

## cover

*I Am Whatever You Want Me To Be*, by Daniela Kostova, a work commissioned by the show Moleculart, curated by Boris Kostadinov, Rajko Alexiev Gallery, Sofia (2008) and later exhibited in New Delhi and New York.

*I Am Whatever You Want Me To Be* is an opulent photographic self-portrait that shows four archetypical characters referring to artist's previous work. It combines Bulgarian tradition (the pagan figure of the kukeri dancer, wearing a beast like costume) and Bulgaria's struggle with the idea of tradition (the chalga singer, embodying the folk music tradition and a new social identity arouse in Bulgaria in the nineties) with quotes from American pop-culture (boom box, fast food, television), in a familiar, yet unusual setting. The image is a freeze-frame of an implosion of space and time. As in general relativity time and space are part of the same continuum and gravitation is only a curvature of space, the free market theory reduces culture to the supply/demand continuum, art is only a curvature of consumerism. The four characters, as moments in time, coexist impossibly in the space of digital photography. It is the Big Bang in reverse: instead of nothing exploding into everything, this is everything imploding into nothing (as in the case of art imploding into advertising). The photo is a freeze frame of such a universe.

In order to communicate her idea, Daniela performed each character for the shot by posing in the four different costumes herself. Later she digitally stitched the shots in a large format composite printed on canvas.

*Daniela Kostova (Sofia, 1974) is an interdisciplinary artist who works with video, performance, photography and installation. Her work addresses issues of geography and cultural representation, the production and crossing of socio-cultural borders, and the uneasy process of translation and communication. In 2003 she was granted a Graduate Fellowship from the RPI, Rensselaer, NY where she later taught Intermediate Digital Imaging. In addition, Daniela curated the BioArt Initiative — an art and science project of the Arts Department and the Center for Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies at RPI. Since the beginning of 2011 she has been Creative Director of Bulgarian Artists in America, an organization based in NYC.*