





**Claims of the Monument/  
the Counter-Monument Remains**

**The myth of the monument  
in former Yugoslavia:  
Artistic practice as reconciliatory form**

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For Mom & Dad



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## Abstract

How can artistic practice become a valid method of observing counter-histories; the histories which are not included in the institutionally supported historical narrative? How can the counter-monument movement be re-adapted and re-visited through its original ideologies, in the context of post-conflict spaces in former Yugoslavia?

This practice-led project positions the state of the monument today, and more specifically in societies existing in a state of unresolved conflict. In doing so, it examines the artwork as a counter-monumental form and as an approach to unravelling issues of a resistance which exist in sites where monument-building is not possible.

Departing from a body of research that looks at how destruction or alienation of sites of memory enables the denial of history and creates formats for further manipulation of historical events, this project considers whether artistic practice can provide a method of confronting the state of memorialization of conflict through an auto-ethnographic critique of historical events. Furthermore, whether artistic practice can provide insight into a space where state facilitated symbolic repair is unstable.

This project takes on an appropriated structure of a play. Presented in six Acts, and a Prologue and Epilogue, it delves into an observation, through a visual and non-visual critique, of three selected, different states of conflict that have appeared in the region of former Yugoslavia and their memorialization. The first examines the WWII conflict between the Partisans and Domobranci (Homeguard) in Slovenia, the second observes the historical narrative surrounding the WWII concentration camp Jasenovac, and the third looks at the problematic state of denial of 1990s atrocities, in Republika Srpska, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Each Act unveils a methodological approach, which is considered an integral part of the artwork, and through which a different understanding of the counter-monument is appropriated.

The Acts consist of reflections intertwining three different modes of presenting knowledge; through theoretical concepts surrounding conflict, memory, monuments, representations of violence in the arts and politics (considered as stage notes, giving

context), interrupted by a series of narrative recollections (imitating diary descriptions, of events that are either encounters with places or people and treated as a scenography which creates the atmosphere), and the artworks (which are regarded as the script).

Through a series of artworks, this project, appears almost as a gesamtkunstwerk, or complete body of the Acts, weaving through theoretical and historical constructs in order to challenge the premise of social and artistic representations of trauma, history, political power, and social injustice. In doing so, it positions the action of making research as the sculptural-visible and non-visible-form which attempts to redefine political sculpture as the re/de-construction of the counter-monument.



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## ACRONYMS & NOTES

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia
ILC	International Law Commission
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
RECOM	Regional Commission Tasked with Establishing the Facts about All Victims of War Crimes and Other Serious Human Rights Violations Committed on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia from 1 January 1991 to 31 December 2001
NOB	Partisans Liberation Movement

HomeGuard	Domobranci
Ustasha	Ustaši
Chetnik	Četnik
Serb Republic	Republika Srpska

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On the inside cover of my dear friend, Charles Knevitt's book *Space on Earth*, which he gifted to me when I was preparing my proposal for this PhD, he quotes Francis Bacon; *Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe or take for granted; not to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.*

First and foremost I would like to thank my incredibly supportive parents Janez and Renata. This project is as much theirs as it is mine and they have helped past each obstacle and uncertainty. I would also like to thank my sister Tina, who has been an incredible source of emotional support throughout this period.

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This project is not perfect but I never imagined it would be. I only hope it will open up new topics for discussion and thoughts about how artistic practice can position itself within such a complex topic.

I am very grateful for the financial support I received from the Ministry of Culture of Slovenia and Municipality of Ljubljana.



## Author's Declaration

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

Manca Bajec

September 28th, 2018

## LIST OF IMAGES AND ARTWORKS

All pages with images of the Author's artworks do not have page numbers.  
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(USB card found in envelope attached to back cover)

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- i. This text was written by a young woman, N. I have never met N. in person, she is a Syrian refugee. I helped her cross borders from Croatia, near Vukovar, to the Austrian border where she then continued her journey to Germany (2015). N now lives and studies in Germany. 55
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- viii. J.B. who is my father shared his memories of the Gulf War. Kuwait, 1990. USB
- ix. L.B. is my great-aunt. She shared her story of being deported to Germany during WWII. Slovenia, 1941. USB
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- xiii. Y.G. kindly shared his experience of obligatory military service. Gaza, 2002. USB
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PROLOGUE:  
NO FAULT OF THEIRS

I have read of the velocity of a bullet and of how many can be killed in a moment; tens yesterday, hundreds tomorrow. The numbers represent little, the names which are not common to us, even less so; we cannot pronounce them so we never repeat them out loud. The tradition of reading victims' names out loud as commemorative action emerged in light of the tragedy of the Jewish People who were stripped of their names and in doing so their identities. It has since become a *popular* commemorative action used not only by the Jewish community but has performed for example at the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and other tragedies that appear in the public eye. Objects have also played the role of 'standing-in' for victims, such as the placing of chairs or bags or even shoes to represent those that were killed.<sup>1</sup> There is however a sensibility that can be felt in the act of read or 'calling' out the names of victims. Perhaps it is in the vulnerable act of pronouncing someone's name, that an acknowledgement or recognition occurs, of the existence of that particular person; separating them from their state of being a faceless victim and only a number.

In November 2015, I spent a day reading the names of some of those whose families I have stood next to at ceremonies in Prijedor, commemorating their loved ones whose bodies were never found at primary, secondary or tertiary mass graves, whose bodies were never

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1 There have been examples of these type of commemorations in the United States such as the placing of shoes on the Mall in Washington DC as a commemorative act remembering the victims of gun violence or the placing of school bags on the main square in Prijedor, BiH, to commemorate the children killed in the war and as a protest against the fact that the local government refuses to build a monument. These are just two of many examples of the placing of objects in numbers to commemorate victims.

Lydia Smith, 'Families of children killed by gun violence lay 7,000 pairs of shoes outside US Capitol', *The Independent* (2018) <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/us-capitol-gun-violence-shoes-protest-children-victims-washington-congress-donald-trump-a8255201.html>> [last accessed 15.09.2018]

'Protest in Prijedor: Victims ask for their right to remembrance', *Documenta Center for Dealing with the Past* (2012) <<https://www.documenta.hr/en/protest-in-prijedor-victims-ask-for-their-right-to-remembrance.html>> [last accessed 15.09.2018]

recovered.<sup>23</sup> Almost 4,000 names of victims fill the pages of the book *Ne Krivi, Ne Dužni*,<sup>3</sup> that was created in 2000.<sup>4</sup>

I could never possibly understand the pain and suffering of those whose stories I have been listening to and reading about. I could never possibly stand in their shoes and hope I will never have to. I can read the words of Cathy Caruth, Judith Butler, Elaine Scarry, and Susan Sontag, or Bertold Brecht's *Interrogation of the Good* or Antonin Artaud's *The Theatre and its Double*, or Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* or re-watch *Schindler's List*, *Son of Saul*, *Shoah*, or *Welcome to Sarajevo*, stand in front of Sargent's *The Gassed* or Kollwitz's *Mother*, and yet I still feel like I don't have the right to speak of the pain of others, even though there have been those who have done so, some more eloquently than others.<sup>5</sup>

At the start of this project a great fear started growing in me, that I would become accustomed to reading descriptions of suffering and looking at images of violence. That I would become resistant and with that resistance that I would not be able to come closer to understanding how relevant it is for those that suffered to feel their voices are not silenced. Silence plays a great role in the denial of the acts of violence and is often seen as complacency but also frequently employed in commemorative ceremonies.<sup>6</sup>

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- 2 The work *No Fault of Theirs* which is both the performance that occurred as well as the documentation and new sound piece, was first shown as part of a performance lecture at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University in December 2015. The work is available on the USB drive attached to the back cover of this book.
  - 3 *Ne Krivi, Ne Dužni: Knjiga nestalih općina Prijedor*. (Sanjski Most: IPC 'PATRIA', Lušci Palanka I Udruženje Prijedorčanki 'Izvor', 2000)..
  - 4 Since then several other mass graves have been uncovered, including as recently as September 2017. Agence France-Presse, 'Mass grave with nearly 100 victims found in Bosnia', *The Telegraph* (2017), <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/09/21/mass-grave-nearly-100-victims-found-bosnia/>> [last accessed 15.09.2018]
  - 5 The problems of appropriation of victimhood and pain are discussed throughout the different Acts, critically looking at how these abuses appear in the arts.
  - 6 In his essay, *Observance, Notes Towards Decipherability*, Marquard Smith speaks of the tradition of the commemorative action of the Minute of Silence, and how this silence could be thought to stand in place for the pain that cannot be expressed in words which he relates to Theodor Adorno's famous statement, *To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric*, which is further elaborated on in *Witness Corner Marked* and also the idea of absence representing the missing (Young). Marquard Smith, 'Observance, Notes towards Decipherability', *Journal of Visual Culture*, 17 (2018) pp.68-96.



NI KRIVI  
NI DUŽNI



*Knjiga nestalih  
općine Prijedor*



I spent many hours overwhelmed by the things I had heard, seen, and read, as I made trips to Bosnia and Hercegovina, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. As I began encountering different people that offered to share their thoughts and ideas on the project I was building, I realised that my line of questioning became *silent* listening, which formed a pivotal point in my work. Listening, observing, before finally presenting these interwoven connections of how the counter-monument can reveal itself in an appropriated form when looking at the complex history of the region of former Yugoslavia.

It would not be unfair to declare that my interest in perceptions of conflict and victimization started before my work on this project, rather with my own memories of the wars in the Balkans and the first Gulf War in Kuwait, where I grew up. Born in Yugoslavia and returning to live in Slovenia, I felt a genuine disconnect with my own 'national' identity, and only became aware of the complexities and multiplicities of the history of the region one day in January 2010, when I was asked to photograph the location of a WWII mass grave and monument in Slovenia.<sup>7</sup>

The groundwork for this project stands on the shoulders of the many who have and still are, making insightful inquiries into the nature of how societies historicise violence. Building upon the work of theorists and artists,<sup>8</sup> this project presents a cross-over between different fields of knowledge that aim to answer the same question; a quest to understand what will be the next amelioration of the state of how conflict is perceived, represented, remembered, forgotten, memorialised, and monumentalised.<sup>9</sup>

This project sits on the throne of the violent history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but, in that it is much like Walter Benjamin's *Angelus Novus*, it is a backless throne, and the subject

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7 This will be further elaborated on in the Act *Everyliar Leaves a Trace*.

8 Each Act delves into the work of specific artists and theorists that have made significant enquiries into the topic.

9 The project looks at different fields, stemming from memory studies, monument studies, critical theory, theories on violence to representations of violence and trauma, and politics.



that occupies it keeps it turning around and around, facing sometimes the future, other times the past, but always firmly rooted in the present.

This project does not attempt to present a set of guidelines for building counter-monuments and was never meant to make absolutist claims of successful new ways of resolving the monument problem, but rather works alongside the questions surrounding the complex narratives that create situations where then monuments become contested sites in society. These are places where the monument (or its lack of) does not only become a place of memory but rather stands in where justice has failed.

The project looks at how a sculptural work such as the monument can take a form that does not solely exist as an object. And while this idea is hardly a new concept since it has appeared and reappeared through centuries, for example in Robert Musil's famous assertion that '*nothing is as invisible as a monument*', the project draws on this rich history of the monumental in order to access something quite current.<sup>10</sup>

*Claims of the Monument/the Counter-Monument Remains* enquires how the shifts of monument building appear either through style or in physical lack of construction- either ideologically or physically. They, monuments, are usually presented as relevant because of their historical value or value as educational tools,<sup>11</sup> but are more often overlooked objects in the public space, only holding some importance if they have entertainment value, or as in the case of the Confederate Monuments in the southern US states or the #RhodesMustFall initiative, when they regain leverage during a political scuffle. It is this value that concerns my project, their value as political agents, or rather, as political props.

The project provides a look at interpretations of the monument through historical shifts, highlighting the pivotal moment with James E. Young's writing on the counter-

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10 Robert Musil, 'Monuments', in *Posthumous Papers of a Living Author*, trans. Peter Wortsman (Hygiene, Colorado: Eridanos Press, 1987), 61. This is further discussed in *Witness Corner Marked*.

11 Joel McKim 'Yes, the Monuments Should Fall', *Birkbeck Comments*, (2017) <<http://blogs.bbk.ac.uk/bbkcomments/2017/08/17/yes-the-monuments-should-fall/>> [last accessed 15.09.2018]  
There is a general, matter of fact way, of approaching the idea that monuments hold some very specific historical value in education that is rarely observed with actual examples and it is more than often that monuments are overlooked and disregarded as important objects in the public realm.

monument, which began to reposition the importance of the monument as a figure that is beyond that of a mnemonic tool in the hands of the nation state.<sup>12</sup> Young's notion of the counter-monument, as one of the most intriguing results of *Germany's memorial conundrum*, has been the advent of memorial spaces conceived to challenge the very premise of the monument. Young explains that this resistance against the conventional form of the monument emerged among artists because of a resistance against,

*'the possibility that memory of events so grave might be reduced to exhibitions of public craftsmanship or cheap pathos remains intolerable. They contemptuously reject the traditional forms and reasons for public memorial art, those spaces that either console viewers or redeem tragic events, or indulge in a facile kind of Wiedergutmachung, or purport to mend the memory of a murdered people. Instead of searing memory into public consciousness, conventional memorials, they fear, conventional monuments seal memory off from awareness altogether. For these artists such an evasion would be the ultimate abuse of art, whose primary function to their minds is to jar viewers from complacency, to challenge and denaturalize the viewers' assumptions.'*<sup>13</sup>

The counter-monument, as proposed by Young, *'has deeply shaped discourses of contemporary art and memory'* explains Veronica Tello,<sup>14</sup> who positions Young's counter-monument notion as needing *'..to be both associated with and differentiated from Foucault's theory of counter-memory.'*<sup>15</sup> Both Foucault's counter-memory and Young's counter-monument can be traced to Nietzsche's ideas in *The Use and Abuse of History for Life*, which according to Tello relate to Young in their, *'homogenous and essentialist renderings of identity and history...'*<sup>16</sup>

Young's notion is rooted in many veins of the history of this *character*. The monument, for example often also appears as an ornamental figure, extrapolating from the idea of it appearing within architecture, as a form of experience that remains in the background of relevance, as decoration.<sup>17</sup> In this way, its non-present presence or lack of reinforced/evident presence is exactly what allows for it to continue existing. It

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12 The notion of the counter-monument is further explained throughout the Acts.

13 James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meanings*. (New Haven: Yale University Press: 1993) p. 28.

14 Veronica Tello. *Counter-Memorial Aesthetics. Refugee Histories and the Politics of Contemporary Art* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016) p. 16

15 Michel Foucault's counter-memory looks at a move away from a conventional mode of thinking about memory towards a more fluid approach which embraced the memories that are otherwise not addressed, from communities whose histories have not been considered.

16 Tello, p. 18.

17 Gianni Vattimo, *End of Modernity: Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Post-modern Culture*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991) p. 87.

appears harmless and void of any kind of overly politicised statement. This somewhat relates to notions that Young presents through his idea of the counter-monument; the counter-monument sheds itself of its monumental form in order to critique its predecessor, the conventional monument. These shifts of understanding what the monument stands for and related thoughts surrounding it, present a key structure of the project.

The project attempts to position itself as a form of an anti-*Gesamtkunstwerk*/*Gesamtkunstwerk*.<sup>18</sup> Restructuring ideas of what is at the core of a ‘total/complete work of art’, in its relation to the monument and counter-monument, it could be said that the monument is observed as a form of ornament for the mass, a multifaceted representation of national identity. My claim to define the monument or rather counter-monument as an anti-*Gesamtkunstwerk* relates to Andreas Huyssen’s notion of the monumental but also to the nature of the monument as it has been developed through history. Huyssen delves into the concept of monumentality in his essay *Monumental Seduction*, which observes the changes of the monument and monumentality in 1995- in a Germany after unification- looking at how the nature of the shifts of aesthetic, historical, national, political, and cultural memorialisation have contributed to the possibility of observing the counter-monument (anti-monument) as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Taking as an example the installation by the artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude,<sup>19</sup> Huyssen eloquently returns to the roots of the Wagnerian thought to express that regardless of its paradigmatic association, such works of art remain within the history of monumentalism which cannot be separated from its relation to its representation of tragedies.<sup>20</sup>

*‘The monumental is aesthetically suspect because it is tied to nineteenth-century bad taste, to kitsch, and to mass culture. It is politically suspect because it is seen as representative of nineteenth-century nationalisms and of twentieth-century totalitarianisms. It is socially suspect because it is the privileged mode of expression of mass movements and mass politics. It is ethically suspect because in its preference for bigness it indulges in the larger-than-human, in*

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18 *Gesamtkunstwerk* often appears in contemporary art to refer to a multi-faceted, complex installation which encompasses many different fields and mediums. The translation into English most commonly used is *complete work of art*.

19 Christo and Jeanne-Claude wrapped the Reichstag for two weeks in June 1995. As Huyssen describes, there are some anti-monumental qualities of this work such as the concealment to the balconies where infamous speeches of the Third Reich took place but essentially the work reveals an architecture that had been dormant for some time with a seemingly monumental gesture.

20 Andreas Huyssen, ‘Monumental Seduction’, *New German Critique*, 69, (1996), pp. 181-200.

*the attempt to overwhelm the individual spectator. It is psychoanalytically suspect because it is tied to narcissistic delusions of grandeur and to imaginary wholeness.’<sup>21</sup>*

The premise of its *Gesamtkunstwerk-ness* is a methodological decision related to Alois Riegl’s distinctions of the different types of monuments that exist, within the scheme of the first differentiation of the intentional and unintentional monument: the historical-monument, art-monument, commemorative monument.<sup>22</sup> With these divisions Riegl provides a framework or rather framing device through which contemporary views of the monument can be analysed. While pertaining to a somewhat classical view of the ‘monument problem’, Riegl manages to illuminate some key issues still present in current discussions. In this way, the monument is scrutinised from all possible angles, its role as an art object, its historical relevance, and commemorative value. These, while remaining as only a starting point, provide a standing ground for an assessment of the monument.

In order to access a potentially valid analysis, the project focuses on three different occurrences of the Yugoslav conflict that transpired in the present; the battle for identity between supporters of the Domobranci and Partisans in Slovenia, Jasenovac as a symbol of Croatian allegiance with the Third Reich in WWII and the post conflict state of silent aggression within Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>23</sup> With these three different cases, I observe how the shifts in history and the development of national identities, through the building or lack of building of monuments, enable certain parts of history to remain concealed or revised. With these ‘case studies’ I intend to elaborate on how the idea of the counter-monument, as a conceptual framework which I attempt to redefine, can illuminate these concealed and altered forms in order to position discourse at the centre of the conundrum which claims to be the ‘reconciliation’. My attempts to redefine the framework of the counter-monument are developed through a historical look at the counter-monument, how it is aligned to certain artistic movements and how its initial appearance as a form of resistance can be adapted to exist in places where monument building is a contested action.

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21 Huyssen, p.189.

22 See Alois Riegl, *Der moderne Denkmalkultus, seine Wesen und seine Entstehung*, Vienna, 1903 (English translation: Forster and Ghirardo, ‘The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origins’, in *Oppositions*, number 25, Fall 1982, pp. 21–51).

23 Domobranci were the Home Guard in Slovenia during WWII and fought with the occupier, Nazis, against the Partisans.

Divided into Acts, the project, consists of reflections intertwining three different modes of presenting knowledge. The three forms present themselves in each Act, appropriating a theatrical structure.<sup>24</sup> Each Act is an unveiling of a theoretical context, which frames the specific artwork/s being discussed in the Act. It is through the deciphering of the complexities of context that we come to understand the artwork. In this way the project presents itself in its entirety. Theoretical concepts surrounding conflict, memory, monuments, representations of violence in the arts and politics are considered as stage notes and provide the context. These are interrupted by a series of personal narrative recollections of either encounters with places or people and are treated as scenography, as they create the atmosphere. The artworks materialise through a range of mediums and are regarded as the script.<sup>25</sup>

This structure attempts to create a form more adept to presenting the experiences that build the core of the research. The structure of interruptions between the context, personal narrative, and artwork, give the reader an opportunity to understand the larger scope of production of thought within the artistic practice. This format exposes one of the integral elements of this project, the relationship between writing and artistic practice, and writing as practice.<sup>26</sup>

The fragmented text is presented in six Acts. As in a theatrical structure the final Act, Epilogue, sees our *characters* returning to the same predicament. At the core, each Act

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24 These shifts within the body of the text can be seen in the changes of formatting of the text.

25 I chose to use the term Act rather than Chapter, because it better reflects on the nature of the project, which is performative in its method of slowly exposing the different aspects of the project. The text exposes how the written and practical component of the project are presented as a whole using descriptive yet fragmentary writing which is also representative of the project. The constant shifts between a personal narrative, theoretical context and excerpts of certain works of art attempt to create a performative element imitating the methodological process of the project which included shifting between the role as an artist, an academic, a researcher, and activist. The three different forms do not appear in equal amounts in each Act. For example, *Witness Corner Marked*, *A Week in August*, and *GAME:MONUMENT*, contain significantly less personal narrative as the artworks presented are partly text-based works.

26 This methodological choice follows the reasoning that the use of adaptation of this type of stylistic writing draws a reader closer to the events that are being described. As described by David Lowenthal in *The Past is a Foreign Country*, the use of historical fiction or a narrative history, rather than simply giving the reader the facts of the events, giving a descriptive account of the situation in which the event took place. See David Lowenthal, 'History, fiction, and faction', in *The Past Is a Foreign Country Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) pp. 367-378. An example of this can be seen in W.G Sebald's descriptive narrative of the destructive remains of Dusseldorf, the reader is given visual and sensual descriptions that bring you closer to imaging and then visualising the events being described (See W.G Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction*, trans. by A. Bell (London: Notting Hill Editions, 1999). Or as seen in Sophie Calle's Detachment where the artist

returns to the question of how a re-adaptation of the counter-monument might look, reoccurring and reappearing through various spaces and scenarios that unfold.

The Acts argue the following:

### ACT I.

*Witness Corner Marked* observes the individuality of victimhood and the grounds for constructing the identity of victimization, through a look at the way conflict or the remains of it are narrated by individuals who have been directly affected. *WCM* also interrogates the basic notions of the monument, Denkmal and the immemorial, and how these are developed through the counter-monument. It provides an initial observation of the topic and its main roots.

### ACT II.

*The Region of the Ash Tree* presents some historical context of the region of former Yugoslavia, which is the focus of the project. The Act delves into the first ‘case’ which is the former WWII concentration camp, Jasenovac. Passing through the histories of the region and camp, the writing creates a storyline around an object that supposedly existed in the camp, and the historical validity of this object. Weaving through the key notions of dark tourism, historical fiction, and myth-making, the Act is interrupted by descriptive encounters with the object and surroundings. In doing so, it examines how a historical conflict materialises in the present.

### ACT III.

*A Week in August* takes on the form of a travelogue alongside theoretical context, which sets in place one of the main objectives of the project; portraying the researcher as a character, tackling the overwhelming topic of representations of violence and the role of monument building in communities existing in unreconciled, post-conflict societies. The text identifies some key issues affecting research in such spaces through

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writes about her interaction with the remains of symbols of East Germany and as she describes in her own words; ‘*I replaced the missing monuments with the memories left behind.*’ Sophie Calle, *Detachment*. trans. by C. Arndt & C. Penwarden (France: Actes Sud, 2013).

a methodising of the performative writing used in the production of the artwork. By doing so it also behaves as a critique of the potential ethical obligations, often overlooked, but sometimes brought into question, when entering a space as an outsider to comment on political and social issues affecting local communities.

#### ACT IV.

*Everyliar Leaves a Trace* critically observes the recent history of monument building in Slovenia by supporters of the Domobranci, and initiates a debate about the physical form these monuments take.<sup>27</sup> It introduces the critical ideas of competitive memory, destruction of memory, and multi-directionality. The Act proposes to look at how decorative elements can behave as a mode of disguise of the true nature of monuments and in doing so exposing the potential of the counter-monument as a *Trojan Horse* of political critique.

#### ACT V.

*Monumental Relay* departs from the history of a specific continuous conflict in the region of Prijedor, Republika Srpska. Through a series of shifts in writing, from interviews to narrative recollections, the Act exposes the concerns of an unreconciled space by looking at how uses of soft-power or re-appropriations of it, may present themselves through attempts of reconciliation. The artworks presented demonstrate the potentials of transnational memorialisation.

#### ACT VI.

*GAME: MONUMENT* repurposes the idea of a board game in order to frame the primary questions surrounding current political debates affecting the status of the monument. It proposes the use of a board game as a method of simulation of negotiations that are present in discussions surrounding restructurings of national identities. In this way, the Act returns to some queries which position how an artwork

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<sup>27</sup> The Home Guard or Domobranci were a military organisation formed in the 1940s in Slovenia as an opposition to the Partisan movement. The Home Guard pledged an oath of allegiance with the Third Reich.

can present itself as an alternative mode of building of monuments or rather how artworks of a counter-monumental nature present a solution to unresolvable conflicts of monumentality.

*Epilogue: Nothing Monumental Shall Come of This* offers a conclusion which returns to the argument that questions not only how the counter-monument, as a format, can be used in exposing establishments of corrupted narratives of national identities and histories, but its position as an essential art historical movement.<sup>28</sup> This final Act re-introduces all of the main characters. It is written in the form of a script which plays out a fictive debate about the building of a monument.

The Acts are followed by an Appendices which includes a Keywords and Meanings, Notes on Interviews, and Bibliography. The section, Keywords and Meanings expounds on the main terminology used in the project, reflecting on the different fields that are being intertwined in order to contextualise the project. The Prologue is followed by a brief history of Yugoslavia.

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<sup>28</sup> See *Keywords and Meanings*.





BRIEF HISTORY OF YUGOSLAVIA.

The history of Yugoslavia is one that contains so many layers but is perhaps best understood by looking chronologically at the recent history from the end of WW1, when the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later renamed Yugoslavia, was formed. In 1941 the Kingdom was invaded by German, Italian, Hungarian and Bulgarian forces and Yugoslavia was split up. Croatia became the Independent State of Croatia and allied with Nazi Germany while other parts were occupied by Germany, Italy, Bulgaria, and Hungary. The Croatian Ustaše were fighting alongside allied Nazi forces while the resistance consisted of the Serbian led royalist Četniks and pan-Yugoslav Partisans led by Josip Broz Tito. In 1946 the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was formed with six republics, and Tito and the Communist Party as the leading power. The first years of socialist Yugoslavia saw the country flourish, particularly in terms of its political position and the development of the Non-Aligned Movement. After this golden era, the economy faltered, bringing inflation and unemployment, and the political situation deteriorated further with Tito's death and the rise of nationalism throughout the country. With the rise to power of nationalist Slobodan Milošević, who argued for Serb dominance within the federal state, the instability precipitated declarations of independence from Slovenia and Croatia. The collapse of Yugoslavia began with sporadic fighting in Croatia in May 1991, followed by the Ten-Day-War in Slovenia and from 1992, an all-out civil war in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, where fighting continued until 1995. The conflict between Croatian and Bosnian forces ended with the Washington Agreement signed in March 1994, and the formation of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which now consists of 10 cantons with their own governments.<sup>29</sup> The Bosnian and Croat forces then joined and with support from NATO pushed back the Bosnian Serbs, thus forcing them to the negotiating table. The Bosnian war ended<sup>30</sup> on December 14th 1995 with the Dayton Agreement,<sup>31</sup> which separated Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, mentioned above, and Republika Srpska. While this solution ended the war, it has been criticised for creating an endless conflict in a state of remission as is described throughout the Acts.

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29 United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 'About Bosnia and Herzegovina', <[http://ba.one.un.org/content/unct/bosnia\\_and\\_herzegovina/en/home/about.html](http://ba.one.un.org/content/unct/bosnia_and_herzegovina/en/home/about.html)> [last accessed by 15.09.2018]

30 The Kosovo War followed in 1998 and continued until early 2000s.

31 OSCE- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Dayton Peace Agreement, <<https://www.osce.org/bih/126173>> [last accessed 15.09.2018]



ACT I.

WITNESS CORNER MARKED

Witness corner: 'a post or monument used especially by surveyors as a reference point for the location of an inaccessible corner.'<sup>1</sup>

This project began with words that express a need to connect, understand, and express the pain of another. In the context of this dilemma, I cannot steer away from questioning the position of aesthetics and image-making. Elaine Scarry positions the importance of imaging in the understanding of pain and how associations help create images in our minds regardless of whether we see them right in front of us.<sup>2</sup>

*Witness Corner Marked* introduces one element of this project, that comprises of a performative installation and the research that encompasses it.<sup>3</sup> The work is formed of a series of narrative recollections of conflict, encounters with post-conflict spaces, or recollections of memories that were passed on through generations. Alongside these narratives - that appear as soundscapes levitating in mirrored balloons - are miniature abstracted or generic monument shapes that weigh down the balloons. The narratives were collected or rather *commissioned* from different individuals.<sup>4</sup>

As a child I remember pestering my grandfather to tell me stories about the shrapnel in his chest and we made a pact that I was going to write a book about his memories of war. Sadly my grandparents have all died and all I have are segmented memories that are probably partly constructed. I do vividly remember my maternal grandmother sitting in front of the house she built herself, with a slim cigarette between index and middle finger telling me stories about what life was like when she was deported to Germany during WWII.

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1 Merriam Webster online <<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/witness%20corner>> [Accessed 12.9.2018]

2 Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

3 The project *Witness Corner Marked* is explained in further detail later on in this Act. It was commissioned by *IoDeposito*, an Italian NGO working with the aim of contributing to cultural development throughout Italy and internationally. The project was created as part of the festival *B#SIDE WAR*, which examines, 'the legacies of the World Wars and XX century wars'. It was exhibited in October 2016 at Caos Art Gallery in Venice.

*IoDeposito* <<http://www.iodeposito.org/en/about/>> [last accessed 15.09.2018]

*Bsidewar* <<http://www.bsidewar.org/en/bside-war-en/>> [last accessed 15.09.2018]

4 The primary research for this Act remains relatively hidden because of the sensitive nature of the topic and my personal relationship with many of the individuals whose narratives I have included.

Most of the village was forcibly deported to Germany while German families were moved into their homes. Her descriptions of smoking chimneys and the smell of burning flesh haunted me for years. But I prefer remembering her other stories of moments of resistance, when she and her sister hid an injured American soldier.

My very favourite story is one that is probably less often heard. I once asked her about how she felt about Germans because my paternal grandmother has such an aversion that she refused to speak German even though she was fluent and even when I was failing German in high school. Ana told me that when her family returned to their village after the War, most livestock were left dead, produce burned and houses looted. They found a note hidden in their house, from the German family that had occupied it, giving instructions to where they had left food for them. That food helped them survive the first winter. She imagined the rest of their missing belongings were either taken or had been destroyed or looted by other families and soldiers as they fled but years later while visiting with a neighbour she saw something familiar, and realised that some of their belongings had in fact been taken by their neighbours. That was a story that I can remember most clearly.<sup>5</sup>

This Act introduces some key concepts which construct the history of monuments, memorials, and the field of memory studies. The performative installation provides a visual analysis of some of the themes that are discussed throughout the project, ***Claims of the Monument/Counter Monument Remains***. It also includes reflections on ephemerality and transience - which I believe are the fundamental notions of the counter-monument. Through some of these ideas I position certain queries introduced in the *Prologue*, of individuality and identity in representations of conflict.

There is a materiality associated with the notion of the monument that is related to its colloquial meaning, as a physical object in the public space. However, when looking at the counter-monument, one of the central ideas relates to the absence of the monument

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5 In this Act I am unable to write in greater detail about the context of the narratives that build the artwork and the individuals that were generous enough to share painful moments, as so many of them have asked to remain anonymous. Some of the narratives will have short descriptions contextualising the narrative but others will be more vague. Please see List of Images and Artworks for further detail. All readings of the narratives are available on USB attached to back cover.

It was a calm morning, as always I loved to look from my window,  
mountains and green trees,  
yes that was full of life, but not this time  
I heard a big noise so I looked outside  
and I saw huge tanks taking their positions on the hills between the  
trees, for me it was a scary but an exciting thing in the same time,  
it was the first time I saw these huge metal things.  
War had started about 2 years ago in our country but it never  
reached our neighborhood, we used to sit in front of the tv watch-  
ing news feeling terrified about the death that was going on every-  
where around us, we used to hear the sounds of bombing from  
afar, and with every sound I remember how my heart shivers, I  
didn't know that this morning the war will come a step closer to us  
As these tanks and other kinds of things started to fire, I remem-  
ber hearing the sound twice, in the firing and in the landing, I ran  
to my mother all I wanted is to look at her face to see that we are  
gonna be OK, all the faces of my family were full of fear, like it  
was the rain of death above of our heads, the tanks were bombing  
a space, and somehow people from that place bombing back at us,  
until my family decided that we must leave our house,  
I moved with my mom to my grandmother's house, as we thought  
it is gonna be safer, it was easier for me to go to my university from  
my grandmother's house as it was closer to the city, but I didn't  
realize that I was about to see a different kind of death and fear,  
one day I was coming back from university waiting for the light of  
the bus, suddenly a bomb hit the bus that was 100meter far from  
us, yes death was that close to me, I survived so many deathfull  
situations...

These situations made me get used to being afraid, to hear the  
sounds of bombs and guns, to see death in my own eyes, but at the  
same time I learned to be strong and brave .... Brave enough to  
smile after I survived each time, I felt it was the only way for me to  
defeat war... And I defeated war.



in its conventional form. Furthermore, it is neither just the object, in its representation of absence, nor the absence of the object, which is a central to the idea of the counter-monument but rather what I would describe as another absorption of the pedestal. The monument can no longer exist without the burden of its own history.

In Rosalind Krauss's text, *Sculpture in the Expanded Field*, Krauss develops on the parameters of what defines sculpture and how these relate to the changes that have occurred to the form and concept of the monument.

*'The logic of sculpture, it would seem, is inseparable from the logic of the monument. By virtue of this logic a sculpture is a commemorative representation. It sits in a particular place and speaks in a symbolical tongue about the meaning or use of that place.'*<sup>6</sup>

She examines the position of the monument and its relation to the space in which it is placed, using the example of Auguste Rodin's *Gates of Hell*, to portray the transformation of meaning of the monument, from a conventional form to a newer mode of the monument, in relation to the place where it is located, or as Krauss describes it, '*the fading of the logic of the monument*'.<sup>7</sup> With that example, Krauss is referring to the many copies of Rodin's work that exist and none of which appear on the site it was designated for. Placement on the site while relevant is not necessary;

*'...one crosses the threshold of the logic of the monument, entering the space of what could be called its negative condition—a kind of sitelessness, or homelessness, an absolute loss of place. Which is to say one enters modernism, since it is the modernist period of sculptural production that operates in relation to this loss of site, producing the monument as abstraction, the monument as pure marker or base, functionally placeless and largely self-referential.'*<sup>8</sup>

Krauss's text continues to reflect on the notion of the pedestal in sculpture and its eventual disappearance, as has often occurred in relation to the monument.

*'It is these two characteristics of modernist sculpture that declare its status, and therefore its meaning and function, as essentially nomadic. Through its fetishization of the base, the sculpture reaches downward to absorb the pedestal into itself and away from actual place; and through the representation of its own materials or the process of its construction, the sculpture*

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6 Rosalind, E. Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field', in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), pp. 276- 291 (p. 279).

7 Ibid. p.280.

8 Ibid. p.280.

*depicts its own autonomy.*<sup>9</sup>

When relating to the monument and its particular site of existence, one cannot ignore its site-specificity. This term, site-specificity, typically refers to an artwork which relates to the site in which it is located and acquires meaning from its physical position.<sup>10</sup> The monument's place in the public space was often related to either a prominent location, re-affirming its importance, or conceptually relating to its location. The German term for monument, *Denkmal*, translates to place of thought but also marker, which essentially describes the role of monuments as emblems set to represent or mark a memory, affirming the importance of location. The many descriptions and frameworks for analysis surrounding the term and attempts to understand it, through the observation of terminology and history surrounding it, shed light on the dilemma of creating stable definitions, measures or guidelines of what its purpose is today and how its visual representation relates to its role. In this way, its state of incommensurability relates very much to certain contemporary art practices and their need for development outside the schemes presented by institutions and nation-states.<sup>11</sup>

This Act deciphers the metaphorical pedestal that holds the history of the monument or the intricate notions that have been debated about regarding its relevance in society as physical form and political agent, and in the end how this metaphorical pedestal is absorbed, within society, just as it was in modernism.<sup>12</sup> These observations are made through assessments of three different topics: the monument, its history, and its abstraction through the action of creating a mobile *monument*.<sup>13</sup> Somewhat delineating the idea of the portable memorial/monument, the work titled *Witness Corner Marked*,

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9 Ibid. p.280

10 Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge:MIT Press, 2002)

11 For example the work of Dutch artist Jonas Staal, whose politically activated work borders between political activism, performance, and visual art. Another example, from former Yugoslavia, could be the group Four Faces of Omarska, who are mentioned in greater detail in the Act, *Monumental Relay*. The Group also collaborated with London based Research Centre Forensic Architecture, who were recently nominated for the Turner Prize, perhaps the most prestigious prize given to a British artist or collective for exceptional presentation of their work. With such a nomination and a win by the collective Assemble in 2015, we can see that institutions have significantly shifted their views of how contemporary art is assessed and defined, broadening and erasing the rigid boundaries.

12 This is referencing Krauss's text where she is describing the characteristics of modernist sculpture.

13 I use the term monument as a way commenting on what the artwork is attempting to do, critique the state of monument building and the forms of prioritizing victimhood, which I discuss later in the Act.

IT WAS BRIGHT  
BECAUSE OF THE  
MOONLIGHT

BUT THE DAY  
DOES NOT WANT  
TO ARRIVE

reimagines Krauss's idea of the monument as a marker.<sup>14</sup> By referring in reality only to itself, as it is void of actual witnessing, it argues for its right of existence through diverse modes of theatricality or performativity and in doing so attempts to understand its own role. In this way, this *monument* also appears as immemorial, in its reassertions of Musil's idea of invisibility and James Young's idea of the counter-monument, as absence continuously attempting to create a presence.

In the past decade the discussions surrounding monument building and removal have shifted. We have become accustomed to seeing these situations being debated about in the public realm, for example; the public selection of designs for the Holocaust Memorial<sup>15</sup> in the UK and government investment of £50 million<sup>16</sup> towards the building of the memorial, as well as the #RhodesMustFall<sup>17</sup> movement branch in Oxford demanding the removal of the Rhodes monument, which was declined by the University.<sup>18</sup> These debates or competitions over which historical narratives can and should be occupying public space have flooded not only the UK and South Africa but America as well, with protests against Confederate monuments, that represent figures of questionable historical heroism.<sup>19</sup> Destruction or removal of these monuments is not a unique phenomenon, as such acts have been a part of many recent wars,<sup>20</sup> including the ISIS led destruction of sites in Syria and Iraq, as well as cultural heritage

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14 The piece is referred to as being an experimental as it alludes to the fact that it is a prop designed to serve as a commentary and further the inquiry of how modes of memorialization behave and our response to them.

15 Victoria and Albert Museum, 'Holocaust Memorial International Design Competition Display', V&A (2017). <<https://www.vam.ac.uk/event/91J6rY1m/holocaust-memorial-international-design-competition-display>>, <https://www.vam.ac.uk/event/5qj6yYq3/holocaust-memorial-design-competition-september-2017> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

16 UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation and Cabinet Office, 'Adjaye Associates and Ron Arad Architects win UK Holocaust Memorial International Design Competition', GOV.UK (2017) <<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/adjaye-associates-and-ron-arad-architects-win-uk-holocaust-memorial-international-design-competition>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

17 Brian Kamanzi, 'The Postcolonialist. "Rhodes Must Fall" – Decolonisation Symbolism – What is happening at UCT, South Africa?', The Postcolonialist, (2015). <<http://postcolonialist.com/civil-discourse/rhodes-must-fall-decolonisation-symbolism-happening-uct-south-africa/>> [last accessed 15.09.2018]

18 Rhodes Must Fall Oxford Wordpress, <https://rmfoxford.wordpress.com/about/> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

19 Along with many other countries, some of those which are also observed or rather mentioned in this project (additionally to the core region, former Yugoslavia) include Lithuania and Germany but the thesis does not go into the complexities of the destruction of monuments as they appeared recently in the Middle East.

20 Iconoclasm or the deliberate removal or destruction of monuments, images or cultural heritage sites is not a recent occurrence but has been a part of history dating back to Ancient times when it appeared first as religious iconoclasm, an attack on religiously significant figures and places.

destruction in the Balkan region.<sup>21</sup> While these recent acts of activism,<sup>22</sup> which occur out of the scope of war, have opened up debates about the value of monuments, their educational purposes, or simply their moral obligation of recognition of certain events of the past,<sup>23</sup> it is the underbelly or the iceberg that is below the surface that is particularly interesting.<sup>24</sup>

Mano Toth's review of Jeffrey Olick's *The Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility*, questions some key problematics facing ideas of memory and national identity politics.<sup>25</sup> Toth critiques Olick's use of politics of regret as being at times too broad in meaning;<sup>26</sup> the term is relating to what has been called the age of obsession with guilt, regret, apology, and forgiveness.<sup>27</sup> Toth's analysis of Olick is particularly observant in highlighting how different regimes account for past crimes, specifically in the declaration that a democratic regime or system is not the main condition for the establishment of a politics of regret as we can see in the case of the building of the Holocaust Memorial but a refusal to deal with the somewhat unstable idea of Cecil Rhodes as a celebrated figure. Similarly the Holocaust Memorial Museum was built in Washington D.C. where no monument or museum had been erected to the history of Native American or African-American struggles and suffering. It is what Andreas Huyssen referred to as an Americanization of the Holocaust.<sup>28</sup>

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21 See Andrew Herscher, Eyal Weizman, 'Architecture, Violence, Evidence', *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation, History, Theory, and Criticism*. 8 (2011) 111-123.

Helen Walasek with contributions by Richard Carlton, Amra Hadzimuhamedovic, Valery Perry, Tina Wik, *Bosnia and Destruction of Cultural Heritage*, (England: Ashgate Publishing, 2015) Google ebook.

22 I am referring to the recent removal of monuments in the US and South Africa.

23 This could perhaps could be an explanation for the building of a Holocaust Memorial in the UK.

24 I say seemingly as the question of monument building and removal was a significant discussion in Soviet countries at the end of the Cold War but their relevance in the western block has initiated discussions across mainstream media and the broader public.

25 Mano Toth, 'The Myth of the Politics of Regret', *Sage Journals*, 43 (2015) 1-15 <<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/42337799.pdf>> [last accessed 09.09.2018]

See Jeffrey K. Olick, *The Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

26 Toth, p.3. 'I have the impression that even he did not use the term consistently as in his writings it sometimes referred to all the institutions of transitional justice, sometimes only to state apology, and at other times to the 'memory boom' in general.'

The misuse of terminology or rather the shifting definitions of terminologies in relation to memory studies seems to be a common problem among memory scholars, which is further elaborated in the *Keywords and Meanings*.

27 This has been discussed by many authors including Duncan Bell, Jay Winter, and Hannah Arendt, which are the main authors whose work has been referenced for this project.

28 In his article, Huyssen presents how the memory of the Holocaust was represented through pop-

In *Introduction: Theorizing Multidirectional Memory in a Transitional Age*, Michael Rothberg discusses this controversial problem of prioritization of victimhood.<sup>29</sup> He takes on the example of the relationships of the legacies of slavery and anti-Semitism in the United States through the essay of critic Walter Benn Michaels. The essay expresses the problems that arise in multi-cultural societies where different cultural identities are given different levels of attention in the public sphere, questioning whether when one victimization is seemingly prioritized over the other, the other then becoming less important. His example discusses the building of the Holocaust Museum, and the views of Khalid Muhammed, who claimed that the expression of the Jewish Holocaust was in fact the denial of another Holocaust. Rothberg explains that while in disagreement because of very controversial nature of Muhammed's opinions, both Michaels and Muhammed claim that;<sup>30</sup>

‘...memory obeys the logic of scarcity: if a Holocaust Museum sits on the Mall in Washington (or just off of it, as is the actual case), then Holocaust memory must literally be crowding the memory of African American history out of the public space of American collective consciousness.’<sup>31</sup>

Rothberg defines this as a form of competitive memory. Two or more memories competing for one space of existence. While this example is a controversial one, since it does to some extent imply that the memorilisation of one conflict can in fact create a denial of another, it does point to the problem of prioritizing one form of victimhood over another, one cultural identity over another. The validation of one

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ular culture on an accelerated level from the 1980s onwards. Michael Rothberg and Stef Craps have also elaborated on transnationalization and globalization of the Holocaust as a key reference and point out some of the main figures that have observed this Americanization. They mention the work of Hilene Flanzbaum who wrote the book *Americanization of the Holocaust* but she was not the first to have used the term. Jon Stratton explains that Flanzbaum herself mentions a usage by Lawrence Langer as early as 1983.

Stef Craps and Michael Rothberg, ‘Introduction: Transcultural Negotiations of Holocaust Memory’, *Criticism*, 53 (2011) 517-521. <[https://www.jstor.org/stable/23133894?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/23133894?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)> [last accessed 05.09.2018]

Andreas Huyssen, ‘Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia’, *Public Culture*, 12 (2000) 21-38. <<https://blogs.commonsgorgetown.edu/engl-218-fall2010/files/Huyssen-Present-pasts-Media-politics-amnesia-copy.pdf>> [last accessed 04.09.2018]

Jon Stratton (2000) ‘Thinking Through the Holocaust: A Discussion Inspired by Hilene Flanzbaum The Americanization of the Holocaust Johns Hopkins 1999’, *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 14 (2000) 231- 245.

29 Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

The concept of multi-directional memory is further discussed in the Act, Everyliar Leaves a Trace.

30 Khalid Muhammed made extremely controversial statements during a lecture, where he attempted to minimise the horrific nature of the Jewish Holocaust.

31 Rothberg, p. 2.

commemoration over the other creates tensions and deep rooted politicizations of the hierarchical structures existing within national identity and society. With this he points to the questionable nature of memory in its representation of an identity. According to Rothberg, many views of memory and identity are presented as being in direct correlation to one another while he believes that memories are not authentic and pure, in that and that there is no direct correlation but a multidirectional one. Multidirectional memory questions the view of ‘my’ memories and ‘others’ memories. The ‘proprertization’ of memory proves difficult and unstable, since according to Rothberg,

*‘...the borders of memory and identity are jagged; what looks at first like my own property often turns out to be a borrowing or adaptation from a history that initially might seem foreign or distant. Memory’s anachronistic quality-its bringing of now and then’ here and there-is actually the source of its powerful creativity, its ability to build new worlds out of the materials of older ones.’<sup>32</sup>*

Rothberg’s analysis of the borrowing or adaptation of memory can also be identified in Olick’s observations. Olick clearly defines the root of politics of regret as being from Germany. The legacy of the Holocaust has created a field which epitomizes dealing with mass tragedy and trauma, and this has extended into the visual sphere as well, especially in terms of monument building, but also through representations of violence, war, and trauma in art.

The politics of regret are rooted within the conceptual framework that lies in the interactions occurring between cultural memory and national identities. We can see the lineage of these theoretical frames which attempt to, in essence, create a dialogue for the understanding of the past.<sup>33</sup> Olick’s *Politics of Regret* is based on the groundwork of social memory studies and the scholars that defined the main ideas of memory work that are used today.<sup>34</sup> These are all situated in the frame of the question of how humanity can deal with mass trauma, in which the case of the Holocaust has

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32 Ibid.p.5.

33 See *Keywords and Meanings*.

34 In the introduction of *Politics of Regret*, Olick describes his path of understanding of the two main scholars of collective memory, Halbwachs and Durkheim but in his text with Joyce Robbins *Social Memory Studies: From “Collective Memory” to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices*, he describes the use of collective memory already in the beginning of the century by Hugo von Hoffmannstahl, who was referring to ancestral lineage of memory.

become central and a globally transferable representation of absolute horror and the epitome of human decline. With the occurrence of the 1990s mass killings in Rwanda and Bosnia, the Holocaust became a focal point of discussions that led the need for an understanding and examining of methods of representation, of not only the victimhood, trauma, and violence, but also the guilt, blame and responsibility. The question of victim and perpetrator became a leading inquiry in the discussions.

How can a victimhood be represented today in terms of the growing idea of the memory boom as coined by Andreas Huyssen (2003) and Jay Winter (2006), which according to Winter already appeared at the end of the 19th century and a second boom in the mid 1970s? We could imagine this current turn that is influenced by mass media, by the velocity of communication and potentials of sharing information relatively freely via technology and without the need of permission or money and power as a third memory boom. This boom separates itself from the previous ones because of the freedom of communication, which on the one hand makes it more difficult to observe and analyse how this boom is manifesting itself, but on the other hand allows for greater quantity of more diverse information to be available and shared across many different mediums. The causes of this memory boom and what it means for society to have had the very strong need for reflection that led to further development of a field, could perhaps be rooted in the 1990s Balkan Wars, the Rwandan Genocide and the collapse of the East-West divide.

As mentioned above, much of the contemporary field of study surrounding memory and historical dialogue stems from the *German case*, or looking at how Germany dealt with its post-war situation. As Tony Judt explains in *The Past is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe*, the period between 1945-1948 became a moment not only for reconstruction of Europe but, '*the period during which Europe's postwar memory was molded.*'<sup>35</sup> It was during this period that the absolute German guilt was formed. This was agreed upon by all the allies and certain responsible parties, and nations, revised the history of their position during the war. This post-war period also saw a number of atrocities but all these, along with any blame other than that directed towards the Germans,

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35 Tony Judt, 'The Past Is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe', in *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and its Aftermath*, ed. István Deák, Jan T. Gross, and Tony Judt (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000) pp.293-325 (p.296)



It came suddenly without warning during one of the Luftwaffes 76 continuous nightly air raids on our great City of London in 1941,

I was a young boy of 13 then.

My Mother, Grandmother, and I, were in our usual place sitting in the large cupboard under the stairs where we always took refuge during an airaid, it was in the basement of my Grandfathers house and was considered a safe place to shelter. Grandad was out in the Kitchen making a cup of tea when it struck. An almighty crash. an exploion of noise,sudden darkness, dust and smoke everywhere.

We later found out that a large bomb had landed on the small WAX and POLISH factory directly opposite our house in TRAFLAGER AVENUE, PECKHAM, S.E. LONDON.

There we were the 3 of us now trapped in the cupboard  
the door blown in with no way of getting out.

Worse still was the fact that we could not see a thing, total darkness. Mother kept calling out "DAD, DAD, DAD, HELP US GET US OUT" But without any reply.

Silence had suddenly come,but we where still in the dark.

All of a sudden I rememberd I had my small torch with the RED, WHITE, and AMBER glass in it that I had got for XMAS in my pocket.

I got it out turned it on to see the state we were in, covered in dust, thankfully no injuries, but still trapped in. MUM asked if I was alright, and if GRANDMA was o.k??

she still carried on calling out for her Father to help us but to no avail.

She said what luck I had the Torch but that I had better turn it off, and only turn it on occasionally to save the battery.

Mum said we mustn't panic but we must try and make ourselves heard, call out all at once, which we did at about 5 minute intervals. We could now hear water hissing and a smell of GAS.

After some time ( seemed like hours) we heard a far off voice calling MR. JENKINSON, MR JENKINSON, FRED, FRED, ARE YOU O.K we all called out together WE ARE HERE UNDER THE STAIRS TRAPPED IN.

Silence for a bit; then the voices got louder and nearer,

then a torch light and tugging at the door, then the door being forced open to reveal our rescuers MR WILLIAMS & MR BENNET our next door neighbours in their Tin Helmets and uniform of the ARP.

An ambulance was waiting outside our house and we were all whisked off to Hospital, checked over and spent the night there.

Regretably, what they didn't tell us was that my Dear old GRANDDAD FRED was killed when the heavy plaster ceiling fell in on him during the initial Explosion.

If only he hadn't gone out into the kitchen to make the tea, but stayed under the stairs with us.

quietly disappeared into the background, with German guilt appearing as the only possible historical narrative. Any other blame was often titled as myth or explained as a guise of resistance against the government. This post-war period saw an emergence of artistic shifts but perhaps the most famous thought relating to post-Holocaust culture is Theodor Adorno's statement that *writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric*. This statement has been reworded so often and used in so many different contexts that too often it is understood as meaning that aesthetic representations or arts in the post-Auschwitz era are immoral. Anthony Rowland provides a precise analysis of the statement and commentaries surrounding it, in terms of semiotics relating to the translations but also the use of the term 'barbaric'.<sup>36</sup> According to Rowland, Adorno was not relating as much to the moral impossibility of the existence of arts after the Holocaust but rather designating that, *'aesthetics of post-Holocaust poetry are of a particular 'barbaric' character.'*<sup>37</sup> Claiming that the use of the word barbaric is purposely *'stylistically and thematically awkward'*, as it asserts *"the need for 'suffering' to express itself: 'it is now virtually in art alone that (it) can still find its own voice, consolidation.'"*<sup>38</sup>

These discussions surrounding representations of suffering and violence also increasingly tainted the realm of monument building which was already a sensitive area taking into consideration that the monument was perceived as being one of the emblematic structures used to represent national identity. Almost as a direct reflection of this the monument suddenly gained another dimension.

The very cases of the building of monuments, or their removal, or lack of in the public realm addressed these structures as relevant symbols in a dormant state awaiting to be politicised.<sup>39</sup> As Toth's critique of Olick declares, being a democracy is not a prerequisite for the development of a political consciousness which would lead to a politics of regret. It seems often, as shown by Rothberg, in the case of the Holocaust Memorial in Washington DC, that it is only that political statement which is desired by

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36 Antony Rowland, 'Re-reading 'Impossibility' and 'Barbarism': Adorno and Post-Holocaust Poetics', *Critical Survey*, 9 (1997) 57-69. <[https://www.jstor.org/stable/41556053?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41556053?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)> [last accessed 11.09.2018]

37 Ibid. p.58

38 Ibid. 67 quoted (Adorno, T, *Commitment*, in *Aesthetics and Politics*, ed. R. Livingston, Anderson and F.Mulhern (London: new Left Books, 1977)p. 188

39 By politicised I mean that their role is used by governments to gain further approval of a certain goal they are aiming to achieve. Their use becomes a symbol of an internal soft-power, the use of visual representations for the positive reinforcement of certain ideologies.

THE  
CONDITIONS  
IN THIS  
SCENARIO  
HAVE BEEN  
RECOUNTED  
TIME AND  
AGAIN.

the government in power that shall be presented, regardless of whether it derives from a democratic or seemingly democratic society or not.

The *Prologue* of this project introduced the main concepts behind the idea of the counter-monument, as defined by James E. Young, which is perhaps the most attention-grabbing theory surrounding monumentalisation. Young's work appeared as a theory surrounding a method or style of building monuments in a moment when 'traditional' or rather conventional methods of monument building seemed to have lost its purpose. It arose almost as an act of rebellion against models of remembrance that created a possibility of collective forgetting<sup>40</sup> through the instating of the responsibility of remembrance onto the object, the monument, rather than proposing that the memory of the events is to be remembered by the people.<sup>41</sup>

Post-war Germany had an exceedingly charged environment of a never before experienced post-war guilt. As Young explains, in the post WWII, post-Vietnam era of the second memory boom, German artists returned to ideas of the monument in a desire to contradict and re-appropriate the idea of traditional monument building, removing it from the symbolism connected to the history of the Third Reich. In a moment when boundaries between the East-West divide started breaking and the memory boom was already in place, a group of German artists started exploring this 'method' or perhaps 'movement' that desired to interrupt a potential forgetting of the dangerous past. The movement, according to Young, necessitated a move away from aestheticised objects as representations. In some way through questioning the potential of representation of violence, pain, and conflict, these objects became present in their stylistic decisions of portrayal of absence. This appropriation of the idea of the present-absence became a leading concept of the movement.<sup>42</sup> Presenting the absence of a monument or an invisible monument as a representation of the Holocaust seemed, as Young described, a more valid form of presenting the loss of a people. This style, or rebellion against

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40 Paul Connerton's division of seven different types of forgetting gives the broadest and clearest presentation of how the act of forgetting is used as mode of manipulation but also as a form of allowing for society to survive a difficult past. Connerton's division are discussed in further detail in several of the Acts. Paul Connerton, 'Seven Tyes of Forgetting', *Memory Studies*, 59 (2008). <<http://mss.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/1/1/59>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

41 Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorial and Meaning*

42 Ideas and concepts around the present absence had already at this time appeared in the arts, for example Bruce Nauman's work *A Cast of the Space under My Chair* from 1965 and was followed by artists like Rachel Whiteread.

traditions, already appeared with Maya Lin's famous *Memorial to Vietnam Veterans* built in 1981, where the young architect made a bold proposal that appeared as a scar in the park designated as the site of the Memorial. Lin's memorial is perhaps one of the more well-known and frequently used examples especially out of the realm of post-Holocaust Germany. The monument is described to have created a wound in the landscape representing not only the loss of American lives but also the very historically relevant public resistance against the government and the war.<sup>43</sup>

This conceptual duality of the monument both standing as a place of remembrance while equally being a statement of critique was also seen in the work of the German counter-monumentalists. While the state of monument building was never suppressed, there was an inability or confusion of how to represent the massive amount of deaths which were strapped as a weight of guilt on the shoulders of generations that had lived through the war and the generations that felt the consequences for years to follow.

Through an analysis of the monument as a structure that appears as a visual marker of the politics of regret, typically presented in the public sphere by a government body, we can observe how, what and if there is a significant visual shift that occurs compared to the counter-monument. The counter-monument in its relation to Michel Foucault's counter-memory could be said, '*has come to be deployed as means by which to frame the construction of histories for the disenfranchised*'.<sup>44</sup> These, in theory, are meant to be spaces of reflection that step away from the conventional forms of monument building that western culture had been accustomed to, and therefore presenting themselves as critiques of society and nation-state. However, some of the examples proposed by Young remain physically very similar to the forms we had been used to regarding as conventional monuments. For example, Jochen Gerz, one of the German artists well-known for being representative of the movement, created the *Monument Against Fascism*, that was meant to reflect an anti-fascist society.<sup>45</sup> A 12-meter-tall lead column was

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43 Young has described the monument as a wound in the landscape in several talks but Maya Lin herself; '*I had a simple impulse to cut into the earth. I imagined taking a knife and cutting into the earth, opening it up, an initial violence and pain that in time would heal.*' Maya Lin, 'Making the Memorial', *The New York Review of Books* (2000) <<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2000/11/02/making-the-memorial/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

44 Veronica Tello, *Counter-Memorial Aesthetics. Refugee Histories and the Politics of Contemporary Art*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2016) p.12.

45 *Monument Against Fascism* was unveiled in 1986 in Hamburg-Harburg and created by Esther Shalev Gerz and Jochen Gerz.

placed on a platform in Hamburg-Harburg. Citizens of the city were invited engrave and sign their names on the column. The column was clean of any marks when installed but with time it became covered with signatures, graffiti, scratches, comments, traces, swastikas, etc. It was slowly lowered into the ground so that a new blank space became available. This act was repeated over the next 7 years, until the column completely submerged into the ground in 1993. It was lowered into the ground with about 70,000 contributions. What remains is the invitation in the place where the column vanished, an underground shaft with a viewing window and a text describing the event of the monument;

*'We invite the citizens of Harburg, and visitors to the town, to add their names here to ours. In doing so we commit ourselves to remain vigilant. As more and more names cover this 12 metre-high lead column, it will gradually be lowered into the ground. One day it will have disappeared completely and the site of the Harburg monument against fascism will be empty. In the long run, it is only we ourselves who can stand up against injustice.'*<sup>46</sup>

The column, which was buried into the ground, initially looked very much like a conventional monument and it is only the act of the artist who positioned the audience at the centre of the work, which in fact became the truly invisible and counter-monumental part of the work.

This idea of the disappearing monument, a play between invisibility and visibility, is revisited by the artist in his work *2146 stones: Monument against Racism*, made in Saarbrücken in 1993. Again Gerz shows his interest in the action of implementing responsibility through physical enactments. This monument began as an unauthorized act of replacing the cobblestones of a square in front of the Provincial Parliament. The cobblestones were being replaced with others that had engraved onto them the names of 2146 Jewish cemeteries that existed in Germany before WWII. The engraved side of the stone was buried into the ground, therefore initially making the action completely invisible. The project was eventually approved and upon completion, the Castle Square was renamed as *The Square of the Invisible Monument*. Is it possible to surmise that in this case the artist's intention was beyond a critique of the nature of the monument as

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46 Ester Shalev and Jochen Gerz <http://www.shalev-gerz.net/?portfolio=monument-against-fascism> [last accessed 11.09.2018]

proposed by nation-state, and also a critique of its visual appearance, and beyond that an attempt to separate the work from institutionalised approval?

These counter-monuments remained in their form, of the absent presence relatively similar in the following years, continuing with Horst Hoheisel's *Ashrott Brunnen* fountain in Kassel, where the artist created an inversion into the ground of the original structure, fountain, that was destroyed. Other work appearing from Renata Stih and Friedrich Schnock, such as the proposal for the competition for the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Bushaltestelle*, initiated a significant turn away from the monumental object.<sup>47</sup> Their memorial took the form of a bus stand and buses that would take people to locations where persecution of Jews took place. They did not win the competition but their proposal remains among the most interesting examples of counter-monuments. Perhaps one example that stands out in particular, from the group of monuments that are typically described as being representative of the movement, also appeared as a proposal for the *Monument to Murdered Jews of Europe* in Berlin. Horst Hoheisel proposed the blowing up of the Brandenburg Gate and produced a mock image of what he imagined the space would look like afterwards. This image is more often presented as an artwork rather than as an example of a monument because it remains significantly removed from its potential physical manifestation. This example draws the most parallels with the project *Claims of a Monument/Counter-Monument Remains*, in the sense that Hoheisel's work could perhaps be seen a further development of the movement itself; by removing the potential monument from the system, it is providing an additional layer of critique of the nation-state and society, and a real move away from monumentality.<sup>48</sup> Such a critique proposes that no monument can undo what had occurred and no number of

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47 The competition for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews in Berlin had a number of interesting proposals which were closer in style and concept to a counter-monument than a monument. The competition lasted longer than expected, beginning in 1994 with a winning proposal that was not well received by the government and followed by a second competition in 1997 which was won by the architect Peter Eisenmann, who had initially worked with the artist Richard Serra on the design, but Serra later pulled out of the competition because of creative differences. James Young describes (in a lecture given on April 29, 2007, a keynote speech for the Witnessing Genocide Symposium) these creative differences as being due to the fact that Eisenmann wanted to make the structure more friendly to the public.

'James Young: The Stages of Memory and the Monument: From Berlin to New York', lecture given on April 29, 2007, a keynote speech for the Witnessing Genocide Symposium <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wWK36TVPP8>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

48 Referring to Huyssen's ideas presented in *Monumental Seduction* which are introduced in the *Prologue*.

monuments will ever truly create a space of reconciliation.<sup>49</sup> In this way, I propose to look at how the true nature of critique can be affirmed through a monument that exists as only an artwork and in this way becoming a further development of the counter-monument or its adaptation.

Further development or re-establishment of the nature of what a counter-monument can present itself as, is experimented in the performative installation, *Witness Corner Marked*. The work proposes to re-examine the idea of witnessing, which is a key element of this project. The idea of witnessing is explored in *A week in August* through the idea of the researcher and artist as witness, an idea that has for long been discussed as a mode of understanding of the artist's intention. The artist has often been described as witness to history or witness to society, but in this case we are observing a very specific form of witnessing. Giorgio Agamben delves into the idea of witnessing as experience of the Holocaust, looking at the work of Emmanuel Levinas and Primo Levi, both survivors of the Holocaust, but also Hannah Arendt.<sup>50</sup> Agamben describes the nature of Levi's position as a witness and how witnessing freed him from the so-called survivor's guilt. Levi wrote because he had to, he became the witness as a mode of survival. Levi was said to have repeated the story of his experience in Auschwitz to anyone that would listen.<sup>51</sup> He felt his position as a witness helped him find some form of comfort; '*I am at peace with myself because I bore witness.*'<sup>52</sup>

Agamben indicates the relevance of responsibility and guilt as being of the law and not ethical. '*Responsibility and guilt thus express simply two aspects of legal imputability; only later were they interiorized and moved outside the law.*'<sup>53</sup> The question of responsibility and guilt is treated by Arendt's provocative, of the time, text that followed the trials of Adolf

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49 See *Keywords and Meanings*.

50 Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone Books, 1999).

51 Michael Tager, 'Primo Levi and the Language of Witness', *Criticism: Fin de Siecle Perspectives on Twentieth-Century Literature*, 35 (1993), pp. 265-288

Also recounted in Agamben's *Remnants of Auschwitz*.

52 Agamben, p.17

Hannah Arendt has been widely critiqued for her text, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, in particular to her notion of the reliability of witnesses.

53 Agamben. p.22



Eichmann and his defense of the role he played in the Holocaust but also of the role of witnessing.<sup>54</sup>

Witnessing and victimhood oftentimes co-exist.<sup>55</sup> The position of victimhood is established once there is an acknowledgement of the perpetrator of the conflict. However, victimhood is also often referred to as being a currency of political debate.<sup>56</sup> For example, as Eyal Weizman discusses in his essay, *665 The Least of All Possible Evils*, governments are frequently in the position of abusing the idea of victimization in order to implement new laws and unsubstantiated violent force.<sup>57</sup> Recently this has also been commented on by artist David Birkin in his new work *Charade*, whereby the artist criticises the legality and concealment of British government tactics of torture, murder, and human rights' abuses, which the government often presents as necessary modes to insure national security. In the video work, a number of people are asked to 'play out' the torturous acts in the form used in the game of charades, only mimicking without using words.<sup>58</sup> Victimhood and victimization have become a common instrument of state induced abuse, particularly in the face of the so-called War on Terror and somewhat consequentially the plight of refugees.

*Witness Corner Marked* acts like an experiment, adapting various methods of witnessing, commemoration, and memorialisation. It departs by positioning the idea of the witness in its title. Departing from a geographical term used to describe a surveying of land and locations, it essentially means; an object is placed as a place holder for a space that is unreachable. For example: for a spot on top of a mountain that is not easily reachable, a place holder or witness corner is created at the foot of the mountain with an arrow pointing to the direction of the actual spot, usually also with the coordinates. This idea

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54 See Hannah Arendt, 'Eichmann in Jerusalem', *The New Yorker*, February 16th 1963.

Also see Hanna Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt Publishing, 1970).

55 See *Keywords and Meanings*.

56 By referred to as being a currency of political debate, I am not stating that this is a common way of discussing victimhood but rather that it often becomes leverage for political change and discourse.

57 Eyal Weizman, '665: The Least of All Possible Evils', *E-Flux Magazine*, 38 (2012) <<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/38/61213/665-the-least-of-all-possible-evils/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018] This is further discussed in the Act, *A Week in August*.

58 David Birkin, 'Charade', David Birkin website, (2017) <<https://www.davidbirkin.net/art/#/charade/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

This work proves interesting because it is a collaborative piece between the artist and the organisation Reprieve however the artist's use of 'actors' in the piece, which are all celebrities from western culture makes the work more questionable in terms of problematics of appropriation.

of a witness removed from the site of witnessing in order to convey its purpose relates to the idea of the counter-monument as artwork. Since, only in its removal from a state of existence as a conventional monument, in that it no longer exists as a product of the nation-state, can it become the true witness of the past. It also alludes to the conflicting nature of what it means to be a true witness. In this way I expound on the characteristics that form in the removal of the witnessing in the present and instead depend on the memory of that witnessing, as is the case of most monuments.

The performative installation attempts to present how different narratives of conflict across a broad range of time and space have a similar poetics. The element of multi-vocality alludes to Michael Rothberg's ideology of the multi-directional- a space of negotiation and constant change. The work accesses this aspect through its makeshift nature of mobility and simplicity, almost becoming a carry-along monument or monument in a box.

*Witness Corner Marked* readapts the meaning of the word to refer to the many moments not memorialised that have no dedicated space or location. It is an observation and critique, of how monuments exist today and what we are monumentalising through an exploration of multi-vocality and by providing a critique of the valorisation of victimhood. The work constructed from a position of awareness of the impossibility to memorialise all the experiences of conflict in the public realm, critiques the hierarchical mode of recognising victimhood. In this way again relating back to Rothberg and once again questioning whose memories are monumentalised.

A collection of narratives are intertwined and overlapped, to create a new language of chaos and serenity in the simplicity of capturing different moments and building new ones. These moments lose their individuality, and for a moment an equality is re-established and they become anyone's moment, a moment familiar to some, a moment that can be adapted and personalised. In this way pointing out the similarities of the moments experienced regardless of time or space. The work further enquires how multi-vocal histories are presented away from solutions offered by nation states but rather employing depoliticised alternatives that are void of their physical identities, therefore equalizing the victimhood. *Witness Corner Marked* attempts to present how

narratives of conflict are surprisingly similar once the locations, names, and dates are not highlighted.

Ten narratives of conflict from six different decades, spanning over a century, and eight countries are all read by one voice. The narratives are first person accounts of conflict but also accounts of the remains of conflict.<sup>59</sup> In its manifestation the work observes multi-vocality as building a structure that is non-monumental, therefore providing a space for the interaction to become intimate. Each narrative is recorded and played through a mini speaker that is attached to the surface of a reflective balloon. The sound of the voice slightly increased by the membrane of the balloon, becomes loud enough for a person standing next to it to hear clearly. In a room the spheres hover at head height but anchored to the ground.<sup>60</sup> The same voice is heard repeating the different stories, and suddenly the overlapping voice sounds like many different voices, eluding to the very nature of the memoryscapes which Rothberg defines as competitive.

The work becomes a portable, flexible, site-responsive installation that enquires on the nature of the stability of collective memory or nation state imposed history.<sup>61</sup> Questioning the physical nature of the monument, its accessibility in the public space and its potential to monumentalize counter-memory rather than collective memory. Furthermore, the artwork critiques the idea of the victim and witness as one removed from the context through misappropriation. In the artwork the voices of witnessing remain equal regardless of time and space in which they existed. Therefore providing a critique of the valorisation of victimhood by removing the nationality and identity of the persons whose stories are presented, and re-establishing an equality.

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59 All the narratives are read by me, in this way relating to the work described in the *Prologue*.

60 The work was originally shown in a gallery space but later on, upon my request moved to the back garden of the gallery, in this way allowing for the sounds to blend and counteract with the sounds of the surroundings.

61 These qualities of the artwork could all be defined as anti-monumental qualities.



Ok, I'll tell you a story, that has stayed in my memories.

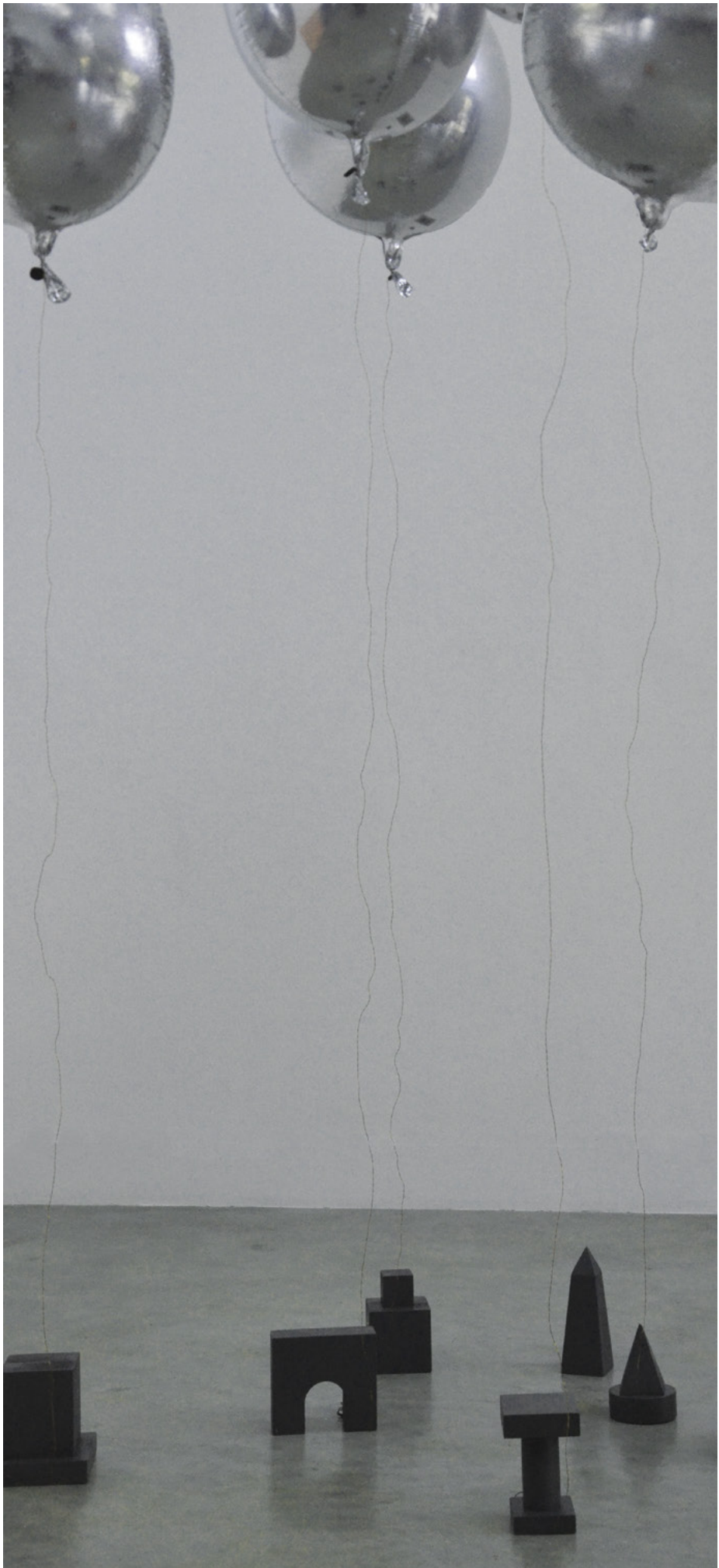
About Mikica, your grandma. She was already in contact with the Liberation Front during the war. And we used to take the bus together. And we drove, me to school and her to work. Then one day she said to me, 'you know what, now you will have to be strong because I'm going to Kozjak and I'm not coming home again and you have to tell mother and father'. This was very upsetting. And we drove with the bus to the city and we said our goodbyes there and I didn't see her for 4 years. Then at home I had to explain to mother and father that she has gone to join the Partisans and will not return. Well, and then soon after that they came for us and took us to the concentration camps. One morning they rang the doorbell, these memories are still so alive to me, there were two gestapos, and they said, 'you have half an hour to pack'. And I can still see it clearly, mother controlled herself but my father, he froze like a statue in the middle of the room, I can still see him now. He stood like a statue, he couldn't understand what this meant. And I was the only one who was lucid enough. So they told me to pack what I can in half an hour and then we had to go. So I packed for all three of us, what I could, I threw together. Then I ran to the basement, because we had all our jewellery and valuables there because of air raids. I took those boxes to the housekeeper and I told her, 'we are going now, they have come for us' and I asked her if she could take care of them. And she did, when we returned, we got them back. That's what I did last and then we left. I remember we went on foot over the Maribor bridge to the Gestapos, and on the bridge we met a man from our block of flats, and we knew that he was the one who had betrayed us and called the gestapo. We used to live on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and the whole stab of Partisans stayed with us for 2 weeks, or something like that. And of course they walked around, and people became aware of this. They slept on the floor, on blankets. We had a 2 bedroom, quite large flat, and there were so many people you could barely walk, the whole stab was there. And this man betrayed us. Yes. And then when we walked over the bridge we ran into him and he was looking at us and we turned away, we didn't look back at him.

It's interesting that when my mother and I were returning after the war, we walked again across the bridge and we ran into the same man, and when he saw us he spread his arms and greeted us but my mother and I both turned our heads away from him. And to think he had the heart to greet us in this way, people are just unbelievable. I can still see him now, how he spread his arms in joy as if he were our relative. And because of him we were in the camps. And like that one after another we came back from the war. And this is how we returned, mother and I alone, because father died in one of the camps. This is war. War teaches you a lot, it takes a lot, that's just the way it is.













ACT II.

THE REGION OF THE ASH TREE

Descriptions of the events that occurred in the WWII concentration camp Jasenovac are not often included in the vast amount of recollections of the horrors of WWII. Researching the camp and the stories surrounding the events that occurred there, I encountered an image of a tool of torture, a glove with a blade attached to it. This glove becomes the central character of this Act, channeling the history and myths surrounding it. The artwork created, *The Region of the Ash Tree*, is a sculptural piece which creates a play of image and the narrative surrounding it.<sup>1</sup>

Trauma tourism is a term used by Laurie Beth Clark, to describe so-called dark tourism, death tourism, war tourism, or tourism relating to topics of violence. It is something relatively common, or rather has a history within western society that is rooted deep in cultural history and not only in the more well-known of examples of Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Sarajevo.<sup>2</sup> However, visiting sites of violence and death is a practice that was established long before that. Perhaps the earliest, most notable would be the Colosseum in Rome, but looking at examples from more recent history; there were in the past and still exist today, public executions,<sup>3</sup> and then of course sites from recent wars, locations of infamous murders, and museums that attract through displays of memorabilia of torture from previous centuries and regimes.<sup>4</sup>

In the summer of 2017 I went to see the Srebrenica Museum in Potocari, which is just across from the cemetery and was also the location of the UN headquarters of the Dutch Battalion in 1994 and 1995, who were responsible for peacekeeping in the region but are now mainly remembered as having played an unfortunate role in the massacres

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- 1 *The Region of the Ash Tree*, also titled *Jasenovac*, was first exhibited at Hanmi Gallery, 25.02.14, in London. It has since been acquired by Christine Park Gallery.
  - 2 Laurie Beth Clark, 'Never Again and its Discontents', *Performance Research*, 16 (2011) 68-79.
  - 3 An exhibition at Iniva in 2011 displayed a range of images taken of lynchings in the US including postcards that were produced as memorabilia available for sale to the public. *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photographs From America*. 27 May 2011 – 30 Jul 2011, Inivia London.
  - 4 There is a difference in the way some of these museums are presented to the public attracting a diverse audience. For example, the London Dungeon which is as the Museum's website claims, 'It's a 110 minute journey through 1000 years of London's darkest past. You and your companions walk through the Dungeon, moving from show to show, guided by our professional actors. The shows are based on real London history and legends (minus the boring bits). You'll get up close and personal with sinister characters including Jack the Ripper and infamous barber of Fleet Street, Sweeney Todd.' On the other hand is the example of the Museum of Genocide Victims in Vilnius which is the site of the former KGB prison. An interesting form of dark tourism also exists via online websites which encourage a genuine experience of the site using 3D technology, images and film such as <http://srebrenica360.com/> and a remarkable source of information is collected on <http://www.dark-tourism.com/>.

that occurred there. I had been to the Potocari cemetery before but the museum and Memorial Room are usually only open by appointment. I arrived with a group of researchers and academics. We were taken inside a room surrounded by screens, images, and information boards. A man asked us to sit down on benches ordered in front of a cinema screen. He pulled up a chair and quietly waited for us to stop rummaging in our bags, and asked us to put away our phones, while explaining that no documentation of his presentation was allowed. I understood why very quickly. The man, probably in his late 40s, described in detail the horrible nightmare that he survived. When he spoke, it was with a slow and clear voice, looking to make eye contact with each person.

There was an intense, uncomfortable silence. This was followed by a documentary he played for us. The extent of the violence in the stories and the footage in the film made me ill. I looked at the man and wondered what he thought of us, coming to listen to him, to stare at the images and footage of corpses and executions. Most of us we were visibly upset yet we still managed to take notes. The man kindly took us around the exhibition and Memorial Room, patiently answering all our questions.<sup>5</sup> I wanted to ask how he felt about having to continuously repeat the same story about the worst moment in his life but I was ashamed, mainly because I already felt like a voyeur, paying to listen to someone delve into their painful past, but also presumptuous to assume I have the right to ask of him to reveal even more about how he felt about us coming to stare at the remains of people's existence. I think I was hoping to hear him say, *I'm happy to talk about my pain if it means that the memory and history of the events will never be forgotten*. But I guess I was worried he was going to say, *You come here to stare at us, scanning our faces to check for scars, looking into our eyes to see if they will fill with tears as we repeat the only story people want to hear over and over again. But you cannot expect to hear it all. I do what I do because I have to and there is nothing else to it*. That's what I imagined he would say, so I never asked.

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5 The Memorial Room is a large hall where many of the Bosniaks hid from the Serbian forces. The space now has an exhibition of photographs and a small installation of objects. The Memorial Room exhibition was created with the support of the Imperial War Museum.

















Dark Tourism, originally coined by Lennon and Foley (1996) in an article published in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, has since become a popular term to use when looking at public attraction to death, violence, war, and tragedy and the growing aspect of sites that represent or are the location of such events, as tourist attractions worth travelling to. A paper<sup>6</sup> published in 2017 in the *Tourism Management Journal*, explains the surge in recent academic and public interest in the topic of dark tourism and thanatourism, as well as the common misunderstanding between the two terms and the historical basis for this recent two-decade long increased engagement with the topic.<sup>7</sup> Duncan Light proposes a clear the difference in the terminology:

*‘Dark tourism tends to be used as an umbrella term for any form of tourism that is somehow related to death, suffering, atrocity, tragedy or crime. As originally formulated, it is a phenomenon rooted in the circumstances of the late twentieth century. Thanatourism is a more specific concept and is about long-standing practices of travel motivated by a specific desire for an encounter with death.’*<sup>8</sup>

Light continues to give a concise division of the topics of interest relating to dark tourism and thanatourism:

*‘Over the past two decades, dark tourism and thanatourism research has focused on a broad range of themes, although the priority given to individual themes has shifted over time. In order to summarise this diverse multidisciplinary scholarship with clarity, this paper is organised around six principal themes: 1) a concern with definitions and typologies of dark tourism and thanatourism; 2) ethical debates regarding the presentation of places of death and suffering to tourists; 3) the broader political roles of such places which overlaps with their role as tourist attractions; 4) the nature of demand for such places (particularly the motivations and experiences of visitors); 5) the management, interpretation and marketing of places of death and suffering for tourism and tourists; 6) the research methods used to understand dark tourism and thanatourism.’*<sup>9</sup>

To this clear distinction of scholarly interests, I would like to boldly add Art as another research theme, as Light defines it. For centuries, artistic practices have been looking and analysing, through different mediums, topics of war, death, trauma, and violence.

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6 Duncan Light, ‘Progress in dark tourism and thanatourism research: An uneasy relationship with heritage tourism’ *Tourism Management*. 61 (2017) 275-301.

7 A series of articles on the topic of dark tourism and thanatourism appeared in *International Journal of Heritage Studies* in 1996 and included some of the key scholars developing these theories. .

8 Light, p.277.

9 Light, p.277. These ideas could also be related to an attraction to violence that is rooted in the oversaturation of the violent image, as described in the following Act.

An analytical observation at forms of depiction of violence in the arts would provide relevant and much needed insight into how audiences are impacted.<sup>10</sup>

For Laurie Beth Clark, what differentiates the term trauma tourism is that it is an expression of a distinctly social engagement that surpasses interest and curiosity but interacts with the psychological viewpoint of discourse and a ‘coming to terms’ with trauma. Clark suggests that it is because of our inability to cope with present traumas and violence that we feel the need to return to these memory sites or sites of memory that contain chapters of history that have been analysed and accepted, and can now serve as spaces for creating an awareness, that a recognition of the past will absolve our responsibility of the present and its atrocities.<sup>11</sup> Returning and repetitive pilgrimage to these sites helps survivors of these traumas and may aid to the closure of open wounds.

In the essay *Never Again and its Discontents*, Clark references Freud’s repetition compulsion and explains that it is rooted in western society’s desire for a, ‘(re)dramatization of the unresolvable trauma’, through an obsession with memorial culture and representations of violence.<sup>12</sup> While this may be the case when assessing collective memorialization and commemoration through the visiting of these spaces, but how can we understand this in relation to the uncomfortable attraction to violence that seems to have swept western societies. This attraction includes dark tourism but also other representations seen in film, literature, photography, and narratives. Many of these do not depart from a personal relationship with the traumatic experiences being pursued. Looking at these attractions we can delve into the history of art and artistic representations of violence that may have been created to make a platform for an understanding of violence, for both society and the individual, but perhaps also to produce documents that critique a society, which may also be understood as a manifestation of the politics of regret.<sup>13</sup>

But what do these spaces create a potential for understanding, for the public that is outside the realm of a personal connection with the trauma? These places may help to

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10 As previously mentioned depictions of violence and conflict have an extensive history in the field of art but this Act observes how the context changed with emergence of oversaturation of the violent image in mainstream media.

11 See *Keywords and Meanings* and in the Act *A week in August*.

12 Clark, L.B. ‘Never Again and its Discontents’, p.69.

13 A very controversial example of representation of violence in the arts is the work, ‘Real Violence’ was produced in 2017 by Jordan Wolfson and exhibited as part of the Whitney Biennial. The virtual reality piece shows a metropolitan city in which the main character get viciously beaten with

create the so-called artificial memory or memory that the individual does not actually have, but because of repetitive interaction with the story, images and remains of the events, individuals create their own interactive memory of the event. If this is the case, then trauma tourism creates this exact situation; artificial memories of spaces which, in the case of sites of memory from WWII, are often narratives that have been represented through many outlets. There are many discussions that can be cultivated within realm of what should be available to the public and in what kind of form. The argument for a full disclosure of information to be available insinuates that we are dealing with the history of an event that is factual, especially if these spaces are government supported institutions. In this way, what is created is also an inability to feel that any facts presented can in any way be disputed since they are being presented as ‘the history’. Therefore, regardless of whether there may be instances when we are presented with questionable material it becomes difficult for the public to act out and show resistance.

Susan Sontag’s *Regarding the Pain of Others*, talks about the use and abuse of imagery in wars and the way the same images, photographs, are used by different, opposing sides, to declare as their own victimization.<sup>14</sup> Sontag’s views defend the violent image as much as they present its potentials for manipulation. ‘*The photographs are a means of making ‘real’ (or ‘more real’) matters that the privileged and the merely safe might prefer to ignore.*’<sup>15</sup> Sontag also presents instances when the image, or rather photograph, while being a medium which unlike written narrative, has a greater potential to be available to all, has been appropriated especially because it ‘*has only one language.*’<sup>16</sup> However, its limits are also that this one language gives space for contradictory and confronting views to exist in the same space. With the emergence of confrontational information, questioning documents and ‘facts’ coming from sources such as government bodies that should be ethical and trustworthy, we have become more open to looking at ideas which were once referred to as revisionist, which creates another layer for potential manipulation.

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a bat. The video recalls the violent French film *Irreversible* in which we see a similar tortuously long violent beating. The work is particularly interesting because of the artist’s need to create as life-like of an experience as possible relating to the numerous video games that have been produced in the last decades where the players are invited to partake in simulations of actual battles that took place.

14 Sontag’s *Regarding the Pain of Others* and ideas of abuse of imagery and photography will be further discussed in the Act, *A week in August*.

15 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, (London: Penguin Books, 2003). p.6

16 Ibid. p.17.



The site of Jasenovac was and remains a space of contested narratives. In Jasenovac, a Croatian town positioned close to the borders between Slovenia, Bosnia and Croatia, stands one of Yugoslavia's recently popularised spomeniks to the victims of the former concentration camp.<sup>17</sup>

A stone flower, opening to the sky, in the middle of a curated park with lakes and a railway track with carriages presented to simulate a visual experience of what might have occurred there during WWII, when the space was the largest concentration camp in the Balkan region. While nothing remains of the original structure of the camp, the architect was able to restore the wooden railway sleepers to create a path across the landscape to the concrete flower.<sup>18</sup> Along the path stands a miniature bronze relief of the memorial explaining its relation to the original structure of the camp.

The monument, designed Bogdan Bogdanović and unveiled in 1966, has been the site of historical controversy that continues to present day. The controversy first pertained to the fact that Bogdanović was Serbian while the site is on Croatian soil. Yet the site continues to be marred by contested events and facts – the number of victims that perished at the camp and the identity of the real perpetrators chief among them. One of the most recent controversies described in *Balkan Insight*,<sup>19</sup> criticizes the Croatian version of Wikipedia, which after being investigated by BIRN, was found to lack references and contained severely altered or omitted historical facts.<sup>20</sup> Some of the highlighted issues include referring to the concentration camp as a 'collection' camp, heavily altering the death toll, and completely eliminating a section titled Controversies that is included in the English version.<sup>21</sup> This type of revisionism is not uncommon since the 1990s Yugoslav Wars, and films such as Jakov Sedlar's *Jasenovac-the Truth*, add fuel to the blazing conflict with more revisionism that has been heavily criticized by

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17 An article in *Easyjet* magazine, summer 2018, has an article about the spomeniks. They have become a popular tourist attraction in recent years particularly because of the increase in tourism in the region and the book by Jan Kempenaers, *Spomeniks*. Jonny Ensall ed. 'Monuments and Memories', *Easyjet Traveller magazine*, (July 2018) pp.80-92..

18 The railway was the main method of deportation of prisoners into the camp.

19 Sven Milekić, 'Balkan Transitional Justice. How Croatian Wikipedia Made a Concentration Camp Disappear', *Balkan Transitional Justice*, (2018) <<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/how-croatian-wikipedia-made-a-concentration-camp-disappear-03-23-2018>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

20 BIRN: Balkan Investigative Reporting Network

21 USHMM Contributors, 'Holocaust Encyclopedia: Jasenovac', USHMM website <<https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005449>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

some, but sadly praised by others including even the Minister of Culture of Croatia, Zlatko Hasanbegović.<sup>22</sup> The memorial has for such reasons been a site of vandalism, most recently and gravely during the wars (1991~) when large parts of the museum artefacts disappeared and the site was attacked by Croatian forces.<sup>23</sup> What was saved was sent to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. for safe-keeping and returned to the memorial site in 2001.

The site largely embodies what was typical of monument building in the region at the time. Bogdanović himself was well-known for designing spomeniks. The style, referred to by Gal Kirn as ‘socialist modernism’, appeared across Yugoslavia between 1960s to 1980s.<sup>24</sup> Kirn emphasizes the emergence of symbols such as flowers, fists, stars, as well as more fantastical abstract forms. Many of these monuments are also found in nature, away from urban life. *‘The monuments are staged within the beautiful landscape, while they in turn become ‘agents’ that stage the landscape surrounding them, making it more grandiose. Nature and the sculptural object enter into a dialogue, raising questions about the relationship between humans and the environment.’*<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, Kirn refers to how the idea of the counter-monument already appeared with these type of monuments:

*‘the role of the monument was located not in any didactic message, but in the experience it orchestrated through its innovative use of space. However, and paradoxically, the counter-monumental form in Yugoslavia was not so much a negative reaction to Modernism. While later counter-monuments offered a critique of Modernism by opting for smaller scales, along with interactivity, the Yugoslav examples remained large in scale even as they introduced aspects*

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22 Sven Milekić, ‘Croatian Jews Outraged by Concentration Camp Film’, Balkan Transitional Justice website, (2016) <<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatian-jews-outraged-by-holocaust-denial-film-04-05-2016>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

23 Walasek, Bosnia and the Destruction of Cultural Heritage, p.84

24 Gal Kirn, ‘Transnationalism in Reverse: From Yugoslav to Post-Yugoslav Memorial Sites’, in *Transnational Memory*, ed. by Chiara De Cesari and Ann Rigney, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014) pp.313-338. In his essay, Kirn points out that memorialization in Yugoslavia started with transnational monuments, which can be divided into three aesthetic types. The third type developed in 1960s when Yugoslavia began to feel the first effects of liberalism, such as didn’t exist before and were not meant to be part of the socialism that was being practiced. With growing gaps in social classes, and unemployment, these artists faced the task of creating monuments that were meant to speak of a future of unity not solely based on the victimization of the past but rather evoke a thought in the audience of a bright future.

Kirn claims that with these monuments, which explored a more socialist modernist aesthetic, many of which were built on the exact sites of the events, which they commemorated, and were larger than life in size, some expanding into whole parks, spaces for people to gather became the true first counter-monuments, which later on James E. Young described in his observation of developments of memorialization in Germany.

25 Ibid. p.318

*of interactivity. In this sense, they represented a productive upgrade in late Modernism that experimented with form while also inscribing the emancipatory promise of the partisan past in less visible ways into their composition. For this reason these monuments cannot be separated from their historical context as mere exemplars of the international style of 'pure' artworks; even less can we read them as anti-systemic or anti-communist artistic gestures. I would suggest instead an alternative way of describing their radicality; they were modernist counter-monuments of and to Revolution. These modernist counter-monuments celebrated something that was won by partisans in the past, but only on condition that this process continue to exert its emancipatory universalist promise in the future.*<sup>26</sup>

As has become typical of these type of spaces, a museum has been built on the site containing an archival display of the documents relating to the camp and objects belonging to the victims and perpetrators.<sup>27</sup> Adapting the commonly used visual language which emerged with Holocaust museums and commemorative spaces, the museum has translucent slabs with the names of the victims engraved on them, hanging from the ceiling.

Jasenovac was a so-called Vernichtungslager or extermination camp. The victims were mainly Serbs, Jews, and Roma, but also Bosnians, Croatians and political dissidents. The figures of how many people perished in the death camp remain questionable as do other details pertaining to the camp and the events in the region at the time. During the period of Tito's Yugoslavia, this part of history remained rather unchallenged but was polarized after the breakup of Yugoslavia. Explanations for this reticence range from claims of Tito's desire to conceal certain events of the war and any responsibility of unethical conduct committed by the western-allied Partisan Liberation Movement,<sup>28</sup> to the left-wing parties and organisations belief that not discussing past events and nationalist ideas was instrumental for Tito's desire to keep a peaceful Yugoslavia.<sup>29</sup> A

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26 Ibid. p.325

27 The new museum exhibition on the site was reopened in 2006.

28 Theories surrounding the cruelty of Tito's regime and their desire to conceal the ill-mannered crimes of the Partisans have been presented by ring wing parties in Slovenia, including Janez Janša's SDS. These ideas have also been supported by other movements in the far-right, the Roman Catholic Church and Slovenian migrants that fled at the end of WWII from the Western-allied Partisans, other groups in the Balkans and the British. This is also further elaborated upon in *Everyliar Leaves a Trace*.

29 This could be said to relate to Connerton's views on repressive erasure and prescriptive forgetting. Both with existing histories that might not have necessarily been viewed as malignant. Repressive erasure was employed mainly in totalitarian regimes in order to create a shift in society and national identity. While prescriptive forgetting, also typically state enacted was usually a mode of assisting

nostalgia surrounding Tito's Yugoslavia is for some a cloud of negativity and of course the occasional conspiracy theory.<sup>30</sup>

Researching an area of such contestation with so many intertwined histories, one therefore expects to come across a variety of opposing views and misleading facts. Among the items that have curiously appeared most in research surrounding the camp is an image of a device that was supposedly used to kill victims in the camp. Many stories and myths surround the use of this tool and its authenticity. As it is strangely similar to a scythe for harvesting wheat, many accounts claim that the tool and stories surrounding it are fictional. It is supposedly called *Srbojsek*, which could be translated to Serb-cutter. A leather glove with a curved blade facing the outside of the glove, it was meant to be used to slit throats efficiently, without causing the perpetrator too much effort in holding the blade and in this way enabling him to kill quickly. Sceptics who claim the glove is a myth are those who also believe Tito's regime fabricated the story in order to sow divisions between Croats and Serbs, however this theory doesn't seem likely considering the lengths to which Tito's Yugoslavia went to maintain ethnic peace and stability, even obscuring some of the atrocities committed during the war.

Amongst the numerous articles, images and videos of the glove, there is also a Wikipedia site dedicated to *Petar Brzica: Peter the Fast or Speedy Peter*. The brief Wikipedia page describes him as a Croatian Franciscan friar, Nazi collaborator, and war criminal.<sup>31</sup> The page boasts of his fame as the winner of a competition of killing the most prisoners with the *Srbojsek*, according to him 1,360 people, but others claim between 670 and 1,100.

Upon contacting the museum of Jasenovac, which is a government funded institution, about the authenticity of the narratives relating to the glove and any documents

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a reconciliation between opposing parties.

30 There are many stories surrounding stringent laws of speech against the state under Tito as well as other stories however from factual documents we understand that Yugoslavia like many other parts of Europe followed the generally unspoken rule of orienting any blame towards Germany in order to begin reconciliation and internal repair. For example, as explained in Tony Judt's *The Past is Another Country*, Yugoslavia had, "something like 66 percent of all livestock, 25 percent of all vineyards, most railway rolling stock, and all major roads were destroyed." (p.294)

Portraying that there was a definite post-war necessity of unity in the newly formed country.

31 'Petar Brzica', Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, (2018) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petar\\_Brzica](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petar_Brzica) [last accessed 11.09.2019]



relating to it, the museum responded with a link to a museum in the UK that they believe has the original glove. The museum, called Littledean Jail, is housed in a former Victorian prison, later a police station and courthouse. Bought by Andy Jones, it was turned into a museum exhibiting the owner's collection of material relating to crime, war, quadrophrenia, and other topics considered taboos.

On Thursday morning I woke up at 7 am in a panic that I will miss my bus to Gloucester at 7.30, it took me some minutes to realize that it was Thursday and not Friday. That evening I went to bed and woke up every hour trying to make sure I don't miss my bus. I left the house around 6.20. The platform on Highbury and Islington was already full of people waiting to sardine themselves on the trains that came by every minute. Victoria Coach Station was filled with people waiting for buses. I imagine it was particularly packed because it was Friday. Sitting on the bus alone I fell asleep quickly and woke up to the bright sunshine on my face. The idyllic countryside covered with a white blanket of frost.

I arrived in Gloucester just past 11am. The station resembling what I am used to in smaller towns in Slovenia, a somewhat rundown construction-site, with buildings of different styles surrounding the centre of the city. After smoking a cigarette I walked around trying to find which bus I can take to Littledean. A teenage girl with peroxide hair and dark rings under her eyes stopped me and asked if I needed help finding something. As I started explaining what bus I was looking for and mid conversation an older woman stopped to listen and they both kindly directed me back to the bus station where I found out that I had just missed the hourly bus. I walked in circles following signs for a TAXI stop. I saw a couple of taxis lined up and knocked on the first taxi's window. A ride to Littledean was about 30 pounds. I wasn't sure whether I was being ripped off but I realised I had no choice because my meeting with Andy was in 40 minutes.

I sat in the taxi and started chatting with the man who was probably about my age or even younger. As we drove through the countryside he told me he grew up in the area and imagines he will stay there forever, commenting on how beautiful it is. And it really was. The sun was out,

the fields were full of sheep and country cottages, and it really looked picture ready for a tourist guidebook. We chatted briefly about the floods that happened years ago, swimming in the river and driving on the wrong side of the road. As he pulled up to the gates of Littledean Jail, I realised my phone no longer had a signal and I couldn't call Andy to let him know that I had arrived. I walked through the open gate and passed a sign about the museum much like I expected it would. A tourist attraction much like the London Dungeon. There was a sign by a door pointing to the visitors' entrance with other signs around it; some warning signs about the graphic material in the museum and a sign with the prices of entrance tickets.

I rang the bell but there was no answer, then knocked on the door when I heard some shuffling on the other side. Still no answer. I walked around a little and thought about making my way back to the main road to try and get a signal but then saw someone through the window and waved. The bald man noticed me, smiled and walked off, soon reappearing to open the front door. He smiled pleasantly, greeting me and pronouncing my name the right way, which surprised me, since I rarely meet a foreigner that pronounces my name the right way. As I walked into the strange building my eyes swept across the room filled with cabinets, filled with objects, mannequins in army gear, a stuffed crocodile, a stuffed baby giraffe, an erotic doll in skimpy painted underwear and frames everywhere, on every inch of the wall and ceiling.

Andy could probably tell I was slightly stunned. He asked if I wanted to see the object first and then have a look around and I said yes perhaps first I could look at it and then have a quick look at everything else. He led me through the main space which was so filled I had to hold my bags in front of me to make my way through and still brushing up against the exhibited objects, frames, and cases.

We walked through two hallways to the room I had seen him in through the window when I was standing outside. The sun was shining brightly that I couldn't see very well until I got closer to the case. The case was packed with stuff. It looked like a miniature set design for a horror

film. And the glove was in there as well, not appearing as unpleasant as I expected because of its surrounding company. Andy had just been undoing the screws when I was waved to him from outside, so he continued unscrewing the case so he could show me the object up close. Without putting any gloves on he grabbed the leather glove and presented it to me, expecting me to take it. I hesitated but realised it would be strange to show that I am slightly disgusted to hold something that had probably been used to kill people.

I took it in my hands and started inspecting it, then pulled out my phone and he asked if I want to take pictures. He held it for me as I took pictures from all angles. He pointed out the inscriptions on it and asked if I knew what they meant. I took a look and took more pictures.

I explained the story of how I had found out he had this thing and he seemed surprised that I had not seen another one anywhere else. I continued to look at other things in the case as he described what they were, including another weapon from Jasenovac supposedly used to bludgeon people. He asked if I wanted to handle that as well and I declined. We chatted briefly about Ustaši and the information he had collected in the cabinet and the surrounding walls which included photos, newspaper clippings and internet printouts. The images were terribly graphic. Next to where the glove was placed there were images of naked dead women with their breasts cut off. My sensitive stomach suddenly became aware of the smells in the room. He was standing quite close to me wearing heavy cologne but the rest of the rooms smelled of a combination of old humid stench and disinfectant, similar to the smell you usually expect in hospitals. I started asking him about how he acquired the pieces and he explained that he bought them from various people, mainly other collectors but sometimes also at fairs or antique shops. The bell rang and he excused himself. A man had arrived and he explained that they needed to do something and asked if I was alright to go ahead and look around alone. They walked up the stairs and disappeared to where I understood was the private apartment where he lived with his family. I made my way around the rest of the WWII exhibition. It was





filled with uniforms and clothes supposedly from prisoners of the camps. There were canisters of zyklon gas supposedly from Auschwitz, next to bars of soap, golden teeth, and a skull, all, according to Andy, from WWII concentration camps. The case next this had a strange display of SS uniforms, SS rings and a doll collection of Nazi soldiers in a miniature exhibit of what looked like a concentration camp room. The soldiers were standing, lounging on the bunk beds and one of them was raping a woman, while holding a leash around her neck. The doll had blood painted to be coming out of her genitals and another was raping a woman on one of the bunk beds. The dolls were horrific. Strangely, amongst all the horrific objects and images I found these almost more disturbing than the actual documentation in the room. I continued to look around and was shocked with each image being more disturbing than the one next to it. Images of executions, hangings of Jews and Nazis, bodies piled up in concentration camps. Images of the gas chambers and more and more images of mutilated bodies. It was a lot more than I wanted to see. Just as I was about to make my way elsewhere when Andy returned and we continued to talk. I asked about the exhibition, about the dolls and the strange posters of what looked like Japanese Nazi porn. Andy explained that he wanted to show not only documents of history but also what is available in terms of the fetishizing of violence. He explained that he curated in a way that would show the public that there is a market for the production of this kind of material. I couldn't quite understand the reasoning behind it but I listened to his stories. He explained he had always had an interest in history and started collecting as a teenager, at first punk rock memorabilia and then expanded to historical material that he felt was not shown elsewhere. He said he feels people should see it all in order to understand what truly happened.

He told me the story of a young boy who came to the exhibition with his parents and complained that it was boring and he didn't have an interest in looking at pyjamas. Andy took the boy aside and asked him to put on a pyjama set that was on display. After the child returned wearing it, he started to show the boy images of corpses from the camps. The child

was obviously disturbed by it. Andy explained that weeks later the boy's parents called and thanked him for doing that and explained that the boy had started taking an interest in history. Andy was clear to explain his distaste of the industry that had been created surrounding WWII, explaining that he felt it was strange and unfair to exploit such a terrible tragedy.

We continued to look at other parts of the exhibition. He talked about getting threats from the Jewish and Muslim community. He also spoke of people that he had met that he felt were exploiting stories. He showed me pictures of Arkan, who he explained he was planning to meet before he was assassinated. Arkan was a war lord who was famous for his brutality, love of football, and his militia group, the Tigers, who famously posed for a picture with a tiger cub. We talked about the Balkan Wars and he showed me more stuff from his friend that was in the SAS during the Balkan Wars, including a memoir, and asked if I was interested in meeting him. I am not too keen on meeting soldiers so I just kept quiet. As we looked at more stuff he spoke about female heroines and showed me a wall dedicated to a British female spy. I scanned around the rooms, saw more weapons, two stuffed monkeys positioned to look as if they were fucking, a KKK gown and clippings of ISIS beheadings.

I looked at my phone and realised it might be smart to try and make my way back into town as it was almost 2pm. Andy asked if I was going to try and take the bus and I explained my phone wasn't working so I couldn't check the timetable. He offered to drive me back and said he needed a couple of minutes to finish up some work. I continued to look around as he disappeared for about 15 minutes. He came back and I pulled out a box of Lindt chocolates and a postcard with a thank you note and my email on it. He smiled, thanked me and we made our way to the car. As I sat into the car and closed the door I smelled the strong cologne again. We drove out of the gate, he jumped out to close the gate and we drove back towards town. On the way I asked him more about his family and their interest in his collection. He had already been clear before that none of his six children nor wife took much interest. He explained that



it was a hobby not a money-making enterprise. I'm not sure whether it was then or earlier that he slipped in that he had just been or was going to Charles Bronson's wedding. I took little interest mainly because I wasn't sure who he was and also because I sort of didn't want to know. The work titled *Jasenovac*, relating to this object, was made in 2015, in response to the idea of revisionism, myth-making, and ideas of artificial memory.<sup>32</sup> It departs from the idea that these spaces of memory have numerous objects and ideas that pass through time and eventually become part of the folklore and oral history.

In his analysis of Jeffrey Olick's *Politics of Regret*, Mano Toth, defines myths and their position in relation to history.

*'It must be noted, however, that the concept of myth is defined in this essay in a way that does not imply anything about the historical accuracy of the claims underlying these commemorative acts. Even so, some might find the concept of myth confusing and would opt for terms that are less associated with falsity in everyday conversation. The problem is that the alternatives are not very appealing. Using the simple word 'narrative' would fail to capture an important quality of myths: the attempt to present a simplified reading of a complex historical event or process which in turn allows myths to effectively popularise representations of the self and of the wider community. The term 'discourse' is too broad; a myth is certainly a type of discourse or a 'truth regime', but not all discourses are identity-constitutive historical narratives. The usefulness of the concept of memory is also questionable. Even if many regard myth an 'old-fashioned concept' and an 'older term', it still seems to be more precise than the misleading metaphor of memory.'*<sup>33</sup>

Myth in relation to this Act refers to the creation of the myth, the myth-making, and how this myth-making relates to the idea of monumentalisation. Myth-making, observed as a forming body of national identity building is key to understanding why

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32 The term myth-making in contemporary art has become a term used to relate to the recreations of narratives relating to actual events. It has appeared often in relation to the work of Jasmina Cibic, Jill Magid, Uriel Orlow, among some.

33 Mano Toth, 'The Myth of the Politics of Regret', *Sage Journals*, 43 (2015) p.4 <<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/42337799.pdf>> [last accessed 09.09.2018]



this particular glove is such an interesting object, its value as a tool of myth-making and its potential as a monumental object.

The role of these myth-making structures is clearly observed in Genevieve Zubrzycki's text on what she defines as 'national sensorium' and mythology of national identities. Zubrzycki defines her term national sensorium in an interview as,

*'the visual depiction and embodiment—in cultural forms, the built environment and the landscape—of historical narratives and national myths that are experienced by individuals in a variety of practices and settings.'*<sup>34</sup>

Her interview and article, *History and the National Sensorium: Making Sense of Polish Mythology*, gives very clear insight into how ideas of national identity, nationhood, and national mythologies developed. The author defines the term myth as,

*'not fictitious stories or plain lies easily opposed to terms like historical "reality" and "truth." Rather and whether or not they are based on historical "facts" they are stories that are posited by a given social collective as real, true and important. Despite often being themselves ideological products of long conflict, myths present themselves as natural and uncontested.'*<sup>35</sup>

In my interpretation of national mythologies, I sway between the concept as it has been defined by both Toth and Zubrzycki, looking at the term as one that is not necessarily fictitious but that separates itself from representing historical events and is rather formed as a result of collective memory, therefore a product of memorialising that comes out of a community or generation rather than being clearly defined in its roots, as also explained by Zubrzycki. These objects and symbols pertain to multi-layered narratives of histories and myths, and through their manifestation as structures, interpret their position in the present, rooted within the national identity building apparatus.

*Jasenovac*, the glove, was created to be used as a framing device of this national identity building apparatus. Departing from the glove and its myth-making nature, the act of reconstructing the glove according to images and drawings found online

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34 Mikołaj Gliński, 'When Poland Became Polish – An Interview with Geneviève Zubrzycki', *Culture Poland: Language and Literature* (2016) < <http://culture.pl/en/article/when-poland-became-polish-an-interview-with-genevieve-zubrzycki> > [last accessed 09.09.2018]

35 Geneviève Zubrzycki, 'History and the National Sensorium: Making Sense of Polish Mythology', *Qualitative Sociology*, 34 (2011) 21-57 (p. 22)

and from archives, positions the question of re-enactment as well and of fabrication.<sup>36</sup> What happens when an object like that is brought to life again through its physical formation? Does the physical form of that particular glove contain its own history which poses a threat to humanity? Has its very form shaped a silent acceptance of its dangerous potential? But there remains the element of doubt surrounding the glove and its role in the camp, and this doubt is a double-edged sword, in either case there is something rather sinister about it; either people really used the glove in the way some have documented or there exist people who have put a great effort in fabricating horrific stories.

Ash tree is the literal translation of the word *jasen*. Curiously, a virus has spread throughout Europe and the UK that has been wiping out the population of Europe's most common tree.<sup>37</sup> The work takes on the poetics of the dying species of the most common tree in Europe as a metaphor for relating the idea of the decaying nature of conflict surrounding the site and memorial. An ash tree branch from a tree in London was burned out and cast in bronze to replace the blade on the glove. This intervention alludes not only to the nature of the symbolism of the style 'socialist counter-monuments' as described by Kirn, but at the same time juxtapositions the discourse of the national sensorium. It repositions the notion of national identity with an intervention that reconsiders not only the current situation in terms of the past, but also its position as an emblem of identity and national mythology.

The object, as it was presented, appeared in the exhibition space as an undefined object placed on the floor, rather than as a museum piece on a plinth, alluding to its fragile nature and instability of identity. A selected number of audience members were asked to take part in a performance. The performers were asked to observe the audience and wait for the moment when someone would take a closer look at the object. At that moment, the performer was instructed to step up behind the audience member, gently place a hand on their shoulder and whisper a brief history of the glove into their ear.<sup>38</sup>

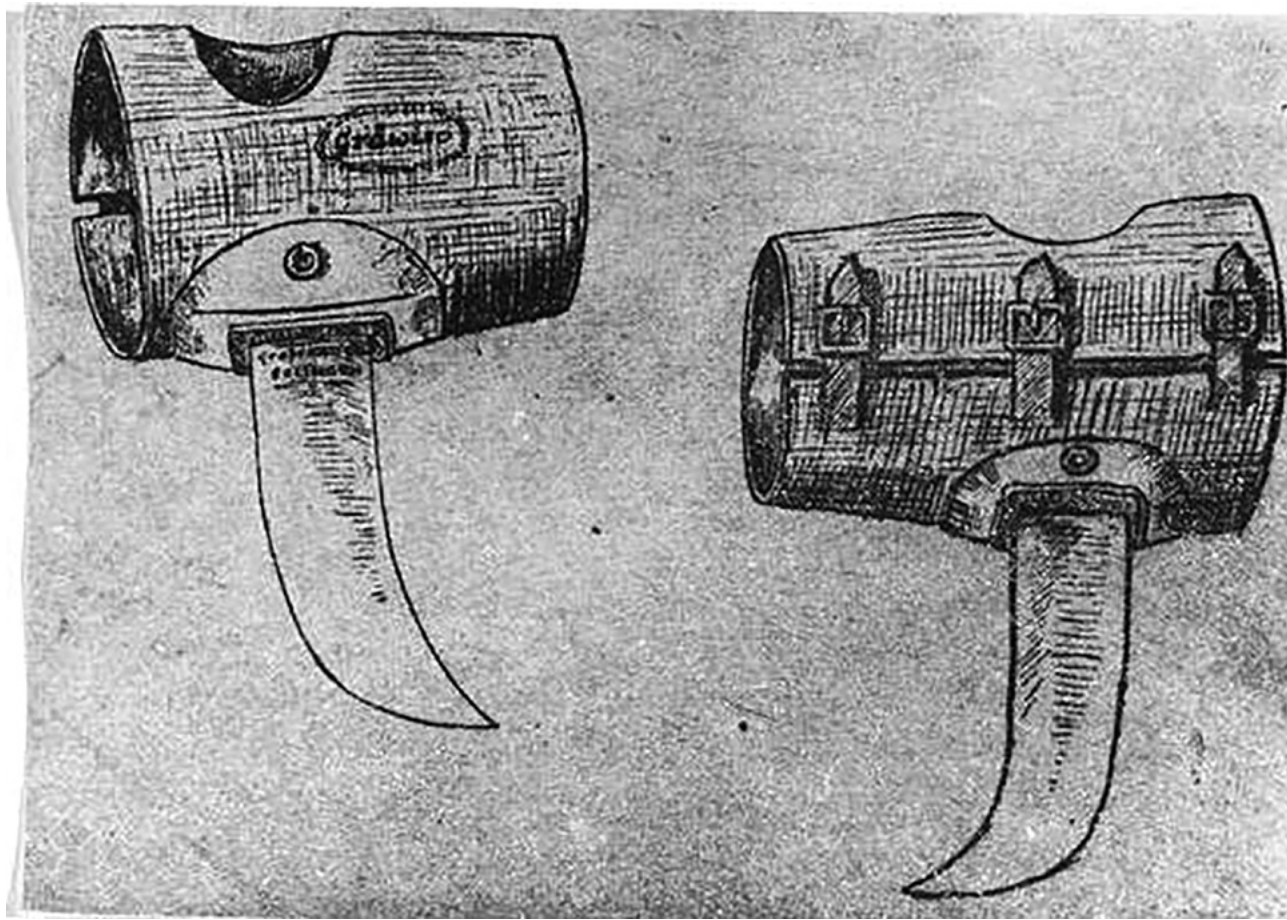
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36 Information about the glove was provided by the Jasenovac Memorial Museum in an email exchange on 16 June, 2017.

37 Damian Carrington, 'Ash dieback and beetle attack likely to 'wipe out' ash trees in UK and Europe', *The Guardian*, March 23, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/mar/23/ash-dieback-and-beetle-attack-likely-to-wipe-out-all-ash-trees-in-uk-and-europe> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

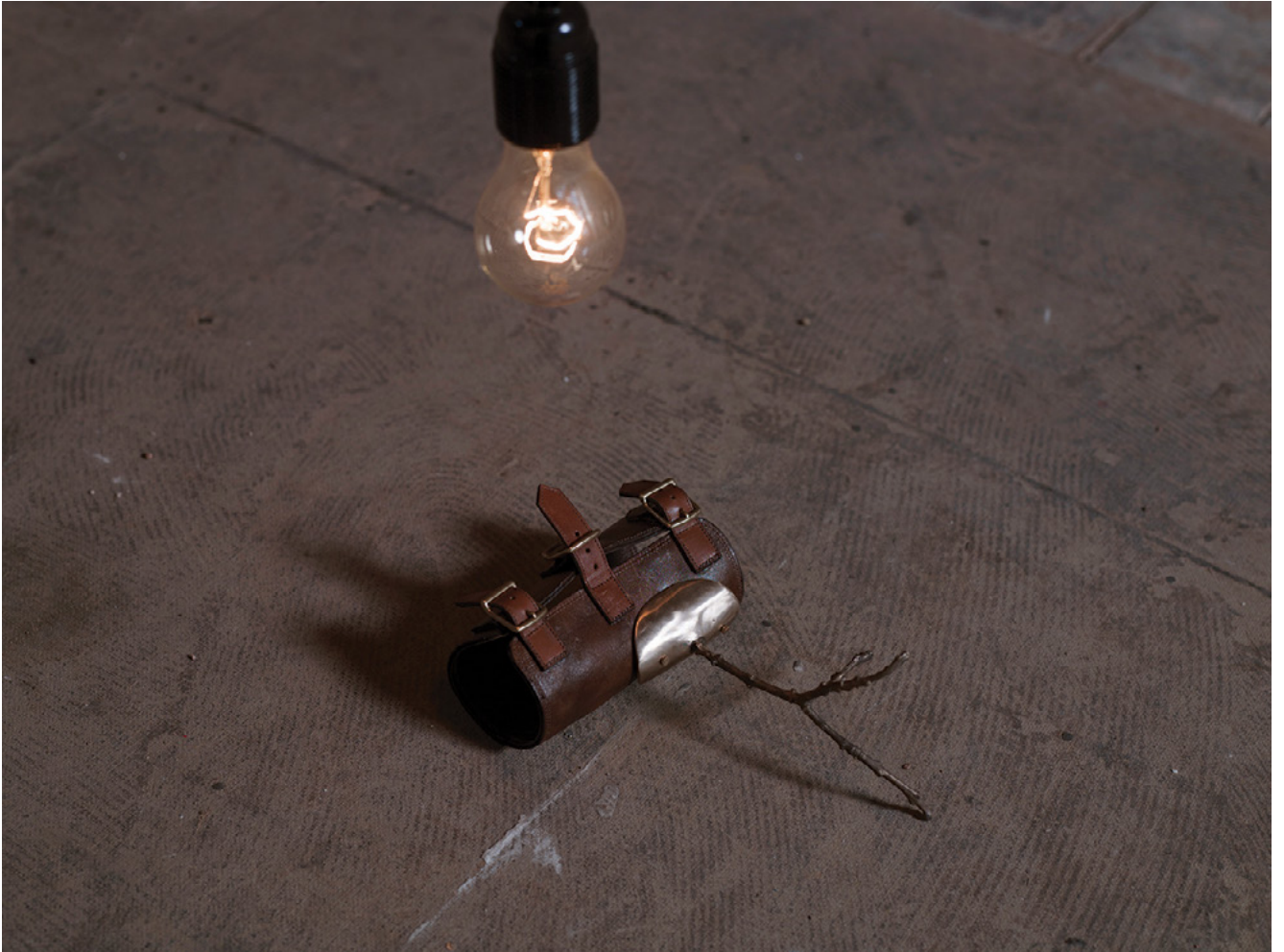
38 This performative element of the work interacts with the notion of the myth and its invisible spreading path.

Whispers as chants echoed in the space, mingled with the conversations that filled the gallery and slowly the object became a representation of that glove that once existed – or didn't.











ACT III.  
A WEEK IN AUGUST

It may have begun as a site visit and research trip to observe some key spaces, but *A week in August* became my first encounter with many of the people and sites that are *leading characters* in this project.<sup>1</sup> The work manifests itself as a travelogue, of performative elements, delving into the methods of auto-ethnographic studies. The text is accompanied by a series of drawings commissioned through an open call for an artist that was invited to listen to my memory recollections of the trip and sketch them.<sup>2</sup> The work occupies a third methodological approach observed in the project. If *Witness Corner Marked* presented a broader understanding of some of the elements of monument development intertwined with a visual critique, and *The Region of the Ash Tree* introduced the first conflict – of the competitive memorialisation, myth-making, and historical revisionism alongside artwork alluding to hidden truths, then *A week in August* introduces the role of the artist and their mode of interaction with representations of conflict, violence, and memory studies.

In Jean Fisher's piece, *Reflections*, on the artist, Willie Doherty's work, Fisher most considerably creates the framework of what it means to deal with memory, conflict and the spaces that remain contested.<sup>3</sup> Besides drawing on some of the key positions addressed by artists and theorists in the field, Fisher identifies three main ideas that shape the argument of this Act.<sup>4</sup> Firstly, places where there is an excess of memory and places where there is an excess of forgetting, then the abuse of memory through manipulation of narrative and thirdly the problem of the monument as an institutionalised 'object'<sup>5</sup> that is bound to a specific memory and historical narrative.<sup>6</sup>

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1 *A week in August* was commissioned by Eros Press for their publication *Death Part 1*. Part of the work was first presented as a performance lecture at a conference for the 20th Anniversary of Srebrenica Genocide at Royal Holloway University, co-organised by Remembering Srebrenica, 29.06.15.

2 Vesta Kroese is the artist who made the drawings according to the memories I shared. All the drawings were made in two sessions when Kroese came to my home.

3 Jean Fischer, 'Reflections', Willie Doherty website, 2013. <<http://www.williedoherty.com/content/reflections>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

4 The key positions I am referring to are tensions, '*between what is and what is not present in the visual field*', the play of image and text, and its subtle address of socio-political history.

5 The idea of the institutionalised object has already been presented in *Witness Corner Marked*, through a look at how the monument has developed through history.

6 Fisher elaborates on this through a reference to Freud's ideas on repetition and dwelling in melancholia as prevention of reconciliation or healing.



Adrian Forty's *The Art of Forgetting* delves into a line of thought that is essential<sup>7</sup> to lay out when thinking about how memory, history, and conflict are manifested as commemorative acts or a memorialisation.<sup>8</sup> In doing so, the author strikes an argument around the necessity to alter the past and forget elements of it in order to create new positions of memory and identity. Forty supports the idea that some things are best forgotten as their continuing presence may instigate the repetition of the past. David Rieff's *In Praise of Forgetting* voices some similarities namely that the need for a continuous collective remembering might not always prove to be the most successful path to reconciliation in spaces where contentious remains of the conflict become transgenerational. This of course is very different from the concept of 'never forget' that has become rooted in the Jewish Holocaust and its role in becoming a benchmark for memory work.

This Act picks up on Fisher's ideas and considers Forty's understanding on the impact of forgetting and Rieff 'praise of forgetting'.<sup>9</sup> Should these spaces and places of horror be levelled and the area remain barren, as was proposed by one survivor of the 1990s Balkan wars?<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, this Act, puts into focus who should be making these decisions, and how the ideas of aesthetisation of violence, or the role of image-making in depictions of conflict, can be approached with regards to the moral and ethical conduct of the artist as a witness and figure of agency.<sup>11</sup>

As with *The Region of the Ash*, *A week in August* is similarly a work that encompasses many different artistic mediums and fields of inquiry, but one which stems mainly from the auto-ethnographic and notions of the journal or travelogue as a method of approaching artistic investigations into and reflections of, post conflict spaces. Set out

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7 This project and each Act in it intends to lay out terminology that is specific to the aspects of the field I am dealing with. As Dacia Viejo Rose pointed out in her essay Culture heritage and memory: untangling the ties that bind, there is great importance in specifying the use of the terms. Most of the terms that are being addressed in tangents leading from their meanings are elaborated upon in the Glossary that is included in the Appendix.

Dacia Viejo Rose, 'Culture heritage and memory: untangling the ties that bind', *Culture & History Digital Journal*, 4 (2015). <<http://cultureandhistory.revistas.csic.es/index.php/cultureandhistory/article/view/83/275>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

8 Adrian Forty & Susanne Küchler, S. eds. *The Art of Forgetting* (Oxford: Berg, 1999).

9 David Rieff, *In Praise of Forgetting. Historical Memory and its Ironies*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

10 BBC contributors, 'Grim history of Bosnia's 'rape hotel'', BBC News, 2016. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-europe-35992642/grim-history-of-bosnia-s-rape-hotel>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

11 These ideas are further introduced in *The Region of Ash Tree*.

as a project that was meant to investigate the idea of the monument, the ‘trip’ or ‘field-study’ also intended to create a platform for initiating relationships with some of the figures involved in the processes of reconciliation and commemoration in the former Yugoslav region of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>12</sup> Proposed as an idea for exploring the limits of what can come out of a week-long trip, the project set out to document the interviews and encounters with some of the memorialisation projects and monuments existing in the different spaces visited. Crossing a large part of former Yugoslavia, the trip was interrupted with meetings across the many cities that were visited. Neither my cameraman nor I, had ever made a trip across former Yugoslavia. We were prepared to document our trip and encounters however, we could not predict that our inexperience, of never having worked as journalists or researchers in conflict or post-conflict spaces, would inhibit us from being able to engage with the environment the way we expected.<sup>13</sup> Both coming from Slovenia we had never experienced the horrors of the wars and were too young to have felt the fear of uncertainty and the looming sense of violence that swept the region when the wars began.

Using an auto-ethnographic approach to dealing with the topic seemed to be the only way of portraying a conscientious image of the situation in which I was only an outsider and will always remain on the outside of. As the discussion of appropriation lurks in the shadows of many debates surrounding artistic practices and approaches to dealing with trauma, I was well aware of my politicised position as the *artist voyeur*.

The autobiographical and auto-ethnographical perspective has been explored in great depths by a variety of artistic practices. Many artists have been inspired to comment on social and political surroundings through their own lives such as Frida Kahlo’s work the *Two Fridas*, which Joan Gibbons describes as being representative in the address of the artist’s personal life as well as its socio-political commentary through the artist’s presentation of herself in colonial dress and traditional Mexican costume.<sup>14</sup> Other examples could include artists’ who have included their personal accounts of war through their official positions as war artists.<sup>15</sup> But many examples can be seen from

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12 Since the collapse of Former Yugoslavia, there have been many international and local initiatives set out to form platforms for exploring reconciliation and peacebuilding.

13 Miha Peterlič was my travelling companion and assisted with documentation.

14 Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory: Images of Recollection and Remembrance*. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007).

15 War artists as a term came to fruition when the profession developed and their role became offi-

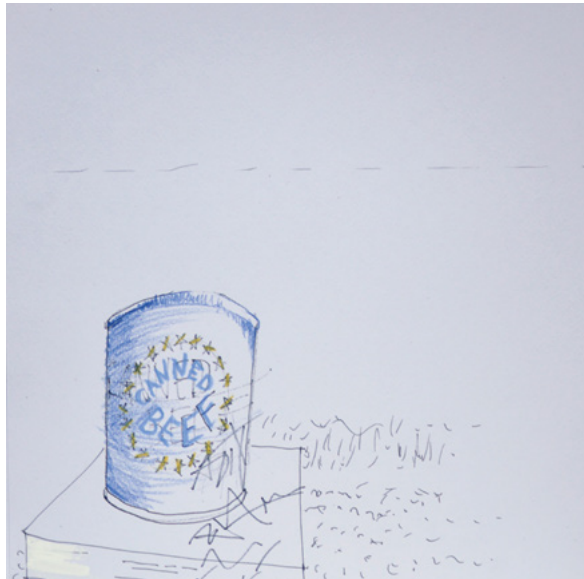
contemporary artists that have been affected by conflict in some way. Former Yugoslavia has a number of artists known both nationally and internationally, working in different mediums, that have acted on these boundaries of using their personal experience to engage with representations of conflict.<sup>16</sup> These types of presentations are common in artistic practices and allow for the artist to present a multiplicity of interwoven stories, facts, critiques and commentaries on situations and topics.

The roots of auto-ethnography are broadly described by Carolyn Ellis, Tony E. Adams & Arthur P. Bochner in *Auto-ethnography: An Overview*, as being a method through which the researchers reveal, rather than conceal, the aspect of subjectivity and emotionality.<sup>17</sup> Auto-ethnographic approaches, deriving from the autobiographical and ethnographical, expose the researcher through their presentation of personal experience of a society and culture. Ellis, as one of the key figures of the field of study, explains that it was David Hayano who fully developed the thought processes surrounding the new field (1979), while the author who is credited by many to have coined the term is Raymond Firth (1956) when first questioning who has the right to represent a society and in what way.<sup>18</sup> This question being central to the field was followed by a period of so called 'crisis of confidence' stemming out of postmodernism, which was not solely relatable to auto-ethnography but to research methods in general and was what theorists described as the crisis of representation. This crisis departs from a move away from post-positivism towards postmodernism, which saw researchers becoming increasingly more aware of the potential problems of objectivity and the questionable hierarchy of the position/

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cial. In the UK and most other western countries this occurred in the early 20th century and was managed by the Imperial War Museum. Artists depicting war dates earlier than the 20th century, as early as the 17th century but the acknowledgement of the role appeared much later. The terms can often be confused with artists depicting war but not designated as official war artists.

- 16 Three examples spanning different mediums include Bosnian Adela Jusic and her work *Sniper* (2007, color vided 4:09 min.), in which she depicts her father who was a sniper and got killed during the war; Serbian Vlado Miladinovic, whose work involves the meticulous tracing with ink wash of newspaper articles, documents, bureaucratic lists, etc, creating a political and social critique of what is archived and documented; and Bosnian painter of an older generation, Melvudin Ekmecic, who work perhaps most closely relates to what is representative of the work of war artists. Ekmecic produced as series of 77 drawings and notes, *Genocide Upon the Bosniaks 1992-1995*, which he drew from what he had seen, heard, read, watched on TV (once he went into exile), and was recalled to him by eyewitnesses.
- 17 Carolyn Ellis, Tony E. Adams & Arthur P. Bochner, 'Autoethnography: An Overview', in *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12 (2011) <<http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].
- 18 David Hayano, 'Auto-Ethnography: Paradigms, Problems, and Prospects' in *Human Organization*, 38 (1979), 99-104.





role of researchers in their approach to studying subjects from different social, cultural and national sphere from their own. These became the beginnings of questioning of appropriation and ‘rights’ to representation, which is further elaborated on in this Act and in *Monumental Relay*.

Ellis describes auto-ethnography to be a method and process that gives the author an identity that the reader can empathize with. Furthermore explaining that while auto-ethnography derives from the experience of the self, it is required to maintain its form of being a methodological approach of researching, balancing a boundary from research to personal, autobiographical writing/expressions. Quoting Mitch Allen, Ellis describes, that auto-ethnographic research must also consider the experiences of others and compare and contrast to experiences that would be familiar to insiders and outsiders. In doing so making the research more valid. This may also include interviewing and looking at certain pre-existing cultural values.

This project displays many of the characteristics of auto-ethnographic research which are adapted through the multiple modes of writing that position me and my experience, through which I attempt to express observations of surroundings. The use of descriptive and subjective narrative also attempts to draw the audience into my perspective view. These shifts include changes of authorial voice, methods of storytelling, and descriptions of atmosphere and space, as well as moments of self-reflection.

While the use of an appropriated auto-ethnographic approach may introduce the critical position of an artist’s own subjectivity when dealing with conflict/post-conflict spaces, the role of recollection and idea of witnessing appear as equal if not more relevant frameworks within this Act. These ideas are the foundations for understanding how the artistic practice methodologizes its position within the theoretical context presented.

The question of dealing with conflict through the arts has in the recent years become a field of its own. With the expanding field of ‘conflict’ art or ‘political’ art, the question of appropriation is often in the foreground of curatorial and artistic representation. How does the artist, who has now also become a researcher, approach histories that

are not their own?<sup>19</sup> What does it mean for an artist to work with conflict that they had not experienced first-hand?<sup>20</sup> This question turns back to: who has the right to decide on the formats, figures and events of memorialisation? These queries are so similar as they are all rooted within the same historically contentious debate; of political, social, and cultural power.

This work elaborates on this position and reflects on how I attempt to maintain a balance when allowing myself to observe and comment from the position of an outsider. And instead of creating a solely visual work which might provoke an immediate emotive reaction, the work attempts to engage through a form of storytelling that I had been subjected to throughout the trip, therefor creating a form of re-enactment. Perhaps stemming from the position that there is a general desensitised mode of observing images created by a consistent over saturation of the violent or painful image.<sup>21</sup>

Roland Barthes had already written about the topic of representation of violence in his essay, *Shock-Photos*, in which he refers to an exhibition in *Galerie d'Orsay*, dedicated to images that are meant to shock the viewer. Instead, they 'introduce us to the scandal of horror rather than the horror itself.'<sup>22</sup> The horror has been experienced and there is an attempt to pass on the experience via the photographic image however this falls short in all but the news-agency photos, according to Barthes. However, I would claim that this is no longer the case, as even these seem to lack the ability to shock nowadays. Many artists have addressed the effects of the violent image, some by recreating it in an exaggerated mode such as Dinos and Jake Chapman.

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19 Although this thesis does not deal directly with the question of the artist as a researcher, this has been a debated topic in recent years, particularly with the surge of practice led PhDs and the question of the evaluation of artistic practice as research. My own definition of the artist as researcher is not contained within academia but rather refers to artists whose work is primarily centred on the exposition and analysis of certain topics of research through their artistic practice.

20 See Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*. Sontag refers extensively to modes of expression and understanding of the pain of others.

21 There are very different levels of the 'violent image' that appear across different cultures, some cultures presenting more censorship. This depends not only on the history and culture of the country but also the politicisation of certain images. There have been extensive discussions on why graphic video games and films are appropriate because they are presented as entertainment while news agencies censor their images of violence from real conflicts. I will not be discussing this as much as the issue of how these real images are then often presented in the arts. Susan Sontag's *Regarding the Pain Others* addresses the topic surrounding the how the photo is positioned within a society that is engulfed in images, questioning its importance, and the shifts of its role.

22 Roland Barthes, *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies*, trans.by Richard Howard (Berkeley: California University Press, 1979) p.73.

Artist Alfredo Jaar, whose work most often proposes some form of social and political critique, had instigated a discussion about representation of the violent image in his piece, *The Rwanda Project*, where he questions the power of an image that captures or attempts to capture violence or the remains of it. Jaar's work extended over several years following his first trip to the country in 1994, some months after the end of the genocide. As an artist who attempts to force the public to question contentious topics, his work is very much what Young outlined as counter-monumental. Jaar placed posters around the city of Malmo, which according to him,

*'scattered around the streets and squares of Malmo, reduced the rhetoric of advertising to a cry of grief. But they also served notice on a complacent public: "You—in your tidy parks, on your bicycles, walking your dogs—look at this name, listen to this name, at least hear it, now: Rwanda, Rwanda, Rwanda..." The posters were a raw gesture, produced out of frustration and anger. If all of the images of slaughter and piled corpses, and all of the reportage did so little, perhaps a simple sign, in the form of an insistent cry, would get their attention.'*<sup>23</sup>

Critiques of violent image are often rooted as emerging from the field of entertainment. In *Voyeurs of Suffering*, Evans and Giroux, put forth the problematic position of how images of violence have been depicted in entertainment and the lack of public disapproval when coming to terms with government torture and violence post 9/11.<sup>24</sup> They offer examples of Hollywood films based on real events, and their seemingly critical portrayal of war but shaped as pleasurable entertainment. In doing so such films add to the normalisation of horrific atrocities and the de-sensitisation in the name of 'justice'. The so called *based-on-true-events* films and other entertainment using depictions of violence have, while perhaps attempting to give the audience that had not been affected by the events some form of an educational experience, also elicited ideas of empathy for characters portrayed as violent heroes. These modes of fictionalisation or creation of personalised sympathetic stories, can also be disguised as potential instruments of mass manipulation.

The so-called *Lesser Evil* effect, as described in Weizman's essay *665: The Least of All Possible Evils*, expounds on the problem of justifying one evil in order to prevent a greater

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23 'The Rwanda Project: 1994-2000', Alfredo Jaar', *Open Democracy website*, 2006 <[https://www.open-democracy.net/arts/rwanda\\_3412.jsp](https://www.open-democracy.net/arts/rwanda_3412.jsp)> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

24 Brad Evans and Henry A. Giroux, *Disposable Futures: The Seduction of Violence in the Age of the Spectacle*, (California: City Lights, 2015).



evil, which is so often also assisted by entertainment mediums such as fictionalised films based on true events.<sup>25</sup> Weizman explains, that this concept of the lesser evil became most widely recognised through Michael Ignatieff's book *The Lesser Evil*, relating to the war on terror and attempts to justify breaches of human rights norms in order to minimise the potential of a greater evil.<sup>26</sup> This issue of calculating and balancing the structures of evil and in doing so finding justifications which are meant to approve of a certain amount of horrible acts in the fight for the greater good, exposes one element of political manipulation which allows for destruction or alteration of public structures in order to reinforce a falsified harmony.

The Yugoslav case, while separated by an invisible line from these forms of critique, as it was never depicted so repeatedly in Hollywood films, also falls into the category of what Evans and Giroux describe as '*the spectacle of violence [that] now mimics a new kind of –to quote Susan Sontag– “fascinating fascism” that overtly politicizes representations of violence and discredits critically engaged aesthetics*'.<sup>27</sup> One such example that has been criticised by some for attempts to create a Romeo and Juliet story<sup>28</sup> out of the very traumatic and concealed events of rape camps in the 1990s Yugoslav Wars, is Angelina Jolie's film *In the Land of Blood and Honey*.<sup>29</sup> Although Velma Šarić, the director of the Post Conflict Research Center in Sarajevo (PCRC), who was also involved in helping with research for the film, explained that many of the victims she had spoken to viewed the film as a fairly accurate account.<sup>30</sup>

These shifts of perceptions of violence could relate to Slavoj Žižek's classification of violence as subjective and objective.<sup>31</sup> Žižek first identifies and defines what he relates as subjective violence. This is the violence that the author refers to as 'pure, divine violence', using Walter Benjamin's words, from his *Critique of Violence*. It is the violence that is easily identified, visible, caused by evil individuals, but according to Žižek it is a distraction from the greater violence that is skewed from view. While Žižek goes

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25 Weizman's essay is also referenced in *WCM*.

26 Ignatieff was the leader of Canada's Liberal Party and former human rights scholar.

27 Evans & Giroux, p.36.

28 Carrie Menkel-Meadow, 'In the Land of Blood and Honey: What's Fair or Just in Love and War Crimes: Lessons for Transitional Justice', in *Framing Crime and Film: An Interdisciplinary Anthology* (C. Picart, M. Hviid Jacobsen & C. Greek, eds., 2016).

29 *In the Land of Blood and Honey*, dir. by Angelina Jolie (GK Films, 2011).

30 From an interview with director of Post-Conflict Research Center, Velma Saric.

31 Slavoj Žižek, *Violence. Six Sideways Reflections* (London: Profile Books Ltd. 2008).

to explain his views of the other violence, objective, through political and historical narratives, he is essentially drawing the same conclusions as Weizman; that of the doing of a smaller evil in order to be able to do 'good' or obstruct a greater evil. Žižek gives examples of this through his political views of liberal communism and capitalism. The innate need and desire to appear as good by giving to humanitarian causes somewhere, while at the same time destroying and causing another humanitarian crisis elsewhere. His chapter SOS VIOLENCE, ends beautifully with a poem by Bertolt Brecht, *The Interrogation of the Good*, which exposes these forms of violence:

Step forward: we hear  
That you are a good man.  
You cannot be bought, but the lighting  
Which strikes the house, also  
Cannot be bought.  
You hold to what you said.  
But what did you say?  
You are honest, you say your opinion.  
Which opinion?  
You are brave.  
Against whom?  
You are wise.  
For whom?  
You do not consider your personal advantages.  
Whose advantages do you consider then?  
You are a good friend.  
Are you also a good friend of the good people?

Hear us then: we know  
You are our enemy. This is why we shall  
Now put you in front of a wall. But in consideration of your  
    Merits and good qualities  
We shall put you in front of a good wall and shoot you  
With a good bullet from a good gun and bury you  
With a good shovel in the good earth.<sup>32</sup>

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32 Bertold Brecht, 'The Interrogation of the Good' (1935) cited in Slavoj Žižek, *Violence. Six Sideways Reflections* (London: Profile Books Ltd.2008) p.32. (translated by S.Zizek)

These same justifications can be viewed in the thinking of the Third Reich and their need to vilify the Jewish community in order to portray the destruction of that community as a deed done for the greater good. These tactics are of course more deeply rooted in history than we are often aware of, such as, for example, the killing of women that were proclaimed as being witches. They are techniques of mass manipulation pre-dating modern warfare but based on the same ideas, those of instating a mass fear through which mass manipulation is possible.

With these critiques of representations of violence artists do not fall out of the realm of criticism. Whether we are discussing the image of the starving child taken in Sudan by Kevin Carter or the critique of Ai Weiwei's image and performative act of positioning himself as Alan Kurdi, the refugee boy whose body emerged on the shores of Lesbos, in the arts these critiques have come and gone all too quickly or rather they remain somewhat out of the discourse.<sup>33</sup> In the case of Wei Wei, the critiques flooded in from the art world as much as from mainstream media but who in fact has the right to make claims of abuse.<sup>34</sup> Such moments should really not the question whether we are confronting 'good' or 'bad' art but should instead decipher what is art's role in the depiction of these kind of moments. Does the attention such a 'performance' created justify its poor taste?

There are several such discussions that have arisen in recent years and many have been criticised. For example, Karlheinz Stockhausen's comment about the images of 9/11 as '*the greatest work of art imaginable for the whole cosmos*'<sup>35</sup> was severely criticised even though we could make claims that Stockhausen was in fact commenting on the sublime nature of the images, while at the same time the 9/11 Museum has several artworks that aestheticise the ruins of the event.<sup>36</sup> And then more recently the case of Hannah Black's protest of a painting made by artist Dana Schutz of the body of the murdered

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33 South African photographer Kevin Carter well-known for his reporting on the violence during the collapse of the Apartheid was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his image of a Sudanese child being followed by a vulture. Following his award he was also heavily criticised. The photographer took his life soon after.

34 Jonathan Jones, 'Jake Chapman is right to criticise Ai Weiwei's drowned boy artwork', *The Guardian*, January 13, 2017. <<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2017/jan/13/jake-chapman-ai-weiwei-refugee-crisis>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

35 Terry Castle, 'Stockhausen, Karlheinz: The unsettling question of the Sublime. *New York Magazine*, August 27, 2011 <<http://nymag.com/news/9-11/10th-anniversary/karlheinz-stockhausen/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

36 The Museum is filled with the remains of the buildings curate to look like an exhibition of works of art.

child Emmett Till.<sup>37</sup> In the way that Black criticizes Schutz, we could offer the same criticism of many artists, we frequently encounter making comments on events, many of which may involve their government or place of living but do not include the artist's personal experience. However, Black was criticised herself not only for her methods of protest, but also the fact that Schutz herself is an American artist and the history of racial violence in the US is part of her own collective identity as an American. How harshly should we then criticize those that chose to delve into the topic of the refugee crisis? This is a question that I not only chose not to answer because of fear of generalization but also because the answer itself cannot be so simple. I chose to believe that there is a necessity, to step away from a conventional form of perceiving identity in order to move away from the rise of nationalistic ideas, towards an transnationalism. The view of the outsider sometimes extrapolates questions that an insider might not notice and may not be able to voice as loudly.<sup>38</sup>

So what right *should* the artist have to speak about events that have not touched or concerned her/him? Is the solution then to allow for the burden to remain on the shoulders of only those who have personal experience of the events? And have these types of critiques become such frequent public debates because the political realities of government actions have begun to take a greater toll on western populations. This may seem like a great judgement to make but it was already in the 1990s that Alfredo Jaar's work *Untitled*, exposed the horrific realities of wars in non-western regions of the world next to *Newsweek* magazine covers, that were void of valid acknowledgement of them, as a critique of how western media validates non-western tragedy. In this way, it could be said, that art provides an outlet of expression and representation of events that may otherwise be forgotten.<sup>39</sup>

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37 Lorena Munoz-Alonso, 'Dana Schutz's Painting of Emmett Till at Whitney Biennial Sparks Protest', *Artnet News*, March 21, 2017 <<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/dana-schutz-painting-emmett-till-whitney-biennial-protest-897929>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

38 This idea will be further elaborated in the Act, *Monumental Relay*.

39 Some other examples of work that addressed unspoken topics of wars, relating to mainstream media, but perhaps chose not to address these in an explicit manner are artists such as Renzo Martens and his project *Enjoy Poverty*, in which the artist introduced 'conflict' photography to locals as a way for them to take charge of the images that were appearing in international news as well as the profits arising from these images.

The outcries of the Yugoslav wars were also hidden at times, with some of the most horrific events appearing in mainstream media because of a handful of journalists.<sup>40</sup> It is because of such concerns and responsibilities regarding creating artworks which comment on conflict spaces, that *A week in August* stepped away from a certain type of aesthetic.<sup>41</sup> The title itself offers the first critique, describing not only the time frame but criticising what many locals have voiced as concerns about how the past and present are depicted through the eyes of artists, journalists, researchers, bloggers and NGO workers who step into the situation for a brief moment and feel capable of describing and depicting it to the rest of the world.<sup>42</sup>

*A week in August* attempts to do three things; first, open discussion into the abuse of the already abused for the purpose of creating an artistic work,<sup>43</sup> secondly expose the issue of the impossibility of monument-building and the denial of war crimes and finally question the potential of an adaptation of the counter-monument as something that may appear as an auto-ethnographic recollection of events.

Following the first part of this Act that considered the violent image and role of the artist, I will continue with an introduction into the most relevant, to this project, ideas structuring monument building in former Yugoslavia. It might be most pertinent to start the history of monument building in Yugoslavia<sup>44</sup> as it has recently been portrayed through the photographs that appeared in Jan Kempenaer's book *Spomenik*.<sup>45</sup> These photographs provided a mainstream outlet to instigate a dialogue that had previously not existed surrounding these architectural structures. Its interpretation laid them out as modernist brutalist abstractions that have an outer-space-futuristic aesthetic.

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40 The journalists that were responsible for being the first to report on the concentration camps in the Yugoslav wars were Penny Marschall and Ed Vulliamy.

41 There was an initial desire to create a work which would be a fictionalised documentary or essay film.

42 This has come from the many conversations with locals throughout former Yugoslavia about the treatment of the events of the war by western visitors. This does not however include the many journalists who have continued to be involved with the region since reporting the atrocities committed there in the 1990s, specifically Julian Borger, Paul Lowe, Ed Vulliamy, Florence Hartmann.

43 I use the term abuse, as I question the purpose of the repetition of certain images and imagery as well as commenting on, what I believe has become an increasingly more common practice, that is for artists to engage with topics of conflict in similar ways to journalists, reporting and illustrating the abused rather than carefully engaging.

44 Also mentioned in *The Region of the Ash Tree*.

45 Spomenik is the Yugoslav term for monument. Jan Kempenaers. *Spomenik*. (Amsterdam: Roma Publication, 2010).

These monuments, in fact celebrate the heroes that fought against the Nazi and Fascist regimes that occupied most of the Yugoslavian territory during WWII, and were meant to portray a unity and evoke the rebuilding of an identity for the newly constructed Socialist State.

In his essay, *Transnationalism in Reverse: From Yugoslav to Post-Yugoslav Memorial Sites*, Gal Kirn points out that memorialisation in Yugoslavia can be divided into three aesthetic types.<sup>46</sup> Kirn's division provides an eloquent description of the historical, political, and aesthetic drive of these changes. They are divided as:

- Popular architectonic monuments; mostly built between the 1940s and 1950s, by locals of a town, commemorating local heroes and partisans. These usually took the visual form of commemorative plaques and monuments, with engraved names, similar to those found in cemeteries. Most of them were designed by locals and stone masons that built them.
- In the years following, in the 1950s, a more organized approach was developed with initiatives such as *Veterans Association of the People's Liberation Struggle* and the *Commission for Ensuring and Developing Further the Traditions of the People's Liberation War and the Achievements of the Revolution*. As Kirn describes; '*These institutions pursued more systematic memory politics besides financing larger projects in the cities and in the countryside. Their principal task was to initiate and publicly discuss new ideas for memorials which would be suitable in the affirming and formalizing of such abstract notions as revolution, the People's Liberation Struggle, the figure of the Partisan, brotherhood, and unity. In general, however, the Commission failed to provide a clear answer as to how to represent these abstract notions, and did not prescribe a specific typology for the memorial sites.*'<sup>47</sup>

These monuments, while following the genre of realist monuments that were already existing elsewhere, did not follow the representative aesthetic of socialist realist monuments.<sup>48</sup> As the author points out, this had much to do with Yugoslavia's split with the Soviet Union in 1948, and its development of self-management, both politically and artistically.

- This led Yugoslavia into exploring a more socialist modernist aesthetic which

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46 Gal Kirn, 'Transnationalism in Reverse: From Yugoslav to Post-Yugoslav Memorial Sites' Kirn's text is referred to in previous Act, *The Region of the Ash Tree* and in the *Prologue*.

47 Kirn, p.317

48 Already during the war there were discussions about a general disagreement of use of art and architecture for political propaganda as was the case in the Soviet Union but also the Third Reich.

we can see in the third form of monuments that emerged between 1960s and 1980s. This period also saw an increase in the support of cultural organizations, supporting arts and culture as a relevant part of civil society. The monument provided a mode of creating spaces for the public to enjoy, embody a form of unity, and present a united historical narrative. Many of these monuments were built on the exact sites where the events they commemorated took place and were larger than life in size, some expanding into whole parks, as spaces for people to gather.

This can relate somewhat to present ideals of a necessity for regaining of public space as a device of revolutionary resistance.<sup>49</sup>

Public spaces are defined by society in which they exist, however are outlined by official bodies designated by state and municipality. They are spaces of representation, spaces of political action, of social action, and of protest. According to Don Mitchell in his essay titled, *The End of Public Space?*, the Greek origin of the term public space, agora refers to,

*‘the place of citizenship, an open space where public affairs and legal disputes were conducted. . . it was also a marketplace, a place of pleasurable jostling, where citizens’ bodies, words, actions, and produce were all literally on mutual display, and where judgements, decisions, and bargains were made’.*<sup>50</sup>

This description of the public space refers to a space that is inhabited and part of a city or location that is populated by citizens. Mitchell battles the problem of privatization of space, which leads to the denial of public freedom of expression and representation. He questions whether today’s society still desires public space. In the past couple of years with the occupation of public squares in time of conflict, protest and revolution, as we have seen in the Occupy movement and during the Arab Spring, public space has once again appeared as relevant.

Jane Rendell writes in, *Art and Architecture*, of the problem of establishing the limits of public space and what the term ‘public’ stands for when discussing the uses of public

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49 Some of these movements include; Occupy, Arab Spring and occupation of Tahrir square, Washington Monument, etc.

50 Don Mitchell, ‘The end of public space? People’s park, definitions of the public, and democracy’, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 85(1995), 108-133.

space for art.<sup>51</sup> She explains that since in Western society public stands for democratic, the public space therefore is one that relies on democracy, however she goes on to describe this as problematic as the democratic space is one that avoids difference. It is through Rendell that the question of defining the public space and the political negotiation within that, poses a relation to the problems of constructing/destroying/working with memorials in that public space.

This issue between the private and the public space, and claims to the space is ever more relevant in the present and its ongoing problems of privatization of space. The private, as Rendell explains, initially has positive qualities such as the possibility of individuality and privacy. However, the privatization of space imposes new rules. The change from public spaces into private ones allows for an integrated amount of control over the population that enters the space.

Many times these spaces include public squares, large areas around buildings, forests, all spaces that seemingly behave as public spaces but are controlled. Considering the term *public art*, Rendell suggests that the term is no longer applicable in the same way as it used to be and therefore proposes the term *critical spatial practice* to describe work which engages with both art and architecture but goes beyond this by creating a space of encounters with the public and private, and in doing so both with the social and aesthetic.<sup>52</sup>

Along with the necessary limits within which a practitioner creates with this *public* space, there is also the question of superseding the boundaries in order to make statements that are possibly not supported by the rules set by the space. And what might be the outcome of a *critical spatial practice* that may be critiquing the government? Taking the example of Omarska camp, which is addressed in greater detail in the Act, *Monumental Relay*, but to summarize briefly; Omarska was a mine before the 1990s war, a concentration camp during and has since become a functioning mine with a foreign majority owner who, seemingly, remains out of the debates surrounding local politics. The new owner ArcelorMittal have promised a plaque recognizing the past events that took place there, however empty promises are all that has happened. In the meantime

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51 See Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture*. (London: I.B.Tauris, 2006).

52 See Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*. (London: I.B.Tauris, 2006).



the space becomes a commemorative site once a year. These interventions can be observed to analyse what occurs within the critical spatial practice. How is the method of claiming a space for interaction without following the appropriate state support dealt with? Are there consequences to this and are such interventions always exposed as impositions in the space or does it depend on who is imposing and how it is done?<sup>53</sup>

Returning to Kirn's analysis of Yugoslav spomeniks, as established public spaces but also a form of *critical spatial practice*, which spoke as a political device of the Socialist state, these monuments did more than simply commemorate. Kirn's key point in the article resonates a notion that is often overlooked, that these monuments delved into what it means to create a future that will not repeat nor glorify the past. In this sense while evoking some of the ideas that had been explored through Wladimir Tatlin's *Monument to the Third Revolution*, these monuments attempted to create manifestos in the public space when in the 1960s Yugoslavia began to feel the first effects of liberalism, such as didn't exist before and were not meant to be part of the socialism that was being practiced. With growing gaps in social classes, and unemployment, artists faced the task of creating monuments that were meant to speak of a future of unity not solely based on the victimisation of the past but rather evoke a thought in the audience of a bright future. Kirn claims that with this, these monuments became the true first counter-monuments. These claims create the spine of this project by revisiting some of the ideas that had already been present in a time similar to the present dystopian state of many societies.

Considering the second point of inquiry; the impossibility of building a monument because of an instability in collective memory, raises the question of what role monuments have had in societies historically and whether we may or may not still apply that same role to them today. In the case of *A week in August*, a form of collective memory appears that, while rooted in the community, is also dependent on the state supported or institutional memory. While we are confronted with the need for a collectivity of memory, however at times this collectivism results in greater divide as is

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53 These thoughts provoke ideas surrounding power relations in terms of divisions of space.

warned by Rieff but also Paul Connerton.<sup>54</sup> A collectivity in this case is placed within a nationalism that is dependent on memorialisation becoming the point of collectivism.

The term collective memory while coined by Maurice Halbwachs was developed through ideas conceived by his teacher, Emile Durkheim, who put forward the need for communal historical continuity. Durkheim expressed society's need for tradition and ritual, for an understanding of the past and its influences in order to function as a whole unified people in the present and future. According to Durkheim's analysis where he observes traditional societies, he describes the need for physical unity of people in acts in order for communal memories to be created. Individual memories would be triggered by rituals and ceremonies. Halbwachs's views surrounding individual memory were very much centred around his ideas of the collective, he believed that individual memories are only part of a greater collective memory rooted in different groups/networks; ie family, organization, nation-state. However, he had a more Nietzschean inspired approach to looking at how collective memory is constructed, explaining that it is the present and the needs of the present that construct the collective memory of the past. Pierre Nora went even further to claim that these memories completely detach themselves from the past. Essentially, that it is the power of the present that dictates the memory of the past which is not necessarily based on empirical histories. Nora also explains the relation of collective amnesia to collective memory. As much as the power dictates the memories it also dictates what is to be eliminated.

In the midst of this argument lies my research. I question my work after reading Nietzsche's account of the shepherd seeing a flock of sheep carelessly enjoying themselves.<sup>55</sup> Unaware of themselves, their actions or their past, they are free to continuously enjoy the present. We instead are confronted with the memories of the past that connect us in the present and create communities through a necessity for a common memory of the past in order to sustain a certain goal in the present.

The idea of a collective memory has been much debated though by psychologists who prefer to use the term group mind and individual mind. In *Heritage, Memory and Identity*,<sup>56</sup>

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54 See Paul Connerton, 'Seven Types of Forgetting', *Memory Studies*, 59 (2008).

55 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, (New York: Cosimo, 2005). (Originally published by Liberal Arts Press Book in 1873).

56 *The Cultures and Globalization Series: Heritage, Memory and Identity*, ed. by Helmut Anheier & Yushishthir

we are reminded again of the ever-present problem of borrowing terminology and re-appropriations in other fields, therefore often creating, *unwieldy and misguided propositions*.<sup>57</sup>

Returning to the terms individual and group mind, we turn to the question as presented in *Roles of Narratives of Commemoration*; what does a group mind refer to in terms of collective memory? And how are we defining the group? Jeffrey Olick referred to the idea of collected memory instead of collective, insinuating that it is the memory that creates the group, therefore people of similar experiences and recollections become a group.<sup>58</sup> It often occurs though that these memories are rooted in narratives passed on from generation to generation, and regardless of people experiencing the same events, their perceptions of them may still differ. This is often the case when thinking about conflict; the events and spaces that people occupy may be the same but their experiences of these may differ greatly. Therefore, we find ourselves returning to the idea of memory as a phenomenon that exists purely through the actions of the tools that are available for it to embody. As presented in *Roles of Narratives of Commemoration*, these 'mnemonic tools', may include texts and hypertexts, for literate societies, as well as landscapes and place names, rituals, monuments, music and dance, and language itself.

Memorialisation in the case of former Yugoslav region presents itself as an interesting *case* through which we can notice that while there is a need for memorialisation, it is often contained within practices of unity of either religious, national, ethnical, or cultural bodies. With the unity of these groups, divisions are formed which make a turn towards the unhealed scars of the past.

*A week in August* behaves like a peeping hole into a very complex array of elements surrounding the rebuilding of national identities in the aftermath of conflict. Its use of recollection of witnessing through oral narration and diary reflections draws attention to the sensitive nature of the encounters throughout the trip. With the performative

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Raj Isar (London: Sage Publications Ltd.,2011).

57 James Wertsch and Doc M. Billingsley, 'The Role of Narratives in Commemoration: Remembering as Mediated Action', in *The Cultures and Globalization Series: Heritage, Memory and Identity*, ed. by Helmut Anheier& Yushishthir Raj Isar (London: Sage Publications Ltd.,2011) pp 25-39 (p.31).

58 Jeffrey K. Olick, 'From Collective Memory to the Sociology of Mnemonic Practices and Products' in *The Invention of Cultural Memory*, ed. by Astrid Erll& Ansgar Nünning (New York: Walter De Gruyter, 2008) pp. 151-163.

element of re-telling the story of the trip to a stranger, who illustrated my memories, I re-enacted what I had experienced. I turned myself into the story-teller/witness, who is passing-on the stories I had heard and situations I was confronted with. It presents itself as only a brief moment rather than a monumental gesture, in order to portray the unstable, transient nature of unresolved ideologies which are in fact transglobal- those of an uncertainty which manifests itself as a fear of the past which has shackled the present and is threatening to grip on tightly in the future.



## A WEEK IN AUGUST

August 2 – August 9, 2014

Ljubljana > Banja Luka > Sarajevo > Višegrad > Sarajevo > Banja  
Luka > Prijedor > Trnopolje > Omarska > Banja Luka > Beograd

2,040 km

*Note to Reader* – In many ways, I myself would describe my research as a form of commemoration – through the observation of destroyed memorials or sites where memorials cannot be built – as a somewhat idealistic infatuation with the possibility of finding a ‘cure’ for hatred.

On this trip I brought my cameraman, Miha, four cameras, and eight 60min HDV tapes. I planned the trip on a day-by-day schedule where I would meet survivors, artists, and activists. I prepared some simple questions:

- i. What do memorials mean to you?
- ii. Would you like to have a memorial?
- iii. Do you believe having a memorial would help with reconciliation and the alleviation of grief?

I imagined I was going to film a story about a ‘perfect’ memorial. I returned to Slovenia a week later with a couple of pictures of buildings on the Samsung phone I had borrowed from my mother. I had managed no filming and no photographic documentation. I had made no sound recordings or taken any written notes of the conversations I had had.

What follows are fragments of my trip as retold to the artist Vesta Kroese. Reverting to the forensic method of witness description composite drawings, Vesta tried to reimagine my experiences and draw according to my descriptions of spaces and situations. These drawings are the souvenirs of the trip.

MANCA BAJEC

Ljubljana > Banja Luka > Sarajevo

I woke up at 6:30 yesterday with my mom ironing away next to the sofa where I was sleeping. My mom always wants me to be very prepared for every occasion no matter the situation. My dad was sitting next to me in his armchair smoking his pipe and waiting to see what my first words were going to be. My parents were both anxious and worried about my 'first' research trip. I was late to pick up my travel companion. Instead of 8 we were off by 9. Despite traffic we managed to get to Banja Luka quite quickly. Coming into the city, we were met by a family friend that took us to the local park for coffee and a quick chat. We sat down and quickly started discussing the trip, my reasons for it, and what I would be able to accomplish in one week in August, when most people were away on holiday. I asked my family friend a bit about what life was like now in Banja Luka, the capital of a region where some of the most horrible war crimes were committed during the Balkan war. He repeated a sentence that I had heard before and was to hear again that day. *It was strange how quickly things changed.* My friend went on to explain that before the war people did not think of each other in terms of nationality or religion. But now things were different. A terrible war that tore friends and families apart continues to linger. He explained that just a day before two Muslim men had been shot in a café in Trnopolje, a town we were planning to visit. During the war Trnopolje contained one of the most notorious concentration camps. In August 1992 reporters from ITN and the Guardian had filmed emaciated prisoners in the camp. The horrors of the war become front-page news.

I knew this trip was going to be difficult, but I only then began realizing that it was likely most people my age that I passed on the street or saw from the car had lived through the war and had their own distinct memories of it.

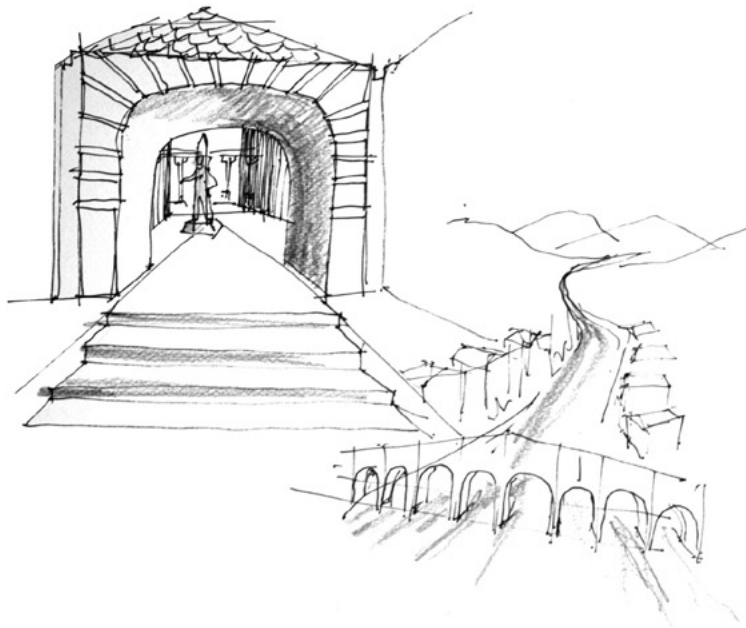
We drove from Banja Luka to Sarajevo. We were again greeted by yet another family friend. Again we sat down and

had a brief chat about life in Sarajevo; what remained, what was rebuilt, and what was destroyed.

After settling into a hostel in Baščaršija, the city center, we decided to take a walk and have a beer after a long day. It was almost 10pm and the city center was filling with the evening crowds. Music played from cafe terraces, people were drinking coffee and smoking shisha; it was difficult to imagine that twenty years ago this city had been near destruction. That day someone explained to me that although time passes we must be careful to remember history because it tends to be easily con-  
torted by a collective amnesia.

Sarajevo > Višegrad and Drina

Višegrad is one of the towns where most of the Bosnian Muslim population is now gone. As I later found out, it was also one of the cities where most of the executions and torture occurred in





public spaces in order to intimidate people. Not many returned.

As we drove into Višegrad we tried to find a parking spot where we could wait for Bakira. I made my way to what looked like the center of the town. In fact it was a newly built structure by filmmaker Emir Kusturica, known as Andrićgrad, named after Ivo Andrić, the author of *The Bridge on the Drina*. Kusturica has a reputation for being staunchly pro-Serbian. I remember some years ago my father swore to never watch any of his films again. The glaring sun struck the whiteness of the newly built town, constructed as a set for Kusturica's new film. A large parking lot dominated the area in front of the city gate. Just past it, a couple of steps lead under an arch and onto a white stone path with small houses on either side. Souvenir shops and restaurants lined the main street. The town opened the day before I arrived, and there were only a few local tourists taking pictures of the crisp, new, mini-town. It felt like a theme park. The restaurants were all open yet no one but the staff were in them. The town square, with its large monument to Andrić, was empty.

I traveled to Višegrad to meet Bakira, a woman who has been fighting for the rights of civilian victims of the war since it ended. She has been active in The Hague, creating an organization to support female victims of war. Because of her work, rape has now become widely acknowledged as a war crime. I met with Bakira because I had read an article in the Guardian by Julian Borger. Julian wrote about Bakira's struggle to protect a house where Bosnian Muslims were burned alive. The house still belongs to a woman that emigrated to the US. Since the war, the local government decided they wanted to tear down the property, removing any evidence of the fire. The owner of the house has given the right of attorney to Bakira and the Women Victims of War Association. Bakira has been able to find funds to fix the house. The upstairs has been transformed into an apartment for the owner who might like to return someday to die in her house. The lower ground floor, where the murders were committed has remained intact.

I waited for Bakira in the parking lot of the new mini-town. She arrived in a car with another woman in her early forties. They asked us to follow them and we drove onto a nearby hill. Višegrad is built in a valley on the banks of the famous Drina river. The bridge across the Drina is infamous for being the site of many of the crimes committed during the war. We drove further up the hill and parked. Bakira stepped out of her car and shook my hand. She looked much like the photos I had found on Google but thinner (she mentioned she lost weight while building the house). Walking between houses on an unmarked path overgrown with weeds, Bakira apologized for not having the keys to the house with her, but said we could look through the windows. The house was built on a slope with others in close proximity. The house had a new façade, appearing from a distance as if it were completely new and without a history. As you approached, the wooden foundations of the house could be seen charred and black. I peeked through the window and saw what I recognized from the Guardian article photo: a bare cement column in the middle of the room, burned floor, and not much else.

It was a scorching hot day and Bakira led us into the shade. There were some bricks in the corner. She picked them up and started stacking them into three piles, making little stools. She offered us a seat, took out her cigarettes and started smoking. She smoked and looked around, then started talking; first about the house, what had happened, the people that had died in there, the babies that died in there, and about how they deserve peace at least now. It was difficult at first to follow what she was saying because she looked straight into my eyes. Her bright eyes looked so sad I lost my concentration. She explained that this was not a memorial but was a room for memory, a room where the pictures of the people who died in there would be placed. A room that the family could visit, a place where people could visit and never forget what had happened. She was very firm about it not being a memorial. She believed in the idea of wanting the site of the crime to remain as is, untouched.

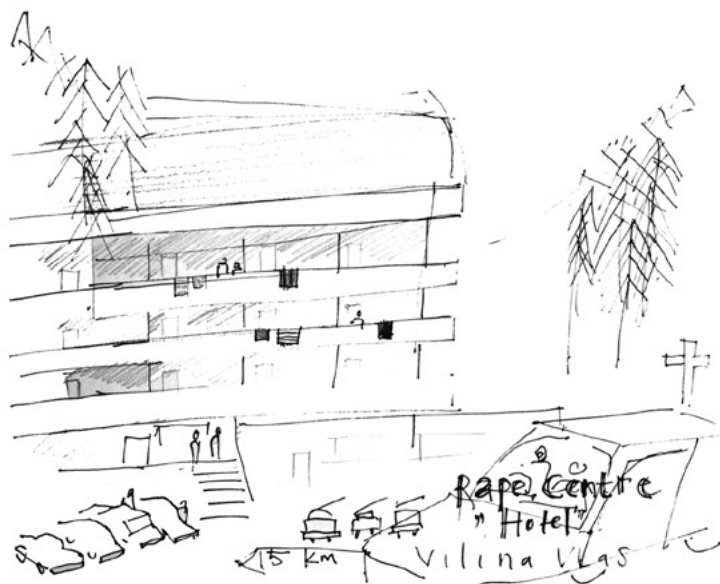
Bakira spoke very little about her own torture and loss during the war. I knew what I had read, I knew she had been raped and beaten. I spoke and asked very little. There were so many other things that Bakira said, some I didn't very clearly understand, some I cannot clearly remember, but mainly it was my impression of her that remained. We walked back to the car, she smiled and gave me a hug.

We come to feel that these stories of rape and murder, slaughter and torture are something commonplace. We start to think of it as something that just happens. It is only when you look at someone that has experienced it that the abstraction disappears and the reality of individual suffering manifests itself.



Bakira told us we should go see Vilina Vlas, a hotel in the hills surrounding the town that had been used as a rape center during the war and was now once again a hotel and rehabilitation centre. We drove up through the forested hills. Reaching the top of the hill, there stood the hotel, which seemed a lot larger than in photos. It was shabby and grey, and parts of the building looked abandoned, but you could see that people were drying their colorful bathing towels from the rusting balconies. We didn't even step out of the car. We just sat there for a couple of minutes looking. I wouldn't even know what to ask anyone in the hotel. How do you ask at the reception desk whether this is the place where girls and women were tortured, raped and killed?

We drove back down the hill and were stopped by an elderly lady. She asked if we could give her a lift to the foot of the hill because she was finding it difficult to walk in the heat. She asked if we were tourists staying at the hotel. I said we were just lost. She asked us to drop her off by the road where there was a group of people gathering, near a cemetery. She was going to a funeral.



Miha and I decided to stop to see the famous Drina bridge. What remained in my mind most were the stories of people being thrown off it during the war. We parked right by the bridge where there was another shabby hotel and a café. Both were as run down as the previous one. The bridge was being renovated but you could walk over it. On it were strange little souvenir stalls selling small sculptures of the bridge, fridge magnets, paintings on wood and stones. We crossed the bridge and walked up a hill to a viewing point. You could see how isolated and vulnerable the town was in between the hills, divided by the river. We sat in the shade of the café before heading back. We were surrounded by people but with Bakira's words still fresh we remained quiet and left quickly. We arrived in Sarajevo to a cool grey rain.

#### Sarajevo

We sat in the hostel waiting for the rain to stop and chatted with the staff. The tour guide for the hostel explained that the biggest attraction was the war. Taking tourists to see all the spots they had seen destroyed on the news: the library, the market place, the Holiday Inn.

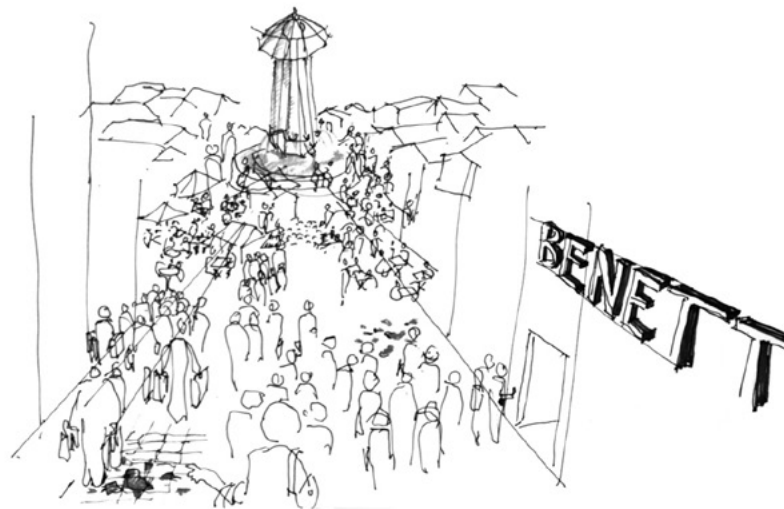
As the rain stopped Miha and I went to see two exhibitions in a local gallery, one a permanent exhibition about Srebrenica, and another a touring exhibition about the Siege of Sarajevo. There were tours every hour. Both exhibitions were mainly photographic, with large black and white prints hanging on the walls. The exhibition about Srebrenica included an extensive archive with four hours of material to go through. It was grueling and confusing, with scans of letters between government officials and a lot of the footage from The Hague trials.

The Siege of Sarajevo was a smaller exhibition; it described the destruction of the city, the misery of death and finished with a video about the Miss Bosnia competition that had been held at the Holiday Inn during the war.

On our third day in Bosnia we went to meet Aida at the SCCA, a contemporary art institute. We discussed one of their



better-known projects about the anti-monument movement. Aida suggested what we should see in the city. She spoke about buildings that were once emblems of the nation and representations of nationhood. We spent the next few hours trying to locate several of the sites. We went to the newly renovated library, where 2 million books had been burned. It is now completely restored. We also went to look at the market where 68 people lost their lives in a mortar attack. The market was alive and busy even for a weekday. At the back of the market was a supermarket onto which the names of those who died were written. The exact point where the shell landed, creating a hole in the ground, had a large vitrine placed over it to protect it. I approached a couple of men sitting by the vitrine and asked them about it. They commented about how badly it was preserved. The glass vitrine had not been sealed properly and condensation and dirt gathered inside, so it was difficult to see anything. It looked like part of a construction site that had been forgotten about. We continued our war tourism: the former building of the Olympic Commission; the Museum of History; the National Museum;



the oldest Jewish Cemetery; the largest Muslim cemetery. From one site to the next we realized that most of these buildings had been completely forgotten about. We would ask for directions on the street but hardly anyone could point us in the right way.

While looking for the National Museum we were told that it had to close due to lack of funding. We arrived at the site and found two monuments. Both were part of the project run by SCCA between 2004 and 2007 called *De/Construction of The Monument*. The first monument, titled *Monument to the International Community*, is a representation of a tinned beef can on top of a pedestal decorated with the colours of the EU. Sadly, or not, most of the gold and blue plastic had been torn off, uncovering the cement beneath. Much of the rest of the monument was covered with graffiti.

The other monument, by the artist Braco Dimitrijević, was a block of stone bearing the inscription: 'Under this stone there is a monument to the victims of the War and the Cold War.' Each of the four sides has the same inscription in a different language – Bosnian, French, German, English. Unlike the canned beef, Dimitrijević's more visually subtle approach seemed to keep people from trashing it. It stood beside the Museum of History, which at first glance seemed closed as well. The façade was ruined, with chunks of concrete coming loose. Somewhat surprised, we noticed an advertisement for an exhibition, so we went up the stairs to have a look. It was open, so we bought tickets and went to see another temporary exhibition about the Siege of Sarajevo. The exhibition mainly included photographs by citizens, objects, home made weapons, and even a recreation of a typical room during the war. In the middle of the space a semi-circle of boards displayed a timeline and information about war criminals their sentencing and crimes. These included images of the cells where these criminals are kept. Most of them had what looked like apartments that included kitchens, lounges and private workshops.

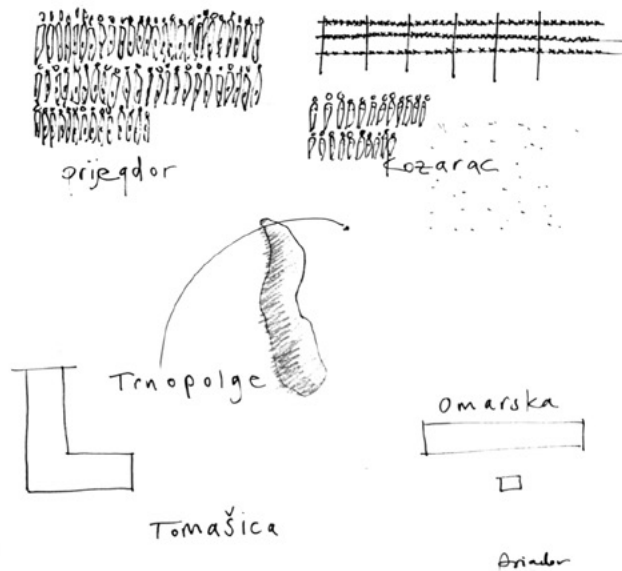
When I was leaving, I was stopped by the woman who had sold me the ticket. She asked if something was wrong because I

was leaving so soon, and explained that I was welcome to come back with the same ticket any time to see the exhibition and rest of the museum.

Later that day we drove to the hills above the city. I could never have imagined how many cemeteries one could see. On that sunny day the bright white stones shone from all sides. As we drove out of Sarajevo we saw the famous Holiday Inn again and were told it no longer had the accreditation to remain part of the Holiday Inn chain, and had gone bankrupt. Restored to its fresh colors it looked exactly like the images I remembered from the television.

Banja Luka > Prijedor > Kozarac > Trnopolje > Omarska

We drove towards Banja Luka, the capital of Republika Srpska, for the next five hours. We arrived around 10pm and were welcomed with an incredible feast: mushroom soup with mushroom scones, and then a mushroom risotto and quite a bit of wine and rakija. The next morning we had breakfast waiting





for us and had a long chat with my father's friends. We talked about my parents, had a few laughs, and then they started to talk of their own experience of the war. They explained that their daughter had been away on a high school student exchange in the US when the war broke out and she was unable to return. They didn't see her again for over a decade. Meanwhile, the father was forced to go into battle, the son was sent into training, and the mother remained alone. After the war, they explained, there was nothing, no food, and no electricity. It took a very long time for things to become normal again. The father was hesitant to speak about much of his time in the Serbian army. He just nodded and said that those were horrible times and horrible things happened there.

Later that day we drove to the region of Prijedor. The area was the best known for the concentration camps covered in the international news in the summer of 1992. In the village of Kozarac, we were to meet up with Satko, a survivor of one of the camps, in a café beside one of the rare memorials to Muslim victims. Coming into the village, the memorial was placed in the little central square, with parking spaces all around it. Obscuring the memorial were large expensive cars with foreign registration plates: Germany, Holland, UK, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, France and even some from the US. Satko had invited us to join a group of American students who had also come to the region for the two days of commemoration.

Driving through the village, all the houses were newly built, many almost mansions, most with the blinds down and seemingly uninhabited. We were taken to a place called Kuća Mira, the Center for Peace. Inside the Center for Peace, we sat in a dining room surrounded by pictures of people that had lost their lives in the war. Satko gave a detailed historical account of how the region was systematically attacked, destroyed, and its citizens transported to the different concentration camps. Kozarac was completely burned to the ground, with only the rubble of the mosque untouched. It had been rebuilt by the families that used

to live there, but now mostly live out of the country and return only a couple of times a year.

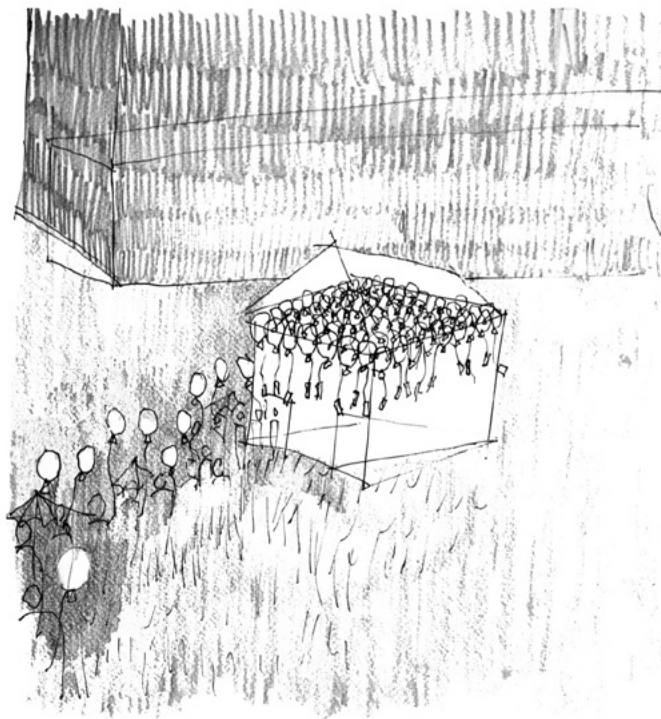
We followed Satko, to the first concentration camp, Trnopolje. It was on the side of the main road that led through the village. We parked in front of a former school, which had been part of the camp. A local man came towards us yelling and waving for us to go away. In the region of Prijedor, much like in Višegrad, there is a general public denial of the incidents of genocide that occurred. Satko encouraged us to ignore the man and he continued to explain what the camp looked like, where the barbed wire had been placed and the conditions in the camp. Trnopolje was the camp where the famous photographs of the emaciated prisoners behind barbed wire were taken. Satko explained that Fikret, the man in the main image that covered the news, was forced to hide after the pictures came out. He had dressed as a woman to avoid detection, defecating on himself so that he was pushed aside because he stank. Satko smiled and picked up his mobile trying to call Fikret; after a brief conversation he explained that unfortunately Fikret was away on holiday, so we wouldn't have a chance to meet him. We stood in front of the empty building that the authorities had begun to renovate despite the efforts made for it to remain as it was. On the road in front of the building stood a memorial dedicated to the Serbian soldiers that died in the war. It was a stone eagle with its wings spread, built in a style similar to many 1950s memorials erected by Tito's Yugoslavia to the heroes of the Second World War. At the foot of the monument lay flowers.

We woke to another rainy day. It was August 6th and the only day of the year that people are allowed to visit the other concentration camp only kilometers away from Trnopolje, in the village of Omarska. The Omarska concentration camp was known for being the more deadly of the two. A working iron mine before the war, it reopened quickly after the war ended. In 2004, ArcelorMittal Steel became the majority owner. While the new owners promised they would allow for a memorial to be built,

but so far they have only allowed for part of the former camp to remain untouched in an otherwise operative iron mine.

Driving to the camp, we passed police, the army and private guards. We parked at the end of what was already a long continuous line of cars parked along the road. We walked down the muddy gravel road. Arriving, we heard that the commemoration ceremony was going to be shortened because of the rain, and soon after the national anthem and moment of silence, a male voice began reading out the names of those that perished in the camp. The camp was made up of two smaller buildings and a large red hangar. It looked exactly like the images and videos I had seen. I had read about the camp and I knew that the smaller building, the White House, was where most of the murders were committed. Behind the White House, white balloons were being filled with helium. People stood next to each other, forming a long line behind the building and passing the balloons one by one through an open window. It was raining heavily but people stood still, some in silence, some chatting and laughing, and some crying.





I made my way to the entrance of the White House. It was filled with people and camera crews. The back two rooms were filling up with the white balloons, hovering on the ceilings. Women were taking them from one room to another and reading out the name on the card that dangled at the end of the string. It was a self-initiated intervention that they had been doing for a couple of years. In one of the front rooms an interview was happening. In another stood a man, his wife and two daughters. He had scars on his head. A lot of them. There were a couple of people standing around him and he was explaining how he was tortured. Suddenly, he ran towards the back of the room hitting the wall and collapsing to the ground crying. It was the first time in 22 years that he had visited the mine where he had been held captive. The house was filled with whispers and cries; loud enough to hear in snatches, and quiet enough to hear the constant weeping. I kept moving around, entering

and the leaving the house. It was almost noon, and time to leave the mine. Through a microphone a voice asked everyone to take a balloon. A young woman approached me with a balloon. She gave it to me and nodded. I think I got number 436, but I cannot remember the name on it.

At exactly noon we were asked to release them. The wind and rain caused most of the balloons to be blown back onto the ground. People started running after them encouraging the balloons back into the sky. I watched as an elderly woman kneeled in the grass, trying again and again to lift the balloons from the ground.

Belgrade > Ljubljana

I soon left Bosnia and made my way to Belgrade to meet up with members of the *Four Faces of Omarska*, a group of artists and thinkers that have been working with the topic of denial of the war crimes and the possibilities of changing the methods of memorialization. I met Srdjan, one of the members, for a beer to discuss their work and my own. We talked how things are in Belgrade after the war and how difficult it is for them to work with their topic because the memories of war are completely different for most people. Here, the war meant isolation from the world and a once cosmopolitan city being left behind.

On the long drive back to Slovenia I thought about everything I had seen, trying to replay things in my mind. There was so much I heard that I knew I could never talk about publicly. On one hand, I do not want to put anyone into uncomfortable or potentially dangerous situations. On the other, many communicated what they had seen and done with solemn stares, their eyes speaking more than their words. I cannot translate those looks; those eyes worn with sadness. What I will remember most clearly is people repeating that before the war no one ever asked whether you were Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian or Slovenian. It didn't matter then.



ACT IV.

EVERYLIAR LEAVES A TRACE

*Everyliar Leaves a Trace* is a series of works set as a commentary on the struggle to memorialise the mass killings which occurred at the end of WWII, in the region now referred to as Slovenia.<sup>1</sup> The narrative is presented through three different but somewhat intertwined works; the text **everyliar leaves a trace** appears as a lead/pewter object, the term **everyliar** as neon, a bronze QR code leading to a sentence **they say it is always the other**, photographic collages, and a series of three photo-etchings. The works are connected through their relation to not simply modes of monumentalisation as they appeared through history, but also position their art historical reference through the selected choices of their materialised form. The work is elaborated upon in further detail later on in the Act where it is visually and conceptually presented.<sup>2</sup> *Everyliar leaves a trace* observes the shift between three notions; how the history of monument building in the region has impacted on recent monument building in Slovenia, the monuments' undeniable role in politics, and artistic practice as mode of analysis of the first two notions.

As with the other Acts in this project, this Act addresses historical battles for memory that are again being addressed in the current political realm. Taking this into consideration, the work departs from the stronghold of politics and language - language as both the structure that forms political groundwork and equally a decorative tool used for manipulative purposes. Language and speech form the frame of the playing field of politics, they act both as a form of communication as much as deliberate miscommunication.<sup>3</sup> The work first and foremost reacts to this and secondly to the idea of competitive memory and attempts of revisionism.

Sanela Bašić's essay *Bosnian Society on the Path to Justice, Truth and Reconciliation*, opens with a reflection on one of the reasons why the war in former SFRY<sup>4</sup> was particularly brutal.<sup>5</sup> As Bašić explains it, and as has been previously mentioned in *The Region of the*

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1 See *Brief History of Yugoslavia*.

2 The work has appeared in two exhibitions at the Royal College of Art, as well as a journal produced at the Royal College of Art, *Why Would I Lie?* More detail date, location,

3 Language and speech has been used as a format for political propaganda, most commonly associated with WWII figures such Hitler, Mussolini or Stalin, but use of speech and language for political manipulation dates back to Plato's Politics and times of Greek and Roman Empires.

4 See *Acronyms*.

5 Sanela Bašić, 'Bosnian Society on the Path to Justice, Truth, and Reconciliation' in *Peacebuilding and Civil Society in Bosnia-Herzegovina – Ten Years after Dayton*, ed. by Martina Fischer (Munster: Lit Verlag, 2007)pp.357-385.



*Ash Tree*, post-WWII time in socialist state of SFRY under Tito saw some suppression of discussions surrounding events of the war or, as Bašić writes,

*‘in the aftermath of the conflict the socialist regime under Tito prohibited any kind of public debate pertaining to the war crimes committed and the traumas inflicted. Instead of open discussion, a superficial sense of common belonging was created and imposed in the public sphere through the acknowledgement of the principles of “brotherhood” and “unity”. Yet, despite official suppression, the memory of the suffering prevailed and was transmitted further between family members and members of one’s own ethnic group.’*<sup>6</sup>

Slovenia was not exempt from this narrative although the hatred between the descendants of Partisans and those of the Domobranci did not pan out in a hostility similar to that between the Bosnians, Serbs, and Croats. Bašić’s analysis of the Hague Tribunal proposes why and how the existence of the Hague Tribunal was similar to that of the Nuremberg Trials. The article looks into how such trials interact with ideas of collective and individual guilt, which inspires my positioning of the artwork and research around concepts of blame, persecution, and reconciliation that has been attempted by the Slovenian government regarding the mass killings.

Theodor Meron, President of the Hague Tribunals, believed that *‘the individualisation of guilt would help bring about peace and reconciliation’* through the Trials.<sup>7</sup> The ICTY, which concluded in December of 2017, followed the motions of the Nuremberg Trials, indicting the main leaders and culprits responsible for leading and ordering the main criminal acts, though only 161 individuals<sup>8</sup> were indicted for 4 different criminal acts: Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, Violations of the Laws or Customs of War, and Grave Breaches of the Geneva Conventions. These criminal charges simplify what, according to Bašić, has been published by the Federal Commission on War Crimes state, that there were between eight and twelve thousand criminals in the Bosnian conflict. These statistics put into question how we can look at what the ICTY really did as opposed to how they have been presented.<sup>9</sup> Was it merely a form of symbolic justice that was being implemented? As Bašić states, it would be practically impossible to load

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6 Bašić, p.357-8

7 Theodor Meron quoted in Bašić. p. 362.

8 ICTY contributors, ‘UN International Court Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia’, ICTY website, <<http://www.icty.org/en/content/infographic-icty-facts-figures>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

9 The ICTY have been presented in a way which highlight the success stories of capturing the ‘leading’ criminals of the Wars but fail to have addressed some of the problems regarding the less relevant or glorified criminals, as well as, having given numerous reduced sentences.

the burden of such a mass of criminals on a legal system in a post-conflict state- instead we see individual guilt standing in for a collective guilt. It is for this reason that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was proposed however, it was dissolved without any documentation regarding the research that was conducted.

Slovenia was not subjected to the brutality that occurred in other regions of former Yugoslavia during breakup, yet the deafening silence that erupted into political bashing after its independence regarding the dormant hatred from WWII and the mass killings of the Domobranci, created a political rift which opened up debates about who should be held responsible for these killings. With this political rift, discussions reverted back to the structures of remembrance that were set into place during Socialist Yugoslavia. Gal Kirn presents a relatively harsh critique of institutional and political changes that occurred in Europe after the collapse of ‘totalitarian’ regimes to build what he names the new Europe of western ideals.<sup>10</sup> Kirn is careful to position that it was not only the West that influenced these views of *totalitarian* critique but that the critique also came from within the former socialist state. As Kirn explains, these rifts in Slovenia were also supported by European ideals;

*‘The ultimate post-socialist effect was recently inaugurated by the European Parliament in the Resolution on European Conscience and Totalitarianism. The Resolution was adopted in 2009 and the European Parliament proclaimed the August 23 as the commemoration day for totalitarian crimes. This event is an important landmark for the process of the new European memorialization. It is a clear example of historical revisionism: In one swoop it equates communism with fascism, therefore ignoring that the WWII was won by a large alliance of antifascist groups within which communist and partisan forces were its equal and essential part’<sup>11</sup>*

Slovenia was occupied by both Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy during the war and was eventually liberated by Tito-led Partisans that fought against the Nazi regime. Within the region there were also local groups who had pledged allegiance with the Nazi regime, in Slovenia those were called the Domobranci. Some accounts portray the allegiance of the Domobranci with the Nazi and Fascist regimes as one of circumstance, explaining that the reasons behind the allegiance lie in their need to fight the communist ideals that

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10 Kirn, G, ‘Transformation of Memorial Sites in the Post Yugoslav Context’ in *Retracing Images. Visual Culture After Yugoslavia* ed. by Daniel Suber & Karamanic Slobodan (Leiden: Brill, 2012) pp 251-281.

11 Ibid. p. 253

were leading the strongest opposing Partisan movement.<sup>12</sup> Without seeping too far into the political dilemma of the historicity of these divisions, the Domobranci had pledged allegiance to Nazi forces and were responsible for fighting the Partisan movement that was struggling to liberate Slovenia from the oppressing powers of Germany and Italy.

At the end of the War, many Domobranci fled to Austria alongside Croatian Ustaše and other Nazi-allied forces in hope of surrendering to the British. There, they were however rounded up by British troops and returned to the Partisans, who were their allies.<sup>13</sup> Upon returning, the prisoners were killed and thrown into mass graves which were concealed and remained unspoken of as one of the *undebatable* or *silenced* events during times of Socialist Yugoslavia. These graves became an epicentre of debate and research in independent Slovenia, with several opposing views and commentaries emerging in the public arena. Among the views, the most outspoken voice presenting a narrative which acknowledges the horrific deaths however considers the context of the time and space in which they were committed would be Božo Repe.<sup>14</sup> On the opposing side Boris Mlakar, who has been known to defend the position of the Domobranci, as allies of the Nazi regime, as being an unfortunate circumstance which occurred under occupation.<sup>15</sup> There were also those who declared the events as genocide, or those who compared the events to Srebrenica like Jože Dežman, who voiced that, “*Srebrenica is like an innocent case compared to that,*” which can of course be viewed as an extremely controversial position considering that those opposing the Domobranci were otherwise sent to Nazi working and concentration camps throughout Europe or killed.<sup>16</sup> The media attention that followed the public emergence of the research on mass graves, presented scrutinising positions regarding what should be done in terms of potentially

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12 Boris Mlakar. *Slovensko Domobranstvo, 1943-1945: Ustanovitev, organizacija, idejno ozadje*. (Ljubljana: Slovenska Matica, 2003).

13 Doroteja Lešnik & Gregor Tomc, *Rdece in črno. Slovenstvo, partizanstvo in domobranstvo*. (Slovenia: Znanstveno in publicistično središče, 1995),

14 Božo Repe is a professor, columnist and political activist. He has been a frequent contributor to the magazine Mladina. His recent book, *S puško in knjigo : narodnoosvobodilni boj slovenskega naroda 1941-1945*, observes the occupation and battle of resistance for the liberation of Slovenia during WWII.

15 Boris Mlakar (reference no.12) is a historian who has dedicated most of his career to research surrounding Slovenian domobranstvo.

16 ‘World War II mass graves open a wound in Slovenia’, *New York Times*, (October 22, 2007) <<https://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/22/news/22iht-slovenia.1.7995453.html>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

Jože Dežman is also president of the Commission on Concealed Mass Graves which was established on November 10, 2005.

prosecuting those who could be responsible and still living, and the organisations tied to the movements that had not before been portrayed in this negative light.<sup>17</sup> In 2016, the Associated Press reported on a reburial for 800 of the bodies found in the mass graves. As part of the commemoration ceremony, the Croatian president placed a wreath and expressed that every victim deserves dignity.<sup>18</sup> This moment was particularly controversial because of Croatia's own revisionist problems which are discussed in the previous Act.

As has been illustrated above, these political negotiations do not operate in isolation. For example, the desire for dignity as voiced, 'every victim deserves dignity', is not a notion that is acknowledged on a wider scale, nor is it even accepted that every victim is valorised as a victim. Recently, a large discrepancy has appeared in how different Nazi allied crimes are viewed across Europe. In the midst of current discussions of how monumentalisation of certain figures should be treated and presented, we can notice that some countries are still very much in denial of their less praiseworthy pasts. For example, the Polish law passed in January 2018, states that anyone can be persecuted for making statements, '*public and contrary-to-fact conduct that attributes responsibility or co-responsibility for Nazi crimes committed by the Third German Reich to the Polish nation or the Polish state,*' and can be punished with up to three years imprisonment.<sup>19</sup> This dangerous rise in revisionism of historical events presents the question of whether these kind of events will allow a form of *symbolic repair* within countries, due to a stepping away from contested pasts, or will it in fact lead to future positions of conflict?

If we look at some of the formats of monumentalisation through the continuous building of conventional forms of monuments throughout history until the present,

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- 17 These are some of the main new outlets that reported on the Slovenian mass graves: 'Slovenia reburies 800 bodies from post-WWII mass grave', *Associated Press*, Oct. 27, 2016, <<https://apnews.com/a8567054faa240008341d537b5ba4b12>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]  
Matthew Day, 'Mass grave of 700 people found in Slovenia', *The Telegraph*, September 8, 2010 <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/slovenia/7989567/Mass-grave-of-700-people-found-in-Slovenia.html>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]  
'Forgotten Victims: Slovenian Mass Grave Could Be Europe's Killing Fields', *Der Spiegel International*, August 21, 2007 <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/forgotten-victims-slovenian-mass-grave-could-be-europe-s-killing-fields-a-501058.html>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]  
'Slovenia: Second World War mass grave found', *The Independent*, September 8, 2010 <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/slovenia-second-world-war-mass-grave-found-2073032.html>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]
- 18 'Slovenia reburies 800 bodies from post-WWII mass grave', *Associated Press*, Oct. 27, 2016, <<https://apnews.com/a8567054faa240008341d537b5ba4b12>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]
- 19 'Polish law denies reality of Holocaust', *The Guardian*, February 5, 2018, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/05/polish-law-denies-reality-of-holocaust>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

and how these have been accepted by the public, can we come closer to being able to understand the position of monuments in these type of fragmented and opposing historical narratives? It is my understanding that in the present climate of political uncertainty in Europe, we have come into a space of time in which it seems that historical facts have been laid aside to make way for draconian political *speech* and acts, which create a fragmented story of history that is often declared as fact. These acts can be presented as methods of moving beyond a history that has been a central focus of national conflicts, but they have not necessarily presented a hypothetical outcome e.g. a peaceful transitioning from a conflicting history into an accepted history without excluding, through intimidation, a certain segment of the population.

How does this then relate to the shifts that occurred in Yugoslavian monument building formats? Returning to Kirn's article, it firstly differentiates the formats of monument building that existed:

*'The Association of Veterans of the Peoples' Liberation War (SUBNOR), with the help of federal authorities, launched a project of memorialization and glorification of the Peoples' Liberation War. The project could be arguably defined as a paradigmatic socialist state art, which consisted of the construction of minor symbolic plates, statues of different size, huge sculptures, murals, paintings, graveyards and memorial parks. Formally, they did not differ much from the canons of war memorials in other countries. They referred to three fundamental narratives of liberation: (1) victory over fascism connected to revolution, (2) victims (suffering of civilians or fighters during fascist occupation), (3) historical context (location of particular antifascist acts, foundation of political and cultural organizations, etc.). Each of them contributed to the common function of memorials: commemoration of the past.'*<sup>20</sup>

Kirn's main focus questions how the monuments built to the Domobranci, following the Slovenian independence, differ in visual form. Kirn is clear to state that his analysis goes beyond a simple aesthetic critique of the monuments but also looks at how these recent monuments have a very specific figurative style. *A week in August* connects the relationship between the monuments that were built in Socialist Yugoslavia and how they developed as counter-monuments, as analysed by Gal Kirn, to the present-day situation of monumentalisation in former Yugoslav states. Kirn presents a very clear description of the historical shifts that occurred and how these monuments grew

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20 Kirn p.259.

in visual form and political and social relevance. The present-day circumstances are evaluated to a certain extent by examining what remains in the absence of the monument and how certain forms have been visually appropriated, as in the case of the stone eagle near the former concentration camp in Trnopolje,<sup>21</sup> where we can notice that its figurative aesthetic presents a step back towards a more recognisable form of monument used by nationalist governments whose position is often a desire to to highlight and embrace national symbols, which in this case, for Serbs, is the eagle.<sup>22</sup>

*Everyliar leaves a trace* examines some of the conflicts of monumentalisation arising in Slovenia. The research for this act, and indeed for this project, began with a book by designer and publisher Ben Freeman, who as a former student of the Royal College of Art completed his studies with a book on the hidden history of the events that transpired post-WWII in Slovenia and continued to remain unknown until the collapse of Yugoslavia and the independence of Slovenia in early 1990s.<sup>23</sup> However *Everyliar leaves a trace* was also inspired by an earlier intervention.

I grew up in a culture that was not my own and only experienced my own culture through my parents.<sup>24</sup> I grew up experiencing wars in both my homes. I grew up realising that both my cultures were flawed by internal conflicts and felt a desperate need to understand these identities. My first memory of war was learning to distinguish the different sounds of sirens. I remember that there was one that was meant to alert in case of a ground attack and another to alert for an air attack. I remember hearing the siren while eating an ice cream outside the building I was living in with my sister and my mother. Everyone got startled and I ran towards the front door dropping my scoop of ice cream on the way. The building

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21 Trnopolje is described in *A week in August* but also *Monumental Relay*.

22 Trnopolje is a village in the region of Prijedor, where a school was temporarily turned into a concentration camp in 1992, where Serbian forces kept Bosnian Muslim prisoners. No monument has been built to the victims of the camp, instead a monument, the stone eagle, has been built to commemorate the Serbian soldiers that died in the conflict.

23 Ben Freeman, *Grobišče: Society, Politics and Mass Graves*, (London: DOWN, 2008).

Freeman's book analyzes, through a series of interviews and encounters, with individuals that are involved in research surrounding these extrajudicial killings, how the different truths are portrayed..

24 I grew up in Kuwait and only returned to live in Slovenia permanently at age of 14. I spent some months in Slovenia during Desert Storm and also lived there during the 30 day war for independence of Slovenia.

we lived in had a bunker in the basement, with a large iron door. It would usually be used as storage, each flat had a wooden cubicle, and we stored firewood, skis, old clothes and books. My mother emptied the cubicle and filled it with a mattress, covers, blankets, food, and water. All the cubicles were made into tiny living compartments. That day we sat in the bunker with the rest of the people living in the building. My sister and I played in our cubicle with two other friends while my mother chatted to other adults. That was the only day I spent in the bunker.

At the time, my father was in Kuwait, where we returned after the first Gulf War, where my father had gotten stuck just a year earlier. It took very long for him to come back but I remember my mother saying he would come soon, any day now, so my sister and I sat on a bench in front of the building, under a tree waiting for him to return.

My next memory that is my own and not a story my parents had told me, was the flight back to Kuwait. Shortly after the end of the Gulf War we returned and flying above Kuwait the sky suddenly got brighter. I remember looking out of the window and it seemed as if I was flying over a birthday cake lit with candles. I remember being angry and my eyes filling with tears along with the rest of the passengers on the plane.

These memories stayed with me, as did the others that followed, of stories of violence, of sadness, stories of brothers fighting on opposite sides. I remember people being divided.

My memories are honest but tainted with stories I had heard from others and my parents.

The work for my doctoral project began with the analysis of the book *Grobišča: Society, Politics and Mass Graves*, by Ben Freeman. It initiated the tone of the research and my methods in dealing with it, which essentially depart from extensive research into the historical documents and texts referring to the incident, in this case the mass killings of the Home Guard at the end of WWII in Slovenia. These killings became the topic of national conflict after the independence of the country in 1991.

The mass graves in Slovenia have been something I had been thinking about and studying for a while but without too much effort apart from my

day trips to look for the burial sites and look at the types of monuments if any have been placed there.

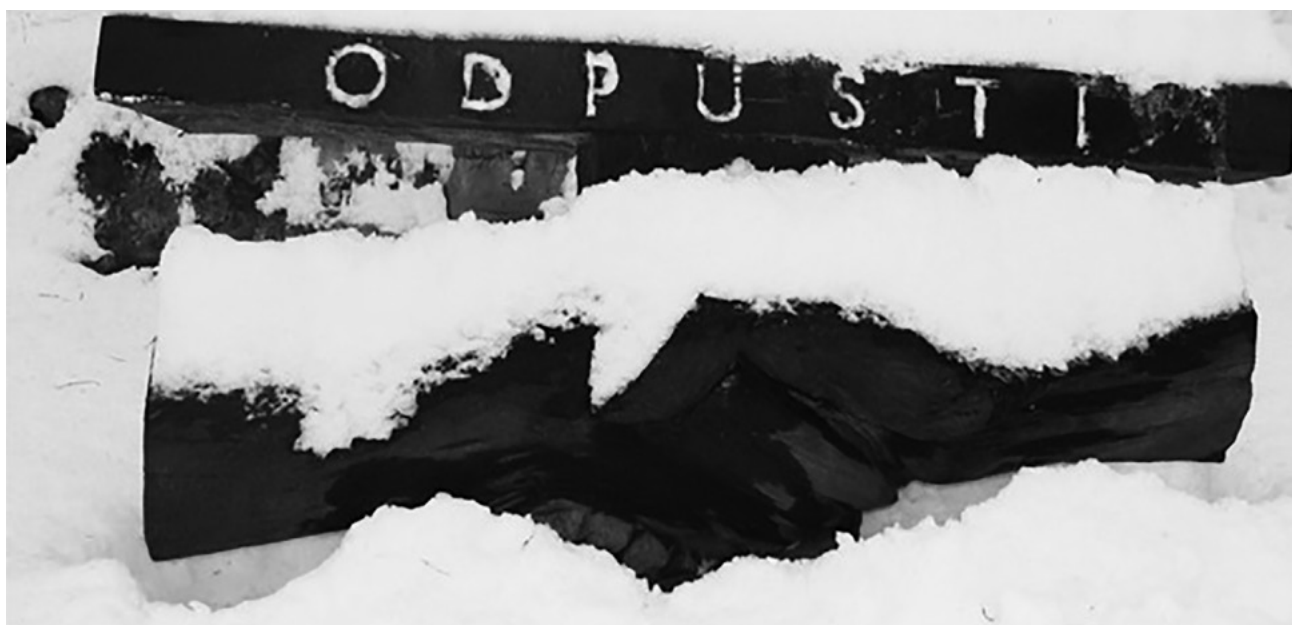
My first was to see the mass graves at Kočevski Rog, a site in the forest that remains still today one of the last wild forests in Europe. I went to Kočevski Rog, in 2010, to go take pictures for my friend's article.

I never knew about the story of the murders that occurred after WWII in the forests in Slovenia. To my knowledge that part of history had always been very clear, there were two sides, one was bad, the other good. I didn't know about the thousands of people that had been killed after the war, and thrown into a mass grave. Gal Kirn asked me to drive out to the forest to document the monument and site of one of these mass graves. Embarrassed about my lack of knowledge about this part of history, I Googled and asked my parents. My parents, more aware of this, initially seemed defensive about my new interest. I realised this part of history had suddenly been dragged into the present as a tool of political manipulation, returning to a war-time division.

Being a young driver I asked a more experienced friend to drive me to this forest as it was winter and there was new coat of snow. We drove towards the forest but were unsure exactly where we needed to go so we stopped for directions in a restaurant. The restaurant by the road, was one of those places that you don't often encounter, it had a miniature zoo at the back with special types of hairy chickens and a bear as well. We asked some of the locals but they seemed uncomfortable with our questions about this site. We finally managed to find someone that pointed us in the right direction of the winding road that took us uphill through the forest. On the sides of the pebbled road stood wooden animal totems. I still don't quite understand who they were made by and what they represented but I imagined they were more likely decorative sculptures by the local community. We pulled up by the side of the road at a sign that pointed to the inside of the forest and continued on foot. Walking on the fresh snow, our feet falling in, we walked for only a bit to find the very big open chapel and next to it the hole where the bodies were found. Both were at the bottom of a slope or many slopes, with makeshift wooden crosses all around. Some crosses had names on, some



had rosaries hanging from them. The Chapel was filled with mosaics depicting, in crude imagery, the violence and torture that occurred, or rather how it was interpreted. In front of the shiny chapel stood a wooden sculpture reminiscent of the totems we saw along the way. Two hands clasped together with the word OPROSTI (FORGIVE) engraved below. It was so quiet; the snow had deafened all the sounds. I remember trying to imagine what had happened there.









The circumstances of this site and others like it remain contested and unresolved. While the *Organisation of Partisans* apologised for their role in the killings without trials, people, figures defending the position of the Domobranci continue to this day to bring up these incidents and there is an ongoing battle about the circumstances and how they should be portrayed in the identity of the young country.

These debates have resulted in a curious attempt of *reconciliation* by the State. Although attempting to rely on the ambiguity that occurs in the positioning of a monument, the event struggled to conceal queries surrounding the formats of revisionism occurring. I am referring to the most recent monument built in Slovenia that caused controversy, *Monument to Victims of All Wars*, built in the centre of the capital, Ljubljana. The monument consists of two building-high slabs of concrete standing some metres apart connected by the surface they are standing on, creating an invisible link between the victims of the Nazis and those of the Partisans. Playing with the idea of the invisible and the absent that is a popular visual tool of contemporary monuments, it has not been as well received by the public who had already just days after the monument was inaugurated reacted with graffiti, '*Stop playing Partisans and Domobranci, already*'.<sup>25</sup> Spomenka Hribar, also commented on the unfortunate visual solution of the troubling dispute that is dividing the nation.<sup>26</sup> According to her the monument does just that, presents not a symbol of national unity but rather it portrays the divide that is lingering on. These type of statements revisit the divided decision; better to continuously reinforce remembering or prescriptive forgetting.<sup>27</sup>

The series of three works titled *Everyliar leaves a trace* form a reaction to this situation and an attempt to put into question the positioning of such monuments within the national identity, the reason why the discussion has remained an open wound-maintaining its relevance in the public realm throughout of the last 20 years, and how effective the

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25 Grega Repovz, 'Ne Spomeniku?', *Mladina*, August 7, 2015 < <http://www.mladina.si/168490/ne-spomeniku/> > [last accessed 12.09.2018] (translated by author, Manca Bajec)

26 Hribar wrote an essay in 1983, *Krivda in greh* (Guilt and sin), which attempted to lay out the ethical considerations for a reconciliation between the two opposing groups.

27 See Paul Connerton, 'Seven Types of Forgetting' in *Memory Studies*, 59 (2008).

attempt of a state-mandated conciliation effort is, that suggests that all victims are equally important and worthy of public monumentalisation.

Three of the works position the conventional idea of inscriptions used in monument building. They rely on the idea of inscriptions-using a play of language- in order to position the ambiguous reasons behind the building of these monuments. In two text based works language is materialised in two different mediums. The entire sentence *everyliar leaves a trace* is cast in pewter, acknowledging not only its reference to monumental works, but as a floor work where the letters are protruding to ankle height, the piece creates an obstacle for the viewer forcing an engagement. The term *everyliar* also is presented as a neon, creating a juxtaposition between the floor and wall piece.<sup>28</sup> The two works titled, *everyliar leaves a trace* and *everyliar* emerge as an echo. The neon piece appearing as a reflection, re-affirming with repetition. The term constructed *everyliar leaves a trace* constructed from the word everyone, referring to the imminent position of history's uncanny nature to resurface in some form, at some time. And also relates to the final work presented which is described in the paragraphs ending this Act.

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28 *everyliar* is guided by a long history of the medium in the arts. Neon that appeared in advertising in the 1930s and 40s, eventually became a favorite medium of many artists including Andy Warhol, Joseph Kosuth, Jenny Holzer, and Bruce Nauman among some. It's initial use was presented as a resistance against consumerist economy but the medium was adapted to question a variety of topics appearing in different decades throughout the 20th Century such as; language and communication (Bruce Nauman), transformations of space through light (James Turrell, Dan Flavin), political and social critique (Jenny Holzer).

ever that leaves a trace







everyliar



The third text work, also titled *They Say*, presents itself as an object similar to that of a tile made in bronze with a QR code cast into the surface, alluding to the concealed message behind the object.<sup>29</sup> The code leads to an online link which provides the text **they say it is always the other**. The code appears as an object or prop, mobile in nature, it appears as an accessory, which relates to the idea of its illusive attributes but also highlighting the potential of *personalised monuments*. How would society react if accessorised monuments would replace people's commemorative needs for a public memorialisation in the form of monumental structures?

The text refers to the ongoing battles of who is the victim of this conflict versus who is the aggressor and the nature of the political correctness that appears in the *Monument to Victims of All Wars*. The play of language occupies a significant role as it attempts to reposition the ideological grounds on which the idea of a monument to victims of all wars is based on. As critiqued in the political journal Mladina, it is not so much that such a monument is a terrible idea, but that in this instance the lack of disclosure about the actual events that occurred and the position that the Domobranci or their supporters have, which is one that still lacks any form of acknowledgement surrounding their support and alliance with Nazi regime, creates a somewhat unsettling image - giant concrete slabs visually creating a representation of gravestones in the middle of a city centre.

*They say* is presented as an image and object. As an image, it appears, in a slightly fantastically visualisation between two monuments that stand in the centre of the little town called Grahovo which is roughly an hour's drive from the capital, Ljubljana. Of the two monuments one, which was unveiled in 1968, is a stone obelisk with a red star on top memorialising the victims of Nazism, while the other, unveiled April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014 is a stone wall blocking the view of the older monument and commemorating the deaths of the Domobranci who were killed in a battle against the Partisans.

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29 The piece also refers to the German, Stolperstein (can be translated to stumbling stone), which are a memorial project dedicated to marking the last place of residency of people who died as a result of the Nazi regime. Initiated by artist Gunter Demnig in 1992, they take the form of 10 x 10 cm brass plates with inscriptions on the name of the victim. Over 67,000 have been placed in 21 countries as of March 2018.

Atika Shubert and Nadine Schmidt, 'Germany's Holocaust mini-memorials go missing amid far-right backlash', *CNN*, March 29, 2018, < <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/03/29/europe/germany-holocaust-stumbling-stones-far-right-intl/index.html> > [last accessed 12.09.2018].

















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There was much controversy regarding the newer monument's unveiling and the support it received from right-wing politicians, as well as the historical validity of the text engraved on the monument.<sup>30</sup> What is evident is that the monument was placed in the memorial park that was dedicated to the victims of Nazism, and was placed directly in front of the monument that had stood there for 46 years. The question seems quite obvious to me, why was this allowed to happen, and how does such a *violent* intervention follow the logic of the *Monument to Victims of All Wars*? These actions would allow one to assume that a significant shift seems to have occurred and only when the aftershocks have passed and the dust settles, we may perhaps see how certain events will be remembered in the future. Will these monuments be presented alongside the critical thinking that has surrounded them in recent years? Can these critiques become a part of how the memorial park is presented in history?

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30 "V Grahovem najprej poklon žrtvam nacizma, nato blagoslov spomenika domobrancem", RTV Slovenia, April 6, 2014  
<<http://www.rtv slo.si/slovenija/v-grahovem-najprej-poklon-zrtvam-nacizma-nato-blagoslov-spomenika-domobrancem/333932>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].







The final work in this Act are three photo-etchings, images of a forest destroyed by a natural disaster.

Everyliar is like everyone or Everyman<sup>31</sup>, the medieval play in which the main character when facing death tries to save himself by analysing all his life's sins. Everyman recognises his sins and admits lack of virtue but is saved because of his trust in god, or divine faith. Everyman is saved because of his one virtue, his faith. Everyliar also comes to the end of its existence, it is confronted not by Death as Everyman but by the haunting image of those who had contributed to its existence. The end of its existence is the end of its relevance, a fate worse than death to a monument.

Its end comes in the midst of a storm like no other. Black ice covered the forests. The branches of trees are clothed in transparent layers of ice so thick they are milky and weigh down the branches, making them droop as if they are carrying an unbearable burden. The forests glisten, in their new clothes, in the sunshine, but look defeated in the shadows with the branches bent and twisted like the heads of those in Dante's Purgatory, with tears of melting ice trickling down their backs. The storm of defeat began long before its final end in the forests surrounding the capital in 2014<sup>32</sup>. Overnight when the temperatures started rising the sounds of battle erupted. Sounds of cracking and breaking, thumps and thunder. Like a journalist chasing a war story, I flew to Slovenia to try and capture the sounds of this war but arrived only to find the remains and traces of the battle. Civilians weren't allowed into the forests and certain areas because of fear of injury so I found a local forester who took me to the frontlines surrounding the city. These same places that were once battlegrounds during the war, now in a state of post-apocalyptic imagery, creating a stunning metaphor; the forest is a stage, and the trees the unwilling victims of a sacrifice.

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31 Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, trans. by Charles A. and Maria-Odilia Leal McBride and Emily Fryer (London: Pluto Books, 2008 (originally published 1974) p.36.

32 Tom Gardner, 'Slovenia buried under FOUR INCHES of black ice as freak blizzard leaves 100,000 people without power and does €66million damage', The Dailymail, February 7, 2014. <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2553989/Slovenia-buried-FOUR-INCHES-black-ice-freak-blizzard-leaves-100-000-without-power-does-66million-damage.html>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

It reminded me of the work of Paul Nash, the fields of tree stumps in a war-torn landscape instead of bodies and limbs - or the words of Stockhausen in relation to the images post 9-11.<sup>33</sup> A subliminal beauty of the torn landscape, so quiet and peaceful. Only the traces left of the perpetrator's scorn. The guilty party had long left the scene of the crime.

Some of these forests in Slovenia, that had been the witnesses of the battles between these opposing groups, now practically destroyed, and their stories and traces disappearing with them. What remains are the tales of political advantage and disadvantage, and the manipulation of the nature of the identities of those who were a part of the incidents surrounding the war and post-war times. But Slovenia is not alone in its position of not placing any responsibility on members of the local communities who allied with Nazis and Fascists, we can see similar situations in Hungary, Austria, Italy, France, Holland, Poland, Lithuania. In Italy, Mussolini is still seen as a heroic figure in certain parts,<sup>34</sup> while in Hungary, Poland and Lithuania there are not many discussions surrounding the violence and murders that took place during WWII, mainly of the Jewish communities.<sup>35</sup> So Slovenia is perhaps not unique in that sense however these attempts to not only disclose rather justify and commemorate certain figures equally and in the same space remain rare. And while these monuments have been at the centre of protests and graffiti damage, not enough has been done in terms of a debate outside the realm of the political game.

*Everyliar leaves a trace* presents a critical position on the lack of acknowledgement of historical facts of WWII. In doing so, I predict these interventions, that are results of reductive representations of history, will not only create historical uncertainty, but will in the future continue to sustain the rift between two opposing political sides. By

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33 On September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2001, composer Karlheinz Stockhausen made a statement during a press conference regarding the 9-11 attacks where he described the events as being, “the greatest work of art that is possible in the whole cosmos.” (Anthony Tommasini, ‘Music; The Devil Made Him Do It’, *The New York Time*, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2001. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/30/arts/music-the-devil-made-him-do-it.html>> [last accessed 28.08.2018])

34 Anna Momigliano, ‘It’s easy to get a Mussolini souvenir in Italy, but its government now wants to ban them’, *Washington Post*, July 13, 2017 < [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/07/13/its-easy-to-get-a-mussolini-souvenir-in-italy-but-its-government-now-wants-to-ban-them/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.6a3993d816b1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/07/13/its-easy-to-get-a-mussolini-souvenir-in-italy-but-its-government-now-wants-to-ban-them/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.6a3993d816b1)> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

35 Christian Davies, ‘Poland makes partial U-turn on Holocaust law after Israel row’, *The Guardian*, June 27, 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/27/poland-partial-u-turn-controversial-holocaust-law> [last accessed 12.09.2018]









positioning this political division into the public landscape the state equips people with the tools that become weapons of ongoing debates.

The artworks, through their use of language and image, as tools also used by the State, present a position which introduces the voice of doubt and critique. These artworks, existing outside of the plane of political debate, use their own agency of existence, as objects transient in nature, to remain as comments that will appear and reappear in different contexts.

This Act predicates how these different mediums interact with language and text but also the aestheticised object. Each of the works engages with the action of concealing and revealing the topic of competitive memory, through the different modes of conveying their materialised forms.





ACT V.

MONUMENTAL RELAY

One will always question a past that is not remembered on plaques, in stone, on paper, in media... While wind and rain weather the sculptures that stand to remember our histories, it is the act of consistent re-*construction*, of those same stories of the past, that creates a space for surpassing of any doubts of their *truth* value.

*Monumental Relay* are two artworks which comment on the state of soft-power and translation of national symbols. One, taking the form of a view-master comments on the role of ArcelorMittal in their decision to not comply with their 'promise' to build a monument to the victims that perished in the factory in Omarska.<sup>1</sup> The view-master displays a series of images from a ceremony that takes place every year at the former camp. Recalling a toy, often used as a tourist gimmick showing images of monumental structures in a city or country, this view-master is used as a performative object to be taken onto the Orbit obstructing the scenic view with images of the reality that lies behind the failed attempt of creating a *megalomaniac* structure symbolising unity.

The other work, a sculptural piece, which is a miniature of the orbit itself, is presented as a baton, recalling Tito's extravagant batons created for his Relay of Youth.<sup>2</sup> The work not only speaks of forms of soft-power used or the debate surrounding the responsibility ArcelorMittal have but also of the position of the Olympic Games as a symbol of national unity attempting to conceal the true political and economic battles which have quietly existed on the sidelines of the sports' event, creating a Cold-War like playing field.

Omarska and Trnopolje are two small villages in the region of Prijedor. Prijedor is situated in the Serb Republic or Republika Srpska (the Serb entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina), a region that is known for –on a more international scale– the

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1 ArcelorMittal is the company that financed the building of the Olympic Orbit and is also the company that is currently the majority owner of the factory in Omarska which was used as a concentration camp in 1992 in BiH. A year after its acquisition of the Omarska mine ArcelorMittal made a public statement claiming it will build a memorial to the victims of the concentration camp and its survivors. ArcelorMittal contributors, 'ArcelorMittal Prijedor announces additional dates for access at Omarska mine', ArcelorMittal website  
<<http://corporate.arcelormittal.com/news--and--media/news/2012/may/15--05--2012>>  
[last accessed 12.09.2018]

2 The Relay of Youth is described in detail later in the Act.

concentration camps that appeared in the international media in 1992. Ed Vulliamy explained,

*“It was said we had “discovered” Omarska, but this was an inaccurate flattery. Diplomats, politicians, aid workers and intelligence officers had known about the place for months and kept it secret. All we did was announce and denounce it to the world.”*<sup>3</sup>

Since the end of the war, the region has remained in a static moment of denial. Republika Srpska did not have a planned format for reconciliation, as they do not acknowledge the idea of the very existence of the camps and the events that occurred there. There are no monuments to the victims of the camps in the region, apart from one in the village of Kozara, which remains mostly populated by the Muslim community, although a large part of the population now reside out of the country and only return occasionally, leaving the newly rebuilt village practically abandoned.<sup>4</sup>

There were a number of camps that existed in the region including; Omarska, Keraterm, Trnopolje, and Manjaca. Two of the camps are located close to the city of Prijedor. The more brutal of the two camps, Omarska, was an iron mine before the war. In 2004, ArcelorMittal bought 51% of shares in the company, therefore standing as the majority owner of the iron mine in Omarska.<sup>5</sup> Before the wars of the 1990s, Omarska was relatively unknown; it is now notable as one of the only concentration camps of post WWII Europe. It opened in early 1992 and within the few months of functioning as a death camp, Omarska held between 5,000 and 7,000 prisoners. According to Human Rights Watch between 4,000 and 5,000 people perished in the Omarska camp, although only a few hundred bodies were exhumed from a mass grave in the mine. Arcelor Mittal initially promised to build a monument at the site of the now functioning mine, but have since done nothing.<sup>6</sup> Instead once a year they allow the

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3 Ed Vulliamy, “‘Neutrality’ and the Absence of Reckoning: A Journalist’s Account”, *Journal of International Affairs*, 52 (1999).

4 There have been some recent initiatives to monumentalise the events that took place there. Anita Zecic has created a portable monument to travel across Europe in order to inform about the unreconciled conditions of the region. Anita Zečić, Project Monument of Peace Prijedor '92, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F13t7scB3z4>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

5 ‘ArcelorMittal is the world’s leading steel and mining company. Guided by a philosophy to produce safe, sustainable steel, it is the leading supplier of quality steel products in all major markets including automotive, construction, household appliances and packaging. ArcelorMittal is present in 60 countries and has an industrial footprint in 19 countries.’ Arcelor Mittal Contributors <<http://corporate.arcelormittal.com/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

6 Forensic Architecture Group ed. *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*. (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014)

victims, their families, and others who come in solidarity, to enter the camp for three hours, during which time a ceremony is held, organised by the visitors. This day falls on August 6<sup>th</sup> each year and is preceded by an evening at the former camp Trnopolje: a school before the war that is now in ruins.<sup>7</sup> From the evening of August 5<sup>th</sup> until afternoon of August 6<sup>th</sup>, a form of memorial exists, as a mass of bodies gather, from all parts of Europe and even the world, to remember together.

This year was very different, this year I am in a different place, towards the end or supposed end, or close to the end of my work. I planned what I thought was the best route to get from the little seaside village of Novigrad in Croatia to Prijedor in Republika Srpska, a 400 kilometer drive. In an attempt to avoid traffic and to cut my driving time, I drove in a diagonal line from my departure point to my destination. This decision meant driving through villages and hills but I had not expected exactly how things would turn out. I didn't have a GPS system but a map and was left with no phone signal for a long stretch of the drive. The beginning of the trip went smoothly with little traffic and beautiful scenic driving. Soon after what I thought was almost halfway through my trip, and almost as soon as I got off the highway, there was little to no signage on the streets. I drove from one village into another, recognising only every other or third name of the villages on my map. I didn't come across many villagers, as most of the villages seemed abandoned and there weren't many cars on the roads either. After a couple of wrong turns and the distracting stunning views, I managed to find a very small border crossing, it was almost hidden but according to some people I spoke with in the next days it used to be one of the major border crossings, as the town close to it was a very developed industrial town, Velika Kladuša. Now it didn't even seem like a village but more of a hamlet.

The journey seemed never-ending after arriving into Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). I drove past a village that had a river running through it, and it seemed like all the villagers were gathered around that river, enjoying the cool waters in the summer heat. And I was in my overheated car, which at the point when my air conditioning stopped working, turned

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7 The municipality intends to turn it into a cultural centre.

into an oven on wheels. But slowly I made my way to Prijedor and driving into the town, I recognised where I was and where I needed to go. I made my way to Hotel Prijedor which was also next to the Motel Prijedor, both on the river bank. I went inside each of them and surprisingly they were both full to capacity. I found this a little strange because this is hardly a tourist town but I was told about a B&B nearby and I made my way to a café to relax for a moment and call the B&B. At this point it had been about 8hrs since leaving Croatia. I called the B&B and a nice gentleman said they had a room for me and explained the location. It was only minutes away so I said I would be there in about 15/20 min and slowly finished my coffee while checking with friends about the evening events. Leaving the café and walking with my two bags, I looked into a small alley and a man popped his head out of a door, and said, 'you must be Manca, welcome'. A little odd but then again, in such a small town, everyone notices the foreigner that seems lost. I paid 15-euro cash on the spot and was shown to a large double bed with a view of the derelict shopping mall on the main square, a spectacular view, I was quite pleased with myself. I showered and contacted Four Faces of Omarska, explaining that I'll be coming to Trnopolje for the first event. I seemed so sure, getting into the car again, that I'll find my way to the former camp. I drove for about 20 min on the main road and turned at the sign, and continued down a road running through Trnopolje. Driving down the road, I was looking for the stone eagle monument, that I had seen the year before, the only monument on the site, built in a similar style to 1950s monuments, it stands in front of the old school, dedicated to Serbian forces. But I couldn't recognise anything. I drove very slowly and some of the villagers were in their gardens, looking at the strange car going 20 km/hr. I decided to turn around and try again as I felt I must have missed it. I went up and down the street twice and finally got the courage to ask a man mowing his lawn whether this was Trnopolje and whether the village continues further down, he replied that it goes on further down for more kilometers so I turned back again and continued driving. Suddenly I recognised the little shop, the white building, and stone eagle.

There were only three cars parked in the yard of the school and I parked next to them, a little hesitant, noticing some people from the little shop staring. I heard noise coming from behind the building and made my way through the unmown lawn. On the concrete basketball court stood a white tent, similar to ones at festivals, with long tables underneath. People were sitting and chatting, and one table was a make-shift kitchen with a lot of onions being chopped. I recognised my friends and went to say hello. We all stood in amazement staring at the back of the school, where large oriental carpets were being spread out and a projection was being prepared. Everyone was ready to camp out there for the evening. I assumed I was going to sleep in the car if necessary. The sky got darker, getting ready for a spectacular storm, a proper summer storm after a hot day, clouds danced on the sky and the sunset colors went from pinks and oranges to deep blues and purples. The sun was setting and in the distant I could hear the sound of the prayers from a mosque. I missed that sound and the familiarity of it almost made me want to sing-a-long. Then the thunder started. The wind blew, some more thunder and then all of a sudden, the sky exploded in buckets of rain and bursts of wind. We all hid under the tents but the gusts of wind started lifting the tent. The tallest of men stood on the edges and held the aluminum construction while the rest of us tried to check that anything valuable was in the centre of the tent and not being washed by the rain. The rain continued and there was a discussion about how to solve the matter of the evening of planned events and speakers. As soon as the rain calmed I followed two friends to take a closer look at the school. Coming to the back steps, we were *saluted* by a blonde man in his 40s, he was standing inside the building behind what was once a glass door, but now with no glass only the aluminum frame remained. He was introduced to me as the Actor. He smiled and started poking his head through the frame and said, 'Look...in the camp...out of the camp'. Everyone laughed! I smiled and felt I needed some form of approval to laugh. We made our way back to the tent to find out where the events would take place now. It was almost dark now. Satko, saw me, smiled and gave me a hug. I had

met Satko on my previous trip. He looked up and said, 'I hear it was in Kozarac earlier today, the storm, and now here, tomorrow it's supposed to be in Omarska... storming from camp to camp,' again everyone laughed. I remembered how it rained the last time I was there and how I offered Satko my umbrella and he replied with a smile, 'It stopped raining for me in 1992.'

There were a lot of people and not enough cars. I yelled out that I have space and collected 4 youngsters and a dog. They were very sweet but completely unsure of what they were doing there and probably like most other teenagers, chatting endlessly about this and that person and other things I couldn't understand while I trying to figure out if I am going the right way. We drove to another village, Kozarac, to the House of Peace. That's where the event was to take place. Dripping in one by one, the living room or social space became filled with people chatting away and lighting up cigarettes. The walls were covered with pictures of people that had died in the region and images from previous events and people that had visited. An elderly lady walked in and started hugging people, ran off again into the kitchen and suddenly I could smell the scent of Bosnian coffee being brewed on the stove, like my grandparents used to make. We sat around big tables, when the electricity went off, everyone began laughing and in a moment candles were lit and we all continued chatting. Not much later the projector was up and the events started with a panel discussion and book launch. This was by Four Faces of Omarska. A great discussion but sadly my Serbo-Croatian wasn't good enough to follow the debate that kicked in at the end. This was followed by another book launch by a woman that I recognised. It took me a couple of minutes but I remembered that I had met her at Royal Holloway University some years before when I was asked to speak at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Srebrenica.<sup>8</sup> This woman was in the audience and after the symposium, she stayed for drinks and all I remember was that she wasn't very pleased about the event or the presentations. She began the presentation of her

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8 'Representational Reconciliation: Monuments & Destruction in Bosnia and Serbia' at the 20th Anniversary of the Srebrenica Genocide: Denial, Commemoration, or Reconciliation? 29th June 2015, Picture Gallery, Royal Holloway, University of London.

own book and quickly went into a speech about intruding foreigners and artists coming to Bosnia. Sitting right next to her, I started to feel incredibly unwanted. I fiddled in my chair. As she finished, Satko stood up and spoke shortly. His exact words I won't remember but he said something like, "Today in Trnopolje, as the rain started and we huddled under the tent, I was approached by two Bosnian women, they came to me and asked, Satko, who are all these foreigners here, what are all these Serbs doing here." Satko stood quietly and continued that unfortunately they decided not to join us now and talk together about why we have decided to gather. He said nothing more, but it was enough for everyone to remain quiet for some moments. The evening continued and suddenly Florence Hartmann<sup>9</sup> walked in with Ed Vulliamy<sup>10</sup>. I was pleasantly surprised that after so many years the journalists that were the witnesses and voices of this war still try to come for these two days of commemoration.

By now it was past midnight and I was getting worried I wouldn't be able to drive back safely. My friends, Four Faces of Omarska, decided to leave so I asked if I could drive behind them, since there was little street lighting and I was already tired and emotional from the long day and didn't want to get lost in the villages.

I woke up to a cloudy and muddy day but at least it wasn't raining. I followed Four Faces of Omarska in my car and we drove into the procession of cars, surrounded by police, that inched towards the factory. This experience felt quite different from the previous time I was there. I knew what to expect and yet parking my car in the long serpent-like organised queue and walking through the mud, it seemed exactly the same, as if time had stopped. It probably does so each year for those hours.

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9 Florence Hartman was the Balkans correspondent for *Le Monde* during the 1990s and later became the official spokesperson and advisor to Carla Del Ponte, chief prosecutor of ICTY (International Court Tribunal for former Yugoslavia created in 1993). She was later held in contempt of court for publishing concealed details of proceedings in her book, *Paix et Châtiment, les guerres secrètes de la politique et de la justice internationales*. After a warrant was issued for her arrest France refused to extradite her.

10 Ed Vulliamy mentioned earlier was a journalist in the Balkans during the war and along with Penny Marschall, was responsible for revealing the first report of concentration camps in the region of Prijedor. He has remained a respected figure by many Bosnians from the region and often returns.



Omarska is built of three structures, the red hangar, the administration building, which we can see in the videos from 1992, and the so called White House, where the torture and murders took place.

There is a strange dynamic that happens for those few hours. People walk in and out of those buildings, some looking for specific places, some recalling stories they remember or had heard from someone else, and some drifting in silence. One cannot but feel the pain and anguish watching the faces of those who lost their families there and the ones that went through an unbelievable living hell and survived. The same ceremony was taking place that I had seen last time I was there, white balloons, with the names of the victims hanging on tags from the string, were filling up the ceilings of the White House. This time there was an official ceremony, which was interrupted last time because of the rain. The speakers stood in front of the administration building and spoke about the gathering, told stories about the victims that died there and about the necessity of breaking the silence that was caught in the invisible boundaries of this site. For a moment I felt uncomfortable, hearing descriptions of torture and death through a microphone/megaphone was something so uncommon and surreal. There were a couple of speakers from different organisations and one told the story of an old man who was caught by the army in Višegrad during WWII and was taken to the Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge<sup>11</sup> where he was stabbed and thrown in the river. The man survived and continued to live in Višegrad where he regularly saw the perpetrator that tried to kill him. The story continues into the 1990s wars, when the old man was caught again by the same perpetrator but this time his throat is slit before he was thrown into the river to his death. The story was meant to warn people about keeping quiet and not standing up to the aggressor. I was slightly surprised as the mood of the ceremony took a more political direction compared to the subtle quiet balloon ceremony I had witnessed before. I stood next to an elderly lady who started crying loudly when hearing these stories and she was shushed by some men in front of us. It was different but not in a way that I would personally think speaks of a reconciliation but rather

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11 The bridge is infamous for murders that took place there during the conflicts in the region. It is also famous for being a central narrative of the book, *The Bridge over the Drina* by Ivor Andrić.

of a desperate need for the breaking of invisible walls of silence that are suffocating the voices that wish to be heard.

If we observe these moments that take place in Prijedor as remains of a history and culture, a memory of a time past, what will the remains of our present be like in the future? What will memorialize this struggle for history and memory?

These commemorative acts, which are mainly recorded via oral narratives but also appear in the work of artists are completely excluded from a historical narrative that could be provided by Republika Srpska. In such societies where narrative and texts play a key role in the distribution of information and knowledge, the Nation-State described in *Roles of Narratives of Commemoration: Remembering as Mediated Action*, holds the ability to shape or manipulate the collective identity of the society.<sup>12</sup> In spaces such as Republika Srpska the decision over what history shall be acknowledged in textbooks used in educational institutions, creates the potential for manipulation of the mass, in an attempt to create a unified thinking society in the present.<sup>13</sup> Whether or not we are discussing the collective thought implemented by the Republika Srpska or Bosnia and Hercegovina, or whether the discussion returns to the nostalgic remains of a Yugoslavia,<sup>14</sup> it is important to critically observe that it is no longer through violence that Nation-States are battling for control of their *citizens' subjectivity*,<sup>15</sup> but through the uses of mnemonic tools, removing these tools in order to attempt to irrigate ideas that do not stand within the limits of the nationally agreed curriculum. This complete suppression of dual or multiple historical narratives creates a divide excluding people that refuse a singular narrative, therefore immediately presenting themselves as a threat to the State.

The Yugoslav Wars manifested in a problem that has appeared in other spaces as well, which is the unexpected shift in a society living in relative peace, and suddenly exploding into a violence that spreads into, not simply, a civil war but a war between neighbours and within families. The results are post conflict spaces that have unresolved

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12 James V. Wertsch and Doc M. Billingsley, 'The Role of Narratives in Commemoration: Remembering as Mediated Action' in *The Cultures and Globalization Series: Heritage, Memory & Identity*, ed. by Helmut Anheier and Yudhishtir Raj Isar, (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2011).pp.25-39.

13 Ibid. p.32

14 As referred to in the *Prologue* and *The region of the Ash Tree* and *A week in August*.

15 Ibid. 32

ideas of commemoration and little or no reconciliation and the population in a state of uncertainty that has remained present and continuous. Furthermore, these divided spaces remain without the possibility of creating monuments and markers in the public realm. As already mentioned above, the removal or denial of these mnemonic tools has left the excluded members of society in need of allocating alternative methods of memorialization.

As in the case of Rwanda, the war was localized, in the sense that civilians took up arms in addition to the presence of government-led militarized battle. Unlike in Rwanda, there has been no form of a *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* or a state approved and enforced programme of reconciliation.<sup>16</sup> The ICC have been projects in development since the 1970s as a solution to,

*‘challenges in post-authoritarian societies which cannot be coped with by means of justice alone. This concerns in particular the contradiction between the political imperative to integrate a society in transition—victims, perpetrators, bystanders, and profiteers—and the ethical, social, and juridical imperatives to do justice to victims and to indict perpetrators.’<sup>17</sup>*

Despite some attempts of a TRC in Yugoslavia, following the dissolution of the first attempt, no other clear attempts have been made, but in 2008 another initiative called RECOM was formed.<sup>18</sup> *‘RECOM is a regional commission for the establishment of facts about war crimes and other serious violations of human rights committed in the former Yugoslavia from January 1, 1991 until December 31, 2001.’<sup>19</sup>* RECOM has been calling on government officials of former Yugoslav states to recognise its work and the establishment of facts and evidence it has collected. According to its website, and as of 2017, 580,000 citizens

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16 TRC Rwanda followed the Gacaca system ( while the South African TRC followed the Ubuntu ( tradition. These both step away from a retributive justice which is more common in Western societies while these rather follow a mechanisms that promote reconciliation and the re-building of societal relationships.

Emmanuel Lohkoko AWOH and Walter Gam NKWI, ‘South Africa and Rwanda: Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, Peacebuilding, Religious and Local African Authorities in conflict situations’, *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, 20 (2017) 20-33.

17 Andreas Langenohl ‘Memory in Post-Authoritarian Societies’ in *The Invention of Cultural Memory* ed. by Astrid Erl&Ansgar Nünning (New York: Walter De Gruyter, 2008) pp.163-173 (p.168)

18 TRC of Yugoslavia created in 2001, was dissolved in 2003 with the collapse of Yugoslavia, but there are claims that no interviews or any reports had been filed, and there are no documents supporting that a real investigation took place. <https://www.eurozine.com/the-yugoslav-truth-and-reconciliation-commission/>

19 ‘What is RECOM’, RECOM website <<http://recom.link/sta-je-rekom/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

of former SFRY have signed the petition calling on their governments for recognition of RECOM and its work.<sup>20</sup>

What is specific to this conflict is that since the Nuremberg Trials of WWII, there has not been an international court set in place to deal specifically with a conflict. The Yugoslav Wars have dealt with their crimes through the International Court Tribunal of former Yugoslavia and also regional courts, however there was a lack of support to deal with the consequences of civilian-on-civilian brutality. These seemed, to many, to have had a quality of performativity similar to that of the Dayton Agreement, apparently presenting a unified decision that results in progress but in reality proves to create long running Cold War-like symptoms. The ICTY, on the other hand, could appear as it might have provided some form of consolation, but to many is seen as inefficient and far from aiding with reconciliation between the different nations involved in the war and the victims of the crimes.

The accountability gap in the process of the post-conflict space has created a situation where there is a division amongst the people and their historicisation of the events that took place during the war. The region of Prijedor, as previously mentioned, is one of the most apparent examples of such a space with dissonant heritage, mainly because of the extent of the atrocities that were committed there but also because it has seen a consistent flow of artistic initiatives, NGOs, journalists, and scholars entering and exiting the space. Could this be an attempt of prescriptive forgetting, as defined by Paul Connerton?<sup>21</sup> It is situation in which there is an, *'the incapacity to forget on the domestic level, and the risk of forgetting on the international level.'*<sup>22</sup>

Amongst the groups, that have been working in the area, I will focus on some examples and more specifically on two groups, *Four Faces of Omarska* and *Most Mira*.<sup>23</sup> Both these

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20 RECOM contributors, 'Sign the Petition', RECOM website <<http://recom.link/sign-the-petition-6/>> last accessed 12.09.2018].

21 Paul Connerton defines seven different types of forgetting: repressive erasure, prescriptive forgetting, forgetting that is constitutive in the formation of a new identity, structural amnesia, forgetting as annulment, forgetting as planned obsolescence, forgetting as humiliated silence.

22 Bruno Coppieters, 'Three types of forgetting: on contested states in Europe', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 20 (2018) 578-598. p. 580. <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/19448953.2018.1504378?needAccess=true>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

23 Also referred to in English as Bridge of Peace.

groups centre their activities towards artistic or multi-disciplinary practices, in this way almost functioning as collectives and their projects as artworks.

Four Faces of Omarska is a collective that observes:

*the strategies of memorial production from the position of those whose experience and knowledge have been subjugated, rejected, and excluded from public memory and public history. In short, it is an ongoing investigation of a complex vortex of historical dynamics in a particular site in the former Yugoslavia. The title Four Faces of Omarska comes from four constitutive layers in the history of this mining complex in northern Bosnia. It was established in socialist Yugoslavia as an iron ore mine (Prijedor, Omarska) at the beginning of the 1990s wars, Bosnian Serb forces and local authorities transformed the mine into a concentration camp for ethnic Muslims and Croats; after the war, in 2004, ArcelorMittal, one of today's largest multinational companies, assumed majority ownership of Omarska mine and resumed commercial mining operations; finally, in 2007 it was used as a film shooting location for Saint George Slays the Dragon, the historical ethno-blockbuster (First World War) co-produced by film companies from Serbia proper and Republika Srpska. It was established in socialist Yugoslavia as an iron ore mine (Prijedor, Omarska)<sup>24</sup>.*

One of its founders, Milica Tomic, was also a member of the *Monument Group*, which was conceived in 2002 as a discussion group that focused on questioning forms of memorialization in Former Yugoslavia and whether the state can take on the responsibility of building monuments that can represent the victims while also presenting insight into their own role in the violence.<sup>25</sup> In this way, the group also worked on mapping out relations of power. It was an attempt to further understand how to build a culture of collective memorialization and instigate methods of implementing a unified but multivocal history. As one of the members Srdjan Hercigonja explained, it is about the methodology of production, non-production, about members of the group taking on different roles and weaving a transdisciplinary way of thinking.<sup>26</sup>

The group Four Faces of Omarska applies artistic strategies, behaving almost as the agent through which ideas can be implemented. Coming into the space as outsiders

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24 Open Space Art Forum, <<http://www.openspace-zkp.org/2013/en/artslab.php?a=3&w=14>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

25 Grupa Spomenik, or Monument Group functioned between 2002-2010

26 From an interview with Hercigonja conducted over skype 19.03.2017.

from the victorious Nation, Serbia, that is glorified in Republika Srpska, they, members of the group, initially had certain privileges or rather were approached with a certain level of respect. In this way, they were able to perhaps perform a role that others could not, taking on the idea of soft-power and instead using it for its own purposes.<sup>27</sup> Through the use of artistic strategies and appropriating State strategies in order to create the desired political outcome, this group creates a form of re-appropriation of soft-power. Appropriating the roles that the State should have set into place but through this presenting their own ideological positions. The group does not create or function as a collective whose primary or even secondary role would include production, they behave more as supporters of local initiatives.

What follows is an excerpt from a recent discussion with Hercigonja.<sup>28</sup>

SH: Basically in our approach in Omarska, we never actually advocated for the monument, but we asked the question of what a monument would actually do, would it solve the problem, will it reconcile the different social or ethnic groups? Of course not, so there must be something more to be done than a monument. The monument is needed in our opinion because there is a need for the victims to have an object...literally an object, something that is touchable, tangible. As a proof that in that locality, in that mind, in this place, they suffered and that something bad happened. This was the case with the White House in which case they are literally touching the walls, grabbing, in need of a physical object to prove that something happened there. There is a need from everyone who is involved for that.

For me it is very interesting that we were the first Serbs that came to the commemoration in Omarska in 2010. But it is also interesting that as an artistic collective we never produced anything and we did not aim to produce any kind of piece of art. It was our very presence that was productive in a way that it opened a political space for locals to get involved, for other people from Serbia to come, because no one had come before us. It was an ice-breaker. It wasn't easy. The most difficult part was that we had to adopt an identity that was

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27 This position of outsiders being able to comment on a situation that is not their own is discussed in the earlier *Act A week in August*.

28 From an interview with Hercigonja conducted over skype 19.03.2017.

forced upon us and we accepted it despite the enormous difficulties but basically we realised that it was needed in order to gain a greater social acceptance or greater social inclusion. So that everyone can work together not just as a polarised organisation.

MB: Do you in a sense produce – just not in the form of objects?

SH: Yes, we have these so called working groups where we discuss media, memory, trauma, memorials, human rights, different artistic practices in relation to post-conflict, post-war, post-Yugoslav spaces and so on and we do consider it as a form of performance, one which is open for everybody to participate in, so it is not only us, we do not moderate but we just give a space for the audience and public to participate.

We have gone every year since 2010.

MB: Would you say that your presence in the space, once a year, is a form of performance?

SH: Yes, the ritual of coming. This year it will be the 8<sup>th</sup> year and in itself that is a form of production and also of performance.

MB: People coming to the space, many from a different cultural generation associated with memorialisation and commemoration with a tangible object with the tradition of building monuments. But for one moment in a year there is a physicality, a physical mass of people in that one space, so for that moment create a physical object that is formed with that mass of people?

SH: Yes, for 3 hours the memorial exists, always the same time from 10AM to 1PM.

MB: So the memorial exists once a year for 3 hours?

SH: I was thinking about it in terms of a social sculpture but also as what a memorial typically looks like. Every year the panels are put in the same place, people

move from one building to another, speeches take place. For me it is interesting to think about what kind of monument it becomes. I imagine that the place becomes a completely politically independent space, so these three hours it is not part of Republika Srpska, it is not part of the municipality or the city of Prijedor. It's a form of ex-territoriality?

But our position there is always tricky since we come and go from there. In Bosnia the situation is fragile but I don't mean that things shouldn't be done because it can raise tension or instability no that is a production of fear created by the government. Something really does have to happen but as with artistic practices and scientific research that there is a responsibility, social responsibility towards the people you are working with who are also your partners in your work.

We behave as agents.

MB: So it is like a fluid space?

SH: Yes. It is not like we have a firm definition, there is no right or wrong.

We are never organisers of any events however we participate by attending and we always support petitions.

There is no past or present in that sense when exploring Omarska that's why we use the term four faces, the idea is also to examine how these periods overlap between each other like socialism, war and concentration camps and the capitalism. Also asking was it possible to transform Bosnia from socialism to capitalism without a war...without these concentration camps? Would privatisation have been possible without a war, having in mind we all had social property?

Looking at Most Mira, we can observe a different approach. It was created, as the founder Kemal Pervanić explained, as a mode of interacting with methods of reconciliation. '*We are not there yet, even though we started our first reconciliation project three years ago*', he explained.<sup>29</sup>

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29 From an interview with Kemal Pervanic conducted over skype on 20.03.2017.



The project started in this absence of official efforts of symbolic repair. People were not given an opportunity to communicate openly about the events that occurred during the wars and there was and still is a lack of an official acceptance of the existence of the camps. The work that Most Mira conducts deals with reconciliation in a way of presenting opportunities for the community to work together. As talking about the events of the war was too uncomfortable, bringing together the community, especially the younger generations, through activities became a method of generating interaction. *'We use arts and culture as our tools for reconciliation'*, Kemal explained and when I asked him to define reconciliation he continued, *"Reconciliation is something you don't try to define, it can change from one day to the next, it's about bringing people together, you try one thing and you see what doesn't work and see why and then try something else."*<sup>30</sup> Pervanić explained how crushing the experience of trying to work in the area is, as change is something that does not happen overnight, there are no immediate results. *'You have to accept that 10 years later there are still no results, and people often get crushed by their expectations. You want something good to happen but you cannot afford to be disappointed, you have to keep trying. When there is a crisis, you have to double your efforts. And that is my approach, it is observational, you follow what is happening and then you decide what the appropriate course of action is. You cannot plan too much because of the constant instability and people's uncertainties and lack of trust due to the many failed initiatives by foreign and local NGOS. But I believe that small victories will accumulate into something big.'*<sup>31</sup>

When I asked about Truth Commissions and whether that would have been something suitable for Bosnia and Hercegovina, Kemal replied that, it would mean that the state would have to support it and even televise it and while it would be great, it isn't something that is possible. So instead the discussions happen behind closed doors unfortunately and as Kemal stressed, the longer that it takes to address the problem in public, the more likely it is that the next generations will become new victims. This lack of a public debate or discourse, leads people to patch histories with personal stories, which tend to perpetuate myths and create new ones, therefore widening the gap and moving further away from a collective history and memorialization.

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30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

Most Mira are currently preparing to build a Youth Peace Center, in one of the local villages, that will offer spaces for people to work together.<sup>32</sup> It is already, through this process of preparing and running Most Mira, that Kemal has been creating bridges between the two communities, involving young professionals from the two different ethnic groups to work together. It is with the act of introducing them to each other as colleagues that have common interests that the potential of discussion of the political past becomes a possibility.

This adaptation of strategies in order to construe ideologies has become the only method of functioning in the area. Testing the boundaries of local governments by using the support systems of the ‘foreign’ hero in order to be able to implement certain ideas that the local suppressed community would not be allowed to forward themselves. Could these methods be proposed as counter-monuments, as non-monumental moments that are not structures that stand as aestheticized objects but rather present themselves in an ever-changing form that adapts? A chameleon or shape shifter, in this way avoiding destruction from those who wish to continue to suppress it - almost becoming the absolute re-appropriation of soft-power.<sup>33</sup>

Or as Hercigonja explained, “*There is production of alternative knowledge which is not possible in academia, which art gives you and provides opportunities for many things within a marginalised space.*”<sup>34</sup>

Omarska in this way inevitably becomes a monument in itself, whether or not it is recognised officially.

Arcelor Mittal has in the remained through this process unscathed by the less than flattering press it gets occasionally.<sup>35</sup> Very little coverage exists of this yearly event.

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32 At the time of writing (2018) the charity was raising funds to build the centre. <<http://www.most-miraproject.org/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

33 This idea of a disguised monument that can function ‘under the radar’ is explored in Everyliar leaves a trace.

34 From an interview with Hercigonja conducted over skype 19.03.2017.

35 Whatever the reason for ArcelorMittal’s decision not to build an object memorializing the deaths and events that occurred at the site of Omarska mine, their refusal to comment on their decision has been met with little resistance. The most likely reason being the political circumstances in the region and the need for the new owner to conform to the right wing politics in the region which support the denial of the events that occurred during the war.

However in 2012 the multibillion-pound company, made a large investment in financing the Olympic Orbit, designed by artist Anish Kapoor as Britain's tallest permanent public art sculpture, to remain after the 2012 London Olympics. The structure was selected as the winning design for a commission for an Olympic Tower. It was the unanimous decision of a panel of the world's most esteemed art professionals. The Orbit was to stand as a proud emblem of the London Olympic games. The ArcelorMittal Orbit is named after its main sponsor, the world's largest steel company. The project was estimated to cost 19.1 million pounds with 16 million coming from the company.<sup>36</sup> In a press release from June 29, 2011,<sup>37</sup> ArcelorMittal explain that the 2,200 tons of steel used in the structure of the Orbit comes from all parts of the world in order to reflect on the notion of Olympic spirit.

On 14 April 2012, Mladen Jelača, Director of ArcelorMittal Prijedor confirmed to Professor Eyal Weizman, of Goldsmiths, University of London and artist Milic Tomic of the Monument Group, Belgrade, that iron ore mined at Omarska mine has been used in the fabrication of the ArcelorMittal Orbit.<sup>38</sup>

ArcelorMittal later denied all claims of this. On July 2, 2012 the Forensic Architecture Research Center along with the group *Four Faces of Omarska*, some survivors of Omarska, and journalist Ed Vulliamy<sup>39</sup> hosted a press conference where they named the ArcelorMittal Orbit as the Omarska Memorial in Exile.<sup>40</sup>

Since its construction, the ArcelorMittal Orbit has been heavily criticized by the Labour Party because of undeniable financial losses.<sup>41</sup> Despite the fact that the tower was

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36 Wikipedia, ArcelorMittal, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ArcelorMittal\\_Orbit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ArcelorMittal_Orbit)> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

37 Forensic Architecture Group ed. *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*. (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014) p.223.

38 Forensic Architecture website <<http://www.forensic-architecture.org/explorations/a-memorial-in-exile/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

39 Guardian journalist, at the time working for ITN British television network, was among three journalists that were allowed into certain parts of the camp on August 6th, 1992. The reportage were the first images of the reality of the camps that the international public saw.

40 Rachel Wright, 'Omarska Memorial in Exile', BBC World Service, <http://vimeo.com/47299561>

41 Pippa Crerar, 'ArcelorMittal Orbit tower 'losing £10,000 each week'', *Evening Standard*, October 20, 2015 <<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/obit-tower-losing-10000-each-week-a3094971.html>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

Rebecca Café, 'Olympic Park tower 'saddled with debt that will never be repaid'', BBC News, July 27, 2017 <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-40728541>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

financed in the majority by ArcelorMittal, £3.1 million pounds of tax-payer money went towards the costs of building the attraction that cannot seem to charm neither Londoners nor tourists into paying the admission fee. According to an article in the Guardian, from October 2015, the tower is losing as much as a £10,000 loss per week. The same article mentions plans to turn the tower into the world's longest slide.<sup>42</sup>

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the slide, designed by Carsten Höller, opened to the public.<sup>43</sup> In an article by the Daily Telegraph, Anish Kapoor is quoted to have warned Mayor Boris Johnson against turning his sculpture into an amusement park.<sup>44</sup> However, according to the same article, it was Kapoor's idea to invite artist Höller, in order to in some way preserve the idea of the tower remaining a public artwork. There is little news of the current state of ticket sales for the amusement park experience.

The very particular situation of the large investment of the company and its name branding, has been for the most part forgotten in terms to the company's relationship to their ownership of the mine/former concentration camp in Republika Srpska.

For the most part, to me, it still remains a Memorial in Exile, a placeholder, for the memorial that is seemingly never to be built in Omarska.<sup>45</sup>

Neither of the artists involved in the building of or intervention to the Orbit have publicly commented about the history relating to the sponsorship. In recent years, we have seen artistic resistance to sponsors who have questionable involvement in socio-political and ecological matters.<sup>46</sup> In this case, this was something that neither artist chose to speak up about despite Kapoor's desire to portray himself as a political

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42 Aisha Gani, 'Olympic Park's Orbit tower costing taxpayer £10,000 a week', The Guardian, October 20, 2015 <<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2015/oct/20/olympic-parks-orbit-tower-costing-taxpayer-10000-a-week>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

43 Lizzie Edmonds, 'Olympic park slide: What it's like to ride the ArcelorMittal Orbit', Evening Standard <<https://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/great-days-out/what-its-like-to-ride-the-olympic-slide-a3278826.html>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

44 Hanna Furness, 'Anish Kapoor: Boris 'foisted' new slide on my sculpture', The Telegraph, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/04/26/anish-kapoor-boris-foisted-new-slide-on-my-sculpture/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

45 The term placeholder is also used and described in further detail in the Act, Witness Corner Marked.

46 One example of such resistance is Liberate Tate. '*Liberate Tate is a network dedicated to taking creative disobedience against Tate until it drops its oil company funding.*' <<http://www.liberatetate.org.uk/about/>>

artist speaking out about human rights abuse<sup>47</sup> and most recently the refugee crisis.<sup>48</sup> The two artistic interventions do however shed some light on the potentials of artistic action. The ArcelorMittal Orbit remains to some the Memorial in Exile, the memorial that ArcelorMittal never built but is re-appropriated through the action of claiming and renaming.

In the paragraphs above I have discussed the narratives surrounding the Orbit but in the paragraphs to follow I will outline briefly what the Relay of Youth was and how it is publicly presented today. In previous Acts, I have described a kind of Yugo-nostalgia and the effects of it in present day states of former Yugoslavia.<sup>49</sup> The two symbols I am interweaving are the Olympic Orbit and the Relay of Youth. *Monumental Relay*, the artwork, featured in this Act, is a response to two elements that I have intertwined, one the idea of the representative symbol of a Nation State, created to show a unity amongst the People and the second the effect of artistic practice on the position of creating such a symbol.<sup>50</sup>

From 1945 until 1988 a symbolic relay race took place in former Yugoslavia. Initially created as a celebration of Tito's birthday, it became an annual moment of unity and national pride. Over 22,000 batons were created throughout the years, some local, others regional. The batons celebrated different emblems of what Yugoslavia stood for. These batons are now part of the collection of the Museum of Yugoslav History in Belgrade. To some it is still viewed as an emblematic event of the Socialist State, representing the unity of the Nation. However, in 1987 an artist group, New Collectivism, won the competition for the poster for Youth Day.<sup>51</sup> The group was the graphic design department of the famous Neue Slowenische Kunst.<sup>52</sup>

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47 Amnesty International contributor, 'Anish Kapoor and friends perform Gangnam Style for Ai Weiwei – video', The Guardian, <<https://www.theguardian.com/music/video/2012/nov/22/anish-kapoor-gangnam-style-video>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

48 Mark Brown, 'Ai Weiwei and Anish Kapoor lead London walk of compassion for refugees', The Guardian, <<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/sep/17/ai-weiwei-anish-kapoor-london-walk-refugees>> [last accessed 12.09.2018]

49 Yugo-nostalgia is a common expression used to describe a nostalgia for the times of Yugoslavia.

50 I use the capitalised People, because I am referring to the society...

51 Museum of Modern Art, New Collectivism exhibition, <<http://nsk.mg-lj.si/artist/new-collectivism/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

52 '*The NSK art collective was formed in 1984 in Yugoslavia by three groups active in the fields of visual art, music, and theater: Irwin, Laibach, and the Scipion Nasice Sisters Theatre. Later, other groups joined in, among them the design group New Collectivism and the Department of Pure and Applied Philosophy. Crucial for NSK's operations*

When New Collectivism won the competition, it was soon discovered that the group had based their poster on a painting, *The Third Reich*, by a prominent favorite artist of the Nazi regime. The controversy around this stirred up a national scandal. The artists kept the image almost the same, only replacing the flags and the baton, the Yugoslav for the Nazi flag and the baton for the torch. Once authorities became aware of this the artists were interrogated by the police. In a documentary, *Fine Art of Mirroring*, the artists recall the events and aftermath of their artwork.<sup>53</sup> The Collective was well-known for provoking imagery questioning the nature of Tito's regime and the freedom or lack of that was offered in terms free-speech and artistic freedom to publicly critique the regime.<sup>54</sup>

New Collectivism provided a great attempt to portray some of the uncertainty surrounding the reign of Tito but also the political situation that was unravelling at the particular moment in the history of Yugoslavia, when nationalist views were emerging from the different states.

Departing from the idea of the poster created by New Collectivism, *Monumental Relay* critiques two different presentations of national identity. The act of making a baton which imitates the form of the Relay of Youth batons, and presenting a miniature model of the Olympic Orbit as a central figure of the baton, addresses the mode of political commentary provided by New Collectivism. They provided a mode of commentary on the scandal of ArcelorMittal's desire to appear as a corporation which invests in transnationality and unity- the Olympics- while concurrently becoming the silent partner of the perpetrator- Omarska. In a moment that provokes and disturbs the nature of a monument (which in this case was the Relay of Youth), *Monumental Relay* attempts to do just that, offering a critique of the structure through its materialization as a miniature model imitating the batons made for the Relay of Youth. These batons

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*and its development were collaboration, a free flow of ideas among individual members and groups, and the joint planning of artistic actions. In 1992, the NSK transformed into the NSK State in Time as a response to the radical political changes that were taking place in Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 1990s.* Certain members of NSK are still active in the artworld. The Venice Biennial in 2016 featured an exhibition of their work. Miran Mohar, 'Why Neue Slowenische Kunst in German?' in *E-Flux Journal*, 57 (2014).

53 *Fine Art of Mirroring* dir. by Corinne Enquist&Toma Bačić, (D'Art, 2012).

54 The group criticised not only the Yugoslav regime but also Nazi Germany and appropriated iconography used by the regimes in order to critique the nature of how art was used as a form of manipulation

took on a variety of forms, typically representing an object or symbol relating to the ‘sponsors’ of the baton.

By reassessing the idea of what unity and national pride can be disguised as- in this case unveiling the support that the sponsor has shown in aiding the denial of a concentration camp which has been widely recognized as such by even the ICTY- the work is positioned as an object that evokes and provokes the very nature of not only the Relay of Youth but the Olympic Games.

In David Lowenthal’s, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, he speaks of the act of ‘*re-making what ought to have been*’.<sup>55</sup> Although Lowenthal is referring to events that ‘*improve history, memory, and relics to reveal the past’s true nature better than could be done in its own time*’,<sup>56</sup> perhaps when we are thinking about the nature of post-conflict spaces, there is a necessary time-lapse that needs to occur in order for clarity of the image of history to be revealed in its ‘true’ colors.

The view-master produced in the style which recalls 1980s toys, addresses the newly made addition of Carsten Höller’s slide. The view-master has a reel of 7 images which in chronological order present a storyboard of the commemoration ceremony which takes place at the site of the former concentration camp. The portable object is meant to be viewed at the top of the Orbit tower and is a proposal for a permanent view-master to be constructed on the viewing platform of the tower.

Regardless of the standing debate surrounding the need to remember and never forget, the necessity for retrieval of the past through mnemonic tools, through the act of re-writing, re-constructing, re-telling, a forgetting is occurring. Certain truths will always be forgotten or altered in order for others to reappear.<sup>57</sup>

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55 David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country Revisited*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) p.499.

56 *ibid*.

57 See David Rieff, *In Praise of Forgetting: Historical Memory and its Ironies*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).









































ACT VI.  
GAME: MONUMENT

**GAME : MONUMENT** has no end and no beginning, it is always in motion, a constantly changing *system of tragedy*.

Players can choose to execute the game by taking on the role of the different personalities. One can play all the personalities or can choose to play with others.

Unlike with other games, there is no ultimate goal; no winner, no loser--- just a choice to become an active participant or remain out of the game, as a passer-by and reluctant accomplice.

Though there is no ultimate goal to reach in the game, there are elements that reveal themselves as the game is played.

Each personality has specific powers of control.

The **PEOPLE** are the speakers of the game and hold the deck of cards, they narrate the game though they do not know what is written on the cards until those are revealed to them by the **NATION OF MEMORY**. The **NATION OF MEMORY** reveals the cards with the roll of a dice.

The **ARCHITECT OF HISTORY** is responsible for enacting the narrative that is read by the **PEOPLE** by placing monuments onto the **NATION OF MEMORY**.

*GAME:MONUMENT* was commissioned for the Kaunas Biennial, ***THERE AND NOT THERE (Im)possibility of a monument.***<sup>1</sup> Initially, when I was invited to take part in the project, I spent some days in Kaunas and Vilnius on a research trip to observe the situation of monument building in the two cities, one which was once the capital and the later which is currently the capital. My work was meant to portray a response to the debate surrounding monument building in Lithuania but coming from a background of years of dealing with former Yugoslavia in an in-depth manner, I was weary of commenting on the situation after only a brief encounter with the spaces, history, and politics of the city. Instead I chose to create a work which not only spoke about the conflicting situation in Lithuania but a more general response to debates of monumentalisation, conflicting histories, competitive memory, and the role of the monument. This Act presents some current conflicts surrounding monument building and positions the artwork created within this context as a mode of commenting and archiving some of the key concepts of the discourse.

The question around constructing monuments remains a representative point of deliberation. The question remains unanswerable; what is it that the monument is really representing in its value as a conventional form of memorialisation in the public realm, that is otherwise not happening in different forms of monumentalisation? How can we continue to justify the building of expensive structures which in themselves have proven to be across the period of the past 30 years since the creation of a ‘new Europe’, as Gal Kirn puts it, only ephemeral in their importance. How can we then allow for a new process of building to become the more *conventional* form? Can we begin

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1 *‘The 11th Kaunas Biennial “There And Not There”\* will open on 15 September 2017 and will question the notion of monument: what, when and why should a monument be or not be. While opposing the populist practice of removing-erecting and conservative traditionalism, both of which are prevalent in the memory discourse of public art in Lithuania, the Biennial will stimulate and legitimise new, contemporary, conceptual, and relevant ideas and strategies of remembrance. The exhibition will take place in public spaces of the city. The 11th Biennial’s curator, artist Paulina Pukytė\*\*, has invited artists from Lithuania, Germany, Slovenia, Great Britain, Japan, the Netherlands, South Africa, and Poland to make site-specific installations for Kaunas.’*  
<(http://www.artterritory.com/en/news/6801-11th\_kaunas\_biennial\_there\_and\_not\_there\_(im)possibility\_of\_a\_monument/)>



to separate from a system of monumentalisation that no longer presents itself useful or pertinent? And how can this system we have created be employed by everyone?

In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Sara Ahmed, positions the role of pain in the divide that occurs between the Western observer and the Other in pain. The Westerner creates a relationship in which they become the center of the pain, ‘we feel sad about their suffering, an ‘aboutness’ that ensures that they remain the object of ‘our feeling’.<sup>2</sup> As she describes we feel a point of empowerment once we are able to associate a story of the overcoming of pain with ‘our work, our support’, turning our sadness into a sense of accomplishment. The relationship between the Westerner who is unaware that they are in fact the cause of that pain come to alleviate their own ‘guilt’ through the sense of accomplishment when we share stories of an overcoming of pain and suffering by the Other. This relationship is of particular interest in terms of how it presents itself in the political realm, when pain and suffering becomes identity.<sup>3</sup>

*‘The fetishisation of the wound as a sign of identity is crucial to ‘testimonial culture’ (Ahmed and Stacey 2001), in which narratives of pain and injury have proliferated. Sensational stories can turn pain into a form of media spectacle, in which the pain of others produces laughter and enjoyment, rather than sadness or anger. Furthermore, narratives of collective suffering increasingly have a global dimension. As Kleinman, Das and Lock argue, ‘Collective suffering is also a core component of the global political economy. There is a market for suffering: victimhood is commodified’ (Kleinman, Das and Lock 1997: xi).<sup>4</sup>*

In previous Acts the position of attraction to violence is presented as a problematic but symptomatic trait of post-conflict identities but this is very closely related to ideas surrounding victimhood.<sup>5</sup> Ahmed’s suggestion regarding the importance of testimony reverts back to the issues surrounding the role of witnessing and testimony, and the need for it as Primo Levi stated. The need to give testimonies of the witnessed atrocities in order to come to terms with the evils experienced. Many have advocated for a need to forget, such as David Rieff in his work *In Praise of Forgetting*. Often of course we hear from the side of the perpetrator or those part of the nation or in some way identifying

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2 Sara Ahmed *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* 2nd ed.(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014) p.21..

3 Ibid. p.32

4 Ibid.p.32

5 The Act in which violence is further addressed is *The Region of the Ash Tree*.

with the past of the perpetrator, advocating for a need to move away from the past, a need to forget and not continuously be reminding, reverting back to hatreds of the past. Understandably so no one wants to be repeatedly reminded of their wrongdoings. However we are well aware, as we have considered throughout the different examples in the development of memory and monument studies, that this is only the case in respect to some nations' pasts. Horrific pasts like the Jewish Holocaust continue to be remembered world-wide with the building of monuments and information/education centers or museums, however those same countries remain rather unwilling to remember or memorialise any of their own blame-worthy bloody pasts. For example the United States' lack of ability to confront the genocide of Native Americans and only on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 a monument was built to the many African slaves that were lynched by white Americans throughout history while the Holocaust Memorial Museum which is the official Holocaust Memorial in the United States was opened in 1993.<sup>6</sup> Equally the United Kingdom, which is almost void of monuments or memorials reflecting on their own bloody colonialist past which included many genocides and continues to keep up monuments of some of those responsible for horrific crimes, has also decided to dedicate millions to the building of a Holocaust Memorial.

If these 'great democratic nations' who are the supposed emblems of human rights' advocacy are incapable to facing their own pasts how can we expect them to hold accountable other nations, which are in stages of redevelopment, for their violent pasts. The unjust double standards that occur in current politics definitely taint discussions around memorialization, commemoration, the building of monuments and reflections of those built in the past. This project exposes some key issues surrounding problematic state of memorialization in certain former Yugoslav states but also instigates a broader questioning of how accepting we are of injustices occurring in different spaces. Ahmed questions how, '*shame becomes not only a mode of recognition of injustices committed against others, but also a form of nation building. It is shame that allows us 'to assert our identity as a nation'.*'<sup>7</sup> In this way modes of memorialisation can present themselves as methods of public shaming equally can certain artistic practices function as modes of shaming. Ahmed relates to Sartre in his description of shame, '*I am ashamed of what I am. Shame therefore*

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6 Campbell Robertson. 'A Lynching is Opening. The Country Has Never Seen Anything Like it. *The New York Times*. April 25th, 2018. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/25/us/lynching-memorial-alabama.html>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

7 Ahmed p.102

*realises an intimate relation of myself to myself. I am ashamed of myself as I appear to the Other.*<sup>8</sup>

Shame therefore taking into account this understanding, exists not only in relation to how we appear to ourselves but how we appear in front of others. In this way looking at national shame as one of the groundworks of national identity, it is only when it exists in the public realm does it really become a useful way of exploring identity. Otherwise the neglect of reflection, of this shame and suppression of the past, leads to a long-lasting selective amnesia that is inherited from generation to generation. For as long as this inability of recognition of all pasts exists, the building of monuments will remain a ritual of those in a position of superiority, those in power.<sup>9</sup>

I have mentioned the work of some artists whose artistic practice and/or monuments are particularly developed to provoke these type of debates but there are others that I should not exclude in particular *Jer me se tiće* (Because it concerns me) a group some of whose members I met in Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina. One of the members Emir Hodžić, also a member of *Stop Genocide Denial (SGD)*, prepared what some described to me as an unforgettable performance which I might refer to as a counter-monument. It was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the beginning of the dissolution of the camps in the area that Hodzic prepared a performance where he re-enacted a scene from what a situation in the camp was like. Dressed up as a soldier he asked former prisoners to re-enact their roles of the prisoners they had been 20 years before that. The performance was emotional for everyone to say the least. Hoždić, along with activist group *Jer Me Se Tiće*, was also involved in a project where a concrete monument was illegally placed in cities where no monuments exist to the victims of the Balkan wars.<sup>10</sup> This monument was removed by the police and eventually the group retrieved their monument only to place it in another town. According to Hoždić the monument had the words, *To all the victims of the war*, inscribed on it, recalling the work of conceptual artist Braco Dimitirjević. Dimitirjevic's *Monument to Victims of All Wars*, stands next to the History Museum in Sarajevo and alongside the *ICAR Canned Beef Monument* by Nebojša Šerić

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8 Ahmed, p.104.

9 The monument as a structure has throughout history been surrounded by debates in terms of its visual form and ideological position in society and history. Are they and have they ever been necessary and is that even relevant? I don't think it is. The question of necessity is irrelevant, they are not necessary but the debate surrounding them is and if they are used as a tool to instigate this debate then their relevance can almost be justified.

10 I never found an image of this monument but it was described to me during a conversation with Hodžić in 2014 in Prijedor.

Shoba. Dimitrijević's monument, a stone plinth with an inscription on all four sides in different languages, *UNDER THIS STONE THERE IS A MONUMENT TO THE VICTIMS OF THE WAR AND COLD WAR*. Shoba's monument some meters away is an oversized replica of a food can similar to those that were brought by soldiers into Sarajevo during the siege. The inscription reads, *Monument to the International Community from the grateful citizens of Sarajevo* and is meant to be a ironic response to the fact that many of the cans that were given to people were expired, some even dating back to the Vietnam War, therefore people weren't actually able to eat them.<sup>11</sup>

SCCA, Sarajevo Center for Contemporary Art along with other organisations, mentioned above and in the Act *Monumental Relay*, has been one of the primary sites for discussions of monument building since the war. One such project that looked at the development of the monument in the post-Balkan War era was the *De/construction of Monument* by SCCA,

*De/construction of Monument, multidisciplinary project, 2004 – 2007, composed as a series of panel discussions, lectures and seminars, artistic presentations, exhibitions and interventions in public space. This project involved particularly important examples of the post-Yugoslav counter-monument-works that re-thought the forms, objects and stakes of public memory. De/construction of Monument relies upon the need for systematization of individual artistic phenomena in the recent art in the environs of former Yugoslavia that use, as their referential material, different representations of past, aimed at its demystification, reinterpretation or re-affirmation. Dealing with monuments, artists appear through their works in the role of critics of the imposed selective perception and interpretation of past upon which today's (weltanschauung) is constituted.*

*Attitude towards the past nowadays is the key for not/solving of numerous regional problems particularly in the countries of former Yugoslavia whose people have, almost through the whole 20th century lived in one common state and learned one common history. The process of overcoming past cannot be truly commenced unless history ceases to be identified with collective memory, national epic poems, tales of heroes, myths of eternal heroism and sacrifice. The project, whose basis lies with the more recent art practice, deals in all its segments with the*

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11 'Bosnians raise monument to canned beef', *Reuters online* April 26th, 2007.<<https://uk.reuters.com/article/oukoe-uk-bosnia-monument-can/bosnians-raise-monument-to-canned-beef-idUKL0657786020070406>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

*clearing of mental space, or with overcoming the past.*

*Project started with introduction of the artists who use the form of monument in anti-monument sense (Braco Dimitrijević, Sanja Iveković) or creating “monument to the negative past” (Jochen Gerz). Last faze of “De/construction of Monument” was contest for the “new monument”. Four monuments have been produced and installed one in Mostar and three in Sarajevo.<sup>12</sup>*

These projects express some of the attempts to work through the problematic situation in post-conflict former Yugoslavia through a moving away from the collective past, as might be a similar ideological position to David Rieff's explanation for a need for forgetting. The project presents a need for a critical assessment of the position of dealing with collective history, memory and identity.

The projects culminated in four monuments, two of them are mentioned above. The third monument placed in Sarajevo plays on a similar note to Dimitrijević's; it is a stone cube, by artists, Nermina Omerbegović and Aida Pašić with the inscription; I THINK, I HEAR, I SEE, I TALK, perhaps recalling Descartes famous phrase, *I think therefore I am*. The fourth monument placed in Mostar differentiates itself in that it, more literally touches on the topic of a lack of collective memories regarding the war. The monument was a solution and commentary on that fact that the villains and heroes in post war Bosnia and Hercegovina changed from one to the other just as quickly as one passed from one entity to the next, when going through the country. In light of that, Ivan

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12 ‘De/Contruction of the Monument’, *Sarajevo Center for Contemporary Art* <<http://scca.ba/scca-projects/deconstruction-of-monument/>> [last accesse 12.09.2018].

*Through art and culture one may follow the genesis of historical consciousness of peoples or societies. Art and culture may be indicators, but also generators of manipulation and instrumentalization of human consciousness. They can also be corrective – active participants in the process of individualization of thought and the formation of a critical, polemical, antagonized position towards the dominant forms of consciousness. It is this individual artistic attitude that we recognize as the corrective of society, the starting point of this project.*

*The works of the artists from Bosnia and Herzegovina, produced in diverse contexts, mainly within the exhibitions shown by the Center for Contemporary Art Sarajevo since 1997, as well as the new proposals and ideas, are immediate motive for this project. The theme of „monument” treated similarly and arisen from the same motives, is present in the works of artists from the rest of Yugoslavia as well. The genesis of the theme may be followed since the nineties ranging from Mladen Stilinovic, Irwin, Sanja Ivekovic, and Rasa Todosijevic to the youngest generation of artists-Erzen Shkololli, Kurt&Plasto, etc. What they have in common is, one hand, the critical interpretation of symbolic presentation of the old, the renewed or the new ideological constructs, or else the re-affirmation of „forgotten” figures and symbols, without which the fundamental values of contemporary society are challenged. On the other hand, emptying/clearing the field of meaning, the artists „monuments”, personal, virtual, imagined/imaginary realities; „monuments” that detect, with critical eye, the present manifestations of real and false power, or create parallel reality. In this semantically empty space new icons of contemporanity move in and settle down. The problem of individual as the subject or object of history, of collective-subjective identity-identification is also the subject of artists’ analysis and self-analysis.*

Fiolić decided that building a monument to Bruce Lee would embody the problematics of the monument building culture, building a universal character of power that was recognisable to all and represented the figure of a hero to everyone regardless their ethnicity. Bruce Lee became one of many popular culture figures that were placed throughout the region. Artist Aleksandra Domanović's video *Turbo Sculpture* looks at the roots of this phenomenon and how turbo culture developed in the Balkan region. 'According to Domanović's tale, turbo culture begins with Montenegrin popstar Rambo Amadeus (a turbo cultural namesake) and his invention of turbo folk: a garish blend of euro-techno and traditional folk music.'<sup>13</sup>

In her film, Domanović shows both the reasons why such structures might be helpful but also negative reactions to them, as suggested by artist Milica Tomić, who warned of such structures erasing the true history of the events of the 1990s in the Balkans.<sup>14</sup> In his article about Domanović's exhibition in London, Morgan Quaintance warns of the dangers of the position of the western audience; 'As funny as this may initially seem to western audiences, scoffing at what appears to be high Eurotrash aesthetics places the viewer in an uncomfortable position of cultural superiority.'<sup>15</sup> These monuments all look at solutions to what was and remains a problem without a solution, like an unanswerable question, rather an existential problem of identity that is unresolvable.

Instead this project proposes to observe all these discussions as solutions in themselves only to provide an answer that turns back into itself, to the beginning. There can be no one solution to a multiplicity of histories and memories.

The series *The 100* looks at what a post nuclear war society might look after the descendants of those who were saved return to Earth. If we disregard the poorly scripted and even more poorly visualized form of the series the issue at hand is its repetition of history, the need and struggle of the white man, portrayed as the superior race, to survive and the justification of violence, to ensure survival at all cost. One

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13 Morgan Quaintance, 'Aleksandra Domanović <<https://morganquaintance.com/2012/07/18/aleksandra-demanovic-turbo-sculpture/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

14 Milica Tomić is one of the founders of Grupa Spomenik (Monument Group) and Cetri Lica Omarske (Four Faces of Omarska).

15 <https://morganquaintance.com/2012/07/18/aleksandra-demanovic-turbo-sculpture/> [last accessed 15.08.2018].

might think about how the characters in this type post-apocalyptic society might be portrayed years later; will they become the heroes that exterminated or attempted to, entire societies in order to maintain power and control?

In the publication *work with the public. 63 years after.* accompanies a project by Jochen Gerz. The first entry is a short story by Barbi Marković titled *The memorial*, in which the author describes what she says is an episode of Star Trek. As a reader you are introduced to different characters of which you are not sure whether they have committed a massacre of innocent people that has taken place or whether their memories of this genocide are false. The character is confronted by a memorial which is in fact a memory machine that creates false memories which allow for the main character to feel he was involved in the killings. The inscription on the screen of the memorial reads, '*Remember our pain. Experience our past first hand. This should instill in you the obligation to be and remain vigilant. This painful experience will enable you to perpetuate our truth.*'<sup>16</sup> The author ends the text with several questions reflecting on the positions described and questioned in this project; how, why, who? To remember or to forget? Is it fair to instill the responsibility of remembrance of guilt onto the generations not responsible?

And in the end the only thing that remains clear is that the decision of whether to remember or forget becomes the responsibility of the next generation.

All these examples speak of a continuous need for contemplation surrounding memory and history. Is there space for new monuments to be built when old hatreds still remain? And how do these reflect on the newly formed national identities. While the world is in awe of the monuments remaining of the times of Yugoslavia, not all of them are protected and kept in pristine shape.<sup>17</sup> Two of these monuments saw some recent controversy. Jasenovac has been used as a backdrop of a fashion campaign by an Australian eyewear brand. The company received some negative responses, criticising their lack of sensitivity and understanding of why using the site of a death camp as a backdrop for their campaign might be problematic. Initially, they responded defensively

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16 Werner Renz ed. *63 Years after work with the public.* (Vienna: Verlag Für Moderne Kunst, 2016) p.19.

17 Some of these monuments that are viewed by recent media as being 'futuristic', are left in derelict physical state while some are taken care of and have been refurbished such as Jasenovac in Croatia or Kozara in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



and only after being ‘called out’ repeatedly on social media did they remove some of the images from their campaign.<sup>18</sup>

One could possibly excuse them for their ignorance but the event also puts into question how such sites are being portrayed in the media and across the internet, as sensationalist emblems practically void of their historical context. But we can also see that local communities are somewhat unsure of how to deal with these structures. Recently in Mostar, the Partisan cemetery built by architect Bogdan Bogdanović, unveiled in 1965, reconstructed in 2005 and in 2006 declared a national monument,<sup>19</sup> was lit up in the colors of the European Union as a campaign.<sup>20</sup> This was also frowned upon by a large part of the academic community and largely misunderstood by local politicians as a ‘putting to new use’ of the cemetery.<sup>21</sup>

Many cities are or have been *invaded* by architecture or memorial structures which are either of another time or have been placed within a city without an understanding of the cultural or historical context or without much regard to it.

Visiting Kaunas I was astounded by the numerous monuments and statues within the city as well as the stunning remains of modernist architecture. Although I could understand that there was a certain divide which existed between the different periods of history and culture that the city had undergone, it seemed to me that creating yet another structure which would attempt to take the form of a memorial, would be somewhat unhelpful and unwanted. Instead I began to think about how these structures communicate with their surroundings and

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18 Antifašistički vjestnik, <[http://antifasisticki-vjesnik.org/hr/komentari/4/Monumental\\_Atrocitiy\\_of\\_Capitalism/288/](http://antifasisticki-vjesnik.org/hr/komentari/4/Monumental_Atrocitiy_of_Capitalism/288/)> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

19 Spomenik database, <<http://www.spomenikdatabase.org/mostar>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

20 ‘Partizansko groblje u Mostaru u bojama Evropske unije’, May 10th, 2018 <<https://vijesti.ba//clanak/405314/partizansko-groblje-u-mostaru-u-bojama-evropske-unije>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

21 Such misunderstandings surrounding sites of horrific pasts can be seen across the world, for example the recently built Prestwich Memorial in Cape Town, which appears to be acceptable to some despite its evident dubious taste; the café in front of the Memorial called the Truth Café creates a unsavory atmosphere for those wanting to peacefully visit the site of the remains of the many slaves that died or were killed and buried in unidentified graves. The Prestwich Memorial was built in 2008 after a long debate regarding how to deal with human remains which were found in the center of Cape Town during new building works. After a process of exhumation and identification a mausoleum or Memorial was built which houses the remains in boxes that can be viewed by visitors from a distance.

what were the processes which created and placed them within the city. I had always thought of monument building within a city as a bit of a game of negotiations, not only among the officials deciding on what to place where but of the city adjusting to the space that is being claimed by the new structure, almost like breaking in a new pair of shoes, the new structure needs to wedge itself into the landscape regardless of whether it will always remain slightly out of place for some.

Working with this idea of negotiation I began to think about monument building in society as a board game and how the strategic positioning of its pieces begins.

In 1972 after the Situationist International dissolved their group Guy Debord, one of the founders, and the author of *Society of the Spectacle*, created a game inspired by the game *Djambi* he played with Alice Becker Ho. *Djambi*, according to Alexander Galloway was, ‘a distinctly late-modern game, it is played on an extruded chess-board of nine by nine squares.’<sup>22</sup> But what is more interesting and more relevant is that; ‘The game tokens are not modeled on the medieval court of kings, queens, knights, and bishops, but instead on the various political actors that make up our advanced liberal democracies: the news reporter, the provocateur, the activist militant, and the assassin.’ This play of using actual figures relevant in the present political realm introduces a new element of interest to Debord, who was later inspired to create his own game together with his partner Becker Ho, *Game of War*. Debord-Becker Ho’s game along with *Djambi* and another game title *Train* by Brenda Romero inspired *GAME: MONUMENT*. Perhaps amongst the three examples Romero’s *Train* was most interesting in that there the purpose of the game was never winning but rather it was what the game uncovered or revealed. Romero, a well-known game designer creates games which are designed for education purposes and are styled to present more complex topics. *Train* is a game which is modelled to present the topic of concentration camps and the masses of people that were transported there using railway systems. It follows a thread described by Gilles Deleuze in his chapter *Tenth Series of the Ideal Game* in *Logic of Sense*, where he talks about the ideal game; he uses

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22 Alexander R.Galloway- ‘Debord’s Nostalgic Algorithm’ in *Zones of Control: Perspectives on Wargaming*, ed. by Pat Harrigan & Matthew G. Kirschenbaum (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2016) pp.371-391. (p.373)

the example of the caucus race in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. According to him these games, which are not common to us as we are used to understanding the logic of a game through rules that allow for us to proceed towards a clear goal and victory. These games on the other hand have no clear victor. A game in which the nonsensical nature begins to create meaning only within each move and action rather than a greater final purpose.

*'This game is reserved then for thought and art. In it there is nothing but victories for those who know how to play, that is how to affirm and ramify chance, instead of dividing it in order to dominate it, in order to wager, in order to win. This game, which can only exist in thought and which has no other result than the work of art, is also that by which thought and art are real and disturbing reality, morality and the economy of the world.'*<sup>23</sup>

In this way, *GAME:MONUMENT* attempts to present, question, and repurpose the idea of the monument. Perhaps it might be most interesting to think of this idea presented by Deleuze as a way of looking at the counter-monument. The counter-monument, in its attempt to diminish its existence as a monument in form and rather exists only to critique its own nature, becomes the work of art, similarly to Deleuze's ideal game. *GAME: MONUMENT* is formed from a series of rules which, in the end, do not lead to anything but nonsensical movement of shapes on a mat. The movements open up ideas and thoughts about the nature of monument building, national guilt, politics of regret, memory politics, and commemoration. By placing the 'players' in a position where they are given a set of rules or rather instructions they create in reality a step by step manual for the performance that unravels once the game is played.

The act of reading out loud and interacting with the material presented, means that each time the game is played a different performance is created. This performance/play also leads into the development of the final work which is a scripted play, the characters of which present themselves similarly to the ones in the game *Djambi*, but rather than actual characters they are fantastical figures. *GAME: MONUMENT* equally uses language as has been presented in previous works as well, as a key component

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23 Gilles Deleuze, *Logic of Sense* Gilles Deleuze trans.by Mark Lester (London: Continuum, 2004) p.71

of the work. The game is composed of a deck of cards, dice, a board mat and an instruction manual.

The work presents itself at the end of this project as a moment of reflection on the different problematics that have appeared throughout the project. This work relates back to work presented in the project *Witness Corner Marked*, the work which looked at some of the key ideas of counter-monumental aesthetics. *GAME:MONUMENT* returns to some of these ideas but breaks away from the more typically monumental form which it replaces with a theatricality.

The work was exhibited in a popular restaurant in the centre of Kaunas as part of the Biennial. The placement of it in a restaurant creates a commentary not only on the nature of monument building in a monument-flooded Kaunas but returning to some of the discussions in previous Acts, to the nature of the diminishing of public space, therefore also returning to Debord and Situationalist International, a commentary on consumerist society.<sup>24</sup> The work becomes available to those who feel comfortable enough to interact with it in a place where they would otherwise only be allowed to enter in order to spend money.

It comments on the broader scope of monumentality and more specifically comments on spaces where monumentality has reached a different level of complexity, where there are evident attempts to interact with it in more novel ways. Interestingly enough these spaces are young democracies in development, where memory politics and identity are being proposed and deliberated through the position of *writing/re-writing* histories.

This Act is the beginning of the conclusion to the project and leads into the final Act or Epilogue which concludes and revises some of the key concept that have been presented.

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24 I never received a report or images of people interacting with the work but only saw the remains of that on the work itself. Several of the pieces were chipped and there are some grease stains on the mat and wine rings from glasses.

**GAME : MONUMENT**

**GAME : MONUMENT** HAS NO END AND NO BEGINNING, IT IS ALWAYS IN MOTION, A CONSTANTLY CHANGING SYSTEM OF TRAGEDY.

PLAYERS CAN CHOOSE TO EXECUTE THE GAME BY TAKING ON THE ROLE OF THE DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES. ONE CAN PLAY ALL THE PERSONALITIES OR CAN CHOOSE TO PLAY WITH OTHERS.

UNLIKE OTHER GAMES, **GAME : MONUMENT** HAS NO ULTIMATE GOAL; NO WINNER, NO LOSER— JUST A CHOICE TO BECOME AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT OR REMAIN OUT OF THE GAME, AS A PASSER-BY AND RELUCTANT ACCOMPLICE. THOUGH THERE IS NO ULTIMATE GOAL TO REACH IN THE GAME, THERE ARE ELEMENTS THAT REVEAL THEMSELVES AS THE GAME IS PLAYED.

EACH PERSONALITY HAS SPECIFIC POWERS OF CONTROL. THE **PEOPLE** ARE THE SPEAKERS OF THE GAME AND HOLD THE DECK OF CARDS, THEY NARRATE THE GAME THOUGH THEY DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS WRITTEN ON THE CARDS UNTIL THOSE ARE REVEALED TO THEM BY THE **NATION OF MEMORY**. THE **NATION OF MEMORY** REVEALS THE CARDS WITH THE ROLL OF A DICE.

THE **ARCHITECT OF HISTORY** IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENACTING THE NARRATIVE THAT IS READ BY THE **PEOPLE** BY PLACING MONUMENTS ONTO THE **NATION OF MEMORY**.

## PERSONALITIES - POWERS

**NATION OF MEMORY** - GAME MAT + DICE

**ARCHITECT OF HISTORY** - MONUMENTS

**PEOPLE** - CARDS

THERE ARE 24 CARDS IN THE DECK, 10 MONUMENTS AND 4 DICE (GREEN: **NO MAN'S NATION**, RED: **NO MAN'S HISTORY**, YELLOW: **NO MAN'S IDENTITY**, BLUE: **NO MAN'S MEMORY**), AND A MAT

EACH MONUMENT IS AN ABSTRACTION OF THE ROLE THEY HAVE HAD AS REPRESENTATIONS OF DIFFERENT COLLECTIVE MEMORIALIZATIONS, SUCH AS THE TRIUMPHAL ARCH REPRESENTING VICTORIES, OR THE CENOTAPH TRADITIONALLY REPRESENTING DEATH OF SOLDIERS IN BATTLES. (PLEASE FIND BELOW THE REST OF THE 'TRADITIONALISED' OR 'GENERALISED' ROLES OF THESE PERSONALITIES.)

10 MONUMENTS INCLUDE:

**OBELISK –**

USUALLY BUILT TO REMEMBER GREAT LEADERS



**TRIUMPHAL ARCH –**

BUILT AS SYMBOL OF VICTORY



**COLUMN –**

TYPICALLY A PART OF ARCHITECTURE OR PLINTH FOR STATUE COMMEMORATING SOMEONE GREAT



**SPHERE –**

APPEARING IN BOTH COMMEMORATIONS OF LOSS AND VICTORY



**WALL –**

TYPICALLY APPEARING AS PART OF WAR OR GREAT CASUALTY MEMORIAL, NORMALLY ALSO A PLACE WHERE NAMES OF THE VICTIMS APPEAR



**STAIRS –**

USED AS PART OF MONUMENTS, TYPICALLY THOSE THAT COVER A LARGER AREA AND ARE INCORPORATED INTO LANDSCAPE. APPEAR BOTH IN COMMEMORATION OF DEAD AND VICTORIOUS MOMENTS



**PYRAMID –**

TYPICALLY APPEAR IN RELATION TO COMMEMORATING OF DEAD



**CENOTAPH –**

USUALLY PLACED TO COMMEMORATE THE DEAD, MAINLY WAR CASUALTIES



**PLINTH –**

TYPICALLY USED AS A PLACEMENT FOR STATUES OR SCULPTURES



**ARCHITECTURAL STRUCTURE –**

A BUILDING OR PART OF A BUILDING THAT CAN MEMORIALIZE EITHER EVENTS OR PEOPLE



PLAYING GUIDE

REGARDLESS WHETHER WE PLAY ALONE OR WITH OTHERS THE RULES REMAIN UNCHANGED.

IF PLAYING WITH MORE THAN ONE PLAYER, ARCHITECT OF HISTORY SITS AT THE SIDE OF NO MAN'S NATION WITH THE MONUMENTS ON THE CORNER OF THE MAT. IF PLAYING ALONE WE SIT AT THE POSITION OF NO MAN'S NATION.

THE CARDS ARE SHUFFLED BEFORE EACH GAME AND ROLL OF DICE AND REMAIN AT THE CORNER OF THE MAT. THE GAME BEGINS WITH THE PLAYER OR PLAYERS STANDING UP.

**NATION OF MEMORY:** READS OUT THE FOUR TITLES OF THE GAME MAT





# NO MAN'S HISTORY

DIGGING INTO THE PAST UNCOVERS THE HIDDEN HOLES OF THE PRESENT					
	THE TRACES OF HISTORY ARE UNEASY WITNESSES				
		THE LAYERS OF MEMORY BUILD DEEP TOWERS INTO THE SOIL OF THE NATION			
			AN OFFENSIVE MONUMENT REMAINS UNTOUCHED EVEN WHEN DESTROYED		
				A MONUMENT ON EVERY CORNER BLINDS THE NATION OF THE PRESENT	
					COLLECTIVITY REMAINS UNTOUCHED ONLY WITH THE PRESENCE OF INDIVIDUALITY

NO MAN'S IDENTITY

NO MAN'S MEMORY

# NO MAN'S NATION

WE ARE A NATION  
OF MANY HEROES  
VICTIMS AND  
PERPETRATORS

WE ARE A NATION  
THAT RECONCILES

WE BUILD MEMORY  
IN ORDER TO FORGET

THE ACT OF  
CONTINUOUS  
FORGETTING ENFORCES  
REMEMBERING

THERE IS A RIGHT  
TO FORGETTING AS  
MUCH AS REMEMBERING

OUR IDENTITY CAN  
REFLECT A COLLECTION  
OF HISTORIES

OUR HISTORY  
REMAINS UNCERTAIN

OUR MEMORY WILL  
NEVER RECOVER FROM  
THE HISTORY WE  
CONTINUOUSLY  
RECREATE

WE VICTIMIZE  
OUR PERPETRATORS

OUR HISTORY HIDDEN  
OUR MEMORY LOST

OUR POWER PRECEDES  
OUR HISTORY

WE HAVE THE RIGHT  
TO BECOME  
PERPETRATORS AND  
CHOSE TO CREATE  
A NATION OF VICTIMS

AS FAR AS THE EYE  
CAN SEE THERE ARE  
VICTIMS OF OUR  
VICTORIES

IN EVERY CORNER  
OF OUR LAND THERE  
IS A HISTORY WE  
HAVE FORGOTTEN

OUR BATTLES  
DEFINE US

WITH EVERY  
VICTORY WE ARE  
MORE BOLD

WITH EVERY LOSS  
WE BUILD TALLER

WE STRIVE TO  
CONTINUE  
REMEMBERING

OUR VICTORIES OF  
TODAY ARE  
OUR VICTORIES  
OF TOMORROW

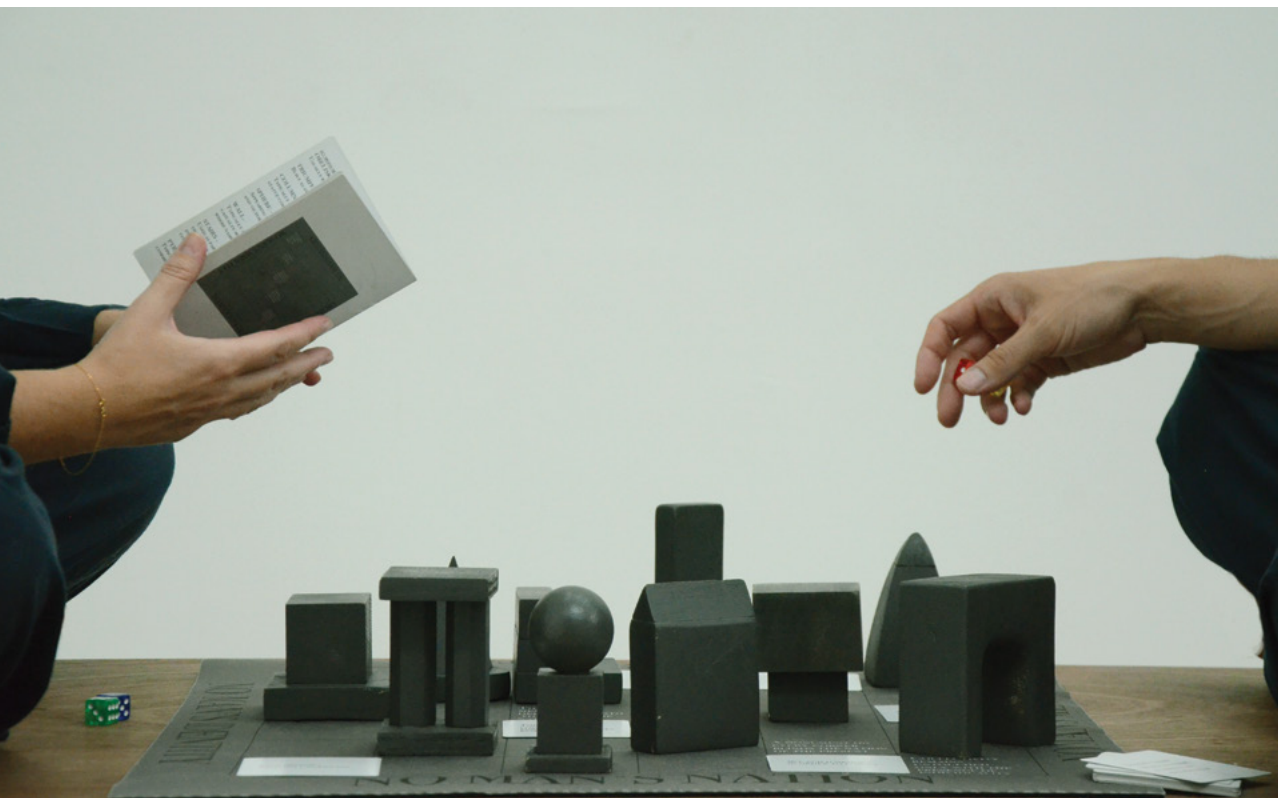
OUR LOSSES OF  
YESTERDAY ARE  
OUR LOSSES OF TODAY

WE CANNOT  
REMEMBER THE  
REASON FOR OUR  
LAST BATTLE

WE CANNOT REMEMBER  
WHETHER  
WE LOST OR WON  
OUR LAST BATTLE

WE CANNOT  
REMEMBER WHAT WE  
GAINED AFTER  
OUR LAST VICTORY

WE ARE NEVER IN  
OR OUT OF BATTLE









EPILOGUE:

NOTHING MONUMENTAL SHALL COME OF THIS

**Epilogue:**

**NOTHING MONUMENTAL SHALL COME OF THIS  
ONE-ACT TRAGICOMEDY**

**UNKNOWN VOICE**

**WITNESSES**

**REMAINS**

**ARTIST**

**NATION**

**HISTORY**

**MEMORY**

*\*All stage notes are read by Unknown Voice but in a quieter voice.*

*(Audience enter into softly lit space. In the top end of the space stands a long wooden table, slightly lifted off the ground, on a what could be a stage or a platform.)*

*Enter Unknown Voice.*

*They sit on a chair behind the long wooden table, pull the microphone closer to their mouth, and looking straight ahead, as if their eyes are skimming the tops of the heads of the audience sitting, they take a breath getting ready to speak.)*

**UNKNOWN VOICE:** *The audience trickles into the dark space lit ever so slightly by the blinking whites of the eyes of actors standing with their backs pressed against the walls on both sides of the nearly perfectly square space. Once the audience is seated, the actors position themselves in a row between the audience and the slightly lifted stage, blocking their view. The actors or as we should refer to them, witnesses, begin to whisper loudly enough to hear. They are repeating the sentence.*

*(Witnesses remain hidden from the view of the audience, only their voices are heard.)*

**WITNESSES:** A silence so immemorial it shatters the glass roof of the theatre of memory.

**WITNESSES:** A silence so immemorial it shatters the glass roof of the theatre of memory.

**UNKNOWN VOICE:** Each time repeated, they attempt a different delivery.

**WITNESSES:** A silence... so immemorial it shatters the glass roof of the theatre of memory

**UNKNOWN VOICE:** The Witnesses break their straight line of defence blocking the view, opening like a Curtain. The Witnesses have now taken on the role of the Curtain.

(Unknown Voice pauses. Takes a deep breath as if getting ready to propel out the words with a force that would turn a windmill. And continues...)

**UNKNOWN VOICE:** The Curtain draws open, as if to seek/peek for the hidden truth. Remember the Witnesses are now the Curtain, wearing a heavy fabric, as they extended their arms the fabric falls to the ground draping into the shape of a curtain. Placed on a circular stage, the Curtain draws all the way around.

(Unknown Voice continues propelling out words at a fast pace, illustrating the story they are describing.)

**UNKNOWN VOICE:** As the Curtain draws open it draws closed.

(Slight pause.)

Repeatedly moving at a steady pace around and around.  
On one side of the Curtain stand the complainants, on the other the accused. Blindfolded they are unaware of who is next to them or who is behind the curtain  
The curtain swooshes by them and a slight wind current is created  
Hear now...is this where man begins to question his own potential for evil, for violence?  
The glass has been broken, the shards cleaned up, the wound stitched but the scar keeps getting thicker and darker, more painful than the wound

A circular stage with a curtain that continues attempting to open and close  
One end attempting to reveal and the other to conceal.

(Pause.)

A sudden silence breaks the swooshes.

(Continues at a faster pace.)

A silence so immemorial it shatters the glass roof of the theatre of memory or of history. It is the theatre of perception. The imitation of reality, the imitation of imitation. The monument is the imitation of the imitation of the imitation. It is the imitation of the theatre of history. The theatre of history presents itself as a bold structure towering as high as it does deep inward towards the centre of history.

(As they speak their voice sounds out the motion of the action.)

Draped over the shoulders of the human body it weighs heavily causing harm. Harm that has a history too. And there has always been one human before this one, it has always been a transgenerational issue. But this harm does it have a pronoun, a form, a recognisable shape? And this human, how do they carry on the burden of this harm? Can they ever get rid of it and not pass on the trait of doubt.

But There is always doubt, of the truth that the human presents... and it lies between the tree of memory and the bark of history or in the space between that piece of chewing gum sprawled on the ground and the pavement that has become its permanent home, its surface like the Plato's wax ball, a landscape of imprints of the past that had throttled over it.

(Witnesses interrupt)

WITNESSES:           And this theatre of history what does it do, how does it appear?

UNKNOWN VOICE:   The Witnesses unsure of what they are looking at, become confused by the voices that are gaining momentum and

volume. Like the creaking and clunky noise of an old drawer being forced out of hiding after being left in its quiet existence away from sunlight and prying eyes of Witnesses, we begin to hear the conversation more clearly. These voices rapidly growing in volume and interrupting each other.

(Unknown Voice leans away from the microphone.)

(The Witnesses call out, as if from a distance.)

**WITNESSES:** There is no instrument of the past as great as the document of culture, it is barbaric in its attempts of representation as is the subject of its representation.

(The stage lights are turned on like the surprising thunder of the lightening that was by now only a memory. The Characters being to appear.)

(Unknown Voice moves towards the microphone and into the spotlight.)

**UNKNOWN VOICE:** The story begins when the conflict ends, when the nation is split, but not like an apple being sliced with a clean snip leaving razor sharp borders but more like raw flesh torn off the bone by hyenas. The knife slitting the throat of the past becomes the feather that tickles it. For a moment the disaster that ruins everything while leaving it all intact, appears again.  
The Characters are set into place.

(The Characters introduce themselves and as they do so a spotlight appears on them.)

**UNKNOWN VOICE:** Remains...the avid advocate of Foucauldian counter-memory and Young's counter-monument.  
Artist...the naïve creative, whose desire it is to present the role of the artist as a relevant figure in socio-political discussions.  
Memory...whose only goal it is to position its importance and the necessity for memorialisation, and a need for continued remembrance.  
Nation...desires power which surpasses any nostalgic past but is instead oriented towards new views and paths for absolute control.  
History... whose only need is to continuously state how the present and the future are dependent on its narrative.



**UNKNOWN VOICE:** This story is not about returning but about arriving for the first time. But how can we arrive for the first time when we have never left. There cannot be a Never Again when Again has never left. Again remains quietly in the corner like a sulking child awaiting to relive its moment in the spotlight. Can Again only disappear when we bring out a mirror for it to face its true reflection or when we stare it down and say ‘you are not real’? So for now we are again returning again.

(The characters facing their audience awkwardly continue their conversation about the rebuilding of a monument.)

**REMAINS:** What sound remains of the missing monument? Is it the sound of the missing stone revealing an emptiness, and is this the absence that heals the wounded borders of torn flesh?

**MEMORY:** Perhaps this emptiness can fill the holes built when the Nation splits?  
I could possibly help you remember, if you would let me show you how to remember.

**HISTORY:** To do what; write the story of your past? I long to remember the past as past was. I find it all too unnecessary to continue with revisions and re-visitations.

**NATION:** Breath in, the thick air heavy of Remains  
Lungs pulling in, diaphragm pushing, the air wheezing through your teeth the stench of the past becoming part of the body  
Do not mourn, for even in memory there is no return,  
Memory is poison and History is a fool’s cup of tea,  
comforting only at the right temperature. Now the Artist,  
they could perhaps be our Trojan horse, our Angel’s trumpet.

**REMAINS:** Or the Ash Tree, one day in overpopulation and the next extinct!

**MEMORY:** Surely the Artist's battle is one of Memory, remembering, and collectivity. I see no need to betray the pathetic wanderer, the seeker of truths.

**REMAINS:** Perhaps not betray but help to forget. Forgetting is poison which works for a short time and causes pain when you sober up. Pain has always been a great source of inspiration for creatives, the Artist would in this way be continuously stimulated.

**MEMORY:** I denounce what you call poisonous memory, forgetting is hay for fools I pronounce a need for a monument, I declare a need. Well a monumental artwork at least. Perhaps this idea of the monument is too archaic.

**REMAINS:** A monumental building then...of history's past, memory's present, nation's future or no man's nation, no man's history, no man's memory, and no man's identity, an absence that will satisfy all.

**HISTORY:** Yes, exactly. Forming meaningful narratives into a unified form, a remembrance of the relevant stories of the past.

**MEMORY:** Whatever meaningful narratives will exist they need to perform the monument, they need to be performative in nature, through memories of the past.

**NATION:** I imagine it as structure built by the Nation and decorated by the Artist, where History would be embraced but perhaps as a painted backdrop in a staged play and Memory reintegrated but with subtlety, like a decorative plaque, on the floor of the stage. And Remains, the groundwork, completely absent in presence.

**ARTIST:** How fascinating, the position, my position, so it seems requires me to be the master visualizer, perhaps the left hand to the right hand?

**ARTIST:** This is how I see it; the large open almost square sized space is divided into a stage and the stage non-stage. I of course am on the stage, well my work is.

**NATION:** Of course you always belong on the stage, right next to me. Like I said it all makes perfect sense: History is the

backdrop, Memory the ground, I mean, stage we walk on, beautifully sculpted of course, and Remains remain important in their invisibility. The Artist is centre stage, bold and always on the pedestal, although sometimes also just the pedestal, which is highly important as well.

**MEMORY:** My role sounds somewhat irrelevant, surely Memory is in the every sound we hear, object we see and touch, and scent we smell?

**HISTORY:** It sounds perfectly logical to me. I create the background scene of every story and you Memory create the path, shifting the stage to your liking. You are our stumble and slip of our every step!

**REMAINS:** I have definitely been overlooked.

**ARTIST:** And this place would provide a space for reflection

**REMAINS:** Or become the Coliseum

**ARTIST:** The stage is a half circle, there are terraces like in Giulio Camillo's theatre of memory, an amphitheatre divided by drawers. Objects, smells and sounds fill the drawers, the audience entering through the drawers, opening and closing them and leave behind their stories, histories and memories to become part of the work too. Much like Camillo's theatre of memory, my artwork places the audience on the stage non-stage. Their presence becoming central to the work. My work becomes reflective of the stories, their presentation and representation. Like Camillo's theatre of memory which describes the creation of the universe, my work describes the development of an identity of a people divided. Like the theatre of memory, the work stimulates the imagination to explore places otherwise unknown.

**NATION:** I have never been too fond of audience participation. It's far too risky.

(History makes its exit murmuring.)

**HISTORY:** The past has become another country.

**ARTIST:** But what about context? What can we do that will define the true nature of this collapse? I cannot recreate all the truths of all the people, they remain unknown to me. I cannot guess the nature of the many words I had not heard and actions I had not seen. I can speak my truth and only propose to question the unknowns and the hidden.

**MEMORY:** So how would this artwork look like in the end?

(Nation appears in the spotlight again uttering)

**NATION:** I am afraid the dire truth is that we might not have the funding necessary to accomplish such a complex project.

(Nation stays on the stage lurking in the darkness.)

**ARTIST:** The work is divided into the parts that speak of a personal truth and those that question the truth that the Nation has proposed. Nation seems to have gone all quiet??

**REMAINS:** I have always thought Nation to be a bit of a hypocrite, their rich language of twists and turns has deceived many of your colleagues.

**ARTIST:** Not every action criticised as being a helping hand of the State should be seen as such. Even those works which seemingly portray the story of the State offer the audience, witnesses, and all of us moments for reflection. Now that I think about it, this is how it must be, the amphitheatre stage non-stage goes all the way around, it encloses the audience, or better, which relates to the position at heart even further, the audience remains on the outside, as they always do in fact, they can see the whole artwork from the outside as the construction of the stage and non-stage is made from a completely transparent material...does that not sound terrific Nation, complete transparency?

(Nation remains quiet.)

(Artist continues, paying little attention to Nation.)

**ARTIST:** A completely transparent amphitheatre where the objects, sounds, smells, video installations, performances fill the terraces, they are the spectators as much as the complainants, they are the remains and reminders. At the

bottom end of the stage non-stage are the Witnesses or  
Curtain forever opening and closing, revealing and  
concealing, but never allowing us to clearly see who or what  
is behind it.

(The Artist feeling a sense of accomplishment for a moment ...quickly returns to  
pacing back and forth. History, Memory and Remains have lost interest and  
Nation has disappeared.)

To be continued to an end

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The Epilogue begins with the artwork titled *Nothing Monumental Shall Come of This*.<sup>1</sup> Through the use of a scripted dialogue, the Act positions one of the key questions revisited throughout this project and one which remains at the core of the debate of monumentalisation and more specifically contested monumentalisation, the question of a democratization of memory. The scripted dialogue presents a conversation between five characters in the form of an abstracted, fictionalised discussion surrounding representations of violence, memorialization, collectivity and national identity. It repositions the use of language as a relevant practice within contemporary art and specifically the field of counter-monumental aesthetics. As Veronica Tello clearly states and is presented in this project,

*‘...there is something at stake in juxtaposing cherished icons with traumatic, unruly histories (which won’t give in). This friction could easily be thought as a mode of counter-memory that attempts to contest the dominance of the victors over the vanquished...’*<sup>2</sup>

The project continuously articulates this struggle and places into question how the counter-monumental appears as a solution to the potentially unresolvable, contested histories, through representation in artworks. The journey through the six Acts reveals how the artistic practice is used as a methodological frame for questioning and repositioning that which remains contested and appears unresolvable. Through the use of artistic practice as a method of analysing and presenting potential solutions, I attempt to come closer to understanding how artistic practice can present itself as a different but equal field of engagement when compared to the theoretical context that is presented alongside it. The three different approaches that appear -artworks, narrative descriptions and theoretical contexts -reveal distinctive aspects of the contentious cases and pursue methods that offer structures of resolution. Through the narrative descriptions, I introduce some of the struggles of an artist working as a researcher, dealing with topics that are both politically and emotionally complex, looking at how the artist interacts with the space and environment they are working within. In this way perhaps, the psycho-geographical aspect of the writing is revealed as a mode of recreating the atmosphere which characterizes the encounters with

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1 *Nothing Monumental Shall Come of This* was performed as part of the Why Remember? Conference and WARM Festival in Sarajevo in June 2018. Why Remember? is part of the Art and Reconciliation research project (UAL, King’s College, LSE) that examines formats of reconciliation. WARM Festival is an annual arts and human rights festival that was established in 2014. The Festival and Foundation were established by war correspondent Rémy Ourdan.

2 Tello, p.78.

certain environments and situations. Through the descriptions of these encounters I propose, to the reader, a different way of looking at an artwork. The reader is shown what happens ‘behind the scenes’. Our play, *Claims of a Monument/the Counter-Monument Remains* was performed in front of a diverse audience, throughout the course of its development. These performances impacted and informed the final structure of this project, in order to expose the many components that interweave this practice-led project.

The artworks do not simply illustrate the questions and discussions that are proposed by the theoretical context, but provide insight into solutions and equally present the reality of how impenetrable the exposed situations actually are. As explained in the *Prologue*, this project cannot give an absolute guide to building monuments in contested sites, neither does it strive to do so, instead it concentrates on three specific *situations*. These three *situations* are first unpicked through their layers of historical, political, and art historical complexities, only to then be re-layered as transparent slabs, creating a new language with juxtapositioned meanings.

In this way, the format of a *play*, presents the perfect mode of analysis. The format eludes to what is described in the *Prologue* as being a form of *Gesamtkunstwerk* with its theoretical context (stage notes), narrative descriptions (scenography), and the artworks (script), to create the ‘complete work of art’.<sup>3</sup> This slightly utopic notion of an absolute work of art, conceived by Richard Wagner<sup>4</sup> through his ideas surrounding opera and theatre arts,<sup>5</sup> as a perfect form of art which according to him, embodied a harmony between the artwork and the audience.<sup>6</sup>

Performance and performativity are also a reoccurring topic which orchestrate a primary part of counter-monumental aesthetics and are a very relevant field of practice

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3 Gesamtkunstwerk was first mentioned by Eusebius Trahdorff (1783-1863) in his work *Aesthetics of the Study of World View and Art (Ästhetik oder Lehre von der Weltanschauung und Kunst)*.

4 The use of Wagner in this project is purely limited to his notion of the Gesamtkunstwerk, as Wagner himself was a contentious figure in history.

5 Wagner presented his idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk in his essay *The Art-Work of the Future* which was first published in 1849 under the original title *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft (The Artwork of the Future)*.

6 Wagner’s idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk referred to his understanding of the position of art in society and its understanding of politics. He understood Tragedy, as being the way of introducing the political to the audience or as he explains; ‘*Tragedy was therefore the entry of the Art-work of the Folk upon the public arena of political life...*’. Throughout his essay Wagner stresses the importance of the



when dealing with conflict and war. One of several reasons for this could be the personal interaction that occurs with the audience but also because performance lends itself to the idea of the ephemeral which is at times a more viable method when working within conflict and post-conflict spaces. Looking at some theatrical modes of working such as that of Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, which was also used as a mode of debate and discussion of political topics, or Brechtian epic theatre, and Artaud's *The Theatre and its Double*, one might question why the form of sculptural or architectural structures have remained as the representational shape of the monument.<sup>7</sup>

In a recent interview, monument scholar Joel McKim explained the necessity for exposing the possibility of change, modification, and removal of monuments.<sup>8</sup> McKim commented on recent changes occurring in public space relating to monuments of heroes from the past, that are no longer viewed as worthy of their monumental position in the public space. Is there potential for a mode of interchangeability of histories to exist in the imbalanced societies of today?

This project provides insight into how counter-monumental aesthetics, which step away from the grandiosity of the monumental, can comment on the specific examples of contentious models of monumentalisation. These situations exposing myth-making, appropriation of soft-power, competitive memory, multi-directional memorialization, and selective memorialization are described through selected examples from the region of former Yugoslavia.

Throughout the six Acts what occurs is an attempt to create a harmony between how artistic practice behaves as an active agent within the political and the structures that it is commenting on. However, as asserted throughout, there is also a need for disconnection

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audience which is a principal conception within this project and when thinking about monument building and the counter-monumental in particular. Richard Wagner, trans. by William Ashton Ellis, *The Art-Work of the Future*, 1849. (p.48) < <http://users.skynet.be/johndeere/wlpdf/wlpr0062.pdf> > [last accessed 12.09.2018].

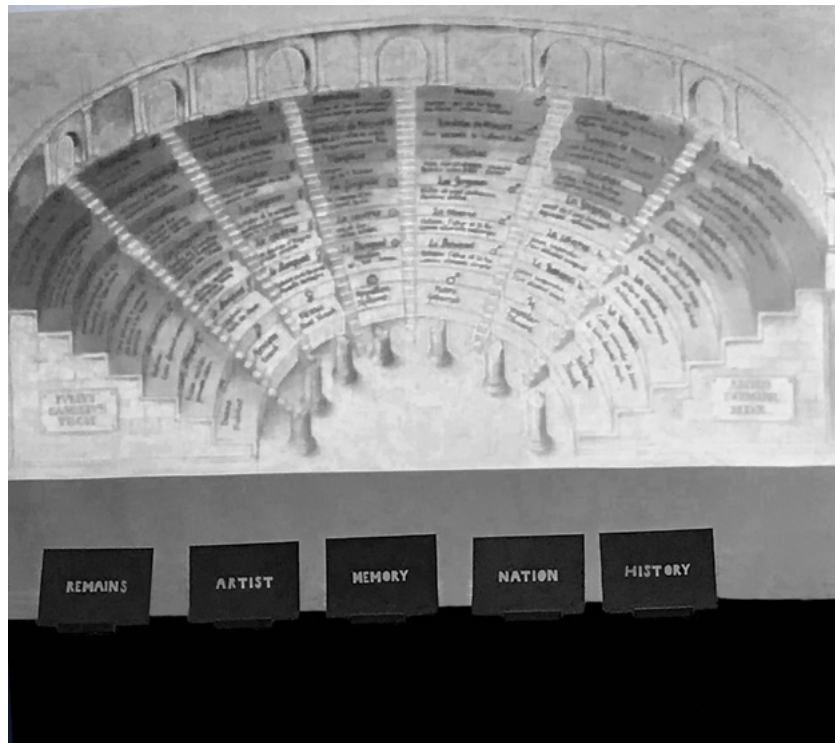
- 7 Antonin Artaud's manifesto challenges the position of language and theatre, and their impact on the audience. It resorts to a form different from that of Boal and Brecht whose works promote an engagement with the audience. Artaud on the other hand never clearly spoke of politics although his texts have been interpreted by many as a form of resistance. The most interesting elements for this project is Artaud's resistance against certain conventional forms of culture ('No More Masterpieces', *The Theatre and Its Double*). He called for a rejection of traditions which constrict society.
- 8 Canadian Television News, Interview with Joel McKim, August 20, 2018 <<https://www.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=1464522>> [last accessed 21.08.2018]

from the restrictive illusion of harmony that exists. This illusion is revealed in each Act and a resistance in the form of artistic analysis is presented. This final Act or Epilogue not only repositions some of the themes dealt with in the different Acts of the project but also presents the question of the future of the monument as a form of artistic practice existing on the boundaries the many fields that it interacts with.

The project becomes, as described in the *Prologue*, a prop for critiquing the political which remains untouchable through conventional modes of monument building. The counter-monumental becomes a complete-work-of-non-monumentalisation, which cannot be understood simply by interacting with the artwork but comes into existence only in its multi-disciplinary form, as an artistic practice that does not exist outside its own modus operandi, as presented in this project.

The times of towering stone structures, that speak of an untouchable divine identity and historical truth, are a thing of the past. I believe they are. Through a relentless interrogation of the true nature of the counter-monument as a form of monument building that eloquently presents how monuments and memorials can exist to provide questions and comments on the society in which they exist, we discover that its form is still far too monumental and yet another reiteration needs to take place in order to step away from providing illustrations of an illusion. This illusion are the layers which remain concealed.

The counter-monument or monument can no longer exist in the space and time in which they were created, as these have also ceased to exist. They will only reappear in a different form, once a shift occurs that embraces the transient nature of the political, historical, and social realities of the present. They, the monuments and counter-monuments need to acknowledge their own crisis of existence which emerges with the fear of irrelevance and becoming forgotten. This project defines the need for recognition of artworks as the new builders of our time and identity. This can occur only when we distinguish between our own desire to grasp hold of a stability, which in fact does not exist, and the necessity for another rebellion against a system that still draws its inspirations from histories that refuse to embrace a need for transience and transparency.





## APPENDICES

## KEYWORDS AND MEANINGS

In her text *Culture heritage and memory: untangling the ties that bind*, Dacia Viejo Rose discusses the problems that have encompassed the field of cultural heritage, memory, and monument studies.<sup>1</sup> While perhaps true that the study had already in the past been active in many fields of knowledge, it is more recently that there has been an abundance of terminology accepted into the field but also used in new or refigured ways. Viejo Rose points to how the misuse or rather the shifts of terminology from field to field, and from meaning to meaning, has created a form of progression in the field. Viejo Rose suggests that it is necessary to explain terminology clearly especially terms that are consistently used in different fields.<sup>2</sup>

### **Monument & Memorial**

The term monument deriving from the Latin, *monere*, which means to remember or remind oneself, was traditionally a structure that stood in a public space that was created to commemorate a person/s or event. Monuments usually take the shape of buildings or sculptural structures. They are sometimes used to memorialise victorious moments or people while other times used to commemorate, such as funerary monuments created to remember the dead, or war monuments to remember heroes or soldiers.

A memorial is a structure or event used to commemorate an event or person/s. Memorials can take the form of parks, sculptures, buildings, procession, event, day, book, and others. A memorial differs from the monument as it can refer to a variety of forms of remembrance. A monument can be part of a memorial.

Note: Borrowing from James E. Young' s explanation<sup>3</sup> of the difference between the two terms using Arthur Danto, ‘ *we erect monuments so that we shall always remember and build memorials so that we shall never forget. Thus, we have the Washington Monument but the Lincoln Memorial. Monuments commemorate the memorable and embody the myths of beginnings. Memorials*

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1 Dacia Viejo Rose, ‘Culture heritage and memory: untangling the ties that bind’, *Culture & History Digital Journal*, 4 (2015).

2 Many of the definitions I will be using are a combination of meanings presented by different authors and I propose a mix of these different terms in order to be able to most clearly present the ideas that I am trying to elaborate on. In this way hopefully also helping the reader by opening the world of the field. Therefore, it would be most important to systematically present my terms and their meanings. Some terms addressed below may not have been used in the project as presented but have been an important part of the research and are presented here in order to offer further clarity on some of the ideas discussed.

3 Young, E. James, *Texture of Memory. Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. p.3



*ritualise remembrance and mark the reality of ends...Monuments make heroes and triumphs, victories and conquests, perpetually present and part of life. The memorial is a special precinct, extruded from life, a segregated enclave where we honour the dead. With monuments we honour ourselves.*<sup>4</sup>

### **Counter-monument**

The counter-monument coined by James E. Young was described by him as an artistic form of experimenting with the concept of the monument that emerged in Germany in the 80s and 90s and stepped away from the traditional idea of monument building which reinforced the idea of collective remembering. This type of monument instead encouraged for the absence of a structure and with this absence reinstating remembrance as an active rather than passive activity. With the enforced absence of a monument, the audience is encouraged to take on the responsibility of reinforcing memory rather than the structure capturing the memory and in that way the audience becoming a passive observer.

The term is also observed through a series of interviews with leading theorists and artists that have worked with the concept in different ways including: Jochen Gerz, Kryzstof Wodiczko, Sharone Lifschitz, Eray Çayli.

### **Anti-Monument**

The anti-monument is a term often confused with the counter monument but it is also used to describe the idea of not building monumental structures by nation states in public spaces. The two terms differ in that anti-monument more often appears as being used by artists, whereas the term counter monument has remained in the more common term in academia. An anti-monument more often appears as a non-conventional monument form such as performance while counter monuments still often appear as sculptural works in the public space.

### **Counter memory**

Counter memory as defined by Michel Foucault describes a memory that is separate from the official, state imposed memory of a historical event, period, person/s, rather it is a memory which allows for multi-vocality rather than a singular state-imposed truth. As Fortunati and Lambert explain, ‘...where the term “counter” emphasizes the fact that

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4 Arturo Danto, ‘The Vietnam Veterans Memorial’, in *The Nation*, 31 Aug. 1986:152.

*these are other memories belonging to minority groups and thus marginalized by the dominant cultures. Memory becomes an “act of survival,” of consciousness and creativity, fundamental to the formation and rewriting of identity as both an individual and a political act.*<sup>5</sup>

Counter-memory is also often observed as emerging with a generation following the one that witnessed an event. This is defined by Marianne Hirsch as being postmemory.<sup>6</sup> Hirsch observes postmemory as being a significant mode of expression among ‘second generation’ artists and writers, inclined to express what Sontag refers to as ‘the pain of other’. Joan Gibbons described this as being a memory that, ‘*articulates that which has been inhibited in the memories of the primary witnesses*’.<sup>7</sup> Counter-memory plays a significant role in understanding Young’s theory of the counter monument.

## **Memory**

Approaching the term through the Greek mneme and anamnesis, two terms that were used to describe the idea; the first a more passive term used to describe the act or mode of remembering and the second refers to the object of remembrance, recollection. Paul Ricouer extensively described the term and its various uses in his book, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, in which he collects the ideas of various figures that have analysed and contributed ideas and notions to the exploration of the term.<sup>8</sup>

The term has been encountered through history in a variety of ways but one of the most interesting reiterations comes from *The Memory Theatre*, written by Simon Critchley, which has been borrowed by Giulio Camillo’s *Theatre of the Memory*.<sup>9</sup> This idea sees memory through a visual manifestation of compartments for storage of different segments of ideas, moments, images, sounds, smells, and memory as being the ability to recall these. This *action* and *object* of memory, also takes in account the idea of memory as something that is in constant motion, a repetition that is always different

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5 Vita Fortunati and Elena Lamberti, ‘Cultural Memory: A European Perspective’, in *The Invention of Cultural Memory*, ed. by Astrid Erl Ansgar Nünning, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008). pp. 127-140 (p.129)

6 See Marianne Hirsch, ‘The Generation of Postmemory’, *Poetics Today*, 29 (2008), 103-128.

7 Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory: Images of Recollection and Remembrance* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2007). p. 73

8 See Paul Ricouer, *Memory, History, Forgetting*. trans. by Blamey, K& Pellauer, D. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004).

9 See Simon Critchley, *Memory Theatre*, (London: Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2014).

See Giulio Camillo’s Theatre of Memory described in Frances Yates, ‘The Memory Theatre of Giulio Camillo’ in *Selected Works: Volume III. Art of Memory* (London: Routledge, 1966) pp. 129-160. <<http://www.alzhup.com/Reta/Docs/ArtOfMemory.pdf>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

and changing and is never fixed in the past or the present. In this way returning to the idea of multi-vocality and also considering Andreas Huyssen's memory boom, and Mieke Bal's ideas on 'travelling concepts'.<sup>10</sup>

### **Artificial memory**

Artificial memory is referred to as being a memory that is appropriated, disfigured, or constructed as a result of its representation through different mediums, which could be said to be a result of the obsession with memory seen in the memory boom moments.<sup>11</sup>

### **Institutional Memory**

Looking at the term through the three level description of Richard Ned Lebow's memory politics, institutional memory would be memory that is developed through influence of political bodies. His three levels of memory are: individual, collective and institutional. These three classifications allow for a clearer observation of how memory is employed in the different forms that it appears in a society.<sup>12</sup>

### **Commemorate**

Commemoration is an action of reinforcement of memory through an event. Usually it refers to a ceremony and act of commemorating or remembering. It is most often used when describing funerary services or anniversaries.

### **Collective memory**

The term collective memory while brought into sociology by Maurice Halbwachs, in his studies on classes and societal interaction, was developed through ideas conceived by his teacher, sociologist, Emile Durkheim, who put forward the need for communal historical continuity. Durkheim expressed society's need for tradition and ritual, for an understanding of the past and its influences in order to function as a whole unified

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10 See Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. (California: Satnford University Press, 2003)

Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

11 See Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. (California: Satnford University Press, 2003)

12 See Richard Ned Lebow, 'The Future of Memory', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science: The Politics of History in Comparative Perspective*, 607 (2008) pp.25-41.

people in the present and future. According to Durkheim's analysis where he observes traditional societies, he describes the need for physical unity of people in acts in order for communal memories to be created. Individual memories would be triggered by rituals and ceremonies.

Halbwachs continued with these thoughts of how individual and collective memories are constructed and believed that individual memories are only part of a greater collective memory rooted in different groups/networks; ie family, organization, nation-state. Halbwachs, however, had a more Nietzschean inspired approach to looking at how collective memory is constructed, explaining that it is the present and the needs of the present that construct the collective memory of the past. Pierre Nora went even further to claim that these memories completely detach themselves from the past. Essentially that it is the power of the present that dictates the memory of the past which is not necessarily based on empirical histories. Nora also explains the relation of collective amnesia to collective memory. As much as the power dictates the memories it also dictates what is to be eliminated. As described by Harald Wydra, Nora also brought in the 'generational twist', claiming that;

*' Even if, as Nora argued, generational identity may draw on people's need to identify with a community of equals in democratic society, it is obvious that generations are not collective subjects capable of remembering. In reality, much like class, state, or nations, generations are subjects of reference created by language. As Reinhart Koselleck put it "There is no collective memory but there are collective conditions of potential memories".'*<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore Hydra, points out Nora's and Halbwachs's attempt to create an opposition between memory and history, or more simply that it is rather that generations remember collectively because of social construct of experience rather than their ruptures with history. In this thesis the idea of collective memory is understood through an idea of a social belonging, a generational belonging that exists as explained above, because of common experience, however I will also be reflecting on it through the idea of its construct as a formation of the national identity. Specifically referring to it as at times as a problematic construct in its potential of forming social segregation, between not only generations but an intergenerational one. Often I refer its negative connotation

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13 Harald Wydra, 'Generations of Memory: Elements of a Conceptual Framework', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 60 (2018), 5-34. (p. 5).

to the potential of manipulative treatments of history by the State, evoking a collective memory based on falsities or reconstructed facts that evoke a collectivity in order to create an identity that can be further manipulated. Therefore it is more often referred to as the memory that is accepted and presented by the nation state. It is the one dictated through the official national histories. I will be referring to counter-memory as the opposite of the collective memory, as one that does not embrace a fluidity but rather refer to the potential of a fluid collective memory as collective-counter-memory.

*‘Halbwachs ends up defining two laws governing the evolution of the collective memory: A law of fragmentation. Occasionally several facts are located at the same place. A location may be split in two, or into fragments, or proliferate. In this case, it is as if the strength of religious devotion required several recipients into which to be poured without exhausting itself. A (converse) law of concentration. Facts that are not necessarily interrelated are located in the same or a very nearby place. Here, the concentration of locations provides believers with grand memories in some places.’<sup>14</sup>*

According to Olick, *‘Halbwachs distinguished between “autobiographical memory” and “historical memory.” The former concerns the events of one’s own lifethat one remembers because they were experienced directly. The latter refers to residues of events by virtue of which groups claim a continuous identity through time.’<sup>15</sup>*

### **Memorialisation**

Memorialisation is an act of reinforcing of memory through the building or creation of events, acts, objects, that are place holders of the memory. It is a method of remembrance.

### **Monumentalism**

Deriving from the word monumental, which would be the making of something grand. Monumentalism usually refers to the making of something monumental. It is often seen as derogative notion when it is related to modes used by totalitarian regimes.

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14 Jean-Christophe Marcel and Laurent Mucchielli, ‘Maurice Halbwachs’s mémoire collective’, in *The Invention of Cultural Memory*, ed. by Astrid Erl Ansgar Nünning, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008) pp.141-151. (p. 148).

15 Jeffrey Olick, ‘From Collective Memory to the Sociology of Mnemonic Practices and Products’, in *The Invention of Cultural Memory*, ed. by Astrid Erl Ansgar Nünning, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008) pp.151-163. (p.156)

### **Present absence**

The expression present absence has been used when referring to the counter monument as much as it has been used in the arts when discussing works by artists such as Rachel Whiteread and Joseph Beuys. It was very widely used by James E. Young when discussing the idea of the counter monument and the necessity of breaking away from conventional monument building with the creation of an absence. His idea of the impossibility of building physical structures to represent the missing or absent people, led to further elaborations on the use of the term present absence in his writings.

### **Competitive memory**

Competitive memory as discussed by Michael Rothberg talks about the problem of occupation of space and with that, the occupation of memory. The idea of one memory only being able to occupy one space, at one time. Competitive memory often results in valorisation of memory and trauma, which leads to creating a hierarchy among the different histories existing in the same space.

### **Cultural heritage**

The term cultural heritage embraces both the idea of the monument as well as the idea of the memorial but also includes elements of sciences, architecture, archaeology, language but refers to the tangible or matter/object. Borrowing from the definition used by UNESCO, cultural heritage is, *‘Cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.’*<sup>16</sup>

### **Other**

The idea of Othering was presented by Simone De Beauvoir in her writings but originated from Hegel’s ideas in his Master-Slave Dialectic. The idea of recognizing someone else as significantly different from oneself and in that way positioning him/her as an Other, one that does not belong to the same kind as he/she does. The idea became central to 20th century French philosophy and was analysed thoroughly by psychoanalysts Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. Three ideas of the Other have been distinguished though these theorists. The first referring to the Other as another

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16 Unesco, Tangible Cultural Heritage, < <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/cairo/culture/tangible-cultural-heritage/> > [last accessed 12.09.2018].

individual, this has been adapted to the idea of the Other as some other faceless enemy, as in Hegel's Master-Slave Dialectic. The second Other refers to the Other in oneself, the Other of the self as in the writing of Simone De Beauvoir. The third, a more abstract Other refers to some other existing outside of the realm of the self. This hierarchy is too often concealed or disregarded in order for it to exist and be employed as an advantage of the more privileged. This idea of the Other has been of key importance in the Othering, the action of making someone else the Other.<sup>17</sup>

### **Multi-directional memory**

Multi-directional memory coined by Michael Rothberg departs from the idea of competitive memory. Michael Rothberg explains multi-directional memory through the example of the disagreement between Khalid Muhammed and Walter Benn Michaels about whether the building of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington has occupied the space for the possibility of memorialization of the 'black holocaust'. Rothberg explains that while the two fundamentally disagree, they do agree on the idea of competitive memory and the logic that collective memory works through the adaptation and colonialization of space. One space can only occupy one memory. Rothberg sees this as a great example of his multi-directional memory, which stands as a state of negotiation and development, rather than a static entity. He believes that this moment of consciousness of the multiple layers of history and the shifting of collective memory is the root of multi-directional memory, an ongoing compromise between the histories and memories of the nation.

### **Victimhood**

Victimhood is the state of becoming and being a victim. Victimhood as the public phenomenon of declaring oneself or others as victims, is a complex part of collective identity that is greatly influenced by political power. A theory of victimhood properly begins by identifying the specific political context in which the victimisation occurs. The type of political system will undoubtedly influence the corresponding nature of the treatment of victims and recognition of victim identities. A growing literature on transitional justice sheds light on approaches to victims of largescale violence but is useful for understanding victimhood as a result of a political context more generally.

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<sup>17</sup> Also see Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963).

Therefore, it could be said that victimisation depends on the institutional structures that exist in the state and depending on these the identity of victimhood is instated.

### **Historical Remembrance**

Jay Winter, scholar on history and memory, begins his *Remembering War* with a concise introduction that illuminates the position of the abuse or rather overuse of the term collective memory which has left him abandoning the term and rather referring to collective remembrance as a way a group of people act in a public space for the purpose of remembering a past event. Winter observes the important fact that there are very few collective memories that we, in a majority, remember equally. Most of these so called collective memories are concentrated within smaller communities, as he positions the situation we once again come to terms with the fact that political powers are deciding factors of what becomes part of a collective memory and what does not. Collective remembrance however does not refer as much to the identity of a group but rather the act that they perform.

Winter continues with an analysis of how the memory boom has changed narratives of history and how the idea of the witness has become a key in historical documentation of wars not only through the idea of judicial accounts but narrative. Winter relates narrative to two types of accounts of history and memory, and describes historical remembrance as the term that occurs in the space between the two. According to Winter, '*Historical remembrance is a way of interpreting the past which draws on both history and memory, on documented narratives about the past and on statements of those who lived through them.*'<sup>18</sup> Historical remembrance also puts forward the problematics of how historians present ideas and which ideas they decide to present. It is a discursive field in which memory and history as well as cultural aspects intertwine.

### **Grassroots Memorials**

The somewhat problematic term of make-shift or temporary memorials that erupt at the site of tragic events, soon after the event, created by local communities has been debated in relation to the correct term used to describe them. They have appeared described as spontaneous shrines used by Jack Santino in 1992 to describe

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18 Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press) p.9.



memorialization of political deaths in Northern Ireland, which eluded to a religious ritual that has led other researchers to the use of the term **improvised or ephemeral memorials**. However, because of the nature of some of these memorials, it has been debated whether improvised is an appropriate term while temporary insinuates that these have been created to remain only for a limited amount of time. The nature of these memorials created by local communities, is specific in its defiance of the very backbone of what memorials are usually defined by, in a sense, they are usually controlled by some form of authority, whether political or religious.<sup>19</sup>

### **Cultural Memory**

One of the leading figures of memory studies, Jan Assman, proposes cultural memory as, ‘...a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behavior and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation.’<sup>20</sup> Cultural memory is often understood as being related to a set of defined points of interest, such as certain literary references, public art structures, and social rituals. These forms of expression develop the cultural memory of a certain society and while rooted in specific points of interest it becomes more flexible in its ability to use those points to understand the present.

### **Reconciliation**

‘The term ‘reconciliation’ is used to refer either to a process or to an outcome or goal.’<sup>21</sup>

Reconciliation while rooted in Christianity, in the present it is seen as a ‘coming to terms’ with the past and with this coming to terms reaching an improvement of relations. ‘Reconciliation typically refers to attempts for divided societies to grapple with historical and enduring injustice.’<sup>22</sup> The term gained popularity with the rise of Truth Commissions in the 1990s and attempts to reconcile mass tragedy but its main roots could be said to be the post-Holocaust era in Germany.

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19 See Cristina Sánchez-Carretero and Carmen Ortiz, ‘Grassroots Memorials as sites of Heritage Creation’ in *The Cultures and Globalization Series: Heritage, Memory & Identity*, ed. by Helmut Anheier and Yudhishthir Raj Isar (London: Sage Publications Ltd.,2011) pp.106-114.

20 Jan Assman, ‘Collective Memory and Cultural Identity’, in *New German Critique*, 65 (1995), 125-133.(p. 126).

21 ‘Reconciliation’, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, < <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/reconciliation/>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

22 Nadim Khoury, ‘Political Reconciliation: With or Without Grand Narratives?’, *Constellations: An International Journal on Critical and Democratic Theory*, 24 (2017) pp.245-256 (p.245). <<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1467-8675.12237>> [last accessed 12.09.2018].

Reconciliation is often formed of a process of actions, including but not necessary is forgiveness as well as the social process of receiving restitution, and the building of monuments. It is an occurrence often associated with the rebuilding of a national identity. There are many views debating in this field, weighing the pros and cons of different methods that have appeared.<sup>23</sup>

### **Active/Passive Forgetting**

The act or event of forgetting has been addressed in this project mainly through a destruction or disappearance of memory. Two key authors are used to deliberate on the term, Adrian Forty and David Rieff.<sup>24</sup> Both authors present their arguments in understanding the role of forgetting in society. Forgetting has become a particularly interesting act which in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has shifted. In Western societies we are becoming more accustomed the idea that forgetting is perhaps something that as a society we may have a difficult time doing, since we are surrounded by accessible technology to document history as it is occurring. We can however distinguish between several different types of forgetting. As Aleida Assman states;

*‘Active forgetting is implied in intentional acts such as trashing and destroying. Acts of forgetting are a necessary and constructive part of internal social transformations; they are, however, violently destructive when directed at an alien culture or a persecuted minority. Censorship has been a forceful if not always successful instrument for destroying material and mental cultural products. The passive form of cultural forgetting is related to non-intentional acts such as losing, hiding, dispersing, neglecting, abandoning, or leaving something behind. In these cases the objects are not materially destroyed; they fall out of the frames of attention, valuation, and use.’<sup>25</sup>*

As forgetting, remembering also has an active and a passive side. The institutions of active memory preserve the past as present while the institutions of passive memory preserve the past as past.

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23 See *Taking Wrongs Seriously: Apologies and Reconciliation* ed.by Elazar Barkan and Alexander Karn (California: Stanford University Press, 2006).

24 See Adrian Forty, *The Art of Forgetting*, Paul Connerton, *Seven Types of Forgetting* See David Rieff, *In Praise of Forgetting. Historical Memory and its Ironies*.

25 Aleida Assman, ‘Canon and Archive’ , in *The Invention of Cultural Memory*,ed.by Astrid Erll Ansgar Nünning, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008) pp.97-109. (p.97-98).

## NOTES ON INTERVIEWS

In the period during the research (2013-2018), I had many conversations with artists, scholars, activists, journalists, writers, and members of the community, relevant for the project. All these conversations have helped me understand, analyse and propose new thoughts for this project.

Many of the people were not interviewed in the conventional form due to the sensitive nature of the project but below is a list of interviewees which were recorded (sound) or conducted in the form of Q&A over email.

Kryzstof Wodizcko (July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

Jochen Gerz (July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

Sharone Lifschitz (July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

Eray Çayli (July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

Srdjan Hercigonja (March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017)

Kemal Pervanić (March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017)

Jelena Petrović (January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

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**Project Information Sheet**

***Remains of the Monument/ the Counter-Monument Remains***  
*The myth of the monument in former Yugoslavia: Artistic practice as  
reconciliatory form*

For further information  
Supervisor:

*Jordan Baseman*

*Jordan.baseman@rca.ac.uk*

July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Dear Potential Participant,

*I am* Manca Bajec, a student in the Sculpture Department at the Royal College of Art. This project is part of my doctoral work entitled ***Remains of the Monument/ the Counter-Monument Remains***. *The myth of the monument in former Yugoslavia: Artistic practice as reconciliatory form* and the project is externally sponsored by Municipality of the city of Ljubljana, Slovenia. You are invited to take part in this research project which explores; How can the counter-monument movement be re-adapted and re-visited through its original ideologies, in the context of the post conflict spaces in former Yugoslavia? This practice-led research positions the state of the monument today, and more specifically in societies existing in a state of unresolved conflict. In doing so it examines the artwork as a counter-monumental form and as an approach to unravelling issues of a resistance which exist in sites where monument-building is not possible.

If you consent to participate, this will involve:

- Undertake a recorded interview of approximately 1 hour. (I will not include any personal details and will only use images you approve of)
- The use of your narrative within the project. The project does not have any ownership of the narrative you have provided and you will remain credited unless you choose to be anonymised or use a pseudonym

Participants were obtained via personal connections and online research of the topic, and contacted either via a mutual contact or by via an email address available online.

Participation is entirely voluntary. You can withdraw at any time and there will be no disadvantage if you decide not to complete the project. All information collected will be credited unless you wish to remain anonymous. All information gathered from the project will be stored securely. At no time will any individual be identified if you wish to remain anonymous.

If you have any concerns or would like to know the outcome of this project, please contact my supervisor Jordan Baseman at the below address.

Thank you for your interest,

Complaints Clause:

This project follows the guidelines laid out by the Royal College of Art Research Ethics Policy.

If you have any questions, please speak with the researcher. If you have any concerns or a complaint about the manner in which this research is conducted, please the address the RCA Research Ethics Committee by emailing [ethics@rca.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@rca.ac.uk) or by sending a letter addressed to:

The Research Ethics Committee  
Royal College of Art  
Kensington Gore  
London  
SW7 2EU





Royal College of Art

# RESEARCH & INNOVATION

## Consent Form

***Remains of the Monument/ the Counter-Monument Remains***  
*The myth of the monument in former Yugoslavia: Artistic practice as  
reconciliatory form*

For further information  
Supervisor: *Jordan Baseman*  
*Jordan.baseman@rca.ac.uk*

July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

I (please print).....have read the information on the research project ***Remains of the Monument/ the Counter-Monument Remains. The myth of the monument in former Yugoslavia: Artistic practice as reconciliatory form***, which is to be conducted by *Manca Bajec* (doctoral candidate) from the Royal College of Art, and all queries have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to voluntarily participate in this research and give my consent freely. I understand that the project will be conducted in accordance with the Information Sheet, a copy of which I have retained.

I understand that I can withdraw my participation from the project at any time, without penalty, and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing. I understand that .

I consent to:

- Undertake a recorded interview of approximately 1 hour. (I will not include any personal details and will only use images you approve of)
- The use of your narrative within the project. The project does not have any ownership of the narrative you have provided and you will remain credited unless you choose to be anonymised or use a pseudonym

I understand that all information gathered will be stored securely, and my opinions will be accurately represented. Any images in which I can be clearly identified will be used in the public domain only with my consent.



**Royal College of Art**

# RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Print Name:.....

Signature.....

Date: .....

**Complaints Clause:**

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