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## **MODERN ART IN A CONTEXT OF EXHIBITION ART-KYIV CONTEMPORARY**

The article is about contemporary art and it's historical and art valid. How can be the contemporary art be written into history? Is the notion of "contemporary art history" or a "history of contemporary art" a contradiction in terms? This article accepts the challenge of exploring the complexities both of contemporary art as a now "historical" phenomenon (as the years between "now" and 1985 expand in number) and of contemporary art as potentially the cutting edge of what people calling themselves artists (or understood by others as such) are making and doing in this increasingly complex and globalized economy of cultural practices. And of course for better understanding there is an investigation of the big exhibition Art-Kyiv Contemporary 2015.

*Keywords:* culture, Art-Kyiv, contemporary, forum, Mystetskyi Arsenal, dialogia.

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### **Сучасне мистецтво на прикладі виставки Арт-Київ 2015**

У статті розкриваються основні питання сучасного мистецтва, історичної і мистецької спадщини: як сучасне мистецтво може бути вписане та інтегроване в історію? Чи існує поняття "сучасне мистецтвознавство" або "історія сучасного мистецтва"? Стаття також вивчає складність сучасного мистецтва як "історичного" явища. Досліджується сучасне мистецтво та творчість художників, які працюють та живуть в умовах економічної і культурної глобалізації. Для кращого розуміння дослідження проводиться на прикладі виставки сучасного мистецтва Арт-Київ 2015.

*Ключові слова:* культура, Арт-Київ, сучасність, форум, Мистецький Арсенал, діалогія.

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### **Современное искусство на примере выставки Арт-Киев 2015**

В статье раскрываются основные вопросы современного искусства, исторического и художественного наследия: Как современное искусство может быть вписано и интегрировано в историю? Существует ли понятие "современного искусствоведения" или "история современного искусства"? Статья также изучает сложность современного искусства как "исторического" явления. Исследуется современное искусство и творчество художников, которые работают и живут в условиях экономической и культурной глобализации. Для лучшего понимания исследование проводится на примере выставки современного искусства Арт-Киев 2015.

*Ключевые слова:* культура, Арт-Киев, современность, форум, диалогия.

What does it mean to be contemporary? This is a pressing question about how one might live now as well as a continuing inquiry into what kind of modernity is most suitable to present circumstances. Indeed, in many parts of the world – notably much of Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East – posing it hastens responses to the challenges of contemporary life. It is, therefore, a question for the world. How does this kind of questioning manifest itself in contemporary art?

A useful starting point is to acknowledge that the concept of contemporaneity has much greater potential than the mindless up-to-dateness that attends the word "contemporary" in much ordinary language and art-world usage. The etymology of the word itself is helpful in this regard. The Oxford English Dictionary's four definitions, for example, bespeak a multiplicity of ways of being in time, and of so existing with others – who may share something of our own temporality but may also live, contemporaneously, in distinct temporalities of their own (and thus share a sense of the strange-ness of being in time, now). This is to understand particular contemporaneity to mean the immediacy of difference. "Difference" is understood in three strong senses: difference in and of itself; difference to proximate others; and difference within oneself. To be contemporary, then, is to live in the thickened present in ways that acknowledge its transient aspects, its deepening density, and its implacable presence.

What might be said of contemporaneity in a more general or historical sense? In the Oxford dictionary, the word "contemporaneity" is defined, simply, as "a contemporaneous state or condition," one that could, of course, occur at any place or time, and be experienced by individuals, groups, and entire social formations. Yet

if we read this word through the richness we now see in "contemporary," we recognize its potential to name a broad, worldwide situation, the most definitive characteristic of which is the experience – at once subjective and objective, individual yet shared, entirely particular while being inescapable for all – of being immersed, to an unprecedented degree, in a world marked by an unprecedented diversity and depth of difference.

Modernity is now our past. It is considered how the current world picture has changed in the aftermath of the Cold War stalemate. As the system built on First, Second, Third, and Fourth world divisions imploded, what new arrangements of power have come into being? The reconstruction of an idea of Europe promises to contain its warring nationalities, or, at least, disperse disruption to its borders, yet it faces fundamental transformation from within as previously colonized peoples move to its centers and diversify its national cultures. Decolonization has opened up Africa, spawning hybrid nation-states that in most cases have failed to reconcile the interests of elites, international economic agents, and the variety of tribal peoples artificially contained within outdated borders. In Asia, a number of "tiger economies" revived the dream of modernity-for-all by intense, high-speed modernizations. China has emerged to superpower economic and political status, driven by arrangements between a centralized state and free-market economic players that would have been inconceivable in modernity. In South America the era of revolution versus dictatorship led first to the imposition of neoliberal economic regimes and then to a continent-wide swing toward populist socialism. Meanwhile, the United States' attempts to rule as the world's only hyper power have spectacularly and destructively imploded, while its patterns of internal governance fall into divisive paralysis. The Middle East is aflame with protest against autocracy, corruption, and servile dependence. The post-1989 globalizing juggernaut – unchecked neoliberalism, historical self-realization, and the worldwide distribution of ever-expanding production and consumption – is disintegrating.

What all of these changes have in common, both within each sphere and as a whole, is the contemporaneity of lived difference, the coexistence of incommensurable viewpoints, and the absence of an encompassing narrative that will enlist the participation of all. In this sense, contemporaneity itself is the most evident attribute of the current world picture, encompassing its most distinctive qualities, from the interactions between humans and the geosphere, through the multitude of cultures and the ideoscape of global politics to the interiority of individual being. This picture can no longer be adequately characterized by terms such as "modernity" and "postmodernity," not least because it is shaped by friction between antinomies so intense that it resists universal generalization; indeed, it resists even generalization about that resistance. It is, nonetheless, far from shapeless. Within contemporaneity, it seems to me, three sets of forces contend, arrayed like a three-dimensional chess game, with moves on each board incessantly shifting pieces on the others.

Dominating the first, geopolitical and economic level is globalization itself, above all its thirsts for hegemony in the face of increasing cultural differentiation (released by decolonization); for control of time relative to the proliferation of asynchronous temporalities; and for continuing exploitation of natural and (to a degree not yet imagined) virtual resources against the increasing evidence of the inability of those resources to sustain this exploitation. On the second level, that of societal formations (citizenship, governmentality, local politics), the inequity between peoples, classes, and individuals is now so blatant that it threatens both the desires for domination entertained by states, ideologies, and religions and persistent dreams of liberation. Thirdly, on the level of culture, where selves are formed vis-à-vis others, we are all increasingly subject to what be called immediation – that is, we are immersed in an infoscape (a spectacularized society, an image economy, a regime of representation) – capable of instant communication of all information and any image anywhere. This economy, or the entire global communication system, is constantly fissured by the activities of highly specialist, closed knowledge communities, open, volatile subjects, rampant popular fundamentalisms and anxious state apparatuses, even as it remains heavily mediated from above.

Globalization, free market economies, centralized states, international arrangements, nongovernmental agencies, legal or shadow economies, cooperation between dissident movements – none of these "global players" seem capable, singly or in concert, of keeping these antinomies in productive tension. This is especially disabling at a time when climate change signals that the implicit ecological contract between human development and the earth's natural evolution might have been broken. Planetary consciousness, and planetary action, has become the most pressing necessity of our contemporary situation.

In Ukraine contemporary art became very popular too. There are lots of modern exhibitions and even biennales exists. The greatest event of contemporary art in Ukraine in 2015 was the art projects forum "X Art-Kyiv Contemporary 2015" that was on September, 22 – October, 10 and took place in National Art and Culture Museum Complex "Mystetskyi Arsenal"

From 22nd September to 10th October Mystetskyi Arsenal was hosted the annual Art-Kyiv Contemporary Art Projects Forum. It was the 10th consecutive year when Art-Kyiv Contemporary demonstrated processes happening in modern art in Ukraine, and thus became an indicator of dominant tendencies and themes. Annually presented the current state of creative research and findings, today Art-Kyiv – is a space for an artistic communication, discussions, researches, exchange and education. Having changed its format from the commercial exhibition to a forum of project expression a couple of years ago, Art-Kyiv became mobile not only by attracting new participants but also regarding to an opportunity to present projects with relevant components, experiments, and extensive media capabilities.

Special Project Dialogia. Ukrainian art in times with no name Dialogia represented the current state of Ukrainian art. This is an attempt in capturing the changes, that happened in the national society and art as a result of traumatic transformations in recent years. An ordinary state of affairs has been disturbed, while the new state of society between peace and war has no final definition. We still do not venture to name those changes and allow ourselves to give this epoch a definition that became common for art – 'Untitled'.

The majority of the works were created in a "work in progress" mode – exclusively for the Mystetskyi Arsenal exhibition. This large-scale project occupied an unusual location – the second floor of the art and culture museum complex. An alternative exposition route contrasts with the familiar idea of the Arsenal's topography and leads to new forms of perceptions of the artistic project as a total installation where the autonomous of artists from different generations, regions, technological and generic preferences form a common space of dialog concerning the most pressing social and personal narratives. The aura of the art workshop with its intimacy and yet with the spirit of the never-ending experiment is to become the main overtone of the project.

The Special Project "Museum Collection. Ukrainian contemporary art 1985-2015 from private collections". 40 largest Ukrainian collectors presented the best pieces of their collections from more than 70 artists.

This special project was formed from the works, which have been provided for the exhibition by more than 40 largest Ukrainian collectors. The selection of the most iconic works from the private collections was presented a cross section of the Ukrainian art of the second half of the 1980s until nowadays. The collectors contribution in the context of preservation of works of art is difficult to overestimate, at the same time their demonstration in the public space remains of considerable significance – the contemplation and understanding of the art works ceases to be a collector's exclusive right, and becomes public.

The discussion platform was an attempt to talk about Ukrainian contemporary art in the conditions of inability to fully embrace the importance of today's events gave rise to a new broader question regarding the connection of art and time. In the context of an appeal to the images of collective and individual appears yet another question of rethinking the past in creative quests of some of the Ukrainian artists. At the same time, this tendency has another dimension to itself – an official request for a new canon formation by means of revision of Ukrainian art of XX century. How does the search for definition of art happens today and how does its function get determined? Who gets the right to name and form the definitions? The discussion platform format – is an attempt to articulate answers to these and other questions.

The Discussion Platform – was a series of public meetings with contemporary Ukrainian artists and cultural figures that took place in a form of open discussions with the Art-Kyiv Contemporary curators.

Also there is no necessary connection between art and popular culture. But beginning in the nineteenth century, and with ever-greater urgency from the 1920s on, critics have insistently connected the two, usually by opposition. Art has come to be defined as that which is not popular culture. Arguably, the very idea of popular culture serves to differentiate "what, at any time, counts as an elite cultural activity or form, and what does not."<sup>1</sup> While it is open to debate when exactly this logic of opposition was initiated, it took on a peculiarly charged importance in discussions about art in twentieth-century Europe and North America. For American critics such as Clement Greenberg, writing in 1939, art was the polar opposite of mass-produced "kitsch," or popular visual culture, the latter exemplified by the covers produced by Norman Rockwell for the Saturday Evening Post. By posing this opposition, Greenberg defended avant-garde art as the site of the survival of elite cultural values, threatened on all sides by the forces of capitalism and commodification.

From today's vantage point, however, things look a little different. Rockwell has been the subject of major art museum surveys without art ceasing to exist. Indeed, in many ways one could argue that art is now a type of popular culture, with the ever-expanding global "art world" developing new biennales and periodicals at break-neck speed. The most widely circulated explanation for this state of affairs is that modern art of the kind being promoted by Greenberg failed its mission, leaving way for the incursions of the market to commodify contemporary art. In this chapter, I will suggest instead that this transformation of art into mass culture expresses what was really at stake in the hierarchical tension between art and popular culture – the maintenance of a certain view of history.

In broadening that view to include those formerly excluded from it, the art/ popular culture debate comes to seem anachronistic.

In the classic Marxist view, history was a forward-marching dialectical struggle between opposed interests. As Greenberg and others deployed Karl Marx's model of history in exploring artistic developments in the twentieth century, the triumph of popular culture over high art could only be viewed negatively as part of the victory of capitalism over socialism. For all the apparent evidence to support this view, it is based on a set of presumptions about the nature of history, the vital role of America in that history, and the place of culture (popular or otherwise) as its barometer. History was presumed to be a narrative with a beginning, middle, and end like other stories. This particular story that of capitalism, was presumed to be reaching its end. America was home to the highest form of capitalism and therefore, following Marx, it would be the place where capitalism would be brought down.

According to Greenberg, high culture was the place within the capitalist system where proper values could be safeguarded for the future, while popular culture was the mass-produced, anaesthetized, and de-based version of art that constantly threatened to overwhelm it. Such anxieties about popular culture began to wane for artists and critics in the generation following Greenberg's. In the 1960s a diametrically opposed view claimed that popular culture was in fact the place of resistance to capitalism. In this view, now known as

cultural studies, the democratic and democratizing forms and practices of popular culture promised to secure a form of socialism. As Stuart Hall famously wrote in 1981: "Popular culture is one of the sites where this struggle for and against a culture of the powerful is engaged. It is not a sphere where socialism, a socialist culture – already fully formed – might be constituted. That is why 'popular culture' matters. Otherwise, to tell you the truth, I don't give a damn about it." Whether Hall really subscribed to such Marxist shibboleths or not, his exploration of cultural studies, including a broader understanding of literary and visual culture that embraced texts and images in the mass media and a critical awareness of the legacies of colonialism, led him and others associated with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham to the realization that history did not necessarily march forward and that European "high" culture could no longer be privileged as the endpoint of cultural development.

While cultural studies thus reexamined and reconceived popular culture in terms of its role in constructing racial, gender, and sexual identities, postmodern art discourse (including art making, art criticism, art history, and exhibition practices) began to engage in a new dialogue with popular culture. But for all its claims to radical rethinking, postmodern visual arts discourse all too often replicated the sense that America, and New York City in particular, was the necessary epicenter of art and culture. Paradoxically, then, just as Euro-American culture became increasingly intertwined with global flows and movements, the emergence of an international art world (comprised of all the discourses noted above) emerged to contain those energies.

This chapter will engage with this recent history of art and popular culture, dwelling at a series of key intersections without pretending to present a comprehensive picture of this relationship. Beginning by contrasting Greenberg's negative views about popular culture, as articulated in his 1939 essay, with Walter Benjamin's enthusiasm about the early cartoons of Walt Disney in the 1930s, the chapter goes on to explore the experimental fusion of aspects of modernist style and method with popular imagery in the work of Andy Warhol and other artists of the 1960s, a fusion that at the time seemed to bring this debate to an end. Yet, I will contend, this insular exchange was displaced and transformed under the influence of decolonization to an exploration of ethnicity in and as popular culture. Following Hall's lead, the chapter will thus conclude by exploring the intersection of art and popular culture in African and African American art.

Situationist theorist Guy Debord's analysis in his 1967 book *The Society of the Spectacle* is a rich account of the image within a capitalist economy of production and exchange. For Debord the reified image is a part of a larger phenomenon – the spectacle. The spectacle is, while an image, also a symptom of the alienation that it seeks to conceal. Insisting on the politics of the artifact, Debord repeatedly warns that the spectacle – those images produced by and for capitalist profit – erodes and feeds on authentic experience. To complicate this, he warns the naïve viewer against conceiving of the spectacle as merely an image, noting that the spectacle is not an image (or images) but an "affirmation of appearance and an affirmation of all human life, namely social life, as mere appearance." Consequently, separation "has become visible." This appearance, this visible form is, however, illusory; it is the separation (negation) of life experience. Ultimately, what the spectacle "achieves is nothing but an official language of universal separation."

Debord employs a dialectical method in order to demonstrate that the spectacle conceals the social relations that comprise it. In doing so, *The Society of the Spectacle* operates as a manual for reading the spectacle against itself. Although the spectacle – in toto – cannot be seen, it can be apprehended by attending to the shape it sculpts out. Like the glacier around which a rock bed forms, the spectacle forces space and time to take shape around what it alienates. For instance, Debord notes that "capitalist production has unified space, which is no longer bounded by external societies." For Debord, the unification of space is exemplified by the growing tourism industry, which, while promising to unite territories and cultures, equates diverse geographic sites. The spectacle manifests itself in terms of time as well. As opposed to cyclical-mythical or linear-progressive temporality, time is experienced in the age of the spectacle as historical stasis. The spectacle erases "the historical time involved in traversing cultures" while exhibiting "pseudo cyclical time" which, as a form of postmodern ritualism, "is in fact merely a consumable disguise of the commodity-time of production."

Besides his polemical exhortations against the spectacle, Debord advocates an appropriative strategy that seeks to get under its skin, to unearth its possibilities while also accounting for the politics of the artifact. The situations theory of *détournement* is an appropriate point of departure for considering this approach. *Détournement* is the appropriation of "pre-existing aesthetic elements. The integration of past or present artistic production into a superior construction of a milieu." In "Methods of *Détournement*" (1956), Debord and Gil Wolman note that the purpose of *détournement* is to prove the "impossibility for power to totally recuperate created meanings, to fix an existing meaning once and for all." In this way, *détournement* aspires to nothing more than to speak its own contingency in order to reveal the contingency of the spectacle as well.

In the *Society of the Spectacle*, Debord describes *détournement* (here translated as "diversion") similarly, as a resistant strategy "that cannot be confirmed by any former or supra-critical reference. Diversion has grounded its cause on nothing external to its own truth as present critique." Yet, here, as opposed to in his earlier text, Debord emphasizes the emancipatory potential of appropriation. While the spectacle's function is "to make history forgotten in culture" and to "congeal time," *détournement* provides a way to re-discover "a common language," thus proving a means to reveal "the community of dialogue and the game with time which have been represented by the poetico artistic works." Elsewhere in this essay, Debord suggests that *détournement* can reintroduce the vital relationship between the image and human experience; it

"can confirm the former core of truth which it brings out." Debord's notion of détournement parallels Hansen's notion of a creative engagement with media, while also asserting that time and history must be pried from the image (and not merely represented) before an embodied relationship to the image can occur.

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### **КУЛЬТУРНА СПАДЩИНА КАЗИМИРА МАЛЕВИЧА В КОНТЕКСТІ СУЧАСНОГО СОЦІАЛЬНО-КУЛЬТУРНОГО ЖИТТЯ (на прикладі міжнародного соціально-мистецького проекту "R-evolution. Suprematism. Maydan")**

У статті аналізується позитивний вплив культурної спадщини Казимира Малевича на соціально-культурні процеси сьогодення. Проаналізовано ідею створення та реалізації соціальних мистецьких проектів як модусів впливу на громадську свідомість у контексті культурних процесів сучасного життя, зокрема на прикладі організації та проведення міжнародного соціально-мистецького проекту "R-evolution. Suprematism. Maydan".

*Ключові слова:* культурна спадщина Казимира Малевича, соціально-культурне життя, громадська свідомість, сучасність, соціально-мистецький проект "R-evolution. Suprematism. Maydan".

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#### **Культурное наследие Казимира Малевича в контексте современной социально-культурной жизни (на примере международного социально-художественного проекта "R-evolution. Suprematism. Maydan")**

В статье анализируется положительное влияние наследия Казимира Малевича на социально-культурные процессы сегодняшнего дня. Проанализировано идею создания и реализации социальных художественных проектов как модусов воздействия на общественное сознание в контексте культурных процессов современной жизни, в частности на примере организации и проведения международного социально-художественного проекта "R-evolution. Suprematism. Maydan".

*Ключевые слова:* культурное наследие Казимира Малевича, социально-культурная жизнь, общественное сознание, современность, социально-художественный проект "R-evolution. Suprematism. Maydan".

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#### **Cultural heritage of Kazimir Malevich in the context modern social and cultural life (the international social art project "R-evolution. Suprematism. Maydan")**

The article is devoted to the actual problem of comprehension and identifying the impact of Kazimir Malevich's heritage on social and cultural processes in the present. The ideas of the origin and formation of the social projects creation as a mode of artistic influence public consciousness in the context of cultural processes of modern life on an example of the organization and conduct the international social art project "R-evolution. Suprematism. Maydan" are analyzed.

One hundred years ago, the artist painted the most famous and controversial work "Black Square". The artist introduced the world to his own painting concept – Suprematism. In 2015 the UNESCO declared the year of K. Malevich. So the world cultural community pays tribute to the important contribution of the founder of Suprematism as an artist, a philosopher, a teacher, an art theorist and a social activist. At the beginning of 2015 the socio-cultural life of Kyiv can observe the activation of art processes that demonstrate the interest of Kazimir Malevich's cultural heritage. In October 2014 in Zaragoza (Spain), in February in the Kyiv (Ukraine) and in April of 2015 the Huesca (Spain) the international social art project "R-evolution. Suprematism. Maydan" was held. In February 2015 in the National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture a project commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Suprematism's birth was organized. In the National Union of Artists of Ukraine the exhibition of abstract painting was held.

The purpose of the article is to study the origins and formation of ideas and the creation of social and art projects as a means of influence on public consciousness in the context of cultural processes of modern life in Ukraine.