

CHAMBER REFLECTIONS OF MUSICAL PHOTO ART: AESTHETIC ASPECT

As we consider photography in its historic aspect and close connection to the mass communication processes against the background of its functioning in the photographic art periodicals, we should as well consider the phenomena of photography in more detail from the aesthetic viewpoint proper.

In the laconic formulation of the essence of the notion of aesthetics, it should be understood as a philosophic discipline dealing with the world of aesthetic phenomena, which are such notions as beautiful and ugly things, tragic and comical, etc. The aesthetic approach to a phenomenon envisages a value attitude thereto. Aesthetics is also called the science of beautiful things. Starting from as early as the 18th century (that is from the time of the origin of the term “aesthetics” introduced by a German scholar A. Baumgartner) the objective of aesthetics has been the study of the “philosophy of things beautiful” and “general theory of art.” In the first case, it analyses nature and specificities of aesthetic qualities of the objective world in their organic unity with evaluative attitude to the reality, character of the aesthetic perception and the role of aesthetic conscience. In the second case, it analyses specificities of art in comparison with other types of creative work and forms of conscience, main stages of development of art as a system, a whole, diversity of specific forms and results of artistic activity. Aesthetics does not substitute for other sciences studying specific forms of arts, such as visual arts, music, theatre, cinematography, fiction and, today also TV. Undoubtedly, this list includes a science, which is still not completely formed as an independent one and which could be most accurately called photography studies or photology but which in real life is actually called the science of photography. Aesthetics and aesthetic approach have considerably broadened their horizons today. A spiritually rich modern person seeks beauty not only in art. We seek to enjoy the beauty of the nature and impart elements of aesthetic and beautiful things in every-day life as created with own hands. Maksym Rylskyy’s idea that human happiness necessarily envisages two wings, the beautiful and useful, is still actual. These words accurately express the higher essence of a full-value person.

To reach a deeper understanding of the specificities of things aesthetically, science and artists seek to understand the nature of aesthetic emotions. The matter is that every person as well as highly developed animals directly responds to external stimulants. A person not only thinks but also feels.

Emotions are subjective reactions of people and animals to the influence of internal and external stimulants and reflect the significance of phenomena and situations, physical condition and external influences.

Depending on their structure emotions can be of various types. They can be absolutely simple and complicated. They constitute two large groups according to their character or colouring. For everyone can distinguish between positive (pleasant) and negative (unpleasant) emotions. They can differ in their social filling and content. According to this criterion, emotions are classified as moral, intellectual, aesthetic.

The simplest human feelings are every-day emotions. P. Simonov [1, p. 81] and his followers developed a rather complicated information theory of emotions. Without considering this specific issue, let us however note that according to this conception, emotions constitute a compensatory respond to the lack of information on the environment.

Aesthetic questions, which are of interest to us primarily due to the raised question of the aesthetic aspect of photography, are very complicated. The statement that art works emotionally influence people has become trivial. However, writers addressing art merely stated this fact.

The first person who raised the question of the role of emotions in poetry as early as in the end of the 19th century was Ivan Franko, the author of a treatise "From the secrets of poetic creative work" which has still not been duly appreciated so far. Bohdan-Ihor Antonych came surprisingly close to the modern aesthetic conceptions. In a known article "National art: attempt of idealistic system of art," he firmly defends the position that art does not reproduce reality or transforms it but rather creates a separate reality. In his opinion, art effects exclusively the mind as it provokes certain emotional experiences, feelings and even will motions and are "one of the primordial needs of people, a mental need;" According to him, "...the aim of art is to provoke in our mind experiences which we do not get from reality." [2, C. 232]

Despite the fact that the article does not include the notion of "aesthetic emotion," Bohdan-Ihor Antonych clearly described feelings which are evoked by a creative work and which cannot be provoked by real phenomena.

Therefore, it is about something that constitutes the main specificity of art and that was later called by creative work of psychology researchers “aesthetic emotions” which is the key notion in the understanding of aesthetic influence on people.

As we consider photography from the viewpoint of its artistry, aesthetic qualities, we find it necessary to stress that its establishment as a kind of art cannot be reduced to a list of facts, dates and empirical details. It is important to make clear what need was met by photography and what was its contribution to culture and, even broader, to historic formation of personality.

To define the artistic specificity of photography as an art, it is important, primarily, to distinguish between the artistic aspect proper, aesthetic and technical aspects. Like in other kinds of art, the technical aspect is just a material, a means of reflection of the artistic content. However, one should not forget that photography, to a greater extent than other creative activities, has not only aesthetic but also extra-aesthetic aspect.

We can talk about the aesthetic aspect of photography at two levels.

The first one is represented by certain aesthetic qualities of photography in general, including the professional qualities of a photo. Here, we can talk about art in the broad sense, in the same way as we talk about artistically made furniture or scored goal. This includes a complex of components, beginning from the ability to spot the object, find an appropriate angle and successfully seize the unique moment as well as the quality of equipment, film, paper and other professional and technical components.

The second level is a specific intrinsic quality, the artistic value of photography which allows to describe it as a work of art. This quality of a photograph is difficult to describe formally or explain exhaustively. It is primarily the ability to see in life what other people may fail to notice. It is an artistic vision of the actual reality containing an element of the creative imagination capable of arousing aesthetic emotions.

As for artistic photography, it is by nature the most documentary kind of art. Undoubtedly, there is a difference between an organized, “staged” photography or photomontage and elements of creative imagination in a clearly documentary photograph. This is actually the biggest mystery which we will try to look into as we consider documentary and artistic character of photography.

It should be stressed that no one is able to clearly define the limits of various levels of the aesthetic aspect in different kinds of photography. Not to mention subjectivity of perception due to which everyone views a

work of a photo artist individually and the level of appreciation is highly movable.

Veracity of the photograph, which is its soul, is one of the key categories of culture of the new and modern world. Other ages did not seek it and did not treat it with such captiousness, and the rise of photography was called forth not so much by the advent of the technical possibilities but through the realization of the need for a special means to reflect authentic reality accurately and quickly.

In the beginning, photography developed in the shade of “great” arts as a sort of semi-applied periphery. However, since the middle of the 20th century it has gained vast numerical superiority. Today, it is a leading visual means in information and advertisement, science and education. It is used both for documentary and purely artistic purposes. This has transformed photography into the leading educator of the eye of a modern person. As we stressed earlier, we see the world mostly photographically.

“Great arts” increasingly evade from the direct contact with nature as they seek to realize their fundamental goals as fully and actively as possible, whereas photography remains faithful to the visible world (even though it occasionally pays tribute to similar searches). As it has enriched its possibilities with movement and colour (also different from painting which differently reflects the colors of reality), photography serves a window into the world whereas painting and graphics help us to plunge in the depths of the human spirit...

What is “more correct?” What is “more important?” The questions are senseless. Both things are integral attributes of the modern conscience. These are two intertwined branches of the modern culture. Each of them taken separately is incomplete. Their inevitable contradictions constitute one of the driving forces of the cultural development [3, c. 19]. Photography’s role in the field of the abstract art was not the least either. The abstract photography is traced back to 1920-s, particularly, to the works of such recognized founders of the abstract photography as American photographer Man Ray who worked in Paris and a Hungarian photographer Laszlo Moholy-Nagy working in Berlin. Let us remind how the famous American master of the modern abstract photography Ernst Haas formulated his aesthetic program: “An objectless photographer is not interested in the object of the photograph as the sense of the photo is the photographer himself, his feelings, his reaction to the visible world. He expresses his feelings in colours and forms.”

Many interesting things can be found in the history of surrealist

photography with its associative worlds and incredible plot situations, suggestiveness and visual surprises which are especially striking in the works of such American masters as Jerry N. Velioman and Sam Gas-kinov. Let us call to mind the thesis: spirituality as an aesthetic category is inseparable from photography (except the technical one) in the same way as it is inseparable from other kinds of art. This is indicated by the photography's special ability to reveal extraordinary things in every-day life, unusual things in routine and, most importantly, to transform a fact of history into facts of art. As for the depths of the human spirit, the photography, including the documentary one is able to shock and provoke catharsis. From the beginning its existence and ability to reflect the environment quickly and credibly has continuously stimulated the old arts towards rejuvenation and relentless search for new original visual systems inseparable from merely photographic perception of reality. Moreover, the visual arts borrowed such actively expressive means as close-up, fragmentariness and others exactly from photography and cinema which is technically close to it.

Researchers dealing with poetics of photography rightly search for specificities of the means of creating artistic images and, consequently, aesthetic emotions mentioned above. As some believe, the central issue in this regard is the problem of "translation" of images to the aesthetic language, the language of specific emotions. According to researchers of the artistic specificities of photography, "visual arts reproduce objects of the actual reality... The main objective of a painter, graphic artist, photographer is to make these objects carry emotional content, to "translate" them into "categories of human passion" for the sake of expressivity of the image." [4, c. 13].

"The "translation" from the language of figures, colour tones, shades, paints into the language of artistic images, aesthetic emotions in photography is carried out in the same way as in painting. The difference between the languages of a painter and a photographer is important but not critical. As masters of photography repeatedly stated, they are not interested in the fact itself. It is the viewpoint of the author that is of interest. The viewpoint of a photo artist is determined by his/her views, beliefs and feelings. However, a photo artist uses the same means of conveying them, such as lines and correlations between them, as the painter does. A line in a photograph is also sensed as a "directed tension" and is also an expressive element. According to Henri Cartier-Bresson, who, in our opinion, is one of the most outstanding masters of modern

photography art, “it is a search of the reality itself for space forms, lines and ratios” [5, c. 25]. It is important to notice the specificity of the artistic image exactly in the photo. A photo, whatever kind it is, is a visual statement. And, according to the theory of communication, any statement contains at least three kinds of connections. They are related to the speaker, the subject and the audience. For us, the third kind of connection is especially important. The result of a created thing is the reception thereof by the recipient.

As a result of the wonderful magic of creation, the image carries aesthetic emotions which are not fixed but are created by the photographer who cannot do without such complicated processes as specificity, abstraction and metaphoricalness. Eisenstein viewed the image as a whole assembly of dynamic potential features ready to explode. For us, the image is the maximal information load of a short fragment of a work.

It is impossible to comprehend the achievements of photographic art without considering the work of the International photo artists’ group magnum [6] organized in Paris in 1949 by Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Capa and David Seymour. George Roger and some other photographers were also close to the group. The group was joined by a photographer from Hungary Zoltan Brassai who lived in France for a long time and Werner Bishof from Switzerland.

According to Cartier-Bresson, “a photographer is oriented in space and time from the viewpoint of himself and the plot. He should be stimulated, forget about everything and think only about ways to show the reality and click the button instantly in time. As he raises the camera to his eye the photographer intuitively balances his eye, thought and heart in one line. It is this instant that constitutes for the photographer the only main moment of creation. This implies the accumulated experience, life style, frame of mind and thinking, culture, intellect, emotionality, imagination, chance and I do not know what else” [6, p. 230]. Cartier-Bresson did not accept the statement “artistic photography”. He did not work according to the aesthetic canons used for a considerable time by those imitating other arts. Neither did he accept decorativeness. He preferred to print his works in full frame. Every day life photos largely depend upon the talent of the photographer.

We have three tickets to enter the temple, namely, religion, science and, actually, art. And the fact that there are also other components of spirituality, which deserve to be in this temple, is, unfortunately, not

always accepted. Traditional worldview does not envisage the rise of any new agents of spirituality which were not present in the cultural life before a certain time. However, the modern development of mankind, its equipment and new way of thinking oblige us to realize as reality the fact that what was generally understood in the past as “art” has ended with the informative art. What follows is not art in the previous sense of this word, something else, in particular, an agent, which concentrates the power of human passions in a completely different plain and measures their significance and efficiency. Undoubtedly, the criteria and principles of the new trends often do not conform to the criteria of “art” on the whole. But this does not undermine either the traditional art or its new trends by any means. It only shows that something radically new has become the reality of our cultural life.

We can quite confidently say that we are mastering a new “real imagery”. It is somewhat “platonic” and insufficient for the optical fixing in photography.

In photography, the object has a healing effect on spirituality not on the basis of perfection, idealness and morality or aesthetics. The artist should not seek for things beautiful and good in cases where spirituality is to deal with the object of the dialectic of comparison.

At the modern stage, the renaissance of photography is taking place not only through theory but also through the hard work of the photographer.

Aesthetic emotions are based on ordinary every-day emotions or human feelings. But aesthetic emotions are usually a fruit of the creative imagination. They can have a long-term effect. A photo received with the help of “impartial mechanism” as if demonstrates the phenomena of “the actual reality” and opposes interpretation thereof in painting and graphic art.

Let us take for example portraits of famous artists: the portrait of a famous Ukrainian composer Anatolii Kos-Anatolskyi with his eyes looking up by master Mykola Kolesa in the process of his creative work; the concentrated look of a concertmaster Artur Mykytka during the performance in the Lviv Chamber Orchestra Academy; the fixed instant of motion of the baton in the hands of a conductor and composer Myroslav Skoryk reflecting the concentrated silence of the audience ready to be overwhelmed by an explosion of music at any moment..., famous, world-known figures of musicians, Oleh Krysa, Bogodar Kotorovych, Yurii Bashmet., etc. Or the music of the Lviv medieval stone buildings, the music of stone... Rain washes away all the

footprints... and the Lviv pebbles simply sparkle with all colours. This reflects the reality; it is “reportage.” In other words, the true objective of an artist is to find the image accurately in reality since the art of direct reflecting of the actual reality is what is valued the most. For a photo artist, it is more important to show in it the directness of the caught moment than to create an aesthetic effect in the general sense of art photography.

World and Ukrainian photography art presents enough empiric material for serious generalizations and conclusions to catch up and overcome our lag.

Today, despite the economic difficulties, we generally have opportunities to study art photography in depth and, simultaneously, to train professional photo artists with well-developed aesthetic worldview and the ability to think unconventionally and independently and, therefore, in a creative way.

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