

A HOUSE OF LEAVES

AN EXHIBITION IN THREE MOVEMENTS AND AN EPILOGUE

FIRST MOVEMENT | 21.09.2012 - 10.11.2012

An exhibition with works by Horst Ademeit, Ida Applebroog, Phyllida Barlow, Nina Beier, Louise Bourgeois, Bettina Buck, Miriam Cahn, Keith Coventry, Tony Cragg, Enrico David, Matthew Day Jackson, Shannon Ebner, Thomas Houseago, Bethan Huws, Chosil Kil, Martin Kippenberger, John Latham, Alvin Lucier, Marie Lund, Benoît Maire, Victor Man, Kris Martin, Eddie Peake, Man Ray, Steve Reich, Pietro Roccasalva, Wilhelm Sasnal, Rebecca Warren, Lawrence Weiner.

SECOND MOVEMENT | 16.11.2012 - 12.01.2013

An exhibition with works by Sara Barker, Phyllida Barlow, Nina Beier, Karla Black, Carol Bove, Ben Cain, Varda Caivano, Luis Camnitzer, Marieta Chirulescu, Keith Coventry, Tony Cragg, Jason Dodge, Alex Dordoy, Nikolas Gambaroff, Gary Hume, Ian Law, George Henry Longly, Marie Lund, Benoît Maire, Victor Man, Kris Martin, Katy Moran, Anselm Reyle, Manuela Ribadeneira, Gerhard Richter, Pietro Roccasalva, David Schutter, Adam Thompson, Lesley Vance, Gary Webb, Lawrence Weiner and Alison Wilding.

THIRD MOVEMENT | 18.01.2013 - 16.02.2013

An exhibition with works by Danaï Anesiadou, Katinka Bock, Etienne Chambaud, Martin Creed, Jason Dodge, Ryan Gander and Mario Garcia Torres, Laura Gannon, Dora Garcia, Pierre Huyghe, Chosil Kil, Marie Lund, Bruce McLean, Benoît Maire, Kris Martin, Jonathan Monk, Roman Ondak, Marlo Pascual, Francesco Pedraglio, Falke Pisano, Yvonne Rainer, Pietro Roccasalva, Lorna Simpson, Simon Starling, Adam Thompson, and Lawrence Weiner, etc.

EPILOGUE | 22.02.2013

An exhibition with works by Jason Dodge, Dora Garcia, Chosil Kil, Marie Lund, Benoît Maire, Kris Martin, Manuela Ribadeneira, Pietro Roccasalva, Adam Thompson, etc.

This exhibition, *A House of Leaves*, is conceived by Vincent Honoré, director and curator of DRAF. It is curated and produced by Vincent Honoré and Benedict Goodwin, Nicoletta Lambertucci and Sandra Pusterhofer, assisted by Marina La Verghetta, Anna Peres, Rosemarie Merchant and Sairandhri Raut.

The founder, the board of trustees and the director of the Foundation would like to thank the artists for their trust and commitment, and everyone who participated in the opening of our new space.



Symes Mews NW1 7JE London
Tel: 44(0)20 7383 3004
Opening Times: Thu-Sat 12pm-6pm,
Tue-Wed by appointment
www.davidrobertsartfoundation.com

Media partner

MOUSSE

Special partner for education



The David Roberts Art Foundation Limited is a registered charity in England and Wales (No. 1119738) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (No. 6051439) at 25 Gosfield Street, London, W1W 6HQ. It is proudly supported by the Edinburgh House Estates group of companies.

4 MOUSEION

More than a collection of artifacts, a museum should be defined as a collective narrative, a cognitive theatre that must be continually examined and confirmed through a variety of individual positions. After all, the word "museum" finds its origin in the Greek "mouseion", a temple dedicated to the muses, whose activities were akin to those of a university or philosophical academy, an institute for studies and a community of scholars and thinkers. The pre-modern form of the museum was a space for musing, a space for the production and exchange of ideas.

5 AGAINST INTERPRETATION

*A work of art encountered as a work of art is an experience, not a statement or an answer to a question. Art is not only about something: it is something. A work of art is a thing in the world, not just a text or a commentary on the world... (...) Which is to say that the knowledge we gain through art is an experience of the form or style of knowing something, rather than knowledge of something (like a fact or a moral judgement in itself).*¹ If we consider an artwork not solely as an object but as an experience, we might also consider the gallery as a hybrid space in permanent reconfiguration: all at once a gallery, an auditorium, a screening room, and a performance space. Here all hierarchies are rejected, and a conversation is as important as a six-month display. *A House of Leaves* can then become a house of signs and the museum a mode of representation. In this space, everything is exhibition and any exhibition is an experience. Together we create a powerhouse for the creation, redeployment, and dissemination of our collective knowledge.

6 PROGRAMMES 2008 - 2011 - 2012

In 2008, we started to invite external curators with our programme *The Curators' Series*. In 2011, we launched *Fig.*, a programme which explores how knowledge can be co-produced and shared through an innovative format of talks, conferences, research projects, and book presentations. Within this flexible format, which can vary from an event to a temporary installation to a radio programme, *Fig.* aims to trigger new questions and alternative models by considering knowledge not as transmission of information, but as a performative co-production. Now, in 2012, we are opening our *Studio*: a laboratory, workshop, theatre, school, meeting room, and library, where we can meet, discuss, co-produce ideas, and examine works. This space, like a salon, is private, but from time to time will host public activities and discussions. Artist Ruth Beale has designed special shelving and furniture for our event space on the first floor at DRAF and will present a series of 'kitchen conversations' starting on November 17th 2012. For the first session of this *Ad Hoc Salon Series*, Ruth Beale invites artist Giles Round to discuss his research in to American designer Ken Isaacs' theories

NOTES ON THE MUSEUM AS SCHOOL

1 GERHARD RICHTER

This exhibition, *A House of Leaves*, self-organizes internally: its curatorial methodology is derived from the study of three major artworks structuring the exhibition itself, and the gallery where these artworks are successively displayed. The exhibition is conceived as a symphony in three movements plus an epilogue. The first movement, structured around a sculpture by Louise Bourgeois, looked at hybrid forms, from fragmented figures to abstraction. An abstract painting by Gerhard Richter now introduces the second movement, an exploration of abstraction, minimalism and performance. In early 2013, a performance by Pierre Huyghe will take us into the third movement, in which performance, rhythm, and volume are investigated. *A House of Leaves* will end with an epilogue, a final movement towards the void; the exhibition space will be emptied, exposing its architecture and volume, to reveal the museum's long-term works, special commissions and interventions that have been embedded into the material structure of the building.

2 PROCESS

The constant substitution of artworks over the course of the exhibition gradually alters the overall context and evolves naturally from one movement into the next. Since the exhibition is in a constant state of flux, it is never the same and never whole; it is impossible to experience entirely, in all its sequences, but must be virtually (re)composed and completed by visitors. The exhibition thus functions on several planes simultaneously: real, virtual, and fictional. Like the house in the novel by Mark Z. Danielewski from which the exhibition borrows its title, the museum hosting such an exhibition becomes a productive medium in its own right, involving visitors in the (co)production of an artistic situation: the exhibition as deferred action and mental space.

3 INTENTION

Ideally, a museum is a site where thoughts and visions are formed and transformed, culture disassembled and the contemporary redesigned. Our aim at DRAF is to promote exhibitions not as pre-established formulas or didactic presentations of items, but as prototypes and experiences. From the start (2008), we have conceived DRAF as a forum for discussion and a structure acting beyond the confines of an exhibition space, a generative site that will establish and support an informal cultural community in a unique context.

of matrix design and 1974 publication *How to Build Your Own Living Structures*.

7 LUIS CAMNITZER

On leaving the building, please read the façade.

Vincent Honoré

STUDY

THE FIRST STUDY FOCUSED on *Senza Titolo (Dopo la strage degli innocenti, Anonimo, verso 1400)* by Victor Man was lead by Sandra Pusterhofer. It launched a new programme at DRAF of case-studies of works from the collection. Each involves a single work, displayed on its own in a gallery. The second study, conducted by Nicoletta Lambertucci, is dedicated to *Machine Gun and Figure* by artist Carol Bove. The work is studied in depth: from its techniques, origin and history to its position in the artist's practice and contemporary debates. *The Study* is made available in a booklet.

AN ARTWORK IS A SYSTEM that cannot be reduced only to an object or an index (certificate, instructions, etc.). It also includes the histories (material and conceptual), the trajectories (physical or virtual) and the narratives (past or to come) generated by the artwork: this is what this programme will research.

FIG.5: AN ACADEMY, AN OPERA, AND OTHER FICTIONS

FIG.5: AN ACADEMY, AN OPERA, AND OTHER FICTIONS, is a four months educational project, running simultaneously to the exhibition *A House of Leaves*. *Fig.5* is the fifth in a series of similar projects launched at DRAF in 2011, investigating knowledge, its production and its dissemination. "Fig." (short for "Figure") can – among other uses – refer to Marcel Broodthaers, in particular to his peculiar arrangements of objects, details, references, and inscriptions included in his *Musée d'Art Moderne département des aiglès*; "academy" emphasises the educative potential of this programme; "opera" calls for a theatrical, musical and participative context; "fictions" are all the composite efforts to bring different narratives and conversations in the museum.

FIG.5 EXPLORES the pedagogical potential at DRAF and questions the role of the audience. We want to stimulate cultural democracy rather than democratization of culture, as we produce together/for individuals, not for masses. *Fig.5* is free and open to all, but we ask for an active engagement that somehow rejects the museological rhetoric of combining 'amusement without excess and knowledge without fatigue.'

FIG.5 IS COMPOSED of three courses: FormContent, Vision Forum and DRAF. FormContent's course will explore issues on visual language that lie at the core of its current programme *It's moving from I to It*. Within the framework of a class run by an artist, a performer and an academic, each mode of thinking and working is presented indistinctively in a knowledge-production setting.

VISION FORUM COURSE, *An Opera in Five Acts* invites the audience to take part in its course of production. Only enrolled participants will be able to participate in any of the acts/workshops. This unconventional art opera is constructed as a series of five accumulative acts, each of which sources information from all of the previous acts.

THE DRAF COURSE FOCUSES on the progressive opening up of the notion of museum: it starts from a focus on the location (*First session: The London Eye*), by pointing to the problematics that affects the relationships between programming and its context. Then *Fig.5* becomes a forum for different museography's methodologies by sharing ideas with a range of institutions not primarily devoted to contemporary art (*Second session: On Museology*). *The knowledge that museums facilitate has the quality of fantasy because it is only*

possible via an imaginative process, as Ludmilla Jordanova writes in *Objects of Knowledge*. We believe that knowledge could be visual and linguistic, immediate and time-based. Different art works and events by artists (*Third session: Practicing Knowledge*) will explore how knowledge can be an artistic material. Academies traditionally frame knowledge with a rigorous and hierarchical allocation of power. *Fig.5* wants to consolidate its scope by stepping back from the academics-knowledge and instead empowering the notion of ignorance (*Fourth session: On Education*). How to investigate knowledge if not placing it within ignorance? *Fig.5* is conceived by Vincent Honoré and Nicoletta Lambertucci.

Programme and schedule available on www.davidrobertsart-foundation.com

THE INCLUSION

The Inclusion is a blog: an independent project that functions parallel to *Fig.5*. The Inclusion operates as a forum and platform for the continuation and diversification of discussions. Engagement will be encouraged through contribution, sharing of resources, essays projects and articles. *The Inclusion* is conceived by Nicoletta Lambertucci and Alex Ross.

TO SWITCH OFF THINKING: CHANCE AND ABSTRACTIONISM

LETTING A THING COME, rather than creating it; no assumptions, constructions, preparation, invention, ideologies – to come closer to the actual richer, more lifelike, to that which is beyond my comprehension.¹

GERHARD RICHTER began research into abstraction in the late 1960s with his Grey Paintings. He developed his technique using brushes and fingers before settling, in the 1980s, exclusively on the squeegee as his primary tool.

FOR THE SERIES ENTITLED FUJI, completed in 1996, Richter used a squeegee to apply oil paint onto alucobond, an industrial synthetic made of aluminium and plastic, which is normally used as a building material. Tools and materials interact to create the work, reducing the artist's intervention to a minimum and introducing chance into the creative act.

*It is a good technique for switching off thinking.*²

FREED FROM ANY LINK with reality and the rules of conscious composition, Richter's abstract paintings find a space between the two conditions of the self – consciousness and the unconscious – in a middle point between these polarities.

BY REMOVING UNNECESSARY detail from his paintings with a squeegee, Richter focuses attention on the essential aspects of art practice. In these works, it is not the artist's inspiration that counts, but colour and surface, gesture and materials.

CHANCE IS THE DECISIVE ELEMENT in this return to essentials, and makes this series a potentially never-ending project, inviting reflections about the nature of art and the role of the artist.

THE SECOND MOVEMENT of this exhibition, therefore, is a journey towards the essential and from the essential towards more complex interpretations of Abstractionism.

PRODUCTION

PRODUCTION CONSISTS OF A RANGE of elements and processes such as; the material, the component, the product or the finished item. This spectrum is not entirely linear, nor is it always easy to recognise the point at which the object moves from being identified as belonging within one of these categories to another. Sometimes therefore, the act of making contains one of identification: What is the material? How should it be deployed? When is it finished?

THE WORD PRODUCTION HAS A LATIN ORIGIN: *Producere*, which translates as to bring forth. This etymology suggests that production can be considered as a process, which is not oriented towards the notion of the product. Production can then be understood as a staging ground, an opportunity to create dialogues which are not rhetorical and do not necessarily contain a sense of resolution for themselves.

DRAF PLAYS HOST to a multitude of productive entities: the curatorial team, independent curators, artists and other practitioners, and embedded structures such as the Labs. Much of what is produced by these individuals and organisations is difficult to define; this is not a critique but a vital part of the functioning of the foundation. It is this community of proximity which encourages sharing of knowledge and informs every strand of what we accomplish.

WHILE IT IS IMPORTANT to appreciate our responsibility to consider the way in which the item in question is interpreted or used, the act of its production can be perhaps more complex and rewarding when the object is not defined by a search for newness, completeness or pertaining to a particular set of values.

TO BE PRODUCTIVE CAN SIMPLY MEAN to be pro-active, and this action can be rewarding when there is a degree of resistance to an easy reading of the produced item, or even to the necessity of the existence of any physical form.

THE PRODUCTION-SITE IS AN ITERATIVE STRUCTURE, it implies a proposal, an imminence, a *bringing forth* of that which has yet to be realised.

1 Gerhard Richter, in: Dietemar Elger, 'Gerhard Richter. A Life in Painting', University of Chicago, 2009, p.251.

2 Ibid, ibidem.