On Virtual FLUXUS

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary Technologies in art are available from the 1960’s. Virtual Fluxus is the result of more than a decade of digital practice events, which give a definition of the online world. This article on Virtual Fluxus discusses the paradoxes of the Virtual in Contemporary Art. It starts its discussion with a citation from Al Hansen, as: “Fluxus is a Virtual Reality system where the glove doesn’t work properly and the helmet doesn’t fit. Other things happen than what was intended”. In this paper, the author underlines that when Virtual Fluxus happened, the gloves and goggles began to work, and when inside, things were more gloriously broken than could have been imagined. In this paper, there are several examples of virtual artworks from different authors examined.

Keywords: Contemporary Art, FLUXUS, Second Front, Second Life, Virtual FLUXUS, Virtual Reality

INTRODUCTION

“Virtual FLUXUS happened when we got the glove and goggles working, and when we got inside, we found out that things were more gloriously broken than we could have ever imagined. The universe shattered before us, and it was beautiful.” – (Man Michinaga/Patrick Lichty).

Events create chain reactions. Stukas fall from the sky, to have their pilots cradled by shamans, and sometimes artists compulsively shop. Events unfold that describe the zeitgeist of an era. This is also, what it was said first akin to FLUXUS also applies to movements in the telling the story of the later 20th century through:

“... A mini-encyclopedia of aesthetic alternatives. Concrete poetry--Found structures of text; surrealist dream combinations--of unusual objects and events; futuristic, strong actions and images; Dadaist sense from nonsense; Zen meaning through Anti-Art; Turn-of-the-Century “Art For Art’s Sake’ becoming Forties and Fifties Anti- Classical-Academic-Understood-Formal Art postures.” – Al Hansen

But that wasn’t the end. From the fifties through the seventies, the rise of the Happening to the death of Maciunas, culture witnessed one of the most kaleidoscopic conglomerations of experimental practices in contemporary art; one that is only beginning to be understood at the beginning of the third millennium. FLUXUS, like its progenitors, Dada, Surrealism, and others, jammed a wrench in the conceptions of art, life, life-as-art, and art-as-life. It spilled over the edges of a loosely -wrapped Pandora’s box, setting loose off a torrent of intent and possibility. But like a poorly behaved child, FLUXUS refuses to be contained or to die quietly with after the death of its progenitors.

The question of death in terms of FLUXUS’ death is a sticky matter, as it seeks to inscribe
terminal points that it refuses to abide by in the first place. Maciunas’ death, for some, was for some the death of FLUXUS, and maybe it was, in the way that the “movement” or “project” was defined as flowing through him through in magazines and elsewhere.

But when Dick Higgins’ creation of the Intermedia Venn Diagram defining proposed a relation of an agglomeration of practices, Maciunas’ conception of FLUXUS became a subset of this torrent of cultural production, and not a compartmentalization of the whole. So, as Al Hansen mused, with the passing on of Maciuinas, in a way FLUXUS died in a way, but it also lives on.

VIRTUAL FLUXUS’ PROTO-CULTURE

So, why should one write about Virtual FLUXUS in particular? What is this additional circle on Higgins’ Intermedia chart, and what are its series of events and effects? It is the result of a complex chain of events, intentions and situations, and is not an arbitrary discussion. The virtual Neo-Dada impulse arose in 2006, when a number of artists logged onto into Second Life, a 3D online virtual world. These included Eva and Franco Mattes, Gazira Babeli, Scott Kildall, Doug Jarvis, Jeremy Owen Turner, Liz Solo, Penny Leong Browne, Tanya Skuce, and myself; all except the Mattes would found the performance group, Second Front (1). Much of this impulse began over with the question of the absurdity of performance without bodies. In addition, Marina Abramovic had questioned the whole of context in performance through her “Seven Easy Pieces” performances at the Guggenheim in 2005. From this, Kildall and the Mattes would remediate classic performances such as Yoko Ono’s “Cut Piece”(1) and Gilbert and George’s “Singing Sculpture,” (2) while Second Front began creating Happenings.

The first of these was “Breaking News,” when Second Front stormed the virtual Reuters News headquarters ‘and “yelling” out their own headlines. (3) This disturbance lasted approximately an hour, while casual onlookers, such as like one avatar named “Macky OH,” walked in and began a repartee with Second Front. The piece as such did not have a written score, but if it did, it might be (Figure 1).

Is this Virtual FLUXUS? To reiterate, to talking about anything FLUXUS is like the

Figure 1. Second front’s “Breaking News”
Effects of Editing Style on the Perceived Meaning: A Comparative Study Between Old and Young Egyptian Television Audiences
www.igi-global.com/article/effects-of-editing-style-on-the-perceived-meaning/90152?camid=4v1a