

UDC 7.001.11:75 Бойс+373.67

**ALL HUMAN QUESTIONS CAN ONLY BE QUESTIONS
ABOUT CREATION: THE EXTENDED CONCEPT OF ART BY
JOSEPH BEUYS AS AN INSPIRATION FOR EDUCATION
IN THE FIELD OF ART**

Barbara Kwiatkowska-Tybulewicz

This article focuses on presentation of the German artist Joseph Beuys as an inspiration for today's artist, who work on the edge of art and pedagogy. The educational turn in art in 21st century is a very important phenomenon for pedagogues working in the space of art. Beuys combined art and pedagogy in his extended concept of art, so he is precursor of art-as-pedagogy. The article shows the most important pedagogical issues in Beuys' artistic activity: education, creative activity, upbringing and human consciousness. For him art is a medium which has a big power to shape the world. The article presents the extended concept of art created by Beuys (a presence of creative potential in every human being), the spaces of crisis in the modern world (the military threat, the ecological crisis, the economic crisis, the crisis of consciousness and sense of life), and the importance of art and education in Beuys' theory (art and education as a basic field stimulating creativity and contributing to the development of a man and the whole society). Joseph Beuys is an inspiration for today's artists and educators, because he combined art and pedagogy in his socially engaged art, intersecting artistic goals with pedagogic ambitions. However, he did not stop at creating the artistic-social theory but he tried to make it real through concrete artistic and pedagogical activity which have been described in this article.

Keywords: Art, pedagogy, Joseph Beuys, engaged art, creativity.

Introduction

The German artist Joseph Beuys (1921–1986) was one of the most important precursor of socially engaged art, combining artistic activities with social and pedagogical elements. He started from the theory of sculpture in visual art (an artist creates a piece of art using his creation) and came to the concept of social sculpture, in which he presented the situation, when free individuals, using their creative activities, form society into the shape of work of art. Art educators especially pay attention to pedagogical involvement of Beuys. He repeatedly said, that the most important thing is to bring up creative and conscious people, who are able to take responsibility for the future of the world. His permanent

emphasizing of importance of education, upbringing, creation and human consciousness is still a great inspiration for educators working in the field of art and for artists combining artistic and pedagogical elements.

Art-as-pedagogy

Attaching contemporary art to educational activities seems to be very important. In a situation, where art can be found everywhere, not only in museums and schools, but also on the streets, in public space and in the Internet, knowledge about contemporary artistic activities can help teachers in their pedagogical work. Contemporary artists also reach for pedagogical forms of activities, e.g. workshops, lectures, discussions, lessons, seminars, reading rooms, libraries, publications etc. Artistic experiments with educational nature have been becoming more frequent recently. As Claire Bishop emphasizes in her book *Artificial hells* (Bishop, 2012), in the 21st century, we are witnesses of a decisive increase of number of artistic-pedagogical projects undertaken by artists. This situation is a result of increased interest in the relationship between art and pedagogy in both, artistic and educational environments. More and more artists and curators are involved in projects, that appreciate forms and methods from the educational sphere. The projects of Tania Bruguera, Paul Chan, Paweł Althamer and Thomas Hirschhorn clearly indicate an educational turn in the contemporary art. Education is becoming interesting for the "art world". Because of this, educational departments in cultural and artistic institutions are developing intensively. A noticeable in the 21st century educational turn in art and curatorial practises requires a change of pedagogue's way of thinking about the way of teaching art and including art to pedagogical practices. Art becomes not only an artistic activity, but also an element of scientific or research activity (e.g. development of methods of qualitative research: art-based research, pedagogy based on performance etc.). Precursors of contemporary artists working on the edge of art and pedagogy, are: Luis Camnitzer, Lygia Clark, Jef Geys, Tim Rollins and of course Joseph Beuys. The last one said, that "to be a teacher is my greatest work of art" (Bishop, 2012, p.243).

The extended concept of art

For Joseph Beuys art is a medium, which has a big power to shape our world, social reality and interpersonal relations. The starting point of his artistic and social theory was the unique and specific concept of art. Art ceased to be seen only in the area of artistic activity. It became present in every creative activity, in transforming all forms in reality, also in social or economic spheres. His total concept of art applied to all forms in the world: not only to artistic forms, but also to social or legal forms, to earning money, agricultural problems, to the issue of creation and the sphere of upbringing and education. All human

questions can only be questions about creation – and this is the total concept of art. It refers to ability that everyone of us is a creative being (Dagmar, Diwo, 1993).

The extended concept of art (also called by Beuys: the total concept of art, the social concept of art or anthropological concept of art) assumes the presence of creative potential in every human being. The legendary statement of artist: "Jeder Mensch ist ein Künstler" (every man is an artist) pointed to the fact, that every person has creative possibilities, which they can develop, and through which they are able to transform the existing reality and shape the world in which they live. Creativity is the basic force inherent in a human being, and it is the greatest capital of man, which allows him to overcome all forces, captivating man in the world: objectification, alienation, mindless subordination etc. Creative ability helps to regain freedom and self-determination. However, it is not an arbitrary act, but is the one based on responsibility and observance of moral values. Creativity occupies a central place in Beuys's concept, as the capital of every society – so it becomes an economic value.

The spaces of crisis

The artistic and social concept created by Joseph Beuys had its strong justification in the socio-political situation in West Germany and other countries of Western Europe and Eastern Europe. The criticism of existing social orders was the starting point of building the concept of a society of justice and peace. This specific kind of social utopia is interesting not only from artistic or social perspective, but also from pedagogical point of view. The artist noticed the symptoms of crisis in four areas of the modern world: the military threat, the ecological crisis, the economic crisis and the crisis of consciousness and sense of life.

The arms race between West and East, nuclear weapons and military activities are a gigantic waste of creative capabilities of millions of people, which are used to produce means of destruction instead of creating the people-friendly world. An artistic critique of this problem was made by Beuys during performing with the rock band the song "Sonne statt Reagan" (Sun instead of Reagan), as a protest against the policy of Ronald Regan, which was criticized by the leftist circles of Western intellectuals. The song was first performed on 25th May 1982 in the television show "Bananas" (Kaczmarek, 2001, p.40).

In many works, art actions and drawings Beuys was against the destruction of the natural environment by modern civilization. One of such action was "Action on the swamp", organized near Ostend in August 1971, during which the artist, protested against the project of drying the swamps, immersed himself in the swamp and lubricated the body with slime.

Beuys claimed that the swamps are the most vital element in the European landscape, not only in terms of the flora and fauna present there, but also as a place of life appearing in legends and folk tales, as a mystery, chemical change, reserves of ancient history. The swamps are the essence of the entire ecological system: they take part in the regulation of water level, they affect humidity and climate in general. Drying them was something, that he could have never come to terms with, that was why he showed his own opposition using artistic language (Jedliński, 1990, p.62). In another action in December 1971 "Overcome the dictatorship of the party" Beuys defended a part of the forest in Dusseldorf, which was to be cut down in order to prepare the space for tennis courts. The artist along with his students cleaned paths from autumn leaves and painted white circles and crosses on the trees, which were designated for cutting. The most spectacular action of this kind was the action of 7 000 oaks, which was launched on 19th June 1982, during the seventh edition of the Documenta in Kassel. Beuys intended to plant 7000 trees in Kassel and in the neighbourhood until the next edition of Documenta which was to take place in 1987. Unfortunately, the artist died and his action was finished by his son Wenzel (Kaczmarek, 2001, p. 41).

Another threat to the modern world, which the artist tried to oppose through his artistic projects, was an economic crisis, especially unemployment. He criticized the laws of the market, artificial awakening of consumer needs, excessive, unnecessary production, conflict of interests between employees and employers. He did not spare harsh words to both capitalism in the West and to socialism in the East, because in both of these systems employers and employees stood on opposite sides of the barricade, and that situation was catastrophic for social relations. He also saw the crisis of modern democracy, which he called "apparent democracy".

Man, living in a world full of conflicts, crises, misunderstandings, succumbing to the force of the state, the market and the entertainment industry, experiences a crisis of consciousness and losses the sense of life. This leads in the first place to the disappearance of creative forces. Later it can cause many negative phenomena, such as alcoholism, drug addiction, depression, suicides, but also harmful, excessive hedonism. Beuys introduced this problem in the installation "Economic values", presented in Ghent in 1980 as a part of the exhibition "Art in Europe after 1968". Various everyday objects and food products from the GDR, Poland and the Soviet Union were placed on the metal shelves, and the walls of the room in which the shelves were arranged, they were decorated with paintings from the 19th century. The confrontation of art (in the form of paintings) with the objects from everyday life was aimed at clearly showing the disproportion between the values carried by art and those by which we are tempted by the economy and industry. The artist emphasized that a man

should be guided towards spiritual values, because only thanks to them he would be able to overcome the crisis of consciousness, and thus any other crisis: military, ecological or economic.

Beuys pointed out several reasons of crisis, but particularly emphasized two of them:

"It can be said that the two elements of the structure of social order that took over power in the 20th century are the reason of this difficult situation: MONEY and THE STATE, it means the roles which were granted in these systems to money and the state. Both elements have become decisive means of power. AUTHORITY HAS THE MAN, IN WHOSE HANDS ARE MONEY AND/OR THE STATE." (Kaczmarek, 2001, p.44)

Thus, the artist criticized both capitalism – based on the power of money, and socialism – focused on the strong state. According to him, a man should be in the central point of every system. Money cannot be an aim itself but only a means to satisfy human needs. The role of the state should also be minimal. In various political systems state interference in areas such as education, culture, economy is too intrusive and the artist claimed that it should be limited.

Joseph Beuys also mentioned another reason of deepening of the crisis in Europe: "americanization". He touched this problem in one of the most famous artistic action "I like America and America likes me" performed on 23th – 25th May 1974 at the René Block Gallery in New York. After landing at the airport, he was wrapped in felt and was transported to the gallery, where he stayed for three days in a room with a coyote, and then after another trip to the airport in felt, he flew back home. He had a meeting with the coyote – an indigenous animal of the American continent, worshiped by Indians, despised and persecuted by Americans. The artist did not "watch" and did not "touch" the American soil. He was only transported in felt from the airport to the gallery and back. In addition, a place, where he was with the animal, was full of copies of the Wall Street Journal, on which the coyote urinated. This was a clear insult to the US stock and financial system.

The importance of art

Communism and capitalism drove a man into a dead end. The artist emphasized that it was not too late to break away from this situation and to realize the idea of a better society. The basic force, that builds social concepts and contributes to their implementation is art. Art in an expanded perspective is a creative approach to reality. Thanks to art and with a help of thinking and action of every human being, the transformation of reality is possible. For Beuys only art was capable of introducing a new culture that would overcome the unhealthy relations in our deadlocked civilization. In the sphere of art, concepts, that actually challenge modern orders and our science and our positivist, materialistic,

divided or atomized culture, are being discussed. In the above statement the artist mentioned an important element of his theories, namely the concept of revolution, as a method of designing new artistic and social concepts. According to him, a change of the world should be started from a change of concepts. It is the reason of his extension of the concept of art (Beuys, 1978, p.2).

Presenting Joseph Beuys as an artist who is important for pedagogy, it should be noted that he developed (on the basis of plastic theory) the concept of social sculpture, which was also called social art, social architecture or social sculpture of warmth. This concept is interesting because it becomes a vivid transfer of artistic theory on the real, social ground. Artistic creation was for Beuys a catalyst for changes taking place in a man and leading to transformation of reality. His own activity was classified by him as a sculpture, a sculpture still unfinished, unspecified, constantly changing. Justifying this permanently changing form of his activity, he spoke about the main goal of his artistic work: stimulating discussion about art and about the world. According to his theory, social sculpture is nothing other than "how we shape and model the world in which we live. Sculpture as an evolutionary process. Everyone is an artist!" (Jedliński, 1990, p.10). The artistic material for people, who live in society, is the social sphere, actively transformed by them. Everyone is appointed to creatively transform the world in their area of activity, regardless of their social role. Art gives a man strength for self-development, for transgression of his own borders, for shaping subjectivity towards other people. For the German artist, society was a unique kind of piece of art, and every member of society was an artist. Beuys established a social process in which everyone, as a creative individual, creates a piece of art, of which he himself is a component. The name of this work of art is society. As an example illustrating this way of thinking in the concrete artwork, we can recall the work "Shovel with two shafts" from 1964, which indicated the need for mutual cooperation and symbolised a unified, harmonious organism, full of love (a metal part was in the shape of heart), and openness to another person and their needs.

Beuys propagated his ideas during numerous discussions, interviews, articles and artistic and political actions. In addition, he was actively involved in political activities. His entire socio-political activity was placed in the broadened concept of art. Politics, as part of an area in which people operate, was also treated by Beuys as art. A politician must act as an artist – constantly using his creative skills.

The importance of education

Beuys wanted to actively influence the social reality and make slow changes which could in the future lead to a change in mentality of people. His basic intention was to influence people's consciousness and change their way of

thinking. How could this be done? I think that the answer of the German artist is particularly important for educators: the most important is education and upbringing of children, public lectures and open meetings for all citizens. The artist claimed that building a new world, a new society should begin from the process of education, process of teaching and bringing up individuals. The most important thing became the issue of awakening awareness, education and information. Education, permanent awareness of people occupied an important place in Beuys' theory. As a teacher, he introduced his assumptions to life by organizing seminars, lectures and discussions in which he and invited by him guests talked not only about art, but also about issues related to social, economic, pedagogical, ecological and political problems. Unfortunately, the artist noticed a big crisis in education. He criticized primarily the fact of the unilateralism. He connected the crisis of education with the crisis of the whole society. He empathically emphasized the huge role of art in the process of education and regretted permanent underappreciation of influence of art on shaping human beings. Beuys treated art as a basic field stimulating creativity and contributing to the development of a man and, consequently, the whole society. Thanks to art people can develop comprehensively, face questions about culture, religion, ethics and metaphysics.

"Man, as a child, is brought up to become a specialist. He actually is born already as a specialist, to be installed anywhere in society, as a circle, a mechanical part. It should not be like that. When one says: education should be universal, it should mean: a man in the process of education must be confronted with all aspects of the world. This corresponds with the extended concept of art and extended concept of science." (Beuys, Haks, 1993, p.50)

Schools were treated by Beuys as the most important enterprises, because they shape a conscious, free, creative man. Education should be comprehensive so that a student is prepared for subsequent acquisition of specialist knowledge. An important concept within his teaching theory was a teaching-learning system, which was based on a very flexible teacher-student relation. The educator should be ready for the fact that in some situation of a complicated educational process, he can change his position from the preacher to the preceptor. A pupil can also be a teacher, if he has knowledge about a certain topic. This situation is especially possible in interdisciplinary schools, where socio-political issues are often discussed. A readiness of both parts of education process (teaching and learning) to change the place in teaching-learning system is the basic condition of a free school. Beuys did not exclude a need of authority – the child needs a tutor and this presupposes the existence of authority.

For the creator of the theory of social sculpture, the most important thing was the upbringing of a free, independent and creative individual (creativity not only referring to the material sphere but also to the moral sphere). Schools and universities were so important to him, because people could acquire there such important "spiritual food". That's why he encouraged for opening departments of Free International University. In his vision, there were workplaces transforming into specific universities, in which, apart from producing material goods, "spiritual food" could have also been produced (even at numerous lectures and discussions). Thus, for Beuys the beginning of the realization of the new reality was education (education through art, which was understood in broader context): not only at schools or universities, but also in workplaces or in special "information points" in towns and villages. From 1971 the artist leaned towards pedagogical forms in his performances, first of all lectures and seminars dedicated to social, cultural and political issues. In February 1972 he ran two very long lectures (which were also artistic actions) in Tate and Whitechapel Gallery. In the same year he initiated Bureau for Direct Democracy during Documenta 5, where he discussed electoral system with the audience of this artistic event. The school boards with the traces of these performative discussions have become installations, which were shown in exhibition spaces as a symbol of social and intellectual exchange (Bishop, 2012, p.243).

He implemented his own educational ideas in Free International University (FIU) for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research - a school outside the academic system, operating from 1973 until the mid-90s. It was the place of research, work and communication to consider the future of the society. One of the most important goals for FIU was to realize the creative potential of every human being. It was a free and open school, without competition, which offered students an interdisciplinary and comprehensive study program, based on art, cultural studies, sociology, anthropology and economics (human creativity was for Beuys an alternative form of capital). Beuys invited a lot of interesting artists, researchers, scientists and intellectuals to create with the students a creative and free space for discussions, workshops and seminars. Looking at Beuys' actions from the pedagogue's perspective, one of the most important project was "100 Days of the Free International University", which was organized during Documenta 6 in 1977. In thirteen interdisciplinary and open for the audience workshops participated artists, musicians, actors but also sociologists, lawyers, politicians, scientists, social activists and other interesting guests. Beuys went beyond art in the direction of social sciences and thus announced a topic which is important for today's art-as-pedagogy (Bishop, 2012, p. 244).

Conclusion

Noticeable in 21st century educational turn in art is a very interesting phenomenon. It is worth in this context recalling the artists, who in 20th century emphasized the importance of education in the space of art. One of them was Joseph Beuys, who, in his activity balancing on the edge of art and pedagogy, referred to spirituality and creativity of a human being and indicated the most important problems concerning the world and a man. Thanks to referring to basic values as love, solidarity, openness, he went out to people, who were not interested in art, but who were looking for the sense of their life. Art and pedagogy could help them. Beuys perfectly combined these two spaces and thanks to it he is an inspiration for today's artists and educators.

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**ВСІ ЗАГАЛЬНОЛЮДСЬКІ ПИТАННЯ МОЖУТЬ БУТИ
ТІЛЬКИ ЗАПИТАННЯМИ ПРО ТВОРЧІСТЬ:
РОЗШИРЕНА КОНЦЕПЦІЯ МИСТЕЦТВА ЙОЗЕФА БОЙСА
ЯК ДЖЕРЕЛО НАТХНЕННЯ ДЛЯ ОСВІТИ В ОБЛАСТІ
СУЧАСНОГО МИСТЕЦТВА**

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У статті акцентується увага на тому, що творчість німецького художника Й. Бойса може служити джерелом натхнення для сучасного художника, що працює на стику мистецтва і педагогіки. Освітній поворот в мистецтві ХХІ століття є дуже важливим явищем для педагогів, які працюють в галузі мистецтва. Й. Бойс об'єднав мистецтво і педагогіку в своїй розширеній концепції мистецтва, тому він є попередником розгляду мистецтва-як-педагогіки. У статті

розкриваються найбільш важливі педагогічні питання художньої діяльності Й. Бойса: освіта, творча діяльність, виховання і людська свідомість. Для нього мистецтво є потужним засобом, за допомогою якого можна змінити світ. У статті представлена розширена концепція мистецтва, розроблена Й. Бойсом (наявність творчого потенціалу в кожній людині), сектора кризи в сучасному світі (військова загроза, екологічна криза, економічна криза, криза свідомості і сенсу життя), а також значимість мистецтва і освіти в теорії Й. Бойса (мистецтво і освіта як базова область, яка стимулює жагу творчості і сприяє розвитку людини і всього суспільства). Творча діяльність Й. Бойса є джерелом натхнення для сучасних художників і педагогів, тому що він об'єднав мистецтво і педагогіку в своїй концепції «соціально заангажованого мистецтва». У ній мистецькі цілі перетинаються з педагогічними амбіціями. Однак він не зупинився на створенні художньо-соціальної теорії, а спробував втілити її в життя за допомогою конкретної художньо-педагогічної діяльності, характеристика якої представлена в даній статті.

Ключові слова: мистецтво, педагогіка, Йозеф Бойс, заняття мистецтвом, творчість.

**ВСЕ ОБЩЕЧЕЛОВЕЧЕСКИЕ ВОПРОСЫ МОГУТ БЫТЬ
ТОЛЬКО ВОПРОСАМИ О ТВОРЧЕСТВЕ:
РАСШИРЕННАЯ КОНЦЕПЦИЯ ИСКУССТВА ЙОЗЕФА БОЙСА КАК
ИСТОЧНИК ВДОХНОВЕНИЯ ДЛЯ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В ОБЛАСТИ
СОВРЕМЕННОГО ИСКУССТВА**

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В статье акцентируется внимание на том, что творчество немецкого художника Й. Бойса может служить источником вдохновения для современного художника, работающего на стыке искусства и педагогики. Образовательный поворот в искусстве ХХІ века является очень важным явлением для педагогов, работающих в области искусства. Й. Бойс объединил искусство и педагогику в своей расширенной концепции искусства, поэтому он является предшественником рассмотрения искусства как педагогики. В статье раскрываются наиболее важные педагогические вопросы художественной деятельности Й. Бойса: образование, творческая деятельность, воспитание и человеческое сознание. Для него искусство является мощным средством, с помощью которого можно изменить мир. В статье представлена расширенная концепция искусства, разработанная Й. Бойсом (наличие творческого потенциала в каждом человеке), сектора кризиса в современном мире (военная угроза, экологический кризис, экономический кризис, кризис сознания и смысла жизни), а также значимость искусства и образования в теории Й. Бойса (искусство и образование как базовая область, стимулирующая жажду творчества и способствующая развитию человека и всего общества). Творческая деятельность Й. Бойса является источником вдохновения для современных художников и педагогов, потому что он

объединил искусство и педагогику в своей концепции «социально ангажированного искусства». В ней художественные цели пересекаются с педагогическими амбициями. Однако он не остановился на создании художественно-социальной теории, а попытался воплотить ее в жизнь посредством конкретной художественно-педагогической деятельности, характеристика которой представлена в данной статье.

Ключевые слова: искусство, педагогика, Й. Бойс, ангажированное искусство, творчество.

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