ART EDUCATION AS SUPPORT OF PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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Abstract: This chapter deals with the potential for the authentic and creative art of persons with special needs, which is part of the productive strategies of art education. Art and art education are based on the paradigm of preserving the authenticity and originality of a person in accordance with the qualitative development of his/her personality. The mental and physical otherness of people is reflected in barriers in interpersonal communication and behaviour. Suitable art education allows the enrichment of the cultural capital of a person, and the development of his/her social skills. It may prevent psycho-social failure and allow a person's potential to create artistically to develop.

Introduction
Disability, whether we perceive it as a long-term disability, or a socially conditioned process of interaction between the individual and the environment, has accompanied the human race from the very beginning. This general reality permeates and permeates every society. It is a basic concept leading society to address the complex relationship to sick or disabled people who have a minority social status. The mental and physical otherness of people is reflected in barriers in interpersonal communication and behaviour. The attitude of segregation towards individuals with disabilities in the cultural and historical context showed itself in their limited opportunities to participate in society. Although society isolated and segregated these individuals in varying degrees to various levels and at various times, they never ceased to be part of society. Society's relationship to people with disabilities illustrated the real focus and the inner life of a particular community (cf. Rudolf, 2011; Harrington, 2006; Barnes, Mercer, 2010). The existence of a disability presents a risk of disadvantage in relation to other members of society, which may even lead to social exclusion. Most at risk are people with severe disabilities, for whom in many areas of life there are still several forms of direct and indirect discrimination. With regard to the outdated medical model of disability in special education, emphasis is now placed on the social model, in which it is no longer possible to perceive a person with disabilities as someone who needs to be cured and educated again, so that in limited cases they may re-enter society.
Responses to this paradigm change include the emphasis on an inclusive approach (cf. Pančoňa, 2008; Barnes, Mercer, 2010; Krhútová, 2011).

The competence of a person and his/her disability must be defined in contemporary society, especially in the context of socio-cultural contexts. Art is considered to be the most important attribute at the level of culture. Through varied forms of art for people with disabilities we can speak about self-presentation through artistic or non-artistic creation. Elementary prerequisites for cultural transformation of the environment of society lie in the ability to work creatively in coordination with others through communication strategies (visual, acoustic, linguistic, etc.).

Concepts of art education

In the Czech Republic after 1989, there were some major changes in the support of people with disabilities in their integration into society. Major changes in support took place and still continue in the areas of education and the job market. In the context of special education we refer to a disabled person as an individual who experiences limitations which result in the social dimension of disability. The objectives of inclusive pedagogy operate with the patterns of psychological development and the process of human learning. Optimal conditions promote effective learning, which then enables the full development of the potential of each student with regard to his/her abilities and skills (Vitková, 2011; Müller, Valenta, 2007).

The theoretical concepts of art education after 1989 in the Czech Republic (e.g. artphilanthropy, art therapy, special art education, etc.) draw from past and current concepts of learning theory and the theory of the history of art (e.g. artistic styles such as modernism and postmodernism, Art Brut, Outsider Art etc.). The common denominator of the presented concepts and the currently applied inclusive approach to persons with disabilities remains the educative and formative processes focused on the authenticity, creativity and individuality of the person. Authentic and creative approach through the forms of visual symbolic language is a prerequisite for a cooperative, reflective, creative and experiential approach to learning. Artphilanthropy as a teaching concept is an alternative educational programme of art education, which aims to enrich the cultural capital of pupils and students, to develop their social skills and to prevent psycho-social dysfunction through artistic activities reflected in a group or community (Slavík, 1997). Special Art can be used as an appropriate intervention for students with special needs and for people from socio-culturally disadvantaged backgrounds. This broad pedagogical concept includes art and therapy approaches in education.

Contemporary art is an important facilitator of social inclusion. It offers space to interpret one's own personal experience and represents a high potential for social participation in the socio-cultural environment (projects presented in an exhibition gallery, public space, etc.). In our present society, interest in the issue of social inclusion (and social exclusion) is increasing dramatically. There are probably several factors involved. It is primarily a reaction to the processes of social differentiation – differentiation of life chances, differentiation of the effects of social risk, differentiation of lifestyles, processes of "multi-culturalisation", as well as individualization and other changes (cf. Pančoňa, 2008; Harrington, 2006; Krhútová, 2011).

The concept of art education in the medical and social model of disability

An effort to help people improve their state of health or "pathological" (or unwanted) thoughts, emotions and behaviour has accompanied human society since time immemorial. These efforts are mainly based on the medical model that is closely associated with the "role of the sick person". Individuals in a particular state or with certain characteristics are deemed ineligible and are exempt from compliance with certain social responsibilities because they are "sick" and can be "cured" only if subjected to doctors' suggested procedures. Due to the medical origin of these ideas, the model is strongly focused on the area of therapy and treatment. This concept focuses on the degree of disability or on social barriers to a far lesser extent. This leads to the conclusion that it is necessary to change the individual, rather than external factors (cf. Pančoňa, 2008; Krhútová, 2011).

The social model of disability perception represents an alternative approach to the perception of the disability paradigm. Developed in the 1970s, it focuses on the causes of systemic barriers, negative attitudes of the majority and the social exclusion of people with disabilities. Proponents of this model especially point to the absence of a direct link between disease, defect or disorder and the development of disability. It sees the main cause of disability in the society itself, which (consciously or unconsciously) ignores the needs of some individuals and opposes their inclusion and social participation. Attention is thus moved from categorization and the extent of an individual's organ or functional damage to the barriers which people face when interacting with the environment. The environment is defined broadly and includes social, physical, economic and political dimensions. The physical environment includes the space created by people, such as public buildings, residential buildings and the public transport system. The economic dimension incorporates unequal opportunities in education and the job market and the political dimension focuses on issues associated with the "locus of control", i.e. factors that influence events in one's life (cf. Pančoňa, 2008; Barnes, Mercer, 2010).

An important indicator of the quality of life can be artistic and non-artistic creation for people with special needs. Artistic artefacts produced by people with disabilities have become fully-fledged works in the global art market. The exceptional artistic work of these authors is apparent particularly in the history of art. Their works reflect the experience of disability, which did not become a barrier to enjoying a fruitful and creative life, but enriched it. Among the well-known greats are Alexander Pope, Francisco Goya, Vincent van Gogh, Frieda Kahlo and others.

In the following text, we focus on the real causes in the previously mentioned perception of the medical model of disability, which implicitly assumes that disability is a negative deviation from the norm. This conceived disability paradigm represents only the individual characteristics of the individual forming the physiological basis as a result of damage or disease. Important intervention in such a concept is through medical and therapeutic approaches.

In the 1920s, some physicians in European psychiatric clinics began to take a more serious interest in the artistic expressions of their clients. The most
significant was a physician named Hans Prinzhorn in Heidelberg. Interest in the production of art which would be of use in psychotherapy significantly influenced the neurologist Sigmund Freud and his colleagues in the formation of psychoanalysis. Scientific interest in the "healing" power of art became the domain of medicine. Based on the research in the field, over time psychotherapy stopped only looking at the psychoanalytic interpretation of the client's work and began to recognize the therapeutic import in the process of artistic creation. Consequently, there has been significant development of expressive art therapy, which began to use a wide range of visual language as an effective tool for communication. Art Therapy is currently seeking and finding a distinctive foundation not only in psychotherapy, but also in art theory, philosophy, etc.

In art therapy each individual client aims to fulfill several goals. The most common goals include the induction of the compensation process, activation, mediation of contact, transforming stereotypes, communication through artistic expression, socialization, etc. (cf. Šicková-Fabrici, 2002). The basis of art therapy is the assumption that the creative process of art therapy is based on the process of learning. The most basic thoughts and feelings of a person coming from their subconscious will be interpreted better in pictures than in words (Naumburg in Šicková, 2002). Art therapy is based on the belief that every person, whether educated in the visual arts or not, has the latent capacity to transfer their internal conflict into visual forms. These can then be used as the "initiation point" for further verbal communication (cf. Šicková-Fabrici, 2002; Slavík, 1997).

In the therapeutic activation of human dispositions for persons with disabilities, a broad approach to art therapy that includes several interpretive currents plays a significant role. The current Czech equivalent of art therapy is derived from the term "Art Therapy", which for the first time in the literature of the 1930s was used by the aforementioned American therapist Margaret Naumburg. The basis of therapeutic focus was psychoanalytic. Psychoanalysis or a general psychodynamic orientation can be found in most of the original art therapeutic approaches. The initial tendency can be divided into two streams of thought which differ in their view of the position of art in the treatment process. These streams may be allocated the terms "Art as Therapy" and "Art-Psychotherapy". These two terms are basically precursors to the major streams of contemporary art therapy. All approaches are broadly divided into receptive and productive. The productive concept envisages the use of specific creative activities (drawing, painting, etc.). Receptive Art therapy uses the perception of artwork selected by the art therapist with a particular purpose (cf. Slavík, 1997; Šicková-Fabrici, 2002).

A significant current trend based on art therapy approaches refers to a new term: artethepilitics. This is a specific conception of art education which was formulated in the Czech Republic after 1989. Under the new concept of art education the term "artethepilitics" originated, created by arts teacher Jan Slavík. Artethepilitics is a modification of art therapy with regard to the importance of education through art. Art therapy is defined as a psychotherapeutic and psycho-diagnostic discipline, utilizing forms and resources with adequate art forms for therapeutic goals. Artethepilitics assumes in its theoretical definition that each artistic expression is a "social binder" (the link between the individual and the general culture of human society).

From art unethical practice a set of principles that are useful in the preparation, management or assessment of artethepilactic activities were formulated. These include an emphasis on authenticity, the individuality of expressive speech, interpersonal enrichment, sensitivity to explore the differences and cooperation of students, the process from individual experience to learning about the culture, with an emphasis on experience and self-reflection and focusing on the context of various forms of artistic expression. Artethepilitics focuses on issues of parallel development and interconnection of the intellectual and emotional potential of pupils in primary and secondary schools (cf. Slavík, 1997). Artethepilitics approaches stand on the border between social integration and therapeutic approaches, especially for pupils with milder forms of mental disability and socio-culturally disadvantaged backgrounds. In those formal therapeutic concepts the emergence of a visual artefact can be seen in the unity of the process of formation and interpretation. This art method can have a therapeutic and psycho-therapeutic nature.

A different perspective on the issue of visual art of people with disabilities is given by the so-called social model, which is a direct response to oppression, an unsatisfactory life and the marginalized social position of people with disabilities. The ability to participate in social activities and hold a social role, including a role in art, depends mainly on the accessibility of different environments. Restrictions on active participation are not caused by disease, defect or disorder, but are a consequence of the organization of the social environment-hence the name social model. Under this concept the perspective on the creative work of people marginalized by disability is gradually changing to be seen as distinct artistic activity. This can be demonstrated publicly with exhibition activities in the galleries of contemporary art, or can be demonstratively rejected as an inappropriate form of arranging one's own art. In the aesthetic and artistic expression of people with special needs two functions should always be present. We speak about the aesthetic function called "the principle of depiction and aesthetic arrangement", and the communicative function, the so-called "principle of expression and communication" (Kulka, 1991).

For persons with mental disabilities the assumption of the existence of an aesthetic response and reflection about creating a work of art is not always fulfilled due to their mental abilities. This reality is the subject of constant controversy in professional circles (art theorists, artists, curators, educators). Nevertheless, it can be assumed that their art work represents elements of self-expression, self-experience and determining their own identity. Nonverbal communication in art takes place through the symbolic language of visual arts (drawing lines, expressiveness in colour, picture composition, sculpture, movement, etc.). Drawing is a basic means of expression from early childhood. The spontaneous collective creations
of persons with mental disabilities in workshops are a dynamic process in themselves, from the start through to the process of making them and ending with the outcome (artefact). Art workshops can offer an improvement in communication skills, and activation and creation of new patterns of social behaviour and experience for people with special needs. The key is their educational function. It may be a workshop in the Renaissance concept of education where pupil and master communicate and cooperate in the process of artistic creation. The student acquires new technologies, methodologies and styles of creative thinking and gets involved in the process of creating a work according to their acquired skills.

The potential of artistic creation

An important moment for the beginning of a change of view on the artistic quality of artwork made by people with disabilities not only in the European context was some research by German psychotherapist, philosopher and art historian Hans Prinzthorn (1886–1933), which was published in the book “Artsistry of the Mentally Ill: A Contribution to the Psychology and Psychopathology of Configuration” in 1922. The book, according to comments from the period, became very popular among artists and art lovers. The published findings undoubtedly influenced the future direction of the work of one of the most important French artists of the 20th century - Jean Dubuffet. His works rank among the highlights of the "primitivism style" in the art of the twentieth century. J. Dubuffet became interested in the work of mentally ill artists in the 1940s and, like H. Prinzthorn, with friends he gathered a collection of art works created in psychiatric hospitals over years. He introduced the term "Art Brut" after the Second World War for the art of the mentally ill, children, and the so-called "untrained primitives", and this then became a source of inspiration for his own work, and then in 1948 he initiated the "Compagnie de l'Art Brut". It was an informal group of artists working on the margins of the official culture (cf. Mikš, 2008; Pijoon, 2000).

At the end of the 1960s Czech psychiatrist Leo Navrátil had his patients at the Maria Gugging Psychiatric Clinic produce some art. His intention was purely for testing purposes. Navrátil subsequently discovered patients with artistic talent in his department and began to vigorously pursue the relationship between mental illness and art. He tried to give his patients an alternative tool for self-expression through making art. His book “Schizophrenia and Art” published in 1965 attracted a series of Viennese artists to “Gugging” and in 1970 the first exhibition of the “artists from Gugging” took place in Vienna. Navrátil founded a Centre of Arts and Psychotherapy for artistically gifted people with mental illness in the early 1980s (now the House of Artists under the leadership of Johann Feilacher), which serves as a residence for artists, a studio, a gallery and a venue for mutual communication.

The works of past and present artists from Gugging is presented these days in more than two hundred exhibitions around the world. In 1990 artists from Gugging were honoured with the Oskar Kokoschka prize for contribution to contemporary art. A symbol of innovative ideas is the House of Artists, whose front facade was decorated by local artists in 1983. Internationally renowned artists with disabilities, such as Johann Fischer, became famous for example with their figurine based on an archetypal Eve. Artist Oswald Tschirtner became known for his minimalist display of birds in his works. Other famous names include Franz Kamlander, August Walla and Johann Garber. The fact that the gallery is run not only by professionals by also by creators of the artefacts themselves is phenomenal. The process of opening up to the world, targeted disruption and removal of the imaginary and real barriers between patients and so-called normal people has received a new humanistic dimension in this place through art.

The exhibition entitled "Blug – four decades of art from Gugging" was launched on 28th June 2006 as part of the symposium "Gugging's Art in an International Context". Due to great interest it was extended and lasted until 8th April 2007. It represented a selection made by the current gallery director of Gugging (Nina Katschini) of 650 paintings, drawings and objects by the most important artistic figures of Gugging, such as Johann Hauser, August Walla and Oswald Tschirnner, Johann Fischer, Johann Garber, Franz Kernbeis, and Johann Korec. The exhibition also included works by artists currently active in the "art colony", supported by the private foundation of Gugging Artists, cultural organizations and private collectors. The philosophical approach towards the artists of Gugging is inspiring and consists of a constantly evolving approach towards working with people with disabilities.

Today's international art scene of amateur artists, which can be placed with regard to its philosophy into the Art Brut style, has many names. The displays of the Art Brut style are not, like symbolism and surrealism, subject to a single style, which would be based on the unity of visual language. Various definitions of spontaneous art, also referred to as Outsider Art, were established over time from Art Brut. They are based on the simple premise that there is still this kind of art, which comes out of the impulse to express an inwardly hidden message or the simple joy of amateur authors (cf. Raw Vision Magazine, 2013). In international art terminology both the terms Art Brut and Outsider Art are used.

Englishman Roger Cardinal created an English synonym in 1972 for Art Brut and he officially named art formed outside the boundaries of the mainstream "Outsider Art". It is often referred to with attributes such as intuitive, visionary, folk, naïve, etc. The term Outsider Art currently indicates the spread of the art of professionally untrained artists who live away from the main currents of social life and create art not in order to have social status of a contemporary artist, but because of the urgent inner need to realize themselves through making art. We speak about the method of original artistic expression, which prefers author independence and authenticity, and avoidance of public social confrontation and the art market. The original and rather specific label of Art Brut is now often used for the artistic creation of patients in psychiatric hospitals and people with mental illness.

For the creation of art in the Art Brut style it is also typical in the Czech Republic to draw on the deep and unconscious depths of the human psyche, both in terms of individual and collective content. Works by authors are not primarily
created for a rational evaluation in the concept of art theorists and art history. Art Brut artists are grouped into categories of so-called Medium artists, psychotics and solitaires. These artists are characterized by the ability to distinctly transform cultural influences and fill them with new meanings which are understandable only in the context of the intimate world of a particular author. The original criteria for being placed in the “Art Brut” collection was a large degree of expressiveness, freedom from cultural influences, work in isolation and a desire to create purely based on personal inner impulse (Nadvorníková, 2008). In today’s global artistic discourse, the terms Art Brut and Outsider Art are often used interchangeably. Well-known Czech educator and theorist M. Valenta (2005) states that in its wider understanding the term Art Brut can include the already mentioned naivety originally particularly associated with the label Outsider Art. If we want to be consistent in terminology, it is possible for Art Brut to be considered only as Dubuffet’s collection in Lausanne. Other collections in many cultural centres and galleries, including other creations of other persons with mental illness and intellectual disability should be given the current designation of Outsider Art.

**Benefits of the Creative Help exhibition project**

The project of special art education continues on from and complements the Special Art educational programme and is a successful example of the implementation of art workshops in partner institutions. Interactive art education of persons with varying degrees of disability, social disadvantage and age took place over a long period of time under the guidance of artists, art teachers and students of the Department of Arts of the Faculty of Education, Masaryk University. The CREATIVE HELP exhibition project is the culmination of a three-year project of the Department of Art of the Faculty of Education, Masaryk University, called Special Art (CZ.1.07/2.2.00/15.0210), co-financed in the years 2010–2013 by the European Social Fund and the state budget of the Czech Republic. The philosophy of the project is based on an interdisciplinary foundation (art, disability studies and special education).

Partner institutions in the project were the Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior, Nové Žmýky – a provider of social services, a diagnostic institute for youth in Brno, the Museum of Roma Culture in Brno, and the Podpěrova nursing home in Brno. The partner institutions provided extensive teaching experience for students, and the artistic focus of the teaching practice greatly helped the development of the personality and quality of life of clients participating in the art workshops. In the words of curator of the exhibition Petr Kamenický (2013) in the form of creative workshops university students learned to communicate with children, adults and seniors with disabilities and from disadvantaged backgrounds. University students thus increased their own pedagogical skills and competencies for their professional careers in education, social services, as instructors and in their own professional artwork. Petr Kamenický, a university lecturer, is the initiator and principal researcher in this project.

If you visit the exhibition in the gallery of the Dům pánů z Kunštátu, you will find, for example, exhibits of large format prints (Fig. 6), the creations of Mr.

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Jaroslav Vaška, resident for many years in the Podpěrova home for the elderly who began to create art work intensively in their art workshops.

![Figure 6: Jaroslav Vaška, © Michaela Dvořáková, 2013](image)

The series of large-format embroidery is fascinating (Fig. 7), with pieces from Mr. Joseph Schubert, long-term resident in the care home in Nové Žmýky. We can see the world through the eyes of children through a series of drawings and paintings from refugee camps from areas of conflict.
Furthermore we can see artistic realisation of the experiences of Roma children and digital animation from workshops which originated in a Children's Home. The atmosphere of the workshops is characterized by an extensive collection of documentary coloured photographs. Students of the Department of Art tried to find inspiration in contemporary art for their own work through the implementation of creative workshops. Shared creativity, empathy and communication skills are essential in the development of the new study programme, Special Art, as well as for other social projects of the Department of Art of the Faculty of Education of Masaryk University.

The mentioned exhibition project contributes to the debate about the transformation of contemporary art not only in the Czech Republic. One possible interpretation of the events that took place in the art workshops in various types of institutions can be described as aesthetic communication of content otherwise incommunicable, contained in an artefact which forms part of the communication. Artistic creation is a living proof of the dialogue between people and their environment, both internal and external, which has the ability to retain which it has experienced and identified. According to Zeleiová (2007) art is a fundamental expression of human activities, thinking, enthusiasm and reflexivity, intuition and logic. Art is thus an optimal space for allowing change to happen in human dispositions and self-fulfilment. The development of the art experience under the guidance of an art teacher can encourage the desire of people with disabilities to further express themselves through art forms.

Conclusion

Art and arts education are based on the paradigm of preserving the authenticity and originality of a person – a creator. Art education is a process of conditioning the development of creative, aesthetic and artistic perception, which is implemented through therapeutic, educational and formative concepts. There are still not enough environments in which teacher and pupil, therapist and client, artist and people interested in art can meet. In the Czech Republic there are various creative and socio-therapeutic workshops, courses, art schools and studios to choose from. Creating art work is part of the learning process. We can express ideas, feelings and attitudes about our relationship to the world and to ourselves. Art, along with education, is the most important attribute of our culture. Through active creative work we can speak about successful self-presentation and communication for people with disabilities. Elementary prerequisites for the cultural transformation of the environment lie in the ability to collaborate and learn more in coordination with others. Artistic and non-artistic creations fulfil these prerequisites.

Artistic work as part of a strategy of education makes the emergence of a communication channel possible for people with varying degrees of disability through universal and specific symbols (visual, acoustic and linguistic). Due to its activity and cognitive functions, artistic work enhances the intimacy of the experience of every person. Expressive arts therapy fulfils educational, therapeutic and rehabilitative functions for people with special needs, with elements of auto-expression and self-reflection. The role of the arts can be seen in services, education, upbringing and therapy. The element of self-awareness of the potential of their own art work determines the subsequent development of interpersonal communication and within this is contained an element of symbolic expression of individual experience. The discourse of contemporary art highlights the fact that individuals have more than one identity and these identities are constantly being created and reproduced through transformation and differences in the socio-cultural environment. A key element in this transformation is education which assumes the formation of a holistic understanding of a person with disabilities. Educational activities in art workshops, galleries and other public institutions can greatly help in this. People with disabilities should play the role of spectator and author of the exhibition in the gallery. The development of cultural activities in which people with special needs have a unique place can be considered one of the important indicators of the dynamics of an inclusive environment in the Czech Republic.

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