

## Drawings

Leszek Knaflewski

4/27/12 — 5/27/12

Cleopatra's is pleased to present the first US exhibition of drawings by Poznań based artist Leszek Knaflewski, commonly referred to as Knaf (b.1960). The drawings included in this exhibition are part of an expanded series of works on paper Knaf produced during his involvement with the influential collective Koło Klipsa (1983–1990). Koło Klipsa began as friends and students at the Poznań Academy of Fine Art in the 80s. The artists started working together at a time when the future for emerging artists working in Poland seemed grim. Koło Klipsa was clearly influenced by the onset of neo-expressionism.

“The members of Koło Klipsa adhered to the principle of creative freedom, stressing the importance of both intuition and individual creative experiences unburdened by the limitations coming from the outside world. That outside world, gloomy and sad in the period after martial law, with the Polish Peoples' Republic's vacuous cultural landscape, encouraged artists to rebel and create subjective fields in art, even at the cost of immersing oneself in an esotericism of private iconography.” (Ewa Gorzadek, 2010)

Koło Klipsa created an adopted visual vocabulary that was often dark and surreal. Touching on many provocative subjects, there is a preoccupation with nature, home, spirituality, time and the body. Motifs are anthropomorphic and religious and the works resonate with a certain intrinsic humanity. Knaf's drawings were an integral part of Koło Klipsa's practice acting as diagrams for the groups multifarious presentations, referred to as "entireties". These works on paper contain elements contributed by several artists that constituted Koło Klipsa and are presented as one seamless environment. Themes and styles combine without crediting any part to a specific member. As said by the group's co-founder Mariusz Kruk, the “goal was to create a situation which would allow us to get closer to each other through shared emotions, shared thinking, and shared work.” Knaf's drawings served the project as they helped to shape, document, and map the efforts of the collective. While the drawings remain highly personal, they simultaneously reflect the shared ideas and concerns of his collaborators.

Knaf has exhibited extensively throughout Poland and Europe, including Koło Klipsa's participation in documenta 8. An influential artist and teacher, Knaf's work is currently experiencing a particular examination in terms of its historical significance and his affiliation with Koło Klipsa. A large-scale presentation of drawings was staged in Warsaw at Leto Gallery in February 2012. A publication

documenting Koło Klipsa is currently underway with MORAVA books and Piktogram, due out in the Fall of 2012.

This exhibition is presented with the support of Leto Gallery, Warsaw and Leszek Knaflewski, Andy Roz and Fine Art Framers.

Leszek Knaflewski — Drawings (Koło Klipsa 1983–1990), text by Aleksandra Jach, Galeria Leto 2012

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