



Małgorzata SOBOCIŃSKA

SOWINGS BY TERESA MURAK AS A MEDIUM OF CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY IN URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

The article discusses Teresa Murak's performative actions *Procesja/ Procession* (1974) and *Zasiewy/ Sowings* in telephone booths (1990-1991), in which the artist uses the form of sowing to enter urban public space that is characteristic for her works. The performative gesture, the visibility of which manifests itself in a plant coat, leads to disorder and confrontation, thus concentrating the attention of co-participants on the female subject - the performer. Striving to break the balance allows the participants of the performance to feel that they are participating in an event that goes beyond everyday life. Such properties are also present in the ritual and celebration, to which the artist formally refers in her works. These activities are the opposite of the daily routine and are referred to as liminal events, serving the purpose of transition or change, directed not only to the experience of the

performer but also to the outside, thanks to which they gain social dimension. The performance as a medium makes possible to create a sphere of social co-participation, which I call performative space, using Erika Fisher-Lichte's concept of aesthetics of the performative. Elzbieta Matynia referring to the agonistic model of public space by Hannah Arendt, calls these common areas spaces of appearance. The perspective I propose assumes that performance contributes to being a visible and active participant of the common space, and thus to the formation of political identity. Therefore, performances can be treated as a political gesture resulting from an affective need to participate in public life and space. The juxtaposition of works made in different historical periods indicates the narration, consistently built by Murak, around a plant gown - her artistic manifesto. On the other hand, it points to significant changes that took place in the artist's creative strategy, resulting from the formation of a democratic public domain, as well as the commercialization of the artistic scene and institutions after 1989 in Poland.