



# LALA RAŠČIĆ: THE DAMNED DAM

[HTTP://PROKLETABRANA.NET](http://prokletabrana.net)



## ABOUT THE PROJECT

*The year is 2027. Tarik is a young engineer. Merima is his beloved. They can save the townspeople of Lukavac if they broadcast the radio drama "Catastrophe" from the year 2000. Heroes and fairies, love and dystopia, rivers and lakes, dams and factories, BH and EU, epic geography and oral tradition: between these a future romance is shaped.*

In Lala Raščić's project *The Damned Dam* the motif of the flood is embedded in the fictional narrative that is composed on the basis of field research and on specific locations and events in the Balkan region the artist undertook in spring/autumn 2010. The collected materials are processed as videos, paintings, audio recordings, a blog and performances that form the elements of this modular project. The narrative strategies that the artist employs in her work are, in this project informed by Bosnian traditions of oral literature. Based on the study of these traditional forms, the artist delivers a fantastical story set in the future that is intersected with socio-political connotations.

The project *The Damned Dam* developed over a series of public presentations and exhibition-events centering around a discursive-performative programs that have taken place in Sarajevo, Belgrade and Banja Luka before being exhibited as an elaborate video installation and documentation exhibition in Zagreb, November 2010.

*In the year 2000 a group of progressive radio broadcasters aired a radio drama entitled *Catastrophe on Radio Lukavac* (Lukavac is a small industrial town in Bosnia and Herzegovina). The radio drama tells of the nearby dam breaking.*

*The broadcast had a profound effect, like that of Orson Wells's *War of the Worlds*.*

*In 2008 I heard the story about the *Catastrophe* broadcast from my brother Arslan. The story instantly grabbed my attention. At that time I was in New Orleans. I started to research this event, at the time I thought it was just an urban legend.*

*One day I popped into a used bookshop in the French Quarter where I found and interesting title: *The Nature of Narrative*. In this book I was for the first time confronted with the idea of the illiterate poet as performer; the singer of epic tales, romances, ballads. I found out about the research of Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord on Balkan oral traditions.*

*My storytelling is not direct continuation of this oral tradition, it is inspired by it. My artistic intention communicates with this tradition through the universal experience and empathy of all oral narration, transcending borders and generations. Having said that, my performance is something else, taking place in a different time, space - and with a different purpose. L.R.*

Produced / Organized by:  
[blok], Zagreb, [www.urbanfestival.hr](http://www.urbanfestival.hr)

Project partners:  
DELVE, Zagreb, [www.delve.hr/weiyth](http://www.delve.hr/weiyth)  
KONTEKST, Beograd, [www.kontekstgalerija.org](http://www.kontekstgalerija.org)  
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## PROKLETA BRANA

2000. godine grupa progresivnih radio entuzijasta emitira radio dramu "Katastrofa" u eteru Radio Lukavaca. Radio drama pronizrokuje efekt nalik "Ratu svijeta" Orsona Wellesa.

2008. od svog brata Arslana saznajem za priču o "Katastrofi" i o panici u Lukavcu. To zaokuplja moju maštu. Istražujem taj događaj i počinjem graditi projekti koji svoje uporište ima u ovoj priči za koju tada vjerujem da je samo urbana legenda.

U jednom antikvarijatu u New Orleansu privlači me naslov "The Nature of Narrative". Autori govore o usmenoj tradiciji epova, balada, romana i tu se prvi put susrećem s konceptom nepismenog pjesnika kao performer, izvođača.

Moj storytelling nije direktni nastavak usmene tradicije, njome je inspiriran. Moja namjera, moj nijet komunicira s tom tradicijom na osnovu sestrinske empatije univerzalnog iskustva usmene naracije, preko granica i minulih generacija. Moja izvedba je pak nešto drugo, u drugom vremenu, u drugom prostoru i s drugim svrhom.

Godina je 2007. Tarik je mladi inženjer, Merima je njegova ljub, Stanovnike Lukavca spasiće od poplave ako emitiraju radio dramu "Katastrofa" iz 2000. godine.



## EXHIBITS

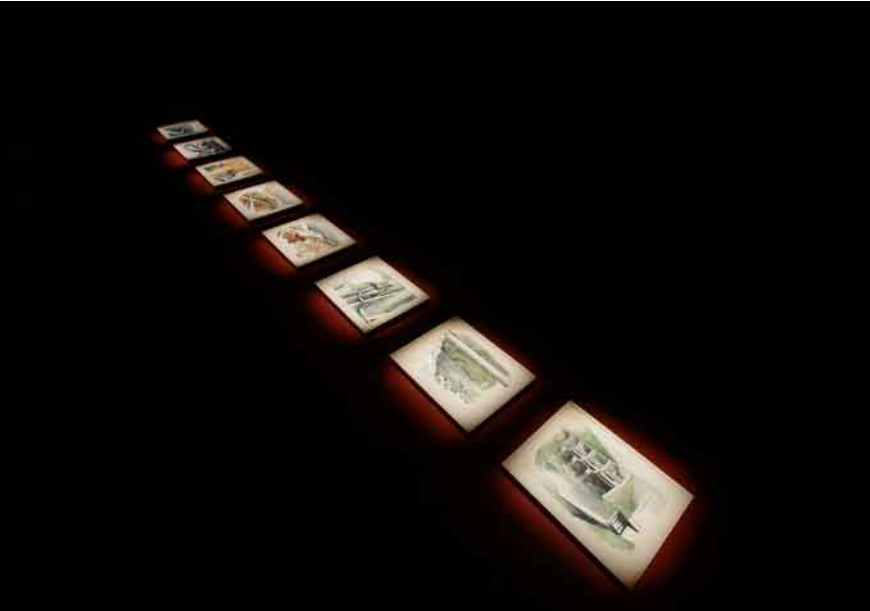
*The Damned Dam* (HD/DVD, 36') shows the artist Lala Rascic narrating the story of Tarik and Merima. The video was shot on site of the dam in Lukavac in October 2010. The repetitions and trials and errors display the effort of trying to film a spoken narrative that has never been written down - following in the steps of oral tradition.

*The Dam* (BETA/PAL/DVD/loop) is an abstract montage of documentary material obtained from TV Lukavac showing the dam Modrac working and discharging water in full capacity during the floods in spring 2010. The footage is projected onto long strips of screening materials positioned in the exhibition space, thus creating a sense of waterfall depth.

*Catastrophe* (audio, 21'), written by Elvis Kovačević and Denis Dugonjić, directed and edited by Denis Dugonjić and produced by Radio Lukavac, this is the original audio drama form the year 2000. that inspired the whole project.

*Discussion 10.14.2010.* (HD/DVD, 23') is an edited - down document of a discussion that was shot in Sarajevo just days after the the storytelling performance *The Damned Dam* was premiered. The goal of the work group that brought together professionals in different fields was to give a critique of the work and to lay ground for discursive interpretations of the narrative, it's motifs and methods. This video can serve as kind of springboard for reading the narrative and the whole project. This was the first of a series of discussions that were held after the live performance of the *The Damned Dam* that followed.





*Illustrations* (watercolor, pencil, marker on paper, 65 x 50 cm) are a series of 8 depictions of the scenes from the narrative. A series of 8 *sketches for Illustrations* are also available for exhibitions.

*Documentary exhibition* (mixed media, dimensions variable) was a visual display of the research Lala Rascic has been posting regularly on the project blog since April 2010. Marijana Rimanic was brought in to curate and edit the data into a show.

Apart from the texts and images the documentary exhibition also consists of 4 videos documenting previous performances, discussions and interviews related to *The Damned Dam* project.



#### ARTIST BIO

*Lala Raščić, born in Sarajevo, based between Zagreb, Sarajevo and recently New Orleans. She develops her performances through scriptwriting, video, installation and drawing. At a closer look, her seemingly humorous works are a satirical comment on contemporary society and the her own environment.*

*Recent solo shows include: 2010: The Damned Dam, Jedinstvo, Zagreb; Zeta Art Gallery; Tirana; Museum of Contemporary Art, Novi Sad, 2008: KC Gallery, Belgrade; Apartman Projesi, Istanbul, 2007: National Art Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo.*

*Group shows include exhibitions at : P1.5, New Orleans; 2010 SpaPort, Banja Luka; FormContent, London; P74 Ljubljana; Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, Salon of the Revolution, HDLU, Zagreb; Angel Row Gallery; Nottingham; La Centrale Electique, Brussels; <rotor> Contemporary Art Center, Graz; Edinburgh Art Festival; The Kitchen, New York; Overtones Gallery; Los Angeles and Platform Garanti CAC, Istanbul.*



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