National Gallery of Art, Lithuania’s national museum of 20th and 21st century art. Also a reconstruction, of a sort, of the main entrance - this building is but the future, despite degrees of negative governmental sentiment. (It should be mentioned conservative forces did manage the open permanent collection exhibition). There is a text in this issue about the National Gallery. I’ve focused here on the focus of building, city, society, and power because the issue of the issue is CAPITALI to reflect upon our city’s status as an “European Capital of Culture 2009.” When commissioning the issue we had hoped to inject a dose of critical language into a stream of official boosterism and PR speak so the tests are largely disarrant in the text. Self, official language was issued under the sign of the Oxford Word about which there is also a text here—“mutually assured destruction” and the festival year founded. What should have been a culture of marking the fifth anniversary of EU membership and the end of the first decade of the 21st century (remember how fantastic the 21st century sounded from a position in the 1970s) has ended as the “Dis appointed of the Decade” or the “Wasted Opportunity of the Decade” from many perspectives. The Contemporary Art Centre did manage to present two major projects including the X Triennial of International Jewish Art—urban stories that the title suggests was also imagined by its curators as a narrative about culture and city (and photos from the exhibition appear in this issue) and an attempt at writing the history of international urban narratives. Of course a prominent narrative that emerges from the histories of many cities that have hosted major festivals is that of the financial hangover that extends through the years following that event (the most famous case is the bankruptcy of Montreal, Canada by the EXPO ’67 and the Games of the XXI Olympiad, 1976). This is the specter haunting the Lithuanian cultural sector in the last days of 2009— from whose perspective “2006 levels” are looking fairly attractive.

Simon Boes
museums demanded the public to wear neat clothes and demonstrate appropriate behaviour (no snipping, shouting, drinking or touching). To reach the Gallery we hiked up the hill from the river side. Although the Gallery opened only eight weeks ago, there was already an alternative plan leading to it straight through the grass! In contrast, these eight weeks apparently were not enough to inscribe the Gallery into taxi drivers’ mental map of Vilnius. Remember, it seemed that taxis were determined to take us to a parking lot of Forum Palace, a well-known sports complex and not to the Gallery. The audiences left the mark on the lawn, but not in taxi drivers’ routes.

SB: I’m not sure if I understood you, but the environment didn’t have an impact on my aesthetic behaviour. Perhaps I was put on edge by the sign of don’t step onto the front door. One of the symbols included a crossed-out pistol. Good job! I left my weapons at the hotel. But, seriously, I think your experience is interesting. There is a real need for the museum to be “lived in”. It’s too sterile right now. The ticket desk is situated in the middle of the empty foyer. It was like some futuristic institution for checking in one’s DNA in NDG (National Museum of Art). Being art in the form and put the visitor at their ease. And put some arrows upwards indicating where the entrance is! Modernus Museum in Stockholm had the exact same problem. Their solution was to do the landscapes with huge black arrows leading the way to aesthetic salvation.

SR: Yes, the entrance lounge can be seen as a Lithuanian architectural version of a Brave New World! Rebuilding the museum might take all sorts of administrative and aesthetic problems. One thing I’d like to see is the art spilling out from the galleries into the ‘junk spaces’ of the museum (to recall from Koolhaas). That’s what I meant just now by bringing the art to the floor. The building teases us with its walls of glass seeming to support the mass structure. It’ll be good to see those windows as the artifacts. One such curtain would be Egle Rukkutė’s video trip ‘Hati’. (Frank (1999). I could be exhibited, as it were, back-to-front with the screens facing outside and all the electronic apparatus tumbling behind. This would draw attention to the ‘fraudulent’ nature of the museum. artworks visible through the glass would make it “open” all the time, not just during the regular visiting hours. The theme of the various rooms relates to openings and borders: “Borders of reality”, “Open works”; “Between myth and reality”. There is clearly a desire on the part of some for the museum to challenge or cut through all kinds of borders. If the museum could, if the resources and commission site-specific artworks. It would greatly help if artists could be inspired to create works by the building itself. This would remind us that the concept that building is in fact the museum’s largest sculpture. Some artists working in the line of ‘institutional critique’ could challenge the nature of the building in interesting (and potentially controversial) ways. The building offers lots of potential for displaying art in non-conventional spaces. (The galleries themselves are perhaps the most boring spaces.) To make the most of it is to retain its flexibility, then it needs to change and to challenge — to keep itself fresh. Just how this home will be furnished will

SR: The director of the museum, Romualdas Rudys has licenced Lithuania’s new National Gallery to a home. In his forwarded to the museum’s first exhibition catalogue Dialogue of Colour and Sound he states that NDG is the fruit of the idea of the Home of the Nation that Citation... and other artists surmounted a hundred years ago! (p. 4). This description of NDG as the ‘home of the nation’ makes sense of context regarding ‘what sort of home it should be’. Home implies a safe place. Or a stilling one. Home could also be the right sort of environment to express yourself openly, without fear of the consequences. Where you can be yourself. Rudys ends his Preface with the hope that NDG ‘will receive great attention from the public’.

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Tautos namai

The director of the museum, Romualdas Rudys has

licensed Lithuania’s new National Gallery to a home. In his forwarded to the museum’s first exhibition catalogue Dialogue of Colour and Sound he states that NDG is the fruit of the idea of the Home of the Nation that Citation... and other artists surmounted a hundred years ago! (p. 4). This description of NDG as the ‘home of the nation’ makes sense of context regarding ‘what sort of home it should be’. Home implies a safe place. Or a stilling one. Home could also be the right sort of environment to express yourself openly, without fear of the consequences. Where you can be yourself. Rudys ends his Preface with the hope that NDG ‘will receive great attention from the public’.

Again, this is interesting if it is to retain its flexibility, then it needs to change and to challenge — to keep itself fresh. Just how this home will be furnished will

foje erdiesi ir ant plaukčių stogų. O jei būtų galima didėjusiai skatinti reklamuoti Lietuvos menininkų video darbus! Iš to atstovautų užsakymai galių tapti koordinacijos dalimi.


SR: Muziejininkų direktoriaus Romualdas Rudys palygino naujųjų Lietuvos Nacionalinės galerijos su namais. Permoninės muziejų pavyzdys, spalvų ir joje esančios dialogo kampe įtampa įvairi, kad kurį reikia įvardinti. Bėgus

nuostatų esmėmis.
SR. Art is always mediated. It is never experienced

of works by Latvian artists, which would classify as of the “first class” standard according to West European
canon. Being trained to read and love Latvian art
since young age, I am, of course, very partial in evalu-
ating the collection displayed at the NGD. However,
if I dare to say, artistically, strongly in my view, part
was that after the 1950s. The hall dedicated to the
1990s looked quite laconic but solid.

But also, aesthetic and artistic contexts are not the
only ones which within the NGD inscribes itself...
We have hardly touched upon political and social issues
yet!

SR. Art is always mediated. It is never experienced

in a neutral or value-free environment (no matter how
demanding museums try to persuade us otherwise).
If one had to describe the NGD, we could like “classi-
drafted, “objective”, “scholarly” would spring to mind.
But what we might call the “little politics” are always
there if we scrape away at the white-office presentation.
We were lucky to be guided around the NGD by
its eloquent chief curator, Lotta Jalabinskiene. She
managed to convey some of the “difficult choices”
that led up to the bang to us today (the term “difficu-
time choice” being adopted from the title of Kuno’s
displayed art history of the NGD). Jalabinskiene praised
her forebear, Romans Bedzere, without whose drive
the museum would never have been realized. Yet she
couldn’t have conveyed the profound disagreements she
had with “kritika”, “objektivis”, “akadēmiskis”.

But, alas, the public is pervaded by “naïve politics”,
vis-a-vis rationalists against their laconic kabo pārvaldi u
manuscripta, kāpēc piņā kā dzīves politīkā,
visādā mākslā rakstīts prasījumā nepieciešamības
baļķo kabo pārvaldi. Manuscripta, kāpēc piņā
manuscripts in 50s and 60s are "solid"

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David Crowley

MANHATTAN’S DOUBLES

For much of the 20th century Manhattan functioned like a magnet drawing artists and designers who wanted to witness the future in the making. It was, in Rem Koolhaas’s words, “a collective experiment, where the entire city became a factory of man-made experience, where the real and the natural ceased to exist.” Koolhaas in his magnificent 1978 textbook, Delirious New York, outlined a reductive manifesto, that is a theory of urbanism written after – rather than before – the new world it described had been fashioned: Manhattan (as) the product of an unformalized theory, Manhattanism, whose programme – is exist in a world.

David Crowley

MANHETTENOS ANTRININKAI


 totalmente fabrizato, ma, to live inside fantasy – was so ambiguous that it could never be openly stated.

Only those without a direct interest in Manhattan’s stone, glass and steel could, it seems, articulate this theory. Koolhaas included, two reflections on Manhattanism appeared in 1965. By a strange, even uncanny, coincidence, they were produced on either side of the Iron Curtain, apparently in ignorance of each other. These non-identical twins were faithful to Kool- haas’s evocative vision of New York: by installing a dome over mid-Manhattan. This massive structure would span the city from the Hudson to the East river. One mile high at its centre,