

GOWEN CONTEMPORARY

GENEVA, Switzerland

DRAWING NOW

Dragan Ilic

Paris, le Carreau du Temple

25 – 29 March 2015

A desire for experimenting, freedom of expression, pushing the envelope in classical art disciplines, as well as re-/deconstruction of the traditional ways, motivated Dragan Ilic to instinctively grab a whole fistful of wooden pencils in the 1970s and start drawing. With this initial gesture, he created his own specific "visual tool", which in various ways remained present in all his future explorations, either as means of drawing, or potential weapon in artistic activities and performances; either in his own hands, hands of a machine hybrid - a robot, or an audience, who directly or indirectly participate in creating artwork. Ilic has so far used 350,000 pencils, out of which he donated some 50,000 to children in endangered regions.

The concept of Dragan Ilic's early drawings focused more on the analysis of subjectless, abstract forms, realized through artist's performative activities, and tools especially created out of pencils. Gradually, he became more interested in the relationship between nature, science and technology, particularly the study of quantum physics, physical chemistry, mathematics and robotics (magnetic fields, movement of particles, improvement of androids, possibilities of liquids, etc), giving new meaning and value to his already highly developed drawing practice. In the course of implementing a drawing, Ilic either moves constructed mobile machines - robots, with specifically designed software and remote controls, or enables active dialogue through interaction with the audience. Ilic was moved to the use of mechanical aids also by physical restrictions of arms.

The issues of mutual relationship between man and nature is present in many of his works, especially those dealing with futuristic contemplations on possibilities of building a hybrid body, with all its technical and biological systems. Ilic continues his long-term interest in physics and mathematics, and analyzes the possibility of developing an android, material form of his mental capital filled with liquid matter. He continues his research and follows new scientific explorations, which confirm his futuristic conceptions. He feels that scientific developments were significantly influenced by DNA-related discoveries, which expedited technological advancements vis-a-vis natural evolutionary processes as much slower and in accord with their own rules. It is for this reason that he developed a belief that the role of humans in the process of development now becomes substantial, and that, much like offspring helping their old parents, we must now help nature. In this way, he (re) constructs a context for creative dialogue between nature and technology, as well as the artist and audience via technology, a context he feels is typical of the 21st century.

For Drawing Now Ilic presents a selection of three of his most recent works. This is his first exhibition in France. (*)

Ilic est né à Belgrade, Serbie, en 1948. Il a étudié à l'Australian National University School of Art Camberra. Il est un artiste serbe, australien et américain. Il vit et travaille à Belgrade et New York. Depuis 1974 il a exposé et il s'est produit dans des performances dans plusieurs pays du monde. Ses expositions passées récentes incluent *Roboaction(s)*, *the 30th Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Art*, Ljubljana, Slovenia (2013); *Plus 20*, ITS-Z1, Ritopek, Belgrade, Serbia (solo, 2012); *In Growing up Amid the Historical Mysteries of Proximity: Pro's & Cons of Being Neighbours*, ITS-Z1, Ritopek, Serbia (2012); *RoboAction 8 and 9*, *Performance and Installation*, Studio View, Brooklyn, NY (performance, 2011); *Roboaction 8*, *Interactive Site-Specific Drawing*, ID Space, New York (performance, 2010); *Roboaction 7*, Museum of Science in Boston, National Robotics Week (performance, 2010); *Roboaction 5*, *Interactive performance and installation*, Fluid v2, Queens Museum of Art, New York (performance, 2009); *Drawing/Devices*, Kentler International Drawing Space, Brooklyn, NY (solo, 2003). Ilic fera l'objet d'une importante rétrospective au MoCAV, Novi Sad, Serbie, en octobre 2016.

(*) The present text contains quotations from 'Dragan Ilic : Performative Drawings', 2015, Sanja Kojic Mladenov, Director & Curator of MoCAV, Novi Sad, Serbia

GOWEN CONTEMPORARY Sàrl

Registered office and mailing address: place du Grand-Mézel 2-4, 1204 Genève

Gallery: 4 rue Jean-Calvin, 1204 Genève

Tel: +41 (0) 22 700 30 68 / Mob: +41 (0) 79 330 17 54 / E-mail: info@gowencontemporary.com

www.gowencontemporary.com