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Play, playfulness and humour in the practice of the Art Gallery H

Abstract

This thesis presents activities of an unofficial private art gallery which operated in Kostelec nad Černými lesy in the 1980s. The research for the paper combined the oral history method, work with visual and textual archives and (visual) semiotic analysis. The aim of the research was to describe the activities of The Art Gallery H and to verify the possibilities of didactic transformation of some chosen aspects into visual arts education. The data, especially interviews with witnesses, historical documents, artworks and school lessons have the character of utterances in the poststructuralist context. Memories of the time and the alternative community viewed through the lens of today bring us important information about the present as well. Clandestine culture arisen in the totalitarian regime brings a new perspective into issues such as freedom, focus of our activities, relation to the establishment, ethics. The main concept that interconnects the whole thesis is the relation between humour, play and art creation. This motive is also important for the context of visual arts education. The outputs of the research were presented in the book *Humour and Play in The Art Gallery H* and at the exhibition of the same name thanks to the support of the project GA UK No. 339415. The collected and organised utterances provide important insights into the nature of art and its practice, which can be used in art history and art pedagogy but also in other cultural fields of knowledge.