la Biennale di Venezia

55. Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte

Partecipazioni nazionali

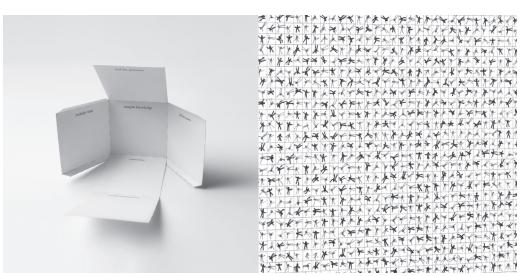**THE MONTENEGRO PAVILION**
AT THE 55th INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION
– LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

Irena Lagator Pejović

I M A G E (*EN)
THINK

Irena Lagator Pejović, *Camera Imaginata. The Means for Exchanging the Power of the Imagination*, 2013 | *Ecce Mundi* (detail), 2013

Commissioner/Curator: **Nataša Nikčević**

Supported by the **Montenegro Ministry of Culture,**
and the **Center of Contemporary Art, Montenegro**

opening: **May 30, 2013 at 6:30 pm**
                  with opening speech by **Bazon Brock**, artist and Professor of Aesthetics
                  and Cultural Education at the Bergische Universität Wuppertal

schedule: **June 1 – November 24, 2013**

hours: **10:00 am – 18:00 pm, closed Monday**
                  except Monday, June 3 and Monday, November 18, 2013

venue: **Palazzo Malipiero,** San Marco 3078-3079/A, Venice, ground floor

Irena Lagator Pejović

IMAGE (*EN)
THINK

At the 55th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, Montenegro is represented by **Irena Lagator Pejović**'s project ***Image Think***. For years now, the artist has been elaborating her analysis of art as social strategy in order to suggest the potentialities of the "unlimited responsibilities" of each and every one of us. By stressing the range of human emotions, she seeks to invoke cognitive and perceptual awareness.

Image Think is a triangular interrelation between *image*, medium and the body that highlights the functions of the imagination, the activation of perception and the relations between the Universal and the poetic architecture of the self. "These spaces inside spaces exist in order to translate seeing into thinking, sensory experience into sense, absence into presence, questioning our personal and collective responsibilities in relation to the creation of *images.*" (Irena Lagator Pejović)

The exhibition at Palazzo Malipiero extends throughout the three rooms of the ground floor and consists of four works: *Further than Beyond, Image Think, Ecce Mundi and Camera Imaginata. The Means for Exchanging the Power of the Imagination,* artists´ intervention in the catalogue.

The first room contains the work ***Further than Beyond:*** golden strings tensed horizontally between the walls create the *bodies* of two tetrahedra, one facing the other. The barely visible filaments, which refer to the work of two renewed Venezuelan artists, Gego's ambient diagrams, and Soto's *Penetrables,* as well as to string theory in science, delineate a *line* between the Earth's end and the start of the Universe – the *space* of perception and imagination. The light dims at the ends of each of the tetrahedra, accentuating the moment the work disappears visually, evoking Derridean deconstruction theory.

Next, in the second room, we enter a completely darkened setting. Light, movement and mirrors in the work ***Image Think*** create rhizomes bridging the material and immaterial worlds, presence and absence… This artificial Universe – created out of black polyethylene perforated with different gauge needles, reflected in the mirror floor and influenced by the presence of the visitor (who is reflected in it) – blends into the space of the self and into the thinking *image* of our world, oscillating between the physical and mental spheres. Referring to the concept underlying Orwellian "Newspeak", the title *Image Think,* with the infinitive form of the verb "to think", is an attempt to demonstrate how the power of imagination and mental images can survive the degeneracies of language (or any kind of totalitarian regime).

From this black box, we enter a third area, a spatialized *white square* (***Ecce Mundi***) covered in hand-drawn canvases with a multitude of rotating minuscule human-like pictograms. In this positive of the cosmos, human beings become star-like figures, constituting a distant–nearby universe with respect to both the drawing-form and the optical phenomena of the figures' animated movements. Visitors are supposed to walk through the medium and the multitude of its barely visible pictograms, but it is the choice and responsibility of each to decide whether to step in and walk through the work to continue its consumption. This work's concept questions the *image* itself, the reasons for its existence, as well as the categories of interactivity, time, space, society and responsibility. The architecture of the white space created here becomes the medium that transmits the *image,* the palace of humanity, which the human race has, for centuries, been just about to start building.

In the fourth work, **Camera Imaginata. The Means for Exchanging the Power of the Imagination**, *image* becomes word. The *Camera Imaginata* is the artists´ intervention in the exhibition catalogue and relies on social media and the visitors' participation, activating personal and collective spheres, subjective versus collective understandings of the world. Out of the palace of humanity, visitors exit into *rooms* of the imagination through the artists´ intervention in the catalogue, which fosters action instead of representation, participation rather than reception. The artist invites us to *feel the presence...multiply time...recall imagination,* initiating art as social strategy – a key aspect in the work of the Montenegrin artist Irena Lagator Pejović.

The exhibition *Image Think* is hence a walk through the knowledge and the suggestions developed by the various ambiences. At the end of experiencing the exhibition, in the **Camera Imaginata. The Means for Exchanging the Power of the Imagination,** artists´ intervention in the exhibition catalogue, a gift is offered to all those who decide to construct it by cutting the drawing, and thereby construct an ideal poetic place. It is the responsibility of each of us to transform the idea into an object, the ideal into reality.

A fully illustrated **catalogue** will be issued containing **essays by Nataša Nikčević, Irena Lagator Pejović and Bazon Brock**. The catalogue contains Irena Lagator's long and deliberated dialectic exchange with artist and philosopher Bazon Brock regarding the question of whether art can be charged with the values of social strategy. An essay by Bazon Brock, who ends by asking the Montenegrin artist for an answer, is published on the Websites: http://irenalagator.net/texts/bazon%20brock.pdf and http://www.bazonbrock.de/werke/detail/?id=2757&sectid=2440

A new work by **Irena Lagator Pejović** will be shown in Italy at the exhibition *the sea is my land.* Artisti dal Mediterraneo, curated by **Francesco Bonam**i and **Emanuela Mazzonis**, at **MAXXI, Rome,** from July 3rd until September 29th, 2013.

BIOGRAPHY

Irena Lagator Pejović (www.irenalagator.net)
Born in Cetinje, Montenegro, 1976, she lives and works in Cetinje and Podgorica.

AWARDS (selection)
2010, Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts. **2007**, *Transforming Memory. The Politics of Images:* International Biennial of Contemporary Art, 24th Nadežda Petrović Memorial, Čačak, Serbia (together with Mariana Castillo Deball). Jury: Beatrice von Bismarck, Mileta Prodanović, Thierry Destriez. **2003**, *4th International Print Triennial,* Museum of Modern Egyptian Art, Cairo, Egypt. **2002**, *Reconstruction,* 4th Cetinje international biennial of contemporary art, Montenegro, UNESCO prize for visual arts. Jury: Bojana Pejić, Henry Meyric Hughes, Petar Ćuković, Edi Muka, Patricia Jerez.

RESIDENCES AND WORKSHOP (selection)
2009, AiR/symposium: ORTung, Salzburger Kunstverein/Deutschvilla, Strobl, Austria. **2007**, AiR: Viafarini, Milan. **2006**, AiR: Neue Galerie am Universalmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Austria. **2005**, *Modelmania*: workshop with Olafur Eliasson and Yona Friedman, ArtExperience Domus Academy, Venice.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS, PROJECTS (selection)
2012, *Società a responsabilità limitata (S. r. l.),* Villa Pacchiani, Santa Croce sull'Arno (Pisa). Curated by Ilaria Mariotti; *The Society of Unlimited Responsibility.* Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade , Serbia. Curated by Dejan Sretenović and Una Popović. **2010**, *Sfere,* Irena Lagator & Wendelin Pressl. IG Bildende Kunst, Vienna. **2008**, *What We Call Real,* Atelier DADO-gallery for contemporary art, National Museum of Montenegro, Cetinje. **2007**, *Is It Still Winter Outside?,* Museum of Contemporary Art, with Petra Maitz: *Lady Musgrave Reef,* Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina; *Living Space,* 'Beograd' Gallery, Belgrade, Serbia. **2006**, *Living Room,* Art Pavilion, Podgorica, Montenegro. **2005**, *Please Wait Here,* Abbazia di San Zeno, Pisa (in collaboration with Fondazione TESECO per l´Arte). **2004**, *Passer-by!* Cultural Center gallery, Belgrade, Serbia.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (selection)

2013, *the sea is my land. Artisti dal Mediterraneo.* MAXXI, Roma. Curated by Francesco Bonami and Emanuela Mazzonis; *Subjective Maps/Disappearances,* National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik, Islanda; *Spring Exhibition 2013,* Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark. **2012**, *Est/Ovest,* Museum of Contemporary Art "Palazzo Pino Pascali", Polignano a Mare. Curated by Rosalba Brana, Mariapaola Spinelli and Antonio Frugis; *The Land Seen From the Sea,* Villa Croce - Museo d'arte contemporanea, Genova. **2011**, *Untitled (History),* 12th Istanbul International Biennial of Contemporary Art, Istanbul. Curated by Adriano Pedrosa and Jens Hoffmann. **2010**, *Geography of Proximity,* MCA, Malta Contemporary Art Foundation, Valletta, Malta; *Orte/Nicht-Orte. Ortung 2009.* Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg. Curated by Hemma Schmutz and Astrid Wege; *Little Constellation – A view on Contemporary Art in Geo-Cultural Micro-Areas and Small States of Europe,* Careof, Milan. **2009**, *Little Constellation – A view on Contemporary Art in Geo-Cultural Micro-Areas and Small States of Europe,* Neon Campobase, Bologna. **2007**, *Transforming Memory. The Politics of Images,* international biennial of contemporary art/24th Nadežda Petrović Memorial, Čačak, Serbia. Curated by Astrid Wege. **2006**, *Artist-in-residence 2005+2006,* Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Austria; *At the Second Sight,* Pavelhaus, Laafeld, Austria. Curated by Mirjana Dabović; *Non Place,* Röda Sten, Göteborg, Svezia. Curated by Maja Ćirić; *Ennui,* FACT, Foundation for Art and Creative Technology, Liverpool, UK. **2005**, *Montenegrin Beauty,* Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin/Motorenhalle, Dresden. Curated by Svetlana Racanović; *At the Second Sight,* Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade. **2004**, *Love it or Leave it,* 5th Cetinje international biennial of contemporary art, Montenegro. Curated by René Block and Nataša Ilić; *Orchid,* 5th Cetinje international biennial of contemporary art, Montenegro. Curated by Petar Ćuković; *Articulation,* BELEF, Belgrade. Curated by Jovan Čekić. **2003**, *Logical,* BELEF, Belgrade, Serbia. Curated by Jovan Čekić; *Montenegrin Beauty,* City Theatre, Budva, Montenegro / Pavilion Veljković-CKZD-Centre for Cultural Decontamination of the Town, Belgrade. Curated by Svetlana Racanović; Trash Aesthetics, Trash Ideology, Trash Technology, 25th Moscow international film festival. **2002**, *Reconstruction,* 4th Cetinje international biennial of contemporary art, Montenegro.

PUBLICATIONS

Irena Lagator Pejović: The Society of Unlimited Responsibility. Art as Social Strategy. 2001-2011. Curated by Christa Steinle, Karin Buol-Wischenau, Neue Galerie Graz am Universalmuseum Joanneum. Köln, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2012.

Irena Lagator Pejović: Società a responsabilità limitata (S.r.l.) / Limited Responsibility Society (L.L.C.). Curated by Ilaria Mariotti. Published by Villa Pacchiani, Santa Croce.

Press kit with essays of Irena Lagator Pejović, Nataša Nikčević and Bazon Brock, and photo in high and low res available at
http://www.altofragile.it/index.php/it/press

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