



*StreetWise: Bosnia 2010*, highlights and documents the use of political advertising and graffiti on the streets of Sarajevo, during the presidential election of October 2010. The images explore the struggle for power, the passage of time, and the iconography of image and text in the atmosphere of a national election. Graffiti serves as an old and powerful tool of mass communication. Forms of graffiti and street art have been around since 30,000 BC as cave painting and other public markings. It's the method of expression for the marginalized. Oppressed people write on walls – it's free. Graffiti is global, and ubiquitous. It exists from New York to Paris; Beijing to Budapest. Some call it art, others call it vandalism. But graffiti endures.

My camera is always with me, the street is my “canvas.” The texture of walls and the imagery of commerce in the west draws me in with its grotesque beauty. Equally fascinating during the communist era had been the eastern equivalent of marketing in the U.S. – the marketing of ideology. MIT Professor and Linguist Dr. Noam Chomsky, characterizes media with his statement: “Propaganda is to democracy what violence is to totalitarianism.” My work, including *StreetWise: Bosnia 2010*, explores this manipulation of advertising strategies to sell political candidates in societies only recently converted to democracy.

Text, color, printed visual fragments, and disconnected context formed the primary elements of my work for decades. Then a funny thing happened. By 1991, communism was over. The red stars, hammers, and sickles disappeared. Lenin and Stalin vanished. Suddenly, the iconic Cold War images were gone. Overnight, countries in the socialist bloc lost their identities.



Amid a visual and political vacuum the streets are always first to chart the changes. Today, questions of identity are central to every former communist/socialist country, even more profoundly than before. Communism's monolithic simplicity has been replaced by complex questions: What elements of socialism to keep? Is a market economy appropriate? What about Fascist elements in society? Should we join the E.U.? How do neighbors turn into killers overnight? And finally, who were we, and, who do we want to be?



These questions first appear as graffiti in the street, as fragments. Words and meaning are papered over changing content and context. Time, chance and occasional human intervention write a country's history on its walls in the streets with a dynamic rhythm all its own. The photographs and collages in this exhibition work along-side the video installations of Zlatko Ćosić to add an element of texture to Ćosić's examination of man in the political environment. “*Obećanja, Obećanja*” explores the numerous ways and forms

that political promises appear, but inevitably fail to deliver.