

ZAUM

Or,

A STORY ABOUT NOTHING

Imagine the future. Find three friends and convince them to sit and think and act about the future with you. For the purposes of ZAUM, you should consider a future that moves *quickly, straight, vibrating, tireless*. This future is all *pumping, all thrusting, all flying and climbing and shining*. Above all it is ZAUM.

To play this game about the future – when language is free, when time and pattern is free, when movement and sound and light are free – you and each of your friends whom you have gathered should consider the future and decide what sorts of things this future calls to your minds:

- Sounds or patterns of sounds
- Light or patterns of light
- Shapes or patterns of shapes
- Words (but not too many; verbs)
- Gestures
- Equations
- Emotions
- Notations
- etc.

Avoid thinking of objects. Don't imagine the future using particular people or places or things. Don't think: skyscraper, woman, goggles, motorcycle, wristwatch. Don't picture them in your heads and don't say these object-words with your lips.

Think: brightness, lightness, weightiness; growing, expanding, reaching; thinking, wanting, hoping. Hold your arms open and then close them. Look up. Sigh, whistle, drum. Think of shapes with straight sides.

If ZAUM were a game about a story, these things that you have called to mind would be the characters in that story; however, ZAUM is not a game about a story and has no characters. In a story, characters make things happen. ZAUM is a story where nothing happens. ZAUM is a story about nothing, or it is not a story at all.

Divide the thoughts, gestures, sounds, etc., that make up your imaginary future amongst yourself and your friends. Each of you should have the same number of

these things. Few is best.

Now, together, you and your friends will enter the future. You will enter ZAUM.

Say it:

All: ZAUM!

Now, each of you should start enacting the future. Say your words. Perform your gestures and make your sounds and, etc.

If you have shapes to enact, find them nearby and bring them to your friends in ZAUM. If you do not have the shapes, then find some paper or cloth and cut the shapes out and paste them onto yourself, or onto your friends, or onto the table. You can paste them around the room or around the building. Or, enact the shapes some other way.

At this point, you have all entered ZAUM. To celebrate, announce your arrival:

All: ZAUM!

See/hear/think/feel ZAUM as it *stretches* and *shimmers* and *rises*. Know its sounds and shapes. Consider its gestures that *bend* and *twist* and *zoom*.

ZAUM is a city and you are its architects. The shapes pasted onto the table are its *arching* and its *soaring* and its *jutting*.

You are creating the future. You are ZAUM.

Say: "Words die, the world stays young forever."

This is a prayer, a curse. A manifesto.

Say it again and again until all meaning is left in the dead past. *Break* the chains that tie you to all that is not ZAUM. *Rend apart* from the confines of sensible syllables and handshakes and wedding dresses and decay.

Produce the gestures, notations, feelings, shapes, patterns of the future. Hold out your hands and shake them. Scream the rallying cry!

All: ZAUM!

And do not stop.

-

Notes:

9. Listen: http://www.ubu.com/sound/russian_avant.html

5. Search: Malevich, Kazimir