



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FRANKLIN FURNACE ANNOUNCES AN EXHIBITION

CONCRETE POETRY

Opening, Friday, September 16, 1988, 6-8 PM.
through October 29, 1988.
Tuesdays-Saturdays 11-6 PM.

"Concrete Poetry" presents the work of revolutionary artists whose poetry links art and literature by employing the semantic, visual, and phonetic elements of language as raw material. Original works, pages from books, audio and video tapes will be displayed, allowing viewers to experience the colorful, kinetic impact of Concrete poetry. Objects and texts in the exhibition are both from the collection of Franklin Furnace Archive, Inc., and have been lent by several anonymous donors.

The exhibit combines works of different languages into groups of similar structure, providing a comprehensive, yet intimate overview of the worldwide Concrete poetry movement. Works displayed will continue to explore themes suggested in "Concrete Poetry: The Early Years," organized by Franklin Furnace and presented at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1986. Works include pop-up poems by Brazilian Augusto de Campos; constellation poems by German Claus Bremer; typopoems by Swiss Diter Rot; and selected concrete poems by American Emmet Williams.

Concrete poetry originated simultaneously in South America and Europe. In Brazil, for example, the Noigandres Group (1952), headed by Augusto de Campos, Haroldo de Campos, and Decio Pignatari, strove for a "physiogrammatical typography" by taking a non-linear approach to poetry. According to Concrete poetry scholar Mary Ellen Solt, the method employed by the Noigandres Group was derived from a mixture of Ezra Pound's Cantos ("ideogrammic"), James Joyce's Ulysses

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("word-ideogram"), and all of e e cummings' works ("word-atomization"). At the same time in Europe, Eugene Gomringer was creating his "Constellations," (1952), ideograms having spatial structure which were his attempt at "formal simplification." Soon, Concrete poets were working in Eastern and Western Europe, North America, and Japan. These artists all worked along the same lines as Gomringer and The Noigandres Group, exploring sociological and political issues, as well as "semantic ideogrammic" relationships found in word sounds or music. By 1960, the isolated, spontaneous development of Concrete poetry had become a unified, worldwide movement.

The roots of Concrete poetry run deep into modernist literature, but the works move so far beyond traditional, linear verse that they "ride the fence" between visual and literary art. Concrete poetry, therefore, was both a literary phenomenon and a form of visual expression, whose global influence has led to the contemporary "Visual Poetry" movement.

Franklin Furnace is proud to mount this exhibition of an artform which, because it is neither conventional literature, nor conventional visual art, has slipped out of both literary history and art history.

Franklin Furnace is a museum for published and multiple art; a library of reference materials on this field of contemporary art; and an archive of unique documents which may be used to interpret works in the permanent collection. Founded by artist Martha Wilson in 1976 and still run by artists today, Franklin Furnace exhibits the historical avant-garde, and launches its future by presenting performances and installations by emerging artists.

Franklin furnace gratefully acknowledges funds received for this exhibit from the New York State Council on the Arts, and private supporters.