

# Dorota Grubba

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

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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 Is any form of continuation possible, when the former economy of means of the art form of photography has been replaced by developed multimedia and multi-layered image structures?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.

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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

lexical possibilities of geometry. The work of these three extremely different artists, Wanda Czełkowska, Krystian Jaruskiewicz, Andrzej Wojciechowski, seems to be tied together by a common element; building spatial utterances based on forms that existed on the border of contemporary and archetypical language. They evoke reflections (e.g. sociological and cultural) by the use of a strongly individualised and meta-artistic code.

I analysed the following artworks: Wanda Czełkowska's *Conceptual Information about a Table* presented in 1972 in Edinburgh at The International Art Festival and another work entitled *Absolute elimination of sculpture as a notion of shape* (66 concrete slabs and 66 light points) from 1972; the project of a room independent of gravity (1959/1960), *Capitel as the structure of space* from 1952; Krystian Jaruskiewicz's multi-material object entitled *Sacrifice to Xawery Dunikowski* (1975), that incorporated an old Polish definition of the 'obiata' (sacrifice) custom taken from Bogumił Linde's dictionary in its original graphic version into an ascetic form; Andrzej Wojciechowski's works from the period when he co-operated with Stanisław Dróżdż, among them a series of photographs *SALVE* from 1970 (a stone with a Latin greeting found in an empty field), a model and an idea of the *Self-sustaining Plinth* from the Symposium "Wrocław '70", an action entitled *The Tower of Joy 23 VII 1970* built with the residents of Wrocław, and a philosophical and formal dialogue with S. Dróżdż *A Sphere and a stone – two perfections* (1974)