

## Arhiva sećanja

Izložba *Arhiva sećanja* Nine Todorović otkriva konzistentnost i slojevitnost umetničkog istraživanja koje ova autorka razvija kroz svoje radove već dugi niz godina. Postavka izložbe u prostoru Muzeja savremene umjetnosti u Banja Luci promišljeno vodi posetioca kroz segmente koji oblikuju jedinstvenu ali otvorenu konceptualnu celinu; segmente koji su višestruko značenjski, istovremeno linearno i nelinearno, povezani. Okosnicu istraživanja Nine Todorović predstavlja grad kao stalno promeljiva kategorija, scena ljudskog sećanja, program koji određuje dinamiku života, otelotvorenje vladajuće ideologije, mesto neverovatnih spojeva istorijskih slojeva vremena i entitet sa kojim se uspostavlja, ne samo materijalna, već i simbolička interakcija. Kako grad podrazumeva stanovnike, tako je i u radovima ove umetnice, pre svega, u fokusu jedinka u kontekstu grada, njegove urbane strukture i arhitekture. Poziciju čoveka u gradu Nina Todorović često promišlja i prelama kroz sopstvena subjektivna iskustva ali uvek svesna globalnih društvanih pomeranja i transformacija koja istražuje, kako kroz vidljivi uticaj tih promena na svakodnevni život, tako i kroz teorijska istraživanja i širu istorijsku perspektivu. Mnogobrojne veze koje oblikuju odnos čovek-grad, vidljive u radovima ove umetnice, upravo, obeležavaju aktuelni trenutak, kao čvorište u kome se susiće prošlost, često porušena i prepravljena, i ostvaruje već planirana projekcija budućnosti.

Seriya digitalnih fotografija pod nazivom *Intersticijalno*, predstavlja deo dugogodišnjeg istraživanja koje Nina Todorović razvija kroz ciklus digitalnih radova pod nazivom *Odbrambene strukture*. Inicijalni momenat u nastanku radova iz ovog ciklusa poklapa se sa početkom a kasnije i sve češćim podizanjem tržnih centara, koji su počeli da zauzimaju velike gradske površine, utičući na ubrzano građenje brojnih stambenih jedinica i na menjanje dinamike života građana. Tržni centri u teorijskom promišljanju prepoznati su kao *ne-mesta*, neizbežni fenomen globalizacije, prostori bez lokalnih karakteristika i geografskih osobenosti. Francuski sociolog Mark Ože, koji je uveo ovaj terminu u upotrebu<sup>1</sup>, navodi da za razliku od *mesta* koje je upisano u odnose, na *ne-mestima* odnosi ne postoje, kroz njih cirkuliše dosta ljudi, ali nema odnosa. Sliku, ili snažnu vizuelnu metaforu, onoga što predstavlja *ne-mesto* u svom ogoljenom značenju, bez sjaja izloga i zavodljivih, raznobojnih proizvoda tržnih centara, možemo videti upravo na digitalnim fotografijama iz serije *Intersticijalno*. To su prizori podzemnih garaža u sastavu velikih *šoping molova* ili stambenih jedinica koje su izgrađene u njihovoj blizini; isparcelisane površine, odvojene gustim metalnim ogradama, koje smanjuju, inače oskudnu vidljivost i mogućnost orijentacije u ovim unificiranim

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1 Ože, Mark. *Nemesta*. Beograd, Biblioteka XX vek / Krug, 2005.

prostorima. Otuda i predstavljene fotografije karakteriše promišljena fragmentarnost ali i svest da se sa svakim novim fragmentom neće dostići jasna celina i ublažiti uznemirujuće osećanje koje relacija sa ovim prostorima generiše. Uznemirujuća emocija nam ukazuje da ovi radovi nisu samo vizuelni dokument već i otelotvorenje paterna koji živimo, oblikovanog izolovanošću jedinke u savremenom gradu; usko povezanog sa odbrambenim mehanizmima savremenog čoveka, ne samo fizičkim već i psihičkim; generisanog procesom globalizacije, koji možemo nazvati i urbanizacijom, kao i našim pokušajem da se orjentišemo i nađemo uporište u ubrzanoj progresiji ovih procesa.

Pojam *intersticijalno*, kao što Nina Todorović navodi u svom umetničkom *statementu* vezanom za ove fotografije, se koristi u arhitekturi da označi međuprostore, obično nevidljive stanarima zgrade, sa funkcijom smeštanja neophodnih građevinskih instalacija. Međutim, ovaj termin se upotrebljava i u medicini da označi takođe međuprostor, ali organski, drugim rečima, vezivno tkivo. Čini se da smo zaboravili kako međuprostori ne moraju samo da razdvajaju i pretvaraju se u odbrambene strukture; u njih je upisana i mogućnost spajanja i organske vitalnosti, koja postaje vidljiva sa promenom perspektive ili duboke analize preovlađujuće percepcije i njenih posledica. U kontekstu izložbe Nine Todorović u Muzeju suvremene umjetnosti u Banja Luci, serija fotografija *Intersticijalno* dobija i dodatnu funkciju oblasti kroz koju se mora proći kako bi se, preko *Alfa Gnezda*, još jednog sastavnog dela *Odbrambenih struktura*, dospelo do *Arhitekture sećanja*, projekta koji je ova autorka odbranila kao svoju doktorsku tezu na Fakultetu likovnih umetnosti u Beogradu 2014. godine. *Intersticijalno* postaje oblast podzemnog, nesvesnog sa kojim se jedinka mora suočiti kako bi stupila u dijalog sa svojim sećanjima.

Projekat *Arhitektura sećanja* je, upravo, postavljen na principima psihološkog odnosa prema mestu, koje je za razliku od ne-mesta, određeno geografskim, istorijskim, socijalnim aspektom, i u stalnoj je interakciji sa intimnom istorijom i sećanjem pojedinca. Početak kreiranja ovog projekta Nine Todorović, poklopio se, takođe, sa menjanjem strukture i izgleda grada, u najvećoj meri gradskog jezgra Beograda, u vreme tranzicione nadogradnje postojećih objekata i stihijske, neplanske izgradnje novih stambenih zgrada. Fotografsko beleženje otisaka kalkana porušenih kuća na površinama zidova susednih objekata, u vremenu pre izgradnje novih, i arhiviranje ovih fotografija, autorku su odveli ka intimnoj analizi odnosa, kroz umetničke medije, prema davno porušenoj kući u kojoj je provela prve godine života. Može se primetiti da je susret sa vizuelnom, geometrijskom upečatljivošću otisaka porušenih kuća za umetnicu, verovatno, imao i značaj prepoznavanja spostvene likovne poetike prisutne u ranim slikarskim radovima. U ovom projektu se na taj način stalno prepliću i srastaju dokumentarni pristup i stvaralačko, intimno, sećanjem obojeno svedočenje. Kroz istraživanje porodične arhive i kreativnu primenu reproduktivnih medija, kao što su digitalna

fotografija i video, u koje je danas moguće preneti gotovo svaki analogni zapis i sačuvati ga na novi način, u digitalnom, nematerijalnom formatu, a zatim ga materijalizovati u oblicima koji omogućavaju prilagođavanje specifičnom izložbenom prostoru, Nina Todorović je pronašla veliki raspon mogućnosti. *Arhitektura sećanja* obuhvata raznovrsni materijal koji osim svoje izložbene dimenzije poseduje i interaguje sa virtuelnom prezentacijom i arhivom koju je moguće istraživati.

Ovaj desetogodišnji projekat u tesnoj je vezi sa drugim projektima Nine Todorović (*Alfa gnezda, Odbrambrene strukture*) razvijanim u istom periodu i može se pratiti kao novo strukturirana reakcija u odnosu na procese otuđenja, zaborava, zatvorenosti, jednoličnosti i anonimnosti razmatranih u pomenutim projektima. *Arhitektura sećanja* nam svojim modelom ličnog pokušaja umetnice da sačuva sećanje na prostor kuće koji je nestao, a koji je uticao na formiranje ponašanja, navika i intimnog univerzuma pojedinca, pokazuje jedan od načina da se sačuvaju osobenosti identiteta, da se omogući formativnom mestu, važnom sloju psihe, da nastavi svoj život u sećanju pojedinca, da se ukaže na važnost mesta u odnosu na zračenje uniformnosti ne-mesta. U tom smislu Nina Todorović izlaže, moglo bi se reći, *konzervirana* sećanja: negative porodičnih fotografija na staklu i digitalne printove sekvenci iz porodičnih filmova ili fotografija na pleksiglasu, koji su smešteni u kutije, takođe od stakla, i udobno postavljeni na meka postolja unutar njih. Zatim, instalira skenirane i digitalno, na transparentnom materijalu, štampane fotografije stare kuće neposredno pre rušenja, preklapajući ih u prostoru sa transparentnim printovima uvećanih slajdova na kojima se nalazi sama umetnica u uzrastu do koga se, po nekim psihološkim teorijama, već u potpunosti formira ličnost osobe. Nina Todorović rekonstruiše sopstveno sećanje uvezujući ga sa sećanjem svojih roditelja, još pre nego što je došla na svet i kroz takvu rekonstrukciju, istovremeno, na sopstveni način ispituje strukturu sećanja i otkriva njegovu arhitekturu. Deo izložbe čini dvokanalna video instalacija *Tišina 2014* u kojoj autorka paralelno projektuje Super 8 film, u digitalni format prenet materijal koji je njen otac snimio i montirao, kao i dokumentarni video iste dužine koji je ona sama snimila, beležeći put do lokacije na kojoj se nalazila stara porušena kuća. Upravo, komplementarni pristupi istom mestu, ili duhu mesta, spolja i iznutra, dodatno govore o arhitekturi, *enterijeru* ali i *eksterijeru* sećanja obuhvatajući dugi niz godina. U projekat *Arhitektura sećanja* Nina Todorović uključuje i članove svoje porodice, tako što svako od njih po sopstvenom sećanju i kroz crtež vizuelno otelotvorava plan porušene kuće koja je imala značaj u njihovim životima.

Otvorenost ovog poduhvata potvrđuje se i činjenicom da umetnica radove koji čine *Arhitekturu sećanja* u različitim izložbenim prostorima predstavlja kroz vizuelni dijalog sa radovima kolegice Svetlane Volic, odnosno, njenim projektom *Unutrašnjeg pejzaža*, stalno razvijajući raznovrsne elemente postavke i dolazeći do novih uvida koji umetnička saradnja donosi. Projekat *Arhitektura*

*sećanja* povezan je i sa aktuelnim prostorom lokacije na koji se odnosi ovo umetničko istraživanje i omogućava lokalnom stanovništvu, da kroz ličnu istoriju umetnice istovremeno ostvare uvid i u deo kolektivne istorije i reaguju na nju. Naime, umetnica postavlja QR<sup>2</sup> kodove na ključna mesta koja su povezana sa lokacijom i koji putem aplikacije na mobilnim telefonima direktno vode na sajt sa prezentacijom projekta i arhivom materijala koji je umetnica koristila. QR kodovi postaju integralni deo postavke u galerijskom prostoru, tako da će posetioci izložbe Nine Todorović u Muzeju savremene umjetnosti u Banja Luci, biti u prilici da se povežu sa virtuelnim informacijama koji čine sastavni deo projekta *Arhitektura sećanja*.

Nina Todorović je uvek svesna sopstvenog kretanja kroz medije, kao i motiva zbog kojih koristi određeni medij za određeni vizuelni motiv ili ideju. Ona analizira pre svega reproduktivne medije, čiji tehnološki razvoj utiče na sve segmente našeg života, a sećanje je njegov konstitutivni deo. U okviru projekta *Arhitektura sećanja*, svoje mesto neizbežno je našla instalacija *Dekodiranje sećanja*, koja nam slikovito i materijalno približava ono šta predstavlja digitalna slika i prevođenje u digitalni zapis: ogromni broj binarnih i heksadecimalnih kodova, u ovom slučaju odštampanih na trakama dugim nekoliko desetina metara koje vise sa tavanice, i kroz koje se moramo probiti da bi došli upravo do te digitalne slike u niskoj rezoluciji postavljene na zid galerije. Nina Todorović tako otkriva generičku i numeričku prirodu digitalne slike, koje zbog navike korišćenja često nismo svesni, čime se otvara i pitanje manipulativnosti i još veće nestalnosti sećanja koje se na digitalnu ili digitalizovanu sliku oslanja. Na taj način izložba *Arhiva sećanja* skreće pažnju i na savremene digitalizovane arhive koji postaju dostupni u virtuelnim prostorima i na potrebu da se odnosu virtuelnog i aktuelnog pristupa svaki put sa kritičkom svešću izvan navike i zavodljivosti bogatstva dostupnih informacija.

Maida Gruden

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2 QR kod (engl. *QR code*) je matrichni kod (ili dvodimenzionalni bar-kod) kreiran 1994. „QR“ je akronim od Quick Response (brz odziv), pošto je tvaraц намеравао да се садржај изузетно брзо декодира. Корисници који поседују мобилни телефон са камером и инсталираним одговарајућим софтвером, могу да скенирају слику QR кода, који ће укључити интернет прегледач и одвести корисника на уграђену УРЛ адресу. Овакав чин повезивања са физичких објеката је познат као хипервеза физичког света.

## Archive of Memory

The exhibition *Archive of Memory* by Nina Todorović reveals the consistency and multilayeredness of the artistic research developed by this artist through her work over a number of years. The exhibition, as presented at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Banja Luka, deliberately leads the visitor through segments that form a single albeit open conceptual whole; segments that are interconnected both linearly and nonlinearly, at several levels of signification. Nina Todorović's explorations principally focus on the city as a continuously changing category, a scene of human memory, a programme dictating the dynamics of life, an embodiment of the ruling ideology, a place of incredible intersections and merges of historical layers of time, and an entity with which one interacts not only physically, but also symbolically. As the city implies the existence of residents, the works of this artist primarily focus on the individual in the context of the city, its urban structure and architecture. Nina Todorović often reflects on the position of man in the city and filters it through her own subjective experiences, but she is always aware of global social displacements and transformations, which she explores both by focusing on the visible impact of these changes on daily life, and on theoretical investigations and the wider historical perspective. Numerous connections that shape the man-city relationship, visible in the works of this artist, mark the present moment, as a point of convergence at which the past finishes its course, often demolished and rebuilt, and at which predictions about the future come true.

The series of digital photographs entitled *Interstitial* is part of years of research by Nina Todorović developed through a series of digital works called *Defensive Structures*. The beginnings of the work on the pieces constituting this series coincided with the emergence of shopping malls and the time during which their construction intensified, as they began to occupy large swaths of city land, bringing with them more and more new residential high rises and changing the dynamics of city life. Theory recognises shopping malls as *non-places*, an inevitable phenomenon of globalisation, areas without any local features or geographic characteristics. The French sociologist Marc Augé, who coined the term *non-place*,<sup>3</sup> says that unlike *places*, which are inscribed in relations, no relationships rest on *non-places* – they are frequented by a lot of people, but there are no relationships. A picture, or a strong visual metaphor, of what constitutes a *non-place* stripped down to what it essentially is, shopping malls without their flashy shopwindows and seductive, colorful products, can be seen in the digital photographs of the *Interstitial* series. They are images of underground parking lots, parts of large *shopping malls*, or housing units built in their vicinity; lots parcelled out and separated with thick metal railing, which additionally diminishes the bad visibility

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<sup>3</sup> Ože, Mark. *Nemesta*. Beograd, Biblioteka XX vek / Krug, 2005.

in the area and the impossibility of orientation in this uniform, monotonous space. Accordingly, the presented photographs are characterised by premeditated fragmentation, as well as an awareness that no matter how many new pieces are added, this will still not make the puzzle complete, or banish the disturbing feeling aroused by one's relation to the space presented. The disturbing emotions indicate that these works are not only visual documents but that they also embody a pattern we live, shaped by the isolation of anyone contemporary city-dweller; closely associated with the defense mechanisms of the modern man, not only physical but also mental; generated by the process of globalisation, which may also be called the process of urbanisation, as well as by our attempts to orient and find a foothold in the accelerated progression of these processes.

The term *interstitial*, according to what Nina Todorović claims in her artistic statement in connection with these photos, is used in architecture to denote interstitial spaces, usually invisible to occupants of buildings, which are used to lay the necessary piping and wiring. However, this term is also used in medicine, where it denotes space that comes in between, only organic; in other words, it denotes connective tissue. We seem to have forgotten that interstices need not only divide and become defensive structures; inscribed in them is also their potential for merging and organic vitality, which becomes visible when one changes the perspective or engages in a thorough analysis of a widely-held perception and its consequences. In the context of the exhibition by Nina Todorović at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Banja Luka, the series of photographs under the title *Interstitial* has another role to play, as an area one has to pass through, by going via *Alpha Nests*, another integral part of *Defensive Structures*, to eventually reach *Architecture of Memory*, the project the artist defended as her doctoral thesis at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade in 2014. *Interstitial* thus becomes part of the subterranean or subconscious, which one has to confront in order to enter into a dialogue with one's memories.

The project entitled *Architecture of Memory* is basically grounded on the principle of relating to places psychologically, which are determined by geographical, historical and social aspects, unlike non-places, and which constantly interact with one's personal history and memories. The time at which Nina Todorović started this project also coincided with the city's changing its structure and appearance, a process which mainly affected Belgrade downtown, in the form of building operations so typical of economies in transition, namely, redevelopments, along with the chaotic unpermitted construction of new residential buildings. The artist took photographs of imprints of wooden beams, once supporting houses, in the walls of adjacent houses, before new buildings were erected in their stead. This photographing activity and the archiving of the obtained visual documents led the artist to a private analysis, using art media, of her own relationship to the long-

demolished house where she spent her earliest years. It is quite noticeable that the artist's encounter with the visual, geometric effectiveness of traces of demolished houses could have been relevant for her in the sense of recognition of her own visual poetics as present in her early paintings. This project is thus an area of intersection and amalgamation of a documentary approach and a creative, intimate testimony marked by remembrance.

As she explored her family archives and the possibility of creative application of reproductive media, Nina Todorović realised she was offered a wide range of options. Reproductive media, such as digital photography and video, can now be used to digitise any analogue recording and save it in a new way, in digital or non-material format, and then re-materialise it in forms that allow adjustment to specific exhibition venues. *Architecture of Memory* comprises miscellaneous materials, which do not only possess a quality that allows their exhibiting, but are also capable of interacting with a virtual presentation of the series and an archive, which can be explored.

This ten-year project by Nina Todorović is closely related to her other projects (*Alpha Nests*, *Defensive Structures*) developed during the same period, which can be followed as her newly structured response to the processes of alienation, oblivion, closure, monotony and anonymity, as explored in the above mentioned projects. *Architecture of Memory* contains a model of the artist's own personal attempt to preserve the memory of the space of a house that has vanished, one which in its time influenced the shaping of the behaviour, habits and private universe of an individual. Thanks to this model, the project shows one possible way to preserve characteristics of identity, and also to make it possible for a formative place, an important layer of any person's psyche, to continue living in his or her memory, and to emphasise the importance of places as opposed to the emanation of the sense of uniformity of non-places. In this sense, what Nina Todorović displays, one might say, are *conserved* memories: negatives of her family photographs printed on glass, along with digital prints of sequences from family videos or photographs on acrylic sheets – all of it put in boxes, also made of glass, and comfortably placed on soft padding inside. Also, she creates an installation from photographs of her family house just before demolition, scanned and digitally printed on a transparent material, over which she superimposes transparent prints of enlarged slides showing the artist at an age prior to which, according to some psychological theories, one's personality has fully developed. Nina Todorović reconstructs her own recollections and links them to those of her parents dating back to the time before she came to this world, and this reconstruction turns into her own method of examination of the structure of remembrance and of the tracing of its architecture. Part of the exhibition is a two-channel video installation called *Silence 2014*, in which the artist simultaneously screens the film *Super 8*, basically something her father filmed and edited,

which she simply digitised, and a documentary of the same length which she made herself by filming the path leading to the place where her demolished home once stood. It is the complementariness of these two approaches to the same place, or the spirit of this place, both inside and outside, that expand the discourse about the architecture, about both the *interior* and *exterior* of remembrance, over a time span of many years. Nina Todorović involves her family members in the project *Architecture of Memory*, with each individual member trying to recall and also draw the floor plan of the now demolished house, which once played a part in their lives.

The openness of this project is further proven by the fact the artist has exhibited the works constituting *Architecture of Memory* at different venues and galleries in a visual dialogue with the works of her fellow artist Svetlana Volic, that is, her project *Inner Landscape*, continually evolving the different elements of the exhibition and gaining new insights owing to artistic collaboration. The project *Architecture of Memory* links to the actual space of the locality to which this artistic exploration refers and enables the local population to have insight into aspects of collective history and respond to it, by means of the artist's personal history. Namely, the artist marks the key points connected with the locality in question with QR codes,<sup>4</sup> allowing mobile phones users to use an application that links them directly to a website with a presentation of the project and an archive of the materials used by the artist. QR codes thus become an integral part of the exhibition in the museum/at the selected venue, and visitors to Nina Todorović's exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Banja Luka will also be able to access this virtual information that is an integral part of the project *Architecture of Memory*.

Nina Todorović is always aware of her movement through different media, and of her motives to use a specific medium for a specific visual motif or idea. First and foremost, she analyses the reproductive media, whose technological development has affected all aspects of our life, including memory as its integral part. The installation entitled *Decoding Memories* is inevitably a part of the project *Architecture of Memory*, and it vividly and physically approximates the world of digital images and conversion to digital images: rows after rows of binary and hexadecimal codes, in this case printed on several-metre-long strips hanging off the ceiling, which one has to push one's way through to reach that specific low-resolution digital image, set against the gallery wall. Nina Todorović thus discloses the generic and numerical character of the digital image, which we are frequently unaware of exactly because we are so accustomed to using it, which also opens the

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<sup>4</sup> QR code is a matrix code (or a two-dimensional barcode) created in 1994. The acronym 'QR' stands for Quick Response, as the inventor aimed for the type of content that could easily be decoded. Users of mobile phones with cameras and the required software can scan a QR code, which then starts an Internet search engine and takes the user to an embedded URL. This type of connection through physical objects is known as the hyperconnection of the physical world.



question of the manipulability, and even more of the instability of memories relying on digital or digitised images. In this way the exhibition *Archive of Memory* also draws attention to today's digitised archives, which are becoming accessible in virtual space, and to the need to approach the relationship between the virtual and actual with full critical awareness, each and every time, beyond the habit and fascination with the infiniteness and richness of available information.

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