



PRESTIDIGITATION/OPSENARIJA

David Eckard



NARODNI MUZEJ CRNE GORE  
ATELJE DADO



## Učtivo obmanjivanje

Na stotine amaterskih fotografija sakupljenih sa rasprodatih imanja, iz rasturenih porodica i napuštenih istorija bilo je izmiješano po kutijama na uličnom sajmu u Berlinu. Njihova cijena zavisila je od formata i starosti tako da istorijski sadržaj nije imao veći značaj od privatnog, pri čemu je rođendanska proslava koštala jednako koliko i vojna formacija u pokretu. Pretražio sam ovu anonimnu arhivu i kupio deset slika.

Fotografije su ili namješteni prizori ili, pak, zapisi o ljudima koji su bili svjedoci nečemu posebnom, neobičnom ili jedinstvenom: žestokoj sniježnoj oluji, postavljanju masivnog crkvenog zvona, dječijoj pozorišnoj predstavi, radnicima koji pregledaju neku okrnjenu konstrukciju, borbi za nadmoć. Svaki od ovih snimaka predstavlja tajanstvenu zagonetku istovremeno postavljenu na raznim jezicima. Akteri su nepoznati, lokacije neodređene, dok značaj dokumentovanog događaja izmiče. I upravo ovi čudni događaji i zaustavljene dramske predstave nastavljaju da privlače moju pažnju i da me zbunjuju.

Zaustavljamo nevjericu kako bismo prigrlili iluziju.

Dragovoljno učestvujemo u činovima obmane i stvaramo razučene, obnovljive fasade da zaklonimo neizbježno.

*(Šlagvort mađioničaru)*

*Možda treba da govorim samo u svoje ime.*

*Moj odraz, na koncu, jedini je koji vidim.*

*Napravljeni gestovi okončavaju se na dužini mojih ruku.*

*Zaustavivši nevjericu, grabim iluzije koje sam podstakao i držim ih čvrsto pri majici. Podešavajući manire, metode i stepene ludila da se suočim sa masom, prilagođavam svoje tikove i temperament kako bih se uklopio u ovogodišnji model.*

*Relativna istina i apsolutna ljepota su dvije strane novčića na mom dlanu i neka mi nebo pomogne ako, kada ga bacim, padne na ivicu.*

Prebiram po svojim novim fotografijama i shvatam kako je lako izmiješati zagonetke i stvoriti nove priče sa nasumice biranim akterima.

*“Konstrukcija koju pregledaju je krov koji se srušio nakon brutalne kasnosezonske sniježne oluje. Zvono je građanski spomen onima koji su nestali u martovskoj nesreći a godišnje sjećanje djece na heroizam pokazan tokom te sudbonosne, ledene nedjelje nastavlja se u čast stradalih...”*

To je Roršahov fotografski test mojih vlastitih narativnih sklonosti i dodatna potvrda moje potrebe da dovedem u red nasumične detalje iz života stvarajući utješne, poznate trope kako bih o njih okačio razum, nade i oklijevanja.

*(Ulazi lijevo i maše komadom svile)*

*Zar niste preneraženi... pometeni... zbunjeni?*

*Dajem vam sada ove smirene i besmislene trenutke koji će se uzdići ili potonuti do metaforičkih nivoa za koje vi smatrate da vrijede.*

*Ignorišite ono što mislite da vidite!*

*Ove vidljive žice i klopke koje se ljuljaju naprosto su znakovi interpunkcije ove poezije. Ali molim vas, poštovane dame i gospodo, dajte mi trenutak da postavim zamke i napunim pušku.*

Kada se vratim kući, ove fotografije izmiješaće se sa mojim vlastitim uspomjenama. Ovo nitkovsko miješanje uništiće vjerodostojnost dokumenata iz mog života i prepredeno uljepšati postojeći dokaz moga iskustva.

*(Aplauz jenjava. Prelazi na centralni dio pozornice)*

*Naše je jalovo ubjeđenje da izduvani dim i isprskana ogledala mogu udvostručiti kapacitet ovog mjesta.*

*Potrebno je tako malo truda da vidite ono što mi je potrebno da vidite.*

*Sve opcije su ovdje, zadržane iza kulise, i njišu se u ritmu bubnja.*

Je li to bio Berlin?

*(Svjetlo se gubi)*

*Opsenarska je majstorija oklijevati malo prije spoznaje da se ono što uistinu zasjenjuje može vidjeti samo tokom najkraćih pauza.*

*David Eckard*





## **A Mannered Misdirection**

Hundreds of amateur photos culled from liquidated estates, broken families and abandoned histories were shuffled into boxes at a street fair in Berlin. They were priced by size and age and the historic relevance carried no more currency than the personal with a birthday celebration costing the same as an advancing military formation. I picked through this anonymous archive and bought ten images.

The photos are either staged, performed acts or the record of people witnessing the particular, uncanny or unique: severe snowfall, coronation of a massive church bell, children's theatre production, workers inspecting a truncated structure, tug of war.

Each of these shots is an enigmatic riddle simultaneously posed in multiple languages. The players are unknown, the locations ambiguous and the impact of the documented event remains elusive. It's these peculiar incidents and paused theatrics that continue to engage and confound me.

We suspend our disbelief to embrace the illusion.

We willingly participate in acts of delusion and fabricate elaborate, renewable facades to shield the inevitable.

*(Cue the magician)*

*Perhaps I should speak only for myself.*

*My reflection, after all, is the only one I see.*

*The gestures made end at the length of my arms.*

*Suspended in disbelief, I clutch the illusions I've fostered and hold them close to my vest. Shifting manners, methods and levels of madness to face the crowd, I adjust my tics and temperament to match this year's model.*

*Relative truth and absolute beauty are the two sides of my palmed coin and heaven help me if, when tossed, it lands on the edge.*

I shuffle through my newly acquired photos and realize how easy it is to merge the riddles and tease out new fictions with the randomly auditioned players:

"That structure being inspected is the failed roof that collapsed after the brutal, late season blizzard. The bell is a civic memorial to those lost in the March disaster and the annual reenactment by the children of the heroism displayed during that fateful, frozen week continues to honor the departed..."

It's a photographic Rorschach test of my own narrative predilections and further evidence of my need to order the random occurrence of living by generating comforting, familiar tropes to hang my reason, hopes and hesitations on.

*(Enters stage left flourishing a silk.*

*Are you not confounded... muddled... mystified?*

*I give you now these poised and pointless moments that will rise or sink to the metaphoric levels to which you deem them worthy.*

*Ignore what it is you think you see!*

*These visible wires and swinging traps are simply this poetry's punctuation marks. But please, dear ladies and gentlemen, grant me a moment to set the snares and load the shot.*

When I return home, these photos will be mixed with my own mementos. This rogue integration will rupture the veracity of my lived documents and slyly embellish the offered evidence of my having been.

*(Applause dies down. Walks to center stage)*

*It's our hollow belief that exhaled smoke and spattered mirrors could double this venue's capacity.*

*To have you see what I need you to see takes such little effort.*

*Every option is here, suspended in the wings, swaying to the rimshot cadence.*

Was it Berlin?

*(Lights fade)*

*It's the sleight of hand, hesitating slightly before the reveal knowing that what truly dazzles can only be seen during the briefest intermission.*

*David Eckard*





**David Eckard** 5 Place Paul Gauguin, 29930 Pont-Aven, France  
www.DavidEckard.com, daveckard@earthlink.net

#### EDUCATION

1988 B.F.A. School of the Art Institute, Chicago, IL  
1982-85 Iowa State University, Ames, IA

#### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2009 David Eckard-Sleight of Hand, CIAC, Pont-Aven, France  
David Eckard, Atelier Dado, Cetinje, Montenegro  
Locus, Chambers Fine Arts, Portland, OR  
Liveries (summer stock), Mark Woolley Gallery, Portland, OR (July)  
2006 Float (dry dock), Linfield College, McMinnville, OR  
2005 Heroes and Apparitions, Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, OR  
2003 Tournament (lumens), Consolidated Works, Seattle, WA  
Comeos and Thugs, PDX Gallery, Portland, OR  
Tournament (lumens), The Art Gym, Marylhurst University, Marylhurst, OR  
2001 Miracle Boy, Suyama Space, Seattle, WA  
2000 Gesture In Space, Malhum Architects, Portland, OR  
1999 Cottage, Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, OR  
1998 dandy, Kim Foster Gallery, New York, NY  
feign, William Traver Gallery, Seattle, WA  
1997 Poulitce, Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, OR  
David Eckard, William Traver Gallery, Seattle, WA  
Select Work (1987-97), Kittredge Gallery, Univ. of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA  
1996 Sculpture and Related Studies, Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, OR  
David Eckard, Fassbender Gallery, Chicago, IL  
1995 Recent Work, Index Gallery, Clark College, Vancouver, WA  
1993 New Sculpture, Roger Ramsay Gallery, Chicago, IL  
1992 New Work, Porter Butts Gallery, University of WI, Madison, WI  
1991 Sculpture, Roger Ramsay Gallery, Chicago

#### PERFORMANCE

2007 "5 U.S. Tragedies", Troca:USA, A Gentil Carioca, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
2006 "Float", TBA Festival, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, OR  
"Widow's Walk, Gallery Homeland, Portland, OR  
2005 "podium:Seattle", Northwest New Works Festival, On The Boards, Seattle, WA  
2004 "podium", TBA Festival, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, OR  
"Dear Alice", Interactive Language Festival, 2 Gyriz, Portland, OR, Nov.  
2003 "centaur", Interactive Language Festival, 2 Gyriz, Portland, OR, Nov.  
"message" Interactive Language Festival, 2 Gyriz, Portland, OR, Nov.  
"scribe", Core Sample, Portland, OR, Oct.  
"drawn", Tournament (lumens), Consolidated Works, Seattle, WA, May  
Tournament (lumens), The Art Gym, Marylhurst University, Marylhurst, OR, Feb.

#### GRANTS/AWARDS

2006 Jurors Award, 2006 Oregon Biennial, Portland Art Museum, OR  
2003 Project Grant, Regional Arts and Culture Council, Portland, OR  
1998 Artist Trust Fellowship, Artist Trust, Seattle, WA  
1993 Art Industry, Artist in Residency, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI  
1991 Visual Arts Fellowship, Arts Midwest/ N.E.A.  
Artist's Fellowship Award, Illinois Arts Council  
1990 Community Arts Assistance Program Grant, Department of Cultural Affairs, Chicago, IL  
1989 George D. & Isabella A. Brown Traveling Fellowship, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL  
1988/87 Union League Civic & Arts Foundation Grant, Union League, Chicago, IL