

JÓZEF ROBAKOWSKI

April 8 – May 15, 2011

April 7, 7:00pm

Goethe-Institut Wyoming Building: Roundtable conversation with Barbara London (Associate Curator, Department of Media and Performance Art, MoMA, New York), Marielle Nitoslawska (Professor in Film Production, Concordia University, Montreal), and the exhibition curators Tobi Maier and Michal Jachula

April 8, 6:00—8:00pm Exhibition opening at Ludlow 38

MINI/Goethe-Institut Curatorial Residencies Ludlow 38 is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition in the US by **Józef Robakowski** (b. 1939), a pioneer of avant-garde film and video art. This is the first presentation of Robakowski's collaborative and relational work, emerging from his ongoing cooperation and dialogue with other artists. Through selected works and archival materials, the exhibition reveals a significant aspect of the artist's practice, not only as a filmmaker and visual artist, but also as an initiator, curator, and organizer of art groups, exhibitions, and artistic events.

An interest in interpersonal dialogue in the context of art has been an inherent part of Robakowski's work from the beginning of the 1960s until the present. The exhibition presents the artist as author, co-author, and producer of films and visual works—a significant body of work based on ideas of collaborative practice. The political dimension of Robakowski's art is also revealed, specifically that which refers to the period of martial law in Poland (1981—83). Robakowski is shown as a creator of experimental work responding to the specificities of his context, working outside the official museum and gallery system to present politically critical works. Important issues of trust, collective expressions, and shared experiences are shown through activities and actions initiated by the Exchange Gallery established by the artist in his own apartment in Lodz in 1978.

The exhibition brings together films and video works such as *Market*, 1970 (in collaboration with Ryszard Meissner and Tadeusz Junak); *Test I*, 1971, produced within the framework of the Workshop of the Film Form; *Attention Light!*, 1981—2004 (collaboration with Paul Sharits and Wiesław Michalak); and *Art is Power*, 1985 (music by Slovenian avant-garde group Laibach). The curatorial models and strategies are represented through documents and photographs showing the activities of the Workshop of the Film Form and photo-documentation from the exhibition *Lochy Manhattanu* (Lodz, 1989). The exhibition will also include a video library featuring selected DVDs with films, videos, and television programs such as Robakowski's film *Władysław Strzemiński—Construction of Vision* (1993), *Choices—An Artist from Eastern Europe Speaks Out* by Marielle Nitoslawska (1987), a documentary film about Robakowski describing the situation of living and working in a state of war, and *Exultation, Oratorio for Katarzyna Kobro* (2011). The exhibition also presents a selection of books, catalogs, and ephemera produced by and drawn from the collection of the Exchange Gallery, Lodz.

On the occasion of the exhibition, a catalogue will be published in collaboration with Spector Books, Leipzig.

Partners of the exhibition: Polish Cultural Institute in New York; Adam Mickiewicz Institute, Warsaw; ArtsLink, New York

Ludlow 38 is supported by MINI and Friends of Goethe

Opening hours: Thursday—Sunday 1–6pm, Subway: B/D to Grand Street, F to East Broadway