

Decoding illusions. Cutting through emotional, social and physical spaces

Employing symbols of identification, remembrance, popular culture and representational models, Renata Poljak speaks of Croatia, former Yugoslavia, herself, emotion, inspiration and the effect of blue as the metaphor of meaning, problems, connotation and the possibilities of belonging to a cultural context, subtly intervening into a social and political public sphere.

A dialogue between private and public, individual and collective, past and present, subjectivity and reflection on social and political moment, occupy special position in works by Renata Poljak. In her pieces that are realized in diverse media, ranging from photography and video to installations, Renata Poljak researches, in a critical voice, personal and social comments, tackling the issues of possibility and impossibility of articulation, built up frustrations, anxieties, misunderstandings, tensions and breaks, through referential assemblies pointing at power dynamics and conflict of both political and personal nature, used by author to speak of belonging to a cultural context, identity, the decoding of illusions.

Constructed via language and representations, identities are not stable unities albeit changeable series of ideological positions construed as temporary intersections of subjects and codes at the crossroad of various social creations and personal experiences. In this manner, art practice of Renata Poljak speaks from the peculiar cultural, ideological and social positions, and she encounters memory, attempting to render visibility of – and point at resistance to – newly formed social norms, everyday routines or traditional values.

Her works feature dismantling of intimate and ordinary relations, the issues of visible and invisible. Applying various strategies, Renata creates an individual language and context for an artwork, pointing at symbolic capital of special fetishes and devaluated values, as well as individual and collective endeavours and efforts. Renata Poljak questions some of the problems of transitional society, its transformations, issues of social amnesia, disturbed values and lack of morality, state of generational uncertainty, portraying situations such as wild urbanism, illegal construction, tolerance of violence, raging of sports hooligans or else feelings of futility and impossibility of making decisions. These social sketches are detected through personal author's views, becoming a place where time and emotional, psychological, social and physical spaces intersect.

BRANKA BENCIC, 2011.