
Frederick Kiesler: Visions at Work
Annotated by Céline Condorelli and Six Student Groups
At Tensta konsthall
11.2 2015 – 2.5 2015



Frederick Kiesler (1890–1965)

paved the way for a dynamic view of the art experience. From the 1920's constructivist-influenced theater exhibitions in Vienna and Paris and the acclaimed shop window designs in New York around 1930, to the legendary scenography for Peggy Guggenheim's Manhattan gallery *Art of This Century* (1942) and the collaboration with Marcel Duchamp on a surrealist exhibition in Paris in 1947, Kiesler tried to enhance the encounter between the viewer and a work of art. Underlying much of his work were thoughts on the continual interaction between man and his natural and technological environments, as defined in the theory of Correalism.

This makes Kiesler's work still highly pertinent today. His investigative methodology, visionary capacity, and projective abilities are especially relevant and are highlighted in this exhibition, which is the first presentation in Northern Europe of Kiesler's truly transdisciplinary work. The exhibition comprises models and documentation of his designs for exhibitions, buildings, interiors, and shop-windows, as well as original drawings, painting, vintage photographs, and publications, etc. from different periods. The exhibition also includes a prototype of the so-called *Mobile Home Library* and some pieces of furniture that are currently in production, for example the "correalist instrument."

The show features new, related work by the London-based artist Céline Condorelli, who has a long-standing interest in exhibition design and modes of display. She contributes a "stage" for the exhibition space, referring to Kiesler's *Space Stage* from 1924. Another contribution is "a creature" inspired in large part by different aspects of Kiesler's various display structures.

In order to test the validity of Kiesler's work today, six groups of students have been invited to engage with Kiesler's work. They are showing a selection of their proposals and objects, which each group will introduce in a public presentation during the exhibition. The

invited groups are: MejanArc, The Royal Institute of Art; Interior Architecture & Furniture Design, Konstfack; Round-trip Translations, KTH School of Architecture; CuratorLab, Konstfack; Orientation Course in Urban Management and Architecture, KTH Tensta; and A5, Askebyskolan, Rinkeby.

A series of seminars, *What Does an Exhibition Do?*, is organized in conjunction with the exhibition. The speakers are Bruce Altshuler, Dieter Bogner, Celine Condorelli, Clementine Deliss, Jens Hoffmann, Peter Lang, Helena Mattsson, Monika Szewczyk and Tirdad Zolghadr. In collaboration with the KTH School of Architecture (Helena Mattsson), The Royal Institute of Art (Peter Lang) and the Stockholm University of the Arts (André Lepecki). With support from ABF Stockholm.

The exhibition is a collaboration between Tensta konsthall and the Austrian Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation, Vienna. The curators are Dieter Bogner and Maria Lind. With support from The Embassy of Austria in Stockholm and Wittmann. Special thanks to the Austrian Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation, Vienna, in particular Dieter Bogner, Peter Bogner, and Gerd Zillner.

How To Put Visions At Work

To disregard presumed limitations and test new—often radical—ideas became a hallmark of Frederick Kiesler. He was a visionary architect, artist, scenographer, pedagogue, theorist, and—not least—a groundbreaking exhibition designer. It is telling that most of his work was temporary, allowing more space for experimentation. When he died in 1965, he left behind an unusually rich and diverse body of work. He had been active within the fields of architecture, painting, sculpture, set design, exhibition architecture, furniture design, journalism, criticism, organizing, and teaching, and he had worked in Austria, Germany, the US, France, and Israel. His work is strongly influenced by both Bauhaus and constructivism, promoting the ideas

that art and life are intimately connected and that there are no given boundaries between the different art forms, just as he did not take for granted the separation of floors, walls, and ceilings inside a building. Throughout his life, he collaborated and in other ways engaged with his peers on both sides of the Atlantic, becoming a link between various cultural scenes and different disciplines. Born into a Jewish family in Czernowitz, then a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and now Ukraine, he moved as a teenager to Vienna, where he attended both the technical university and the art academy. Although he never graduated, he took active part in the city's avant-garde cultural circles. In 1926, he moved to New York with his wife Steffi, a "visual poet" known under the pseudonym Pietro de Saga and a librarian.

After having designed acclaimed sets for the plays *R.U.R.* by Karel Čapek and Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones*, both in Berlin, Kiesler was invited in 1924 to design an exhibition of new international theater techniques in Vienna. It took place in the Wiener Konzerthaus, a space where the walls could not be touched, as part of a theater festival. Kiesler decided to use the floor, for which he developed the so-called Leger- und Trägersystem (L and T System). This simple and practical wooden structure, painted black, white and red, displayed two and three-dimensional exhibits, selected by Kiesler himself, that showed the latest developments in the sphere of theater. A version of the Leger- und Trägersystem was also used in the 1926 International Theater Exposition in New York's Steinway Building, where an empty floor, otherwise used as offices, housed the exhibition.

Kiesler referred to his exhibition architecture at the Austrian theater section of the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris as "Raumstadt," or space city. Here the "city" was indeed floating in space, the wooden structure suspended from the ceiling, hovering above the floor. Again the walls were not used but covered with black

fabric, thereby creating an abstract space. Kiesler's approach to architecture has been described as "counter-architecture," a style influenced by, for instance, Theo van Doesburg and the art and architecture group De Stijl, where Kiesler became a member. Examples are his 1925 sketches for a "horizontal skyscraper" and a "spiraling department store." The unrealized, suspended Endless Theater from 1926 was an elastic construction system with "bridges" that created the stage, seating areas, and light ramps. Around the same time, he also designed the Double Theater (1926–27) in Brooklyn, with one large, single stage area attached to two different auditoria. It is around this time that he co-founded the International Theater Arts Institute, the first in a row of organizations and institutes that he helped initiate. Some years later he was to become advising architect to the National Public Housing Conference, where he regularly participated in meetings. With the "optophone theater," a theater without actors, he came very close to what we today think of as an art installation: an empty room to be filled with sound, music, and color. He spoke about a four dimensional theater, which was the same as the theater of the future. Until the end of his life, he continued to rethink the space of theater, sometimes through his many set designs at the Juilliard School of Music.

Technological development and scientific research were major interests of Kiesler's, feeding directly into his own work. An example is the Film Guild Cinema, which opened on 52 W 8th St. in 1929. The megaphone-shaped movie theater was a setting that clearly departed from the old architectural model of spoken theater. The design took into account the whole building in order to extend the space of the film to encompass the space of the spectator. By using light projections for all the walls plus the ceiling, the building was turned into a plastic medium dedicated to a new art form, "light art." If a film set in the middle ages was screened, projections indicating gothic architecture could be used. At the time, the Film Guild Cinema was described as

“the first 100% cinema,” unique in design, radical in form, original in projection, as well as as the “quintessence of cinema.”

A central concern of Kiesler’s was the relationship between interior architecture, painting, and sculpture. He was also concerned with how art was presented and therefore made public. In the 1920s, he thought of the exhibition space as a “modern room” where he imagined light sensitive plates or screens that could receive images sent from elsewhere. Original art works would be kept in “treasure rooms” and would only be taken out occasionally. In the future, he thought, the thought of art as permanent “decoration” on walls would be neglected. Some of these ideas were developed in relation to a museum that he sketched for the collector Katherine Dreier, co-founder of Société Anonyme and a big supporter of Marcel Duchamp’s work. It was never realized. A few years later, in 1930, he developed the idea of the “Tele-Museum,” through which the art works at, for example, the Louvre and Prado would be accessible to people elsewhere through a selection plate connected to telephone sets.

In order to earn money and to use the potential of commercial contexts to make art available to a wider audience, Kiesler worked with shop window displays. At the department store SAKS Fifth Avenue in New York, he used only a few items, primarily articles of clothing, in settings that indicated a certain kind of drama. The lighting underlined the slightly surrealistic atmosphere of the theatrical displays. He also designed display structures, like a wooden stand, for the shop windows. Displays of entire environments featured in his work with AUDAC, The American Union of Decorative Artists and Craftsmen, for an exhibition in New York’s Grand Central Palace (1930). Here he introduced his “flying desk,” hung from metal rods from the ceiling, and he began to copyright his industrial design objects. His ideas about contemporary art and shop window display were elaborated on in the book *Contemporary Art Applied to the Store and its Display* (1930).

Among Kiesler’s achievements was the notion of “endless space” as featured in the never realized but influential, organic-looking Endless House. “Endless movement” was typical of Kiesler’s practice: a movement produced by “continuous tension” between continuously changing and opposed forces. It is an anti-metaphysical, “biotechnical” approach where the human being is not an object, but a condensation of forces. This creates a dynamic system, often with endless poly-dimensional movement. Furthermore, he thought that “unity” was typical of the 20th century, but he saw it as a unity composed of various interconnected parts. His paintings, for example, consisted of different pieces and carry titles such as *Nova*, *Galaxy*, and *Cluster*. The series of paintings called *Galaxies*, made from the late 1940s onward, contains between three and nineteen parts, which relates to his ideas about “elastic space.”

Conceptualised in the 1920s, the Endless House took shape in the following decades through drawings, models, and texts. It was a self-supporting structure departing from the classical paradigm of “carrying” and “carried,” a home to one family but several generations at once. The shared rooms had tall ceilings, and the rooms for individual use were smaller. Complex lighting was installed in the walls and ceiling, reaching every part of the fluid space without interruption. Instead of glass, the windows would be covered by moulded semi-transparent plastic. In 1950, an egg-like model of the Endless House was shown in the exhibition *The Muralist and the Modern Architect* at the Kootz Gallery in New York. The commission to make a version of the Endless House for the sculpture garden of the Museum of Modern Art never materialized. Instead, a second model was included in the 1960 exhibition *Visionary Architecture*, which featured buildings designed by, among others, Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe that were too radical to be realized.

Some of Kiesler’s ideas of endlessness came across in two postwar exhibitions, *Bloodflames* at New York’s Hugo

Gallery and Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme at Galerie Maeght in Paris, both in 1947. The former was curated by Nicholas Calas and included work by Arshile Gorky, Wifredo Lam, and Isamu Noguchi, among others. The latter contained work by, for example, Max Ernst, Yves Tanguy, and Joan Miró and was curated by Duchamp and Breton. This was the time when Kiesler again began to paint and make sculptures himself. He included the large *Figue Anti-Tabou* in the exhibition in Paris. In *Bloodflames*, he thought of the paintings on view as sitting “in the middle of painting’s milky way.”

At the Laboratory for Design Correlation that Kiesler founded at the School of Architecture, Columbia University (1937-41), he could study life processes and design in a more systematic, even scientific, manner. Together with the students, he researched basic forms and how they are used in architecture and the industry. For example, for *The Mobile Home Library*, Kiesler and his students jointly investigated the phenomenon of the storage of books and then developed a solution for how to keep them.

Out of his work with the Laboratory for Design Correlation, he developed the theory of “Correalism.” In this way of thinking, it is the relationships that are important, rather than the discreet objects. It is a theory that is oriented towards structures, as well as natural science and biology. It has been compared to wireless electricity; i.e. correlation without connection. The interconnection between humans, nature, and technology had been a tradition in Vienna since the turn of the century and its logical positivism, including ideas like Rudolf Carnap’s theory of relations, Christian von Ehrenfels’s *Gestalttheorie*, and Matthias Hauer’s composition technique based on the twelve-tone scale.

A prolific writer, Kiesler discussed his own deviation from high modernism in several texts, for instance *Architecture as Biotechnique*. He argues that design is neither about “form following function”

nor “the circumscription of a solid,” but about a deliberate polarization of natural forces towards “a specific human purpose.” Instead of starting with existing commodities, he suggests the study of general physiotechnics, which leads to a focus on tools. Whereas, according to Kiesler, functionalism is developing objects, biotechnique is developing the human being.

By the mid-30s, Kiesler had established himself as an architect, without actually having built much, and an artist in New York City. He had designed whole apartments, like the *Mergentime Apartment* in Manhattan, and he worked on set design. An example is the 1936 *In the Pasha’s Garden* at the Metropolitan Opera. In 1933, he had become a set designer and teacher at the Faculty of Theater Design at Juilliard School of Music. He was one of very few New York-based artists who participated in Alfred H. Barr’s legendary 1936 exhibition *Cubism and Abstract Art* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. He was included in the architecture, theater, and furniture part, acting as a link between constructivism and surrealism. In 1952, Kiesler took part in the exhibition *Fifteen Americans* at the Museum of Modern Art, showing the sculpture-cum-environment *Wooden Galaxy*. Visitors could walk through the piece and even sit on it. This should not come as a surprise, as the piece, made in 1947, was a stage set for Darius Milhaud’s and Jean Cocteau’s *The Poor Sailor*.

Thanks to Kiesler, October 1942 marks an important moment in the histories and practices of curating, specifically exhibition design. That month saw Marcel Duchamp’s legendary installation with hundreds of yards of string strung across the refugee benefit exhibition *The First Papers of Surrealism* in a private mansion in Manhattan. Shortly afterwards, the joint efforts of collector and gallerist Peggy Guggenheim and Kiesler came to fruition when *Art of This Century* opened on 30 W 50th St. in the same city. This museum-cum-commercial gallery was a true sensation: its Surrealist, Abstract, Kinetic and Daylight Galleries

offered an unprecedented experience of the work of the European avant-garde contained in Guggenheim's collection. As one headline put it, for the first time "modern art in a modern setting" was on offer.

Even good photographs of the galleries cannot do justice to the presentation, which had, for example, frameless paintings by Max Ernst and Joan Miró "floating" in front of undulating curved wooden walls in the Surrealist Gallery. Utopian architecture, stage design, and retail display counted among Kiesler's references, and in the Abstract Gallery, where the walls were covered with ultramarine curtains, pictures by Francis Picabia and Kasimir Malevich, among others, were hung on V-straps running from floor to ceiling like in a shop window. Flexible pieces of so-called "correalist" furniture were specially designed by Kiesler to function not only as stands for both paintings and sculptures but also as seating. In the Kinetic Gallery, items from Duchamp's *Boite-en-valise* were displayed on a ferris wheel-like structure that could be maneuvered by the visitors themselves and viewed through a peephole. In the Daylight Gallery, which functioned as a commercial gallery, Jackson Pollock and Robert Motherwell, among others, had their first solo exhibitions.

A sense of the radical nature of this orchestration of art is given by the walk-in model of the Surrealist Gallery on the scale of 1:3. The roaring sound of an approaching train greets you in the dark. When the lights come on, they illuminate a few works at a time, creating a sort of choreography and allowing closer looks at the miniature replicas of Giorgio de Chirico's *The Nostalgia of the Poet* and Picasso's *The Studio*, among other paintings, in a gallery that is like a hybrid of an art dollhouse and a funfair.

In designing Jerusalem's monumental *The Shrine of The Book* (1965), Kiesler extracted ideas and forms from his often-reproduced *Endless House*, where, to quote Kiesler himself, "all ends meet." *The Shrine of The Book* is a hybrid between

a monument, a building, and a sculpture, housing the Dead Sea Scrolls found 1947–56 in a cave in the West Bank. It hints at the "primordial unity, a unity between men's creative consciousness and his daily environment" which Kiesler believed in. This foundational condition of harmony has been lost and should be reconstructed, hence the connection between, on the one hand, art and reality and, on the other, painting, sculpture, and architecture. He wanted as well to take painting back to this condition of harmony, one way being to remove frames so that it is space itself that frames the image. This is something that is explored later on by artists like Mark Rothko.

In Kiesler's work, the environment is as important as the object, whether an art object or not, which is staged but not separated from the rest of reality. He once admitted that he even found it difficult to separate facts from artifacts; according to him, painters, sculptors and architects must conceive their work technically and ideologically as part of the world in which they live. Boundaries, for example those of Cartesian geometry, should be transgressed in order to further develop space, which exists in slumber until it is awakened.

**A conversation between
Céline Condorelli and Maria Lind**

Maria Lind

Your new work the Swindelier, which is a commission for Frederick Kiesler: Visions at Work, Annotated by Céline Condorelli and Six Student Groups, can function both as an instrument to look at the exhibition and a map of Kiesler's practice and thinking. Can you please elaborate on this?

Céline Condorelli

The Swindelier, while being a piece in the exhibition Visions at Work, also affects its conditions both spatially and climatically, in this way altering the way one might navigate through it and how one encounters the works on display. It provides the soundtrack to the exhibition, modulates its lighting, air flow... But it is also a condensation of different elements that come from Kiesler's own long-term interest in forms of display, and in this way gathers some things I have learned from him into this quasi-object which functions like a tool-box, a sample, a register of some of his works and way of thinking.

ML

How did you become interested in Kiesler's work?

CC

I first heard of Kiesler's work when I was a student, as that of an eccentric visionary. It is only later, when I started being actively interested in forms of exhibition display, that I re-encountered him as one of the very few people who had made display an explicit subject and object of their practice, and, more specifically, had realized "a new physical framework and ideological scaffolding for exhibition," as Mary Anne Staniszewski mentioned in her seminal book *The Power of Display* (MIT Press, 1998). I became fascinated by the L and T System, and how they functioned as objects modulating the relationship between a public and the objects on display, and then realized this was one of the main objectives of his larger practice.

ML

What is the most intriguing part of his legacy for you today?

CC

It has taken a long time to realize how influential Kiesler's life and work has been, and he is now emerging as a powerful voice counter to the main modernist narratives present in art, architecture, and performance of his time. His attention to forms of display, as fundamental to the understanding and conception of exhibitions, is of particular relevance in today's renewed interest in the medium of exhibitions. He worked very hard at putting notions of 'standards' into question, and in this way made space for practices interested in re-inventing possible conditions for artworks by re-imagining them through a variety of possible relations between context, exhibition, work, the public, which has in turn allowed the questioning of these categories and the notions they form. I am still, like many people, working with many of his ideas as suggestions for further works, and further ways to work, which is why I decided to appropriate one of his diagrams into my working methodology, which forms a new piece for the exhibition.

Céline Condorelli is a London-based artist. She is the author and editor of *Support Structures*, Sternberg Press (2009 and 2014), and one of the founding directors of Eastside Projects, Birmingham, UK. She is currently Professor at NABA (Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti) Milan. Recent exhibitions include *bau bau*, HangarBicocca; *The Company She Keeps*, Van Abbemuseum; Céline Condorelli, Chisenhale Gallery; *bau bau*, museum refectory, permanent installation, Museum of Contemporary Art Leipzig; *Ten Thousand Wiles and a Hundred Thousand Tricks*, MuHKA, Antwerp (2014); *Additional*, Project Art Centre, Dublin; *Puppet Show*, Eastside Projects, Birmingham; *Things That Go Without Saying*, Grazer Kunstverein, Austria; *The Parliament*, 'Archive of Disobedience', Castello di Rivoli, Turin (2013); and *Surrounded by the Uninhabitable*, SALT Istanbul (2012).

Student Projects

KTH Tensta and Askebyskolan

This year's group from KTH in Tensta, a preparatory course in architecture, consists of 22 students. The 15-credit course runs part time two days a week. The overall aim is to provide the students with basic knowledge of Architecture and Social Structure. It is intended to provide a set of tools and concepts that enable the future development of the subject and its working process.

During the semester, the theories of Fredrick Kiesler have been introduced. They have been used as inspiration and instrument over the different steps of the course, which include architecture, urban planning, construction science (construction and materials). Kiesler's Endless House has been used to study space and scale, as well as as a reference for model building. The last step in the course was completed together with students from Class A 5 (eleven-year olds) at Askebyskolan in Rinkeby. Using Kiesler's theories on "endless space" and furniture, they together created a structure / multi-functional piece of furniture to put on the school's property. Askebyskolan is a primary school with 370 pupils, who together speak around thirty different languages. Kiesler's "Endless House" is a great opportunity to enhance the students' creativity and to integrate culture and aesthetics into their learning.

The participants from KTH Tensta: Alia Abdulsahib, Pål Ahlsén, Jennifer Andersson, Elvira Anshelm, Denise Bustillos, Henrik Cheng, Jennie Fridolin, Anita Gasal, Elin Ghersinich, Payam Hakemivala, Agnes Hedberg, Pavels Hedström, Stephanie Hoffman, Ann-Charlotte Ingschold, Zeinab Saad, Kristoffer Sandqvist, Anna Selberg, Stavros Stavropoulos, Ida-Sofia Stenberg, Pernilla Ström, Margareta Tohver, Mårten Tovle, Pazcal Vasquez. Teacher: Stefan Petersson.

The participants from Askebyskolan: Sarmmad Alaf, Stelios Florakis, Kadro Hassan, Ruwaida Hashi, Anas Hussein, Shahd Hussein, Gloria Kakembo, Fatimah Mandalawi, Abdi Al-Maurayati, Nasro

Mohamed, Sumaya Nasrudin, Bugra Orhan, Isabella Raimovic, Saber Sabriye, Aboud Shammo, Cebrail Yagci, Hassan Yusuf. Teacher: Nabil Belkacem.

Konstfack Interior Architecture and Furniture Design

Students in the Interior Architecture and Furniture Design Program at Konstfack have approached Kiesler's oeuvre and manifesto in manifold ways. In order to learn more about Kiesler, the students have analysed and discussed the Correalism manifesto and examined artists and architects who have influenced Kiesler. These influences range across various styles, amongst them Russian Constructivism, de Stijl, and Rudolph Steiner's anthroposophical architecture and manifesto. This research was followed by interior and furniture explorations, investigating how questions similarly radical questions to those Kiesler developed in the 1920's could be framed today, as well as developing novel methods and innovative design solutions.

For the interior architecture component of the project, the students explored individually different notions from the correalism manifesto such as force, endlessness, and latent functions.

They developed a method of principles to analyze, understand, and reinvent spatial qualities in a contemporary context using the atrium of Ross Tensta Gymnasium as a case study for reconfiguration. In a next step the students undertook the task to re-construct the adaptable T and L System. Based on historical photos and incomplete drawings, the students created a complete set of drawings, 3D visualizations, a scaled model, and a full-scale reconstruction of the T and L System within one week.

These investigations raised questions about copyright and about what defines an original as distinct from a reconstruction. Students then collaborated in smaller groups on design projects investigating how the notion of 'display' could be interpreted in our own contemporary context. What might be a radical approach that questions the notion of display and the relationship between

an artwork and the viewer? The student proposals include wearable objects, easily understood as fashion or large-scale jewellery; tool-boxes with a variety of filters used as intermediaries between the viewer and the artwork; elements constructing mobile and reconfigurable spaces; furniture and surfaces for inhabitation and display and as framing devices; and finally the installation of insertions creating novel transitions for the visitor of exhibition spaces.

Students:

Emma Brålander, Mathilda Clahr, Hugo Lundberg, Elida Mangefors, Linn Melin, Ulrika Ohlgren, Sandra Petterson, Daniel Reinius, Viktor Sundström, Hannes Tennberg, Sanna Trotsman, Emily Pun, Sayaka Shiraishi, Jamie Smith, Michiel Van Gageldonk, Georgina Walter. Under the supervision of the Senior Lecturers Åsa Conradsson, Rochus Urban Hinkel, Sergio Montero Bravo

KTH School of Architecture

Studio#5: Translations

Studio #5 at KTH School of Architecture has engaged with the work of Frederick Kiesler through the speculative design of a new theater in Stockholm in the Haga Castle ruin. Through text seminars and a study trip to New York, the students have critically studied Kiesler's experimental take on theater design, ranging from the early Space Stage to his Guild Cinema and unbuilt theater proposals. The students have positioned their individual work in relation to a specific aspect of Kiesler. Many have found great inspiration in Kiesler's ambition to break the traditional theater's static picture frame and find more intricate relations between actors, audience, stage, and set design.

With great interest in Kiesler's experimental design methodologies and his fascination with technology and the correlation between natural, human, and technological environments, the studio has explored the generative potential, use, and consequences of techniques, tools, and technologies for translations between context/site, digital and analogue information, and material processes. Architecture as field and practice calls for procedures of translation from

medium to medium, from drawing to model, from drawing to building, from mediums of representation to fabrication. The exclusion of certain kinds of information and the inclusion of other kinds of information within a given medium is driven by the conventions of architectural notation. A general concern in architecture has traditionally been that of preserving the meaning and likeness from idea to drawing to building with minimum loss. The studio has investigated sensibilities, which disturb identity, with an interest in embracing the generative potential when going between mediums.

Students:

Kristina Barnskyte, Axel Bodros Wolgers, Kamila Borucka, Anton Bogårdh, Toby Buckmaster, Manon Deijkers, Inese Dindone, Elise Dorby, Aron Edling Fidjeland, Alexander Hammarstrand, Torbjörn Hirsch, Maria Johansson, Jerry Kopare, Love Liljekvist, Sara Lundmark, Pernilla Lönnborg Mailys Marty, Yvonne Mitschke, Johan Nordstedt, Raffer Qian, Luciano Peirone Udriot, Mirja Robin, Andrea Sundelin, Kristina Sundin, Henrik Wallin, Anna Weglin, Jannik Weisser. Professors/teachers: Ulrika Karlsson, Einar Rodhe and Veronica Skeppe.

KKH Mejan Arc

Architectural Theory and History Displaying Frederick Kiesler

A working group was formed discussing an investigation into alternative archives, as a way of rethinking the way content is organized and displayed. From there, the group examined a number of projects by Frederick Kiesler, posting their research on the course blog, <https://wildsidemejanarc.wordpress.com/workshop-displaying-kiesler-tenstakonsthall/>.

The working group reached a consensus on the importance of the five senses in Kiesler's oeuvre and made a set of postulations that could be integrated into the exhibition. From these, the group developed a color, double-sided, foldable brochure to be laser cut and handed out at the opening. The foldable brochure is inspired by one of Kiesler's designs for a space called Bloodflames 1947.

On April 15, at 15:00, together with Céline Condorelli, a Talk Show will be recorded in the Tensta konsthall space, designed and staged for a discussion on display and ideology. A stage will be designed for the Talk Show and advertisements and features made by the course participants and screened during the event.

Participants: Matthew Ashton, Frida Boström, Anna Hesselgren, Malin Heyman, Ulrika Jansson, Emma Jenkins, Dan Lageryd, Stuart Mayes, Szymon Zydek.
Professor: Peter Lang.

Stationary projects

The Frederick Kiesler library Set up by CuratorLab with the help of Konstfack Library.

The Frederick Kiesler library at Tensta konsthall presents a wide range of titles, stretching from artist biographies, manifestos, and science and philosophy books to writings about and by Kiesler. With this selection, the library opens up possibilities for cross readings and cross connections through different subjects and people, all connected to Kiesler's own multidisciplinary body of work.

A specific color-coding system has been constructed for this particular project, each representing a given subject or personal connection to Kiesler. Every title appearing in the library will be assigned one or more colors to highlight these connections and how they are associated with Kiesler.

The selection of titles for the library is the collective effort of Valentina Sansone, Kim McAleese, Sam Perry, Patrik Haggren, Dorota Michalska, and Jacob Hurtig, from the CuratorLab course at Konstfack. Jacob Hurtig has also constructed the color-coding system and been the coordinator for the library.

Special thanks to Konstfack Library for a helping hand and for lending out books for this project, and to the Kiesler foundation for sending us their whole catalogue of titles.

loose connections, strong sympathies

loose connections, strong sympathies consists of a series of panels focusing on the hybrid status of modernity in the body of work of Frederick Kiesler. Through a constellation of images, we seek to place Kiesler's projects in a broad spectrum of scientific discoveries, psychological experiments, and mechanical laws. Rather than following a strictly methodological approach, we propose a more imaginative montage of possible connections. The panels tackle some of Kiesler's main obsessions, such as the idea of a non-functionalist infinity, visual correlations without symbolic connections, and a total environment inhabited by human and non-human beings.

The projects aim to actualize Kiesler's correalism as an interdisciplinary approach. Focusing on connections, we reach towards a dense reality of shifting boundaries and changing identities. The project has been developed as an intense research laboratory about architecture as an accumulation of energy, movement, hybrids, and speculative science.

Curated by Patrik Haggren and Dorota Michalska, CuratorLab, in collaboration with the artist Mikhail Lylov.

Through a Glass, Lightly

11.2–2.5 2015

Opening: 11.2, 16.30–18.00

The shop window is the space of visual speculation. It is the stage of visual ecstasy, of the diffuse spectacle associated with advanced capitalism and commodity abundance. In his essay "Some Notes on Shop Windows," Frederick Kiesler proposes that the shop window should be performing a play starring Mr. Hat and Miss Glove. He refers to the shop window as a stage, describing the street as an auditorium with constantly changing viewers. The shop window is a central issue in several of Kiesler's works; he wants to attract the attention of the observers and turn them into active spectators.

Through a Glass, Lightly is a project focusing on presentation and representation connected to Frederick Kiesler's multidisciplinary body of work. The artists were asked to work with the shop owners of the Tensta Market to design window displays reflecting on questions of desire production, collaborative fashion, and new mythologies. The exhibition aims to consider the shop window space as a tool of communication and possible connection with a larger auditorium than a classical art institution.

Artists: Céline Condorelli, Johanna Gustafsson Fürst, Carl Palm
Istanbul Fashion and Interflora in
Tensta Centrum, Stockholm

Curated by Dorota Michalska, CuratorLab

In collaboration with: Polish Institute in
Stockholm.

Temporary projects

Building a figurative utopia: a series of events at The Frederick Kiesler Library
Frederick Kiesler's architecture is inspired by life: his buildings are based on organic, open formulae. Similarly to Kiesler, Ettore Sottsass defined new, radical ways of living through design as "a way of discussing society, politics, eroticism, food and even design. At the end, it is a way of building a possible figurative utopia or metaphor about life."

Departing from a reflection on Kiesler's visionary architecture and its relationship with the radical architecture and design movements in the late 1960s, a series of events especially conceived for the project by CuratorLab will activate The Frederick Kiesler Library over the course of the exhibition at Tensta konsthall. Invited artists and scholars will reflect on utopian visions in art, architecture, life, and design. The series of public events at The Frederick Kiesler Library represents an attempt to analyze further the fruitful exchanges between art and architecture over the course of history and poses new questions on the medium of sculpture today.

Ian Kiaer on Frederick Kiesler
Tuesday 17.2, 15:00–16:30
A skype session with London-based
artist Ian Kiaer

Florian Medicus: Kiesler's Endless House revisited
A lecture on 'endlessness' in the history
of art and architecture

The work of Frederick Kiesler has fascinated Ian Kiaer for many years. Kiaer introduces Kiesler's work and explains the reasons he has developed a new series of sculptures departing from Kiesler's Tooth House. After the Skype session, the lecture Kiesler's Endless House Revisited by Florian Medicus (University of Applied Arts, Vienna) will follow. Medicus looks at the concept of 'endlessness' in Kiesler's work, exploring its ramifications for art and architecture. Is it possible to escape from a traditional aesthetics when dealing with the idea of the 'endless?'

Tooth House brings together a series of works by Ian Kiaer (1971, lives and works in London) made between 2005 and 2014. The title is taken from the work of Frederick Kiesler, from a scheme designed in the late 1940s for a residence integrated into its environment, modeled on a tooth – that part of the body that grows twice and is a constant reminder of our primordial past.

Thanks to: The Henry Moore Institute, Leeds (UK); Institute of Architecture, University of Applied Arts, Vienna.

Curated by Valentina Sansone,
CuratorLab



**Lunch Reading Session on Friendship
with artist Céline Condorelli moderated
by Kim McAleese, CuratorLab**

Wednesday 11.2, 13:30–15:00

Artist Céline Condorelli works with art and architecture as a means to develop structures for 'support.' Support can be defined as a type of relationship between people, objects, social forms, and political structures, or it can be defined in purely architectural terms. Condorelli elaborates on this notion of 'support structures' by relating her practice back to the idea of friendship and how integral it has been in the development of her artistic work and her research.

Curatorlab at Konstfack has been invited to populate the Kiesler library, which will be present for the duration of the exhibition at Tensta Konsthall. Kim McAleese has selected a number of texts charting the discourse around Condorelli's practice, focusing on friendship and support.

Members of the public are invited to join the lunchtime reading group on 11 February, where Condorelli and McAleese will present a selection of texts from the library, and will discuss them in more detail.

No booking is required.

**How to Live?
Documentation of Andrea Zittel's
lecture on Frederick Kiesler
(MAK, 2013)**

The Mobile Home Library

Thursday 16.4, 16:00

Recipient of the 2012 Kiesler Prize, the American artist Andrea Zittel elucidates her comprehensive work. Zittel's Social Sculptures cross the boundaries between art, architecture, design, and technology and attempt to combine personal experiences with important social issues. "Perhaps what inspires me most about Frederick Kiesler is how his brain worked. He was interested in things like matter, interacting forces, human need, continuous motion, and elastic spaces. He felt that every object in the universe

should be considered in relation to its environment, and he described this as an exchange of interacting forces, which he called co-reality and the science of relationships." (Andrea Zittel, New York 2012). The video is the documentation of the lecture that took place on June 5, 2013 at the MAK Lecture Hall in Vienna.

Thanks to Bärbel Vischer, MAK, Wien

Frederick Kiesler
Time Line Photographs
Clockwise from top to bottom

1. Stage design for R.U.R., 1923.

Kiesler's set design for Karel Čapek's play R.U.R at the Theater am Kurfürstendamm in Berlin featured both sculptural and mechanical elements as a reaction against the customary flat backdrops. The play is a science fiction about a factory making artificial humans, "robots," who eventually take over the world. R.U.R. stands for Rossum's Universal Robots, thereby coining the term robot. The set design was immediately praised and laid the foundation for Kiesler's reputation as a forward thinker.

2. Film Guild Cinema, 1929. The Film Guild Cinema was designed by Kiesler and opened on 52 W 8th St. in New York in 1929. It was commissioned by an association of independent film-makers interested in experimental film. The cinema had a megaphone-shaped movie theater with a "psycho function," a surplus value, to use Kiesler's own words. It meant that the whole building was considered as part of the cinematic experience: the space of the film was extended to encompass the space of the spectator.

3. Kiesler in front of the opening poster of the Film Guild Cinema, 1929. For the inauguration, Charlie Chaplin's One A.M. was screened. Alexander Archipenko, George Gershwin, and the Austrian consul general Friedrich Frischerauer, among others, attended the event.

4. Space Stage, 1924. This inventive stage design included a ramp, an elevator, and a circular stage on top. The audience could only experience the performance from the surrounding balconies. The stage was a commission for the International Exhibition of New Theater Technique that took place at the Vienna Konzerthaus, as part of a theater festival.

5. International Exhibition of New Theater Technique, 1924. The exhibition featured the newest developments in the world of theater and took place in a space

where the walls could not be touched, the Vienna Konzerthaus. Kiesler's solution was to revert to the floor, for which he developed the so-called Leger- und Trägersystem. This wooden structure, painted in black, white, and red, would then carry the two and three-dimensional exhibits.

6. Space House, 1933. In the showroom of Modernage Furniture Company on 162 E 33rd St., Kiesler showed his Space House, described as "time-space-architecture." This is an example of how organic forms appear early in his work. Among his inventions here are sound-proofing rubber curtains.

7. Shop window SAKS Fifth Avenue, 1928. Out of both an interest in methods of display and economic necessity, Kiesler worked with shop window displays at the New York department store SAKS Fifth Avenue, among other places. His displays were sparse, showing only a few items, primarily of clothing, often in settings that indicated a certain kind of drama, thereby breaking with the convention of the time.

8. Installation of the International Theater Exposition, 1926. A third theater exhibition was staged by Kiesler in New York's Steinway Building. He was the curator of the European section and the designer of the catalogue, where he claimed that "the theater is dead." Accompanying Kiesler in this photograph is Jane Heap, the publisher of the theater magazine Little Review who invited him to work on the exhibition.

9. Group photo in front of the City in Space, 1925. Kiesler referred to his early exhibition architecture as "Raumstadt," or space city. City in Space was the Austrian theater section of the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes at the Grand Palais in Paris. The "city" was suspended from the ceiling, hovering above the floor. In this photo Kiesler is accompanied by Theo van Doesburg, George Antheil, Jane Heap, Tristan Tzara, and László Moholy-Nagy, among others.

10. Art of This Century, 1942. Art of This Century on 30 W 50th St. in New York was the joint effort of collector and gallerist Peggy Guggenheim and Kiesler. It was a true sensation, its Surrealist, Abstract, Kinetic, and Daylight Galleries offering an unprecedented experience of the work of the European avant-garde in Guggenheim's private collection. As one headline put it: with Art of This Century, for the first time "modern art in a modern setting" was on offer. The coordination between painting, sculpture, and architecture was at the core of the project where paintings should not be hung on the walls and sculptures should not be placed on plinths. Another goal was to make possible a more intensive encounter between the viewer and the individual artwork. The Abstract Gallery featured abstract paintings displayed on rods and cables that ran from floor to ceiling, allowing for unorthodox viewing angles. Between the cables, flat surfaces were placed so as to create horizontal areas for the display of sculptures.

11. Art of This Century, 1942. The notion that Kiesler developed for this, and for his other exhibition designs, was "spatial presentation." It implied that all components in the space are mobile and possible to de-install. They should involve minimum costs and labor and be simple to handle by the gallery. The Surrealist Gallery featured curved wooden walls and frameless paintings attached to the walls by "arms."

12. Kiesler on Metabolism Chart, 1947. A complex chart was included in the article Correalism and Biotechnique. In this "metabolism chart of the house," the idea was that the individual is going through a sort of metabolism by passing through time.

13. Art of This Century, 1942. The walls in the Abstract Gallery were covered with dark blue fabric, which was held in place with rope, almost like sails. Kiesler's correalist furniture was used throughout Guggenheim's institution. (see #10)

14. Art of This Century, 1942. At Art of This Century, items from Kiesler's close friend Duchamp's Boite-en-valise were displayed on a ferris wheel-like structure that could be maneuvered by the visitors themselves and viewed through a peephole. Kiesler and Duchamp supposedly got to know each other in Paris in 1925, and they met regularly until 1942 when Duchamp, escaping the war in Europe, stayed with Kiesler and his wife Steffi for a whole year. Kiesler wrote the first text on Duchamp's work to be published in the US, in Architectural Record in 1937, and he lectured on The Large Glass.

15. Max Ernst in the exhibition Bloodflames, 1947. Bloodflames took place at the Hugo Gallery, New York, and it included work by Arshile Gorky, Wifredo Lam, and Isamu Noguchi, among others. The theatrical setting was designed by Kiesler, who used simple and inexpensive means to transform the apartment gallery into a surrealistic experience. Ernst was a close friend of Kiesler.

16. Hall of Superstitions 1947. Hall of Superstitions was one of the spaces in the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme, which took place at Galerie Maeght in Paris. The Hall of Superstition was an early attempt at physically articulating the ideas behind the Endless House. Kiesler transformed the room with dark-turquoise cloth into a spherical cave, an endlessly flowing space continuum without corners and edges. The exhibition featured work by Max Ernst, Yves Tanguy, and Joan Miró, among others. It was curated by Marcel Duchamp and André Breton. The participating artists were invited to realize sketches by Kiesler.

17. Bloodflames, 1947. The exhibition was curated by Nicholas Calas. The Hugo Gallery was in operation 1945-55, and it was directed by Alexander Iolas, a central figure of New York's queer art scene at the time. In this exhibition, the pictures were framed by the space itself rather than by conventional frames. Kiesler's ambition was to place the viewer "in the middle of the Milky Way of painting." He had befriended Gorky and Noguchi in the 1930s when he became an

important connection between the European avant-garde artists escaping the Nazi regime and the Second World War and the New York art scene. By using paint, Kiesler created the illusion of a cave. The artworks, as well as the visitors, were framed by the space. Paintings and sculptures were thus welcomed “into the big family of architecture,” according to Kiesler.

18. Figue Anti-Tabou, 1947. After WWII, Kiesler began to work more with painting and sculpture. He included his own Figue Anti-Tabou in the exhibition in Paris. The large sculpture resembles a fist with the thumb stuck between index and middle finger—a traditional gesture to ward off evil.

19. Kiesler designing a stage set for the Juilliard School of Music, 1935. From 1933, Kiesler worked as a teacher and set designer at this influential theater school in Manhattan. He frequently made set designs for its stage until the 1950s.

20. Endless House, 1950. When Kiesler showed sketches and models for the Endless House in the exhibition *Two Houses: New Ways to Build* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1952, it was juxtaposed with Buckminster Fuller’s geodesic dome. Both buildings were inspired by organic forms as well as new technological developments, and they shared a visionary approach to architecture. This early model of the Endless House is shaped like an egg and holds various spaces of different dimensions meant for the dynamic life of several generations.

21. Endless House, 1959. Kiesler in front of a model of the Endless House, shown at the 1960 exhibition *Visionary Architecture* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Kiesler originally made the model(s) because the MoMA wanted him to build a 1:1 scale model in the sculpture garden of the museum. When this did not work out, the models, plans, drawings and photos were shown in the *Visionary Architecture* exhibition.

22. Rockefeller Galaxy, 1947–51. This large-scale wooden sculpture was purchased by Nelson B. Rockefeller.

It was included in the legendary exhibition *15 Americans* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1952, alongside work by Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, and Clifford Still, among others. His various Galaxies developed out of a set design for Darius Milhaud’s and Jean Cocteau’s 1947 play *The Poor Sailor*. A common denominator among the galaxies is that they function as environments rather than traditional sculptures.

23–24. Shrine of The Book, 1965. Together with the architect Armand Phillip Bartos, Kiesler designed the monumental Shrine of The Book in Jerusalem. It is the home of the ancient Dead Sea Scrolls and the only building by Kiesler that was realized.

25. Bucephalus, 1963. This sculpture, which borders on being an environment, was named after the horse of Alexander the Great. It is typical of Kiesler’s work of the early 1960s in its mixing of figurative and abstract features, alluding to existential issues. The plaster model was supposed to be cast in bronze, but it remained unrealized.

List of works by Frederick Kiesler Anticlockwise

26. Study for a department store, 1925. (Reproduction from Kiesler’s book *Contemporary Art Applied to The Store and Its Display*, NY 1930). Repro on fibreboard. The building is lifted from the ground, providing space for the circulation of traffic and people. Five light shafts are surrounded by shop windows, and on the top floor there is an outdoor restaurant. The construction relies on cables and telescopic pipes instead of pillars and includes double glass walls between which heating and air conditioning are kept.

27–28. Horizontal Skyscraper, 1925. (Reproduction from *Contemporary Art Applied to The Store and Its Display*, NY 1930) Repro on fibreboard. In order to secure costly land for traffic and parks and to provide healthy living conditions with plenty of privacy, Kiesler devised the horizontal skyscraper. The central part is a garage and the four wings are housing

units, entirely surrounded by air and light. The building materials, as well as the construction process, are supposed to be thoroughly standardized.

29. Study for a spiral shaped department store, 1925.

(Reproduction from Kiesler's book *Contemporary Art Applied to The Store and Its Display*, NY 1930). Repro on fibreboard. This tall department store is meant to solve one of the most pressing issues of the trade: how to avoid bottlenecks around staircases and lifts and create a steady flow of shoppers. A glass facade resting on a steel structure provides light and visual contact with the environment. On every third level, there is supporting beams connecting the department store to the neighboring buildings.

30. International Exhibition of New Theater Techniques, exhibition view with Frederick Kiesler's L and T System Konzerthaus, Vienna 1924.

Repro on fibreboard. The exhibition explored the stage of the arts of theater within the European cultural avant-garde of the time. The exhibited items had been chosen by Kiesler himself, who thus acted as both curator and exhibition designer. Among the exhibited items were Fernand Leger's now classical film *Ballet Mechanique*, which had its premiere here, and sketches by Alexander Vesnin, Alexandra Exter, and Enrico Prampolini. Kiesler was also responsible for the design of the poster, the invite, and the catalogue (See #5).

31. Model of City in Space. (see #9)

32. Model of Space House. (see #6)

33. Re-construction of the L and T-system (Leger und Träger).

Made by students from Interior Architecture and Furniture Design, Konstfack

34.

- a. Student work by KTH Tensta and A5 Askebykolan, Rinkeby.
- b. Interior Architecture and Furniture Design.
- c. Student work by CuratorLab. Loose

Connections, strong sympathies.

- d. KTH School of Architecture Studio 5
- e. CuratorLab Frederick Kiesler Library

35. Space Stage (Fragment),

Céline Condorelli 2015. Unfinished wood. Space Stage (Fragment) is the reconstruction of a part of Kiesler's Space Stage of 1924, which he built for performances to take place on and is here hosting the program of events for the exhibition dedicated to him.

36–37. Endless House, Project for the MoMA, NY, plans and elevations, 2nd scheme, 1959.

Sepiaprint on fibreboard. This drawing was shown at the 1960 exhibition *Visionary Architecture* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The exhibition joined under one roof 20th century architectural projects that had been considered too radical to be realized. Among Kiesler's co-exhibitors were Le Corbusier and Buckminster Fuller. (see #20–21)

38–41. Endless House for Mary Sisler, Plans and Sections, 1960.

Sepiaprint on fibreboard. The collector Mary Kiesler commissioned Kiesler to design a version of his Endless House for her estate in Florida. However, disagreements arose and the project was never realized. (see #20–21)

42. Mobile Home Library (reconstruction model, scale 1:10; model by Peter Schamberger und Georg Wizany) 2008.

Various plastics. The Mobile Home Library was the result of eighteen months of work by Kiesler and his students at the Laboratory of Design Correlation at the School of Architecture, Columbia University, New York. The laboratory was in operation 1937-41. Based on Kiesler's theory of "biotechnique," they investigated book storage as a process. According to Kiesler, bookcases had, until then, put more strain on the user than on the tool, the bookcase itself.

43. Reconstruction of Mobile Home Library by Wittmann. Including books set up by CuratorLab with the help of Konstfack Library (see Stationary projects

page: 10). The Mobile Home Library was a new biotechnical tool for keeping books at home, subject both to variation and improvement. Recognizing that books were also changing, Kiesler anticipated other tools of communication taking over in the future, for example, television and reading by optophonetics. The prototype was modular and double-sided, made of chestnut wood and a steel frame with inlay of sponge rubber, and transparent plastic dust flaps. The height was adjusted to human scale, the width of each shelf extended by a few inches to increase storage space, and the modules made to revolve to allow access to both sides.

44. Swindelier, Céline Condorelli, 2015. Copper pipe, fan, light, lightboard, speaker, mp3 player and track, C-type prints. Following elements from Kiesler's work as a set of instructions, the Swindelier is an instrument for adjusting existing conditions. The creature's many arms are each able to modulate the environment and its perception through sound, light, and wind and with instruments of comprehension (diagrams, methodologies, and other keys). It is connected to and modulates the exhibition's lighting and, in this way, also explicitly depends and relies on the larger infrastructure of the gallery.

45. The Strategy of Everything, Céline Condorelli, 2015. One colour silkscreen print, daily newspaper (Claridad, 22.1 2015). The Strategy of Everything is a diagram adapted from Kiesler's notes and up-cycled to a working methodology cycle. It is printed on a page from the daily newspaper Claridad from Puerto Rico where the artist was doing a residency while making the work, thus "using the existing conditions" in the spirit of Kiesler.

46. Kiesler & Bartos, The Shrine of The Book, Plan, 1957–65. Repro, sepiaprint on fibreboard. The Shrine of The Book has been described as one of the most important religious buildings of the 20th century. Together with the architect Armand Phillip Bartos, Kiesler designed the spectacular ensemble in Jerusalem in 1965. It is a branch of the Israel Museum that houses

the Dead Sea Scrolls found 1947-56 in a cave in the West Bank. The scrolls are of great historical, linguistic, and religious significance, as they include the earliest known manuscripts with texts that became part of the Hebrew Bible. They have been dated between 400 BC and 300 AD. The Shrine of the Book is a hybrid between a monument, a building, and a sculpture. The exterior is dominated by a large, circular, white, lid-like shape situated in a pool of water and a black "slab" standing next to it. Both refer to how texts have been used and preserved, in scrolls and in books. The interior is characterised by rounded, cave-like shapes and natural materials like stone.

47. Kiesler & Bartos, The Shrine of The Book, perspective elevation, 1957–65. Sepiaprint on fibreboard (see #46)

48. Party Lounge, 1936. The Party Lounge is both a sofa and a bed. Moving parts make this piece of furniture usable in different ways. Part can be folded up and down to become either a backrest or a mattress pad. The sofa has wheels that make it easy to move around, so it can be placed along the wall or in the center of the room. The name Party Lounge comes from Kiesler's ambition to create a piece of furniture that fits at a party, where more people need room to sit.

49. Correalist Instruments, 1942. This multi-functional piece of furniture was designed for the inauguration of Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century Gallery in 1942. The piece can be put and placed in several ways and challenges the notions of what furniture can and cannot be used for. The shape, however, is not arbitrary, but designed in relation to the contours and curves of the human body. There are no less than eighteen different ways of using the Correalist Instrument.

50. Correalist Rocker, 1942. As with the Correalistic Instruments, the Correalistic Rocker was designed for the opening of Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century Gallery, a tailor shop that Kiesler's modernistic and visionary furniture designs helped to turn into an exhibition space. The Correalist Rocker and Correalist Instruments are nowadays

regarded as architectural classics. Their organic and abstract shapes suggest new ways of relating to spatiality and exhibition design.

51. Freischwinger No.2, 1933. This armchair is one of six armchairs Kiesler drew for the New York apartment of Charles and Margurite Mergentime in 1933. At the time, the chair was not produced, but it has since been manufactured retrospectively by the Austrian furniture company Wittman, who has returned to Kiesler's drawings and produced several of his avant-garde furniture designs.

52. Surrealist Gallery, Peggy Guggenheim's "Art of This Century Gallery" (reconstruction model, scale: 1:3), 1997. Made for the Exiles and Emigres exhibition at Los Angeles County Museum of Art, diverse materials. The roaring sound of an approaching train greets you in the dark of this model. When the lights come on, they illuminate a few works at a time, creating a sort of choreography when the light moves through the space. The sound stops after a minute or so, and you are allowed to take a close look at the miniature replicas of Giorgio de Chirico's *The Nostalgia of the Poet* and Picasso's *The Studio*, among other paintings, in a gallery that is like a hybrid of an art dollhouse and a funfair. The sequence of sound and light is faster than in the original setting. (see #11)

**List of the Works in Surrealist Gallery
Short end clockwise:**

- a. Giorgio de Chirico, *The Gentle Afternoon*, 1916
- b. Salvador Dalí, *Birth of Liquid Desires*, 1931–1932
- c. (sculpture) Alberto Giacometti, *Woman Walking*, 1932
- d. Max Ernst, *The Kiss / Le Baiser*, 1927
- e. Max Ernst, *The Attirement of the Bride*, 1940
- f. Max Ernst, *The Forest / La Forêt*, 1927–1928

Long end clockwise:

Left wall:

- g. Max Ernst, *The Antipope*, 1941–1942
- h. Max Ernst, *The Entire City*, 1936–1937
- i. (sculpture) Alberto Giacometti, *Woman with her Throat Cut*, 1932
- j. André Masson, *The Armour*, 1925
- k. (top) Salvador Dalí, *Untitled*, 1931
- l. (bottom) Giorgio de Chirico, *The Nostalgia of the Poet*, 1914
- m. (top) Yves Tanguy, *Promontory Palace*, 1931
- n. (bottom) Yves Tanguy, *If It Were*, 1939
- o. Yves Tanguy, *The Sun in its Jewel Case*, 1937

Front wall:

- p. Max Ernst, *The Numerous Family*, 1926
- q. Paul Delvaux, *The Break of Day*, 1937
- r. Joan Miró, *Dutch Interior II*, 1928

Right wall:

- s. Max Ernst, *Zoomorphic Couple*, 1933
- t. Max Ernst, *Landscape-Effect of Touch*, 1934
- u. Victor Brauner, *Fascination*, 1939
- v. René Magritte, *The Voice of Space*, 1931
- w. (top) Leonora Carrington, *The Horses of Lord Candlestick*, 1938
- x. (bottom) Leonor Fini, *The Shepherdess of the Sphinxes*, 1941
- y. Joan Miró, *Seated Woman II*, 1939
- z. Giorgio de Chirico, *The Red Tower*, 1913

53. Hall of Superstition, Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme, exhibiton view, Galerie Maeght Paris 1947. Repro on fibreboard. (see #16)

54. Model for Endless House, general view, 1959. Repro on fibreboard. (see #20–21)

**Small space:
Anticlockwise**

55. Laboratory for Design Correlation, original doorsign, NY c. 1937. Paperboard letters on paperboard. At the Laboratory for Design Correlation (1937–41) at the School of Architecture, Columbia University in New York, Kiesler could study life processes and design in a

more systematic, even scientific, manner. Together with the students, he researched basic forms and how they are used in architecture and the industry. For example, for The Mobile Home Library, they jointly investigated the phenomenon of the storage of books and developed a solution for how to keep them.

56. Vision Machine, Conceptual drawing, historical reproduction of the original
Photographic repro mounted on fiberboard 91.

57. Study for viewing artworks 1942. Drawing, pencil on paper.

58. Study for viewing artworks 1942. Drawing, pencil on paper.

59. Study for presentation of artworks 1942. Drawing, pencil on paper.

60. Study for installing and lighting artworks, 1942. Drawing, india ink on paper.

61. Study for viewing paintings, 1942. Drawing, india ink on paper

62. Study for viewing mechanisms, 1942. Drawing, india ink and gouache on paper.

63. Study for viewing mechanisms, 1942. Drawing, india ink and gouache on paper.

64. Study for concave wall viewing apparatus, 1942. Drawing, india ink and gouache on paper.

65. Study for ceiling and lighting system, Surrealist Gallery, 1942. Drawing, india ink on paper. Light played an important role in Kiesler's conception of exhibition spaces. For the Surrealist Gallery, he wanted direct light on each artwork and used spotlights to achieve this. (see #10, #11 & #52)

66. Study for different ways of supporting paintings, 1942. Drawing, india ink and gouache on paper.

67. Study for presentation-unit at the 'Painting-Library', 1942. Drawing, india ink and gouache on paper.

68. 'Painting-Library' at the 'Daylight Gallery' exhibition view looking south New York 1942. (photograph K.W. Herrmann). Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. According to Kiesler, this was "a painting library" where the visitors could sit down and handle the paintings themselves from "the stock" placed in movable "bins." A special foldable stool was developed for the Daylight Gallery, which also functioned as a commercial gallery known for its seasonal group shows featuring emerging artists. A number of well-known artists had their first solo shows here, among them Jackson Pollock and Robert Motherwell. Art of This Century was in operation until 1947, and during this period 40% of the artists in the Daylight Gallery were women, for example, Alice Rahon Paalen, Virginia Admiral, and Irene Rice Pereira. The man on the left in the photograph is the artist Barnett Newman.

69. 'Surrealist Gallery' Exhibition view looking south with Frederick Kiesler and unknown woman, New York 1942. (photograph Berenice Abbott). Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. (see #10, #11 & #52)

70. 'Abstract Gallery', Exhibition view looking south, New York 1942. (photograph Berenice Abbott). Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. Ever since his early work in theater, Kiesler put a lot of energy and care into documenting his work, often hiring renowned photographers. In this case it was Berenice Abbott whose straight photography captured both New York architecture and people in artistic and literary circles. (see #10)

71. Viewing mechanism for Marcel Duchamp's "Boîte-en-valise" New York, 1942. (photograph Berenice Abbott). Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. The Kinetic gallery had a visitor controlled viewing mechanism specially designed for Marcel Duchamp's Boite-en-Valise. In addition, there was

a small conveyor belt that automatically showed paintings by Paul Klee. (see #14)

72. Four part Galaxy [Hand and Foot], 1955. Painting, oil colours on paper on fibrewood panel. The paintings were shown in clusters on the wall, floor, and even ceiling. For the artist, a painting was not a representation of reality but its own reality, and the space was as important as the object. In this way, he contributed to current discussions on “the death of easel painting” and the emergence of the environment as a format. When Kiesler took up painting in the 1940s, he harked back to his own ideas and attempts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in the 1910s. One of them was to reinvent portraiture by precisely dividing the image into separate parts.

73–74. Hall of Superstition, exhibition view with Frederick Kiesler’s Totem of All Religions, Paris 1947. Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. “La cascade architecturale,” a broad yellow belt, stretched from the ceiling to the floor like an undulating wave. Attached to it was a colourful frieze by Joan Miró symbolizing the presence of superstition. Totem of All Religions is an assemblage-like sculpture made of pieces of wood and rope, incorporating shapes from various religions. (see #16)

75–76. Hall of Superstition, exhibition view with model seated on the “cascade architecturale,” Paris 1947. Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. (see #16)

77–78. Hall of Superstition, exhibition view with “la cascade architecturale,” a frieze by Joan Miró, David Hare’s sculpture L’homme-anglaise, and Roberto Matta’s Le Whist, Paris 1947. Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. (see #16)

79. Hall of Superstition, exhibition view, Paris, 1947. Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. (see #16)

80. Hall of Superstition, exhibition view with Frederick Kiesler’s Totem of All Religions, Paris, 1947. Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. (see #16)

81. Study for Hall of Superstition, 1947. Drawing, india ink/ballpen on paper. (see #16)

82. Study for Hall of Superstition, 1947. Drawing, india ink/ballpen on paper. (see #16)

83. Study for Hall of Superstition, 1947. Drawing, india ink and gouache on paper. (see #16)

84. Study for Hall of Superstition with Figure Anti-Tabou, 1947. Drawing, india ink and gouache on paper. (see #16)

85. Study for Hall of Superstition, 1947. Drawing, india ink/ballpen on paper. (see #16)

86–87. Study for exhibition design Bloodflames, Hugo Gallery, New York 1947. Drawing, india ink and gouache on paper. (see #15–17)

88–91. Bloodflames exhibition view with works by David Hare, Isamu Noguchi, Helen Phillips und Jeanne Raynal, Hugo Gallery, New York 1947. Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. (see #15–17)

92. Conceptual drawing for the environment Last Judgement, 1962. Painting, charcoal and pastel on paper in original frame.

93–96. Exhibition design for American architecture and city planning exhibition, c. 1944–45. Drawing, india ink on paper. The exhibition was commissioned by the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship and looked at recent developments in architecture and urban planning in the US. It was planned in 1944 and was to take place in Moscow in 1945. However, Kiesler’s daring proposal was refused. Although the design for this initiative was never realized, it points to Kiesler’s commitment to surrealist ideas of how to think about space.

97–99. Study for Endless House, c. 1950. Drawing, ballpen on paper. The endlessness that Kiesler had in mind

was connected to the cyclical rhythms of life and to the human body, which for him does not have a clear beginning and end. Fluidity was a key feature in the Endless House. (see #20–21)

100–105. Study for Endless House

c. 1959. Drawing, pencil/ballpen on paper. (see #20–21)

106. Endless House Galaxy, Surface

Treatment of Shells, 1959. Drawing, pencil on tracing paper. (see #20–21)

107. Endless House Galaxy, Space

Division, 1959. Drawing, coloured crayons on paper. (see #20–21)

108. Art of This Century, 1942. (see #10)

109. Study for Sisler House (Endless

House for Mary Sisler), 1961. Drawing, pencil on tracing paper. (see #20–21)

110. Colour study for Endless House, c.

1960. Drawing, pencil, coloured pencil and pastel on paper. (see #20–21)

111. Colour study for Endless House,

c. 1960. Drawing, coloured crayons on paper. (see #20–21)

112–119. Endless House, interior

view, New York 1959. Vintage print, silvergelatine on baryta paper. This model was shown at the 1960 exhibition Visionary Architecture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The projects in the exhibition were all “too revolutionary to be built,” according to the curator. Among the other exhibitors were Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn. The plan to erect a 1:1 model of the Endless House in the sculpture garden of the Museum of Modern Art was never realized. (see #20–21)

Events

Public introductions to the exhibition
14:00, Thursdays and Saturdays

Wednesday 11.2

13:30 Student presentation: Lunch Reading Session with Céline Condorelli and Kim McAleese (CuratorLab, Konstfack)

15:00 Introduction to the exhibition Celine Condorelli

16:30–18:00 Student presentation: Opening Through a glass, Lightly in Tensta Centrum with artist Johanna Gustafsson Fürst and Carl Palm, curated by Dorota Michalska (CuratorLab, Konstfack)

19:00 Inbetween: Inside the Curatorial Space, Dieter Bogner. Part of the seminar series What Does an Exhibition Do?

Saturday 14.2

15:00 Student presentation: Artist talk: Through a Glass, Lightly with Johanna Gustafsson Fürst, Carl Palm and Dorota Michalska (CuratorLab, Konstfack)

Tuesday 17.2

15:00 Student presentation: Kiesler's Endless House revisited, lecture by Florian Medicus, Skype introduction by artist Ian Kier, curated by Valentina Sansone (CuratorLab, Konstfack)

23.2–27.2 Art Camp: Imaginary School, for the age 10-12 with Sergio Montero Bravo and students from Interior Architecture and Furniture Design, Konstfack

Wednesday 25.2

19:00 Superstudio in 3 exhibitions: Jolly 2 in Pistoia 1966, Trignon in Graz 1969 and Mana Art in Rom 1971, Peter Lang. Part of the seminar series What Does an Exhibition Do?

Monday 2.3

19:00 Exhibitions as Performative, or, Form and Function in Exhibition-Making, Bruce Altshuler. Part of the seminar series What Does an Exhibition Do?

Wednesday 11.3

19:00 The Fifth Riwaq Biennale 2014-2016, Tirdad Zolghadr. Part of the seminar series What Does an Exhibition Do?

Wednesday 18.3

11:00 Student presentation: Working with the visions and works of Kiesler, KTH in Tensta

Thursday 19.3

15:00 Student presentation: The Frederick Kiesler library with Jacob Hurtig (CuratorLab, Konstfack)

Wednesday 25.3

12:00 Student presentation: Working with the visions and works of Kiesler, KTH School of Architecture

Wednesday 25.3

19:00 The Exhibition's Eternal Return, Jens Hoffmann. Part of the seminar series What Does an Exhibition Do?

Wednesday 1.4

13:00 Student presentation: Working with the visions and works of Kiesler, Interior Architecture and Furniture Design, Konstfack

Wednesday 1.4

19:00 An exhibition must do many things, Monika Szewczyk. Part of the seminar series What Does an Exhibition Do?

Wednesday 15.4

15:00 Student presentation: Working with the visions and works of Kiesler. Talk Show with Mejan Arc, The Royal Institute of Art

Wednesday 15.4

19:00 Céline Condorelli: Talking back. Part of the seminar series What Does an Exhibition Do?

Thursday 16.4

16:00 Student presentation: How to Live? Screening of Andrea Zittel's lecture on Frederick Kiesler (MAK, 2013) arranged by Valentina Sansone (CuratorLab Konstfack)

Wednesday 22.4

19:00 Demonstrate reality: Full-scale environments at Moderna Museet 1968–1977, Helena Mattsson. Part of the seminar series What Does an Exhibition Do?

Wednesday 29.4

19:00 Collecting life's unknowns, Clementine Deliss. Part of the seminar series What Does an Exhibition Do?

With support from ABF Stockholm.

Staff at Tensta konsthall

Fahyma Alnablsi, host
Maja Andreasson, assistent
Emily Fahlén, mediator
Ulrika Flink, assistant curator
Asrin Haidari, communication and press
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