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**Justyna Balisz-Schmelz**

## **I write but I don't describe.**

### **Writing as a memory forming device in the works of Hanne Darboven**

The paper deals with the work of the German artist, Hanne Darboven, with the emphasis on her opus magnum entitled *Schreibzeit [Writing Time, 1975–1999]*. It focuses on the role of two constitutional aspects of her oeuvre: (hand)writing and memory, and how they intertwine. The paper argues that both the specific form and the act of the (re)writing itself are deliberately used by the artist to reflect the complexity of (German) memory – both collective and private, and above all, can be understood as the search for one's own place in history.

**Andrzej Bednarczyk**

## **The Shape of Illegibility**

Illegibility draws identity from legibility. To determine illegibility, one needs to recognize this as a sentence. Illegibility is always of a certain degree and type, and because of the multidimensionality of language performances, it is a part of the understanding process. Each sentence is richer than its reading. There may be areas that will always form an illegibility zone due to translational incompatibility. Illegibility may be the result of defective messages. We live in an overloaded informational space, in which an individual must master the ability of ignoring enough information to survive. Illegibility takes the form of unreadability. More and more information reaches us not directly but processed and therefore we lose contact with the source. Unreadability means reading within the area of a fleeting contextual horizon.

**Małgorzata Dawidek**

## **On Bodywriting**

Małgorzata Dawidek's *On bodywriting* refers to issues relating to the artist's own studio practice and academic research. This paper analyses the author's fields of artistic interests, which are focused on a phenomenon of body as a textual form with a special attention to the conflict between

corporeality and discursive language. This very aspect has been examined from the perspective of women's writing (*écriture féminine*), which – similarly to the writing on an ill body – is excluded by European cultural tradition from the language sphere. Another issue touched upon in the text refers to the act of writing as a form of corporeal activity. The text also explains the meaning of the term "bodygraphy", coined by Dawidek and defining her artistic work.

**Sebastian Dudzik**

### **(Un)clarities. Some remarks on signs and emotions in the contemporary graphic arts**

The author analyses several significant motives of the creative exploration of the tension visible between knowledge/recognition and efface/ambiguity/uncertainty of the visual code in the contemporary graphic arts. He presents different levels of the artistic exploration of the clarity/uncertainty of the notation and signs in the selected graphical realizations of Polish artists. Graphic arts is not accidental here, because technical and technological determinants of this medium makes it perfect „environment” for performing multidimensional and multi-faceted experiments with signs. Matrix character of graphics art is of great help here and it provides potential of multiplication, processing and synthesizing of visual sign. This very simplification, which often leads to iconization, will be point of departure of the author's considerations. He will also examine the play with the context and emotions of the transcript. Another issue which will be analysed and is connected with creative capabilities of uncertainty is the problem of decomposition of the sign which takes place in the process of synthesizing and multiplication. The author closes his considerations by reflecting on the issue of the synthesis of the sign between calligraphy and „graphology” of the transcript.

**Krzysztof Gliszczyński**

### **On the Turn. The Illegible Alphabet by Maciej Sieńkowski**

The text refers to a 1996 work entitled *Books* by a Gdańsk-based artist Maciej Sieńkowski (1962-2014). His laborious task of rewriting Stefan Morawski's entire publication *On the Turn. From Art to After-art* using

the typeface proposed by Władysław Strzemiński bleaches the book of its original function. The three volumes produced are impossible to read, and their designed illegibility constitutes critical discourse in reference to not only the idea included in this theoretical work but also to art in general. Couldn't one compare the diagnosis formulated by Maciej Sieńkowski, with the use of the criticist text by Stefan Morawski on the crisis of art, to the theses of the seminal work by Hannah Arendt on the crisis in culture? Isn't the book – by losing its legibility – open to new possibilities of interpretation?

**Dorota Łuczak**

### **The Paradigms of Photographic Illegibility**

I consider the concept of illegibility as a critical notion which is present or is intending present in the photographic discourse. In the first part of the paper I indicate to the historical examples and I show that illegibility did not belong to the concept of photography as a universal language and was treated as a technical mistake. Further, I refer to the critical studies, especially to Roland Barthes' pioneering texts from 50's–60's, in which demystification of the photographic myth(s) means in fact focusing on illegible dimension of the image. In the second part of the paper I introduce the illegibility as an element which provides us to the rethinking photography as a subject matter. This last one – as I propose – should be formulate as a "photographic vision", which involves inseparably: the image and the viewer's perception.

**Sławomir J. Magala**

### **Readings in Rhetoric and Ontology (Philosophical Illegibility of Art)**

A fundamental shift in our approach towards the processes of historical evolution of aesthetics follows both a linguistic and a cultural turn in social sciences and in the humanities. Critical artists deconstruct sentimental mobilizations of mass media audiences (Ai Weiwei's self-portrait as a dead Syrian boy on a beach is a case in point) or try to introduce a meaningful gesture into the inhuman humming of giga-bites which flow in global networks by simply exchanging links between digits (Roman Opalka's self-effacing rows of numbers are a case in point). Meaning and value are slowly redeemed as legitimate partners of space and time in navigating

our knowledge and passions. A Whiteheadian ontology of interactive and communicative events allows us to ask rhetorically if a piece of raw marble could evolve into a sophisticated sculpture?

**Mateusz Promiński**

### **Illegibility of Identity.** **Masquerades of Maciej Osika**

The subject of the article is identity transgression of Maciej Osika, a Wrocław-based photographer. For nearly twenty years, he has been taking staged photographs which expose the creation process of the cultural gender. Crossing the borders of the traditional splitted roles of feminine and masculine, he draws inspiration from many sources, such as low and high art, ancient art, modern religious iconography and popular culture. His works establish a multi-threaded but coherent tract about the human body, its limits, and patterns. *The Masquerades of Identity* are not restricted only to sex change but are more complex. They touch the subjects of the beauty of the human body, social taboos, alienation and oppressive role of culture. The creative attitude of the photographer can be considered illegible - not only due to a problem with defining sexuality of photographed models but also because of the many cultural and formal imports influencing the distorted image of the photographic medium.

**Marta Smolińska**

### **Illegibility: Contexts and Palimpsests**

Contemporary philosophers underscore the fact that illegibility can become a consciously adopted strategy in literature and visual arts, a strategy oriented to the audience in order to prove that the illegible is not and does not have to be the opposite of the legible, but it may usher in alternative forms of access to texts. The exhibitions. *Illegibility: Contexts of Script* at the Art Stations Foundation by Grażyna Kulczyk in Poznań and *Illegibility. Palimpsests* at the Pan Tadeusz Museum in Wrocław (both curated by Marta Smolińska) aim to present an array of varied forms in which such illegibility functions. Selected works by 36 artists feature different kinds of notations that refer to script, alphabet, palimpsests and punctuation marks, but in fact they reveal the loss and blurring of the word, instead of expected legibility. Another important field consists of

examples of inaccessible books and scrolls that cannot be pored over in order to examine their contents. Selected works outline a topography of various strategies dealing with illegibility, including crossing out, rubbing out, blurring, adding layers and creating palimpsests, playing with censorship, following the appearance of the script without copying the content, concentrating on the visual beauty of script itself, the (in)ability to express emotion and trauma in logical language, reference to other literary works.

**Adam Workowski**

### **Philosopher in the Land of Illegibility.** **The last day of the exhibition and the gallery**

My traveling through the exhibition of illegibility had different phases. First, I tried to search the collapse of meaning, which "gives rise to thought" and open up new ideas and metaphors. Later, I focused on the areas where the natural process of the constitution of meaning is blocked. In these places it is happening illegibility – I feel tension and irritation. Only stopping of the natural process of constitution of sense and continuous transition from one sense to another, allow me to capture what is illegible. In the end, I realized that illegibility is not in a margin but in a center of my conscious life; and looking for it is not an extravagant trip into the unknown, but the touch of the origin of the emergence of sense. Maybe something like that Plato called the wonder on which philosophy is grounded.

**Maciej Zdanowicz**

### **Triady of Romana Hałat – The attempt to read**

The subject matter of this article is the creative output of Romana Hałat (1937–2012) presented in the context of the issue of readability and illegibility. She studied painting and textile design at the State School of Fine Arts in Łódź. One of the essential elements of her works from the cycle entitled *Triady* is freehand writing. Visual form and the way of creation suggests some links with the phenomenon of lettrism. Hałat encrypts of her reflections by handwriting in the mirror reflection and reverse order. In this meaning, that notation is situated on the border between drawing and text, became a kind of complex ornament. In a general sense the cycle of *Triady* implemented since 1985, is the personal

diary of the artist, notation of the transient time, work, reflection on the essence of the image.

