



Development of Creativity Using a Method of “Intuitive Aesthetics”: Results of En Plein Airs (Vilnius, Lithuania, 2018)

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the problem of development of creativity of science teachers. Development of teachers' creativity is one of the most significant challenges in success of innovating in education. There are a large number of studies on issues of teachers' creativity development, but not enough attention is being paid to the development of methods which would help teachers to identify and step out from the stereotypes that hinder their creativity. Impact of the “Intuitive Aesthetics” method was researched in the project for Lithuanian painters. 40 well-known Lithuanian painters took part in two En Plein Airs held in Vilnius (Lithuania) in 2018. The “Intuitive Aesthetics” method included four interactions: 1) seminar on art psychology, mindfulness and embodiment; 2) practice for developing skills of reflection; 3) live painting; 4) independent painting. The article presents the results of the research showing how the “Intuitive Aesthetics” method helped to change stereotypes of creativity of painters, and it can be considered for further research as a method for development of creativity of science teachers as well as teachers in general. The method also contributes to the development of teachers' abilities to better identify the needs of children and expectations of parents and make needed decisions in complex situations of today's world. Awareness of the maturity helps teachers to cope with the challenges of the time, better understand the request of children and their parents. Direct response allows flexibly change the interaction in difficult situations, as well as to see the consequences of the changes in practice.

Keywords: Authenticity, Creativity, Art, Development of painter's personality.

1. Introduction

Development of teachers' creativity is one of the most significant challenges in success of innovating in education. There are a large number of studies on issues of teachers' creativity development, but not enough attention is being paid to the development of methods which would help teachers to identify and step out from the stereotypes that hinder their creativity.

The study of creativity in relation to personal characteristics of contemporary artists is one of the most significant problems of modern psychology of art as well. It is difficult to trace the connection between creativity, personal characteristics and features of the paintings, as far as it is necessary to combine several psychological methods of research and art history techniques of analysis of the works of art. In this article, we apply an interdisciplinary scientific and practical approach that combines the competence of the psychologist-researcher, psychologist-practitioner and art historian to study the impact of the method “Intuitive Aesthetics” to change stereotypes of creativity.



2. Literature overview

Analysing the art from the perspective of the identity of the artist, contemporary Italian artist, philosopher and psychologist A. Meneghetti offered his concept of the creative process. Therefore the level of development of the artist's reflection is getting particularly important [1].

It should be noted that the sphere of artistic creativity (as well as artistic perception) is a zone of responsibility of mainly unconscious forces of mental activity, therefore there is still no criterion defining creativity of artists in either the psychology of art, or in art history. The creativity is based on intrapersonal factors, such as vitality, reflexivity, self-esteem of living standards, health, tone [2].

A. Meneghetti in his works identifies two types of art: the art of projection and the art of epiphany. The art of projection is perceived as a pathological or existential problem of the artist. Almost all contemporary artists reproduce stereotype, and criticism emphasizes it, but does not see it. Artists who have achieved an understanding of their own affective and existential problems are able to be mature and create "playing the lyricism of being" [1].

R. Balčiūnienė and G. Šeputis concluded that negative images come from the media, which gives rise to serious behavioural problems among young people and leads to a loss of creativity [3]. Considerable preliminary work is needed to educate a person. How do we help our children regain the desire for perfection? We have to speak with them about existential things – about life, death, loneliness, and meaning. These questions cannot "dissolve". We need a program that will work in educational institutions. The conclusions of R. Balčiūnienė and G. Šeputis about the necessity of work with the system of education and upbringing of artists, the necessity of understanding of beauty was used in the practice of en plein air.

3. Methodology of Scientific and Practical Work

Based on the review of the existing literature, we highlighted the main aspects that we worked with when conducting plain air with artists. Attention was focused on working with overall formations, which in psychology are defined as complexes and on live action techniques, which allow distinguishing the action of the world of life from the projection of stereotype and neurosis.

The development of the method "Intuitive Aesthetics" was based on the assumption that the current life situation is reflected in the work of artists as it is subjectively perceived by the author him/herself. Two hypotheses were put forward: about changes in the judgments and creativity of artists after participating in the en plein air and about the allocation of 4 stages of creative growth.

The first part of the method "Intuitive Aesthetics" was a seminar class with artists on the topic of intuitive aesthetics, including work on the awareness of the organismic criterion. The second part was a en plein air itself, which included several practical exercises.

In the process of the en plein air, questionnaires were filled in (40 participants), in which the artists gave answers to questions about what art meant for them. During the second en plein air, artists (20 people) answered the questions twice: before classes and after classes.

To confirm or refute the hypothesis about the stages of creative growth of artists, based on method "Intuitive Aesthetics" 10 people gave answers to the questions of the "Existence scale" psychodiagnostic method by A. Längle [4].

4. Discussion

Thus, the intuitive aesthetics was presented in the form of work in the lecture hall, a new vision of the beauty of Vilnius and participation in the en plein air.

The hypothesis of changes in the opinions and works of artists was proved in the course of the second en plein air based on the method of "Intuitive Aesthetics". 20 people attended it, two surveys were conducted (primary and repeated) and a deeper analysis of the participants' works was carried



out. It was revealed that the en plein air had a positive impact on all artists, which was expressed verbally and in the works. After the contents analysis of the responses, the following was found:

- 30% of the participants changed their attitude to self-expression;
- desire for reflection appeared in 20%;
- 20% of participants have new understanding of art.

4 stages of art understanding art were identified on the basis of the content analysis. The first is the stage of self-expression (Figure 1), it provides an opportunity for a creative response to the challenges of life. The stage of reflection is connected with the emotional living of the meaning of art, i.e. implies awareness of whether art is produced. The selection stage is the possibility of a conscious choice of a certain dynamics in art. And the stage of responsibility implies following the chosen dynamics in the work and full awareness of what the spectator gets when meeting with the works of the artist.

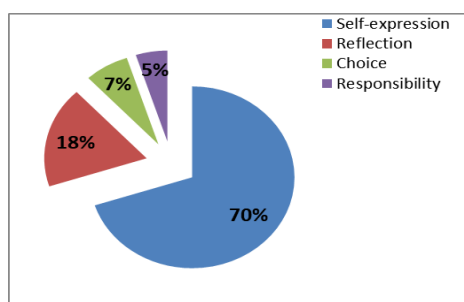


Fig 1: Stage of the understanding of art (N=40)

One of the tasks that we set for ourselves was the awakening of reflection. Reflection supports and clarifies the action. Through the definition of art and analysis of the works of artists, we have identified four stages of art, which artists undergo in their work.

We 4 stages not only in verbal answers, but in painted works of participants. The majority of the plain air participants found themselves at the stage of reflection in the work. Unfortunately, the young painters of the en plein airs were closed for the change most of all (Fig. 2).





Fig. 2: *Stereotypes in the works of young artists*

Partial changes were recorded in the works of one young artist. A vivid manifestation of two tendencies of stereotypes: from the interpretation of the form in the spirit of pop art and neo pop art to the perspective of the model of Jan Vermeer and the vision of fashion models – it was not difficult to notice. During the en plein air she painter abandoned the methods found.



Fig. 3: *Stereotypes and changes in the works of the artist*

A great master took part in one of the en plein airs, with a well-established author's style, whose works are strongly influenced by the paintings of M. K. Čiurlionis, expressionists and artists of the East.



Fig. 4: *Changes in the works after the en plein air*

After participation in the en plein air, the works of painter afterwards contain great compositional clarity, the colour of the works becomes more and more luminous and calm, and there appears the beauty of the depicted place (Figure 5).

Considerable changes took place in the works by another painter. The compositional solution was found in the painting of the action, the colour – in the work with watercolour, and the image of the location of the leaves – in the task with black watercolour (Figure 6).



Fig. 5: *Comparison of the artist's works before and after the en plein air*



There is a conscious choice of positive dynamics and a desire to follow it after participating in the en plein air. We are witnessing the fourth stage of the attitude towards art – the stage of responsibility.

We can point out several groups of artists:

- artists who have found new techniques for themselves, partly or completely got rid of stereotypes – 15%;
- artists who have been able to see and create an alternative to stereotype in their work, but have not yet been able to realize this into their work – 35%;
- artists who have partly changed their stereotype, but returned to it after the en plein air – 15%;
- artists, who reproduced their stereotype in the en plein air – 35%.

The selected groups correspond to the stages of the formation of understanding of art and the awakening of a conscious attitude to their own creativity.

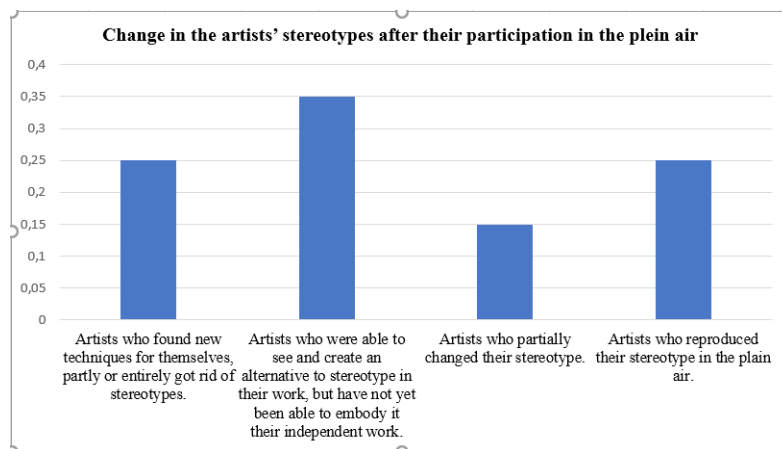


Fig. 6: Change in the artists' stereotypes after experience of "Intuitive Aesthetics" method in the en plein air

The hypothesis of the allocation of 4 stages of understanding of art was proved in the analysis of works and the allocation of four groups of artists. These data were verified by the results of the answers to the "Existence scale" test (N=12). It was found that the average indicators on the scales of the methodology only correspond to the average values for the test presented by the authors, but also fall in resonance with the data of the analysis of the works of artists.



5. Conclusion

Thus, both hypotheses were proved: about changes in creativity (judgments and creativity of artists) after the en plein air and about the allocation of 4 stages of creative growth of artists. The method “Intuitive Aesthetics” used in the en plein air can be considered as psychological authenticating counselling of artists that help to step out from stereotypes in creative process. The artist needs mental order and creative health. Mental order means the ability to recognize one’s own unity of action (conscious and unconscious) and make a choice towards positive art.

The novelty of the experimental research conducted in conjunction with the practice of live action provides a new method “Intuitive Aesthetics” for working with artists, the relevance of which is manifested in the creation of a completely new contemporary art.

“Intuitive Aesthetics” method can also be considered for further research as a method for development of creativity of science teachers as well as teachers in general. The method also contributes to the development of teachers’ abilities to better identify the needs of children and expectations of parents and make needed decisions in complex situations of today’s world. Awareness of the maturity helps teachers to cope with the challenges of the time, better understand the request of children and their parents. Direct response allows flexibly change the interaction in difficult situations, as well as to see the consequences of the changes in practice.

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