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Professional Contemporary Art Exhibitions and Their Reception and Interpretation by Blind People: A Case Study of the Art Project *Touch of Art*

ABSTRACT

This publication addresses the issue of accessibility in contemporary art exhibitions. It presents the second edition of the art project entitled *Touch of Art II*, organised by the Institute of Fine Arts, Faculty of Arts, MCSU in Lublin. The project takes the form of a nationwide art competition open to professional artists and has resulted in a number of exhibitions (e.g. CSK Lublin, 2024; BWA Bielska Gallery, 2024; RIPPL Gallery, Kaposvár, Hungary, 2024; Wozownia Art Gallery in Toruń, 2025; BWA Gallery in Kielce, 2025). The initiative promotes a multisensory experience of artworks, designed to be accessible to a wide range of audiences. The participating artists were encouraged to create their works with visually impaired viewers in mind.

The article also presents a case study on the reception of contemporary art by a person completely blind from birth. The study was conducted at one of the exhibitions using a research tool developed by the author – a questionnaire for the perception of art, based on a model of the structure of an artistic work, taking into account the layers of: content, form, creativity and emotionality (Niestorowicz, 2017; 2024; see also: Ingarden, 1966; 1970; Golaszewska, 1986; Popek, 1999). The findings indicate that audio description, particularly when based on curatorial texts, significantly enhances the viewer's understanding and readability of both the form and content of the artwork. These factors also influence the positive evaluation of the work, in terms of its creative and emotional dimensions.

KEYWORDS: art accessibility, contemporary art, art perception, visual impairment, blind people.

STRESZCZENIE

Profesjonalne wystawy sztuki współczesnej a ich odbiór i interpretacja przez osoby niewidome. Na przykładzie projektu artystycznego *Dotyk Sztuki*

Niniejsza publikacja dotyczy zagadnienia wystaw sztuki współczesnej i ich dostępności. Zaprezentowany zostanie opis drugiej edycji projektu artystycznego pt. *Dotyk Sztuki II*, zorganizowanego przez Instytut Sztuk Pięknych Wydziału Artystycznego UMCS w Lublinie, który ma formułę ogólnopolskiego konkursu artystycznego, skierowanego do artystów profesjonalnych. Efektem projektu jest szereg wystaw (np. CSK Lublin, 2024; Galeria Bielska BWA, 2024; RIPPL Gallery, Kaposvár, Węgry, 2024; Galeria Sztuki Wozownia w Toruniu, 2025; Galeria BWA w Kielcach, 2025). Projekt zakłada multisensoryczny odbiór dzieł sztuki, dostępny szerokiemu gremium widzów. Artyści, kreując dzieła na niniejszą wystawę, mieli jednak na uwadze przede wszystkim odbiorców z dysfunkcją wzroku.

W artykule zostały także przedstawione badania recepcji sztuki współczesnej, przeprowadzone na wystawie z osobą całkowicie niewidomą od urodzenia, na zasadzie studium przypadku. Narzędzie badawcze stanowiła autorska ankieta do badania percepcji sztuki, w odniesieniu do modelu struktury dzieła artystycznego, uwzględniającego warstwy: treści, formy, kreatywności i emocjonalności (Niestorowicz, 2017; 2024; zob. także Ingarden, 1966, 1970; Gołaszewska, 1986; Popek, 1999). Badania wykazały że audiodeskrypcja, bazująca na opisach kuratorskich dzieła, stanowi cenną pomoc, zwiększając rozumienie oraz czytelność dzieła (w warstwie formalnej i treściowej). Obie te cechy wpływają także na pozytywną ocenę dzieła (warstwa kreatywności i emocjonalności).

SŁOWA KLUCZE: udostępnianie sztuki, sztuka współczesna, percepcja sztuki, dysfunkcja wzroku, niewidomi

Introduction

In the literature on art perception, the role of other senses than just visual cognition is increasingly emphasised (Smolińska, 2020). Maria Gołaszewska (1997, pp. 136–137) notes the importance of the aesthetic experience in contact with a work of art that flows from tactile exploration: “it is a voyage of discovery through an exuberant land of shapes that can only be known through touch.” These experiences, she goes on to write, “move us more deeply, sink into us, embrace us more comprehensively than visual or auditory sensations.”

The blind researcher Georgina Kleege (2021), who studies the perception of art, emphasises that this is not a matter of an exceptionally heightened sense of touch, as blind individuals are often attributed with extraordinary

tactile abilities. Rather, it is about the fact that tactile perception directs observation in a more attentive, insightful, systematic, and conscious manner.

Marta Smolińska (2020, p. 23) claims that haptics not only “does not eliminate the action of sight, but activates it in cooperation (with other senses)”: hearing, taste, smell, sense of balance and kinesthetic sense. A similar position is also presented by Gołaszewska (1997, pp. 137–138), who states that sensual experiences “and consequently also aesthetic experiences, are by nature multisensory,” operating on the principle of synesthesia of the senses. This phenomenon, called polysensory cognition in cognitivism, consists in the integration of cognitive sensory processes.

It is clear that blind people, lacking the ability to perceive visually, build up a cognitive pathway for themselves using their other senses. The polysensory way of learning about reality interacts with the phenomenon of compensation of impaired cognitive activities by other activities (Niestorowicz, 2024).

When considering the issue of contact with art for blind audiences, it is important to be aware of the specificity of tactile reception. The typhlo-didactician Aldo Grassini¹ (2011: *apud* Kłopotkowska, 2016; see also Niestorowicz, 2024) developed a theory of art perception that takes into account both differences and similarities in the perception issues of sighted and blind people. According to the author, the first phase – the hedonistic – is characterised by similarities in terms of the perception of sensory stimuli and defining them as “pleasant, indifferent or unpleasant.” The second, cognitive phase reflects the differences in the two modes of perception. Visual cognition provides an overall picture of the object to be explored, and also produces images of phenomena only accessible visually (such as colour, light, value or perspective). Tactile cognition, on the other hand, is an arduous and time-consuming effort, involving memory, requiring “prolonged exploration ... and the slow construction of a mental image” (Kłopotkowska, 2016, pp. 283–284). This process is fragmentary and sequential, hindering cognition of real objects, ultimately producing a less concrete and detailed image, sometimes inadequate to reality (Paplińska, 2008; Kucharczyk, 2015; Czerwińska & Kucharczyk, 2019). The third phase – mental interpretation, i.e. the reading of meanings between the art object and the idea it expresses, depends on “accumulated experience.” Blind people do not have the possibility, as sighted people do, to “refer to the object of cognition ... they have to rely only on memory traces” (Kłopotkowska, 2016, pp. 283–284).

1 The theory of A. Grassini is referenced from an interview by A. Kłopotkowska (2016) with the researcher, as well as the paper *Touching art, cognitive experience or aesthetic use*, presented in Katowice in 2011, at the conference *Blind people and art*.

Thus, in order to optimise the reception of art by visually impaired people, it is not enough to ensure only the sensory accessibility of exhibitions. Invaluable help, as confirmed by art perception studies (see, for example, Cupchik & Gębotys, 1988; Szubielska, Niestorowicz, & Balaj, 2016; Kleege, 2021), is provided by curatorial descriptions, appropriately designed for blind people, most often in the form of audio description. In addition, the accessibility of works, perceived by touch as well as by the other senses, should comply with the principles of accessibility of (contemporary) art for visually impaired people.²

The obligatory principles in this case will be:

- Legibility: perceptually appropriate convexity of the signs, contrast of textures, message without details that interfere with tactile perception.
- Coherence of the work (prudence in the dispersion of elements in space).
- Appropriate size of elements.
- Safety and durability of the work's construction.

The optional principles, on the other hand, will be:

- Attractiveness.
- Colour contrasts (for the visually impaired).
- Recognisability (for figurative works), e.g. representation of objects in canonical perspective, with proportions and distances between objects. Prudence in the use of perspective and axonometric layouts and ideograms.

*The Touch of Art Project*³

Currently, there is a growing number of initiatives aimed at making culture and art accessible to blind individuals. Many projects are being launched by cultural institutions as well as independent artistic initiatives. One notable example is the work of blind performer Carmen Papalia, whose projects take the form of participatory public engagements, encouraging participants to embark on non-visual tours and explore spaces using senses other than sight. Additionally, there is increasing involvement from art universities in various projects focused on the accessibility of art (Niestorowicz, 2024).

One of such projects was established at the Institute of Fine Arts, Faculty of Arts, MCSU in Lublin in 2019 (see Niestorowicz & Szubielska,

2 Own elaboration based on: Więckowska, 2008; Czerwińska, 2008; Raffray, 1988; Argyropoulos & Kanari, 2015; Niestorowicz & Szubielska, 2022.

3 <https://www.umcs.pl/pl/instytut-sztuk-pieknych,18215.htm> (tab *Touch of Art*).

2022). The premise of this project is the multisensory reception of artworks, accessible to a wide range of viewers. However, when creating the works for the present exhibition, the artists had in mind above all the visually impaired audience. The second edition of the project is currently underway for a two-year exhibition cycle (2023–2025). It has the formula of a nationwide art competition, aimed at professional artists. The *Touch of Art* exhibition reveals artistic proposals, covering a variety of forms of expression. On display are sculptures, artistic objects, installations and spatial paintings by 39 artists from all over Poland.

The creations of the works posed a challenge to the artists, who were looking for ways to transform the visual sign into a tactile one, thus answering the question of how to create a work of art so that the message would be comprehensible and legible to viewers who are blind from birth. For a more complete reception of the works, an audio description was prepared for the exhibits, which is intended to provide a verbal description of the visual content for blind and partially sighted people. The audio description has an interpretative and informative character (interpretative-reporting, according to the classification of E. Smiechowska-Petrovskij, 2021).

In order to observe the process of reception of contemporary art by visually impaired people, research was organised during exhibitions held as part of the *Touch of Art II* project.

Research into the perception of contemporary art

The aim of the research was to reach the blind viewer's interpretation of a work of art and to observe the fact whether information about the work of art, or the lack thereof, influences the perception and aesthetic valuation of the painting, which is confirmed by research on this problem (see, for example, Cupchik & Gębotys 1988; Waligórska, 2006; Szubielska et al., 2016; Kleege, 2021).

The research was conducted by means of a questionnaire⁴, and was motivated by the questions:

- What is the interpretation of the work, and how is the work perceived in tactile perception by a blind person?
- Does learning contextual information (in the form of an audio-description) about the artwork under study changes previous perceptions and ideas about the artwork viewed?

⁴ The construction of the questionnaire is based on the model of the structure of the artwork and therefore includes questions concerning content, form and also aesthetic-emotional connotation (Niestorowicz, 2024).

Research procedure (tactile perception of the work)

The research procedure was governed by the author's procedure,⁵ which included three stages: interpretation of the work on the basis of the blind person's own experience and independent viewing of the work; conceptualisation of the work on the basis of knowledge derived from contextual information (audio description); and aesthetic-emotional evaluation of the work – interpretation by the blind person on the basis of the knowledge acquired and provided. The procedure is therefore as follows:

1. *Independent viewing of the work* completed with inventing a title by a blind person. Sensory cognition takes place here by way of induction, i.e. finding and recognising the elements of the work against the background of the whole composition, thus from the specific to the general. The questions at this stage are questions about the content of the work under research (two questions, see Table 1).
2. *Conceptualisation of the work on the basis of the audio description.* The blind person receives information in the form of an audio description about the work of art being examined. This fact changes the mode of sensory cognition, which takes place by way of deduction: starting from the whole, the blind viewer recognises the elements of the work in detail. This process takes place from the general to the specific and is a reaching out to the criteria for recognising a phenomenon. The questions at this stage are questions about content and form, but also about the principle of legibility, understanding and recognisability of the work under research (nine questions, see Table 1).
3. *Aesthetic-emotional connotations.* The final stage of the study of the perception of an artistic work is related to its evaluation. I therefore try to reach the viewer's judgements about the acceptance or lack thereof of a work and the factors on which this acceptance depends (one question, see Table 1).

I relate all three stages of the research procedure to the model of the structure of an artwork, it allows me to explicate three fields of interpretation, which in the tradition of describing a visual work are called layers⁶ (Niestorowicz, 2024). I therefore take into account the layer of content, the layer of form, and the layer of creativity and emotionality.

In order to gain knowledge about the perception of the studied artwork, an interview method was used. The interview scenario included

5 This procedure, in a modified form (with an altered research tool), was used in a study on the perception of bas-relief by blind people (Niestorowicz, 2017).

6 I find a model of describing a work of art using the concept of layers in the works of R. Ingarden (1966, 1970), M. Gołaszewska (1986); S. Popek (1999).

questions covering each of the three stages of the study. Participant observation was also used to verify the veracity of the judgements obtained.

The study group consisted of 10 visually impaired adults. The research was carried out during an exhibition at the CSK in Lublin, in June 2024, and continues to be carried out during subsequent editions of the *Touch of Art* project. In this article, I present a study conducted with one person who has been totally blind since birth (male), on a case study basis (I have this person's consent to participate in the study).

Two (of the eight) works of art examined, an abstract spatial painting entitled *Colours of Emotions* and a sculptural figurative work entitled *Dream*, were the subject of this publication's research. Radosław Skóra's work entitled *Dream*⁷ was a metaphorical representation of the ultimate dream, which is death. Symbolic associations, reflecting states of matter, were to be evoked by appropriately selected, strongly contrasted sculptural materials: the ceramic head was to give the impression of softly sinking into a steel form, which, imitating fabric, was to absorb the portrayed man. The spatial painting by the author of this article, entitled *Colours of Emotions*⁸ was a series of three works depicting one emotion each: joy, sadness and anger. Each of the colours was created using a different substance, each one conveying different sensory experience and evoking different tactile associations. The paintings also invited the viewer to participate in the creation of an emotional image, which was revealed through painting, sifting and imprinting. The colours and textures were inspired by the ideas of ten-year-old children completely blind from birth about colours and emotions. It is important to emphasise that colour is a phenomenon that is not accessible through sensory perception, making the imagination of children who have never seen particularly fascinating in this context. Their associations between the colours of specific emotions and textures depicted in artworks are also intriguing. Additionally, it was interesting to explore whether these interpretations would be understandable and inspiring for other blind viewers. The compositions were therefore created through conversations with the children and their associations of colours with specific forms and phenomena (the works in the exhibition have an audio description, which can be listened to, as well as photographs of the work, see references in the footnote).

7 <https://www.umcs.pl/pl/radoslaw-skora,28558.htm>

8 <https://www.umcs.pl/pl/ewa-niestorowicz,28534.htm>

Table 1. Research into the perception of contemporary art – interview with a blind viewer

Question	1. Communication behaviour of the questioner		Observations
What does this work represent in your opinion?	<p><i>Colours of Emotions (work 1)</i></p> <p><i>I associate this work with the sea, the beach, the rocky seabed. That is, I have associations with holidays, sunshine and freedom. But these sharp stones limit it, this freedom. It means that something is coming to an end.</i></p>	<p><i>Dream (work 2)</i></p> <p><i>It seems to me to be a portrait of a man, fenced off from the world. Perhaps not of this world? He sounds, but super (the sheet metal that surrounds the portrait is extremely sonorous). We have a man in a box. He seems to be dead. I would say he lies in a sarcophagus. Maybe he collapsed from the plinth. His mouth is open, supposedly the jaws of dead people drop. It's an old man's face, I can tell by the muscular arrangements.</i></p>	<p>The subject carefully runs his fingers over the works finding individual elements. He locates the individual facial elements (artwork 2): nose, eyes, mouth, whole head and guesses that it is a portrait of a dead person. He concludes so on the basis of the arrangements of drooping muscles, open mouth, closed eyes.</p>
What title could you give to this work?	<p><i>The title is the end of the summer holidays.</i></p>	<p><i>Portrait of a dead man. Resting in peace. A metaphysical portrait-I think it will be the best.</i></p>	

2. Conceptualisation (after reading the audio description to the participant)		
	<i>Colours of Emotions</i>	<i>Dream</i>
What does this work represent in your opinion?	<p><i>So, the stones are anger. I associated them with something negative, with some kind of end, limitation. After listening to the audio description, I would change my own title, but also the title that the author of the work gave. In my opinion, these are not colours of emotions, because for a blind person this is difficult to imagine, but sounds of emotions. The first sound (in the first work) is the sound of sand being sifted, such calming, holiday joy. The rustling of small pebbles, pearls (in the second work depicting sadness), is indeed sadness, such sobbing. And those coarse, sharp stones (in the third work) that make a loud, unpleasant sound - that's anger. It all adds up. Only the sound of anger should definitely be louder. But the work is extremely creative and, despite the artist's different point of view, you can make your own interpretation. It stimulates the imagination.</i></p>	<p><i>I guessed it, a dead man.</i></p>
In your opinion, is the title the artist gave to this work appropriate?	<p><i>I would change the title to The Sound of Emotions.</i></p>	<p><i>A very good title, but mine was good too.</i></p>
Is the work legible?	<p><i>Audio description has a very strong effect on the imagination. For me it was all very down-to-earth, with the outside world, and maybe you could actually reach inside. The author's interpretation is cool, so original, it allows the imagination to spread its wings.</i></p>	<p><i>Yes, I had that association from the beginning. I have a very good sense of detail in this work.</i></p>

<p>Can elements of the work be better recognised before or after listening to the audio description? (Did the audio description help you to see the work under study?)</p>	<p><i>Now by touching the work and listening to the audio description you can imagine it much better. So yes, it is helpful. It has activated layers of imagination. Even though it is an abstract work, I guess that's what the artists call it, the elements of the work are easy to find anyway. But the description somehow directs the viewing of this work in a more attentive way. I can feel the textures very well, which are indeed associated with emotions.</i></p>	<p><i>In this case, it directed the viewing, as it was clear what to look for.</i></p>	
<p>How do you envisage the colours of this work?</p>	<p><i>I would associate joy more with the green colour, because everything is developing, blooming, giving hope for better, longer and warmer days. But as much as possible in the children's associations one can see the sun, which is yellow and holidays, and this is associated with joy and sand. And sadness, as much as I agree with the children's interpretation, I associate it with the grey of small pebbles, with tears. And anger, I also like this association of the children, with bigger, sharp stones. But for me, anger is such a big emotion, so the stones should be bigger. So I don't agree with the weight, but for a 10-year-old I think it's enough. I like that the stones are sharp. And I agree, anger is a dark red and black colour.</i></p>	<p><i>The colours from the description as much as possible make me think of the dead man. The grey face here is said to be blue. This agrees with my depiction of the dead man.</i> <i>The rust on the metal sarcophagus, also agrees. The rust is said to be red, some grey and some black but so scalloped. It agrees with the colours of emotions, with sadness, but such a deep sadness, in which there is also blackness. It even says deep blackness.</i></p>	
<p>Is the texture chosen appropriately?</p>	<p><i>Yes, as much as possible, although I would enlarge the stones of anger.</i></p>	<p><i>Yes, textures are very important, and here they are varied, which is fine. Although I would still add hair.</i></p>	

<p>Is the work tacti-ly pleasant?</p>	<p><i>Yes, and it comes from the fact that I really like the sea, the sand and the different weights under my fingers that you can sift through. So, the work is great tactilely, which is always nice.</i></p>	<p><i>Well, that's right, the face is unpleasant, but that's the way it should be in the case of a dead man. Here the skin is rough and dry. The metallic surfaces are cold and are also associated with unpleasantness. The author's name is also appropriate to the work, as he has depicted the skin masterfully.</i></p>	
<p>In what form would you like to see adapted works in museums/galleries? Is it the work itself, the audio description alone, or the work and the audio description?</p>	<p><i>Certainly, both the work and audio description</i></p>	<p><i>The artwork and the audio description are the best option because they complement each other.</i></p>	
<p>3. Aesthetic-emotional connotation</p>			
<p><i>Colours of Emotions</i></p>			
<p>Do you like the work or not? Why?</p>	<p><i>I like the work because it is not static, it is moving, these pebbles are moving. Moreover, when they are shifting, they make sounds that agree with the emotions that occurred in the work. The premise of the audio description really appealed to me.</i></p>	<p><i>I like it for the fact that it is very readable and wonderfully executed. This work is pure metaphysics.</i></p>	<p><i>Dream</i></p>

Interpretation of research

Research has shown that the description of a perceived work of art alters its viewing and influences the understanding, and readability of the artwork viewed (see also Szubielska et al., 2016). It influences the perception of both the content and formal layers of the work. In the content layer, under the influence of the audio description, the interpretation of the work is changed, according to the subject: the imagination spreads its wings. This can be clearly seen in the reception of the abstract work *Colours of Emotions*. In a figurative work, on the other hand, the subject looks for concrete elements, a reflection of reality. Certainly, audio description changes the way in which the studied work is viewed. By means of deduction, starting from the entirety of the work, the subject recognises its individual elements, according to the principle of ‘from the general to the specific’. According to the subject, the description directs the viewer to “look at the work more attentively ... because one knows (already) what to look for.” This is easier than creating a picture of the whole work, without the audio description, by induction, where the viewer has to create a picture of the whole in his or her mind on the basis of sequentially learned details. These results are in line with the views of perception researchers (see e.g. Szubielska et al., 2016), according to which descriptions guide the viewing of the work.

In addition, art perception studies show that it is easier for the subject to interpret figurative work than abstract work, due to the fact that he or she is a layperson in the field of art (see e.g. Furnham & Walker, 2001). Abstract art, when confronted with a viewer who is non-professional and unprepared to receive it (and such people are involved in this research), can cause perceptual and interpretative difficulties in the reception of a work in which, as Roman Ingarden (1970, p. 187) perversely observes, “nothing can be seen.” Audio descriptions provide invaluable help in this regard. They positively influence the understanding and appreciation of works in relation to abstract paintings (Swami, 2013), moreover, they influence the interest in the work (Szarkowska, Krejtz, Krejtz, & Duchowski, 2013).

In the present research, the viewer willingly changes his or her interpretation of the abstract work under the influence of the audio description. Moreover, the description causes this “stirring of the imagination” of the research participant, who, going further in his interpretation, turns inaccessible concepts into accessible ones. The representations of colour made by the blind viewer are extremely interesting. They belong to the representation of sensory inaccessible concepts, building up the category of substitute – surrogate – imaginations (Sękowska, 1982; Paplińska, 2008, Kucharczyk, 2015). These are culturally shaped, often triggering

a cognitive mechanism by analogy (Sękowska, 1982; Walthes, 2007). This phenomenon is able to approximate the referents of abstract concepts through knowledge built on the principle of sensory and mental comparisons (Niestorowicz, 2024). Zofia Sękowska (1982) recommends referring to the construction of sound when explaining colour.

Despite the theoretical references cited, the way in which the work is interpreted by the completely blind viewer is surprising. It turns out that the sound aspect of the work agrees with the subject's ideas about the sound of particular emotions, when sifting through the matter from which they are created. I think that the viewpoint of the subject has outlined new perspectives for the interpretation of this work, and the title, in the form of the metaphor *Sounds of Emotions*, is even more apt, as it introduces a situation of focusing on a different, because aural, aspect of the work, revealing at the same time an element of poetics.

It turns out that aesthetic connotation does not depend on tactile pleasure. A tactilely unpleasant work can also be liked, provided it is relevant to the presented content and legible, as in the case of the sculpture *Dream*. In addition, elements of the work's attractiveness are also important when the elements diverge from the static form, e.g. they can be displaced, and there are also elements that act on other senses (e.g. sound in the work *Colours of Emotions*). Very important, according to the subject, is textural variation, which increases the readability of the work.

In the research carried out as part of the *Touch of Art* project, categories can be identified that emerged during the interviews with visually impaired viewers. These are particularly drawn in the layers of content and creativity and emotionality. Radosław Skóra's sculpture *Dream* was categorised as the most metaphysical work and the painting *Colours of Emotions* as the most creative work in the exhibition.

Conclusions

The audio description, based on the curatorial descriptions of the work, is therefore a valuable aid, as researchers argue, viewers are provided with an appropriate interpretative key to perceive the work (Szubielska et al., 2016, p. 31). Audio description “triggers *top-down* processes,” helping to understand the “message that is the abstract image.”

Audio description influences at least two layers of a work of art:

- in the content layer, it causes a variety of interpretative possibilities to be shown, it reveals the artist's perspective, it contributes to awakening the imagination and searching for one's own solutions, especially in abstract works. It therefore prompts the viewer to reflect on

the work, to interpret it mentally and to discover its meanings, thereby increasing the understanding of the work;

- in the formal layer, on the other hand, it directs the viewer to look at the elements of the work and also to identify them, thus making reception easier, increasing the readability of the work.

The subject also emphasised the willingness of tactile viewing of works of art in museums and galleries, combined with audio description.

The third layer (creativity and emotionality) is related to the emotional components of evaluation. Positive evaluation of an artwork, according to the interview, depends on the content (here metaphysical or creatively framed), as well as on the attractiveness of the artwork, the sense of understanding of the artwork and its readability. This thesis is in line with the results of other studies of art perception (see e.g. Szubielska et al., 2016, p. 31), according to which, “the layperson’s sense of understanding of an abstract work may be related to the experience of the Aha! effect, which in turn results in a more positive evaluation of the artwork viewed.” Furthermore, a work of art that is perceived as sensory unpleasant is not necessarily perceived negatively on an aesthetic level, and can therefore appeal to the viewer. The situation of lack of tactile pleasure is therefore not necessarily valued aesthetically negatively.

It should be emphasised that the present research, being a case study, only sets the direction for research into the perception of art of blind people. However, the participants of the research, by learning the “language of art,” have the opportunity to broaden their perception of the areas of art they are able to experience (Golaszewska, 1986).

The perceptions and interpretations of both blind people and the creators of works of art can provide a platform for different perspectives on the perception and interpretation of works of art which interpenetrate, creating an interaction of mutual cognition and understanding.

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