

05 — OSANKARICA, 1959

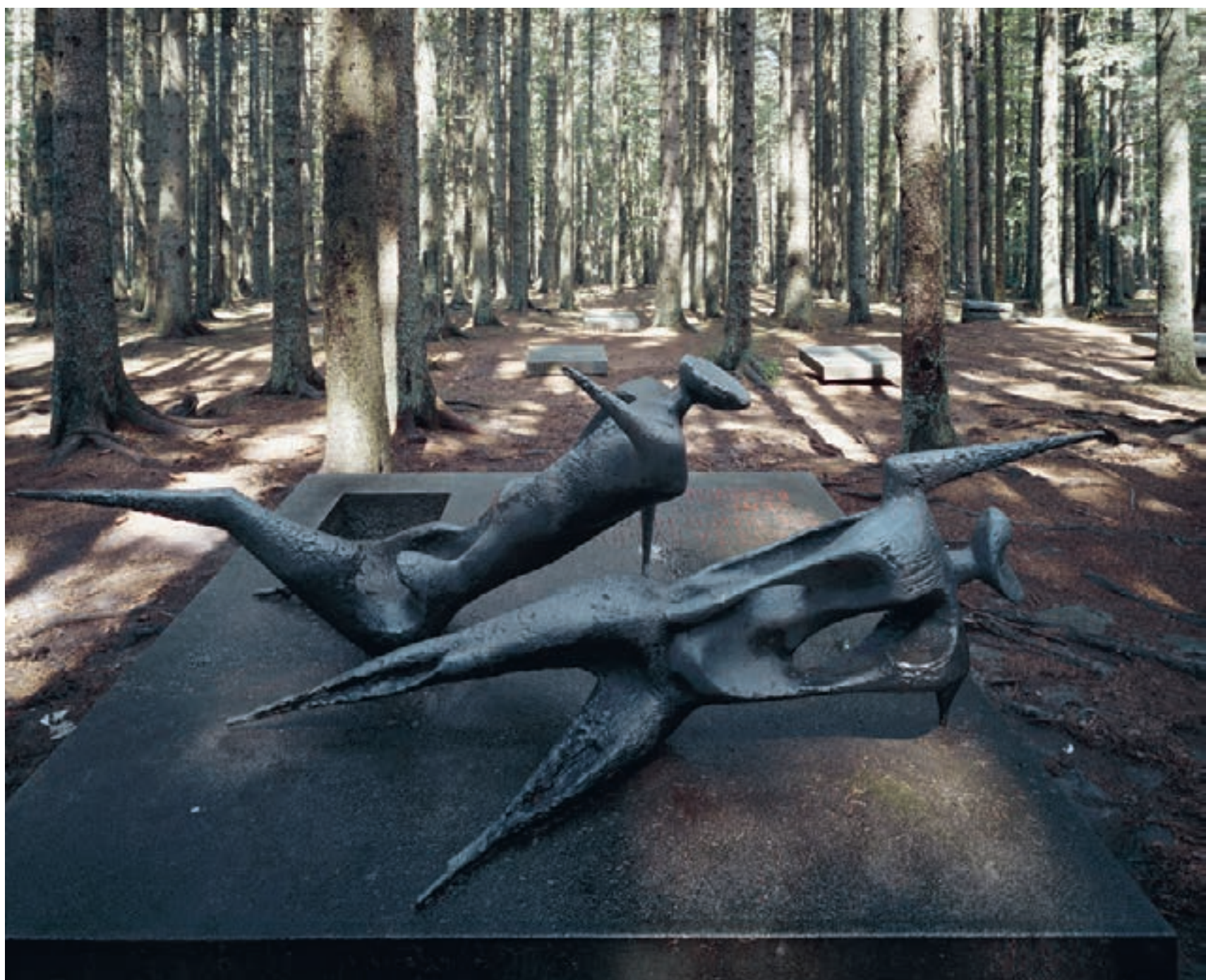
Branko Kocmut, Slavko Tihec



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Kompleks v spomin padlim borcem Pohorskega bataljona na Osankarici • Osankarica na Pohorju, Slovenija •
Arhitekt: Branko Kocmut • Kipar: Slavko Tihec • Material: granit, bron • Status: kulturni spomenik
državnega pomena • Fotografije: Virginia Vrecl, Blaž Budja • Besedilo: Aleksander Saša Ostan

Memorial complex for the killed fighters of Pohorski battalion, Osankarica • Osankarica on Pohorje,
Slovenia • Architect: Branko Kocmut • Sculptor: Slavko Tihec • Material: granite, bronze •
Status: cultural monument of national importance • Photographs: Virginia Vrecl, Blaž Budja •
Text: Aleksander Saša Ostan





O bisk spominskega obeležja je prvovrstno prostorsko doživetje: postopno potapljanje v čarobne pohorske gozdove vključuje obreda prehajanja in romanja. Hoja skozi mehko topografijo bukovega in smrekovega gozda nas umiri in pripravi na srečanje. Na poti prečkamo nekaj potočkov, brvi in granitnih plošč, diskretno umeščenih v zemljino. Ko se približamo ožji lokaciji dogodka (ki po svoji strukturi spominja na grške tragedije, na bitko pri Termopilah), naletimo v naravni katedrali med vertikalnim ostenjem visokih smrek na prva znamenja obeležja – manjše granitne kocke z vgraviranimi imeni padlih. Na zgornji ploskvi je reliefno poglobljen kvadrat, v katerem se nabira voda s čarobnim odsevom neba. Iz stranic kubusa štrli dva kamnita tulca, verjetno prispodobi cevi, saj kamni obeležujejo položaje obrambnih strelnih gnezd; morda pa tudi abstraktni očesi, ki zreta v svet prežee nevarnosti ... Osrednji prostor obeležja označujejo večje, na ozek podstavek dvignjene granitne plošče, ki optično »zalebdijo« v prostoru. Ti abstraktni kamni simbolizirajo zemljanke, ki so jih borci Pohorskega bataljona konec zime 1942 postavili okoli majhne gozdarske koče. Prav tu, v središču kompozicije, kjer je nekoč stala koča štaba, leži največja kamnita plošča. Na njej počivata bronasti figuri/skulpturi – prispodobi moškega in ženske, ki v zadnjem, krčevitem boju legata na »žrtveni oltar svobode«. Za tiste čase pogumno, sodobno kiparstvo (nekje med Moorom in Giacomettijem), med figuraliko in abstrakcijo, organski preplet oblik med zunaj in znotraj, ki balansira med telesnim in duhovnim. V osrednji plošči še danes zeva luknja, skozi katero je nekoč rasla smreka. Simbol upanja, preživetja, moči narave? Danes na tem prostoru ni sledov življenja, niti podrasti, tla so kot »mrtva« zemlja, posuta z iglicami in listjem, »ubito« rjave barve. A le nekaj metrov nižje nas na majhni jasi ob potočku pozdravijo zimzeleni mahovi; tu se lahko »okopamo« v revitalizacijski energiji gozda, ki nam pomaga povrniti zaupanje v življenje ... Celotno obeležje spominja na svetišče v naravi, poetično in intimno pričevanje, ki nam onkraj socrealizma ali monumentalizma, značilnih za spominska obeležja tistih časov, z abstraktnim, simbolnim in večno sodobnim arhitekturnim jezikom še danes spregovori o univerzalnem človekovem hrepenenju po svobodi. Kompozicija pa je tudi »land art«, natančno vpet v prostor in posvečen spominu na dejanske osebnosti. Iz dokumentov se da razbrati, da sta avtorja v izvorni zasnovi na zunanjem robu obeležja predvidela ovalni jarek z obročem odstranjenih dreves, ki naj bi ponazarjal mejo tabora oz. bitke. Zakaj tega »svetega (za)risa« v obeležju ni, ne vemo, a obiskovalcem bi pomagal ozavestiti realni perimenter tega tragičnega dogodka, ožjemu območju pa bi dodal posvečeni, pietetni značaj.



Visiting the memorial site is a first-rate spatial experience: a gradual sinking in the magical Pohorje forests includes the ritual of passage and pilgrimage. The walk through the soft topography of the beech and spruce forest calms us and prepares us for the encounter. On our way, we cross a few streams, footbridges, and granite slabs discreetly placed in the earth. As we approach the ground zero of the tragic event (reminiscent in its structure of the battle of Thermopylae), we notice in the natural cathedral, among the vertical enclosures formed by the tall spruces, the first marks of the memorial - little granite cubes with engraved names of those killed. On the top surface, they feature a sunken shape of a square accumulating water with a magical celestial reflection. Two stone cylinders project from the cuboid's sides, probably an allegory of a gun barrel as the stones denote the positions of defensive foxholes; perhaps they're abstract eyes peering into the world of impending danger. The central space of the memorial is marked by larger stone slabs elevated on narrow supports causing the optical effect of "levitation" in the space. These abstract stones symbolise the dugouts constructed by Pohorski battalion fighters around a small forester's lodge - the headquarters - at the end of winter of 1942. In the centre of the composition, once the site of the headquarters cabin, the largest stone slab is installed. Placed on it are two bronze figures/sculptures, allegories of a man and a woman lying down on the "sacrificial altar of freedom" in their desperate final struggle. For the time period, this was brave, contemporary sculpture (somewhere between Moore and Giacometti), figural and abstract to an equal degree, an organic intertwining of forms between outside and inside, balancing between the corporeal and the spiritual. The stone slab itself features a gaping hole which formerly had a spruce growing through it. A symbol of hope, survival, and nature's power? Today, there are no signs of life in this central space, no undergrowth, the ground resembles "dead" earth, strewn with conifer needles and leaves, "beat down brown" in colour. But only a couple hundred metres from here, we're greeted by evergreen moss on a small meadow by a stream where we can "bathe" in the revitalising energy of the forest, which helps us regain faith in life ... The entire memorial is reminiscent of a sanctuary in nature, a poetic and intimate testimony, which even today speaks to us about the universal human yearning for freedom in an abstract, symbolic and forever contemporary architectural language beyond Socialist realism and monumentalism characteristic of commemorative memorials of the time. But at the same time, the composition is "land art", precisely incorporated in the space ("in situ" and "site specific") and dedicated to the memory of concrete persons. Records reveal that in the original design, the authors envisaged an oval trench with a ring of removed trees at the outer perimeter of the memorial in order to mark the limits of the camp and the battle. Why this "magic circle" does not feature in the memorial is not known, as it would help the visitors gain an understanding of the actual perimeter of the tragic event while augmenting the reverent character of this sacred space.