

## Čudoviti svet odsotnosti monochromov Zeigerpointer

Čudoviti svet odsotnosti je monochromova zbirka tako imenovanih *zeigerpointerjev* (Nemško-angleški tavitološki neologizem, ki bi ga lahko okorno prevedli kot »kazaleckazalec«. [op. prev.]).

Dokler ne bomo našli uradnega termina za eno od splošnih razširjenih oblik reprezentacije, ki se pojavlja v tiskanih medijih, bomo kot nadomestno ime uporabljali izraz *zeigerpointer*. Tega medijskega fenomena ni doslej še nihče zaznal ali opredelil kot specifično formo. Z zbirko ([www.monochrom.at/zeigerpointer](http://www.monochrom.at/zeigerpointer)) in nizom podob *Zeigerpointer* želi monochrom prispevati k raziskovanju

odgovorni za prizorišče, naj pokažejo na mesto, kjer se je »tisto«<sup>1</sup> zgodilo. *Zeigerpointerje* je možno jasno določiti z nekaterimi kriteriji, ki jih morajo izpolnjevati te podobe. Po teh kriterijih jih lahko razlikujemo od vseh drugih medijskih podob. Poročani dogodek ne sme biti viden s pomočjo nobenega drugega sredstva razen s kazanjem na mesto, kjer se je »tisto«<sup>2</sup> zgodilo; dogodek je torej viden zgolj s pomočjo odsotnosti »tistega«, kar se je zgodilo.

monochrom že več let zbira podobe iz časopisnih izrezkov. Sprva so jih iskali le v avstrijskem



Image / Slika 2  
monochrom  
*The scene of the accident: Here, the Serb got caught in the wildlife fence, 2011*  
Prizorišče nesreče: Tu se je Srb ujel v ograjo za divjad  
Oil on canvas / Olje na platnu,  
140 x 100 cm

*Zeigerpointerji* se posebno pogosto pojavljajo v brezplačnih revijah in brošurah v napol urbanih in podeželskih okoljih na obrobju avstrijske medijske pokrajine, v lokalnih medijih, v glasilih in podobnih publikacijah, ki poročajo o lokalnih dogodkih. Pojavljajo se tudi v tisti nadregionalni obliki, v kateri provincialna Avstrija nastopa v nacionalnih tabloidih s široko cirkulacijo, ki polaga temelje za vsakdanjo percepcijo širokih krogov prebivalstva.

Kakovost slik in tiska se spreminja (glej sliko 4), a večina *zeigerpointerjev* je precej nizke kakovosti. V oljni tehniki pride do izraza njihova specifična estetika, ki jo lahko primerjamo z estetiko foto-realističnih slik iz sedemdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja. monochrom si s slikami ne prizadevajo za zvesto upodabljanje estetike v revijah, ki so tiskane na sijajnem papirju, temveč raje reproducirajo ceno in slabo izdelavo, ki sta značilni za precejšen del avstrijskega tiska.

Značilnosti uporabe in izdelave teh podob poudarjajo s specifično obliko teh slik. Včasih si prizadevajo narediti avtentični učinek, da bi pričarale avro neposrednosti in bližine odsotnega dogodka, ki ga dokumentirajo. Dogodek je nepreklicno mimo, s kazanjem nanj skušajo

nemočno reaktivirati eno najstarodavnejših kulturnozgodovinskih metod validacije: kazanje, pa čeprav nekoliko neuspešno, ker se tisto, kar naj bi kazali, ne prikaže tam, kamor kažejo prsti in roke upodobljenih oseb.

*Zeigerpointerji* se pogosto zdijo kot amaterski posnetki brez navdiha, najbrž zato, da bi kompenzirali svojo pomanjkljivost, čeprav so dejansko v večini primerov skrbno pripravljene posnetki, ki so jih naredili profesionalni fotografi. To je razvidno zlasti iz izumetničnega načina kazanja na omenjene lokacije (glej sliko 5).

Pogosto se zdi, da je oseba na sliki upodobljena naključno in nelaskavo, kajti posnetek skuša z amatersko in naglo razporeditvijo posredovati vtis, da ni zrežiran. Te podobe niso niti ponarejene niti kako drugače popravljene za medije, ker naj bi poudarile nevsakdanjost dogodkov, tako da kažejo neprivlačne lokacije v neprivlačnem okolju in z neprivlačnimi običajnimi ljudmi; tu ni videti ničesar, toda tik preden se znova nadaljuje vsakodnevnina rutina, to neprivlačnost in banalnost prekine dogodek, ki je predmet posnetka.

V specifično in večinoma ravnodušno obliko

*zeigerpointerjev* sta se vtisnila vznemirjenje in kratka življenjska doba nekaterih medijev in njihovih dogodkovnih obzorij.

Čudoviti svet odsotnosti si želi iztrgati vsakdanje medijske dogodke iz njihovega trivialnega in povsem potrošniškega konteksta, v katerem jih srečujemo, ko listamo po časopisih in revijah. Morda nas za trenutek zabavajo ali ganejo, nato pa nas od njih odvrne neustavljiv tok informacij, ki temelji na pregovorni domnevi, da nič ni tako staro kot včerajšnja novica. Iz zasople poplave besed, iz verbalne medijske diareje si želimo izolirati tisto podobo, ki konstituira pretok informacij, ne da bi jo kot tako zaznali ali vanjo podvomili – torej podobo kot zavestno uprizorjen informacijsko-estetski dogodek.

To podobo želimo izkristalizirati kot izolirano in zaznavno podobo-dogodek in jo s pomočjo spremembe medija preoblikovali v umetniški artefakt, da bi jo lahko (kritično) motrili, (estetsko) doživeli in kontekstualizirali (kot strategijo reprezentacije).

Predvsem nas zanimajo zgodbe v ozadju zgodb, ki jih pripoveduje podoba, in normalnost, ki jo je zmotil dogodek (kot oprijemljivi razlog za upodobitev). V času, ko je upodobitev nastala, so bile zgodbe že prebavljene in spet prerasle v dogodek kot tak.

Posebej smo pozorni na specifično estetiko *zeigerpointerjev* in na njihove diskurzivne implikacije, ki jih poudarjata izolacija in sprememba medija. Doslej zbrani artefakti vsebujejo celoten repertoar človeških odnosov in afektov v obliki mnogovrstnih slojev oziroma stopenj – od drastičnih (npr. slika 5) in tragičnih dogodkov (slika 3), ki se križajo z banalnimi (slika 1) in vse preveč človeškimi, do agresivnosti in nasilja (slika 4), ki ju avstrijska družba lahko le pomanjkljivo sublimira. Slike razkazujejo družbene prelomnice in razpoke, ki jih zaznavamo zaradi izklesanih oblik poročanja ali zato, ker so omenjene precej

brezobzirno. Te prelomnice in razpoke so primeri medijskega odmika od vzrokov k tistemu, kar je vidno in zato predstavljivo. Ponos in radost, ki ju očitno razkrivajo izrazi na obrazih nekaterih ljudi, ki so upodobljeni na *zeigerpointerjih*, sta posledica njihove opažene medijske pomembnosti in pričata o odnosu med Avstrijci in »njihovimi«<sup>3</sup> mediji. Sestavni del mnogih *zeigerpointerjev* je nezavedni rasizem, ki je v Avstriji postal vsakdanji pojav. Etnični status obravnava kot samoumeven del poročila in zato navidezno neproblematično uporablja izraze, kot je »Srb«<sup>4</sup> (slika 2).

Na splošno *zeigerpointerje* uporabljajo takrat, ko se kraji, kjer se je nekaj pripetilo, ne zdijo sami po sebi vredni upodobitve, ker nimajo lastne tradicije upodabljanja (kakršno imajo denimo kulturnozgodovinske stavbe ali politično reprezentativna poslopja).

Upodobljeni ljudje ne kažejo le prizorišč zločina ali nesreč, temveč opozarjajo tudi na medijski princip reprezentacije kot take. Tam, kjer ni ničesar (več) videti, je treba z aktom kazanja vpeljati nadomestno ime oziroma medijski domislek, da bi potrdili vidnost in jasnost, ki so ju mediji privzeli kot formalno nujnost in ideološko strukturo tudi kadar je nekaj nevidno.

*Zeigerpointerji* torej reprezentirajo ne le dogodke kot take, temveč tudi reprezentacijsko potrebo medijske pokrajine, ki se skoraj v celoti zanaša na samopojasnevalno sugestivno moč podobe in podpisa. Njeni informacijski produkti, ki konstantno tekmujejo med seboj, pa so odvisni od hitre razumljivosti in jedrnate, jasne vizualizacije.

Zahteva po reprezentaciji je v primeru *zeigerpointerjev* nekako pravzaprav parodija. *Zeigerpointerji* so skrajna afirmacija banalnosti medijskih podob, ki upodablja tista prazna mesta, kjer ni ničesar več. *Zeigerpointerji* so oblika reprezentacije v trojnem smislu. Dogodke upodablja v obliki njihove nezmožnosti upodobitve; reprezentirajo torej reprezentacijsko



Image / Slika 3  
monochrom  
*At this spot the missing corporal was dragged under cloggings and driftwood by the current according to the police, 2011*  
Na tem mestu je po policijskem poročilu tok potegnil pogrešanega deseterja pod veje in druge naplavine  
Oil on canvas / Olje na platnu,  
140 x 100 cm

potrebo informacijske družbe. Upodablja tudi sledi trivializacije, ki princip (medijske) reprezentacije, kot okrnitev vsebine, ki jo je treba zreducirati na informacijo, uveljavlja v svetu usod in dogodkov s posledicami družbenih konfliktov in nerešenih problemov. Pogosto groteskni in okrnjeni podpisi k slikam prenesejo tragično in trivialno v območje absurdno poetičnega izraza. Podpisi vsebujejo vzvišene nasprotujoče si izjave.

*Zeigerpointerje* je mogoče tolmačiti tudi kot besedno-slikovne oblike prepričljivosti groznega, kot zgoščene mikro-drame, ki v obiskovalcih razstave ustvarjajo napetost s pomočjo odsotnosti bistvenih kontekstualnih podatkov, ki so sprva obstajali oziroma jih bilo mogoče rekonstruirati, čeprav bi jih tudi v njihovem izvornem kontekstu zelo redko zaznali.

Te mikro-drame so zgoščene verzije dogodkov, ki s svojo enigmatičnostjo in ekscentričnostjo bolj kot karkoli drugega reprezentirajo avstrijsko realnost in vsakdanjo normalnost.

Poezija predstavljanja tistega, kar ni navzoče, preusmeri pozornost k trenutkom, situacijam in »krajem«, ki bi bili sicer redko vredni upodobitve,

h krajem, katerih normalnosti in vsakdanje funkcionalnosti (ograj in robnikov, živih mej in pločnikov ipd.) običajno ne opazimo. Prav njihovo pomanjkanje privlačnosti jim daje specifičen čar. Podobe kažejo tisto, kar je skrito za avstrijskimi kulturnimi ali turističnimi samopodobami in kar postane vidno s tem, ko ga izločimo s selektivnim zaznavanjem.

Prikazana istost, razsvetljena praznina, pomanjkanje dogodkov, ki je prekinjeno le za bežen trenutek; vse to so običajni trenutki konfiguracije lokalne vsakdanje kulture, v kateri se grozote bohotijo sredi neopaznega. Ujeti jo je mogoče zgolj kot tisto neopazno v mimikriji lastnega okolja.

*Zeigerpointerji* opozarjajo tako na bežnost tragičnega trenutka kot tudi na tragičnost bežnosti, zato so morda najlepši stranski konflikt človeškega boja s praznino.

Izdaja ob razstavi / Published on the occasion of the exhibition:

**monochrom**  
**Zeigerpointer**  
[www.aksioma.org/monochrom](http://www.aksioma.org/monochrom)

Aksioma | Projektni prostor / **Project Space**  
Komenskega 18, Ljubljana, Slovenija  
6. – 22. julij 2011 / **July 6 – 22, 2011**

**Izvršna producentka / Executive producer:** Marcela Okretič  
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**Produkcija / Production:** Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana, 2011  
[www.aksioma.org](http://www.aksioma.org)

Projekt so podprli Avstrijski kulturni forum v Ljubljani, Ministrstvo za kulturo RS, Mestna občina Ljubljana in Oddelek za podporo umetnosti / Mesto Dunaj, Avstrija / **Supported by the Austrian Cultural Forum in Ljubljana, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia, the Municipality of Ljubljana and the Department of Art Funding / City of Vienna, Austria.**

avstrijski kulturni forum\*

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Zahvaljujemo se Andreasu Hellerju za zagon tega projekta; vsem, ki so prispevali *zeigerpointerje*, in Ljudski republiki Kitajski / **Thanks to Andreas Heller for kick-starting this project, all Zeigerpointer contributors and The People's Republic of China.**

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## **The wonderful world of absence monochrom's Zeigerpointer**

'The wonderful world of absence' presents monochrom's collection of so-called 'Zeigerpointers':

Until an official term for the media phenomenon 'Zeigerpointer' has been found, this place holder describes a widespread form of representation used by the print media. This has until now neither been perceived nor defined as a specific form. With the collection ([www.monochrom.at/zeigerpointer](http://www.monochrom.at/zeigerpointer)) and the sequence of images



Image / Slika 4  
**monochrom**  
*Dramatic scenes at a playground in Hallein (Salzburg): Two young men fired upon 15 children. Alexander (12) shows the balcony where the shots where fired from. Policeman Josef Walcher secured the weapon, 2011*  
Dramatični prizori na igrišču v Halleinu (Salzburg): Mladeniča sta streljala na 15 otrok. Alexander (12) kaže balkon, od koder so prišli strelji. Policist Josef Walcher je zasegel orožje  
*Oil on canvas / Olje na platnu, 140 x 100 cm*

'Zeigerpointer', monochrom wants to contribute to the examination of the 'Zeigerpointer' as a category of representational aesthetics.

We define the 'Zeigerpointer' as images (in the scope of printed media reporting) of crime scenes, locations of accidents as well as other locations in which some kind of thing has happened that can no longer be seen because the reported happening is already over and no traces are visible (either because none were produced or because they were already removed during the reinstatement of the status quo). Because in these cases there is nothing to take a picture of, the photo journalist generally asks certain people –

eyewitnesses, concerned parties or somebody in charge – to point to the spot where 'it' happened. 'Zeigerpointers' can unambiguously be defined with a couple of criteria they have to fulfil and therefore distinguish them from other pictures of people pointing at something. The reported event must not be visible through any other means than the pointing at the spot where 'it' happened.

monochrom has been collecting such images for several years in the form of newspaper clippings

high frequency in the magazines and booklets that are distributed free of charge in the semi-urbane and rural fringes of the Austrian media landscape, the local media, notice sheets and the like that report on local events. However, it also appears in that supra-regional form in which the provincial Austria returns as a nationwide tabloid with wide circulation which structures, coins and lays the foundations of the day-to-day perception of wide swathes of the population.

Therefore, the quality of the pictures and the print varies (see image 4). Most 'Zeigerpointers' however, have a rather poor image quality which, painted in oil, displays a singular aesthetic attraction comparable to the photo-realistic paintings of the 1970s.

The often poor image quality does not strive for the aesthetics of so-called glossy magazines, but rather reproduces the cheap and poorly produced quality which is characteristic for a considerable percentage of the Austrian print media.

It thereby contains, in a specific form, the characteristics of usage and product of these images. At times they pursue the intention of producing authentic impressions. They do this in order to conjure up an aura of immediacy and closeness to the event, the absence of which they however document. The event has passed irrevocably and pointing to it tries to helplessly reactivate one of the most ancient historico-cultural methods of validation: pointing, if somewhat without success. The shown does not appear where the fingers and hands of the depicted persons point.

Probably to compensate for this defect, the 'Zeigerpointers' often appear as unspirited and unschooled snapshots although in fact they are mostly painstakingly arranged images produced by professional photographers. This is evident in the often very contrived way in which the respective locations are pointed at (see image 5).

The depicted person often appears to be haphazardly and unfavourably posing in an image that tries to convey an impression of not being composed through the amateurish and hasty arrangement. They are neither made up nor otherwise prepared for the media, but rather accentuate the non-banality of the events by pointing to charmless locations in a charmless environment as charmless day-to-day people, where there is nothing to be seen but where shortly before the continuation of the daily routine was interrupted for a moment of happening.

In the specific and mostly loveless form of the 'Zeigerpointer' the agitation and short lifespan of certain media and their event horizons has inscribed itself.

'The wonderful world or absence' wants to lift day-to-day media events from their trivial and pure consumer usage in which we encounter them when paging through newspapers and magazines. They may momentarily amuse us or touch us only to be swept away by the unstoppable torrent of information based on the assumption turned into proverb that nothing is as old as yesterday's news. From the breathless torrent of words, the 'verbal diarrhoea' of the media, we want to isolate that single image which constitutes the flow of information without being perceptible or questionable as such – as an image, i.e. a consciously staged informational aesthetic event.

We want to crystallize it as an isolated and perceptible image event and, through the change of medium, reshape it into an artistically designed artefact in order to contemplate it (critically), savour it (aesthetically) and contextualize it (as a strategy of representation).

We are most of all interested in the stories behind the stories recounted in the image and that normality which was interrupted by the event (as the tangible reason of depiction), which, however, at the time of the depiction already has devoured



Image / Slika 5  
**monochrom**  
*The railway station tobacconist Andrea Fröschl (31) at the scene of the accident: 'The man was in flames and rolling on the floor, screaming', 2011*  
Trafikantka na železniški postaji Andrea Fröschl (31) na prizorišču nesreče: »Človek se je v plamenih valjal po tleh in kričal«  
*Oil on canvas / Olje na platnu, 140 x 100 cm*

and overgrown the event again.

We focus our attention on the specific aesthetics of the 'Zeigerpointers' and their discursive implications, which should be emphasized by the isolation and the change of medium. The artefacts collected up to now contain the whole repertoire of human relationships and affects in a form of multiple layers or degrees, drastic (e.g. image 5) and tragic (image 3) events colliding with the banal (image 1) and all too human, the aggression and

commonplace in Austria, which treats ethnic status as part of the report as a matter of course and which utters such phrases as 'the Serb' (image 2) seemingly without problems, is a constitutive part of many 'Zeigerpointers'.

'Zeigerpointers' generally are used when the places where things have happened are not considered to be worthy of an image of their own because they do not have an image tradition of their own (such as historico-cultural buildings or representative places of politics).

The depicted people, however, do not only point to crime scenes and places of accidents, but rather also point at the medial principle of representation itself. Where there is nothing (left) to see, a place holder and medial contrivance has to be introduced – in the act of pointing – in order to affirm the visibility and clearness, internalized by the media as a formal necessity and ideological structure, also in the face of the invisible.

'Zeigerpointers' therefore not only represent events alone, but that representative necessity of a media landscape which relies almost exclusively on the self-explaining suggestive power of image and caption and whose competing information products are dependent of quick understandability and a compact, seamless visualization.

Yes, the necessity of representation is parodied in a certain way. It might seem that the 'Zeigerpointers' are an over-affirmation of the banality of the medial image: in the depiction of the banality of those void spaces where nothing is left.

'Zeigerpointers' therefore represent in a threefold sense: They represent events in the form of their unrepresentability, they represent the representational necessity of the information society. They also represent that trace of trivialization which applies the principle of (media) representation (also as the mutilation of content which has to be reduced to information) in a world of fates and consequential

events, societal conflicts and unresolved aggressions. The often grotesque and mutilated captions transpose the tragic and trivial to the reaches of the absurd-poetic. The exalted in a counter-factual form is nearly contained in the captions.

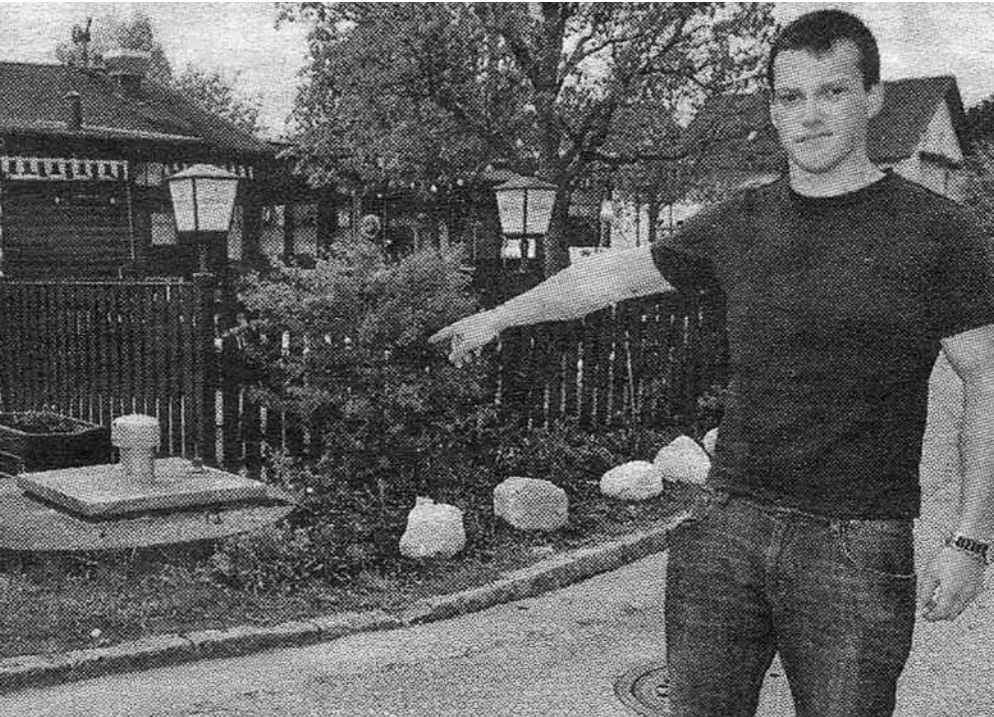
The 'Zeigerpointers' can also be interpreted as verbal-pictorial forms of stringency of the terrible, as compressed micro-dramas that create tension in the viewers of the exhibition through the absence of essential contextual information which originally was contained or reconstructible, but which also in its original context of the cursory lecture is rarely perceived.

These micro-dramas are compressed and concentrated versions of events that above all in their enigmatic and eccentric quality represent Austrian reality and day-to-day normality.

The poetry of presenting the non-present shifts the focus to moments, situations and 'places' which otherwise would rarely be worthy of an image, places whose normality and casual functionality (fences and curbsides, hedges and pavements etc.) is normally concealed from our perception. Specifically their lack of charm constitutes their specific lure. The pictures point to that which is concealed behind the cultural or touristic Austrian self-images and which is visible in such a way that it is excluded by the selective perception.

The shown sameness, the illuminated void, the lack of events only interrupted for the blink of an eye – all these are common moments of configuration of the local day-to-day culture where the terrible thrives within the inconspicuous and which can only be captured as the inconspicuous in mimicry of its environment.

The 'Zeigerpointers' point to the transience of the tragic as well as the tragedy of transience. They are perhaps the most beautiful side-conflict of the human fight against the void.



**MONOCHROM**

# **ZEIGERPOINTER**