The introduction could begin with a reference to large, and indeed inconceivable, numbers of people both in the world and in Serbia, with anxiety disorders, but hardly any number would show the omnipresence of anxiety in our lives. In order to establish it as a disorder, it is necessary that the anxiety become excessive and prevent the functioning of the individual, but an incalculable number of people often “only” feel anxious – foreboding, worried, scared, panicked or restless – which is accompanied by physical problems like tremor, insomnia or nausea. Some theorists of affect claim that one of the dominant emotions of our societies is anxiety; at the moment we are facing entirely justified *climate anxiety*, and the ruling right-wing policies and *creeping fascism* keep the neoliberal order alive by constructing and spreading irrational fears of refugees… Anxiety seems to be really the spirit of the times.

*Catastrophe capitalism* and its new-age business-management class have, expectedly, found one more multibillion-dollar source of profit, offering quick solutions to anxiety – from anti-stress blankets, through salt lamps, to smartphone applications dedicated to mental health – although all these products either not at all or hardly rely on the results of scientific research. Not only does this industry practically deceive consumers with unfounded promises to address anxiety, but it is also ideological as such – creating normative systems of ideas on the conscious and unconscious levels. Its discourse is strictly individualistic, based on the narrative that the individual is to be blamed for a problem they are struggling with and that they can only overcome it on their own (self-care). In parallel with the aggressive propaganda of individualistic narratives, the process of *medicalization of society* takes place, whose practice also personalizes anxiety with neurobiological explanations, from which it follows that what is needed for healing are drugs which will remove chemical imbalances in our brains. However, anxiety, as treated by the *happiness industry*, psychiatric and pharmacological industry, is an ideological construct, not only because it forces the narrative of the individual’s guilt for their problems or their biological inevitability, but also skilfully conceals political, economic and cultural causes and influences on our mental health.

Milica Ružičić’s paintings and drawings cut through all *neoliberal sorcery* and *magical thinking*, directly showing the social and economic roots of anxiety – *predatory state neoliberalism* (“Fear of the Executor”) on the periphery of the global capitalist system (“Fear of losing a job”) with a *supervisory* repressive state apparatus to maintain such an order (“Supervision”). Ružičić’s sculptures, on the other hand, visualize the negative health consequences of anxiety – from a long-lasting fatal cardiac arrhythmia to motor tension. Together, these works of art call for establishing a view of anxiety from the perspectives of social, political, communal, and critical psychology, which seek explanations in social relations and structures. However, if we take into account the entire critical opus of Ružičić, it becomes clear that her statement does not end with pointing to social sources of anxiety, but with the thesis that it is actually a disciplining force of neoliberalism. William Davis in *The Happiness Industry* claims that anxiety is not only a kind of accidental negative consequence of neoliberal policies, but also a powerful emotion for establishing and maintaining the state of precariousness. The lack of job security and decent wages and the consequent inability to plan for the future do cause anxiety, but are also a system of control through blackmailing people with their bare livelihoods. In the attempts to understand the omnipresent anxiety, social factors such as economic inequality, the destruction of the welfare state and its social services, or patriarchy and institutional racism must not be sidelined as secondary, but must be seen as constitutive elements of a mass mental health crisis.

Understanding that anxiety also stems from harmful social relations and that the ruling ideology uses it to maintain its own hegemony must lead to new forms of community that would transcend neoliberal individualism. Ružičić’s works of art are therefore not only documents of anxiety and its “invisible” causes, but creating and presenting them to the community is, at the same time, a desirable form of personal struggle for control over one’s own fears. As Ann Cvetkovich claims in *Depression: A Public Feeling* – creating in a critical manner (individual level) and participating in social movements (collective level) – simultaneously – is the most desirable way to overcome one’s own feeling of anxiety, but also the system of *anxious capitalism*.

Lav Mrenović