

ICONS AND DOCUMENTS

A selection of student works of the Department of Photography at VIST, Ljubljana

It is definitely a question of the relationship of who is sending out whom, where to and what for. We can provide a simple enough scheme: somebody, for whom we assume that he knows (for example a professor, a lecturer, a mentor) sends out somebody, who doesn't know (let's call him a student) to bring something back to the place of discussion and treatment (i. e. the school). This is followed by instructions and repetitions, until the arranged time has passed or until the selection of given paths is exhausted (let's call this a study program). Students go out to field work, they take photographs, they read and experiment; then we brainstorm around what they've brought back, comment on their work – the photographs, the notes, the results of their experiments. The trouble is that they didn't take the correct road or that what they've brought back does not live up to the expectations. The trouble is also that the expectations are not clear, that instructions can never anticipate all the possible ways and presented materials; that whoever is sending them doesn't really know what he's sending them out for, and that the one going out isn't sure whether he would prefer to be guided by the one who knows or would rather be left alone. The entire path is a wondering; an endless "beating about the bush", but some are there to prune the bush, and others to make sure it's done professionally. On top of that, the former were supposed to bring their own scissors, and the latter should be able to sharpen them. As it turns out, there is no bush; indeed, there are many ways of pruning one, but no guaranteed way of doing it right; countless educated guesses exist, but the scissors were not the right size in the first place. (Besides, who said anything about pruning that bush in the first place?)

It is also quite simple to demonstrate the reverse relation, where the one not knowing sends out the one that knows, to get what? Knowledge? Not likely. It is more likely he would demand an assurance that their fundamental relationship is such, that the one who is assumed to know should always be able to prove that he can cover his signifier; a guarantee, a hidden reserve, which at the same time can only function as an effective guarantee if it remains hidden. Who succeeds in this relationship? Neither one nor the other – perhaps the relationship. It may not sound very encouraging, but from a slightly reversed perspective it is exactly this relationship that turns out to be quite ordinary, as long as we are able to take on both roles at the same time: the role of the one that is assumed to know and also the role of the one that is assumed to not know; we stand in front of our wardrobe and choose a tie or a suit, or we decide where we are having lunch, or choose the destination of our vacation; or even a step further – we decide whom we are inviting to lunch or vacation, and why. Naturally, there are relationships of both kinds: some can allow various digressions; others set rules and cut through the Gordian knot to establish what's right and wrong, beautiful and ugly, good and bad. What matters is that we understand that in the digressions there are clearly postulated inherent rules; an order, and that on the other hand, in the established rules and order it is not entirely clear who is sending out whom to where and what for.

Is photography necessary in all of this? No. It could be anything that the person out in the field has brought back and placed on the table. It is only after we put our heads together around the trace, the trophy, the document; only after we begin to point our fingers, we can talk. And if there is such a thing as the true goal of this relationship, then it is definitely repetition: once again! A new task, a

new mission to get the wrong scissors to cut the non-existent bush in the non-professional way. Any repetition, therefore, is a success.

Peter Rauch

The exhibition offers an insight into the extensive authorial production of this young generation of photographers. Through the photographic medium, which in the exhibition ranges from experiments with *camera obscura*, photograms and snapshots, to videos and interactive photographic works, the authors construct their spaces of interest and use them to explore the topographic relationships, social bonds and often the proper expressive potential of the medium.

Participating authors: Bojan Mijatović and Bojan Radin, Jernej Čuček Gerbec and Davor Kralj, collective AAF 2012/13 (Peter Gorenšek, Ana Ambrož Strle, Žiga Palčar, Mitja Ličar), Katarina Kokalj and Tomaž Bevk, Cherie Plaustainer and Luka Svetlin, Sara Kiršič and Artarded (Dare Sintič, Peter Fettich, Vedran Tomšič), Adriana Aleksić and Žiga Palčar, Urška Premik and Andrej Zavašnik, Mihaela Majerhold Ostrovršnik and Matjaž Rušt.

Curator: Peter Rauch

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Open on weekdays between 9am and 10pm, and on Saturdays between 4pm and 10pm.