

ARTS DURING THE PANDEMIC PERIOD

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Many epidemics in human history, including plague, tuberculosis and other diseases, have caused pandemics at various times. The world is currently fighting the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic under the auspices of the World Health Organization.

At all times, creative people were sensitive to such tragedies and created works of art on this topic. In the Middle Ages, the plague that gripped Europe was called the "Black Death". At that time, under the influence of the plague epidemic, the concept of "Dance of Death" was born in the culture. The Dance of Death, which existed from the middle of the 14th century to the first half of the 16th century, is a synthetic genre with an iconographic plot, accompanied by poetic interpretations [1]. In the second half of the 15th century, this "dance" was described by Bernt Notke, Michael Wolgemut, and then by Hans Holbein and other artists. The topic of pandemics in the visual arts also emerged in the late 19th century. Thus, in 1898, the Swiss painter, graphic artist and sculptor Arnold Bjoklin created the painting "The Plague".

The rapid spread of the Spanish flu between 1918 and 1920 affected about 500 million people. Norwegian artist Edvard Munch also contracted the Spanish flu, but after recovering, he created the painting "Self-portrait after the Spanish flu." At the same time, the brilliant representative of Austrian Expressionism, Egon Schiele, contracted the flu and died. The artist created the painting "Family" based on the example of the tragedy of his family. This painting is one of the few examples of paintings depicting the tragic consequences of the flu.

As a result of social isolation and quarantine during the pandemic, millions of people stay at home and stay away from all kinds of cultural events. At the same time, ICT is an invaluable tool for bringing people physically distant from each other together to bring them together for different purposes. Despite the fact that today, depending on the price and quality, the availability of different types of smartphones allows even the poor to master this type of technology. In this case, in turn, Internet resources become available, and access to information is simplified for all segments of the population.

Since the pandemic was declared in March 2020, educational and cultural institutions around the world have gradually suspended their activities. However, given the fact that it is wrong to exclude people from education and culture in conditions of social isolation, many educational and cultural institutions decided to continue working on virtual platforms. From this point of view, one of the first projects in Azerbaijan was the creation of a joint project of the Ministry of Education and the TV channel of culture "Lesson Time" [2].

Over time, many businesses began to conduct online discussions, seminars and classes using Internet resources. In such conditions, the need for special programs and applications for video communication and video conferencing (webinars) has increased. One such tool is *Zoom Video Communications*, launched in 2011. As the number of people forced to stay at home by the COVID-19 pandemic has increased, so has the use of the *Zoom Program*. An estimated 10 million daily *Zoom* users in December 2019 were up to 200 million in early April 2020. Due to the requirements of the quarantine regime, more than 90,000 educational institutions in 20 countries of the world use this service, and this is not the end [3]. In connection with the transfer of the population to a strict quarantine regime, the need for access to the Internet, including the *Zoom* service, continues to grow rapidly in Azerbaijan.

Along with educational institutions, cultural institutions are also moving to the online system. Major museums offer various forms of guided tours, workshops, 3D-walks, and other online services. National Carpet Museum in Azerbaijan, Tretyakov Gallery and Hermitage in Russia, British Museum in England, Louvre in France, Thyssen



Bornemisse Museum in Spain, the Freer and Sackler Galleries in Washington DC, Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Harvard University Art Museums in Cambridge, and the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, etc., and many other internationally renowned museums and galleries offer rich exhibits, both live and video. The Tretyakov Gallery's project "*Tretyakovka-Home*" is an online lecture by the museum staff, excursions to the gallery's permanent exhibition, concerts and film screenings. Virtual visitors can stay at home and follow the museum's services from various Internet resources. The Thyssen Bornemisse Museum, mentioned above, organizes virtual visits to both permanent and temporary exhibitions. You can take a virtual tour of the exhibition "Rembrandt and Portraiture of Amsterdam", which was scheduled to open in February 2020, but suspended due to quarantine, and get acquainted with the works presented.

The idea that I voiced a few years before the pandemic: "The Internet is a turning point in culture, art and education, changing the world", again reflects the reality of today [4].

The economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic has not gone unnoticed in the field of culture and art, as in all other areas. Many cultural projects, exhibitions, concerts and performances are canceled or postponed. Thus, cultural institutions of various types lose a lot of money, and the economic situation of the creative team, the troupe and, in general, individuals is deteriorating.

It is also possible to engage in various creative activities at home during a period of social isolation. Of course, the quarantine regime is not a big problem for composers, people involved in the visual and decorative arts. However, work from home in the field of mass creativity, or rather theater and performing arts, cinematography, has certain limitations. Note that world premieres, filming and other cultural events have been canceled.

In our previous research, we showed that art is independent of internet technology. That is, you can work in various creative fields without special equipment, digital tools and Internet resources. For example, for an easel painter, social isolation can have a positive effect. On the other hand, it should be noted that even the fields of art that do not depend on information technology have a common digital connection. This connection is an international electronic network - the Internet. Our previous studies of Internet resources have shown that all areas of art intersect with Internet technologies in one form or another [5]. It is almost impossible to prepare a TV show that meets a high artistic taste without bringing together a large theater team. But at the same time, individual artists can prepare a solo performance at home in quarantine mode and send it to a wide audience via Internet resources. We believe that such conditions are an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the personal qualities and professionalism of an actor.

Turkish pop singer Hande Ünsal wrote at home in quarantine: "Are you doing well?" ("İyi misin?") filmed and released the music video on his mobile phone. During a live mini-concert on *YouTube* on April 9, 2020, the singer performed a new song, which she had recorded in quarantine, along with many other songs.

The London Symphony Orchestra began broadcasting full recordings of selected concerts on the Internet two days a week, starting on 22 March this year. The Royal Opera House has also rescheduled all scheduled events, but provides free viewing of performances on the *Youtube* channel.

During the quarantine, Coldplay frontman Chris Martin performed live music on Instagram from the comfort of his home, instead of a scheduled but rescheduled concert. Many global and local stars, such as Chris Martin, meet their fans live and delight them with their performances.

Thus, despite all the difficulties, during the coronavirus pandemic, people could not stay away from concerts, performances, exhibitions and other cultural events. The coronavirus pandemic will not last forever, and we believe that humanity will return to normal life by participating in theater, cinema, concerts, exhibitions and other cultural events. Of course, various remote concerts or video performances cannot replace real events, live performances by musicians, actors and singers who communicate directly with the audience. However, it must be admitted that in the current situation ICT is a beautiful and effective tool for cultural recreation for people with a high artistic taste.

Thus, it is safe to say that works of art created by cultural and artistic figures as a result of the widespread use of ICTs are successfully presented to the public, listeners and fans, even if they do not replace real communication.

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