

Imagining the Brain Closer Than the Eyes¹

*Now we are carefree, tender and airy
Let us think: how quiet are, the snowy
peaks of the Urals.*

M. Crnjanski, *Sumatra*

When we look around us a little, we can perceive the overall fall that has occurred in the last decade, ranging from various elections, terrorism, occupation, Gulf problems, Mediterranean failures to migration, ecological disasters, risk societies, “failed states”, and governments swollen with words of post-truth (which leaves room for relative facts). The whole environment seems to be depicted in the following M. Crnjanski’s words: *I felt, one day, all the helplessness of human life, and the intricacy of our destiny. I saw that no one goes where they want, and I noticed connections unobserved before.* Connections that possess *insecurity* (precaire), as well as flaws. The world in which governments, at their own speed and by their neoliberal stance, have managed to break all the touching points and contacts between the social system and culture. Such *mimetic deterioration*² makes modern capitalism, at least, overwhelming, while philosophy and art become places where all that insecurity, as well as deficiencies, needs, relationships are found and read in one word – *actualisation*. In other words, we could say that philosophy and art

¹ *Imagining the brain closer than the eyes* is an expression taken from Gary Hill’s video *Site Recite, a Prologue*.

² An expression used by Hal Foster in his book *Bad New Days: Art, Criticism, Emergency, 2015* when explaining the present state of contemporary art.

enhance their presence through broken space, virtual space, through confusion and zombie time in which we live, and all this for the purpose of the spectacle and desire that awakens and feeds actuality.

Consequently, we come to the fact that we build the *brave new world*, not from the good old days, but from the *bad new ones* that are offered to us. To confront the present can be one of the ways, but to agree with contemporaneity and to draw something good out of it is another possibility. In other words, not only can the choice be not to/to agree with the offered, insist on institutions, resources (political, cultural), and thus sleep in the peace and quiet of everyday life of an ordinary person, who is facing an extraordinary situation even today, but it can also be to make the most, for the general interest, of such a *capitalistic rubbish bin*. This also raises the question of artist's existence in such surroundings, which is not an act of perplexity, but an action of responsibility. Responsibility including the idea that it is important what is done and the decision to be free. And freedom is a precondition for responsibility. A constant struggle in which work of art becomes alive and which contains a dose of criticism of what is seen, surrounded, felt, ...waited for. An act of creation from what is within your grasp, the media that are not pre-defined, not filled with meaning and have no excess value, mystery or suspicion. The media that allows you to work with it, and at the same time to be patient so as not to give significance to yourself. It follows from such a view that the established definitions are re-examined and destabilised. The eternal need for quality is the idea of the neutralised, and some kind of spirit that helps you escape the reality. Nevertheless, at this point we can say that it is not only about quality, but about energy as well. Energy you need for thinking, confronting, for permanent self-examination, self-destruction, self-harm, where you are constantly burdening yourself, even more and more, again and again and again, ... fighting for your work of art. And where are we in all this?

Predrag Terzić