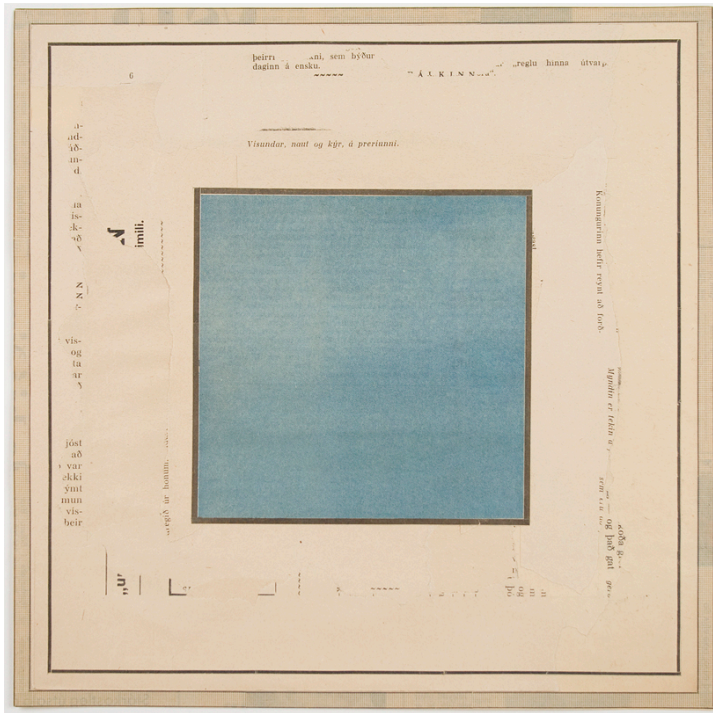


DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

ÓLÖF K. SIGURDARDÓTTIR

DIRECTOR, HAFNARBORG | THE HAFNARFJÖRDUR CENTRE OF CULTURE AND FINE ART
HAFNARFJÖRDUR, ICELAND



Jón Laxdal, *Diary Sheet*, 1994, collaged papers, 10 1/8 x 10 1/8 inches (25.7 x 25.7 cm)
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With great pleasure, Hafnarborg | The Hafnarfjörður Centre of Culture and Fine Art presents *Art=Text=Art: Works by Contemporary Artists*, an exhibition drawn from the New York collection of Sally and Wynn Kramarsky. The exhibition and accompanying online catalogue showcase close to fifty internationally renowned, mid-career, and emerging visual artists, many of whom have never before exhibited in Iceland. The artworks included date from the mid-1950s to 2012 and provide broad insight into the many ways artists incorporate text into their practice. *Art=Text=Art* explores how modern and contemporary artists have utilized text as a formal element (e.g. color, shape, and line), investigated the structure of the written word, examined text's mnemonic function, and considered language as a semiotic system.

In Iceland it was the emergence of conceptual art in the early 1970s that introduced text as a significant element in the works of leading artists. Literature and the Icelandic Sagas are a key component of our nation's cultural identity and as such are still an influential reference point. This refers both to the use of the written word to convey information and to the act of reading as a path toward cultural understanding. Included in the exhibition is work by the Icelandic artist Jón Laxdal, who for decades has created thoughtful works of art using paper and printed material he has salvaged and reshaped.

The Kramarsky Collection is the result of more than sixty years of collecting art. Wynn Kramarsky has acquired over three thousand works of art, more than half of which have subsequently been donated to museums and other public institutions. I would like to thank Sally and Wynn Kramarsky for generously sharing this selection of precious works with us and for their vision of linking them with other places and contexts by presenting the exhibition at Hafnarborg. My thanks also to Rachel Nackman, curator of the Kramarsky Collection, and N. Elizabeth Schlatter, Deputy Director and Curator of Exhibitions at the University of Richmond Museums, where the exhibition originally opened in 2011. We thank them for their commitment to organizing the show and its travel to Iceland. Hafnarborg is the third venue of the exhibition and the first venue outside the United States. I also wish to thank the curators for their diligent oversight of this online catalogue and to extend my thanks to all those who contributed by writing about the artworks in *Art=Text=Art*.

Art=Text=Art is brought to Iceland in collaboration with the Reykjavík Arts Festival 2013. I am grateful to Hanna Styrmsdóttir, the festival's artistic director, for her support and encouragement. Last, but not least, I would like to thank the artists for sharing their ideas, and I look forward to welcoming you at Hafnarborg.

Ólöf K. Sigurðardóttir is Director of Hafnarborg | The Hafnarfjörður Centre of Culture and Fine Art.