

Collaterality and Art¹

ABSTRACT

The article explores the relation between a name and its repetition, focusing on the name as ready-made and the name change of three Slovenian artists who changed their names into Janez Janša, two-time prime minister of Slovenia.

In the humanist tradition a human being is considered unique and name-giving is an act of branding that uniqueness. In as much as every human being is unique, the name given to them needs to contain that uniqueness. As we know, the conventions of naming are in many cultures much more about repeating rather than innovating. Reproduced and repeated names (of an elderly member of the family) are not there only to extend a family line, but they are there to name a life as a reproduction of a society.

The repetition of the name Janez Janša creates collateral effects, because the name refers to more than a single person. As soon as you call a person with the name "Janez Janša", you cannot but set in motion a series of other effects that name conjures. The institutions involved in a name change cannot but be linked to the collateral effects of that name change. Collaterality becomes a concept that creates social ties among areas in societies that are not connected as such.

JANEZ JANŠA

Janez Janša is contemporary artist who, together with two other Slovenian artists, in 2007 changed his name into that of the conservative, two-time prime-minister of Slovenia. Prior to and after this radical artistic gesture, Janša has been working as a theatre director and performer of interdisciplinary works that focus on the relation between art and the social and political context surrounding it, reflecting on the responsibility of performers as well as spectators. Many of his works deal with the very status of performance in neoliberal societies. For Janez Janša artistic practice, theoretical reflection and political involvement are not separated. He is also the director of Maska, a non-profit organisation in publishing, production and education, based in Ljubljana, and has edited several books on contemporary dance and theatre. He is author of the book on early works by Jan Fabre (*La discipline du chaos, le chaos de la discipline*, 1994). Currently he is a fellow at the international research centre Interweaving Performance Culture at the Freie Universität in Berlin.



Janez Janša, Janez Janša, Janez Janša. *Signature Event Context*, Berlin, 2008.
Performance (screenshot, detail). Courtesy: Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art,
 Ljubljana . www.aksioma.org

Name and Repetition

In the video installation *Namesake* (1999) by Gary Hill, we see the artist repeating his name in an endless loop:

Two color video images are projected on opposite walls. On one a face is saying the name “Gary;” on the other the back of the head appears. (...) Over and over again, the artist simply repeats his name, not particularly fast or drawn out and slow. There is no attempt to try and say it particularly differently or with any noticeable theatricality. Rather the focus is to get inside the word as if one could discover identity—where the name might become the person over time. With each articulation the word turns, shifts, and cuts a new “image.” There seems to be an equal chance of the opposite

occurring—complete alienation as the name “Gary” morphs like any other word, mutating into pure sound in the very mouth of the one it belongs to.²

In the description of the video posted on the artist’s website, the author is focused on the sound of the name pronounced. The name is not heard by the one to whom it has been addressed to again and again, the artist’s namesake, his double, the projection of himself. As much as there is no dynamics in the way of calling, there is no particular body movement that would demonstrate an effect of listening to the name. The name becomes an alien to both bearers. However, the author tries to state that the name turns into nothing more than a sound: the unsuccessful calling of the artist himself can produce a variety of affects and interpretations in a spectator.

Let us look at the video from another perspective. What if the name is repeated not in order to be heard by the namesake, but to be set as a name by the speaker, by the actual bearer of the name? Doesn't a (proper) name become the (proper) name by its mere repetition? Despite cultural differences in the convention of naming, the very act of naming contains at least two facets. A given name is always trying to fit a child, to identify the most with an infant that is yet out of language (*in-fans*—Latin—one that doesn't speak), to accommodate a new being in a name that contains and projects something that is yet to come. A given name is a nest in which a new human being lands and it becomes their primary land. In the humanist tradition a human being is considered unique and the name giving is an act of branding that uniqueness. In as much as every human being is unique, the name given to them needs to contain uniqueness.

Given names are names that are branded onto us, they can hurt or they can make us feel comfortable, they will connect and perform for us and in the performance of a name the repetition will have a crucial role. It is only through the repetition that a name becomes the name and when Gary Hill calls himself "Gary" again and again he is establishing his name as the name. He accommodates himself in the name given to him. He fine-tunes his name.

But, as we know, the conventions of naming in many cultures are much more into repeating rather than innovating. Beside the obvious repetition of surnames that prolong the life of a family, given names are often given after someone (grand-parents, for example, or persons important for the parents, the name givers), as a re-production of a naming convention. Reproduced and repeated names (of elderly members of the family) are not there only to prolong a life of the family, but they are also there to name a life as reproduction of a society.³

A Name: More or Less than a Name?

In the short documentary by Boris Bezić *Janez Janša: the Project* (2008) Viktor Bernik, an artist and a friend of one of the three artists who changed their names into Janez Janša,⁴ describes the act of addressing his friend in the following terms: "Ever since Žiga changed his name to Janez it is pretty necessary to not just say 'hello' but 'hello Janez' instead." In his description

1. The article is part of larger research on the performativity of name that author develops as a fellow at the International Research Center, "Interweaving Performance Culture" at the Freie Universität in Berlin (2015-16).

2. URL: <http://garyhill.com/work/namesake.html> (Accessed 2016-04-06)

3. According to the Icelandic naming policy, one can give to a child only a name that is listed in the Personal Names Register. As of the end of 2012, the Personal Names Register (Icelandic: Mannanafnaskrá) contained 1,712 male names and 1,853 female names. The BBC reported that "A 15-year-old Icelandic girl has won the right to use the name given her by her mother, after a court battle against the authorities. Blær Bjarkardóttir will now be able to use her first name, which means 'light breeze', officially. Icelandic authorities had objected, saying it was not a proper feminine name. Until now, Blær Bjarkardóttir had been identified simply as 'Girl' in communications with officials." URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-21280101> (Accessed 2016-04-06). Iceland is not the only country with strict naming regulations. The same goes for Denmark, where the list contains 7,000 pre-approved names and out of 1,100 applications for new names on a yearly basis, some 15-20 per cent are rejected.

4. In the summer 2007, three artists living in Ljubljana, Slovenia, Davide Grassi, and Žiga Kariž, changed their names to "Janez Janša", the name of the Prime Minister of Slovenia at the time and the leader of the SDS (Slovenian Democratic Party).

5. "I shall then suggest that ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you there!' Assuming that the theoretical scene I have imagined takes place in the street, the hailed individual will turn round. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a subject. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was 'really' addressed to him, and that 'it was really him who was hailed' (and not someone else). Experience shows that the practical telecommunication of hailings is such that they hardly ever miss their man: verbal call or whistle, the one hailed always recognizes that it is really him who is being hailed. And yet it is a strange phenomenon, and one which cannot be explained solely by 'guilt feelings', despite the large numbers who 'have something on their consciences.'" Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. New York, NY: Monthly Review Press. 2001. p. 174. While interpellation always hit the right target without naming it, in collaterality there is always something that remains aside.

6. Dolar, Mladen. *What's in a Name?* Ljubljana: Aksioma. 2014. p. 17.

7. At the time the three artists changed their names, there were already 11 peoples with the same name in Slovenia. Only Janez Janša, the Prime Minister of Slovenia at the time, was a public person. Interestingly enough, his legal name is Ivan Janša and the name "Janez Janša" is his nickname. Retroactively we can say that even the politician uses his name as a ready-made.

8. URL: <http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/27/duchamp.php> (Accessed 2016-02-01).

9. Adj. late 14c., "accompanying," also "descended from the same stock," from Old French collateral (13c.), from Medieval Latin collateralis "accompanying," literally "side by side," from Latin com- "together" (see com-) + lateralis "of the side," from latus "a side" (see oblate (n.)). Literal sense of "parallel, along the side of" attested in English from mid-15c. Related: Collaterally. n. 16c., "colleague, associate," from collateral (adj.). Meaning "thing given as security" is from 1832, American English, from phrase collateral security (1720).

Bernik points that the name "Janez" is not there to identify a person addressed, but instead to underline the new name that his friend gave himself. Bernik tells us that addressing of his friend contains a certain performative dimension with which the name that is pronounced functions as more than a name. There is something in addition to what the name "Janez Janša" contains and that's why it is not enough to call your newly-named friend with just "hello".⁵ That "something" in addition to the pronounced name is the collateral effect of the name change, and it is the reason why you cannot call your friend without naming him. Whenever you pronounce his name, something else is pronounced, something that makes that name more than just a proper name. Saying the name "Janez Janša" hits not only one target (one person), but sets a series of collateral effects in motion that effect/affect not only the bearers of the name. When you address Žiga with the name "Janez", you do not only acknowledge his new name, you do not only indicate a person that holds that name, but you also acknowledge the act of a name change. You perform his name change by saying his name.

Mladen Dolar explains that once we have four (public) people with the same name, none of them can exist only in one's own name. Talking about the name change of the three artists he claims:

The project comes with a twist, though: if one cannot turn the name into the perfect replica of the thing, one can make the perfect replica of the name itself, the name can be cloned, so even if the name is an imperfect image, its

*tenuous and tenacious connection with the bearer is such that it clones the bearer. The one and only Janez Janša is, by the mere cunning of the name, multiplied by three more Janšas with the threat of becoming indistinguishable.*⁶

The repetition of the name Janez Janša creates collateral effects because the name refers to more than a person. We will have a closer look at the concept of collaterality, but for the moment let us point at a crucial dimension of the concept of collaterality, and that is unavoidability. As soon as you call a person by the name "Janez Janša" you cannot avoid evoking a series of other effects that the name engenders.

Ready-made and Collateral Effects of the Name Change

The name "Janez Janša" is repeated in the very act of name-changing. It is the name that already existed and it is the name that is charged with a strong meanings in the political life of Slovenia.⁷ The name "Janez Janša" is a ready-made, an object that acquired another meanings by being transferred into another context. Let us have a closer look at the name being a ready-made.

What distinguishes the classical Duchampian ready-made from the name as ready-made are two main features. First, an object from everyday life that has been transferred to a gallery has no effect on other objects that existent outside the artistic context. The same

goes for those destroyed and disappeared and for those that are yet to be fabricated. There is no disambiguation needed between a urinal that is installed in a bathroom from another one installed in another bathroom. Also, there is no need to disambiguate Duchamp's *Fountain* from other urinals. Urinals are not affected by the one that became one of the most significant art objects in the twentieth century art (that has itself seventeen replicas commissioned by Duchamp).⁸ If I use a urinal I can do it without thinking about scrutinising an art work. When it comes to the name as ready-made the situation is rather the opposite: a name that has been transposed into another reality calls for immediate disambiguation. Janez Janša cannot be just "Janez Janša". A name as a "rigid designator" needs a cluster of descriptions to be able to operate as the indicator of a person we are talking about. Even if the supposed clusters of descriptions are not pronounced, they are always at work in making a name the proper name.

Janša, Janša and Janša titled their exhibition in Graz (Steirischer Herbst, 2008) *Name Readymade*. The

objects exhibited consisted of personal documents issued by authorities (state, political party and banks) in order to claim identification, membership or other civil status of the individual. The objects presented in the gallery acquired the status of art objects by the procedure of their naming (done by the artists), by their inclusion in an art context (acted out by the gallery, curator, festival) as well as by legal expertise that claimed the objects are artefacts (enacted by a court assessor for visual art). The status of art object was added to the initial status the object had, and that was not interrupted. They also became the ready-mades. Here we come to the second difference between the classical ready-made and the objects that were exhibited at the *Name Readymade* exhibition. It would be unlikely that once a ready-made would leave its place in everyday reality and become an art object, it would turn back into everyday life once the exhibition would be over. Or the other way round: the object that is turned into a ready-made mostly loses its function from everyday reality. Even if someone would piss into the *Fountain*, that would not turn the art object into a urinal (which is anyhow deprived of the infra-



Janez Janša, *Janez Janša, Janez Janša*
PB0241858 (Passport), Ljubljana, 2007
Booklet, spread 17.5 x 12.5 cm
Courtesy: Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary
Art, Ljubljana



Janez Janša, *Janez Janša, Janez Janša*
PB0241891 (Passport), Ljubljana, 2007
Booklet, spread 17.5 x 12.5 cm
Courtesy: Daniel Aschwarden



Janez Janša, *Janez Janša, Janez Janša*
PB0243172 (Passport), Ljubljana, 2007
Booklet, spread 17.5 x 12.5 cm
Courtesy: Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary
Art, Ljubljana

structure needed to be able to function as a urinal). In a certain way, a urinal turned into a ready-made becomes an illusion of an urinal.

The opposite goes for the exhibited official documents: even if a spectator's gaze tries to turn them into mere documents (a document of an action, a leftover of an action that took place somewhere else), they insist on their everyday existence. The personal documents exhibited by Janša, Janša and Janša did not remain in the art context, once the exhibition was over. They turned back to everyday life, continuing their own pre- and post- ready-made life. The individuals to whom the documents were issued were vitally interested to get them back into their everyday life in order to be able to continue performing their civil status.

For our discussion on collaterality it is crucial to point out two aspects of the documents: on the one hand they were produced as collateral effects of the name change—an individual is obliged to ask for new documents once some of their data have been changed; on the other hand, the institutions that issue the documents are obliged to issue them. It is part of their routine to produce new documents. It is unavoidable for both parties to have new documents produced.

Collateral

Before paying closer attention to the way institutions reacted to the name changing, let us briefly look at the concept of collaterality. The word “collateral” comes from medieval Latin *collateralis*, from *col-*, “together with” + *lateralis* (from *latus*, *later-*, “side”) and is otherwise mainly used as a synonym for “parallel” or “additional” in certain expressions (“collateral veins” run parallel to each other and “collateral security” means additional security to the main obligation in a contract).⁹

The concept is widely known via its negative meaning, coming from military jargon—“collateral

damage”. In 1961 the term was introduced into US military doctrine via an article written by T.C. Schelling entitled “Dispersal, Deterrence, And Damage”. The USAF Intelligence Targeting Guide states that

*broadly defined, collateral damage is unintentional damage or incidental damage affecting facilities, equipment or personnel occurring as a result of military actions directed against targeted enemy forces or facilities. Such damage can occur to friendly, neutral, and even enemy forces. (...) Determining collateral damage constraints is a command responsibility. If national command or theater authorities do not predetermine constraint levels for collateral damage, a corps or higher commander will normally be responsible for doing so.*¹⁰

In 1999 the German word for collateral damage—“*Kollateralschaden*”—was declared “unword” of the year.¹¹ The argumentation was that “collateral damage” is a military term referring to the incidental destruction of civilian property and non-combatant casualties. It points out euphemistic dimension of a word underlying its rhetorical and ideological function.

There is no doubt that unintended civilian casualties were given their name in military doctrine as a consequence of the public pressure on acknowledging innocent victims of war operations. However, from the discourse on collateral damage that has been developed in the last 50 years, it is clear that despite all the advancements in military technology, collateral damage is always an unavoidable part of military operations. There is no war operation that can avoid collateral damage. As much as we try to put them aside, as much as we try literally not to collateralise¹² the victims, they are unavoidable.¹³ The naming is not going to save their lives.

The term “collateral” was introduced in finance in the late 1980s, most widely as “collateralized debt obligations” (CDO). In simple terms, a CDO can be

understood as a security for a loan to be paid or as “a promise to pay investors in a prescribed sequence”. The market for CDOs has been hugely developed and CDOs became one of the main instruments in financialisation.¹⁴ What makes the concept “collateral” relevant for us (I will continue to use the popular version of the term “collateral” instead of that of the CDO) is the fact that it is impossible to take out any loan today without having a collateral as security. Collateral is something put aside, but it is only because of that “something” that the main operation (taking out a loan) can take place. There is no “thing” without a collateral. The fact that something that operates as a periphery, as something alongside the main operation, became of such structural importance that it turned the economy of collateral into a business that in the mid-2000s generated billions of profit.¹⁵ The economy is developed on a simple basis: since collateral became so important, additional collaterals that would stand as a back-up for the first collateral were introduced. From here on, the highway to bad infinity of endless collateralisation was open. In both military and financial contexts the term collateral appears as something unavoidable, as something that sits alongside, but without it an operation itself cannot take place.

Name Change and Collaterality

The name change of Janša, Janša and Janša triggered reactions in various contexts. Identification documents of Janša, Janša and Janša have been exhibited several times and, as we pointed out above, have thus acquired the status of works of art. But the artists had virtually nothing to do with their creation as such. Simply due to the routine nature of their functioning, institutions produced numerous objects the artists subsequently put in an art context and thus prompted the question of the artistic status of those objects. Those works were created as side effects, as a collateral consequence of the change of names. In this process, the actions of the artists are nothing special, for every citizen needs to change their personal documents if a change in their personal data occurs. What is particular here is the functioning of the institutions, which unknowingly produced, and still produce artworks, simply by performing their usual activities. Institutions produce works of art without intention and without doing anything outside their purview. The artworks are a side effect, collateral of a new situation in which all agents behave as if nothing has changed.

10. URL: <http://fas.org/irp/doddir/usaf/afpam14-210/part20.htm#page180> (Accessed 2016-02-01).

11. The unword of the year (German: Unwort des Jahres) is an annual publication that names a German word or word group that is considered to be the year's most offensive new or recently popularised term. Between 1991 and 1993, the unword was announced by the Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache, alongside the Word of the Year. In 1994, the task was taken over by Goethe University Frankfurt.

12. The word “collateral” comes from medieval Latin *collateralis*, from *col-*, “together with” + *lateralis* (from *latus*, *later-*, “side”) and is otherwise mainly used as a synonym for “parallel” or “additional” in certain expressions (“collateral veins” run parallel to each other and “collateral security” means additional security to the main obligation in a contract). [Adj. late 14c., “accompanying,” also “descended from the same stock” from Old French *collateral* (13c.), from Medieval Latin *collateralis* “accompanying,” literally “side by side,” from Latin *com-* “together” (see *com-*) + *lateralis* “of the side,” from *latus* “a side” (see *oblate* (n.)). Literal sense of “parallel, along the side of” attested in English from mid-15c. Related: *Collaterally*. n. 16c., “colleague, associate,” from *collateral* (adj.). Meaning “thing given as security” is from 1832, American English, from phrase *collateral security* (1720).]

13. Zygmunt Bauman uses the concept of collateral damage in relation to catastrophes, pointing out how social inequalities turn certain part of the population into collateral casualties: “Casualties are dubbed ‘collateral’ in so far as they are dismissed as not important enough to justify the costs of their prevention, or simply ‘unexpected’ because the planners did not consider them worthy of inclusion among the objects of preparatory reconnoitring. For selection among the candidates for collateral damage, the progressively criminalized poor are therefore ‘naturals’—branded permanently, as they tend to be, with the double stigma of non-importance and unworthiness.” Bauman, Zygmunt. *Collateral Damage. Social Inequalities in a Global Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press. 2011, p. 8.

14. “Financialization describes an economic system or process that attempts to reduce all value that is exchanged (whether tangible or intangible, future or present promises, etc.) into a financial instrument. The intent of financialization is to be able to reduce any work product or service to an exchangeable financial instrument, like currency, and thus make it easier for people to trade these financial instruments.” URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financialization> (Accessed 2016-02-06).

15. “When the financial crisis peaked in 2008 crippling the banking sector, banks found themselves with a trillion dollars tied up in now worthless assets. Of this, around half, that’s \$500 billion, was tied up in CDOs. With many banks sitting on huge losses, the interbank lending market dried up, as no bank wanted to lend to another bank that was potentially going bust. CitiGroup lost \$34 billion on mortgage CDOs, Merrill Lynch lost \$26 billion. The insurer AIG was crippled due to selling \$500 billion worth of Credit Default Swaps to in effect insure against defaults on CDOs, and payments of which it could not meet.” <https://sites.google.com/site/sparemoments/my-articles/cdos---their-role-in-the-financial-crisis> (Accessed 2016-04-25).

16. *Osebnosti – Veliki slovenski biografski leksikon*, Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana, 2008.

17. Tončka Stanonik, the editor of the *Osebnosti – Veliki slovenski biografski leksikon* in an email to Janez Janša, 30 April 2008.

18. *Pojmovnik slovenske umetnosti po letu 1945. Pojmi, gibanja, skupine, težnje*, ALUO and Študentska založba, Ljubljana, 2009.

19. URL: http://www.pojmovnik.si/people/hrvatin_emil/, URL: http://www.pojmovnik.si/people/grassi_davide/, and URL: http://www.pojmovnik.si/people/kariz_ziga/ (Accessed 2016-01-27).

20. As long as we are not talking about “Janez Janša”, the only entry that has no year of birth, no year of death. Despite the fact that Janez Janša changed his name to Žiga Kariž in 2008, he didn’t die. Janša stays immortal and Kariž dead!

Institutional Resistance

Let us have a closer look at the way some institutions reacted on the name change. The contributors and editors of the *Who is who in Slovenia* publication¹⁶ claimed that the former names of the artists should be used in the entries in their lexicon, instead of new ones. According to them, the names “Žiga Kariž”, “Davide Grassi” and “Emil Hrvatin” are more known than the new ones. They stated that the lexicon functions as a net of references in which each name gets linked with other names in the lexicon, and if they would replace artists’ former names with new ones they would need to do that all the way.

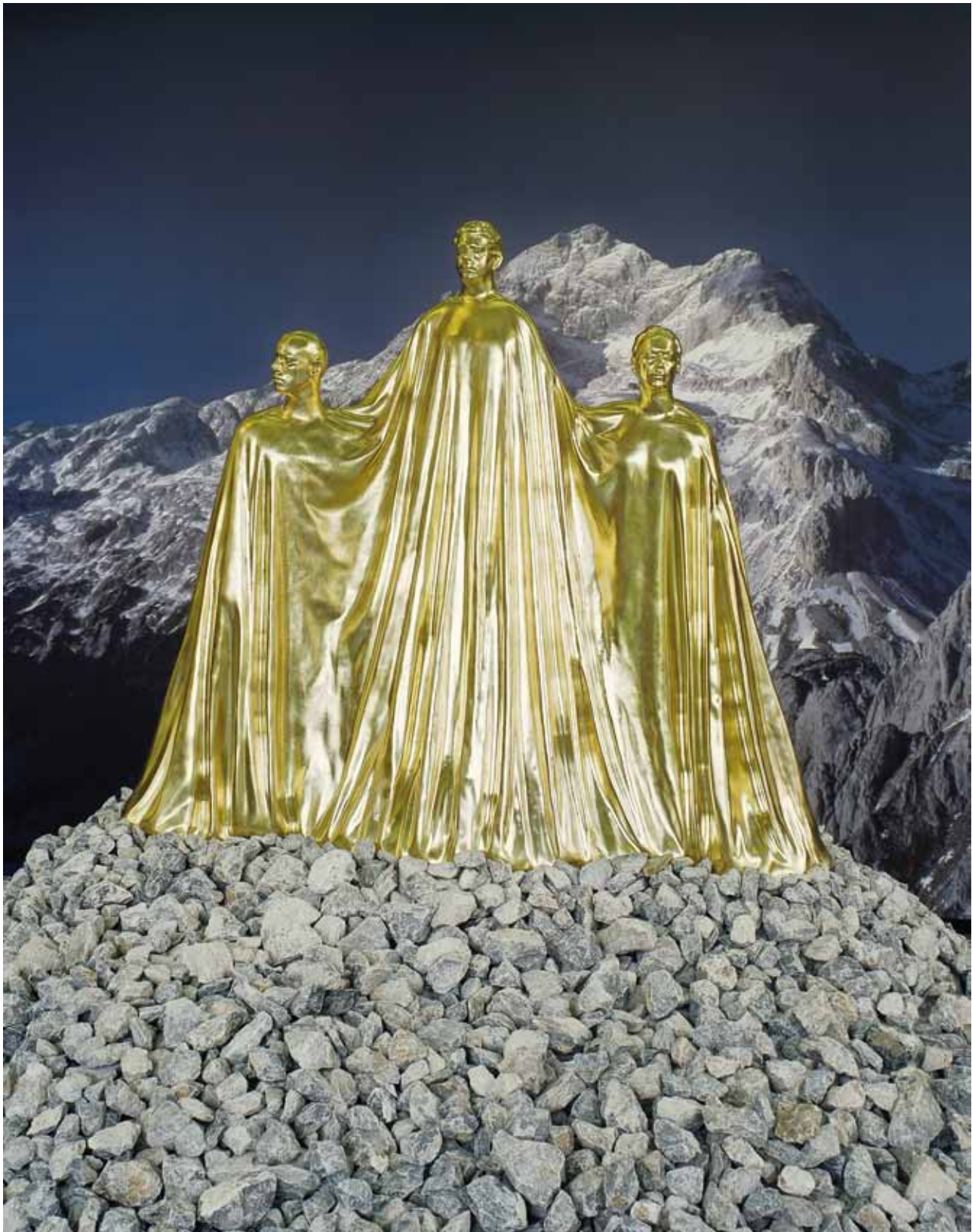
*I send you the entries. I don't know how to understand this complication. Don't you think that it would be correct that at least I would know whom am I talking to? I have to deal with 13,000 entries and I am supposed to be busy with only 3 of them. It's not fair. I have no time to explain what are the consequences of that change.*¹⁷

The artists insisted on editors doing their encyclopaedic job correctly and using the data that corresponds to their legal status. At the end the editors published entries with the names “Janez Janša”, “Janez Janša” and “Janez Janša”.

Behind the story there might be the same problem the editors of Wikipedia had. As soon as there were three new people with the same name in addition to the existing one of Janez Janša, disambiguation was needed. The editing policy has changed slightly over the course of nine years, however, the name of the politician was always the first one on the list.

Another lexicographic publication¹⁸ solved the problem of naming by splitting artists into different persons. On the web page www.pojmovnik.si, among other information on artists there is also a year of birth and a year of death (in the case an artist is deceased). Next to the name “Žiga Kariž” it is written “born 1973, died 2007”, next to “Davide Grassi” “born 1970, died 2007”, next to “Emil Hrvatin” “born 1964, died 2007”.¹⁹ Although this could be considered as a pure mistake (in the book version the same people with their old names are still “alive”) or shortcoming of a web database, the editors basically “murdered” names and in doing so they opened an interesting debate about the names of artists as their identity, as their brand—as an artist you are not a person, you are just your name. A name is detached from a person, a name lives its own life, it can live longer, but also shorter than the person who bears it.²⁰ In both cases the institutions were resisting to accept new names, and the new legal status of three individuals. By doing that, they actually undermined their institutional position. The arguments used were the arguments of power.

Another exclusion policy the artists encountered several times was at airports. It happened that the computer system that deals with booking of flights left only one person with the name Janez Janša on a list of passengers, although at least another one if not two of them had booked their flights and bought tickets. Although all the examples speak about the power of institutions through their resistance to accept more than one person with the name Janez Janša, they actually extend the field of institutional legitimacy. They have to decide on



Janez Janša, Janez Janša, Janez Janša. Monument to the National Contemporary Art (Golden Triglav). Gilded sculpture, 115 x 123 x 45 cm. Steirischer Herbst, Forum Stadtpark, Graz, 2008. Photo: Peter Rauch. Courtesy: Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana. www.aksioma.org

21. Dežulović, Boris. *Rat i mir*, Zagreb: VBZ. 2012. pp. 61–63. Originally published as Ali je Janez Janša kreten? In *Dnevnikov Objektiv*, 2017-09-01. Translated from Slovenian by Polona Petek.

22. On 13 November 2012 all the news broadcast on Radio Student in Ljubljana was signed by Janez Janša. The journalist of the commercial station POP TV became inspired by Janša's exhibition *Life [in Progress]* and made a performance of washing the Slovenian flag at one of the main squares in downtown Ljubljana. The performance was staged for later broadcasting that took place on 28 September 2010.

something that is not part of their institutional agenda. In the cases described, they did not use the power of argument but the argument of power.

Collaterality in the Media

With their change of name, the artists opened up a space for action for other agents in the public realm, among which the media and journalists reacted most forcefully. In some political media, journalists simply took advantage of the fact that there are more people called Janez Janša appearing in public and they developed their journalistic activities accordingly. The media and the artists established mutual collateral operations without ever forming a pact with each other. The artists' act opened up a new space for the journalists to perform media activities, whereas the media—with their usual routine of following public cultural events—opened up a new space for the artists, which was far outside the usual cultural context.

a. Mutual Collaterality

Some artistic gesture can trigger gestures in other subsystems of society. What is important here is that the collateral effects were not intended by the act itself, but are the consequences of a potential new space, opened up by an artistic gesture. Take the example of Boris Dežulović column entitled "Is Janez Janša an Idiot?" in which the author, who signed the article with the pseudonym Ivo Sanader (the name of the Prime Minister of Croatia at the time), claims that there would be no newspaper that would dare publish an article under this own name. Now, since we have three

artists with the name Janez Janša that becomes possible:

This can be done because it is perfectly legitimate to call artists—but not politicians—idiots and to call their work idiocy. Artists are harmless beings who do not have powerful lawyers. Unlike politicians, they do everything publicly and they offer their work to be judged by the public, despite the fact that their mandate is strictly personal and their responsibility is only to themselves. Politicians, on the other hand, have our mandate and they are accountable to us; and yet, no politician has ever publicly presented their work. There are no annual festivals or exhibitions in which politicians would display their achievements of the past year.²¹

Dežulović uses the insertion of the name "Janez Janša" in the public sphere to show the potential of criticism and media strategies that the media themselves can use without being threatened by possible being sued. Name changing created the potential for a vast range of media strategies.²² Just four months before parliamentary elections, in May 2008, an article in the daily *Dnevnik* mentioned that in the town where the Prime Minister Janša would appear on elections list, one of the artists with the name Janez Janša would appear as the candidate of the Social Democrats. In September 2008 political weekly *MAG* wanted to publish an interview with the politician Janša as one in the series of interviews with presidents of political parties. Janša refused and the three artists Janša, Janša and Janša were invited to give an interview instead of the politician. The interview was conducted

in written form and it was pretty obvious that the intention of *MAG* was to use artists as a parody of a politician. The artists accepted to give an interview and instead of replying to the questions by the newspaper, they wrote a completely new interview and sent it just before the deadline expired, so that the journal could not make any substantial changes.

We can say that in all of these cases there was a kind of mutual collaterality: artists opened up media spaces for their strategies while the media opened up a space to the artists to perform their artistic operations. The media used artists to criticise the politician Janša and the artists had their work presented far beyond the usual cultural context, and in that way extended the very field of art. In that sense mutual collaterality created new spaces for activities in a wider public space: in the cultural, media and political field.

Mutual collaterality raises the question of the notion of collateral in a military, medical and economical context, too. Mostly, collaterality is understood one way: there is a military operation, which as a consequence creates civilian casualties (called “collateral damage”). Potential civilian casualties have no instruments to stop an operation that would make them potential victims. The same goes for the collateral effects of medication: the pharmaceutical industry is generated by collateral effects, since curing a disease can cause another malfunction of a body. Then there is finance in which every loan has to be backed up with a collateral, which generates the backing up with another collateral and so on and so forth.

b. Complicity

Mutual collaterality in the media raises an old question of the role of the media in society. The media create and co-create reality on which they report and reflect. The space of manipulation is immense. What is different in the case of the Sanader-Janša article is the fact that the author introduced a new type of journalism, which is satirical on the one hand, while on the other it is creative journalism, which continues

at the point where artists open up possibilities for another kind of critical journalism. The journalist and the newspaper embraced the gesture of the artists and continued operating in their own field alongside the space opened up by the name-changing gesture. In that sense journalists became the *collateral accomplice* of the artists: artists and journalists never met, the artists and the media never defined any kind of cooperation, and yet they created conditions for both of their activities to acquire another dimension. Of course, this kind of situation is much more complex and creates mutual collaterality only under conditions in which there is no misuse or abuse of the other side. The artists and the media are closely connected only if they are radically separated, if they are collateral, if they are together by operating independently in different fields.

Journalist Jela Krečič wrote extensively on the position of journalist as an accomplice:

The Janez Janša media phenomenon reveals the nature of the Janez Janša art phenomenon by parasitically infiltrating the media; the media is the space of artistic performance, that is, the space of the project by the three artists, and they cannot be severed from the artistic creation of the Janez Janša project. The project also reveals the nature of the functioning of the media, which never reports on reality as such, rather, they construct such a reality by reporting about it and by choosing a way of reporting about it. The media, which co-creates the art project, induces a certain split in the journalist who is duty bound to report about the project, and in the process of reporting about the three Janez Janšas, the journalist understands—at least, instinctively—that s/he is not merely a recorder of a neutral event but that s/he is also dealing with an event that constantly evokes a series of meanings (and their interconnections) that cannot be done away with, regardless of how precisely or dispassionately the journalist treats the event. By inadvertently producing a whole series of meanings or several coexistent semantic fields, the reporting about the Janez Janšas often creates confusion

23. Krečič, Jela. The Janez Janša Media Phenomenon. In *NAME Readymade*. Ljubljana & Berlin: Moderna galerija & Revolver. 2008. pp. 175-195

24. Lukan, Blaž. The Janez Janša Project. In *NAME Readymade*. p. 23. Last but not least, in the media debate between Janša, Janša, Janša and the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports at the time Žiga Turk, the Minister ended his second response with the following words: "With the answer I end my participation in your promotion and I am thankful for your understanding." *Politična samovolja ne sme vplivati na izvajanje kulturnih programov*. In *Delo*, 8 March 2013, p. 24.

25. As of early 2016, the Museum still hadn't obtained the official permit to buy the identity cards of the artists for their collection.

26. See Ziemer, Gesa. Neue Form von Kollektivität: Das Projekt NAME readymade von Janez Janša. In *Komplizenschaft. Neue Perspektiven auf Kollektivität*. Bielefeld. transcript Verlag. 2013, pp 152-156.

27. Orel, Barbara. Naming as a Playing Practice and Political Strategy. In *Playing Culture: Conventions and Extensions of Performance*. Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi. 2014. pp. 126-127

*and appears comical. Even though—or, perhaps, precisely because—the journalist as a professional remains faithful to the rules of reporting and commenting, s/he cannot shake the feeling that s/he participates in the creation of the Janez Janša media phenomenon and, by extension, the Janez Janša art project.*²³

It is by doing the same that the journalist produces a difference. The same goes for the artists. Blaž Lukan wrote that nothing basically changed in the work of Janša, Janša and Janša: they continued doing the same professional activity as before their name-changing. To paraphrase Krečič, the artist as a professional remains faithful to the art making, and as such find accomplices in other fields.

Furthermore, we note that the artists achieve this effect in an almost passive manner, for the plan carries itself out by itself, by producing new meanings solely by appearing spontaneously in the media, with no additional special or planned activities. Since the name change, all three artists have been doing what they have always done, in the same way, and there is no evidence to the contrary; meanwhile their new names, in connection with their actions, produce new meanings. The following is important when considering this conclusion: if we ask ourselves how The Janez Janša Project is functioning or where its author is to be situated, we note that it is not to be found in any of the planned activities of the three artists (a plan or a concept can only be detected in their simultaneous decision to change their names into Janez Janša), but rather

*in the media attention following their actions.*²⁴

From Institutional Critique to Institutional Complicity

Let us have a closer look at the relationship between the artists and cultural institutions. There has been long and well advanced artistic practice of the critique of institutions and we are not going to enter a debate about reach and complexity. Janša, Janša and Janša perform a different model of the relationship between the artist and institution—a relationship called *institutionalised complicity*. The artists invite cultural institutions to be their "partner in crime", to join them in breaking through into broader social, political and economic contexts and collaborate with them on projects that cannot be realised within the field of art. The cultural institution thus appears as an accomplice and positions itself into a broader social context and by extension questions its social role.

In 2011 the Museum of Modern Art (MG) in Ljubljana wanted to include the three identity cards of Janša, Janša and Janša in their permanent collection. The double status of those objects (being official and valid identification documents and art objects at the same time) made the museum approach the administrative arena (the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the issuer of the IDs) for a permission for acquisition of the objects. Although underlining and attaching the documentation that demonstrates the artistic status of the objects,

the authorities on both local and state level claimed that those are valid documents (only) and should not have any other function than the one prescribed by the law. The Museum continued correspondence, asking the Ministry of Culture to intervene in the situation by treating the objects as artworks and not just as identification documents.²⁵

This is an example that gives another dimension to the relation between artists and public cultural institutions. The position of an institution here is not a position of a producer, presenter or protector of an artist. The intention of the public cultural institution (the museum) to include official documents in their collection gives them no other option than to perform the role of supreme authority in the field of culture towards public institutions in other fields. Only as such can they raise a question of real weight and position of art and culture in a wider social and political context. It is a structural position of an institution to make it behave like an institution, as a subject of authority in the field of culture. The cultural institution interacts with other public and state institutions as an institution of knowledge and expertise and not as an institution of state power. Therefore, the state institutions can also enter into dialogue as institutions of knowledge and not as institutions of power. That puts the question of a double state of identity card on the same level as questions about the relation between constitutionally proclaimed rights (including rights of free artistic expression, as well as the rights of free movement within and outside the country) and legislation, which puts forward constraints and limits.

The Inclusiveness of Collaterality

Let us conclude our brief journey with the concept of collaterality by looking at the social potential of the concept. Gesa Ziemer pointed out that the gesture of name-changing unconsciously involved a wide range of people: those working in state administration offices, in factories that produce personal

documents, in the media, in political parties, in the cultural field...²⁶ Barbara Orel goes even further, interpreting the impossibility of “staying out” of a name-changed situation, turning the reality affected into a kind of omni-theatrical event:

A theatrical event usually takes place in a single location and in a precisely defined time. The JJJ project, however, started in 2007, the moment the three artists acquired the politician's name and will continue as long as they bear it. The players are not only the artists, but anyone who uses their names. At the same time, the role of audience is also acquired by the three artists as they observe others who use their names. Thus the question of who are the performers and the audience remains open. The borders between playing and not playing, intentional and unintentional playing, productive and unproductive playing are blurred as ordinary daily activity becomes extraordinary and the fictitious is infused in the real.²⁷

What matters here is the fact that those who became included stayed exactly in the same position as they were before. Inclusion did not change the state of a person or an institution included. Inclusiveness happened as a collateral effect and original positions were maintained—they are included by keeping their positions.

Collaterality is a concept that could operate here only by crossing borders of art and cultural contexts and placing art in a wider social and political context. Moreover, collaterality is a mode of operating that co-involves different social and political contexts without them necessarily being connected. In that sense society itself appears as multi-layered and multi-connected. Distinct from a networked society, in which some kind of totalising dimension guides relationships between people, collaterality is a concept which shows that we are always already in relation although we don't need to be connected.



*Janez Janša, Janez Janša,
Janez Janša. Waiting for JJ
(Riga International Airport),
Riga, 2007. Digital photogra-
phy. Photo: Janez Janša. Cour-
tesy: Aksioma – Institute for
Contemporary Art, Ljubljana.
www.aksioma.org*