

Introduction

The introductions that I like the most are those that sum up the point of the book so well I do not have to read it. For, today, we are in a constant race against time. A different and equally good approach is the exact opposite, that is, when the introductory words are written in such a skilfully enigmatic way that, despite the lack of time, the reader really wants to read the book. So how can their interest be aroused?

Regardless of how deep an idea and how far-reaching a vision we offer the reader, it seems that they would probably most readily be attracted by every, even the most modest piece of information about the nature of people behind the art world that the expert texts usually do not discuss. Mine are no different. The reader can get a sense of the mentality of Slovenian cultural politicians, who I dedicated a few lines to, when, for example, I present the difficulties in establishing the museum of contemporary art at Metelkova. In other texts, they can read about how people can still surprise us with their solidarity. When more than twenty Slovenian galleries joined the Hosting Moderna galerija! campaign, our work again seemed more meaningful.

Although the texts are mine, they are in a way a collective work, since they are mostly related to Moderna galerija/Museum of Modern Art. Together with my colleagues, especially Igor Zabel, I have fought for a better status of contemporary art in Slovenia and a more equal position of Eastern European art within the international art system. My first and at the same time most critical reader was always 3X, while Roman Uranjek was the one who encouraged me to publish the texts.

The key topics of my texts of the last twenty years, which I have selected for this book together with Petja Grafenauer, are contemporary art, its museum and the Eastern European context. I see myself, above all, as a describer of my own practice connected especially to my curatorial work and the development of the concept of a museum of contemporary art. Ever since I assumed my post at Moderna galerija, I have considered one of my key tasks to be to connect our quite closed space with the international one. My work provided numerous precious contacts with colleagues and artists all over the world with whom we constantly exchanged ideas. The experience I have thus gained is multi-layered. Although I am now friends with many of them, still, it is professional interests that have always been at the back of our relations. But, where exactly is the dividing line between the private and the professional? If socializing is based on personal attraction, then I can say that most of my contacts on the international scene have been personal. But I have to emphasize that in all these relations I never forgot where I came from. Not because of sentimental patriotism, but because I was constantly intensely interested in the

reality of the art world in which the geopolitical positions of power were transferred also to the relations with individuals. I have to mention that a broad-brush survey of an increasingly larger art world, the search for new and surprising things, is a general characteristic of the present time. As I have written in one of the texts, today's art world is above all cynical, but this characterisation has no positive or negative meaning. It is simply such. Professionals wandering in it can become good friends and allies, but then part because of the challenges that draw us to always new people, spaces and ideas. Loyalty in this world has no operative meaning.

I chose the title Authentic Interest in order to emphasize the distinctions within the same Post-Fordist world. While I was writing, I had to come up with new terms, such as historicization and self-historicization since, in this world in which the discovery of new things predominates, we are simply running out of terms that could designate authentic remembrance that is not completely compatible with the network of other spaces. Or as Boltanski and Chiapello would say: "»In a connexionist world, loyalty of the self looks like inflexibility; resistance to others seems like a refusal to make connections; truth defined by the identity between a representation and an original is regarded as a failure to understand the infinite variability of the beings who circulate in the network, and change every time they enter into relation with the different beings, so that none of their manifestations can be taken as a point of origin with which other expressions can be compared. In a network world, the question of authenticity can no longer be formally posed.« (1)

(1) Boltanski, L., and E. Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, London and New York, Verso, 2005

The conclusion could be: with my writing, I try to look at authentic interest from a different perspective in the sense of searching for local priorities and their concordance with similar examples within the network world.