

Galerija Art

DRITON SELMANI
SCREENSHOTS OF NOW

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Hopes & Fears, 2021
Nade & strahovi, 2021.
Tailor-made coat,
metal rack,
200 x 150 cm
Kaput izrađen po mjeri,
metalni stalak,
200 x 150 cm

Ponekad bivamo i offline

'Now', it seems, is one of the words that fools us into believing it represents something real.¹

Konstatacija da je reč „sada“ u izvesnoj meri obmanjujuća u smislu da nismo sigurni da li predstavlja nešto stvarno, da li je reč o nečemu trenutnom ili o neodredljivom vremenskom opsegu koji je moguće objasniti samo na metaforičkom nivou, donekle proizlazi iz eluzivnog karaktera samog pojma sadašnjosti, koji osujećuje svaki pokušaj njenog preciznog definisanja. Ali, i bez potrebe da se precizno odredi, ostaje pitanje kako je razumevamo, na koji način se manifestuje u našem svakodnevnom iskustvu pre nego što postane predmet teorijskog razmatranja i kritike². I na kraju, kako je osećamo i doživljavamo na ličnom nivou, s obzirom na to da smo njen nerazlučivi deo. To je pitanje koje preokupira umetnike u savremenom trenutku, s kojim se bore, jer teže da ga razumeju, pa i predstave. Ne ulazeći u dublju analizu temporalnosti i različitih aspekata poimanja vremena kao takvog, fokusiraćemo se na shvatanje sadašnjosti kao savremenog perioda u kome živimo i na koji način se umetnost snalazi u okvirima radikalnih razmimoilaženja u percepciji istog sveta³, a da pritom pruži mogućnost shvatanja određenih formacija koje se u njemu javljaju.

¹ North, M. What is the present?, Princeton University Press: Princeton, Oxford, 2018, p. 17

² Groys, B. Comrades of Time, e-flux journal #11, december 2009, p. 2

³ Smith, T. Philosophy in the Artworld: Some Recent Theories of Contemporary Art, Philosophies 2019, 4,37; doi:10.3390/philosophies4030037, p. 2

Sometimes, we exist offline

"Now", it seems, is one of the words that fools us into believing it represents something real.¹

The view that the word "now" is, to an extent, misleading, in the sense that we can never be certain whether it represents something real, whether it is a current matter, or an indefinable time range that can only be explained on a metaphorical level, is founded in part in the elusive character of the very term present, which thwarts any attempt to define it precisely. However, even if we put aside the need to define it with precision, the question remains of how we comprehend it, how it manifests itself in our everyday experience, before it becomes the subject of theoretical consideration and criticism.² And finally, how we feel and experience it on a personal level, considering that we are its integral component. It is a question that preoccupies contemporary artists, and a question with which they are struggling because they aspire towards understanding it, and even finding a method of presenting it. Without going into a deeper analysis of temporality and all the different aspects of understanding time as such, we will focus on understanding the present as a contemporary period in which we live, questioning how art addresses the radical differences in the perceptions of the same world,³ while providing the possibility of

¹ North, M. What is the present?, Princeton University Press: Princeton, Oxford, 2018, p. 17

² Groys, B. Comrades of Time, e-flux journal #11, december 2009, p. 2

³ Smith, T. Philosophy in the Artworld: Some Recent Theories of Contemporary Art, Philosophies 2019, 4,37; doi:10.3390/philosophies4030037, p. 2

Izložba Dritona Selmanija Screenshots of Now preispituje pojam sadašnjosti, odnosno, one njene aspekte koje savremenost čine veoma kompleksnom. Polazeći od ličnog iskustva, kroz različite medije (video, crtež, fotografiju, tekst, instalaciju), umetnik stvara jednu vrstu zabeleške o sopstvenoj poziciji unutar datog okvira. Okvir naše savremenosti, proizvodno orijentisan, u kome obitavamo kao radnici i/ili kao potrošači, određen je uslovima nejednake preraspodele moći uslovljene globalnim kapitalizmom. U tom smislu, pozicija umetnika se, kroz kritičnost i skepticizam koje zahteva upravo takva savremenost, kristališe kao moguća pozicija otklona od svega navedenog. Pojam screenshot-a, odnosno, vrste digitalnog dokumentovanja sadržaja na ekranu, u ovom kontekstu iskorišćen je kao metafora potrebe za brzim beleženjem trenutka u društvu koje je u stalnom pokretu, optrećenom prezentizmom i činjenjem svega „sada i odmah“. Na taj način stvorena je jedna zanimljiva slika naizgled suprotstavljenih koncepata, koji su, zapravo, dve strane istog umetničkog novčića – s jedne su fragmenti „umetnikove sadašnjosti“, delovi posvećenog umetničkog delovanja, dugog trajanja (reč je o životnom pozivu, offline), počev od najintimnijeg, ličnog prostora i iskustva kao polazišta, dok je s druge sve to stavljeno na uvid javnosti (online), istoj onoj koja ima mogućnost da u svom brzom pogledu i beleženju iz toga oseti i pokuša da razume određeni trenutak u (svojoj) sadašnjosti. Trenutak sada i odmah, koji je karakterističan za društvene mreže i život online, posebno mladih generacija, u velikoj meri zaglušuje prostor za kritički odnos prema sadašnjosti kao posledice, uzrokovane nekim drugim „sada“, dok

understanding certain formations that are featured in it.

Driton Selmani's exhibition Screenshots of Now questions the very notion of the present, i.e. those aspects of the present that render contemporaneity highly complex. Starting from personal experience, and using various types of media (video, drawing, photography, text, installation), the artist creates a type of a record, a note on his own position within the provided framework of the contemporaneity. The said framework of our contemporaneity, production-oriented, in which we abide as workers and / or as consumers, is determined by the conditions of unequal redistribution of power, ultimately driven by global capitalism. In that sense, the position of the artist, through criticism and scepticism imposed by such contemporaneity, becomes crystallised as a potential deviation from the above. The notion of a screenshot, or a kind of digital documentation of content on the screen, was used in this context as a metaphor for the urge to quickly record a moment in a society that is in constant motion, burdened with presentism and doing everything "now and immediately". Consequently, an interesting image of seemingly opposing concepts is produced, which are, in reality, two sides of the same artistic coin. The first side contains fragments of the "artist's present", parts of enduring artistic activity (it is a life vocation, offline), starting from the most intimate, personal space and experience as a starting point, while the other side makes it all available to the public (online) – the very same public that has the opportunity to feel and try to understand a certain moment in (their

Missed Call, 2020

Propušteni poziv, 2020.

Acrylic paint on found plastic bag, 65 x 45 cm

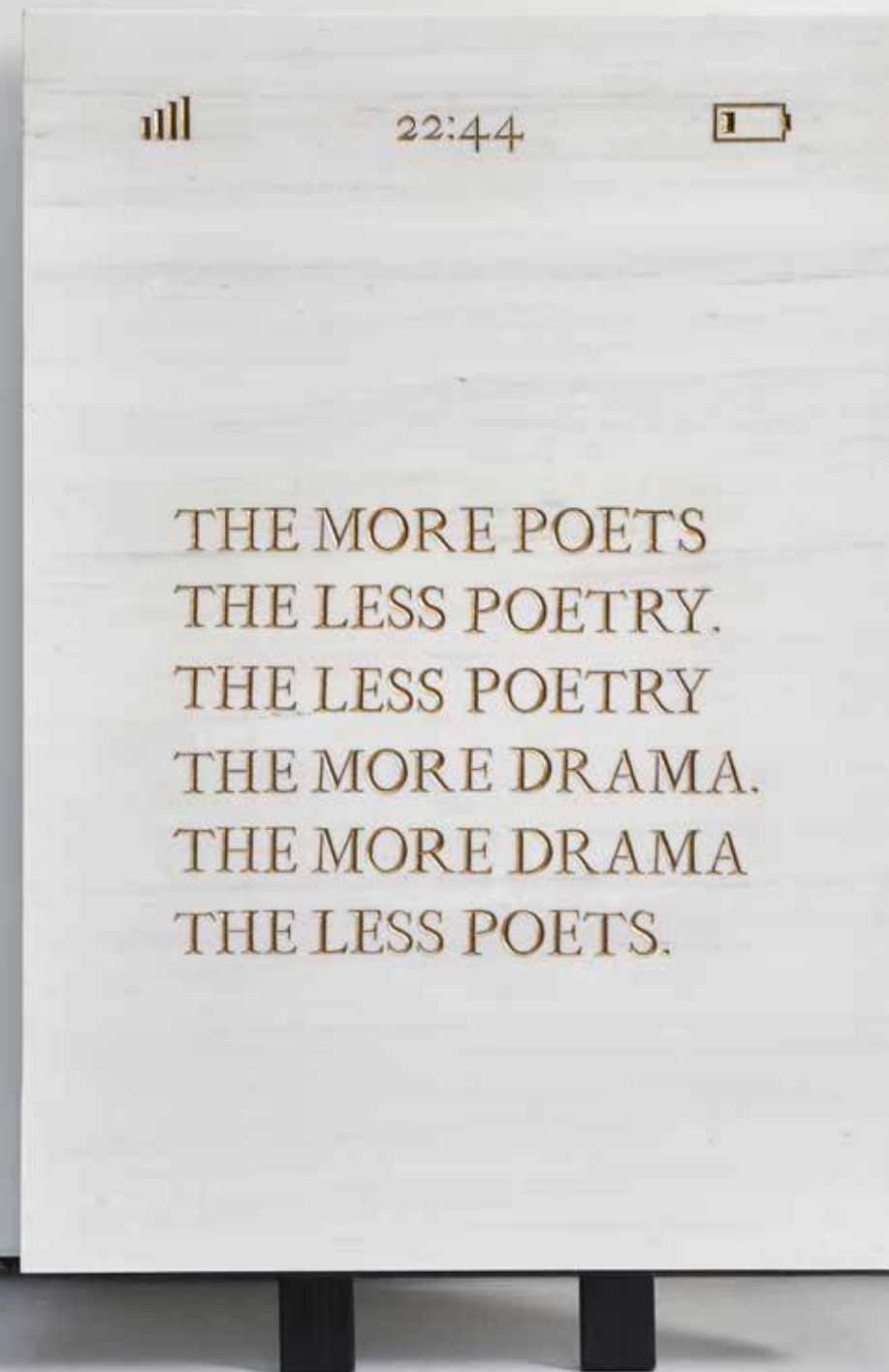
Akrilna boja na nađenoj plastičnoj kesi, 65 x 45 cm



mi bivamo u središtu sukcesivne smene uzroka i posledice. Dritonov rad Dial L for Luck, na kome je na plastičnoj kesi predstavljen čovek s ispisom lucky you izvedenim unazad, u kombinaciji sa radom Now, Now, koji čine svetleća slova od pleksiglasa koja se neprekidno isključuju i uključuju, preispituje odnos pojedinca prema mogućnosti da svoje vreme posmatra i kao vezu potencijala i delovanja, a ne (samo) kao apstraktnu datost u kojoj obitava. Da li će ostati srećni pojedinac koji će se utopiti u sadašnjost kao posledicu, ili će se odlučiti na neku vrstu aktivnog odnosa prema njoj, pitanje je za ozbiljno razmatranje, jer svako (ne) delovanje ostavlja, ipak, i neke posledice, što posredno iščitavamo u umetnikovim stihovima (rad Howl): The more poets, the less poetry. The less poetry, the more drama. The more drama, the less poets. Delovanje, međutim, ima smisla ako ima i epilog, i to onaj koji ostvaruje drugačiji odnos prema normama i opštevladajućim konvencijama nametnutim od strane „većine“, jednostavno, prema onome što živimo danas. Da je ono, često, osuđeno na suvoparnu repetitivnost bez ikakvog postignuća, doživljavamo svakodnevno, u već pomenutom proivodno –konzumerskom okruženju globalnog kapitalizma, posebno s urušenom (a zašto ne reći i nepostojećom) verom u bilo kakvu budućnost. S jedne strane smo u situaciji da pomislimo da nam, bukvalno, treba dva para ruku (Hopes & Fears) kako bismo odgovorili na zahteve kapitalističkog multitaskinga na svakodnevnom nivou, neretko kao obrazovni ili radni migranti koji čeznu da sebi obezbede „svetliju budućnost“ ili makar otvore drugačije prostore od onih koji su nam dati rođenjem. S druge strane, čini nam se da to radimo bez

own) present. The moment of now and immediately, characteristic of social networks and the online life, especially among the younger generations, largely restricts the space for a critical reflection on the present, as a consequence of some other “now”, while we are at the centre of successive change of cause and effect. Driton’s Dial L for Luck, featuring a drawing of a man on a plastic bag, carrying a lucky you inscription in mirror-writing, combined with the piece Now, Now, which consists of luminous letters made of Plexiglas, flashing on and off intermittently, challenges the individual to take an attitude towards viewing one’s time as a link between potential and action, and not (only) as an abstract fact in which one resides. Whether one remains a happy individual assimilated with the present as a consequence, or one decides to assume a sort of active attitude towards the present, is a question for serious scrutiny, given that every (in) action leaves some consequences – all of which is indirectly conveyed by the artist’s verses (the piece Howl): The more poets, the less poetry. The less poetry, the more drama. The more drama, the less poets. However, action only makes sense if it has an epilogue, and one that results in a different attitude towards the norms and conventions imposed by the “majority”, or simply, towards the lifestyle of contemporaneity. And yet, we experience the fact that such an approach is often doomed to dry repetitiveness without much success on an everyday basis, which is most visible in the previously mentioned production- and consumer-oriented environment of global capitalism, especially with a collapsing (and, it is fair to say, non-existent) faith in any future. On the one hand, we find ourselves in a

Howl, 2021
Zavijanje, 2021.
Engraving on white marble, 100 x 70 x 5 cm
Gravira na bijelom mermeru, 100 x 70 x 5 cm





Teardrop, 2012
Suza, 2012.
Single channel video,
Duration: 1min 25sec
Shooting format: HD,
Screening ratio: 16:9,
Sound: stereo
Jednokanalni HD video,
16:9, trajanje: 1min.
25sec. Stereo zvuk



Lorem Ipsum, 2019
Glass bottle,
recycled paper, charcoal,
30 x 8 cm
Staklena flaša,
reciklirani papir, ugljen,
30 x 8 cm

vidljivog efekta. Ta vrsta nesigurnosti, nade, osetljivosti, rečju, prekarnosti čita se u više Dritonovih radova – They say you can't hold two watermelons in one hand, Teardrop, Homesick, Lorem Ipsum. U video radu Teardrop, umetnik, stojeći na litici zagledan u morski horizont nekog „tuđeg tla“ u periodu školovanja, više iz glasa dve reči: Mama i MOMA. Dva suprotstavljena pola – mama, kao intimni simbol sigurnosti i utočišta, i MOMA kao paradigmatički primer čežnje za pripadanjem etabliranom sistemu umetnosti – prožimaju se i gube u nepreglednoj širini prirodnog ambijenta, doprinoseći utisku uzaludnosti tog čina.

Dritonov pristup sa bazira na instinktivnom reagovanju na svoje okruženje, okidač je lični doživljaj i njegov rad je, zapravo, procesuiranje doživljenog. On to radi na poetičan, dopadljiv način koristeći reči i jezik uz humor i suptilnu ironiju, po čemu se izdvaja ciklus radova Love Letters (Missed Call) koji predstavljaju intervencije na plastičnim potrošačkim kesama u vidu zapisa raznih misli, citata, poruka, crteža, inspirisane spiskovima za kupovinu koje je svakodnevno dobijao od svoje supruge. Tim njegovim činom, banalni predmet (ali ne i bezopasan) kakav je plastična kesica, na jedan osoben način izdignut na nivo umetničkog dela, rekontekstualizacijom postaje medijum za vidljivost poruke. Dvostruko razumevanje koje se tom prilikom javlja je nešto što dodatno potkrepljuje nesigurnost u razlučivanju granica privida naše stvarnosti, koja kao da mora biti fikcionalizovana da bi bila mišljena.⁴

Dodatni privid stvara algoritamski određen online život koji stvara iluziju

⁴ Foster, H. Contemporary Extracts, e-flux #12, January 2010, 4.

situation where we think that we literally need two pairs of hands (Hopes & Fears) to respond to the demands of capitalist multitasking on a daily basis, often as educational or labour migrants, seeking to secure a “brighter future” or at least to reach different horizons than those provided to us by birth. On the other hand, it seems that such efforts do not produce any visible effect. That kind of insecurity, hope, sensitivity, or – in sum – precariousness, is featured in several of Driton's works – They say you can't hold two watermelons in one hand, Teardrop, Homesick, Lorem Ipsum. In the video work Teardrop, the artist, standing on a cliff gazing at the sea horizon of some “foreign soil” during his schooling, yells the following two words: Mama and MOMA. Two opposing aspects – mama, as an intimate symbol of security and refuge, and MOMA as a paradigmatic example of a longing to belong to an established system of art – permeate each other and disappear in the vast breadth of the natural environment, enhancing the impression of futility.

Driton's approach is based on an instinctive reaction to his environment, with the trigger being a personal experience and his work a form of processing of that experience. His delivery is poetic and engaging, employing words and language with humour and subtle irony, which characterises the cycle of works Love Letters (Missed Call), comprised of interventions on plastic consumer bags in the form of notes of various thoughts, quotes, messages, drawings, inspired by shopping lists that he received daily from his wife. Therefore, a common (but not harmless) object such as a plastic bag, raised in a distinctive way to the level of a work of art, becomes





Dial L for Luck, 2021
Acrylic paint on found plastic bag, 65 x 45 cm
Akrična boja na našenoj plastičnoj kesi, 65 x 45 cm



Now, Now, 2021
Sad, Sad, 2021.
LED Plexiglass, CNC cut letters, 50 x 30 x 10 cm
LED pleksiglas, slova izrađena CNC tehnologijom, 50 x 30 x 10 cm

objektivnosti, s ostvarivanjem profita kao jedinim ciljem, dok je offline komunikacija sve češće svedena na tišinu. Ta tišina koja se javlja, određena je letargičnim odnosom prema trenutku u kome živimo i slabim razumevanjem funkcionalnih posledica takvog pristupa. S druge strane, relacija koja se prvenstveno ostvaruje na individualnom, ličnom nivou, između dve jedinice, veoma je krhkog karaktera (o čemu govori rad Binum Silentium (Dupla tišina)) i često je sveden na uspostavljanje ravnoteže između podrške i težine takvog odnosa. Na kolektivnom planu, taj odnos se danas meri stepenom prekarizacije i to u podeljenom svetu enormnih nejednakosti, u kome se sve dešava u hodu, brzo, trenutno, samo da je profitabilno ili vidljivo.

Umetnost u današnjem okruženju ima fluidni karakter, a time uspeva da bude unutar svakog delovanja i da preispituje svaki dalji korak koji se javlja u bilo kom prostoru, virtuelnom ili stvarnom. U tom smislu, ona nesporno ostvaruje komunikaciju u javnom diskursu, samo ostaje pitanje da li je ostvaruje na efemernom nivou ili teži da čini razliku uz svest da njeno delovanje u datom kontekstu utiče ne samo na njen dalji tok već i konstruiše ono što iz takve komunikacije proizlazi.

Ana Ivanović
istoričar umjetnosti

a medium for increasing the visibility of a message through recontextualisation. The ambiguity that occurs as a result further reinforces the uncertainty in distinguishing the boundaries of the illusion of our reality, which seems to have to be fictionalised in order to be thought.⁴

An algorithmically determined online life crates an additional level of illusion, which further produces a mirage of objectivity, with profit-making being the sole objective, while offline communication is increasingly reduced to silence. The resulting silence is determined by a lethargic attitude towards the moment in which we live and a poor understanding of the functional consequences of such an approach. On the other hand, the relationship that is primarily assumed on an individual, personal level, between two individuals, is very fragile (as discussed in the piece Binum Silentium (Double Silence)) and is often reduced to establishing a balance between support and weight of such a relationship.

At the collective level, nowadays, this relationship is measured by the degree of precariousness in a divided world of enormous inequalities, in which everything happens on the fly, quickly, instantaneously, as long as it is profitable or visible.

⁴ Foster, H. Contemporary Extracts, e-flux #12, January 2010, 4.

Binum Silentium, 2021

Dupla tišina, 2021.

Hermann tortoise shells, white bean grain, 34 x 17 cm

Oklopi šumske kornjače, zrno bijelog pasulja, 34 x 17 cm





In the ambience of contemporaneity, art has a fluid character, and thus manages to be an integral part of every activity and to question every further step that occurs in any space, be it virtual or real. In that sense, it indisputably introduces communication into the public discourse. The only remaining question is whether it introduces communication on an ephemeral level, or if it aspires towards making a difference with deep awareness that its actions in a given context do not only affect its own further course, but also construct what arises from such communication.

Ana Ivanović
art historian

Homesick, 2019
Nostalgičan, 2019.
Mixed media framed drawing on paper, 65 x 45 cm
Kombinovana tehnika na papiru, 65 x 45 cm



They say you can't hold two watermelons in one hand, 2012
Kaže se da ne možeš držati dvije lubenice u jednoj ruci, 2012.
C-Print on Aluminum, 150 x 100 cm
C-print na aluminijumu, 150 x 100 cm

Biografija umjetnika



Driton Selmani rođen je 1987. godine. Živi i radi u Prištini.

Idejama o percepciji stvarnosti pristupa dekonstruišući društvene, kulturne i političke teme, koje ga okružuju. U djetinjstvu mu je rečeno da voli zemlju koja više i nije postojala, zbog čega je stvorio osnovu za skepticizam prema bilo kakvoj datoj stvarnosti. Takav odnos prema realnosti danas primjenjuje u svom umjetničkom radu, pretvarajući lična uvjerenja u vizuelne artefakte. Stari prividi su 1999. godine zamijenjeni novim; ornamenti nekadašnjih prostora obnovljeni su i usmjereni ka novim značenjima, i novim neizvjesnostima. U tom procesu koji se uvijek odvija, Selmani se pozicionira i kao posmatrač i kao performer, stvarajući djela na osnovu vlastitih iskustava, perspektiva i sumnji.

Driton Selmani izlagao je na brojim samostalnim i kolektivnim izložbama: Stacion – Centar savremene umjetnosti, Priština; Muzej Ludwig, Budimpešta; Kunstraum Niederosterreich, Beč; Casa Triangulo, Sao Paolo; Bijenale mladih umjetnika Evrope i Mediterana, Ankona; U10 Art Space, Beograd; Peto bijenale u Marakešu; Festival svjetla, Amsterdam; Fabbrica del Vapore, Milano; Bregnez Bijenale u Austriji; Exchiesetta - Polinjano a Mare, Nacionalna umjetnicka galerija, Tirana; Muzej moderne i suvremene umjetnosti, Rijeka, Centar savremene umjetnosti, Solun; Festival svjetla, Norceping; Škuc galerija, Ljubljana; Galerija Eugster, Beograd; Kuća umjetnosti, Muzej MAXXI, Muzej savremene umjetnosti Skoplje, Brisel.

Biography of the artist

Driton Selmani (b. 1987) lives and works in Prishtina and Doganaj.

Selmani approaches the idea of perceived reality by deconstructing formations of social, political and cultural topics that have been embodied around him. At a young age, he was told to worship a country that no longer existed, which caused him to form a basis of skepticism towards any supposedly given reality. He later used this as a beneficial tool to reconstruct his beliefs into visual artifacts. In 1999, old simulacra have been replaced by new simulacra; the ornaments of a previous space have been refurbished in order to unfold with new meanings but also new uncertainties. Selmani confronts himself as a spectator of this “on-going event”, and positions himself as an actor, enacting his performances based on his personal histories, beliefs and doubts.

He has exhibited at solo and group exhibitions in Stacion Center For Contemporary Art Pristina, Ludwig Múzeum in Budapest, KunstraumNiederosterreich Vienna, Casa São Paulo, Mediterranea Biennale 16 Ancona, U10 Belgrade, 5th Marrakesh Biennial, Amsterdam Light Festival, Fabbrica del Vapore Milan, Bregenz Biennale, ExchiesettaPolignano a Mare, National Art Gallery Tirana, Thesaloniki Center of Contemporary Art, Eugster || Belgrade, Norrköping Light Festival, La Maison des Arts Brussels, MAXXI Museum, MMSU Rijeka, Škuc Gallery, Museum of Contemporary Art Skopje among others...