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Conceptual Art A&I (Art And Ideas)



Synopsis

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.

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Customer Reviews

If you're one of those people who enjoy going to art museums, but find yourself scratching your head at the piles of plastic bones, jars of fat, or sound boxes that endlessly repeat "chatter chatter chatter" installed in dark rooms, this book will be of great assistance. Conceptual art is simply a different world. It's not a pretty painting or a beautiful sculpture (though "pretty" and "beautiful" are relative to the extreme); it's more of a reaction to these things, a response to the notion of what art is, or a heightening and re-evaluation of the question "what is art?" The best "explanation" of conceptual art in this book is by the philosopher Arthur C Danto. He suggests that at some point art moved from the purely aesthetic to the purely philosophical; without a theoretical background it is very difficult to see why a Brillo box or a neon light that glows and pulsates the words "Eat and Die"

is considered art. The "art" is in the concept, not necessarily in the physical work itself. Conceptual art is thus highly intellectual (usually), abstract, and typically doesn't aim for the mere appreciation of a physical object. That many of the artists mentioned in this book use concepts from philosophers like Wittgenstein doesn't refute the claim that conceptual art inhabits an almost purely mental or philosophical realm. To appreciate it, the viewer must go beyond the basic act of seeing. The book begins with some introductory remarks concerning conceptual art, then discusses its origins in the work of Duchamp, Dada, and cubism. The bulk of the book concentrates on what is considered the peak of conceptual art, or the years 1966 to 1972.

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