



**SPREGLEDANI RAZGLEDI /
PHONEY SIGHTS**
A Film by Ana Čigon



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short experimental film
Slovene language, English subtitles
DCP
19'10"
2019

Logline

A reflection of contemporary society through modified moving images.

Trailer

<https://vimeo.com/349436777>

Synopsis

Spregledani razgledi / Phoney Sights is a satiric critique of the current social and political changes that are happening locally, in Europe and in the World aesthetically explored through (de)formation of landscapes and cityscapes. *Phoney Sights* considers social and political issues and even quantum physics when searching for an answer to the questions: Where are we? and Where are we going?

Long synopsis

Phoney Sights presents a vision of the world in the form of intimate letters and computer-modified urban landscapes of different world cities. It covers a wide variety of topics such as class inequality, political powerlessness of the individual, the criminalization of refugees, gentrification of urban centres, critique of the multi-speeds Europe, political and economic fight between the superpowers, accumulation of wealth of the richest elite, etc. From local-Slovenian themes represented through images of its capital city - Ljubljana, the view extends to urban European centres. The European Union is presented from the perspectives of both: eastern and western members. The horizon then extends to the world capitals and bird's-eye views of different worldly locations. With them the position of the superpowers of China and USA is reviled. The tour of the world rounds out in a caricatured view of the state of affairs from the perspective of the wealthiest people in the world. The last two chapters are devoted to science and Universe. It is a scientist who, through her reflection on astrophysics and quantum mechanics, presents the story of the end of the Universe, which can also be perceived as a critique of the atomization and class stratification of society. The last word is given to the Universe, which, by telling the story of its beginning, presents a parable of people bonding and a grass-roots rebellion.



FAQ

Q: Where did the idea for this film come from and what were you hoping to achieve?

A: I feel that important changes happened in the world since the last economic crisis and for a long time I have been wanting to make a project that would reflect this. When I read an interview with one of our politicians that said people should understand they should not talk about things they have not enough information about, I decided I should do the opposite. I think people should say more about what is going on in the world not less and know more about it to. We should be more involved with the society and politics in everyday life, not just in the time of elections. But it seems hard to know which informations are important and which not, because news broadcasts and newspapers many times are not helpful either. This experimental film was my attempt to make sense of the current political affairs and construct an imagery that could represent it in a global sense.

Q: How did you approach this subject?

A: Since the topic of the film is very broad I approach it through a form that starts in a local context and then gradually broadens to a larger topic both geographically and politically. The film slowly moves from a local Slovenian perspective, then to European and then into World perspective. The story is narrated through letters which I think give a level of intimacy and more personal perspective to the themes that mostly seem distant.

Q: Whenever we hear this letters, we only see silhouettes of people in windows. There is actually no close-up of people, or even if we see people, they are never completely recognisable. Is there a special reason for such an aesthetics'

A: In my search for a proper representation I was looking for visuals, that could speak to and about not individuals, but groups of people. Groups such as: Slovenians, Europeans, general middle-class or working population, scientists,

politicians, the economic elite etc. This is how I came up with the idea for silhouettes of people visible in windows writing letters. I thought this would be a better way to talk about the system and society as a whole and move away from individualism. Sometimes it is possible to ascribe a certain letter to a particular person, but still it is his or her position (worker, politician, president, billionaire) that is important here, not the person itself. It is the role he or she plays in the society or in the capitalist system. It is the structure of the society, the power relations I am interested in.

Q: There are quite a few repetitive motives in the film like windows and clouds or fog, and the vast majority of locations is cityscapes. Why so much urban areas?

A: Because I was aiming to talk about global issues I was searching for locations that are quite popular and could be recognisable or look familiar to people all over the world. On the other hand I also wanted to make visible something that seemed least cinematic to me – neoliberalism. The critique of neoliberalism, its uncontested need for constant economic growth, the capitals lust for profit, its dehumanising effects on interpersonal relations and devastating effects on global warming – all of this I feel greatly affects lives of everyone on the planet so I did not want to avoid this issue. The growth of cities is deeply connected with the spread of capitalism. When individual farmers could not compete with the big farmers or when people were without jobs they moved to the city. This is still happening today. So cityscapes, urban images seem to me the obvious choice for this film.



Q: The film has a lot of special effects and animation. Why?

A: New technology is so powerful now that very convincing fake pictures and videos of unreal events can be produced, which is quite scary. However I wanted to turn this around and wondered if it would also be possible to search for reality exactly through fake pictures. If special effects could be also a useful tool to present an idea or imagine a different future.

Q: Is this your first experimental film and why did you choose this form?

A: I have been working in the field of video art for more than ten years, and have finished my first documentary in 2015. I think of all film forms experimental film is probably most similar to video art, so to me this is just natural development of my work. In the film I compress the knowledge I have obtained through my experience in film and visual arts. I think of it a bit like I am painting a film shot. I like this idea. To paint a film frame, a reality, a possible future. I think maybe the best categorisation of the film is essay film, which is the perfect form for presenting ones view of the world.

Q: What was the most difficult part of producing this film and what was the best part of it?

A: I didn't like how long it took me to finish the film. Parts of the film were made for an ongoing art project that includes texts and video installation. I started this project already in 2017, then in the beginning of 2018 I started to make this film and finished it only in second half of 2019. Because the film is about current topics I was worried some issues might not be relevant any more. I had to change the signs on the Ljubljanska banka building for example, because in the meantime time it was privatised and sold to new buyers. However the vast majority of the other topics like the Chinese One Belt, One Road project, inequality between EU members, global warming etc. are still relevant. But I think this is mostly due to the fact that these were all presented in a more abstract or somehow more universal way.

The best part of the making of the film was working with the films team. With Vasja Progar we again managed to find a great score for the film, and he has been helping me with my work for almost a decade. He is indispensable when it comes to analysing the content and how it is presented and I don't know what I would do without him. With this film I also had the privileged to work with quite a few other collaborators. Andreja Kopač helped me make sense of my messy script and keep a sense of irony and sarcasm through the film. It was also great to work with actors who through their narration gave a special tone to the film and I think gave it much more liveliness. It was great searching for the right accents of the text with them. All in all it was much easier and much more enjoyable to work collectively.



Cast and Crew Biographies

Ana Čigon (1982) is an artist from Slovenia that works in diverse artistic fields like film, video art and performance. She studied painting, video and new media art in Ljubljana (Slovenia) and Linz (Austria). Her projects tackle social issues, such as under-representation of women in history, LGBTIQ+ topics and marginalised social groups, pursuit of happiness, the effects of neo-liberalism on society and such. Her works often contain elements of humour and irony. She is a winner of OHO Award, finalist for the Slovenia Henkel Award and finalist of Vordemberge Gildewart Foundation Award. Her films have been presented on international film festivals worldwide, for which she received numerous nominations, two audience choice awards and three jury awards.



Vasja Progar (1986) is a Slovene sound artist who also experimented with different artistic disciplines like sound art, composing and new media art, but most of all he is a music lover as well be it old or contemporary. He composed several contemporary music scores for documentary films and short animation, as well as scores for (solo) performances and concerts.

Dr. Andreja Kopač works as a publicist, dramaturgist, editor and professor of contemporary performing arts. Most recently she has been working as a dramaturgist and contributor to national and international art projects and education (at SVŠGUGL and the Academy of Dance, Ljubljana). She writes for Mask, Rast and Delo.

Barbara Žefran is a theater, television and film actress who graduated at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television (AGRFT) in 2003. After her studies, she played in various Slovenian theaters and other projects of the independent theater scene, and in 2006 she became a member of the Ljubljana DNG Drama theater. She also stars in Slovene feature and short films and series. She works in the field of education - she has taught at the Barica Blenkuš Drama School and is currently teaching at SVŠGUGL.

Barbara Krajnc Avdić obtained a degree in stage acting at the AGRFT in Ljubljana, where she also completed her master's degree. She has played in numerous Slovene theaters and is involved in many other independent art projects in various non-institutional organizations. As a student, she received the Prešeren and Sever awards. She has led workshops at the Barica Blenkuš Drama School for 15 years, and for several years has taught drama at the SVŠGUGL School in Ljubljana.

Mojca Dimec is a professor at SVŠGUGL and a mentor, (co)author and director of the annual performances of secondary school of drama and theater. She has received several awards for her work in this field. As a mentor she participates in international impro projects and as a performer in contemporary dance projects, videos and visual arts projects. Together with the Ana Monro Theater she founded the Impro League in 1993, and until 2000 she actively participated in the theater as an actress and creator.

Ivan Peternej graduated from stage acting at AGRFT, Ljubljana. As an actor and performer, he has participated in the Betontanc Group, the Muzeum theater and many other independent productions. Since 2003, he has been employed by the Slovenian Mladinsko Theater, and at the same time creates independent theater projects, including within the framework of his own association Društva za umetnost Avgus. He is the recipient of several awards, including: Župančič's awards, Sever's awards, Borštnik's awards for young actor, etc.

Blaž Šef graduated in 2010 from AGRFT, majoring in stage acting. In the same year he got a job at the Slovenian Mladinsko Theater. Since his studies, he has been collaborating with various (non)institutional theaters, especially in Ljubljana, as well as with Radio and Television Slovenia, Cankarjev dom, SNG Opera and Ballet Ljubljana and others. Since 2006, he has been an active contributor to the Cultural Centre of European Space Technologies (KSEVT), both in Vitanje and Ljubljana. He is also an associate of the AVGUS and IGNOR art institutes.

Julita Kropec is a young student of stage acting at the Academy of Theater, Radio, Film and Television (AGRFT).

Matjaž Predanič graduated from the Department of Music Pedagogy at the Academy of Music in Ljubljana in 2011, and in 2014 he completed his master's degree in composition. His opus includes works for various orchestral ensembles. He also writes music for dance and theater performances. He is the recipient of the student Prešeren Award of the Ljubljana Academy of Music.



Phoney Sights / Spregledani razgledi

Narrated by

Ana Čigon	From Below
Barbara Žefran	From the East
Mojca Dimec	From the West
Ivan Peternejl	From the Far East
Blaž Šef	From an Island
Julita Kropec	From the Earth

Director, Writer, Director of Photography, Editor and Animations
Ana Čigon

Script Consultant
Andreja Kopač

Additional Script Consultations
Andrej Šprah, Ida Hiršenfelder, Jurij Hadalin

Music and Sound Design
Vasja Progar,
an adaptation of "Fugue in C major", BWV Anh.90

Ambient Sounds and Sound Effects
Matjaž Predanič

Extras in the windows
Ana Grobler, Pia Skušek, Eva Jus, Ana Čigon

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Boat Ride CCA3.0 (From the Far East): Toloncho on Videvo

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From the West

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From the Far East

Anchor, Sea Gulls with New York Skyline, Manhattan Skyline,
Times Square videvo.net (Royalty Free License)

Highlanders pixabay.com (FCU NA)
From the Island

Island areal view pixabay.com (FCU NA)

Other videos

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The White House: (From the Far West): Stock media provided by [MovingImages]/ Pond5

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Antarctica-60608.jpg*

Sounds and music with Creative Commons Attribution CCA
From the West: Wagon arrives altered: dulcimer guy (freesound.org)
*From the Far East: Ganimes de vuelta otra vez de nuevo: Lanark
(freemusicarchive.org)*

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