

Ilina Koralova

The Deceased: Floating Points

The Deceased: Floating Points is a complex work based on the juxtaposition of two basic concepts: statics and motion, while at the same time being a commentary on the ideas of Roland Barthes who discusses 'the concept of photography as an elusive visual interpretation of intangible and abstract time.'

Through the life-size photographs of people captured in the process of 'enacting' their own (as yet imaginary) death, Dejan Grba builds a multi-layered temporal structure. If we accept that photography is an extension of the human memory, naturally referring to a past moment in time, Grba's images capture something like 'memories of the future'. Due to the character of the project itself, however, the likelihood of exactly these 'memories' ever turning into reality is negligible – the concepts of 'real' and 'imaginary' are interlaced and dynamically inter-linked. This kind of dynamics, in turn, contradicts the static nature of the photographic image, as well as the very idea of death, which presupposes peace. And again, at the level of presentation of the project 'immobility' is opposed to 'motion' through the act of throwing the 'bodies' into the reaches of the river.

From here on the process of decoding continues in the direction of interpreting the philosophical and purely literary questions to which the work is addressed and which are suggested by the context of the place where the 'Unique Sign – Unique Location' workshop was being held – Mostar, one of the most devastated cities in all ex-Yugoslav wars during the Nineties. Inevitably, we again touch on the theme of death (this time in its quite concrete dimensions), on the question of the transience of human existence and its dependence on factors which are frequently beyond the will of the individual.

In this sense the flow of the Neretva River is an important component of the work, turning 'the deceased' into 'floating points', into an elusive interpretation not only of intangible time, but also of uncontrollable human behaviour, of non-guidable human fate.

Ilina Koralova, *Dejan Grba: The Deceased - Floating Points, Unique Sign – Unique Location* project catalogue, Cultural City Network, Graz, 2001.