

FROM THE EDITORS

The articles in the second section of our double issue focus on art practices from Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Palestine. Each in their own way, these authors discuss art and film practices that complicate the process by which we establish genealogies, trace histories, and narrate historical developments, intervening in linear trajectories and pointing to possible alternatives.

In his article, Branislav Jakovljević reviews the richly illustrated 1926 book *Creativity of the Mentally Ill* (*Tvorchestvo dushevnobol'nikh*) by Russian psychiatrist Pavel Ivanovich Karpov as an outstanding, if largely forgotten, example of the rich collaborative, transdisciplinary research culture that existed in the Soviet Union during the early 1920s for the study of creativity from what we might today refer to as “outsider” positions: from nonacademic folk art to art produced by children and the mentally ill.

Mary A. Nicholas devotes her contribution to an alternative genealogy of Moscow Conceptualism as it evolved in the mid-1970s and early 1980s, with a special focus on the performance art group Gnezdo (“The Nest,” active 1974–79). Accounts of Moscow Conceptualism tend to privilege Ilya Kabakov and the group Collective Actions as the phenomenon’s progenitors, without considering the contributions—foundational in Nicholas’s estimate—made by Sots artists Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid and their exploration of the communicative role of

official speech. It is to the latter artist duo and their broadened understanding of their audience that the members of Gnezdo turned for their own actions.

Adair Rounthwaite examines in her article performative aspects in photographs by Yugoslav artist Željko Jerman. Specifically, she argues that in his experimental work of the 1970s, Jerman turned the photographic development process into a performative act, with far-ranging ramifications for his self-enactment as a creative subject. According to Rounthwaite, Jerman viewed photography not as a linear process whose upshot and endpoint was a positive representation, but as a performative space that exploits the photograph's material properties, to varied and broadly unpredictable results.

Greg Burris's investigation of contemporary Palestinian cinema focuses on two documentaries, from the 1980s and 2000s, respectively. Burris argues that both films carve out a space in the Palestinian imaginary that is not fully consumed by the logic of resistance, a logic that understandably has tended to dominate Palestinian filmmaking over the decades. Not coincidentally, dreams, in particular, can serve to represent the "unoccupied spaces" that offer themselves to imagining a future in which Palestine and Palestinians can finally be free to determine their own destiny.