

G E O R G K A R G L F I N E A R T S

Press Release

DAVID MALJKOVIC *Temporary Projections*

Exhibition dates: June 29 – August 13, 2011

Georg Kargl Fine Arts presents *Temporary Projections*, the second solo show of the Croatian artist David Maljkovic, and his first one in the main space of the gallery.

In his installations, videos, and collages, David Maljkovic (born in 1973) is concerned with aspects of the eventful history of his country. The far-reaching consequences of the transformation from a communist to a capitalist social system and the linked economic and cultural impacts form the subtext of his artistic production.

Exploring the modernist remnants of socialist Yugoslavia and their echoes to the present as well as their future possibilities is one of the main themes in his artistic practice. In recalling the ideas of the past, analyzing their impact on the presence, transforming them into sites of an utopian alternative future, he achieves a shifting between different time levels.

With his current exhibition at Georg Kargl Fine Arts David Maljkovic has undertaken an experimental journey through the broad and complex space of the gallery. Through a massive architectural intervention the gallery is divided into a public and a private space, an exposed and a hidden part. With *Temporary Projections* David Maljkovic creates an atmospherically charged overall installation.

Fiona Liewehr has interviewed David Maljkovic about his artistic practice, his motivations and the specific challenge of the gallery space.

FL: My impression is that this exhibition is a very special one for you. You have started to paint again and at first glance your works have nothing to do with one of the main themes of your artistic practice: to investigate the history of your own country, to question the impact on the modernist concepts of social Yugoslavia for the presence and for an alternative future. Is there a connection? Are you striking a new path or do you even start a new chapter of your work?

DM: *Temporary Projections* refers to my 16mm film *Images with their own shadows* from 2008. It does not deal with the content of the film but with its principle. The mentioned film was shot in the estate of Vjenceslav Richter (1917-2002), a founding member of the group EXAT 51. I used sound clips from the last-recorded interview with the artist and architect. In the video you see a black screen with the subtitles of the words of Vjenceslav Richter, who speaks about certain moments of his history as an artist. These parts alternate with scenes of young people that are shown with their mouths open as if they are about to speak, but without any sound coming out except the sound of the projector. The overlapping of the sound of the projector in the film with the actual sound of the projector was a striking experience for me, that I bring now to the gallery space in treating the sound almost the same way. The sound of the projector moderates and initiates the image. This exhibition is specific for me because it goes further with the sound, which has always been very important in my video works and installations but now it is directly connected to the gallery space.

I do not see this exhibition as a starting point for me to paint and I have never been thinking about stopping or starting to paint because I do not approach the media in that way. The paintings in this exhibition are hidden physical evidences. In a physical sense they are paintings, but I would rather see them as positions.

Well, in my artistic practice the structuring of the subjects is much more important than the subjects themselves, but of course the subject is capable of grasping someone's attention and to determine you to some superficial level. I do not tend to be occupied with the context of my work and I can even say that in my opinion artists rarely think about the context when they are creating their works. Every project for me is a whole new approach in a way and I see this exhibition closely related to some of my previous works like *Place with limited premeditation* from 2003/04, works that were created during my stay at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam and were presented later in the artist book with the same title. Also the work *Space has happened* from 2002, when I took numbers that are used by the police for photographing crime scenes and positioned them in the empty gallery space.

FL: Matt Mullican has labeled the gallery space as a kind of "learning space" with its three levels, and his labyrinthine and heterogeneous structure. What was the special challenge of the space for you?

DM: Of course every artist has a different approach to Georg Kargl gallery space, because it is a very personal space and it is not possible to just arrive and deliver the works. Due to this specific character *Temporary Projections* makes sense in that space. In a clean white cube that work would not be possible. For me it is a kind of "traveling space".

FL: You have divided the space into two parts, a public and a private space. You have closed parts of the rooms, that are normally used as exhibition spaces and you have opened parts, that are normally private and hidden. Even in the „public part“ of the show, your works are hidden: you put a unique linoleum print in a tube on a shelf, small paintings are illuminated by a giant umbrella, that is normally used in photo studios, so that they can only be seen from the side. This exhibition is a challenge for every visitor. Not only that you have completely changed the standard patterns of reception of the space: the visitor has to overcome his inhibitions and force his way into the main space of the gallery, if he wants to grasp the whole show. What leads you to this idea, to this experiment?

DM: I am not sure if I would call those spaces public and private but it can be seen that way. I would rather call and divide the space in the projection room and the projection. Of course the projection here is my private fictional studio. I had a similar feeling while I was shooting the film *Images with their own shadows* in Vjenceslav Richter's studio. His studio was not really his studio anymore from the moment it was opened for the public it became a studio projection. His works and the whole new situation started to look more like some casting. I decided to treat *Temporary Projections* in a similar way and even go a step further because the studio is the paradigm of a studio – the working space that never really existed. My three months stay in Augarten Atelier is quite important for this exhibition because that atelier there became the model of the studio.

FL: Is there an interest in the exchangeability, contingency and dependency of categories as public and private?

DM: No.

FL: Let's come to the cinematic aspect of the show. Right after entering the gallery one is kept by the sound of a 16mm projector that accompanies the visitor during his walk through the space. There is a light coming from a hidden room, the light of a giant umbrella gives a whole space the atmosphere of a film set and a huge blackbox is leading to a dead end. You evoke the suggestive

power of the cinema inside the whole exhibition, without showing film. For me in this exhibition you try to interrogate the methods of narrative construction and point out the fragmentary character of reality and its filmic representation. What is your special interest in the medium of film?

DM: I actually agree and think it is pretty close. It is about the projection room a lot. I would like to mention the sound once again that here has the purpose to keep the image alive. This aspect has two sides, on the one hand the sound of the projection makes the image more suggestive and in a way activates the static scene and on the other hand it gives the scene a temporary character because film is always time-based and has always its duration. The exhibition is a walk across the interspace of an artistic practice and your participation in it.

Interview will be continued.
An artist book will be published.

David Maljkovic has participated in numerous international exhibitions. For example, he has presented individual exhibitions at Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven (2005), London's Whitechapel Art Gallery (2007), Kunstverein Hamburg (2007), Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana (2010) and took part in group exhibitions held at Artists Space New York (2007), Berlin Biennale (2008), and Mucsarnok - Kunsthalle Budapest (2008), 11th Istanbul Biennial (2009), Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris (2010). By the end of 2011 a solo show will be on display at Secession, Vienna (Dezember 2, 2011 – Februar 2012).

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Opening hours:
Tue, Wed, Fri 11 am – 7 pm
Thu 11 am – 8 pm
Sat 11 am – 4 pm