

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: *Footnote 6: As Model*

**Liam Gillick, Józef Robakowski, R. H. Quaytman, Edward Krasinski, Union Gaucha Productions,
Karin Schneider, Nicolás Guagnini, Lygia Clark, Anna Ostoya, Igor Krenz
+ replica**

Curated by Barbara Piwowarska

Dates: July 7 – August 14, 2011

One finds the footnote at the bottom of the page – as opposed to the endnote, which appears at the end of the book. Endnotes have the advantage of not affecting the image of the main text, but may cause inconvenience to readers, who have to move back and forth between pages to access the notes' content.

Footnote originated in the basement of a large castle in Poland, around Halloween time, in near-total darkness. The few people who saw the exhibit took pictures.¹ Just as R. H. Quaytman's 1999 replica of Katarzyna Kobro's 1928 *Spatial Composition 2*, presented in *Footnote 6*, is a reversed reconstruction of the original work, *Footnote* seeks to upend established orders of legibility. Instead of the main text, the footnote appears as primary here, in the format of an exhibition. And both the main subject of interest – avant-garde sculptor Katarzyna Kobro – and the project's curator, emerge from the sphere of the 'margin.'

Footnote is a spatial model of articulation, but with an approach opposite to that of Ad Reinhardt's parodic *Mandala* diagram, which positions on an illustrative chart the four axes of "art and government," "art and education," "art and nature," and "art and business." *Footnote*, rather, resembles the "ultramundane margins" in Robert Smithson's *Quasi-Infinities and the Waning of Space*, margin-notes consisting of images and diagrams that "contain indeterminate information and reproduced reproductions." The text's first note – "the first obstacle" – is the thumbnail of a "labyrinth, through which the mind will pass in an instant, thus eliminating the spatial problem."

For each element in *Łódź Prototypes* (2011), Liam Gillick divides a 40 x 40 cm sheet of black cardboard into a grid, then constructs different permutations by folding along the lines. Here, Gillick works within the confines of a geometric model, thus opening a dialogue with Kobro, who employed the Fibonacci sequence to size her work. The *Prototypes* are models for a larger-scale 'intervention' that will be shown next to the Neoplasticist room at the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, commissioned for the museum's permanent collection. These structures refer to Gillick's formal language, in which sculptures are made from industrial materials available as stock items. In this case, the models were produced by hand, cut out and folded by the artist.

R. H. Quaytman fabricated the mirrored replica of Kobro's *Spatial Composition 2* in order to examine its dialectical potential through a series of photographs of the sculpture from different angles and in various states. This study was inspired by Yve-

¹ *Footnote* is an ongoing project referencing existing institutions, situations, and statements. It commenced in 2010 with *Footnote 1: Phantom Limb*, in the cellars of the Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw. This first show took as its point of departure the concurrent exhibition in the CCA's main level spaces, curated by Professor Andrzej Turowski, devoted to Władysław Strzemiński's *Theory of Vision*. The 'phantom limb' was a metaphor for modernist projects and their failures, their absence, and the ways in which they remain present. *Footnote 1* was also inspired by Turowski's book, *Avant-Garde Margins*. The show focused on the avant-garde phenomenon of Katarzyna Kobro (Strzemiński's wife) and the international reception of her work, as articulated by Yve-Alain Bois' essay, "Strzemiński and Kobro: In Search of Motivation", then reconsidered in the late 90's by New York artists R. H. Quaytman, Karin Schneider, and Nicolás Guagnini – all three of whom became members of Orchard, the collective project space in the Lower East Side, a decade later. At CCA, for the first time, these artists' works were presented alongside Polish investigations from the 70's to the present, including films by Józef Robakowski, a filmic essay by Andrzej Turowski, and video installations by Igor Krenz.

Subsequent iterations were *Footnote 2: Correction* at Silberkuppe, Berlin; *Footnote 3: Andrea Fraser* at Foksal Gallery, Warsaw; *Footnote 4: Disambiguation* at Format P, Warsaw; and *Footnote 5: Screening Space* at MUMOK, Vienna.

Alain Bois' famous essay on Kobra and Strzeminski, as well as by research on the artist's paternal great-grandparents in Łódź, and preparations for the *Construction in Process* biennial in Bydgoszcz. Kobra's ideas about sculpture resonated with Quaytman's own reflections on how to proceed with painting. Just as Kobra sought to abolish the "objectness" of sculpture in favor of architectural integration and unity with the surrounding space, Quaytman developed a system "in which each picture's isolation was recontextualized into the surrounding space/context." Like Kobra, Quaytman began to size works according to the Fibonacci sequence. *Painting for Footnote 6: As Model* (2011), echoes Quaytman's 'pre-chapter' painting from 1999-2000, when Kobra and Strzeminski began to inform the artist's practice. It can be asserted that they remain Quaytman's perennial 'allegorical decoys.'

Karin Schneider's artistic practice was "perforated" by both Kobra and Lygia Clark. *Text Piece* (2011), analyzes two paradoxical, parallel models of production that Kobra used from the 20's to the 40's: spatial compositions and female nudes. By creating two economies, Schneider posits that Kobra's work 'decentralized the rational subject.' By creating a 'writing space,' Schneider revisits a physical location where she manipulated Kobra's sculptures in performative sequences in the storage of Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź. This moment is depicted in *Phantom Limb* (1998), a film by Union Gaucha Productions (Schneider and Guagnini). This work was the result of Union Gaucha's research on 'avant-garde margins,' and is a 'fictional documentary' about the development of modernism in Argentina, Brazil and Poland via the exploration of works by Kobra, Strzeminski, Raul Lozza, Lygia Clark, Helio Oiticica, and others. The film was the first attempt to correlate Kobra and Clark as artists who shared the concept of sculpture as a laboratory of social space. Clark is represented in *Footnote 6* by one of her *Animals (Bichos)* from 1969, a series of interactive spatial objects that exist beyond the category of sculpture, and are depicted in *Phantom Limb* in the process of being touched and manoeuvred by human hands.

The Union Gaucha film is shown alongside the first film on Kobra by Józef Robakowski: *Kompozycje Przestrzenne Katarzyny Kobra (Spatial Compositions by Katarzyna Kobra)* from 1972. The film features a voiceover of quotes from Kobra's writings, and was co-scripted by Janusz Zagrodzki, who at the same time began to construct replicas of Kobra's missing works at Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź. These works remain on display today, and can be seen in Igor Krenz' video installation, *Correction of Tilt*, commissioned by the museum as an intervention into the Neoplasticist room. Strzeminski designed this very space, which opened to the public in 1948, was dismantled in 1950, and later reconstructed in the 60's. The gallery displays a collection of works donated by the a. r. group. Krenz filmed the space with a tilted camera, and calculated the angle at which monitors would need to be positioned to match the horizon line in the filmic space.

Last year, Anna Ostoya examined Kobra' and Strzeminski's *Composition of Space: Calculating the Space-Time Continuum*, 1931. As part of her project *Autopis: Notes, Copies, and Masterpieces*, she reworked their theory on sculpture into *Composition of Information* (2010), a text-collage superimposed on the first page of the above-mentioned treatise. The artist replaced the word "space" with "information," and modified the original arguments in order to apply them to today's works of art. A cooperative translation of *Composition of Space* by Karin Schneider, Barbara Piwowarska, Anna Ostoya, and Klara Kemp-Welch will constitute the final ingredient of the present iteration of *Footnote*.

Footnote 6 will remain spatially dominated until August 14 by Edward Krasinski's blue Scotch tape, the main element of his *Interventions*. This tape, first used in 1968, "can appear on everything and everywhere, always at 130 cm height." It creates an autonomous model of space; a 'reality trap' with its own rules and dimensions, a horizon line with a top and bottom – or a header and footer.

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