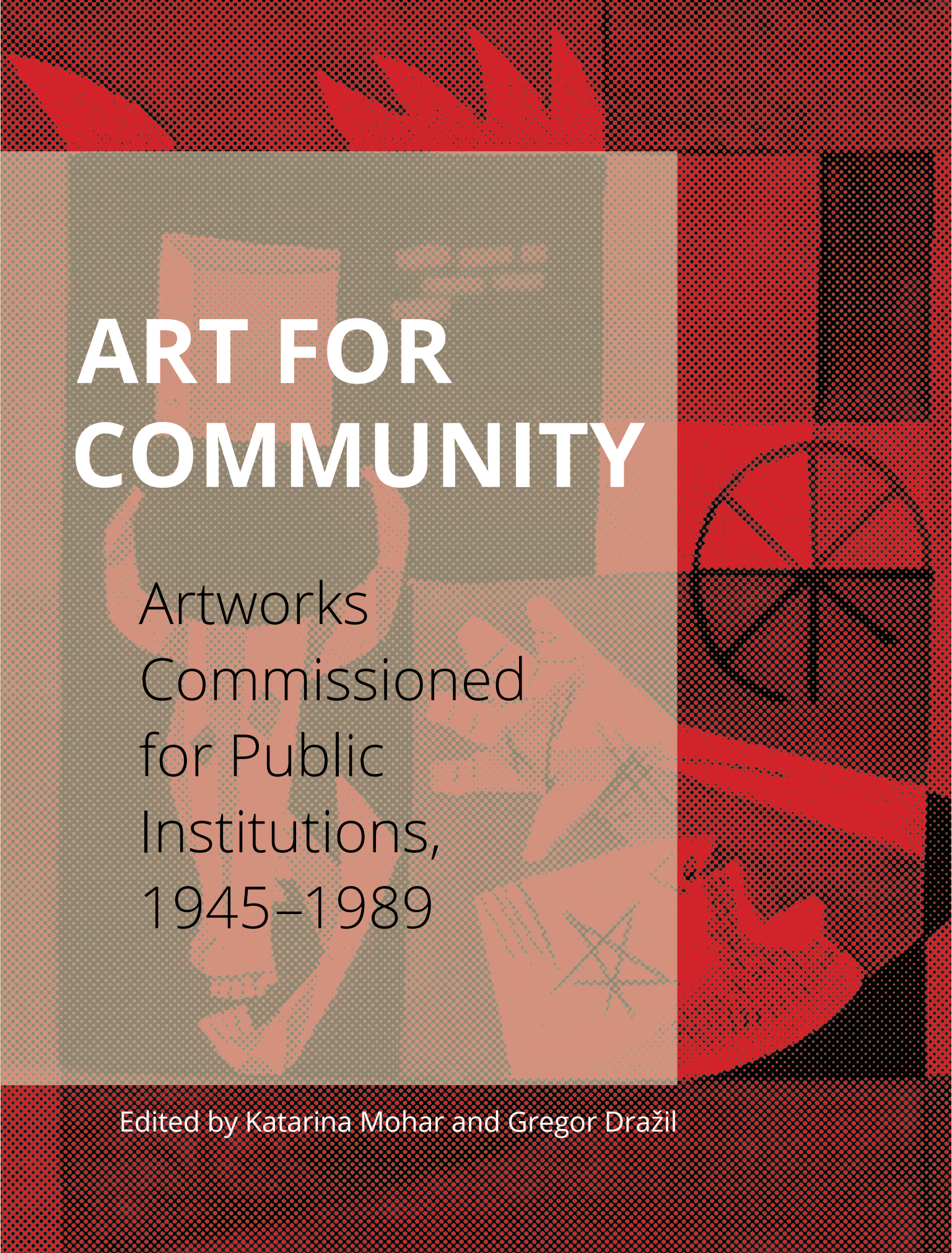




ART FOR COMMUNITY

Artworks
Commissioned
for Public
Institutions,
1945–1989

Edited by Katarina Mohar and Gregor Dražil



Založba ZRC



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Ljubljana, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

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. The chapters collected here examine this fragile artistic production from an international perspective, exploring specific artworks and artists as well as the broader political, institutional, social, and artistic contexts in which they were commissioned and created.

This volume is a result of the research project *Art for Community: Registration and Assessment of Artworks Commissioned for Public Institutions in Slovenia, 1945–1991* (J6-50206), funded by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency. Conducted between 2023 and 2026 by researchers at the France Stele Institute of Art History at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the project identifies, documents, analyses, and assesses this dispersed corpus, makes its records accessible through an open-access digital registry, and contributes to its preservation. It also seeks to position these works within Slovenian, Yugoslav, and international art history, reassess artists' oeuvres, investigate cultural policies and commissioning procedures, and involve citizens in identifying undocumented works. At the time of writing, the project had identified approximately four hundred and fifty works, of which three hundred were already available through an online registry (<https://www.umetnostzaskupnost.si/>). The resulting corpus includes many works previously absent from scholarship and allows comparisons across periods, regions, media, institutional settings, and states of preservation. The conference *Art for Community: Artworks Commissioned for Public Institutions, 1945–1989*, held in Ljubljana on 26–27 September 2024, extended this inquiry beyond Slovenia. The revised contributions gathered here extend it to Sweden, West Berlin, Romania, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Italy, and Portugal.

The project and volume use different endpoints. For the Slovenian project, 1991 marks independence and the end of the Yugoslav institutional framework in which its corpus was formed. The volume retains the conference's 1945–1989 frame as a comparative Cold War horizon, whereas some contributions begin earlier and several follow the works' later histories. The volume focuses primarily on artworks commissioned for public institutions. Several chapters extend this scope to other institutional

environments or consider acquisitions and other forms of placement when these formed part of comparable strategies. The public character of these settings depended on access as much as on ownership. Among the works discussed are those integrated into architecture and movable objects conceived for specific interiors, with unrealised commissions also considered. In the title, “community” refers to the groups that institutions claimed to represent or serve, although actual audiences and patterns of access changed over time.

Main themes

The volume pays particular attention to the institutional conditions under which artworks were commissioned and produced. Funding arrangements influenced how commissions were organised, and commissioners and professional bodies shaped the selection of artists and the development of individual works. Artists participated actively in these processes: they negotiated the terms of projects and sought to influence cultural policy through professional associations.

Several contributions consider how the ideal of the synthesis of the arts was realised through the relationship between art and architecture. The form this took varied across political and institutional settings: hierarchies within institutions shaped collaboration between artists and architects, and individual commissions provided a scope for testing new forms of artistic expression. A closer examination of production also brings into view those that translated artistic designs into material form; their contribution was often obscured by attribution to the artist that conceived the work. In some cases, this division of labour was explicitly gendered.

The relationship between artworks and their settings continued to shape their fate and meaning after installation. Alterations to buildings could conceal or damage works, and relocation sometimes ensured their survival at the cost of the original context. Preservation therefore involves attention to physical condition as well as interpretation. Inventories provide a basis for assessing dispersed material, and digital methods help document change and visualise lost spatial relationships.

Contributions

The chapters approach these questions from various geographical and institutional perspectives, often moving across the themes outlined above.

Oscar Svanelid and Marta Edling begin with the Swedish system of state-supported public art. Their chapter examines the tension between

the governmental infrastructures and the political agency of art in state environments, testing claims of cultural democracy against the uneven distribution of commissions. Barbara Vodopivec broadens the comparison by placing established European percent-for-art schemes alongside professional advocacy and non-binding initiatives in socialist Yugoslavia, with particular attention to Slovenia. Annette Tietenberg then examines a single unrealised project, reconstructing the competition that selected Ed and Nancy Kienholz's proposal for *Ernst-Reuter-Platz* (Ernst Reuter Square) as well as the administrative and political circumstances in which it failed to obtain a building permit.

Burcu Selcen Coşkun examines related questions of patronage and architectural setting in postwar Istanbul. Drawing on projects involving public or private commissioners, she examines the dialogue between artworks and buildings, and then addresses the conservation problems caused by alterations to their architectural settings or their demolition. Gregor Dražil turns to mural production by Ivan Seljak Čopič during the 1950s and early 1960s. His artist-centred account traces Seljak Čopič's movement away from realism toward an increasingly geometric, semi-abstract idiom and situates this development within broader changes in Slovenian art of the period.

Irina Cărbăuş expands the comparison to socialist Romania through Jules Perahim's murals. She examines how the ideas of synthesis and monumentality operated within cultural policy and the changing built environment. Professional networks shaped access to commissions, and later material losses were accompanied by the erasure of Perahim's role from historical narratives. Andreja Rakovec returns to the Slovenian National Assembly, using newly discovered drafts and archival material to reconstruct the development of Ive Šubic's mosaic. Its repeated revisions show how the final design emerged through negotiation between the artist and those overseeing the commission.

Nadja Zgonik shifts the focus to Marij Pregel's tapestries for the Koteks Tobus boutique. She relates their design for Oton Jugovec's interior and their production at Atelier 61 to the wider revival of tapestry as a prestigious modern medium and a movable form of public art. Their later dispersal and recovery reveal the particular vulnerability of movable works. Nataša Ivanović develops these questions through Zoran Mušič's embroidery for the first-class lounge of the Italian ocean liner *Augustus*. She places the embroidery within the liner's coordinated interior design and its role in representing Italian culture abroad, drawing attention to the contribution of Mušič's wife and mother-in-law to its production. The

chapter also traces the work after its removal from the ship, including its restoration and later museum display.

Patricia Počanić moves from an individual textile commission to the broader artistic furnishing of Yugoslav hotel interiors in Istria and the Kvarner Gulf. Her case studies show how socially owned hotel companies combined direct commissions with acquisitions, guided by tourism policy and a desire to present Yugoslavia as a modern country to foreign visitors. Collaboration between artists and architects was central to the resulting interiors. Blaž Šeme subsequently turns from individual histories to a systematic inventory of socialist-era mosaics in Slovenia. Condition assessment and risk analysis show how building type and heritage status affect the preservation and vulnerability of these works.

Begoña Farré Torras concludes with Dordio Gomes's mural *The Myth of Prometheus*, painted for the Porto Higher School of Fine Arts during the *Estado Novo* period. She traces its changing reception and examines the debate over whether a political intervention added in 1974 should be removed or preserved. The chapter also considers how photogrammetry and digital visualisation can document the work and inform decisions about its future.

This volume contributes to the transnational study of art commissioned for public institutions, a field that remains unevenly researched across national contexts. The chapters broaden accounts of postwar public art by drawing attention to its presence in everyday institutional environments. They also consider movable works and different forms of collaboration in the production of artworks. Together, they 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.

UVOD

Številne likovne umetnine, ki so bile po drugi svetovni vojni ustvarjene za institucionalna okolja, so danes spregledane, čeprav jih srečujemo skorajda na vsakem koraku. Nahajajo se v šolah, bolnišnicah, občinskih uradih, tovarnah, hotelih, trgovinah in drugih prostorih, ki jih obiskujemo vsak dan. Nekatere so še danes v izvornem stanju, druge so ohranjene v močno spremenjenih interierjih ali pa so desetletja od svojega nastanka preživele le delno, v obliki fragmentov. O nekaterih pričajo le še arhivski zapisi, fotografije ali megleni spomini. Čeprav so bile pomemben gradnik javnih prostorov in vizualne kulture, so bile številne zakrite, predstavljene, uničene ali pozabljene. V poglavjih v monografiji je ta ranljiva skupina umetnostne dediščine obravnavana z mednarodne perspektive, posamezna dela in umetniki pa so umeščeni v širše politične, institucionalne, družbene in umetnostne kontekste, v katerih so bile te umetnine naročene in ustvarjene.

Monografija je rezultat raziskovalnega projekta Umetnost za skupnost: Evidentiranje in vrednotenje umetniških del, naročenih za javne ustanove v Sloveniji, 1945–1991 (J6-50206), ki ga je financirala Javna agencija za znanstvenoraziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost Republike Slovenije. V okviru projekta, ki smo ga med letoma 2023 in 2026 izvajali raziskovalci Umetnostnozgodovinskega inštituta Franceta Steleta ZRC SAZU, smo umetnine evidentirali, dokumentirali, analizirali in vrednotili, pridobljene podatke pa objavljali v odprto dostopni digitalni evidenci in s tem skušali prispevati k ohranjanju te dediščine. Dela smo umestili v slovensko, pa tudi širšo jugoslovansko umetnostno zgodovino in v mednarodni kontekst, na novo smo ovrednotili opuse nekaterih umetnikov in proučevali kulturno politiko, vključno s postopki naročanja. Do časa pisanja uvodnika nam je s pomočjo širše javnosti uspelo evidentirati približno 450 del, podatki o 300 delih pa so bili že dostopni v digitalni evidenci (<https://umetnostzaskupnost.si/>). Nastali korpus vključuje številna dela, ki v dosedanjih raziskavah niso bila obravnavana, omogoča primerjave med obdobji in mediji, pa tudi med institucionalnimi okolji in stanji ohranjenosti. S konferenco Umetnost za skupnost: Umetnostna naročila za javne ustanove, 1945–1989, ki je potekala 26. in 27. septembra 2024 v Ljubljani, smo raziskave razširili tudi onkraj slovenskega prostora. Na podlagi konferenčnih prispevkov so nastala poglavja pričujoče monografije, ki obravnavajo umetnine, naročene za javne ustanove na Švedskem, v Zahodnem Berlinu, Romuniji, Jugoslaviji, Turčiji, Italiji in na Portugalskem.

V projektu smo se osredotočili na jugoslovanski okvir med koncem druge svetovne vojne in osamosvojitvijo Slovenije leta 1991, v monografiji – ki je tako kot konferenca zastavljena bolj mednarodno – pa zlasti na primerjalni

okvir znotraj blokovske delitve sveta med hladno vojno do leta 1989. Kljub temu avtorji v nekaterih poglavjih obravnavajo tudi čas pred letom 1945 ali pa sledijo usodi umetnin v času po padcu Berlinskega zidu. Monografija se osredotoča predvsem na umetnine, naročene za javne ustanove. Posamezna poglavja ta obseg razširjajo na druga institucionalna okolja ali obravnavajo pridobitve in druge oblike umeščanja, kadar so bile te del primerljivih strategij. Javni značaj teh okolij je bil od dostopnosti odvisen prav toliko kot od lastništva. Med obravnavanimi deli so tista, ki so del arhitekture, premične umetnine, zasnovane za določene interierje, upoštevana pa so tudi neuresničena naročila. V naslovu monografije se »skupnost« nanaša na skupine, ki naj bi jih ustanove predstavljale ali jim služile, dejansko občinstvo in načini dostopa pa so se skozi čas spreminjali.

Osrednje teme

V monografiji je posebna pozornost namenjena institucionalnim pogojem, v katerih so umetnine naročali in ustvarjali. Načini financiranja so vplivali na organizacijo naročil, naročniki in strokovna telesa pa so usmerjali izbor umetnikov ter razvoj posameznih del. Umetniki so te procese dejavno sooblikovali: pogajali so se o projektnih pogojih in prek strokovnih združenj skušali vplivati na kulturno politiko.

V več prispevkih v pričujoči monografiji se v povezavi z razmerjem med umetnostjo in arhitekturo pojavlja vprašanje uresničevanja ideala sinteze umetnosti. Način njenega uresničevanja se je razlikoval glede na politično in institucionalno okolje; hierarhije v ustanovah so vplivale na sodelovanje umetnikov in arhitektov, posamezna naročila pa so odpirala prostor za preizkušanje novih načinov likovnega izražanja. Podrobnejša analiza procesov nastajanja umetnin razkriva tudi vlogo posameznikov, ki so umetniške zasnove prenesli v material. Njihov prispevek je pogosto ostal spregledan, saj je bilo avtorstvo pripisano umetniku, ki je delo zasnoval. V nekaterih primerih je bila delitev dela izrazito spolno zaznamovana.

Razmerje med umetninami in njihovim okoljem je tudi po umestitvi v prostor določalo njihovo usodo in pomen. Spremembe stavb so dela lahko zakrile ali poškodovale, premestitev pa je včasih omogočila njihovo ohranitev za ceno izgube prvotnega konteksta. Ohranjanje zato vključuje skrb za fizično stanje dela in premislek o njegovi interpretaciji. Pri tem je inventarizacija podlaga za ocenjevanje razpršenega gradiva, digitalne metode pa pomagajo dokumentirati spremembe in vizualizirati izgubljena prostorska razmerja.

V poglavjih monografije so ta vprašanja obravnavana z različnih geografskih in institucionalnih vidikov, obenem pa pogosto prehajajo med zgoraj predstavljenimi temami.

Oscar Svanelid in Marta Edling najprej predstavita švedski sistem javno financirane umetnosti. V poglavju obravnavata napetost med infrastrukturo vladanja in politično avtonomijo umetnosti v prostorih državnih ustanov, trditve o kulturni demokraciji pa preverjata ob neenakomerni razporeditvi naročil. Barbara Vodopivec uveljavljene evropske sheme odstotka za umetnost primerja z nezavezujočimi pobudami v socialistični Jugoslaviji, ki so jih spodbujala strokovna združenja, posebno pozornost pa nameni Sloveniji. Annette Tietenberg obravnava neuresničen projekt: v svojem poglavju rekonstruira natečaj, na katerem je bil izbran predlog Eda in Nancy Kienholz za Trg Ernsta Reuterja (*Ernst-Reuter-Platz*) v Zahodnem Berlinu, ter upravne in politične okoliščine, v katerih zanj ni bilo mogoče pridobiti gradbenega dovoljenja.

Burcu Selcen Coşkun na primeru povojnega Istanbula obravnava sorodna vprašanja naročništva in arhitekturnega okolja. Na primerih javnih in zasebnih naročil proučuje dialog med likovnimi umetninami in stavbami, nato pa se posveti konservatorskim težavam, ki so jih povzročile spremembe ali rušenje arhitekturnega okolja. Gregor Dražil se posveti stenskemu slikarstvu Ivana Seljaka Čopiča v petdesetih in zgodnjih šestdesetih letih 20. stoletja. Na umetnika osredotočena obravnava sledi njegovemu odmiku od realizma k vse bolj geometrični, delno abstraktni likovni govorici ter ta razvoj umešča v širše spremembe v slovenski umetnosti tega obdobja.

Irina Cărăbaş primerjavo razširi na socialistično Romunijo z obravnavo stenskih poslikav Julesa Perahima. Proučuje, kako sta ideji sinteze in monumentalnosti delovali v okviru kulturne politike in spreminjajočega se grajenega okolja. Strokovne mreže so določale dostop do naročil, poznejše materialne izgube pa je spremljalo brisanje Perahimove vloge iz zgodovinskih pripovedi. Andreja Rakovec se vrne k slovenskemu parlamentu in z novoodkritimi osnutki ter arhivskim gradivom rekonstruira razvoj mozaika Iveta Šubica. Večkratne spremembe kažejo, kako se je končna zasnova oblikovala v pogajanjih med umetnikom in tistimi, ki so odločali o naročilu.

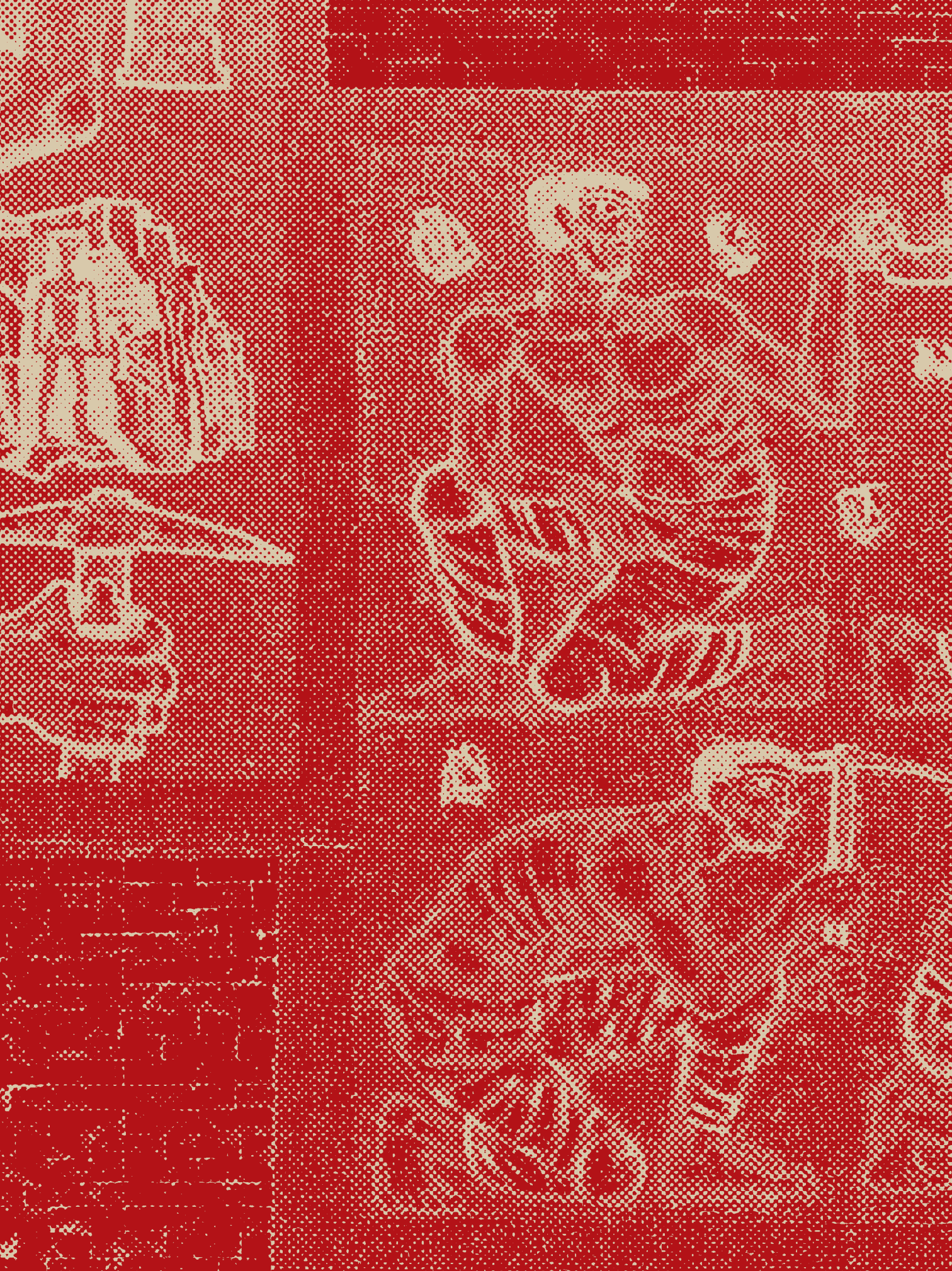
Nadja Zgonik posveti pozornost tapiserijam Marija Preglja za butik Koteks Tobus. Njihovo zasnovo za interier Otona Jugovca in izdelavo v Ateljeju 61 poveže s širšim prepovedom tapiserije kot prestižnega sodobnega medija ter premične oblike javne umetnosti. Njihova poznejša razpršitev

in ponovno odkritje razkrivata posebno ranljivost premičnih del. Nataša Ivanović ta vprašanja nadalje razvije ob vezenini Zorana Mušiča za salon prvega razreda na italijanski čezoceanki *Augustus*. Delo umesti v celostno zasnovo ladijske notranjščine in predstavi njegovo vlogo pri zastopanju italijanske kulture v tujini, obenem pa opozori na prispevek Mušičeve žene in tašče k njegovi izvedbi. V poglavju sledi tudi usodi umetnine po odstranitvi z ladje ter obravnava njeno restavriranje in poznejšo muzejsko predstavitev.

Patricia Počanić predstavi umetniško opremo jugoslovanskih hotelskih interierjev v Istri in Kvarnerju. Njene študije primerov kažejo, kako so hotelska podjetja v družbeni lasti neposredna naročila dopolnjevala z nakupi obstoječih del. Na te odločitve sta vplivali turistična politika in želja, da bi Jugoslavijo tujim obiskovalcem predstavili kot sodobno državo. Pri opremi interierjev je imelo pomembno vlogo sodelovanje umetnikov in arhitektov. Blaž Šeme nato preide od posameznih zgodovin k sistematičnemu popisu mozaikov socialističnega obdobja v Sloveniji. Ocena stanja in analiza tveganj pokažeta, kako vrsta stavbe ter status dediščine vplivata na ohranjenost in ogroženost teh del.

Begoña Farré Torras monografijo sklene z delom Dordia Gomesa *Mit o Prometeju*, naslikanim za Visoko šolo za likovne umetnosti v Portu v času *Estado Novo*. Sledi spreminjajoči se recepciji dela in obravnava razpravo o tem, ali naj se politični poseg iz leta 1974 odstrani ali ohrani. V poglavju predstavi tudi možnosti uporabe fotogrametrije in digitalne vizualizacije pri dokumentiranju dela ter odločanju o njegovi prihodnosti.

Monografija prispeva k transnacionalnemu proučevanju umetnosti, naročene za javne ustanove, saj je to področje v različnih nacionalnih okoljih še vedno neenakomerno raziskano. Prispevki širijo pogled na povojno javno umetnost in opozarjajo na njeno prisotnost v vsakdanjih institucionalnih okoljih. Pozornost namenjajo tudi premičnim delom ter različnim oblikam sodelovanja pri nastajanju umetnin. Skupaj kažejo, kako so ustanove z likovno umetnostjo oblikovale svoja okolja ter kako so poznejše spremembe namembnosti ali lastništva vplivale na pomen umetnin in možnosti za njihovo ohranitev.





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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.
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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.

