

Conceptual Art

Leading philosophers and art theorists engage with the philosophical puzzles raised by conceptual art: What kind of art is conceptual art? What follows from the fact that conceptual art does not aim to have aesthetic value? What knowledge or understanding can we gain from conceptual art? How ought we to appreciate conceptual art? What is conceptual art? Is it really a kind of art in its own right? Is it clever – or too clever? Of all the different art forms it is perhaps conceptual art which at once fascinates and infuriates the most. In this much-needed book Peter Goldie and Elisabeth Schellekens demystify conceptual art using the sharp tools of philosophy. They explain how conceptual art is driven by ideas rather than the manipulation of paint and physical materials; how it challenges the very basis of what we can know about art, as well as our received ideas of beauty; and why conceptual art requires us to rethink concepts fundamental to art and aesthetics, such as artistic interpretation and appreciation. Including helpful illustrations of the work of celebrated conceptual artists from Marcel Duchamp, Joseph Kosuth and Piero Manzoni to Dan Perjovschi and Martin Creed, *Who's Afraid of Conceptual Art?* is a superb starting point for anyone intrigued but perplexed by conceptual art - and by art in general. It will be particularly helpful to students of philosophy, art and visual studies seeking an introduction not only to conceptual art but fundamental topics in art and aesthetics.

"An international movement that developed along separate but parallel lines in Europe and America during the 1970s, Conceptual Art grew out of the legacy of Marcel Duchamp. Aiming to completely redefine the relationships between the production, definition and ownership of artworks and their various audiences, Conceptual artists rejected traditional formats, media and definitions. Instead they chose to address some of the key issues underlying modern life and art. These included the gulf between initial idea and finished work, the value assigned works of art in modern economies, the role of women and of feminine creativity in general, the politics of exhibition organization - in short, the ways art and the art world have been defined for centuries. Among the notable figures whose work is discussed in essays ranging from the evaluative to the theoretical are Judy Chicago, Robert Morris, Sol LeWitt, Marcel Broodthaers and Mary Kelly. The influence of Conceptual Art continues to be felt today in the work of such controversial young artists as Rachel Whiteread and Damien Hirst." - back cover.

In the twenty-first century, we are continually confronted with the existential side of technology—the relationships between identity and the mechanizations that have become extensions of the self. Focusing on one of humanity's most ubiquitous machines, *Automotive Prosthetic: Technological Mediation and the Car in Conceptual Art* combines critical theory and new media theory to form the first philosophical analysis of the car within works of conceptual art. These works are broadly defined to encompass a wide range of creative expressions, particularly in car-based conceptual art by both older, established artists and younger, emerging artists, including Ed Ruscha, Martha Rosler, Richard Prince, Sylvie Fleury, Yael Bartana, Jeremy Deller, and Jonathan Schipper. At its core, the book offers an alternative formation of conceptual art understood according to technology, the body moving through space, and what art historian, curator, and artist Jack Burnham calls "relations." This thought-provoking study illuminates the ways in which the automobile becomes a naturalized

extension of the human body, incarnating new forms of “car art” and spurring a technological reframing of conceptual art. Steeped in a sophisticated take on the image and semiotics of the car, the chapters probe the politics of materialism as well as high/low debates about taste, culture, and art. The result is a highly innovative approach to contemporary intersections of art and technology.

Conceptual Art in a Curatorial Perspective: Between Dematerialization and Documentation focuses on the curatorial practice of exhibiting conceptual art. The fact that conceptual works are not object-based, creates challenges in exhibiting or re-exhibiting them. This book offers various perspectives on how to handle conceptual art in the context of the museum, based on three detailed case studies and an extensive introduction in which the paradox of conceptual art is analyzed. It also elaborates on the history of exhibiting conceptual artworks, and on the influence of curators in their canonization.

Photography After Conceptual Art presents a series of original essays that address substantive theoretical, historical, and aesthetic issues raised by post-1960s photography as a mainstream artistic medium Selected by Choice as an Outstanding Academic Title for 2011 Appeals to people interested in artist's use of photography and in contemporary art Tracks the efflorescence of photography as one of the most important mediums for contemporary art Explores the relation between recent art, theory and aesthetics, for which photography serves as an important test case Includes a number of the essays with previously unpublished photographs Artists discussed include Ed Ruscha, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Douglas Huebler, Mel Bochner, Sherrie Levine, Roni Horn, Thomas Demand, and Jeff Wall

Ideas, systems and processes - Includes discussion of pieces of work by various exponents of the movement.

Conceptual art magazine projects (like their earlier twentieth-century predecessors and later related tendencies) are designed to function as art or art-like occurrences in printed magazines. Magazine projects are not reproductions of artworks that were constructed for other purposes but are, rather, artworks in reproduction. The projects that I deal with involve deliberate employment and/or disruptions of the conventions of magazine publications; they were designed to alter and reconfigure the readers' experience of the magazine as a form of communication as well as challenge their expectations of art and its possible manifestations. The publications studied include small-run, self-produced journals designed as complete clustered or interrelated artworks through to mass-market art magazines for which the artists were invited to contribute one or more pages, and where the pages were understood to function as either alternative exhibition spaces or as discussion forums for ideas about art. I examine the origins of magazine projects during the early years of the century in European Expressionist, Futurist, Dadaist, International Constructivist, and Surrealist periodicals of the teens to the late 1940s. I also discuss later precedents for Conceptual art in Fluxus and experimental writing of the 1960s. Subsequent chapters are studies of one of several distinguishable means that were employed for using the magazine format to produce and distribute artwork. Examples of the use of each generalized approach are then analysed in detail to support this typology. To conclude the dissertation, I examine the relation between Conceptual art and aesthetics because it is frequently proposed that it somehow managed to avoid aesthetics altogether. I consider the aesthetic role of obstacles to sensibility in Conceptual art and the encounter with art being a kind of learning-like activity that expands both understanding and general awareness. With Conceptual art, the pre-given knowledge and circumstantial evidence surrounding an artwork become part of the work in extension. Context,

history, and interpretation are externally embedded as fluctuating components of the work. I reach this conclusion by the theorizing of a lateral extension of artwork and artist functions. "Reading the interviews gathered by Patricia Norvell more than thirty years ago is like opening one of the time capsules Steven Kaltenbach made at around the same time and discusses here. It makes one feel nostalgic for these uncompromising times—so much has changed, so fast! One should be immensely grateful to Norvell for her undertaking and, paradoxically, for the long delay in the publication of these conversations: nothing could have better highlighted the candor and commitment of the artists who participated in this project than their willingness, long after the fact, to let their youthful voices be heard unedited. This is a precious document that casts a fresh light on the early history of Conceptual art, revealing all the doubts and uncertainties its practitioners had to overcome."—Yve-Alain Bois, Harvard University "These interviews, full of the rich texture and confusion of an art movement at its inception, began as a "process piece" in mid-1969 when formalism still seemed worth defeating. The artists, tired of talking about turpentine, struggle to extend the rhetoric of form, and as they do so, reveal their roles as theorists and philosophers of a newly cerebral art, Conceptualism. Alberro's helpful introduction frames both Norvell's provocative questions and the surprising responses in a useful book that continues the process of historicizing 20th century art."—Caroline Jones, author of *Machine in the Studio* "The contemporary interviews collected in this volume shift the ground on which conceptualism in the United States should be understood. The middle months of 1969 were a time of artistic and social unease when artists were anxious to test—and occasionally to declaim, as the interviews demonstrate—ideas in conversation with a sympathetic interlocutor. Patricia Norvell proves to have been an ideal listener. She knew conceptualism well enough to keep the conversations honest, but not so well as to make the artists defensive and wary. The artists had things to say, and were not afraid to put themselves out on a limb."—John O'Brian, Professor of Art History, University of British Columbia "A key document of the late 1960s avant-garde."—James Meyer, Emory University "[This book is] a reminder that the project of Conceptual art and its artists' reasons for refusing the object of art were far from monolithic. The differences that emerge in the interviews are spoken in voices that are still fresh and particular, but each voice and position is tied to the moment of the late 1960s, from stoned mysticism to philosophical idealism, from political optimism to materialist critique."—Howard Singerman, author of *Art Subjects*

Critical and theoretical essays by a long-time participant in the Art & Language movement. In *Conceptual Art and Painting*, a companion to his *Essays on Art & Language*, Charles Harrison reconsiders Conceptual Art in light of renewed interest in the original movement and of the various forms of "neo-Conceptual" art. He discusses developments in the Art & Language movement since 1991, during which time there have been major retrospectives of its work at the Musée du Jeu de Paume in Paris, the Antonio Tàpies Foundation in Barcelona, and PS1 in New York. Harrison also addresses larger issues of painting as an art, the representation of the female body, and the relation of art to its audience.

In *One and Five Ideas* eminent critic, historian, and former member of the Art & Language collective Terry Smith explores the artistic, philosophical, political, and geographical dimensions of Conceptual Art and conceptualism. These four essays and a conversation with Mary Kelly—published between 1974 and 2012—contain Smith's most essential work on Conceptual Art and his argument that conceptualism was key to the historical transition from modern to contemporary art. Nothing less than a distinctive theory of Conceptual and contemporary art, *One and Five Ideas* showcases the critical voice of one of the major art theorists of our time.

An examination of the origins and legacy of the conceptual art movement.

Conceptual Art has set out to undermine two concepts associated with art - the production of objects to look at, and the act of contemplative looking itself. This introduction explores the

reasons why the new avant-garde chose to produce such work.

Art criticism in the 1980s was highly influenced by market forces that somewhat changed the face of the art world. A mediocre show purchased by a wealthy investor or collector received disproportionate coverage in the New York press, particularly those glossy, four-color journals that were highly dependent upon the advertising dollars of galleries, auction houses, vodka companies, airlines and fashion designers. Lost in the coverage of market-driven art was that it was not necessarily the most advanced or even the most significant work of the decade. This work provides an alternative viewpoint to the general American cultural discourse of the 1980s, showing that the real situation was not the exclusionary rhetoric of Postmodernism but was instead the conflict between late Modernism and Conceptual Art. The 24 essays range from discussions on Joseph Beuys and Allan Kaprow to studies of French artist Tania Mouraud and Polish artist Jan Zakrzewski. It also includes a lengthy commentary on art and technology, along with a look at performance and installation art. Instructors considering this book for use in a course may request an examination copy [here](#).

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particular, but each voice and position is tied to the moment of the late 1960s, from stoned mysticism to philosophical idealism, from political optimism to materialist critique."--Howard Singerman, author of *Art Subjects*

In *Art & Language International* Robert Bailey reconstructs the history of the conceptual art collective Art & Language, situating it in a geographical context to rethink its implications for the broader histories of contemporary art. Focusing on its international collaborations with dozens of artists and critics in and outside the collective between 1969 and 1977, Bailey positions Art & Language at the center of a historical shift from Euro-American modernism to a global contemporary art. He documents the collective's growth and reach, from transatlantic discussions on the nature of conceptual art and the establishment of distinct working groups in New York and England to the collective's later work in Australia, New Zealand, and Yugoslavia. Bailey also details its publications, associations with political organizations, and the internal power struggles that precipitated its breakdown. Analyzing a wide range of artworks, texts, music, and films, he reveals how Art & Language navigated between art worlds to shape the international profile of conceptual art. Above all, Bailey underscores how the group's rigorous and interdisciplinary work provides a gateway to understanding how conceptual art operates as a mode of thinking that exceeds the visual to shape the philosophical, historical, and political.

Lucy R. Lippard's famous book, itself resembling an exhibition, is now brought full circle in an exhibition (and catalog) resembling her book. "Conceptual art, for me, means work in which the idea is paramount and the material form is secondary, lightweight, ephemeral, cheap, unpretentious and/or 'dematerialized.'" --Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years*

In 1973 the critic and curator Lucy R. Lippard published *Six Years*, a book with possibly the longest subtitle in the bibliography of art: *The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972: a cross-reference book of information on some esthetic boundaries: consisting of a bibliography into which are inserted a fragmented text, art works, documents, interviews, and symposia, arranged chronologically and focused on so-called conceptual or information or idea art with mentions of such vaguely designated areas as minimal, anti-form, systems, earth, or process art, occurring now in the Americas, Europe, England, Australia, and Asia (with occasional political overtones) edited and annotated by Lucy R. Lippard.* *Six Years*, sometimes referred to as a conceptual art object itself, not only described and embodied the new type of art-making that Lippard was intent on identifying and cataloging, it also exemplified a new way of criticizing and curating art. Nearly forty years later, the Brooklyn Museum takes Lippard's celebrated experiment in curated concatenation as a template, turning a book that resembled an exhibition into an exhibition materializing the ideas in her book. The artworks and essays featured in this publication recall the thrill that was tangible in Lippard's original documentation, reminding us that during the late sixties and early seventies all possible social and material parameters of art (making) were played with, worked over, inverted, reduced, expanded, and

traced back to the minimal art and the earlier works of Marcel Duchamp, the black paintings of Ad Reinhardt and the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein. By 1965, such artists as Mel Bochner and Joseph Kosuth were turning away from conventional art and viewing art as a concept, based primarily upon language. Mary Acton suggests that the best way to understand modern art is to look closely at it, and to consider the different elements that make up each art work - composition, space and form, light and color and subject matter. Her engaging and beautifully-written guide to art of the modern and postmodern period covers key art movements including Expressionism, Constructivism, the Bauhaus, Surrealism, Pop Art, Conceptual Art and Young British Art, and artistic forms such as architecture and design, sculpture and installation as well as works on canvas. The book is richly illustrated with color and black and white images by the artists, designers and architects discussed, ranging from Picasso and Matisse to Le Corbusier, Andy Warhol and Rachel Whiteread.

What is art? Must it be a unique, saleable luxury item? Can it be a concept that never takes material form? Or an idea for a work that can be repeated endlessly? Conceptual art favours an engagement with such questions. As the variety of illustrations in this book shows, it can take many forms: photographs, videos, posters, billboards, charts, plans and, especially, language itself. Tony Godfrey has written a clear, lively and informative account of this fascinating phenomenon. He traces the origins of Conceptual art to Marcel Duchamp and the anti-art gestures of Dada, and then establishes links to those artists who emerged in the 1960s and early 1970s, whose work forms the heart of this study: Joseph Kosuth, Lawrence Weiner, Victor Burgin, Marcel Broodthaers and many others.

Conceptual Art Phaidon Incorporated Limited

By the early 1960s, theorists like Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, Foucault, and Barthes had created a world ruled by signifying structures and pictured through the grids of language, information, and systems. Artists soon followed, turning to language and its related forms to devise a new, conceptual approach to art making. Examining the ways in which artists shared the structuralist devotion to systems of many sorts, *Systems We Have Loved* shows that even as structuralism encouraged the advent of conceptual art, it also raised intractable problems that artists were forced to confront. Considering such notable art figures as Mary Kelly, Robert Morris, Robert Smithson, and Rosalind Krauss, Eve Meltzer argues that during this period the visual arts depicted and tested the far-reaching claims about subjectivity espoused by theorists. She offers a new way of framing two of the twentieth century's most transformative movements—one artistic, one expansively theoretical—and she reveals their shared dream—or nightmare—of the world as a system of signs. By endorsing this view, Meltzer proposes, these artists drew attention to the fictions and limitations of this dream, even as they risked getting caught in the very systems they had adopted. The first book to describe art's embrace of the world as an information system, *Systems We Have Loved* breathes new life into the study of conceptual art.

This book examines the use of image and text juxtapositions in conceptual art as a

strategy for challenging several ideological and institutional demands placed on art. While conceptual art is generally identified by its use of language, this book makes clear exactly how language was used. In particular, it asks: How has the presence of language in a visual art context changed the ways art is talked about, theorised and produced? *Image and Text in Conceptual Art* demonstrates how artworks communicate in context and evaluates their critical potential. It discusses international case studies and draws resources from art history and theory, philosophy, discourse analysis, literary criticism and social semiotics. Engaging the critical and social dimensions of art, it proposes three methods of analysis that consider the work's performative gesture, its logico-semantic relations and the rhetorical operations in the discursive creation of meaning. This book offers a comprehensive method of analysis that can be applied beyond conceptual art.

Jingjing Lin is a conceptual artist whose work deals primarily with social-political themes. Lin explores the depths of social and personal identity, often examining themes such as confusion and quest, existence and absence, constraint and resistance through a lens of paradox. She has reconstructed herself into a complex daily translation. Well-known art historians from Europe and the Americas discuss the influence of conceptualism on art since the 1970s. *Art After Conceptual Art* tracks the various legacies of conceptualist practice over the past three decades. This collection of essays by art historians from Europe and the Americas introduces and develops the idea that conceptual art generated several different, and even contradictory, forms of art practice. Some of these contested commonplace assumptions of what art is; others served to buttress those assumptions. The bulk of the volume features newly written and highly innovative essays challenging standard interpretations of the legacy of conceptualism and discussing the influence of conceptualism's varied practices on art since the 1970s. The essays explore topics as diverse as the interrelationships between conceptualism and institutional critique, neoexpressionist painting and conceptualist paradigms, conceptual art's often-ignored complicity with design and commodity culture, the specific forms of identity politics taken up by the reception of conceptual art, and conceptualism's North/South and East/West dynamics. A few texts that continue to be crucial for critical debates within the fields of conceptual and postconceptual art practice, history, and theory have been reprinted in order to convey the vibrant and ongoing discussion on the status of art after conceptual art. Taken together, the essays will inspire an exploration of the relationship between postconceptualist practices and the beginnings of contemporary art. Distributed for the Generali Foundation, Vienna. *Postscript* is the first collection of writings on the subject of conceptual writing by a diverse field of scholars in the realms of art, literature, media, as well as the artists themselves

This landmark anthology collects for the first time the key historical documents that helped give definition and purpose to the conceptual art movement. Compared to other avant-garde movements that emerged in the 1960s, conceptual art has received relatively little serious attention by art historians and critics of the past twenty-five years—in part because of the difficult, intellectual nature of the art. This lack of attention is particularly striking given the tremendous influence of conceptual art on the art of the last fifteen years, on critical discussion surrounding postmodernism, and on the use of theory by artists, curators, critics, and historians. This landmark anthology collects for

the first time the key historical documents that helped give definition and purpose to the movement. It also contains more recent memoirs by participants, as well as critical histories of the period by some of today's leading artists and art historians. Many of the essays and artists' statements have been translated into English specifically for this volume. A good portion of the exchange between artists, critics, and theorists took place in difficult-to-find limited-edition catalogs, small journals, and private correspondence. These influential documents are gathered here for the first time, along with a number of previously unpublished essays and interviews. Contributors Alexander Alberro, Art & Language, Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, Robert Barry, Gregory Battcock, Mel Bochner, Sigmund Bode, Georges Boudaille, Marcel Broodthaers, Benjamin Buchloh, Daniel Buren, Victor Burgin, Ian Burn, Jack Burnham, Luis Camnitzer, John Chandler, Sarah Charlesworth, Michel Claura, Jean Clay, Michael Corris, Eduardo Costa, Thomas Crow, Hanne Darboven, Raúl Escari, Piero Gilardi, Dan Graham, Maria Teresa Gramuglio, Hans Haacke, Charles Harrison, Roberto Jacoby, Mary Kelly, Joseph Kosuth, Max Kozloff, Christine Kozlov, Sol LeWitt, Lucy Lippard, Lee Lozano, Kynaston McShine, Cildo Meireles, Catherine Millet, Olivier Mosset, John Murphy, Hélio Oiticica, Michel Parmentier, Adrian Piper, Yvonne Rainer, Mari Carmen Ramirez, Nicolas Rosa, Harold Rosenberg, Martha Rosler, Allan Sekula, Jeanne Siegel, Seth Siegelaub, Terry Smith, Robert Smithson, Athena Tacha Spear, Blake Stimson, Niele Toroni, Mierle Ukeles, Jeff Wall, Rolf Wedewer, Ian Wilson

Overview of conceptual art, its artists and premises.

A consideration of the relationship between Conceptual art and the context of the 1960s and 1970s.

Conceptual art is an art of ideas which can be written, enacted or carried in your head, challenging the notion that a work of art is an object of visual pleasure. This text combines survey essays, key words, descriptions and an anthology of key texts.

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