



## Editorial



Dear Reader, the fourth issue of the Sputnik Gazette has Dragan Zivadinov, co-founder of Neue Slowenische Kunst and founder of Cosmokinetic Cabinet Noordung in an interview that discusses Sputnik as an icon or sign. The interview was made by phone and I would like to thank Dragan for participating and Honor and Goran for getting me in touch with Dragan.

The International Sputnik Day 2007 website at <http://sputnik.irmielin.org> is now available in Russian and the first fixed date (in Ljubljana) is included in the program. Francis Hunger



## Dragan Zivadinov



**If you think of the Sputnik as an icon - a bowl with those 4 long antennas, which pictures is this invoking in you?**

On the first level Sputnik is a heterotopian icon of the 20th century, on the second level it is a first suprematistic being.

Looking back to the 20th century from today's point of view, from Eastern Europe, there are, in my opinion, two style formations, which are essential, which are crucial and need to be transferred to the 21st century. I'm talking about Suprematism and Constructivism, which were, at that time, set against each other: supremation against function. If you look at the black square, you look into the 3-dimensional black, which is filled with information (the face of God / Information Zero). If you look at the construction of the 3rd International monument by Tatlin you look at the tele-present globalistic information, or better, at the function of the radio frequency, transmitted from a monument.

So, if suprematism and constructivism built modernism, then Sputnik is the first product of supramodernism, since it combined both style formations: suprematistic bowl and constructivistic antennas. The suprematistic bowl is a manifestation of basic geometrization and the four antennas are no more than a function; by transmitting sounds they prove its actual existence in space. The form of all following satellites is defined by a composite structure, through its functions.

But let's go back to Sputnik. The antennas, which are transmitting signals to the Earth are no more than a repetitive sound supremation. What we see when we look at Sputnik is a bowl, what we hear is a sonority of signs. So, Sputnik is a suprematistic sign. The first object, which was launched into the orbit thus becomes, by transmitting the rhythm, the suprematistic being. All other objects, which were launched into the orbit later on are composite, functionalistic structures, which keep us informed about our real and, at the same time, special place, which we, as human

beings, hold in the orbit. So they are constructivist.

*Only Sputnik is a suprematistic, supramodernistic being.*

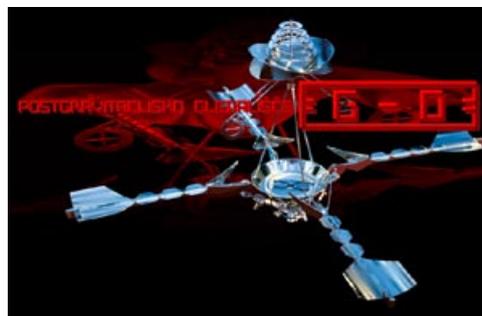
### Why?

Let me soften this thesis and say that Sputnik is a suprematistic sign, a modernistic sign. It is a part of a huge system, which was built by modernism, a part of modernistic utopia, which manifested itself in the progress. There was in the 20th century in Eastern Europe a continuous struggle in finding a system and a method. Duchamp's (Western) method is well known: art is everything you say art is. After that, in the middle of the century, art was anything you touched during the creative process, later on you were not allowed to touch art and at the end of the century a method aroused, which was brought to the 21st century: Everything is potentially digital.

When Ives Klein is lying on the beach on a beautiful day and watching the sky, he feels the urge to put his sign in the right lower corner of the sky. He wants to make the sky his art piece. And with Duchamp's method he can do it! Klein's blue is full of information, of radio-, TV- and other signals. Malevich's three-dimensional black contains cosmistic information, Klein's blue contains information of development. Malevich and Klein both struggle for the abstract, but at different times and by different means.

The 20th century combines the abstract with the development and places both into an entirely new condition, the conditions of weightlessness. Sputnik combines Abstractya with Elektronika, which both create this transmission, the telecosmistic transmission.

What is Sputnik? It is an icon of the 20th century, it is a suprematistic being, it is a telecosmistic transmission, it is a system and it is a development.



Img.: Zero-Gravity Theatre

**Sputnik seems to be the fulfilment of many fantasies of the modernist period. It is the first global radio transmitter (Chlebnikov, Brecht and others) and also paths the way towards the global satellite navigation system and global satellite based surveillance (Orwell). In what relation do you see Sputnik to these utopian fantasies?**

I prefer to use the word heterotopia, since every utopia (futurism) has it's anti-utopia

(fascism). Every positive utopia has its negative mirror picture. At the present point in time the word »progress« and the word »utopia« are deconstructed, but the word »development« holds a big poetic potential!

The 20th century is about Antonin Artaud's Plague, Fear and Incest and about Bertoldt Brecht - anything new, even if it is bad, is better than anything old, even if it is good.

Heterotopia is the starting point for post-gravity art.

### So this is, what you are currently working on...

I'm creating conditions for post-gravity art, for supra-abstract art! Out of the supra-abstract we, Dunja Zupancic and I, are developing fourteen supra-architectons, called umbots. »um« comes from Zaum, the language invented by Chlebnikov and »bot« comes from robot which itself stems from the Slavic »rabotnik« (worker). Since my basic artistic education and my starting point is theatre, my work and research has to do with actor's body in the conditions of weightlessness. Amongst other things, Dunja Zupancic, Zavod Projekt Atol, Miha Tursic, a weightlessness environment designer, and myself are working on a launching of the first artistic satellite, which will take place in 2009. In 1990 I started to process my final, 50 years lasting theatre performance Noordung 1995-2045: We, Dunja Zupancic and Dragan Zivadinov, together with eight actresses and eight actors, performed the Noordung 1995 - 2045 projectile in a theatre, for the first time on the 20th of April, 1995, at 10 pm. The perspective of the viewer was directed vertically downwards from a dome. The first repetition performance took place ten years later, in 2005, on the same day at the same time, with the same actors, with the same text. It was performed on the International Space Station model in the hydro laboratory of the Jurij Gagarin Center, which is used for cosmonaut training in Star City. The second repetition performance takes place ten years after the first one in the same manner. The following repetition performances take place in 2015, 2025, 2035 and 2045. Should one of the actors die during one of the intervals, the two of us shall replace him in his mise-en-scene through a remote-controlled sign.

During the temporal interval of the repetition performance, the actor and his speech will be substituted by rhythm while actresses and their speech will be substituted by melody. In 2045 there are sixteen signs and music pieces in the Noordung 1995 - 2045 projectile, instead of actors and actresses. In 2045, I'll go into geostationary orbit in a spacecraft and place them on sixteen points around the planet Earth. The models/signs, which are the substitutes for the actors are going to become artistic satellites or in this case umbots. Each umbot sends information in two directions: the biography of the actor is sent towards Earth and a 3-d face mesh of actor into deep space.