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Art on the Train from Łódź to Koszalin and Back

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The term 'Pitch-In Culture' first showed up in Łódź, in the middle of 1984, during an artistic-social meeting. The text describes the problems and controversies associated with research on this phenomenon. Problematic issues refer to both the scope and the time frame within which it acted, and the list of the participants. The author states, that maybe with time it grew so much that it started to function independently of its primary source. He pays attention to achievements that apparently existed on the margin of Polish art, but when considered with regard to the perspective of the Pitch-In Culture, they can show the whole phenomenon in a new light. The text describes a few selected events, that took place in Koszalin or were undertaken as initiatives of artists from Koszalin in the eighties.

The author points to a few important elements that in his opinion are characteristic of activities within the Pitch-In Culture. He points to the modernist intellectual heritage and the post-modern approach to problems within the art of that period. Following Janusz Zagrodzki, the author of the term 'Private Art', the author focuses the functioning of the Pitch-In Culture within the private and unofficial sphere and following Józef Robakowski he focuses on keeping an individual and independent attitude as an element that is essential for making art.

The author further states, that in the way Pitch-In Culture or 'Private Art' functioned, there are four important elements: the personal relationships and contacts of the participants, the spaces – enclaves that allowed for the organisation of events and confront attitudes, activating and annexing the activities of people from outside of so-called art community, as well as self-publishing.

According to the author, probably the greatest manifestation of the Pitch-In Culture and 'Private Art' was the *Artist Pilgrimage* organised in September 1983 in Łódź. As part of the Pilgrimage there were exhibitions, concerts, film screenings, actions, performances and theoretical appearances that were presented on an equal basis and always ended with long discussions.

The *Christmas call* event entitled *NO SLOGAN [BEZ HASŁA]* organised in Koszalin between the 10th and 12th of February 1984 was an event in return for inviting the artists from Koszalin to the *Pilgrimage* that happened a year earlier. The organisers were the people who participated in the event in Łódź: Ewa Kowalska, Grażyna Bogusz-Wolska, Andrzej Ciesielski and Stanisław Wolski. They invited 85 artists from the whole country, plus there also came many artists who were not formally invited but associated with the Pitch-In Culture movement.

The next initiative by artists from Koszalin was a cyclical event, organised between 1982 and 1988 every year in mid-December, *AFTER A YEAR* organised by Andrzej Ciesielski and Andrzej Słowik. Artists from the whole of Poland presented their current art practice.

For the Koszalin community open-air workshops were an important activity, that were in fact connected with the tradition of the Osieki workshops organised since 1963 and ended after the imposition of martial law in 1981. The situation was changed

by a series of workshops organised under a name "We invite you to work" between 1987-1989 in Karlino and in 1990 in Darłowo. The initiators and first artistic curators were Andrzej Słowik and Maria Idziak who in 1989 entrusted the function to Wojciech Zamiara and in 1990 to Andrzej Ciesielski.

Also important for the functioning of the Koszalin community within the Poland-wide circuit was the Presbitery (Na Plebanii) Gallery run by an artist Andrzej Ciesielski and between 1986 and 1990 there were 35 meetings organised in it.

As the author states, the Pitch-In Culture was born out of the need for a totally different way of presenting one's own artistic practice, the exchange of information and joint action. Without friendship, knowing one another, a willingness to work and even without some personal antagonisms, the whole movement would not have had a chance to spread so broadly around the country and accept so many versatile artists as for example as it happened in Koszalin.

Grzegorz Dziamski **The Pitch-In Culture thirty years later**

The "Pitch-In Culture" began functioning at the end of 1981 within a circle of people connected with the Łódź Kaliska group, but very soon its strongest presence was reflected by the Artist pilgrimage, Long live art! (Łódź 2-4.09.1983). This was when two meanings of the term "Pitch-In Culture" emerged: a narrow one, meaning people connected with the Łódź Kaliska group and those whose concept of art was closely associated with the group and broader interpretation – meaning the way the artists acted who wanted to keep their independence during the martial law. Józef Robakowski on the occasion of an exhibition organised in Belgium entitled The Polish avant-garde wrote that the Pitch-In Culture was "independent of politicians, police, church, administration and artists themselves", it expresses in gestures and slogans, "that is why it may be everywhere, in our homes, streets, forest, bar, park, tram, queue at the butchers shop and even on the train from Łódź to Koszalin and back". Martial law forced artists to search for new forms for their activities, but this did not blur the previous personal and artistic differences. For Józef Robakowski the Pitch-In Culture was a new form for the activities of independent artists; for Łódź Kaliska it was a new artistic form. In the first case the 'Pitch-In Culture' was only a means; in the second – it was an aim. Of course, the second is more interesting but it requires us to answer a question: what was the art form about? Some critics thought of Jacek Kryszkowski as one of the Pitch-In Culture leaders, although he considered that the Pitch-In Culture was supposed to break with the production model of art. Kryszkowski never explained how this post-production art shall look. Today, even though Kryszkowski would not have been happy about this, since many times he attacked the dependence of Polish criticism upon art terminology and theories worked out in the West, we could say that post-production art actually resembles the relational aesthetics of Nicolas Bourriaud.

Adam Sobota **The Pitch-In Spectrum**

An artistic phenomenon called the 'Pitch-In Culture' distinguished the Łódź artistic scene, although it actually reflected the situation in the whole country during the eighties and that is the reason why it attracted artists from different towns and various generations. The most radical arts programme emerged across the entire spectrum of independent artistic activities in Poland after martial law and it was different from art directly connected with political opposition or religious motives. I observed some 'Pitch-In culture' actions in Łódź, however I prefer to talk about the way the phenomenon was situated in the broader context of the situation for the arts communities in Poland. Since the mid fifties the art circuit had become stronger and stronger, becoming an alternative to official culture. The totalitarian system was conducive to bureaucratic stagnation, so young artists, who were interested in new media and a non-conventional means of expression, created their own network of artistic groups, galleries and events, most often associated with so called 'student culture'. In the seventies these artistic communities was numerous and multi-generational. Their basic need was self-education and generating a network of private contacts in the country and abroad