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strategies of power

● From the 1960s onwards, the philosophy of art, or rather its critique, has - through deconstruction of the basic concepts on which the modernistic myth is based - been pointing to the existence of complex mechanisms and social technologies of production of meanings which can be ideologically mobilized with the aim of preserving the status quo to which art, just like all other areas of human activity, is not immune. It has become clear that what we call art is not only subject to the influences of ideology, but in fact functions as a constituent part of a specific ideology. The aim of the theme of this Congress was to determine possible extensions of the concept of art. The theme Strategies of power was divided into three sub-themes, each of which was the subject of one-day discussions. The sub-themes are as follows:

I. THE LEGACY OF MODERNISM AND THE IMPERATIVE OF MODERNITY

In the final decades of the 20th century we have witnessed the collapse of modernistic aesthetics, i.e. of the modernistic paradigm adhered to within disciplines of history of art and art criticism, which are based on, among other things, the principle of self-sufficiency of aesthetic experience, which in turn resulted in perceiving art as an autonomous area immune to various social causalities. This theme was designed to encourage discussion on the adequacy of the existing theoretical apparatus in the process of reception of the phenomenon we perceive as our contemporary artistic practice, in other words, about the significance and function of art criticism today.

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II. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

The point of issue for discussion is the claim that art in itself is not able to be subject to definition, or to be more specific, that definition of art can be formulated only with reliance on the institutional frameworks. The theme further promotes discussion on what constitutes, and in what way, an institutional framework (museums, galleries, critique, markets, mass media, etc.) by way of which something acquires the legitimate status of art, and somebody the status of an artist.

III. SEXUALITY AND POWER

In the sense of defining post-modernism as a crisis of cultural authority, particularly that cloaked by West European culture and its institutions, this theme was designed to inspire discussion on the influences imposed on post-modern thought, and production, by the feminist theories and feminist art practices, as well as the queer theory. The theme considers the technologies deployed to construct social identities by means of specific representation regimes manifested in visual arts, in film and in the mass media, and which are based on the construction of sexual difference. ●

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