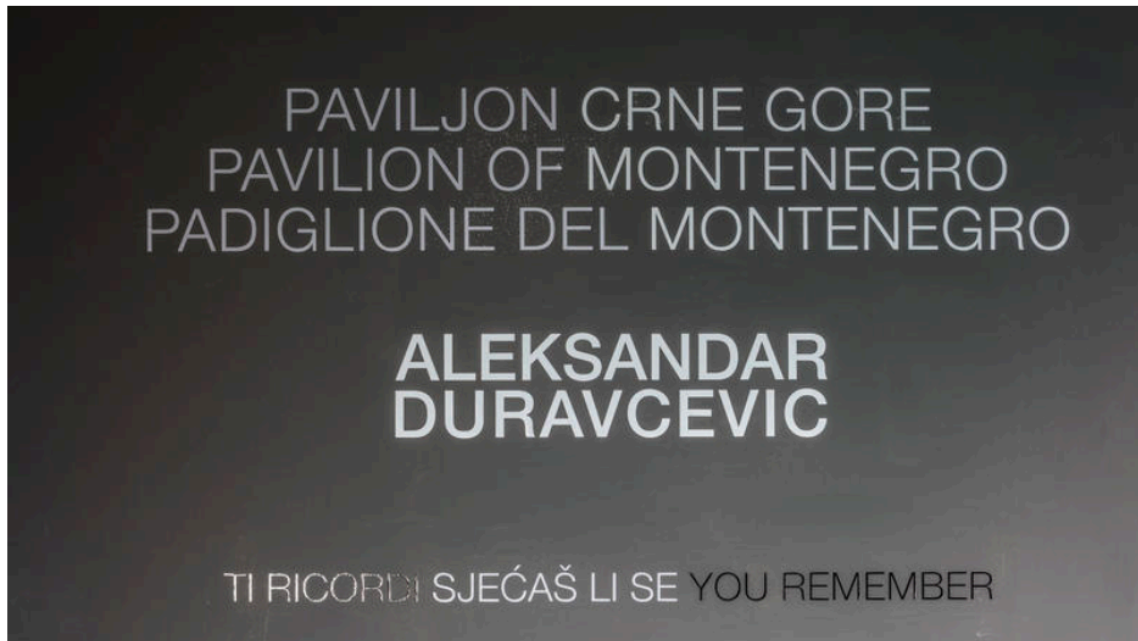


### Interview with Aleksandar Duravcevic Montenegro at the 56th International Art Exhibiton, Venice Biennale

Author: Tina Kaplár  
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Montenegro is represented at the 56th Venice Biennale by the exhibition *Ti ricordi Sjeć aš li se You Remember* by Aleksandar Duravcevic, the New York based artist of Montenegrin origin. In the five rooms of Palazzo Malipiero he seeks answers to questions related to memory, remembrance, identity and national identity.



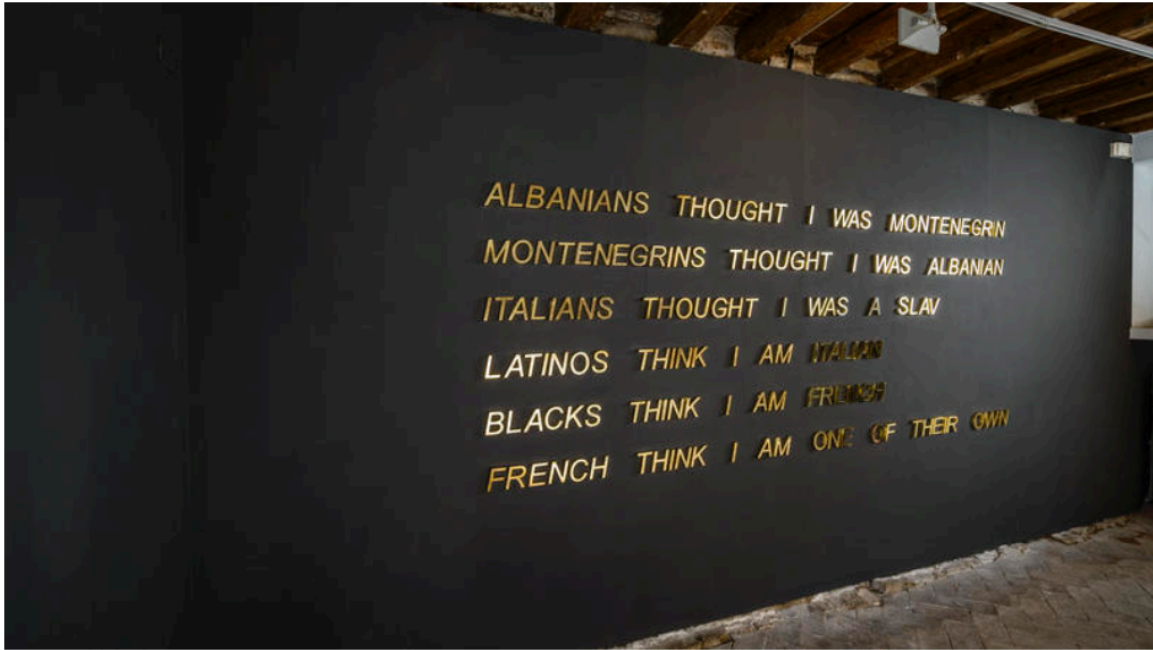
**Tina Kaplár:** What is the selection process like in Montenegro? When did you learn that you are going represent your country this year in Venice?

**Aleksandar Duravcevic:** Montenegro like most countries leaves the decision making to the main curator. It is always a hard decision as one needs to choose and that is usually process that leaves some really good artists out.

**TK:** Whose artistic legacy influenced you most from the previous Montenegrin exhibitors at the Venice Biennale?

**AD:** I can't talk about being influenced by Montenegrin artists . My artistic formation was outside of Montenegro Italy ,USA and of course an international artistic scene that is somewhat a resent creation. I can say that I remember as a teenager seeing Dado Djuric and his world. He is also an artist that left Montenegro long time ago but it feels like he never left.

# T O T A H



*Aleksandar Duravcevic: Identity Installation, bronze letters 2014-2015, courtesy of Centar savremene umjetnosti Crne Gore photo: Dusko Miljani*

**TK:** You were born in Montenegro, in the former Yugoslavia, now you live and work in N.Y.C, how can Montenegro still inspire you and how does it manifest in your work?

**AD:** I left Montenegro 22 years ago. Exactly half of my life. And yet it's always with me. That deep connection that we have with place of birth of earliest memories of early sorrows. Montenegro is a rare ecosystem and people's mentality is shaped by its mountains. After all we are part of nature and Montenegro is a beautiful anomaly.

The last Yugoslavia was one of few attempts to unify South Slavs and probably was the best attempt however lasted the longest. I am proud that I grew up in a rich multicultural Yugoslavia . It was a unique experiment historically speaking and I think that the echoes of that idea will still be heard in the Balkans for years to come.

**TK:** In an interview I read you referred to yourself as a manufacturer, does it mean you make souvenirs?

**AD:** Well I think that all artists are manufacturers of something. Of ideas. Of objects that last or don't. Of illusions. Souvenirs are manufactured memories. Piranesi made hundreds of prints of vistas of Rome to be sold to tourists that were coming to Rome. This is two hundred years before photography and this prints are still with us ,magically documenting "old Rome" the one that is gone cleared out by progress or Mussolini. So they allow us to re-remember.

# T O T A H



*Aleksandar Duravcevic: Room n.2 Wood charred 2015. courtesy of Centar savremene umjetnosti Crne Gore photo Dusko Miljanic*



*Aleksandar Duravcevic: Red 5 videos 1992-2002 courtesy of Centar savremene umjetnosti Crne Gore photo Dusko Miljanic*

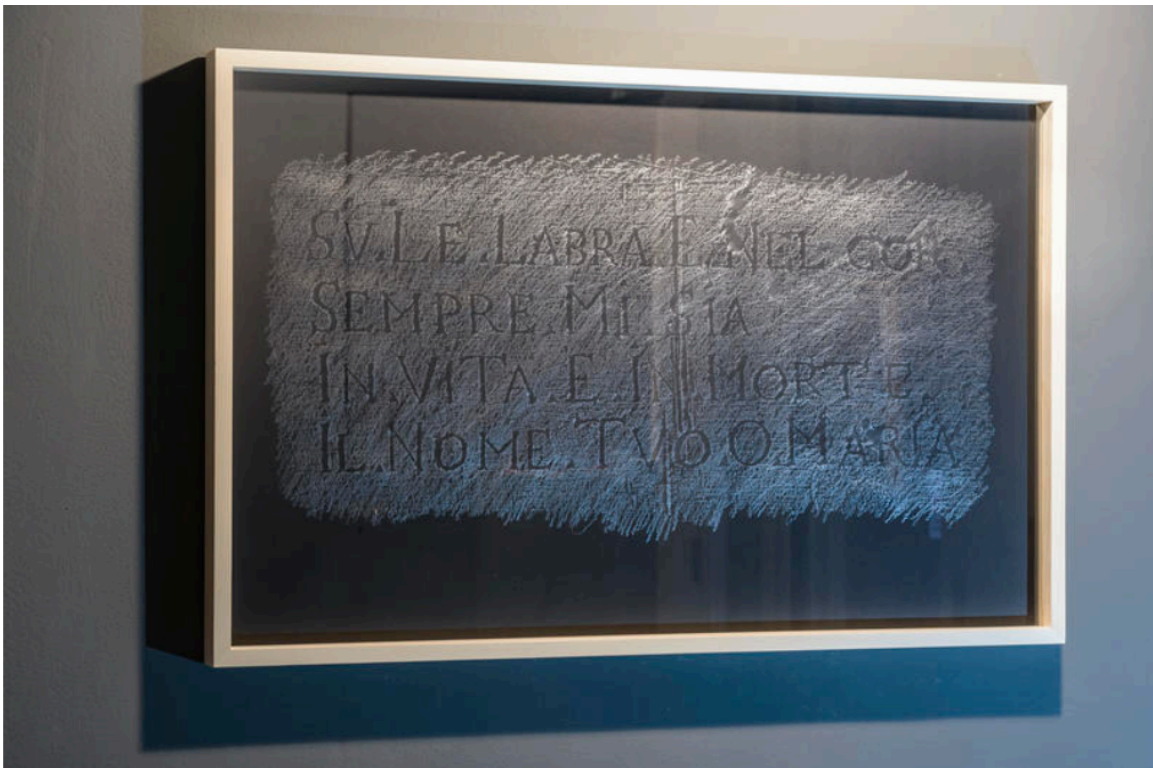
# T O T A H

**TK:** Is the national identity a souvenir or a living picture?

**AD:** National identity varies just like souvenirs. Of course it's not that simple.

**TK:** In your graphics we can find always find/feel 'remembrance', everything is feels like being covered by the veil of time, are we right this regarding?

**AD:** I heard before about the remembrance and veils in my work . I guess is there. I can't say it's a conscious decision I make . Its probably the way I process everyday always with a dose of fragmented past. Everything feels like a déjà vu.



*Aleksandar Duravcevic: Come mi manchi 2015 frottage courtesy of Centar savremene umjetnosti Crne Gore photo Dusko Miljanic*

**TK:** Do we have to remember to remember? What are the things we should not forget?

**AD:** We should remember everything especially painful things. It's like a Borges's story Funes the Memorious.



# T O T A H



*Aleksandar Duravcevic: Waiting, video 2015 courtesy of Centar savremene umjetnosti Crne Gore photo: Dusko Miljanic*

**TK:** How do you see the role of the Venice Biennale in the international art scene ?

**AD:** La Biennale is the oldest art show. But more than that it's a World Fair of the Art world. It's a political event. Always was. When you walk through Giardini you walk through different architectural styles representing empires or states and some of them that don't exist anymore. I guess Yugoslavia is one of them.

# T O T A H

## **MONTENEGRO**

*„Ti ricordi Sječaš li se You Remember “*

**Aleksandar Duravcevic**

*Commissioner/Curator: Anastazija Miranovic. Deputy Commissioner: Danica Bogojevic. Venue: Palazzo Malipiero (piano terra), San Marco 3078-3079/A, Ramo Malipiero*

**Aleksandar Duravcevic** was born in Montenegro. He attended the Unverstiy of Montenegro (1990-1992) and the Accademia di Bella Arte, Florence (1993-1994), and received his MFA from Pratt Institue, Brooklyn. He is currently a visiting professor at the Hunter College MFA Program. His works are in numerous private and public collections including the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum, and Museum of Fine Arts Boston, among others. Duravcevic lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.