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Ephemeral art and Counterculture : n Example of Selected Cases from the History of Art Institutions in Hungary

Sztuka i Dokumentacja nr 7, 54-55

2012

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

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ENGLISH SUMMARIES

streszczenia angielskie

Łukasz Guzek

The art gallery movement in Poland. A historical outline. From the sixties, through the conceptual galleries of the seventies, until their consequences in the eighties and the nineties.

The gallery movement was in fact an art institution in Poland. The movement created its own art world based on the principles of self-organisation and self-study. People who participated in it were artists, art professionals and art lovers, altogether so called 'conducive people'. Around each of such institutions its circles emerged – communities that co-operated with each other within the town, the country or internationally. This is how the network of personal ties as well as artistic influences appeared. A formal-artistic feature of the movement was the great number of various action art forms or, more broadly – art based on the present-ness. The history of the movement embraces half a century of contemporary Polish art. It starts just after Stalinist times. In 1956 in Krakow there emerged the Krzysztofory Gallery founded by the Grupa Krakowska [Krakow Group] Association, that directly continued the tradition of the pre-war avant-garde. The development of the movement in the seventies was especially dynamic, forming a conceptual art decade during when the conceptual galleries movement emerged. The expansion of the definition of art by the conceptual art movement allowed for the making of a gallery to be as significant as making art. That period was ended by the imposition of martial law on December 13th, 1981. In those extremely unfavourable conditions the gallery movement and art communities showed their strength. After the total elimination of art in the public sphere, the world of art revived quickly and relocated into the private sphere – private studios and apartments. The art community in Łódź, where the tradition of self-organisation was especially strong, was able to organise the movement throughout the whole country. It was later called the "Pitch-in Culture". After 1989 and the fall of communism, first in Poland and then in the whole of Eastern Europe, the new social and political conditions caused changes in the way the art world began to be organised.

Katalin Balázs

Ephemeral art and Counterculture. An Example of Selected Cases from the History of Art Institutions in Hungary.

Through a number of case studies, this paper attempts to provide an overview of the conditions imposed by the cultural policy plus highlight the actual state and operation of the society with regard to Artist Run Initiatives which were engaged with an

ephemeral 'approach' during the previous four decades of Hungarian culture. While trying to include some sociological facts, the text, mainly based on the responses of interviewed artists and some fundamental publications, attempts to shed light on the problem of connections between the concept of underground, avantgarde, progressive, official, mainstream and popular culture.

The paper delineates the conditions in which the initiatives were formed, their history, pre-history and afterlife of some, subjectively chosen initiatives and groups. It attempts to provide an overview of the Artist Run Initiatives with mind to other fields of Arts.

Tomás Pospiszyl

Artist Run Initiatives (ARI) – the General Features and the Analysis of Selected Historical Examples in Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic.

The essay questions the position of artist run initiatives in the countries of the former Soviet Bloc, particularly in Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic, during the communist regime and compares them to similar institutions working today. The general thesis is that the self-organised activities of artists under a totalitarian state or in the times of economical crisis lead to similar strategies. Therefore the history of unofficial art in the former Soviet Bloc cannot be understood as shaped exclusively by the conditions of the communist state. In general terms it is similar to the artist run initiatives or theoretical models elsewhere, for example the Temporary Autonomous Zones by Hakim Bey or different independent art institutions in Western Europe or USA.

Artist run initiatives are often physically attached to certain places which influences their mission and their activities. The alternative to the official institutional system creates parallel community, formed by different art groups, galleries or by a whole community that shares similar interests, vocabulary and values. Sometimes – and especially in Eastern Europe – creating a social network is more important than art production or the establishment of theoretical framework. Art is often a mere pretext for a desired social activity that cannot be fulfilled in another way. The traditional values of art criticism are not sufficient here. The works clearly have not only an aesthetic value, but also an ethical one.

Jozef Cseres

The Attraction of Hesitating Between the Virtual and the Possible

In his paper "The Attraction of Hesitating Between the Virtual and the Possible" Jozef Cseres reflects upon four different ephemeral art strategies in Slovak intermedia art – the social happening of Stano Filko (b. 1934), the visual and action music of Milan Adamčiak (b. 1946), the simulated art museum of Michal Murin (b. 1963), and the extreme performances of József R. Juhász (b. 1963). Dealing with these fragile manifestations of conceptual and performance art, he finds interesting affinities between the extreme social positions of the actual art and the poststructuralist discourse of humanities, mainly reflected by a process of interpretations of the world coined by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. This kind of art is ephemeral and fragile not only in terms of its forms but also in terms of communication and presentation. That's why it often requires and uses specific institutional frameworks, ways and means. Often it is difficult or even impossible to integrate this kind of art into the conventional cultural running of establishments. Moreover, the ephemeral art forms played and still play an important role in political life due to their ability to reflect actual social issues in an unbiased way, using inventive persuasive means that attract people frustrated by corrupted politics and sordid mass media games. Ephemeral art is open-minded and resists the current art world consolidated and corrupted by technocratic and trendy curators and their commissioned "art" commodities. Whether this resistance will survive a global crisis of representation is of course questionable, but hope in the ability of art to transform itself to new kind of sensibility, corresponding with our postmodern condition, still lives.