Poetry and Performance

The Eastern European Perspective

Exhibition Guide

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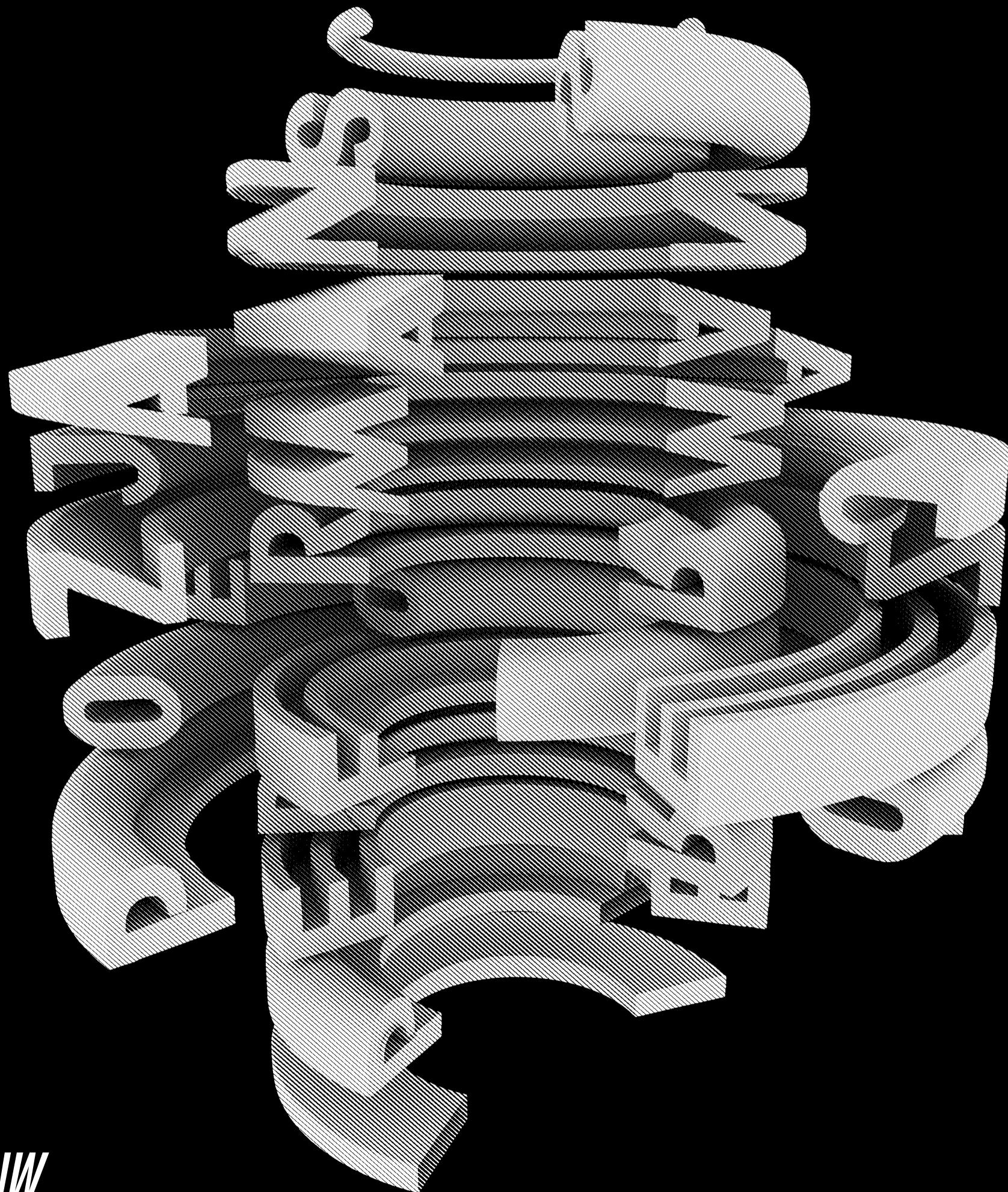
Muzeum Współczesne
Wrocław

Poetry and Performance

In the second half of the twentieth century, poets and artists in Eastern Europe in particular took up the challenge of reflecting on and investigating the instrumentalization of language for communicative and political--ideological purposes. They did so by drawing attention to the madeness of language, its materiality and mediality, and by creating performative situations for themselves and their audiences within which possibilities of verbal expression could be tested and acted out. Poetic performance makes the limits of language and speakability tangible.

In the socialist states of Eastern Europe, with all of their differences, poetry and performance are characterized by a double subculturality: on the one hand, they undermine the conventional perception of script and words as neutral means, which, on the other hand, was unacceptable against the cultural-political backdrop, forcing them into the unofficial or partially tolerated cultural scene.

The writing practice of samizdat as well as artists' self-publishing and their relation to the devices of concrete and visual poetry have been treated and presented in previous projects. Until now, however, less consideration has been given to the circumstances of performance. In addition to typewritten literature, subcultural milieus attached particular importance to the oral recitation of poems, poetic installations in self-organized exhibitions, poetry actions and artistic interventions in public space. The interrelation between text and situation in poetic acts functioned as a trigger for actions, performances and happenings – a very specific and notably Eastern European characteristic of performance art.

The focus on artistic positions from Eastern Europe in our exhibition does not imply a territorialization of the topic, however. With the term "perspective" we aim to change the viewpoint in order to open up new horizons of reflection on what we do and on what we are able to do with language in general. In Eastern Europe, we can observe a specific sensibility for the power and at the same time the fragility and vulnerability of language developing over many decades.

Poetry and performance have produced specific milieus within the diverse cultures of Eastern Europe. There were parallels developing between movements and approaches separated not only by the Iron Curtain from the developments in the West, but also, paradoxically, by barriers between those Eastern European cultures themselves. Nevertheless, what we can see as a characteristic feature here is a transgression of the conventions of national culture and the emergence of international networks. Our exhibition wants to contribute to the current rediscovery of these connections of which, until recently, there was very limited awareness.

One of our special concerns is the tension between singular artistic positions and the phenomenon of artistic collectives defined by the specificities of local milieus and subcultural communities. In this exhibition we want to recreate such milieus or to make them accessible by way of comparison, working with thematic groups focused on artistic practices. The presentation of the exhibition in a place of performative and poetic actions as renowned as Wrocław requires emphasizing the local background. The facade of Wrocław Contemporary Museum with Stanisław Dróżdż's hourglass of words, meaningfully located in a post-German air shelter, is articulated even stronger in this context. The fragility of language meets the power of materiality of words, visible and always present.

The show is composed of various types of coexisting exhibits: text scores, interactive objects, sound and video recordings, films and installations of performance documentation. Together, they present authors from subcultures in socialist states along with contemporary positions that continue the legacy of combining poetry and performance, showing the efforts of poets and artists to break free from controlled language and normative communicative here and now. *Poetry and Performance. The Eastern European Perspective* thus confronts the current social challenges in the post-socialist countries through the prism of language and ideology and looks back at their points of departure. Poetry and performance take on an exceptional topicality in periods of political crises, as these ephemeral and flexible art forms enable the reflection on relations and contexts that remain otherwise undiscussed.

Writing-Reading Performance

Performance places the poetic text in a situational context of production and reception. Beyond the printed word, typographic experiments evolve from a physical process of writing by hand and producing texts by typewriter, which themselves often gain the status of aesthetic objects. The presentation of poetry by way of poets' readings implies a further shift from the reception of self-contained works to the perception of poetry in performance situations (Lev Rubinstein). Poets seek direct contact with their audience. In his performance for a video camera titled *Conversation with a Lamp*, Andrei Monastyrski, one of the founding members of the Collective Actions group, reflects on how the concept of performativity developed from poetry, retrospectively presenting Russian poets of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the situation of a reading performance. Another prominent approach by many artists and poets is the focus on freeing language from ideological usurpation. They tried to understand to which degree they themselves had unconsciously internalized ideology, for instance, as when Dmitri Prigov took on the character of a Soviet militia-man in his readings. It is precisely this gesture that Pussy Riot cited in their action The Policeman Enters the Game in the 53rd minute of the World Cup final match on 25 July 2018, thus radicalizing the intertwinement of poetics and politics and intervening into media space.

In contrast to the meta-linguistic practices of Moscow Conceptualism, Slovak conceptualist Ľubomír Ďurček deals systematically with the contextual meanings of a single word, such as the word truth. He uses the page format as a limited model space, a performance area in miniature. Monogramist T.D's works rather emphasize intimate processes of writing, whose manipulation of figurative language changes the word into a material image or spatial object. In his early work, starting with the first Hungarian happening *The Lunch (in memoriam Batu Khan*, 1966), Tamás Szentjóby styled himself a "poet at the typewriter."

For the Polish neo-avant-garde artist Andrzej Partum, postcards with provocative slogans, which he sent worldwide, were a form of postal performance examining the meaning and weight of words. Thus the addressee and his or her (often very creative) response played a key role in Partum's postal actions. It was a part of the international Mail Art movement and crucial element of the Poetry Office founded by Partum in Warsaw in 1971. In the works of the artistic duo Dorota Gawęda and Eglė Kulbokaitė (Young Girl Reading Group), collective reading from mobile displays creates a unique experience of community. Yet here reading the text is not simply transferred to the performative situation; thanks to the installation, its virtual dimension is exceeded in the form of material objects strongly engaging the senses.

1) Collective Actions Group, *Slogan*, 1977
   Courtesy of the artists
2) Ľubomír Ďurček, *Návštevník (Päť návštev)*, 1980
   Courtesy of the artist

Language Games

Since the emergence of language-based art practices in the 1960s, poetry has been taken literally as a potential field for the examination of language as such. Poetry opens up a horizon for analysing how words act in various contexts and various media. Language is often understood not only as a means of communication and its materiality, but also as a relational and dynamic field. Mladen Stilinović's statements often imitate the form of slogans used in politics and marketing. His chief interest is in language not as a linguistic object, but as a dynamic field for confronting ideologies. In his work, phrases taken from everyday speech are inscribed into a complex matrix of social relations. Vlado Martek's pre-poetry goes back to synergy of elementary practices and concrete materials used for writing conventional poetry by means of tautology. Honza Zamojski is an artist who creates his unique world, where pencil sketches, visual poetry and the essence of an artist's book intertwine with sculptural objects and installations, adding up to build inseparable combinations. In this way, Zamojski explores the relationship between the world closed inside the book and the architectural space of the exhibition. He builds visual and poetic narratives without avoiding absurdity, self-irony and humour; however, he is sometimes deadly serious and disturbing.
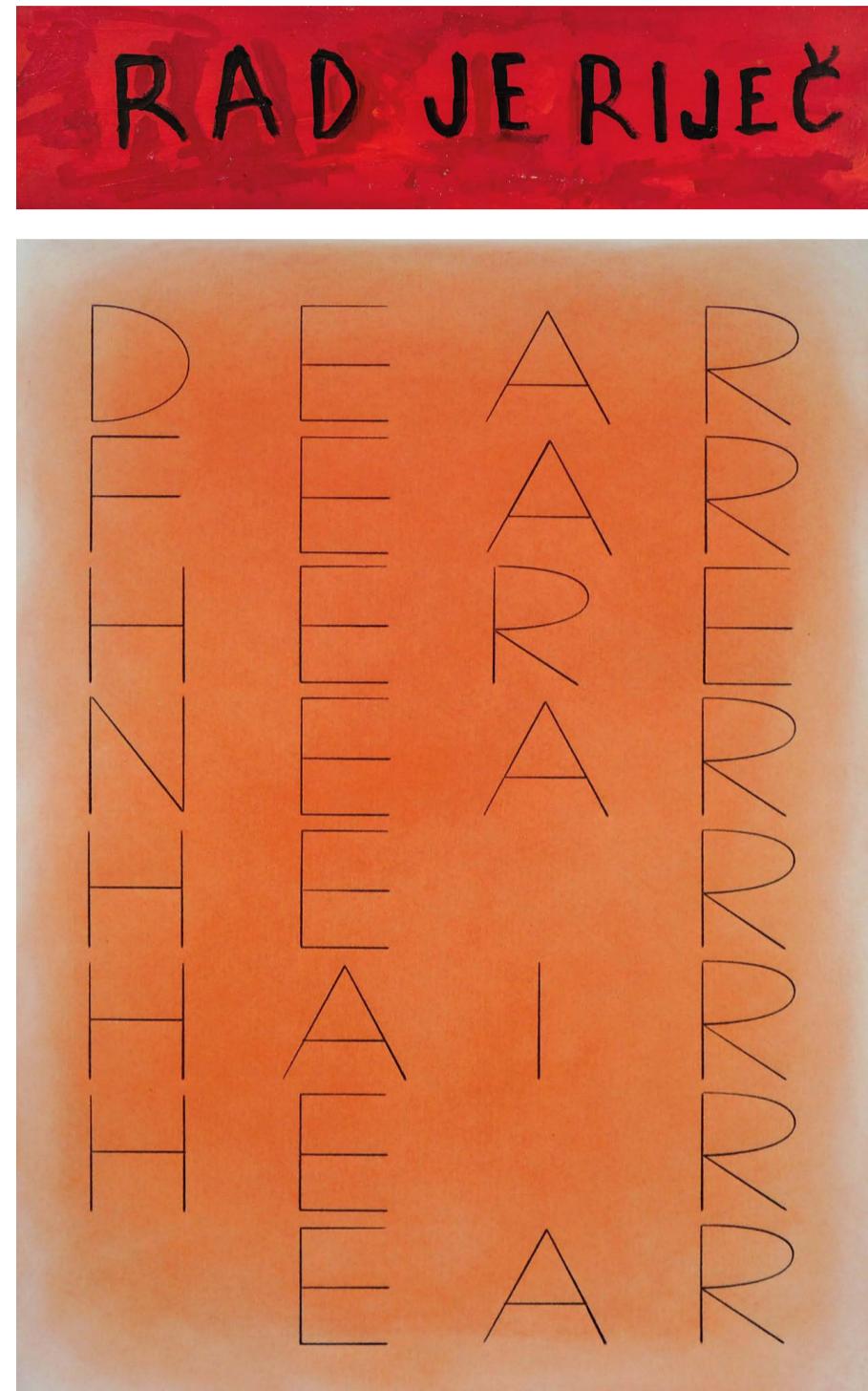
1)   Mladen Stilinović, *Work is Word*, 1982
     Branka Stipančić Collection
2)   Honza Zamojski, *Untitled [Dear Fear]*, 2018
     Courtesy of the artist and Leto Gallery

Interventions in Public Space

Spoken or written word in public space confronts poetry with politics and involves direct sharing of ideas within a community or interaction with accidental passers-by. In the 1970s, the exhibition actions of the Zagreb-based Group of Six Artists or the public interventions of the Bosch+Bosch group from Subotica practiced what one might call a poetry of immediate impact. Testing the limits of freedom, they used the street as an open interactive space to replace the page of a book or conventional exhibition space. The performances of Tomislav Gotovac often involved communication with public opinion through self-exposure and controversy of his naked body in the public space. In his late performance *Degraffiting* (1990), Gotovac whitewashes a wall, thus demonstrating the problematic process of defining a new identity after the end of Yugoslavia, as the palimpsest of old graffiti (political slogans and obscene curses) is continuing to show under the paint.

The Polish artist Ewa Partum used letters made of white cardboard sold in shops to assemble slogans for the decoration of living and working spaces. She randomly scattered these letters in both urban and natural spaces, and in this way liberated them from their original meaning. She called this series of actions *Active Poetry*. During a street action after the defeated labour protests of 1976, the group Akademia Ruchu presented the assembled crowd with lines of poetry written on banners. The Orange Alternative, on the other hand, played with the political setting by changing one singular letter in a slogan to mock the prohibition of anti-regime banners. Contemporary artist Liliana Piskorska also creates performative acts reclaiming public space. In this case, however, she deals not with the political regime, but with sexism in language, which also mounts considerable resistance. By changing male to female endings in wall graffiti, she draws attention to the need for gender-specific adaptation of Polish flexion.

In contemporary Russia, Pavel Arsenev and Roman Osminkin of the Laboratory of Poetic Actionism from St. Petersburg, or Kirill Medvedev, a Moscow-based poet, activist, and frontman of the politically engaged rock band Arkady Kots, experiment, increasingly via social media, with methods and devices aimed at breaking out of the safe space of art to intervene directly in society. Damir Avdić, a Bosnian musician, writer, and critic of post-Yugoslav social reality, works in a similar fashion.


1) Ewa Partum, *Active Poetry*, 1971
   Courtesy of the artist
2) Tomislav Gotovac, *Degraffiting*, 1990
   Sarah Gotovac Collection / Tomislav Gotovac Institute

Body
Poetry

This section focuses on the body as a physical site for speech acts. On the one hand, embodiment returns language to its material origins. The necessity of mediating such corporeal acts in the process of documentation also tends to introduce a distance between action and perception in photo and video performances. By its focus on how speech acts are embodied, this group of works touches on the core issues of radical narcissism, body-rhetorics, identity politics, gender and gaze. In the trangression of the disciplinary norms that coerce and control the body, in the 1970s the private becomes public. The repetitive formula *Was ist Kunst?* in the video performance by Raša Todosijević opens up a complex set of questions related to art as an institution. The automatism of a despotic phonocentric machine serves as a general metaphor for the connection of totalitarian discourse with the institution of art. Jiří Valoch explores the intimacy of the body with a specific focus on image-text and image-sound relations.

In a performance for the photo camera, he articulates a word, which the viewers can only read from his lips. Contemporary artist Paulina Ołowska based her series of photographs *Alphabet* on a similar idea – she bends her body in the shape of letters of the alphabet. Dressed in a characteristic red-blue outfit, she refers to fashion photography, but above all to the power exerted by language in shaping the human world. Bálint Szombathy also explores the image-text relations, but his works are more embedded in the tactile terrain of bodily experiences, as he confronts the bureaucratic operation of stamping with the fragility of the human skin. In the performance *Arrhythmia,* Barbara Kozłowska used the phrasing and ordering value of language, both as spoken and written words. The names of the body parts read by her assistant from the atlas of anatomy were then marked by her and written on a canvas, and the model was the artist's body.

In the performance *Shaman Poem* by Katalin Ladik, the lines between poetic performance, music and body art are blurred. Ladik's poetry develops into a pure form of sound poetry, including elements of archaic ritual, shamanistic mythology and an affinity with folkloric and new music with the use of both traditional and newly-made instruments like drums and bagpipes. In the case of "autoperforation" artists in the East German underground scene, the body became a site of actions which unsettled through moments of self-injury. In the collaborations of Via Lewandowsky and Durs Grünbein, this bodily aesthetic enters into tension with the structuralising potential of the poem-text. In 1984, at the initiative of Gabriele Stötzer, Exterra XX emerged in Erfurt, one of the few groups of working female artists in East Germany. This collective action created a space of performative experience between literature, film, and fashion show.
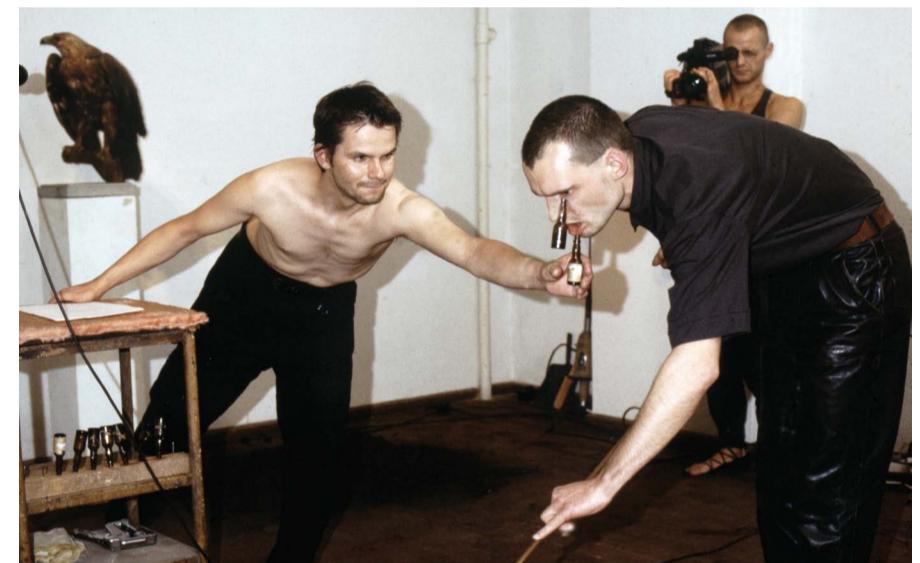
1) Bálint Szombathy, *Rubber and Flesh*, 1979/2014
   Courtesy of the artist
2) Durs Grünbein / Via Lewandowsky, *German Thoroughness,*
   1989 Courtesy of the artists

Cinematographic Poetry

In the subcultural milieus of Eastern Europe, poetry constantly steps into an intermedial relation with the moving image. In the films by Naško Križnar and Nuša & Srečo Dragan of the OHO group from the 1960s, the poetic exploration of the materiality of language is combined with visual cinematographic experiments. Constellations of letters, sentences, quotes, objects, and bodies evolve into cinematographic situations. Similarly, Romuald Kutera, an artist belonging to the Wrocław milieu centred in the 1970s around the Recent Art Gallery, experimented with moving images. In his work *Here* (1975), the word, film and gesture are tightly connected. Young Polish artist Agnieszka Polska in her computer-generated animations goes even further in her experiments. She discusses the limitations of understanding reality caused by language.

Poetry also plays a central role in the self-understanding of 1980s subculture in the GDR, and here too there is a new connection between poetry and film. It was not possible to simply document poetry readings with basic Super 8 camera equipment. Lip-synched audio recordings were not yet an option. Necessity was the mother of invention for many poets and filmmakers who found original solutions to this problem, working with voice-over texts, repetitive recitations or word-letter stop-motion sequences. In the 2000s, the artist and poet Yuri Leiderman and the film director Andrey Silvestrov developed a specific form of cinematographic geopoetics, playing with literary stereotypes against the backdrop of various cultural landscapes worldwide.

1) Naško Križnar (OHO / OHO Group), *Bullshit*, 1968
   Marinko Sudac Collection
2) Yuri Leiderman, Andrey Silvestrov, *Birmingham Ornament*, 2011
   Courtesy of the artists

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Audio
Gestures

Auditory or phonic poetry can be understood as a further development of sound-poetry in that it not only involves the sound of language and the transgressive potential of the voice, but also clearly works with the technical possibilities of audio recording. One of the great technological breakthroughs of the 1960s was the personal tape recorder, which meant that sounds could not just be recorded, but edited, cut, modulated or mixed. Ladislav Novák experimented with a tape recorder at home before he and other poets, such as Josef Hiršal or Bohumila Grögerová, began collaboration with a radio studio in the north Bohemian town of Liberec in the late 1960s on a *Semester of Experimental Creation*, during which innovative audio compositions were aired over the course of many months.

In the 1980s, the activity of the Latvian artist collective NSRD (Workshop for the Restoration of Unfelt Feelings), founded by Hardijs Lediņš and Juris Boiko, was characterised by the production of experimental music albums and the performance of interdisciplinary actions. In her sound compositions, Jelena Glazova, a younger artist from Riga, uses archival recordings of Latvian folk songs from 1927, preserved on wax cylinders, which she mixes with her own digitally processed voice recordings. For Polish artist Wojciech Bąkowski, the noise of tape and cheap music equipment from the 1980s are objects of nostalgia, which he willingly uses in both stage performances as well as installations.
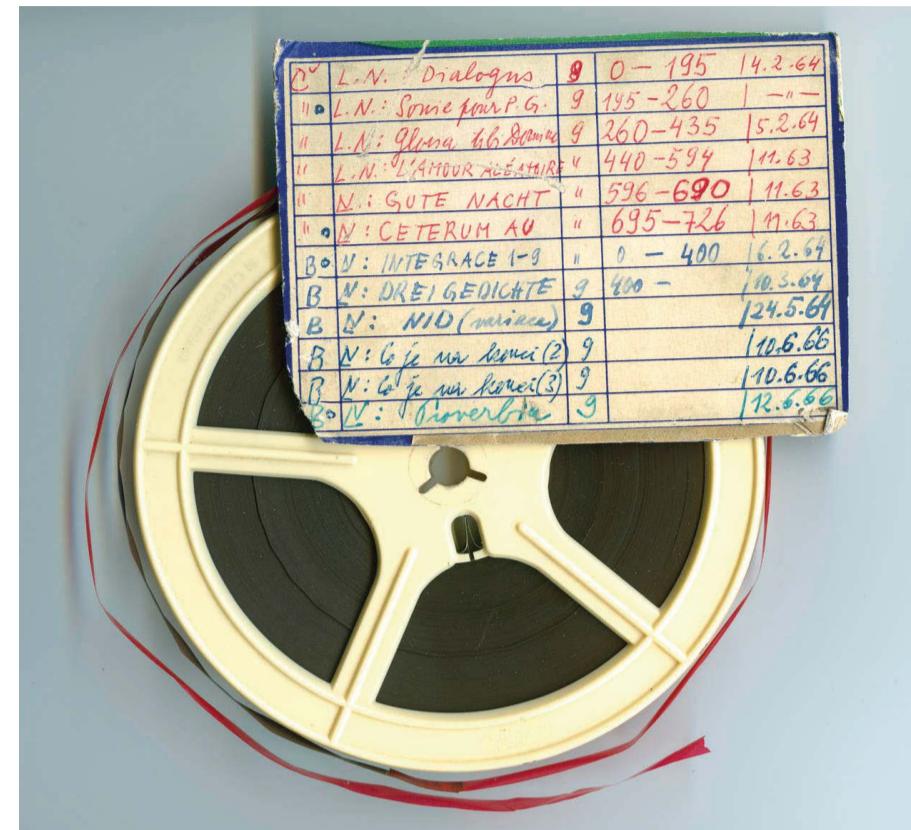
1)   Ladislav Novák, *Tape and Box*, 1965–1969
     Pavel Novotný Collection

2)   NSRD - Workshop for the Restoration of Unfelt Feelings,
     3rd Walk to Bolderāja (Bolderāja walkers set out looking for the snow), 1982
     Courtesy Archive of Hardijs Lediņš and Latvian Centre for Contemporary
     Art (LCCA), Riga

Artists

Academy of Movement
(Poland)

Academy of Movement (Akademia Ruchu) theatre was founded in Warsaw in 1973, with Wojciech Krukowski (d. 2014) as founder and art director. Since the very beginning, it has been known as theatre of behaviour and visual narration. The group's practice combines the disciplines of theatre, the visual arts, performance and film, focusing on the shared qualities of movement and space with a social message. This is connected with a sense that artistic radicalism and social meaning do not have to be mutually exclusive. Academy of Movement's public-space work, pur- sued continuously since 1974 (about six hundred performances, events and street actions), is the first example in Poland of such a systematic creative practice outside the official institutional framework in non-artistic space: on the streets, at private homes, in industrial spaces. Transferring elements of everyday reality in unchanged form into the holy space of art (onto the stage, into the gallery) has served to enrich its anthropological vision with- out impoverishin the aesthetic one in any way. Academy of Movement has presented its work in almost all countries of Europe as well as in North and South America and Japan as part of tours and major theatre festivals, e.g. at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in London, documenta 8 in Kassel, NRL Live Art in Glasgow, Museum PS1/Clocktower Gallery in New York, Ludwig Forum in Aachen, the Los Angeles Contemporary Art Exhibition (LACE), the Museum of Modern Art in Yokohama and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.

Nikita Alekseev
(Russia)

Nikita Alekseev (b. 1953 in Moscow) studied at the Year 1905 Art College (Section of Industrial Graphics and Advertising) from 1968 to 1972, and at the Moscow Polygraphic Institute (Department of Artistic and Technical Design of Printed Matter) from 1973 to 1976. In the years 1976–1983 he was a member of the Collective Actions group. In 1979 he was one of the organisers of the Moscow Archive of New Art (MANI), and in 1982–84 a co-founder and director of the AptArt Gallery. In 1985–1987, Alekseev played "simulation rock" with the Central Russian Upland group. He works with painting, graphics artistic actions, objects and installations. He is also a curator of contemporary art exhibitions, journalist, art critic, and author of numerous publications in the Russian and international press. He lives and works in Moscow.

Gábor Altorjay
(Hungary)

Gábor Altorjay (b. 1946 in Budapest, Hungary) is a poet, actionist and filmmaker. After practicing collective poetry improvisation in 1966, he introduced *happening* as a new medium in Hungary together with Tamás Szentjóby. His objects and happenings combine a Fluxus-like spirit with an affinity for politics, especially after his emigration to West Germany in 1967, where he joined the radical artistic circles around Wolf Vostell. Altorjay has intensively engaged with the critical perception of 1968 with concepts and event-based pieces confronting the notions and ideologies represented by "East" and "West".

Pavel Arsenev
(Russia)

Pavel Arsenev (b. 1986 in Leningrad) is an artist, poet, theorist, and a founding member of the group Laboratory of Poetic Actionism. As an artist, he works with the graphic aspects and materialisation of (poetic) text. He has participated in several international exhibitions and projects, including Manifesta 10 (St. Petersburg), Büro für kulturelle Übersetzungen (Leipzig), *Disobedient Objects* (Victoria and Albert Museum), 3rd Moscow International Biennale for Young Art and Subvision Art Festival (Hamburg). He has published several books of poetry, and his work has been translated into English, Italian, Danish, Dutch, Bulgarian, Polish and Slovenian. Arsenev is editor-in-chief of the literary-critical magazine Translit and recipient of the Andrei Bely Prize (2012).

Damir Avdić
(Bosnia and Herzegovina / Slovenia)

Damir Avdić Graha (b. 1964 in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina) is a poet, writer, musician, and film music composer. Avdić formed the hardcore punk band Rupa u zidu (Hole in the wall) and recorded five albums. He also performs solo with his voice and his electric guitar. As a writer, he has published three novels to date: *Na krvi ćuprija* (Bridge over blood) in 2005, *Enter dzehenem* in 2009 and *Tiket za revoluciju* (Ticket for the revolution) in 2012. He contributed music to Branko Šimić's punk'n'roll fairy tale *Ein Kind unserer Zeit* (A child of our time) and played a role in it as well. Avdić is considered an immediate commentator and critic of his society, tackling the Yugoslavian past and confronting the post-Yugoslavian present. The immediacy of his songs and performances depends not least on his usage of colloquial speech. He lives in Ljubljana.

Wojciech Bąkowski
(Poland)

Wojciech Bąkowski (b. 1979) is a visual artist, poet and musician. A graduate of the University of the Arts in Poznań, leader of the music groups KOT and NIWEA. In 2007, together with Radosław Szlaga, Tomasz Mróz, Konrad Smoleński and Piotr Bosacki, he founded the artist collective Penerstwo. In his art, he focuses on the apotheosis of experiencing banal reality and the brutalist-lyrical fascination with "prosaic, mundane facts and objects." He is a laureate of the "Views" award of Deutsche Bank and the Zachęta National Gallery of Art (2009) and the "Polityka Passport 2010" award, as well as awards at festivals of animated and short films (including the Grand Prix at the Oberhausen Festival, 2014). He collaborates with the Warsaw-based Stereo gallery and the Bureau in New York.

Bosch+Bosch
(Serbia)

Bosch+Bosch was an artist group established in Subotica in 1969 by Slavko Matković with Balint Szombathy and László Szalma. Other members included Katalin Ladik, Lásló Kerekes, Attila Csernik and Ante Vukov. Their work moved, amongst others, within the spheres of intervention in space, land art, arte povera, mixed media, project art, concrete poetry, conceptual art, visual semiotics, new comics and mail art. Alongside their works of art, Szombathy and Matković also developed theoretical and critical practice. Their work can be defined as the New Artistic Practice (*nova umjetnička praksa*) or semio-art. Their investigations were focused on hybrid fields of art, and in their work each member of the group intentionally positioned themselves in opposition to the others. Kerekes performed interventions in open space, Szalma pursued neo-dadaist interventionist projects, Csernik worked in the domain of visual and behavioural poetry, Ladik was active in performative actions, ranging from phonic poetry and poetic performance to behavioural feminist actions, and Vukov was focused on conceptual works.

Collective Actions / Kollektivnye deistviia
(Russia)

The Collective Actions group came into being in 1976. It was founded by Andrei Monastyrski, Nikita Alekseev, Georgi Kizevalter and Nikolai Panitkov. Future members included Yelena Yelagina, Igor Makarevich, Sergei Romashko and Sabine Hänsgen. Many well-known artists and writers from the Moscow Conceptual circle took part in their actions. These were organized as "trips out of town," in the course of which a field of untouched snow would often become a stage for minimalist performances, thematizing perceptual patterns and abstract categories: presence/absence, appearance/disappearance, sound/silence, rhythmic sequence, interval, pause. At a later stage of development, the group began to compile documentary volumes about its work. These combined a wide range of material, such as descriptive texts, narratives by the participants, theoretical commentary, discussions, photographs, drawings, and diagrams, forming a descriptive, narrative and interpretative artwork in its own right.

Attila Csernik
(Serbia)

Attila Csernik (b. 1941 in Bačka Topola, Serbia) is a visual artist, performance artist and poet. Most of his work centres on typography, text and their relation to the image and body. As a member of the group Bosch+Bosch (Slavko Matković, Bálint Szombathy, Katalin Ladik, László Szalma, and others), he participated in the radical practice of the Vojvodina neo-avant-garde of the 1970s, whose aim was to broaden the field of art with shock aesthetics and everyday life practices, leading beyond the constraints of socialist Yugoslavia's bureaucratised cultural environment of moderate modernism.

Nuša & Srečo Dragan
(Slovenia)

Nuša Dragan (b. 1943 in Jesenice, d. 2011) and her partner Srečo Dragan (b. 1944 in Spodnji Hrastnik) are important members of the Slovene neo-avant-garde. Nuša Dragan earned her degree in Pedagogy and Sociology at the University of Ljubljana. Srečo Dragan graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana with a degree in Painting and in 1971 he attended a course in New Media in London. Between 1967 and 1988, Nuša and Srečo Dragan worked together artistically as a couple. In 1969, they made the first video work in former Yugoslavia, *White Milk of White Breasts*. From 1968 through 1969, they participated in the work of the OHO Group. Their early work arose in the context of "rheism", arte povera, conceptualism, contextualisation of language, installation, and usage of new technologies of film and video. After 1988, they worked individually.

Ľubomír Ďurček
(Slovakia)

Ľubomír Ďurček (b. 1948 in Bratislava) is a conceptual artist, performer, documentarian and author of experimental texts, books and films. He studied Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava and worked as a secondary school teacher for most of his life. In 1977, he co-organised the landmark exhibition *Photorecords* featuring photographs by Czech and Slovak action and concept-oriented artists. In the late 1970s, he collaborated with the Labyrinth Theatre and the Temporary Society for Intense Experiences. Ďurček participated in the underground activities of performance artists, worked with amateur artists and organised gatherings. His first solo show took place only after 1989.

Exterra XX
(Germany)

Exterra XX was established in Erfurt in 1984 as the first collective of female artists in the GDR. Using means of expression such as performance, poetry, photo sessions, film recordings, fashion shows and many other activities, the group tested the limits of artistic genres. What was important for the artists was to create a space that allowed freedom of action and the implementation of subjective forms of artistic expression. This was understood as liberation not only from the monotonous visual reality of the GDR, but also from gender-related roles defined and imposed by the prevailing norms. The artists gained greater recognition after 1988, primarily due to their performances and stage shows with expressive costumes. Among the members of the group were Verena Kyselka, Gabriele Stötzer, Monika Andres, Claudia Bogenhardt, Petra Buchner, Gabriele Göbel, Anke Hendrich. In 1990, the group established Kunsthaus Erfurt.

Else Gabriel
(Germany)

Else Gabriel (b. 1962, Halberstadt, GDR) is an artist working with installations and video. She was trained as a church musician and studied Stage Design at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts beginning in 1982. As a student, she founded the artist group Autoperforationsartisten (with Michael Brendel, Rainer Görss and Via Lewandowsky). In 1987, she graduated with the first diploma to be awarded to a group performance in East Germany. Gabriel emigrated to West Germany shortly before the end of the German Democratic Republic, developing both an individual practice and one within the artist duo "(e.) Twin Gabriel" (with Ulf Wrede). She is currently a professor of art and sculpture at the Weissensee Academy of Art. The only film Else Gabriel made in East Germany is *Sublime Love*.

Dorota Gawęda, Eglė Kulbokaitė (Young Girl Reading Group)
(Poland, Lithuania)

Dorota Gawęda (b. 1986) and Eglė Kulbokaitė (b. 1987) are an artist duo based in Basel. Switzerland. Gawęda and Kulbokaitė work within a variety of media, spanning performance, installation, photography, fragrance, sculpture and video. Both are graduates of the Royal College of Art in London (2012) and founders of the extended serial projects Agatha Valkyrie Ice (2014–2017) and Young Girl Reading Group (since 2013). The artists have exhibited internationally, including presentations at Fri Art / Kunsthalle Fribourg (solo); Futura Gallery, Prague (solo); Lafayette Anticipations, Paris; Lucas Hirsch Gallery, Düsseldorf (solo); HKW, Berlin; Spazio Maiocchi, Milan; ANTI – 6th Athens Biennial; Cell Project Space, London (solo); Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Amanda Wilkinson Gallery, London (solo); Kunstverein Freiburg (DE); MMOMA, Moscow; 13th Baltic Triennial, Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius; ICA, London; Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw; Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf (solo); Berlin Biennale 9; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Upcoming exhibitions of the duo include solo presentations at: Amanda Wilkinson Gallery, London; Julia Stoschek Collection, Düsseldorf and Trafo Gallery, Budapest. In 2020, Gawęda and Kulbokaitė will be in residence at Onassis Cultural Foundation (GR), La Becque (CH) and Alserkal (UAE).

Rimma Gerlovina
(Russia / USA)

Rimma Gerlovina (b. 1951, Russia) is a conceptual artist working with photography, text and performance. She and Valeriy Gerlovin were involved in underground conceptual movements in Soviet Russia before coming to the USA in 1980. Based on a play of paradoxes, their work is rich with philosophical and mythological implications that also reflect back into their writing. Many of their images refer to an iconography of universal knowledge — with allusions to Christian symbolism, alchemy, numerology. Their book *Concepts* was published in Russia in 2012. The work of Rimma Gerlovina and Valeriy Gerlovin has been exhibited and performed internationally and is represented, among others, in the collections of the Guggenheim and the J.Paul Getty Museum. Rimma Gerlovina lives in the United States.

Jelena Glazova
(Latvia)

Jelena Glazova (b.1971) is a sound artist, visual artist and poet based in Riga. She works in interdisciplinary areas of contemporary art, combining in her work image, poetic text, installation and experimental music activity like noise/droning, usually constructed from processed vocals. As a visual and sound artist, she has participated in numerous group exhibitions, festivals and projects in Latvia and abroad, including solo shows at the Latvian Museum of Photography (2010) and the Latvian Contemporary Art Centre (LMC, 2011). Among her publications are books of poems, such as *Transfers* (2013, published by Orbita, in Russian and Latvian) and *Plasma* (2014, published by Paranoia.ee, in English and Estonian). Jelena Glazova's poetry has been translated into Latvian, English, Finnish, Polish, Estonian, Lithuanian, and Swedish.

Tomislav Gotovac
(Croatia)

Tomislav Gotovac (b. 1937 in Sombor, Serbia, d. 2010 in Zagreb) was a multi-disciplinary artist considered the precursor of performance art in the former Yugoslavia. He attended the University of Zagreb and the Academy of Performing Arts in Belgrade. Cinematic imagery intimately connected Gotovac's personal life and artistic work, as he saw himself both as an actor in and observer of a perpetual movie. Gotovac developed a pioneering practice in conceptualism and performance. Approaching his own body as a readymade, in the 1960s he began staging photographs of himself. During this decade, he directed experimental films using continuous repetition of images to reveal personal stories. Gotovac's films relate to multiple elements: to a whole that is his life, to his other artworks, and, more broadly, to politics, to his country's history, and also, or perhaps even most of all, to other directors' films.

Bohumila Grögerová & Josef Hiršal
(Czech Republic)

Josef Hiršal (b. 1920 in Chomutičky, d. 2003 in Prague) was a poet and translator. In his younger years, he was an adherent of the poetics of surrealism. He considered the period of close collaboration with his partner Bohumila Grögerová between 1962 and 1970 to be the happiest and most productive years of his life. Hiršal and Grögerová's so-called experimental poetry was a reaction against the pervasive devaluation of the term and an attempt to reinvest words with energy and meaning by revealing their often grotesque semantic structure. Hiršal's translations from the fifties onwards included Chinese tracts, Renaissance poetry, the work of Spanish, English, French and Yugoslavian poets, including famous authors such as Morgenstern, Heine, Heissenbüttel, Enzensberger, Jandl and Artmann, spanning a period of two thousand years. His own work progressed from the traditions of the surrealist avant-garde to the classic experimental book *JOB-BOJ* (with Bohumila Grögerová, 1968), and to the collection *Píseň mládí* (Song of Youth).

Bohumila Grögerová (b. 1921 in Prague, d. 2014 in Prague) was a poet and translator. In the 1960s, she and Josef Hiršal co-authored many experimental poems, encompassing a wide range of techni- ques, ranging from purely visual creations to philosophising riddles. Her work occupies a space where literature, music and visual art come together; it examines not only meaning but also the ancient, audio-visual roots of words and, by extension, thought.

Group of Six Artists / Grupa šestorice
(Croatia)

The Group of Six Artists was an artist collective established in 1975 by Boris Demur, Željko Jerman, Vlado Martek, Mladen Stilinović, Sven Stilinović and Fedor Vučemilović in Zagreb, Croatia. They began exhibiting in open-air spaces in an attempt to circumvent the traps set by art institutions, and called their shows 'exhibition-actions' because most of the works were created on site and in response to the given situation. Their work emphasised tautology as the heritage of conceptualism and questioned the status of both artist and artwork in an expanded communication with the audience. The group's activities were documented in experimental films and in the self-published magazine MAJ/75 (1978–1984).

Durs Grünbein
(Germany)
Durs Grünbein was born in Dresden, Germany, on 9 October 1962. In 1985 he moved to East Berlin, where he began to study Theatre. Engaging with painters, photographers and performance artists, he contributed to a variety of magazines, journals, and exhibition and publishing projects. In 1986, he met Heiner Müller, who introduced him to Siegfried Unseld and in 1988 Suhrkamp published his first book of poems, *Grauzone morgens*. He lives and works as a poet, translator, and essayist in Berlin and Rome. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, he travelled through Europe to South-East Asia and the USA. He was a guest of the German department at New York University and the Villa Aurora in Los Angeles. He has received numerous prizes for his work, including the Peter Huchel Prize, the Georg Büchner Prize, the Literature Prize of the Salzburg Easter Festival in 2000, the Friedrich Nietzsche Prize in 2004, and the Berlin Literature Prize in 2006, which was connected with the Heiner Müller Professorship. His books have been translated into numerous languages.

Gino Hahnemann
(Germany)
Gino Hahnemann (b. 1946 in Jena, GDR, d. 2006 in Berlin) was a writer and filmmaker. After studying architecture, he applied himself to literature, film and stage design as an autodidact. As an artist and a figure integrating various East German subcultures, he emerged as one of the key personalities of the independent art scene in East Berlin and the GDR. From 1982 to 1986, Gino Hahnemann was prolific as a super 8 filmmaker, inspiring other artists to also work with this medium. Since his death in 2006, his literary and personal legacy has been administered by the Academy of Arts, Berlin.

Tibor Hajas
(Hungary)

Tibor Hajas (b. 1946 in Budapest, d. 1980 in Szeged) defined himself foremost as a poet who also created radical body-based performances. His early conflict with Soviet-type Hungarian authorities in 1964 concluded with a prison sentence. In the late 1960s, Hajas began to develop actions and photographic practice in the spirit of Fluxus. A decade later, in 1978, he launched a more radical performative practice in collaboration with photographer János Vető. This collaboration was based on one-man actions by Hajas, and resulted in photo sequences – as final medium – installed in characteristic tableau formats. Along with their performative and photographic collaboration, Hajas presented his autonomous performances rooted in Tibetan philosophies, as a spiritual examination of physical existence. He died in a car crash in 1980.

Jörg Herold
(Germany)
Jörg Herold (b. 1965 in Leipzig, GDR) is a German visual artist. After training to be a stuccoer, he began studying Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig, enrolling as a regular student in 1987, and later switching to the Weissensee Academy of Art. Already in Leipzig, Herold was an active member of the artist group PIG (Plagwitzer Interessengemeinschaft), whose members included Gerd Harry Lybke, who later reached prominence as an art dealer and became his gallerist. Jörg Herold participated in the 1995 Venice Biennial and his work was exhibited in documenta x, Kassel, in 1997. He is currently a fellow at the Villa Massimo in Rome. His artistic practice continues to include moving images, although he switched from super 8 to video after the dissolution of the GDR.

Josef Hiršal
see Bohumila Grögerová & Josef Hiršal

Jiří Kolář
(Czech Republic)
Jiří Kolář (1914–2002) was a Czech poet, writer, painter and translator, a key artistic and cultural figure in the Czech Republic. In his young years, he worked as a construction worker, security guard and bartender, among other jobs. He had no formal education. Kolář, whose works enter into a dialogue with his Cubism-inspired Dadaist predecessors Raoul Hausmann, Man Ray, Hannah Höch, Kurt Schwitters and Max Ernst, eschewed conventional aesthetic values: already his first exhibition in 1937 showed collages and mixed media sculptures, which worked to disrupt the field of vision. His work adopted the technique of "rollage", which playfully combined vertical slices of reproductions of old masters' paintings with torn pieces of magazines and everyday objects. Kolář's first published collection of verse, *Křestní list* (Birth Certificate, 1941), demonstrated elements of the existentialist musings of Skupina 42, a Czech poetry collective which emerged in the late 1930s. After 1953 Kolář migrated away from writing and began to focus on the visual arts: "poetry of silence." In 1977, Kolář signed Charter 77 – a declaration demanding the acknowledgement of international human rights agreements by communist authorities and immigrated to Berlin. Kolář later resided in Paris and exhibited globally.

Vladimir Kopicl
(Serbia)

Vladimir Kopicl (b. 1949 in Đeneral Janković, Kosovo) is a poet, critic, theorist, editor and anthologist. In the early 1970s, he was a member of several conceptual art collectives, including Group (Ǝ. He has participated in many international exhibitions, including Septième Biennale de Paris (1971), *Aspects* (1975), Edinburgh Art Festival (1975) and numerous literary festivals, conferences, meetings, symposia and residencies. He was the editor of the magazine *Index* and *Tribina mladih* (Youth Tribune). In 1972, he edited and translated the book *Telo umetnika kao subjekt i objekt umetnosti* (Artist's Body as Subject and Object of Art), an international anthology of texts and documents on body art. He also worked with film as a tool for recording artwork.

Dávid Koronczi
(Slovakia)

Dávid Koronczi (b. 1990 in Lučenec, Slovakia) is an artist, poet, graphic designer and organiser. His artistic research delves into narrative clichés that teach us to understand the world. He is ac- tive as an organiser of critical platforms and independent associations. He was chief curator of the Priestor art gallery in Lučenec between 2010 and 2015. In 2013, he joined Martina Szabó to form the creative incubator Pinchof_.

Barbara Kozłowska
(Poland)

Barbara Kozłowska (b. 1940 in Tarnobrzeg, d. 2008 in Wrocław) was a graduate of the State Higher School of Fine Arts in Wrocław, where in 1965 she defended her diploma work in the field of architectural painting. Her work was situated at the intersection of painting, drawing, sculpture; she was also interested in paratheatrical actions, "poesiography" and landscape activities; she made video works and performances. She was the author of manifestoes and texts in the field of art theory. She participated in many seminal events for Polish art history, including the Wrocław '70 Symposium of Visual Arts, Osieki '70 Open-air Festival, the Dreamers' Congress, Atelier '72, the Concrete Poetry movement. In the years 1972–1981 and 1989–1993 she ran the independent gallery Babel founded in her studio.

Naško Križnar
(Slovenia)

Naško Križnar (b. 1943 in Ljubljana) is an ethnologist and archaeologist (Ljubljana University, 1970). He was a member of the OHO Group and in 1982 he established and directed the Audiovisual Laboratory of the Scientific Research Centre at the Slovene Academy of Science and Arts. He is the author of numerous visual ethnographic field productions, ethnographic films and publications. He earned his PhD in visual ethnography in 1996. Since 2004, Križnar has been a professor of visual anthropology at the Primorska University in Koper, where he founded the Centre for Visual Ethnography. He has been organizing the annual Summer School of Visual Ethnography in Nova Gorica since 1979, and since 2006 he has been running the Days of Ethnographic Film, an international festival in Ljubljana.

Romuald Kutera
(Poland)

Romuald Kutera (1949–2020) in the years 1970–1975 studied at the State Higher School of Fine Arts in Wrocław, where he obtained a diploma in Painting at the studio of Prof. Alfons Mazurkiewicz. In the years 1975–1985 he worked as a teacher at his alma mater. Simultaneously, from 1975 to 1980, together with Anna Kutera, he ran the Recent Art Gallery at the Pałacyk Academic Culture Centre in Wrocław. After 1975, together with Jan Świdziński and Anna Kutera, he propagated the programme of contextual art. He had over 30 individual exhibitions. In the years 2008–2015 he was the curator of the Recent Art Gallery at the Municipal Art Centre in Gorzów Wielkopolski. He worked with film, photography, spatial installation, drawing and painting.

Katalin Ladik
(Hungary)

Katalin Ladik (b. 1942 in Novi Sad, Serbia) is a poet who employs various means of expression. She makes collages and photographs, acts on stage and in films, and also practices performance art. She finds paper – the traditional medium of poetry – too static, and replaces it with her (often naked) body: sensual, individual, and political. Her poetic performances were accompanied by graphic scores that she interpreted in situ. Constructed around the material quality of sound, her vocal compositions strip language of meaning, breaking it down into phonemes to expose its instinctive, mechanical aspects. She lives and works in Novi Sad, in Budapest, and on the island of Hvar.

Yuri Leiderman
(Ukraine)

Yuri Leiderman (b. 1963 in Odessa) is an artist and writer. In the 1980s and 1990s, he lived in Moscow and was a member of the Moscow Conceptual circle. In 1987, he was one of the founding members of the Medical Hermeneutics group, which he left in 1990. Leiderman has participated in numerous international exhibitions of contemporary art, including the biennales in Venice (1993, 2002), Istanbul (1992), Shanghai (2004), Manifesta (Rotterdam, 1996). He is the author of several books of essays, prose and poetry. In 2005, he was awarded the Andrei Belyi Prize. Leiderman lives and works in Berlin.

Via Lewandowsky
(Germany)

Via Lewandowsky (b. 1963 in Dresden, GDR) is a German visual artist. In 1982, he began studying Stage Design at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, where he founded the artist group Autoperforationsartisten with Michael Brendel, Else Gabriel, and Rainer Görss, graduating in 1987 with the first diploma to be awarded to a group performance in East Germany. Shortly before the dissolution of the GDR, Lewandowsky emigrated to West Germany, where he took part in many exhibitions and displayed works in public space. Via Lewandowsky made numerous films on super 8, both with Autoperforationsartisten and on his own, between 1985 and 1988.

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Vlado Martek
(Croatia)

Vlado Martek (b. 1951 in Zagreb) is a multimedia conceptual artist, poet and writer. He graduated from the University of Zagreb with a degree in Literature and Philosophy. His work includes actions, agitations, ambiances, murals, graffiti, texts on his own art and on other artists, prints, art postcards, sculptures, poetic objects, paintings, art books and staged photography. Martek's work can be seen primarily as avant-garde poetry, standing in opposition to the dominant lyrical paradigm of European literature. One of Martek's key concepts is pre-poetry, the idea that poetry is not a finished, isolated work, but rather comes through the poet and the writing process. From 1975 to 1978, Martek was a member of the informal Group of Six Artists.

Slavko Matković
(Serbia)

Slavko Matković (b. 1948 in Subotica, d. 1994 in Subotica) was a conceptual artist involved in visual poetry, body art, comics, poetry, painting, performance, film and mail art. His work explores authorship as well as the relationship between art and linguistics. In 1969, Matkovic with Bálint Szombathy founded the art group Bosch+Bosch in Subotica. During the 1970s, Matković created interventions on paper or on book pages, generated by computer codes. He also started experimenting with comics, whose narration he undermined, affirming the autonomy of individual words. During 1981, he distributed invitations to his solo exhibition in Mali Salon on the streets of Rijeka. Photographs of the actual distribution of invitations to unknown passersby taken by Bálint Szombathy were included in the exhibition. It was around this time that Matković began to "sign" his works with a stamp bearing the image of comic book heroes.

Kirill Medvedev
(Russia)

Kirill Medvedev (b. 1975 in Moscow) is a poet, left-wing activist and musician, who plays as the frontman in the band Arkady Kots. His books have been published in the USA, Estonia, England and the Netherlands. Medvedev's collage of poetry, criticism, and action re-examines old potentialities, looking for gaps and interstices where protest, opposition, and utopianism remain possible. His Andrei Bely prize-winning volume *Pokhod na meriiu* (March on City Hall) was released by his publishing house Free Marxist Press. Medvedev's translated essays on politics and aesthetics have made their way into publications such as The London Review of Books and The New Left Review. Nationally, his translation and recording of the protest song *Steny* (*The Walls*; Lluis Llach's famous 1968 Catalan protest song *L'Estaca*, remade into *Mury*, the anthem of Polish Solidarity in the 1980s) became one of the anthems of the long year 2012.

Jan Měřička
(Czech Republic)

Jan Měřička (b. 1955 in Pardubice) is a printmaker and artist. He graduated from Prague's Václav Hollar Art School in 1983. He teaches at the Film and Television Faculty, Department of Photography (FAMU Prague) and works as a curator in the Gallery 50°47'55.9"N 14°57'22.6"E. Měřička's concepts are based on records of human motion in specific spaces e.g. metro stations, later abstracted into models of human motion, and realised through drawings in silk screen technique. Měřička has been producing artist's books since 2000, working with texts by Jaromir Typlt, H.M. Enzensberger, Guillaume Appolinaire, Pavel Novotný and his own. His books often have processual character e.g. *Photograms of Fish Skeletons Eaten by the Artist during a Year*. Měřička was awarded the 1st Prize at 7th International Biennial of Miniature Art, Gornji Milanovac, Serbia (2003), 1st Prize at 4th Egyptian International Print Triennial in Cairo, Egypt 2000 and other awards.

Andrei Monastyrski
(Russia)

Andrei Monastyrski (b. 1949 in Petsamo/Murmansk region) is a poet, artist and theorist. He graduated from Moscow State University with a degree in Philology. In 1973, he began to work with serial structures and minimalist sound compositions. In 1975, he turned his attention to poetic objects and actions. In 1976, he was one of the founding members of the Collective Actions group and later compiled the group's documentary volumes, Trips Out of Town. He also edited numerous publications, including the first issue of the Moscow Archive of New Art (MANI). In 2003, Monastyrski received the Andrei Bely Prize for his contribution to Russian literature and in 2009, the Innovation Prize for Art Theory. In 2011, Monastyrski and Collective Actions represented Russia at the Venice Biennale.

Monogramista T.D
(Slovakia / Czech Republic)

Dezider Tóth (b. 1947 in Výčapy-Opatovce) is an artist who has been exhibiting his work under the name Monogramista T.D since 1997. He is one of the key representatives of conceptual art in Slovakia. In 1970 he co-organised and took part in the legendary unofficial exhibition at the First Open Studio. Later Tóth also organised the apartment exhibitions *Depozit* (1976-77) and *Shift*, *Championship in the shift of the Artefact* (1979-86). His conceptual work ranges from action art, installations, artists' books to paintings, objects and minimalist interventions. He has taught at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava since 1991. Tóth received the Dominik Tatarka Literature Award in 2012. He lives and works in Brno.

Ladislav Novák
(Czech Republic)
Ladislav Novák (b. 1925 in Turnov, d. 1999 in Třebíč) was an artist and poet working with sound and image. He studied at Prague's Charles University between 1945 and 1950, writing his thesis on *Rhyme and Assonance in the Work of Vítězslav Nezval*. He was instrumental in advancing concrete poetry and sound poetry, recordings of which he made in the 1950s. With Jiří Kolář and Josef Hiršal he formed the first Czech Group of Experimental Poetry. In 1962 he acquired a small Sonet Duo tape recorder and began experimenting by recording his own voice. Thanks to an editor at Czechoslovak Radio in Liberec, he had the opportunity to record several of his poems in a professional studio in 1969, and those recordings found their way abroad. His work was exhibited with that of contemporaries such as Henri Chopin, Bob Cobbing, Pierre Garnier, Ernst Jandl and Maurice Lemaître.

Pavel Novotný
(Czech Republic)
Pavel Novotný (b. 1976 in Liberec) is a poet and scholar. He works at the Department of German Language at the Faculty of Education in Liberec, and writes poetry, songs, radiophonic compositions. He is also the author of experimental texts, which are created by transposing speech into written form. Novotný has published several books of poetry, as well as prose written together with Helena Skalická. His lifelong project is called *Tramvestie*, an endless set of sound and text recordings, mapping a tram ride between Liberec and Jablonec nad Nisou. Together with Jaromír Typlt, he has re-staged the dada composition *Ursonate* by Kurt Schwitters. The German publishing house Arco has published his dissertation on literary collage and montage.

NSRD
(Latvia)
NSRD (Nebijušu sajūtu restaurēšanas darbnīca / Workshop for the Restoration of Unfelt Feelings) was an artist collective, active in Latvia between 1982 and 1989. Its members were, among others, Juris Boiko, Hardijs Lediņš, Imants Žodžiks, Inguna Černova. Its founders were architectural theorist Hardijs Lediņš (1955–2004) and poet and artist Juris Boiko (1954–2002). They were joined by architect Imants Žodžiks (b. 1955), musician Inguna Černova (b. 1962) as well as artist Leonards Laganovskis, musician Mārtiņs Rutkis and others. NSRD are known for their experimental music recordings, actions, interdisciplinary art and exhibition projects. They were among the first in Latvian art to use video and computer technologies in their projects. These included music and conceptual album records, concert performances, multimedia exhibitions and video performances. It was only in 1988 that some of the group's earlier actions, such as *Walks to Bolderāja*, were retroactively attributed to NSRD by Juris Boiko.

OHO
(Slovenia)
The OHO Group was an artists' collective formed in the late 1960s. Its core members were Milenko Matanović, David Nez, Marko Pogačnik and Andraž Šalamun. The OHO Group achieved success in the late 1960s and early 1970s by participating in conceptual art exhibitions, both at home and abroad. Their artistic practice is connected to *arte povera*, land art, happenings and various body art practices. While working together, the members of the collective were exploring spirituality and the transfer of spiritual issues into their art practice. They became interested in ritual as a medium; this made it possible to transcend the boundaries of the everyday world and to establish a deeper connection with nature. In a later phase, the members of the OHO group gave up working within the art system and founded a commune in the village of Šempas, in the Vipava Valley, Slovenia.

Paulina Ołowska
(Poland)
Paulina Ołowska (b. 1976) is a graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. She continued her studies at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam. She is the winner of the Aachen Art Prize (2014). In 2016, the New York Times listed Paulina Ołowska among 28 creative geniuses who had redefined culture in that year. She has participated in many artistic projects and shown her works at individual exhibitions in venues such as Novecento Museum, Milan (2018); The Kitchen, New York (2017); Tate Modern, London (2015); Ludwig Forum für Internationale Kunst, Aachen (2015); Zachęta National Art Gallery, Warsaw (2014); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2013); Kunsthalle Basel, Basel (2013); CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco (2010); and in many important group exhibitions. Paulina Ołowska's works can be found in private and public collections.

Orange Alternative / Pomarańczowa Alternatywa
(Poland)
Orange Alternative is a Polish underground movement which started in Wrocław and was led by Waldemar Fydrych, commonly known as the Major in the 1980s. Its main purpose was to offer an alternative means of opposition against the authoritarian regime to a wider group of citizens by means of peaceful protest using absurd and nonsensical elements. Orange Alternative has been viewed as part of the broader Solidarity movement, although parody of Solidarity was also one of its guiding themes. Initially they painted graffiti of dwarves on paint used to cover up anti-government slogans on city walls. From 1985 to 1990, Orange Alternative organised more than sixty happenings in several Polish cities. It suspended activity in 1989, but was reactivated in 2001 and has been active on a small scale ever since.

Roman Osminkin
(Russia)

Roman Osminkin (b. 1979 in Leningrad) is a Saint Petersburg-based poet, art critic, performer and video artist. He received his PhD from the Russian Institute of Art History with a dissertation on participatory art and its manifestations, and has been a member of the Saint Petersburg Writers' Union since 2007. Osminkin was a member of the Laboratory of Poetic Actionism, which combined video-poems (distributing the poetic word in three dimensions) with more aggressive interventions in public space. He was also active in the Saint Petersburg Street University movement that emerged in 2008. Osminkin is interested in the dynamics of poetics and politics within the form and structure of a text or image. Osminkin frequently acts as an invited lecturer and performer in various institutions in Russia and abroad.

Andrzej Partum
(Poland)

Andrzej Partum (b. 1938 in Warsaw, d. 2002 in Warsaw) was a neo-avant-garde poet, composer, performer, creator of objects and installations, author of manifestoes and critical and theoretical texts, painter. Orphaned at an early age, he did not graduate from any art school, although he attended the Composition Department of the Warsaw Conservatoire as a non-enrolled student. He was one of the first artists in Poland to publish his poetry volumes at his own ex- pense. In 1971, he founded the Poetry Office in Warsaw. A small room in the attic served as his original gallery (later called the Pro/La gallery), a place for presentations and meetings as well as a correspondence exchange point as part of the international Mail Art movement. In the years 1971–1984 he created an archive in which he collected documentation connected with the functioning of the Poetry Office, his own practice and the practice of numerous artists from around the world with whom he maintained contact. Partum did not leave many tangible artistic materials since his art was largely based on situational actions, gestures, improvised interactions, words, texts.

Ewa Partum
(Poland)

Ewa Partum (b. in 1945 in Grodzisk Mazowiecki near Warsaw) is a conceptual artist whose work combines poetry, performance, and film. She studied at the State Higher School of Visual Arts in Łódź and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, where she earned her diploma in 1970. Beginning in 1969, her work has explored issues of female identity, including the gender bias of the art world. Major works include *poems by ewa* (since 1970), *Tautological Cinema* (a series of short films made between 1973 and 1974), and *Self-Identification* (1980), a nude performance combined with a series of photomontages. Her works have been exhibited at leading art institutions worldwide. Ewa Partum lives in Berlin.

Liliana Piskorska
(Poland)

Liliana Piskorska (b. 1988) is a visual artist, Doctor of Fine Arts, graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. In 2017, she defended her doctoral dissertation entitled *Desire for Contact* at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Toruń (supervisor: Elżbieta Jabłońska). A member of Grupa nad Wisłą since 2013. Finalist of the Forecast Forum at Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin in 2017, winner of Deutsche Bank's "Views" Audience Award. In her artistic work, she analyses social issues from the perspective of radical sensitivity, rooted in the feminist-queer and feminist-posthumanist practice and theory. An important element of her activities are issues of group identity, collective memory, construction of law and ways of building imaginary communities.

Agnieszka Polska
(Poland)

Agnieszka Polska (b. 1985) positions her computer-generated media works within an intricate network of language, science and history, using them to focus on individual and social responsibility. She attempts to describe the overwhelming ethical ambiguity of our time by poetic means, and the relationship between an individual and their surroundings by constantly shifting the narrative through different scales. The departure point for these melancholic journeys might be the laws of quantum mechanics, the female mouth or an imperfect and fragile artefact, but they soon reach the horror of catastrophes on a cosmic scale. Many of her works examine various processes of influence, legitimisation or exclusion in the fields of language, consciousness and history. In order to describe these processes, Polska deliberately uses visual and acoustic stimuli to affect the viewer's brain. Agnieszka Polska was the 2017 winner of the Nationalgalerie Prize in Germany, and took part in the main show of the 57th Venice Biennale, curated by Christine Macel.

Bogdanka Poznanović
(Serbia)

Bogdanka Poznanović (b. 1930 in Begeč, d. 2013 in Novi Sad) is an artist whose practice includes traditional and new visual media, painting and mail art. She earned her degree in Painting from the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade, and was a member of the editorial boards of the magazines *Polja* and *Tribina mladih*. She received a grant from the Italian government to develop her work and reside in Florence and Rome in 1968/1969, and later in Venice in 1977. Poznanović is a longtime professor of Intermedia Research at the Academy of Fine Arts in Novi Sad.

Dmitri Prigov
(Russia)
Dmitri Prigov (b. 1940 in Moscow, d. 2007 in Moscow) was a Russian writer, artist, and performer. He graduated as a sculptor in 1965 from the Moscow's Stroganov Art Institute, and began to write in 1971, his practice generating poetry, prose, mini-dramas and poetic objects. His later art blends definitions of poet, sound performer and graphic artist, connecting his poetry to conceptual readings, performances and installations. Prigov embodies the idea of Gesamtkunstwerk in the framework of Moscow conceptualism. Since 1986, he was briefly incarcerated in a psychiatric hospital by the KGB after a performance during which he distributed his poetry cycle *Appeals* in public places. Prigov was awarded the Pushkin Prize in 1993 and the Boris Pasternak Prize in 2002. His literary texts have been translated into numerous languages, and he participated in many exhibitions worldwide.

Pussy Riot
(Russia)
Pussy Riot is a Russian feminist punk group founded in 2011 and based in Moscow. In 2012, Pussy Riot famously broke into the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow to perform an impromptu concert (with the *Punk Prayer: Mother of God Drive Putin Away*). Russian authorities detained three members of the group, two of them were sentenced to two years of confinement in a labour camp. At the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, members of the group were beaten by Cossack security guards during one of their flash recitals. In 2018, four members of Pussy Riot ran onto the pitch during the World Cup final in Moscow. The stunt was meant to salute Dmitri Prigov, a Russian poet and artist who died 11 years before. Prigov used the persona of a militiaman as the central protagonist of his major poetic cycle, crucial to the aesthetics of Moscow conceptualism – a legacy the World Cup protesters paid homage to by dressing as contemporary Russian police.

Lev Rubinstein
(Russia)
Lev Rubinstein (b. 1947 in Moscow) is a poet from the circle of Moscow Conceptualism. He earned his degree in Russian Philology at the Pedagogical Faculty of the Moscow State University in 1971. While working as a librarian, he began using index cards to write sequential texts which he describes as a "hybrid genre" that "slides along the edges of genres and, like a small mirror, fleetingly reflects each of them, without identifying with any of them." His work was circulated through samizdat and underground readings in the unofficial art scene of the 1960s and 1970s, finding wide publication only after the late 1980s. Now among Russia's most well-known living poets, Rubinstein lives in Moscow and writes cultural criticism for the independent media.

Gerhard Rühm
(Austria / Germany)
Gerhard Rühm (b. 1930 in Vienna) is a writer, composer and drawer. Rühm graduated from the piano and composition class at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. After graduation, he took private lessons from Josef Matthias Hauer, the creator of the method of composing with all twelve notes of the chromatic scale. Since the early 1950s, he has been creating poetry of sound and the spoken word, visual poetry, photomontages; he is also the author of many publications. At the end of the 1960s, he participated in the radio programme *Semester of Experimental Creation*. He is a co-founder (together with Friedrich Achleiter, H.C. Artmann, Konrad Bayer and Oswald Wiener) of the Vienna Group and publisher of an anthology under the same title. In 1972–1996 he worked as a professor at the University of Fine Arts in Hamburg and in 1978–1982 he was the president of Grazer Autorinnen Autorenversammlung, a Graz-based writers' association. Rühm's works combine elements of music, literature, gestures and visual art. His works are prime examples of New Radio Plays and Acoustic Art.

Andrey Silvestrov
(Russia)
Andrey Silvestrov (b. 1972 in Moscow) is a film director and producer. He earned his degree in Art History at the Russian State University for Humanities (RGGU) and also studied film with the filmmaker and theatre director Boris Yukhananov. He is the author of over twenty short films and video projects. His works have been shown at various festivals, including Venice Film Festival, Rotterdam Film Festival, Rome Film Festival, Berlinale; he also directs an international film festival of his own in Kansk (Siberia). Since 2010, he has worked together with Yuri Leiderman on the ongoing film performance *Birmingham Ornament.*

Mladen Stilinović
(Croatia)
Mladen Stilinović (b. 1947 in Beograd, Serbia, d. 2016 in Pula) was a conceptual artist whose work focused on the language of politics and its reflection in art and the everyday. From 1969 to 1976 he worked with experimental film and from 1975 to 1979 he was a member of Zagreb's Group of Six Artists. His works include drawings, collages, photographs, artist books, paintings, installations, actions, films, and video. They probe the field of artistic signs and speech by decoding verbal and visual clichés, separating language from common or daily political ideas and connotations.

Gabriele Stötzer
(Germany)
Gabriele Stötzer (b. 1953 in Emleben, GDR) is a German writer, artist and actress. She was first trained as a medical technician in Erfurt, and then studied pedagogy. In 1976, she participated in the protests against the expatriation of the songwriter Wolf Biermann, for which she was exmatriculated and arrested. After serving a year in the Hoheneck Women's Prison, she began to work as an artist, both alone and as part of the Erfurt artist group, founded in 1984. She made music, worked with textiles, wrote poems and prose, staged performances and fashion shows, ran a private gallery and made films on super 8. Today, Gabriele Stötzer teaches and writes.

László Szalma
(Serbia)
László Szalma (b. 1948 in Subotica) is an artist and graphic designer. He earned his degree at the Graphic School in Subotica. In 1968, he was a founding member of the Bosch+Bosch group and participated in all of the group's exhibitions until 1975. His practice included actions and graphic design, and he has also experimented with collages. In 1980, Szalma joined the Q art group in Subotica, and has regularly participated in the summer school in Zalaegerszeg. He also worked together with artists from the Hungarian city of Csurgó. Szalma has worked for several Yugoslavian periodicals as a graphic designer and contributor since the 1970s.

Tamás Szentjóby
(Hungary)
Tamás Szentjóby (b. 1944 in Fót, Hungary) is a poet and happener, also known as Tamás St. Auby, Stjauby, Emmy (Emily) Grant, St. Aubsky, T. Taub, St. Turba. He represents one of the most radical positions within the Hungarian neo-avant-garde. During the 1960s, he turned away from metaphysical poetry and began creating happenings and actions. Along with Gábor Altorjay, Szentjóby initiated the first Hungarian happening, *The Lunch (In Memoriam Batu Khan)*, held on 25 June 1966. Around the same time, he also made intermedia objects, as well as concrete and visual poems. In 1968, Szentjóby founded the International Parallel Union of Telecommunications (IPUT) through which he, as the organisation's superintendent, carried out part of his activities.

Bálint Szombathy
(Hungary)
Bálint Szombathy (b. 1950 in Paćir, Serbia) is a visual artist, performance artist and theorist of nomadic and hybrid productions. Each medium has similar weight in his work, from performative pieces centred on intervention, mail art, visual poetry to the object- and installation-centred works of recent decades. Szombathy is well known for his semiologic photo-performances and for extending poems physically to disrupt the faculties of urban space. In the 1970s he was a co-founder and catalyst of the group Bosch+Bosch. He lives and works in Budapest.

Slobodan Tišma
(Serbia)
Slobodan Tišma (b. 1946 in Stara Pazova) is a poet, writer, and musician. He studied Literature in Novi Sad and Belgrade. Until the mid-1970s, he worked in the field of conceptual art. He was a member of the group KôD (CODE) and (Ǝ, and served as editor of important youth magazines *Index* and *Polja*. He was also editor of *Tribina mladih* (Youth Tribune). In the late 1970s and during the 1980s, he played rock music in the bands Luna and La Strada. Since the 1990s, he has published nine books of poetry and prose, receiving several important national awards for his prose writing. His work has been translated into several languages. He is a member of the Serbian PEN Centre, and has read and performed his poetry at various poetry festivals since the 1990s. He lives in Novi Sad.

Raša Todosijević
(Serbia)
Raša Todosijević (b. 1945 in Belgrade) is a painter, sculptor and writer. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade in 1969, where he studied Painting. In the early 1970s, he belonged to a group of artists gathered around the Belgrade Student Centre, where a new form of artistic expression was conceived, later called *nova umjetnička praksa* (new artistic practice). His means of expression include installation, performance, video, painting, sculpture, as well as objects made of different, clashing organic and non-organic materials: bread, fish, rubber plants, mud, plaster, water, metal, found objects, transistors, etc. His performance explores totalitarian behaviour and builds a victim-torturer relationship, making light of the philosophical and theoretical question of art's definition, for instance by asking *Was ist Kunst?* – „what is art" in German – over and over again in one of his videos.

Jaromír Typlt
(Czech Republic)
Jaromír Typlt (b. 1973 in Nová Paka) is a poet and art historian. He graduated from the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague. At present, he applies himself to exhibitions of progressive art and photography. Typlt has published several books of poetry and fiction. Since around 1999, he has experimented with incorporating the written word in other forms of art, such as art books, stage performances, audio recordings and short films. His interests as an art historian include art brut, among other subjects. He has amplified the form of the so-called "mutated authorial reading" in which he makes use of pre-recorded voices, language rhythm, as well as found objects and scenic action in space. In recent years, he has been producing book-objects in cooperation with other allied artists.

Jiří Valoch
(Czech Republic)
Jiří Valoch (b. 1946 in Brno) is an art theorist, curator, artist and poet. Valoch completed his studies in Czech, German and Aesthetics at the Faculty of Philosophy at Masaryk University in Brno, with a thesis on the development and typology of visual and phonic poetry. Valoch has been creating visual poetry since 1963. By the end of the 1960s, his work transformed itself in accordance with the development of concrete poetry and conceptual art. From 1972 to 2001, Valoch worked as a theorist and curator in The House of Arts in Brno (Dům umění města Brna), where he organised exhibitions of key personalities of Czech art (V. Boštík, M. Knížák and many others). From the early 1970s, he participated in the organisation of informal exhibitions in several different spaces throughout Czechoslovakia.

Honza Zamojski
(Poland)
Honza Zamojski (b. 1981) is a graduate of the University of the Arts in Poznań. An artist, designer and publisher of books, who uses various media in his practice: from drawing and drawing sculptures to infographics from the world of corporation and poetry. This diversity reflects the artist's spectrum of interests, which are based on a utopian desire to organise and understand the surrounding world. What connects the seemingly distant elements of Zamojski's practice is the simplicity of form, humour and self-distance. He is the author of over a dozen books and the "How It's Made" series of lectures, which he has delivered at venues such as Centre Pompidou, MoMA Library, and Printed Matter New York. He lives and works in Poznań.

Poetry and Performance
The Eastern European Perspective

Wrocław Contemporary Museum
27.03 – 8.06.2020

Wrocław Contemporary Museum
Photograph by Małgorzata Kujda, 2020

Exhibition curators:
Tomáš Glanc, Sabine Hänsgen, Agata Ciastoń

In collaboration with:
Dubravka Đurić, Daniel Grúň, Emese Kürti, Claus Löser, Pavel Novotný, Branka Stipančić, Darko Šimičić i Māra Traumane

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Hubert Kielan

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