



STEVAN KOJIĆ
SAMOODRŽIVI SISTEMI APSURDA
SELF-SUSTAINING SYSTEMS OF ABSURDITY



Sunčica Lambić - Fenjčev
LABORATORIJA APSURDA

Instalacije Stevana Kojića – Prevazilaženje granice. Danas gotovo da ne postoje materijali, medijumi ili tehnologije koje ne koriste savremeni umetnici, a složene interrelacije između umetnosti, društva, nauke i tehnologije donose nove forme umetničkog izražavanja koje ruše tradicionalno postavljene granice među ovim oblastima i značajno menjaju kontekstualizaciju i recepciju umetnosti krajem 20. i početkom 21. veka. Umetnost se danas sve više posmatra u proširenom konceptu kao „distribucionni kanal koji nudi mogućnost komunikacije izvesnog sadržaja koji nije definisan apriori kao umetnički već služi opštem epistemološkom interesu”.¹ Ovo nas navodi da pojedina umetnička dela možemo, u širem smislu, shvatati kao „interdisciplinarna”, a to upravo može biti slučaj sa instalacijama Stevana Kojića postavljenim na samostalnoj izložbi „Samoodrživi sistemi apsurdna” u Savremenoj galeriji Zrenjanin. Galerijski prostor kao da je transformisan u laboratoriju u kojoj se odvijaju različiti eksperimenti čije procese i uspeh publika u pojedinim slučajevima može u potpunosti da isprati („eksperimenti” odnosno instalacije u koje su uključene „prave” biljke); u jednom „eksperimentu” publika je aktivan učesnik (roboti), a za dva „eksperimenta” se može reći da se odvijaju na konceptualnom nivou (video-instalacija „Drvo-klon” i fotografije industrijskih i trgovinskih centara). Moglo bi se reći da Stevan Kojić gotovo čitavim svojim dosadašnjim umetničkim stvaralaštvom prevazilazi tradicionalno uspostavljene kategorije istorije umetnosti, menjajući naše uobičajeno razmišljanje i odnos prema umetničkim delima i vizuelnoj kulturi, kao i našu poziciju posmatrača. Spajanje prirode sa novim tehnologijama u savremenoj umetnosti nosilac je novog filozofskog koncepta i pogleda na svet koji redefinišu naše shvatanje fenomena, koji su reduktivno bili podeljeni na prirodne i kulturne, smatrajući ih neodrživim.² Ova misao može se prepoznati na izložbi „Samoodrživi sistemi apsurdna” koja sjedinjuje žive materijale sa novim medijima u instalacijama konceptualno baziranim na principima ekotehnologije čija često otvorena radna situacija poziva na neku vrstu interaktivnosti i otkrivanje njene višedimenzionalnosti u svakom pojedinačnom radu.

Asparagus – Život u veštačkim uslovima. Asparagus je postavljen u zamračenom galerijskom prostoru. Namera umetnika je da se biljka gaji odnosno održava u veštačkim uslovima, u zatvorenom prostoru bez sunčevog svetla. Asparagus je osvetljen veštačkom svetlošću, u njega su uperene sijalice crvene i plave boje koje isijavaju samo onaj deo spektra sunčeve svetlosti neophodan za fotosintezu. Ovaj sistem delimično oponaša metod gajenja biljaka u hidroponskim sistemima. Hidroponika je metod gajenja biljaka bez zemlje sa korišćenjem specijalnih rastvora koji sadrže hranljive elemente u određenim koncentracijama neophodnim za razvoj biljaka. U poslednje vreme se otvaraju takozvane „fabrike povrća” gde se primenjuje specijalna oprema koja zamenjuje zemlju, sunce i čoveka – hranljivim rastvorom, veštačkim osvetljenjem i kompjuterom. Smatra se da je hidroponika tehnologija budućnosti jer ovaj sistem može da se prilagodi sobnim uslovima i formiranju kućnog mini vrta.³ Kojićeva instalacija ne podržava u potpunosti metod hidroponike. Umetnik je samostalno konstruisao sistem u kojem će se odgajati asparagus bez snažnijeg utemeljenja u nauci i tehnologiji ovakvog gajenja biljaka, uslovi nisu kontrolisani i ne zna se da li će biljka uspeti da

1 Reichle, Ingeborg, Art in the Age of Technoscience, Genetic Engineering, Robotics, and Artificial Life in Contemporary Art, SpringerWienNewYork, 2009. (prevod autora teksta)

2 Mnogi teoretičari kao što je Donna Haraway i umetnici kao što je Eduardo Kac smatraju ovaj tradicionalan dualizam neodrživ u svetlu novih naučnih i tehnoloških dostignuća.

3 www.hidroponika.com

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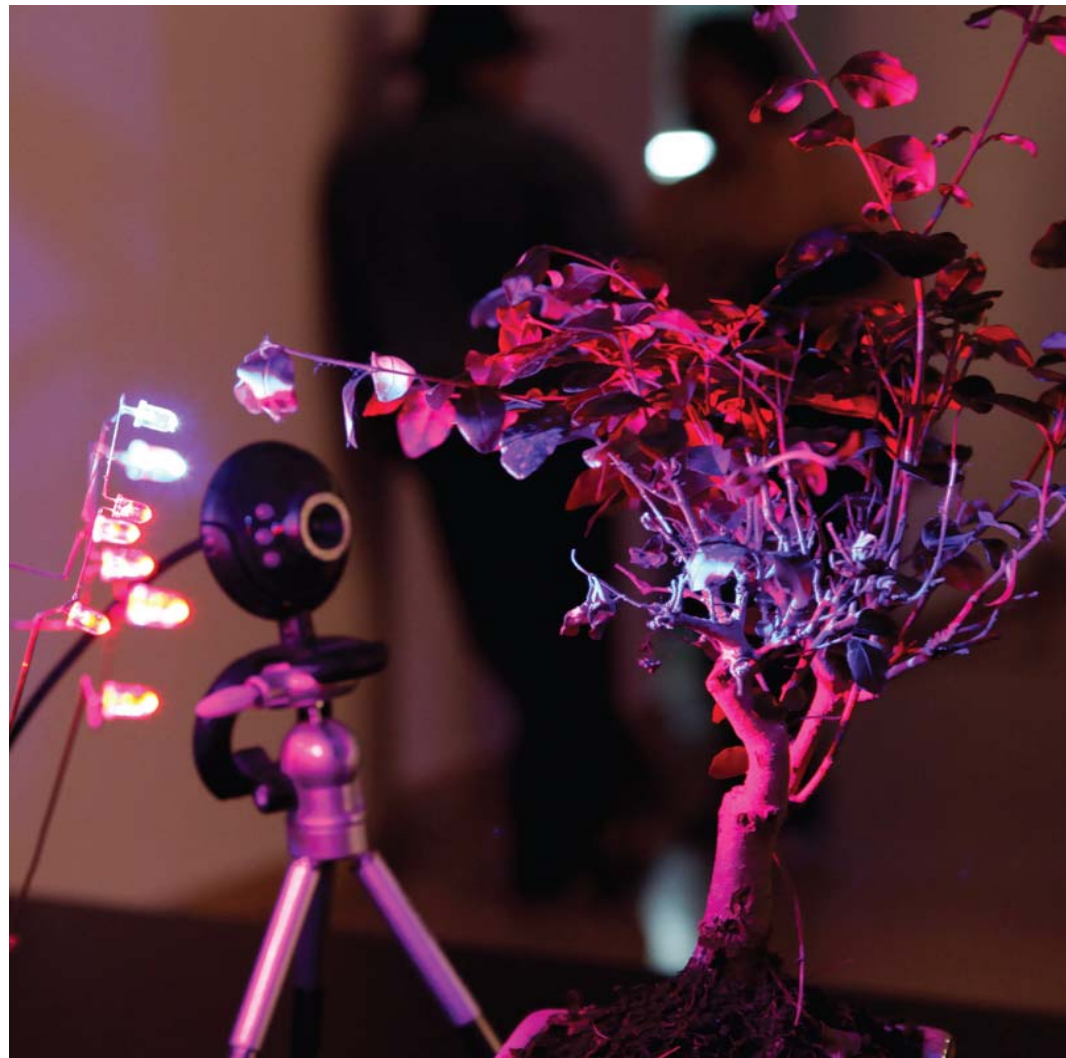
Stevan Kojić's Installations – Transgressing boundaries. Today there are almost no materials, media or technologies that have already not been utilised in contemporary art practice. Complex interrelations between art, society, science and technology introduce new forms of artistic expression which break down the boundaries traditionally set up between these fields and significantly change the contextualisation and reception of art at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. Today art has increasingly been observed as an expanded concept, as "...a channel of distribution which offered the possibility to communicate certain content that was not defined a priori as artistic, but served general epistemological interest".¹ Thus, in a wider sense, some works of art can be understood as "interdisciplinary", and this may just be the case with the installations by the artist Stevan Kojić, displayed in his solo exhibition "Self-sustaining Systems of Absurdity" in the Contemporary Gallery in Zrenjanin. In the gallery space that looks as if transformed into a laboratory, different experiments are performed and in certain cases the audience can follow their progression and outcome entirely ("experiments" i.e. installations that incorporate "real" plants). In one "experiment" (the robots), the audience is an active participant, while two "experiments" can be said to take place on a conceptual level (the video-installation "Tree-clone" and the photographs of the industrial and trading centres). One can argue that Stevan Kojić with his almost entire art practice so far transgresses traditionally established categories of art history, thus transforming our common understanding and attitude toward works of art and visual culture, as well as our position as the observers. Combining nature with new technologies in contemporary art carries a new philosophical concept and worldview, which redefine our understanding of the phenomena reductively divided into natural and cultural, deeming them untenable.² "Self-sustaining Systems of Absurdity" exhibits this notion in the installations that bring living forms and new media together and that are conceptually based on the principles of eco-technology. Its often open situation invites a certain interaction and exploration of its multidimensionality in each of its individual works.

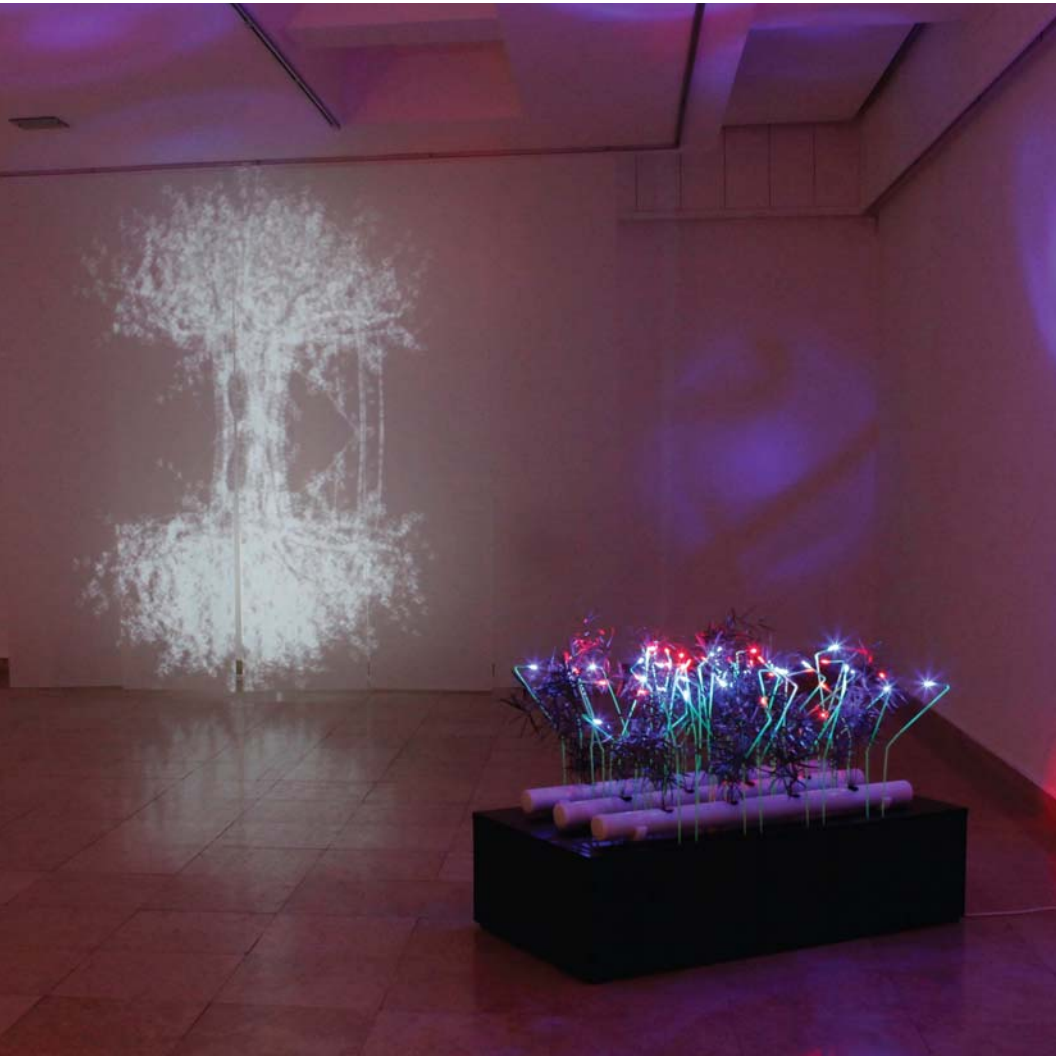
Asparagus – Life under artificial conditions. An asparagus is placed in the darkened gallery space. The artist's intention is to grow i.e. sustain the plant under artificial conditions, indoors, in the closed space without sunlight. The asparagus is lit by artificial light, by the red and blue bulbs that radiate only that part of the spectrum of sunlight essential for photosynthesis. This system mimics partly the method of growing plants in hydroponic systems. Hydroponics is a method of growing plants without soil using special liquid solutions that contain the right balance of nutrients required for plant growth. Recently so-called "vegetable factories" have been emerging containing special equipment that replaces soil, sun and the man with nutrient solutions, artificial lighting and the computer. Hydroponics is considered to be the technology of the future as its system can adapt to indoor conditions and enable the creation of mini homegrown gardens.³ Kojić's installation does not support the hydroponics method completely. On his own, the artist has created the system which will grow the asparagus without a solid foundation in science and the plant growth technology, the system whose conditions are

1 Reichle, Ingeborg, Art in the Age of Technoscience, Genetic Engineering, Robotics, and Artificial Life in Contemporary Art, SpringerWienNewYork, 2009.

2 Many theorists such as Donna Haraway and artists such as Eduardo Kac regard this traditional dualism as untenable in the light of the latest scientific and technological achievements.

3 www.hidroponika.com





opstane ili ne. Apсурnost ove instalacije je u tome što Kojić konstruiše jedan „samoodrživi sistem“ na način kako to stručnjaci nikada ne bi uradili pritom ne znajući kakav će biti ishod njegovog eksperimenta. Sistem se ovde koristi isključivo u neutilitarne svrhe, za realizaciju tehnološke utopije koja podriva vladajuće političko i ekonomsko ustrojstvo današnjeg društvenog sistema i u njemu sveprisutnu tehnoidologiju. Veća primena samoodrživih sistema među pojedincima i grupama, odnosno upotreba prirodnih resursa u saglasju sa prirodom, dovela bi do postepenog urušavanja savremenog robovlasničkog društva i novog kolonijalizma. Neki teoretičari smatraju da bi ekotehnologija, kao potencijalna tehnologija novog doba, stvorila sistem svesnog i nezavisnog pojedinca nasuprot današnjem podređenom i uveliko poniženom čoveku. Ali i ova ideologija prilično deluje kao utopija. Ipak, življenje i rađanje u veštačkim, kompjuterski kontrolisanim uslovima, odnosno spajanje prirodnih karakteristika sa bezgraničnim potencijalima tehnološkog, čini se da briše granice između prirodnog i artificialnog i da se ubrzano kreće prema stvaranju „silikonske druge prirode“ i veštačkog života, što bi drastično redefinisalo ovaj tradicionalni dualizam.

Bonsai – Posredovane slike. Bonsai, održavan u životu na isti način kao i asparagus, obasjan je crvenim i plavim sijalicama koje omogućavaju uslove za fotosintezu u zatvorenom prostoru. Bonsai se neprekidno rotira, a kamera postavljena sa strane snima i emituje snimak na monitor kompjutera. Pošto se bonsai okreće, svetlost se drugačije reflektuje na njemu i kroz njega i ove svetlosne promene se vide na monitoru. Na monitor su postavljene fotosetljive ćelije koje čitaju odblesak svetlosti sa snimka što se prikazuje na ploči od klirita, koja se nalazi na zidu sa strane u vidu plavih i crvenih tačaka koje svetle jače ili slabije ili uopšte ne sijaju u zavisnosti od intenziteta svetlosti koje fotoćelije očitavaju sa ekrana. Instalacija je napravljena sa namerom da predstavi radnu atmosferu eksperimenta koji je u toku i, kao i u prethodnoj instalaciji, umetnik ne zna kako će se ovaj eksperiment završiti i ima li uopšte smisla. Stručnjaci iz ove oblasti verovatno mogu prepoznati apsurdnost ove instalacije, dok posmatračima naviklim na dela tradicionalne umetnosti može izgledati prilično misteriozno i zamršeno. I u ovom radu uočavamo međusobnu nauku, tehnologije, prirode i umetnosti. Čini se da je u ovom radu priroda, odnosno drvo samo interfejs među različitim komponentama instalacije, kao i između tehničkih uređaja uključenih u instalaciju i posmatrača. Svaki tehnički uređaj u eksperimentu (kamera, ekran kompjutera, fotosetljive ćelije) na drugačiji način prenose sliku drveta. Posredno, ovaj eksperiment ukazuje na to kako elektronski mediji prenose informacije i kreiraju svet oko nas, za nas. Stvama biljka i slika biljke, realnost i model, za tehnički uređaj su isto. Ovo izjednačavanje prirode i tehnologije dovodi do samostvaranja realnosti koja raskida sa stvarnošću kao referencom, odnosno simulira stvarnost. Nauka i tehnologija kopiraju principe prirodnih procesa, a vizualizacija tih prirodnih procesa ne odnosi se više na stvarni predmet, predmet iz prirode, već samo na njegove principe. Na taj način dobijeni rezultati nisu rezultati stvarnih, prirodnih procesa, već apstraktnih procesa izračunatih u kompjuteru. To je, na neki način, slučaj i sa Kojićevom instalacijom. Intenzitet prikazane svetlosti u vidu tačaka na ploči od klirita nije rezultat stvarne promene svetlosti na drvetu, već promene svetlosti na snimku ovog procesa emitovanog na ekranu i to na osnovu iščitavanja proizvoljno raspoređenih fotosetljivih ćelija. Ovo direktno ukazuje na problem što modeli, koji sve češće zamenjuju realne predmete, odnosno posredne, drugostepene slike i informacije, često postaju kriterijumi za dobijanje saznanja i izvođenje zaključaka.

Drvo - Klon ili Kako klonirati drvo? Kloniranje je, jednostavno rečeno, proces pravljenja identične kopije. Ovako stvoreni sintetički organizmi ne pripadaju bilo kakvom prirodnom toku evolucije jer nisu stvoreni prirodnim putem, spajanjem muške i ženske polne ćelije, već su rezultat biotehnoloških procesa u naučnim laboratorijama i predstavljaju „epistemološke objekte“ ili modele

not controlled and therefore it is not known whether the plant will manage to survive or not. The absurdity of this installation lies in Kojić's constructing a "self-sustaining system" in a non-expert way and not knowing the outcome of his experiment. Here the system is used solely for non-practical purposes, realization of the technological utopia that subverts the ruling political and economic structure of the current social system and its ubiquitous technoidology. Larger application of self-sustaining systems among individuals and groups, i.e. the use of natural resources in accordance with nature, would lead to the gradual collapse of the contemporary slave society and the new colonialism. Some theoreticians believe that eco-technology, as a potential New Age technology, would create the system of a conscious and independent individual contrary to the present-day subordinate and largely humiliated man. However this ideology by far also looks like utopia. Nevertheless, life and birth under artificial, computer-controlled conditions, in other words combination of natural features and limitless technological potentials, seems to be blurring the boundaries between the natural and the artificial and to rapidly lead toward the creation of the "Silicon Second Nature" and artificial life, which would drastically redefine this traditional dualism.

Bonsai – Mediated images. A bonsai tree, kept alive in the same way as the asparagus, is lit by a grow light, the blue and red bulbs that mimic the light spectrum from the sun essential for photosynthesis. The bonsai rotates continuously, a camera set up on the side records the movement and simultaneously exports the footage on the computer screen. As the bonsai rotates, the manner in which the light reflects off or passes through it changes and these light changes are visible on the monitor. The monitor is fitted with photosensitive cells that measure the reflection of the light in the footage. The Plexiglas board mounted on the wall behind displays this process in the form of blue and red dots shining stronger or weaker or not shining at all depending on the intensity of the light that the photocells detect on the screen. The installation was intended to demonstrate a working atmosphere of an ongoing experiment and, just like in the previous installation, the artist does not know how this experiment will end or whether it makes any sense at all. The experts in this field can most likely recognise its absurdity, while the observers used to traditional works of art can see it as rather mysterious and complex. In this work also, the interrelationship between science, technology, nature and art is evident. It seems as if nature in this work, i.e. the bonsai, is only an interface between the different components of the installation, as well as between the technical devices integrated in the installation and the observer. Each technical device in the experiment (the camera, the computer screen, photosensitive cells) conveys the image of the bonsai tree in a different way. Indirectly, this experiment points at the way electronic media transmit pieces of information and create the world around us, for us. A real plant and the image of the plant, reality and its reproduction, are the same to a technical device. Such equating of nature with technology leads to the self-creation of reality that breaks away with reality as a reference, i.e. simulates reality. Science and technology copy the principles of natural processes, and the visualisation of those natural processes does not refer any more to a real object, an object from nature, but only to its principles. Thus the obtained results are not the results of real, natural processes, but of the abstract processes calculated in the computer. This, in a way, is the case with Kojić's installation as well. The intensity of the light shown as dots on the Plexiglas board is not the result of an actual change of light on the bonsai tree, but of the change of light in the recording of this process appearing on the screen, which is furthermore based on the arbitrarily distributed photosensitive cells reading. This directly points to the problem that models, namely mediated, second-degree images and information, which more and more frequently replace real objects, often become the criteria for obtaining knowledge and drawing conclusions.

koji služe kao surrogati i sve češće reference u laboratorijskim istraživanjima.⁴ Naučno-tehnološke manipulacije i kontrola prirodnih procesa direktno vode do denaturalizacije i artifičnosti odnosno stvaranja biotehnoških entiteta - kopija koje ne postoje u prirodi. Kojičeva video projekcija modela imaginarnog drveta koje se rotira, odnosno njegove strukture nalik na DNK strukturu i njegovog odraza kao u ogledalu, postavlja problem kloniranja kao bioteički problem savremenog društva. Etički kriterijumi često se ignorišu, a usmerenje i upotreba naučnih i tehnoloških dostignuća gotovo se u svim sferama javnog života u potpunosti rukovodi ekonomskim faktorom odnosno profitom. Sumnje velikog dela čovečanstva u opravdanost manipulisanja biološkim životom putem genetskog inženjeringa i strah od sve izvesnije činjenice o primeni ovakvih eksperimenata nad ljudima koji bi, po nekim teoretičarima, u potpunosti podredili ljudska bića „logici industrijske proizvodnje“, zaklanjaju potencijalne pozitivne strane ovih istraživanja. Suština ove instalacije, koja opet ide do apsurdna (jer je predstavljena struktura drveta proizvodnja, a ne naučno zasnovana), možda se nalazi u ukazivanju fundamentalne opasnosti ideologije neoliberalnog društva u savezu sa sve razvijenijom tehnologijom i industrijom koje zahtevaju standardizaciju i industrijalizaciju života, eksploataciju prirode i narušavanje čovekovog dostojanstva isključivo za profit. Za Bodrijaru kloniranje je simulacija, kopija bez izvora, bez referencijalnosti, bez stvarnosti, „... poslednji stadijum istorije modelizacije tela, onaj u kome je, sveden na svoju apstraktnu i genetičku formulu, pojedinac predodređen za serijalno umnožavanje“⁵, pa samim svojim postojanjem uništava prethodnost, ubija sve što je bilo pre njega. To je ono što kloniranje čini, po Bodrijaru, „savšenim zločinom“, zločinom koji prevodenjem svih naših aktivnosti u čistu informaciju dovodi svet do konačnog razrešenja putem kloniranja stvarnosti i uništenjem stvarnoga njegovim dvojnikom. Kloniranje je možda najekstremniji proces u savremenom društvu koji potvrđuje teze nekih teoretičara da će doći do dramatičnih promena u kategorijama koje su dugo smatrane kao nepremjenjive.⁶

Roboti – Žive skulpture. Teoretičar Jack Burnham, u svetlu modernih tehnologija, dao je pretpostavku da će u budućnosti skulpture biti zamenjene „sistemima koji simuliraju život“.⁷ U epohi ubrzanog razvoja tehničkih nauka Pigmalionov san ostvaruje se kroz pokušaje umetnika u kreiranju „živih skulptura“ koje autonomno operišu kombinovanjem robotike i veštačkog života, odnosno prenošenjem principa iz prirodnog u tehnološki sistem. Ove „žive skulpture“ simuliraju određeno ponašanje i istražuju nove puteve u interakciji između umetničkog dela i posmatrača, kao i između umetničkog dela i njegovog okruženja. Stevan Kojić konstruiše tehnički jednostavne robote koji se samostalno kreću po prostoru dok ne nađu na neku prepreku da bi se onda okrenuli na drugu stranu i nastavili put. U ovim jednostavnim konstrukcijama može se uočiti koncept inteligentne skulpture koja je u interakciji sa okruženjem. Ali, ovi roboti nisu autonomni već im je neophodna ljudska ruka da ih pokrene. Ovdje i posmatrač na neki način postaju Secundus Deus, jer pored umetnika koji, po Albertiju stvaraju svoje radove poput božanstva, posmatrači imaju mogućnost da pritiskom na prekidač robote „ožive“ ili ih ponovo „zamrznū“. Međutim, različita istraživanja na polju robotike i veštačkog života, naročito u konstruisanju autonomnih robota, uticala su na pojedine teoretičare i naučnike da ovakve robote vide kao „sledeću fazu evolucije“ i da njihove prognoze i vizije o budućnosti idu u pravcu „evolucije

Tree—clone or how to clone a tree? Cloning is, simply put, the process of producing identical copies. Synthetic life forms thus created do not belong to any natural course of evolution since they were not produced in a natural way by the union of a male and a female sex cell, but instead are the end result of biotechnological processes in scientific labs and represent “epistemological objects” or models that serve as surrogates and more and more frequently as references in laboratory research.⁴ Scientific and technological manipulations and control of natural processes lead directly to the denaturalisation and artificiality, i.e. creation of biotechnological entities - copies that do not exist in nature. Kojić’s video projection of the model of an imaginary tree that rotates, the projection of its structure resembling DNA structure and of its reflection as if in a mirror, posits the problem of cloning as a bioethical problem of contemporary society. Ethical criteria are often ignored, while the direction and the use of scientific and technological achievements are entirely guided by the economic factor i.e. profit in almost all spheres of public life. Doubts of a large part of humankind in the justification of the manipulation of biological life by genetic engineering and the fear of increasingly certain reality of the conduct of these kinds of experiments on people that would, according to some theoreticians, completely subordinate human beings to the “logic of the industrial production”, obscure potentially positive aspects of these explorations. The essence of this installation, which again slips into the absurd (as the presented structure of the bonsai tree is arbitrary, and not founded in science), possibly lies in its pointing out the fundamental danger of the ideology of neo-liberal society coupled with advancing technology and industry which demand standardisation and industrialisation of life, exploitation of nature and violation of the man’s dignity exclusively for profit. For Baudrillard cloning is simulation, a copy without an original, without reference, without reality, “...the last stage of the history and modeling of the body, the one at which, reduced to its abstract and genetic formula, the individual is destined to serial propagation”⁵ and thus with his own existence annihilates previousness eradicating everything that was before him. That is what makes cloning, according to Baudrillard, “the perfect crime”, the crime that in translating all our activities into pure information brings the world to its final resolution by cloning reality and destroying the real with its double. Cloning is possibly the most extreme process in contemporary society, which validates theses by some theoreticians that the categories long considered to be unalterable will undergo dramatic changes.⁶

Robots – Living sculptures. In the light of modern technologies, theorist Jack Burnham made an assumption that in the future sculpture would be replaced by “life-simulation systems”.⁷ In the age of fast technical and scientific progress, Pygmalion’s dream is realised through artists’ attempts to create “living sculptures”. These “living sculptures” operate autonomously incorporating robotics and artificial life, i.e. by transferring principles from the natural into the technological system. They simulate certain behaviour and investigate new ways of interaction between a work of art and its spectator, as well as between a work of art and its surroundings. Stevan Kojić constructs simple robots that move about on their own until they come across an obstacle, then turn the other way and continue to move. In these straightforward devices one can notice the concept of an intelligent sculpture,

4 Reichle, Ingeborg, Art in the Age of Technoscience, Genetic Engineering, Robotics, and Artificial Life in Contemporary Art, SpringerWienNewYork, 2009.

5 Bodrijar, Žan. Simulakrumi i simulacija, Svetovi, Novi Sad 1991.

6 Haraway, Donna. Simians, Cyborgs and Women. Reinventions of Nature, Routledge, New York 1991.

7 Burnham, Jack. Beyond Modern Sculpture. The Effects of Science and Technology on Sculpture of This Century, Braziller, New York 1968.

4 Reichle, Ingeborg, Art in the Age of Technoscience, Genetic Engineering, Robotics, and Artificial Life in Contemporary Art, SpringerWienNewYork 2009.

5 Baudrillard, Jean. Simulakrumi i simulacija (Simulacres et Simulation), Svetovi, Novi Sad 1991.

6 Haraway, Donna. Simians, Cyborgs and Women. Reinventions of Nature, Routledge, New York 1991.

7 Burnham, Jack. Beyond Modern Sculpture. The Effects of Science and Technology on Sculpture of This Century, Braziller, New York 1968.





inteligentnih mašina koje će prevazići ljudsku vrstu⁸, što veoma podseća na scenario *Matriksa*. Ipak, Kojićevi „poluživi“ roboti, tehnički veoma jednostavno konstruisani, pa su često „u kvaru“, prilično su daleko od autonomnih, inteligentnih robota budućnosti. Ovi roboti su u stvari ready-made objekti, načinjeni od elektronskih komponenta prisutnih u mikroelektronici, odnosno materijal koji se obično upotrebljava u neke druge svrhe, ovde je upotrebljen u konstruisanju umetničkog dela i dobio potpuno novu funkciju. Ovo nas na neki način povezuje sa principima ekotehnologije, pošto elektronski materijal generalno spada u grupu opasnih otpada koji dugoročno utiče na uništavanje životne sredine i ima veliku štetnost po zdravlje ljudi i zato je neohodna njegova reciklaža ili, za one materijale koji su nerecikabilni, skladištenje na ekološki bezbedan način ili upotreba za dobijanje energije.⁹

Industrijski i trgovinski centri – Novi lanac ishrane. Fotografije domaćih trgovinskih i industrijskih centara snimljene su modifikovanom kamerom koja registruje infracrveni spektar. Ovakav način fotografisanja se upotrebljava kada treba prikazati odnosno otkriti nešto što nije dostupno ljudskom oku. Neki od giganta prikazanih na fotografijama su u ekspanziji dok drugi više odavno ne rade i od njih su ostale samo ruševine koje narušavaju izgled svog okruženja. U svakom slučaju oni su predstavnici industrije koja u potpunosti okupira i formira našu društveno-političku stvarnost. Način na koji su fotografije snimljene utiču na to da čitavo okruženje ovih trgovinskih i industrijskih centara izgleda kao „sprženo“, kao prizor nakon katastrofe. Vegetacija nije više zelena nego ljubičasta, sve deluje neprirodno, sablasno, kao vizije budućnosti iz nekog apokaliptičnog naučno-fantastičnog filma. Ovo jeste jedno od mogućih viđenja budućnosti usled novih odnosa u društvu kreiranih kobnom vezom ekonomije, nauke i tehnologije i stvaranjem „novog lanca ishrane“ u kojem je čitavo čovečanstvo poniženo, na dnu lestvice dok konce vuče samo mali broj povlašćene elite koja u rukama drži svu moć nauke, tehnike, politike, tržišta... U suštini ova čovekova uniženost nastala je delimično i na dobrovoljnoj bazi. Tehnologija se implementirala u svaku oblast čovekovog svakodnevnog života načinivši od njega zavisnika i često postavši jedini smisao njegovog života; industrijska, serijska proizvodnja standardizovala je način čovekovog života, gde je i on sam postao prosta jedinica u nizu, izbacujući uvek nove i bolje proizvode kratkog veka, podstičući kupoholičarsku groznicu u težnji za što većim profitom. Ovakav život udaljava čoveka od stvarnog života, stvarnih vrednosti, predmeti se poništavaju u sopstvenoj bezgraničnoj reprodukciji, postajući samo prazni modeli, kopije bez suštine i smisla, simulakrumi simulakruma. Po Arganu, „...mašine ne proizvode predmete; proizvode do u beskraj, silke. U novoj lestvici vrednosti objekt postaje slikom, a subjekt, pretazeći s prvog na poslednje mesto, postaje stvar. Najbolnija degradacija dopala je čoveku“.¹⁰ Ovdje razlike između realnog i virtuelnog kao da više ne postoje, pošto je virtuelno u savremenom društvu itekako postalo stvarno, osetljivo, dotakljivo. Pitanje je samo šta će se dogoditi kada stvari jednoga dana izmaknu kontroli?

Priroda, tehnologija, umetnost. Industrija, ekonomija, nauka i tehnologija suštinski su konstitutivan faktor savremene društvene strukture, a sve više pokušavaju da u potpunosti ovladaju i upravljaju i prirodnim procesima. Proizvode nove proizvode, stvaraju nove živote, artifičijelne ili sintetičke, potpuno redefinišu tržište i beskrupulozno transformišu čovekov identitet i njegov dignitet. Zbog njihovog međusobnog preplitanja i amalgamacije ne možemo jasno razlikovati ko između tehničkih, društvenih, ekonomskih ili političkih faktora zaista upravlja ovim, čini se, nepovratnim procesom. Ali, neki

which interacts with its environment. However, these robots are not self-sufficient and require a human hand to start them. In addition to the artist who, according to Alberti, creates his works like God, here the observers somehow become Secundus Deus, since by pressing a button, they are able to “revive” the robots or “freeze” them again. On the other hand, various research in the field of robotics and artificial life, particularly relating to the construction of autonomous robots, convinced certain theorists and scientists to see such robots as “the next phase of evolution” and the future as moving toward the “evolution of intelligent machines that will exceed the human kind”⁸, a vision highly reminiscent of “The Matrix” scenario. Nevertheless, Kojić’s “half-living” robots, whose technical simplicity often causes them to “break down”, are rather far from the autonomous, intelligent robots of the future. These robots are in fact ready-made objects built out of the electronic components present in microelectronics. This material, usually used for some other purposes, here was utilised for the construction of the work of art thus acquiring a completely new function. This in a way brings us to the principles of eco-technology, since electronic materials generally belong to the group of dangerous waste materials that can have a long-term harmful effect on the environment and people’s health, which is why it is necessary to recycle them or for those materials that are non-recyclable, to dispose them in an ecologically safe way or use them for the production of energy.⁹

Industrial and trading centres – New food chain. The photographs of the national trading and industrial centres were shot with a modified camera that detects the infrared spectrum. This type of photography is used when one wants to demonstrate or discover something not visible by the human eye. Some of the industrial giants shown on the photographs are currently expanding while others have long closed down leaving behind derelict industrial sites that have a negative visual or environmental effect on the surrounding area. Anyhow, they represent industry, which fully occupies and forms our socio-political reality. The way in which the photographs were shot renders the entire immediate environment of these trading and industrial centres “scorched”, as if they were in a post-catastrophic disaster zone. The vegetation is not green any more but purple, the whole scene seems unnatural, ghastly, like a vision of the future from an apocalyptic science-fiction movie. This, indeed, is one of the possible visualisation of the future emerging as a result of the new relationships in society established by the fatal correlation between the economy, science and technology and by creation of the “new food chain” in which the whole of mankind is disgraced, having reached its lowest point, while only a small number of the privileged elite pulls all the threads and holds in their hands all of the power of science, technology, politics, markets. In fact, man’s degradation has partly happened to him on a voluntary basis. Technology has become an integral part of every aspect of his everyday life leaving him addicted and often becoming the only meaning in his life; industrial, serial production has standardised his lifestyle, reducing him to merely a unit in a series, launching always new and better products with short shelf life thus stimulating shopaholic fever for ever bigger profit. This kind of life detaches the man from the real life, real values, objects cancel themselves in their endless reproduction becoming only empty replicas, copies without any essence or meaning, simulacra’s simulacra. As per Argan, “...machines do not manufacture objects; they manufacture images, infinitely. On the new scale of values an object becomes an image, and a subject, coming down from the top to the bottom of the scale, becomes a thing. The most painful

8 Reichle, Ingeborg. Art in the Age of Technoscience, Genetic Engineering, Robotics, and Artificial Life in Contemporary Art, SpringerWienNewYork, 2009.
9 www.ekoforum.org
10 Argan, Gulio Carlo. Studije o modernoj umetnosti, Nolit, Beograd 1982.

8 Reichle, Ingeborg. Art in the Age of Technoscience, Genetic Engineering, Robotics, and Artificial Life in Contemporary Art, SpringerWienNewYork, 2009.
9 www.ekoforum.org

teoretičari smatraju da je ovaj razvoj nauke i tehnologije sasvim očekivan i da ga ne treba a priori smatrati protivprirodnim. Današnja epoha (The Age of Technoscience) polako raskida sa nama poznatim i opšteprihvaćenim, tradicionalnim gledištima na svet i prirodu. I kao što se umetnost tokom vremena izborila da bude oslobođena bilo kakve mimetičke veze sa prirodom, tako i savremena nauka raskida sa tradicionalnom mimetičkom naukom. Svet se transformiše pred našim očima i to deluje drastično, ali od postanja život na zemljinoj kugli se menja, evoluiru. Suštinsko pitanje je samo ko vlada, sponzorise i upravlja ovim saznanjima i na koji način ih upotrebljava ili zloupotrebljava, odnosno da li čovečanstvo vodi prema prosperitetu ili prema samoubistvu. Mnogi savremeni umetnici i teoretičari u svetu se na različite načine bave ovom problematikom. „Bioart“, „TransgenicArt“, „Telerobotic Art“, „Hybrid arts“ samo su neki od pokreta i pojava u savremenoj umetnosti koji često na veoma radikalan način preispituju i istražuju nove odnose između prirode, biologije, ekologije, živih organizama, nasuprot tehnologije, nauke, ekonomije, društva. Instalacije Stevana Kojića često imaju ironičan prizvuk, ali umetnik generalno ne izražava sopstvene stavove prema ovim stvarima već iznosi neke primere na uvid javnosti pružajući mogućnost svakome da ih sam preispita i donese sopstvene zaključke. Ova „laboratorija“ svojim apsurdnim „eksperimentima“, uglavnom konceptualno baziranim na principima ekotehnologije, posredno ukazuje na apsurdnost današnjih odnosa u društvu i provocira na razmišljanje o tome da čovek treba da se otrgne iz sistema, vrati sebi, svom dostojanstvu i da ponovo uspostavi savez sa prirodom kroz prepoznavanje uzajamne potencijalno pozitivne veze između prirode i tehnologije, na obostranu korist i dobrobit čovečanstva. Bioartist George Gessert piše u kontekstu istraživanja i ideja Bioarta, ali ovaj navod može se preneti na umetnost uopšte: „Da li umetnici prelaze granicu kada stvaraju biljke ili životinje ili koriste oruđa biotehnologije? Naučnici rutinski prelaze granice. Takođe i poljoprivrednici, poslovni ljudi, vojnici i doktori. Samo umetnici i poneki religiozni ljudi oklevaju. Naravno, jedna od najvećih ljudskih dilema je u tome što ne poznajemo granice svojih moći. Mi izmišljamo, pronalazimo, neobuzdano i nehajno kao što dišemo, ali nemamo ideje gde će nas naši pronalasci odvesti. U izumiranje? U ropstvo? 1000 godina u Diznilendu? Čak i da se holokaust nikada nije desio, imali bismo dobar razlog da budemo zabrinuti oko toga kuda će nas poznavanje genetike i DNK odvesti. Biće nam potrebna sva svest kojom raspolazemo da se izborimo sa evolucijom. Dokle god je umetnost naklonjena svesti, što više umetnika prelazi granice, to bolje.“¹¹ A izložba „Samoodrživi sistemi apsurd“ Stevana Kojića to upravo čini na jedan nenametljiv i veoma konstruktivan način.

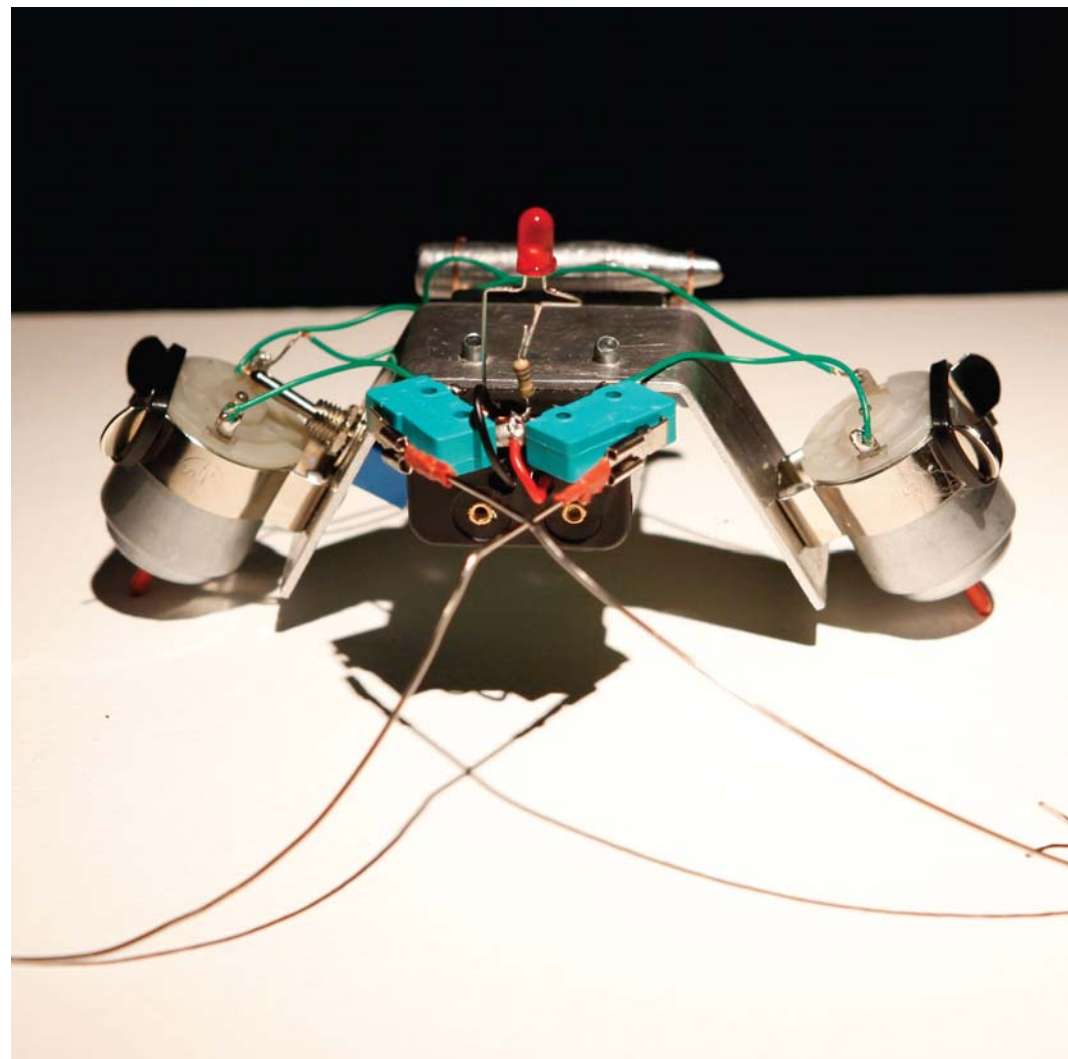
¹¹ U Reichle, Ingeborg. *Art in the Age of Technoscience, Genetic Engineering, Robotics, and Artificial Life in Contemporary Art*. SpringerWienNewYork, 2009. (prevod autora teksta)

degradation befell the man”.¹⁰ Here it seems as if the difference between the real and the virtual no longer exists, given that in the modern society the virtual has become very real, palpable, tangible. The question is only what will happen when one day things get out of hand.

Nature, technology, art. Industry, economy, science and technology are essentially constitutive factors in the contemporary social structure trying more and more to take total control over the natural processes as well. They produce new products, create new lives, artificial or synthetic, completely redefine the market and unscrupulously transform man's identity and his dignity. Due to their mutual overlapping and amalgamation we cannot clearly discern which one among the technical, social, economic or political factors actually has power over this, seemingly, irreversible process. However, some theorists believe that such progress of science and technology is quite expected and should not be thought a priori counternatural. Today's age (The Age of Technoscience) breaks away slowly from the well-known and generally acknowledged traditional views of the world and nature. And as art has in time managed to set itself free from any kind of mimetic ties with nature, so is contemporary science breaking off with traditional mimetic science. The world is transforming in front of our eyes and that does seem drastic, however, since its Genesis, life on the planet has been changing, evolving. The only critical question is who is in charge, backs and controls this knowledge, how do they use or abuse it, i.e. do they lead the mankind toward prosperity or suicide. Many contemporary artists and theoreticians around the world deal with these problems in different ways. "Bioart", "Transgenic Art", "Telerobotic Art", "Hybrid Arts" are just some of the movements and developments in contemporary art which frequently rather radically re-examine and explore new relationships between nature, biology, ecology, life forms on the one hand and technology, science, economy, and society on the other. Stevan Kojić's installations often have an ironic tone, nevertheless, on the whole, the artist does not express his own attitude toward these themes but puts forward some examples so that the audience have the opportunity to examine them themselves and draw their own conclusions. This "laboratory", with its absurd "experiments" for the most part conceptually based on the principles of ecotechnology, indirectly points to the absurdity of the existing relationships in society and engages the mind by suggesting that the man should perhaps break loose from the system, return to himself, regain his dignity and re-establish his union with nature by recognising potentially positive relationship between nature and technology which would aim for mutual benefit and the well-being of the whole of humankind. The bioartist George Gessert writes the following relating to the explorations and ideas in bioart, although referable to art in general, "Do artists cross a line when they breed plants or animals, or use the tools of biotechnology? Scientists routinely cross the line. So do farmers, businesspeople, military men, and doctors. Only artists and certain religious people hesitate. Of course, one of the great human dilemmas is that we do not know the extent of our powers. We invent outrageously and as casually as we breathe, but we have no idea where our inventions will take us. Extinction? Slavery? 1000 years in Disneyland? Even if the Holocaust had never happened, we would have good reason to worry about where knowledge of genetics and DNA will take us. We will need all the awareness we can muster to engage evolution. To the extent that art favours awareness, the more artists who cross the line the better".¹¹ And Stevan Kojić's exhibition "Self-sustaining Systems of Absurdity" does that precisely in an inconspicuous and a very constructive way.

¹⁰ Argan, Giulio Carlo. *Studije o modernoj umetnosti*, Nolit, Beograd 1982. Translated from Serbian.

¹¹ In Reichle, Ingeborg. *Art in the Age of Technoscience, Genetic Engineering, Robotics, and Artificial Life in Contemporary Art*. SpringerWienNewYork 2009.



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