

NEW COMMUNICATION MODEL: MULTIMEDIA ART

(conference papers)

Author: M.A. Vesna Srnić, 9th November, 2007

According to Information Technology science Multimedia is technologically speaking an integration of the Text, Picture, Sound and Speech within a surrounding – a Computer, which is extended in Multimedia system. Croatian scientist Dr. Fjodor Ružić thinks that Multimedia *'is not just a sum of information via different Media, but a logically shaped, organized and integrated group of mutually connected Media which create a Multimedia document'*.¹ That's the way Hypermedia documents are created as a logically assembled documents which use a certain communication, navigation space or a Net.

Critique of the Technological Multimedia

Newertheless, Multimedia in the world of Information Technology is considered as artistic mostly while reproducing Film and music, as well as using electronic (digital) picture in Video-art.

The lack of high Art Education in the Informatic world is not justified by more intense usage of Computers in Design (CAD), nor the Virtual Cyberspace. Certain selfsufficiency of Technological Intelligence makes its Creativity and Cognition mostly on the level of a Child, and consequently Multimedia Art can be promoted by the higher education of Artists in the field of Technology.

An example of positive effort in Croatia can be seen on National Television HRT in Dinko Cepak's computer graphic design. (**Eg.1** TV sequence «3 Plus».)

Artistic aspect in Multimedia Art is cognitional and sensible synesthetic sum of several media (Picture, Music, Text, speech, as well as a movement in a space), not just logically

¹ Ružić, F. (1994)'Multimedija', Klik, Mozaik knjiga, Zagreb, Croatia, p. 15

as in technological sense.

Multimedia Art as more than a Sum of Media (*Gesamkunstwerk*)

Back in the 19th century Wagner came up with an idea of 'The Total Art Work' (*Gesamkunstwerk*) as a Synesthetics of Art, Philosophy and Religion. Although proclaimed as a decadent, the idea was a certain movement of Perception of that time, that is also 'Overvaluing Seeing'² in the sense of 'Rediscovering Seeing'³ which develops our Cognitive abilities and a new Perception of Reality.

It's the same Perception Viktor Sklovski was writing about while stressing the importance of Empathy ('ostranenie vešcej') which prolongs the Perception, as well as László Moholy-Nagy taught in the Bauhaus school emphasizing the phenomenological term 'Einfühlung' (sensing the Oness).

In fact, Multimedia Art consists of the 'Human Existential Supportings', as we 'humanize' the technology, so we claim that such an Art is synergetic intensification and an orchestration of work of Art as well as of Existential Supportings. This strenghtening has been doing through an Empathy and a new Perception.

The reason why we can't speak about numerous Multimedia Art works, tell us about its complexity because of:

- ✚ Finacial reasons (expensive technology)
- ✚ weak interaction between Informatic Technologists and Artist
- ✚ lack of the experimental spirit in the Academic world of Artists` Education,
- ✚ that is exhausting themselves in 3D experiments, Virtual Reality (VR) and photorealism.

² Horvat-Pintarić, V. (Editor), (1972)'*Televizija danas*', GGZ, Zagreb,Croatia, p. 194

³ *ibid.* p. 194

Multimedia Art Projects

Multimedia Art has appeared in the 1960`s. Gene Youngblood as the first Multimedia Theorist specified the earliest Human Sensorium: '*Cerebrum*'. That Labyrinth or 'sensory-stimulation laboratory'⁴ has been the place of experience in which everyone was voyager, exhibitionist and participant as well. Such mental space was a combination of 'Night club' and 'Art gallery'.

During 1970`s and 1980`s strong Multimedia Projects have been gathering in San Francisco as *Siggraph (Special Interest Group Graphics)* or Media Art, inspired by the cult of Psychedelic generation. Multimedia Artist and avangard musician John Cage introduced his famous Multimedia Project HPSHRD, and also well known Performer of Multimedia style Laurie Anderson has been showing her early work of Art. Her special interest as an Art Historian has also been sociological interest, while researching the influence of Technology on Human relationships and communication.

In the early 1990`s Cyberspace had been strenghtning through VR, as well as through Internet users Community, thus it has been realizing events based upon Communication and Arts: '*Digital city*' (Amsterdam, 1994) which connected dozens of international cities via the Web, and an Internet project '*Telepolis*' (Luxembourg, 1996), Network-art or 'online global art scene' in netted society as a new idea of collective identity and virtual communities. Korean, later American Video Artist Nam June Paik installed a Multimedia Installation: '*Modulation in Sync, Jacob`s ladder*' at the Guggenheim museum, in 2000.

Multimedia Performance

⁴ Youngblood, G. (1970), '*Expanded Cinema*', E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, , p.359

Multimedia Performance, as a special type of Multimedia Art, also known as Happening or art in which actions of single person or a group, on a certain place and in a certain time, take an action. Performance can be a series of intimate gestures, or much bigger visual theatre, and can be done with or without scenario. It is such a variety of Art specific for integrated individuals, and thus it becomes infallible in the postfeminist period as an opponent to sexual discrimination (sexism).

Experiences from Practice: Christmas in Musical Pictures

The experiences from Practice can be seen in a Performance 'Christmas in Musical Pictures' prepared with the students of The Faculty of Teacher Education in Osijek, department in Slavonski Brod, while teaching at 'Multimedia Culture' board, and with pupils of the Elementary school Ivan Goran Kovačić (15 primary school students and 15 college students). It was performed in 2004, before Christmas, in a large theatre, as a primary Multimedia Performance.

Through six intensively integrated Musical Pictures, pupils, students and mentor stressed the idea of the Permanent Learning importance. Musical genres were chosen very precisely to challenge the effect of astonishment:

- ✚ Minimalistic music (Philip Glass, *Windows of Appearances*) (**Ex.2**)
- ✚ Baroque music (Pergolesi, *Salve Regina*) (**Ex.3**)
- ✚ Atonal music (Kronos quartet, *Doom. A Sigh-as the Christmas in Croatian War*) (**Ex.4**)
- ✚ Jazz (Pat Metheny, *As falls Wichita, so falls Wichita Falls*) (**Ex.5**)
- ✚ Traditional English Christmas carols (Silent night, Away in a manger) (**Ex.6**)
- ✚ Traditional Croatian Christmas carols (Radujte se narodi) (**Ex.7**)

Although the genres had been mixed, the result of the Performance was not a Kitsch, but

rather the real Postmodern Work of Art.

Conclusion

Multimedia Art, especially Multimedia Performance strengthens educational capacity of the Permanent Learning and enables the creative persons to integrate intensively their Cognitions and Existential Supportings, thus becomes favourable for Permanent Learning and Education in general..

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to invent new Educational model, to fill the gap in Education by showing the positive influence of Multimedia Art, especially Multimedia Performance on Permanent Learning at the level of primary school students, college students and teachers or on Education in general. After introducing the specifics of Multimedia Art as a Synesthetic model and necessity of Empathy in Education by Multimedia Performance, the mentor supervised and compared two groups of children (15 primary school students and 15 college students). He had prepared each group separately, but joined them all while performing Christmas in Musical Pictures. Results indicate that after one year of preparation, the two groups of students of all ages have been spontaneously integrating in a Performance and thus making no differences. Each of 6 levels of audio-visual Performance has been performing as an orchestrated part of Oneness. Final Performance show that Multimedia Art, especially Multimedia Performance strengthens educational capacity of the Permanent Learning and enables the students and creative persons as well to integrate intensively their Cognitions and Existential Supportings, thus becomes favourable for Permanent Learning and Education in general. Educators need to increase their knowledge of the Multimedia Art and especially Multimedia Performance in order to improve the Permanent Learning development. (Additional data: 7 short films)

B I O G R A P H Y

Vesna Srnić is a professor of Art History and Literature, teaching '*Media culture*' and '*Multimedia culture*' at *Faculty of Teacher Education* in Osijek, department in Slavonski Brod. She postgraduated on video-art and film at *Faculty of Philosophy* (Zagreb, 1994) and is defending her doctoral theses '*Electronic media and Aesthetics in Postfeministic theory*'. Personal education in Canada enriched her interests in multimedia and cybernetics. Vesna Srnić has been an editor of the first electronic magazine (e-zine) for Ecology and Art in Croatia (*EkoMAR*) during 2001/2003, and an editor of the only European 'online classroom' for Art and Ecology during 'Europe-at-school' competition (<http://skola-mar.sbnet.hr/wsa>). She is the author and initiator of the Internet project and performance '*Art and Ecology for Planet Europe*' as an online collaboration between Croatian Secondary School 'Matija Antun Reljkovic', Scottish International school 'Shawlands Academy' and Finnish school 'Klaukkallan Ylaaste' (<http://planet-europe.sbnet.hr>). Vesna Srnić is also an editor of '*Media-via*' electronic magazine (<http://media-via.info>). As an Art Historian she published a course book '*Cultural and historical heritage*' for secondary schools in Croatia in 2006 year. She prepares students for multimedia performances. They have exhibited multimedia poem 'The Soul of the World' on the International 24th Music Biennale in Zagreb (April, 2007).
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