

*Paper prepared for the  
Sixth Euroacademia International Conference*

*Re-Inventing Eastern Europe*

*Belgrade, 27 – 28 January 2017*

*This paper is a draft*

*Please do not cite or circulate*

# **The Role of Art in Cold War Diplomacy in Yugoslav-US Relations 1961-1966**

Stefana Djokic, The University of Edinburgh, UK

## **ABSTRACT:**

During the 1960s, culture was often (sometimes unwittingly, other times intentionally) infused with the politics of the Cold War. This paper will highlight the specific role of former Yugoslavia in America's cultural Cold War programme and Yugoslavia's *frontier* position between East and West in geographical, ideological and socio-political terms. America's foreign and cultural policies will be correlated with Yugoslavia's government active roles and strategies and its art world in international cultural relations.

The analysis will start with the year 1961, when Yugoslavia adopted a new strategic position of "nonalignment". In the same year, the US Information Agency organised the exhibition *American Vanguard Painting* upon the request of the Yugoslav government. The exhibition illustrates the importance of politics in the cultural relations between the US and former Yugoslavia. Changes in Yugoslav political agenda, particularly frequent re-positioning towards the US and USSR, were manifested at all levels, including Yugoslav President Tito's shifting attitudes towards abstract art. I demonstrate how exhibitions were not just art events, but often political "minefields" for every party involved.

The neutral position of "nonalignment" allowed Yugoslavia to promote dialogue between foreign states. In art, this was achieved through the organisation of transnational exhibitions, which drew artists, curators and visitors from Eastern and Western Europe, the US and the decolonised Third World. As a result, Yugoslavia became a "contact zone" where East and West (and South and North) could meet. This is illustrated with the example of the 5<sup>th</sup> *International Graphic Art Biennale in Ljubljana*.

Finally, a discussion of the exhibition *Yugoslavia: Contemporary Trends, the Younger Generation* (1966) will "turn the tables" and reveal Yugoslavia's official strategies in promoting Yugoslav art in America. The analysis will consider how art was used to construct a modern national identity for Yugoslavia abroad and to what extent this was successful.

## **KEYWORDS:**

Art Exhibitions, Cold War, Cultural Diplomacy, Former Yugoslavia, US.

## **Introduction**

This paper discusses the role of art in Cold War diplomacy in Yugoslav-US relations between 1961 and 1966. During the 1960s, culture was often, sometimes unwittingly, at other times intentionally, infused with the politics of the Cold War. According to one line of existing scholarship, the rise of US art after WWII and exhibitions of American art abroad amounted to cultural imperialism and a 'profound glorying of American civilization' (Cockroft 1985; Guilbaut 1983; Kozloff 1985). These historians persuasively identified the political motives behind the exhibition strategies of American museums, such as MoMA's promotion of Abstract Expressionism through the International Program of Circulating Exhibitions (established in 1952), or the US Government's Central Intelligence Agency endorsement of US art through its offices around the world (Saunders 1999). Accordingly, Abstract Expressionist works were staged as *par excellence* representations of America's democratic values, where the messages of freedom and individuality behind the works of such artists as Jackson Pollock were contrasted against the tyranny and totalitarianism of the USSR (Guilbaut 1985, 2007). Indeed, John Hay Whitney, Chairman of the Museum of Modern Art, explicitly stated that the role of the Museum and of art was to 'educate, inspire, and strengthen the hearts and wills of free men in defence of their own freedom' (Cockroft 1985, 148).

This is, however, only one part of the story, since previous analysis has mostly focused on Western Europe and it is not clear how effective, if at all, these “weapons of art” actually were in Europe’s communist countries. This paper highlights the role of former Yugoslavia in America’s cultural Cold War programme, while also challenging the America-centric narrative of modernism, as proposed in the studies mentioned above. The paper shows that Yugoslavia was not just a passive recipient of both US art and the “ideological intentions” of US state propagandists and critics. Instead, Yugoslavia actively responded to US art (resisting or embracing it), while also trying to introduce Yugoslav art into the US, e.g. through exhibitions, such as *Yugoslavia: Contemporary Trends, the Younger Generation* (The Corcoran Gallery, 1966).

The paper argues for the hybrid and transnational aspects of modern art, an approach inspired by recent scholarship that “decentres” twentieth-century art, such as Partha Mitter (2008, 544), who calls for a ‘more heterogeneous definition of modern art;’ Piotr Piotrowski’s (2009) writings on Eastern European art arguing that a “vertical” or “hierarchical” history of art was developed retrospectively in art-historical discourse; or David Craven’s (1999) *Abstract Expressionism as Cultural Critique*. As a result, my analysis does not merely focus on American foreign and cultural policies and agendas, but also on the active roles and strategies of the Yugoslav Government and its art world in international cultural relations.

The Yugoslav response to US culture is particularly compelling, as Yugoslavia represented a *frontier* position between East and West in both geographical and socio-political terms. This is best illustrated in a speech by the President of Yugoslavia, Marshal Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980) at a plenary session of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1954:

We are following our own path into socialism, and we will not allow anyone, neither those in the East, nor those in the West, to make us stray away from this path’ (Unknown Author 1954).

Although our discussion begins in 1961, the US closely monitored Yugoslavia and its relationship with the USSR as early as the 1940s. An opportunity presented itself in 1948, when, following disagreements between Presidents Josip Broz Tito and Joseph Stalin, Yugoslavia was expelled from the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform). America quickly seized on Yugoslavia’s newly found position as the only European communist country detached from the Eastern Bloc – the American press immediately began referring to Yugoslavia as “our Communist Ally” (Unknown Author 1951, 66).

From then on, Yugoslavia became the only communist country with a neutral anti-bloc status that actively co-operated with both sides, and, as a result, would play a unique role in America’s cultural Cold War programme. For instance, during a period of renewed Yugoslav-Soviet rapprochement, which began with Khrushchev’s visit to Belgrade in May 1955, followed in July by the signing of the Belgrade Declaration and culminating with the dissolution of the Cominform in April 1956 and Tito’s visit to the Soviet Union in June 1956, the US made great efforts in exercising cultural influence in Yugoslavia and Europe at large (West 2012, 230). The exhibition *Modern Art in the United States (MAIUS, 1956)* was the first significant showing of post-war US art in the world, which, somewhat surprisingly, also came to Yugoslavia (Dimitrijević 2009, 322). As a result, Yugoslavia became the very first communist country to display American art, standing out on *MAIUS*’s otherwise Western-Bloc itinerary, which included Paris, Zurich, Barcelona, Frankfurt, London, The Hague and Vienna. That this exhibition was partially a political move by the US government, organised at a point when the US looked to strengthen its relations with Yugoslavia, was clear from the exhibition catalogue: ‘There already exists a cordial friendship between Yugoslavia and the US. We hope that this exhibition will further strengthen these connections’ (*Savremena Umetnost u SAD [Modern Art in the USA] 1956, 3*).

Importantly, US efforts to promote American culture could only succeed, because Yugoslavia removed some of the ideological barriers that characterised other East European countries. As a result, the initial reactions to *MAIUS* were mixed and divided: it was at first dismissed by some Yugoslav writers as “American tutti-futti”, aligning it with banal entertainment, but it was then embraced by critics and politicians interested in promoting an opening up to the West, or at least Western modern art (Dimitrijević 2009, 322).

In September 1961, less than a month after the construction of the Berlin Wall, which further and deeper divided the Cold War world, Yugoslavia adopted a new strategic position of “nonalignment”, which was made official under the leadership of Tito, Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt), Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana) and Sukarno (Indonesia). The Non Aligned Movement (NAM) aimed for an independent path in world politics, preventing member states from becoming “pawns” in the struggle between the two superpowers. Importantly, the NAM was a further impetus behind Yugoslavia’s openness and new role in international relations (Piškur 2014).

Yugoslavia's unique position of being the world's "peace factor" meant that transnational exhibitions were organised across Yugoslavia, mostly its three Republic capitals (Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana), which quickly became budding cultural centres. The country began attracting artists and visitors from Eastern and Western Europe, the US and the decolonised Third World (as will be seen later in the case of The 5th International Graphic Art Biennale in Ljubljana), becoming, to use the term introduced by Marie Louise Pratt, a "contact zone" for the international art world (Pratt 1991). Consequently, the Yugoslav audience was exposed to an extraordinary contrast of artistic practices, with, for example, the Zagreb Music Biennale in 1963 including John Cage's controversial piece 4'33", as well as classical performances by the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra (Vučetić 2015).

## **American Vanguard Painting: An Exhibition or a Political Minefield?**

When the second exhibition of modern US art, *American Vanguard Painting (AVP)*, opened in Belgrade in 1961, Yugoslavia was a more open country than it had been in 1956. It was not only more receptive to American art, but also assumed an active role on the international art scene. Remarkably, according to the recollections of Jerome Donson (1963, 242), one of the committee members who had travelled to Yugoslavia, *AVP* was organised *upon the request* of the Yugoslav Government for 'a show devoted particularly to American Abstract Expressionism.' This clearly illustrates that Yugoslavia was not a passive recipient of America's cultural policies, but invited the US to present American art in Yugoslavia. The Americans positively responded to this request, while Tito's government partially funded the exhibition.

*AVP* was organised under the auspices of the United States Information Agency (USIA) and realised by a committee of several American museum directors. The committee chose thirty-three artists as the "finest examples of contemporary US painting", bringing together, for the first time, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg (Spicer 2009, 65). The exhibition travelled across four Yugoslav Republics and, in contrast to the timid and largely uninformed reception of the 1956 exhibition, this time provoked a much stronger reaction. The USIA's selection of other countries on *AVP's* itinerary (Austria, Germany and England) was also politically charged: cities in Germany and Austria were at the border of the Communist Bloc, while Britain was America's greatest ally (Dossin 2015, 140).

Donson's recollections, published in the American magazine *Art Journal*, reveal that *AVP* had political connotations for every party involved. According to Donson (1963), during the opening night in Belgrade, the Russian Ambassador in Yugoslavia had 'even requested a special tour', and thereafter the whole Russian delegation visited; Donson briefly adds 'perhaps it was orders.' Donson's statements attest to American pride in their cultural supremacy over the USSR and to the growing tensions between America and Russia. Importantly, his article confirms Yugoslavia's position as a country "sitting on the fence" between the two world powers. His article even featured a photograph of the American flag hanging over the Modern Gallery in Ljubljana during the showing of *AVP* (Figure 1). The flag powerfully symbolised the process of arrival and assertion of American culture that these exhibitions fulfilled, but also the acceptance of this process in Yugoslavia (Vučetić 2015, 242). To the American readership, this image would encapsulate the idea of (art-political) "conquest". Finally, Donson (1963) illustrates that for the Americans, *AVP* was a great success: 'as important to some European painters, particularly the deep-feeling Yugoslavs, as the 1913 Armory Show was to Americans.' His reference to the famous Armory Show, the first showing of European avant-garde art in America, highlights the US art world's confidence in their new-found hegemony in the Western art world.

However, while the American perspective of *AVP* is well known, what was the Yugoslav perspective? Was *AVP* really a success in Yugoslavia, as Donson suggests? *AVP* received a much warmer welcome than *MAIUS* and many of the art critics began to think about American art in much the same way as the Americans had. For example, in his discussion of Pollock, Francis and Rauschenberg, the art critic Lazar Trifunović (1961a) emphasizes the importance of spontaneity in their paintings: 'Creativity has become a **spontaneous** act and completely **liberated**, in fact, **freed of all tyranny**, whether it came from the object, idea or even substances [my emphasis].'

The daring references to liberty and freedom, as opposed to tyranny, perhaps allude to something more than aesthetic concerns, i.e. freedom from academic painting. In the context of Yugoslavia, which once had strong ties to the Soviet Union, his rhetoric seems provocative and politicised. In fact, Trifunović's words recall the language used a decade earlier by President Eisenhower in his propagandist speech delivered on the occasion of MoMA's 25th anniversary, where the 'precious freedom of America' was contrasted with Soviet 'tyranny...when artists are made the slaves and tools of the State' (Turner 2010, 267). While the situation in Yugoslavia in the 1950s and 1960s was far from tyrannical for artists, Trifunović might allude to the Yugoslav authorities, who started to use modern art to project their image in the West, thus making what was once

“revolutionary” now “bourgeois” (Denegri 2003, 177). Earlier in 1961, Trifunović (1961b) had written about the state of abstract painting in Yugoslavia, arguing that while abstract art was ‘once a vanguard force, today [in 1961] it has become (semi-)official art, which has entered our interiors and all the pavilions at international exhibitions.’

While Trifunović and Pavlović display mostly a positive assessment of American painting, they both criticise the American art committee involved in *AVP*. Trifunović questions the “didactic intentions” of the curators, who divided the exhibition into categories (Abstract Imagists, Abstract Impressionism, Mathematic Structure etc.). In Trifunović’s view (1961a), these sections are intended to shape the experience for the public, but lack any ‘serious theoretical analysis.’ Similarly, Pavlović (1961, 19) tells his Yugoslav readers not to categorise the artworks on display. He writes:

We face the artworks for which **we are told** that we need an intellectual and rational approach to understand them; the others, **we are told**, are possible to understand only intuitively [my emphasis].

Trifunović and Pavlović sense that US art is presented with a “manual of instructions” and seem to be resentful of the didactic approach taken by the American curators. The fact that they were able to “see through” the patronising intentions of the American curators, demonstrates a level of maturity that resisted the blind acceptance of US art.

A very negative criticism of *AVP* by Dragoslav Djordjević demonstrates that not every art critic responded favourably to the Abstract Expressionist and Neo-Dada works of *AVP*. Djordjević’s review was published in the paper *Borba* for which he was the official art critic (Udovicki 2000, 248). *Borba* was a well-known political paper and the voice of Tito’s party; people would carry *Borba* in their jackets with the logo visible, as to read *Borba* was a demonstration of party loyalty (Vučetić 2015, 243). Djordjević (1961) begins by labelling *AVP* ‘simpler, limited and poorer’ than its predecessor *MAIUS* (1956), further criticising *AVP* for neglecting American realist painters:

We lament that we have been deprived the works of Ben Shahn, Jack Levine, Hyman Bloom, Morris Graves and others.

Djordjević (1961) dismisses Rauschenberg and Johns for showing no signs of originality: ‘no new take on the Dadaist revolt’; he only praises them for their display of the return of human presence in painting, which, Djordjević hopes, ‘will falter the unchallenged supremacy of abstract art.’ Djordjević (1961) finishes his review with a solemn tone:

Not even these few honourable exceptions free us from the impression of mediocrity that the artists attempt to compensate by using large formats.

How, then, do we explain Djordjević’s vehement dismissal of abstract art and *AVP*? His negative review seems peculiar, since the Yugoslav Government had requested from the US Government that *AVP* be devoted to Abstract Expressionism. Why would a critic, writing for the party paper, criticise the movement? The answer, in my opinion, lies in the close links between art and the shifting politics during this period. Two weeks before the opening of *AVP* in Belgrade, Tito delivered a speech at the first Summit of NAM that deeply disappointed the US officials. According to the recollections of Walter Roberts (2014), then Counsellor for Public Affairs at the American Embassy in Belgrade, Tito mentioned that he ‘understood’ the reason why the USSR had violated the nuclear test ban agreement, at the same time criticising the US for their involvement in Guantanamo Bay and in Berlin. A Telegram to the US (Figure 2) by George Kennan (1961), the Ambassador of The American Embassy in Belgrade, states: ‘[Tito’s] passage on Berlin contains no word that could not have been written by Khrushchev.’ Kennan was so angry, that he avoided meeting with Tito for several months afterwards (Roberts, 2014).

This episode illustrates the difficulties of Yugoslavia’s position between East and West, only made worse by the fact that these were testing years, marked by a series of events leading to increasing tensions between the two blocs: the start of the construction of the Berlin Wall, the Soviet Union’s victory in the “space race” and, the most important event, Cuban Missile Crisis, which was the closest that the Cold War came to escalating into a full-scale nuclear war. US-Yugoslav relations cooled off, while the Yugoslav-Soviet rapprochement continued, with Tito meeting with Khrushchev in the USSR in December 1961. This was just a few weeks before Tito launched his campaign against abstract art and there is little doubt that he was influenced by Khrushchev’s own campaign against modernism, also launched in December that year. The Russian leader had apparently ‘exploded with violent criticisms’ after viewing some modernists at the exhibition *Thirty Years of Moscow Art* (Lovell 2001, 2422). In fact, the widely-distributed Yugoslav weekly paper *NIN* published Khrushchev’s diatribe in March 1963:

Man won't allow dirty smears which could have been created by any donkey's tail to be served to him as art. The people will find the strength to resist such art, and instead create canvases full of joy, calling the people to work (Unknown Author 1963).

Similarly, Tito's New Year's speech (1 January 1963) referred to abstract art as an 'unacceptable foreign implant', incompatible with 'our socialist ethic', that is trying to 'derail us from our revolutionary path' (Vučetić 2015, 237). Tito's second attack, less than a month later, once more confronted abstract art, calling it an "imposter" in galleries and museums throughout Yugoslavia (Unknown Author 1963b).

It is easy to see a correspondence between Khrushchev's attack on abstraction and formalism as a form of bourgeois ideology and Tito's own views on art during the same period. At this point, it was not clear what the fate of artists would be in Yugoslavia. The extent of Tito's influence can be seen in the fact that during these years a number of Yugoslav abstract artists (e.g. Lazar Vozarević, an older generation Informel painter) cancelled their exhibitions out of fear from the authorities. However, one of Yugoslavia's leading modernists, artist and critic, Miodrag Protić, went ahead with his planned solo exhibition (Belgrade, March 1963). Protić (2000, 514) later recalled: 'I knew I could not do that [cancel the show], nor scare others with my fear.' Protić's exhibition of abstract works stimulated considerable public interest and support from fellow artists and art critics. Importantly, support also came from some brave government members, including the minister of foreign affairs Marko Nikezić (Protić 2000, 514). This shows that Tito's threats did not stop the general public, the art world, or even party officials from taking an interest in modern abstract painting.

## **The 5<sup>th</sup> International Graphic Art Biennale in Ljubljana: A Symbol of Yugoslavia's Internationalism**

Tito's campaign against abstract art began in December 1962, but must have waned by June 1963, when the 5th Ljubljana Graphic Art Biennale (June 9–September 15 1963) awarded the First Prize to Rauschenberg for his *Accident* (Figure 3, 1963). Despite being the very first award that Rauschenberg received in Europe, his success in Ljubljana has been overshadowed by his First Prize at the Venice Biennale in 1964, which is considered a landmark event in post-war art history. It is not well known that Rauschenberg maintained and valued his links with the Ljubljana Biennale over a period of over thirty years, winning him three additional First Prizes.

The Ljubljana Biennale was recognised by the international art world as being one of the world's most renowned art events. For instance, Pierre Restany (1963, 42) stated that the 'Yugoslav formula' was an important exhibition model for other countries to emulate. Its founder and director, Zoran Kržišnik (1920-2008), later recalled that the Ljubljana Biennale inspired Tokyo's International Biennial Exhibition of Prints (Žerovc 2010, 44). Since its inception in 1955, the Ljubljana Biennale was a symbol of Yugoslavia's internationalism. For this reason, Tito had supported and publicly praised the Biennale, for example in a speech in 1959: 'It's marvellous that we have this gathering of artists from all over the world' (Grafenauer 2013, 25).

The Ljubljana Biennale had prided itself on its ability to cross geo-political borders by combining artists and audiences from Eastern and Western Europe, the USA and the Third World (The Museum of Modern Art 1963). This was particularly true of the 1963 Biennale, which included entries by 340 artists, from 42 countries, across six continents, including Jasper Johns, David Hockney, Alberto Burri, Emilio Vedova, Robert Motherwell, Victor Vasarely, Getulio Alviani, Karel Appel, Ossip Zadkine, and others (The Museum of Modern Art 1963). They represented movements as diverse as Optical Art, New Abstraction, Pop Art, European New Figuration, the art of social reportage, etc. (Grafenauer 2013, 26). Moreover, the Biennale's jury boasted an impressive international board: the French Pierre Restany and Jacques Lassaigue, the Italian Umbro Apollonio, the American William S. Lieberman, the Russian Aleksey Fjodorov-Davidov, the Austrian Walter Koschatzky, the Yugoslavs Zoran Kržišnik and Lazar Trifunović, the Poles Mieczysław Porębski and Ryszard Stanislawski, and the German Werner Schmalenbach, whose presence helped to expand the network of the Biennale and enriched the Yugoslav art scene.

Rauschenberg's success had two main consequences. Firstly, as Deborah Wye (2004, 150) argues, Ljubljana's prestigious award established the artist and the pre-eminence of American art on a global scale and had a greater impact than any other previous exhibition on Rauschenberg's career. While Ileana Sonnabend promoted Rauschenberg at her gallery in Paris earlier that year, the whole world had reported on Rauschenberg winning the first prize in Ljubljana (Restany 1963; Denys 1963; Menna 1963; Unknown Author 1963c). Secondly, Rauschenberg's success also generated considerable publicity for the Biennale and granted Yugoslavia an

important role in the broader international art world. It demonstrated that Yugoslavia supported the progress of radically new directions in art and recognised America's leadership position in modern art (Dossin 2015, 190).

Importantly, while Rauschenberg's later success at the Venice Biennale was interpreted by many as the "scandalous" outcome of American cultural Cold War diplomacy and part of American cultural imperialism, his victory in Ljubljana carried no such connotations. This was due to the unique circumstances in Yugoslavia, which differed from those in other Eastern European countries, 'where art was oppressed by an exceedingly rigid ideology,' and also from those in the West, which was 'ruled by a powerful art market' (Denegri 2003, 207). According to Hiroko Ikegami (2010, 19), Rauschenberg's success in Paris and Venice was partly due to promotional and marketing efforts by American art dealers (Ileana Sonnabend and Leo Castelli), but this was not the case in Yugoslavia. Kržišnik denied that such forces were at play when he and the rest of the jury were deciding to award Rauschenberg:

It was a purely artistic decision, a professional one. We were not influenced by any Leo Castelli, any Ileana Sonnabend, or anyone else (Žerovc 2010, 48).

How, then, did Rauschenberg come to display his works at Ljubljana's Biennale and was the jury's decision really "a purely artistic and professional one," as Kržišnik claims? Although the conditions under which Rauschenberg took part are poorly documented, a press release issued by MoMA notes that the artist was 'invited to participate by the Yugoslav organizers' (The Museum of Modern Art 1963). This is only part of the story, as Kržišnik elaborated in an interview given in 2007 that Rauschenberg's print had come to Ljubljana with the help of Tatyana Grosman and her printing studio ULAE:

She [Tatyana Grosman] rang me from New York, told me what she was doing and asked me if we were interested. I said yes and she came to Ljubljana personally and brought all those things. The jury already included Restany, Schmalenbach and Stanislawski. We were already perfectly aware that this was part of a Pop Art trend. After a long discussion, we decided that it was so impressive – the lady [Grosman] brought complete graphic sets – that we gave him [Rauschenberg] the award. It is interesting that American and European journals immediately took hold of it (Žerovc 2010, 48).

It is not surprising that other members of the jury, most notably Lieberman, Restany, and Trifunović, also favoured Rauschenberg. Restany had supported the *Nouveaux Réalistes* (New Realists), a group of (French and Italian) post-*Informel* artists who employed ready-made objects in their art (Ikegami 2010, 34). They were popularised by Restany as Europe's equivalent to American Neo-Dada (as Tapié did with *Informel* and *Abstract Expressionism*). By supporting Rauschenberg, Restany (the "father of New Realism") was therefore indirectly promoting the *Nouveau Réalisme* movement. Moreover, as Restany was concerned with making connections across borders, his presence at the Biennale would have aided the transnational collaboration between European and American artists (Ikegami 2010, 35).

Another member of the jury with an obvious affinity for Rauschenberg was the American Lieberman, Curator of Drawings and Prints at MoMA. He was close to Tatyana Grosman and had previously encouraged her to consider collaborating with contemporary artists to create original prints. It is even possible that Lieberman asked Grosman to bring Rauschenberg's prints to Ljubljana. Nonetheless, Kržišnik insists that Rauschenberg's dealer, Leo Castelli, was not involved and 'didn't know that Rauschenberg would get the award' (Žerovc 2010, 52).

Were there political motivations or influences behind the vote of the two Yugoslav members of the jury, Trifunović and Kržišnik? Trifunović had already shown his appreciation of Rauschenberg in 1961, while Kržišnik stated that his decision was based exclusively on quality and impressiveness (Žerovc 2010, 52). However, politics was a part of Ljubljana Biennale, as Kržišnik himself noted that during Tito's campaign against abstraction, a serious "examination" of the Biennale was conducted by the government (Žerovc 2010, 52). We know that the Yugoslav Government has funded this event and we have already seen that art and culture were continuously instrumentalised from "above" to sustain Yugoslavia's relations with the two world powers. Was it, then, merely a coincidence that Rauschenberg's success happened just months after Tito's attacks on modern art? Could this have been a way to aid Yugoslavia-US rapprochement, which was later made official by Tito's meeting with President J. F. Kennedy in October 1963, just three months after the Biennale? Was the participation of a large group of American artists and Rauschenberg's success a way to remedy the damage caused by Tito's "upsetting" speech at the summit of NAM and aid yet another re-positioning of Yugoslavia? More than fifty years later, we do not have clear answers to these questions, but can only notice the close and interlaced relationship between politics and art during this period.

## **Yugoslav Strategies in promoting Yugoslav art in America: *Yugoslavia: Contemporary Trends, The Younger Generation***

The Yugoslav Government began to promote contemporary Yugoslav art abroad in 1950, at the largest contemporary art exhibition at the time: the Venice Biennale (Bogdanović 2016). Although Yugoslavia had previously boycotted the Venice Biennale of 1948 for being capitalist and market-oriented, it returned in 1950 to show the transformation of Yugoslavia after the Tito-Stalin conflict. In fact, following the 1950 Biennale, some Yugoslav officials expressed discontent with the Yugoslav Pavilion for displaying some artworks influenced by Socialist Realism (Bogdanović 2016). Hence, for the Venice Biennale in 1952 and in later years, the government aimed at matching the international “standards” of contemporary art, in order to demonstrate that Yugoslav artists were connected to contemporary international art developments (Bogdanović 2016).

From 1952 onwards, numerous exhibitions of contemporary Yugoslav art were organised throughout Europe, in particular in Italy, France, Britain and Germany (including *Arte Jugoslava Contemporanea (Contemporary Yugoslav Art, 1957, Milan and Rome)*, *Arte Yougoslave d'aujourd'hui (Yugoslav Art Today, 1959, Paris)*, *L'art Contemporain en Yougoslavie (Contemporary Yugoslav Art, 1961, Paris)*, *Contemporary Yugoslav Painting and Sculpture (April 28 – May 28 1961, London)*, *Neue Jugoslawische Kunst (New Yugoslav Art, October 8 – November 19, 1961, Karlsruhe)*. *New Painting From Yugoslavia (NPFY, 1961)* was the first held in America. According to the catalogue, it was sponsored by the Yugoslav Commission for Foreign Cultural Relations and “circulated by The American Federation of Arts” (New York). The curator, Zoran Kržišnik, stated the exhibition’s purpose in the catalogue:

To introduce to America those Yugoslav artists who have turned away from the object toward a more general and philosophic conception of painting, tending to “absolute art” (*New Painting From Yugoslavia 1961*).

The chosen artists mostly represented abstract painting, who, as Kržišnik argued, ‘give perhaps the best illustration of the present trend in Yugoslavia’ (*New Painting From Yugoslavia 1961*). Sixteen artists were chosen from three Yugoslav Republics (Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia): The Croatian artist Edo Murtić represented gestural abstract painting, to which the American audience might easily relate in terms of Pollock’s work; the Slovenian painter Janez Bernik presented *Ostrvo (Island, Figure 4)*, a textural abstract painting that integrated organic materials. Radically abstract works were by Ferdinand Kulmer, with non-descriptive titles as *Red-Green Composition (1959)* and by Josip Vaništa (*Composition, 1956, Figure 5*). Slightly more conservative inclusions were by Frano Šimunović, whose semi-abstract *Zagora II (1956, Figure 6)* referenced the Yugoslav town Zagora. The Serbian Miodrag B. Protić displayed Cubist-inspired paintings, such as *Mrtva Priroda sa Zutom Pticom (Still-life with Yellow Bird, 1959, Figure 7)*. Although the *NPFY* included some paintings that were not completely abstract, they were no longer descriptive and were easily related to languages of Western contemporary art, such as Abstract Expressionism, Cubism and Informel.

The selection suggests that Yugoslavia actively worked to construct a “Yugoslav identity” through exhibitions abroad, but this identity depended on which border it crossed. When sending art to Eastern communist countries, mostly figurative, folkloric art and copies of medieval frescoes from Yugoslav churches were chosen, in order to avoid offending Eastern sensibilities. This is not to say that abstract works never went East, but when they were shown, their inclusion was met with criticism. For instance, an exhibition of contemporary Yugoslav drawings in Bulgaria was heavily criticised for including too many abstract works (Vučetić 2015, 247). However, when crossing the Atlantic, Yugoslavia predominantly sent examples of its most avant-garde art from the late 1950s and early 1960s. Yugoslavia’s dualistic approach is confirmed by an anecdote: when in 1963 the figurative painter Ismet Mujezinović timidly asked a member of the Commission for International Relations in Belgrade why figurative painting was never sent to exhibitions in the West, he was told that ‘such paintings could only go to underdeveloped countries’ (Marković 1996, 428). That *NPFY* was part of Tito’s larger efforts at strengthening the US-Yugoslav relationship is clear when we consider that the first meeting between a US and Yugoslav leader took place around the same time: on 22 September 1960, Tito travelled to the US for the United Nations’ General Assembly meetings, where he met with President Eisenhower (Figure 8) (Lees 1997, 233). Although this was an informal encounter, Tito was then officially welcomed to the US in 1963, where he spent over a week in talks with President John Kennedy.

In parallel to the increasing presence of Yugoslav art in the US, several Yugoslav books were translated in English and published, such as: *Umetnost Naivnih u Jugoslaviji (Primitive Artists of Yugoslavia)* by Oto Bihalji-Merin, published in 1965 and reviewed by Preston (1965) in *The New York Times*, and *Savremeno Slikarstvo u Jugoslaviji (Contemporary Yugoslavian Painting)* by Aleska Celebonovic’s in 1966, referenced by Minotaur (1966). From 1966, Yugoslavia’s most important art magazine *Umetnost (Art)* in Serbo-Croatian also appeared

with summaries in English in the US as referenced by Minotaur (1966). These publications provided the American public with solid information on contemporary Yugoslav art from a Yugoslav point of view, which differed from the American critics' viewpoint (discussed later).

In addition, MoMA showed a series of Yugoslav films in 1961, i.e. in the same year as *NPFY*. MoMA devoted ten days to a series of nine representative Yugoslav films. Some still dealt with war themes, but the most recent films addressed contemporary subjects and genres, such as comedy, musical and romance. The MoMA press release positively noted that 'new conditions have made for a competitive spirit leading to results evident in both quality and quantity of the film produced,' praising Yugoslav cinema for the 'wide variety of approaches to cinematic problems' (The Museum of Modern Art 1961). In the same year, Yugoslav culture gained further international attention, as Ivo Andrić was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Yugoslav culture was thus well received and granted space in one of America's most prestigious venues, such as MoMA. However, the Yugoslav films were only on show for ten days and would have reached a limited audience. It is also uncertain how widely the English translations of various Yugoslav publications on art were read in the US. They were only available from certain venues, such as the Yugoslav Information Centre in New York, or had to be ordered through a US-Yugoslavia library exchange programme. Therefore, for the ordinary American, finding out about Yugoslav culture required making an effort.

## American Politicised Attitudes towards Yugoslavia

*Yugoslavia: Contemporary Trends, the Younger Generation (YCTYG)* was first shown in the Corcoran Gallery (Washington D.C.), January 7–February 13 1966, and subsequently in five additional US venues (The Fresno Arts Center, The Denver Art Museum, The Portland (Maine) Museum, The Addison Gallery of American Art, and The Milwaukee Art Center). Like *New Painting from Yugoslavia*, *YCTYG* was an initiative of the Yugoslav state, sponsored by the Yugoslav Embassy in the US and the Commission for Cultural Exchange with Foreign Countries in Belgrade. It was organised in association with Hermann Warner Williams, Jr., the director of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, who selected the artists for this exhibition. Williams concentrated on the younger generation of artists (aged between thirty and fifty), in order to represent the vitality of contemporary Yugoslav art. The final selection consisted of four sculptors: Vojin Bakić, Dušan Džamonja, Stevan Luketić and Drago Trsar, as well as nine painters: Janez Bernik, Stojan Čelić, Oton Gliha, Branko Miljuš, Edo Murtić, Mića Popović, Zlatko Prica, Mladen Srbinović and Vladimir Velicković, each with three to five examples of artwork, amounting to a total of fifty-one works. As with the previous *NPFY* exhibition, all painters of *YCTYG* fitted within the broad category of abstraction, except for Velicković, whose works were figurative.

In order to reveal American responses to *YCTYG*, the following analysis will focus on exhibition reviews published in some of America's most important magazines and newspapers: *The Art Gallery*, *The New York Times*, *Newsweek* and *The New Republic*. In 1966, *The Art Gallery* devoted its January issue (titled the "Yugoslavian Issue") to the *YCTYG* exhibition and Yugoslav art in general. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the curator Hermann Williams of the Corcoran Gallery of Art contributed the first article to the issue: 'A Letter from Washington, or: It's Different in Yugoslavia'. As the title suggests, Williams (1966, 8) stresses Yugoslavia's "difference", not from the US, but from other communist countries:

I had rather expected to encounter at least some evidences of the social realism that one associates with communist countries, particularly in their official art. But that was far from being the case in Yugoslavia.

Significantly, Williams does not discuss the artists and the artwork, as one might expect from an exhibition review, but focuses on the political and artistic situation in Yugoslavia. Both his article and the exhibition curated by him show a desire to demonstrate to his American audience that Yugoslavia had "abandoned" Socialist Realism and severed its ties with the USSR. Stressing that the Yugoslav state exerts 'no direct pressure on the artists, and a complete freedom of expression exists there today', Williams commends Yugoslavia for replacing the "tyranny" of a state-regulated art system (as practiced in the USSR) with artistic freedom (thereby following American values).

Similar references to Yugoslavia's freedom of expression were voiced by other American critics reviewing *YCTYG*. For example, an art critic of *The New Republic* insisted that in the art of communist Yugoslavia, there is nothing that is usually associated with "communist art" (Vučetić 2015, 248). Others even made direct comparisons between Yugoslav and American artists: F. J. Blumenfeld (1966) of *Newsweek* identified Edo Murtić's paintings as possessing the same 'explosiveness of shrapnel' that can be also seen in the works of American action painters, such as Kline and De Kooning,' whereas Elizabeth Stevens (1966) of *The New York*

*Times* argued that Murtić ‘submerged all individuality in imitation,’ referencing his heavily brushed abstractions to the works of Kline and Hartigan.

Back in Yugoslavia, the critic and Informel painter Zivojin Turinski (1966a and 1966b) quickly made these American reviews known to the Yugoslav public in the magazine *Umetnost* (*Art*). In one article, Turinski tries to dissociate art from ideology and state politics. He is critical of the American writers’ excessive emphasis on politics and ideology, noting that they are more interested in the political *milieu* that enabled the development of contemporary Yugoslav painting, rather than in the works themselves. While American writers focus on Yugoslavia’s separation from Stalinist ideology, which resulted in an art freed from Socialist Realism, Turinski argues that Yugoslav abstraction is the result of an independent inner growth of Yugoslavia’s modern art world, of which the US critics know very little.

With irony, Turinski criticises the American writers’ excessive emphasis on the influence of American art on the Yugoslavs. He specifically accuses the critic writing under the pseudonym “Minotaur” and even quotes his observations of “ordinary” people whom he met during his travels:

The cleaning woman in the hotel who liked Op Art and the bellboy who preferred Tapiés, the chemist from Zagreb who argued for Rauschenberg, a young businessman in Ljubljana who knew more about modern art, on the national and international scale, than some American critics I know (Minotaur 1966, 48).

Turinski, amused, concludes that the whole purpose of Minotaur’s text must have been to convince his American readers of the modern attitudes of the Yugoslav people, and to justify the American interest in Yugoslavia and Yugoslav art.

## American Exoticising Attitudes towards Yugoslavia

The contributors to the “Yugoslavian Issue” of *The Art Gallery* also attempted to offer a wider picture of the Yugoslav art scene, based on their travel experiences through Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana in the summer of 1965 (Bendig 1966, 6). Although they write favourably of Yugoslavia, urging their readers to visit the country and to take interest in the art, when describing the people and country, their words echo those of a “coloniser” describing the “colonised people”. For instance, Bendig (1966) writes that they were met with warm friendliness and co-operation during their travels, but ‘at times, intrigue and confusion of the Balkan variety crept in.’ In describing the Yugoslav people in such terms, and implying distrust and irrationality, Bendig is “exoticising” the Yugoslavs, while also suggesting his own superiority. Similarly, when Luis Edwards (1966, 57) discusses Dalmatia in Croatia as a “beautiful land” with “fantastic names”, he is, effectively, “exoticising” the region:

With white islands gleaming out at sea-islands, with fantastic names such as Krk, and Rab, and Cres.

Edwards’ statement confirms his appreciation of Yugoslavia as an attractive tourist destination that offers beaches and sunshine, rather than avant-garde art. Furthermore, in their search for a picturesque, rural and backward life, the American critics omit a discussion of important changes in the built fabric of Yugoslav towns and cities, their industrial growth and modern character.

Considering the writer’s exoticising vision, it is not surprising that he, and the other writers, point their readership to “naïve” Yugoslav art, even though this was not part of *YCTYG*. The issue included four full-page colour illustrations of naïve or folkloric artworks, such as a stamp with a reproduction of a painting by naïve painter Jovan Običan (Figure 9, 1962). The painting portrays a peasant family in national folk costume, realised in a child-like style, utilising bright colours and simple shapes. Furthermore, Minotaur (1966, 45) considers Običan the ‘darling, symbol and product’ of Yugoslavia, an example of what can happen when the ‘native talent’ is released. He essentialises Yugoslav art as primitive, suggesting that Yugoslav artists are predestined to paint rural themes. This is confirmed by Minotaur’s (1966) condescending statement that the ‘Yugoslav is the world’s worst imitator,’ suggesting that modern Yugoslav art is simply derivative of American or Western artists. A similar viewpoint is expressed in a review of the book *Primitive Artists of Yugoslavia* by Oto Bihalji-Merin in *The New York Times*:

But one wonders how long this idyllic state can last, how long before the rot will set into this happy primitivism after the visit of a travelling exhibition from a Museum of Modern Art (Preston 1965, 7).

Here, the gaze is bound with a desire for a permanent primitive and exotic Yugoslav culture that would remain positively different and unspoiled by modernity.

Therefore, while the Yugoslav Government’s promotion of contemporary Yugoslav culture in the US worked towards constructing a modern national identity for Yugoslavia, this was, however, only partly

successful, since American critics, for all their openness and enthusiasm towards Yugoslav art, viewed Yugoslavia through the eyes of an anti-USSR American citizen and a Western tourist. In turn, Yugoslav critics, like Turinski, called for an openness towards the US, but cautioned their readers about American tendencies to stereotype and even manipulate Yugoslav art. At the same time, Yugoslav institutions and artists aimed to define their art in relation to the world's new dominant cultural and economic power, and, arguably, to create a new foreign market for Yugoslav art.

## Concluding Remarks

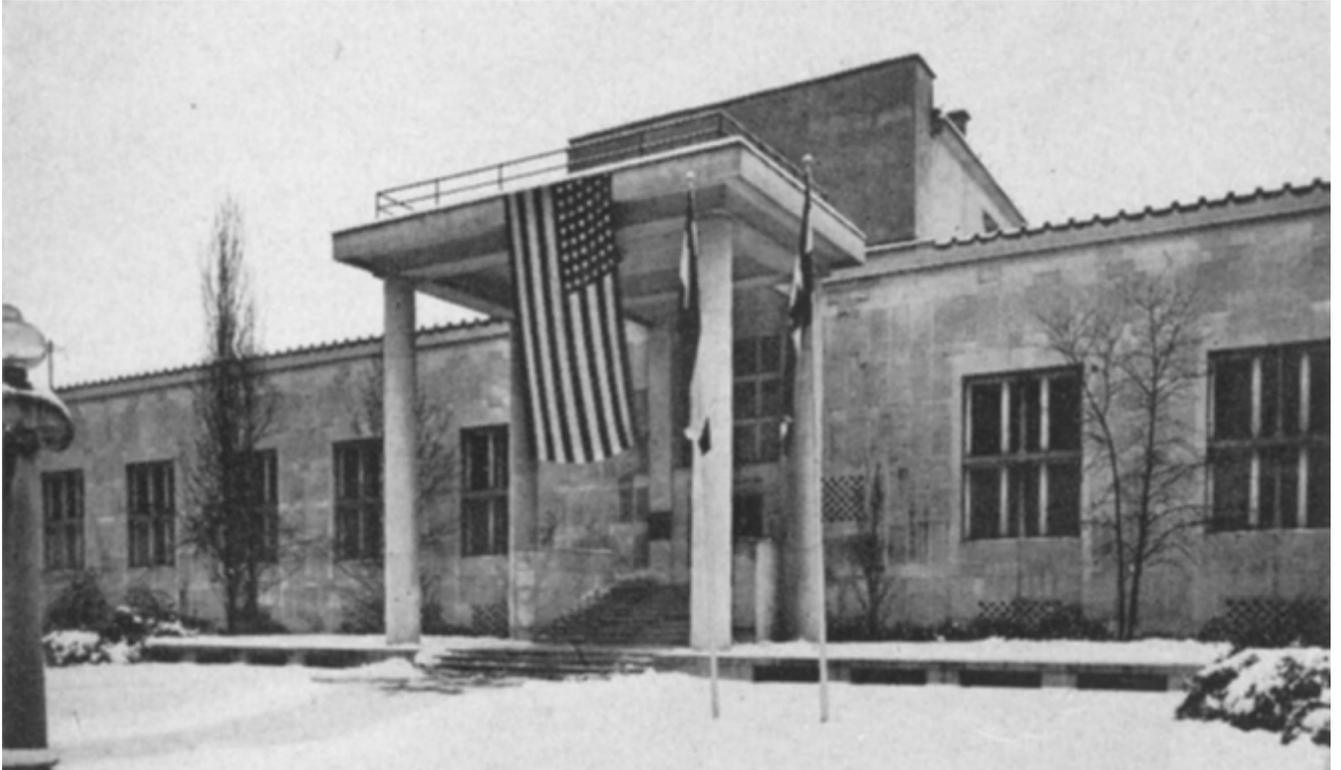
This paper considers artistic and cultural exchanges between former Yugoslavia and the US in relation to the political and ideological subtexts in which they took place. When US art arrived in Yugoslavia in the 1950s and 60s and was inserted into the Yugoslav cultural context, it highlighted the social, ideological and political differences between the US and Yugoslavia. This paper shows how both sides instrumentalised modern art for different political needs and agendas. For the US, exhibiting their art was an important vehicle for transferring US values to Yugoslav people and for reaching out to other East European countries through Yugoslavia. *American Vanguard Painting* presented an opportunity for the US to demonstrate their cultural supremacy in Yugoslavia and project an image of “conquest” back home in the US. On the other hand, the Yugoslav Government had supported and even invited *American Vanguard Painting* in order to aid Yugoslavia's transition from the Soviet model and to demonstrate its “modernity” to the West. Crucially, the exhibition highlighted that changes in Yugoslav political agenda, particularly frequent re-positioning towards the US and USSR, were powerfully manifested in President Tito's shifting attitudes towards US art.

The analysis in this paper challenges the commonly perceived notions of Yugoslavia as the “periphery”, which were prevalent at the time and remain largely in place today. The Ljubljana Biennale, however, showed that in Yugoslavia art could promote transnational collaboration, inviting artists and curators from all corners of the world. Rauschenberg's success in Ljubljana in 1963 clearly demonstrates that the Yugoslav art world supported radically new directions in art. This fact is often neglected by art historians writing about Rauschenberg, as it was overshadowed by his success at the Venice Biennale in 1964.

The Yugoslav Government's promotion of contemporary Yugoslav culture in the US worked towards constructing a modern national identity for Yugoslavia. However, this was only partly successful, as the presence and presentation of Yugoslav art and culture in the US showed that US critics hardly approached Yugoslav art in relation to broader developments of contemporary art. Rather, they were more interested in politicising and stereotyping Yugoslav art, trying to relate it to a culture that they considered mostly as reassuringly anti-Soviet, primitive and exotic. Yugoslav critics, like Turinski, called for an openness towards the US, but cautioned their readers about American tendencies to stereotype and even manipulate Yugoslav art.

Finally, the research in this paper contributes to a reconsideration of the Western-centered discourse on US art and its opening to a wider international, particularly Yugoslav perspective. In that sense, this paper brought to light findings that merit further research and I believe that my analysis of a multitude of Yugoslav reactions to, and interactions with, post-war US art deserves to be integrated into the existing art-historical discourse.

## Figures



**Figure 1**

Modern Gallery, Ljubljana, December 1961.

Jerome Donson. 1963. "The American Vanguard Exhibitions in Europe." *Art Journal*, 22: 4, 243.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE of the HISTORIAN

## Foreign Relations of the United States 1961-1963 Volume XVI, Eastern Europe; Cyprus; Greece; Turkey, Document 96

### 96. Telegram From the Embassy in Yugoslavia to the Department of State<sup>Source</sup> (#fn-source)

Belgrade, September 3, 1961, 4 p.m.

377. Belgrade Conference. Tito's statements on Berlin and on Soviet resumption of tests came as deep disappointment to Western observers here, including myself. Passage on Berlin contains no word that could not have been written by Khrushchev; and that on testing, leading off with reproach to French and accepting in full Soviet explanations for resumption, is weaker and more pro-Soviet than even those of Nasser and Nkrumah.<sup>1</sup> (#fn2) Private information indicates Tito has been endeavoring behind scenes to play down issue of tests ever since beginning of conference, probably fearing it would adversely affect success of meeting.

I have repeatedly called attention to strong Yugoslav feelings over rearmament of Western Germany and their negative reaction to impression we have given of unwillingness to negotiate or at least to make any positive proposals for settlement of Berlin problem, as confirmed by Kohler to Nikezic on August 29 (see Deptel 254, September 1).<sup>2</sup> (#fn3) But neither I nor any of my Western colleagues were prepared for so one-sided an attitude on Tito's part as this; and I think we must reflect carefully on its implications for our treatment of conference and, in more long-term, our attitude towards role of Yugoslavs at this juncture.

I am stuck with Tito's expressed understanding that we are proposing to go to war over specific issue of signing of peace treaty itself and his evident failure to understand that our military interests could be actively engaged only if subsequent effect of treaty were to create intolerable limitations on Allied rights in Berlin or on freedom of city's communications. I recently urged, in conversation with Secretary,<sup>3</sup> (#fn4) that we take steps to make plain that crucial issue in our eyes would not be signature of treaty itself but situation which would arise if attempt were made to give to treaty an interpretation and implementation which would affect these factors just mentioned. Would like now to repeat this recommendation. So long as we let stand present ambiguity on this score we will lead with our chin for line of reproach which Tito took in this respect.

At conclusion Tito's speech I had occasion talk alone with Nehru during intermission. I expressed to him my shock over image conveyed by Tito of juxtaposition in Germany of stable East German state peacefully developing under happy socialist system, as against Western Germany seething with "Fascist and revanchist conceptions and tendencies." Pointed out this was fantastic distortion of facts, and that no attempt by neutrals to play positive role in reaction to Berlin crisis could conceivably be successful if it ignored fact that heart of difficulty was incredible political failure of Ulbricht regime, which could not even stand comparison with other Communist regimes of Eastern Europe. This, I said, was problem not only for us but for Russians themselves, and no action of this conference based on fiction this problem did not exist could come anywhere near root of difficulty or have any

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v16/t96>

1/2

30/03/2016 Document 96 • Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963, Volume XVI, Eastern Europe; Cyprus; Greece; Turkey • Historical Documents • ...

particularly helpful effect. Nehru listened attentively but was non-committal. Private knowledge that same thesis was forcefully put to him this morning by personal envoy of Willi Brandt leads me to hope all this may have some effect on his thinking.

Archbishop Makarios' speech, which followed Tito's, was very constructive on Germany and nuclear testing, calling for reunification Germany on basis plebiscite and characterizing Soviet test resumption as "shocking", while expressing concern over French nuclear tests in Africa.

It is unfortunately plain that if moderation and balance are to be brought into final resolutions of conference on Berlin question, the impulse will have to come from Nehru, Nasser, U Nu and others, not from Tito.<sup>4</sup> (#fn5)

Kennan

## Figure 2

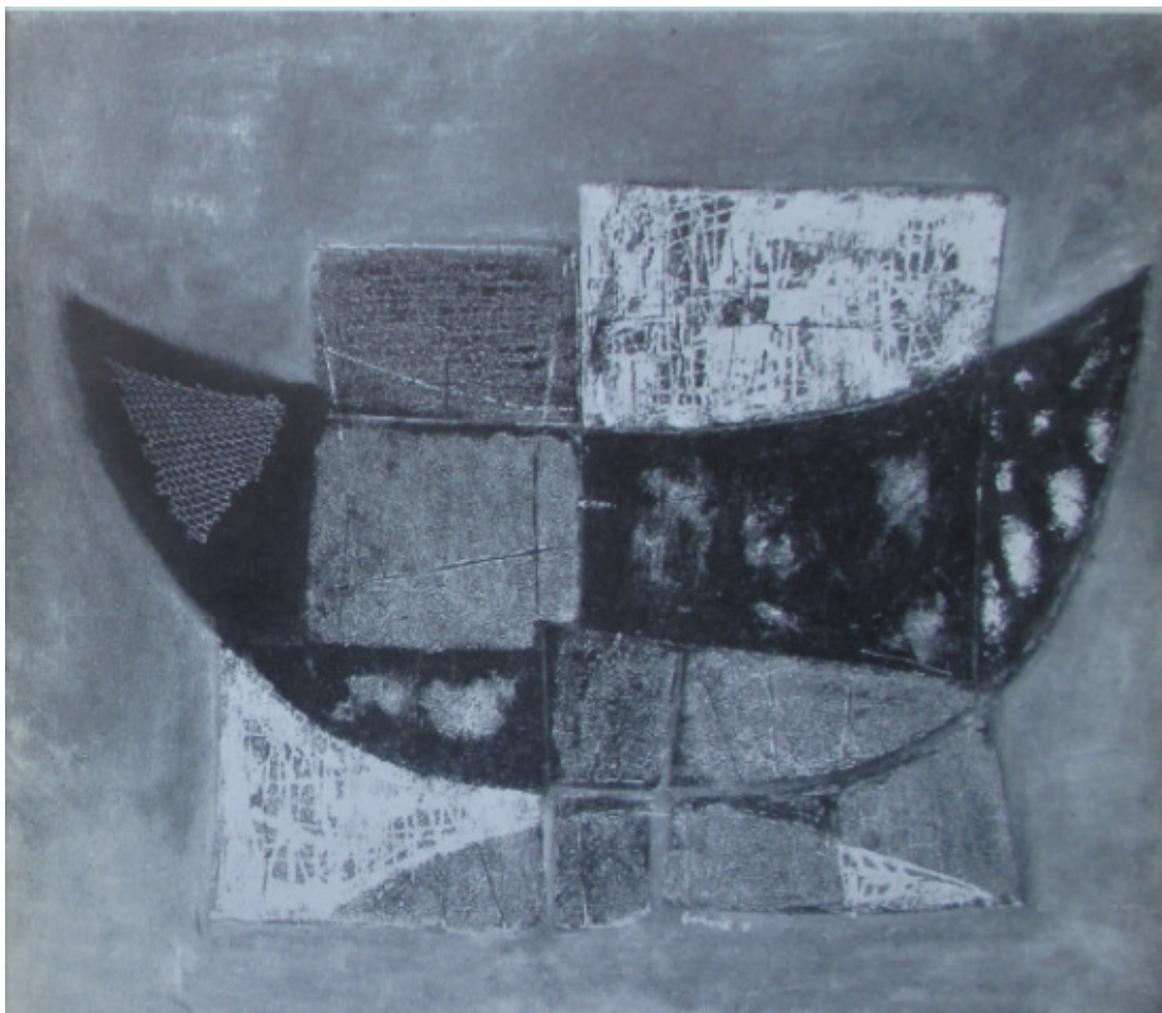
Telegram to the US Department of State, written by George Kennan, the American Ambassador in Belgrade, September 3, 1961.



**Figure 3**

Robert Rauschenberg, *Accident*, 1963.

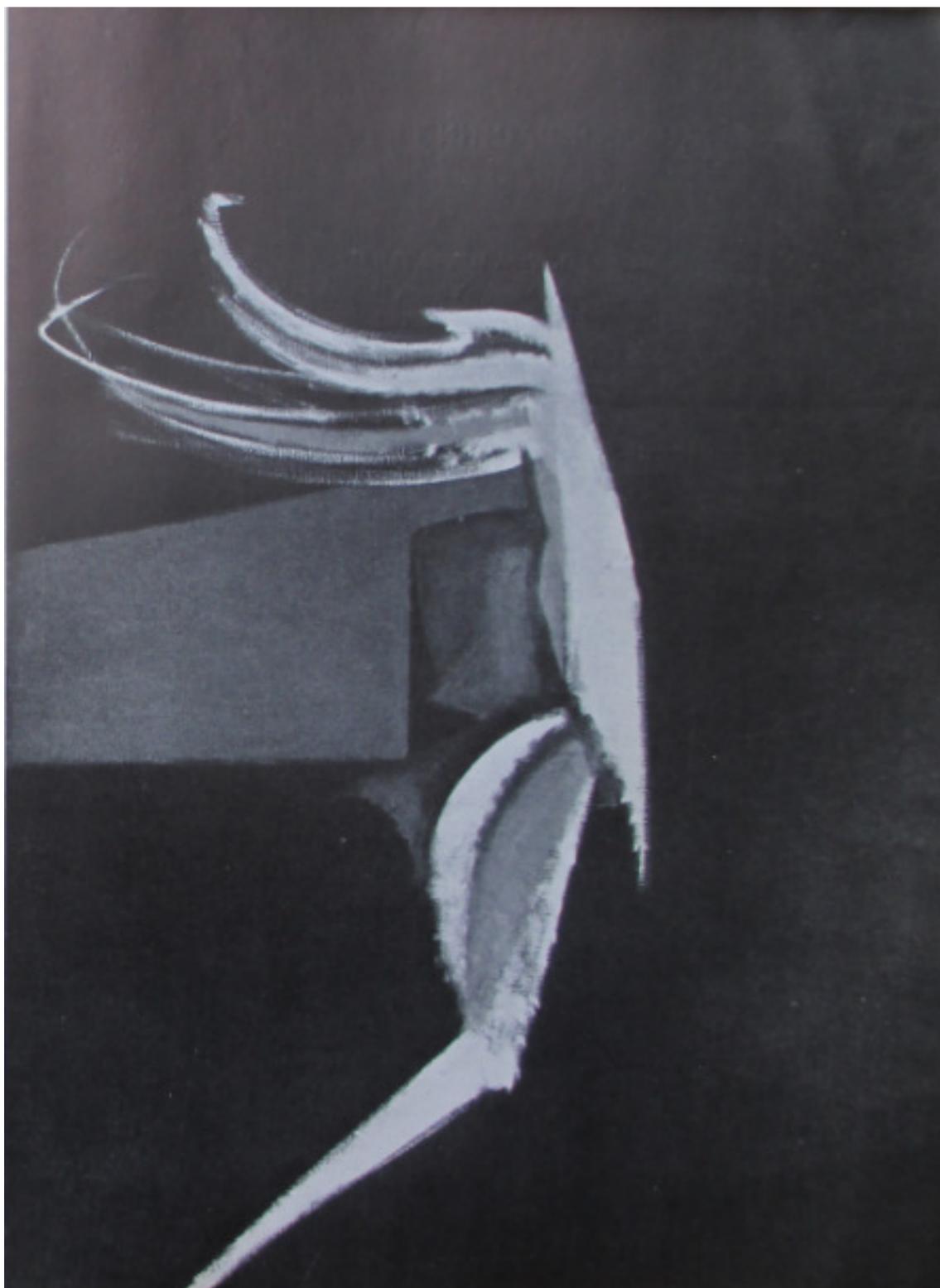
Lithograph, Composition: 97.3 x 70 cm, sheet: 105 x 75 cm, Publisher: Universal Limited Art Editions, West Islip, New York.



**Figure 4**

Janez Bernik, *Ostrvo (Island)*, 1958.

Oil on canvas, 139.7 x 116 cm, provenance unknown.



**Figure 5**

Josip Vaništa, *Composition*, 1956.

Oil on canvas, 137 x 104 cm, provenance unknown.



**Figure 6**

Frano Šimunović, *Zagora II*, 1956.

Oil on canvas, 91 x 132 cm, provenance unknown.



**Figure 7**

Miodrag B. Protić, *Mrtva Priroda sa Zutom Pticom* (Still-life with Yellow Bird), 1959.

Oil on canvas, 81 x 101 cm, provenance unknown.



**Figure 8**

Meeting with President Josip Tito And President Eisenhower, New-York, 23 September 1960.

Source: Getty Images.

<http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/meeting-with-josip-tito-and-president-eisenhower-etats-unis-news-photo/166711214#meeting-with-josip-tito-and-president-eisenhower-etatsunis-newyork-23-picture-id166711214>



Figure 9

Jovan Običan, *Jugoslavija*, 1962.

*The Art Gallery*, IX: 4, January, 1966, 43

## References

- Bendig, William. 1966. "Preface." *The Art Gallery*, IX: 4, January.
- Blumenfeld F. J. 1966. "Slovenes without Marx." *Newsweek*, February 7.
- Bogdanović, Ana. 2016. "Representing Yugoslavia at the Venice Biennale in 1950 and 1952: a Case Study on the Relationship between the State and Exhibition Politics." Paper presented at the Art and Politics in Europe in the Modern Period Conference, Zagreb, Croatia, 29 June-2 July.
- Cockcroft, Eva. 1985. "Abstract Expressionism, Weapon of the Cold War." In *Pollock and After: The Critical Debate*, edited by Francis Frascina, 147-154. London: Harper & Row.
- Craven, David. 1999. *Abstract Expressionism as Cultural Critique*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Denegri, Ješa. 2003. "Inside or Outside "Socialist Modernism"? Radical Views on the Yugoslav Art Scene, 1950-1970". In *Impossible Histories: Historical Avant-gardes, Neo-avant-gardes, and Post-avant-gardes in Yugoslavia, 1918-1991*, edited by Dubravka Djurić and Miško Šuvaković, 170-208. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Denys, Chevalier. 1963. "Ljubljana International Graphics" (La Gravure internationale de Ljubljana), *Aujourd'hui*, Paris, 42-43: October, 202.
- Dimitrijević, Branislav. 2009. "'Iron Curtain Raiser': An Exhibition of American Modern Art in Belgrade and its relation to "Socialist Modernism" and "Socialist Consumerism" in SFR Yugoslavia in the 1950s". In *Different Modernisms, Different Avant-Gardes: Problems in Central and Eastern European Art after World War II*, edited by Sirje Helme, 326-343. Tallinn: Eesti Kunstimuseum.
- Djordjević, Dragoslav. 1961. "Izložba Savremene Americke Umetnosti" ('The Exhibition of Contemporary American Art'), *Borba*, 1 October.
- Donson, Jerome. 1963. "The American Vanguard Exhibitions in Europe." *Art Journal* 22: 4.
- Dossin, Catherine. 2015. *The Rise and Fall of American Art, 1940s-1980s: A Geopolitics of Western Art Worlds*. London: Routledge.
- Edwards, Luis. 1966. "Dalmatia Was Delightful." *The Art Gallery*, IX: 4, January.
- Grafenauer, Petja. 2013. "The Biennial of Graphic Arts – Serving You Since 1955." In *Interruption: The 30th Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana*. Ljubljana. Exhibition Catalogue.
- Guilbaut, Serge. 1983. *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Guilbaut, Serge. 1985. "The New Adventures of the Avant-Garde in America." In *Pollock and After: The Critical Debate*, edited by Francis Frascina, 197-211. London: Harper & Row.
- Guilbaut, Serge. 2007. *Be-bomb: The Transatlantic War of Images and All That Jazz 1946-1956*. Barcelona: Museu D'Art Contemporani de Barcelona.
- Ikegami, Hiroko. 2010. *The Great Migrator: Robert Rauschenberg and the Global Rise of American Art*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Kennan, George. 1961. "Telegram from the Embassy in Yugoslavia to the Department of State." Belgrade, September 3. Accessed January 13. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v16/d96>.
- Kozloff, Max. 1985. "Abstract Expressionism, Weapon of the Cold War." In *Pollock and After: The Critical Debate*, edited by Francis Frascina, 107-124. London: Harper & Row.
- Lees, Lorraine. 1997. *Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia and the Cold War*. Pennsylvania: University Press.

- Lovell, Stephen. 2001. "Thirty Years of Moscow Art." In *Censorship: A World Encyclopaedia*, edited by Derek Jones, 2422. London: Routledge.
- Marković, Predrag. 1996. *Beograd Izmedju Istoka i Zapada (Belgrade between East and West)*. Belgrade: Sluzbeni List.
- Menna, Filiberto. 1963. "Incontro di incisori a Lubiana" (The Meeting of Graphic Artists in Ljubljana), *Il Popolo*, September 10.
- Minotaur. 1966. "A Letter From Dubrovnik." *The Art Gallery*, IX: 4, January.
- Mitter, Partha. 2008. "Interventions: Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde from the Periphery." *Art Bulletin* 90: 4, 531-549.
- New Painting From Yugoslavia*. 1961. Belgrade: Commission for Foreign Cultural Relations. Exhibition Catalogue.
- Pavlović, Zoran. 1961. "Savremeno Američko Slikarstvo" (Contemporary American Painting), *Danas*, September 27.
- Piotrowski, Piotr. 2009. "Towards a Horizontal History of the European Avant-Garde." In *Europa! Europa? The Avant-Garde, Modernism and the Fate of a Continent*, edited by Bru, Ørum et al., 49-58. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Piškur, Bojana. 2014. "The Non-Aligned Movement and Cultural Politics in the Former Yugoslavia." Paper presented at the Bandung Humanisms Conference, New York, America, April 16.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. 1991. "Arts of the Contact Zone." *Profession*, 33-40.
- Preston, Stuart. 1965. "A Breathing of Delight: Primitive Artists of Yugoslavia." *The New York Times*, April 25.
- Protić, Miodrag. 2000. *Nojeva Barka I: 1900-1965 (Noah's Ark I: 1900-1965)*. Belgrade: Pigmentum.
- Restany, Pierre. 1963. "The V International Graphic Biennial in Ljubljana" (La V Biennale internazionale dell'incisione a Lubiana). *Domus*, 405.
- Roberts, Walter R. 2014. "Tito – Personal Reflections." Accessed January 13. [http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/item/2014/0105/ca/roberts\\_tito.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/item/2014/0105/ca/roberts_tito.html)
- Saunders, Francis. 1999. *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*. London: Granta.
- Savremena Umetnost u SAD (Modern Art in the USA)*. 1956. Belgrade: Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. Exhibition Catalogue.
- Spicer, Frank G. 2009. "Just What Was It That Made U.S. Art So Different, So Appealing?" PhD diss., Case Western Reserve University.
- Stevens, Elizabeth. 1966. "Yugoslav Artists Between Party Lines." *The New York Times*, January 30.
- The Museum of Modern Art. 1961. "New Yugoslavian Films at Museum of Modern Art", Accessed on July 10, 2016. [https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press\\_archives/2903/releases/MOMA\\_1961\\_0118\\_116.pdf?2010](https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/2903/releases/MOMA_1961_0118_116.pdf?2010)
- The Museum of Modern Art. 1963. "Fifth International Exhibition of Prints." Accessed on July 8, 2016. [http://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press\\_archives/3173/releases/MOMA\\_1963\\_0085\\_81.pdf?2010](http://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/3173/releases/MOMA_1963_0085_81.pdf?2010)
- Trifunović, Lazar. 1961a. "Američko Slikarstvo" (American Painting), *NIN*, September 23.

- Trifunović, Lazar. 1961b. "Od Revolucionare do Gradjanske Umetnosti" (From Revolutionary to Civic Art), *NIN*, June.
- Turinski, Živojin. 1966a. "Američki Recenzenti o Jugoslovenskoj Umetnosti" (American Reviewers About Yugoslav Art). *Umetnost*, 7: 1966
- Turinski, Živojin. 1966b. "Američki Časopis o Jugoslovenskoj Umetnosti" (American Magazine About Yugoslav Art), *Umetnost*, 5: 1966.
- Turner, Catherine. 2010. *Pressing the Fight, Print, Propaganda, and the Cold War*. Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Udovicki, Jasminka. 2000. *Burn This House: The Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia*. London: Duke University Press.
- Unknown Author. 1951. *Life*, January 15.
- Unknown Author. 1954. *Primorske Novice*, 3 April.
- Unknown Author. 1963a. "Hruščov o Umetnosti" (Khrushchev on Art), *NIN*, March 17.
- Unknown Author. 1963b. *Borba*, January 24.
- Unknown Author. 1963c. "Rauschenberg Wins Graphics Prize." *New York Times*, June 20, 28.
- Vučetić, Radina. 2015. *Koka-Kola Socijalizam (Coca-Cola Socialism)*. Belgrade: Glasnik.
- West, Richard. 2012. *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Williams, Hermann. 1966. "A Letter from Washington, or: It's Different in Yugoslavia." *The Art Gallery*, IX: 4.
- Wye, Deborah. 2004. *Artists and Prints: Masterworks from The Museum of Modern Art*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art.
- Žerovc, Beti. 2010. "An Interview with Zoran Kržišnik." In *Mnemosyne: The Time of Ljubljana's Biennial of Graphic Arts*, edited by Vesna Teržan, 36-54. Ljubljana: Mednarodni grafični likovni center.

## Short Biography

I have completed an MSc by Research in History of Art in 2016 and graduated Joint History of Art and Architectural History (MA, Hons) in 2014, both at the University of Edinburgh, UK. My MSc Dissertation is entitled “Cultural Encounters and Cultural Conflicts: Rauschenberg in Yugoslavia and Yugoslav Art in the US”. The main focus of my research is the Yugoslav reception of modern US art during the Cold War period, as well as Yugoslav strategies in promoting their art in the US and the American responses to it. In my dissertation, I am dealing with the writings of Yugoslav art critics and art historians, which is a deplorably under-researched topic. Currently, I have applied for PhD Studies at The University of Edinburgh.

My work aims to raise awareness of Yugoslav culture and contribute to recent attempts at widening the “canon” of art history. My research places Yugoslavia in a wider East European context, which will help to open up novel opportunities for re-thinking the aesthetic, social, didactic and ideological positions on which European responses to modern US art were grounded. I am also a contributor to the collaborative research and publication project “US Art in European Art Writing in the Cold War Era”, an initiative of the *Art in Translation* Journal, supported by the Terra Foundation. <http://usartineurope.eca.ed.ac.uk/>.