

Ioana Palamar
Doctor in Visual Arts
Assistant Professor
Visual Arts
Faculty of Visual Arts and Design
George Enescu National University of Arts
Iași, România
ioanapalamar@yahoo.com

Smaranda - Sabina Moldovan
Doctor in Visual Arts
Assistant professor
Visual Arts
Faculty of Arts and Design
West University of Timișoara
Timișoara, România
smaranda.moldovan@e-uvt.ro

Art connection in the metaverse or online space. Visual Arts Painting and Performance.

Abstract

Art is one of the most influential and powerful ways of conveying ideas and emotions. Art is found in people's homes, in galleries, museums, and elsewhere. Artists have many ways to connect with their audiences; they can paint, sculpt, write poetry and drama, and create music and dance. In shaping the minds of others, the way an artist chooses to communicate is crucial. We use art to express ourselves uniquely, and it is an essential part of our world.

Each art form has advantages and disadvantages. Connecting the different mediums and the audience of different cultures may be a challenging task. In this article we will try to set up a methodology of building bridges and engage to a more wired society both in the real space as

well in the metaverse. The process of connection is a form of expression, an exteriorizing of an inner content. Both the process and the content in the art based research are discussed in the study cases of the article.

#visualarts #performace #artbasedresearch #research #abar

Authors biography:

Smaranda Moldovan was born and raised in Timișoara, Western Romania. She holds a bachelor's degree in visual arts-painting and a master's degree: *Sources and Resources of Imagery in Contemporary Painting* from West University of Timisoara, Faculty of Arts and Design. At the same institution, she developed her doctoral research project *From Painting to Object. From Object to Painting*, which explores the visual experience and the disappearance of boundaries between painting and sculpture from an artistic-philosophical point of view. She coordinates the group T40, the association of young artists under the umbrella of the Artists Union of Timisoara. As an assistant professor at the Western University of Timisoara, Faculty of Arts and Design, Department of Visual Arts, she is also involved in the educational field.

Her works, paintings, objects and installations, have been exhibited nationally and internationally at select galleries, museums, institutions such: National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (Cairo - Egypt), Korundi (Rovaniemi - Finland), Selçuk Ephesus Urban Memory Museum (Izmir - Turkey), Art Museum Galați (Galați - România), Art Museum Chișinău (Chișinău - Moldavian Republic), Art Museum Bacău (Bacău - România), Museum Vasile Pârvan (Bârlad - România), Espace Culturel Epinay-sur-Seine (Paris - France), Museum House of Humor and Satire (Gabrovo, Bulgaria), UNAGaleria (Bucharest - România), National Art Gallery Forma (Deva, România), Galleria Impatto (Rome - Italy), Gallery Jecza (Timișoara - România), Gallery Alfa (Arad - România), Calpe Gallery (Timișoara - România), Centre Centrifugeuse (Pau - France), Ataturk Cultural Center (Istanbul - Turkey).

Ioana Palamar was born in 1989 in Rădăuți, Suceava County, Romania. She has bachelor, master degree and doctoral studies within the Painting Department, at the Faculty of Visual Arts and Design, *George Enescu* National University of Arts in Iași (2008-2016). She studied within the frame of Erasmus scholarships international program at the *University of the*

Basque Country / Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea in Bilbao (2013) and at the *Alanus Hochschule für Kunst und Gesellschaft* in Bonn (2015). She also participated in art residency programs such as: *Alte Schule Hohenstein* in Kirchensittenbach, Nürnberg (2016-2017), *Glo 'Art* in Lanaken (2017), *ART STAYS Festival* in Ptuj (2018), *La Coyotera Taller Estudio*, Mexico (2022) and so on. In 2016 she organized her solo exhibition entitled *Ansichten des Ichs* at *Kult 41 Cultural Center* in Bonn and the group exhibition *Jam Art Session* in the same location, in 2019, in which she took part with the students and teachers from Painting Department, Faculty of Visual Arts and Design from Iași. In 2022 she had her solo exhibition called *Trace* at *Clavijero Cultural Center* from Morelia, Mexico, organized within *La Coyotera Taller Estudio* residency program. Since 2018 she coordinates *UNAGE Iași Art Residency* international art residency program with the support of the Faculty of Visual Arts and Design from Iași, during which there were organized the following art events like: *Da, mulțumesc* multi-media exhibition by the American artist-in-residence John Dillard (2019), British resident artist Stephen Polatch's *Drawings of Iași* (2019), *Pigeon Loops* performance by the artist-in-residence Amber Liberte from New Zealand (2019), *Play and stop* multi-media exhibition by the Japanese resident artist Tomie Seo (2019), *Factual tropes* by the American artist-in-residence Larissa Mellor (2021), *The Cur(r)ents of Mallet Creek* multi-media exhibition by the American artist-in-residence John Mcgarity (2023) and many others. In 2020 she won the *Youth Award* at the *Artis* collective exhibition. She published articles like: *Self-portrait in Middle Ages* in *Anastasis* journal, Artes Publishing House, DOI code, (2019); *Cyclicity in creation: from drawing to memory, from memory to drawing* in *Culture and arts in the context of cultural heritage*, Klironomy Journal, Ostrava: Tuculart Edition (2022) and so on. She is a full member of the Union of Visual Artists in Romania, Iași Branch since 2018.

She is interested in exploring her memories from her childhood and their strong influence upon her adulthood. According to Sigmund Freud's theories, mental processes and motivations are outside our awareness and during our development they are pushed into unconsciousness. Ioana is using art as a therapy in order to bring into her consciousness specific aspects from her past, by using a figurative - abstract painting style, her methodology of working being actually based on mixed techniques which imply mostly unconventional materials through which she succeeds in creating a specific materiality composed of various layers of materials which become a metaphor of our complex memory structure but also of our deep connections to ancestors.

Introduction;

The blending of multidisciplinary practices can be defined as a suggestion of expression of the phenomena of artistic process. Both a traditional empirical approach and a method of eidetic insight fail to capture the penumbral quality of expression. Husserl's discussion of 'expression' in *Ideas* (Husserl) refers to '*logical meaning*', i.e. to the unambiguous, the conceptual, the goal, to the realm of logos or language in its universal nature. The analytical criteria of conventionality and publicity are replaced by concepts of pure conceptuality and explicit meaning. However, the tendency to limit the phenomenon of expression to its most objective, specifiable dimensions can be observed in both cases.

There are other similar statements regarding the birth of modernism, such as that of the critic Harold Rosenberg (Balken), who wrote that the canvas at a certain point became a place in which an object was no longer produced or expressed, but a place like a stage on which to act, in a way predicting the emergence of performance and happening. However, one may ask whether other forms of human expression are as dependent as language is on fixed rules, content or contexts. The dynamics of current trends seem to find their source in working and thinking with modern artists. I say this because 1990s conceptual art produced images and solutions similar to those half a century ago. The solutions proposed by the new generation of conceptual artists have been adopted with far greater serenity, with fewer disruptions and shocks than those that preceded them.

Until the 1990s, the term conceptualist was often connected with insanity, ignorance and opposition, but this has changed with the new generations, who in the last decade have given the term a different connotation, with much softer implications, which may be due to the socio-economic and political environment, which has not been affected by as many transformations as in previous years.

But in the year 2020 a crisis emerged due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Due to the severe lockdown from March 2020, the new generation has been forced to adapt to a new environment in a short period of time in terms of creation cycles. Meanwhile, the creative industries, along with others, have experienced some setbacks. Galleries have closed, depriving many artists of a source of income.

However, in the first phase of the pandemic, there was no migration to online versions by actors in the creative sector. As the pandemic progressed, an online network of events was established.

Cultural events are increasingly being held online, with a growing number of cultural events being held online.

So this reiteration of themes, ideas and concepts over the past thirty years, reworked slightly, more elaborated, in order to be accepted by the public, could be seen as ready-mades after already created concepts, concepts that have been slightly modified from the previous ones, has changed due to another event similar to the great depression. Significant events changed the course and mentality of the artist, who, sensitive to the changes in the surrounding environment, reacted more forcefully with new ideas, new concepts and new technical visions. It can be said that, to a certain extent, you can intervene in the ideas that already exist and come up with the idea of creating art out of the art that already exists. In this way, through a new reconceptualisation and representation, tradition is reintegrated, re-proposed and re-enacted.

We believe that with our concept of "Connections" we have moved further away from this reintegrated tradition and have taken a step towards a new way of thinking about and approaching space and time in art.

Methodology

Memory on interconnections.

Memory has always played an important role in **collective unconsciousness** and this fact had a special importance in art history too. Generally speaking, past is considered to be the main source of inspiration which can be actually compared, visually speaking, to a giant on whose shoulders several ‘**layers**’ of centuries are constantly carried on, whether we like to admit it or not. Carl Gustav Jung’s researches about collective unconsciousness is a proof in this sense and I dare to state that personal **memory** is strongly **connected** to the collective one which incorporates geographical, social, cultural, political and historical aspects. Thus, one can consider that nobody is alone from this point of view; a human being itself is a sum of multiple ‘layers’ of former generations known or rather unknown. We are caring in the

structure of our spirit, mind and body an entire amount of information that we are actually conscious of in about 10 or 20% and if we have a strong desire to find our more, we need to make an effort to dig into ourselves and bring to light specific ‘numb’ aspects from our lives. We are connected to each other like a very intricate **network** we cannot get rid of as it’s imprinted in our genetic structure code. Our body itself is made from layers of various anatomical layers represented by our bone system covered by the muscular one and then by skin which has its own layers. And if we are trying to analyze the development stages of our mind since the prenatal period until let’s say an older age, one can notice the presence of multiple *layers*, in a form of life periods that we are continuously crossing and which inevitable come up in a very natural way as if they have always been there. Our brain develops and our body and mind follows the same steps; everything is happening in a continuous and unstoppable rhythm and cyclicity. We are regenerating, nature is regenerating, time is regenerating which means that it cannot be just ‘frozen’, as most of us thought that this happened because of the pandemic period that we have recently experienced. Nothing stops, not even death can stop anything and a proof is that a lot of generations during humankind history shared mostly in an unconscious way a lot of information no matter if it was expressed in a written, oral or unspeakable way. So all these things being said, I think that we are all connected to each other despite our differences as for race, gender, culture, physical space and so on. At the beginning of this world there was a unique land which was gradually divided by water and thus continents appeared but this doesn’t mean that humankind doesn’t have the shape of a whole itself. The historical **energy** has so much power that cannot be buried, it just needs to be discovered due to a thorough research.

Public intervention.

Performance over the years has become a genre in its own right, where art is presented live, also known as **artistic action**. Pablo Helguera (“Pablo Helguera » Blog Archive » An Aspect of Freedom (2016)”) in his view, the embedding of performance in social aspects of living is achieved by borrowing several conceptual mechanisms and strategies from the history of performance art and architecture. Helguera asks what is the meaning of performance art and what makes it sociologically oriented art. He also gives examples based on Louis Sullivan's theory of how the function follows the form applied on performative acts. In other words, the form of something should be primarily a function of its purpose.

Just as painting has a two-dimensional canvas, pigments, brushes, the illusion of three-dimensionality, i.e. time, space, the body and presence of the artist, and the relationship between the creator and the public, the content of the action has these basic elements.

The process of creating an artwork does not stand in the foreground, but rather the process of creating it: the collecting, the sorting, the assembling, the associating, the patterning. Process artists saw art as a purely visual form of human expression. Process art advocates the idea that the process of creating a work of art can itself be a piece of art. The artist Robert Morris placed 'anti-form' procedure and time before a finished artifact.

Communicative action theory (Habermas) is a critical project that reconstructs a concept of reason not instrumental or objectivist, but based on an emancipatory communicative act. Developing a concept of rationality that is no longer bound and limited by the subjectivist and individualist premises of modern philosophy and social theory.

The difference between symbolic and actual practice is not hierarchical; rather, its importance lies in allowing a certain distinction to be made: it would be important, for example, to understand and identify the difference between a project in there is a concrete action and a project in which imagination is the main instrument to fabricate a documentation of it in a digital medium. It would be a symbolic act, using literary and public-relations mechanisms to achieve authenticity and credibility.

Study case: Visual arts. Painting

In Renaissance, whether we are talking about tempera, fresco or oil painting, artists used to put emphasis on the color refinement and also on the methodological procedure which consisted in adding layers (in case of fresco technique, artists used to add layers of plaster and then water-based colors; in case of tempera technique painters used to add dark layers of colors consisting in pigments mixed with egg yolk combined with water and afterwards successive lighter shades were added and in case of oil colors technique artists used to paint a primer layer of light gray and then various layers starting with background, clothing, hands and faces, thus reaching a certain level of depth and color refinement (Cartwright).

Rembrandt used a complex technique based on lower opaque layers of colour covered with upper transparent layers, thus creating with great mastery transitions between lights and shadows through multi-layered glazing (Sato).

Starting with the modern period, artists used to change their way of working, as the living times used to be different, taking into account that in 19th and 20th centuries great revolutions in many European countries and in United States as well started for the sake of independency and fight for citizen's living rights which also had a strong imprint on the collective unconsciousness. There was a general restlessness which influenced artists' minds and their perception of time. Even art movements which appeared in this period were several and lasted for a few decades in comparison to Renaissance or Baroque style which used to last for a few centuries.

Claude Monet used to paint in a very fresh and spontaneous way, by adding first thin layers of color and then thicker layers, (Monet) and visible brushstrokes ("Monet's Shapes") in order to rework the surface of his paintings.

During the two world wars artists like Jackson Pollock ("Artists During the Second World War") began to experiment with unconventional materials added directly on large surfaces of canvas placed on the ground; the perspective of painting on a canvas changed and also the method of painting. The artist became part of his painting and his body touched the surface of the canvas. In his work entitled *No.5* Pollock used to paint thick layers of brown and yellow layers on top of it, creating a nest-like appearance (Pollock).

Francis Bacon (Brown and Bacon) used to paint often on raw canvases, as is the case of the artwork called *The study of a bull* where one can notice that underneath the bull he used real dust which became also a symbol of meditation on the ephemerality of this life.

The contemporary artist Mark Braford (Bradford) used to create a huge installation which had the shape of the gallery walls, by using layers of paper collage, textiles and paint.

All this being said, one can state that there is a strong **connection** between art techniques from past and nowadays, there is a string which crosses the art and history centuries... If artists since the early periods wouldn't have patiently created their artworks based on complex techniques, the contemporary artists wouldn't have thought about this possibility of interpreting some techniques or compositions from a conceptual point of view by changing the perspective. Past will always be a source of inspiration for the times we are living now. This concept of *layer* is visually represented in the images below which are my own paintings that were done in unconventional techniques by using overlapped layers of industrial paints, wax, oil colors, transparent varnishes and pitch whose aim was to achieve particular textures

highlighted by the *chiaroscuro* contrast. I started from a figurative style which represented some fragments of the human face and which were gradually made more abstract, being like a codified message, semantically speaking. In fact there is a dynamic between figurative and abstract styles, between clear and obscure (message) and between outer and inner world.



Photo. no. 1, 2, Ioana Palamar, *Essence; Pain*, 2023, mixed techniques on canvas, 80 x 60 cm; 70 x 50 cm

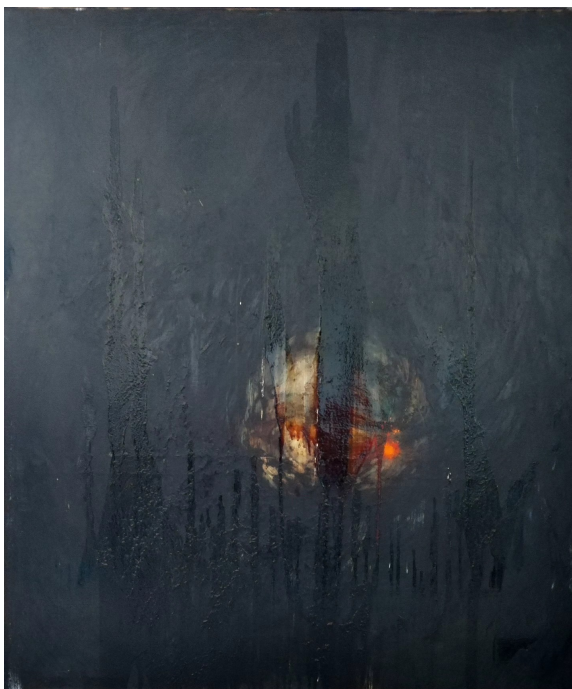


Photo. no. 3, Ioana Palamar, *Another world*, 2023, mixed technique on canvas, 200 x 150 cm (personal archive of Ioana Palamar).

Study case: Performance

Habermas (“Habermas, the Public Sphere, and Democracy: A Critical Intervention | Request PDF”) argues that social action as the performative act (social action as an 'acting' constructed by relationships between individuals) is more than an isolated individual's manipulation of circumstances to achieve a desired end (that is, more than the use of strategic and instrumental reason). Rather, he privileges what he describes as **communicative action**, a type of social action that is geared to understanding and communicating between individuals and that can have a sustainable impact on the spheres of public and culture as a genuine emancipatory force.

Instead "the inner form of language" theory by Wilhelm von Humboldt interpreted by Noam Chomsky in the debate with Foucault's studies of man, from history to linguistics and psychology, offers us the perspective of the language as a rule-based system that makes "infinite use of finite means", i.e. an unlimited number of expressions can be created using a fixed set of semantic and syntactic conventions. (“Human Nature: Justice versus Power”)

During the summer of 2018 with the ISEAS Finland (“(PDF) ISEAS 2018 | Katja Juhola and Smaranda Sabina Moldovan”) I started to conceptualize the performative act with the first performance at the KMart, Karjaa Raasepori. After the group exhibition *Bound* at Galleria Perspektiv was elaborated. The public intervention of "*bounding*" was created in collaboration with the Norwegian artist Kimmo Ylonnen. The starting point of the concept was the observation of the target audience during the first performance with the help of photo and video documentation by Alessandro Sabena and Daniel Fuss. Observing the documentation was used as a basis to start a dialogue with Kimmo regarding the Nordic approach to performative art. The dialogue led to the following observations: the shyness of the people; The safety of observation from a distance; Curiosity; Need for interaction.

On the basis of the clarifications offered by Kimmo, the seed of the idea to bring the people together was planted and it was put into praxis using a long red woolen wire. I first tied a knot between Kimmo and me and the Turkish painter Ahmet Ozel, and then between the other people who had attended the exhibition and the other public workshops.

Socially engaged art and the public intervention by non verbal communicative action operates by tackling themes and concerns that would normally be the domain of other fields, and temporarily shifting them into a space of ambiguity. It is this temporary appropriation of topics into the domain of art production that provides new perspectives and understandings of

a particular or complex problem or issue, and thereby reveals it to other disciplinary fields. In this case is clearly an acknowledgement of a *connection* with the art practice and also of *layers* of various perception perspectives regarding this performance.



HOPBUNDNA. Kimmo Ylonen och Smaranda Moldovan ville med sin performans visa att vi är sammankopplade fastän vi inte är släkt. Ahmet Ozel deltar.

SOCIAL KONST, ISEAS

Konst som använder livet som stoff

En dansande kvinna på gatan. Guldfärgade flaskor på affärshyllorna. Kärleksbrev av en okänd person. Karis och Ekenäs har i veckan varit scener för performancekonst.

I två veckor har sjutton konstnärer från Finland, Italien, Rumänien, Turkiet, Iran, Polen och Tyskland tillsammans skapat social konst i Itäseas. Det är tredje gången Iseas-symposiet kring social konst ordnas på orten. Denna gång var temat performancekonst.

Performance är egentligen en del av samfundskonsten, det är konst som sker ute bland folk och vars material är livet, säger konstnär Katja Juhola, som är arrangör för symposiet.

Konstnärerna har gjort två verk i Karis. Det första bestod av att de ob-

la verk. Dansaren Grazia Simeone från Italien dansade på gator och i affären. Många reagerade positivt på hennes dans och en bil stannade och personerna i bilen applåderade.

Grazia har varit dansare i många år men det var första gången hon dansat bland folk på gatan. Hon sade att hon alltid har dansat på en estrad och varit sig vid applåder. Det här var helt annorlunda, säger Mari Krappala som fungerat som Iseas-projektets mentor.

Konstnären Smaranda Moldovan från Rumänien deltog i performansen genom att ställa guldfärgade



KONTAKT. Grazia Simeone kommunicerade med folk genom dansen.

got. Många gick och tittade på mina flaskor och verkade lite förvirrade men ingen vågade ta en, säger hon. Själva fokuserar hon i sin konst på hur vi förhåller oss till tingens omkring oss. I exemplet med flaskorna visade hon på hur ett objekt kan bli helt annorlunda om det får en annan kontext.

Jag tog ett vanligt bruksföremål, en flaska, och förde in den i konstvärlden. Sen tog jag samma objekt och förde den tillbaka till affären. Då är reaktionerna helt olika, säger hon.

Päivi Päätsä från Finland skrev i sin tur kärleksbrev till främmande människor på gatan. Reaktionerna var väldigt varierande – en del blev röda, andra förlätna, några vägrade ta emot brevet.

Fint med liv i en död stad

En av de finska konstnärer som deltog var Kimmo Ylonen från Norrs-

– Ikara ett halvt dussin personer pratade med mig, och de flesta sade att det är bra att någon gör något i denna döda stad. Men i allmänhet var det så att folk verkade intresserade, men på avstånd. På det finska sättet, säger han.

– Kimmo blev en viktig länk till publiken. De reaktioner han fick hjälpte oss att förstå hur publiken tog emot vår konst, säger Moldovan.

Konst sammanlänkar allting

I onsdags var konstnärerna i Ekenäs bibliotek och hängde upp en utställning om projektet i galleri Perspektivet, samtidigt som de fortsatte att skapa performancekonst. Smaranda Moldovan och Kimmo Ylonen gick omkring hopbundna med ett rött yllegrann och försökte interagera med folk.

– Den röda tråden symboliserar en blodslänk. Även om vi inte är släkt

Symposiet

Iseas står för International Socially Engaged Arts Symposium.

Konstnärer från Finland: Mikko Paakkola, Roi Vaara, Kaisa Lipponen, Kimmo Ylonen och Päivi Päätsä.

Internationella konstnärer: Beate Linne (Tyskland), Sanyia Torimmarad-Jozavi (England/Iran), Sarah Bowyer (Italien/England), Malgorzata Andrzejewska (Polen), Daniel Fuss (Israel), Pooneh Jafarnejad (Iran), Grazia Simeone (Italien), Ahmet Ozel (Turkiet), Smaranda Moldovan (Rumänien), Alessandro Sabena (Italien), Marcello Maggioni (Italien) och Justyna Andrzejewska (Polen/Frankrike).

Ordnades också i fjol. Då samarbetade konstnärerna med samfund och skapade bland annat väggmålningar i Svartå skola och Mustion koulu.

någon kommer närmare för att se vad de gör får de en liten teckning eller målning med sig.

– Det är ett sätt att ge folk energi. Jag älskar att arbeta framför människor och det här projektet har varit mycket intressant, säger Bowyer. Utställningen om Iseas-symposiet pågår i galleri Perspektivet till den 9 september.

Photo no. 4. Article about the Bound performance in Tammisaari Finland. (screenshot from personal archive of Smaranda Moldovan). In the picture above, Smaranda Moldovan with Kimmo Ylonen and Ahmet Ozel with the red rope.

Results

Two examples of artworks with an ethical and social purpose, but which function through the representation of ideas or problems. These are works that address social or public issues only on a figurative, metaphorical or symbolic level (e.g. a painting about social issues is not very distinguishable from a public art project that claims to offer a social experience, but only in a symbolic way, as above). The artwork does not control a specific social situation in an objective and strategic way in order to achieve a specific outcome.

The results are only at the theoretical stage and will be on display at the Art Gallery of Auckland, New Zealand in March 2024. The connection between people, culture, places and ideas will be the main theme addressed to the public through visual art and performance. Two other artists will be involved, namely the choreographer Amber Liberte from Auckland, New Zealand and Alina Tofan from Bucharest, Romania who will participate in an online performance that will be documented as a video performance.

The main reason for this interaction is the fact that the New Zealand society was one of the last to come out of the lockdown. The side effects on the community are well visible. In order to build a bridge of understanding, to mitigate the side effects of isolation and to create new opportunities for social interaction, action art and public manifestations, we decided to focus the exhibition concept on community issues.

Connection is a form of expression. It is the outward representation of a substance. Both the processes and the contents of arts-based enquiries are explored in the case examples in the present and future contribution.

Conclusion

We find that different people with very different cultural influences of a particular medium arrive at highly congruent systems by overlapping layers of memory, of transgenerational genetic, empirical and emotional heritage. You have to dig deep to become aware of them.

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