

ART OBJECT-TRADITIONS AND MODERNITY

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Annotation. The author analyzes the influence of the Russian avant-garde on the work of Vitebsk contemporary artists. The art object has become the most radical direction in art, reflecting the industrial era of the twentieth century. Having arisen in line with the formative ideas of constructivism and suprematism, the art object received its further development in world practice in the 60-70s of the twentieth century. Continuing the traditions of the Russian avant-garde and relying on modern Western trends, the artists of Vitebsk have created their own original concept of the formation of spatial objects.

Keywords: art object, suprematism and constructivism, world avant-garde, continuity of styles, Vitebsk artists.

АРТ-ОБЪЕКТ – ТРАДИЦИИ И СОВРЕМЕННОСТЬ

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Аннотация. В статье анализируется влияние русского авангарда на творчество современных художников Витебска. Арт-объект стал наиболее радикальным направлением в искусстве, отражающим индустриальную эпоху XX века. Возникнув в русле формообразующих идей конструктивизма и супрематизма, арт-объект получил свое дальнейшее развитие в мировой практике в 60-70-х годах XX столетия. Художники Витебска, работая в русле современных художественных течений, создали свою оригинальную концепцию формирования пространственных объектов, продолжая традиции русского авангарда начала XX века.

Ключевые слова: арт-объект, супрематизм и конструктивизм, мировой авангард, преемственность стилей, витебские художники.

An art object is the construction of a form

The twentieth century has made its own adjustments to the life and way of life of people, science has transformed the world, opened new horizons of knowledge, the world of technology and new technologies have burst into human life. The artists who came out in the process of experiments with form into the subject world drew attention to the artistic potencies of technology and talked about the priority of form education issues and the problem of invention in artistic creativity. In the art of the early twentieth century, the following became relevant: functionalism – function became an important

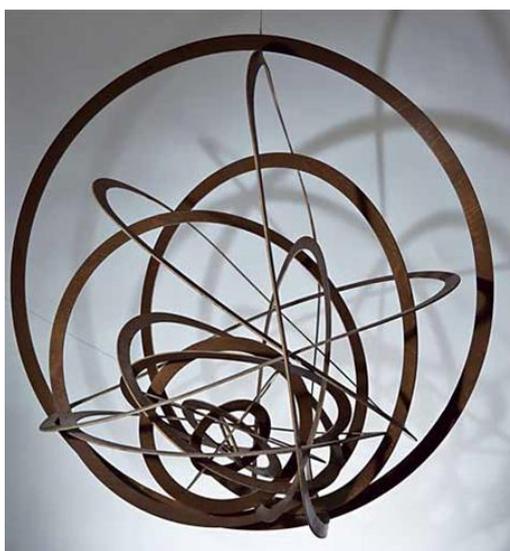


Figure 1. A. Rodchenko “Mobili”

component; constructiveness of the construction of objects, forms, spaces, conciseness in the choice of material, shapes, colors. The history of the emergence of art objects is associated with the appearance of abstract art, the names of K. Malevich, V. Tatlin, A. Rodchenko, M. Duchamp, L. Lisitsky, the Stenberg brothers, K. Kobro. These artists are characterized by the creation of an original language of art, a fundamentally different artistic thinking. Art has become global, expanding its borders, increasingly intersecting with the surrounding world, in line with new concepts of shaping, such as constructivism, suprematism, neoplasticism. “It turned out that the radical style-forming processes in the first third of the twentieth century occurred in an environment of a sharp increase in scientific and technological progress and a wide spread of rational and logical methods of shaping in all types of creative activity” [1, p. 51].

V. Tatlin (1885-1954) played a decisive role in the development of the constructivist trend. After returning from Paris in 1913, the artist began to engage in non-objective plastic. In May 1914, he opened the doors of his workshop to the general public. In the poster for the exhibition it was written – “synthesis–static composition”. His reliefs were completed with the help of pure geometric forms, which testifies to the creation of its own unique language in art. The artist called the first reliefs “picturesque” and they were located on the vertical plane of the wall. Three-dimensional three-dimensional elements – triangles, cones – seemed to be pushed into real space, perhaps hence their name “counter-reliefs”. In 1915, the “picturesque” reliefs were replaced by “angular” reliefs, which were presented at the “last futuristic exhibition 0, 10”. In 1919-1920, on behalf of the People's Commissariat of Education, V. Tatlin built an impressive design for the “Monument to the III International”. The spiral frame of the structure and the kinetic structure of rotation of the internal volumes (cube, cone, cylinder) struck with its audacity. The geometric perfection of the project “makes us recall with what persistence Malevich brought to the fore <...> the universal and all-encompassing role of the primary elements – the square and the cube – insisting on infinite formal possibilities” [2, p. 116].

A. Rodchenko (1891-1956) – one of the founders of constructivism, in addition to painting and graphics, was also engaged in spatial structures. These include the cycle

of works “Folding and disassembling” (1918), consisting of flat cardboard elements, “Planes reflecting light” (1920-1921) – freely hanging mobiles of concentric shapes cut out of plywood (circle, square, ellipse, triangle and hexagon), which moved without mechanical force. The third cycle was created “According to the principle of identical forms” (1920-1921) – spatial structures made of standard wooden bars connected according to the combinatorial principle. Rodchenko, like many artists of that time, was looking for some simplicity and tried to split the basics into the smallest units, which he then redesigned, recreated in a completely new aesthetic category. He considered the problems of pointlessness from the point of view of the movement of planes, the intersection of elements of various configurations – circles, rectangles, longitudinal planes (F.1). In his suspended constructions, A. Rodchenko tried to solve one of the most difficult issues – this is the problem of the relationship between the category of pointlessness and real space.

A special place in the list of innovators of the twentieth century belongs to K. Malevich, the founder of suprematism. In the mid – 1920 s, K. Malevich created his famous architectons and planites, which marked a new step in the process of “coming out” of suprematism in architecture. These were real three-dimensional compositions in real space, original sketch models of experimental architectural compositions (“architecture as a problem”), in which parallelepipeds of various shapes and sizes (horizontal and vertical) adjoin or, as it were, cut into each other at right angles. The artist defined his plastic models-architectons – as architectural formulas according to which architectural structures can be given shape. The clear geometric shapes of Malevich's suprematist compositions and architectons played the role of peculiar crystals thrown into a permeated solution. Their influence affected the creative search of the Golden group “De Style”, and the artistic principles of the German Bauhaus, and the works of many Soviet architects (N. Ladovsky, I. Leonidov, K. Melnikov, L. Lisitsky, M. Ginzburg, A. Nikolsky, L. Hidekel).

In the early 1960 s, minimalism emerged in the USA, the basis for which was constructivism, suprematism and formal art of the beginning of the century. Among the most famous minimalists were K. Andre, M. Bochner, R. Morris, D. Judd and T. Smith. They were united by the desire to fit the artifact into the environment, to beat the natural texture of the material. Rejecting classical creative techniques and traditional artistic materials, minimalists used industrial and natural materials of simple geometric shapes and neutral colors, small volumes, and used serial, conveyor methods of industrial production. The originality and innovative approach in the development of modern trends in the art of an art object also belongs to German artists of the 60 s-70 s. These are G. Yukker, J. Boyce, R. Geiger, the group “Zero”. The band members were looking for a new, bright world after the tragedy of the Second World War. In contrast to classical painting and sculpture, the artists took pure light and movement as a new zero point of reference. They embodied their ideals in kinetic light works: disks, balls, light space.

An art object in the works of modern Vitebsk artists

In the 80 s of the twentieth century, a wave of postmodern art trends touched the city of Vitebsk. On the one hand, the creative heritage of the avant-garde of the 1920 s became the basis for the formation of a new vision of art. On the other hand, perestroika swept away all barriers and exhibitions of contemporary artists from Germany, and



Figure 2. A. Maley “Metaphysical construction”

America began to be actively held in the post-Soviet space, whose work opened the way for experiments with form, material and space. The younger generation of artists was influenced by the creative ideas of constructivism, suprematism, concrete art and minimalism. Among them are A. Dosuzhev, A. Slepov, T. Makletsova, G. Faley, A. Faley, N. Abramovich, N. Goncharova, M. Sidin, A. Maley, V. Vasiliev, K. Demchev and G. Vasilyeva.

So being an adherent of K. Malevich's creativity, Alexander Maley created his theory, justifying it practically with a series of works called “Feedback”: “Suprematism with three balls” (1991), “Crimson Object” (1993). The artist writes about his project: “Feedback” is a double the space based on the three-dimensional and transcendent consciousness of man, the cubo-square is his aesthetic expression. Cubo-square space is constructed in the human mind as a virtual action, splitting the space into two aesthetic events (cube and square), and bonded into a single structure by consciousness” [3, p.41]. The main artistic means of expressing such spatial thinking for the artist are objects, installations in which the artist connects the plane and three-dimensional objects. In the mid-2000s, the artist creates picturesque objects made of plywood. A. Maley connects geometric shapes of different colors in space at a distance from each other using anchors. As a result, a kind of picturesque relief was obtained, which, being on the white wall of the exhibition hall, included it in spatial perception (F.2). Thus, it can be said that A. Maley transformed the ideas of K. Malevich's suprematism, catching and fixing the pulse of modernity.

Alexander Slepov, the author of the project “Figurative Suprematism”, relies on the work of D. Yakerson in his formal search. The artist creates sculptural objects by

means of geometric volumes, transforming the human figure into abstract forms using plastic. “The idea of “figurative suprematism” is to reassemble an image from the elements of pointlessness, which would push the viewer to specific reflections set by the artist” – this is how A. Slepov presents his concept. On the white surface of the sculpture, he applies geometric elements of suprematism – a triangle, a square, a cross, emphasizing the iconic basis of creativity. One of his works is called “Holding the Fire” (2010) – this is Prometheus, giving the warmth of his heart to people. The heart is depicted in the form of a cube divided diagonally into two parts, which surprisingly echoes the first sketch of K. Malevich's square for the opera “Victory over the Sun”. The sculpture consists of geometric elements that, echoing in the rhythm of the dance, create a dynamic figure full of color and plastic contrasts.

One of the guides for Vasily Vasiliev was the work of G. Yukker and the group “Zero”. Unconventional material (ropes, sand, nails, plastic, fabric, ashes, moving objects), philosophical concept, new formative concepts – all this had an indelible influence on his creative approach. In 1994, V. Vasiliev held an author's action called “Project Z”, in five exhibition halls of Vitebsk. In each hall there was a separate concept that formulated the movement from painting – to the subject – object, and further – to minimal art and conceptualism. The project presented works completed over the past 7 years, since 1986, as well as the first objects and abstract paintings in the spirit of minimalism. In the artist's work, a significant place belongs to the theme “Plastic standard”. The standard, as you know, is a role model, measurement, application, i.e. it has the possibility of practical use. The artist's reflections on the topic of heredity, the experience of genetic memory formed the basis of a series of works entitled “The Ways of Blood”. The epigraph to this series can serve as the words of M. Bulgakov “blood issues are the most difficult issues in the world”. This is the unconscious destiny of a person, closely connected with fate, karma (a series of works: “Chariot”, “Ladder”, “Pendulums”). Galina Vasilyeva often creates art objects during promotions, performances not only in exhibition halls, but also in the landscape. The first art object in the landscape was created by the artist during the second international plein air “Malevich. Unovis. Modernity” (1996). In the former estate of the Tsekhanovetsky artists were provided with a unique park of the 18th century. On one of the terraces was placed an “Orange square” of 9 stones and a little further on an “Orange line” lined with stones along a lime alley, the trees of which were curved in the form of an arch. A special place in the author's work is given to the theme of the sun, the play of shadows, and the sundial. So, in 1996, on September 19, the action “Sundial” was held on the banks of the river Zap. Dvina in Vitebsk. The action began at 9:00, under the clock at the Town Hall. The sun shone on the pillar and its shadow fell into the water, the first stone was laid there, and wrapped in a golden film. Every hour of that day was marked with a stone, the place of which was marked by the shadow of the pillar. 10, 11, 12, 13, time passed quietly and imperceptibly, the shadow went its usual way on the ground. “By 12 o'clock, the pillar was completely wrapped in a golden film and its radiance was dazzling. At 18-30, the sunbeam disappeared behind the clouds, the daylight was ending” [4, c.40]. The final touch of the painting created in the landscape of the city were the “Golden” stones in the Vitba River.



Figure 3. G. Vasilyeva Sundial

In 2001, G. Vasilyeva created another art object in the landscape, which used sunlight – “Mittag” or “12” (Verentzhain, Germany). Noon symbolizes the peak of the solar disk in the sky, the flowering of life and culture. The object consisted of 12 two-meter pillars, painted in gold paint, located at a distance of 20 centimeters from each other, in the South-North direction. At noon, the shadow of the pillars forms a single line, which was emphasized by the white marble chips between the rows, and the golden vertical of the pillars takes the viewer into the blue sky to the sun.

The active inclusion of sunlight in the creation of the object can be seen in the work “Sundial” (2009), created in Rheinburg-Luccum (Germany). The object was a red square, on which a silver-colored tree section was placed (F.3). The shadow falling from a small triangular ledge showed the time.

Conclusions

With the development of the industrial era at the beginning of the twentieth century, the picture of the world has changed, the perception of this world by man has changed. Since 1910, dramatic changes have also taken place in the history of the world practice of art. Many artists have reached a new level of reproduction of – non-objective creativity. Art has ceased to be an illustration of anything, it has become an independent object. New style-forming concepts have emerged – constructivism, suprematism, neoplasticism. With the departure from the transmission of reality, reliefs and spatial structures have replaced traditional types of art – paintings and sculptures.

The convergence of scientific, technical and artistic creativity was most clearly reflected in such a direction of art as an art object. The history of the emergence of art objects is associated with the names of K. Malevich (architectons), V. Tatlin (counter-reliefs), A. Rodchenko (mobiles), M. Duchamp (ready-made), L. Lisitsky (prouns) and many other avant-garde artists. These artists are characterized by the creation of a new language of art, a fundamentally new kind of artistic thinking. Initially, these artists stood on a common position – they proceeded from a new vision of the world, turning to the formal language of art.

In the early 60s of the twentieth century, with the emergence of the post-industrial era, the creative experiments of the avant-garde of the 1920s received their further development. Such trends in art as minimalism, geometric abstraction, concrete art, installation, performance, art object have become relevant.

In the 90s, perestroika opened the way to a new worldview, to new trends in art in the post-Soviet space, in particular in Belarus. A constructive direction has emerged in Vitebsk, which is closely connected with the names of such artists as A. Maley, V. Vasiliev, A. Slepov, G. Faley, G. Vasilyeva. The Vitebsk School of Contemporary Art is a special direction in the national art of Belarus, which is characterized by both continuity of the formative traditions of the avant-garde, and an individual path of development within the framework of modern trends in art. Numerous projects by A. Maley, V. Vasiliev, G. Vasilyeva, A. Slepov demonstrate the uniqueness of the development of art in Vitebsk, which reflected the personal commitment of artists to the search for new forms in the art of the twentieth century. In their work, the artists turned to art objects, in the creation of which objects and materials of industrial production were widely used.

Art objects transformed the exhibition projects of contemporary art, capturing not only the exhibition space of museums and contemporary art centers, but also becoming part of the urban environment and rural landscapes.

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