



This work seems very pleased with itself — too much perhaps, since it apes a 50 year old genre of art so far from being radical, surprising or intellectually stimulating that it is almost impossible to imagine it ever could have been. I mean of course, Conceptual Art (a comedy genre according to *Art & Language*), now long used as an off-the-peg style, or look, or

manner by artists who wish to buy into what the style now seems to represent: a simplistic equation between a particular choice of form (specific canonised books, texts etc) and an assertion of high intellect on the part of the artist. This work does a respectable job of joining in with this genre by not in any way whatsoever challenging or advancing it; it

can therefore also be considered to be in another genre, one perhaps offering more potential due to its having fallen out of currency: academic art.

Simon Bedwell, artist (UK)

Šis darbs šķiet joti apmierināts ar sevi — varbūt pat par daudz, nemot vērā, ka tas atdarina 50 gadus vecu mākslas žanru, kas ir tik tālu no radikāla, pārsteidzoša vai intelektuāli stimulējoša, ka ir teju neiespējami iztēloties, ka tas jebkad varēja pastāvēt. Es, protams, runāju par konceptuālo mākslu (komēdijas žanrs, saskaņā ar *Art & Language*), kuras

nu jau sen kā standartizēto stilu, izskatu, vai manieri izmanto mākslinieki, kuri vēlas noticēt tam, ko šobrīd šis stils šķietami reprezentē: vienkāršotu vienādojumu starp specifisku formas izvēli (specifiskas kanonizētas grāmatas, teksti utt.) un pretenzijām uz augstu intelektu no mākslinieka puses. Šis darbs cienījami pievienojas šim žanram, nekādā veidā to

neizaicinot vai neveicinot; tādējādi to arī var uzskatīt par cita žanra pārstāvi, iespējams, tāda, kurš piedāvā lielāku potenciālu, jo ir izkritis no aprites: akadēmiskās mākslas.

Saimons Bedvels, mākslinieks (Lielbritānija)

## Kõik, mis jäääb tegemata

Me oleme üks vähesed liike, kui mitte ainus, kes oskab osa oma olemasolemisest konverteerida potentsiaalsusesse. Sellesse, mis pole veel juhtunud. See, mis pole veel juhtunud, ei pruugi mitte kunagi juhtuda. On väga suur töenäosus, et kui kujutada ette, kuidas täpselt võiks realiseeruda mõni võimalik maailm, siis see kindlasti ei realiseeru nii.

Aga võib ka juhtuda, et mustritaju, teadmine sellest, kuidas kunagi varem oli, kuidas võimalikkusest sai möödaläinu, et see laob kokku realisatsioonitee, mis ennast hälvitamatu täpsusega lahti kerib. Lühikeses füüsilisusepöhistes lõikudes me teame sageli väga selgelt, mis järgmiseks juhtub. Ka see on võimaliku maailma etteaimamine. Õigupoolest, kui me teeme mingi liigutuse, on aju lihased juba ette valmistanud paljudeks järgnevateks hetkedeks ja konfiguratsioonideks. Me tegelikult nägime tulevikku ette. Kui lüüa kirvega halu pihta, siis ennustus, et halg läheb pooleks, on sageli väga täpne.

Lugemata raamatuga on osaliselt sarnane olukord. Me teame, et ta avaneb. Me teame, et temas on kirjatähed. Me teame, et nendest saab kokku laduda mingi loo. Me võime eeldada, et see raamat saaks olemas olla Borgese lõputus raamatukogus. Seda olemasolemist võiks piirata kirjasüsteem, Borgese raamatukogu põhines ladina tähestikule, väga palju üleskirjutatut oleks jäanud seal kõrvale. Aga me ei peaks ennast siin ja praegu selle küsimusega vaevama. Meile piisab teadmisest, et kui esimeses raamatus oleks olnud kõik tähed A ja viimases raamatus kõik tähed Z, siis täpsemaid reaalsusarvutusi tegemata tundub, et nende kahe vaheline mahuksid ära kõigi ladina tähestikus kirjutatavate raamatute võimalikkused.

Kui nüüd võtta riul avamata raamatuga, või juhistega, kuidas aimata raamatut või lugu avamatuse taga, siis põhimõtteliselt võib öelda, et Arturs Bērziņš on Borgese raamatukogu esindaja reaalruumis. Ilma et ta ühtki teost kaasa oleks toonud. Borgese raamatukogu töötabki võimalikkusel. Te olete selle riiulitele väga lächedal, kui te jäätate raamatu avamata, kui te ei siruta kätt. Kuni te pole andnud võimalikkusele põhjust realiseeruda, on raamatukogu teile avatud. Hiljem võib juhtuda ükskõik mida.

andreas w

## Everything that remains undone

We are one of a few species – if not the only one – who can convert some of its existence into potential. Into something that has yet to happen. Something that has yet to happen might never happen at all. It's highly probable that imagining a potential world will probably not result in its actualisation in that way.

But it might also be that perception of patterns and knowledge of what has been, how possibility became reality, put together a path to realization. In short physical segments we often know very clearly what will happen next. This is also a kind of a premonition. In fact, if we make a particular gesture, our brain is already prepared for a number of other moments and configurations that may come. We could foresee the future. If you take an axe to a log of wood, the prediction that it will break into half is often very accurate.

It's somewhat similar with books yet to be read. We know that they can be opened. We know that they have printed letters. We know that these letters make up some kind of a story. We can assume that the book would be in Borges's endless library. This could also be limited by its script. Borges's library was based on the Latin script; a lot of what was written could have remained unknown. But we don't have to worry about that right now. It's sufficient to know that if the first book had only the letter A and the last one only Zs, the probability is clear that every possible combination of books written in the Latin script would fit between them.

Now if you were to have a shelf with an unopened book or with directions how to feel up the book or the story behind it being shut, we could say that Arturs Bērziņš is a representative of the Borges library in real time. Without him bringing along any books. Borges's library relies on possibility. You are very close to its shelves if you leave your book shut, if you won't reach out your hand towards it. Until you haven't given the possibility any reason to actualise, the library is open for you.

After that anything can happen.

andreas w

## Raamat

Varase keskaa künnsisele jõudnud A. ärkas vaevaliselt hilissuviselt uimasel varahommikul.

Ta sirutas end laisalt siidiste Yves Delorme'i sügis Kollektiisi on linade vahel ja mõmises venitades lemmikmantra esimesi silpe: „Om mani...” Lähtudes oma töekspidamistes eelkõige intellektuaalsest säästlikkusest, ei pidanud A. nii varasel hommikutunnil kogu mantra lausumist oststarbekaks. See võis oodata, sest tavapärased hommikused rituaalid vajasid sooritamist.

End vaevaliselt mugandatud lootoseasendist välja vingerdades vajutas A. voodipeatsis asuva stereosüsteemi juhtpaneeli nuppe. Stereosüsteemid olid A. jaoks ülimalt tundlik teema. Heli kvaliteet ja selle kättesaadavus, sõltumata A. asukohast, olid ülimalt olulised. Seega oli tema residentsi iga ruutmeeter kaetud vaid parima tehnika abil edastatava valmisolekuga kvaliteetse heli nautimiseks. Loomulikult ei olnud see odav lõbu, kuid A. oli erudeeritud muusikalise maitsega ja äärmiselt valiv ning eeldas parimaid lahendusi. A. muusikakogu ei olnud suur, täpselt koosnes see vaid ühest läbi raskuste hangitud helikandjast. Helikandjast, millel talletatu oli sisestatud hoolikalt kõigisse tema loendamatutesse parima kvaliteediga süsteemidesse. Nagu juba öeldud, ei olnud selle rareteetse salvestustse hankimine olnud lihtne. Isegi A. positiiooni, tutvuste ja võimalustega mehet.

Hommikuste rituaalidega ühele poole saanud A. istus nõutult diivanil ja jõi kohvi. Tänane päev oli A. elus ebameeldivalt eriline ja ebatalvine. Üldjuhul armastas A. üksindust, kuid tema ametikoht nõudis aeg-ajalt mugavasti üksindusest väljumist ja kolleegidega kohtumist. Või, mis veel ebameeldivam, nende vaba aja sisustamist. Täna siis oligi järekordsest päev, mil A. hoolikalt läbimöeldud päevaplaan oli segi paisatud ja tekitas temas mõningast nõutust. Nimelt nõudis äriettevõtte juhatus, kuhu A. kuulus, kaugelt iga-aastasele nõupidamisele saabunud kolleegide võõrustamist. A. eeskujulikult sisustatud residentsi juurde kuulusid nii kinosaal kui ka golfiväljak, samuti väike, aga esinduslik jahisadam. Külalistest keeldumine ei olnud mõeldav. Iseenesest ei olnud A.-l külaliste vastu midagi, nii Norfolkist saabunud J. kui ka Dudgeonist kohale lennanud P. olid A. külalised olnud varemgi. J. kippus küll liialt palju lobisema ja P. veetis valdava osa ajast tukkudes, kuid üldjoontes olid nad talutavad. Muret tekitas hoopis muu. Selle allikas lebas diivanil ees laual ja A.-le tundus, et see põrnitses teda ning tema nõutust üleolevalt.

Raamat. A. tundis, et tema elu oli tänu paari päeva tagusele spontaansele otsusele astuda sisse raamatupoodi ja väljuda seal koos raamatuga täiesti segi paisatud. A. oli üldjoontes kultuurisõbralik, kuid raamatud ei olnud seni tema ellu kuulunud. Raamatupoe aknast möödudes köitis tema pilku aga lagoonilise kaanekujundusega õbluke raamat lummava pealkirjaga „Loogilis-filosooiline traktaat”. A. jaoks kõlas see nagu heliteose peakiri ja meenutas talle tema lemmikhelikandja olemust. Pealegi sobis raamat kaanekujundus ülihäästi tema residentsi sisekujundusega.

Nii nad siis nüüd istusid juba tunde ja vaatasid nõutult teineteisega tõtt. Sest A. jaoks oli raamatule koha leidmisest hulga muret tekitavam peatselt saabuvate kolleegide voimalik reaktsioon. J. ja P. olid kuulu järgi raamatutega enam harjunud ja võisid nõuda selgitusi või, veel hullem, alustada sel teemal vestlust.

Nõutult rõüpas A. viimase suutäie jahtunud hommikohvi ja otsustas intensiivsest mõttetegevusest pisut puhata. Ta lonkis lähima stereosüsteemini ja vajutas ootusärevalt selle nuppe. A. neelatas vaevukuuldaalt ja lülitas helisüsteemi viimast, olulisimat nuppu. Raamatuga seotud dilemmade lõpliku lahendamiseni oli jääanud veel 4 minutit ja 33 sekundit.

Elena Šmakova

## The Book

A., a person standing on the edge of an early mid-life crisis, woodenly woke up on a lazy late summer morning. He stretched himself between his silk Yves Delorme sheets from their autumn collection, and mumbled the first syllables of his favourite mantra: “Om mani...” A firm believer in intellectual sparseness, A. did not find it reasonable to utter the whole mantra at such an early hour. It could wait; ordinary morning rituals needed his full attention.

Struggling to release himself from the lotus position, A. pushed the buttons on his bedside stereo. Stereo systems were an incredibly sensitive topic for him. Sound quality and its accessibility regardless of location were of utmost importance. Every square metre of his residence was covered in the best equipment and ready for the enjoyment of quality sounds. This was not a cheap solution, but A.’s taste in music was refined and incredibly choosy and required the best solutions available. A.’s collection was not big, to be exact it comprised of only one record, obtained with great difficulty. A record which was carefully played on every high-quality sound system he had. As mentioned, obtaining this record was not easy. Even for a man of such status and connections as A.

After finishing his morning rituals, A. sat on his couch, perplexed, drinking coffee. Today was unpleasantly special and unusual. He generally loved being alone, but his position dictated that he occasionally meet up with his colleagues or – even more unpleasant – host them. Today was one of those days where his carefully constructed schedule had been turned upside down. The board of directors from his business demand that A. host colleagues from afar every year. His exemplary residence also included a cinema, a golf course and a small yacht harbour. Declining guests was completely out of the questions. He didn’t really have anything against his guests – J. from Norfolk and P. from Dudgeon – they had been his guests before. J. had a habit of talking too much while P. spent most of his time napping, but in general they were tolerable. A. was worried about something else altogether. The source of his concern laid on the table in front of him and it seemed to A. that it stared back at him arrogantly.

A book. A. felt that his life had been completely rocked by a spontaneous decision a few days ago to walk into a book shop and buy a book. A. was generally open to culture, but books had not been a part of his life so far. However, walking past the book store, his gaze was captivated by a small volume with a sparse cover design, bearing the enticing title “*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*”

It sounded like a title of a musical composition and reminded A. of his favourite record. And besides, the cover design for the book was in perfect harmony with his interior design.

So they sat for hours staring at each other. A. was also worried about his colleagues’ reaction. Reportedly J. and P. were accustomed to books and might want to ask questions or start a conversation about the book.

A. took a last sip of his coffee that had turned cold by now and decided to take a rest from intense thinking. He gulped barely audibly and sauntered to his nearest stereo, pushing anxiously its most important button. He had exactly 4 minutes and 33 seconds until finally solving his book dilemma.

Elena Šmakova

**Vai tas, ko mēs redzam, ir tāds, kādu to redzam? Ko mēs vēlamies ieraudzīt? Viena norāde ved pie nākamās vai tieši otrādi – stāv uz vietas. Starp konceptuāliem līkločiem, vārda un attēla spēku, un amatnieka prieku – šajā starptelpā virmo Bērziņa darbi. Ietilpīgums sazarojas un atklājas pavisam vienkāršs.**

**Is what we see the way we see it? What do we want to see? One clue leads to another or the other way around – stands still. Among the conceptual curves, the power of word and image, and the joy of a craftsman – the works by Bērziņš vibrate in this interspace. Capacity forks and reveals itself as quite simple.**

MAIJA RUDOVSKA

## **Arturs Bērziņš**

Arturs Bērziņš eesmärk on tekitada vaatajas ühte spetsiifilist tunnet, mida ta on ise tundnud. Selleks koostatud instruktsioonid ja kujutlusvõime töölepanekuks mõeldud objekt on äärmiselt minimalistlikud. Vaatajalt aga oodatakse vastukaaluks aktiivset kaasaelamist, jäädgitut ja ennastunustavat sisenemist kunstniku kogemusse, kujuures vahendid, mida selleks saab kasutada, on ülimalt napid. Instruktsioonid on sellised, mida näitusesaalis täita ei saa – see on n-ö kodune ülesanne. Näitusel võib endale seda tegevust ja sellest tekkivat tunnet vaid ette kujutada.

Kuivõrd vaataja töepoolest suudab selle protsessi läbi teha, sõltub juba väga paljudest asjadest. Tema senisest kaasaegse kunsti kogemusest, taustateadmistest antud kunstniku kohta, hoiakust sedasorti minimalistliku kunsti suhtes, isiklikest kogemustest raamatute ja riilitega, väsimusastmest, tujust ja sellest, kas äsja söödud eine nurgapealses kohvikus vastas ootustele või mitte. Kuid vaevalt et kunstnik seda loodabki, et suured rahvahulgad tema tööd nautima hakkavad. Kui paar näitusekülastajat selle tunde kinni püüavad, siis on juba hästi.

Kui see siiski kellelgi õnnestub, võib juhtuda, et tekib mõttækäik emotsiонаalse ja intellektuaalse naudingu suhetest. Teoses käib jutt raamatutest. Raamat on oma olemuselt intellektuaalne stimulaator, lugedes (eriti neid tekste, mida Bērziņš oma töös silmas peab) võivad küll tekkida mingid tunded, kuid põhiline elamus peaks saabuma mõistuse kaudu. Oma installatsioonis keerab kunstnik selle naudingumehhanismi pea peale, ärgitades vaatajat kogema tunnet, mis ei teki raamatut lugedes, vaid seda ostes, puudutades, vaadates ja riulisse asetades.

Nõukogude ajast mäletame, et raamatutel olid väga suuret tiraazid, need olid odavad ja iga endast lugupidava pere väikekodanlikku kodu kaunistasid riulid n-ö kohustusliku kirjandusega – teostega, mis olid olemas kõigil. Kui paljud neist ka läbi olid loetud, see on teadmata, kuid kindlasti mitte kõik. Seega juba ainuüksi raamatute omamine koos võimalusega hellitada pilku neid oma riulis vaadates oli staatuse sümbol ning tekitas kahtlemata hea tunde.

Bērziņš pakub meile ühekohalist riilut, sellist, kuhu mahub ainult üks raamat. Sellega nullib ta ära kvantiteedi mastaapsusest tekkiva elamuse ja sunnib vaatajat oma emotsioine sedavõrd kontsentreerima, et need muhuksid ära ainult ühele raamatule.

Kontsentratsioon ongi sedalaadi kunsti märksõna ja ühtlasi võti õnnestunud retseptsioniks. Pea laialti otsas läbi näituse joostes lahkelt pakutud tunnet ei püüa.

Mari Kartau

## **Arturs Bērziņš**

Arturs Bērziņš aims to make the audience feel in a specific way he himself has felt. Instructions and the object meant to jog the imagination are both incredibly minimalist. The viewer is required to actively participate and throw themselves completely into the artist's experience, while the means to achieve this are sparse. Instructions cannot be followed in the exhibition hall, it is homework. One can only imagine the activity and the emotions achieved while in the exhibition hall.

If or not the viewer is able to walk through this process, depends on a number of things. Their previous experiences with contemporary art, their background knowledge of the artist, their attitude towards this kind of minimalist art, personal experiences with books and shelves, the level of tiredness, mood, and whether or not the meal from the corner café lived up to expectations. I doubt the artist hopes that masses of people will enjoy his work. It's already successful if only a few visitors to the exhibition capture the feeling.

However, if someone is successful, it might lead to considering the relationship between emotional and intellectual pleasure. The piece is about books. A book is an intellectual stimulator and reading (especially reading the ones that Bērziņš lists), even while causing some emotions, should thrill the mind first and foremost. He turns this pleasure mechanism upside down in his installation, encouraging the audience to focus on how it feels not to read, but to buy a book, to touch it, to look at it, and to shelve it.

We might remember from the Soviet era that books were circulated in large numbers, they were cheap and every member of the petit-bourgeois adorned their home with shelves packed with so-called mandatory literature – books that everybody had. How much of them remained unread is a mystery. Owning books along with the chance to casually glance at them in your living room was a status symbol and definitely made people feel good.

Bērziņš gives us a shelf with a slot for only one book. He nips any emotions stemming from massive quantity in the bud and forces the audience to concentrate their emotions only on one book.

Concentration is the keyword in this type of art, and also the key to a successful reception. Charging through the exhibition unfocused will not provide the feelings intended.

Mari Kartau

# VISPĀRĪGĀ STANDARTIZĒTĀ KRITISKĀ VĒRTĒJUMA ANKETA

GENERAL STANDARD FORM OF CRITICAL EVALUATION

Nr. 0004

Autora vārds, uzvārds/Author's name and surname:

Darba nosaukums/Title of the piece:

Vai kaut kas ir redzams/Is anything visible?

Jā/Yes  Nē/No  Nezinu/I don't know

Vai redzamajā kaut kas ir attēlots/Is anything depicted in the visible?

Jā/Yes  Nē/No  Nezinu/I don't know

Vai neredzamajā ir kāda jēga/Is there any meaning in the things invisible?

Jā/Yes  Nē/No  Nezinu/I don't know

Vai ir izmantota valoda/Is there any language used?

Vizuālā/Visual  Verbalā/Verbal  Kermēpa/Body language

Cita/Other: \_\_\_\_\_  Nav/No

Vai novērojama kustība/Is there any movement detected?

Jā/Yes  Nē/No  Nezinu/I don't know

Vai telpai ir nozīme/Does space have any meaning?

Jā/Yes  Nē/No  Nezinu/I don't know

Vai laikam ir nozīme/Does time have any meaning?

Jā/Yes  Nē/No  Nezinu/I don't know

Īpašas atzīmes/Additional notes:

22. aktet gredzen, R.R.

Vai šī ir māksla/Is this art?

Nē/No

0

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Jā/Yes

X

8

9

10

Nezinu/I don't know

Datums/Date:

18 Sep. 2014  
BEZAHLT  
Dobst, Z.V.

Paraksts/Signature:



"Wenn ich Kultur höre - entsichere ich meinen Väronning"  
Sanna Dobst, Geblageler





## 10/10

Arturs Bērziņš on kinnitanud galerii seinale riiuli, millesse mahub üks raamat. See on seal ka olemas. Eeldatavasti on Arturs kirjutanud sinna kõrvale targa teksti selle kohta, miks see riiul ja see raamat galeriis on. Tekst räägib raamatu esmase omamise kogemusest ning sellest, millise tundega me vaatame riiulitääle teoste selgasid. Selle teksti kohalolu galeriis tähendab, et kunstnik ei usalda oma teose vaatajat ega temas tekkivaid emotsiione.

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Arturs on tundud peamiselt erotikast kubisevate kitsilike teoste poolest. Neist kumab täiuslikult nauditavat surrealistmi, kuid teoste vormi töttu ei tohi keegi neid tösiselt võtta. Huvitaval kombel jagab kunstnik oma teosed kommerslikeks ja mittekommerslikeks, kuigi tegelikult sellist vahet ei eksisteeri.

Artursi valimine Artishoki Biennaalile on Grigori üks julgemaid kuratoorseid käike – tegemist on selle nelja toimumiskorra jooksul eeldatavasti kõige vähem antud biennaali raskekäelise ja servadest kulunud ideoloogiaga sobitava kunstnikuga. Seda kurvem on aga mitmepalgelisi ja üllatusi pakkuvaid elamusid ootaval publikul astuda saali ning näha järjekordset asja, mis sobitub täpselt etteantud vormi. Umbes nagu keskmise raamat mahub keskmisse riiulisse.

Tekstist, selle kogemisest ja selle omamisest rääkimine antud biennaali kontekstis on loomulikult sümboolne. Mina kirjutan ühte teksti üheteistkümnest, mis erinevatel öhtutel publiku ette paisatakse. Ja nii kümme öhtut järjest. Võiks oletada, et need tekstdid sisaldavad lõpmatus koguses täiesti ajuvaba jahumist kunsti kohta. Enamasti räägitakse kõigest muust kui antud öhtu teosest või esitletavast kunstnikust. Kriitik peab õigustama enda väljavalimist! Võib-olla keegi peale kuraatori loeb need tekstdid kõik ka läbi. Külastajad seda kindlasti ei tee. Töele au andes ei viitsi mina ühena autoritestki kõigi teiste tekste läbi lugeda. Ja kunstnikud loevad ainult seda, mida nende kohta kirjutatakse.<sup>1</sup> Siis pannakse tekstdid võib-olla raamatusse ja need rändavad kunstiteadlaste riiulitele ning enam ei võta neid seal välja mitte keegi.

Artursile see eeldatavasti ei meeldi, et ma tema teosega seotud tekstis lihtsalt jahun ja lällan. Tuleks ikka rääkida asjast ja mõni Deleuze või Guattari või Žižek sekka pillata. Aga noh, minul on ka vaja 2500 tähemärki täis saada. Selle eest biennaal mulle maksab.

\* \* \*

Grigor ütles mulle, et Arturs vihkab üle kõige kriitikute ebatäpsust ja valestimõistmist.

Peeter Talvistu

## 10/10

Arturs Bērziņš has attached a shelf on the wall that has room for only one book. Presumably it was Arturs who has attached a text explaining why this shelf and book are in the gallery. This text describes the primary experience of owning a book and the emotions we have while looking at books on shelves. The presence of such a text in the gallery means that the artist does not trust his audience and their emotions.

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Arturs is mainly known for kitsch eroticisms. They also include perfectly enjoyable surrealism, but because of the format, no one should take them seriously. Interestingly, the artist divides his works as commercial and non-commercial, however, in reality this distinction is non-existent.

Choosing Arturs for the Artishok Biennale is a bold curatorial move on behalf of Grigor – this is probably an artist who deviates most from the biennale's heavy and worn-out ideology. And the sadder it should be for the audience expecting complex and surprising experiences, only to step into the gallery and see another thing that suits perfectly the mould given. Kind of like an average book fitting into an average shelf.

Talking about text, experiencing it and owning it is of course symbolic in this context. I am writing a text



among ten others that will be presented to the audience of an evening. Ten evenings straight. One could assume that these texts contain an endless amount of incoherent tirades about art. Usually, the topics include just about everything else other than the piece or the artist under scrutiny that evening. The critic has to justify why he was chosen! Maybe someone else other than the curator will also read all of these texts. (edit: Yes, the unpaid proofreader!) The visitors definitely will not. To be brutally honest, even I as an author can't be bothered to read all the other texts. And the artists only read what has been written about them.<sup>2</sup> And maybe the texts are compiled into a book and then they are shelved by art historians and then no one will ever take them out from the shelves. In this case Arturs probably does not approve of me rambling on about the texts about his work. I should talk about the important stuff and name-drop Deleuze, Guattari or Žižek. But, well, I need to hit the 2500 character mark. This is what the biennale is paying me for.

\* \* \*

Grigor told me that above all Arturs hates when critics are inaccurate and misunderstand him.

Peeter Talvistu

<sup>1</sup> Küsige mõnelt kunstnikult, kui palju ta teiste kunstnike näituste arvustusi loeb?

<sup>2</sup> Ask any artist how often they read the reviews about other artists.

## KOORMA TÄHTSUS

*“Kui sa oskad näha ainult tekstilist tarkust, võid sa lugeda kõik maailma raamatud läbi, aga kui endal puudub oskus asju näha ja kuulda ja tajuda, siis oled sa justkui nagu eesel, kes tassib suure koormatäie raamatuid seljas neist mõhkugi aru saamata.”*

Väega Anka, ankeankake.tumblr.com

Arturs Berziņš kavatsustest mäletan ma vaid mingit tunnet või justkui mingit kuulujuttu. Tundub, et tegemist on inimesega, kelle ideaalid ei ole purunenud. Seda saab öelda vaid eeldusel, et enamuse inimeste ideaalid on purunenud või neid ei olegi. Keegi, kes hindab raamatuid, on ilmselt idealistik inimene. Jutt käib raamatust kui sellisest – ükskõik, mis ta siis ka ei oleks. Meil idaeurooplastel on raamatust teistsugune arusaam kui näiteks ameeriklastel. Idaeuropased teavad, mis tunne on üles kasvada raamatute keskel – kui kõik toad on maast laeni vanu väärakaid raamatuid täis. Kui raamatute abil toetatakse mööblit, asendatakse diivanjalgu. Kui täiesti suvalise raamatu järele haaramine avab sulle täiesti uue maailma, mille taolisi on su kodus mustmiljon, sest sul puudub ülevaade või sa ei mäleta täpselt, mis raamatud su kogus täpselt on. Selle kõige põhjus on see, et raamatud olid kunagi väga odavad. Neid anti välja tohututes tiraazižides, kirjanikud said riigilt ülisuuri honorare, mille eest võis endale kohati auto või suvila osta. Selline väärkas, sotsialistliku ühiskonna kultuurilise eliidi elu tekitas raamatuid üha juurde. Kas see tundub meile praegu nagu üleküllus või representatsiooni kriis?

Berziņš väidab, et raamat võib teatud situatsioonis olla kunstiteos. Raamatust ostmise akt olevat tema jaoks oluline, samuti raamatu kojutoomine. Ma ei saanudki aru, kas jutt käib uutest või vanadest raamatutest. Ja kas raamatu peaks tingimata ostma või tohib raamatut ka kuskilt tasuta võtta. Muide, varastatud raamatut on üsna raske riilisse panna, isegi siis kui vargus on õiglane. Ühest küljest on väga hea tunne mõni tähtis raamat talle sobimatust kohast “päästa”, teisest küljest on tegemist justkui sõjasaagiga, mida tuleks hoida teistest raamatutest lahus. Nii, et Berziņš võiks tegelikult mõelda ka sellele, kuidas eksponeerida varastatud raamatuid ja püstitada nendega seotud probleeme.

Aga miks peaks raamat olema kunstiteos? Kunstiteos viitab singulaarsusele, kunstiteosel on raamatu kontrastis minu jaoks negatiivne konnotatsioon. Võimalik, et Berziņš esitabki siin küsimuse loomeprotsessi ja selle resultaatide osas – kas eesmärk on sisuga tegelemine või produkti viimistlemine. Kas ei võiks kunstiteosedki olla vabad oma singulaarsusest. Küsimus on ju kultuuri olemasolus, selles, kuidas me elame ja kuidas toimime, mis meid huvitab ja miks. Et selle käigus antakse välja raamatuid ja luuakse kunstiteoseid, on osa elust, mis jätab maha märke. Need märgid ei saa aga kunagi olla eesmärk. Sa ei saa endale kunagi osta ühte raamatut, sa ei saa endale kunagi osta ühte kunstiteost. Kui sa seda teed, oled sa telliskivi. Aga üksiku tellisega pole põhimõtteliselt mitte midagi peale hakata, sellest saab kirjutada vaid suurel hulgjal raamatuid, mis on paksud nagu telliskivi, ja nad vedelevad meie kodudes laiali nagu kartulid. Raamat ei ole infokandja, raamat ei ole ka kunstiteos. Raamatpuhil on oluline selle kogus – et oleks koorem. Koorem ja selle tassimine, ümberpaigutamine korrapäraselt meie teadvust ning kaitseb seda info eest. Koorem lahendab ära küsimuse, kuidas teada ja selle teadmisega ka elada. Kui midagi teada, tuleb seda ka kanda.

TANEL RANDER

## IMPORTANCE OF THE CARTLOAD

*“If you can only see the wisdom in text, you can read every book in the world, but if you don’t know how to see and hear and feel things, then you are just like a donkey who lugs a huge cartload of books on his back without understanding any of it.”*

Anka with powers, ankeankake.tumblr.com

I only remember a feeling or like a rumour about Arturs Berziņš's intentions. He seems to be a person whose ideals are not yet shattered. This can, of course, be said only on the assumption that most people's ideals are shattered or they just don't have any. Someone who values books is obviously an idealistic person. I'm talking about books as such – whatever they may be about. We eastern Europeans have a different understanding of books than, say, Americans. Eastern Europeans know what it feels like to grow up among books – where every room is filled from floor to ceiling with old respectable tomes. Or when books are used to balance uneven furniture or replace the feet on the sofa. The act of reaching for a totally random book may open up a whole new world given that there are millions in your home for which you lack an overview or simply don't remember what books exactly you own. The reason behind it is that books used to be very cheap. They were published in huge numbers; writers received massive subsidies from the state that could be invested in new cars or summer cottages. This signified life of the cultural elite in the socialist society produced more and more books. Do we think of that as over-production or as a crisis of representation?

Berziņš claims that a book can be a work of art in certain situations. The act of buying a book and bringing it home is important to him. Although, I couldn't understand if we're talking about old books or new ones? Or is it really necessary to buy them, couldn't they just be taken for free? By the way, it's pretty difficult to display a stolen book on the shelf, even if the theft is justified. On the one hand, it feels really good to “save” a book from some unsuitable location, but on the other it's a bit like spoils of war that should be kept separate from other books. So Berziņš could also consider how to exhibit stolen books and propose other issues related to this question.

But why should a book be a work of art? Work of art refers to singularity and uniqueness; a work of art in the context of a book has a negative connotation for me. It's possible that Berziņš is questioning creative processes and its results – whether the aim is to work with the substance or refine the product. Perhaps works of art should also be free from their singularity. The question is about the existence of culture, how we live and function, what we are interested in and why. Publishing books and creating art is a part of this and leaves a trail. These trails, however, could never be the goal. You can never buy just one book, you can never buy just one piece of art. If you do then you're a brick. But there's nothing to do with a single brick, except write numerous books about it that are thick like bricks and they lie around our homes like potatoes. A book is not a medium for information, it is also not a work of art.

What matters is the quantity – to have a cartload of books. Lugging a cartload around and rearranging it also clears our subconscious and protects it from information. A cartload answers the question how to know and how to live with knowledge. If you know something, you also have to carry it around.

TANEL RANDER

## Ceturtā saruna. „.. svītriņa mīļā – okera – krāsā”

**Jānis Taurens:** Es studentiem pēc atmiņas mēdu stāstīt – varbūt arī Arturs Bērziņš to ir dzirdējis – kādu Vitgenšteina konstruētu gadījumu. Kad beidzot saņēmos un sameklēju oriģinālu, atklāju, ka esmu to diezgan stipri pārveidojis, bet, vienalga, lekcijās stāstītais man šķiet labāks. Iedomāsimies, ka mums ir kalpi – cilvēkiem līdzīgas būtnes jeb automāti, kas izpilda mūsu pavēles. Vieni vienkārši izpilda pavēles, bet otrs vēl arī saprot, ko mēs sakām. Par šiem otrajiem mēs maksājam nedaudz vairāk. Šo modeli var pārveidot, piemēram, „.. otrs vēl arī lasa grāmatas, utt.”. Cik daudz “vairāk” tu maksātu par šiem “otrajiem”?

**Vasilijs Voronovs:** Es redzēju sapni, kura sākumu neatceros. Es staigāju pa tukšu veikalnu, plauktos bija sakrautas drēbes, bet katrā telpas nodalījumā, blakus drēbēm, bija redzama kāda grāmata ar grāmatīzi. Es nodomāju, ja veikalā nav pircēju, tad pārdevēji lasa grāmatas. Sapnis droši vien saistīts ar vakardienas lēmumu šīsdienas sarunu veltīt Artura Bērziņa grāmatu pirkšanas instrukciju.

**J. T.:** Īstenībā šīs darbs – cik var spriest pēc paša autora apraksta, jo pagaidām mums nav nedz instrukcijas, nedz procesa “ilustrācijas”, – no jauna izvirzā jautājumu par “artikulētu vienību”, ja lietojam šo Pitera Osborna terminu, starp dažādiem medijiem instrukciju, performancei un tās dokumentāciju.

**V. V.:** Robežgadījumā darbs varētu būt tikai instrukcijas lapiņa pie sienas, teiksmis, kā klasiskajā 60. gadu konceptuālismā.

**J. T.:** Bet tas tā nav. Tomēr sekošana instrukcijai tiek atstāta katra skatītāja ziņā, un nenotiek arīdzan nekāda mākslas objekta dematerializācija, drīzāk otrādi – mākslas darbs rematerializējas grāmatā, kas tiek nopirkt, sekojot instrukcijai.

**V. V.:** Taču ievēro – tas ir Artura Bērziņa mākslas darbs tikai līdz tam brīdim, kamēr grāmata tiek izlaisti.

**J. T.:** Par laimi, nekas nav teikts par saprašanu – pie veiksmīgas izvēles (norādot, kāda grāmata jāpērk) atsevišķos gadījumos tas varētu kļūt par potenciāli mūžīgu mākslas darbu.

**V. V.:** Un plaukti pie sienas, speciāli vienai grāmatai, kura tur arī būs...

**J. T.:** Tāds sīreals objekts...

**V. V.:** Jā, šāds plauksts kā “ilustrācija” ir pilnīgi lieks.

**J. T.:** Tomēr tas nav tik vienkārši. To var uztvert kā slazdus neuzmanīgam skatītājam, kuram vajag, kur “pieķerties acīj”. Turklat ievēro, ka autors savā aprakstā saka, ka darba “priekšmets ir īpaša sajūta”. Rezumēsim: ne jau katrā skatītāja, kurš sekos instrukcijai, nopirkta grāmata (līdz tās izlaistišanai) ir mākslas darbs. Mākslas darbs ir skatītāja sajūtas reprezentācija, grāmata tikai izraisa šo sajūtu.

**V. V.:** Bet kas šajā gadījumā ir reprezentācijas līdzekļi? Sajūtas reprezentāciju – to izjūtu un pēc tam objektīvējot tajā vai citā formā – var veikt tikai pats skatītājs. Tātad arī sajūtas dokumentācija ir vija ziņā. No Osborna “artikulētās vienības” mākslinieks tātad ir darinājis tikai pirmo elementu – instrukciju.

**J. T.:** Vēl viena nianse – Arturs Bērziņš norāda, ka mūs ietekmē arī grāmatas, kas netiek izlaistas (vismaz tā viņa teiko var saprast). Līdzīgu domu izteicis Valters Benjamins, kuram nācās pamest savu bibliotēku, un Borhess, kurš, kļuvis akls, vairs nespēja izlaist grāmatas. Tomēr es gribētu teikt, ka īpaša sajūta, nopērkot grāmatu, par kuru, kā es uzskatu, mākslinieks saka, ka tā ir darba priekšmets, man neradīsies, ja grāmata pirkšu, sekojot instrukcijai. Grāmatai ir tā joma, kur es diez vai kādam ļaušu sev dot norādes! Taču sajūta man ir zināma. Sajūta ir vien jāaistsauc atmiņā. Tātad šīs darbs ir domāts (un saprotams) vien tiem, kas mīl pirkt grāmatas, un tā aptveršanai nav vajadzīgs nekas cits kā neliela atmiņas piepūle.

**V. V.:** Tad tā ir visai elitāra māksla. Benjamins šajā gadījumā varētu atcerēties, kā iegādājies kādu plānu grāmatiņu ar okera krāsas muguriņu. Kad Asja (Anna Lācis) pēc viņa paša uzaicinājuma izvēlēties jebkuru grāmatu no plašas bibliotēkas apjomīgo foliantu vidū izraudzījusies plānu svītriņu sev mīļajā okera tonī, viņš esot nobālējis un vārgā balsī izdvesis: “Gētes “Stellas” pirmsais izdevums! ...”

Kombuļu pagasts, 2014. gada 4. augustā

## Fourth conversation. “...sweet line – ochre – coloured”

**Jānis Taurens:** I tend to tell students from memory – maybe also Arturs Bērziņš has heard that – one occasion constructed by Wittgenstein. When I finally got around to finding the original I discovered I had changed it quite a bit, but still – what I told in lectures seems better to me. Let's imagine we have servants – human-like creatures or automata which follow our orders. First ones simply follow orders, but the second ones also understand what we are saying. We pay for the second ones a little bit more. This model can be changed, for example, “...the second ones also read books etc.”. How much “more” would you pay for the “second ones”?

**Vasilijs Voronovs:** I saw a dream, of which I don't remember the beginning. I was walking through an empty shop, the shelves were filled with clothes, but in every compartment of the space, next to clothes, a book with a bookmark was visible. I thought – if there are no customers, then the sales clerks read books. The dream is probably connected with yesterday's decision to dedicate this conversation to the book buying instruction by Arturs Bērziņš.

**J. T.:** Actually this work – as much as you can judge from the author's own description, since we don't have the instruction or the “illustration” of the process – once again poses the question of “articulate unity”, if we use this term by Peter Osborne, between different media: instruction, performance and its documentation.

**V. V.:** In bordercase this work could be only an instruction manual on the wall, let's say, as in classical 1960's conceptualism.

**J. T.:** But it is not so. Still following the instruction is left to each viewer's choice and there is also no dematerialisation of an art object taking place, it's the other way around – the artwork rematerializes in the book which is bought following the instruction.

**V. V.:** But keep in mind – it is the artwork by Arturs Bērziņš only until the moment, the book is read.

**J. T.:** Thankfully nothing is said about understanding – in the case of a lucky choice (indicating which book needs to be bought) in some cases it could become a potentially eternal artwork.

**V. V.:** And a shelf on the wall, especially for one book, where it will be...

**J. T.:** Quite a surreal object.

**V. V.:** Yes, such a shelf as “illustration” is completely excessive.

**J. T.:** Still it is not that simple. It can be seen as a trap for an inattentive viewer who needs something that “catches the eye”. Also it is necessary to notice that the author in his description says that the work's “object is a special feeling”. Let's resume: not every viewer's book that is bought (until its reading) following the instruction is an artwork. The artwork is the representation of the viewer's feeling, the book only causes this feeling.

**V. V.:** But what in this case are the means of representation. The representation of the feeling – by feeling and then objectivizing it in one form or another – can be done only by the viewer himself. Thus also the documentation of the feeling is in his hands. From Osborne's “articulate unity” the artist has only created the first element – instruction.

**J. T.:** Another nuance – Arturs Bērziņš notes that we are influenced also by books which are not being read (at least that's how his words can be understood). A similar thought has been said by Walter Benjamin who had to leave his library and Borges who became blind and couldn't read books anymore. Still I would like to say that a special feeling from buying a book which – as I see it – the artist is saying is the work's subject, will not arise if I will buy the book following an instruction. Books are a sphere, where I doubt I will let anyone give me directions! But I am familiar with the feeling. The feeling only needs to be brought back to memory. Thus this work is meant (and understandable) only for those who love to buy books and the only thing necessary to grasp it is a small exertion of memory.

**V. V.:** Then it is quite elitist art. Benjamin in this case could remember, how he bought a thin book with an ochre coloured back. When Asya (Anna Lācis) after his own invitation to choose any book from his vast library among the big folios chose a thin line in her favorite ochre colour, he paled and uttered in a feeble voice: “The first edition of Goethe's “Stella”! ...”

Kombuļu municipality, August 4, 2014

Jānis Taurens

"The object of *Untitled (book)* is a special feeling. When a book is purchased and brought home. Placed into the shelf. Or on the table. An indescribable and unrepresentable feeling."

Arturs Bērziņš on his project for the Artishok Biennale [Author's translation]

"Islamists Deface John Latham Sculpture in Frankfurt

artnet News, Monday, June 2, 2014

Three allegedly-Islamist men stole a portion of John Latham's *God is Great (#4)* (2005) out of legendary art space Portikus' current exhibition, according to Germany's *Bild*. The work, created one year before the British conceptual artist's death, consists of a Quran, a Bible, and a Talmud spread across the gallery floor on a field of shattered glass. The work is reportedly worth €150,000.

According to reports, the men entered the exhibition around 5:45pm and began yelling things at Portikus staff such as, "What is this supposed to be?" "What's the point of this show?" One of the men allegedly then jumped onto Latham's work, grabbed the Quran, and ran out of Portikus."

<http://news.artnet.com/in-brief/islamists-deface-john-latham-sculpture-in-frankfurt-31537>

Left: Hans Haacke. Blue Sail. 1964-1965. Chiffon, oscillating fan, fishing weights, and thread. 340.36 cm x 320.04 cm.

Collection SFMOMA

Right: John Latham. God is Great (#4). 2005. Glass, books, silicone.



Pa kreisi: Hans Haacke. Zilā bura. 1964-1965. Šifons, kustīgs ventilators, makšķerēšanas atsvari un aukla. 340,36 x 320,04 cm. SFMOMA kolekcija

Pa labi: Džons Lethems. Dievs ir varens (#4). 2005. Stikls, grāmatas, silikons.

"*Bez nosaukuma (grāmata)* priekšmets ir īpaša sajūta. Kad tiek nopirkta grāmata un atnesta mājās. Nolikta plauktā. Vai uz galda. Pārņem neizsakāma un neattēlojama sajūta."

Arturs Bērziņš par savu darbu Artishok Biennālei

"Islāmistī sabojā Džona Lethema skulptūru Frankfurtē

artnet News, pirmdiena, 2014.gada 2.jūnijs

Vācijas laikraksts *Bild* raksta, ka trīs, visticamāk, islāmistī no Franfurtes leģendārajā mākslas telpā "Portikus" šobrīd notiekošās izstādes izzaguši daļu no Džona Lethema darba "*God is Great (#4)*" (2005). Darbs, kurš tapis gadu pirms britu konceptuālista nāves, sastāv no saplēstu stiklu klājumā uz galerijas grīdas novietota Korāna, Bībeles un Talmūda. Darba vērtība ir aptuveni €150 000.

Saskaņā ar ziņām, trīs vīrieši apmēram pulksten 17:45 ienākuši izstādes telpā un sākuši kliegt uz "Portikus" darbiniekiem: "Kas šis tāds vispār ir?", "Kāda jēga no šīs izstādes?". Pēc tam viens no vīriešiem esot uzlecis Lethema darbam, paķēris Korānu un izskrējis no galerijas."

<http://news.artnet.com/in-brief/islamists-deface-john-latham-sculpture-in-frankfurt-31537> [Autora tulkojums]