



One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity

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A critical history of site-specific art since the late 1960s.

Site-specific art emerged in the late 1960s in reaction to the growing commodification of art and the prevailing ideals of art's autonomy and universality. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, as site-specific art intersected with land art, process art, performance art, conceptual art, installation art, institutional critique, community-based art, and public art, its creators insisted on the inseparability of the work and its context. In recent years, however, the presumption of unrepeatability and immobility encapsulated in Richard Serra's famous dictum "to remove the work is to destroy the work" is being challenged by new models of site specificity and changes in institutional and market forces. *One Place after Another* offers a critical history of site-specific art since the late 1960s and a theoretical framework for examining the rhetoric of aesthetic vanguardism and political progressivism associated with its many permutations. Informed by urban theory, postmodernist criticism in art and architecture, and debates concerning identity politics and the public sphere, the book addresses the siting of art as more than an artistic problem. It examines site specificity as a complex cipher of the unstable relationship between location and identity in the era of late capitalism. The book addresses the work of, among others, John Ahearn, Mark Dion, Andrea Fraser, Donald Judd, Renee Green, Suzanne Lacy, Inigo Manglano-Ovalle, Richard Serra, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, and Fred Wilson.

One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity Details

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From Reader Review One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity for online ebook

Jacob Wren says

Miwon Kwon writes:

It occurred to me some time ago that for many of my art and academic friends, the success and viability of one's work are now measured by the accumulation of frequent flyer miles. The more we travel for work, the more we are called upon to provide institutions in other parts of the country and the world with our presence and services, the more we give in to the logic of nomadism, one could say, the more we are made to feel wanted, needed, validated and relevant. Our very sense of self-worth seems predicated more and more on our suffering through the inconveniences and psychic destabilizations of ungrounded transience, of not being at home (or not having a home), of always traveling through elsewhere. Whether we enjoy it or not, we are culturally and economically rewarded for enduring the "wrong" place. We are out of place all too often. Or, perhaps more accurately, the distinction between home and elsewhere, between "right" and "wrong" places, seems less and less relevant in the constitution of the self. [...] But I remain unconvinced of the ways a model of meaning of interpretation is called forth to validate, even romanticize, the material and socioeconomic realities of an itinerant lifestyle. I am suspicious of this analogical transposition and the seductive allure of nomadism it supports, if for no other reason than the fact of my own personal ambivalence toward the physical and psychical experiences of mobilization and destabilization that such nomadism demands. To embrace such conditions is to leave oneself vulnerable to new terrors and dangers. At the very least, we have to acknowledge this vulnerability.

Jesse McLean says

Great history of the theory and practice of public art since the 1960's. Some people took offense at the omission of the Situationists, but I'm okay with it.

Kotryna says

The only thing I am sure of after reading this book is that I am deeply provincial when it comes to art outside museum walls; how unaware I was of the wonderful world of site-specific art inside and outside gallery walls, filling the streets, local communities, and nature with content that challenges identities, builds relationships, expands a meaning of space, and in other ways affects or is affected by the locality.

In brief, it is a great introduction to site-specific art (though in many parts, still beyond my own reach). There are no taking sides in this book, just a research-based polemic on how the concept of site-specific art changed through years & different practices, which helps to navigate in this branch of the art world, while the relationship between location and identity gets only more complex and unstable.

Egor Sofronov says

If not for too verbose and lengthy critique of identity politics-community-based art of the early-to-mid 90s this book would be a gem. On the registers of polemics, theorization and historicity, Kwon is impeccable. In fact, half of the book was published almost verbatim in the journal October, Spring 1997 and all the important stuff (and engaging reading) is there.

Virginia says

it was terribly dry. so dry that i needed to drink a glass of water when i was done with it. it parched me, no one likes that.
the absence of christo was off-putting.

Ally says

This book was suggested to me as a primer on contemporary discussion of Public Art and though I found it informative, it certainly doesn't offer any new ideas in terms of how practice in the public sphere is changing for artists. Technology and the arts are almost wholly neglected and the book is annoyingly academic at times.

Deb says

Excellent coverage of key ideas and works relating to "locational identity".

Nathaniel says

an excellent survey and theoretical analysis of site specific art.

Shane says

A thorough analysis of the evolution of site-specific art and art as community engagement up to the early 2000s, concluding with some excellent observations on place identity and the role of an artist in a community.

Makeba says

eh.

Ansh says

Brilliant read on critiques on public and community art and how it has evolved from collaborations with architects and urban designers to "sited" collaborations with local communities. Offers some really strong institutional critiques from plural perspectives on how community identity is shaped on assumptions made apriori to the project. All of this builds to one of the more effective critiques on the "postmodern condition" wrapping Bourdieu as well as Deleuze & Guattari on how identity that's associated with no particular place and constructing a solid thesis from that.

Penny says

A good question:

"How do we account, for instance, for the sense of soaring exhilaration and the anxious dread ngendered by the new fluidities and continuities of space and time, on the one hand, and their ruptures and disconnections on the other? And what could this doubleness of experience mean in our lives?"
