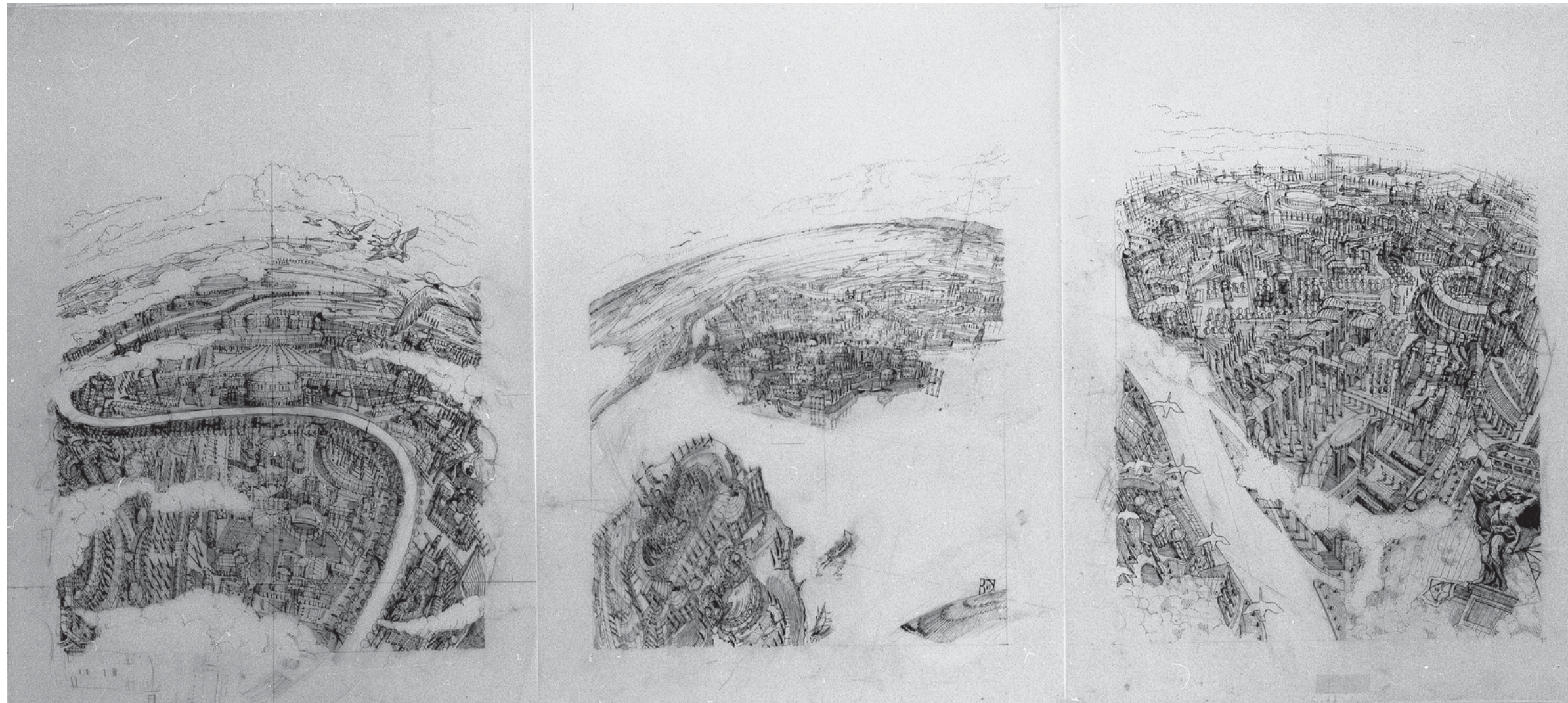


Branka Kaminski
UŽITAK PROSTORA
THE PLEASURE OF SPACE

tekst / written by Silva Kalčić



Nikom ne pokazuj svoje crteže, pa ćeš sâm poznjeti slavu”, bio je savjet učenicima Leonarda da Vinciја. Branka Kaminski, koja se već tijekom studija isticala crtačkim umijećem, često je, međutim, radila crteže za skupne natječajne projekte ili druge naručitelje. Moć proizvodi *prostor* koji se potom materijalizira kao *mjesto* ili, prema Lefebvreu, “društveni” je prostor pomak od prostora kao konteksta materijalnog djelovanja ili manifestiranja do prostora stvorenog subjektivnostima i duhovnim stanjima. Branka Kaminski svoje crteže-konstrukte urbanističkih cjelina – parcela povijesnih središta i modernističkih predgrađa (kao akumulirani trud prošlosti) kontinentalnih i priobalnih hrvatskih gradova (za perspektivni prikaz Pule s amfiteatrom u prvom planu autorica je dobila međunarodno priznanje, drugu nagradu na “The Architectural Review

“Do not show your drawings to anybody, so you will keep all the fame for yourself”, was Leonardo da Vinci’s strong recommendation to his disciples. But Branka Kaminski often made drawings for joint competition projects or for other commissioners, wining recognition due to her drawing skill while she was still a student of architecture. Power produces space, being then materialized in the form of a *place*, or according to Lefebvre, the “social” space is a breakthrough from space as a context of material activities or manifestations, toward the space created by subjectivities and states of mind. The drawings/constructs of Branka Kaminski, frequently made according to historical matrices of urban entities/plots of historical city centres and modernist suburbs (representing the accumulated efforts of past generations) of Croatian inland and coastland cities (the author gained international recognition with the second prize in “The Architectural Review

Centenary Drawing Competition”, 1996.) – često napravljene prema povijesnim matricama, topografski utemeljuje, a iz ptičje perspektive ili vizure čini ih blago iznad motiva. Svijet tu nije apstraktno mnoštvo koje nadilazi našu mogućnost poimanja, nego proces čiji se segment (trenutak ili razdoblje) može nacrtati u mjerilu. Nadilaženje “puke faktualnosti” Kaminski postiže uključivanjem interpretacije u svoje kirurški precizne crteže; to je ključ čitanja stvarnosti na tankom području između percepcije i mentalne, tj. konceptualne umjetnosti. Crteži uključuju istodobno “prikaz, spoznaju i transformaciju”, prema Gombrichu, vjerodostojnost i odslik – vizualno posredovanje viđenog. “Renesansna perspektiva, koja se smatrala prirodnim zakonom, bila je dio samog medija, a to je bilo i oblikovanje

Centenary Drawing Competition” in 1996, for a perspective drawing of the city of Pula with the Roman amphitheatre in the foreground), are based on topographic measurements, showing the motif from a bird’s eye view or from a viewpoint slightly above it. The world, therefore, is not an abstract multiplicity beyond our capability of comprehension, but a process, a segment (moment or span of time) of which could be drawn to scale. Kaminski exceeds “bare factuality” by implanting theoretical interpretation in her surgically accurate drawings, as a key for the decoding of reality, in a narrow field between perception and mental, i.e. conceptual, art. According to Gombrich, drawings comprise “representation, cognition and transformation” simultaneously, and authenticity and reflection – a visual mediation of the beheld. “Renaissance perspective, considered to be a law of nature, was an integral part of a medium,



modela prirodnim svjetlom, točnost u prikazu detalja, teksture i linije" (Don Slater). Branka Kaminski u svoje perspektivne prikaze uključuje poetsku dikciju, etičke i duhovne krajolike (*mindscapes*), lirsku metafiziku – obojene mrlje, senzualnost vijugavih potoka, poštovanje prema prirodi moćnijoj od čovjeka. Portreti urbanog pejzaža na kojima dominiraju ravna crta i kote izmjera, s vrlo malo štafaže – ljudskih figura ("tijelo i teritorij") u kratkim scenarijima svakodnevnice (*genre*), izmjenjuju se s prikazima prirodnih formacija nacrtanih krivuljama, arabeskama (na nekim crtežima linija je jedini element forme, ponavljana i varirana). Perspektive i dijagonale vrtova i njihova povijest, uostalom, anticipirali su povijest gradova. "Građeni isključivo za pružanje zadovoljstva... vrtovi sjedinjuju osjetilni užitek prostora s užitkom razuma na najbeskorisniji način" (B. Tchumi). Radijalni gradovi i ortogonalni rasteri, hedonistički urbanizam, ustanovljavanje



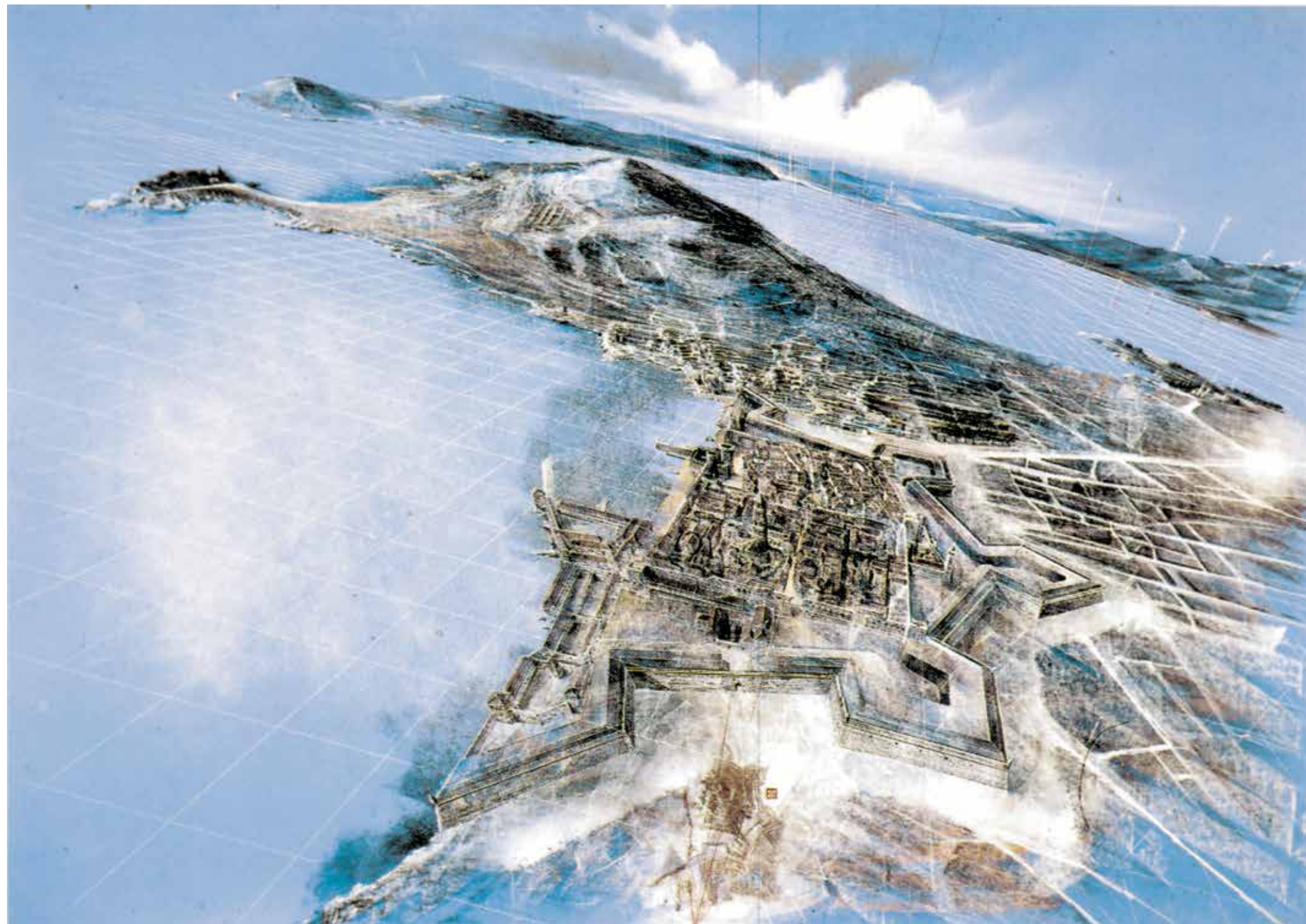
such as shaping of forms by natural light, accuracy in depicting detail, texture and line" (Don Slater). In her axonometric representations Branka Kaminski involves poetic articulation, ethical and spiritual landscapes (*mindscapes*), lyrical metaphysics – coloured spots, the sensuality of meandering streams, respect for a nature presumed to be more powerful than man. Portraits of urban landscape with dominant straight lines and elevations and only a few human figures – *Staffage* ("body and territory") in brief scenarios of everyday life (*genre scenes*), alternate with presentations of natural configurations of the ground, outlined in curves, arabesques (the line, multiplied and varied, is sometimes the only formal element of a drawing). After all, diagonal lines of gardens and parks and their history have anticipated the history of cities. "Built exclusively to provide pleasure... gardens unit the sensory pleasure in space with the pleasure of understanding in the most useless manner" (B. Tchumi). Radial cities and rectangular grids, hedonistic



i svrgavanje prostora, sretna i nesretna gradogradnja, grad "sretne svjetlosti, zraka i trave" (Koolhaasov termin), arhitektonske "konverzije", ovještene fasade, skyline Zagreba, Slavonskog Broda, Splita, Pule, grad kao kumulativna pozornica, poslovne zgrade u Hamburgu i Frankfurtu nalaze se na slikama Branke Kaminski. A sve su različitih razina rutiniranosti, namjene i osobnog odmaka. Ideja o nevinom (neutralnom) oku je, uostalom, neutemeljena u stvarnosti – percepcija podrazumijeva tumačenje i dogradnju *imagea*.

U vrijeme kad manualni postupak kao bitno svojstvo umjetničke operativnosti, kao i tehnički crte', biva ukinut ("ako je tehničko umijeće prije bilo precjenjivano, danas je prezreno", tvrdi Konrad von Lange već 1907. godine) radovi Branke Kaminski rezultat su preciznog mjerenja i izraz umijeća: *techné*. Arhitektonska perspektiva promovirana je u samodostatni umjetnički medij. Integracija, koherencija i potpunost prizora povremeno su narušavani fragmentiranom perspektivom, metanarativnim pregledom, disharmonijom.

U veljači i o'ujku ove godine u Galeriji ULU-PUH-a u Zagrebu održana je izložba *Učka okom arhitekta*, koju je Kaminski prijavila na natječaj Galerije. No zbog tragične i svakako prerane smrti autorice (rođene 1956.) izložbu je realizirao Mario Beusan preselivši u *white cube*, uz "gotove" slike, i kreativni nered ateljea, skice i nedovršene radove – prikaz nedovršenog procesa; kao i privatne fotografije, poruke i zapise kao svojevrsan biografski sa'etak, nekrolog. Preuzimajući dijelom kartografski diskurs (prema analogiji Roberta Smithsona da veličina određuje predmet, mjerilo određuje umjetnost), umjetnica slika planinu kao mjesto bez središta i periferije. Golema prirodna figura – kraška manifestacija, Mala i Velika Učka (uvijek vrha optočenog *lucidarom*) u širokim akvarelnim perspektivnim prikazima naslikana je sepijastim ili sivim međutonomima, kao gruda zemlje, ili pak zasićenim zelenim pigmentom na nekom svom drugom licu. Poetskim riječima Bogdana Bogdanovića: "Pustinja ima svoja zrcala u naslagama soli: kristali koji odražavaju sunce reflektiraju jednu moguću nebesku arhitekturu. To zrcalo mijenja se



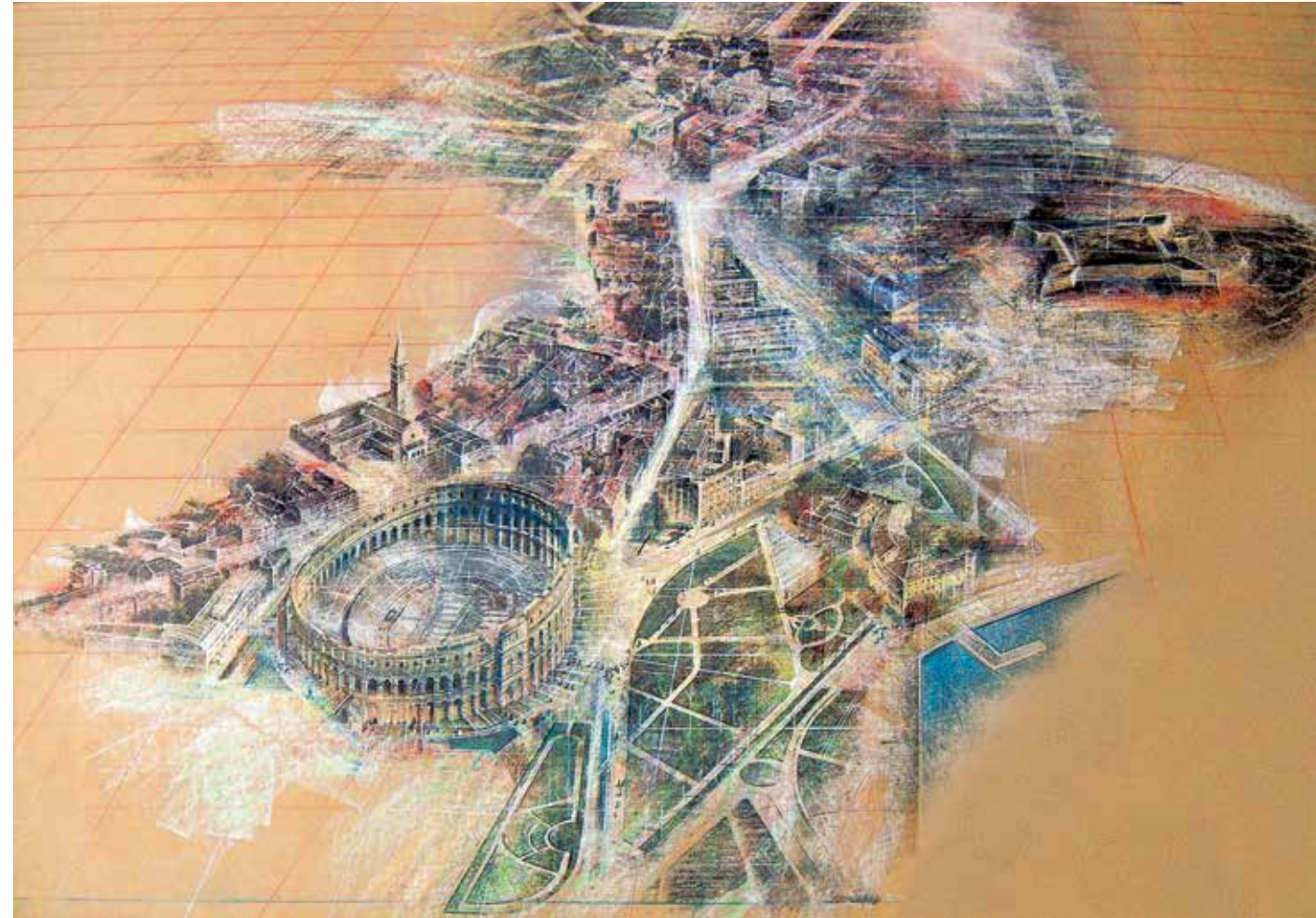
kao što se vezuju šaka pijeska i kap kiše na dlanu”.



town planning, the establishment and disposition of the space, happy and *unhappy* urban construction, a city of “happy light, air and grass” (Koolhaas’s term), architectural “conversions”, curtain walls, the skyline of Zagreb, Slavonski Brod, Split, Pula, the city as a cumulative stage/scene, office buildings in Hamburg and Frankfurt – all of them have been depicted in Branka Kaminski’s drawings, characterized by different levels of routine work, assignment and personal detachment. The idea of the innocent (neutral) eye is, after all, not founded in reality – perception implies the interpretation and completion of an *image*.

In the era of the renunciation of hand work, in both technical drawing and the essential characteristics of artistic operations (“If technical skills were overestimated earlier, today they are highly disregarded”, claimed Konrad von Lange as early as in 1907), the works of Branka Kaminski are the result of the accurate measurement and skill: of *techne*. Architectural perspective is promoted to a self-sufficient artistic medium. The integration, coherence and entirety of the scene are occasionally disrupted by a fragmented perspective, a meta-narrative overview, and disharmony.

The exhibition *Učka in the Eye of the Architect* was held this year in February and March in the ULUPUH Gallery in Zagreb. Kaminski applied to the Gallery with that exhibition, but due to the tragic and premature death of the



author (born in 1956) the project has been realised by Mario Beusan, who put into the white cube not only the completed works of art but also the creative mess of the author’s studio, as well as sketches and incomplete works, by way of presentation of unfinished creative process; exposing private snapshots and notes to the public seems to be a kind of review for an obituary. Partly appropriating cartographic discourse (according to Robert Smithson’s correspondence – the object is determined by its size, and scale determines the art), the artist paints the mountain as a place without a centre or periphery. The massive natural figure – the karstic phenomenon, of Little and Big Učka (with its peak always wreathed in cloud – *lucidar*) drawn in watercolour in wide perspectives – was painted in sepia or grey shades, as a lump of earth, or in saturated green pigment on its other side. In poetic words by Bogdan Bogdanović: “Layers of salt are the mirrors of the desert: crystals reflecting sunlight could mirror a potentially heavenly architecture. That mirror is changing, as the handful of sand and a raindrop merge on our outstretched palm”.

