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REINTEGRATION. SCULPTURE IN SOCIAL SPACE

Doctoral dissertation – abstract

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Abstract

As part of my dissertation, I conducted a series of studies examining the mechanisms that activate naturally formed human abilities and creative needs.

In the introduction, I discuss the role of the artist in society and how through joint action and the realization of an important mission, understanding and tolerance can be increased within a group of people. I describe my experiences in organizing creative activities among different communities aimed at breaking social stereotypes and encouraging people to work together. I introduce my doctoral thesis, which creates a multi-module installation. It consists of casts of people's hands and symbolizes the gesture of giving water as a symbol of agreement and cooperation. I emphasize that through direct contact with other people and mutual support, the artist can help people find their place in the world and overcome fears associated with new situations. The reintegration in the title of the doctoral thesis reveals my asylum – a community asylum where life and relationships with another person are a value in themselves. In my installation, water turns into a river of words, which is a symbol of life and emerges from many shared conversations and actions.

In Chapter I, I present a part of my previous artistic achievements that have ideological references to the topic of „Reintegration. Sculpture in social space” and to the form of the doctoral exhibition, which is the culmination of my research work. I focused on group projects that

activate people from different backgrounds to take action on a large scale. I organized a series of events aimed at examining the relationship between creativity and breaking established patterns, i.e. various resistances and blocks resulting from prejudices. For this purpose, strangers had the opportunity to get to know each other through shared work and conversation. I organized events on a small private scale in groups of a few people, but also on a large scale, such as the „Fire and Clay Festival in Lubrza”, which united over five hundred people of different professions and ages. I found that to communicate with someone, it is enough to create a favorable, friendly, and safe environment, an asylum.

In the individual subchapters, I included an extensive ideological description, richly illustrated with photos and drawings, including those made by children. I also quote statements from people who have been involved in my projects and who comment on them in a form that is close to them. These include, among others, long or short descriptions, poems, photos, and drawings. They also contain texts by myself and other people, including children, which are sometimes coherent and sometimes poetic and ambiguous, constituting an indirect commentary and an attempt to draw conclusions. Additionally, I included numerous illustrations, mostly limited to black and white, but also drawings and pictures made by primary school children related to the theme of water.

The second part (Chapter II) is a description of the artistic practical part of my doctoral thesis, which was created as a summary of the activities from the first part. I created a multi-module installation, consisting of works created in mixed techniques. These are hand-cast forms obtained by me in a traditional way in the gesture of giving water, arranged on the floor to create the shape of a lake. The edges of the created „lake” are regulated by ceramic modules in shapes suggesting river stones. The whole is complemented by a multi-part photographic installation – a polyptych, whose components are hands in the gesture of giving water, sent to me in all possible ways: messenger, mail, MMS, regular mail. The installation also includes a mosaic with dimensions of 100 x 140 cm, made in a silver-toned assemblage technique with recycling. Its leading module is a silverish sphere in large quantities. This work is spatial, deep, and durable. The presentation of my doctoral installation is supplemented by a film projection and sound. The film shows hands pouring spheres, while the sound is a pleasant, gentle water rustle. The presentation of my installation will take place in a space specially selected by me on the premises of the University of Silesia in Cieszyn, which I will adapt to my needs. The section titled „Fluid Chapter with a Bench in the Background” is what I consider to be a summary of my work. In it, I consider the issues that troubled me during the period of working on my doctoral thesis. We often talk about the

same things, but each in our own way. Research work is a process that requires commitment and sometimes becomes difficult due to unexpected obstacles, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. However, thanks to new media such as phones or the internet, one can still pursue their goals remotely and receive support from other people.

Sometimes when seeking inspiration, we focus on the people around us, but we don't pay enough attention to them. To learn more about them, we need circumstances and an atmosphere that enable deeper connection. Interpersonal communication is the key to understanding others and helping them.

Often, we meet people who want to be heard but don't know how to find someone who will listen to them. Other times, it is us who need support and advice, but we don't always have someone who will be willing to listen to us. This requires concentration, empathy, and a willingness to engage in interpersonal communication. Going back to basics, conversation is key to building interpersonal relationships.