

A black and white photograph of a social gathering in a room with track lighting. In the foreground, a woman with curly hair, wearing a patterned sweater and a necklace, smiles while holding a glass. Behind her, a woman in a striped dress and a man in a dark shirt are visible. To the right, a woman in a light-colored tracksuit stands near a man. In the bottom foreground, the head of a dark-colored dog is visible, looking towards the right. The background is slightly blurred, showing more people and a bright light source.

Janez Bogataj

KOGA SEM VIDEL

Janez Bogataj

Koga sem videl / In good company

Razstava fotografij z otvoritvenih dogodkov v Galeriji ZDSLU in Likovnem razstavišču Rihard Jakopič v Ljubljani (1988-1990) / Exhibition of photographs from the opening events at the ZDSLU Gallery and the Rihard Jakopič Art Pavilion in Ljubljana (1988-1990)

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Urednica kataloga in organizatorka razstave / Edited by and Organizer of the exhibiton:

Petra Kosi

Kustosinja razstave / Curated by: **Judita Krivec Dragan**

Besedila / Texts by: **Judita Krivec Dragan, Nataša Strlič**

Prevod in lektura / Translation and Proofreading: **Andreja Dvoršek**

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Več kot spomini

**JUDITA KRIVEC DRAGAN,
KUSTOSINJA RAZSTAVE**

Jean Clair, kurator jubilejnega 46. beneškega bienala, je na osrednji razstavi »Istovetnost in drugačnost, oblike telesa 1895/1995«, s katero je subtilno zastavil pregled zgodovine Evrope v zadnjih sto letih skozi njeno umetnost, prav posebno pozornost namenil poglavju Umetniki in skupinski portreti¹. Avtor besedila Marc Fumaroli se je v razumevanju fenomena ustvarjalca vrnil vse do renesanse in njenih antičnih vzorov. Še posebej zanimivi so zanj v fokusu postali t. i. skupinski portreti umetnikov, kjer so v družbi slikarjev in kiparjev skoraj obvezno tudi pesniki in misleci. Ta posvetni »Sacra Conversazione« pisec uporabi kot posebno prisposodbo skupnosti umetnikov in filozofov z asociacijami na antični Parnas Rafaela v Vatikanskih stanzah in avantgardni »Au rendez-vous des amis« Maxa Ernsta iz leta 1922². Kljub temu, da zadnja slika izzveni v svojski antipod platonskim idealom renesančne freske, celota ohranja navezo pesnika, likovnega umetnika in filozofa, ob tem pa tudi neko usojeno nujnost po pripadanju.

S fotografom Janezom Bogatajem

More than Memories

**JUDITA KRIVEC DRAGAN,
CURATOR OF THE
EXHIBITION**

Jean Clair, curator of the 46th Venice Biennale, paid special attention to the chapter Artists and Group Portraits¹ in the Biennale's central exhibition "Identity and Alterity: Figures of the Body 1895-1995", which subtly presented an overview of the history of Europe over the last hundred years through its art. The author of the text, Marc Fumaroli, went back to the Renaissance and its ancient models in his understanding of the phenomenon of the creator. He found the so-called group portraits of artists particularly interesting, where poets and thinkers are almost obligatory companions of painters and sculptors. The writer uses this secular "Sacra Conversazione" as a special metaphor for the community of artists and philosophers, with associations to Raphael's ancient Parnassus in the Vatican Stanzas and Max Ernst's avant-garde "Au rendez-vous des amis" from 1922². Although the latter painting resonates as a peculiar antipode to the Platonic ideals of Renaissance frescoes, the whole retains the connection between the poet, the visual artist, and the philosopher, as well as a certain fateful

sva skoraj sočasno vstopila v ta posebni svet likovnih umetnikov in njihovih sopotnikov, ki so se v poznih osemdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja srečevali na naslovu Komenskega 8 v Ljubljani. Tam, v veliki hiši z vrtom, je Zveza društev slovenskih likovnih umetnikov (ZDSLU) z volilom dokumentarnega fotografa, zbiratelja in mecena Frana Vesela iz leta 1944 pridobila svoje upravne prostore in Galerijo ZDSLU. Vsaj delno je bila izpolnjena Veselova poslednja volja, da njegova bogata zapuščina preide v last slovenskega naroda, hiša, v kateri je živel in gostil umetnike, zlasti predstavnike slovenske moderne, pa v upravljanje nacionalnega društva likovnih umetnikov. Želel je, da v njej ostane prostor za razstave in srečevanja različnih posameznikov in skupin, ki premorejo dovolj ustvarjalne sile, poguma in širine, da lahko zagotovijo obstoj in razvoj slovenske umetnosti v domačem in širšem evropskem kulturnem prostoru. Na ZDSLU se je res oblikovalo pomembno središče, tam so se rojevale bolj in manj nore ideje, kresala mnenja, nastajale so razstave, ki jih tudi najstrožja kritika včasih le ni mogla povsem prezreti; med seboj različne, tudi introvertirane posameznike, kar naj bi umetniki že pogovorno bili, pa sta povezovali vsaj dve močni ljubezni: do umetnosti in do druženja.

Najbrž je na otvoritev razstave, ki je bila tudi ali pa predvsem družabni dogodek, nekega večera s fotoaparatom v roki naključno prišel Janez Bogataj, takrat že prepoznaven in uveljavljen fotoreporter revije Mladina in (so)avtor značilne podobe takratne ljubljanske punk scene. Slišal je, da so na ZDSLU dobri žuri, kot je nekoč sam omenil, in začelo se je sodelovanje, ki časovno ni veliko presegalo obdobja treh let, toda

v posnete fotografije se je v celoti ujelo eno najuspešnejših poglavij delovanja več kot 100 let starega društva, predvsem pa njegova z neverjetnim optimizmom, toleranco in morda poslednjim boemstvom prežeta osemdeseta. Zame kot klasično muzejsko kustosinjo je bilo življenje med umetniki koristen odmik od teoretičnih, velikokrat zmotnih predstav o naravi in vlogi umetnosti v družbi; način razumevanja sveta skozi skupno izkušnjo ustvarjanja in sprejemanja, predstavljanja in prispevanja na ZDSLU mi je zato za zmeraj ostal najboljši bralnik skritih sporočil umetnosti. Umetnik je bil seveda tudi Janez Bogataj. Čeprav se pri nas takrat še ni veliko govorilo o dokumentarni fotografiji kot umetniški, so se nekateri kritiki, še bolj pa vizionarski uredniki revij in časopisov zavedali, kako je v svetu prevladujočih vidnih sporočil pomembno, da reportažni oziroma dokumentarni fotograf ne deluje (le) kot novinar, ampak kot avtor, ki ustvarja zgodbo ali vizualno pripoved. Umetniška dokumentarna fotografija namreč združuje dva pristopa, ki se navidez izključujeta, tj. dosledno opazovanje resničnosti in njeno podajanje prek posnetka na eni ter avtorsko interpretacijo, ki vključuje lasten koncept in estetiko, na drugi strani.

Janez Bogataj nikoli ni maral statične kompozicije niti ni postavljaval fotografirancev v načrtovane, reprezentativne položaje; tudi pomembnost posameznih udeležencev zanj ni igrala nobene vloge. Kot neviden opazovalec se je spretno gibal med ljudmi in izbiral posebej zanimive poglede, obraze, živahne dialoge, situacijsko komiko, dinamično premikanje posameznikov po prostorih, nekatere je izpostavil, druge pustil v komaj določenem ozadju. Avtorju so bili

necessity of belonging.

Photographer Janez Bogataj and I entered this special world of visual artists and their companions, who met at the address Komenskega 8 in Ljubljana in the late 1980s, at almost the same time. There, in a large house with a garden, the Slovenian Association of Fine Arts Societies (ZDSLU) acquired its administrative premises and the ZDSLU Gallery in 1944, thanks to the will of documentary photographer, collector, and patron Fran Vesel. His last wish was at least partially fulfilled: his rich legacy became the property of the Slovenian people, and the house where he lived and hosted artists, especially representatives of Slovenian modernism, came under the management of the national association of fine artists. He wanted it to remain a space for exhibitions and meetings of various individuals and groups who had enough creative power, courage, and breadth to ensure the existence and development of Slovenian art in the Slovenian and wider European cultural space. The ZDSLU really did become an important centre, where more or less crazy ideas were born, opinions clashed, and exhibitions were created that even the harshest critics sometimes could not completely ignore. Although they were different, even introverted individuals, as artists are proverbially known to be, were united by at least two strong loves: for art and for socializing.

It was probably at the opening of the exhibition, which was also (or mainly) a social event, that Janez Bogataj, already a well-known and established photojournalist at the weekly magazine Mladina and (co-)author of the characteristic image of the Lju-

bljana punk scene at the time, happened to arrive one evening with his camera in hand. He heard that ZDSLU hosted good parties, as he himself once mentioned, and so began a collaboration that did not last much longer than three years, but the photographs captured one of the most successful chapters in the history of the more than 100-year-old association, especially its incredibly optimistic, tolerant, and perhaps last bohemian years in the 1980s. For me, as a classical museum curator, life among artists was a useful departure from theoretical, often erroneous ideas about the nature and role of art in society. The way of understanding the world through the shared experience of creating and accepting, presenting and contributing to ZDSLU has therefore always remained the best reader of the hidden messages of art for me. Janez Bogataj was, of course, also an artist. Although documentary photography was not yet widely discussed as an art form in Slovenia at the time, some critics, and even more so visionary magazine and newspaper editors, were aware of how important it was in a world dominated by visual messages that reportage or documentary photographers did not act (only) as journalists, but as authors who created stories or visual narratives. Artistic documentary photography combines two seemingly contradictory approaches: consistent observation of reality and its presentation through photography on the one hand, and authorial interpretation, which includes the photographer's own concept and aesthetics, on the other.

Janez Bogataj never liked static compositions, nor did he place his subjects in planned, representative

očitno vedno blizu odnosi med posamezniki znotraj večjih družabnih dogodkov, kot so na primer koncerti in otvoritve razstav; po eni strani ga je zanimala njihova performativna, kdaj tudi provokativna vsebina. Zanimivo, da je znotraj »glasnih« prizorišč zmozel poiskati celo nasprotno, intimno atmosfero, v katero so se za hip potopili obrazi posameznih portretirancev. Kot je imel smisel za poseben humor, tako se je lahko tudi zasanjal v podobe, včasih mikro narave v pokrajinah brez ljudi in njihovih sledi. Ciklusi avtorskih fotografij z motivi samotnih pobegov v gozdove, med podrastje in trave k osamelim drevesom, ki so učinkovali že kot metafizične prisposode, so nastajali hkrati z Bogatajevimi fotoreportažnimi pripovedmi s takrat aktualne »scene«. Lahko bi rekli, da je avtor mojster v beleženju izjemnih trenutkov, v katerih ne želi le povzemati realnosti, temveč tudi ali predvsem poudariti vsebino, čustva in razpoloženje. Velikokrat mu uspe ujeti celo značajske poteze upodobljenec in predvideti njihove naslednje geste. Na črno-beli fotografiji z izvirno uporabo kompozicije in osvetlitve je prav vzdušje v podobi tisto, ki določa Bogatajev avtorski podpis.

Danes, ko so umetniško dokumentarno fotografijo posvojili že največji muzeji in galerije po svetu (prav sedaj je v newyorški MoMi razstava Nova fotografija), se bolj kot v času nastanka Bogatajevih »pričevanj« z otvoritev razstav ZDSLU zavedamo, kako izmuzljiva je meja med umetniško in dokumentarno fotografijo. Njegova je nedvomno avtorska refleksija sveta, ki združuje resničnost in interpretacijo, zato ob ogledovanju teh podob izpred več kot 30 let ne oživijo le spomini na nam znani čas in ljudi – marsikaterih že dolgo ni več

z nami, temveč z njimi tudi duh časa, značilen za družbo tik pred prelomnimi dogodki v svetu: padcem Berlinskega zidu, razpadom Sovjetske zveze in za nas še posebej tragično vojno v Jugoslaviji. Morda se na prvi pogled res zdi, da so bili takratni društveni dogodki, kamor so zahajale vse generacije, umetniki, kustosi, kritiki in sopotniki različnih slogovnih preferenc in kjer je bil vsakdo dobrodošel, oblika pobega pred temnimi slutnjami bližnje prihodnosti, ki smo jih globoko v sebi nosili skoraj vsi. S krilatico »The west is the best« iz kultne pesmi Jima Morrisona The End smo simbolično izražali odpor do JLA (Jugoslovanska ljudska armada), ki nam je predstavljala vse večjo grožnjo ugrabljanja svobode. Med lepo sfriziranimi fanti iz video spotov skupin, kakršni sta bili Wham! ali Duran Duran, in namerno neotesanimi, v usnje in debele verižice s sponkami napravljenimi punkerji z ulice, kjer se je našel še kakšen v sedemdesetih izgubljen »otrok cvetja«, se je iztekalo v začetku optimistično osmo desetletje. Dan je bil res prelep za smrt, kot je prepeval Primož Habič s skupino Niet. Morda je bil tudi za Janeza Bogataja in za vse druge umetnike iz ZDSLU, ki so nas ostale uspeli vsaj na trenutke prepričati v pravilnost svojih (drugačnih) percepcij in vizij sveta, pa naj so bile še tako iluzorne. Kot vemo, je v sprejemanju stvarnosti in njene interpretacije umetnikova resnica avtonomna in večinoma drugačna od slehernikove, zlasti pa je rada tuja odločevalcem v politiki in družbi.

Čeprav Janez Bogataj v te svoje fotografije iz (povsem) stvarnega sveta ni vnašal metaforičnih ali simboličnih elementov, je zaradi posebnega, izrazito osebnega pristopa, ki ne želi le povzemati dejstev, uspel ustvariti ciklus prave umetniške dokumen-

positions; the importance of individual participants also played no role for him. As an invisible observer, he skilfully moved among people and selected particularly interesting expressions, faces, lively dialogues, situational comedy, and the dynamic movement of individuals through spaces, highlighting some and leaving others in the barely defined background. The author was obviously always interested in the relationships between individuals within larger social events, such as concerts and exhibition openings; he was interested in their performative, sometimes also provocative content. Interestingly, within these loud venues, he was able to find the opposite, an intimate atmosphere in which the faces of the individual subjects were immersed for a moment. Just as he had a sense of special humour, he was also able to dream himself into images, sometimes of micro nature in landscapes without people and their traces. The series of original photographs depicting solitary escapes into the woods, among undergrowth, grasses, and lonely trees, which already served as metaphysical allegories, were created at the same time as Bogataj's photo reportage stories from the then-contemporary scene. One could say that the author is a master at capturing exceptional moments in which he does not merely wish to summarize reality, but also, or above all, to emphasize content, emotions, and mood. He often succeeds in capturing even the character traits of his subjects and anticipating their next gestures. In black-and-white photography, with original use of composition and lighting, it is the atmosphere in the image that defines Bogataj's signature style.

Today, when artistic documentary

photography has been adopted by the world's greatest museums and galleries (right now, the MoMa in New York is hosting an exhibition entitled New Photography), we are more aware of the elusive boundary between artistic and documentary photography than we were at the time when Bogataj's "testimonies" from the openings of the ZDSLU exhibitions were created. His work is undoubtedly an authorial reflection of the world, combining reality and interpretation, so when we look at these images from more than 30 years ago, they bring back not only memories of a time and people we know – many of whom are no longer with us – but also the spirit of the time, characteristic of a society on the eve of momentous events in the world: the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and, for us, the particularly tragic war in Yugoslavia. At first glance, it may seem that the social events of that time, attended by all generations, artists, curators, critics, and companions of various stylistic preferences, where everyone was welcome, were a form of escape from the dark premonitions of the near future that almost all of us carried deep within ourselves. With the catchphrase "The west is the best" from Jim Morrison's cult song The End, we symbolically expressed our resistance to the JNA (Yugoslav People's Army), which represented an ever-increasing threat to our freedom. Between the boys with neatly styled hair from the music videos of bands such as Wham! and Duran Duran, and the deliberately unkempt punkers from the streets, dressed in leather and thick chains with pins, where some lost "flower power" individuals from the seventies could still be found, the optimistic eighth decade was coming to an

tarne fotografije. Vsa preteklost in ljudje, ki so jo zaznamovali, osvetljujejo pomemben del naše zgodovine; morda se niso kazali tako, kot jih vidimo danes, a je take doživel avtor takrat, ko se niso zavedali, da so opazovani. Zato predstavljajo dragoceno dokumentarno gradivo in umetniške eksponate z izvirnim avtorskim konceptom in interpretacijo.

end. The day was truly too beautiful to die, as Primož Habič, singer of Slovenian punk band Niet, sang in one of their songs. Perhaps it was also too beautiful for Janez Bogataj and all the other artists from ZDSLJ, who managed to convince us, at least for a moment, that they are right in their (different) perceptions and visions of the world, no matter how illusory they may have been. As we know, when accepting reality and its interpretation, the artist's truth is autonomous and mostly different from that of an average person, and it is especially foreign to decision-makers in politics and society.

Although Janez Bogataj did not introduce metaphorical or symbolic elements into his photographs from the (entirely) real world, his unique, distinctly personal approach, which does not merely seek to summarize facts, has enabled him to create a cycle of true artistic documentary photography. The entire past and the people who shaped it shed light on an important part of our history; they may not have appeared as we see them today, but this is how the author experienced them at the time, when they were unaware of being observed. They therefore represent valuable documentary material and artistic exhibit pieces with an original authorial concept and interpretation.

JANEZ BOGATAJ IN NJEGOV MUZEJSKI FOTOGRAFSKI FOND:

stičišče novih priložnosti in sodelovanj

**NATAŠA STRLIČ,
MUZEJ NOVEJŠE IN
SODOBNE ZGODOVINE**

Ob vstopu v osemdeseta leta 20. stoletja je komaj polnoletni Janez Bogataj s kombinacijo talenta, vztrajnosti in strasti do fotografije začel svojo poklicno fotografsko pot.

Družbeno zapleteno, ekonomsko krizno, politično negotovo, a hkrati kulturno bogato obdobje socialistične Jugoslavije in Slovenije mu je ponujalo številne in raznolike motive. Med letoma 1979 in 1991 je ustvaril preko 21.000 črno-belih negativov, ki odstirajo vso večplastnost tega obdobja in jih danes hrani Muzej novejše in sodobne zgodovine Slovenije.

Svojo mladostno ljubezen, umetniško fotografijo, je Bogataj v prvi službi pri tedniku Mladina nadgradil z reportažno fotografijo. Ta mu je odpirala nova vrata, ponujala drugačne motive, predvsem pa srečanja z ljudmi, ki jih je sprva zadržano, nato pa vse bolj suvereno portretiral in z njimi pogosto spletel (prijateljske) vezi. Večinoma lastna pobuda ga je vodila v svet uradne in alternativne kulture. Njegove fotografije dogodkov in oseb z različnih področij umetnosti, nastale predvsem v desetletju (kulturnega) preho-

JANEZ BOGATAJ AND HIS MUSEUM PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTION:

a hub for new opportunities and collaborations

**NATAŠA STRLIČ,
MUZEJ NOVEJŠE IN
SODOBNE ZGODOVINE**

At the dawn of the 1980s, Janez Bogataj, barely of legal age, began his professional photography career with a combination of talent, perseverance, and passion for photography.

The socially complex, economically crisis-ridden, politically uncertain, but also culturally rich period of socialist Yugoslavia and Slovenia offered him numerous and diverse motifs. Between 1979 and 1991, he created over 21,000 black-and-white negatives that reveal the complexity of this period and are now kept at the National Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia.

Bogataj built on his youthful love of artistic photography with reportage photography in his first job at the weekly magazine Mladina. This opened new doors for him, offering different motifs, but above all encounters with people, whom he initially portrayed with restraint, but then with increasing confidence, often forming (friendly) bonds with them. Mostly on his own initiative, he entered the world of official and alternative culture.

His photographs of events and people from various fields of art, taken main-

¹Jean Clair, Marc Fumaroli: Identity and Alterity, La Biennale di Venezia 1995

²ibidem.

da, so odstirale pogled na nove načine umetniške produkcije, tradicionalne kulturne tokove, njihovo medsebojno prepletanje ter vpetost v intenzivno dinamiko takratnega časa in prostora. Širok spekter portretirancev tako uradne kot alternativne kulture, ki jih je spremljal poklicno in zasebno, je ujel v trenutkih neformalnih druženj, sredi delovnega procesa ali med načrtovanimi portretiranjmi.

S svojim večnim iskanjem drugačnosti in kompozicijske inovativnosti jih je Bogataj ustvaril v različnih vlogah in ustvarjalnih obdobjih. Poklicno kot fotograf tednika Mladina, neformalno kot član večno neresne Fotogrupe M in zasebno kot Janez Bogataj, izrazilo naklonjen predvsem literarni umetnosti.

Ustvaril je raznolik ustvarjalni opus. Njegova serija vrhunskih portretov slovenskih literatov in literatov se prepleta s koncertnimi, studijskimi ter portretnimi fotografijami domačih in tujih glasbenikov različnih zvrsti. Pionirski in še danes zelo zaželeni so njegovi posnetki ljubljanske punk subkulture in ikoničnih prostorov druženja v slovenski prestolnici. Fotografsko je beležil tudi tradicionalne socialistične obrede, dogodke in srečanja, ujel delovni utrip v gospodarskih, izobraževalnih, zdravstvenih, kulturnih in drugih ustanovah ter vsakdanjik zadnjega desetletja socialistične Slovenije.

Leta 1988 je opustil reportažno fotografijo pri tedniku Mladina in se postopoma vračal k svoji prvi ljubezni: avtorski, umetniški fotografiji. Preden je v začetku devetdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja za nekaj časa ustvarjalno umolknil, se je občasno še gibal v polju umetnosti. V Parizu je prodril s svojimi umetniškimi posnetki, v Ljubljani pa je beležil

živahen delovni utrip na ljubljanski Akademiji za umetnost in odprtja razstav Zveze društev slovenskih likovnih umetnikov v Ljubljani.

Kmalu zatem, ko se je končal njegov dolgoletni »ustvarjalno-razstavljalni« post, je Muzej novejšje in sodobne zgodovine Slovenije leta 2009 odkupil njegov fond pretežno reportažnih črno-belih negativov. Umeščenost v nacionalni ustanovi, ki hrani okrog šestdeset tisoč muzealij in štiri milijone fotografij na različnih nosilcih ter z njihovo interpretacijo ilustrira različne vidike življenja na slovenskem ozemlju v 20. in 21. stoletju, je Bogatajev fond povzdignila. Dobil je status nacionalne kulturne dediščine. Za več desetletij skoraj pozabljeno gradivo se s strokovno obdelavo in digitaliziranjem vrača v širšo javnost. Doživlja publicistično in razstavno renesanso ter ob že znanih razkriva nove motive z nikoli razvitih fotografij. Tudi s pomočjo njegovih nekdanjih sopotnic in sopotnikov, pogosto portretirancev, številni neznani obrazi in dogodki dobijo ime in primeren zgodovinski kontekst.

Bogatajev muzejski fotografski fond je postal stičišče novih in obnovljenih poznanstev ter priložnosti za številna sodelovanja. Tokrat z Zvezo društev slovenskih likovnih umetnikov (ZDSLUI), kjer je Bogataj konec osemdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja v objektiv svoje- ga fotoaparata ujel živahna druženja predstavnikov slovenske likovne scene med odprtji njihovih razstav.

Z razstavo »Koga sem videl« se Janez Bogataj vrača v prostore na Komenskega 8 v Ljubljani. Simbolično tudi k začetkom slovenske fotografije, saj gostuje v stavbi, ki jo je ZDSLU zapustil veliki ljubitelj umetnosti in priznan fotograf z začetka 20. stoletja, Fran Vesel.

ly during the decade of (cultural) transition, revealed new ways of artistic production, traditional cultural trends, their intertwining, and their engagement in the intense dynamics of the time and space. He captured a wide range of subjects from both official and alternative culture, whom he accompanied professionally and privately, in moments of informal gatherings, in the midst of the work process, or during planned portrait sessions.

In his eternal quest for diversity and compositional innovation, Bogataj created them in various roles and creative periods. Professionally as a photographer for the weekly magazine Mladina, informally as a member of the eternally frivolous Fotogrupa M, and privately as Janez Bogataj, particularly fond of literary art.

He built a diverse creative opus. His series of outstanding portraits of Slovenian writers is intertwined with concert, studio, and portrait photographs of domestic and foreign musicians of various genres. His photographs of Ljubljana's punk subculture and iconic social venues in the Slovenian capital are pioneering and still highly sought after today. He also photographed traditional socialist ceremonies, events, and meetings, capturing the working life of economic, educational, health, cultural, and other institutions, as well as everyday life in the last decade of socialist Slovenia.

In 1988, he gave up reportage photography at the weekly magazine Mladina and gradually returned to his first love: artistic author photography. Before he took a creative break in the early 1990s, he occasionally remained active in the field of art. He made a name for himself in Paris with his artistic photographs, while in Ljubljana he captured the lively working atmosphere at the Ljubljana Academy of Fine Arts and the openings of exhibitions by

the Slovenian Association of Fine Arts Societies.

Shortly after his long creative and exhibiting hiatus ended, the National Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia purchased his collection of mostly black-and-white reportage photography negatives in 2009. Its placement in a national institution that holds around 60,000 museum pieces and four million photographs on various media, and whose interpretation illustrates various aspects of life in Slovenia in the 20th and 21st centuries, has enhanced the value of Bogataj's collection. It has been granted the status of national cultural heritage. After decades of near oblivion, the material is being returned to the wider public through professional processing and digitization. It is experiencing a renaissance in publishing and exhibitions, revealing new motifs from previously undeveloped photographs alongside those already known. With the help of his former companions, often the subjects of his portraits, many unknown faces and events are being given names and a proper historical context.

Bogataj's museum photography collection has become a hub for new and renewed acquaintances and opportunities for numerous collaborations. This time with the Slovenian Association of Fine Arts Societies (ZDSLUI), where Bogataj captured lively gatherings of representatives of the Slovenian art scene during the openings of their exhibitions in the late 1980s.

With the exhibition *Koga sem videl/In good company*, Janez Bogataj returns to the exhibition space at Komenskega 8 in Ljubljana. Symbolically, he also returns to the beginnings of Slovenian photography, as he is a guest in the building that ZDSLUI inherited from Fran Vesel, a great art lover and renowned photographer from the early 20th century.

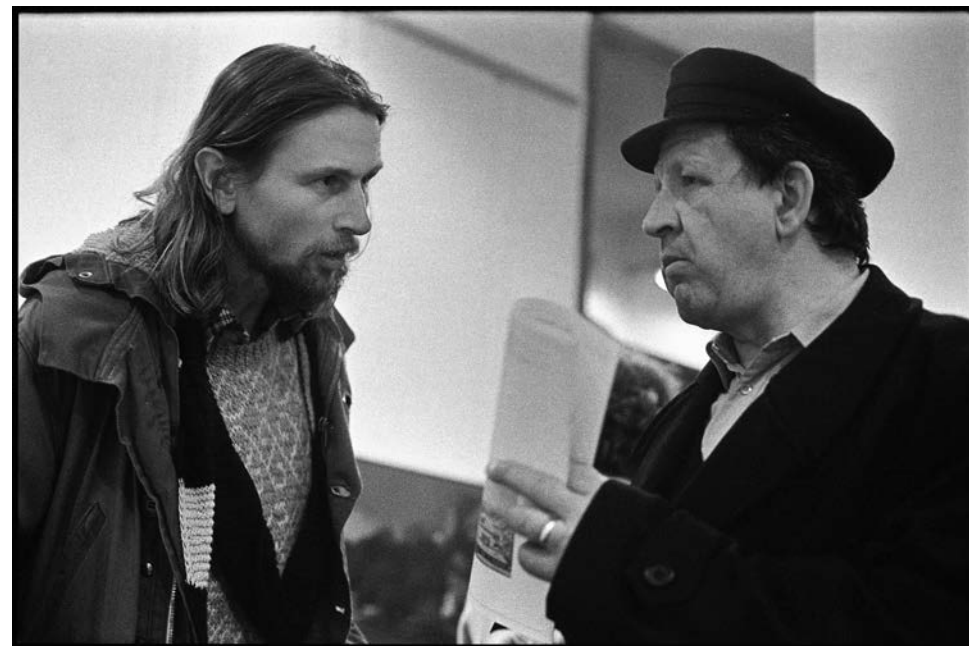


Otvoritev spominske razstave Evgena Sajovica (1913 - 1986) v Galeriji ZDSLU, 7. 4.-1. 5. 1988

Dame s klobuki pred tihožitjem Evgena Sajovica

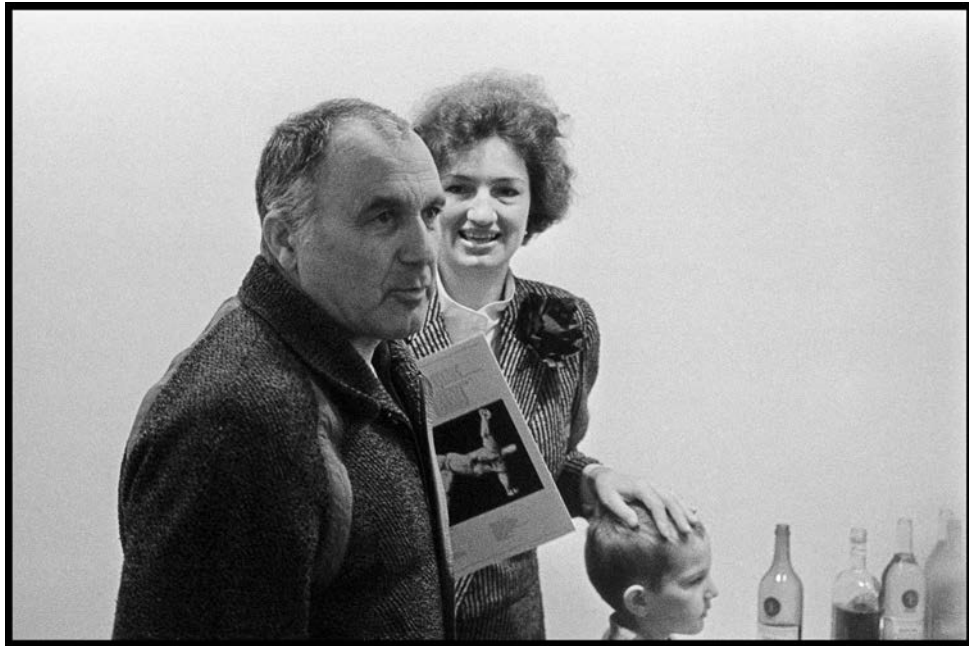
Opening of the memorial exhibition of Evgen Sajovic (1913 - 1986) at the ZDSLU Gallery, April 7 - May 1, 1988

Ladies with Hats in Front of a Still Life by Evgen Sajovic



Umetnostna zgodovinarja dr. Ivan Sedej in Pavle Bračko v dialogu

Art historians Dr. Ivan Sedej and Pavle Bračko in dialogue



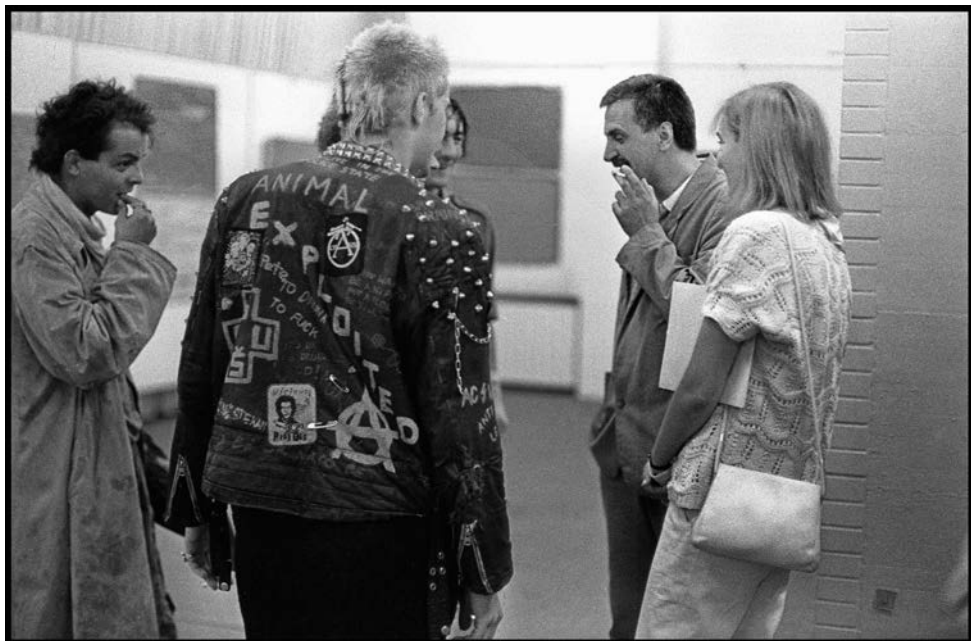
Otvoritev razstave Lovra Inkreta v Galeriji ZDSLU, 5. 5.-15. 5. 1988
Akademski slikar France Slana z ženo dr. Alenko Žagar Slana in sinom

Opening of the exhibition of Lovro Incret at the ZDSLU Gallery, May 5 - May 15, 1988
The academic painter France Slana with his wife, Dr. Alenka Žagar Slana, and their son.



Otvoritev razstave Jane Vizjak v Galeriji ZDSLU, 21.12.1988/18. 1. 1989
V ospredju akademski slikarki in grafičarki Adriana Maraž in Jana Vizjak, zadaj levo akademski kipar Peter Černe in fotograf Zdovc

Opening of the exhibition by Jane Vizjak at the ZDSLU Gallery, December 21, 1988 January 18, 1989
In the foreground, academic painters and graphic artists Adriana Maraž and Jana Vizjak, with academic sculptor Peter Černe and photographer Zdovc in the background, left.



Otvoritev pregledne razstave sarajevskega umetnika Edina Numankadića, Likovno razstavišče Rihard Jakopič, 1989
Obiskovalci v slogu 80-ih let

The opening of a retrospective exhibition of the Sarajevo artist Edin Numankadić, Rihard Jakopič Art Gallery, 1989
Visitors in the style of the 1980s



Otvoritev razstave Didaktična zbirka Slikarstvo, Galerija ZDSLU, 1989
Pisatelj in slikar Jernej Vilfan ter akademska slikarja in grafika Zvest Apollonio in Herman Gvardjančič

Opening of the exhibition of the didactic collection: Painting, ZDSLU Gallery, 1989
Writer and painter Jernej Vilfan, and academic painters and graphic artists Zvest Apollonio and Herman Gvardjančič.



Otvoritev razstave Rene Rusjan (Štirje letni časi na vrtu), Vrt ZDSLU na Komenskega 8, Pomlad 1990
Akademska slikarja Janez Knez Marjan Gumilar s sogovornicama

Opening of the exhibition by Rene Rusjan (Four Seasons in the Garden), ZDSLU Garden at Komenskega 8, Spring 1990
Academic painters Janez Knez and Marjan Gumilar with their conversation partners



Od leve proti desni: umetnostni zgodovinarji Marjeta Marinčič iz Galerije Equrna, Zdenka Badovinac in Igor Zabel iz Moderne galerije Ljubljana, v ozadju akademski slikar in videast Srečo Dragan

From left to right: art historians Marjeta Marinčič from the Equrna Gallery, Zdenka Badovinac and Igor Zabel from the Modern Gallery Ljubljana, with academic painter and video artist Srečo Dragan in the background.

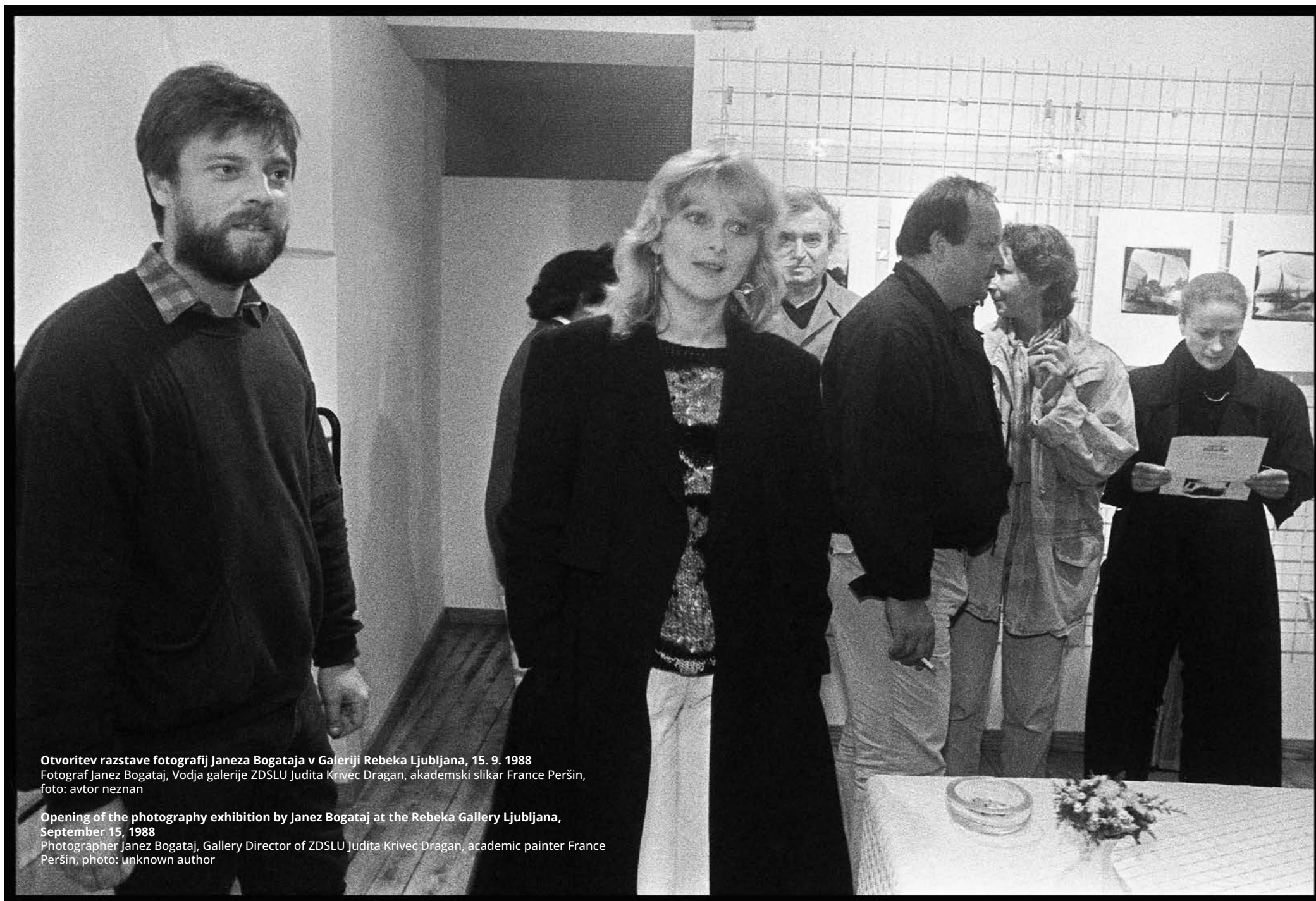
Janez Bogataj

Janez Bogataj je bil rojen 18. 5. 1961. Njegove prve fotografije sodijo v pozna sedemdeseta leta 20. stoletja, izbor je leta 2016 pod naslovom Zgodnja dela prvič predstavila Galerija Fotografija v Ljubljani. Med letoma 1979 in 1988 je deloval kot fotoreporter pri reviji Mladina in se ob vse bolj avtorsko prepoznavni dokumentarni fotografiji vzporedno posvečal tudi umetniški. Za svoje delo je že leta 1981 prejel nagrado Zlata ptica. Razstavljal je samostojno in v okviru skupinskih, tematsko zastavljenih razstav od leta 1980, najprej doma (v nekdanjem skupnem kulturnem prostoru Jugoslavije), nato pa še v tujini, kjer je bil posebej uspešen v Franciji (Francoska narodna knjižnica v Parizu je leta 1991 odkupila 40 njegovih del). Na seznamu številnih razstav so med drugim: XXII. republiška razstava fotografije (Galerija Škuc, Ljubljana 1980), 27. salon fotografije »20 oktobra« (Salon fotografije, Beograd, 1981), Bilderschau 82 – Fotofreunde Wertheim e.V. (Wertheim, 1982), 20 let Fotogrupa ŠOLT (Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 1983), Razvojne poti slovenske fotografije 1945–1983 (Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 1984), Janez Bogataj, Fotografske metamorfoze krajine (Moderna galerija, Ljubljana, 1992), Janez Bogataj. Pastoral (Galerija Photon, Ljubljana, 2006), N'č se ne premakne, Pankrti – 30 let, v okviru projekta Mesec fotografije (Muzej novejša zgodovine Slovenije, Ljubljana, 2007), Janez Bogataj, Sonata za sonce in meglo (Galerija Fotografija,

Ljubljana, 2014), N'č se ne premakne. Pankrti – 30 let (Muzej suvremene umjetnosti, Zagreb, 2017), Že dolgo nismo videli in slišali (Muzej novejša in sodobne zgodovine Slovenije, Ljubljana, 2017), Photo Basel/Virtual Edition (Basel, 2020), Osemdeseta (Muzej novejša in sodobne zgodovine Slovenije, 2022), Slovenski punk in fotografija (Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana 2023), Bagatelles (Galerija Fotografija, Center Rog, Ljubljana 2024), Punk. Subculture. Socialism. Archives of the Future. Photography from Slovenia (Pforzheim, 2024), Iz oči v oči. 20 let Galerije Fotografija (Galerija Fotografija, Center Rog, Ljubljana, 2024), Punk. Subkultura. Socializem. Arhivi in fotografija iz Slovenije (Galerija Murska Sobota 2025).

Janez Bogataj was born on 18 May 1961. His first photographs date back to the late 1970s, and a selection of them was first presented in 2016 by Galerija Fotografija gallery in Ljubljana under the title Zgodnja dela/Early Works. Between 1979 and 1988, he worked as a photojournalist for Mladina weekly magazine and, alongside his increasingly recognizable documentary photography, he also devoted himself to artistic photography. He received the Zlata ptica (Golden Bird) Award for his work in 1981. He has exhibited independently and as part of group, thematically-based exhibitions since 1980, first at home (in the former common cultural space of Yugoslavia) and then abroad, where he was particularly successful in France (the French National Library in Paris purchased 40 of his works in 1991). His numerous exhibitions include: XXII. republican photography exhibition (Skuc Gallery, Ljubljana 1980), 27th photography salon "20 October" (Salon fotografije, Belgrade, 1981), Bilderschau 82 – Fotofreunde Wertheim e.V. (Wertheim, 1982), 20 years of fotogrupa ŠOLT (Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 1983), Razvojne poti slovenske fotografije (development paths of Slovenian photography) 1945–1983 (Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, 1984), Janez Bogataj, Fotografske metamorfoze krajine (photographic metamorphoses of the landscape) (Moderna galerija, Ljubljana, 1992), Janez Bogataj, Pastoral (Photon

Gallery, Ljubljana, 2006), N'č se ne premakne (Nowt s'getting on), Pankrti – 30 years, as part of the Month of Photography project (National Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia, Ljubljana, 2007), Janez Bogataj, Sonata za sonce in meglo (Sonata for Sun and Fog) (Photography Gallery, Ljubljana, 2014), N'č se ne premakne (Nowt s'getting on), Pankrti – 30 years (Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2017), Že dolgo nismo videli in slišali (National Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia, Ljubljana, 2017), Photo Basel/Virtual Edition (Basel, 2020), Osemdeseta (The eighties) (National Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia, 2022), Slovenski punk in fotografija (Slovenian Punk and Photography) (Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana 2023), Bagatelles (Galerija Fotografija Gallery, Center Rog, Ljubljana 2024), Punk. Subculture. Socialism. Archives of the Future. Photography from Slovenia (Pforzheim, 2024), Iz oči v oči (Face fo face). 20 Years of the Galerija fotografija gallery, (Galerija fotografija gallery, Rog Center, Ljubljana, 2024), Punk. Subculture. Socialism. Archives and Photography from Slovenia (Murska Sobota Gallery, 2025).



Otvoritev razstave fotografij Janeza Bogataja v Galeriji Rebeka Ljubljana, 15. 9. 1988
Fotograf Janez Bogataj, Vodja galerije ZDSLU Judita Krivec Dragan, akademski slikar France Peršin,
foto: avtor neznan

Opening of the photography exhibition by Janez Bogataj at the Rebeka Gallery Ljubljana, September 15, 1988
Photographer Janez Bogataj, Gallery Director of ZDSLU Judita Krivec Dragan, academic painter France Peršin, photo: unknown author

Naslovnica / Cover page:

V ospredju Manca Košir in novofundlanec Gal, zadaj
Marika Pogačnik in Srečo Dragan

In the foreground, Manca Košir and the Newfoundland
dog Gal, in the background Marika Pogačnik and Srečo
Dragan.



ZDSLU
Zveza slovenskih pisateljev
The Slovenian Association of Writers



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