

"Jelena Tomasevic." In the Gorges in the Balkans (exhibition catalogue). Interview with Petar Cukovic, Kunsthalle Fridericianum Kassel, 2003.

IN THE GORGES OF THE BALKANS

A REPORT

JELENA TOMAŠEVIĆ



Untitled, 2003



Interview mit Petar Ćuković

P.C.: We can say that lately you have been using photography as the basis for most of your works. What is your interest in this medium?

J.T.: I have no interest in rules of photography or "aesthetics" or, eventually, the artistic value of the photo itself. What I am interested in is the authentic photo-evidence found in photographs taken at crime scenes and used in a courtroom to facilitate reconstruction of a crime. What I investigate is the logic of the material. This is about reducing photography to "WHAT MATTERS".

P.C.: In other works of yours the medium of photography has been used for previously conceptualized, minutely thought-out pieces. But wasn't the work that was selected for the exhibition in Kassel created as a kind of immediate – we could even say – profoundly existential experience?

J.T.: What assures us that the world exists is its characterization of the occasional, criminal and imperfect. These photos are not what they seem to be. The actual situation with red-colored hands lasted only for the time it took to put them on the negative. The scene in the photo in effect distracts us from the factual and so hides what the scene is like in reality. We (who know how they have been created) are balancing between ILLUSION and TRUTH. The photos claim to be something that they are actually not.

P.C.: Who is the driver of the automobile? Who, at the speed of 40 kilometers an hour, i.e., a speed that makes it possible to concentrate and contemplate, arrives at the idea of recording a visually puzzling moment?

J.T.: I don't think that these photos (works) should be viewed from a fixed perspective; if I perceived them in a framework of rigid definition, that would mean that I limited myself and imposed on others what they should think about those photos. This is not something that interests me. I think that the meaning of a work of art lies in the effort that has to be made to produce it (that effort is a state, an activity, an interaction with the world), not in its intention. However, some people believe that intention is everything. They build a context and explain their objectives, and then the context is supposed to verify those objectives. These kinds of intentions have the effect that the "work" becomes closed to the experience of others.

Certainly the sense of this work is OPENING OF SPACE FOR DOUBT. So, I could say that it is a painter and a butcher and a housepainter and a murderer and a philosopher holding the wheel. I think that this work resolves everything hidden that is meant to be said.