

Joseph Beuys

THE PERFORMATIVE BEUYS (1964-1984)

Curator: Professor Eugen Blume

The Atlas Sztuki Gallery exhibits the videos, mainly documentary records of the actions of German artist Joseph Beuys. The exhibition is arranged as a set of monitors and projection screens. Videos come from the collection of Joseph Beuys Medien-Archiv, which is the institution founded in 1996, connected with the Hamburger Bahnhof Museum für Gegenwart in Berlin.

Beuys was a sculptor, author of installations, actions and performances. Also nowadays, he is one of the most influential artists and one of the most remarkable personalities of modern art. To the firmly rooted position of Beuys in the history of modern art perhaps contributed also the wide documentation that accompanied his creative work.

It is possible that his collaboration with the photographer Ute Klophaus during the action named "How to explain paintings to a dead hare" in the Schmela Gallery in Düsseldorf in 1965 and the spread of photographs documenting this action, made this performance become a symbol of German art of the 60s.

The way of displaying the videos on the monitor screens during the planned show in the Atlas Sztuki Gallery is a reference to Beuys's actions, such as the aforementioned performance "How to explain paintings to a dead hare" when the audience could see the artist only through the gallery window or watch him on the two television monitors, exposed outside.

Art Exhibition in the Atlas Sztuki Gallery once more is showing artistic work of Beuys and figure of the artist through the medium of video.

Among the videos that have been selected for the exhibition, there is also the recording of the discussion titled "Ende offen. Kunst und Antikunst" (1970) between Beuys and artist Max Bill as well as German philosophers and art critics. An hour long video shows Beuys as an artist attaching great importance to the theoretical foundations of his art. "Anyone can be an artist," he says during the discussion, anybody can be a creator and influence reality. He doesn't agree with Marcel Duchamp's Dada nihilism that influenced a large number of art actions of the 60s.

Beuys was an artist involved in social and political issues. He was the co-founder of the Green Party, and the founder of the "Organization for Direct Democracy by Referendum".

In 1981, in response to the emergence of the Polish "Solidarity" movement, he donated set of his own works and documentation to the Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz that he called "Delivery to Poland 1981".

In Beuys's opinion the rational culture of the West opposed the culture of the East, that according to him was characterized above all for a spiritual element. He wanted to connect the two cultures in order to avoid destruction by materialism. He considered himself a shaman, and featured live animals in his actions.

Exhibition in the Atlas Sztuki Gallery not only presents the figure of Joseph Beuys as an action artist and theorist, but it also raises questions about the role of documenting and presenting art through the medium of video as well as the role of the archiving institution and the impact it has on the reception of the artist's works.

[ATLAS SZTUKI](#)

Piotrkowska 114/116

opening hours

Tue-Fri: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Sat-Sun: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

opening: 11.05, 7 p.m.

exhibition will be held: 11.05-24.06