

PRO CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIA

See separate PDFs for the *History, Timeline, PRO Conferences PRO Magazine, PRO Drawing Collection, PRO Exhibitions, Publications, Collaborative Projects, Press, Picture Book*



1st PRO Conference'87 Dordrecht, the Netherlands

Dates: 28th February – 1st March 1987

Location: auditorium Dordrechts Museum

Attendance: about 175 artists, art historians, curators from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Poland.

PURPOSE

The 1st PRO Conference'87 introduced the mission of the newly founded Foundation PRO, building on art historical context and relationships between fine art and architecture in a contemporary context, combining ideology and theory with the factual world. The majority of participants were artists that were fascinated by how many colleagues in so many different countries shared similar interests, providing attending artists with new confidence and motivation.

Supported by the CCK (the Cultural Committee for Art) of the City of Dordrecht, the Verenigde Spaarbank, Artel BV, Edition & Galerie Hoffmann, Café Merz, PRINT'80, the speakers, the artists and architects.

The poster of the 1st PRO Conference, designed by Fré Ilgen, was printed by Edition Hoffmann.

SPEAKERS:

Drs. N.L.P. Lamers, Alderman for Environmental Planning and Culture, City of Dordrecht: opening speech;

Fré Ilgen, the Netherlands, artist, President of the Foundation PRO – pro art and architecture;

Constructivism: The Real Prologue – the founding speech of the Foundation PRO

Joost Baljeu, the Netherlands, artist, author: *The synthesis of the arts?*

Johannes Peter Hölzinger, Germany, architect: *Zur Theorie meiner Arbeiten*

Sigurd Rompza, Germany, artist, author: *Gesellschaft zur Förderung aktueller Kunst mbH*

Rainer Bullhorst, the Netherlands, architect, author: *Stichting Beeldende Bouwkunst*

Dr. Dieter Bogner, Austria, art historian, Verein Exakte Tendenzen:

Zwei österreichische Raumkonzepte: Friedrich Kiesler – Kunstraum Schloss Buchberg

Prof. Andrzej Turowski (Poland): *Existe-t-il un art de l'Europe de l'Est?*

Exhibition:

Première of the *PRO Drawing Collection*, exhibited at the home and studio of Fré & Jacqueline Ilgen.

[See separate PDF PRO Drawing Collection](#)

+ a special presentation of a selection of screen-prints and multiples by Edition Hoffmann, Friedberg, Germany.

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This conference involved a two-day program with talks, organized lunches, transport per bus to a dinner at *Café De Unie* in the city of Rotterdam.¹ During the conference coffee was presented by the official presentation team of the Verenigde Spaarbank.

Catalogue 1st PRO Conference, including Fré Ilgen *Constructivism The Real Prologue*, the founding speech, profile-descriptions and pictures of the speakers and full-page reproductions of all initial works in the PRO Drawing Collection.

A report of the 1st PRO Conference was published in PRO Magazine No.1.

Press coverage including a full-page interview with the leading Dutch newspaper *Algemeen Dagblad* and articles in *De Volkskrant* and *Financieel Dagblad*.

SYMPOSIUM ON CONSTRUCTIVE ART

Date: 2nd + 3rd December 1988

Location: Auditorium, RUL (Royal University Limburg), Maastricht, the Netherlands

Attendance: about 100 artists, art historians, curators, students.

The Foundation PRO was invited by the Royal University Limburg to organize a symposium on constructive art as part of the Studium Generale program. Courtesy of artist Dré Devens.

SPEAKERS:

Fré Ilgen, the Netherlands, Foundation PRO:

Konstruktivisme – waarde, houding, betrokkenheid

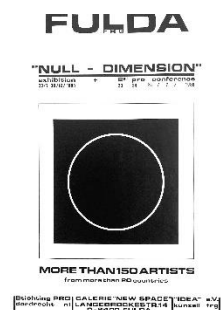
Dr. Matthias Bleyl, art historian, Germany: *Platz und Monument*

Prof. Jürgen Blum-Kwiatkowski, Poland/Germany: *Kunstlabor EL* (El = Elblag, Poland)

Exhibition: PRO Drawing Collection, and installation by Jürgen Blum-Kwiatkowski at Perroengalerie, PRO poster-collection at the library of the RUL, Maastricht, the Netherlands.

+ world premiere in the cinema of the *Filmhuis*, Maastricht, of the documentary *Um Euch den Katakomben zu entreissen und in die Geschwindigkeit unserer Zeit zu stossen* about Swiss legendary artist and activist **Richard Paul Lohse** by Jean Couvreur and Rolf Wäber, production jeu continuel des poumons-films, la sept, le Centre Pompidou, Zürich, Paris, 1988.

A report of this symposium was published in PRO Magazine No.5.



2nd PRO Conference'88 Fulda, Germany

Dates: 23rd, 24th, 25th July 1988

Location: Galerie New Space, Fulda

Attendance: about 200 artists, art historians, curators.

¹ The reconstruction of the legendary *Café De Unie* designed by Gerrit Rietveld (1925). Rietveld was part of *De Stijl* group with Piet Mondriaan, Van Doesburg).

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PURPOSE

The 2nd PRO Conference'88 was a logical consequence of the 1st PRO Conference'87, offering a broad view on who considered themselves constructive artists and what art they created. There was a general desire to analyze what has been done, what is being done in constructive art and what needs to be done to avoid stagnation.

As concluded, parameters must be developed for artistic quality, to be promoted through all activities.

COLLABORATION

This event was a unique collaborative project with Polish artist and curator Jürgen Blum-Kwiatkowski, leader of the Galerie New Space, under patronage of the Mayor of Fulda. Realized by the IDEA e.V., an association of citizens who transformed the large old garage of a car dealer into Galerie New Space, an alternative conference hall and large exhibition hall. Opening in presence of Dr. Weiss, Director of the Arts and Sciences Ministry of the government of Hessen.

Supported by the Städtische Sparkasse und Landesleihbank Fulda, the City of Fulda, IDEA e.V., a series of businesses in Fulda, advertisers in the catalogue, the speakers, the artists and architects.

The logo of the Null Dimension (a white zero in a black square) was conceptualized by Jürgen Blum-Kwiatkowski. The poster of the 2nd PRO Conference, designed by Fré Ilgen (who transformed the zero into a white circle), was printed by Edition Heads&Legs.

SPEAKERS:

Fré Ilgen, the Netherlands, Foundation PRO: *On the Contemporary Constructivist*;

Jürgen Blum-Kwiatkowski, Poland/Germany: *The Null Dimension*

Waldo Balart, Spain, artist, curator: *Constructivistas Espanoles*;

Dr. Bernhard Fauchille, France, Director Le musée Municipal de Cholet, France: *The musée de Cholet*

Michael Kidner, Great Britain, artist: *The Point, The Line and The Plane*;

Elzbieta Koscielak, Poland, *Does Constructivism Exist in Greece?*

Dr. Dietrich Mahlow, Germany, art historian, well known curator (incl for MoMA New York):

Wie das Denken in der Kunst kam – und was es bewirken kann;

Julian Gil Martinez, Spain, artist: *A Brief History of Constructivism in Spain* (on groups like Equipo 57 and the NO Grupo de Madrid);

Jean-Pierre Maury, Belgium, artist, author, curator: *Constructive Art in Belgium*

Dr. Jochen Schulz, Germany, President IDEA e.V., *Opening the exhibition Null-Dimension*;

Prof. Ryszard Winiarski, Poland, artist, director of the Fine Art Academy Warsaw; *Constructive Art in Contemporary Poland*;

Upon request a **special Q&A** (Questions & Answers) **section** was added to the program. In this section Joost Baljeu (the Netherlands), Jean Spencer (Great Britain), Bernard Fauchille (France) and Vera Molnar (Hungary/France) participated.

Exhibition: *the Null-Dimension*, 23th July – 30 December 1988, Galerie New Space, Fulda, Germany. 164 artists from many different nationalities, per artist three works, totaling 492 works.

See the separate PDF Exhibitions.

+ special presentations of Edition Fanal, Switzerland, Edition Heads & Legs, Belgium, plus the constructivist magazines *Mésures-A.I.*, *Constructivist Forum* and the *PRO Magazine*

+ special cinema presentation in Fulda of the documentary *Um Euch den Katakomben zu entreissen und in die Geschwindigkeit unserer Zeit zu stossen* about Swiss legendary artist and activist **Richard Paul Lohse** by Jean Couvreur and Rolf Wäber, production jeu continuel des poumons-films, la sept, le Centre Pompidou, Zürich, Paris, 1988. This movie features a shot showing PRO Nr.1 Magazine in Lohse's studio.

Catalogue 2nd PRO Conference, including introductions by the mayor of Fulda, Dr. Jochen Schulz of IDEA E.V., Fré Ilgen of the Foundation Pro and Jürgen Blum-Kwiatkowski of Galerie New Space. Containing pictures of all artworks in the exhibition.

A report of the 2nd PRO Conference was published in PRO Magazine No.5.



3rd PRO Conference'89 Dordrecht-Rotterdam-Vlissingen, NL **Constructivism: Man vs. Environment**

Dates:

3 days at: the World Trade Center Rotterdam, city of Rotterdam

1 day at Hotel Britannia and Watertower, City of Vlissingen (Flushing)

Attendance: about 200 artists, art historians, curators

PURPOSE

The 3rd PRO Conference'89 built on both earlier conferences and on the many discussions, symposia and exhibitions evoked by the activities of the Foundation PRO. The fast evolvement of a broader interest in the constructive approach demanded a further focus on its potential of contribution to society. Therefore, this conference addressed the various features of human interaction with nature and the urban environment, including the potential offered by digital technologies, and attempting to involve political authorities. To stir up discussion on these subjects, the provocative and paradoxical title was chosen *Man versus Environment*. Paradoxical, as man cannot be seen as separate from his environment.

This conference with all exhibitions was the most ambitious of all activities of the Foundation PRO.

Concluded, there are reasons for the constructive approach to create a certain kind of art as artistic basis for improvements of the urban environment, inspiring well-being for all. The processes involved in urban environment decision-making are still far from acknowledging such an approach, as long as disciplines continue to be independent and separated.

Supported by the city halls of Rotterdam, Dordrecht, Vlissingen, Cultural Council of Vlissingen, Assurantiekantoor voor Akademici Leiden, Overleg Beeldende Kunst Rotterdam, World Trade Center Rotterdam, Stichting ter Bevordering van Volkskracht, Rotterdams Nieuwsblad, Slootmaker's Transport en Expeditiebedrijf BV Rotterdam, bookshop Robert Premela Amsterdam, bookshop Donner-Boeken Rotterdam, bookshop Nijhof&Lee Amsterdam, De Bijenkorf Rotterdam, Academy of Fine Arts Rotterdam, TenToon B.A. Dordrecht, Edition

Heads & Legs, Circ Amsterdam, advertisers in the catalogue, the speakers, the artists, architects and quite a few volunteers.

Special thanks to Leon Riekwel, Cultural Department Vlissingen, for the Conference in Vlissingen and the exhibition and realization of the large sculpture by Leonardo Mosso.

The poster of the 3rd PRO Conference, designed by Fré Ilgen, was printed by Edition Heads & Legs.

SPEAKERS:

Dr. J.M. Linthorst, Alderman for Finances and Culture, City of Rotterdam: opening speech;

Fré Ilgen, the Netherlands, Foundation PRO: *Constructivism: Man versus Environment*

Charles Biederman, USA: *Art - Science - Reality*

Prof. Ernest Edmonds, GB: *Computing Research, Visual Research and Constructive Art*

Prof. Fons Elders, NL: *Time in Architecture*

Prof. Vilém Flusser, Czechoslovakia/Brasilia: *Man as Subject or Project*

Johannes Peter Hölzinger, Germany: *Der öffentliche Raum – Seine Gestalt und Bedeutung*

Toine Horvers, the Netherlands: *Movement/Sound Sculptures*

Francisco Infante, USSR: *On My Concept of the Artefact*

Dr. Dietrich Mahlow, Germany: *Constructivism: Man and his Environment*

Furthermore involved in podium discussions:

Drs. N.L.P. Lamers, Alderman for Environmental Planning and Culture, City of Dordrecht;

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Ruud van Middelkoop, Member of the Committee for Environmental Planning, City of Rotterdam;
Ir. Peter Wolf, Director Department of Urban Development, City of Flushing;
Drs. H.J.A.M. van Haaren, Director Faculty of Fine Arts and Architecture, Rotterdam.

Special projects in the Conference program:

Jean-Pierre Husquinet and Gilles Cabodi, Belgium, digital saxophone, bassoon, digital tape-recorder.

Leonardo Mosso, Italy, movement performance *Struttura Ambiente*, Hall Fine Arts Academy Rotterdam;

Susan Tebby, GB, Layered Lattices 1988, Hammersmith Hospital, video;

At the Conference a special Information Fair was organized with booths of Edition Heads & Legs, the magazines *Mésures- A.I.* and the *PRO Magazine*, plus a valuable presentation by the LUTCHI Research Centre of Loughborough University, Great Britain (who organized a series of conferences on Creativity and Cognition, involving computer scientists and artists);

At the large department store *De Bijenkorf*, located opposite the WTC Rotterdam (the location of the conference), where in 1958 the legendary sculpture by Russian constructive pioneer Naum Gabo was installed, two large shop windows were dedicated to the activities of the Foundation PRO. By courtesy of the director of *De Bijenkorf* also PRO publications were offered in their book store. See PDF Picture Book.

Exhibitions:

See the separate PDF Exhibitions.

Constructivism vs. The Computer, Galerie FARO + Main Hall WTC Rotterdam; the very first exhibition combining constructive artists working with conventional media with those that apply digital technologies;

the *PRO Drawing Collection*, main hall, WTC Rotterdam;

8 Contemporary Constructive Environmental Installations by artists in the galleries Tussenwater, Paradise Regained, Kunst+, GALERIE, Dionysus and the Municipal Centre for Fine Art, Rotterdam;

Tape-Licht-Verf, constructive 2D-3D, a choice, Watertower, Oost-Souburg, Vlissingen;

Spuikom Models – 14 models of an international selection of artists and architects, Galerie Bellamy, Vlissingen;

Spuikom Sculpture '89 by Italian artist/architect Leonardo Mosso, Spuikom, Vlissingen, the Netherlands; (a sculpture of H8 x L25 x W25 meters)

Catalogue 3rd PRO Conference, including introduction by Fré Ilgen (in Dutch, English, German), Foundation PRO, summaries and profiles of all speakers and all exhibitions.

For more information see [the PDF Exhibitions](#)

+ **A separate catalogue** was released for the conference day and exhibitions in Vlissingen:

Tape-Licht-Verf, constructive 2D-3D, a choice, Watertower, Oost-Souburg, Vlissingen;

Spuikom Models – 14 models of an international selection of artists and architects, Galerie Bellamy, Vlissingen;

Spuikom Sculpture '89 by Italian artist/architect Leonardo Mosso, Vlissingen, the Netherlands (H8 x L25 x W25 meters);

A report of the 3rd PRO Conference was published in *PRO Magazine* No.6.

Quite an amount of publicity through interviews and otherwise was realized (see PDF Press), including a special edition in the *Rotterdams Nieuwsblad*, consisting of 4 full pages, a special edition by Ernest Edmonds, the total edition of 130.000 was distributed door to door in a selected part of the city of Rotterdam; also frequent updates by the *Rotterdams Nieuwsblad* and reports in the international press later, like in Germany, France, Belgium, Korea, England.



4th PRO Conference'90 Moscow, USSR

Dates: 27th + 28th July 1990

Location: USSR Architects' Union, Dom Architektura, Moscow

Attendance: about 100 artists, art historians, curators

The PRO Foundation was invited by the USSR (Russian) Architects Union to organize this conference and exhibition as part of the Konstantin Melnikov Architectural Festival. Melnikov (1890 – 1974) was one of the leading Russian pioneers of constructive architecture in the 1920s. UNESCO declared 1990 as a mark to celebrate his 100th day of birth. Simultaneous to the PRO Conference there was an international meeting of art critics (AICA) and the Melnikov Symposium.

The poster of the 3rd PRO Conference, designed by Fré Ilgen, was printed by Edition Heads & Legs.

SPEAKERS:

Vladimir Aronov, Russia, philosopher, USSR Artist's union, *The Art of Constructivism in the USSR Avantgarde Art of the 1980s*.

Eugene Asse, Russia, architect, Union of Soviet Architecture, *Theory of Architecture and Urbanism*;

Evgeny Bogdanov, Russia, artist, designer: *Environmental Design for the Mayakovsky Museum*;

Ernest Edmonds, Great Britain, artist, pioneer of digital art, Director LUTCHI Research Centre: *The Impact of Computer Technology*

Johannes Peter Hölzinger, Germany, architect: *Öffentlichen Raum – Formfindungen für den Gesellschaftlichen Wandel*;

Fré Ilgen, the Netherlands, artist, President of the Foundation PRO – pro art and architecture: *Individual and Universal*

Vjacheslav Loktev, Russia, artist, architect: *From Constructivism and Suprematism to the Art of Space Metamorphosis*;

Selim Khan-Magomedov, Russia, architect, internationally leading architecture historian;

Jean-Pierre Maury, Belgium, artist, curator, co-founder of Mésures – Art International: *The Revival and the New Orientations of the Constructivist Tendency*;

Jiro Sugawara, Japan, artist: *My Work Interacting with Stone*;

Exhibition:

Universal Progression,

a historical first re-connecting of Russian constructive art with their Western colleagues;

Dates: 22nd July – 20th August 1990

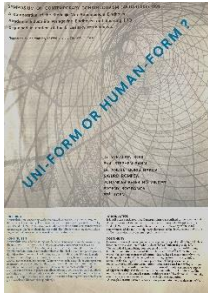
Location: Central Exhibition Hall / Manege, the large exhibition hall next to the Kremlin

Artists list, see PDF PRO Exhibitions

A report of the 4th PRO Conference was published in PRO Magazine No.7

The exhibition was realized thanks to the following galleries:

Aneri Art Ltd (New York), Gilbert Brownstone et CIE (Paris), Grita Insam (Vienna), Annely Juda Fine Art (London), Denise René (Paris), Dr. István Schlégel (Zürich), Schueppenhauer (Cologne), De Sluis/Wim Vromans (Amsterdam), Winter (Vienna).



SYMPOSIUM: UNI-FORM OR HUMAN FORM?

Date: 20th January 1991

Location: Auditorium, AIVE (Academy Industrial Design Eindhoven), Eindhoven, the Netherlands

Attendance: about 200 artists, art historians, curators, students of industrial design.

The PRO Foundation was invited by Jan Debbaut, Director of the Municipal van Abbe Museum Eindhoven, to organize a symposium in direct relation to the exhibition *El Lissitzky (1890 - 1941), Architect, Painter, Photographer, Typographer*, staged in his museum. The third partner for this symposium was the AIVE.

SPEAKERS:

Prof. Stephen Bann, Great Britain, art historian: *The Tradition of Constructivism: How many steps further?*

Evgeny Bogdanov, Russia, artist, designer: *Exhibition Design for the Mayakovsky Museum;*

Dr. Yve-Alain Bois, France/USA, art historian: *El Lissitzky: A Brechtian Typograph*

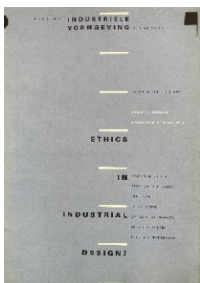
Fré Ilgen, the Netherlands, artist, President of the Foundation PRO – pro art and architecture:
Uni-Form or Human Form?

Frank Lubbers, head curator and representative director of the Van Abbe Museum: *opening of the symposium;*

Dr. Andrei Boris Nakov, Bulgaria/France, art historian: *The Influence by Exter on El Lissitzky*

Sigurd Rompza, Germany, artist: *Auf dem Prüfstand die Bildsprache, Konzeptionelle Überlegungen zu einer Konstruktiv-Konkreten Kunst Heute Angestellt im Hinblick auf Eigene Künstlerische Arbeiten;*

A report on the Symposium Uni-Form or Human Form was published in PRO Magazine No.8



SYMPOSIUM: ETHICS IN INDUSTRIAL DESIGN?

Date: 20th April 1991

Location: new Auditorium, AIVE (Academy Industrial Design Eindhoven), Eindhoven, the Netherlands

Attendance: about 190 designers, architects and students of industrial design.

Fré Ilgen organized this symposium on behalf of the AIVE, bringing together leading thinkers on ethics and industrial design from academia and consultants of large industries.

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SPEAKERS:

Prof. Wim Crouwel, graphic designer, Director museum Boymans-van Beuningen:

Ethics and the Economic Cycle

Prof. Vilém Flusser, cultural philosopher, Czechoslovakia/Brasil:

Ecological and anthropological feedback between tools and their users, Ethics in Industrial Design?

Fré Ilgen, Foundation Pro and coordinator Studium Generale AIVE:

Ethics in Industrial Design?

Prof. Fons Elders, philosopher, University of Humanities Utrecht, the Netherlands:

The L.A.T. Relationship between Ethics and Aesthetics or the Primary of Form

Dr. Dietrich Mahlow, director of various museums and professor of aesthetics, Germany:

Künstlerische Tätigkeit und moralisches Verhalten

Ir. Gijs Ockeloen, Philips Corporate Industrial Design, design consultant, the Netherlands: *Ethics in the*

Practice of the Industrial Designer

Drs. Paul Rademaker, assistant to Mr. Dekker and the Board of Management of Philips International, the Netherlands:

The Responsible Company

Jan Kees Oom, industrial designer, the Netherlands, adjunct director AIVE, industrial consultant; he did not contribute a talk but participated in the panel discussion.

A report on the Symposium Ethics in Industrial Design was published by the AIVE.

Supported by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the Netherlands. Designed by 2D3D, The Hague, the Netherlands.