

Sonia Abadziewa

Conceptual Practices in the Art Narratives of Milcho Manchevski

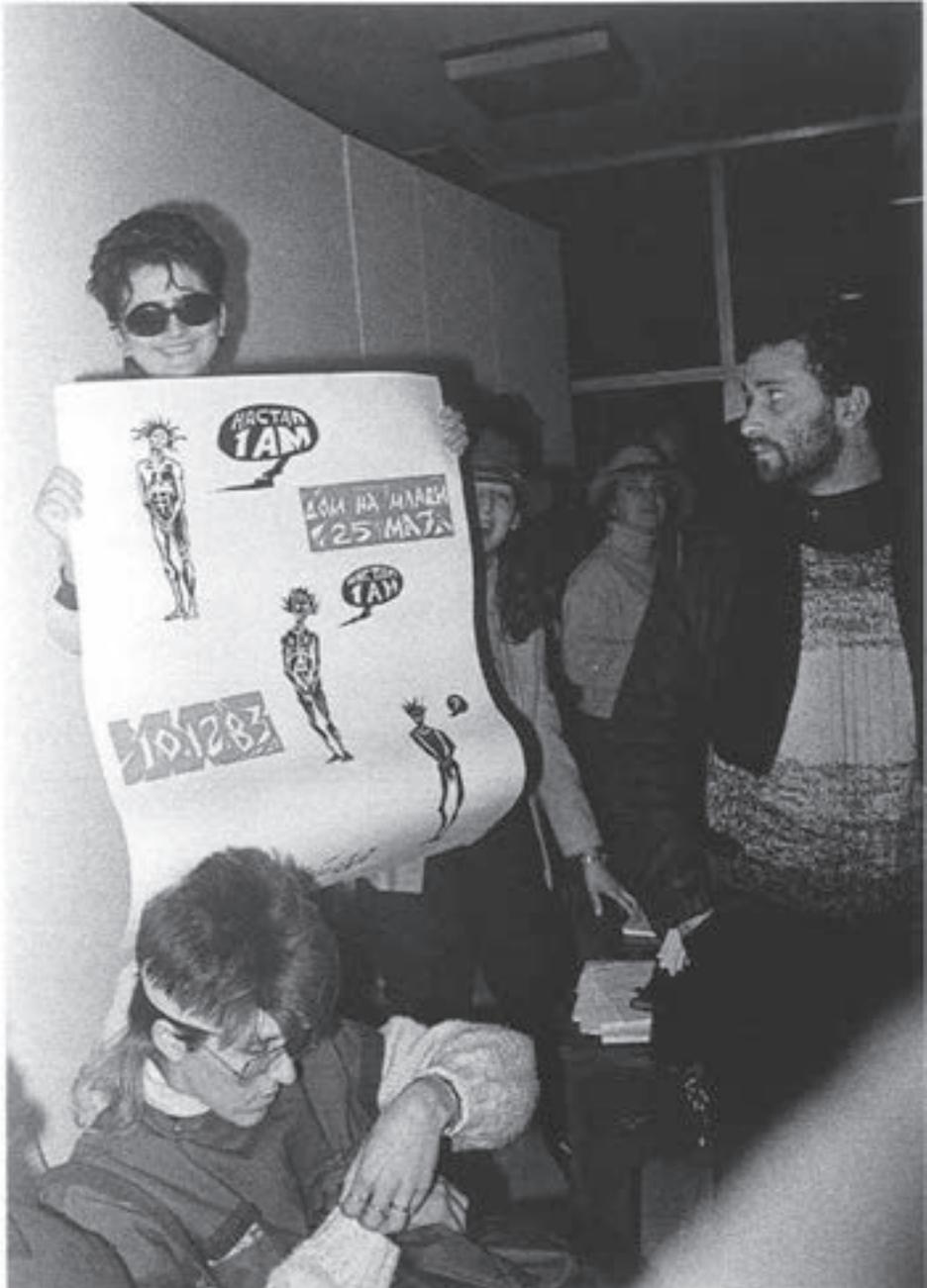
“Man is unable to destroy something, and not put something else in place of what he destroyed. Although Dadaism was seeking to ruin any art form that has been the subject of a dogma, at the same time it met the need to express itself.” (Ribemont-Dessaignes)

“Painting should not be exclusively visual or retinal, but should involve the grey cells together with our yearning to understand... That is why I am dedicated to chess. I find similarities between chess and painting. Indeed, playing chess is like drawing something or building a mechanism of some kind by which you win or lose... The game itself”.
(Marchel Duchamp)¹

Milcho Manchevski considers fine art in the same way maestro Marcel Duchamp considered chess. Fine art entered the game of film. Manchevski's first affinities are in a direct connection with fine arts. I assume that is why at first he studied art history and archaeology at Kiril and Metodij University in Skopje. I connect the most impressive events in these years with his determined choice of the alternative models in visual arts, unlike many artists (painters, sculptors, graphic artists, and so on) in the 1980s, who worked in classic media and expressions.

His fresh reading of the art in Macedonia in that period is related to 1953, when, after the slight relaxation of the communist system, the group Denes was formed (1953/54). Its Manifesto was a significant step out of the established art empiria. On a theoretical level, the members of the group (architects, sculptors, graphic artists, painters) stood for free fluctuation of the disciplines, and brought in the first concept of intermediality. From today's point of view, that fitful determination to overcome the ideological dogma of the time seems like a grand opening of new paths for the

¹ Zoran Gavric, *Izbor tekstova, Muzej savremene umetnosti*, Beograd, 1984, p. 43. A conversation from 1956 of Marcel Duchamp with James Johnson Sweeney.



Performance of the Group 1 AM in Skopje, December, 10, 1983



The Editing of *The Ghost of My Mother*



The opening of *Five Drops of Dream* exhibition at Solyanka Gallery in Moscow



expressiveness of art . And acting in groups became a manner of many alternative activities. Manchevski's predecessors here are the performances of the painters Dragoljub Bežan and Milosh Kodžhoman (1972/73; indoors and open air), urban and mountain actions of the tandem Simon Shemov and Nikola Fidanovski (1973/1985 in Skopje, Prilep and at Korab and Deshat mountains, etc.), and the installations and objects made of ephemeral material by the architect Simon Uzunovski (1975-1978) in the Dom na mladi 25 Maj (now Youth Cultural Center).

Manchevski explicitly seceded from the above mentioned new practices (performance and/or installations): his actions are first of all based on concepts that are previously conceived and realised in textual form (photocopied applications, invitations, programmes, questionnaires), with very precise program indications for the content and modalities of the performances. The word, the letter, the number reigns in them.² The performances of the Group *1AM*, formed by Manchevski, were reduced to fragments of language, text, book, film, photography, sound, performer's body, speech/conversation... which was a declaration of the aesthetics freed from the material: objects, exhibits or pieces of art as physical reality. Here we should mention the first interface solutions while presenting the first experimental films (*The Wire*, and *Paths of Glory*, that he made as a student in Carbondale, USA, and that consisted of only one shot 2 or 3 minutes long).³ In connection with his analytical exploration of certain phenomena, tamed with the non-hierarchical setting of the "materials" used to construct the works, and the bare fact of the constant repetition of various elements of the program and converting the pictorial into verbal illusion, I would put Manchevski's work in a closer ontological connection with the dadaist discourse of Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia from the beginning of 20. Century, and with the conceptualists from the 1970s: Vito Acconci, John Baldessari, Sol LeWitt, Daniel Buren, Joseph Kosuth, and with the social plasticity of Joseph Beuys.⁴

Manchevski's first installation is *The Ghost of My Mother* (1983), set in an apartment in Skopje, in the presence of the artist Iskra Dimitrova. Those pieces of paper arranged on the living room floor are actually stems of his thoughts, concepts and their notation on paper – material that later

2 See: Sol LeWitt, in: Ursula Meyer, *Conceptual Art*, A Dutton Paperback New York, 1972, p. 174-5 : "Illogical judgements lead to new experience"; "All ideas need not be made physical"; "If words are used, and they proceed from ideas about art, then they are art and not literature, numbers are not mathematics" ; "All ideas are art if they are concerned with art and fall within the conventions of art".

3 *The Wire*, involved a single hand-held shot climbing a set of stairs to an attic room, including a glimpse of the shadow of the cameraman and the wire linking the camera to the battery belt. Hence the name of the film *The Wire*.

4 See: Ursula Meyer, *Conceptual Art*, opus.cit. p. IX.): "Duchamp rejected the myth of the precious and stylish objet d'art, a commodity for the benefit of museums and status seekers. His interest turned from tradition of painting to the challenge of invention... All art after Duchamp is conceptual in nature because art only exists conceptually". See also: Josef Kosuth, *Art After Philosophy*, Studio International, October 1969, p. 10.



Manchevski and Tehching Hsieh, Brooklyn, Sept 10, 2014

entered the context of the book *The Ghost of My Mother*. The book, published in 2000 by Tri, de facto contains the 'conceptual' material of artist's activities in the 1980s. The book uses contemporary visual diversity: comic strip, video, clips, commercials... - a heterogeneity that not only does not want to avoid cacophony, but on the contrary, emphasizes it.⁵ The refreshing processes of his aesthetics happen in this mix.⁶ He 'abuses cynicism and irony' and is close to Dadaists, Surrealists and Cubists. As did Duchamp, so, too, Manchevski "did not aim to 're-value all values'; that would be an act of tautology for him, but he tried to deepen Cartesian doubt, and, furthermore, to explain every pursuit of a substantial aim as a priori doomed to fail, and therefore unreasonable"⁷.

"That's also a way to keep on fiddling creatively with what you do. Otherwise you turn into a walking monument", Manchevski says.⁸ The witticism and raciness of his ideas in the book *The Ghost of My Mother*, as in his films, are fine acts of insouciance that for him are "a creative game... But, mind you, the witticism has to be integral and consistently performed. A little game causes a lot of work"⁹. Another important characteristic of the integral concept, in the book as well as in his happenings and performances, is the connection with minimalism, a reduced manner or laconic discourse.

"I like minimalism... I like to have it put in context, to have it as an extreme of something larger, to be able to say: minimal on one hand, but at the same time very rich"¹⁰. In the same interview the artist mentions that when he was 15 he was obsessed with haiku, tanka and books about Zen Buddhism, that he did not understand at the time, and he "even tried to write a few haiku poems myself", admiring the discipline and the minimalism of expression.

The Ghost of My Mother is a book-object or artist's book, filled with emotion, a Babylonian expression, a mélange of the Macedonian, Serbian and English languages. The book itself is a conceptual piece, bricolage/ assemblage of images of comics, blurred photographs with non-representative content, abstract landscapes, short/laconic expressions, conceptual poetry, mini-stories, some sort of haiku poetry, recounting of dreams, self-referencing notes/ intimate confessions, love of MTV, quotes from books or TV, pensées: "The object of war is not simply to kill, but to convince the survivors to submit", absurd assertions: "There are two sects in this religion. According to one there is no God, while according to the other there is no God". A sorrow is felt in the background, a lasting wound: "When you're anemic even the mosquitoes won't bite you and your mother's not here"; or "Some strange tastes/of rooms/come over me/and pull me back/to the childhood/of huge things". Or fear: "What fear/is/so/big/to fill up/a whole/apartment?"; "Sometimes, at night, as I type in the empty apartment, my back to the door, I have a feeling there's someone behind me. Just like now." There are also lonesome erotic cries, nostalgia: "Nobody's young no more!", pain: "I am different./I can't stand pain./Pain hurts me.", death – the death of the mother of his friend Markus, the fake funeral of Josef Honys ("Mystification Event", and then his suicide).

The Manifesto of the Conceptualists is published in the book as well. The illustrations are mainly comic heroes, photographs with blur effect.

In the Group *1 AM*, Manchevski (at the beginning with the philosopher Branislav Sarkanjac) as a main promoter of the concept, organized multimedia activities in Dom na mladi 25 Maj in Skopje (1983 and 1984) with deliberate emphasis on the collective approach of the creative process. The happenings, body

5 The book itself consists of text only. The edition published by Tri has illustrations that Manchevski made with the designer Matthias Heipel, including those in which the panels of an old comic are mutated.

6 See: Milcho Manchevski: *We Were Explaining Joseph Beuys' Performance to a Live Rabbit*, Golemoto staklo, Skopje, 2002, No. 14/15, p. 72

7 See: Zoran Gavric, Marcel Duchamp, Muzej savremene umetosti, Београд, p. 6

8 See Golemoto staklo, quoted volume, p 73.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Ibid.*



*На ден 10. декември 1984, понеделник,
се почело во 20,15 с. во просториите
на Галеријата при Дом на
младите „25. мај“, во Скопје*



*Членовите на групата
1 АМ ќе изведат настап*

*Ќе ни биде особено мило ако Вие
и Вашето семејство се нејашко
присудествувате на нашата малка
свеченост, која по тој повод ќе
се одржи на дадениот месин*

Дом на младите „25. мај“
Кеј „Димитар Влахов“ Б.Б. — Скопје

Група 1 АМ
ул. 348 бр. 6-Б — Скопје

On the 10th of December, 1984, Monday, beginning at 8:15 PM,
in the space of Gallery of the Youth Home “25th of May”, in Skopje

The members of the group 1 AM will perform a presentation

We would consider it a great honor if you and your honored family should attend our humble celebration, which on that occasion will be held at the space granted as described below

Youth Home “25th of May”, in Skopje

Kej “Dimitar Vlahov” B.B. – Skopje

Group 1 AM

ul. 348 br. 6-b – Skopje

PLAN ZA RASPUŠTANJE NA GRUPNATA 1 AM

Место: Галерија при Домот на младите "25. мај", Скопје, Југославија
Време: Сабота, 10.12.1983, 22.30 до 24.00 часот, средноевропско време

- 22.30 Отклучување на галеријата и вклучување на светлото
22.34 Читаме на Уводниот збор
22.35 Читаме на Планот за изложба*
22.39 Истакнување на експонатите
22.42 - 23.39 Деламе на Планот, Свесноста и Уводниот збор
22.42 - 23.39 Потпишување на Концептуално-методичкиот манифест од страна на публиката
22.44 Проекција на филмот "Патежи на славата"
22.48 Слушаме на "Нарек и Методиј блуз"
22.53 Продаваме лист примерок од планот
22.58 Деламе на текстот од речиталот "Елегии за Нарек и Методиј"
23.01 Речитал: "Елегии за Нарек и Методиј"
23.05 Парча
23.08 Старираме на парчето мрав
23.08 - 23.39 Набљудуваме на топењето на парчето мрав
23.09 Фотографираме на изложбата
23.14 Истакнување на фотографиите од изложбата на сликата изложба
23.18 Вртем на проектот "Лица" кон публиката
23.22 Второ слушање на "Нарек и Методиј блуз"
23.27 Проекција на филмот "Лица"
23.32 Фотографираме на фотографиите од изложбата
23.36 Истакнување на фотографиите од фотографиите на изложбата
23.40 Проекција на филмот без наслов (во исто време со делето на текстот од филмот без наслов)
23.40 Деламе на текстот од филмот без наслов (во исто време со проекцијата на филмот без наслов)
23.43 Деламе на оригинални позивки за настанот
23.54 Средување на впечатоките од настанот
23.58 Сложување на планот
23.59 Истакнување на светлото и заклучување на галеријата.

*Овој лист со овој текст

GROUP 1 AM PLAN OF PERFORMANCE

Place: Gallery at the Youth Home "The 25th of May", Skopje, Yugoslavia
Time: Saturday, the 10th of December, 1983,

- 10:30 PM to 00:00 AM, Central European Time
10:30 PM Unlocking the gallery and turning on the lights
10:34 PM Reading the Introduction
10:35 PM Reading the Plan of performance*
10:39 PM Displaying the exhibits
10:42 - 11:59 PM Distribution of the Plan, List and Introduction
10:42 - 11:59 PM The audience signs the Conceptualist Manifesto
10:44 PM Screening of the film *Paths of Glory*
10:48 PM Listening to *Cyril and Methodius Blues*
10:53 PM Selling six copies of the poster
10:58 PM Distributing the text of the recital *Elegies for Cyril and Methodius*
11:01 PM Recital: *Elegies for Cyril and Methodius*
11:05 PM Break
11:08 PM Uncovering the piece of ice
11:08 PM - 11:59 PM Observing as the piece of ice melts
11:09 PM Photographing the exhibition
11:14 PM Displaying the photographs of the exhibition at the exhibition itself
11:18 PM Turning the project *Faces* towards the audience
11:22 PM Second listening of *Cyril and Methodius Blues*
11:27 PM Screening of the film *Wire*
11:32 PM Photographing the photographs of the exhibition
11:36 PM Exhibiting the photographs of the photographs of the exhibition
11:40 PM Screening of the untitled film (at the same time as the distribution of the text of the untitled film)
11:40 PM Distribution of the text of the untitled film (at the same time as the screening of the untitled film)
11:49 PM Distribution of the original Invitations for the performance 11:54 PM Going over the impressions of the performance
11:58 PM Taking down the poster
11:59 PM Turning off the lights and locking the gallery.

*This list with this text

ЕЛЕМЕНТИ ЗА ТОЛКУВАЊЕ НА НАСТАПОТЕ НА ГРУПАТА

1 AM

Дефиниција на настапот на групата 1 AM :

Настапот на групата 1 AM не е концептуалистичко дело,
хепенинг, перформанс, боди арт, структуалистичко дело,
ГАСП-уметност, минималистичко дело, понтависки уметност,
екивокаменталистичко дело, мари-уметност, дадаизам.
Негативната дефиниција на дефиницата.

IIIIIIII

Да се каже оцена за едно уметничко дело законско значи да не се
спознае новото, бидејќи каваквата оцена значи гледање преку
традицијата.

IIIIIIIIII

Немоќта на критиката се огледа во најголемо мерење едно уметничко
дело да се каже под зов и зив.

IIIIIIIIII

Ние не сме интересирани уметноста, туку мета-уметноста.

IIIIIIIIII

...се состои во согледувањето дека постојат резервати на уметноста,
но дека уметноста не се наоѓа во класичните резервати, ами баш надвор
од нив.

ELEMENTS FOR INTERPRETATION THE OF THE GROUP 1 AM PERFORMANCES

Definition of the performance by the group 1 AM:

The performance by the group 1 AM is not: a conceptualist piece, a happening, a performance piece, body art, a structuralist piece, GASP-art, a minimalist piece, mail art, an environmental piece, camp-art, Dadaism.

A negative definition does not define.

-

To evaluate an art piece always means to fail to cognize the new, as evaluating means viewing through tradition.

-

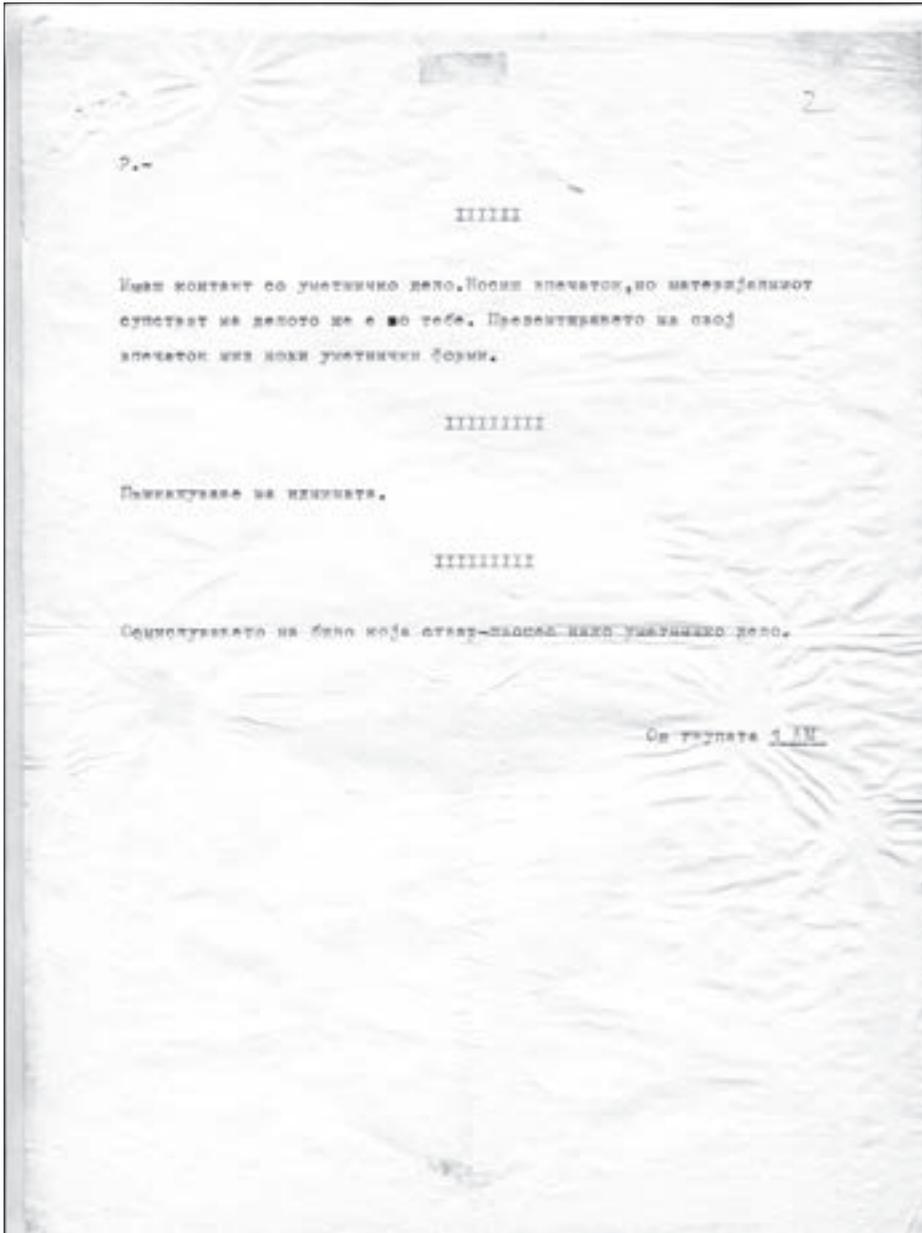
The impotence of criticism is reflected in its insistence for a work of art to be reduced to gender and type.

-

We are not interested in art, but in meta-art.

-

... consists of realizing that art reservations do exist, but also that art cannot be found on the classic reservations, but instead, exactly outside of them.



You come in touch with a work of art. You come away with an impression, but the material substrate of the piece is not within you. The rendition of this impression through new art forms.

-

Showing the future.

-

Imagining of any thing-process as a work of art.

From the group 1 AM

Текст на речиталот "ЕЛЕГИЈА ЗА КИРИЛ И МЕТОДИЈ"

А Б В Г Д Е Ж З Ѕ Ј К Л Ђ М Њ Ђ О П Р С Т К У Ф Х Ц Ч Ѓ

Text of the recital *ELEGIES FOR CYRIL AND METHODIUS*

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

НЕГАТИВНА ДЕФИНИЦИЈА НА НАСТАПОТ НА ГРУПАТА 1 AM

Настапот на групата 1 AM не е: концептуалистичко дело, хепенинг, перформанса, боди арт, структуралистичко дело, ГАСП-уметност, минималистичко дело, постемска уметност, енвайронменталистичко дело, камп-уметност, дадаизам.

Негативната дефиниција не дефинира.

DEFINITION OF THE PERFORMANCE
OF THE GROUP 1 AM

The performance of the group 1 AM is not: conceptualist piece, happening, performance, body-art, structuralist piece, GASP-art, minimalist piece, mail art, environmentalist piece, camp-art, dadaism.

A negative definition does not define.

1 AM

УВОДЕН ЗБОР

1. Дали уводниот збор треба да уведува ?
2. Разно.

INTRODUCTION

1. Does the introduction have to introduce?
2. Various.

(ПРАВАНЕНО) НА ГРУПАТА 1 AM

1. Дали овие филмови се уметнички дела? *Тие што ги гледав*
2. Дали овие филмови се автономни (уметнички) дела, или тие се огледа елементи во настапот на групата 1 AM *Праворпорционално*
3. Дали овие филмови се правени и со цел да бидат дел од настапот на групата 1 AM *А. ЈЕБЕЦ МУ МАТЕР. П.А.А.А. Америка*
4. Дали настапот на групата 1 AM е можен без овие филмови *НУЖЕ СЕ ХУМАНИ*
5. Дали ~~овие~~ филмови се можни без настапот на групата 1 AM *ПРАВИТЕ СЕ СЕГА О, Д, А*
6. Дали тоа што настапите на групата 1 AM не се ни: концептуално дело, хепенинг, перформанса, боди-арт, структурално дело, ГАСП - уметност, минималистичко дело, постелска уметност, енвајронментално дело, камо-уметност, поп-арт, инту дадаизам, ги прави овие филмови уметнички *ДА, БЕ*
7. Дали постои настап на групата 1 AM без експонатите и без оној правалник на кој морате да не одговорите *Во Промите се*
8. Дали постои настап на групата 1 AM без недостигот на Вашите одговори
9. Дали Ви благодариме на соработката *АТЛАН?*

Од групата 1 AM

(QUESTIONNAIRE) OF THE GROUP 1 AM

1. Are these films works of art?
2. Are these films autonomous works (of art), or are they just elements in the performance of the group 1 AM?
3. Was the goal of making these films to also make them a part of the performance of the group 1 AM?
4. Is the performance of the group 1 AM possible without these films?
5. Are these films possible without the performance of the group 1 AM?
6. Does the fact that the performances of the group 1 AM are neither: conceptualist pieces, happenings, performance works, body-art, structuralist pieces, GASP- art, minimalistic pieces, mail art, environmental pieces, camp-art, pop-art, nor Dada make these films artistic?
7. Does a performance by the group 1 AM without the exhibits and without that questionnaire that you shouldn't have to answer exist?
8. Does a performance by the group 1 AM exist without the lack of your answers?
9. Do we thank you for the cooperation?

From the group 1 AM

Текст на филмот без наслов

Отсекогаш сум сакал да направам оригинален филм.

Во мојот прв филмски предмет на Академијата снимив филм кој траеше две минути и имавше шпica од пет минути. А, и во тие две минути, половина минута или можеби цела минута идилично снимав една фабрика, а после целата таа минута што остана, плус уште две-три минути имав еден долг, статичек кадар на машина, пресов. Тоа беше субјективен кадар на работникот. После, ми зинаа како "не може секој да биде Анди Ворхол". Тие не сакаа ни две-три минути да го гледаат она што работникот го гледа по осум саати дневно, цел живот. Филмот се викаше "Работничката класа оди во рајот". Овие критики ме натераа да се чувствувам како да не сум оригинален. После, сакав да снимам филм кој би се викал "На убавиот, син Дунав" и во кој би се слушала само музиката од вальсот на Етрауе, а снимката би била само крупен план на ебеме, како кур алегорија во пичка. Ама, и тоа го видоа, мислам, крупниот план на ебемето во "Блу Бот" на Пеласон. Знаеш, депресивно е кога мнозина деца не се оригинален човек. Тогаш реших да направам црн филм, да земам само црн лидер и да зборувам зад него. Ми рекоа: "Ни тоа не е оригинално, и други го правеле. Дури и Годар ставал црно и зборел зад него!". Да, но житу еднаш не било со оваа варијација. Ни, дури и ако било, сигурно не било со мојот глас. Токму. Точка! Еби го!

Text of the untitled film

I always wanted to make an original film, an experimental film.

In my first production course I made a film.

The film itself was about two minutes long and then I had one long take of a press machine printing press that was about four minutes long. Everyone in the critique said "Not everybody could be Andy Warhol" and I felt like I was stealing Andy Warhol's idea. This first film was called "Working Class Goes to Heaven" and that was the POV of the worker - so the audience was seeing for four minutes what the worker was seeing for eight hours every day. And they didn't like it. Then, I was gonna make a film named "The Beautiful Blue Danube" and the soundtrack was gonna be the music from the waltz "Beautiful Blue Danube" by Johann Strauss and the picture would be only one static shot, a close-up of fucking. A real close-up so you see the cock getting in the cunt. And it didn't really work. I also saw a whole bunch of close-ups of fucking and touching- I mean T O U C H I N G, and then in "Blue shoot", and so on. Then, I mean everything I wanted to do, they would tell me that someone else had done it or at least thought of it. And it's pretty frustrating you know, you feel like you're not an original person, you feel that you are thinking something that people have already thought of. Then, I finally got the idea, I wanted to only have a black leader and they told me that that's already been done. Then I decided I wanted to have a narration with the black leader and they said "It's been done you know, Godard has been doing things like that!", and I said but no one had a black leader, with narration, with my voice. And even if someone had a black leader, with narration, with my voice, it wasn't this narration. So this is absolutely, positively, original, and that's it. Period. Fuck it.

МИЛЧО

1. Јазни: поле, сина, воша, рошан, јаков, ..., 25.5., РОЗЕТА
2. збори со 25. мај - проба за филм и лепилица
3. збори за плакат и за истакивање
4. оркестар - 6, папилографича
5. интервјуи - петок у 15 ч.
6. предавање покани
7. збори со луѓе
8. посетител провери и проба
9. слици - миро,
10. поведомци - вилета, мирче.

Дом:

- група
- ва - дуб.
- САТ

покане се за
1 АМ као
вечерин покан
- разгледува Наредна
окачена

БАБА поштува со
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art performances, object making, slide screenings, music performances and conversations are explained in detail, as in a sort of screenplay as well as in their photocopied texts. The first Macedonian Manifesto of the Conceptualists was published in these texts (signed by Milcho Manchevski, Emil Ansarov, Atanas Bogdanovski, Vanco Gjosevski, Hadzhi-Angelkovski Gjorgji, Ljubomir Stojasavljevikj, Miloje Radakovic, Sarkanjac, Dabic, Princevac Zanet, Vanja Ve, Peric Ljiljana, Petre Bogdanovski, A. Grcev, Pasoski Robi, Darka Stefanovska, Lidija P., Ivan M., Tanja, Zorica Trpkovska, M, Polazar, J. Nikuljska). This art workshop is close in spirit with the social plasticity of the greatest Fluxus mage – Joseph Beuys.

The activities of *1 AM* are multimedia, multidisciplinary, and intercommunicative (exhibits, performances, happenings, conversations, film screenings, music, reciting, discussions, taking photographs, communicating with the audience). They cherished the absurd and irony and were close in spirit with Dadaists, who in fact denied art. They strived to keep the anonymity of the group members, anonymity against collective action, socializing, socialization and democratization of art. They performed activities with permanent repetition, pleonasm, photographs on photographs, films on films, repeating the name of the Group 1 AM.

The second performance of the Group 1 AM also had connotation of multimedia activities (music, TV program, slide screening, unpretentious conversation topics, and paradoxical situations of waiting for no event). The event is in the waiting, the charm is in the desire to see, touch, and hear. A sort of paraphrase of a 1963 Joseph Beuys' happening is made with a twisted meaning: "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare" became "How to Explain Joseph Beuys' Performance to a Live Rabbit". The Questionnaire for the event emphasizes that this *mélange* of events is not treated neither as one direction nor style, noting that negative definition is not a definition.¹¹

Manchevski himself explains the concept of his experimental film *1.72: My film "1.72"* shown in Belgrade, Split and New York, consisted of the following: I appear on the stage and I hold a piece of film 1.72 m long, in complete darkness, which is then exposed to 24 flashes. Then I take the same piece of film upstairs and project it (short projection). The film is in fact exposed, but not processed, so that there is nothing to see on it. Then I take it downstairs, cut it into pieces, staple each piece onto a questionnaire (questions about what art is, what the nature of art is: is it this film or that piece of film we performed as a happening, or these pieces that I'm now distributing?). In all of my experience, that is the point I was closest to the fine arts".¹²

After two and a half decades, Manchevski conceived the project *Riddle* (1999), probably inspired by the urban design of billboards and citylights, and among other things, as a result of his intensive work in photography, exhibited around the world. *Riddle* consists of 8 photographs that are a sort of anti-puzzle, because the photographs do not follow in order but present a process of putting up a billboard, a project that can be put together as one wishes it to be. The interactive idea is emphasized, and if it were taken out, that would completely devalue the work.

*

All this plethora of events, performances, installations, art books, experimental films, interactive and interface performances, et.c, at first were independent and later parallel with Manchevski's other activities: feature films, photo exhibitions, commercials and spots. I would say all these activities are one and only a sort of cabinet of rarities, a contemporary one, interweaving lucid, ironic, often absurd ideas as connecting lines between the unconventional art happening from the early 20th century to the early 21st. In that way, the ontological space of the cabinet assumes the aura of a holistic principle, characteristic of grand concepts.

11 "We had two performances of what we called appearance art. They were defined by what they were not. We had a long list of all we were not (performance art, conceptualism, happening, Dadaism, etc., etc., etc.) and then a paragraph followed saying that a negative definition is not a definition. The performance was basically about keeping promises. And a whole lot of conceptual, and not just conceptual, things were promised that were also carried out at a given point in time. (We had exhibits, projections, a recital and a performance). That was the first appearance. The second appearance was exactly a year later and it was a paraphrase of Joseph Beuys' happening, "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare", only we had a live rabbit and we were explaining Beuys' performance to it". In Milcho Manchevski, quoted piece in Golemoto staklo, p. 70.

12 *Ibid.*