

# IVAN BLAŽEV



NARODNI MUZEJ CRNE GORE  
maj-jun 2007.



← Prvo kupanje u sezoni / First swim of the season, Trpejca

Deltaplani / Deltaplanes, Galičica

“Svijet je uzbudljiv, okrutan, i neobičan” a fotografsko oko omogućava da se kroz uvježbano “iskustvo gledanja” prepozna i sačuva ona specifična aura koja odražava “trenutak ravnoteže” i markira posebnost izdvojenih scena i slika, izvučenih iz konteksta određenog ambijenta.

*Macedonia Dreaming* je projekat nastao sa prvobitnom idejom da se stvori fotografski esej o Makedoniji, njenim stanovnicima, prirodnim kontrastima, fascinantnim pojavama - “uhvaćenim” svakodnevnim trenutcima i situacijama. Iako na prvi pogled ovi radovi spadaju u klasični reportažni esej oni sadrže poseban duhovni sloj koji zahtijeva viši nivo tumačenja, sagledavanje kroz introspekciju. Svaka fotografija, pa čak i ona sa naizgled najprozaičnijim dokumentarnim ambicijama sadrži autobiografski segment, emituje nešto od bića autora. Kretanje od spolja ka unutra, Ivan sprovodi kroz jedan standardni fotografski, dobro poznati princip “odlučujućeg trenutka” koji je u direktnoj relaciji sa prepoznavanjem dominantne vlastite emocije, mentalnog stanja, i to na izuzetno elegantan i rafiniran način. Spolja on bira trenutak, koji odražava smisao situacije koju bilježi, dok unutra bira emotivno stanje koje se njime opredmećuje, materijalizujući ga kroz složena simbolička značenja. Radnja postaje psihološki iskaz “unutrašnjeg pejzaža” prepoznate situacije. Ipak, među njima nema apsolutne podvojenosti. Iako za određeni broj fotografija možemo reći da pripadaju grupi - tzv “lajf” snimaka, dok su druge naglašeno meditativne, neke, začuđujuće, sadrže oba kvaliteta.

Sasvim je jasno da nije u pitanju samo obično dokumentovanje “ljudi i običaja” sa namjerom faktografskog opisivanja jednog društvenog miljea, viđenog kroz kulturološke i sociološke raznolikosti. Ove fotografije su posebno preispitivanje sopstvenog bića do nivoa hirurški preciznog seciranja intimnih emocija, koje se prepoznaju kroz jedinstvenost i neponovljivost izbalansiranosti scene, i njenim vještijim izmještanjem iz običnog, lokalnog konteksta, uzdižući je ka univerzalnom, opštem. A “istinито i valjano snimiti, znači vidjeti ispod površine i opažati kvalitete koji se nalaze u čovjeku i prirodi”. (A. Adams)



*Brod Baunti / The Bounty ship, Skopje*

Na hiljade pređenih kilometara, na desetine posjećenih gradova i još više sela, iznjedrile su mnoštvo fotografskih priča, koje grade cjeloviti "fotografski diskurs", jedinstvenu povjest doživljenu okom i bićem, nepristrasno ali s puno najtananih emocija. "Makedonija sanjajući" je sasvim subjektivana slika svijeta koji se stalno mijenja, ali pod pritiskom savremenih globalnih tokova ne gubi svoju posebnost, živopisnost i vedrinu.

Iako savremeno društvo sve više "pretpostavlja sliku stvari, kopiju originalu, predstavu stvarnosti, pojavu biću"(Feuerbach) a masova proizvodnja i potrošnja slika postaju glavno mjerilo "zdravlja ekonomije, stabilnosti zajednice i težnje za ličnom srećom", u ovom opsežnom poduhvatu Ivan je pokušao "sačuvati život u činu življenja" (H.C. Bresson) time što će utkati svoju osobenu, istančanu perceptivnu nit, prepoznajući vitmanovski imperativ po kome su "svi trenutki jednako važni". U okolnostima aktuelnog nemilosrdnog, masovnog konzumerizma, potreba za vlastitim preispitivanjem u osami, distanciranog, pažljivog posmatrača sa foto aparatom, a time i udaljavanje od ustaljenih, banalnih normi i lako čitljivih poruka može djelovati kao sigurno utočište. Na taj način slika prestaje biti samo slika; dokument u kome pojave imaju određena, striktna, značenja i smisaona određenja. Ona postaje trag, nešto neposredno preslikano sa stvarnog, kao "otisak stopala ili posmrtna maska", jedne zbilje koju nanovo prerađuje udišući joj novu svrhovitost. Zato ovaj foto esej predstavlja putovanje tokom kojeg se ne dešava dramatično smjenjivanje mjesta i događaja, već se potencira liričnost fotografskog zapisa i suptilnost prezentiranja realnosti. Rotiranje pogleda od javnog ka privatnom, svodenje od opšteg na pojedinačno ili obratno, smjenjivanje individualne istorije i savremenosti, posredno grade jednu univerzalnu, "urbanu geografiju".

Ono što dodatno potencira višeznačnost jezika ovih scena, a što skoro da se može opipati, je dominantno osjećanje "intenzivne usamljenosti" – mentalne izdvojenosti, odsustva, čak i kada su figure u masi. Poput

meditativnih predstava na slikama Edvarda Hopera, kojima se "uspostavlja psihološko mapiranje urbanog stanja", i reprezentuje teatar javnih lica i anonimnih tipova. Srasla sa ambijentom, koji postaje njena "druga koža" figura više ne predstavlja konkretnu osobu, već gustu masu formi i emocija. Ako je tačno da se "čitav život može sažeti u jednoj pojavi", kako je smatrao Balzak, onda je ono što je započelo kao svedočanstvo o jednoj naciji preraslo u jedinstveni psihološki autoportret samog autora.

Mirjana Dabović Pejović



*Berbernica / Barbershop, Radoviš*

"The world is exciting, cruel and extraordinary", and the photographic eye makes it possible to recognize and preserve, using the practiced "experience of watching", that specific aura which reflects the "moment of balance" and marks the uniqueness of discrete scenes and images, taken out of the context of a certain ambient.

*Macedonia Dreaming* is a project which came about with the initial idea of creating a photographic essay on Macedonia, its inhabitants, its natural contrasts and fascinating phenomena – on everyday moments and situations "caught". Although, at first glance, these works seem to constitute a classic reportage essay, they also have a distinct spiritual plane which needs to be interpreted at a higher level, to be perceived through introspection. Each photograph, even if it appears to have the most prosaic documentary ambition, contains an autobiographic segment and broadcasts something of the author's being. Ivan accomplishes this transition from the external to the internal through the standard and well-known photographic principle of the "decisive moment", which is directly related to the recognition of one's own dominant emotion or mental state, and he does this in an extremely elegant and sophisticated manner. Externally, he chooses a



*Poljubac i grafiti / A kiss and graffiti, Štip*

moment which reflects the meaning of the situation which he is recording, while internally he chooses the emotional state which is embodied by it, materialising it through complex symbolic meanings. The action becomes a psychological expression of the “internal landscape” of the recognised situation. However, there is no absolute separation between them. Although some of the photographs can be said to belong the group of so-called “life” images, while others are markedly meditative, a few, remarkably, contain both qualities.

It is quite clear that this is not only merely a case of documenting “people and customs” with the intention of factually describing a certain social milieu seen through cultural and sociological differences. These photographs represent a specific re-examination of one’s own being, to the level of a surgically precise dissection of intimate emotions, which are recognised by a unique, unrepeatable balancing of the scene and its skilful dislocation from an ordinary, local context and elevation to the universal and general. And, as Ansel Adams said, “To photograph truthfully and effectively is to see beneath the surfaces and record the qualities of nature and humanity which live or are latent in all things.”

The thousands of kilometres covered, the dozens of towns and even more villages visited, all resulted in an abundance of photographic stories which build a complete “photographic discourse”, a unique narrative experienced with the eyes and whole being, unbiased, but with much refined emotion. Macedonia Dreaming is a quite subjective image of a world which is constantly changing, but without losing its specific aspect, vividness and cheerfulness under the onslaught of modern global trends.

Although modern society increasingly “presupposes the image to the thing, the copy to the original, the representation to the reality, the phenomenon to the being” (Feuerbach), and the mass production and consumption of images becomes the main criterion “of the health of the economy, the stability of the community and the striving for personal happiness”, in his extensive project Ivan has tried to “to preserve life in the act of living” (H. Cartier-Bresson) by weaving in his refined perceptive thread and recognising



*Prodavac balona / Balloon vendor, Skopje*

the Whitmanesque imperative of “each moment being equally important”. In the current circumstances of merciless mass consumerism, the need to re-examine oneself in the loneliness of the remote, careful observer with a camera and the consequent distancing from established, banal norms and easily read messages, may seem like a safe haven. In this way, the image ceases being merely an image, a document in which phenomena have defined, strict meanings and definitions. It becomes a trace of a reality which it processes by breathing into it a new purposefulness; it is something directly copied from the real, like “a footprint or a death mask”. That is why this photographic essay represents a journey during which there is no dramatic change of scenery and events, but which underlines the lyrical nature of the photographic record and the subtleness of representing reality. Shifting the gaze from the public to the private, reducing the general to the individual or vice-versa, the succession of personal history and modernity, all indirectly contribute to a universal “urban geography”.

What additionally underlines the polysemy of these scenes is the nearly palpable dominant feeling of “intense loneliness” – of mental isolation, of absence, even when the figures are in a mass. This is akin to the meditative representations in Edward Hopper’s paintings which “establish the psychological mapping of the urban condition” and embody the theatre of public faces and anonymous types. Become one with the ambient, which turns into its “second skin”, the figure no longer represents a specific person, but a dense mass of forms and emotions. If it is true that “a whole life can be condensed into a single phenomenon”, as Balzac thought, then what began as testimony about a nation has grown into a unique psychological self-portrait of the author.

*Translated by Srdjan Vujica*

### **Ivan Blažev**

Rođen je 1974. u Skoplju, Makedonija.

Diplomirao na Brooklyn College at CUNY, New York, USA u oblasti filma.

Većina njegovih radova realizovana je u Makedoniji i u širem regionu Balkana, a bavi se mladima, društvenim i kulturnim pitanjima.

Režirao nekoliko kratkometražnih filmova, prikazanim na internacionalnim filmskim festivalima.

Radi kao freelancer, a njegov radovi su objavljivani u nacionalnim časopisima.

Predaje fotografiju u srednjoj školi u Skoplju, gdje i živi.

### **Samostalne izložbe:**

**2007.** Krakov, Poljska, *Macedonia Dreaming*, Alhemija

**2006.** Ohrid, Makedonija, *Prijatelji*, Kulturni centar  
Skoplje, *Macedonia Dreaming*, Muzej grada Skoplje

**2005.** Skoplje, *Prijatelji*, Točka galerija

**2004.** Skoplje, *Bljeskovi: Inicijative za bezbjednu školu*, Muzej grada Skoplja  
Tetovo, *Bljeskovi: Inicijative za bezbjednu školu*, Galerija muzičke škole

### **Selektirane grupe izložbe:**

**2006.** Ljubljana, *Fotonični trenutci*

**2004.** Solun, *Balkanski trg*, Fotografski centar

### **Kontakt:**

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### **Ivan Blažev**

Born in 1974 in Skopje, Macedonia.

Graduated from Brooklyn College at CUNY, New York, USA with a degree in filmmaking.

Most of his work was done in Macedonia and the Balkan region, and deals with youth, social and cultural issues.

Directed several short fiction and documentary films, shown in international film festivals.

Works as a freelancer and has had his work published in national newspapers and magazines.

Teaches photography at a high school in Skopje. Lives in Skopje.

### **Solo exhibitions:**

**2007** Krakow, Poland, Macedonia Dreaming, Alchemia

**2006** Ohrid, Macedonia, Friends, Cultural Center  
Skopje, Macedonia, Macedonia Dreaming, Museum of the City of Skopje

**2005** Skopje, Macedonia, Friends, Točka Gallery

**2004** Skopje, Macedonia, SPARKS: Initiatives for safe school, Museum of the City of Skopje  
Tetovo, Macedonia, SPARKS: Initiatives for safe school, Gallery of the Music School

### **Selected group exhibitions:**

**2006** Ljubljana, Slovenia, Photonic Moments, Ljubljana castle

**2004** Thessaloniki, Greece, Balkan Square, Photographic Center of Thessaloniki

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