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CONTEMPORARY TRENDS AND CHALLENGES IN VARIETY PERFORMING ARTS IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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This article examines contemporary trends in variety performing arts in the digital era, analyzing how social media, streaming platforms, and technologies impact perception, professional standards, and artistic values. Challenges related to commercialization, shallow audience engagement, and the transformation of the “star” concept are discussed.

Variety performing arts have evolved from early 20th-century theatrical concerts and radio shows to modern digital platforms. The 21st century has brought radical changes in how artists promote themselves and interact with audiences. While digital technologies offer unprecedented opportunities, they also challenge traditional aesthetic and artistic standards. This study analyzes how digitalization affects the quality of variety arts and identifies issues related to superficial audience engagement and commercialization. Particular attention is given to the contemporary concept of the “star,” where image and media presence often outweigh artistic achievement. The influence of global trends and online media on the formation of new audience preferences is highlighted, illustrating both opportunities and challenges for performers and viewers.

Modern platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram allow artists to promote their work independently. Successful cases show that visual presentation, interactivity, and publication frequency often matter more than technical skill or stage mastery. Information overload creates competition for attention rather than quality, shifting focus away from artistic craftsmanship. Studies indicate that performers with active social media presence gain more followers, but this does not always correlate with critical recognition. These technologies have lowered barriers to entry, enabling young performers to reach global audiences rapidly.

Short video formats and emphasis on visuals encourage a “clip-based” way of thinking among audiences. In-depth analysis of performances and artistic concepts is often neglected. New popularity criteria emerge: virality, likes, and comments



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override the depth of artistic value. This phenomenon affects young audiences' tastes and diminishes interest in traditional forms of variety performing arts. Educational programs and critical discussion forums are necessary to mitigate these effects and foster deeper appreciation for performing arts.

Modern variety performers are media personas, where image, charisma, and social media interaction often surpass artistic content. Fame is increasingly measured by followers and media mentions rather than professional mastery. This shift leads to a crisis of values and reduces the role of critical perception of art. Contemporary stars often prioritize visual branding and social engagement strategies over technical development. Globally, TikTok performers gained popularity through viral videos without formal training. In Russia, media-focused artists actively use social networks, yet their technical and artistic level often lags behind classically trained performers. Audience metrics confirm that online video views exceed attendance at traditional concerts. Examples include viral online challenges, digital-only performances, and influencer collaborations, illustrating how technology reshapes the variety arts landscape.

Variety performing arts are undergoing profound restructuring under digital influence. Digitalization opens new opportunities for self-expression but requires conscious preservation of artistic standards. The future of variety arts depends on balancing commercial interests, technological innovations, and artistic quality. Media literacy education, public programs, and critical audience engagement are essential for sustaining artistic value. Maintaining a dialogue between tradition and modernity is crucial for ensuring the cultural relevance and longevity of variety performing arts in the digital era.

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