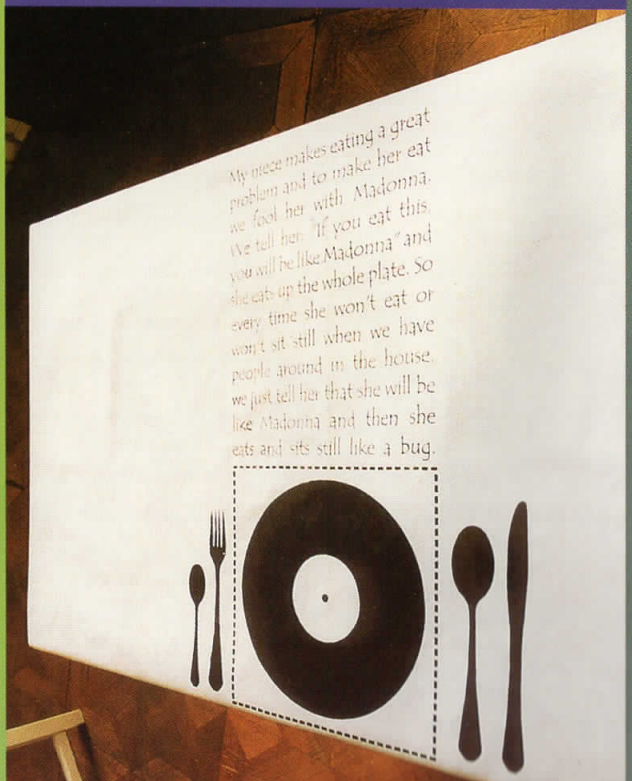
Regula Mitchell
Skitzoland

APPLE



from.

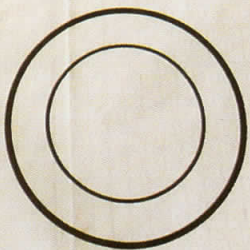
WHEN I was a little girl
I wanted to be a bally-
dancer. But... my MAMA
says: "You can not:
dance, I CAN NOT RUN
you can not play GAMES
you CAN ONLY
take a deep
BREATH! :C
p.s. I HAD ASTHMA
BUT NOW I'm DANCING."



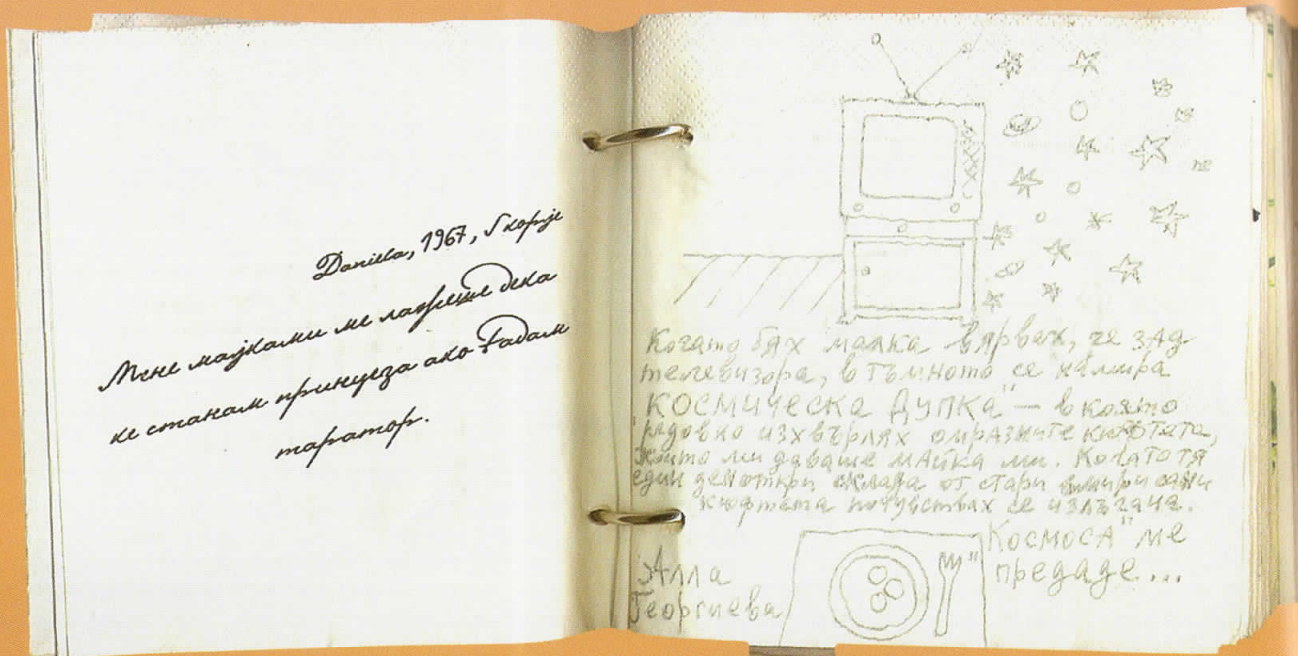
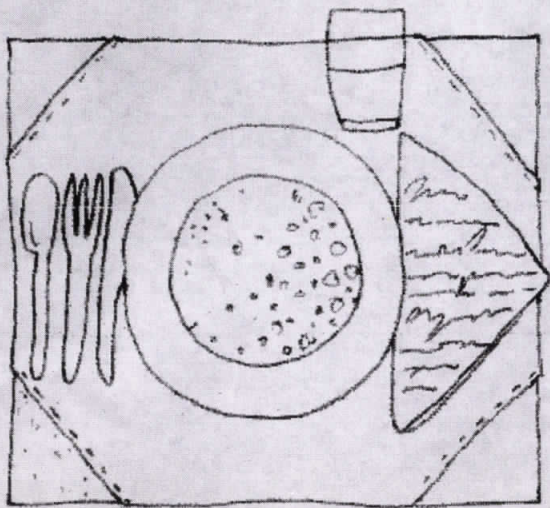


I had no problem eating, so nobody had to use lies to make me eat. I ate everything, but my little brother was a problem in that department. I can clearly remember my mother chasing him around the house with the plate in her hands and putting food into his mouth. She used to take a piece of food from my plate and said out loud so that we could all hear: "... This is for Junior so that his weewee won't fall off".

I really didn't like sharing everything with him, and I was also confused with the "falling off" thing.

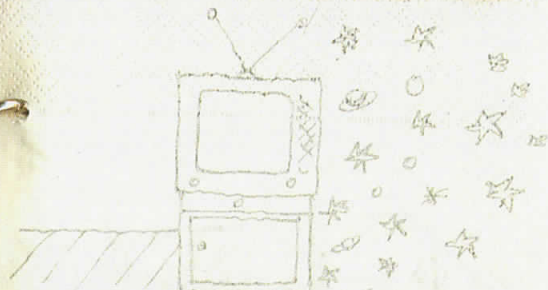


Elena, 1962



Danilo, 1967, Sofija

Мне најлакше ме нафрине деца
ке стакане прикуца ако падне
тафатоме.



Когамо бях малка дядо ми, се задр
телевизора, в темното се казва
КОСМИЧЕСКА АУПКА — в която
како ли изхвърлях образите козметика,
како ли даваме МАЙКА ми. Кога то тја
едни денотки, акава от стари филми акава
како тоа потучетвах се иза какава.

Ана
Георгиева



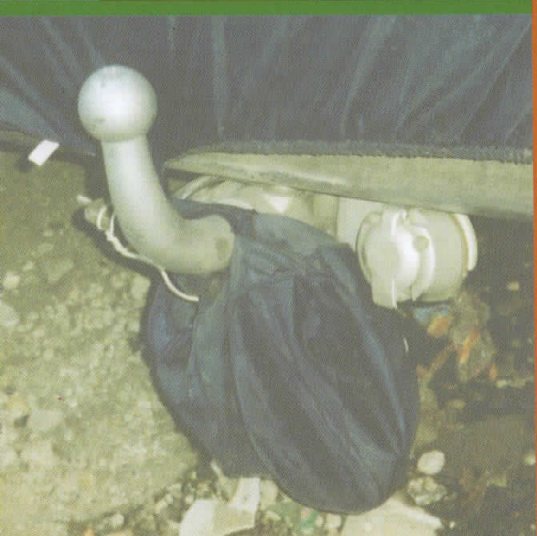
КОСМОСА" ме
предаде...

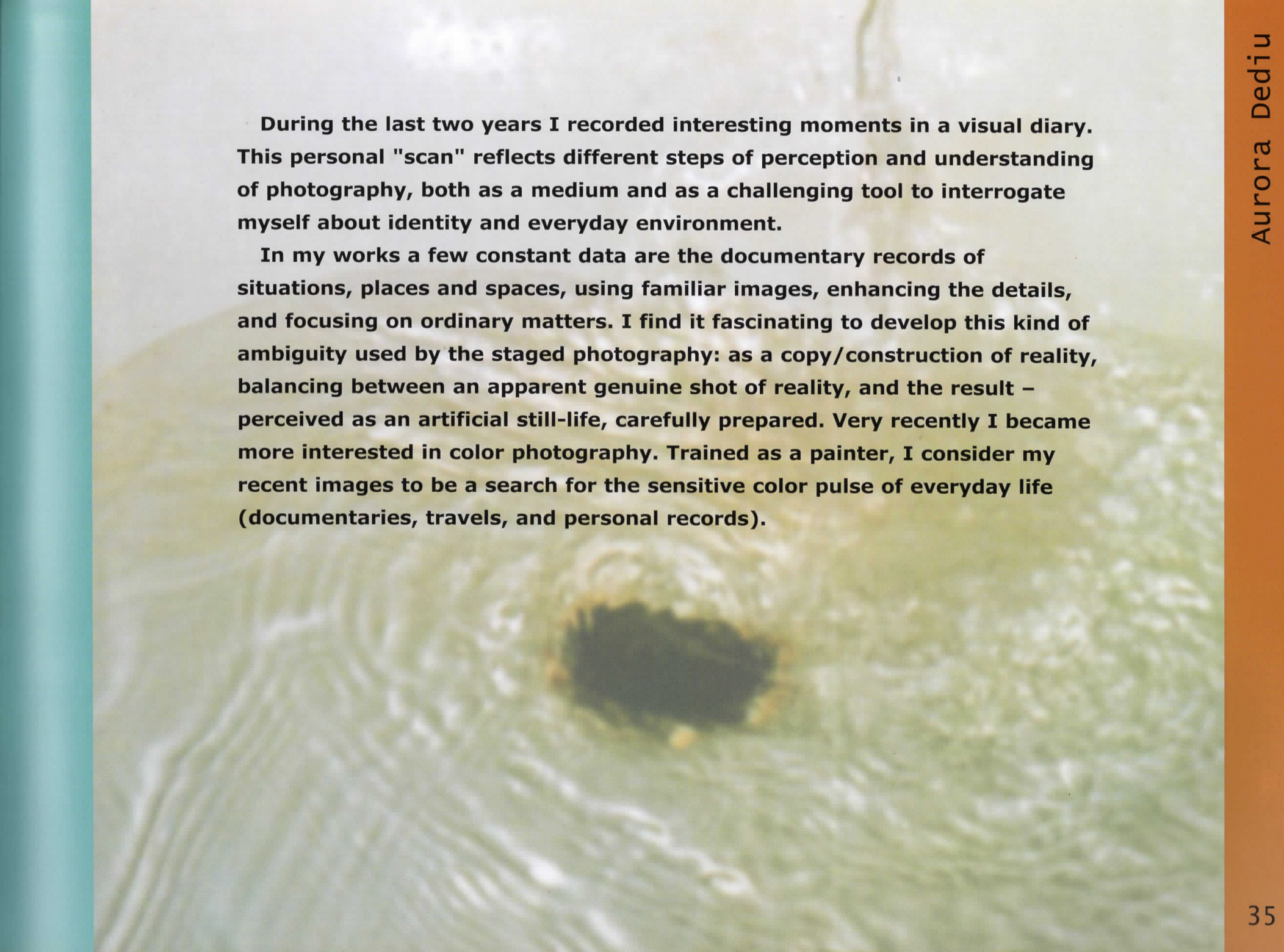
Py A Py M

They say that a boy
(map) should not be
refused any food, candy
or whatever edible because
his wee-wee will
"grow soft" or just fall
off or etc.

Once they didn't give me
a piece of salami I
wasted but my wee-wee
is still here.

Lucho 1957



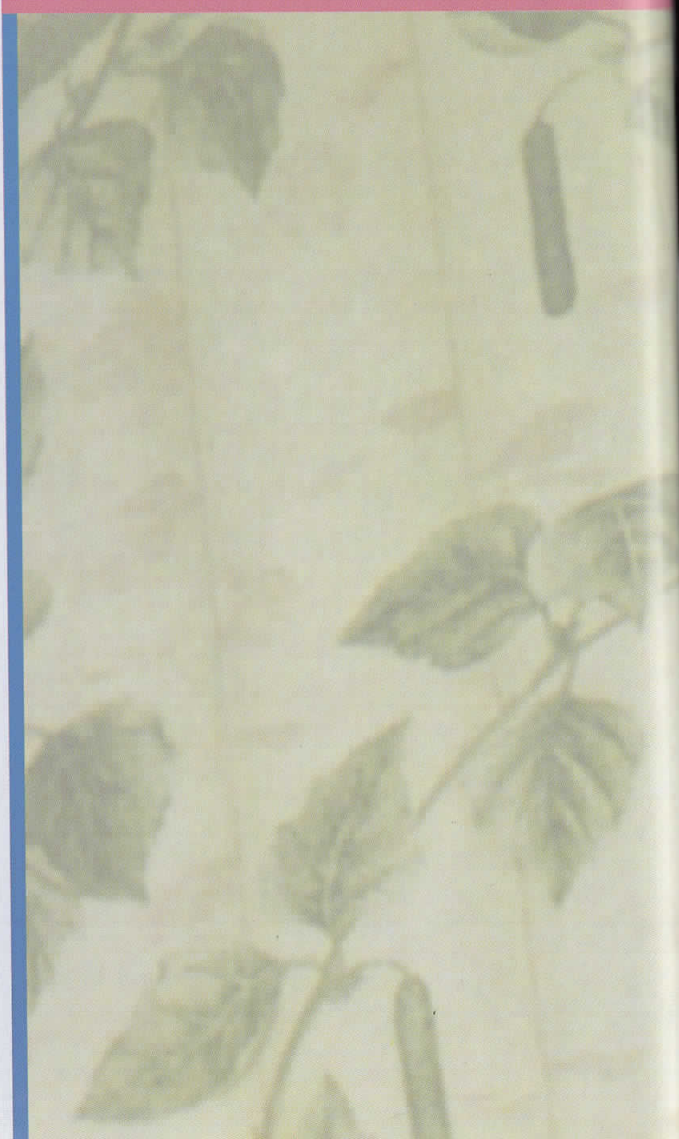


During the last two years I recorded interesting moments in a visual diary. This personal "scan" reflects different steps of perception and understanding of photography, both as a medium and as a challenging tool to interrogate myself about identity and everyday environment.

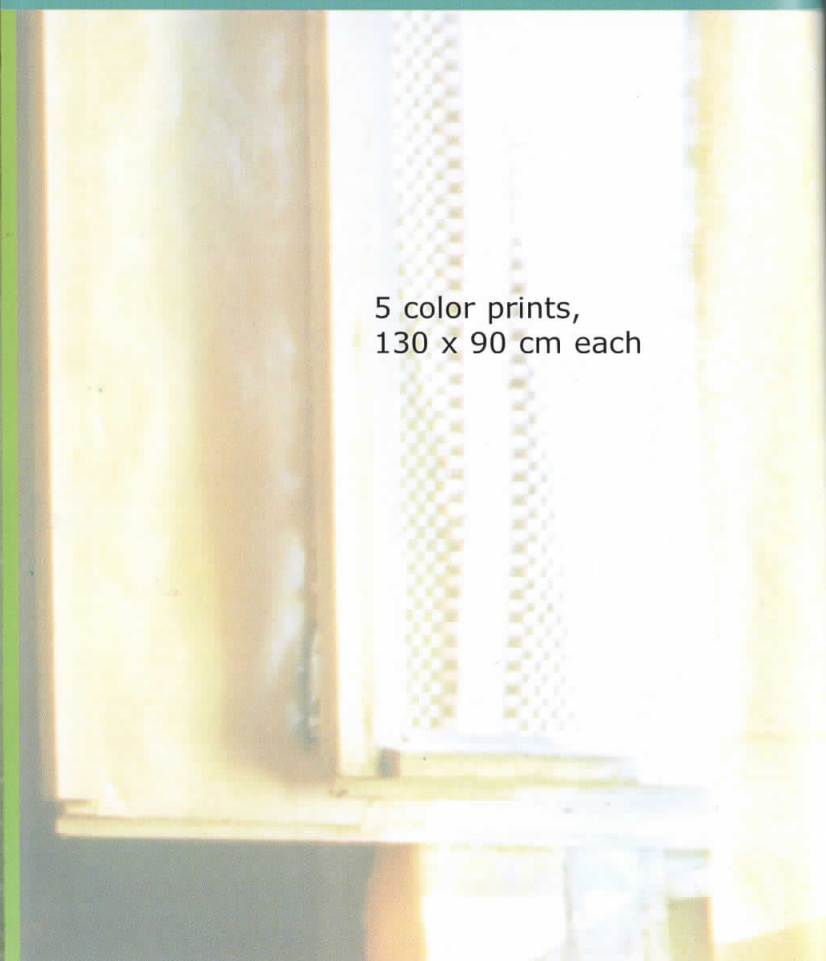
In my works a few constant data are the documentary records of situations, places and spaces, using familiar images, enhancing the details, and focusing on ordinary matters. I find it fascinating to develop this kind of ambiguity used by the staged photography: as a copy/construction of reality, balancing between an apparent genuine shot of reality, and the result – perceived as an artificial still-life, carefully prepared. Very recently I became more interested in color photography. Trained as a painter, I consider my recent images to be a search for the sensitive color pulse of everyday life (documentaries, travels, and personal records).



5 color prints,
130 x 90 cm each

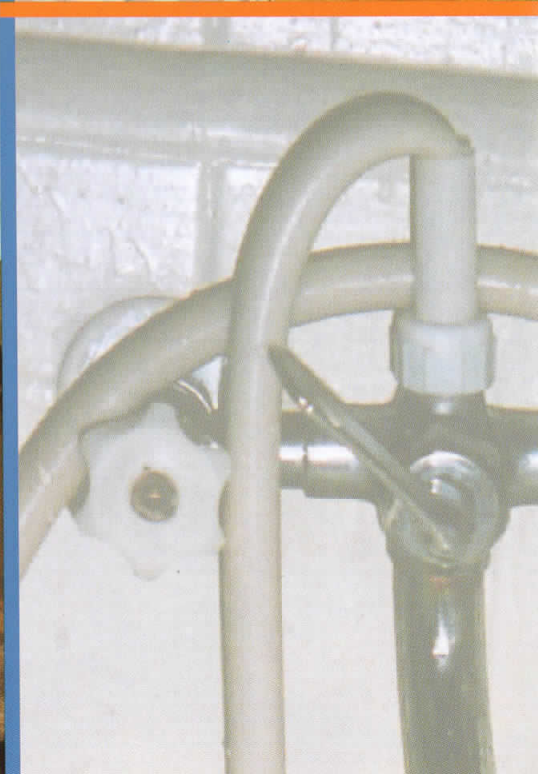






5 color prints,
130 x 90 cm each





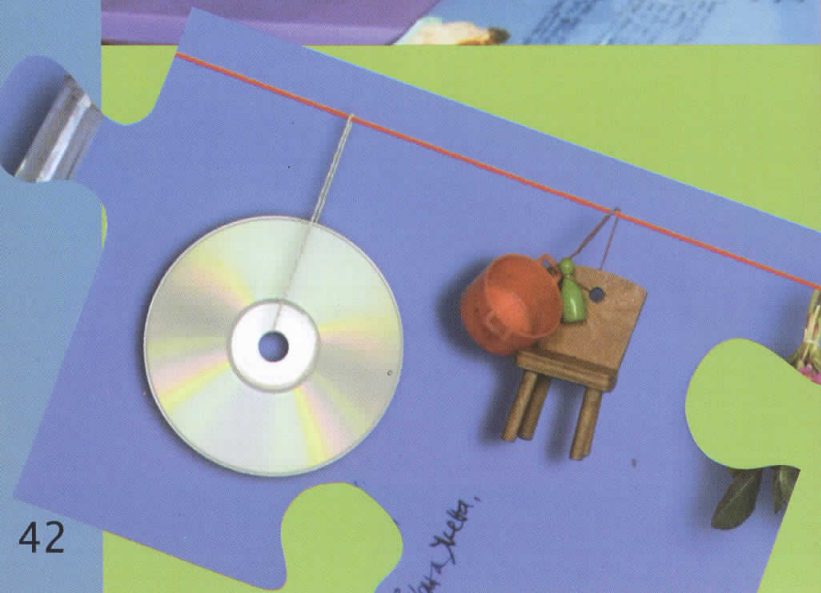


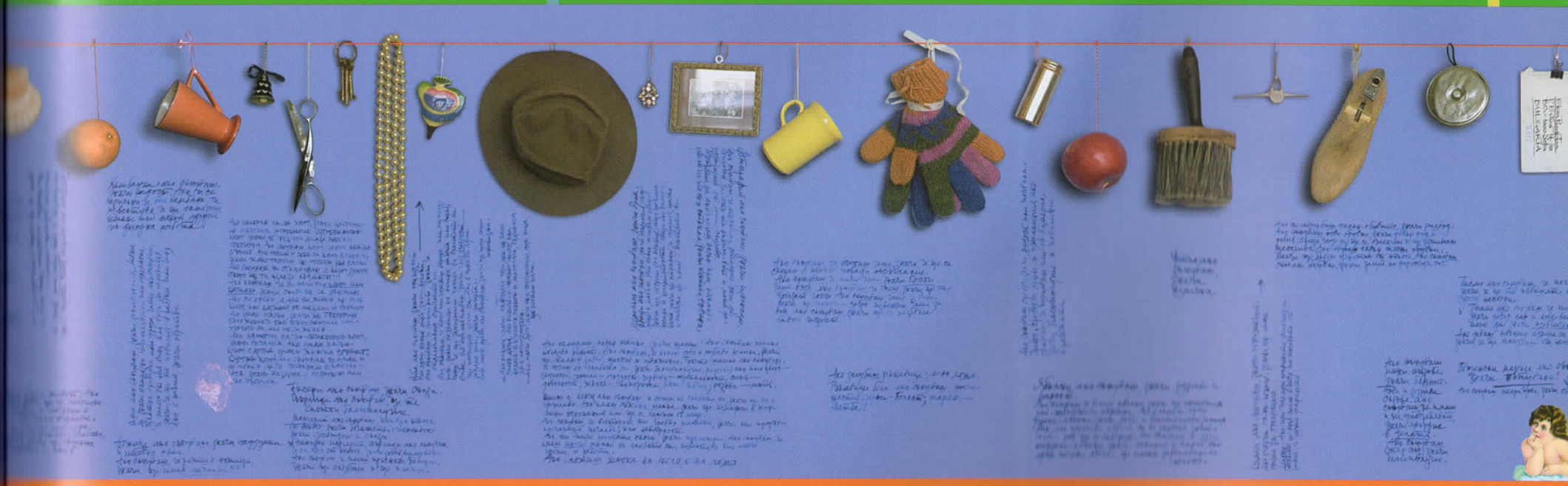
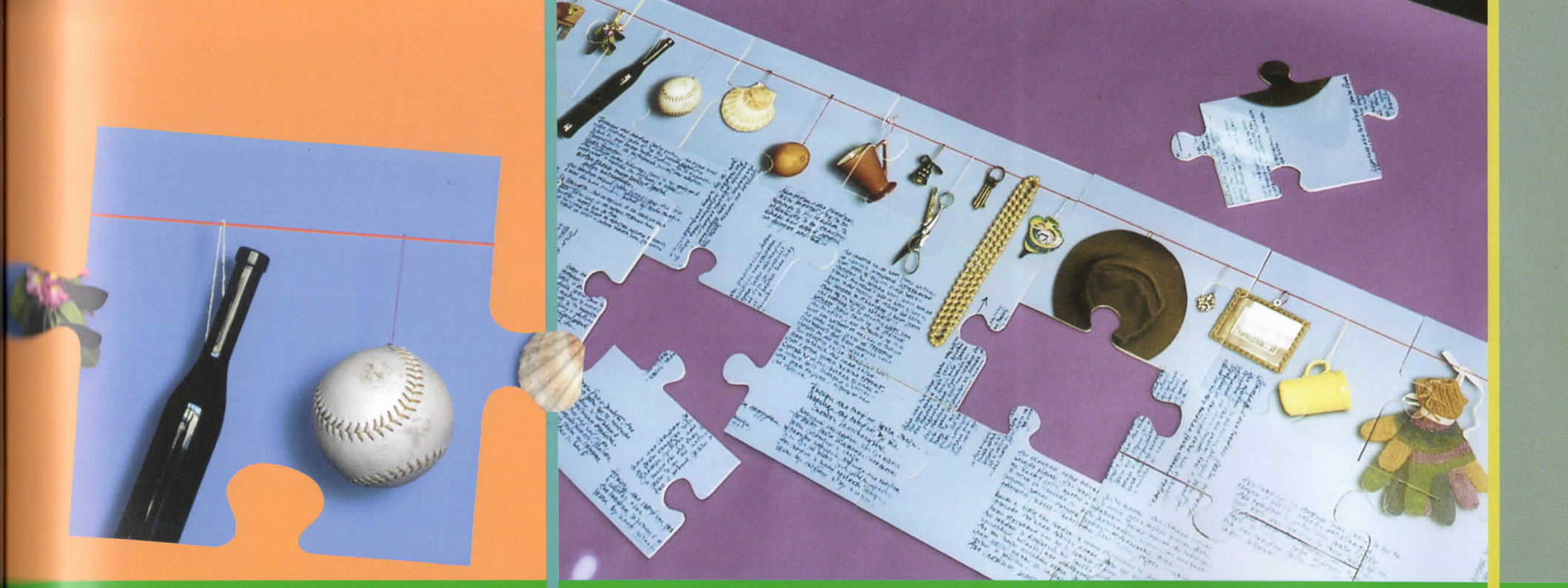


Elena Panayotova

What do dreams look like and can you "touch" them? Do they disappear when they turn into reality? They live in us – immaterial, fragile and hesitant, they possess us and sometimes leave us, without rhyme or reason.

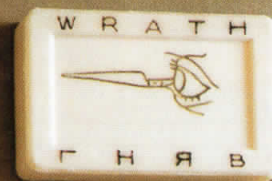
Dreams are impossible without love and without the sense of freedom.





Morpheus' Dictionary or Beginners – 33 color photographs, foam core, 56 x 274 cm



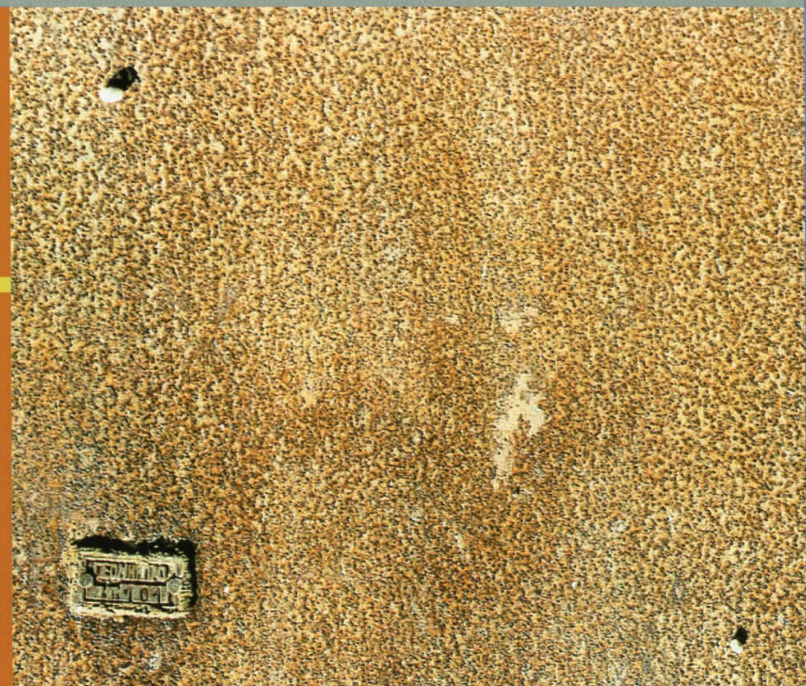


Seven – Wood, glass, cardboard, clay, nails, paper, soap, cord, putty, feathers, wool, stones, popcorn, sand, buttons, cloth, grass, acrylic colors, 170/93/24 cm





A la recherche du temps - 7 color photographs, 50 cm height each



Goods Girl / Bat Girls - 2 color prints, 100 x 70 cm each





The Rustling Of Undelivered Letters – lasts, paper pulp, plaster, acrylic colors, various size



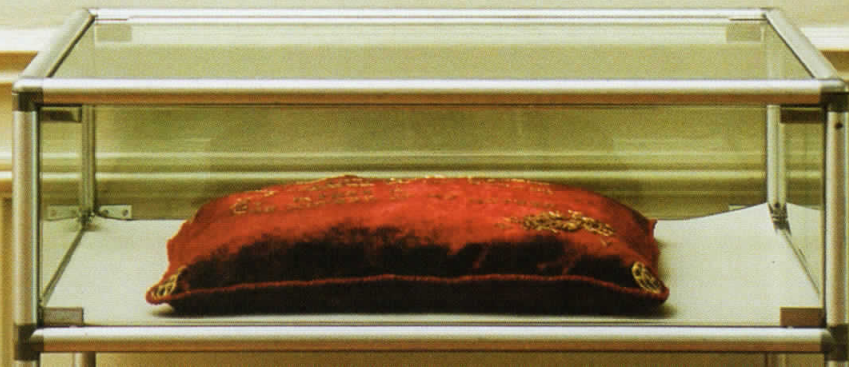


Jelica Radovanovic



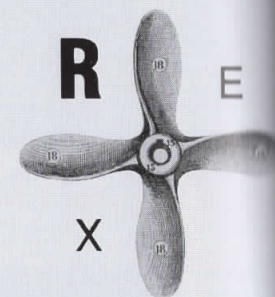
MY GRANDMOTHER IS THE FATHER OF MY MOTHER
MY MOTHER IS THE MOTHER OF MY FATHER
MY FATHER IS THE MOTHER OF MY MOTHER

ДНЕВИ
ОД
ЈЕЛИЦЕ
РАДОВАНОВИЋ

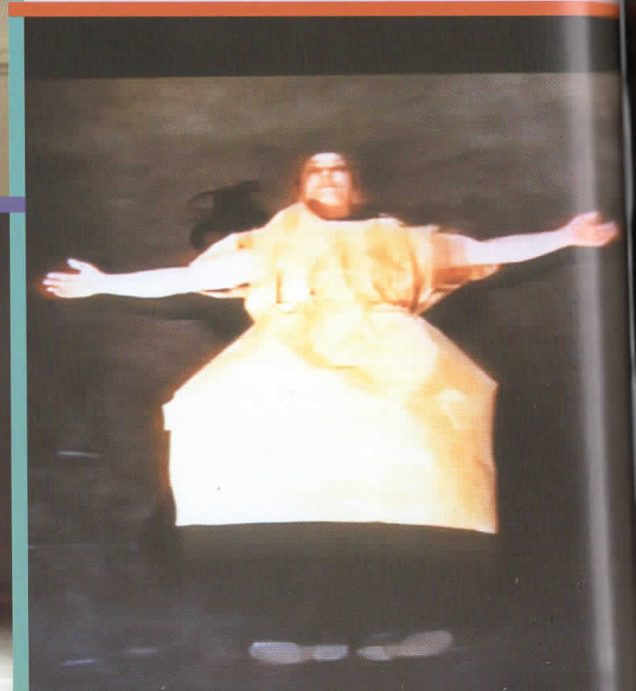




Play (Igra) –
video, pencil drawings, cord



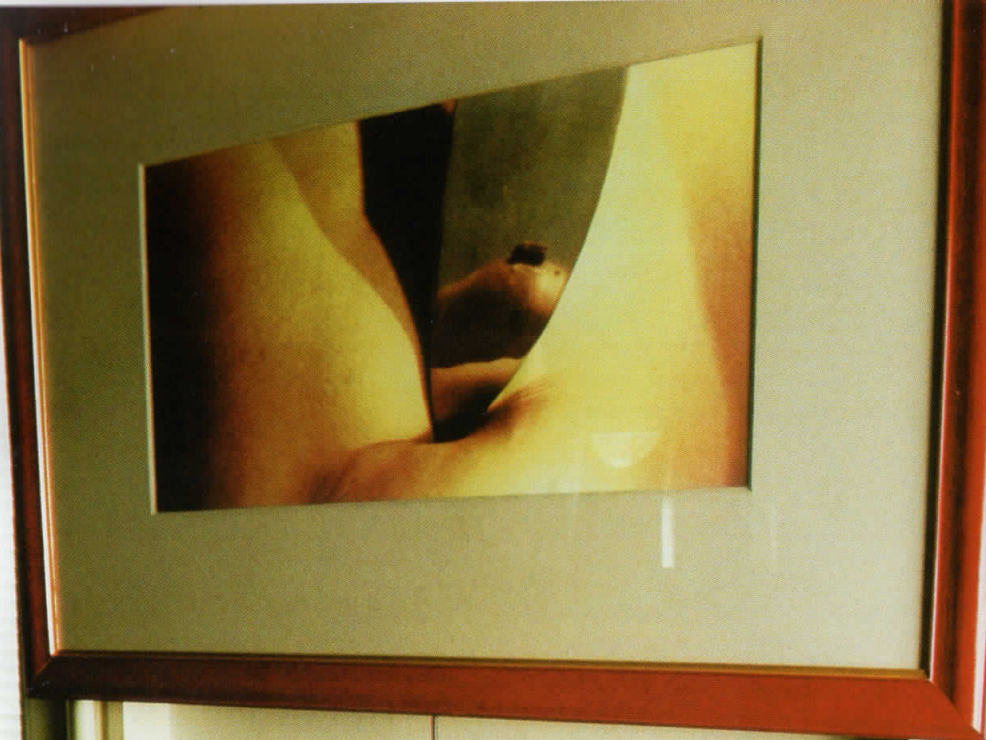
This work has been executed in collaboration with Ister Teatar, dancer Jelena Jovic, music Nenad Jelic, camera Vladimir Micunovic. Post-production partly supported by the REX Cinema.

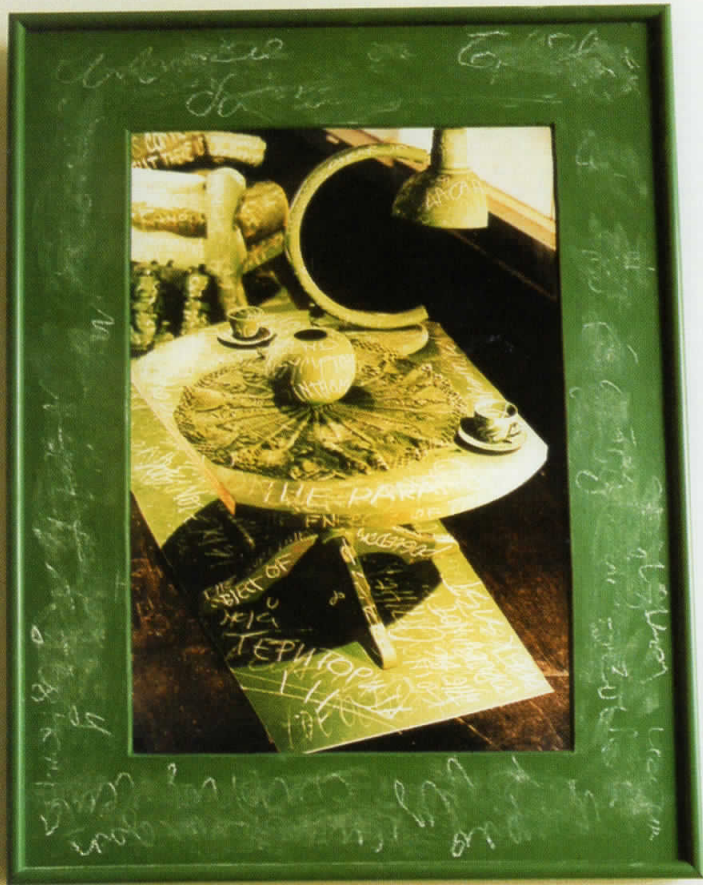




Jelica Radovanović











Head –
video, dough baby



Marija Vauda

PIONEERS OF GREY ZONES

My concept of the exhibition *The Dream of My Life* is to exhibit a multiplied almost identical situation in all of the five rooms and all of the five topics. The artistic action is the motion which precedes and produces meaning. Without the concept of Art, without an efficient language which such art produces, not one independence-cum-defiance beauty would attain meaning which is detected through it by the transparency of the surface.

This exhibition provokes, makes transparent the different indices of minority (woman-minority, artist-minority, artistic action-minority, number-minority, nation-minority, personality/individual-minority, choice-minority). Thus it corresponds to my status and life – the production of meaning in that status, in that zone. That is why I decided, once again, to advocate rhetorically the Space/Zone which cannot be inhabited (VERWERFUNG). It is that socially unacceptable space that I choose, mostly isolated but densely populated, and because of all the characteristics necessary in order to define, describe and expand the area of the subject. Aware how much the role of the subject is subversive with regards to cloned and hypnotic social contracts on which the history of gender is based in most cases.

Repetition/seriality/monochromy of almost the same work in 5 invariants represents the persistence of the very exclusion of minority to comfortably inhabit its space-region, for the

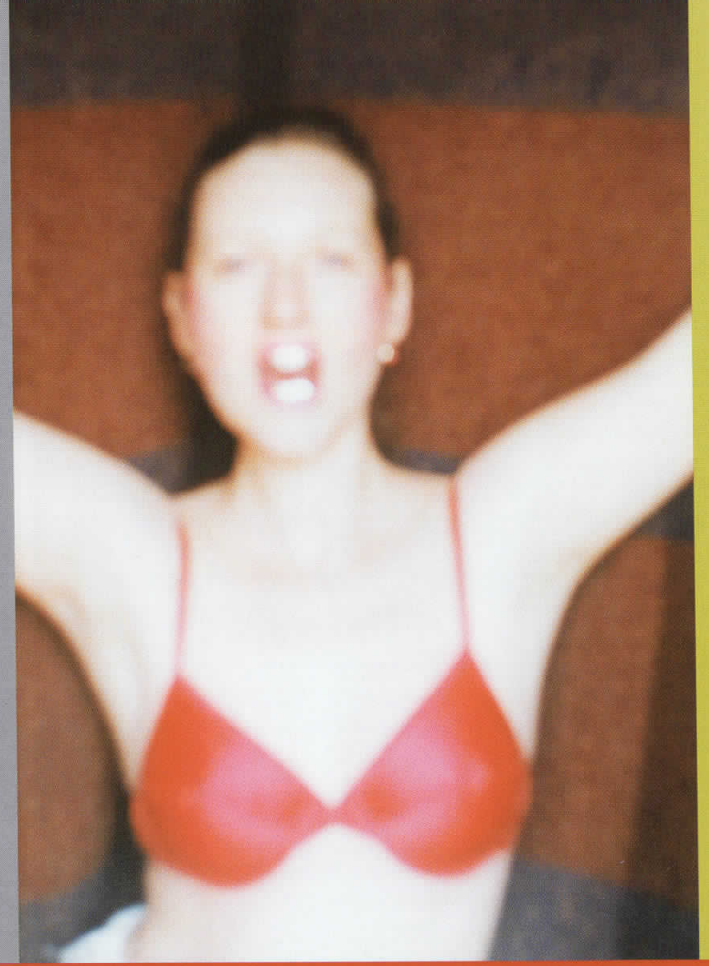


A photograph of a striped banner with the word 'VERWERFUNG' written on it, and a dark blue dress on a mannequin in the foreground. The banner is made of a material with horizontal stripes in shades of red, green, and blue. The word 'VERWERFUNG' is printed in large, bold, black capital letters. The dress is a dark blue, short-sleeved, form-fitting garment. It is positioned on a mannequin that is partially visible. The background is a light-colored, textured surface, possibly a wall or a backdrop. The overall composition is artistic and conceptual.

VERWERFUNG

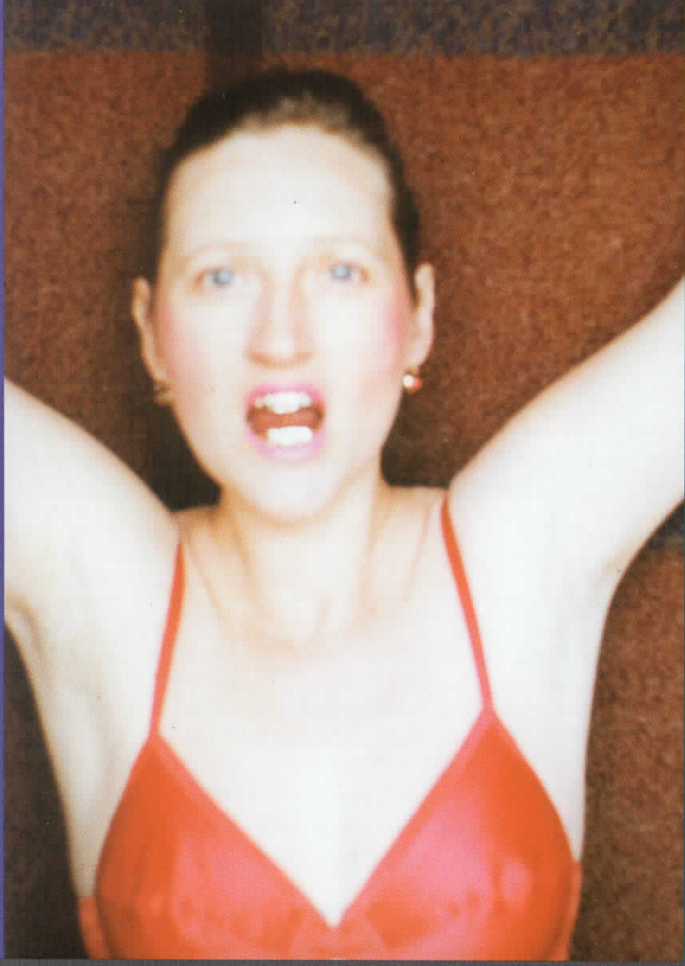
minority to divide in as many parts as it can, to produce, so that the plurality would also be exposed as the one who bears the zone of creativity and thus the language of criticism.

Language buzzes and is being sharpened in all the grey/ghettoized/utopian/undemocratic zones. The figure, personality, subject/identity is autistic, rejected, isolated and unnecessary, thus it is unavoidably self-satisfied, optimistic because it steals language (language of the nation, language of a foreigner, language of psychology, language of economy, language of new technology, forgotten languages, language of medicine, language of globalization and all kinds of alienations, desintegrations, deconstructions, disorientation and dehumanizations, deterritorizations, de- of de-) and intensifies its permanent satisfaction from them.



Noises Of The House

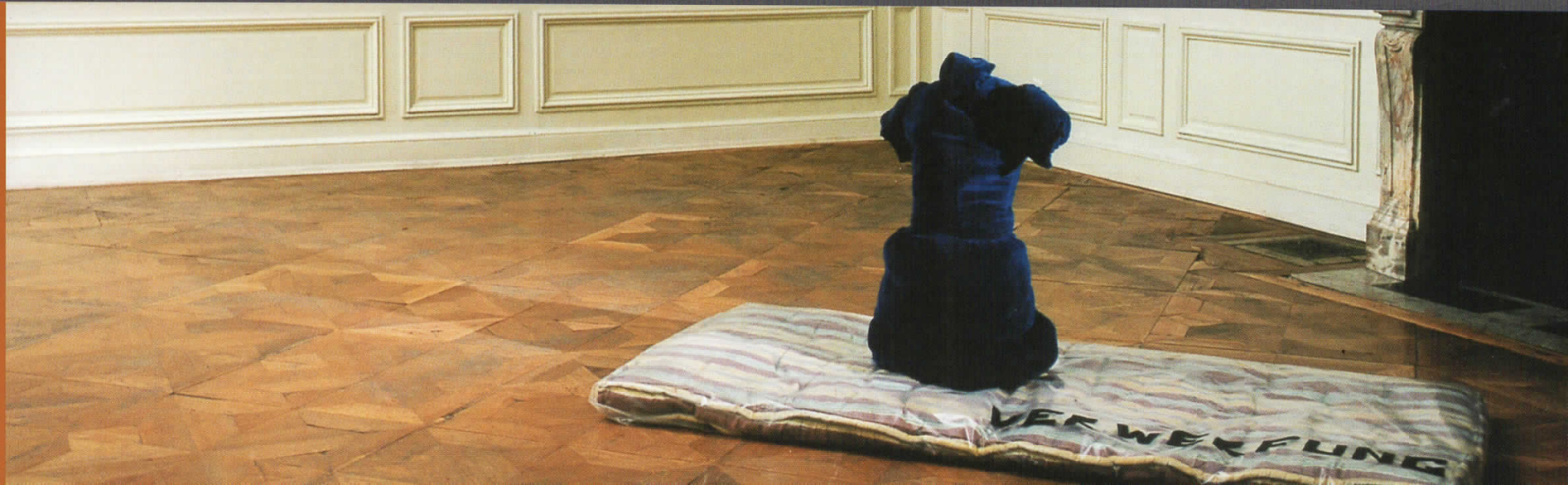




The Kitchen – A Repository Of Family Dreams

Dances Of The Archangels / A Garden Of Flowers

Marija Vauda





Have Fun
Good Girls / Bad Girls





Pioneers of Grey Zones – textile puppets, mattress, nylon, acrylic color, framed photographs



Pioneers of Grey Zones –
textile puppets, mattress, nylon,
acrylic color, framed photographs







Mirela Dauceanu

The, THE or THi, def. art. Used before nouns with a specifying or limiting effect; used before adjectives and adverbs in the comparative degree it means by so much.

Dream/s, drem, n. The thought of a person in sleep; a vain fancy.-vi. To have images in the mind, in sleep; to imagine; to think idly. -vt. To see in a dream; to spend idly.;

Dreamless, drem'les, a. Free from dreams. **Dreamy**, drem'i, a. Full of dreams;

Of, ov, prep. Denoting source, cause, motive, possession, quality, condition, material; concerning, relating to, about.

My, mi, pron. The possessive case sing. of I; belonging to me.

Life, ilf, n.; pl. **Lives**, livz. State of animals and plants in which natural functions are performed; vitality; present state of existence; time from birth to death; manner of living; spirit; vivacity; the living from; exact resemblance; rank in society; human affairs; a person; narrative of a life; eternal facility.



My, mi, pron. The possessive case sing. of I; belonging to me.

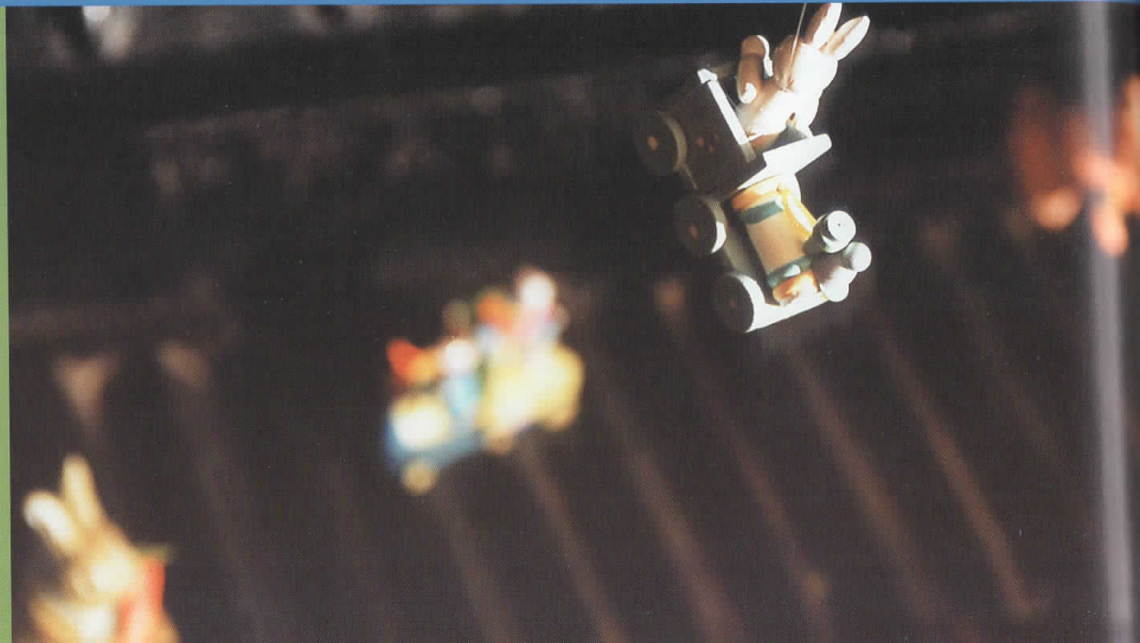
Museum, mu-ze'um, n. A repository of interesting objects/dreams connected with the artist experience/life

Of, ov, prep. Denoting source, cause, motive, possession, quality, condition, material; concerning, relating to, about.

Contemporary, kon-tem'po-ra-ry, a. Living of occurring at the same time. -n. One who lives at the same time with another.

Dream/s, drem, n. The thought of a person in sleep; a vain fancy.-vi. To have images in the mind, in sleep; to imagine; to think idly. -vt. To see in a dream; to spend idly. **Dreamer**, drem'er, n. One who dreams; a fanciful artist; a visionary. **Dreamless**, drem'les, a. Free from dreams. **Dreamy**, drem'i, a. Full of dreams.

Mirela Dauceanu



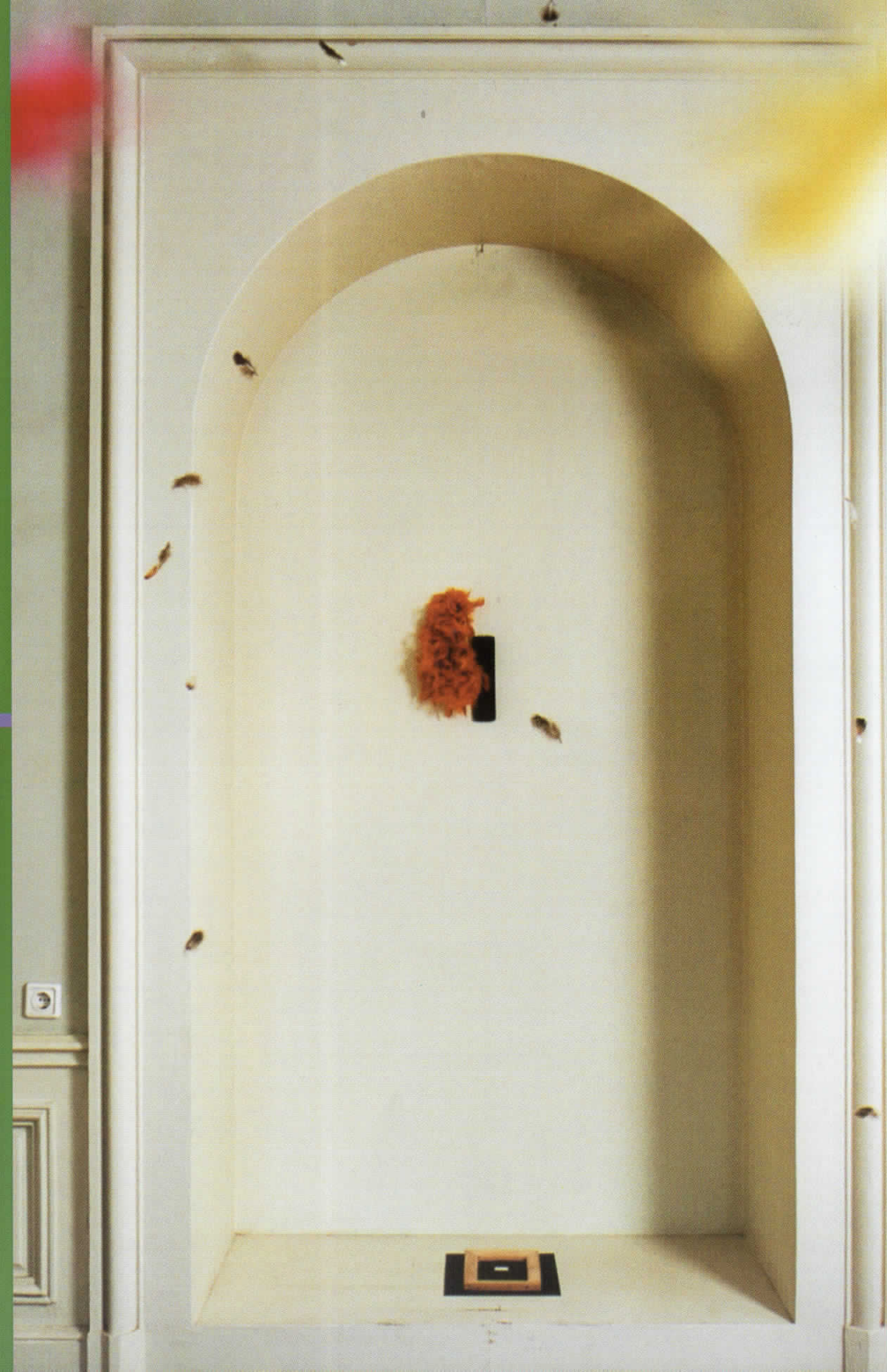
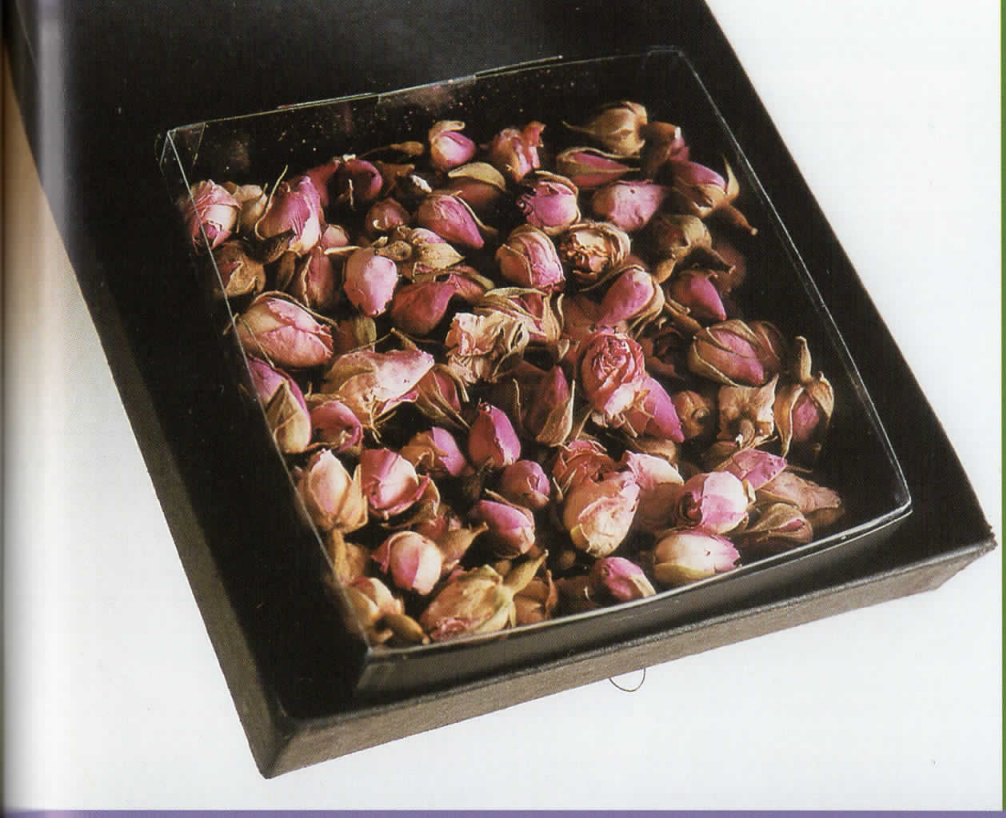




My Museum of Contemporary Dreams –
feathers, string, toys, objects, various size







Monika Moteska

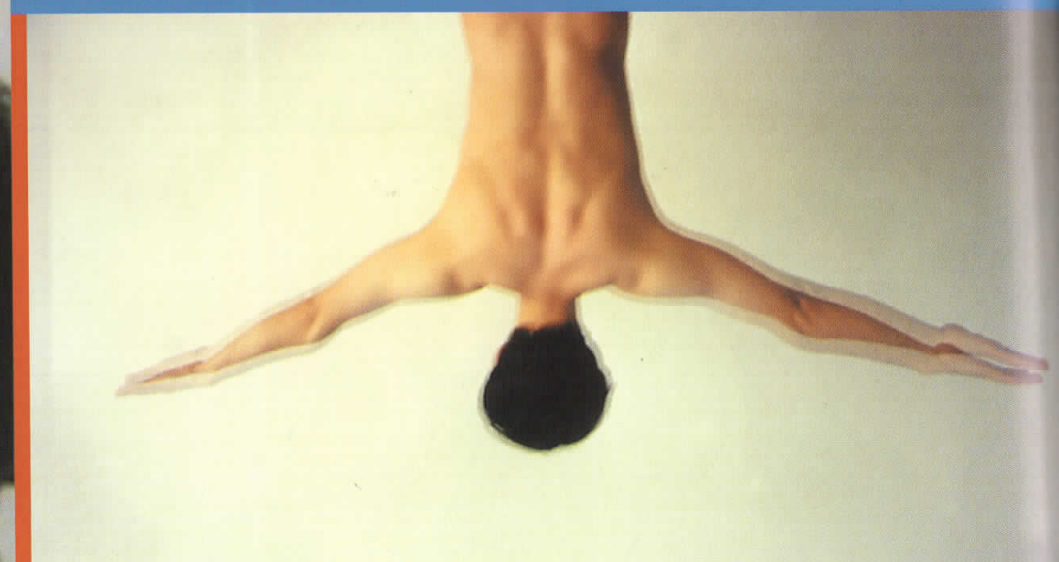
THE DREAM OF MY LIFE

Sometimes our dream can be something unfulfilled, distant and far away, captured by birds of prey. But sometimes, just for a moment, they can take us to another world, to Elvira's world (travesty), who becomes a bride just for a moment. However, will birdman's dream (Icarus) come true? Are we going to keep our dreams after our death?

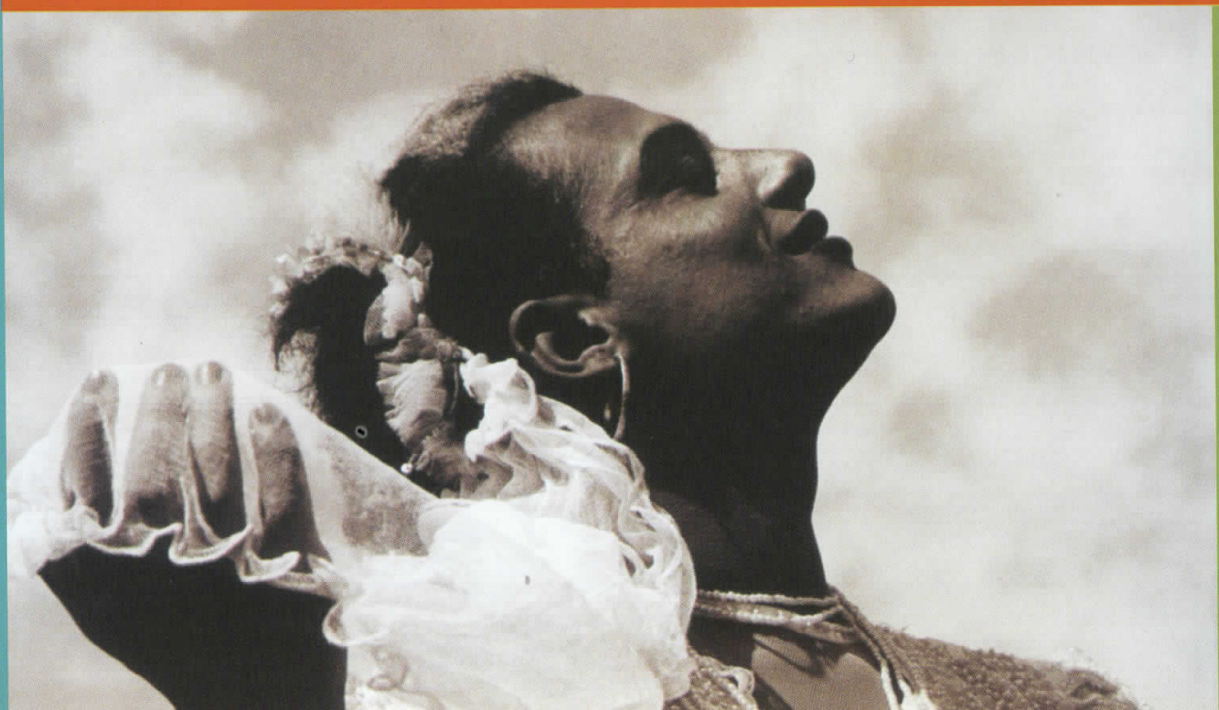




Still Life or Silence – photo installation, 2 photographs, 50 x 80 cm each













Dance

Video, camera Robert
Jankuloski, editing
Blaze Dulev



Monika Romenska

*"Beautiful Soup,
so rich and green,
waiting in a hot tureen!
Who for such dainties
would not stoop?
Soup of the evening,
beautiful Soup!..."*

Song of the Mock
Turtle from
*Alice's Adventures
in Wonderland*
(Lewis Carroll)

Turtle soup
1 average-sized turtle
1 onion
1 1/4 pint white wine (550 dl)
2 table spoonfuls of cream (to be added just before serving)
3 table spoonfuls of olive oil
5 juniper cones
a pinch of rosemary
10-15 black pepper grains
salt to taste

The first water is thrown out after boiling. The soup may also be thickened, according to taste. A good idea is to add 4-5 drops of Worcester sauce.





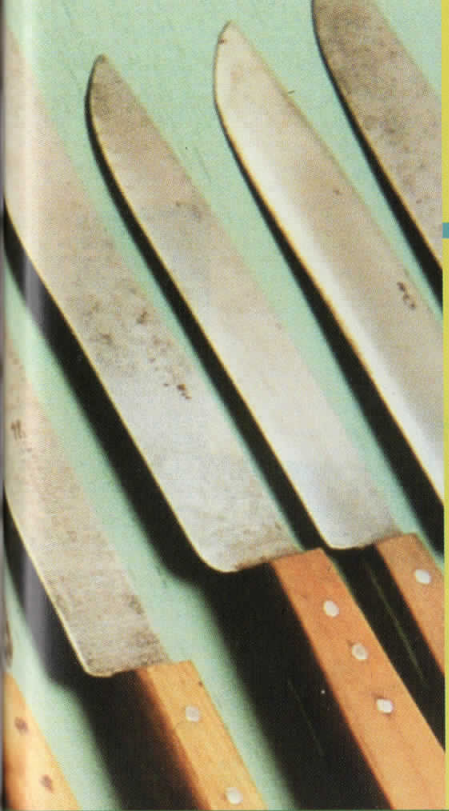
Dances Of The Archangels / A Garden Of Flowers – bottles, paper boats, metal string, various size

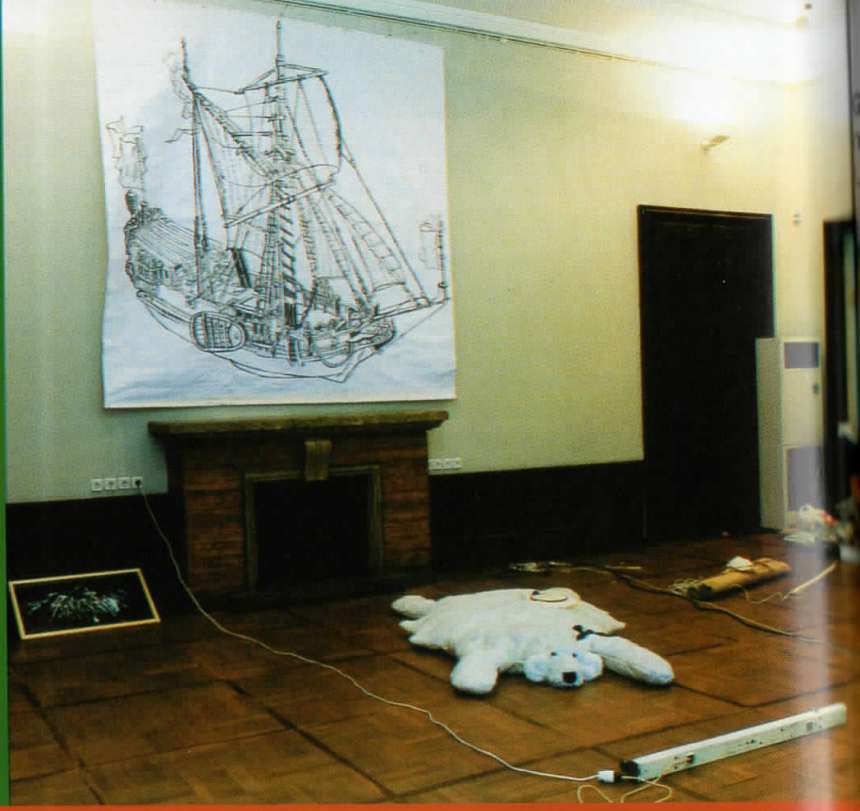
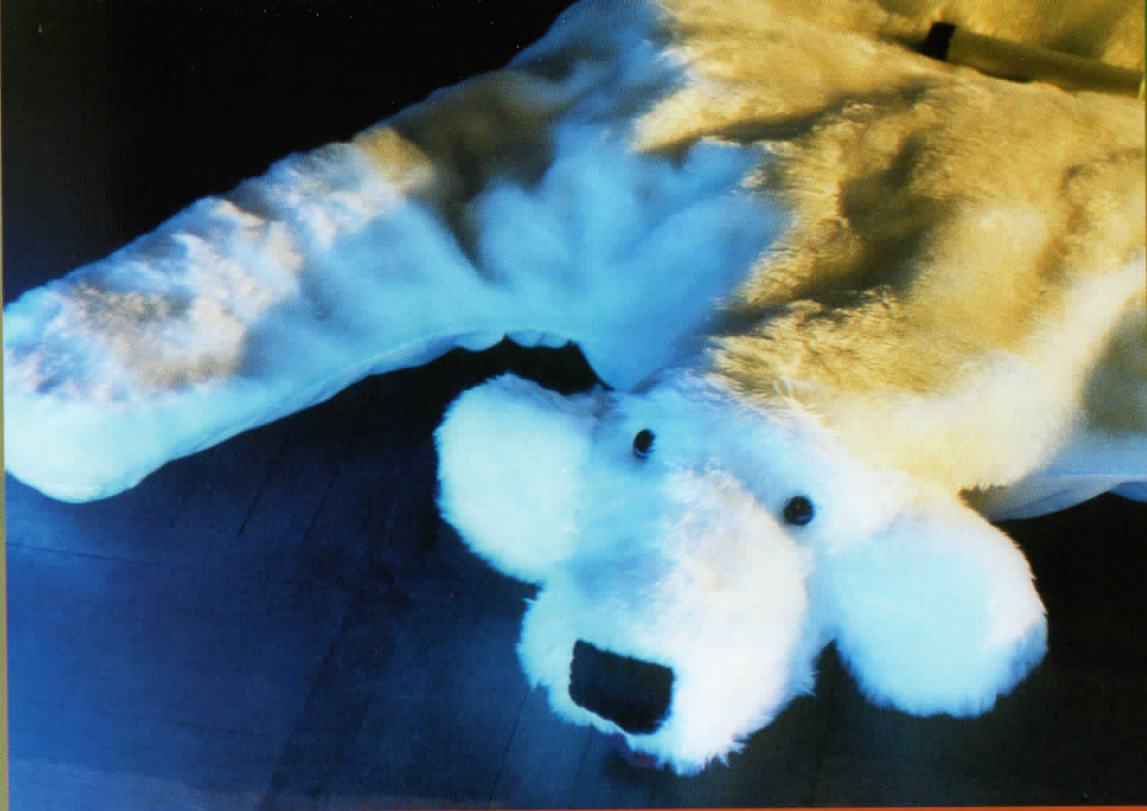


Холандска швертова яхта от 1680 г.



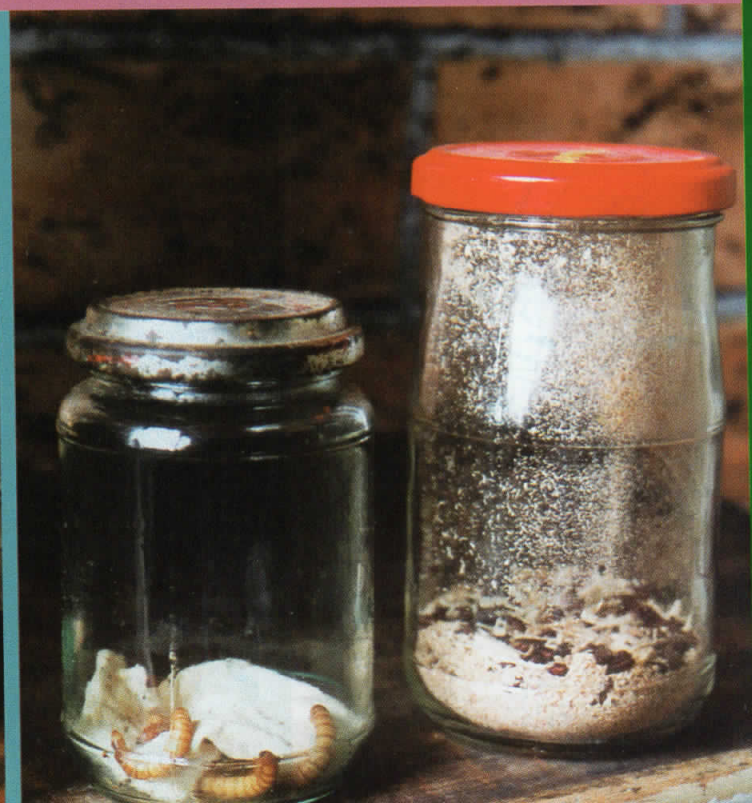
The Kitchen – A Repository Of Family Dreams – wooden table, metal tools and instruments, framed picture, wall paper, 260 x 80 x 40 cm



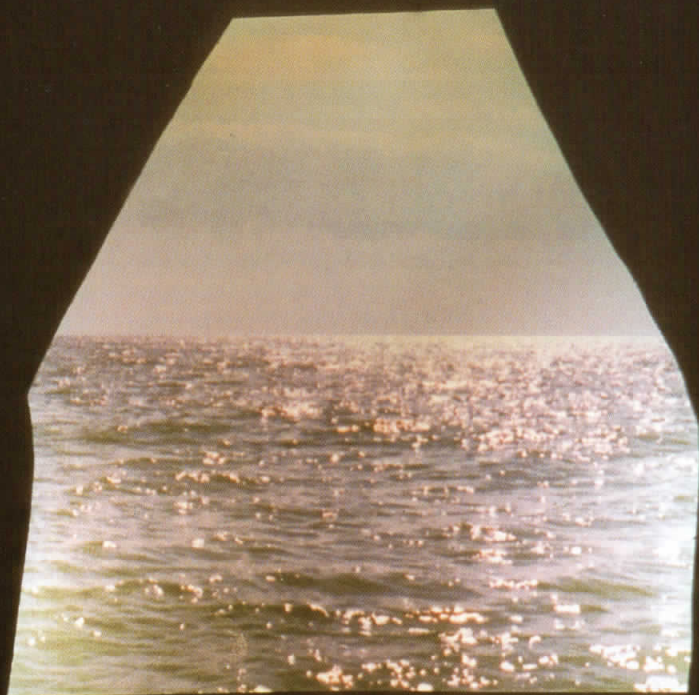


Good Girls / Bad Girls – ink drawing,
material, binoculars, embroidery frame,
UV light, various size

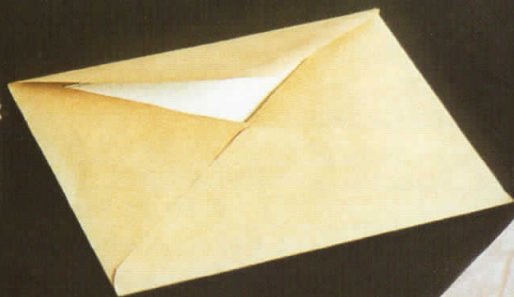




Noises Of The House – wooden table, jars, worms, metal tool, wall paper, framed picture, 260 x 80 x 40 cm



Have Fun – wooden table, wall paper, wooden box, photograph, light, letter, embroidery, 260 x 80 x 40 cm



Biographies

Ana Stojkovic

Born in Skopje, Macedonia in 1971.
Graduated in Graphics at the Faculty for Fine Arts, Skopje – 1997.

Solo Projects:

1998 – Skopje, Before Any Text, Museum of the City of Skopje [O.G.A.S.]
1997 – Skopje, Printed Project, Youth Cultural Center

Group Projects:

2000 – Berlin, Germany, 12 Graphic Art Positions from Macedonia, Southeastern Europe Cultural Center
Skopje, Graphic Art Experiment, Open Graphic Art Studio
1999 – Istanbul, Turkey, Always Already Apocalypse, Yuksel Sabanci Art Center
Skopje, The First Peep Show in the City, CIX Gallery
Skopje, Narcissism(s), Museum of Contemporary Art
Skopje, Always Already Apocalypse, Institute for Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology
1998 – Skopje, Mak-Graf [the fourth & the fifth chapter], Open Graphic Art Studio
Dresden, Germany, 12 Graphic Art Positions from Macedonia, Kulturrathaus
Skopje, Tendencies 98, Museum of the City of Skopje
1997 – Skopje, International Student Art Biennial, Museum of the City of Skopje
1997 – Annual Faculty Award

Address:

Ana Stojkovic, Jurij Gagarin 25/37,
91000 Skopje, R.Macedonia
phone: ++ 381 91 380 729,
e-mail: fyrma@lycos.com

Aurora Dediu

Born 1970 in Braila, Romania
Graduated Academy of Arts, Bucharest 1994.

Participations:

1998 – Internship – Manifesta 2 Info-Lab, Luxembourg
1998 – Internship – Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart

Personal exhibitions:

2001 – Feminine Archeology (project in collaboration with Magda Carneci), International Centre for Contemporary Art, Bucharest
2000 – Melancholia, GAD Photogallery, National Theatre 3/4, Bucharest
2000 – Sindan Cultural Center, Cluj
1999 – International Centre for Contemporary Art, Bucharest

Selected group exhibitions:

2001 – The Dream of My Life, National Gallery of Art, Sofia, Bulgaria
2000 – In Full Dress, Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu
1997 – The Shadow, Hungarian Museum of Photography, Kecskemet, Hungary
1996 – Una Finestra sull'Est, Galeria San Filippo Neri, Torino, Italy
1996 – Project 2000 Contest, Palazzo Bricherasio, Torino, Italy
1996 – Experiment in Romanian Art between 1960s-1990's, Artexpo Gallery, Bucharest

Address:

Biserica Amzei 7-9, 70172 – Bucharest, sector 1, Romania
phone: +40-1- 210 0642 / 223 0067 / 410.10.66; e-mail: dediua@hotmail.com
www. romanian-art.com

David D'Agostino

American artist and curator.
He has actively exhibited in galleries and museums in the USA, the Middle East, Spain and Bulgaria.

Address:

24 Krum Popov St.
BG – 1412 Sofia, Bulgaria
phone: +359.2.653285
e-mail: artemoderno@email.com

Elena Panayotova

Born in 1964 in Sofia, Bulgaria.
Graduated Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts, Sofia – 1989.

Selected solo exhibitions:

After Balchik, Art 36 Gallery, Sofia – 1994
Domestic Objects, Art 36 Gallery, Sofia – 1996
The World After Nora, Ata-ray Gallery, Sofia – 1997
Works On And Out Of Paper, Embassy of Switzerland, Sofia – 1997
A Bit In Jest, A Bit In Earnest, AVE Gallery, Sofia – 1998
The Lucid Dreams Of My Grandmothers, Kaire-Desine Gallery, Vilnius – 1999

Selected group exhibitions:

National Youth Show, Shipka Gallery,
Sofia – 1989
CH=BG=Izložba=Ausstellung, Sofia,
Varna – 1994
Exchange, Ata-ray Gallery, Sofia – 1996
ARTEST Show, Kunsthalle Palazzo,
Liestal, Switzerland – 1996
Ist & IInd International Artist's Book
Triennials, Vilnius – 1997, 2001
National Drawing Exhibition, Shipka
Gallery, Sofia – 1997 and 1998
Black, Grey, White, Sofia and Kerava,
Finland – 1997
Contemporary Bulgarian Art, Parts I & II,
Collection of the National Gallery, National
Palace of Culture, Sofia – 1997/98
Erato's Version, Shipka Gallery, Sofia –
1997
Caprice, ATA Center for Contemporary
Arts, Sofia and Gallery for Graphics and
Work with Paper, Plovdiv – 1998
Annual Show of the Soros Center for
Contemporary Arts, Art Gallery, Varna –
1999
Obsession, Central Mineral Bath, Sofia –
1999
Bulgaria, NY, New York – 2000
Communication. Experience of
Interaction, Almaty, Kazakhstan – 2000
The Imaginary Temple, Aladja Monastery,
Varna and Municipal Gallery, Sofia – 2000
Don't Look at Me This Way, Shipka
Gallery, Sofia – 2001
3rd International Graphics Triennial,
Sofia – 2001
24th International Biennial of Printing
Techniques, Ljubljana, Slovenia – 2001

Address:

30, Patriarch Evtimi Blvd., 1000 Sofia,
Bulgaria

Phone: +359.2.953 01 65
+359.2.68 30 62
+359.88.79 54 20

e-mail: nefertiti@sf.icn.bg,
elenkata1@hotmail.com

Jasmina Cubrilo

Born in Belgrade in 1967.
Studied law and art history.
1995 graduated the Faculty of
Philosophy, Department of Art History in
Belgrade.
1998 Master's degree at the same
Faculty.
During her studies she worked as collab-
orator on various programmes at the
Gallery of the Students' Cultural Centre in
Belgrade. Published texts on arts (art criti-
cism, essays, reviews) since 1986 in vari-
ous magazines and newspapers (*Student*,
Mladost, *Vreme*, *Rex*, *Projeka(r)t*, *Nasha*
Borba, *Danas*, *ProFemina*), and in exhibition
catalogues. In 1998 she published the book
Belgrade's Art Scene – 90's.
For a series of texts published in the
magazine for literature and culture *Rex* she
received the Lazar Trifunovic Award (1997)
Author or co-author of exhibitions, as
well as member of various juries.
For two years researcher at the Faculty
of Philosophy, Department of Art History in
Belgrade.
Since 1998 teaching assistant in History
of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Art
Academy in Novi Sad.

Address:

Jovana Zujovica 16
11 040 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Phone: +381.11.660969
+381.64.1396935
e-mail: jasminaz@yubc.net

Jelica Radovanovic

Born in 1957 in Dubrovnik, Croatia,
Yugoslavia. Graduated painting at the
Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade.

Works together with Dejan Andjelkovic –
since 1991. They participated in groups as
SWEET DREAMS BABY, PROJEKT GALERIJA
and MIGRATIVE ART.

Selected solo exhibitions:

Gallery of Dom omladine, Belgrade –
1988 and 1992
34. October Salon, 25th May Museum,
Belgrade - 1993
Installations, National Museum, Belgrade
– 1994
Experiences From Memory, Radio B 92,
Belgrade – 1995
A Look At The Wall, Cinema REX,
Belgrade – 1996
Off Bitef, Alter Image, BELEF, Belgrade –
1988
Project Signs
Project Europartrain, Horn, Amsterdam,
Holland – 1998

Selected group exhibitions:

Das Geschlossene System, Krems,
Austria – 1993
Led Art/Urbazone, Action no.6, Gallery of
Dom omladine, Belgrade – 1993
Terra, Gallery of Contemporary Art of
National Museum, Kikinda – 1993
Stories About Archetypes, Gallery 73,
Belgrade – 1993/94



ArtVrt, Cinema REX, Belgrade – 1994
 Unbelievable/Gaze Scenes, Cinema REX,
 Belgrade – 1995

The Masters Of Belgrade Alternative,
 Gospodar Vasin Konak of National Museum,
 Kraljevo – 1996

10 Seconds Before Murder, Konak
 knjeginje Ljubice, Belgrade – 1997

De Valigia, Train Station, Belgrade and
 Budapest – 1997, Vienna – 1998

The Critics Have Chosen 98, Gallery of
 Kulturni centar, Belgrade – 1998

Body And The East, Modern Gallery,
 Ljubljana – 1998

Balkan Answer, St. Petersburg – 1998
 Video Art In Serbia, Bitef Theater,
 Belgrade – 1999

Dossier Serbien, Akademie der Kunste,
 Berlin – 2000, and Vienna – 2001

Address:

22, Vukasoviceva Str., 11090 Beograd,
 Sebia, Yugoslavia
 Phone: +381.0.11.596 699
 E-mail: symptom@eunet.yu

Iskra Trayanova

Born on 25 March 1961 in Sofia.

Curator and critic. Studied and graduat-
 ed with honours art history at the Karl Marx
 University in Leipzig.

1987 – Started work as curator/art critic
 at the Western Art Department of the
 Gallery for Foreign Art of the St. St. Cyril
 and Methodius International Foundation,
 Sofia.

1990 – Postgraduate student with a
 scholarship of the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen
 and Halbach Foundation in Munich on
 European art nouveau.

1994, July – scholarship of the
 International Summer Academy for Cultural
 Management in Salzburg and Vienna.

1996-97 – expert in the International
 Cooperation and European Integration
 Department at the Ministry of Culture,
 Sofia.

1997-98 – expert/art critic at the St. St.
 Cyril and Methodius International
 Foundation, Sofia.

Since 1998 – Head of the European
 Painting Department at the National Gallery
 for Foreign Art, Sofia. Contributing to a
 number of specialised editions devoted to
 the problems of modern art. Curator of a
 number of solo and group exhibitions.

Address:

1000 Sofia, 45 Solunska Street
 Tel./Fax: (+359-2) 987 98 48
 e-mail: iskratrayanova@hotmail.com

Maja Cankulovska

Born 1976 in Skopje, Republic of
 Macedonia. Graduated at the St. Cyril and
 Methodius University, Faculty of Philosophy,
 History of Art and Archaeology, 1998.
 Currently finishes her post-graduation stud-
 ies in Contemporary Art at the St. Cyril and
 Methodius University, Skopje, Macedonia.
 Since 1997 she has worked as art critic.
 More than 200 published articles concerning
 Macedonian contemporary art, various proj-
 ects, etc.



Address:

Vodenska 1-2-5, 1000 Skopje,
 Republic of Macedonia
 Phone: +389.2.367 637; +389.2.339 147
 E-mail: majacankulovska@yahoo.com

Marija Vauda

Born in 1961 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia.
 Graduated sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade (1986).

Selected solo exhibitions:

- Sculptures and drawings, Pinki Gallery, Zemun - 1986
- Installation Aquarium, Municipal Library, Belgrade - 1992
- Sculpture, Most Gallery, Belgrade - 1992
- Performance Yellow Sky, Students' Cultural Center Gallery, Belgrade - 1992
- Performance Parallels - Sounded Breathing, Students' Cultural Center Gallery, Belgrade - 1993
- Installation MV, Dom Omladine Gallery, Belgrade - 1994

- Installation Betons, Students' Cultural Center Gallery, Belgrade - 1995
- Installation Sculpture, Gallery Center for Visual Culture, Novi Sad, and Center for Cultural Decontamination, Veljkovic Pavilion, Belgrade - 1996
- Video Obsession, Belgrade - 1997
- Performance Obsession 2, video Medea, Novi Sad - 1998
- Photography, Museum of Contemporary Arts, Belgrade - 1999
- Installation Chain of Luck, Singidunum Gallery, Belgrade - 2001

Address:

29 Novembar 74
 11 000 Beograd, Yugoslavia
 Phone: +381.11.764 152
 e--mail: manik@ptt.yu

Mirela Dauceanu

Born 1965 in Constanza, Romania.
 Graduated 1994, Bucharest Art University

Selected exhibitions:

- 2000 - In full dress, Sibiu Brukenthal Museum
- Ephemer Art Festival, META Cultural Foundation
- 1997 - Der gruene Punkt, 35 Studio, Eforie Gallery, Bucharest
- PERIFERIC 1 - Performance Festival, French Cultural Center, Iasi
- 1994 - Essay of Compare Art, National Art Museum, Bucharest
- 1992 - Mozart's Sex, ¾ Gallery, National Theatre, Bucharest
- 1991 - cARTe/author's book, Collection Museum, Bucharest

International exhibitions:

- 1999 - Romanian Contemporary Art, Munich, Germany
- 1998 - Process Space Festival, Balchik, Bulgaria
- 1997 - Progetto 2000, Palazzo Bricherasio Gallery, Turin, Italy
- 1996 - Art Across Oceans, Copenhagen, Denmark
- Una Finestra sull Est, San Fillipo Gallery, Turin, Italy



1995 – CODEX-/author's book,
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
1994 – Romanian Contemporary Art,
Moscow, Russia
IMPAKT Art Festival – Kyoto/Japan –
1993, 1994

Address:

103-105 Calea Victoriei B/34, Bucharest 1
tel: +40.1.610 5782;
mobile: +40.94 344847;
fax: +40.1.313 5111;
e-mail: mirela@icca.ro

Monika Moteska

Born in Prilep, Macedonia in 1971.
Graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts
in Skopje in 1996.

Solo exhibitions:

1994 – Suli An Gallery, Skopje
1996 – The Big Blue, Youth Culture
Center, Skopje

1998 – Achilles' Heel, CIX Gallery,
Skopje
Fire Eater, Vienna, Austria
Selected group shows:
1995 – SIAB 2, Daut Pashin Amam,
Skopje

1997 – Chifte Amam 3, Old Turkish Bath,
Skopje

Graphic Art Experiment, Open Graphic
Art Studio, Skopje

1998 – Doma Omladine Gallery,
Belgrade, Yugoslavia

Radiations, Recent Macedonian Fine Art,
Munich, Germany; Pavilion Veljkovic,
Belgrade; Museum of Contemporary Art,
Skopje; Tokyo, Japan

1999 – Narcissism(s), Museum of
Contemporary Art, Skopje

2000 – Women of the World, White
Columns, New York, USA; Stockholm,
Sweden

Women Creators of The Two Seas,
Thessaloniki, Greece

Transformations, Modern Macedonian
Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Skopje

Address:

Vera Jocic 12A 1/17, 1000 Skopje,
Macedonia
Phone: +389.2.432 429
+389.70.231 055
e-mail: moteskam@yahoo.com

Monika Romenska

Born 1958 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.
Graduated from the Graphic Faculty at the
National Academy of Fine Arts in Sofia
(1983). Specialisation in graphic techniques
at Rossler Studio – Leipzig, Germany
(1988). Member of the EDGE group for con-
ceptual art (from 1989). Scholarships in
Scuol and Boswil, Switzerland.

Member of the Union of Bulgarian
Artists.

Selected solo shows:

Graphics and installations, Plovdiv –
1985, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1996



Graphic studio Rossler, Leipzig, Germany
– 1988

Die Worte, Sgraffito and The Fish Is Not
So Far Away, Installation – Kulturzentrum
Scuol-Nairs, Switzerland – 1995

The Other Things, Plovdiv, Sofia and
Varna – 1996

1-30, Installation, Plovdiv – 1996

Mountains Are Media, Installation,
Zurich, Switzerland – 1998

Swiss Fields Forever, Installation, Boswil,
Switzerland – 1999

Belles De Jour, Installation, Ata Center,
Sofia – 2000

Exhibitions and actions
with EDGE Group:

Symbols and Signs, Plovdiv, Blagoevgrad
– 1990; Black Happening, Root High In The
Sky, Plovdiv – 1990; Big Photography,
Plovdiv 1991; Ideal, Plovdiv, Balchik –
1992; Obvious Breakfast, Balchik – 1993;
Object As In Bulgarian, Sofia; Opus-
Probject, Plovdiv – 1993; N-Forms, Annual
Soros Exhibition, Sofia – 1994; 4 of EDGE,
Swiss Embassy Residence, Sofia – 2000

Selected Group Projects:

Looking For Your Own Reflection, Plovdiv
– 1994

The Plastic Image of The 90s, Sofia –
1996

The Man – The Document, Week of
Contemporary Arts, Plovdiv – 1996

Erato's Version, Sofia – 1997

Ars Ex Natio, Annual Soros Exhibition,
Plovdiv – 1997

Arts. Money, Plovdiv – 1997

Caprice, Sofia, Plovdiv – 1998

Labyrinth, Prague – 1998

Archive, Sofia – 1998

Obsession, Sofia – 1999

Recipes, Sofia – 1999

Bacterium Bulgaricum Arts, Riga, Latvia
– 1999

Participations in numerous international
exhibitions and Biennials in Gabrovo, Varna,
Leipzig, Burgwedel (Germany), Tuzla
(Yugoslavia), Ferol (Spain), Plymouth (USA),
Istanbul (Turkey), London (UK), Maastricht
(Netherlands), Vilnius, (Lithuania), Prague
(Czech Republic), Riga (Latvia)

Address:

13 Rodopi Street, 4000 Plovdiv

Tel. +359 32 628840

e-mail address: romenska.monika@post.bg

Veronica Marin

Born 1974 in Constanza, Romania

Graduated from the Ion Mincu University
of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest,
2000

Works as editor of the *Arhitext* Design
magazine, President of the NGO Asociatia
Tranzitia Urbana (ATU); works as art critic,
architect and urbanist.

Lives and works in Bucharest.

Address:

Str. General Dona, nr. 6, sector 1,
Bucharest

Phone: +40 1 416886

mobile phone: +40 93577595

e-mail: veramarin@hotmail.com

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Boris Klimentiev, Darka Radosavljevic,
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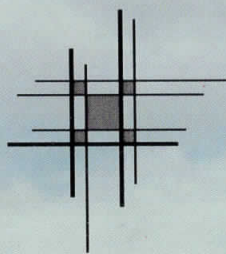
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