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A Medium or a Person? – Conceptual Art Dilemmas Shown by a Few Examples

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My intention is to describe essential artistic strategies associated with conceptualism mainly by highlighting examples of artists associated with the Wrocław milieu, one of whose strategies included using so called new media, that in the 1960s and 1970s were photography, film and video. This strategy opened the concept of art to the influences of mass culture, everyday life, to the issues of broadening perception and manipulating information. Confrontations and contradictions between the use of new media and classic art forms were expressed by within the milieux and by the various generations of artists causing acute polemics in Poland in the mid-seventies. First I want to focus on the arguments supporting the analysis of photomechanical media, as an essential artistic problem. In Polish art, pioneers of such an awareness were Zbigniew Dłubak and Zbigniew Staniewski. Since 1970 it was expressed in the program of the Permafo group (Dłubak, Natalia LL, A. Lachowicz) and then within other artistic groups, including Foto-Medium-Art and by Jerzy Olek. They were in touch with similar tendencies in Łódź, Kraków and Warsaw. Photomedialism preferred an objective criteria of activities and an openness towards the rules of visuality and the laws of nature typical for documentary movies. On the other hand, it could not exist without pointing at the subject of the creator and its subjective conditions. So the criteria of media and personality interweaved in artistic practice, but also appeared as antagonistic. It was best seen in the work of Natalia LL, who pointed at the instrumental blindness of the photomedialists, even though she paid a lot of attention to media issues herself.

The reduction of the role of art objects in conceptual art on behalf of a person and his/her life activities required a search of the personality which often reached the broadest cultural references, associated with philosophy, religion or mythology. It is well illustrated by the artistic activity of Natalia LL and Andrzej Dudek-Dürer, anchored in conceptual art and constantly developing through the confrontation of corporality and mental power combined with the language and communication possibilities offered by media.

Ryszard W. Kluszczyński

Conceptualism and Interactive Art. The Analysis of Polish Examples

Contemporary interactive art, which is created through digital computer technologies, has its roots in the artistic trends of a new avant-garde that developed at the end of the 1950s. Conceptual art played a significant and specific role in this process along with kinetic art, action art, installation and electronic media art. It formed not only a deep logic and framework for neo avant-garde tendencies in art, but also a favourable context to develop participatory tendencies and to prepare the conceptual ground for interactive art. In this complex field of artistic genres of that time, many artworks created had features which allow us to consider them in relation to interactive art. Amongst them, we can find works of such artists as Wojciech Bruszewski and Józef Robakowski. Their numerous installations and objects from the seventies link conceptual and analytical attitudes with interactive characteristics.

Tomasz Załuski

KwieKulik and Conceptualism in the People's Republic of Poland (PRL). A Contribution to the Problem Analysis

Until now, the artistic practices of a duo named KwieKulik, founded between 1971-1987 by Przemysław Kwiek and Zofia Kulik, were placed outside of conceptual art. I am not presenting here a simple thesis that KwieKulik were conceptual artists, but I attempt to formulate an introductory question about the complex relationship in which they **situated** themselves in response to conceptualism. In one of the interviews, the artists claimed that they could never be 'pure conceptual artists'. I wonder, however,