

Nina Kurtela

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NINA KURTELA is an artist born in Zagreb, currently working and living on relation between Berlin and Zagreb and thinking and creating in relation between visual arts, video, performance and contemporary dance and choreography.

EDUCATION/ SCHOLARSHIPS/

GRANTS: **KulturKontakt Austria** Artist in Residence Program, Vienna / **HAVC** - Croatian Audiovisual Centar, film production grant / **UdK Berlin and Ernst Busch Berlin** - Contemporary Dance, Choreography, Context at the Co-operative Dance Education Centre Berlin (3 years education program - scholarship from City of Zagreb) 2007-2010 / **DanceWEB**, ImpulsTanz Vienna, Scholarship program / **Academy of Fine Arts Zagreb** (MA degree) / **CEPUS** Faculty of Fine Arts (Atelier of Body Art), Scholarship program, Brno

AWARDS: **Youth Artists Prize CEE 2010 - Henkel Art Award**, Vienna / **Essl Award 2007**, Essl Museum, Vienna / **Rectors award** for the year 2005/2006, The University of Zagreb / **Visura Aperta Momiano '05 emerging artist award**; festival of visual and audio medias (for video work DanceKingQueens), Momjan 2005.

SELECTED WORKS:

“TRANSFORMACE” experimental film, durational performance (co produced by HAVC Zagreb, HUTZ Berlin and Uferstudios Berlin) / “THE STORE” (together with Marjana Krajač and Iva Korenčić) performance-installation (production: Sodaberg, realized with the support of City Office for Culture Zagreb and the support of Gallery Nova Zagreb) / “AUTOSHOW”, happening-installation-sculpture (realized with the support of City Office for Culture Zagreb, support of INA artist donation and support of Gallery HDLU Zagreb) / “HAPPY BIRTHDAY”, Installation realized with a support of Gallery Križić - Roban, Zagreb) / **DANCEKINGQUEENS** video installation (co produced by the visura aperta festival Momjan).

Nina Kurtela:

Laundromat

Doing the laundry is one of the most ordinary and profane activities in human life, on par with cleaning the apartment or servicing the car. However boring it may seem, someone has to do it. In most countries, laundromats are ubiquitous and there exists a certain culture developed around them. While doing laundry you can also have a coffee or a nice brunch on Saturday (washday), you can meet a friend or even some stranger and have a relaxing conversation. The laundromat is more connected to the youth/single culture, because “family people” usually already own their own washers and dryers.

In Croatia there are no laundromats whatsoever. Actually there is one, close to the student's dormitory, where pricing is far from cheap. Why is that the case, and how would our life change if there was one in the center of Zagreb are the questions that artist Nina Kurtela is trying to answer by bringing laundromat in the form of art installation to the gallery space.

The art audience and everyone else are offered washing and drying machines, detergents, drying racks and irons so they can do their cleaning outside their home. From the beginning, the project was a success. A lot of people without a machine decided to use the gallery laundromat. There was a queue almost every day formed around the machines. There were also a few problems – gallery power was sometimes not strong enough to support the infrastructure; machines sometimes appeared to have a will of

their own, and technically knowledgeable people from real laundromats would have been a great help to have there instead of the gallery crew.

The aesthetic dimension of the piece is there – the beauty of the machines is accompanied with brightly colored accessories (pegs, laundry baskets, drying racks). However the artistic concept puts this piece into a category of social sculpture. A lucid transformation occurs when the gallery space has a specific function besides being an art space and the gallery crew become maintainers of the laundromat. This taps into far more crucial and interesting questions. For example the question of the necessity of art contrasts to the social function of space. Can the art be transformed into necessity; can art provide the means of providing services for people?

An interesting artistic strategy employed by Nina Kurtela in most of her gallery projects is reinventing the space into something else outside of the art context, something connected to everyday life. For example, in Gallery Bacva she used for promotion of her artistic car - Cooper Caviar GTX, so the whole gallery was staged as a car salon, and the opening as the promotion of a new long expected car model. Gallery Krizic Roban was the space in which the artist used to celebrate her own birthday, crossing the line between private and public event and inviting everyone (art audience) to become part of her private life, and vice versa, inviting everyone from her private life (boyfriend, sister, friends, parents) to become

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part of her exhibition. The exhibition that happened was made of presents she received from her friends and polaroid photos taken at the birthday party. Gallery VN went through a dramatic transformation and also successfully became a place of happening, but this time the event lasted more than the opening day. With a mixed audience of launders and art patrons, “why is that art?” became the most frequently asked question, being posed mostly by ordinary people outside art circles.

Some social conclusions concerning the project are connected to the economy of course. As we said in the beginning, laundromats are often associated with youth and single culture. Croatia, (like Italy for example) is one of those countries known for the fact that offsprings live much longer with their parents, something that has persisted since Socialism. Most live with parents while single, and sometimes even after marriage. That's why laundromats were not all that necessary. When young singles live with their parents, they don't need to find washing machines outside their apartment. Only recently did the social behavior of young people start to change, and this trend is to establish your own family later, and live by yourself by in the mean time. The audience at Nina Kurtela's experiment has shown that Zagreb needs at least one laundromat.

Olga Majcen Linn



KONČAR
Aparati iz obične kuće.

Henkel

KATUNAR



NAKLADNIK: Knjižnice grada Zagreba • Galerija Vn Knjižnice Vladimira Nazora
ZA NAKLADNIKA: Davorinka Bastić • UREDNICA: Vesna Čabrić
NAKLADA: 300 • TISAK: Printera grupa • DIZAJN: Ruti
RADNO VRIJEME: pon, uto 14 - 20 sati, a.sri - sub 8 - 14 sati • Program Galerije Vn podržavaju
Gradski ured za obrazovanje, kulturu i sport Grada Zagreba i Ministarstvo kulture RH



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Nina Kurtela:
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foto: Domagoj Blažević