

Y? PROJECT

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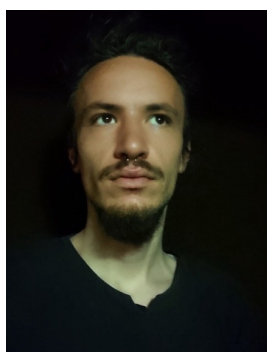
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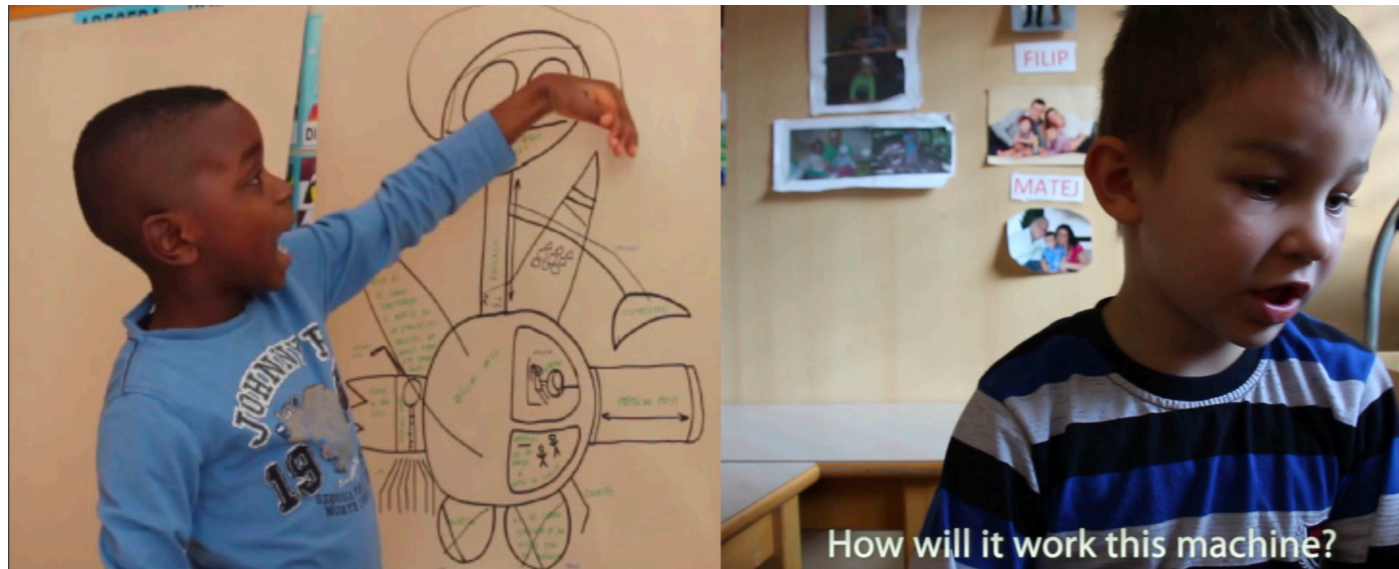
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NEŽA KNEZ

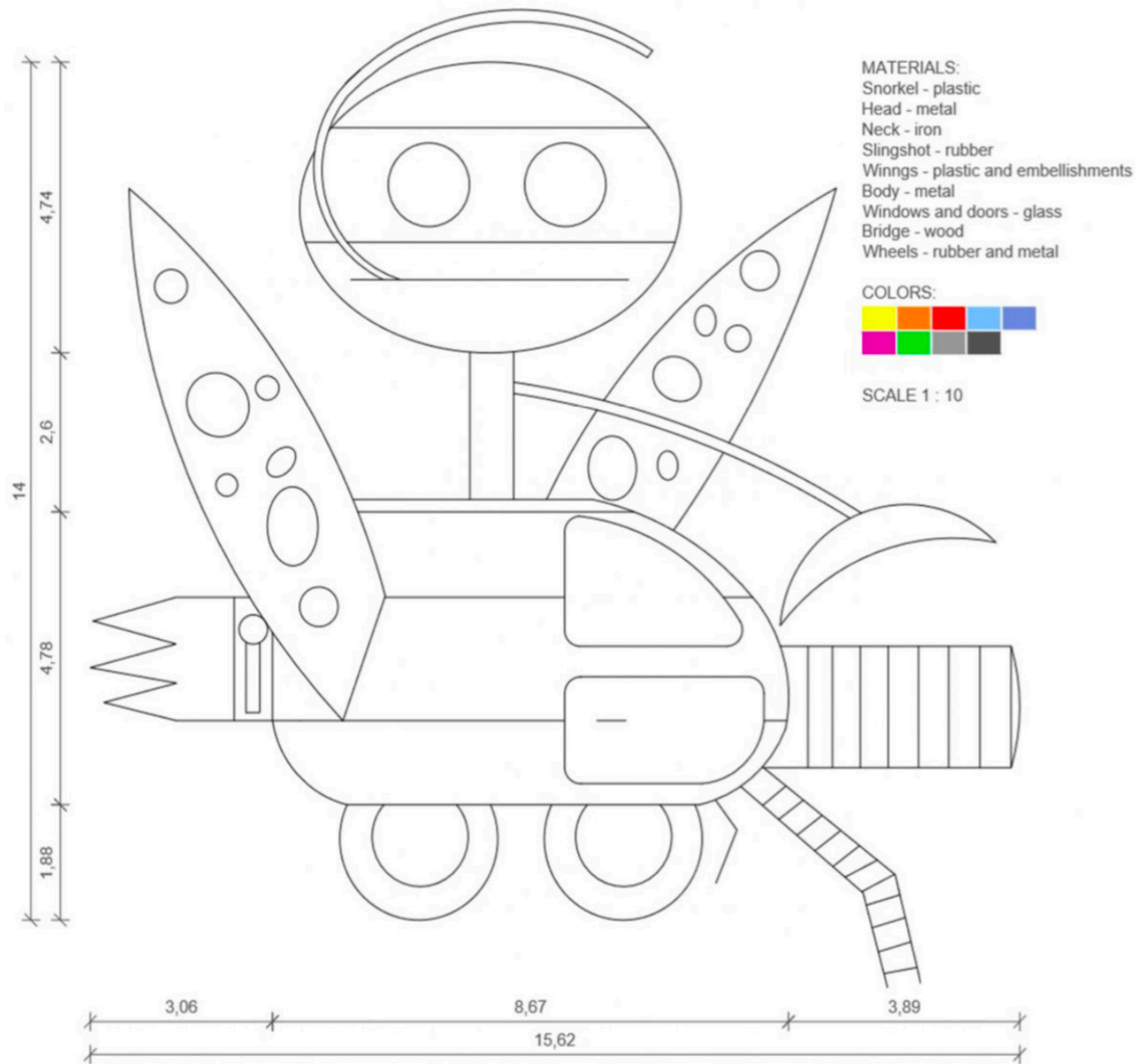
DEUX EX MACHINA

The term *deus ex machina* is a Latin term which means »God« or supernatural being that has gained several meanings and explanations over the course of two millennia. This superior force or person at the last moment resolves an unsolvable situation without following the previous logic of the relationship or overcoming common sense. In the first phase, the work was based on conversations with five-year old children about drawings they have made, depicting their most important things to them and their vision of the future. The drawings were used as a source material from which they then selected the most important elements to them (»head of the Ninja Turtle – it can zoom, the butterfly wings – we can fly, the ambulance car – so that we are fast, ornaments on the wings – because they are beautiful, the bridge – we can go over the lava or the flood.«). Then they assembled their pictures into a single image and named it: »A machine that will make a better world, a machine that will help us.«.

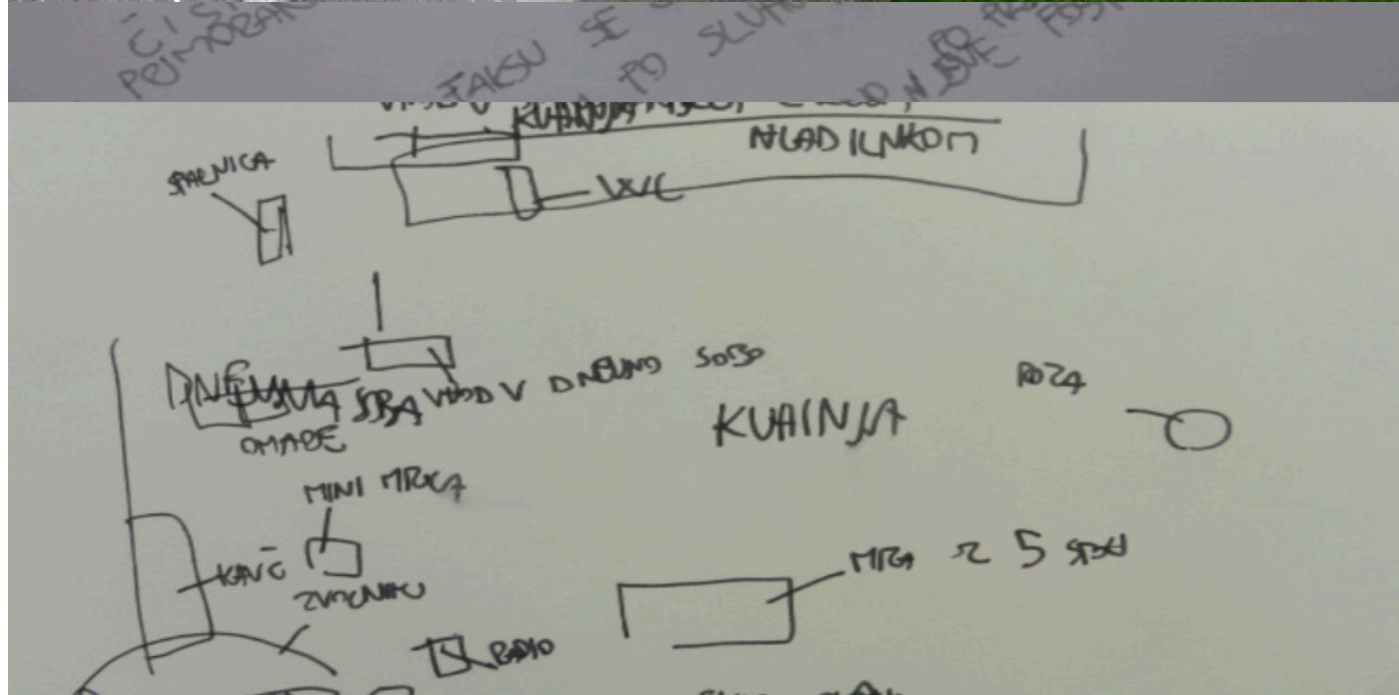
This collaboration, raised a number of questions: Is there such thing as »unspoiled nature« in children, or are they already the projection of us and the world that surround us? How do they perceive the concept of the future, even though they are not yet fully aware of it? What, when and where is our present? Are solutions by those who concern the consequences of the present always recognizable as rational?

It is very possible that incredible things will come out of that.

2017/18 (on-going): three week workshop in kindergarten Oton Župančič (Slovenia) and on-going workshop with Robotics class, 7th grade, Charles O. Dewey Middle School 136 in Brooklyn



"He will do anything we want. And also so we can play, we will be faster."
 "He can fly easy. Really high. He can reach the clouds."
 "He can carry a patient one, two, three to the hospital."



OTHER VIEW

I make myself not to see for ten days (24 hours per day), thereby trying to enter the other dimension of perception of the world around me. I realize that with our ability to see we are detached from space and objects; we feel them only superficially. When confronted with »blindness« our body and everything around us feels different. We start to construct space from the beginning and build some sort of an »interior« space. This interior space is full of places we have inhabited not only with our bodies but also with our touch, smell, and hearing. I eliminate completely my field of vision, by that awaken my other senses, and then enter the space, see how my perception of it changes and how my senses react.

With this work, I am trying to move the viewer towards my experience of "blindness". I am placing the viewer in front of documents of my experience and simultaneously create conditions in which my project becomes a story. I am not trying to represent or illustrate the experience of blindness, I try to present my "blindness" only.

I got acquainted again with known and familiar places but experienced them with other senses. I cannot be blind the way blind people are and the viewer cannot be blind as I was. The blindness of the blind people, my blindness and blindness of the viewer is not the same, it doesn't want to be the same and by no means can be the same. The project is opening the field of difference between the actual blindness, the experience of blindness and the materialization of it. Assuming only one correct interpretation would be a failure.

Three different portraits made without seeing the person portrayed. One is based only on touching the person, one on memorizing it and one after an audio description of its looks. 64 pages long visual diary, filled with hand drawings and notes and drawings on paper. Diary, made using Descriptive Experience Sampling method. For 24 days (7 days before and after "blindness" and 10 days during it) my alarm clock rang 10 times per day to remind of describing the inner experience of the present situation – space, people, surrounding sounds.

2015: 22 days blinded



SQUARE

Square is a direct result of Neža Knez's two-month residency in New York. It references her new life experience, new surroundings, the culture, and the people. Neža Knez carried out a public street-cleaning action on Brooklyn's Broadway Avenue. She selected a square in front of the entrance to her apartment where she lived; determining the location and time – she cleaned 22 days, every day from 8 am to 9:30 am. The street on which she worked was full of random passers-by, especially those carried out everyday routines on the street: walking to work, drinking coffee, opening nearby stores. In these passers-by, she awakened an interest, yet she did not wish to engage in verbal communication with them, or even later explain to them that she was carrying out an artistic action. Her answer was only that she wishes to have a clean square.

What does the square represent the artist?

During her first experience in the United States, Neža Knez had the impression that the American flag and the square are visual elements that most determine those surroundings. Even the series of photographs documenting her working process awaken painterly associations. For her, the persistent cleaning of the ground represents the closest approximation to a direct painting experience that she has ever gone through. On the exhibition itself, the artist presents photographs, video, objects, and excerpts from her journal writings. Some works were created during the action itself, others came about later in response to it. The documentary video and photographs record the process of cleaning, the location, the happening and people's reactions. The documentation reveals the basic information about the street, its nature, incidental passers-by, community and culture. In general, the project Square carries several characteristics of Knez's previous artistic actions, which reveal every day through physical activity. With them, she creates situations that are inconceivable in the chosen environment yet are unusual enough to carry the potential to interrupt the flow of the urban routine. By including random passers-by, Neža Knez provokes an immediate reaction and thus emphasizes the importance of genuine experience and cooperation, which are both integral parts of her activity.

2018/19, public intervention in NYC; video, objects, photographs, text

*Nina Skumavc

TONI POLJANEC

HOPE AND DESPAIR

A documentary that follows the fates of migrants stranded in their despair on the greek island Lesbos on their impossible journey to a better European life.

Presented: Festival dokumentarnega filma DokuDoc, Festival migrantskega filma, Galerija Alkatraz, Kino Otok, Kranjska Gora film festival,...

30', Hupa Brajdič produkcija, 2016 (co-author, camera, editing)



GROWING WINGS

Growing Wings dances the thin line that separates the real from the imaginary. It explores dimensions of loneliness through the structures of inner monolog and reflects anxiety. Methodologically it uses method of psychodrama that helps to discover the paradoxical acts that shake up everyday life. unreal poetry of everyday madness.

Presented on various film festivals and awarded with the Golden Fish on the Festival of independent production in Kamnik, Slovenia.

12'16'', KUD Teater na konfini, 2017 (director, camera, editing)





BITTER SMILE

The film features a parodical story and personal stories of prisoners in high secured Slovene prison in Dob. It tells the story of life in prison, of time, punishment and freedom. The film was realized as part of a workshop with 13 prisoners from Dobr prison.

34'10'', Hupa Brajdič produkcija, 2010 (co-author, camera, editing)

IS THIS CULTURAL STUDIES

The movie explores never explained identity of cultural studies and its place in Slovene science community.

Presented: Kinodvor Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences Ljubljana, Klub Gromka Ljubljana, festival Dokma

50', KUD Kult.co, 2009 (co-author, director, editing)



HOPE DIES LAST

Short music documentary film focuses on bricolage of music, films and stories connected to Slovene artist, poet and musician Ivan Volanč - Feo. It is memorial to artist's life and death. Feo in his own unnatural environment of extraordinary proportions.

23'55'', Žalostna sova, 2017 (director, camera, editing)



DANILO MILOVANOVIĆ

TOP PARKING

One of the problems in many modern cities are parking spaces. Reconstructions of city centers often include a complete renovation of the area, including underground or surface parking garages. However, lack of parking spaces can be used for developing a lucrative personal business. This leads to private homes with public parking spaces instead of courtyards, unpaved surfaces organized as temporary parking lots and various improvisations primarily aiming at high profits.

Ljubljana, a city in the process of gentrification, has many examples of parking lots that are significantly derogating from standards of planned city areas, intended for parking vehicles. Although infrastructural and staff investments are minimal, such improvised surfaces still maintain approximately the same prices as official parking garages. The idea of my intervention was to set up my own parking lot as a criticism of the described situation. Since I intended to set it up as a critical and not a functional piece, the intervention took place at a location, unavailable to vehicles. It was executed on a meter-high platform, which is actually a roof of a private underground garage. Furthermore, the name TOP does not only imply the location of the parking lot, but also the meaning of this word in local sleng, where it stands for something which is simply the best.

Alongside the central intervention which was painting the parking lines, I also performed two additional actions. Firstly, I equipped the TOP parking lot with a cash register. The register is a wooden construction, made of banners and actual posters of 'wild' parking lots in Ljubljana. Secondly, I imitated aggressive advertising campaigns, using the words top and king to insinuate something leading, superior to competition. For this step, I removed the posters from citylight boxes, altered them to promote my own parking lot and returned them. This action is inherently absurd, because it advertises an (unavailable) parking lot, and not even near to it.

The posters were removed during a single day. The cash register was removed after a week at the initiative of local inhabitants. The parking lot lines were painted with lasting colors and remained on the location.

The project was carried out in Ljubljana in 2018.





ŚLIMAK

Ślimak (The Snail) is the title of the project done in 2018 during the artist residency in Katowice, Poland. It is based on a life story of a local homeless person Mirek. Mirek is a loner who loves motor bikes and cars since he was young. Most of his life he earned his living as a driving instructor, personal driver and similar. When he lost his home in old age, he started using abandoned cars as permanent dwellings. Because of his personal need to hoard discarded but still useful things, his dwellings quickly became vehicles completely covered with things. Although Mirek did sort and organize these found objects in some sort of chaotic installations, they were disturbing to other citizens, which repetitively resulted in authorities removing the vehicles and all the things.

People usually have a distanced, avoiding and denying relationship to the homeless. If we talk about snails, the first thing we most often think of is the shell and not the snail itself. On a metaphorical level, I saw Mirek as a snail that needs a proper shell in order not to be constantly rejected and chased away. Based on his stories and material needs, I developed a plan for Mirek's new shelter. His habit and genuine wish to live in a vehicle defined the form of the object. It is a modified van to which we added iron constructions and boxes for organizing Mirek's stuff. The engine was removed from the frame and a water container was installed instead. The inside of the van consists of battery lights, shelves, a chair, a table and a bed made from non flammable materials. The final construction was made available to Mirek for use, which marks the beginning of the interactive nature of the installation. Alongside the social and functional nature of the project, it can also be perceived as a living platform, exposed to constant transformation due to its use.



LUKA ERDANI

TRANSFORMA FESTIVAL

In 2011 I initiated a summer camp called Transforma. Main concept was based in building a self-organized community space, where we were bridging the gap between organizers and visitors, in an effort to synergize and make the “event” make itself out of spontaneous interactions and self-initiative of all participants. We organized five editions of the festival in a span of five years. The process of production was changing through the years. This is mirrored in the excerpt of the concept from the last edition of the event, that happened in 2016:

“Transforma is utopian in the sense that it envisions an overthrow of any determined normality, life’s penetration by the marvelous. It does not concern itself very much with what was or will be, it’s interested in results, successful raids on consensus reality, breakthroughs into more intense and more abundant life. But it cannot be utopian in the actual meaning, as a noplacé. We are looking for spaces/times (geographic, social, cultural, imaginal) with potential to flower as autonomous zones.”



MODRI KOT

The community that grew around Transforma established a permanent space called Modri kot in Autonomous Rog factory in Ljubljana, 2014. Soon the place became a nod for various artistic and activist collectives from Slovenia and abroad. Until today we organized and hosted well over 100 events, workshops, symposiums in fields of contemporary art, politics and social sciences. Modri kot is a space and a collective in continuous becoming - it is constantly developing its infrastructure (ambient, functionality, maintenance) and activities it produces and defines simultaneously. It is an open and self-built space, that is there to be used for: multidisciplinary cultural production including performative arts, music and sound events, roundtables, workshops, lectures, literary and word events, ambient arts, political excursions.



Modri kot (Blue corner) is a place that researches and theorises the activities it produces. Modri kot is also a community space, intended for meetings, assemblies and day to day chit chatting. We do not have entrance fees, the space functions with the support of all visitors giving voluntary donations.



PODHOD BIKE REPAIR SHOP

In 2017 I started a small business by opening a bicycle repair shop in Ljubljana, called Servis Podhod. Currently, there is a team of three professional mechanics employed in my shop.