

ZÁPADOČESKÁ UNIVERZITA V PLZNI
FAKULTA FILOZOFICKÁ

Bakalářská práce

**History of Performance Art in American context
and its interpretation in Mass Media**

Andrea Hrabáková

Plzeň 2017

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Vedoucí práce

Ing. et BcA. Milan Kohout

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Čestné prohlášení

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V Plzni, dne

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Andrea Hrabáková

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1. Introduction

The present thesis is aimed at performance art and its history in American context. It consists of two main parts, theoretical and practical. The theoretical part is structured in two main chapters; chapter 2 (Performance art) and chapter 3 (The history of performance art).

The chapters are divided into several subchapters, designed to provide the reader with a sufficient amount of theoretical information about performance art, its attributes and also about its historical background related not only to the USA but partly to Europe due to their direct historical connection in this field.

The practical part of the thesis comprises chapter 4 (Performance art today), releasing graphically depicted results of questionnaire focused on perception of performance art by the general public in the Czech Republic.

The main objective of the thesis is to acquaint the reader with the issue of performance art from historical perspective and to mediate the reader the results of the questionnaire which releases updated information about the relation of the general public to performance art.

The bachelor's thesis may therefore be a contribution to conception of performance art and its objective understanding.

To name the most helpful sources for the present thesis, then it is to be mentioned a book written by *RoseLee Goldberg* – '*Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*' one of the first publications dealing with the issue of performance art, or a book by *Tracey Warr* and *Amelia Jones* – '*The artist's Body*' full of pictures and photographs of performances which helped the author to construct the idea about particular artists. The most helpful electronic sources were websites of reputable museums – American *MoMa* and British *Tate*.

The theme was chosen on the grounds of the author's interest in arts.

2. Performance art

2.1 What is performance art

Several attempts were made to define performance art.

MoMA, The Museum of Modern Art in New York City, describes performance art as follows:

“In performance art, the artist’s medium is the body, and the live actions he or she performs are the work of art. The term, used loosely at first, arose in the early 1960s as American practitioners sought a way to refer to and describe the many live events taking place at that time. Performance art usually consists of four elements: time, space, the performer’s body, and a relationship between audience and performer. Traditionally, the work is interdisciplinary, employing some other kind of visual art, video, sound, or props. Although performance art takes the form of live action, it has reached a large public audience through documentation of the performance.” (MoMA [US], © 2017)

Based on the author’s research the definition appears to be the most suitable for introduction and purposes of the first chapter.

Yet, the definition might not be satisfactory for those, who are looking for a comprehensive idea about performance art.

The definition is therefore followed by detailed description of its “objectives” and various forms of performance art, designed to gain complex idea, what performance art is.

2.2 Performance art and performing arts

In English, the term performance art is repeatedly mistaken for almost identical one – performing arts. They are, however, not interchangeable.

For illustrative purposes of this issue, the selection of the most frequently mentioned differences between performance art and performing arts are discussed below.

Space

Traditionally, performing arts incorporate theater, music and dance. In contrast to that, performance art could be understood as a multidisciplinary phenomenon, encompassing various fields and techniques deploying them in any combination - theater, music, dance, literature, poetry, architecture and painting, as well as video, film, slides and narrative (Goldberg 2011). From this perspective, performance art seems to be more similar to the alternative forms of theater, music and dance, which tend to be multidisciplinary as performance art (Arts Lexicon). Moreover, performance art is sometimes understood as an extension of fine arts. Based on this assumption, performance art is more closely connected to painting.

Studied at the conservatories, performing arts belong rather to traditional scene, such as theaters and concert halls (Acting Coach Scotland). Performance art, on the contrary, is performed in galleries with contemporary art, *Tate* (a British network of four art museums) and *MoMA* (The Museum of Modern Art in New York City) as an example.

Nonetheless, as a result of an anarchistic expression of the believe that all art exhibited in the museums is “dead” at the beginning of the 20th century, performance art can appear de facto anywhere.

Narrative

Unlike performing arts, by which the content is usually scripted and performed in a form of a narrative, performance art is often unscripted and narration is not used.

Approach to Body

Using of the body as a medium can be regarded as mutual attribute. In both, performance is usually a physically and mentally demanding activity.

In performing arts, a story expressed by a body is traditionally the most important element. However, attention of audience to body is kept on bare minimum. In contrast with that, in performance art, body itself is the main issue. Moreover, particular emphasis is given on the act of pushing the physical and mental limits of a human body, as especially seen in performance art in the 1970s.

2.3 Performance art and conceptual art

Conceptual art, what is it and how is it linked to performance art?

Documented manifesto of conceptual art was formulated in 1967 by an American painter and sculptor *Sol LeWitt*, as an essay *Paragraphs on Conceptual Art*, published in an international monthly magazine *Artforum* specializing in contemporary art. *Sol LeWitt* expressed his approach towards this phenomenon formulating itself already for a certain time, saying, that *'the idea itself, even if it is not made visual, is as much of a work of art as any finished product'* (MoMA [US] © 2017).

In other words, in the 1960s a new approach towards art was officially declared and, more importantly, also accepted. As a reaction to formalism and commodification of art, conceptual art was often shocking and with its attributes freely continued in the philosophy of the European movements active at the beginning of the 20th century – *Futurists* and *Dadaists*. Consequently, in the galleries occurred pieces which were not likely to be sold, because a concept was in its nature immaterial.

Many of these works could be described as conceptual – performance art. During this period, artists often transformed part of their body into a commodity, showing it as a created object. Many notorious pieces were created in this spirit - *Piero Manzoni's Artists's shit* (1959), canned excrement put on sale, or *Robert Rauschenberg's This Is a Portrait of Iris Clert If I Say So* (1961), a telegram instead of a promised portrait exhibited for the inauguration of *Galerie Iris Clert's* new exhibition space in Paris.

Joseph Kosuth's One and Three Chairs (1965), consisting of a wood folding chair, photograph of a chair and photographic enlargement of the dictionary definition of "chair" is then a typical example of a pure conceptual work.

It is accepted, that conceptual art and performance art are often classified as siblings (McEvelley 2005). Yet from another perspective, it was conceptual art which helped photographs, architectural drawings and performance art reached equal footing with painting and sculpture (MoMA [US] © 2017).

2.4 Main attributes of performance art

Performance art may be considered as boundless when it comes to its expression. Yet, the lack of limitations draws distinctions among performance artists and their work on many levels.

According to *Milan Kohout*, a Czech–American performer, performance art is in nature anarchistic and thus does not belong in any way inside institutions, such as museums and galleries (Kohout 2014). However, reality shows that many performance artists, primarily those, who also practice conceptual art, do not attach to an anarchistic attribute of performance art high importance.

Performance artists may perform alone, mediating their work to public via photography, video and film. Collective action is nevertheless one of the most frequent attributes of performance art. In this case, audience participates on performance and brings the whole original work into existence. Collective action can also refer several collaborations between performance artists, such as *Marina Abramović* and *Ulay*, working together between 1976 and 1988, or *Gilbert and George*, a London duo performing side by side since 1967.

Performance and Ethics

“When the Kantian trichotomy fell apart, as Conceptualists banished the aesthetic and raised the cognitive to an elevated authority, so Performance artists, also banishing the aesthetic, introduced the ethical (or social) faculty into the position of authority.” (McEvelley 2005, p. 217)

If we understand that art has generally three faculties, in performance art the ethical is the most important, followed by the faculty of cognition and aesthetics. Performance artists therefore often call things into question and serve as a medium through which people become conscious of their weaknesses, fears and taboos of their time.

Performance art usually questions the general facts and believes accepted by academicians and the public. Performance art is usually intended to make “blind society to see”. Some performance artists thereby consider themselves as saviors of the society. Movements of the first half of the 20th century - *Futurists*, *Dadaists* and *Surrealists*, for instance, showed their rejection of the society capable of causing a war, each in their own artistic and philosophical style. Later on also *Fluxus* or members of *Viennese Actionism* expressed their attitudes towards the society from their own perspective.

According to a several number of American and European historians, performance art is connected with the beginning of the 20th century. Yet, the performative act can be traced back to Ancient Greece, namely by *Diogenes of Sinope*, also known as *Diogenes*

the Cynic (Kohout, s. 3). *Diogenes* is known for his mockeries of great thinker of his time, *Plato*.

Some artists claim, performance art should not be understood in the same way art standardly is. Related to that, they believe the absolute performance is life itself.

Performance artists engaged in politically orientated performance art, e.g. *Milan Kohout*, interpret politics “*as an everyday and never-ending mechanism of social interaction.*” (Kohout, s. 3)

Body Art

A substantial number of performance artists are engaged in *body art*, a strong genre of performance art, where performance artists use their own body seeking to uncover every hidden social taboo (McEvelley 2005).

Body art is a characteristic form for those performance artists, who inspire themselves from prehistorical and tribal societies. Performance artists in this case return to natural roots of the society, performing shamanic rituals or “ritually based therapeutic Performance” (McEvelley 2005, p. 218). The historical regression brought its objectives: multiculturalism; an urge for equality of all people. It is being observed, that Paleolithic-based performance has been done mostly by males, while female performance artists tend to Neolithic age, where with the shift from the hunter-gatherer society to agriculture, the role of a woman was constantly increasing.

Neolithic-based performative actions of *Donna Henes*, acclaimed contemporary spiritual teacher considered as one of *Urban Shamans*, include “multi-cultural ritual celebrations of the cycles of the seasons and the seasons of our lives” (Mamma Donna Henes Urban Shaman). These performative gatherings are intended to have therapeutic effect and to help the society to restore matriarchy. (Kohout 2014)

Carolee Schneemann dedicated essential part of her carrier to the idea of expressing the woman body and female and male spirit in art. Her therapeutic-based performances are focused on social taboos related to body “transformed the definition of art, especially discourse on the body, sexuality, and gender (Carolee Schneemann).

Herman Nitch, an Austrian Performance Artist and former member of *Viennese Actionism*, still engages himself in existential and ritualistic performative actions known as *Theatre of Orgies and Mysteries* being held in his residence Prinzenhof in Austria.

Controversial spectacle including blood and carcasses is always perfectly planned. According to *Nitch* view, his actions have highly therapeutic impact, especially because the participants have to use all the five senses. Their intention is not to provoke (Veselková 2012).

Having thousands of forms, one significant attribute connecting all performances together throughout the history can be seen there though; the longing for ethical reaction against conformism and social deviation detected either rationally or instinctively. Since the mid-twentieth century, an American Performance Artist *Stelarc*, investigates for instance the approach of the society to digital technology.

From a certain perspective, performance art will always be a form of a protest against the culture deviations, against its wrong attitudes, values and relative truths, or in other words: *“Performance art is and continues to be concerned with how collective action can challenge oppressive regimes and overturn established ways of thinking. At its heart is a strong social critique, asking questions about how we perceive the world around us—and our place within it.”* (Khan Academy: Performance art 2017)

3. The history of performance art

This part is aimed at the history and historical background of performance art. Its content is divided into nine subchapters.

In this chapter, which is structured traditionally from the beginning to the end of the century, a range of performances of the 20th century are discussed. The USA and Europe are both depicted here, since a great number of performance artists were born in Europe and later immigrated to the USA, and thus influencing next generations of artists on both continents. Approximately one third of this chapter is therefore aimed to Europe.

As it is also believed that performance art began far earlier, chapter 3.1 is aimed to outline this assumption.

3.1 From prehistory to the present

“Conceptualism can only be traced as far as Dada and Duchamp. Performance Art, however, has a pedigree almost as long as that of the human species.” (McEvelley 2005, p. 220)

As seen by *McEvelley*, the roots of performance art can be traced back to the Paleolithic Age, and to each era that it followed.

Furthermore, in each era, particular nature of performance art emerged i. e. provocative, esoteric, shamanistic, instructive and entertaining nature (Goldberg 2011).

From this perspective, the first expressions of performance art may be already observed in the Upper Paleolithic Age (50 000 - 10 000 years ago) in the form of cave paintings located around the whole world. Yet, for an old age of the paintings and lack of exact information we can only assume their performative meaning.

Source of inspiration for performance art portrays Paleolithic rituals (ref. in Chapter 2.4), distinguished by drumbeat, dancing and astral projections of shamans, which are by numerous historians explained as cleansing and beneficial for the whole tribe.

Australian Aboriginal culture also provides inspiration and new ideas when it comes to performance art. For instance *Marina Abramović*, a Belgrade-born performance artist, spent almost a year in the Australian desert. *Abramović* claims it as “a valuable experience for her and the beginning of all her best work career” (Douglas 2013).

3.2 Europe: the 1st half of the 20th century

In Subchapter 3.2, the European movements of the beginning of the 20th century are introduced. The chapter emphasizes the most distinguish characters and issues of each particular era.

Italian Futurism

In 1909 Futurism was born, when a seventeen-year-old Italian poet, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, launched its manifesto in Paris. *Marinetti* didn't choose Paris by accident. After a successful pre-futurist theater piece 'Ubu Roi', performed in 1896 at *the Theatre de l'Oeuvre* by *Alfred Jarry*, which became notorious for the opening line with a single word 'Merdre' (a strong taboo word in the public domain at the time even with the added 'r'), *Marinetti* was sure, that the Parisian public would be ready to accept his ideas (Goldberg 2011). As was Futurism raising its popularity, *Marinetti* with other futurists wrote other manifestos and Futurism changed its former shape throughout the first two decades of the 20th century. Various painters joined Futurist ranks, convinced of fact, that performance mediated the idea of the artist better than painting ever could. Still, it was an anarchistic movement, despising museums, libraries and everything old. Futurists praised the progress and were fascinated by speed. Later on, *Marinetti* engaged himself in experiencing with sounds. To this issue, he dedicated his manifesto 'The Art of Noises'. *John Cage*, a music composer, visual artist and a key figure of American post-modernism, became interested in experiencing with sound almost twenty years later. Although Futurism was an Italian issue, similar tendency revealed also in Russia or in the United Kingdom.

Dada

History of Dada takes us to Munich, Germany, where *Hugo Ball* and his wife *Emmy Hennings*, a cabaret star, wanted to spread their attitudes towards the society at the beginning of the 20th century and especially during the World War I. Their attitudes were based on idea that the society, which is capable of a war, is not worth existence. Their device to mediate their pacifistic beliefs and to manifest "the nonsense of their time" was a cabaret show. However, their plans were unsuccessful, because the Bavarian audience wasn't ready for being criticized and mocked. *Ball's* ideas and shows were too much furious and absurd for the public. At the beginning of World War I, *Ball* and *Hennings* escaped to Switzerland, where they started their own café,

known as *the Cabaret Voltaire*. *The Cabaret Voltaire* put together names such as *Tristan Tzara*, *Richard Huelsenbeck* or *Hans Arp*, who later performed their Dada cabarets and ideas in other cities. The cabaret shows were winning ovation, but consequently, the ideas of *Tzara* and *Ball* differed. In addition, there were no funds for *the Cabaret Voltaire*. At this point, *Huelsenbeck* moved to Berlin and *Ball* distanced himself from the whole Dada movement. Only *Tzara* felt the opportunity to introduce the Dada cabarets to Parisian audience where he moved at the invitation of *André Breton* (Goldberg 2011).

The Dada movement included performance artists, poets, dancers and painters. Well-known French Dada artist *Marcel Duchamp*, who immigrated at the beginning of the World War I to the United States, is mostly known for his piece '*The Fountain*' (1917), one of his last projects of the series of *The Ready-mades* which were presented on the avant-garde exhibition of *Society of Independent Artist* in New York. '*The Fountain*' was in fact a urinal signed with the pseudonym "R. Mutt" and wasn't accepted at the exhibition at all. Nevertheless, *Duchamp* influenced many artists not only in the United States, but also in Europe and so did the whole Dada movement.

Surrealism

Another reason for decline of Dada movement was *André Breton*, a former leader of the Parisian Dada group, who declared its end despite protests of *Tristan Tzara* and started engaging in Surrealism. Surrealist's ideas were presented in *Surrealist Manifesto* in 1925. Their interest was the examination of the unconscious inspired by *Sigmund Freud*. Surrealists used 'psychic automatism' in their work. The first surrealist's poets, theater plays, films, music and many famous paintings were created in this spirit. Surrealist movement was interrupted by the Second World War and art had no freedom to display itself during that time. However, the course of theatrical developments such as simultaneity and spontaneity were once set by Futurists and Dadaists and Surrealism had introduced psychological studies into art (Goldberg 2011).

Bauhaus

Bauhaus, an art school based on idea of 'Gesamtkunstwerk' (total work of art), was founded by *Walter Gropius* in Weimar, 1919, Germany. This concept formulated in Bauhaus manifesto, brought architecture and fine arts together. The Bauhaus' idea was to create things functional, nice and accessible for masses, which was important in

impoverished postwar Germany (Goldberg 2011). Among Bauhaus teachers were (and many others) *Paul Klee*, *Wassily Kandinsky*, *Josef Albers*, *Lyonel Feininger*, *László Moholy-Nagy* and *Oskar Schlemmer*. *Oskar Schlemmer* was a dancer, choreographer, painter, sculptor and pedagogue. At the Bauhaus school he taught sculpture and later he lead theatre workshop which was important for practicing his theory of space.

Later on, Bauhaus moved to Berlin, but during the Second World War, Bauhaus was closed by Nazi members. The architectonic legacy of Bauhaus can nowadays be seen in Chicago and New York and also in Tel Aviv with the largest number of buildings built by German Jewish architects.

Its philosophy of ‘Gesamtkunstwerk’ and legacy of *Schlemmer’s* performances were reconstructed by members of Bauhaus immigrating to the United States, namely *Josef* and *Anni Albers*.

Important European Artists of the first half of the 20th century

Two famous European artists *Yves Klein* and *Piero Manzoni* who both worked on the edge of performance and conceptual art, are depicted in this chapter, since they both are generally accepted as founding fathers or an important characters in these artistic fields.

Yves Klein

Yves Klein was a French artist, born in 1928 in Nice. His passion for judo, a modern martial art, was crucial for his closer interest in Eastern philosophy and its reflection in his work later on. In 1955, he began creating monochrome paintings, made by using only one colour. Two years later, *Klein* entered his “blue period” leading to invention of his patented International Klein Blue (*IKB*). This time he introduced his ‘live actions’, in which he used nude models as paintbrushes. *Klein* succeeded as conceptual artist too. In his invisible exhibition ‘*The Void*’ from 1958, *Klein* emptied a gallery, repainted the walls white, and presented the emptiness of the space as a work of art (The Guggenheim Museum, © 2017).

Piero Manzoni

Piero Manzoni was born in 1933 in Italy. Often compared to the work of *Yves Klein*, his own work anticipated, and directly influenced the work of *Arte Povera*, a group of Italian conceptual artists. *Manzoni’s* ironic approach to avant-garde art may be seen in one of his most famous pieces ‘*Artist’s shit*’ from 1961, in which he put on sale his

own canned excrement. With his approach – that world too could be declared an artwork - *Manzoni* presented several performances, including ‘*Artist’s Breath*’ (1960), in which he sold his breath in balloons for money or ‘*Living Sculpture*’ (1961), where *Manzoni* put his sign on bodies and declared them being his authentic artwork.

3.3 The USA: the 1st half of the 20th century

Subchapter 3.3 covers the issue of performative tendency and influence of the European immigrants on the American continent in the 1st half of the 20th century. Special attention is devoted to *Black Mountain College*, the first institution in the USA functioning according to the concept of German Bauhaus and to their acclaimed teachers *John Cage* and *Merce Cunningham*.

Black Mountain College

Founded in 1933 in Blue Ridge Assembly Historic District in Western North Carolina, *Black Mountain College* (BMC) was an unusual institution for the USA. The core study on *BMC* was art and the place became soon visited not only by artists but also writers, dancers and musicians. The formation of *BMC* was at its beginning influenced by German immigrants *Josef* and *Anni Albers*. Both being famous representatives of Bauhaus, they brought its spirit straight to America. *Albers* once explained to his students: “*Art is concerned with the HOW and not the WHAT; not with literal content, but with the performance of the factual content. The performance - how it is done – that is the content of art*” (Goldberg 2011, p. 121). Thanks to *Xanti Schawinsky*, another absolvent of German Bauhaus invited to *BMC*, reached stage studies the spirit of Bauhaus too. *Schawinsky* devoted its course to study of fundamental phenomena; space, form, color, light, sound, movement, music and time (Goldberg 2011).

Until its closure in 1957, *Black Mountain College* introduced and brought together names such as *Merce Cunningham*, *Robert Rauschenberg*, *John Cage*, *Allan Kaprow* and many others.

In 1993, *The Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center* were founded by arts advocate *Mary Holden* “*to celebrate the history of Black Mountain College as a forerunner in progressive interdisciplinary education and to celebrate its extraordinary impact on modern and contemporary art, dance, theater, music, and performance.*” (The Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center)

John Cage and Merce Cunningham

John Cage was an American composer, music theorist, artist and writer, born in 1912. His famous Zen inspired piece *4'33* from 1952, during which the audience listened to the sound of silence for 4 minutes and 33 seconds, was *Cage's* lifelong favorite. *Cage's* interest in Eastern philosophy was perhaps initiated by meeting with *Marcel Duchamp* whom he met in New York (McEvelley 2005). Zen Buddhism became at the time satisfying source of inspiration not only for music composers. To its popularization in the Western countries contributed also American writers and members of *Beat movement* such as *Allan Ginsberg* or *Jack Kerouac*, with whom *Cage* later accidentally met. *Cage* was influenced not only by oriental philosophy, history and art, but also *Duchamp's* Dadaism itself. Being in the cradle of evolving post-modernism, his attitude towards randomness had a significant influence on the next generations of artists and particularly his students.

Since 1952, *Cage* collaborated with his contemporary, *Robert Rauschenberg*, American painter and sculptor, whom he met at the *BMC*. *Rauschenberg's* paintings are also believed to be inspiration for *Cage's* performance '4'33'.

During years spent at *the Black Mountain College*, *Cage* met also his lifelong partner *Merce Cunningham*, a forefront American dancer and choreographer. His approach to dance resonated with *Cage's* attitude towards music. "If *John Cage* believed in limitless possibilities for music, then *Merce Cunningham* believed in limitless possibilities for human movement." (Unlock Art: Frank Skinner on performance art, 2013)

3.4 Europe: the 1950s – the 1960s

Subchapter 3.4 discusses a movement of explicit and radical artists generally known as *Viennese Actionism* as well as a distinctive personality of a post-war era, *Joseph Beuys*.

Viennese Actionism

As an alternative to Fluxus but much more provocative was an avant-garde movement known as *Viennese Actionism*, which was active in 1962 – 1970. For their provocative performances and actions including confrontation with head of state or a church, its members were often prosecuted and sentenced. Their goal was to break taboos and provoke the public out of the comfort zone. One of the distinctive Vienna actionists was *Hermann Nitsch*, famous for his performances of strange bloody spectacles including

pagan rituals with liters of animal's blood and hysterical music, known as '*the Theatre of Orgies and Mysteries*'. Since the 1990s he regularly appears with his retrospective exhibitions in Europe (including the Czech Republic), Australia and the United States.

Joseph Beuys

Joseph Beuys was an iconic German performance artist known for his sculptural installations, personal symbolism in his work and faith in spiritual power of art and its ability to heal the society. He was also a graphic artist, pedagogue and ecological activist. The presence of an elemental myth about *Beuys* being shot over Crimea and his rescue by the nomadic Tatars in his artwork is obvious. According to the story, the tribesmen had supposedly wrapped his broken body in animal fat and felt, which later become fundamental and symbolic materials for *Beuys*' work. He was actively cooperating with many American members of Fluxus, and thus influencing his students and another generation of artists all over the world. He built up his reputation in art world and started to be politically active, organizing discussions, meetings, and in the 1970s *Beuys* founded the *Free International University*, an organization based on ideas of an international and multi-disciplinary cooperation. *Beuys*' idea about evolution of social being which he called "*social sculpture*" and his personal beliefs, are obvious in his famous pieces such as '*How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare*' (1965); '*Coyote: I like America and America likes Me*' (1974) and '*The Honey pump*' (1977). In '*How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare*', *Beuys* with his head slathered with layer of honey and gold, gently carried a dead hare around the exhibition, letting him to touch the paintings and thus explaining it to him. In a discussion broadcasted on Austrian TV station ORF in 1983, *Beuys* talked about his intention, about the origin of the title for the performance and also discussed his belief that '*everyone is an artist*' (Joseph Beuys im 'Club 2'). The importance and up-to-datedness of the piece were proved again in 2005, re-performed by *Marina Abramović* at the *Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum* in New York as a part of her series '*Seven Easy Pieces*'. The piece '*Coyote: I like America and America likes Me*' (1974) is generally understood as a relationship between the United States and Europe or as a performance reflecting the American Indians' history of persecution. It was performed in New York, where *Beuys*, wrapped in felt holding a stick, spent seven days closed in a room with a coyote. '*The Honey pump*' was performed at the contemporary art exhibition *Documenta 6*. "*The piece consisted of a series of tubes running into rooms adjacent to the staircase,*

through which two tons of liquid honey was pumped by a motor. For Beuys, the production of honey and the organizational system of bees in the hive were on a par with human social systems.” (Tate Modern)

3.5 The USA: the 1950s – the 1960s

Subchapter 3.5 depicts post-war performance artists in the USA with a focus on the 1950s and the 1960s. The chapter also comments on an American painter *Jackson Pollock*, whose expressionistic and performative painting became discussed by considerable number of artistic critiques at the time. The 1950s are also associated with *Allan Kaprow*, introducing to New York his original term “happening” and an anarchistic Fluxus group connecting artists all over the world.

Jackson Pollock’s action painting

“When I am in my painting, I’m not aware of what I’m doing. It is only after a sort of ‘get acquainted’ period that I see what I have been about. I have no fear of making changes, destroying the image, etc., because the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through. It is only when I lose contact with the painting that the result is a mess. Otherwise there is pure harmony, an easy give and take, and the painting comes out well.” (Biography of Jackson Pollock)

Pollock’s ‘action painting’ broke the ice in abstract expressionism in the 1950s. According to experts, the pictures of *Pollock* working in his studio, taken by *Hans Namuth*, point out the performative act in *Pollock’s* painting.

Attributes of *Pollock’s* work can be recognized in two completely different artworks; firstly, in *Shigeko Kubota’s ‘Vagina Painting’* (1965) performed at *the Perpetual Fluxus Festival* in New York and in *Andy Warhol’s ‘Oxidation Paintings’* (1977 – 1978).

Allan Kaprow

Since the *Black Mountain College* was closed in 1957, *John Cage* started to give lessons at the *New School for Social Research in New York*. *“His classes included painters and film makers, musicians and poets [...] each in their different ways had already absorbed Dada and Surrealist-like notions of chance and “non-intentional’ actions in their work.”* (Goldberg 2011, p. 127)

Allan Kaprow, born in 1927, graduated student of arts and philosophy was among

the students. *Kaprow* was already influenced by *Pollock's* action painting at the time. Being a painter at the beginning and cooperating with *Hans Hofmann*, a German-born American and forefront of abstract-expressionism, under *Cage's* influence *Kaprow* was more focused on happenings in his later work. The term “happening” as form of live art experiencing its popularity at that time, was coined by *Kaprow* himself. For *Kaprow*, environments were ‘spatial representations of multileveled attitude to painting’. (Goldberg 2011, p. 128)

‘*18 Happenings in 6 Parts*’ (1959) was the first happening held by *Kaprow* for the public. Before attending the happening, the visitors received invitations from *Kaprow*. Some of them also received mysterious plastic envelopes containing bits of paper, photographs, wood, painted fragments and cut-out figures. They were also given a vague idea of what to expect (Goldberg 2011).

Kaprow's intention was to blur the border between audience and artist by involving the audience into the piece. Based on that, the audience experienced activities such as playing musical instruments for children or squeezing an orange. The audience was intended to use all sensations including smell during the happening (Kohout 2014).

Fluxus

Fluxus was an international avant-garde group, forming itself in the 1960s under the influence of *John Cage*. Members of Fluxus described themselves as a group of people sharing anti-commerce and anti-art attitudes, where anyone could do art anywhere and anyhow. The center of their work was New York with a strong representation in Japan, Germany and also in the former Czechoslovakian Socialistic Republic. Fluxus members were for example *Yoko Ono*, a New York music composer. *Joseph Beuys* (chapter 3.4), already mentioned *Shigeko Kubota*, Japan video-artist, *Nam June Paik*, a partner of *Shigeko Kubota*, being considered as a founder of video-art, and also *Milan Knížák*, to name a few.

Fluxus organized meetings and events, where its members spontaneously performed. The do-it-yourself culture penetrated the whole existence of the group, including ‘readymades’ in the spirit of Duchamp’s Dada, happenings, performances and so called ‘fluxusboxes’.

Vito Acconci

Acconci's work represents another distinctive approach to performance art. As a poet, he embodied his poems or particular words in performances instead of writing them on paper. *Acconci's 'Following Piece'* (1969) dedicated to a word 'following', brought the artist into the streets of New York, where he followed a several number of randomly chosen citizens according to a prepared map (MoMA [US] © 2017).

His work was later on penetrated by interest in psychology, namely in so called "power-fields". In other words, *Acconci* investigated the interaction of the artist and the audience as well as another objects in a particular physical space (Goldberg 2011). Based on this, *Acconci* performed his notorious '*Seedbed*' (1971), which was later on re-performed by *Marina Abramović* as one of her series of performances *Seven easy pieces* (2005). In '*Seedbed*' the artist lay under the floor of a gallery on which the visitors walk in otherwise empty space and listen to the sound of the artist constantly masturbating and whispering words related to his or her fantasies (Tate Modern).

3.6 The USA: the 1970s

The 1970s were penetrated by a variety of performances among which certain patterns can be recognized. In this decade, a substantial number of performance artists pushed their physical and mental limits to better understand the human condition – *Chris Burden* and *Marina Abramović* as representatives of the USA (although *Abramović* born in Belgrade) are discussed in the present chapter. At the same time, a British artist *Stuart Brisley* or an Italian artist *Gina Pane* both experienced such forms of performance art in Europe.

In the 1970s, performance art investigated not only serious themes, but also entertaining ones. A collaborative duo *Gilbert and George* started its project "living sculpture" in the 1970s, in which both declared themselves as an art and showed themselves side by side for several years (Artemuseum, 2008).

A period of feminist activity in the USA known as second-wave feminism is usually dated between the 1960s – 1980s. In the work of *Carolee Schneemann* (Chapter 2.4) and *Hannah Wilke* distinguishing forms of performance art were used and a range of feminist and female issues examined. An Austrian artist *VALIE EXPORT* simultaneously questioned role of an objectified female body in cinematography and mass media.

Chris Burden

From a certain perspective, *Burden's* notorious performative works of the 1970s can be described as classics.

In '*Shooting Piece*' (1971), *Burden* was intentionally shot into his arm by a friend. The work might appear meaningless and dangerous on the first sight; however this and other performances including *Deadman* (1972) was meant to alter people's perception of violence (Goldberg 2011).

In '*Trans-Fixed*' (1974), *Burden's* palms were nailed while he was lying on the car and stretching his arm over the roof. He presented himself as a modern martyr to contemporary consumerism as represented by the cars in 'California's burgeoning freeway culture' (Warr, Jones 2000).

Marina Abramović

Marina Abramović pushes constantly the limits of her body and mind since she performed *Rhythm 10* at the *Edinburg Festival* in 1973. *Rhythm 10* was based on drinking game played by Russian and Yugoslav peasants included a white sheet of paper, twenty knives of different sizes, and two tape recorders. *Abramović* was kneeling on the paper and constantly stabbing the knife between her fingers, sometimes so fast, that she cut herself. After a period of time, she switched the knife until she came to the last one. The sound was recorded and after she used the last knife, the recording was played and *Abramović* consciously repeated the whole piece again. It lasted for 1 hour. "*I had experienced absolute freedom – I had felt that my body was without boundaries, limitless; that pain didn't matter, that nothing mattered at all – and it intoxicated me.*" (Abramović 2016, p. 69)

Another piece of *Abramović* early carrier, *Rhythm 0* (1974; Studio Morra, Naples) was intended to exercise the relationship between the audience and the performer, where not the performer but the audience decided about what or where the limits are. *Abramović* laid before the audience 72 objects including hammer, fork, scissors, pistol, bullet, also rose or feather. In this performance *Abramović* also embodied an object. She was prepared to take responsibility for all consequences, which, anyway, went beyond her expectations. "*After three hours, one man cut my shirt apart with the scissors and took it off [...] Things got more intense. [...] There was a one man – very small man – who just stood very close to me, breathing heavily. This man scared me. [...] After a while,*

he put the bullet in the pistol and put the pistol in my right hand. He moved the pistol toward my neck and touched the trigger.” (Abramović 2016, p. 69) Abramović finished the performance after 6 hours.

3.7 The USA: the 1980s

Abramović (Chapter 3.6) has remained in the public awareness since the 1970s, when she achieved recognition of the art world and currently presents her work as one of the few performance artists of the former decade.

In performance art, the 1980s are generally accepted as a period of decline of its ethical and anti-establishment ideas usually typical for the sixties. A substantial number of performance and conceptual artists turned to traditional artistic disciplines, especially painting or sculpting, and thus the conceptual artist’s cardinal rule of concept over product was broken. In other words, tendency and effort to become famous artist and to be sold, appears to be the driving idea of many artists of the eighties in the USA. The art world of the eighties was criticized for its disproportional attention to commercial business of art (Goldberg 2011).

Andy Warhol, an American artist, widely known as a leading figure of pop-art, was for this reason criticized in the 1980s. In relation to his exhibition held in 1980 at the Jewish Museum in New York, he came under strong criticism for he was in reality uninterested in Judaism and Jews. As follows from his diary notes, he was only convinced that the pictures ‘are just going to sell’.

Yet, *Warhol’s* approach towards art was later understood by a number of art critics as the most brilliant mirror of our times, as he reflected superficiality and commerciality of this particular era (Andy Warhol’ 80s 2017).

With a shift to commercial shows and cabarets, performance art became fashionable and fun entertainment for mass culture. At the same time, performance artists apparently contributed to fusion of traditional theatre with performance art and thus theatre critics started to pay attention to performance art too. Based on that, Bauhaus inspired “Gesamtkunstwerke” and several new operas were introduced (Goldberg 2011).

In the eighties, especially in the former countries of the Soviet Union, performance art was also understood as a means to express social protest.

3.8 The USA: the 1990s

The nineties were noticeably penetrated by performances questioning the identity of ‘otherness.’ Because marginalized groups – gays, lesbians, sex-workers, cross-dressers even the chronically ill and disabled developed material that was intentionally deeply disturbing, it became an interesting area for performance artist to investigate.

A high number of deaths caused by HIV led the artist to cope with the disease by several artistic forms. Many of the HIV positive artists engaged themselves in theatre, for instance *Reza Abdoh*, self-styled ‘outsider, queer, HIVpositive, emigré artist of colour, born in Iran, and educated in London and Los Angeles’ created complex theatrical events confronting issues as race, class and the AIDS crisis (Goldberg 2011).

Performance art also examined the acknowledgment of multiculturalism at that time. Several artists were inspired with rituals of indigenous cultures as well as spiritualism.

For instance, *Ana Mendeita* (1948 – 1985), a Cuban born artist demonstrated through violation and sacrifice of a chicken the violence done by society to her both as a woman and as a Cuban born woman. The piece was performed in 1972 under the title *Death of Chicken*.

“Mendeita stood naked, holding a chicken that had just been beheaded. [...] Its body jerked about in her hands and, as she closed her eyes, the death throes of the chicken reverberated through her and the blood spurted across her own body. This was one of her earliest performances documented in super-8 film, re-enacting the Cuban Santería ritual of purification through bloodletting, in which a chicken is sacrificed and its blood used to signify initiation into the community.” (Warr, Jones 2011, p. 101)

Another distinguish group of performance artists of the nineties examined new technology, and also investigating relation of society to it.

An Australian artist *Stelarc*, who dedicated his career to this issue much earlier, explored in ‘*Event for Stretched Skin*’ (1976) 1-G gravitational field and purpose of human skin. In this piece, *Stelarc* pierced the skin on the back side of his body with hooks and suspended himself in different spaces with ropes. He claimed, that he thought metaphysically, in the past, we have considered the skin as surface, as interface. The skin has been a boundary for the soul, for the self, and simultaneously, a beginning

to the world. Once technology stretches and pierces the skin, the skin as barrier is erased.

In *'The Third Hand'* (1976 – 1980) *Stelarc* exhibited his approach towards technology once again. He performed with a 'third hand' produced for him by Japanese robotic engineers, which matched the size of his own hand. He proposed the idea that the only evolutionary strategy is to incorporate technology into the body, which creates a new evolutionary synthesis and a new human hybrid with a new evolutionary energy. (Warr, Jones 2011, p. 184)

'Omnipresence' (1993) stands for the seventh live "performance-operation" of the French artist *Mireille Suzanne Francette Porte* known under pseudonym *ORLAN*. During this piece, *ORLAN* underwent a plastic surgery with only local anesthetics in order to be able to answer the questions of spectators who could ask the artist both before and during the operation. After the intervention, *ORLAN* juxtaposed photographs of her bruised, healing face with computer-morphed images of goddesses from Greek mythology. This emphasized the physical deformity and pain she was undergoing in order to attain a culturally idealized beauty. (Warr, Jones 2011, p. 185)

3.9 The USA: New Millennium

With beginning of the Internet, performance art could reach another dimension. Firstly, the Internet was a great opportunity for performance artists to start their own webpage, profile or blog and thereby connect with others and the public easily. Many new applications were introduced comprising of Vimeo or YouTube, often used by artists to show their recorded performances publicly. Secondly, the Internet itself and its influence on society and our approach towards it became highly reflected issue in area of art.

For instance, *Marina Abramović* performed a new piece during her retrospective exhibition *'The artist is present'* (2010), sitting at the table inviting the public to sit to her and offering to a stranger her complete attention. In New York, where this exhibition was held, reactions often included cry. *Abramović* explains the reaction of the public as follows: *"Very soon while you're having this gaze and looking at me, you start having this invert and you start looking at yourself. So I am just a trigger, I am just a mirror and actually they become aware of their own life, of their own vulnerability, of their own pain, of everything—and that brings the crying. [They are]*

really crying about their own self, and that is an extremely emotional moment.” (Stigh 2010)

In 2015, *Abramović* took a part on TED conference in Vancouver, talking about the modern society’s approach towards technology as being wrong, because the society lose the time they have for themselves. (Abramović 2015)

The Internet is not the only highly investigated theme of this particular era. Also ecological and political issues remain questioned.

An American actor *Shia Labeouf* introduced an online performance art project at the day of the inauguration of the 45th President of the United States, Donald Trump.

A camera, streaming 24 hours a day for the whole duration of presidency of Donald Trump, was launched outside the Museum of the Moving Image in New York for anyone who was willing to say out loud: “He will not divide us.” (Rayman 2017)

From a certain perspective, *Occupy Wall Street*, a movement protesting against economic inequality may also be considered as performative action. People gathered in New York and on September 17, 2011, and since then about 300 cities in the USA participated on Occupy movement. The protests were held around the world, including Czech city Olomouc, where the protest lasted for seven months.

4. Performance art today

'*Documenta*', an exhibition of contemporary art with a long tradition, which is held every five years in a German city Kassel (in 2017 also in Athens, Greece), could be an ideal opportunity to experience performance art today. Other possibility to reach this artistic phenomenon is to visit a museum with contemporary art, for instance *Tate Modern* (GB) or *MoMA* (US) organizing regular events dedicated to this issue and small galleries that can be found in almost every city around the world represent another option. Moreover, performance art can be produced in the streets maintaining its anarchistic image; for instance, a group of young people gathered at the Pilsen central Square of the Republic on the 17th November 2016 to honor the memory of 1939 and 1989 by depicting the heart of Havel (a symbol of a former Czechoslovakian president) above their heads.

The following subchapters investigate the issue from closer angle, because, despite the presence of performance art within the museums, galleries and festivals, the opportunity to acquaintance with performance art is usually quite limited for the general public.

4.1 Performance art and its interpretation in mass media

As a practical part of the bachelor's thesis the author intended to choose articles from the US magazines across the whole political spectrum and compare their contents. One of the objectives was to prove the author's assumption that the right wing articles about performance art may be more rejective in comparison to the articles from the left orientated magazines. Second objective was to conduct a quantitative analysis and thereby to describe frequency of publication of the articles about performance art in the US press.

However, the author came upon major difficulty, which limited the research to such an extent, that it was decided to change the whole practical part.

Conclusion of the former practical part would be following:

After the research on the articles about performance art according to the list of the US press published on the website of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, the author realized, that despite many of the magazines consist of a section about culture, none of them have written about performance art in the last few months.

The only exception was an article about *Shia Labeouf's* performative – conceptual piece '*He will not divide us*', mentioned by New York tabloid *Daily News* on March 31, 2017 (chapter 3.9).

It is nonetheless apparent, that performance art exists on the Internet. There are several websites dedicated to performance art or art in general, for instance US website *Artsy*.

4.2 Questionnaire

Considering the low media coverage of performance art, the relevant question would therefore be, how much the general public is in fact informed about performance art and how acceptable this phenomenon for the general public is.

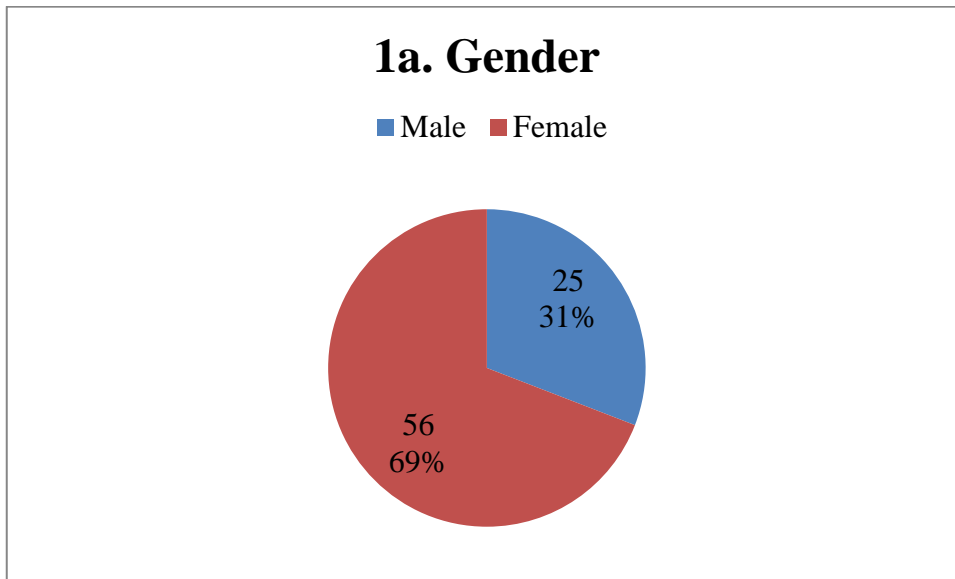
To receive the answer to these questions, the author designed an online questionnaire, in which 81 out of approx. 200 addressed people took part - that means 40.5% participation. Author shared the questionnaire primarily via social media (Facebook).

The questionnaire consists of 10 questions; five of them (1 – 5a) have practical purpose and helped the author divide the respondents into categories. The results are graphically depicted in diagrams, provided with the author's commentary.

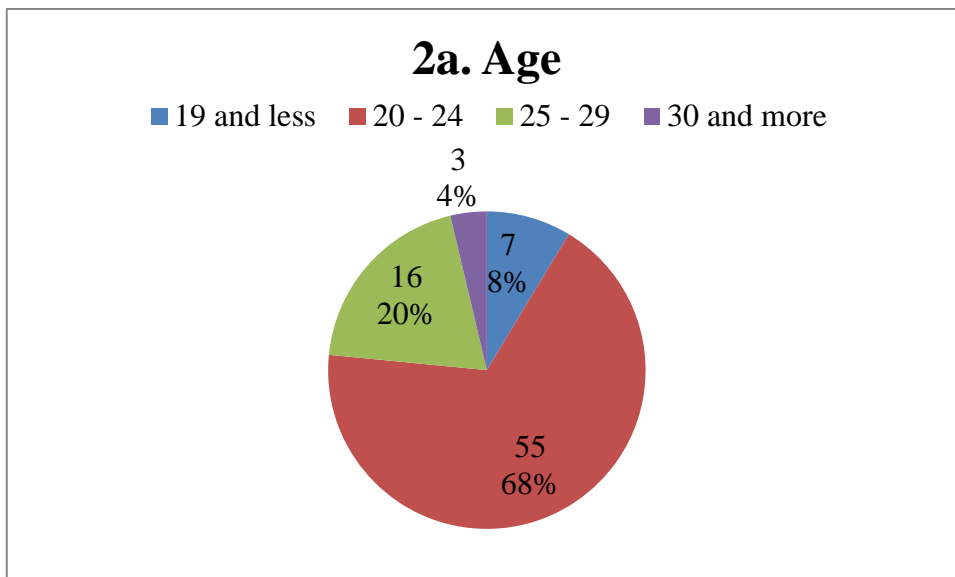
Gender, Age and other introducing questions

Gender and age were two criterions used in the questionnaire, because the author assumed, that there will be difference between the answers of men and women and also throughout different age groups. Questions 3 (*Do you visit museums, galleries, theatres, ...?*), 4 (*Are you interested in contemporary art?*) and 5 (*Have you ever heard about performance art?*) were also included in order to find more about connection between those who attend cultural events and those, who are not interested in culture at all and other potential links.

From 81 respondents, who took part in the questionnaire, 56 were women and 25 were men.



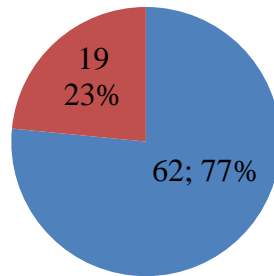
The strongest age group covered is the author's age group, 20 – 24-year-old respondents.



According to the questionnaire, 62 out of 81 respondents go to museums, galleries or theatres...

3a. Do you visit museums, galleries, theatres, ...?

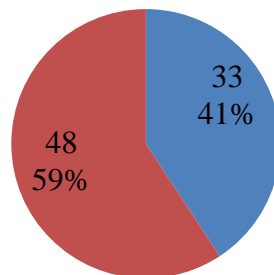
■ Yes ■ No



...but only 33 of them are interested in contemporary art.

4a. Are you interested in contemporary art?

■ Yes ■ No

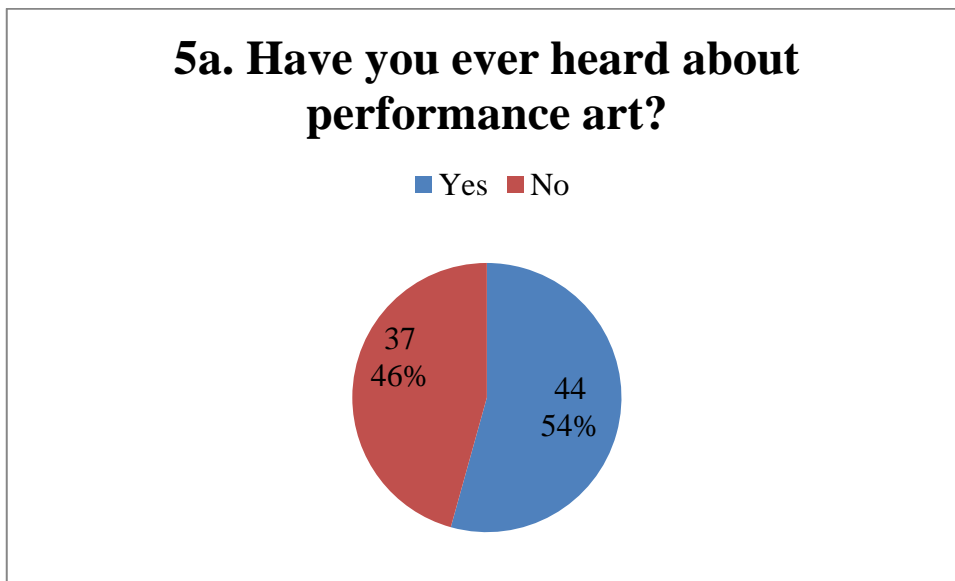


Have you ever heard about performance art?

Based on the results, 59% of the respondents who visit theatres, museums or galleries have already heard about performance art.

In case of the respondents, who do not visit cultural institutions, the results show that only 37% of them have already heard about performance art.

Concerning the data, it can be said, that going to a theatre or visiting a museum increases a chance that the person has ever heard about performance art.



5 questions about performance art

In the five following questions (1 - 5b), the respondent had the opportunity to read a short text about the particular elements of performance art. On a scale of 1 – 5, the respondent graded how much he or she likes the element or not.

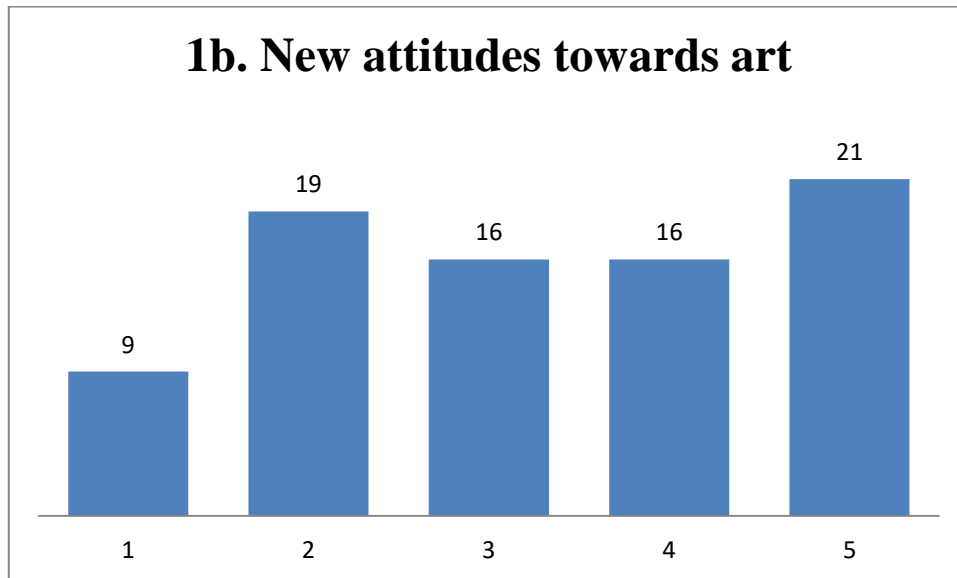
1. New attitudes towards art

In the present question, the respondent decided, how he or she perceived the 50s performative artwork of *John Cage – '4'33'* (chapter 3.3), which was chosen as an example of the avant-garde tendency of the first half of the twentieth century, showing a new attitude towards art.

Unlike the other elements, this particular one brings quite balanced range of answers. An interesting fact might be that the respondents, who are interested in contemporary

art, graded “new attitudes towards art” on average 2.79 in accordance to the others not interested in contemporary art, who graded the element on average 3.58.

The data therefore implies that whether a person is interested in contemporary art or not may have an impact on what the person thinks about performance art. Based on the questionnaire, those, who are interested in contemporary art, would grade performance art with a better mark and vice versa.

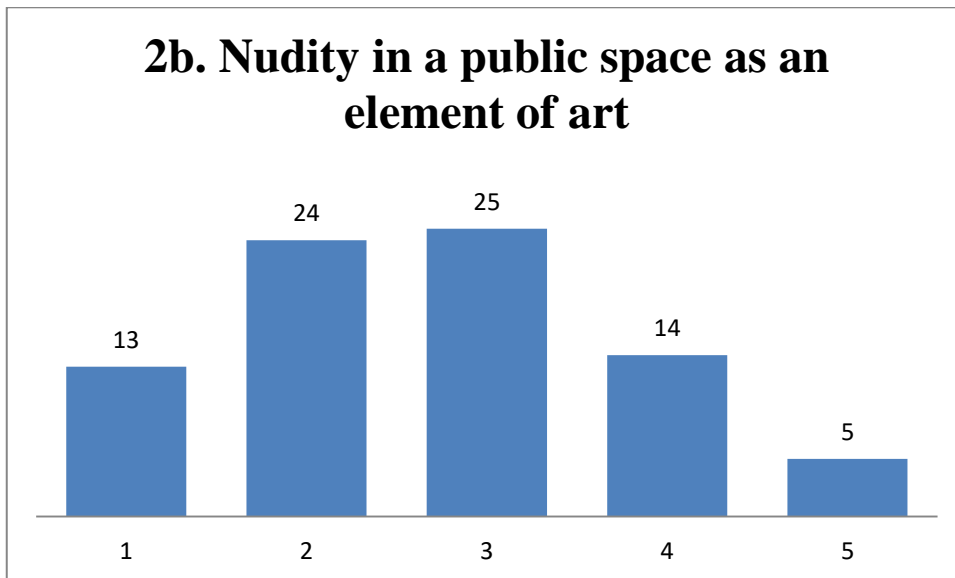


2. Nudity in a public space as an element of art

The author has chosen the artwork of *VALIE EXPORT*, an Austrian performance artist for this particular question. The respondent was introduced to *EXPORT*'s outraging ‘*Tapp und Tastkino*’ from 1968. In this performance, *VALIE EXPORT* went into the streets with a paper box fastened around her torso, beneath which she was completely naked. The paper box was a miniature of a theater in which “a movie was screening”. If the passersby wanted to “see the movie”, they pushed their hands through the box and touched the artist’s breasts. In this artwork, *VALIE EXPORT* reportedly examined the role of women in a film (MoMA [US], © 2017).

According to the results, men and women graded this particular element more or less the same. However, comparing the data about whether the respondent is interested in contemporary art or not (question 4a) with the results of this element, we come to an interesting conclusion.

An average grade of those who are interested in contemporary art is for this particular element 2.42. The rest of respondents, who are not interested in contemporary art graded nudity in a public space with an average 2.85. Once again, the factor of being or not being interested in contemporary art plays an important role.



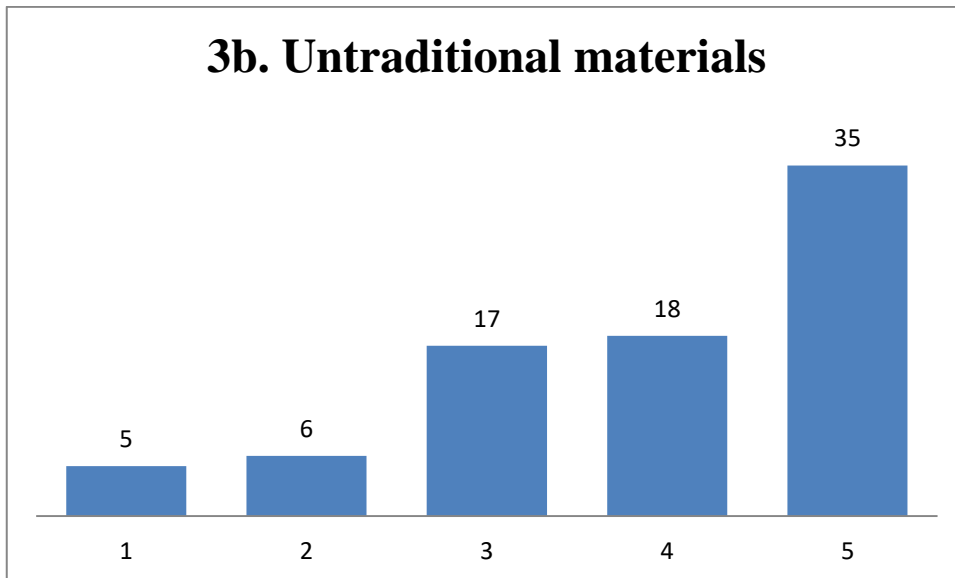
3. Untraditional materials

In order to make his ritualistic performative actions known as *Theatre of Orgies and Mysteries* more impressive, *Herman Nitsch* used the slaughtered animals, their blood and guts (Chapter 2.4).

Materials including faeces, vomit and semen were common for his former artistic colleagues and members of the *Viennese Actionism* (Chapter 3.4). The art group fought for individual freedom through confrontation with violence and brutality, and to a certain extent contributed to greater interpersonal and sexual tolerance. (Štědrová, 2012)

As the diagram shows, this element was graded the worst among the others. In this case, the author aimed at the 11 respondents, who, despite the tendency of almost half of the participants to grade the element with the worst grade, graded it as “acceptable”. The author’s assumption was that those respondents grading untraditional materials with 1 and 2 would grade the following element, a self-harm as an element of art, similarly positive. This assumption was proved, because the data

shows, that those, who graded positively (with 1 or 2) untraditional materials, graded “self-harm” on average with mark 2.9 which is considerably better in comparison to average 3.7 (rating of self-harm as an element of art by all respondents).



4. Self-harm as an element of art

In the following works, the artists employ physical pain or self-harm in their performances. Three artists were introduced here.

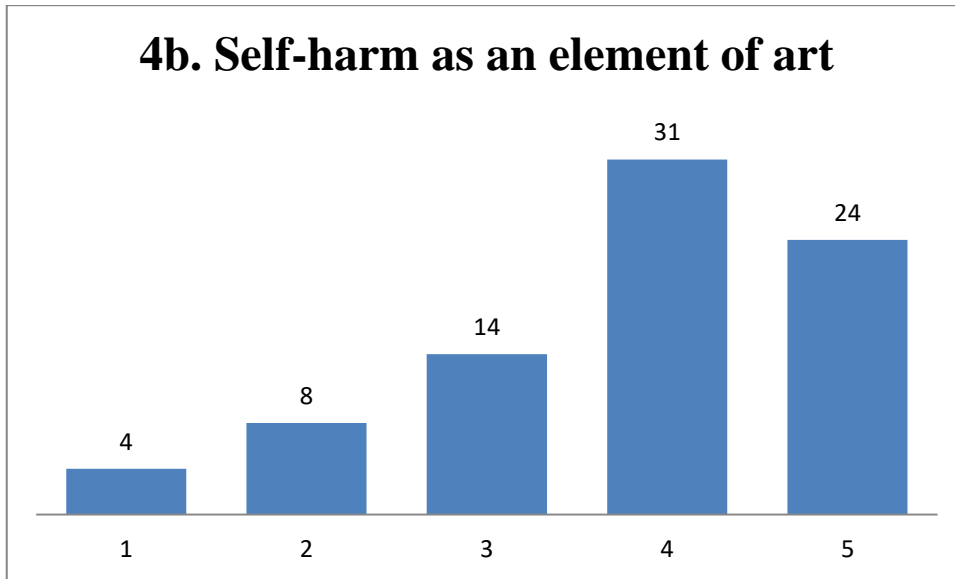
Chris Burden's works are more politically-based. For the questionnaire, Burden's 'Trans-fixed' was chosen (Chapter 3.6).

Marina Abramović explores in his performances human fear of death, suffering and pain (Chapter 3.6).

A French artist *ORLAN* deals with the taboo topic of plastic surgery and also pressure of the society on their members to fulfill the contemporary ideals of beauty.

Considering gender, the data shows, that there is only slight difference between the average marks.

Yet, we can say, that those, who are interested in contemporary art, graded this element generally better, than those, who are not interested in it.



5. Invisibility – therapy as an element of art

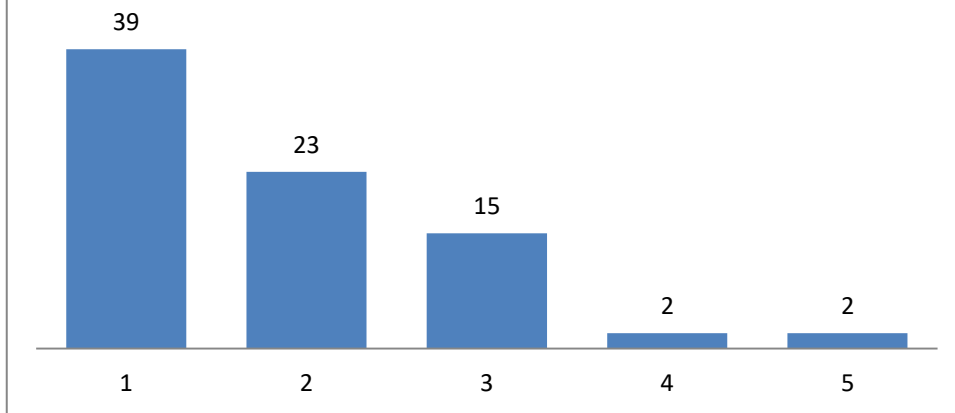
“For one thing, I don’t think people ever really look into themselves. We all try, as much as possible, to avoid confrontation.” (Abramović 2016, p. 309)

A current artist dedicating to the therapeutic-based performances is indisputably *Marina Abramović* (Chapter 3.9), therefore her latest performance ‘*The artist is present*’ was chosen as an example for this element.

This element was generally graded the best among the others. The assumption of the author by this particular element was that women would grade it more positively, because generally, women are considered as more sensitive. According to the data, the assumption was right, but there was only slight difference between the average grade of women (1.76) and men (1.96).

Again, the results follows, that the element was graded generally positively by those, who have a special interest in contemporary art.

5b. Invisibility - therapy as an element of art



5. Conclusion

During the 20th century, performance art had a tendency to distance itself from the society and from generally accepted forms of art (the 1st half of the 20th century - chapter 3.2, 3.3) followed by inventing new approaches towards art deploying elements of theater, music, dance or literature – simply anything.

Subsequently, performance art gained its position in the art world and found its place in museums and galleries. But behind the walls of the institutions with contemporary art, performance art appears to be still predominantly met with scepticism, even though its partial commercialization in the 1980s (The USA: the 1980s – chapter 3.7). As it follows the chapter 4.1 (Performance art and its interpretation in mass media), the scepticism of the general public might be caused by no coverage of performance art in media.

The question the author asked in the practical part follows:

“What is the relation of the general public to performance art today?”

According to the questionnaire, two out of five performances were graded by respondents as “acceptable” (average mark 3 and better). Namely, the element 2 (*nudity in a public space*), which was graded on average with 2.68 and the element 5 (*therapeutic element*), illustrated with *Marina Abramović*’ performance ‘*The Artist is Present*’, which was graded with 1.83. *Abramović*, a Beograd born American performance artist, may therefore be on a good way to fulfill the goal of bringing performance art closer to the bright audiences. The rest of the chosen elements were, however, graded on average as “not acceptable” (average mark worse than 3).

As mentioned above, the questionnaire follows, that three out of five elements of performance art were not accepted even today.

Whether performance art will gain more positive image in the following years is according to the author’s opinion possible but not probable. Especially, if we took into consideration among artists generally believed fact, that performance art does not tend to be accepted by masses in its nature.

Lastly, regarding the data, the author assumes that the more people will take an interest in contemporary art the less strange performance art for them would be.

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4.3 Sources of pictures in appendix

Picture 1

John Cage's 4'33" defies silence, 2016. [online]. [accessed: 11-04-2017]. Available from: <https://www.thepiano.sg/piano/read/john-cages-433-defies-silence>

Picture 2

Pomeranz-collection: VALIE EXPORT. [online]. © VBK, Wien, 2011. [accessed: 11-04-2017]. Available from: <http://pomeranz-collection.com/?q=node/40#flou>

Picture 3

VOGT, Jonas and Alexander NUSSBAUMER: *Hermann Nitsch*, 2010. [online]. [accessed 11-04-2017]. Available from: https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/hermann-nitsch-595-v17n11

Picture 4

New Exhibitions Museum: Chris Burden: Extreme Measures. [online]. New Museum Of Contemporary Art, ©2012–2016. [accessed 11-04-2017]. Available from: <http://www.newmuseum.org/exhibitions/view/chris-burden-extreme-measures>

Picture 5

BORECKA, Natalia: *The Most Terrifying Work of Art in History Reveals The True Cost of Passive Acceptance*. [online]. Lone Wolf Magazine, © 2016. [accessed 11-04-2017]. Available from: <https://lonewolfmag.com/studio-visit-jewelry-esigner-alexes-bowyer/>

Picture 6

Foto_museum: SITUATION #61: ORLAN, Omnipresence, 1993. [online]. © Fotomuseum Winterthur 2015. [accessed 11-04-2017]. Available from: <http://situations.fotomuseum.ch/portfolio/orlan/>

Picture 7

marinaabramovic.com: SOLO WORKS – The artist is present, 2010. [online]. [accessed 11-04-2017]. Available from: <http://www.marinaabramovic.com/solo.html>

8. Abstract

The aim of the bachelor's thesis is to inform the reader about the artistic phenomenon of performance art and its history with regard to the USA. The theoretical part is therefore dedicated to this aim. There, the history of performance art, distinguished performance artists and characteristic works of each particular era are explained to the reader.

The practical part of the present thesis is designed to understand the relation between performance art and the general public. It investigates general awareness about the phenomenon and relation of the Czechs to particular forms of performance art.

A part of the thesis is appendix containing pictures relating to the practical part. These pictures were part of the questionnaire, which has served the author as a main data collection tool.

9. Resumé

Cílem této bakalářské práce je seznámit čtenáře s uměleckým fenoménem performačního umění a jeho historií se zvláštním zřetelem na USA. K tomu slouží zejména teoretická část této práce. V ní je čtenář obeznámen s historií performačního umění, výraznými uměleckými osobnostmi a stěžejními díly jednotlivých období.

Praktická část této práce slouží k porozumění vztahu mezi performačním uměním a širokou veřejností. Zkoumá všeobecné povědomí o tomto fenoménu a vztah české veřejnosti k jeho jednotlivým uměleckým formám.

Práce je doplněna obrázkovou přílohou vztahující se k praktické části. Tyto obrázky byly součástí online dotazníku, který sloužil autorovi jako hlavní nástroj sběru dat.

10. Appendix

1.1 Pictures to the questionnaire

1. *John Cage, '4'33'* (1952) – Element 1, “new attitudes”
2. *VALIE EXPORT, 'Tapp und Tastkino'* (1968) – Element 2, “nudity in a public space”
3. *Hermann Nitsch, 'The Orgy Mystery Theatre'* (1960 - 1990) – Element 3, “untraditional materials”
4. *Chris Burden, 'Trans-fixed'* (1974) – Element 4, “self-harm”
5. *Marina Abramović, 'Rhythm 0'* (1974) – Element 4, “self-harm”
6. *ORLAN, 'Omnipresence'* (1993) – Element 4, “self-harm”
7. *Marina Abramović, 'The Artist Is Present'* (2010) – Element 5, “therapy”

1. *John Cage, '4'33'* (1952)



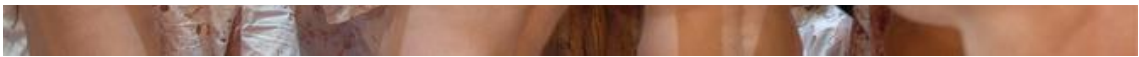


2. VALIE EXPORT, *'Tapp und Tastkino'* (1968)

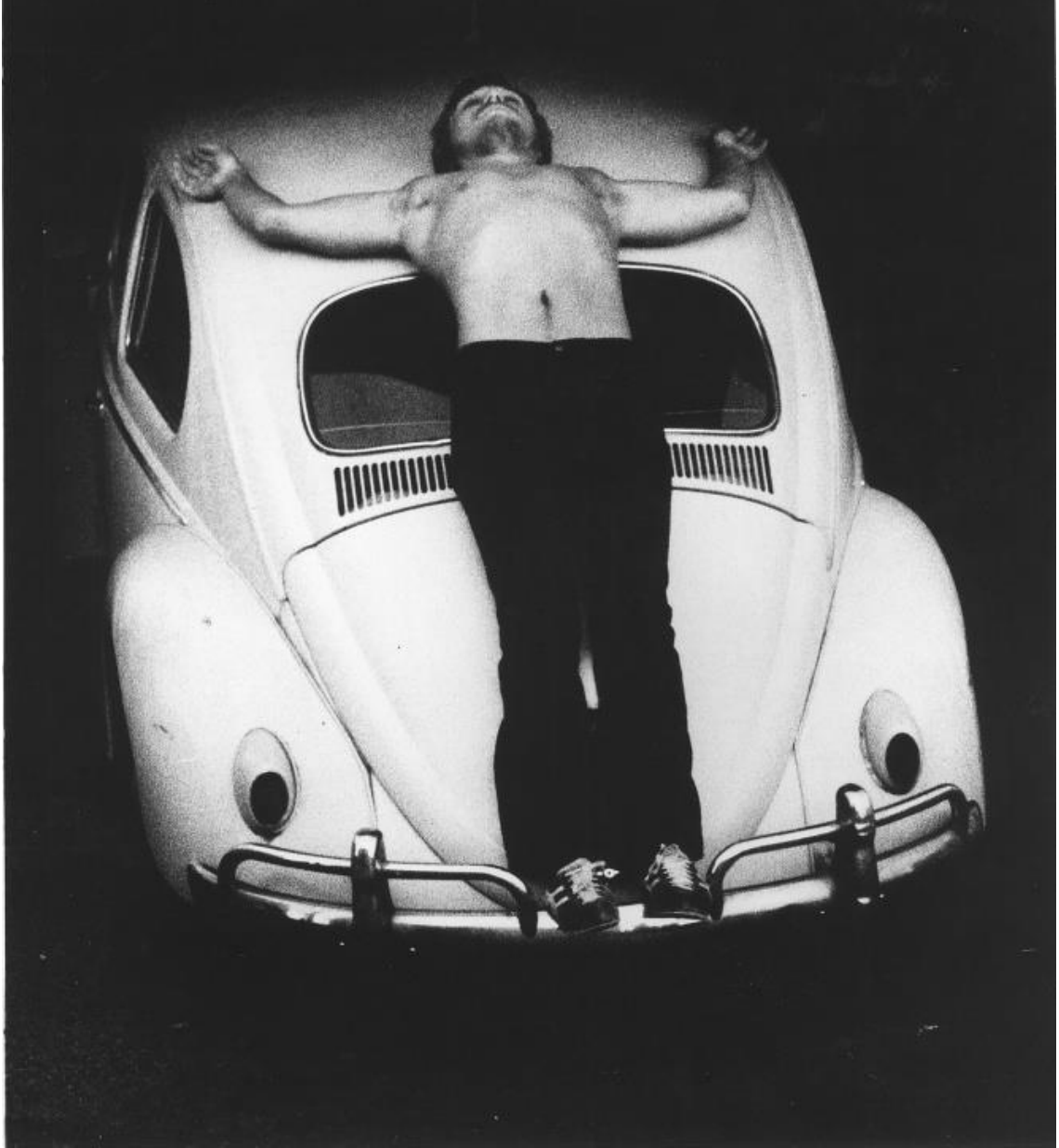




3. Hermann Nitsch, *'The Orgy Mystery Theatre'* (1960 - 1990)



4. Chris Burden, 'Trans-fixed' (1974)





5. Marina Abramović, *'Rhythm 0'* (1974)



6. ORLAN, *'Omnipresence'* (1993)

7. Marina Abramović, *The Artist Is Present* (2010)

