

**title: Installation history**

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case: Joseph Kosuth, *Glass (one and three)*, 1965

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## Installation history of Joseph Kosuth's 'Glass (one and three)'

### 1977 Acquisition by Geertjan Visser Antwerp (B)

Joseph Kosuth's 'Glass (one and three)' was realized in 1977 when Geertjan Visser acquired the installation. The work was created in his Antwerp apartment according to instructions on a certificate. The definition of 'glass' was taken from the English-Flemish (Dutch) dictionary. The object in this so called 'object definition' by Kosuth, a plain sheet of glass, was delivered to Visser's house. This sheet of glass was photographed standing on the spot where the whole work was to be installed. The resulting photograph would be part of the installation itself and was hung left to the sheet of glass, opposing its textual definition on the right. As a result the photograph of the glass showed the same background as the actual scene of where the whole work was installed, including the glass itself, generating a visual connection to the site. The photographic image of the glass would appear almost as transparent as the glass itself because of the matching background. Unfortunately there is no visual document of the beginning of the installation history showing 'Glass (one and three)' in Visser's apartment.

May 1979, two years after acquisition the work was given to the Kröller-Müller Museum as a long-term loan. The three parts of the installation were actually transported to the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo. The exhibition history shows how the artwork was treated as a 'guest' in the museum, that was using the actual material parts of the installation that were handed to the museum when the loan was organized. This research project has provided the time and tools to research how to deal with the immaterial aspects of this installation by Joseph Kosuth and develop a guideline of best practice.

**1982 'Recent acquisitions'**  
**Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo**  
**13.11- 2.12.1982**



Photo: Kröller-Müller Museum

'Glass (one and three)' was shown for the first time in the Kröller-Müller Museum during a show of recent acquisitions, November 13 - December 12, 1982. In spite of the title on the certificate the work was called 'One and three glass' at that time, analogue to the other 'object definitions' by Kosuth like 'One and three chair' for instance. A registration photograph of this exhibition shows Kosuth's 'Glass (one and three)' at the far right in the background of 'A copper ribbon' by Carl Andre and 'Angry' by Gilbert & George. This photo was used in the catalogue of the 1992 exhibition 'Una giornata al mare - A choice from the collection of Geertjan Visser', only cropped so that Kosuth's installation is not really recognizable anymore. Yet it is still visible how the museum showed the work the way it was originally made for Visser in 1977, including the photograph made in his Antwerp apartment. By doing so the site related aspect of the installations was lost.

**1992 'Una Giornata al Mare - A choice from the collection of Geertjan Visser'**  
**Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo**  
**26.06 – 01.11.1992**

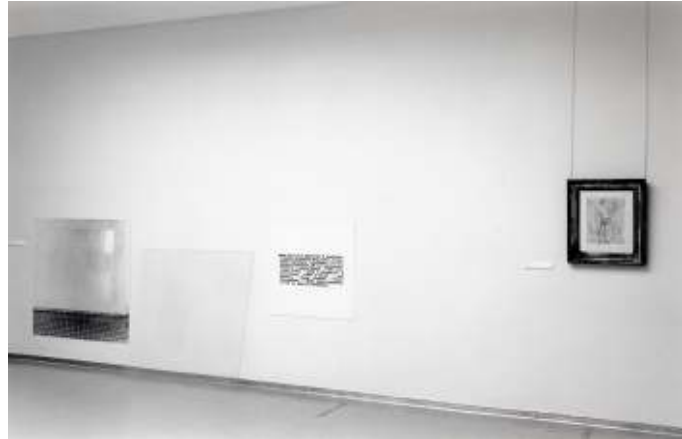


Photo: Cary Markerink

The Kröller-Müller Museum showed 'Glass (one and three)' for the second time in a special exhibition of the collection of Geertjan Visser: 'Una Giornata al Mare - A choice from the collection of Geertjan Visser', June 26 – November 1st 1992. The work was installed in the old wing of the building, together with sculptures of Bruce Nauman and a small watercolour of Francis Picabia. Again, the museum showed the work with the parts that were originally made for Visser's Antwerp apartment.

**1996 'Raw Material - A choice from acquisitions 1991-1995'  
Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo  
04.11- 04.02.1996**

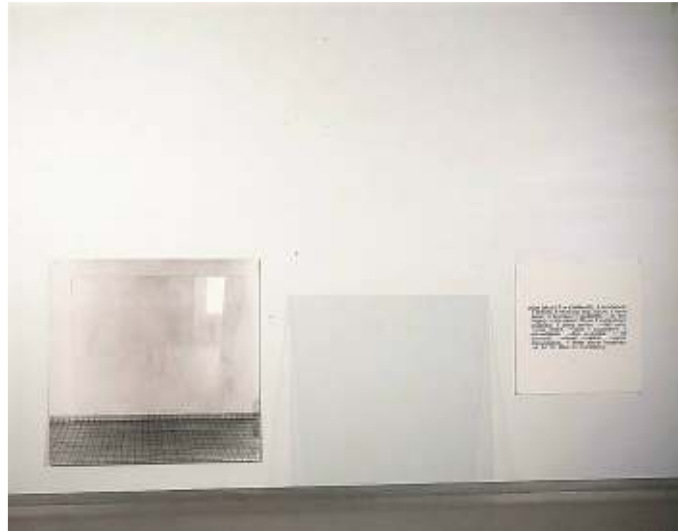


Photo: Cary Markerink

'Glass (one and three)' was officially acquired in 1995, after a period during which the work was housed in the museum already on the basis of a long-term loan. That is why the work was shown during 'Raw Material - A choice from acquisitions 1991-1995' in the Kröller-Müller Museum, November 4, 2005 - February 4, 1996. The installation photograph taken during this exhibition shows that the museum still installed the work with the components made for Visser's Antwerp apartment. The installation is situated in the wing that is known as ES in Kröller-Müller Museum. The photograph of the artwork that was made at this occasion was later used as a spread in the large book the museum published in 2000: 'The Collection Visser at the Kröller-Müller Museum' on pages 218-219.

**2000 'A choice from the collection Visser'  
Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo  
01.07-17.09.2000**

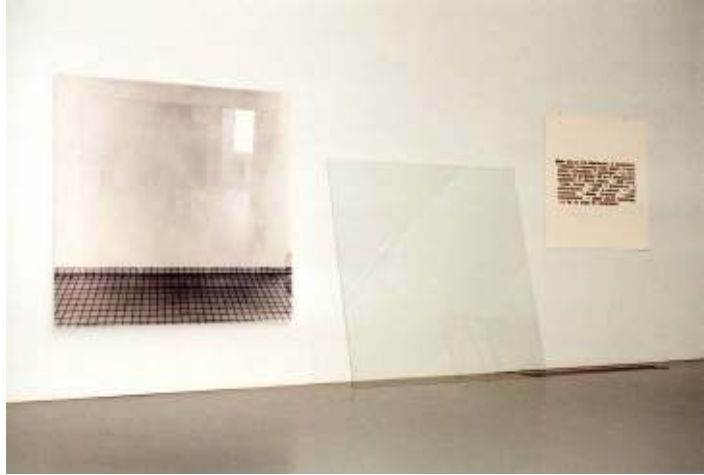


Photo: Kröller-Müller Museum

'Glass (one and three)' was installed once more at 'A choice from the collection Visser' at Kröller-Müller Museum, July 1st - September 17 2000. The exhibition was organized at the occasion of the publication of the large book the museum published in 2000: 'The Collection Visser at the Kröller-Müller Museum'. This collection had been acquired by the museum over the years from different family members collecting art. Like the previous installation moments 'Glass (one and three)' was installed the way it had been done previously, with the parts that were made for Visser's Antwerp apartment in 1977. At this time the work had already been acquired by the museum in 1995 but this did not change the way the museum installed the work. Adapting the way of installing the work was not really questioned because the certificate did not prescribe to change the photographic representation of the glass every time the artwork was installed in different surroundings. Paula van den Bosch, the author of the book, states: 'Sadly, since 'One and three glass' was moved to the Kröller-Müller Museum, it no longer stands on the authentic white floor-tiles. Because of this, the pleasing effect of infinity (Droste effect) could not be preserved.' p. 219.

**2002 'Conceptual Art in The Netherlands and Belgium 1965-1975:  
Artists, Collectors, Galleries, Documents, Exhibitions, Events'  
Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam  
20.04-12.06.2002**

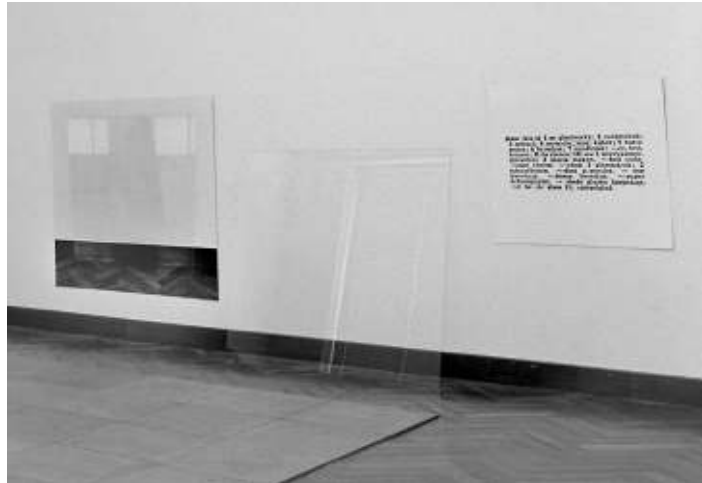


Photo: Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam  
(detail)

'Glass (one and three)' was loaned for 'Conceptual Art in The Netherlands en Belgium 1965-1975: Artists, Collectors, Galleries, Documents, Exhibitions, Events' in the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, April 20 - June 12, 2002. It was for the first time that the question of replacement of the photograph was addressed. This was initiated and insisted upon by Rudi Fuchs, then director of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. It was the first time a new photograph was made for the work that related to the site where the work was going to be installed. The installation view shows the work containing a photograph of the glass situated on the parquet floor of the Stedelijk Museum. The installation had regained a site related character similar to when the work was first realized at the Visser's apartment. After the show the used photograph was given to the Kröller-Müller Museum, where it is now kept in storage as a document referring to its installation history. It is kept as an inactive part of the installation, only to be used at the specific site depicted in the photograph. In the catalogue of the exhibition the old photograph of the work from 1995 is depicted, the same as in the Visser catalogue from 2000, showing how the Kröller-Müller Museum had presented the work before.

**2006 'Inside Installations I'**  
**Kröller-Müller Museum**  
**25.10.2006-07.01.2007**

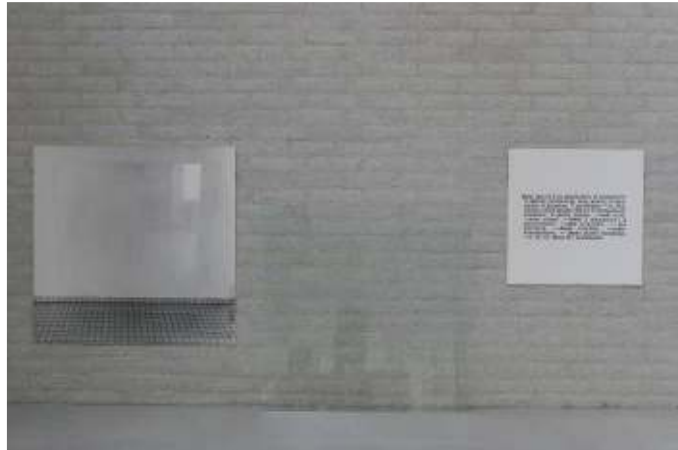


Photo: Sanneke Stigter / KMM

From October 25, 2006 to January 7, 2007 the Kröller-Müller Museum organized 'Inside Installations I', the first part of the exhibition as part of the 3-year research project "Inside Installations: Preservation and Presentation of Installation Art", initiated and coordinated by the Netherlands Institute of Cultural Heritage. The aim of the exhibition was to show the public what the problems are that the museum faces managing installation art and how the museum deals with the aspects of preservation, presentation and conservation of installation art. 'Glass (one and three)' was one of the case studies. During the first part of the exhibition the installation was shown the way the museum had done this in the past, using the 'original' photograph of the glass plate, made at Visser's in 1977. It was the first time however that the title 'Glass (one and three)' was used, according to the title on the certificate that belongs to the work. Before, the work was always referred to as 'One and three glass' analogue to Kosuth's other 'object definitions' like for instance 'One and three chair'. In the Luzern catalogue from 1973 however the title 'Glass (one and three)' is used for the English version of the work. It is notable that this is the only one in deviation of the rest of the object definitions in this catalogue. Documentation like this was also part of the exhibition, together with other documents that had been studied during the research, such as the certificate, installation photographs of similar work, quotations by the artist and so on. Also, the photograph made for the installation in the Stedelijk Museum was displayed, but separate from the installation. This was done to indicate the installation procedure that was followed when the work had been on loan for the first time. This procedure had never been dealt with before in the Kröller-Müller Museum, because this was not indicated on the certificate. During the exhibition a photographer was commissioned to make a new photograph of the glass plate on the site where the work was installed. The public could witness this procedure during the exhibition.



**2007 'Inside Installations II'**  
**Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo**  
**21.03-03.06.2007**



Photo: Sanneke Stigter / KMM

During 'Inside Installations II', March 21 - June 3, 2007, the Kröller-Müller Museum presented 'Glass (one and three)' in a site-related version first time. After an elaborate research it became clear that it would be 'best practice' to show the work with a site related photograph. This means that the photograph of the object in the installation should show the very surroundings of where the work is installed so that the photograph would show the same background. By doing so, the image of the object in the installation would be as transparent as possible, less an object, a photograph, by itself – merely an image. This suits the idea of the 'object definition' that Kosuth developed. Even though Kosuth might have refined his ideas about the nature of his work over time, including the replacement of the photograph as an imperative, at the time 'Glass (one and three)' was first realized, he obviously had began to work with glass. And that was for a reason that supported his idea of the perfect object definition. Glass could serve as an object as transparent as possible, as a site related photograph would serve as transparent an image as possible. Furthermore the writings of the artist and proclamations in interviews that state that the photograph should be replaced all date from before the first document of the existence of 'Glass (one and three)'. Research into the installation history and the curatorial management of similar 'object definitions' support the idea as well (see case research - comparable work).

The realization of the new or actual form of 'Glass (one and three)' was a result of the research project 'Inside Installations: Preservation and Presentation of Installation Art'. During the exhibition organized around this research project the two previous photographs once used in the installation were on display on an adjacent wall to communicate the history of the installation to the public. This was supported with display of the certificate of 'Glass (one and three)' and writings and publications about the work.

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