Chapter 1
The Basic Paradigm Shift in Contemporary Art:
From Stable Aesthetic Artwork to Conceptual Service of Art

ABSTRACT

The difference between modern and contemporary art, which in the present enters the names of art museums, is based on the notions formed in art theory and art history: whereas modern art is tied to aesthetics, artistic autonomy, author, and the concept of stable and finished artwork, the more fluid and conceptual contemporary art foregrounds the links of the art with the social, politics, economy, everyday life, science, and media. This chapter aims to explore media-shaped contemporary art projects in terms of art services that are algorithmic, cognitive, and conceptual. The service presupposes a problem, a challenge, or an order to be solved or carried out. The artist as a service performer is always faced with a certain task, challenged to solve it in a sequence of steps, chosen as economically as possible. The service therefore ends with a solution of the problem (or its removal) and not with the manufacturing of a finished object.
INTRODUCTION

The contemporary art is a broader field of artistic activity than so-called modern art defined by aesthetic modernism proclaiming the separation of art field from the social and other fields of a given reality. The profound changes in the field of artmaking as well are the result of constant efforts of contemporary artists how to define the field of their own quests and creations anew and time adequate. Contemporary art is considered as a problem, an unsafe field, an enigma, but it has neither vanished nor has it been abolished. In the sense of quantity, there is more art than ever, the only mistake is that we are often looking for it in the wrong places (just in traditional ones) and that we still judge art as-it-is-today by concepts and canons gained from experiencing the art as-we-know-it, namely as an activity linked only to artifacts (such as book, statue, painting, and also symphony and film), and to certain site specific institutions (galleries, museums, theatres, libraries).

The significant field of contemporary art that is “too pluralistic in intention and realization to allow itself to be captured along a single dimension” (Danto, 1995) are the new media art projects that occur at the intersection of contemporary art, networked economy, new (often beyond the state institutions driven) politics, technoscience, the Anthropocene issues regarding the expanded concept of life and ethics, and new lifestyle. The new media art pieces are often only one click away from in the Web embedded sites and portals of political organizations, social media, big corporations, and e-commerce, meaning that here is a different situation as used to be common within the modernist paradigm based on differentiation of artistic realm from the social. The new media art includes digital and post-digital art, activism and hactivism based art, Internet and Post-Internet art, techno-performance, digital literature, and software art (Rush, 1999; Greene, 2004; Manovich, 2003 & 2013).

Today, the very nature of art is being steadily questioned and conceptualized anew, the artistic nature of art is getting more and more instant, fluid, and temporary. In a similar fashion as Hakim Bey (1985) has coined the expression temporary autonomous zones, one can talk today about the temporary art projects as activists’ events and pranks that have artistic signification and justification for a very short period of time; they upspring in a very limited time, but in different time and contexts such projects could gain quite different signification and functions. They are multifunctional and their creators could by means of their artistic training and experience execute other, no strictly
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