

Kraków... 15.04.2019

Summary

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Japanese avant-garde and experimental film

Japanese avant-garde film, closely connected to street theatre and performative activities, can be described both as a conglomerate of the Western audiovisual influences and the example of the unique aesthetic quality. The style of the Japanese artists was born through combining the inspirations taken from the Western filmmakers and other artists with searching for the answers for the post-war socio-political changes. This dissertation aims at showing the connections between Japanese historical avant-garde movements and new Japanese experimental films, showing the constant evolution: the metamorphosis of the tendencies of the independent artists, groups, and collectives. The author provides insight into the development of Japanese avant-garde film, and experimental aesthetics expanded by the post-2000 generation of artists. The main question that accompanied the presented research was that on the extent to what the new Japanese avant-garde artists fulfill the postulates, aesthetics, and objectives of the previous generations of the filmmakers.

The author starts from a brief description of the parameters of avant-garde film activity. In the first chapter, there are presented the theoretical frames, the critique, and comments on the avant-garde film – provided by the Western researchers. Furthermore, the author analyzes the parameters of the Japanese avant-garde activity and Japanese film theory, juxtaposing them with the Western perception of the movement. The following chapter revolves around the detailed presentation of the chosen aspects, artists and films of the Japanese avant-garde from its origins to the 1990s. The author starts from situating the Futurist, Dada and Surrealist inspirations in the broader context of the Japanese avant-garde. Also, the author focuses on the themes, objectives, and aesthetics introduced by such artists as Shūji Terayama, Donald Richie, Takahiko Iimura, Masao Adachi, Takashi Ito, Toshio Matsumoto, Mako Idemitsu, as well as by feminist avant-garde art and Japanese video art. The last chapter concerns the rapid development of the visual experiment in Japan after the year 2000, featuring the works of such authors as Takashi Makino, Rei Hayama, Shinkan Tamaki or Kazuhiro Goshima.

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