

THE BOOK LOVERS

A Project on Artist Novels

Curated by: **David Maroto**, visual artist (Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and **Joanna Zielińska**, head curator at Cricoteka, Centre for the Documentation of the Art of Tadeusz Kantor (Kraków, Poland).

Curators' Premise: **The Book Lovers** is a systematic attempt to study the phenomenon of artist novels. There are some examples of artist novels in the 20th century, but it is in the last ten or fifteen years that an increasing number of artists are choosing the novel as an artistic medium. Surprisingly, there is a lack of research on this subject. This circumstance gives way to a situation in which artists who write novels are not aware of others doing the same. With The Book Lovers we are intending to create public awareness on this silently widespread artistic trend. There are a number of questions that this project wants to pose: Has literature become a new tool for creating expanded narrations in visual arts? Is it justified to talk about a new phenomenon in contemporary art? What are the consequences for the production process when adopting a purely textual form, moreover a narrative? What link remains to visual arts? Is it possible to find a relation to conceptual art, relational aesthetics, or is this an entirely different artistic form? Collective writing, fictional artist/authors, ghost writers...what are the issues raised in relation to authorship and re-skilling of art practice?

The Book Lovers is a long term project, which is divided in three parts:

1. **A collection of artist novels** including a total of 140 titles that has been acquired by **M HKA, Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp, Belgium**. The collection is complemented by a parallel online database, an "Ensemble", also hosted by M HKA:

<http://ensembles.mhka.be/events/what-happens-when-the-artwork-becomes-a-novel>

The artist novels collection is being on display at M HKA in a specially built Reading Room till 21st April 2013. Some artists present in the collection are: Carl Andre, Sophie Calle, Keren Cytter, Salvador Dalí, Tim Etchells, Mattias Faldbakken, Liam Gillick, Goldin+Senneby, Pablo Helguera, Stewart Home, Joseph Kosuth, Yayoi Kusama, Jana Leo, Rita McBride, Tom McCarthy, Mai-Thu Perret, Richard Prince, Roee Rosen, Lindsay Seers, Alexandre Singh, Andy Warhol... among many others.

2. **An exhibition to take place at EFA Project Space in New York City** (25th January – 9th March 2013, www.efanyc.org/the-book-lovers), and later at **Cricoteka, in Kraków, Poland**. The exhibition will display, on the one hand, the complete artist novels collection, which will be available for public's perusal in a special reading room. On the other hand, a selection of artists will show their works made in relation to their novels. The exhibition will unfold the different creative strategies that visual artists employ when they integrate narrative literature in their own art projects. These are multidisciplinary and extremely varied: video installation, drawing, sculpture, photography, painting, performance... In addition to the reading room and the group exhibition, there will be a public program with performances, video screenings and other public events that complement the mapping of artistic strategies chosen by artists in relation to their own novels.

3. **A two-day symposium** on the phenomenon of artist novels, with a public program of lectures, performances, discussions, public readings... in the **Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, Poland** (October 2013).

More info: www.davidmaroto.info/The-Book-Lovers