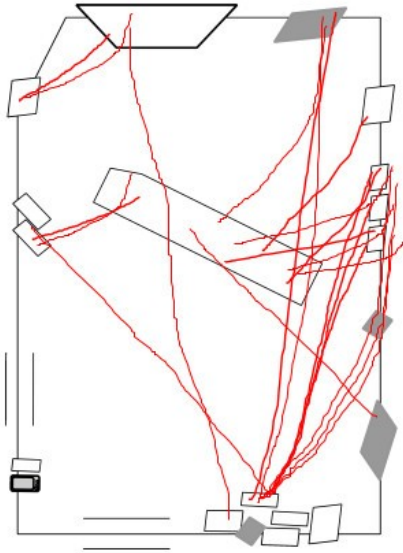


RDEČE NITI | RED THREADS

Translacija | Traslación

Translacija | Traslación is a platform for production, exhibition and research on performance art created by artists Tatiana Kocmur and Francisco Tomsich in 2017¹. Its first edition was produced in Ljubljana, Slovenia, between March and June 2018, and included a series of public activities (performance art events, publications, exhibitions), as well as the first application of a model of artistic research focused on narratives and memories around historical performances, entitled *Rdeče niti* (*Red thread*). The title of this research model refers to methodological aspects and displaying devices, as seen in the exhibition *Rdeče Niti: Where is the Line?* (Rampa/Lab (Kapelica Gallery, Ljubljana, Slovenia, May-June 2018)².



Performance art happens in a specific time, in a concrete space, and no documentation or registry substitutes the uniqueness of the experience of having been there. Each performance

1 The name refers to the artists' main interests, as stated in the general presentation of the overall project: "We are interested in works in which the body takes the quality of an artistic object: a presence in a space with aesthetic values producing potentially infinite images and interpretations. The characteristics of the place where each work is produced and introduced to the public also offers the opportunity to deconstruct, fragment and re-combine former artistic processes in order to be shown as performative events in a different context and in a specific space. We are aiming to create an international platform for collaborations and exchanges with artists and institutions from Slovenia and abroad. The intention is to emphasize processes and models of translating and exhibiting performance events happening in another location and in a parallel space." The use of Slovenian and Spanish version of the association's name also alludes to the specificities of the word in that languages which can not be translated into English as "translation", as well as to the bilingualism or biculturalism of T|T's founding artists. See: <http://translacija.wordpress.com>

2 The exhibition displayed a series of artworks and documents summoned as *preliminary results* of the research model's operation on the performance *Where is the Line?* (Franc Purg, ŠKUC Gallery, Ljubljana, 1998). This specific investigation is not concluded yet. See: <https://translacija.wordpress.com/documentation/>



creates a number of non-fixed images, stories, rumors, memories and narratives, sometimes contradictory, obfuscated, fragmentary. In *Rdeče niti*, we want to approach this phenomena by choosing one significant performance art piece from the past and therefore generating an exploration of its persistence on the bodies of the persons³ who were there or heard something about what happened there. Memories and remembrances from witnesses are able of being articulated as stories, discourses and images, and they can be represented in different ways. We are interested in how individuals and groups remember, articulate and tell stories about what happened in one performance art event from the past.

These approach to historical research on performance art tries to operate afar from three common current trends: re-enactment as re-construction, “the shift to the objects remains of performance”⁴ and the fetishism of documentation. It tries to avoid the “presence of the original” instead, it eludes relics, and refrains from interpretation. All these aspects can be illustrated by the way we applied our research model to the study of memories and narratives around the performance *Where is the Line?* (ŠKUC Gallery, Ljubljana, December of 1998), from the Slovenian artist Franc Purg.

We decided to produce this first research project about *Where is the Line?* because this piece provides many interesting aspects in the framework of our study. It was a complex work which followed a very simple idea. It was developed dramatically in different rooms of the gallery and even incorporated the public space into its scope. It is easily understood in universal terms (i.e. it was not exotic), but it

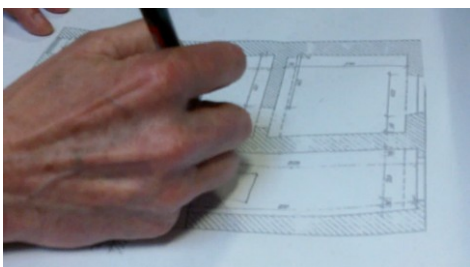
3 See: Belting, Hans, *Bild-Anthropologie*: Fink Wilhelm GmbH + Co.KG, 2011.

4 See: Jones, Amelia, “The shift to the objects remains of performance. Material traces: time and gesture in contemporary art” in: Dertnig, Carola and Thun-Hohenstein, Felicitas (eds.), *Performing the Sentence. Research and Teaching in Performative*, Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien. Sternberg Press, 2014.



deals at the same time with very local issues. It included the participation of the public, and also the essential assistance of a non-artist professional in order to carry out one part of the action. It was attended by a considerable number of persons, and it was documented through photos and videos. It is reviewed in books and articles. In addition, it was shocking and very controversial, and probably it would be even more difficult to make it nowadays than back then. This latter point is remarkable, since revisiting Franc Purg's work in current times poses many questions about politics, ethics and even morals of art practices, and about the contingency of the ideas articulating the discourses about them. Each one of these interesting aspects proved to be extremely rich in reverberations and secondary red threads.

The practice and analysis of our research model, even if still fully undeveloped, produced another kind of very interesting and specific consequences on the theoretical level, aiming us to start sketching a typology of performance art in relation with the strategies, methods and potentials of the research itself, thus proving it to be what a scientific approach to art history demands. It means that each application of our research model produces a set of specific questions and issues in relation with the kind and type of the studied performance in the framework of our methodology. Franc Purg's *Where is the Line?*, for example, represents a type of performance art work extremely based on action itself, and on dramatized (or scored) action. There was neither discourses to remember nor music or sound, there was not even words in the performance's script and formalization. In the context of our research, that means that we must look for a specific type of memories and remembrances. This why the space of the gallery where the work was done acquired such an importance, this is why stories focused so much on the order of



events, in actions' dramaturgy. Being the work very simple from the point of view of its articulation in space, but complex in meaning and emotional responses from the part of the public (and the artist himself), it allows us to delve into the very difficult task of remember even the less puzzling events and the devices and objects involved on them while producing at the same time recreations of emotions and feelings which superimpose with ideological discourses. Telling what happened there that day (or night, in this case) is not our task: we are absolutely devoted to let the witnesses talk (and only them, and the author, if there, appears at the same level). This is why we should never forget, as editors of the source material of the exhibition or publication, that we are showing (among other things) a *function* of the performance for the bodily configuration of its public. "What happened there that day" (in this case: "What happened that night of december, 1998, when Franc Purg made his performance *Where is the Line?* in ŠKUC Gallery?") is the only question we have to launch the interviews with the assistants.

Due to the distinct character of performance artworks, our research included conventional methodologies (organizing interviews, visiting archives, deciphering photos and texts) as well as some not-so-common operations, like the one in which we got to know at least the name of the butcher who assisted Franc Purg in his action, completely erased from the memory of all participants, organizers and the artist himself.

In the next pages, we will display a selection of the documentation of the exhibition made upon this first research project. It will provide some examples of devices, strategies and formal decisions taken in order to show our methods and aims.



RDEČE NITI #WHERE IS THE LINE?

DOCUMENTATION OF EXHIBITION DEVICES



Translacija | Traslación 1.3, May-June 2018

Rampa/Lab, Kapelica Gallery

Kersnikova 4, Ljubljana, Slovenia

TRANSLACIJA | TRASLACIÓN 1.3
a cycle of performance art events based in Ljubljana (Slovenia), March-June, 2018. <https://translacija.wordpress.com/>

ČTERTEK | THURSDAY | JUEVES 31. 5. 2018, 20:00
Galerija Kapelica, Kersnikova 4, Ljubljana

**KAJ SE JE ZGODILO NA DECEMBERSKI NOČI
LETA 1998, KO JE F.P. PREDSTAVIL SVOJE
DELO?**

RDEČE NITI #Where is the line?
Razstava začetnih rezultatov raziskovalnega projekta o spominih in nareciyah
umetniškega performansa iz preteklosti *Where is the line?* (Franc Purg, Galerija
Škuc, december 1998).

An exhibition of the preliminary results of a research project on memories and
narratives around performance art events from the past applied to *Where is the
line?* (Franc Purg, Škuc Gallery, December 1998).

Una muestra de resultados preliminares de un proyecto de investigación en memorias
y narrativas sobre eventos históricos de arte de performance aplicado a la obra
Where is the line? (Franc Purg, galería Škuc, diciembre de 1998).

Translacija | Traslación je platforma za produkcijo, razstavljanje in raziskovanje performativne umetnosti, ki sta jo izoblikovala umetnika Tatiana Kocmur in Francisco Tomsich. | Translacija | Traslación is platform for production, exhibition and research on performance art created by artists Tatiana Kocmur and Francisco Tomsich. | Translacija | Traslación es una plataforma de producción, exhibición e investigación en arte de performance creada por los artistas Tatiana Kocmur y Francisco Tomsich.

The block contains an architectural floor plan on the left with various dimensions and labels. The background is a photograph of a person sitting at a table with a laptop, looking at a screen. There is also some handwritten text visible in the background image.



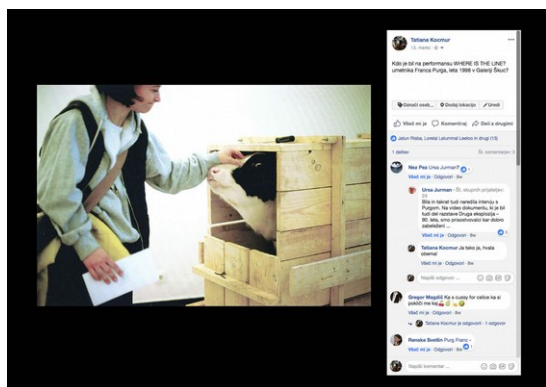
1) Map of Ljubljana, showing the places where interviews were made. Section of a standard tourist map, nails, red thread connecting marked spots with devices in the exhibition room.

2) Description of the project and credits in English and Slovenian languages. Two prints, A4, nailed. See next page for complete text.

3) *The Mick connection*. 5 colour prints, A4, nailed. The story, told through the reproduction of emails and social networks dialogues, of the unsuccessful attempt to get information about the whereabouts of the archive of Slovene poet and photographer Dušan Merklin (Mick), who used to work in ŠKUC gallery and appears in the video documentation of *Where is the Line?*

4) *Watching pictures at Kapelica Gallery*. Video; colour, sound, 1'01' (loop), on tablet. Registry of the two members of Kapelica Gallery's staff trying to recognize people depicted in the documentation of *Where is the Line?* included in the catalogue *The Second Explosion - the 90's / Druga eksplozija - 90. leta* (P.A.R.A.S.I.T.E., Ljubljana, 2016).

5) *Kdo je bil...?* (Who was there...?) A4-colour print of a Facebook post looking for people who was present at *Where is the Line?* in December 1998, and answers.



6) *Rdeče niti: Ivan*. Video; B&W, silent, subtitles, 8'61' (loop), on tablet. Fragments of an interview with one assistant to the performance.

Translacija | Traslación is a platform for production, exhibition and research on performance art created by artists Tatiana Kocmur and Francisco Tomsich. Its first edition is being produced in Ljubljana, Slovenia, between March and June 2018. It includes a series of public activities (performance art events, publications, exhibitions) and the application of a model of artistic research focused on narratives and memories around historical performances.

Performance art in the sense we understand it here happens once. It is made in an concrete place, has a specific duration and it is witnessed by a certain group of persons. The privileged material is the artist's own body, and no documentation or registry can substitute the traces of its presence. For the participants and spectators of a performance, being there and then means a very distinct experience which constitutes their own bodies in the form of memories and remembrances. These memories and remembrances are able of being articulated as stories, discourses and images, and they can be represented in different ways. We are interested in how individuals and groups remember, articulate and tell stories about what happened in one performance art event from the past.

We chose Franc Purg's performance *Where is the line?* (ŠKUC gallery, Ljubljana, December of 1998) as our first study case. The main reason of this decision lies in some characteristics of the work that make it very appropriate for this kind of experimental approach to historical research. One of them was its very concreteness and economy of resources. Another one is its stunning, even revolting character, and the consequences it had for, and the traces it left in the bodies of the artist, the public and even the social sphere.

We do not want to make an exhaustive introduction to what happened on that cold December night, since we want to let the voices of the people who were there being heard. Many different kinds of narratives have arisen from our research, which has just began. What we would like to show here are the preliminary results of a work made along three months without any kind of financial support. It included conventional methodologies (organising interviews, visiting archives, deciphering photos and texts) as well as some not-so-common operations, like the one in which we got to know at least the name of the butcher who assisted Franc Purg in his action. We avoid making conclusions or analyse results at this stage of our investigation.

This project and this exhibition was supported by numerous persons and relied on the generous help of many people. We can not forget to mention here: Barbara Borčič, Betina Habjanič, Tisa Neža Herlec, Kapelica Gallery, Kocmur family, Lasić family, Yasmin Martin Vodopivec, Sanja Moravec, Tadej Pogačar, Franc Purg, SCCA-Ljubljana, Igor Španjol, Henrike Von Dewitz, Matías Zemljič and all the persons who accepted to be interviewed by us and let us show their testimonies here.

Tatiana Kocmur & Francisco Tomsich

Description and credits of the exhibition *Rdeče Niti: Where is the line?*



Se pravi, "kje je meja?"



je ta zadeva celo večji vtis pustila,

Two frames from *Rdeče niti: Ivan*. Video; B&W, silent, subtitles, 8'61' (loop), 2018. Fragments of an interview with one assistant to the performance *Where is the Line?* (1998)



7) Poem sent by email by an anonymous assistant to *Where is the Line?* as an answer to the question "What happened that night of December 1998 when Franc Purg made his performance *Where is the Line?*" Print on self-adhesive paper, A2.

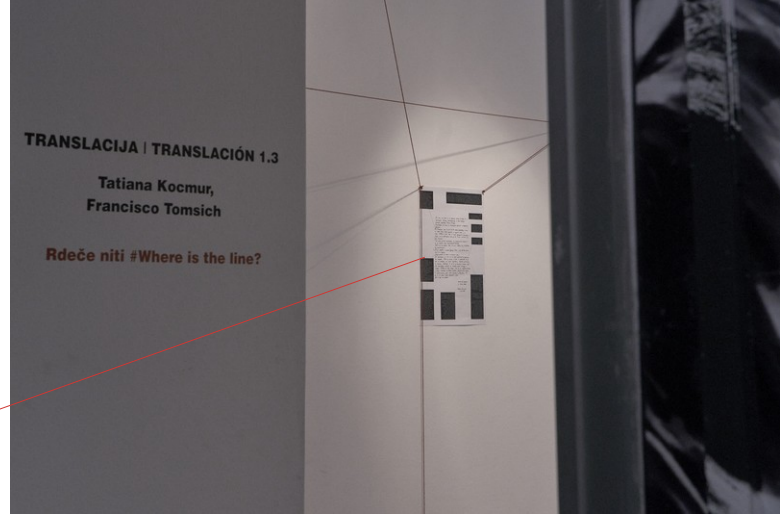
pojedina.
sem vegetarijanka.
gledam ljudi, ki se bašejo za mizo.
nekateri malo zadržano, drugi full-on.
meso vseh vrst in barvnih palet zgleda dekorativno.
ob hrani veselo kramljajo.
povabljeni v drugo sobo.
vidim tele in vem, kaj bo.
zagledam nekoga, kako steče ven držeč se za usta,
ko teletu prerežejo vrat.
ne vem zakaj me ni presenetilo,
meni je samo hudo za vse tiste klobase
in ljudi, ki ne pomislijo, od kod prihajajo.
všeč mi je bilo, da se franca purga ne spomnim.
kot da ni bil sploh prisoten na dogodku.
performativnost brez avtorja v centru, to je to.

9. april. 2018

8) *Rdeče niti: Jurij*. Video: colour, sound, 1'61 (loop), on cell phone, headphones. Fragment of an interview with one assistant to the performance *Where is the Line?* (1998). A3-print of a digitally intervened photo of a catalogue reproduction of a photo from the original performance



9) A3-print reproducing a hand-written text by Tatiana Kocmur in which she recalls the interview made in 2018 with Mojca, one assistant to the performance *Where is the Line?* (1998). These remembrances of Mojca's remembrances are afterwards surrounded by actual fragments of the interview which contradict or confirm the interviewer's memory. The hand-written text shows corrections of the used Slovene language made directly on the print by a third hand.



10) *Artist's statement.* The same statement about the performance *Where is the Line?*, written by Franc, its author, is displayed as a printed text and as sound (MP3 player, headphones) together with a photo of the artist taken from his website.



11) *All butchers come from Celje.* Digital film; sound, colour, subtitles, 18'42' (loop) on projector. Documentary road film made by Matías Zemljič on the trip made by Tatiana Kocmur, Francisco Tomsich, Henrike von Dewitz (photography) and himself to North-Eastern Slovenia in the search of the butcher who assisted Franc Purg in his performance *Where is the Line?* (1998). The artists had nothing to help them on the research but the location of the restaurant where Franc Purg met the butcher for the first time and some photos included in the catalogue *The Second Explosion - the 90's / Druga eksplozija - 90. leta* (P.A.R.A.S.I.T.E., Ljubljana, 2016).

12) *Jernej.* A3-print depicting three photos and fragments of an interview made with one assistant to the performance *Where is the Line?* (1998)



The only indication we could get
is this restaurant.



I know exactly where he lives.



No, I really don't want to do it.

Frames from *All butchers come from Celje*. Digital film;
sound, colour, subtitles, 18'42'. Matías
Zemljič/Traslacija | Traslación, 2018.

Najprej so se zgodila zaprta vrata, kar je neobičajno za otvoritev razstave.

Mislil da se je razstava začela zvečer. Bila je tema in mislim da je bilo to proti koncu decembra v tistem predprazničnem vzdušju, ki je bilo prav za prav v času obilja

Tle je bil začetek konec običajne razstave.

...bilo je res obilje, bilo je res vina.

...in nihče ni vedel kaj se dogaja, kaj je za tem.

Tudi vabilo k razstavi ni nakazovalo.

In ta gostija je trajala in trajala in ljudje so še kar prihajali in bilo je veselo in sproščeno.

Vse dokler ni prišlo do vabila avtorja, da se pridružimo, zapustimo ta prostor in gremo sem, kjer se je dogajal dejanski performans, razstava.

Nekateri so panično tekli ven drugi so se držali za usta, da bojo zdaj zdaj bruhal.

Ampak jaz mislim da tisti pok ni bil tako tragičen, da vse drugo se je dogajalo kasneje.

Mislil da nas je na koncu tam ostalo zelo malo...

Sem šel domov. Na razstavo sem prišel z vlakom iz Kopra. Nazaj sem šel s kolegom, z avtom. Mislim, da sva bila kar nekaj časa v tišini, brez komuniciranja, tišina, konec.

Mlado tele je postalo kadaver.

Mislil, da ima ta razstava sporočilno vrednost

...če bi ta performans mogoče prestavili v neko ne urbanem okolje, na deželo, bi to čisto drugače sprejelo, bi rekel med navednicami bolj naravno.

Se mi zdi da ko sem stal v tej sobi, vsaka noga je imela eno tono, nisem se mogel premakniti, sem ždel tam notri in opazoval in gledal in poskušal razumet kaj se dogaja.

Znirnivo, kaj ostane, kateri delčki ostanejo, kateri obrazi ostanejo, čeprav so takšni porcelanasti, prebledeli in pa recimo salama medvedka... ja no.medvedkova glava, notri oči, prvič videl v življenju.





15) *Rdeče niti: Simon*. Video; colour, sound, 13'19'00' (loop), 2018. Interview with one assistant to the performance *Where is the Line?* (1998)

13) *Polaroids*. A4 colour print. Portraits of two women interviewed by Translacija | Traslación intervened with fragments of the hand-written notes taken by Tatiana Kocmur during the interviews.

14) *When I saw that video...* GIF animation on computer. A 26-words casual statement made by a person who saw the video documentation on *Where is the Line?* exhibited in another exhibition is animated over 27 frames taken from a copy of that video, property of the National Museum of Slovenia.

KAJ SE JE ZGODILO NA DECEMBERSKI NOČI
LETA 1998, KO JE F.F. PREDSTAVIL SVOJE DELO?

dramaturgija / vprašanja



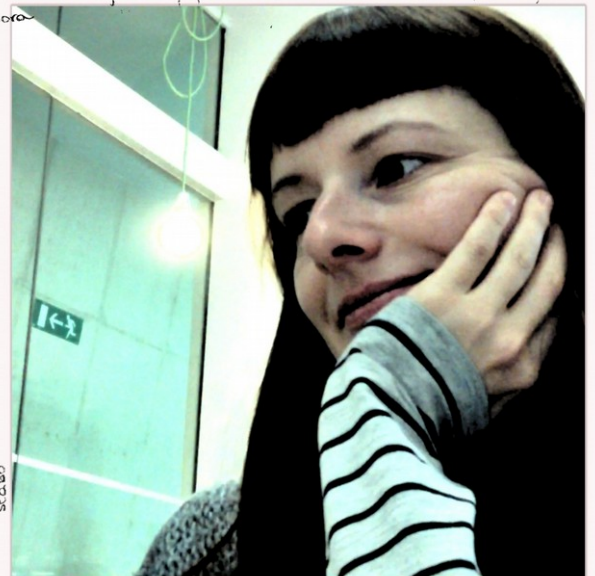
Božidar Zrnstič, J. Krpan, Z. Badovinac

čarovni okruski
občutek je ostal in prostorska
situacija
nisem vedela kaj se bo zgodilo
takrat se še nisimo pogovarjali o
tem kaj se dogaja

EU regulira trg mesa - v klanicah ne
več v kmetijah - populizma industrial.
umora

luda averzija
požrtija

omizje
Santé je mu sp ljubilo
in živos



po pripovedovanjih
ni zgodil performansa
prepoznavanje obrazov art scene
fotograf mladine

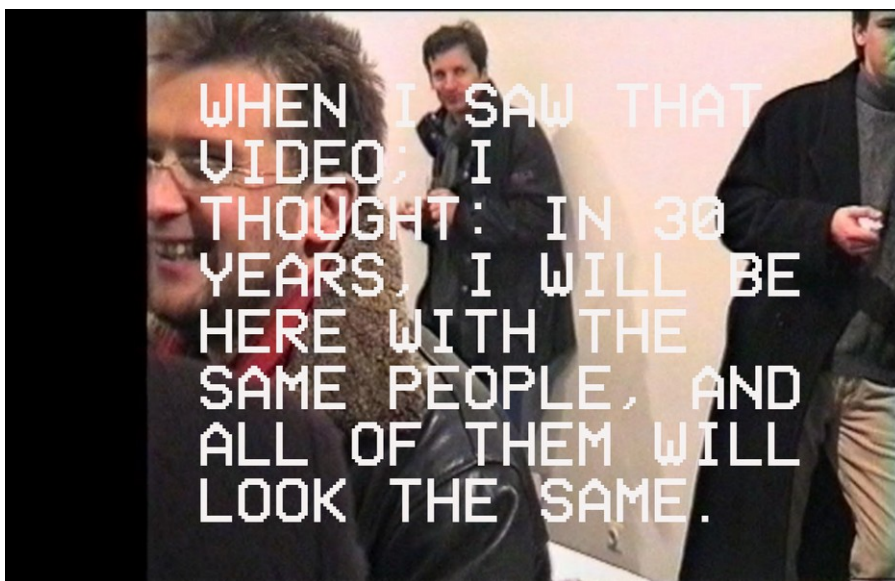
iz vidike etike mi ni sporen / izpostavljen
etične odnose / katarzično dejanje /
v 90. bolj sprejeto / danes težje
F. posthumanistično gleda na svet
učinek empatije



WHEN I SAW THAT
VIDEO; I
THOUGHT: IN 30
YEARS, I WILL BE
HERE



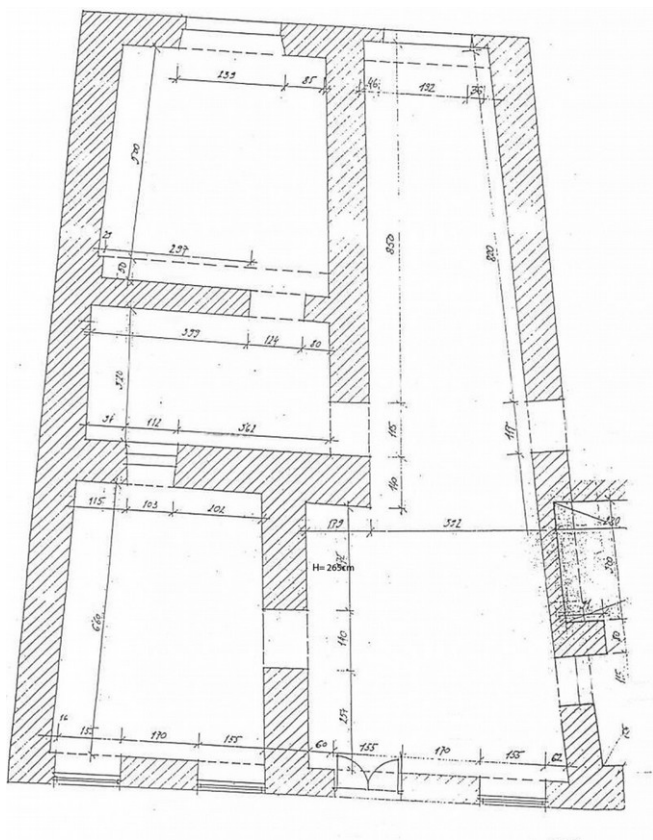
WHEN I SAW THAT
VIDEO; I
THOUGHT: IN 30
YEARS, I WILL BE
HERE WITH THE
SAME PEOPLE, AND
ALL OF THEM WILL
LOOK THE SAME.



Frames of *When I saw that video...* GIF animation, 2018.



Rdeče niti: Simon. Video;
colour, sound, 13'19'00',
2018.



16) Interviewed assistants to the performance *Where is the line?* were asked to fill A3-prints of ŠKUC gallery's floorplans, depicting where objects and devices were situated that night of 1998, and the direction of actions and movements. We showed five of these drawings at the floor of Rampa/Lab, linking them to their authors' statements, portraits or registries.

Tatiana Kocmur and Francisco Tomsich, 2018

Photos of the exhibition: Tomáš Šantl