

Tomasz Załuski

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

Sztuka i Dokumentacja nr 6, 176-177

2012

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Adam Sobota

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

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,

if the activity of the duo may be framed in a category of some 'impure conceptualism' whose important aspect is to be found in exposing the conditions of life and work in the People's Republic of Poland. To achieve this one needs to investigate thoroughly the artists stance towards the hegemonic term of 'conceptualism' whilst highlighting all of their actions that had any conceptual feature and to define a specific, individual form which appeared in the network of relationships with other elements of artistic practice. In my text I explain how one should understand 'conceptualism' as 'a hegemonic term' that organises and imposes itself onto an agonistic field of innovative art practices — not only in the West, but also in Poland. In this context, undertaking the question of "KwieKulik and conceptualism" opens a new perspective for a counter-hegemonic reinterpretation of conceptualism in the People's Republic of Poland. Without rejecting the term 'conceptualism', one needs to look at the questions related to it through the prism of an individual case of the KwieKulik duo. It should also allow the practices of both artists to make an imprint on 'conceptualism'. In the last part of my text, I limit myself to a series of 'contributive' notes which may be treated as orientation points in an appropriate analysis of the conceptual aspects of the art of KwieKulik.

Grzegorz Sztabiński
Conceptual Tautologies

The text is an attempt to consider the character of tautological activities undertaken in conceptual art. There are two ways the issue can be approached. The first refers to the texts of Joseph Kosuth, who wrote that an artwork is a tautology because it refers to the term 'art'. The author develops the sense of Kosuth's statement "a work of art is a definition of art" and states, that a part of the tautological system that makes a proposed *definiens* of 'art' is available for direct perception, but the other part, which is the term 'art' must be recalled intellectually by the recipient. After taking into account the conceptual reference, the sense of a conceptual project with a meta-artistic character becomes noticeable. Polish examples of such works are projects by Roman Opałka, Jarosław Kozłowski, Jan Chwałczyk and Wanda Gołkowska. The second part of the article considers conceptual projects, in which both parts of equal tautology are directly given. Conceptual works of this structure may either state what is "unquestionable and universally important" (as Alicja Kępińska wrote) or make a kind of sense "at the same time suggested and reversed" (Umberto Eco). The possibilities are considered in reference to tautological works of Zdzisław Jurkiewicz, Jarosław Kozłowski, Zbigniew Dłubak and Jerzy Trelński.

Bogusław Jasiński
Art Instead of Philosophy

The aim of this text is to show the cognitive function of the art later referred to as conceptual. Conceptualism was particularly predisposed to express abstract messages which included philosophical ones. The basic question I would like to pose in this text is: can a conceptual art toolbox express in its own way that which had been formerly expressed by philosophy? How, with the usage of means suggested by conceptual art, may one build a general image of the world – comparable to that which philosophy had previously given? Perhaps a full answer to the above question leads us into the areas of art which ceased to fill the boundaries of conceptualism, or post-conceptualism and heads straightforward to action, which Grotowski called an 'active culture' — that is a place where art is not sufficient anymore.

Kazimierz Piotrowski
Conceptualism as Conceptism

We know, how valuable the role of the functor 'as' played in conceptualism. The functor was a basic linguistic tool of conceptual art infrastructure – the minimal part of speech that allowed for the production of concepts, engaging *ingenium* in its primary function as *ingenium comparans*. The criticism of conceptualism, mainly