institute of network cultures

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On Tuesday night a last event in a series happened that I curated together with Tesla/Podewil and Transmediale, here in Berlin. Our guest was Stefan Roemer from Munich. We sceened his film Conceptual Paradise on the history of conceptual art. The documentary contains a long range of famous artists and theorists (here you see Lawrence Weiner). The tesla netz.kultur room was packed. At least sixty people showed up and the debate after was interesting, bordering to political correctness (always a problem in the Berlin art scene). First of all there was the issue of female representation. Adrian Piper, one of the artist in the film, who attended the screening, praised the film but noted that Stefan had failed to ask the women in the film to give their view of the turbulent history. Another point of discussion was the 'global' aspect of concept art, outside of New York and a handful of cities in Europe. Stefan defended his attempt to, at least, integrate that debate in the film and agreed that he failed to cover all continents (for instance, Latin America is not covered, India is...). This master piece that takes 110 minutes is not educational. Such a relief to go beyond Bildung. It is a film for friends, one that you would also want to make one day. Conceptual Paradise preassumes that the viewer already knows a fair bit about late 20th Century art history. According to Stefan Roemer, the film should raise curiocity to write down names of artists and books. Conceptual Paradise awaits premiere on a film festival before it will get wider distribution but the DVD can already be hired through 235 Media in Cologne.