

Marko Golub - Crossroads - Karolina Pernar

The inner ring below the dome of the Home of HDLU (Croatian Association of Visual Artists), also known as the Expanded Media Gallery (PM Gallery), has quite frequently been the subject matter in the works of artists who had an opportunity of exhibiting there. Even if the idea of the work does not in any way refer to the space, the visitors are still inclined to experience a certain relationship of the work and space. When there is no explicit intention by the artists, the audience behaves according to some established rules and makes a ritual circle in going through the gallery even if it is not required by the exhibition or in cases when the exhibition dispositions are frontal to the gallery entrance, which is itself the only point in the gallery where circular movement stops.

A suggestive installation by Zoran Pavelić a few weeks ago pushed us into Madonna's three-coloured flag like hug. In his much earlier video work the same artist used the pounding sound of footsteps to beat out the rhythm to the acoustically awkward space. Some artists engaged in a playful consideration of symbolically and physically opening and breaking the closed ring or its dome even before the last restoration of the building brought it to its original state. A good example for that was the exhibition Shum by Mezak, Friščić and Rogić which in one of its segments provided a view onto the street, that is, the immediate vicinity of the building. The most radical move was made by Slaven Tolj who exhibited sticks of dynamite suggesting a possibility of bringing the entire outer space inside.

At the exhibition titled Crossroads, Karolina Pernar developed her work along the similar lines, and the link to the work by the three previously mentioned artists is self-evident. She placed six cameras on the roof of the building which recorded six radial streets leading to other parts of the city. The recordings were shown on six monitors set in the gallery. It is at this point that all similarity with the work of Mezak/Friščić/Rogić stops, even if this work already stemmed from their elementary strategy. Although the concept of time has been introduced with the so called closed circuit, that is, the

existence of connection between the recordings and their reproductions, Karolina Pernar used it in a series of interrelated conditioned procedures thus making it the core of her work

Only one screen is harmonized with the real time, whereas each of the remaining five show an event that comes four hours later in time than the previous one, thus creating together one entire day. At this exhibition the visitors are placed in a certain time mechanism in which the perception of time is closely related to the technology somewhat more sophisticated than cogwheels, to the perception of space where it is located and, and to the measures and constructed relationships within it. Additionally, certain conventions related to both categories are disturbed. What should be the view from the roof of the building is twisted since the screens are placed high above the dome. The circular movement that is imposed by the space where it is directly connected to the measuring of time is broken by strictly vertical lines of the streets which are daily filled with cars and people. Although the exhibition only takes up the space of the PM Gallery, it metaphorically embraces the entire building whose outer ring, hollow space under the dome and its exterior appearance and location within the city become some sort of mystical mechanism. The production of the art work is also impeccable, partly due to the use of certain potentials of the building which have so far been taken as a setback and disturbance at exhibitions. The not so attractive air vents which once entered a visual competition with Knifer's meander were now used by Karolina Pernar as suitable frames for the screens. Even the penetrated dome was given a function. Its „embroidery“ of light did not subdue the video projections, but emphasise them, made them more complete, convincing and arresting. Naturally, various esoteric interpretations could be applied here. However, it seems that Karolina Pernar's intention was not to develop such a story, but to work in a given context and use its resources with minimal interventions and clear direction.