

Jerzy Grotowski (1933–1999) was one of the most important theatre artists of the second half of the twentieth century and is still considered to be an experimenter who brought about fundamental changes in this artistic field. Paradoxically, he owed his international, almost global recognition not so much to the performances he directed (only three were presented outside of Poland, all for relatively small groups of viewers), but to his texts and books, as well as his public appearances and performances – both live and transmitted through various media. Revolutionizing theatre in the 1960s, leaving it in 1970 and then creating his own version of the performance art, Grotowski consistently developed a creative process, which resulted in a changing image of both himself as an artist and the art he practiced. Thanks to its effectiveness he was able to continue his research and receive the necessary support even when he was no longer creating any works that could be widely presented. This proves that Jerzy Grotowski's work and person can be seen as a flagship example of the strategies developed by neo-avant-garde art aimed at creating a strongly influential, colorful, complex and dynamically changing image of the charismatic and exceptional artist, which is the basis for particular ideas about contemporary art. Grotowski's achievements in the area of creating social images and attracting and sustaining collective interest constitute an important element of the particular landscape of contemporary art, which in many ways disturbed and abolished the divisions between the creator and the work, life and art.

The project "Performative strategies and reception of neo-avant-garde art image and persona creation – Jerzy Grotowski's case" aims to present in detail and analyze the ways in which the artist created and implemented the image of himself and his art, as well as the ways in which it was received. However, the image is seen here not as a "mask" or a tool of manipulation, but as the sort of creation that distinguishes contemporary art and makes it different from other fields and ways of life. By examining how Grotowski created and exhibited an image of himself in texts and books, language, public speaking, film, photography, radio, and specially invoked, unprecedented performative events, we want to uncover such aspects of contemporary art that are still important today, as more often than autonomous works, they create an image of the art itself and a multidimensional figure of the artist who is both the subject and object of creation.