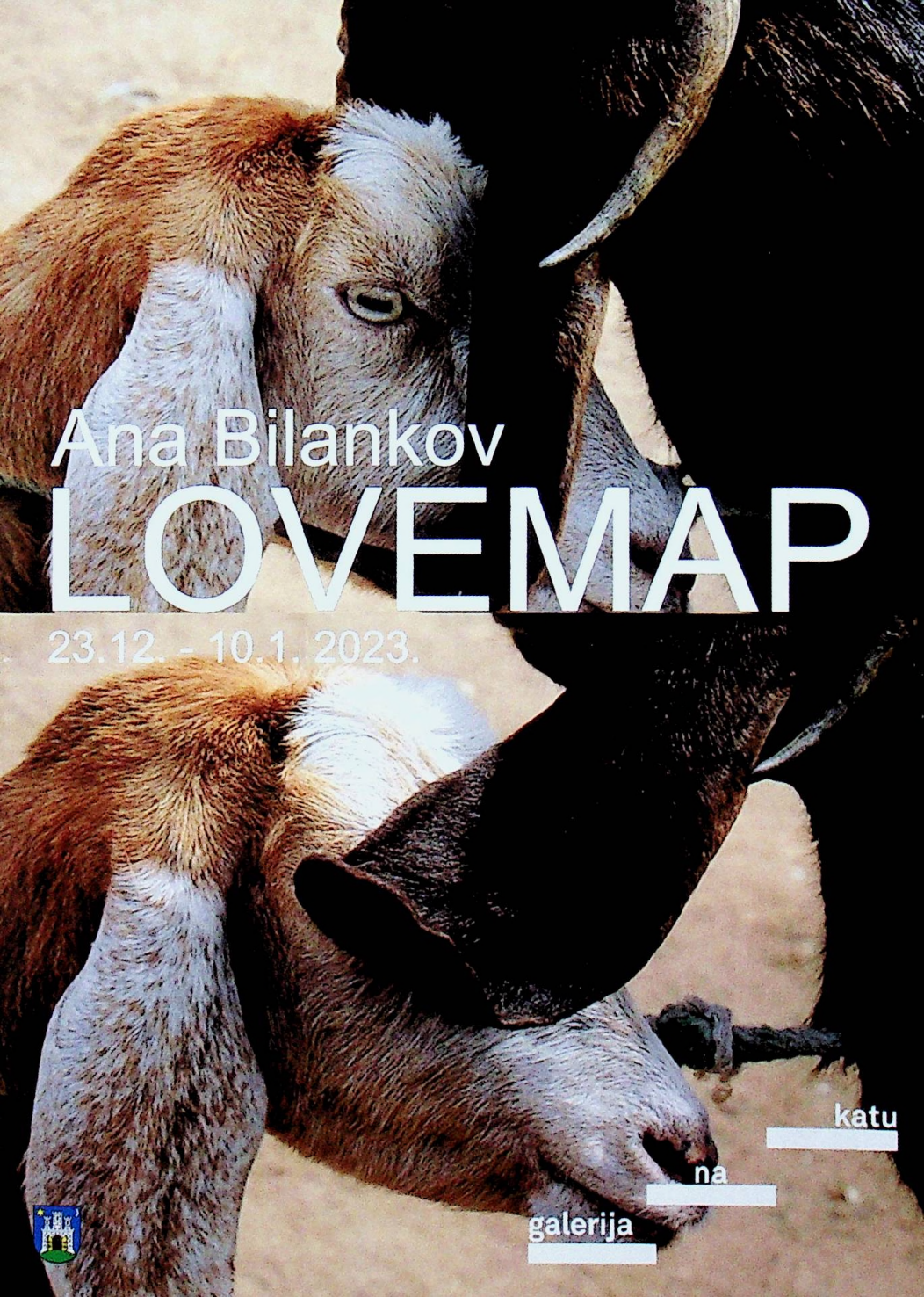




Ana Bilankov

LOVEMAP

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katu

na

galerija



Pustinja kao kraj ili novi početak

Strah koji živi u nama, zgusnut ili rasplinut, u svim je stanicama našeg bića. Zgrčen čuči i strpljivo čeka. Mnogi su faktori koji ga pokreću, pretvaraju iz gustog ili plinovitog stanja u tekuću paniku koja tada kola našim tijelom i tjera nas na akciju ili reakciju.

U tom kratkom momentu djelovati li ne djelovati stvaraju se heroji i kukavice, donesu se odluke dobre i loše, rađaju se ljubavi i privrženosti ili se pak tone prema smrti i utnuću. Ti trenuci u kojima nam valja bježati ili boriti se, određuju nas u daljnjem životu, crtaju sliku naše mutne osobnosti i određuju naše mjesto u društvu. Događaji koji se krenu nizati nakon borbe ili bijega, naš su život, a iz njega nema van. U njemu smo zarobljeni i u njemu najčešće lutamo u potrazi za pokojim svjetionikom u mraku ove dekadentne civilizacije. No, postoje mjesta, metaforična i fizička kojima težimo ne bi li kupili sebi nekoliko trenutaka mira, pauze, time outa u kojemu možemo razmisliti zašto smo reagirali kako jesmo na te kamene spoticanja pred nama i dozvolili da nas strah svlada. Zašto smo baš na njima posrnuli i zašto ih nismo jednostavno zaobišli.

Pustinja je takav materijalni i metaforični prostor, praznina koja to nije, neka čudna punina i savršen filozofski pejzaž gdje sila teže drži sipak pijesak pri dnu i na okupu.

Ana Bilankov argonaut je takvih pejsaža i putnica europskim kulturnim krajolicima posljednjih desetljeća. Njezino putovanje kroz teritorije gdje je politika, tj. pobjednik neke krvave bitke, stvorila jasne nacionalne zajednice pa do mitskih monokromnih pejzaža koji poput nekog laksativa čiste sve ono što urbana sredina zgusne u nama, njezin je modus operandi. Ona putuje svojevrijedno i prepušteno sudbini, bez previše scenarija, bez velikih očekivanja, ali sa željom da bude prisutna i često stisnuta između političkog i iskonskog.

Njezin susret s pustinjom počinje prolaskom kroz vrata na saharskom dijelu Tunisa. Ulazak je to u nenapisanu knjigu razočaranja i očekivanja u kojoj likovi žive i umiru jedan za drugoga. Likovnost koja nju pokreće u tom pustinskom dualizmu boja neba i pijeska, često je samo plemenita ovisnost o snazi kojom priroda komunicira jednostavnost svojih boja. Što ih je manje, to je ovisnost veća. Minimalizam kolorita koji putovanje pustinjom sadrži, razbijen je geometrijom pustinskih urbaniziranih sredina u koje Ana intervenira montažnim postupcima zrcaljenja. Obrtanjem motiva nastaju sasvim nove slike, gotovo stvarne, koje tom malom intervencijom daju meditativnu 'mandalastu' kvalitetu arhitekturi ili pejzažu. Unutar tih arhitektonskih mandala su ljudi, stranci njoj, a opet domaći likovi iz pustinje, koji gotovo neupadljivim pokretima plešu neku posvećenu koreografiju tražeći svoje mjesto Bogu pod nogama.

Ana svjesno luta između medija kojima bilježi putovanje u srce svoje tame (ili svjetla), često su to neoštri, drhtavi, iz ruke snimani kadrovi vožnje ili pijeska koji leti zrakom kao kakav duh koji traži ili je ovoga trena napustio neko toplo tijelo. Slika koju nudi, ta pejzažna, pustinska scenografija koju kamera guta, samo je prikaz njezina stanja, nekada krhkog, a ponekad moćnog i gladnog simetrije i sklada. Recimo to poetski, Ana nema srce u rukavu, nego u objektivu.

I snimak je jednog emotivnog svjedočanstva u kojem autorica rasipa poput zrnaca suhog saharskog pijeska svoju ranjivu osobnost pred nama. Pustinja je za Anu prostor evaluacije prošlosti i prihvaćanja sadašnjosti u kojem se prošli događaji i odluke, i naravno, njihove posljedice, mogu sagledati iz druge perspektive. Suputnik na tome putu uvijek može biti i druga osoba, no najčešće je to ustvari pejzaž, sama pustinja koja prodire kroz pore sitnim zrcima i ulazi kroz oči jednostavnim koloritom brišući asfalt i utrnjujući buku urbanih pejzaža iz kojih dolazimo.

Strah spomenut na početku, za Anu je pokretač koji tjera u nepoznato, u sučeljavanje sa samim sobom kroz one druge ljude ili duplirane zgrade i trgovce koji tvore nepostojeće savršenstvo divljeg arapskog urbanizma. Nekako posredno, u savršenoj scenografiji boje pijeska i plavog neba, kroz oči životinja vezanih ispucanim konopom oko vrata koje izravnim pogledom u kameru kao da traže spas od noža kome prethodi molitva iskupljenja Alahu, Anin film uvlači gledatelja u jedino moguće putovanje vrijedno odlaska, ono u sebe samu.

Narativni kôd, ili osobna dramaturgija sabijanja doživljaja vremena i prostora u putovanje slikom i zvukom, u njezinome slučaju je osjećajni testament, oporuka sasvim emotivne prirode koja pokopava jedno stanje i otvara prostor za nastanak nečega novoga. Slika i zvuk tako postaju medij kojima Ana komunicira u skućene dvije dimenzije filma ili fotografije svoj složen i teško uhvatljiv rasap ili ushit, neki pošten i iskren sukob s tehnologijom, prirodom i sobom.

Minimalne su njezine intervencije u samu stvarnost, ona ne nagoni ljude na glumu ili statiranje, ne nadograđuje pejzaž dodatnim elementima niti koristi rekvizitu kako bi napravila korak razlike. Ana radi drugačijim alatima. Jednostavnost montaže, čistog reza i glazbe organski su razmješteni u prostoru otvarajući pogled na događanja koja sva nekako postaju važna, nabijena značenjima, veća od života.

Pustinja tako postaje podloga na kojoj se razvija jedan poseban oblik introspekcije u kojem su slika i ton samo sredstvo kojima se pokušava prenijeti unutarnji svijet jedne žene koja se usudila proći kroz vrata koja u nju vode.

Mnogi od nas bi zastali, vratili se, prestrašili se te praznine i monokromije. Nije taj strah od pustinje same, nego od pustoši u nama koji pustinja još samo uveća.

Veliko je to ništa puno pijeska u koji stopala upadaju što se više krećemo. Ana taj strah ima, no ipak je prošla kroz vrata, ispričala svoju priču i na koncu je nenametljivo pustila u javnost. Dio putovanja podijelila je s nama, nadajući se možda kako pustinju više nećemo gledati kao prazninu u kojoj će čučajući strah u nama iskočiti, nego kao početak, sipku podlogu na kojoj treba ponovo izgraditi dio našeg postojanja.

Emil Matešić

The Desert as the End or a New Beginning

The fear we carry inside, condensed, or dispersed, is present in all the cells of our body. It is squatting convulsed and waiting patiently. Various factors can set it into motion, transforming it from a dense or gaseous state into liquid panic circulating our body and forcing us to act or react.

In that short moment between action and inaction heroes and cowards emerge, good and bad decisions are made, loves and affections are born, or death and numbness take over. Those moments when we either run away or choose to fight, determine the rest of our lives, sketch out our opaque personality and determine our place in society. The events that start to unfold after our struggle or escape, frame our life, and there is no getting away from it. We are trapped inside it wandering in search of a rare beacon of light in the darkness of this decadent civilisation. But there are places, metaphoric and physical, which we seek trying to buy ourselves a few moments of peace, pause, time out during which we can ponder why we reacted the way we did towards the stumbling blocks we faced and why we succumbed to our fear. Why we stumbled over them instead of easily circumventing them.

The desert is such a material and metaphoric space, a void which is not a void, a strange fullness, and the perfect philosophical landscape where gravity holds the loose grains of sand together at the bottom.

Ana Bilankov is an Argonaut of such landscapes traveling through European cultural landscapes of the past decades. Her modus operandi encompasses a voyage through territories in which politics, i.e., the winners of certain bloody battles, created distinct national communities, and mythical monochromatic landscapes which have a laxative effect on everything our urban milieu has compressed in us. She travels wilfully, surrendering to faith, without making up scenarios, without great expectations, but wanting to be present and often being clenched between the political and the primal.

Her encounter with the desert begins with her passing through doors in the Sahara part of Tunisia. It is the entrance to an unwritten book of disillusion and expectation whose characters live and die for each other. The visual artistry which she uncovers in the desert's dualism of sky and sand, often gently relies on the strength with which nature transmits the simplicity of its colours. The fewer colours there are, the greater the contingency. The minimalist nature of the colours one encounters while traveling through the desert is disrupted by the geometric desert urban dwellings Ana intervenes in with the editing process of mirroring. Reversal of motifs results in completely new images, almost real - this slight intervention giving the architecture or the landscape a meditative mandala-like quality. Inside these architectonic mandalas we find strangers, the inhabitants of the desert, who unobtrusively dance a sacral choreography trying to find their place in God's vicinity.

Ana consciously drifts between different media she uses to record the journey into the heart of her darkness (or light). These are often blurry, shaky, hand-held shots made while driving or shots of sand adrift in the air, reminding us of a ghost searching or momentarily leaving a worm body. The image this desert scenography provides is swallowed by the camera and is merely a representation of her state of mind, at times fragile, and at other times powerful and hungry for

symmetry and harmony. Let us put it poetically, Ana does not wear her heart on her sleeve but on her camera lens.

Everything she captures inside her prepared lens is a recording of a certain emotional testimony – the author scatters her vulnerable personality in front of us like grains of dry Sahara sand.

For Ana the desert is a space for evaluating the past and accepting the present which helps us see past events and decisions, and of course their consequences, from a different perspective. The fellow traveller on such a journey can always be another person, but most often it is the landscape itself, the desert which penetrates our pores through tiny grains and penetrates our eyes through its elementary colouring that erases the asphalt and muffles the noise of the urban landscapes we come from.

The fear which was mentioned at the beginning pushes Ana into the unknown, where she confronts herself by way of other people or duplicated buildings and squares which form the inexistent perfection of wild Arabic urbanism. In this perfect scenography formed by the colours of sand and blue sky, we see through the eyes of animals who are tied with a rough rope and gazing directly into the camera as if they are seeking escape from the knife. It is preceded by a prayer to Allah for redemption. Ana's film indirectly absorbs the spectator into the only journey worth taking, the journey inside oneself.

The narrative code or personal dramaturgy compresses the sense of time and space into a journey through image and sound. In her case it is a sensitive testimony, a testament of a purely emotional nature which buries the given situation and opens space for the beginning of something new. Image and sound become Ana's media, allowing her to communicate through confined two dimensions of film or photography – her complex and evasive diffusion and elation, an honourable and truthful clash with technology, nature, and herself.

Her interventions into reality are minimal. She does not push people into acting or stage scenes, upgrade the landscape by adding elements or use props to make a shift. Ana utilises different tools. The simplicity of editing, clean cut and music are organically arranged in space – they expand our gaze towards events which somehow become important, charged with meaning, larger than life.

The desert thus becomes the foundation on which a special kind of introspection develops. The image and tone are merely the vessel for transposing the inner world of a woman who dared to pass through the doors that lead inside of her.

Many of us would hesitate, return, get frightened of the void and the monochrome. It is not the desert that frightens us, but the wasteland inside us which the desert only magnifies.

It is a grand nothingness filled with sand which yields under the weight of our feet the more we move. Ana knows this fear all too well, but she still managed to pass through the doors, tell her story and in the end quietly make it public. She shared a part of her journey with us, perhaps hoping that we will no longer see the desert as a void setting our hidden fear into motion, but as a beginning, a loose foundation on which we need to build a new part of our being.

Text by: Emil Matešić
Translated by: Dina Pokrajac

Ana Bilankov vizualna je umjetnica, rođena je u Zagrebu, živi i radi u Berlinu. Njezina konceptualna i kontekstualna umjetnička praksa uključuje medije kao što su fotografija, video/eksperimentalni film, instalacija i tekst, a glavne teme su joj poetika/politika dislokacije, migracije, osobno i kolektivno sjećanje kao i konstrukcija identiteta u "među-prostorima". Studirala je povijest umjetnosti i germanistiku na Sveučilištima u Zagrebu i Mainzu (diplomirala u Zagrebu), umjetničku fotografiju na Wiesbadener Freie Kunstschule, te postdiplomski studij "Umjetnost u kontekstu" (M.A.) na Universität der Künste u Berlinu i University of the West of England u Bristolu, UK.

Ana Bilankov is a visual artist, born in Zagreb. She is based in Berlin. Her conceptual and contextual artistic practice includes media such as photography, video/experimental film, installation, and text. The main themes of her work are the poetics of dislocation, migration, personal and collective memory as well as the construction of identity inside "interspaces". She studied the history and German language at Universities in Zagreb and Mainz (graduating in Zagreb), art photography at Wiesbadener Freie Kunstschule, and finished a postgraduate study programme "Art in Context" (M. A.) at Universität der Künste in Berlin and University of the West of England in Bristol, UK.

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