

Gagarins Thing



Project “Gagarins Thing” – Exhibition

In 1999 I was invited to the USA for an artist’s residency in San Francisco of several months. Following one of the presentation lectures I was introduced to John Cole. He was interested in my work relating to the concept of social design and my cooperation with institutions and big manufacturing companies. He offered me an opportunity to take part in a project at NASA.

He gave me a few days to think it over and proposed a meeting, where I would receive more information on the project in question if I was interested. I was very surprised by this offer and at the same time I was so taken by its unusual nature and fascinated that I agreed to the meeting.

After a few days I received a folder with the inscription “Gagarin’s Thing” and an offer to collaborate on the restoration and subsequent artistic reconstruction of the object. The origin of Gagarin’s Thing was explained to me, as was the reason for its present lamentable state. John explained to me what had occurred in Prague in 1968

and therefore why I might be enthusiastic about the entire issue.

In the following years I had an opportunity to participate in the restoration of the destroyed object in the developmental laboratories of NASA and the Getty Institute, although my participation in this respect was more of a consultancy nature. Even though I was not allowed to work physically with the original object, I had a chance to see it many times in very close proximity. The work itself was fascinating, especially the part relating to material expertise and the subsequent application of fixation materials (details are given in the restoration report).

My main task, however, consisted in conducting a reconstruction of Gagarin’s Thing. I was to create a special, life-size model, which, and this was especially fascinating, was to reflect the appearance of Gagarin’s Thing in 1962. The reconstruction was to imitate Gagarin’s Thing in the condition in which it had been before it first arrived at the White House, i.e. before its definitive destruction.



**The exposition view
Model of "Gagarins Thing" and audiovisual guide on the exhibition and archive video
of "Gagarins Thing" from Youtube.com**



**The exposition view
Reconstruction energy core of "Gagarins Thing", Reconstruction report
and adds Documents**



The exposition view
Show-cases with archive photographs and texts regarding issues “Gagarins Thing”



The exposition view
Issued Prints concern “Gagarins Thing” and Poster design made by Dmitri Stakhilevich Orlov under a direct order from Nikita Khrushchev



Show-case with archive photographs and text from Russia



Show-case with archive photographs and text from USA, Cuba and Czechoslovakia

