

ENGLISH Sum ma ries

Transformations in Polish art after 1989

Anna Markowska (editor of the section)

Introduction

It is quite commonly believed that the country's independence did not contribute to changes in art. It is said that Polish people already gained a large degree of freedom after October 1956. Although at first the freedom was based on modernist autonomy, in the next decade it was expanded to include critical art, which then came into existence, and in the decade following martial law the chafing consensus with the authorities was completely severed. In such a perspective political changes after 1989 can be treated only as the icing on the cake. But in fact, can such a completely different political and economical context forcing changes in mentality and traditions be treated so lightly? In addition, another view, also depreciating the role of independence, can be encountered quite frequently. In this perspective ideological limitations and censorship compel a more careful form and more intelligent content; an artist has a wall that they rebound from and that shapes them, which perfects their expression. Today there is no such wall, so the level of art in the free country has plummeted.

A quarter of a century after the free elections it is time to look at post-1989 art in a different way: the new situation formed a new field of activity, a different responsibility of the author and diverse horizons. Our thesis is that the freedom of the artist in an independent country has an influence on the shape of the art created. Thanks to the regime change, the birth of democracy and abolition of censorship, artists gained an opportunity to critically evaluate the political situation. The map of artistic concerns started to feature completely new issues - social problems such as justice, identity differences, discrimination, exclusion, as well as issues such as shame, being lost or the inability to find one's own place in reality began to be taken up. Art that rewrites Polish history appeared. Budding capitalism, consumerism and institutionalism became sources of criticism. The voice of trans-species solidarity and the turn to ecological art intensified. Camp art became more popular and blasphemy, scandal and stardom turned into artistic strategies. Unexpectedly, it turned out that preventive censorship exists, that an artist (specifically a female artist) may be subject to a devastating eight-year long trial and on the way to court in no way only metaphorically spit on by people who had never seen the art in question. The problem of losing local specificity emerged because the global art world absorbs everything. Thus the problem of building a local hierarchy of value increased dramatically because of the hidden wave of neocolonialism which seems to be dictating to Poles from the outside who is a great artist based only on commercial criteria. Meanwhile, the map of Europe has changed and the availability of internet and airline communications brought us closer not only to Spain and Great Britain but also to China and Japan.

Transformations in Polish art after 1989 is the title of a scientific session that took place in the Labirynt Gallery in Lublin in December 2014. In order to consolidate the Lublin discussion, we would like to invite you to continue it in *Art and Documentation*.

Paweł Moźdzynski

Transformations in Polish art after 1989: Reconfiguration and bewilderment. The field of art in Poland 1989 – 2015

Reconfigurations and bewilderment in the field of art during the time of social, political and economical transformation are the main topics of Moźdzynski's text. The author uses the categories of Pierre Bourdieu: the field of art, struggle and competition of agents. He explores the dimensions of bewilderment and writes about deregulation of the art world, the marginalisation of fine arts academies, struggles in the field of visual arts and the conflicts between artists and society in contemporary Poland. In the last part of the article, the author tries to examine the contemporary art field in Poland through the perspective of Jean Baurdillard's book *The conspiracy of art*.

Iwona Szmelter

Contemporary Valuation In Visual Art. The Future of Art?

The modern understanding of the values of cultural heritage has a wide scope. It extends from natural heritage, through culture (including the value of tangible and intangible heritage as well as digital heritage). The purpose of this article is to present the system of values for modern and contemporary visual art and the current state of conservation-restoration theory concerning this valuation, with regard to its contemporary setting in terms of changes in the way we evaluate artwork. This includes the historical conditions, the relationship with philosophical and behavioural concepts and also the socio-economic role of such objects of heritage. This dissertation refers to changes in attitudes over time to the care of heritage and the influence of the classic theory of conservation of the eighteenth century on the latest understanding of cultural heritage. Thus, the modern theory of conservation and restoration of cultural heritage is attempting to keep up with these changing trends and this involves many new and complex methodological issues, for example the RCE Dutch model. Among them is the basis of the author's valuation of visual art legacy within the theory of the care of cultural heritage. Synergy is necessary at every stage of the research and the identification of the artwork. The process of collecting, care and conservation of modern and contemporary art begins with the recognition of its values, which includes identifying the values of each individual object which should be properly defined at the outset¹.

¹ This paper is based on the SMART Values Project by the Joint Programming Initiative-Cultural Heritage-EU, for more, see <http://www.heritageportal.eu/Browse-Topics/GUIDELINES-STANDARDS/Factsheet-7-SMARTValue-Values-and-valuation-as-key-factors-in-protection-conservation-and-contemporary-use-of-heritage>.

Ewelina Wejbert-Wąsiewicz

The movies of women. Changes, turns and “glass ceiling” in Polish cinematography before and after 1989

Polish women worked behind the camera in the period of silent films, but their work is unknown in wide circulation. In the postwar years of the PRL, the director Wanda Jakubowska occupied a strong

position. Besides Wanda Jakubowska, the most popular Polish women-directors in Europe and the USA are: Agnieszka Holland, Barbara Sass, Dorota Kędzierzawska, Małgorzata Szumowska, Urszula Antoniak. We are also familiar with the activities of women-directors as assistants to their husbands. Their professional life therefore fits in someone else's curriculum vitae, they are often not allowed to be independent and break away from the biography of their husband, protector, or another artist. The achievements of these women-directors in the development of Polish cinema has been usurped by their partners located in the centre.

The article describes the sphere of Polish cinema both in the past and present from the perspective of the participation by women-directors. This sociological essay is an attempt to sketch the location of the works of Polish women-directors as an opposite to the canon. There are two important elements in this perspective: analysis of the artistic strategies and the many barriers that exist in the field of cinematography (systemic and mental barriers, "celluloid ceiling"). The article uses existing materials, such as: research studies, newspaper articles, written reviews, interviews, memoirs, recorded discussions.

Emilia Zimnica-Kuzioła

Social problems in Polish dramatic works since 1989

The article is devoted to social problems in Polish dramatic works after 1989. Many of today's dramas on the condition of the Polish population develop a discourse of trauma and provide a subjective commentary on the issues concerning Poles living in transition.

The emerging new system has brought political freedom, the abolition of censorship (artistic freedom), but it has also generated other problems inherent in the laws of the market. Each transformation brings changes of an "ambivalent balance". This could not be otherwise in the case of political, economic and cultural transformation in Poland. Sociologists write about the value duality, disorganization, cultural disorientation and even about collective trauma or shock caused by social change. At the same time, they pay attention to the positive effects of the collapse of the communist system. The authors of dramas seem not to notice the good sides and accentuate only the negative results of changes.

On the basis of the stage plays (in their literary version) collected in several anthologies that appeared between 2003 and 2013 and published in the *Dialog (Dialogue)*, the author captures the manifestations of anomie observed by the artists – playwrights as they try to adapt to new conditions, use the strategies described by Robert Merton – they are conformists, escape into ritualism, rebel and apply innovations.

The artists showing social problems in dramatic works do not intend to reject a system *in limine*, their criticism shows reflectivity, in other words, the ability to perceive the adverse effects and formulate a positive programme that aims to inhibit or eliminate hazards and increasing social pathologies. Diagnosing the diseases in society (poverty, social exclusion, violence, dystrophy of family and social ties, consumerism, unsettled communist past etc.), the authors of dramas suggest ways of curing them: overcoming inertia, involvement in grass-roots activities and genuine, spontaneous initiatives - *sine qua none* conditions for the joint development of civil society.

Slawomir Marzec

The Unwanted Accidental Results of Art Modernizations

The problematic and complications within the development of art is the subject of this text. Today this brings into being the performative shake of openings, announcements and debuts without any consequence (the novelty as novelty itself; or the simulated novelty). It creates a variety but without

any differences, that is in fact - dullness. The author briefly analyses what kind of limitations and thoughtlessness we have been sentenced to by our “open, critical and creative variety” in the recent period.

Analysis is made using the example of four main superstitions that have shaped the art worlds' intellectual climate: variety, currentness, commitment and controversy. It proves that in fact the concepts were not arguments or explanations but ... problems. Problems that have not been undertaken at all.

Sławomir Marzec raises the question: what is the reason to practice deconstruction, when the public (and frequently the authors too) are not able to distinguish deconstruction from frolic? Similarly: to practice the strategy of “appropriation” as insolent feeding (instead of subtle trance / subjectiveness). Or the desublimating “abject” which often appears only as the canonization of vulgarity. As a consequence it brings the danger of identification of the new cultural (and artistic) competence together with a principal hypocrisy and primitive smartness.

The author formulates the newest challenges to art (and to the art world) – perceiving the reality as complex dynamical multi dimensionality, authentic pluralism, individual subjectiveness (and so on). The concept of plurality results here in the right to have art (both as an artist and a viewer) on ones own measure.

He is afraid that we will not be rid of the present chaos and ambiguity of notions, if we do not make more readable, more functional, the ideas of currentness, variety, controversy and commitment.

VARIA

Dominik Kuryłek

Andrzej Partum's Ontological Nihilism

Andrzej Partum was a neo-avant-garde poet, musician and performer. He worked in mail art, wrote concrete poetry, made speeches, published manifestos, created graphic art-works and paintings. He ran his own original anti-institution – the Poetry Office. Since the turn of the 1950s, he treated his creative art as a way towards experiencing the *Real*. His way to the experience led him through the Nietzschean attitude of the *complete nihilist* resulting in a *weak being*, which Gianni Vattimo came to consider as highly potential in post-modernity. Undoubtedly, nihilism had a profound existential significance for Partum. Partum's nihilism was not just his peculiar creative method that centered on negation. He created art in indirect reference to the notion of Nothingness. The analysis of his poems created at the peak of Polish modernity, his concrete poetry and particularly his manifestos – the focal point of his artistic endeavours, originally summarised by his *Manifesto for Positive Nihilism of Art* – leads to the conclusion that Partum's approach was an expression of an ontological nihilism, consequently realized since the 1950s.