

# Jerzy Olek

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## Foto Medium Art

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

*artistic groups in Poland in 1946-1976*) from 1981 presented a broader panorama of artistic trends that emerged in the seventies. The history of Polish conceptualism mostly covers a narrow circle of galleries: the Foksal Gallery in Warsaw, Pod Mona Lisą and Permafo in Wrocław, and Akumulatory<sup>2</sup> in Poznań; a separate place is taken by film and photographic activities. The Remont Gallery in Warsaw, which was active around the same time, was not historically analysed. Its activity has always been treated as marginal. Undoubtedly this was caused by the specific atmosphere of those times, personal relationships and (often wrong) opinions which influenced the works of critics later on. What I refer to is the stance taken by the Foksal Gallery towards more and more frequent activities of the neo avant-garde, which meant that the gallery was often accused of non-uniformity, ambiguity of motives, but also aggression and mockery of the avant-garde. The creator and founder of the Remont Gallery was Henryk Gajewski. The official date when the Gallery was opened was 1.04.1972, and the date it closed was 06.11.1979. For almost seven years it hosted prominent Polish and foreign artists; it published numerous but modest publications, organised international conferences, exhibitions and activities that crossed the official boundaries of art. The gallery, from the very beginning, had little in common with the traditional concept of an art gallery. Its programme was filled with meetings with known publicists, political, social and cultural discussions and exhibitions with modern photography. Thanks to its open formula, the projects were realised by artists coming from various milieux. In the programme it was underlined, that it was not a gallery of one group or trend. What is worth noting is the fact that it showed the works of artists recognised as the leading representatives of neo avant-garde and now often linked with different art centers. The activities of the Remont Gallery can be compared to the activities of such places as Pod Mona Lisą and Permafo, where the gallery space was used for 'new media' or actions from the border of audiovisual art. The Remont Gallery in the beginning, similarly to Permafo, showed experimental photography and photo-conceptualism (Lucjan Demindowski, Krzysztof Wojciechowski, Elżbieta Tejchman, Andrzej Jórczak, Andrzej Lachowicz, Antoni Mikołajczyk, Zygmunt Rytko and Henryk Gajewski). No other gallery in Warsaw was more dynamic and with such a diversified programme, which allows us to analyse its activity from the perspective of a variety of discourses situated on the border of conceptual, contextual art, performance, mail-art, photography, installation, body art, audio-art or happenings.

Maciej H. Zdanowicz

### **The Concept and Experience of Time in the Art of Polish Conceptualism.**

In my paper I analyse the art of selected Polish conceptual artists, whose art and creative strategies clearly attempt to analyse the essence of time. I consider exceptional in this context the work of Roman Opałka (*Opałka 1965 /1 – ∞*), Natalia LL's recordings (*Permanent recordings of time*), Zdzisław Jurkiewicz's *Saturn and Jupiter Ways*, and the projects by Stanisław Dróżdż (*FROM TO*) that touch upon various levels of time. In the presented analyses, I refer to the psychological and philosophical concept of perception and apercption, as well as an anthropological understanding of time. In my view, conceptual art is the genre whose characteristics lie in the conscious cognition and deep intellectual analysis of the reality surrounding the artist. With regard to the active role of the mind in the process of perception the apercption of time may be a more appropriate term.

Jerzy Olek

### **Foto Medium Art**

The Foto-Medium-Art Gallery has worked continuously since 1977. For twenty years it was based in Wrocław and since 2007 in Kraków. During that time, an emphasis was placed on various issues which were reflected by the programme and the way it acted. After the analytical and new media period (in the seventies) there was a time of 'elementary photography' (the eighties). However, photography was not

the only medium that was exhibited there. Often the expositions, installations and projections were presented according to a programme, such as a series entitled "presence among the stones". An important initiative was Photoconferences East-West "European exchange" that has taken place since 1989. The largest one happened in 1991. It consisted of an international exhibition "New spaces of photography" and a conference "The ethos of photography".

A dozen or so years ago "Foto-Medium-Art" lost its space and it became a mobile gallery, organising exhibitions and meetings in various friendly places. Finally F-M-A settled in Kraków and at this time important questions arise: how to find a place for the programme developed over the years in the changing cultural climate especially in times when the most widely used media has changed (digital media replaced analogue)? Is any form of continuation possible, when the former economy of means of the art form of photography has been replaced by developed multimedia and multi-layered image structures? It seems that after the media and elementary periods, F.M.A. has entered an era that is in the process of shaping. In an era, that started after 'neos' and 'posts', when linear narrations are replaced with mosaic structures of databases, structures consisting of elements that are independent of one another, it is time to reformulate the programme.

Karolina Jabłońska

### **Conceptual Activities within the Artistic Environment of Łódź by the Konkret Group**

The Konkret Group emerged in the spring of 1970. The group exhibited three times in Łódź, and one of their exhibitions was also shown in Sieradz. The group consisted of Aleksander Hałat, Romana Hałat, Ryszard Hunger, Andrzej Jocz, Zbigniew Kosiński, Andrzej Nawrot, Henryk Strumiłło, later accompanied by Konrad Frejdllich and Antoni Szram. Among the group members there were artists who expressed themselves in painting, sculpture and graphics, and also ones who were associated with the creative use of text and language. The group did not have a formal program. The group members agreed, that at this specific time and place one needed to turn to concrete art, that is to concentrate on the form, not forgetting, however, about its social aspect. They perceived a way to develop art by new artistic means, using the achievements of technology and science. They did not support enclosing oneself within one discipline, they rather wanted to show the convergence of the ideas of visual art and other artistic disciplines, such as poetry.

The activity of the Konkret Group may be placed on the border of conceptualism and Dadaism, however, the resignation from creating a tangible artwork that happened not sooner than in the last exhibition of the group would favour the previous. Paradoxically, the lack of presence of a recognised artwork in the exhibition of 1972 was caused by the impossibility to realise a specific concrete form. On the other hand, the form that the artists wanted to show was a form of communication, therefore it dealt with a concept, not an object. The other argument to support the conceptual character of the group was the introduction of documentation to the exhibition and the elevating of this aspect to the importance of an artwork, equal to painting. On the other hand – the Dada character of the group's activities can be seen in the fact that in their ventures they were critical towards the artistic milieu and used ready mades. This group of young artists was open to the novelty factor in art and at the same time, the newest of artistic phenomena and tendencies became for them useful tools amongst others to deepen the essence of art.

Dorota Grubba

### **... a straight infinite line... Wanda Czelkowska, Krystian Jaruszkiewicz, Andrzej Wojciechowski**

In the paper, I recall three independent individuals, whose work oscillated around conceptual art. They shared a strong interest situated on the borderline of mathematics and art philosophy (including problems such as: *an open space, the concept of central – axial point, infinite line* etc.) and research on semantic and