

NEODVISNI

UŽITEK DELA IN DELO UŽITKA

Intervju z Giulio Palladini

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Jernej Kaluža je asistent raziskovalec na Fakulteti za družbene vede. Zadnje čase se ukvarja z raziskovanjem internetnih komentatorskih kultur. Bil je odgovorni urednik Radia Študent in strokovni sodelavec v Asociaciji.

Pogovor z Giulio Palladini, raziskovalko in kritično teoretičarko, zaposleno na Univerzi v Roehamptonu, avtorico knjige *The Scene of Foreplay: Theater, Labor, and Leisure in 1960s New York* (Prizorišče predigre: Gledališče, delo in prosti čas v New Yorku šestdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja; Northwestern University Press, 2017), delo katere se osredotoča na politiko in erotiko umetniške produkcije ter družbene in kulturne zgodovine, se je zgodil ob njenem predavanju na Novi Pošti v okviru festivala Seks in gledališče, 2. 6. 2019.

Vaše delo je po eni strani precej teoretsko – govorite o konceptih predigre, užitka in dela. Toda po drugi strani se zdi, da je mogoče vaša razmišljanja direktno aplicirati na prevladujoče stanje dela znotraj sfere kreativnih in umetniških poklicev, na različne oblike samozaposlenosti, prekarnost itd. Sklepam pravilno in kako bi lahko vaša teorija intervenirala v konkretne oblike dela?

Težko je sicer predlagati prevode teoretskih idej, ki so zelo dragocene kot epistemološki uvidi, v prakso. Ni jih mogoče pretvoriti v nekakšne recepte. V svojem delu se posvečam vprašanju predigre v navezavi na vprašanje dela, produkcije in subjektivnosti. Zanima me, kaj mehanizmi, ki jih omenjate, denimo dejstvo, da smo vsi do neke mere prisiljeni biti samostojni podjetniki, da bi preživel – kaj to naredi s subjektivnostjo delavca in kako oblikuje določeno časovnost dela, odnose, sodelovanja in vzdrževanja teh odnosov. Skrbi me, kako razdrobljenost dela vpliva na naravo umetniške produkcije, zato je eno od vprašanj zame tudi to, kako razviti strukture sodelovanja in solidarnosti, ki bi omogočale drugačno obliko in drugačno razumevanje dela. Drugo pomembno vprašanje zame je vprašanje užitka. Pri Marxu je svoboda definirana kot progresivna razširitev sfere užitka. Sicer pa je o užitku, predvsem o telesnem užitku, zelo zapleteno razmišljati. To je pravzaprav življenjski cilj, nekaj k čemur težimo, nekaj, kar nas motivira. Misliti skušam načine, na katere lahko ustvarimo prostor za užitek in kako v tem kontekstu producirati različne oblike subjektivnosti.

V vašem raziskovanju ste se ukvarjali predvsem z analizo funkcioniranja umetniških krogov oziroma sfer umetniške produkcije v različnih zgodovinskih obdobjih. Ali lahko organizacije dela, ki se izvajajo v sorazmerno majhnih umetniških krogih, služijo kot primeri za organizacijo proizvodnje v večjem obsegu, za organizacijo produkcije kot take?

Vsekakor mislim, da je pomembno, da poskušamo razmišljati o umetniški produkciji kot o nekakšnem laboratoriju za oblike življenja, ki jih lahko izkusimo tudi drugje. Obstaja besedilo, ki ga zelo občudujem in h kateremu se vedno znova vračam: to je esej Walterja Benjamina *Avtor kot producent*. Kar je v tem besedilu zanimivo, je jasen poudarek, da si politično angažirano umetniško delo ne bi smelo postavljati vprašanja o lastni estetski vrednosti, temveč samo sebe dojemati kot dialektični laboratorij za proizvodnjo sveta.

Ali menite, da obstaja povezava ali dialog med marksistično teorijo in aktivizmom na eni strani in teorijo sodobne umetniške produkcije na drugi strani? Včasih imam namreč občutek, da ljudje, ki poskušajo resno razmišljati o političnih rešitvah in alternativah, teh ne iščejo na umetniški sceni.

Tu vidim dva problema. En izhaja iz težnje po »uporabi teorije«. Kot da bi teorija obstajala v drugem svetu in bi se lahko v določenih primerih »uporabila« v tem svetu. Škoda je, da se zelo pogosto, ko se filozofi in teoretiki nanašajo na dejanske umetniške prakse, zgodi točno to: svojo teorijo zgolj aplicirajo na prakso. Mene zanimajo drugačni odnosi med teorijo in prakso. Obstajajo nekatera dela – razmišljam denimo o delu kolumbijskega kolektiva *Mapa Teatro*, s katerim sem sodelovala, pa tudi o delu Janezov Janš – pri katerih praksa dela dejansko že govori o določeni teoriji in proizvaja podobne učinke kot kritična teorija. Delo Janezov Janš je denimo vsekakor vpeto v razmerje med performansom in državo, v mehanizme birokracije, v institucijo privatne lastnine itd. Želim reči, da si je vredno prizadevati za pravi dialog: namesto da razmišljamo, da je teorija »nad« prakso in je lahko uporabljena v praksi, je smiselno razmišljati o praksah, ki proizvajajo teoretična vozlišča in so posledično »uporabne« v teoriji.

Druga točka, ki sem jo želela v tem kontekstu poudariti, je določena nevarnost, ki izhaja iz dejstva, da se veliko sodobnih performativnih praks in sodobnih diskurzov o performansu vse bolj osredotoča na neoliberalizem in gleda na izvedbo kot na metaforo za nematerialno delo, istočasno pa so pogoji produkcije v uprizoritvenih umetnostih v samih delih vse manj obravnavani. V svojem nedavnem delu sem zato poskušala razviti idejo o *domačijskosti performansa* [domestics of performance], ki se zoperstavlja ideji *političnosti performansa* [politics of performance]. Poskušam razmišljati o tem, kakšne spretnosti, dinamike, tehnologije, so potrebne za upravljanje hiše, saj mislim, da manjka razmislek o konkretni materialnosti dela. Podobno kot je denimo Marxov lasten projekt mogoče razumeti kot skrbno analizo, ki izpostavi dejanskost procesa dela.

Bi lahko podrobneje pojasnili enega vaših glavnih konceptov – koncept predigre? Če vas razumem pravilno, se skušate s tem konceptom zoperstaviti maskulini zamisli, da mora vsak korak v spolnem odnosu voditi do končnega cilja, končne eskalacije, ejakulacije. Tovrstno razumevanje velja tudi na polju performativnih praks, kjer je končni cilj dogodek ali performans. Obenem pa to korespondira tudi s klasičnim razumevanjem

produkcije kot take, ki je podrejena proizvodnji končnega produkta, presežne vrednosti.

Koncept predigre je najprej diagnoza, šele nato predlog za nasprotovanje sliki, ki izhaja iz te diagnoze. Menim, da mi koncept predigre omogoča razkriti in hkrati predlagati drugačno logiko obzorju progresivne časovnosti, ki zaznamuje naše trenutno razmišljanje o življenju in delu. Tudi ideja revolucije je nekako vpeta v to: v idejo, da obstaja progresivna temporalnost, v kateri je tisto, kar je na prvem mestu, priprava na nekaj, kar sledi. O predigri sem zato razmišljala kot o človekovi dejavnosti, ki, tako kot delo, na videz deluje v skladu z obzorjem progresivne časovnosti, v resnici pa delujejo drugače. Tudi na politično delo lahko gledamo na podoben način: je pomemben zgolj končni cilj, nova država? Ali ni dovolj resnična stvar že pripravljeno delo, delo za revolucijo, ki bi bila dejanska sprememba, novo obzorje, ki ga ne poznate? Mislim, da je progresivna temporalnost zasnovana na določeni fikciji, koncept predigre pa je tisti, ki razkriva to fikcijo. Tradicionalno razmišljamo o predigri kot o pripravljalnem obdobju za orgazem, vendar mislim, da vsakega dejanja, za katerega je značilna struktura predigre, v resnici ne poganja pričakovanje orgazma. Ponovno je potrebno premisliti razmerje med željo in užitek, saj ni nujno, da je želja pred užitek, zadeva je bolj zapletena.

Vaš koncept predigre, če razumem pravilno, naznačuje tudi idejo dela oziroma produkcije, ki ni podrejena užitku, temveč je sama že užitek. Torej govorimo o delu, ki ni delo za užitek, ki se bo zgodil po delu, nekje v prihodnosti, ampak je vseskozi že tam, v samem aktu dela? Toda ali ni ravno to danes problem, posebej med t.i. kreativnimi poklici; torej ideologija, da je delo užitek, ki prekarne umetnike spodbuja k temu, da cele dneve delajo, prepričani, da uživajo? Ali se strinjate, da je možno tudi tovrstno, ne tako optimistično razumevanje koncepta predigre?

Absolutno. Zato skušam razmišljati, kakšni so načini, na katere si lahko reappropriiramo prostor. Rada bi poudarila, da ni absolutne zunanosti razmeram, ki jih opisujete, razmeram, v katerih že delamo. Dejstvo je, da je ideologija prepletenosti užitka in dela glavni gonilnik samoizkoriščanja. Ta problem me moti in zato želim razmišljati v smeri drugačnih možnosti, ki izražajo iz danega. Pomislite na primer na klasično tovarniško delo – v tem kontekstu je bila tovrstna praksa modalnost avtonomnega dela, s katero so nekateri delavci eksperimentirali, denimo *perruque* [koncept, ki ga je preučil De Certeau]. Med delovnim časom so del tega časa, del orodij in materialov proizvodnje delavci uporabili tudi za samostojno delo, produkte dela pa so lahko uporabili v politične ali privatne namene. Seveda nimam rešitev, ampak logika, ki jo skušam misliti in ki sem jo skušala ponazoriti z metaforo predigre, v kateri je prisoten užitek, ki ga ni mogoče reducirati na končen produkt, gre v smeri drugačnega merjenja časa. Če torej užitek razumemo kot nekaj, česar ni mogoče povsem apropiirati, s kakšnimi merili ga lahko merimo? Kako omogočiti, da neoliberalna logika izkoriščanja in samoizkoriščanja ne bo povsem apropiirala časa in da bo tudi del užitka ostal neappropriiran?

Vaša ideje me v določenih vidikih spominjajo na sovjetsko idejo prolet-kulta. Ali mislite, da bi vsakdo moral delati kakor dela idealiziran umetnik, ki med delom uživa, in da bi moralo vsako delo izgledati kot ta idealizirana podoba umetniškega dela?

Najprej bi rada poudarila, da mislim, da umetniki ne bi smeli biti na kakršenkoli način privilegirani, in če obstaja privilegirani vidik umetniškega dela, bi ga bilo potrebno kolektivizirati. Mislim, da je to zelo pomembno. Strinjam se z Marxovo in Engelsovo idejo iz *Nemške ideologije*, da bi po revoluciji zjutraj lahko bili ribiči, popoldan lovci, zvečer pa umetnostni kritiki. Menim tudi, da je potrebno storiti še veliko v zvezi z delitvijo na fizično in intelektualno delo, kar je bilo posebej poudarjeno v kontekstu feministične misli. Prav tako je v svetu umetnosti družbena reprodukcija zelo velik problem. Pogosto se spregleda, kdo skrbi za vzdrževanje polja, za kontinuiteto delovanja itd. Če pogledam iz svoje perspektive – dolga leta sem delala zgolj kot raziskovalka, zadnja leta pa se mi vse bolj zdi, da je najbolj vreden in zadovoljiv del mojega dela učenje, to kar se zgodi v učilnici, ko kolektiviziram to, kar smatram za izreden privilegij: da sem plačana za to, da javno mislim. Mislim, da je to zgolj en primer, obstajajo seveda tudi drugi načini kolektiviziranja dela.

Omenili ste, da verjamete, da umetniki ne bi smeli biti privilegirani. Vendar pa je po drugi strani v umetnosti zelo prisotna ideja, da je kakovost v umetnosti nekaj redkega, nekaj izjemnega, nekaj, kar se ne dogaja vsak dan. To je seveda povezano z idejo genija, morda v akademskem svetu obstaja podoben ideal, ki zahteva zelo strogo selekcijo. Mislim, da je ta ideal kvalitete zelo problematičen, vendar pa po drugi strani ne vem, ali bi umetnost sploh še obstajala, če bi rekli, da kakovosti ni. Razumete kaj mislim?

Na mesto o kvaliteti bi v tem kontekstu sama raje uporabila koncept vrednosti. Ob tem se mi porajata dve misli: zadnje čase me vse bolj zanima amaterizem. Po eni strani se pogovarjamo o tem, kako je pretirana ljubezen do dela glavni motor izkoriščanja sodobnega intelektualnega in umetniškega dela, po drugi strani pa amaterizem, dejstvo, da se nekdo v prostem času odloči, da se bo posvetil umetniški praksi, velja za ponižujočo prakso. Mislim, da je tu na delu neko protislovje ...

Druga misel, ki se mi poraja je ta, da je sam ideal kvalitete vgrajen v idejo trga; trg določa, kaj lahko nanj vstopa in kaj ne. Dobro vemo, da ta logika ni toliko povezana s samim delom. Tudi v svetu umetnosti imamo ekonomijo imena, ki je povsem ločena od realnega sveta. Gre za zelo kompleksno vprašanje, ki si ga je potrebno zastaviti v kontekstu vprašanja, ali je smiselno misliti umetniške prakse zgolj v okviru estetike? Če da, potem moramo definitivno ponovno premisliti, kaj je estetika in kaj so njeni parametri. Ste imeli to v mislih z vašim vprašanjem?

Da, nekaj takega. Prav tako se strinjam, da je nemara koncept vrednosti bolj na mestu od

koncepta kvalitete. Hotel sem povedati, da je svet umetnosti bistveno povezan z izbiro, z vrednotenjem nečesa in razvrednotenjem nečesa drugega, kar je zelo blizu funkcioniranju razredne razlike. Zanimivo bi se mi zdelo premisliti, kako bi bilo mogoče na polju umetnosti to preseči.

Med svojim raziskovanjem sem se pogosto ukvarjala z vprašanjem porazdelitve vrednosti. Zanimiv primer se mi zdi Vivian Maier, ki je bila celo življenje amaterska fotografinja, denar pa je služila tako, da je bila varuška. Potem je nekdo na boljšem trgu našel škaflo njenih fotografij, začel raziskovati, ugotovil, kdo je bila ta oseba, ki je šele retrospektivno postala slavna (posnet je bil film, razstave njenih fotografij so po vsem svetu). Tem fotografijam je bila dodana neka vrednost, od katere avtorica sama nima nič, saj je že pokojna. Podoben fenomen sem opazila tudi med svojim raziskovanjem newyorške umetniške scene 60ih let, ki sem jo naredila za knjigo *The Scene of Foreplay*. Večina umetnikov, katerih delo sem raziskovala, na primer Jack Smith, so umrli v revščini in za časa svojega življenja niso bili pripoznani kot pomembne osebe. Trideset let kasneje njihove arhive hranijo institucije, kot je MoMA. Tudi v tem kontekstu se mi postavljajo vprašanja, ki so povezana s konceptom predigre: ali je bilo tem umetnikom in njihovim delom vnaprej namenjeno, da se bodo dovršila v tem trenutku, ko jim bo podeljena vrednost? Ti primeri so seveda določena stranpot in ne direkten odgovor na vaše vprašanje, ki pa je vsekakor zelo pomembno, saj je vprašanje kakovosti in podeljevanja vrednosti posebej problematično, sploh v današnjem času, ko v sodobni umetnosti tehnika in mojstrstvo ne štejeta več prav veliko.

Ukvarjali ste se z ljudmi, ki so bili zelo pomembni za produkcijo in reprodukcijo umetniške scene v svojem času, četudi morda za časa svojega življenja niso bili pripoznani. Toda kako rešiti ta problem, saj v trenutku, ko jim poskušate dati nekakšno zadoščenje, jim obenem tudi že podelite vrednost, jih zgolj postavite na »drugo stran«, v dvorano slavnih, nič pa se ne zgodi glede same delitve med vrednim in ničvrednim.

To je zanimivo, res. Poudarila bi rada, kaj mislim, ko razmišljam o produkciji: ta zame ni le produkcija predmeta, predstave ali knjige. Bolj me zanima produkcija družbenega življenja. Delo Andyja Warhola denimo ne bi bilo nikoli mogoče, če ne bi bilo točno določenega družbenega življenja, določenega okolja in ambienta ... Vprašanje torej je, komu sploh damo priznanje, kdo je omogočil, da se umetniška produkcija zgodi, četudi to ni avtor umetniškega dela. Tu je razviden problem delitve na produkcijo in reprodukcijo umetnosti. Sama mislim, da delitev med produkcijo in socialno reprodukcijo ne bi smela obstajati, saj sta medsebojno povsem prepleteni. Temu je torej potrebno dati vrednost: ohranjanju scene, kar mislim v smislu vlaganja časa, energije in dela v publikacije, platforme, dejansko nastanitev umetniških praks itd. Vse to delo je produkcija. Vrnimo se k primeru fotografije, ki sem jo omenjala, ali k številnim drugim primerom generiranja vrednosti na način, da se kot velikega avtorja izpostavi nekoga, ki je bil prej nihče. Sama

skušam delati nekaj povsem nasprotnega: misliti socialno okolje in dinamiko, ki obkroža umetnike, posamezna umetniška dela pa skušam obravnavati kot del te širše dinamike. Mislim, da na tem ni nič posebej revolucionarnega: zanimajo me pač oblike življenja, ki so omogočile nastanek teh del, namesto da bi obravnavala posamezno umetniško delo kot mojstrovino samo po sebi. Zato se vedno manj zanimam za estetiko in vedno bolj za potencial, ki ga ta dinamika predstavlja pri zamišljanju drugačnih načinov dela in produkcije.

Vseeno se mi zdi, da je ideal »postati zvezda« zelo pomemben ne samo v svetu umetnosti, ampak tudi širše. Veliko število umetnikov sanjari, da bodo jutri postali svetovno znani. Je to del progresivne časovnosti? Se vam to zdi problem ali je ta želja po uspehu pač nekaj naravnega, neizogibnega?

To, kar ste opisali, je bistvena značilnost dela v pogojih, ki jih narekuje kapitalizem, ki pač temelji na konkurenci. Vsa tekmovalnost samozaposlenega kulturnega podjetništva izhaja iz tega, da želijo akterji doseči določeno priznanje. To je seveda tudi razlog, zakaj se mi zdi poudarjanje avtorstva problematično. Vseeno pa nimam konkretnih rešitev, kako se vpliva konkurenčniške logike znebiti. Vsekakor je mit, da delo opravi posameznik. Vprašanje je, kako izpostaviti to dejstvo, kako ga narediti vidnega? V zgodovini obstajajo številni poskusi poudarjanja kolektivnosti, vendar mislim, da je treba še korak dlje in preseči idejo, da je vrednost vselej ultimativno povezana z avtorstvom.

Zdi se mi, da se tudi na čisto konkretni ravni harmonični kolektivni trenutki, ki se včasih zgodijo v kreativnih krogih in v katerih skupina deluje za en cilj, prekinejo v trenutku, ko se znotraj kolektiva pojavi konkurenca, vprašanja o deležu avtorstva, o tem, kako se bo razdelilo skupno itd. Kako ravnati v takih trenutkih?

To je res zelo pomembno. Žal smo socializirani v takšnem ekonomskem sistemu. Zato sem vedno sumničava do ljudi, ki trdijo, da je možen absolutni pobeg v zunanost sistema. Nasprotno, potrebno je delovati od znotraj, vendar z namenom spreminjanja sistema. Razlog zakaj zadeve postanejo takšne, kot ste jih opisali, je ta, da kapitalizem deluje tudi in predvsem na mikropolitnem področju socializacije. Zato je potrebno za spremembo (ali za ohranitev drugačnosti) veliko dela. Strukture družbenih odnosov, ki smo jih podedovali – družina, par itd. – so že oblikovane po določeni hierarhiji vrednosti in pomena. Pogosto se vračamo k tem strukturam v takšni ali drugačni obliki, četudi se jim upiramo, zato se mi zdi pravo vprašanje, kako je mogoče preoblikovati naše odnose na način, da bi človeško življenje spet postalo nekaj možnega in zaželenega.

POVZETEK

V intervjuju se Jernej Kaluža pogovarja z raziskovalko in kritično teoretičarko Giulio Palladini, avtorico knjige *Prizorišče predigre* (*The Scene of Foreplay*, 2017). Beseda teče o razliki med teorijo in prakso; o užitku v (umetniškem) delu; samoeksploataciji, ekspemplaričnosti specifičnega načina dela v umetnosti; o načinu dela, ki lahko uide logiki vrhunca; o kvaliteti in vrednosti; konkurenčniški logiki in njenemu preseganju ter drugih temah.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

užitek, delo, umetnost, trg, predigra, vrednost



Giulia Palladini. Meritá, 2017. Foto/Photo: Alexander Morales

INDEPENDENT

THE PLEASURE OF WORK AND THE WORK OF PLEASURE

Interview with Giulia Palladini

Jernej Kaluža

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This conversation with Palladini, researcher and critical theorist, currently affiliated at the University of Roehampton, the author of the book *The Scene of Foreplay: Theater, Labor, and Leisure in 1960s New York* (Northwestern University Press, 2017), whose work focuses on the politics and erotics of artistic production, took place on the occasion of her lecture at Nova Pošta in the frame of Sex and Theatre festival this June.

On the one hand, your work is fairly theoretical – you speak of the concepts of foreplay, pleasure, and work. Yet on the other hand, it seems that your reflections can be directly applied to the dominant working conditions in the sphere of creative and artistic professions, to various forms of self-employment, precarity, etc. Are my observations correct? How could your theory intervene in concrete forms of work?

It is difficult to introduce the translation of theoretical ideas, which are extremely valuable as epistemological insights, into practice. They cannot be transformed into recipes. In my work, I predominately deal with the question of foreplay in connection to the questions of work, production, and subjectivity. I am interested in what the mechanisms that you mention, for example the fact that, to a certain degree, we are all forced to be independent entrepreneurs in order to survive – what this does to the subjectivity of the worker and how this shapes the timing of the work, relationships, collaborations, and the maintaining of these relationships. I worry how the fragmentation of work affects the nature of artistic production; this is why one of the questions that interest me is also how to develop structures of co-operation and solidarity that would enable a different form and a different understanding of work. Another important question for me is that of pleasure. Marx defines freedom as a progressive widening of the sphere of pleasure. However, pleasure, especially bodily pleasure, is a very complex matter. In a way, this is a life goal, something we strive to achieve, something that motivates us. I try to think of ways in which we can create a space for pleasure and how we can produce various forms of subjectivity in this context.

In your research, you mostly analyse how artistic circles or spheres of artistic production functioned in various historical periods. Can work organisations that are carried out in relatively small artistic circles serve as examples of organising production on a larger scale, for the organisation of production as such?

I definitely believe it is important that we try and think of artistic production as some sort of a laboratory for forms of life we can experience elsewhere. There is a text that I very much admire, and return to over and over again: the essay *The Author as Producer* by Walter Benjamin. What is interesting in this text is a clear emphasis on how politically engaged artistic work should not question its own aesthetic value but perceive itself as a dialectical laboratory for the production of the world.

Do you believe that there is a connection or a dialogue between Marxist theory and activism on the one hand, and contemporary art production theory on the other? Sometimes I get the feeling that people who try to have a serious reflection on political solutions and alternatives never seek those on the art scene.

I see two problems here. One stems from the tendency to »use theory«. As if theory existed in another world and could in certain cases be »used« in this world. It is such a shame that very often when philosophers and theorists deal with actual artistic practices, this is exactly what happens: they only apply their theory to practice, or artists relate their work to certain theories that are elaborated elsewhere. I am interested in different relationships between theory and practice. There are certain works – for example, the work by the Columbian collective *Mapa Teatro*, with which I have collaborated, and also the work of Janez Janšas – where the practice of the work already speaks of a certain theory and produces similar effects as critical theory. The work by Janez Janšas, for example, is certainly caught up in a relationship between performance and the state, in bureaucratic mechanisms, in the institution of private property, etc. What I want to say is that it is worth striving for a real dialogue: instead of believing that theory is »above« practice and that it can be used in practice, it makes sense to think about practices that produce theoretical nodes and can consequently be »useful« in and for theory.

The second thing I wish to emphasize in this context is a certain danger stemming from the fact that many contemporary performative practices and contemporary discourses on performance focus more and more on neo-liberalism and see performance as a metaphor for non-material work, while production conditions in performance arts are less and less discussed in the works themselves. In my recent work, I have therefore tried to develop the idea of the *domestics of performance*, which is juxtaposed to the idea of the *politics of performance*. I try to think about skills, dynamics and technologies that are necessary to manage a house, as I believe we are lacking a reflection on the concrete materiality of work. In similar fashion, Marx's own project can be understood as a detailed analysis emphasizing the actuality of a work process.

Could you give us more details on one of your main concepts – the concept of foreplay? If I understand correctly, you wish to take this concept to stand against the masculine idea that every step in a sexual relation must lead towards

the final goal, final escalation, ejaculation. Such understanding is predominant also in the field of performative practices where the final goal is an event or performance. At the same time, this corresponds to the classic understanding of production as such, which is subjugated to producing an end product, a surplus value.

The concept of foreplay is first a diagnosis and then a proposal to contradict the image stemming from this diagnosis. I believe that the concept of foreplay enables me to discover and simultaneously propose another logic to the horizon of progressive temporality that marks our current reflection on life and work. The idea of revolution is somehow connected to this: to the idea that there is a progressive temporality in which what comes first is a preparation for something that follows. This is why I thought of foreplay as a human activity that, just like work, apparently acts in line with the horizon of progressive temporality but actually acts differently. Political work can be observed in the same way: is only the end goal, the realization of a new state, what is important? Or is the preparatory work not real enough? What about the work done for a revolution that would be the actual change, the new unknown horizon? I think that progressive temporality is based on a certain fiction, while the concept of foreplay is the one revealing this fiction. Traditionally, we think of foreplay as the preparatory period before reaching orgasm, but I believe that not every action that is marked by the structure of foreplay is really driven by the expectation of an orgasm. We need to rethink the relationship between desire and pleasure as desire does not necessarily precede pleasure; it is more complicated than that.

If my understanding is correct, your concept of foreplay also introduces the idea of work or production that does not serve pleasure but is pleasure in itself. Are we therefore speaking of work that is not work for pleasure which will happen after work, sometime in the future, but is already present, exists in the act of work? However, is this not where the problem lies today, especially among the so-called creative professions? I am thinking of the ideology that work is pleasure that encourages precarious artists to work day in and day out, convinced that they are having a good time? Do you agree that such not very optimistic understanding of the concept of foreplay is also possible?

Absolutely. This is why I try to think of ways to reappropriate space. I want to make it clear that there is no absolute exterior to the conditions that you describe, the conditions we are already working in. It is a fact that the ideology of pleasure and work being intertwined is the main driver of self-exploitation. I am bothered by this problem and this is why I wish to think in the direction of different possibilities that stem from what is given. Think, for example, of classic factory work – in this context, one such practice was the modality of autonomous work with which some workers experimented, e.g. *la perruque* [a concept studied by de Certeau]. During their working hours, workers dedicated a part of

their time, tools and production materials to their independent work, while the products of this work could be intended for political or private purposes. For De Certeau, *la perruque* could transform the workplace in a place where work for enjoyment might also happen. Of course I have no solutions, but the logic that I am trying to think and that I have tried to explain using the metaphor of foreplay (where there is pleasure that cannot be reduced to an end product) goes in the direction of a different measuring of time. If we understand pleasure as something that cannot be entirely appropriated, how can we measure it? How can we make sure that the neoliberal logic of exploitation and self-exploitation will not appropriate time entirely and that a part of pleasure will also remain non-appropriated?

In certain ways, your ideas remind me of the Soviet idea of proletkult. Do you believe that everybody should work the same way an idealised artist works by enjoying themselves and that every work should look like this idealised image of artistic work?

Firstly, I would like to emphasize that I believe the artists should in no way be privileged and, if there is a privileged perspective of artistic work, it should be collectivized. I think this is really important. I agree with the idea Marx and Engels wrote in *The German Ideology*: after the revolution, we could all be fishermen in the morning, hunters in the afternoon, and art critics in the evening. I also believe that there is a lot more to be done considering the division between physical and intellectual work, something that was especially emphasized in the context of feminist thought. At the same time, the world of art is facing a big problem of social reproduction. We often overlook who maintains the field, sees to the continuity of operations, etc. If I look from my perspective – for a long time, I was working exclusively as a researcher, but in the past couple of years, I feel that the most valuable and fulfilling part of my work is teaching; what happens in the classroom, when I collectivize what I consider an enormous privilege: to be paid to publicly think. I believe this to be only one example; there are, of course, also other ways of collectivizing work.

You mentioned that you believe no artist should be privileged. Yet on the other hand, art often cherishes the idea that quality in art is something rare, something exceptional, something that does not happen every day. This is, of course, connected to the idea of a genius; perhaps the academic world holds a similar ideal that requires an extremely strict selection. I think that this ideal of quality is very problematic; on the other hand, however, I am not sure if art would still exist if we were to say that there is no quality. Do you know what I mean?

Instead of quality I would personally rather employ the concept of value in this context. Two things come to my mind. Lately, I have become really interested in amateurism. On the one hand, we are talking about how too much love in one's work is a motor of exploiting contemporary intellectual

and artistic work. On the other hand, amateurism – the fact that someone decides to dedicate themselves to artistic practice in their free time – is regarded as a demeaning practice. I feel there is a contradiction at work here ...

The second thought I have in relation to this is that the ideal of quality itself is integrated in the concept of the market: the market decides what can enter and what cannot. We are well aware that this logic is not really connected to work itself. In the art world we also have the economy of the name that is completely separated from the real world. This is an extremely complex question that needs to be posed in the context of another question: does it make sense to think of artistic practices only in the framework of aesthetics? If yes, then we definitely have to rethink what aesthetics is and what its parameters are. Was this your initial question?

Something like that. I also agree that the concept of value is perhaps more suitable than the concept of quality. What I wanted to say was that the world of art is essentially connected to choice, to giving value to something and to taking value from something else, which is very close to how class difference functions. It would be interesting to think how art could get past it.

In my research, I have often encountered the question of distributing value. Vivien Maier is an interesting example: she spent her entire life as an amateur photographer while she earned money by being a babysitter. Then somebody found a box of her photographs on a flea market, began researching who this person was and she retrospectively became famous (a movie was made, her photographs are exhibited all over the world). Her photographs were given additional value she cannot enjoy as she is no longer with us. I remarked a similar phenomenon when I was researching the New York art scene of the 1960s for my book *The Scene of Foreplay*. The majority of artists whose work I was exploring, for example Jack Smith, died in poverty and had not been recognised as people of »value« during their lifetimes. Thirty years later, their archives are stored in institutions such as MoMA. Also in this context, I am posing questions related to the concept of foreplay: was it decided in advance that these artists and their works were to be accomplished only afterward, in the moment that value was attributed to them? These cases are, of course, slightly off-topic and do not directly answer your question which is definitely really important since the question of quality and value attribution is especially problematic, most of all today, when contemporary arts do not give much credit to technique and its mastering.

You have researched people who were extremely important for the production and the reproduction of artistic scene in their time, even though they might not have been recognized as such during their lifetime. But how to solve this problem: in the moment you try and give them a certain recognition, you simultaneously already give them value; you only place them to »the other side«, in the hall of fame, yet nothing is done regarding the

division into valuable and worthless.

This is really interesting. I would like to make clear what I mean when I think of production: for me, the latter is not merely the production of an object, a performance or a book. I am more interested in the production of social life. The work by Andy Warhol, for example, could never have been possible without a specific social life, specific environment and atmosphere ... The question, therefore, is who do we give credit to, who enabled artistic production to happen, even though they are not themselves authors of a given artistic work? I personally believe that the division into production and social reproduction should not exist as the two are inextricably linked. This is what we must give value to: to the maintaining of the scene – by which I mean giving time, energy and work into publications, platforms, actual hosting of artistic practices, etc. All this work is production.

Let's return to the case of the photographer I mentioned, or to numerous other examples of generating value by introducing somebody that used to be nobody as a great author. I try to do quite the opposite: I am reflecting on the social environment and dynamics surrounding the artists, while treating individual artworks only as parts of this wider dynamics. I do not believe this to be particularly revolutionary; I am simply interested in the forms of life that had enabled the emergence of these works instead of focusing on an individual artwork as a masterpiece in itself. This is why I am less and less interested in aesthetics and more and more in the potential this dynamic represents in imagining different methods of work and production.

Nevertheless, I believe that the ideal of »becoming a star« is extremely important not only in the world of art but also more broadly. A lot of artists dream of becoming world famous tomorrow. Is this part of progressive temporality? Do you find this problematic or is this desire to succeed simply something natural, unavoidable?

What you have described is the essential characteristic of work in the conditions dictated by capitalism that is based on competition. All this competitiveness of self-employed cultural entrepreneurship stems from the fact that the actors wish to achieve certain recognition. This is, of course, also the reason why I find the emphasis on authorship problematic. Nevertheless, I have no concrete solutions on how to get rid of the influence of competitive logic. In any case, the idea that work is done by an individual is a myth. The question is how to emphasize this fact, how to make it visible. In history, there were several attempts at emphasizing collectivity, yet I believe that we need to go a step further and surpass the idea that value is always ultimately connected to authorship.

I feel that on a very concrete level, harmonious collective moments that sometimes happen in creative circles and in which a group works for one single goal are interrupted in the instant that competition occurs inside the collective, questions arise dealing with the share of authorship, with how the common would be

divided, etc. How to react in moments like these?

How very important. Sadly, that is the economic system that we are socialized in. This is why I am always suspicious of people who claim that absolute escape outside of the system is possible. Quite the opposite, we must work from within, yet with the purpose of changing the system. The reason why things turn out the way you described lies in the fact that capitalism also and predominately works on the micro-political field of socialization. That is why much work must be done in order to change (or preserve what is different). The structures of social relations that we have inherited – family, couple, etc. – are already formed following a specific hierarchy of value and meaning. We often return to these structures in one form or another even though we revolt against them. The real question in my mind is therefore how is it possible to transform our relationships in a way that human life would become possible and desirable once again.

ABSTRACT

Jernej Kaluža interviewed the researcher and critical theoretician Giullia Palladini, author of *The Scene of Foreplay*, 2017. They talk about the difference between theory and practice; the pleasure of (art)work; self-exploitation, the exemplarity of a specific type of work in the arts; a type of work capable of escaping the logic of climax; quality and value; competition logics and its surpassing; and other topics.

KEY WORDS

pleasure, work, art, market, foreplay, value