

# LUHRING AUGUSTINE

**KRIWET**  
**MEDIAWAKE**  
**June 29 – August 11, 2017**  
**Opening reception: June 29<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm**

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Luhring Augustine is pleased to present *MEDIAWAKE*, an exhibition of works by German artist Ferdinand KRIWET on view at Luhring Augustine from June 29 – August 11, 2017.

At its core, KRIWET's work embraces principles of Concrete Poetry, in which visual strategies such as typographical composition and repetition of text are employed to create meaning in a poem. Expanding on these concepts he took a uniquely political and avant-garde approach to art making. Though not formally trained as a writer or artist, he infused his work with a varied body of influences, such as Constructivism, Beat Poetry, Pop Art, as well as the writings of Walter Benjamin. KRIWET was far ahead of his time in many respects, particularly in his appropriation of mass media to analyze the languages and cultural influences of television, advertising, and commercial photography.

KRIWET's films are sound and picture collages that are characterized by dynamic fast cuts and an affinity for optical patterns and graphic surfaces. In 1969 he traveled to New York with the intention of collating the media broadcasts and printed matter reporting on the Apollo 11 launch. Renting a room at a hotel in New York City, he set up numerous television sets and filmed them with a 16mm camera; he also collected sound bites from radio broadcasts, recording the event from take-off to landing. Using the cut-up method, he assembled these articles of mass media into audio, book, and film works. The resulting film, *Apollovision* was shown nationwide on German television later that year.

Broadcast media played a critical and powerful role in American politics, as demonstrated by the televised debates between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon which were pivotal in determining the election's outcome. The film *Campaign* (1972-73) examines the media's reaction to the presidential race between George McGovern and Richard Nixon, looking not just at the events themselves, but rather the way in which they were reported. KRIWET's work brilliantly records the visual strength of images and graphics, recognizing the emergence of the 'sound bite' and 'talking head' phenomena.

The discourse of public address is a theme KRIWET continuously explored. His *Text Signs* (1968) made from stamped aluminum are formatted with the character of commercial signage, the text, arranged in the round, asserts idea that the phrase has no beginning or end. Pieces such as *Text Dia* (1970), also a composition of text in concentric circles, are printed on clear PVC. Suspended in space, the works juxtapose words visually within their environment.

KRIWET was born in Düsseldorf in 1942. Since publishing his first book at the age of 19 he has produced a body of work across a wide range of media including books, paintings collages, performance, installation, audio works for radio broadcast, films, and sculptural reliefs. Further to his art projects he has created information delivery systems for municipal and commercial buildings. Recent exhibitions of the artist's work include solo shows at Cherry and Martin, Los Angeles, CA (2015); Fri Art Kunsthalle Fribourg, Switzerland (2013); *KRIWET: Yester 'n' Today*, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Germany (2011); Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck, Austria (2011); The Modern Institute, Glasgow (2008); and BQ, Berlin (2013 and 2010).

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