

[interview]

Ego trip Goran Bertok

Babnik, Jan

»I don't like photographers. If I would be a painter I would probably say that I don't like painters. But as it is I feel more sympathy with the painters and their work than towards those who practice photography.«

Photographer, artist and graduated journalist Goran Bertok is known to the public by his works, such as Stigmata (2002), Holy Cross (with Dean Verzel, 2002), Visitors (2004) and Post Mortem (2007). Bertok is an artist who is seriously asking himself whether anything would change if we would abolish art for five years and force artists to occupy themselves with something more useful - preferably hard manual labor. Would anybody take notice? No, and there is a good reason for that. In the eyes of our interlocutor, art has become a perfect ego-trip without any noticeable role in the society, apart from parasitic role we might add. Bertok's artworks stir attention of admirers and critics alike; how could one overlook the installation Holly Cross - a burning cross in Strunjan, photographs of burning »visitors« in crematorium, which came to visit us at the gallery Kapelica in Ljubljana and haunted us with their perfect compositive presence and lastly the visit of motionless bodies from the morgue from the series Post Mortem. No, there is nothing quotidian in the artwork of Goran Bertok and yet it seems that no fact is more quotidian than the death itself. Bertok's imagery forces us to rethink and reevaluate cultural and ideological suppositions of death and violence in our society and time, and the role which contemporary art and photography plays in reevaluating these issues.

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Goran Bertok, iz serije Post Mortem, 2007.

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