



Participation (Documents of Contemporary Art)

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The desire to move viewers out of the role of passive observers and into the role of producers is one of the hallmarks of twentieth-century art. This tendency can be found in practices and projects ranging from El Lissitzky's exhibition designs to Allan Kaprow's happenings, from minimalist objects to installation art. More recently, this kind of participatory art has gone so far as to encourage and produce new social relationships. Guy Debord's celebrated argument that capitalism fragments the social bond has become the premise for much relational art seeking to challenge and provide alternatives to the discontents of contemporary life. This publication collects texts that place this artistic development in historical and theoretical context.

Participation begins with writings that provide a theoretical framework for relational art, with essays by Umberto Eco, Bertolt Brecht, Roland Barthes, Peter Bürger, Jen-Luc Nancy, Edoard Glissant, and Félix Guattari, as well as the first translation into English of Jacques Rancière's influential "Problems and Transformations in Critical Art." The book also includes central writings by such artists as Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica, Joseph Beuys, Augusto Boal, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Thomas Hirschhorn, and Rirkrit Tiravanija. And it features recent critical and curatorial debates, with discussions by Lars Bang Larsen, Nicolas Bourriaud, Hal Foster, and Hans-Ulrich Obrist.

Copublished with Whitechapel Art Gallery, London

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