

NoguerasBlanchard is pleased to announce the first exhibition in the gallery's new location in L' Hospitalet de Llobregat (Barcelona). With the aim of presenting key works by established artists, the new programme will consist of four exhibitions per season. *White – Skin* by Croatian artist Mladen Stilinović (Belgrade, 1947) is the artist's first exhibition in Barcelona and focuses on works produced during the Balkan conflict. Created between 1990 and 1995, they belong to the *White Absence* and *Skin* series, from which the exhibition takes its title.

Mladen Stilinović made these works during the war in Croa in response to the situation, when the artist was unable to establish any rapport with political factors. These works focus on individual experience and reflect impotence. In reference to the lines by Spanish poet Jorge Guillén "Does the world seek a white, total, lasting absence?" Mladen Stilinović titled his cycle of works *White Absence*. "What is the color of pain, the artist asked himself in the early, wartorn 1990s in Croatia. 'White is the color of silence, very intimate, and pain is an intimate thing', says the artist who used white to cover images and objects encompassing various concepts: emptiness, absence, pain, poverty and absurdity(1) . What really interests him is not the ideological content of a specific type of power, socialist or capitalist, but rather neutralizing the apparatuses that reproduce power as such as their effect on the individual. In that sense, the concept of power, in terms of pain and sadness, can be read as Spinozist: he fundamentally sees it as an obstacle in order to bring about the *potentia agendi* of each individual.(2) In the words of the artist, "during the war I became numb in art and in other situations, silence is pain."

Stilinović has always worked with language, especially with the direct impact of the language of politics on the language of everyday life and art. In his universe, language is an ideological trap, a kind of communication that carries with it a threat: the violence of forcing the individual to belong to a linguistic community, with all the rules and constrictions presupposed by that membership to one's subjectivity. His "white works" turn inwards, they do not contain any subversive elements but are poetic instead, and talk about that which is hard to express.

The works here consist of everyday items that are fragile and have acquired the patina of age, white, yellow and gray that soaks in time. Individual elements are arranged on the gallery walls in a similar manner to that used by Mallarmé to arrange the verses in *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*. The white space between the works creates intervals; emptiness is as eloquent as the works themselves

Mladen Stilinović lives in Zagreb. From 1969–76 he worked with experimental film. He was a member of the Group of Six Artists (1975–79) and also ran the PM Gallery in Zagreb from 1982–

91. His works include collages, photographs, artist books, paintings, installations, actions, films, and video. Stilinović has exhibited in numerous solo and group shows worldwide since 1975 including the 50th Venice Biennial (2003), 15th Sydney Biennial (2006), Documenta 12 in Kassel (2007), 11<sup>a</sup> Istanbul Biennial (2009), and his work is present in the collections of MoMA (NY), Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris) or the CGAC in Spain. His current solo show *1+2= Mladen Stilinović* is at the MUAC (Mexico).

(1) Branka Stipančić, Mladen Stilinović – *White Absence*, The Gus Fisher Gallery, University of Auckland, New Zealand, 2001.

(2) Alejandra Labastida, *1+2= or How to manipulate that which manipulates you*, ed. MUAC (Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporaneo), Mexico, 2015

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