



Tytuł

Reflections on the Archive as a Strategy for Re-writing Histories

Autor

Urška Savič

Źródło

MIEJSCE 7/2021

DOI

<https://www.doi.org/10.48285/ASPAW.24501611.MCE.2021.7.2>

URL

<http://miejsce.asp.waw.pl/reflections-on-the-archive-as-a-strategy-for-re-writing-histories/>

Abstrakt

The reflections on the archive's role in forgotten heritage research are based in the positioning of the archive as a strategy for re-writing histories in the contemporary art field. The text dives into the narrative of video art development in Slovenia until 1991 and exposes some of its representatives, while for the period from the 1990s until today the interest is not on the video art timeline, but rather on the archival approaches that were present and were shaping video art history making. The case study of an archival institution concerns the Center for Contemporary Arts SCCA-Ljubljana, meanwhile the individual artist examples are Ana Nuša Dragan, Zemira Alajbegović and Ema Kugler, female representatives of a specific use of the video medium from the 1960s until the 1990s, selected as representatives of the 'Not Yet Written Stories' project. The emphasis is not on their practice, but on how they were treated by the evolving narratives of performance and video-art. The institution of the archive and the archive as an approach towards historicisation in contemporary art history are discussed.

Przepraszamy, ten wpis jest dostępny tylko w języku Amerykański Angielski.

Documentation Tools and archives-in-becoming

The process of becoming is of crucial value for performance art, and therefore the practice itself is accompanied by transitory and ephemeral characteristics and is a time-based art form. In the context of ephemeral art, the recorded material acts as proof of the event, especially if the cameraeye is the only witness of the event. Thus, the photographic documentation of performance art has gradually acquired a status of an artefact. The end product of the camera lens was already on its invention considered as the first visual media able to function as proof of ownership in court,¹ for the reason that the captured images retained their geometrical shapes and the relations between them in mathematical values reflected in reality, which is therefore reduced but not transformed.² The documentary tendency that appeared in time-based art was, however, paradoxical in the context of the ontological definition of performance as 'representation without reproduction'.³ The practices, initially executed as subversive acts of dematerialisation aimed at object-driven art institutions, subsequently settled in the installation form, comprehended as a site specific medium and therefore unique in each time and place installed, playing with Walter Benjamin's concept of the aura in new (media) conditions.⁴ Photography was the most readily available documentation technique at the time of the historical avant-garde movements' experiments in the field of dance, music and theatre that followed.⁵ The later accessibility of the video medium, starting in the neoavant-garde period, made it possible to grasp conceptual art projects as a sequence of moments in time, transmitting the durability of an action.

Video was at first seen as non-material painting, an alchemical artistic tool that could enable a deviation from the materiality of art towards transmitting ideas and concepts.⁶ The beginnings of such use of video in Slovenia are attributed to the wider movement around the conceptual art group OHO. Along with the documentation of art actions, the medium was used by the first video artists as means of communication with the audience. The possibility to deviate from presence and question it through the means of recording devices was investigated further. Recorded material thus became the foundation for the intertwinement of video and performance art in simultaneous use. Performed actions could at the same time be observed on monitors as real-time video, or the recorded material became part of another performance. A milestone in video art was set by the pioneering pair Nuša and Srečo Dragan⁷ in 1969 with the (sketch for a) work *The White Milk of White Breasts (Belo mleko belih prsi)*, around which the mythology of being the first video in Yugoslavia was created.⁸ After the experimentation with the technical possibilities of the video medium, somehow supported also by the public media institutions in Yugoslavia, the media experienced rapid changes in technology that enabled its wider use outside of broadcasting

studios. It thus became the identification and amplifying tool of the marginalised voices of the 1980s Ljubljana subcultural scene. The video used by the alternative referred either to history in relation to politics or to the body in relation to its sexuality.⁹

The latter was essentially political, performing sexuality in the extreme, intentionally diverging from then valid norms. In the Slovenian context, video was a nomadic medium, wandering from art galleries to TV studios, sometimes residing in cinemas, theatres or video festival venues, but in the 1980s period it found its place inside disco clubs. The best known was Disco Študent or Disco FV¹⁰, initiated originally by the theatre group FV 112/15,¹¹ which later formed the prominent multimedia conceptual group Borghesia.¹² Wider production of the scene was based on a critique towards society and politics, rotating around the axes of music, performance, video, self-documentation and reuse of appropriated material from other sources, such as television news, music videos, commercials and film productions.



Zemira Alajbegović, Neven Korda, Dario Seraval / Borghesia, So Young (Tako mladi), 1985, music video stills, Courtesy DIVA Station in Ljubljana

The range of possible interpretations of the 'objective truth' that the camera image transmits was already disputed in techniques of photocollage, fast film montage, typography as a graphic element and others used by artists at the beginning of the twentieth century.¹³ Juxtaposition methods, such as cut and paste, or repetition inherent to the function of replay or loop are in the case of video referring mostly to television material, revealing the manipulation inherent in the proclaimed objectivity of the camera lens. The appropriation of mass media imagery and its recontextualisation in artistic and research context is inclined towards revealing the power mechanisms working behind such representations. The materials juxtaposed and recontextualised are subjected to the mechanisms that belong to the archival approach. Namely, out of any recording activity consequently emerges an archive of the material defined with specific technological parameters. Each era is marked with what was (or is) its relatively massively accessible documentation tool.

The institution of an archive enables procedures such as 'interpretation, valuation, verification, as well as exclusion, erasure and partition'¹⁴ of its content. Historicisation can be understood as the repetitive returning to the archive, and thus its constant fragmentation and expansion. The difference between history and historicisation is defined with the latter being an open-ended process that is hardly ever completed since all the results are endlessly questioned – it is therefore

a 'history-in-becoming'.¹⁵ Each confrontation with the archive in a different context could result in a different choice. The notion of subjectivity in that kind of process is therefore inevitable,¹⁶ bringing such practices into the domain of creativity. The archive has transformed from a repository of documents to an art medium which 'disrupts boundaries between art production and its documentation and therefore does the same to the traditional hierarchies'.¹⁷ Therefore the roles of artist, curator, critic, historian and similar become interchangeable.

Case study of SCCA-Ljubljana: 'What Is to Be Done with Audiovisual Archives?'

18

The democratisation processes of the transition period in the 1990s in Slovenia brought along history formation. Some archives were forgotten, some destroyed, others glorified. New media art and its forerunners were mostly not recognised, supported or efficiently and systematically taken care of by the institutionalised mechanisms of the one-party systems in the East. In Slovenia, that was not the ultimate case since there was financial support coming through the various (student) organisations, namely the ŠKUC-Forum, and even national TV. However, most artworks using video were then seen as alternative¹⁹ and therefore did not find a place in the archives of the official art institutions. They were mostly stored in the basements of individuals who recognised them as important but had neither the ability nor the means to systematically and professionally care for them. The prevalent narrative of video art history in Slovenia began to form soon after the country's 1991 separation from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The break from the previous political system in the 1990s marked the time of the post-socialist transition into a new social and cultural model in the wider area of the former East. This tendency towards democratisation of all areas of life was the main development model in the first transition period. The democratisation brought along various terms that were supposed to function as a synonym of it in a specific field. Contemporary art²⁰ was therefore a regular term used in the names of newly established art institutions. An emphatic focus on the formation of the official story of Slovene contemporary art on the other side also enabled the 'cannibalisation'²¹ of some parts of (what was) the alternative.

The exclusion from what was becoming an official history line resulted in mass processes of self-historicisation in various forms. The alternative and subcultural scene was, among others, revisited by the pair of artists Zemira Alajbegović and Neven Korda (ZANK), both members of the groups FV 112/15 and Borghesia, resulting in a documentary film *The Old and the New (Staro in novo)* in 1997, which narrated their story line, illustrated by excerpts from an immense amount of video

material. Such archives were stored in analogue formats, mostly VHS. The lack of consistent digitisation of analogue archives appeared as a problem for the recorded material's accessibility, while the analogue carriers also became subject to decay. The formation of the state strategy on audiovisual archives never really took place, and the financial supporters interested in the new media heritage mostly came from abroad, as was the case with the SCCA-Ljubljana, described further below. Such situations confronted the actors in the archival field with ongoing questions. When the

interpretation of an archive follows an open structure, it results in the strategy of distributing (screening) and not accumulating (storing). Keeping of multi-media projects implies their reproduction. However, the specific socio-political context in which the works were produced needs to be taken into account. The power inherent in archives and their keepers is to shape public knowledge.²² Thus the legal perspective and questions of authorship come to function as a regulatory tool for what is collectively memorised and what is overlooked.

The early initiatives for media art archives mostly originated from the West and were directed towards the East, forming a buffer zone of non-governmental institutions between civil society and the newly established state governments engaged in the process of transition. At the time, the media art archives were part of a simultaneous phenomenon of the appearance of a great number of non-governmental institutions with a similar agenda.²³ Even though financial outsourcing was crucial for the urgent protection of sensitive materials against decay, it also somehow indefinitely postponed the formation of a new state's cultural heritage and archival policy towards new mediums of storing art that would not rely on Western funds.

The Soros Center for Contemporary Arts in Ljubljana (SCCA-Ljubljana) immediately at its inception in 1993 expressed a genuine interest in the archive of audiovisual art. The wider network of Soros Centers for Contemporary Arts (SCCA Network) developed out of the Soros Fine Arts Documentation Center in Budapest, established 1985. The pilot project focussed on the documentation of the 'counter-cultural'²⁴ activities that were not recorded by the official state institutions. In the 1990s, the format of supportive infrastructure of such centres gradually spread in Eastern and Central Europe, the countries of the former Soviet Union and Central Eurasia (as parts of respective Open Society Institutes). They were all established on the same recommendations of structure and content, which they could rearrange as they pleased according to the needs of their environment. The idea behind the programmes of those centres was in general manifested in the form of educational programmes, exhibition and publication activity, along with a great focus on comprehensive documentation and archival practices of the artistic activities of a certain period, along with the production of theoretical texts about them and their Western-art-historical integration. The initial

name of Fine Arts Documentation was replaced by the term Contemporary Arts, but the act of documentation remained the important fundament of the SCCA Network's interest.²⁵ Within the given framework, SCCA-Ljubljana focussed specifically on video art production. In addition to grants for artists from the field who did not receive state or municipal funding,²⁶ the institution developed a pioneering interest mainly in the archives of the data storage carriers of the time, belonging either to individuals or institutions.

The main documentation, archival and research project by SCCA-Ljubljana, Videodokument. Video Art in Slovenia 1969–1998,²⁷ was initiated in 1994 and released in 1999 as the first, comprehensive overview of the main protagonists in the field. The narrative of video art protagonists and development of the medium in Slovenia was set²⁸: the pioneer use in conceptual art of the late 1960s and 1970s, the experimental approach with the technology available in TV studios in the 1970s and 1980s, the video production of the alternative subcultural scene of the 1980s, when video equipment became available to the general public, and the rise of individual experimentation with the medium in the 1990s. The archive in the making was understood as an open structure in all the consequent activities of the Soros Center for Contemporary Arts. In 2000, it was re-established as the SCCA, Center for Contemporary Arts –Ljubljana, which continued archiving AV production in Slovenia since the late 1960s to the present. Their archival strategy never aimed towards being merely storage, but also to disseminate it through presentation and collaboration. A large amount of the financial means in SCCA-Ljubljana was invested in research, collecting, inventory and creation of copies technically adapted to the rapidly changing standards in the field.

The accumulation as a result of the archival collecting of documentation leads towards questioning how exactly the gathered materials should be treated. The role of archives as a photocopying machine from one format to another started to be seriously discussed. A broad research project on the topic of archiving practices was launched in 2005.²⁹ In parallel with the structured theoretical research of the concept behind archives, ran the practical and material manifestation of those practices as DIVA Station³⁰, a physical and web archive of video and new-media art, which was initiated in 2005 and was launched at the exhibition 'DIVA at Škuc Gallery' in 2009.³¹ As an open-ended and living archive, DIVA became one of the most important tools for accessing documentation of time-based art, since its goal was not only to reach back to history, but to actively support emerging practices. As an online repository, it functions in a way as a platform for an artist's portfolio. Artists are therefore relieved of establishing their own archive – additionally, the format of video and film requires mass digital storage and systematic (financial) care for the site's accessibility.



DIVA at Škuc Gallery, 2009, exhibition documentation, Courtesy SCCA-Ljubljana



Videodokument webpage, 1999, screenshot, Courtesy SCCA-Ljubljana

And so, what is published online does not also stay there. The transience of online projects and platforms can be seen in the prominent example of the GAMA (Gateway to Archives of Media Art) website,³² which was imagined as a central platform that was supposed to gather the media art digital archives of European institutions and collections into a coherent whole with a unified tagging system, supported by the funds of the European Union.³³ DIVA's inclusion in such a constellation in 2009 gave the works inside the archive much greater visibility than before, when existing solely by themselves. But lack of interest and consistent financing for projects that prove themselves fundamental in a specific field after establishing themselves on seed money is a persistent destructive condition, forcing artists into ever new repetitions of what has already been done.

A place of memory and oblivion

In an essay³⁴ included in the Videodokument project's theoretical outcome published in 1999 the pioneers of video art are stated to be Nuša and Srečo Dragan. However, the latter is mentioned as a member of the OHO group, and the first addressed as 'his spouse at the time'. After the couple's separation in 1988, Ana Nuša Dragan is not widely considered as an individual artist. Her recognition is further hampered since their group work needs his approval to be shown, which he refuses to give. Furthermore, the groups and pairs representing the alternative video production of

the 1980s can blur the perception of the individual within them. The protagonists, including Zemira Alajbegović, are rarely taken out of the context of their collective work inside groups and pairs and considered from the point of view of development as an individual artist, even though they had later produced solo video works and films, as is the case with Alajbegović. On the other side, an artist working all by herself in the same time period, such as Ema Kugler, stayed largely overlooked until the recent trend of interest in female artists, symptomatic of the global network of contemporary art institutions. The selection of those three artists as prominent female representatives for yet another archive can however become a closed-circuit perpetuation of a certain created narrative, excluding those not yet discovered.

In search of lost or forgotten stories that belong to the marginalised in society based on power structures,³⁵ one's starting point of research is often the archive. An archive is a place where everything that did not find its place in the historical narrative is stored – in order not to be forgotten. The paradox seems to be that the archive used as a strategy for writing new history does not overthrow existent power relations, since it is perpetuating the mechanism of the dominant narrative's formation. Even though an archive is created in order 'to remember', its content is usually forgotten.

An archive presupposes the collection of documents, be it in the form of the spoken word, written text, objects or imagery, in either static or moving format – the technology available at the specific time and place when and where that archive was constituted is therefore the determining factor of its (dis)appearance. The archive itself is arranged in a specific order, be it chaotic, hierarchised or rhisomatic. From the constellations of documents in whichever of those forms, the contemporary researcher has the possibility to create their own narrations, serving particular interests and goals.³⁶

In the context of the twenty-first century the digital database is the omnipresent global archive of human knowledge and the digitisation of physical data-storage mediums from the previous technological eras is required in order to be included in newly formed narrations. The sustainability of creating online digital archives is questioned when the long-term maintenance of infrastructure is not planned, nor the meta-archive that would keep the work already done available thought of.³⁷ The aim towards a unifying media art archive has been around for quite a while, constantly facing existential problems when the seed money for a certain project is spent and there is no interest from the state or other sources to continue and support such practices. The domain of the online archive expires, and what was achieved is lost among layers of non-functioning web pages. Internet archaeology exists as a form of researching forgotten heritage, an exciting yet frustrating new field for researchers, artists and other digital successors of flea market enthusiasts.

Archives in their previous (but still existing) forms, like the filing cabinet, libraries, museums, state, municipal or church records and so forth, were recognised as an old, bureaucratic means of exercising power.³⁸ Venturing into the etymological meaning of the archive, it does not refer only to the place, but at the same time applies to the person in charge of it.³⁹ Namely, *arkhē* refers to the 'person of main authority' and 'the place where this authority is being executed'. At the core of each archive is the existence of the other, the second, the one who comes after the first. Every archive therefore also has its shadow version⁴⁰ and for both the specific territory they occupy is distinctive – be it in the form of physical space, such as data storage capacities, or a specific discourse on the terrain of the language.⁴¹ It is important to notice who decides to invest in the archive and defines its infrastructure and its priorities in a specific moment.

Counter archives are increasing in number, proportionally with the interest of contemporary art (represented by the politically engaged artist) in 'the other' – in terms of a cultural or social identity.⁴² Ordering, selecting and isolating hitherto neglected subjects into new combinations that form a new history can be emancipating for previously ignored voices, and personal stories can be transformed into the heritage of a whole community.⁴³ However, the use of the same archival methods that beforehand led to the amnesia of specific parts of the past, contributes to the repetitive pattern of ever new forgetting. An archive might be presented as the exit from historical narration or its alternative, but in fact it is always perpetuating the oblivion of another story. The fragmentation into more and more individualised and detailed archives can thus become a historiography that tends towards the maintaining of the status quo and which loses its emancipatory potential. At the same time such processes of ever new becoming and the constant multiplication of points of views can create confusion about the perception of what is the centre and what is on the margin, therefore their places become interchangeable and anarchy can take place.

Bibliography

1. Barthes, Roland, *Image Music Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977)
2. Borčić, Barbara, and Ida Hiršenfelter, 'Myths and Legends about Early Video Art Works', *Maska: Performing Arts Journal*, 24, no. 123–124 (2009), 142–159
3. Derrida, Jacques, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. by Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996)
4. Eșanu, Octavian, 'What Was Contemporary Art?', *ARTMargins*, 1no. 1 (2012), 5–28 <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269617605_What_was_Contemporary_Art> [accessed 31 May 2021]

5. Foster, Hal, 'The Artist as Ethnographer?', in *The Traffic in Culture*, ed. by George Marcus, Fred Myers (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 302–309.
6. Foucault, Michel, *The Archeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. by Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972).
7. Kovič, Brane, 'The Beginnings of Slovene Video', in *Videodokument: Video Art in Slovenia 1969–1998: Essays*, ed. by Barbara Borčič (Ljubljana: Open Society Institute – Slovenia, 1999), pp. 23–35.
8. Giannachi, Gabriella, *Archive Everything: Mapping the Everyday* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2016)
9. Groys, Boris, 'Art in the Age of Biopolitics: From Artwork to Art Documentation', in *Documenta11_Platform5: Exhibition*, ed. by Heike Ander, Nadja Rottner (Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2002), pp. 108–114
10. Gržinić, Marina, *Rekonstruirana fikcija. Novi mediji, (video) umetnot, postsocializem in retroavantgarda. Teorija, politika, estetika. 1997–1985* (Ljubljana: Študentska založba, 1997)
11. Gržinić, Marina, 'The Ljubljana Alternative Movement, The Ljubljana Lacan School, and Slavoj Žižek', in *East Art Map Contemporary Art and Eastern Europe*, ed. by IRWIN (London: Afterall, 2006), pp. 321–331
12. Hiršenfelder, Ida, 'Body Archive / The Body as the Archive', *Maska: Performing Arts Journal*, 35, no. 200bb (2020), 74–84
13. Jones, Amelia, *Body Art: Performing the Subject* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998)
14. Manovich, Lev, *Avantgarde as Software*, 1999, pp. 1–20 <<http://manovich.net/index.php/projects/avant-garde-as-software>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
15. Orel, Barbara, 'Amateur Theatre and the Alternative of the 1970s: The Turn to Not-Acting in the Slovenian Performing Arts', *Amfiteater: Journal of Performing Arts Theory*, 8, no. 1 (2020), 106–120 <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/01e9/710f511cb4b35713cd2cb26a3bc83016792e.pdf>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
16. Osthoff, Simone, *Performing the Archive: The Transformation of the Archive in Contemporary Art from Repository of Documents to Art Medium* (New York: Atropos Press, 2009)
17. Phelan, Peggy, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993)
18. Sekula, Allan, 'Reading an Archive: Photography Between Labour and Capital', in *The Photography Reader*, ed. by Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 443–452
19. Sekula, Allan, 'The Body and the Archive', *October*, 39 (1986), 3–64
20. Zgonik, Nadja, 'Video Conquering Space', in *Videodokument: Video Art in Slovenia 1969–1998: Essays*, ed. by Barbara Borčič (Ljubljana: Open Society Institute – Slovenia, 1999), pp.

145–161

Online sources

1. 'Archiving Practices', SCCA-Ljubljana <<http://www.scca-ljubljana.si/arhiv/archiving-practices.htm>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
2. Arns Inke, and Broeckmann Andres, 'Raising the Question: Report on the V2_East during DEAF 96' <<https://v2.nl/archive/articles/raising-the-question-of-power>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
3. Badovinac Zdenka, 'INTRO: Interrupted Histories', *Glossary of Common Knowledge*, January 2017 <<https://glossary.mg-lj.si/referential-fields/historicisation/1-interrupted-histories>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
4. DIVA Station, *Digital Video Archive* <http://www.e-arhiv.org/diva/index.php?lang_pref=en> [accessed 31 May 2021]
5. Džuverović, Lina, 'The Archive as a Political Act', YouTube, 2014 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GE7yWXTAahQ>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
6. 'EU/EC Projects', C3 <http://www.c3.hu/c3/eu_projects/gama/index.html> [accessed 31 May 2021]
7. 'GAMA: Gateway to Archives of Media Art', SCCA-Ljubljana <http://www.scca-ljubljana.si/arhiv/GAMA-Brochure_3dec2009.pdf> [accessed 31 May 2021]
8. Grabar, Nika, 'DIVA at Škuc Gallery' ('DIVA v Galeriji Škuc'), 2009 <http://www.e-arhiv.org/diva/index.php?opt=work&id=1011&lang_pref=en> [accessed 31 May 2021]
9. Korda, Neven, 'DISKO FV 83-85', *YouTube* <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnccpyxxEBw>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
10. Milevska, Suzana, 'Documenting the Aura', *V2_East Meeting on Archives and Documentation*, 1996 <<https://v2.nl/archive/articles/documenting-the-aura>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
11. 'Soros Centers for Contemporary Arts (SCCA) Network', C3 <<http://www.c3.hu/scca/>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
12. 'Staro in novo', dir. Zemira Alajbegović, Neven Korda (V.S. Video / Forum Ljubljana, VPK & TV Slovenija, 1997) <<http://www.e-arhiv.org/diva/index.php?opt=work&id=261>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
13. 'Videodokument', *SCCA-Ljubljana* <<http://www.videodokument.org/credits.htm>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
14. 'Videodokument: Nuša & Srečo Dragan', SCCA-Ljubljana <<http://www.videodokument.org/dragannusasreco/dragannusasreco.htm>> [accessed 31 May 2021]

15. 'What Is to Be Done with Audio-Visual Archives', SCCA-Ljubljana <<http://www.e-arhiv.org/kaj-storiti/context.htm>> [accessed 31 May 2021]
1. Allan Sekula, 'The Body and the Archive', October, 39 (1986), 3–64. ↵
2. Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), p. 17. ↵
3. Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 146. ↵
4. Boris Groys, 'Art in the Age of Biopolitics: From Artwork to Art Documentation', in *Documenta11_Platform5: Exhibition*, ed. by Heike Ander, Nadja Rottner (Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2002), pp. 108–114 ↵
5. Amelia Jones, *Body Art: Performing the Subject* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998) ↵
6. Nadja Zgonik, 'Video Conquering Space', in *Videodokument: Video Art in Slovenia 1969–1998: Essays*, ed. by Barbara Borčič (Ljubljana: Open Society Institute – Slovenia, 1999), pp. 145–161. ↵
7. 'Videodokument: Nuša & Srečo Dragan', SCCA-Ljubljana <<http://www.videodokument.org/dr-agannusasreco/dragannusasreco.htm>> [accessed 31 May 2021] ↵
8. Barbara Borčič, Ida Hiršenfelder, 'Myths and Legends about Early Video Art Works', *Maska: Performing Arts Journal*, 24, no. 123–124 (2009), 142–159. ↵
9. Marina Gržinić, *Rekonstruirana fikcija. Novi mediji, (video) umetnot, postso-cializem in retroavantgarda. Teorija, politika, estetika. 1997–1985* (Ljubljana: Študentska založba, 1997), p. 78. ↵
10. 'Staro in novo', dir. Zemira Alajbegović, Neven Korda (ZANK) (V.S. Video / Forum Ljubljana, VPK & TV Slovenija, 1997) <<http://www.e-arhiv.org/diva/index.php?opt=work&id=261>> [accessed 31 May 2021]. An excerpt of the documentary with English subtitles can be found at: Neven Korda, 'DISKO FV 83-85', *YouTube* <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-ncpyxxEBw>> [accessed 31 May 2021] ↵
11. The FV 112/15 group was formed in 1980 but its members did a performance in ŠKUC Gallery already a year before naming themselves Theater Performance (Teater performance). They were namely Zemira Alajbegović, Marina Gržinić, Neven Korda, Samo Ljubešić and Dušan Mandić. See Barbara Orel, 'Amateur Theatre and the Alternative of the 1970s: The Turn to Not-Acting in the Slovenian Performing Arts', *Amfiteater: Journal of Performing Arts Theory*, 8, no. 1 (2020), 106–120 <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/01e9/710f511cb4b35713cd2cb26a3bc83016792e.pdf>> [accessed 31 May 2021] ↵
12. Initial members of Borghesia were Zemira Alajbegović, Goran Devide, Aldo Ivančić, Neven

Korda and Dario Seraval. ↵

13. Lev Manovich, 'Avantgarde as Software', 1999, pp. 1–20 <<http://manovich.net/index.php/projects/avant-garde-as-software>> [accessed 31 May 2021] ↵
14. Ida Hiršenfelter, 'Body Archive / The Body as the Archive', *Maska: Performing Arts Journal*, 35, no. 200bb (2020), 74–84. ↵
15. Zdenka Badovinac, 'INTRO: Interrupted Histories', *Glossary of Common Knowledge*, January 2017 <<https://glossary.mg-lj.si/referential-fields/historicisation/1-interrupted-histories>> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
16. The notion of subjective and personal responsibility is stressed in a lecture by Lina Džuverović, 'The Archive as a Political Act', *YouTube*, 2014 [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
17. Simone Osthoff, *Performing the Archive: The Transformation of the Archive in Contemporary Art from Repository of Documents to Art Medium* (New York: Atropos Press, 2009), p. 22. ↵
18. The title of this chapter refers to the international symposium with the same name that consisted of lectures, panel discussions, workshops and exhibition carried out by the SCCA-Ljubljana in 2005 subtitled 'The Status of Digital Audiovisual Archives and their Accessibility' ('Teoretski in praktični vidiki digitalnih AV arhivov in njihove uporabe'), which marks the starting point of the center's incessant research in the field of AV archives, the structures of the self-archiving practice either by artists or the institutions, the technological specificities, the approaches towards archiving the multimedia art practice, the inclusion of AV archives into the field of national cultural heritage, etc. See 'What Is to Be Done with Audiovisual Archives', SCCA-Ljubljana <<http://www.e-arhiv.org/kaj-storiti/context.htm>> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
19. Suzana Milevska, 'Documenting the Aura', *V2_East Meeting on Archives and Documentation*, 1996 <<https://v2.nl/archive/articles/documenting-the-aura>> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
20. Octavian Eșanu, 'What Was Contemporary Art?', *ARTMargins* (2012), 5–28 <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269617605_What_was_Contemporary_Art> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
21. The expression 'cannibalisation' in the context of the alternative and subcultural scene in Ljubljana is used by the theoritician Marina Gržinić on many occasions. The use here is related to her contribution to the East Art Map project. See Marina Gržinić, 'The Ljubljana Alternative Movement, The Ljubljana Lacan School, and Slavoj Žižek', in *East Art Map Contemporary Art and Eastern Europe*, ed. by IRWIN (London: Afterall, 2006), pp. 321–331 (p. 323). of some parts of (what was) the alternative. ↵
22. Ida Hiršenfelter, 'Body Archive / The Body as the Archive', pp. 83–84. ↵
23. Sister-organisations or the 'media art community' met at international symposiums, such as

the V2_East Meeting on Documentation and Archives of Media Art in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, which took place in Rotterdam in 1996, where individuals from Slovenia that were at the time involved with the Soros Center for Contemporary Arts – Ljubljana also participated. This is an excerpt from the conference report about the importance of a unifying archive of media art (never fully accomplished): The planned V2_East WWW database is not a material archive, but rather a database collecting information about information sources, a 'catalogue of databases' which will have to be extended over the next months. The problem of lacking compatibility of different databases was mentioned [...] but it seems unavoidable that people develop their own systems according to their local needs. On the other hand, it seems advisable to share information, experience and possibly customised software in order to avoid having to invent the wheel over and over again. [...] [W]e also need to create a system of information exchange about existing systems and sources, and we need to continue building and connecting the data bases that already exist and that are being constructed. Arns Inke, and Broeckmann Andres, 'Raising the Question:. Report on the V2_East during DEAF 96' <<https://v2.nl/archive/articles/raising-the-question-of-power>> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵

24. 'Soros Centers for Contemporary Arts (SCCA) Network', C3 <<http://www.c3.hu/scca/>> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
25. Octavian Eșanu, 'What Was Contemporary Art?', p. 16. ↵
26. That was the case of Ema Kugler, woman artist working in the field of performance, although never as the one performing but rather as a director, costume and set designer. Only with outsourced funding did she begin to create her first videos/films in the 1990s, unique on the Slovenian scene, earning international recognition. ↵
27. 'Videodokument', SCCA-Ljubljana <<http://www.videodokument.org/credits.htm>> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
28. The narrative of 'Videodokument' is a matrix for the further archiving of SCCA, but also for this article – for the project 'Not Yet Written Stories' the selected women artists Ana Nuša Dragan, Zemira Alajbegović and Ema Kugler were already part of the 'Videodokument' project. Each one individually marks a specific time period – a pioneering/conceptual, social/media and deviating/narrative video practices. They are all representatives of performative practices intertwined with the video format. While focussing on them, we consciously dismiss other practices and actors/actresses appearing at the same time. ↵
29. The first one in the series being also the title of this subchapter. Further events can be found

- at: 'Archiving Practices', *SCCA-Ljubljana* <<http://www.scca-ljubljana.si/arhiv/archiving-practices.htm>> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
30. *DIVA Station, Digital Video Archive* <http://www.e-arhiv.org/diva/index.php?lang_pref=en> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
31. Nika Grabar, 'DIVA at Škuc Gallery' ('DIVA v Galeriji Škuc'), 2009 <http://www.e-arhiv.org/diva/index.php?opt=work&id=1011&lang_pref=en> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
32. 'GAMA: Gateway to Archives of Media Art', *SCCA-Ljubljana* <http://www.scca-ljubljana.si/arhiv/GAMA-Brochure_3dec2009.pdf> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
33. 'EU/EC Projects', *C3* <http://www.c3.hu/c3/eu_projects/gama/index.html> [accessed 31 May 2021]. ↵
34. I am referring to the text of Brane Kovič, 'The Beginnings of Slovene Video', in *Videodokument*, ed. by Barbara Borčić, pp. 30–33. ↵
35. Be it the relation West-East, citizen-migrant, man-woman, heteronormativity-homonormativity, etc. ↵
36. Sekula compares the archive with alphabet soup, where all the particles are atomised, but there is a possibility of making a selection that forms a word connoting a certain meaning. See Allan Sekula, 'Reading an Archive: Photography Between Labour and Capital', in *The Photography Reader*, ed. by Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 443–452. ↵
37. I am referring to the GAMA archive, which was a project on a massive scale with a now dysfunctional site and no public access to its inactive version. ↵
38. Gabriella Giannachi, *Archive Everything: Mapping the Everyday* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2016), pp. 1–15. ↵
39. Jacques Derrida. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. by Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 1. ↵
40. Allan Sekula, 'The Body and the Archive', p. 10 ↵
41. Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. by Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), pp. 128–131 ↵
42. Hal Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer?', in *The Traffic in Culture*, ed. by George Marcus, Fred Myers (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 302–309. ↵
43. Gabriella Giannachi, *Archive Everything*, pp. 93–107 ↵

Urška Savič

Przepraszamy, ten wpis jest dostępny tylko w języku Amerykański Angielski.

Urška Savič is a critic and journalist active in the fields of visual arts and cultural politics, working also as a photographer and radio artist. She finished her BA in photography at FAMU (Prague, 2014) on the topic of collage and photomontage. Her master's thesis at the Department of Sculpture at ALUO (Ljubljana,

2020), on the use of documentation and archiving practices in contemporary art, received the Prešeren Award for Students from the Academy. Since 2017, she has been an active participant in cultural programming at Radio Študent, one of Europe's oldest and strongest non-commercial, alternative radio stations. There, she has been a curator of the open radio (art theory) research platform RADAR since 2019.

ISSN 2450-1611