

Perception and interpretation
Relational aesthetics in Hungarian contemporary art
DLA Thesis

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In my dissertation I look at the borderline categories when organizing contemporary Hungarian artworks and artistic practices. I organize local contemporary artworks in order to interpret them. I ask whether it is possible to interpret the artist's working methods as a spectrum rather than a linear development. Placing domestic works within the framework of Nicolas Bourriaud's Relational Aesthetics, under three systems and their subsystems: (Nicolas Bourriaud writes in Relational Aesthetics, published in 1998, that artwork is the starting point for a common world on which new and new relationships can be built¹, and modern art has allowed for a parallel, pluralistic approach² Relational aesthetics involves modes of creation that are based on connections between people and also include the social background of connections they are based on interconnections and also carry the social background of interconnections.)

Thesis 1: The starting point for the creation of relational artworks is disruption.

Thesis 2: The plural layering of working methods is characteristic of certain creative processes, during which the artist leaves his general function.

These chapters are based on these two theses:

1. Relational Aesthetics as a viewpoint, The concept of disruption

three cases:

1.1. Relational Aesthetics as a viewpoint, The concept of disruption

Grant H. Kester describes the concept of disruption in 2013: "A discontinuity provoked by an avant-garde work of art is necessary to disrupt the viewer."³ The artists move when the work of art leads them out of the usual functions; these functions can be a working method, a medium, a thought structure. In other cases it drives the viewer out of their position, or from an entrenched idea, isolation, or something that causes the person to connect to that specific artwork. The work of SZ.A.F. .: Miklós Mécs, Judit Fischer:

¹ Nicolas Bourriaud: *Relációsztétika*, ford: Pálfi Judit, Pinczés Bálint, Múcsarnok, 2006. 21.old.

² Nicolas Bourriaud: *Relációsztétika*, ford: Pálfi Judit, Pinczés Bálint, Múcsarnok, 2006. 66.old.

³ Grant Kester: *Életképek: A dialógus szerepe a társadalmilag elkötelezett művészetben* Kester, Grant, in *A gyakorlatól a diskurzuszig Kortárs művészetelméleti szöveggyűjtemény*, Szerkesztette: Kékesi Zoltán • Lázár Eszter • Varga Tünde • Szoboszlai János *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially Engaged Art*, in: *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, Blackwell, Zoya Kocur – Simon Leung, 2008, 76-88. Fordította: Hock Bea, A fordítást ellenőrizte: Hornyik Sándor. p.132.

"Pech series N.2" can be integrated into this framework. Miklós Mécs's video series entitled *Altikleider* is a strong disruption.

1.2. Relational aesthetics as a viewpoint, autonomous works of art

According to Jacques Rancière Individuals are perceiving and understanding what they see in the theater, school or museum.⁴ Are viewers liberated and autonomous when the artist liberates them, or they originally are, if they get an opportunity to see the artwork? János Szirtes's video work *The Bird of Zagreb* and *Prague Spring* are both autonomous works of art, providing an emotional space for the viewer and breaking up dogmas, just as Márton Murányi's work *MMBau* is similarly autonomous.

1.3. Relational aesthetics as a viewpoint, people meeting

Nicolas Bourriaud sees the basis of contemporary art in relations, in people meeting, according to him contemporary art is relying on relations between people, after relation between people and God, then people and object.⁵ Relevant artwork relating to this subject is Gergely László and Péter Rákosi, the *Technika Schweiz's* the *Dunaújváros Garage Project* and *Csakoda*, founded by Dominika Trapp and Márton Dés. Finally my own work relatable is the *grasspillow*. It seems to me that coefficient of random factors in my artwork and the attempt at other realities are opportunities to break away from my own reality. I do not distinguish between artworks and ephemeral works, they often come together.

Thesis 3: Individual and participatory or group artwork can be autonomous from the perspective of both the viewer and the artist.

Thesis 4: The Process of getting involved can be liberating.

On these two theses, these chapters are based:

2. PARTICIPATION:

Five cases:

2.1. Participation: collaborative practices, aesthetic approaches to participation and autonomous artwork:

In his 2011 text "Notes on collaborative production", Jan Verwoert talks about autonomous choice, in his opinion the quality to be preserved is the freedom to choose between working individually or in a group.⁶ This dilemma is addressed by the work of Miklós Mécs, Hajnalka Tulisz and Gábor Erlich entitled *The Cool Job*. *Flowershop* work by Virág Bogyó is also relevant. *GruppoTökmag's*, Tamás Kovács and András Tábori's *Dragon Lee* is a relevant example. My own examples of this approach to participation are the *Instant group photo photo series*, the *familiar stories of others video series*, and the *Ask!* and *Bubble of What We Leave Behind*.

2.2. An ethical approach to participation

Grant H. Kester, in his book *The One and the Many*, emphasizes the importance of dialogue. Kester states that dialogue contributes to solidarity⁷ An important precursor is Tibor Várnagy's work: *Mimi and Liget* gallery run by Várnagy. I would highlight *Pneuma.Szöv.'s* project, the *20 Forint Operetta I*, and

⁴ Jacques Rancière: *A felszabadult néző*, ford: Erhardt Miklós, Műcsarnok, 2011. p.16.

⁵ Nicolas Bourriaud: *Relációsesztétika*, ford: Pálfi Judit, Pinczés Bálint, Műcsarnok, 2006. 23. old.

⁶ Jan Verwoert: *Notes on collaborative production*. p.2801-285 in.: Nina Valeria Kolowratnik and Markus Miessen: *Waking up from the nightmare of participation*, *expodium.nl*, 2012 p.282.

⁷ Grant Kester *Életképek: A dialógus szerepe a társadalmilag elkötelezett művészetben* Kester, Grant, in *A gyakorlatól a diskurzushoz Kortárs művészetelméleti szöveggyűjtemény*, Szerkesztette: Kékesi Zoltán, Lázár Eszter, Varga Tünde, Szoboszlai János *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially Engaged Art*, in: *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, Blackwell, Zoya Kocur – Simon Leung, 2008, 76-88. Fordította: Hock Bea, A fordítást ellenőrizte: Hornyik Sándor. 137. oldal. 1.bekezd.

Zsófia Illés's project, the CollectivePlant, and Kata Soós's videowork Propéra and her exhibit How You Feel You Tell Your Story, and Mindspace's Rákócziterezés. Finally, my own examples of an ethical approach to participation: Creating in a group, finding communities, interpreting the relation to my environment, or moving away from it all are important to me. I've worked on a number of projects with Gonzague Lacombe and Collective Exyzt, with Lacombe we set up PLEBS, we operated a mobile silkscreen workshop, we made murals and fanzines with communities and ourselves. My work as a facilitator includes the Wall and Concrete Fanzines, the Perception and interpretation Fanzine and the Exhibition. They were realized in the Studio of Young Artists' Association and in the Labor gallery: Perception and interpretation, Curriculum, Mist and Dust. Exhibition in co-operation with Slovakian artist Daniela Krajcova, slightly tinted, at FKSE and the local Library and Coop, a one-month event space with curator Judit Csatlós. We worked with Judit Szalipszki on a curatorial work, I Wake Up to Sleep and I lay down to get up exhibition.

2.3. Participation and utility

Mika Hannula does not envelope participation in any ideology, but considers getting closer to each other most important, according his text from 2011, the long tradition of thinking differently means understanding opportunities and difficulties of slow actions.⁸ Freedom of art is overshadowed if this does not get space. A utilitarian approach would treat artists as social workers.

2.4. Participation, lasting cooperation in reality

With long-term presence in many cases, participatory initiatives provide real help. Collaboration involving different individuals and organizations using creative project methods. Among many other initiatives, such significant initiatives as Nóra L. Ritók's Igazgyöngy Foundation, the Éjjel nappal7ker, the Bagázs Public Benefit Association, the Don Bosco Elementary School in Kazincbarcika, the Dr. Ámbédkar School in Miskolc and IndaHouse in Hernádszentandrás and Pere. Of course, I could mention organizations active in other fields, but I have highlighted this important area.

2.5. Participation: the autonomy of art, the autonomy of the artist, the autonomy of the recipient

Whatever work method the artist works with, it is essential for them to remain true to the artwork and its content and form and their self. While Bourriaud, and many other before have abolished the artist's genius, he also claims that in the world of parallel realities, individual genius, relational aesthetics and collaborative practices coexist. Any authoritarian external pressure, even economic authoritarianism, brings with it the emergence of alternative structures and the emergence of new communities. At the same time, conscious or unconscious choices of real and internal emigration are also made. In my opinion change in power relations and the authoritarian change to institutions will lead to the emergence of an alternative scene. In all cases alternatives will develop, if possible periodically. Even in the case of the present dissolution of institutions transformed after the change of regime.

Thesis 5: The discursive space and the physical space can have big impact.

These chapters are based on this thesis:

3. Relation to a location:

Five cases:

3.1. Relation to a location, the socio-cultural space

8 Mika Hannula: If you are looking for honey, don't go off killing all the bees-the quest for the common good and the participatory community p.:79-87 in.: Nina Valeria Kolowratnik and Markus Miessen: Waking up from the nightmare of participation, expodium.nl, 2012. p.83.

According to Henri Lefebvre's interpretation of space in 1971, space is not merely a form or an area, but a socio-cultural and political space, Miwon Kwon's description in the 1997 "One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity" is an interesting parallel, where events are spaces, continuing Lefebvre's thought. According to Bishop, position of the artwork and the artist are free. Everyone who works in public space makes cultural and social differences visible. This is exactly what The Randomroutines, Tamás Kaszás and Krisztián Kristóf, The Great Rescue mural does. My site-specific works are, with Brazilian typographer Tassiana Nunez Costa, co-author of Nomansland. Wall and Concrete Fanzines. The 1260 animation, that is part of the 585000m² in White Box Gallery, New York.

3.2. Relation to a location, the placement of a work of art

Does artistic freedom mean that the artist creates autonomous artworks, or that they are able to choose the conditions of their artwork autonomously? With a twist, Balázs Kicsiny inserted a private space into Polifonia's public space projects. Kicsiny Balázs's artwork, the Don't travel! Travel! An Uncomfortable Exhibition in My Room, remains autonomous in many ways. Works of the Architecture Uncomfortable Workshop, The Fifth Corner and the Tin House can also be highlighted in this category.

3.3. Relation to a location, thought as space

Miwon Kwon focuses on the essence of space, and space becomes a platform that can be anything, whether it's a real location or not. According to Kwon, the artwork itself is a place. Relevant artworks in this category are Emese Benczúr's Think About Your Future and Nem mi voltunkCrew feat. Lóránt Bódi's work, the Jewish Beach, created with Curator Tamás Don within the frameworks of Vanishingpoint 1.0.

3.4. Relation to a location, the psychogeographic layers of the place

Sigmund Freud writes in 1930 of the psychogeographic layers of the history of the city are all present at the same time. This layering can be found in the following works: Technika Schweiz' and Katarina Šević's Gasium et Circenses - Lumen Branch #2, and Murányi Mózes Márton-Tamás Kaszás's Hobbyists. The mural of Laci and Balázs, Sgraffito with Anna Kárpáti's sculptures, are also important layered works.

3.5. Relation to a location, the milieu and the other person as a place

The human milieu is also a place. According to Pierre Bourdieu, the milieu is not just a geographical location, but people with similar lifestyles. An idea and a desire can be a space; encounter itself can be a space. Judit Csatlós talks about the responsibility of the anthropologist, responsibility, ethical issues that the mediator has to face. According to Hal Foster, artists and critics now turning to anthropology have resolved these contradictions by relativizing and placing them in the center. The ethnographic turn in contemporary art also follows the minimalist, post-minimalist history of the past 50 years. Ágnes Eperjesi's work entitled Mixed Marriage highlights the stratification of identities.

Thesis 6: Interpretational range of relational and autonomous artworks can be equally infinite, relational artworks can be autonomous and artwork created in individual working methods can have a disruptive power.

4. CONCLUSIONS:

Since we were able to get some insight into the perception of artists, not of viewers, thru interviews and analysis of their work, it is clearer to me that group, and participatory creation is important to them, because they can think and act with others. Another important point is the admission of the random factor into the creative process. Relational aesthetics as an approach includes autonomous creation. The autonomous artwork or abstract artwork can be a refuge, but so can the community.