

PARTICIPANTS:

Ami Barak (FR), **Hubert Besacier** (FR), **Anthony Elms** (USA), **Michel Gauthier** (FR), **Radmila Iva Janković** (HR), **Mladen Lučić** (HR), **Zvonko Maković** (HR), **Arnauld Pierre** (FR), **Pascal Pique** (FR), **Cay Sophie Rabinowitz** (USA), **Žarko Radaković** (DE), **Valentina Radoš** (HR), **Christian Rattemeyer** (USA/DE), **Anne-Laure Ribulet** (FR), **Branka Stipančić** (HR), **Noëlle Tissier** (FR), **Danka Šošić Vijatović** (FR/HR), **Žarko Vijatović** (FR/HR), **Janka Vukmir** (HR)

PROGRAM

9. 5. 2024. Četvrtak / Thursday

● 1

12:30 – 13:00 Uvod / Introduction

13:00 – 13:20 VALENTINA RADOŠ

Knifer i Osijek / Knifer and Osijek

13:20 – 13:40 MLADEN LUČIĆ

Knifer i drugi / Knifer and Others

13:40 – 14:00 BRANKA STIPANČIĆ

Snimanje filma o Juliju Kniferu u Parizu (2000.) / Making of film about Julije Knifer in Paris (2000)

14:00 – 14:20 ŽARKO RADAKOVIĆ

*Tübingenski božićni meandri Julija Knifera /
Julije Knifer's Tübingen Christmas meanders*

14:20 – 14:40 diskusija / discussion

Valentina Radoš: Knifer i Osijek / Knifer and Osijek

It is known that Osijek is the hometown of Julije Knifer, but after leaving for Zagreb, his returns were sporadic. Only the special efforts of the then curator of the Fine Arts Gallery (now the Museum), Vlastimir Kusik, kept the ties between the artists and Osijek alive. The presentation will focus on exactly these connections: what through the exhibitions held during the 1970s and 80s, what in the future through the large anniversary exhibition that is planned for 2026. Also, the present-day relationship of the hometown towards the artistic heritage and meaning of Julije Knifer is particularly interesting, where the question of the community's responsibility arises in the conscious and appropriate use of artistic authorship in the "branding" of Osijek.

Mladen Lučić: Knifer i drugi / *Knifer and Others*

The presentation is based on my personal experiences of socialising with Julije Knifer and on two exhibitions where I confronted his work with the works of two other artists. The first exhibition was in 1988, when I compared Julije Knifer's work with the work of Ferdinand Kulmer through a chronological selection of works, trying to use these examples to convey continuity and discontinuity in Croatian art. The second exhibition was held in 2015 at the Kranjčar Gallery as part of the Mindset (mentor - follower) project, when I tried, more on a spiritual level than on similarities in artistic expression, to show the influence of older artists on the creativity of younger artists, and I juxtaposed the work of Julije Knifer with the works of Marko Vojnić.

Branka Stipančić: Snimanje filma o Juliju Kniferu u Parizu (2000.) / Making of film about Julije Knifer in Paris (2000)

The story of the making of a film about Juli Knifer in 2000 with the director Gordana Brzović in Paris for Croatian Television. During that recording, she used her DVD camera to record how we were working. Occasionally, someone from the team would take a camera and that's how they captured something of the atmosphere. Just the other day she did a bit of tidying up of that material and she'll play it while speaking.

Žarko Radaković: Tübingenski božićni meandri Julija Knifera / *Julije Knifer's Tübingen Christmas meanders*

In November and December 1988, Julije Knifer worked on the last series of his paintings created in Tübingen. In the attic of the business center of the construction company Kemmler, a dozen large-format plane trees (which I call here the "Tübingen Christmas Meanders") were created.

I attended Kinifer's work and helped him in all stages of the work process. I was the only witness to the creation of the "extremely important series of Juliet's plane trees" (Pascal Pique in a conversation with me). I occasionally recorded segments of the work process with a video camera.

Most of the time we were silent; sometimes we talked (about anything and everything). Such a conversation was also recorded in the clip from the film material that I am showing here."

● 2

15:15 – 15:35 ANTHONY ELMS

Gdje god ima otkucaja pulsa /
Wherever there beats a pulse

15:35 – 15:55 DANKA ŠOŠIĆ VIJATOVIĆ & ŽARKO VIJATOVIĆ

Posjet Julija Knifera Documenti 2 u Kasselu /
Julije Knifer's visit to Documenta 2 in Kassel

15:55 – 16:15 ARNAULD PIERRE

Posvuda sam bio stranac /
I was a stranger everywhere

16:15 – 16:45 diskusija / discussion

Anthony Elms: Gdje god ima otkucaja pulsa / *Wherever there beats a pulse*

In considering Knifer's statements on rhythm, repetition, and the achronological nature of his art making, reverberations and adjacencies can be found in some seemingly unrelated places. Considering his work alongside other artists' similar sentiments, I find ways of opening up readings of Knifer's work along other avenues, particularly music.

Danka Šošić Vijatović & Žarko Vijatović: Posjet Julija Knifera Documenti 2 u Kasselu / *Julije Knifer's visit to Documenta 2 in Kassel*

The presentation deals with the European and American art context at the time of the creation of Knifer's first meanders through Julije Knifer's visit to the contemporary and modern art exhibition Documenta 2, held in 1959 in Kassel, from the point of view of the epoch, the significance of Barnett Newman and through correspondence with François Morellet.

Arnauld Pierre: Posvuda sam bio stranac / *I was a stranger everywhere*

In 1993, the meeting of Julije Knifer and François Morellet in a joint exhibition was the occasion for an epistolary exchange which quickly turned towards questions of identity and geographical belonging. It is Morellet who, unintentionally, places the discussion on this ground. His first letter asked, among other things, "Don't you regret that the events in Yugoslavia did not take place a few decades earlier?" Can you imagine the place you would have now in France (and in rotten capitalist Europe) if you had come here thirty years ago?

● 3

11:00 – 11:10 Uvod

11:10 – 11:30 JANKA VUKMIR

Projekt transkripcije Banalnih dnevnika /
Transcription Project of Banal Diaries

11:30 – 11:50 ZVONKO MAKOVIĆ

Dnevnici Julija Knifera / *Diaries of Julije Knifer*

11:50 – 12:10 CAY SOPHIE RABINOWITZ

Proces na stranici: Uredničke i dizajnerske odluke za doživljaj vijuganja Julija Knifera u različitim medijima /
Process on the page: Editorial and design decisions to experience Julije Knifer's meandering in diverse media

12:10 – 12:30 CHRISTIAN RATTEMEYER

Crtež u tisak: propedeutika čitanja crteža Julija Knifera kroz tiskanu stranicu / *Drawing Into Print: a propaedeutics of reading Julije Knifer's drawings through the printed page*

Janka Vukmir: Projekt transkripcije Banalnih dnevnika Julija Knifera / *Transcription Project of Banal Diaries by Julije Knifer*

Driven by curiosity to find out what was written in Knifer's diaries and motivated by the fact that those piles of diary entries are still unread, except in fragments, and inaccessible to researchers and the public, even twenty years after Knifer's death, I initiated the transcription project of the Banal Diaries. Although after a year of work, the project is only at its early beginning, with a small group of collaborators, we have laid the foundations for possible further development of the project.

Zvonko Maković: Dnevnici Julija Knifera / *Diaries of Julije Knifer*

In parallel with painting and drawing, Julije Knifer writes his diaries in notebook pages with the same rigor, the same zeal, and the same logic. These are diaries, the oldest of which are known to date from the mid-1950s, although they haven't been preserved. Knifer keeps these entries in his notebooks as diaries, or anti-diaries, as he also called them, as an analogy to his understanding of paintings with a meander motif, which he considers anti-paintings. In later years, the journals / anti-journals will also be called Banal diaries, translating into Croatian French the name Journal banal as they are now usually titled.

Cay Sophie Rabinowitz: Proces na stranici: Uredničke i dizajnerske odluke za doživljaj vijuganja Julija Knifera u različitim medijima / *Process on the page: Editorial and design decisions to experience Julije Knifer's meandering in diverse media*

Christian Rattemeyer: Crtež u tisak: propedeutika čitanja crteža Julija Knifera kroz tiskanu stranicu / *Drawing Into Print: a propaedeutics of reading Julije Knifer's drawings through the printed page*

● 4

13:15 – 13:35 MICHEL GAUTHIER

Knifer i konceptualno slikarstvo /
Knifer and conceptual painting

13:35 – 13:55 RADMILA IVA JANKOVIĆ

Odnos umjetnika i slike /
Relation between the artist and the painting

13:55 – 14:15 PASCAL PIQUE

Novi ezoterični i energetske pristupi umjetnosti Julija Knifera / *New esoteric and energetic approaches to Julije Knifer's art*

14:15 – 14:35 HUBERT BESACIER

Art, No-Art, Anti-Art

14:35 – 14:55 diskusija / discussion

Michel Gauthier: Knifer i konceptualno slikarstvo / *Knifer and conceptual painting*

From the late '50s onwards, a paradoxical phenomenon began to emerge: conceptual painting. Is Knifer's work part of this international tendency?

Radmila Iva Janković: Odnos umjetnika i slike / *Relation between the artist and the painting*

*Julije Knifer described the relationship to art not as an artist's relationship to art, but as a human's relationship to art. In line with this thought, the photo performance *Relation between the artist and the painting* performed in Tübingen in 1975, in which the artist poses in front of a white canvas with his arms spread out to its edges, can be understood as a kind of cryptic manifesto. It will be the starting point in thinking about Knifer's thought dichotomies: impersonality and subjectivity, control and anarchy, passivity (rest) and movement (process), visual fact and sign, nothingness and transcendence, principledness and excess, and finally - (self)restriction and freedom.*

Pascal Pique: Novi ezoterični i energetske pristupi umjetnosti Julija Knifera / *New esoteric and energetic approaches to Julije Knifer's art*

*Julije Knifer is one of the rare artists in the history of art to have devoted his entire life to a **single gesture**. As with icon painters, **this gesture has an existential and spiritual dimension** before being a motif relating to a form of abstraction with the meander. It is also a **“gorgonesque” project which combined the absurd, the infinite and the absolute**. Julije Knifer's art has been hailed as a singular and major contribution to post-constructivist geometric abstract art. First in former Yugoslavia with the groups Gorgona and New Tendencies, then in Italy, Germany and France. Paradoxically, it also embodies an alternative to non-objective art. An alternative of unusual energetic and meditative scope which refers to esoteric transcultural and transhistorical foundations. These esoteric*

dimensions, like the spirituality evoked by Julije Knifer, have been very little addressed and explored. Either misunderstood or passed over in silence. To grasp them today is to fully immerse oneself in the work to risk some interpretations where it is as much a question of Malevich, of aboriginal art, of black and white, of the moon and the sun, as of the rainbow serpent. in sky. This also requires reinvesting an energetic approach to works of art. For example, through the visible and invisible energies of the universe, including those of trees, carbon, graphite, or lead, which Knifer crystallizes by updating the cultures of alchemy. Julije Knifer's art then appears in a completely different light. That of a form of care, or universal panacea, that the artist bequeathed to be reactivated in our museums, in our heads and in our hearts. A treatment whose alchemical dimension is part of a cosmological restoration enterprise of crucial relevance 100 years after the birth of Julije Knifer.

Hubert Besacier: Art, No-Art, Anti-Art

Reflection here focuses on the notion of ANTI, which Julije Knifer as well as the protagonists of the Gorgona group used to qualify their positions and their work: anti-Art, anti-magazine, anti-newspaper...

● 5

15:20 – 15:40 AMI BARAK

Julije Knifer - Francusko poglavlje - životna ljubav / Julije Knifer -The French chapter - a lifelong love affair

15:40 – 16:00 ANNE-LAURE RIBULET

16:00 – 16:20 NOËLLE TISSIER & JACQUES FOURNEL

16 :20 – 17 :00 diskusija / discussion

Ami Barak: Julije Knifer - Francusko poglavlje - životna ljubav / Julije Knifer -The French chapter - a lifelong love affair

My talk will attempt to outline the main lines of the long love affair with France of the Croatian artist, an iconic figure of the avant-garde and abstract art. I'll also try to grasp the reasons behind this very special relationship and the links forged over decades between this major key personality, his work and its reception in France and Paris, as well as with players on the art scene and activists in the defence of modern and contemporary art.

Anne-Laure Ribule:

Noelle Tissier / Jacques Fournier: