

Text written by Ilija Soskic for the 'I Carry the Bird for the Work of Art' exhibit catalogue, Graphical Collective Gallery, Belgrade, 2007.

An action performance, the issue at hand here, is a direct act of art, generated within a reality, one would dare say – a banality, but one which through an intervention of the artist radically changes said reality. So, by inverting something ordinary, things become extraordinary, they become art. Of course, one assumes that the starting point is always a singular concept. The very outcome of the idea (ideology) depends on the strength of that concept, on its meaning, because meaning is the basis of everything.

I've heard of Tatjana Allic, long before I even met her, from her Dusseldorf academy professor, Jannis Kounellis, back in 1994 in Greece, Hydra, during the summer. Kounellis repeatedly told me that he had an extremely talented student who was from Belgrade. Tatjana and I first met in Rome, in 1999, at the International Youth Biennial. That is when I first saw Tatjana's bird, her living, winged axiom, as a work of art. I agreed with Kounellis.

Later on, we met through work, discussions, meditation, socializing. Tatjana has a strong character, she is lucid and very courageous. She has a Heidegger-esque understanding of art, meaning – what happens, happens, but unlike the philosopher who merely asks the questions, she doesn't rest there, she provides answers without concluding her work. Her action performances are in fact the "what happens, happens"

The border crossing with a hidden bird in her pocket, a scene with which she starts off her performance, opens a debate which brings into question the meaning of boundaries. It provokes the purpose of limitations and the very purpose of border systems. In so doing, she creates a discourse which is of civilizational importance: limitation, bordering, division, narrowing, closing, smothering and abusing. It's not about whether the world will change or not, what is important is for the very idea to be thought about. It is also important never to accept the boundaries and limitations. It is what Tatjana is. She is the very opposite of epigonism, hedonism and fame-worship. She is an accomplished intellectual, she possesses freedom of thought, just like the Greek mathematician Tales who measured the Pyramid of Cheops using shadows almost 2 and a half millennia ago. Consequential photographs of the action and the breach document speak of a bird on a border crossing, wonder and bureaucracy, which is a story of how today's modern art

look like, what it is and what it isn't.

When one speaks of an action performance, one needs to be reminded of the characteristic works of this visual discipline and its very famous elderly protagonists such as: Luigi Ontani and his "Christopher Columbus", Joseph Boyce and his "Jackal", Marina Abramović and Ulay and their "Walk on the Great Wall of China", my own "A Shot to the Wall", Cadare's "Moving Stick" etc. And all this, to understand the culture of this type of performance.

Unequivocally, Tatjana Ilic and her miniature bird are part of that culture and its continuity.

The importance of visual speech such as this one is that it is forward, fast, energetic, synthesized and it communicates directly. Other than that, it is a form of expression which unites stylistic and ideological components into one single gesture.

That is why I say that the action performance is a story – a message about what modern art looks like, what it is and what it isn't. Tatjana is a lucid artist, she knows, and that is something which earns her international acknowledgments of the highest instances in modern art.

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