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**Museum of Contemporary Art in
Belgrade: communication strategies
with the public (1965-2021)**

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Introduction

Art in Serbia, understood both as art history, contemporary art, national and international art and various art museums is not met with attention and interest. As it is not, mainly, part of the curricula and programs at diverse educational levels - from elementary school to university -with the exception of the University of Arts of Faculty of Philosophy - the young generations do not acquire the habit of going to the museums; do not possess the knowledge of art history, even are not informed about the existence of various museum, galleries or exhibitions. The situation has significantly deteriorated after the 1990s, raging wars, international sanctions and isolation and hyperinflation. The breakup of the country and the collapse of socialism has contributed to the destruction of the socialist legacy that used to provide elementary knowledge of art history as well as the tradition of visits to the museum organized by the school - as part of the obligatory extra curricula activities.

The reasons and the solution for the progressive lack of understanding, education and interest are twofold and recognized as direct and indirect. Firstly, the direct variable concerns interest and seminal information and knowledge about art life that are to be provided through thoughtfully planned and organized communication strategies of the art institutions - most importantly national museums. The indirect variable (reason and solution) is the long term one concerning the improvements of the educational program to involve if not specialized courses than at least part of the courses dedicated to art history, cultural management, sociology of art or contemporary art production (The curricula of foreign language is to involve texts about art, museums, theaters etc.) The work on the second variable demands an inter sector cooperation of various Ministries like one of education, culture, for youth etc. Obviously, it is beyond the scope of the thesis to research this variable but it has to be mentioned as it surfaced from the questionnaire given to the students of the Belgrade University. Moreover, it gives us the reason to outline the recommendations for the changes and corrections of the art history curricula at the various levels of education system.

According to aforementioned, the master thesis is developed – bit asymmetrically - in both directions as dual structure with the two parts dedicated, respectively to the

communication strategies and to the comments about the results of the survey of the student population and of the interviews conducted with the chosen professionals from the domain of art, media and culture. The case study is the Museum of the Contemporary Arts in Belgrade and its communication strategy – with the focus on the turnover from socialism to posts-socialism – aimed to inform and educate various generations and diverse visitor groups. The basis for the second part of the thesis is the questionnaire - answered by targeted group on Facebook, group of students of Belgrade University - involving questions about their museum going habits, the ways they are informed about museum events and about the popular exhibitions they have visited. The results reveal both the ways for the improvements of the communication strategy as well as it indicates the most popular events. The undisputed dominance of Marina Abramović allow us to conclude that the communication strategy work best when combined with other sort of support and enhancement like the world proven popularity of the performer artist, the emphasis of her Yugoslav origin (she almost was part of the marketing campaign Svetsko a naše - or World one yet also ours one) and state support. The fact that the exhibition and Marina Abramović public lecture - organized for the occasion of the opening of the exhibition attended by the politicians, popular and known persons from business world – were organized under the direct auspices of the premier Ana Brnabić and her Cabinet/Government made it into the social and cultural event where one had to be seen.

The questionnaire chapter is followed by the interviews with paradigmatic (in social, education, generational sense) individuals dealing with art, media and communication issues. The questions in the interview relate to student's knowledge about Museum – its history, architecture, closures and exhibitions. In this way the answers are expected to map out the ways for improving the systems of dissemination of the information about art life (related with the MCA but tangentially also in Belgrade in general).

The aim of the thesis is: to present modes of communication and communication strategies of the MCA in the period with the public 1965-2021 (1) and to indicate the ways of the changes of and improvements of communication that are to fill gaps in the knowledge of the target group – students. (2)

The thesis is divided in three chapters, which describe communication strategies developed in three different periods. It begins with an overview of the history of the

museum since its opening in 1965 to today as divided in several periods. Divided by the turning points of the art history it follows the development of the museum from the socialist realism through socialist modernism and afterwards to post socialism recognized after Mikhail Epstein as post modernism¹ (post socialism is our post modernism- meaning in the former Eastern Europe). The thesis focused the periods of the closure of the MCA in 1999 (NATO bombing), 2007-2017 (unforeseen prolonged reconstruction of the main building) and the changed regime of work cause by COVID 19 epidemic. The innovative perspective for the theoretical problematization of the work of the museum as the space of the formation of art history and (re)contextualization of the artists is provided by the seminal texts of Bojana Pejić - the European famous curator who lucidly outlined the history of socialist/Yugoslav art in the era of (political and social) transition. Moreover, the thesis analysis the changes and broadening of the communication strategies to include newly acquired spaces of the museum -complex. Gallery in Pariska 19 and to its forced closure due to NATO bombing, then during its reopening and the new/old permanent exhibition and new closure from 2007-2017; in the 2019 when it was reopened (but also analyzing the communication strategies regarding the other spaces /gallery in Pariska 19 and Gallery of the legacy of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković. (Magnificent Corbusier style private villa of the former partisan, communist and politician and his wife. The unexpected union of the modern European architecture, pre-WW2 bourgeoisie life style and in the war acquired revolutionary and communist aura and glory.) The last but not the least we explore the overall digital turn or forced migration of many activities into the digital realm during the COVID 19 as probably the mode of sustainability of the efficient communication strategies in the future turned toward new generations of digital nomads.

The hypothesis of the thesis is that the problem of the lack of and insufficient knowledge of students about the Museum of Contemporary Art (and art in general) is to be solved: by modernized and innovative communication strategies, employing new media and modern i.e. digital technologies for achieving personalized or individually

¹ M. Epstein, *After the Future: The Paradoxes of Postmodernism and Contemporary Russian Culture*, Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1995, pp. 188-210.

tailored, custom made communication and by changing the educational system and pertaining curricula on all levels, but especially in the elementary and high schools. The replies to the questionnaire about Museum of Contemporary Art posted/published in the student's group on Facebook ("Studenti Beogradskog Univerziteta"), revealed their initial knowledge about the museum. This Facebook group is chosen as the largest group of students on social networks. Because of the situation with COVID 19, questionnaires are filled on-line. Target groups are students, of both artistic and non-artistic universities, age between 18 and 30. The decision about the age of the target group is made with the presumption (confirmed in the thesis) that they possess scant and superficial knowledge about the Museum, because it was mainly closed in the time of their growing up and coming to maturity. Based on the obtained results this thesis focuses the compensation/supplementation of that knowledge / ignorance through communication strategies.

Research questions included the following questions: the gender and university of the participants, the knowledge about the history of the museum (e.g. when it was opened, who was the first director, how long the construction lasted, information about the construction competition), the knowledge about the architecture of the museum itself (e.g. about materials, architectural plan, logic of movement within it), the knowledge about Museum's closure and the question of whether they heard or attended any exhibition in this Museum.

In addition to this results, brief interviews with the representatives from the art and communication domains were taken, also, on-line.

Research resources used for the thesis include books, articles and conference presentations online questionnaires and online interviews.

Unless stated otherwise all the translations are provided by the author of the thesis.

1 History of the Museum of Contemporary art in Belgrade

On the 20th anniversary of the liberation of Belgrade from fascism in the Second World War, on October 20, 1965, the Museum of Contemporary Art was open. The opening ceremony was attended by senior officials, politicians, representatives of universities and diplomacy and renowned historical experts. At the opening, the opportunity to give a speech had its founder and the first manager of the Modern Gallery, later renamed the Museum of Contemporary Art, Miodrag B. Protić and the President of the Assembly of the City of Belgrade Branko Pešić².

To this day Protić's speech (Ill. 1) has been described through three spheres: historical-artistic: - "Without complete and orderly collections - our contemporary art cannot be fully known"³; museological: - "The best and most distinctive works of art of the XX century have disappeared and decayed in the past decades"⁴ and socio-cultural reasons: - "Without a special Museum, contemporary art could not have been used more seriously in cultural and social sense."⁵



Ill. 1 Protić at the opening of the Museum, D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 12.

²D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 11.

³ M. B. Protić, *Od života do umetnosti*, in "Umetnost", vol. 1, 1965, pp. 5-10, here cit. p. 7.

⁴Ibid., cit.

⁵Ibid., cit.

One additional sphere could be political one in which he claimed that the idea of this Museum was as old as the contemporary art itself, but it was possible to realize it only “in socialist society, in the middle of the seventh decade of our century, after almost fifteen years of talks, initiatives and work.”⁶ Ten months before he gave this statement, he had explained what the institution museum meant to him. He understood the museum as a cultural technology that played a significant role in shaping the cultural attributes of socialist society. According to him museums are institutions which actively make a culture and represent a society⁷.

Pešić’s addressing to the audience was marked as political and ideological. He described the Museum as the: - “Proof of the care of the socialist society for the achievements of culture”⁸, while highlighting the idyllic representation of brotherhood and unity explaining it as: - “a house of brotherhood and unity, beauty and common creation [...] developing the activities of the Museum in schools and work collectives.”⁹ In that period, this statement was characteristic for the discourse of political officials on culture¹⁰. The opening was very well covered by the media. In the sea of euphoric newspaper articles, that of art critic Aleksa Čelebonović in the daily newspaper "Politika" was the most noticed¹¹.

These are parts of the famous article:

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade opened its bright rooms to the public. The significance of this event is so great that not all the consequences can be seen at this moment. We can only compare it with the successive preceding openings of certain faculties in Belgrade during the last sixty years, and wish that the presence of the new museum in our art would be as life-giving as theirs was in science. [...]

The new museum is aimed at the public as much as the artists themselves. Because nothing can be created from nothing. Known only to a narrow circle of experts and lovers, our art could not always develop at the pace that life demanded. Old problems that had already received their answers in the past were often asked again and unnecessarily, while new ones were viewed with disbelief because the connection with previous events could not be seen. Art as a

⁶M. B. Protić, *Muzej savremene umetnosti u Beogradu –razlozi i ciljevi*, in *Muzej savremene umetnosti*, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1965, pp. 4–17, here p. 10.

⁷D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 16-17.

⁸M. Gligorijević, *Muzej savremene umetnosti svečano otvoren*, in “Borba”, 21 October 1965, cit.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 11.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 40.

conscience and a consciousness must have a base that is not improvised, in which the museum of contemporary conceptions can play a first-class role. To that end, it must not be stiff or static. In this particular case, a wide and dynamic activity is envisaged both towards the audience and within the museum itself in relation to the so-called 'museum settings'. The current exhibition is comprehensive, Yugoslav, which gave the Belgrade Museum of Contemporary Art a special position in our community. It is the only place where the works of artists from all over the country can be seen in a connected whole, comparisons can be made and conclusions can be drawn. And what works are available!¹²

The activity of the Museum of Contemporary Art began in 1958. That year, an act was passed by the Alliance for Culture of the People's Committee of the City of Belgrade. The Decision on the establishment of the Modern Gallery was officially passed¹³. The terminological change in the name, from Modern Gallery to Museum of Contemporary Art, occurred in 1965. The participants (Ill. 2) in this decision were the Modern Gallery Council, together with the City Culture Council, who adopted the change of the name¹⁴. This change in the name itself spoke of the desire to distinguish between Yugoslav and modern art¹⁵.

In one of his interviews Protić explained a reason for this decision saying that the original name was determined at the beginning of the century. In that period, modernity did not yet have its history. However, in the meantime, in the period when the institution was founded and built, this name ceased to correspond to the program and goal of the institution. He further explained that the institutions in which the development of contemporary art was presented and studied were essentially museums¹⁶. He referred to the Germans who claimed: - "*Kunsthalle* is one, *Kunstmuseum* mother."¹⁷

After the Nazi and allied bombs, old Belgrade was destroyed. A completely new construction was required for the museum. For that reason, it was not surprising that the Executive Council of the Republic of Serbia decided to build a building for the

¹²A. Čelebonović, *Umetnost kao suština misli, znanja i osećanja*, in "Borba", 22 October 1965, cit.

¹³Site of Museum of Contemporary Art; <https://msub.org.rs/zgrada-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti> [last access on 21 August 2021]

¹⁴M. B. Protić, *Istorijat Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Nojevbarka I*, Belgrade: Srpska Književna zadruga, 1992, p. 513-514.

¹⁵M. Švaković, *Jugoslovenska umetnost*, in *Pojmovnik modern i postmoderne likovne umetnosti i teorije posle 1950. Godine*, Belgrade – Novi Sad, 1999, p. 136.

¹⁶D. Sretenović, *Miodrag B. Protić o Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp 58-80, here p. 74.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, cit.

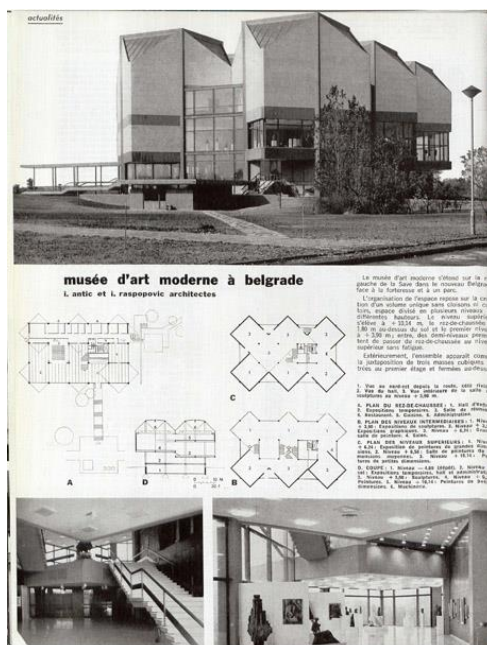
needs of the Modern Gallery that would satisfy modern museological principles. This decision was made in 1959. The agreed location was in New Belgrade, at the mouth of the Sava, opposite the Belgrade Fortress. At the same time, a competition was announced. The winners of the competition for development of a conceptual design were announced in 1960. The architects Ivan Antić and Ivanka Raspopović got the honor to participate in this project. They were awarded the October Award of the City of Belgrade for Architecture in 1965. The new building of the Museum of Contemporary Art was marked as one of the biggest achievements of post-war Yugoslav architecture. At the same time, it was the most significant example of cultural buildings in the former Yugoslavia that had worked on establishing communication with local but also international public opinion. The channel of this communication was marked as a privileged aesthetic language and it referred to architecture. The aim of that communication was to inform the public about the value system proclaimed in socialist Yugoslavia¹⁸.



III. 2 Officials at the opening, D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 13.

¹⁸M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 160.

One of the problems involved with the Museum's construction was the location. The idea of this museum was completely overshadowed in relation to other projects such as: the Trade Union Hall (1947–1955), the Military Geographical Institute and Printing House (1950–1953) and the Belgrade Fair complex (1954–1958)¹⁹. The first solution, in 1954, was a suggestion to add a floor to the building of the National Museum, to be more precise in the part of the Mortgage Bank. It sounded like a good idea, because this was the building in which the National Museum with the collection of modern Serbian art had been moved. Already at that moment, this meant the end of the Gallery (later renamed the Museum) as an independent institution. The period from 1951 to 1954 was a period of dormancy which was due to the reorganization of the republic's cultural bodies. After the pause, the work continued and Protić felt personal responsibility towards the Modern Gallery project²⁰ (Ill. 3).



Ill. 3 Scheme of the Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art in “L’Architectured’aujourd’hui”, Vol. 129, January-February 1967, p. 102.

¹⁹Z. Manević, *Novija srpska arhitektura*, in *Srpska arhitektura. 1900–1970*, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1972, p. 29-31.

²⁰M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 162.

In order to fulfill the idea of the Museum as an independent institution, the support of the cultural elite was also needed. The most important goal was to promote the need for Serbian and Yugoslav modern art to have their own separate institution. In 1954, a survey was conducted by the Council's Department of Culture for education and culture on the need to establish Modern gallery, later named the Museum of Contemporary Art, where all respondents supported the idea²¹.

After the received support and the compromise with the National Museum, the results were visible. Namely, by the decision of the Council for Education and Culture, the Board of the Modern Gallery was appointed in 1955²².

It was this Board that was tasked with proposing the appropriate building. So, the idea of one's own construction was still distant. The arguments for rejection were that the new building would be expensive, illogical and provocative. The Board rejected the offers of existing, often unfinished, buildings. They justified their position with the high cost of maintenance and the fact that the adaptation would exceed the cost of the new facility²³.

The first goal, which was to get a location for the new building in the old part of the city, was not achieved. In 1959, the decision of the Executive Council of Serbia was to assign the location to the Modern Gallery on the left, New Belgrade bank of the confluence of the Sava and the Danube, on the edge of the highway, across from the Central Committee building. However, once again, the location was changed. Thanks to Protić's request, the place for the building was moved to the very confluence of the Sava and the Danube, thus moving away from the traffic highway. This proved to be an ideal compromise: the political structures were satisfied with the New Belgrade location. In this part of New Belgrade, the urban plan envisaged a "museum oasis." In addition to the Museum of Contemporary Art, there should have been the Museum of the Revolution, the Ethnographic and Natural History Museum (with appropriate "reserves") and the Party School²⁴. Even though these other projects weren't executed

²¹ M. B. Protić, *Istorijat Muzeja savremeneumetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Nojeva barka I*, Belgrade: Srpska Književna zadruga, 1992, p. 510.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 511.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 513-514.

²⁴ D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističko Jugoslavij i iposle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremeneumetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 23.

and the Museum was left “lonely”, this institution, as it turned out later, was given an exclusive spatial domain²⁵.

1.1 Modernity of the Museum of Contemporary Art and the competition for the project of the Modern Gallery building (1959–1960)

The first museum in Yugoslavia that was organized according to modern museological standards was the Museum of Contemporary Art. The modernity included the appropriate infrastructure which was provided by the unorthodox modernist architectural solution of the architects Ivan Antić and Ivanka Raspopović of the building in Ušće²⁶(Ill. 4).



Ill. 4 Exterior of Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, https://beogradskonasledje.rs/kd/zavod/novi_beograd/muzej_savremene_umetnosti.html

In the memoir book „Noah's Ark“, Miodrag Protić claimed that the Museum was inspired by the New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). The resemblance rest in the “ways of visualizing the historical development of modern art in a permanent exhibition”, “new technology of preparation and setting up of studio exhibitions”,

²⁵M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 162.

²⁶D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 29-30.

“style of work” which meant “a balanced relationship between the ‘static’ (setting) and ‘dynamic’ (programs) part of the Museum.”²⁷

One more idea that came from New York and made this Museum the pioneer in communicational strategies, in the whole of Yugoslavia, is the establishment of the Department of Art Documentation and the Department of Pedagogical Work and Propaganda (reformed into the Center for Visual Culture and Information in 1974) and international cooperation²⁸. The Center for Visual Culture and Information is wider described in the paragraph 1.6 - The Museum's program and communication strategies. Still there were some differences in comparison to the New York model. The most significant and obvious ‘deviation’ was the introduction of the term “contemporary” in the name of the institution. In that period, even when we think globally, this was a rare case when it comes to museums (apart from galleries and institutes)²⁹. What we need to bear in mind is that “contemporary” is indefinite and elastic term, for example “discursive category” or “operational fiction”, according to Professor of Modern European Philosophy and Director of the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy (CRMEP), Peter Osborn. The meaning is not so much on either style or period, but it acquires a more concrete meaning depending on the context of use and a quality. The quality was theoretically understood by Protić and it came to the expression in the seventies. This was a period when notion of contemporary art will become the subject of historical-artistic and theoretical discussions³⁰.

About modernity of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Jerko Denegri, Protić's associate and a promoter of new artistic tendencies, claims, by paraphrasing Slovenian sociologist, psychoanalyst, literary theorist, translator and political activist, Rastko Močnik, that every institution is a bricolage made of various elements. He wrote:

Excessive considerations towards different forces in its own environment, overemphasized, although basically justified educational and informative role, sometimes the inevitable proximity of the official cultural policy that not only financially sustained, but also itself through the conventions of interstate exchange with various foreign partners partially influenced the program of exhibitions - all this seemed to condition a certain conceptual instability as a result

²⁷ M. B. Protić, *Istorijat Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Nojeva barka I*, Belgrade: Srpska Književna zadruga, 1992, p. 527.

²⁸ D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 29-30.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

of which the action of the Museum left a far smaller trace in its own environment than it would for the environment itself and the Museum useful, valuable, necessary³¹.

Despite all the comments or critiques, general judgement on the role of the Museum of Contemporary Art cannot be refuted. To be more precise, the writing art history and presenting art that will become history, as German art historian and theorist of medieval and Renaissance art, Hans Belting would define it, was taking place in the Yugoslav art space until the early 1990s, become an integral and unavoidable factor in 20th century art history³².

In 1959, the Committee for the development of the program for the construction of the Modern Gallery was elected, and immediately afterwards, a competition was announced for the conceptual design of the building. For the Committee, several points were mandatory when considering the idea: “maximum elasticity and adaptability of the exhibition space”, as well as “variations in the heights and volumes of individual spaces”³³.

As mentioned above, the winners of the competition were the architects Ivan Antić and Ivanka Raspopović.

The first place was awarded with the explanation of the jury that they appreciated “fresh, original, nuanced spatial concept of the interior”, as well as: interesting possibilities with plastic playful masses “in the exterior design, noticing “finally, and a little bizarre, crystalline forms of roofs, which can still be of good visual effect from the bridge and Kalemegdan”³⁴. Kalemegdan is the largest park in the Serbian capital, Belgrade. It is also marked as the most important cultural and historical complex, in which the most famous Belgrade Fortress is located above the confluence of the Sava and the Danube. However, the jury also emphasized that this solution should be understood only as a conceptual concept that has yet to be developed.

³¹J. Denegri, *Otvaranje Muzeja savremene umetnosti in Šezdesete: teme srpske umetnosti (1960–1970)*. Novi Sad: Svetovi, 1995, p. 67., cit.

³²D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 40.

³³ O. Minić, *Konkurs za Modernu galeriju u Beogradu*, in *Arhitektura-urbanizam*, Belgrade, 1960, p. 33-34.

³⁴M. B. Protić, *Istorijat Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Nojeva barka I*, Belgrade: Srpska Književna zadruga, 1992, p. 511.

The second place went to architect Rista Šekerinski and architecture student Petar Pavlić and instead of the third prize, three ransoms were determined. The first redemption went to the architects Slobodan Mihajlović and Dragan Raspopović, the second to architects Prvoslav Janković, Aleksandar Stjepanović and Božidar Janković and the third to Aleksandar Ljahnicki. Additionally, the work of a team of architects from Ljubljana consisting of Janez Lajovic, Stanko Kristl, Majda Dobrovec and Mirijana Vidmar, who got the third place, received a monetary compensation, and in return they ceded ownership of their project to the organizers of the competition.

The two architects, Ivan Antić and Ivanka Raspopović, described their idea as a composite structure which had three elements: the ground floor area, the central building and a separate cube intended for the lecture hall.

The ground floor area- its function can be described as a function of a sculpture park. Its primary geometric shapes - circles and rectangles, are noticeable, as well as their specific materialization. The ground floor of the building is in the shape of rectangle; the front, entrance area is transparent, and in the rear is located the office space. This part is connected to the central corpus of the building by a long, covered ramp. It takes visitors directly to the interior. Central building- a staircase is located here. It connects the ground floor with a two-story plant derived from a square modular matrix, rotated by 45 degrees relative to the lower level³⁵.

The base of the ground floor is a rectangle with an aspect ratio of 3: 5. The base of the floors is in the form of a rectangle with an aspect ratio of 2: 3. These scales show the tendency of the “golden section”, because the numbers 2, 3 and 5 represent the elements of the Fibonacci sequence (0), (1), 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, ...³⁶.

Above the rectangular ground floor is a two-story building. It consists of five units derived from a rotated square matrix. Four of them have the base of a square, and one has the base of a rectangle. This part of the building is rounded by a hipped roof. Its sides are transparent. Thanks to them specific zenithal lighting is made as well as the crystal-morphic appearance of the object³⁷.

³⁵ M. R. Perović, *Iskustva prošlosti*, Belgrade: Zavod za planiranje razvoja grada, 1985, p. 123.

³⁶D. Sretenović, *Kultura savremenosti i arhitektura Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 114-131, here p. 120.

³⁷Z. Manević, *Novija srpska arhitektura*, in *Srpska arhitektura. 1900–1970*, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1972, p. 29-31.

This project idea enabled a visual connection with the environment. At the same time, the incorporation of Kalemegdan and Old Belgrade urban landscapes into the interior was possible (Ill. 5)³⁸.



Ill. 5 Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade and Kalemegdan,
<https://mapio.net/pic/p-5822052/>

In comparison to the project idea from 1959, the built structure still differs in several elements. Complete modulation was performed. To be more precise, six equal cubes with truncated roof planes, structurally based on a reinforced concrete structure were made. There have been changes in the functional organization as well. A lecture hall was built into the basic building. Also, the office space underwent certain changes, because a Documentation Department was introduced³⁹. However, perhaps the most visible change is at the level of materialization of the façade. In the project from 1959, the usage of bricks was planned. But, in the realization, however, wedding pale gray marble was used⁴⁰. It was this change that contributed to the crystal-morphic impression of the building, which became one of the bearers of the visual identity of the Museum.

³⁸M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 169.

³⁹Ibid., p. 165-167.

⁴⁰ M. B. Protić, *Istorijat Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Nojeva barka I*, Belgrade: Srpska Književna zadruga, 1992, p. 612.

In 1961, the construction of the Modern Gallery building began. The representative of the investor (Council of Culture and the Executive Council of Serbia) was the Directorate for the construction of New Belgrade. Construction works were performed by the company "Sedmi Jul" from Belgrade and design was completed in the project bureau of the construction company "Rad"⁴¹.

It was designed as a monumental building in the form of a ziggurat. From this we can see a clear connection with Le Corbusier, the French architect of Swiss origin and his ideas about the architectural articulations of museum buildings. According to him, the ziggurat represents a "chain of knowledge in which human deeds develop through the centuries."⁴²

The exterior of the building is formed of the shape of six notched two-story cubes with an even upper roof elevation. The walls are slab-sided with white marble slabs, partly in glass, and sloping roof surfaces covered with glass⁴³. The concept of the building was obviously original. Its spatial composition was imagined as a single exhibition space without internal partitions. It is divided into five exhibition levels connected by stairs. In order to make some more space, the interior has half-floors and mezzanines. In addition, the interior is enriched with successive panoramic views of the surroundings. These levels, with different heights make a single whole. Thanks to this idea, it is possible to view exhibits at lower levels from higher levels and from different angles. The total area of the interior is 5,055 m². The ground floor is located at 1.80 m from ground level. The first level is at 3.90 m, the second and third levels share height differences of 2.34 m and 1.56 m. The highest level is at 10.14 m from the ground⁴⁴.

The work was completed in 1965. The most problematic year in the construction was 1963. The problem arose for economic reasons. Namely, it was planned to replace the noble materials - wedding marble, stone floor coverings, oak parquet with cheaper ones. This problem, the increase in costs, was for some time discussed at the sessions

⁴¹ A. K., *Данас се отвара Музеј савремене уметности*, in "Borba", 20 October 1965.

⁴²Le Corbusier et P. Jeanneret, *Oeuvre complètede 1910–1929*, Zurich, 1965, 194, cit.: N. Levin, *Logika inverzije Gugenhajmovog muzeja u Njujorku*, in *Istorija modern arhitekture: Antologija tekstova. Kristalizacija modernizma*, M. R. Perović, Belgrade, 1999, p. 243.

⁴³Site of Museum of Contemporary Art; <https://msub.org.rs/zgrada-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti>[last access on 20 August 2021]

⁴⁴Ibid.

of the Serbian government. At one of them, politician Slobodan Penezić made a proposal to approve the costs. He justified his proposal with the sentence: - "Better to pay than to be blamed tomorrow for an obviously ugly object!"⁴⁵

At last, thanks to Protić and his connections and acquaintances in political circles, this kind of "destruction of the building" did not happen⁴⁶.

1.2 Abstraction, form and logic of movement and space

One of the elements of architecture that is noticeable on this museum is modularity. When the architects were looking for an ideal module that would satisfy the constructive and functional scheme, they came up with a solution that Ivan Antić described in the following words:

Through the program it was felt that an area of one hundred and fifty square meters could be a basic module. Such a module, however, would require too large spans. And then I came up with the idea of using a half-smaller grid [...], to place it diagonally, and simply remove the cell walls⁴⁷.

The optimal square grid of the structure is defined with 24 (6 x 4) pillars at an axial distance of 9.5 meters. The superimposed diagonal matrix of eight squares is $9.5 \times \sqrt{2}$ ⁴⁸. The architectural plan of the museum was created by a diagram structure. This was done by merging two square matrices of different dimensions and rotated at an angle of 45 degrees⁴⁹. It is known that the diagrammatic architectural plan in the history of modern architecture was symbol of a sign. This symbol denotes the aesthetics of rationalism and the authoritarianism of functionalism. The diagram of this structure is called the "abstraction of abstraction"⁵⁰. It represents a reduced linear conceptualization of abstract spatial relations. Due to the above descriptions, the Serbian architect Oliver Minić speaks of this building as something that is abstract, transcendent and which is created almost according to mathematical laws. More

⁴⁵ M. B. Protić, *Istorijat Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Nojeva barka I*, Belgrade: Srpska Književna zadruga, 1992, cit., p. 616.

⁴⁶ M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in "Časopis Nasleđe", 2009, p. 165-167.

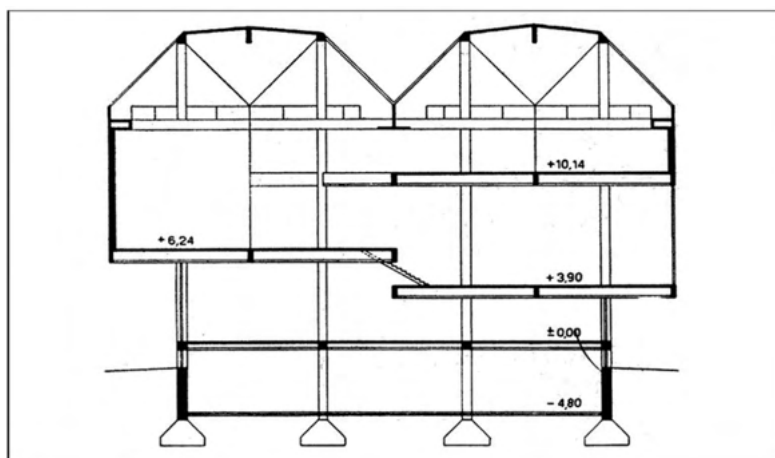
⁴⁷ Ibid., cit.

⁴⁸ Lj. Blagojević, *Нови Београд: оспорени модернизам*, Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2007, p. 232–240.

⁴⁹ M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Časopis Nasleđe*, 2009, p. 165-167.

⁵⁰ A. Vidler, *Diagrams of Diagrams: Architectural Abstraction and Modern Representation*, in *Representations*, Berkley, 2000, p. 244.

precisely, it was the rational and geometrized basis that enabled the appearance of the optimal amount of formally architectural motifs in the elevation⁵¹.



Ill. 6 Section of the Museum of Contemporary art, M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Časopis Nasleđe*, 2009, p. 166.

Ivan Antić obviously used the language of form: geometric and rational. This is supported by his words that the one thing he always wanted was to have a geometric and clean shape. To be more precise, he wanted a rational form. As for the theory of form, one paradox is noticeable. It is immanent in multivalent deeds. Theory of form has its basis in geometry and rationalism. However, it is not devoid of sophistication and formal lucidity⁵².

By studying the form more deeply, we can gain two opposite impressions. The first one is the impression of a cold, artificial and platonic atmosphere. The other one is the impression of an organic structure that naturally arises on the place and from the place where it is located⁵³.

Searching for appropriate descriptions for the Museum of Contemporary Art, we will often come across descriptions related to crystals, crystal-morphic structures, crystallographic morphemes. From the formal-plastic aspect, the building, according to the scientist and crystallographer Arthur Loeb, belongs to crystal architecture. It is

⁵¹Site of Museum of Contemporary Art; <https://msub.org.rs/zgrada-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti>[last access on 20 August 2021]

⁵²M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “*Časopis Nasleđe*”, 2009, p. 165-167.

⁵³M. Mitrović, *Beli kristali na obali Save*, in „Politika“, 26 December 1965.

described as an architectural complex based on “building blocks”. These blocks form a cellular system, which is both honeycomb-like and comparable to the crystal structure. For this reason, in the course of thinking about the form, the multiplication and multiplication of the basic element are imposed as a logical solution that arose from the cellular system⁵⁴.

This is how the concept of “continuous growth” is built - the modular redistribution of the structure that was recorded in the diagram phase of the plan. It will later be used to predict logic movements, as well as for the spatial articulation.

There is another paradox, in the multiplications of the form which refers to the six crystallomorphic elements, which make up the group form and although we see them as identical, they are different⁵⁵. In the art history, the term “group form” has been used by Japanese architects, gathered around the idea of metabolic architecture⁵⁶. This museum has been compared to metabolic structures. One of the people who made that comparison is the architect M. Lojanica⁵⁷. We identify them on the basis of a geometric concept, an artificial idea of the crystal shape. We make a difference based on orientation, position and materialization.

At the end of the discussion, we can say that these are not absolute, platonic forms that are trying to imagine discovering order in the cosmos⁵⁸. These forms are placed in the service of the architectural structure. Their use is in the reality of their environment⁵⁹. When it was talked about the functional scheme of the museum, a lot of effort was put in the movement of visitors. The logic of motion was based on the principles of spiral motion. The reason for this was the cascading shape of the interior space. There is one anecdote about this element. It is believed that this logic, the structure of half-floors and melting in the vertical and horizontal levels, was inspired by the conversation between Ivan Antić and the sculptor Rista Stijović about museum buildings. Stijovic recalled touring Parisian museums. He said: “People hate to climb on the floors [...] Museums should be in ground-floor buildings, or it should happen that it is easy to go

⁵⁴Lj. Blagojević, *Нови Београд: оспорени модернизам*, Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2007, p. 232–240.

⁵⁵M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 165-167.

⁵⁶Č. Dženks, *Moderni pokreti u arhitekturi*, Belgrade: Građevinska knjiga, 1988, p. 82–85.

⁵⁷ M. Lojanica, *Ivan Antić graditelj*, in *Arhitekta Ivan Antić*, Belgrade: Salon MSU, 1975.

⁵⁸ Č. Dženks, *Moderni pokreti u arhitekturi*, Belgrade: Građevinska knjiga, 1988, p.121.

⁵⁹M. Mitrović, *Belikristali na obali Save*, in „Politika“, 26 December 1965.

from floor to floor.”⁶⁰ This is how the living interior space is built. Thanks to this idea, a comparison was being made with the archetypal form of the spiral. Also, in that period started the comparisons with other museum buildings within the framework of modern architecture.

Why a spiral? A spiral represents a circular motion, connecting point A and point B. The spiral was chosen as a symbol of openness that characterizes expansion, development and emanation⁶¹. Due to the spiral, the form gained elegance and energy potential. However, the most significant contribution of this structure was the category of time⁶².

We continue with the term “time”. Architect Milutin Borisavljević saw architecture as the art of the time. More precisely, he proposed an aesthetic conception of architecture as the art of the time⁶³. However, in modern architecture there was a tendency to show succession, mobility, and dynamism through space. This was exactly what was visible in the Belgrade Museum. It was the space that was presented as a medium in which modifications of elements were occurring⁶⁴.

At one point, the question arose as to whether the tyranny of space was occurring in the case of this architecture. More precisely, the suspicion was that a modernist design existed for the sake of “expressionist acrobatic space for a new age in architecture”. This type of situation was described in this way by Venturi, Scott Brown and Eisenhower⁶⁵. Yet this suspicion was not justified. Museum architecture in this case does not have “acrobatics” or similar volume exhibitions. The space was well thought-out. Additionally, although there is a number of plastic heterogeneities, it has not moved to the side of self-sufficiency⁶⁶. Commenting on spatial objectivity and balance, architect Aleksej Brkić explains that the chosen path is the path of mediation and “moves somewhere between Brašovan's superstructural and Zloković's infrastructural

⁶⁰A. Brkić, *Zgrada Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu in Znakovi u kamenu: srpska moderna arhitektura 1930-1980*, Belgrade: Savez arhitekata Srbije, 1992, cit., p. 183.

⁶¹A. Gerbran, Ž. Ševalije, *Spirala*, in *Rečnik simbola*, Novi Sad: Stylos, 2004, p. 863–866.

⁶²M. Borisavljević, *Problem prostora i vremena u arhitekturi*, in *Zlatni presek i drugi eseji*, Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruka, 1998, p. 361–385.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 165-167.

⁶⁵R. Venturi, D. Skot Braun, S. Ajzenur, *Prostorkao bog*, in *Pouke Las Vegasa*, Belgrade: Gradjevinska knjiga, 1990, cit., p. 156–158

⁶⁶M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 165-167.

analysis.”⁶⁷ (Both Brašovan and Zloković were Serbian architects.) In the previous levels are noticeable moderation and normative based on rationality and geometry, which enabled the implementation of an imagined architectural act. The realization of Antić and Raspopović is therefore seen as a masterfully realized flowing space that is unique in the Serbian architecture of the twentieth century. Flowing space is a term that Robert Venturi, an American architect, describes with the words: - “Flowing space means that a person is outside when he is actually inside, and that he is inside when he is outside, that is, that he is both there and there at the same time.”⁶⁸ Or simpler that is to say, it is the idea of understanding the house as a spatial unity. In relation to the rigidity of classical space, in this spatial unity, spaces are mutually condensed and intertwined⁶⁹.

We now return specifically to the spatial structure of the building. It has several categories, namely the constructed space of the building, the physical space of the ambience and the imaginary space of art⁷⁰. Thanks to these categories and the concept of experience the interior of the museum changes with the movement of visitors, and at the same time, by changing the position, visitors are shown a whole spectrum of new spatial sensations. In this way, a heterotopic impression was reached, which is best explained by the words of the French philosopher Merleau-Ponty: - “I can be somewhere else while staying here.”⁷¹

Another recorded quote related to space and movement: - “The designers wanted the visitor to have above them during the documents and photographs wells that would be dimly lit zenital lighting and that would give the appropriate atmosphere to the museum.”⁷²

⁶⁷A. Brkić, *Zgrada Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu* in *Znakovi u kamenu: srpska moderna arhitektura 1930-1980*, Belgrade: Savez aritekata Srbije, 1992, p. 181.

⁶⁸S. Maldini, *Enciklopedija arhitekture II*, Belgrade: Slobodan Maldini, 2004, cit. p. 243.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 167.

⁷¹ M. Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, London –New York: Routledge, 1962, cit. p. 285.

⁷²D. Sretenović, *Kultura savremenosti i arhitektura Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 114-131, here cit. p. 121



Ill. 7 Interior of the MSUB, <https://beogradskonasledje.rs/izdvajamo/muzej-savremene-umetnosti>

1.3 Yugoslav or/and Serbian orientation and exhibition of the modern art

In an interview with the curator of the Museum, Radmila Matić-Panić, Protić answered, among other things, the questions about the Yugoslav and/or Serbian orientation. He stated the fact that in both legal and financial terms, Gallery, later Museum is exclusively financed by the Serbian authorities. As he claimed, in order to show that the Yugoslav direction is an expression of pure conviction, pure desire, not a single dinar was taken from the federal treasury. One of the goals of the founders was not to betray the enthusiasm of Yugoslav artists from the beginning of the century and after the war, neither in the cultural nor in the program sense. Protić, as he himself said, was criticized for showing Yugoslav art and reducing the space for Serbian art. The argument for this was that similar institutions along with other national environments do not exhibit Serbian artists. Further, the criticism was followed by the fact that Yugoslavia in culture should be not only a Serbian obligation, but also an obligation of our neighbors. He defended his concept and added that it is sad that Serbian and Yugoslav couldn't be presented as the art within the appropriate epochs and poetics of European art. However, thanks to Protić's persistence and this policy,

the Museum became important. Unfortunately, or fortunately, it has become the only focus of yesterday's and today's Yugoslav art of the 20th century⁷³.

The uniqueness of the Museum of Contemporary art wasn't in being the first museum that was collecting and exhibiting modern art. Its uniqueness lay in Yugoslav orientation and museological standards Protić installed. This was the first systematically gathered collection of modern art from the whole of Yugoslavia. Protić claimed that thanks to this collection “synthetic history” of Yugoslav modern art was made. Up to this day, it is in the permanent exhibition of the Museum. Yugoslav art - exhibitions, actions and work focused on Yugoslav art - exhibitions continued until the decay of Yugoslavia, in 1991. The whole-time accent was on Serbian art, which was seen by many, including Protić, as the integral part of the Yugoslav art⁷⁴.

The financial fact, which is not mentioned often, is that the Museum was financed exclusively by its founder, the Socialist Republic of Serbia and the City Assembly Belgrade. Nevertheless, the museum was presented as an institution of federal importance. The fact that it was included in the protocol of the Federal Government showed how seriously its role was. This meant that the Museum was included in the obligatory sightseeing of the capital city Belgrade of foreign statesmen or their wives, crowned heads, politicians and cultural representatives. Some of the official recorded visits, during 1960s and 1970s, included people such as Nicolae Ceausescu, Kenneth Cound, Luis Echeverria, British Princess Margaret, Queen Fabiola of Belgium, Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, the wives of Giscard d'Estaing and Willy Brant, actress Gina Lollobrigida⁷⁵.

Because the decay caused confusion about Yugoslav art, Serbian art and art of the other members of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, from a post-Yugoslav perspective, Ješa Denegri, Serbian art historian and art critic offered an explication, using a new term – “Yugoslav art space.” He described this term:

The term 'Yugoslav artistic space' implies a geographical, political and cultural area within a polycentric life which was happening, but at the same time common artistic life of several national environments as former constitutive units of the previous two Yugoslav states were taking place. This space was both polycentric

⁷³D. Sretenović, *Miodrag B. Protić o Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp 58-80, here p. 64.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p. 21-23.

and common at the same time, because in each of those environments a sufficiently autonomous and autochthonous cultural and artistic scene was formed with separate and specific problem physiognomies and with its own protagonists, and yet all those scenes were included in one each of them significantly expands the 'world of art' or 'art system' based on very intense flows of artistic events...⁷⁶

The processes of political and economic decentralization that gave powers to the republics were official by the 1963 Constitution and left repercussions in the cultural sector, too. Although during the existence of Yugoslavia, especially during the rule of Tito, brotherhood and unity were glorified, due to the strengthening of individual tendencies, there were significant differences in the spheres of language policy, education and literature. And after the decline, we witnessed the insistence on particular cultural identities. The idea of creating a supranational Yugoslav culture that would be compatible with national cultures was almost non-existent in practice. For this reason, Edvard Kardelj, a Slovenian politician, economist, publicist and partisan, admits that there are “no special Yugoslav criteria in culture because they are read differently everywhere”⁷⁷. This explains the effort of politicians to maintain the Museum and to keep the idea of Yugoslav modern culture alive and politically usable⁷⁸.

In addition to this, Donald Preciozi, museum theorist, claims that in modern times one cannot be a nation-state without appropriate art with its own distinctive history which is “a reflection of or modeled on the wider historical evolution of that identity - which represents its 'soul’”⁷⁹

1.4 Initial success of communication strategies

The first recognitions of the museum were already after the completion of its construction. In favor of this speaks the October Award for Architecture and Urbanism, which was awarded to architects Ivan Antić and Ivanka Raspopović for

⁷⁶J. Denegri, *Ideologija postavke Muzeja savremene umetnosti in Jugoslovenski umetnički prostor*. Belgrade: Hektor print, 2011, cit., p. 6

⁷⁷Lj. Kolečnik, *Socijalizam i modernost. Umjetnost, kultura, politika 1950.–1974*. Zagreb: MSU Institut za povijest umjetnosti, 2012, cit., p. 12.

⁷⁸D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 21-23.

⁷⁹R. S. Nelson, R. Šif, *Muzeji/zbirke in Kritički termini istorije umetnosti*, Novi Sad: Svetovi, 2004, cit., p. 496.

their realization of the museum. The decision of the jury was supported by the impression that the building is characterized by harmoniously complex functional, constructive and compositional properties⁸⁰. What was especially emphasized was the visual connection of interior spaces and exhibited works with Kalemegdan and the Sava slopes of Belgrade. These elements contribute to making the artistic contents stronger⁸¹.



III. 8 October award for Ivan Antić and Ivanka Raspopović for the building of Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade,
<http://www.cab.rs/en/blog/zagonetna-dama-nase-moderne#.YbxpD2jMLIU>

Besides the praise, recognition and admiration, there was also criticisms. They were quite based on different concepts of understanding the exposed space. Thus, one of the criticisms referred to the character of the inner space, which made it difficult to concentrate on individual works. In addition to this, there was also an objection to the difference in materialization wall surfaces that were allegedly affecting the quality of perception. From all this, it was concluded that architecture itself tends to become an exhibit⁸². The position and importance of the Museum led it to the classification as an heir and promoter of general architectural values. Although the building was created under very specific conditions, it surpassed the local character that captivates with the

⁸⁰ *Harmonično i funkcionalno*, in „Borba“, 17 October 1965.

⁸¹ M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 168.

⁸² M. Mitrović, *Beli Kristali na obali Save*, in „Politika“, 26 December 1965.

spirit of modern European architecture. It could be said that the Museum itself is artistic exhibit, a kind of ready-made. This statement first and foremost refers to the Kalemegdan ridge and the confluence of the Sava and the Danube. These two factors are essentially two elementary factors (genitor urbis) in the formation of the character and morphology of Belgrade⁸³. Precisely because of this, the notion of the city is clearly inscribed in the visual code of the Museum. In essence, the Museum can also be described as a singular element of the city. After all, the term singularity represents an object that cannot be simply and unilaterally interpreted⁸⁴. And if we talk about this concept in the context of the image of the city, from the point of view of the American urban planner Kevin Lynch, it represents the sum of qualities that characterize an element. Because of that, it becomes noticeable, vivid, prominent. Some of the qualities that are included here are contrasts of shape, intensity, complexity, size, purpose, spatial location⁸⁵.

The Museum was an architectural and social success, and Protić was explaining from the early beginnings of the idea that the building was not designed as an alienated temple. It was just the other way around. Protić stated (Ill. 7):

...already its architecture speaks of a new, modern understanding, of the unity of art, nature and life: sequences from the confluence of the Danube and Sava - water and sky, trees and light - are constantly lined up within its windows, while on its walls pictures are blooming⁸⁶.



Ill. 9 Protić and model of MSUB, A. Čelebonović, *Art as the essence of thought, knowledge and feelings*, in *Borba*, 22 October 1965.

⁸³B. Bogdanović, *Grad i mitologija grada*, Niš: Urbs & logos, 1976, p. 28.

⁸⁴J. Baudrillard, J. Nouvel, *Singularni objekti – Arhitektura i filozofija*, Zagreb: AGM, 2008, p. 84–85.

⁸⁵K. Linč, *Slikajednog grada*, Belgrade: Građevinska knjiga, 1977, p. 134–135.

⁸⁶M. B. Protić, *Muzej savremene umetnosti u Beogradu – razlozi i ciljevi*, Muzej savremene umetnosti, Belgrade: MSU, 1965, cit., p. 4-7.

In an official conversation with the curator Radmila Matić-Panić, Protić spoke openly about the resistance aimed at building the Museum. He cited the idea of the National Museum to simply add a floor for the 20th century as a big problem. His desire to build a special building was hidden behind his belief that modern art, in terms of the larger environments, can be expressed only in one way- in a special, not within a traditional, complex museum. This problem did not bypass the sessions of the Board and the Council either. Cultural-political factors have argued their displeasure and according to them it was illogical that there was an idea to first established, and later built an institution for a branch that until recently was disputed as an expression of civic decadence. An additional argument was the fact that at that time even the National Library did not have a building, after the destruction in April 6 bombing⁸⁷.

Conditionally speaking, we can make this division into three periods:

1965-1993 - period of stability. Stability referred to the fact that there were no changes to the building during this period. The museum became a podium for relevant domestic and world exhibitions, where distinguished guests and visitors from the fields of art and culture and politics have appeared. This place marked the center of elite cultural and artistic life, state and diplomatic protocol, educational activities, thus becoming a default center for Belgraders and their guests⁸⁸.

1993-2000 - period of degradation of the building and institution. This period will begin for the state with political unrest, and for the Museum with the arrival of a new administration. This process was explained as “staff cleaning of cultural institutions”. Here we distinguish two important points. The first can be called symptomatic, and the second tragic. The architectural purity of the museum was respected for a full thirty years. Jerko Denegri, one of the first curators of MSU, in interview conducted on October 20, 2008, supported this fact with the “sanctosacral” character of the Museum. According to him, during the administration of M. B. Protić (1965–1980) everyone was extremely careful not to make any changes in the interior or exterior⁸⁹. Despite this

⁸⁷D. Sretenović, *Miodrag B. Protić o Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp 58-80, here p. 63.

⁸⁸ M. B. Protić, *Istorijat Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Nojeva barka I*, Belgrade: Srpska Književna zadruga, 1992, p. 491-492.

⁸⁹M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in “Časopis Nasleđe”, 2009, p. 171-172.

tradition, the new administration decided to display the very conspicuous inscriptions MUSEUM / MY3EJ (written in Cyrillic and Latin) on the facade of the building. The basic concept of the architectural recognizability of the building was endangered, and the typographic dilettantism was also noticeable⁹⁰. However, the first devastation occurred with the bombing of Belgrade in 1999. Almost all the windows on the Museum building were damaged during the detonation of bombs dropped on the building of the former Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Unfortunately, the glazing was started only in the fall of the same year, so the open building continued to decay under the influence of external atmospheric and physical influences⁹¹. The interior of the building was not either bypassed by birds of prey⁹².

The period started in 2000 - a period of consolidation, revitalization and reconstitution. As a result, after the change of government in 2000, the management of the Museum was changed. The consequences of the bombing were still present. Formerly technical museum installations, which once met the highest world standards⁹³ have become obsolete in this period. From 2002 to 2006, architectural and construction interventions began, as well as the planning of studies in the field of technical and technological aspects. And, in 2008, reconstruction and adaptation began.

1.5 Socialist modernism, communication and international cooperation outside Yugoslavian borders

What is socialist modernism? The simplest and most precise definition is the one given by J. Denegri, who believes that socialist modernism represents:

artistic climate and artistic system as the ruling spiritual moods and institutional apparatuses of the art world within the 'soft' self-governing Yugoslav socialism during the rise of this socio-political order between 1950-1970⁹⁴.

⁹⁰M. Prodanović, *Stariji i lepši Beograd*, Belgrade: Stubovi kulture, 2004, p. 69–70.

⁹¹M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in "Časopis Nasleđe", 2009, p. 171-172.

⁹²S. Ćirić, *Muzej savremene umetnosti. Kuća duhova*, in "Vreme", Belgrade, 6 November 1999.

⁹³N. Kurtović-Folić, *In Memoriam Ivan Antić (1923–2005)*, in "Časopis Nasleđe", Belgrade, 2007, p. 273–276.

⁹⁴D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, cit., p. 15.

Socialist modernism as the dominant part of art culture brought the manifestation of radical versions of modernism and the neo-avant-garde. This meant that the art scene in Yugoslavia, during the 1950s and 1960s, didn't differ that much from the world's scene. Yugoslav art space was plural. Inside of it, different artistic attitudes were positioned depending on institutional policies and interests, cultural situations and traditions that were in the center of artistic life⁹⁵.

The Museum of Contemporary Art had a big role in the installation and/or reconstruction of artistic modernism in socialist Yugoslavia. This had previously been achieved with coinciding goals of liberalized cultural policies and autochthonous aspirations in artistic practice. From this we discover that at first one of the crucial goals of the Museum was to convert into the "symbolic legitimization" (Pierre Bourdieu) of modernism, as an international artistic paradigm, the totality of the practices which were created on the territory of Yugoslavia at the beginning of the century⁹⁶.

As the then director of the Museum, Protić, explained, international cooperation was achieved through two phases. The first phase lasted about ten years. It was marked by the Museum's direct communications and connections with similar institutions in the world. From the first phase, some exhibitions could be singled out: the first complete exhibition of Picasso's graphics in Belgrade and Yugoslavia. It was made in collaboration with art historian and collector Kahnweiler in Paris and art historian Jiri Kotalik in Prague - Kramarž Collection. The next exhibition we can mention is from Klee, made in collaboration with Schmalenbach from Düsseldorf, art historian and curator. It featured the Blue Knight, as well as the 28 works of Kandinsky.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid.



Ill. 10 Paul Klee, *Blue Knight*, Klee, 1937, oil on canvas, <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/434808539026318232/>

Furthermore, we can cite a complete retrospective of Yves Klein, then Nolde, the American significant exhibition *New Direction*, and many other exhibitions of French, Italian and English art⁹⁷.

The second phase passed with the help of the mediation of the competent republican and federal bodies. At this stage, Mayakovsky's exhibition with posters from October can be singled out. In one of the interviews, Protić mentioned one of the last big jobs he worked on - the two international exhibitions *Belgrade '77* and *Belgrade '80* that belong to this period. These exhibitions presented new concepts, and for the first time, the selectors were museums and galleries of contemporary art from as many as thirty countries. Then two great things were achieved - the most current art was shown as museums see it in their environment and their meeting and cooperation were enabled in one place, in Belgrade, under the roof of the Museum, which in this way became an important stage of foreign art⁹⁸.

From the very beginning, the Museum has attracted a lot of attention. His exterior, as well as the interior, aroused great interest. Its realization was the most significant architectural work of its era. This fact, that it was in the public spotlight, the Museum used in a communicative sense – for example to be published in foreign media. Thus, among other publications, the Museum building was published in important

⁹⁷D. Sretenović, *Miodrag B. Protić o Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp 58-80, here p. 76-79.

⁹⁸Ibid.

architectural magazines in the country and abroad, for example in the journals “Domus” and “L’Architected’aujourd’hui”⁹⁹.

In the 1950s and 1960s, people around the world saw Yugoslavia as a new model of society, and the art of this country as its free, dynamic and interesting counterpart. Protić believed that this position, both in Europe and in the world, was called into question due to the economic and political crisis, as well as due to the confusion of artistic and political criteria. Furthermore, on this topic, Protić stated:

The world perceives us as a loose set of cultural provinces, so as a place of affirmation it offers us - its cultural provinces... However, that is more a problem of our official international cultural ties¹⁰⁰.

His opinion was that Yugoslavia should not prove that it was a part of Europe, that it focused too much on "imitating" it. According to him, its goal should be to create authentic art, because Yugoslavia had already shown and proved throughout the history that it was part of Europe. The problem was the belief that everything that was created in this area could be good only if it was created in Rome, Paris, Berlin, London or New York¹⁰¹. He further emphasized:

A national culture that is below time, that is in fact sub historical, provincial or folklore, that a tradition that opposes modern experience is never a properly understood tradition¹⁰².

The most important artistic events took place at the biennials in Venice (Ill. 11), Sao Paulo, Paris and Tokyo. Among the important events in art were panoramic exhibitions, which took place in the West, in the East, as well as in non-aligned countries, in accordance with the policy of Cold War balancing¹⁰³. Works of art, which geographically belonged to Yugoslavia, were marked as works of contemporary art of the state of Yugoslavia.

⁹⁹D. Sretenović, *Kultura savremenost i arhitektura Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 114-131, here p. 115

¹⁰⁰ D. Sretenović, *Miodrag B. Protić o Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp 58-80, here cit., p. 78.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 76-79

¹⁰²Ibid., cit., here p. 79.

¹⁰³D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 24-26.



Ill. 11 Yugoslavian pavilion at Venice biennale,
<http://www.commonpavilions.com/pavilion-serbia.html>

However, those foreign critics who were more informed about Yugoslav art recognized the uniqueness of certain artistic environments. Thus, the French art critic Raoul-Jean Moulin recognized the "appropriate unity of spirit and aesthetics" which affirms "three characteristic centers of influence: Belgrade, Ljubljana and Zagreb"¹⁰⁴. The observation of the Italian critic Gillo Dorfles is also worth mentioning. As someone who paid attention to culturally based differences between artistic environments, he specified the core of the Yugoslav artistic situation:

...one of Yugoslavia's happy circumstances is that it managed to update its art very quickly and in time from two decades to decisively break through to the European level, depending on their own cultural initiatives, without losing, as happened to others, their national characteristics that are so important for cultural preservation originality of a country, especially if that country, as is the case with Yugoslavia, accepted some contributions from communist thoughts¹⁰⁵.

His presentation of Yugoslav art was recorded in the presentation of the IV Belgrade Triennial of Yugoslav Art (Museum of Contemporary Art, 1970). At the same time, he was not the only foreign critic interested in this topic. Yugoslav art was well accepted in the world. The reasons were different, but one was in the forefront - surprise at the knowledge that in the country of real socialism, contemporary (abstract) art was legitimate. This had an encouraging effect on the art scene, gradually erasing the "periphery complex". At the same time, the regime was satisfied, because it saw in this fulfillment of the foreign policy goal of cultural policy,

¹⁰⁴ R. J.Mulen, *Jugoslovenska grafika u Beogradu*, in "Umetnost", 20, Belgrade, 1970, p. 35.

¹⁰⁵G.Dorfles, *Trijenale jugoslovenske umetnosti. Postali su savremeni ostajući verni sebi*, in "Umetnost", 24, Belgrade, 1970, cit., p. 24.

which was the creation of the image of Yugoslavia as a free country of democratic socialism.

The museum communicated with the world by gaining place in the media. One of the world's reactions was recorded in the American "Newsweek" in 1966. They announced for the Museum of Contemporary Art:

It stands as an ultramodern monument to artistic freedom... The most provocative and original building ever erected in a socialist society... In its spirit, it represents, as one Western observer said, a modern and cheerful tombstone of socialist realism¹⁰⁶.

Protić played a big role in creating and communicating a positive image of the Museum worldwide. His travels and stays in Paris, New York, Prague, Italy, Germany and other countries, as well as the role of a member of international juries, contributed to spreading a positive voice about this institution, but also to realizing extremely important and expensive exhibitions. Without Protić's acquaintances, the settings that contained works by Picasso, Klee, Nolde, and the New Direction would be unthinkable¹⁰⁷.

In one of the interviews, he mentioned the finer benefits of acquaintances and participation in international, artistic events, and that was the involvement in the artistic life of the time. Listening and talking to different, important actors, he revealed and received ideas, discovered doubts and important facts directly, and had the opportunity to hear interesting remarks and conclusions. As a representative of our environment, even when he spoke on his own behalf, he had the opportunity to present the Museum worthwhile. Written evidence for these claims are the correspondences with some personalities of the international art scene - Kasu, Dorival, Kotalik, Dorfles, Markiori, d'Annancourt, Thomas Messer, Pontus Hulten, Pierre Ruve... However, he considered that some encounters, for example with Moore, Herbert Reed, Dora Mar, Lipschitz, Prever and others were very important, although they left no practical consequences¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁶ R. Vučetić. *Koka-kola socijalizam. Amerikanizacija jugoslovenske popularne kulture šezdesetih godina XX veka*. Beograd:Službeni glasnik, Belgrade, 2015, cit., p. 237.

¹⁰⁷M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in "Časopis Nasleđe", 2009, p. 171-172.

¹⁰⁸D. Sretenović, *Miodrag B. Protić o Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 58-80, here p. 74.

1.6 The Museum's program and communication strategies

The Museum's program was created as a coherent system of different, but also interdependent activities. Answering questions about the program, Protić explained it through an example: the exhibition exposes the development of Serbian and Yugoslav art of the 20th century with the best available works arranged in poetic series of all epochs. But, since each exhibition is only a reduction, it was necessary to supplement it with studio exhibitions composed of special works from all Yugoslav collections, which would provide a much more complete picture of those epochs (the program Yugoslav Art of the 20th Century)¹⁰⁹.

Further, in the conversation, he explained that the introductory studies, which contained the subject and concept of the exhibitions, were written by him, in the role of their holder. He undertook this task due to methodological and conceptual unity. In contrast, the studies that studied the relevant parts of the whole, or the phenomena in certain environments, were in charge of experts from the Museum itself or, as was more often the case, from those environments¹¹⁰.

However, these exhibitions could not fully represent the protagonists themselves in a structural, stylistic or methodological sense. Special series of their retrospectives were used for this. Several such retrospectives have been recorded, for example from Nadežda Petrović (Ill. 12) and Kosta Milićević from the beginning of the century to artists from the period after 1945 - Šejka, Vozarević, Olga Jevrić, Srbinović, Čelić, and so on¹¹¹.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 75-76.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Ibid.



Ill. 12 Nadežda Petrović,
<https://www.011info.com/beogradjani/nadezda-petrovic-jedina-zena-ciji-likkrasi-srpsku-novcanicu>

In the course of events, the following division of work was created: the museum was demanded to show the work of Serbian artists. Related institutions from other backgrounds were in charge of the taken over artists and their exhibitions. However, this was not the only activity of the Museum. So, in addition to studying Serbian and Yugoslav art within the framework of general art, there was also an activity of international cooperation which, in addition to the role of information, comparatively studied the most important phenomena of 20th century art, which had or could have an impact on Serbian / Yugoslav art.

In the 20th century, in order not to be isolated from current events, the Museum followed new trends as well as talented young artists. They were encouraged by the exhibitions in the Salon at 14 Pariska Street. The fulfillment of one of the roles of the institution was also seen here, and that is to show and study the entirety of the artistic development process of that period. The sensitive task was that the attention had to be paid on the balance between scientific research of the past and critical monitoring of the present.

As for communication strategies, from the opening of the Museum to the popularization of social networks about the work of the museum, working hours, opening of the new exhibitions, visits of officials and cultural envoys, citizens were

informed by publications and articles in the daily newspapers such as “Politika” and “Večernje Novosti”.

During this period, primary and secondary school students from the capital - Belgrade, as part of their school activities, had organized visits to the Museum, which were also adapted to school materials. Those students who were from other cities or even those from outside of Belgrade had one unavoidable stop as part of excursions and visits to the capital, and that was exactly this Museum.

The problem concerning communication strategies, which has been present since the opening (in modified versions even today) can be presented through one sentence by Svetlana Velmar Janković - the indisputable fact is that in the post-war period cultural events were under the control of the leading party¹¹². Later, during the sixties and seventies, the control loosens, but still certain cultural institutions, in terms of communication with the audience, were represented by individuals, and not by the press office and public relation offices. This role most often belonged to the directors. In the case of the Museum of Contemporary Art, from opening to retirement, it was Miodrag B. Protić.

As a kind of struggle for communication strategies, it is impossible not to mention the existence of the Center for Visual Culture and Information¹¹³, the Children's club, the Youth club and the Teachers' club¹¹⁴. The Center for Visual Culture and Information appeared in 1974 from the pedagogical service of the Museum of Contemporary Art. The program of this center used the methodologies of permanent education and social orientation of art. The main goal of the Center was education through art, and its activities included a series of public seminars and lectures at the Museum. Furthermore, cooperation with schools, colleges, factories and social enterprises were included. Such activities made it possible to address the widest audience. In addition to these activities, the Center also disseminated information about the Museum's programs.

¹¹²S. Velmar Janković, *Prozraci 2*, Beograd, Laguna 2015, here p. 141-143.

¹¹³*Centar za vizuelnu kulturu*, in Site Muzej savremene umetnosti; <https://msub.org.rs/centar-za-vizuelnu-kulturu/> [last access on 20 September 2021]

¹¹⁴*Dečiji i omladinski klub*, in Site Muzej savremene umetnosti; <https://msub.org.rs/deciji-i-omladinski-klub/> [last access on 20 September 2021]

After so many years, the role of the Center has remained essentially the same to this day. Its role adapts to current artistic practices, as well as to the new socio-political situation.

The goal of the Center is to constantly encourage the activity of various social groups in the Museum's programs. The activity is encouraged by various collaborations, locally and internationally, in agreements with educational institutions and experts of various profiles. There is also the idea of creating a platform for all associates. It would be an open laboratory, where they can discuss issues related to contemporary art and its social role in relation to the art system and the socio-political context in which it is framed. In parallel, the development of education comes through public presentations and discussions led by team members and experts, guests of the program¹¹⁵. The Children's club was founded out of the desire to provide the youngest, children of preschool and primary school age, with active communication in the field of visual culture and to provide basic knowledge of the art history and theory. The program is designed to positively influence the development and deepen the ability to experience, understand and evaluate a work of art. Models of working with children that are applicable in the curricular conception of the program are being researched, and at the same time new models of working with schools are being developed.



III. 13 The Center for Visual Culture and Information in 1974,
<https://msub.org.rs/deciji-i-omladinski-klub/>

¹¹⁵*Centar za vizuelnu kulturu*, in Site Muzej savremene umetnosti; <https://msub.org.rs/centar-za-vizuelnu-kulturu/> [last access on 20 September 2021]

Education is done through information processing and problem solving with the help of exhibitions in the museum. Advanced way of learning are thematic repertoires. These are programs of events which contain integrative and active approach to learning¹¹⁶.

The Youth club is designed for high school students. This club was also founded with the desire to encourage active participation in the formation of the educational system. This idea is implemented through the promotion of museum collections and contemporary visual production. The Museum's collections enable research in the fields of art history and theory, they influence and encourage the development of critical thinking, as well as the formation of awareness of the place and role of art in cultural heritage. Contemporary visual production encourages and develops visual thinking, but also represents a link between visual art and education¹¹⁷.

The Teachers' Club was established for primary and secondary school teachers who use modern teaching methods, integrative topics and environmental resources. Research conducted within the educational programs of the Museum, through projects of the Children's and Youth Club, proved that the use of museum collections in the learning process, through an integrative and interdisciplinary principle, creates space in the school curriculum for direct communication between museums and schools. It is the Teachers' club that is working on studying the models of working with students, which are applicable in the curricular concept and which are developing new models of working with schools¹¹⁸.

This Center and the Clubs belong to the pedagogical area. In addition to the described goals and functions, their role is most concisely summarized in the writings of Jadranka Winterhalte, curator of the mentioned Center, that testify about the pedagogical work of the Museum. She recorded the significance of “permanent education” and “free exchange of labor” arising from the “social demands” placed on museum workers¹¹⁹.

¹¹⁶Dečiji omladinski klub, in Site Muzej savremene umetnosti; <https://msub.org.rs/deciji-i-omladinski-klub/> [last access on 20 September 2021]

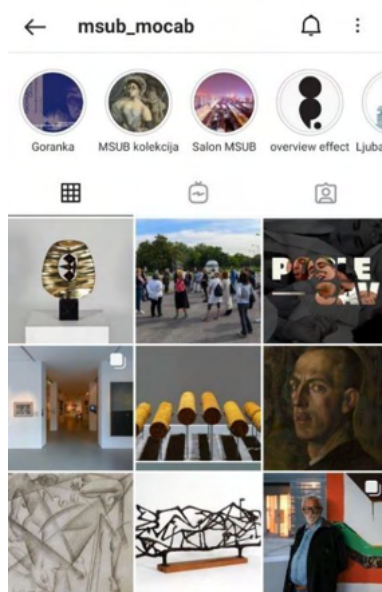
¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 33-39.

After the breakthrough of the Internet, citizens were able to get information through the site in combination with Museum's clubs, newspapers and articles.

Since Facebook and Instagram (Ill. 14) took over the communicative podium, the Museum has the opportunity to more regularly inform those interested about all past and upcoming activities. At the same time, social networks have contributed to communication with the audience, in the sense that those who have any doubts, questions, praise or suggestions can send an inquiry directly to the Museum.



Ill. 14 Official Instagram page of the Museum

In each of the mentioned periods, what has not changed is that the employees of the Museum are always open for communication and that they have always given and are giving answers to questions. The openness they have nurtured for years has contributed to communication with the audience. It was this interest that made live conversation, during the visit to this institution, a traditional and primary communication strategy of the Museum.

Journalist and communicator, Dina Simić in accordance with her profession, gave her opinion about Museum and its communication strategies:

The very significance of the Museum is reflected in its collection and the history it has to show. From the point of view of journalists and communicator, I can say that it is very important to keep an older audience, which is the most realistic, given their technological literacy, to do it through "more traditional" media - articles in newspapers, cultural radio and television shows. On the other hand, we must work on attracting the younger population and the most efficient way to do

it is through social networks. Posts have to be written according to their preferences, sometimes maybe even in their language to get their attention and make culture and art an interesting experience¹²⁰.

1.7 Barr's effect and importance of permanent settings in terms of communicational strategies

The peak of the process of institutionalization of the Yugoslav art space was the opening of the Museum with a permanent exhibition of modern art in Yugoslavia. These include the founding of the Association of Fine Artists of Yugoslavia (1947), the Yugoslav exhibitions in the country and abroad, the founding of the Triennial of Yugoslav Fine Arts (1961–1977), the launch of the magazines Yugoslavia (1949–1959) and Art (1965–1980). All this was based on new systemic and ideological foundations. At the same time the tradition that was conceived in South Slavic artistic circles at the beginning of the last century has been renewed. This Museum has represented the main point, in artistic sense, of this geographical area since its founding. The reason for this was essentially simple - the Museum regularly presented art scenes from all republics and provinces. Artists from this area were exhibited here, and experts from all over Yugoslavia were gathered here until its disintegration¹²¹. The first permanent exhibition could be described as the crystallization of Yugoslav modernism, and the promotion for this exhibition was done in an exclusive, dedicated space¹²².

A crucial role in shaping the concept of a permanent setting had Barr's diagram of the family tree of modern art, better known as "Barr's effect"¹²³ (Ill. 15). In 1936, director of the Museum of Modern Art, Alfred H. Barr, Jr. made a famous diagram "Cubism and abstract art". He imaginatively replaced the conventional typographic catalogue and wanted to create and to visualize a genealogy of modern art through a holistic and fluid structure, as a history of influences.

¹²⁰Interview in extenso in appendix

¹²¹D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 23.

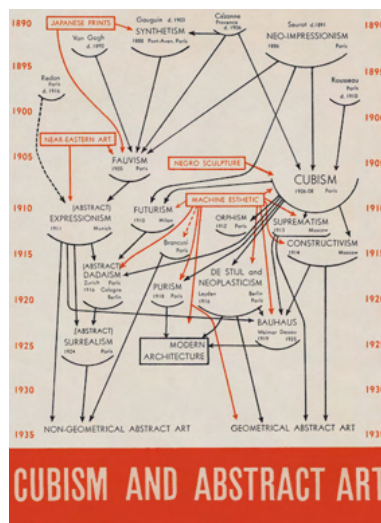
¹²²M. Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in "Časopis Nasleđe", 2009, p. 171-172.

¹²³D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 33-39.

Because in this way art history is kind of canonized, this diagram deserves further and deeper explication.

Art from many parts of the non-Eurocentric world is noticeable, for example Japanese prints, Negro sculpture, Near-Eastern art and Machine esthetic (these are written in red color, so usually these catch the eye first). It is not concentrated only on Western and European art. We can say that this diagram gives us a more global point of view.

The three contributions from the south and the east are highlighting the same way as the kind of the external contributions. Obviously, they have an impact on the fluid development of the arts.



III. 15 Barr's diagram, <https://inventingabstraction.tumblr.com/post/41701591608/the-chart-in-our-show-is-not-the-first-to-map-the>

On the margins, years are written in order to contextualize the movements and the influences. This can be seen as a time line. At the top of the diagram are the “masters of modern art”, Van Gogh, Gauguin and Cezanne. As the organization of modern art is followed, the division of two main groups, at the end, is presented. The left one, a bunch of “-ISMs”, which share a common value- color, starting from Van Gogh to fauvism, Expressionism in which the color is the main thing. The second is the shape, the form, and starting from Seurat we go to Cubism and Constructivism up to Geometrical abstract art.

Meaning of the “broken” lines are observable - from Bauhaus to Modern architecture. The second one is going from Redon to (abstract) surrealism. This can be explained as

the influence which is not that strong. Red labels are kind of extra artistic contributions, because not within hegemonic dialogue while at the same time we see other movements, for example constructivism, specifically Russian movements.

Now to get back to Museum of Contemporary Art, its permanent setting and connection with Barr's effect. After Protić's and Barr's conversation which ended with an advice:

Arrange the best works created in one epoch into poetic sequences, poetic sequences into chronological streams, so that the exhibition would reveal both that epoch and its representatives¹²⁴.

Why choose permanent setting? Why does this Museum and museums in general decide on these exhibitions in the first place? Two reasons stand out: the permanent exhibition functions as an identity determinate towards the other, for example, the foreigners and the second is that it aims to confirm, recall, amend or challenge what the local audience of different ages and background already know from the history books¹²⁵.

From this the importance of permanent exhibitions in terms of communication strategy is obvious. These exhibitions serve museums to communicate the past with visitors. Through these exhibits, museums retell past events to those interested - they remind locals of their history, and introduce foreigners to it. Communication develops in this way and depending on how the curators do this transfer of information, the reaction of the audience also depends - whether they will arouse curiosity to visit that institution again, whether they will recommend this exhibition to someone or they will be disappointed with the time spent in museum. Precisely for these reasons, the Museum of Contemporary Art had this type of exhibition. Below are listed and described some of them, exhibitions that were pioneers in this institution, which later served as a model for other institutions in terms of such settings presented. At the same time, these settings presented Yugoslav history to those interested.

The permanent exhibition, which Protić started in cooperation with the painter and art historian Otto Bihalji-Merin, has been completed with Barr's advice. For the first time,

¹²⁴M. B. Protić, *Istorijat Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Nojeva barka I*, Belgrade: Srpska Književna zadruga, 1992, cit., p. 524.

¹²⁵K. Mitrović, D. Vidović, *Permanant Exhibiton as a new challenge*, Museum Professionals in Dialogue "Challenges of Permanent Exhibitions", Workshop proceedings (Historical Museum of Serbia, 10 June 2017) edited by S. Bojković here p.14.

so many important protagonists of Yugoslav modernism were gathered in one exhibition, and that was exactly this exhibition.

It was mentioned that the ideology of permanent exhibition was based on three principles: on the principle of organic unity, the principle of aesthetic value as a condition for acquiring historical value and the principle of primacy of historical and not individual chronology¹²⁶.

When the Museum opened, its collections numbered more than 3,000 works. The first permanent exhibition showed more than 400 works that filled the entire exhibition space, except for the first level, the ground floor which served for occasional exhibitions.

The museum adhered to this policy until 2001. The only exceptions were the settings for which it was necessary to provide more space, due to the size / number of exhibits. From that 2001, all levels began to be used for occasional exhibitions. In that year the problems in the institution begin to be clearly seen. The decision contributed to the violation of the preservation of conceptual / authorial integrity. This initiated a discussion about one of Protić's ideas, which dates back to the 80's - the idea of the necessity of building a neighboring building for the 21st century, with the goal in which the existing building "acts" as a museum of 20th century art¹²⁷.

The new permanent exhibition dates from 1985. This project was led by Kosta Bogdanović, sculptor, art historian, art critic and visual arts theorist and his team. The changes could be felt at the same moment. Barr's model was considered obsolete, and Protić's conception was put up for revision. Bogdanovic believed that the old exhibition was "a kind of "open book" or "encyclopedic narration" that fulfilled its pioneering mission." In order for the Museum to "live" in the present and move towards the future, the concentration had to be put "on poetics, on the problem circles that gave and set the tone to modern times in fine arts."¹²⁸

One of Bogdanović's ideas was to get "on the visibility of the architectural space". This was done by reducing the number of exhibits, by removing movable wooden panels.

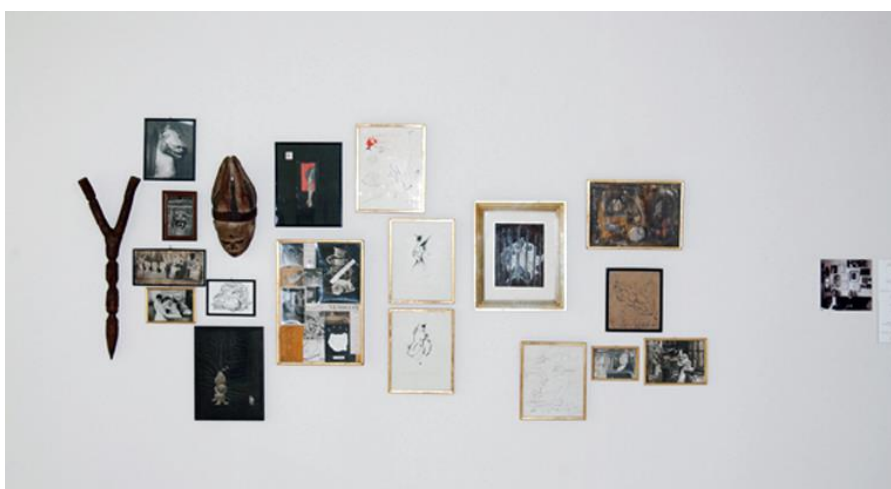
¹²⁶D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 34-36.

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸ A. Fejzagić, *Trezori modernog iskustva*, in "Oslobođenje", 21 August, 1985, cit.

Instead, the space was given to sculptures and works of young artists. Due to the low ceilings, the chronological flow was directed in the opposite direction - from bottom to bottom, from the fifth to the second exhibition level¹²⁹.

Perhaps the most radical change or the final “postmodern turn” was made by Denegri. The exhibition he worked on, “Yugoslav Art Space 1900-1991”, was inspired by a new hegemonic model, i.e., the setting of the Tate Museum in London. The setting was set according to the principle of thematic environments or “problem stories”. These principles led to a break with the canonical narrative. It relied on formal kinship, poetics, and consecrated authors.



Ill. 16 A permanent part of Yugoslav art from the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, <https://msub.org.rs/kolekcija/>

Among other things, due to the astonishment of the public, Denegri felt the need to emphasize that the exhibition did not aim to confirm or challenge the established values of individual artists and phenomena. He further added that the exhibition “studies and presents characteristic and key ideas, problems and processes in the art of the 20th century.”¹³⁰ Tate's setting in Britain has been criticized for its transhistorical and trans geographic “presentism”. The installation led to confusion in the understanding of the work of art in the appropriate historical and social context. However, Denegri was lucky that his task was much simpler - he represented only art

¹²⁹D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 41-43.

¹³⁰J. Denegri, *Ideologija postavke Muzeja savremene umetnosti. Jugoslovenski umetnički prostor*. Belgrade: Hektor print, 2011, cit., p. 53.

from Yugoslavia. In order to open new plans for understanding and interpretation, as well as to abandon the totalizing narratives in historical and artistic science, his influence and this intervention were more than necessary. This exhibition has contributed in many ways to the project of reinstitutionalization of the Museum, which included restructuring or "a new way of connecting the existing institutional elements, with the appearance of some new ones that did not exist before."¹³¹

What did reinstitutionalization mean? It meant the implementation of a series of measures in order for the institution to wake up after the period of "hibernation" and to be functionally enabled after the loss of legitimacy. This included adapting to modern standards and tendencies in the field of museum practices. This "action" led to a revision of the purchase and exhibition policy, which was supposed to be in line with the new parameters of valuing the artistic heritage. The focus was on monitoring modern trends, as well as the establishment of specialist clubs for children and youth within educational programs, Department of Design and Multimedia, renewal of international cooperation and the establishment of a network of partner institutions in the country and abroad, modernization of technical infrastructure, introduction of team model labor, and so on¹³². However, the key change was the development of a progressive concept of critical museum. Piotr Piotrowski defined this new term as follows:

A critical museum is a museum-forum, involved in public debate, which deals with important, often controversial problems of a given society, problems related to the history of a given society and its modernity. The critical museum is an institution that works for the benefit of a democracy based on debate, but it is also a self-critical institution that revises its own tradition, which re-examines its own authority and the historical-artistic canon that it educated itself¹³³.

The term "critical museum" was not in use when the historian and writer Branislava Andjelković-Dimitrijević became the director of the Museum. Her and her team's policy, ten years later, as Piotrowski presented it, was a policy adapted to the so-called "transitional processes" in Serbian society. The Museum was again tasked with acting

¹³¹R. Močnik, *3 teorije. Institucija, nacija, država*. Belgrade: Centar za savremenu umetnost, 2003, cit., p. 176-177.

¹³²D. Sretenović, *Uvod: Muzej savremene umetnosti u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji i posle*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 9-57, here p. 44-45.

¹³³P. Piotrowski, *Kritički muzej*. Belgrade: Evropa Nostra Srbija i Centar za muzeologiju i heritologiju, 2013, cit., p. 16.

as a creative agent and imagining artistic, social and intellectual missions. It also meant its active participation in the processes of negotiation and value creation, as well as work on "educating" new audiences and stimulating critical thinking in and around art. Because of these moves and such directions in the thinking of the leaders, the Museum had to be transformed into a dynamic and flexible institution. These included exhibitions, lectures, talks, presentations, symposia, workshops, screenings, performances, concerts, theater performances, with the aim of gathering various profiles of associates and audiences. Preservation and exhibition of works of art, as the basic function of this institution, has not been betrayed and that it has not become the *Kunsthalle* (this was one of the objections to the new concept). This only meant that the redesigned "modernity" of the Museum of Contemporary Art was, as Claire Bishop, an art historian and critic, would put it "a method or practice potentially applicable to all historical period."¹³⁴

The permanent exhibition of works of Yugoslav art from the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art has been changed between 3 and 5 years. It functioned on the principle of the author's conceptions of the reconstruction of historical wholes, movements, tendencies and individual phenomena in the Yugoslav artistic space. In 2005, the last permanent exhibition was presented, which contained about 160 works of Yugoslav art created in the period 1900-1981. It was conceived as a set of mini-exhibitions, which were set up in accordance with the spatial units of the exhibition space¹³⁵.

This structuring came about for two reasons: the exhibition is a medium of primary communication of the work of art with the audience. Furthermore, the exhibition is a strategic model of forming knowledge about art. From this, the conclusion is drawn that these mini-exhibitions acted as a text that explains the chapters of the history of Yugoslav art of the 20th century. In addition, they served for a comparative understanding of intrinsic meanings, as well as the historical positions of each individual work of art. A smaller number of exhibits was noticeable in all exhibition

¹³⁴C. Bishop, *Radical Museology or, What's 'Contemporary' in Museums of Contemporary Art*, London: Koenig Books, 2013, cit., p. 59

¹³⁵D. Sretenović, *Stalna postavka dela jugoslovenske umetnosti iz zbirki Muzeja savremene umetnosti in MSU*, 2013; <https://msub.org.rs/stalna-postavka-dela-jugoslovenske-umetnosti-iz-zbirki-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti/>[last access on 20 August 2021]

segments. The reason for this was the desire to emphasize certain works that have been marked by art history as anthological works of Yugoslav modern art. The permanent exhibition, conceived in this way, enabled visitors to move through the world of ideas, themes and stylistic-linguistic orientations of the Yugoslav artistic space without any difficulties¹³⁶.

The layout of the exhibition segments of the exhibition was as follows: the beginnings of modern painting (symbolism, impressionism, realism), Cezanne and post cubism, expressionism (colors and forms), intimism, pioneers of abstract painting, historical avant-garde (constructivism, surrealism), socially engaged art after 1945, fantastic art and "dark modernism", abstract landscape, informel, neo constructivism and protominimalism, late modernist abstract sculpture, Belgrade new figuration, conceptual art, video performance, foreign graphics (abstract tendencies after 1945, pop art).



Ill. 17 Permanent exhibition of works of Yugoslav art <https://msub.drei.one/exhibition/stalna-postavka-dela-jugoslovenske-umetnosti-iz-zbirki-msub/>

The permanent exhibition was on the second and third level. The ground floor, fourth and fifth levels were used for current exhibitions, and between exhibitions, these two levels were used to present "modular" exhibitions - thematic and monographic exhibitions with works from the Museum's collections. These exhibitions were the results of the curator's research work with the collections. Due to the lack of exhibition

¹³⁶Ibid.

space, it was not possible to include special modules in the permanent exhibition, which are works from the 1980s. Modular exhibitions have enabled more frequent exhibition of works from the collections. At the same time, they were intended for showing not only in Belgrade, but also outside this city¹³⁷.

1.8 Decades of exhibitions

Important exhibitions shown between 1967 and 1980 are called "Decades of exhibitions of Yugoslav art of the 20th century", which included exhibitions *Third Decade - Constructive Painting, Surrealism - Social Art 1929-1950, Fourth Decade - Expressionism of Color, Poetic Realism, Beginnings of Yugoslav Modern Painting, Yugoslav Sculpture 1870-1950, Yugoslav Graphics 1900 –1950, Yugoslav painting of the sixth decade*. These were devised by the then manager of the Museum Miodrag B. Protić. The expert team of the Museum, numerous experts on periods and problems from all republics of the former Yugoslavia worked on the realization of these projects. The eighth exhibition in the series of these exhibitions, *Yugoslav Graphics 1950-1980*, which was in the period between 1985 and 1986, was made during the mandate of the acting manager Kosta Bogdanović¹³⁸.

The Third Decade - Constructive Painting, 1967- the organizers of this exhibition were Miodrag B. Protić - in charge of conception and coordination, and curator Draga Panić who was leading the organization of the exhibition. Protić was often asked why this series of exhibitions started with this setting. His written explication was:

Because that decade is the most culturally historically and aesthetically obscure, it is almost forgotten and undeservedly underestimated, so gaps and ambiguities appear in later organically intertwined artistic periods. Emergency lighting was therefore a first-order imperative. It was necessary to show her works and her ideology - which coincides with the youth of our avant-garde - in order to be revalued and to break the myth of her cold, 'tin', 'rational' painting... I am convinced, however, that this exhibition will erase those prejudices that arose during the antithetical fourth decade, in which lyrical miniature and pathetic coloristic momentum prevailed as understanding, taste and theory¹³⁹.

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸D. Sretenović, „Decenijske izložbe” jugoslovenske umetnosti XX veka, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 135-170, here p. 137-139.

¹³⁹M. Protić, *Uvod in Treća decenija – konstruktivno slikarstvo*. Belgrade: Muzej savremene umetnosti, 1967, cit., p. 4-5.

The arrangement of the selected and exhibited paintings, as well as the arrangement in the catalog went in the following order: Cezannism, Cubism / Postcubism, Expressionism of form, Neoclassicism / Traditionalism.

Little-known phenomena and movements of that time were also presented here, which were named after important personalities and magazines of that period. Examples were the magazine "Zenit" and an art movement "Zenitism", Yugoslav Dadaist single issue publication Dada Tank, Dada Jazz and Dadaism of Dragan Aleksić (Serbian Dadaist poet, author, journalist and filmmaker) - "Yugo-Dada."¹⁴⁰

The biggest surprise and huge success were the exposition of early Dobrović's cubist drawings, Bijelić's painting (Ill. 18) *Abstract Landscape* (1920), graphics by Mikhail S. Petrov published in "Zenit" and "Dada Tank", as well as his *Composition 77* (1924), Chernigov's works at the Bauhaus, Radović's *Collage* (1924) and his drawings and watercolors from the early twenties, along with masterpieces by Šumanović, Gecan, Uzelac, Šulentić, Pilon, the King brothers. A special place was taken by the then little-known paintings *Kartashi* (1924) and *The Temptation of St. Anthony* (1927) by Vasa Pomorišac¹⁴¹.



Ill. 18 Jovan Bijelić, *Apstraktni predeo*, 1920, oil on canvas, 78x115 cm, Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, <http://www.riznicasrpska.net/likovnaumetnost/index.php?action=profile;u=2;sa=showPosts;start=720>

¹⁴⁰D. Sretenović, „Decenijske izložbe” jugoslovenske umetnosti XX veka, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 135-170, here p. 137-139.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 140.

As expected, the exhibition attracted much attention. One of the loudest comments was that of diplomat and art historian Božidar Gagra in the Zagreb magazine "Život umjetnost":

According to the task it undertook, the goals it was intended for, the criteria it was guided by and the effort it made to realize the exhibition of the third decade at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, it is a very interesting and significant fact of exhibition-critical practice in our country. systematic gallery and critical activities, a shortcoming that has always been deeply felt and maintained... Regardless of the remarks that may be made to the conception and realization of this first topic, the idea of a series of studio critical exhibitions, presented by the Museum, dedicated to thematic, genetic or historical units of our latest art, almost unknown, is appropriate and urgent¹⁴².

Miodrag B. Protić had the leading role for conception and coordination in *Surrealism - Social Art 1929-1950*, in 1969, and an art historian and art critic Marija Pušić was in charge of the organization.

Exhibition *Surrealism - Social Art 1929-1950* had four segments: surrealism (1929–1932) with the additional phenomenon of post-surrealism (1932–1939), social art (1929–1941), art in the National Liberation War (1941–1945) and socialist realism (1945–1945)¹⁴³.

The biggest surprise was the fact that this exhibition was the first comprehensive presentation of the visual experimentation of artists who belonged to the Belgrade Surrealist movement. These experiments were processed in Protić's study *Serbian Surrealism 1929–1932*. The studies of the Croatian art critic and theorist Josip Depolo, *Earth 1929-1935*, lecturer Božica Ćosić, *Social Art in Serbia* and the Serbian art historian and art critic Dragoslav Đorđević, *Socialist Realism 1945-1950*, were very helpful for this topic¹⁴⁴.

Some of the masterpieces that adorned this exhibition were: Tabaković's *Genius* (1929), Detoni's *Nutrition* (1933) and his *Drunk Carriage* (1935) (Ill. 19). Also, drawings and graphics of various authors of related orientation can be listed. Works from the period of socialist realism were also exhibited here: Lubardin's *Bomber* (1945), Pregel's *Camp* (1947), Konjović's *Construction of a Bridge near Bogojevo*

¹⁴²B. Gagra, *Treća decenija, konstruktivno slikarstvo* in "Život umjetnosti", 6, Zagreb: 1968, cit., p. 117–125.

¹⁴³D. Sretenović, „Decenijske izložbe” jugoslovenske umetnosti XX veka, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 135-170, here p. 143-144.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

(1947), Andrejevića - Kun's *Witness of Horror* (1948), Šimunović's *Columns* (1948), Pengov's *Calls for Uprising* and his *Manifestations* (1949)¹⁴⁵.



Ill. 19 Marijan Detoni, *Pijana kočija*, 1935, oil on canvas Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, <https://gkd.hr/izlozba/umjetnost-i-zivot-su-jedno-udruzenje-umjetnika-zemlja-1929-1935/marijan-detoni-pijana-kocija-1935-muzej-savremene-umetnost-beograd-inv-br-1429/>

A huge enigma for many people was how one exhibition could contain seemingly so many different, and perhaps even mutually exclusive linguistic, media and ideological features, for example how the exhibition was set up from surrealism, then social art to socialist realism. Protić explained the obscurity in the following way:

Therefore, regardless of the difference between the revolt of the Surrealists and the revolt of members of the organized left - they, in some important respects, still represent two poles of one organic whole - art from the point of view of a rebellious man as subconscious and anthropological in one case and as a conscious social being in another. The impression of the whole therefore stems not only from the personal connection, from the fact that most of the former surrealists later became a supporter of social art, but also from the determination before the same important dilemmas of the epoch¹⁴⁶.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

¹⁴⁶M. Protić, *Uvod*, in *Nadrealizam – socijalna umetnost 1929–1950*. Belgrade: Muzej savremene umetnosti, 1969, cit., p. 8.

Fourth decade - expressionism of color, poetic realism, 1971 - Miodrag B. Protić was again in charge of the conception and setting of the exhibition, and the verified partner curator, Draga Panić, was in charge of the organization¹⁴⁷.

In connection with this exhibition, Protić divided the painting practice called "pure art" of the fourth decade into three poetic units: expressionism of colors, poetic realism and intimacy.

Masterpieces of the following artists were presented: Jovan Bijelić, Marijan Detoni, Vilko Gecan, Kosta Hakman, Oskar Herman, Rihard Jakopić, Ignjat Job, Milan Konjović, Petar Lubarda, Gabrijel Stupica, Sava Šumanović, Ivan Tabaković, Marino Tartalja, Milivoj Uzelac, Emanuel Vidović and others¹⁴⁸.

The explanation for this exhibition was once again presented by Protić:

It is necessary to show and structure the predominant part of the art of that time, which in that decade the Yugoslav society loved and considered its own. If there were sometimes elements of rebellion in it, it primarily had the property of revising aesthetic views and criteria, and perhaps only implicitly of a broader revision, striving to harmonize the social framework with the being of art and the values of life¹⁴⁹.

The exhibition *The beginnings of Yugoslav modern painting*, 1972-1973 was prepared by an already proven tandem, the concept was made by Miodrag B. Protić, while the study preparation, the proposal of the exhibits and the organization were done under the direction of the curator Draga Panić.

One of the key tasks for this exhibition was to collect documentary material. The leading role in this task belonged to the Documentation Department in cooperation with external institutions and individuals.

In this case, the division of the following formations was noticeable: *pleinairisme*, secession and symbolism, the Munich Circle, impressionism (in Slovenia and Serbia) and expressionism¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁷D. Sretenović, „Decenijske izložbe” jugoslovenske umetnosti XX veka, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 135-170, here p. 147-149.

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

¹⁴⁹M. Protić, *Četvrta decenija: ekspresionizam boje, poetski realizam, intimizam, koloristički realizam* in *Četvrta decenija – ekspresionizam boje, poetski realizam*, Belgrade: Muzej savremene umetnosti, 1971, cit., p. 7.

¹⁵⁰D. Sretenović, „Decenijske izložbe” jugoslovenske umetnosti XX veka, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 135-170, here p. 147-149.

Here we can talk about the ideological platform of the people of Yugoslavia. This is exactly what Protić was talking about:

The Yugoslav peoples felt the aspiration towards spiritual and political unity and unification, which, however, meant their previous liberation. The desire to achieve, through individual freedom, collective, national freedom, to see the former as a condition for the latter, and vice versa - modern art could only encourage and help¹⁵¹.

Yugoslav sculpture 1870–1950, 1975 - once again, the work of conception and coordination was done by Miodrag B. Protić, and the curator Dragana Vranić and an art historian and art critic Jerko Denegri were in charge of the organization. This exhibition was classified as a huge organizational endeavor - more than 200 works by as many as 68 participants were shown here. And at the same time, the catalog was a great success. The subtitle "Relationship between objects and methods" stood out. Here, "the features of a theoretical discussion of 'methodological alternatives' in the historicization of sculpture as a specific artistic discipline" were presented. This topic was supplemented by parts: "Sculpture as a form, way of seeing, constructive principle, aesthetic object", "Sculpture as development and relationship with other areas", "Sculpture as the unity of constructive principle and development; constructive principle as a mirror of the general orientation of time and society"¹⁵². The catalog sided with the thesis that the analysis and historicization of modern sculpture needed a sociological approach. As an argument, it is stated that sculpture is more than painting in the function of a social order and order. It was generally claimed that sculpture depended on social representations and development. Protić denied this and further stated that the sculpture was "a kind of public monument" and that it is "an expression of the ruling cultural, and often political, orientation of a society."¹⁵³ Following this methodology, two stylistic units "Academism, Signs of the New, Secession and Mestrovic, Expressionism" and "From 'Constructive' and 'Synthetic' through Intimate and Real to Social" were made. The logical sequence was at this exhibition, and that was the presentation of the work of sculptor Ivan Meštrović.

¹⁵¹M. Protić, *Jugoslovensko slikarstvo 1900–1950.*, Belgrade: BIGZ, 1973, cit., p. 7.

¹⁵²D. Sretenović, „Decenijske izložbe” *jugoslovenske umetnosti XX veka*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 135-170, here p. 152-154.

¹⁵³M. Protić, *Jugoslovenska skulptura 1870–1950.*, Belgrade: Muzej savremene umetnosti, 1975, cit., p. 10.

Thirteen exhibits have been set up, from *The Early Artist of My People*, from 1905 to *Late Job*, from 1946. Nine works by sculptor Tomo Rosandić (Ill. 20) were also shown.



Ill. 20 Toma Rosandić, Harfista, 1934, sculpture, Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, <https://msub.org.rs/selection/zbirka-skulpture/>

Yugoslav graphics 1900–1950, 1978 - the conception and coordination were done in tandem by Miodrag B. Protić and an art historian and art critic Marija Pušić, and the curator Dragana Vranić did the organization.

The periodization of the graphics of this period was presented in the following order: "Academism and traditionalism. Old Forms of Symbolism and Romanticism (1900–1920)", "Secession and Related Phenomena", "Expressionism and New Forms of Symbolism", "Expressionism of Free Space and Movement", "Constructive 'Avant-Garde: Jugo-Dada, Zenitism, Echoes of the Bauhaus and October, "Expressionism of Form", "Examples of Intimist and Poetic-Realistic Graphics (1930–1940)", "Social Graphics (1932–1941)", "Graphics in War and Revolution (1941–1945)", "Socialist Realism (1945–1950)".

It is believed that this exhibition contributed to the affirmation of graphics as an independent artistic discipline. This sentence, which can be found in the book of an art historian, writer and curator Dejan Sretenović, *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene*

umetnosti, indicates the underestimated role of graphics as a medium of production of reproduced works in Yugoslav art between 1900 and 1950. *Yugoslav graphics 1900-1950* presented 420 exhibits and 110 participants. The installation is characterized as attractive, and at the same time accompanied by catalog documentation¹⁵⁴.

The exhibition *Yugoslav Painting of the Sixth Decade*, 1980, was presented after the Museum historized the artistic processes of the first half of the 20th century. Following the time line, the exhibition presented a treatment of the art of the first post-war decade (1950–1960).

Conception and coordination were performed under the direction of Miodrag B. Protić and the above-mentioned art historian and art critic Marija Pušić¹⁵⁵. It is noticeable that this exhibition was different and represented a new, political, social and artistic epoch. People and experts have wondered why the exhibition began with the 1950s. It was logical for many to start with the socialist realism covered by previous exhibitions of the Museum. Protić explained this dilemma:

Therefore, special attention was paid to 1950, the moment of extinguishing politically and socially engaged art, to the processes of transition from administrative to self-governing socialism, to opening to the world and artistic exchange of ideas, deeds and personalities, to the principles of cultural policy - democratization, struggle, polycentrism, pluralism, the role of criticism, reducing the influence of class organizations and the emergence of independent groups, the identity of individual communities, institutions and individuals¹⁵⁶.

The exhibition featured 183 exhibitors. It was divided into three large blocks: "Figurative painting", "Associative painting" and "Non-figurative painting - each of which is divided into many subgroups"¹⁵⁷.

During this exhibition, the term "socialist aestheticism" appeared. To clarify, the term was introduced by the literary critic and esthetician Sveta Lukić in 1963 in "Politika"¹⁵⁸. According to him, this term originated after 1955 and was needed to

¹⁵⁴D. Sretenović, „Decenijske izložbe” jugoslovenske umetnosti XX veka, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 135-170, here p. 156-157.

¹⁵⁵Ibid.

¹⁵⁶M. Protić, *Jugoslovensko slikarstvo šeste decenije –nove pojave in Jugoslovensko slikarstvo šeste decenije*, Belgrade: Muzej savremene umetnosti, 1980, cit., p. 9

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 11-12.

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

describe the development of literature and art in Yugoslavia. Socialist aestheticism is, to put it mildly, a reaction to socialist realism. Sveta Lukić in 1963 in "Politika":

Aesthetics dulls the spikes, rounds things off, stifles more specific, further divergence. Theoretically empty, in any case loose, in practice he forces more neutral works¹⁵⁹.

Attention to this exhibition, and due to which various discussions later followed, was occupied by the phenomenon of "Informel or informal art". This is a common term for styles of abstraction in Europe. One of the commentators on this topic was Lazar Trifunović, an art historian, art critic and professor at the University of Belgrade. One of Trifunović's most striking statements was:

It is more than interesting that one Museum of Contemporary Art is bothered by Informel after twenty years, and that is why it is doing everything to devalue its place in the history of contemporary art¹⁶⁰.

Catalogues of "Decades of exhibitions" now represent an unavoidable basic professional literature in the field of domestic modern art. Extensive documentation and published studies presented in the catalogues of these exhibitions are indispensable in the education of contemporary art in Serbia, although of course there are justified additions, corrections and revisions of certain parts of the catalogue.

Communication strategies during the "Decades of exhibitions" period were limited. The reason for this is the fact that this Museum was "an exhibition ground for a controlled and regulated art experiment and the canonization of radical actuality, the auspices of the then contemporary pedagogical teaching on contemporary art, criticism and theory"¹⁶¹. However, since the government viewed culture as an important spectrum of society, the exhibitions could be learned from daily newspapers and posters that adorned the streets of Belgrade.

¹⁵⁹ S. Lukić, *Socijalistički estetizam. Jedna nova pojavain Politika*, Belgrade, 28 April 1963, cit.

¹⁶⁰L. Trifunović, *Enformel u Beogradu in Studije, ogledi, kritike 3.*, Belgrade: Muzej savremene umetnosti, 1990, cit., p. 111.

¹⁶¹ M. Šulaković, *Urnebesni kliker jugoslovenstva*, in "Vreme Online", 18 April 2002; <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=312278> [last access on 18 September 2021]



III. 21 Exhibition poster from 1967

About the significance of the Museum, in 20th century, Irena Kondić, curator and applied graphic artist, stated for the thesis:

In my opinion, the significance of MSUB has so far been in presenting and collecting works and collections of the most important domestic and foreign artists in the 20th century. MSUB collects and presents to the public the most significant works of domestic and foreign authors of the 20th and 21st century¹⁶².

1.9 Marina Abramović, Cleaner

Marina Abramović had studied at the Belgrade Academy of Fine Arts for five years and her education continued in Zagreb. During the years her work has become more and more abstract. In time, she has begun to use her body as an artistic instrument, focusing on the performance art, but also on the sound.

Some of the performances of Marina that stand out are: *Relation in time* (1977), *Balkan Baroque* (1997) (III. 22), *The Artist Is Present* (2010).

¹⁶²Interview in extenso in appendix



Ill. 22 Marina Abramović, performance *Balkan Baroque*, Venice, 1997, <https://www.dw.com/en/marina-abramovic-in-belgrade-a-long-awaited-homecoming/a-50499549>

Due to Abramović's specificity, unusual way of thinking and world success, "The Cleaner" was greeted with impatience. After 44 years, Marina appeared in front of the Belgrade audience. She continued where she left off in 1975 in the Museum of Contemporary Art.

The Cleaner is the first major European retrospective of Marina's work. It premiered in 2017 in Sweden. After that, people could see the exhibition in Denmark, Norway, Germany, Italy and Poland. Marina's homeland was the last city of this exhibition, the last stop of the tour and it was held from September 2019 until January 2020.

Marina scheduled a press conference at 06:23 in the morning, where she gave a short speech as an introduction to the installation. Part of Marina's speech:

It's not scary to jump and take off, you can jump from a skyscraper if you want and you'll be fine. The danger begins when you should touch the ground. 44 years ago, when I left this country, I jumped, and I have been flying all the time since. Today, I feel like I'm starting to touch the ground, and the warm welcome you gave me has diminished what could have been a catastrophic fall¹⁶³.

The weekly "Nedeljnik" gave a short, but precise hint of what her retrospective looked like: - "Vessels with water, photos and recordings, bones that still smell of flesh and blood, naked artists you have to pass by."¹⁶⁴

This retrospective, which had an educational character, especially for young people, as the artist claims, showed Marina's fifty years of work. The setting was done

¹⁶³D.Đurić, *Posude sa vodom, fotografije i snimci, kosti koje još mirišu na meso i krv, nagi umetnici pored kojih morate da prođete: Kako uživo izgleda "Čistač" Marine Abramović in "Nedeljnik"*, <https://www.nedeljnik.rs/posude-sa-vodom-fotografije-i-snimci-kosti-koje-jos-mirisu-na-meso-i-krv-nagi-umetnici-pored-kjih-morate-da-prodete-kako-uzivo-izgleda-cistac-marine-abramovic/Belgrade>, 21 September 2019, cit.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., cit.

chronologically. The phases of this artist were shown - from early paintings and conceptual works, through solo performances and joint work with Ulay, to cult works from Abramović's independent career. More than 120 works were shown - paintings, drawings, objects, photographs, audio and video works, films, scenography, reperformances and archival material, anthological works of performance art - series *Rhythm*, *Lips of Thomas*, *Relational works*, *Crossing the nightmare*, but also works such as *Balkan Baroque*, *Seven easy pieces*, *The artist is present*. Screenings of films about Marina Abramović, lectures on the art of performance and public guides were also included.¹⁶⁵



Ill. 23 Marina Abramović, Čistač, MSUB, 2019. Foto: Ivan Zupanc, <http://www.seecult.org/vest/cistacica-je-prisutna>

The Belgrade exhibition had some additions that were not presented in previous cities. This includes a video of the performance *Rhythm 2*, which was performed in 1974 at the Gallery of Contemporary Art in Zagreb. The video was borrowed from the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb. Also, the performance *Rhythm 5* was shown, which Marina prepared as part of the April Meetings in 1974 in the yard of the Belgrade Student Cultural Center. A group of conceptual artists also participated with

¹⁶⁵ *Marina Abramović nakon 44 godine ponovo u Beogradu - Izložba „Čistač u Muzeju savremene umetnosti od 21. septembra*, in “Serbia Travel”, <https://www.serbia.travel/sr/vesti/31931-marina-abramovic-nakon-44-godine-ponovo-u-beogradu-izlozba-cistac-u-muzeju-savremene-umetnosti-od-21-septembra/>[last access on 21 September 2021]

her. It was with these people that Abramović presented herself for the first time on the world stage, at the festival in Edinburgh.

As always, Marina caused a spectrum of emotions - from admiration to disgust. A special attraction at the exhibition *The Cleaner* was the work *Balkan Erotic Epic* from 2005. This video installation attracted attention, probably because it touched on taboo topics, especially for Serbs, more precisely the artistic research of eroticism in Balkan folk culture. Namely, there was a belief that something superhuman rests in the erotic. When she explained her work, the artist stated that obscene objects, male and female genitalia, which were displayed and used freely, had an important function in the fertility and agriculture rituals of Balkan peasants. The artist was "cleaning" her intimate and artistic biography and presented the best, as she herself said: - "Cleansing is spiritual, physical, mental and spiritual".¹⁶⁶

In addition to this performance, Marina also held a public lecture where she talked about what a performance is, how she experiences art, what it means to be a top artist, about her career. Speaking about the artist and the audience, she said: - "The audience opens up to you, but you have to be vulnerable, you can't be overbearing, an idol... because that means you're not a real artist. Narcissism in art creates a barrier between you and your work. and the deed is important, you are not important"¹⁶⁷. Even though this exhibition is a lot "younger" in comparison to the "Decades of exhibition" it had to be mentioned here after it for several reasons. Besides artistic importance, excellent cooperation between artist and Museum, this exhibition was important from the side of communicative strategies. Since this was Marina's first exhibition after a long period of time, the media used this happening to cover also her return. The exhibition itself had a huge media coverage - from the announcement to the opening and duration of the exhibition.

¹⁶⁶D.Đurić, *Posude sa vodom, fotografije i snimci, kosti koje još mirišu na meso i krv, nagi umetnici pored kojih morate da prođete: Kako uživo izgleda "Čistač" Marine Abramović* in "Nedeljnik", Belgrade, 21 September 2019, cit.

¹⁶⁷*Marina Abramović publici: Vi ste moj rad*, in "See Cult", 29 September 2019, cit., <http://www.seecult.org/vest/marina-abramovic-publici-vi-ste-moj-rad>[last access on 21 September 2021]



Ill. 24 Front page of the weekly newspaper "Nedeljnik", Marina Abramović, <https://www.nedeljnik.rs/najpoznatiji-sajt-za-kulturu-preneo-pismo-marine-abramovic-srbiji-objavljeno-u-nedeljniku/>

Many see the political side of the country at this event, because the fact is that the exhibition was initiated, and then in some parts organized, personally by the Prime Minister, Ana Brnabić. Therefore, the exhibition was announced in the prime time in news, it filled the front pages, received advertisements on radio stations, as well as on social networks and of course on the official site of the Museum. In addition to attracting local audiences, given Marina's popularity, this kind of media attention can be interpreted as a move to attract foreigners, not just locals, by the state in agreement with the Museum. And since the Prime Minister played such an important role, and the country which gave a big budget for it, it can also be seen as an attempt to strengthen the position of the ruling party in academic circles, in which people are mostly apolitical or on the side of the opposition.

2 The first closure, 1999 and communication strategies

In 1999, during the NATO bombing of Serbia, one of the bombs fell near the Museum. The windows cracked, and the institution was, logically, closed due to reconstruction. However, the time period for which it was closed was illogical. The interior of the Museum and many exhibits have been left at the mercy of decay. As it was written in the weekly "Vreme", the one who would enter the museum, could see remnants of broken glass, parts of window construction, overturned sculptures from the Palavičini legacy, Ivan Meštrović's sculpture *Widow* on the floor, scattered tiles with the name of the authors and the titles of the works and on some of the paintings the fungus that appeared due to moisture¹⁶⁸.

Due to the impact of the detonation, as mentioned, the glass had to be replaced. However, these works took over six months. The excuses were mostly of a monetary nature. Another excuse was that the windows were taking time to be made and that this situation didn't have anything with the Museum. An additional aggravating circumstance was that Serbia was under inflation during this period. The condition of this "house of ghosts" was described by the then director Radislav Trkulja: - "When the weather is gloomy, the wind and rain blow, the draft raises the curtains, so the Museum looks like a house of ghosts."¹⁶⁹ He also stated that a falcon once flew in, with which the director himself took a picture as a souvenir.

Although the fall of the NATO bomb was unexpected, crisis management was not up to the task and it did not cope best in the new situation. During this closing period, there was practically no communication with the public and the audience. Communication strategies practically didn't exist during these six months. The public did not know when the Museum would reopen, how the repairs were progressing or the condition of the works of art within the institution. Given the situation in the country and the bombing, culture fell into the background. This sad circumstance was in favor of the leading personalities of the Museum, considering that they did not feel the pressure of giving information. Journalists who dealt with culture in that period came across scanty and incomplete information. Some of this information were contained in the statements like those about the overturned sculptures of the then

¹⁶⁸ S. Ćirić, *Muzej savremene umetnosti Kuća duhova*, in "Vreme", 461, 6 November 1999, here p.17.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., cit.

director, such as: - "Let them lie there, they would lie like this in the depot as well, and Meštrović has a cross at the base, it's hard, it can't even be moved."¹⁷⁰ This caused bitterness and (in)directly showed the attitude towards the Museum. Because of such statements, many have questioned Trkulja's ability and dedication. Reconsiderations about this man led Irina Subotić, an art historian and a curator of this museum from its opening until 1979, to, among other things, wonder where the money given by the Ministry of Culture was invested.

Before he finally finished repairing the windows, Trkulja justified himself by talking to various boards, that they did not react, that the society had to react faster in solving the problem, and in one of the interviews he stated:

Yes, we are closing the windows after six months, in the meantime there was wind, rain, sun, and we felt it all. And the depots had more moisture than they should, the dust that bothers the works of art entered. Some funguses have also appeared in the pictures, due to moisture. Why did we wait? There had to be various agreements, I don't even know how the financial construction was made. I haven't even dealt with it¹⁷¹.

2.1 The second closure, 2007

Due to a combination of the unfortunate circumstances and malfunctions inside the Museum, in 2007, the building was closed to the public for reconstruction. Back in those days, no one could have imagined that this repair would last for a full 10 years. A digital counter was then set up above the footbridge leading to the main entrance. It was ticking the time until the reopening of the museum. The Minister of Culture, Ivan Tasovac, announced October 20, 2015 as the day of reopening, when the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Museum was to be celebrated. However, this deadline, as well as others, have been breached¹⁷². In this case, too, the public received limited updates. The opening dates have shifted, it was not known how the works were progressing, how much money was spent from the state budget, how much money was still needed.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., cit.

¹⁷¹ R. Trkulja, in S. Ćirić, *Muzej savremene umetnosti Kućaduhova*, in "Vreme", 461,6 November 1999, cit. p.17.

¹⁷² *Muzejs avremene umetnosti Polimorfni Kristal beogradske arhitekture*, in „Before After Online“, 10 July 2015; <https://www.beforeafter.rs/grad/arhitektura-muzej-savremene-umetnosti/> [last access on 15 August 2021]



Ill. 25 Countdown to the opening of the Museum,
<https://www.beforeafter.rs/grad/arhitektura-muzej-savremene-umetnosti/>

The years passed, and 8,034 works of art were in the underground vault of the National Bank. Thus, many were deprived of potential artistic events and the study of works of art. An entire generation was deprived of a work of art and experience under the name of the Museum of Contemporary Art. The impression was gained that it became a trend for Belgrade to be left without a museum, under the pretext of reconstructions, and then the lack of money and which has been a characteristic of Serbia, due to political turmoil. The fate of the Museum of Contemporary Art was shared by the National Museum and the History Museum as well.

These cases resonated with the public, and among others, the BBC journalist Nevs Guy De Launey, in 2013, wrote in his article: - "All this means that the collection of foreign and domestic painters owned by Serbia, including Picasso, Matisse and Van Gogh, is under padlock"¹⁷³.

But what did the museum do without a building? How did sincere art lovers, who were still employed by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, communicate with the ordinary world, how were the exhibitions organized and what were the communication strategies during this decade?

¹⁷³G. De Launey, *Art gathers dust as Serbia museums kept shut* in "BBC News Online", 27 August 2013, cit.; <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-23841398/>[last access on 15 August 2021]

As the period of renovation of the building got longer, the Museum had to manage, travel, and use someone else's exhibition space. The museum had at its disposal a salon space in Pariska Street and the "Petar Dobrović" gallery¹⁷⁴. This way of working enabled communication with a new group of visitors who would otherwise visit the museum where the Museum of Contemporary Art is a guest. For example, "traditional" visitors who visit exhibitions for certain dates (May 1 - Labor Day, May 25 - Youth Day), those who admire the character and work of Tito, Yugoslav nostalgias were given the opportunity to see other artistic directions in the Kuća cveća. He talked about the significant of the Museum. In 1963, while the Museum was still under construction, it was visited by the President, Josip Broz Tito, who gave a sharp speech on the situation in Yugoslav artistic practice, and this is part of it:

I am not against the creative search for something new, say in painting, sculpture and other arts, because it is necessary and good. But I am against giving money for units for some so-called modernist works that have nothing to do with artistic creation, let alone our reality. On the artistic side, in modern painting there are also significant works, sometimes of lasting value, or those that represent a decorative value, but there is still something that has no artistic value.

And it is precisely these valueless works that are significantly represented in our art exhibitions today and are naturalized, paid expensively, by various institutions. Who then is to blame for such quasi-art beginning to prevail? Certainly, those who buy such quasi-works of art and spend state money on them, sometimes giving prizes and the like¹⁷⁵.

Two years after the opening, the president visited the Museum. After visiting numerous works about the Museum, he described its significance in just one word. However, that word was the most beloved word of the Yugoslav peoples and nationalities - "Tito".

By placing the Museum exhibits in the new space, the communication of the past and the present and the communication of different aesthetic values is realized.

The following case also speaks about the coping of the Museum and artists during this period of ten years of reconstruction. Coincidentally, an exhibition of contemporary art, was held in the premises of the Museum of the History of Yugoslavia. Within this building is the grave of the former president of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito. It is well

¹⁷⁴ D. Rošić, "*Beograd i njegovo blago u trezorima*" in "Deutsche Welle Online", 13 June 2014; <https://www.dw.com/sr/beograd-i-njegovo-bлаго-u-trezorima/a-17704900/> [last access on 15 August 2021]

¹⁷⁵ VII kongres Narodne omladine Jugoslavije, in "Borba", 24 January 1963, cit.

known that the lifelong president of Yugoslavia, despite his political obligations, had free time for the culture and art. He was very interested in films and fine arts. The paintings in his residence testify about Tito's fondness for classical paintings. Even his hobby was artistic - he was into photography. A few years ago, in one of his photographs, which became popular, we see Tito himself taking self-portrait in a mirror. It is considered that he is the first president to take a so-called selfie back in 1961.



Ill. 26 Tito taking a selfie, <https://fotodoks.de/en/photographers/Josip-Broz-Tito>

The setting of this exhibition was in a way ironic, because the works of art have returned to the public at the very place where the old Yugoslavia was buried, in the place where modern art flourished.



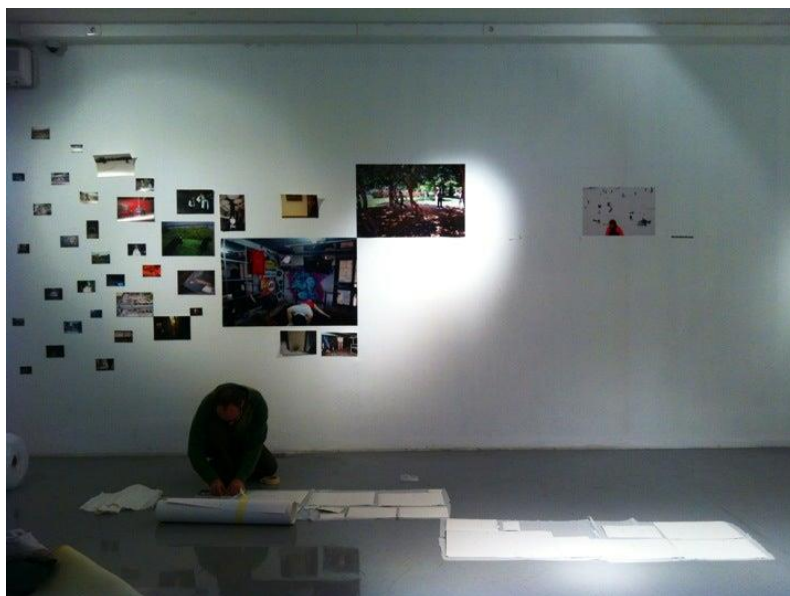
Ill. 27 Kuća cveća - part of the Museum of the History of Yugoslavia, <https://belgrade-beat.rs/lat/znamenitosti/kuca-cveca>

The communication strategy for this exhibition was simple. The exhibition was advertised, among other things, thanks to loyal "associate journalists" from cultural departments in newspapers such as "Politika". Another source for informing the audience were social networks. The announcement relied on nostalgia for contemporary art in the capital city. However, in addition to that nostalgia, another one woke up - the one after Tito and his politics, considering the place where the exhibition was held. For that reason, a lot of buses came from the region. Overall, the exhibition was a great success. It was visited by about 10,000 people from the entire region. As one of the curators Dejan Sretenović stated, the human hunger for contemporary art was obvious¹⁷⁶.

One of the institutions that was generously "lending" its space to the Museum of Contemporary Art was the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade. This salon is located at 14 Pariska Street. The concept of the Salon was still based on the presentation of the most current trends in visual art, primarily through solo exhibitions of contemporary artists from the country and abroad, but also through the organization of presentations, forums and lectures. The Salon was also open for thematic exhibitions of curators who dealt with modern tendencies and who had the opportunity to realize projects in this area. Thus, the Salon retained the role of the most

¹⁷⁶Ibid.

prestigious gallery space in Belgrade, successfully positioning itself on the world stage. It was opened four years before the Museum of Contemporary Art in Ušće and began operating in the spring of 1961 under the name Salon of the Modern Gallery. This gallery is considered to be the first Belgrade gallery to have a permanent program and a clearly defined concept. The focus of the gallery has always been on the younger and middle generation artists. It has followed and continues to follow the most current artistic tendencies. The salon realizes its goals through solo exhibitions of contemporary artists from the country and abroad, organizing presentations, forums and lectures. It has been always open for thematic exhibitions of curators who deal with contemporary tendencies. The success of the Salon and the title of the most prestigious gallery space in Belgrade are undeniable in Serbia, and it is successfully listed on the world stage¹⁷⁷.



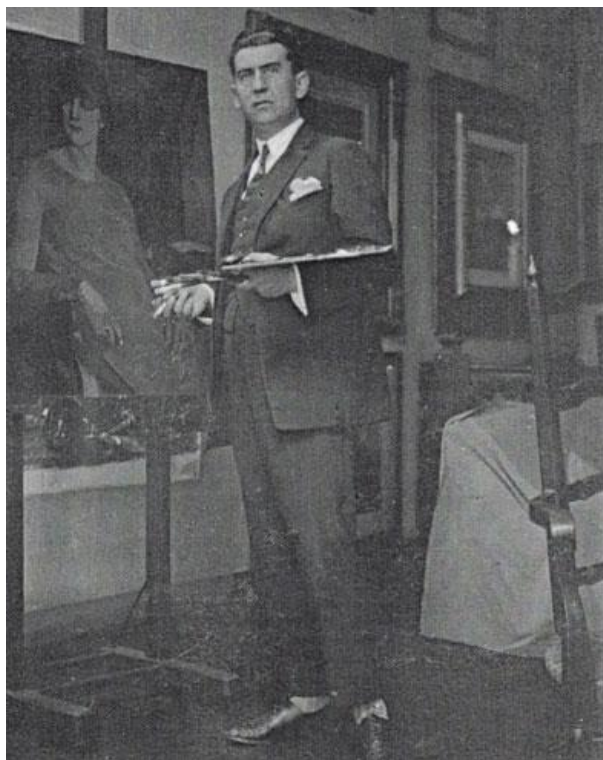
Ill. 28 The Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, <https://it.foursquare.com/v/salon-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti/4d53ec42dcb1a1434d9fb8bf>

The next used location that must be mentioned is “Petar Dobrović gallery”. This gallery is located in the very center of Belgrade, in Kralja Petra Street number 36 on the IV floor. The artist Petar Dobrović lived in this building. For obvious reasons, the majority of the artist's oeuvre is kept here. The gallery was founded in 1974 by the

¹⁷⁷Site of Salon Museum of Contemporary Art; <https://www.decijigrad.rs/organizacije/salon-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti/>[last access on 15 August 2021]

City of Belgrade. The city owned a collection that was received as a gift from the artist's wife Olga Dobrović and son Đorđe Dobrović.

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade received this gallery-legacy for a professional care, and that lasted until 2017. In 2017, this role was transferred to the House of Legacies, again by the decision of the City Assembly.



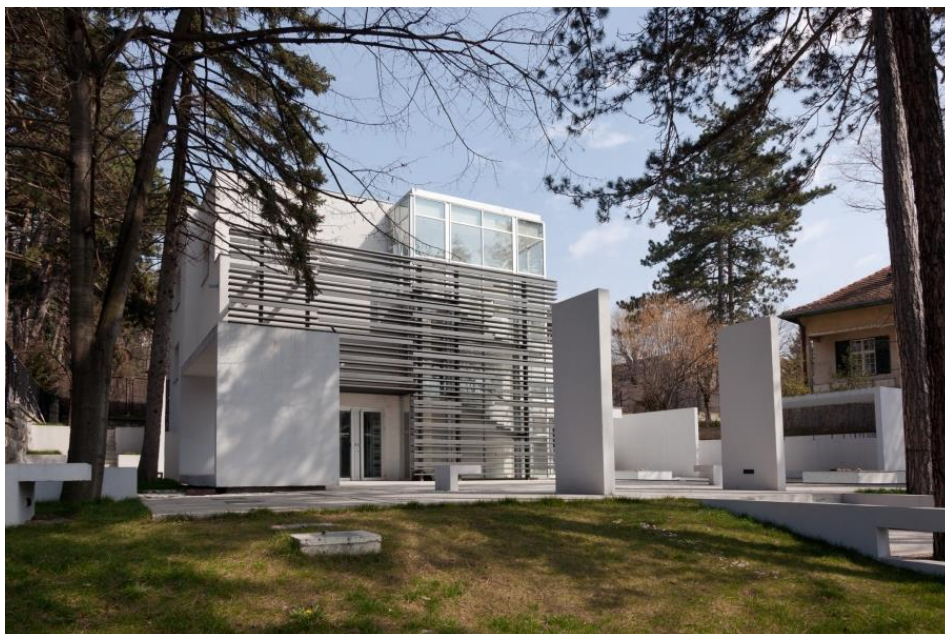
III. 29 Petar Dobrović,
<http://www.kucalegata.org/galerijapdobrovica.html>

The collection consists of 1407 works of art: 360 oils on canvas, 14 watercolors, 19 pastels, 29 tempera and 955 drawings as well as 30 works of art by other authors¹⁷⁸.

Finally, the third location that was open for contemporary exhibitions was the Gallery of the legacy of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković. The gallery was opened to the public in December 1980 and is located at Rodoljuba Čolakovića Street 2 in Dedinje, in Belgrade. It is housed in a building that tapestry artist Milica Zorić and her husband, a revolutionary and a writer Rodoljub Čolaković donated to the city of Belgrade. The management of the Gallery is entrusted to the Museum of Contemporary Art.

¹⁷⁸Site of House of legacy; <http://www.kucalegata.org/galerijapdobrovica.html> [last access on 16 August 2021]

The gallery contains the legacy of this married couple. Here is a collection of 92 works by the most famous Yugoslav artists, a collection of period furniture, oriental rugs, glass and steel. The catalog of the collection of this Gallery was published after its opening in 1980. In 2010, the Gallery was reconstructed and adapted, so the space began to be used for various programs and activities.



Ill. 30 Gallery of the legacy of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković, <https://www.nocmuzeja.rs/gradovi/beograd-zona-f/legat-colakovic>

Fortunately, because of its adaptation, during the reconstruction of the Museum of Contemporary Art, this space got the function of a mini-museum. Various programs from modern and contemporary art, design, architecture and film were held here¹⁷⁹.

2.2 Exhibitions and communication strategies during the second closure

East Side Story, October-November, 2008 – This was a project made by artist Igor Grubić. Igor is a multimedia artist who deals with photography, video and website-specific activities. With his works, videos, montages and cuts, he shows us political situations from the past as well as from the present. Among other successes he represented Croatia at the 57th Venice Biennale in 2017 and participated in Manifesta 4 and 9 and the 11th Istanbul Biennale, in 2009. His work was purchased by Museums

¹⁷⁹*Gallery of the legacy of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković*, in “Art Magazin.info Online”; http://www.artmagazin.info/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2575&Itemid=28/ [last access 15 August 2021]

such as TATE Modern, the Museums of Contemporary Art in Belgrade and Zagreb, Contemporary Museum in Wroclaw and Kadist in San Francisco recognized and purchased his works¹⁸⁰.

East Side Story is a project shown in the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art, in 2008, when the main institution for contemporary art was locked. The project showed the rights of sexual minorities in a traditional society which rejects the diversity. Unfortunately, the society has reacted, and still reacts, to diversity, aggressively, savagely, unrespectful towards the basic human rights.

The project was created by the artist reviewing documentary footages collected from various television broadcast. On the footages he has shown the Gay Pride in Belgrade in 2001 and Zagreb in 2002 and the reaction of the population towards those demonstrations, advocating equal rights for homosexuals. The brutal treatment of someone and something else different spawned the *East Side Story* project.



Ill. 31 Front page of exhibition catalog, *East Side Story*, <https://msub.org.rs/publication/igor-grubic-east-side-story/>

¹⁸⁰Igor Grubic, in *Laveronoca arte contemporanea*; <https://www.gallerialaveronica.it/artists/igor-grubic/> [last access on 16 September 2021]

The communication channels for this setting were targeted at online media. In addition to the official announcement on the Museum's website, there were online cultural publications in online newspapers such as "Arte". On the official Museum site promoting was done through exhibition catalog, *East Side Story* (Ill. 26). The exhibition was intended for sexual minorities, their support, but also those who do not understand them to be educated about these minorities. In both capitals of Serbia and Croatia, Belgrade and Zagreb, together with the choreographer and dancers, Igor re-enacted and recorded artistic dance interventions at the locations of these two cities. This was also a good marketing step, a form of communication strategy where passers-by could see the material live and view this performance as a form of announcement. Besides his recordings, *East Side Story* included cuts from the aforementioned video documents from the two pride parades. Igor Grubić:

I want to suggest that the creative force here is still in a kind of a resistance movement that is trying to change the stubborn conservative society for the better¹⁸¹.

The project was purchased in 2012 by the TATE Modern Museum¹⁸².

2.3 On Normality: Art in Serbia from 1989 to 2001

On Normality: Art in Serbia from 1989 to 2001 was premiered at the end of 2005 at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade. This exhibition was a symbol of the most comprehensive and relevant feat of historicization and perception of the art of the last decade of the 20th century in Serbia¹⁸³. Post communism discourse presenting the new states of Eastern, central Europe and in the former the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are characterized by two synchronic processes. The first one is the recreation of the collective memory in pre-communist times that include glorification, mystification and falsifying national tradition, inventing national tradition. The second one is creating the collective amnesia regarding the period of communism and this can

¹⁸¹*East Side Story Igora Grubića*, in "Arte", 10 October 2008, cit.; http://www.arte.rs/sr/aktuelno/east_side_story_igora_grubica-3067/1/1/?dan=20081012/[last access on 13 September 2021]

¹⁸² Site of Tate Modern Museum; <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/grubic-east-side-story-t13651/>[last access 15 August 2021]

¹⁸³B. Andjelkovic, B. Dimitrijevic: „*The final decade: Art, Society, Trauma and Normality*“ in „*On Normality-Art in Serbia, 1989-2001*“, edited by B. Andjelkovic, B. Dimitrijevic: Museum of contemporary art: Belgrade, 2005, pp. 1-63, here p. 33.

be colored by Euro-centric, even racist overtones. Pejić's concept that post socialism is modern art is in fact retroactive rewriting or rereading of the art history during Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia through the lenses of Europeanisation. And so, if the USA and Europe, as a valid term, we have post modernism, here it is very difficult to label something as the real post modernism. So, Yugoslav post modernism is in fact post socialism. And thus, this stayed with Yugoslav archive; Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade stayed without any national qualification. It has never been Yugoslav Museum of Contemporary Art nor Serbian Museum of Contemporary Art nor Museum of Contemporary Art of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is implicit that it changes morph because the greatest thing in communism is suppression of national being. The period of modernism is the period of the formation of the national states. There was a multinational state and only with its destruction and disintegration was able to finish the story of the modernity and the modern art¹⁸⁴.

On Normality had a goal to show the position or "image" of Serbia in the public eyes worldwide, from 1989 to 2001. Serbia was described as the instigator of war, the country whose role was to use the war as the only means of resolving a political dispute.

In this project, but also through ex-Yugoslavia history, Serbia and its people have been seen as the only culprits for the tragedy of Yugoslavia. This statement has become a fixed collective image of this nation. One of the problems was to who should be given the "identity of the victim". This term was granted to everyone in the conflict, but the Serbs.

In that period in Serbia no one had even a slight desire to change this image. People were guided by thought that nothing can be done, the image had already been created, so why even try? They attributed the description of their country as a result of an international conspiracy. The conclusion was if nothing could be done about picture of Serbs, why not act precisely the way the world saw Serbs? Paradoxically, this would become Serbian "true" identity and the country would become as much isolated as self-isolated.

¹⁸⁴ B. Pejić: "Post communism and Rewriting of (Art) History?" in "Project by SCCAN" Institute for Contemporary Art in Zagreb" Zagreb: 1997, pp. 3-8, here p. 3-6.

Serbian history has relied heavily on self-pity. This was directed to the real victims of the war - Serbian civilians killed in Krajina, Mostar, Slavonija, but not only towards them. There is self-pity directed also to those Serbs who have become the victims of conspiracies. One of the biggest ones in the newer history, that was presented more in details in this project, is certainly the NATO bombing, in 1999, in which the killing of civilians was officially covered by a veil of humanity. So, the Serbs saw themselves not just as victims, but as double victims - by the world, but also by the regime of the then president Slobodan Milošević. The Milošević's regime, which was supported by foreign forces, was not supported by "his" people. Removing this "ruler" from the political scene was a long process. During this process the ideology of "Normality" can be described as a part of the so-called quarantine strategy. This strategy used by individuals, who tried in their own space to have own freewill, or at least a wish for it. Sadly, this was only an abstract "ideal".

The religion of "Normality" was an attempt to make a new form of antagonism. This form would be used to substitute the political antagonisms. Also, its purpose would be used in society for distinguishing between the "normal" and "abnormal". "Normal" are those people who are nominally against the then present regime and they were guided by the desire for a normal life. "Abnormal" were the ones who craved for new conflicts, act irrationally and vulgar.

In the case of this specific situation there was a full media coverage in the Western part of the world. Apart from NATO bombing, their precision hits, as the falling of the bombs was characterized, Western medias were also interested in abnormal life in Serbia. In the media coverages there was a fascination with the maintenance of "normality" in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia - with normality on the streets, cafes and restaurants. The fact is that those journalists who were in Serbia and reporting from there were surprised to what extent the life was unfolding in its normal fashion. The religion of Normality influenced Serbs to act perfectly normal despite the falling bombs. This normality became "abnormally normal".

The art during the bombing period relied a lot on photographers who were capturing the moments of real-life during NATO aggression. The one rare artistic project that was carried out during the bombing, was Vesna Pavlović's series of photographs

named *Herzlich Willkommen in Hotel Hyatt Belgrade*, presented in exactly this hotel. The project was mostly shown to foreign journalist.

These photographs showed the reality itself, not the other side of it. The project showed the difference between a visual expectation when thinking about wartime and the reality of it – the scenes of normality during the wartime. Pavlović emphasized that normality is representing also the truth in this period.

While downfall of the Milošević regime was evident and the announcement of one more bloody episode was getting louder, the art in Serbia was becoming more sophisticated, artists were becoming popular over the borders of Serbia and intellectual exchange within a European framework became more and more evident. Then came a need for establishing a school of Art History and theory. Its founders were Branislava Anđelković, Branislav Dimitrijević and Branimir Stojanović. The School existed from 1999 to 2002 and represented an independent and formalised organisation of higher education. Its focus was on the sphere of visual theories as a multidisciplinary area. Here art theories overlapped with social and political theories, theories of psychoanalysis, culture, film, architecture, etc¹⁸⁵.

The exhibition *On Normality* was once again presented to the public in 2009, this time, at the Katzen Art Center of the American University Museum in Washington. This exhibition is very important from the point of view of communication strategies. First of all, it was a great success to organize exhibition, since the "headquarters" – The Museum of Contemporary Art - was closed. Second, with this move, a new epoch of international cooperation in the history of the local contemporary museum practice began. At the same time, this was the first project of inter-museum cooperation between institutions from Serbia and the USA, in the field of contemporary visual art¹⁸⁶.

¹⁸⁵ B. Anđelković, B. Dimitrijević: „*The final decade: Art, Society, Trauma and Normality*“ in „*On Normality-Art in Serbia, 1989-2001*“, edited by B. Anđelković, B. Dimitrijević: Museum of contemporary art: Belgrade, 2005, pp 1-63, here p. 32.

¹⁸⁶ D. Purešević, *Art zona: “O normalnosti, ponovo”*, in “RTS 2 Online”, 1 August 2009; <https://www.rts.rs/page/tv/sr/story/21/rts-2/76821/art-zona-o-normalnosti-ponovo.html> [last access on 17 August 2021]



Ill. 32 *On Normality: Art in Serbia from 1989 to 2001*,
<http://www.seecult.org/vest/o-normalnosti-u-vasingtonu>

The curators of the exhibition, Branislava Andjelković, Dejan Sretenović and Branislav Dimitrijević, showed the divergence of the artistic expression. They showed the ordinary world the ways in which art communicated with its immediate environment. The relations of art with continuous tragic events and wars were presented, but also with European artistic trends¹⁸⁷.

For this occasion, 20 artists and 24 works of art were selected - canvases, photographs and video installations by Serbian artists: Biljana Đurđević, Uroš Đurić, Neša Paripović, Vesna Pavlović, Adrian Kovač, Zoran Todorović, Raša Todosijević, Goranka Matić, the Association "Absolutely", Zoran Marinković, Era Milivojević, Zoran Naskovski, Vladimir Nikolić, Tanja Ostojić, Balint Zombati, Milica Tomić and others¹⁸⁸.

Besides representing a new epoch of international cooperation, *On Normality* was also a symbol of overseas communication. In addition to the representatives of the Museum in Belgrade, the Ministry of Culture of Serbia also participated in the negotiations on this exhibition. The Katzen Art Center was in charge of advertising the exhibition, as it was organized on American soil. Apart from the marketing role of the Center, the advertisement also included announcements of Serbian cultural departments in the media ("Politika", "Radio Television of Serbia"). Additionally, one of the steps in the

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Z. Šuvaković, *O srpskoj normalnosti u Vašingtonu*, in „Politika“, 6 May 2009

communication strategy to attract as many Americans as possible was to train several art students. The main curator of the exhibition, Dejan Sretenović, was in charge of the training. It was these students who were in charge of guiding the interested audience through this setting¹⁸⁹.

An attention was drawn and as the result some articles were written. One of the examples is the article of the novelist, Maggie Barrett, who stated on the occasion of the guest appearance of this exhibition that, although the then President of Yugoslavia Milosević tried to silence those who opposed him, the artists were representatives of the rebellion - they continued to express their views. However, unfortunately, their works from 1989 to 2001 were rarely exhibited. For this reason, in that period the Museum was a passive means of nationalist ideology, which was effectively closed to ambitious, contemporary art¹⁹⁰.

The communication strategy was also based on overcoming the (political) gap between the USA and Serbia, getting America acquainted with Serbian history and hold the exhibition without (political) provocations. Because of this, it is no wonder that this exhibition presented works that in some way, directly or indirectly, explained the political, economic, cultural and everyday climate in Serbia in the late 80s, as well as the beginning of the 21st century. The exhibition reflected the Serbian position between involvement in international artistic trends and retaining local specifics, “direct political engagement and delusionist escapism, tragic and comic, moderate and pretentious, theoretical and intuitive, participation and isolation.”¹⁹¹

Since the average American audience did not have enough historical knowledge to understand all the associations from the setting, each work of art on the ground floor of Katzen had an accompanying textual description of the circumstances under which it had been created.

The visitors showed great interest and enthusiasm towards Zoran Naskovski's video installation *Death in Dallas* which stood out by topic. In it, visitors could see a kind of musician – guslar, who sings in detail about the assassination of President John F.

¹⁸⁹S. Popović, *Hrabri prikaz bolne stvarnosti*, in “Novosti Online” 10 May 2009; <https://www.novosti.rs/vesti/kultura.71.html:239531-Hrabri-prikaz---bolne-stvarnosti>[last access on 17 August 2021]

¹⁹⁰*O normalnosti u ...Vašingtonu*, in “Abeceda nezavisne kulture Online”, 2 May 2009; <http://www.seecult.org/vest/o-normalnosti-u-vasingtonu/>[last access on 18 August 2021]

¹⁹¹ Ibid. cit.

Kennedy in Dallas. The song was accompanied by heartbreaking video inserts of this American tragedy. The fact is that the installation was presented in many American museums, but never in the capital, never in this context¹⁹².



III. 33 *Death in Dallas*,
<http://www.seecult.org/vest/promisljanje-proslosti>

Two huge canvases by Biljana Đurđević, *Santa Claus on his deathbed* and *Dental Society*, stood out as very provocative and have achieved great success. The director and chief curator of the Katzen Art Center, Jack Rasmussen, then told "Politika" that exhibits like a lifeless Santa Claus in the underwear, with Christmas stockings, or a red swastika pasted all over the wall, would not be welcome in any other Washington museum or gallery. He added that Katzen is the only one who allowed the freedom of political provocation with works of art¹⁹³.

2.4 1395 days without red

1395 days without red, May-June, 2012 - Although a cultural institution such as the Museum of Contemporary Art was largely on hiatus, artist Šejla Kamerić, fortunately, had the opportunity to hold her first solo exhibition in Belgrade, in the Museum's replacement space, at the Legacy Gallery of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković¹⁹⁴.

¹⁹² Z. Šuvaković, *O srpskoj normalnosti u Vašingtonu*, in „Politika“, 6 May 2009

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Site of Museum of Contemporary Art; <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/sejla-kameric-1395-dana-bez-crvene/> [last access 17 August 2021]

Šejla Kamerić works with various media such as film, photography, objects or drawings. Uncomfortable memories are among important elements in her works. She uses memories as a source of energy. The present is represented through the burden of the past. Relying on her own memories, experiences and dreams, with the help of her art, she leads the audience into the global spaces of displacement and discrimination. She uses complex, psychogeography landscapes and shows the persistence of the human spirit. She depicts various emotions and the dominating ones are sadness and beauty, hope and pain.

1395 days without red is the result of a collaboration between Šejla Kamerić and Salo and Ari Benjamin Meyers, commissioned by Artangel of London in collaboration with the Manchester International Festival, the Whitworth Art Gallery (Manchester), the Fundació Museu D'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) and the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (Rotterdam). Co-producers are Art Angel and SCCA / pro.ba.Sarajevo. It was opened on the 25th of May in the Legacy of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković in Belgrade, while the space for the premiere accompanying screening of films was reserved for the cultural center in Belgrade, Dom Omladine.

The very name of the exhibition and the film gives a spotlight to the experience of the movement, but also the survival of the inhabitants of Sarajevo during the siege between 1992 and 1996. Why "no red"? Because during this period, residents were advised not to wear bright or conspicuous colors, such as red, so that snipers would not easily notice them. 1395 referred to the number of days under the siege in which was Sarajevo. On the way to work, while looking for food, visiting friends, relatives, lovers, the citizens of Sarajevo could hear: - "A sniper is like a bull. Bright colors are also a bad choice. A sniper is crazy by nature, and every crazy person loves colorful. Wear gray, brown or burgundy!"¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. cit.



III. 34 Poster, *1395 days without red*,
<https://banjalukain.com/clanak/70693/projeksija-filma-1395-dana-bez-crvene-12-maja>

In addition to the film *1395 days without red*, those who were interested could also watch the short film *Happiness* by this artist. She drew inspiration for this work from various quotes from the book *Engaged in Paradise*, by Mirko Kovač. Guided by these mantras, the audience was made aware that the search for happiness is the only form of survival¹⁹⁶.



III. 35 *Happiness*, <https://www.artforum.com/print/reviews/201108/sejla-kameric-29388>

Since the exhibition occupied the venue of the Legacy of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković and the Dom Omladine, the communication was done from these two sides,

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

as well as of course from the side of the curator and artist of the exhibition. In addition to the official page on the Museum's website, the exhibition was announced on cultural sites such as "Arte", European public service channel, but also on the Sarajevo Center for Contemporary Art website. Because it was a film, the communication strategy also included posters (Ill. 34) as an announcement. Already, in 2011 trailer for *1395 Days Without Red* was out. YouTube, as one of the biggest online platforms, was used in communication purposes, for public to see the upcoming project and to make them interested in it, to make them want to see more.



Excerpt: Šejla Kamerić, *1395 Days Without Red* (2011)



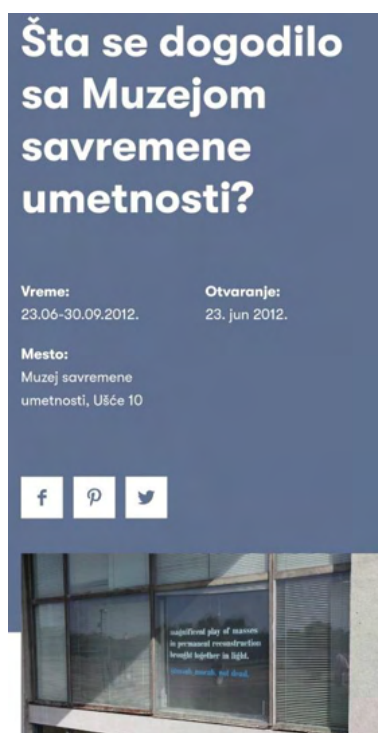
Ill. 36 Trailer for *1395 Days Without Red*

2.5 What happened to the Museum of Contemporary Art?

June 2012. Five years has passed since the building of the Museum of Contemporary Art was closed to the public due to works on reconstruction, adaptation and extension. Five years of reconstruction, and only the first phase was completed - the roof, basements, energy block. The completion of works was not in sight. Communication between those in charge of repairs and the public practically did not even exist. The older generations slowly began to forget about the space of the Museum, and the younger generations did not even have the opportunity to get to know it. So, what happened to the Museum of Contemporary Art?

The project *What happened to the Museum of Contemporary Art?* also known as the "non-exhibition", presented the situation in which the institution found itself in various

ways. The non-exhibition did not have the form, structure and architecture, because the defunctionalized building became a non-museum, there were no more elementary museological and technical conditions for exhibiting works of art. The space could no longer fulfill its purpose - to be a space for exhibitions. In terms of communication strategy, the exhibition can be seen as a cry for help and as a shout not to forget about this institution.



III. 37 Announcement for the exhibition *What happened to the Museum of Contemporary Art?* on the official website of the Museum of Contemporary Art, <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/šta-se-dogodilo-sa-muzejom-savremene-umetnosti/>

The author of the exhibition *What happened to the Museum of Contemporary Art?* was Dejan Sretenović, and the curators were Andrej Dolinka, Una Popović and Dejan Sretenović himself. The artists envisioned this project as an induced incident of waking up the Museum building from hibernation. The goal of the exhibition was presenting a cry for attention, help, support and reaction. The goal and the cry were addressed to the artistic, cultural and the general public. The desire for communication, at least on

the part of art lovers, did not die. The exhibition represented a form of protest, alarm and appeal. It was also an open discussion forum that raised the topic of the relationship between the state and society towards the Museum in the then political, economic, social and cultural context. Questions and facts about the general condition of the museum infrastructure, cultural institutions and contemporary art production in Serbia were raised.



Ill. 38 Project *What happened to the Museum of Contemporary Art?*, <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/sta-se-dogodilo-sa-muzejom-savremene-umetnosti/?lang=en>

The project consisted of three segments. The first segment consisted of archival forms that contained information, documents and artifacts related to the process of work on the renovation of the building from its beginning in 2002 to 2012. The materials contained chronology, press clippings, photo-documentation of construction works, project documentation, comparative analyzes of the condition of similar museums in the region and so on. The second segment featured the intervention of artists and designers who considered "various aspects of the interruption of the Museum's function as a machine for the production of art and knowledge of art"¹⁹⁷. The last segment visually showed to visitors the death of the Museum. This part of the exhibition was self-evident: the interior of the museum clearly showed traces of the

¹⁹⁷D. Sretenović, *Šta se dogodilo sa Muzejom savremene umetnosti*, in "Muzej savremene umetnosti Online" 23 June 2012; <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/sta-se-dogodilo-sa-muzejom-savremene-umetnosti/?lang=srb/> [last access on 18 August 2021]

building's decay, completed and interrupted construction works, the remains of exhibitions, architecture and furniture¹⁹⁸.

After almost seven years since the beginning of the reconstruction, curators and artists have continued to manage and look for a space for their endeavors. Communication strategies were reduced to a minimum - some publications in the media and social networks, which in that period were not at their peak as they are now. Thus, in the period between March and May, 2014, the Museum of the History of Yugoslavia opened its doors for two months to the exhibition entitled "One Hundred Works from the Museum of Contemporary Art".

This exhibition presented the most significant works of Yugoslav and Serbian art from its collections from 1990 to 1945 and at the same time pointed out the existing problem - the delay in the reconstruction of its building in Ušće¹⁹⁹.

The author of the concept and setting was Dejan Sretenović, and the curator was Mišela Blanuša. An additional incentive for organizing this exhibition was the fact that the Museum did not have the opportunity for a full seven years to present the collections more comprehensively through a permanent exhibition. And this fact further implied that the function of this institution - the exhibition of art of the 20th century - was suspended. Mišela Blanuša said:

After the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the most important works of Croatian, Slovenian, Macedonian... art of modernism remained in our museum. This is an opportunity to better present the oldest period until 1945, so there will be works of impressionism, plein air, expressionism, social art²⁰⁰.

On that occasion, she pointed out the historical avant-garde - zenithism, constructivism and surrealism, which formed special segments.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ *100 dela iz zbirki MSUB i MIJ* in "Abeceda nezavisne kulture Online", 21 March 2014; <http://www.seecult.org/vest/100-dela-iz-zbirki-msub-u-mij/> [last access 18 August 2021]

²⁰⁰ Ibid., cit.



Ill. 39 Đorđe Andrejević - Kun, U ćeliji, 1939/40, Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, <http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-K-ar7OD6zc8/U0rKCmiPutI/AAAAAAAAADEA/fMldTn63S7Q/s1600/1%C4%90or%C4%91e-Andrejevi%C4%87-Kun.jpg>

According to many definitions, theories, the permanent collection is the basic identity map of every museum institution and its primary concern. Permanent exhibitions represent a resource of production and a display of knowledge about art. However, in the practice of the Museum, that was not possible. The exhibition pointed out various problems such as the state's negligence for its fate, the consequences of its sad fate for the functioning, the development policy of that house and its social, cultural and educational function²⁰¹.

Guided by the Serbian saying "Better anything than nothing", due to technical reasons, at least a part of the fund, a representative of the art of the first half of the 20th century was shown. Thus, designed and historically the most distant, it attracted the attention of the public. The aim of the exhibition was to affirm the museum collection, to get acquainted with key and / or characteristic phenomena. These phenomena represented the time period of the first half of the 20th century in Yugoslav and Serbian modernism. Therefore, it was not surprising that all media were represented - painting,

²⁰¹ Ibid.

sculpture, photography were in line with the museum's policy to deal with all the media it owns and all historical periods²⁰².

Visitors had the opportunity to see works of respected artists such as Đorđe Andrejević Kun, Antun Augustinčić, Jovan Bijelić, Marko Čelebonović, Petar Dobrović, Lojza Dolinar, Vilko Gecan, Krsto Hegedušić, Richard Jakopić, Ignjat Job, Milan Konjović, Fran Kršinić, Mirko Kujčić, Milo Milunović, Milena Pavlović Barila, Mihailo Petrov, Nadežda Petrović, Zora Petrović, Vasa Pomorišac, Ivan Radović, Marko Ristić, TomoRosandić, Veljko Stanojević, Eduard Stepančić, SretenStojanović, Zlatko Sulentic, Sava Šumanović, Ivan Tabaković and others²⁰³.



Ill. 40 Milena Pavlović Barili, self-portrait, 1938, oil on canvas, Gallery Milena Pavlović, Požarevac, http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-vx1u5szDIhE/U0rKBog_65I/AAAAAAAAADD4/npt2nDzYTtA/s1600/32Milena+Pavlovi%C4%87+Barilli.jpg

Something that could be described as an attempt of communication strategy with the visitors was the fact that exhibition was accompanied by a rich program, which included lectures and thematic guides through the exhibition conducted by the curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art and other experts, as well as educational

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid

workshops. This time as well, there were announcements for the exhibition from the most loyal associates from the media, such as the daily newspaper “Politika” and the weekly “Vreme”.



Ил. 41 Announcements in the daily newspaper “Politika”, <https://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/287753/Sto-dela-Muzeja-savremene-umetnosti-pred-publikom>

After a long media silence, eight years since its closure, this topic was slowly becoming present. Inspired by the situation of this institution, journalist Zlatko Bogdanovski published a text in "Politika", with the aim of shedding some light on the unenviable situation of the Museum. After eight years, the first phase of reconstruction has just been completed, depots have been made and the roof has been reconstructed. According to him, one of the unfortunate elements of this story is that "someone" again “unculturedly” stole money from culture. On the other hand, the happy circumstance is that "someone" finally spoke about it. The shift from zero was a press conference at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, held on October 14, 2015. On that day, the public finally received the names of the people who were obliged to give answers to the questions related to the tender for the reconstruction, adaptation and extension of the museum building, both to the public and to the competent authorities. Former

director Jovan Despotović, the members of the tender commission and the Republic Commission for Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures, received criminal charges from the Museum and the Ministry of Culture of Serbia due to suspicion that their decisions called into question the realization of the project²⁰⁴.

In August 2013, the Ministry of Culture of Serbia wrote a proposal to file criminal charges against former Minister of Culture Voja Brajović and former director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Branislava Andjelković Dimitrijević, for abuse of office and embezzlement of 176 million dinars. The proposal was submitted to the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office. The internal commission of the Ministry of Culture determined that in December 2007, the construction company "Montera" was paid in advance exactly those 176 million dinars for the reconstruction of the Museum, which is still going on at that moment²⁰⁵.



Ill. 42 Reconstruction of the Museum of Contemporary Art

A new reopening date was then announced. The year 2016 was set as the due date, but this date was not respected either.

2.6 Tear down and rebuild

In 2015, the curators continued to fend for themselves and the public. The next effort was the exhibition of Jasmina Cibic: *Tear down and rebuild*, in September-October,

²⁰⁴ Z. Bogdanovski, *Zašto je Muzej savremene umetnosti osuđen na osamgodina zatvora?* in „Nova srpska politička misao-časopis za političku teoriju i društvena istraživanja Online“, 1 January 2016; <http://www.nspm.rs/kulturna-politika/zasto-je-muzej-savremene-umetnosti-osudjen-na-osam-godina-zatvora.html?alphabet=l>[last access 18 August 2021]

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

2015. The exhibition also represented the still existing communication with the region, this time with Slovenian artist Jasmina Cibic. She is a well-known Slovenian artist who analyzes specific national, political, cultural and artistic origins. In this way she creates her own language and stands out from the crowd. She uses films, installations, objects and photography. Cibic experienced international success as a representative of the Republic of Slovenia at the 55th Biennial of Contemporary Art in Venice. She is a well-deserved owner of numerous awards, including the Bevilacqua la Masa in Venice and Trend awards for outstanding achievements in the visual arts in Slovenia²⁰⁶. *Tear down and rebuild* is the third chapter of her project called *Spielraum*, to which the artist dedicated one year. The first chapter was shown at the Ludwig Museum in Budapest, the second at the International Center of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana and the third at the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, since the main building had been closed to the public for eight years in 2015²⁰⁷. This part of the project dealt with research and the question of how the art and architecture can be used as tools of power in a political system. It consisted of two parts: a performative installation and the film of the same name *Tear down and Rebuild*²⁰⁸.



Ill. 43 *Tear down and rebuild*,
https://www.artforum.com/uploads/upload.001/id22451/picsimg_430x.jpg

²⁰⁶U. Popović, *Jasmina Cibic: Srušiti i ponovo izgraditi*, in *Muzej savremene umetnosti, exhibition catalouge Online* (Belgrade, Salon Museum of contemporary art, 11 September - 25 October 2015) Edited by Museum of Contemporary Art Online; <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/jasmina-cibic-srusiti-i-iznova-izgraditi/> [last access on 19 august 2021]

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

The film was shot in the Palace of Serbia, a building in which several cabinet level ministries and agencies are placed. The artist chose this location for filming, because of the way she imagined the project. The ambience and interior of the Palace with the conference hall and salons of the Yugoslav republics was a perfect place for the scenography of the film. The plot of the film follows the conversation of four characters: ideological variations of the Mother State: the Builder of National Identity, the Pragmatist, the Conservator and the Artist / Architect. Four women, who are fictional characters, quote world politicians, for example Josif Stalin, Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, Josip Broz Tito, Ronald Reagan, Prince Charles, John Kerry. The topic of the quotes at the time, and then repeated in the film, was the construction of national identity and the answers to the questions why some buildings need to be demolished, reconstructed or having their purpose changed. The statements were taken from documents and political debates from the beginning of the 20th century until today. With the quotes from the past, Cibic pointed out the "universality and timelessness of the paradox of the national and ideological representation and its icons"²⁰⁹.



III. 44 *Tear down and rebuild*, <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/jasmina-cibic-srusiti-i-iznova-izgraditi/>

The opening of the exhibition was additionally marked by a performance in which a group of artists performed interventions on photo wallpaper that served as an imaginary landscape. Photographs from the archives of personal photographers of

²⁰⁹ Ibid cit.

Josip Broz Tito were used for the landscape, as well as slogans uttered by certain politicians in the recent history²¹⁰.

In this case, the communication strategy again relied mostly on the Internet - on the online announcement of the Salon, on cultural articles in online editions, as well as trailers on YouTube. A short video about the exhibition, in which the artist herself gives a description of it, was published on the official YouTube channel of the Museum.



SCREENmocab : Jasmina Cibic, Tear Down and Rebuild

Ill. 45 *Tear down and Rebuild* on official YouTube channel of the Museum, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4H5GNqpxkE>

On October 20, 2015, the museum modestly celebrated its 50th birthday, but it was still closed. In previous years, the date of completion of the reconstruction of the building in Ušće had been postponed several times, marking this date as the day of its reopening.

The Ministry of Culture announced in 2014 that the Museum would be open for a jubilee birthday, but that did not happen. Moreover, at the beginning of October 2015, the public procurement for reconstruction, adaptation and extension was suspended, and the announcement of a new one was announced²¹¹.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ *Muzej savremene umetnosti obeležio 50 godina*, in "RTS online", 22 December 2015; <https://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/16/kultura/2149297/muzej-savremene-umetnosti-obelezio-50-godina.html>, [last access on 15 August 2021]



Ill. 46 Museum of Contemporary Art- 50 years,
<https://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/16/kultura/2149297/muzej-savremene-umetnosti-obelezio-50-godina.html>

The celebration was symbolic – thank-you notes were given to institutions and individuals who contributed to the business of the museum with their works. The letters of thanks were given to the institutions that have been long-term partners of the Museum, that helped the realization of the various projects have been done. Some of the awarded institutions were the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the National Bank of Serbia, the National Library of Serbia, the Institute of Literature and Art in Belgrade, the Museum of Yugoslav History and the EUNIC network of foreign cultural centers in Serbia. The awards were also presented to media partners, including the Serbian Radio and Television and the daily newspaper "Politika"²¹². And this was all of the communication from the part of those who had the fate of the Museum in their hands.

2.7 Between innocence and evil

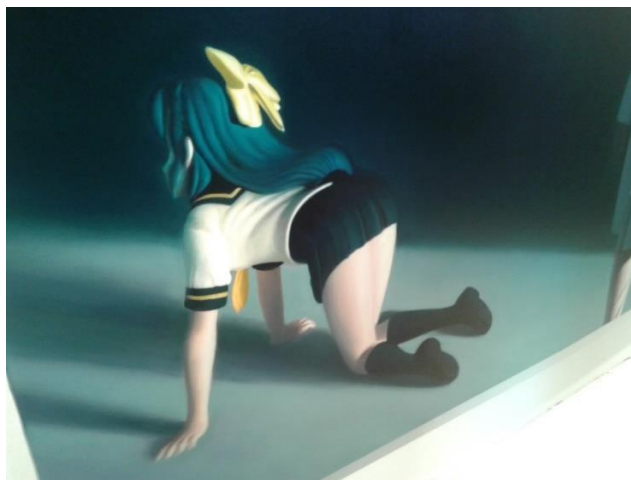
As already mentioned, the curators and artists of the Museum of Contemporary Art, during the ten years of reconstruction, did not give up on art and exhibitions. The exhibitions were often held in the gallery-legacy of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković and in the Salon of the Museum. One of them was the exhibition *Between*

²¹²Ibid.

Innocence and Evil by an Austrian painter, photographer, set designer and performance artist, Gottfried Helnwein²¹³.

His work is based on the problems of personal and collective responsibility and guilt and the possibility of overcoming it. It often leaves one provoked and with a feeling of anxiety. At the same time, he explores various forms of psychological and social anxiety, as was the case with this exhibition²¹⁴.

Between innocence and evil depicted children in a disturbing way, without questioning their beauty. At the same time, the children were portrayed as symbols of the innocence and evil. Gottfried Helnwein is a child of the parents who were participants and witnesses to the heinous crimes of the Third Reich. And that left consequences on him. This was cited as one of the reasons when the exhibition was interpreted through a critique of the socio-political situation and crimes committed during World War II, Nazism and the Holocaust. He showed cruelty and violence aimed against helpless and innocent people. Mostly, he showed this by using the motives such as child violence and pedophilia, which were used in his criticism²¹⁵.



Ill. 47 Detail of Gottfried Helnwein's painting, Legacy Gallery of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković, January 2016. Photo: De Materialization of Art, <http://dematerijalizacijaumetnosti.com/deca-hiperrealizma/>

²¹³D. Purešević, *Art zona- Gotfrid Helnvajn: Između nevinosti i zla*, in “RTS Svet Online” 10 May 2016; <https://www.rts.rs/page/tv/sr/story/22/rts-svet/2311084/.html> [last access on 20 August 2021]

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵V. Jeremić, *Deca hiperrealizma*, in “Dematerijalizacija umetnosti 2014-2019 Online”, 31 December 2016, p 317-323; <http://dematerijalizacijaumetnosti.com/deca-hiperrealizma/> [last access 20 August 2021]

The Čolaković Legacy exhibited 17 paintings from various cycles: Epiphany, The Murmur of the Innocents, The Horrors of War and others. The part of the exhibition that was in the Salon, contained 16 photographs. These were mostly self-portraits, but also photographs from cycles created in collaboration with musician Marilyn Manson²¹⁶.

Owing to the unusualness and courage in the work, more than the communication strategies, the setting recorded more than expected success. The exhibition progressed, and the interest in it grew more and more, so the organizers subsequently decided to organize numerous public guided tours and workshops for the youth²¹⁷.



III. 48 Symbols of innocence and evil,
https://www.helnwein.com/press/international_press/article_5679-Ostalo-1-Izmeu-nevinosti-i-zla-Helnvajnova-izloba-u-Beogradu

Gottfried Helnwein:

I think the biggest tragedy is that people are incredibly easy to manipulate. The tragedy is not that there are dictators and sadists, because there are very few of them. They themselves do not pose a threat to humanity. The real threat is that people are so susceptible to manipulation that to believe everything, that they lose

²¹⁶D. Purešević, *Art zona- Gotfrid Helnvajn: Između nevinosti i zla*, in “RTS Svet Online” 10 May 2016; <https://www.rts.rs/page/tv/sr/story/22/rts-svet/2311084/.html> [last access on 20 August 2021]

²¹⁷V. Jeremić, *Deca hiperrealizma*, in” Dematerijalizacija umetnosti 2014-2019 Online”, 31 December 2016, p 317-323; <http://dematerijalizacijaumetnosti.com/deca-hiperrealizma/> [last access on 20 August]

their individuality in an instant, as soon as they find themselves the target of appropriate propaganda²¹⁸.

The main problem in communication strategies during these years was the "scattering" of exhibitions. That's why there haven't been any books of impressions or complete documentation on the settings. That is one of the reasons why the public doesn't have a complete archive of these events, either.



III. 49 Annual catalog 2009,
<https://msub.org.rs/publication/salon-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti-beograd-godisnji-katalog-2009/#slide-0>

However, thanks to the Internet, some types of archives are online texts and articles, which can be found in, unfortunately, abbreviated versions and descriptions.

2.8 Reopening after 10 years and the first exhibition, 2017

After having a padlock on its entrance for the public for ten years, the renovated building of the Museum unlocked its doors to visitors on October 20, 2017, with the exhibition *Sequences*. Communication and its strategies with the public have finally revived. The media announced this event days earlier and the public welcomed the news with enthusiasm. Even after the opening there was a thorough media coverage – by newspapers, radios, television and social media. The magazine National Geographic Serbia announced the reopening with the words:

²¹⁸D. Purešević, *Art zona- Gotfrid Helnvajn: Između nevinost i zla*, in "RTS Svet Online" 10 May 2016, cit.; <https://www.rts.rs/page/tv/sr/story/22/rts-svet/2311084/.htmlc> [last access on 20 August 2021]

The renovated building of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade was opened with an exhibition entitled *Sequences. Art of Yugoslavia and Serbia from the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art*²¹⁹.

On the opening day, Radio Television of Serbia announced:

Today, after 10 years, the Museum of Contemporary Art finally opened its doors to visitors, who come in large numbers from 10 am to visit the renovated building in Ušće and see the exhibition *Sequences. Art of Yugoslavia and Serbia from the Museum of Contemporary Art*²²⁰.

Izložba "Sekvence" otvara renovirani Muzej savremene umetnosti

Nakon što je deset godina bila zatvorena za javnost, renovirana zgrada Muzeja savremene umetnosti otvara se 20. oktobra 2017. godine u 10 časova, izložbom „Sekvence. Umetnost Jugoslavije i Srbije iz zbirki Muzeja savremene umetnosti“. Prvih sedam dana, od 20. oktobra u 10 časova do 27. oktobra u 10 časova, publika će biti u mogućnosti da u bilo koje vreme obiđe izložbu, ulaz će biti besplatan.

IZVOR: B92 | ČETVRTAK, 12.10.2017. | 14:26

Слика ми се Твитују Podeli



Ill. 50 Announcement of the *Sequences* on the "B92" television site, https://www.b92.net/kultura/vesti.php?yyyy=2017&mm=10&dd=12&nav_category=1864&nav_id=1313406

The team in charge of the creative concept of the opening consisted of the director of the Belgrade Dance Festival Aja Jung, the director of the Belgrade Philharmonic Ivan Tasovac, the painter and professor at the Faculty of Applied Arts and Ivan Grubanov,

²¹⁹ A.D., *Otvoren Muzej savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in „National Geographic Srbija Online“, 20 October 2017, cit.; <https://nationalgeographic.rs/istorija-i-kultura/istorija/a22015/otvoren-muzej-savremene-umetnosti-u-beogradu.html/> [last access on 7 January 2022]

²²⁰ M. Rajković, *Otvoren Muzej savremene umetnosti*, in “RTS Online”, 20 October 2017, cit.; <https://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/16/kultura/2910678/otvoren-muzej-savremene-umetnosti.html/> [last access 8 January 2022]

the director of the Matica Srpska Gallery in Novi Sad²²¹. A seven-day program was organized, which included performances by a conductor Heinz Karl Gruber, soprano Branislav Podrumac and conductor Gabriel Felc. Choreographer Jakopo Godani with the players of the company *Dresden Frankfurt Dance* was announced as a guest of the museum. The program also included a musical part that was held on the plateau in front of the museum. The jazz quartet "Four Plus", DJ Boban Petroni and DJ Sonja Pavlica were in charge of this segment. There was also a special program for the youngest visitors²²².

The decade without exhibitions in the Museum was ended by the exhibition *Sequences. Art of Yugoslavia and Serbia from the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art*, in 2017. The author of this exhibition was the curator Dejan Sretenović. Besides Sretenović, the curators of the exhibition were Mišela Blanuša and Zoran Erić.

The exhibition followed the period from the beginning of the 20th century to the present, as well as presenting created art in Yugoslavia and Serbia today. *The Sequences* covered contemporary art. Its aim was to confirm and show, once again, the rich collection of the Museum. Also, it gave the audience a new framework with the goal to help the visitors familiarize with and understand the art made on these territories²²³.

This didactically oriented exhibition was based on working concepts, methods and models active in contemporary history and the theory of art.

The importance of the *Sequences* was, among other things, "bringing new input into the corpus of extant knowledge and writing one version of the history of modern and contemporary art"²²⁴. The exhibition helped in remapping, correcting and reevaluating the 20th century art history. Also, its contribution can be seen through reinventing some of the neglected and marginalized phenomena.

²²¹M. Božović, *Aja Jung, Tasovac, Grubanovic Tijana Palkovlević koautori koncepta otvaranja zgrade MSU*, in „Blic Online“ 18 October 2017; <https://www.blic.rs/kultura/vesti/aja-jung-tasovac-grubanov-i-tijana-palkovljevic-koautori-koncepta-otvaranja-zgrade/v80f47/> [last access on 21 August 2021]

²²² S. A. *Nakon 10 godina rekonstrukcije, sutra se otvara Muzej savremene umetnosti*, in “Novi magazine Online”, 19 October 2017; <https://novimagazin.rs/zivot-i-ljudi/159854-nakon-10-godina-rekonstrukcije-sutra-se-otvara-muzej-savremene-umetnosti> [last access on 14 December 2021]

²²³B. Sterling, *Belgrade's Museum of Contemporary Art re-opens after ten years*, in “Wired Online”, 26 October 2017; <https://www.wired.com/beyond-the-beyond/2017/10/belgrades-museum-contemporary-art-re-opens-ten-years/> [last access on 21 August]

²²⁴ Ibid.



Ill. 51 Vasa Pomorišac, Kartaši, 1924, oil on canvas, <http://www.casopiskus.rs/sekvence-umetnost-jugoslavije-i-srbije-iz-zbirki-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti/>

The exhibition consisted of 18 sequences. These were freely clustered around a chronological axis. The axis kept track of the historical shifts in the art of Yugoslavia and Serbia for a period longer than one century.

The name of “sequence” was borrowed from the film terminology. In films, it marks a series of scenes which are in a relationship with the unity of time or location, creating a distinct narrative unit. In this context, the notion of sequence is connected to artistic currents, tendencies and movements, constrained by the unity of time and space, for example, poetic, linguistic and thematic relatedness. *Sequences* are observed as the spatial-temporal units. These units relay on a dialectical relationship between the museum representation, in terms of the material practice of arranging objects in space, and art historical narrativization, in terms of practice of writing which arranges these objects in the historical time²²⁵.

²²⁵Ibid.

This exhibition and the introductory text reminded the audience of the role and importance of the contemporary art in museums. The exhibition was intended for a wide audience, which was a great challenge for the curators. One of the challenges, but also the imperative was to strike a balance between the theoretical achievements of the art history and the long-awaited return of the audience to the museum.

The introductory text reminded the public of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the disappearance of a large artistic space, which was located on the borders of the newly formed states.

The preface revealed that the concept of "geo-history of art" (Thomas Dakota Kaufman) was applied. This concept takes into account the interrelationship of territory, identity and artistic constellations and at the same time determines the significance of geography for the history of art²²⁶. Thomas Dakota Kaufman in *Toward a Geography of Art* explained:

In other words, the reason that questions of culture (and art) can be studied geographically is because certain perceived cultures have distinctive geographical dimensions: north and south, east and west are all used to delimit them. In addition, because they provide causal explanations for the existence of cultures, climate and materials can be investigated²²⁷.

Furthermore, it was declared that the starting point in history for the periodization of contemporary art was unanimously agreed to be 1989. This year was accepted because of the geopolitical changes that affected Europe and the whole world after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and which left consequences on the world of contemporary art. According to all geopolitical labeling it was very difficult, almost impossible, to particularly label Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia or contemporary non-European member states of the Western Balkan. They were not Eastern Europe; they were something different form behind the Iron curtain. It was used to be called "hole in the Iron curtain" or "no man's land" and thus because of that the incapacity to label and to made it either Western or Eastern bloc, Yugoslavia initiated the non-alignment movement. Nowadays, the studies of the former Yugoslavia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and so on are either clustered with central Eastern European

²²⁶Muzej Savremene umetnosti u Beogradu. *Sekvence*, in "Art Magazin.info Online" http://www.artmagazin.info/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4650&Itemid=106/ [last access on 22 August 2021]

²²⁷T. Da Costa Kaufmann, *Toward the Geography of Art*, University of Chicago Press, 2004, p.84, cit.

studies, Balkan studies or Western Balkan studies and sometimes, especially France, they cluster with the oriental studies. Pejić's way of addressing the issue is in fact a discussion about standardization how to speak about Yugoslav art as neither east nor west, always something in between no man's land and everyone's image. Pejić thought about a new label – mix of post socialist art with rich diversity that still waits to be named. She also discusses Eastern initiatives at its own exhibitions examining its protests of self historization²²⁸. The philosopher Michel Foucault came up with the expression the "fatal intersection of time and space", in *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*, which in the case of the disintegration of Yugoslavia received a concrete realization:

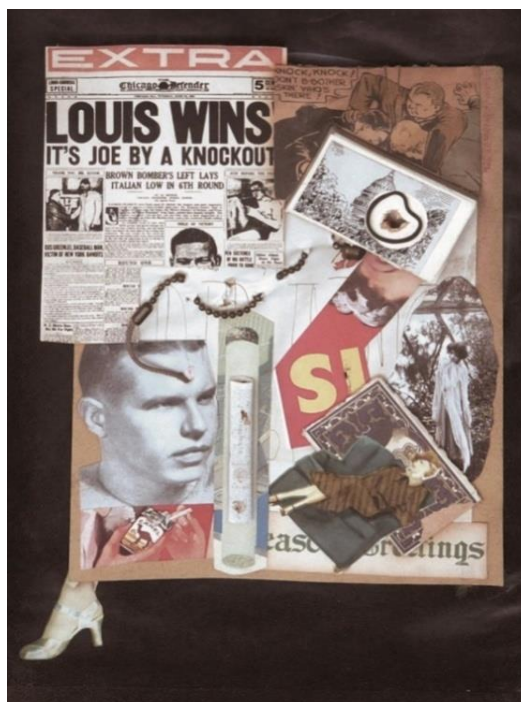
Yet it is necessary to notice that the space which today appears to form the horizon of our concerns, our theory, our systems, is not an innovation; space itself has a history in Western experience, and it is not possible to disregard the fatal intersection of time with space.²²⁹

In the case of the disintegration of Yugoslavia, this expression received a concrete realization. For that reason, the curators thus give themselves the right to set 1991 as a double historical marker. It was believed that then the change in artistic geography at the regional level coincided with the change in the periodization of contemporary art at the global level²³⁰.

²²⁸M. Sapija, *Conceptualizing Exhibitions as Sociopolitical Research: An Analysis of European Exhibition Practices of the 1990s*, in "The Garage Journal: Studies in Art, Museums & Culture", 3,2021, pp.193-211, here p.198

²²⁹M.Foucault, *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*, in "Architecture /Mouvement/ Continuité", October, 1984, cit.; <https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/foucault1.pdf/> [last access 10 January 2022]

²³⁰ Ibid.



Ill. 52 M. Ristić, Assemblage, 1939, Collage - Assemblage, 362x252 mm, Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, <http://nadrealizam.rs/en/collections/assemblage-marko-ristic-aa939-inv-br-c-922>

Sequences is a symbolic project because it represented time in narration, style in ways, creative personalities in echoes of time, existential in figure, society in photographs, dominant in colorful, abstract in minimalist, expressionist in decomposed native landscape, realistic in the postmodern, subversively in the modernist, intimately in the bourgeois, art in the light of today. All elements can be placed at the same time. This was done with the aim that the observer, regardless of prior knowledge of art and collections, thinks from a different angle about the set contents, to consider and observe. On the other hand, those who do not have prior knowledge have been given the opportunity to concentrate on what attracts or challenges them the most. The exhibition implied an educational function, and that is one of its meanings.

In this case, once again, the dependence of artistic aspirations on curatorial selection was seen in a full glory. And the doubts that existed were left to the visitors, who in this way become potential and active interpreters, for insight, and then processing, for criticism or for unconditional consent²³¹.

²³¹ Ibid.

The media, under the impression of the opening, as well as the success of the opening and the interest of the audience, thoroughly announced and then followed this setting.

2.9 The third closure, 2019

Shortly after the opening of the museum in Ušće, after a decade-long break, Museum didn't get enough time to shine in full splendor. Instead, it was closed once again in July 2019 and this time for two months²³².



Ill. 53 Marina Abramović and skeleton, <https://www.espreso.co.rs/kultura/galerija/443789/cistac-i-pocisceni-kako-je-izlozba-marine-abramovic-opet-podelila-srbiju>

The reason for the summer "break" was the preparation of the setting of the retrospective exhibition *Cleaner* by Marina Abramović²³³. During this closure, crisis management was enough prepared and had ready answers to potential media questions. And so, when asked to comment on the move, museum director Slobodan Nakarada tried to explain the scope and complexity of the work and the architectural changes required for Abramović's project. He justified this questionable decision with an identical or similar way of working of foreign museums.

²³² B. Barlušić Jovanović, *Otkrivamo zašto se ponovo zatvara Muzej savremene umetnosti*, in "RTS Online" 15 July 2019; <https://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/16/kultura/3591316/otkrivamo-zasto-se-ponovo-zatvara-muzej-savremene-umetnosti.html> [last access on 22 August 2021]

²³³ S.M. Stajić, *Čistač i pročišćeni budžet za kulturu: Kako je izložba Marine Abramović opet podelila Srbiju?*, in "Espresso Online" 23 September 2019; <https://www.espreso.co.rs/kultura/galerija/443789/cistac-i-pocisceni-kako-je-izlozba-marine-abramovic-opet-podelila-srbiju/> [last access on 22 August 2021]

While the answer about the closure was very short, the announcement and follow-up of Marina's *Cleaner* was complete, extensive and frequent. We saw this in more detail in the first part of the thesis (1.9. Marina Abramović, Cleaner, September 2019 - January 2020).

3 Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade and communication strategies during COVID-19

As Dejan Tiago Stanković, writer and translator, stated in one of the interviews during the pandemic, the whole world received proof that we can live without planes, trucks, restaurants, cars, but that we cannot do without books, music and movies and art in general²³⁴. In this chapter I will try to support this thesis, on the basis of selected case exhibitions.

The exhibition *Reflection of our time: Acquisitions of the Museum of Contemporary Art 1993-2019* planned for June - November 2020, coincided with the 55th jubilee of the Museum of Contemporary Art. In a way, the exhibition was a gift of gratitude to its visitors and a celebration of the art displayed at this institution through over a half of century. At the very beginning, as well as many events in 2020, it encountered a problem called COVID-19. The planned opening date of the exhibition for the public, March 28, has been postponed. Until the exhibition officially became available to the public, those interested in live visits had the opportunity to see works of art on the Museum's website and social networks²³⁵. Fortunately, on June 27, 2020, in Ušće, as well as in the Gallery of the legacy of Milica Zorić and Rodoljub Čolaković, the exhibition became available to visitors, respecting epidemiological measures²³⁶. The authors of the concept of this exhibition were the curators of the Museum of Contemporary Art: Mišela Blanuša, Rajka Bošković, Svetlana Mitić i Žaklina Ratković²³⁷.

²³⁴M. Krtnić, *Niko režim ne podržava od srca, što je znak da mu se približava kraj*, in "Danas", 8 May 2020; <https://www.danas.rs/kultura/niko-rezim-ne-podrzava-od-srca-sto-je-znak-da-mu-se-priblizava-kraj/> [last access on 25 August 2021]

²³⁵*Refleksije našeg vremena: akvizicije muzeja savremene umetnosti 1993-2019*, announcement (Museum of Contemporary Art Online, March 2019); <https://msub.org.rs/najava-izlozba-refleksije-naseg-vremena-akvizicije-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti-1993-2019/> [last access on 25 August 2021]

²³⁶A. Neša, *MUSUB: Izložba "Refleksije našeg vremena :akvizicije muzeja savremene umetnosti1993-2019"*, in "Dan u Beogradu Online", 21 June 2021; <https://www.danubeogradu.rs/2020/06/msub-izlozba-refleksije-naseg-vremena-akvizicije-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti-1993-2019/> [last access on 25 August 2021]

²³⁷*Refleksije našegvremena: akvizicije muzeja savremene umetnosti 1993-2019*, announcement (Museum of Contemporary Art Online, March 2019); <https://msub.org.rs/najava-izlozba-refleksije-naseg-vremena-akvizicije-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti-1993-2019/> [last access on 25 August 2021]

The idea for this exhibition arose as a desire to show to the public the museum fund, which in the period from 1993 to 2019 was enlarged with more than 1,400 works of domestic, regional and European modern and contemporary art²³⁸.



Ill. 54 Biljana Đurđević, Oruđedelanja (A tool of treatment), Photo: Bojana Janjić / MSUB, <https://www.novosti.rs/vesti/kultura.71.html:872451-Zbirka-MSU-za-25-godina-obogacena-je-sa-1400-radova-Riznica-sa-Usca-a-neka-od-ovih-dela-bice-dostupna-posetiocima>

The fund includes over two hundred representative works of art, divided in several units - paintings, graphics, drawings, sculptures, installations, photographs and video works. The collection was filled in a planned way - the works were redeemed from domestic and international exhibitions organized at the Museum, through gifts from artists or their successors. Also, art works were gathered through direct contacts with the artists themselves. The exhibition provided an insight into two basic concepts in the approach to collecting museum collections. The first concept represented a historical line of development, in which are put some of the crucial works for the currents of 20th century modernism in the Yugoslav art space. The second concept followed the course of regional and European movements, and at the same time the dynamics of the contemporary art scene²³⁹.

The exhibition presented works by some of the most important Yugoslav artists of the first half of the 20th century – Nadežda Petrović, Sava Šumanović, Sreten Stojanović,

²³⁸ A. Neša, *MUSUB: Izložba "Refleksije našeg vremena :akvizicije muzeja savremene umetnosti 1993-2019"*, in "Dan u Beogradu Online", 21 June 2021; <https://www.danubeogradu.rs/2020/06/msub-izlozba-refleksije-naseg-vremena-akvizicije-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti-1993-2019> [last access on 25 August 2021]

²³⁹ Ibid.

Dušan Jovanović Đukin, Petar Dobrović, Marko Ristić, the second half of the 20th century - Miodrag B. Protić, Ljubica Cuca Sokić, Bora Iljovski, Djordjije Crncevic, Nevenka Stojisavljevic and the first two decades of the 21st century - Biljana Djurdjevic, Ivan Grubanov, Vladimir Nikolic²⁴⁰. The exhibition was accompanied by lectures by the authors of the exhibition, experts in certain fields, as well as film programs based on works from the Museum's collection²⁴¹.

As for the communication strategies related to this setting, because of the pandemic the setting has received more announcements than it would otherwise. As museums were being closed on a global scale, that was the case here as well. The reopening required a re-announcement, so that one exhibition would be rescheduled, but also advertised on several occasions - on the site, social networks and cultural sections. Due to the lockdown of the cultural institutions, those who were interested, as mentioned above, could view it online. Although this was a novelty, the Museum succeeded in addressing the audience this way. The gain was represented by many new young visitors who constantly use the Internet, but there was a noticeable "loss" of the older generations, who do not cope with technology. This is supported by the 2020 results of research by the DATAREPORTAL.COM site, which deals with the processing and presentation of data that follow current internet and marketing trends. In Serbia, 75% of the population has access to the Internet, and only 42% actively use social networks. We must also take into account that the survey was conducted at all ages, and the fact is that in these percentages young people are the vast majority²⁴². This argument is applicable to all the below listed exhibitions in this thesis.

3.1 Love is love: the joy of marriage for all

Love is love: the joy of marriage for all, Jean Paul Gaultier, November 2020 - March 2021 - Jean Paul Gaultier is one of the world's most famous designers. From 2003 to 2010, this French designer was the creative director of the fashion house Hermès. His

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ *Refleksije našeg vremena u Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in "RTS Online", 21 Jun 2020; <https://www.rts.rs/page/magazine/sr/kulturno/story/3152/vest/3993730/muzej-savremene-umetnosti-izlozba.html> [last access on 25 August 2021]

²⁴² *Internet i marketing trendovi u Srbiji*, in "site snartweb", 03 March 2021; <https://smartweb.rs/internet-marketing-trendovi/> [last access on 18 September]

first solo collection was released in 1976. He often focused on the street fashion with an emphasis on the popular culture²⁴³. His collections celebrate androgyny, blended street styles with haute couture.

The exhibition *Love is love: the joy of marriage for all - Jean Paul Gaultier* was created as the finale of the exhibition *Jean Paul Gaultier's Fashion World: From Sidewalk to Runway*, where 38 high fashion wedding dresses created from 1990 to 2020 were shown. The exclusivity in this case was that the Belgrade audience had the chance to see the premiere of eight Gaultier wedding dresses that were not part of the exhibition before. In his own way, through the redesign of the white dress, re-examining gender, ethnic and religious conventions, Gauthier's struggle for human rights and the promotion of cultural diversity could be seen²⁴⁴.



III. 55 Wedding dress, Jean-Paul Gauthier, Photo: EPA-EFE/MAXIM SHIPENKOV, M.Marjanović/Nova.rs, <https://nova.rs/kultura/pise-milena-marjanovic-gotje-u-msu-je-iskorak-u-buducnost/>

²⁴³ V. Stojanović, *Jean Pol Gaultier: Kreativnosti nikad dosta*, in „Wannabe Magazin Online“; <https://wannabemagazine.com/jean-paul-gaultier-kreativnosti-nikad-dosta/> [last access on 26 August 2021]

²⁴⁴ A. Neša, *Muzej savremen eumetnosti Beograd: Izložba: “Ljubav je ljubav: radost venčanja za sve-Žan Pol Gotje”*, in “Dan u Beogradu Online”, 3 November 2020; <https://www.danubeogradu.rs/2020/11/muzej-savremene-umetnosti-beograd-izlozba-ljubav-je-ljubav-radost-vencanja-za-sve-zan-pol-gotje/> [last access on 26 August 2021]

Since the exhibition was presented during the pandemic, it also played a role in its direction. For that reason, there were several online inclusions at the ceremony - from the curator Thierry Maxim-Lorio from Canada and from Jean-Paul Gauthier from France. The curator pointed out:

This premiere in Serbia marks the end of Gauthier's career in the world of haute couture and celebrates the way he showed humor over fifty years through his creative and provocative work, which revealed a humanistic vision of society embracing all cultures and subcultures without any taboos or condemnations. He portrayed us as we are beyond fashion²⁴⁵.

Fortunately, and with respect for epidemiological measures, interested visitors were able to attend the exhibition in person²⁴⁶.

However, besides the pandemic problems, there was another big obstacle. The curators thought that wedding dresses had no place in the museum and they openly showed dissatisfaction. On this occasion, the head of the Department of Art Collections and Exhibitions of the Museum, Dr. Zoran Erić, stated:

It is an extremely inappropriate way of making a museum program due to the huge budget necessary for the realization of that exhibition, for which we still do not understand where it comes from in the crisis. Also, the motif of the exhibits - wedding dresses - in the year of the pandemic and the reduction of weddings to extremely modest ceremonies and without guests, seems out of place²⁴⁷.

Former acting director of the Museum, Vladislav Šćepanović, when asked by "Sputnik" for a comment, said that this exhibition did not have the quality required by the Museum of Contemporary Art.

However, the main word was given to the acting director Viktor Kiš, who pointed out that Gaultier is "more than a modern world-famous fashion designer - he is an

²⁴⁵ M. Jakovljević, *Ljubav je ljubavi u doba korone-Gotjeove venačnice u Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in "Sputnik Online", 27 November 2020, cit.; <https://rs-lat.sputniknews.com/20201127/ljubav-je-ljubav-i-u-doba-korone--gotjeove-venanice-u-muzeju-savremene-umetnosti-1123966058.html> [last access on 26 august 2021]

²⁴⁶ M. Mirković, *Više od venčanice: U beogradskom Muzeju savremene umetnosti otvorena spektakularna izložba Žan-Pola Gotjea*, in "Novosti Online", 29 November 2020; <https://www.novosti.rs/kultura/vesti/940099/vise-vencanice-beogradskom-muzeju-savremene-umetnosti-otvorena-spektakularna-izlozba-zan-pola-gotjea> [last access on 26 August 2021]

²⁴⁷ M. Jakovljević, *Ljubav je ljubavi u doba korone-Gotjeove venačnice u Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in "Sputnik Online", 27 November 2020, cit.; <https://rs-lat.sputniknews.com/20201127/ljubav-je-ljubav-i-u-doba-korone--gotjeove-venanice-u-muzeju-savremene-umetnosti-1123966058.html> [last access on 26 August 2021]

artist."²⁴⁸In addition to the support of the director, the project was supported by numerous sponsors.



Ill. 56 Wedding dress, Jean-Paul Gauthier, Photo: Bojana Janjić, <https://www.blic.rs/kultura/u-msu-otvorena-izlozba-zan-pol-gotjea-ljubav-je-ljubav/n7rv66>

For some, as expected, the exhibition was a success and described a lavish, provocative, engaged and creative exhibition, which was "much more than an exhibition of high fashion"²⁴⁹. Personally, I can see the artistic side in everything, as is the case with the wedding dress exhibition, but I still can't agree with the time of the exhibition. On this issue, I absolutely agree with the statement of Dr. Zoran Erić.

In addition to the regular announcements, as part of communication strategies, there were those so-called pandemic announcements - about the working hours of the Museum and about updating whether there will be a re-closure. As can be noted in the short description of the exhibition in this thesis, the negative marketing was obvious, since many curators, as it has already been said, publicly objected to the wedding dresses being exhibited in this building. The setting certainly attracted a lot of

²⁴⁸SEEcult, *Izložba venčanica Žan Pol Gotjea u MUSUB*, in "Media Sfera medijski vodič Online", 3 November 2020, cit.; <https://mediasfera.rs/2020/11/03/izlozba-vencanica-zan-pol-gotjea-u-msub/> [last access on 27 august 2021]

²⁴⁹M. Mirković, *Više od venčanice: U beogradskom Muzeju savremeneu metnosti otvorena spektakularna izložba Žan-Pola Gotjea*, in "Novosti Online", 29 November 2020; <https://www.novosti.rs/kultura/vesti/940099/vise-vencanice-beogradskom-muzeju-savremene-umetnosti-otvorena-spektakularna-izlozba-zan-pola-gotjea/> [last access on 26 August 2021]

attention, both positive and negative. One of the reasons for going to it was the fact that this exhibition has attracted more than two million visitors in 12 cities around the world. At the same time, it broke many records of visits to fashion exhibitions in Serbia.

3.2 Stations

The academic painter of the *Stations* exhibition is Ljiljana Šunjevarić. Ljiljana Šunjevarić is a visual artist and associate professor at the Faculty of Arts, University of Priština, with a temporary headquarters in Kosovska Mitrovica, a city located in Kosovo. For years, her painting has been sealed with strong and symbolic scenes of people and their relationships during movement, in areas such as swamps, forests, river valleys or beaches. Very often she focuses on migrations in her works. Šunjevarić compares the historical migrations of peoples with modern migrations. It shows the relations between the movements of people and monumental spaces that points us to the social, political, and sometimes personal causes of these movements. Viewed from an iconographic angle, it mainly represents large groups of people who are outdoors, in nature, in open territories or in landscapes²⁵⁰.

Stations, which was presented in February-April, 2021, through seven almost monochrome large-format paintings, in the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art. She began creating this cycle of paintings in 2019. She depicted monumental halls of international airports, a spacious interior of a train station, a shopping center that seems empty and abandoned, the ferry with passengers. Furthermore, she painted the interior of a large temple, which at first glance seems unfinished, too. The ambience and atmosphere were complemented by small groups of people moving disoriented and undirected. They seem like they are waiting in disbelief for someone or something. People in images and events act frozen, as if standing in time and space, showing spiritual gaps, and the artist emphasized that with the conflicts of light and dark, as well as the interrelationships of surfaces and possible figures. Due to the specific

²⁵⁰S. Ristović, “*Stanice*” *Salon Muzeja savrenene umetnosti*, in “RTS Radio Beograd 2 Online” 13 February 2021; <https://www.rts.rs/page/radio/sr/story/24/radio-beograd-2/4256663/ljiljana-sunjevaric.html>[last access on 27 August 2021]

atmosphere, the impression of metaphysical dynamics is formed. Thus, a transient and seemingly insignificant station turns into a newly discovered life experience²⁵¹.

The work, started in 2019, observed from the present time, has a very strong impact on the human psyche. The exhibition acts as a prediction for what followed a year later - a pandemic and a global pause in motion. The *Stations* now represent an allusion to humanity that has suddenly stopped moving²⁵².



III. 57 Stations, Ljiljana Šunjevaric, https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-8-QqQ6EJn5s/YEs5pAvT7XI/AAAAAADV8g/afuGgm57Nk0O3y8i2ZHK22IcUhpKqJ4gCLcBGAsYHQ/s2000/_DSC0365.JPG

In an interview with the "Cultural Panel", she explained that the pandemic served her to research and interpret issues that she had been dealing with for a long time - migrations and other types of migration processes, but through a new prism. She views the *Stations* in a drastic way, as an indicator of "places of uncertain stops, administrative bans and almost endless disturbing waits."²⁵³ The noticeable difference is that it has moved from showing large groups of people to smaller ones. By showing fewer people, in a state of rest, or chaotic movement, she believes that she has gained additional relevance with an allusion to the world that has suddenly stopped.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵²J. Krulj, *Izložba "Stanice"-aluzije na svet koji se iznenada zaustavio*, in "Kulturpanel Online" 28 February 2021; <https://kulturpanel.com/izlozba-stanice-aluzija-na-svet-koji-se-iznenada-zaustavio-kultur-panel/> [last access on 27 August 2021]

²⁵³ Ibid., cit.

This statement of hers, as well as the topic itself, were enough to attract the audience. The announcement itself, which explained the topic, intrigued the public, because the whole world was experiencing what was shown in the *Stations*, what was predicted in her art.

3.3 Experience in the crowd a retrospective exhibition by Goranka Matić

Experience in the crowd, March - May, 2021, a retrospective exhibition by Goranka Matić, March - May, 2021 - Goranka Matić graduated in art history at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. She has been engaged in photography since 1980 and worked in the fields of reportage for newspapers and art photography. Her works have been published in the magazines "Jukebox" and "Start". She was the editor of photography in two important newspapers in Serbia, in the weekly "Vreme" and the daily "Politika". She has had exhibitions both in the country and abroad. Matić was the winner of the "October Salon" awards in 1989, the "Conquest of Freedom" awards in 2002 and the "Politika Awards" awards in 2004. These are just some of her successes and these are just some of the reasons why her exhibition *Experience in the crowd* was accompanied by curiosity and enthusiasm²⁵⁴.



III. 58
Goranka Matić, <https://fmk.singidunum.ac.rs/profesori/goranka-matic/>

²⁵⁴ *Upoznaj autore Izložba Beograd-Beograd – Brisel* announcement in "Site Primenjena nostalgija", Izložba 06 2010; <https://www.appliednostalgia.com/sr/fotografii/goranka-matic.html> [last access on 27 August 2021]

Goranka Matić is characterized as a chronicler whose works provide insight into the social and cultural circumstances of Yugoslavia, and later of Serbia and Belgrade, from the beginning of the eighties to the beginning of the 21st century. Her photographs are amongst the crowd of the current moment, conveying the drama of the events and the psychology of the individual²⁵⁵.

Her exhibition *Experience in the Crowd* consisted of hundreds of photographs and materials such as archives, documentation, photo-essays. They were exhibited on three floors and divided into five parts arranged thematically. The dominated units were: first author's exhibitions and first photographs; photographs of rock concerts and the protagonists of New Wave, as well as photographs of actors in the art scene during the eighties, when the center of events in Belgrade was the Student Cultural Center. These include rock photography, the lifestyle of rock actors and the art scene, the design of music album covers; portraits - artists, directors, writers, politicians, and others. In the 10 years against unit - photos from political rallies, manifestations and protests in Belgrade in the period between 1990 and 2000 were included. In the Art projects unit - intimate self-portraits, such as *Moravice projects*, *Matrilinial mirror*, *Memorabilies*, *Portraits with friends* and *Scars* were exhibited²⁵⁶.

In an interview for the daily "Danas", she said that the exhibition got its name because the curator Una Popović extracted that quote from previous interviews, and in that moment, Matić realized that the quote was in fact her poetics - an experience in a crowd²⁵⁷.

This retrospective coincided with several important events - 40 years of the new wave, 30 years since March 9 - mass protests in Belgrade, which turned into a riot and a bloodshed between the protesters and police, 18 years since the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, 22 years since the bombing. In the same interview, she explained that she photographed the new wave on March 9, half-consciously. When the Prime Minister was assassinated, she clearly remembers how the news were told

²⁵⁵ *Iskustvo u gužvi – retrospektivna izložba Goranke Matić* announcement (Museum of contemporary art Online, March 2021); <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/iskustvo-u-guzvi-retrospektivna-izlozba-goranke-matic/> [last access on 27 August 2021]

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ A. Čuk, *Goranka Matić: Moja poetika je iskustvo u gužvi*, in "Danas Online", 10 March 2021; <https://www.danas.rs/kultura/goranka-matic-moja-poetika-je-iskustvo-u-guzvi/> [last access on 27 August 2021]

to her - she was told to forget about the lecture that day (at that time she was lecturer at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade) and to run to the editorial office. Regarding the bombing, she said that she did not even believe that it would happen nor that the political situation would escalate so much. However, while she was returning from the newsroom one day, over Branko's bridge, the first bombs fell²⁵⁸. Her photographs were to capture the atmosphere and life during these events.

In addition to these unpleasant events, she used a camera to record the faces and moments of various people - from celebrities to the ordinary people - and all of this was included in this retrospective. When asked if she was making a difference between these two "classes" of people, she answered that "in the process you are actually trying to do something good as a shaman and forget about whether there is a terribly important person in front of you, a much older person or a child"²⁵⁹.

When giving an interview for "Radio Television of Serbia", on the topic of this retrospective, she asked how to achieve an individual, author's stamp in a mechanically reproduced image. She answered: "Probably everyone has his/her own stamp, just as everyone has a different pattern for identification in the police. There one should add a little more education, happiness, perseverance and the duration in business."²⁶⁰ Considering that Goranka Matić has been present on the art and photography scene for 40 years, the announcement for her retrospective did not require too much presentation of the artist herself and her work. She has cooperated with numerous journalists over the years, so she got the media space to announce a retrospective. In addition to the announcement for the exhibition, the Museum had to include information on new epidemiological measures in communication strategies during this period, so all media sources emphasized that the maximum number of visitors, in the planned Protić Hall, was 40 people and reminding that wearing masks and respecting distance was mandatory. An additional step in communication with the audience was a representative catalog that contained segments of the author's work with two texts that

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ D. Purešević, *Goranka Matić: Pečat autora fotografije je kao šara na palcu*, in "RTS Online", 01 May 2020; <https://www.rts.rs/page/magazine/sr/kulturno/story/3158/intervju/3940026/goranka-matic-fotograf.html?fbclid=IwAR10ejS3nM6ND14jGn2wWDY4kE0DINKqlq9vwENPwf51ToH8dM6HgS8zeBY/> [last access on 28 August 2021], cit.

chronologically, thematically and in detail analyzed the practice and works of the author. The promotion was held on the last day of the exhibition.



Ill. 59 Goranka Matic, from a series of protests, Proclamation of Milosevic as President, 1997, Photo: Goranka Matic, <https://nova.rs/kultura/pise-milena-marjanovic-odlucujuci-momenat-goranka-matic/>



Ill. 60 Goranka Matic, from a series of portraits, Marina Abramovic, 1988, Photo: Goranka Matic, <https://nova.rs/kultura/pise-milena-marjanovic-odlucujuci-momenat-goranka-matic/>

In brief interview for this thesis chronicler and photographer Goranka Matic emphasized that for her, but also for photography, the significance of the Museum is great, because her retrospective exhibition *Experience in the Crowd* is the first major retrospective of a photographic author with a threatening large and high-quality catalogue. Since it has been closed for a decade and then again due to the pandemic, she hopes that it the moment the Museum get the chance of continuity with working, it will return to its original significance²⁶¹.

3.4 Film marathon performance at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade

The film marathon performance project at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, in April 2021, was presented after the positive reactions of the audience to the project *The film marathon performance* carried out in October 2020. The October 2020 project was a part of

²⁶¹Interview in extenso in appendix

the International Art Week in Venice and was done in collaboration with the Italian Institute of Culture and the Austrian Cultural Forum in Belgrade²⁶².

The collaboration continued, so the film performance program at the Museum, in April, was curated by the International Venice Performing Arts Week. The International Venice Art Performance Week is an independent live art exhibition project. It was created by the artistic tandem WestAndPage in co-organization with the non-profit cultural association Studio Contemporaneo, with W Exhibit, Venice Open Gates, Live Arts Cultures and the Foundation of the European Cultural Center GAA in Venice²⁶³.

This project was done in cooperation with the artist Marta Jovanović, and the goal was to support new performers from Belgrade and Serbia²⁶⁴.

The communication strategies, which aimed to attract young artists, this time were a little more focused on that particular group. The result were thirteen screenings that were shown to the public, the last of which showed videos of Serbian young performances by artists and their works created especially for this occasion. In the screenings, young people were given the opportunity to present themselves to the audience²⁶⁵.



Ill. 61 The film marathon performance project, Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade <https://nova.rs/kultura/filmski-maraton-performansa-u-muzeju-savremene-umetnosti/>

Prof. Nevena Daković, Member of Academia Europaea, gave a brief interview for this thesis. She claims that sees the significance of the Museum from the moment it was founded back in

²⁶²SEE cult, *Filmski marathon performansa u MSU*, in “N1 Online”⁴ April 2021; <https://rs.n1info.com/kultura/filmski-maraton-performansa-u-msu/>[last access on 27 August 2021]

²⁶³Ibid.

²⁶⁴Ibid.

²⁶⁵*Muzej savremene umetnosti: Filmski marathon performansa programa umetnosti*, in “Dan u Beogradu Online” 3 April 2021; <https://www.danubeogradu.rs/2021/04/muzej-savremene-umetnosti-filmski-maraton-performansa-programa-umetnosti/>[last access on 28 August 2021]

1965. She believes that its importance for the public is the focus on the identification of the historicization and promotion of Yugoslav contemporary art, conceptualized according to the most modern world models, with whom it cooperated, organized biennials, exhibitions, guest appearances. In her opinion, as an object that is located in one of the first purpose-designed museum buildings, it also has an architectural value per se. She sees the significance through the first director of the museum, Miodrag Protić, because he gathered a group of young art historians / curators and associates and set the museum as the central space of contemporary Yugoslav art. She goes on to say: - "It was helped by the wave of socialist modernism that actually glorified the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the world."²⁶⁶ Daković also looks back at the period of the wars and the symbolic confirmation that those years did not and cannot destroy the common cultural heritage that we should continue to nurture in the new supranational, regional, post-Yugoslav and Balkan frameworks. She believes that Belgrade tacitly still occupies a central place.

There is a reopening, a decade-long break, where the importance continues in the form of exhibition policy and the presentation of the most important artists, periods, movements and tendencies of Yugoslav, Serbian and foreign art of the 21st century. She also looks at the importance of the Museum through participation, presentation and promotion of local art abroad, as well as the organization of this institution in the performances of local artists at international biennials and triennials (Venice, Sao Paulo, Paris, etc.)²⁶⁷.

3.5 Retrospective exhibition Miomir Grujić- Fleka "Public Illegal"

Retrospective exhibition Miomir Grujić- Fleka *Public Illegal*, April-Jun 2021 - As an introduction to this exhibition, it will be briefly presented who Miomir Grujić Fleka (1954-2003) was. This painter, journalist, radio host, editor was marked as the leader of the underground art scene in Belgrade, during 90s. He was claimed to be one of the important figures in the culture and art scene of the eighties and nineties in Serbia. He said that his "nationality was an individual, his citizenship an underground, his profession a sharp-eyed witness, his specialty a producer of diversity"²⁶⁸, and that his hobby "was collecting realized

²⁶⁶Interview in extenso in appendix

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ V. Laplević, *Ko je bio Miomir Grujić Fleka, javni ilegalac koji je pomerao granice stvarnosti*, in "Sputnik Online"²⁹ May 2021; <https://rs-lat.sputniknews.com/20210529/ko-je-bio-miomir-grujic-fleka-javni-ilegalac-koji-je-pomerao-granice-stvarnosti-foto-1125466633.html/> [last access on 28 August 2021]

utopias"²⁶⁹. Because of this way of thinking, he gave himself the nickname "Public Illegal", and it was after that nickname that the retrospective exhibition got its name²⁷⁰.

The *Publicly Illegal* project is dedicated to Fleka's complex creativity. The project introduced the audience to his paintings, legendary texts, painted leaflets, posters, aphorisms, slogans and audio-video works. All these materials are proof of Fleka's position that his profession was actually a "mission" and that he managed to create diversity and say "No!" to the Ordinary Lord, the Lord in vain and the Lord of misunderstanding²⁷¹.

The exhibition was edited by the Museum in cooperation with the Independent Art Association Remont. The curator of the retrospective, Darka Radosavljević Vasiljević, was also the editor of the monograph. The exhibition was conceptually divided into three zones. The first zone was "IDENTITY versus AUTHORITY" and represented the cult texts of this author. It was named after his statement: "Whoever gives you authority, you give him identity", which was also recorded as the title of one of his interviews. The second zone was the "INSTINCT ZONE". This zone found inspiration in Fleka's ultimate - cult text "Instinct-ultrazone" and it presented his visual arts from the 80's. The third zone - "ZOMBY ZONE" was in the form of documentation and audio-video works. This part brought the audience closer to the artist and pointed out the indestructibility of his spirit, social engagement and creative strength²⁷².



III. 62 Exhibition, Public Illegal, Photo: Vesna Lalić / Nova.rs, <https://nova.rs/kultura/poslednji-glas-andergranda-aktovi-miomir-grujic-fleka/>

²⁶⁹Ibid., cit.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷²SEEcult, *Retrospektiva Fleke u Salonu MSU- "Javni ilegalac"*, in "N1 Online", 19 April 2021; <https://rs.n1info.com/kultura/retrospektiva-fleke-u-salonu-msu-javni-ilegalac/> [last access on 27 August 2021]

During the preparation of the project, a considerable number of drawings and graphics on the topic of the female nude were found, so the decision was made to present his hitherto unexposed works in this gallery. In addition, in the Remont Gallery, in the premises of the above-mentioned associates of the Museum, in the end of April, about thirty acts created from the middle to the end of the 80's were presented (Akt by Fleka)²⁷³.

The retrospective was accompanied by a 280-page monograph. It contains the entire complex work of this artist. The book includes about thirty texts. One third of the texts are new author's texts and the remaining texts which make the majority of the monograph, are reprints of Fleka's texts and interviews²⁷⁴.

The COVID-19 period led people globally to increasingly share information online, as a direct contact was limited. Guided by this situation, the Museum turned to online communication strategies. It approached the audience and informed them about the exhibitions, including this retrospective, online. The retrospective was written about on social networks, but also in many art articles for example on the Museum's website, on the Seecult website, Peščanik website, the Korzo portal, the SPUTNIK website, in the online editions of the daily newspapers "Danas" and "Politika".

3.6 The Effect of Review

The Effect of Review, June-September 2021, was a project of a team consisting of coordinators and curators Blanca de la Torre and Zoran Erić, an assistant curator Dušan Savić, producer Dragana Jovović, designers for the project logo Katarina Popović and Andrej Dolinka. The initial concept of the project was changed due to the pandemic. As a consequence of the COVID-19, the project was divided into two phases. The first phase began on October 2, 2020. Art-works were on display in the Museum's Sculpture Park. The Park featured outdoor installations, murals, outdoor interventions in various urban and rural areas, performances, art workshops, art projects on Instagram and the production of a personalized postage stamp with the artist's logo, among other things. Subsequently there were a series of panel discussions on

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

important environmental topics. The second phase is an exhibition of works by 60 artists, artistic tandems and collectives exhibited on five levels of this institution²⁷⁵.

This international exhibition, *The Effect of Review*, deals with "environmental justice" - various environmental problems and the need to develop awareness of the necessity to protect the environment. The goal of this exhibition is to change the consciousness of man, to change the anthropocentric understanding of the world, because the man is the one who drains natural resources, pollutes the environment, endangers and exterminates many species of living world on the planet Earth²⁷⁶.



Ill. 63 Exhibition, *The Effect of Review*,
<http://www.seecult.org/vest/efekat-pregleda-u-parku-skulptura-msub>
<https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/efekat-pregleda/>

Zoran Erić, the curator of the exhibition, stated in one of the interviews: -"Together with the artists, we are talking about our key problem, which is the problem of environmental justice, the problem of the pollution we face globally, and this topic is especially relevant today in Serbia."²⁷⁷ So, the authors of the exhibition themselves wanted to show environmental awareness in action, so they followed the guidelines of sustainability in order to reduce the carbon footprint of the entire exhibition. They achieved this by avoiding the use of "pollutants", materials from oil and its derivatives, and air transportation of works of art. They focused on the local production, biodegradable materials and recycled materials. In addition, the very title

²⁷⁵*Efekat pregleda*, announcement (Museum of Contemporary Art Online, June 2019), <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/efekat-pregleda/> [last access on 29 August 2021]

²⁷⁶ S. Kalebić, *Izložba "Efekat pregleda" u Muzeju savremene umetnosti*, in „City Magazine Online“, 7 June 2021; <https://citymagazine.danas.rs/kultura/art/izlozba-efekat-pregleda-u-muzeju-savremene-umetnosti/> [last access on 29 August 2021]

²⁷⁷ *Izložba „Efekat pregleda“ u Muzeju savremene umetnosti razmatra ključne ekološke probleme*, in “RTS Online”, 23 June 2021, cit.; <https://www.rts.rs/page/magazine/sr/kulturno/story/3152/vest/4419230/muej-savremene-umetnosti-izlozba-efekat-pregleda.html/> [last access on 30 August 2021]

of the exhibition suggests a view from above - it urges the man to change his perspective and to understand how everything is intertwined in nature, including his influence on it²⁷⁸.

For a better understanding of the project, the title of the exhibition must be explained a little bit more. The title was named after a term introduced by Frank White in 1987 in the book of the same name - *The Effect of Review*. He used the term for the cognitive shift mentioned by astronauts who saw the Earth from the space. The question of the astronauts, Frank White, and then the author of this exhibition, is: "Do we have to move so far away from the planet we live on, as the 'crew of the spaceship Earth', according to Buckminster Fuller's metaphor, to realize that our 'spaceship' is slowly running out of 'fuel' and the crew needs 'the oxygen'?"²⁷⁹

The exhibition is divided into several topics, including the topic "Without edges!" which shows a problem of the economic model which is based on eternal growth and the idea of the progress that has brought the planet Earth to its extremes. The next topic, "Vodotopije" ("Water solutes"), focuses on water and emphasizes that there is a possibility that there will not be enough water in the future if there is no crucial change in human behavior²⁸⁰.

3.7 Group portrait: Sixty years of the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art

The Salon of the Modern Gallery at 14 Pariska Street began its work in the spring of 1961, four years before the opening of the Museum. The Salon of the Modern Gallery, today's Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art, was the first Belgrade gallery to have its own permanent program, regulations and concept. Sixty years later, in 2021, it celebrates its anniversary and a successful museum gallery - Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art²⁸¹.

The salon truly had a reason to celebrate. During the sixty years, it has hosted hundreds of exhibitions and thousands of accompanying programs, talks, presentations, and has participated in the mapping, articulation and historicization of current artistic practices during all these years. The salon has also had a great role in the affirmation of the entire generations of authors, of all orientations, because in addition to already established artists, it gave space

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ *Efekat pregleda*, announcement (Museum of Contemporary Art Online, June 2021); <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/efekat-pregleda/> [last access on 29 August 2021]

²⁸⁰ M.A.K., *JAVNO VOĐENJE KROZ IZLOŽBU "EFEKAT PREGLEDA": Napredak bez granica i voda koja nestaje*, in "Novosti Online", 8 July 2021; <https://www.novosti.rs/kultura/vesti/1014772/javno-vodjenje-kroz-izlozbu-efekat-pregleda-napredak-bez-granica-voda-koja-nestaje/> [last access on 30 August 2021]

²⁸¹ *Grupni portret sezdeset godina Salona Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, in "Arte", 15 July 2021; http://www.arte.rs/sr/aktuelno/grupni_portret_sezdeset_godina_salona_muzeja_savremene_umetnosti-14207/ [last access on 30 August 2021]

to artists of the middle and younger generation. In the work of this salon, it cannot be avoided to mention the successful international cooperation of galleries, too²⁸².

The salon is part of the Museum, physically separated at the other end of the city, but it also acts autonomously. In addition to affirming the artists, it indirectly promotes the Museum and its collections with its programs. Moreover, it has a role in selecting and grouping works and values important for the Museum and the future generations²⁸³.



Ill. 64 Sixty years of the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art, <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/grupni-portret-sezdeset-godina-salona-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti/>

Group portrait: Sixty years of the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art, held in July – September, 2021, was presented chronologically. The exhibition featured documentaries, photographs of early exhibitions, catalogs, video archives, but also several works from the Museum's collection, as well as authors who have exhibited at the Salon over the past years. The goal of the exhibited works of art was to promote the diversity of artistic expression, in the gallery's program strategy during the time of its existence.

Those interested had the opportunity to see the organizational, historical and ideological phases of the institution itself, as well as the possibility of mapping art history in local and world settings thanks to the well selected materials.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ *Grupni portret: Šezdeset godina Salona Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, announcement (Museum of Contemporary Art Online, July 2021); <https://msub.org.rs/exhibition/grupni-portret-sezdeset-godina-salona-muzeja-savremene-umetnosti/> [last access on 30 August 2021]

At the same time, this exhibition was the beginning of work on the realization of the monograph on the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art, which is planned for the coming years²⁸⁴. Given the period of the exhibition, communication strategies continued in the same manner that crisis management adopted at the beginning of the pandemic. The audience was also accessed in writing for this setting. The information could be found on the sites such as “Seecult”, “24sata online”, RTS online edition, in the online and written editions of the newspapers “Danas” and “Vreme”.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

Discussion

The research problem that was investigated in the thesis is the insufficient knowledge of students about the Museum of Contemporary Art, that aroused as a consequence of insufficiently developed communication strategies. With the method of questionnaire, it was found out which are exactly deficiencies in the knowledge of the target group. After the questionnaire enabled the exact definition of the problem, further elaboration was arranged in relation to it, but the methods of communication strategies were also presented, which must continue to be preserved and also be developed.

The research was conducted in the form of a questionnaire answered by 60 students from different universities, age between 18 and 30, online, in the Facebook group “Studenti beogradskih univerziteta”.

When making the questionnaire, it was assumed that students knew little about the history and architecture of the Museum of Contemporary Art. Questions 3, 4 and 5, that were about the history and the architecture, showed that this was a good assumption. Due to the age of the students and the long closure of the Museum, they did not have the opportunity to get to know this institution better. Books of Dejan Sretenović, *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti* and of Milan Popadić, *Arhitektura muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, contributed the most to this part of the thesis.

About architecture: The base of the ground floor is a rectangle with an aspect ratio of 3: 5. The base of the floors is in the form of a rectangle with an aspect ratio of 2: 3. These scales show the tendency of the “golden section”, because the numbers 2, 3 and 5 represent the elements of the Fibonacci sequence (0), (1), 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, ...²⁸⁵.

As expected, they answered positively to the question number 6 whether they knew that the Museum had been closed for a whole decade. However, question number 7 unexpectedly showed that they did not know the reason for the closure, which can be attributed to poor communication and unavailability of information about the Museum in that period. For these reasons, the answer to the eighth question was not so surprising, the majority of students did not know where the exhibitions were held in that decade and how the Museum functioned. Therefore, they did not have knowledge of previous exhibitions. The second and third chapters focus on that part about exhibitions and the way they are promoted. In this section most of the

²⁸⁵D. Sretenović, *Kultura savremenosti i arhitektura Muzeja savremene umetnosti u Beogradu*, in *Prilozi za istoriju Muzeja savremene umetnosti*, edited by D. Sretenović, Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016, pp. 114-131, here p. 120.

data is taken from the newspaper “Politika”, the weekly “Vreme”, the online edition of “RTS” and “Arte” and the Museum's official site.

About the Museum’s work during the second closure: As the period of renovation of the building got longer, the Museum had to manage, travel, and use someone else's exhibition space. The museum had at its disposal a salon space in Pariska Street and the "Petar Dobrović" gallery²⁸⁶.

However, in the recent past, interest in the work of the Museum has been shown. Questions 9 and 10 presented that the students visited the exhibitions in the recent period.

The most frequently mentioned exhibitions, in question number 10, were by Goranka Matić, Marina Abramović and Jean Paul Gauthier. The reason lies in the promotion of these exhibitions, more precisely the well-implemented communication strategy. The information came to the students because it was published often enough. The announcements themselves were interesting for the students, so they attracted them to visit the exhibitions in person. The weekly "Nedeljnik" gave a short, but precise hint of what Abramović’s retrospective looked like: - "Vessels with water, photos and recordings, bones that still smell of flesh and blood, naked artists you have to pass by."²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶D. Rošić, “Beograd i njegovoblago u trezorima” in “DeutscheWelle Online”, 13 June 2014;

<https://www.dw.com/sr/beograd-i-njegovo-blago-u-trezorima/a-17704900>[last access on 15 August 2021]

²⁸⁷D. Đurić, *Posude sa vodom, fotografije i snimci, kosti koje još mirišuna meso i krv, nagi umetnici pored kojih morate da prođete: Kako uživo izgleda “Čistač” Marine Abramović* in “Nedeljnik”, 21 September 2019, cit.; <https://www.nedeljnik.rs/posude-sa-vodom-fotografije-i-snimci-kosti-koje-jos-mirisu-na-meso-i-krv-nagi-umetnici-pored-kojih-morate-da-prodete-kako-uzivo-izgleda-cistac-marine-abramovic/Belgrade>[last access on 15 August 2021]

Conclusion

The hypothesis of the research that modernized, improved and up to date communication strategies are directly/explicitly and that targeted changes within art education in the schools system are of implicit /indirect (and thus tangentially elaborated in the thesis) are of key importance for achieving the better communication with potential visitors of the Museum- their knowledge about art, events or their being promptly and efficiently informed about the museum program is fully verifies.

This thesis argues the importance of communication strategies identifying and evaluating its formats and effects through whole era of the work of the museum since its opening in 1965. However special attention is paid to the reshaping of the communication strategies both in the years of the forced closure of the museum (1999, 2007-2017) and its adaptation to the new context imposed by the COVID 19 pandemic. In the mentioned years the communication strategies are planned broadly after the principles of the crisis management. Also, the special attention is given to the communication strategies of the world known, exhibitions of the proven popularity that were on their world tour also hosted in the MCA. The most famous case is the exhibition *The Cleaner* of Marina Abramovic. The specifics of the exhibition as the exhibition of the performing artist whose performances are shown through videos shot during the original events and by the props form the original performance together with the hype promotional and marketing campaign introduced the concept of the exhibition as the cultural event²⁸⁸. Moreover, the presence and almost overall Government and Prime Minister “sponsorship” gave an extra hype to the event and proved the benefices of the co work and interrelation of the art history, social context and written in work of ideology.

The popularity of such events-exhibitions (also like the exhibition of Fleka and Goranka Matic) of which we do not have so many documents, critiques data about the visitors, public reaction and reception, serves as an impetus for getting more detailed knowledge and information about the history of MCA and the past events. It is an inspiration for discovering (if not Hobsbawm inventing) the tradition of the art moderna, modernism and modernity in Serbia, its glocal (global + local) profile cherished at MCA as its center. The transformation is revitalized anew in the post socialist /postmodern era after the October 5th 2000. At the same time more than ever the choice of the exhibitions, museum program strategy and curatorial practices and

²⁸⁸ E. Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance*, edited by Taylor & Francis Group, New York – London: Routledge, 2008, pp. 1-23.

projects are constrained by the permanent tensions of the politics of balkanization and Europeanisation that define the Serbian public politics and political scene.

All these elements and factors (of the social environment) have to be taken into account when planning and appropriating or adapting the communication strategies.

The brief SWAT like summary of the results speaks about advantages and obstacles or good and bad aspects of the communication strategies practices. The sway of the modern, multimedia and digital communication strategies helps the dissemination of the history of MCA, its social relevance and importance. Part of the documents and official (hi) story is made widely accessible through the museum website. In couple of click the students- member of digital nomad generation – easily get essential relevant info about one of the most important art institutions both in former Yugoslavia and present-day Serbia. In addition, it is one of the few that kept its all-Yugoslav character *although not in the name (and contemporary art and world art history orientation). The overall digitization (digitization of the documents, digitized records of inventory books of the Museum) and digitization -displacement and reconceptualization of the museum guides, books, relevant text in the digital realm on the website or platform help the partial overcoming of the problems of the past. The limitations both in general and for the research conducted in the thesis such as the availability of materials are solved by their digitization enhanced accessibility. However, the problems such as the lost book of visitors' comments and impressions – uniting the comments of the celebrities such as politicians and artists and those of the students, pupils, ordinary people, who visited museum - or small number of photographs of the Museum edifice and other spaces the past cannot be solved by the digitalization. The possible solution discovery of the lost or until now unknown documents is to be found through diligent and exhaustive archival research in the whole of former Yugoslavia and in Europe (catalogs of the exhibition of MCA that went into the world). It is on the basis of these limitations that recommendations for the future are better preservation and archiving of data by new digital technologies as well as VR and AR technologies that in the COVID era replaced the impossible visits to real museums. By looking at the past, comparisons and new plans for communication strategies are made especially as in the time of COVID plans based upon predicted circumstances of the future became impossible.

The communication with the audience, regardless real or virtual, through classical, analogue media or modern digital ones became more important and necessary than ever - both for the sustainability of the work of the museum and for educating and making the new generation of

visitors adapted the new social, cultural and media ambient. The processes of change are recognized as both as adaptation and appropriation. The adaptation refers mainly to media adaptation to the COVID circumstances and overall digital turn in society. The appropriation means the appropriation of the world practices, experiences and projects to the local circumstances. In other words, simplified example is the mentioned exhibition of Marina Abramovic that was downsized and adapted to the space of MCA and thus it was (as the curators had to reduce the number of artifacts and to spatially reorganize it) they have appropriated the exhibition narrative). The exhibitions of Fleka and Goranka Matić were made after the similar curatorial projects in Europe. Especially the exhibition of the photos of Goranka Matić as the document of the turbulent cultural, social and political moments in Yugoslavia and Serbia was made in real space in the way that mimicked its digital display. The photos were densely packed one to another and loosely organized in the chronological parts. The chronology or any system with the parts dedicated to years and epochs however did not exist. It was left as the free oriented reading to the visitors. The digital platform display gives the opportunity of the better and neater organization, and facilitated orientation due to advanced search options after the metadata provided in the more extensive way than the simple capitations in the real space. Finally, the JPG exhibition is simply taken over on its world tour but the perfect choice for the guided visits, fashion historian Stefan Žarić made and the strategically placed videos from the fashion shows introduced to Serbia ion the grand way the fashion exhibition practice.

Finally, the easy way of making the digital communities through social media revives the tradition of cultural- film, theater, museum, literary – clubs. On social media the communities gather at tremendous speed to include the people interested in the topic regardless of their previous knowledge about the topic. According to theory of Pierre Levy (1987) the communities as collective intelligence prove the centripetal force of digital media and they explode at great velocity. The communities aimed for the exchange of information, thoughts and dissemination of knowledge are also space of alternative informal education. As such they effectively replace and compensate for the reforms in the educational system that take time and years for implementation. Further as of proved efficiency online they might also prove to be good way of working off line in real space and time. The digital museum clubs – part of the privilege of the visitors - with the year ticket or museum donors - have proved to be excellent in communication strategies, which are maintained and improved - both in the way of

transmission of as much information as possible in the quick and efficient way of the informational age.

Appendix

The questionnaire is done with the sample group of 60 students, members of the Facebook group “Studenti beogradskih univerziteta” (“Students of the University of Belgrade”). The age group is 18 to 30, while the students are from the faculties of humanities, technical sciences etc. and from the various level of studies (graduate and postgraduate). The choice of the online method is imposed by the pandemic restrictions and the limitations of entering the university premises. In the given circumstances the choice of the Facebook group “Studenti beogradskih univerziteta” asserted that the criteria of the sample group are met in the best possible way. Moreover, being of 18-30 years old means that they belong to the generation born in the period 1992- 2004 i.e., the era of the wars, crises and transitions that significantly reduced the until that standard art education and flow of information from the world (due to international sanctions).

The questionnaire is to be found on the link:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSehjpwhQ5D6u_44l-meYrDD_24nLIddl9iU4lgBqpWhHm0oCQ/viewform

Questionnaire:

1. Gender
2. University
3. Are you familiar with the history of the museum (e.g., when it was opened, who was the first director, how long the construction lasted, information about the construction competition)?
4. Do you know anything about the architecture of the museum itself? (e.g., about materials, architectural plan, logic of movement within it)?
5. If the previous answer was yes, write briefly what you know about the architecture of the museum.
6. Did you know that the museum was closed for 10 years?
7. Do you know the reason for the closure?
8. Do you know how and where the exhibitions were held during those 10 years?
9. Have you attended any museum exhibitions?
10. If yes, can you list the exhibition(s)?

Statics, graphic display and comments of the results:

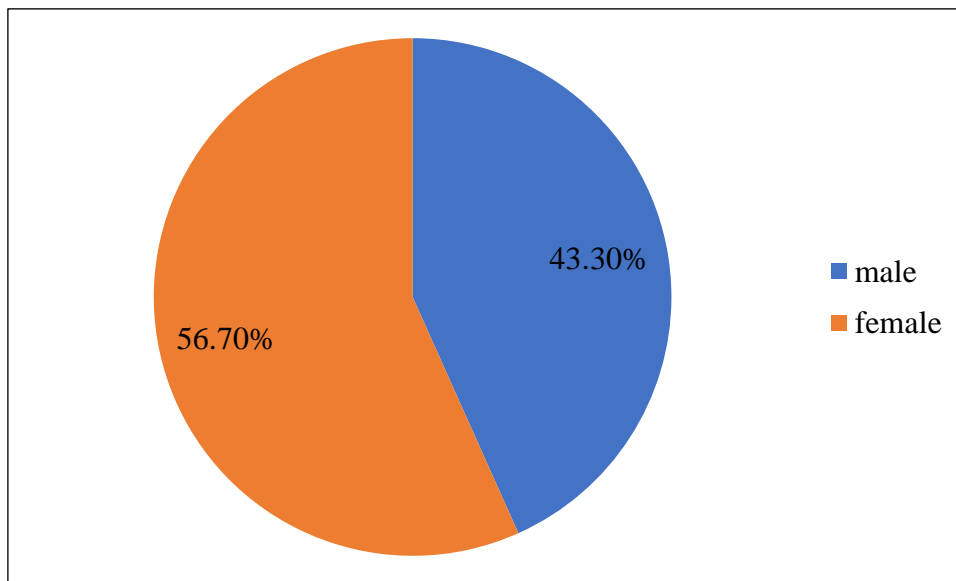


Figure 1. Distribution of respondents by gender

Question number 1 was answered by 60 students, of which 56.7% were female and the rest, 23.3%, were male.

Fakultet

60 answers

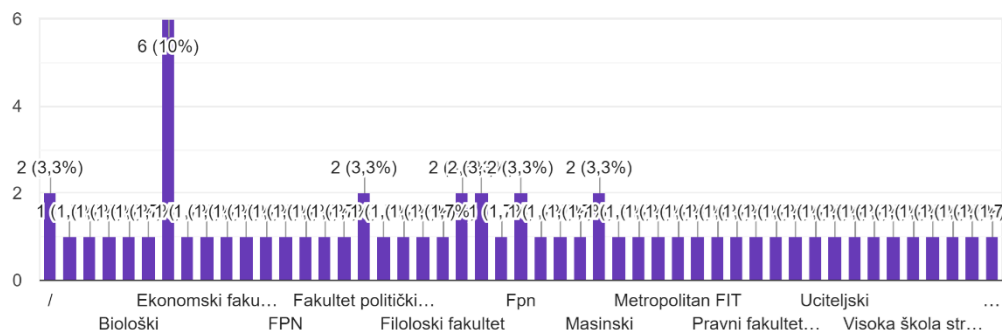


Figure 2. Distribution of universities

On the second question, out of 60 students, most of them wrote that they attend the Faculty of Economics (10%), the Faculty of Political Sciences (3.3%) and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering(3.3%).

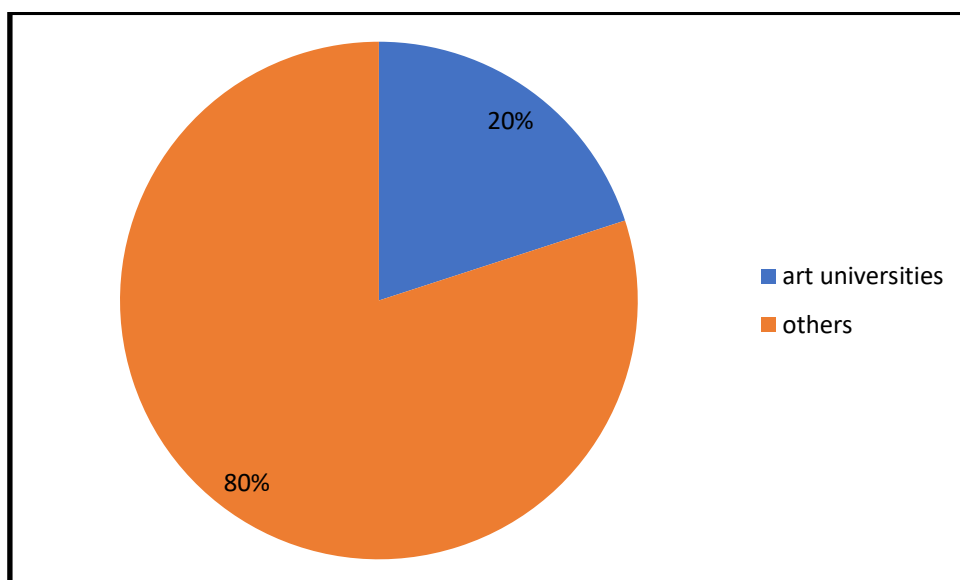


Figure 3. Representation of art faculties

Additionally, we can see that 20% of students are from art universities and the rest, 80% from other universities.

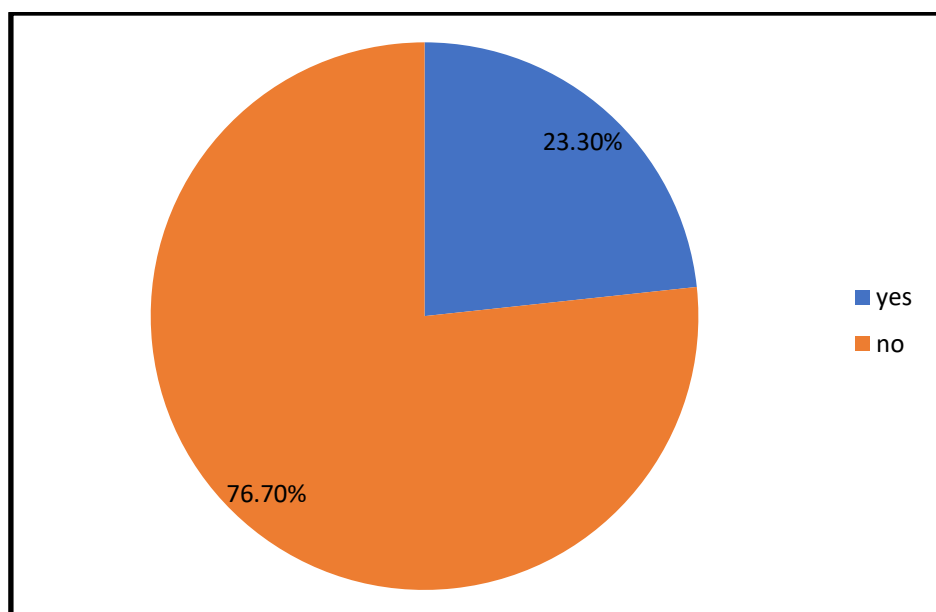


Figure 4. Familiarity with the history of the Museum of Contemporary Art

The third question was answered by 60 students. 23.3% stated that they are familiar with the history of the Museum of Contemporary Art, and the remaining 76.7% believe that they do not know the history of the Museum.

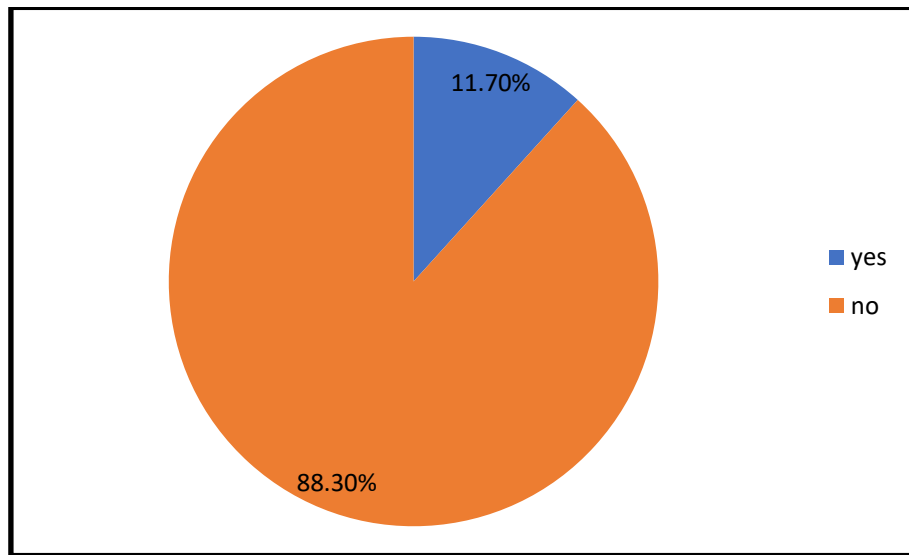


Figure 5. Knowledge of the architecture of the Museum of Contemporary Art

To question number 4, out of 60 respondents, 11.7% think that they know about the architecture of the Museum, compared to 88.3% of students who are not familiar with architecture.

Students who answered in the affirmative to the question number 4, whether they are familiar with the architecture of the Museum of Contemporary Art, briefly gave the following answers which describe it in question number 5:

1	Facade (white marble, glass)
2	The exterior walls are lined with marble and glass, the building is composed of several units, which is reflected inside, which is divided into levels connected by stairs. It is located in a park and large glass walls allow communication between the interior and the exterior, in which sculptures surround the building.
3	Ivan Antić and Ivanka Raspopović, they won the first prize in the competition for the construction of the museum in 1960. The concept of architecture and spatial plan was for the visitor to explore what was done with the help of "floor parts of space".
4	It was built in the style of socialist modernism.
5	The building was supposed to represent a modern direction in the architecture of that time. It consists of 6 cubes. The inside is made of marble. Only the logo of the museum shows the profile of the building, more precisely 3 cubic corners.
6	The walls are covered with white marble slabs, partly in glass, and the sloping roof surfaces are covered with glass.

Table 1. Answers by which students describe the architecture of the Museum of Contemporary Art

This question answered 6 students. I must add that I do not agree with the fourth statement. The answer under question number 4 is the opinion of the student, which is not based on information. This answer also shows the lack of adequate communication strategies of the Museum. This opinion is based on the preconception that all the architecture of the 1960s represents some kind of socialism. In contrast to this answer, the answers to questions 2, 3 and 5 show that some students read professional literature describing the architecture and building structure of the museum.

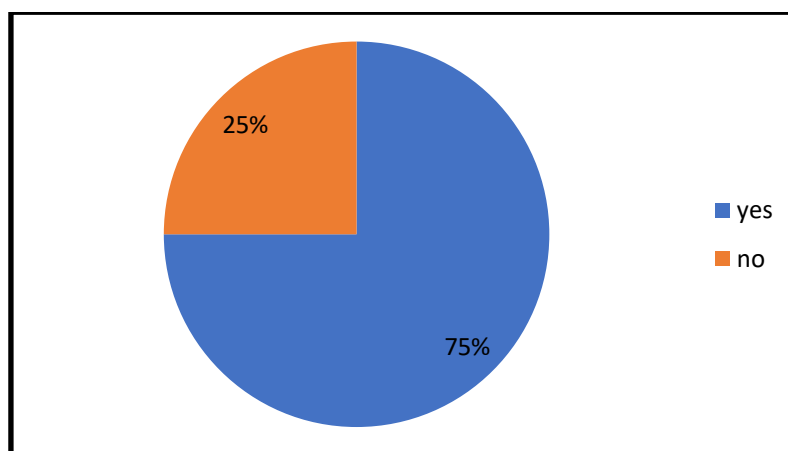


Figure 6. Awareness of the ten-year closure of the Museum of Contemporary Art

The sixth question was answered by 100% of respondents, 60 of them. 75% knew that the Museum was closed for 10 years, the other 25% of respondents were not informed about it.

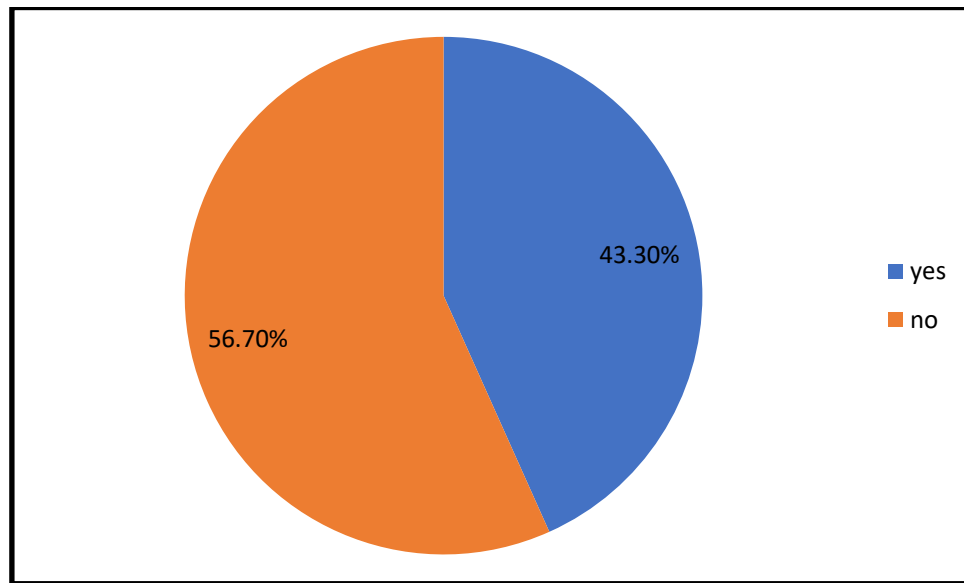


Figure 7. Awareness of the reason for the long closure of the Museum of Contemporary Art

The following question shows less information. Although most of the students knew about the closure of the Museum for 10 years, only 43.3% of them knew the reason for the closure, the other 56.7% did not.

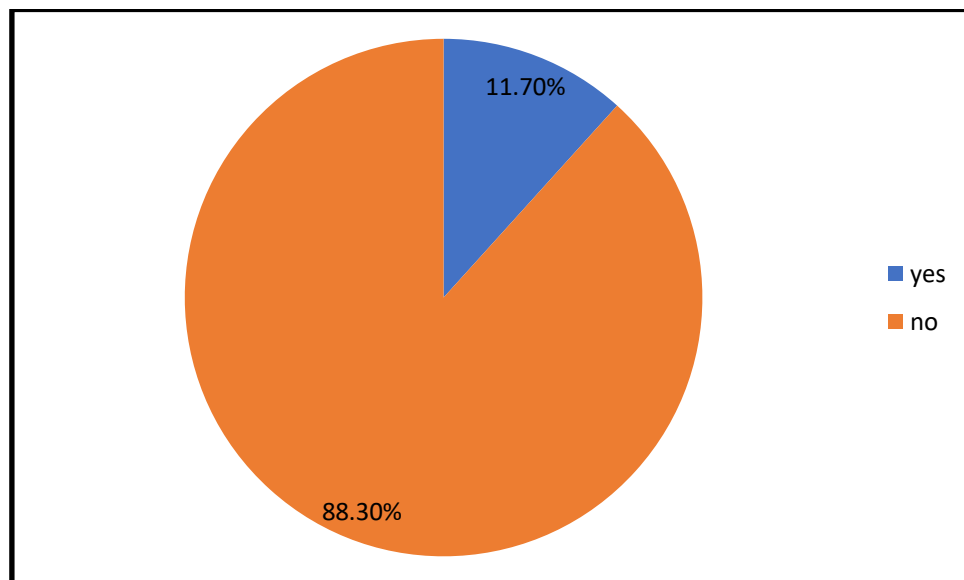


Figure 8. Awareness of the work of the Museum of Contemporary Art during the closing period

Question number 8 showed that only 11.7% of the 60 respondents knew about the work of the Museum during the time when its building was closed. 88.3% of students circled "No" as the answer.

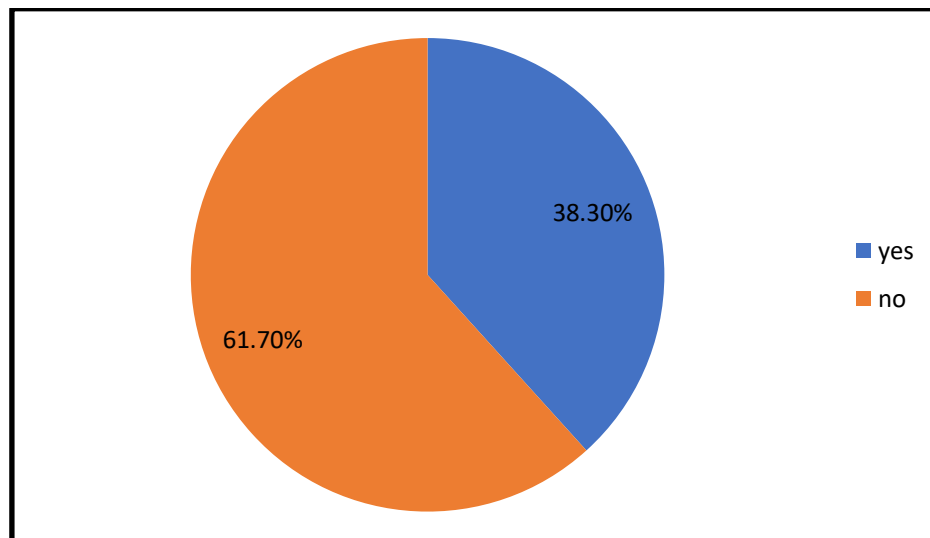


Figure 9. Representation of respondents who visited an exhibition of the Museum of Contemporary Art

Question number 9 showed that 38.3% of students visited one of the exhibitions in this Museum. Of these 60, 61.7% answered that they did not attend exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

The students (only 13) stated that they visited the following exhibitions:

1	Cleaner
2	Artist present Marina Abramović, Love is Love Jean Paul Gauthier
3	Goranka Matic, Marina Abramović
4	Permanent exhibition
5	Jean Paul Gauthier wedding dress exhibition, Standard setting
6	I attended the regular installation and "Čistač", M. Abramović
7	Experience in the crowd. Goranka Matic
8	Marina Abramović, wedding dress exhibition, sequence exhibition after reopening
9	Exhibition by Goranka Matic
10	As part of the children's summer workshop
11	Marina Abramović, Goranka Matic
12	Permanent exhibition at the opening, Marina Abramović
13	50 years ...

Table 2. Exhibitions that students said they had visited

The students (13 of them) stated that they visited the following exhibitions:

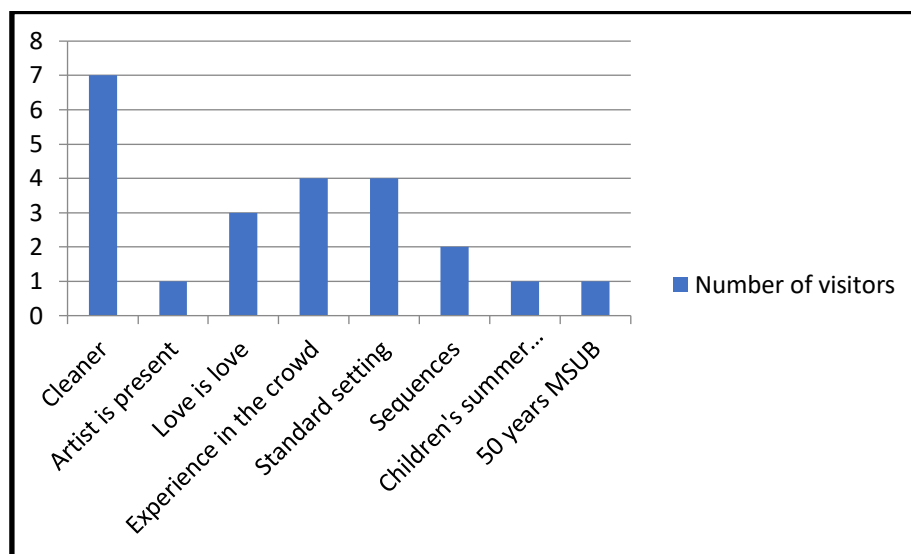


Figure 9. Distribution visiting each exhibition

The most popular exhibition was *The Cleaner*, Marina Abramovic.

Brief interviews

Brief interview with art historian and photographer Goranka Matić - I did an interview with Goranka Matić on August 26, 2021, by e-mail. I chose Matić as a relevant interlocutor, because she has been in the art and photography scene for 40 years. Also, her retrospective *Experience in the crowd* is described in detail in this thesis, in chapter 3.3 *Experience in the crowd* a retrospective exhibition by Goranka Matić.

1. During your career, how difficult was it to be a woman photographer, and even to record works that belong to the domain of contemporary art?

It wasn't hard, I grew up and worked in a stable society.

2. How satisfied are you with the organization and approach of the Museum to your exhibition *Experience in the Crowd*?

It was almost ideal, only there were more funds but that's it compensated by the enthusiasm of the employees.

3. What is your opinion about the significance of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade in the past?

So, when it is worked out a bit, after a long break I think, it will return to the significance it had. For me and for photography, it was important because in such a large retrospective of one

was done for the first time on this scale a photographic author with a threatening large and high-quality catalog.

4. What is your opinion about the significance of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade in the present?

I answered via question 3.

Brief interview with Prof. Nevena Daković, Member of Academia Europaea - I did an interview with Prof. Nevena Daković on August 25, 2021, by e-mail. I placed her interview in chapter 3.4 Film marathon performance at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade. Her opinion is relevant to this part of the thesis because she is a film theorist, professor and scholar of film and media. Also, Daković is the Director of the Institute for Theater, Film, Radio and Television, FDA

1. In your opinion, what is the significance of showing films at the Museum of Contemporary Art?

Screening of films in any museum, even in the Museum of Contemporary Art, is extremely important in terms of enriching the museum setting, media modernization and diversification, as well as popularizing the concept of the museum with the widest audience. In order to better evaluate and explain film screening practice, it is necessary to identify ways and reasons for organizing film screenings in the museum space. The film material is an integral part of the exhibition, e.g. The Russian art experiment is part of the permanent exhibition of the Moscow State University; the films of Men Ray and Salvador Dalí were museum exhibits at the Surrealism exhibition at UNBOUND in Bobur. The films integrated into the exhibitions function in two ways: as works by the authors to whom the exhibition is dedicated, so the film is actually associated as a visual art to painting, photography, etc. or it is a film that documents e.g., the life of the author and the epoch (home movies, doc. pictures of the city, estates). An example could be *The artist is present* by Marine Abramovic where the performances are shown through film documentary material. Film screenings of thematically related films about the artist, movement, etc. most often they document the life and work and the origin of the exhibition itself in special terms or e.g., in the space at the end of the exhibition in certain slots. The museum space is part of festival screenings - e.g., Beldocs will screen the films at MSUB. Film screenings as part of the tribune program and the non-exhibition program of the Museum. The screening of the film is followed by a discussion about the film - mainly on the inspiration

of the curator depends on what will be shown and how the film will relate to MSUB. We can state e.g. A series of Kubrick or Hitchcock films and debates about the citation and influence of painting and great painters on directors and their works. A film as the theme of an exhibition or a film installation that is an exhibition itself for example Gordon Douglas 24h Psycho.

2. What is your comment on the selection of films, was the selection suitable for showing in the Museum?

I have no insight into the film program before 2000 but I don't think it was significant. For the period after 2000 MSUB was closed for a long time. Therefore, only a positive assessment of the Museum's film program when the film is part of the exhibition in the mentioned cases or as in the case of the current exhibition Film Program Performance of Art-Venetian Initiative ... or about the already mentioned visit of Beldocs in the museum.

3. What do you think was the significance of the Museum in the past, and which in the present?

At the time of its founding back in 1965, MSUB focused on the identification of historicization and promotion of Yugoslav contemporary art, conceptualized according to the most modern world models (with which it collaborated, organized biennials, exhibitions, guest appearances) and housed in one of the first purpose-designed museum buildings and gives it architectural value per se. The first director of the museum, Dr. M. St. Protic gathered a group of young art historians / curators and collaborators (e.g., Jesa Denegri) and set the museum as the central space of contemporary Yugoslav art (he helped the wave of socialist modernism that actually glorified the SFRJ in the world). At the time of the country's disintegration and hyperinflation, not only did the museum concept as such disintegrate, but, like all cultural institutions, the MSUB came to the brink of extinction. In the post-October period, the work of the museum under the new administration was ceremoniously renewed with the new exhibition Yugoslav Art Space as a tribute to Protic and the generation of founding fathers, but also as a sign of the new policy of post-October Serbia on the path of truth, reconciliation and justice. Symbolic confirmation that the years of wars have not destroyed and cannot destroy the common cultural heritage that we should continue to nurture in the new supranational, regional, post-Yugoslav and Balkan frameworks (And Belgrade tacitly still occupies a central place ...). After the reopening, he continues his exhibition policy of presenting the most important artists, periods, movements and tendencies of Yugoslav, Serbian and foreign art of the 21st century. Today the place is open for innovative curatorial practices - if not in the MSUB building then in the MSUB Gallery (there was also an exhibition on Video Games in 2008, in fact as an interactive

installation ...) and mostly in the Legacy of Čolaković which is located in their family villa, which is par excellence an example of new Le Corbusier-inspired architecture.

The museum also participates in the presentation and promotion of local art abroad, and has often had the opportunity to organize performances by local artists at international biennials and triennials (Venice, Sao Paulo, Paris, etc.).

Brief interview with curator and applied graphic artist Irena Kondić - I decided to do an interview with Irena Kondić, considering that the opinion of the curator and applied graphic artist on the significance of the Museum of Contemporary Art, in 20th century, is relevant for this thesis. Interview was done on August 27, 2021, by e-mail.

1. What is in your opinion the significance of Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade?

In my opinion, the significance of MSUB has so far been in presenting and collecting works and collections of the most important domestic and foreign artists in the 20th century. MSUB collects and presents to the public the most significant works of domestic and foreign authors of the 20th and 21st century.

Brief interview with journalist and communicator Dina Simić - Since this paper is about communication strategies, I thought that the opinion of experts was necessary for the work. I chose journalist and communicator Dina Simić, graduate journalist of the Faculty of Political Sciences and master communicator of the Faculty of Media and Communications. The survey was conducted on August 28, 2021, by e-mail.

1. Can you comment the significance of development of communication strategies in case of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade?

The very significance of the Museum is reflected in its collection and the history it has to show. From the point of view of journalists and communicator, I can say that it is very important to keep an older audience, which is the most realistic, given their technological literacy, to do it through "more traditional" media - articles in newspapers, cultural radio and television shows. On the other hand, we must work on attracting the younger population and the most efficient way to do it is through social networks. Posts have to be written according to their preferences, sometimes maybe even in their language to get their attention and make culture and art an interesting experience.

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