

GALERIE DIX9 H el ene Lacharmoise

DOUBLE NOIR

by

Nemanja Nikolic



Video animation HD, sound, 4'05, 2016

Born in 1987 in Serbia, Nemanja Nikolic belongs to a new generation opened to modernity but still living with the ghosts of a past marked by drastic changes in his country, since the explosion of former Yugoslavia. His work raises a number of issues and topics on post-conflict and transitional reality, from the trends of historical revisionism, to the position of a common individual facing the deterioration of economics and other crises.

A meditation on the moving image itself, the process of analysing, framing, mounting and making a film in a conceptual approach which embraces several medium is reflected in his projects of animated films. His fascination with the seventh art has turned Nikolic's initial studies of form and expressive potentials of drawing in more complex visual thinking and linking the language of visual art and film. Film is also the author's starting point in defining the motif space in his works and artistic approaches that are still focused on classical drawing, but conceptually expanded and rounded through the moving image properties. In animation, soon adopted as his new visual expression, Nemanja most often refers to Alfred Hitchcock's film work, finding in the poetics of the said director some conceptual preferences and directions for further development in themes, form and style in his art practice. The author retains the method of gradual (frame by frame) deconstruction and translation of the chosen scenes from the films into the medium of drawing as the initial process for what will be the essential outcome of restarting those scenes in animation: creating of completely new visual entities.

DOUBLE NOIR can be seen as a kind of meditation on the seventh art, a simulation of the imaginary self-constitution in the dimension of fiction film. A tribute to film noir, the video is made of sixty sequences showing a man in pursuit of his own double. The scenes are inspired by nineteen films played by Humphrey Bogart, a legendary noir protagonist. Using deconstruction by tampering with film stills taken from eighteen Bogart noir movies and by transferring them into 1800 drawings, a new movie narrative is formed. The film is made of 60 sequences, each one made of drawings in white chalk on 60 blackboards. But only the last drawing of the sequence stay visible, the previous ones been erased with a sponge after been photographed. Photos of the whole series are then made into an animation that becomes the only medium that safeguards the complete memory of this layered work. The drawings in sequences, however, are not copies or verbatim 'quotes' taken out of the movie. The author combines, multiplies, finesses or accumulates in the same layer segments of noir movies. Drawing a line and writing a letter are thus made out to be the same, and drawing becomes a form of cinematography in its own right by articulating meaning in non-static movie time-space through juxtaposition of images, sounds and movement.



October Salon, Belgrade 2017
Installation view, white chalk on blackboards (120x77 cm each)

Born in Serbia in 1987, Nemanja Nikolić currently lives and works in Belgrade. He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade, department of painting (2010), and received his PHD in art studies at the same faculty in 2019. Nemanja Nikolic excels in drawing and won several prizes, such as Award for drawing from Vladimir Veličković Fund, special award for mural and wall installation from Raiffeisen Bank and Gallery 12HUB and Award for an exceptional creative innovation from Miloš Bajić Fund. Since 2007 his works have been exhibited on numerous exhibitions and festivals in Serbia and abroad such as the Art Gallery of the Cultural Center of Belgrade, the Youth House of Belgrade, the Center for Contemporary Art of Montenegro, the Gallery of Rome in Kragujevac, 56th and 57th October Salon in Belgrade, KunstlerHaus in Wien, Austria, Caixa Forum in Barcelona and Madrid, Rencontres Internationales Paris-Berlin, Kunsthal KAdE, Amersfoort NL.

His works figure in many public and private collections including Lucas Museum of Narrative Art in Los Angeles, Ekard collection in Wassenaar, NL, ABN AMRO Amsterdam, NL, WAP Art Foundation in Seoul, JSM collection in Paris, Wiener Städtische collection in Belgrade, collection of Oktober Salon, Sumatovacka Center for Art Education and Telenor Collection, both in Belgrade

Nemanja Nikolić is initiator of U10, an artist run space based in Belgrade.