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## The urban space in Łódź as an archive : Material traces of Construction in Process

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# JULIA SOWIŃSKA - HEIM

## THE URBAN SPACE IN ŁÓDŹ AS AN ARCHIVE. MATERIAL TRACES OF CONSTRUCTION IN PROCESS

At the end of October and at the beginning of November 1981 (26.10 – 15.11.1981) Łódź hosted the first *Construction in Process*. Although it was held outside the official structures and circle of art institutions, it became an important event and an independent artistic undertaking on the international scale. At that time eminent artists connected with the avant-garde artistic trends of the day then visited Łódź. In total, the catalogue mentioned over fifty-four names of such famous artists as Sol LeWitt, Richard Serra, Richard Nonas, Dennis Oppenheim or David Rabinowitch<sup>1</sup>. In most cases, their works had not been presented in Poland and the first opportunity to show them arose with the exhibition *Construction in Process*.

According to general assumptions of the originator, Ryszard Waśko, *Construction in Process* was meant to present the Polish audience with outstanding artists from the post-constructivist trend<sup>2</sup>. In the invitation from April 1980, the exhibition was given a subtitle specifying its concept: *Construction in Process – Art of the 70s*<sup>3</sup>. The main event, namely the international exhibition, was accompanied by an exhibition titled Falochron (Breakwater), which featured Polish art of the 70s – 80s, as well as many other undertakings and various types of activities such as: a conference, a performance, video shows, discussions, concerts and others<sup>4</sup>. Invitations to the exhibition, signed by Ryszard Waśko, were printed on the „letterhead paper” of a quasi-institution illegally created by him called the Archives of Contemporary Thought, invented for the need of the hour and to authenticate in the eyes of artists and curators from “the West” activities undertaken<sup>5</sup>.

The exhibition was mainly housed on the production floor of the Budrem factory at 37 PKWN Street (currently Dowborczyków Street). It was an extraordinary space, which diverged significantly from museum interiors. As the information leaflet read: the premises of an old factory gave the general impression of abandonment and a kind of natural shabbiness<sup>6</sup>. It is worth emphasizing that in those days it was a pioneering idea to use a factory building for the purposes of an exhibition<sup>7</sup>. In this extraordinary *entourage*, artists who came to Łódź from all around the world carried out their projects. Most of the works were created especially “for Łódź”; many of them were installed or simply created directly on the spot in relation to the existing context. Since *Construction in Process* was a complex event going beyond the frames of an “exhibition”, it was largely based on improvisation and spontaneous activities<sup>8</sup>. According to Ryszard Waśko, “It was sort of an exhibition developing in time”<sup>9</sup>. Visitors were not only able to see the works, but also to participate (passively or actively) in the process of “coming to life”. What was very important was the idea of cooperation, linking the artistic and non-artistic community. From the beginning, *Construction in Process* was designed as an artistic and social event<sup>10</sup>. Those involved included people from artistic circles as well as “students, journalists, critics, labourers, passers-by,

audience, poets (...), writers, bar owners (...), researchers, local government activists and government officials and a multitude of volunteers coming from the local community"<sup>11</sup>. As Ryszard Waśko recollects: "It was truly fantastic. Almost the whole city got engaged in the organization of CONSTRUCTION IN PROCESS and sometimes it seemed that Łódź lived and breathed the exhibition, modern art"<sup>12</sup>.

Striving to preserve independence unhindered by official institutions and communist authorities and at the same time, requiring the support of an outside organization, the organizer asked the Łódź branch of the trade union Solidarity to take the exhibition under its wing and help in the undertaking. Thus, a wider social and political context of opposition against the regime's dictatorship was additionally supported. At the opening of the exhibition, the head of Łódź Solidarity emphasized that „In our times it is particularly important for art not to be locked behind museum walls but to be close to man, informing his world view, his way of thinking"<sup>13</sup>. As the curators of the exhibition *Construction in Process 1981 – The Community that Came?* organized in 2011 in Łódź Art Museum, Aleksandra Jach and Anna Saciuk - Gąsowska remarked, such an undertaking as *Construction in Process* "was possible because of its ephemeral and from today's perspective, unobvious yet enticing (...), alliance: artists with workers and "Solidarity" activists with local government, who agreed to collaborate for the common goal"<sup>14</sup>.

It might have been due to the atmosphere of artistic community and social solidarity that numerous artists decided to hand over their works as gifts to the citizens of Łódź. The collection was given to the Independent and Self-governing Trade Union Solidarity as "a symbolic gesture, a sign of tribute to this social movement"<sup>15</sup>. In the 80's the collection was placed as a deposit in Łódź Art Museum and in 2005 it became the property of the museum.

At the beginning, the exhibition was scheduled to last until April 1982. It was also meant to be a "touring" exhibition and to be shown in different Polish cities: in Wrocław, Gdańsk, Warsaw, Lublin and Bydgoszcz. Yet, implementation of this plan proved impossible, mainly because of the political situation and introduction of martial law in December 1981<sup>16</sup>. However, *Construction in Process* was later continued. An international artistic event under the same title was organized in the following years: 1985 in Munich, 1995 in Israel, 1998 in Melbourne and in 2000 in Bydgoszcz. *Construction in Process* also came back to Łódź twice: in 1990 and in 1993.

Writing about the first edition of *Construction in Process*, Anda Rottenberg bitterly noted that as it was impossible for the works created in Łódź by world-famous artists to be left in the spaces where they had been made, there was a risk that the "living art of daily life would turn into a museum exhibit"<sup>17</sup>, without the context of the original place and now in the museum interior.

The sparse material traces of activities associated with *Construction in Process* which have directly survived in Łódź public space, seem all the more precious. Those created in the urban space are particularly interesting. Artistic interventions and activities frequently took place outside the buildings. Traces that have remained enrich the public space and at the same time, testify to the events from the past. Therefore, Łódź can be perceived as a sort of archive of pieces of art and cultural artefacts in the public space. The "archival collection" is made up of works created during the following Łódź editions of *Construction in Process*.

One unusual piece of evidence of the ideas associated with *Construction in Process* is a spatial composition by Henryk Stażewski, placed in the immediate vicinity of the Strzebiński Academy of Fine Arts Łódź (which was then named the State School of Art). Although it was only unveiled on 27 October 1982, which was a year after the exhibition, Ryszard Waśko emphasized that the idea of placing the sculpture in Łódź had arisen in 1981 during the preparations for *Construction in Process*. In order to stress the relationship with the Polish avant-garde tradition, Waśko asked Henryk Stażewski, a former member of the famous Łódź avant-garde group a.r. (that existed from 1929-1936) to consent to placing one of his works in the public space. He agreed to enlarge one model of a spatial composition from the collection in the Łódź Art Museum. The exhibition agenda included an announcement for unveiling the sculpture by Henryk Stażewski near the State School of Art in Łódź scheduled for the middle of November<sup>18</sup>. Unfortunately, due to a problem with obtaining appropriate material, which was typical for the reality of the Polish People's Republic, the Transformer and Traction Apparatus Factory ELTA failed to produce the sculpture on time<sup>19</sup>. Interestingly, ELTA manufactured this untypical 7-metre construction later than expected, yet at no charge.

Eighty-year-old Henryk Stażewski, bound up with the pre-war avant-garde, was regarded as an important figure by the organizers of *Construction in Process*. A significant reference point was a non-institutionalized initiative undertaken by the artist from the a.r. group, who thanks to personal contacts, managed to build up an international collection of modern art and then, in the form of a deposit made to Łódź Art Museum in 1931, to show it to the wider public in Łódź<sup>20</sup>. As in the interwar period, an international network based on cooperation by contemporary artists was established in 1981, despite numerous difficulties and right before the announcement of martial law. Also important were references



Tom Bills, *Lodz Poland*, 1990, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Gene Flores, *Bells sculpture for Lodz / Gathering*, 1991, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Spatial composition by Henryk Stażewski, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Ilan Averbuch, *Strongman*, 1990, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.

to the social context of the artistic activities. As Anda Rottenberg wrote in 1984 “The speciality of Łódź is the cooperation between artist and society, which is also an intentional reference to Strzemiński’s program from 1934”<sup>21</sup>.

After the political transformation in 1989 and the first free election in post-war Poland, which was won by “Solidarity”, an idea and opportunity arose to organize *Construction in Process* again. In 1989 the International Artists’ Museum, an unconventional “museum without frontiers” based on a network of contacts and the shared activities of artists from different parts of the world, was opened. The so-called Solidarity collection, together with the works handed over after the new Łódź edition of *Construction in Process* was going to become a fundamental part of the museum’s collection<sup>22</sup>. The new museum, “an art centre”, was going to have its seat in a former factory on PKWN Street, which meant reviving an unrealized idea from 1981<sup>23</sup>.

An important idea associated with the undertaking *Construction in Process – Back in Lodz* from 1990 was to encompass the whole city area with artistic activities. As it was emphasized in the project published by the Construction in Process Association<sup>24</sup>: CONSTRUCTION IN PROCESS – Back in Lodz was not a kind of museum space, an academy, a workshop or an educational workplace, but rather an open and living space created for artistic activities. It should be a bustling “workplace”, the area of an unending process of creation and the development of ideas within a changing social context. That is why already existing “pieces of art” could not be presented during this event<sup>25</sup>. Angelika Stepken described these events as: “the largest art-happening in any Eastern European nation in the post-war era”<sup>26</sup>. One condition for participating in *Construction in process – Back in Lodz* was leaving created objects and designs where they were made at least until the end of the exhibition<sup>27</sup>. Some of them remained in the urban space for longer.

This is what happened with a sculpture by Tom Bills titled *Lodz Poland*<sup>28</sup>. It was made in the area near the Łódź Academy of Fine Arts, in the vicinity of the spatial composition by Henryk Stażewski. Tom Bills is a well-known American artist, a professor from Yale University. He took part in a few editions of *Construction in Process*, both in Munich (1985) and in Melbourne (1998) as well as in Bydgoszcz (2000). He also participated in both Łódź *Construction in Process* events that were held in the 90’s.

His sculpture for Łódź from 1990 is a grey concrete monolith, almost 5 metres high and over three metres wide<sup>29</sup>. It is a symmetrical abstract form, whose important elements are both smooth concrete surfaces and “empty” cut out geometrical forms. What is important is the idea of exerting influence by both form and space. Under the influence of a similar concept, Tom Bills has made a sculpture titled *Boat House* for the William Paterson University of New Jersey, which owns a significant collection of public sculptures. David Shapiro has described Tom Bills’ sculptures as follows: “Tom Bills’ pieces are excruciatingly economic. A simple symmetry reigns, but everything counts and is significant: the thickness of the piece, the little bits of negative space that become enormous, the monumentalism and lack of mere business, and the implication that something of immense gravity has to be confronted in the everyday. (...) Here, everything is laid bare, and yet there is an uncontrollable grace in these large and unhurried forms. This is abstract sculpture satisfying in its dignity”<sup>30</sup>. Tom Bills’ sculpture is one of the few material traces of *Construction in Process* that have remained in the place of creation until today. Yet, every now and then it “interacts with the surroundings” and undergoes a temporary metamorphoses, being covered in different colours. At the moment, the largest surface is covered in peeling red paint, under which there are white patches of a bottom layer.

As part of activities undertaken during *Construction in Process*, works were created in many parts of Łódź of different character. As Sue Cramer emphasized, it is hard to imagine an international exhibition which would be comparable to this event, no matter where it would take place: in the United States, Europe or Australia with possible access to so many places in the city<sup>31</sup>. Interestingly, artists were allowed into Łódź museums whose profile was not associated with avant-garde art. For instance, over ten works were created in the Museum of History of the City of Lodz (currently the Museum of the City of Lodz). Some of them were made in the garden adjacent to the former palace of Izrael Poznański. Nowadays we can still see there a sculpture by Ilan Averbuch, who was born in Israel and has been working mainly in the USA. He is an author of numerous monumental sculptures placed in the public space in different parts of the world, such as Tel Aviv, Calcutta, Berlin and in many American cities like Portland, Denver, New York or Phoenix. As Averbuch emphasizes: “I work a lot on the space, in the physical and the spiritual sense and of course, also in the personal sense, between the cultures. The memories I plant in my work are memories from here together with the process they have undergone there”<sup>32</sup>. What is important for him is the context of the place and reference to the society for whom the work is created. His Łódź sculpture is titled *Strongmen*. It is made of wood, one of the materials willingly used by the artist, apart from stone, glass and metal. Averbuch also frequently uses recycled materials. The *Strongmen* sculpture perfectly matches the greenery of the garden and although it speaks a totally different language than the

eclectic facades of the palace, it holds a peaceful dialogue with the surroundings. As the artist declares, his sculptures constitute: “a dialogue between the intimate and the monumental. They are monumental, but with a question mark”<sup>33</sup>.

The sculpture is a part of so-called Sculpture Avenue<sup>34</sup> established in the palace garden of Izrael Poznański and being an outdoor exhibition of various pieces of sculpture. It is also where a sculpture created during *Construction in Process* in 1991 by Tadashi Hashimoto could be seen for a long time. Despite efforts by employees of the Museum of the City of Lodz, in 2009 the sculpture became damaged under the influence of long-term exposure to atmospheric conditions. Hashimoto is a Japanese artist eagerly working in the public space. He has attached importance to the energy of a place/ radiating from a place. What is considerably significant about *One and Many*<sup>35</sup> which was made for Łódź, is not only the form, but also its interaction with the sunlight. The sculpture’s shadow gave it a new dimension going beyond three-dimensional physicality. The artist used mainly wood, which is one of his favourite materials, apart from steel and engineered stone. Hashimoto’s sculptures, which are based on geometrical forms, consider and combine the issues of space, light, movement and gravity. The sculpture made for Łódź had the form of an open circle placed vertically. It was the form that the author frequently used at the early stage of his artistic work. Hashimoto wrote about his Łódź sculpture: “The reading of these works foretold both change and harmony. The sculpture, *One and Many* once sited at the Museum of History in Lodz, quietly appeared as a hopeful metaphor. For many, it had the effect of celebrating the act of people gathering and starting anew in the Poland of 1990”<sup>36</sup>. Unfortunately, despite efforts made by Museum’s employees, the wooden sculpture was destroyed. Then, under the influence of external factors, its reconstruction also fell into ruin.

Something different happened to the bas-relief sculptures made and given to Łódź by an outstanding Canadian artist, David Rabinowitch. Rabinowitch is a famous and respected artist and his works are stored, among others, in the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In 1990 he created his works in the stylish staircase of the Museum of the City of Lodz. The consent to placing such huge pieces by the avant-garde author in the historic building required great courage and openness. In his statements, David Rabinowitch emphasized that creating a permanent piece of art in a historic space is a unique event, which could have taken place nowhere but in Łódź<sup>37</sup>. Two minimalist compositions of a large format with concentrically composed circles covering neighbouring walls, entered into an interesting dialogue between modern art and the past of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Łódź. According to the idea, the work was going to be a “sculpture – monument”, a kind of a tribute to the society of Łódź, which had overcome communism and whose engagement had resulted in the organization of an international exhibition of modern art in 1981. The context of a historically important place was significant. Here the works were accessible to the audience for twenty-three years. In 2013, the authorities from the Museum of the City of Lodz decided to cover the Rabinowitch’s works with wooden panelling and restore the place to its original, historic character. However, they were not destroyed, just fully hidden from the sight of the visitors. The official web page of the Museum reads, “In historic buildings the past and present often overlap. The Museum of the City of Łódź also contains traces of events that have happened here, shaped the identity of the place and become an inseparable part. A particular significance should be attributed to the international exhibition of an unusual character, *Construction in Process*”<sup>38</sup>. Thus, a problem of the ambivalent attitude to and the look of the material traces of the event, seem evident.

Another artist whose activities undertaken within *Construction in Process* from 1990 have left a trace in Łódź was an American, Peter Downsborough. One of his works was created in front of the Museum of Cinematography in Łódź, while another one, in the form of a mural, appeared on the building at 105 Kilińskiego Street. Unfortunately, both of them have undergone complete destruction, which totally deformed the initial effect. The remains of the structure made from metal poles on Victory Square is nowadays used by the museum’s employees as a poster frame and the mural “is disappearing” not so much under the influence of human activity, but more under the influence of time. Originally, the end wall of the building was painted white and against this background Peter Downsborough placed his characteristic black elements of letters creating single words: stały [stable], jak [how], tak [yes] etc. as well as horizontal and vertical lines. As time went by, the white paint peeled off from the building, uncovering elements of the former advertisement of a carpet factory, Dywilan, which was hidden underneath. Nowadays, in the collage made by layers from various periods and modern billboards, only some remains of the words and lines can be found. The work is one of Peter Downsborough’s artistic activities confronting the problem of placement in a space and its activation. Notices introduced into them do not follow programmed sequences, but create various verbal and spatial contexts. Thanks to a strongly reduced means, the artist obtains multi-dimensional space.

The fate of the sculpture known in Łódź as *Bells sculpture for Lodz*<sup>39</sup>, made by American artist Gene Flores, also hangs in the balance. Interestingly, the sculpture bears the totally different name,



Richard Nonas, *Milczący Sojusznik*, 1991, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Buky Schwartz, *Sculpting the Spectator*, 1993, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Emilie Benes - Brzeziński, *Maple Cascade*, 1993, Archive photograph by Lech Czolnowski, source: >>Muzeum Artystów<< międzynarodowa prowizoryczna wspólnota artystyczna Łódź, Łódź 1996.



Emilie Benes - Brzeziński, *Maple Cascade*, 1993, Archive photograph by Lech Czolnowski, source: >>Muzeum Artystów<< międzynarodowa prowizoryczna wspólnota artystyczna Łódź, Łódź 1996.

*Gathering*, on the artist's web page<sup>40</sup>, which is not without significance for its reception. Flores recollects the process of creating the work. Elements of what he calls a "kinetic sculpture" were produced in one of the post-communist factories, which was a place "with obsolete tools but with a spirit big enough for this monumental sculpture"<sup>41</sup>. This monumental steel work (20 x 24 x 12 feet) was completed in 1991 and placed at the crossroads of Kościuszko and Piłsudski Streets.

In 2007 the fate of Gene Flores' sculpture went up in the air, when a decision was made to build the Hilton Hotel in its immediate vicinity. Although construction works have not been initiated, certain preparatory actions have been taken and for this purpose the area has been secured with a fence. Unfortunately, it appeared that the fence was meant to pass through the middle of the sculpture, dividing it in two. The problem arose as a result of a decision by the district authorities to sell the plot on which the sculpture was partially placed. There has been a concept to make the investor move the work to a different place, e.g. near EC1<sup>42</sup>. Yet, so far the sculpture has remained in its original location.

The fate of the sculpture made by a New York artist, Richard Nonas, for *Construction in Process - Back in Lodz* was different. Nonas was also a very active and involved participant of *Construction in Process* in 1981. During the 1990 edition he made a massive steel sculpture titled *Silent Sharer*, which in February 1991 was installed in Arthur Rubinstein Passage, within immediate vicinity to the most elegant street of the city, Piotrkowska.

In the 90's, an "attack" on *Silent Sharer* evoked wide interest in Łódź. Several dozen pieces of steel appeared too tempting for local scrap collectors, who moved the sculpture away and sold it to a scrapyard. The case ended up in a court hearing and Richard Nonas' work was returned to its original place. However, only a few people kept track of the fate of the sculpture and a story about an utterly destroyed work by an American artist has almost passed into legend<sup>43</sup>.

Meanwhile, in 2006, *Silent Sharer* was moved to the Sculpture Park laid out in Manufaktura in the same year. A few other works created in the urban space after *Construction in Process* have also been moved there. According to a declaration by the contemporary Marketing and Promotion Manager of Manufaktura, a huge trade and entertainment centre established in the converted buildings of Izrael Poznański's former factory, the sculptures would be cared for and have the opportunity to "speak to a larger group of people". However, the initiative may raise doubts, first of all due to the fact that the pieces of art have been deprived of their original context, which is so important for many artists. One

of them is Richard Nonas, who always creates “in” and “for” a particular space<sup>44</sup>. Nowadays, *Silent Sharer* is located in a space with a totally different character, between a carpark and the side elevation of a main retail building. The sculpture is regarded as one of the most eminent traces of artistic activities undertaken during *Construction in Process*<sup>45</sup>, yet it has not even been provided with the smallest piece of information about its author, time of creation, etc. It remains completely anonymous in the commercial space.

The Sculpture Park is also where the work by Buky Schwartz *Sculpting the Spectator*<sup>46</sup> resides. It was created during *Construction in Process – my home is your home*, organized in Łódź in 1993. The title of that edition directly referred both to hospitality and warm reception and in a wider sense, to the opening of borders and integration across divisions<sup>47</sup>. The event was attended by 140 artists from 40 countries<sup>48</sup>. The work by Buky Schwartz took the form of an installation placed in six spots in Łódź<sup>49</sup>. Two parts: one from Piłsudski Street, placed in front of the Marshal Office, and the second from Piotrkowska Street, have also been moved to the premises of Manufaktura. They are slightly better displayed than the artistic work by Richard Nonas, since they have been given more space within the “market” of Manufaktura, near the representative historic gate, which used to lead to Izrael Poznański’s factory. Buky Schwartz, who died in 2009, was born in Israel but lived firstly in Great Britain and then in the USA. He created a lot of videoconstructions, installations and sculptures, which activated the audience. The installation for Łódź made of raw steel also provokes the audience to interact with it. At the top of some stairs there is a small plinth and a board with a handwritten notice: THE OBSERVER IS A SCULPTURE FACING ANOTHER PERSON. Buky Schwartz’s works are stored in many renowned museums and galleries, such as the Guggenheim Museum and the Whitney Museum in New York and the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington.

On the premises of Manufaktura, right next to the work by Richard Nonas, there resides an installation by Emilie Benes-Brzeziński. Yet, it was not created during *Construction in Process – my home is your home*, but was made by the artist on the premises of Łódź Manufaktura in 2006 as a part of the Łódź Biennale. The sculpture made during *Construction in Process* titled *Maple Cascade*<sup>50</sup>, was placed in the park near Grohman’s Palace. It was then moved to a villa at 14 Tylna Street, belonging previously to the family of the Łódź factory owner, Grohman, which housed the Artists’ Museum from 1991. When the user changed, the sculpture was destroyed. The work that is currently placed on the premises of Manufaktura gives some idea about the sculpture from 1993, since both of them are an inherent part of a series of work consisting of wooden elements processed in a way that is typical of the artist. The form correlates with the space and the wood is marked with sharp tools, making cuts – scars. They are a trace of a peculiar dialogue between nature and the creator. The material that Emilie Benes-Brzeziński mainly uses in her works is wood, often processed with chain saws, a chisel or sometimes with an axe. As she emphasizes: “As I carve the trunk, I retain the essential outline and gesture of the tree, uncovering within its form a symbol of its history. The final iconic shapes enshrine this existential cycle and act as metaphors of human experience as well”<sup>51</sup>. The artist’s sculptures can be found in the public space of numerous cities across the world. Their prestige and recognition were confirmed when the work from 1998, *White Oak Verticals* (belonging to the same cycle of sculptures as the Łódź work) was awarded the First Prize at the 2003 Florence Biennale. Unfortunately, the Łódź work from 1993 was destroyed, while the one that can be found on the premises of Manufaktura has been placed in quite an inconvenient and non-representative spot in direct vicinity of the carpark. Right next to the sculpture there are concrete posts to protect it from being run over by cars.

It is worth mentioning that Emilie Berens-Brzeziński is a niece of the former Czechoslovakian president, Edwarda Benesz, and a wife of Zbigniew Brzeziński, an adviser to President Jim Carter for the United States national security.

A significant trace of *Construction in Process* from 1993 is an artistic work by Sol LeWitt. It was raised in the garden adjacent to the villa at 14 Tylna Street as a gift to the Artists’ Museum. It has been slightly luckier and has remained in the place where it was created until these days.

Sol LeWitt, a world-famous American conceptual artist was associated *with Construction in Process* from the very beginning. During the first edition in 1981, he created a composition consisting of six white geometrical figures made of chalk against a black background, on the wall of a former factory in PKWN Street. The number of figures corresponded with the number of Polish cities that were originally going to host *Construction in Process*. In 1990, an important act during *Construction in Process - Back in Lodz* was the reconstruction of this minimalist composition and thereby a return to the factory space in PKWN Street. This constituted a reference to significant artistic events from nine years earlier and provided an artistic and symbolic connection between the times of Solidarity and the post-communist era. Interestingly, the work was this time created in the operating factory hall.

Earlier the organizers of *Construction in Process* had tried hard to turn the factory in PKWN

Street, having been a silent witness to past events, into the seat of the Artists' Museum<sup>52</sup>. However, they were not successful and after a few address changes the Museum had settled down in a building at 14 Tylna Street. This is where Sol LeWitt's work was created in 1993. The artist created a white brick structure for the new place. This artistic work is an inherent part of one trend that is characteristic of the artist, within which he created geometric structures in the form of a pyramid made of geometric progressions.

In the interview given by Sol LeWitt to *Bom Magazine*, the artist emphasized that he consciously refrains from calling his three-dimensional works "sculptures", but calls them structures, due to his way of thinking resulting more from the history of architecture than from sculpture<sup>53</sup>. Fortunately, the work in Łódź by Sol LeWitt has not been destroyed, but it is not easy to see it, since at the moment the villa at 14 Tylna Street houses the Łódź District Chamber of Legal Advisors.

As shown by the fate of the majority, the few works connected with the following editions of *Construction in Process* which have survived in the urban space, this "external" archive of international artists' achievements, are still exposed to destruction and oblivion. The archive is also dispersed and hidden in different corners of Łódź public space. However, according to the organizers' assumptions, the artistic activities undertaken as part of *Construction in Process* related to the particular context of a place or time. They "were frequently improvised only for the moment" and were in the character of fleeting and temporary activities. There was no "overriding goal to create an object which would be commonly perceived as an exhibition piece of art; what is important here is the process of being – an artist's existence in a particular environment"<sup>54</sup>. Despite the assumed transitory quality of most of the artistic activities undertaken, the works that have remained should be properly cared for and their significance and context in which they were created should be remembered. These are material traces of important events from the past that should not be forgotten.

To sum up, we may quote the words of Richard Nonas:

"... 1981? It's not so much 1981 that I want to talk about, I wanna talk to you about another world, a completely different world – a world in which art had a meaning that had nothing to do with what art has for us, here – now. A place where art really was important – where it really made a difference – where it really defined with how people dealt with all the difficulties of their lives. It had nothing to do with career, it had nothing to do with individual people's lives, it had nothing to do with galleries and other artists. It had to do with how to figure out how to live in the world, that was impossible to live in. And that's what this show was about. That's what CONSTRUCTION IN PROCESS is about. And all of that is being forgotten! And it's our challenge to try to maintain that memory. Everything changes. Everything changes. But some changes maintain a memory, and other changes don't maintain a memory. And it's our choice, whether we chose to remember – what the beginning of this event – this, this series of events, means"<sup>55</sup>.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> *Construction in Process: Oct. 26 - Nov. 15, 1981, 37 PKWN Street, Lodz, Poland* (New York: Thousand Secretaries Press, 1982), accessed 02.02.2015, <http://www.digitizing-ideas.hr/pl/wpis/21040>. Exh. Cat.
- <sup>2</sup> Inspiration and a direct incentive to organize *Construction in Process* was the London exhibition *Pier + Ocean* from 1980. Ryszard Waśko mentioned that during the exhibition he had thought that he needed to organize an exhibition in Poland presenting the most important artistic achievements of the 70s, yet at the same time, presenting the very process of creating an object.
- <sup>3</sup> Ryszard Waśko, no article title, in *Wydawnictwo Grupy Twórczej: Litera*, „Konstrukcja w procesie,” no issue numer, październik (1981): 4.
- <sup>4</sup> „Construction in Process,” *Solidarność Ziemi Łódzkiej: wydanie specjalne*, no. 23 (1981): 1. Flyer.
- <sup>5</sup> „Muzeum Artystów”: *międzynarodowa prowizoryczna wspólnota artystyczna, Łódź. The Artists' Museum: international provisional artist's community, Łódź*, ed. Komitet Wykonawczy Muzeum Artystów (Łódź: Muzeum Artystów, 1996), 15.
- <sup>6</sup> An interview with Ryszard Waśko, the main curator of the exhibition, in: *Solidarność Ziemi Łódzkiej...*, 23 (1981): 1.
- <sup>7</sup> Joanna Szupińska-Myers points at the exhibition of Robert Morris 9 at *Castelli* from 1968 as an earlier example. Joanna Szupińska - Myers, “From Kunsthale to Factory,” in *Konstrukcja w procesie 1981 - wspólnota, która nadeszła? Construction in process 1981 - the community that came?* eds. Aleksandra Jach, Anna Saciuk - Gąsowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2012), 143.
- <sup>8</sup> It is well illustrated in Tak Imur's recollections, in: “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 48.
- <sup>9</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 48. [translated by author].
- <sup>10</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 7.
- <sup>11</sup> Maciej Cholewiński, „Konstrukcja w procesie & Muzeum artystów,” *Sztuka i Dokumentacja*, no. 4 (2011): 101 – 102. [translated by author].
- <sup>12</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 22. [translated by author].
- <sup>13</sup> “Opening Statement at »Construction in Process« Andrzej Słowik Chairman of Lodz Solidarity, October 26, 1981,” in *Construction in Process, Oct. 26 - Nov. 15, 1981, 37 PKWN Street ...*, 13.
- <sup>14</sup> Aleksandra Jach, Anna Saciuk - Gąsowska, “Thirty Years Later,” in *Konstrukcja w procesie 1981 - wspólnota, która nadeszła?...*, 70.
- <sup>15</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 70. [translated by author].
- <sup>16</sup> Ryszard Waśko, no article title, in *Konstrukcja w procesie...*
- <sup>17</sup> Anda Rottenberg, “Konstrukcja w procesie. 1981,” in Anda Rottenberg, *Prze-ciąg. Teksty o sztuce polskiej lat 80* (Warszawa: Fundacja Open Art Project, 2009), 209. [translated by author].
- <sup>18</sup> *Solidarność Ziemi Łódzkiej...*, 1.
- <sup>19</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 9.
- <sup>20</sup> *Solidarność Ziemi Łódzkiej...*, 2.
- <sup>21</sup> Anda Rottenberg, “Factory and environs,” *Cahier*, no. 2/3 (1984), in “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 92. [translated by author].
- <sup>22</sup> Marek Koprowski, “Konstrukcja konfliktu,” *Odgłosy*, no. 51 (1989): 11.
- <sup>23</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 148.
- <sup>24</sup> Formed in 1989.
- <sup>25</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 167. [translated by author].
- <sup>26</sup> Angelika Stepken, “Letter from Lodz,” *Arts Magazine*, March (1991): 108.
- <sup>27</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 167.
- <sup>28</sup> Such a title was given on the page devoted to the artist The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, accessed 03.02.2015, [http://www.pkf-imagecollection.org/artist/Tom\\_Bills/works/8223/#!8223](http://www.pkf-imagecollection.org/artist/Tom_Bills/works/8223/#!8223).
- <sup>29</sup> As The Pollock-Krasner Foundation declares the precise sculpture's dimensions are as follows: 16 x 10 x 4 feet, “Tom Bills,” accessed 20.02.2015, [http://www.pkf-imagecollection.org/artist/Tom\\_Bills/works/8223/#!8223](http://www.pkf-imagecollection.org/artist/Tom_Bills/works/8223/#!8223).
- <sup>30</sup> David Shapiro, “Sculpture on Campus – Bills,” accessed 24.03.2014, <http://www.wpunj.edu/coac/gallery/sculpturecollection-bills.dot>.
- <sup>31</sup> Sue Cramer, “Report From Poland, Back to the Future,” *Art in America*, March (1991): 67.
- <sup>32</sup> The Open Museum Omer, “The Local and the Universal,” accessed 01.02.2015, [http://www.omuseums.org.il/eng/mmosgc\\_1/lilan\\_Averbuch's](http://www.omuseums.org.il/eng/mmosgc_1/lilan_Averbuch's).
- <sup>33</sup> The Open Museum Omer, “The Local and the Universal,” accessed 01.02.2015, [http://www.omuseums.org.il/eng/mmosgc\\_1/lilan\\_Averbuch's](http://www.omuseums.org.il/eng/mmosgc_1/lilan_Averbuch's).
- <sup>34</sup> So-called Sculpture Avenue in the Museum of the City of Lodz was officially opened only in 2000.
- <sup>35</sup> This is the title given by the author on his official web page: <http://tadashi-hashimoto-sculpture.tumblr.com/large-scale%20sculpture>; while on the page of the Museum of the City of Lodz the work is titled *Sun*.
- <sup>36</sup> Tadashi Hashimoto, “Sculpture,” accessed 23.02.2015, <http://tadashi-hashimoto-sculpture.tumblr.com/large-scale%20sculpture>.
- <sup>37</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 179-181.
- <sup>38</sup> Marta Skłodowska, „Dawid Rabinowitch, *Bez tytułu*,” accessed 01.04.2014, <http://www.muzeum-lodz.pl/pl/zbiory/obiekty-godnia/561-david-rabinowitch-bez-tytuu>.
- <sup>39</sup> „Construction in Process III, 1990, Lodz, Poland,” accessed 10.02.2015, <http://www.wschodnia.pl/Konstrukcja/html/pictures3.htm>; Aleksandra Hac, „Połowa słynnej łódzkiej rzeźby stoi na działce Hiltona,” *Gazeta Wyborcza - Łódź*, no. 94 (2010): 2; Aleksandra Hac, „Wielki ptak zamiast Hiltona,” *Gazeta Wyborcza - Łódź*, no. 185 (2010): 2.
- <sup>40</sup> Flores - studio, accessed 05.02.2015, [http://www.floresstudio.com/Pages/Gather/pub\\_gather.htm](http://www.floresstudio.com/Pages/Gather/pub_gather.htm).
- <sup>41</sup> Flores - studio, accessed 05.02.2015, [http://www.floresstudio.com/Pages/Gather/pub\\_gather.htm](http://www.floresstudio.com/Pages/Gather/pub_gather.htm).
- <sup>42</sup> Aleksandra Hac, “Potowa słynnej...”, 2.
- <sup>43</sup> Bianka Mikołajewska, “Arcydzieło zniszczenia,” *Polityka*, no. 28 (2001): 32-33; Piotr Sarzyński, *Wrzask w przestrzemi. Dlaczego w Polsce jest tak brzydko* (Warszawa: Polityka Spółdzielnia Pracy, 2012), 74.
- <sup>44</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 243.
- <sup>45</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 268.
- <sup>46</sup> Buky Schwartz, „Biography,” accessed 16.03.2015, <http://www.bukyschwartz.com/biography-2/>.
- <sup>47</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 470.
- <sup>48</sup> „Construction in Process IV 1993, Lodz, Poland. My home is your home,” accessed 15.02.2015, <http://www.wschodnia.pl/Konstrukcja/html/pictures4.htm>.
- <sup>49</sup> *Facing oneself* - such a title was given on the official web page. “Construction in Process IV 1993, Lodz, Poland. My home is your home,” accessed 14.02.2015, <http://www.wschodnia.pl/Konstrukcja/html/pictures4.htm>.
- <sup>50</sup> Emilie Benes – Brzeziński, “Throw back Thursday to a 1993 piece, Maple Cascade,” accessed 20.02.2015, <http://www.thelureoftheforest.com/brzezinski-blog/>.
- <sup>51</sup> Emilie Benes – Brzeziński, no article title, accessed 20.02.2015, <http://brzezinski.book.art.pl/index.php/pl/8-emilie-benes-brzezinski>.
- <sup>52</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 245.
- <sup>53</sup> Saul Ostrow, “Sol LeWitt,” in *Bomb* 85 (Fall 2003), accessed 12.02.2015, <http://bombmagazine.org/article/2583/sol-lewitt>.
- <sup>54</sup> “*Muzeum Artystów...*”, 238. [translated by author].
- <sup>55</sup> “Introduction to Construction in Process,” accessed 11.02.2015, <http://www.wschodnia.pl/Konstrukcja/html/construction.htm>.

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