

ZBIGNIEW LIBERA

Zbigniew Libera is a Polish artist, whose artistic work is controversial. It goes beyond the established canon of art in the social awareness.

1). At the beginning of Libera's creative activity, he created two video works, which relate to real events in the artist's life. These short films are about his grandmother Regina, whom he took care of for more than two years.

*The first is titled "Rites of Intimacy". The artist presented in his daily effort put into caring for his ailing grandmother, so he filmed such activities as washing, changing diapers, feeding and dressing her.

* The second slightly longer film is "Mystical Perseveration", in which Libera showed Regina's attachment to the potty. This object was to replace her rosary. So, in this film, Libera presented the potty as an object of almost religious value, which is an interesting and uncommon artistic idea.

These two video works were created according to the idea of embarrassing art. Its purpose was to make viewers feel embarrassed. Therefore, to achieve the effect of embarrassing art, the artists used sincerity and broke taboos. These short films are controversial, because they are difficult to assess them. On the one hand, they show Libera's care and love for his grandmother. But on the other hand, they document scenes from the artist's private life. Not every artist is brave enough to film scenes from their family member's life with all the details, because this violates the private space of that person.

2). Libera also became famous for his production of dolls, particularly a series of objects entitled "Aunt's Ken." Probably everyone is familiar with what a Barbie doll looks like. She has an unnaturally slim figure, always nicely styled hair, and so on. But Libera breaks with such a model, creating the opposite of Barbie. He created dolls with women's shapes, with unfashionable hairstyles and kitschy makeup. This work of art stimulates discussion about what the artist wanted to convey with it. The most obvious interpretation is that he most likely wanted to reveal the pressures imposed on women, regarding appearance.

3). Libera also created an artwork, which has caused quite a scandal. It's about Libera's most famous work, the installation "Lego. Concentration camp". After assembling the blocks, a smaller and toy version of the German Nazi concentration camp was created. It was possible to build from the blocks prison barracks, gas chambers or watchtowers. The prisoners were presented as smiling corpses. It was a very controversial artwork, so it received a lot of criticism. People wrote about Libera's mad, nonchalance and free treatment of a painful subject. Therefore, the

exhibition of this set of Logo in the Venic Biennale was refused, and the artist nearly went to court. A very interesting question is why Libera created such a work of art in general, what was his explanation. Certainly his intention wasn't to support the mass extermination. He denied this in many interviews. Libera talked about that "the Holocaust, money, capitalism and business have something in common, but it's hard to put into words". That's why he created an artwork to express it better. He simply wanted to denounce the world of commercialism by means of this custom idea.