

# EUROPEAN CULTURAL MONTH – LJUBLJANA 97

history of the project, basic principles and  
framework programme for individual programme  
spheres

## **0. HISTORY OF THE PROJECT EUROPEAN CULTURE MONTH AND CANDIDATURE OF THE CITY OF LJUBLJANA**

The decision on the European Culture Month was taken by the Council of Ministers of Culture of the European Community on 18th May 1990. This is an annual event which can be organised by all European cities of countries based on democracy, pluralism and the rule of law. The Council of Ministers of Culture selects a city with sufficient cultural and organisational facilities and significance for the organisation of this major and demanding cultural project under the auspices of the European Union.

So far, the project has been organised in Krakow (1992), Graz (1993), Budapest (1994), Nicosia (1995) and St. Petersburg (1996) while the organiser of the project in 1997 is Ljubljana.

The candidature for the project European Culture Month – Ljubljana 97 was proposed by the then city secretary for education, research, culture and sports, Ms Branka Lovrečič to be in 1995. The Assembly of the City of Ljubljana discussed the proposal for the candidature of Ljubljana for the European Culture Month in 1995 at its 17th session, held on 19th December 1991, and gave it unanimous support and authorised the City Secretariat for Education, Research, Culture and Sports

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to supervise all relevant activities. With the approval of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia, the city of Ljubljana applied for candidature at the Council of Ministers on 14th January 1992, but the Council suggested that the candidature of the City of Ljubljana should also be supported by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia discussed the candidature at its 53rd session, held on 4th November 1993, gave its support and took a decision to provide the means for the implementation of the project in 1995 or 1996. The Government of the Republic of Slovenia authorised the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to inform the Council of Ministers of the European Union of the support given by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia to the candidature of the city of Ljubljana for the European Culture Month.

The Council of Ministers of Culture of the European Union decided at the session held on 5th November 1993 that the organisers of the European Culture Month in 1995 would be both Nicosia and Ljubljana. But after thorough consideration, Ljubljana asked for the postponement of the candidature to the year 1997 for the following reasons: firstly, at least two years were necessary for the preparation of this project, secondly, the reform of local self-government in Slovenia and local elections in 1994, and thirdly, the media attention would have been dispersed if the organisation had been shared with Nicosia.

On 17th June 1994, the Council of Ministers of Culture of the European Union selected Ljubljana as the organiser of the project European Culture Month in 1997.

Mojca Kumerdej  
Chief Coordinator  
European Culture Month – Ljubljana 97  
Ljubljana, 5th April 1995

## **I. BASIC PRINCIPLES**

The project of the European Culture Month – Ljubljana 97 should be independent with regard to the programme, finances and organisation and it should include some of the established regular events in Ljubljana as accompanying activities.

As an intermediary between local and foreign cultural activity, the project, which would present Ljubljana as a modern urban cultural centre and the capital of Slovenia, would assert the artistic activity of Ljubljana – and Slovenia – and its existing social and cultural network of events on the European scale.

The basic objective is for the project to assert and at the

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same time re-evaluate the intermediary position of Ljubljana and at the same time contribute to the forming of its material infrastructure network according to the example set by European cities (institutions, forms of organisation). With this project, Ljubljana would reflect on and conceptualise invited events from European cultural activity, which would be implemented on an exclusively professional programme basis.

Ljubljana is located at the meeting point of various cultural trends which are today not polarised simply in terms of the East-West axis, but also in terms of the outside-inside relationship (the multiculturalism of individual national states, independent national culture, etc.). The concept of the presentation and realisation of the project of the European Culture Month – Ljubljana 97 (EMK – Ljubljana 97) would be centred on this dynamic, productive (non-typical) polarity and the level of artistic and cultural activity in Europe. “Integration” into Europe would be implemented through additional urbanisation of Ljubljana and through its policy of an open cultural city which with the internationalisation of its own activity increasingly embraces its inner specific and identity.

It is this meeting-point position of Ljubljana which offers the city special opportunities, conditions and insights. Ljubljana is at the same time a meeting point and a bridge, which wishes to become a part of the Western European sphere, but at the same time, it acknowledges its special character – which has not been formed only by the former Eastern European sub(context) but is also a material product and media effect of a specific artistic constellation.

Local contemporary-culture arts activity should establish a dialogue with the “external” European production, while both would enter the process of recontextualisation. As a result, several projects would be carried out in cooperation with international European artistic circles in the form of a coproduction process which would be presented in other European galleries and venues after the finished EMK-Ljubljana 97 project.

The other basic direction of the EMK – Ljubljana 97 project is the desire for the event to make a long term contribution not only to the Ljubljana cultural programme but also to its infrastructure, which includes the construction of the Contemporary Arts Centre (proposal by Ms. Branka Lovrečič) and the renovation of a number of buildings intended for culture.

At the programme level, the process of project forming would proceed from principle programme viewpoints to the actual planning of the programme according to individual programme spheres.

At the organisational level, the founding of the Programme

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Board (as the highest body for decision-making and forming of the programme) would be followed by the founding of other organisational working bodies and committees for individual events.

Written by: Marina Gržinić  
President of the EMK – Ljubljana 97 Programme Council  
Ljubljana, 5th April 1995

## **II. FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME FOR INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMME SPHERES**

Ljubljana, 5th April 1995

**LITERATURE** – coordinator Tomo Virk

Setting 1997 as the year for the European Month of Culture represents an opportunity for the surpassing of regular methods of presentation and exchange of literature, as are known in Slovenia, and at the same time, for a more decisive step forward into the European spheres of literature.

Contextually, the programme is based on the need to establish a link between Slovene and foreign literary art and the desire to reach the readership beyond the Slovene borders. The objective of the programme is to assert Slovene literature and the Slovene – particularly that of Ljubljana – spiritual environment in the European horizon, which would also be visibly shaped by the planned events.

The establishing of the European network of literary energies would be favourably received not only in Slovenia but also in European cultural circles, for authors from various environments and countries often find that links between them are insufficient and that more attention is paid to the research of “great” literatures and cultures than to the research of those surrounding us, whether this is justifiable or not.

1. The founding of the Emona literary magazine with an international board of editors, which would be published four times a year. The title, Emona, would discreetly point to the millennia of the historical presence of Ljubljana and, significantly, it would at the same time be acceptable (pronounceable) in all European languages.

2. Literary computer network. The collecting of literary texts in a computer network would allow every reader who has access to a modem to appraise the quality of a literary work available and add his or her comment. In cooperation with experts, a computer address would be set up, under which

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literary texts for reading and possible evaluation could be entered and which would enable all those interested to follow literature of various forms and trends.

3. Final meeting of the associates of the magazine During EMK – Ljubljana 97, a meeting of the most important associates of the magazine is planned in Ljubljana. Each of them would be introduced with his or her reading/speech programme and all of them would participate at a symposium, the precise theme of which will be defined later, but it will concentrate on the specific feature of European culture, particularly in comparison with the USA on one hand and the rest of the world on the other.

**PERFORMING ARTS** – coordinator Tomaž Toporišič

The programme of various spheres of performing arts will be based on specific characteristics of the relevant contemporary Slovene activity in various spheres, which will also serve as the criteria for the selection of guest performances and signing of coproduction contracts. Only in this way can the identity of the entire event be formulated. The programme consists of three segments:

***1. Slovene productions***

The implementation of coproductions and productions would stem from determined interests and conceptual basis. This would encompass all the highest quality institutional and non-institutional partners, who would participate in negotiations with European partners. The programme would be determined by the end of 1995. Possible new performance spaces include the historical part of Ljubljana (the puppet project, ambience project by the Ana Monro theatre), industrial premises (independent productions) and Plečnik's Križanke.

***2. Guest appearances of foreign theatres***

It would be sensible to have preview shows by major names from various disciplines, which need to be decided upon by the end of this year. The programme envisages one major name from the theatre, one from (new) opera, one from contemporary dance, new relevant names from Eastern and Western Europe and one theatre name from Asia (Japan). As a part of foreign guest appearances, cooperation would be established with the EXODOS Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts, the concept of which corresponds with that of EMK – Ljubljana 97. A special section of the presentation of recent European production would be carried out in cooperation with the Glej theatre and EXODOS.

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EMK – Ljubljana 97 would be a coproducer of a new production within the framework of JUNGE HUNDE, produced by several major European production houses. This demands cooperation with Cankarjev dom, Festival Ljubljana and certain Ljubljana theatres which as partners of EMK – Ljubljana 97 would provide the infrastructure for guest appearances, workshops and preview shows.

### ***3. Symposiums, workshops***

The programme also envisages the organisation of workshops within various spheres, which would be led by and participated in by foreign and Slovene artists. Results of some workshops would be presented in the form of premieres in Ljubljana and a selection of them would move to other towns. In cooperation with the programme section of Publications/Congresses/Symposiums and EXODOS festival, a symposium on the phenomena of contemporary performing arts is planned, which would also be participated in by foreign experts. Considering the European orientation of the project, a symposium on lobbying within the European Union for Slovene artists and producers would be organised in cooperation with the department for theatre at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia, the Dutch theatre institute, ONDA from France and other relevant organisations.

***FINE ART*** – coordinator Marina Gržinić

#### ***Contemporary fine art***

1. East-West Exhibition; a mixed curator group from the former Eastern Europe would set up an exhibition, presenting and interpreting new Eastern European avant-garde trends from the 1960s and 1970s to the present.

2. Exhibition of contemporary Slovene art in the form of an introspection – establishing of parallels between contemporary Slovene works of art and works from Western Europe; Slovene artistic originals in comparison with those from Western Europe; artefacts from European museums and galleries and also Slovene national and private collections would be presented in a dynamic and polemic dialogue; differences and similarities between Slovene and European contemporary art.

3. Authorial exhibition by two custodians (a Slovene and a foreigner); an exhibition of works by artists from the whole of Europe (Eastern and Western). At the exhibition, not only major but above all conceptually and artistically the most influential names from fine art would be presented, namely, what is here

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and now (within the entire European context) most topically, provocatively and (multi)conceptually formed. The project would originally be presented in Ljubljana and would move to other European galleries after the end of EMK – Ljubljana 97.

4. Custodians/representatives/critics of a number of European galleries would introduce several highly representative/best known artists from these galleries at a joint exhibition in Ljubljana

### ***Older fine art***

Three projects have been proposed in connection with the National Gallery:

1. Gothic art in Slovakia – in cooperation with the Bratislava National Gallery
2. Cultural ties between Slovenia and Kärnten – from the Romanesque period to 20th century art – in cooperation with the Klagenfurt Landesmuseum.
3. Exhibition contributed by a Western museum.

### **ARCHITECTURE/DESIGN/CITY PLANNING –**

coordinator Tomaž Brate

The programme encompasses the following segments:

#### ***1. Intensification of activities already in implementation***

- Renovation of the castle – the finishing of works and the setting up of the exhibition “Urban development in Ljubljana”;
- Ljubljana – my city; renovation of Metelkova

#### ***2. Exhibition activity***

- Exhibition at the Ljubljana castle “Urban development in Ljubljana”
- Moving of the Plečnik exhibition to Ljubljana

#### ***3. Publications***

This includes already existing publications which would prepare special issues following an agreement between EMK – Ljubljana 97 and editors; preparation of a photo-monograph, with the emphasis on architecture, and guides on the architecture of Ljubljana.

#### ***4. The arranging of “ephemeral settings”***

For the EMK – Ljubljana 97 project, presently neglected points in the city centre must be arranged. This would be an attempt at the temporary arrangement of settings for activities of

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EMK –Ljubljana 97 in the city centre “gray zones” – the “distribution” of events (and electronic information).

### **5. Contemporary Art Centre**

Membership of European and with this, access to tender projects; a workshop with ten relevant architects and their students who would work on the project in Ljubljana for a month.

### **6. International cooperation**

The opening of institutions by inviting major international lecturers during this time, the implementation of relevant thematic/conceptual coproductions.

**SERIOUS MUSIC** – conceived by Brina Jež

### **CONTEMPORARY SERIOUS MUSIC**

The project is a unique opportunity to put contemporary music in an equal position to other contemporary arts, as it enjoys in the “developed Western” world.

#### **1. Commissions for Slovene artists**

Slovene composers would be commissioned to write new works from different spheres. Proposal:

a) Two shorter stage musical works with a “medium” number of musicians by choice (not more than the size of a chamber orchestra). Possible incorporation of singing, acting, dance, instrumental section and electronics.

b) Three electronic works – independent or with the incorporation of soloists or smaller instrumental sections, possible additional commission, combined with a higher number of musicians: orchestra and (or) choir.

c) Three chamber (solo) works which would be contributed to the programme by invited foreign and Slovene ensembles.

#### **2. Concerts of chamber, solo and orchestra music and stage musical events**

a) Concerts of chamber music

With its intimacy and limits, the subtle sound and specific structure of chamber music offers the purest musical pleasure to connoisseurs of music. Slovene names would be presented along with major European artistes. An important role would be played by younger musicians. Proposed concerts:

– Rohan de Saram, Marianne Schroeder (violoncello, piano)



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Both artists rank among the supreme performers of contemporary music and have participated at all major events. The cellist is a member of the Arditti quartet, while the pianist chiefly performs solo. They recently began to perform as a duet.

- Ensemble Recherche (chamber orchestra) A top orchestra from Freiburg, specialising in contemporary music

- Luisa Castellani (vocal)

- Younger chamber orchestras would contribute a large portion of contemporary music to the programme (wind trio, flute quartet, piano duet, etc.). Muzina String Quartet, oboist Matej Šarc, violinist Svava Berhardsdóttir, pianists Bojan Gorišek and Tatjana Ognjanovič, double bass Boris Kantušar and more.

- Concert of a symphonic orchestra We would welcome a combination of electronic music, incorporated concert forms with soloists, possibly actors, a vocal group, etc.

- Stage musical works Proposal: two shorter performances of experimental stage musical works by Slovene composers, engaging singers, actors and musicians and including electronic music.

Guest appearance of a foreign group (concrete proposal will soon be presented).

### ***3. Series of events promoting electronic music***

Since electronic music is little present in the creativity of Slovene composers and concert programmes, concerts of this kind of music should be accompanied by additional promotional activities. Round table discussions and seminars on the position of electronic music in Slovenia and abroad, the influence and representation of electronic music and new techniques, approaches, programmes and equipment of electronic studios would be organised. A number of experts and representatives of studios would be invited to participate in round table discussion and introduce studio production. Papers must be published in two languages (English and Slovene).

The concert part would be partially informative and partially accompanied with the elements of the setting, movement, music theatre, etc.

The proposal for the opening of the project:

The event would open with a concert of the city bells. Mr Lorenzo is involved with similar projects (additional information is available). The project incorporates all church bells performing a certain “composition”. European cities have employed this kind of opening for events or celebrations of anniversaries. This would be an original way of drawing attention to the event and its incorporation in and dependency on the present moment, place and city.

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**ROCK/ETHNO/JAZZ** – coordinator Igor Vidmar

The programme will include top performers of jazz, rock, ethno and techno music from Slovenia and abroad and would therefore represent an exceptional international attraction for the public and media and of the important characteristics of EMK – Ljubljana 97 in comparison with European months of culture organised in other European cities.

At the same time the programme represents a continuation and addition to the already existing regular events and their long tradition – International Jazz Festival, Novi rock, Druga godba. Due to its mass (30,000 to 40,000 visitors, 15-20% of which would come from abroad) and social character, the programme would have numerous secondary economic effects.

Programme:

1. a central event would represent a new quality for Ljubljana and Slovenia. A one or two-day open-air festival (Bežigrad stadium, Stožice hippodrome) would create an event framework, which has been present in Europe for decades.
2. 3-4 medium size concerts in connection with existing regular events (International Jazz Festival, Druga godba), which could be organised in Križanke, Gallus Hall of Cankarjev dom and Tivoli Hall.
3. Showcase – “display” concert by Slovene musicians of new rock in Križanke.
4. Musical stage project by Laibach, the best known Slovene (and Central/Eastern European) international band (Križanke or Cankarjev dom).
5. 12-15 club concerts and events in city streets and squares – project of musical socialising in the city
6. Euro-techno rave
7. Programme of media animation: making of video clips, radio recordings/broadcasts on the music programme of EMK-Ljubljana 97 and Slovene musicians, which would make up a promotion in the Slovene and particularly the foreign media, including satellite TV; the project is envisaged in the cooperation with TV Slovenia and privately owned media.
8. Round table discussion – workshop with international participation on the following subjects: – influence of global media, particularly MTV, on local music production – role of jazz-rock-ethno-techno-popular music in the social and cultural network of central European cities (Graz, Vienna, Prague, Bratislava, Zagreb, Rijeka, Budapest)
10. Programme of establishing a computer information network which would connect halls, clubs, musicians and organisers in Slovenia and elsewhere

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11. Issuing of presentation publications on the history of jazz, rock, techno and other types of music in Ljubljana and Slovenia.

**FILM/PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO AND MEDIA ART** –

coordinator Uroš Prestar

***Film***

1) Premiere of one of the more interesting films in cooperation with the European FIPRESCI academy, which would be attended by a part of the film crew. 2. Organisation of a film school – a workshop led by a major film artist (director, screenplay writer), which would be participated in by students from European academies enjoying a month's grant and accommodation. 3. Month of European film 4. Short film competition 5. Guest presentation of one of the major exhibitions on the 100th anniversary of film 6. Special issue of Ekran magazine, possibly in coproduction with Maska, Formart and Mzin. 7. Joint project by fine artists and young Slovene directors: artist designs a poster, director makes a short clip. 8. Filming of music clips with local groups under the sponsorship of a major record company and exclusive viewing on TV.

***Video***

1. Authorial presentation of video works. The selection of Slovene and European video production from the period 1995-97 would be entrusted to a foreign selector.

2. Project of Telekinetic Interactive Location set up at various points in the city of Ljubljana. This is audiovideologovision as a part of IntArt – a joint project of Italy, Austria and Slovenia. The project would be carried out on the Trieste-Ljubljana-Vienna axis and would be accompanied with a CD-rom catalogue in place of an ordinary catalogue. The implementation of a part of the project has already started with Rotas-Cyberland, which researches and builds digital models of Plečnik's architecture. After an additional processing of structures, this could be finished as an Art Internet project and entered in the internet communication network.

3. Project "Video Information Columns-Sculptures" would inform incidental passers-by of cultural events of EMK – Ljubljana 97 with the help of a touch screen.

4. Symposium "Digital Vision of Speech" would be implemented in the form of interactive television, which represents a simultaneous incorporation of various studios in

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Slovenia and abroad. This could also include certain programmes from other spheres.

5. Special multimedia projects which would be carried out for this event.

6. EMK – Ljubljana 97 represents a unique opportunity to create minimum conditions for becoming acquainted with unknown practices in Ljubljana, such as: interactive, cybernetic and communication art. For this purpose, certain institutions and services (RTVS, FDV, IJS, CD, DTP-KUD) should be linked and equipped with basic technology. EMK – Ljubljana 97 is not supposed to be the main sponsor for this equipment, but it should provide coordination and minimum standard compatibility among the listed and other potential centres. In this way, a public tender for the participation of local and foreign artists and the beginning of continuous work in this sphere would be feasible.

### ***Photography***

1. Exhibition of an internationally famous artist
2. 2-3 exhibitions of recent European innovative photography
3. 2-3 exhibitions of Slovene photography
4. Workshops and an international symposium on critique and theory in photography

### **CULTURAL AND SOCIAL PHENOMENA**

***NSK STATE, LJUBLJANA*** – coordinator Miran Mohar

The event itself is a synthesis of recent NSK projects, including the conception of the State in Time. It would take place in a specially created collapsable and movable architectural environment which can be incorporated into other environments. The visitor would enter the NSK state through a border crossing and move around the interior of the planet.

During the setting up of the NSK State, Ljubljana project, exhibitions, concerts and shows would take place in this environment. The event would be designed in an interactive way, in order to make the space accessible for public use. Lectures by and debates with local and foreign theoreticians and artists are also planned.

***METELKOVA*** – coordinator Marko Hren

Metelkova is a new location which solves the problem of space by contributing space for the programme of approximately 180 groups and individuals. Eight buildings with

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a total ground surface of some 9,000 square metres offer sufficient space for numerous studios, rehearsals, galleries, social events, production activities and services.

Programme:

1. Presentation of a permaculture entitled "Nature-City", including a presentation of some ecological and natural science projects in Slovenia (such as Škocjanski zatok multimedia)

2. On the Edge – international symposium on the civil and military

3. Opening of the project Prison Corps, accompanied by the archives Anthropology of Prison; Slovene and foreign artists have been turning prison cells into galleries and living areas for the last year.

4. Festival in coproduction with Trans Europa Halles (association of 18 multicultural centres in Europe); the event would be participated in by all active artists of Metelkova and their guests from TEH centres.

**YOUTH HANDICAPPED DEPRIVILIGED** – coordinator  
Klaudija Poropat

The programme will be formed in cooperation with other programmes of EMK – Ljubljana 97:

1. in cooperation with the fine arts programme

– an exhibition of works by the association of painters who paint using their mouths and feet (VDMFK-Vereinigung der Mund und Fuss malenden Kunstler, Liechtenstein)

– 2 smaller exhibitions

2. in cooperation with the performing arts programme:

– guest theatre performance

– guest dance performance

3. in cooperation with the publications/congresses/symposiums programme:

– publication of a special issue of Awola (theoretical magazine for social studies)

– series of lectures on handicaps and social studies

4. in cooperation with the film/photography/video and

media art programme:

– mini film festival on handicaps

All listed projects would be coproduced by various local and foreign organisations.

**GAY CULTURE** – coordinator Brane Mozetič

The aspect of artistic creativity and culture defined by the sphere of different sexual practices and bringing a special expression of gay culture (denoting both male and female homo-eroticism) should also be presented within EMK – Ljubljana 97.

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The relevant programme includes:

1. Artistic and photographic exhibition by artists from Slovenia and abroad
2. Days of film art: films on gay and lesbian subjects from the countries of the former Eastern Europe
- 3 Three club concerts: appearances of pop and rock bands which explicitly express their adherence to this specific culture

***YOUTH CREATIVITY*** – coordinator Katerina Mirović

Within this programme, the issue of youth creativity is presented as broadly as possible. Apart from the presentations of young artistic groups (Strip Core, etc.), the programme would also introduce the organisational aspect of youth creativity.

Apart from the multimedia production and organisational groups, certain types of art specific for youth culture or ignored by cultural institutions (such as strip cartoons and graffiti) would be included in the programme. In the presentation of this kind of art, the location is of extreme importance. The spraying of (a wall at) Metelkova, which would at the same time symbolise the acquisition act, would be highly suitable.

Apart from the visual presentation, this part should be accompanied by relevant round table discussions and each organisation should form its own specific programme or presentation concept. An interesting part of the programme would be the setting up of panels in Slovene youth clubs and centres where the programme of similar organisations would be introduced.

***PUBLICATIONS/CONGRESSES/SYMPIOSIUMS*** –  
coordinator Emil Hrvatin

Planned symposiums:

1. Contemporary artistic production is interdisciplinary. Interdisciplinarity is not revealed only in the crossing of the limits of classic artistic spheres but also in the connecting of art with technology, science and theory. Therefore, to discuss art within the limits of individual disciplines would be excessively narrow, for its widest range is the “historisation” of a certain practice.

2. One of the basic theoretical concepts of the last decade is the notion of Reality. With Baudrillard’s essays on simulacrum and hyperreality, the theory of sociology has arrived at the point where reality can only be described as concealed and hazy. Reality as defined by Lacan and as one of the basic notions of the theory of psychoanalysis has become a concept which is discussed in ethics, aesthetics and cognitive theory regardless of the original paradigm.