

PARADISE PERFORMANCE REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

Exhibition period: **07. Oktober 2023 – 07. Januar 2024**

Opening: **Friday, 06. Oktober 2023, 7 pm**

Press tour: **Friday, 06. Oktober, 11 am**

Venue: **Fotografie Forum Frankfurt, Braubachstr. 30–32, 60311 Frankfurt**

Frankfurt am Main, 06. October 2023 – The satirical staging of social roles, how we observe our surroundings, the phenomenon of repetition: with the exhibition **PARADISE, PERFORMANCE, REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART**, the Fotografie Forum Frankfurt (FFF) presents three positions of contemporary photography from Slovenia. Despite completely different themes, all three artists explore the boundaries of photography in an equally experimental and refreshing way.

Vanja Bučan (*1973, Nova Gorica) questions socio-political themes with surreally staged image compositions. In her series Birds of Paradise – created from 2021 to 2023 during the pandemic-related retreat into the domestic – the photo-artist addresses traditional female roles in the seclusion of the private sphere. The woman primarily responsible for childcare and household chores is reduced to hands-on duty. Bučan dissects her photographs and then assembles them into humorous, enigmatic photo collages as a mirror of experience and an invitation to reflect.

In his installations, **Jošt Dolinšek** (*1997, Ljubljana) investigates visual perception and affects of environment, especially of landscape and nature. This young artist is less concerned with environmental crises and their causes but more of the fundamentals of existential and individual attitudes to time and space. The focus of his work deals with uncertainty, loss and change. Dolinšek experiments with different media, materials and forms combining photography with moving images, sound and sculpture.

Since the 1980s, **Bojan Radovič** (*1960, Novo mesto) has been concerned with the principle of repetition, copy and imitation. The photo-artist explores the fascinating diversity of meanings and variations of the "replica" with obvious pleasure, on a content-related and procedural level as well as by means of various references in photography and art history. In addition to his artistic work, Radovič is key to the Slovenian photo-scene as an exhibition organiser, publisher and founder of Fotogalerie Novo mesto and House of Photography.

On view are around 60 works, including photographs, installations and multimedia projects.

PARADISE, PERFORMANCE, REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART was curated by Celina Lunsford and co-curator Andrea Horvay. The exhibition is FFF's contribution to Slovenia's Guest of Honour programme at the Frankfurter Buchmesse 2023.

PARADISE PERFORMANCE REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

SPECIAL PROGRAMME

SAT, 07.10., 3 pm GALLERY TALK

with **VANJA BUČAN, JOŠT DOLINŠEK, BOJAN RADOVIČ, CELINA LUNSFORD**
and **MARIJA SKOČIR**, Director of the Jakopič Art Gallery, Museum & Galleries Ljubljana

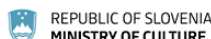
TUE, 17.10., 14.11., 12.12., 3 pm CURATOR'S TOUR

with **CELINA LUNSFORD** or **ANDREA HORVAY**

PUBLIC GUIDED TOURS every **Wednesday**, 5 pm

PRESS IMAGES: Download at www.fffrankfurt.org/presse

PROJECT PARTNERS of the exhibition:



FFF ACADEMY

SAT/SUN, 14./15.10., 10 am–6 pm WORKSHOP

NO MORE BORING PHOTO BOOKS with **TONI AMENGUAL**

SAT, 04.11., 2–6 pm WORKSHOP

SICHTBARKEIT, POSITIONIERUNG & AKQUISE FÜR BERUFSFOTOGRAF*INNEN with **SILKE GÜLDNER**

SUN, 05.11., 10 am–2 pm WORKSHOP

DIE KUNST DER GESPRÄCHSFÜHRUNG – BUSINESS-KOMMUNIKATION with **SILKE GÜLDNER**

WED, 22.11., 6 pm BOOK PRESENTATION & DIALOGUE

HANS-MICHAEL KOETZLE, author and photo historian, about his new book *REDEN WIR ÜBER FOTOGRAFIE*, in dialogue with **SABINE KÖNIGS**, Communications FFF

Further Events at www.fffrankfurt.org

OPENING HOURS Tue–Sun 11 am –6 pm, Mon closed

ADMISSION regular 7 Euro, reduced 4 Euro

FOTOGRAFIE FORUM FRANKFURT

The Fotografie Forum Frankfurt (FFF) is one of the leading centres of photography in Europe. As an exhibition space, institution and event forum the FFF deals with all aspects of photography. Since its founding in 1984 it has presented at about 270 exhibitions with historic and contemporary artists. Additionally, the programme of the FFF ACADEMY comprises of regular workshops, talks and discussions with internationally renowned photographers, artists and experts. Further information available at www.fffrankfurt.org

Fotografie Forum Frankfurt is supported by Förderkreis Fotografie Forum Frankfurt e.V., Stadt Frankfurt am Main, FUJIFILM Electronic Imaging Europe and Hauck, Aufhäuser, Lampe



PARADISE PERFORMANCE REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

Vanja Bučan (*1973, Nova Gorica, Slovenia) graduated in photography from the Royal Academy of Arts in The Hague, The Netherlands. Before becoming a photographic artist, she studied sociology at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and took part in environmental activism, which is reflected in her artistic practice.

In her signature approach, she deconstructs her staged photographs through cut-outs to achieve altered realities, which merge into fiction. Many of her projects are centred on her visions of nature and the way humans subjugate it. Bučan's storytelling does not focus on historical events but instead reflects on the psychology of our everyday.

Her work has been awarded and exhibited at several international group exhibitions, biennials, and solo shows. Among them are Kunsthaus Wien and Lentos Kunst Museum, Austria; Benaki Museum with Athens Photo Festival, Greece; Biel Fototage, Switzerland; Circulations(s) Festival, France; CAFA Art Museum Beijing, China; European Month of Photography (Bratislava, Berlin, Luxembourg); Galerija Photon, Slovenia; Galerija Fotografija, Slovenia; Talent Latent, Spain; Vento Solar, Brasil; Leica Gallery Wetzlar; Artget Gallery Belgrade, Serbia. Vanja Bučan is based in Berlin.

Jošt Dolinšek (*1997, Ljubljana, Slovenia) works with the medium photography including the medium moving imagery, installation and sculpture. Dolinšek creates long-term projects, exploring the existential experience of environment and time and our relationship to both. His work is centred on uncertainty through perspective, duration and change. Form and materiality pose as crucial elements in his works and are often strongly related to his inquiry of the process behind them.

His approach is largely nonlinear and intertwined with different methods and materials. Dolinšek tends to use photography as an act that performs rather than represents.

He graduated in 2023 from a MFA Photography programme at HDK-Valand in Gothenburg, Sweden. In 2020, he earned a BA in Psychology at the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia. Dolinšek was a selected artist in the 3rd cycle of Parallel – European Photo Based Platform and was featured in Paris Photo's Curiosa sector in 2021. His works have been shown in Röda Sten Konsthall in Gothenburg (2023), Photon Gallery Ljubljana, Slovenia (2021) and Vienna, Austria (2022); Charta Festival, Rome, Italy (2021); Landskrona Foto Festival, Sweden (2020); Robert Capa Center, Budapest, Hungary (2019) and at Voies-off Festival, Arles, France (2018). The artist currently lives and works in Gothenburg.

PARADISE PEFORMANCE REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

Bojan Radovič (*1960 Novo mesto, Slovenia) is a photographer, curator and organiser of photographic exhibitions. He graduated in photography from the Swansea College of Art (UK) in 1982. Radovič has presented his works in numerous solo and group exhibitions, both nationally and internationally. His contribution to the development and interest in fine art photography of Slovenia is of European importance; he played a significant role in establishing the photography scene in Novo mesto, founding the Novo mesto Photo Gallery in 1984, which became one of the cornerstones of the photography community in his country. Bojan Radovič also founded the House of Photography, where he was actively involved in various photographic projects and initiatives, creating an exchange of international artists.

He has participated in residencies in New York, USA (2008), London, Great Britain (2022), and was the first Slovenian photographer to take part in the European Eyes on Japan project in 2012. In 2022/2023 Galerija Jakopič, MGML, Ljubljana, Slovenia created the retrospective Bojan Radovič. Replica with a monograph of the same title. This work inspired the concept for the exhibition **PARADISE, PERFORMANCE, REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART** at the Fotografie Forum Frankfurt in 2023. Bojan Radovič lives and works in Novo mesto.

PARADISE PERFORMANCE REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

Vanja Bućan

Birds of Paradise, 2021–2023

In her series Birds of Paradise Vanja Bućan addresses one of the most critical themes of feminism: domestic homemaking and the woman as the “natural” housekeeper. Motherhood, cutting things, spilt milk, life around the kitchen and the table, exhaustion, mending things, beauty and decorating define the everyday home activities in her works. At first glance one might view these three-dimensional photo-collages as playful, almost manic. Unusual haptic techniques such as fractional forms and over-layering lend ambiguity and sculptural perceptions. The figures, colour of the objects, and clothing are vibrant and the cut-out compositions almost seem to flutter.

As with other series, Bućan’s artistic method is about breaking down the rules, questioning stereotypes, and combining the unexpected. Thus the mother, the wife, the auntie, the girlfriend in her images becomes the symbol of the unpaid domestic worker: the women routinely caring for the basic human needs when at home.

Jošt Dolinšek

Passing Cairns, 2021

Archival inkjet prints, in a handmade wooden box

A study on collaborative memory

Each stone in the cairn represents a passer-by and its experience with the path. It may be therefore seen as a conglomerate of individual memories, but its fragile composition makes the stacks both makeshift and permanent. But what happens when such collaborative memory starts to decay, just as if stones are removed from a cairn, exposing the layers underneath and, ultimately, bare ground? Does it lead to forgetting past experiences, individualisation of memory, or decomposition of continuity? Collaborative memory takes patience. It starts where you are.

(Jošt Dolinšek)

PARADISE PEFORMANCE REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

Jošt Dolinšek

Stone Performance, 2022

2K video, 46' 12''

The duration of a seemingly endless performance is determined by chance – the moving image stops when the stone's movement leaves the frame. The excess of motion eventually leads to its absence.

The autonomous dynamics of the stone's performance are stemming from two main interconnected ideas or points of research. First is the emergence of the crucial event in which certain progression breaks and takes a different path. The other one is a butterfly effect, a term coined in chaos theory. It describes a phenomenon when a small change in one state can cause an event of much greater magnitude. In this case, the whole performance is stopped as a consequence of chance, out of my control.

(Jošt Dolinšek)

Jošt Dolinšek

To Move the Sun and Earth Away, 2019–2021

Four archival inkjet prints, walnut frames with two-sided mirrors; soundscape

To Move the Sun and Earth Away is a photographic and sound project exploring the human perception of environments – how we comprehend them, the deceptions, and our own sense of otherness in relation to nature. How biased is our perspective on the environment and its past? The physical form of installation questions the significance and biases originating from omnipresent dualisms, such as truth vs. false, hiding vs. revealing, accepting vs. denying, and fact vs. fiction.

The mirrors in front of the photographs allow innumerable perspectives and perceptions of the photographs – such as not exposing the unknown or unseen, but rather discovering an aspect in things and objects that got lost within the depths of our own perception. The soundscapes heard in the room are drawn from field recordings which have been altered, creating a visual and auditorial “perceptual playground”.

(Jošt Dolinšek)

PARADISE PEFORMANCE REPLICA. SLOVENIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

Bojan Radovič

Déjà vu, 2007

Eight archival inkjet prints

The basic motif of the series is several photograms created in 1991. The photographer randomly affixed sheets of photographic paper to a wall on which the nocturnal light of public streetlamps fell, inscribing traces of light and shadow on the paper. He later placed, again randomly, the sheets of paper on the floor of his apartment and rephotographed them as some sort of found objects. The series contains a note of the author's personal history: the family left the house in which the photograms were created but moved back in a couple of years later. In this way, the rephotographed photographs of the photograms found themselves on the same wall, with the same light falling on them through the same windows. The pieces are surrounded by a sense of déjà vu, the impression of something seen before, something that happened to us some time ago in the same place where we are standing now, perhaps changed, but with the same inner feeling.

Transformerji /Transformers, 2007

12 archival Inkjet prints on glass

The photograms from the 1990s which the artist had further processed in the series Déjà vu, were transferred onto plexiglass achieving three-dimensionality – an effect that is enhanced with the bending of the plexiglass surface – and thus they became objects. These forms are ethereal in their transparency but solid in their structure. By scanning the objects and printing them on glass, in Transformers the author again reduces these objects to the dimensions of length and width. He coined the term “scannograms” for these works, alluding to the transfer of the photogram technique into the digital environment.

Monokromi /Monochromes, 2007–2022

Four archival inkjet prints

Works from the series Monochromes consists only of traces (of framed photographs, photographic film, glass plates, graffiti, plexiglass), thus replicating the absence of content. It emerges from the concept of a frame, representing the most fundamental element of the photographic medium. This series could be described as one of the photographer's long-term “collecting” projects.

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Matrica /Matrix, 2007/2022

Two archival inkjet prints, printed glass

Matrix is a renewed version of the photographic diptych of the face of Kazimir Malevich, as he lies in his coffin, an image that was itself replicated by the art collective Irwin in their 2003 work Corpse of Art. The photograph was taken at a relatively low resolution with a video camera during the taping of an Irwin exhibition in Skopje, North Macedonia. An indistinct text spreads conceptually across the glass of the framed photographs of Malevich's face. At first glance, the words appear unintelligible and meaningless, the lexical inscription conveying no discernible information or message.

In fact, the text was generated in a programming language that dictates to a computer information for the digital rendering of precisely this photographic image – that is, a printed .txt document of the image. In this way, the digital image is deconstructed back to its fundamental elements and becomes a sort of digital negative, projected onto the physical photograph in the reflection of the glass picture frame.

Ikona /Icon, 2004–2022

Two archival inkjet prints, printed glass

Icon – already a replica of itself, as it has been exhibited several times – continues to address, this time in a new form and manner of presentation, the motifs and iconography of the five-pointed star – a symbol which will be forever remembered as the carrier of both the socialist idea and the federal state in the context of Yugoslavian history. The stars, which have been replicated on postcards, photographs, stickers, and other materials, indicate both the possibility and necessity of understanding the five-pointed star or the pentagram in many historical and ideological frameworks. It is no surprise then that the symbol was appropriated by precisely the ideological forces that sought to govern the masses, foremost among them communism, socialism, and capitalism.

Mirage, 2012

Four archival inkjet prints

The city of Himi is known for a spectacular view of the Japanese Alps as they rise above the sea, but the view is often obscured by clouds that conjure an image of the peaks they conceal – a mirage. With this in mind the pragmatic Japanese citizens constructed panels that depict beautiful replicas of the scene at ideal vantage points for the many times when the view of the Japanese Alps cannot be enjoyed. If the traveller suspends disbelief and directs their view to the ideal image that is offered by the so-called “Fox’s Window” (from the same-titled Japanese fairytale), they experience the perfection of this beautiful image in all its imperfection.

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Replika /Replica, 2005–2022

Three archival inkjet prints from scanned analogue negatives

These three works feature motifs of direct replicas of life, specifically animals and people, some mythological, the kind we would not encounter in our own place and time. Photographs, passages, street photography, landscapes and vistas, cleansed of life and any living creatures, except the flora that co-creates the landscape. What images of living creatures we can find assume banal forms: sculptures, signage, decorations. These images are intended for the passer-by and they are mute witnesses to a life one can only imagine. We might wonder if life had only recently vanished from these places – indeed, do such forms of “life” not remain behind us in our world as well, where we have made living conditions impossible, leaving behind us, yes, only replicas?

TEXT INTRO WALL FFF

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Vanja Bučan (*1973, Nova Gorica) questions socio-political themes with surreal image compositions. In her series *Birds of Paradise* – created 2021 to 2023 during the pandemic-induced retreat into the domestic – the photo artist addresses “typical” female roles in the seclusion of the private sphere.

In his long-term series, **Jošt Dolinšek** (*1997, Ljubljana) examines visual perception and the effect of surroundings, especially of landscape and nature. The young artist places less emphasis on environmental crises and causes, but on more fundamentals of existential and individual attitudes to time and space. Dolinšek experiments with different media and materials combining photography with moving images, sound and sculpture.

Since the 1980s, **Bojan Radovič** (*1960, Novo mesto) has been concerned with the principle of repetition, copy and imitation, as well as with the fascinating diversity of the meaning and variation of “replica”. In addition to his artistic work, Radovič is key to the Slovenian photo-scene as an exhibition organiser, publisher and founder of the photo institutions *Fotogalerie Novo mesto* and *House of Photography*.

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Conversation About Cosmic Energy 02, 2022.
From the series *Birds of Paradise*, 2021–2023
© Vanja Bučan, 2023



Invisible Housewives, 2022.
From the series *Birds of Paradise*, 2021–2023
© Vanja Bučan, 2023



The Womb, 2023.
From the series *Birds of Paradise*, 2021–2023
© Vanja Bučan, 2023



Birds of Paradise 10, 2022.
From the series *Birds of Paradise*, 2021–2023
© Vanja Bučan, 2023



Don't Touch The Hand That Feeds You, 2022.
From the series *Birds of Paradise*, 2021–2023
© Vanja Bučan, 2023

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**From the series To Move the Sun and Earth Away, #5
2019–2021**

© Jošt Dolinšek, 2023



**From the series To Move the Sun and Earth Away, #6,
2019–2021**

© Jošt Dolinšek, 2023



**To Move the Sun and Earth Away, #1, #2, #4
2019–2021. Installation view Photon Gallery Ljubljana,
Slovenien, 2021**

© Jošt Dolinšek, 2023



Passing Cairns, 2021

© Jošt Dolinšek, 2023

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From the series Transformers, 2007

© Bojan Radovič, 2023



From the series Icon, 2004–2022

© Bojan Radovič, 2023



From the series Replica, 2005–2022

© Bojan Radovič, 2023



Matrix, 2007/2022

© Bojan Radovič, 2023



From the series Monochromes, 2007–2022

© Bojan Radovič, 2023

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