

CRISTIN TIERNEY

ARTNEWS

‘WELL-EDITED MEMORIALS OF WANDERLUST’: A BRIEF HISTORY OF BRITISH CONCEPTUAL ART BY Alex Greenberger

“Victor Burgin at Galerie Thomas Schulte” By Alicia Reuter

September 2012

In this thought-provoking retrospective of three decades’ worth of film, photography, and text-based work, British artist Victor Burgin, one of the founding fathers of Conceptualism, asserted his intellectual might, as well as a surprising ability to transform the mundane into rich, sensual imagery.

The show opened with Burgin’s first juxtaposition of text and image, *Performance/Narrative* (1971), which consists of 16 framed photographs and one framed text. The black-and-white gelatin prints depict a small desk, a chair, a lamp in a mysterious office, while the text describes various obscure narrative possibilities.

In the last room, eight diptychs titled *Zoo 78* (1978) paired unsettling images, often of women in various states of undress, with mundane shots of the courtyards, street signs, room interiors, and buildings that surround the Berlin Zoo. Short texts from Russian critic Viktor Shklovsky and the Marquis de Sade created a sybaritic element, suggesting Burgin’s interest in acts of voyeurism.