

Janez Janša

C'était un rendez-vous (déjà vu)

In 1976 the French film maker Claude Lelouch created a short film, only nine minutes long, entitled *C'était un rendez-vous*. The film, which was shot in Paris in the early hours of the morning, is a breakneck spin through the city streets, filmed from a subjective angle by a camera mounted on the front of the car, which we never see. At the end of the race the driver gets out of the car just in time to sweep an attractive blonde into his arms. During its mad dash, the car terrifies pedestrians, frightens the pigeons and breaks just about all the rules of the highway code, disregarding traffic lights and one way streets, mounting the pavement and doing some dangerous overtaking. We never see the car, but the roar of the engine is clearly that of a Ferrari.

In April 2007, the Slovenian artist Janez Janša went to Paris to shoot a remake of *C'était un rendez-vous*. Like the original, the video lasts 9 minutes, has the same soundtrack, is preceded by the same caption and features the same route used by Lelouch. The difference can be seen in the camera's point of view, which is much closer to road level, and at the end of the video, when the vehicle stops and we come face to face with the waiting date: not an attractive blonde this time, but a tortoise. According to Janša, the remake was filmed with the camera mounted on the shell of a "Golden Greek" tortoise, accompanying its "race" through the streets (at a speed which never exceeded 0.32 km/h) and then compressing the film to 9 minutes. Like in the original, "red lights are ignored, one-way streets are violated and centre lines are crossed."

With *C'était un rendez-vous (déjà vu)*, Janez Janša did not just create a remake of a media artefact, namely Claude Lelouch's film. The reinterpretation does not view *C'était un rendez-vous* as a finished artefact, but as an *open* work, which includes the production process and the legends it has generated, and skilfully managed, for more than 30 years.

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