

# SOCIALINIO MENO GALIMYBĖS IR RIBOS: PROJEKTO ŠANČIAI – DRAUGIŠKA ZONA ATVEJIS

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Straipsnyje aptariamos sparčiai populiarėjančio socialinio meno vertinimo problemos. Radikaliai pažeisdamas modernybei būdingos meno autonomijos ribas, socialinis menas perkelia kūrybos ir sklaidos procesus į visuomeninių santykių sferą, tad jo interpretacijose susipina estetiniai, etiniai ir politiniai aspektai. Čia mėginama suformuluoti tokios meninės veiklos vertinimo kriterijus ir išbandyti juos projekto *Šančiai – draugiška zona* atvejo analizėje.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: socialinis menas, dalyvavimas, bendradarbiavimas, kolektyvinė kūryba, bendruomenė, viešoji sfera.

## ĮVADAS

Pavarčius 2012 m. išleistą *coffee-table* stiliaus meno albumą *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991–2011* (*Gyvenimas kaip forma: socialinis menas 1991–2011*)<sup>1</sup>, galima drąsiai tvirtinti, kad šiandien socialinis menas<sup>2</sup> išgyvena iki šiol neregėtą pakilimą. Meno

(*community arts*), „bendradarbiavimu paremtas menas“ (*collaborative art*), „reliacinis menas“ (*relational art*), „dalyvaujamas menas“ (*participatory art*) ir kt. Plačiau apie terminus ir juos pagrindusių teoretikų veikalus žr. Lina Michelkevičė, „Dalyvavimo estetika: analitinių ir kritinių prieigų paieškos“, in: *Acta Academiae Artium Vilnensis*, Vilnius, 2009, t. 52: *Meno kūrinys: paviršius, figūra, reikšmė*, sud. Dalia Klajumienė, p. 255–266. L. Michelkevičės straipsnis yra vertingas ir dėl to, kad Lietuvos moksliniame diskurse tai buvo pirmas tekstas, išsamiai pristatantis socialinio meno teorijas. Kiek anksčiau, 2007 m., Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas išleido mokomąją knygą *Kultūros animacija* (aut. Linara Dovydaitytė, Rūta Mažeikienė, Rasa Žukienė). Knygos autorės mėgino į apyvertą įtraukti dar vieną terminą „kultūros animacija“, labiau paplitusį Lenkijoje, o iš esmės atitinkantį britiško „bendruomeninio meno“ (*community arts*) termino turinį. 13-ame ir 14-ame šios knygos skyriuose „kultūros animacija“ arba „bendruomeniniu menu“ vadinama kūrybinė veikla yra atskiriama nuo kitų socialinio meno (pvz., „dalyvaujamojo meno“) formų dėl pastarųjų priklausymo instituciniam meno laukui (projektų dokumentacijos eksponavimas galerijose ir bienalėse). Tačiau šiandien nebėra prasminga daryti šios skirties, nes į institucinį meno lauką yra įtraukiami patys įvairiausi – menininkų ir ne

- <sup>1</sup> *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991–2011*, sud. Nato Thompson, New York: Creative Times Books; Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The MIT Press, 2012. Šią knygą, kuri yra ir tarptautinės parodos *Living as Form* katalogas, išleido įtakinga menų organizacija „Creative Time“, nuo 1972 m. skatinanti viešojo meno kūrybą. Nuo 2006 m. organizacija rengia kasmetines tarptautines konferencijas, skirtas meno ir socialinio teisingumo temai, bei skiria pirmąjį tarptautinio masto apdovanojimą šioje srityje – Leonore Annenberg prizą už meną ir socialinę kaitą.
- <sup>2</sup> Socialinio meno (*socially engaged art*) terminas turi daugybę sinonimų, iš kurių labiausiai paplitę „bendruomeninis menas“

THE POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITS  
OF SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART:  
THE CASE STUDY OF  
ŠANČIAI – FRIENDLY ZONE  
PROJECT

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KEYWORDS: socially engaged art, participation, collaboration, collective production, community, public sphere.

SUMMARY

Socially engaged art projects that give central priorities to principles of participation, collaboration and the inclusion of various social groups into the creative process are spreading rapidly. Despite this “social turn” in contemporary art (or maybe it is because of it) one of the most important questions remains: how do we evaluate such activity? Socially engaged art radically transgresses the limits of artistic autonomy that were inherent to modernism, transferring the processes of creativity from the conventional art-world space into the sphere of social relations. Thus, an art practice which is not merely representational directly affects human relations. Therefore evaluation of social art can be diverse including various combinations of aesthetic, ethical and political aspects. The paper investigates the problems of evaluating social art in order to formulate a set of criteria that will be applied in the analysis of the *Šančiai-Friendly Zone* socially engaged art project.

The theoretical part of the paper ends with the conclusion that different dimensions of political, ethical and aesthetic standpoints should be judged in proportion to one another as they impact the general form that the particular socially engaged art project takes. Ethical criteria are the most problematic ones when applied to the creative processes that are impossible to put in the frame of tight moral boundaries. Political meaning and effects in socially engaged art projects are obvious and interpretation should be based on the principles of locality and contextuality. However, the question of aesthetic values in socially engaged art are often forgotten in order to understand the broader political possibilities and limits of social art. Raising the question of aesthetic criteria, as I’ve argued,

should thus be one of the essential things to do. On the one hand the transposition of art related skills to the non-art sphere exactly defines the limits of social art detaching it from such disciplines as social work or activism. On the other hand the transfer of attributes of art discourse, the condensation of the unknown and the imaginary, into the sphere of social relations can accomplish the act which historically is associated with socially engaged art’s *raison d’être* – to change reality.

The second part of the article contains the analysis of artistic and cultural project *Šančiai – Friendly Zone* executed in 2013 in Kaunas. The main aim of the project was to create experiences of publicness through communication and collaboration with local communities in one area of Kaunas called Žemieji Šančiai. The publicity in this case was perceived after Jürgen Habermas’ classic definition of the modern “public sphere” understood as a place for critical-rational discussion. However, the project bears all the consequences that follow from this idealist image of public sphere. From a social point of view Žemieji Šančiai is a very heterogeneous area beginning from working class foundation ending with large Roma minority. In a context such as this the urgent question to be raised is how to overcome Habermasian idealism where the interests of one class are regarded as universal, ignoring the heterogeneity of the public sphere by blindly believing in the efficiency of rational communication? After the analysis of the *Šančiai – Friendly Zone* project the statement could be made that the participants overcame the normative rationality of public space by using creative methods based on creativity and imagination instead of logical argumentation. They provoked the emergence of collective images, emotions, and acts; creating situations in the local community in order to form new derivatives of the public sphere even if they were temporary and fragmentary. However, the analysis tells how important it’s to note that the public sphere, just as society, is not homogeneous, and how stressing the differences and conflicts that follow from this situation are important. The tools of art and creativity can expose and employ the conflicts productively. So far, the inner conflict situation seems to have been extracted from the agenda of project *Šančiai-Friendly Zone* (the title *Friendly Zone* speaks for itself) and concentrated on external conflict (where enemy is official conception of culture and negligence of institutions).