

Gender (B)ender Program

Carla Ferreri and Sanda Brumen

The art and culture program, Gender (B)ender, was organized as a part of the conference, and it included exhibitions, performances, concerts and films. Two exhibitions were staged: Self-portraits 2003–2005 (Alenka Spacal) and Self-portraits (Helena Janečić and Ana Opalić). Also, the following performances were given: Transkitchen Rhythmic Therapy (Act Women), Bridgeland Zwei (Bridge Markland), Capitalist Whore Fantasy (Miss Moon) and Kalimero (Edin Aladžuz), as well as the Lollobrigida concert and a music event with DJ Cow. We showed the following film and video works: GenderFuck (compilation by Kara Lynch, 2005), Marble Ass (Želimir Žilnik, 1994), Puszta Cowboy (Katrin Kremmler, 2004.), Cocoon (Vesna Tokin, 2003), Pashke and Sofia (Karin Michalski, 2003), Un chant d'amour (Jean Genet, 1950), Bent (Sean Mathias, 1997), and Lilies – Les feluettes (John Greyson, 1996).

Our aim was, as through theoretical presentations and workshops, to talk about gender stereotypes from a cultural perspective. We decided to have fun in the manner of gender (b)ender. We tried to create a safe space for different expressions. Free of phobias, heterosexism and prejudices. To watch, dance, jump, and have fun to the sounds of tolerance. The program was realized by: Carla Ferreri, Ivana Ahel, Sanda Brumen, Martina Ptiček, Jana Kohut, Gabriela Ivanov and Dana Budisavljević.



Capitalist Whore Fantasy

Miss Moon, London



Miss Moon is a video and performance artist and activist from London. She combines direct action and genderfuck politics in her work. In her political performance Capitalist Whore Fantasy a female drag queen uses different elements to question the construction of femininity and sex / gender roles connected with high femme. Standing on the stage, Miss Moon reads a manifest, which is a sharp criticism of consumer society, particularly when consumerism starts affecting sexuality. We follow a transformation from a person in ordinary black clothes into one with extremely feminine look. During the performance, a video tour of Sydney anti-authoritarian scene of direct action is shown. In short, Miss Moon in the performance is a mixture of Barbie on crack and Black Block.

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Self-portraits 2003–2005
Alenka Spacal, Ljubljana



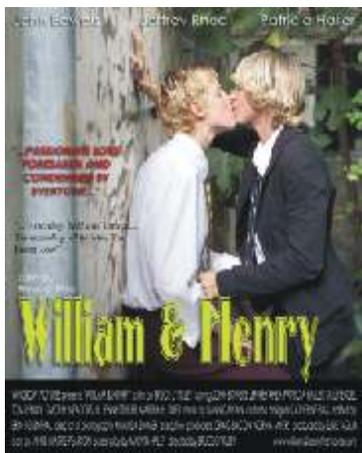
Alenka Spacal's self-portraits were painted in oil on kitchen cloths hanging on a clothesline. This unusual manner of exhibiting the work creates an ironic atmosphere of home and places the traditional 'women's corner' in a completely new context. Alenka uses the genre of self-portrait to question her own identity and subjectivity. The person making the portraits is at the same time the painter and the object of painting. The subject and object of the process are contained within the same person. Alenka uses this relationship as a metaphor to question the role of woman as the 'other', as an object. She defies this traditional presentation and tries to establish an active artistic subject. She redefines her subjectivity through changes of identities (gender / sex, race, religious, social). Using her own language, she places her personal stories in a wider social context. Showing herself in different presentations, she questions the plurality of various identities (the relation between sex and gender, her racial identity – the author as a member of a different race, religious identity – the author as a Muslim...) and takes them through the dimension of time. In her feminist questioning, Alenka Spacal does not remain closed within the binary oppositions of sex / gender. Using various motives, she plays with numerous possible presentations of sex / gender and overcomes the traditional male / female division.

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Self-portraits

Helena Janečić and Ana Opalić, Osijek and Dubrovnik



Ana Opalić and Helena Janečić's exhibition consists of minimized photographs, recently shown on billboards in the public space of Osijek as a part of the exhibition The New Osijek Art Scene. The artists' self-portraits are based on the concept of advertisements, in which we encounter an interesting world of imagination and imaginary relationships and roles such as school boys / girls, fashion models, sportsmen, and actresses. They highlight the narrow-mindedness of advertisements as copies of the power relations and heteronormative order in society. Ana and Helena are playing by inserting a lesbian couple into this typical pattern of advertisements. The result is a fusion of consumer culture, surrounding us at every step, and lesbians, who are always somewhere on the margin, almost invisible. As the authors themselves have said, some roles were parallel with the processes and wishes in real life and vice versa: the roles formed real identities. For example, since Helena started training football in the Osijek Football Club, they used the stereotype of the 'lesbian football player' in a photograph. The artists want to show the notion of lesbian identity to the public and in this way raise our society's awareness of the existence of marginal groups. The posters send a particular message to a target audience.

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**Transkitchen Rhythmic Therapy –
Satirical Anti-consumerist Show**
Act Women, Beograd



The performance Transkitchen Rhythmic Therapy is a satirical anti-consumerist show in the form of a telesale, addressing various (self)destructive slimming programmes. Act Women present social taboos to the public through performances and theatre work. Their performances celebrate the freedom of thought, with the aim of de-intimizing the lives of feminists, lesbians and other groups from the margins of society. They find ideas for their performances in working with different marginalized groups (Roma, women victims of violence, abandoned children, LGBTQ population). They actively promote female art by organizing various street actions, festivals and shows.

Contact:
<http://www.ljudmila.org/merc/actwomen/>



Bridgeland Zwei

Bridge Markland, Berlin



(Photography: Udo Hesse)

Bridgeland Zwei is a feature (55 minutes), bisexual, bilingual (German and English) performance about the questioning of socially constructed gender roles. Bridge Markland, a chameleon artist, through dance, theatre, performance and erotic art breaks the boundaries of heterosexual and homosexual identities. Her scope of activity lies somewhere between the existing and pre-given forms and identities. This approach often leaves the public in shock. Her speciality is a performance of transforming from a man into a woman and vice versa. Apart from performances, Bridge also writes, does grotesque dancing, film and photography. This was her first guest performance in Croatia, and her personality and work have caught the interest of the media, which have declared her the icon of European queer scene.

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www.bridge-markland.de

Kalimero

Edin Aladžuz, Sarajevo



Ever since his early childhood, he has loved music and acting. In primary school he was a member of the drama group, but that wasn't what he really wanted. He got an opportunity to express himself freely at the Teacher Education Academy in Sarajevo, where he acted in a cabaret and wore his 'uniform' of a mini skirt, nylon stockings, and high heels, for the first time during a 15 minute show, which delighted everybody, and especially Edin himself. Many people congratulated him for having the courage to perform publicly dressed as a woman, which encouraged him to continue with his work. After this school performance he became famous in his home town of Sarajevo. Having performed on many TV stations, he was invited to perform in discos, clubs and restaurants. Shortly after that, the yellow press developed an interest in him, and published numerous texts about his private and professional life.

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Concert

Lollobrigida, Zagreb



Lollobrigida performed in 2003 as the opening act for the German 'trash' artist Mambo Kurtu, arousing big interest on the Zagreb underground music scene. In February 2004, they managed to pack the Zagreb Student Centre, and after that signed a contract with DOP Records. In September 2004, they released their first single Party, which became famous, transforming an underground name into a widely known band. In a relatively serious women's magazine, Elle, they appeared wearing rubbish bags, and their second, Christmas single, Unhappy Christmas, as well as their successful performance at the big concert Fiju Brijuni, managed to keep public interest until the release of their debut album Cartoon Explosion in May 2005. They presented this album on a concert in KSET in Zagreb, with the Belgrade hip-hop duo, Bitcharke na travi, as the opening act. The album was produced with music recorded on a home computer using the freeware program, and it was produced by Svadbass, one of the best home producers. They were careful not to lose the amateur sound in the production, since Lollobrigidas promote 'trash' culture. Lollobrigidas are no longer only a couple of girls – they have enlarged the band and changed their name to VIS Lollobrigida. Their video was the first domestic video to be shown on MTVAdria.

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<http://www.lollobrigida-girls.com/>