

Sheltering the shelter

Public/private performance by Nadjia Kracunovic

Starting from the same point from my first assignment and work "Yellow flower shelter", I wanted to make a full circle around the journey and come back to the topic that was somehow always there with me along the way. A shelter is defined as a place that protects from bad weather or danger and as a shield, I apply it to my own everyday battle. What is my microhabitat? What I consider home and how to protect it? While reading Martin Heidegger's piece about dwelling, I played with the words *house* and *home* comparing them with the same meaning in my mother tongue. In literal translation the expression *being home* from English to Serbian, I noticed the metaphor: I am home – Ja sam dom, meaning *I am my home*. Am I? Seeking for the rightness of the place you inhabit, wherever you are means seeking for the home. Since I made the transition from Serbia to Germany I am dealing with the fact that no place is home. After a while, I created a shelter in a newly inhabited space until it started shaking again. My shelter needed protection. Something that we all share, no matter how different we are, is the need to belong. I tried to implement my charisma and color of my being into the contexts of the new environments. Constantly, I would feel the ambivalence of getting closer to the surroundings and getting far away from them. Everything undesired that would happen I will take personally in a way that I could not deal with it. My shelter needs a protector and I am the only one competent for that type of job.

Being interested in the private space and the walls that we build to separate our intimacy or vulnerability from the rest of the world, I noticed the urge to confront my own. To start with it, I must connect with the little Nadjia and ask her about her experience of the same issue. Step by step, I passed through the whole childhood coming to the present moment, and along the way, noticed the pattern that repeats. Playing, camping, protecting, hiding.

Why is everything shaking right now?

I must walk. Walk with the plan not to have a plan. My pace provokes my thoughts, says Mr. Hirsch and I confirm.

One of the things that are truly applied to my everyday life is mindful walks that help me process and understand all the trembling happening. After I have seen all the women flâneurs and fell in love once again with Janet Cardiff's work, I wanted to experiment both with the walk and voice. For the final work, I did the same – circulating my steps until the solution appeared. After making the circles inside and outside Weimar while drawing my walk with the GPS app, I figured out what is *in between*.

I believe that I forced my work to go in one direction in the process of making a final piece and it was just not natural. The moment of noticing the force was the first mindful step that I made. Instead of taking a topic or the Week, my final work is something that is happening currently, **right now in my mind, body, and soul**. However, it was influenced by the strategies, methods, and knowledge that I gathered within the course - walking, dwelling, emotions, and their translation. While being present in my walking, I played associations with my mind and recorded them. The process of emptying the head and words that appeared somehow collectively have meaning. After the 10 walks, I came home and did it. Welcome shelter's protector.

Do you remember your first self-built fortress?

My current habitat became a place of the first part in the performance where I created shelter inside the shelter – fortress inside the room. Although we mostly practiced implementation in public space, I learned that not everything is for the outside world and that my mind will go out when it is ready. Being gentle to yourself is also the act of kindness that we experienced together on this journey. The sheltering was an amazing process of letting myself being little and fragile again, taking glitter and pillows while building the castle on my bed. When I saw the creation, I proudly entered it.

The day after sheltering the habitat, I was ready to inhabit another place and strong enough to communicate with the outside world, where I would again find my place of belonging. Preparation was professional since the task was really important to me. I packed my suitcase with all necessary for one to inhabit a space. Along the way to my favorite *outside*, Kirschbahtal hill in Weimar, I found the construction that was perfectly fitting my idea. The cold wind and the three ducks from the near lake made the scenery even more magical. People would pass by looking which did not disturb me, since the place was meant to be the castle, I felt it. The outside sheltering was successful and my mind was free from the bunch of thoughts that were attacking and shaking my imaginary tent. Change, pandemic, and the fact that I can not shelter in the familiar lap of a person I know made me levitate in the void. Without the possibility to find it, protection of my little realm was necessary. Sheltering on my own. In the end, it is not the equipment that protected the shelter, but my body.

Ja sam kući – I am my home.

Link to the work:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FYN7YtCEiSpqwg7odJM1DCszg6Piph/view?usp=sharing>