

PRESS RELEASE

Istituzione Bologna Musei | Villa delle Rose
Goran Trbuljak
Before and After Retrospective
Curated by Lorenzo Balbi and Andrea Bellini

26 January - 24 March 2019
Opening: Friday 25 January 2019 at 6.00 pm

Bologna, 24 January 2019 - As part of a wider journey of rediscovery to enjoy and experience artists currently working on the international stage, **Villa delle Rose** is delighted to host a retrospective of **Goran Trbuljak**, from 26 January to 24 March 2019, co-curated by Lorenzo Balbi and Andrea Bellini, the first such exhibition held in an Italian museum.

Promoted by **MAMbo - Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna**, this exhibition follows on the heels of the retrospective of the Croat-born artist held at the **Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève** from 30 May to 19 August 2018, linking up with it conceptually to document the main phases of the artist's career. The exhibition features a **wide selection of works**, from Tribuljak's early art of the late 1960s to his more recent production, and taking in the full range of his expressive vocabulary, encompassing **paintings, frottages, monochromes and monograms, photographs, films, books and documentations of his street actions.**

Goran Trbuljak (born in Varaždin 1948, lives and works in Zagreb) can be inserted among the generation of artists who were shaped in the historical and geopolitical setting of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In his work, he seeks to go beyond the artistic tradition in a "socialist modernism" mould that became established after 1950. Compared to artists actively engaged in the conceptual landscape and avant-garde movement of the *New Practice Art*, with its focus on recognising artist authorship and the aura of a piece of art, Trbuljak is known for enacting a strategy that, by radically questioning these two modernist principles, define him as a precursor of postmodern sensitivity.

Trbuljak's aesthetic search probes the boundaries between the foundations of art and anti-art, artist and non-artist seeking for alternative means of production and representation. In his continuous drive to redefine the environment, his musings analyse and decompose the rules that underpin the museum and art gallery system, and also the mechanisms in place to accept something as art.

On the basis of this approach, even the simplest of gestures can act as a tool to **criticise the wider artistic and social order**. Concealed movements - like pushing a finger through a hole in the door of Zagreb's Modern Gallery (*Hole in the door*, 1969) - or fleeting actions performed anonymously in public areas - such as placing photocopies of several photos of holes in the

tarmac on the ground next to the same holes (*Anonymous street actions*, 1970), underline his reflections on the place of artwork with regards to institutions and his position as a young and still unknown artist.

In 1971, with an invitation to show his work at the Student Cultural Centre of Zagreb, Trbuljak found himself engaging directly with institutional spaces. This was the start of a display method known as “exhibition work”, which he returned to until the 1980s. His contribution - a single poster with the statement *I do not want to show anything new and original* followed by his signature *g. trbuljak* - is the radical expression of his refusal to be considered an artist in the conventional sense. The artist subsequently exhibited two artworks produced according to the same visual concept at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Zagreb: *The fact that somebody is given the opportunity to make an exhibition is more important than what is shown at the exhibition* (1973) shines the spotlight on the institutional conceding of “opportunity” as the primary condition of artistic production, while *With this exhibition I maintain continuity in my work* (1979) deconstructs and, at the same time, perpetuates one of the premises for achieving success: continuity, that is creating and retaining a recognisable artistic style.

The solo exhibition at the Galleria del Cavallino of Venice organised in 1977, further explores the relationship between artist and art gallery in the context of international art, in this case, Italy. Playing on an invitation he received from a highly regarded art gallery, Trbuljak presented a series of photographic prints and posters entitled “Exhibition views at Galleria del Cavallino, Venice” that reproduced the enlarged covers of several catalogues of well-known artists published by the gallery. The disorder he introduced within the established order of art production and to the role of this famous gallery - altering its name, publishing its history in the catalogue instead of presenting his own little known career and printing its name on the cover in larger letters than his own - make the suggestion that this institution is not merely an impartial exhibition space, but also has the power to promote art and change the status of the artist exhibiting.

The desecration of the role of authorship, in a spirit similar to the protests of the 1970s, in his subsequent works, he evolved towards the expression of an interior crisis caused by the conflicts within the art world and the implications deriving from his decision to label himself as an “artist”. *Referendum* can be seen as the apex of the humour and self-irony of his language, which threads through all his work. In this street action of 1972, Trbuljak asks unwary passers-by to decide whether he is an artist or not. As his name and art were virtually unknown at that time, the referendum concluded with 259 votes in favour and 204 against, and was therefore totally irrelevant, showing how little it matters whether the person about which we make a judgement is truly engaged in a creative activity, or even if such creative activity exists at all.

The exhibition path at Villa delle Rose documents how in Trbuljak’s search for creativity, his works on paper (vitrines) executed from the 1980s onwards in the form of notebooks and monographies must be considered as critically important, all sharing a common idea that “An artist does an exercise as he waits for the time when he will be ready for the work he will make in future”. Production of this kind, allowed him to set a clear distinction between his “official” activity and his more intimate work, carried out in his home and not intended for

display, but which, however, allows him to fill a “creative space” through manual exercises that have nothing to do with conceptual research.

While basing his thoughts on the processes of appropriation and deconstruction of institutional and curatorial methods, Trbuljak did not avoid the question of his own position and complicity with the world of art. Despite being well-aware of the contradictions engulfing him, he never stopped exploring the possibilities of art, placing his own work between the **passionate defence of artistic work** and its **rigorous criticism**.

The exhibition is complemented by a substantial **monograph** in English prepared by Goran Trbuljak himself and Tevž Logar, published under the title *Before and After Retrospective* by Gurgur Editions in partnership with Snaporazverein, Samedan (GR - Switzerland); Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève; Istituzione Bologna Musei | MAMbo - Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna; Kontakt. Art Collection Erste Group / ERSTE Foundation; transit.cz. The book, with an ample iconographic section, examines the man questions at the heart of Trbuljak's complex artistic practice over the past 45 years, through critical essays by Ivana Bago, Andrea Bellini, Jerko Denegri, Christian Rattemeyer, a curatorial note by Andrea Bellini and Lorenzo Balbi, and an interview with Vít Havránek.

Before and After Retrospective will be inaugurated on Friday 25 January 2019 at 18.00 within the framework of main projects undertaken by **ART CITY Bologna - Art Week**, the programme of institutional initiatives promoted by the City of Bologna in collaboration with BolognaFiere during Arte Fiera. On the weekend dedicated to modern art, the exhibition will have extended opening times: Friday 1, Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 February 2019, from 10.00 to 20.00.

The exhibition was organised with the support of the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Bologna. Special thanks to P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin.

BIOGRAPHY

Goran Trbuljak was born in 1948 in Croatia. He lives and works in Zagreb. His work has been exhibited at Carré d'Art, Nîmes; New Museum, New York; Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz; Museion Bolzano; Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt; Centre Pompidou, Paris, as well as at the 51st Biennale of Venice.

TECHNICAL SHEET

Exhibition

Goran Trbuljak

Before and After Retrospective

Curated by

Lorenzo Balbi and Andrea Bellini

Promoted by

Istituzione Bologna Musei | Area Arte Moderna e Contemporanea

Venue

Villa delle Rose

via Saragozza 228/230 | 40135 Bologna (Italy)

Dates

26 January - 24 March 2019

Opening

Friday 25 January 2019 at 6.00 pm

Opening hours

Friday, Saturday, Sunday h 2.00 pm - 6.00 pm

On the occasion of ART CITY Bologna 2019 Friday 1, Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 February 2019, from 10 am to 8 pm

Tickets

Full € 5 | Reduced € 3 | Free for Card Musei Metropolitani Bologna holders and during ART CITY Bologna 2019

Publishing

Goran Trbuljak. Before and After Retrospective

curated by Goran Trbuljak e Tevž Logar

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English edition

328 pages | 21 x 27 cm

€ 50

Information

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WORKS

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled, 1969
Gelatin silver print and typescript on paper
Cm 29,5 x 21
Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled, 1969
C-print
Cm 31 x 30
Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled, 1970
2 gelatin silver prints and typescript on paper
Cm 29,5 x 21
Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled, 1970
Xerox copies of photographed holes
Cm 21 x 29,5
Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak
I do not wish to show anything new and original, 1971
Type-set print on paper
Cm 60 x 42
Courtesy the artist and P420, Bologna

Goran Trbuljak
Referendum, 1972
Series of 11 silver prints, ballot
Cm 38,6 x 29,9
Type-set print on paper
Cm 9,4 x 14,7
Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak
Anonymous Conceptual Artist, 1972
Letterpress print on card
Cm 10 x 20
Courtesy the artist and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin



Goran Trbuljak
Untitled, 1972-81 / 2001
13 paintings on canvas
Cm 30 x 24 each
Courtesy the artist and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled (Trbuljak - Artist) I/II, 1973
Selection from two series of gelatin silver prints
Cm 30 x 45 each
Courtesy Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
The fact that someone has a chance to make an exhibition is more important than what will be exhibited at the exhibition, 1973
Screenprint on paper
Cm 69 x 49
Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Sunday Painting, 1974
Series of 3 gelatin silver prints
Cm 40 x 30
Courtesy Private Collection, Bologna

Goran Trbuljak
Tambourine (Test of the tautness of canvas), 1974
Primed canvas, bells
Cm 20 x 24 cm
Courtesy Collection La Gaia, Busca, Italy

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled, 1975
3 silver prints, paint
Cm 19 x 44 each
Courtesy Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Cut, 1976
Black and white video, dvd (original on open reel)
29”
Courtesy the artist and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled (A. Calder), 1977
Gelatin silver print



Cm 118 x 115
Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled (J. Dubuffet), 1977
Gelatin silver print
Cm 118 x 115
Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled (P. Klee), 1977
Gelatin silver print
Cm 118 x 115
Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled (Man Ray), 1977
Gelatin silver print
Cm 118 x 115
Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled (G. Mathieu), 1977
Gelatin silver print
Cm 118 x 115
Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Manual (exercise of an artist, for work which will be done in future), 1978
Notebook, colour pencil and colour ink on paper, perforated pages
Cm 29,5 x 20, 120 pages
Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak
With this exhibition I maintain the continuity in my work, 1979
Screenprint on paper
Cm 40,8 x 59
Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Artiste en Crise, 1980 - 1981
Series of 4 gelatin silver prints
Cm 50 x 60 each
Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak

Exercise of an Artist, 1980 - 2018

Handmade books

Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak

Retrospective, 1981

Screenprint on paper

Cm 59,5 x 84,5

Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak

Painted and dropwise from behind, 1984

Acrylic on canvas, wood, glass

Cm 38 x 32 x 5

Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak

Untitled (paint on the back), 1984

Paint on canvas

Cm 38,1 x 33 x 5 (with frame)

Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak

Jazz Brush Painting, 1985

Oil on canvas, bell

Cm 30 x 25

Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak

1#(4)a, 1986

Acrylic on canvas, wood, glass

Cm 37 x 31 x 3

Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak

Jazz Brush Painting, 1987

Oil on canvas, bell

Cm 30 x 27

Courtesy the artist

Goran Trbuljak

Painted from side, 1988

Acrylic on board

Cm 45 x 34

Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin



Goran Trbuljak
Untitled (Teapots), 1988-94 [2003]
Gelatin silver print
Cm 58 x 46,5
Courtesy Collezione Orsini, Mutina, Fiorano Modenese

Goran Trbuljak
Frottage from some reproductions from unknown art magazine, 1991
9 frottages and "Art in America" magazine
Cm 48 x 61 each
Courtesy the artist and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
The Journal of Art 38 and 28 Frottage, 1991
9 selected frottage
Canvas panels, offset print ink
Cm 48 x 61 each
Courtesy l'artista e Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Jazz Brush Painting, 1991
Oil on canvas, bell
Cm 30 x 27
Courtesy the artist and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Tambourine Painting, 1992
Primed canvas, bells
Cm 38 x 30
Courtesy Collection James Keith Brown and Eric Diefenbach

Goran Trbuljak
Ink + acrylic paint through palette hole, 1993
Ink, acrylic canvas, palette
Cm 30 x 27
Courtesy the artist and P420, Bologna

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled (White dot of paint through a hole in the glass), 1994
Acrylic on canvas, wooden frame, glass
Cm 50 x 46 x 6
Courtesy Roberto Ciocca, Brescia

Goran Trbuljak
Self Portrait, 1996



Photo
Cm 46,5 x 58 cm
Courtesy Collection Enea Righi, Bologna

Goran Trbuljak
Untitled, 2006-2008
Series of 8 silk prints mounted on canvas
Cm 71 x 51,5
Courtesy the artist and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
150 handmade monographs, 2010-2013
Handmade books
Courtesy the artist, P420, Bologna and Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

Goran Trbuljak
Sketch for Sculpture, 2013
Photo
Courtesy Collection Massimo Orsini, Mutina for Art, Fiorano

