

**Janez Janša**

**Life II  
[in Progress]**

to Maks Soršak

25. 2.–4. 5. 2014

Opening of the exhibition on Tuesday, 25 February 2014, at 7 p.m.

Conceptual artist Janez Janša started developing the *Life [in Progress]* project in 2008. It consists of written, photographic and graphic instructions that encourage the audience to actively participate and interact with the artwork. Some instructions are translations and transfers of famous artworks from the 20th century into brief instructions for performances that can happen in everyday life. Even though they seem ironic, playful and even humorous, in their actual implementation, they potentially also raise discomfort, shame and vulnerability or are even in conflict with the law. According to the artist, the project turns around the traditional logic of representation: it is not art that represents life, it is rather life that follows the artistic scenario.

Past performances of the project had an emphasis on performativity and audience participation, whereas this presentation at MGLC has been adapted to the exhibition format. The main focus of the show is the extensive photographic project spanning over a five-year period, which follows a group of women (artists) through their pregnancies into motherhood. It is a series of staged monumental photographs, produced following the instructions of the infamous performance *Imponderabilia* by Marina Abramović and Ulay in 1977, in which visitors to the gallery had to squeeze between the two artists' naked bodies. In Janša's treatment, *Imponderabilia* is handled as a quotation from which a different work develops that establishes certain key differences of meaning and message in its implementation and implication. In contrast to the seriousness of the original, the full-figure colour images of pregnant women, nursing mothers and children arouse pleasant feelings and empathy.



Two photographs of the *Life [in Progress]* project, which were taken by Janez Janša at the Centro Municipal de Arte, Helio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro (2009).

The interest for historical performance as well as its re-enactment and interpretation is a very widespread occurrence within contemporary art, which is part of the general trend of exploring and revitalizing the non-institutional art and culture of the 1960s and 1970s. Theoreticians construe this interest as a need to revitalize the advanced ideas of this freethinking period since these have merely remained utopias or have in some way or another transformed themselves into commodities, or else, have become threatened again after having been socially accepted.

Lectures delivered by Aldo Milohnić, Bojana Kunst and Mladen Dolar will accompany the exhibition.

Janez Janša is an author, director, performer, editor and researcher of contemporary art. He has created over twenty original independent theatre pieces including *Miss Mobile*, *We Are All Marlene Dietrich FOR*, *Pupilija, papa Pupilo and the Pupilceks – Reconstrution*, *Slovenian National Theatre and Who's next?*, which have won him national and international awards. He makes interdisciplinary and visual works, which include *FWC (The First World Camp) Triglav on Triglav* and *NAME Readymade* (in collaboration with Janez Janša and Janez Janša). His artistic work is characterized by social criticism, interdisciplinary approaches and the questioning of the position of art within society. He is also the director of Maska, a non-profit organization for publishing, production, education and research.

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Photographs of the performances *Life [in Progress]*: Marcandrea, Janez Janša

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TIMEeSCAPES; Working with – In Time

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