

MAJA  
STRGAR  
KUREČIĆ

FLOATING  
GARDEN

Galerija Kranjčar

MAJA  
STRGAR  
KUREČIĆ

FLOATING  
GARDEN

Zagreb, Galerija Kranjčar  
22. 4. – 5. 5. 2021.

# SMRZNUTO VRIJEME Iva Prosoli



Postoji taj neki događaj u svačijem životu koji donese osvještavanje neumitnosti kraja. Dode on iznenada i ostavi te na trenutak bez daha. Kao snažan udarac u trbuh, baš tako nekako, fizički. Za Maju Strgar Kurečić bio je to osamnaesti rođendan njezine kćeri, prigodom kojeg je mlada žena na poklon dobila i jednu ružu. Sam pogled na ružu i, sasvim sigurno, pomicao na činjenicu da njezina kći odrasta, u Maji je izazvao poriv da ružu sačuva od propadanja, da sačuva njenu mladost, i bez mnogo razmišljanja Maja je ružu zaledila. Tak kasnije posegnula je ponovo za ružom kako bi je fotografirala. Nakon ruže uslijedili su drugi cvjetovi, raznovrsno bilje, grane, sjemenke... Maja ih je počela sakupljati, proučavati, smrzavati i na kraju fotografirati. Od poriva je postala igra, od igre fotografija. Slično kao i u svom ranijem ciklusu *Other Worlds* Maja se sa svojim „blagom“ povukla u dječju sobu, uronila ga u jednu običnu zdjelu s vodom, istu onu u kojoj nedjeljom kuha ručak, i samo uz svjetlo stolne lampe započela je s transformacijom. Nastale slike oda su organičkom, elementarnom životu, no ujedno su i oda svakodnevici, ali ne onoj javnoj, već upravo suprotno, privatnoj i najintimnijoj. Atmosfera je stvorena interakcijom između različitih predmeta biljnog podrijetla čija je struktura vidljiva anatomski precizno te vode, što omogućava nebrojena čitanja. Vidiš ono što jesi, napisala je Maja jednom prilikom. Već samo posezanje za floralnim repertoarom nosi obilje simboličkog potencijala. No, na ovim se slikama ne radi o prvenstveno o tome. Maja Strgar Kurečić autorica je koja se uvelike oslanja na intuiciju. Pritom je ona potpuno neopterećena općim mjestima i predvidljivom simbolikom, gotovo dječe zaigrana, igrom otvara novi prostor slobode. Zadnjih nekoliko godina ova se autorica koja ima iza sebe punih dvadeset i pet godina profesionalnog iskustva u fotografiji, okrenula prirodi i apstraktnoj fotografiji. I jedno i drugo prepostavlja samoču ili makar kratkotrajno osamljivanje. Majin postupak duboko je eskapistički po svojoj naravi. U svojoj se osnovi oslanja na tradiciju onih autora koji svojim radom, ili nekim njegovim dijelom pod pritiskom društvenih okolnosti u umjetnosti pronalaze odmak od stvarnosti. Veliki hrvatski avangardist Antun Motika pritisnut grubim realitetom Drugog svjetskog rata u intimi svoga doma realizirao je brojne eksperimente. Proučavao je biljni svijet, koji ga fascinirao, zaokupljao i u kojem je prepoznao savršenost kakvu nije video u čovjeku. Između dva komada stakla stješnjavao je dijelove biljaka i druge materijale, koristio svjetlo projekcije i dobio kompozicije koje nemalo nalikuju onima s ove izložbe.

Kao i fotografije u svim ranijim serijama Maje Strgar Kurečić tako i ove iz serije *Floating Garden* polaze od visokih estetskih načela i nastojanja na tehničkoj savršenosti. Na ovoj izložbi predstavljene su u malom formatu, kao što su i nastale unutar ograničene zapremine jedne odveć velike zdjele. Međutim znati zaviriti u fotografiju kao uostalom i znati zaviriti u zdjelu a vidjeti životni ciklus, moment je koji čini razliku.

IP: Na tvojim je slikama izuzetno jaka svijest o smrti. Lijepo i nježno, fragilno i istovremeno muklo i okrutno.

MSK: Nije mi baš to bilo na pameti. Naglasak mi je na prolaznosti, ali i na ljepoti svih faza života.

IP: Je, sve je to. I klice i život i početak. A opet krug je zatvoren, jer one jesu mrtve. Zaledene. I nije li prolaznost samo eufemizam za smrt?

MSK: Ne znam. Meni ovo nije priča o smrti. Iako je i ona sastavni dio ciklusa života. Starenje, propadanje ali opet u nekom pozitivnom prirodnom smislu koji stvara uvjete za novi život. Biljka propada i postaje hrana za novi život.

IP: To i jest jedna od mogućih interpretacija smrti. Smrti nema. Jesu li sve biljke bile smrznute prije nego su završile u zdjeli?

MSK: Da.

IP: Kažeš ciklus, a negiraš propadanje?

MSK: Meni to propadanje nije "propadanje" nego stvaranje novog života. Biljke sam zaledila, ali sam ih najčešće snimala odleđene jer bi tako došla do njihove strukture. Da sam samo ubranu biljku ili laticu cvijeta stavila u vodu, ne bi se vidjela struktura.

IP: Ali svo si bilje zadržala zaledivanjem na vrhuncu njegove ljepote. Ništa nisi snimila u fazi fizičkog propadanja?

MSK: Pa mislim da ne. Latice tulipana i ruže sam uzela tek kad su prirodno otpale, nisam ih čupala. Jedino ono trulo lišće. Izvadila sam ga iz zemlje. Ono je bilo u fazi propadanja, a onda je iz njega u proljeće izbio šafran. Doslovno iz njega. Šafrani mi ovdje nose najveću simboliku novog života, novog ciklusa, obnove, svjetla.

Ja sam kao mala na grobu svoje bake i djeda zamišljala da su oni iz zemlje došli na drvo koje je raslo tik do njihovog groba. I danas sam uvjerenja u to.

## FROZEN TIME

### Iva Prosoli

There is a certain event in everyone's life which brings about the awareness of the inevitability of the end. It happens unexpectedly and leaves you breathless for a moment. Physically, as a strong punch in a gut – just like that. That event for Maja Strgar Kurečić was her daughter's eighteenth birthday for which, among other gifts, the young woman received a single rose. The mere look at the rose and, quite surely, the thought that her daughter was growing up, drove Maja to preserve that rose from deterioration, to safeguard its youth. So, without much though Maja froze the rose. It was not until much later that she took it out to photographed it. Other flowers, various plants, branches, and seeds followed. Maja started gathering and examining them to finally photograph them. Similarly, like with her previous series *Other Worlds*, Maja secluded herself with her "treasure" in the children's room where she submerged it under water in a simple bowl, the same one she uses for making Sunday lunch. Thus, submerged and illuminated by a desk lamp she began with its transformation. The created images are an ode to the organic, elemental life, as well as an ode to everyday life – not the public one, but quite opposite the most private and intimate one. The atmosphere is achieved through the interaction of water with various plant origin objects whose structures are anatomically and precisely visible, thus allowing countless readings. On one occasion Maja wrote that *you see what you are*. The mere reach for the floral repertoire carries an abundance of symbolic potential. However, these images are not primarily about that. Maja Strgar Kurečić is an author who relies heavily on intuition. At the same time, she is completely unencumbered by commonplace and predictable symbolism, and almost childishly playful, she opens a new space of freedom through play. In the last few years, this author, who has twenty-five years of professional experience in photography behind her, has turned to nature and abstract photography. Both presuppose loneliness or at least short-term solitude. Maja's action is deeply escapist in its nature. In its essence it relies on the tradition of those authors who, through their work, or some part of it, had found haven in art due to pressure of social circumstances. The great Croatian avant-garde artist Antun Motika, pressed by the harsh reality of the Second World War, realized numerous experiments in the intimacy of his home. He studied plants, which fascinated and preoccupied him and in which he recognized a perfection he had not seen in mankind. Between the two pieces of glass, he pressed parts of plants and other materials, used projection light, and created compositions that closely resemble those in this exhibition.

Like the photographs in all previous series by Maja Strgar Kurečić, these from the *Floating Garden* series are based on high aesthetic principles and efforts to achieve technical perfection. In this exhibition, they are presented in a small format, as they were created within the limited volume of a not too large bowl. However, knowing how to peek into a photograph, as well as knowing how to peek into a bowl and see the life cycle is the precise moment that makes a difference.

IP: There is an extremely strong mortality salience in your images. Nice and tender, fragile and at the same time muffled and cruel.

MSK: That wasn't exactly on my mind. My emphasis is on transience, but also on the beauty of all stages of life.

IP: Yes, that's it. And sprouts and life and beginning. And yet the circle is closed because they are dead. Frozen. And is transience not just a euphemism for death?

MSK: I don't know. To me, this is not a story about death. Although it is also an integral part of the circle of life. Aging, decay and yet again in some positive natural sense this enables preconditions for a new life. A plant decays and becomes food for new life.

IP: That is one of the possible interpretations of death. There is no death. Were all the plants frozen before they ended up in the bowl?

MSK: Yes.

IP: You say cycle, and yet you deny decay?

MSK: To me, that decay is not a "deterioration" but the creation of a new life. I froze the plants, but I usually photographed them thawed to get to their structure. If I had just put the picked plant or flower petal in the water the structure would not have been seen.

IP: But you preserved all the plants at the peak of their beauty by freezing. You didn't record any of them in the phase of physical decay?

MSK: Well I don't think so. I took the tulip petals and roses only when they fell off naturally, I didn't pluck them. Only those rotten leaves. I pulled it out of the ground in a state of decay, and then saffron sprouted from that in the spring. Literally out of it. Saffron carries to me the greatest symbolism of a new life, a new cycle, renewal, and light in this.

As a child on the graves of my grandparents, I imagined that they went from the ground to a tree that grew right next to their grave. And today I am convinced of that.





8

Maja Strgar Kurečić – Floating Garden



9

Maja Strgar Kurečić – Floating Garden

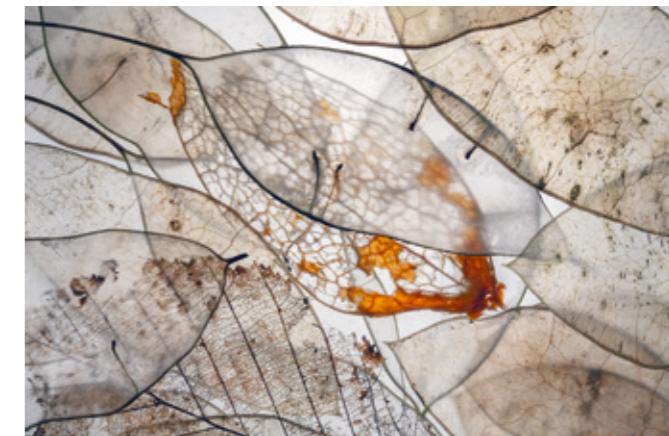


Šta misliš, šta se dogodilo od mladića i staraca?  
i šta misliš, šta se dogodilo od žena i djece?  
Oni negdje žive i zdravo se osjećaju,  
najmanja travka dokazuje da u zbilji nema smrti;  
a kada bi je i bilo, ona vodi naprijed život, a ne stoji  
na kraju da ga zaustavi,  
te prestaje u času kada se život javi.  
Sve ide dalje i vani, ništa se ne gubi,  
a umrijeti je nešto drugo nego je čovjek mislio, i to sretnije.

— Walt Whitman, Pjesma o samom sebi  
(Preveo s engleskog Tin Ujević.)

What do you think has become of the young and old men?  
And what do you think has become of the women and children?  
They are alive and well somewhere,  
The smallest sprout shows there is really no death,  
And if ever there was it led forward life, and does not wait at the  
end to arrest it,  
And ceas'd the moment life appear'd.  
All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,  
And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.

— Walt Whitman, Song of Myself



# BIOGRAFIJA

Maja Strgar Kurečić rođena je u Zagrebu 1972. godine. Diplomirala je 1996. godine na Grafičkom fakultetu Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, gdje je i doktorirala 2007. godine s temom iz područja digitalne fotografije. Članica je Fotografske sekcije ULUPUH-a (Hrvatske udruge likovnih umjetnika primijenjenih umjetnosti). Fotografijom (reklamnom, reportažnom i eksperimentalnom) aktivno se bavi od 1991. godine te izlaže na više od 50 selektiranih skupnih i 10 samostalnih izložbi fotografija. Svoje radove izlagala je diljem svijeta – od Hong Konga do Moskve, Omana, Barcelone, Pariza, Kölna, Budimpešte, Praga i hrvatskih gradova: Zagreba, Rijeke, Splita, Dubrovnika, Rovinja i Varaždina. Dobitnica je više nagrada i priznanja. Radi kao izvanredna profesorica na Katedri za grafički dizajn i slikovne informacije na Grafičkom fakultetu Sveučilišta u Zagrebu gdje predaje fotografiju i grafičku pripremu.

Serija *Floating Garden* osvojila je brojne prestižne svjetske nagrade, od kojih su najvažnije:

2021. 14<sup>th</sup> Annual International Color Awards, 3. mjesto u kategoriji Apstrakcija  
2020. 15<sup>th</sup> Julia Margaret Cameron Award, 1. mjesto u kategoriji Priroda  
BIFA 2020 – Budapest International Foto Awards, zlato u kategoriji Priroda  
ND Photography Awards, 2. mjesto u kategoriji Priroda  
MIFA 2020 – Moscow International Foto Awards, srebro u Fine Art kategoriji  
Chromatic Photography Awards, 2. mjesto u kategoriji Priroda  
6th Fine Art Photography Awards, 3. mjesto u kategoriji Priroda  
PX3 – Prix de la Photographie Paris, 3. mjesto u kategoriji Priroda  
San Francisco Bay International Photography Awards, srebrna medalja za seriju  
2019. TIFA 2019 – Tokyo International Foto Awards, zlato u kategoriji Priroda

#### SAMOSTALNE IZLOŽBE (izbor)

2020. *Drugi svjetovi*, Galerija ULUPUH, Zagreb  
2019. *Drugi svjetovi*, Centar vizualnih umjetnosti Batana, Rovinj; Galerija Principij, Rijeka  
2016. *Interakcije*, Tehnički muzej Nikole Tesle, Zagreb  
2004. *Maske*, Galerija Badrov, Zagreb  
2002. *Prozori*, Galerija Fortezza MGC Klovićevi dvori, Zagreb; Galerija Zlati ajngel, Varaždin; Mali salon MMSU, Rijeka  
1998. *Dubrovnik - svjetla i tame*, Galerija Croatia Airlinesa, Dubrovnik; Galerija Foto kluba, Split; Atrij Muzeja Mimara, Zagreb  
1995. *Svjetlo, sjena, boja*, Galerija Forum, Zagreb

#### KONTAKT

gsm: +385 91 5177 962  
e-mail: [maja.strgar.kurecic@gmail.com](mailto:maja.strgar.kurecic@gmail.com)  
web: <http://majastrgarkurecic.com/>

# BIOGRAPHY

Maja Strgar Kurečić was born in Zagreb in 1972. She graduated in 1996 from the Faculty of Graphic Arts, University of Zagreb, where she received her PhD in 2007 with a thesis in the field of digital photography. She is a member of the Photographic Section of ULUPUH (Croatian Association of Fine Artists of Applied Arts). She has been actively involved in photography (advertising, reportage and experimental) since 1991 and has exhibited in more than 50 selected group and 10 solo photography exhibitions. She has exhibited her works all over the world – from Hong Kong to Moscow, Oman, Barcelona, Paris, Cologne, Budapest, Prague, and Croatian cities: Zagreb, Rijeka, Split, Dubrovnik, Rovinj and Varaždin. She has won several awards and recognitions. She works as an Associate Professor at the Department of Graphic Design and Image Information at the Faculty of Graphic Arts, University of Zagreb, where she teaches photography and graphic preparation.

The series *Floating Garden* has won numerous prestigious world awards, the most important of which are:

- 2021 14<sup>th</sup> Annual International Color Awards, 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the category Abstraction  
2020 15<sup>th</sup> Julia Margaret Cameron Award, 1st place in the category Nature  
BIFA 2020 – Budapest International Foto Awards, gold in the category Nature  
ND Photography Awards, 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the category Nature  
MIFA 2020 - Moscow International Foto Awards, silver in Fine Art category  
Chromatic Photography Awards, 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the category Nature  
6th Fine Art Photography Awards, 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the category Nature  
PX3 – Prix de la Photographie Paris, 3rd place in the category Nature  
San Francisco Bay International Photography Awards, silver medal for the series  
2019 TIFA 2019 – Tokyo International Foto Awards, gold in the category Nature

#### SOLO EXHIBITIONS (selection)

- 2020 *Drugi svjetovi*, ULUPUH Gallery, Zagreb  
2019 *Drugi svjetovi*, Batana Centre for Visual Arts, Rovinj; Principij Gallery, Rijeka  
2016 *Interakcije*, Nikola Tesla Technical Museum, Zagreb  
2004 *Maske*, Badrov Gallery, Zagreb  
2002 *Prozori*, Fortezza Gallery MGC Klovićevi dvori, Zagreb; Galerija Zlati ajngel, Varaždin; Mali salon MMSU, Rijeka  
1998 *Dubrovnik - svjetla i tame*, Croatia Airlines Gallery, Dubrovnik; Photo Club Gallery, Split; Atrium of the Mimara Museum, Zagreb  
1995 *Svjetlo, sjena, boja*, Forum Gallery, Zagreb

#### CONTACT

gsm: +385 91 5177 962  
e-mail: [maja.strgar.kurecic@gmail.com](mailto:maja.strgar.kurecic@gmail.com)  
web: <http://majastrgarkurecic.com/>

# IMPRESSUM

## KATALOG / CATALOGUE

Izdavač / Publisher  
Galerija Kranjčar

Za nakladnika / For the publisher  
Elvira Kranjčar

Urednica kataloga /  
Catalogue editor  
Iva Prosoli

Uvodni text / Introduction  
Iva Prosoli

Prijevod na engleski jezik /  
English translation  
Dunja Nekić

Lektura i korektura /  
Proofreading and editing  
Iva Prosoli

Grafičko oblikovanje /  
Graphic design  
Petra Slobodnjak

Priprema fotografija za tisak /  
Photo print preparation  
Petra Slobodnjak

Tisk / Printing  
Kerschoffset Zagreb

Naklada / Print run  
200

Zagreb, travanj – svibanj 2021. /  
April – May 2021

ISBN 978-953-55363-7-6  
KRAJNČAR d.o.o.

CIP zapis je dostupan u računalnom  
nazivu katalogu Nacionalne i  
sveučilišne knjižnice u Zagrebu  
pod brojem 001097877. / CIP  
entry accessible in the computer  
catalogue of the National and  
University Library in Zagreb under  
No. 001097877.

## IZLOŽBA / EXHIBITION

Zagreb, Galerija Kranjčar,  
22. 4. – 5. 5. 2021.

Autorica izložbe /  
Exhibition author  
Maja Strgar Kurečić

Kustosica izložbe /  
Exhibition curator  
Iva Prosoli

Likovni postav izložbe /  
Exhibition design

Maja Strgar Kurečić, Iva Prosoli

Ispis fotografija /  
Photography printing  
B nula

Oprema fotografija /  
Photography mounting  
Ramasutra

Tehnički postav izložbe /  
Technical production  
Galerija Kranjčar

Grafičko oblikovanje /  
Graphic design  
Petra Slobodnjak

Odnosi s javnošću /  
Public relations  
PRiredba

Galerija Kranjčar

Zagreb, travanj – svibanj 2021. /  
April – May 2021

ISBN 978-953-55363-7-6

KRAJNČAR d.o.o.



GK



Sveučilište u Zagrebu

Grafički fakultet

