



During the mid-1950s the process of modernization in the city of Zagreb was in a full swing, post-war restoration was at its peek, and the center of the socialist modernization was the present-day Avenue of the city of Vukovar. In the 1960s the experience of this avenue was transferred to the New South Zagreb, new socialist town that emerged south of the river Sava, a part of the city that we still call – Novi (New) Zagreb, although its first settlements are older than half a century.

The project **Steps of the City 1957-2017**, via which we are critically observing the concept of “development” of the city on the example of Avenue of Vukovar City as well as the models of city representation in various media, was named after the movie **Steps of the City** (director Branko Majer, production Zagreb-Film).

Majer’s propaganda film begins with the sentence “The year is 1957. The city has taken great steps southwards”. In 1957, this avenue from which Zagreb began to grow to the south got the name the Avenue of the Proletarian Brigades and kept it until 1991. ‘Envisioned as the Moscow Boulevard in the first city post-war vision by the Urban Institute of the Ministry of Construction of the People’s Republic of Croatia and its director, the architect Vladimir Antolić’ (Ivanković), this street, the avenue or a boulevard ^[1], was conceptualized as the city center already in 1946 and 1949. The film almost cites the contemplation of architects of that era. Ivan Zemljak said that ‘the street becomes a great manifestation of collective spirit and appearances’; Božidar Rašica claimed that ‘the contemporary urban and architectural concept must be progressive to such an extent that it can be carried out in the time of our existence’; Peroslav Ilijić said that ‘the Street of the Proletarian Brigades gives an amazing picture of the conflict of the past and the endeavors of the present’ (Ivanković).

The film highlights exactly Ilijić’s words: a conflict between the

so-called “past”, embodied in small houses that still today auto-represent themselves as survivors of the rural matrix of Trnje (once a village, nowadays the city district that the Avenue of Vukovar City is a part of), and the modernity, materialized in the iconic works by architects Ivan Zemljak, Neven Šegvić, Božidar Rašica, Stanko Fabris, Peroslav Ilijić, Kazimir Ostrogović, Radovan Nikšić, Milan Grakalić, Ivo Geršić, Milan Žerjavić and many more who gave shape to the avenue whose basic morphology has been kept to the present.

However, “the periphery that stood against the steps of the city” proved itself far more resistant than Antolić’s plans could have predicted. Perhaps precisely because the “periphery” felt endangered, as Pasinović wrote: “the concept and the representatively thought-out road, with its traffic-oriented character, its speeding scale, and supra-human perspective cut the city without mercy”.

Although the Avenue of the city of Vukovar today also in various ways cuts through the city, the value of its integral urban concept as well as of some particular works is undeniable. However, there are many interstitial spaces for improvement. We hope to locate them and contribute to improvements. Join us!

Association for Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Research

[1] In 1949, i.e. in the time of presentation of Vladimir Antolić’s city master plan, the Avenue of the city of Vukovar (then the Moscow Boulevard) was envisioned as the link between two planned but never built train stations – one eastwards and the other one westwards (Ivanković : 179).

Bibliography
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Steps of the City 1957-2017





:: Program ::
 NEIGHBOURHOOD CINEMA ::
 Zagreb ::
 June 15th - July 18th

June 15, 2017 :: 21.30 – 23.00
 Park 100. brigade
 within the program “Cinema in the district” at the Festival Design District 2017 (June 13th – 18th)

Film Screening :: free entrance :: English subtitles

Moj stan / My apartment
 1962, 14', dir: Zvonimir Berković, production: Zagreb film

Ljubica / Violet
 1978, 91', dir: Krešimir Golik, production: Croatia film

Although these films were selected for the Design District Festival because they mirror the part of Zagreb along the Martićeva Street, which is the *locus* of that festival, the location sites are also linked to the Avenue of Vukovar City.

Protagonists of the short documentary *My apartment* move from the city center (Mrazovićeva St) to today's Savica (Miljackina St), not far from the Avenue of the Proletarian Brigades (now the Avenue of Vukovar City) – as it is said in the film, to “the future city center”. A girl through whose critical eye we analyze Zagreb from the beginning of the 1960s, spots the difference between her new apartment, which belongs to the so-called temporary after-war architectural typology (all those buildings are still standing, proudly resisting the time), and modernist buildings that are created in the center of the city, such as the famous skyscraper built for the employees of the National Bank in Laginjina St in 1962 (that is, in the year when this film was created), by the architect of Ivo Vitić, whose hundredth birthday is celebrated this year. Last but not least, this film won the first prize in short documentary category in Cannes in 1962.

The protagonist of the movie *Ljubica* / “*Violet*” (magnificent actress Božidarka Frajt) spends her days between a rented one-room apartment of the mentioned after-war architectural typology and her work in the Rehabilitation Center for Children with Speech Difficulties and Hearing Impairment. While we are following the everyday life of a young woman who is trying to emancipate herself equally from her husband and his parents as well as from a younger lover, and simultaneously to get a permanent job and thus the right to win own existence and care for her little son, we are moving along with her both through marvelously filmed intimate spaces and Zagreb jugulars – Zvonimirova, Ilica, and Savska St, and the Avenue of the Proletarian Brigades. Film conveys Zagreb as it was in the mid 1970s, seemingly long time ago, but in many ways so similar to what it is today.

July 8, 2017
 Fun Lab, 3 Trnjanska St
 11.00 – 13.00 workshop for kids :: only in Croatian language

21.30 Film Screening :: free entrance :: English subtitles

Koraci grada / Steps of the City
 1957, 12', dir: Branko Majer, production: Zagreb film

Martin u oblacima / Martin in the Clouds
 1961, 110', dir: Branko Bauer, production: Jadran film

informal discussion after the screening
 moderator: Hrabren Dobrotić, Professor of Comparative Literature

The propaganda film *Steps of the city* is a significant document of the never-completed transformation of the semi-rural district of Trnje, occupied by workers’ homes, often built without permission, into the utopia of socialist modernism. From today’s perspective, the film powerfully, while bursting in the sounds of winning trumpets, highlights the impressive images taken of high-rise buildings, from where the gaze is almost scornfully lowered to small, modest self-built houses. When a camera enters the yard of a family that is just moving from one of those households, carrying everything it has on several trucks, the music is more compassionate, elegiac and emphasizes the melancholy of vanishing space: “in the place of curving and narrow paths” there are “big roads of a new city” emerging.

The film *Martin in the Clouds* abounds in veduta alike images and icons of the 1960s (sometimes also contemporary) Zagreb: Meštrović’s *Well of Life* on the Marshal Tito Square, the express restaurant *Splendid* at Zrinjevac, or parts of a renowned *Family and Household* exhibition held at, as said in the movie, – *Velesajam*” (*Fair*). The exhibition had the social role of bringing new modern housing forms closer to people who moved in large numbers from small and rural areas, to rapidly industrialized Zagreb. Martin is a student, subtenant in a small room (a so-called “maid’s chamber”, in which a serving maid used to live) inside a luxurious bourgeois apartment owned by the retired archeologist Solar on Marulić Sq. The plot begins when Martin stays alone in a large apartment, as an archeologist (though retired) goes on a four month study on the Adriatic coast. Martin is being advised to invest in the housing co-operative in order to finally get an apartment, where he could live with his girlfriend Zora. However, Martin will get into trouble...This slapstick comedy is a real film treat, and one of the first film roles of the legendary Croatian actor Boris Dvornik.

July 12, 2017 :: 21.00 –23.00
 POGON – JEDINSTVO, Center for Independent Culture and Youth
 Trnjanski nasip bb

Film Screening :: free entrance :: English subtitles

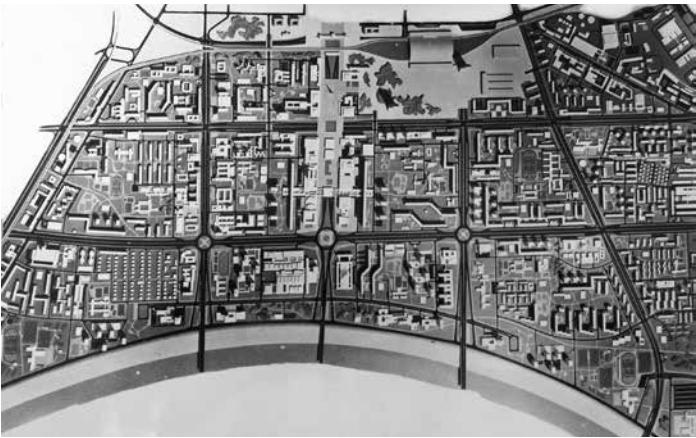
Nezaposlena žena s djecom / Unemployed Woman with Children
 1986, 12’ dir: Krsto Papić, production: Zagreb film

Živi bili pa vidjeli / That’s the Way the Cookie Crumbles
 1979, 97', dir: Bruno Gamulin & Milivoj Puhovski, production: Zagreb film

Both films thematize the state of Croatian society that in the 1970s entered a phase of thorough re-examination, which is particularly reflected in the highly critical film production of the period.

Films such as *Kuća* / *House* (Bogdan Žižić, 1975), *Ljubica* / *Violet* (Krešo Golik, 1978), *Posljednji podvig diverzanta Oblaka* / *The Last Stunt of Commando Cloud* (Vatroslav Mimica, 1978) are only few of the titles that together with *That’s the Way the Cookie Crumbles* openly address corruption via cinematographic means, more and more pronounced class inequality, unemployment and consumers’ greed.

Elegiac documentary form of the short film *Unemployed Woman with Children* also pinpoints those problems which in the 1980s culminate in stigmatization of unemployed to the painful state of outcasts, while at the same time clearly underpins the gender perspective of that stigma.



:: stay tuned for our future events

September 28, 2017
 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, 3 Ivana Lučića St

100 Years of Film: Between Revolution and Re-Membering
 Revolution :: Gal Kirn, lecture :: free entrance :: in English language

The lecture of Gal Kirn is envisioned as a panoramic view of the paradoxical and intense relationship between film and revolution in the perspective of the centenary of the October Revolution. Soviet early cinematography sought to be a constituent part of the revolution, both in political (in terms of participation in the revolution) and in the aesthetic spectrum (montage). Kirn will briefly compare various methods of acceleration (Medvedkin’s Cinema Train, Eisenstein’s mounting of attraction, etc) as well as new models of perception and sensitivity (Vertov’s “Man with a Film Camera”) and try to answer the following questions: what were the advantages and weaknesses of these methods and models, and how these films already created a memory of the revolution, as some emerged during the 10th anniversary of the Revolution. In the last part of his lecture, Kirn will question the ways how these models continued to be and / or were exposed to immanent criticism in the 1960s.

Gal Kirn is Affiliated Fellow at the ICI Berlin. He was also Postdoctoral Researcher at the Slavic Department at Humboldt University and Research Fellow at the ICI, Akademie Schloss Solitude and the Jan van Eyck Academie. He holds a PhD in Philosophy from the Graduate School of the University of Nova Gorica. He has written a Slovenian-language book on the Partisan ruptures and contradictions of market socialism in Yugoslavia (Sophia, 2014). Kirn has also contributed essays to the collections *Partisans in Yugoslavia* (ed. Miranda Jakiša and Nikica Gilić, Transcript, 2015), *Retracing Images: Visual Culture after Yugoslavia* (ed. Daniel Šuber and Slobodan Karamanić, Brill, 2012) and *Raumschiff Jugoslawien / Spaceship Yugoslavia* (ed. Naomi Hennig et al., Argobooks, 2011).

October 25 - November 11, 2017

Exhibition with a working title “Media Representations :: Zagreb 1957 – 2017”
 Modulator Gallery, Center for Culture Trešnjevka, Park Stara Trešnjevka 1

For further details please visit www.uiii.hr and www.cekate.hr or contact us at office@uiii.org.

