

Earth & Sky Exhibiton, October 6 - 30, 1989

Diary – English excerpts

9

EARTH AND SKY EXHIBITION

06 October 1989

WORKS OF ART INSTALLED ON THE ROOF TERRACE (the roof terrace of the Gallery building of the Union of Bulgarian Artists, Shipka 6 Street, Sofia – Ed.):

Hristo Shapkarev (Blagoevgrad) – NO NAME /car tyres/

Georgi Kovachev (Blagoevgrad) – MESSAGE /cross/

Vasko Ivanov – (Blagoevgrad) – THE SHOW /stones and mirrors/

Plamen Bonev – (Blagoevgrad) – MIND OCCURRENCE / after Kovachev/

Sasho Stoitzov – (Blagoevgrad) – FORAGE STORE

CURRENTLY WORKING ON THEIR ART WORKS ARE:

Elena Parusheva (Sliven)

Kolyo Karamfilov (Plovdiv)

Dimitar Mitovski (Plovdiv)

Dobrin Peichev (Sofia)

Orlin Dvoryanov (Sofia)

Georgi Todorov (Sofia)

NOTE:

At 19.00 hours a truck arrives carrying the materials for the additional safety parapet.

MATERIALS FOR THE *EARTH AND SKY* EXHIBITION

07 October 1989

CURRENT SATURDAY THOUGHTS ON THE ROOF:

PEYCHEV-DVORYANOV: The red-painted fence seems like Kant's morals imperative - "Man is an end in himself, not a means. Those who use man as a means commit the greatest crime against the person".

/citation not literal/editor's note//

SUGGESTION BY GEORGI KOVACHEV: The aluminum "xylophone" possibly passed state commission admission sometime in the past.

CONFESSION BY DIANA POPOVA: In order to keep something safe from somebody else trying to lay their hands on it, you have to announce it is your own artwork.

QUESTION BY VASKO IVANOV: Well, what do I have to do with that?

OPINION BY A SUPPOSEDLY OLD COLLEAGUE/SHIPKA 6 VOLUNTEER: Guys, better take care not to end up being just very talented and hardworking.

/based on unconfirmed reports/editor's note//

KOLYO KARAMFILOV'S OPINION OF THE *EARTH AND SKY* EXHIBITION: It reminds me of an aborigine who bought a new boomerang but could not get rid of his old one.

/after old Australian motifs//

A THOUGHT EASY TO REMEMBER: I don't believe in labour productivity.

/A draft slogan /editor's note//

CONFESSION BY VASKO IVANOV: I work very slowly, I like elaborating on (touching) things.

THE DRIVER: Well, I have been supplying whatnot, yet never stones from Blagoevgrad to Sofia.

HRISTO DIMITROV /HINDO/ - camera man: If we should discuss the cultural context of the exhibition and the historical perspective, we may summarize as follows: "All is calm on Shipka".

DVORYANOV: The only way out is to interweave our hairs and jump. Or our beards - "Behind every beard there is a bastard. /Shakespeare/

PEYCHEV: That was what I was doing till 5 years ago when I quit participation in their exhibitions.

II / HAPPY/ SIGH BY SASHO STOITZOV: I told you back in 1969 it was possible to have a good time in Sofia too.

EATH AND SKY

Tuesday 10th October

Rain. Night storm. Caused by a group of 3 to 4-meter tall aliens who land in the centre of the circle. As a result, the arch of Dobrin and Orlin falls down. The authors suffer indescribable fear, then decide /they know but so do we/ to construct a new prismatic arc using the tubular scaffold provided for that purpose. At early evening time the arch is ready. Plamen Koev promises that on 11th October the video shall be available and operating. Luyben Kostov arrives with his super artwork loaded on a truck coming from the Balkan mountains. He'll install that tomorrow. The "City" group is looking for gypsum in large quantities for their artwork on the roof. May be, as a beginning, they will produce a smaller-scale piece of work for 108 Rakovski Street. Discussion- an argument regarding the optimal arrangement of the exhibition. Or what is more important: the relationship between works of art or between their authors. Or isn't it one and the same?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKSHOP TOPICS:

I. HISTORY, THEORY AND CRITICISM OF BULGARIAN AVANT-GARDE

/CONCISE COURSE/

1. How to achieve in 15-20 years time what other peoples under other circumstances preferred not to achieve.
- 2 How to meet both ends: the end of modernism and the end of stagnation.
3. The juridical surrealism: the legend of the 300 percent, the 30 percent obligatory social insurance /?/ and other ways to fully break the neck of the free painter.

4. Counter techniques of point 3 /they know but so do we/
5. Year, date and hour of the initiation of Bulgarian avant-garde.
6. Of socialist realism say nothing but good.
7. Post-post-post-modernism – the senile disease of post-modernism.
8. Dialectics of empty pockets and sponging.

II. SPONSORSHIPOLOGY

1. Methods of convincing a sponsor from rebel tactics to Christo
2. Patron of the arts: a job of the future
3. Ludwigology.

III. TECHNOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF AVANT-GARDE

1. Techniques of happening: from Benkovski to 09th September 1944
2. Theft of materials as a performance
3. All-year round plenary cycle of the twelve cities /a travelling circus model/
4. Bringing art at a higher level: on the roof terrace of 6 Shipka Street. /What next?/

WE AWAIT YOUR TEXTS ON THESE TOPICS AND OTHER TOPICS SUGGESTED BY YOU, UNTIL 20TH OCTOBER

EARTH AND SKY EXHIBITION

13th October 1989

Friday

In the morning – sunny and warm weather /relatively/. Work goes on at a normal rate. Likewise does attendance.

Asen Botev and Zhoro Ruzhev installed their “Eye”, moving over heaps of grass /as if there is not enough on the terrace/. Indeed, regarding the grass, opinions divided: should it be left or taken away, so we take the middle road – we leave it at some places, and remove it from others.

It is apparent that Sofia Airport already functions normally: it participates in its own way in the *Earth and Sky* Exhibition.

Posters are received - distribution is under way.

In the afternoon the remark of some pupils from the Secondary School of Applied Arts in “A book on...” suddenly beset upon the participants the weight of a historical mission: to prepare the skirts of the peak they would be mounting. Jumping in their minds way ahead in the future, the authors started lamenting with a senile verbose pathos: “Now, is that avant-garde?! When we were young...” This went on for a long time.

/CONFESSED BY D. Popova – My contribution is moderate, temperate as suits an academic critic among avant-gardists./

In passing, Orlin Dvoryanov was already weaving not threads but ropes, and as a result his “Conversation” got rough – inevitably, although under the impact of the surrounding reality. At about early evening he finished the work and gave it the subtitle : “Sitting between two chairs – getting to heaven”.

/The work of G. Todorov continues to be warmly appreciated./

OTHERS

ANONYMOUS REMARK: It is obvious that all who complain of some emptiness on the terrace subconsciously reflect the emptiness in themselves.

A QUESTION one would inevitably ask about “View to the West” (by Nedko Solakov – Ed.):

– Well, precisely why the five-pointed star?

COUNTER QUESTION:

- So what do you want – facing the cross?

EARTH AND SKY EXHIBITION

20th October 1989

Friday

The preparation for the discussion goes on, partly individually, partly on the terrace /because wind came out/.

Some of the participants engage in looking for a video full of adventures and hard physical labour. Because Asen Botev's car is meant for a proportional distribution: half the time it moves, the rest of the time it is pushed. In order to prolong the first period, the authors passed by the guard of the gate at "Bulgarian video". On their way back, behind the level crossing gate, the following dialogue took place:

- Why didn't you stop when you drove out?
- We were on our way to take a video.
- Give me the note certifying you took a video.
- But we didn't take any video.
- Fine, give me a note certifying you did not take a video.

Then Asen started talking about a bazooka – that is what Georgi Todorov shared. Yet, military action was evaded.

After all, the video actually appeared, though a bit late – the discussion had already started.

The "discussion" genre /as Georgi Todorov would say/ has long time been difficult, and almost always unsuccessfully carried out. The beginning is a grim piece and just when it is on the brink of boiling it falls apart into variously directed dialogues. Though the discussion of Earth and Sky went exactly the same way, some things about the avant-garde came to be cleared:

- the avant-garde rides the crest of the wave /Luchezar Boyadjiev/

- the avant-garde is always about protesting and rebelling /Philip Zidarov/

- one cannot buy avant-garde /Andrey Daniel/
- the avant-garde has a sense of historicity /.../

But since it was not clarified whether the pieces exhibited on the terrace were avant-garde, voting was suggested. Unfortunately it was not carried out and the issue remained open.

A REPLY from the discussion: It is high time we do away with the myth about the poor painter in the garret...

DIMITAR GROZDANOV – This, however, does not apply to the Bulgarian art expert on the terrace.

EARTH AND SKY EXHIBITION

22th October 1989

Sunday

Video playing goes on: mythological games by Dimitar Grozdanov, two actions by Dvoryanov-Peichev, two actions by Georgi Todorov, etc. Because of the constant watching some of the participants look carried away and slightly out of concentration.

In the afternoon, in a fit of creative shudder and in order to get a move on, Georgi Todorov /hereinafter referred to as the "COLLECTIVE"/ installed the work "THE CANNON EXPLODED" by Luchezar Boyadjiev and collective.

BRIEF CONVERSATIONS IN FRONT OF THE VIDEO:

AN ARTIST /severely/: Watch now so I need not tell you after! You are an art expert – be careful...

REPLY to Georgi Todorov's film: Wow, you are putting your life to risk!

ANSWER: Well, not a big deal, St. Simeon stayed on such a pillar for 40 years /a bit cut here and there, of course/. I stayed 40 seconds – on the occasion of life's growing dynamics.

THERE MUST BE everything there: post avant-garde, pseudo avant-garde, socialist avant-garde.... And if they do not like the definition avant-garde, we will term it rear-garde. After all, we are always last at the queue...

I.E. it is high time we turned into a garde.

ORLIN DVORYANOV COMMENTING ON HIS FILM "EYE":

-Well, apparently we are not going to get piece of mind until we break our heads.

-The abundance on that table is elusive...

REPLY /from the room/: What are these avant-gardist scruples?

- Asking that question, the artist is seeking the answer to life's winding road. It turns out to be a Chinese wall.

- Innocents When there is nothing better to do, people aim at confusing the lives of others.

- The idea of the April Uprising as a happening came to my mind two years ago...

REPLY /from the room/: No, it was Zahari Stoyanov who propounded it for the first time.

- Here the artist runs away from his wakeful consciousness.

A BRIEF CONVERSATION:

- What is that?

– Christo.

– Anti-Christo, I'd say – unpacking.

– This external conflict is, indeed, internal.

– There is no problem that in a mind battered enough something watched on T.V might occur.

ANNOUNCEMENT: The first viewers-participants in the exhibition – Raycho and Hristo put a notice “NO SMOKING” on the exhaust pipes of Antony Sofev.

SO ON AND SO FORTH:

ASEN TO ZHORO RUZHEV: Have this wooden pipe, play it, don't get angry.

A WALL: like a sun – you need not paint it.

46

EARTH AND SKY EXHIBITION

23th October 1989

Monday

THE SIGN "VIEW TO THE WEST" VANISHED

*And should one look to the east, they will only be able to see the smog over the town,
and the smog alone.*

EARTH AND SKY EXHIBITION

24th October 1989

Tuesday

On the evening of 23rd October a meeting was held at the Young Artist Club. Brief information was announced about the long odyssey of the status in the current year. Rising their heads out of the paperwork into which the club members were sunk for a few months, they were facing the same Hamletian dilemma. They decided it "To be". /Come to think of it, at the end of the day status is status, activity is activity, life is life etc. alphabetical truths./ "To be" was also backed by the Managing Board and that is how the beginning of something was laid.

Awaiting that decision, the participants finished "The intellectual game" and in the period of a few hours /in changing participation/ were doing the happening "Keeping the red square".

With a view to an eventual surge of sponsors in the evening, a conversation was held with the economist-pessimist /Antoniya Spasova/, which was broadcast again by the collaborators group. Probably there will be no work.

The overseeing psychologist is vigilant.

OTHER

SLOGAN SUGGESTION: Who goes to a goat for wool, will have some hard time.

New rubrics: STUDIO X /SHORT CRIMINAL STORIES/

In a fortnight time there went missing:

- a scotch adhesive;
- a Raphael brush

Alleged thief: a colleague.

COMMENTARY: Colleagues, this is not the way! After all, no one knows who is more of a genius than the rest... And let's put an end to all those biblical shirts, cheeks etc.

From "CHARITY FOR THE BULGARIAN PATRON OF THE ARTS" went missing 5 /five/ leva granted in person by Stefan Prodev.

COMMENTARY: The young Bulgarian artist is used to being robbed. But stealing from the Bulgarian patron of the arts...!

Citizens who take sheets from the diary on the notice board, ARE ASKED to return them after being copied. Or else leave stotinki for the next copy.

NOTE: The 15 kilograms of apples eaten at the "Peripatetic installation" do not fall within this rubric.

The apple I had on 25.10 at sunset helped me a lot.

Thanks ...

EARTH AND SKY EXHIBITION

26th October 1989

Thursday

In the morning the intellectual chess game became real. Two forces came against each other: one being the apples, the other – the pavement stones. Besides pawns, the first team consists of half bread loafs (rooks), eggs (a horse in exchange of a hen), water glasses (bishops), flower in a flower pot (queen) and a church-lamp (king). The second team comprises a collection of variously sized stones. All figures come from the *Earth and Sky* exhibition, from the current Collective Exhibition at 6 Shipka Street, and the glasses were provided by the administration.

During the day, among other things, 2 or 3 sets were played. The time for thinking was extended because of the hard physical labour for moving the stones around. The end of the last set was especially beautiful. The stone king was shut in the corner together with a faithful bishop and a rook. He was driven to that position by a glass of water and a few apples.

REPLIES ROUND THE CHESS GAME:

What a nice castling – bread and the church-lamp.

WE MUST NOT forget chess is a sport. Here we may distinguish heavy athletes.

My situation is as carefree as a flower in a pot, if I am to judge it by the queen /flower in a pot/.

OTHER

EVERY other visitor asks the question: "Why is the VIEW TO THE WEST moved?". Every visitor silently asks the question to themselves.

CITATION ON THAT OCCASION: The Germans asked Picasso about The Guernica

- Is that your work?

- No, it's yours.

NOTE: Anything that you might come to think about, is pure coincidence.

EARTH AND SKY EXHIBITION

28 - 30th October 1989

Saturday - Monday

The major event on Saturday was the action in the Brewery ("Proshekovo pivo" – an abandoned old brewery next to Shipka 6 Gallery – Ed.). Its conquest was carried out in two directions: interior and exterior. The small internal roof – terrace was managed using various means of expression, with several Ariadne's threads /punched tapes/ leading to it through the labyrinth.

The planned "Secret lunch" transformed into an idyllic "Luncheon on the Grass" (by [Edouard Manet](#) – Ed.) /no need to mention the menu – mainly apples/. Eventually Asen Botev handed out medals of merit according to merit. The television got a lot of presents: a version of "A male and a female agricultural workers" /with the Statue of Liberty instead of the latter/, a bottle of symbols for earth and sky, a small well packed "minotaur", etc.

On Sunday the participants watched video films and were taking morals, and for a change did a small "hap" with apples on the base of the Statue of the Master (a statue of the prominent Bulgarian painter Vladimir Dimitrov – the Master in front of the Shipka 6 Gallery – Ed.). That provoked the indignation of an aged visitor. On the roof he entered into a dialogue fire with a bunch of wonderful punks so the intervention of participants was pointless – they told him all he needed to know.

In fact, the installation did not hold for long.

Today, Monday, future plans are being elaborated. Despite the finding of the overseeing psychologist: "You look a bit tired."