

Abstract

When creating my dissertation, I did not think that the topics I would take up would be so topical and close to the territory. The ongoing war in Ukraine beyond Poland's eastern border is, unfortunately, an example of the fact that armed conflicts - and, above all, the pain and suffering that accompany them - are something that happens here and now. Therefore, the topic of post-war trauma cannot be ignored by art, which not only allows you to look at it from a broader perspective, but, above all, helps explain the accompanying phenomena and a range of strong emotions. This dissertation is an attempt to discuss war and trauma. It reveals a new field of artistic expression in the context of relational art involving war veterans and participants in foreign missions in countries of armed conflict. As one well-known graphic artist and illustrator Pawel Warchol used to say - the greatest catastrophe of mankind is the destruction of the Tower of Babel [...] and then, according to the Bible, the great confusion of languages began¹. These words became my inspiration and motivation to create work. I took up the artistic and research challenge, asking myself two fundamental questions - Are there areas in art that have not been discovered? Is it possible to obtain knowledge, a message without being exposed to re-experiencing traumatic situations? This dissertation is a response to the issues I raised in the matter of visual arts. It is undoubtedly interdisciplinary in nature, in which photography becomes the main research tool, but not as a final product, but as a form of electronic sketchbook. This aforementioned digital sketchbook was created by the project participants and became the basis for a series of paintings. Importantly, however, it gave a new meaning to the visual arts. Photography as sketch, document, content. Painting as a non-direct action aimed at synthesizing two worlds, the sender of the message and the receiver. Visual actions here are a kind of bridge, a way to materialize what we are not able to achieve verbally. My function as an artist has changed. From a complete creator, for whom the work is dependent from beginning to end, I changed into a provocateur-creator of the situation. There has been a transfer of the partial creative act to third parties.

The work consists of two parts. The first - practical - is a collection of nineteen paintings made in the technique of acrylic on canvas, divided into 3 cycles. The division was made due to the content of the photographic material. The first collection presents decorations and gremos, the second deals with personal objects, while the third is a series of landscapes. The second part of the work contains theoretical considerations, as well as a description of the course of action. In the first chapter of this part, I look at theory in the field of socially engaged art. In the second, I touch on topics related to the social sciences, outlining the specifics of the environment. The third chapter is devoted to the entire creative process and the description of artistic works. In this section I justify the choices I made and include the conclusions and results of my research.