

CONTEMPORARY MUSEUMS: SPACE FOR ART, EDUCATION AND CYBERCULTURAL EXPERIMENTS

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Modern museums, actively responding to socio-cultural challenges and transformations, are becoming a space for artistic, educational and cybercultural experiments. These trends are traced in museums activities in Odesa city (Ukraine). In cooperation with the Odesa National Polytechnic University, the museums not only introduce creative and marketing innovations into their work, but also engage in scientific and theoretical comprehension of the processes taking place in art, education, urban cultural environment, cyber culture, etc. Involvement of the University students into joint projects allows to expand the scope of the education, as well as to form necessary competencies among future professionals in culture studies, museum studies, and exhibitions.

KEYWORDS: *art, experiment, museums of Odesa, education, cooperation of the University with museums.*

1. Introduction

Scientific discourse of the issues of experiment in the contemporary art

The art culture of the beginning of the XXI century is accompanied by the emergence of a new concept of "contemporary art" – which is adequate to the time dynamics, and based mainly on the experimental activity. There is a shift in emphasis in comprehension of the creative act and its results in the classical paradigm of the art as a craft to the art, whose purpose is the experiment. The very process of perception and understanding of the experimental art is complicated by its balancing between the creative freedom and engagement on the part of society, the market, and politics. To understand the essence of this transformation, to identify the structural elements of contemporary art, possibly by systematizing and analyzing the processes of modern visual culture, including artistic processes taking place on the periphery.

The issues and specifics of the experimental contemporary creativity (even before a term "actual art" was included into the scientific vocabulary, the formation of this term is a subject for a specific study) were actualized in the philosophical, cultural and art history aspects.

For example, one of the leading German modern philosophers W. Welsh in his study "Our Postmodern Modern" analyzing the modernity critically, drew attention to its negative aspects: superficiality and shortsightedness. Parallels can be drawn between W. Welsh's concept of "the practice of plurality" and "the experimentation of contemporary art" (Welsch, Wolfgang, 2002).

French philosopher J.-F. Lyotard in his "The Answer to Question: What is the Postmodernity?" was engaged in the study of an experimental project of the present, a project aimed at the future [Lyotard, Jean-Francois, 1979].

German thinker, the opponent of J.-F. Lyotard, Y. Habermas in his study "Postmetaphysical Thinking" referring to the blurring of lines in modern culture between

philosophy, science and art, putting forward the concepts of "blind discourse", "gambling" as the basis, explores the experiment of interpenetration of various spheres of human intellectual activity [Habermas, Jürgen. 1992].

Slovenian philosopher and culturologist Slavoj Žižek, in his fundamental work "The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Center of Political Ontology", analyzed the experiment of modern culture, as a man's life with decentralization of the spheres of his existence [Žižek, Slavoj, 1999].

American literary critic F. Jameson in his "Postmodernism or the logic of the culture of the recent capitalism" explored the modern postmodern paradigm and place of the contemporary art [Jameson, Fredric. 1991].

Writer, publicist, art theorist B. Groys dealt with issues of finding criteria for the contemporary art in "What is Contemporary Art?" [Гройс, Б., 1997].

The famous Russian curator, editor-in-chief of the "Khudozhestvenny zhurnal" V. Misiano, in his article "Party as a Sociocultural Phenomenon", analyzed a birth of the experimental art within the boundaries of the "tusovka" [Мизиано, В.А. 2002].

The Ukrainian artist, founder and head of the Institute of Contemporary Art V. Sidorenko, in his monography "Visual art from avant-garde movements to new directions: development of the visual art of Ukraine in XX-XXI centuries" observed the evolution of the modern Ukrainian art, focusing on its experimental essence [Сидоренко, В.Д. 2008].

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ISSUE

Thus, it can be stated that there is a change of emphasis from the act of creating a work to experiment in the contemporary visual arts. In the classical avant-garde and recent conceptual art, where there were no "things", i.e. the work as a product of intellectual consumption by society, the emphasis was still on the final result, or on the illusion of this result, or on the illusion of the act of creating a work. In this case, an experiment in the visual arts is not a creation, but is something "raw" ambiguous, denying any probability of being included in any traditions and structures.

Those and many other theoretical issues related to the experiment in contemporary art are discussed at scientific conferences that the Department of Culturology, Art History and Philosophy of Culture of the Odesa National Polytechnic University jointly conducts with the museums of the city of Odesa (Ukraine). Initiator of the conferences is an employee of the Department, a famous Odesa artist, a member of the Union of Artists of Ukraine, Ms Olena Shchokina.

In 2011, the conference "Museums and Galleries in Urban Culture: History and Modernity" was held, launching a series of scientific forums of an interdisciplinary nature. The purpose of the conference was to attract researchers and practicing professionals from various fields of scientific knowledge (culture studies, art history, philosophy, history, etc.) to discuss the role and place of museums in the space of modern urban culture.

In 2012, the conference "Discourse of Body in the European Culture" was accompanied by an exhibition of student works "Notes in Margins", which was organized at the Odesa Museum of Modern Art.

At international scientific conferences "Artist and Museum: Ways of Interaction" (2013) and "Is Everything Allowed for Art?" (2015), a discussion began about prospects for the art development in the XXI century, about boundaries of permissiveness in the art, about role of the art in modern cultural, social and artistic contexts. Within the framework of those conferences, joint exhibitions of paintings by students and professional artists

were also held, who presented a project "Do I have the right?"

Problem of bias in the contemporary art and attempts of its philosophical interpretation were discussed at the conference "Politics and Philosophy. The Destiny of Art in the XXI Century" held in 2014

The aim of the scientific conference "Issues of Cultural Identity in Contemporary Art and Museum Practice" (2016) was to analyze the artistic and stylistic dominant as an integral part of the identity formation process, a search for national identity in the art, theoretical and practical tools for researching the issue of identity in contemporary art and culture studies.

Despite the variety of topics announced for discussion at the mentioned above conferences, a topic on the experiment in the art remained a priority. After all, if we proceed from the fact that any art is always an experiment, then what are the features of contemporary experimental art? This question remains relevant for scientific theoretical discourse.

While theoretical researchers are trying to comprehend the phenomenon of experiment in contemporary art, practicing artists continue to experiment. Art centers, galleries and museums of contemporary art become a space for their experiments.

In this regard, the modern experimental art of Odesa looks especially bold, combining harmoniously traditions of the classical avant-garde and innovations of a megalopolis, endlessly striving in their artistic environment for experiment.

3.METHODOLOGY

Experimental art in the space of Odesa museums and galleries

At the end of the XX century, the contemporary art was the most clearly manifested in activities of the experimental by its essence Center for Contemporary Art in Odesa, funded by creative grants from the Soros Center. For some time the Centre was supervised by the well-known figure of contemporary art M. Gelman. The artist A. Royburt, the art researcher and art critic M. Rashkovetsky, the journalist F. Kohrikht took direct part in the Center's work.

In the period of 2000 - 2011, in Odesa, along with the previously existing exhibition spaces (exhibition halls of Odesa museums, an exhibition complex at the Sea Port premises, art galleries "Liberty" and "White Moon", exhibition halls of the Odesa organization of the Union of Artists of Ukraine) a number of new galleries were opened, focusing on the commercial success of new art, and setting themselves educational goals (NT-art; Art Center at Pushkinskaya, 32; Khudpromo; Yatlo; Norma and others). Some of the above galleries existed for a relatively short time, for example, the galleries "Norma" and "Yatlo".

However, during a short period of their existence, they played a significant role in the popularization of contemporary art. We list the most significant actions in the Yatlo gallery, curated by the artists E. Yatlo, V. Kozhukhar. For the presentation of the gallery, the curators chose a retrospection or "the family album" of Mike Henz: a performance artist, video artist, musician and gastro lover. Later, there was held an exhibition of a famous Moscow artist, honored worker of postmodernism and master of psychedelic realism, - A. Nasonov.

Gallery "Yatlo" returned to the cultural vocabulary a concept of "transavant-garde", presenting an exhibition of the artist and writer Elena Nekrasova. An interesting

project by the Odesa artist Miroslav Kulchitsky "Screens". Miroslav Kulchitsky experiments with various types of contemporary art (video, installation, photography, multimedia, intermedia projects). The main idea of the project is a social integration of art, focusing on the problems that concern people "here and now".

Activities of the gallery Norma, curated by the Odesa artist I. Gusev, was distinguished by a special radicalism and, in fact, continued a tradition of the so-called apartment and basement exhibitions. The most striking projects of the gallery: A. Venetsky "BAKHCHEBUK", "Fried Kittens", Igor Brutalinsky (Albania) "Shaggy Hat".

In 2009, the Odesa Museum of Contemporary Art was opened, having based on a private collection of works by artists of the second half of the XX century M. Knobel.

The phrase "museum of the contemporary art", being paradoxical, can also be viewed as an experiment. It is an experiment driven by a need to bridge a gap between the past and the future.

"The past is the fate of a museum, and, getting into the past, no revolutionary gesture may claim to exist in the future, it is mechanically removed from the time flow," wrote Arkady Ippolitov in his essay "The Emptied Time". It is impossible to create a museum of the future, as it will immediately turn into a museum of ideas about the future, characteristic of a certain period of time.

Museum, mausoleum, morgue, cemetery, the embodiment of the tyranny of time, which cannot be avoided. Any coup, any revolution, once it gets there, turns into a storage unit. The way out of this impasse was the idea of creating a museum of the contemporary art". Arkady Ippolitov considers the attempts of contemporary art museums to avoid becoming a "document of the past" as naive. "The idea of creating a museum of contemporary art contains a childish conviction that by calling itself "modern", the museum will never turn into a collection of facts from the cultural past. Alas, the battle against time is like Don Quixote's fight with mills. Any work created today, tomorrow will turn into what was created yesterday, and go into the area of the memory." (Ипполитов, А. 2008).

But contemporary art museums, like all other contemporary museums, are no longer just collections of artifacts, but arenas for experiments. Other words, museums not only store works of experimental art, but they themselves are constantly experimenting: developing new approaches to organizing exhibitions, looking for additional forms of communication between the museum and visitors, etc.

4.FUNCTIONALISM IN PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

Experimental practices of Odesa museums

Odesa museums, traditionally focused on the preservation, study and popularization of the cultural heritage, are increasingly bringing an experimental component into their work. These museums include the Odesa Art Museum, Museum of Western and Eastern Art, Literature Museum, Bleschunov Odesa Municipal Museum of Personal Collections, Museum of the Ukrainian Navy and others.

Their experiment is aimed at the development of many forms of research and educational work: the development of new principles of exposure (multimedia, nonlinearity), the introduction of new types of work with the audience, which are ultimately aimed at attracting the viewer.

In addition to the Night of Museums action, which has already become

traditional for many museums around the world, Odesa museums are developing their own unique projects.

For example, since April 1, 1995 the Odesa Literary Museum presents its "Garden of Sculptures". The open-air exposition features small bronze sculptures depicting popular heroes of the Odesa literature and folklore. "The Sculptures Garden of the Odesa Literary Museum is a phenomenon that has no analogues," the Museum personnel proudly wrote in the book "Museum workers laugh". Literary heroes and iconic figures of urban folklore, beloved by the townspeople, converged in this lovely corner for temperamental conversations about the past and present of Odesa.

The Sculptures Garden conveys the unique look of Odesa, standing on the ancient land, but invariably young, a city that has absorbed the traditions of great cultures and illuminated them with a sunny smile [Музейщики смеются, 2007].

This project allowed not only to expand the museum space, but also to strengthen its communicative, interactive component.

It is this component that has become relevant for museums in the recent years, which have to respond to crisis challenges of the nowadays: the financial and economic crisis, social transformations, a shift in cultural paradigms, etc. In these conditions, museums have to solve not only the problem of conformity to modern sociocultural content, but also to look for new forms of presentation of this content.

One of such forms is a theatricalization of the museum's communicative space. "Today, the situation in the art in general, and particularly in museum practice (lack of government funding, outflow of the public, depletion of funds) forces museum workers to introduce new forms that are able to turn a contact of a viewer with the exposition into communication of an eventful nature," noted Anatoly Bakanursky. "This often leads to transformation of a traditional exhibition space into a stage in which a collection, museum personnel and spectators create a collective actor" [Баканурский, А.Г., 25-27 квітня 2013 р].

At the moment, there are two forms of the museum space theatricalization: theatrical excursions and museum / theater performance. Such practices are complemented by works of fiction that have a museum theme [Прокопович, Л.В., 2014]

The link "museum - literature" is being updated not only on the basis of literature museums. Museums of other specialties also turn to the literary heritage to attract the visitors [Prokopovich, L. 2013].

For example, in 2007 the Bleschunov Odesa Municipal Museum of Personal Collections created an exhibition dedicated to the works of Alan Alexander Milne "Winnie-the-Pooh" and "The House at Pooh Corner". The authors of this project sought to immerse visitors in the atmosphere of their favorite book, in childhood memories. Almost all of the items, not very valuable, but very attractive, could be touched by hands. Visitors could even sit down at the table and play "tea party" with a teddy bear, or draw their favorite characters.

Experimental projects of this museum also include a creation of the first museum board game "Collect a Collection, Create a Museum", which the staff presented in 2019.

Such experiments are targeted at overcoming the audience syndrome of passivity by including them in the process of independent formation of the cultural meanings. The result of those experiments is the combination of such forms as "museum-collection", "museum-event", "museum-theater", "museum-idea" in a new metaphor and "museum-

information-semantic field" [Прокопович, Л.В. 2019].

Students of the Odesa National Polytechnic University, who are mastering the profession of a culturologist, become active participants in many museum experiments.

5. Results and discussion

Museum experiments in the system of the professional training for culture studies

The Department of Culture Study, Art History and Philosophy of Culture of the Odesa National Polytechnic University, give a priority to the cooperation with museums in the course of preparation of bachelors and masters in the specialty "Culture Studies". After all, a modern museum is the most convenient platform for creative and educational experiments, a space where knowledge about the past and present is combined with the orientation towards the future.

The education course in cooperation with museums, galleries and art centers involves not only study tours, but also the active participation of students in research and creative projects.

One of the forms of joint activity of the Department of Culture Study, Art History and Philosophy of Culture with the museums of Odesa is the organization of field excursions, plein-air, master classes by famous artists and photographers. Such meetings can be spontaneous and thematic (for example, "Lighthouse in art", "Ecology of the Odesa region").

One of the formats of such activity is attracting students to the international project "Art Tourism". Within the framework of this project, students participate in plein-air, where they create their own works of painting, photography, computer graphics. Their works are exhibited together with works of Odesa artists at various exhibition sites. For example, such an exhibition was organized by the curator of the Art Tourism project Galina Lekareva-Nikitina in the K. Paustovsky Library and the I. Franko Library.

In addition, the participation of students in this project is part of an experiment conducted by a teacher Tatyana Ovcharenko as an integral part of the education programme. The experiment is carried out in several stages. At the first stage, first-year students visit museums during excursions, get acquainted with various types of museums. At the second stage, third-year students undergo practical training at one of the museums, performing creative tasks, observations and experiments. At the third stage, students of master's training independently try themselves as exhibitions' curators and organizers, participate in organization and conduct of plein air. One of results of this project was issuing the educational and methodological manual "The Traveller Guide in Ukraine" [Овчаренко. 2019]. The project participated in the competition for a grant from HBCE in 2019-2020.

Another experiment, which allows to combine the students' education and exhibition activities is conducted by a teacher Lada Prokopovych on the basis of the International Exhibition "Jewelry Salon". Within the exhibition framework, a competition of sketches of jewelry "Got an idea!" is held annually. Under the guidance of L. Prokopovych, students apply to this competition by submitting their sketches. In 2018, they presented the following projects: the Oceania brooch (Irina Mikhailova), the Sky Lace necklace (Alena Shevchuk, Irina Oleshchuk), the Koi Carp pendant (Anastasiya Shyntar) and others. The essence of this educational experiment is that students can develop some creative, communicative, cultural and organizational competencies in a real

project mode, in a real exhibition activity.

Another area of cooperation with museums is the digitalization of museum exhibits and information. In 2018, the Ukrainian-German AR Summer School was held at the Institute of Computer Systems of the Odesa Polytechnic University. The idea for this School belongs to HTW Berlin Professor Jürgen Sieck. The task was to develop a program using 3D space modeling (creation of augmented reality). One of the teams developed an idea proposed by Maksim Lungulenko, master of the Department of Culturology, Art History and Philosophy of Culture, "Muzeum Catalog". The Ukrainian modernists' exhibition "Odesa-Kiev", presented by the Kiev Art Fund and the Odesa Museum of Modern Art, was described and digitized by the team within five days. Pointing a smartphone camera to an exhibition item opens up an opportunity to learn almost everything about the painting and its author: from the time of creation to the peculiarities of the execution technique.

Another area of cyber culture that allows the museum, leisure and digital technologies to be combined is the creation of computer games and the conduct of virtual quests in the museum space. For example, you can offer the player to collect a virtual collection of items that they can find during their visit to the museum. An example of such a game already exists - Fallout III (Action / RPG genre). The game features two locations - museums. The player should locate a museum in the city, explore it and find the artifacts to continue the mission. There are two museums in the game: Technical and Historical (*Museum of Technology*. 2021). Our department develops the idea of a computer game on the basis of the museum of the Odesa Polytechnic University. This game is conceived as educational, allowing you to study not only the history of the university, but also the history of the development of science and technology in general.

In this case, such a combination of a virtual game and real visit to the museum not only improves communication skills, but also stimulates cognitive and creative activity, and makes it possible to actualize the cultural heritage.

6. Conclusions

Analysis of modern museum practices allows to say that museums are actively turning into sites for a wide variety of experiments: art, theatrical, educational, cybercultural, etc. Museums are becoming the centers for creating a space where not only the cultural heritage (material and spiritual) is preserved, but also new ideas are constantly generated and embodied, and current discourses of art, education, science, and cyberculture develop.

Obviously, this requires a more detailed philosophical and cultural comprehending. But it is already becoming clear that museums, as a socio-cultural institution, are ready to respond to the cardinal changes observed in society and in the modern cultural context.

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