



Suprematism on the Square!, project proposal for intervention in the public space, Zagreb main square, photomontage, 2008.

## **SUPREMATISM ON THE SQUARE!**

an intervention in the public space, Zagreb, since 2008 ongoing  
documentation of the working process, web site, social sculpture  
Kristina Leko in collaboration with BLOK, Local Base for Cultural Refreshment

"Suprematism on the Square!" is an artistic site specific intervention on the main square of the city of Zagreb, Croatia. It will cover all the adverts and company logos with black cloth, or, alternatively, another color, for 24 hours. The intervention is planned for the year 2010. It will be a collaboration with the companies involved with the main square advertising surfaces, the advertising sign companies and the municipal authorities.

The collaboration with companies means that each company should cover their logos or adverts at their own expense. Each company is approached through several meetings (until now, we met the responsible parties from 10 companies). At these meetings, we explain the project, and try to get the other side enthusiastic about the project. A diary is being kept documenting these meetings. The aim is to explore to which extent the business people are ready to give away their advertising for a non profit and poetic cause. During the meetings we also negotiate the color: if we feel that there is a problem, instead of black, we offer alternative colors, first red, and then white.

In December 2008, in the production of Local Base for Cultural Refreshment, a non profit organization, a test intervention on the east side of the square was supposed to take place. By covering the logos and adverts in black only, during the Christmas time, this intervention wanted to influence the passers by to reflect about the status of material values in today's society. This time, the covers were to be paid by the non profit organization.

The project was not realized. The leading bank in Croatia did not want to openly refuse taking part in the project. Instead, their director called the mayor. After that, the permission, issued 2 weeks beforehand, was cancelled. Therefore, other companies which wanted to take part in the project were not able to do so.

The cancellation of the permission by the municipal authorities is unique. It never happened before. It was not well received by the media. Several newspaper articles were critical about the bank and the city.

All this influenced the form and dynamics of the project. Because of this incident, the project initiated its web site which promotes the project and informs about it. Also we collected signatures of support and comments about the project. After 500 signatures were collected, we filed a complaint, and asked for a renewal of the permission by the municipal authorities. At the moment, I am working on the hand written letter to the mayor and the bank director asking them for a meeting, in order to change their mind, and give support to the project.

suprematizamtrgu.kristinaleko.net

**Cover adverts and company logos with black cloth.**

## **Suprematism on the Square! Poetics not Money, for just 72 hours!**



## **Long Live Pointlessness!**

In its contemporary manner, this poetic art action invokes Suprematism, the avant-garde movement of the early 20th century, with its geometrical, objectless painting that concerned itself with endorsing the spiritual in art.

Covering the signs of material and economic progress with black, this intervention has connotations with violent erasure, censorship, death, and through this wishes to prompt passers-by to think positively about the ephemerality of life, to say yes to intangible and to play down material values.

Although the intervention is conceived in such a way as to encompass the whole of the square, for a beginning we resolved to produce a trial intervention on the eastern side of the square lasting three days. We did not entirely succeed in this. Corporate lobbying proved to be more persuasive than the needs of freedom of artistic expression, marketing imperatives stronger than the recommendations and consent of the municipal authorities. Some seem to think the world will come to an end if a bank's logo goes missing from the square for 72 hours.

Do you think that corporate entities have the right to deprive members of the public, passers-by, of the experience of a work of art? To whom, do you think, does public space belong? Do you know who controls it? Have we decided democratically that we would rather look at company logos than the architectural heritage? Your answer to these and similar questions are an important step towards the democratic control of public space. Visit our Web site and learn more, at [www.operacijagrad.org](http://www.operacijagrad.org)

Suprematist Composition No. 1 Black on Grey, 2008, artistic intervention in the public space of Trg bana Josipa Jelačića, a proposal, author: Kristina Leko, artist. Production: BLOK, Local base for culture refreshment, Sonja Soldo, main producer, Ana Plančić, Ivo Poparić, Marko Matošić, production assistants, as part of the event Operacija Grad 2008/Operation City 2008.

