

ARTISTIC DIS-LIMITATIONS: IRINEL ANGHIEL AND FICTIONAL REALITY

ELMIRA SEBAT¹

SUMMARY. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the borders between the various kinds of artistic expression become blurred, making room for the advent of an ever more clearly contoured new species, that of the “hybrid” or “total” (*all-round*) artist. The latter is at the same time creator and performer, musician, visual artist, dancer, and stage director, and creates works that are almost impossible to break down into component parts. In the autochthonous context, Irinel Anghel embraces this non-disciplinarily and this creation with dissolved borders, which she considers to be experience-art: she never repeats her projects; she is not interested in trodden directions, already accepted solutions, artistic fashions or intellectual and emotional comfort. She does not strive to please at any cost, but, acknowledging her role of radar-artist, unafraid of the form of artistic disturbance or irony-art, through apparent unbalances she restores the cultural balance of the moment.

Keywords: all-round artist; experience-art; artistic disturbance; non-disciplinarily; radar-artist; irony-art.

*A boundary is not that at which
something stops, but (...) that from
which something begins its presenting.*
(Martin Heidegger)

After searches initiated several decades ago by a pleiad of artists from various fields who were discovering the impact of interdisciplinarity, present times offer creators an ever more generous space of inspiration and action. Ultra-specialisations tend to become history in the twenty-first

¹ University of Craiova, 13 Al. I. Cuza Street, 200585, Craiova, Dolj, Romania, Associate Professor, elmira_sebat@yahoo.com

century, making way to a direction with blurred borders. Phenomena of “artistic crossing” engender a new “species” – that of the “hybrid” or “total” artist – who is at the same time creator and performer, musician, visual artist, dancer, stage director, and who creates works that are almost impossible to break down into component parts. These artists naturally evince an organic bond between all the means used to convey a concept.

Of course, for the time being, these artists are formed through individual decisions and efforts, each coming from a specialised educational background.

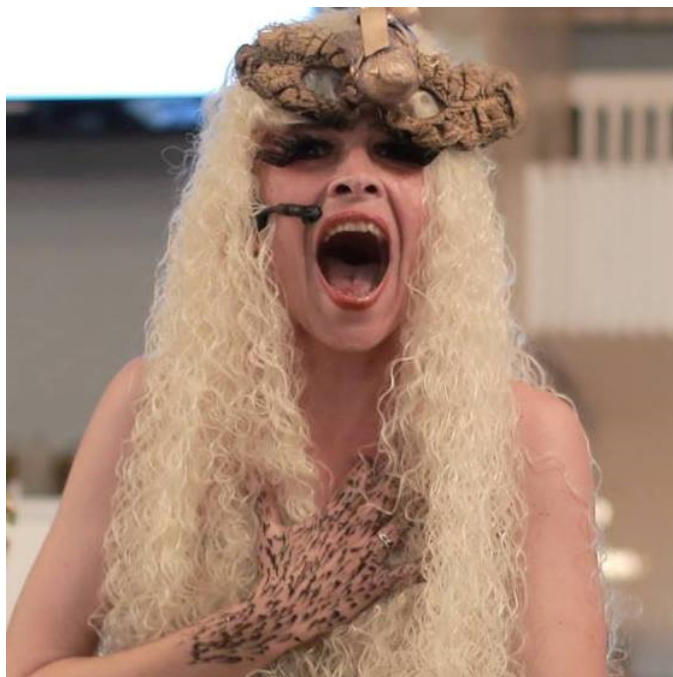
The creators of this new paradigm are compelled to invent their own categories, concepts and labels in order to convey their intentions and offer clues on their artistic endeavour.

This is also Irinel Anghel’s case, as in the presentation of her works she uses terms coined by herself: OTHERwork, Real Fiction, Temporary artistic disturbance, zoocore style, soundance, performative illusion, electronade, blind film, etc. As she explains:

Quite often in today’s cultural landscape we come across situations and events that beg the question: “what is this?” And if the answer we choose to give is not “it is what it is”, we are faced with a topic in the research of a phenomenon that is ever more present in the arts across the world. “What is this?” raises the issue of the classification, definition and analysis of the productions that trigger this question from the perspective of what we know so far using the prevalent artistic categories and their means of research. This situation is created by a phenomenon that is growing each year in an acceleration that can no longer allow anyone to avoid an encounter (be it accidental) with its manifestations. I am talking about the dissolution of the borders between artistic areas and categories, which has engendered the so-called “crossing borders” or “crossover” art.²

² Anghel, Irinel – “Arta experiențială” [“Experiential Art”], *Muzica Review* no. 4/2012, p. 19.

Image 1



Irinel Anghel – *Your Highness*

But actually who is Irinel Anghel, the composer whose “case” as *all-round artist* with an initial musical background can be followed and analysed in the autochthonous context? She studied piano at the “George Enescu” Music High School in Bucharest, she graduated from two sections of the National University of Music in Bucharest (Musicology and Composition), she has two master degrees, a doctorate and a post-doctorate in the academic musical world. She has written chamber and orchestral works, a book on contemporary Romanian music, and now, after successive transformations, she is known as a multidisciplinary artist: vocal performer, sound designer, performance artist, soundancer, stage direction, fashion designer – all this converging in an ultra-experimental territory, “dis-limited”, impossible to discipline, difficult to name and grasp.

Image 2



Irinel Anghel – *What about your freedom?*

Irinel Anghel reveals: *Over the past few years I have started to describe my projects in the most “bizarre” ways – “un-nameable” deeds, “liberties under construction”, “performative illusions”, “blind films”, etc.*³

In her analysis of trans-border artistic approaches, Irinel Anghel specifies that she is not referring to *hybrid artistic genres born out of the collaboration of artists who come from different fields, where we can detect the specialised contribution of each, but to the organic activity of certain artists in an “all-round mode”, which results in the emergence of works that seem odd – “UFO’s” that experiment with combinations for which no school prepares you.*⁴

³ Anghel, Irinel – “Abordări transfrontaliere” [“Transborder Approaches”], *Muzica Review* no. 7/2015, p. 29.

⁴ Anghel, Irinel – “Abordări transfrontaliere” [“Transborder Approaches”], *Muzica Review* no. 7/2015, p. 29.

Can Irinel Anghel be a model through her non-disciplinarity? At this time, certainly not. Irinel Anghel does not set the norm in our socio-cultural system. She is, for the time being, the “exception” to the rule and this probably motivates her in choosing untrodden paths to explore. This can also explain the artist’s decision not to repeat her projects – a decision she has kept for almost ten years. She is confident that her inspiration, which has been providing her with ever fresh ideas for her to try, apply and present, will not dry out.

Concerned with limits and boundaries, Irinel Anghel is thus drawing away from the “artistic centre” marked by well-known directions, by already accepted solutions, by artistic fashions or by intellectual and emotional comfort.

A consequence of the creation with dissolved borders seems to be experience-art, about which Irinel Anghel asserts:

Experiential Art classified as DIFFERENT does not “mind” not having a stable identity. Not having a stable identity, it can have any identity at all. But, in order to receive an identity, DIFFERENT claims an independent gaze, detached from comparison, from the perception of the realm of artistic forms through boundaries. If limits disappear, we find ourselves between nowhere and elsewhere, outside our comfort area, in the realm of mystery, which can be scary to some and fascinating to others.⁵

Her explorations lead her towards the margins of art (of music, fine arts, dance, etc.). She is attracted to any sound or visual effect, her vocal techniques expand from year to year to the point of parting with “human vocal singing” as it is known and acknowledged. Every encounter with a new artistic project signed by Irinel Anghel is a challenge to the audience, welcomed by some, rejected by others. Irinel Anghel does not strive to please at any cost. To her, any reaction to her proposals is valid and important. Artists who embrace this path may seem “suicidal” from the point of view of their image and social and professional position. Such artists “risk” ruffling people, being rejected and yet, if they go on, it means there is something strong about them – intuition, passion, commitment. Despite difficulties, it is persistence that draws people’s attention and, in Irinel Anghel’s case, the consistent novelty of her projects.

⁵ Anghel, Irinel – “Arta experiențială” [“Experiential Art”], *Muzica Review* no. 4/2012, p. 26.

Image 3



Irinel Anghel – *Posthumanism*

Tackling the issue of post humanism in art in connection with the phenomenon of hybridisation, Irinel Anghel remarks how *The combination between control and total freedom, between what is rehearsed and what is unrehearsed, between the art of performing and performance art as living art reduces the border, the passage line, feeding the confusion between the two realms, and faces the audience with tricky questions.*⁶ In her opinion, *post humanist art works with uncertainties, with doubts, with multiple possibilities of rendition and reception, initiating imaginary trials against the non-negotiable standards of “traditional goods”.*⁷

To hybrid, all-round artists, the common space of all the arts that is thus opened offers countless possibilities of route choice. Like all explorers, they will initiate actions, give them shape and then move on. They will not grow roots. New artists are travellers. They create at and for the present time.

⁶ Anghel, Irinel – “Ce este postumanismul?” [“What Is Posthumanism?”], *Muzica Review* no. 6/2016, p. 76.

⁷ *Ibidem.*

Image 4



Irinel Anghel – *Dinner with my Demons*

To this effect we would like to mention the “oblivion contracts” that Irinel Anghel had the audience sign before her *PHL4U24GET* performance, her relinquishment of her own manuscripts, CD’s and photographs within the *Posthumanism* project (announced as “temporary artistic disturbance”), the musical auction in which she put herself up for sale in the mini-performance entitled *Your Highness*. Other unclassifiable landmarks of the artist’s creation are: *Zoopera* – experimental other work for screaming soloists and death-metal band, *ArtSpa* – an ironic experience aimed at the pseudo-needs of comfort expressed by the audience when in contact with art, *What about your freedom?* – a performative question to test the audience’s limits when it comes to freedom, *Aaaaaaaa* – a *homeless art* experiment situated at the margins of music, with posthumanist nuances, *MMMusMobile* – an ad-hoc composition of moving the furniture around a concert area.

Image 5

**Irinel Anghel – *Backtothefuture***

The form of artistic disturbance and that of irony-art thus recur often in Irinel Anghel's works, a radar-artist who, through apparent unbalances, restores the cultural balance of the moment. These aspects do not arise by chance, inadvertently, for Irinel Anghel is, perhaps, more than anything a conceptual artist, an artist who carefully thinks out her projects, which she imbues with multi-layered semantics. Not few fall into the trap of judging the surface of such projects, missing other more profound perspectives.

The musical side of these events is permanently accompanied by *performance art*, by movement, by costumes created by Irinel Anghel in a style that is itself situated at the border between *steampunk*, *camp* and *Goth*.

The creator of exhibitions of a wide range of performative acts, Irinel Anghel gathers around her artists who are impassioned with experimenting in various cultural areas, uniting them through a *masterplan* that combines control and freedom, rigour and chance, as in *Ziua cu trei ceasuri altfel* [*The Day with Three Hours Otherwise*], *Aeroportul Oniria* [*Oneiria Airport*], *Muzexpo* [*Musexpo*], *Backtothefuture*, or *Muzele de la Muzeu* [*Museum Muses*].

Image 6



Irinel Anghel – *All Inclusive*

The artist of the new hybrid cultural paradigm is heading towards experience-art, which also dissolves the limits between performers and audience, fiction and reality, often undergoing a “conflict” of inadequacy, of clash with the performing area. The roots of such actions can be traced back to the advent of *performance art* in the projects of the Fluxus group, which included John Cage, Joseph Beuys, and Yoko Ono.

Regarding the origins of this direction, Irinel Anghel identifies several “Gates to the Common Space of Creative Fields” and the “DIFFERENT Zone”:

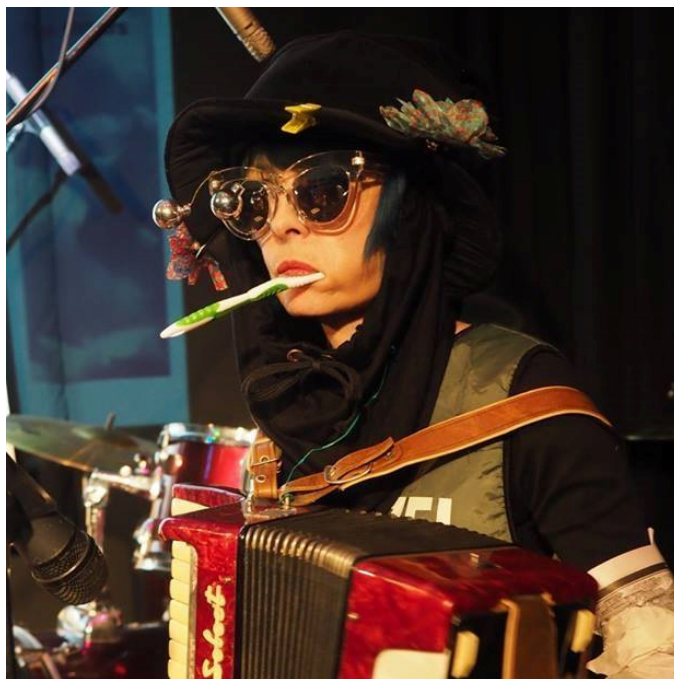
- Surrealism and the Dada Movement
- The Need to Experiment Fully Manifested by the Avant-Garde of the Twentieth Century
- Aleatory Art and Improvisation
- The “Counterculture” Movements
- Postmodernism

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The explosion of multimedia means that has enabled artistic interactions that would have been unimaginable until not long ago.⁸

There is a great difference of perspective on the work of art that these artists juxtapose to the classic aesthetic ideal, to the “object-art” (to be listened to or watched). The dimension introduced by artistic EXPERIENCE is that of LIVING art at the border between reality and fiction. Fictional reality and real fiction seem to be the genres of the new artistic paradigm.

Image 7



Irinel Anghel - Aaaaaaaaaa

In her postdoctoral thesis, Irinel Anghel even draws a portrait of the event creator with dissolved borders:

⁸ Anghel, Irinel – “Fuziune, Integrare, Ne-limitare. Dizolvarea granițelor în gândirea și practica muzicală contemporană” [“Fusion, Integration, Un-limitation. Border Dissolution in Contemporary Musical Thinking and Practice”] in *Studii de Sinteză 2012-2013*, vol. 1, MIDAS. Bucharest: National University of Music Press, p. 9.

- *He/She is a creator in action (actively involved in his/her creation)*
- *He/She is a creator that relies on intuition to beget and lead the project*
- *He/She does not have a pre-determined reason and result (the value of the experience lies in the experience itself)*
- *He/She is in dialogue with the present. His/Her creations are not transmissible.*
- *He/She operates in as many creative fields as possible (he/she is a pluri- or inter-disciplinary artist).*
- *He/She is ready to leave behind what he/she has learned in order to function in a borderless space and make room for new experiences. He/She practises **un-learning after learning**.*
- *He/She is a curious, ludic artist. He/She has no certainties. He/She raises questions through his/her art.*
- *More often than not he/she also performs his/her creations, being an experience facilitator to his/her stage partners and to the audience.⁹*

These artists have no illusions about the wide acceptance of their creation. Lack of success does not scare them. Rejections and bans only make them go forward, move from one place to the other, convinced that authenticity is the right path and that *If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear* (George Orwell).

Translated by Alina Bottez

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⁹ Anghel, Irinel – "Fuziune, Integrare, Ne-limitare. Dizolvarea granițelor în gândirea și practica muzicală contemporană" ["Fusion, Integration, Un-limitation. Border Dissolution in Contemporary Musical Thinking and Practice"] in *Studii de Sinteză 2012-2013*, vol. 1, MIDAS. Bucharest: National University of Music Press, p. 12.

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