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## Performance Art: Genesis and Evolution

**Review.** *This article is devoted to one of the most common phenomena in contemporary art — the actual performance of the work of art. The article deals with the issues of its origin. In this respect, it covers different forms of art of the past, such as syncretic ritual, medieval street theater, commedia dell'arte, and some synthesized works of the Renaissance and the Baroque period, and their modifications in the XXth — early XXIst century. Some common features in the well-known performance pieces of the past and the present are compared. The works by Tan Dun, L. Lipkis, K. Stockhausen, I. Xenakis, J. Cage and others are given as an example. Performance is considered as a single phenomenon of modern culture that reveals the main constant of postmodernism — a synthesis of the arts. In this connection, a method of holistic analysis is used in addition to the analytical method of presentation. The conclusions demonstrate the main genre features of performance, which appeared in the past eras (works by da Vinci, L. Bernini, etc.), and represent performance as a genre in the twentieth century.*

**Keywords:** *synthesis of arts, postmodernism, synthesizing, performance, performance art, art history, genre, theatricality, ritual, music.*

Performance is one of the leading forms of art expression in the XXth — XXIst centuries. Its attractiveness for composers, artists, directors, writers, and representatives of other creative professions in the specified time period can be explained by the specific nature of this phenomenon. The fact is that performance involves the synthesis of the arts in one particular work, and, as we know, the synthesis of the arts is the main feature of postmodernism that embodies the modern society. As R. Goldberg stated, 'Performance has been considered as a way of bringing to life the many formal and conceptual ideas on which the making of art is based. Live

gestures have constantly been used as a weapon against the conventions of the established art.'<sup>1</sup> Indeed, postmodernism by all its manifestations negates all art forms known up to the middle of the twentieth century, while the synthesis of the arts contributes to a more conceptual implementation of the author's ideas. The most appropriate form of such a synthesis is, in a general sense, *the-* 'art in action' or 'performance art'— a macro-notion, or a macro-genre, the idea of which is a deliberate emphasizing of a certain concept by any means.

<sup>1</sup> Goldberg R. Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present. — M: Ad Marginem Press, 2014. P. 7.

In turn, the 'art in action' has two main types that are opposite in terms of the characteristics of their implementation being associated with a degree of freedom given to performers — a '*happening*' based on the principle of randomness (the development of a specific concept through improvised actions of both performers and all the people present at the time of its implementation, for example the audience)<sup>1</sup>, and *performance* itself based on the consistent pattern (the development of a specific concept by performing all the actions prescribed by the author with no improvisation and involvement of the audience in the process of implementation). Happenings and performances — as art synthesis phenomena — can involve different artists, including musicians, representatives of fine arts, dancers, actors, writers, etc. Note that both a happening and a performance each has their own division into subtypes. Of course, they are divided according to the degree of dominance of one or another art form — thus, you can single out a musical happening / performance, literary happening / performance, theater happening / performance, etc. In addition, for example, a musical performance can also have a number of subtypes — instrumental theater, choral theater, vocal and instrumental theater, etc.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, a happening

and a performance (in a broader sense –art in action/performance art as a whole) are complex and multifaceted phenomena that have their own specific features, and a number of varieties.

Referring back to performance as the main subject of this article, it is necessary to point out that despite its leading position only in the era of postmodernism its formation lasted throughout the whole period of the evolution of art. The origins of performance can be found, of course, in a syncretic ritual, in the street theater of the Middle Ages, as well as in some theatrical performances of the XVth –XVIIth centuries — the Italian Renaissance and the Baroque Period.

Let us examine these origins in more detail:

*Syncretic ritual* existed in primitive society, and combined different forms of human life. For example, when casting spells and evoking spirits, an ancient shaman was dancing, singing, playing a musical instrument, saying some texts, and wearing a special kind of costume. 'Syncretic ritual', a ritual combining of different traditions was also implemented in a number of performances in the twentieth century.

Here is an example of an instrumental performance (instrumental theater<sup>3</sup>) —

<sup>1</sup> For more information about the theory and history of happenings see: Petrov V. O. The Musical Happening: Phenomenon Aesthetics // Philosophy and Art: Materials of the II International Conference / Ex. Editor T. P. Zaborskikh. — M.: Gnessin Russian Academy of Music, 2013. P. 28–35; Petrov V. O. The Happening in the Art of the Twentieth Century // Bulletin of the N. A. Nekrasov Kostroma State University. — 2010. — No. 1. Vol. 16: Main Issue. P. 212–215.

<sup>2</sup> These varieties are often ignored, and all the performance works are called 'an instrumental theater', though that is not the right term. For example, A. Papenina makes a number of mistakes, when calling the opera *From Germany* (1977) by M. Kagel performed by soloists, chorus and orchestra 'an instrumental theater' (Papenina, A. N. *Musical Avant-Garde of the Middle of the XXth Century and Issues of Art Perception*. — SPb.: Publishing House SPbGUP, 2008. P. 63). This view is shared by other researchers as well. S. Sigida notes that an instrumental theater is a 'theatricalization of most vocal and instrumental

works' (Sigida, S. Y. *Musical Culture of Europe. The Second Half of the Twentieth Century*. Great Britain // *The History of Foreign Music. XX Century: Textbook / Ex. Ed. N. A. Gavrilova*. — M.: Music, 2005. P. 435). And in the book *Signs of Sounds. About Modern Musical Notation* by Y. Dubinets, a genre of instrumental theater includes a number of works expressing happening which, on the one hand, matches the ideas of conceptualism and musical actionism and, on the other hand, does not embody a genre of instrumental theater due to the 'extended' number of performers, as well as some opera works. For example, the heptalogy *Light* by K. Stockhausen (Dubinets, Y. A. *Signs of Sounds. About Modern Musical Notation*. — Kiev: Gamayun, 1999. P. 107). In this regard, we can talk about a trend in the domestic musicology of referring any work, in which instrumentalists are prescribed to perform on stage (in their operas, Stockhausen and Kagel suggest the movement of musicians on the stage), to the genre of instrumental theater.

<sup>3</sup> The theory of instrumental performance (theater) is examined in the following publications: Petrov, V. O. *Instrumental Theater: Movement Features of Performers // Current Problems*

*Ghost Opera* (1995) by **Tan Dun** for the Chinese lute and string quartet. The composer suggested that five artists should make a *spectacle*, using five instruments and voices, which, on the one hand, should resemble an opera, and on the other hand — a ritual. In the context of instrumental music, these genres turned out to be similar: when playing an opera and creating a ritual, the instrumentalists needed to use the entire range of sound-reproducing means, including their voices. *Ghost Opera* embodies Tan Dun's childhood feelings about shamanic rituals from the Chinese culture. In his note to *Ghost Opera*, Tan Dun said, "My whole village was crazy. We had a professional crying team available for hire at funerals and deaths...a shamanistic choir to set the mournful tone. In Hunan, where I grew up, people believed they would be rewarded after death for their sufferings. Death was the 'white happiness', and musical rituals launched the spirit into the territory of the new life." Tan Dun's idea is a reflection on the spirituality of a human, whose positions in life can be destroyed by disasters that terrify modern society. This idea is implemented through the sound of music, the value of which is reduced within the shamanic ritual to a method of communication between the people and the gods: as a rule, the sound of music has no shape — it reflects 'the progress' of the rite. Thus, in addition to the fact that the composer matches a lute and a string quartet, each instrumentalist is endowed with his/her own musical material and behavior, due to which a dramatic *matching of a number of musical and behavioral layers* is achieved. This matching suggest, late in Act I (*Bach, Monks and Shakespeare Meet in Water*) that begins

with an instrumental introduction — the 'sound' of water (the lute player pours water from one vessel to another — the rhythm is highlighted in the score), against which a Bach melody (from *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II, Prelude in C Sharp Minor*) is played by the quartet. The lute player who is associated with a shaman has his own musical material based on the imitation of the background noise. In the context of the composition, the Bach theme is a *leading image* that symbolizes human spirituality. Later, in the same act, the composer uses the melody of the Chinese folk song *The Little Cabbage* that becomes a bearer of the light and good origin. The actions on the stage are emphasized by the light range: first, the lamp aimed at the performers is lighted, and vessels with water standing on the stage become "iridescent" in the light. First played against the background of dripping water, the Bach's theme is then matched with various accords. Within a few minutes, a voice is heard on the background of a solo violin — first, it is the text of one of the ancient Chinese poems (Di Li Huang Ya San liang), and then — a scream based on the phonemes 'uya-uya-uya!' and 'ya-o-ya-o!'<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the shamanic ritual, composers can reproduce other types of the ritual by means of an instrumental ensemble: *an autumn labor rite* (*Autumn Music* (1975) by K. Stockhausen for four performers), *a pagan rite* (*Last Pagan Rites* (1978) by B. Kutavičius), *a ritual seduction act* (*The Last Stone Idol from Easter Island* (2000) for violin written by V. Yekimovskiy), and *a funeral procession* (*Echoes of Time and the River* (1967) for orchestra written by G. Crumb). In all these works, a key dramatic moment is actions performed on the stage by the performers, whether it is a funeral procession, as in the work by G. Crumb, or

of Higher Music Education: Analytical and Educational Scientific Journal. — 2011. — No. 2 (18). P. 40–45; Petrov, V.O. About Eventful Plots in the Instrumental Theater Works // Musicology. — 2011. — No. 12. P. 9–14; Petrov, V.O. Under the Sign of Performance // Academy of Music. — 2012. — No. 2. P. 123–127.

<sup>1</sup> Note that such a phoneme is used in ritual dances of success in Jordanian tribes.

actions typical for autumn work, as in the composition by Stockhausen.

Since the Middle Ages, *street theater* that was dominant throughout Europe (*commedia dell'arte* based on the carnival festivities — in Italy, mystery play — in France, Italy and England, farce, improvised comedy and fairground performances — in France, and buffoonery — in Russia) has had a repertoire of simple and topical sketches played by the participants, often — by non-professional actors. Each of them represented a particular character — Pantalone, Harlequin, Pierrot, Columbine, Petrushka, etc. According to M. Bakhtin, the main forms of the street theater are 'ritual spectacles (carnival pageants, comic shows of the marketplace, etc.); comic verbal compositions (including parodies)...; and various genres of billingsgate (curses, oaths, popular blazons, etc.)'.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the functions of an actor, narrator, singer and player of musical instruments were performed by one person (both in solo performances of, for example, troubadours, and in genres such as farce and mystery that were performed on stage and referred to as an 'ensemble' depending on the number of performers involved). Movement, plastics and other peculiarities of the street theater would become typical features of performance in the twentieth century. That is why the marketplace theater can be considered one of its prototypes<sup>2</sup>.

The *theater characters* can be logically embodied in the instrumental theater, which is a form of musical performance that com-

bines playing an instrument and stage acting. Thus, the *commedia dell'arte* characters were portrayed in the instrumental trilogy by the American composer **L. Lipkis**: in 1989, he wrote the Concerto for Cello & Orchestra *Scaramouche*, in 1997 — Concerto for Bass Trombone & Orchestra *Harlequin*, and in 2002 — Concerto for Bassoon & Orchestra *Pierrot*. In all concerts, a soloist depicts the character, and the orchestra either complements his characteristics or enters into conflict with him. Scaramouche and Pierrot are treated by the composer *in a general sense*. Thus, both in the Italian comedy and in the work by Lipkis, Scaramouche is a coward and boaster — no wonder he was called a 'ghost knight'. In all seven parts of the concerto, his musical material barely stands out from the overall atmosphere of the orchestral sound. The most distinctive features of *Scaramouche* are pantomime and choreography: the cellist needs to express the condition of the character by movements and postures that describe the boastfulness and cowardice. Pierrot by Lipkis is a victim of his own feelings, and due to it the musical material of the bassoonist is lyrical and tragic, which makes (as does the appearance of the character, who is dressed in the famous white costume) the audience feel pity. When playing, the bassoonist is instructed to strike compassionate postures. In *Scaramouche* and *Pierrot*, solo parts of the instrumentalists *match* with the orchestra: all sounds make up a solid musical composition, which indicates a *non-conflict drama*. However, the question / answer system between the soloist and the orchestra performing an accompanying function is a distinctive feature of the biggest part of the Lipkis' trilogy — *Harlequin*; there is clearly a *conflict*, in which Harlequin is a convincing 'debater' in relation to the orchestra. And the trombone player has a number of dramatic monologues. A characteristic element of theatricality is movements of both the

<sup>1</sup> Cited by: Teryokhin, A. V. Social and Philosophical Aspect in the M. M. Bakhtin's Concept of the Folk Humor Culture // Art of the Twentieth Century: Paradoxes of the Culture of Laughter: Col. Works. — Nizhny Novgorod, 2001. P. 241.

<sup>2</sup> Note that theatricalization is a prerequisite of any instrumental and performance process in the field of folk music. A striking example is the abovementioned instrumental tunes which, in addition to the playback of music, allow a number of additional means of emotional expression — movements, dancing, etc. Since instrumental tunes are often used in more global actions (for example, in the rites), this synthesis is quite natural.

soloist and members of the orchestra (this method is not used in *Scaramouche* and *Pierrot*), and the complications in the trombone part (leaps over more than two octaves in the variable metrics and rhythmic) make the music 'active'. Unlike *Scaramouche* and *Pierrot*, *Harlequin* is portrayed by Lipkis with various details: the trombonist interchanges simple lyrical melodies and sharply atonal phrases separated with pauses that are associated with the expressionist style in music. The expressionistic features of *Harlequin* can be seen most clearly in the cadence.

A more detailed description of one of the brightest characters of Italian *commedia dell'arte* Harlequin is given in the through-composed one-man show *Harlequin* (1975) — a 15-minute 'instrumental choreography' written for K. Stockhausen's clarinetist and dancer S. Stevens. In addition to the thematic material, the performer's task includes stage acting, including various types of movements, plastic sketches, etc. The score is a musical formula that has pitch and rhythm. The variability of the formula is random. The only condition -is that it has to change constantly, and these changes must reflect the events taking place on the stage. The story written by Stockhausen (*commedia dell'arte* has always been a theatrical improvisation based on a specific scenario) has several defined sections as follows: in the beginning, Harlequin is an *enchanted dreamer*. The clarinetist has to suddenly run out from the backstage and start dancing actively tapping a rhythm with his legs, which brings an additional sound context into the composition — the basic melodic formula and its development are played on the background of certain rhythms. Next, Harlequin is a *playful improviser*. He varies the melodic formula with the desire for a slower pace and clear pronunciation of individual sounds. He can leave the stage, play behind the scenes or perform acrobatic

stunts — anything that corresponds to the concept of 'improvisation'. In this section, the sounding material is structurally the most detached from the formula given at the beginning. The performer can show all his skills in playing the instrument. Then Harlequin goes to sleep (the performer lies down on the stage) and in his dream he sees himself as a *lyrical hero*, who stares into the void and plays the same melody twice gradually kneeling on his left knee, and as an uncompromising and strict *pedantic teacher*. In the dream, he charms everyone with his melody, turning the ugliness of the world into the inner beauty. He dreams of music. When Harlequin *wakes up* and rises, he shows to the world the music he heard in his dream. He tries to play it as vividly as possible, but he stumbles, stops, becomes agitated, and then begins to play again sending the sounds into the space. It all ends with a Harlequin's *frenzied dance* (a special sole is used that allows hearing the noise of feet hitting the floor at a large distance). In other words, during the play, Harlequin is turning from a dreamer into a person who forms part of the universal space mind. All other actions made by the performer during the stage implementation of Stockhausen's opus are random, and in this regard the score can be likened to a scenario of the *commedia dell'arte* that existed many centuries before. Such a scenario provided only a structure — a sequence of events taking place in the play. This rough script that contributed to the actor's improvisation was attached to the back of the wings so that actors could see the scene to be played next and make up their own text. Note that at the end of this one-man show Harlequin has to fall on his knees before the public. Only at this point the basic melody of the composition that gradually crystallizes during the show has to be played in its 'final' *solid* form, rather than in phrases as during the stage implementation of the composition through

the actions of the character — movements, acting, choreography, etc. In *Harlequin* by Stockhausen, the motor expression of emotions matches the music. The score also has a number of comments on how you need to play the material — ‘Hold the sound like a bird cries’, ‘When playing, quickly turn your head from side to side to create a feeling of rough tremolo’, etc. Stockhausen’s *Harlequin* is a collective image, because this character has received different interpretations in the *commedia dell’arte*: he can be a silly servant who always argues with Pantalone, or a passionate dreamer who attracts the sympathy of the audience. In the note, the composer revealed not only the stage dramaturgy (e.g. ‘lies down on the set’, ‘stands up’, etc.) and the special conditions of the performance (variations of the formula), but also the images for the conversion of the formula. (For example, it is specified that *Harlequin* is a charming dreamer, a playful improviser, or lyrical hero: this emotional state should be expressed both by the actions of the performer and the music.) Theatrical coloring is introduced by the colorful costume (for the first shows, the costume of S. Stevens was designed by Stockhausen himself) and bright makeup that personify the image.

**The Italian Renaissance and Baroque** is another storehouse of prototypes of modern performance. A striking example is *Paradise* (1490) — a theatrical play written by the famous artist **Leonardo da Vinci** who created the plot and designed the scenery, costumes, lighting and color effects, and musical material. The drama action of *Paradise* was devoted to the Duchess of Milan Isabella of Aragon and was staged before her on January 13, 1490 right in the green room of the Castle of Milan fit out specifically for this presentation: da Vinci paintings were hung among the tapestry, and paintings by other artists depicting heroic deeds of the Duke Francesco Sforza, the husband of Isabella of Aragon, were

put on the ceiling together with garlands decorated by artificial vegetables, fruits and flowers (the material symbols of Paradise). According to witnesses<sup>1</sup>, the most impressive was the Paradise itself — a separate stage designed by da Vinci, which included a high podium with lit torches simulating the stars and court actors dressed in ‘costumes’ of different planets that moved in a circle, symbolizing the cycle of life in the nature. In general, the imaginative concepts were the very image of Isabella. (The text of the play tells the story of her life, and describes her beauty, and all the characters — Apollo, Jupiter, and Mercury — leave the Paradise to enjoy her beauty), the image of the Universe (da Vinci’s passion for astrology and astronomy is well-known), and the image of Religion (Paradise, heavens with Gods, etc.). As you can see, da Vinci was a versatile artist who combined different kinds of creative activity.

In many cases, the authors for performance art of the twentieth century are very versatile artists as well. For example, when composing the instrumental performance *Eonta* (1964) for piano and brass instruments, its author — **I. Xenakis** — was both a composer and director of events taking place on the stage: he designed a dramaturgical plan of movements for instrumentalists, as well as the light and color palette. The Xenakis’ idea is associated with determining the place of a unique personality in society and approving the prevalence of society (the brass) over personality (piano). The theatrical process which, according to the composer, includes ‘stochastic’ (based on the theory of probability) and ‘symbolic’ (based on logistics) music is described in the score as in any performance. The first page of the score shows a disposition of the instruments

<sup>1</sup> For details see: Malinverni L. 13 gennaio 1490: la Festa del Paradiso // [http://lauramalinverni.net/pdf/13\\_GENNAIO\\_1490\\_LA\\_FESTA\\_DEL\\_PARADISO.pdf](http://lauramalinverni.net/pdf/13_GENNAIO_1490_LA_FESTA_DEL_PARADISO.pdf)

on the stage. (Black dots are places where the brass musicians have to stop when moving). The composition has only one part, but it can be divided into three sections according to the *stage drama*. Each section ends with the movement of the brass musicians in complete silence. In *Section I*, the piano stands separately in the left side of the room, and all brass musicians sit on chairs in the middle of the stage. The music is expressive; the most distinctive is a sophisticated piano part that starts the composition. After the piano solo, the brass musicians rise from their seats, and the actual performance and the story begin. All brass instruments offer a contrast to the piano: when the piano sounds aggressive, the brass instruments play slowly and calmly recreating a cantilena. Gradually — at the first climax — the brass musicians come close to the piano (with no fallboard) and become its body in relation to the audience. The piano player ‘defends’ himself against them by loud rhythmic ostinato. The brass instruments suppress the piano due to their dynamic advantage by playing staccato tremolo. The pianist stops playing admitting his ‘defeat’ in the acoustic ‘battle’. Then the brass musicians line up in silence, walk across the stage and sit on chairs in the right side. When *Section II* begins, the entire musical material is ‘swapped’: the piano ‘smoothes’ the aggression and plays peaceful and quiet sounds in the upper registers (‘pulsing chords’, according to Xenakis), while the brass musicians play in a rough and dissonant manner. This is escalation of the conflict and its climax. Gradually, the chaos and aggression are shown by all performers; at the same time, there is a high possibility of the dialogue — interchange of phrases between the instruments (the conflict ‘on equal terms’). In this process, the brass musicians again stand up and surround the piano, while continuing to play their material from the score. Then — at the second climax — they target it at the piano and actively play their material ‘into

the piano’, suppressing its volume, although it is that time when the pianist plays difficult passages within the limit dynamics, which at the end ‘falls’ into the silence. In this silence, the brass ensemble withdraws (at a slack pace — the performers walk strictly one after another) from the piano, and the musicians sit on the chairs that were put earlier in the middle of the stage. *Section III* of *Eonta* is a resolution to the conflict: it shows not only the musical chaos, but also the chaos in actions, i.e. on the stage. The brass ensemble ceases to be an ensemble — each of the instrumentalists begins to move in any direction. This part of Section III may be called the prevailing ‘cadence’ of the brass ensemble as the piano takes no part in it. After taking different positions across the stage, the brass musicians gather in a group and sit down on the chairs in the right-hand side of the stage. The composition ends dramatically: the piano and the brass ensemble again start the fight forming the third climax which, just as the previous ones, dies when the piano stops to play. The most silent accord extended by trumpets and trombones allows us to consider the brass musicians winners in the conflict. Consequently, at the level of the storyline, *Eonta* has three stages, each of which performs a specific function in the dramaturgical process — starting point, culmination of the conflict and its resolution. The piano here is a character that actively fights the crowd represented by the brass ensemble. But any attempt to become a full member of this crowd suffers a defeat — a sudden termination of playing and silence. This technique is dictated not only in terms of acting: six brass instruments can really suppress the sound of the solo piano in terms of acoustics. It is this factor that played a major role in the choice of instruments when Xenakis was writing *Eonta*.

Note that the Baroque era forms a new type of pastime for socialites: the so-called ‘*secular clubs*’, in which the participants used

to stage some dramatic performances and plays. For example, such a club existed in the house of the **Duke Alfonso II** (1533–1597): every Thursday, very important people gathered at his house to dance, sing songs and read poetry that had common subject or plot. To emphasize the individuality of each meeting, they chose special settings and sewed unique costumes. In the twentieth century, absolutely any place could become a platform for performance: futurists headed by F. Marinetti considered the theatrical stage as an ideal platform (*Manifest of Lust* (1913) by V. de Saint-Point was staged at the Comedy Theater of the Champs Elysees). Another performance platforms were clubs (*Scene with Table* (1974) by M. Haimovic was performed at the London's club *The Garage*), art galleries (*Magnolia* (1976) by S. Russell was featured at the New York gallery *Artist Space*), educational institutions (*Time to Move* (1994) by M. Chaydri was performed at the London's Institute of Contemporary Art), roofs of old buildings (*Delay Delay* (1972) by J. Jonas was presented on the roof of an old five-story building), park areas (*The Base of the World* (1961) by P. Manzoni was performed in a park on the outskirts of the Danish city of Herning), and stores and shopping centers (*The Store* (1962) by C. Oldenburg was shown at the East Street Mall in Dallas). It becomes obvious that the place for performance was not so important; the most significant was the form of presentation, idea, and concept.

One of the main representatives of baroque performance was a famous Italian architect, sculptor and painter **G. L. Bernini** (1598–1680), who built his own theater and wrote scripts for comedy plays in the 1630s<sup>1</sup>. The actors were Bernini's brother Luigi, the artist G. Abbatini, and students

of the school of fine arts. The plays were characterized by abundant scenery, bright costumes, additional visual imagery (e.g., paintings), architectural structures, specifically designed items, and literary and musical works. For his plays, Bernini created a special machine that could quickly change the scenery, lighting, and the stage as a whole.<sup>2</sup> Comedies were staged in a confined space and suggested that only a small number of spectators was present in the room, thus achieving a certain sacredness of all that happened on the stage. As a rule, the plots chosen were either absurdist situations or real events that were relevant to that time, and served as a 'replica' of modern life. These kinds of plots also characterize 'performance' in the twentieth century as a whole.

An example of an **absurdist situation** is Bernini's stage performance *Two Theaters* (1637) that involved the following events: the people who came to see the show found themselves in the situation as if they were in front of the mirror — the actors in black costumes and masks were sitting on the stage in the same manner as the audience. The purpose of the performance was to show the emotions of the audience from the outside: the actors responded to the emotions and movements of the spectators by copying them. At the same time, the actors were reading different texts: one actor explained the purpose of the performance in the Prologue and another one addressed directly to the audience, saying that there were several types of audience and several alternative perceptions of events taking place on the stage. The spectators who came to see the performance behaved in different ways: someone loudly applauded and someone got up and left the room, full of indignation (and

<sup>1</sup> Note that Bernini's passion for performances was not spontaneous. At the beginning of the 1630s, he was an organizer of the Roman Carnivals and had an experience in the production of bright and cheerful shows.

<sup>2</sup> Some issues of Bernini's stage performances are discussed in the following article: Lucignani L. Il gran teatro di Bernini // la Repubblica. — 11.04.1992.

the actors on the stage were doing the same things!). Is this not reminiscent, to some extent, of a canonical musical performance of the mid-twentieth century — the composition 4'33" (1952) by **J. Cage**? In the Bernini's show, the spectators, who expected to see a bright stage performance but did not get it, created the events taking place on the stage, i.e. acting on the stage began when the audience started to perform some actions. In the Cage's show, the spectators, who expected to listen to the music but did not get it, created a sound of the show on their own by making noise, getting off their seats, expressing their dissatisfaction, slamming the doors, and stamping their feet, i.e. the 'music' appeared when the audience started to perform some actions (note that, according to Cage, any noise is music of the world around). Noise has always accompanied performances: as late as in 1914 **F. Marinetti** in his Manifesto on the Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation noted that it was necessary to create a new declaiming technique in order to 'liberate intellectual circles from the old static, pacifist and nostalgic declamation.' A new dynamic and warlike declamation was desired for these ends. Marinetti proclaimed for himself the 'indisputable world primacy as a declaimer of free verse and words-in-freedom'... The Futurist declaimer, he insisted, should declaim as mush with his legs as with his arms. The declaimer's hands should, in addition, wield different noise-making instruments.<sup>1</sup> This idea was implemented in performances of *Pedigrotta* (1914) by Marinetti and of *The*

*Printing Press* (1914) by G. Balla. (It was staged for S. Diaghilev, and therefore largely related to the art of choreography: 12 people imitated various parts of mechanical machines.) And the manifesto *The Art of Noises* (1913) by L. Russolo developed a point of view among performance artists that anything can become a source of sounds and, in the first place, all sorts of items, machines and devices.

The 'mirror communication' between the audience and the actors — as compared with *Two Theaters* by Bernini — takes place in the theater performance *The Madness* (1920) by **M. Dessi**. Its idea is as follows: an unsuspecting audience fills the room, sits down on the seats and begins to watch the events taking place on the stage. After that a man comes out on the stage and for a long period of time shows the signs of his madness (circling, snarling, uttering only one word — 'madness') to the audience in order to 'infect' the spectators with his madness. At the premiere performance, the actor managed to immerse part of the audience into a magical state, in which they also started to perform the above actions and shout the word 'madness'. Thus, the spectators began to do the same things as the actor — another implementation of the idea of two theaters.

In addition, the prolonged effect of the Bernini's show can be noticed in the twentieth century in the performances, where the stage space is '*stratified*' into a series of distinct spaces or implies the presence of actors in the audience. 'Stratification' of the stage into two separate areas marks the theatrical performance *Simultaneity* (1915) by F. Marinetti, which shows the relationship between two families (the parallel drama technique is used), while stratification into three areas characterizes the performance *Communicating Vessels* (1916) by Marinetti again. In both cases, the actions taking place in one of the spaces did not accumulate only in one area of the stage — performers could

<sup>1</sup> Goldberg R. Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present. — M: Ad Marginem Press, 2014. P. 22; The issues of history of performance are discussed in the following publications: Carlson M. Performance: A Critical Introduction. London and New York: Routledge, 1996. 288 p.; Carr C. On Edge: Performance at the End of the Twentieth Century. — Wesleyan University Press, 1993. 333 p.; Goldberg R. Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present (World of Art). Thames & Hudson, 2001. 256 p.; Searle A. Performance Art: A Bit of History, Examples and a Fast Dictionary // The Guardian. — 2012. July 3 / Website: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrevon-ah/performance-art-history\\_b\\_2029450.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrevon-ah/performance-art-history_b_2029450.html)

move and, depending on the plot twists, go from one space to another. The presence of actors in the audience is a frequent phenomenon in the musical performances of the twentieth century. We will note only a typical example — the play *Terretektorh* (1966) for 88 performers by **I. Xenakis**. The score is preceded by a diagram, which shows that the conductor is placed in the center of the circular space, while the location of instrumentalists and the audience is shown in bold and small dots respectively. Xenakis had been testing his ideas for a long time until he found a unique, in his view, location for the visualization of the stage space and for a specific tonal halo. Y. Nazaikinskiy notes, “In *Terretektorh*, each of the musicians received additional percussion instruments and whistles to create a vortexual rotation of noises of dramatically different nature — a sort of a ‘sonotron’, as defined by Xenakis by analogy with synchrophasotron.”<sup>1</sup> In addition, Xenakis suggested that *Terretektorh* should be performed in ballrooms free of any objects to avoid malformation of the specific acoustic flow that could have been distorted in conventional ballrooms.

Referring back to the Baroque art, note that the play *The Inundation of the Tiber* (1638) that showed on the stage the flooding that occurred in Italy a year before can be an example of realism in the Bernini’s performances. The performance content was achieved by an unusual atmosphere of the action — water was continuously flowing down the walls of the stage and the audience was in constant anticipation of the approaching waves due to the specially created background sound. In addition, a certain visual segment of the Tiber was recreated on the stage: in the center there was the river and in the perspective (scenery and illus-

trations) the audience could see the castles of St. Angelo and St. Peter. At the premiere performance, some viewers, who erroneously thought that the events on the stage were real, left the room in a hurry shouting, “It’s a flood again!” Certain special effects that, to a large extent, allowed the spectators to become participants in the events taking place on the stage were also present in other Bernini’s shows. For example, the play *Justice* showed in the same year had a real fire on the stage, which also freaked out the spectators, especially ones sitting in the front row. Similar methods of affecting the audience can also be seen in a number of performances of the twentieth century.

In the specified time period, there are also performances that completely replace live acting by a set of technical means regarded spectacular from the theatrical point of view. Thus, the stage implementation of *Futurist Mechanical Ball* (1922) by **I. Pannaggi** included the sound of music and mobile scenery with mechanical figures imitating real people.

In general, the XVII century is marked by a lot of plays and shows that can rightly be called the prototypes of performance. Primarily, this is due to the full prerogative of secularity over religion in the specified time period (as well in the history of art). These works include the masked comedy *The Masque of Blackness* (1605) by B. Johnson with music by A. Ferrabosco and costumes by I. Johnson, *Oberon* (1611) by B. Johnson again with music by A. Ferrabosco and R. Johnson, and D. Shirley’s fantasy show of several acts *The Triumph of Peace* (1634) directed by I. Johnson with music by W. Lewis, C. Ives and B. Whitelock.

Thus, we need to single out the main genre features of performance that emerged in these works and characterize performance as a genre in the twentieth century:

- Movable stage allowing a quick change of the stage plans (*The Masque of Black-*

<sup>1</sup> Nazaikinskiy, Y. V. *Spatial Music // Theory of Modern Composition: Textbook / Ex. Ed. V. S. Tsenova.* — M.: Music, 2007. P. 452.

ness) or a number of nearby podiums (*Paradise by da Vinci*);

- Collective (*The Masque of Blackness*, *The Triumph of Peace*) or 'monopolistic' (*Paradise by da Vinci*) creation of the show;
- Clearly defined plan of action (in all performances) that must be respected;
- Empowering instrumentalists with features of actors (*The Triumph of Peace* involved a group of lute players dressed in the costumes of priests and moving across the stage — an early prototype of a special form of performance in the twentieth century — instrumental theater);
- Use of realistic elements in the show (live horses in *The Triumph of Peace*);
- Special spectacularity of stage actions (*The Masque of Blackness* used a technique of imitating a sea wave by blowing up blue fabric on the podium);
- Synthesis of the arts within a single work (in *Oberon*, the stage scenery included

specially designed canvas, architecture structures standing on each side of the room and creating the participation effect for the audience, choreography for additional interpretation of the text, etc.).

The value of performance in the art of the twentieth century is emphasized by R. Goldberg: '...a radical stance has made performance a catalyst in the history of twentieth-century art; whenever a certain school, be it Cubism, Minimalism or conceptual art, seemed to have reached an impasse, artists have turned to performance as a way of breaking down categories and indicating new directions.'<sup>1</sup> While agreeing with the opinion of the investigator, it also should be noted that all performances, one way or another, according to the form of their implementation, are based on intentional or unintentional epatage that became a prerogative of the huge number of works of art in the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> What will remain in the history of art, and what will be just a local phenomenon — time will tell!

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<sup>1</sup> Goldberg R. Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present. — M.: Ad Marginem Press, 2014. — P. 7 (320 p.).

<sup>2</sup> For more information see: Petrov, V.O Pioneering Art Images in the Twentieth Century: From the Perspective of Epatage // Culture and Art. — 2013. — No. 5. P. 562–569; Petrov, V. O. Epatage in the Art of the Twentieth Century // Culture and Art. — 2013. — No. 6. P. 623–632.

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