

METRO PICTURES

Kopp, Celine. "Freezed Images," *Domus* (May 2008): 33-35.

domus

FREEZED IMAGES

ARHITEKTONSKI PROJEKTI BIRO
ZAGREB
ZAGREB, BOGOVIĆEVA UL. 2, TELEFON 38-474

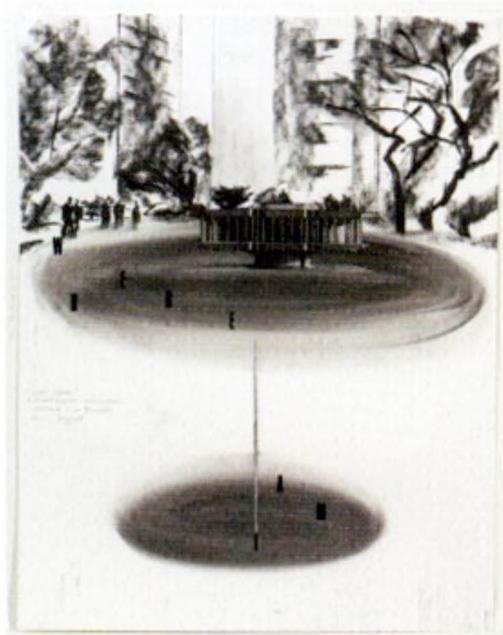
33

TEXT
CÉLINE KOPP

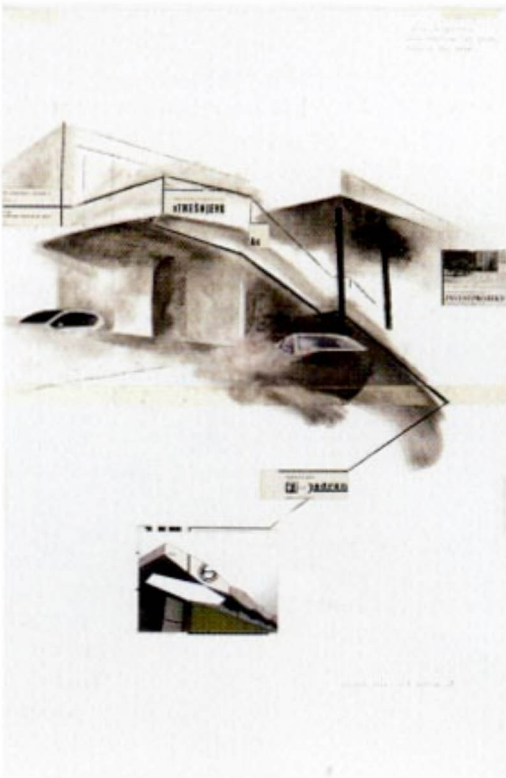
ARHITEKTONSKI BIRO
EKTANT
LETARSKIH BRIGADA 30a V
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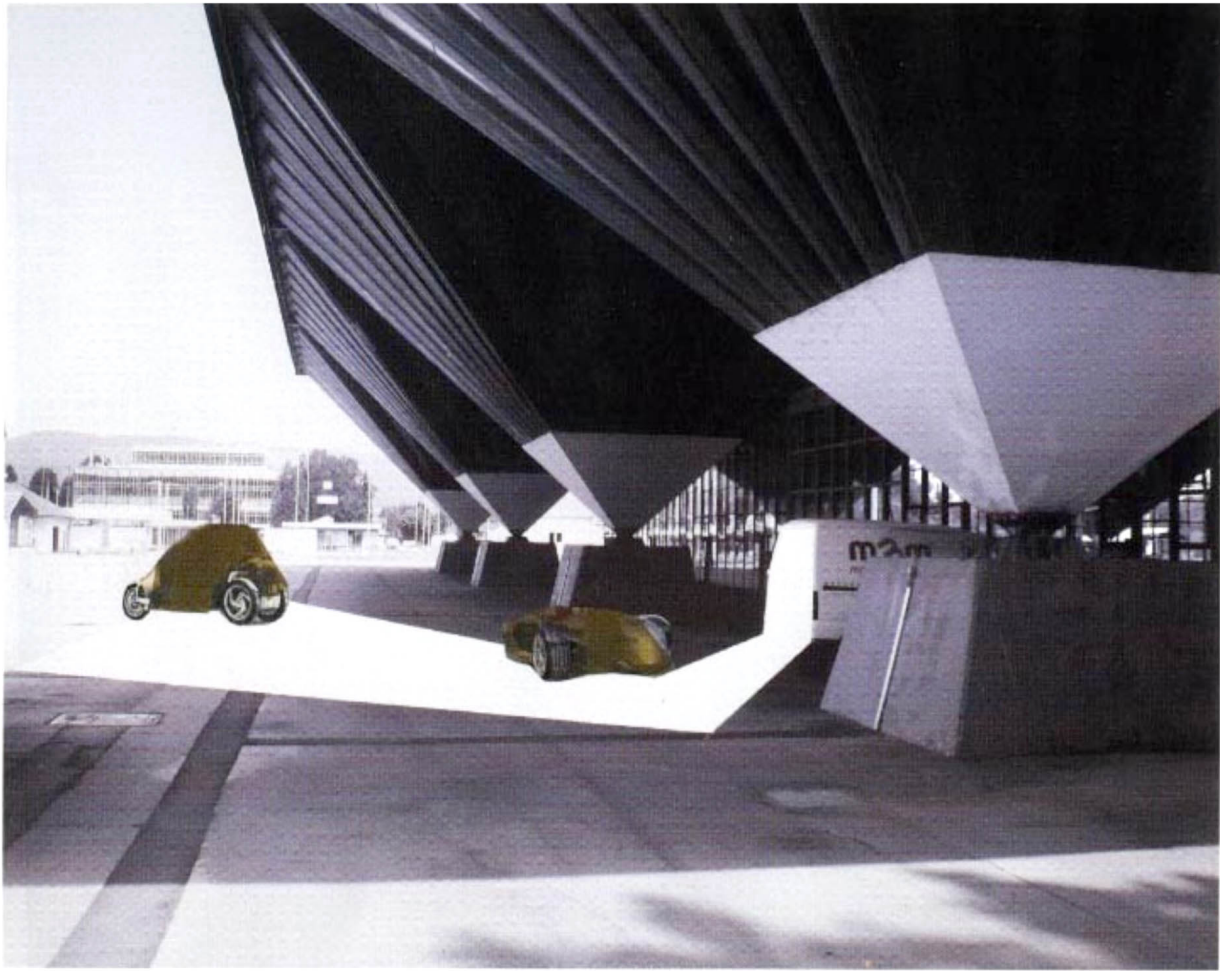
*Sanjina "Svetovodna"
No. 05-06, 1987,
1987.*

SAZIDNA, VI.
INSTALACIJA



IN APERTURA/OPENING PAGE:
FREZZED IMAGES, MATITA SU CARTA, TECNICA MISTA/ PENCIL ON PAPER, MIXED MEDIA, 2007 (COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND METRO PICTURES). QUI ACCANTO, IN ALTO/THIS PAGE, LEFT: **FREZZED IMAGES, MATITA SU CARTA, TECNICA MISTA/ PENCIL ON PAPER, MIXED MEDIA, 2007 (COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND METRO PICTURES).** QUI ACCANTO, IN BASSO/THIS PAGE, BELOW: **FREZZED IMAGES, CARBONCINO SU CARTA/CHARCOAL ON PAPER, 2007/2008 (COURTESY OF ANNET GELINK GALLERY, AMSTERDAM).**



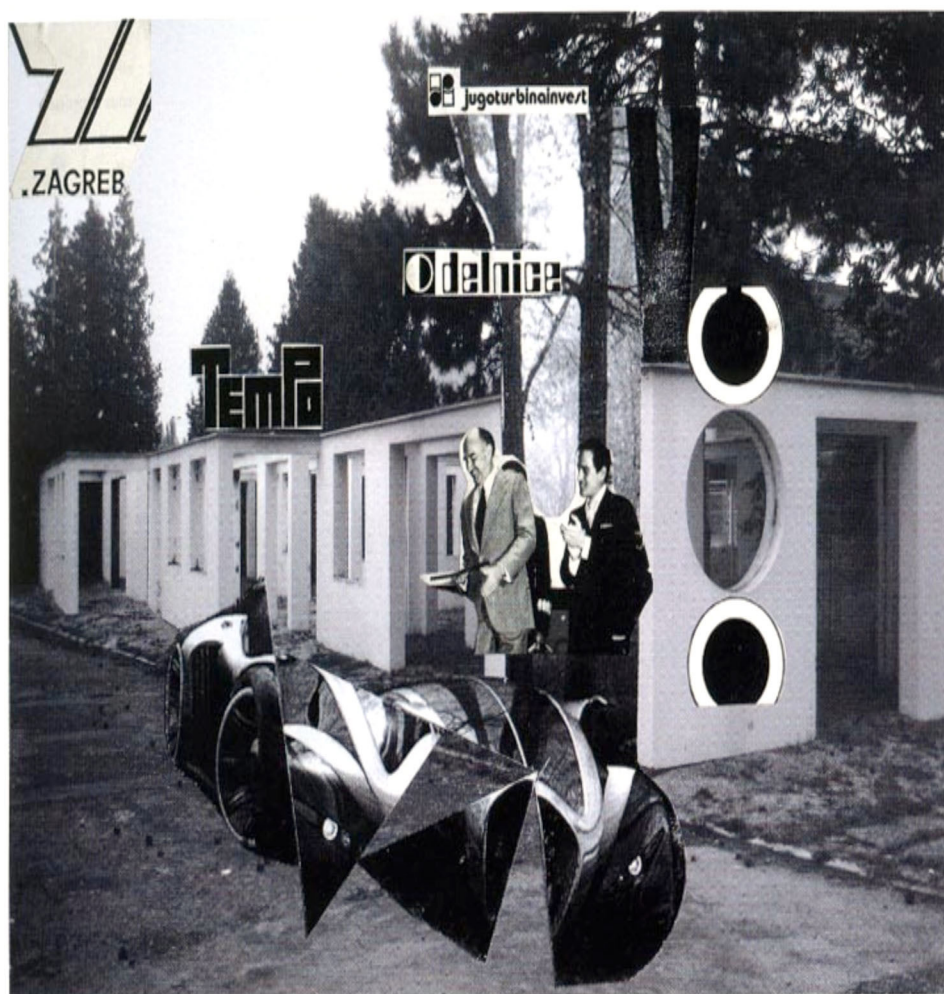


DAVID MALJKOVIC'S POETIC SPACES, A BRIDGE BETWEEN PAST AND FUTURE FOCUSING ON MODERNISM IN EX-YUGOSLAVIA AND PROJECTING NEW DESIRES

"This time, I was really well prepared long before I started. Sketches, models, re-examinations alternated for several months. Finally, after six months, the static journey began. I had protected myself against romanticism and set forth, although there was no wind in my hair. The quest for vision had begun, of course; the images of history appeared at once. (...) I know...I know... I have skillfully slipped away from nostalgia."

This excerpt from a fictional diary, written by Croatian artist David Maljkovic (from *Almost There*, exhibition catalogue, Kunstverein Hamburg, 2007) in relationship with his seminal work *Again for Tomorrow* (2003), points out both his quest for a "vision" and a working method conceived as a journey. Such methodology entails an extensive range of media as a means of merging references and creating new connections. Over the past couple of years, Maljkovic has gained growing recognition for the series of works *Scene for a New Heritage* (2002-2006) and *These Days* (2003-2006). In Maljkovic's work, each sketch, drawing, collage, text, video and installation is a step

IN QUESTA PAGINA, DALL'ALTO/
THIS PAGE FROM TOP: **THESE DAYS, COLLAGE E TECNICHE MISTE/COLLAGE AND MIXED MEDIA, 2007** (PRIVATE COLLECTION, COURTESY OF ANNET GELINK GALLERY, AMSTERDAM); **LOST PAVILION FROM THESE DAYS, COLLAGE, 2006** (PRIVATE COLLECTION, COURTESY OF ANNET GELINK GALLERY, AMSTERDAM).



forward into the exploration of his country's recent history and culture. Maljkovic aims to create a poetic hallucination in an imaginary future, where the energy of late Modernism's visionary concepts can be recalled, and where Croatia's young generation seems to cohabit in a peaceful amnesia with historical monuments. In this way, new beginnings seem possible, and monuments can be invested with new meanings, remote from trauma and nostalgia.

Although Maljkovic is known for his videos, his drawings and collages are also essential parts of his practice. They are a means for him to complicate the relationship between past elements and the fictional future and to create a fluidity allowing him to escape historical burdens. Drawings, collages and texts often constitute the beginning and end of Maljkovic's quest for vision.

The series of collages entitled *Frozen Images* was initiated in 2007 as a continuation of *These Days* (2005) and *Lost Memory from these Days* (2005-2006). With *Frozen Images*, David Maljkovic pursues his investigation of Novi Zagreb, the neighbourhood that was once home to the Zagreb fair, a symbol of economic, social and political growth in the 1960s and '70s. In its heyday, the Fair used to be an important point of connection between the East and the West. The national pavilions, built by avant-garde architects, represented the belief in an optimistic future. Initiated in the 1950s, the development of Novi Zagreb, or "New Zagreb",

Drawings and collages are a means to create a fluidity allowing the artist to escape historical burdens

is rooted in ideas linked with radical and utopian architecture. The project was to transform rural areas into a modernist and socially progressive metropolis with high-rise apartment buildings, where all classes would cohabit and have the same tenant rights.

The choice of collage reflects Maljkovic's intention, as this medium is historically associated with the beginnings of modernism. In this series of work, Maljkovic also visually refers to the avant-garde aesthetics

of the '60s and '70s. The cut-outs in *Freezed Images* were taken from 1960s' architecture magazines and the elements of text recall names of construction companies that no longer exist. The collision of signifiers allowed by a collage constitutes a perfect tool for Maljkovic to create a fluid impression of past, present and future, allowing historically charged elements to be re-examined. Far from sci-fi, the futuristic references such as the ultramodern concept cars and indications like "Novi Zagreb, 2067" provide an empty space of potentiality. Maljkovic's creation of poetic spaces relies on absence. According to him, the future is as empty as these monuments and locations; they are "lost landscapes, scenes that had passed and do not matter any more". More than focusing on modernism in ex-Yugoslavia, Maljkovic uses these references as empty platforms to project new desires. The recurrence of straight and geometrical lines seems to evoke trajectories that echo these aspirations. The cars, however, are strangely immobilised by smudged charcoal, blurring the perspective and revealing that the artist's poetic spaces are also strangely disillusioned. Maljkovic's own words "Your moment is your heritage" (from *Place with Limited Premeditation*, Amsterdam, Artimo 2005) are reflected in one of the compositions by the letters: "w h e r e I a m." **CK**