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SECTION 1

EVERYTHING IS A COLLECTION. OSIEKI - A TROUBLESOME HERITAGE?

Edited by Anna Maria LEŚNIEWSKA

INTRODUCTION

The Osieki collection was built together with subsequent editions of the International Meetings of Artists, Researchers and Art Theoreticians, which took place in Osieki and the nearby Łazy in the years 1963-1981. They have become part of the history of the Polish neo-avant-garde, influencing the artistic practice and theoretical reflection of two decades of the 20th century. Both the plain-airs and the collection were created thanks to the initiative of the artist and animator of artistic life Marian Bogusz (1920-1980), in cooperation with Jerzy Fedorowicz (1928-2018), an artist from Koszalin. Bogusz, after the experiences of his activity in the Crooked Circle Gallery (Krzywe Koło), focused on finding a new place to develop its vision of contemporary art. During the *Arguments 1962* exhibition, both artists initiated the process of creating a program for the meeting in Osieki and outlined the idea of the Museum of Modern Art in Koszalin.

The process of organizing plain-airs and the parallel process of building the Osieki collection was interrupted by the imposition of martial law in Poland in December 1981. The achievements of the meetings - on the one hand - fit into the global framework of the cultural policy of the People's Republic of Poland, taking into account the policy towards the so-called Western Territories – and on the other hand – the plain-airs led to profound changes in Polish art, constituting a kind of laboratory of artistic forms. The Osieki collection, in its present shape, consists of works of art, including films, as well as multimedia documentation that is the registration of the course of the meetings. The research potential of the collection is huge. An attempt to interpret it was undertaken by the authors of the texts presented below. They are using in their texts interchangeably the notions of the avant-garde and the neo-avant-garde, without pointing out the criteria for such a division. This

can be read as a kind of intuitive recognition by researchers into this period of the continuity of art phenomena that took place in Osieki during the historical plein-air, and it is also visible in the Osieki collection.

The articles collected here are devoted to the achievements of the International Meetings of Artists, Researchers and Art Theoreticians in Osieki and the collection gathered in the Contemporary Art Department of the Museum in Koszalin. They also serve to outline new subjects and methods deserving further development. The set of theoretical texts is accompanied by an Annex, which consists of documentation. The conference *Osieki 1963-1981* was devoted to the Osieki Collection and related to the celebration of the centenary of the avant-garde movement in Poland, organized by the Polish Section of the International Association of Art Critics AICA in Zachęta - National Gallery of Art in Warsaw in December 2017.

Janusz Zagrodzki comprehensively wrote about the founding initiative of the Museum of Modern Art in Koszalin in his text "Premises for a Museum of Modern Art by Marian Bogusz." In the texts presented here in Section 1, other studies by this researcher on the subject of Osieki and of he himself as a participant at the plain-air events are often referred to.

Marcin Lachowski reflects upon the early plain-air events organized until 1967. In his text "Plein Air Events in Osieki and Limits of Modern Painting" he shows the process of neo-avant-garde formation, which was caused by the cyclical nature of organized meetings and their thematic variability. They were important elements of creating a new plain-air's formula. The common opinion of the critics interpreted the Osieki plain-air as a continuation of the project of the collection of modern art initiated by Bogusz in the Krzywe Koło Gallery in Warsaw. The donation of a part of this collection to the Koszalin Museum and the initiation of meetings in Osieki resulted from the need to reflect on the various artistic conventions of the Thaw period. At the same time, it initiated reflection on the image that connects with the context, the place and time of action that annexes fragments of reality, and reinterpreted the

category of "realism". During the Osieki meetings a specific ritual of presenting works in the natural landscape, according to Lachowski, determined the process of questioning the modernist art form through the use of spatial forms and actions or artistic activities. Such practice became a direct impulse for conceptual art practices at the turn of the sixties and seventies. But it also became an element of a deeper transformation of a modern artwork into a complex avant-garde montage structure consisting of both an art form and an environment.

Łukasz Guzek's article "The Line, or What Connects the Polish Avant-Garde Trends?" is an attempt to reconstruct the artistic and political significance of the last two plain-air events in 1980 and 1981, in which conceptual art, according to the author, took a dominant position. That does not mean that Osieki was the only place for the presentation of such art. "Line" - as the leading slogan of the plain-air in 1980, is a useful reference point for the author. He draws a broad interpretation of the term line from the book by Wassily Kandinski *Point and Line to Plane*. The organizers of the plain-air events also considered another direct reference point to be Waław Szpakowski's line drawings, presented during this plain-air by Janusz Zagrodzki. The word "rhythm" became the leading slogan of the plain-air in 1981. Both "line" and "rhythm" are not only key words, but also a kind of description, symbolic closure and summary, as Guzek believes, of the artistic debates of the seventies into conceptual art, as well as the achievements of the plain-air events. Their importance was strengthened by the context of the conflict between the ruling authorities and society, including strikes at the Gdańsk Shipyard and the impact of the Solidarity movement. The author has used the methodology of performance studies to analyze the phenomenon of the plain-air events. The categories of performance distinguished by Jon McKenzie become a tool for recognizing the phenomenon of the plain-air events, which underlines still their actual contemporary research potential.

Artistic activities carried out during the plain-air events were the result of the affective reactions of artists functioning between discourses, the essence of which is included in the concepts of

"dysensus" and "eutrapelia". The text by Luiza Nader "A Community of Imagination as *Dissensus*. The 8th Artists and Art Theoreticians Meeting in Świdwin / Osieki (1970)" introduces the act of resistance as a form of *dissensus*. This theme appears in Osieki thanks to a lecture by Jerzy Ludwiński titled "Post-artistic Era." The critic postulated in it the creation of a "playground field". The author of the article recalls in it an event related to Ludwiński, recalled by Jarosław Jakimczyk in his book *Najweselszy barak w obozie. Tajna policja komunistyczna jako krytyk artystyczny i kurator sztuki w PRL* [*The most cheerful barrack in the camp. Communist secret police as art critic and curator of art in the People's Republic of Poland*], which explains the attitude of *dysensus*. It is Ludwiński's disagreement towards both the attitude of the authorities and the artistic milieu. The quoted statement of the SB (Secret Police) officer could only result in Ludwiński's withdrawal from open criticism of the authorities in favor of the possibility of continuing the creative activity. The strategy used by both critics and artists, revealed during the 8th plein-air, shows them as being fully conscious of the threats existing at that time in Poland. This critical attitude of Ludwiński was already expressed in his earlier actions as an animator of artistic events, e.g. during the 1st Symposium of Artists and Scientists in Puławy (1966) and in the activities of artists that took place there (e.g. Włodzimierz Borowski, *Offering furnaces*). These were radical, critical manifestations of attitudes towards the policy of the authorities. Despite the position of the author of the text, in Polish art there was a state of "silently playing along" with the authorities that even gave permission to do it, despite the events of March 1968 and their effects. Therefore, the *dysensus*, being a denial of consensus, became the way of artistic discourse within the neo-avant-garde artists' milieu. This applies not only to the plain-airs events in Osieki, but also to other meetings. This was the result of political situations whose sources should be sought primarily in cultural policy and the introduction of new social policy principles, based on an agreement between the Ministry of Culture and Art and the Presidium of the Central Trade Union Council in the field of popularization of culture (1963).

Plain-air meetings in Osieki were a significant biographical experience for the generation of historical avant-garde and neo-avant-garde artists. In my text "Transformation of Order. Introducing the Performing of Art at Osieki According to Jan Dobkowski" I criticize the phenomenon of the avant-garde as read by Stefan Morawski. The presence of the philosopher at the Osieki plein-airs was significant due to the open dialogue he had with artists, which became the determinant of the new quality of artistic discourse. On the opposite end of it there is activity, which I defined in my text by the term "eutrapelia", which, broadly speaking, is the ability to "transform discourse into a joke". Thanks to this, it shapes the sensitivity of others. Eutrapelia has become one of the elements describing the perspective of affective transformation, allowing the acceptance of an attitude of openness to new procedures in art against indoctrinated reality. The declaration of Jan Dobkowski, who announced his return to natural existence, inspired him to performative actions. They became a research tool for him, supported by eutrapelia. The plain-airs in Osieki, in the context of Dobkowski's actions and Ludwiński's lectures, can be seen as a place of manifestation of autonomous attitudes. They were "art gaps" located in the field of anti-system activities. Paradoxically, they took place in the governmental cultural institution, which only emphasizes the state of the constantly conducted game. Susan Sontag's sense of humor, recalled here for purposes of my analysis, in her essay *Notes on Camp* outlined a strategy of total distance from popular culture, which becomes a playground area, a constant game understood as a kind of sensibility, and which has been recognized as a way of interpreting art that breaks the existing routine of vision.

A complex presentation of the Osieki collection, based on an exhibition at the Warsaw Zachęta Gallery (CBWA - Central Bureau for Art Exhibitions) in 1969, as a museum collection showing the plain-airs and artistic milieu, was presented by Gabriela Świtek in the text "Exhibitions. *The Plein-airs of Koszalin, 1963–1968* in the Central Bureau for Art Exhibitions." The author reflects on the exhibition policy towards works created at

the plein-air in Osieki. Comprehensive analysis of the exhibition, supported by the commentary of the then influential critic Ignacy Witz, reveals a clearly outlined social division during the plain-airs, regardless of the centre or region from which the artists came. Witz's words fundamentally influenced the press reports commenting on the exhibition of art from the Osieki's plain-airs at the Warsaw Zachęta Gallery. Significant "mobility of the Osieki collection" until 1980, revealed the stereotypical character of the selection of places for its presentation. It was only the exhibitions from the nineties of the twentieth century with the participation of the Osieki collection, referring to the history of Krzywe Koło Gallery and its collection (MNW, Warsaw 1990; Mazovian Centre for Contemporary Art Elektrownia, Radom, 2015) or to the activity of Marian Bogusz (*Radość nowych konstrukcji. (Po)wojenne utopie Mariana Bogusza / Joy of new constructions. (Post) war utopias by Marian Bogusz*, Zachęta Gallery, Warsaw, 2017) that give rise to the fundamental question posed by the author regarding the revision of views on the exhibition problems that brings the collection into the context of the plain-airs achievements. Nevertheless, what will ultimately be the subject of analyzes, as the researcher points out, should take into account the stimulating role of both the Osieki collection, including the archives, in the reinterpretations of Polish art that are being created.

Schizophrenic - this is how Dorota Jarecka described the issue of the Osieki collection in her text "Small Utopia of the Avant-Garde. The Collections of both the Studio Gallery in Warsaw and Koszalin Museum. Seen as local initiatives for the foundation of Contemporary Art Museums in Poland". The author does this by analyzing and comparing the situation managed by the Studio Gallery, which has been in operation since 1972 at the Studio Theatre in Warsaw. Institutions operating on similar principles have common structural features. Both are part of a larger whole. Both the Museum in Koszalin and the Studio Theatre "are not dedicated to contemporary art and are of ambivalent heritage". In the context of broadly understood historical policy, the author poses a question about the contemporary place for

the achievements of those institutions created in the PRL. She also draws attention to the ambiguity of the terms "collection" and "museum" in relation to the works in these collections. The author concludes that the creation of a museum could be identified by the authorities as a place ruling over the autonomy of thinking, and thus being a source of resistance. However, the position of the collection is a creation dependent on the place where it is located. Therefore, it is not theoretically a threat. This way of understanding the power of works of art can undoubtedly be a testimony to a kind of fear and a great respect of authorities towards the commitment of a museum bringing together an opinion-forming milieu. The author emphasizes that such a place will not gain significance, even if there will be works of significant artists of many generations and art trends along with extensive documentation of their creation, if it is not subjected to constant reevaluation. The collection gains value and significance through subsequent adaptations. In this way, it becomes an inalienable point of reference in the ongoing generational discourse, and not an "ambivalent burden" which is inhibiting activities for the sake of art. The institution may inhibit the initiation of artistic activities. But this will not change the fact that art will be created, with or without institutional support, because it is born of an unrestrained impulse for the action, regardless of the prevailing political system.

Elżbieta Kal in the text "The Dialectic of Gesture. The Gift by the Krzywe Koło Gallery of Contemporary Art to the Museum in Koszalin, held in the collection of the Museum of Middle Pomerania in Słupsk" describes a fragment of the collection from the first gift by the Krzywe Koło Gallery to the Museum of Middle Pomerania in Słupsk in the light of the collection of Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz's works. Placed in this context, the gift by Bogusz is for the author an example of a collection occupying a static position in the face of new phenomena. The author puts forward a disputable thesis that Bogusz's gift meets the idea of Witkacy's Pure Form.

The need to redefine the achievements of the International Meetings of Artists, Researchers and Art Theoreticians is also due to the fact that

its current state of preservation has been revealed, which has become a pressing problem for the Koszalin authorities. Notable underinvestment of the Department of Contemporary Art in the Koszalin Museum resulting in the lack of proper storage, professional equipment and the necessary substantive and organizational support for this department, appears almost at every stage of work on the legacy of the Osieki's plain-airs. As a result, we become more and more aware that the heritage developed in the years 1963-1981 in Osieki by artists, critics and art enthusiasts is less and less present in common perception. The message of Osieki, which went beyond locality, degrades due to the locality of thought. This is pointed out by Walentyna Orłowska, a long-time head of the Contemporary Art Department in the Koszalin Museum, and Ewa Kowalska, a former museum worker, now the Municipal Monument Conservator in Kołobrzeg in the text "Artists' Meetings in Osieki – Art, Documentation and Reflections After Years". By recalling the history of the Osieki meetings, including almost all of their participants and spectacular lectures, the authors appeal to the authorities to ensure proper conditions for the storage of the Osieki collection and to create a new seat for it. Despite the considerable passage of time, the idea of Bogusz's museum seems to be constantly up-to-date. It makes Koszalin more attractive for visitors as well as for researchers analyzing the phenomenon of Osieki meetings.

Wojciech Ciesielski in the text "Has Osieki Definitely Finished?" describes selected artistic events that referred to art activities in Osieki. The author emphasizes the existence of a "dual structure of the functioning of art", defining the situation of its existence until 1981, in which the artistic independence of art venues more and more evidently escaped the unambiguous assessments of authorities, even though they were organizationally dependent on those authorities. After the imposition of martial law there was a descent into the underground, and art functioned as a "private art" in a climate of spontaneity resulting from the internal need of the artists. Art then became an integral part of the nascent system of values, which on the one hand definitely closes the time of

cooperation with the authorities on its terms and starts a new period of individual initiatives. From today's point of view, the evaluation of the situation that arose among artists and critics during the time of the meetings in Osieki belongs to the policy of the time of another reality. The analogies between them reveal the need for research on the political-social or institutional themes that are a part of the process of changes from the sixties and seventies to the eighties.

An integral part of the Osieki phenomenon was Jerzy Fedorowicz, who died during the preparations for the publication of these texts. Agnieszka Popiel in the text "Jerzy Fedorowicz: The Rhythm of Life, the Rhythm of Time, the Rhythm of Art" recalling the slogan of the 1981 plain-air, remembers and reassembles Fedorowicz and Ludmilla Popiel, an artist co-creating the meeting, and Fedorowicz's wife. By dividing the text into "contexts" the author reveals the stages of work on subsequent meetings, based on Fedorowicz's own accounts and private archives. The text is a memory, an impression aimed at perpetuating the artist's image. A. Popiel discusses the subsequent stages of his work, which is really unknown because he never had an individual exhibition. The joint activities of both artists end with the death of Ludmilla Popiel in 1988. From that moment, Fedorowicz focused on recalling the accomplishments of Osieki's meetings, while critically referring to the resulting publications about them.

The political context that appeared in the above-mentioned texts became only a background to the described artistic processes. The political meaning of artistic phenomena does not determine the view of the authors of the texts. It is a contribution to embedding them in the context of time and place. The main interest of the authors of the texts (as well as the participants of the mentioned conference) remained the problem of the collection of works, their fate, power, preservation, exhibition policy conducted over the years by the collection managers, as well as the ever-emerging problem of its presence/non-presence in the public discourse.

Janusz ZAGODZKI

Premises for a Museum of Modern Art by Marian Bogusz

The article describes a notable creative initiative by Marian Bogusz (1920-1980) for the establishment of a Museum of Modern Art modelled upon the **International Collection** unveiled in 1931 by Władysław Strzemiński and the a.r. group, entrusted as a deposit to the Museum in Łódź. Bogusz embarked on this project promptly upon his release from the concentration camp in Mauthausen (1945) and also the establishment of the Young Artists and Scientists Club in Warsaw (1947). The imposition of socialist realism in Poland soon thereafter significantly impeded the collection of modern art, and it was only upon the creation of Klub Krzywe Koło (The Crooked Circle Club) and of Bogusz's autonomous Gallery (1956) that his ideas could be revisited. Bogusz was seeking to assemble a collection of works by artists affiliated with the international Phases movement and by others whose pieces were exhibited at the Krzywe Koło Gallery, incorporating them into the foundation of a permanent collection. He initially broached the subject with the Art Museum in Łódź. A body of 13 paintings by artists active in Paris was eventually assembled and passed on to the Łódź institution, but the latter did not agree to the concept of establishing a separate Museum of Modern Art. The next body of works, **Collection I of the Krzywe Koło Gallery** (35 paintings from 1957-1961), was bequeathed to the National Museum in Warsaw (1963), but likewise was not exhibited.

In the 1960s, Bogusz based himself in Koszalin. The first exhibitions of modern art were held at the Baltic Drama Theatre and, subsequently, at the Museum in Koszalin. Ever hoping to establish an independent Museum of Modern Art, Bogusz bequeathed to the Museum in Koszalin (1963) the **Collections II and III** (comprising, respectively, 13 paintings and 29 assorted gouaches, drawings and prints). Beginning in 1963, the annual Meetings of Artists and Scientists were held in Osieki near Koszalin; the accomplished artists invited to these events were required to, as it were, remit a participation fee in kind by gifting

one of their pieces to the museum. In 1965, further work on Bogusz's project was thwarted; the art department at the Museum in Koszalin was closed by way of an administrative decision, the net effect being that the nascent Museum of Modern Art launched in 1963 physically ceased to exist.

The concept of a new museum formulated by Bogusz, one in which painting and sculpture would be paired with poetry, theatre, and music, is worthy of note. Global artistic achievements of the early 1960s, with a significant contribution by Polish artists are yet to be duly presented in actual museum spaces and may be enjoyed only virtually, if at all. The dispersed collections of the Museum of Modern Art, as built up in fits and starts in accordance with the ideas of Bogusz, are still waiting for a home and for an appreciating audience.

Marcin LACHOWSKI

Plein Air Events in Osieki and Limits of Modern Painting

The article reflects on the early plein air events in Osieki, organised from 1963 by Jerzy Fedorowicz and Marian Bogusz. The events have been interpreted as an expansion of the project of a modern art collection initiated by Bogusz in Warsaw's Galeria Krzywe Koło (Crooked Circle Gallery). The meetings in Osieki began after providing the Museum in Koszalin with a part of the collection that simultaneously created the possibility of rethinking diverse artistic conventions from the period of thaw. The subsequent gatherings, which displayed the works in the natural environment, determined the process of questioning the modernist form by exhibiting spatial forms and artistic actions and artworks.

The plein air events fit the general outline of the cultural policy of the Polish People's Republic of Poland towards the so-called Recovered Territories; they influenced deep changes in modern art, providing cogitations on a painting that connects itself with the location and time of its action, annexing and displaying fragments of reality, reinterpreting the category of "realism". Such practice became a direct impulse for conceptual artistic activity at the turn

of the decade, as well as an element of a further transformation of a modern work of art into the complex avant-garde structure of an installation – a work viewed together with its surroundings.

Łukasz GUZEK

The Line, or What Connects the Polish Avant-Garde Trends?

The plein-air in Osieki were organized in the years 1963-1981. On their basis, one can trace in a kind of laboratory form, the changing trajectories of world art and its influence on Polish art. Influencing both the artistic character and the dynamics of change. The study of art presented in Osieki indicates the leading processes taking place within Polish art. The sixties influenced by post-avant-garde art and the seventies subjected to the domination of conceptual art, and the following decline of these tendencies. The line – known as the leading slogan of the plein-air in the groundbreaking year 1980, is a useful point of reference. I derive a broad interpretation of the line from the book by Wassily Kandinski *Point and line to plane*. Another, more parochial point of reference was a linear drawings by Waclaw Szpakowski, discovered at that time by Janusz Zagrodzki. In the history of Polish art, conceptualism has its sources in geometric abstraction as well as in the art of photo-film media. Art of geometric provenance has always been present in Osieki. But it was not until 1980 and 1981 that conceptual art and the art of new media took a dominant position during the plein-air. The '80 and '81 plein-air were a kind of recapitulation of the artistic debates of the 1970s over conceptual art (and at the same time became a recapitulation of the plein-air series). Their significance also lay in the fact that they took place in the context of a sharp conflict between the authorities and society, strikes in the Gdansk Shipyard and the influence of the Solidarity movement. The article is an attempt to reconstruct the artistic and political significance of the last two plein-air. In the conclusion, I propose to use the methodology of performance studies to analyze this phenomenon. Consideration of these plein-air

in connection with three types of performances: organizational, cultural and technical, allows for them to be re-adjusted to contemporary cultural reflection.

Luiza NADER

A Community of Imagination as *Dissensus*. The 8th Artists and Art Theoreticians Meeting in Świdwin/Osieki (1970)

The text aims to reflect on the meaning of artistic utterances presented at the 8th Artists and Art Theoreticians Meeting in Świdwin/Osieki, Poland, 1970 in relation to the horizon of events in Poland in 1968. I focus particularly on Jerzy Ludwiński's first lecture "Postartistic Era" and on several works by artists (such as Jan Chwałczyk, Wanda Gołkowska, Jerzy Fedorowicz, Jarosław Kozłowski, Natalia LL, etc.) who responded and interacted with the critic's lecture. I also recall the context of selected phenomena as well as social and cultural processes around the year 1968 that have proceeded and accompanied the plain-air meeting. I view the time between June 1968 - December 1970 as a particular micro-period in Polish art history that can be described as a long-term-duration structure on one hand and as bearing distinctive principles on the other. Finally, I reflect on the ensuing ideas of the Osieki plain-air meeting in 1970, especially with regard to the category on imagination. I assert that they bore not just the character of critique or contestation, but should be recognized as another, not commonly recognized in Polish art history, form of discourse of resistance – *dissensus*. In the case of the 1970 Osieki meeting, I consider the *dissensus* as a discursive disconnection of the then prevailing "distribution of the sensible", as multiple small but meaningful constellations of tactics of differentiating from the post-March 1968 world. In the case of the works presented in Osieki, *dissensus* did not rely on negation, but on the gesture of rebuilding, working with imagination which has been weakened or destroyed as a result of the events between June 1967 and August 1970.

Anna Maria LEŚNIEWSKA

Transformation of Order. Introducing the Performisation of Art at Osieki According to Jan Dobkowski

Performance actions – including the performances of Jan Dobkowski – manifested themselves as an instrument for exploring reality at the Osieki plein airs in the 1970s and 1980s, and they became an element in the fine-tuning of Dobkowski's artistic approach. His creative strategy was centred on a radical return to the rules of natural existence as a font for human emotions (and flights of emotion), the role and significance of which came to be fully appreciated by way of the neo-avantgarde shift from art to creative endeavour, what with the autotelic value of art supplanted by a showcasing of the author's own identity. Dobkowski's oft-repeated call for establishing an organic relationship to nature enabled the forging of a path meaningful enough to reorient the very sense of existence, with eutrapelia thrown in for good measure. In this context, eutrapelia is simply about the ability to have a good time, yet – even though it refers to a desire to enjoy fun and recreation while retaining a healthy balance – eutrapelia is not an end in and of itself. First and foremost, eutrapelia ought to assist in the regeneration of vital powers, which might then be tapped for pleasure, providing intellectual succor in achievement of the formulated goals/objectives. In this understanding, eutrapelia may be woven into the tropes describing the possibilities for affective transformation, contributing to a new understanding of the facetious in art on the one hand and open to new artistic procedures in the face of an indoctrinated reality on the other.

Gabriela ŚWITEK

Exhibitions. *The Plein-airs of Koszalin, 1963–1968* in the Central Bureau for Art Exhibitions

In September 1969, *The Plein-airs of Koszalin, 1963–1968* exhibition was shown at the Zachęta – Central Bureau for Art Exhibitions in Warsaw. The show gathered seventy artworks by Polish

and international artists created at the Osieki Plein-airs in the 1960s. The works belonged to the Museum of Middle Pomerania in Słupsk; today they constitute the core of the Koszalin Museum's contemporary art collection. The paper discusses some aspects of the 1969 exhibition in Warsaw as the presentation of an international art collection that was founded thanks to donations by artists participating in the Osieki Plein-airs. Analyses of the strategies of exhibition organisation and of the institutionalisation of the collection fall within the research perspectives of new museology and the history of exhibitions.

Dorota JARECKA

Small Utopia of the Avant-Garde. The Collections of both the Studio Gallery in Warsaw and Koszalin Museum Seen as Local Initiatives for the Foundation of Contemporary Art Museums in Poland

The main objective of the article is to look at two public collections of contemporary art in Poland: The Studio Gallery in Warsaw and the department of contemporary art at the Koszalin Museum. These are looked at with regard to the Avant-Garde utopia of the museum as being able to change the awareness of the masses. The collections are rooted in two main movements of modernization during the time of Communism in Poland: after the Thaw of 1956 and in the beginning of the 1970s when Edward Gierek took over. In 1963 Marian Bogusz, a painter and organizer of the Krzywe Koło Gallery in Warsaw, donated thirteen paintings of contemporary artists to the Museum in Koszalin in order to encourage local authorities to initiate a museum of contemporary art. The same year, Avant-Garde meetings (plain-airs) in neighboring Osieki began. Soon the hope of founding the museum dissipated. Yet the "Osieki collection" at the Koszalin Museum developed and today it amounts to eight hundred objects. In Warsaw Józef Szajna, who was a founder of the Studio Theatre and Gallery, started a collection of art which was defined by him as a starting point for the museum. At that time in Warsaw there was no museum of contemporary art. When

Szajna resigned in 1981, the idea of the museum was dropped, but his successors did not abandon the task of enlarging the collection. Today it comprises almost one thousand artworks. The article considers possible future scenarios for both collections that have been marginalized since the 1980s.

Elżbieta KAL

The Dialectic of Gesture. The Gift by the Krzywe Koło Gallery of Contemporary Art to the Museum in Koszalin, Held in the Collection of the Museum of Middle Pomerania in Słupsk

This text is both a presentation and an attempt at contextual analysis of paintings and works on paper donated by the Krzywe Koło Gallery in Warsaw to the forthcoming collection of modern art in Koszalin. In March 1963 Marian Bogusz, Gallery Manager donated 12 abstract paintings to the Museum in Koszalin in a gesture of acknowledgement for the established co-operation and joint organization of plein-air in the nearby seaside place of Osieki. Plein-air – 19 of which were held in total - became an opportunity to meet avant-garde artists, scientists and critics from all over Poland and abroad. The first happenings (*Panoramyczny happening morski* by Tadeusz Kantor), artistic actions and works of conceptual art came into being here, and in addition to this, lectures, confrontations and discussions were held. In December 1963 following the 1st Plein-Air in Osieki, Bogusz donated to the Museum in Koszalin another gift - 29 works on paper including artists connected with Krzywe Koło. As a result of various reorganizations and coincidences, both collections found themselves in the Museum of Middle Pomerania in Słupsk and became a part of the Department of Modern Art.

At the beginning, the author considers the significance of gesture: beyond the artistic one (e.g. courtesy) and first of all in art (“Duchamp’s gesture”, action painting which can include some of the works mentioned). Then she analyses the paintings among others by Marian Bogusz, Zbigniew Dłubak, Stefan Gierowski,

Hilary Krzysztofiak, Henryk Stażewski, Kajetan Sosnowski (and three famous Czech artists) against the background of the panorama of Polish post-war art which is also represented by the already mentioned works on paper. For example, among them there are drawings by Bogusz, Ali Bunsch, Jerzy Kujawski and Andrzej Wróblewski. Furthermore, the author discusses the significance of both gifts in the context of the modern art collections at the Museum in Słupsk, including the largest collection of masterpieces by Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz and the exhibitions where the gifts from the Krzywe Koło Gallery were displayed. At the end she expresses the hope that after the adaptation of the historic granaries is handed over to the Museum of Middle Pomerania, the most valuable works of modern art will find a decent place for permanent exhibition.

Ewa KOWALSKA and Walentyna ORŁOWSKA

Artists’ Meetings in Osieki – Art, Documentation and Reflections After Years

The International Meetings of Artists, Scientists and Art Theorists were periodically organised in Osieki near Koszalin over the years of 1963 through to 1981. As a consequence they left their mark in one way or another, on many important phenomena in 20th century Polish art. The First International Study of the Koszalin Plein Air organised in September 1963 by Marian Bogusz of Warsaw and Jerzy Fedorowicz of Koszalin was the first artistic plein air in the modern sense of the term, held in Poland after World War II. Works bequeathed by artists attending the successive Osieki sessions were earmarked for the modern art collection of the Museum in Koszalin. This began in 1963 with a gift from Marian Bogusz himself (comprising works from the Krzywe Koło Gallery). As intended by the initiators of the Osieki plein airs, these works were to become the endowment of a future Museum of Modern Art in Koszalin. Now kept at the modern art department of the Museum in Koszalin, this body of over 500 works, augmented by a compendious archive documenting the plein airs, indubitably

deserves a place among the more valuable collections of 20th century art. Within this trove, art and documentation overlap and augment one another, combining into a unique insight not only into Polish art, but also Polish art criticism and art theory in the period of 1963 to 1981.

Wojciech CIESIELSKI Has Osieki Definitely Finished?

The text presents a method to interpret the phenomena of the International Meetings of Artists, Researchers and Art Theoreticians in Osieki. This is enabled by describing several key artistic strategies and their application in later activities - as a kind of pattern and matrix for independent artistic initiatives. The presented events, which took place after 1981, after the end of Osieki, displays the power of their influence and the same recurring need lying behind the majority of similar actions, allowing for understanding of the phenomenon of specific methods used by artists organizing themselves to create situations and spaces that ensure them great freedom.

The strategies present in the functioning of Osieki, transferred in varying degrees to many initiatives of the decade of the eighties are, among others, occasional publications submitted by the participants themselves and distributed among themselves, expanding the circle of participants to include people outside the so-called art world, searching for alternative places favorable for their meetings and confrontations.

The text describes such phenomena as Private art, Pitch-in Culture, alternative places of art, artistic publications: *Fabryka*, *Tango* and independent artistic events: *Artistic Kołęda* [Christmas call] and *Pilgrimage*, Meetings in Teofilów, Meetings in Karlino. Those initiatives, as well as many others undertaken in the decade of the eighties, combined the extraordinary energy and unconventional courage of the participants. However, they were not only the result of confrontation with the political situation of that time, but also sprang from the immutable value pervading the spirit of art - the need for freedom. Presented strategies can be found in

numerous initiatives undertaken in the following decades, up to the present day.

Agnieszka POPIEL Jerzy Fedorowicz: The Rhythm of Life, the Rhythm of Time, the Rhythm of Art

In 1954 graduates of the Cracow Academy of Fine Arts – Jerzy Fedorowicz (1928– 2018) and Ludmiła Popiel (1929–1988) settled in Koszalin, a city that had been destroyed by eighty percent. They started to create an artistic environment. In a country deprived of liberty, they initiated and implemented the idea of artistic freedom – international Meetings of Artists, Critics and Theoreticians, the first of which took place in Osieki in 1963. For eighteen years, Fedorowicz was the organizer and creator of the thematic concepts and the especially important meetings. But in Osieki itself, when plain airs took place Popiel and Fedorowicz were, first and foremost, artists who belonged to the strict circle of the avant-garde and they were among the forerunners of conceptualism in Poland. They actively participated in the most significant artistic events of the sixties, seventies and eighties in Poland. The rhythm of time marked by Osieki and the rhythm of art by Fedorowicz and Popiel is not only reflected in works, and documentation, but also in notes, memories and manuscripts. Some of them will be discussed in this article.

The artists' work should be the subject of separate studies. The content of this paper concerns the role played by them as co-authors of the concept and organizers of the Osieki encounters. The text was based on conversations - fragments of memoirs of Fedorowicz recorded in recent years, as well as documentation from the artist's archive.