

The One Is Not

Can we think about the world not through the idea of unity and identity, but through multiplicity, coexistence, and pluralism? Is the One and the autonomous individual the primary onto-structure of the existence, or are they rather a consequence, a temporary configuration, a unifying function of the multiple? Does the One exist at all without its relational entanglement with the other elements that constitute it?

Contemporary quantum physics unsettles the classical concept of the world as composed of stable, fixed, and fully determined objects situated in time and space. Instead, it reveals a reality in which “things” emerge through interactions, probabilities, and measurements (wave–particle dualism). In the quantum world, particles do not possess fixed properties in themselves; they exist in a state of superposition that becomes actualized only in the act of observation - an idea articulated in the Copenhagen interpretation (Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg). Identity appears as a performative effect rather than an ontological first cause (Barad, 2007).

The One Is Not is a project that questions precisely the idea of the autonomous, self-sufficient, and self-reflexive individual - the One as a founding principle of existence. Borrowing its title from the philosophy of Alain Badiou, it rejects the One as an originary given and instead understands it as the result of processes of grouping, ordering, and unifying multiplicity (Badiou, 1988). The project unfolds in a context of eroded solidarity, new global wars (Israel–Gaza and Russia–Ukraine), and capitalist accelerationism, which transforms human existence into competitive value and market function. It operates as a critical tool within a framework deeply shaped by the neoliberal idea of the individual as possessing intrinsic value and self-syndical autonomy, detached from its relations to the collective.

Within this political context, where the subject is increasingly fragmented, separated from the group, turned into a “competitor,” and burdened with the imperative to become “capital”, **The One Is Not** proposes a different perspective: the subject emerges through relations, within networks of mutual vulnerability, dependency, and care. Against Cartesian cogito and self-sufficiency, the project insists that we are the result of shared encounters, ecosystems, histories, and collectives that exceed us yet simultaneously constitute us. An ethics of coexistence and reciprocity replaces the mythology of the self-sufficient Self (Butler, 2020). The One is understood as a function of multiplicity.

It is precisely here that the practice of Denitsa Todorova functions as a formal argument in defense of a politics of multiplicity. Her works, constructed through graphite, rubbing, layering, polishing, and the erosion of paper, refuse a central focus. They do not offer a composition organized around center and periphery, but rather flat planes of occurrence. Meaning does not “crack” from a transcendent point; it emerges from interactions between traces. Erasure does not destroy but creates; the wounding of the surface opens new zones of visibility. The artist does not impose form authoritatively but reveals it through relationships between matter, time, and body.

This formal and aesthetic decentralization resonates with the project’s ethical position: the subject is not a given but an emergence. Just as there is no visual One in her graphite fields, there is no politico-ethical One in the project’s political imagination. It is not the individual that serves as the unit of measure of the world, but relations. The installation physically

immerses the viewer in a network of graphite and sculptural traces, within a space without a center. The viewer becomes an active participant in its making and a component of its aesthetic corporeality. The viewer's body becomes a relational element of the artwork itself. It is precisely here that the project articulates its political strategy: by demonstrating that we exist only as multiplicity, only through our relations with others, which not only condition us but constitute us.

In direct response to the Biennale's theme concerning the "minor," **The One Is Not** opens a space for all suppressed, secondary, decentralized, and silenced voices - those of marginalized groups, peripheral subjects, and those displaced by systems of identity ("us versus them"). The project functions as a philosophical experiment that critically interrogates the idea of unity and the individual, delegitimizing the hidden ideological structures that sustain them. In the context of ongoing global conflicts, the project serves as a reminder of the lasting impact of political and institutionalized violence legitimized through narratives of identity that impose their aggression authoritatively upon the multiple, serving as justification for domination and violence. The central question remains: if we abandon the idea of identity and think of ourselves through our relations with others and the world, can we address the global problems of oppression and marginalization?

RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROJECT TO THE SPACE

The installation for the Bulgarian Pavilion includes a combination of drawings, sculptures, and floor elements made of black powder, as well as 3D-printed objects. The project unfolds in Sala Tiziano and the garden, creating a continuous spatial network between interior and exterior. In the main hall, seven monumental drawings (350 × 250 cm), freely suspended from the ceiling, form a labyrinthine structure. The audience moves among them, becoming part of the composition. In the garden, the sculptural configuration continues this principle of connectivity, extending the installation beyond architectural boundaries. For a more detailed and comprehensive overview of the project and its visual articulation in space, please refer to the visual materials included in the application.