

RADENKO MILAK & ROMAN URANJEK

DATES

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Possibly it is precisely *Dates*, a joint project by artists Radenko Milak and Roman Uranjek, that is the reason for considering the relation between space, time and the spectator. The two artists' cooperation started in the beginning of 2015, when they connected two projects, Milak's *365 Images of Time* and Uranjek's *At Least One Cross A Day After 1.1.2002.*, in a way exceptionally subtle and spontaneous. Milak began *365 Images of Time* early in the year of 2013 as a project representing a sort of calendar containing the (f)actual protagonists of infamous i.e. forgotten historical events, compounded with subtle artist commentary, which he created using the watercolour technique precisely, almost monochromatically. It seems like Milak created a new "landscape made up of real-time media protagonists", telling us that because of the tremendous and uncontrolled amount of visual information that surrounds us we are often forced to merely consume the information in question, without transferring or disseminating it. Consequently "impeccable" images from streets, post boxes and television screens increasingly and ever faster become dark shadows, accumulating on the trash of our memory. On the other hand, Roman Uranjek's project, *At Least One Cross A Day After 1.1.2002.* represents a diary entry featuring the cross as the central motif, which the artist set in different conceptual fields, namely, those of art, society and politics, thus consistently reinterpreting it. Ever since he started working on the project, the artist created at least four characters with a cross each and every day, which are really his thoughts assembled into kinds of collages, while at the same time combining a number of techniques at the formal level, from drawing to photography, from text to collage. Uranjek systematically reduced this corpus created over a period of thirteen years and containing several thousand crosses, selecting a total of four crosses for each respective year, one of which only he reinterpreted through dialogue with Milak's protagonists.

Nevertheless the effect jointly created by the diptychs constituting the *Dates* project is that time and space are marked from two different perspectives, the particular presentation at EASTWARDS PROSPECTUS tries to accent also the fact, that Uranjek and Milak are subtly disclosing 'culture's movement' and try to show how this consciously and uncsciously constitutes our mundane. As a consequence the exhibition set up is not conceived as a kind of central formation based on a visual structure but tries to lead the spectator through five different narratives that represent basic constitutive parts (Knowledge, Belief, Art, Morals, Law) of Culture*. The spectator's presence, his observation of the exhibition consequently transfers the last constitutive element in to the exhibition - the Ritual - through which the spectator is following events and people over different time periods and spaces, who are not only the frozen protagonists of a staged moment; it is also the artists' social commentary. That is how the *Dates* project represents a point, a symbolic space in which collapse happens. That which is *punctum* to Roland Barthes and seems unexpected and different from *studium* - making conclusions about facts which do not make us stop in our tracks, which we quietly go past, or abandon. The sudden blow experienced upon an encounter with something, the tension thus created, something that is really difficult to define and is highly subjective - it can be stressed, practically incessantly, through the diptychs of the *Dates* project,

continuously attacking one's point of vulnerability, the artists' reinterpretations and their reflexions
in the spectator's subjectivity.

As a result, we perceive the joint project *Dates* as an attempt to deliberate the relationship between an artwork, time and space. Works created in a process of dialogue always appear extremely multi-layered, since beside tension between two diverse art practices, there is constant tension and reconsideration inherent to the inner logic of individual elements, allowing reflection at a number of levels, covered by the narrow area of metadiscourse. The *Dates* project attempts, in a time when contemporary media protagonists seem to become but illustrations of grand ideologies, to recognise and find new potential in them and lead the spectator to challenge and overcome the hegemony of formal, theoretical, philosophical and political postulates, which too often lead one to approach works of art with expectations and claims. The intersection of the protagonists intertwining with the spectators' 'rituals', a point that becomes an area of reflexion of the real and abstract time and space.

*According Edward Burnett Tylor, the founder of cultural anthropology, Culture is defined as: *Culture, or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.*