

Memory Clouds

Artist: Decebal Scriba

Curator: Ami Barak

9.05 – 30.06.2018

At the beginning of the 1970s in Bucharest, Decebal Scriba, b. 1944, was one of the most striking and cutting-edge personalities. His experiments are reviewed today as an integral part of the avant-garde tradition of this key moment in the history of post-war art. During the 70's and the 80's, Decebal Scriba developed a consistent and elaborate body of work, of conceptual and performative approach, addressing issues of both formal and textual language, the analysis of spatial representation systems, symbolic gestures and forms. Through performance, a genre that suited the underground context of Eastern Europe, the essence of all these gestures and actions was indeed extolled and dissolved into the "memory clouds". Unfortunately, the regime was gradually stiffening, and the strict and dogmatic environment put an end to all artistic fulfillment and independence. It is only relatively recent that the artist has begun to create in a mood connected with present times and moreover this exhibition, a selection of 70's and 80's projects, demonstrates a second youth with a contemporary approach, preserving the works' earlier drive and momentum.

The title of this exhibition is not a reminder of a project of ten years ago in Trafalgar Square, London where the public sent short text messages grafted onto smoke plume. Neither is this an allusion to the now widespread cloud data storage technology. It is an attempt to poetry that rehabilitates the memory of shared moments, scattered here and there, gathering them together for an exhibition.

(Ami Barak)

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*Living in Fontainebleau-Avon since 1991, **Decebal Scriba** is an artist approaching media such as photography, installation, performance and video art, with sustained activity in the sphere of conceptual art, in which he also integrates his preoccupation with drawing.*

He has exhibited in Romania starting with 1974, participating in notable group exhibitions: "Situatie și concept" [Situation and concept], Atelier 35, Bucharest (1974); "Fotografie și film experimental" [Photography and experimental film], House of Art, Bucharest (1979); "Scrierea" [Writing], Institute of Architecture, Bucharest (1980); "Spațiu-Obiect" [Space-Object], Institute of Architecture, Bucharest (1982); "Spațiul-Oglindă" [Space-Mirror], Institute of Architecture, Bucharest (1986); "Experiment în arta românească după 1960" [Experiment in Romanian art after 1960], National Theater, Bucharest (1996). During the communist regime, he participated in several projects abroad, between 1973 and 1988, which encouraged art by correspondence, or so-called 'mail-art', such as "Objeto de Interferencia", Sao Paulo (1985) or the ecological project "Messagio Terra", Milan (1983). Along with Nadina Scriba and with the participation of a group of friends, he initiated the document video project "House pARTy", editions I and II, between 1987 and 1988, in Bucharest.

After 1990 he participated in the exhibitions "When History Comes Knocking: Romanian Art from the 80s and 90s in Close Up", curated by Judit Angel, at the Plan B Gallery in Berlin (2011) and "The Poetics of Politics", curated by Olivia Nițiș, Propaganda Gallery, Warsaw (2012).

In 2015 he opens his first personal exhibition at the Victoria Art Center, Bucharest, followed by his second, in 2016, at the Calina Gallery in Timișoara, both curated by Olivia Nițiș. He contributed to the exhibition "Situations and Concepts", curated by Magda Radu, organized in 2017 at the Project Salon in Bucharest and participated at the Life - A User's Manual Contemporary Art Biennale Art Encounters - Timisoara, 2017, curated by Ami Barak and Diana Marincu.