

"Harald Szeemann: Documenta 5"

18/2 – 27/3/2011

KIM? Contemporary Art Centre is proud to present the first historic project from ICI (*Independent Curators International*) series "Exhibition in a Box" –

"Harald Szeemann: Documenta 5". The exhibition has been assembled by David Platzker (USA).

On March 3, at 6 pm, *kim?* invites to attend "Algorithm of the Exhibition" – reading by art historian Kaspars Vanags about Harald Szeemann's work and the legendary exhibition "Documenta 5". Further in the lecture art historian and curator Vilnis Vējš will introduce the parallel processes in the Latvian art in 1970s while art historian and curator Ieva Kulakova will speak about curatorial work nowadays.

About the series "Exhibition in a Box": ICI's newest series of shows celebrates the fact that interesting projects can come in small parcels, and takes its lead from initiatives such as Marcel Duchamp's (1887 – 1968) *Boîte-en-valise* and George Maciunas' (1931 – 1978) *Fluxkits*. Charged with a do-it-yourself imperative, each "Exhibitions in a Box" provides source material from which venues can generate high-content, low-cost exhibitions, adapting and adding to the materials provided according to the space and facilities available. An evolving series developed by artists, curators and art historians, the content of the boxes variously includes small-scale artworks, videos, sound works, instruction works, ephemera and archive materials.

These projects are suitable for all scales of institution, from libraries and artist-run spaces, to art centers, university galleries, museum project spaces, or education centers. Each box will arrive with materials ready to install, requiring little or no equipment for presentation. The projects are conceived to stimulate discussions and events, to be organized by the host venue. Virtually any configuration is possible: for example, the box contents may be added to with contributions from the host venue's collections and archives, or can be the starting point for an exhibition that presents local artists' practices in relation to a broader art issue or event. There are three categories of "Exhibitions in a Box": key historic precedents that influence art practice and exhibition making now; artist-initiated boxes; and a project series, focusing on one period or range of works from contemporary artists.

"Harald Szeemann: Documenta 5" is the first historic "Exhibition in a Box". The materials explore the many facets of one particularly controversial "Documenta" exhibition, which jumped outside the contemporary art sphere into an expanded realm of activity, a legendary extravaganza that invited both visceral criticism and praise. Generally speaking, "Documenta" is a major international contemporary art presentation that takes place every five years in Kassel, Germany. This specific 1972 "Documenta", chiefly curated by the influential Swiss curator, Harald Szeemann (1933 - 2005), was a pioneering, radically different presentation that was conceived as a 100-day event, with performances and happenings, outsider art, even non-art, as well as repeated Joseph Beuys (1921 - 1986) lectures, and an installation of Claes Oldenburg's (1926) "Mouse Museum",

among many other atypical inclusions. The show widely promoted awareness of a contract known as The Artist's Reserved Rights Transfer and Sale Agreement, which protects artists' ongoing intellectual and financial rights with regard to their production.

This "Exhibition in a Box" includes the exhibition catalogue, ephemera, artists' publications and editions produced in conjunction with the exhibition, as well as published reviews and critical responses. The assembled materials provide a rich jumping off point for art history students, artists, and general audiences to plunge into the international contemporary art scene of 1972, to see what this particularly fertile cultural moment produced.

David Platzker is the director of *Specific Object*, an innovative gallery, bookshop, and storehouse for a range of items from artist's multiples to unique works of literature, music, and sound. Prior to founding *Specific Object*, Platzker was the executive director of *Printed Matter*, a non-profit institution dedicated to the promotion of artists' publications from 1998 to 2004, and he has curated exhibitions of artists including John Baldessari (1931), Marcel Duchamp, Ed Ruscha (1937), and Claes Oldenburg.

ICI (*Independent Curators International*) is a dynamic non-profit organization that produces exhibitions, events, publications, and training opportunities for diverse audiences around the world. A catalyst for independent thinking, ICI connects emerging and established curators, artists, and institutions, to forge international networks and generate new forms of collaboration. Working across disciplines and historical precedents, the organization is a hub that provides access to the people, ideas, and practices that are key to current developments in the field, inspiring fresh ways of seeing and contextualizing contemporary art.

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