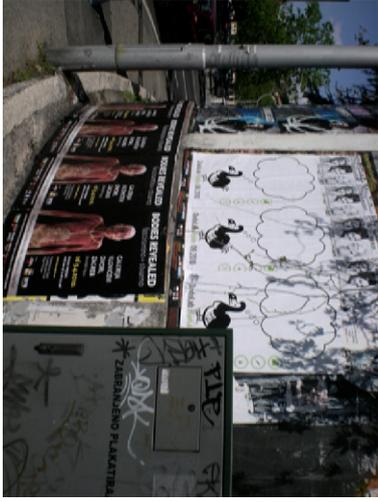


Andrew Hunter (Dodolab)

Icons of Rijeka (Book 1)



dodolab




The posters are everywhere, plasticized corpses, their skins peeled away to reveal a high chromatic body of intense colour dominated by the meat red of muscles and the pale dairy white of sinews, bone and connective tissue. Articulated, frozen in motion and gesture, suggesting life and movement, eyes wide open (as wide as can be since these beings lack skin and eyelids) their smooth perfect orbs rest in deep cavities, tethered to the brain. Yet while the eyes are wide, they see nothing, reveal nothing.

Such an extreme level of excruciating detail, literally cast in sharp focus, an uncomfortable level of exposure that strives for a depth of understanding, yet is burdened by its excess. Have we come full circle, back to the renaissance obsession with “Man” at the centre of all things, standing in the cleanly demarcated space of linear perspective? Such precision hints at a deeper understanding (as it was perspective that gave us the illusion of pictorial depth) but may only mask a deeper lack of understanding. The more we see the less we know.

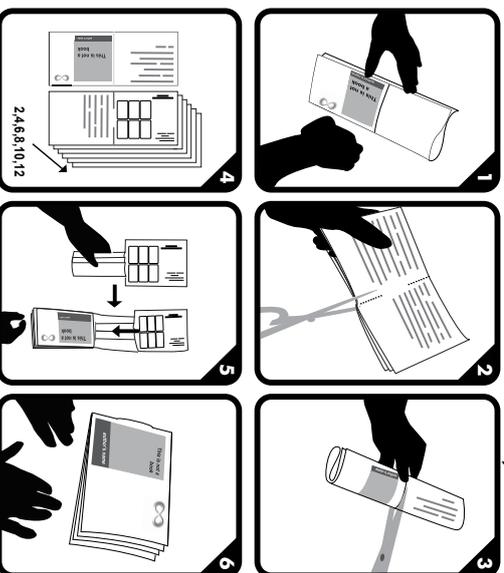
Rijeka: The Body Revealed



2010-04-24

1 of 2 publications based on visits to Rijeka, Croatia, in February and April, 2010. These visits were part of Dodolab's preparations for public labs in the city in June, 2010, in conjunction with the Musagetes Café. Additional documentation and information on Dodolab and Musagetes Café can be found at www.dodolab.ca and www.musagetes.ca.

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most revealing, but the fleeting messages one finds within. Not the buildings ritual of subsistence that looks intense, busy and active, but teeters between existence and life. Beneath the obvious and the everyday, underneath the standard map of a place with its surface of familiar details and customs, are perhaps more revealing fragments. It is not the existence of the café that is

beneath clouds of blue smoke.

This city looks alive but may be frozen, caught (like many places) in a ritual of subsistence that looks intense, busy and active, but teeters between existence and life. Beneath the obvious and the everyday, underneath the standard map of a place with its surface of familiar details and customs, are perhaps more revealing fragments. It is not the existence of the café that is

the detritus of conversations overheard and subtle markings, traces and gestures of those who have passed through this place, with us and before us.

What lies beneath the surface of these polished pedestrian streets and restored buildings, behind the rituals of daily life (at work, at shops, in the market, at church, in cafés, bars and schools)? It is like there are two worlds here, split along lines of age, an older generation immersed in the cadence of life that has a tempo that the younger generation reacts against. This split is reflected on Sundays on the Corso, from morning to early afternoon, mostly an older generation, well-dressed and moving from church to market to cafés. By afternoon, a younger crowd emerges to take over the cafés, to smoke and drink espresso and to re-hydrate from the previous nights antics at the local clubs where they could be seen, late, in dark clusters, huddled at the entrances beneath clouds of blue smoke.

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brutal remnants of the efforts of an analytical mind.

We live in a time of exaggerated detail, of easy access to information, of high resolution imaging, of instant communications that make claims to depths of meaningful exchange rarely delivered. We can always get more detail, another layer of information through probing technology. We can zoom in ever closer, but the obsession with such “comprehensive” detail overshadows the pace of a life lived, of being *in the world*, fragmented wanderings through



and public spaces themselves, but the markings on their surfaces that resonate both in the act of marking and in the lingering on of marks (one should not discount the lack of initiative or desire to remove these markings as being any less significant than the original act of marking).

Peel back the skin and we lose the surface markings, the scars of life. Freeze the figure in a static pose to facilitate analysis, and we lose the subtle gestures, the nuances of movement, the empathetic motions and utterances, the passionate declarations and poetic disclosures. We lose the stuff of life and the distinct, sometimes messy and confusing character of a place and the individuals who reside within.

Andrew Hunter, DodoLab
Ritcka, April, 2010







