

#IZOIZOLYATSIYA: CRIATIVIDADE COMO UM MÉTODO DE SOCIALIZAÇÃO¹

#izoizolyatsiya: creativity as a method of socialization

Alexandra L. Yurgeneva²

RESUMO

O desafio *Izoizolyatsiya* se tornou uma das formas mais populares de entretenimento durante a quarentena na Rússia. Neste artigo, analisei como esse ambiente virtual de comunicação funcionou na situação extrema da pandemia. As primeiras manifestações do princípio de recriar obras de arte com modelos vivos no campo do lazer e da arte foram brevemente delineadas. O flash mob acumulou características das tradições do tableaux, da pintura, da fotografia e características específicas das redes sociais. Foi revelado que as características carnavalescas do desafio contribuíram para a atualização das forças criativas entre os participantes, bem como para a sua emancipação. A participação no flash mob *Izoizolyatsiya* ajudou a compensar a falta de comunicação cotidiana durante o isolamento e também se tornou uma nova forma de interação entre os membros das famílias.

Palavras-chave: Izoizolyatsiya. Flash Mob. Pintura Viva. Redes Sociais. Pintura Viva.

ABSTRACT

The *Izoizolyatsiya* challenge became one of the most popular forms of entertainment during lockdown in Russia. In this article, I analyzed this virtual communication environment that functions in an extreme situation of the pandemic. The earlier manifestations of the principle of recreating art works with live models in the field of leisure and art were briefly outlined. The flash mob accumulated features of the traditions of tableaux, painting, photography, and specific characteristics of social networks. It was revealed that the carnival features of this challenge contributed to the actualization of creative forces among the participants and their emancipation. Participation in the *Izoizolyatsiya* flash mob helped compensate for the lack of everyday communication during isolation, and also became a new form of interaction between family members.

Key-words: Izoizolyatsiya. Flash mob. Live painting. Social networks. Photography.

¹ <https://doi.org/10.51359/2357-9986.2023.259053>

² The State Institute for Arte Studies (SIAS). E-mail: Ivovushka@yandex.ru. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0465-4728>.

During the period of self-isolation all possible online services were activated. Services providing a variety of leisure activities occupied a significant niche on this market. These are online cinemas, virtual museums, trainings, master classes, etc. Undoubtedly, user activity has increased in the video communication services and social networks as well.

Within this variety, the social network (Facebook) group *Izoizolyatsia* stands out, which is defined by its creators as an ‘anti-spleen flash mob in our Coronavirus time.’ In this group, participants post their photos that reproduce the image of any work of art. In many ways, this is consonant with one of the behavioral strategies during the plague outbreak described in *The Decameron*:

Wherefore they banded together, and, dissociating themselves from all others, formed communities in houses where there were no sick, and lived a separate and secluded life, which they regulated with the utmost care, avoiding every kind of luxury, but eating and drinking very moderately of the most delicate viands and the finest wines, holding converse with none but one another, lest tidings of sickness or death should reach them, and diverting their minds with music and such other delights as they could devise. (Boccaccio, 1921, p. 7)

The group creators insist that the flash mob originated from the circle of several families of friends feeling bored in self-isolation. Soon, however, the number of images grew so much that a separate social media group was created under the hashtag #izoizolyatsiya. Presently, its number of participants increased to six hundred thousand. They are mostly Russian-speaking users, but have a large geographic spread: the majority lives in Russia, Ukraine, and the United States, but the group also includes people from Western Europe, South Africa, and Australia. Gradually, those foreigners whose Russian friends shared the group materials and their own publications joined the group. The group’s administration turned into a full-time distance job with an eight-hour working day for its creators.

As a result, the flash mob became a project with a financial component. Initially, a message that anyone can support the administrators financially appeared. Then, the growing popularity of the group attracted attention of such market giants as Lego, Litres, and the online cinema Okko which

started to launch contests with prizes and a random selection of winners. The project also initiated the *Izotvoritelnost* campaign monetizing Likes and transferring funds to Konstantin Khabensky's charity foundation. Due to this intervention, for a period, the participants' works focused on specific topics such as reimagining compositions with the help of Lego elements and figurines or recreation of images related to film and cartoon characters. The *New York Times* and *Esquire* published materials about the popular challenge.

The flash mob captured the interactive nature of multimedia art and was so in tune with the highly debated topic of distance learning, that even students in art schools were given tasks to create images of this kind and Facebook post in the group.

Background and similar projects

The concept to recreate famous artworks is not new. In her article on this phenomenon, Anna Vladimirovna Konstantinova analyses the ancient tradition that revived the works of fine arts in plastic and temporal theatrical forms.

The dialogue between these two types of artistic imagery was carried out even in proto-theatrical forms, where there was no acting in its contemporary understanding. For example, in such performances as the series of *living pictures* described by Apuleius in the 2nd century A.D. or in the portrayal of the famous myth of the Judgment of Paris, the priority of pictorial compositionality is self-evident. (Konstantinova, 2015, p. 220)

In Antiquity and, later, during the 19th century, these hybrid visual forms emerged based on literary sources: these were living illustrations performed in space and time. Following the verbal descriptions of characters and scenes, performers constructed their images, and, therefore, a visual tradition of the characters' depiction in various media (on stage, in book illustration, painting, or sculpture etc.) served as a guide helping viewers to interpret them correctly. I am not going to discuss the topic of *living pictures* in details, since Konstantinova has already done it exhaustively. However, I would like to address here a case mentioned by Yulia Vladimirovna Arkhi-

pova which gets very close to the subject of this study. "During one of the performances, three to five live pictures were presented mainly by young people and teenagers — the children of the house owners, their relatives and friends" (2015, 229). The models imitated not only paintings, but also works of plastic art: initially, they revived ancient statues through motion, but soon the performers ceased movement and stood still, thus varying the dynamic and static states. So, in course of this domestic performance, the living pictures became a kind of creative leisure experience and home entertainment activity.

Yuri Lotman points out to the fact that being transferred to the three-dimensional world, verbal descriptions acquire spatial boundaries:

the *living pictures* were performances where the action was achieved through the compositional arrangement of stationary actors in the stage frame. As in painting, movement was represented here by dynamic poses of motionless figures. The beholder accustomed to pictorial art is not surprised that a motionless canvas denotes dynamic scenes. He restores movement in his mind. (1994, p. 201)

A contemporary viewer, however, may need a logical justification for this corporal statics when confronted with it in a theatre space or in course of a performance. Otherwise, such beholder accepts the notion of static in photography which validates it, making the fixation of movement its natural property. Photography also clearly sets an image frame determining the parts of reality to be included in and excluded from the shot.

The game aspect has been present in the art of photography since its very invention. Gustav Rejlander (1813-1875) applied a composite technique in his works; he printed a single plate from several negatives picturing models in the arranged poses. Even ordinary clients of the 19th-century photographers often were caught up in the playfulness of this medium and preferred to be depicted in a staged scene using a set of props that they could find in a studio.

I would like to notice that several projects with identical concept preceded the today's challenge #izoizolyatsiya, some of them were launched by museums seeking to establish contact with their visitors in the virtual space. Such flash mobs were launched by the Getty Museum in Los Ange-

les, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the National museum in Warsaw (#niebawemwMnW) and the Instagram account Tussen Kunst & Quarantaine, which has 281 thousand subscribers and is supposedly considered the very first in the wave of quarantine creativity. As far as it is possible to trace the history of their origin, they all appeared this spring in connection with the global quarantine. Nevertheless, this form of artistic expression, which involves the recreation of images belonging to visual culture or cultural heritage by means of a photograph staged using improvised means and being often marked by self-irony, has already appeared in creative projects a few years ago.

Bangkok-native Anucha Saengchart runs Facebook account called Lowcostcosplay. Since its creation in 2013, the page has attracted an incredible number of subscribers, 5.5 million. It shouldn't be surprising since Saengchart mocks one of the world's most popular subcultures, cosplaying anime characters. True fans spend much money to create a look of their favorite characters: they buy or sew the costumes identical to those worn by the beloved characters and use the most advanced makeup allowing them to change the facial features beyond recognition. As a result, they achieve almost complete visual transformation into fictional characters. On the Lowcostcosplay page, a young man posts photos and videos where he quite accurately, very funny and inventively turn himself into cult heroes with the help of aqua face and bodypaint and everything that comes to hand (chili peppers, mirrors, his cats, chopsticks, pasta, feminine hygiene items, etc.). To add more comic effect, the user often uses his quite voluminous belly which can be turned into a Pokemon or a donut with an equal success. Famous anime characters and scenes from movies are mocked here on equal terms with usual food and packaging items. These visual strategies signal the author's intention to reduce the *pathos* of fandom culture. The author of Lowcostcosplay, with his comical reincarnations, demonstratively plays with his own body (sometimes on the verge of decency), and his courage to look ridiculous teaches his subscribers the importance of being true to oneself.

Another experiment in this direction is part of a large project undertaken by the contemporary artist Nina Khachaturian and called *Lavatory*

Self-Portraits in the Flemish Style. It was initiated spontaneously during a long flight in 2010. The artist created a series of self-portraits in which the viewer can easily recognize the typical characteristics of Flemish portraiture between 1400 and 1600. The restraint and conciseness unique for the Northern Renaissance painting corresponds to the limited means available to create an image in an airplane bathroom, as it was the initial condition of the project to produce these photos during the flight. Cold lighting in the lavatory, carefully selected angles (almost all portraits of the artist are taken in profile and three-quarters), correctly reproduced details of the costume's distinctive features are sufficient for a shot. To create portraits (male and female), Khachaturian uses only a black beret, scarves that she had during the flight, plastic cups, bags, a neck pillow and paper towels. With their help, she imitates hats, hairstyles and collars, typical for the 15th-century Netherlands, and creates a traditional dark background. Later, according the artist's own words,

at the Dunedin Public Art gallery, the photos were framed in faux-historical frames and hung on a deep red wall reminiscent of the painting galleries in museums like the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (Katchadourian, 2010)

Among similar experiments in Russia, one may also mention the independent art project *Balthus* by Albert Soldatov, which received the Kandinsky Prize in 2014 in the nomination *Young artist. Project of the year*. The project consists of video works which are actually frozen scenes exactly reproducing the paintings by Balthus. The jury's selection of Soldatov's project for the award exemplifies the success of the very principle transferring traditional works of art into another media (video, photos, multimedia) and the interest of contemporaries in this artistic strategy. Moreover, there is no revision addressing the artworks of the past, the artist's reflection is directed at the Present only. Original works become a tool for understanding and criticizing the phenomena belonging to the surrounding reality. This attitude is evidenced in the text commenting on the young artist's works on the Competition website:

Characters frozen in an atmosphere of inactivity actualize the consciousness of a modern person, a visitor to social networks, the image of boards, forums where information is presented in a fragmented form, which hangs as if in a trance. (Kandinsky prize, 2014)

One may also remember that even earlier, in 2000-2001, each issue of the *Karavan istoriy* magazine ("Caravan of stories") published photos of celebrities in the framework of Ekaterina Rozhdestvenskaya's project *Private collection*. The sitters of these portraits were dressed and featured as characters from the famous paintings displayed in the major museums around the world. These photos were heavily retouched which seemed natural for a slick magazine format; but in some case, computer processing was used to imitate the painting texture, including the specific impressionist brushstroke. At the same time, often viewers could notice that some photos were characterized by a rather rough overlay of the model on the background (the image' edges were processed poorly and the difference in brightness and colour saturation between the two layers was noticeable). Nevertheless, this commercial project became very popular and readers often bought the magazine just because of these photos.

Rozhdestvenskaya also joined the #izoizolyatsia and posted some of her older works there. This publication collected as many as two thousand comments from participants who were divided into two camps: some old fans welcomed the celebrity in their ranks, whereas others expressed sharp resentment over her appearance in the group. She was accused of unsuitable self-promotion and too condescending tone of her publications in relation to other participants. It is worth noticing that these comments are distinguished by a pronounced negative attitude and even use obscene language, although, generally, an extremely cheerful and friendly atmosphere characterizes all communication in the group. One may assume that this resentment was due to Rozhdestvenskaya's status, being a professional who invaded the territory of amateurs. At the same time, the quality of many works in the group is noticeably better than these pictures taken twenty years ago. The most restrained comments look the following way: "Ekaterina Rozhdestvenskaya your photos are inappropriate here, whatsoever not ;)"; "In her very first sentence, she seems patronizing toward the members of the group. She allegedly ad-

dresses so poorly educated crowd that she even can't decide how illiterate should be her expressions to communicate to such people...", "The group buggered up... Profs (allegedly) have shown up((((post on your page!", etc. The reason for this conflict is a lack of technologies available to the average people, although Rozhdestvenskaya's sense of style is also quite debatable. Probably, the aggression was caused by the unfair, from the contemporary point of view, positioning of the photographer as a high-level professional.

In my opinion, the discussed art projects revealed the presence of two trends in the "reproduction" of artworks in modern photography. One relies on irony, self-irony and a strong ludic principle based on the variability of details; the second aims to transfer the image as precisely as possible, directly from the sphere of classic art to the new media. Both trends can be found in publications united by the #izoizolyatsia challenge.

The reasons for popularity

A question arises: why has #izoizolyatsia flash mob become so popular? In addition to the very inventive use of everyday objects, the works of the *Lavatory Self-Portraits in the Flemish Style* and Lowcostcosplay projects are connected by the use of limited physical space: Saengchart creates his images at home, and Khachaturian in a tiny toilet stall. On the other hand, social networks are full of groups whose members share a common geographic location (residents of different cities and towns, for example, Tel Aviv or Zelenogradsk). They discuss problems of public services, post news, declare love for their small homeland, share archival images from local history and simply exchange entertainment content. The *Izoizolyatsiya* brought together people united by a common misfortune, their geography is now limited to their homes or other places where one was caught by the lockdown.

The virtual groups designed around a topic are characterized by high involvement and participation of the subscribers. The publications generate lively discussions in comments and many posts are made during a day. The *Izoizolyatsiya* exemplifies the intensity of creativity manifestation among the participants. The publication of each photo created a motivation for producing new works, and many participants posted several publications. For

instance, one of the group members set out to publish a work per month and fulfilled his promise.

The reasons why the flash mob became so popular and, most importantly, succeeded to gather so many participants and publications, are quite clear. The concept developed earlier has waited for the ideal conditions to actualize.

First, people in the self-isolation have a reserve of energy for leisure activities. Some did not work at all, others saved on commuting time. Many were able to get a good night's sleep.

One of the group creators, Katerina Brudnaya-Chelyadinova, says that "the empty streets no longer feel real", "now, the reality is your own home and the Internet" (Troianovski, 2020). Thus, another reason for the challenge's popularity was its ability, in a certain way, to compensate for the lack of communication. This exchange of images and comments didn't aim to establish deep affective bonds, but to expand the social space and create a source of the background communication that is always present at work, in the office, in shops and public transport, etc.

Communication within the group

At the same time, staging the photos for the Facebook group gave new reasons for communication within the family. The texts accompanying the post tended to indicate how important was interaction between family members for the creation of images. Often, they describe the process of shooting, technical difficulties encountered by the authors, and ways to overcome them. This way, the final shot turns into a small victory over the circumstance that required active cooperation and mutual support of the entire family.

For example, one married couple removed the interior doors and leaned them against the wall in order to create the desired background. Often, the participants report how difficult it was to put everyone together for the shooting. Tatiana Barakauska, one of the group members, writes: "Dedicated to gloves. You should have seen me running around and looking for something that looked like a flower. It was necessary to take the picture quickly,

because my husband rarely agrees to sit. Therefore, a stone flower is not a stone flower at all, but you know what it is made of. Flowers reflect time. Lots of fuss about the light, but thanks to the child who held a flashlight, it highlighted the hair”. A successful work that gathered many likes and positive comments becomes both, a reward for the job done and an evidence of harmonious family relations, a proof of their creative power. Natalia Reznik observes with a great precision that “as unexpected as it sounds, this spring, the *Izoizolyatsiya* has become the most important trend in family photography, reflecting the *do it yourself* philosophy” (2020).



Illustration 1. Galina Bleikh. *The Apollo Belvedere*. Facebook group *Izoizolyatsiya*. Available at: <https://clck.ru/Q8Fo3>.

Another consequence of this inclusive family communication was the appearance of the senior relatives of the 80+ age group on the Internet,

as for a long time they have been digitally excluded. Moreover, they became models for shooting, and photos with their participation are distinguished by careful elaboration of details, faithful posture and lighting, and accurate selection of costumes. One may assume that the authority of the model determined a more responsible approach to work, and the group members noticed it themselves. So, Galina Bleikh's mother (90 years old) became the protagonist of several joint photos recreating Antique and Renaissance sculptures. These photos collected a record number of likes, 50 to 60 thousand! A bit less, 42 thousand likes, gathered Natalya Markova who posted a photo of her eighty-eight-year-old grandmother modelled as Portrait of Sylvia von Harden by Otto Dix. Several of these senior models took part in the flash mob, and the photos with their participation usually follow the path of reproducing images as accurately as possible.

As I have already noticed, there are two ways to process this kind of material. One is so-called "serious" approach to the task; it implies no play with an image. Such authors attempt to recreate the original in detail, to transfer the flat image to the three-dimensional space and to capture it with a photo. The lighting, costume, entourage, and appearance are reproduced carefully. Authors who know the image post-processing technologies use colour correction, which is almost the only method of image processing allowed.

Another trend relies on the maximum playfulness in the approach to the originals. Predominantly, it involves the "domestication" of art works. Some costumes and attributes are replaced by analogies not only similar in shape and form, but bringing new meanings: bottles on the bar counter are replaced with bottles of sanitizer, Dali's "soft watches" are imitated with medical masks, a mound is assembled of dumplings, and a dragon turns into a vacuum cleaner. This approach allows for more individuality of expression which becomes a special value for the flash mob participants. This way, they can relate better with other members of the group and make the communication more personalized. For adherents of both trends, the choice of material for the imitation may be determined by the authors' professions or hobbies. One of the participants with a gymnastics background made a series of works recreating images of ballerinas from modern painting. A boy created

copies of famous pop art works by collecting hundreds of Rubik's cubes. An image of a pin-up female factory supervisor can be easily staged by a wife of a factory worker who wears uniform on a daily basis.

Bosch Hieronymus
the garden of earthly delights (1503-1515)

#изоизоляция



36 тыс.

Комментарии: 1,3 тыс. Поделились: 1,1 тыс.

Illustration 2. Ksenia Krondo. Hieronymus Bosch 'The garden of earthly delights'. Facebook group *Izoizolyatsiya*. Available at: <https://clck.ru/Q8Fhm>.

The more personal traits appear in the constructed images, the more obvious it becomes that one of the results of the flash mob was making people to feel free in the lockdown. I have already mentioned that the posts con-

tain some information which allows the viewer to form an idea about the authors and their lifestyle. For instance, if the room is not draped with fabrics, or the photo was not cropped enough, one can see a part of someone else's private space. This intrusion into one's private life became omnipresent in the course of Internet communication during the lockdown regime. Workshops and interviews, public lectures, master classes, conferences, and concerts – all of them switched to the online format and, subsequently, the atmosphere of formal communication was merged with a lively home atmosphere: pets, children, sport equipment, family photos, handicrafts, etc. appeared within the frame of computer cameras. If during the formal meetings intimate details of daily life appear unintentionally, then in the images made for the #izoizolyatsia, they become the key elements, for example, several times a pole was used to create an effect of flight.

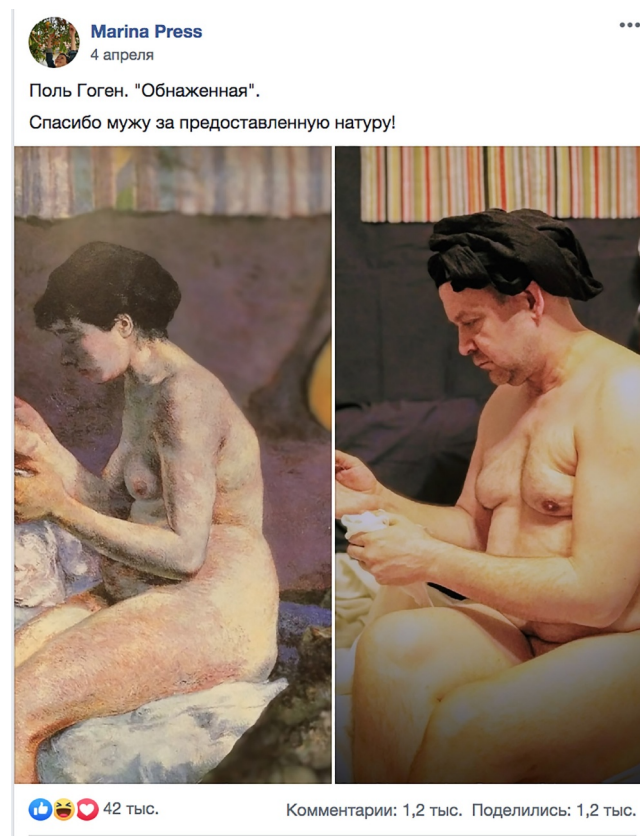


Illustration 3. Marina Press. *Paul Gauguin 'Nude'*. Facebook group *Izoizolyatsiya*. Available at: <https://is.gd/13tIIY>.

Some participants of the flash mob were aware that with their limited financial means it was possible to recreate a masterpiece only in a comic way. Often the human body may not correspond to the beauty characteristics

of a character depicted on a selected artwork. However, the atmosphere of freedom fostered in the group encouraged many participants to choose the path of self-irony. Men appear in the role of pin up girls or prove to the public that their figure is not inferior to the forms of Rembrandt's Danae. Women are not afraid to become cheerful old ladies with watering cans in the works by Inge Lööf, and they even add pillows to give more volume to their hips.

One should also mention here the imitations of paintings by Bosch, which is achieved through a complete deformation of the human body. These publications stand in sharp contrast with the social media photos created by users who, in pursuit of their beauty standard, generously use retouching and filters allowing them to edit their physical appearance. In a way, the photos made for the #izoizolyatsia can be seen as anti-selfies. In the flash mob space, the aesthetics of one's body becomes less important than the task to mimicry the works of art. The authors disengage from their bodies which become only tools to achieve the goals, to make a good post in the group and to get encouragement in the form of positive responses.

Other authors use the magic of photography to create an almost exact copy of the original artwork. Usually, such authors display genuinely serious attitude toward their creations. They tend to pose as a stylized characters whose features would emphasize the advantages of the model's look or would make the authors more attractive. Both, men and women may follow this path, and, though the number of men is fewer, some participants attempted to resemble the athletic appearance of ancient heroes. In this case, they try not to replace attributes with equivalents found in modern life, but choose the most accurate copies or even construct these attributes themselves. Costumes are also carefully selected and sewn from the most appropriate materials. Since the group posts can be also visible to the authors' Facebook friends, a person gets an opportunity to appear in a new role to his/her friends and to show off. If for the group members the choice of an original image does not bear additional significance and is found to be almost irrelevant, for the author's acquaintances (even if only virtual, but knowing the author for a long period) this choice of the art subject to be imitated adds to the virtual image of the author. This special interest became es-

pecially evident when the online cinema OKKO launched a competition for the best recreation of a movie or cartoon character in the group. The competition set the conditions to recreate an exact movie frame, but some participants perceived it as reimagining of a movie character. Taking for this purpose mostly the close-up shots women were finally able to pose as iconic movie stars (for example, Sophia Loren, Lyudmila Gurchenko, or Audrey Hepburn) and to underline the similarity between the celebrities and the authors which had long been obvious to everyone around them or only imagined by female group participants. In its mood, this direction of the transformation appears to be similar to the works by Rozhdestvenskaya, in whose portfolio only a very few photos have a comic effect. These photos glorify the authors as modern celebrities by assimilating them to the images taken from the sphere of classical art. It is important to notice that in similar circumstances a professional photographer works with a model's body, whereas an amateur's approach focuses on the author's own body.

Both trends discussed above also allowed the participants to reveal their sexuality through the imitation of another character. In general, the group, indeed, has many nude photos, which can be due to the home staging of the images. The participant felt protected at home, especially, in the conditions of lockdown when home was positioned as a shelter that resists external dangers. In those cases when men filmed their lovers and recreated erotic set-ups, the works, though being quite interesting, usually lacked a good taste. Simultaneously, some of them attempted to share the authorial vision of the loved ones by framing it in the terms of a famous artwork.



Александр Челпанов

★ Восходящая звезда · 16 апреля в 23:37 · 📌 Выбор редакции

О. Роден. "Мыслитель". Две булавки, пластилин.



👍❤️😮 13 тыс.

Комментарии: 292 Поделились: 331

Illustration 4. Alexandr Chelpanov. *Auguste Rodin 'The Thinker'*. Facebook group *Izolyatsiya*. Available at: <https://clck.ru/Q6uEN>.

However, some authors do not take selfies or pictures of their family members or themselves, instead of people they take photos of pets (it is worth noticing that some participants themselves staged the animals appearing in famous paintings), household objects and groceries. For example, one of the participants made a series of works of dry pasta, and another one used only safety pins. The group published many pictures composed of cereals, tea, coffee, dried fruits, sugar, spices, beads, etc., some are truly skilful works “reproducing” landscapes as well as figurative paintings and portraits. In the beginning of the quarantine, they were created as a response to the panic buying, when stores sold out the essential goods (primarily cereals and toilet paper) in just a few days. These works literally resist the very idea of scarcity, using food not for nutrition, but solely for aesthetic purposes. In a way, such food compositions reminded a pagan offering to the deity, designed to beg him/her to prevent the hunger.

It seems important to notice that visual arts which were declared to be the grounds for the very Facebook group's existence (the subject without which the group loses its recognizable features) actually, are not the main

topic of the photos. And it shouldn't come as a surprise. During a discussion on the group, Ilya Doronchenkov, a Professor at the European University in St. Petersburg, said that he "as an art historian is useless in the discussion, this is material for anthropologists" (Reznik, 2020).

Indeed, many works are accompanied by texts that contain not only the name of the original work and its author, but also some interesting historical facts related to them. The participants also attempt to present their opinions about the originals and to imitate the curatorial texts and art critical narratives on an amateur level. Here they explain why this particular work motivated them to experiment and even to transform their own bodies. Moreover, such texts can accompany equally the internationally recognized masterpieces and tasteless paintings by contemporary artists creating souvenirs for tourists or covers of romance novels.

The objects of reproduction are all kind of visual works that vary in quality (recognized classics, clearly kitschy art, and ancient artefacts) and in technics (painting, sculpture, movies- and cartoons frames, photography, posters, graffiti). At the same time, the group never gives an assessment of the original artwork; comments are related only to the productions made by the participants, and its quality is determined by the harmony between the reproduction and the original artworks. In other words, the flash mob gives an absolute freedom of choice, it does not judge the participants' tastes and follows the principle "tastes are not disputed".

In general, the participants criticize each other very rarely; hate comments, which can be easily imagined under such content, are non-existent. Too harsh comments are immediately ridiculed and levelled by other participants; the administrators also track them down immediately. All the discussed features point out art being only a pretext for communication: the interaction with other people appearing in a similar difficult psychological situation is the main value of the group. However, this pattern of relations reminds a carnival where a transformation is a necessary condition for communication.

The carnival features of the flash mob can be traced quite clearly, although the period of the group's popularity related to the quarantine is time-limited and is gradually coming to naught. The challenge goes beyond the

quarantine. One may say that the space of the flashmob was under a time spell, where there was no beginning and no end and only an infinite wandering from one image to another structured the reality, and the number of images was constantly growing. Participants continue to create their works even after the lockdown. In many of these photos one may find the deformation of the human body, which changes its shape, turns male into female and vice-versa, mixes animal and anthropomorphic features; and also the aspiration to downplay and ridicule the drama of quarantine.

The artworks become masks which people wear to meet the epidemic, to resist it, and to hide behind them. For many, the group became a source of "good news", positive information, which is updated constantly and can diminish the importance of daily infection and death rates. It created a sense of a positive social milieu existing in the external world, i.e. implemented through the Internet and located outside the house boundaries, which contribute to people feel secluded in their isolation. The Facebook displayed an ability to create the ideal conditions for satisfying this need for communication.

Recebido em 10/02/2022

Aprovado em 10/11/2022

REFERÊNCIAS

GIOVANNI, Boccaccio . *The Decameron*. Translation: J.M. Rigg. Vol. I. London: Priv. print. for the Navarre Society, 1921.

NINA, Khachaturian. *'Lavatory Self-Portraits in the Flemish Style' from Seat Assignment*. Available at: <http://www.ninakatchadourian.com/photography/sa-flemish.php>. Access on 2.10.2020.

VLADIMIROVNA, Konstantinova Anna. "Tableaux: visual Theater of the pre-directorial Era (on the history of Russian theater in the first half of the XIX century)». *Vestnik Akademii Russkogo baleta im. A.YA. Vaganovoj*, № 4(39). 2015, 219-236.

YURI, Lotman. *Conversations about Russian Culture*. Saint Petersburg: Iskusstvo, 1994.

NATALIA, Reznik. “*The Izoizolyatsiya*: from home theater to a social event”. *Colta*, 2020. Available at: <https://www.colta.ru/articles/art/24459>. Access on 15.06.2020.

ANTON, Troianovski. “Bored Russians Posted Silly Art Parodies. The World Has Joined In”. *The New York Times*, 2020. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/25/world/europe/russia-facebook-art-parodies.html>. Access on 29.10.2020.

OFFICIAL page of Kandinsky Prize, 2020. Albert Soldatov. Available at: <http://www.kandinsky-prize.ru/al-bert-soldatov/>. Access on 14.08.2020.



Esta obra está licenciada com uma Licença
[Creative Commons Atribuição 4.0 Internacional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).