

Round figures generate reflection. It has been 50 years since the student protests of 1968. Protests were sparked by those who felt out of place, and with no sense of belonging in the post-war world. They felt they were backing the wrong horse, wasting their lives if they kept living the way they did: a cog in the capitalist machine, where their individuality and creativity were traded for the mundane workdays that slowly consumed life. It was not about making ends meet. They protested because simply being alive was not enough. They aspired to live freely and creatively – the way artists did.

They were young and eager to create; not the way machines manufacture items on an assembly line, but the way artists create, experimenting with unique ideas. And once they have to work, may that work be full of active involvement, voluntarily chosen challenges, and results to be proud of. *Ne travaillez jamais! Do not ever work!* – wrote the young Debord on the wall next to the river Seine, then students wrote the same thing on banners in 1968. This was not about praising laziness; this was about rejecting futile work.

In the meantime, some of the artists could no longer put up with art being forgotten in museums, visited by a tiny fraction of well-to-do people. They wanted to create art that finds its way back to people, which streams back to everyday life. They gave their endeavor a name: Flux. Maciunas, the pope of Flux, claimed: Flux needs to become a lifestyle, not a profession. Art is a way of life that needs to be lived.

These artists sought meaning in life events outside the frames of a picture and away from the pedestal of a statue. They wanted art to be recognized in anything (and everything) so that anyone (and everyone) could become an artist.

Was there any point in protesting?

Protests prove that people strive to live according to what they imagine, know, and do best – this is an inner obligation for which they are willing to make sacrifices, as well. The protests of 1968 had perceivable effects. As of the 1970s, the one-size-fits-all approach to work became more lax on the production line, and creativity and initiative started to be appreciated and expected. And then it turned out that anything could become art, and anyone could become an artist. However, this did not result in heaven on Earth for the working class.

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Round figures generate reflection. “15” is indeed round enough a figure. On Partium Christian University arts have been taught for 15 years with a unique perspective. On a BA level areas related to applied graphic arts comprise the curriculum, but at the same time there is constant outlook at the improvements and ongoings in contemporary, autonomous art. Students expect to make a living from activities rooted in applied arts (not necessarily as artists, more likely as creative laborers). Therefore, their education consists of offering a perspective to them within which they become capable of getting around the obvious, simple procedures in order to find unique solutions while carrying out their tasks (so that they can attain the perspective of an artist). Then, after graduation, they start work at advertising companies, cultural institutions, publishers, printing-houses, museums, and local

governments. Some of them carry on with individual projects, they sometimes receive prizes at festivals and biennials, and participate at national and international exhibitions.

Do they protest against anything? Not really. They might think they don't have to anymore. They will be able to lead their lives in a world where constant need for creativity and for unrestricted, independent works of art is the norm. Demand for being surrounded by witty, elegant, creative, evocative, and beautiful sight is on the increase. Life has been craving for esthetics. They most probably see no clash between life and (applied) arts, no open gap between the two. There is increasing need for their creativity in more and more areas of life. A laptop with access to the Internet opens the whole world: almost everything is available at their fingertips, making it possible to create, and the works of art could be made accessible worldwide in a few seconds. Now it is all about talent, skill, and perseverance. And they do not ever have to work again.

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The present catalogue records a moment from the 15-year-long life-education-work-art cycle or flux that has been going on at the Arts department on Partium Christian University. Whether these young adults are indeed creative or they merely walk the beaten path, whether they are rebels or conformists – let it be figured out by the public.

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