A History of Public Art

Alla Kyselyova

Graduate student of Odessa State Academy of Building and Architecture, UKRAINE, Odessa, Didrihsone street 4, E-mail: kiselyovaalla@gmail.com, tel: 097 90 59 257

Abstract – This article describes the genesis of public art and its development.

Key words – public art, modern art, dematerialization of the art, artworld, institutional theory of art, institutional critique.

I. Introduction

Creating a space that would satisfy material and spiritual needs and stimulate the development of an individual and society as a whole has been a subject of an intensive search of modern architects, designers, art historians, sociologists and psychologists. An important role in formation of the spiritually ideal living conditions belongs to the objects of public art. They fulfill the social function, interacting with architectural environment.

To be able to define the modern art, we should address some of the historical circumstances, determining both its origin and development.

II. The Origin of Public Art

The origin of public art is determined by the fundamental changes that were taking place in the mid-60s of the 20th century. In these years there are many different artistic genres in art. 1965 witnessed minimalism and conceptual art. The result was what Lucy Lippard later called “the dematerialization of the art object” [1].

“Antiintellectual” emotionally-intuitive process of creating a work of art, characteristic of the previous two decades, and especially for the art of abstract expressionism, giving way to a conceptual approach, which emphasizes the thinking process [2].

Thus, the artists started to put less physical effort while creating their pieces and focused exclusively on the concept, engaging the professionals to complete them. As long as the piece of art is just the final product, many artists lose interest in embodying the concept. This particular trend leads to dematerialization of the art.

The need in theoretical explanation, which structure the objective process of art practice, arises.

Arthur Danto coined the term “artworld”, laying the foundational theory of art: “Any object – a urinal of a cardboard box – becomes a piece of art when it enters the artworld” [3].

In 1974, George Dickie wrote about institutional theory of art in “Art and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis” [4] and gave the definition of art and what could be considered the object of art. Accord to Dickie, the art in 21st century resembled scientific, political of business institution in its form.

He considered the “artworld” to be such institution. The “artworld” is the professional community (including art critics, artists, art dealers, psychologists and philosophers) which defines and appraises the objects of modern art. Introducing the object in this field, it reaches a "recognition of his right to be a work of art," says George Dickie, then he gets the recognition, and enters the world of art.

Further, a recognized art-world artist should focus on the destruction of the institution of art. Introducing new practices, it is designed to bring a new art object beyond the already recognized field. This paradox, where the artist opposes the art world, but with a focus on it and forms a paradigm in which the current practice of contemporary art.

III. The Formation Of Public Art

The epoch witnesses not only the change in pieces of art or the way they are appreciated but also the way they are displayed.

The term “institutional critique” first appeared in an article by Mel RAMED "On the criticism" in 1975. In it he raises the question of rearrangement of emphasis in the analysis of institutions. And claimed that the functions of the institutions should be reviewed on the basis of criticism of bourgeois individualism and removal "outside" of the principles of the capitalist bureaucracy, which determine the validity of all components of the system of art.

The artists in 60s stepped out of the art gallery: Table I.

| Table 1. The evolution of public art |

| TRADITIONAL TYPES OF ART |
| NEW TYPES OF ART |
| INSTUTIONALIZATION OF ART |
| MODERN ART |
| INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE |
| PUBLIC ART |

The new trend of “institutional critique” emerged. The term “institutional critique” was first published in the “Critique” by Mel Ramsden in 1975. This article questioned the focus in analyzing the institutions.
Ramsden claimed that their functions should be revised with regard to criticizing bourgeois individualism and actualizing the principles of bureaucratic capitalism which define the components of the system of art.

This criticized both the institutions – museums, foundations, galleries – and all the components of the system of arts. The specific character of “Institutional Critique” evolved re-defining the place and re-branding the display area.

The art entered the “public space”. The interrelationship strategies, involving the artist, the audience, and the museum, were reviewed.

Robert Smithson – in his declaration “Cultural Confinement” (1972) – described artists’ manifests of the 1970s, which aimed at putting the relationship between the audience and the system of arts outside the limits, dictated by the traditions: artist’s action – result – exposition – audience’s attention.

**Conclusion**

Today art can only be autonomous to the idea that it pursued until now, as seen in the example of post-modern art trends. The desire for liberation from all the pressure, expressed in all possible ways, the need to oppose itself artistic forms of the past has led to the denial of the principle of autonomy. The next step after the distance traveled autonomy does not exist, because it will be a negation of the negation, which can only mean rejection of the principle itself.

A much greater need for its further development and the possibility of retaining the aesthetic experience is the purpose and function of which lie outside. Art is facing a complete reorientation, because now it can no longer stay away from non-artistic purposes and functions, but quite the contrary, opens them for yourself and appropriates every time manifesting a special artistic way.

**References**


