

IVANA PAPIĆ

BERLIN OBEĆANI GRAD – IZVJEŠTAJ IZ CALL CENTRA

*Kroz svoj participacijsko-umjetnički rad istražujem životne i radne uvjete radničke klase u suvremenom digitaliziranom društvu. I sama sam bila dio radničke klase posljednjih nekoliko godina života u inozemstvu. U procesu umjetničkog istraživanja koristim fotografiju i biografske intervjuje koje kasnije kolažiram u složenu zvučnu instalaciju koja posjetitelje*ice poziva na kretanje i interakciju. Zvuk, priča i prostor su osnovni elementi rada. Prikupljeni narativi odnosno glasovi, njih 13, govore o opresiji radnika*ca, migracijama, identitetu i pripadnosti.*

“Berlin obećani grad - izvještaj iz call centra” je opsežan umjetničko-istraživački projekt u okviru kojeg je Ivana Papić intervjuirala dvadesetak bivših i sadašnjih radnika call centra u Berlinu, agenata i menadžera, mahom mladih i obrazovanih međunarodnih iseljenika. U postavu izložbe protagoniste, koje povezuje posao u call centru u Berlinu, upoznajemo krećući se stanicama instalacije gdje kroz uredske telefone oslušujemo fragmente njihovih života kao slučajni prolaznici u podzemnoj željeznici. Stanice, odn. poglavlja s kratkim pričama prate njihov dolazak u Berlin, rad u call centru i mehanizme opresije s kojima se bore, njihovo poimanje „doma“, i na koncu planove za budućnost.

Berlin je mističan grad, simbol slobode i „boljeg života“, dok je Call Centar simbol kapitalističkog sistema rada i digitalizacije, dvaju svjetova koji se svojim različitim vrijednostima sudaraju i isprepliću. Plodno tlo za call centre korporacije pronalaze u Berlinu zbog velikog priliva expata odnosno imigrantske radne snage koja je zbog velike konkurencije, nedostatka poslova i režima viza često prisiljena prihvatiti niskokvalificirani i uglavnom minimalno plaćeni posao agenta na telefonu. Za većinu protagonista posao u call centru predstavlja stanicu života u Berlinu, zamku i mukotrpano iskustvo koje su prošli da bi u tom gradu ostali i ostvarili svoje snove. Istovremeno postoji konotacija moderne verzije gastrabajtera gdje se radnici call centra uspoređuju s imigrantima koji su u prošlosti odlazili raditi na nisko plaćene fizičke i građevinske poslove u Njemačku.

BERLIN, THE PROMISED CITY – A REPORT FROM A CALL CENTER

Employing a participation-based approach to my art, my aim is to evaluate the living and working standards of the working class in contemporary digital society. In the past few years living abroad, I found myself a part of this same working class. In my artistic explorations, I make use of photography and biographical interviews, which I subsequently assemble in the manner of a collage into a layered sound installation designed to encourage observers to interact and move through it. Sound, Story, and Space form the building blocks of the work. The collection of stories, numbering 13 different narrators, speak of the oppressed status of the working class, of the nature of migrations, of identity and belonging.

“Berlin, The Promised City – A Report From A Call Center” is a comprehensive art-research project wherein Ivana Papić conducted interviews with around twenty former and current employees of a Berlin call center – the group consisted of agents and managers, all young and well-educated immigrants from abroad. The exhibit is set up in such a way that by progressing from one “station” to the next we become acquainted with the different protagonists, the common thread among them being the aforementioned call center. Using office phones, we are able to listen in on fragments from their lives, like passers-by overhearing conversations in the subway. The “stations” of the exhibition, corresponding to different chapters comprising a number of short stories, tell the tale of the narrators’ arrival in Berlin, their time working at the call center, the systems of oppression that they have struggled against, their notions of “home”, and finally their plans for the future.

Berlin is a magical city, a beacon of freedom and a “better life”, whereas the Call Center serves as a symbol for the capitalist work model and digitalization: two disparate worlds that nevertheless collide and intertwine with respect to the various values they uphold. Different corporations see Berlin as an appropriate homebase for their call centers due to the substantial influx of expats, that is to say work-capable immigrants, into the city. Upon arrival, this class of newcomers is often forced to settle for low-skilled underpaid positions such as that of call

Među ostalim, Ivana Papić ovim umjetničko-istraživačkim radom želi se kritički osvrnuti na takav kapitalistički sistem rada jer call centri nisu pitanje prošlosti, štoviše pojedini rastu u vrijeme COVID19-a s ubrzanom digitalizacijom i automatizacijom. Kriju se iza online platformi, iza kulise atraktivnih šarenih ureda sa "start up"-ovima, prividnim osjećajem „obitelji“ i "ravne hijerarhije", dok se u pozadini nalazi ista korporacijska piramidalna struktura moći.

Što smo spremni napraviti da bi ostvarili svoje snove? Kakav je otpor radničke klase moguć prema sadašnjim korporacijskim strukturama moći? Postoji li granica između života individualca i bivanja u tkivu radničkog kolektiva, pogotovo u ulozi imigranta? Ostati u rodnoj zemlji ili otići u inozemstvo kao radnik imigrant, te možda i najvažnije pitanje: možemo li se nakon odlaska uopće više vratiti "doma"?

Interaktivna zvučna instalacija na hrvatskom i engleskom jeziku je 45-minutni audio-dokumentarac, kolaž pomalo šaljivih 27 priča podijeljenih u 9 poglavlja i dostupnih za preslušavanje na 9 za ovu priliku adaptiranih uredskih telefona. Interaktivni dio telefona je rezultat višemjesečnog prototipiranja sa Arduino elektroničkim komponentama. Instalacija prostorno ponavlja shemu Berlinske podzemne željeznice koja je iscrtana na podu izložbenog prostora, dok ambijentalni zvuk čini 5-minutni loop sa zvukovima iz berlinskog U-bahna.

Ivana Papić (Split, 1987.) magistrirala je na Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti Sveučilišta u Splitu, na Odjelu za restauraciju i konzervaciju 2011. godine. Od 2018. studira na specijalističkom postdiplomskom studiju na Institut für Kunst im Kontext na Universität der Künste Berlin. Izlagala je na nekoliko grupnih izložbi u Berlinu, a ovo je njena prva samostalna izložba. Živi i radi u Berlinu te je članica udruge međunarodnih umjetnika u atelier kompleksu WerkStadt.

operator, owing to high competition, a shortage of jobs, and unfavorable Visa regulations. For the majority of our protagonists, the job at the call center represents a station in their life's journey, a trap of sorts, and an overall arduous experience that they each had to endure in order to stay in Berlin and be able to continue pursuing their dreams.

Among other things, Ivana Papić uses her artistic research in an attempt to critically reexamine this type of capitalist work model, seeing as call centers are not yet a thing of the past. On the contrary, a number of centers are seeing a marked growth in this Covid-19 epoch, fuelled on by ever-increasing digitalization and automation. They persist under the ruse of online platforms, often putting forward a façade of appealing colorful start-up office spaces, cultivating an ostensible air of "family" and "flat hierarchy" – all this to conceal the all-too-familiar pyramid-shaped power structure typical of big corporations that continues to operate in the background.

What are we prepared to do in the pursuit of our dreams? What forms of resistance are available to the working classes in their struggle with corporate power structures? Is there a clear dividing line between the life of an individual and a life inextricably tied to the fabric of the working masses, especially as it pertains to immigrant lives? The choice between remaining in one's homeland and moving abroad to become an immigrant worker is compounded by possibly the most crucial of questions: once we've left, does the way back "home" remain open to us?

This interactive sound installation in Croatian and English takes the form of a 45 minute audio-documentary, assembled in a kind of collage comprising 27 different stories further divided into 9 chapters – all reproduced using specially modified office phones. The interactivity of the phone units resulted from a months-long process of prototyping using Arduino electrical components. The layout of the installation echoes the spatial plan of the Berlin underground, as outlined on the floor of the exhibition space. The installation is accompanied by the ambient sounds of a 5-minute loop playing sounds from the Berlin U-Bahn.

Ivana Papić (Split, 1987) acquired her master's degree in 2011 at the Arts Academy of the University of Split, with the Department of Restoration and Conservation. In 2018 she began her postgraduate studies at the Institut für Kunst im Kontext (Universität der Künste Berlin). She has participated in a number of group exhibitions in Berlin, this being her first solo show. She currently lives and works in Berlin, and is a member of the international artists' association at the WerkStadt studio complex.