

# FESTIVAL OF NAKED FORMS 2021 – INTERSPECIES NUDITY / GDANSK EXPORT

ART AND RESEARCH PROJECT



# INTRODUCTION

## Edited by Łukasz GUZEK

FNAF - Festival of Naked Forms - was held this year for the seventh time in a row in Prague, Holešovice, on the Altenburg boat in September 10-12, 2021. The idea of the festival was conceived by Lenka Klodová, artist and teacher at Brno University of Technology at the Faculty of Fine Arts (FaVU), where she runs the Body Design Studio. Klodová's practice can be called body discourse. It is being developed comprehensively in many fields: research, artistic creation and education. Her pedagogy and artistic practice assume being open to various functional aspects of the body, with particular focus on the naked body. Studies on the visual form of a naked body aim to discover and test the ways of cognition and self-cognition through one's own body. It is therefore a phenomenologically-oriented activity. However, in the special case of the artist-performer, the entire body (somatic) and mental condition is also the source of the work. Hence, a performance art work is both a visual form and a discursive form (in dialogue with its context). It is therefore a training in critical thinking about the surrounding world as an object of cognition.

In 2021, the second part of the FNAF festival took place at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, as FNAF Export, as part of the Theoria

cum Praxi of Performance Art festival held since 2018, curated by Łukasz Guzek (October 4-7, 2021). Artists from the Czech Republic, selected by Klodová, were joined by artists from Gdańsk, selected by the curator of the Gdansk festival, and Klodová conducted workshops according to her own didactic method for students of the Intermedia faculty. A conference was part of this event. According to Klodová's concept, each festival has a leading topic, general enough to be an umbrella term for many forms of artistic activity (a short history of FNAF and the titles of each edition can be found in the documentation published below). In 2021, the leading topic was "Interspecies Nudity."

The conference consisted of only five papers. However, this theoretical part should be considered in connection with the entire festival project, i.e. the performance and workshop presentations. It belonged to the type of research and artistic practice, where scientific methods coexist with artistic ones and mutually enhance their results. In the presentations, as well as in artistic works, the term „interspecies” (or „multispecies”) has been interpreted in various cultural contexts. Together, the various subjects of the works and lectures compose a panorama

# Theoria cum Praxi of Performance Art 2021

4-7 October 2021  FNAF Export Gdańsk

Performance Art Festival & Conference

Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk  
Targ Węglowy 6, 80-836 Gdansk



AKADEMIA  
Sztuki  
Piękności  
w Gdańsku



Curator: Lukasz Guzek

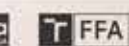
In collaboration with:  
FWF 2021 | InterSpaces Nudyty  
Curator: Lenka Kodova  
Prague, 11-12 September 2021



Ministerstwo  
Kultury



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of up-to-date cultural issues. The conference and festival took place at the Academy of Fine Arts, where nude studies are still the basis of formal artistic education. At the same time, contextually, the attitude to the issue of nudity marks the borderline of the political-social division. It points the way to the features of an open society, where acceptance of nudity is a measure of inclusiveness. Nudity is here a tool in the cultural discourse in favor of building social equality. What is social (interpersonal and group relations, political agendas and affiliations) is defined here by what is private. The un-dress code illustrates the whole set of social and political views, which was reflected in the presentations. Interspecies nudity is an aspect of this broad socio-cultural subject matter. At the same time, it is the most advanced way of political thinking and, in terms of art forms, a radical means of representation.

Jana Orlová's lecture „Interspecies in Czech visual performance” begins with the definition of the key term „visual performance,” which singles out performances by visual artists from the broader category of performance studies. In the field of visual arts, works that take the aspect of nudity in a radical way have been indicated. At the same time, these are the most radical actions in the history of Czech performance art. These inquiries support the thesis that naked form is the most radical in the development of art, especially in connection with live action. The second term defined in the paper is „interspeciesism.” Its scope of meaning includes a wide and multispectual network of relations between human and various non-human beings. Thus, in the paper opening the conference, the fields of discussion and interpretation were indicated for the subject of the festival. Also addressed is its relationship with contemporary discourses. Part of the exemplification includes the analysis of performance, both constituting the idiom of the history of contemporary Czech art, and contemporary examples. The author organized the analytical material according to three basic categories: „Human and Animal;” „Humans, plants, elements;” and „Interspecies Anthropology.” All three, as she emphasizes in the conclusion, constitute keys to the interpretation

of the present in the light of the inter or multi species, which she believes has explanatory power.

The next paper by katarzyna lewandowska (this is the author's idea to use lowercase letters in her name) entitled „Why do we need women's freedom? Feminist artistic activism against power: Anarcho-porn-resistance” took the form of a video presentation about the body and nudity used as a means of visual arts for the purposes of political struggle, here mainly for women's rights. The paper shows, however, that this subject may constitute a starting point for addressing a wide spectrum of key contemporary issues. In connection with the topic of the festival and conference, this issue is extended to include animal rights, as the same political forces do not respect the rights of women and animals. The reason for this, indicated by the author, is functioning according to the principles of the patriarchy, which is pointed out as the main source of evil in the world. Contemporary examples (from the author's own practice) and historical examples are cited as an exemplification, which proves that social change is a long process. But it also proves that this is a change in the foundations of culture. The article contains many examples of artistic actions for social change. These are inconvenient activities from the point of view of the authorities, and information about them is therefore not disseminated by them. The published descriptions and manifestos complemented the works presented at the festival very well.

The paper by Paweł Leszkowicz „Queering Interspecies in Critical Theory and Polish Performance Art” referred to the attitudes in politics towards queer minorities. Developing an effective position and program requires a deviation from traditional categories such as naturalness or humanism. The naturalistic position, which would appear to be closely related to the issue of nudity, is nevertheless used as an argument to dismiss queer minorities as unnatural. So it uses a very selective, narrow definition of nature. Humanism is also not a quite inclusive category today, as it assumes a dominant human position. Instead, the author proposes the categories of a specific ecology as „eco-erotics,”

and „interspecies intimacy” understood as emotions connecting over genre classifications. He also finds useful a postcolonial theory that talks about crossing the boundaries of exclusion. It is in this light that he interprets the queer male nudity in performance art of Krzysztof Jung and Krzysztof Malec, two Polish artists who died in the 1990s and were pioneers of the queer art of masculinity.

Marek Rogulski's presentation entitled „Protoanthropoid-Coagulation of Consciousness” had a performative character and concerned the idea developed by the artist both in his works and in theory. In his paper, after presenting the definitions of the concepts indicated in the title, taken from the discourse of science, the author moves to „transspecies politics.” He points out that body hair, i.e. the naked / clothed state in interspecies relationships, is within the 1 percent of the genetic difference between humans and chimpanzees. The naked body in this perspective is a more theoretical construct. The “proto” prefix (core) suggests the deep origin of our self, which is represented by our activity (art) to materialize (visualize) expressions. So any controversy about nudity and the body arises from the state of consciousness. The article deals with the thesis about the impact of the naked body on the efficiency of the relationship of people with the world.

At the end of the conference part of the festival, Lenka Klodová gave a lecture entitled „Who are the Czech Nudes?” In her paper, as the creator of the idea and the curator of the festival, she considers the cultural sources of nudity in Czech art. And she found origins in the discourse of nudity in the 15th-century Reformation-era religious movement, the Adamites, who briefly functioned in Southern Bohemia. Their religious premise was to function naked on a daily basis. The thesis of the article is that after the Adamites were massacred, every one of them was killed, nudity was excluded from public discourse in Czech (Bohemia) and the Czech Republic too. Until the establishment of the FNAF festival. The idea of nudity was continued on a daily basis in the Freikörperkultur (FKK) movement in Germany. Although the festival refers to many aspects of

nudity, it is precisely these broad approaches to nudity that make it a universal topic in the sense of a point of reference for numerous life practices (ethics). In the structure of the festival, as described in her article, there are sections such as FNAF Escort and FNAF Fashion referring to the commercial use of the naked body in liberal politics and the economy.

Through the festival, Klodová consciously reflects the culture of the Czech Republic. Since we share certain cultural aspects, resulting from the historical heritage of Soviet totalitarianism, but also from the previous experience of the cosmopolitan Habsburg Monarchy, we can project the festival's ideas across the entire region of Central Europe. One could say that this is a Central European nudity festival. And although such a regional focus is not the first assumption of the festival, it reflects a regional cultural discourse in which the naked body allows us to tackle many common issues.