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SHOWCASE OF INNOVATION IN BUILDING AUDIENCES FOR ARTISTIC EVENTS Third Belgrade's Interventions in Community and Space of Savamala pertaining to the Urban Incubator: Belgrade Project

by:

Sandra Stojanović

Supervisor:
Silvija Ještrović, PhD

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ABSTRACT

As a transitional country for over ten years now, Serbia has phased many challenges in adjusting its infrastructure. Social changes that were introduced or envisioned are simply not possible without reformation of communities' value systems and culture. One of the symptoms both deterioration of previous infrastructure and systems, and troubles with establishing new ones, is reflected in the cultural activity of citizens. Contemporary visual art events are maybe one of the most obvious examples of issues in audience development and communication in the cultural sector of Serbia. Galleries and cultural centres mainly choose to present visual art through traditional formats such as exhibition, and the core audience of such events are friends and families of the artists exhibiting. Research shows that only 5,4% of Serbian society falls under the category of passive visual arts audience (Mihaljinac 2011). The main reasons behind such low interest of general population in contemporary artwork lies in the lack of education about even the basic visual codes and languages, as well as the inability of artists and cultural workers to communicate artwork properly.

Extent and quality of contribution in audience building in post-modern art are important issues, yet rarely analysed in conditions of transitional Serbia. If we take into account the negative impact of almost non-existent art market and outdated art education, relevance of any initiative trying to break away from the ineffective set of widely used practices immediately becomes obvious. In Third Belgrade's vision, developing audiences is inseparable from the actual artwork. Third Belgrade is a physical and mental space; group of contemporary visual artists from Belgrade and a certain strategy of artistic behaviour in post-socialist Serbia. The physical space is embodied in a Gallery, situated on the left bank side of the Danube River. This part of the city is often referred to as *the Third Belgrade* (*the First Belgrade* being the old city centre, and *Second* – typically socialist New Belgrade). The group and Gallery were symbolically named after the area, and are a part of an attempt to establish a utopia for art production and consumption. The group is currently struggling with the question of '*Who are we doing art for?*'. Additionally, Third Belgrade is involved in the Goethe institute's trial project called Urban Incubator: Belgrade, where their programme is organised under the *We also love the art of others* mantra. The project's aim is to explore possible ways of revitalising Savamala, while actively

engaging the community. Bearing in mind that galleries have an immediate approach and potential to catalyse (social) change, Third Belgrade's programme in the Osmica Gallery in Savamala as part of *We also love the art of others* tries to deal with the huge discrepancies between artistic production, experience and consuming. Essentially, through events such as Savamala ArtSample talks with young artists, a range of intertwining curated exhibitions, artist in residence programmes, volunteers' autonomous projects etc, concepts are drawn from contextualised problems in Savamala as a solid ground for establishing a relationship with the community. Third Belgrade feels that the **most sustainable way to attract, develop and preserve audience for art events is to integrate a context-based artistic dialogue into community's identity and everyday life.** Furthermore, apart from high quality artwork and opportunity to engage in artistic activities, Third Belgrade holds that the basis of audience building is inherently a distinct collective vision. As the UiB projects' vision is lacking in many ways, and the project as such fails to live up to its full potential, we ought to acknowledge that this has an effect on Third Belgrade's overall contribution and impact in Savamala. However, UiB project will revisit its position in Savamala after the trial period ending in November 2013, and will inevitably have to recognise that its format and activities so far present a bit of a paradox in the already paradoxical environment such as Savamala. **Even so, given the circumstances, Third Belgrade did a series of significant events and interventions, and more importantly - started a number of processes.** By and large, the *We also love the art of others* programme is rather diverse; from carefully planned and interconnected exhibitions, to talks and performance workshops, all the way to exposing high quality artists from different environments and backgrounds to Savamala, Serbian art scene and audience; and vice versa. Third Belgrade's relative aesthetics makes way for **principles of inclusion and accessibility in production, selection and presentation of artwork.** As a result, the audience for events is steadily growing: individuals often choose to come back and attend other events, which is a sign of a more sustainable relationship. The fact remains that visibility, scale and other aspects of events in Savamala could improve further. Nonetheless, Third Belgrade's genesis and activity pertaining to *We also love the art of others* as a relative innovation and success. They are good example of highly contextualised, yet at the same time rather universal approach to communicating visual art and reaching out quite effectively.

RÉSUMÉ

PROBLEMATIQUE

Le mémoire de maîtrise a dans le centre d'intérêt les idées innovantes et les manières possibles du développement du public de l'art visuel contemporain. Dans le but de concrétiser et d'analyser en détails des mécanismes nouveaux et créatifs, on travaille sur l'exemple de l'Association indépendante artistique Troisième Belgrade (ci-après Troisième Belgrade). Du mars au novembre 2013 Troisième Belgrade est inclus dans la phase expérimentale du projet de l'Institut Goethe à Belgrade, intitulé Incubateur Urbain : Belgrade.

Le projet a pour le but d'examiner les possibilités de la redéfinition de l'identité de Savamala, une des parties les plus négligées de Belgrade, qui incarne largement les discours historiques et politiques en Serbie pendant le 19^e, le 20^e et le 21^e siècle. Le mémoire ne traitera pas le projet entier de l'Incubateur Urbain qui regroupe plus de neuf organisations partenaires de l'Europe, mais seulement le programme de Troisième Belgrade qui s'appelle « *On aime l'art des autres aussi* ». En ce moment une demie de toutes les activités prévues est déjà réalisée, alors qu'on traitera les autres comme les idées pour l'augmentation de l'intérêt pour l'art visuel contemporain.

Troisième Belgrade est un groupe des artistes très intéressant, radicalement extraordinaire dans sa recherche de l'utopie. Le groupe est fait de neuf artistes de l'âge, l'intérêt et le domaine du travail différent. D'un côté, Troisième Belgrade représente l'espace mental pour la considération et la coopération artistique, mais aussi un espace physique – la galerie sur la rive gauche inhabitée du Danube, sur la route de Krnjaca. J'ai devenu personnellement le membre du groupe au début de l'année 2013 avec le désir d'améliorer mes compétences artistiques et gestionnaires. C'est un moment très intéressant étant donné que Savamala, de même que Troisième Belgrade ont la tendance de se redéfinir. Le thème comment atteindre plus des gens et communiquer l'art d'une manière plus efficace est dans le centre d'intérêt du groupe depuis la création artistique *Le grand rêve*. Avec cette création qui est la marque typique de Troisième Belgrade on a identifié les problèmes dans la communication avec le public en Serbie, ensuite il nous a servi de

catalyseur des changements au sein du groupe vers la fin de l'année 2012. Une question s'est imposée : « Pour qui fait-on tout cela ? »

Il est indéniable que la nature et la qualité des efforts dans le développement du public dans l'art postmoderne relatif sont les aspects très importants, mais très rarement analysés en Serbie en transition. A travers l'examen des relations dans le triangle public – artiste – contexte, le but est de rapprocher les mécanismes réussis de la création artistique et la consommation. L'espace des galeries en tant que le forum (physique) des activités de Troisième Belgrade représente un aspect primordial dans la stratégie pour le développement du public. En général, les galeries sont les espaces idéaux pour l'analyse des procès de la création d'une exposition, suivie du mappage des problèmes de la scène artistique ainsi que le développement d'une stratégie efficace qui pourra résoudre ces problèmes. Quelques uns des exemples qui supportent cette affirmation sont le Centre Culturel des Etudiants des années soixante-dix et la Galerie Remont récemment. Leur rôle dans la facilitation des changements pragmatiques des discours en Serbie est indéniable¹. Compte tenu que le Musée d'art contemporain est fermé depuis des années, l'intérêt pour l'examen des galeries en tant que les endroits importants pour l'art contemporain en Serbie vient naturellement. Selon la recherche de l'Institut de l'examen du développement culturel², la fréquentation des activités culturelles traditionnellement comprises (par exemple le théâtre, les galeries artistiques et les musées, les bibliothèques etc.) ou l'engagement (amateur ou professionnel) concerne un tiers de la population totale en Serbie³. Seulement dans 5,2% de ces cas les individus préfèrent aller dans une galerie ou un musée. Parmi eux, vers 10% « visite » vraiment les expositions. Les individus entre 25 et 50 ans sont plus souvent les visiteurs des expositions, alors que les élèves et les étudiants, de même que les citoyens plus âgés s'y décident rarement.

Il existe des fluctuations apparentes du public par rapport au fait s'ils habitent en ville ou à la campagne, même par rapport aux régions de la Serbie. Une des conclusions importantes de cette

¹ Mihaljinac, N. (2011) Les formes de la gestion des galeries - le fonctionnement de la scène de l'art visuel contemporain en Serbie. La thèse de diplôme soutenue à la Faculté des arts de la scène de l'Université des Arts: Belgrade, page 8

² Lazarevic, A. (2011) L'Institut de l'examen du développement culturel: Belgrade, page 13-14
[<http://www.zaprokul.org.rs/Media/Document/71f7f39c1a9c4fb5b60eebdd984d98b2.pdf>]

³ Lazarevic, A. (2011) L'Institut de l'examen du développement culturel: Belgrade, page 13-14

étude est le fait que les citoyens d’habitude ne sont pas instruits sur l’art (contemporain) et que selon le goût ils préfèrent un art figuratif et réaliste aux formes plus abstraites modernes.

Ce mélange même des contextes et des besoins en ce moment est la raison de l’analyse de l’action de Troisième Belgrade à Savamala. Le mémoire traite :

- Les activités de Troisième Belgrade avec le but de comprendre tous les niveaux du phénomène à Savamala
- Les interventions et les évènements visés à lier les concepts artistiques modernes avec un public plus large
- Organisation des expositions des artistes choisis qui se sont inspirés d’un des aspects de Savamala

Dans le cadre du mémoire, le grand nombre des recherches déjà conduites et des considérations des manières pour développer le public a été consulté, tels que : *Kultura – menadžment, animacija, marketing (Dragićević Šešić et Stojković 2007)*, *Imagining the Audience: Viewing positions in artistic and curatorial practice (Malm & Wik 2012)*, *Oblici galerijskog menadžmenta – funkcionisanje savremene scene vizuelne umetnosti u Srbiji (Mihaljinac 2011)*, *A Place for Stories: Nature, History and Narrative (Cronon 1992)*, *Urban Interventions, Personal Projects in Public Spaces (Klanten & Huebner 2010)*, *Ideology of an Exhibition: About Ideologies of Manifesta (Šuvaković 2002)* etc. Afin de mieux analyser, les sources secondaires telles que l’examen du public de galeries seront complétées avec une série des données d’évaluation et des rapports de Troisième Belgrade au sein du projet Incubateur Urbain : Belgrade.

LES ACTIVITES DE TROISIEME BELGRADE A SAVAMALA

A la question : « Quel est le moyen le plus efficace de la communication avec le but d’élargir le public et d’avoir une expérience artistique de meilleure qualité ? » Troisième Belgrade a répondu avec une série des activités à Savamala, telles que : Savamala ArtSample les entretiens avec de jeunes artistes, un nombre des expositions guidées et des interventions qui s’enchâînent, des programmes résidentiels, des projets individuels des volontaires de Troisième Belgrade etc.

- a) *Savamala ArtSample: Les entretiens avec de jeunes artistes*

Dans le cadre de l'analyse du public de l'art visuel contemporain en Serbie, une place considérable parmi les obstacles d'une expérience de bonne qualité détient le manque de connaissance sur l'art (Mihaljinac 2011). Ensuite, non seulement le public est-il relativement non-instruit, mais les artistes n'ont pas de compétences de base pour la communication et la présentation de leur œuvre. Dans de nombreux cas l'artiste de même que les œuvres sont presque complètement autoréférentiel, autistiques et exclusifs. Le manque de compréhension de l'expression artistique aggrave le conflit dans le triangle *artiste – public – projet d'art*. De même, la possibilité de la création d'une relation à long terme au moyen de l'identification, de l'engagement personnel et enfin de l'intérêt même pour l'art en général est en diminution.

Afin d'augmenter le niveau de la connaissance des concepts et des expressions de l'art contemporain, Troisième Belgrade organise chaque mois des conversations avec un couple choisi de jeunes artistes, sous le titre *Savamala ArtSample*. Savamala ArtSample entretiens consistent en deux parties : une courte conférence de la part des artistes sur leurs influences artistiques et théoriques et ensuite la discussion avec le public. La préparation pour les discussions se déroule en trois étapes avec le modérateur. La partie du modérateur dépend des besoins de jeunes artistes. **Comme notre compréhension du monde est enracinée dans la langue et l'articulation linguistique des choses que l'on observe, il y a une nécessité de parler de l'art dans la forme référentielle. En demandant les artistes de se rappeler leurs influences, le modérateur les fait examiner ce qui importe vraiment pour eux dans l'art et pourquoi.**

L'artiste se rappelle aussi qu'il est aussi parfois le public et l'admirateur de l'art. La majorité des artistes qui ont été jusqu'ici appelés de se présenter sont rarement ou jamais au centre de l'attention au sein d'un événement public. De même, le public n'a presque pas l'occasion d'être en interaction directe avec eux. En tenant compte de cela, les entretiens Savamala ArtSample n'ont pas seulement le rôle éducatif, mais servent aussi pour la validation du talent et l'affirmation de la pratique artistique de bonne qualité dans les phases débutantes de la création. Le titre même implique « sampling » ou la prise des exemples du contexte de la scène artistique actuelle *qu'aiment* les membres de Troisième Belgrade.

Troisième Belgrade croit qu'il est possible d'établir de bons mécanismes et les systèmes de valeur sur la scène artistique de la Serbie en transition uniquement au moyen des échanges et du support mutuel. A travers les exposés sur le travail artistique et le contexte de la création, le public obtient l'opportunité d'entendre des autres artistes intéressants et de découvrir les niveaux des concepts qu'étudient les artistes qui font l'exposition. Il est évident que dans la majorité des cas les essais des jeunes artistes passent inaperçus ou qu'ils ne sont pas aperçus suffisamment par rapport à l'effort qu'ils y ont mis. Pour résoudre le problème de la distance entre les jeunes artistes et le public, les jeunes artistes s'exposent dans ces entretiens aux perspectives différentes de la part du public, et le public obtient la possibilité d'écouter et discuter sur l'art directement.

De même, les artistes qui exposent ont l'opportunité de répondre à la conversation et aux questions posées avec une exposition dans la Galerie de Troisième Belgrade au bord du Danube dans le délai d'un an. Ensuite, en liant les entretiens ArtSample et le programme des expositions de la Galerie de Troisième Belgrade, on obtient l'impression d'une continuité et d'une cohérence des activités de Troisième Belgrade : deux espaces physiques de Troisième Belgrade sont liés de manière explicite au sein de l'espace mental.

Jusqu'à présent, les couples des artistes qui ont participé aux entretiens sont : Ana Banduka et Ksenija Jovisevic, Jovana Vasic et Lidija Delic, Boris Sribar et Marina Markovic, et Anastasia Tasic et Bojana Atlja.

Etant donné que les entretiens se déroulent les samedi soir, ils ne sont pas en désaccord avec les horaires de travail de la plupart de la population active. De même, les annonces vidéo avec les sous-titres en anglais se sont avérées comme un élément d'inclusion ; jusqu'à présent les annonces pour les entretiens ont été vues par quelque milles des gens. Les entretiens entiers sont également enregistrés et sont maintenant en postproduction qui se déroule lentement, d'une manière relative. Un des partenaires internationaux de Troisième Belgrade - Creative Carbon à Glasgow (Ecosse), a lancé récemment sa série des entretiens ArtSample à l'instar de ceux à Savamala. L'idée est d'élargir les réseaux des entretiens le plus possible et que l'on forme une chaîne Youtube avec tous les entretiens enregistrés. Le côté positif est qu'à Savamala, sauf dans le cas du deuxième entretien, le nombre des participants augmente est varie entre 17 et 51. Tous

les groupes d'âge sont présentés dans le public sauf ceux qui ont moins de 18 ans. On a noté l'augmentation du nombre des habitants de Savamala et des individus dont la profession n'est pas de nature artistique, ainsi que le nombre de plus en plus réduit de ceux qui connaissent les artistes en personne.

b) Les expositions guidées et interventions

Une grande partie du programme *On aime l'art des autres aussi* (et des activités de Troisième Belgrade en général) est consacré à la présentation des pratiques artistiques à travers les expositions et les interventions. Tous les projets individuels sont choisis attentivement ; ensuite, les projets au sein du programme communiquent entre eux dans une certaine mesure. **La conception de l'exposition suit un certain cours sous la forme de la recherche artistique rythmique de Savamala au sein des concepts espace – son – sentiment (une émotion évoquée). La nature lisible et le discours clair contribuent que l'esthétique de Troisième Belgrade soit communiquée d'une manière explicite.** Troisième Belgrade et les artistes « dont l'art ils aiment » projettent le visiteur pour créer une expérience sensorielle et mentale, et dans de nombreux cas les œuvres n'existent même pas sans la contribution du visiteur.

Le programme *On aime l'art des autres* est ouvert avec une performance en groupe de l'esthétique relative intitulé *Common Dinning Table* où les habitants de Savamala et les artistes ont été invité d'apporter la boisson et la nourriture et de prendre part à un festin commun. Par ce début, Troisième Belgrade a enchaîné le projet à Savamala à son esthétique précédente et à sa stratégie artistique. La performance *Une ligne pour Savamala* a examiné en outre le concept de la continuité, par rapport à la genèse actuelle de Savamala. Une série des expositions telles que *Reposition* de Vuk Ninkovic, *Point, virgule* de Bojana Atlija et Marko Basic, *Le paysage psychogéographique de la banlieue dans le centre de la ville* du groupe diSTRUKTURA, même *Le paysage paradoxal* deMagali Sanheire ont touché au thème de positionnement de Savamala, mais aussi de l'artiste et le potentiel créatif dans le paradoxe du lieu donné. En même temps, les interventions telles que *Je ne suis pas mon corps* avaient lieu dans l'espace public avec l'intention d'examiner les bases éthiques pour la transformation de Savamala. Ensuite, la maison rom de Branislav Nikolic est en train de valider la culture de la commune rom négligée dans Bara Venecija, en l'incluant en même temps en tant qu'un auteur égal.

Au sein du programme *On aime l'art des autres*, tous les projets d'art conçus ont tendance de s'inspirer des niveaux du contexte de Savamala et d'approcher le visiteur moins comme un observateur, et plus comme un participant actif.

c) *Artistes au séjour résidentiel: Magali Sanheira (FR) et Marlène Hausegger (AT)*

Troisième Belgrade prête beaucoup d'attention à la coopération internationale et aux échanges avec les organisations, les individus et les institutions à l'étranger. Au moyen des partenariats et les séjours résidentiels, le groupe à jusqu'à présent réussi à amener en Serbie des chercheurs et des artistes de qualité, et à permettre à un nombre des artistes de Serbie le séjour résidentiel en Autriche, Allemagne, et Slovénie. Quelques uns des exemples des individuels et des collectifs qui ont séjourné et travaillé un certain temps en Serbie incluent la chercheuse Ursula Kisling (SE), le collectif Ginger Society (CH), les représentants dans le pavillon russe de la Biennale de Venise en 2011 - *Collective Actions etc.*

La dynamique et le profil des séjours résidentiels se sont avérés jusqu'à présent assez inspirateurs pour Troisième Belgrade ; non seulement le groupe permet-il la base logistique du séjour résidentiel, mais aussi entre en dialogue artistique avec les artistes et les chercheurs invités. Le format des séjours résidentiels fonctionne aussi dans le cadre du projet à Savamala. Avec l'inclusion des artistes de qualité et leur exposition au nouveau contexte, c'est-à-dire Savamala, on a entamé une genèse des projets intéressants avec une perspective différente. Parmi eux, les plus intéressants sont *Paradox Lanscap*, l'exposition inspirée par les entrelacements historiques et culturels paradoxales de la France, Allemagne et Serbie, ou plus précisément Savamala de l'artiste Sanheira (FR) et la recherche de la conception dans le cadre du programme *On aime l'art des autres aussi* menée actuellement par Marlène Hausegger (AT).

d) *Les projets choisis individuels des bénévoles de Troisième Belgrade*

Troisième Belgrade a pour la première fois cette année engagé les bénévoles pour les besoins du projet Incubateur Urbain : Belgrade. Jusqu'à présent, on a inclus 5 bénévoles pour une durée de trois à six mois avec le but de faire référence aux aspects positifs du bénévolat à travers l'histoire, tels que les lancements des réformes sociales et la philanthropie, contrairement aux tendances actuelles au sein desquelles les individuels font du bénévolat à cause du désespoir

faute de l'emploi permanent. Les membres de Troisième Belgrade servent des mentors aux bénévoles pendant leur travail. De même, au début on a décidé que les bénévoles seraient choisis selon leurs compétences d'effectuer non seulement les tâches opératives et administratives, mais aussi à travers les discussions et les propositions des idées pour les actions à venir. En accord avec cela, Troisième Belgrade soutient fermement les projets individuels de ses bénévoles. Comme chacun des bénévoles a une perspective et des intérêts différents, jusqu'à présent ils ont réalisé les évènements qui introduisent une différence supplémentaire au programme de Troisième Belgrade et ainsi ils ont réussi à attirer une nouvelle démographie des intéressés à la participation. Cela engendre le sentiment du soutien et l'encouragement des bénévoles, comme le montrent leurs rapports des travaux pratiques. Quelques-uns des projets que Troisième Belgrade à aidés sont *Viewpoints performance workshops* Lori Baldwin, *Boats: Spaces of Imagination* de Valentina Brkovic et *Savamala Le musée de l'art contemporain de Slavica Obradovic.*

CONCLUSION

Troisième Belgrade croit que la manière la plus tenable de l'attraction, du développement et de la relation de long terme avec le public des évènements artistiques est l'intégration du dialogue artistique dans la commune locale et dans la vie quotidienne, comme dans l'exemple du programme On aime l'art des autres aussi, au sein du projet Incubateur Urbain : Belgrade à Savamala.

Etant donné qu'elle représente la matérialisation urbanistique de l'histoire et de la politique de la Serbie moderne, elle donne beaucoup de contextes complexes auxquels elle peut s'enchaîner et sur lesquels elle peut travailler. Il est tout à fait naturel que cette partie de la ville a réussi d'attirer un grand intérêt dans les années précédentes. Cependant, on doit être conscient des dangers qui guettent à cause de la présence de Troisième Belgrade dans cette région. Justement parce que Savamala est à présent dans le centre d'attention, on peut même dire – en mode, le groupe rencontre beaucoup de défis en essayant de maintenir l'intégrité et le discours positif. Un des aspects primordiaux de l'engagement de Troisième Belgrade à Savamala et dans le projet Incubateur Urbain est de nature étique ; comment résister au processus négatif de l'identification

et par conséquent – comment ne pas nuire à l'image de Troisième Belgrade. Même si évidemment le programme *On aime l'art des autres aussi* sert à tester la stratégie pour la redéfinition de Troisième Belgrade, il représente aussi un abus de ce qui a été fait auparavant, et donc la possibilité du développement du risque en même temps.

C'est évident que les espaces physiques de la Galerie Huit et de la Galerie de Troisième Belgrade sont très différentes selon leurs caractéristiques et selon leurs intentions. D'un côté, l'espace à Savamala peut être considéré comme une sorte de l'ambassade de Troisième Belgrade – une fenêtre vers le public. Et pourtant, sa visibilité, ou plus précisément la visibilité du projet Incubateur Urbain et de l'activité de Troisième Belgrade au sein de lui reste discutable.

Incubateur Urbain n'a pas dans sa phase expérimentale de coordination nécessaire, de vision et de cadres communs. Malgré tout cela, il faut avouer que le programme *On aime l'art des autres aussi* a une conception très variée ; on a conçu d'une manière attentive des expositions qui s'enchaînent et complètent entre eux, on a organisé les entretiens avec les artistes, des performances, des ateliers et des séjours résidentiels des artistes réussis etc.

Ensuite, l'esthétique relative de Troisième Belgrade compte sur les principes de l'inclusion et de l'accessibilité dans la production, sélection et la présentation de l'art (les exemples parfaits sont les performances « Common Dining Table » et « I am not my body »). Ayant à l'esprit la phase délicate dans la genèse de Troisième Belgrade, ainsi que l'environnement de l'Incubateur Urbain, on n'aurait pas tort si on considérait *On aime l'art des autres aussi* comme un succès. Comme on a autorisé l'utilisation de l'espace à Savamala au groupe pour une durée d'au moins deux ans, certaines des recommandations pour l'amélioration supplémentaire des activités de Troisième Belgrade et de l'influence dans le développement du public pour l'art visuel contemporain sont :

- les programmes pour les jeunes (au-dessous de 18 ans)
- plus d'interactions avec la communauté locale à Savamala
- une meilleure postproduction des entretiens Savamala ArtSample
- un possible élargissement des entretiens Savamala ArtSample aux thèmes au sein de la théorie de l'art, de la recherche, de la politique culturelle etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

This master thesis aims at analysing innovative ideas and possible ways of building contemporary visual arts audiences. For the purpose, plans and activities of the Independent Artistic Association Third Belgrade (Third Belgrade) will be taken into account. Conveniently, from March until November 2013, Third Belgrade will partake in a trial project initiated by the Goethe Institute called Urban Incubator: Belgrade (UiB). The project is set to examine possible ways of re-inventing identity of Savamala, one of the most deprived districts of Belgrade which, as often pointed out, embodies a rather accurate testament of national political discourse changes and their (physical) manifestation on urban infrastructure throughout 19th, 20th and 21st century. While the thesis might at times only touch upon the general strategy of the UiB, it will not, however, be dealing with the analyses of the entire project and its numerous activities as such. The focus is on either up-and-running or planned activities that Third Belgrade believes can improve numbers and quality of the general public's participation in contemporary art events. Roughly one half of the planned activities in the domain of audience development has been implemented up to this point. Therefore, one part of the thesis comprises of, strictly speaking, *ideas* pertaining to Third Belgrade's communication with audience during the period of involvement in the UiB project.

At first, one could argue that looking into activities out of which some have not yet happened is uncalled for. In this case, however, I would beg to differ. The forum for Third Belgrade's actions at the UiB project, which is in its trial period, is fully open for experimentation. In other words, Third Belgrade has been entrusted with solid venue and funds but also strong partnerships and complete freedom to shape its approach to dealing with Savamala and the community. The fortunate combination of unrestrictive yet fully supportive environment gave way to organic creative process and, effectively, resulted in a spectrum of above average quality solutions very much worth looking into.

Furthermore, Third Belgrade is a compelling group of visual artist and radically unusual in its pursuit of utopia. As a phenomenon, it is highly relevant for the overall art scene in Serbia (and region) for several reasons which will be elaborated in the following Chapter. There are currently nine artists involved, vastly ranging in age and media they work in. The variety of interests and perspectives within the group is one of its strongest points. On one hand, Third Belgrade represents a mental space for artistic contemplation and cooperation, but also a physical - gallery space, at the left bank side of the Danube River. I personally joined the group earlier this year looking for opportunities to challenge both my artistic and managerial competence. So far, my engagement has perfectly complemented the academic knowledge gained through master courses in Painting and Cultural Policy and Management. Significantly, as the Project Manager, I have insight in UiB and the general discourse of Third Belgrade. Also, having joined relatively recently in comparison to other members, I believe that I have retained a level of objectivity when it comes to analysis of the group's output.

This is further relevant when we consider the fact that Third Belgrade has undergone a number of changes throughout 2012. The topic of reaching out to more people in a substantial way and more effectively communicating curated individual as well as group's artistic strategy is very close to the core of Third Belgrade attention since the artwork Big Dream. This artwork, a sort of a hallmark of all Third Belgrade's artistic activities, rapidly catalysed change in the late 2012 and onward. By re-questioning the stable yet closed utopian environment that was created at that point (a mini-utopia if you will), paradox at the core of utopia's definition became obvious. In the words of Lars Gustavsson, Swedish philosopher and writer:

*"What is characteristic for utopia is that it questions the existing society and societal relations by offering a counter proposal which concerns the society as a whole."*⁴

Therefore, utopia as an inclusive notion, crucial for Third Belgrade's mission, propelled a need to open up. Despite the fact that the pool of people who were considered regular visitors is relatively large when paired up to other galleries, it comprised mainly of other artists, cultural

⁴Gustavsson, L. (1985). *Utopije u Utopija*. Književnakritika: Beograd, pg. 100-120;

workers and “friends”. Soon enough, the priority of the group became breaking away from this practise. Albeit finding ways to reach out to wider audiences is a clear goal, the point was raised early on that this was not to be done by compromising group’s artistic integrity on the way.

The question of “*Who do we actually do this for?*” also made Third Belgrade re-visit other aspects of group’s mission. Some of the early plans included experimentation with creating a commune of artists working and living (?) together, and thereby setting an example or a model of how artists can *sustain* in the much troubled transitional Serbia. However, over time, the position of artists was mostly addressed in other ways. Group’s activity was mainly reflected in exhibiting selected high quality artwork by artists from both Serbia and abroad, networking, making authentic artwork as a solid group statement and providing residency programmes to daring artists and theoreticians interested in, broadly speaking, context of Serbian society and art scene. Through residencies, the conditions for creating quality artwork were tested and new perspectives introduced. So, during the search for an alternative model of life, one could say that new standards for professional conduct in creating and presenting contemporary artwork were established. While “utopia” still stands strong as a vision, more realistic and concrete steps were defined through actual activities. The group identified that re-organisation is in order, and scheduled the turning point for June 2014. Until then, Third Belgrade is to formulate the next steps by testing some of the options precisely through the UiB project.

Incidentally, Savamala district struggles to reinvent itself, too. The pioneering efforts of creative industries and initiatives like Mixer Festival and KC Grad are now complimented with yet another approach to art through the UiB project and Third Belgrade’s involvement. Pluralism in creative visions has so far only but helped in reaching out to more people and involving different demographics in cultural activities. In Third Belgrade’s vision, developing audiences is currently inseparable from the actual artwork. Thus, audience building makes a sensible choice of perspective for analysis of wider implications of group’s contributions to the art scene in Serbia and worldwide.

Indisputably, *extent* and *quality* of contribution in audience development in post-modern art are important issues, yet rarely analysed in conditions of transitional Serbia. Through examination of

the relationship triangle between audience, artists and context, the aim is to bring closer a showcase of fine mechanisms behind contemporary art creation and consumption. In other words, artistic rendering of specific issues in a distinct community and space of Savamala, that is said to in many ways mimic Serbian society as a whole, helps us realise the multi-faceted nature of our problems, and face up to them more effectively.

As indicated before, the most important reason for looking closely into Third Belgrade's activity as part of UiB is an interesting mixture of contexts and needs. Through the thesis, the following will be examined:

- Third Belgrade's activities that help understand Savamala as a phenomenon;
- Interventions and events aimed at connecting wider audiences and contemporary art concepts;
- Curated exhibitions of selected young artists who found their inspiration in various aspects of Savamala.

The analysis will focus on two things: inventiveness of activities put together by Third Belgrade and how suitable they are for problems they are set to address. For the purpose, a large body of theoretical work on contemporary art consumption and audience development will be considered, such as: *Culture – management, animation, marketing* (Dragićević Šešić & Stojković 2007), *Imagining the Audience: Viewing positions in artistic and curatorial practice* (Malm&Wik 2012), *Forms of gallery management – the functioning of the contemporary visual art scene in Serbia* (Mihaljinac 2011), *A Place for Stories: Nature, History and Narrative* (Cronon 1992), *Urban Interventions, Personal Projects in Public Spaces* (Klanten & Huebner 2010), *Ideology of an Exhibition: About Ideologies of Manifesta* (Šuvaković 2002) etc. In order to better define problems, secondary sources e.g. recent studies on gallery audiences and cultural habits of people in Serbia will be complimented with different sets of evaluation data and reports of Third Belgrade's activities pertaining to the UiB project.

1.1 Problem definition; A brief overview of contemporary visual art audiences and gallery management in Serbia

Gallery spaces, as Third Belgrade's (physical) forum for activities, represent a vital aspect of group's audience development strategy.

Museums and art galleries alike - through the vagaries of their development and evolution - are talked about in different context, serve different purposes on the whole and even have varied audience sets. However, it is not hard to see where the point of commonality lies between the two. In the traditional sense, both fulfil the essential task of 'exhibiting' an object and affirming an artwork as essentially art. This implies two things – firstly, there is a special space where cultural objects are displayed, and secondly, the space is also the entry-point for the audience to appropriate the object. At once, a nexus of objectification, exhibitionism and spectatorship is created. However, a significant difference between the two is the fact that galleries as a format are subjected to far more radical curatorial decisions, experimentation and, broadly speaking, interactions. The gallery spaces are ideal for exploring processes of creating exhibitions through mapping the problems of art scene and developing effective strategies as a response. Examples perfectly illustrating this point are the Student Cultural Centre (SKC) in the 70s and Gallery Remont more recently, whose role in facilitating paradigmatic shifts of the art discourse in Serbia are undisputable⁵.

Thus, since galleries represent important places for contemporary art, one is naturally curious about their "popularity" among wider audiences in the environment such as transitional Serbia. According to the research authorised by the Cultural Development Research Centre (Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvijka)⁶, participation in traditional cultural activities (e.g. theatre, art galleries and museums, concerts, libraries etc.) or engagement (amateur or professional)

⁵Mihaljinac, N. (2011). *Oblici galerijskog menadžmenta – funkcionalisanje scene savremene vizuelne umetnosti u Srbiji*. Diplomski radodbranjen na Fakultetu dramskih umetnosti Univerziteta u Beogradu, pg. 8.

⁶Lazarević, A. (2011). *Kulturne prakse građana Srbije*. Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvijka: Beograd. pg. 13-14 [<http://www.zaprokul.org.rs/Media/Document/71f7f39c1a9c4fb5b60eebdd984d98b2.pdf>];

concerns roughly one third of Serbia's overall population⁷. Among them, only in 5,2% of cases individuals stated that their preference is visiting art galleries and/or museums. Roughly 10% make an effort and actually "visit" art exhibitions. Individuals between 25 and 50 are far more likely to visit exhibitions, as opposed to elementary/high school/university students and older citizens. The visual arts audiences are also not equally dispersed across the country, meaning that there is a huge difference between countryside and urban areas. The discrepancies in amounts of audience in different cities exist, too: roughly 51% of subjects in Belgrade claimed they like visiting exhibitions, while in the cities of South-East region of Serbia the number was significantly lower (34%).

The word *visit* in the previous passage was intentionally put into quotation marks to hint the difference in the *quality of experience* and *effect*⁸ of an exhibition. The aforementioned research recognises four categories:

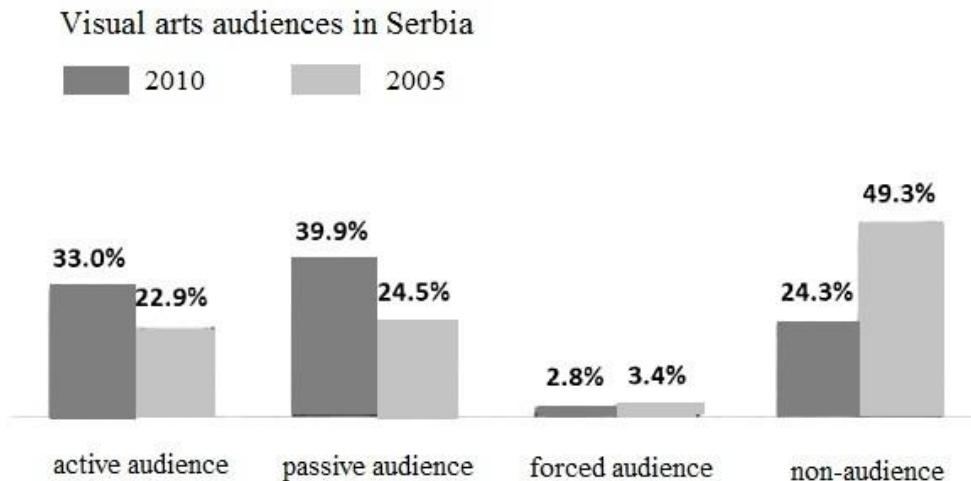
1. *Active audience* – likes to and is motivated to visit art exhibitions; has done so at least once the previous year;
2. *Potential / passive audience* - likes to and is motivated to visit art exhibitions; but for some reason has not done so at least once the previous year;
3. *Forced audience* – do not necessarily has a preference towards this type of cultural activity, however have visited at least one exhibition in the previous year;
4. *Non-audience* – has no interest in this type of cultural activity⁹.

For audience development purposes, particularly interesting are potential and forced audiences which are a likely pool of visitors to at one point engage more. In the following graph, statistic rendering of the four audience categories in 2005 and 2010 pertaining to visual arts are presented. What first becomes obvious is that there is an increase of active and potential audience numbers in 2010, and some declining of the forced and non-audience. In 2010, amounts of active (33%) and potential (39.9%) audience both surpass non-audience (24.3%).

⁷Lazarević, A. (2011). *KulturnepraksegrađanaSrbije*. Zavodzaproučavanjekulturnograzvitka: Beograd. pg. 100;

⁸DragićevićŠešić, M. (1998). *Publika*, ČasopisKultura, broj 97, pg.69;

⁹ See 4. pg. 24;



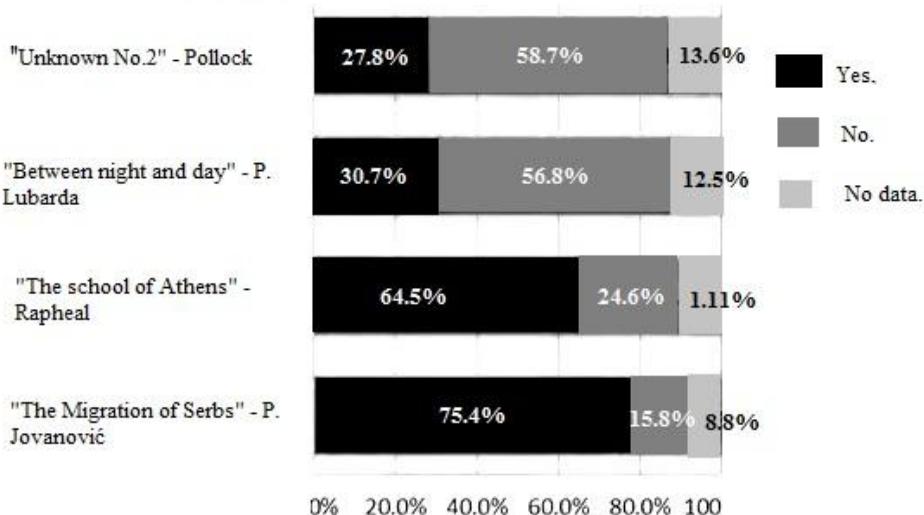
Graphic 1. Visual art audiences in Serbia in 2010 and 2005

However, when it comes to positive audience changes between years of 2005 and 2010, author made a remark that one should be vary of taking positive results for granted. Namely, cultural trends and societal patterns in habits and needs are always changing at a rather slower rate. The difference in percentage might be attributed to either underestimating cultural habits of population in 2005 or overestimating them in 2010 for the sake of positive image¹⁰.

Knowing how many people are projected to be likely to engage in exhibitions is important, yet for this thesis fixation on contemporary art audiences, the preferences in taste give us as a much clearer scan of the field. Fortunately, the research went further and tried to get a hold of general taste in visual arts among Serbian citizens. Subjects were presented with four different examples of artwork: Pollock's "Unknown No.2", Lubarda's "Between night and day", Raphael's "The school of Athens" and Paja Jovanović's "The Migration of Serbs". The question asked was simply: "Do you like this painting?".

¹⁰Lazarević, A. (2011). *Kulturne prakse građana Srbije*. Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvijanja: Beograd. pg. 29;

Do you like this panting? (Taste research)



Graphic 2. Research data on tastes in visual arts (Serbia, 2010)

The selected samples were meant to represent both traditional pieces i.e. renaissance and realism, and modern art forms i.e. abstract and colourist expressionism. Both national and international artworks were embodied. Results presented in the Graphic 2. clearly show far more inclination towards traditional artwork. Undoubtedly most popular among the samples was "The Migration of Serbs" by the early 20th century classical Serbian painter Paja Jovanović. The painting proved to be a preference to as many as 75.4% of subjects. Conversely, between 56.8% and 58.7% said that they did not like abstract pieces while only less than a third of subjects liked them¹¹. The figurative art proved convincingly more acceptable to wider public in Serbia.

Taste is a complex construct; factors like age, personality, education and experience of art have an influence on how an individual forms their taste in art¹². Pierre Bourdieu went further and asserted that class affiliations play a big role in determining the taste; working classes and individuals from rural regions seem to be inclined to assess art through its form, content and

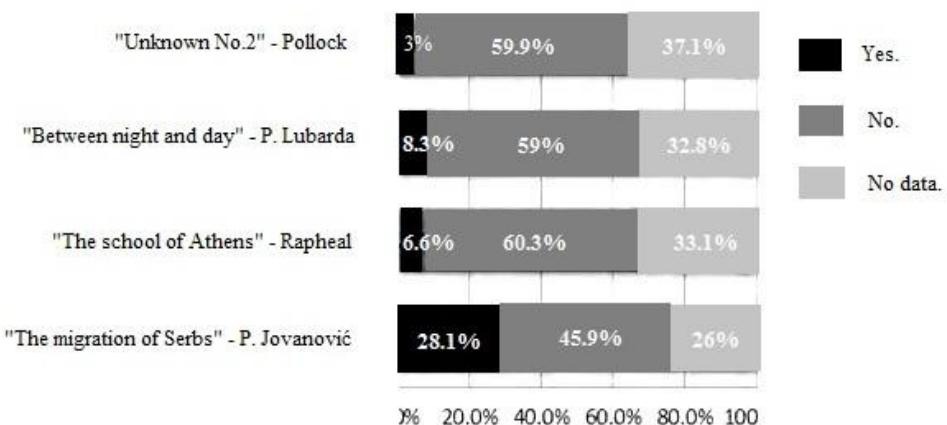
¹¹Lazarević, A. (2011). *Kulturne prakse građana Srbije*. Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvijka: Beograd. pg. 33;

¹²British Journal of Psychology. (2009). *Personality Traits Linked To Artistic Taste*. Medical News Today. Retrieved from: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/158509.php>;

moral message; they allegedly miss the aesthetic predisposition to appreciate the abstract¹³. In order to better understand social aspects of why wider audiences (in Serbia) seem more inclined to traditional art, one must first look into education.

Conveniently, further parts of the research focused on how much knowledge Serbian citizens have when it comes to visual arts field. The same examples of four paintings were again taken as a starting point, yet this time subjects were asked whether they knew who painted them. The contemporary paintings were deliberately lesser known works of Jackson Pollock and Petar Lubarda. The aim was to determine whether individuals are able to depict and read distinct styles and characteristic visual vocabulary of the two 20th century artists¹⁴.

Do you know who painted this? (Knowledge research)



Graphic 3. Research data on knowledge regarding visual arts (Serbia, 2010)

As anticipated, a very low percentage (between 3 and 8.3%) recognised authors of the expressionist paintings. One of the “surprises” of the research was that only 6.6% knew that Raphael’s acclaimed “The school of Athens” was in fact his work. Further, despite the fact that Paja Jovanović’s painting is almost constantly present in media and featured in many school books, publications etc., only 28.1% of subjects knew who the author of “The Migration of

¹³Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Harvard University Press;

¹⁴Lazarević, A. (2011). *Kulturne prakse građana Srbije*. Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvijanja: Beograd. pg. 37;

“Serbs” is. This leads us to a very important conclusion – **Serbian public is largely uneducated about visual arts**. So much so, that they do not even recognise the mere basic items and codes, which prevents them from engaging and having a full experience on the rare occasions they do.

On one hand, there is the factor of uneducated public, but equally importantly, Serbian higher education system produces (visual) artists which have limited recourses of knowledge, skills and competence. For the purpose of illustrating this claim, let us consider studies at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. The oldest institution for higher fine arts education produces roughly 50 certified visual artists per year, around 30 artists with a master degree and 20 holding a PhD in either sculpture, painting or printmaking. Faculty management, apart from splitting the 5-year course into a 3-year Bachelor and 2-year Master, introduced only two changes into the study programme since 1974, the year Academy of Fine Arts became the Faculty we know today. The changes made were: a course for senior students concerning multimedia thought once per week and a management class for freshmen on Saturday (which effectively made them rather unvisited by students). Other than that, courses focus on “traditional” and practical aspects of making art, without much regard to individual and contemporary needs. However, through an evaluation by the Faculty’s Commission on Quality done a year ago, students feel insecure and lacking even in the areas concerning practical skills required for professional presentation and communication of their artwork and themselves. Examples of this are e.g. photography and editing competence. There is absolutely no collaboration of the Faculty with other Faculties within the University of Arts, which could potentially better the offer and meet the needs of contemporary interdisciplinary approaches to creating artwork. A staggering research by Prof. Dr Bojana Škorc, who teaches at the Faculty, reveals that roughly 25% of students continue making art 2 years upon graduation, and that number goes under 2% 10 years into their post graduate lives. Without going too far and wide as to how Serbian art scene and non-existing art market might have contributed to this, let us just establish that a more appropriate education would have at least provided a better chance of success.

With audience lacking basic insight in contemporary art language and artists left to teach themselves out of autistic ways of making art, the role of art directors, managers, curators and others becomes ever more important in ensuring proper interaction between audience,

artist and artwork. When it comes to places for affirmation and communication of art, and considering that the Contemporary Art Museum in Belgrade closed for 6 years now, galleries are currently the only consistent source of contemporary art in the nation's capital whether we choose to comply with it or not. Effectively, the role of galleries ought to be rather proactive and multi-faceted. The goal needs to be establishing a dialectic process between audience, artists and artwork.¹⁵ Thus, in a sense, before presenting and affirming art practices, galleries must identify potential issues in communicating artwork and face up to them. Galleries therefore exceed narrow definitions as "places of appropriation and exhibition of art objects"; their functions are more true to mediation and facilitation. In Belgrade and overall Serbia, up until very recently galleries worked as self-referential institutions without proper contextualisation; they gathered people of the same social status, interests and education. However, many galleries have begun to recognise the full potential for affirmation of new approaches in art, discussion and social reflection. In their programmes, one can clearly see shifts from elitism to a sort of intimism; Third Belgrade is one of them.

It is important to add that the amount of research done regarding galleries' policies, strategies, marketing etc. is disproportionate to the responsibilities laid on galleries. With the exception of *Exhibiting policies of Belgrade's visual art galleries* (Martinović 2012), a study that focused on four galleries in Belgrade's city centre, *Forms of gallery management – functioning of the contemporary art scene in Serbia* (Mihaljinac 2011) and *Gallery and exhibition spaces of visual and multimedia art in Serbia* (Tadić 2012), there is rarely any in-depth consideration of galleries' decisions and strategies; nearly none to be found about galleries outside of Belgrade and Novi Sad. According to Mihaljinac (2011: 93)¹⁶, the main communication channels with the audience are media (electronic, newspapers and rare specialised magazines), mailing lists (only some of the galleries have diversified mailing lists) and galleries' internet presentations. The gallerists often have difficulties in defining precisely their target groups which leads to lack of strategies for media coverage and inadequate informing and animation of public. Furthermore, there is an

¹⁵Martinović, D. (2012). *Izlagачka politika beogradskih likovnih galerija*. Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvijenja: Beograd. pg. 35;

¹⁶Mihaljinac, N. (2011). *Oblici galerijskog menadžmenta – funkcionisanje scene savremene vizuelne umetnosti u Srbiji*. Diplomski rad odbranjen na Fakultetu dramskih umetnosti Univerziteta umetnosti: Beograd, pg. 93-97;

obvious scarcity of media platforms (broadcasters, magazines, blogs etc.) aimed at quality art critique; the rare media coverage mostly comprises of announcements. Many galleries' representatives pointed out that the media pays greater attention to other arts such as theatre and film. Obviously, the galleries are not strongly present in public, lacking skills of strategic deliberation and acting, knowledge on positioning in the art and culture market, marketing and management in culture. By and large, **galleries in Serbia do not apply innovative and modern methods of animation and popularisation of programs and there are no capabilities to place itself actively in the market and increase competitiveness.** Mihaljinac further asserts that the reasons for this may be lack of qualified personnel, financial limitations or incapability of the gallerists to address this issue due to extensive gallery production. While in most cases not able to clearly define their target groups, galleries conform to the fact that most visitors are in fact professionals in the field of arts: artists, art historians, art students etc.

No wonder then that over 2/3 of Serbian population are beyond reach of gallery programmes. Galleries, out of which most are open during work-time, present themselves as a choice for art non-professionals mostly on weekends. Furthermore, programmes rather rarely target demographics under 25 and/or over 50 years of age. Also, galleries are not in the habit or position to make content more visible to wider public; exhibition concepts are often communicated through highly dense intellectualised catalogue texts¹⁷. This unfavourable development should be prevented by different mechanisms – by establishing connections with educational and cultural institutions, by introducing forms of permanent education in the area of cultural mediation aimed at curators, decentralisation of activities, targeting students and older individuals, as well as creating programmes for individuals with special needs etc. Third Belgrade, on the other hand, understands that contemporary forms of art often draw concepts from contextualised problems, and therefore present a highly *relatable form* when communicated properly. This propensity presents the basis for group's trajectory (in audience building).

¹⁷Lazarević, A. (2011). *Kulturne prakse građana Srbije*. Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvijeta: Beograd. pg. 25-50, 100;

2. THIRD BELGRADE: MENTAL AND PHYSICAL ARTISTIC SPACE

2.1 Third Belgrade's beginnings, utopian vision and re-definition

“In the world in which nothing succeeds like success, art is defined as a failure and twisting, turning of the aforementioned world order upside down... The Third Belgrade project falls under the scope of phenomena which refute that defeatism.” (Milorad Belančić, 2011)

BEGINNINGS

One cannot do justice to the story behind Third Belgrade without proper look into lives and positions of its founders, among which first and foremost Selman Trtovac. Group's formation, gallery set-up and mission have all been strongly influence by very personal, but, at the same time, strangely universal accounts of individuals in post-Yugoslav milieu.

Trtovac was brought up in a mixed family; his mother belonged to Italian minority in Croatia and father came from predominantly Islamic Novi Pazar. During the 90s civil war and tension, Trtovac left for Dusseldorf where he studied art and lived up until the year 2000. Like a number of Serbian intellectuals living abroad, he was motivated by the events on the 5th October and seeming democratic changes in Serbia. After almost a decade spent in Germany, he decided to come back. Right about that time, most of the family land in Croatia was sold out and he made a decision to invest in something that would attempt to balance up the negative memories of the 90s political and personal turmoil - something *beautiful*. Trtovac along with architect and artist Milorad Mladenović started making plans to build an object (Academy or Gallery) which would present a cornerstone for the further developments. They soon gathered a group of artists (Olivera Parlić, Radoš Antonijević, Anica Vučetić, Ranko Đanković, Sanja Latinović, Marina Marković and Marko Marković) which were up to that point mostly not connected to each other, but possessed a certain binding quality. They made a decision to build a contemporary art gallery and place it on the left bank side of the Danube River, on the road to Borča. This part is often

referred to as *the third Belgrade*; *the first Belgrade* being the old city centre, and *second* – the typically socialist New Belgrade area. Back in Yugoslavia in the 80s, there were major plans for Belgrade's expansion which anticipated building an urban infrastructure and making Third Belgrade another densely inhabited part of the city. However, due to Yugoslavia's dismembering and inflation right after, the plans were mainly completely abandoned.

Building a Gallery at the place of interrupted development was seen as a fitting intervention. Apart from the past intention, there were neither physical households nor cultural activity in the area at the time. Namely, taking a huge leap and displacing, or rather guiding focus towards Krnjača and away from the city centre, was on one hand meant to remind everyone of the forgotten positive aspects of Yugoslav past (and our identities), but also completely dissociate the group from current art practice in Serbia. In 2009, both Gallery and the group were accordingly named after the area – *Third Belgrade (Treći Beograd)*.

UTOPIAN VISION

The discourse of Third Belgrade draws from academics and thinkers such as Alain Bourdieu, Jean Francois Lyotard, Arthur Danto, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, H.L.A. Hart, Antonio Negri, Herbert Marcuse, Milorad Belančić, Marxist philosophers and others.

At the very beginning, the group agreed upon the following: the transitional society of Serbia, in the attempt to reform itself, has completely lost sense of continuity and value. Only a fraction of manifested itself through the non-existing art market, closed Museums, empty galleries etc. The failing infrastructure for creation and communication of art, primarily (and somewhat selfishly), concerned members of the group as active artists. This need for a substantial alternative, a fair system that works, was taken as a starting point.

As a response, Third Belgrade set out to establish a utopian space, or rather a mini-utopia. Utopia, as a somewhat ambiguous concept, implies an attitude according to which the political,

artistic and/or theoretical endeavour is future-oriented; it is meant as a normative project¹⁸ which takes place temporarily and become embodied in the future. Utopia is also a very specific positioning in relation to the idea of revolution – it is a negation of the current (social) order, and contribution of the alternative. Essentially, utopia which literally means “no-place” includes willingness to envision a dramatically different form of society as either a social ideal-type or its negative inversion. Scholars point out that while a vision of a radically different (and presumptively better) future drives experiments with utopia, something coercive lingers about the term. Utopias can be enforced at the expense of liberty, general consensus achieved by limiting choice. Fascism and utopia can skirt dangerously close to each other¹⁹.

The role of art is therefore presumably central in the development of “anticipating power”. Art builds implicit and explicit models of the contemporary world (Bloch 1982)²⁰, and steers radical criticism of culture ought to look for utopian elements and projections of a better system.²¹. The limit between art and social, political and everyday life concepts becomes indeterminate. A strong inspiration was found in the words of Joseph Beuys:

“Let's talk of a system that transforms all the social organisms into a work of art, in which the entire process of work is included... something in which the principle of production and consumption takes on a form of quality.”²²

Beuys understands our society in all its facets as a reality which has to be prompted artistically. In sequence, Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein takes works of art for tautology²³. He claims that they are projections of reality onto itself, and therefore equally true as a reality on

¹⁸Dedić, N. (2009). *Utopijski prostori umetnosti i teorije posle 1960*. Vujičić kolekcija: Beograd, pg. 254;
[Reflection on re-politisation of art] “..art is political not because it aims to make art and everyday life equal, but on contrary, because it builds topologic differences between artistic and everyday; art, thus, is not political on the level of content but on the level of tactical definition of utopian spaces, i.e. spaces of differential instance within the sphere of material production.”

¹⁹Claeys G. & Tower Sargent, L, (1999). *Introduction: The Utopia Reader*. New York University Press : New York, pg.1;

²⁰Kelner, D. (2004). *Medijskakultura. Studijekulture, identitet i politikaizmeđumodernizma i postmodernizma*. Clio: Beograd, str. 184;

²¹Ibid.;

²²Volker, H. (2004). *What is Art? Conversation with Joseph Beuys*. Clair Interview Books;

²³Wittgenstein, L. (1922). *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. London : Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co;

their own. Both Wittgenstein's position of art in the concept of reality and Beuys's integration of artistic principles in all aspects of life make the core of Third Belgrade's strategy for establishment of utopia.

Group's first collective artworks such as *Warm Place* and *Big Dream* exemplify artistic attribution to social and/or everyday circumstances, wrapped in intimate and benevolent sentiments.

When the Gallery was finished in the winter of 2011, instead of a traditional opening, the group had put together the installation *Warm Place* and invited others to partake. Typical stoves produced in Yugoslavia, called *Smederevac*, were assembled and connected through special pipes transferring the energy and heat through the space. Further, as more and more people stepped into the Gallery, they collectively added to both energy levels and warmth, thereby contrasting the shivering cold outside. The feeling of sharing, collective responsibility and pleasure propelled the opening. The installation was in fact a framework for performance, in which **visitors were not only there to observe or perceive – in fact, prospects of their presence and interactions made the performance.** By using objects like *Smederevac*, a bridge with the past got established, and through relying on people, a clear message was sent: our present and prospects of future are our own group responsibility. This was to become basis of the utopian artistic strategy – warmth, sharing and accountability, instead of hopelessness and frustration over inconsistent political transition, and ruthlessness of the contemporary art scene.

In the *Warm Place*, our thoughts were propelled back to the Yugoslav past and reminded us of our role in determining the present. Moreover, the group transcended the focus and started imagining the *future*. In line with transformation of regular processes into art by re-contextualisation, the active projection of future also took that turn. They engaged in a closed performance where only members of the Third Belgrade got together and dreamt. The group called it - *The Big Dream*. The concept behind the performance is well summed up in the following quotation:

“The dream on its own represents psychological process which leads a dreamer to individualisation and self-actualisation, and might induce ‘awakening’ of that individual. Accepting to dream in a group meant trusting the other participants in the project. While sleeping, we are unprotected, we do not have full control over our reactions, we yield to external influences; we allow our energy to merge with other sleepers’ energies. Sharing the space with the group of sleepers is an intimate act and it means surrendering to the Other, opening up for the communication on a subconscious level and bonding.” (Artist Anica Vučetić, member of the Third Belgrade)²⁴

It also meant – re-questioning the reality from the very foundations. Sleeping and having lucid dreams together is a different event than everyday life. It represents a deliberate defiance to usual course of events²⁵, peaceful act of protest and humane projection of the future. The group never thought of limiting visions to only members and they decided to repeat the *dreaming*, but this time with an attempt to include general public. *The Big Dream* was planned to happen again in the central Serbian city of Čačak. The idea was not only to engage the public, but also to go outside of Belgrade and target new environments. Due to a number of organisational flaws by the cultural institutions in Čačak, which agreed to arrange logistics for the performance, as well genuine lack of motivation and/or understanding by regular citizens to participate – the performance did not take a form that was previously anticipated. Members of the Third Belgrade have indeed placed themselves on the main square and started dreaming, yet no one joined in. While a number of individuals found it interesting to observe, they were reluctant to *participate*.

This event left the group with two very important conclusions. **First, utopia proves harder to sustain in a wider social framework, however, micro (or limited) utopias are indeed a good tool for inducing excellence, daring alternatives and change on a local level. Second, audiences in Serbia do not have a habit of engaging or analysing art performances at all –**

²⁴ 3BGD 2012 [http://www.issuu.com/treci.beograd/docs/3bgd2012_final_net], pg. 11;

²⁵ Many artists use lucid dreaming in their work. Most recent example is the exhibition titled *Abstract speaking - sharing uncertainty and collective act*, curated by Mika Kuraya at the Japan pavilion of the 55th Venice Biennale. Exhibition is a solo show by Koki Tanaka organised by The Japan Foundation, and also presents the act of collective dreaming. Note: Third Belgrade already got in touch with the artists and currently plans of collaboration are underway.

they find it beyond their reach of interests, understanding and comfort zone. These findings propelled a need for re-definition of Third Belgrade's mission and strategy.

RE-DEFINITION

In the late 2012, Third Belgrade went through two important events. Firstly, Milorad Mladenović, one of the founders, left the group on account of irreconcilable differences. Naturally, this resonated with the group, changing its dynamics, vision and overall competence. Further, Goethe Institute approached Third Belgrade and invited them to partake in the project called Urban Incubator: Belgrade, aimed at exploring options for re-definition of the Savamala district.

After five years of activities, the group felt as if it were time for re-assessment of their own strategy. On one hand, opportunity to engage in a group project with a traditional hierarchy, structure and focus seemed like a true jump in a rather different direction in comparison to the organic collaboration with artists thus far. However, the group was granted high levels of freedom and trust in coordinating their part of the project. So, the period of engagement was seen fit for experimentation with what Third Belgrade *could* tackle and *might aim to* accomplish in the future. Furthermore, group established a timeline, picking June 2014 as a point of re-definition or their (artistic) strategy.

2.2 Urban incubator: Belgrade (UiB) project and *We also love the art of others* strategy

UIB PROJECT OUTLINE

The Urban Incubator is a Goethe-Institute ‘project of excellence’, supported by the City of Belgrade and the Municipality of Savski venac. The UiB involves more than ten local and international projects from the fields of art, architecture, urbanism and social engagement, which are being implemented in Savamala in the trial period from March to November 2013. Apart from Third Belgrade, the project includes a wide range of partner organisations, institutions and

individuals, such as Raumlaborberlin, the University of Technical Sciences (ETH) Zurich, the University of Fine Arts in Hamburg, the Zurich University of the Arts, Nexthamburg (Hamburg), Ginger Ensemble (CH), Camenzind (Zurich), Maja Popović and Boba Stanić (Belgrade/Amsterdam), Goethe-Guerrilla, and many others.

The UiB is a unique project supporting re-vitalisation of the now neglected Belgrade city-quarter of Savamala. The vision is to engage artists, architects, activists and the residents of Savamala (and not so much planners, politicians, or investors) who will contribute to shaping the future of the Savamala district. World wars, authoritarian rule and the current economic crisis have left their marks. Today, Savamala is in a state of dilapidation, economically underdeveloped and socially disadvantaged. Mixer

The UiB aims to explore the ways which would eventually improve the quality of life of local residents, arguing strongly in favour of a city on a human scale, and aims to encourage the residents of Savamala to take charge of their local community. As opposed to e.g. Mixer House, the project puts district's cultural and social values as a driving force behind Savamala's re-vitalization, rather than commercial and real-estate business interests. The UiB represents a participatory approach to urban development and could serve as a model for other cities in Serbia and the region.

SAVAMALA AS A PHENOMENON

Savamala, as a district reflecting historical, economic and urban planning discourses, with its many phenomena and paradoxes, is a starting point for the UiB project, and effectively Third Belgrade's engagement in it.

Savamala was the first new settlement constructed outside the fortress walls of Kalemegdan. Construction began in the 1830s as ordered by the prince of Serbia, Miloš Obrenović, after a popular pressure to build a Serbian settlement outside the fortress and the Turkish settlement. Residents of various demographics were relocated in order to make way for merchants, craftsmen and others alike. Thanks to the docks on Sava River, up until World War 2 the area

was growing and became one of the most relevant and richest trading centres in the Balkans. The reminiscence of that time period are the fine examples of classical architecture still found today mostly along Karadjordjeva Street. Nevertheless, upon the end of the World War 2 and establishment of Tito's Yugoslavia, the area was seen as a strong symbol of bad capitalist influences considering its predominant trading character. In addition to very little investment in the district all throughout the period of Yugoslavia, railway, public and cargo transportation were navigated through it; all of which contributed to Savamala's severe decay. First elaborate plans for re-urbanisation appeared in the early 80s. Unfortunately, due to a mixture of civil war, inflation and individual interests for a long period of time no plans were put into action.

Currently, new ideas as to what could become of Savamala have emerged; from 2007 onward a number of spaces for cultural events were established, among which Magacin Gallery, Mixer House and KC Grad. The new re-urbanisation strategy took a different turn and suggested a reconstruction based on redefining district's identity and advocating for Savamala through well-placed creative interventions. As already mentioned, since March 2013, Goethe Institute started up a project named UiB, through which nine premises in Savamala were adapted for purely cultural purposes. The map of spaces is shown in the picture bellow; all of them are given to selected cultural organisations for a designated period of time. Organisations, institutions and individuals curated for the purpose are expected to make site-specific interventions in the space and community. Third Belgrade named their programme pertaining to the UiB project - *We also love the art of others* which is in line with the initiative's strong utopian tendencies. The space the group was given is in Kraljevića Marka 8, and used to be a medicine storage unit.

Picture 1. Spaces in Savamala secured for UiB project



“WE ALSO LOVE THE ART OF OTHERS” PROGRAMME

Third Belgrade’s strategy at UiB

We also love the art of others presents a mantra under which Third Belgrade operates in Savamala. Bearing in mind ubiquitous systematic problems in making and communicating contemporary artwork, the programme will be used as a platform for experimental activities aimed at connecting audiences with high quality artists and artwork, and vice versa, whilst drawing inspiration from the Savamala context. Subsequently, nature and effectiveness of Third Belgrade’s interventions in Savamala will be the focus of this master thesis.

We also love the art of others programme was opened with an (artistic) event called *The Common Dining Table* that pretty much summed up the goal of Third Belgrade’s presence in Savamala. In line with previous relational artistic interventions, e.g. *The Big Dream*, *The Common Dining Table* was a half performance and half video piece; it presented itself only through participation and interaction. Inhabitants of Savamala, art community and friends of Third Belgrade were invited to come and share a meal together in the premises of Gallery Osmica, in Kraljevića Marka 8 in Savamala. All attendees were asked to contribute to the dining table and eventually, with almost 200 hundred people taking part, the table itself was full and ready for the ‘common dining’. The idea behind sharing a meal and attributing cultural qualities to it is rather well summed up in the following statement:

“The shared meal elevates eating from a mechanical process of fuelling the body to a ritual of family and community, from the mere animal biology to an act of culture.” (Michael Pollan, In Defence of Food: An Eater’s Manifesto)

The Common Dining Table established a clear bond with Third Belgrade’s previous doings, and, in a sense, conveyed continuity in relational aesthetics²⁶ that is characteristic for their group work. Apart from elevating a basic and life-essential process into a ritual or contextualised

²⁶Bourriaud, N. (2002). *Relational Aesthetics*. Dijon: Les presses du réel. pg. 113: According to Bourriaud, relational art encompasses "a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space."

cultural act in a ‘user-friendly’ manner, the foundations for what comes next were effectively laid down. **We also love the art of other is to be about the community, shared responsibility (and pleasure) and, of course, the place itself - Savamala.** Further, the hope was that Gallery Osmica would remain in people’s minds as a **place of pleasurable, unpretentious and community-oriented artistic interactions**. Words in the title of the programme such as *art, others* and *love*, reinforce the sentiment of unforced and relatable concepts. It was rather important to establish dialogues with both the community of Savamala and Belgrade’s art scene, as well as provide framework for their mutual interface.

As mentioned before, the Savamala endeavour is a sort of a transitional period in the group’s work. By displacing themselves from the comfort of the gallery space on the Danube River, a new set of questions emerged: *What else can be done to help affirm good art practices? How can problems of Serbia’s cultural scene be addressed more effectively through activities other than occasional exhibitions? What are the problems of communicating art, and why are the audiences so predictably scarce? What would interest and benefit the community of Savamala? Is our presence in Savamala meaningful or does it just serve higher goals of gentrification and boosting the real estate prices? etc.*

It is important to note that ethics played a significant part in shaping the strategy of the *We also love the art of others* programme. Mixer House and Mixer Festival are often put as an innately different sort of intervention in Savamala. Namely, the overall emphasis of the Mixer House is on what can be described as creative industries based on solely businesslike principles. Accordingly, profit and financial security greatly determine the course of action. For Third Belgrade and its visions of utopia, it is particularly relevant that the actions are grounded in more humane notions, such as e.g. *love*. In many ways, Third Belgrade was formed as a response to typically neo-liberal cultural models and formats. By seeking another way of doing things, the group actively criticises attempts to render culture and art as yet another profit-making venture. Fused restaurants, bookstores and other that make way for superficial social interactions cannot replace or make up for the function of culture and art in society, and in many respects work to degrade it. There is nothing wrong with making profit out of artistic activities per se, but basing

strategy and decisions on one such factor definitely is. In the lack of better words to describe the role of art in society, I would hereby use the following quote:

“Art is not a pleasure, a solace, or an amusement; art is great matter. Art is an organ of human life, transmitting man's reasonable perception into feeling. In our age the common religious perception of men is the consciousness of the brotherhood of man - we know that the well-being of man lies in the union with his fellow men. True science should indicate the various methods of applying this consciousness to life. Art should transform this perception into feeling. The task of art is enormous.” (Leo Tolstoy)

Further, Wittgenstein also regarded the arts not as entertainment but as a mode of understanding; the reduction of art to mere entertainment would be seen by him as a symptom of an alarming deterioration in our culture and sensibility²⁷. Essentially, art, as a manifestation of behaviour, has existed since the dawn of human consciousness and ability to perceive the premises of reality. While we may argue to which extent and how exactly art influences and changes reality, one thing is clear – it does and there is a need for it. Compromising the function of art in man's life by subjecting it to economic premises is with no doubt harmful. Third Belgrade's principle-based dilemma affects not only the strategy for Savamala or transitional Serbia; it is a universal issue that occupies a whole range of contemporary organisations and individuals. Fundamentally, the group does not treat audiences as *consumers*, but rather *active participants* and *creators* of (artistic) objects, and *initiators* of social processes.

We have established that *We also love the art of others* programme is rooted in unpretentious and humane principles, and it aims to encourage various degrees of interactions between art professionals and audience (in Savamala). From the thorough analysis of visual arts audiences in the Chapter 1.2, it is clear that there are several factors at stake. In order for audience-artist-artwork triangle to fulfil its full potential, the following is addressed through *We also love the art of others* activities and events:

²⁷Wittgenstein, L. (1980/1998) *Culture and Value*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell; pg. 79-91;

- a) *Education* of both artists and audiences in order to better the communication between them or even existing altogether;
- b) *Consideration and rendering of Savamala phenomena* as a framework and context, which to draw from and base artists - audiences dialogue on;
- c) *Exposure of audiences to high quality art practices* from both Serbia and abroad.

3. THIRD BELGRADE'S INTERVENTIONS IN SAVAMALA

With the more immediate approach and potential to catalyse (social) change, galleries seem about perfect to deal with the huge discrepancies between artistic production, experience and consuming. Third Belgrade recognises that contemporary forms of art are highly *relatable* if communicated properly; essentially, drawing concepts from contextualised problems which can be found in Savamala is a solid ground for establishing a dialogue with the community. Therefore, *We also love the art of others* programme, which tackles the issues surrounding communication, audience development and retention (in Savamala), comprises of events such as: Savamala ArtSample talks with young artists, a range of intertwining curated exhibitions, artist in residence programmes, volunteers' autonomous projects etc.

3.1 Savamala ArtSample: Talks with young artists

While analysing gallery audiences in Serbia, it was pointed out that one of the major obstacles in art consumption is the lack of knowledge and good quality education in art (Mihaljinac 2011). Further, not only are the audiences largely uneducated, but young artists receive absolutely no instruction in how to communicate or use tools to present their work. In many cases both artwork and artists end up being self-referential, 'autistic' and exclusive. On the other hand, insufficient understanding of artistic expression deepens gaps in the *artist – audience - artwork* triangle. It greatly diminishes general potential for identification with, engagement and, eventually, public interest in art.

So in order to tackle education of artists and audience, Third Belgrade came up with the idea to hold monthly talks on Saturday night with selected couple of young artists; the artist talks were named *Savamala ArtSample*. In the first part of the talk, artists prepare short 15-minute lecture about other individuals and artwork that influenced them and thus contextualise their work. In the second part, they engage in conversation with the audience. Having young artists conversing

with the audience is meant to, on one hand, provide audiences with further insight in artwork but also expose young artist to audience's feedback and comments.

As mentioned, Savamala ArtSample talks consist of two parts: short *lecture* and *discussion* straight afterwards. The preparation for lecture is taken seriously and done in three steps with the moderator. Moderator's involvement varies depending on the need of young artists. In the first step, artists are briefed on the intent behind the artist talks and instructed in how they should be structured. Compatible with the *We also love the art of others* mantra, artists are asked to pinpoint influences; other artists, theoreticians or ordinary people/events that affected and helped formed them. **Because our world is rooted in language and linguistic explanations of the things we observe, there is a need that is fulfilled by talking about art in terms of reference.** Namely, all artists work within a context whether they are fully aware of it or not. By asking artists to revisit their influences, the moderator is essentially asking them to **think about what matters to them and why**. The artist is in a way reminded that they too are occasional audience and admirers. The first step of the preparation period is therefore crucial as it forces artists to dissociate themselves from how they usually approach analysis of their work, and shifts their focus away to *others*. In the second step, artists are asked to select between two and five most important influences, and explain how exactly influences relate to their work. Also, in this step, the two artists that are invited to present themselves through Savamala ArtSample get to sit down together and discuss their presentation. It is important to mention that artists are never invited at random, and decision as to whom to invite next is carefully made by the entire Third Belgrade group. In the further text, reasoning behind pairs of young artists that are invited thus far is thoroughly elaborated. In any case, artists relate to each other at some level and through dialogue they further connect their presentations, even through contrasting each other. In the third step of preparation, artists go through whole lecture accompanied by visual materials in front of the moderator and a speaking coach. Moderator and speaking coach offer feedback and suggestions for both presentations, content and visual material.

Somewhere during the process of preparation, a short 2-minute trailer video is filmed. The trailer is aimed as a teaser of sorts, where artists are shown talking about abstract bits that relate to the lecture they will give. Whilst the interest in the trailers seems decent (between 280 and 700

YouTube views in the first week), their main aim is to challenge artist to speak in front of cameras and express themselves²⁸. Also, by giving away bits and pieces of what they would talk about, target groups are more easily reached. Furthermore, talks themselves are filmed.

So, the first part of Savamala ArtSample events, which are short lectures, is followed by *discussion*. Whilst the preparation of lecture and facing up to stage fright are important, the part when artists enter a dialogue and start talking to the audience is by far the most important and thought-provoking experience. Lecture, in this case, can be seen as only a trigger for discussion. A more detailed analysis of what has so far come up during these interactions between audience and artists, and members of audience among themselves, will be presented later on. For now, it is good to remember that discussions are only triggered by lectures, and are never limited to only the content that lectures/presentations cover.

Most young artists that were invited rarely or almost never get a hold of the spot light. Also, audiences do not normally have a chance to directly interact with them. This is why Savamala ArtSample talks do not only have an educational purpose, but also validation and affirmation of the up-and-coming artists that often get looked over. The truth is that most galleries see audience development only in terms of securing big names and already affirmed artists, whereas here the principle is completely the opposite. By introducing young talent, good artistic strategies and enthusiasm of young people, and letting audiences engage with them, the hope is to spark interest in those artists (and visual art in general).

Target groups for talks vary from month to month and depend on the overall artists unique approaches to art. As the further analysis of evaluation data will show, there has been between 5% and 23% of audience overlap i.e. most of the audiences that choose to attend talks are new to it. On average, there are roughly 34 individuals in attendance, varying from 17 to 51. Generally, audiences present a mixture of Savamala residents, art professionals and other Belgradians. These events do not necessarily directly relate to Savamala's phenomena and community. However, their aim is to bring individuals to come to Savamala for a specific purpose – a quality cultural activity. Having formatted Savamala ArtSample talks each month on the second

²⁸Furthermore, the actual talks are filmed too.

Saturday evening (at 19:00 CET), the hope is to introduce a level of continuity the flow of cultural events in Gallery Osmica, so that people can anticipate more easily what comes next. Information about talks are disseminated through specially designed blue UiB posters and flyers, the already mentioned YouTube trailer, as well as social media (Facebook event), Third Belgrade website and mailing lists, UiB blog and, as of lately, SEEcult web portal. Participants are asked to register by sending their contact information through email. The purpose of this is to set a certain standard in conduct of audiences; build a sense of responsibility on their part. This is developing very slowly as still nearly 2/3 of audience do not bother to register before attending.

In essence, Savamala ArtSample is a hallmark event of the *We also love the art of others* programme for many reasons. The name itself, indicated ‘sampling’ or picking the art Third Belgrade members deem good i.e. *love*. Apart from that, young artists are then reinforced in their admiration towards other artists, theoreticians and individuals in general. Third Belgrade believes that only through supporting each other and sharing knowledge can there be a normal value system in place in the transitional Serbia. Also, by thinking about others, or the context of artistic expression, audiences get a chance to hear about a range of interesting artists and discover new layers of art concepts. In most cases, the effort (young) artists invest in creating work in not equally matched by the effect they provoke in audiences. In order to bridge that gap, artists get exposed to different perspective, and audiences get to hear about and discuss art. **The Savamala ArtSample talks are supplemented with an actual opportunity to exhibit at the Third Belgrade Gallery.** Namely, all the artists that were invited and presented themselves through Savamala ArtSample have a chance to respond to points that came up during the discussion, interaction with their pair and Third Belgrade, through making an exhibition/intervention in the Gallery at the Danube River. In this way, young artists are further supported in their efforts. Additionally, through connecting Savamala ArtSample talks and exhibition programme at the Third Belgrade Gallery, a sense of continuity and consistency is created. The two physical spaces of Third Belgrade are clearly associated within its unique mental space. Up until now, there were four Savamala ArtSample talks held with the following pairs of artists: Ana Banduka and Ksenija Jovišević, Jovana Vasić and Lidija Delić, Boris Šribar and Marina Marković, and Anastasia Tasić and Bojana Atlja.

SAVAMALA ARTSAMPLE #1: ANA BANDUKA AND KSENIJA JOVIŠEVIĆ



Photos from the event

The challenge behind selection of the first pair of young artists who would present themselves through the Savamala ArtSample talks was double; on one hand, the combination of the two artists needed to be intriguing enough for people to want to come to the event, and on the other, it would set a profile of artists who are to present themselves in the future.

Ksenija Jovišević and Ana Banduka were invited after long hours of discussion among Third Belgrade's members. The two artists had just graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, and had seemingly different approaches and taste in artwork. Ksenija's work is minimalist and highly

intimate; among her influences she references artists such as Ljubica Cuca Sokić and Robert Ryman. Ana has flair for more socially engaged art; such as the one of Ghada Amer and Škart group. The hope was that they would enter a dialogue and through explaining their artistic influences, become more aware of their own artistic strategies. In the preparation period, this was exactly what happened; **the two conflicting viewpoints had in fact managed to organically complement each other. The contrasting presentations they gave, showed both how much the two are different, but also to which extend they intrinsically relate.** This tension made the talk additionally interesting to be a part of.

One of the fears was that audience would be reluctant to actively take part and discuss; fortunately, this was disputed. Audience felt very much invited to share, ask questions, comment and even discuss among themselves. Furthermore, they gave suggestions as to how some things might have been clearer to them and challenged artists to think about issues such as commercialisation and how much they would be willing to sacrifice in order to make their work acceptable to wider audiences. Artists shared their plans for the future, and as a result some concepts that would later appear in the response exhibition in Third Belgrade Gallery were conceived. One of the participants described the talk as “*Highly animating.*” On top of it, around 80% of those who attended the talk have, made an effort to RSVP for the opening of the follow-up exhibition in Third Belgrade Gallery. This shows that a significant portion of audience built a longer lasting relation to the two artists. There was a total of 38 individuals in attendance. When it comes to audience composition, the following tables sum up the data drawn from evaluation forms:

Age overview of the Savamala ArtSample #1 participants

AGE	10-18 years	18-25 years	25 – 35 years	35- 45 years	over 45 years
S. ArtSample #1 (38 participants)	1 particip. 2,63%	9 particip. 23,67%	20 particip. 52,60%	3 particip. 7,89%	5 particip. 13,19%

Amount of art professionals among participants		Amount of Savamala residents among participants			
ARTS PROFESSIONALS	Yes	No	RESIDENTS OF SAVAMALA	Yes	No
S. ArtSample #1 (38 participants)	25 particip. 65,79%	13 particip. 34,21%	S. ArtSample #1 (38 participants)	4 particip. 10,53%	34 particip. 89,47%

The talk attracted predominantly individuals between 18 and 35 years of age (total of 76, 27%), and a number of individuals from the over 45 age group (13,19%). Among all participants, 65,79% were art professionals (artists, art historians, art teachers, art managers and other). In the age group over 45, 20% of audience were art professionals; in the group of 25-35 years of age the percentage goes up to 70%, while in the group of 18-25 it is 100%. There was a relatively poor interest of Savamala community, being that individuals from Savamala made up for only 10,53% of audience. On the other hand, only 16 individuals or 42,10% knew artists (personally) before coming to the talk. Given the record of similar events and exhibitions, this proportion is rather satisfying. Participants learned about the event in the following ways:

How Savamala ArtSample #1 participants learned about the event

WAYS TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT	UiB blog & Third Belgrade websire	Social networks	Posters and flyers	Through a friend	Through media
S. ArtSample #1 (38 participants)	2 participants 5,27%	12 particip. 31,58%	3 particip. 7,89%	21 particip. 55,26%	0 participants 0%

The most ineffective way to disseminate information about the event seems to have been through media, while a large number of participants got to know about it through *friends* and *social networks*. In the conclusion, the talk established a high standard at the very beginning, and the only major downside of it was that it managed to attract very few people from Savamala, while at the same time sparking interest among young individuals and art professionals.

SAVAMALA ARTSAMPLE #2: LIDIJA DELIĆ AND JOVANA VASIĆ



Photo from the event

The choice of artists for the second talk came down to young artists gathered around the U10 Gallery. So on one hand, through supporting their individual efforts, the vision behind U10 would also come to be more visible.

Artists who were invited in the end were Lidija Delić and Jovana Vasić. They are both currently at the PhD studies in Theory of contemporary art and media at the University of Arts in Belgrade. Much like Ksenija and Ana before them, their individual artistic strategies were somewhat conflicting. Jovana is inclined to use contemporary media in her work, while Lidija prefers traditional forms for representation of contemporary concepts. Their common ground pertaining to artwork was the *public – private* dichotomy, and the infringement of privacy and intimacy principles. As somewhat experienced researchers, they needed little assistance in the preparation of materials. However, their major issue was facing up to the camera and the audience. Therefore, the main part of the preparation was done to in one way or the other help

them relax and gain confidence in performing. One of the drawbacks of the Savamala ArtSample #2 was a *force majeure*; on the evening of the talk, it was heavily raining. This naturally reflected on attendance. There were only 17 participants, among which most knew the artists, where similarly their age and were art professionals. The composition of the audience in precise numbers was:

Age overview of the Savamala ArtSample #2 participants

AGE	10-18 years	18-25 years	25 – 35 years	35- 45 years	over 45 years
S. ArtSample #2 (17 participants)	0 particip. 0%	2 particip. 11,77%	15 particip. 88,23%	0 particip. 0%	0 particip. 0%

Amount of art professionals among participants

ARTS PROFESSIONALS	Yes	No	RESIDENTS OF SAVAMALA	Yes	No
S. ArtSample #2 (17 participants)	17 particip. 100%	0 particip. 0%	S. ArtSample #2 (17 participants)	0 particip. 0%	17 particip. 100%

It is fair to say that only people who already knew and cared about the artists gave an effort, and in spite of rain, participated. Accordingly, most of attendees also found out about the event through their *friends* and *social networks*.

How Savamala ArtSample #2 participants learned about the event

WAYS TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT	UiB blog & Third Belgrade websire	Social networks	Posters and flyers	Through a friend	Through media
S. ArtSample #2 (17 participants)	0 participants 0%	3 particip. 17,65%	0 particip. 0%	14 particip. 82,35%	0 participants 0%

SAVAMALA ARTSAMPLE #3: MARINA MARKOVIĆ AND BORIS ŠRIBAR



Photos from the event

The third talk was scheduled for mid July, which effectively presented an additional challenge is attracting audiences given that it was summertime and people tended to be on vacation. That is why this time, the decision was made to invite a somewhat already visible couple of artists – Marina Marković²⁹ and Boris Šribar.

²⁹Marina is a member of Third Belgrade;

The two, apart from being romantically engaged, have an on-going project together called *Asylum*. The project, where artists are living and working in a gallery space for a designated period of time, puts forward issues around position of artists in Serbia and a need for a cultural “asylum” in order to be able to survive and make art. So far, the project has been done in Belgrade (Cultural Centre Belgrade; curated by Nikola Dedić) and Berlin (Kunsthalle am Hamburger platz). The two residencies in the gallery space, different to an extent due to different profiles of spaces, are seen by artists as a platform for creation of new artwork. The aesthetics behind *Asylum*, the sugar-coated pink interior and elements of a reality show, are picked intentionally to communicate the message in an eye-catching way, further raising the questions of general taste or lack of it. In their presentation at the Savamala ArtSample, artists referred more to concepts, formats and situation that influenced them rather than other artists and theoreticians. This alteration in the concept of Savamala ArtSample talks was done as this was simply a more appropriate way to better present multiple layers of the project to the audience.

Discussion about *Asylum* attracted 42 participants. Interestingly, among them, there was almost equal number of individuals aged between 25 and 35, as the ones over 45. Nearly half of the audience (45,24%) were between 35 and 45 years of age, making the average about 10 years over the age average at e.g. Savamala ArtSample #1. Also with only 7 individuals (or 16,67%) previously (personally) knowing the artists, and almost half of the audience not being professionals, this talk managed to provoke significant interest in general population, outside of Third Belgrade’s and artists’ social circles. Further, number of residents of Savamala was slightly higher than at the Savamala ArtSample #1 (6 overall; 2 more than at the first talk).

Age overview of the Savamala ArtSample 3 participants

AGE	10-18 years	18-25 years	25 – 35 years	35- 45 years	over 45 years
S. ArtSample #3 (42 participants)	0 particip. 0 %	1 particip. 2,38%	12 particip. 28,57%	19 particip. 45,24%	10 particip. 23,81%

Amount of art professionals among participants

Amount of Savamala residents among participants

ARTS PROFESSIONALS	Yes	No	RESIDENTS OF SAVAMALA	Yes	No
	S. ArtSample #3 (42 participants)	23 particip. 54,76%	19 particip. 45,24%	S. ArtSample #3 (42 participants)	6 particip. 14,28%

Interestingly, more people than average found out about the talk through media and social networks, and less through friends.

How Savamala ArtSample #3 participants learned about the event

WAYS TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT	UiB blog & Third Belgrade websire	Social networks	Posters and flyers	Through a friend	Through media
S. ArtSample #1 (42 participants)	1 participants 2,38%	20 particip. 47,62%	4 particip. 9,52%	12 particip. 28,57%	5 participants 11,90%

This Savamala ArtSample talk presented a transgression in many ways. On one hand, the choice of the artists came down to those not completely unfamiliar to the public, and they focused on one project in particular instead of their overall separate artistic strategies. In essence, this talk presented the artists in a way that they felt most comfortable to present themselves – through a hallmark project, which strongly connects them. **Through discussion, the audience broadened the topic by introducing social problems that prompted artists to seek “asylum” in the first place.** Out of the four talks, this one managed to engage audience the most as they analysed situation in Serbia that affects artists, and **projected themselves onto it.**

SAVAMALA ARTSAMPLE #4: ANASTASIA TASIĆ AND BOJANA ATLJA



Photos from the event

The last talk to be analysed through this thesis is the fourth Savamala ArtSample. This time Third Belgrade invited Bojana Atlja and Anastasia Tasić, a couple of young artists with distinguished visual language. They have both entered a phase in their work, where they started

re-questioning some aspects of art, and thus group conversation was seen as a nice intervention which could help their processes. **Savamala ArtSample#4 talk attracted the biggest audience so far – 51 people.**

Age overview of the Savamala ArtSample #4 participants

AGE	10-18 years	18-25 years	25 – 35 years	35- 45 years	over 45 years
S. ArtSample #4 (51 participants)	0 particip. 0%	4 particip. 7,84%	31 particip. 60,78%	9 particip. 17,85%	7 particip. 13,76%

Amount of art professionals among participants

ARTS PROFESSIONALS	Yes	No	RESIDENTS OF SAVAMALA	Yes	No
S. ArtSample #4 (51 participants)	29 particip. 56,86%	22 particip. 43,14%	S. ArtSample #4 (51 participants)	14 particip. 27,45%	37 particip. 72,55%

The age ratio was pretty similar to the Savamala ArtSample #1, while there was a slightly elevated number of Savamala residents. Art professionals made about a half of the audience. Interestingly, this time only 17, 73% found out about the talk through friend, while most did so through social networks. Media remains a fairly ineffective way of spreading information about talks.

How Savamala ArtSample #4 participants learned about the event

WAYS TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT	UiB blog & Third Belgrade websire	Social networks	Posters and flyers	Through a friend	Through media
S. ArtSample #4 (51 participants)	2 participants 3,92%	38 particip. 74,51%	1 particip. 1,96%	7 particip. 13,73%	2 participants 3,92%

SUMMARY

Altogether, as a trial series of events, talks proved to be rather vibrant. The audience experience was multi-faceted:

1. Through a relaxed presentation and discussion afterwards, the audience got to **understand** better who two artists presenting were - where they are coming from and in which context they work;
2. Audience got to hear more about other artists and theoreticians. Through evaluation forms, large portions of the audience have repeatedly stated **educational aspect** as one of the most valuable ones;
3. Audience was directly exposed to artists and had a chance to **question and discuss** with them, thereby expending the dialogue between two artists. Relevant issues arouse, such the authenticity of artwork or acceptable extent of commercialisation;
4. The talk was mutually helpful as the audience got to know pairs of artists and their work better (or at all), and **the artists got important input on how their work is perceived** in return.

Given that the talks are on Saturday in the evening, they do not conflict with working hours. Furthermore, subtitled trailers reached hundreds of people on YouTube. The whole talks are also filmed, but their post-production (and subtitling) is going quite slowly. One of Third Belgrade partners - Creative Carbon in Glasgow, recently started a series of ArtSample talks of their own. The idea is to further expand the network and have a common YouTube channel for all ArtSample talks.

On a positive note, with the exception of Savamala ArtSample #2, the number of participants has been slowly growing. Apart from the under 18, all age groups are represented in varying degrees depending on the talk. There is also a slow increase in number of residents of Savamala and art non-professionals, and reduction in the number of people who previously knew the artists.

Savamala ArtSample talks in numbers

SAVAMALA ARTSAMPLE TALKS IN NUMBERS	Talk #1	Talk #2	Talk #3	Talk #4
Number of participants	38	17	42	51
Duration of the talk	1h 42min	1h 15min	1h 56min	1h 45min
Number of trailer views on YouTube	431	240	719	281
Number of RSVP on Facebook event	139	74	75	71
Number of views of talk's online version	0 (the video is still in post-production)			
Number of Savamala residents	4 (10,53%)	0 (0%)	6 (14,28%)	14 (27,45%)
Number of artists and other art professionals	25 (65,79%)	17 (100%)	23 (54,76%)	29 (56,86%)
Number of individuals who previously knew artists	16 (42,10%)	15 (88,23%)	7 (16,67%)	26 (50,98%)
Number of individuals who previously attended at least one Savamala ArtSample talk	---	1 (5,88%)	4 (9,52%)	12 (23,53%)

In the evaluation form, participants were asked to provide suggestions as to how the talks could improve in the future. Here are some interesting ones:

- “*Moderation was fantastic! I only wish the audience was allowed discussion already during presentations...*”(Participant at the Savamala ArtSample #1)
- “*There should be more of these things in the future, and much often.*”(Participant at the Savamala ArtSample #2)
- “*More participants and a bigger venue.*” (Participant at the Savamala ArtSample #2)
- “*I enjoyed listening to the presentation, but it was shorter than I expected.*”(Participant at the Savamala ArtSample #3)
- “*Better branding of the space.*” (Participant at the Savamala ArtSample #4)
- “*This concept and format can be expended to events around, for instance, research questions and cultural policy issues, and not only be about art.*”(Participant at the Savamala ArtSample #4)

Further, words commonly used to describe talks: *educational* (39), *insight* (32), *useful* (39), *context* (39), *dialogue* (39), *practical* (39), *interesting* (17) etc.³⁰

85% of participants rated the experience of Savamala ArtSample talks as *satisfying*, around 12% thought it was *excellent*, and 3% claimed it was *decent*. No participants marked *unsatisfying* nor *completely unsatisfying* on Savamala ArtSample evaluation forms.

Bearing in mind all aspects of this type of event, information gathered through evaluation forms and potential for improvement, Savamala ArtSample talks can overly be regarded as a relatively successful outreach programme.

³⁰In the form, there was a question: *Which three words would you use to describe the Savamala ArtSample talks?*;

3.2 Curated exhibitions and interventions: *Roma house* by Branislav Nikolić, *I am not my body* by Jovana Popić, *Re-positioning* by Vuk Ninković, *Savamala psycho geography map* by Distruktura and *Line for Savamala* by Selman Trtovac and Veljko Pavlović etc.

A large portion of the *We also love the art of others* programme (and Third Belgrade's activities in general) is dedicated to presenting artistic practices through exhibitions and interventions. All individual projects were carefully selected; further projects within the programme, in one way or another, respond to each other. Namely, the whole **curation follows a rhythmical exploration of Savamala within concepts of space – sound – sentiment. The readable nature of curation and a confident flow help communicate Third Belgrade's aesthetics more clearly.**

In the last few years a generation of artists in the field between contemporary art and performance have developed situations where the viewer steps into situations, which are either sound based or live events, and where the presence of the audience is vital for the development and existence of the work. In curatorial terms there are different strategies for involving the audience, which include the dramaturgy or choreography of an exhibition, how a shift of context or situation will change the experience of the viewer, how spatial, temporary and other aspects are created within the curatorial craft of constructing the situation of the audience. There are also practices which are not necessarily based on identification, but which serve as a projection surface or platform for the thoughts and emotions of the viewer.

In terms of design and branding, all exhibitions and interventions were quite clearly unified under UiB corporate design of blue background and Helvetica/Myriad black letters. This further helped the legibility of the programme, and eased participation.

In this Chapter, the focus will be on how the Third Belgrade and artist '*whose art the group loves*' imagine the viewer in order to create both a sensory and a mental experience, and where in some cases the works would not even exist without the viewer's contribution. All curated artwork in the programme pertains to the viewer less as an observer and more as a participant. Exhibitions and interventions are listed and explained in the following text.

PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY OF THE SUBURB IN THE CITY CENTRE/dISTRUKTURA

From May 2013



Photo from diSTRUKTURA series (left) and Prof. Dr Jelena Stojanović at the workshop (right)

Following the opening performance of *Common Dining Table*, there was a need to better place *Savamala* in the context and further associate Third Belgrade with it. Prof. Dr Jelena Stojanović held a lecture and workshop and called *Production of space*. She has previously written a paper about Third Belgrade's position in Krnjača, and production of space in the forsaken urban area. Introductory discussion was meant to define a wide platform for contemplation over a particular way of action in Savamala, as well as about Savamala. At the same time, it opened possibilities for discussion about the genesis of idea regarding *Production of space*, which has its roots in the writings of French theoretician Henri Lefebvre and his thoughts about urbanism and industrialisation, and their role within society, culture and art. The questions regarding gentrification and other potential negative aspects of sudden interest in Savamala were raised and talked about. The discussion presented a solid basis for diSTRUKTURA's project in Savamala.

Subject of diSTRUKTURA's work is a study of Savamala's urban landscape, referring to concept of urban wondering and similar inventive strategies related to explorations of towns

such as psycho geography. This strategy, which resembles a game, collects just about anything that takes pedestrian off his predictable paths and jolts them into a new awareness of the urban landscape, presenting a modern town as a place for investigation. By renouncing our usual motifs for movement and action, relations, work and leisure activities, we are going to let ourselves be drawn by the attractions of the surroundings and coincidental encounters with passer-bys whose directions and recommendations will create our path.

In the end, the outcome of this creative research will be establishment of streams, flows, paths of Savamala which are not determined by its architecture but by sentiments and memories of its inhabitants.

LINE FOR SAVAMALA / SELMAN TRTOVAC AND VELJKO PAVLOVIĆ

June 25, 2013



Photo from the performance

The Line for Savamala is an artistic project by Selman Trtovac and Veljko Pavlović, members of the Third Belgrade, which consists of elements of drawing, video and performance.

In May 2013, Third Belgrade visited the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Zagreb, or more precisely Josipa Vaništa's retrospective exhibition, which symbolically marked drawing a line, connection between Savamala, as a starting point, and Zagreb, thus connecting position and aesthetics of Third Belgrade to the one of Gorgona group in the 70s. The initial motive for this artistic activity was to 'witness' Vaništa's artwork called *The Silver Line*. The visit and conversations with Mr Josipa Vaništa himself left an empowering mark on the group. As one of the outcomes, *The Line for Savamala* represents a dialogue between Veljko Pavlović and Selman Trtovac, which can be understood as contemplation **over continuity and legitimacy of creative processes in Savamala.**



Photo from the visit to Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb and Josip Vaništa

After the performance, Selman and Veljko placed 'the line' (piece of rope) in the middle of gallery, making it impossible for visitors to see the drawing and video without adjusting it and essentially interacting with the line. In a way, participants were positioning themselves in relation to the line of symbolic creative potential, and other individuals in the space.

RE-POSITIONING / VUK NINKOVIĆ

July 7 – 20, 2013



Photo from the exhibition

Further, following the needs to position Savamala in the context of sorts, there was an exhibition where a need to position an individual in the community (of Savamala) was a main focus. The context of Vuk Ninković's *Re-positioning* is, at core, dealing with new postulations within media and life space in Savamala; relationship between an individual and a group i.e. society through author's perspective regarding space ownership.

The author shares the following:

"The space that we focus on nowadays [Savamala] occupies a slightly ambiguous physical boundaries, spreading from the main bus station to Branko's Bridge, and over to the foothill of Zeleni venac. The urbanised space suffers changes and its vibrancy oscillates conditioned by the social discourse; re-establishment of norms and system that affects the space which we inhabit. It portraits and resonates our attitude often far longer than we imagine, thus making the process of socially accepted reformation of space a long-term one. I cannot claim with total certainty the amount of time that Savamala would require to reinvent itself, given that

*every space has its own unique micro-life on the everyday basis which prevents the spark of that space go down.*³¹

In the group of artwork dedicated to the Savamala district, there are a number of digital prints and two videos, that together present a dialectic whole. The artworks are circular, and in a way, do not have an ending. They represent a reflection and a graphical rendering of the aforementioned transformations of the space. One of the videos shows a local cat originally called *Savamala* while giving birth to kittens. The other video portraits the space that constantly reinvents itself, through author's pursuit in the Savamala "box". The video is directly connected to the digital prints which present us with author's subjective viewpoint and, at the end of the day, represent reminiscence of the pursuit.

Ninković further adds:

"So, the relevant characteristic of every space is that it is constantly reinvented in the visual, functional and media sense. These oscillations are obvious in Savamala where an individual and corporations shift, settle and look into the future. This overly positive characteristic of the space reminded us of existence of the River. Belgradians never fully made use of the notion of their city resting on River(s), and this might be a convenient time to address that notion."

There is a chance to start creating a space from the beginning, but opportunities for that are rare. Artists alone are responsible for the new creation. They ought to attempt to foster the progressive energy of visual and ethical qualities. This exhibition was followed by Magali Sanheira's *Paradox Landacape*.

[Vuk Ninković is born in Belgrade, in 1987. He graduated from the Painting master course at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. While studying, he attended the class of prof. Jovana Sivacki. Ninković is a member of Serbian Association of Visual Artists (ULUS) from 2011. He actively exhibits both in Serbia and abroad.]

³¹ Quotations are extracted from interview with the artist conducted by Third Belgrade's intern Tamara Laketić;

I AM NOT MY BODY / JOVANA POPIĆ

September 17–20, 2013

Jovana Popić, having returned to Belgrade after 15 years of living abroad, was faced with an exhibition in G12HUB Gallery right across from Kraljevića Marka 8. The exhibition at the time was called *I am my body* by Marta Jovanović. Works focused on the matter and materialism in human strivings. Jovana found the concept (and the gallery itself) questionable in many respects, and decided to respond or resist it through a project of her own. This is how *I am not my body* project came to be.

The project focuses on the content of graffiti messages in Mostarska Street, which is located in Belgrade's district of Savamala. The goal was to present utopism and ideliasm of young people who live in the area. Conceived as an opposition to the society they belong to, their specific utopian worldview is characterised by downfall and tragedy, and could be inherently a part of fundamentally passive, autistic attitude of young creative individuals in Belgrade toward their surroundings. On the other hand, in their unfaltering belief in true values of human society and a better world, lies a potential energy which could be used to alter Serbian society.

The artist regards the inarticulate, chaotic space in Mostarska Street as part of a decomposition process of the symbolic body of Serbian society. Thus, the title of the project – *I am not my body*. Having in mind that the medium of sound, as a carrier of emotions and messages, is capable of polarising the space and change viewers perception of it, the project *I am not my body* emphasises that art and willingness to resist could be used as a moving force behind changing the state of apathy and absence of ideals in the world that surrounds us. Apart from perfectly connecting hers and Third Belgrade's utopian strivings with the context, the project is done out in the open in Savamala, using highly sight specific content.

[Jovana Popić is born in Zadar, Croatia, in 1977. She works and lives in Berlin. For more information about the artist, visit her blog³².]

³² <http://www.jovanapopic.com>;

FULLSTOP, COMA. / BOJANA ATLJA AND MARKO BAŠIĆ

September 28 – October 5, 2013

Bojana Atlja is a young sculptor and Marko Bašić has a vast experience in sound design. Their collaboration started on the ground of fascination with numerous paradoxes in Savamala, and its setting.

Bojana previously worked on sculptures, drawings and sound installations that were aimed to question limits of a medium and perception. Their exhibition together is a mixed media attempt to explore and respond to the space in Kraljevića Marka 8; gallery and the façade in front of it. The exhibition features photography and video of what artists refer to as *muses* i.e. fragments of Savamala that intuitively inspired the two artists, and drawings and sculptures which are incorporate in the already existing structure and damages of the space. By playing with visual and hearing perception, and exaggerating physical propensities of the original space, they effectively make us question our previously established notions about it. The title indicates a dose of playfulness and humour with mismatched punctuation signs which are both true (in terms of function) and wrong (in terms of connotation). As project takes place both inside and outside, it is meant to first lure passersby to look at the space, and then help them discover its potentials for creative expression. On one hand, one takes note, projects and analyses a typical Savamala spot, but equally importantly, one notices and potentially remembers this particular UiB venue for the future reference.

ROMA HOUSE / BRANISLAV NIKOLIĆ

November 2 – 30, 2013

In the Savamala district, within the area often referred to as *Bara Venecija*, there is a deprived Roma community. Branislav Nikolić did research into architecture of this particular settlement and noticed that there is a pattern or even tradition in house making out secondary materials. Namely, there is even a community 'architect' who makes sure that houses are built to sustain weather conditions and cater for basic needs.

The artist, along with members of the community, will collect secondary materials throughout Savamala, and in the end make a replica of a typical Roma house. On one hand, he is working together and actively learning about the architectural solutions thus acknowledging and validating Roma culture from his perspective. Roma community rarely gets singled out as a positive example in Serbia. At the same time, Branislav is creating an object with shared authorship; de-contextualising it only to contextualise it again in the Gallery space.

Essentially, *Roma house* project is as much about specificity of Roma community as it is about contemporary consumer attitude and values we take for granted. In terms of audience building, this project more than any other has managed to merge art with real life, and reach new demographics. As with any relational art and social plastique logic of art making, the project draws from context of social reality and actual people. It is highly anti-defeatism. Furthermore, it could also be seen as a strong reminder and critique of gentrification projects and initiatives in Savamala.

[Branislav Nikolić is born in Šabac, in 1970. In 2001, graduated from the master course at the Dutch Art Institute, Enschede, the Netherlands. Member of international art group New Remote (www.newremote.net) and independent artistic association Kolektiv. From 2002, serves as a member of selection panel for Art colony of Jalovik (www.jalovik.net).]



Roma houses in Bara Venecija

3.3 Artist in Residence programmes: Magali Sanheira (FR) and Marlene Hausegger (AT)

Third Belgrade is highly devoted to active exchange with artists and institutions from abroad. Therefore, over years the group has built important partnerships such as the one with the Ministry of Culture of Steiermark (Austria) and a large network of residency programmes in Europe called Green ArtLab Alliance (GALA). Through these connections and residency programmes, Third Belgrade has so far been able to bring to Serbia high quality artists and researchers, and expose our cultural scene to them (and vice versa). Some of the most successful residency programmes include researcher Ursula Kisling (SE), Ginger Society (CH), Russian pavilion representatives in 2011 Venice biennale – *Collective Actions* group etc. Conversely, through partnerships and networks, Third Belgrade provides a chance for a fully covered 3-month residency in Graz for 2 Serbian artists per year.

The dynamics and nature of residency programmes has so far been inspiring for Third Belgrade; the group does not only provide an infrastructure for residency, but they enter an artistic dialogue with the guest artist or researcher. The format of residencies works well in the context of Savamala, too. Bringing in prominent artists and theoreticians, and exposing them to the district and audiences generated interesting projects. Among them, two are particularly interesting for our consideration – *Paradox Landscape* by Magali Sanheira (FR) and research paper on *We also love the art of others* curatorial practice by Marlene Hausegger (AT), which is currently in the making.

MAGALI SANHEIRA (FR)

All throughout August 2013, Parisian artist Magali Sanheira was working and residing in Savamala as Third Belgrade's guest. The artist underwent intensive research and preparations in the district, eventually coming up with the project *Paradox Landscape*. The project was exhibited towards the end of the month as part of *We also love the art of others* programme. Magali's residency is curated by Third Belgrade in order to provide new perspective on

exploration of the many district's phenomena; the fresh perspective of a young outstanding artist previously unfamiliar to Savamala.

Magali Sanheira was born in 1977, and she lives and works in Paris. In 2003, she completed a master degree in visual arts at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Arts de Paris-Cergy. She has thus far realised a number of group and solo exhibitions, among which: *Ode to metal* in 2011 (Former School of Architecture Nanterre), *Survival* in 2009 (Jeune Création Gallery, Paris), *French Connection* in 2001 (Gallery 99, Brno, Czech Republic) etc³³. *The Paradox Landscape* project is the final product of the residency in Savamala. It is a set of fragmented, then recomposed and re-arranged shapes from nature which are combined in one place as a sort of a *garden*. **In essence, the exhibition represents a nature's hybrid inspired by author's residency in Savamala district; a combination of her context and the context she encountered.** *The Paradox Landscape* puts forward the notion of intricate interconnection of cultural, economic and natural elements in an urban environment.



Magali Sanheira in the Gallery Osmica just before the opening of Paradox Landscape exhibition

The Paradox Landscape stages objects as symbolic witnesses of history, and refers to events from the following three countries: Serbia, France, and Germany. On one hand, the piece *Songe* (translator's note: dream, illusion, fantasy) depicts the effect rhythmical beats of "Comorian Bourkan" song, typically performed during the *Kabar* ritual on the Reunion Island (France),

³³ More about the artist and her projects at: <http://www.magalisanheira.org>;

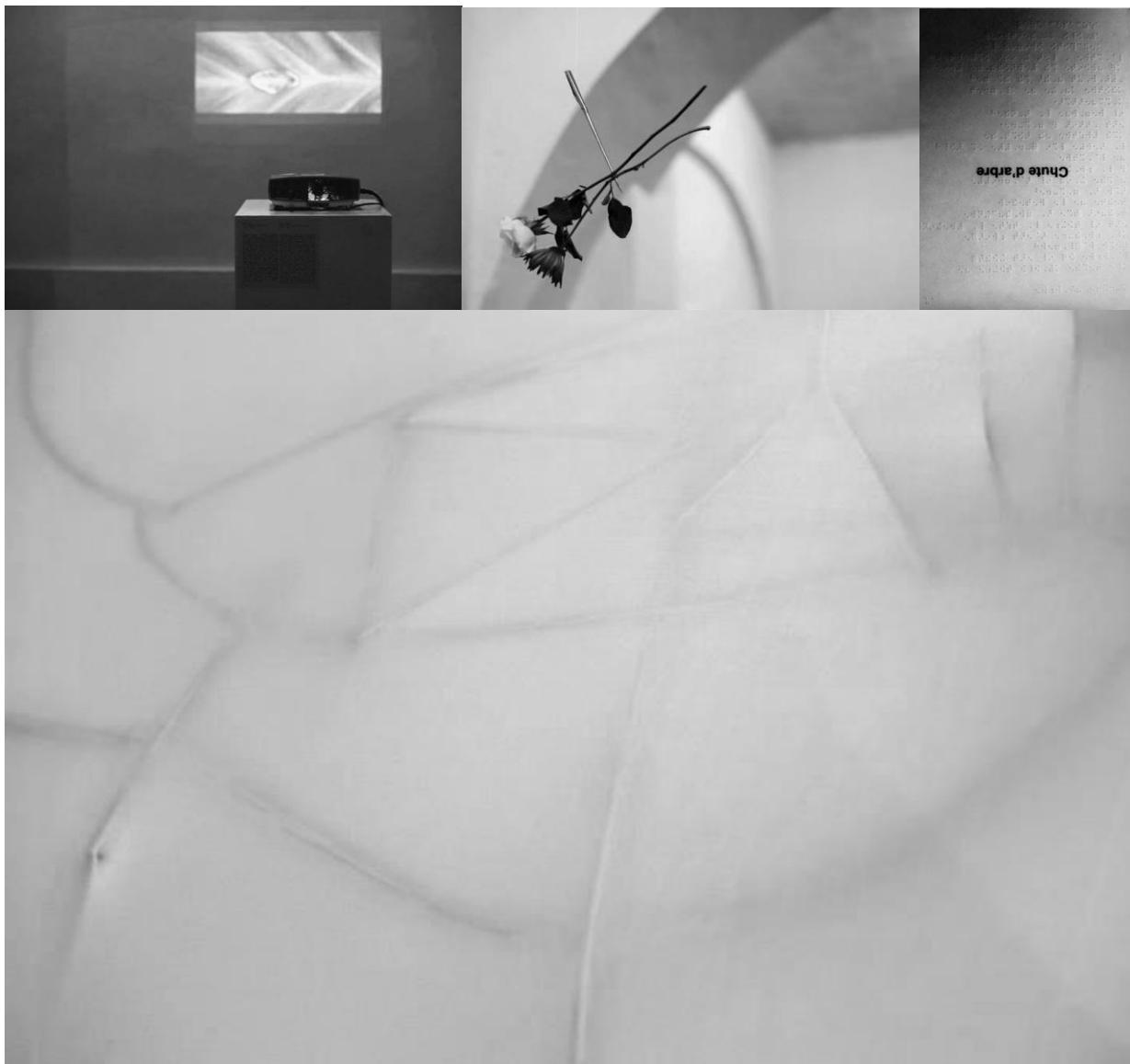
have on the leaf of the plant *songe* and drop of water on its surface. Namely, movement and illumination of the water drop come to be as a direct consequence of interaction with the sounds of *Comorian Bourkan*, but also due to climate conditions and technical editing. The reference to the current state and decay of Savamala due to human activity is obvious. This binding of nature with man-made, wrapped around the semantic implications, further gets elaborated through the *Blue flower and white rose*, an Ikebana of sorts. The *White rose* is the name of a highly relevant resistance group from Munich during the World War 2. They based their mission on the pacifistic, utopian principles and were heavily influenced by German writers like Goethe and Novalis. This particular installation combines a white rose with a blue flower, effectively broadening the reference to the unfinished novel by Novalis, named *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. The story of unlimited affection and constant search for the object of that affection i.e. blue flower, ties in with the utopian strivings of Third Belgrade. *Fall of the tree*, an inverted Ex-voto and tautology, brings the linguistic and transformative intermediate stages to the point where the causality becomes less obvious and lost, and effectively – we perceive nothing.

The ultimate piece of the *garden*, called *Fantasma*³⁴, shifts our focus back to the starting point – Savamala. Author spent days and days walking around the district – perceiving, feeling and defining it. Her psycho-geographic rendering of the district's structure of roads and streets through the medium of metal rods is covered with white satin cloth. The shape rods form under white satin appears ambiguous and almost like a fantasy. **At the moment, Savamala is undergoing a process, which will eventually re-define it; author's current rendering is somewhat like a ghost connecting past, present and future.** In the end, *Paradox Landscape* questions the *sentiment* and the *idea* of nature as such, where things are both true and contradictory. It gives us an insight in the landscape of Savamala where a string of paradoxes are being articulated. Building a garden is a manifestation of a need for compensation of anxiety; form of re-appropriation of nature. By sampling nature, picking what is pleasing in it, and defining enclosed space, the author makes an attempt to converse with it. The choice of the exhibited objects is oriented towards their significance to what they represent: spectator's beliefs, superstitions, or utopias. In addition, each piece of the exhibition shows a phenomenon of simultaneousness. The effect of it is questioning the spectator's relationship with reality, and

³⁴The spelling is an intentional word play - fantasy and phantasm allegory together;

how they project themselves in it. *Paradox Landscape* project tests how we interpret the *signs*, relying on formal correlations and temporal coincidences. Furthermore, the exhibition forms new connections between the presented concepts. The aim of *Paradox Landscape* is not to provide theoretical evidences to distinguish the truth and the facts, but to pave the way for critical and sceptical questioning of Savamala's paradigm. The only challenge with this particular project was the fact that artworks were so conceptual and reduced that it took an extra effort to explain them through artist statement and organised “guiding” through exhibition. Magali helped by being present at the Gallery for most of the time, and by interacting with visitors.

Artworks from left to right: Songe, Blue flower and white rose, Fall of the tree, and bellow, Fantasma



MARLENE HAUSEGGER (AT)

Marlene Hausegger is one of artists and researchers whom Third Belgrade previously got to meet through a partnership project with Steiermark Ministry of Culture. Her residency starts on September 1, 2013 and continues until the end of UiB project trial period i.e., beginning of December 2013. As Magali before her, she will be living and working in Savamala. However, her residency has a theory-based character – she will conduct research and analysis of the *We also love the art of others* curatorial practice. Most (around 80%) of the planned exhibitions will, in fact, take place in the period of her stay in Savamala. Third Belgrade made sure Marlene received material about exhibition and events that happened before, and helped with other preparation and research on Savamala before her arrival.

On a plus side, having a researcher guest in the situation where there is a trial version of the project in place may indeed be very useful. An objective perspective on curated projects, Marlene will provide recommendations as to how to improve the approach and selection of artwork and artists. Thorough analysis of the *We also love the art of others* programme are important for two things reasons: a critical assessment may help enrich Third Belgrade's curatorial practice, and it is also a curious way of learning about Savamala for Marlene as an outsider – through the eyes of artists and their projects.

Additionally, while in Savamala analysing *We also love the art of others* programme as a whole, Marlene will attend to writing reviews for the 6 upcoming exhibition which are a part of the programme. Namely, texts about art exhibitions usually come down to announcements, and having proficient critical analysis is meant to prompt a reviewing culture. In the yearly publications so far, Third Belgrade has included reviews by many prominent Serbian art historians and theoreticians. The hope for the future, and as part of redefinition, is to include a platform which would gather individuals who would take up on professional reviewing not only of exhibitions happening at UiB or Third Belgrade Gallery, but throughout Belgrade and Serbia. As one of the mechanism to reach out to audiences, validate quality and enhance the effect of exhibitions, reviewing falls under group's priority list. Marlene, as a professional and insightful theoretician and artist is of great help in establish the standard for future reviews' platform.

3.4 Selected volunteers' autonomous projects: *Viewpoints workshops* by Lori Baldwin, *Boats: Spaces of Imagination* Valentina Brković and *Savamala Museum of Contemporary Art* by Slavica Obradović

Third Belgrade has, for the first time this year, engaged volunteers for the needs of the Urban Incubator: Belgrade project. So far, there have been five of them in periods of either three or six months.

Volunteering in historical terms meant bringing about social reform. Early advocates saw the role of volunteerism as a cornerstone of democracy. In essence, it is seen as selfless investment of time and effort in resolving issues, whilst receiving no material compensation. However, today's actual use of volunteer work force is somewhat different. Even though the Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the national Volunteering Act all protect the concept from being exploited, in practice things took a different turn. Especially with low budgets secured for culture in Serbia, most organisations and institutions are forced to employ free work force. On the other end, with high unemployment rate of 24,1%³⁵, many people in Serbia have little choice but to offer their services for free, hoping to either increase their chance of employment by adding an additional experience to CVs or that they might eventually get employed at the place of volunteering. Both of these reasons are in strong collision with the historical origins of volunteering. Third Belgrade attempts to re-appeal to notions of social reform and humanity regarding volunteerism, instead of submissiveness and desperation. Volunteering also serves as a kind of mentorship programme for members of Third Belgrade, as each volunteer gets assigned to one of the members. At the very beginning, it was agreed that volunteers are to be selected in accordance with their ability to contribute not only to operative and administrative tasks, but also through discussions and ideas. Furthermore, they are strongly encouraged and supported to take on autonomous projects. As each volunteer has a different perspective, their methods and ideas were sometimes refreshingly different from traditional events that the group had put together in the past. In fact, through activities they inspired, different demographics were attracted. As a result, volunteers themselves felt a sense of ownership and strongly empowered, as their final reports show. Following are some examples of projects Third Belgrade volunteers had implemented.

³⁵ Prema informacijama Republičkog zavoda za statistiku (RSZ) od 28. juna 2013. godine;

VIEWPOINTS WORKSHOPS

*“Viewpoints relieves the pressure to have to invent yourself, to generate all alone, to be interesting and force creativity. Viewpoints allows us to surrender, fall back into empty creative space and trust that there is something there, other than our own ego or imagination, to catch us.” (Anne Bogart and Tina Landau, *The Viewpoints Book*)*

Lori Baldwin, a MAIPR student, was first in the line of volunteers that joined Third Belgrade. She spent three months, between March and May 2013, contributing to the *We also love the art of others* programme through regular social networks and website updates, and eventually an autonomous project – Viewpoints workshops.

Viewpoints is a particular performance technique. It trains bodies and minds with improvisational exercises based on the following 9 viewpoints: tempo, duration, kinaesthetic response, repetition, spatial relationship, shape, gesture, topography, and architecture. Viewpoints relies on the group being open to themselves and one another, with bodies that are ready to respond and work in instant collaboration with others. It explores different possibilities of creating experimental physical improvisations within a non-hierarchical structure. Lori has up to that point held several workshops focusing on the Viewpoints. She felt that the activity might bring up interesting outcomes in Savamala. Namely, each workshop’s outcome is unpredictable and always different depending on precisely on the group and their direct interaction within the framework of 9 aforementioned techniques.

Lori’s idea was to hold two consecutive workshops with two different groups of up to 6 participants. Each workshop lasted for a week. Within the one week, group met three times and trained together, slowly getting to know each other and building unique movement vocabulary. Upon the three training sessions, Lori and the group went to a number of locations in Savamala, and made site-specific interventions; interacting with the space, people and traffic.

The aim of workshops was to provide basics for performance techniques, while exposing participants to spaces in Savamala. There were no limitations as to age, profession or gender. Even though open for all to apply, the main targeted groups were young artists and residents of Savamala. As there is virtually no training in performance for students at Faculty of Fine Arts and Faculty of Applied Arts, this was seen an opportunity to supplement their education. Also, with specific perspective on the Savamala district, the workshop might have been particularly interesting for those living in it.

Two groups of participants were formed through open calls, and their composition is showed in tables bellow.

Age overview of the Workshops participants

AGE	10-18 years	18-25 years	25 – 35 years	35- 45 years	over 45 years
Workshop 1 (5 participants)	0	20%	60%	0	20%
Workshop 1 (4 participants)	0	25%	50%	25%	0

*Amount of art professionals among
Workshops participants*

*Amount of Savamala residents among
Workshops participants*

ARTS PROFESSIONAL	Yes	No	RESIDENT OF SAVAMALA	Yes	No
Workshop 1 (5 participants)	80%	20%	Workshop 1 (5 participants)	40%	60%
Workshop 1 (4 participants)	50	50%	Workshop 1 (4 participants)	25%	75%

Gender wise, participants were 100% female, and one half has had some previous experience in performance (equally dispersed in two groups). Workshops attracted expected numbers of participants (under 6); 5 people in the first and 4 took part in the second Workshop. Among participants, there was a fine number of art professionals, while in the second Workshop, only one individual resided in Savamala. In general, for workshops like this in the future, it would be interesting to attract more people who have strong personal/work/other connection to the district.

The workshops eventually ended in two separate interventions in Savamala; exposing the community to its effect. Also, interventions were recorder, and are available on YouTube:

Viewpoints Workshop 1: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hf_4KkBDpc

Viewpoints Workshop 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6HTJyruKZU>

On one hand, workshops were an important experience for Lori, who **took responsibility for a project and had practice in things she was interested in**. On the other, Viewpoints methodology was suitable for exploration of Savamala. Through combination of intensive training and actual, real life, site-specific interventions, participants got to truly experienced performance as a form of expression. They were often approached by people passing by in Savamala and made conversation about the interventions with those interested in knowing more.

One concern during the preparation period was the fact that Workshops would take place in English. This had significantly narrowed potential participation among core Third Belgrade's fan base. However, it forced the group to use other sources of contacts to share information about workshops (in addition to posters, flyers and social networks). Savski venac Municipality, as one of the partners on the project, was asked to forward the open call through their mailing lists, student parliaments at the University of Arts were contacted, and there were short presentations of Workshops at two other Urban Incubator events. Altogether, two weeks of workshops involved 9 individuals, and exposed many more to its final performance interventions. As far as audience building, this is not much in numbers, however should the workshops of performance (and other skills) take place more often and more regularly, this activity would have for sure made a relevant contribution to interactions with the general public in Savamala.

Photo taken at the Viewpoints Workshop 1



Photo taken at the Viewpoints Workshop 2



“It felt like we were all together in this... It [workshop] made me more aware of where I was at that point – physically and mentally.’

– Participant at the Viewpoints Workshop 2

BOATS: SPACES OF IMAGINATION

„A boat is the heterotopia par excellence. In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates.“ (Michel Foucault)

Valentina Brković, graphic designer and aspiring multimedia artist, has volunteered at the *We also love the art of others* programme during three months of summer in 2013. In this period, she has helped put together exhibitions Re-positioning and Paradox Landscape, both inherently focused on the aspect of space in Savamala. In order to close the cycle of projects dealing particularly with *landscape* and *space*, Valentina took initiative in organising a workshop and presentation around the presence of boats in Savamala, along with the German artist Julia Blawert (Germany) she previously met through Third Belgrade.

The one-day workshop was based on a performance which took place seven months prior and depicted boat project from Frankfurt to the Black Sea in the period from April - October 2014. The project was inspired by Michel Foucault's idea of boats being the “the greatest reserve of the imagination“. The workshop deals with the question of how functional and non-functional boats can be used for artistic, social and/or scientific research purposes in Belgrade. First, participants took a close look at different boat metaphors and discussed the more abstract question of what boats could represent and stand for. Furthermore, they then left the gallery space for a walk along the Sava River. This little field trip was done in order to get inspiration by the many ship wrecks lying around; to trigger ideas and try to transform those into a concrete visual outcome. The aim of this workshop is to develop group artistic visions for possible transformations and use of boats in relation to the context of Savamala and the City of Belgrade.

This workshop was primarily intended for artists of all ages with all kinds of interdisciplinary backgrounds - video/photo/audio artists, painters, sculptures, musicians, performance artists etc. In the evening, at the end of the workshop, a presentation was held which showed a set of developed ideas and envisioned works to wider audience, and prompted discussion. The 8-hour workshop had indeed attracted a number of artists and activists (more precisely 9, predominantly

between 20 and 35 years of age). Valentina and Julia also invested some effort in enagaging Sava River boat onwers who were invited to the presentation. Roughly 20 people attended the presentation; among which 3 boat owners.

Through initial dialogue, Julia and Valentina agreed to take the project a step further; this event would be a start of a longer exchange of ideas and practical work from August / September 2014 and all throughout 2015 in Belgrade. This way a platform would be provided where individuals could think of ways to use boat wrecks in community and art-friendly manner. **Workshops were an initial phase for creation of space that is filled with creative potential and utopian ideas surpassing mere entertainment.**

What was particularly interesting in planning this project was seeing how Valentina had developed her managerial competence; she tied in the characteristics of Third Belgrade's utopian vision and nature of Julia's fascination with boats as potential spaces for creativity. In this way she had also kept up with the continuity in vision. The fact is that one of the main challenges of Third Belgrade's involvement in Savamala so far was maintaining a visible connection between group's strategy and *We also love the art of others* activities.

As the question of internal re-definition of Third Belgrade was made public, some had found it fitting to critisize their involvement in Savamala. They hold that 'growing apart' from the Third Belgrade Gallery is a clear indicator of losing the sense of direction and strategy. On one hand, UiB project serves as a ground for experimentation for what else Third Belgrade could contribute. However, on the other, there is a realistic risk of every trial and error method - losing integrity. It is then an additional challenge for Third Belgrade to maintaining the quality while working in the Savamala context, and clearly link *We also love the art of others* projects with its core values. With the *Boats: Spaces of imagination* project, Valentina has achieved that. This project has dealt with a specific phenomenon of Savamala, managing to translate it into an socially engaged issue regarding places for creativity and art. Also, it included targeted Savamala community members, as well as artists who made the core contribution in ideas as to what could become of boats. Furthermore, it opened possibilities for future collaboration. In many ways, this was one of the most perspective implemented interventions so far.

NEW COLLECTION / SAVAMALA MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Slavica Obradović, a sculpture student, started volunteering for Third Belgrade in August 2013. Immediately, she suggested and then started developing NEW COLLECTION / Savamala Museum of Contemporary Art project. This is therefore, one of the projects in their initial phase; not yet implemented. With the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade closed for over 6 years now, people are prevented access to most of its collections of modern and contemporary art. Furthermore, art students do not enjoy being exposed to historically relevant art concepts, and consequently their education suffers. Slavica Obradović and a group of other art and history of art students have come up with an idea to react to this state of affairs. With the help of Third Belgrade, in the following year, they will conduct a project of creating a Museum of Contemporary Art of their own.

The project will be implemented in three phases, involving around 40 art students and art historians, as well as several locations across Savamala. The first phase is comprised of curators' selection and their research into Museum's collections. This is to be followed by a number of workshops where young curators and young students will take a closer look and discuss concepts of modern and contemporary artwork within the stored collections. They will divide themselves into smaller teams. In the third phase, artists will reproduce or, better, interpret works from the collections. For the purpose of exhibiting created works, all 9 UiB venues will be put into use, as well as possibly venues like KC Grad and Hub Gallery. Furthermore, the plan is to get in touch with as many local shops and put art pieces for display in the shop windows all across Savamala. Each of the exhibition places, carefully put together and marked, will present one piece of the Savamala Contemporary Art Museum puzzle for one entire month. The plan is to organise school tours, discussions etc. in order to draw attention to the issue. It would have been the most normal thing in the world to have museums in Serbia up and running, however due to the aftermath of the recent past, along with many other things, they remain inaccessible to young generations. This project is a radical gesture of students who took the matter into their own hands, and made tangible what was out of their reach; for both themselves and the general public. Moreover, it presents a valuable practice for young artists and curators involved.

4. SUMMARY; CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Third Belgrade feels that the **most sustainable way to attract, develop and preserve audience for art events is to integrate a context-based artistic dialogue into community's identity and everyday life**, as showcased by group's programme *We also love the art of others* at the Urban Incubator: Belgrade project in Savamala.

Savamala, having been in many ways urban materialisation of history and politics of modern-day Serbia, gives an abundance of contextual layers to draw from and work with. It is not surprising, therefore, that the district generated a high interest in the recent years. However, one must be aware of the dangers behind Third Belgrade's involvement there. Precisely because Savamala is currently in focus, and one might even dare say - trendy, the group faces many challenges in retaining its integrity and positive discourse. One of the critical aspects of group involvement in the district and UiB initiative is ethical; how to resists contributing to negative processes of gentrification, and consequently – how to not compromise Third Belgrade's ethos. Whilst evidently, *We also love the art of others* programme serves the purpose of trying out new things and testing a strategy to properly re-define Third Belgrade, **it also presents a transgression in comparison to what was done before, thus, emerging both as an opportunity and a risk.**

The fact is that physical spaces of Osmica and the Third Belgrade Gallery on Danube are different, both in their propensities and functions. Contemporary art Gallery on Danube, while lavish and surrounded by the most amazing nature, is still relatively far away from the city, with undone roads and parking lots. It is also for most part closed during winter time due to river flooding. Osmica Gallery, on the other hand, is located at the wider city centre area and, as a former storage space, is suitable as both gallery and as a venue for workshops, lectures, performances etc. Overly, the aura of exclusivity around contemporary art galleries is definitely less present in Osmica. In a way, **the space in Savamala can be seen as a sort of embassy for Third Belgrade – a window to audience.** This is precisely what the group has recognised and accordingly included in their strategy.

Nonetheless, visibility of the space remains arguable; or better UiB as a project, and Third Belgrade's activity as part of it. Namely, UiB, being in its trial phase, has adopted the following approach: curator Tim Rientz has selected various mostly architecture and arts-related organisations, to which the Goethe Institute lent spaces in Savamala for free use. All organisations, apart from Third Belgrade, are from the German speaking countries, and receive compensation of 10 thousand EUR. For most of its history, Savamala was indeed Belgrade's gateway to the world, a place of exchange and encounter, and new perspectives and creative capital of those coming from abroad are naturally always welcome. Nevertheless, in this case, the amount of funding conditioned most of organisations to make only a few brief visits to Savamala. Further, events are scattered throughout the trial period in an unequal pace. Organisations doing 'their things' on a rather small scale and without proper chance to dig deeper into the Savamala district (or Belgrade) have very little to show for. The situation has become slightly better with the 5-month late opening of the Spanish house pavilion, which serves as a sort of base. However, the entire project lacks proper coordination, common vision and guidance, as observed early on by Third Belgrade's volunteer, Lori Baldwin:

'... one of the biggest challenges the Urban Incubator Project faces is finding who the project is meant for and how they are going to access that target audience. This is one question that Sandra and I continually returned to in our conversations about publicity efforts, workshop attendance, and measuring the success of the project. Who is it ultimately for? It appears that the answer varies depending on whom you talk to. Some people from one organization might have one response, while those of Third Belgrade another, and those of the Goethe Institute yet another. Some perceive the project to be more philanthropic, trying to access the people who live in Savamala, while others merely want to bring an outside audience into the neighborhood. It begs the question: if the true goal of the project is to stimulate the cultural scene in Savamala, does this involve the people who live there? Or is it better modelled after a trickle-down approach, that is, if cultural events are happening, it doesn't matter who is there, as long as these events are happening in the neighborhood. Then, eventually the people of Savamala will receive the benefits of these cultural events. The answer is unclear.'
(Lori Baldwin, MAIPR student; Volunteering report, May 2013)

Apart from high quality artwork and opportunity to engage in artistic activities, Third Belgrade holds that the basis of audience building is inherently a distinct collective vision.

As the UiB vision is lacking, and the project as such fails to live up to its full potential, we ought to acknowledge that this has an effect on Third Belgrade's overall contribution and impact in Savamala. Namely, one of the reasons behind joining the group initiative was multiplying output and effect by collaboration and support within the group. UiB project will revisit its position in Savamala after the trial period ending in November 2013, and will inevitably have to recognise that its format and activities so far present a bit of a paradox in the already paradoxical environment such as Savamala. **Nonetheless, we also must acknowledge that given the circumstances, Third Belgrade did a series of significant events and interventions, and more importantly - started a number of processes.** Considering that infrastructure for production and consumption of contemporary fine art is largely undeveloped in Savamala (and Serbia), as part of events such as Savamala ArtSample talks with young artists, a platform was created that caters for mutually education interactions between audience, artists and art managers. By and large, the *We also love the art of others* programme is rather **diverse**; from carefully planned and interconnected exhibitions, to talks and performance workshops, all the way to exposing high quality artists from different environments and backgrounds to Savamala, Serbian art scene and audience; and vice versa. Third Belgrade's relative aesthetics makes way for **principles of inclusion and accessibility in production, selection and presentation of artwork** (perfect example of that are 'Common Dining Table' and 'I am not my body' performance). The absolute subjectivity of Third Belgrade's position in Savamala is precisely its main advantage. As a result, the audience for events is steadily growing, and apart from the age group of *under 18*, Third Belgrade has managed to evoke interest in roughly 2 thousand people so far. Furthermore, individuals often choose to come back and attend other events, which is a sign of a more sustainable relationship. Given the delicate phase in Third Belgrade's genesis and overall UiB environment, one would not be wrong to regard *We also love the art of others* as a relative success. It is a good example of highly contextualised, yet at the same time rather universal approach to communicating art and reaching out. As Third Belgrade is offered the space in Savamala for at least two years more, following are some recommendations to help improved group's activity and impact regarding audience development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As previously mentioned, what characterises *We also love the art of others* programme and activity in Savamala, is that it is a space meant for experimentation and further development of Third Belgrade's mission. Many different events were organised, and continue to be organised by Third Belgrade in Osmica Gallery, addressing a variety of art production and consumption issues. By now, it is possible to identify aspect that have a potential for improvement and make recommendations as to how to do so. Following are some of them.

a) *More visibility.*

Currently, visibility and effectively accessibility of *We also love the art of others* programme is achieved through branding of the space, interactions, regular exhibiting and performing activity in the Osmica Gallery and various public spaces in Savamala. However, all of the events are on a rather small scale. On one hand this is due to the Osmica Gallery space capacities, but also due to the general lack of interest in traditional art exhibitions. The group of Third Belgrade was formed precisely as an answer to visibility issues within (art) community in Belgrade and Serbia; this principle is strongly embedded in the activity in Savamala, too.

One of the possible ways to deal with the limited visibility of the *We also love the art of others* programme, as an autonomous entity within UiB project, is to organise larger and more elaborate events. With the *NEW COLLECTION / Savamala Museum of Contemporary Art* project such tendency is started. This particular project engages multiple venues and public spaces in reach of Savamala residents and passersby, as well as a larger number of authors and curators. School tours and other side activities will hopefully increase the awareness about the project and issues behind it that inspired action. Generally speaking, events at the Third Belgrade Gallery have already managed to reach out to many and establish themselves as 'must go' happenings; the goal for Third Belgrade's activity in Savamala should be to exceed numbers and quality of audience attendance at the Third Belgrade Gallery.

Therefore, one of the ways to do so is to be overly more ambitious when it comes to the scale of exhibitions and other side events such as artist talks, workshops etc. Currently, having regarded the conclusions of this thesis, the group is preparing an intervention to mark the closure of the trial period in November. Intervention consists of placing metal inscriptions reading *YOU ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND TO*, calling for and referring to a level of consciousness and active participation in the act of attendance in (artistic) events.

b) *Programmes targeting the age group under 18.*

Third Belgrade's audience analysis had shown poor interest of young people under 18 to attend *We also love the art of others* events. This is naturally for most part due to the fact that none of the (side) events have targeted precisely this age group. In order to improve the general literacy about basic visual arts code and language, it would be of essence to create programmes for children and teenagers, and thus contribute to their education and understanding of contemporary visual art.

c) *Better post-production of Savamala ArtSample talks.*

Savamala ArtSample talks with young artists have proven to be successful in various respects: audience and artists' education, connecting physical spaces of Third Belgrade and Osmica Gallery within one mental space, contextualisation of art and affirmation of good art practices. Initially, one of the main goals was to record the talks and make them available online. However, due to the fact that editing is done by Project Manager, and the task is time-consuming, videos are still not online. One of the priorities for the future is to find an individual for the job of recording and editing videos professionally, and publishing them in the reasonably short succession after the talks have taken place.

d) Expanding the concept of Savamala Sample talks.

The physical creation of art becomes the evidence for the inner aesthetic meaning and our task is to interpret this meaning. Savamala ArtSample talks are at their core meant for better interpretation and communication of contemporary art, in addition to affirmation of good art practices. One of the important aspects was networking with other cultural institutions and organisation in Europe (and potentially worldwide) and making a common channel for recoded talks. Currently, in the trial period, there is one partner - Creative Carbon in Glasgow. Apart from sharing the concept to other countries, it could also be expended to cater for other areas such as research and cultural policy topics. Namely, art consumption does not only depend on contextualisation of art but the wider socio-political and cultural factors, and it would be highly useful (if not necessary) to establish a ‘Sample talk’ forum for discussion over issues surrounding these factors.

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Savamala ArtSample #2 Trailer: [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEoE594Wu6Q>]

Savamala ArtSample #3 Trailer: [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JpqzPERzLG0>]

Savamala ArtSample #4 Trailer: [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmfqwm3ODCQ>]

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Urban Incubator: Belgrade, official blog [<http://www.blog.goethe.de/urbanincubator>]

UIB YouTube channel: [<http://www.youtube.com/user/urbanincubator>]

Viewpoints Workshop 1: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hf_4KkBpC]

Viewpoints Workshop 2: [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6HTJyruKZU>]

6. APPENDIX: Biographies of Third Belgrade members and Internship report

by Lori Baldwin

BIOGRAPHIES



ANICA VUČETIĆ

Born in 1962 in Belgrade, Serbia. Graduated with an MFA degree in painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. Works mostly on video installations and video ambiences. Freelance artist since 1986. Lives and works in Belgrade. *Contact: anica_vuc@yahoo.com.*



OLIVERA PARLIĆ

Born in 1971 in Belgrade, Serbia. Earned an MFA degree in sculpture at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. Currently engaged in PhD studies at the same Faculty. Since 2005, works Assistant Professor at the Faculty. Lives and works in Belgrade. *Contact: parlico@sezampro.rs.*



MARINA MARKOVIĆ

Born in 1983 in Belgrade, Serbia. Graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. A Fellow of the Young Visual Artist Award and Mangelos Award for 2011. Lives and works in Belgrade and New York.



SANJA LATINOVIĆ

Born in the 1983 in Serbia. Graduated from Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade at the department of sculpture. Lives and works in Belgrade.

Contact: rem_faza@yahoo.com



RANKO ĐANKOVIĆ

Born 1978 in Osijek, Croatia. Studied sculpture at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. Lives and works in Belgrade.

Contact: ranko.djankovic@gmail.com.



RADOŠ ANTONIJEVIĆ

Born 1969, Serbia. Visual artist and educator. Holds an MFA degree from the Faculty of fine Arts in Belgrade where he is currently finishing his PhD project. Works as Assistant Professor at the same

Faculty. Contact: radosantonijevic@yahoo.com.



SELMAN TRTOVAC

Born in 1970. in Zadar, Croatia. Studied at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. Completed a master degree at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf. Member of International Artistic Gremmie IKG since 2003. Currently enrolled in PhD studies at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. Lives and works in Belgrade. Contact: selmantrtovac@gmail.com.

INTERNSHIP REPORT BY LORI BALWDIN

Following is the report of Third Belgrade's first volunteer – Lori Baldwin. I find this report to be rich in observation and successful in conveying the atmosphere of the UiB project in its initial phase. Note that analysis is focused less on the actual *We also love the art of others* programme and more on the entire UiB project as such³⁶.

'I was sitting at a table that was longer than it was wide, observing the invisible line that seemed to cut it into two lengthwise. As happens in large dinners, this invisible line dictates who talks to whom – people only converse with those who are sitting on their side of the line. Sandra Stojanovic, my colleague and the project coordinator at the Third Belgrade Urban Incubator project, was sitting next to me, whispering explanations of the identities of the people sitting at the table.'

"And what's the point of this dinner?" I asked, curious to find out who was paying for my food and why.

"To socialize and let people in the city government know what the Urban Incubator project is doing."

"So if that's the point," I started, "why are the people from the government sitting on one side and all the artists on the other?"

A man sitting next to me turns and says with a wry smile, "that's just how it is."

We laugh, as people do in situations like this. For what other response can one have but to laugh? I think how this situation is just a microcosm for the larger gap between artists and the governing bodies. Even when they are supposed to come together, sit at the same table, and share what is happening, an invisible line divides them. I had known of this gap before, but I had never seen it so clearly illustrated.

³⁶Mentioning of *organisation* in the text refer to the whole UiB organising team, and not only Third Belgrade;

This is not a problem only specific to the context in Belgrade; I would imagine it is present in most contemporary artistic, creative, and even academic circles. The politics of the governing body bleed over into these fields: on issues of funding and permits, access and space. My experiences with Third Belgrade, as well as in the classroom in Belgrade, have heightened my awareness of the fraught relationship between governing bodies and artists. I am still searching for the tools with which to face these challenges. Perhaps that comes with more practice?

Practice. More practice. My classroom training in MAIPR, the classes on socially engaged art and curation, were insufficient when I tried to apply them to a real-life situation in Third Belgrade. I do not fault the classes; learning within the classroom brings a student understanding only to a certain point. What follows is practice, taking the things that one learns and embodying them in different situations one encounters in the field. For example, in-class debates on the validity and purpose of public art projects can influence how one approaches working with an organization engaged in such projects.

However, satisfactory practice typically requires far more than just a 3-month internship with an organization. It would require, on my part, a longer commitment to the project. This was no surprise, as I usually find personal input into projects needs more than three months if it is going to take root and truly grow.

Other than reaffirming my prior belief that one needs to forge a more sustainable and committed relationship to a project, I gleaned much from my internship with Third Belgrade. Likewise, I was able to contribute to the project, albeit in such a short time. Overall, we shared a rather symbiotic relationship, one in which I was learning and Third Belgrade received both concrete products of my labor as well as an alternative perspective on the project.

When I arrived, Third Belgrade had just started a new project in partnership with the Goethe Institute. The Goethe Institute was beginning a new experiment – the Urban Incubator project, one that they would try in Belgrade, in the neighborhood in Savamala. Their intention is eventually to expand it other cities worldwide. The idea is to partner with pre-existing organizations, give them spaces to work in within Savamala, and encourage a revamping of the

cultural scene in that neighborhood. Though Savamala used to be a symbol of wealth and commerce in Belgrade, it has suffered from decay and neglect, and now is home to many abandoned buildings and broken facades. It has received more attention in the past 5-10 years, with private companies turning some of the abandoned buildings into trendy clubs and restaurants. The Goethe Institute's model and intention is different – encouraging cultural activity as a way to spawn development and investment.

The Urban Incubator project revealed to me a new concept and model for creative and artistic projects that intervene in particular spaces. According to Sandra, the Third Belgrade Urban Incubator project coordinator, the project's aim to increase the perceived value of the neighborhood by programming artistic and cultural events (workshops, lectures, exhibitions, performances).

However, one of the biggest challenges the Urban Incubator Project faces is finding who the project is meant for and how they are going to access that target audience. This is one question that Sandra and I continually returned to in our conversations about publicity efforts, workshop attendance, and measuring the success of the project. Who is it ultimately for? It appears that the answer varies depending on whom you talk to. Some people from one organization might have one response, while those of Third Belgrade another, and those of the Goethe Institute yet another. Some perceive the project to be more philanthropic, trying to access the people who live in Savamala, while others merely want to bring an outside audience into the neighborhood. It begs the question: if the true goal of the project is to stimulate the cultural scene in Savamala, does this involve the people who live there? Or is it better modeled after a trickle-down approach, that is, if cultural events are happening, it doesn't matter who is there, as long as these events are happening in the neighborhood. Then, eventually the people of Savamala will receive the benefits of these cultural events. The answer is unclear.

In my time, I was able to distinguish three identified audiences specifically for the Third Belgrade activities within the Urban Incubator project:

1. *The pre-existing audience of Third Belgrade (including, but not limited to, Third Belgrade's friends on Facebook, artists who have exhibited and worked*

- (with Third Belgrade, and people who have already attended a Third Belgrade event)*
2. *Those who identify as artists or cultural workers in Belgrade (there is much overlap between the first and second group)*
 3. *People who live in Savamala*

However, there is not a clear decision as to which is the target audience, or which it should be. The project is in its first few months of development, and not surprisingly, the bulk of the public that have attended our events and workshops are those who found out about it through Third Belgrade social media or personal connections within the group. Sandra and I have shared lengthy discussions about this, debating the benefits and drawbacks, and considering the ever-present question: so we know who are current audience is, but is that who it should be? Which ties into a larger question: what is the goal of Third Belgrade in the Urban Incubator project? They have two years in a space to curate exhibitions and events, what is the outcome they want? As much as I could, I tried to encourage Sandra to think about these questions, and we discussed them, though I felt incapable of coming up with sufficient answers. Again, I cite my lack of time with the organization and also my position as an outsider that hindered me from seeing a clear solution.

I think one thing is clear: it is necessary for those within Urban Incubator to create time and space for a larger continual conversation amongst all the organizations involved in the project. All would benefit from increased cross-project communication - each organization could more clearly identify and establish both their goals and audience. This experience showed the importance of cross-organizational communication and the sharing of ideas, particularly in projects that are interconnected. Though each organization that forms a part of the Urban Incubator has their own method, goals, and strategies, a great cohesion within the project overall could be found if more constant communication channels were opened and maintained. If I was going to spend a longer period of time with Third Belgrade, this is something I would attempt to establish.

From my perspective, the project overall would benefit from more communication, more clarity in terms of audience and goals, and a clear searching for and defining of strategies for reaching

those goals. However many of these things are found not in the conference room, but are discovered when an organization or a person takes action and responsibility for finding them. This does not undermine the need for discussion, but ideas and strategies cannot start and end there. There must be practice behind them. Research and practice benefit from one another and operate together both within academia and in the workplace.

The process of trial and error is one that becomes very familiar, particularly in a newly founded project like this, one that is indeed still in an experimental stage. With time and trying different strategies, one begins to see what works and what does not. For example, with our first ArtSample event, we saw that Facebook can bring us at least fifty people to our space. Yet they by and large people who already either knew the artists or Third Belgrade.

So we ask again, is this enough? Is there a different way to reach people who wouldn't normally come to an event like this? Is that what we want? And then we go back to discussions, and decide that we should try covering Savamala in posters, and see what happens. But will posters for one event be enough, or do we need to continue increasing the visual presence of Third Belgrade's Urban Incubator within Savamala through weekly or bi-weekly poster hangings? And how will we measure the success? I have learned that this constant renegotiation of methods and goals, strategies and audience is an essential part of the process particularly within the early stages of a project.

My experience with Third Belgrade has shown me that it is not necessarily detrimental to have a project that is not very clearly defined at the beginning. Sometimes the project's definition emerges as a part of the process. Of course one begins with some vague idea of what will be happening. But in a project like this, there is much space for variation. At first this vagueness, this space for growth and change, both confused and intimidated me. Yet I have grown more able to accept it within this context. I would expect that this perspective would continue to help me in my dealings with cultural institutions in the future. It is not the last time I will be engaged in a similar project.

The majority of my contributions to the Third Belgrade Urban Incubator project were very tangible and concrete. I was able to use my previous experience and practical knowledge in ways that were useful and practical. I shot and edited video and photo material from the ArtSample event and the Viewpoints workshop. I taught Sandra how to use Final Cut Pro and the basics of the camera so that she can continue to handle the documentation on her own after I have left.

Additionally, I led two one-week long Viewpoints Intensive workshops with participants from Belgrade, each culminating in a site-specific Urban Intervention in Belgrade. I brought in my performance training in order to create a workshop that, while being slightly outside of Third Belgrade's typical focus (they deal mostly with visual arts) was able to fit in within the context of the Urban Incubator project. It was also my intention with this workshop to demonstrate how performance can have a place within a visual art context, particularly as I was working mostly with visual artists that were looking for an alternative form of creative expression. I hoped that the workshop would encourage Third Belgrade to consider alternative artistic practices within the Urban Incubator project, to expand their possibilities for programming and audience engagement.

Other than these two contributions, the third most apparent contribution I gave was an outside eye, an alternative perspective. It is difficult for me to measure the success that I had in this, as it still remains to be seen how the project will develop and carry on. However, I do believe that conversations I shared with Sandra regarding public art, the purpose of the project, the role of the curator in programming, and how to access the desired public, were helpful in casting a new light on these issues. Though I wasn't quoting any theoretical texts, I recognize that the knowledge I was gaining through my courses on curation influenced both what I discussed and how I approached it.

This internship was a necessary and useful practical element of the MAIPR course. It clearly showed me that scholarship, without practice, is just scholarship, and remains within academia's walls. Though a deep-rooted contribution needs more time to be cultivated, I did learn from Third Belgrade how they balance their artistic practice with their work practice, and

how the two can inform one another. However, I still feel a gap between classroom learning and trying to position that knowledge within the context of an organization. There were many times when, in conversation with Sandra, I felt like I had insufficient knowledge or ability to tackle a problem. Yet I am still left with the question: is this learning meant to come from the classroom or from practical work experience? Or is it some combination of both?

Though scholarship without practice is just scholarship, I still recognize its usefulness and necessity. Scholarly research within this program has enabled me to develop and access new ideas, and has given me knowledge and tools with which I can approach the creative, artistic, and academic worlds with a new perspective. However, my internship with Third Belgrade has added a new layer, an acknowledgement that scholarship or research can inform practice even within the workplace. One just has to intentionally access it. ‘ (Lori Baldwin, June 2013)

7. AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

SANDRA STOJANOVIĆ was born in Nikšić, Montenegro on August 14, 1988. In 2007, she graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, in the class of Prof. Gordan Nikolić. The same year, she enrolled in the master course at the same Faculty. During this period, Sandra served as the Student Vice Dean. Following the completion of the MFA in Painting, she went further to attend the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management course.

For over seven years, she has been an active Alumna of the youth network of NGOs in Europe, called European Youth Parliament (EYP). Throughout 2011 and 2012, after having established EYP Serbia, she presided over the organisation and founded offices in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš. Sandra attended over 40 sessions and forums as peer educator within network. Currently, she coordinated the Board of National Committees, the Assembly of EYP International.

From November 2012 until March 2013, Sandra was an intern at the Visual Arts department at the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Serbia. After that, she went on to become Project Manager of the Independent Artistic Organisation Third Belgrade (Treći Beograd), where she remains currently employed.

All throughout, Sandra has been actively exhibiting. Some of her notable exhibitions are:

- Independent Art Scene Exhibition in Split, March 2012;
- Festival Š.U.N.D., ArtCentar, Belgrade, May 2011;
- Exhibition at the Festival of Student Film, KU Parobrod, Belgrade, March 2011;
- FESTUM exhibition, SKC, Belgrade, May 2010;
- Drawing exhibition, Gallery 107, Zemun, March 2010;
- Student exhibition, Magacin Gallery, Belgrade, November 2009, March 2010 and November 2011 etc.

