IZDAVAČ
ZA IZDAVAČA
ZA KULTURU

REALIZATOR
VODITELJICA
LIKOVNOG PROGRAMA
STRUČNA SURADNICA
PREDGOVOR
LEKTURA
PRIJEVOD
OBLIKOVANJE
TISAK
NAKLADA

Studentski centar u Zagrebu, Kultura
Mirko Bošnjak, ravnatelj SC-a
Davor Šišmanović, pomoćnik ravnatelja SC-a za Kulturu
Kultura SC-a

Marta Kiš
Ksenija Baronica
Sunčica Ostoić
Vlatko Previšić
Sofija Žagar
Ljubica Golubić
Sveučilišna tiskara
120 primjeraka

Izložba je realizirana uz financijsku potporu Gradskog ureda za kulturu, međugradsku i međunarodnu suradnju i civilno društvo za kulturu Grada Zagreba i Ministarstva kulture i medija RH

GALERIJA SC
Savska 25, 10 000 ZAGREB
TEL > 00385 1 4593 602
radnim danom > 12,00 do 20,00 h
subotom > 10,00 do 13,00 h
galerija@sczg.hr
http://www.sczg.hr/galerija/

TONI MEŠTROVIĆ
Prisluškivanje

Galerija SC, 8. – 21. 12. 2023.

Zvučnost nadzora

Sustav nadzornih kamera izraženo je nespektakularan. Nevidljiv je i nečujan, a iritantan i turoban automatiziranom prisutnošću procesa koji jedino što čini jest bilježenje identičnog kadra određenog prostora. Prateći njegov linearni tijek u realnom vremenu kamera je najčešće uperena u prozaičnu i monotonu sliku, osim, ako se ne odvije ilegalna ili neka druga intrigantna radnja. Uobičajeno prevladava nepromjenjivost rutine prostora i aktivnosti koje se kontrolira. Toni Meštrović, umjetnik usmjeren na medije videa i zvuka, u jednoj od serija kojima se bavi u posljednjih pet godina preispituje estetiku nadzorne tehnologije, i to one analogne koja zbog svoje zastarjelosti iščezava. Razradom mogućnosti njenoga alternativnog korištenja istražuje izravni prijenos zatvorenog sustava videonadzora, uz njega vezan fenomen beskonačnosti i interakciju s publikom, te eksploatira mogućnost ostvarivanja anomalija i postizanja začudnih efekata, bilo da se to odnosi na njezinu sliku, zvuk ili oboje. Posrijedi su radovi *Hakiranje sustava*, 2018., *Samokontrola*, 2020., *Nadziranje nadzora*, 2020., *Evidencija*, 2021., *Ometanje*, 2022., *Presretanje*, 2022. Ta su djela *hommage* začetnicima videoumjetnosti, a referiraju se i na suvremene vizualne umjetnike i umjetnike zvuka koji eksperimentiraju s analognom ili digitalnom videoslikom i zvukom u rasponu od Nam June Paika do Ryojija Ikede.

Toj se niski pridružuje djelo *Prisluškivanje*, prvi puta izloženo 2022. godine u Muzeju moderne i suvremene umjetnosti u Rijeci. Ono je jedini rad iz ciklusa koji odlikuje hibridan pristup u vidu korištenja i analogne i digitalne tehnologije. U njemu umjetnik koristi fizičku opremu nadzornog sustava kombinirajući videokamere, analogne TV monitore i njima osobite vrste smetnji na slici, s današnjim standardnim aktivnim zvučnicima, softverom, računalom i digitalnom estetikom zvuka. Meštrović se odmiče od nijeme nadzorne videoslike dopunjujući je zvukom, koji se u javnim sustavima nadzora najčešće ne koristi. On ne samo da je prisutan, već ima dominantnu ulogu jer je nadzorna infrastruktura nadograđena zvučnicima. Ishodište zvuka je u transformaciji samoga sebe u vizualni prikaz – u apstraktnoj videoslici koju dvije kamere preuzimaju s dvaju monitora. Ovdje autor čini značajan obrat kojim proširuje i prespaja medije zvuka i slike tako što videosignale iz kamera obrađuje kroz miksetu, ali kao audiosignal. Preciznije, videosliku šalje kroz audioulaz, čime ona postaje audiosignal. Tim temeljnim krivim spajanjem signala slika postaje zvuk koji se kroz dvanaest kanala prenosi u isti broj zvučnika i oprostoruje stvarajući zvučni ambijent. Zbir razdijeljenih zvukova sa zvučnika vraća se potom u monitore kao audiosignal kroz videoulaz, čime se postiže zatvoreni krug stalno ponavljajućeg procesa. Iz tih razloga autor kamere zorno interpretira kao dva uha koja se ponašaju "kao oko koje sluša... i prisluškuje sama sebe", a monitore poetično kao "dvije polutke mozga koje sanjaju same sebe". Neispravna upotreba tehnologije u umjetničkome djelu, što podrazumijeva da nije u skladu s njezinom uvriježenom funkcionalnom svrhom, dovodi do nestandardnog poremećaja ili kratkog spoja koji se čuje i vidi kao kontinuirano titranje. U toj se formi percipira zvučanje prevođenja slike u zvuk i vidi promjena zvuka u sliku. U zvučnome spektru, koji nije sintetiziran i nema mnogo tonske modulacije, razvija se zujanje vibrantne teksture, dok se na monitorima pojavljuju impulsi u obliku crno-sivo-bijelih treperavih horizontalnih linija ujednačenog ritma, kojima videoslika osvjetljava prostor. Ritam slike monitora usklađen je s onim zvukova jer je to njegova vidljiva inačica.

U kontinuiranoj pretvorbi slike u zvuk i zvuka u sliku, u kojem nadzor i kontrola postaju vizualno i zvučno apstraktni, publika prolaskom ispred kamere ima na nju učinak koji je zamjetan, ali nije ekscesan. Štoviše, unatoč tome što modificiraju šumove i titranje slike, sudionici audiovizualnog ambijenta naprosto se utope u njegovu apstraktnost. Meštrovićeva taktika pogrešnog spajanja i pretvaranja jedne apstrakcije u drugu, te nanovo apstrahiranje apstrakcije, proizvodi učinak postavljanja pitanja o mjestu subjekta koji ima minornu važnost u interferiranju s tehnologijom, jer na sustav ne utječe mnogo, a pogotovo ga ne remeti. U takvom sustavu subjekt nije moguće učiniti vidljivim ili mu omogućiti da pruži otpor. Apstrahiranjem nadzornog sustava umjetnik ističe njegovo bitno određenje koje se odnosi na činjenicu da je to zatvoreni sustav koji snima i reproducira zadano te ga ništa ne može ugroziti.

Meštrovićevo istraživanje nadzora neizbježno ga postavlja kao još uvijek vrlo značajnu temu bez obzira na uvriježenost i naviknutost na različite tipove kontrole u svakodnevici koji su postali konvencija izmaknuta iz područja zabrinutosti za dobrobit i vlastitost subjekta. Nadziru se fizički i virtualni, javni i osobni prostori i tijela putem identifikacije lica, uha, glasa, šarenice, mrežnice, zubala, vena na dlanu, mreže krvnih žila na licu i tijelu, mirisa, hoda, DNK, praćenjem aktivnosti na internetu, prisluškivanjem telefona itd. Nadgledanje se provodi i posredstvom sustava samonadzora kojim se dobrovoljno dijele podaci, recimo na društvenim mrežama. Subjekt postaje objekt koji se analizira, obrađuje, dio je statistika, tržišno je primjenjiv i isplativ. Sve to rasteže, a naposljetku i rastapa granice između intimnog, privatnog i javnog. Autor omogućuje da se to vidi i čuje, to stanje apstrahiranosti subjekta u signal ili podatak. Eksperimentalnom estetikom ukazuje na to da je nadzor mehanizam normiranja kroz pasivni-agresivan sustav kontrole. Ne adresira izravno etički kontroverzna pitanja nadzora, no ne izostaju asocijacije na Kinu, u kojoj je prema tvrtki Comparitech na 1000 stanovnika postavljeno 439,07 kamera, tj. gotovo jedna nadzorna kamera na dva stanovnika, ili na Hyderabad s 83,32 kamere, Moskvu sa 16,88, London s 13,21, Los Angeles s 10,27 kamera na isti broj građana.

Dovodeći estetiku nadzora na apstraktnu razinu, Toni Meštrović u *Prisluškivanju* izvrće težište s vidljivog na nevidljivo, s prepoznatljivog na neprepoznatljivo. Time uobičajeno neprimjetan zvuk, kao i pulsirajuća svjetleća slika, razgolićuju i čine osjetilno opipljivim ono što se inače ne zamjećuje – da je sustav nadzora uvijek aktivan, koja god bila manifestacija audio ili vizualnih elemenata. Zvučna i vizualna izokrenutost u djelu nije metafora nego podsjetnik o sveprisutnosti nadzora i samonadzora. Rad podastire nove vrste nadzorne jednoličnosti i nove odnose koji se postižu u zatvorenom krugu neodvojivih transformacija pokretne slike u zvuk i obratno. To je ekspresivna jednoličnost s naznakama promjene koja oživljava dosadu statične slike kamera i prevodi je u sofisticiran umjetnički događaj koji se temelji na zvuku. Zvuk koji proizvodi ambijent trzajući je i nelagodan, što je izravno povezano s konceptom prisluškivanja kao tajnog i neupadljivog praćenja. Prisutnost i učinci nadzora nužno bi trebali proizvesti osjećaj odbojnosti, uznemirenosti i stanje tjeskobe. Nelagoda u djelu služi kao upozorenje koje potiče na informiranje, oprez, kritički pristup ili angažirano djelovanje spram nedodirljivih sustava kontrole, bilo da posjeduju ljudski ili tehnološki oblik.

Sunčica Ostoić

Sonority of Surveillance

The system of surveillance cameras is outstandingly unspectacular. Invisible and inaudible, yet irritating and gloomy with the automated presence of a process that only records an identical frame of a specific space. Following its linear course in real-time, the camera is most often directed at a mundane and monotonous image, unless an illegal or other intriguing action takes place. What is usually prevailing is the unchanging nature of the routine of space and controlled activities. Toni Meštrović, an artist focused on video and sound media, in one of the series he has been working on in the last five years, examines the aesthetics of surveillance technology, particularly the analog that is disappearing due to its obsolescence. By elaborating on the possibilities of its alternative use, he explores a closed-circuit video surveillance system, with its associated phenomenon of infinity and interaction with the audience. He exploits the potential for achieving anomalies as well as peculiar effects, whether it concerns its image, sound, or both, as well. The series includes artworks such as "Hack the System" (Hakiranje sustava), 2018, "Self-Control" (Samokontrola), 2020, "Surveilling Surveillance" (Nadziranje nadzora), 2020, "Records" (Evidencija), 2021, "Interleaving," (Ometanje), 2022, and "Interception" (Presretanje), 2022. Those artworks are hommages to the pioneers of video art, referring also to contemporary visual and sound artists who experiment with analog or digital video image and sound, spanning from Nam June Paik to Ryoji Ikeda.

The series is joined by the artwork "Eavesdropping" (Prisluškivanje) first exhibited in 2022 at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rijeka. It is the only project in the sequence with a hybrid approach, involving the use of both analog and digital technologies. The artist uses physical surveillance equipment, combining CCTV cameras, analog TV monitors which generate specific types of glitches in the image, with contemporary standard active speakers, software, computer, and the digital aesthetics of sound. Meštrović moves away from the silent surveillance video image complementing it with sound, which is commonly not used in public surveillance systems. The sound is not only present but has a dominant role, as the surveillance infrastructure is upgraded with speakers. The origin of the sound lies in the transformation of itself into a visual representation, which is an abstract video image captured by two cameras from two monitors. Here, the author makes a significant twist by interconnecting and expanding the media of sound and image achieved by rearranging the video signal through a mixing board, but as an audio signal. Precisely, the video image is sent through an audio input and transformed into an audio signal. Through that basic misalignment of signals, the image becomes a sound that is transferred through twelve channels into an equal number of speakers, gaining spatial qualities and creating a sound environment. The cluster of divided sounds from the speakers reverts to monitors as an audio signal through a video input, which creates a closed-circuit of a constantly recurring process. For these reasons, the author graphically interprets cameras as two ears that serve the function of "an eye that listens... and eavesdrops itself" and the monitors poetically as "two hemispheres of the brain that dream of themselves." The improper use of technology in an artwork, which implies that it is not in alignment with its established functional purpose, results in an unconventional disruption or short circuit that is heard and seen as a continuous vibration. In this form, a sonority of transfer of the image into sound is perceived and a shift of the sound into image is seen. In the sound spectrum, which is not synthesized and lacks much tonal modulation, a drone buzzing vibrant texture is developed, while on the monitors, impulses appear in the form of black-gray-white flickering horizontal lines with a uniform rhythm through which the video image illuminates the space. The rhythm of the monitor's image is synchronized with that of the sound, as it is its visible counterpart.

In the continuous transformation of image into sound and sound into image, where surveillance and control become visually and acoustically abstract, the audience, passing in front of the camera, has a noticeable effect on it, yet not excessive. Moreover, despite modifying the noises and vibrations of the image, participants in the audiovisual environment simply blend into its abstractness. Meštrović's tactic of irregular merging and transforming one abstraction into another, and re-abstracting the abstraction, results in an effect of questioning the place of the subject, who has minor importance when interfering with technology, as it neither significantly affects the system, and, especially, it doesn't disrupt it. In such a system, it is not possible to make the subject visible or enable them to defy it. By abstracting the surveillance system, the artist emphasizes its essential nature, which relates to the fact that it is a closed system that records and reproduces a given setting, and it can't be compromised.

Meštrović's exploration of surveillance inevitably positions it as a highly significant theme, irrespective of the commonness and familiarity with various types of surveillance in everyday life that have become conventions, shifted away from concerns for the well-being and autonomy of the subject. Both physical and virtual, public and personal spaces, as well as bodies, are subjected to surveillance through the identification of faces, ears, voices, irises, retinas, dentures, veins on palms, blood vessel networks on the face and body, scents, gait, DNA, monitoring online activities, phone tapping, and more. Surveillance is also conducted through self-surveilling systems where individuals voluntarily share data, for example, on social media. The subject becomes an object that is analyzed, processed, part of statistics, marketable, and profitable. All of this stretches and ultimately blurs the boundaries between the intimate, private, and public spheres. The author enables us to see and hear this state of abstraction of the subject into a signal or data. Through experimental aesthetics, he points out that surveillance is a mechanism of normalization through a passive-aggressive system of control. He doesn't directly address the ethically controversial issues of surveillance, but associations with places like China are inevitably brought up, where, according to the company Comparitech, there are 439.07 cameras per 1000 inhabitants, which means almost one surveillance camera for every two people; while in Hyderabad there are 83.32, in Moscow 16.88, in London 13.21, and in Los Angeles 10.27 cameras per the same number of citizens.

By bringing the aesthetics of surveillance to an abstract level, in "Eavesdropping," Toni Meštrović shifts the focus from the visible to the invisible, from the recognizable to the unrecognizable. In doing so, the usually imperceptible sound, as well as the pulsating illuminated image, expose and make palpable what is typically unnoticed – that the surveillance system is always activated, regardless of how the audio or visual elements are manifested. The auditory and visual inversion in the art project is not a metaphor but a reminder of the omnipresence of surveillance and self-monitoring. The work presents a new kind of surveillance uniformity and new relationships achieved in the closed-circuit of inseparable transformations of moving images into sound and vice versa. It is an expressive monotony with hints of change that enlivens the dullness of static camera images and translates it into a sophisticated artistic event based on sound. The sound produced by the environment is jarring and uncomfortable, directly connected to the concept of eavesdropping as secretive and inconspicuous monitoring. The presence and effects of surveillance should essentially evoke feelings of repulsion, unease, and anxiety. The discomfort in the artwork serves as a warning that prompts awareness, caution, a critical approach, or engaged action towards untouchable systems of control, whether they take on a human or technological form.

Sunčica Ostoić

BIOGRAFIJA / BIOGRAPHY

Toni Meštrović, (Split, 1973), graduated with a Graphic Arts degree from the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in 1999, where he produced graphic arts, sculpture and installation. Due to his interest in electronic audiovisual media, he studied Video/Digital Imaging at the International Summer Academy for Contemporary Art in Salzburg in 1997, and completed a two-year postgraduate diploma in Media Art at the Academy of Media Arts, Cologne in 2004. Since 1992, he has taken part in group and solo shows, as well as video festivals. He lives in Rijeka and Kaštela, and teaches at the Arts Academy in Split, Department of Film and Video.

Toni Meštrović, (Split, 1973.), diplomirao je 1999. na Grafičkom odsjeku Akademije likovnih umjetnosti u Zagrebu gdje se bavio grafikom, skulpturom i instalacijom. Zbog interesa za elektroničke audiovizualne medije 1997. studira Video/Digital Imaging na International Sommerakademie für Bildende Kunst u Salzburgu. 2004. završio je dvogodišnji postdiplomski studij za Medienkunst na Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln. Od 1992. aktivno sudjeluje na skupnim i samostalnim izložbama te video festivalima u Hrvatskoj i inozemstvu. Živi u Rijeci i Kaštelima a predaje na Umjetničkoj akademiji u Splitu, Odsjek za film i video.

url: www.macaknara.hr