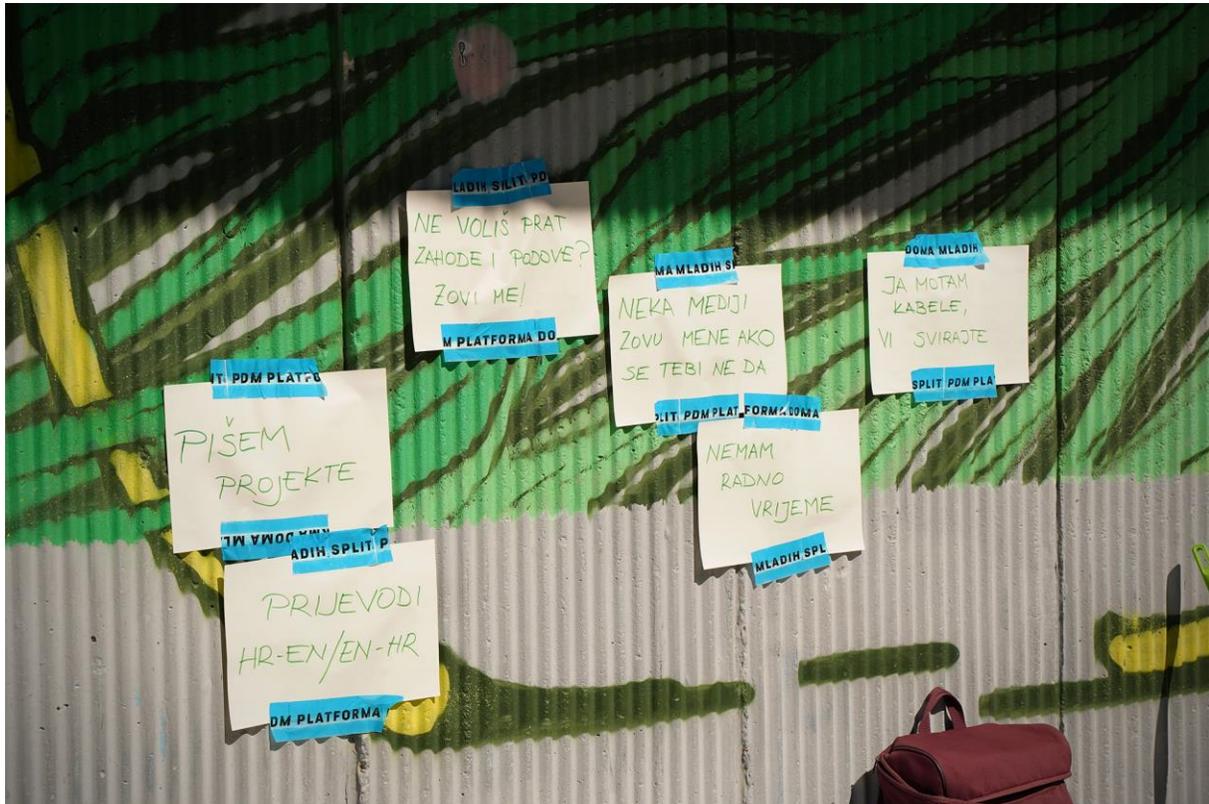


# Self-exploitation

Katarina Duplančić developed and performed for the first time *Self-exploitation* in front of the Youth centre (Dom mladih) in Split on April 8, 2021, in the frame of *Misplaced Women?* workshop led by Tanja Ostojić. This piece was inspired by the working environment and working conditions for cultural workers.



Self-exploitation by Katarina Duplančić, photo by Andrea Resner

Its structure includes several actions that are arranged in a chaotic sequence of activities (waking up, cleaning the floor, talking to the media, exercising, laying cables, distributing archival materials to the audience, writing a project in *Kapotasana* pose- upside down).

In just a couple of minutes, it is necessary to perform all these actions in order to point out the excessive burden of one person-worker in culture who must do physical, intellectual and creative work, while maintaining their own physical and mental health.

The short duration of the performance is conditioned by what the concept itself dictates: lack of time dedicated to oneself. Namely, the performance is "squeezed" in between several obligations that the artist executed before and after the performance. All these other obligations are here and need to be done in order to enable another author to present their own work.

The location for the premiere was supposed to be Strossmayer Park in Split (known to citizens as Đardin), and it is a public secret that until recently prostitution took place there, i.e. offering one's own body and services, to anyone, at any time. The symbolism of the location is clear.

However, due to the impossibility of holding the performance at a previously agreed time (because the artist was setting up an exhibition by another person at the time), the entire performance was moved to another day and to another location. The new location was the Youth Center in Split, a space to which the artist has been attached since the early 2000s - volunteering, working and self-exploiting.



Self-exploitation by Katarina Duplančić, photo by Andrea Resner

The very need to change the date and location before the performance shows and proves exactly what is being said in the performance: "I can't do something for myself because I have to do something for someone else first, and then I will continue to work for others."

The concept of this performance and its very structure indicate a hectic way of life led by cultural workers, torn on several sides, which results in them lacking time to express themselves.

How to have flexible working hours, without being available 24 hours a day for everyone's desires?

How do you create and maintain boundaries between what's in your job description and what 'sprouts' along the way because someone else wanted it that way?

How (as a woman in culture) to learn to say 'no'?

How to say 'no' and be sure that the other person is taking us seriously?

How to stop this eternal cycle of self-exploitation?

These questions are asked throughout the performance, and the answers have yet to be found.



Self-exploitation by Katarina Duplančić, photo by Andrea Resner

Katarina Duplančić (1992) is an art historian and professor of English language in Split who has been devoting most of her waking hours to volunteering, social activism and the work of cultural and artistic organizations since the mid-2000s. As president of youth association Activist, for the last four years she has been actively involved in shaping youth policies, participating in the development of strategic documents important for the (independent) culture of Split and organizing exhibitions, concerts, education and performances at the Youth Center and underground club Kocka. Since the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020, she has changed her priorities: she is now trying to fight her nature, her need to please the community and other individuals and is trying to put them in second place, devoting as much time as possible to her passions (music and movement, plant breeding, tarot and psychology).

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Copy editing: Cultural Hub Croatia (CHC)

This performance has been developed and performed for the first time in the frame of *Misplaced Women?* workshop led by Tanja Ostojić, in Split, April 6-8, 2021.

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Photos: Andrea Resner

Video recording & editing: Andrea Resner

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