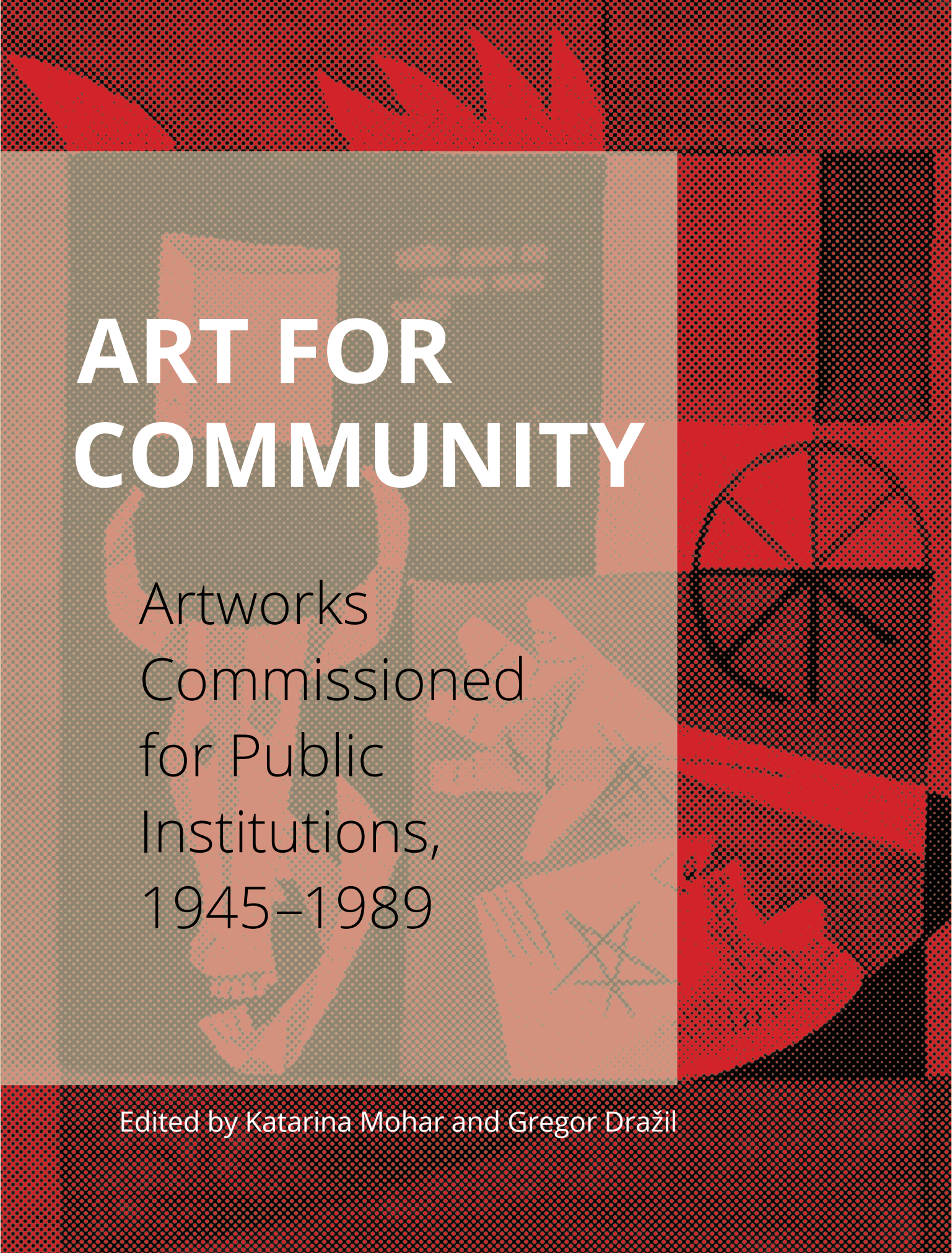




ART FOR COMMUNITY

Artworks
Commissioned
for Public
Institutions,
1945–1989

Edited by Katarina Mohar and Gregor Dražil



Založba ZRC



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Ljubljana, 2026

Opera Instituti Artis Historiae

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Edited by Katarina Mohar and Gregor Dražil

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Design, layout and photo editing: Andrej Furlan

Issued by ZRC SAZU, France Stele Institute of Art History

Represented by Mija Oter Gorenčič

Publisher: Založba ZRC

Represented by Oto Luthar

Založba ZRC general manager and editor-in-chief: Aleš Pogačnik

Print: Present, d. o. o., Ljubljana

350 copies

First edition, first print run / First e-edition

Ljubljana 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610511748>



The book is a result of the research programme Art in Slovenia at a Cultural Crossroads (P6-0061) and research project Art for Community: Registration and Assessment of Artworks Commissioned for Public Institutions in Slovenia, 1945–1991 (J6-50206), both funded by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency.



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Cover image: Ivo Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia.
Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 009**
013 Katarina Mohar, Gregor Dražil
INTRODUCTION
Uvod
- 018**
039 Oscar Svanelid, Marta Edling
**THE GOVERNMENT OF ART: DEMOCRACY
AND STATE PUBLIC ART IN SWEDEN 1937–2027**
Vladanje z umetnostjo: demokracija in javna umetnost
v državnih naročilih na Švedskem v letih 1937–2027
- 042**
067 Barbara Vodopivec
**“PERCENT FOR ART” SCHEMES: ARTISTIC AGENCY,
CULTURAL POLICY, AND PUBLIC ART IN EUROPE AND
POSTWAR SLOVENIA/YUGOSLAVIA**
Shema »odstotek za umetnost«: vloga umetnikov, kulturna politika
in javna umetnost v Evropi ter v povojni Sloveniji/Jugoslaviji
- 070**
097 Annette Tietenberg
**ED AND NANCY KIENHOLZ’S PROPOSAL FOR *THE BERLIN
FOUNTAIN* (1981/83): AN IRONIC COMMENTARY ON THE
FUNCTION OF ART IN PUBLIC SPACES IN EAST AND WEST
BERLIN DURING THE COLD WAR**
Predlog Eda in Nancy Kienholz za *Berlinsko fontano* (*The Berlin Fountain*;
1981/83): ironični komentar o funkciji umetnosti v javnem prostoru
Vzhodnega in Zahodnega Berlina v času hladne vojne
- 100**
129 Burcu Selcen Coşkun
**THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN ART AND ARCHITECTURE DURING
THE POSTWAR PERIOD IN TURKEY: CASES FROM ISTANBUL**
Dialog med umetnostjo in arhitekturo v povojnem obdobju v Turčiji:
primeri iz Istanbula

132

Gregor Dražil

**THE MURALS OF IVAN SELJAK ČOPIČ IN THE 1950S AND
EARLY 1960S: BETWEEN REALISM AND ABSTRACTION**

154

Stenske poslikave Ivana Seljaka Čopiča iz petdesetih in zgodnjih
šestdesetih let 20. stoletja: med realizmom in abstrakcijo

156

Irina Cărăbaș

**JULES PERAHIM'S MURALS AND THE POLITICS
OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN ROMANIA
IN THE POST-STALINIST PERIOD**

179

Stenske poslikave Julesa Perahima in politika grajenega okolja v
Romuniji v poststalinističnem obdobju

182

Andreja Rakovec

**NEW INSIGHTS INTO IVE ŠUBIC'S MOSAIC
IN THE SLOVENIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

209

Nova odkritja o mozaiku Iveta Šubica
v Državnem zboru Republike Slovenije

212

Nadja Zgonik

**TAPESTRIES AS PUBLIC ART IN ELITE SPACES OF SOCIALIST
YUGOSLAVIA: THE CASE OF MARIJ PREGELJ'S TAPESTRIES
FOR THE KOTEKS TOBUS BOUTIQUE**

239

Tapiserija kot javna umetnost za elitni prostor v socialistični
Jugoslaviji: primer tapiserij Marija Preglja za butik Koteks Tobus

242

Nataša Ivanović

**ARTISTIC DECORATION OF SHIPS IN POSTWAR ITALY:
ZORAN MUŠIČ'S EMBROIDERY *STORIA DI MARCO POLO***

260

Likovna oprema ladij po drugi svetovni vojni v Italiji:
vezenina Zorana Mušiča *Zgodba o Marku Polu*

262

Patricia Počanić

**ART FOR LEISURE ARCHITECTURE: ARTWORKS
COMMISSIONED FOR HOTELS IN ISTRIA AND
THE KVARNER GULF IN THE 1960S**

297

Umetnost za turistično arhitekturo: umetniška dela, naročena za
hotele v Istri in Kvarnerju v šestdesetih letih 20. stoletja

300

Blaž Šeme

**CONDITION AND RISK ASSESSMENT
OF SOCIALIST-ERA MOSAICS IN SLOVENIA**

324

Ocena stanja in ogroženosti mozaikov
iz obdobja socialistične Slovenije

326

Begoña Farré Torras

**PROMETHEUS'S TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS:
A CASE STUDY OF HERITAGE CHALLENGES POSED
BY MURALS FROM THE TIME OF PORTUGAL'S *ESTADO NOVO*
DICTATORSHIP (1933–1974)**

345

Prometejeve preizkušnje in tegobe: študija primera izzivov
dediščinskega varstva, ki jih odpirajo stenske poslikave iz obdobja
portugalske diktature *Estado Novo* (1933–1974)



NEW INSIGHTS INTO IVE ŠUBIC'S MOSAIC IN THE SLOVENIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Andreja
Rakovec
ZRC SAZU

Ive Šubic (1922–1989), one of the most prominent Slovenian artists during the second half of the twentieth century, created several works of art for public spaces, including various public institutions. The most prestigious commission in light of institutional importance was the mosaic created for the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia (today the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia). This was Šubic's first solo monumental wall painting for a public institution¹ and the most prominent commission for a public institution in his oeuvre. Although the mosaic has so far received the attention of several authors,² the recent discovery of drafts that have been preserved in the artist's studio (where they are still kept) calls for this research gap to be filled. The article aims to shed light on how the mosaic was created, to complete the archival records with the inclusion of the preserved drafts, and, by drawing on both types of material, to tentatively reconstruct the development of the visual theme and work process. The mosaic, with its abstract design, stands apart from the rest of Šubic's works for public institutions, where most themes, developed throughout his creative period, relate to the National Liberation Movement. In addition, unlike other monumental wall paintings for public institutions, its content was dictated by an expert panel; this required Šubic to change his drafts several times, which was consequently the main reason for its delayed completion.

The building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia was constructed between 1954 and 1959, based on a design by Vinko Glanz.³ To furnish such an important building with art, only the finest Slovenian artists were considered suitable:⁴ Karel Putrih and Zdenko Kalin created the sculptural portal, the statue of Marshal Tito was the work of Boris Kalin; the fresco *Zgodovina Slovencev od naselitve do danes* (The History of the Slovenians from Settlement to Modern Times) was created by Slavko Pengov, the mosaic *Ljubljana v borbi* (Ljubljana at War) by Marij Pregelj, the mosaic *Bičkova skala* (Biček Cliff) by Ivan Seljak Čopič, and the paintings *Naše Primorje* (Our Littoral) and *Naš gorski svet* (Our Alpine World) were produced by Gojmir Anton Kos; the paintings *Trgatev* (The Grape Harvest), *Kurenta* (Two Kurents), and *Zeleni Jurij* (Green Jurij) were the work of France Mihelič, and *Jesen v Slovenskih goricah* (Autumn in the Slovenian

Hills) was painted by Janez Vidic. Although Gabrijel Stupica was also invited to take part in the commission, his draft *Plodovi naše zemlje* (The Fruits of Our Land) was rejected.⁵ Šubic received the invitation to work together with his fellow painter and close friend Jože Ciuha (1924–2015), and their mosaics were viewed as a seamless whole.

Although Šubic was already mentioned in 1957 as part of the group of artists chosen to decorate the parliament building, no details are known about his selection.⁶ It seems likely that he was selected based on both his previous artistic accomplishments and active involvement in the National Liberation Movement as a Partisan and the head of a Partisan print shop, where he worked with established Slovenian artists and also proved himself as a gifted artist.⁷ Between 1956 and 1958, the period that overlaps with the time of the commission for the parliament, he was also highly active as the president of the Slovenian Fine Arts Society.⁸ Perhaps he was selected at the recommendation of Luc Menaše, who was familiar with his work for Komen's Cooperative Hall (*Zadružni dom*) and wrote a critique of his sgraffito.⁹ Moreover, unlike other members of the expert panel, such as Stane Mikuž and Lojze Gostiša, who both championed Socialist Realism, Menaše was partial to modernism.¹⁰ A slight shift toward modernist visual expression in Šubic's works can be detected from the mid-1950s onward, when he first came into direct contact with Western art in the first half of the 1950s. In 1952, he visited an exhibition of contemporary French art at Ljubljana's Museum of Modern Art, which also displayed works by Picasso and Braque, and in 1953 an exhibition of Belgian art of the previous hundred years, which appealed to him more because of its figurative expression. However, it was especially after visiting Paris in 1956 that his art began to display a more pronounced influence of Chagall's surrealism and Braque's cubism (colourism and the geometric articulation of volumes).¹¹ A few such examples are the paintings *Mati* (Mother; 1958, Maribor Art Gallery) and *Vasovalec* (Serenader; 1958, private ownership), and an untitled painting, depicting a farmer suspended in the air above a village (1960, private ownership). Šubic was particularly captivated by Picasso's *Guernica*, which crucially inspired his drafts for the mosaic in the parliament building, even though he may have never seen the original painting and relied on reproductions.¹² Between 1953 and 1956, *Guernica* travelled to several European cities (e.g., Milan in 1953, Munich in 1955, and Brussels, Amsterdam, and Stockholm in 1956). In 1955, it was put on view by the Museum of Decorative Arts in the Louvre Palace as part of a major Picasso retrospective.¹³ The exhibition was on view from 3 June to mid-October 1955. Because Šubic visited Paris a year



*Figure 1. Ive Šubic,
Pokrajina (Landscape),
mosaic, 1960,
National Assembly of
the Republic of Slovenia,
Ljubljana.
Photo: Andrej Furlan,
ZRC SAZU.*

later, perhaps he only encountered the painting through reproductions, the exhibition catalogue or other materials.¹⁴ It is noteworthy that Šubic's library contained a volume about Picasso from 1955,¹⁵ which he may have purchased in Paris. Further testifying to his admiration of Picasso is the famous artist's photo portrait hanging on his studio wall.¹⁶

The mosaic *Pokrajina* (Landscape; 272 × 833 cm), completed in 1960, depicts an abstract landscape, inspired by Slovenian vernacular architecture [Figure 1]. The mosaic was produced by the Ljubljana-based workshop of Alfio Tambosso (1914–1992), an Italian mosaicist, who later created several more of Šubic's mosaics. This one was made using Sava River pebbles and glass. It took no less than two years for the expert panel to authorise the project. The panel, composed of the architects Vinko Glanz and Lojze Rojc and the art historians Lojze Gostiša (then still a student), Stane Mikuž, and Luc Menaše, was set up in 1957 and served an advisory role. The final decision was made by Ivan Maček Matija, a prominent communist politician.¹⁷ Šubic and Ciuha were initially tasked with adorning the cornice in front of the small hall of the Chamber of Producers on the first floor of the parliament building with a mosaic showcasing the evolution of the Slovenian people from the emergence of the proletariat to modern times.¹⁸ However, in October 1957, at Ivan Maček's behest, they were instead entrusted with adorning the staircase in the entrance vestibule:¹⁹ Šubic was to cover the right wall with a figurative mosaic depicting the National Liberation Movement, and Ciuha was to cover the left wall with a mosaic

on topics related to industrial advances.²⁰ The wall surface was challenging to work with, considering that the staircase was flanked by columns partially blocking the view of the mosaics and visually dividing them into a one-third/two-thirds ratio.²¹

The progress of Šubic's mosaic can be outlined via a tentative reconstruction based on his preserved drafts and the panel's records. Initially, the panel did not specify a topic and let the artists devise a few proposals, which it reviewed and only then specified the content.²² In December 1957, Šubic and Ciuha submitted sketches depicting peasant uprisings and the National Liberation Movement, along with sketches displaying scenes from industry, agriculture, war, peace, and labour, as well as decorative elements.²³ The panel rejected all the first drafts and proposed that by April 1958 the artists devise harmonised compositions in a warm colour palette²⁴ and vertically arrange the images of heavy industry workers, which was a task undertaken by Ciuha, and the figures of resistance fighters (a Partisan, a member of the underground movement, a nurse, and a wounded soldier), which was an assignment entrusted to Šubic. The panel further required the artists to include both male and female figures,²⁵ harmonise the mosaics with the portal, and give them a Slovenian expression. It repeatedly stressed that the figures should not be excessively "uniform" but convey humanity,²⁶ most likely referring to Socialist Realist depictions of figures that appeared distant and cold. The artists submitted new drafts in January 1958, but the panel rejected these as well and requested one more draft from each. However, with the deadline nearing rapidly due to the envisaged opening of the parliament, it decided that the walls should remain blank for the time being and the mosaic be subsequently created either by Šubic and Ciuha or by a third artist.²⁷

Šubic's drafts with multi-figural compositions featuring themes of the National Liberation Movement can be classified as those that the panel reviewed at the end of 1957 and perhaps as belonging to the initial phase. Pencil drawings that provided the models for the colour draft [Figure 2] have been preserved. They depict a group of Partisans, with the one at the front portrayed on a much larger scale and holding the flag of the People's Republic of Slovenia, local inhabitants welcoming them as their liberators, and a fallen German soldier in the bottom right corner symbolising the defeated Axis forces. Whereas the number of Partisans slightly varies from one draft to the next, the composition reveals no major deviations. The figures are arranged in layers composed of rounded hills and rural houses: the painter abandoned perspective and hierarchically ordered size ratios set according to depth and lined up the figures in a

Figure 2. Ive Šubic,
unrealised sketch for the
mosaic in the building
of the People's Assembly
of the People's Republic
of Slovenia.
Photo: Andreja Rakovec,
ZRC SAZU.



Figure 3. Ive Šubic,
unrealised sketch for the
mosaic in the building
of the People's Assembly
of the People's Republic
of Slovenia.
Photo: Andreja Rakovec,
ZRC SAZU.



single plane, with hills rising in between. This arrangement of figures is somewhat reminiscent of Marc Chagall's early works as well as of late Gothic frescoes, particularly the theme relating to the Procession and Adoration of the Magi, where the uniform-sized figures are interrupted by rounded hills. The latter were known to Šubic from the history of Slovenian medieval wall painting, which he knew well from his local environment. The colour draft is dominated by ochre, grey, and white shades; the modulation of houses exhibits cubist influences, and the figure of the Partisan walking on the roof points to Chagall's influence.

Further drafts preserved by Šubic also feature the groups specified by the panel – Partisans, members of the underground movement, nurses, and wounded soldiers – and may therefore be categorised as the second group of drafts, produced between December 1957 and January 1958. Although the sketches vary in detail, the content remains consistent. Because the drafts are not chronologically documented, it can only be speculated how their development progressed. Perhaps the first draft was the one that bears the inscription *OF SLOV[E]NSKEGA NAR[ODA]*²⁸ [Figure 3],

Figure 4. Ive Šubic,
unrealised sketch for the
mosaic in the building
of the People's Assembly
of the People's Republic
of Slovenia.
Photo: Andreja Rakovec,
ZRC SAZU.



considering that the figures in other drafts are more distinctly divided into two groups and include the added depiction of a Partisan sleeping. The standing figures are arranged at the same level, whereby Šubic apparently heeded the recommendation from Luc Menaše's critique of his sgraffito in Komen and refrained from creating a sense of depth in his composition.²⁹ One of the Partisans on the left is covered with a blanket, and the figure holding a scroll is a member of the underground movement delivering a message. In the colour draft, Šubic further enhanced the atmosphere of subversiveness by depicting the courier looking about warily with one hand tucked into his jacket [Figure 4]. This gesture could also be interpreted as an emblematic feature in the theme of underground movements in Slovenian art during that period (e.g., Frančišek Smerdu's statue *Ilegalec* (Underground Resistance Fighter), 1952). The wounded soldier appears next (two in one of the drafts), depicted on the right side of the composition in the other two drafts [Figures 5, 6]. All of Šubic's drafts include a female figure in the right half of the composition with a pot of food and often a boy standing next to her wearing a side cap (known as a *titovka*) as a representative of the civilian population aiding the Partisan struggle. Individual figures also feature in his other works; for example, a Partisan with a blanket and a Partisan sleeping on the ground (in the print *Počitek*, Rest, from 1958, etc.).³⁰ Šubic depicted a sleeping Partisan several times either in multi-figural compositions or independently. The oldest known representation is the linocut *Kolona v snegu* (Column in the Snow) from May 1944 with a soldier sleeping with a rifle in his hand in the bottom right corner,³¹ suggesting that Šubic drew from his personal experience as a member of the Partisan movement. The background varied from one draft to the next: it was either rendered in a geometric formulation, with the ground level filled with small houses, or the artist added details to the house and tree(s) on top of the hill and added burned



Figure 5. Ive Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia. Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.



Figure 6. Ive Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia. Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

houses and haystacks between the Partisans' legs at ground level. A horse occupied a prominent place in the centre of the composition and was also featured watching over the sleeping Partisan in a separate depiction.³² This group further includes a draft created using a warm colour palette, in which the vertically split composition is even more geometricised, with each figure enclosed in its own block and full-body figures in upright rectangular fields alternating with those in square fields [Figure 6]: the composition is flanked by the full-body figures of a Partisan and a woman offering food. On the left side, more prominence is given to members of the underground movement compared to other drafts, featuring three of them preparing and distributing flyers. In the centre is a sleeping Partisan

with a horse leaning down over him, and on the right a wounded soldier along with two Partisans sitting next to him, enclosed in smaller fields. The totality resembles Marij Pregelj's mosaic from 1956–1957 at the Trbovlje Workers' Home, with figures in rectangular fields alternating between full-body and waist-up views. In 1958, the mosaic earned Pregelj the Prešeren Award. It is entirely possible that Šubic designed the bolder composition with Pregelj's work in mind, especially considering that in 1958 Pregelj furnished one of the staircases in the assembly building with the mosaic *Ljubljana v borbi* (Ljubljana at War).³³

The panel also rejected these drafts and changed its mind regarding the vertical division of the composition, fearing that the figures might appear too large for the small entrance vestibule.³⁴ It instructed the artists to provide new drafts within two years, and, should they fail to meet the criteria, the project would be awarded to other artists.³⁵ By May 1958, Šubic and Ciuha had submitted five new drafts each on the subject of war and peace. The sketches were first rejected by Ivan Maček³⁶ and then by the panel itself, which nonetheless viewed them as a considerable improvement. The project was finally awarded to them, even though it would not be completed by the assembly's opening. According to the panel, the drafts employed an appropriate colour palette, whereby Šubic depicted war using darker tones and Ciuha employed brighter tones to convey peace. The panel merely suggested that the artists harmonise their work with the mosaicist Alfio Tambosso.³⁷ It approved Šubic's sketch that demonstrated a "coherent figurative composition with a clearly discernible set of themes", adding that he should "only slightly simplify or visually refine the draft ... to bring it closer to Ciuha's and its consistent use of visual means", making the remark that "the distinctions between 'early Chagall' and 'Picasso's *Guernica*' are still problematic at this point."³⁸ It is not clear what draft the panel specifically referred to, considering that none of the sketches preserved corresponds to the description above. Although the stenographic minutes of the panel's session present informative details regarding the drafts from this phase, they do not suffice for a reliable identification (e.g., that Šubic's draft is underlined by dynamism set in motion by a bird's flight; that he submitted drafts in different versions; that they had a narrative rather than decorative value; or that Šubic's work was more impactful than Ciuha's, but that his overcrowded composition necessitated simplification).³⁹

This group includes drafts that Šubic titled *Vojna* (War) and that address the topics of occupation, resistance, the Axis forces' retaliation measures, and liberation by drawing on Picasso's *Guernica*. The starting point was

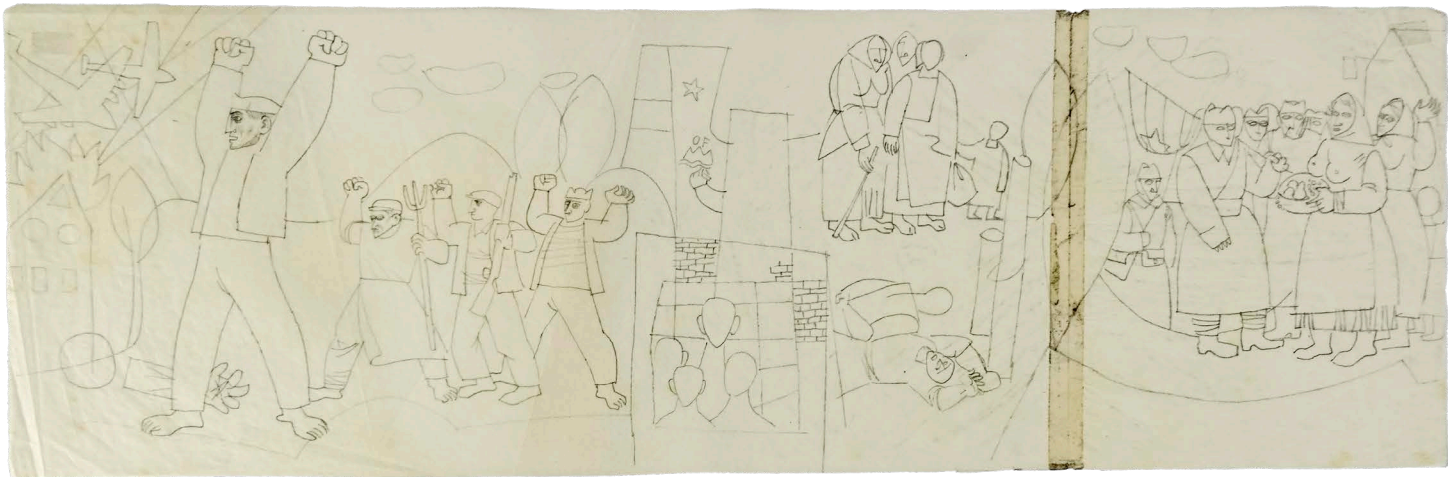


Figure 7. Ive Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia.

Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

most likely the pencil sketch [Figure 7], which incorporated elements from earlier drafts, such as the hilly landscape, the group of Partisans with the Yugoslav flag (or the flag of the People's Republic of Slovenia), and the women with a pot of food. From left to right, the drawing depicts a burning house with two bombers flying over it, a man raising his hands high as a sign of resistance, and a severed hand lying behind his right foot, which is reminiscent of *Guernica*. Then follow farmers raising their tools, weapons, and fists, ready to engage the enemy. The underground movement is represented by a demolished wall displaying a five-pointed star and a hand drawing the Liberation Front (OF) symbol (a stylised three-peaked Mount Triglav) beneath it and above the depiction of internees behind bars. The next scene features deportees and two dead captives, one with hands tied behind his back. The final scene depicts the liberation: Partisans, one carrying a flag on his shoulder, and two mothers and a child welcoming the liberators with a bowl of food. In terms of size, he explicitly highlighted the figure of a resistance fighter next to the burning house, symbolically pointing to the overall emphasis of the whole: the resistance movement, which, although at the cost of great suffering, ultimately led to freedom. Perhaps the artist was inspired by the figure of the captive in a white shirt in Goya's *The Third of May 1808* (1814, Prado, Madrid) or the figure of resistance with upraised arms in *Guernica*.⁴⁰

Šubic further refined the composition in subsequent drafts by considering the vertical division of the format and by prioritising symbolism over narrativity (e.g., he replaced the hand of an underground movement member drawing a star with the depiction of two schematised trees and a star drawn into one of them). Two of the drafts reveal a more pronounced

shift toward the Picassoesque visual syntagm. In the first, a pencil drawing [Figure 8], Šubic reduced the figurative aspect in favour of enhanced symbolism. Overall, he followed the original concept and retained all substantive clusters. In the depiction of bombardment, he replaced the bombers with a bird, and the burning house beneath it was drawn with inspiration from *Guernica*; the fatalities are presented only by two severed hands. The simplified resistance fighter remains the largest figure in the composition; he clenches one hand into a fist in front of himself while raising the other. The theme of resistance is reduced to hands raised in the air, surrounded by a rectangular field, and the underground activity is reduced to a five-pointed star on the trunk of one of the two trees. Internment is conveyed in the form of three horizontally outstretched arms, which may be interpreted as the arms of internees, desperately reaching out toward freedom. Then follows the vertical field, in which suffering is depicted in the form of tied hands representing captives as well as an animal skull and a human skull signifying death. Liberation and the Axis forces' defeat are summarised in the Yugoslav flag (or the flag of the People's Republic of Slovenia) rising above the fallen bird embodying the Axis forces. Finally, peace in the upper rectangular field is presented as a bird and an olive branch in the lower rectangular field, with the hands of the free outstretched toward it. Šubic turned the rich symbolism into a colour draft [Figure 9], from which he omitted several details (e.g., the dove) and depicted the figure of the resistance fighter according to the concept of heroic nudity, perhaps in alignment with the sculptures on the parliament building portal, created by Zdenko Kalin and Karel Putrih. This may have been one of the five drafts that Šubic presented to the panel. He created several sketches of the resistance fighter, varying from realistic to schematised. As the colour study in earthy tones suggests, he also tested colour tonality. In the next cluster of drafts, he took the reduction of themes a few steps further. The starting point was probably the pencil sketch [Figure 10], which maintained the composition of vertical division and the aforementioned themes but introduced more deviations: the depiction of the resistance fighter only comprises his head and raised fists, the number of raised fists is increased from six to nine, and the captives' tied hands are moved beneath them. Then follows the woman with a headscarf in strict profile, and the field containing a sequence of bust portraits of Partisans and women in frontal view and in strict profile arranged in four lines. The series is completed with the fallen bird, the dove with an olive branch in its beak symbolising freedom, and hands outstretched toward it. In a draft showing half the composition, Šubic drew the Yugoslav flag (or the flag of the People's Republic of Slovenia) behind the resistance fighter's fists

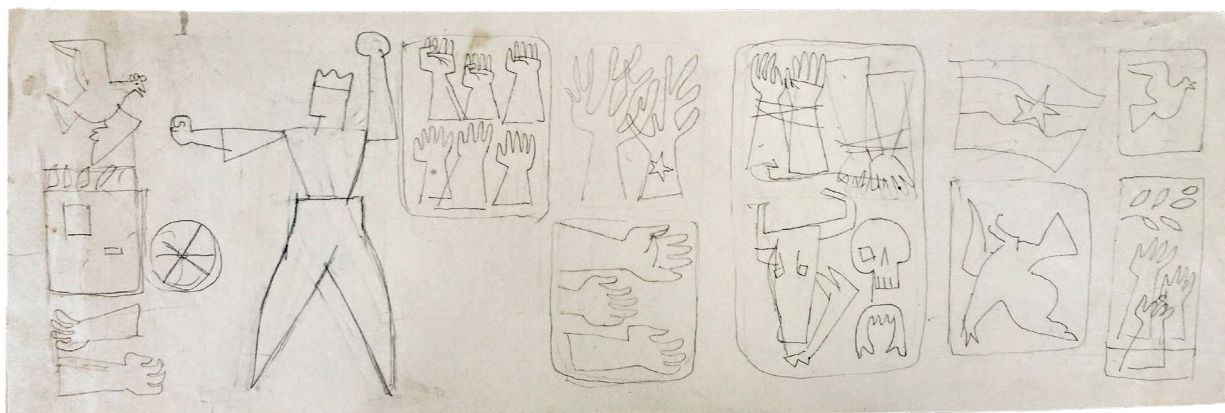


Figure 8. Ive Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia. Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.



Figure 9. Ive Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia. Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

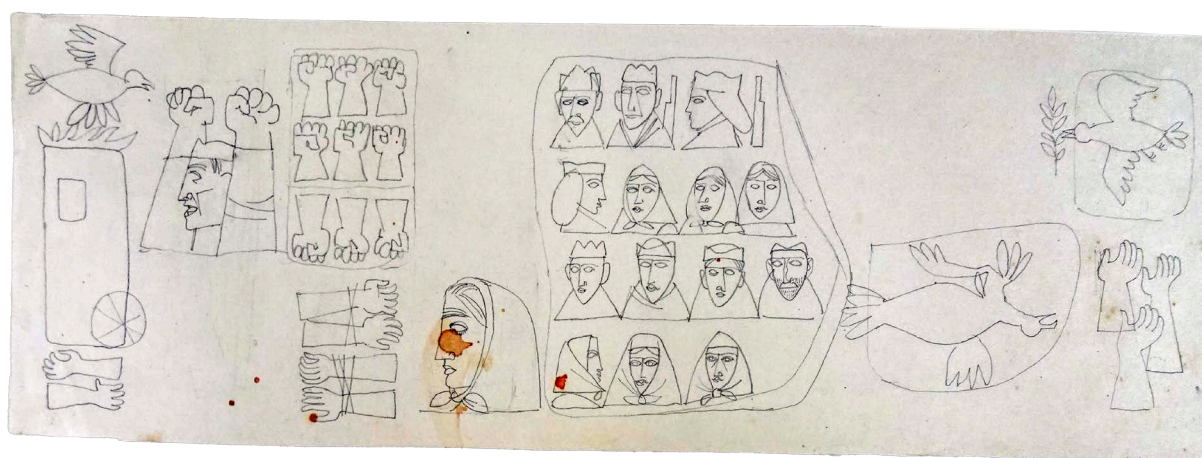


Figure 10. Ive Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia. Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

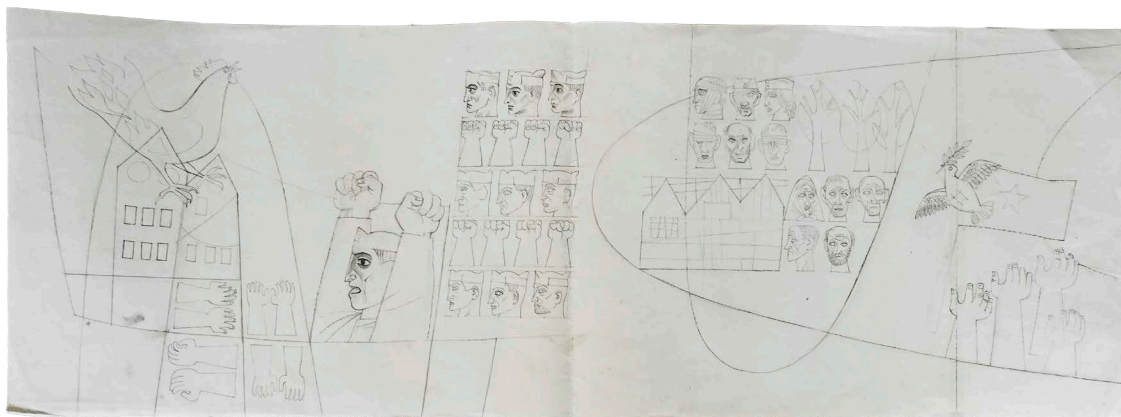


Figure 11. Ive Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia. Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

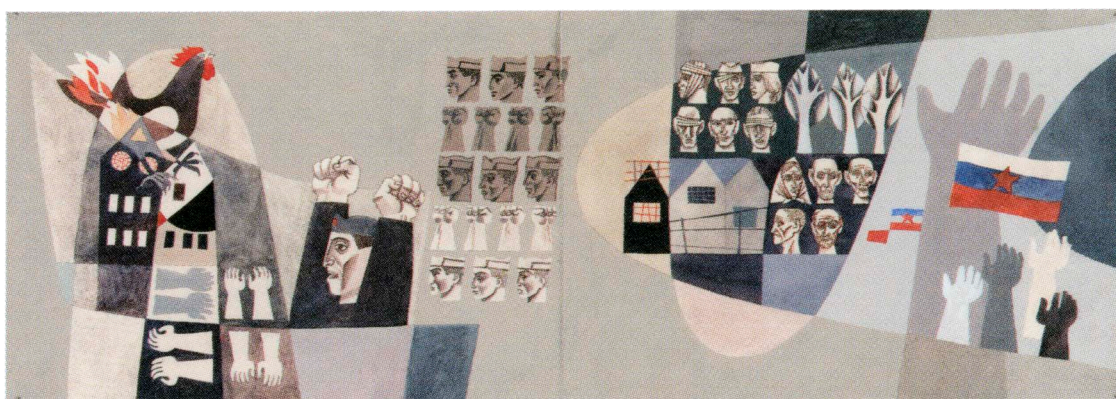


Figure 12. Ive Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia. Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.



Figure 13. Ive Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia. Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

and moved the neck-up profile of the horse behind the captives' bound hands. Separate sketches have been preserved for individual figures, such as the resistance fighter with raised fists, the Partisans and the women giving them food, and the hands of the suffering and the liberated. In some places, Šubic used colour lines and background surfaces to intervene in the black-and-white line drawing of the bust portraits. He elaborated the composition further and added more variegation [Figure 11] by introducing parabolic curves into the vertical division to round out individual compositional clusters. Thus, he replaced the flames on the roof of the house with a rooster and placed the hands in the bottom part of the sketch. The resistance fighter's bust portrait is followed by a section with the Partisans' heads in profile and fists alternating in strips (because one of the drafts features the Partisans' heads screaming, he apparently experimented with various facial expressions). There are notable similarities between their heads in strict profile and the miners' heads in Pregelj's mosaic in Trbovlje, which are also presented in strict left profile. Parallels can also be drawn to the painting oeuvre by Jože Ciuha, who in the 1950s, inspired by Byzantine frescoes he saw on his study trip to Macedonia, introduced geometric flattening and depicted female figures as bust portraits in frontal view and in strict profile (e.g., *Žene v belem* (Women in White), 1957; private ownership). At the intersection of the two parabolas, human suffering is presented above in the form of wounded soldiers' heads and below as buildings with bars representing prisons and the heads of the afflicted local population along with the starving internees with sunken faces. The dove with an olive branch in its beak symbolises freedom, and behind it is the five-pointed-star flag with hands outstretched toward it. With a few changes, this draft was also created using the tempera technique, and it was probably among the five drafts submitted to the panel [Figure 12]. The colour draft corresponds to the sketch, except that the dove in the last section is replaced by a large hand surrounded by three flags of various sizes: the largest is the flag of the People's Republic of Slovenia, followed by the flag of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, and the smallest flag is that of the Communist Party. The colour palette is limited to muted and compatible grey, blue, and brown tones, which are contrasted by red accents in the flags and the rooster; the colour-contrasting surfaces enhance the impression of abstractness. Further development of the composition is demonstrated in the allegorical colour draft [Figure 13], which begins with the burning house and a dead man lying beneath it with an outstretched hand, both inspired by *Guernica*; carved into the dead man's cheek is the bloody symbol of a broken five-pointed star. The resistance fighter now faces right and carries a rifle on his back. His figure



is followed by a two-part geometrically articulated strip with profiles of Partisan heads above and a fallen captive beneath them, his left hand clenched frozen in a defiant fist. The composition is brought to completion by the personification of Freedom with an olive branch in her hand and the flag of the People's Republic of Slovenia behind it. The division into colour-contrasting surfaces heightens the impression of abstractness. In terms of content and design, this group may also include the colour draft [Figure 14], which is the only one created in the narrow vertical format and stands out from the others, which are rendered in landscape format, making it questionable whether it was indeed intended for the parliament building. The influence of *Guernica* is also apparent here. The composition ought to be viewed from the bottom up, as a sequence of hands raised in defiance, the burning house with the bodies of its dwellers and cattle, visibly inspired by *Guernica*, and the axle of a wheel from the broken wagon. Then follow the collapsed victim and the head portraits of Partisans in strict profile and with a war cry on their lips, the highest one holding a grenade. Above him is a horse depicted from its neck up, rising with its mouth open in terror, which is yet another detail borrowed from *Guernica*. At the top, the freedom won with great effort is guarded by a Partisan depicted as a bust portrait in strict profile and holding a rifle. Behind him are the Yugoslav flag and an olive branch.

This group further includes drafts with stylised figures of the occupying forces and suffering civilians, burning houses, and Picassoesque details that also appear in the aforementioned drafts. In one of them, the naked figure of a German soldier brandishing his sword is depicted at the beginning of the composition, with houses burning in the background; then follows the suffering family and captives depicted as full-figure nudes; in the lower section, suffering is depicted with the details of a headless female torso, a bleeding head with a ripped cheek, and hands sticking out from behind prison bars [Figure 15]. A synthesis of the features listed so far is encapsulated in the drafts combining full-figure depictions of captives or the heads of Partisans with *Guernica*-inspired symbolic details. One of the drafts [Figure 16] thus displays a burning house

Figure 14. Ivo Šubic, sketch.
Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

Figure 15. Ive Šubic,
unrealised sketch for the
mosaic in the building of
the People's Assembly of
the People's Republic of
Slovenia.
Photo: Andreja Rakovec,
ZRC SAZU.



Figure 16. Ive Šubic,
unrealised sketch for the
mosaic in the building of
the People's Assembly of
the People's Republic of
Slovenia.
Photo: Andreja Rakovec,
ZRC SAZU.

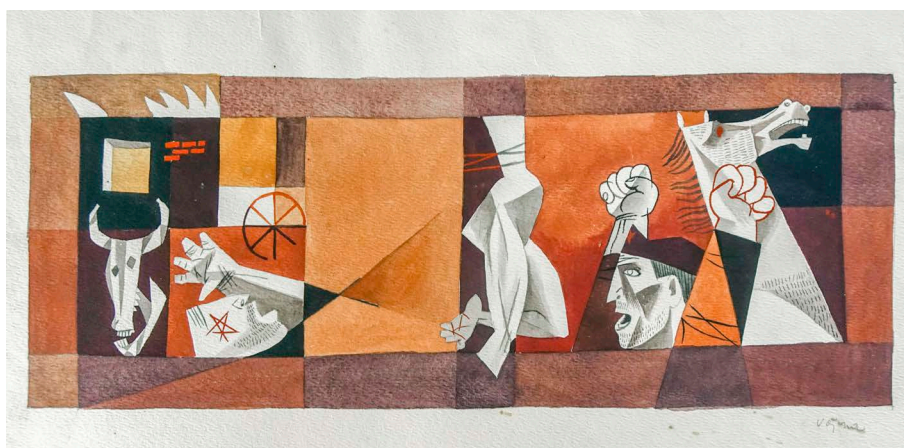


in the *Guernica* style, with a cow's skull looking through the window and a dead man lying on the floor with his mouth wide open in a silent scream. Then follow two executed female captives, one turned upside down and the other blindfolded and kneeling, with her hands outstretched in the air and a gushing wound below her neck. The next scene features the flag of the People's Republic of Slovenia and the profile of a Partisan beneath it, followed by a horse and a fist, and a schematised female figure. The geometric surface articulation is executed in the cubistic colour scale of grey, ochre, white, and black tones. The next two drafts are very similar, except for the number of burning houses and a few minor details. In the first, the body of a dead man lying beneath the burning houses shows a strong resemblance to the fallen soldier in *Guernica* [Figure 17]. The resistance is represented by the fist as the most prominent element in size within the composition, followed by the heads of Partisans and the terrified horse – which is, again, a detail taken from *Guernica* – and the flag of the People's Republic of Slovenia fluttering behind them. The other version depicts only one burning house and a naked female captive

Figure 17.
Ive Šubic, sketch.
Photo: Andreja Rakovec,
ZRC SAZU.



Figure 18. Ive Šubic,
unrealised sketch for the
mosaic in the building of
the People's Assembly of
the People's Republic of
Slovenia.
Photo: Andreja Rakovec,
ZRC SAZU.



instead of the fist; apart from slight variations in the figures of Partisans, no other deviations are observed. The panel was most likely presented with one of these drafts; considering the level of perfection, it seems safe to assume that it was a version that relied heavily on *Guernica*.

The most reduced versions of the original visual idea are represented by two colour drafts in red and orange tones, which only retained the key elements. The simpler draft likely served as the basis for the more elaborate one, which may have been submitted to the panel [Figure 18]. Šubic stripped the composition of all narrative detail and merely retained a few symbolic elements: the burning house in the *Guernica* style, with the cow's skull and the local inhabitant lying killed in front of it in the same vein as the fallen soldier in *Guernica*: reduced to a head with its mouth wide open in a mortal cry and bloody stars instead of eyes, the hand, outstretched behind the head in the first draft, now rises above it, with its form resembling the hand of the dead man in *Guernica*. The theme of

Figure 19. Ive Šubic,
 sketch for the mosaic
 in the building of the
 People's Assembly of
 the People's Republic of
 Slovenia.

Photo: Andreja Rakovec,
 ZRC SAZU.

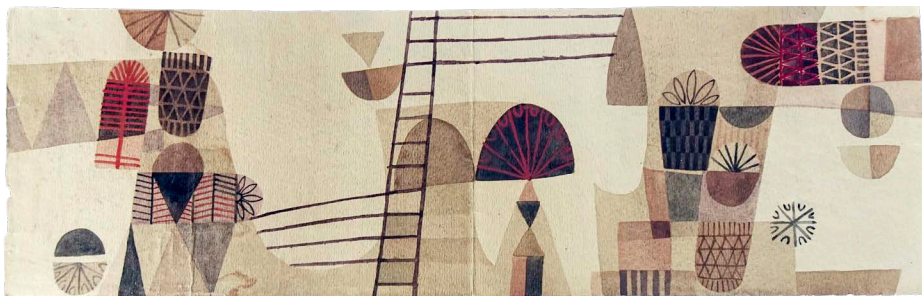
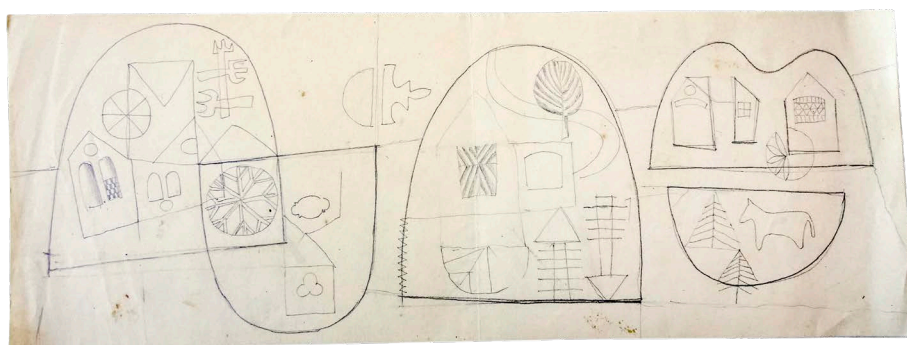


Figure 20. Ive Šubic,
 sketch for the mosaic
 in the building of the
 People's Assembly of
 the People's Republic of
 Slovenia.

Photo: Andreja Rakovec,
 ZRC SAZU.



suffering is completed by the torso of a female captive tied to a pole. The resistance is embodied in the shouting head of a Partisan raising his fists, and the whinnying horse depicted from the neck up may be interpreted as an image of the horrors and maelstrom of war.

The final group of drafts brings forth an entirely distinct set of themes that deviate radically from the panel's proposal. The sketches depict an abstract landscape with elements of Slovenian vernacular architecture. In his explanation, Šubic maintained that he abided by the panel's desire to use the mosaic as a decorative surface and designed it as a multifaceted, figureless surface conveying elements of the Slovenian landscape, including vernacular architecture and its specific features.⁴¹

The theme was probably based on the pencil drawing, in which houses are lined up in a seemingly mirrored arrangement. In further drafts, Šubic worked with individual architectural details, such as rosettes, brick lattices, windows, shutters, and gables, and he transformed them into abstract compositions. His watercolours were also studies of colour configurations in warm shades [Figure 19]. The final version is perhaps the pencil drawing, in which the decorative details of vernacular architecture are arranged into an abstract composition of rounded shapes representing hills or the undulating terrain of the Slovenian countryside known to Šubic from his native Poljane Valley [Figure 20]; perhaps the double hill is a schematic



Figure 21. Ive Šubic, sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia.

Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

representation of two mountains – *Mladi vrh* and *Stari vrh* – which he often incorporated into his works. The parabolic curve was employed in one of the earlier drafts. In two colour drafts [Figures 21, 22], the composition was elaborated with further details. The result was an abstract whole composed of schematised details of buildings and trees reduced to geometric surfaces. The final draft [Figure 22] was approved in September 1959. In addition, the panel also deemed it better than the figurative drafts. The panel described it as “pure ornament that will fit well in the creation of a natural-stone mosaic,” but it did not delve into the development of the theme and the artist’s explanation presented with it.⁴² According to this explanation, Šubic divided the composition into three major undulating units echoing the rolling shape of the Slovenian hills, and he rhythmically alternated them with rural houses, windows, niches, and wood panelling, further adding a haystack and trees. Using multicolour surfaces and lines, Šubic created a congruent, colour-harmonious whole that exuded softness. He graded the colour scale in accordance with the natural colour of stone and envisaged a few colour accents in artificial stone.⁴³ Perhaps the final selection of the draft was also due to Luc Menaše, who championed modernism and believed that the art furnishing of the assembly building should also include decorative works that emanated individuality and intimacy.⁴⁴ The fact that the panel showed no interest in the content and approved the mosaic alongside Ciuha’s as an aesthetic contribution to the ambience of the space⁴⁵ sheds light on the attitude that the authorities at the time had toward their modernism. As early as the mid-1950s, even in the statements of the most ardent advocates of Socialist Realism, such as Boris Zihelr, it is apparent that they allowed for modernist form in certain cases (e.g., young artists following “fashion”), while rejecting modernism in terms of content.⁴⁶ Because Šubic’s mosaic did not radically depart from



Figure 22. Ive Šubic, sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia.

Photo: Tomaž Lunder.

Source: Arhiv Nives Lunder.

the objective world in form, but rather maintained an associative link with it, it was also acceptable to a prestigious state institution. On the other hand, the content was also unproblematic because he chose a landscape theme, which is semantically neutral.⁴⁷ At the end of the 1950s, modernism with secular content was also approved as an apolitical artistic orientation within the framework of public commissions, allowing the Yugoslav state, as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, to build an image of plurality and liberality and to navigate shrewdly between the Eastern and Western blocs.⁴⁸ On the one hand, the abstract mosaics on the staircase could be interpreted as an affirmation of the commissioner's public image because they complemented stylistically diverse artworks in the assembly building, and immediately at the entrance they confirmed the image that Yugoslavia had been cultivating in the world as a prominent representative of the so-called Third Way. On the other hand, the mosaics were located in a space that served merely as a passageway, and so they were less conspicuous. Nevertheless, abstraction in mosaics did not interfere with the interior of the staircase leading into the vestibule, where Boris Kalin's full-figure statue of Tito took centre stage in the parliament building.⁴⁹ Šubic's thematic and formal shift, as seen in the last group of drafts, was probably influenced by Jože Ciuha, who, on returning from his study trip to Paris in 1957, collaborated with Šubic and lived in his studio in Poljane nad Škofjo Loko for a while (at least until 1959, when he set out for Myanmar).⁵⁰ During that period, they worked on the drafts for the parliament,⁵¹ addressing in particular the issue concerning the spatial arrangement of the mosaics⁵² to establish harmony between the mosaics themselves and with the foyer, which had a cold ambiance due to its stone walls. Thus, it is not excluded that Šubic's final solution was owed to his collaboration with Ciuha. Specifically, Ciuha's oeuvre from the 1950s features a geometric flattening of the composition, landscape, and figures,



Figure 23.
Jože Ciuha, *Kompozicija (Composition) or Sončno mesto (Sun City)*, mosaic, 1960, National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana. Photo: Andrej Furlan, ZRC SAZU.

which are comparable to Šubic's drafts from the last group. For Ciuha, too, the mosaic for the People's Assembly was the first mosaic in his oeuvre, and he, too, was acquainted with and profoundly impressed by Marij Pregelj's mosaic in the Trbovlje Workers' Home.⁵³ After submitting a series of variation drafts on his assigned topic of industry, Ciuha – like Šubic – created the mosaic as a decorative abstract composition [Figure 23]. He and Šubic then harmonised their drafts in terms of design but kept their themes distinct, Šubic opting for his favourite subject of his native rural environment.

Later, Šubic used some of the drafts for the parliament in developing compositions or details in other works for public institutions; for example, in the mosaic gracing the Partisan Lodge on the Vodice Pasture (*Vodiška planina*) in 1963 (completed in 1964) and in unfinished drafts for the fresco *Poljanska vstaja* (Poljane Uprising) in Poljane in 1981. He also used them for other kinds of commissions – for example, the monument of the Battle of Dražgoše in 1976 – by adding such details as hands, burning houses, and bust portraits of women with headscarves.

The abundance of preserved drafts for the mosaic in the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia attests that Šubic had explored the subject matter extensively. What also makes the commission for the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia exceptional in his oeuvre is that, unlike the rest of his works for public institutions, it was evaluated by an expert panel and a representative of the commissioning authority, which both repeatedly rejected his proposals. Ultimately, Šubic completely modified the design of his draft to bring it closer to Ciuha's and, by doing so, finally reached a compromise that convinced the panel to authorise its realisation.

The mosaic is also exceptional for its degree of abstraction, which Šubic did not repeat in his later work. The painter developed his artistic style under the influence of cubism, surrealism, and the art of Marc Chagall. He remained devoted to figurative art, which underpins all the other public works for which he conceived the design.

Funding

This chapter was written as part of the basic research project Art for Community. Registration and Assessment of Artworks Commissioned for Public Institutions in Slovenia, 1945–1991 (J6-50206) and the research programme Art in Slovenia at a Cultural Crossroads (P6-0061), both funded by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency from the state budget of the Republic of Slovenia.

Endnotes

- 1 Before that, in 1949, he created the sgraffito in Komen's cooperative hall in collaboration with Floris Oblak, and between 1953 and 1954 he most probably carried out the technical execution of the art decoration at the Vuzenica Hydroelectric Power Station, based on drafts by Zoran Didek and Ivan Seljak Čopič. R. J. [Janez Dokler], "Pomlad, konjske sile in pogovor o slikarstvu," *Mladina* 12, no. 52 (28 December 1954): 7; *Ivan Seljak-Čopič* (Idrija: Mestni muzej, 1988), 7.
- 2 Katarina Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije: umetnostno naročilo in njegov kontekst* (PhD diss., Ljubljana: Podiplomska šola ZRC SAZU, 2015), 168–177; Kaja Širok, "Gradnja Skupščine Socialistične republike Slovenije in oblikovanje nacionalnega historičnega diskurza," in *Parlament – tri zgodbe: arhitektura, umetnost, spomin*, by Nika Grabar, Kaja Širok, and Martina Vovk (Ljubljana: Muzej novejšje zgodovine Slovenije, 2012), 57–71. See also Petra Čeh, "Loški spiritus movens," in *Ive Šubic: ilustrator in kulturni delavec*, ed. Petra Čeh (Škofja Loka: Loški muzej Škofja Loka, 2022), 37; Saša Bučan, "Ohranjanje starodavnega izročila," in *Ive Šubic: slikar Poljanske doline*, ed. Tomaž Krpič (Ljubljana: Modrijan; Škofja Loka: Muzejsko društvo Škofja Loka, 2013), 84–85.
- 3 See Nika Grabar, "Nastanek in gradnja parlamenta po načrtih Vinka Glanza," in *Parlament – tri zgodbe: arhitektura, umetnost, spomin*, by Nika Grabar, Kaja Širok, and Martina Vovk (Ljubljana: Muzej novejšje zgodovine Slovenije, 2012), 7–29.
- 4 Arhiv Državnega zbora Republike Slovenije (hereinafter ADZRS), Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik seje Komisije za pregled umetniških in kiparskih del v novi palači Ljudske skupščine LRS, 9 March 1958, 10.
- 5 See Tomaž Brejc, "Neznana umetnina v znanem času," in *Gabrijel Stupica: pozabljene podobe: risbe, akvareli in tempera*, ed. Miloš Bašin (Ljubljana: Bežigradska galerija 2, 2003), 3–45. Reprinted in Tomaž Brejc, *Študije o slovenskem slikarstvu v 20. stoletju* (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 2010), 221–255; Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*.
- 6 Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 29.
- 7 On Šubic's creative work during the Second World War, see Vera Visočnik, "Ivan Šubic–Ive, slikar in grafik," *Borec* 19, no. 11 (1968): 913–916; "Pripovedi treh partizanskih likovnikov," *Borec* 16, no. 5 (1965): 462–468; Sonja Porle, "Pri Dovjakovih je bilo podobarstvo zmeraj doma," in *Ive Šubic: slikar Poljanske doline*, ed. Tomaž Krpič (Ljubljana: Modrijan; Škofja Loka: Muzejsko društvo Škofja Loka, 2013), 307–309.
- 8 On Šubic's engagement in the Slovenian Fine Arts Society, see Tina Fortič Jakopič, "Ive Šubic kot kulturni delavec in vloga njegove umetnosti v družbi," in *Ive Šubic: ilustrator in kulturni delavec*, ed. Petra Čeh (Škofja Loka: Loški muzej Škofja Loka, 2022), 56–58.
- 9 Luc Menaše, "Sgraffito – okras zadružnega doma v Komnu," *Mladinska revija* 5 (1949–1950): 277–278.
- 10 Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 33.
- 11 Cf. Fortič Jakopič, "Ive Šubic kot kulturni delavec," 68.
- 12 He might have been familiar with the reproduction published in Veno Pilon, "Pismo iz Pariza," in *Likovni svet: arhitektura – slikarstvo – kiparstvo in umetna obrt*, ed. Lojze Gostiša (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1951), 165.
- 13 Airpress, "A Press Release on the Opening of the Exhibition Picasso at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris," press release, 23 May 1955, Les Arts Décoratifs Archives, Paris, D1/296, article 5, Expo. Picasso, <https://guernica.museoreinasofia.es/en/document/press-release-opening-exhibition-picasso-musee-des-arts-decoratifs-paris>.
- 14 Maurice Jardot, *Picasso: peintures, 1900–1955* (Paris: Musée des Arts Décoratifs, 1955).
- 15 Wilhelm Boeck and Jaime Sabartés, *Pablo Picasso* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1955).

- 16 Maja Šubic, personal communication.
- 17 Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 32–34. A similar case in which the expert panel rejected drafts for the decoration of an important institution were Slavko Pengov's frescos in the Palace of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in Belgrade, see: Elizabeta Šprager, *Slavko Pengov: freskant* (Bachelor's thesis, Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta, 1993), 39; Donovan Pavlinec, "Slovenski inženirji človeških duš: monumentalne stenske poslikave socialističnega realizma," *Zbornik za umetnostno zgodovino*, n. s., 44 (2008): 131.
- 18 The cornice measured 1.5 × 31.1 m. ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Zapisnik sestanka glede notranje umetniške opreme nove palače Ljudske skupščine LRS, 26 June 1957.
- 19 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Poročilo o izračunu za umetniška dela na Palači Ljudske skupščine LRS, 15 October 1957; ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Zapisnik sestanka glede notranje umetniške opreme nove palače Ljudske skupščine LRS, 26 June 1957.
- 20 Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 169.
- 21 Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 170. The plans for furnishing this space with art changed before Šubic and Ciuha were commissioned. According to the earliest preserved, undated source cited by Mohar, the walls were to be decorated with mosaics featuring soldiers and workers; in June 1957, however, the possibility of leaving the space without artistic decoration and covering the walls with marble was also considered. Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 168; ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Zapisnik sestanka glede notranje umetniške opreme nove palače Ljudske skupščine LRS, 26 June 1957; ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik sestanka Komisije, 3 December 1957, 5.
- 22 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik sestanka Komisije, 3 December 1957, 5; ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik seje komisije za izvedbo umetniških in slikarskih del v novi palači Ljudske skupščine LRS, 6 December 1957, 3.
- 23 Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 169.
- 24 This probably related to the proposed golden patina of the sculptural portal, with which the mosaics were to be harmonised. ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik sestanka Komisije, 3 December 1957, 3.
- 25 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Poročilo za Iveta Šubica in Jožeta Ciuho z oceno predloženih del in napotki za popravke na podlagi sestanka Komisije, 3 December 1957.
- 26 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik seje komisije za izvedbo umetniških in slikarskih del v novi palači Ljudske skupščine LRS, 6 December 1957, 1–2, 4.
- 27 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Poročilo o dosedanjem delu (december 1957–januar, februar 1958) Komisije za pregled umetniških del in opreme v novi palači Ljudske skupščine LRS, 1–2.
- 28 The inscription abbreviates *Osvobodilna fronta slovenskega naroda* (Liberation Front of the Slovene Nation).
- 29 Regarding the sgraffito in Komen, Menaše maintained that building a composition in depth was more suitable for a fresco than for a sgraffito; moreover, where the same tone was used, the figures were not clearly discernible from the background. Menaše, "Sgraffito – okras zadružnega doma v Komnu," 278.
- 30 Reproduced in *Ive Šubic: slikar Poljanske doline*, 127.
- 31 The work is held by the National Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia.
- 32 A horse was the first animal Šubic drew as a child. After his uncle Metod, a joiner, drew a horse's head for him, the boy copied it many times until he finally drew an entire horse. Ladislav Lesar, "Njegovo dolenjsko partizanstvo," *Dolenjski list* 30, no. 14 (1979): 48. In Šubic's view, a horse represented the perfection of a living being that every good painter should know how to draw in full detail. *Ive Šubic: poet in glasnik Poljanske doline* (Poljane nad Škofjo Loko: OŠ Poljane, 2000), 50.
- 33 See Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 157–167.

- 34 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Komisija za oceno umetniških del, 2–3.
- 35 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik seje Komisije za pregled umetniških in kiparskih del v novi palači, 9 March 1958, 1.
- 36 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik seje komisije za pregled umetniških (risarskih in kiparskih) del v novi palači Ljudske skupščine, 21 May 1958, 2.
- 37 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik seje komisije za pregled umetniških del, 21 May 1958, 6.
- 38 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik seje komisije za pregled umetniških del, 21 May 1958, 1.
- 39 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik seje komisije za pregled umetniških del, 21 May 1958, 3–4, 6.
- 40 Tomaž Brejc, *Guernica: eseji o slikarstvu, politiki in vojni* (Ljubljana: Delavska enotnost, 1988), 94–95.
- 41 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Osnutek za mozaik na levi stranski steni v avli Ljudske skupščine LRS.
- 42 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Poročilo Komisije za pregled umetniških del, 7 September 1959.
- 43 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Osnutek za mozaik na levi stranski steni v avli Ljudske skupščine LRS.
- 44 ADZRS, Skupščina SRS, Stenografski zapisnik seje Komisije za pregled umetniških in kiparskih del v novi palači, 9 March 1958, 10.
- 45 Širok, "Gradnja Skupščine Socialistične republike Slovenije in oblikovanje nacionalnega historičnega diskurza," 67.
- 46 On changes in the government's attitude toward contemporary visual art, see Aleš Gabrič, *Socialistična kulturna revolucija: Slovenska kulturna politika 1953–1962* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1995), 198–202; Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 102.
- 47 Critics influenced by communist ideology took a different stance toward Stane Kregar's abstract works, which had religious content. See Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 103.
- 48 See Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 101–107.
- 49 Mohar, *Likovna oprema Ljudske skupščine Ljudske republike Slovenije*, 104.
- 50 Jože Ciuha, "Biografija," in *Jože Ciuha*, ed. Radmila Ciuha (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 2000), 270.
- 51 Ciuha, "Biografija," 266.
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Nova odkritja o mozaiku Iveta Šubica v Državnem zboru Republike Slovenije

Povzetek

Mozaik *Pokrajina* Iveta Šubica (1922–1989) v Državnem zboru Republike Slovenije je njegova prva samostojna monumentalna stenska poslikava za javne ustanove in najprezentativnejše naročilo. S pomočjo ohranjenih osnutkov skušamo dopolniti arhivske dokumente in rekonstruirati razvoj motiva. Mozaik izstopa med njegovimi deli za javne ustanove po abstrakciji, saj sicer prevladujejo motivi NOB, pa tudi zato, ker je vsebino narekovala strokovna komisija in je moral Šubic osnutke večkrat spremenjati. K izdelavi mozaika so ga povabili skupaj z Jožetom Ciuho in njuno delo obravnavali kot celoto.

Pri Šubicu zasledimo modernejšo likovno govorico od sredine petdesetih let naprej. V neposreden stik z umetnostjo Zahoda je prišel že v prvi polovici petdesetih, po obisku Pariza leta 1956 je opazen vpliv nadrealizma Marca Chagalla in kubizma Georgesa Braqua. Pomemben vir osnutkov za mozaik v parlamentu je bila Picassova *Guernica*, ki je najbrž nikoli ni videl v živo in si je pomagal z reprodukcijami.

Pot do realizacije mozaika, dokončanega leta 1960, je bila dolga dve leti, preden je strokovna komisija odobrila osnutek. Komisija (Vinko Glanz, Lojze Rojc, Lojze Gostiša, Stane Mikuž, Luc Menaše) je imela posvetovalno vlogo, končno odločitev je sprejel politik Ivan Maček - Matija. Sprva so umetnikoma namenili okras venca pred malo dvorano Zbora proizvajalcev v pritličju parlamenta, oktobra 1957 pa so jima na Mačkovo pobudo zaupali izdelavo mozaikov na vhodnem stopnišču.

Umetnika sta najprej naredila nekaj predlog in komisija je šele nato določila vsebino. Do decembra 1957 sta predložila osnutke na temo kmečkih uporov, NOB, industrije, kmetijstva, vojne, miru, dela in dekorativne motive. Mednje sodijo Šubičevi večfiguralni osnutki na temo NOB. Po risbah s svinčnikom je nastal barvni osnutek s partizani in prebivalci, ki pozdravljajo osvoboditelje, padli Nemec je simbol poraženega okupatorja. Viden je vpliv zgodnjega Chagalla in kubizma.

Komisija osnutkov ni potrdila in je predlagala, da do aprila 1958 izdelata enotni kompoziciji v toplih barvah, z vertikalno razdelitvijo z delavci v težki industriji, česar se je lotil Ciuha, in z borci oziroma revolucijo, ki naj predstavljajo partizana, ilegalca, bolničarja in ranjenca, česar se je lotil Šubic.

Na Šubičevih osnutkih, ki so nastali med decembrom 1957 in januarjem 1958, so predstavniki skupin, kot jih je določila komisija. Med njimi je tudi osnutek toplih barv, na katerem je vertikalno razdeljena kompozicija geometrizirana, saj so figure zaprte vsaka v svoj blok. Ni izključeno, da je imel Šubic v mislih mozaik Marija Preglja na Delavskem domu v Trbovljah.

Novih osnutkov, ki sta jih umetnika predložila januarja 1958, komisija ni sprejela. Naročila je še po en osnutek, ker pa je bil rok zaradi predvidenega odprtja parlamenta prekratek, je določila, da steni ostaneta prazni in mozaika namestijo pozneje ali pa naročilo zaupajo drugemu umetniku. Komisija je spremenila tudi mnenje glede vertikalne razdelitve kompozicije, ker naj bi figure v majhnem vhodnem prostoru delovale prevelike. Kljub temu sta umetnika do maja 1958 predložila po pet novih osnutkov na temo vojne in miru. Šubic, ki je osnutke poimenoval *Vojna*, je upodobil okupacijo, upor, povračilne ukrepe okupatorja in osvoboditev. Kompozicijo je postopoma izčistil in namesto narativnosti krepil simboliko. Izrazit zaspek h *Guernici* opazimo na dveh najbolj reduciranih osnutkih: trpljenje predstavljajo goreča hiša, kravja lobanja, ubiti domačin in torzo talke, privezane ob drog; upor pooseblja partizan v izrezu glave, ki dviga pesti v zrak in kriči, strah oziroma vojni kaos pa predstavlja rezgetajoči konj.

Čeprav so osnutke zavrnili, je komisija prepoznala izjemen napredek in naročilo le zaupala umetnikoma. Zadovoljna je bila s Šubičevim osnutkom, ki je prikazoval »sklenjeno figuralno kompozicijo z jasno spoznavno motiviko«, a je opozorila na očitne povezave s Chagallom in *Guernico* in želela, da bi se likovno približal Ciuhi.

Zadnja skupina osnutkov predstavlja popoln obrat. Šubic je sledil naročnikovi želji po mozaiku kot dekorativni ploskvi in ga je zasnoval ploskovito z elementi slovenske krajine in kmečkega stavbarstva. Nanj je verjetno vplival Ciuha, v čigar opusu iz petdesetih let opazimo geometrično ploščenje kompozicije. Osnutke sta oblikovno uskladila, vsebinsko pa se razmejila, pri čemer je Šubic izbral motiviko domačega kmečkega okolja. Septembra 1959 je komisija odobrila končni osnutek kot »čisti ornament«. To zgovorno priča o tedanjem odnosu oblasti do njunega modernizma. Že proti sredini petdesetih let v izjavah tudi najbolj zagrizenih zagovornikov socrealizma zasledimo, da so v določenih primerih dopuščali modernistično formo, vsebine ne. Ker je Šubičev mozaik v formi ohranil asociativno vez s predmetnim svetom in prikazoval pomensko nevtralno krajino, je bil sprejemljiv tudi za reprezentativno državno ustanovo.

A substantial body of postwar art created for institutional environments remains hidden in plain sight: in schools, hospitals, municipal offices, factories, hotels, shops, and other spaces of everyday life. Some works remain intact, others survive in altered interiors or as partial material remains, and still others are known only through scattered archival records, photographs, and uncertain

memories. Many have been covered, relocated, destroyed or forgotten, even though they formed an important part of postwar public space and visual culture.

This volume contributes to the transnational study of art

commissioned for public institutions, a field that remains unevenly researched across national contexts. The chapters show how institutions used art to shape their environments and how later changes in use or ownership affected the works' meanings and prospects for preservation.

