
Exhibition & Programs

Nov 18  Foksal Gallery
Nov 21  Katarzyna Krysiak
         Pawel Polit
         David Senior
         Justyna Wesołowska
Nov 22  Katherine Carl
         Katarzyna Krysiak
         David Senior
Dec 7   Irina Aristarkhova
         Katherine Behar
         Johanna Burton
         Patricia Ticineto Clough
         Ashley Dawson
         Piper Marshall
         R Joshua Scannell
         Rebekah Sheldon
Thoughts Isolated:  
The Foksal Gallery Archives,  
1966–2016  

The James Gallery  
The Graduate Center, CUNY  
365 Fifth Avenue at 35th Street  

centerforthehumanities.org/james-gallery  

Hours: Tue–Thu 12-7pm, Fri–Sat 12–6pm  

Nov 19–Dec 17, 2016  

Exhibition and Programs
Thoughts Isolated
The Foksal Gallery Archives, 1966–2016

Founded by artists and critics in 1966 in Warsaw, Poland, the Foksal Gallery has thrived through transitions in the realms of government, the economy, and the art world. Today, at a time when New York City’s artist-run spaces are encountering serious threats to survival, the case of the Foksal Gallery becomes ever more relevant. How does the Foksal Gallery illuminate new ways of building a sustained art community and legacy? The archives tell the story of the gallery as a model of an arts space run as a collaboration between artists and critics and engaged consistently in critical reflexive dialogue about its purpose/mission and meaning.

The exhibition opens on the occasion of the Foksal Gallery’s 50th anniversary featuring the Foksal Gallery Archive’s unique set of resources of original papers, photographs, printed matter and artworks collected since the gallery’s founding. The exhibition includes early exhibition catalogues, invitations, posters and flyers, often designed by the artists themselves. Original material such as maquettes and designs for exhibitions are also to be found, as well as a large amount of photographic documentation of performances, installations and social gatherings at the gallery as well as sound and moving image recordings of early happenings and events.

The theoretical writings of the core critics who formed Foksal’s philosophical agenda, such as Wiesław Borowski, Hanna Ptaszkowska, Mariusz Tchorz and Andrzej Turowski, were provocations towards rethinking how art could be presented. This exhibition pays homage to their work and theoretical rigor which emphasized new artistic concepts that changed how art could take place and disperse itself. These key texts form the enduring legacy of the Foksal Gallery.

Thoughts Isolated, the exhibition’s title, is excerpted from a text entitled “The Living Archives” by Wiesław Borowski and Andrzej Turowski (1971), in which the artists-critics stated in bold text: “WE DO NOT PRESENT HISTORY BUT WE KEEP THOUGHTS ISOLATED.” This notion captures the Foksal Gallery’s continued exploration of role of the archive in the gallery’s program. The archive as a recurring conceptual figure is also to be found in Tadeusz Kantor’s Panoramic Sea Happening (1967), during which a set of archival documents was submerged at sea; in Borowski and Turowski’s The Living Archives exhibition (1971), where the entire gallery was transformed into an information exchange for international conceptual art documents; and most notably in traveling exhibitions to Edinburgh, Glasgow and London in 1979–1980. As we trace the various ways in which the archive was staged throughout the history of the gallery, this exhibition is similarly an experiment with archival practice.

In its current state, housed in same small gallery space in Warsaw in wooden boxes designed by the artist Krzysztof Wodiczko in the 1970s, the Foksal Gallery Archive demonstrates the role played by the gallery in shaping the history of contemporary Polish art. These materials give evidence of the experimental nature of the works displayed at the gallery by Polish artists like Zbigniew Gostomski, Maria Stangret, Tadeusz Kantor, Edward Krasinski, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Jarosław Kozlowski and Stanisław Drózd. It constitutes a singular collection of records which are of immense value in both artistic and historical terms and document fifty years of work within various political realities and in collaboration with a diversity of artists, from Henryk Stażewski, pioneer of Polish avant-garde, to an international roster of conceptual artists like Lawrence Weiner, Daniel Buren, Christian Boltanski, and Ben Vautier. (www.galeriafoksal.pl)
Introduction to the catalogue of the first Foksal Gallery exhibition, 1966.
PROGRAM Galerii Foksal PSP

W sprawach dalszych zatopilek niezadowolenia ogładza się ich nie tylko wywoływać. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby na wyjeździe wyciągnąć. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby z numerem wyjeźdu wyciągnąć. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby z numerem wyjeźdu wyciągnąć.

Wystawę się mieniwicie, jak to już w nierzadę w podobnych okolicznościach stwierdzano, niektóre zatopilek niezadowolenia ogładza się ich nie tylko wywoływać. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby na wyjeździe wyciągnąć. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby z numerem wyjeźdu wyciągnąć.

Poniżej to wszystko, tym niestety, jak w przypadkę og Panel do wybudowania tego na widok, otwartej twórczej. Jednakże czekamy, aby się oto zamiast zatopilek niezadowolenia ogładza się ich nie tylko wywoływać. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby na wyjeździe wyciągnąć. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby z numerem wyjeźdu wyciągnąć.

Wystawę się mieniwicie, jak to już w nierzadę w podobnych okolicznościach stwierdzano, niektóre zatopilek niezadowolenia ogładza się ich nie tylko wywoływać. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby na wyjeździe wyciągnąć. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby z numerem wyjeźdu wyciągnąć.

Wystawę się mieniwicie, jak to już w nierzadę w podobnych okolicznościach stwierdzano, niektóre zatopilek niezadowolenia ogładza się ich nie tylko wywoływać. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby na wyjeździe wyciągnąć. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby z numerem wyjeźdu wyciągnąć.

Wystawę się mieniwicie, jak to już w nierzadę w podobnych okolicznościach stwierdzano, niektóre zatopilek niezadowolenia ogładza się ich nie tylko wywoływać. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby na wyjeździe wyciągnąć. Aby tryb czasu, ćwiczyby z numerem wyjeźdu wyciągnąć.
At least one side of the expert of habit is readily apparent. So cleave at blind is it that to future is a mindless shift of your point must come. Let us be no moment longer look at worst, but let us no step further the territory except by them. Let us not enter the exhibition, let us try it. It is inevitable. What shall we find out?

1. The enemy of exhibition is its intolerance. It is countered as an ornament. It must not act upon the man.

But here are the facts. Exhibition explains itself on its own, and becomes an independent entity. In an exhibition there is no bell of art that becomes a fact. An individual work becomes subject to the independent actuality of the exhibition. It has forever since it is an event. The work conceived as a thing, once it is any among the many. How the work that cannot be made for a moment's enjoyment. How it even thought of as drawing up to a train of shelves?

It. An exhibition is a post-factum operation. The art of artistic realization has been subject to the smell of the very worth of the situation. The freethinker, from work begins a completely new existence as the exhibition. It communicates what is already the past. What it creates available, are the friends of the work, the friends of the act. An exhibition is a communication of what has passed, anywhere and on a base installation. It has actually no relationship at all with the activity of exhibition.

3. The behavior. He appears at the exhibition to solemn final formalism concerned with its reception. His presence has a merely logic significance. And for all that the work freedom has been allowed him, while or generally doesn't know how to use it. This freedom it has no activity on its part, as e.g. a simple necessity might have done. As a result, all these presents at the exhibition. The incompleteness actually varies distance towards a work of art, it sustains the kinship. Activity is a condition of the libidinal presence at the exhibition, it allows him to concept, to check, to purchase etc.

4. The artist. This artist has something more to do in the exhibition except holding the flowers. He is a man in the house, more or stimulated by no longer present experience, or also he is not the one who believes in the future magic, his notion is that of a certain long staying without sensible reminder after he had performed his duty.

The artist, and is to be constituted in the present form, he overview the exhibition manifest, actively participate, and direct a rift that is inseparable with his actual matter. The artist is tuning in his not be, while we are trying to rear the living animal out of the ego. There the artist, persuaded by the learned that identity is at moment present, sees an endless continuum among the works of his intention to fixate splendor of a public show.

Why not to make this somehow, so the exact quantity of the work, into its very object?

The place thus. No place the PLACE. The PLACE for art.

The PLACE is an area that arises by virtue of a void, void and any principles binding in the salon.

The PLACE is not a space category, it not an area, a brave, a postcard, a screen, a postcard, and above all it is not an exhibition.

The PLACE is isolated and at the same time it must get experienced. Its existence is not a mere subjective matter and it cannot be called into being by purely private endurance. It must be comprehensive and significant object, while at the same time it cannot seem if it fails to present itself against the world's impact and against getting identified with the world.

The PLACE is a sudden gap in the utilitarian approach to the world. Art and any standards valid beyond the PLACE no longer hold within it. There is no idea of its potential significance all its moment, sense, element and non-essential. Interpretations are left behind, Events, if they occur at all, are deprecated of any thing meaning whatever. There is no existence within the PLACE, since there is no difference between the wrong and the right, the good and the bad-for-effect, everything equally, and simply is there. The PLACE is neither strange nor common, refined or vulgar, wise or simple. It is neither dream nor value.

The PLACE is no transparent. What it is, in the actual present, there are so criteria of better or more valuable. Effect is the PLACE. It may even be empty, the place must be emotionally present.

The PLACE is not to be an area, it cannot be divided and it does not present. The PLACE is what we are.

Only way step aside, we compose it is our many many places compared with it. The PLACE can become an object of barid only from inside the PLACE. From worldly point of view this is by no means a precious area. The PLACE cannot be recognized by its appearance. It does not manifest the world's news because it has nothing to do with them at all. The PLACE may indeed look like any other fragment of worldly. However, there are some areas in the world that are show off of particularity fit for becoming PLACES.

The PLACE is not a construction nor a destruction. It comes into being as a result of an internalized demand. The PLACE has no sufficient change in the world. In it is the artist that this comes radical. It is a place that holds the PLACE. It is created by him who steps within it. It is only the PLACE that is created by all his PLACE. The PLACE cannot be actually fixed up in it must be necessarily perpetuated.

A slight moment of instantaneous may be enough for it to get back as it is stored it. There are numerous unconscious forms that spontaneously destroy the PLACE or prevent it from existences. These forms take advantage of the PLACE to move in and they manipulate with where that is and where it is not. The PLACE is situated to it, without. The PLACE cannot be brought or collected. It cannot be used. It cannot be an object of view.
Zbigniew Gostomski

This page contains a text discussing the concept of the system in the context of the Wrocław city. The text is written in Polish and includes references to specific locations and elements within the city. The text is not fully legible due to the quality of the image, but it appears to be an artistic or philosophical discussion related to urban planning or architectural concepts. The page also includes a note at the bottom about the gallery and the event. The text is not fully translatable due to the partial legibility of the content.
ASSEMBLAGE D'HIVER dans la Galerie Foksal PSP, Varsovie


Edward Krasinski, "I've Lost the End!!" Foksal Gallery leaflet, April 1969.
...a few people are busy around a large trunk. They are wrapping it tight in layers of linen and paper. They are in a hurry. They are looking around with anxiety. They are unfolding some strings with much care...They give orders to each other in a low voice. They act efficiently and without anybody’s permission. They try to realize the order taking advantage of the general carelessness. To prevent the trunk...to make fail any attempts at reaching the contents...They succeed to pack it and stamp it with warnings, instructions, mail symbols: Attention: Fragile. Ostracize. Cura Duri bendo. By boat. The Address: GALLERY FOKSAL PSP — Warsaw...The rumor goes among the public that the trunk consists a collection of the Gallery’s important documents: a manuscript of the pedant chronicle of pseudo-serious events; applications and responses to applications; lengthening records with signatures; full file of press items with critical reviews...shortest reports, protocols, photographs and phasograms...The crowd around the trunk is growing. At a certain moment it is brought to the very shore of the sea. There it is most carefully put aboard of a little boat which quietly sails away sea bound, with the scaredly watching a naked shot...the sign to throw the trunk into water...
głos na taśmie
HENRY GALY CARLES

sprawozdawcy z trasy listu:
Wiesław BOROWSKI
Zbigniew Gostomski
Edward KRASIŃSKI
Mariusz Tchorek

LISTONOSZE
Marian Gęgniewicz
Henryk Jurczak
Marian Książek
Piotr Kucharenko
Bolesław Nowak
Wacław Nowakowski
Henryk Wójcik

CZŁOWIEK
W CZARNEJ
SKORZANEJ
KURTCE

tadeusz kantor

MARIA STANGRET

ZBIGNIEW Gostomski
Mariusz Tchorek
Hanna Ptaszkowska

EDWARD Krasinski

WIESŁAW Borowski

9 rayons de lumière
dans le ciel

Henryk Siażewski 1969

18 Thoughts Isolated

19 The James Gallery
Artistic activities, when they are under way, remain
in-vulnerable to their showing off; they also set in doubt
the reasons to be perceived.

An active thought wishes to exist beyond the manipu-
lations of:
— artiste themselves
— display managers
— the greedy audience.

A new work, since it is identical with its message, lasts
as long as its process of isolation continues. Its real
existence is locked up in the time span between its
broadcasting and its reception.

If the limits are encroached upon from either side, the
autonomy of the work is threatened:
— persistent stroking of his thought by the artist con-
taminates it with the author’s lyrical Ego
— when received, a thought is introduced into the cir-
culation of the schematic cultural values.

A letter put to a mailbox is no longer subject to any
manipulations until it arrives where it is bound to. Its
objectless, shapeless, impersonal and necessary authen-
ticity is equivalent to the length of the mail channel.

The time of transmission is the only neutral ground of
an artistic work. Even if reduced to a minimum, it deter-
mines the occurrence of the fact.

Artistic facts call for an establishing of the LIVING
ARCHIVES as a possibility to apprehend the trans-
mission.

The LIVING ARCHIVES make it clear that a thought is
past when it is accessible.
The LIVING ARCHIVES define a work when it is social-
ly present — when the artist has quit it already —
when the mill of schematizing interpretations has not
started yet.
The LIVING ARCHIVES are expected to be a channel
in which the works remain in their own state of readiness
— already beyond the stimulating thought of their
maker, but before the audience disturbs them. We step
in to give a work its frame, we seize the transmission —
we don’t care for the broadcasting and the reception.

An exposition, as a place of reception of a work and the
last phase of the flow of information, has been the point
from which it’s been consumed and introduced into the
institutional pattern.

A Laboratory of Art used to provide hothouse con-
ditions for the brooding of ideas, it was a focal center
allowing for exhibitionist advertising of an artist in ways
prepared in advance.

By establishing the LIVING ARCHIVES we deny:
— the Laboratory of Art
— the workshop for artistic ideas
as well as WE DENY ANY AND ALL FORMS OF PRE-
SENTATION OF A WORK.
WE ALSO DENY ALL THE ARCHIVES, since any archi-
ves present history.

WE DO NOT PRESENT HISTORY BUT WE KEEP THE
THOUGHTS ISOLATED.
The LIVING ARCHIVES offer the frames which are not
institutional or cultural for any artistic activity.
We do not collect materials in a scientific or methodic
way. Our objective is not archives endeavors to
make its files complete. We’ve got no use for archives
as a collection of documents which “are not actual, but
are worth to be kept.”

A rich collection in the LIVING ARCHIVES is a neces-
sity, but it cannot be used for any purpose.

We are establishing the ARCHIVES THAT ARE FUNCTION-
ING CURRENTLY.
The LIVING ARCHIVES set forth a model for a work-
ing, work maintaining its neutrality.
The LIVING ARCHIVES, by suggesting a changing but
always sharp border of distinctive becomes a new context for creative activity.
The LIVING ARCHIVES are subjected to creation.
The LIVING ARCHIVES are a current reaction to the
— artistic
— non-artistic
— anti-artistic phenomena.

Wieslaw Barowski
Andrzej Turowski
Programs

Mon, Nov 21, 6:30pm
Lecture and Discussion

Achieving Rapport: Art and Archives at Foksal Gallery

Katarzyna Krysiak, Paweł Polit, David Senior, Justyna Wesołowska.
Moderated by Katherine Carl.

In tandem with the exhibition on view in the James Gallery, “Thoughts Isolated: the Foksal Gallery Archives 1966–2016,” this evening’s lectures by Katarzyna Krysiak, Paweł Polit and Justyna Wesołowska followed by discussion will focus on critical and curatorial strategies and practices at the Foksal over successive decades with continued support of the thriving contemporary art scene. Today at a time when artist-run spaces founded in the 1960s and 70s in New York City are encountering serious threats to survival, what does the example of Foksal Gallery illuminate for building a sustained art community and legacy? Starting in the 1960s from a base of extraordinary commitment to art and philosophy as well as ongoing international exchange, the gallery was self-reflective in its practices and in its documentation of activities ranging from performances and public art to strong graphic and textual production of catalogues and printed materials. Foksal Gallery introduced deeply influential artists to the international scene including Tadeusz Kantor and Edward Krasinski, and Krzysztof Wodiczko, as well as hosting an international roster of conceptual artists like Lawrence Weiner and Ben Vautier, which in turn shaped contemporary art in Poland and internationally.

The James Gallery

Tues, Nov 22, 6:30pm
Gallery Tour


Katherine Carl, Katarzyna Krysiak, David Senior.

The archives of Foksal Gallery in Warsaw tell the story of the gallery as a model of an arts space run as a collaboration between artists and critics, which was constantly in critical dialogue with itself about the purpose and meaning of its own mission. Now celebrating Foksal Gallery’s 50th anniversary, the archive houses a unique resource of original papers, photographs, printed matter and artworks collected since the gallery’s founding. The exhibition includes printed materials like early exhibition catalogues, invitations, posters and flyers, often designed by the artists themselves. Join the curators for a look at archival materials such as original maquettes and designs for exhibitions, copious photographic documentation of performances, installations and social gatherings at the gallery as well as sound and moving image recordings of early happenings and events.

The James Gallery

Wed, Dec 7, 2016, 7pm
Conversation

Object-Oriented Feminism

Irina Aristarkhova, Katherine Behar, Johanna Burton, Patricia Ticineto Clough, Ashley Dawson, Piper Marshall, R Joshua Scannell, Rebekah Sheldon.

This conversation explores object-oriented feminism (OOF), a feminist intervention into recent philosophical discourses—like speculative realism, object-oriented ontology (OOO), and new materialism—that take objects, things, stuff, and matter as primary. Approaching all objects from the inside-out position of being an object too, OOF foregrounds three significant aspects of feminist thinking in the philosophy of things: politics, erotics, and ethics. The evening’s discussion centers on a new discipline-expanding volume, Object-Oriented Feminism (University of Minnesota Press), which seeks not to define object-oriented feminism, but rather to enact it by bringing together contributors from a variety of fields and practices including sociology, anthropology, art, science and technology studies, English, philosophy, and everyday life.

The James Gallery

This event is co-sponsored by the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences, Baruch College, CUNY.
Curators: Katherine Carl, Katarzyna Krysiak, David Senior.

Cooperation: Bartek Remisko and Martyna Stółpiec. With special thanks to Anna Ficek and Jennifer Wilkinson.

Organizers: James Gallery, the Graduate Center, CUNY and Foksal Gallery, Mazovia Institute of Culture, Warsaw.

The exhibition was made possible by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland; the support of the Polish Cultural Institute-New York; the patronage of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute/Culture.pl; and Anka Ptaszkowska.

Additional support from The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in New York; The Kosciuszko Foundation; The Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences of America, Inc.; Artists Alliance Inc.; Artists Space; CEC ArtsLink; EFA Project Space; Franklin Furnace; NURTUREart Non-Profit, Inc.; Residency Unlimited.

The Amie and Tony James Gallery, located in midtown Manhattan at the nexus of the academy, contemporary art, and the city, is dedicated to exhibition-making as a form of advanced research embedded in the scholarly work of the Graduate Center across multiple disciplines. The gallery creates and presents artwork to the public in a variety of formats. While some exhibitions remain on view for extended contemplation, other activities such as performances, workshops, reading groups, roundtable discussions, salons, and screenings have a short duration. The gallery works with scholars, students, artists and the public to explore working methods that may lie outside usual disciplinary boundaries.
The James Gallery