8.01.2011-05.03.2011

William Anastasi, Billy Apple, Ben, Katinka Bock, George Brecht, Robert Filliou, Ludwig Gosewitz, Tomas Schmit, Franz Erhard Walther



illustration: Franz Erhard Walther, *100 Mittellinienzeichnungen,* William Anastasi, *Sink*

exhibition at Galerie Jocelyn Wolff
78, rue Julien-Lacroix
F-75020 Paris

curators : Erik Verhagen et Jocelyn Wolff
January 8 to March 5, 2011

The second chapter of the exhibition dedicated to artists prefiguring the conceptual phenomenon, *8.01.2011-05.03.2011* is chiefly centered on linguistic practices.
Receptive to a playful and mischievous dimension, the language of Robert Filliou is submissive (of which the *Danse-poème* nods in the direction of Duchamp).
With a random and interactive perspective, Ludwig Gosewitz and Tomas Schmit allow the viewer(s) and reader(s) to put the finishing touches

to the artwork. This sharing of the responsibilities weakens the status of the author, which, in the 1960s, was questioned more than ever.

In the *Toile de 45 cm de long* by Ben Vautier, the artist treats this interactive dynamic from a different angle. The numbers and letters reveal themselves through a form of participation and take on an intention of the tautological order: the word and the thing forming one and only one entity, a canvas 45 cm long.

The aim of Barrie Bates is noticeably different. Well before working under the identity of *Billy Apple* ("conceived" November 22, 1962), Bates produced polygraphic works in the beginning of the 1960s, that were frequently inspired from everyday *activities* (and not "performances"), associating texts and images.

On another register, *For sale* (1961) seeks to circumvent advertising and merchandising codes and straight-forwardly asserts the mercantile dimension of the artwork, announcing with this the often ambiguous relationships woven by conceptual artists with the art market and marketing strategies[i].

As for the work of Franz Erhard Walther, the *100 Mittellinienzeichnungen* ("one" median line spread over a hundred cards) can never be viewed in its entirety – the displacement of the viewer involves a discontinuous, almost jerky movement, (de)composed of multiple moments that follow one another – and evokes the lines of Manzoni, without their invisible character.

As with this major figure of pre-conceptual art, it is the viewer that must make the projection of one line in order to bring relief to the idea of a "spatial extension", which to use the wording of Benjamin Buchloh in regards to the Italian, "n'est plus accessible, si ce n'est conceptuellement"[ii]. At last, it seemed pertinent to us to associate this simultaneous work as a tribute, to call it such, by Walther to his colleague, as well as a work by Katinka Bock, which, in revealing a same inaccessibility, shows as a result that certain questions posed by Manzoni have not lost their pertinence in today's world.

[1] Refer to this title of the work by Alexander Alberro, *Conceptual Art and the politics of publicity*, MIT, Cambridge, 2003.

[1] Benjamin Buchloh, « Les concepts analytiques de Manzoni » in *Essais historiques II*, Art Edition, Villeurbanne, 1992, p. 50.