

Contemporary cemeteries & A Dilettante Discourse?

Contemporary cemeteries have no single meaning stronghold. Anyhow, some notions are dominating, making the two primary layers and describing the motivation of their relation.

Those two semantic layers are in a direct visual correlation, it's issue of "multicultural cemeteries" within Bosnia and Herzegovina and general "diversity of TV noises".

This video shows contemporary cemetery in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where some of tombs started to emit video noises. These video signals are nicely framed in an architecture of tombs and seem to be a previously planned tombs', long-awaited video activity. Such tombs' video activity overwhelmingly evokes the issues of Boris Groys' essay Religion in the age of digital reproduction, in which he exams obvious "religious renaissance" within visual medias and its implications to revision of distribution of religious discourse.

Tombs are in media space of Bosnia and Herzegovina one of the most beloved objects. Their type, size, numbers, time and space, are "from some reasons" in constant media actualization.

Religious objects, in this case a tombs, by randomly giving sing of media life, evoke to a sort of "natural" relationship between contemporary religious discourse and its needs to be mediated by most direct ways, appropriating the media's visual language in the most absurd formats. Poetically said, this Bosnjak's contemporary cemeteries landscape seems to be an illustration of embryo phase of religious-media organism, which is created by accumulated religious-electricity, being ready soon for an own, cemeteries broadcast or even podcast.

Mladen Bundalo on *Contemporary cemeteries*

A Dilettante Discourse? What kind of contemporary artists come from Bosnia and Herzegovina? What kind of cultural figures did the generation of the upcoming artists in Bosnia have at their disposal, at the time of their "spontaneous cultural formation", until they have (in)formally decided to become a part of the discourse of "the contemporary visual art"? Which is the social either that they venture in today? What are the formats, quantities, qualities, lectures, exhibitions, conversations and books which a young artist has at his/her disposal in Bosnia and Herzegovina? Why are those subjects conditional dilettantes compared to their "Western-European" colleagues who grew up in preponderance of available materials connected to a practical use of contemporary art? Together with the questions by which the text almost aggressively puts forward its cognitive fascinations, it's not all that difficult to decipher who is the text about, and the way they are approached. Aside from the challenge to elaborate on all the qualities which the selective works of this live-streaming carry, and to rhetorically legalize the selected artists inside the sphere of the current world critique, my choice is conditionally opposite. In Chapter I, I will write about the figures of handicap of these artists and their works in the format of traditional cultural discourse constructed on the distribution of knowledge before the Internet revolution. Chapter II is concerned with a brief analysis of the younger generations' way of compensating for the handicaps connected to the distribution of knowledge inside the traditional physical systems and, moreover, how they acknowledge the notion of dilettante based on the absence of "physical" knowledge in relation to the cultural contexts to which the dilettante norms are bound within Chapter I. **Reasons** I do not undertake that gesture as an attraction that a custodian text juggles with as a contrast to the automated content that these texts usually possess and maintain their quality, while damaging artists in the process. [1] First of all, it's about realizing the "back structure" which "in formal case", damages not just the selected artists in this online streaming but all the contemporary artists who grew up in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the past few decades. The mentioned "back structure" cannot easily be named socio-political, geo-political, historical, physical isolation effect, nor the effects of continuous and infrequent live physical contact with the questions of contemporary art (from theory to concrete happenings and realizations). This back structure is concerned with all the mentioned names and notions and thus could, most realistically, be named as the morphology of general, physical, cultural ether inside which a young, contemporary artist of that space and time is formed and

where he moves. Furthermore, the adjective 'back' does not just evoke some kind of an omnipresent structure which is formed in the works of young artists from Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also evokes a certain distance, remoteness and absence of argument about practical effects of one such structure. Another reason for contextualizing the actual selection is based on the need to employ relations inside the intertwined circumstances formed around all subjects in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially those who emit an aspiration for appropriation of a discourse of contemporary art, formed somewhere else (far away from Bosnia and Herzegovina), and its imitation, commenting and criticizing. It's about the relations which occur "here" and "now". Fortunately or not, those relations do not offer anything specific by which this particular group of young artists could be distinguished as special in today's world, unlike the (un)fortunate first generation of young artists from this country who are bound to the war period of Bosnia and Herzegovina in a working, motivational and experiential way. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, as Žižek says, there is a fear of coming out of the focus of interest; we have nothing interesting and compassionate to offer to the world of mass-media industry. Certain contemporary artists, as partially nostalgic intellectuals, still believe they can find someone interested in the war story of the '90s, and that they will, through their more or less intricate metaphors, intrigue, for "mythological emulsifiers" the ever vigilant and prepared "West" [2]. Nevertheless, those are fewer and fewer and those most convinced in the essence of those lasting, (to myself, personally) largely obsolete, temporal relations, have begun to doubt their own semantic intensity of this time, desperately putting them from one medium to another and refreshing them with the new methods of interpretation. Be that as it may, the inner relation on which the discourse of contemporary art of Bosnia and Herzegovina is based exists, and that discourse has its actual identity which we will underline here and juxtapose to its "original-ideal" to which it obviously aspires. So as not to damage the experience of another contemporary artist inside the numerous times mentioned state in this text, which, beside all the differences, cannot be radically different from my own, I shall stick to the facts based on my experience only. I grew up in a small town which reconstructed its cinema just two years ago. The programme of the cinema is based on the Hollywood blockbusters and the Serbian commercial classics. I gained the access to cinematography through local cinematheques in which the most avant-garde film is Natural Born Killers from Oliver Stone, with somewhat quality production of ex-Yugoslavian film. Practically, I know very little about world cinematography, nor inside my physical surroundings do I have access to the knowledge of cinematography, unlike my "Western" colleagues with similar intellectual sensibility who, not only have access to a multitude of cinematography, but also to the excessive reviews of that cinematography. A chance for a more systematic insight of a video art and somewhat an experimental film, I had during the namaTREba.ba video fest in Trebinje and Kratkofil film fest in Banja Luka, and that's all that happened for the past four years; before that there had been a complete and utter darkness in that regard. The available literature which deals with the topics of contemporary art? The domestic authors and their works practically don't exist, aside from a few interesting texts which serve as the introduction to exhibition pamphlets, written by some domestic "theorists". Intellectually hungry, I manage to survive on foreign translated texts from Croatia and Serbia (luckily, with the same language area which Bosnians are obstinately trying to change), where the publishers I'm interested in exist to some extent. Today, in Bosnia and Herzegovina there is not a single magazine which is concerned with art reviews. The Vizura magazine ceased to exist after several issues and the magazine Tačka has been waiting for its fourth issue for four years already. I am not familiar with the existence of any publishing houses which translate theoretical debates of today nor do I have any insight of what is happening with visual art and the following rhetorical paradigmes, inside or outside the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, occurring Here and Now. Several cultural institutions which foster contemporary art see and acknowledge the same as "Great Biennial" with many exclusive guests who are prepared to impress the "domestic elite" with their intricate metaphors (in the sense of productivity). Here is a quote from the practically only one critically oriented group: "pioneer conversations, analytic processing and critical freedom, characteristic for the needs of a narrow, discursive space, represses, condemns and does not realize inside the cultural insitutions of the state." [3] I have used every invitation,

opportunity for a shorter or longer holiday or students' time abroad, in the countries of the European Union, collecting any pamphlets or books that were available for me. Based on this, there are two conclusions: -Young, contemporary artists who grew up in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not live through contemporary art, in the sense of absence of continuous contact with the contents of contemporary art and its connection with the cultural ether as a whole. -For their young, Western-european colleagues who move along much more complex sphere of happenings and occurrences, connected to the discourse of contemporary art inside the physical space, they are formally dilettantes. dil·et·tante/,dili'tänt/: 1. a person who claims an area of interest, such as the arts, without real commitment or knowledge. 2. a person having a superficial interest in an art or a branch of knowledge. 3. an admirer or lover of the arts. *Intertext* Nevertheless, there is always a 'but'. But, even among this pessimistic illustration of formal inferiority of young Bosnian and Herzegovian artists, they often manage to neutralize the negative effects of their physical and cultural ether. How? II In most concrete terms, the password for this question is: THE INTERNET! For a young generation of artists from Bosnia and Herzegovina who have only recently, physically or virtually got in touch with the current discourse of contemporary art in a culturally and economically developed part of the Europe and World, the Internet is not only used as a resource for physically unavailable content but also as a discursive space of their contemporary art. During the first, physical contacts with my young, European colleagues, I was surprised by a small number of results when googling their names, the frequent absence of a personal web-portfolio, and any other online insight into their works. I found it incredible that it was about already "renowned" young artists with a long curriculum vitae who left so little trail on the Internet. In essence, my, then such a banal questioning contained many cognitive figures which are bound to numerous important paradoxes connected to the unchangable projection of a discourse of contemporary art on various socio-political and cultural structures, but more importantly, deviations in the perception of the Internet and its engagement in the discourse of contemporary art, inside various socio-political structures. Normally, within the widely spread system of contemporary art in the sense of the existence of institutions which present art in a physical space, simple access to the abundant printed publication, expanded and active reviews, simply, the continuity of quality and quantity of happenings and occurrences, young artists perceive Internet as a primary discursive platform in a slow manner; more than an outstanding medium for self-promotion or a fast and simple insight into the working schedule of cultural institutions which they approach physically. Moreover, they often see it as a threatening medium which with its distribution of digital image, sound and video, casts a blight on the myth of the "original" and threatens the authorship, on condition that it is about artists for whom is, "among other things", important to get to the art market under the cover of 'gallery people'. Why would someone purchase a video or film which has been, during two years of its online streaming, copied and downloaded an infinite number of times, in the original quality of its sound and video. On the other hand, for self-promotion, it is good to "attach" a photo documentation, but under no circumstances in high resolution which could then be printed. Such photos function as a marker for the original which is, in its original format, kept safe from uncontrolled distribution. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, consequently to the relations of what we called a general, physical and cultural ether, the Internet is the most acceptable "cultural institution", specifically for the distribution of the current artistic production and its contact with the relative review. Chat canals and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) enable "live" discussion to artists often distanced from one another and in small numbers, theorists and reviewers who don't have a frequent chance for professional contacts or just interaction inside a physical space. Online video services enable insight into the current video production. Photo albums of social networks are often piled up with photo documentation of "physical" works. Computer folders are packed with PDF books and magazines. Of course, it is impossible to generalize the access and perception of the Internet within a discourse which is partially based on the comparison of "here" and "there", but differences are clearly present. What is even more important, those differences are today sufficient to characterize the whole generation of young artists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It's less and less about the pursuit of a collective identity of a single generation within a culturally-historical context, and more about

locating that identity inside the relation of a generation with the dominant world, digital and online culture. In that sense, the Internet represents a compensation for a cinema, cinematheque, library, gallery, as well as a table upon which contemporary art is debated, and a phantom limb of a mutilated body of Bosnia and Herzegovina's contemporary art.

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- [1] Case: Vittorio Sgarbi, Italian pavilion on the 54th Venice Biennial.
- [2] Watch: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EzM8tqjmCU8>
- [3] A group of visual artists Tač.ka: http://tacka.org/htm/tacka_eng.html