

XVI International Art Festival INTERAKCJE Spaces of Dispute / Spaces of Negotiation

Interactions 2014 is an art festival combining two strategic approaches to performance art: 'ideatic manifestation' and 'open process'. Finding the right proportions between the two should create the optimal formula of a cutting-edge contemporary performance art festival.

We wish to rely on a strategy developed during the Festival's fifteen years of existence, while opening up a field of experiences resulting from the specificity of performance art. We are proposing an 'art-in-process' Festival that, besides presenting existing works, will generate new ones in the course of a workshop programme. Besides the action segment, we are planning to establish a forum for the exchange of ideas and to initiate a discussion on theory/praxis based on the 'Performance on Theory' series which broadens the field of performance art by identifying its natural contexts: the intersections of the various disciplines of art. For this part of the Festival, we are proposing the title 'What Do Pictures Want from Us?'

Another goal of the Festival is to create and present works in the field of new performance art and its developmental strategies, functioning in spaces of visual communication predicated on the interstices of sculpture, drawing, dance, photography and so on. This will be realised through a new formula of the Festival as an open experience of art in process. Although its tradition is only several decades old, performance art has gained considerable authority and respect, as reflected in the establishment of performance art departments at North American and European, including Polish, art museums and universities.

The Festival's particular goal is to present the creative attitudes of a new generation of artists confronted with an educational tradition aiding the development of a vigorous, intellectually rich discipline that is performance art in its various hues. It is important to notice and analyse its intermedia context. The facilitation of generational and programmatic confrontations between artists from various parts of Europe is of great significance and may result in highly desirable – and artistically indispensable – disputes about values. As an artistic discipline, performance art formulated its definitions outside the framework of official art institutions such as museums, official art centres or art schools. The discipline's dynamic and global career has resulted in the establishment of festivals such as New York's Performa or of the performance section at Documenta Kassel, the participation of performance artists in the Venice Biennale, or the initiation of relevant educational programmes at art colleges and universities. The late 1990s and early 2000s fundamentally changed the character and quality of the Polish reflection on performance art, locating its centres in many different places on the cultural map of the world.

We assume that the Festival will provide an opportunity for recognising a new situation, the key segments of which are constituted by the spaces of creation and confrontation, of theoretical and historical reflection. Such a diagnosis is informed by my participation in numerous projects pointing to the fundamental importance of an open process of the creation of a work, defining its own educational programme. My ambition is to expand the boundaries of Interactions to include workshops and educational experiences, treated as autonomous spaces of contemporary art.