

Stalking with Stories - The Pioneers of the Un-Rememberable

Sometimes, on awakening we recall a dream. In this way rare shafts of insight illuminate the ruins of our energies that time has passed by.

(Walter Benjamin)

Giorgio Agamben, when contemplating about the 'un-rememberable', reflects on an **unintentional memory** and concludes that exactly this memory that doesn't remember is the most powerful memory of all. But - what would happen if we would try to put in relation the 'un/rememberable' to the slippery cliché of modernist nostalgia - a modern disease, a longing for a something that never existed? According to the Russian writer and theorist Svetlana Boym there are two types of nostalgia: the first, **restorative** nostalgia, tries to reconstruct the lost root that nobody remembers, while **reflexive** nostalgia, which she locates in art, doesn't try to reconstruct a space or field of home but rather reflects it's strength, power and time and it can be **not retrospective but prospective**. It is a thought of the **past as a potential**, i.e., it is about 'watching' dreams through which we can think about the future. In this equation, there is no rupture between past and future. This triangle between Remembering- Forgotten-Reconstructed is what the *Stalking with Stories* focuses on. The works in the show can seem like contemporary 'genre scenes' that (un)intentionally take up roles of nostalgia triggers causing, in Agamben's words - **brief and fragmented awakening**. The works involve navigating real and imagined territories and time - geographic, political, economic and social by revealing how the personal and communal **forgotten or 'un-rememberable'** construct the nostalgia of/for the future. The show functions as an archive of parallel micro-narratives, expanding on the notion of **derive** - radical wandering of, in this case, a **'time-flaneur'**, as a means of **touching upon different chronotops**. The exhibition strives at formulating an **unstable and fragmentary cartography** where spatial and time collisions often result in conditions close to **pseudo-modernist melancholy**. Finally, it reveals how cultural mythologies are inscribed into personal **Time-Space-Memory** equation.

Felix Gmelin's *Farbtest, Die Rote Fahne II*, shows two screens- one shot in 1968 in Berlin and the other shot in 2002 in Stockholm. In the first short film, a young man (the artist's father) runs through the streets of West Berlin with a red flag to join other youth activists on the balcony of a government building. In Stockholm in 2002, the artists re-enacts the scene: the players are male and female, and the conclusion isn't as glorifying: they don't find any young activists. The work is a comment on today's situation of political indifference of the youth and expression of the nostalgia for the 'real' before irony.

Zbyněk Baladrán in *KOLDOM* deals with the idea of an ideal apartment drawn by the Czech modernist architect Karel Honzik, which is today just a forgotten utopia. A simple pen drawing becomes the actual archeological transcript of the modernist ideas and the trust in the revolution.

The protagonist of **Artur Zmijewski's** video *Lisa*, a German girl who claims she experienced a revelation about her former life as a Jewish boy, murdered at the age of 12 by the Nazis, receiving a message from God to go to Israel and live there. In spite of the fact that her life in Israel isn't ideal, surrounded by people who find her story absurd, she persists in pursuing and living her revelation.

Katarina Seda in *It Doesn't Matter* discovers that her now apathic and introvert grandmother remembers to the last detail all the items she was once selling as an employer in a tools shop in a small village in Moravska, and documents her process of remembering as she is making a never-ending series of drawings of various tools from her store.

The brief but notorious career of **Bas Jan Ader** was mysteriously concluded when he disappeared at sea in 1975, during his project *The Search for the Miraculous*. The photograph documenting his departure became the symbol of revitalizing the figure of an artists as romantic hero in the quest for the unknown.

David Maljković works evolve around the emblematic architecture of the Memorial Centre for a Partisan Hospital designed by Vojin Bakic in 1981. The expressive monumentality and a distinct style of these buildings are perceived as time capsules, spaces so intensively charged by their own era, that they become means of transfer for spiritual heritage relevant to both present and future.

Ahmet Ogut's *Book of the Lost World* (2005) appropriates the format of a fairytale-style book, but without the happy ending, or a beginning. Through the pages of this work, the layers of his country's collective memory are displayed in simple drawings, creating a certain narrative of the personal trauma and the overall flux of time.

In her sound installation and artist-book *Kvatrić*, **Tina Gverović** deals with the forgotten narratives of the chronotop of the Kvaternikov trg in Zagreb, discovering layers of personal and collective 'un-rememberable' and the *genius loci* of this emblematic post-socialist square in Zagreb.

Anri Sala discovered an old newsreel film, portraying a congress of the Albanian Communist Party where a young woman (artists mother) makes a speech, and is interviewed. The film soundtrack was missing, so what she was saying was unclear. Lip readers deciphered Anri Sala's mother's words. 'Intervista' captures the moment when Sala shows his mother the film. With her words recovered, she confronts her younger self. Her communist ideals and the current chaos in Albania collide, offering a moving reflection on the country's (and one woman's) history and present state.