

# THE OTHER SIDE OF REALITY

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Novi Sad, Serbia

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14 photographs, fine art prints

60 x 40 cm / 100 x 70 cm

PROJEKT GRANT

Kunst.Transfer., Cultural Department City of Dortmund

In 1960s Yugoslavia, artists had notable room for creative exploration, a period now seen as an independent expression of modernity. Looking at it helps expand the understanding of contemporary culture.

The work of the Serbian artists Milan Popovic and Aleksandar Lucovic Lukijan was also highly individual and independent, producing surreal works often imbued with fantastic and metaphorical content. Their works can be seen, among others, in the Museum *Art Collection of Rajko Mamuzic* in Novi Sad.

The current right-wing nationalist government in Serbia makes freedom of expression in contemporary art more difficult. In contrast, ethnically and religiously motivated art is promoted, while the creative space for contemporary artists is increasingly restricted.

To navigate these constraints, critical artistic practice increasingly relies on indirect symbolism, allowing a wide range of interpretations without directly critiquing current socio-political conditions.

This context is reflected in my work *The Other Side of Reality*, which restages selected works by Milan Popovic and Aleksandar Lucovic Lukijan, including *Man With Chair* (Lucijan), *Redundant Man* (Popovic), *Cultus Familius* (Popovic), *The Dwarf In The Armchair* (Lucijan), and others.

The female model in the photographs wears a traditional folk costume from Novi Sad and plays with conventional role stereotypes within the staging, contrasting with the free-spirited nature of the original artists. The question of how free art can be in a political environment that seeks to regulate expression is increasingly relevant in other European countries as well.