



BAD VIDEO ART FESTIVAL



photo by Andrey Slaschilin
Exposition View

Background

The International Bad Video Art Festival (BVAF) is an independent artist-run initiative. Video artists and bad movie fans Natalia Monakhova and Andrey Slaschilin have once decided to find out whether there is something like bad video art. It is well known that bad movies have long ago formed a special cultural field with its own heroes and fans. In other arts sectors the issue of the bad has not been problematised so actively. Natalia and Andrey founded the International Bad Video Art Festival which was first held in March 2017 in A3 Gallery (Moscow, Russia) thanks to the support of the then-Director of the gallery Andrey Volkov.

Concept

Curators of the Bad Video Art Festival Natalia Monakhova and Andrey Slaschilin propose to study extreme forms of video art. According to the curators videos shown at the Festival are at the intersection of bad art, “bad” painting and bad cinema (B-movies, cult, camp, trash) but still have not been introduced as an independent category for profound studying.

Short Description of The Show

The works are selected on the basis of an open call. Every applicant has to answer why his or her work deserves to be called bad video art. Selected works are divided in sections. This is the usual practice of the Festival. The sections are put together according to formal and contextual characteristics. This practice allows the curators to define year by year the attributes of bad video art, and makes it easier for the viewers to orient themselves within the Festival.



Why show bad video art?



The curators of the Festival insist on using the term “bad”. Not as a statement “bad because I don’t like it” or a moral judgement “bad because it’s about war, death, suffering, racism, corruption”, but first of all as a judgement of taste. Though some artists describing their work as bad video art mention the moral issue, the curators while selecting works start from the general meaning of “bad” as a term in art and cinema.

In 1978 at the New Museum of Contemporary Art Marcia Tucker curated the exhibition “Bad” Painting featuring the works of fourteen artists. In the press release for the exhibition Tucker pointed to the “rejection of the concept of progress” and “scorn for the standards of good taste” typical of the participants of the show. But Tucker uses quotation marks around “bad” emphasising that this is “an ironic title for *good painting*”.

Bad video art also often neglects technical progress. Artists enjoy lo-fi aesthetics, use rough cut occasionally (meaning not paying

enough attention to the form) or deliberately, don't edit color and sound, or degrade the image and use irritating sound.



Linda Vilka (Latvia)

As “bad” painting bad video art transgresses visual and contextual standards of good taste. Bad video art may ignore ethical norms, work with low culture, be trashy or campy, or just study irrelevant issues.

But unlike Marcia Tucker the curators of the Festival talk about bad without quotation marks. Bad video art may be of any quality – bad or good. One of the artistic tasks of the Festival is studying the issues of quality in art. Can art be judged as good or bad? Can we talk about good and bad taste in relation to art in general and video art in particular? Is it possible that the issue of taste (a popular subject of cinema studies) is irrelevant as the subject of video art studies?

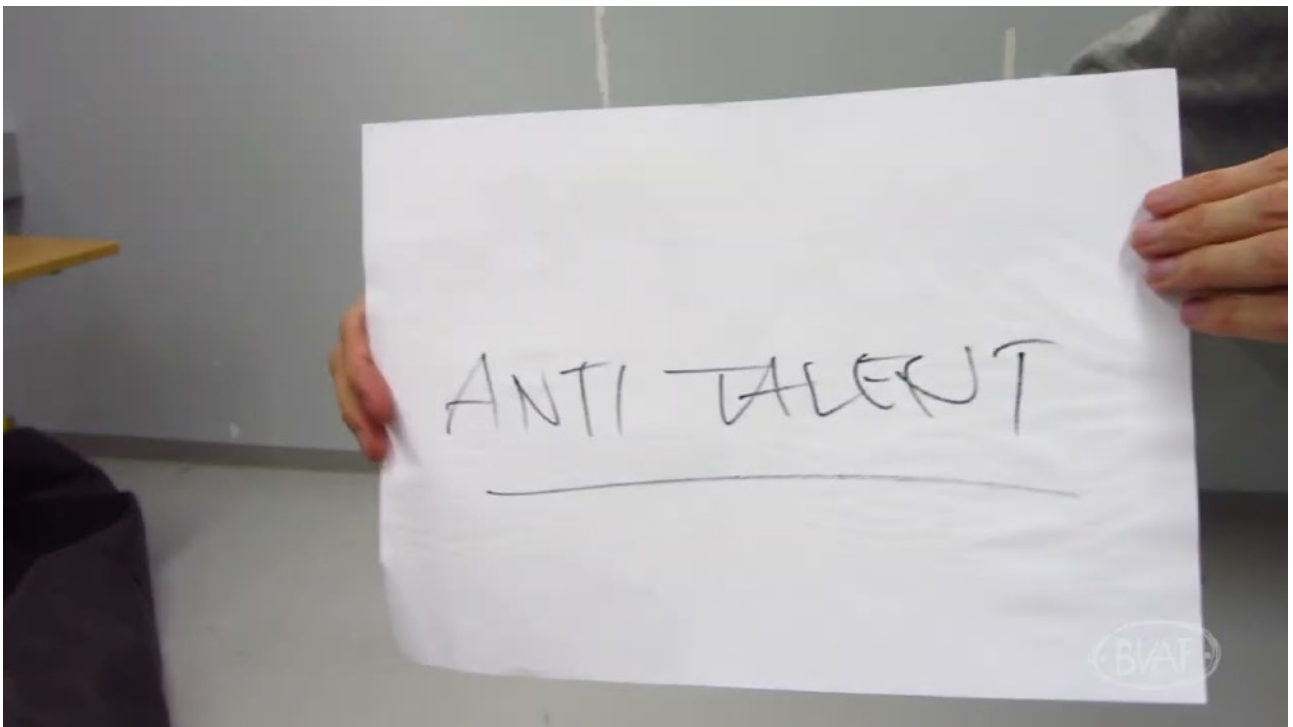
As Bourdieu wrote, it is not possible to get rid of hierarchy. The meaning and value of a cultural object depend on its coordinate system.

Calling something “bad” and showing it is a game, which is impossible to lose. The viewer may not like what he sees but he won't be deceived. He has never been promised anything good, on the contrary, he was warned not to count on anything. This is not Louvre, he was told. What Venera? She is not here.

There is no competition, no hype. Just bad video art from all over the world because it really exists in this world. And there are artists fearless enough to take part in the Festival without being afraid of labels or disrepute.

Bad Video Art Festival is a good example of successful international communication beyond any geographical, social or cultural limits, or fictional ranking.

A Small Collection of Bad Videos (2017–2023)



Contacts

<https://badvideoart.wixsite.com/badvideoart>

www.facebook.com/badvideoart

https://youtube.com/@badvideoartfestival?si=O9Ea7Y_ipF-olh-x

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