

Slothouber/CCC text: Roosje Levano

Exhibition in the Van Abbe Museum



Jan Slothouber (1918) has been working together with William PARS Graatsma (1925) on the study of the construction of the cube. Jan Slothouber calls himself an architect and he was also professor at the TU/Eindhoven. In 1965 they establish the CCC, the Center for Cubic Constructions. This was some kind of laboratory where they experiment with the possibilities, measurements and the mathematical patterns of the cube. Applied in diverse constructions of different materials. During CCC, they developed interior exhibition-projects, stamps, street facilities and a (3D) cubic grid.

Earlier, Slothouber was designing exhibitions for DSM, the staatsmijnen (the former state mines), they designed posters, packaging and the identity for DSM. In these earlier projects, the cube was already a basic element in the works. And here is where the research and interest in cubic patterns and symmetry started, and where they developed the cubic design system. It is surprising to see how many different forms you can build based on one of the most basic geometric forms; the cube. Some forms are vaulted or some with colour systems.

It all appears pretty strict mathematical thinking to me, but besides this, it also has a social aspect. Slothouber was opposed to individualistic movements such as the Cobra painters, and preferred a more democratic form. The cube was a universal form which everyone could comprehend and manipulate.

You could say that their work is on the border of art, design and architecture. Slothouber wanted to show that the function is following the form. In my opinion, his work is architectural, since they are dealing

with solutions for organizing space and environment. Or you could also say that they coordinate architecture.

But in any case, in 1965 the world of art welcomed them with open arms, because their work interfaces with the minimal-art and conceptual-art movements. More artists worked with the possibilities and forms of the cube. One of them is Sol Lewitt. His result is Variations of Incomplete Open Cubes. In the book, which contains the same title, he explains the outcome of his research.

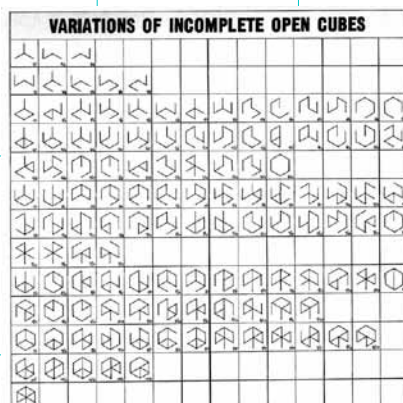
For those who are interested, right now there is an exhibition with drawings, prints, objects and installations of Slothouber at the van Abbe museum Eindhoven. From 17/10/2008 till 05/01/2009.

Books

1. Slothouber en Graatsma, Cubische constructies van Slothouber en Graatsma, publisher rosbeek bv, Maastricht 2 juli 2000
2. Jan Slothouber + William Graatsma, Cubics, a Cubic constructions compendium, Deventer 1970.

Internet:

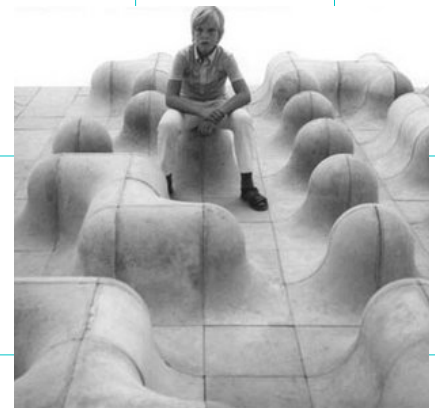
http://www.parasolpress.com/lewitt_2.html
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Variations of incomplete open cubes



Centrum Cubische Constructies



Gewelfd trottoir, Biennale Venice