

SAISON CROATE EN FRANCE :  
NOUVELLE SCENE D'ART VIDEO

*Loop, repetition, identity*

Written and Curated by Branka Bencic

Works by:

Dalibor Barić, Matija Debeljuh, Tanja Deman, Nina Kurtela, Davor Sanvincenti,  
Goran Škofić, Matko Tadić

During the past four decades video art established itself as an important feature that shaped the landscape of contemporary art in Croatia. Video established itself as medium of choice for artists exploring both sides, its technical, poetic and subjective possibilities.

During 1960s and 1970s the interest toward new artistic practice is developing, including the use of film, photography and video, and the artworks produced show an analytical and critical interest towards the immediate environment, the (artist) body, language and the institutional and social context.

As a new medium video was accepted relatively fast in the artistic circles and it informed a new approach in the experimental artmaking. First works were produced by **Dalibor Martinis, Sanja Iveković, Braco Dimitrijevic, Goran Trbuljak, Ivan Ladislav Galeta**, artists that have produced anthological works of contemporary art in Croatia. Approaching with awareness of technical preconditions, first works in the medium of video were based on performances and video technology that underscored the process itself, developing into strategies of self representation, structural and thematic engagement.

Since 1980s Dalibor Martinis and Sanja Ivekovic established themselves as important figures in video art while the artscene was enriched with artists like **Breda Beban, Ivan Faktor**. During 1990s new generation emerged with **Dan Oki, Vladislav Knezevic, Simon Bogojevic Narath, Nicole Hewitt, Alen Floricic**, to name a few. After 2000 video became a widespread artistic medium and artist like **Renata Poljak, Ana Husman, Damir Ocko** emerged, while all artists from previous generations are still active, which allowed a diverse and lively production. We witnessed the rise of importance of regional centers

(Rijeka, Split, Dubrovnik, Istra), the rise and development of media departments in art schools (Art academies in Zagreb and Split), and the increasing number of film festivals, exhibitions and video related events.

The program presents works by Croatian video artists of a younger generation and the selection has been limited to the category of single-channel video. Past 10 years have shown an increasing amount of works of video shown and exhibited in the contexts of both exhibitions and film festivals and video has developed as a widespread dominant language in contemporary artistic production.

Although selected artists represent different artistic positions we can map certain issues that have emerged in their work– the use of loop and repetition, visions of urban narratives, self representation, questions of identity or the heritage of experimental cinema and conceptual art practices. Landscape has emerged as an issue to explore environment and shared social space, relations to nature and reflect different moods and complex relations. The use of loop as a circular form and engaging with repetition disrupt the traditional time flow structure, of beginning, middle and end, and emphasizes the insecurity and instability of the subject. On the other hand through a personal perspective the artists raise awareness of certain issues– individual and collective identities and social structures.

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*The River* by DAVOR SANVINCENTI is a cinematic voyage through a black and white photograph captured with a vintage camera. The negative has been put through a series of processes of destruction in order to obtain a disintegrating structure. Navigating the landscape of data, with aggravated perception, the deconstruction of the scene is created by the collision of static and moving images. It represents a single human character isolated in an post industrial urban landscape.

Modernist architecture has emerged as an important point of interest in the works of several artists of younger generations.

*Abode of Vacancy* by TANJA DEMAN is composed of a series of architectural situations in the form of video tableaux, where each tableau represents real and surreal vacant spaces of nature and modernist city, exploring the way we understand the built environment.

Short film/video *Contrada* by MATIJA DEBELJUH is set between performance and landscape, questioning relationships between human body, movement and nature to reflect different moods, emotions, atmosphere and complex relations.

In different ways *The River*, *Abode of Vacancy* and *Contrada* function as a memento of an imaginary journey, contributing in the creation of an atmosphere of melancholy, articulating the feelings of oblivion, emptiness and absence.

MARKO TADIC creates unusual haunting worlds. His video animations have a form of a fantastic visionary travelogues in imaginary landscapes, shaping fictive narrative worlds that are exploring models of history, science fiction and future perspectives.

Works by DALIBOR BARIC are experimental animations that show similar haunting quality while the artist works with found footage and collage techniques. Collage has been a significant part of iconic culture – the image culture as we know it and along with film montage represents the language and technology of the art of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Based on the semantic displacement of cinematic elements, his videos are making visible gaps, breaks, interruptions, a complex multiplicity and disintegration of meaning are irrational, oneiric influenced by vintage images, popular culture, hallucinations, psychedelic, surreal juxtapositions.

In video loops by GORAN ŠKOFIĆ sets of repetitive actions take place within a simple geometry of a single frame. He is combining techniques of digital animation, montage and collage, reminiscent of the “tricks”, “gags” and mime of silent film or slapstick, where the artist rhythmically orchestrates the visual character of image and movements of (his) body. He is main protagonist in his

own videos. Self-referential strategies, humor and irony, cuts representing breaks the social body remain in the focus of artist's interest.

NINA KURTELA's *Transformance* is a documentation of a five month durational performance, structured as time-laps out of hundreds of still photographs. The artist positions herself/her body in the center of the image that depicts an empty warehouse in the construction process, as she establishes a daily routine witnessing transformations of the architectural space. The piece emerges as a case study of an individual subject's encounter with the radical transformations of social structures and operative models within the performing society.

#### LINKS

GORAN SKOFIC \_ [/www.goranskofic.com/](http://www.goranskofic.com/)

DAVOR SANVINCENT\_I [/www.messmatik.net/](http://www.messmatik.net/)

MATIJA DEBELJUH \_ <http://matijadebeljuh.hr>

MARKO TADIC \_ <http://markotadic.blogspot.com/>

TANJA DEMAN \_ [www.tanja-deman.com/](http://www.tanja-deman.com/)

NINA KURTELA \_ [/www.ninakurtela.com/](http://www.ninakurtela.com/)

DALIBOR BARIC \_ <https://vimeo.com/user1479357/videos>