

frieze

CONTEMPORARY ART AND CULTURE

NO. 164 JUNE • JULY • AUGUST 2014



Politics & Place **ERIC BAUDELAIRE**
OMER FAST & TOM MCCARTHY *On Location*
ART & POETRY NOW
REVIEWS *Whitney / Glasgow / Sydney*



UK £6.95 US \$12 €10



97 70962 067021

CLEVER BOY BOULLET PDF

IN THESE GREAT TIMES

Kunstneres Hus, Oslo

A video monitor at the entrance of the group exhibition 'In These Great Times' showed the curator, François Piron, standing at a workbench in the partially installed show and redacting lines from the exhibition's brochure. The video was one of artist Victor Boulet's contributions to the show; its *raison d'être* was another – the snippets of text Piron is censoring from the brochure with his black pen are from a published email exchange between Boulet and Piron on the subject of artistic and family legacies, as well as a discussion of Boulet's complex and multi-layered installation for the show, *The Harrow, The Sparrow, The Sorrow* (2014).

At first Boulet's video seemed incidental, but it transpired to be a fitting addition to this exhibition, which placed language centre stage, in a somewhat elliptical homage to the under-recognized and eminently outspoken Austrian satirist Karl Kraus, whose eponymous 1914 essay gave the show its title. Kraus is perhaps best known for his almost entirely self-authored, self-edited and self-published journal *Die Fackel* (The Torch, 1899–1936), in which he railed against the feebleness and corruption of the contemporary press, as well as the moral hypocrisies and looming political threats of his times. A noted aphorist, who relished citing from newspapers as much as devising his own German-language gems, Kraus inaugurated *Die Fackel* with the following dictum: 'My business is to pin down the Age between quotation marks.'

Kraus's fighting spirit may have hovered over the conception of 'In These Great Times' but it didn't haunt the halls of works in Kunstneres Hus. Those seeking an exhibition 'about' Kraus – akin to Piron's much-hailed 'Locus Solus' devoted to French author Raymond Roussel (at the Reina Sofia, Madrid, in 2011–12) – would have



4

been surprised. Instead of tracing influences of a writerly aesthetic on a generation of artists, as he did with Roussel, Piron seemed to want to test the aphoristic method as a curatorial strategy. There was no overarching 'theme' to be teased out of the diverse selection of young and well-established artists and works (dating from the 1970s to the present), but language was playfully, acerbically, critically, poetically and revealingly omnipresent – both in the exhibition and in the negotiations between the artists, institutions and the curator revealed in the brochure.

In the main exhibition space, Kristine Kemp's lean text series ('Currency', 2014), printed on paper headed with 'In dieser grossen Zeit' (the original German title of Kraus's essay), faced off with Mladen Stilinović's exuberant wall installation *Exploitation of the Dead* (1984–90), a visual collage of suprematist and constructivist-style art works, photographs and faux cakes and pastries, which cohered into an alternately serious and slapstick vision of history and ideology. Kemp was the only artist to cite Kraus directly: one of the phrases in the 1914 essay is 'Expect no words from me.' Kemp opened her series with this phrase, thus displacing her own authorship.

Speech acts and issues of public address were highlighted in Jenny Holzer's colourful grid of *10 Inflammatory Essays* (1979–82), posters shouting out confrontational phrases in her signature uppercase, which papered one wall of the lobby, and in Adrian Piper's *My Calling (Cards) #1 and #2* (1986–90) sitting on the welcome desk and the bar. Piper used to hand the cards out as a form of non-vocal resistance to everyday racism and social injustice: Card #1 begins: 'Dear Friend, I am black. I am sure you did not realize this when you made/laughed at/agreed with that racist remark.' Though very much a product of their times and places, the ongoing poignancy of these works was striking. Same goes for Per-Oskar Leu's beautiful sound piece *An die Nachgeborenen* (To Those Who Follow in Our Wake, 2014), based on Bertolt Brecht's letter to the future, written in the 1930s when the playwright was in exile in Denmark. Leu's work was audible throughout the exhibition, but was theatrically installed in the dark auditorium, the speakers accompanied by a single spotlight on the floor in front of a mirror teleprompter. Taken aphoristically, or as citations to be 'read' alongside each other, these voices came together as a powerful chorus of discontent with our own 'great times'.

VIVIAN SKY REHBERG

PAULINA OŁOWSKA

Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw

It was a warm May night some ten years ago when, completely bewildered, I walked into a place just off Warsaw's Nowy Świat high street looking for an art space that Paulina Ołowska and Lucy McKenzie had just opened in the former gallery of the National Artist's Club. What I found was a room packed full of people, music, Polish art nouveau-style wall paintings, and mismatched pieces of Zakopane, or highland-style, furniture. The short-lived space was called Nova Popularna and it was the first work I saw by Ołowska. Given this introduction, it did not surprise me that her recent exhibition at Zachęta, 'The Spell of Warsaw', her largest to-date in her native country, featured a fully fledged womenswear store.

Taking its title from a 1960s Warsaw fragrance shop, which once boasted a neon sign in the shape of a perfume bottle (until this was replaced by a run-of-the-mill billboard, shown on the show's poster), 'The Spell of Warsaw' brought together ten years' worth of paintings, collages, photographs and installations, which speak less of the city itself than of the ways in which its imagery has changed over the decades.

Warsaw's spell, then, is a certain aura perhaps best embodied by the glow of the neon signs that once lit its streets. For *Palimpsest* (2006), Ołowska commissioned a number of neon signs combining geometric forms and slogans from historical and modern examples to be manufactured by what is today a modest company, but which, in the 1960s and '70s, was the city's major supplier. *Natasza* (2010), with the red and white outline of three Matryoshka dolls (oddly resembling squat Coca-Cola bottles), is a remake of a logo that once sat over the entrance to a store offering merchandise from the USSR. In another room, the painting *48HG 2 Mi* (2006) lists the names from hundreds of neon signs for stores, merchants and services – most of which have since disappeared. In *Nocturnes (Night Paintings from Warsaw)* (2005–08), two near pitch-black images of the city's Palace of Culture and Science and a view of the River Vistula, seem austere, if not downright gloomy – much like *Warsaw Belongs to Bourgeoisies* (2006), a monochrome collage in which streetlights and buildings emanate a pale light.

The exhibition leaflet compares Ołowska's concept of bringing together fashion, design and photography from the 'East' and the 'West' to the aesthetics of *Ty i Ja*, a Polish women's monthly published from 1960 to 1973, whose carefree tone brought a whiff of the West to the otherwise lacklustre magazine market of the People's Republic of Poland. Ołowska's approach seems also to have been inspired by that of *Ty i Ja*'s editorial staff, who had no qualms about quoting and reprinting materials published abroad. In her 'Crossword Puzzles' (2009–ongoing), a series of large panels featuring black and white squares superimposed with images of young women – a frequent feature of Polish brain-teasers to this day – the artist cites →

1
Man Ray
Noire et Blanche (Black and White), 1926, silver gelatin print, 18 × 24 cm

2
Medardo Rosso
'Enfant à la Bouchée de pain' in the Cézanne room at the Salon d'Automne, 1904, silver gelatin print, 12 × 16 cm

3
Constantin Brancusi
Le Muse endormi, (The Sleeping Muse), 1910, bronze, 16 × 28 × 19 cm

4
Jenny Holzer
10 Inflammatory Essays, 1979–82, offset coloured posters, each 43 × 43 cm, installation view at Kunstneres Hus

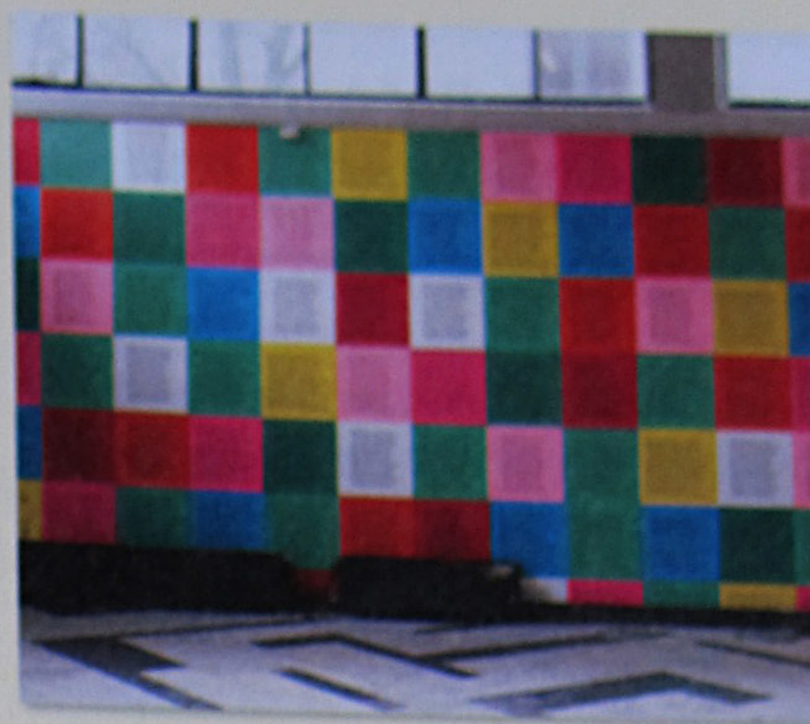
IN THESE GREAT TIMES

Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo

A video monitor at the entrance of the group exhibition 'In These Great Times' showed the curator, François Piron, standing at a workbench in the partially installed show and redacting lines from the exhibition's brochure. The video was one of artist Victor Boulet's contributions to the show; its *raison d'être* was another – the snippets of text Piron is censoring from the brochure with his black pen are from a published email exchange between Boulet and Piron on the subject of artistic and family legacies, as well as a discussion of Boulet's complex and multi-layered installation for the show, *The Harrow, The Sparrow, The Sorrow* (2014).

At first Boulet's video seemed incidental, but it transpired to be a fitting addition to this exhibition, which placed language centre stage, in a somewhat elliptical homage to the under-recognized and eminently outspoken Austrian satirist Karl Kraus, whose eponymous 1914 essay gave the show its title. Kraus is perhaps best known for his almost entirely self-authored, self-edited and self-published journal *Die Fackel* (The Torch, 1899–1936), in which he railed against the feebleness and corruption of the contemporary press, as well as the moral hypocrisies and looming political threats of his times. A noted aphorist, who relished citing from newspapers as much as devising his own German-language gems, Kraus inaugurated *Die Fackel* with the following dictum: 'My business is to pin down the Age between quotation marks.'

Kraus's fighting spirit may have hovered over the conception of 'In These Great Times' but it didn't haunt the halls of works in Kunstnernes Hus. Those seeking an exhibition 'about' Kraus – akin to Piron's



4

been surprised of a writerly ac of artists, as h seemed to wa method as a c no overarching of the diverse established a the 1970s to t was playfully, cally and reve the exhibition between the curator revea

In the mai Kemp's lean t printed on pa grossen Zeit' of Kraus's ess Stilinović's ex *Exploitation* a collage of sup style art work and pastries, nately serious and ideology. cite Kraus di 1914 essay is Kemp opene thus displaci

Speech a address were colourful grid (1979–82), po tional phrase



the partially installed
g lines from the
re. The video was one of
t's contributions to the
tre was another – the
on is censoring from the
lack pen are from a
change between Boulet
object of artistic and
well as a discussion of
nd multi-layered
show, *The Harrow, The*
v (2014).

video seemed incidental,
be a fitting addition
which placed language
mewhat elliptical hom-
cognized and eminently
satirist Karl Kraus,
1914 essay gave the
is perhaps best known
ly self-authored, self-
ished journal *Die Fackel*
36), in which he railed
ss and corruption of the
as well as the moral
ning political threats of
horist, who relished
ers as much as devising
guage gems, Kraus
rel with the following
is to pin down the Age
arks.'

pirit may have hovered
of 'In These Great
aunt the halls of works
Those seeking an
aus – akin to Piron's
Solus' devoted to French
ussel (at the Reina
1–12) – would have

1
an Ray
nche (Black and
silver gelatin print,
× 24 cm

2
rdo Rosso
Bouchée de pain'
ézanne room
utomne, 1904, silver
int, 12 × 16 cm

3
ntin Brancusi
rmi, (The Sleeping
1910, bronze,
28 × 19 cm

4
ny Holzer
ry Essays, 1979–82,
loured posters,
cm, installation view
sternes Hus



4

been surprised. Instead of tracing influences of a writerly aesthetic on a generation of artists, as he did with Roussel, Piron seemed to want to test the aphoristic method as a curatorial strategy. There was no overarching 'theme' to be teased out of the diverse selection of young and well-established artists and works (dating from the 1970s to the present), but language was playfully, acerbically, critically, poetically and revealingly omnipresent – both in the exhibition and in the negotiations between the artists, institutions and the curator revealed in the brochure.

In the main exhibition space, Kristine Kemp's lean text series ('Currency', 2014), printed on paper headed with 'In dieser grossen Zeit' (the original German title of Kraus's essay), faced off with Mladen Stilinović's exuberant wall installation *Exploitation of the Dead* (1984–90), a visual collage of suprematist and constructivist-style art works, photographs and faux cakes and pastries, which cohered into an alternately serious and slapstick vision of history and ideology. Kemp was the only artist to cite Kraus directly: one of the phrases in the 1914 essay is 'Expect no words from me.' Kemp opened her series with this phrase, thus displacing her own authorship.

Speech acts and issues of public address were highlighted in Jenny Holzer's colourful grid of *10 Inflammatory Essays* (1979–82), posters shouting out confrontational phrases in her signature uppercase, which papered one wall of the lobby, and in Adrian Piper's *My Calling (Cards) #1 and #2* (1986–90) sitting on the welcome desk and the bar. Piper used to hand the cards out as a form of non-vocal resistance to everyday racism and social injustice: Card #1 begins: 'Dear Friend, I am black. I am sure you did not realize this when you made/laughed at/agreed with that racist remark.' Though very much a product of their times and places, the ongoing poignancy of these works was striking. Same goes for Per-Oskar Leu's beautiful sound piece *An die Nachgeborenen* (To Those Who Follow in Our Wake, 2014), based on Bertolt Brecht's letter to the future, written in the 1930s when the playwright was in exile in Denmark. Leu's work was audible throughout the exhibition, but was theatrically installed in the dark auditorium, the speakers accompanied by a single spotlight on the floor in front of a mirror teleprompter. Taken aphoristically, or as citations to be 'read' alongside each other, these voices came together as a powerful chorus of discontent with our own 'great times'.

VIVIAN SKY REHBERG

high street looking for an art space that Paulina Ołowska and Lucy McKenzie had just opened in the former gallery of the National Artist's Club. What I found was a room packed full of people, music, Polish art nouveau-style wall paintings, and mismatched pieces of Zakopane, or highland-style, furniture. The short-lived space was called Nova Popularna and it was the first work I saw by Ołowska. Given this introduction, it did not surprise me that her recent exhibition at Zachęta, 'The Spell of Warsaw', her largest to-date in her native country, featured a fully fledged womenswear store.

Taking its title from a 1960s Warsaw fragrance shop, which once boasted a neon sign in the shape of a perfume bottle (until this was replaced by a run-of-the-mill billboard, shown on the show's poster), 'The Spell of Warsaw' brought together ten years' worth of paintings, collages, photographs and installations, which speak less of the city itself than of the ways in which its imagery has changed over the decades.

Warsaw's spell, then, is a certain aura perhaps best embodied by the glow of the neon signs that once lit its streets. For *Palimpsest* (2006), Ołowska commissioned a number of neon signs combining geometric forms and slogans from historical and modern examples to be manufactured by what is today a modest company, but which, in the 1960s and '70s, was the city's major supplier. *Natasza* (2010), with the red and white outline of three Matryoshka dolls (oddly resembling squat Coca-Cola bottles), is a remake of a logo that once sat over the entrance to a store offering merchandise from the USSR. In another room, the painting *48HG 2 Mi* (2006) lists the names from hundreds of neon signs for stores, merchants and services – most of which have since disappeared. In *Nocturnes (Night Paintings from Warsaw)* (2005–08), two near pitch-black images of the city's Palace of Culture and Science and a view of the River Vistula, seem austere, if not downright gloomy – much like *Warsaw Belongs to Bourgeoisies* (2006), a monochrome collage in which streetlights and buildings emanate a pale light.

The exhibition leaflet compares Ołowska's concept of bringing together fashion, design and photography from the 'East' and the 'West' to the aesthetics of *Ty i Ja*, a Polish women's monthly published from 1960 to 1973, whose carefree tone brought a whiff of the West to the otherwise lacklustre magazine market of the People's Republic of Poland. Ołowska's approach seems also to have been inspired by that of *Ty i Ja*'s editorial staff, who had no qualms about quoting and reprinting materials published abroad. In her 'Crossword Puzzles' (2009–ongoing), a series of large panels featuring black and white squares superimposed with images of young women – a frequent feature of Polish brain-teasers to this day – the artist cites →