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ZNAČENJE
HIPERREALIZMA DANAS
Realitet, ikonička
razlika i percepcija
hipertransparentnih slika

Krešimir Purgar
THE MEANING OF
HYPERREALISM TODAY
Reality, Iconic Difference,
and Perception of Hyper-
Transparent Images

Premda hiperrealistička djela najprije doživljavamo kroz vrhunsku vještinu slikara ili kipara da kroz neki umjetnički medij prenesu dojam stvarnosti, ovaj bi umjetnički stil povijest umjetnosti prvenstveno trebala sagledati kao problem teorije reprezentacije. Na drugom mjestu pokušao sam objasniti zašto smatram da slikarstvo općenito može rasvijetliti mnoge aporije prikazivanja;¹ tada sam rekao da svako umjetničko djelo nastoji uspostaviti namjerni diskontinuitet između znaka i značenja kako bi skrenulo pozornost na sebe i odvojilo se kao zasebna kategorija objekata unutar vizualnog kontinuuma svakodnevice. Jednu od najpoznatijih varijanti

Even though hyperrealist works are viewed principally through the superior ability of a painter or sculptor to convey the impression of reality through an artistic medium, said artistic style should be perceived by art history primarily as an issue of the **theory of representation**. On another occasion, I sought to explain as to why I believe that painting in general can shed light on the many aporiae of representation;¹ I stated that every work of art seeks to establish **discontinuity** between sign and meaning so as to draw attention to itself and separate itself as an individual category of objects within the visual continuum of everyday

¹ Krešimir Purgar, **Slikarstvo kao alegorija teorije [Painting as an Allegory of Theory]**, exhibition at MSU Gallery, Zagreb, December 19, 2016 - January 19, 2017.

¹ Krešimir Purgar, **Slikarstvo kao alegorija teorije, izložba u Galeriji MSU, Zagreb, 19.12.2016. - 19.1.2017.**

tog diskontinuiteta nalazimo u nerazriješenom sukobu riječi i slika, primjerice – u vjekovnom nastojanju jednoga komunikacijskog sredstva da istakne svoje prvenstvo nad drugim. Još jedna, mnogo upadljivija varijanta diskontinuiteta jest ona između stvarnosti svijeta i stvarnosti umjetničkog djela. Naime, jednako kao što moderno umjetničko djelo (ovo, dakako, ne vrijedi za klasičnu tradiciju aristotelizma) nastoji ostvariti vlastitu medijalnu autonomiju, tako se i nastoji emancipirati od svijeta unutar kojeg je nastalo i postati svijet za sebe. Međutim, pri pogledu na većinu hiperrealističkih slika nastalih tijekom sedamdesetih godina prošlog stoljeća, primjerice Cadillac Showroom Window ili Volkswagen Dona Eddyja, Cafeteriju Richarda Estesa, portrete Chucka Closea, Airstream Ralpha Goingsa ili Autobus za Cmrok Jadranke Fatur, prvi dojam koji te slike ostavljaju potpuno je suprotan želji suvremenoga umjetničkog djela za diskontinuitetom i emancipacijom.

Htio bih postaviti tezu da ono što ključno definira hiperrealizam kao umjetnički stil nije problem realizma, nego upravo izostanak diskontinuiteta spram stvarnosti. Dakle, pitanje koje želim postaviti nije zašto su hiperrealistične slike tako bliske čovjekovoj percepciji stvarnosti, nego zašto se ne žele razlikovati od stvarnosti.

life. One of the most famous variants of the discontinuity we find in the unresolved conflict between words and images, for example – in the age-old endeavour of one communication tool to accentuate its precedence over the other. Another, much more conspicuous variant of discontinuity is the one between reality of the **world** and reality of the **artwork**. Specifically, just as modern artwork (naturally, this does not apply to the classical tradition of Aristotelianism) seeks to achieve its own medial autonomy, it also seeks to **emancipate** itself from the world within which it originated and become a world in itself. However, when looking at most hyperrealist paintings made in the 1970s – for example, **Cadillac Showroom Window** or **Volkswagen** by Don Eddy, **Cafeteria** by Richard Estes, portraits by Chuck Close, **Airstream** by Ralph Goings, or **Autobus za Cmrok (Bus for Cmrok)** by Jadranka Fatur – the first impression left by these paintings is exactly the opposite from the desire of a contemporary artwork for discontinuity and emancipation.

I would like to propose a thesis that hyperrealism as an artistic style is not crucially defined by the problem of realism, but rather by the very absence of discontinuity in regard to reality. Therefore the question I seek to pose is not why hyperrealist paintings are so close to human perception of reality, but rather

Da bismo na ovaj način mogli izokrenuti pozitivistička pitanja iz domene povijesti umjetnosti – i učiniti ih s jedne strane kritičkom podlogom suvremenih vizualnih studija, a s druge ontološkom dvojbom o prirodi reprezentacije, čime se bavi opća znanost o slici – morat ćemo fenomenu hiperrealizma pristupiti iz vizura koje će uzeti u obzir tri bitne činjenice:

- 1) kako bi imale bilo kakav kulturalni ili umjetnički učinak, sve slike najprije su podložne čovjekovoj percepciji, tj. opažanju razlika unutar vizualnog polja (fenomenološka dimenzija slike);
- 2) umjetničke slike, bivajući trajno promatrane, svoj učinak stvaraju u vremenu svojeg nastanka, ali i u svim budućim vremenima koja više nisu „njihova” (anakronistička dimenzija slike)
- 3) slike su u suvremenoj civilizaciji podložne medijskom i kulturalnom nomadizmu te više ne posjeduju vlastito prirodno „mjesto” (dekontekstualizacija slike).

Pojavljivanje kao intencionalnost i razlika

Krenemo li od jednostavnog aksioma da slika kao fizički objekt (ili kao mentalni zamišljaj) nije i ne može biti ono što prikazuje, na što se referira ili pobuđuje, nego samo relacija prema prikazanoj, referiranome ili pobuđeno-

why they do not tend to be different from reality? In order to be able to invert the positivist questions from the domain of art history – and make of them a critical foundation of contemporary visual studies on the one hand, while pointing at an ontological ambiguity of the nature of representation, handled by general image science, on the other hand – we must approach the phenomenon of hyperrealism from the perspectives that will take into consideration three essential facts:

- 1) in order to have any cultural or artistic effect, all images are primarily subject to human perception, that is, detection of differences within the visual field (phenomenological dimension of image);
- 2) fine art images, being observed throughout history, produce their effect at the time of their emergence, but also at all other times that are no longer “theirs” (anachronistic dimension of image);
- 3) images are subject to media and cultural nomadism in contemporary civilisation, and no longer possess their own natural “location” (decontextualization of image).

Appearing as intentionality and difference

If we start from the simple statement that image as a physical object (or as a mental imagining) is not and cannot be that which it represents, that which it refers to, or invokes,

me, tada je svaka slika uvijek već definirana razlikom koja njoj – slici – mora biti imanentna kako bismo uopće mogli raspravljati o slikovnom iskustvu. Za ontološki status slike kao razlike spram zamišljenog ili prikazanog nije presudno koji element u slici ili u promatraču konstituirao tu razliku, nego to je li razlika između reprezentacije i svijeta uopće vidljiva. O kategorijama i vrstama razlika bave se iz svojih esencijalističkih vizura znanstvene discipline poput povijesti umjetnosti, semiotike ili fenomenologije uz ključnu karakteristiku koja ih dijeli, a prema kojoj prve dvije smatraju da je razlika uvijek već uspostavljena karakterom same slike, dok potonja drži da je ikonička razlika mentalni proces koji ponajprije ovisi o sposobnostima promatrača da uopće nešto vidi kao sliku i tek potom može početi razabirati njezine estetske ili komunikacijske aspekte. Utoliko fenomenološka vizura, u suprotnosti spram semiotičkoj, povijesnoumjetničkoj ili nekoj od subjektivističkih perspektiva, mora prethodno uvesti u raspravu stupanj (ne)transparentnosti slike koju se analizira; preciznije rečeno, fenomenološka analiza iz svojih estetskih evaluacija jednostavno ne može izostaviti pojmove poput transparentcije, opaciteta, vidljivosti i općenito načina percepcije slikovnog objekta, budući da se estetska

but rather merely a relation toward the represented, referred-to, or invoked, then every image is always already defined by the difference that is immanent to it – to the image – because only due to that difference we are able to have pictorial experience in the first place. For the ontological status of the image as the difference in relation to that which is imagined or presented, it is not crucial as to which element in the image or the observer constitutes this difference, but rather whether the difference between representation and the world is visible at all. Scientific disciplines such as art history, semiotics or phenomenology are engaged – each from its own respective viewpoints – in the categories and types of differences; the crucial characteristic that separates them is that the first two consider the difference to be already established by the character of the image itself, while the latter considers the iconic difference to be a mental process that principally depends on the abilities of the observer to observe something as **an image** in the first place, and only then to be able to make out its aesthetic and communication aspects. The phenomenological viewpoint – contrary to the semiotic, art-historical, or one of the subjectivist perspectives – must first introduce in the discussion a level of (non-)transparency of the analysed image; more precisely, the phenomenological analysis sim-

vrijednost kod fenomenologije nužno uspostavlja kroz same procese distinkcije između slike (ili nekog drugog umjetničkog objekta) i stvarnosti te je o tim procesima neposredno ovisna.

Primjerice, umjetničku dimenziju skulpture Henryja Moorea Large Two Forms iz 1966. godine fenomenološki ćemo morati sagledati kao intervenciju artificijelnog volumena u prostor realiteta, dakle kao specifičnu relaciju objekta i prostora, a ne kao odnos tog umjetničkog objekta prema drugim umjetničkim objektima ili prema sustavu umjetnosti u njezinu povijesnom kontinuitetu. Pritom će jedna od ključnih odrednica biti je li skulptura izložena u unutar-njem ili vanjskom prostoru, zatim vizure iz kojih se ona otvara promatraču te mogućnost promjene fokusa gledanja – upravo zbog primarnog interesa fenomenologije za ulogom percepcije u estetskom iskustvu, uvjeti gledanja će umjetničkom djelu davati nestabilan karakter u skladu s promijenjenim okolnostima njegova pojavljivanja. Primjer iz nama bliže domene, one slikovnih iskustava, funkcionira na posve jednak način, premda dimenzija fizičkog prostora u njoj izostaje: bez obzira na to je li riječ o apstraktnom ili figurativnom prikazu, specifičan način pojavljivanja prikaza bit će ključ razumijevanja estetske vrijednosti slika. Činjenica da se

ply cannot omit from its aesthetic evaluations such notions as transparency, opacity, visibility, and the way of perception of the pictorial object in general, since the aesthetic value in phenomenology is inevitably established through the very processes of distinction between image (or another art object) and reality, and is directly dependent on these processes.

For example, we must phenomenologically observe the artistic dimension of the sculpture **Large Two Forms** (1966) by Henry Moore as an intervention of an artificial volume in the space of reality i.e. as a specific relation of object and space, and not as the relationship of that artistic object with other artistic objects or with the art system in its historic continuity. One of the key determinants will thereby be whether the sculpture is exhibited in interior or exterior space, the perspectives from which it opens up to the observer, and the possibility of changing the focus of viewing; exactly because of the primary interest of phenomenology in the role of perception within the aesthetic experience, the conditions of observing will give the artwork an unstable character in accordance with modified circumstances of its appearing. An example from the domain that is closer to us, the one of pictorial experience, functions in an identical manner, even though the dimension of physical space is missing in it: regardless of whether

apstraktne slike – ili sve one čije nam značenje nije pri prvom pogledu jasno – za nas pojavljuju na posve osobite i neočekivane načine objašnjava zašto estetsku vrijednost imaju i slike koje ne znače „ništa“, nego se jednostavno pojavljuju u kontekstima koji od promatrača zahtijevaju osobitu pozornost: naime, njihova vrijednost i nije sadržana u trenutačnoj pojavnosti nekog značenja, nego u pojavljivanju oblika i konfiguracija.

Koncept „estetike pojavljivanja“ kod njemačkog filozofa Martina Seela znači izdvajanje onih elemenata u umjetničkim objektima koji su u konkretnom objektu na poseban način „prisutni“ i na poseban se način „pojavljuju“, a čije izdvajanje u njihovu eventualnom pojavljivanju izvan umjetničkog objekta ili ne bi bilo moguće ili ne bi imalo predznak estetskog. Za nas je ovdje posebno važno da se Seelova estetska teorija kao estetika pojavljivanja (njem. *Ästhetik des Erscheinens*) sastoji od odnosa proizvedenih, s jedne strane, načinima promatranja pojedinih objekata i, s druge strane, samih objekata koji, unatoč tome što promatranjem ne mijenjaju svoju strukturalnu zadanost, mijenjaju svoju fenomenološku pojavnost; dakle, uslijed drugačije pozornosti koju im pridajemo objekti se na specifičan način konstituiraju kao estetski objekti, a u tom procesu presudnu ulo-

this is an abstract or figurative representation, the specific manner of the appearing of representation will be the key to comprehend the aesthetic value of images. The fact that abstract images – or all images whose meaning is not clear at first glance – appear to us in quite particular and unexpected ways explains why images that mean “nothing,” but rather simply appear in contexts that require the observer to pay particular attention, also have aesthetic value: specifically, their value is not contained in the momentary appearance of meaning, but rather in the appearing of **forms** and **configurations**.

The concept of the “aesthetics of appearing” by German philosopher Martin Seel purports the separation of those elements in art objects that are “present” in a specific manner in that object, and also “appear” in a specific manner; should we wish to separate them in their appearing outside of the art object, this either would not be possible or would deprive them of a specific aesthetic indication. What is particularly important to us is that Seel’s aesthetic theory, the **aesthetics of appearing** (German: *Ästhetik des Erscheinens*), consists of the relationships produced by the manners of observing individual objects on the one hand and, on the other hand, by the objects themselves, which – despite not changing their structure when observed – change their phenom-

gu imaju oni načini promatranja koje čovjek rezervira samo za objekte od kojih očekuje estetski učinak. Promatračeva intencionalnost u procesu estetskog združivanja fizičkih objekata ili slika i vlastitoga promatranja dovodi do toga da se vizualna pojava (engl. appearance) objekta, koja je karakteristična za svaki fizički predmet ili sliku, pretvara u pojavljivanje (engl. appearing) konkretnog objekta ili slike kao estetski vrijednog predmeta. Kako ćemo malo kasnije vidjeti, ekvivalent pojavljivanju kod jednog od prethodnika fenomenologije, njemačkog filozofa Konrada Fiedlera, naziva se *Gestaltung* – formiranje ili nastajanje oblika – čime je već u drugoj polovici 19. stoljeća, posve u skladu s antimimetičkim tendencijama u umjetnosti tog vremena, pozornost promatrača usmjerena prema genezi specifičnih oblika unutar umjetničkog djela.

Ključno je razumjeti da se, prema Martinu Seelu, pojmovna razlika između termina koji označavaju trajno stanje nečega što vidimo kao kontinuiranu pojava (engl. appearance) i periodično, intermitentno stanje čiji se učinci akumuliraju iz povremenih aktivnosti namjenskog načina gledanja, tj. pojavljivanja (engl. appearing) – pretvara u estetski čin. Naravno, nije riječ o tome da je estetsko iskustvo pritom nastalo djelovanjem jednostavne dimen-

enological appearance; due to different attention we give them, the objects are thus constituted as aesthetic objects, and the crucial role in this process is played by the ways of looking that one reserves solely for the objects from which he expects an aesthetic effect. The observer's intentionality in the process of aesthetic consolidation of physical objects or images and his own observing results in the transformation of the object's visual appearance, which is characteristic of any physical item or image, into the specific appearing of the actual object or image as an item of aesthetic value. As we shall see a bit further on, the equivalent of appearing is termed *Gestaltung* (the forming or emergence of forms) by German philosopher Konrad Fiedler, one of the predecessors of phenomenology, with which the attention of the observer has been directed toward the genesis of specific forms within the artwork, already in the second half of the 19th century and entirely in accordance with the anti-mimetic artistic tendencies of that period.

It is crucial to comprehend that, according to Martin Seel, the notional difference between terms – those which denote a permanent state of something that we see as a continuous appearance, and those denoting the periodical, intermittent state whose effects accumulate from the periodic activities of the designated manner of observing

zije vremena, tj. pukom činjenicom da kontinuirana prisutnost (ili pojava) nekog predmeta čini od njega trivijalan objekt svakodnevice, dok izostanak predmeta iz svakodnevice i njegova tek povremena dostupnost čini to da ga lakše doživimo kao estetski objekt. Uopće nije riječ o konceptu vremena koje bi onda iz čisto praktičnih razloga bilo svedeno na gramatička svojstva pojmova – imenicu kao oznaku trajnog statusa i glagolsku imenicu kao oznaku aspekta nestabilnih egzistencija u vremenu; pojavljivanje je za Seela interakcija različitih pojava koje promatrač pretvara u vrijednost objekta, tj. njegova pojavljivanja u baš tom konkretnom činu gledanja, neovisno o tome kakva je inače objektivna ili, preciznije rečeno, neestetska pojava predmeta (budući da, kako smo rekli, estetskim promatranjem ne mijenjamo strukturalna svojstva objekta, nego njegovu fenomenološku datost za promatrača).² Premda je njemački filozof uvjerljivo pokazao da je pojavljivanje rezultanta kompleksnih odnosa između promatrača i (ne nužno specifičnih) objekata za koje se vjeruje da mogu biti znatno više

² O tome vidi opširno u Martin Seel, *Aesthetics of Appearing*; preveo s njemačkog John Farrell. Stanford University Press, 2000. [*Ästhetik des Erscheinens*; Carl Hanser Verlag, München/Beč, 2005.], prvenstveno na str. 19-49.

i.e. appearing – transforms into an aesthetic act. Naturally, this does not purport that the aesthetic experience is thereby generated by the activity of the simple dimension of time, that is, by the mere fact that continuous presence (or appearance) of an item makes the latter a trivial everyday object, while the absence of the item from everyday life and its merely periodic presence makes it more easily experienced as an aesthetic object. This, by all means, does not purport a concept of time that would be reduced – for reasons that are purely practical – to grammatical properties of notions, i.e. the noun as the mark of permanent status, and verbal noun as the mark of the aspect of unstable existences in time; to Seel, appearing is an interaction of various appearances that are transformed by the observer into the value of the object, that is, into the value of its appearing in the very act of observing in question, regardless of the objective or, more precisely put, non-aesthetic appearance of the item (the reason being that, as we have already noted, the aesthetic observing does not change structural properties of an object, but rather the way in which it is phenomenologically given to the observer).²

² On this, see in detail: Martin Seel, *Aesthetics of Appearing*; translated from German by John Farrell. Stanford University Press, 2000 [*Ästhetik des Erscheinens*; Carl Hanser Verlag, München/Vienna, 2005], primarily pp. 19-49.

DON EDDY, *Untitled* (Volkswagen), 1971; courtesy of MUMOK, Wien



JADRANKA FATUR, *Bus for Cmrok*, 1975; Museum of contemporary art, Zagreb



od svoje pojavnosti, nas ovdje zanima može li pojam pojavljivanja biti upotrijebljen izvan čisto estetske domene, unutar opće znanosti o slici, s namjerom definiranja najprije ontoloških, a potom i umjetničkih osobina svih slika. Pojam koji ćemo uvesti i nastojati pritom teorijski afirmirati – slikovno pojavljivanje (engl. pictorial appearing) – nadahnjuje se, kako ćemo pokazati, Seelovom terminologijom u znatnoj većoj mjeri nego njegovim konceptualnim polazištem. Neki razlozi tomu su odmah posve jasni: primjerice, dok se on bavio problemom estetskog iskustva, mi se bavimo problemom slikovnog iskustva koje je znatno šire jer se ne ograničava na percepciju samo estetskih objekata. S druge strane, pojmom pojavljivanja u našoj interpretaciji prvenstveno želimo istaknuti distinkciju između statusa slike kao mjesta reza prema stvarnosti, kako su to objasnili Gottfried Boehm i Jean-Luc Nancy, i slike kao prvenstveno vizualnog dojma, što se ne mora nužno konstituirati u opreci s realitetom, nego može postojati, i sve češće to čini, u načinu ikoničke simultanosti (engl. iconic simultaneity), pri čemu vizualno iskustvo postoji unatoč tome što je slika-kao-razlika prestala postojati. Teorijske temelje fenomena hipertransparentnih vizualnih iskustava, tj. onih što zaobilaze ikoničku razliku (engl. iconic di-

Even though the German philosopher convincingly showed that **appearing** is an outcome of complex relationships between the observer and the (not necessarily specific) objects, which are considered able to become much more than mere **appearance**, what we are interested in here is whether the notion of appearing can be used outside of the purely aesthetic domain, within general image science, with the aim to define primarily ontological, and subsequently artistic properties of **all** images. The notion we shall introduce and thereby seek to affirm theoretically – **pictorial appearing** – is inspired, as will be shown further on, by Seel's terminology to a greater extent than by his conceptual foundation. Some of the reasons for this are immediately clear: while he was occupied by problems of **aesthetic** experience, for example, we are engaged in the issue of **pictorial** experience that is much broader since it is not limited to the perception of merely aesthetic objects. On the other hand, with the notion of appearing in our interpretation we primarily seek to emphasise the distinction between the status of the image as a cut, disruption or break toward reality, as elaborated by Gottfried Boehm and Jean-Luc Nancy, and the image as a primarily visual **impression**; this visual impression need not be necessarily constituted in opposition to reality, but can exist – and it does so ever more frequently

ference) i tako u većoj ili manjoj mjeri ulaze u područje imerzivnosti, prvi je postavio Aristotel u Poetici, istaknuvši oponašanje prirode kao svrhu i metodu pjesničkog umijeća; kada govorimo o mimezisu kao poetskoj formi tzv. klasičnih umjetnosti, tada ponajprije mislimo na uranjanje u prethodno nam zadan prirodni svijet na taj način što ga iznova oblikujemo kroz sustave reprezentacije. Oni sustavi reprezentacije koji omogućuju veći stupanj analogije između artefakata i prirodnih oblika imali su privilegirano mjesto u retrospektivnom pogledu s pomoću kojega je povijest umjetnosti teorijski sankcionirala vlastiti aristotelizam.

Promatrač, promatrano
i emancipacija slike

Dva događaja u povijesti vizualne kulture uzdrmala su poziciju i prirodne stvarnosti na koju se pozivala klasična teorija reprezentacije kao mimezisa i realizma kao slikarskog pravca koji je tome cilju služio u metodološkom i operativnom smislu. Ako je funkcija umjetnosti bila činjenje prisutnim u slici (ili književnom tekstu) onoga što je već bilo prisutno u stvarnosti ili je tijekom vremena postalo neprisutnim ili se samo željelo da bude prisutno, tada je posve jasno da su tehnologije fotografije i filma u bližoj prošlosti, virtualne stvar-

– in the mode of **iconic simultaneity**, whereby the visual experience exists despite the fact that image-as-difference has ceased to do so. The theoretical foundations of the phenomena of hyper-transparent visual experiences i.e. those that “circumvent” the **iconic difference** – thereby creating the sensation of immersion – were first established by Aristotle in **Poetics**, whereby he stressed the mimicking of nature as the purpose and method of poetic art; when referring to mimesis as the poetic form of so-called classical arts, we primarily mean the immersion into the given natural world by redesigning it through systems of representation. The systems of representation that enable a higher level of analogy between artefacts and natural forms have had a privileged position only retrospectively, due to which art history theoretically sanctioned its own Aristotelianism.

The observer, the observed, and the emancipation of image

Two events in the history of visual culture have stirred both the position of **natural reality**, to which the classical theory of representation as mimesis referred to, and **realism as a painterly movement** that served this purpose in the methodological and operative sense. If the function of art was to **make present** in the image (or a literary text) that which had already been present in

nosti i holograma u sadašnjosti te klonova i humanoidnih robota u bliskoj budućnosti omogućile prisutnost na daleko sofisticiranije načine nego što je to u stanju učiniti ruka i najvještijeg umjetnika. Zbog toga su pojmovi poput reprezentacije i hiperrealizma danas ponovno aktualni i zato su opozicije prisutnosti i reprezentacije, realizma i apstrakcije te slike i vizualnosti kao teme umjetnosti – a ne više kao njezine metode i stilovi – od najvišeg teorijskog značaja. Parafraziramo li Lamberta Wiesinga, ako je funkcija svih vrsta umjetnosti i svih tehnika vizualizacije da nas navede na percepciju željenih pojava i fenomena, bez na to obzira jesu li oni umjetnički ili posve praktično motivirani, sasvim je svejedno na koji je način u čovjekovu umu induciran proces percepcije – kroz klasično umjetničko djelo ili nekom od digitalnih tehnologija proširenog iskustva – pod uvjetom da postoji svijest o percepciji upravo onoga što je ponuđeno svijesti da bude percipirano.³

Na tragu ovoga Wiesingova razmišljanja jest i pomno elaborirana posthumanistička premisa futurističke TV serije *Westworld*:

reality, or had become absent over time, or its presence was merely desired, it is quite clear that the technologies of photography and film in the recent past, virtual reality and holograms in the present, and clones and humanoid robots in the near future have enabled presence in far more sophisticated ways than that of the hand of even the most skilful artist. Therefore the notions such as representation and hyperrealism are also topical today, while the oppositions of presence and representation, realism and abstraction, or image and visualisations as **subjects** of art (and no longer as its methods and styles) are of utmost theoretical significance. If we were to paraphrase Lambert Wiesing – that the function of all types of art and all techniques of visualisation is to prompt us to **perceive** the desired appearances and phenomena, regardless of whether they are motivated artistically or merely for practical reasons, the manner in which the process of perception is induced in the human mind is entirely irrelevant – through a classical work of art, or through any of the digital technologies of expanded experience – under the condition that there is an awareness on the perception of exactly that which has been proposed to consciousness so as to be perceived.³

³ Lambert Wiesing, *The Philosophy of Perception. Phenomenology and Image Theory*; translated from German by Nancy Ann Roth.

³ Lambert Wiesing, *The Philosophy of Perception. Phenomenology and Image Theory*; prevela s njemačkog Nancy Ann Roth. Bloomsbury, London 2014. [Das Mich der Wahrnehmung. Eine Autopsie. Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt, 2009.] str. 39-40.

jedan od likova dolazi u visokotehnološki zabavni park, repliku Divljeg zapada koju, osim turista željnih hiperrealističkog iskustva seksa i nasilja, nastanjuju i (naizgled) savršeno dizajnirani ljudski roboti koji se kreću, ponašaju i komuniciraju prema unaprijed zadanim narativima, tj. kompjuterskim algoritmima. Prije ulaska u park, nakon što je posjetitelj upitao jednu od hostesa je li ona sama stvarna, njezin odgovor glasio je otprilike ovako: „Ako ne vidite razliku, zar je uopće važno?“. *Westworld* nam nudi (za sada, doduše, samo fiksijska) objašnjenja zašto je Wiesingovo radikalno preispitivanje fenomenologije kao esencijalističke znanosti ključno, kako za suvremenu znanost o slici tako i za nadolazeću „tehnologiju iskustava“ (premda svojoj knjizi on ne dodaje slikovne primjere koji nas ovdje zanimaju). Mislim da tumačenje hipertransparentnih slika danas, u koje ubrajamo ne samo one proizvedene suvremenim tehnikama vizualizacije nego i već „povijesno“ hiperrealističko slikarstvo nastalo sedamdesetih godina 20. stoljeća, prvenstveno mora krenuti od učinka percepcije na promatrača, a ne percepcije koja nastaje intencionalnom sviješću promatrača u susretu s objektom percepcije. Ova je teza bitna za razumijevanje ne samo brojnih imerzivnih vizualnih iskustava koji se temelje na izostanku

On the trail of Wiesing's deliberations is also the meticulously elaborated post-humanist premise of the futuristic TV-series *Westworld*: one of the characters arrives at a high-tech amusement park, a replica of the Wild West, which – alongside the tourists seeking a hyperrealist experience of sex and violence – is also inhabited by (seemingly) perfectly designed humanoid robots that move, behave and communicate according to preassigned narratives i.e. computer algorithms. Prior to entering the park, after the visitor had asked one of the hostesses whether she herself was real, her answer went something like this: “If you can't see the difference, why does it matter?” *Westworld* proposes explanations (albeit fictional, for the time being) as to why Wiesing's radical re-examination of phenomenology as an essentialist science is crucial for both contemporary image science and the forthcoming “technology of experience” (even though his book does not include illustrated examples that would be of interest for us in this case). I believe that the present interpretation of hyper-transparent images – in which we include not only those that are produced with contemporary techniques of visualisation, but the already “historical” hyperrealist painting that developed in the 1970s – must

Bloomsbury, London 2014 [Das Mich der Wahrnehmung. Eine Autopsie. Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt, 2009], pp. 39-40.

ikoničke razlike nego i slikovnog pojavljivanja kao središnjeg argumenta ovog teksta i zato zaslužuje da se njome detaljnije pozabavimo.

Lambert Wiesing preokreće temeljno pitanje fenomenologije koje glasi: **Na koji način čovjek svojom intencionalnom svijesću „proizvodi”, zapravo uvlači u svijest, percipirani objekt? i pretvara ga u obrnuto pitanje: Kakve posljedice realitet percepcije ima za promatrača?**⁴ Ovaj Wiesingov obrat važan je zato što se po prvi put uzima u obzir da suvremene tehnologije proizvodnje i konstrukcije virtualnih realiteta uopće više ne računaju s individualnim sposobnostima percepcije nego se, upravo suprotno, temelje na tome da mogućnosti individualne percepcije izostanu u što većoj mogućoj mjeri. Primjerice, kada preko očiju stavimo opremu za VR, bezbrojne mogućnosti intencionalne svijesti i njezina sloboda proizvodnje značenja svode se na samo dva izbora: držati oči otvorenima ili ih zatvoriti. U tom slučaju promatrač više ne može kao ranije, dok je još promatrao statičnu sliku na slikarskom platnu ili pokretne slike na filmskom platnu, „pregovarati” s različitim razinama realiteta i tako samostalno donositi sudove o njihovoj umjetničkoj vrijednosti ili slikovnoj vjerodostojnosti, nego je je-

primarily start from the effect of perception on the observer, and not from the perception that arises from the intentional awareness of the observer when faced with the object of perception. This thesis is essential for the understanding not only of the numerous immersive visual experiences that are founded on the absence of the iconic difference, but also of the pictorial appearing as the central argument of this text, due to which it deserves to be dealt with in more detail.

Lambert Wiesing inverts the fundamental question of phenomenology that reads as follows: In what way does the observer with his intentional awareness produce or, more specifically, bring into awareness the perceived object? and turns it into a question: What consequences does the reality of perception have for the observer?⁴ This inversion of Wiesing's is important because, for the first time, it is taken into consideration that the contemporary technologies of production and construction of virtual realities do not rely anymore on the individual abilities of perception, but rather, on the contrary, they are motivated to the fullest extent possible by the absence of the possibilities of individual perception. For example, when we put on VR equipment, the countless possibilities of intentional consciousness together with its freedom of meaning production are reduced

dino što mu preostaje pasivno uroniti u takav radikalno individualizirani virtualni svijet koji mu se otvara pred očima ili izabрати potpunu tamu; dakle, odustati od bilo kakve percepcije. Pojam intencionalnosti, koji je omogućio kartezijanskom cogito da bude preveden u modernu teoriju slike i da tamo bude doveden u bitnu operativnu funkciju, pojam koji je bio toliko važan fenomenologiji, od protofenomenoloških uvida Konrada Fiedlera, preko Edmunda Husserla i Jean-Paula Sartrea do Lamberta Wiesinga⁵ – u svijetu virtualne stvarnosti gubi svaki konceptualni i metodološki značaj.

Lambert Wiesing u svojoj knjizi **indikativnog naziva** *Das Mich der Wahrnehmung* (Mene percepcije) ponudio nam je stoga tri fenomenološka uvida koji čovjekovu percepciju slike objašnjavaju kao rez prema stvarnosti, tj. kao još uvijek prisutnu (ikoničku) razliku, do koje doduše ne dolazi inten-

to merely two choices: to keep the eyes open, or to close them. In that case, the observer cannot “negotiate” anymore as before – when observing the static image on the canvas, or moving images on the film screen – with different levels of reality, and thus independently judge their artistic value or pictorial credibility, but is rather left to passively immerse into such radically individualised virtual world that opens before one's eyes, or to opt for complete darkness; in other words, to give up any kind of perception. The notion of intentionality, which enabled the Cartesian cogito to be translated in the modern image theory and thus brought into essential operative function, the notion that was of such importance to phenomenology, from proto-phenomenological insights by Konrad Fiedler, Edmund Husserl and Jean-Paul Sartre, to Lambert Wiesing⁵ – loses every conceptual and methodological significance in the times of virtual reality.

⁵ Ovdje prvenstveno mislimo na utemeljiteljske knjige fenomenologije spomenutih autora: Konrad Fiedler, *On Judging Works of Visual Art*; UniCal Press, 1957. preveli s njemačkog Henry Schaefer-Simmern i Fulmer Mood [Über die Beurteilung von Werken der Bildenden Kunst, Leipzig, 1896.]; Edmund Husserl, *Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory (1898-1925)* [Husserliana: *Phantasie, Bildbewusstsein, Erinnerung. (1898-1925)*]. Priredio Eduard Marbach, 1980.]; Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Imaginary. A phenomenological psychology of the imagination*; preveo s francuskog Jonathan Webber. Routledge, London, 2004. [L'imaginaire, Éditions Gallimard, Paris, 1940., 1986.]; Lambert Wiesing, op. cit.

⁴ Ibid., str. 72-78.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 72-78.

cionalnom sviješću promatrača nego specifičnim učinkom same slike:

1) jedinstveni OBJEKT slikovne percepcije: specifična ontološka karakteristika slikovnog objekta jest njegova redukcija na jednu jedinu osobinu - osjetilnost. Slika postaje vidljiva samo zato što je isključivo vidljiva. Prisutnost predmeta prikazanog na slici artificialna je prisutnost koja se svodi samo na vidljivost.⁶

2) jedinstveni IZVOR slikovne percepcije: riječ je o uvjetima mogućnosti percepcije slikovnog objekta. Posebno svojstvo percepcije slike leži u subjektu percepcije koji u ovom slučaju izvodi znatno drugačiji konstitutivni čin nego u slučaju percepcije nekog normalnog objekta, tj. onog koji nije slika.⁷

3) jedinstvene POSLJEDICE slikovne percepcije: samo pri gledanju slike iskustvo percepcije nije povezano s obvezom sudjelovanja u percipiranim događajima. Čovjek više ne mora sudjelovati! Isključivo u slučaju percepcije slike, promatrač nije uronjen u percipirani svijet.⁸

Hiperrealističko slikarstvo, a pogotovo najnovija imerzivna iskustva, potvrđuju teorijsku valja-

In his book, indicatively titled **Das Mich der Wahrnehmung** (literally: **The Me of Perception**), Lambert Wiesing therefore proposes three phenomenological insights that construe one's perception of image as the cut or break from reality, that is, as the still-present (iconic) difference which, indeed, does not arise from the intentional awareness of the observer, but rather from the specific effect of the image itself:

1) the unique OBJECT of image perception: the specific ontological characteristic of the pictorial object is its reduction to a sole property - sensuousness. The image becomes visible merely because it is exclusively visible. The presence of the thing portrayed in the image is an artificial presence that is reduced to mere visibility.⁶

2) the unique SOURCE of image perception: these are conditions of the possibility of perception of the image object. The special feature of image perception lies in the subject of perception which, in this case, performs a significantly different constitutive act than in the case of perception of a normal object i.e. of that which is not an image.⁷

3) the unique CONSEQUENCES of image perception: when merely observing the image, the experience of perception is not related to the liability to participate in perceived events. One need not participate anymore! It is exclu-

6 Lambert Wiesing, op. cit., p. 135.

7 Ibid., p. 138.

6 Lambert Wiesing, op. cit., str. 135.

7 Ibid., str. 138.

8 Ibid., str. 140.

nost čak i naizgled konzervativnih teorija, poput Boehmove i Nancyjeve, koje se vežu uz povijest umjetnosti i nasljeđe metafizičke filozofije i ne ulaze dublje u tehničku konstrukciju suvremene zbilje. Hiperrealizam je sve ono što slika ontološki nije i ne može biti; problematizira mogućnost negacije ikoničke razlike ikoničkim, tj. slikovnim sredstvima; maksimalno se približava iskustvu realiteta i time maksimalno osporava vlastiti slikovni status. Premda je hiperrealistično slikarstvo nastalo kao navlastit umjetnički fenomen, njegovi su dosezi mnogo značajniji za opću teoriju slike negoli kao doprinos autonomnom području umjetnosti. Već spomenuti kulturni i medijski nomadizam današnjice ne dopušta bilo kojem predmetu da bude fiksiran unutar društvenog sklopa u kojem je nastao, nego biva nebrojeno puta dekontekstualiziran, medijski reinkarniran i resemantiziran u neograničenom lancu semioze. U ovdje predloženom kontekstu Wiesingove fenomenologije percepcije hiperrealistično se slikarstvo nadaje kao alegorijsko-teorijska umjetnička praksa s potencijalom da – parafrazirajući W. J. T. Mitchella – postane metaslikom teorije (slike).⁹ Svojevrstan je pa-

9 Opširnije o Mitchellovom pojmu metaslika vidi u: W. J. T. Mitchell, „Metaslike”; u: Krešimir Purgar (ur.) Vizualni studiji - Umjetnost i mediji u doba slikovnog obrata; Centar za vizualne

sively in the case of image perception that the observer is not immersed in the perceived world any longer.⁸

Hyperrealist painting, and especially the most recent immersive experiences, confirm the theoretical validity even of seemingly conservative theories, such as Boehm's and Nancy's, which are associated with art history and the legacy of metaphysical philosophy without getting deeper into the technical construction of contemporary reality. Hyperrealism is everything that a painting is not and cannot be; it problematises the possibility of negation of the iconic difference with iconic or pictorial means; it maximally approximates the experience of reality and thus maximally disputes its own pictorial status. Even though hyperrealist painting came into existence as a distinctive artistic phenomenon, its scope has been much more significant for the general theory of image than as contribution to the autonomous field of art. The already-mentioned cultural and media nomadism of today does not allow for any object to be fixated within the social system within which it originated, but is rather continuously decontextualized, always reincarnated in yet another media, and resemanticised in the infinite chain of semiosis. In the hereby proposed context of Wiesing's phenomenol-

8 Ibid., p. 140.

radoks da je hiperrealizam u stanju afirmirati ključne teze Wiesingove teorije slikovne percepcije iz pozicije onoga što on sam – hiperrealizam – upravo odbacuje, a to su autonomnost i emancipiranost slike kao posebne vrste materijalnog iskustva naspram sveukupnog realiteta svakodnevice. Naime, hiperrealizam kao teorijski pojam – dakle, ne samo artefakti slikarskog pravca nego i svaki oblik tehnološkog oponašanja stvarnosti, virtualne i proširene stvarnosti te djelovanje humanoidnih strojeva – govori o želji čovjeka da se približi prirodnom iskustvu, ali da ipak ne podliježe zakonima prirode.

Hiperrealistična je slika ona vrsta vizualne reprezentacije koja pretkazuje kraj ikoničke razlike i početak tehnologija hiperrealnog iskustva s one strane fizičke realnosti. Iz današnje perspektive, umjetnički učinak hiperrealizma je paradoksalan: savršenu slikarsku vještinu u oponašanju stvarnog svijeta treba razumjeti kao jedan od prvih tragova sumnje u to da predmeti i pojave vrlo skoro više neće biti ono mislimo da gledamo. Između tradicionalne slikovne reprezentacije i računalno generirane virtualne vizualnosti već sada uočavamo velik procjep – tranzicijsko područje između slike i ne-slike, realnosti i

studije, Zagreb, 2009. [Tekst je izvorno objavljen u: W. J. T. Mitchell, *Pictorial Turn*; University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1994.]

ogy of perception, the hyperrealist painting imposes itself as an allegorical and theoretical artistic practice with a potential of becoming – to paraphrase W. J. T. Mitchell – a **meta-picture of picture theory**.⁹ Somewhat of a paradox is that hyperrealism is capable of affirming the key theses of Wiesing's theory of image perception from the position of that which it itself – hyperrealism – in fact repudiates, i.e. the autonomy and emancipation of image as a specific type of **material** experience as opposed to the overall reality of everyday life. Specifically, hyperrealism as a theoretical notion – that is, not only the artefacts of the painterly movement, but also any form of technological imitation of nature, virtual and expanded reality, and the operation of humanoid machines – speaks of the desire of man to draw close to natural experience, but yet not having to be subject to the laws of nature.

The hyperrealist painting is the kind of visual representation that anticipates the end of the iconic difference and the beginning of the technologies of hyperreal experience beyond physical reality. From today's perspective, the artistic effect of hyperrealism is paradox-

9 For a detailed account on Mitchell's notion of the meta-picture, see: W. J. T. Mitchell, "Metaslike," in: Krešimir Purgar (ed.), *Vizualni studiji - Umjetnost i mediji u doba slikovnog obrata*; Centre for Visual Studies, Zagreb, 2009 [The text was originally published in: W. J. T. Mitchell, *Pictorial Turn*; University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1994]

fikcije. Razvojem tehnologije taj će se procjep sve više smanjivati u korist čiste vizualnosti bez slika. Nakon tisućljetnog razdoblja slika kao fizičkih pojava, dolazi vrijeme u kojem će one u materijalnom obliku nastajati i opstajati još samo kao egzotičan relikv umjetnosti. Prije nego što zauvijek nestanu iz svakodnevne komunikacije kao vjerodostojne pojavnosti, predlažem da se fokusiramo na ovo iznimno uzbudljivo vrijeme njihova nestajanja u praksama dematerijalizacije, virtualizacije i posvemašnje nestabilnosti, a koje zovem slikovno pojavljivanje.¹⁰

10 O konceptu slikovnog pojavljivanja opširno govorim u knjizi *Pictorial Appearing - Image Theory After Representation* koja izlazi 2019. kod izdavača Transcript, Bielefeld [www.transcript-verlag.de/978-3-8376-4135-6/pictorial-appearing/].

ical: the perfect painterly skill in mimicking the real world ought to be understood as one of the first traces of doubt that the things and appearances will soon cease to be that which we think we see. Between the traditional pictorial representation and the computer-generated virtual visualisation, it is already now that we recognise a large gap – the transitional area between image and non-image, reality and fiction. With the development of technology, this gap will be increasingly reduced in favour of pure visualisations **sans** images. Following the thousand-year period of images as physical appearances, there comes a time in which they will appear and subsist as nothing more than an exotic relic of art. Before they permanently disappear from everyday communication as authentic **appearances**, I suggest that we focus on this extremely exciting time of their disappearance in the practices of dematerialisation, virtualisation and overall instability, which I call **pictorial appearing**.¹⁰

10 I address in detail the concept of pictorial appearing in the book *Pictorial Appearing Image Theory After Representation*, which is expected to be published in 2019 by Transcript, Bielefeld [www.transcript-verlag.de/978-3-8376-4135-6/pictorial-appearing/].