
English Summary

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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.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

HOMMAGE À JAN ŚWIDZIŃSKI **(An Essay on Art as Contextual Art)**

Jan Świdziński (b. 1923) has been one of the main representatives of the post-conceptual movement since the mid-seventies. His artistic doctrine *Art as Contextual Art* (published in February 1976), considered in confrontation with Joseph Kosuth's tautological model of art, makes it possible for us to appreciate Świdziński's contribution to overcome hegemony of conceptualism and New York. Świdziński was right to indicate that conceptualism of the *Art and Language* group and Kosuth, although it did try to restore to art its profound meaning (art is a meaning and not decoration) by introducing non-artistic considerations (self-consciousness), replaced in fact the traditional formalism of art with the formalism of the neo-positivistic philosophy which was hard to maintain. Kosuth's thesis - the works of art are analytical and tautological sentences - was a mistake because the theory of meaning of Wittgenstein as a method of using expression implied an entropy of meaning in art and revealed a need for some sort of verification to the theory of meaning itself. The tautological model as the relativistic one while assuming self-reflection in the autonomous context of art did not answer the question: why is the term of art used this way and not differently? So, in 1975 Świdziński compared the artifacts not to analytical sentences but to sentences comprising intensional functors (their veracity depends upon the contents replacing the variables). The intensionality of artistic statements, that is to say, the presence of functors in them (*I know, I believe, I suppose, I must* etc.) studied by the epistemological or deontological logic, indicates that they are restricted by the pragmatic moment of experience. Świdziński declared that *Art as Contextual Art* is an opposition to the multiplication of meaning, and thus to relativism, at the same time he recognized the dissimilarity and changeability of contexts, stating - what is real in one context is not real in another, and therefore he tried to sanction relativism. This is the perspective shown by his book *Art, Society and Self-consciousness* (1979) in which he was attempting to define the structure of intensionality as the antagonistic one. In the global context coexist various logics and regulate our image of the world: the logic of norms, the logic of freedom, the epistemological logic and the logic of game. The awareness of the intensional structure of the context requires of us today to work out a model of culture, different from the absolutistic and relativistic one, a model in which the repressive opposition of absolutism and relativism has lost significance. This is the question: what society should be? This book is an introduction to Świdziński's *Freedom and Limitation - The Anatomy of Postmodernism* (1987). Today - in my opinion - Świdziński does not resemble the old contextualist fostering the intentions of a traveller-researcher. He is more of a neo-pragmatic contextualist-tourist. But his doctrine is very important for our understanding of the present art and culture, though the debate between Kosuth's conceptualism and Świdziński's contextualism appears only a case of the history of conceptism and - last but not least - wit (*ingenium comparans*).