

Fig is pleased to present COBRA's solo exhibition, "The Play of October Vol. 1," from October 18th to November 16th. This is COBRA's second solo exhibition at Fig since 2019. As the title *The Play of October Vol. 1* implies, the exhibited works explore the idea and associated practices of "play." Centered around the seemingly incoherent structure of "play," which embraces freedom while simultaneously being bound by rules, the exhibition attempts to reweave COBRA's various series of works.

As seen in Fluxus and their approaches to making, which blurred the boundaries between everyday life and art and incorporated fluid, uncertain elements, the concept of "play" has been elaborated and revisited by a variety of artists. Not simply a means of spending leisure time, the idea of play has been considered a strategic method for infiltrating various systems and orders and establishing a new reality. Many of COBRA's works are known for their uniquely humorous critical stance toward institutions and their performative approach, which often treats his own body as almost an equal matter to other materials. However, in this exhibition, he emphasizes "play," incorporating the viewer's body and attempting to reconstruct the institutions and systems surrounding art-making and its presentation.

This exhibition comprises four different series. COBRA's *4'33 -Sleep Apnea Syndrome-* is a work that incorporates records and photography. It is composed of footage recorded during the artist's own sleep apnea testing at a hospital and is a response to John Cage's composition *4'33*. Just as Cage heard sounds occurring within his own body during his experience in Harvard University's anechoic chamber, and this experience led him to explore further the relationship between silence and music, COBRA's interests lie upon a visualizing and materializing performances that exist outside of consciousness by superimposing silence, or the rhythms of the body that cannot be controlled voluntarily, onto the music/silence explored by Cage.

*The Game of Life*, an installation that unfolds throughout the exhibition room, transforms the space into a board reminiscent of the game, using scorecards, dice, and objects displayed throughout. Visitors can freely participate in the piece, transforming it into the Game of Life. This work recreates the various elements that make up reality—system, emptiness, competition, and failure—that the artist has observed as a gallery director, blurring the boundaries between art and everyday life. While implicitly referencing Marcel Duchamp's notion of chance and the experimental nature of Fluxus, which embraces improvisational qualities, the exhibition space functions as a playground where visitors move freely with minimal instruction, which could be seen as the artist's response to so-called audience-participatory artworks.

*The Play of October Vol. 1*, displayed on the wall above the staircase, is based on wordplay that the artist also uses in earlier works. Drawing on recent Japanese slang and social media-style emotional expressions, the piece depicts simplified and retranslated diagrams of the 20th century to contemporary art movements. It is an attempt to visually establish the humor that emerges at the border between daily life and theoretical discourse.

Outside the exhibition room, a series of works using birdcages, exhibited in various exhibitions over the past few years, are on display. Conceived as "paintings for birds," they appear humorous and idyllic from a human perspective, but when viewed through the visual structures and behavioral principles of birds, they are designed to evoke emotions and fears entirely different from our own. The fundamental question of "for whom is art?" is quietly replayed within the small birdcages. Through these four works, this exhibition explores the artist's question of how to sustain art as something that is not given meaning in society by layering multiple layers—"artwork," "audience," "institution (art history and the very concept of art)," and "non-human perception."