

PERFORMATIVE ARTS: HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL ASPECTS

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INTRODUCTION

Performative art, encompassing theater, dance, music, performance, and other forms of live expression, represents an integral part of humanity's cultural landscape. It serves not only as a medium for self-expression but also as a mechanism for shaping societal norms, transmitting ideas and values, and reflecting social, political, and cultural processes. In today's world, characterized by rapid technological advancements and globalization, affecting all spheres of life, the study of the historical and theoretical aspects of performative art is becoming increasingly relevant.

The historical aspect allows us to trace the evolution of performative forms, reveal the relationship between art and society, and understand the ways in which different cultures and traditions have influenced one another. For instance, analyzing theatrical practices of antiquity or the ritual dances of ancient civilizations helps to uncover the origins of modern artistic forms and their impact on the further cultural development. Such knowledge provides an opportunity not only to preserve, but also to reinterpret cultural heritage, integrating it into the contemporary context.

The theoretical approach, in turn, focuses on analyzing the mechanisms of art creation and perception. It aids in understanding the structure and composition of works, defining their functions and impact on audiences. Theory also serves as a tool for interpreting complex artistic phenomena, enabling artists and researchers to discover new modes of expression and expand the boundaries of creativity.

Thus, the study of the historical and theoretical aspects of performative art is not merely a means of preserving cultural memory but also a key to understanding contemporary processes in art and society. It fosters dialogue between generations, cultures, and traditions, helping to address pressing issues through the lens of creativity.

1. Performative Art: The Terminology Issue

Studying the problem of performative art, it is considered appropriate to focus on its terminology. Discussions about the definition and multiple interpretations of the term have persisted since the emergence of

performance as an art form and continue to this day. Historically, this type of art developed from various artistic forms and avant-garde movements. Notably, the term «performance» first appeared on the poster of John Cage's «4'33» concert in 1952. Based on historical analysis, it can be asserted that by the early 1970s, specialized publications began recognizing performance as an independent artistic practice. The issue of its definition proved particularly challenging, as the words used to describe this phenomenon had pre-existing meanings within art history. The universal term «performance», derived from English, was applied to nearly any public artistic act, including manifesto readings, poetry evenings, musical and theatrical performances, concerts, etc¹.

It should be emphasized that the term «performance» was not universally accepted in many European countries, particularly in Germany, where one of the key figures of Actionism, Joseph Beuys, worked. German artist Klaus Rinke viewed the term as distinctly American, favoring alternatives such as «Aktion» or «Demonstration». Despite criticism and ambiguity, the term «performance» has gained a foothold among critics, art historians and artists, being officially used to refer to one of the genres of contemporary art. In 1970, Vito Acconci, a pivotal figure in American performance, published the article «Vito Acconci on Activity and Performance». And in 1973, the expression «performance art» began to appear in the headlines of art publications as a distinct term denoting a new form of actionism².

It has been established that the term gained final recognition after the publication of the first book about performance «Performance: Live Art from 1909 to Present», in 1979 by renowned American art critic and curator RoseLee Goldberg. That same year, Goldberg began teaching the history of performance at New York University, while Christine Stiles introduced a similar course at the University of California, Berkeley³.

Analyzing scholarly approaches to performance, it has been established that RoseLee Goldberg describes this art form as the «avant-garde of the avant-garde» emphasizing its radical nature. She perceives performance as an art form that cannot be bought or sold; its essence lies in the moment, not in the object. For Goldberg, performance art is a response to the challenges of contemporary culture, serving as a form of communication with a broad audience that encourages people to reconsider their perceptions of art and its relationship to cultural processes.

¹ Малютіна В. Перформативні практики: досвід осмислення. Одеса. 2021. 184 с.

² Шумська Я. Інсталяція та перформанс у мистецтві кінця XX – початку XXI століття: українсько-польська співпраця, творчі експерименти та взаємовпливи: автореф. дис. ... канд. мистецтвознавства : 17.00.05. Львів. нац. акад. мистецтв. Львів. 2017. 16 с.

³ RoseLee Goldberg. Performance: Live Art 1909 to the Present. New York. 1979. 129 p.

However, this perspective is criticized by renowned American cultural theorist and theater scholar Marvin Carlson. In his view, performance does not belong to the avant-garde because its features can be observed in experimental entertainment. Carlson highlights the overuse of the term «performance» in global culture, noting that various humanities disciplines increasingly focus on issues of human action, its repetition, and the process of self-discovery during these actions. He categorizes performance into two dimensions:

- microcosm – the art of performance itself, which occurs on stage or in an exhibition space;
- macrocosm – performance that exists within a broader sociocultural context, influencing social processes and human behavior ⁴.

Klaus Biesenbach, curator of the Department of Media and Performance Art at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York and co-author of the exhibition «*100 Years of Performance*», approaches the issue from a different perspective. He defines performance as live art that cannot be confined within frameworks or placed on a pedestal. Biesenbach emphasizes that performance is a moment when the artist liberates the creative process, separating it from the final product. It is an art form that comes to life before the audience, where the act of creation itself takes precedence over the result, and the moments of interaction between the artist and the audience become the essence of performance.

Theater theorist Richard Schechner views performance as «embodied behavior» – any human action that takes place in front of others in daily life and across various world cultures. According to Schechner, every event, ritual, tradition, and even everyday action has a performative character. He classifies performance as one of eight types, encompassing not only art but also performances in daily life, sports, business, technology, sexual practices, rituals, and theatrical plays. Thus, performance art is merely one of many forms of human behavior that possesses a theatrical or demonstrative nature ⁵.

Art philosopher Noël Carroll considers performance a dual phenomenon. On the one hand, artists use their bodies as the primary material, creating living, evolving art. A performance artwork emerges and exists only during the artist's action, which is integral to the event. The process itself becomes the object, and the work concludes when the artist stops. On the other hand, the artist and the performance are also subjects, as they depend on the level of interaction with the audience, the use of techniques, and the artist's inner

⁴ Goldberg R. *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*. New-York: Thames & Hudson. 2005. 256 p.

⁵ Schechner R. *Performance Theory*. London and New York: Routledge. 2003. 432 p.

motivation. Here, the balance between the artist's influence on viewers and the audience's interaction with the art is crucial⁶.

Art critic Hugh Adams notes that performance art disrupts traditional rules and transforms established values. He emphasizes that the foundation of performance is unstable and ever-changing, as each performance is unique and depends on specific circumstances. Moira Roth, another critic, underscores that performance is deeply integrated into everyday life, affecting its various aspects.

Religious studies scholar Eric Mazur also highlights the ritualistic nature of performance, noting its connection to profound, often symbolic actions. Mazur draws attention to the fact that many performances contain elements of brutality and expressive tension, which are part of their emotional and physical essence⁷.

We conclude that performance is a unique moment when the performer, guided by a specific idea, enters into a personal mental and physical interaction with the audience. It is a distinctive form of art that constantly emerges and vanishes, adhering to the laws of a living work. Performance is temporary and variable, as its essence lies in the act rather than the result.

The terminological analysis and interpretation of scholarly thought lead us to state that the definition of «performance» (derived from the English «performance», meaning «execution» or «play») may seem ambiguous, as it is often associated with theatrical productions. However, historically, performance as an art form has often opposed traditional theater. The conflict between «performance» and «theater», as well as questions about the boundaries between the two and their dissolution, are among the key topics discussed by performers, art historians, and critics. It is essential to understand that performance does not merely embody theatricality but transcends it, experimenting with new forms and ideas.

Using general scientific research methods, we argue that performance art is a form of presentation where the artist's individuality and the process of expressing their ideas are central elements. Performance is a synthesis of various art forms, such as dance, music, sculpture, painting, cinema, and poetry. This art unfolds before an audience in various spaces, including museums, galleries, and even streets, where every element, including music, video, and the space itself, becomes part of the overall composition.

It is established that performance art underscores the significance of the creative process over the final product. The personal presence of the artist-

⁶ Phelan P. Introduction: the ends of performance. The ends of performance, ed. Peggy Phelan, Jill Lane. *New York University Press, New York and London*. 1998. Pp. 1–19.

⁷ Frith S. Performing rites: on the value of popular music. *Oxford: Oxford University Press*. 1996. 360 p.

performer is of paramount importance, as they not only convey their conceptual vision but also actively interact with objects, space, and the audience. Such direct engagement results in a unique form of art that exists exclusively in the moment and cannot be replicated or reproduced in its original form.

According to *The Oxford Dictionary of American Art and Artists*, performance is an interdisciplinary and temporal form of artistic expression that emphasizes the body and the psychological preparedness of the performer. Performance art reached its peak in the 1980s, evolving from happenings, the Fluxus movements, conceptual art, and elements of contemporary dance. This form of art is not intended to entertain the audience, as its primary objective is the self-expression of the artist rather than creating a captivating spectacle.

In performance, artists often present themselves, using their bodies and emotions as the primary instruments. However, in certain instances, they may adopt stereotypical images or characters, typically to deliver ironic commentary or critique. Most performances are not rehearsed in advance, preserving the naturalness and authenticity of the act, which lends it spontaneity and unpredictability.

Performance, as a phenomenon, has numerous definitions, each reflecting its core characteristics to some extent. One of the crucial aspects of performance is its public nature, which combines elements of art and non-art, creating an artifact through this synthesis. Such works do not require the performer to possess specific professional skills and do not aim for longevity. At the heart of performance is the gesture, which may be symbolic, expressive, or provocative.

Outrage and provocation are intrinsic features of performance, enabling it to challenge societal norms and artistic traditions. The aesthetic specificity of performance lies in its orientation toward the primacy and self-sufficiency of the creative act. The art form we are studying underscores the importance of the creative process itself rather than its final outcome. Performance seeks to affirm the identity of the artist, who not only creates art but also shapes their own image through it. Consequently, it should be noted that the performance can be described as the art of the moment, existing at the boundary of being and non-being, as it lives only during its execution and vanishes after the act concludes. It is an art of the here and now, balancing between reality and imagination, temporality and eternity⁸.

⁸ Скрипник Д. Мистецтво та художник як проєкція сучасності. *The problem of periodization of the history of Art: Classical period, modernism and postmodernism*. 2021. № 8. С. 38 – 46.

We argue that performance is a genre of contemporary art, one of the forms of actionism rooted in performative practices and processual art of the latter half of the 20th century. This genre differs from theatrical performances by serving as a visual expression of the artist in real time and a predetermined space. In performance, the human body and the artist's energy become the primary means of expression, while the presence and participation of the audience – whether direct or indirect – constitute an essential component of the work.

It should be noted that performative art is based on the idea that language and actions do not merely describe the world but actively transform it. In the context of performative arts, language has not only an informative but also a transformative character. This implies that words do not merely convey information but have the power to alter reality, influencing social and cultural processes. Performative art is not limited to verbal expression. It encompasses a wide range of actions, that include not only verbal elements but also non-verbal signs such as gestures, facial expressions, and postures. For instance, political protests can be considered performative, as they not only express dissent but also possess the capacity to influence societal reality. Performative actions are significant not only on an individual level but also in a societal context. Public appearances, speeches, and social movements can also be viewed as performative acts that shape public opinion and determine the course of future events. Additionally, they play a vital role in identity formation: by articulating specific beliefs, individuals not only influence others but also reinforce their own self-awareness and self-esteem. However, it is crucial to recognize that the effectiveness of performative art depends on context and audience reaction. It can lead to both positive changes and negative outcomes, particularly if used unethically or without consideration of potential consequences⁹.

It is worth emphasizing that performative art has become a central element of modern society, where words and actions merge into a specific tandem capable of shaping, transforming, and altering reality. They function not only as means of communication but also as active tools of intervention in the surrounding world, influencing social, cultural, and political processes.

It is important to draw attention to the significance of performative art, which is the subject of our study. In the contemporary artistic context, performative art plays a crucial role, where the artist not merely reflects reality but acts as an active agent of change. Performative art involves the

⁹ Лігус Л. Поняття перформансу: соціально-філософський аспект. URL: <http://molodyvcheny.in.ua/files/journal/2017/7/11.pdf>.

use of the body, space, time, and interaction with the audience to create an artistic impression that transcends traditional artistic formats¹⁰.

Special attention in performative art is given to the act of execution, which is considered an independent artistic expression. This can take the form of a painterly action, a dance performance, interactive audience participation in the creative process, or other forms where the focus is not only on the final result but also on the creative act itself. It is essential that in such practices, the act of performance and the process of creative interaction with the audience become key elements of artistic expression, expanding the possibilities and boundaries of contemporary art.

One of the key characteristics of performative art is its temporality and uniqueness. Many performances or shows are singular moments in which the performer and the audience interact in a specific time and space, and the work of art exists only in that moment. By witnessing performative events, audiences become part of the work, as their reactions, interactions, and participation influence the course of execution and its outcome.

Today, performative art opens new horizons for creative self-expression, allowing artists to use actions and interactions instead of merely material objects. It creates a space for innovation, discussion, and striking experiments that actively cross the boundaries between art and life, expanding the understanding of creativity's possibilities and its impact on society¹¹.

Thus, summarizing perspectives on the terminology of performance art, it can be stated that it is understood as scenic, theatrical, or, more precisely, performing art. So, performing arts include various forms such as theater, dance, circus, pantomime, and other forms of public performance. Performance refers to performance art, whereas theater (or any theatrical action, often referred to in English as performance) is a type of performing arts. If one were to ask what makes performing arts performative, the answer could be that all these forms of art require the physical presence of skilled or trained individuals, whose demonstration of abilities constitutes the performance itself.

The study of the cultural and historical aspects of the formation of performance art makes it necessary to emphasize that performance art is an example of the ongoing development of the world's centuries-old visual culture of gesture and action. Despite differences in context, historical period, ideological and motivational components, and societal functions, an apparent continuity and similarity can be traced in the visual elements, techniques, and "images of action" used by contemporary performers. These

¹⁰ Готовський Є. Театр, ритуал, перформанс. Львів: Літопис. 2008. 186 с.

¹¹ Eugenio B., Savares N. *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of the Performer*. Routledge. 2005. 254 p.

elements echo the body language and actions found in pagan rituals, the physical culture of indigenous peoples, religious ceremonies, public executions, street culture, the phenomenon of holy fools, an example of the paradoxical behavior of ancient philosophers, public experiments on the human body for scientific purposes, anatomical theater, and the cultural tradition of provocation, or the so-called shock value¹².

With its substantial cultural component, classical works in the performance art genre are perceived as precedent-setting visual texts. Elements and direct borrowings from Tibetan practices, shamanism, the traditions of Australian Aboriginals, and the rituals of indigenous tribes in Latin America are evident in the works of artists such as Marina Abramović, Joseph Beuys, Miguel Coates, Ana Mendieta, and Linda Montano. These elements illustrate the transmission of archaic culture and Eastern philosophy into the Western contemporary reality through performance¹³.

Analysing the theoretical aspects of performance art, we identified several features of its origin and modern transformation:

- borrowing elements from poetry, theater, music, architecture, painting, video, cinema, and photography;
- transitioning from the synthesis of spectacles to the synthesis of experiences;
- a strictly anti-commercial and anti-institutional nature;
- a cultural phenomenon as a cross-cultural phenomenon of globalisation.

Examining the conceptual and terminological framework of the study, it is worth noting the publication of RoseLee Goldberg's groundbreaking book *«Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present»* in 1979. This expanded edition provides a comprehensive account of the technical, political, and aesthetic shifts in performance art characteristic of the early 21st century. The broad appeal of performance art to an ever-growing audience interested in contemporary art is driven by the desire for direct engagement with the most prominent artists of our time. Maurizio Cattelan, Paul McCarthy, Tania Bruguera, Matthew Barney, and Patty Chang are just a few of the many names presented in the book within a historical context linked to other pioneers in performance art – from the Futurists and Dadaists to Yves Klein and Laurie Anderson¹⁴.

¹² Kershaw B. *Theatre Ecology: Environments and Performance Events*. Cambridge University Press. 2007. P. 9 – 14.

¹³ Абрамович М. Пройти крізь стіни. Київ : Art Huss. 2018. 440 с.

¹⁴ Goldberg R. *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*. New-York: Thames & Hudson. 2005. 256 p.

Thus, referring to the terminological analysis of performative art, it was established that *performative art* is a genre of contemporary art and one of the varieties of actionism rooted in performative practices and procedural art of the second half of the 20th century. Performance, as a work within this genre, stands in contrast to theatrical productions and represents a visualized statement by the artist in a real and designated time and space. The artist uses the human body and energy as the primary mediums to create an action, which necessitates either the direct or indirect presence and participation of the audience. In contemporary art, performance has gained significant prominence as a form of expression where the artist's role becomes more dynamic and integrated into interaction with the audience. As a live art form, performance opens new avenues for artists to express their creativity through actions and real-time interaction. In performance art, the artist acts as an active agent, exerting a substantial impact on both the audience and society at large.

2. Formation and Development of Performance Art

At the beginning of the 20th century, performance art emerged as a kind of catalyst for political, social, philosophical and artistic existence, which gave rise to and was reflected in the visual language of art in the second half of the twentieth century. Having absorbed the results of the experiments, philosophical insights, and ideological foundations of early avant-garde movements, performance became a vivid illustration of the art of the 1960s and 1970s. Although postmodernism often stands as an antithesis to modernism, performance – having matured as a genre – logically extends the language and principles of avant-garde modernist movements into the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

The first wave of performance art as a mode of address (1910s–1950s), which established the language of future actionism in general and performance in particular, proclaimed rigidity as a loud word of rebellion, provocation and experimentation. Artists and authors associated with Italian Futurism, Constructivism, German Dadaism, Surrealism, avant-garde theater, and the Bauhaus school used live performances as a direct means of expressing and popularizing their ideas, often articulated in manifestos and reflected in groundbreaking productions. Examples include «*King Ubu*», «*Manifesto of Lust, Madness*», «*The Performance Is Canceled*», and works by Oskar Schlemmer («*Triadic Ballet*» and others). Futurist evenings and manifesto readings often ended in arrests, while modified versions of anti-academic cabarets and vaudevilles, provocative performances, poetic declamations, and theatrical experiments all this symbolized the European

artistic revolution. This revolution occurred alongside political upheavals, global wars, and social unrest, frequently highlighted by the press¹⁵.

By the first half of the 20th century, European audiences, who came to avant-garde performances, began to «accept shock as a work of art», granting artists the societal permission to provoke through unconventional behavior.

It should be noted that most reforms and innovations by ideologues advocating for the rejection of artistic and intellectual experiences of the past occur in the realm of literature and stage art. However, they lead to the emergence of a distinct non-theatrical language of actionism and are reflected in performances. During the modernist era, a new concept of art exhibitions emerges, employing techniques of exaggeration and parody. Artistic protest demonstrations and reconstructions, such as the «Storming of the Winter Palace», are organized. Vsevolod Meyerhold's «Biomechanics» becomes the first innovative system of exercises aimed at the physical and psychological development of performers. Meanwhile, the theater of Dadaists challenges moral values, continuing the theme of addressing the boundaries of sexuality and obscenity. It introduces the tradition of festivity within galleries (e.g., «Dada Gallery»), creates performative acts that become prototypes of happenings and events (e.g., actions at the intellectual «Club du Faubourg»), and develops a new manner of writing, presenting texts, and the attitude towards it. Surrealism appeals to the subconscious of both artists and audiences, abandoning self-control (automatic writing) and elevating the authority and popularity of the artist-trailblazer in society¹⁶.

The attempt to merge different art forms into a single work was initially undertaken by Italian Futurists and Constructivists. Later, their tandem provided impetus for the emergence of performance art in the 1960s and became the foundation of its modernized versions in the 2000s.

During this period, the performance continues the tradition of live performances by the artists themselves in the presence of an audience. The anarchism and obscenity of early avant-garde performances were characterized by provocation and theatricality. In performance art, this principle is replaced by the desire of artists to bring their works as close to life as possible and to oppose themselves to the theater. In the stage performances of the first half of the 20th century, avant-garde artists presented their ideas by creating works through acts and actions – features later inherited by happenings. In the second half of the 20th century, actions

¹⁵ Taylor D. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Duke University Press. 2003. P. 38 – 42.

¹⁶ Fischer-Lichte E. *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics*. Routledge. 2008. 96 p.

centered on corporeality, with the body of the performing artist becoming an integral part of the work in action.

The beginning of the second wave of performative art was marked by another period of global socio-political crises. The establishment of authoritarian regimes in Europe, revolutions and power shifts, the rise of pro-fascist forces in Germany, Italy, and Spain, as well as the outbreak of World War II led to the inevitable mass emigration of free-thinking European artists, intellectuals, and reformers to the United States. This marked the beginning of the development of future forms of actionism on two continents simultaneously.

For instance, the educators of the dissolved Bauhaus in Germany relocated to the United States and began their activities at Black Mountain College, which opened in 1933. They continued the interdisciplinary experiments of the European school in a new democratic educational institution distinguished by a liberal approach to learning. European reformers developed curricula based on the synthesis of arts and science, nurturing a new generation of artists who changed audience and societal perceptions of various art movements¹⁷.

Historical-genetic and retrospective analyses lead to the conclusion that the two main figures whose ideas and principles influenced the formation of performance art were the authors of new «spectacles» – choreographer Merce Cunningham, who redefined the structure and technique of dance, and composer John Cage, who declared noise and silence to be music. Both reformers drew inspiration from everyday life and the surrounding environment. They incorporated elements of chance, uncertainty, and unintentional actions into their works.

It is noteworthy that the theme of place and work with space and audience engagement gained a new status after Cage held an avant-garde concert in the New York Museum of Modern Art in 1943, using household items instead of instruments.

Instead, in 1952, Cage, in collaboration with Cunningham, created an improvised performance at Black Mountain College aimed at transforming both audience perception and the perception of the audience itself: the seating arrangement was altered, enabling viewers to observe the action from all four sides of a square platform, Cunningham and his band were dancing in the aisles while a dog chased them. This method of involving the audience

¹⁷ Кочубейник О. Перформанс як інструмент локальних ідентичностей. *Науковий часопис НПУ ім. М. Драгоманова*. 2013. URL: http://nbuv.gov.ua/j-pdf/Nchnpu_012_2013_42_13.pdf.

in the context and transforming the public into an integral part of the context was later adopted by the performance art¹⁸.

The reformist perspectives of Cage and Cunningham significantly influenced their students who studied with them, including artists such as Jim Dine, Al Hansen, and Allan Kaprow. It is worth noting that the figure of Kaprow plays a special role in the history of actionism for several reasons, namely: he is recognized as the founder of the happening genre and published the radical instructional essay «How to Make a Happening»; Kaprow transitioned «live art» actions, which had previously been confined to small, exclusive audiences, into the realm of New York galleries and to places where citizens gather, such as streets, attics, and basements. Thus, actionism becomes an integral part of the city's cultural life, extending its influence to the rest of the world.

Kaprow's renowned hour-and-a-half-long work, «*18 Happenings in Six Parts*» (1959), marked the beginning of a new language of interaction and play between the artist and society. This work contained elements that formed the basis of two parallel developments in global visual art: *performance art and site-specific theatre or environmental theatre*, (theatre related to a place or environment, which redefined space or spatial concepts, engaged audiences in innovative ways)¹⁹.

The coexistence of performance art and environmental theater within the same temporal and geographic space created a certain «diffusion» effect. However, despite the possibility of one type of visual art being replaced by another, this coexistence only contributed to their mutual popularization and development within American and global society, strengthening and spreading a new style of communication.

In 1968, Richard Schechner founded «*The Performance Group*», and the New American Theater movement, embodied by «*The Living Theatre*», created alternative performances to Broadway shows that violated social taboos, appealed to instincts, psychophysics and archaic themes, as seen in productions like «*Paradise Now*», «*Dionysus in 69*», and «*Makbeth*». In the early works of director Anne Bogart, theatrical actions subordinated the space of rooms in an ordinary apartment, where the audience was accommodated. Under the influence of European theater theorists such as Bertolt Brecht, Jerzy Grotowski, and Antonin Artaud, as well as the philosophy of American Beat writers, experimental «live theater» emphasized the process occurring here and now, aiming to liberate performers, alter audience perception, and redefine the visual content of

¹⁸ Turner V. *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. PAJ Publications. 1982. 148 p.

¹⁹ Schechner R. *Performance Studies: An Introduction*. Routledge. 2013. 264 p.

theatrical performances. The role and status of the audience or the evolved, transforming spectators into participants of the performance²⁰.

It has been established that in the 1970s, the emergence of a new trajectory in stage art was shaped by the efforts of experimental directors such as Robert Wilson, whose monumental productions lasted 10-12 hours, and Richard Foreman, the founder of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater. They were joined by a cohort of choreographers who viewed dance as an extension of everyday life and explored the possibilities of the human body and space, exemplified by the Judson Dance Theater.

At the same time, the development of free dance continued – a movement intertwined with life itself, whose proponents sought to affirm the power of the feminine principle and liberate individuality through unrestrained, natural motion. Later, in 1972, choreographer Steve Paxton developed the method of contact improvisation, which is often compared to performance art in terms of popularity and significance. Contact improvisation is rooted in natural impulses, the communicative nature of movements, inertia, and the kinetic principles of human bodies supporting each other through shared weight.

Thus, the concepts introduced by Anna Halprin, Martha Graham, Trisha Brown, Yvonne Rainer, and Steve Paxton addressed the reconsideration of functions and perceptions of public space. Improvised dances and happenings were staged in New York galleries, churches, and along building walls, as seen in «*Man Walking Down the Side of a Building*» (1970). During this period, New York became a city that defined the trajectory of global contemporary art²¹.

In Europe during the 1950s and 1960s, processes of performative art development took place. The appeal to the body, gesture, and use of live interaction in art unfolded in two distinct directions, and each directly influencing the evolution of various forms of actionism:

- from and within the artistic field – an attack on traditional artistic values and within the field of art, continuing the tradition of modernism and breaking down the barriers created by art and society in the past through the provocation of society.

The main figures were the contemporaries and polemicists Yves Klein and Piero Manzoni, who used the (naked or nude) human body and an acts based on agreement as the two main elements in the process of creating a work of fine art in public;

²⁰ Phelan P. *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*. Routledge. 1993. 207 p.

²¹ Гончаренко Д. Перформанс-арт як явище культури постмодернізму. *Актуальні проблеми мистецької практики і мистецтвознавчої науки*. 2013. Вип. 5. С. 333–337.

- crossing into from the realm of art to the social and political realms – an emphasis on attacking and transforming sociopolitical realities. Notable examples include the «Fluxus» art-movement and artist Joseph Beuys, who addressed the obligatory context of social life.

Thus, we can emphasise that performance art was shaped in the 1960s within European (e.g., the Spanish-Italian group Zaj), Asian (e.g., the Japanese group «Gutai»), and American cultures (e.g., the hippie counterculture of the «*Summer of Love*» in 1967), happenings, and early performances)). At this time, the artist's own body became the primary medium of expression.

In the broader history of culture, expressive language employing gestures and figurative actions as a means of communication existed long before performance art became recognized as a separate genre. Pagan rituals, public battles, carnival culture, and the actions of artists from various cultural traditions, which served as precursors to performance art, raise questions about the origins of this genre. In this regard, there are different perspectives on the periodization of performance art.

For instance, Richard Schechner argues that the roots of performance art should be sought in a complex of interrelated elements such as shamanism, sacred ceremonies, rituals, daily life, games, sports, and creative activity. When these elements converge, the resulting action acquires the fundamental characteristics of performance art. According to Schechner's concept, performance art, in essence, has existed since the dawn of human communities.

According to the Italian art historian Attanasio di Felizzi, the origins of performance art date back to the Renaissance. By citing the processions, masquerades and performances organised by Alberti, Leonardo da Vinci and Bernini as examples, di Felizzi concludes that performance has been one of the main areas of artistic activity since the very inception of the concept of modern art. However, it was later pushed out of the artistic scene, which was a symptom of the complex decline of the visual arts in the Mannerist era²².

RoseLee Goldberg and Martha Wilson link the first manifestations of performative practices to the work of the Italian Futurists, who were the first to employ them as a dynamic artistic language to express new ideas, contrasting them with old traditions. In her seminal work, «*Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*», Goldberg outlines the history of performance art, beginning with this period. Similarly, Wilson begins her version of the history with the actions of the Italian Futurists. However, most researchers, including Philip Auslander, Adrian Henri, Marvin Carlson, and

²² Скиба Ю., Луньо П. Мистецтво перформансу як спосіб життя. *Молодий вчений*. 2019. № 11 (75). С. 281–284.

others, adhere to the generally accepted chronology that identifies performance art as a distinct genre emerging after World War II.

We support this perspective, marking the centenary of performance art, commemorated by the exhibition organized by Goldberg in 2009. Within the framework of this established chronology, we propose our own model for the development of performance art. Thus, we consider the process of development of performance art in three phases:

- rise – establishment (1960s-1970s);
- stagnation – consolidation (1980s-1990s);
- revival-affirmation, and modification (mid-1990s to the present day).

Thus, performance art emerged as a distinct artistic form between the late 1950s and early 1960s. Key figures in the burgeoning American performance art scene included innovators from various artistic fields: visual artists (Allan Kaprow, Robert Rauschenberg), composers (John Cage), theater directors (Robert Whitman), and choreographers (Yvonne Rainer).

A comparative analysis makes it possible to assert that in Europe, leading representatives of performance art came to this genre from painting and sculpture, in particular, notable figures included the French artist Yves Klein, the Italian artist Piero Manzoni, and German artists Joseph Beuys, Wolf Vostell, and Thomas Schmit. While some artists, such as Manzoni and Klein, sought to establish the body as an artistic medium, which later became known as body art, others artists' actions were marked by complex symbolism and references to sacred and archaic culture. For instance, Beuys often referred to his works as «social sculptures», with performances resembling shamanic rituals²³.

One of the earliest European performances is Yves Klein's «*Anthropometries*», presented in 1960 at the Gallery of Contemporary Art in Paris. During this performance, accompanied by the «*Monotone Symphony*» consisting of a continuous tone lasting 20 minutes, three nude models, covered in blue paint, pressed their bodies against white canvases. The imprints left on the canvases became part of the well-known ANT series, whose works are now exhibited in museums worldwide. Another example of symbolic performance is Thomas Schmit's piece, in which the artist poured water from one bottle to another in a circular motion. This action continued for several hours until the water completely evaporated, leaving all the bottles empty. The performance symbolized the essence of art as a self-exhausting process.

By the 1970s, when performative practices were actively gaining popularity, artists began to transform themselves into living sculptures (Vito

²³ Шклярєнко Ж. Наукові принципи дослідження перформансу як сучасного культурного явища. Художня культура. *Актуальні проблеми*. 2020. № 16(1). С. 49–53.

Acconci, Gilbert & George, Jannis Kounellis), to organise ritualized actions (Hermann Nitsch, Marina Abramović, Otto Muehl), and address feminist themes in their performances (Rebecca Horn and Ulrike Rosenbach).

In the 1980s and 1990s, the alternative, non-commercial, and intangible language of art was significantly overshadowed by the manifestations of capitalist globalization culture, characterized by a focus on mass entertainment, popular culture, the cult of fame, and commercial success. During this time, the entertainment industry appropriated several elements of performance art, leading to a substitution of concepts and a disruption of many principles of classical performance art in favor of spectacle and showmanship. As a counteraction to the rapid pace of money and commercial relationships, classical performance art embraced themes of isolation, explored by artists such as Tehching Hsieh, Linda Montano, Marina Abramović, and Ulay, also known as Frank Uwe Laysiepen)²⁴.

Since the mid-1990s, performance artists have increasingly turned to new media (notably Paul McCarthy and Sam Taylor-Wood), gradually erasing the boundaries between live performance and its documentation. The expansion of the Internet has played a pivotal role in shifting the presentation and discussion of performances into the digital realm. During this period, museums also began actively utilizing their spaces as platforms for hosting performances.

In the 2010s, influenced by globalization, performance art deviated from the foundational principles and independent nature of works by the pioneers of the genre. The genre evolved within the domains of museums and the art market, with the artist playing a critical role as either the representative of the artwork or the co-author of a planned performance. Among the globally renowned curators who have worked with performance art are Klaus Biesenbach and Klaus Schöne²⁵.

Simultaneously, a new type of reproducible and touring performance emerged. Taking into account all the aforementioned concepts of the performance genre's genesis, we propose the following periodization of the history of performance art. The prehistory of the genre can be divided into two stages. The first stage encompasses the origins of the visual language and philosophy of performance, which existed in primitive and traditional cultures that endowed gestures with particular significance and power, which was manifested in religious rites, the phenomenon of mischief, the practice of paradox behavior of ancient philosophers, etc. The second stage identifies

²⁴ Янова Д. Перформанс як вид сучасного мистецтва. URL: <https://conferences.vntu.edu.ua/all-hum-2017>.

²⁵ Alexander J. C. Cultural pragmatics: social performance between ritual and strategy. *Sociological theory*. 2004. Vol. 22. № 4. P. 527 – 573.

the prerequisites for the formation of performative practices in New European culture, rooted in new directions in global artistic and philosophical thought, protest culture, avant-garde movements, experimental theater, and provocative art.

It can be asserted that performance art emerged as a result of the accumulation of elements of visual language and theoretical explorations from avant-garde movements in the first half of the 20th century. The genre's direct establishment occurred in the late 1960s, marked by the appearance of the first deliberate and significant actions by European and American artists such as Bruce Nauman, Joseph Beuys, Vito Acconci, Yoko Ono, Carolee Schneemann, Joan Jonas, Tadeusz Kantor, Marina Abramović, and Ulay, among others. The works of these artists are today considered canonical and foundational for the art of performance. At the same time, academic research into performance also began. Performance art transitioned into a popular phenomenon of global visual culture, inevitably influenced by the capitalist societal system and globalization. Classical performance became part of the eclectic visual language of contemporary artistic and non-artistic realities.

At the beginning of the 21st century, contemporary performative art began integrating elements of traditional forms such as theater and dance with experimental approaches involving interactive technologies. Performances and exhibitions in online spaces combine virtual and physical interactions, expanding the possibilities and impact of performative art.

Modern performances, encompassing diverse forms of expression, actively employ interactive technologies to deepen engagement with audiences, create new experiences, and shift art into the digital realm. This opens new horizons for artists, transforming the very nature of performative art.

Moreover, interactive technologies allow audiences to actively participate in performances, turning them from mere spectators into participants. Contemporary artists can employ sensors that respond to movement or sound, use virtual reality, or specialized applications to ensure interactivity and dynamism. Virtual and augmented reality also enable the transformation of ordinary spaces into fantastical virtual worlds, allowing for creating immersive performances where audiences become part of the virtual experience.

It should be emphasized that artists actively utilize reactive elements and kinetic installations to create performances that respond to sounds, movements, or even the emotions of viewers. This approach imbues the artwork with dynamism and a sense of live connection between the audience and the piece or work of art.

The Internet and social media play a crucial role in contemporary performances. Artists broadcast their shows online in real-time, enabling viewers from different parts of the world to participate via virtual platforms, using chats, comments, and other forms of communication. Some artists employ interactive tools such as mobile applications or web platforms, allowing audiences to engage with the artwork through their devices. This can include voice commands, gestures, and other types of electronic communication.

In the context of globalization and social change, contemporary performative art frequently responds to pressing issues such as politics, social inequality, and environmental problems, etc. Artists use these topics to express their positions and draw attention to significant societal concerns.

Thus, the evolution of performative art reflects a continuous need for artists to transcend traditional forms of expression and seek new, innovative ways to interact with audiences and convey their ideas.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the application of terminological analysis and the interpretation of scholarly thought, the study addresses the issue of terminology of performance art and concludes that the art of performance should be understood as an independent genre of contemporary art. This distinction allows it to be separated from adjacent directions and forms of performative and process-based art, preserving its «identity» within the space of art and non-art. Performance, as a work of this genre, opposes theatrical production and represents a visualized statement by the artist within a pre-determined time and space, involving the direct or indirect presence of an audience, thus establishing personal contact among all participants.

It has been established that performance is a form of actionism that engages in dialogue with the social space, remaining within the frames of artistic context and using the visual language of appeal and influence. It transforms the relationship between the artist and the modern audience by maximizing the act of direct communication, replacing the value of the artifact as a work of art with the value of participation and the process of creating a work of art. It challenges the anthropocentrism and authenticity of experience against the technogenic and object-oriented language of art, as well as the mobility and excessiveness of textual messages in contemporary mass society.

It has been proven that the emergence of performative art is linked to the accumulation of elements of visual language and the theoretical explorations of avant-garde movements in the early 20th century. The genre's final formation began in the late 1960s, with the first significant, consciously executed actions by European and American artists. The history of

performance art is argued to be the evolution of generations of artists who pushed the boundaries of traditional forms of expression, leading to contemporary performances that actively utilize interactive technologies and engage closely with audiences.

The roots of this art form can be traced to avant-garde movements such as Futurism and Dadaism. Artists like Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia experimented with combining language and action in their works between the World Wars. In the 1960s, the «Fluxus» movement emerged as a protest against tradition, aiming to blur the boundaries between art and life. Their happenings – improvised events – merged these two realms, creating a new type of artistic action where art became part of everyday life.

During the 1970s, Body Art became a leading direction in performance art. Artists like Marina Abramović, Gina Pane, and Chris Burden used their bodies as primary means of expression and communication with the audience. With the advent of interactive technologies, performance art has become even more experimental and open to new formats. Artists have begun employing virtual reality, sensors, mobile applications, and other technological tools to create interactive performances, enabling real-time engagement with audiences.

SUMMARY

The study is dedicated to a comprehensive analysis of the historical origins and theoretical approaches to the study of performance art as a multidimensional cultural phenomenon. By applying a wide range of scientific methods, the research refines and clarifies the conceptual and terminological framework, specifically the terms «performance art» and «performance». The work examines in detail the historical processes of the formation and development of performance art, emphasizing its sociocultural contexts.

Special attention is given to the interaction between traditional and contemporary forms, the impact of technological innovations on the nature of performance, and the role of bodily expression in preserving and transmitting cultural memory. The study includes a critical review of key works in the field and highlights the contributions of prominent figures who have significantly advanced the development of performance art.

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