

From *Event Horizon* catalogue

An artist from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Igor Bošnjak, presents two (interconnected) segments of his work at the exhibition. These are films - animations in which his introspective focus is directed at certain philosophical and existential questions. The film *Humankind* reflects on the universal historical struggle and universal historical loss in the context of human experience and identity. In this case, the focus shifts from the general to a more personal, or territorially and mentally more precisely defined perspective. Therefore, in this sense, we can speak of the frameworks of Yugoslav experience and identity, which the artist plays with, re-examining them through his recent works and poetics. The presence of Yugoslav modernist monuments set in a timeless dimension, in an impersonal environment - neither in the sky, nor on earth, piled up and transformed into the objects resembling metal filings and parts of unknown machines, in a sterile futuristic scrapyard that is being formed, surrounded by numerous stylised human figures, perhaps humanoid robots with cold, blue light in place of their hearts, standing in dynamic poses, frozen in motion, their running, fighting and fear abruptly interrupted, suggests deeply buried, blocked, and forever repressed emotions. These are absorbed but never fully processed or consciously acknowledged collective experiences.

Film associations naturally arise, and Bošnjak's world irresistibly evokes an episode from *The Twilight Zone* (1985), titled *A Little Peace and Quiet*, directed by Wes Craven. In this episode, the protagonist, with the help of a mysterious pendant, manages to stop time and freeze the activities of all living beings around her (though, as it turns out, this effect extends on a global scale), thereby solving her personal problems and frustrations. In doing so, she ignores and silences her awareness of ongoing negotiations regarding nuclear armament between the USA and the Soviet Union, until she finds herself in a no-win situation, confronted with a frozen Soviet nuclear missile in the sky above her city. Bošnjak's world is cold, purified, yet paradoxically emotionally charged, nostalgic, and critically attuned. In the second segment, or more precisely, in the following four video works titled *The Four Seasons*, we again encounter Yugoslav modernist monuments from the post-World War II era, set in a postapocalyptic landscape, cleansed of human presence. The sound of Vivaldi's composition of the same name gives an almost idyllic tone to the overall solitude of nature, which regenerates after the human *glitch*. In *Spring*, monuments appear as living, permanent forms, dignifiedly present in eternity - seemingly tame. As the seasons change, the monuments transform as well. *Summer* brings sharpness, another kind of life, another kind of eternal presence. At times, the monuments take on a somewhat animalistic character. *Autumn* brings moss and lichens, entrapment in mud and sludge. Misty greyish tones. Starkness. The impression is as if one is briefly observing through a surveillance camera. On the other hand, *Winter*, unlike the previous three seasons, brings

traces of human presence - abandoned ruins, tools, rusty scrap, rebars, concrete slabs resembling gravestones, traces of a lost country. Through the four seasons, we are submerged in the course of the development and demise of an idea. The monuments are omnipresent; they bear a thought related to a specific ideological and political context, while the transformation of the dystopian landscape speaks of both rise and fall. The artist recontextualises the mentioned objects. He reinterprets them and they are no longer (merely) part of history. Now, they are also part of a futuristic situation, part of the near future. It goes without saying that adopting a critical stance is essential, as our perspective grows darker and darker. The ideals are long gone. Tese are deeply emotional, multilayered and philosophical works which, without the slightest pinch of irony, call for re-examination of historical legacy in a dystopian reality.

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