



**CONTEMPORARY STAGE ART AS A PERFORMATIVE INNOVATIONS
AND PROVOCATIVE CULTURAL AND ART FORMS
IN THE POSTMODERNIST DIMENSION**

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Abstract. The author of the article touches on the issue of performativity, emphasizing that pervasive performativity, as a special cultural phenomenon, has recently been an integral part of modern life. The performative event belongs to the culture of everyday life and exists simultaneously in the space of art and in the space of sociocultural processes – at the intersection of empirical and artistic realities, which implies inseparable sociocultural and artistic connections.

The purpose of the work is to differentiate meaningful structures of performativity and performance, inscribed in a sociocultural context, through the prism of culturological–art history analysis; understanding the trends of the latest stage practices as performative innovations of an experimental bent and provocative cultural and artistic forms in the context of postmodernism.

The research methodology is based on the synthesis of culturological and art history approaches, analytical and interpretive approaches to the study of the outlined issues.

The scientific novelty consists in: systematization of the main principles of performance as a provocative cultural and artistic form in the space of innovative cultural practices of postmodernism; differentiation of meaningful structures of performativity.

Performativity is determined by the sphere of free action and the conceptual mastery of a new aesthetic experience, which is built on the ability to "move within perception" and "move the art event itself" in its sociocultural reality, which inspires the acquisition of new views of an existential nature.

Modern stage practices are determined by the tendency to bring art into life as a complete merger with it and introduce into the human consciousness the idea that any fragment of his everyday life can reach the level of an artistic act and reveal the performative essence of reality.

The performative action is determined by the form-content essence of newest form of theatricalization of reality in its inherent correspondence to life forms (when the boundary between the conditional and the real is overcome). Therefore, the performative action appears as an art project (the project – "thrown forward") within the framework of non-classical and post-classical theater systems.

The performative action immerses the viewer in the diffusion of artistic innovations, turning into an integral action, unexpected in its solutions, which is separated into a coherent artistic structure.

Modern stage practices gravitate towards the performative innovations defined by the formula of artistic experiment "action for the sake of action" in cultural and artistic forms in postmodern dimension (which focuses the research initiative of critical thought on the latest artistic intentions as prospects for further researches).

Keywords: modern stage practices; postmodernism; an artistic response to the challenges of time; provocative cultural and artistic forms; performativity; an artistic experiment of "action for the sake of action"; performative aesthetics.



Artistic responses to the challenges of the time are based on the reflection of today's chaotic life in the mastery of cultural experience, which is formed in the postmodern dimension as performative.

The tendency to overcome the boundaries between life and art, manifests a state of vivid stage experiment, as a permanent desire to go beyond the boundaries of previous artistic forms, the perception of actual performative intentions. They are superimposed on the existing theatrical tradition and turn into isolated statements taken out of their inherent context.

The artistic experiments expands its boundaries, where innovative scenic forms try to reveal the meanings of today's world, which loses the distinction between progress and degradation, real and virtual, future and past, beauty and ugliness, etc. Today's scenic practices are actively searching for a new artistic language, a new system of aesthetics with the aim of a broader understanding of modern art in integral social and cultural terms, searching for new spaces and perspectives of their existence as a performative event.

An intense search for new ways of perceiving the world is updating stage practices, which become the center of the aesthetics of stage art, according to J.-F. Lyotard, as «tense with momentary effects» (which differs from other forms of cultural practices by the significant weight of the presented materials and artistic means). Modern stage practices and theater share with other arts a taste for the aesthetic rebellion of postmodernism, self-reflection and self-positing of themes [12].

Despite the stormy coverage of both artistic and life space by performative initiatives, they have not yet found an exhaustive reflection in classical theater rhetoric. The view on the performativity of today's stage art in the context of the statement of the postmodern limitless artistic synthesis of the real and the artistic, new aesthetics, in the heuristic sense, is an actual research lens.

The purpose of the work is to differentiate meaningful structures of performativity and performance, inscribed in a sociocultural context, through the prism of culturological – art history analysis; understanding the trends of the latest stage practices as performative innovations of an experimental bent and provocative cultural and artistic forms in the context of postmodernism.

New forms of art change the idea of culture, culture appears as a global performance. The postmodern aesthetic field reflects the beauty of dissonance, the pluralism of tastes, and the mosaic of the cultural context with many forms of self-expression, and affirms the free artistic style as the formative main performance in the context of postmodernism.

New forms of art are now changing the idea of culture, which appears as a global performance, from the standpoint of theoretical reflections, in the context of postmodernism. First of all, it should be noted that the very concept of "postmodernism" is quite difficult to give an accurate, exhaustive definition; it remains blurred, despite many scientific interpretations, to the present day. The postmodern paradigm is mainly associated with the perception of the world as chaos, governed by probabilistic laws and declaring a rejection of determinism and the search for truth. Post-non-classical science that studies postmodernism (correlating with eschatological expectations of the "end of history") explores the universe as a non-linear non-equilibrium system (unstable, torn, devoid of order in the world).

The inherent spontaneous manifestations of "theatricality" in everyday culture, the focus on connections with the sociocultural context, the representation of a real, authentic, "documented" beginning are means of expression that serve to provide a theatrical response to the social and cultural situation, where the surrounding world is interpreted by the plurality of meanings and the order of chaos in the spirit of postmodernism.





In the context of the ambiguity of the current reality, the inclusion of a radical transformation of the stage element in its artistic arsenal is fundamentally characteristic of performative stage practices, which overcome the framework of classical theater systems, as non-classical and post-classical theater systems.

The postmodern aesthetic field reflects the beauty of dissonance, the pluralism of tastes, and the mosaic of the cultural context with many forms of self-expression, and affirms the free artistic style as the formative basis of performance.

Performative stage actions appear as aestheticized forms of a cultural and communicative nature, as specific attempts at figurative understanding of the most significant event situations of sociocultural existence.

The impossibility of remaining stable in the currently existing performative culture, which reveals the modern man's desire for self-discovery and self-overcoming, appears as a desire to respond to the cultural dynamics with its growing pace. Today's performative works are probably the most sincere of the art forms, because they take place here and now, presenting the personality of the artist in the present space and present time, at this very moment. This is the main difference between the aesthetics of performativity: the viewer and the artist are in a real, not an illusory, world.

The history of the penetration of performativity into modern stage practices and theater appears as the history of the transformation of the viewer, in particular, the change of his rational perception (of what is happening) to a sensual one. It is unlikely that, speaking of performativity in the theatrical sense, it is possible to precisely separate which trends came from where, and what influenced what. In addition, the issue of the so-called theatrical fourth wall, which establishes a boundary between the audience and what is happening on the stage, has long been

present. A progressive position of interest in knowledge in general, as well as in knowledge of the tools of knowledge (according to documentary position), is considered a good tone. Art is one such tool of knowledge, so it is only natural that the number of consumers of art who want to know how it is arranged begins to increase dramatically. It is no longer enough for the viewer to perceive the illusion (theater focuses on illusion), it is no longer enough for the viewer to be a viewer – he wants to be a participant and actively influence the reality that is in front of him, requiring access to its basic mechanisms. Performative art and – in a narrow sense – performance art gives him this opportunity, performance actualizes the provision of specific mechanisms for changing the position of the viewer, which has been happening more and more recently.

At the present stage, various attempts are being made to scientifically comprehend the processes taking place in modern theater and the latest stage practices, among which, first of all, one can single out the views of the world's leading theater critic Erica Fischer-Lichtey, who focuses research attention on the actualization of performativity.

E. Fischer-Lichtey views performance art with no less interest than is customary in science in relation to traditional arts, and today her works are recognized as key studies of performance in the world of the humanities. In her numerous studies, she focuses special attention directly on the properties of performativity, the main feature of which she considers the event that takes place between the actor and the audience in modern theatrical and stage practice today.

E. Fischer-Lichtey understands performance as an independent artistic event that has its own essence, and investigates its modern life, interprets performance and the performative nature of modern culture as a whole.



E. Fischer-Lichtey focuses on the "performative turn" in art at the end of the 20th century, which marked the overcoming of the gap between textual and performative cultures and marked the beginning of theatrical reflection, the object of which is the "performance". E. Fischer-Lichtey introduces the term "performativeness" into theater studies precisely as opposed to "textuality". According to the author, the cultural processes of the second half of the 20th century requires a new aesthetic that could describe all the variety of arts and practices that have a specific dimension of performativity. One of her theories, in particular "Creation of materiality by performative means", proposed the principle of analytical description of performativity as such [6, 7].

The context of her research – from ancient rituals to the modern political situation (provocative, highly social, and sometimes even dangerous performances that entered the cultural context) as a separate art form and had the strongest impact on its other areas.

In E. Fischer-Lichtey's view, "turning to the performative features of culture made it possible to reveal the specific nature of actions and events in the field of culture", which led "to the emergence of the metaphor "culture as a performance". Therefore, one can observe the growing attention to the phenomenon of "performativeness" in the sense of dominant communication. Performative understanding consists in the very movement, change in time [7].

So, E. Fischer-Lichtey defines the meaning of performance in modern culture as experimental theater and new forms of artistic practice in the broadest sense of the word [6, 7].

In line with the concept of E. Fischer-Lichtey, according to the author, stage practices and theater today are by no means a "relic of antiquity", rather, an extra creative "creator" who tries to present theatrical reality as a spiritualized poetic-sensual reality of

stage language in the "format" of innovative and performative.

Richard Schechner's "Performance Research" and Hans-Tys Lehmann's "Post-Dramatic Theater" can be placed in the same row with the scientific work of Erica Fischer-Lichtey, without which it is impossible to imagine the study of the new cultural reality today postmodern, generated by the collisions of the historical development of culture and forming the circulation of ideas and artistic experience, which reflects its artistic context.

In addition, among the researchers of the meanings and essence of performativity, one should mention the works of modern practitioners and researchers of the world theater such as: Romeo Castellucci, Jacques Lecoq, Marvin Carlson, etc.

Along with the above works, it is worth mentioning "Artificial Hell Participatory Art and Spectatorship Politics" and "Antagonism and the Aesthetics of Interaction" by Claire Bishop, in which the author touches on the trends spreading in contemporary art as a standard of art of complicity or art of participation.

K. Bishop illuminates the "archeology" of the techniques of today's artistic practice, conducts a study of interaction (participation or complicity of the audience) as a technique in different eras of theatrical culture, and the culture of modern performance and actionism.

It should be singled out the study of Christoph Bid "And the theater became post-dramatic: the story of one illusion", which touches on performativity from an unusual perspective – starts, on the one hand, from the classic "Theory of Modern Drama" by Peter Sonda, and on the other hand, relies on the conceptuality of the idea of "postmodern". K. Bid claims that nowadays the status of reality is complicated, which is presented or represented with an endless collection of different forms of reality, which leads to a kind of "postponement" of meaning, denial of narrative as such. In general terms, K. Bid characterizes the modern performative shift



as the displacement of the old model by the new model of the modern theatrical situation in the sense that the "philosophy of theatrical action" appears as the philosophy of the speech act or social relations.

According to the concept of postmodern theatrical aesthetics of K. Bid, the theater is used as a metaphor with a negative connotation – staging, spectacle, mediatization, simulation, hegemony of artifacts (is meant the possibility of manipulation and cynicism). K. Bida emphasizes in his works "The Postmodern State" and "Postmodern Fables", that modern stage practices fundamentally change orientations.

Modernity is seen by K. Bid as a conceptual scramble, where Lyotard's "energy theater" is adjacent to the phenomenological opposition of "action" and "situation", where Baudrillard's and "hyperrealism, hypernaturalism": "post-dramatic" aesthetic and social practice that exists side by side with dramatic theater. K. Bid determines together with H.-T. Lehman that nowadays "the concept of drama loses its conceptual value" (a theatrical performance lacks theatrical illusion or epic distance, recognizable characters, intrigue, entertainment, tension, etc.) [17]. A similar kind of spectacle can really be seen in the works of Claude Regi, Romeo Castellucci, and others.

C. Bid in his work "And the theater became post-dramatic: the story of one illusion" focuses on the connection between postmodernism and modern theatrical practices. According to K. Bida, it is the concept of postmodernism that is most suitable for describing modern performative practices that tend towards direct connection, intersection with practices of other arts.

K. Bid's reflections concern the lack of a clear categorization of modern art practices, respectively, the analytical method for their study, the lack of development of the theoretical apparatus intended for their analysis.

Summarizing the theoretical provisions regarding the essence of performativity, it can be noted that modern performative activity is equally related to both the culture of everyday life and the culture of art – existing simultaneously in the space of art and in the space of socio-cultural processes. Crossing the boundaries of empirical and artistic realities is its essential characteristic, as the characteristic of the culture on the border of the 20th and 21st centuries, which implies inseparable socio-cultural and artistic connections.

Performance exists in a wide variety of contexts, sometimes very far from each other. The performance is understood as a different kind of metamorphosis, transformation (and not only in the theater space).

Performative actions – extraordinary, extravagant, intriguing, and those that shock the audience – are all kinds of public artistic actions, when the object is the person himself as a certain "play with the audience." This is an expressive artistic action, which is outrageous and provocative in nature and aims to stun the viewer with unusual ideas and feelings.

If we take the exact translation of the word "performance" from the English language (execution, presentation, speech), it becomes clear and permissible to use the concept of "performance" in relation to any kind of reincarnation and theatricality. Dictionaries, as a rule, interpret the term "performance" as a conceptual art that specializes in depicting experiences, states of consciousness, socio-psychological phenomena in the context of socio-cultural reality, when the human body, appearance, gestures, behavior of the artist serve as the means and material of creativity (who assumes the role of an actor). In other words, a performance is an artistic action, fundamentally aimed at a certain self-expression, one can say, self-expression "in its pure form", for the sake of a chosen goal, which attracts the attention of the viewer. Moreover, "spectator" is understood quite



broadly – as a subject that is currently related to communication (even if not engaging in direct verbal communication).

The performance contains not only an appeal to the present subject, but also sometimes to an absent, ephemeral spectator-observer that does not necessarily exist in reality. So, a performance – a representation, an action, a spectacle – is a form of modern art, where the work is the actions of a character or the author himself, which the audience observes in real time.

The event is organized with the help of a number of provocative actions, the result of which is not always predictable, and has an improvisational and playful nature. The improvisation is a formative basis that allows you to adapt the problem-thematic canvas to new proposed circumstances.

The main features of the performance are:

- effective activity;
- ephemerality;
- the creator himself appears as a work of art;
- what is happening is breathtaking;
- the main attention is permanently attached to the heroes;
- the main content often consists of silent scenes, since the main thing is visual perception;
- a kind of synthesis, interweaving of various special effects – noise, musical accompaniment, sound effects, theatrical reincarnations, bright unusual actors' costumes, etc.

Performative action is characterized by tendentiousness and enlargement of forms for clarity. Stage practices and theater reflect on the accelerated pace of life, which should be defined as a constitutive feature that entails the signification of a theatrical statement by the property of multilevelness, as well as insubordination to semiotic logic (moving away from the logic of drama as an artificial construction of the world in the form of a sequence of events arising from each other).

The components of the stage action cease to be a “doubling of reality”, becoming fundamentally significant in themselves [17]. At the same time, the primary significance of the mutual influence of the actor-spectator polylogue is intensified, turning the understanding and experience of the stage work into a new processuality that has no final completion.

The performer demonstrates his “presence” and artificial formation of another sensory reality as a bodily-material influence on the audience (he is not an actor, he does not play the role of a character [6, 7]).

Performance is considered as a theatrical form based on improvisation and interaction of performers with the audience, organized in honor of any significant event for the audience, which is characterized by the predominance of visual images, synthetic interdisciplinary character, emphasis on creating an atmosphere, costuming, spontaneity, fragmentation, intertextuality.

So, one aspect can be singled out – the position of the spectator (with the possibility of even the absence of a classical spectator, since the performance can take place on the street, among passers-by who may or may not notice it).

“Performative and performativity” is defined as the intention to present something to the audience; performing arts is a stage form where the material is the actor's body.

Performing on stage and in an ordinary life situation is practically the same thing, and individual behavior of the performer depends on the context in which he finds himself, that is, this or that social situation determines the corresponding (role), and therefore the way of self-representation in that or that situation” [13].

Thus, performativity in its essence is content-conceptual, because it allows adding the performer's own flavor in understanding the socio-cultural space and how the artist interacts with it. The recipient, who becomes a



spectator, masters a new aesthetic experience, built on the ability to move within the perception and move the art event itself in its socio-cultural reality, which inspires the acquisition of a new view of the world.

It should be emphasized that a certain plurality of the performance can determine the driving improvisational actions and the interaction of the performers with the audience, which is expressed both in many parallel, separate plots that are based on interaction with the audience and develop, and in the many ways of development of each of these plots that are born here and now in co-authorship with the audience – in general, in the multi-interpretive perception of the artistic concept. The character of the development of the action in the performance appears fundamentally rhizomatic (rhizome as chaos) in comparison with traditional theatrical forms.

The current state of stage art, to put it radically, is focused on performativity. The technique of shocking the audience (provoking them and putting them in an uncomfortable position) is fashionable and effective. In fact, this way of treating the audience shows the preservation of the notorious fourth wall, the alienation of the stage from the viewer and not considering him as an equal. In modern stage art, the activation of the inquisitive and interested position of the viewer, without any confrontation with the performer, is widespread. Thus, the participants of the performance are invited to contribute to the change of reality, of which the performance is a part.

The performance fundamentally erases the hierarchical boundaries between the artist and the viewer, the participant in the action and the casual passerby. It is impossible to limit it to certain frameworks – the line that separates art from reality is completely blurred. And the artist is no longer interesting by his creation, but by the manifestation of his own personality.

Performance represents the diffusion of many types of art and turns into a synthetic action, contributing to the growth of a wave of creative experiments as a rethinking of the role of dramatic art, which by its intention acquires the characteristics of a creative laboratory.

Accordingly, in line with the new topical theatrical form performance is based on the principles of spontaneity and forms a new type of artistic thinking (the ability to think montage, vectorially) as the ability to direct the interaction of performers and the audience in the right direction, to achieve the creation of the necessary image – atmosphere.

The performance is characterized by: fragmentation, a tendency to borrow, the collage principle of work, the repeated use of "shards and scraps of someone else" for the purpose of broadcasting the meanings embedded in them and generating new ones that enter into a polylogue and interact with the audience. It should be emphasized the important role of the audience, each member of which interprets the meanings arising from interactions in their own way. Performance is embodied in eclecticism and polysemantic ambiguity of meanings, which makes it essentially "multi-interpretive" [14].

Artistic practice is carried out by working with the body as a carrier of one's own bodily consciousness and bodily imagination against the background of reflection on oneself and the environment. The body is not necessarily used as an instrument, but becomes the author of the image and a critical agent for thinking. A peculiar body-phenomenon with its special existence primarily in its materiality is perceived, first of all, in its phenomenal meaning. The bodily-plastic imagery comes to the fore in the performative action, is actualization of nihilistic and grotesque forms takes place that give it a "new sound".

The primary thing in the performance is the creative gesture of the author-artist, ex-



pressed through bodily-visual expression, and one of the most important features of art practices of this type is body-centrism. The fundamental characteristic of performance can be called bodily imagery. "The development of ideas" of corporeality in performative practices gives the viewer the opportunity to experience special situations and sensations that are almost impossible in real life. They not only become a source of new experiences for the viewer, but also exert a serious influence on the sensual sphere, which is transformed due to certain changes in the visual and tactile perception of a person, and the cultural opposition "spirit / body" is gradually smoothed out [15].

The spectacular basis of performative aesthetics presupposes exclusively the visual perception of the aesthetic value of art, which is enriched by dynamic and expressive means of expressiveness, the main of which is, together with physicality, the use of theatrical techniques and spectacular details, publicity, the presence of communication with the viewer, the combination of meaningfulness with entertainment, thanks to which and bright spectacular features are acquired.

The performative aesthetics of modern stage practices is not just a mental and physical construction that the artist creates in front of the audience at a certain time and place. After all, the performance is the very life of the performer, and in this case we are not observing an abstract or metaphorical, but an absolutely concrete and real fusion of performance with life. And this can be considered the main characteristic of performative aesthetics.

As a concomitant characteristic of performative aesthetics, one should define its special creative communicativeness, corresponding of modern culture. After all, in the artistic process, the performance is maximally social and open to all topics and problems of life, asserting a new definition of the roles of the author and the character, creating new

communicative situations, destroying stereotypes of perception, forming a new audience ready to accept new artistic forms [18].

Performance gathers all the arts at once, rejecting their limitations and not being defined by multidisciplinary alone. Performance art is a new convention of the existence of art and its perception. The whole meaning of a performance consists in an action that is not aimed at fixing or describing an already formed situation, but at changing reality (a theater director, an actor and an artist meet in the figure of a performer). The distinction between the production and the work disappears, and the audience becomes a part of the work without even wanting it, without even being aware of it. In a performance, the actor ceases to portray a character, the director ceases to depend on the scenographer, and the artist gets rid of the distance between himself and his work or material, because his body is both that work and the material.

Performance art appears as a burst of creative energy in the desire for change, longing for something alive and real, something that is happening right now and to which you can have a direct relationship. Time is one of the elements that determine the existence of a performance. Others – include space, the presence of a performer (live or with the help of media) and an audience that is prone to certain affects, which is the object and subject of the relationship that arises between it and the performers. Although the presence of a performer (neither live nor in medialized form) is not necessary for the emergence of a performative situation – theater without people [4].

In the context of what Erica Fischer-Licht defines the category of event as a fundamental feature of the performative (an event that occurs between the performer and observers/participants and makes performance possible) an understanding of its impact on modern theater is formed.



Its forms are born directly in the process of rehearsal in scenographic and musical solutions that demonstrate images, ideas, nuances, the meaning of which changes in the context of a visual game. Modern theatrical art is changing classical landmarks: one stage action can combine the techniques of multimedia technologies, holographic show and 3D mapping, the expressive means of carnival and street theater, etc. It is obvious that a modern performance denies the classical structure of the spectacle and begins to "live" in other artistic aesthetics.

Its content does not cancel the sounding of unanswerable questions that hide the essence of life. The open look "eye to eye" is an artistic stimulus, rather, a study that is the starting point in the search for the stage style of modern post-theatre, mastering new forms, developing a new stage language of opposition to the conventions of the traditional look, in fact, a way, according to Rosela Goldsberg, "to revive formal and conceptual ideas on which art is based" [3].

Following the performance in the latest stage practices, modern theatrical performances began to move into the category of events. The question of the documentation and reproduction of the performance is still acute, and it is generally accepted that it is impossible to reproduce or repeat the performance, this destroys its essence. The performance is not considered as something stable and something that can be easily repeated (in this sense, the idea is also widespread that in reality there are no identical performances, as if every time the performance loses its liveness, vivacity, and ceases to be what it was). We are talking about the fact that, according to the definition of K. Stanislavskaya, "modern theater and new forms of theatricality today acquire performative features, which gives the right to predict not just the theatricalization of performance, but the performativization of theater" [20].

Performances are increasingly appearing, which, according to E. Fischer-Lichte, in their very essence are tied to the "loop of the corresponding reaction", that is, include in their events the reaction of the audience, which from time to time makes the performance visibly different [5].

In the modern theater of the prevailing post-drama – the post-dramatic or post-performative turn – the viewer is a co-creator. The so-called performative turn in the practice of art takes shape decades before its theoretical description (performative properties of culture, properties of action, which is important in itself, and meaning may not be given or may be given only after perception). This view grows on the basis of the impossibility of performative analysis within the framework of traditional aesthetic theories, which imply that the work has a certain final meaning laid down by the author and which can be transmitted to the audience and perceived in a more or less undistorted form. This does not mean that the new theater, the new stage art cannot be interpreted (the problem is that the best examples of them cannot be limited to any proposed interpretation, always going beyond them). Moreover, most often the director expects that the interpretation and "meanings" or "story" will be born in the head of the viewer – to each his own [5, 17].

The theater "renounces" literature, although after the performative turn texts for the stage appear, which can also be designated as post-dramatic: they have an obvious performativity and the concepts of drama, conflict, plot, hero or character appear completely lost.

Such texts include works by, for example, Heiner Müller, Elfriede Jelinek, Sarah Kane, Raynald Goetz, Martin Crimp, and many others.

E. Fischer-Lichte states: "it is obvious that a situation has arisen within the frame-



work of performance in which two relations are fundamental, both for the aesthetic theory of hermeneutics and for the aesthetic theory of semiotics. Relationships are redefined: firstly, the relationship between the subject and the object, between the observer and the observed, the viewer and the actor, and, secondly, the relationship between the corporeal-material and symbolic aspects of the elements, between what signifies and signified" [5].

This blurring of the hitherto obvious positions of the viewer and the actor is another feature of modern stage art. It adapts, saturating itself with performative practices, their main methods: deconstruction of meaning, turning to oneself and thematization of oneself, turning the internal mechanisms of one's work inside out, shifting from acting to performing, criticism of representation and illusion, problematization the basic structure of subjectivity, the choice of non-theatrical places for showing the performance and performers (e.g. people with health problems), various forms of non-traditional attitude of the performers to their own body (the kind that shocks within the framework of the stage action) [6].

The position of the actor also changes. In the classical dramatic theater, the actor is the central figure of the performance in general, the entire representation is built on his charisma and presence on the stage, his ability to captivate the audience and get used to the role. From the perspective of performativity, there is a shift – the actor's role changes to that of a performer, his tasks expand from text recitation to a wide range of practices: singing, plastic arts, acrobatics, complex non-representational models of presence. Now it is important for the performer not how well to "run through the text" of the play or put himself in the place of the character being performed, but how to more accurately perform directorial tasks, which can be extremely diverse. The place of the actor in the most avant-garde examples of post-drama is

equated with the place of any other elements of the performance – music, light, scenography or objects; there are also examples when the play gets rid of professional actors or live people altogether. At the same time, it should be borne in mind that in the context of post-drama there are exceptions to any trend, and there are examples, in which the actors are not puppets in the hands of the director, but his co-creators or even the only ones who "put together" the performance: come up with texts, a movement, improvises pauses for its own reasons. These changes in the role of the live performer are often seen as a limitation of his potential and a degradation from a high level of psychological performance. In fact, it is quite obvious that such transformations only expand the capabilities of the performers: the performer's body becomes a means of expression in itself, and it is able to "communicate" much more than the text speaks. This physical reality on stage transmits to the audience an energy without representation, the performer does not act – he just is. Moreover, it can be anything – it can be a living body, or an inanimate puppet, it can be an object of decoration, it can be a corpse [9].

Once the modern theater leaves the yoke of literature and ceases to offer the actor to get used to the role, the need for a linear narrative and storytelling in general disappears: there is no chain that can be followed, no "fate of the heroine" and "beginning, climax and end". In the theater, in parallel with the development of the actual theatrical language, there is also the development of a certain theatrical ethics, the main direction of which is the emancipation of the viewer, putting him on the same level as the creators. Narrative and storytelling are essentially repressive practices, they impose on the viewer a rigid framework of the plot, from which it is simply impossible to deviate. Within the performative action, the viewer has much more freedom (however, not everyone is ready for this freedom). Directing practices



are often aimed not at the rational perception of the performance by the audience, but at the sensual or subconscious. The object of transmission is not a verbal message, but impressions and emotions. The expansion of the audience's sensuality is one of the most important effects of performative action [15, 19].

The narrative is replaced by collage and fragmentedness of the story, and sometimes they are not there either – simply "something happens", which is justified in itself as a theater of gestures and movements, which causes the viewer to freely fly associations and impressions. This is a post-drama space, a post-modern space.

Another key feature of this type of stage practice is the rejection of mimesis, that is, art's attempts to copy reality. Even if the plays use, for example, life-like scenography, there is almost always some kind of reality rift in the course of the case; actors do not try to behave "lifelike", and for many directors, even grotesqueness becomes the main method. It is this not always understandable feeling of strangeness, weirdness, and is, from the author's point of view, one of the main emotions of the performance action, which appeals to human sensuality [17].

Performative action is a situation, a modernized theatrical action. Because modern performative action is more of a work-in-progress than a stable phenomenon in the territory of post-drama. This shows that there are now ways of expression beyond the text, that now theater is not about expressing form, but rather about creating a certain situation, often necessary to form a complex relationship between performer and audience. This puts in the hands of the director or the initiator of the performance a much wider toolkit than is available in the drama theater. In general, the history of modern theater can be understood as the history of the awareness and understanding of the performance as very special separate work of art, and there-

fore, the awareness and understanding of the director as a co-creator with the audience.

Post-drama is divided into many important phenomena, but the mainstream of modern theater remains the so-called stage performativity in the understanding of today's theatrical practices.

Thus, no art form belongs to postmodernism as much as performative art does. It, being formed over decades, reproduces all the ideas, principles and attitudes of postmodernism. *Performance is realized as an art and a special sphere of culture, an activity within the limits of artistic and aesthetic transformations of the most significant moments of socio-cultural existence, when embodiments arise on the basis of figurative and symbolic constructions in theatrical actions.*

The "root" of the theatrical form of performance, its original essence, is the expression of the artist, his act of self-expression, and the main means of expression, tool and material of expression is the artist's body. The concept of the body as a central genre-creating element of performance "on the borders of different arts" is being updated, according to theater expert H.-T. Lehmann and his concept of "post-dramatic theater", performance becomes a special "meeting place of various arts" [11]. An obligatory component of performance art is the special participation of the audience, a special "dialogue between the artist and the public." As noted by the art critic R. Goldberg, "the performance is seen as a means of overcoming the alienation between the performer and the audience, because both of them experience its effect on themselves at the same time" [3]. Dominance of visual images; outrageousness, expressiveness, provocativeness, paradoxicality; variety of places of action; lack of a straightforward narrative; polyphonic nature of interpretation; essence in spontaneous action – all these are specific features of performance.



It is possible to indicate the characteristics of the trends of modern stage practices, according to K. Bid:

- total intersection of theater with performance, plastic arts, dance, music, cinema, video, new media and TV, resulting in de-hierarchization and a state of parataxis of the stage work. a prominent place is given to visuality (which reflects the currently dominant position of visual media), in addition, musical and vocal components also play an important role, the text is only an element of stage material;
- the peculiarity of the practice of "delaying (delaying) meaning", which calls into question the usual mode of audience perception, which becomes "open", fragmented, similar to the psychoanalytic technique of free associations.

Performance is "an ambiguous story-communication, played out at the junction of art and the everyday flow of life" [19] Post-modern art requires the interaction of the recipient (audience) with the subjective self-expression of the sender (performer) for the purpose of communication consensus.

The impossibility of remaining silent in relation to one's interlocutor – the spectator – from the side of performative stage practices, which inspire not just an actual dialogue, but a public discussion in the chain "stage action – spectator", where the main link becomes the condition of a person as such, becomes quite obvious. The heightened psychologism and emotionality of the artistic fabric of the stage action ensures the inclusion of the recipient in the active process, which reveals a stable trend towards "theater without a performance" with an "empty space" of the performance.

It should be emphasized that the principle of involving the audience in the active action of the performance-manifesto initiates the evolution of approaches to stage art as such: the desire to confirm the dominant body-centrism and aggressive visuality as an artis-

tic-constitutional material that is embodied on stage.

Performative stage practices are reveal to paradigmatic oppositions: "representatio–presence"; "meaning–manifestation"; "experience is transferred– experience is shared"; "result-process"; "information-burst of energy"; Theatrical modernity tends to be "on the other side of the drama" as an exit to the surface of the hidden impulse to disintegration, dismantling, deconstruction [16].

The performance is extremely intertextual (features of intertextuality are fragmentation, heterogeneity, tendency to borrow other people's meanings and generate new ones), accordingly, the plots of authentic reality and artistic texts enter into a dialogue and interact.

The rhizomatic nature of the performative development of the action is a concept that is expressed by the main artistic image of the event – the creation of an atmosphere and rules of interaction with the audience, the predetermined adaptation of the space.

The concept and form of performative stage practices is determined dramaturgically, based on the theme of the event, the place, the scale of the performance and the characteristics of the audience. The interaction of performers with the audience when moving into the realm of theatrical forms cannot be planned in advance one hundred percent, but you can develop the concept of the event, direct the improvisation in the right direction, marking some rules of the game with the audience (such as preliminary development, modeling, structuring).

Plurality blurs the composition of the performance, multiplies conflicts, driving improvisational actions and the interaction of performers with the audience, which is expressed in:

- many parallel plots based on interaction with the audience;
- many ways of development of each of these plots, which are born here and now in co-authorship with the audience,



way of spectator perception. The stage process becomes more present than a representative act and the result of incarnation, more a manifestation (than a designation), an energy impulse (than information). Dramatic relationships are transferred from the stage space to the space between the stage and the audience. The strong point, of course, should be considered receptive involvement – provocativeness in relation to the audience's attention and imagination as an external affectation of the material [8].

New performative methods of shaping, innovative principles of artistic generalization and structuring predetermine a certain performative line of increasing the information-figurative flow, which puts both the starting point and the point of higher development of the "theater of modernity" and today's stage practices on one level.

Stage action in revealing its performative-procedural nature correlates with the desire to overcome the isolation of man and the world, which actually transfers it from an ordinary stage work into an event that forces the viewer to concentrate on the current moment, *making some kind of analytical breakthrough in the field of detailed interpretation and giving meaning to what is happening* [19].

The performative essence is born from the personal history and mythology of the author, and the performance appears as a cultural and artistic form of existential content and existential reflections.

The consequence of the "performative transformation" of the theatrical model is the orientation towards the present, what is happening now, as the dominant of the procedural nature of the stage action (both devaluing the intrigue with the effect of uncertainty, and predicting further logic).

So, performative action as a phenomenon of postmodern is based on the idea of processuality in art, where the artistic statement itself is at the mercy of chance and momentary coincidence, the nature of these manifesta-

tions is visual and oriented to the laws of spectacular culture [19].

Performance, developing in the postmodern space, reveals the use of everyday life as components of a creative act. The essential nature of the performative action as a spectacular form is such foundations of postmodernism as: a pluralistic-ironic mixture of languages and images of artistic trends and styles; repetition and interpretation of what historically exists in artistic practices; appeal to the rituals of traditional culture and borrowing the form of ritual. The postmodern ritual is embodied in the fact that creators actively turn to forms of social activity; seek to emphasize the playfulness of social events, focus on the unpredictability of actions [2].

Performance expresses the basis of postmodernism – a "small story", social rebellion, reflecting the problems of postmodern society, which are caused by the crisis of the traditional understanding of individuality and the place of the individual in society.

The discourse of performative action is distinguished by its multi-linear construction of its own reality, which finds its expression in various forms. Moreover, "spectator" is understood quite broadly – as a subject that is currently related to communication (even if not engaging in direct verbal communication).

From the author's point of view, it should be especially emphasized that the mindset of modern stage practices is primarily focused on the reflection of the worldview and the study of a person, the expansion of consciousness and the refinement of feelings; focuses not on the image, but on modeling reality by experimenting with embodied reality as a connection with the forgotten in the bustle of the Eternal. The "formular" methods of understanding the world and accepting the current picture of the world are formed as a living breath, living energy, redefining the roles of the author and the character, creating new communicative situations, destroying



stereotypes of perception, forming a new audience ready to accept new artistic forms.

Summarizing, we can formulate that the stage practice of modernity strengthens the accents of performativity, consistently moving along the path of destruction of traditional theatrical boundaries, moving them into a new cultural-communication and conceptual-aesthetic field.

Thus, the installation of modern performing stage practices is focused primarily on reflecting the worldview and studying a person, expanding consciousness and refining feelings (it is focused not so much on reflection as on modeling reality by experimenting with embodied reality as a connection with the Eternal, forgotten in the hustle and bustle). "Formula" methods of world perception and acceptance of the actual picture of the world are formed as living breath, living energy, asserting a new definition of the roles of the author and the character, creating new communicative situations, destroying stereotypes of perception, forming a new audience ready to accept new artistic forms.

The performative aesthetics of today's stage art is not burdened by the burden of classical canons and is able to completely liberate the viewer, directing him to independent creativity as a "decoding" of unusual forms of representation, when emotions and unexpected impressions are deeply experienced, being the quintessence of receptive experience.

Modern performative stage practices inspire phenomenal "inclusion in thinking" in the course of an exceptional, "living" dialogue, which presents its artistic and aesthetic explication of socio-cultural life, acting as a non-trivial problematic polemic, "in relief" articulating existential issues, reflecting on borderline situations. In other words, the performative stage practices of the artistic-pluralistic world of today represent a mediator in joining the presented topical discourse

and are addressed to a reflective, searching viewer who is able to immerse himself in thoughts about himself and his place in the current world.

Performative action conceptualizes bringing art to life, merging with life, introducing into the consciousness of an ordinary person that any fragment of his everyday life can be aestheticized and raised to the level of art or even sacred action (without super efforts).

Performative action is a synthetic art-form as a author's unstructured spontaneity, in which the main essence of the work lies in the process of its creation. It is a multifaceted innovative and authentic art-form that is on the border between sacred and everyday, reality and symbol, and in it everything is real, because the status of reality in our time is represented by an endless collection of different forms of reality.

In the context of performativity, conditional demarcations of trends in artistic and figurative solutions are determined by clearly limited regularities of the process of artistic creation. Otherwise, there is a threat of loss of artistry, when leans towards exaggeration naturalism, or capricious convention, subjective arbitrariness, loss of connection with reality. That is, the contradictions between the real and the ideal should represent a content-artistic dialectical unity. The multi-vector nature of the relations that arise between them, social-artistic, social-ideological, social-functional etc., determine the peculiarities of artistic production as a multi-system formation. The accumulative chain in it is the performative action, which represents the artistic and valuable load and gives an idea of how it meets social needs. Performative action is a reality that in a specifically theatrical way reflects the characteristic features of social life in its spiritual-provocative potentials and dimensions.

Diffusion of artistic experiments is determined by the formula – "action for the sake of



action", which is built on the possibility of "moving within perception" and "moving the art event itself" in its sociocultural reality. Performative action appears as a sphere of free action and conceptual mastery of a new aesthetic experience with existential reflections.

Therefore, the performative action in its form-content essence is the newest form of reflection of theatricalization in its correspondence to life forms (when the boundary between the conditional and the real is crossed) and appears as an art project (the project is "thrown forward") within the framework of non-classical and post-non-classical theater systems. Diffusion of conceptual-artistic author's innovations and co-creation with the viewer, turning into an extraordinary integrality, each time very unexpected in its solutions, is separated into a coherent artistic structure.

Modern stage practices gravitate towards the performative innovation of the author's artistic know-how in provocative cultural and artistic forms of the postmodern dimension, which focuses the research initiative of critical thought on the latest artistic intentions as prospects for further research.

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