

# NA PUTU SLOBODE

RADOVI IZ KOLEKCIJE MUZEJA  
SAVREMENE UMETNOSTI  
VOJVODINE, NOVI SAD

## ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION OF  
THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY  
ART VOJVODINA, NOVI SAD

# NA PUTU SLOBODE

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UMETNOSTI VOJVODINE, NOVI SAD

# ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

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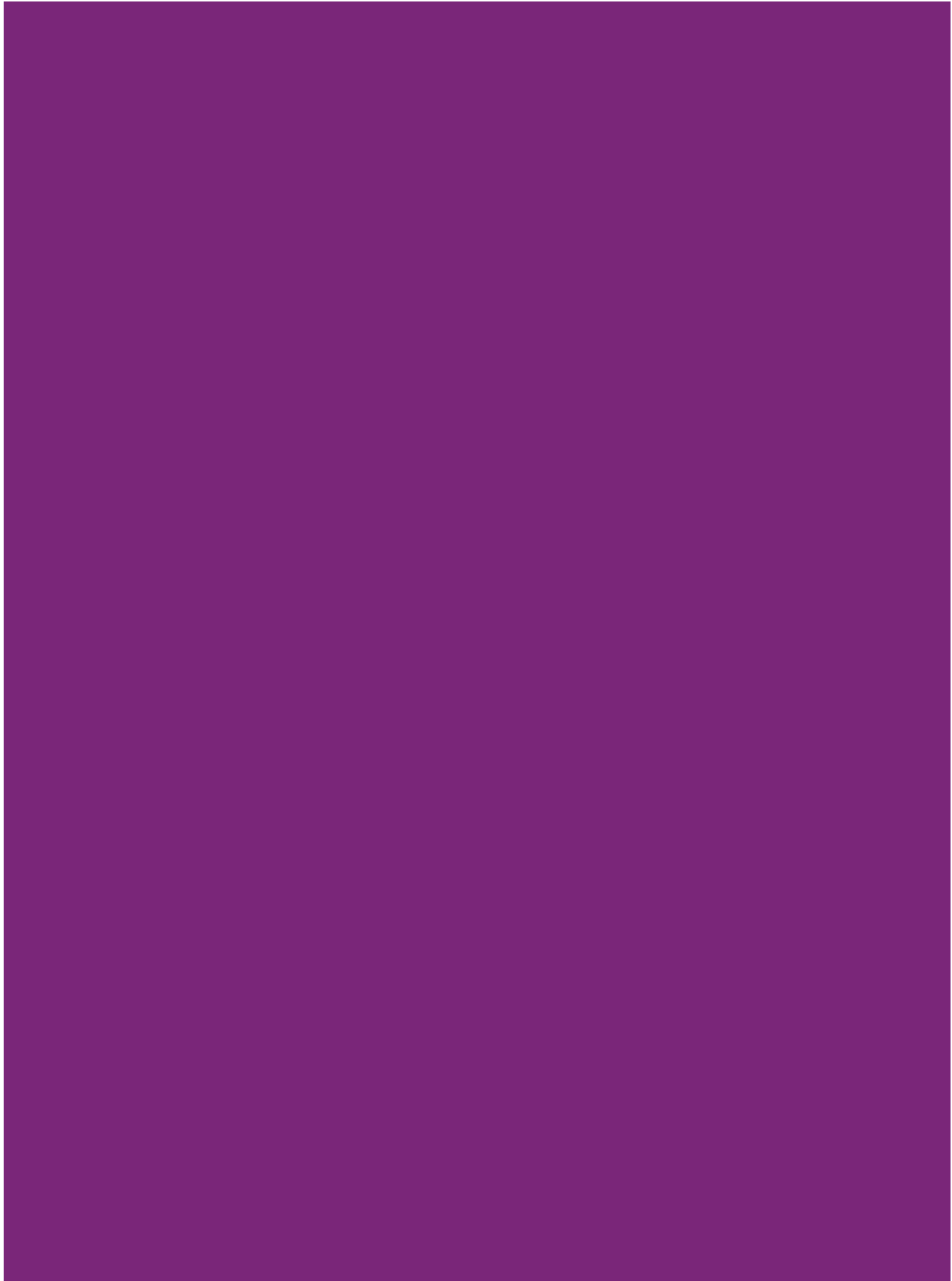
WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM  
OF CONTEMPORARY ART VOJVODINA, NOVI SAD

Novi Sad, 2022.

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MUZEJ SAVREMENE  
MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY  
UMETNOSTI VOJVODINE  
ART VOJVODINA





## NA PUTU SLOBODE

dr Sanja Kojić Mladenov

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### Internacionalno – lokalno

Međunarodna grupna izložba VERBUND COLLECTION (FERBUNT KOLEKCIJA), Beč, FEMINISTIČKA AVANGARDA 1970-ih (FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE OF THE 1970s), autorski koncept direktorke i kustoskinje dr Gabriele Šor (Gabriele Schor), obuhvata dela internacionalno afirmisanih umetnica okupljenih pod zajedničkim terminom „feministička avangarda”. Za izložbu u Novom Sadu napravljen je poseban izbor koji čine dela 37 umetnica zastupljenih u VERBUND kolekciji. Među njima su: Dara Birnbaum, Džudi Čikago (Judy Chicago), VALIE EXPORT, Sanja Iveković, Katalin Ladik, Ana Mendieta, ORLAN, Đina Pane (Gina Pane), Sindi Šerman (Cindy Sherman), Birgit Jurgensen (Birgit Jürgenssen), Brigitte Lang (Brigitte Lang), Hana Vilke (Hannah Wilke), Frančeska Vudman (Francesca Woodman) i dr. Ovaj izbor prati izložba NA PUTU SLOBODE sa radovima umetnica iz kolekcije MSUV, Novi Sad, u kustoskoj selekciji dr Sanje Kojić Mladenov.

Istorijski, žene su prikazivane kao projekcija muških fantazija, predrasuda i odnosa, navodi Gabriele Šor. Međutim, u 1970-im se dogodila promena u načinu na koji se žene predstavljaju u umetnosti. Kako bi stvorile alternativne poglede na ženski identitet, umetnice su počele da istražuju vizuelne prikaze sopstvenih bića. Kao direktorka kolekcije i urednica prateće monografske publikacije, Gabriele Šor je istražila feminističku avangardu kako bi naglasila ulogu koju su ove umetnice imale u poslednje četiri decenije. „Rezultati su radikalni, poetični, ironični, ljuti, cinični i srdačni. Najviše od svega su iskreni, deleći kolektivnu svest koja je preispitala i odbacila

ono što je ranije dominiralo, okrećući se novim načinima izražavanja u oblastima fotografije, performansa, filma i videa”, navodi. Izložba i knjiga FEMINISTIČKA AVANGARDA 1970-ih naglašavaju postignuća žena umetnica koja su ohrabrila i nadahnula one koje su se razvile na iskustvima prethodnica.

Izložba VERBUND kolekcije u Novom Sadu je proširena izlaganjem umetničkih radova iz kolekcije MSUV, odnosno izložbom umetnica iz geopolitičkog prostora Srbije koje svojom umetničkom praksom prelaze granice tradicionalnih medijskih i rodničkih pozicija te deluju u lokalnom i/ili internacionalnom kulturnom prostoru. Izabrana su dela umetnica, kao što su: **Katalin Ladik, Milica Mrđa, Tanja Ostojić, Vesna Perunović, Bogdanka Poznanović, Jelena Radić, Judita Šalgo, Vesna Tokin i Milica Tomić**, koje pripadaju različitim generacijama. Pojedine su svoju umetničku praksu razvijale 60-ih i ranih 70-ih godina 20. veka, kao što su Bogdanka Poznanović, Katalin Ladik i Judita Šalgo. Period njihove aktivnosti, tematski i medijski pristupi, mogu se smatrati bliskim radovima umetnica iz VERBUND KOLEKCIJE iz Beča, čime se još jednom ukazuje na postojanje angažovanih umetničkih tokova u lokalnoj sredini koji su se odvijali paralelno sa inovativnim i radikalnim umetničkim praksama na međunarodnoj umetničkoj sceni. Konstataciju potvrđuje i primer umetnice Katalin Ladik čiji se radovi istovremeno nalaze i u kolekciji iz Beča i kolekciji MSUV iz Novog Sada. Proširivanje vremenskog perioda izložbe umetničkim radovima Milice Mrđe, koja je prisutna na umetničkoj sceni od 80-ih godina, te onih umetnica koje deluju od 90-ih, kao što su Vesna Perunović, Vesna Tokin, Milica Tomić i Tanja Ostojić, te Jelena Radić, koja istražuje od ranih 2000-ih, uslovljeno je kako situacijom u samoj zbirci MSUV (umetničkim radovima koji su za ovu priliku bili dostupni) tako i društveno-političkim kontekstom 90-ih godina, koji je inicirao ponovnu afirmaciju kritičke umetničke prakse, bliske jeziku umetnosti s kraja 60-ih i početka 70-ih godina. Naime, izabrana umetnička dela se u periodu svog nastanka, u odnosu na medijski razvoj savremene umetnosti i situaciju na lokalnoj umetničkoj sceni, mogu izdvojiti kao inovativna, kritička i kontekstualno koncipirana, bliska istovremenoj inostranoj umetničkoj produkciji.

### **Termini – teorija – praksa**

Neoavangardna umetnost nastaje i razvija se krajem šezdesetih i tokom sedamdesetih godina 20. veka. Počeci su vezani za izložbu Lusi Lipard (Lucy Lipard) *Ekscentrična apstrakcija (Eccentric Abstraction)* u Njujorku 1966. godine,

kao prvu antiminimalističku reakciju. Lusi Lipard u tekstu koji potpisuje zajedno sa Džonom Čendlerom (Johnom Chandlerom) *Dematerijalizacija umetnosti* (*The Dematerialisation of Art*), uvodi globalni kritički termin „dematerijalizacija umetničkog objekta” za inovativnu umetničku praksu kojoj izvođenje i dovršenje estetskog objekta nije konačni cilj i svrha umetničke operacije, nego je takva umetnička operacija moguća i sasvim legitimna čak i ako ne rezultira trajnošću materijalno čvrstog i postojanog dela. Dozvoljava se svođenje umetničkog rada na mentalni proces, intelektualni nacrt, tzv. *ideju*, tako da je umetničko delo za Lipard, ono koje nastaje u procesu pronalaska sredstava za izražavanje ideje. U pitanju je umetnost koja raskida sa klasičnim disciplinama kao što su slikarstvo i skulptura, prenoseći težište na samog umetnika, njegovu ličnost, ponašanje, komunikaciju, javnost i društvo, izlazeći izvan etabliranih muzejsko-galerijskih prostora i zatvorenih institucionalnih okvira u otvoreni prostor ulice, grada ili prirodne sredine, alternativne prostore druženja ili u intimne prostore doma. *Nova umetnička praksa* vodi poreklo iz naslova poslednjeg poglavlja teksta Katrin Mije (Catherine Millet) *Konceptualna umetnost kao semiotika umetnosti*<sup>1</sup>. Termin *nova* se odnosio na inovativnost neoavangarde, bitno drugačije od prethodnih struja, termin *umetnička* želi da otkloni svaku sumnju da je reč o umetnosti, dok termin *praksa* naglašava procesualnost umetničkog rada i istraživanja, te negira vrednost finalizacije estetskog objekta kao sopstvenog cilja. *Druga linija* se kao pojam koristila u teoriji jugoslovenskog prostora kao obuhvatni termin za avangardne, neoavangardne i radikalno modernističke modele umetničkog jezika i ponašanja, od početka dvadesetih do početka osamdesetih, koji su otvoreni za transnacionalne uticaje, suprotne lokalnim tradicionalnim diskursima (Ješa Denegri). Termin konceptualna umetnost se razvija na granici između vizuelne umetnosti i lingvistike i teži uspostavljanju njihovih međusobnih relacija. Usmerena je na istraživanje prirode i procesa nastajanja umetničkog dela, koncepta (ideje) dela, a tek zatim i njegove realizacije. Važna je za alternativnu umetničku scenu Novog Sada kraja 60-ih i početka 70-ih godina, koju razvijaju uglavnom studenti humanističkih nauka i umetnosti okupljeni oko Tribine mladih.

Sa neoavangardnom umetnošću dolazi do ključne promene u poziciji tela i identiteta u vizuelnoj umetnosti. Umetnice za polazište uzimaju sopstveni identitet kao predmet istraživanja, što je za Lusi Lipard posledica prethodne marginalizacije umetnica u umetničkom sistemu, kao i uopšte društvenog procesa podizanja svesti žena vezanog

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<sup>1</sup> Prevedenog u časopisu *Polja*, 156, Novi Sad, februara 1972.

za feminističke pokrete. Žena nije više samo nemi objekat (najčešće seksualni), već i subjekat umetničkog rada u delima žena umetnica koje postaju akterke. Identitet i telo gotovo da postaju njihovi mediji koji se predstavljaju na najrazličitije načine, kroz realni život umetnice pred publikom, javno, u performansu, bodi artu ili privatno, u umetničkom videu, fotografiji, instalaciji ili tekstu. Koristeći sopstveni identitet kao mesto susreta privatnog i javnog, umetnice problematiku politike identiteta i tela iz polja privatnog prenose u polje umetnosti i društvenih odnosa.

U zbirci eseja o umetnicama, *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* (1976), Lusi Lipard, iznosi poluautobiografski prikaz ranih dana feminističkog umetničkog pokreta i brojne probleme sa kojima se susreću žene na umetničkoj sceni, a koji ukazuju na ustaljeni diskriminatorni, seksistički i neravnopravni sistem, kao što su: ignorisanje i zapostavljanje od strane kustosa i galerista (koji su u to vreme bili uglavnom muškarci), malobrojnost žena u akademskom diskursu, nastavničkom kadru u umetničkim školama, visokim muzejskim pozicijama i sl. (Spisku možemo dodati i nagrade, otkupe umetničkih radova, odrednice u enciklopedijama i sl.) Zato je smatrala da je važno uvesti nove kriterijume, novi sistem vrednosti u vizuelnim umetnostima koji bi činili osnovu za kreiranje feminističke kritike i menjanje dominantnih odnosa moći. Kako *lično može postati političko* i kako porodični odnosi, društvena i politička pitanja mogu biti koncepti umetničkih dela, bila su aktuelna pitanja u umetničkoj praksi 60-ih i 70-ih, istovremeno sa drugim talasom feminizma. Pristupi umetnica su bili različiti, ali je zajedničko bilo to što se u njihovim radovima počeo uočavati lični pečat autorke, akterke, odnosno, njen rod i seksualnost su postali istaknuti, nisu više bili zamaskirani. Koleginica Gabriele Šor postavkom termina *feministička avangarda*, označava period umetničkog delovanja umetnica u periodu kraja 60-ih i 70-te godine 20. veka. Iako bi u formalnom smislu taj termin mogao da ima prefiks *neo*, u odnosu na avangardnu umetničku praksu sa početka 20. veka, može se smatrati opravdanim zbog intencije da se naglase radikalne promene u pozicioniranju žene na umetničkoj sceni koje su se tada desile.

## **Tematski konstrukti izložbe NA PUTU SLOBODE**

Izložba NA PUTU SLOBODE predstavlja umetničke radove koji su primeri analize položaja ličnog identiteta umetnica u umetničkoj praksi, društvu, umetnosti, prirodi ili tehnologiji, odnosa kolektivnog i individualnog identiteta, istraživanja procesa performativnosti, dematerijalnosti i eksperimentalnosti, kao i izraza težnje za

transgresijom granica, probijanjem dominantnih formalnih, medijskih i prostornih okvira.

U naučnom radu „Arhetipske predstave žene u savremenoj umetnosti Srbije”<sup>2</sup> iz 2009. godine sam, na osnovu analogija, formirala nekoliko grupa umetničkih radova saglasnih u osobinama i odnosima, kao što su: Partizanka (Ratnica), Mučenica, Seksualni objekat i Boginja, uz mogući razvoj Kiborga i Konzumentkinje. Na izbor umetničkih radova tada su uticali sledeći kriterijumi: (1) žena kao autorka dela, (2) žanr – autoportret i portret, (3) svi likovni mediji, (4) vremenski okvir – od kraja 80-tih do danas (poslednjih dvadesetak godina) i (5) geografski okvir – uža Srbija i Vojvodina. I sada je u pitanju selekcija vođena izborom produkcije umetnica iz Srbije (sa naglaskom na Vojvodinu), žanr – autoportret i portret, ali shvaćenih u nešto širem konceptu, svih medija, konceptualno-kontekstualnog pristupa, proširenog vremenskog okvira na 1970-te, uvođenjem fokusa na kolekciju MSUV. Ovog puta bez namere da se formiraju arhetipovi i tematske konstrukcije dovedu u vezu sa istorijski i društveno nametnutim stereotipnim ulogama i odnosima. U pitanju je više bila želja da se uoče i izdvoje narativne celine, kao primeri savremene umetničke prakse u kojima je uloga umetnica značajna.

Za ovu priliku sam izdvojila nekoliko segmenata kroz koje se mogu pratiti ključni tematski konstituenti umetničke prakse umetnica prisutni u kolekciji MSUV, u odnosu na navedene kriterijume, kao što su:

- komunikacija – društvena delatnost (Bogdanka Poznanović, Judita Šalgo);
- telo – seksualnost (Katalin Ladik, Jelena Radić);
- priroda – religija (Milica Mrđa, Vesna Perunović, Vesna Tokin);
- rat – nasilje – migracija (Milica Tomić, Tanja Ostojić).

Primera naravno ima još, ali je izbor napravljen i u odnosu na izložbene prostorne i tehničke kapacitete. Jedan od mogućih segmenata bio bi:

- žena – kiborg – tehnologija (Nataša Teofilović, Isidora Todorović), koji je u okviru izložbe Akvizicije MSUV 2012–2015 (2016) i rada Centra za intermedijску i digitalnu umetnost MSUV već bio istaknut i prezentovan javnosti, kao i:

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<sup>2</sup> Kojić Mladenov, Sanja. 2011. „Rod i umetnost”. U *Uvod u rodne teorije*, ur. Ivana Milojević i Slobodanka Markov, 425–437. Novi Sad: ACIMSI – Centar za rodne studije i Mediteran, <https://sanjakm.blogspot.com/2012/05/ahetipi.html>



– telo u postprodukciji – roba – konzumacija (Paula Muhr, Ksenija Kovačević i Milena Nena Popov...) koji sadrži veći broj autorki i zahtevao bi posebnu prostornu celinu.

### **Komunikacija – društvena delatnost**

U periodu *nove umetničke prakse* u Novom Sadu i Vojvodini istaknut je doprinos autorki kao što su: Bogdanka Poznanović, Judita Šalgo i Katalin Ladik, o čemu sam više pisala u tekstu „Neoavangardna umetnost i ženski doprinos” (2022)<sup>3</sup>. Kao posebnu celinu na izložbi NA PUTU SLOBODE izdvajam umetničke radove Bogdanke Poznanović (*Srce*, 1970) i Judite Šalgo (*Rolling Poetry*, 1970; *Mojih N minuta*, 1979), kao primere performativnog, eksperimentalnog i intermedijuskog umetničkog pristupa koji je težio međusobnoj razmeni i saradnji sa drugim protagonistima alternativne umetničke scene, kao i uključivanju sugrađana i posetilaca. Ali ne samo zbog toga, već i zbog njihove ukupne javne društvene delatnosti, naročito u okviru koncipiranja programske strukture Tribine mladih, ali i Ateljea DT20 i Akademije umetnosti u Novom Sadu. Aktivnosti ovih autorki su bile usmerene na angažovane, interdisciplinarnе i inovativne pristupe kako u sopstvenoj umetničkoj praksi tako i u uredničkim i organizacionim poslovima, uz naglašenu težnju ka afirmaciji nadnacionalnog umrežavanja. Radove Judite Šalgo uključujem u izložbu, iako nisu zastupljeni u kolekciji MSUV, kao izuzetak, koji smatram važnim za egzistenciju celine, sa željom da se što adekvatnije prezentuje ženski doprinos kod nas tokom perioda neavangarde, koji čini srž izložbe FEMINISTIČKA AVANGARDA.

### **Telo – seksualnost**

Naga i(li) erotizovana žena je najčešći oblik predstavljanja žene kao seksualnog objekta i njene reprezentacije u istoriji umetnosti i delima koja čine umetničke kolekcije svetskih muzeja. Jedan od prvih primera radikalne promene ovom pristupu u umetnosti Srbije je s kraja 60-tih godina 20. veka u delima konceptualne umetnice Katalin Ladik. U pitanju je jedna od prvih umetnica sa prostora Jugoslavije koja je istraživala i kreirala radove bliske međunarodnom feminizmu. Svojim performansom prikazanim na izložbi (*Shaman poem*, 1970), težila je da iskaže seksualno oslobođenje žene kroz telesno-vokalno izražavanje, dekonstrukciju ustaljenih sistema umetnosti

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<sup>3</sup> Konferencija „Rod, znanje i moć. Istorija, nasleđe i značaj naučnica u Srbiji” u okviru projekta „Nasleđe i značaj naučnica u Srbiji: istraživanje prošlosti kao investicija za budućnost“, Etnografski institut SANU, Beograd.

i afirmaciju žene autorke, oslobođene svih društvenih i umetničkih stereotipa, erotizovane i moćne. Radikalnim sredstvima je propitivala i iskazivala seksualnost i erotizam ne samo u umetničkim krugovima već i mas medijima i pop kulturi Jugoslavije, uz intervjue, nastupe i fotografije objavljene u aktuelnim i popularnim časopisima. Ovakvo delovanje umetnice je isprovociralo različite reakcije javnosti. Drugi rad na ovoj izložbi, *Slika* Jelene Radić iz 2001, nastala tri decenije kasnije prezentuje isečak/sekvencu intimnog života savremene žene, koji svojim predimenzioniranim prizorom uputstva za korišćenje tampona takođe provocira publiku i ukazuje na postojanje još uvek prisutnog stida i srama u savremenoj javnosti, pogotovo kada je u pitanju žensko telo i seksualnost.

### **Priroda – religija**

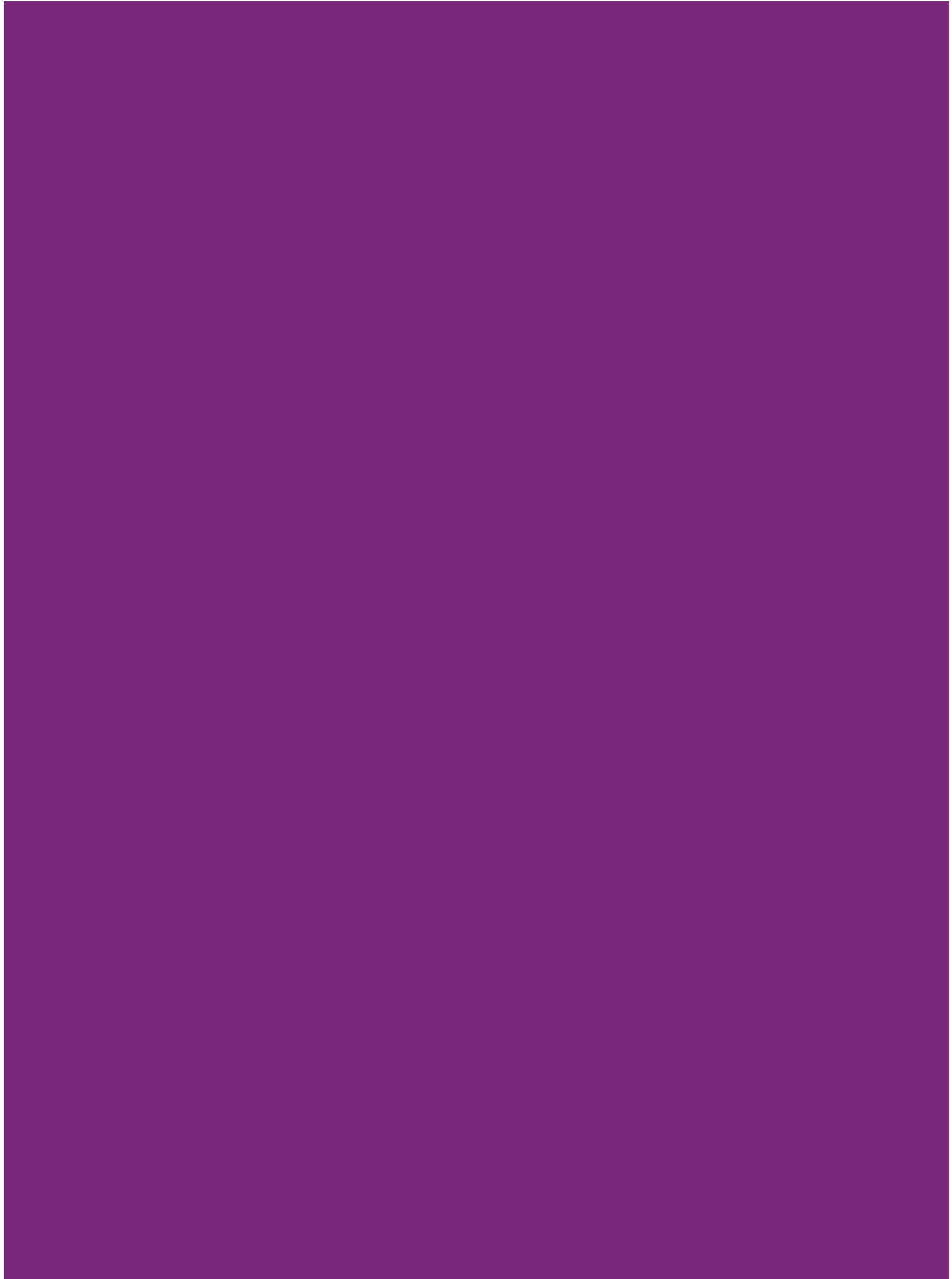
U više tekstova o konceptualnoj umetnosti u Vojvodini, naročito ženskom performansu (M. Šuvaković, N. Dedić...), uz umetnice kao što su Bogdanka Poznanović i Katalin Ladik pominje se Milica Mrđa. Iako je svoju aktivnost na umetničkoj sceni započela nešto kasnije, bliska im je svojim konceptualnom performativnim pristupom. U svojim radovima (*Telo, pigment, voda*, 1989; *Obredi tela i zemlje*, 1990) prezentuje se kao simbolično, neraskidivo povezana sa prirodom, kroz pagansku, mitsku simboliku, dok izvodi performanse na način blizak ritualu. Njeni radovi su ujedno i među primerima prvih umetničkih eksperimenata koji istražuju odnos žene i prirode kroz jezik dematerijalnih medija. Medijsku praksu razvija i Vesna Tokin, jedna od prvih umetnica kod nas sa jasnim opredeljenjem za video-art. U svom video-radu *Kali* (2003), inspirisanim hinduističkom boginjom u svom razornom obličju, reprezentuje ženu kao boginju rata i destrukcije, velike moći. Boginja nosi ogrlicu od ljudskih glava umesto kojih se postepeno pojavljuju delovi TV šou-a popularnih folk zvezda i dokumentarne scene iz rata 90-ih, koje čine društvenu stvarnost same autorke. Potrebu da preokrene jednu od najpopularnijih scena od početka hrišćanstva do danas – Poslednju ili Tajnu večeru, ima Vensa Perunović u svom video-performansu *Iznenadno pojavljivanje mnogo Marija* (2007). Strogo kanonizovanu ikonografiju, koja naglašava moć i ulogu muških autoriteta, zamenjuje ženama, akterkama. Ukazuje na kontinuiranu marginalizaciju žena kreiranu ukorenjenim religijskim društvenim pogledom na svet. Njeni radovi ističu probleme snažnog patrijarhalnog pritiska na ženu i prirodu te ukazuju na alternative u korišćenju istorijskih, umetničkih i mitoloških formi starih civilizacija, politeističkih verovanja.

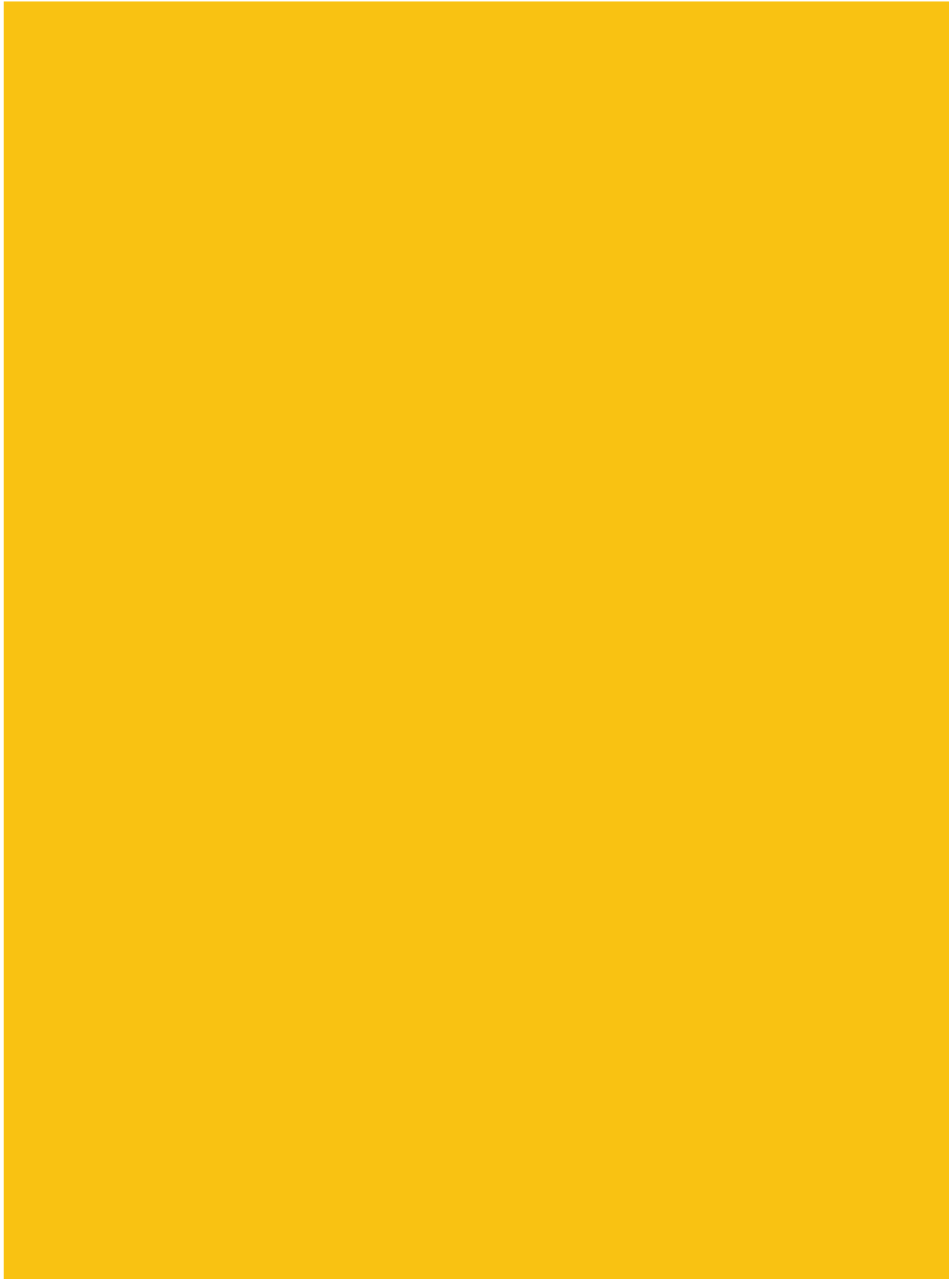
## Rat – nasilje – migracija

Teme rata, nasilja i migracije se javljaju na umetničkoj sceni u Srbiji naročito kao posledica ratova koji su pratili raspad Jugoslavije. Društveno-politički, ekonomski, kulturni i psihološki sunovrat društva je nakon razornog perioda istorije, kao što su bile 90-te godine, doveo do opšte retraditionalizacije, repatrijarhalizacije i klerikalizacije društva. Video-rad *I am Milica Tomić* (1998), Milice Tomić jedan je od prvih na našoj umetničkoj sceni koji je propitivao temu nasilja nad ženama u kontekstu nacionalnog identiteta i jezika, veoma istraživanog tokom pojačanih nacionalističkih politika. Njena akcija – intervencija u javnom prostoru *Jednog dana umesto noći, bljesnuće rafal iz mitraljeza kad družke svetlost ne može doći (iz poeme Oskara Daviča)* (2009) bavi se propitivanjem problematike antifašizma danas i njegovog brisanja iz javne istorije i javnog sećanja, kao i njegove današnje pozicije u odnosu na nove oblike fašizma. Ratovi 90-ih godina, bili su surova realnost prisilnog kretanja stanovništva, koje se nastavilo migracijama stanovništva i narednih decenija, mahom iz ekonomskih i političkih razloga. Više umetničkih koncepata Tanje Ostojić bavi se pozicijom žene migrantkinje, odnosima pozicije moći, *druge* u odnosu na društveno dominantno. Među njima je interaktivni veb projekat *Tražim muža sa EU pasošem* (2000–2005), kao i kolaborativni projekat *Mis(s)placed Women?* predstavljen na izložbi NA PUTU SLOBODE. Kroz, uglavnom, performativnu formu, višegodišnji istraživački projekat Tanja Ostojić razvija još od 2009. godine, uključivanjem velikog broja akterki koje imaju iskustvo migracije, izgnanstva i nepripadanja. Temu diskriminacije proširuje propitivanjem ženskih iskustava, uvodeći lična svedočenja o četiri pokušaja silovanja, ukazujući na važnost prisustva ove teme u javnom diskursu, kao i na važnost ženske solidarnosti.

## Umesto zaključka

Izložba NA PUTU SLOBODE prezentuje manji segment umetničke kolekcije MSUV. U nedostatku prostora za stalnu postavku, vidljivost prezentovanih umetničkih radova čini simbolički ekces prakse Muzeja koja bi trebalo da bude stalna, a ne privremena. Osim radova koji su kroz postavku u okviru projekta FEMINISTIČKA AVANGARDA „izašli iz depoa“ i druge autorke takođe zaslužuju da budu predstavljene u kontekstu ove izložbe za šta se nadam da će biti prilike kako kroz njihovu vidljivost i afirmaciju u okviru programa MSUV tako i kroz uvećanje umetničkog fonda značajnim delima onih umetnica koje do sada nisu dobile mogućnost da budu zastupljene u kolekciji.







## ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

dr Sanja Kojić Mladenov

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FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE OF THE 1970s is an international group exhibition of the VERBUND COLLECTION, Vienna, which encompasses artwork of a number of internationally established female artists brought together by a mutual term “feminist avant-garde,” an authorial concept of the director and curator Gabriela Schor, PhD. VERBUND Collection includes the following artists: **Dara Birnbaum, Judy Chicago, VALIE EXPORT, Sanja Iveković, Katalin Ladik, Ana Mendieta, ORLAN, Gina Pane, Cindy Sherman, Birgit Jürgenssen, Brigitte Lang, Hannah Wilke, Francesca Woodman** and others, out of which a special selection of works by 37 artists was made for the exhibition in Novi Sad. This is followed by the exhibition ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM with works by artists from the Museum of Contemporary Art Vojvodina (MSUV) collection from Novi Sad, curated and selected by Sanja Kojić Mladenov, PhD.

As stated by Gabriele Schor, women were historically represented as projections of male fantasies, prejudices, and relations. However, in the 1970s, a change occurred in the manner in which women were being portrayed in art. Female artists began to explore visual presentation of their own selves in order to create alternative views of female identity. As the collection’s director and editor of the accompanying monograph publication, Gabriele Schor explored feminist avant-garde in order to emphasize the role these artists have had in the past four decades. “Results are radical, poetic, ironic, angry, cynical, and heartfelt. Most of all, sincere, sharing the collective consciousness which re-examined and rejected previously dominating trends, shifting towards new forms of expression in the field of photography, performance, film and

video,” she states. The exhibition and the book FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE OF THE 1970s emphasize achievements of female artists which encouraged and inspired those growing from the experiences of their predecessors.

The exhibition of the VERBUND collection in Novi Sad is expanded by artworks from the MSUV collection, that is, the exhibition of female artists from the geopolitical space of Serbia, who transcend boundaries of traditional media and gender positions, and act in the local and/or international cultural space. The selected artworks include artists such as: **Katalin Ladik, Milica Mrđa, Tanja Ostojić, Vesna Perunović, Bogdanka Poznanović, Jelena Radić, Judita Šalgo, Vesna Tokin and Milica Tomić**, all belonging to different generations. Some of them were developing their art practices in the 1960s and 1970s, including Bogdanka Poznanović, Katalin Ladik and Judita Šalgo. Their period of activity, as well as thematic and media approaches, can be considered relevant to the works of artists from the VERBUND COLLECTION from Vienna, which demonstrates the presence of engaged artistic trends in local environments taking place simultaneously with innovative and radical artistic practices on the international art scene. This assertion is also demonstrated by the example of artist Katalin Ladik, whose works are exhibited in both the Vienna and MSUV Novi Sad collection. Expanding the exhibition time frame through Milica Mrđa, who has been present on the art scene since the 1980s, as well as those who have created since the 1990s, such as Vesna Perunović, Vesna Tokin, Milica Tomić and Tanja Ostojić, as well as Jelena Radić, who has been exploring since the early 2000, has been dictated by both the situation in the MSUV collection (availability of artworks for this occasion), as well as socio-political context of the 1990s, which initiated renewed affirmation of the critical art practice, connected to art expressions dating back to the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s. Namely, selected artworks could have been, in the period of their origin, and in relation to media development of contemporary art and the direction of the local art scene, singled out as innovative, critical, contextually conceived, and closely associated with the international art production of the time.

### **Terms - Theory - Practice**

Neo-avant-garde art originated and developed at the end of the 1960s and during the 1970s. Its beginnings are associated with the exhibition of Lucy Lipart, *Eccentric Abstraction* in New York in 1966, as the first anti-minimalist reaction. In the essay co-authored with John Chandler, *The Dematerialization of Art*, Lucy Lipard introduces

a global critical term “dematerialization of art object,” indicating an innovative art practice where implementation and completion of esthetic object is not a final goal and purpose of an art operation, but that such an art action is possible and legitimate even if it does not result in the permanence of materially solid and enduring object. According to Lipard, reducing artwork to mental process, intellectual draft, a so-called *idea*, makes the object of art that which emerges from the process of finding means for the expression of an idea. It is about art which breaks away from classical disciplines such as painting and sculpture, thus transferring the focus to artist him/herself, their personality, behavior, communication, public and society; leaving established museum and gallery spaces and confined institutional frameworks, and moving into the open space of streets, cities, or nature, alternative spaces for socialization or intimate spaces of homes. *New Art Practice* originates from the title of the last chapter in the text by Catherine Millet *Conceptual Art As Semiotic of Art*<sup>1</sup>. The term *new* relates to the innovativeness of the neo-avant-garde, significantly different from previous movements, the term *art* aims to eliminate any ambiguity about the subject matter, while the term *practice* emphasizes the processual aspect of artistic work and exploration, and negates the value of finalization of esthetic object as the goal in itself. *The Second Line* was used as a theoretical designation in former Yugoslavia as an encompassing term for the avant-garde, neo-avant-garde, and radical modernist models of art language and behavior from the beginning of the 1920s until the beginning of the 1980s, which were open to transnational influences, contrary to local traditional discourse (Ješa Denegri). The term *conceptual art* evolved on the border between visual art and linguistics, and aspired to establish their mutual relation. It is directed towards exploration of the character and process of artwork evolvment, its concept (idea), and only then its realization. It was significant for Novi Sad’s alternative art scene of the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, developed mainly by students of arts and humanities brought together by Tribina Mladih [“*Youth Forum*,” *Novi Sad Cultural Center, translator’s note*].

Neo-avant-garde art leads to the critical change in the position of body and identity in the visual art. Female artists take their own identity as their starting point, as a subject matter for exploration, which Lucy Lipard sees as the result of their previous marginalization in the art system, as well as a general increased awareness among women in relation to feminist movements. A woman is no longer a mere mute

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<sup>1</sup> Translated in journal *Polja*, no. 156, Novi Sad, 1972.

object (most frequently sexual), but also a subject in the work of female artists, who themselves also become actively involved. The identity and the body almost become their media, which they present in the most diverse ways, publicly - through presentation of actual life of an artist before the audience, in a performance, through body art - or privately, in an art video, photography, installation, or text. Through using one's own identity as the meeting point between the public and the private, the artists transfer the issue of identity and body politics from the private domain to the sphere of arts and social relations.

In the collection of essays on female artists, *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* (1976), Lucy Lipard offers a semi-autobiographical presentation of the early days of the feminist art movement and numerous problems which women encountered on the art scene, and which pointed to engrained discriminatory, sexist, and unequal system, such as: disregard and neglect on the part of curators and gallerists (who, at the time, were mostly male), paucity of women in academic discourse, teaching staff in art schools, higher museum positions, etc. (This list could also include awards, artwork purchases, encyclopedic entries, etc.) It is for this reason that she felt was important to introduce new criteria and value system in visual arts, which would constitute a basis for creating feminist criticism and change of dominant power relations. The question of personal becoming political, and family relations, social and political issues becoming a concept in artworks, comprised most significant subjects in the art practices of the 1960s and 70s, coinciding with the second feminist wave. Artists' approaches differed, but their artworks' common denominator was a personal touch, their gender and sexuality apparent, no longer disguised. Through establishment of the term *feminist avant-garde*, colleague Gabriele Schor marks the period of artistic activity of female artists in the period from the end of the 1960s and 1970s. Even though this term could, in the formal sense, contain the prefix neo-, relative to the avant-garde art practice from the beginning of the 20th century this could be considered justified due to the need to emphasize radical changes taking place at the time in the positioning of women on the art scene.

### **Thematic Constructs of the Exhibition ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM**

Exhibit ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM presents art works which constitute examples of the analysis of the status of female artists' personal identities in art practice, society, art, nature, or technology; the relationship between collective and individual identity,

exploration of the process of the performative, dematerial, and experimental, as well as the expression of the tendency towards transgression of boundaries, breaking through dominant formal, media, and spatial frameworks.

Based on analogies, in a 2009 academic paper “Archetypical Representation of Women in the Contemporary Art of Serbia,”<sup>2</sup> I identified several artwork categories conforming in characteristic and relationship: a woman as a Partisan (Warrior), Martyr, Sexual Object, and Goddess; with possible development of a Cyborg and a Consumer [*all of these terms pertain to female gender, apparent in Serbian noun suffixes, translator’s note*]. The selection of artworks were there influenced by the following criteria: (1) a woman as an artwork creator, (2) genre - self-portrait and portrait, (3) all art media, (4) time frame - from the end of the 1980s to present (last 20 years), and (5) geographical framework - Serbia and Vojvodina. The present selection was also made on the basis of the artistic production on the part of female artists from Serbia (with the emphasis on Vojvodina region), genre - self-portrait and portrait, but also meant to include a somewhat wider concept - all media, conceptual-contextual approach, and expanded time framework to the 1970s, introducing the focus on the collection of the MSUV. This time no attempt was made to form archetypes and bring thematic constructions in connection to historically- and socially-imposed stereotypical roles and relationships. The present effort was more about the intention to identify and isolate narrative wholes as examples of contemporary art practice which emphasizes the role of female artists.

For this occasion, I have singled out several segments which demonstrate key thematic constructs of female artists present in the MSUV collection, and relative to the above stated criteria, such as:

- communication - social activity (Bogdanka Poznanović, Judita Šalgo);
- body - sexuality (Katalin Ladik, Jelena Radić);
- nature - religion (Milica Mrđa, Vesna Perunović, Vesna Tokin);
- war - violence - migration (Milica Tomić, Tanja Ostojić).

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2 Kojić Mladenov, Sanja, 2011, “Gender and Art,” in *Introduction to Gender Theory*, editor Ivana Milojević and Slobodanka Markov, pg. 425–437, Novi Sad: ACIMSI – Center for Gender Studies and the Mediterranean, <https://sanjakm.blogspot.com/2012/05/ahetipi.html>



There are, of course, additional examples, but this selection was made also relative to exhibition/technical capacities. One of the additional possible segments could have included:

- woman - cyborg - technology (Nataša Teofilović, Isidora Todorović), which was, as part of MSUV Acquisition exhibit 2012-2015 (2016) and activities of the Center for Intermedia and Digital Art, already exhibited and presented to the public, as well as:  
- body in post-production - commodities - consumption (Paula Muhr, Ksenija Kovačević and Milena Nena Popov...) which comprises a larger number of female artists and would require a separate spatial whole.

### **Communication – Social Activity**

During the period of the *New Art Practice* in Novi Sad and Vojvodina, the artists Bogdanka Poznanović, Judita Šalgo and Katalin Ladik made a major contribution, which I discussed in greater detail in the text “Neo-Avant-Garde Art and Female Contribution” (2002)<sup>3</sup>. As a special segment of the exhibition ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM, I singled out artworks by Bogdanka Poznanović (*Heart*, 1970) and Judit Šalgo (*Rolling Poetry*, 1970s; *My N Minutes*, 1979), as examples of the performative, experimental and intermedia artistic approaches which aspired towards mutual exchange and cooperation with other protagonists of the alternative art scene, as well as towards inclusion of the fellow citizens and audiences. However, this aspiration is not the only reason; there is also their overall public social activity, especially evident in the conception of the program of the cultural center Tribina Mladih in Novi Sad, as well as Atelje DT20 and the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad. The pursuits of these artists were directed towards the engaged, interdisciplinary and innovative approaches to both their personal art practice and editorial and organizational activities, with the visible tendency towards the affirmation of supranational networking. Although not present in the Museum of Modern Art of Vojvodina’s collection, I have decided to include Judit Šalgo’s works in the exhibition, as an exception, which I view as significant for the existence of the whole and as an attempt to adequately present local

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3 Conference “Gender, Knowledge, and Power. History, Legacy, and the Significance of Female Scientists in Serbia” as part of the project “Legacy and the Significance of Female Scientists in Serbia: Exploration of the Past as the Investment for the Future,” Ethnographic Institute of the Serbian Academy for Arts and Sciences (SANU), Belgrade.

female artists' contribution to the Neo-Avant-Garde period, which holds the essence of the exhibition FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE.

### **Body - Sexuality**

Portrayal of a woman as a sexual object, naked and/or erotic is the most common form of her representation in the art history and the artworks displayed in the collections of the world's museums. One of the earliest examples of the radical change to this approach in Serbian art at the end of the 1960s is visible in the works of the conceptual artist Katalin Ladik. She is one of the first Yugoslav artists to explore and create the works associated with international feminism. Her performance (*Shaman Poem*, 1970) was intended to express sexual liberation of women through body and vocal demonstration, deconstruction of the traditional art systems and the affirmation of the woman – author, free of all social and artistic stereotypes, erotic and mighty. Using radical tools, she questioned and expressed sexuality and eroticism not only in art circles, but also in Yugoslav mass media and pop culture through interviews, performances and photographs printed in contemporary and popular magazines. Such ventures provoked diverse public reactions. The second artwork in the exhibition by Jelena Radić (*Painting*, 2001), which came to life three decades later, represents a clip/sequence from the intimate life of a contemporary woman, which, with its oversized instructions for using tampons, provokes the audience and shows ever-present feelings of shame and embarrassment in contemporary public, especially when it comes to the female body and sexuality.

### **Nature - Religion**

In numerous texts on conceptual artists in Vojvodina, especially their female representatives (M. Šuvaković, N. Dedić), apart from Bogdanka Poznanović and Katalin Ladik, frequently mentioned is also Milica Mrđa. Although not as long on the art scene as the previous two, she is close to them in her conceptual performative approach. In her works (*Body, Pigment, Water*, 1989; *The Rituals of Body and Earth*, 1990), Milica Mrđa's symbolic, ritual-like performance portrays her as inextricably interwoven with nature through pagan and mythical symbolism. Additionally, her artwork represents one of the first art experiments exploring the relationship between the woman and nature using the language of dematerialized media. Media art practice

has been further developed by Veska Tokin, firmly committed to video art. In her work *Kali* (2003), inspired by the Hindu goddess in her destructive form, she portrays a woman as the goddess of war, and destruction, holding great power. The goddess is wearing a necklace made of human skulls which gradually transform into the parts of TV shows featuring folk stars and documentaries about the Balkan wars of the 1990s, which altogether form the social reality of the artist. In her video performance *Sudden Appearance of a Lot of Maries* (2007), Vesna Perunović feels the need to alter one of the most popular scenes since the beginning of Christianity – The Last or the Secret Supper. She replaces strictly canonized iconography that stresses the power and the role of male authority with female counterparts. Thus, she is trying to emphasize the continuous marginalization of women brought about by the ingrained religious and societal worldview. The artwork both highlights the problems of powerful pressure on women and nature by patriarchy and suggests the alternatives in the use of historic, artistic and mythological forms of ancient civilizations, polytheistic beliefs, Slavic tradition, the observation of nature and a woman as holy, the spirit and body as inextricably interwoven.

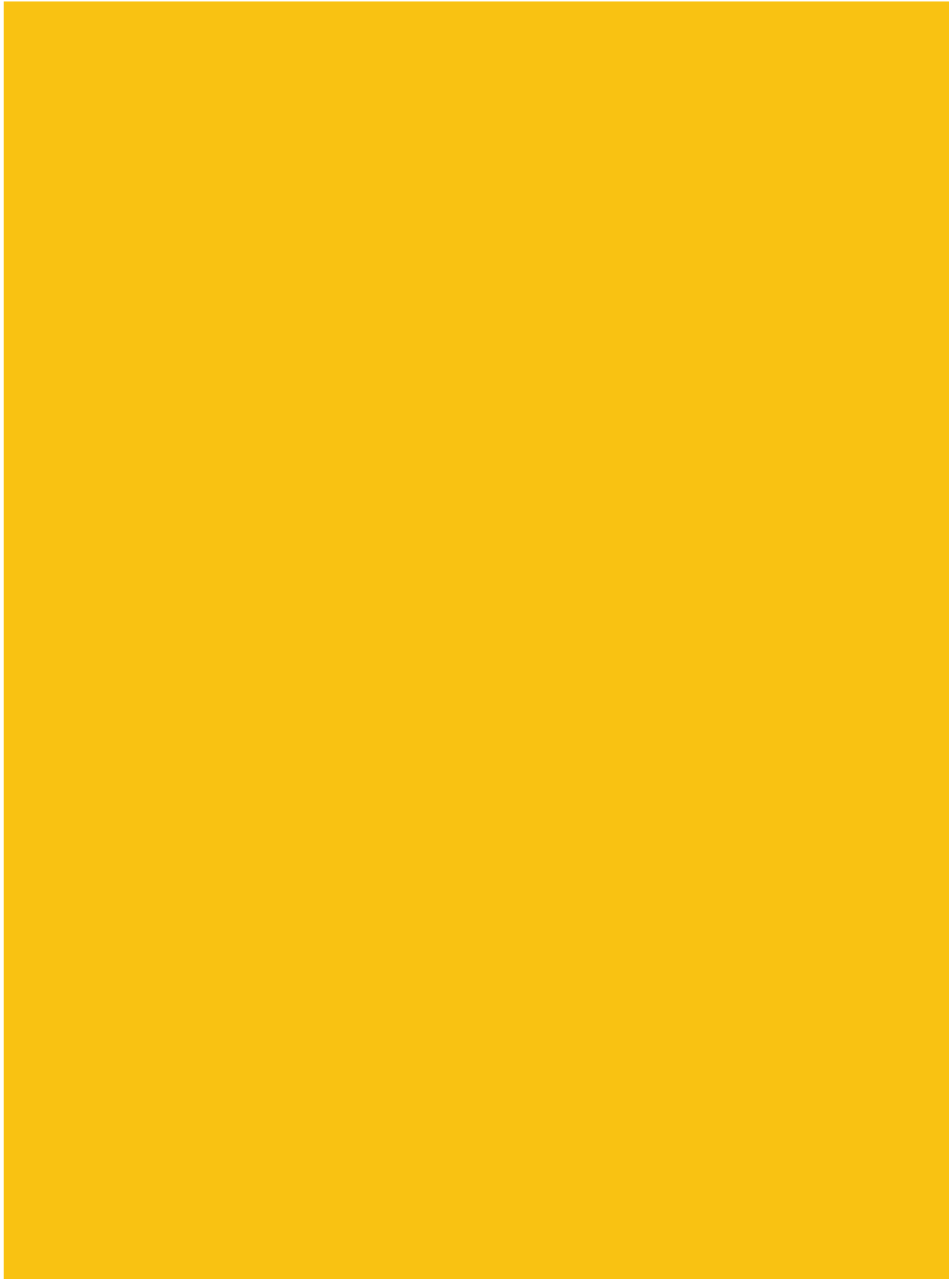
### **War – Violence - Migration**

The themes of war, violence, and migration appeared on the Serbian art scene especially visibly as a result of the wars following the disintegration of Yugoslavia. After a destructive historic period – the 1990s, socio – political, economic, cultural and psychological downfall of the society has led to the general retraditionalization, repatriarchalization and clericalization of the society. The video *I am Milica Tomić* (1998), by Milica Tomić, is among the first ones on our art scene to explore the subject of violence against women in the context of national identity and language, which was particularly prominent in the heightened nationalist policies. Her action – intervention *One day, instead of a night, a burst of machine-gun fire will flash, if light cannot come otherwise* (taken from Oskar Davičo's poem; 2009) explores antifascism today and its eradication from public history and memory, as well as its present position in relation to new forms of fascism. The Balkan wars of the 1990s uncovered the harsh reality of forced migrations which continued in the years to come, mainly due to economic and political reasons. Tanja Ostojić's numerous art projects explore the position of a woman migrant, power relations, the *other* in relation to the socially dominant. Among them is an interactive web project *Looking for a Husband with EU Passport* (2000-2005), as well as the collaborative project *Mis(s)placed Women?*, which

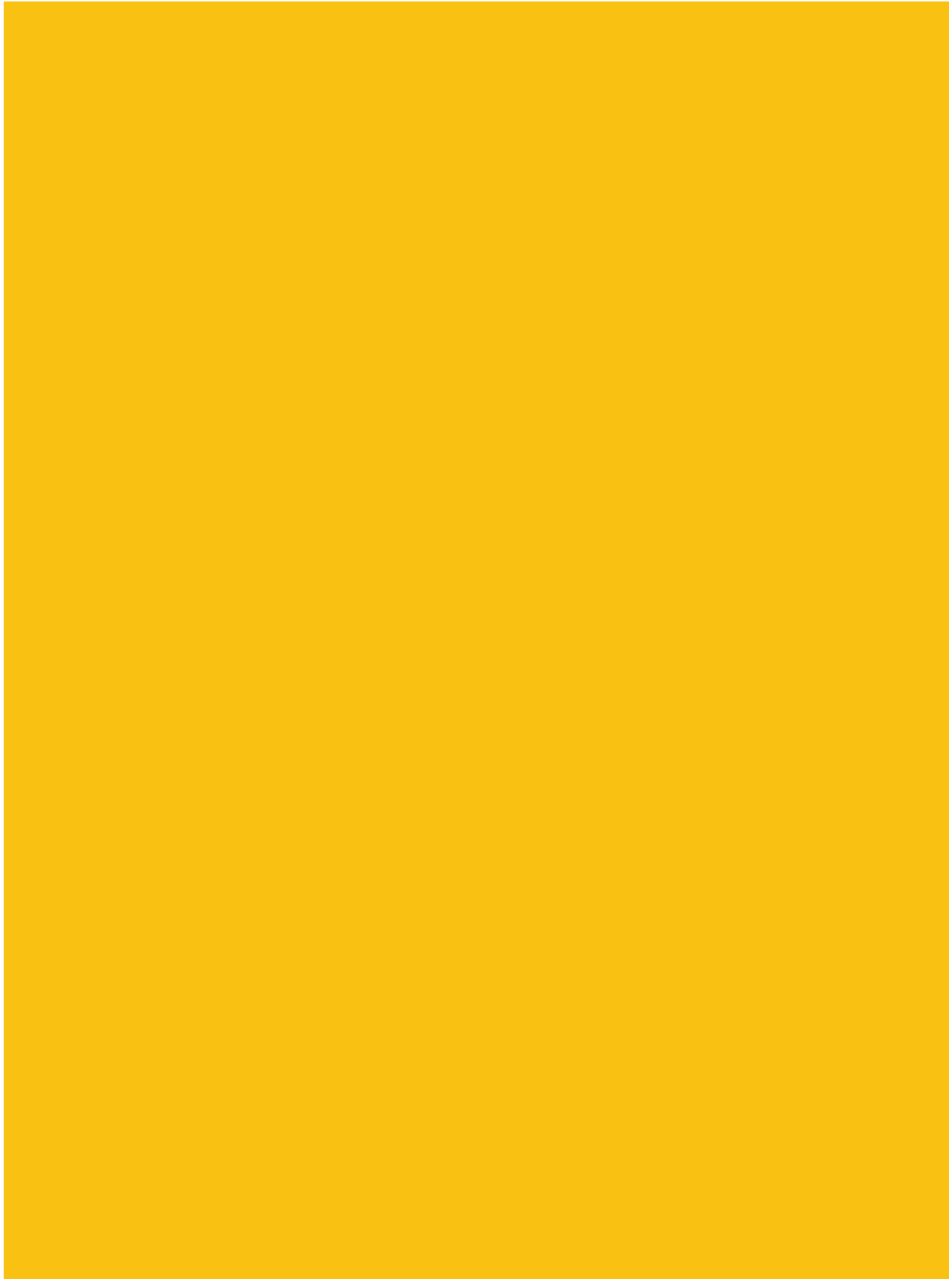
is a part of the exhibition ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM. Through predominantly performative form, she has been developing a research project since 2009, which includes many women who emigrated, were exiled or did not fit in. The theme of discrimination is further extended to include women's experiences and personal testimonies of four attempted rapes, with the aim to stress the importance of this theme in public discourse, as well as the importance of women's solidarity.

### **Instead of Conclusion**

The exhibition ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM presents a smaller segment of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Vojvodina's art collection. Due to the lack of space for permanent exhibition, the visibility of the presented artwork represents a symbolic excess of the Museum's practice which should be permanent and not temporary. In addition to the works that had the opportunity to 'leave the depot' by being exhibited as part of the project FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE, other female artists also deserve to be a part of this exhibition, and hopefully they will be, through visibility and affirmation within the Museum's program and the increase of the art collection to include significant works of those artists who so far have not had the chance to be represented.







## KATALIN LADIK

POEMIM, 1980

Video, VHS, kolor | Video, VHS, color, 10'41'

Video realizovala | Video realisation: Bogdanka Poznanović

© Katalin Ladik & MSUV

Umetnički rad je deo MSUV kolekcije | Artwork is part of the MSUV collection

— „Šta je zapravo lepo žensko lice? Društvo zahteva da žena ima lepo lice i telo. Taj zahtev sam smatrala nepravednim. Svoj protest sam izrazila u performansima, u kojima sam nosila masku ili sam se pokazala bez kose, kao ćelava. U performansu *Poemim* izražavam taj protest pomoću komada prozorskog stakla na koje prislanjam lice i snažnim pritiskom deformišem ga u groteskni izraz. Da, i to sam ja!” (Katalin Ladik)

Video-rad nastavlja umetničku praksu Katalin Ladik i otvoreno se bavi propitivanjem ženske telesnosti, promenljivih uloga i seksualnosti. Fokus kamere je na telu i licu umetnice Katalin Ladik, čime se naglašava njen govor *u prvom licu*, karakterističan za feminističku, postavangardnu umetničku praksu. Rad je realizovan u Vizuelnom studiju za intermedijalna istraživanja Akademije umetnosti koji je formirala Bogdanka Poznanović.

— “What exactly is a pretty woman’s face? Society demands that a woman has a pretty face and handsome body. I considered that request unfair. I expressed my protest in performances, in which I wore a mask or showed myself without hair, as if bald. In the *Poemim* performance I express that protest with the help of a piece of window glass against which I press my face and with strong pressure I deform it into a grotesque expression. Yes, that’s me too!” (Katalin Ladik)

This video work continues the artistic practice of Katalin Ladik and openly deals with the questioning of female body, changeable roles and sexuality. The focus of the camera is on the body and face of the artist Katalin Ladik, which emphasizes her *first-person* speech, characteristic of feminist, post-avant-garde artistic practice. This work was realized in the Visual Studio for Intermedial Research of the Academy of Arts, which was established by Bogdanka Poznanović.



## KATALIN LADIK

### SHAMAN POEM, 1970

performans | performance, GEFF, Zagreb

c/b fotografije | b/w photographs

© Katalin Ladik

Vlasništvo umetnice | Courtesy of the artist

— „Proširiti granice poezije u prostoru i vremenu! To je moje geslo od kada sam počela pisati poeziju šezdesetih godina. Godine 1970. sam odlučila da u multimedijalnom performansu pokažem kako je moguće pisanu poeziju za čitanje ostvariti i pretvoriti u zvučnu poeziju i poetski, ritualni performans.” (Katalin Ladik)  
Raniji performansi Katalin Ladik nastali krajem 60-ih godina 20. veka, predstavljaju prve primere, tada, jugoslovenske umetničke scene; bavili su se seksualnim oslobođenjem žene kroz telesno-vokalno izražavanje, odnosno umetnički akt, dekonstrukciju ustaljenih sistema umetnosti i afirmaciju žene autorke, oslobođene svih društvenih i umetničkih stereotipa.

— “Expand the boundaries of poetry in space and time! That has been my motto ever since I started writing poetry in the 1960s. In 1970, I decided to show, in a multimedia performance, how it was possible to realize and turn the poetry written for reading into sound poetry and poetic, ritual performance.”(Katalin Ladik)  
An older performance by Katalin Ladik, created in the late 1960s, presents one of the first examples of the then Yugoslav art scene that dealt with sexual liberation of women through physical-vocal expression, i.e. artistic act, deconstruction of the established art systems and affirmation of the woman author liberated of all social and artistic stereotypes.

