

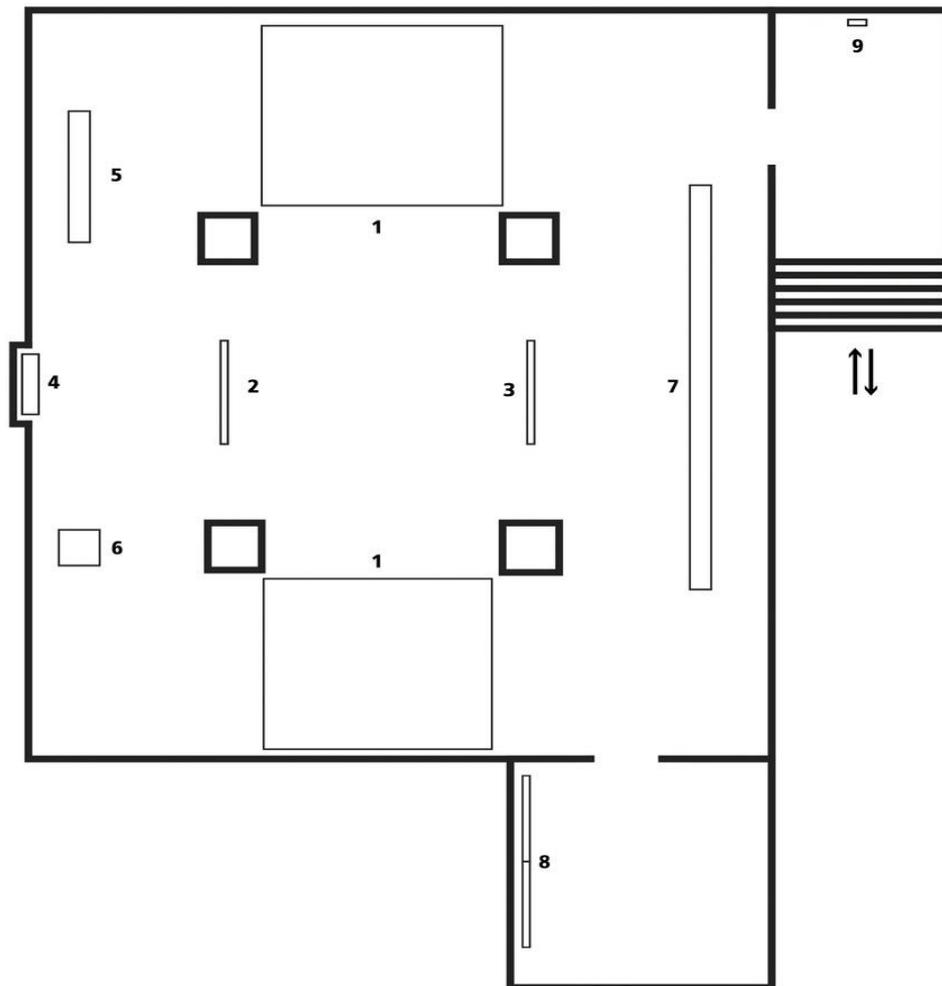
NATIONAL GALLERY/KVADRAT 500

THIS CLEAR – CUT WORLD DIED WITHOUT LEAVING BEHIND IT A CHARNEL HOUSE

Exhibition of Radostin Sedevchev

Curator: Iara Boubnova

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- 1. THIS CLEAR – CUT WORLD DIED WITHOUT LEAVING BEHIND IT A CHARNEL HOUSE, 2021**
site-specific installation, wood, plasterboard, angle plates, metal screws, variable size

We always begin our lives in an admirable twilight. Everything that will help us later to survive our dashed hopes gathers around our first steps.

René Char, *Liege Lord*

2. NON-ORIENTABLE STORY 1, 2021

digital print, tube, metal rope

Two sources reveal different viewpoints to the story of a man. They construct a Mobius strip, which is the simplest non-orientable surface. Thus, obtained the topological object combines two contradicting entities where one compliments the other and vice versa.

Side A

This is a very familiar story. A story where a certain “boy of ours” participates by necessity. He is called ■■■ from the village of ■■■ in Bulgaria. He started his career as an agronomist at the local cooperative farm (the TKZS, a totalitarian period term). Due to overzealousness or out of curiosity, I don't know, but he concocted a solution for spraying vines and so he managed to ruin entire massifs in no time at all. To this day, eyewitnesses argue about how many kilometers down the river the fish was trying “to learn” swimming belly up, while the envious ones would claim that the recipe for the above-mentioned concoction was requested by the US Deforestation Command for use in Vietnam, but ■■■ did not give it to them.

This research on vineyards, however, did affect his career as an agronomist. People in-the-know from the Personnel Department of the local office of the Interior Ministry in ■■■ arranged so that the boy went for a more suitable job at the district office of the Ministry of Interior Affairs in ■■■. Well, it is true that at that time the boy had outgrown the age limit for such work in the said ministry and also that the person in charge of HR did not find the necessary qualities in him to make him suitable for the job. However, a call “from high up” settled all these minor problems and as of May 1975 he started working in the ministry's office in the city of ■■■. When the man finally found himself on the right ground, his qualities flourished and he went all the way up to become the deputy head of the said local office.

In the meantime, he did not forget his personal affairs, of course, and so he joined a JSC (the local kind of totalitarian period condominium, apartment building). During the construction of the cooperative building some minor troubles occurred. The Military Prosecutor's Office opened an investigation accusing him of presenting a false invoice for the purchase of timber and iron at the time of opening of the construction financing in order to claim larger investment but actually to cover contributing a lot less money. The invoice was worth two thousand levs, a huge sum at the time, which he was supposed to provide in materials. But the material was not in evidence during the investigation, so he duly paid the money very expeditiously /the two thousand leva/ and with that the problem was solved.

At that time, he had an accident - his uncle from HR in the Ministry of Internal Affairs in ■■■ was asked to retire early due to some “reasons”. And since one of the uncle's duties was to periodically give good marks to the boy's work, he now found himself in an awkward position. Unable to keep his cool, he shot a deer and just when the hunting season was still off at that. What followed was a ‘severe’ demotion. However, he met the troubles stoically and when criticized he kept silent like a communist guerrilla during interrogation. Fortunately, at that time the party secretary of the municipal BCP (Bulgarian Communist Party) branch had not yet lifted his protection. He waived a finger at the boy because he was such a naughty boy and let him be.

Although greatly demoted in the service, Comrade ■■■ continued doing things as many times before – fixing his personal affairs from the position of his official authority. The people who suffered from it imagined that they would find justice and complained accordingly. Complaints were checked along the lines of the saying “God is high up, King is far away.” The applicants – Engineers ■■■, ■■■, ■■■ most likely wondered why Eng. ■■■ met in ■■■ with the “investigator” sent after his complaint by the local PD in ■■■. As it turned out for some reason the investigator ■■■ did not check the most important part of ■■■'s complaint, although written in capital letters so as not to escape anyone's attention. Due to old age, impaired vision, or who knows why, the investigator missed to see just that part. That's why ■■■ and many other people are wondering why ■■■, though retired is still in active service. To be clear, all this happened before November 10, 1989. Then, sensing democracy in action, Mr. ■■■ did not stay away from the general advance of market economy. And since many things are needed for conducting private activity, e.g., spare parts for a truck, on one nice day at the end of last year, pretending to be a police officer to the guard of the “Concrete Depot”, our man quickly appropriated the differential, the gearbox and a bunch of other parts from the Gazka truck,

stored there. For this 'operation' the driver of the truck [REDACTED] and the guard have sent a written signal right then and there to the Regional Department of the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

On the occasion of another very recent complaint against Mr. [REDACTED] to the Ministry of Interior Affairs in [REDACTED], this time made by Sergeant [REDACTED], who caught a nephew of [REDACTED] to steal sheet metal and imagine you, he did not close his eyes to the theft of gasoline, so now a representative of the Ministry of Interior Affairs is conducting an inspection regarding the operation "Truck" so successfully conducted by Mr. [REDACTED]. Waiting for the conclusion... Will [REDACTED] be still kept in service to "uphold" the reputation of the Regional Department of the Ministry of Interior Affairs in [REDACTED]?

Meanwhile, life goes on. At the moment when the representative of the Ministry of the Interior Affairs was checking the wife of Mr. [REDACTED], Mrs. [REDACTED] /canteen manager/ was selling rice from sacks to the population at very liberal prices. Well, it is true that because of moisture the rice was to some extent moldy, but if we believe the science that there is penicillin in the mold, then that it is a kind of care for humans.

Altogether, a very, very familiar story, and you've heard of it, haven't you?

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Side B

Healing spring cures eye diseases

A mineral spring, recently restored in the village of [REDACTED] in [REDACTED], cures all kinds of eye diseases. The healing water with a temperature of 36.7 degrees Celsius gushes in the area of [REDACTED], just below the monastery [REDACTED], which according to legend was built on a lake. Thracians and Romans passed through these lands thousands of years ago, and the ones badly wounded in battle, healed their injuries in the bog.

Not far from the spring rises the former balneology sanatorium, now turned to ruins. The same fate befell the resting house for workers, welcoming the casual traveler with dilapidated rooms and broken windows. It is good that at least the healing spring is still there to restore the glory of the small village [REDACTED].

The local resident [REDACTED] is due the "credit" for the restoration of the spring. He dreamed that the spring with healing water must be found and revived. The initiative involved entrepreneurs from [REDACTED], as well as local people who volunteered to dig the closed more than 40 years ago spring at a depth of 2.5 m in the ground. Now a stone slab greets everyone who stops by this place. The spring dug into the ground is covered with a canopy, and above the spout on both sides there are icons – on the left is the icon of the Holy Trinity, and on the right – of the Holy Mother of God. "We put them against theft, because health coins are thrown into it and often homeless gypsy kids retrieve them from the water", says [REDACTED] while he is quick to add that the Roma are afraid of God – they believe that if they rob a holy place, their hands will dry up.

About 50 meters up the hill, towards [REDACTED], was the shelter of the Haiduk (rebel) [REDACTED]. Legend has it that he had 20-28 stab wounds and was brought to the spring by his men. They watered his wounds with water from the spring while he healed and went to fight again. In the 1920s, people sat here by the spring and warmed their feet against skin diseases and all sorts of irritations that disappeared after a few "baths". The black mud around the spring also had healing properties. The spring is closed now with concrete and marble tiles and the water drains through a spout to stop possible infections, as the "revivalist" expertly explains. Once upon a time, various people went there to heal their furuncles and contaminated the water. To revive the spring [REDACTED] traveled as an apostle to the businesses in [REDACTED]. The notary [REDACTED] helped him and so he managed to attract many local entrepreneurs to the venture. One of them is the owner of the poultry company [REDACTED], and thanks to him and his brother, this other man [REDACTED] got a replica of the famous golden treasure.

He brought him to the mud one day, told him how many people had found cure here, and the businessman said, "[REDACTED], we will do it!" Now he relies on him to pave the ground to the spring, otherwise it is difficult to pass in the mud. We hope that the spring will be officially inaugurated on the feast day of [REDACTED], which is at the beginning of summer, says [REDACTED]. He cannot find words to express his gratitude to everyone who contributed to the renewal of the holy spring under the monastery. To promote the good deed, the grandson of [REDACTED] uploaded the information about the healing spring in [REDACTED].

Miracles

An 85-year-old woman from the village says that when she was little, a strange thing happened – her family's cow stung her eye and the father wanted to call butchers to slaughter her. However, the mother took pity on the mutilated animal and doused the cow at the spring with the cauldron 40 times a day until she started seeing again.

■■ from ■■ was also cured – a fly entered her eye and she could not take it out. She poured water into a small cup and blinked in it 40 times until the insect melted away. Another one - ■■, had a cataract on one of her eyes and also started seeing - thus lists the cases of the healed Grandpa ■■.

The healing properties of the spring are also evidenced by an incident with a boy who fell from a motorcycle and received severe wounds. His relatives undressed him, immersed him in the spring and poured water on him for 4 days - on the fifth day the boy went up to change the tiles on the roof of their house.

The community cultural center opened its doors and welcomed residents and guests of the village with a festively arranged table. There were many delicacies from the hosts of the village. Nice wine, and compote from the old Grandpa ■■, created a pleasant and festive atmosphere.

3. NON-ORIENTABLE STORY 2, 2021

digital print, tube, metal rope

Two letters sent to the man in charge of the penal labour colony "Rositca" in 1947 reveal the twofold character of the man who ran the famous facility. The letters are incorporated in the simplest non-orientable surface, formed by two-sided ribbon that is then twisted 180 degrees and its ends are connected.

Side A

They call me in the municipality and I go down in the evening. The chairman and 2 strangers make me work on the collective farm. I told them I can't walk at the age of 67, I can't go alone like the young ones. I have to go to Slatina to make me warm-ups with electric heaters. I'm suffering and here the doctors couldn't help me. "That's what you think, don't you have this farm in your heart and don't you come to work because people like you who do things voluntarily, we will give rations to", says Yosif. "We will force you to be a guard for 10 days, and the able ones will work for 2-3 days. And (in lana?) brought an invitation on June 29 – if I do not show up at the farmyard to be a fire-guard (o A d?) Minov Tsv. Tomov t. (Goroulev?), I will face charges under paragraph so and so, etc. Every day until completion we went, day 2 and decided to beg for another 1 (nino hinov?), so they gave us a 3-rd every 24 hours. 1 day I bought from Angelov forests by giving him 2 liters for bread and soup from a 2-liter cauldron and now I'm in the wrong? There are some sheaves to drive, and they say I had hidden land – yeah, taken from their fathers and I have hidden it in their mother's asses... So, I received a notice, I didn't sign it; for this undeclared land, they will take my income, and they will force on me as much labor as they did last year for the fields where I sowed, and they reaped. These shameless outlaws and were still not satisfied with how much they took down and labor and straw and chaff (keeps) and cattle and land worked on with fertilized – everything in (death?). Now they have found about 1 decare of land, may the Black Death take it and take them! How many times did I go taking back from the gypsy what they stole? This spring we valued 1 ace for a shepherd who used us and then ran away, and Joseph he is called. But there is no law to judge them, there is only a law in our country to take it from us, for this there is a law. We gave money for pipes so the people could water their gardens in the middle of the village and for 1 pot of water we will go to as far away as Marinov and come straight back to... Also, there are no pillars for us for electricity and lighting so our Shopski neighborhood is abandoned. In the farm with what benefits we enjoy and what good we had last year for peppers, they said now that for those of us who don't work there will be no flour now. We don't have any money. They gave me 200 and some leva from winter and spring and now there is nothing for me. They brag that they are satisfied with something and everyone shouts that it should be left empty, etc. This clearly shows that people are tired of something because it is against their will, desire and freedom as it was said after the 9th (September 9th, 1944, the day of the so-called socialist revolution in Bulgaria) and me at will. And was I not bitten enough by the Danube mosquitoes near Tulcha and Isakcha (in Romania)? So now day and night they don't give us peace and

why and for what good would wind and fog cause us working days, will they be satisfied? Well, let's just waste ourselves and get angry if we take to describe how the corn is dug and there is no weed to dug; the fields are abandoned and they will no longer give prosperity to us as it was when the fields were in honest hands and the people would work in good faith until 8 – 9 in the morning. Now they are just hanging around the farm while managing and every man and manager drags a bag of notebooks, so that a young man to work for 5 leva like me.

There is no end to this story. Yesterday I talked to Petko Mitov about my illnesses. He said that it would be good for you to go to Gorna Banya again, and that you should also go to your Tsvetko to take a note to somewhere, where I forgot, and go to the military clinic. I told him there is nothing to be treated for today, an old man has no value and there will be no rights and conditions for him. So, it is better to live without us in this world anymore.

Prodan Ivanov's father should have been hired and others as well but as he is Ivan Mitov's uncle (in Tserovitsa, the guard Mishov, K Kouzmanov, Nini Tsenov until harvest in the village of Stanilovets or Ponchov, Tolev and others in the meadows...?) Also, his lover (?) she was fired from the factory and went to the top of the heifer, and Hristo, the gardener and his wife saw that there was a run, and they gave the calves to the crazy Wallachian. Then they run to the canteens where there is stuff for free in Sturshel after July 10th.

What is revealed here is just a little of all happening in the farm... So, Diko Ivanov what's he aiming for we do not know, but he does not give duty service, they say. They say that he just builds some houses and destroys others; that he cares for his wife as if she is a painted egg and doesn't allow her to work on the farm or to go to school. Did the manager write about this because I am not the one to do it, nor the one to control but there is no order and justice to provide? So, Mitov (it was) with my father, they are always on the right side but when I wrote down some things for him and he calmed down. I said, why you don't go to the farm for 1 day to look and I will show him the "wolves"?

Side B

27-I-1947, Bankya

Hi,

Only today I received your letter of 22 this month. And I hasten to answer you. Now I feel very happy. This is your first letter, in which the closeness of your friendship to me is expressed to some extent. For the first time, I also realized that you are no stranger to recent and old memories. As I read your lines, all the memories spent together came to my mind. I imagined for a moment your cozy and well-heated room in which you now stand alone, and a crazy desire overwhelms me to be there again, but of course this remains for now only a wish.

I put up with this situation, comforting myself with your letters and your phone calls.

I think I would feel much happier if I, like you, were surrounded by objects that connect me to a number of memories. Only your letters and photo are always and everywhere with me. In addition, every day at noon I pass by Blagoev Cinema house and remember those few pleasant days.

By the way, all this is not very important for serious people, right? And so, I will conclude the subject.

I still can't calm down and relax. I believe that this will happen only when I finish my term, after February 25. I still have to do exams in 8 more subjects. I'm very scared and I think I'm going crazy. Anyway, in the end, I'll still make it somehow.

Today here we are enjoying good weather, meaning it is warm. The snow melts away all day and the sun shines. The only bad thing is that my shoes are already torn, as a result of which my feet get wet, but this also will be fixed somehow.

For now, I don't find it necessary to write you more, and I'm already really sleepy, because it's quite late. I will expect you to call me again, and maybe come soon. Greetings to all.

Bye

Yulia

4. SIMULTANEOUSLY, 2019

found map, digital print, PVC board, wood table

I was both calm outside and impulsive inside, in the reality and in the dream, in the statistical fact and in the unreal.

5. YOU GO, I WILL CATCH UP, 2021

found notebook cover, pencil, felt tip pen, graph paper, wooden board, 300 x 30 cm
digital print, 130 x 163 cm

A notebook cover with the fable of "The Hare and the Tortoise" by La Fontaine with the pencil inscription "Drafts"; contains inside the Zeno's paradox. In a race, where one runner starts first, even the quickest runner can never over-take the slowest, since the pursuer must first reach the point where the pursued started, so that the slower always hold the lead. Drafts always have the edge.

"Brouillons" from French: drafts

6. THE TRAPPED KNIGHT, 2021

pencil, graph paper, original gelatin silver print, digital print, PVC board, wooden table, variable size

During the feast of the knights from the French college "St Augustin" in Plovdiv in 1939 the squares of an endless chess-board are numbered in a spiral sequence. One Knight starts from square 1 and is making moves by the regular chess rules that allow the knight to move 3 squares vertically and one square horizontally. When there is more than one free square the knight chooses to take the one with the lowest number where he has not yet stepped on. At move number 2016 and on square number 2084 the knight could not continue his movement and is trapped by his own perseverance. The only thing left to do is to rise a hand.

7. PARALLEL, 2021

digital print, wooden tables, travel belt, variable size

On the one hand we overrate other people, on the other we underrate them; and we constantly overrate and underrate ourselves; when we ought to overrate ourselves, we underrate ourselves, and in the same way we underrate ourselves when we ought to overrate ourselves.

Thomas Bernhard, *Concrete*

Perhaps, not all points lying on the same parallel have the same latitude. Between 1970 and 1990 one ordinary family from Sofia takes on dozens of organized tourism trips abroad. This is evident from their extremely well-organized archive of photographs, travelogues and documents. What makes their trips extraordinary is that on top of the most common destinations at the time, they also visited many exotic corners in the world, far beyond the reach of the Warsaw Pact.

8. PRESENT ABSENCE, 2018

two-channel video installation, sound, digital print

A family of badgers moves into an abandoned cemetery, using the natural cavities formed by the graves as semi-ready underground chambers, evicting the previous inhabitants. This process of activating the forgotten human space is part of a natural cycle in which humans are both part of the process and at the same time its observers.

9. "PEARLS ARE ALWAYS APPROPRIATE" (JACKIE KENNEDY), 2021

found framed photographs, graphite on wall