

Dematerialisation / AAH Annual Conference 2004

Diarmuid Costello

CALL FOR PAPERS

Dematerialisation: The Entry into Postmodernity

Association of Art Historians Annual Conference 2004: Old/New?
University of Nottingham
1-4 April 2004

This is the first call for papers for a panel on the legacies of conceptual art for more recent debates in art, art theory and aesthetics. We welcome historical, theoretical and philosophical contributions. Abstracts of 300-400 words should be sent by e-mail to the organisers by 1st September 2003.

In the history of art there cannot be a shorter chronological period that has been ascribed the status of cultural epoch than 1966-1972, the years surveyed by Lippard's classic document, *Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object* (1973). The art, criticism and theory of this epoch still provide key historical reference points for contemporary art in Britain and in the USA, and have been instrumental in securing the intellectual priority of New York for subsequent debates around postmodernism. In dominant art historical narratives Minimal art, anti-form, systems, conceptual art, earth and process art have been characterised as the entry into artistic postmodernity, decisively challenging the hierarchies of aesthetic value embedded in the forms, materials and mediums associated with modernism, its institutional spaces and conventions of viewing.

This session invites papers that investigate the legacy of the generative moment of 1966-1972. How did the aesthetic concepts that emerged during these 6 years -- repetition, seriality, theatricality, process, materiality, negation, structure, and the situated, embodied beholder -- inform the first waves of theoretical speculation on the character of artistic postmodernity? Was the process of dematerialisation conceived in terms of the complete dissolution of 'the aesthetic' as a unique category of experience, or did the movements of 1966-72 offer a

radically transformed conception of the aesthetic? Is our understanding of 1966-72 locked within the postmodernist critique of modernism? Or does the art and theory of this epoch offer the intellectual resources to think beyond the current congealed radicalism of postmodernist paradigms?

Session Organisers:

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Reference:

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