

Mireia Sallarès

Visual artist

Kao malo vode na dlanu

(Like a little water in the palm of my hand), a project about love in Serbia, 2014–2018

Visual Ethnography

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Biography

Mireia Sallarès (Barcelona, 1973) is a visual artist and guest lecturer at several international universities. She lives between Barcelona and other foreign cities in which she carries out her artistic projects because foreignness is an essential register in her artistic practice.

Her works are the result of long research process of life from situated feminisms concerned by nonfiction and political problematics that are formalized with films, books, installations and *site-specific* works. She has presented her work internationally and she has received important grants as the Leonardo Grant for Researchers of BBVA Foundation. *Las Muertes Chiquitas*, a long investigation on female orgasm as a political problem carried out in Mexico is the project with which she has obtained the greatest international recognition. *Kao malo vode na dlanu*, research on love in Serbia awarded with the Barcelona 2019 City Award is the second chapter of her bigger and ongoing project: *The Trilogy of trash concepts (truth, love and work)*.

Email: mireiasallares@gmail.com

Link & password

<https://vimeo.com/480867477?share=copy>
LOVE_SERBIA_4



Sinopsis

What is the amorous thinking we have incorporated, who exploits it and who abuses it? What inequalities does it generate and what withholding of recognition does it entail? Does it contribute to the reproduction of inequalities or can it subvert them? Can it be a productive force or only reproductive? Is love, when all is said and done, a passion of domination or of emancipation? As a way of relating to these questions, in this film-conversation in which only two people seem to be talking, many voices from different places are heard: the interpretation of the Yugoslav Wars, the transformation of ownership since communism and the transition to capitalism, the critique of romantic love, the anarchist legacy and feminist anthropology, the condition of the stranger and the tragedy of the refugees, psychoanalysis and the fiction of a police interrogation in which art calls into question the meaning of its practice.

Methodology

This project began during an investigation into truth in Caracas in 2011. This was the origin of the *Trilogy of Trash Concepts*, a Mireia Sallarès's still ongoing project from prolonged researches into life in relation to the doubtful political prestige of concepts such as truth, love and work. Someone told her the story of love's birth, Eros, son of Penia, goddess of poverty, a beggar. However, this precarity of love was resonating far beyond material precarity: love as a *trash concept* served to open up the question of everything and everyone that counts for nothing in the common imaginary regarding love on our lives.

Throughout four years of field work, going back and forth to the ex-Yugoslav territory, this project supported the importance of sustaining projects over time and borders, in the ups and downs of the intensity and the recognition that time is also a great creative force that works on what has been lived and imagined. A project in which the artist needed to dissolve the usual boundaries between theme, methodology and form. What Helena Braunjštajn, the first Serbian that Mireia Sallarès met, years ago in Mexico, who accompanied this project from its inception, helped to explain in the words of Jacques Derrida: any treatise on love must be an act *of* love, an act *with* love. To turn the theme into methodology and form, that is, to investigate love with love in order to produce loving acts, implied, among other things, to be open to that which could not be theorized or organized but which claims us. Open to the unexpected, to the unforeseen, to the unthinkable. It also implied surrendering to the power of fiction as a way to talk with care and respect to people who would not have accepted an interview in the usual documentary style. People tired of being commonplaces in historiography. People, as Helena's brother, the main character of this film, who crossed what Derrida described as a dense forest of prohibitions, discriminations, codes, scenarios and positions we must make our way through in order to cease separating love from other affects such as charity or friendship. This extended investigation by Sallarès shows what can happen to art when it lets itself be pervaded by an amorous practice. A lesson in humility and love for art.