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→ Jelena Jureša
MIRA, Study for a Portrait

31.01.2015 –
05.03.2015

Press talk
29.01. 11am

Opening
30.01. 6pm



→ Jelena Jureša (born in Novi Sad, lives in Ghent) is an artist who works mainly in and with the media of photography and video. Her chief interest is in questions of cultural identity, memory, history, and the photograph's boundaries of representation. The focus of her work is the portrait, which she uses to investigate the relationship between viewers and what is viewed through an understanding of the subject portrayed, and more fundamentally, through the problematic question of what the image does or does not convey. Here, the photographic image serves as the starting point for her artistic examination of the portrait, regardless of the medium that is ultimately used: photography, video, or audio-visual installation.

MIRA. Study for a Portrait, the show on display downstairs at the Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst & Medien, is a work about absence that chooses the portrait as the form through which to explore the fragility of memory, while at the same time researching the relationship between the medium of photography and perception in general. This is a long-term project on several levels, in which the artist dedicates herself with scrupulous precision to the history of a country, a family, and, most especially, of a woman.

The work consists of a video installation, several photographs, and twelve lithographs. While watching the videos (two videos, each forty minutes long), viewers are provided with new ways to read the photographed and moving image, as well as with new meanings for the site as the medium of recording and deletion. Even though the first part of the work is based on a real period in history, its actual duration, and familiar historical facts, it is broken up by a personal story that Jureša shifts into the foreground. The video installation traces the life of Mira and her family, from birth to her death, using photographs and video recordings that identify places and correspond to the recollections of some of the characters portrayed. The first part of the film brings to life the family history of her parents, David and Minka: David's Jewish roots and Minka's Muslim background, Bosnia before World War II, the troubles David's family endured; how they both joined the partisans, their meeting, their separation, Minka's nearly fatal injury, and their years until Mira's birth.

Only a few archival photographs are used to reconstruct Mira's portrait. The specific narrative, combined with Jureša's photographs, traces her life with great aesthetic care and subtlety. Her childhood, her life in Belgrade, in Sarajevo, the birth of her children, her marriage and divorce, her work at a senior citizens' home, up until her tragic death in 1990, when she died in a traffic accident near Pakrac, where the unrest that foreshadowed the war in Croatia soon broke out, triggering the decay of what was formerly Yugoslavia.

Exhibitions (selected)

Memory of Violence – Dreams of the Future 1914–18/2014 / Prigušena egzistencija – The Subdued Existence, Museum Of Contemporary Art Vojvodina, Novi Sad (2014)

Jelena Jureša – Mozarts, Zvono Gallery, Belgrad (2010, solo)

namaTRE.ba 4 – namaTRE.ba, Trebinje (2010)

What It Feels Like for a Girl, Museum Of Contemporary Art Vojvodina, Novi Sad (2009, solo)

Press talk: 29.01.2015, 11am

Press download: <http://www.km-k.at/en/exhibition/jelena-juresa/press/>

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Opening: 30.01.2015, 6pm

Curator's talk: 12.02.2015, 9am

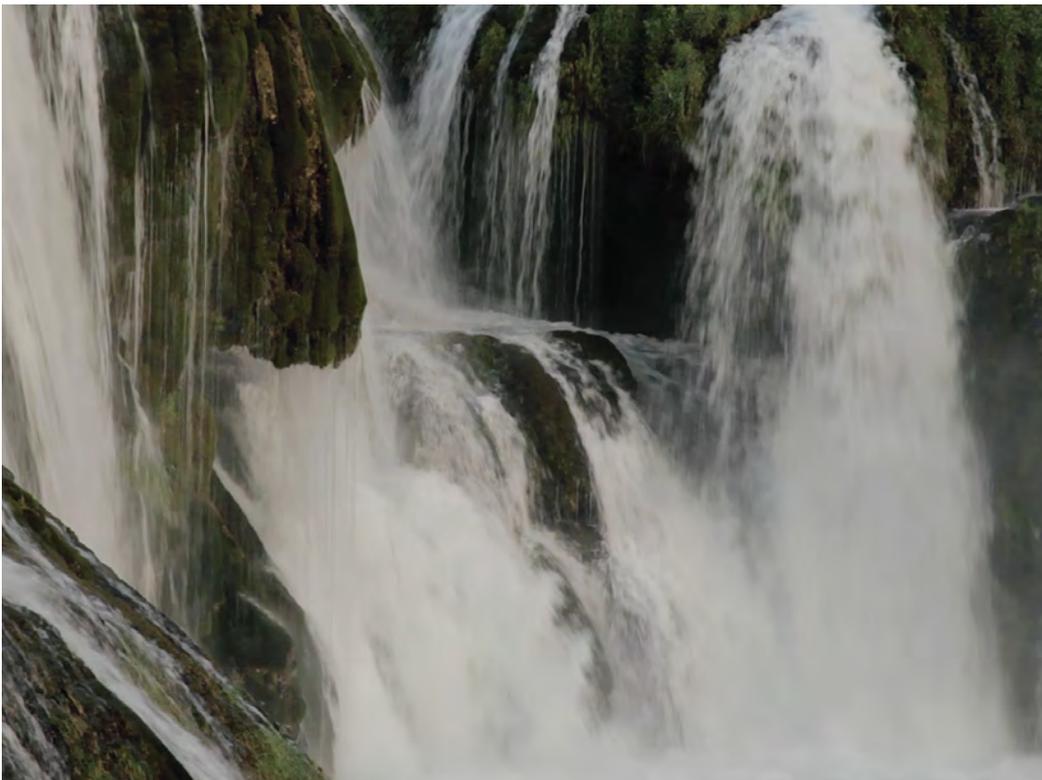
Artist talk with Jelena Jureša and Aneta Stojnić (Belgrade), "Denkmal oder Mahnmal? Historicization and consequences – debating political articulation of traumatic past": 26.02.2015, 6pm

Lecture by Branka Benčić (Zagreb) and Presentation artist book FOTOHOF edition & Jelena Jureša: 05.03.2015, 6pm

Catalogue available



Jelena Jureša, Mira, Study for a Portrait, videostill, courtesy the artist, 2010–2014



Jelena Jureša, Mira, Study for a Portrait, videostill, courtesy the artist, 2010–2014