



Still from the video **Workers' Collective**. Distribution of the newspaper in front of the main gate of the Mining and Smelting Basin of Bor (RTB). 5 min, editing: Rena Rädle, camera: Rastko Popov, Bor 2013

Workers' Collective

Workers' Collective is an artistic transformation dealing with the experience of the historical workers' self-management in Yugoslavia. We edited a special issue of the Mining Company's newspaper *Bor Collective* (Borski kolektiv) and distributed it to the workers in front of the RTB gate.

Bor Collective was first time issued in 1947, with the establishment of workers' self-management in the RTB Mining Company. Though still published under the same name, today *Bor Collective* represents the voice of the RTB director and management floor instead of the workers. We used samples of the historical newspaper and photo archives of the Bor People's Library to assembly an updated version of the first number, now under the programatically changed name *Workers' Collective* (Radnički kolektiv).

The work consists of:

Newspaper Workers' Collective: http://issuu.com/vladanrena/docs/radnicki_kolektiv

Video documentation of the distribution in front of the gate: <https://vimeo.com/114715217>

Documentation of the discussion with workers at the library: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpOGirLg91o>

Produced with the support of: Ministry of culture and information of Serbia, Bor Municipality, People's Library Bor. Curated by Dragan Stojmenović Sima.



Bor Collective, issue from 1947 and issue from 2012.
 Special edition **Workers' Collective**, 16 pages.
 Rena Rädle and Vladan Jeremić in collaboration with Saša Lović, Bor 2013

Texts cut out from the original newspapers are updated striking through and replacing certain words, old political slogans are contrasted with new ones. A collage of historical and contemporary practices of workers' self-organization is printed on a double page. It shows photos of the election of the workers' councils after the socialization of the mine and images of the mass protests during the last decade, when many branches of the mining company entered the privatization process and stopped production.

Another photomontage refers to a form of workers' protest that emerged after many remained without wages or pension. Fighting for the existence of themselves and their families, the workers blocked the national highway with mining trucks and protested with loafs of bread pinned to their placards. There is also a comic strip problematising the position of the union leaders. Ironically, the sentences scribbled onto the pictures of the workers' spokesmen resemble the typical phrases of the Mine Company's management. And there is a double page edited by a musician and former worker at RTB with a collection of workers' humour and poetry.



Photomontage, double-page from **Workers' Collective**

Almost thousand newspapers were distributed to the workers in front of the copper mines' gate during shift change. They were invited to the discussion at the People's Library of Bor the same evening. The discussion centred amongst others on the fact that the so called democratisation of the society did not lead to an increase but to the total loss of workers' control in the management of their factories. Another problem that was raised was the corruption of the big trade-unions by the political establishment that controls the privatisation process and the reform of workers' rights legislation.

A few weeks after the discussion, the president of the Independent Workers' Union Bor went on hunger-strike to protest against corruption in the privatisation process of the Mining Company and the directors' attempt to press the workers join his newly founded trade-union under threat of dismissal.





Still from the video **Workers' Collective**



Video still: Distribution of **Workers' Collective**



Video still: Distribution of **Workers' Collective**



Documentation of public presentation of the newspaper **Workers' Collective** at the People's Library Bor and discussion with Dragiša Trujkić, president of the Independent Workers' Union Bor, Milan Rakita, sociologist and Ivan Radenković, philosopher.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpOGirLg91o>



View of **Red Winter** intervention with sound installation and banners at the main square of Levanger, 2014

Red Winter

The artistic intervention with sound, banners and distribution of a newspaper on Levanger's main square creates references between contemporary and historical social movements from Levanger and Norway that are part of world-wide struggles for emancipation. The point of departure is the three-day-long workers' uprising that took place in 1851 on Levanger Square, which was internationally noticed and covered by the news in Paris and London at that time. It was triggered by the arrest of Carl Johan Michelsen, who agitated for the first Norwegian labour movement, led by Marcus Thrane.

The work consists of:

Installation of **sound recordings of four speeches and banners with slogans and drawings**

Red Winter Newspaper (Norwegian/English): http://issuu.com/vladanrena/docs/red_winter_newspaper

Video documentation of the distribution at the square (excerpts): <https://vimeo.com/114021960>

Public discussion at the townhall

Produced by Levart in the frame of Deep Sites, 5-20 September 2014, curated by Anne-Gro Erikstad.



Distribution of the newspaper on the main square of Levanger.

Stills from the video **Red Winter**, 16 min, editing: Rena Rädle, camera: echomedia, Levanger, Norway, 2014

In the center of Levanger, at the historical location of the uprising, we installed banners all around the square. From the square's speakers pavilion, we emitted recorded speeches by political agitators from past and present-day movements. Passer-byes were addressed by us and we distributed a newspaper with the four speeches, drawings and slogans to them.

The speakers represent the first Norwegian labour movement, the antifascist struggle during WW2, emancipatory movements of the Roma and Sami during the last decades and current environmental movements. From their historical positions - but also aware of the present day situation - they share the experience of their struggles and analyze mechanisms of exploitation now and then. They defend their demands, claim political, social and economical equality and call for radical change and revolution.



Red Winter. Banners at the pavillion and around the Levanger town square.

The work **Red Winter*** draws on a local tradition of historical folk theater. However, the aim of the intervention reaches beyond a re-enactment of historical events. The imaginary interaction between the speeches and slogans that are each derived from specific situations and political conjunctions, draws a connection ranging all the way from the past to the social struggles of today.

The particularity of their struggles is traced by the speakers' biographical testimony and accounts, but their incendiary speeches are also directed to a common struggle that needs to be fought at the present. Through the artistic compression of time, space and language, the work creates a new perspective on current positions and makes space for the projection of a future political program beyond particular interests, identity politics and anthropocentrism.

*The title Red Winter was inspired by the dramatic play Raud Vinter by Thorvald Sund, based on the Levanger riots in 1851, and performed in Levanger for the first time in 2006.



Speech by the member of the Thrane movement

Citizens of Levanger!

Some one hundred and fifty years ago, they sent Carl Johan Michelsen and our comrades to jail. Why were they thrown into the dungeon?
 Because they were hungry! Because they had no work!
 Because they wanted to send their children to school, but didn't have the money for it!
 Because they no longer wanted to send their children to war as cannon fodder for the gentlemen in power!
 Because they wanted to have a say in matters concerning them.
 Ha! They had to use soldiers to defeat our rebellion; we have given these mighty gentlemen quite a fright!
 There would be plenty for everyone, if only things were distributed fairly:

Down with the landowners!

Now, one hundred and fifty years later, I stand on Levanger Torg once again.
 I hear that you have fought for the right to vote and the right to education, and even military service for women.
 I hear that Norway is a rich country now.
 I also hear that begging is nowadays banned in Levanger?
 Is it really necessary for anyone to beg?
 The more I enquire, the more I realize that you have not achieved the kind of social justice for which we fought in 1851.
 You have fought for political equality and equality before the law;
 Do not stop there!
 Fight for economic equality as well!
 Only by fighting against the propertied class can we pave the way for a just society.

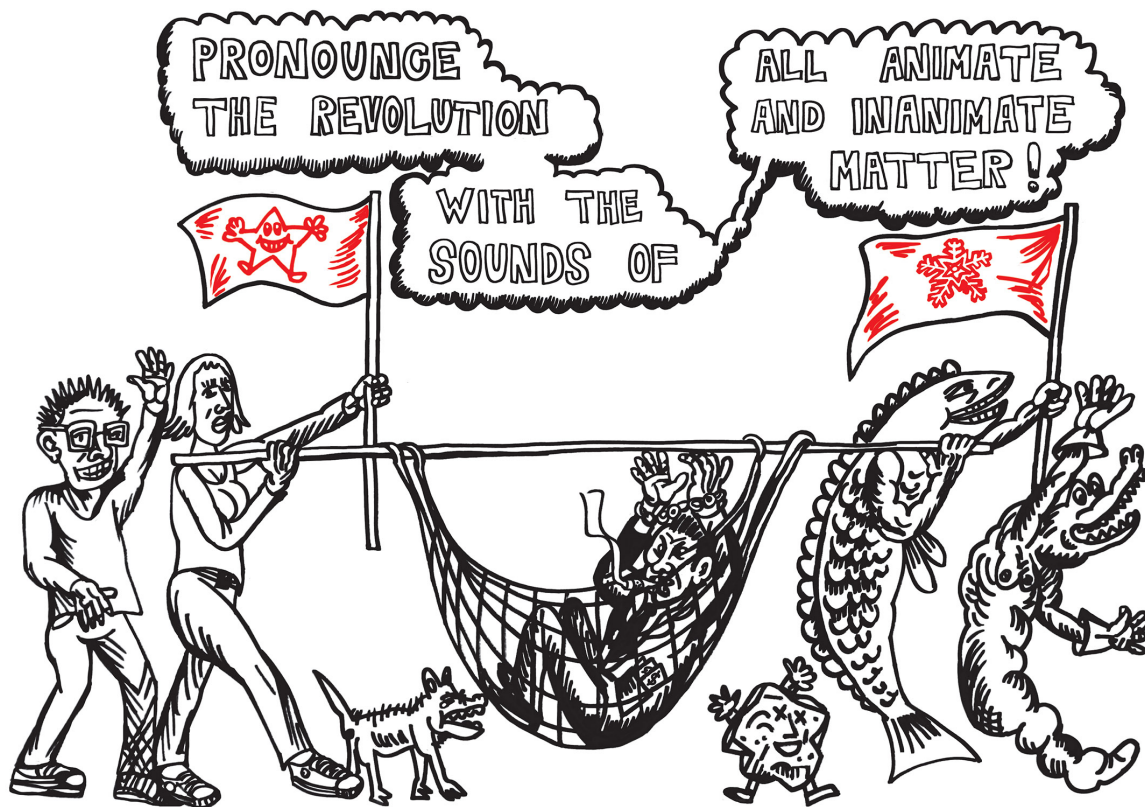
From the **Red Winter** newspaper

I call on you to sow the seed of revolution - transfer our power into the 21st century!

Let the revolution start from this place in Levanger.
 Let it spread to the south from the periphery of northern Europe and ignite the heart of Europe, which is weakened by the poison of neo-liberalism and neo-colonialism!
 Europe with all its riches will have to change its relationship to the world.
 The wars for resources, the exploitation and plundering of the periphery, the expropriation of land, the internment of the displaced and dispossessed, all this needs to be brought to a halt.
 That is what we are fighting for, at this moment, in this place!

But before I return to the past, I want to tell you one more thing:
 As modern socialists, you must not look backward. Do not leave the development of technological progress to the capitalists!
 Your so-called Facebook and Twitter revolutions will not endure as long as modern technology remains a resource in the hands of the capitalists.

You yourselves must take control of technological progress!
 Increase the speed of social transformation!
 For economic democracy!



Speech by the activist for a radical ecological turnaround

I greet you, my dear friends, in the language of the people of this northern landscape.

Inaudibly for you, I greet the stones under our feet and the distant mountains from which they were hewn. My inner self receives the screeching answers of birds that mingle with the roar of the wind.

Fossil capitalism has forged an alliance with death!

Using ever more destructive methods, it forces all natural wealth from our planet. We human inhabitants of Norway are among the infinitely small percentage of living things that immediately and directly profit from the destruction of the earth.

With oil drilling planned in the Arctic, the Barents Sea and off the coast of Lofoten, we endanger our last untouched marine regions.

Do we really believe that quick profits such as these will enable our descendants to survive the collapse of the ecosystem?

Last year we achieved an important victory in the fight for the Lofoten Islands.

But we demand more:

Stop all oil production in the Arctic!

I agree with the comrade from the Thrane movement of the 19th century: we need a revolution, and we are the ones who must spark it off!

I agree with the Romanist activist that we must not simply retreat into our own biotope, but need to enter into coalitions that rise above homo sapiens as a species!

The resistance fighter from World War II is right when he says that fascism is on its way back. We can see it right in the midst of society: in the racist campaign slogans of so-called patriotic parties, in the pamphlets of young people filled with hate, in the neo-Nazi attacks on migrants and Roma throughout Europe.

If the struggles of the past are not to be in vain, we need to adopt a new and far more radical position!

The old logic that places the individual at the centre of the world is too limited.

We need a radical, a truly revolutionary change in perspective!

Away with anthropocentrism!

The inhabitants of the seas, the skies and the earth are our allies.

The plants and the minerals are our comrades!

Let us regard the revolution from the perspective of the sand!

Let us write our slogans in the language of the ocean's depth!

Let us proclaim the revolution with the sounds of all animate and inanimate matter!



Pavillion with sound installation, newspaper and banners.



Public discussion about the artistic action at the townhall of Levanger.



View of **Ironworks ABC**. Intervention with transparents at the main square of the Ironworks district Željezara, Sisak 2015.

Ironworks ABC

Ironworks ABC (*Abeceda Željezare*) proceeds from the form, spatial points, and status of existing sculptures that were produced in the Ironworks Sisak art colony from 1971-1990. A former giant that employed 14,000 workers, Ironworks Sisak was practically destroyed by war and privatization. The sculptures were created in the colony as the result of a collective process of production between artists and workers, and they continue to stand as witnesses to the era of self-management and creation in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The majority of the sculptures have survived in a park in the Caprag neighborhood, despite the fact they would normally be destroyed. Such is the attitude toward the heritage of socialist monuments in the Republic of Croatia.

The work consists of:

- Installation of **transparents with slogans**
- **Ironworks ABC newspaper** (in Croatia-Serbian):
http://issuu.com/vladanrena/docs/abeceda_zeljezare_press

Produced by Miroslav Kraljević Gallery Zagreb for Festival Željezara, June 2015.



Distribution of the newspaper in *Željezara*, the Ironworks district of Sisak.



Ironworks ABC. Transparents at the central square of the Ironworks district Željezara.

Ironworks ABC deals with the language of social transformation, which references the recent past of collective work between workers and artists. It is conceived as a kind of alphabet for thinking work as liberated practice and struggle for creation. *Ironworks ABC* is composed of banners in the public space, intended for the neighborhood of Caprag, and text-based graphics pages in the form of newspapers, in which matter itself appeals to us: iron ore, pipes, sheets, steel, and sculptures.

Because the artistic work lies in the creative collaboration of artists and workers and not in the extant form of the sculptures, this project is interested in the history of production, presenting transformative speech through language and symbols. It is not a question of affirming the sculptures as objects which are in need of protection from deterioration, but rather the revalorization of the relations at the core of the creative process. *Ironworks ABC* aims to speak about those relations as art, locating the symbols and language with which this is possible.



Ironworks ABC. Transparents at the city park of the Ironworks district.



Ironworks ABC. Transparents at the central square of the Željezara district of Sisak.



Rena Rádle & Vladan Jeremić

Abeceda Željezare



Rena Rádle & Vladan Jeremić

Abeceda Željezare



Abeceda Željezare X

Us ,
displaced atoms,
through the heat,
push dreams forward,
in the refreshing cold reality.
If you are realistic,
we can progress
from theory to practice.
Speculation about
bankruptcy
is not realistic.

We demand
the cancellation of debt!

