

Re: Q: Use of the term anti-art

Barbara Oettl

Barbara Oettl <Obarb@aol.com>
wrote:

Dear Saul Ostrow,
in fact, the term had already been coined before the Dada movement started. But no wonder you came across Dada as they are trying to base their new art on Duchamp their great "father" (I put it in brackets as he couldn't be and in fact wasn't their mental father) - and Duchamp was the first one to use that term concerning his art. You might find more in books on Duchamp and also in a lot of the autobiographical notes of the artist which are preserved. The most authentic autobiographical statement is probably his piece of art "The Green Box" - very hard to decipher, though, and many have tried already. I hope this was of some help for you.

Good luck,
Barbara Oettl
Department of Art History
University of Regensburg, Germany

Saul Ostrow <so5@nyu.edu>
wrote:

Dear Barbara
I'm looking for when the term was coined, not how it came to be associated with DaDa --

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Barbara Oettl <Obarb@aol.com>
wrote:

Dear Saul Ostrow,
ok, it was coined BEFORE Dada by DUCHAMP which is giving the closest time-frame anybody who has been working on that subject could ever give you. Time frame, in fact, still remains from 1913 (Duchamp is making his first ready-mades) to interviews given by the artist in the 1960s. Remember: Duchamp always was and will be a mysterious man and with that we

don't know whether he has coined the term "Anti-Art" while he was doing his first ready-mades (which were not exhibited until the 40s) or when they were re-done (verified copies by the artist) in the 60s or some when during one of his interviews when he was talking about what he was doing in his early years.

To be exact: 2 of his ready-mades were exhibited in New York in 1916 (Exhibition of Modern Art, Bourgeois Galleries, New York, 3. - 29. April 1916, listed under No. 50 as "Two Ready-mades."). What those ready-mades were? We cannot know for sure: "Pharmacies", "In Advance of a Broken Arm" (=snow shovel), "Trap" (=coat hook). We know that they were probably not even noticed as pieces of art. Was this called "Anti-Art" already back then? After that he's never shown any of those pieces anymore. How should we know whether he was naming his art "Anti-Art" already by the time he "invented" it or only later?

He is, at least, known to have given the origin of the "Anti Art" and of the term "Anti Art".

Literature:

Dieter Daniels, Duchamp und die anderen, Cologne 1992 (should be translated into English already)

Allen Leepa, Anti-Art and Criticism, Excerpts from Professor Leepa's forthcoming book "Problems in Contemporary Painting"; in: Battcock, Gregory (ed.), The New Art - A Critical Anthology (revised), N.Y. 1973

Good luck!

Barbara Oettl

Stefan Neuner <stefan.neuner@univie.ac.at>

wrote:

I think the problems that occurred with the use of the term anti-art (whether it was related to a specific metier or not in times of Dada) can be solved when you take into account that a general notion of 'art' (as opposed to a notion of art which is bound to specific media) was only established in the art critical discours around Pop Art, Minimalism and Conceptual Art in the 60s, e.g. in Arthur C. Dantos 'The Art World' (1964). Thierry de Duve wrote an important essay on this subject (chapter in his 'Kant after Duchamp'). A brilliant recent study by James Meyer ('Minimalism. Art and Polemics in the 60s') retraces the debates in the 60s. So it comes as no surprise that Hans Richters 'Art and Anti-Art' was also published in the 60s. Its context is the theoretical discours of the Neo- Avantgarde.

Sincerely,

Stefan Neuner

ArtHist.net

Institut fuer Kunstgeschichte
der Universitaet Wien
Unicampus - Spitalgasse 2, Hof 9
1090 Vienna
Austria

Reference:

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<<https://arthist.net/archive/25337>>.