

In the year 2010, in the aftermath of Romania's adherence to the E.U., Romania's image is not reflected properly on either national or international level. Due to some journalists' avidity or exoticism, attraction for pseudo-VIPs, sensational and false events, the media is flooded with photographs of no artistic or documentary value. Many artists, journalists, intellectuals or politicians do not show concern for the unique events and transformations undergone by Romania during these years or for going beyond the cliché of a country of stray dogs, homeless children, and questionable oriental music.

A significant part of the already existing archives has been neglected or even deliberately destroyed. The cultural project RO_ARCHIVE, initiated by architect and visual artist Iosif Kiraly and scientifically coordinated by professor Mihail Manescu under the aegis of the Bucharest National University of Arts, puts forward a dynamic team of curators, artists, and sociologists, some of which are still MA or doctoral students: Raluca Nestor, Raluca Ionescu, Cosmin Moldovan, Simona Dumitriu.

This initiative has as its primary goal the de/reconstruction of recent Romania and the construction of a cultural archive of texts and images at its core. Among the desired results there is also a website that will make the archived information accessible online, workshops, and exhibitions.

RO_ARCHIVE puts together a proposal centered on the model of the Postmodern and Post-structuralist archive. The modernist collection of cultural objects preserved as testimony of an identity past becomes nowadays form of artistic expression, over-encompassing factor, or filter of cultural redundancy. No longer limited by its condition as treasurer of the past, the archive is free to be a part of the mapping of the present and the facilitation of the new.

In the era of tautological information and technically archived culture, marked by ready-made, RO_ARCHIVE sets to approach the archive in Boris Groys fashion, as a machine that produces the future, a last criterion that can delimitate art from non-art. Any artistic innovation, re-evaluation, or novelty determined to penetrate the field of contemporary art can thus be certified by its acceptance in the archive.

The RO_ARCHIVE project is financed by the National Council for Research in Higher Education.

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