

Title: Against Dualism – Conceptual Art in the Context of Functional-Normative Theory

Author: Michaela Brejcha

Department: Department of Aesthetics

Supervisor: Mgr. Ondřej Dadejík, Ph.D.

Abstract:

The present dissertation thesis focuses on the problem of theoretical reflection of conceptual art in Anglo American aesthetic discourse in the second half of 20th and the beginning of 21st centuries. It is based on the claim of many conceptual artists and also some theoreticians, which emerged in the nineteen-fifties, that the conceptual art or tendencies have nothing in common with aesthetics or aesthetic theory. This work shows that this presumed discord draws on reduced understanding of what is the aesthetics and, at the same time, this understanding itself is based on the dualistic paradigm, which presents one of the most fundamental frames for our approach to reality. In the context of analysis of selected texts of Anglo American aesthetics, eight particular distinctions of dualism will be defined, which to a great extent contributed to the rejection of aesthetics by conceptual artists, and on the other hand to bad recognition of conceptual art by the aesthetic theory. As an alternative to the dualistic approach in the context of definition of conceptual art, the fluid and dynamic conception of aesthetics will be offered, based on Mukařovský's theory of an aesthetic function, norm and value. This theory is elaborated later in the work by the functional-normative theory, which is the particular contribution of the thesis. According to this theory, the reality is defined as a continuous power-energetic field, in which the work of art – either traditional or conceptual – is constituted as a set of values by means of functional-normative frames.

Keywords: conceptual art – Anglo American aesthetics – dualistic paradigm – dualism – dualistic distinction – perceptual – conceptual – sensory perception – essentialism – descriptive – normative – aesthetic value – functional-normative frame – power-energetic field