

HERMANN NITSCH
Text by *Wieland Schmied*

Hermann Nitsch's work is definitely extraordinary if compared with the other contemporary artists' ones. It's almost difficult to me to consider him only an Austrian artist even though his work is based on the essential union between the man and the artist who is born on the hills in the Lower Austria. The consequence of his work had as a strong international echo as only a few other artists ever had. This is very important if we think that a Museum has been committed to the master on the Czech border, in Mistelbach village and in Italy in Napoli it will be open the *Museo Archivio Laboratorio per le Arti Contemporanee Hermann Nitsch*.

It's not by chance that two years ago at the Arco's art fair in Madrid Hermann Nitsch was elected as the most renowned still living artist. So I'd like to underline not only the circumstances where his art is born and the role that it has been playing since then. His poetry succeeded in crossing the border of the scandal dimension and being actual. The analogies among Mondrian's, Picasso's and Klee's works 50 years before Nitsch, based on their peculiar conception of the world, on the formal representation of subjects on canvas were the main point of reference to understand modern art but since that moment something has radically changed.

Canvas can't be anymore the main artist support. Contemporary art explores the possibilities of the space around, studies our sensations related to it, studies the inner beauty, transforms spectators into actors, and gives new code rules to communication which help to give a new definition to the art itself. Installations, happenings, performances, environments, some videos cover all that and are part of this new concept that belong to contemporary art. The conceptual representation of *Erweiterte Kunstbegriff* studied by Joseph Beuys doesn't move only in one direction. We should be always ready to follow him any time he will ask us to do it. Hermann Nitsch's *Orgies and Mysteries Theater* belongs and trusts this new idea of art.