

## TOMISLAV GOTOVAC SVE JE PODREĐENO DISANJU

GORAN BLAGUS



Performance s otvorenja izložbe - instalacije "Point Blank", Franklin Furnace Archive, 112 Franklin Street, New York, 6 siječnja 1994. (na 17. rođendan kćeri Sarah)

SNIMO: IGOR MARTINOVIC

Iako u priručnim antologijama subkulturnog života često istican kao najzanimljiviji zagrebački marginalac, Tomislav Gotovac, prije svega jest umjetnik s precizno izgrađenim stavom prema onome što radi, uvijek svjestan nužnosti svog djelovanja. Više od trideset godina bavi se uglavnom performansom, gdje je potrebitost fizičkog prisustva samog umjetnika kao katalizatora alkemije stvarnosti osnov svake sadržajnosti djela. Ispitujući mogućnosti apsolutne slobode pojedinca u zadanom vremenu i prostoru, je Tomislav Gotovac, često "žrtvujući" sebe, namjerno izazivao mehanizme zabrane (film "Plastični Isus", striking "Trčanje gol u centru grada" itd.) Film je znatno utjecao na njega. Diplomirani je filmski redatelj, ali mu sama kamera nije osnovni alat za upuštanje u režiranje života shvaćenog kao koincidenciju čitavog niza spektakala. Montiranje doživljenih slučajnosti po vlastitom izboru, stalna potraga za mogućim postojanjem logičke transcendentije i zakonitosti u prethodjenju događajima rezultiralo je konkretnim i vrlo ranim "strukturalističkim filmovima", koji ga pridružuju pantenonu svjetski poznatih autora eksperimentalnog filma (Kubelki, Snowu, Fromplonu).

Neprestano osporavan u vlastitoj sredini, uspio se napokon potvrditi u inozemstvu, u New Yorku, gdje je, koristeći četveromjesečnu stipendiju, u ekskluzivnom prostoru Marthe Willson "Franklin Furnace Archive" na Manhattanu, svojom izložbom "Muzej rev-

olucije naroda Tomislava Gotovca", uspio zainteresirati američku publiku. Ona, poput i ranijih njegovih projekata, nastoji raskrinkati uvjete življenja u totalitarnim sistemima, te iznova se prisjećajući razdoblja komunizma, upozorava na ironičan način kolike se opasnosti kriju za čovjeka kada ga društvo pretvori u psa. Tama Janowitz u svom filmiziranom romanu "Robovi New Yarka" briljantno detektira frustrirajuću i dekadentnu situaciju postkapitalizma. Hoće li Tom dobiti priliku da povede Ameriku u revoluciju?

*Govorimo li o umjetnosti kao protoku informacija, više-manje jasno determiniranih, dakle, prostorno i vremenski povezanih, tada je kontekstualizacija Vašeg djelovanja znatno otežana, jer Vi ste u neprestanom sukobu sa stvarnošću. Suvremeni Don Quijote, recimo.*

□ Ne vidim nikakve razlike između onoga što nam se događalo ranije i ovog sada. Sve je to jedan surovi kontinuitet, a mi, stanovnici ove zemlje, naprosto ne želimo sebi priznati da nam se događa to što nam se događa. Uvijek su nas uvjeravali da nam se događa nešto drugo, a prava je istina da svakodnevno idemo k sve većem osiromašenju, i umjesto da dobivamo, mi stalno

gubimo. Udaljavamo se od onih ideja kojima smo težili čitajući lijepe knjige, shvaćamo da su uokolo nas kulise i da je većina stvari trik.

E sada, čovjek kao pojedinac može, ako želi, komunicirati direktno sa Svevišnjim i to je onda za njega sreća, jer pri tome nema nikakvih posrednika. Međutim, u ovakvim zemljama poput naše uvijek se nalaze posrednici koji vam tumače Svevišnjega i koji vam nastoje objasniti tko smo mi zapravo. Moja se romantičarska dužnost sastoji u tome da pokušam demistificirati ulogu posrednika između mene kao pojedinca i kretena s jedne strane i Svevišnjeg s druge. Ja u svom životu ne dozvoljavam nikome da za mene posreduje, osim onih koje sam osobno provario na intiman način, kao što su recimo: John Ford, Ivan Kožarić, Howard Hawks, Tristan Tzara i neki drugi s kojima sam vremenom postao familijaran. Te ljude priznajem za svoje informatore, ali sve one koji mene silom pokušavaju, na jedan divljački način, uvjeriti u neku stvar...otkuđ sam došao ...ne jebem. Do toga ne držim



Atelje Michaela Ketchana, *I am my own dog/ Ja sam svoj vlastiti pas*, New York, 9. veljače 1994. (na 57. rođendan Tomislava Gotovca)

SNIMIO: MICHAEL KETCHANA

apsolutno ništa. S tim u vezi, ne priznajem ni provinciju ni centar. Za mene je centar u nešem mozgu, a ne u fizičkom obimu. To znači da čovjek može biti slobodan i u zatvoru, jer tu se naprosto radi o našem odnosu prema zabranama. Isto tako, čovjek može biti u centru ako se nalazi i u zadnjoj selendri, jer mene nitko ne može natjerati da mislim provincijalno. Ako imam dostupnu informaciju, ja sam apsolutno slobodan.

**Dojam je da je Vaš život "kopija" umjetnosti, a sama umjetnost stalna inspiracija. No bez obzira na Vašu radikalnost, kako je već ranije ustvrdio Hrvoje Turković, Vi ste izuzetno protradicionalan umjetnik?**

S onim pravim avangardnim postavkama nemam ništa zajedničkog. Ja sam grozan tradicionalist. Samo me smeta da mnogi ljudi nemaju pojma što je umjetnost, a za to su krive pojmovne izmišljotine kritičara. Umjetnost je JEDNA i avangarda i tradicija jedan su isti problem. Stvar je i u tome da ja ne mogu razlikovati život od umjetnosti. Za mene je sve to isto, možda mi je to i najveći problem... što bi bio život? Vječna borba da imaš gdje spavati, što pojesti...

**Nema li sada disproporcije u ovome što govorite? Potencirate sukob sa životom u smislu da ga čak ne želite razumjeti, a opet svojim akcijama vrlo uspješno raskrinkavate neke svakodnevne loše pojave. Hoću reći, kako ipak dobro osjećate svoju stvarnost...**

Meni je ovaj trenutni prostor i vrijeme neka vrsta déja vu situacije koju sam ja već emotivno proživio kroz mnoga umjetnička djela. Naprosto mi se sada sve to ponavlja, ali u stvarnom obliku i meni je, što se toga tiče, sve to kao poruka posve neinteresantno. Za mene je najveća stvar da čovjek može koristiti svoj dar izražavanja kroz neke umjetničke oblike, kroz vizualije, riječi, zvuk, odnosno da izražava svoju slobodu onim trenutnim što mu padne na pamet. Ponovit ću, postoji sukob između prisile totalitarizma, tj. ljudi koji su odlučili da se uguraju između nas i Svevišnjeg, i koji će nam tumačiti koje smo mi budale i kakva smo stoka, što trebamo misliti... Oni su isto nekakvi umjetnici koji nas ostale ljude tretiraju kao svoju materiju. Moja je pobuna upravo u tome da ne dozvoljavam svakome da se postavlja kao posrednik. Mogu to dozvoliti nekome za koga osjetim da je, recimo, dobar redatelj. Sve sam više uvjeren da više nitko ne zna što je zapravo umjetnost, a što život. Možda je to uvijek tako i bilo. Mislim da je sloboda sreća većini ljudi, samo se srame. Srame se skinuti goli i proći tako Ilicom, srame se javno opsovati, iako to u mislima žele. Sve je velika predstava u kojoj svi sudjelujemo...

**Vas, dakle, nikada nije bilo sram?**

Naprotiv, mene je bilo sram. Stvar je u tome što umjetnik uvijek mora pokušati ono što mnogi ljudi žele, a za to nemaju hrabrosti. Ja se, može se reći, žrtvujem i za te ljude i za sebe. Želim vidjeti i druge koji će mi svojim nastupom, pomoći da preživim sljedećih 24 sata, jer 24 sata jedan su dan, a onda je to i tjedan, i mjesec, i godina, i čitav jedan život. Nije slučajno Joyce napisao svog *Uliksa* koji se događa samo u jednom danu. Radi se o tome da su problemi koje rješava jedno ljudsko biće univverzalnog karaktera i kao takve ih uvijek trebamo rješavati kako za sebe tako i za druge.

**Jeste li ovu projekciju da su 24 sata zapravo čitav život primijenili u Vašim djelima, odnosno, je li možda jedan vaš performance projekcija života?**

Ako bih želio biti malo prepotentan, rekao bih da su oni bili nešto kompletno i opće. Međutim, kada umjetnik napravi svoje djelo ono mora živjeti i dalje. Dakle, kada se svakodnevno stvara umjetničko djelo nužno dolazi do ponavljanja, te eventualno imamo sad fazu plavu, pa fazu žutu, pa smeđu itd. Mi znači uglavnom štancamo neoriginale. Za mene je to najveći problem. Raditi svakodnevno jest živjeti ponavljanja, jer uvijek iznova imamo jutro, buđenje, posao, podne, ručak,

odmor, pa dolazi večer, "čašica" razgovora, noć, pa možda seks, možda ne... onda opet tako...

Kako izaći na kraj sa svim tim stvarima i zadovoljno gledati na budućnost? Kako preživjeti taj monotoni protok vremena? Nema tu čvrstih stvari za koje se možemo uhvatiti. Ovaj je rat, u kojem kuće i sigurnost nestaju, sve to pokazao. Dakle, vrjednosti ne znače apsolutno ništa.

**Uvijek ste izražavali svoju pobunu protiv konvencija, a sada govorite i o relativnosti postojanja vrijednosti. Kako se ipak mora živjeti dalje, gdje onda naći potrebnu oslonac?**

Konvencije za mene jasno postoje i njima određujem svoj odnos prema bližnjima. To znači ne maltretirati ljude time da ih uništavate i da im divljački namećete svoju volju. Treba sudjelovati u općim ra-

**Vjerojatno za nekoga ono što ja radim predstavlja zagađivanje, ali ja tako ne mislim jer nikoga ninašta ne prisiljavam.**

dostima, jer noramlno je da je lijep, sunčan dan lijep svima nama. Treba poštivati svoje sugradane i ne zagađivati im okoliš. Vjerojatno za nekoga ono što ja radim predstavlja zagađivanje, ali ja tako ne mislim jer nikoga ninašta ne prisiljavam. Treba pružiti mogućnost općinstvu da sve shvati ironično, a ne obavezujuće. Sve što sam radio na ulicama bio je moj sukob sa stvarnošću na jedan pasivan način, jer nikoga nisam silio da čini to isto. Na kraju krajeva mislim da me je bilo i zabavno gledati. Stavljao sam sebe u jedan naugodan položaj da bi drugima možda bilo ugodnije. To je, dakle, bio blagi vid protesta, ali ne protiv svih konvencija.

**A što se tiče umjetničkih konvencija?**

Poštujem ih. Na različite vrste umjetnosti gledam kao na izloge koje je moguće razgledati i o njima donositi svoj stav, je li to O.K. ili ne, ali da bih ja nešto uništavao, sačuvaj bože. Ovo govorim zbog mladih ljudi koji možda još nemaju definirani odnos prema umjetničkim vrijednostima. Njima bi trebalo sve, od akademizma do avangardizma, jednakopravno stajati na raspolaganju. Uvijek ću se zalagati za to da mladi ljudi dobiju informaciju o svemu, kao hranu.

**Govorite o duhovnoj hrani?**

Starost se sastoji od disanja. Sve je tome podređeno. Dok mladi ljudi traže još nešto više.

**Osjećate li se Vi to možda starim?**

Ne govorim ja o tome prvi put. Nije baš

da starost osjećam, ali se protiv nje neću moći buniti.

**Kako se osobno doživljavate kao umjetnik?**

□ Tomislav Gotovac sebe zamišlja kao redatelja koji bi želio režirati u mnogim oblastima umjetnosti i života.

**Dakle, redatelja koji ne promatra samo kroz optiku kino kamere?**

□ Većina filmskih redatelja kojima se ja divim bili su vrlo kompletne životne ličnosti. Njihovi su filmovi bili samo vrhovi ledenih bregova. Režirati u filmu nije značilo samo stati iza kamere, značilo je i živjeti s ljudima, poznavati pejzaž, uživati u muzici... Recimo Matissov je čitav život izlazio na površinu kroz njegovu boju.

**Vi neobično cijenite umjetničku personalnost, pa su mnogi Vaši radovi, filmovi i performancei, napravljeni kao hommagei velikim pojedincima, naprimjer Glennu Milleru. Jesu li to doista samo posvete, ili pri tome koristite i njihove umjetničke jezike, sada reciklirane kroz druge medije?**

□ Ne koristim njihov jezik, već njihovu umjetničku moć koja je od ranije resorbirana u meni. Ja živim u tom umjetničkom svijetu. To je nepoželjno izgovarati i ne ide mi u prilog jer svi žele biti originalni, ali želim uvijek jasno dati do znanja gdje se koja stvar nalazi. Radi se o mom poštenju. Kada sam 60-ih radio kolaže, priznao sam da sam bio opsjednut Kurtom Schwittersom. Sva kretanja u umjetnosti ravna su otkrivanju tople vode i drvenog željeza. Jedino se čovjek mora osjećati važnim.

**Kakav je onda Vaš odnos prema novom?**

□ U svim tim tzv. "novim stvarima", postojale su ličnosti koje su skupljale, svaka u svoje vrijeme, međ s drugih polja. Tako i ja radim. Glenn Miller bio je odabran svojom muzikom stvarati zadovoljstvo velikom broju ljudi. On je, ustvari, bio samo upotrebljen i kada mu je rok upotrebe istekao, on je nestao na jedan vrlo čudan način. Njegova mi sudbina simbolizira sudbinu mnogih umjetnika koji su radeći svoje stvari bili iskorišteni, a potom bačeni. Da bih mu iskazao čast kao umjetniku, posvećujem mu *performance*. I u doba renesanse, naprimjer, crkva je koristila umjetnike i bez, obzira koliko bilo veliko njihovo djelo, glavno je uvijek bilo nešto drugo.

**Smatrate li se i Vi upotrebljavanim umjetnikom?**

□ Pa to je moj najveći problem. Želio bih da me upotrijebe, ali kada postanem svjestan te mogućnosti, uvijek sve zabrljam.

**Kako biste željeli da Vas upotrijebe?**

□ Kada bih ja to znao, sigurno bih onda imao jako puno novaca (smijeh). Nema umjetnika koji se ne može upotrijebiti. Očigledno je da umejtnici nisu baš tako pametni, jer oni možda uspiju izvući kamatu, ali glavnice nikada.

**Nedavno ste se, nakon četveromjesečnog boravka, vratili iz New Yorka. Što ste tamo uspjeli napraviti?**

□ Ne bih to nazvao boravkom u New Yorku, nego na Manhattanu, ili još uže, na East Villageu, Sohou i Tribeci. Tako da pravu Ameriku, osim nekih dijelova, gotovo da i nisam vidio. Imao sam *grantove* Arts Linka i Fondacije Mercy Pavelic, što mi je sve sredila gđa. Martha Wilson iz Franklin Furnace Archivea. Gospoda je voditelj spomenutog prostora nekih 20-ak godina, a i sama je *performer*. Ona je postala institucija za tzv. *non-commercial avangard art*. Svoju, jednu od najboljih arhiva za tu vrstu umejtnosti, ona je krajem prošle godine prodala MOMA-i.

**Kako je došlo do kontakta s gđom. Wilson?**

□ Ona je jednostavno pročitala *moj interview* u katalogu kolektivne izložbe Rhetorical Imagea čiji je kustos bila Milena Kalinowska, i koja je održana u prosincu 1990. u New Museum of Contemporary Art na Broadwayu.

Bilo je to vrijeme neriješene političke situacije na Balkanu, tako da sam u tom interviewu dao neka svoja predviđanja. Tada sam u New Yorku boravio tri tjedna.

Amerika se spremala na "Pustinjsku oluju", a kod nas je izbila "afera Špegelj", tako da me je iskreno bilo strah i jedva sam čekao da se dokopam Zagreba. Tek je krajem 1993. Marthi Wilson uspjelo osigurati mi spomenute stipendije i u Franklin Furnaceju sam napokon mogao napraviti izložbu "Muzej revolucije naroda Tomislava Gotovca", koja je namjerno otvorena za rođendan moje kćeri 6. siječnja ove godine, s naslovom *Point Blank* (brisani prostor za gađanje, op.a.). U sklopu same izložbe po tjednima sam rasporedio i nekoliko svojih *performancea*.

**Zadovoljni ste publikom?**

□ To je pametna publika kojoj nije trebalo puno objašnjavati što sam ja to napravio. Mislim da sam naišao na dobar odjek. Samo u Americi uspjeh ne dolazi preko noći, izuzev ako nisi senzacionalan. Za ono što ja radim moglo bi se reći: "Tiha voda brege ruši". Karakter je moje izložbe bio tipično europski, ali želio bih napraviti čisto američke stvari, s onim tamošnjim nabojem.

**Vi i jeste uvijek govorili da ste "američki umjetnik"...**

□ Ma, govorio sam ljudima da sam Amerikanac samo zato da ih što više nerviram...

**Kakva bi bila Vaša prava američka izložba?**

□ Nisu neke tajne, ali kada bih unaprijed o tome govorio, to nije onda više to. Ali mislim da bih bio u stanju napraviti veliki dar-mar u United Statesu!

**Pogled na izložbu instalacija "Point Blank" u Franklin Furnace Archive-u, New York, 6-29. siječnja 1994.**





## IV

TOMISLAV  
GOTOVAC

## □ SEE PAGE 27

Though in the reference anthologies of sub-cultural life Tomislav Gotovac has been pointed out as the most important marginal person in Zagreb he is above all an artist with the precisely built attitude towards his work, always aware of the necessity of acting. For more than thirty years he has been engaged in performances, where the necessity of the artist's physical presence as a catalyst of the alchemical reality is the basis of any substantiality of the work. Examining the possibilities of absolute freedom of the individual in a given time and space Tomislav Gotovac has intentionally provoked the mechanisms of prohibition often sacrificing himself (the film *Plastic Jesus*, striking *Running Naked In The Downtown*, etc.). The film had great influence on him. He has graduated film directing, but the camera only is not his basic tool to get involved in directing life understood as a coincidence of the whole range of spectacles. Cutting and editing the experienced accidents according to his own choice, the constant search for the possible existence of the logical transcendence and regularities in preceding events resulted in concrete and very early 'structuralist films' that join him to the Pantheon of the world famous authors of the experimental film (Kubelka, Snow, Frampton). After having been constantly disputed at home he managed to establish himself abroad. During his four-month grant he managed to interest American audience by his exhibition 'Museum of the Revolution of the People of Tomislav Gotovac' on the exclusive premises of Martha Willson's 'Franklin Furnace Archives' on Manhattan in New York City. As his former projects this exhibition tried to expose conditions of life in totalitarian systems and then remembering the communism again he ironically warned of dangers that threaten a man when the society turns him into a dog. In her filmed novel 'Slaves of New York' Tama Janowitz brilliantly detects the frustrating and decadent post-capitalist situation. Will Tom get a chance to lead America into a revolution?

*If we consider art as a flow of information, more or less clearly determined, thus connected in time and space, then the contextualization of your activities is made much more difficult, because you are in the constant conflict with reality. A modern Don Quixote, let's say.*

□ I don't see any difference between what happens to us before and this now. All that is a harsh continuity, and we the inhabitants of this country simply don't want to admit what happens to us is what really happens. They have always convinced us that something else has been going on, and the real truth is that we are getting poorer and poorer every day and instead of gaining we keep on losing. We are drifting away from the ideas we longed for reading beautiful books, we realize that stage settings are around us and that most things are

tricks. Well now, if a man as an individual wishes to communicate directly with the Almighty, he can do it and he is lucky then, because there is no middleman. However, in a country as ours there are always middlemen who are interpreting the Almighty to you and who are always trying to explain who we really are. My romantic duty is to demystify the role of the middleman between me as an individual and idiot on one side and the Almighty on the other. I don't allow anyone in my life to mediate for me, except for those I personally digested in an intimate way as for instance: John Ford, Ivan Kožarić, Howard Hawks, Tristan Tzara and some other people I became familiar with. I accept these people as my informers, but I don't give a damn for those who are trying to convince me in a savage way of a certain thing ... where I come from. This is absolutely irrelevant for me. Referring to that, I don't accept the provinces and the center. In my opinion the center is in our brain, not in a physical extent. This means that a man can be free even in a jail, because it is the question of our relation to prohibitions. In the same way a man can be in the center even if he is in the most remoted village, because nobody can force me to think provincially. If I have information at hand, I am absolutely free.

*Your life seems to be a copy of art and art itself your permanent inspiration. Regardless of your radicality you are an exceptionally pro-traditional artist, as Hrvoje Turković stated before?*

□ I have nothing in common with the real avant-garde principles. I am a terrible traditionalist. It just bothers me that people don't have the faintest idea what art really is, and this is the fault of critics and their conceptual fabrications. The art is only one and the avant-garde and the tradition are the same problem. I can't really differentiate life and art. It is all the same for me, maybe because it is my big problem ... what would life be? It is an eternal struggle to find a place to sleep in and something to eat...

*Isn't there a disproportion in your words now? You are intensifying the conflict with life in the sense that you don't even want to understand it, and then again you demask some everyday evil occurrences in your actions very successfully. I want to say that you still feel your reality well.*

□ This momentary space and time is for me a kind of *deja vu* situation I have emotionally been through in many works of art. It is simply a repetition for me, but in a real shape, and as far as I am concerned, this is all completely uninteresting as a message. In my opinion the most important thing is that a man can use his talent to express himself through artistic forms, through the visual, through words, sound, or in other words to express his freedom through whatever comes to his mind at the moment. I'll repeat that there is a conflict between the compulsion of the totalitarianism, i.e. people who decided to squeeze in between us and the Almighty and who are going to explain to us that we are fools and stupid cattle, what we have to think... They are also a kind

of artists that treat the rest of us as their material. My revolt consists exactly in not letting anyone take a role of a middleman for me.

I can allow it to somebody that I can feel as a good film director, say. I am more and more convinced that nobody knows what life really is and what art is. It might have always been that way. I think freedom is happiness to most people, they are just ashamed. They are ashamed to take off their clothes and take a walk down Ilica like that, they are ashamed to swear in public, even though they want it in their thoughts. Everything is a big show and we all take a part.

*You have never been ashamed then?*

□ On the contrary, I have been ashamed. An artist must always try to do what many people want to but they lack courage to do it. It can be said that I sacrifice myself for those people and for myself. I want to see the others, too, who are going to help me make it through the next 24 hours, because 24 hours are a day, and then it is a week and a month and a year and a whole life. Joyce did not accidentally write his *Ulysses* that takes place only in a day. The problems that a human being deals with have universal character and we always have to solve them as such for ourselves as well as for the others.

*Have you applied this projection that the 24 hours are a whole life in your works, that is to say, is perhaps one of your performances a projection of life?*

□ If I liked to be a little overbearing, I would say that they were something complete and general. However, when an artist finishes his work it has to go on living. Therefore, when one creates works of art on a daily basis it necessarily comes to a repetition, so it could mean a blue phase now, then the yellow one and the brown one and so on. This means we don't mostly produce originals. That's a big problem for me. To work every day means to live a repetition, because there is always again morning, waking up, work, noon, lunch, rest, then evening, a 'cup' of conversation, night, then maybe sex, maybe not... then again that way... How to deal with all these things and to look at future satisfied? How to make it through the monotonous flow of time? There are no solid points of support. This war, in which houses and security disappear, has shown all this. Therefore, values mean absolutely nothing.

*You were always expressing your revolt against conventions and now you are speaking about the relativity of the existence of values. How should one go on living, where should one find the points of support?*

□ It is clear for me that conventions exist and I determine my relationship to fellow creatures according to them. That means you don't torture people by destroying them and you don't impose your will savagely on them. One should take part in the general joy, because it is normal that a nice, sunny day is nice to all of us. One should respect his fellow citizens and shouldn't pollute the environment. What I do might be polluting the environment for somebody, but I don't agree with it, because I

don't force anyone to do anything. One should give a chance to the public to conceive everything ironically, not boundedly. Everything I did in the streets was my conflict with reality in a passive manner, because I did not force anyone to do the same. After all, I guess it was fun to watch me. I put myself in an embarrassing position, so the others might not be so embarrassed. So that was a kind of a mild protest, not the protest against all conventions.

#### And what about artistic conventions?

I respect them. I look upon various arts as upon shop-windows that you can view at and form your own opinion about them, if they are OK or not, but God forbid that I would destroy something. I am saying this because of young people who might not have a defined relation towards artistic value. Everything should be equally at their disposal: from academism to avant-garde. I shall always plead that young people get information about everything, as food.

#### Are you talking about spiritual food?

Getting old consists of breathing. Everything is subordinated to that. But young people still want something else.

#### Do you maybe feel old?

I am not talking about this for the first time. I don't feel exactly old, but I won't be able to complain about that.

#### How do you personally experience yourself as an artist?

Tomislav Gotovac always imagines himself as a film director who would like to direct in many fields of art and life.

#### That is to say, as a director who does not observe things through the lens of a film camera only?

Most film directors that I admire were complete vital personalities. Their films were just tops of icebergs. To direct a film did not mean just to stand behind a camera, it meant living with people, being familiar with landscape, enjoying music... Say Matisse' whole life came to surface through his color.

#### You unusually appreciate an artist's personality, so lots of your works were created to pay homage to the great individuals, e.g. Glenn Miller. Are these really just dedications or do you use also their artistic expressions, now recycled through other media?

I don't use their expressions, but their artistic power which was resorbed in me previously. I live in such an artistic world. It is not desirable to say that, because it is not beneficial to me, because everybody wants to be original, but I always like to put things in their places. It is my honesty. When I made collages in the '60 I admitted that I was possessed by Kurt Schwitters. All trends in art are equal to discovering warm water and wooden iron. A man should only feel important.

#### Then, what is your relation to the new like?

In all this so called "new stuff" there were personalities who, each in his time, picked the honey from other fields. I do so, too. Glenn Miller was chosen by his music to create pleasure for a large number of people. In fact, he was just used, and when he was out of use, he disappeared in a very strange way. His destiny

symbolizes the destiny of many artists whose creating was used up and they were thrown away. To honor him as an artist I dedicated a performance to him. In the Renaissance times the Church used artists, and no matter how important their work was, something else was essential.

#### Do you consider yourself a used artist?

Well, that's my big problem. I would like to be used, but when I become aware of it, I mess up everything.

#### How would you like to be used?

If I knew it, I would be very rich. (laugh) There is no artist that cannot be used. It is obvious that artists are not very smart, because they sometimes get the interest but never the principal.

#### Short time ago you returned from New York after four months there. What did you manage to do there?

I wouldn't say it was a stay in New York, it was rather Manhattan or more precisely East Village, Soho and Tribeca. So I haven't almost seen the real America except for a few parts. I had grants by the Arts Link and the Fondation Mercy Pavelic what was arranged by Mrs. Martha Wilson of the Franklin Furnace Archives. That lady has been in charge of the stated premises for about 20 years, and she is a performer herself. She has become a kind of institution for the so called non-commercial avant-garde art. By the end of the last year she sold one of the best archives for that kind of art to the MOMA.

#### How did you get in touch with Mrs. Wilson?

She simply read an interview with me in the catalog of the collective exhibition 'Rhetorical Image' that took place in December 1990 in the Contemporary Art Museum on Broadway. The curator was Milena Kalinowska. It was the time of the unsolved situation in the Balkans, so I stated some predictions in that interview. That time I spent three weeks in New York City. America was getting ready for the Desert Storm, Špegelj affair broke out here, so I was frankly afraid and I could hardly wait to reach Zagreb. Only at the end of 1993 Martha Wilson managed to arrange the mentioned grants for me and I could make the exhibition *The Museum of the Revolution of the People of Tomislav Gotovac* that was purposely opened on my daughters birthday on the January 6 this year under the title Point Blank. As a part of the exhibition I organized a couple of my performances over the weeks.

#### Are you satisfied with the audience?

That's a bright audience, there was no need to explain much what I did. I think I had good repercussions. But success in America can't be reached over night, unless you are sensational. For what I do it could be said: Still waters run deep. The character of my exhibition was typically European, but I would like to do something clearly American, with the American load.

#### You have always been saying that you are an "American artist"...

Well, I was telling people I was American in order to upset them more...

#### What would your a real American exhibition be like?

That is not much of a secret, but if I told people about it in advance, that wouldn't be it any more. But I think I could make a big mess in the United States!

GORAN BLAGUS

## THE FORMS OF THOUGHT

### SEE PAGE 20

"An image gives a more complex formation than a sentence."

(Tibor Hajas)

What I am writing about - fine arts - is not speculation but personal experience: it is no other than clear "empiria". Of course, it might seem strange that this empiria virtually immediately points back to itself: the experienced totality of art is, in fact, indivisible and unexplicable. As Miklós Erdély put it; it is the empiria of the "intellectually unattained." What puzzles us is that the intellectually unattained, that is there intangibly, is bound to an object before us, that is to the work; "the works, just like all other things, are naturally near at hand in the same way" (Heidegger). And it is exactly this where we witness the basic conflict concerning the modern problem of the image, which could not be evaded since Duchamp, on the one hand, the work is a thing "near at hand", on the other hand, it is infinitely more than a thing "near at hand": it is a spiritual entity. Or, more precisely, it is both at the same time, nevertheless, it can emerge from the circle of the things "near at hand" through the latter of the two.

Duchamp said to Pierre Cabanne about the Big Glass that "everything in it became conceptual, notional, and so, everything depended on something else other than the retina." His raising the problem of the image and consciously shifting the emphasis to the conceptual side in the arts, his legendary non-conformist behaviour, his scepticism concerning art life and art trade made Duchamp an aesthetic "point of reference" and a personal example, an "archetype" for the representatives of concept art at the turn of the sixties and the seventies.

By rejecting the traditional notion of the artwork being a fetish, by reducing the importance of the material and tangible objectivity aspect, and by documenting the thought, the idea of art as an existing self-contained entity, concept art realised the conceptual and intellectual self-examination of art. As a result, texts, signs, writings on walls and photos were born, causing some - temporary - confusion in art trade. Yet, even Joseph Kosuth admitted that, however complex and highly elaborate it might have been, thinking of the "principles of how the work of art works" as an art in itself had lost a great deal of its original impetus, and became less attractive by the eighties. And this fact is due only to the machinations of the art market, but also to the fact that the progres-