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Art And Its Institutions: Current Conflicts, Critique And Collaborations

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This book engages with the current debates surrounding the areas of art practice, curation, museology and the art market, by focusing on the changing roles of contemporary art's key institutions. It provides a cogent and accessible critique of the roles played by a variety of art institutions, from galleries and museums to commissioning agencies and funding bodies. Contributors give an international scope to the book's subject with essays from leading critics, curators and directors from institutions in the United States, such as Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Museum of Fine Art, Boston, and European institutions such as Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Tate Modern, London, and Moderna Museet, Stockholm. For the past 20 years curators have rivalled artists for the place of most important figure in contemporary art. This book documents and analyses this development and its repercussions. "Art and Its Institutions" provides a broad survey of art's complex and troubled relationship with institutions, and is an essential introduction to anyone involved with art appreciation, collecting, curation, the art market, art practice, as well as students and practitioners of art history, theory and politics. "Art and Its Institutions" considers recent events and developments in museology and curatorial practice within the art world. From the emergence of metadepartments in art institutions like The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston to the impacts of institutional economic performance on intellectual content and artistic expression, this book plunges into the debates surrounding the institutions of the artworld, and emerges with some truly fascinating conclusions. It is an analytical and thought provoking publication, raising crucial questions, such as: Can art influence and engage with anything outside its own institutions? Is art merely self-referential or can art and its institutions contribute to the broader community/city/society? And do the spatial configurations of art institutions significantly reflect on society's reception of art and its practices? The various essays refer to and highlight the importance of key texts from within this area of study, from Douglas Crimp's seminal postmodern inquiry On the Museum's Ruins, 1993, to Peter and Christa Berger's influential Theory of the Avant-Garde, 1974, wherein the conception of the avant-garde's relation to institution was first proposed in terms of literary theory. These and other texts are considered in "Art and Its Institutions" with reference to the various crises of funding, meaning and political legitimacy, that currently afflict the artworld. This is an important resource that illuminates the diversity of art instutions today and their relation to artistic practice; an essential for anyone in art, education or arts administration.

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