

**ARTISTS' PAGES: THE ACCESSIBILITY OF ART THROUGH  
THE PRINTED PAGE 1966 – 1973**

**VOLUME ONE**

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Contemporary interest in artists' printed ephemera and the restaging of historic exhibitions from the early conceptual era 1966-1973 has drawn attention to the materiality of work that was originally defined as being idea or process-based. This research investigates how artists used pages in group exhibition catalogues, to support, extend, or replace exhibited objects, thus making artists' works accessible beyond the physical and temporal parameters of the exhibition. As a modest and intentionally democratic medium, artists' pages disseminated information, ideas and artworks amongst wider, international audiences without infrastructure or economics thus enabling a new generation of artists to emerge at the same time throughout Europe and the United States.

Artists and organisers advocated that in print, ideas became widely and immediately accessible, reproduction both significantly expanded the audience for conceptual art and positioned individual readers closer to the thinking and making processes of artists. Accordingly, the current research analyses a selection of artists' pages contributed to exhibition catalogues and draws upon statements, interviews and essays published concurrently, supporting the view that it is preferable to go directly to the work and for readers to draw their own conclusions from it. This research explores how via the reproduction of plans, drawings, photographs, texts and documentation on the page, readers were invited to play an active role in tracing and extending an artist's thought process to arrive at their own interpretations of the work. The fixity of print ensures that, through reproduction, artists' ideas continue to be accessible to contemporary audiences and engenders numerous reconfigurations of these as artists' pages are taken into new printed and digital formats and contexts.

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## NOTE TO VOLUME ONE

This thesis is presented as two intersecting and complementary volumes. Volume one presents the main body of the research into the pages that artists contributed to group exhibition catalogues in the early conceptual era (1966 – 1973). Volume two comprises reproductions of the selected pages discussed in volume one, providing the reader with access to the material consulted. References to pages in volume two are indicated through the use of bold square brackets, for example **[v.2, pp. 74 – 75]**, allowing the reader to turn to these pages as they consult the main text in volume one of the thesis. Volumes one and two are intended to be read side by side, but may also be consulted independently of one another.

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A copy of this article is presented in Appendix E of Volume Two of this thesis **[v.2, Appendix E, pp. 305 – 324]**

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## INTRODUCTION: THE PAGE IN CONCEPTUAL ART

This research project examines the ways in which the pages that artists contributed towards exhibition catalogues produced in the early conceptual era (1966 – 1973) represented and extended ideas and artworks beyond the physical phenomena of exhibitions. Whilst exhibitions generally remain fixed in a specific location and are accessible for only a limited period, the longevity of print ensures that pages, bound alongside others in an accompanying catalogue can continue to circulate in the public domain long after the close of an exhibition. They can be taken into the home, workplace, library or archive; they can be extracted, repositioned, shared with others and reproduced for future reference<sup>1</sup>. The 'fixity of print'<sup>2</sup> ensures that what the artist sets down on the surface of the page remains preserved in perpetuity, meaning that the reader in 2018 hypothetically encounters the same information as the reader of the late 1960s or early 1970s. Through the page, artists' ideas pass directly into the grasp of the reader, thus, communication between artists and their audiences becomes more immediate, lessening the need for intermediaries<sup>3</sup>. The research functions to demonstrate the ways in which the audience has been invited to play an active role in arriving at their own interpretations of the work, meaning that artists' ideas may be physically and mentally re-constituted in a multitude of forms and contexts.

Statements, theoretical essays, drawings, plans, instructions, maps, photographs, correspondence and documentation are considered here as works in their own right and as reflecting the versatility and diversity of conceptual practice. The thesis argues that due to the material modesty of the page as familiar, lightweight and portable that conceptual art has been able to permeate beyond the traditional systems of exhibiting, collecting and critiquing art, landing more directly in the hands of readers. The research clearly demonstrates that artists' pages in exhibition catalogues supported, extended understanding of, and in some cases entirely superseded, exhibited works. Whereas catalogues of art typically represent work that is exhibited, for conceptual art such

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<sup>1</sup> Kosuth, J., artist statement, *January 5 – 31, 1969* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>2</sup> A phrase accredited to Elisabeth L. Eisenstein in her comprehensive work, Eisenstein, E. (1983) *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, second edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

<sup>3</sup> Siegelau, S., and Harrison, C., 'On exhibitions and the world at large', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 917 (December 1969), p. 203

representation is often parallel to 'presentation', thus, I would argue, constituting conceptual artwork in its own right. The research investigates the different functions of the page in relation to artworks and exhibitions, from the working out of process to the elucidation of complex concepts, as the provider of evidence, documenting a remote or otherwise unperceivable artwork, or as an autonomous site for the work itself. Although wide-ranging in content, conceptual artworks can be defined as sharing one or more of the following characteristics; the factual appearance of verbal or visual information<sup>4</sup>, the use of inexpensive, everyday materials that are considered secondary in relation to the idea<sup>5</sup>, and an emphasis on legibility as the primary aesthetic concern<sup>6</sup>, all of which are especially transferrable to the printed page.

This introductory chapter is arranged in two sections: The first section provides the general scope and focus of the research, acting as a backdrop to the works produced. It proposes to establish the viability of the page as an entity and explain how this was a significant medium for disseminating ideas and artworks amongst wider audiences, noting especially how developments in technology contributed to the exchange and spread of conceptual art practices. It will locate the use of pages in the wider historical, political and geographical context of the late 1960s and early 1970s to explain how the page might be used as a litmus for changing attitudes towards accessibility and examines the veracity of claims for the democratisation of art. The second section of this chapter outlines the methodology and structure of the thesis.

The analysis of selected pages is divided into five chapters: 'The Role of the Page in Challenging the Conceptual: Artists and Readers', 'Process, Sequence and Repetition', 'Marking the Spot: the Page as Location and Time Frame', 'Exchange and Correspondence', and 'Dematerialisation: the Silence of an Empty Page'.

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<sup>4</sup> Huebler, D., statement, *January 5 – 31, 1969* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p.; Burnham, J., 'Real Time Systems', *Artforum*, vol. 8, no. 1 (September 1969), p. 50; Spear, A.T., 'Introduction', *Art in the Mind* (1970) exhibition catalogue, n.p.; Burnham, J., 'Alice's Head: Reflections on Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 8, no. 6 (February 1970), p. 43

<sup>5</sup> LeWitt, S., 'Paragraphs on Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 5, no. 10 (summer 1967), p. 80; Szeemann, H., 'About the Exhibition' *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p.; Harrison, C., 'Against Precedents', *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>6</sup> 'Introduction', *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1, no. 1 (May 1969), p. 3; Weiner, L., and Sharp, W., 'Lawrence Weiner: At Amsterdam', *Avalanche* (spring 1972), p. 67

These themed chapters arise from the various ways in which selected artists have engaged with the page as a dynamic medium and involved the reader as a participant in configuring meaning. The concluding observations will reflect on the experience of accessing and interpreting this material fifty years after it was originally published to assess the ways in which the page can be re-contextualised and contribute to the body of contemporary knowledge framing conceptual art.

## **Scope and Focus**

The research analyses pages that artists contributed towards group exhibition catalogues between 1966 and 1973 in the UK, Europe, North America and South America. The time frame is significant as marking the most active period of conceptual practice, which coincides with a number of salient world events including the United States' involvement with the Vietnam war, May '68<sup>7</sup>, the Civil Rights Movement, the Womens' Liberation Movement, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the threat of nuclear war, the space race and counterculture. Whilst the effects of these socio-political circumstances are not overtly present in the vast majority of artists' pages, they nevertheless created a general climate of unrest that marked the early conceptual era and the ways in which artists critiqued and contributed to established systems. The geographical limits are identified as marking the main locations for this practice at that time as represented in page form. Although the research is focused within these parameters, the publications to be examined are, by their nature, far more extensive in reach.

The landmark exhibition *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptures*<sup>8</sup>, which opened at the Jewish Museum, New York on 27 April 1966, and the catalogue produced to accompany it, mark the beginning of this research period. This was chosen as it shows how a handful of artists, then associated with minimal art, such as Carl Andre (b. 1935) and Robert Smithson

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<sup>7</sup> May '68 describes a brief six-week but radical uprising in Paris that took between the end of March and beginning of June 1968. A witness account of the events in Paris during May '68 is provided in Quattrocchi, A., and Nairn, T., (1998) *The Beginning of the End: France May 68, What Happened, Why it Happened*. Verso

<sup>8</sup> *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*, The Jewish Museum, New York, 27 April - 12 June 1966, organised by Kynaston McShine.



(1938 – 1973), began to exhibit 'purposefully more philosophical and conceptual' work<sup>9</sup>. This was reflected in the accompanying catalogue through the inclusion of plans and information as opposed to customary installation photographs and biographies<sup>10</sup>. The year 1966 holds further significance as this marks the beginning of Lucy Lippard's (b. 1937) seminal anthology *Six Years* (1973)<sup>11</sup>, and is also the year identified by Germano Celant (b.1940), 'in which systems of logic and artistic process [began] to define themselves through the written and published language of books and other publications'<sup>12</sup>.

The research period ends in 1973 by which point, conceptual art had become enveloped by the art market and lacked the fresh, raw qualities of the work of the previous seven years as it became institutionalised and consumable<sup>13</sup>. The current research has identified that the period 1966 to 1973 presents a period when accessibility and democratisation were driving forces behind the production and dissemination of conceptual art to explore how these ambitions were effectively promoted by the medium of the page.

## What is a page?

Throughout this thesis, the term 'artists' pages' is used to refer to the varied contributions that artists' made to exhibition catalogues published in the early conceptual era. Traditionally, photographs of previously installed works, artists' biographies and statements usually supplied by a gallery dealer or prepared by the exhibition organiser formed the content of such catalogues<sup>14</sup>. During the

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<sup>9</sup> McShine, K., 'Introduction' in *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors* (1966) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>10</sup> McShine, K., *op cit.*, n.p.

<sup>11</sup> Lippard, L., (1973) *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972: a cross-reference book of information of some esthetic boundaries: consisting of a bibliography into which are inserted a fragmented text, art works, documents, interviews, and symposia, arranged chronologically and focused on so-called conceptual or information or idea art with mentions of such vaguely designated areas as minimal, anti-form, systems, earth, or process art, occurring now in the Americas, Europe, England, Australia, and Asia (with occasional political overtones), edited and annotated by Lucy R. Lippard*, London: Studio Vista

<sup>12</sup> Celant, G. (1972) *The Book as Artwork 1960 – 1972*, 2nd edition, New York, 6 Decades Books, p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> Richard, S., 'Interview with Anton Herbert', (2009) *Unconcealed*, London: Ridinghouse, p.435; Lippard, L., 'Postface', (1973) *Six Years...* London: Studio Vista, p. 263.

<sup>14</sup> Before confirming the start and end dates for this study, I consulted a number of exhibition catalogues published in the wider time frame of 1965 to 1975. The content of

period of research, content was created and contributed by artists directly, in keeping with the view that this made ideas and artworks immediately accessible to audiences, and could, on occasions, become an integral part of the work itself<sup>15</sup>.

The current research builds on studies by Catherine Moseley<sup>16</sup> and Stephen Leiber<sup>17</sup> into artist-generated documentation and ephemera defined as being freely available or inexpensively distributed and intended to be useful for only a short time<sup>18</sup>. Accordingly, in dealing with the material covered in this thesis, one of the initial questions has been how a 'page' can be defined and differentiated from our broader understanding of a 'document'. Suzanne Briet (1894 – 1989) is credited with forming the fundamental definition of a document in her treatise *Qu'est-ce que la documentation? (What is documentation?)* (1951)<sup>19</sup>. Briet affirms that a document is 'any concrete or symbolic indexical sign, preserved or recorded toward the ends of representing, of reconstituting, or of proving a physical or intellectual phenomenon'<sup>20</sup>. Following this logic, Marc Koscijew posits, 'A piece of art is indeed a document because it not only materialises and represents (artistic) ideas, messages or meanings — that is, information — but also simultaneously informs and serves as evidence of that (artistic) information'<sup>21</sup>. Applied to conceptual art, which stressed the underlying thought processes and immateriality of the work, the question of whether an artwork is a document, and moreover, whether a document can be thought an artwork presents an issue that was fiercely contested amongst artists, organisers and critics during the period<sup>22</sup>. The exhibition *Workings Drawings and Other Things*

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earlier catalogues including *Seven Sculptors* (1965) and *New Generation 1965* (1965) comprised installation photographs and artist biographies that had been prepared and formatted by exhibition organisers.

<sup>15</sup> Siegelau and Harrison, op cit., p. 202

<sup>16</sup> Moseley, C., (2001) *Conception: Conceptual Documents*, Norwich: The Norwich Gallery

<sup>17</sup> Leiber, S., (2001) *Extra Art: A Survey of Artist's Ephemera 1960-1999*. Smart Art Press

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 21

<sup>19</sup> Briet, S., (1951) *Qu'est-ce que la documentation? Translated by Day, R.E., Martinet, L., and Anghelescu, G.B.*, Paris: Editions Documentaires.

<sup>20</sup> Briet, op cit., p. 10

<sup>21</sup> Koscijew, M., 'Documenting and materialising art: conceptual approaches of documentation for the materialisation of art information', *Artnodes*, no. 19 (June 2017), p. 68. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7238/a.v0i19.3115> (accessed 02-06-2018)

<sup>22</sup> Evidence of these debates can be found in Burnham, J., 'Alice's Head: Reflections on Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 8, no. 6 (February 1970), pp. 37 - 43; Buren, D., 'Beware!', *Studio International*, v. 179, no. 920 (March 1969), p. 100; Weiner, L. and Sharp, W., 'Lawrence Weiner: At Amsterdam', *Avalanche* (spring 1972), p. 71; Collins,

*on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to Be Viewed as Art* organised by Mel Bochner (b. 1940) at the School of Visual Arts, New York in December 1966, which has since been credited as the first exhibition of conceptual art<sup>23</sup> provides a useful case study of how documents came to replace the exhibition of traditional art objects, and how these, in turn, were transformed into pages. Bochner was interested in what was 'upstream' of the work and asked artists, writers, and musicians to submit their working drawings for display in the gallery. Due to financial limitations, it was not possible to frame and hang the drawings, so Bochner turned to the then-new technology of the Xerox machine to make copies that he could pushpin to the wall instead. Recalling this process, Bochner said;

But as they came out of the machine, these different sized and coloured sheets were now all the same size and colour, neatly stacked in the tray. Suddenly they were pages. In other words, they had already become a book...<sup>24</sup>

The Xerox enabled Bochner to make multiple copies of the drawings that were then displayed in four ring binders presented on plinths (as sculptures would be) in the gallery setting (Fig. 1).

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J., 'Things and Theories', *Artforum*, vol. 11, no. 9 (May 1973), pp. 32 – 36. Additionally, John Bladessari's *Cremation Project* (1970) can be read as a critique of artworks becoming replaced by documents. The role of documentation in art practices has been more recently discussed in 'Documentation as Art Practice in the 1960s', *Visual Resources: an international journal on images and their uses*, vol. 32, issues 3-4 (2016)

<sup>23</sup> Buchloh, B. 'Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions', *October*, Vol. 55 (Winter, 1990), pp. 105-143

<sup>24</sup> Burton, J., (2007) 'Mel Bochner in conversation with James Meyer' in *Mel Bochner: Language 1966 – 2006*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press and The Art Institute of Chicago, p. 135



Fig. 1: *Workings Drawings and Other Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to Be Viewed as Art*, December 1966, School of Visual Arts, New York, installation photograph, available at: <http://www.melbochner.net/exhibitions/working-drawings/> (accessed 08-06-2018)

The use of print technology as a means for producing and disseminating artworks and ideas can be further considered in the light of Walter Benjamin's (1892 – 1940) essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'<sup>25</sup>. Written in 1936 and translated into English in 1968<sup>26</sup>, Benjamin's essay focuses on the introduction of the printing press in 1440 and the ramifications this had on the reception of 'original' works of art. Benjamin notes, "[i]n principle, the work of art has always been reproducible. What man has made, man has always been able to make again"<sup>27</sup>. This lessens the notion of the 'unique' and 'original' work of art but has even greater currency when considered in light of technological developments of the 1960s. For example, in 1963, Xerox ran an advertisement that challenged readers to distinguish the difference between a Pablo Picasso (1881 – 1973) drawing worth \$2,800 and a photocopy costing 5 cents<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> Benjamin, W., (1936) *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, 2008 edition. London: Penguin Books

<sup>26</sup> First English translation by Harcourt, Brace & World Inc. published in 1968 in *Illuminations*. First published in Great Britain by Jonathan Cape Ltd in 1970, including a new introduction by Hannah Arendt.

<sup>27</sup> Benjamin, (1936), op cit., p.3

<sup>28</sup> Advertisement for the Xerox 914 in U.S. News & World Report, 20 July 1963. Reproduced in the exhibition catalogue *Xerography*, Firstsite, Colchester, 8 September – 10 November 2013, curated by Michelle Cotton. Discussed in Owen, D., (2004) *Copies in Seconds: How a Lone Inventor and an Unknown Company Created the*

Consequently, 'It can also place the copy of the original in situations beyond the reach of the original itself. Above all, it makes it possible for the original to come closer to the person taking it in...'<sup>29</sup> Although in the example of *Working Drawings*, the ring binders remained in the gallery, Benjamin's essay stressed how reproduction enabled the geographical and cognitive distance between artwork and audience to be reduced, affording not only a more diverse and expanded readership but also a more immediate encounter when the work is placed in the hands of the audience.

Looking towards publications as an increasingly important medium for conceptual art, Anne Rorimer's essay, 'Siting the Page: Exhibiting works in Publications – Some Examples of Conceptual Art in the USA', published in *Rewriting Conceptual Art* (1999)<sup>30</sup>, develops the view that 'the page or pages of a book or magazine [took] the place of the traditional exhibition space'<sup>31</sup> in conceptual art during the 1960s and 1970s. Rorimer presents examples of projects conceived specifically for the page, many of which were featured in specialist art periodicals or the mainstream press as well as within lesser-known publications such as *0-9* and *Vision*. She also demonstrates how artists including Robert Barry (b. 1936), Michael Asher (1943 – 2012) and Dan Graham (b. 1942) dealt 'with the page itself as a material, two dimensional entity that is one of a number of hinged, repeated elements forming part of a book or publication' – defining the page in terms of its physicality<sup>32</sup>. This research advances Rorimer's analysis of works conceived specifically for the magazine page by extending the position that pages were not only an *alternative* site to the exhibition but existed in *relationship* to exhibitions and were closely bound up in the politics of production, dissemination and participation with art. Crucially, Rorimer's study only deals with artists from the United States, whereas this research goes further by investigating pages that artists from the US, Europe and South America specifically contributed to a range of exhibition catalogues.

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*Biggest Communication Breakthrough Since Gutenberg - Chester Carlson and the Birth of Xerox*. Simon & Schuster, p. 248

<sup>29</sup> Benjamin, (1936), op cit., p.6

<sup>30</sup> Rorimer, A., (1999) 'Siting the Page: Exhibiting works in Publications – Some Examples of Conceptual Art in the USA', in Bird, J., and Newman, N., (eds.), *Rewriting Conceptual Art*. Reaktion Books, pp. 11 - 26

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.11

<sup>32</sup> Rorimer, ibid, p. 20

Apart from Rorimer's essay, which focuses on artists' contributions to magazines, no academic study to date has examined the pages per se that artists contributed towards exhibition catalogues during the early conceptual era. Writing more generally in *How The Page Matters* (2011)<sup>33</sup>, Bonnie Mak argues, 'Despite its key role in the codex, the page has not yet been analysed in detail'<sup>34</sup>. Mak credits a few notable exceptions; these include *The Future of the Page* (2004)<sup>35</sup> by Peter Stoicheff and Andre Taylor, *Material Modernism: The Politics of the Page* (2001)<sup>36</sup> by George Bornstein and some brief explorations by Alberto Manguel of how,

The page leads an underhand existence. Lost among its brethren within the covers of a book...the page comes into our reader's consciousness only as a frame or container of what we mean to read... Like a skeleton supporting the skin of a text, the page disappears in its very function, and in that unprepossessing nature lies its strength<sup>37</sup>

Mak suggests that the page has become 'transparent', she adds, 'so accustomed to its form, we no longer notice how the page is fundamental to the transmission of ideas and that it shapes our interpretation of those ideas'<sup>38</sup>. Seth Siegeluab's (1941 – 2013) assertion that the page offered a 'neutral' or 'standardised' site for the presentation of conceptual art offers one explanation of this oversight. Such an approach, he claimed, aimed to help audiences to 'see the individual work of art' with greater clarity<sup>39</sup>. The increased focus on ideas in the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, comes at the expense of the material support via which these are transmitted. Mak urges us to pay attention to the material qualities of the page, recommending, 'The page is more than a simple vehicle or container for the transmission of ideas; it is a part of those ideas, entangled in the story itself'<sup>40</sup>. Consequently, this research project intends not only to analyse the content presented in exhibition catalogues but seeks to

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<sup>33</sup> Mak, B., (2011) *How the Page Matters*, Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 7

<sup>35</sup> Stoicheff, P., and Taylor, A., (eds.) (2004) *The Future of the Page*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press

<sup>36</sup> Bornstein, G., (2001) 'How to read a page: modernism and material textuality' in *Material Modernism: The Politics of the Page*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

<sup>37</sup> Manguel, A., (2010) 'A Brief History of the Page', *A Reader on Reading*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, p. 120

<sup>38</sup> Mak, op cit, p. 8

<sup>39</sup> Siegeluab and Harrison, op cit., p. 202

<sup>40</sup> Mak, op cit., p. 69

consider how the reader interacts and engages with this through the discrete medium of the page.

### **Advancing the Role of the Reader/Viewer**

In his seminal essay 'Death of the Author' (1967), Roland Barthes (1915 – 1980) posits that, the unity of a text is not in its origin, it is in its destination<sup>41</sup>.

Originally published in English and contextualised amongst projects by artists including Sol LeWitt (1928 – 2007), Dan Graham (b. 1942), Mel Bochner (b. 1940) and John Cage (1912 – 1992) in the magazine *Aspen*, issue 5+6<sup>42</sup>, Barthes' essay emphasises the active role in deciphering meaning that the audiences of artworks in the late 1960s were encouraged to embrace. Barthes states that 'to write is to reach'<sup>43</sup>; the author extends his perspective outwards publically through the text, but it cannot be known if when these are taken up by the reader, that these will be interpreted as intended by the author. Texts for Barthes can be thought of as providing a bridge between the past tense of the author's proposition and unknown interpretations of readers in the future tense. A page is a shared place where the minds of artists and their readers can meet. Mak describes the page as the point of contact between author, designer, text, image and reader, likening this to an 'interface'<sup>44</sup>. This is a useful term as it signifies a place of meeting and interaction between two fixed points and has the connotation of communication, in a similar vein to LeWitt's statement, '[a] work of art may be understood as a conductor from the artist's mind to the viewer'<sup>45</sup>.

That the theorist and writer, Barthes, refers to his audience as 'readers', while LeWitt uses the term 'viewers' indicates tension in how we are to consider our

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<sup>41</sup> Barthes, R., 'Death of the Author', *Aspen*, 5+6 (fall/winter 1967), section 3, n.p., available at: <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen5and6/threeEssays.html#barthes> (accessed 10-09-2018)

<sup>42</sup> John Logie has stressed the importance of acknowledging *Aspen* 5+6 as the original site of publication for 'Death of the Author', he has shown how several scholars have mistakenly dated the essay as being written in 1968 in the context of May '68. Logie, J., '1967: The Birth of 'The Death of the Author'', *College English*, vol. 75, no. 5 (May 2013), pp. 493-512

<sup>43</sup> Barthes, R., 'Death of the Author', *Aspen*, 5+6 (fall/winter 1967), section 3, n.p., available at: <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen5and6/threeEssays.html#barthes> (accessed 10-09-2018)

<sup>44</sup> Mak, (2011) *How the Page Matters*, Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, pp. 4 - 9

<sup>45</sup> LeWitt, S., 'Sentences on Conceptual Art', 0-9 (January 1969), p. 3

role when encountering the artists' pages investigated in this thesis. This is reflected by Robert Pincus-Witten's observation that in conceptual art 'the published document and the printed page is in itself a kind of image or picture which can be looked at as easily as read'<sup>46</sup>. 'Readers' decipher meaning from written language, whilst a 'viewer' is someone who witnesses a spectacle, emphasising the 'communal' nature of the experience<sup>47</sup>. Viewers are also readers though, as the active process of perception involves memory and other internal processes including senses such as touch for the brain to decipher what patterns and signals might mean<sup>48</sup>. The nature of conceptual art problematises this slippage between terms. Traditionally, catalogues and the pages they contained would exist on the margins of exhibitions of visual art, both metaphorically and practically, containing supplementary 'secondary information' about the works on display, but, during the early conceptual era, the catalogue, I would argue, took a more central position and could, on occasions, 'be the exhibition'<sup>49</sup>. Furthermore, the proliferation of statements, correspondence, written proposals and essays that constituted conceptual practices make different demands on audiences, with pages by Art & Language, Joseph Kosuth (b. 1945), Victor Burgin (b. 1941) and Daniel Buren (b. 1938) requiring sustained study more akin to 'reading' than 'looking'. Consequently, the term 'reader/viewer' will be used where appropriate throughout this thesis to account for the varied textual and visual contributions, as well as combinations of these, that constituted artists' pages and the ways we are expected to engage with them.

In their seminal essay 'The Dematerialization of Art'<sup>50</sup>, Lippard and John Chandler noted how the viewer was required to spend more time in the 'immediate experience' of conceptual art in order to 'focus on [the] details and absorb... an impression of the piece with the help of those details'<sup>51</sup>. For members of Art & Language, the 'prime requirement' concerning a work's

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<sup>46</sup> Pincus-Witten, R., 'Anglo-American Standard Reference Works: Acute Conceptualism', *Artforum*, vol. 10, no. 2 (October 1971), p. 85

<sup>47</sup> Fletcher, P., 'Reader, Viewer, Spectator, Beholder: Response', *Victorian Studies*, Volume 59, Number 3 (Spring 2017), pp. 457–462.

<sup>48</sup> Gregory, R., (1966) *Eye and Brain, The Psychology of Seeing, (fifth edition)*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

<sup>49</sup> Siegelau, op cit., 202 - 203

<sup>50</sup> Lippard, L., and Chandler, J., 'The Dematerialization of Art', *Art International*, Vol. XII, No. 2 (February 1968), pp. 31 - 36

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, p. 31



appearance was that it is 'reasonably legible'<sup>52</sup>. In the first issue of *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, the editors give the example of an essay, 'laid out flat in reading order behind glass within a frame', which is implied as being an art object due to its presentation in the context of an exhibition<sup>53</sup>. They suggest that the ambience of an art gallery 'conditions' the reader to expect to see an art object. However, when the same essay is presented in a magazine, it takes on the appearance of art theory or criticism. Whereas *Art & Language* want their text to be seen as an art object, others took exception to this. In the introduction to the catalogue accompanying *Art in the Mind* (1970)<sup>54</sup>, Athena T. Spear cautioned against the 'highly artificial' situation of presenting written documents in exhibitions and suggested, 'such material belongs to publications and libraries'<sup>55</sup>. Critic James Collins, writing in 1973, also took exception to the experience of encountering printed texts in the ambience of an art exhibition:

Reading while walking... is not the most effective way of receiving information. The procedure is rendered even more complex and ineffectual by placing the work to be communicated in glass cases at unhappy reading levels. Moving, stooped and crabwise, around a room, while simultaneously trying to read, is simply impractical.<sup>56</sup>

Exhibitions of conceptual art required 'a hell of a lot of reading'<sup>57</sup>, accordingly, visitors were invited to physically engage with paper-based works through the addition of rooms specifically for this purpose<sup>58</sup>. In 1970, Joseph Kosuth installed a series of 'Information Rooms'<sup>59</sup>; these comprised textbooks and newspapers piled on tables, arranged in a manner as if to invite the audience to

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<sup>52</sup> Atkinson, T., Baldwin, M., Bainbridge, D., Hurrell, H., 'Introduction', *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1, no. 1 (May 1969), p. 3

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, p. 1 - 10

<sup>54</sup> *Art in the Mind*, 17 April – 12 May 1970, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College organised by Athena T. Spear.

<sup>55</sup> Spear, A.T., *ibid*, n.p.

<sup>56</sup> Collins, J., 'Things and Theories', *Artforum*, vol. 11, no. 9 (May 1973), p. 33

<sup>57</sup> Plagens, P., '557,087', *Artforum*, vol. 8, no. 3 (November 1969), p. 65

<sup>58</sup> Anna Sigrídur Arnar has written about the 'reading rooms' that formed part of the *Documenta 5* (1972) exhibition in Arnar, A.S., (2017) 'Books at documenta: Medium, Art Object, Cultural Symbol', in Buurman, N., and Richter, D., *Documenta: Curating the History of the Present*, ONCurating.org, issue 33 (June 2017) pp.151 - 164 available at: [http://www.on-curating.org/files/oc/dateiverwaltung/issue-33/pdf/Oncurating\\_Issue33.pdf](http://www.on-curating.org/files/oc/dateiverwaltung/issue-33/pdf/Oncurating_Issue33.pdf) (accessed 07-05-2018)

<sup>59</sup> Kosuth, J., 'Information Room (Special Investigation)', Meyer, U., (1972) *Conceptual Art*, Dutton, p., xi and p. 171.

consult the material provided (Fig. 2). These readings rooms, although still public spaces, engendered a more private, concentrated engagement with conceptual art, where audiences would be left to contemplate material over a prolonged period. They provided a comfortable environment where audiences could draw in closer to pages as opposed to the more removed stance that is common for wall-mounted work.

Rather than being contained in vitrines, where only a small part of the total work could be glanced at one time, these reading rooms invited gesture and somatic engagement as the reader was not only positioned closer to the work but was also permitted to handle it (Fig. 3). Chairs around the tables invited the readers to consult the publications whilst seated, furnishing a more comfortable, and possibly an extended engagement with the material presented. Such a posture, one might observe, afforded a sharper focus in a manner more akin to private study than of visiting an exhibition of visual art.



Fig. 2: Joseph Kosuth, *Information Room*, 1970. New York Cultural Center, New York. Photo: Jay Cantor. Available at: <https://www.sfu.ca/galleries/SFUGalleriesEvents/past-events/2015/JohnCWelchman.html> (accessed 15-07-2018)



Fig. 3: Installation view, *955,000*, Vancouver Art Gallery, 13 January – 8 February 1970, published in *From Conceptualism to Feminism: Lucy Lippard's numbers shows 1969 – 74*, 2012, Afterall Books, p. 136

Additionally, the cover, type of paper used, size, font, introduction and page layout or design contribute to the overall work. Gerard Genette used the term 'paratexts' to describe 'those liminal devices and conventions, both within and outside the book, that form part of the complex mediation between book, author, publisher and reader'<sup>60</sup>. Artists' and organisers working in the conceptual era were clearly aware of these devices. For example, Dan Graham required the editors of publications in which his work *Poem Schema* (1966)<sup>61</sup> appeared to set the 'final form' of the poem<sup>62</sup>. Respective editors were asked to complete the work by inserting data such as the number of adjectives, adverbs, columns, lines, letters of the alphabet etc. that were used and to record the perimeter [sic], weight and type of paper stock the poem was printed upon. For the exhibition *Sonsbeek 71* (1971)<sup>63</sup>, Buren presented his trademark coloured and white stripes across the inside cover of the catalogue, a part of the publication that is usually disregarded. Like his unofficial presentation of works outside *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969)<sup>64</sup> and the installation of subtle white stripes behind other artists' works in *Documenta 5* (1972)<sup>65</sup>, Buren's insertions exist on the peripheries of established modes of display and serve to draw attention to and critique the context in which conceptual art was encountered.

The binding of catalogues was often inventive and reflected artists' and organisers' interest in the nature of information, which was characteristic of the conceptual era<sup>66</sup>. Catalogues for *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) (Fig. 4) *Op Losse Schroeven* (1969)<sup>67</sup> and *Documenta 5* (1972) were presented in cardboard files. In the *Attitudes* catalogue, artists' pages were organised using the alphabetical dividers of a telephone directory (letters G, Q, U, X and Y remained empty), and were fastened with a metal clasp. This allowed pages to be added and removed accordingly with each new venue of the touring

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<sup>60</sup> Genette, G., (1987) *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Editions du Seuil

<sup>61</sup> Reproduced in publications including *Aspen*, 5+6 (Fall 1967), n.p. and *Art Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1, no. 1 (May 1969) pp. 14 - 16

<sup>62</sup> Graham, D., *Poem Schema* in *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol 1., no. 1, (May 1969), p. 15

<sup>63</sup> *Sonsbeek 71*, Sonsbeek Park, Arnhem, 19 June – 15 August 1971, organised by Wim Beeren and Geert van Beijeren.

<sup>64</sup> *When Attitudes Become Form*, 22 March - 27 April 1969, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, organised by Harald Szeemann

<sup>65</sup> *Documenta 5*, 30 June - 8 October 1972, Museum Fridericianum, Friedrichsplatz, Neue Galerie, Kassel, organised by Harald Szeemann

<sup>66</sup> Burnham, J., 'In Alice's Head: Reflections on Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 8, no. 6 (February 1970), p.43

<sup>67</sup> *Op Losse Schroeven*, 15 March - 27 April 1969, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, organised by Wim Beeren and Ank Marcar

exhibition. Contributions taking the form of loose-leaves in *557,087* (1969)<sup>68</sup>, *955,000* (1970)<sup>69</sup>, *In Another Moment* (1971)<sup>70</sup> and *Arte De Sistemas* (1971)<sup>71</sup> (Fig. 5) were randomly gathered together, along with introductions and bibliographies and packaged in cardboard folders and envelopes. These pages were brought together and united by their format but allowed the reader to take apart and reorganise the sequence according to their individual interests. In this sense the overall catalogue became a conceptual challenge, involving the reader in the haptic experience of giving form to the catalogue<sup>72</sup>.

The hand-held scale of catalogues meant that all work, regardless of whether it was a room-sized installation, land art, or virtual conversations taking place across expansive distances, were reduced to a form that could be encountered in a single field of vision. Siegelauub stressed his belief in 'giving every man [sic] the same situation, same money, same pages in a catalog [sic], and same physical space'<sup>73</sup> thus emphasising how the page could be used as a device to ensure democratic representation of all artists' work and the way this was promoted to readers.

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<sup>68</sup> *557,087*, 5 September – 5 October 1969, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, organised by Lucy Lippard

<sup>69</sup> *955,000*, 31 January – 8 February 1970, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, organised by Lucy Lippard

<sup>70</sup> *In Another Moment*, Gallery SKC, Belgrade, 15 September – 3 October 1971, organised by Braco and Nena Dimitrijevic.

<sup>71</sup> *Arte de Sistemas*, Museo De Arte Moderno / Centro de Arte y Comunicacion, Buenos Aires, 21 July – August 1971, organised by Jorge Glusberg.

<sup>72</sup> Seth Siegelauub discussed how the catalogues produced for *557,087* (1969) and *955,000* (1970) organised by Lucy Lippard could be re-organised into various configurations in Melvin, J., '(2012) Seth Siegelauub in conversation with Jo Melvin', in Bulter, C., et al *From Conceptualism to Feminism, Lucy Lippard's Numbers Shows 1969 – 74*, London: Afterall, pp. 156 - 159

<sup>73</sup> Burnham, op cit, p. 39

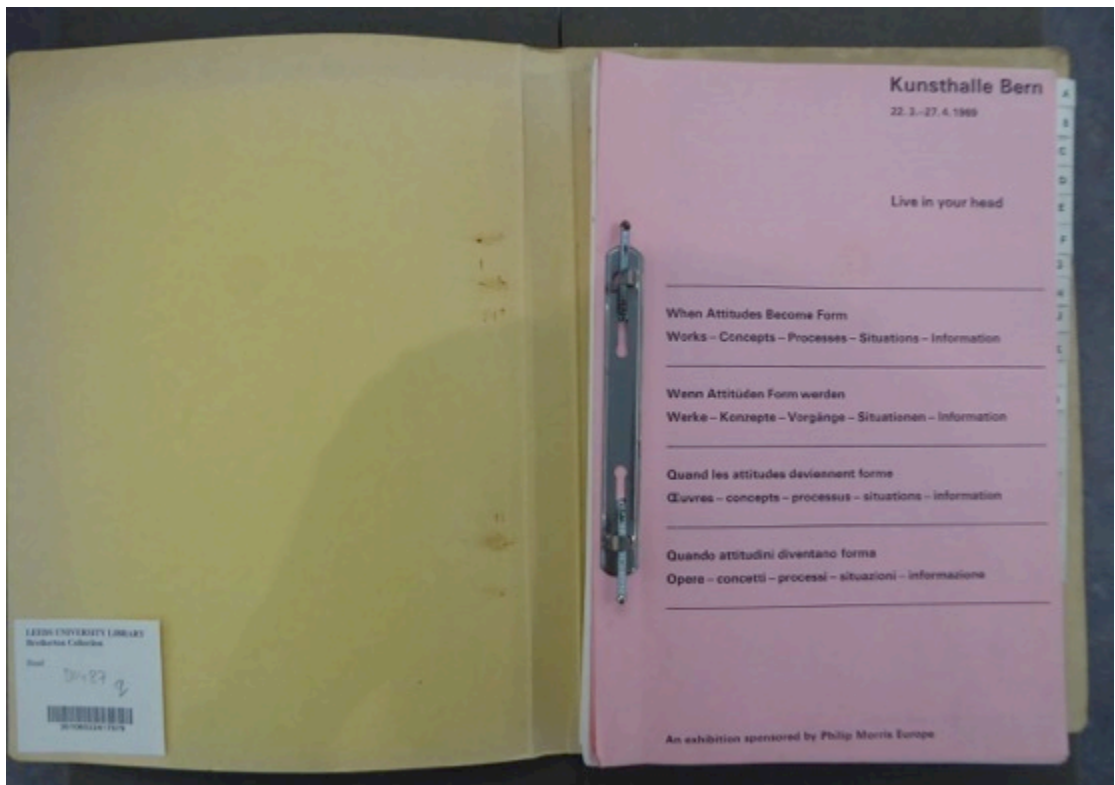


Fig 4: *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) exhibition catalogue. Image courtesy of University of Leeds Special Collection, 26-10-2017

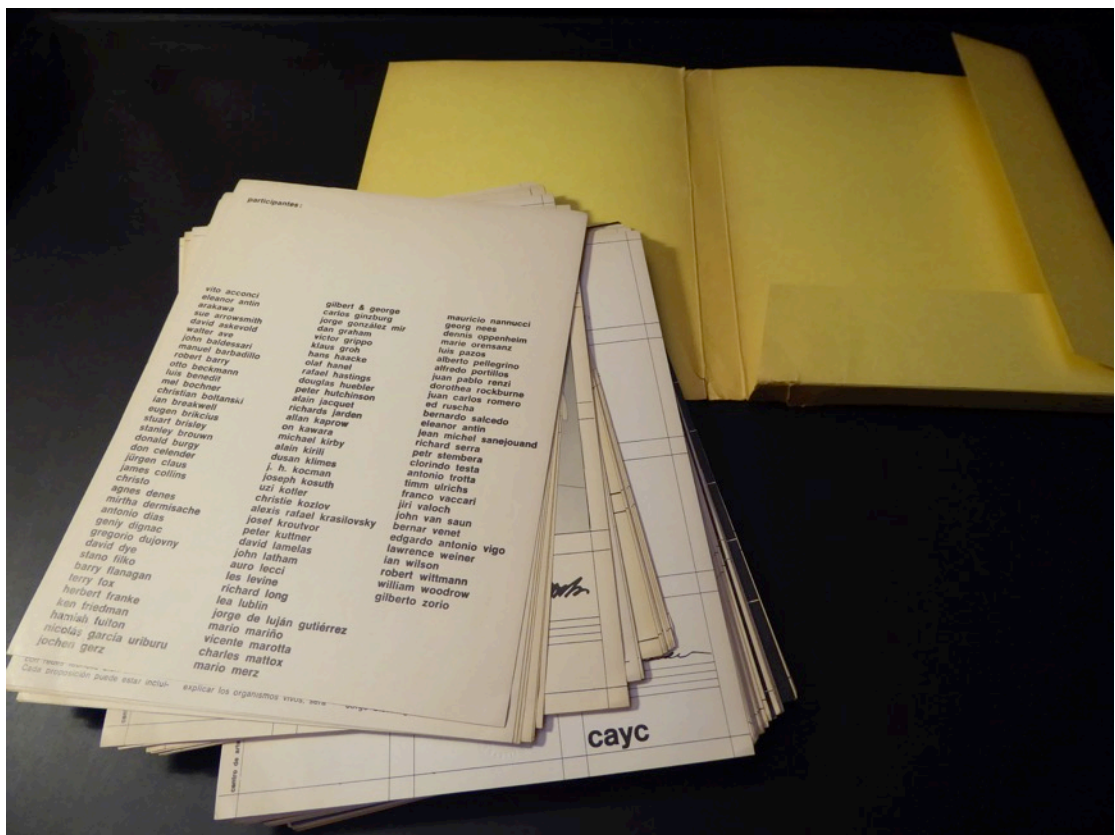


Fig. 5: *Arte de Sistemas* (1971) exhibition catalogue. Image courtesy of The National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 11-02-2016

Catalogues were generally inexpensive to produce, disseminate and purchase. Most were printed in black and white only, with pages perfect-bound using glue rather than more expensive stitched spines. Colour printing was however used when the work necessitated it, or an artist requested it, as was the case for many of Buren's pages presenting alternating coloured and white stripes<sup>74</sup>. Additionally, some larger catalogues such as those produced for the *VI Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971)<sup>75</sup> and *Documenta 5* (1972)<sup>76</sup> included a limited number of pages printed in colour. An International General<sup>77</sup> price list from 1971 offers global distribution of catalogues and artists' books, the majority of which were priced between \$2 and \$4 (the equivalent of \$12 - \$24 /£9 - £18 today) (Fig. 6). The exceptions were the 'Xerox Book'<sup>78</sup>, which cost \$20, *Artists and Photographs* (1970)<sup>79</sup>, the most expensive catalogue of the era advertised for \$100 (Fig. 7) and the extensive catalogue to *Documenta 5* (Fig. 8) which cost 65DM. It is probable that most catalogues were produced in an edition of around 500 to 2000 copies<sup>80</sup>. The dispersion of catalogues meant that exhibitions remained in the public consciousness long after they were taken down. This was particularly significant for exhibitions that lasted for only a short duration, such as *19:45 – 21:55, September 9 1967, Frankfurt, Germany*

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<sup>74</sup> For example, Buren's pages in the *Prospect 68* (1968) *Prospect 69* (1969) *Studio International July / August* (1970) catalogues were printed in colour. In the *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) catalogue, Bruce Nauman's page was the only one to be printed in colour.

<sup>75</sup> *Sixth International Guggenheim Exhibition*, 12 February - 25 April 1971, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, organised by Diane Waldman

<sup>76</sup> *Documenta 5*, 30 June - 8 October 1972, Museum Fridericianum, Friedrichsplatz, Neue Galerie, Kassel, organised by Harald Szeemann (Secretary-General)

<sup>77</sup> International General was a publishing house and international distribution company set up by Seth Siegelau in 1970

<sup>78</sup> *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, Lawrence Weiner, December 1968*, New York, organised by Seth Siegelau and John Wendler. More commonly referred to as the 'Xerox Book'.

<sup>79</sup> *Artists and Photographs*, 28 March - 5 April 1970, Multiples Gallery, New York, organised by Lawrence Alloway and Marian Goodman

<sup>80</sup> *July August September* (1969) was published in an edition of 2000; *Artists and Photographs* (1970) was published in an edition of 1200; *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Lawrence Weiner* (1968), the 'Xerox Book' (1968), *One Month: March 1969* (1969) and *Publication* (1970) were published in editions of 1000; *19:45 - 21:55* (1967) and *Idea Structures* (1970) were published in editions of 500; *Derule 11/7/73* (1973) was published in an edition of 250; and *Art in the Mind* (1970) was initially published in an edition of 100. Catalogues including *Sonsbeek 71* (1971) produced by larger organisations or museums were generally published in larger editions. It has not been possible to ascertain the edition sizes for all catalogues consulted in this thesis.

(1967)<sup>81</sup> and *In Another Moment*, or were situated outside of the main centres and seen by fewer visitors.

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<sup>81</sup> 19:45 - 21:55, September 9 1967, Frankfurt, Germany - *Dies alles Herzchen wird einmal Dir gehören*, Galerie Dorothea Loehr, Frankfurt, 9 September 1967 organised by Paul Maenz.



## INTERNATIONAL GENERAL

Please send me the following books:

—	The "xeroxbook".....	\$20.00
—	Douglas Huebler.....	2.00
—	Statements.....	2.00
—	January 5-31, 1969.....	2.50
—	July, August, September 1969.....	3.00
—	557,087/955,000.....	4.50
—	Robin Redbreast's Terri- tory/Sculpture 1969.....	2.00
—	18 PARIS IV.70.....	3.50
—	July/August Exhibition Book.....	3.50
—	26 Gasoline Stations...	4.00
—	Sunset Strip.....	8.00
—	34 Parking Lots.....	3.50
—	Royal Road Test.....	2.50
—	9 Swimming Pools.....	3.50
—	Crackers.....	5.00
—	Real Estate Opportun- ities.....	4.00
—	Various Small Fires....	4.00
—	Fibonacci 1202 Mario Merz 1970.....	2.50
—	Traces.....	2.50
—	Robert Barry.....	3.00
—	Trans VSI Connection...	5.00
—	24 Pieces.....	5.00
—	23 Pieces.....	5.00

Enclosed please find \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
in payment for the above books.

name.....

.....

address.....

.....

.....

Fig. 6: International General Price List 1971, courtesy of Hugh Pilkington

**Artists and Photographs**

Mel Bochner  
 Christo  
 Jan Dibbets  
 Tom Gormley  
 Dan Graham  
 Douglas Huebler  
 Allan Kaprow  
 Michael Kirby  
 Joseph Kosuth  
 Sol LeWitt  
 Richard Long  
 Robert Morris  
 Bruce Nauman  
 Dennis Oppenheim  
 Robert Rauschenberg  
 Ed Ruscha  
 Robert Smithson  
 Bernard Venet  
 Andy Warhol

The only collection of limited editions reflecting current involvements with and uses of photography as media and process in art.

The 13 x 13 x 4 inch box contains 19 books, objects and prints on paper and plastic, in color and black and white printed by offset lithography and silkscreen. The box includes a catalogue with text by Lawrence Alloway. The edition is limited to 1,200 copies, \$100.

Published by Multiples, Inc. in Association with Colorcraft, Ltd.

**Multiples** New York and Los Angeles

**ORDER FORM**

ARTISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS	QUANTITY	PRICE	SHIPPING*	TOTAL

\*Please add \$15. per order for shipping and handling to Europe by air or \$7. by surface. For delivery in the United States and Canada, add \$5. per order. Add sales tax where applicable. Payment must accompany order. Make checks payable to Multiples, Inc.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

Multiples 927 Madison Avenue, New York 10021 Telephone: (212) 249-9290

Fig. 7: Advertisement for *Artists and Photographs* (1970), limited edition of 1,200 copies available to purchase by mail order for \$100 plus delivery. *Artforum*, volume 10, number 3 (November 1971), p.15

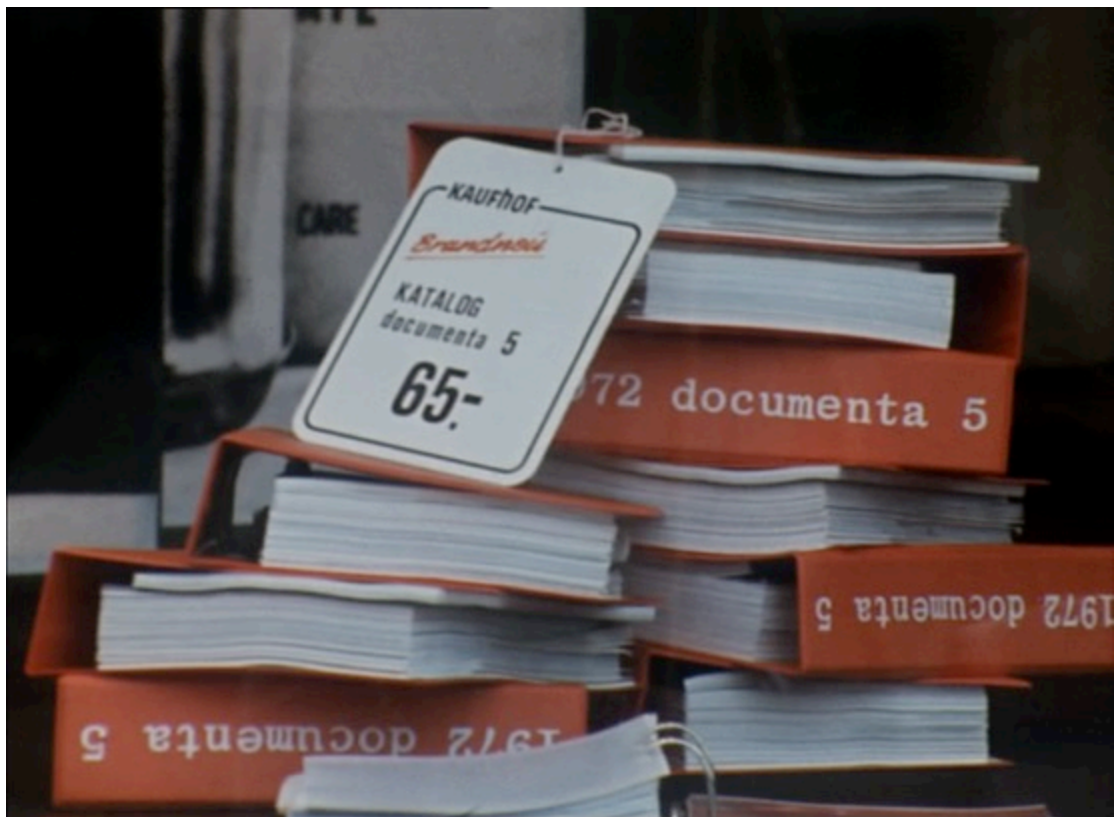


Fig. 8: *Documenta 5* catalogue on sale in Kassel, 1972. Still from Jef Cornelis (1972) *documenta 5* [DVD] JRP Ringier, Zurich

Dematerialised art sought to place artists' ideas in the hands of many readers rather than those of the privileged few<sup>82</sup>. The generally affordable prices of exhibition catalogues also alluded to the democratisation of art during the conceptual era<sup>83</sup>, especially in the sense that it was possible for there to be multiple owners. The inexpensive cost of an exhibition catalogue, which contained several works by a range of artists also meant that through acquiring a catalogue, one could possess the work of many artists at a far reduced rate compared to the cost of a single traditional art object. Lizzie Bordon, however, noted a 'major contradiction' in conceptual art that 'while it attempts to work outside the art economic structure by eliminating the saleable object, documents, photographs and leaflets are often produced in multiple and sold'<sup>84</sup>.

The economic aspect of exhibition catalogues is accentuated in the present day. Whereas in the late 1960s when 1000 copies of a catalogue would be deemed more than enough to meet demand, with the advent of increasing historicisation of conceptual art and an increasing audience in the present day these same catalogues have become rarified and valuable objects. The majority of catalogues examined in the current research are held in library special collections and archives, whilst some are available at escalated prices on the second-hand market [v.2 Appendix C]. In spite of that, due to their multiple nature, these catalogues still remain accessible up to a certain extent, and arguably continue to make the ideas contained within them 'possessable' in the cognitive, if not entirely material sense<sup>85</sup>.

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<sup>82</sup> '...since dealers cannot sell art-as-idea, economic materialism is denied along with physical materialism', Lippard and Chalnder, op cit, p. 34; Weiner, L. and Sharp, W., 'Lawrence Weiner: At Amsterdam', *Avalanche* (spring 1972), p. 67; Siegelau, S., and Claura, M., 'L'art conceptuel', *XXe siècle*, no. 41 (December 1973), translated into English by Blake Stimson in Alberro, A., and Stimson, B., (1998) *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, p. 289

<sup>83</sup> Siegelau and Claura, op cit., p. 288

<sup>84</sup> Borden, L., 'Three Modes of Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 10, no. 10 (June 1972), p. 71

<sup>85</sup> Lawrence Weiner explained, 'In a sense, once you know about a work of mine, you own it. There's no way I can climb into somebody's head and remove it', Weiner and Sharp, op cit., p. 67

## Communication: Mobility, Networks and Technology

The artists' pages investigated in this research responded to changing media and embraced communication and print technology as part of the production process. The ways in which exhibition catalogues continue to be reproduced and disseminated show that these issues are ongoing and have they affected the research process by making artists' pages accessible in alternative formats that are more relevant to the present day.

Advancements in communication technology in the 1960s and the increasing accessibility and affordability of these helped collapse the spatial and temporal distance between individuals and changed the way that artists interacted with each other and their audiences<sup>86</sup>. Marshall McLuhan (1911 – 1980) likened developments such as television, radio and the telegraph to an extension of the central nervous system, causing individuals to become increasingly unified and involved in each other's activities.

The use of innovative print lithograph technology as a means for producing and disseminating artworks followed shortly after the launch of the Xerox 914 automated copier machine in 1959. Two years later, the Fluxus movement began; George Maciunas (1931 – 1978) stated in the 1965 Fluxus manifesto that 'anything can be art and anyone can do it... [art must be] unlimited, mass-produced, obtainable by all and eventually produced by all'<sup>87</sup>. In 1967 McLuhan announced that 'xerography' 'heralds the times of instant publishing. Anybody can now become both author and publisher'<sup>88</sup>.

Artists gained access to the Xerox machine through affiliations with art schools and institutions<sup>89</sup>, or via copy shops and used it as a tool for experimentation

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<sup>86</sup> Examples of this include work by N.E. Thing Co., such as *Trans VSI Connection NSCAD-NETCO* (1970) at Nova Scotia College of Art & Design; international telegrams sent by On Kawara for his series *I Got Up* (1968 – 1979); and the organisation of the Art by Telephone (1969) exhibition. These are discussed in further detail in 'Chapter 5: The Page as an Agent of Exchange and Correspondence'

<sup>87</sup> Maciunas, G., 'Manifesto on Art / Fluxus Art Amusement', 1965, available at: [http://www.kim-cohen.com/seth\\_texts/artmusictheorytexts/Maciunas\\_Manifesto%20on%20Art.pdf](http://www.kim-cohen.com/seth_texts/artmusictheorytexts/Maciunas_Manifesto%20on%20Art.pdf) (accessed 15-07-2018)

<sup>88</sup> McLuhan, M., and Fiore, Q., (1967) *The Medium is the Massage* (2008 edition), London: Penguin Books p. 123

<sup>89</sup> John Baldessari taught at the University of California 1968 – 1970 and at CalArts until 1986; Douglas Huebler chaired the art department and organised a programme of guest

though as a production method it could prove ineffective from an economic perspective. Following the aforementioned exhibition *Working Drawings*, in 1968, Ian Burn (1939 – 1993) used the Xerox 720 machine to produce a book of one hundred blank pages; each page was re-used and copied to make the next one, getting darker with each page (Fig. 9). In December 1968, Siegelau and Jack Wendler published *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, Lawrence Weiner*, a project that is more commonly known as the 'Xerox Book' due to the intended production method, even though this finally proved too time-consuming and expensive to use. The works conceived specifically for the pages of the Xerox Book made use of the flatbed of the copier machine as a dynamic space for creation and duplication.

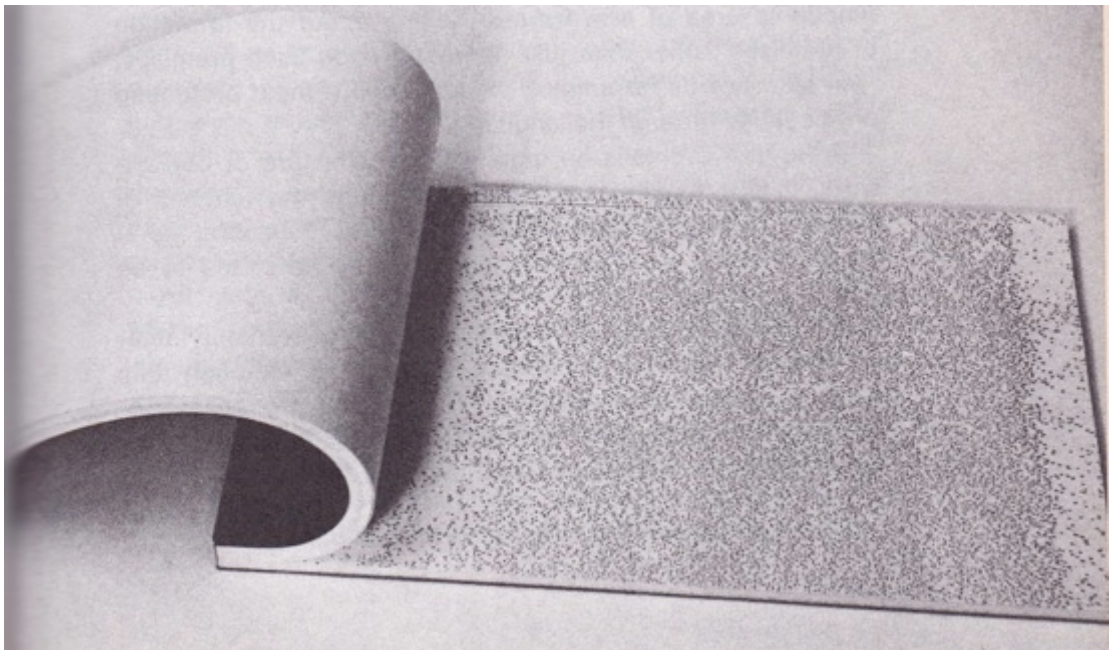


Fig. 9: Ian Burn, *Xerox Book* (1968), image from Ursula Meyer (1972) *Conceptual Art*. New York: Dutton, p. 95

Emerging technologies such as fax, telecommunications and satellite transmission were fundamental to the work of many conceptual artists and helped to collapse the perceived space between viewers and events taking place across the globe. In 1969, Gerry Schum (1938 - 1973) launched the first

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lectures at Bradford Junior College, Massachusetts; Iain Baxter was an assistant professor of Fine Art at the University of British Columbia from 1964 – 1966, associate professor and university resident in visual arts at the Centre for Communications and the Arts at Simon Fraser University 1966 – 1971 and in 1972 was an associate professor at York University; Terry Atkinson was a lecturer on the Art Theory course at Coventry University between October 1966 and 1973. Michael Baldwin was a student at Coventry College of Art from 1964 to 1967. He took up a lecturing position in 1969

TV Gallery with the exhibition *Land Art*<sup>90</sup>, which Schum stated in the catalogue was used to promote the idea of 'communication of art instead of possession of art objects'<sup>91</sup>. To prepare the exhibition *Art by Telephone* (1969)<sup>92</sup>, 'The telephone was designated the most fitting means of communication in relaying instructions to those entrusted with fabrication of the artists' projects or enactment of their ideas'<sup>93</sup>. The catalogue, which took the form of an LP included recordings of the telephone conversations that took place between artists and gallery staff, which presented as sound recordings posed a challenge to the form of the printed page. The exhibitions *Cybernetic Serendipity: The Computer and the Arts* (1968)<sup>94</sup> and *Software: Information Technology / Its new meaning for art* (1970)<sup>95</sup> focused on artists' increasing utilisation of computers by artists. Jack Burnham (b. 1931), organiser of *Software* declared, 'today, as evidenced by this exhibition, people with no special training have access to computers. Thus in practice, there has been a steady trend towards democratization' [sic]<sup>96</sup>. Visitors to the exhibition were given the opportunity to interact with many of the systems at hand and to engage in a dialogue with the artist.

In addition to electronic media, which increased the speed of communication, the increasing ease of air travel enabled artists, organisers and gallery dealers to forge supportive international networks and present works in a range of venues. Terry Smith points out that, 'much art of this period came out of a suitcase, or could be made on the spot by people in transit'<sup>97</sup>. When an artist could travel, install his or her work in situ using locally sourced materials, or send an instruction via the mail, telegram or telephone, it meant that audiences

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<sup>90</sup> *Land Art*, Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum, Hanover and broadcast German television channel on SFB, 15 April 1969, organised by Gerry Schum.

<sup>91</sup> Ironically the catalogue for *Land Art*, which was published after the launch of the exhibition concluded with a telegram from Robert C. Scull stating that he was interested in purchasing the whole exhibition and asking Schum for the price

<sup>92</sup> *Art by Telephone*, 1 November - 14 December 1969, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, organised by Jan van der Marck

<sup>93</sup> van der Marck, J., *Art by Telephone* (1969) exhibition catalogue, LP jacket

<sup>94</sup> *Cybernetic Serendipity: The Computer and the Arts*, Institute of Contemporary Art, London, 1 August – 20 October 1968, organised by Jasia Reichardt.

<sup>95</sup> *Software: Information Technology / Its new meaning for art*, The Jewish Museum, New York, 16 September – 8 November 1970, organised by Jack Burnham.

<sup>96</sup> Burnham, J., *Software: Information Technology / Its new meaning for art* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 13

<sup>97</sup> Smith, T., 'Peripheries in Motion: Conceptualism and Conceptual Art in Australia and New Zealand', Camnitzer, L., Farver, J., and Weiss, R., (eds.) (1999) *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s – 1980s*, New York: Queens Museum of Art, p. 87

for exhibitions of conceptual art were exposed to rapidly developing ideas as they happened<sup>98</sup>. Traditionally, these discussions would remain private between artist and organiser, but when correspondence was reproduced in the pages of exhibition catalogues, it opened up the conceptual and logistical decisions that took place.

Conceptualism was created through a network of often, but not necessarily always, like-minded artists, organisers, dealers, writers and collectors for whom meetings, correspondence and collaborations were an intrinsic element of their professional lives. For example, the meetings that Terry Atkinson (b. 1939) of Art & Language held with US artists during his visits to New York and Los Angeles in 1967 and 1969 were instrumental for the exposure of the group outside of the UK<sup>99</sup>, and likewise, brought the work of US artists including LeWitt, Graham and Lawrence Weiner (b. 1942) to the attention of British audiences. Representation of letters, telegrams and documents in the pages of exhibition catalogues made these networks transparent to the public. For example, a selection of pages taped together from organiser Harald Szeemann's (1933 – 2005) address book was reproduced at the beginning of the *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969)<sup>100</sup> exhibition catalogue (Fig. 10). Handwritten and checked-off at various times in different pens and pencils, this list of contacts demonstrates the fluidity of relationships forged between international organisers, artists, dealers and collectors.

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<sup>98</sup> Lippard, op cit., p. 8

<sup>99</sup> Terry Atkinson, artist biography, *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* (1970 exhibition catalogue), pp. 62 - 63

<sup>100</sup> *When Attitudes Become Form*, Kunsthalle Bern, 22 March – 27 April 1969, organised by Harald Szeemann. These two pages were included in the Bern catalogue only.

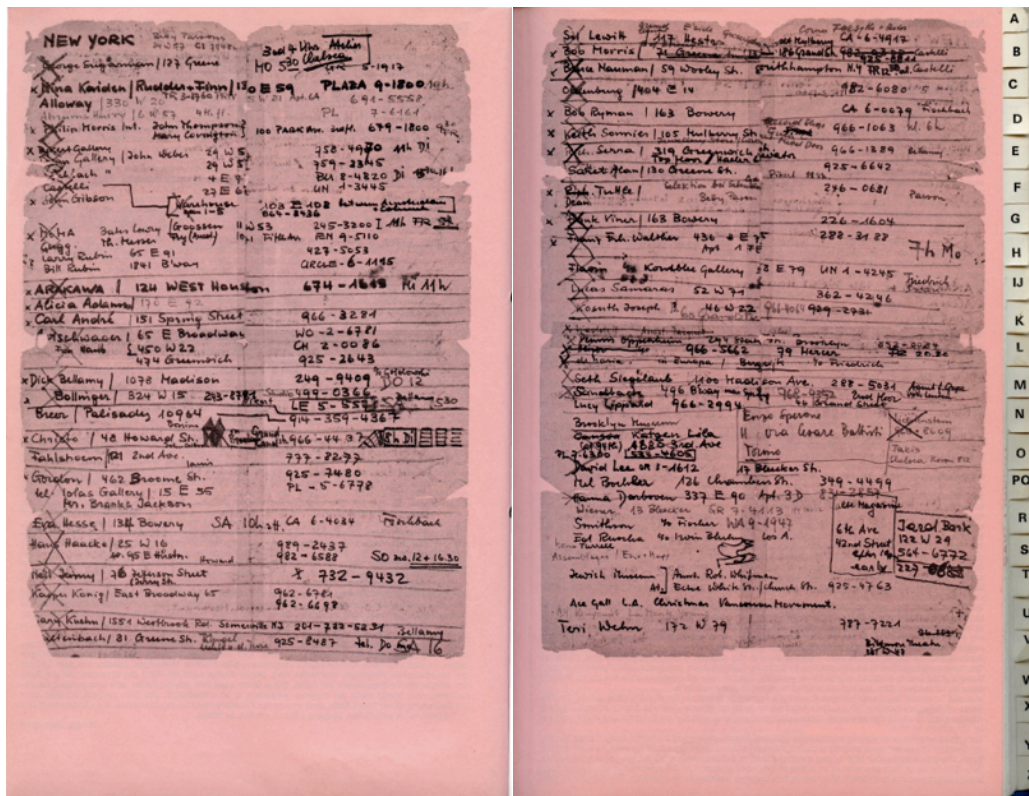


Fig. 10: Pages from organiser Harald Sezeemann's address book reproduced in the opening pages of the *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) exhibition catalogue (Bern version only), n.p. Screenshot from PDF facsimile available at facsimile [https://ubutext.memoryoftheworld.org/Szeemann-Harald\\_Live-In-Your-Head\\_When-Attitudes-Become-Form\\_1969.pdf](https://ubutext.memoryoftheworld.org/Szeemann-Harald_Live-In-Your-Head_When-Attitudes-Become-Form_1969.pdf) (accessed 01-01-2018)

The galleries showing work by the conceptual artists discussed in this thesis were few in number but widespread across Western Europe, North America, and to a lesser extent, South America. The evidence presented in this research will demonstrate an alternative balance compared to the typical over-emphasis on North American conceptual art provided in some recent studies<sup>101</sup>. Sophie Richard's research on the *International Network of Conceptual Artists: Dealer Galleries, Temporary Exhibitions and Museum Collections (Europe 1967–1977)*<sup>102</sup> has shown that a significant number of emerging dealer galleries were

<sup>101</sup> For example, almost twice as many North America artists than European artists were represented in the large exhibition 1965 – 1975: *Reconsidering the Object of Art*, 15 October 1995 – 4 February 1996, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, organised by Ann Goldstein and Anne Rorimer; further imbalances can be witnessed in Alberro, A., (2003) *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press; Allen, G., (2011) *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press; Morris, C., and Bonin (eds) (2013) *Materializing Six Years, Lucy Lippard and the Emergence of Conceptual Art*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press

<sup>102</sup> Richard, S., (2006) *International Network of Conceptual Artists: Dealer Galleries, Temporary Exhibitions and Museum Collections (Europe 1967–1977)* PhD thesis, Norwich School of Art and Design, Associate College of Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge



based in cities located in the northern triangle of Europe between Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands<sup>103</sup>. These included Konrad Fischer's (1939 – 1996) space in Düsseldorf. Fischer sent artists plane tickets, inviting them to create new works in situ and insisting that artists were in Düsseldorf when he showed their work, enabling them to meet local artists<sup>104</sup>. Wide White Space Gallery, run by Anny De Decker and Bernd Lohaus (1940 - 2010) opened in Antwerp, Belgium, in March – April 1966, Yvon Lambert in Paris also opened in 1966 and was dedicated to showing American minimal and conceptual artists. Art & Project in Amsterdam opened in September 1968, and in 1970, Fernand Spillemaeckers (1938 - 1978) founded Galerie MTL in Brussels<sup>105</sup>. Due to their specialist nature, these galleries had limited footfall but increased the visibility of artists' work through mailings and catalogues<sup>106</sup>.

For conceptual art, the gallery space was less significant than independent organisers such as Siegelau and Lippard, Szeemann or dealers such as Fischer<sup>107</sup>, all of whom were able to move around venues and present exhibitions in a variety of contexts. The catalogue is one such context, I would argue, that enabled the fixed space and typical boundary of the gallery to be further broken down. Within catalogues such as *July August September* (1969)<sup>108</sup> or *Sonsbeek 71*, geographically dispersed works are gathered together in the shared space of bound pages. Additionally, the portable nature of the catalogue enables the works to transcend the geographical and temporal boundaries of a temporary exhibition, and thus, reach a larger and more widely dispersed audience.

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<sup>103</sup> Lynda Morris explained how 'Ten of the cities prominent in early exhibitions of conceptual art are in this triangle. Cities rather than countries were key to the development of the conceptual network in the first decade'. 'Unconcealment', *Tate Papers: Landmark Exhibitions Issue*, 12, Autumn 2009

<sup>104</sup> Fischer, K., and Jappe, G., 'Konrad Fischer interviewed by Georg Jappe', *Studio International*, Volume 181, number 930 (February 1971), pp. 68 – 71; Tuchman, P., 'American art in Germany: The History of a Phenomenon', *Artforum*, vol. 9, no. 3 (November 1970), p. 61

<sup>105</sup> Galerie MTL represented a number of important conceptual artists including; LeWitt, Buren, Zorio, Andre Cadere, Broodthaers, Dibbets, Bochner, Kosuth. Darboven, Baldessari and Ryman

<sup>106</sup> Fischer, K. and Jappe, G., op cit. p. 70

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, p. 71

<sup>108</sup> *July August September*, 1 July - 30 September 1969, 11 various locations worldwide, organised by Seth Siegelau

That artists' ideas and artworks set down on the page continue to be accessible in the public domain fifty years after they were initially conceived demonstrates how the page functions to transcend different time periods. Since the early 2000s, numerous catalogues have been republished as digital and facsimile editions [v.2 Appendix B]. Most facsimiles are affordable to contemporary western audiences, costing between £12 and £25, and provide a realistic copy of the original catalogues. Websites including Primary Information<sup>109</sup>, Ubuweb<sup>110</sup> and Monoskop<sup>111</sup> have made digitised copies of exhibition catalogues available as freely downloadable PDFs<sup>112</sup> or e-books. It is through these new formats that contemporary audiences are increasingly likely to become familiar with the content of exhibition catalogues from the 1960s and 70s. Mak has warned that '[t]he facsimile is designed to imitate, to emulate, to reproduce; it encourages readers to overlook the ontological rift between the facsimile and the object that is being imitated, and nowhere more acutely than in the digital environment'<sup>113</sup>. In these new formats, alterations in layout, paper, binding, and even content<sup>114</sup> have sometimes been necessary. In 2012, with the support of a grant from the Egress Foundation, Primary Information made seven of Siegelau's 'classic' catalogues freely available as PDF downloads under the 'online projects' section of their website. Miriam Katzeff, co-founder of Primary Information, explained how Siegelau loaned the organisation copies of each publication, which they then digitally scanned and 'cleaned up any signs of aging and binding, then made the scans into single PDFs which we compressed for downloadability'<sup>115</sup>. One of the catalogues digitalised by Primary Information was *One Month: March*

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<sup>109</sup> Primary Information was formed in 2006 as a non-profit organization devoted to publishing artists' books and artists' writings, available at: <http://www.primaryinformation.org> (accessed 10-06-2018)

<sup>110</sup> Ubuweb was 1996 by poet Kenneth Goldsmith, the website provides an educational resource and a significant digital archive of avant-garde art and poetry, available at: <http://ubuweb.com> (accessed 05-06-2018)

<sup>111</sup> Monoskop a wiki for collaborative studies of the arts, media and humanities, available at: <https://monoskop.org/Monoskop> (accessed 05-06-2018)

<sup>112</sup> Adobe Systems created the Portable Document Format (PDF) in 1991. It makes the visual elements of documents portable across platforms and devices. Lisa Gitelman provides analysis of the PDF in the chapter 'Near print and beyond paper – knowing by PDF' in Gitelman, L. (2014) *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*, Durham and London: Duke University Press

<sup>113</sup> Mak, op cit., p. 66

<sup>114</sup> Clive Phillpot, co-founder of Zédélé Editions explained that he prefers to use the term 'second editions' in reference to a series of reprints of artists' books produced by the company in 2012 - 2014. He added, 'The opportunity to examine and improve the book was taken further by Dibbets and in the end both the written material and the typeset sections were also revised', Phillpot, C., (2018) Email to Samantha Ismail-Epps, 31 January

<sup>115</sup> Katzeff, M., (2018) Email to Samantha Ismail-Epps, 27 February

1969 (1969), which was originally produced as a 178 x 215mm size calendar, it comprised individual pages printed on cream card that were fastened along the top edge with two sets of staples (Fig. 11). The digitalised version of *One Month* was produced as a set of individual monochrome pages, of which the size may vary when viewed on screen or printed (Fig. 12). The ways in which audiences interact with digitalised pages also differ to the experience of handling original catalogues, instead of turning from recto to verso, holding each page between their thumb and forefinger; contemporary readers will use a mouse pad to scroll vertically through a sequence of single pages displayed on a screen, which potentially disrupts the relationship between adjacent pages. It is also possible to search keywords in a PDF document, detracting from the experience of browsing that one may have when consulting a physical publication. These slight changes are a small compromise to make for unlimited access to what are now some of the most valuable and rare catalogues produced in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but over time, these alternations for the digital environment may engender a misled or alternative interpretation of the material compared to what was originally intended.

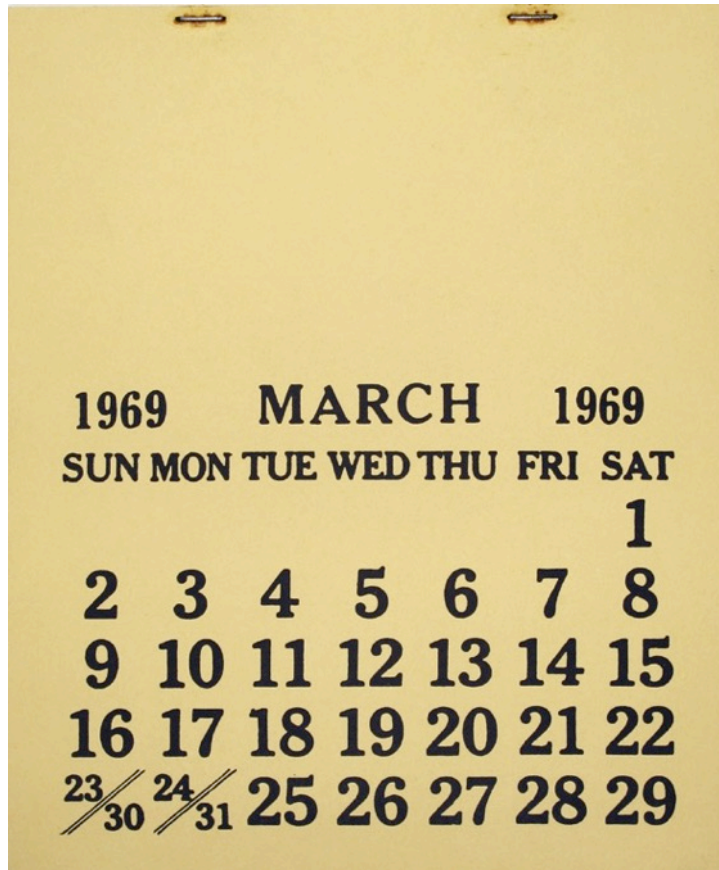


Fig. 11: *One Month: March 1969* (1969) exhibition catalogue, front cover. Image available at: <https://www.macba.cat/en/a00213> (accessed 16-04-2018)

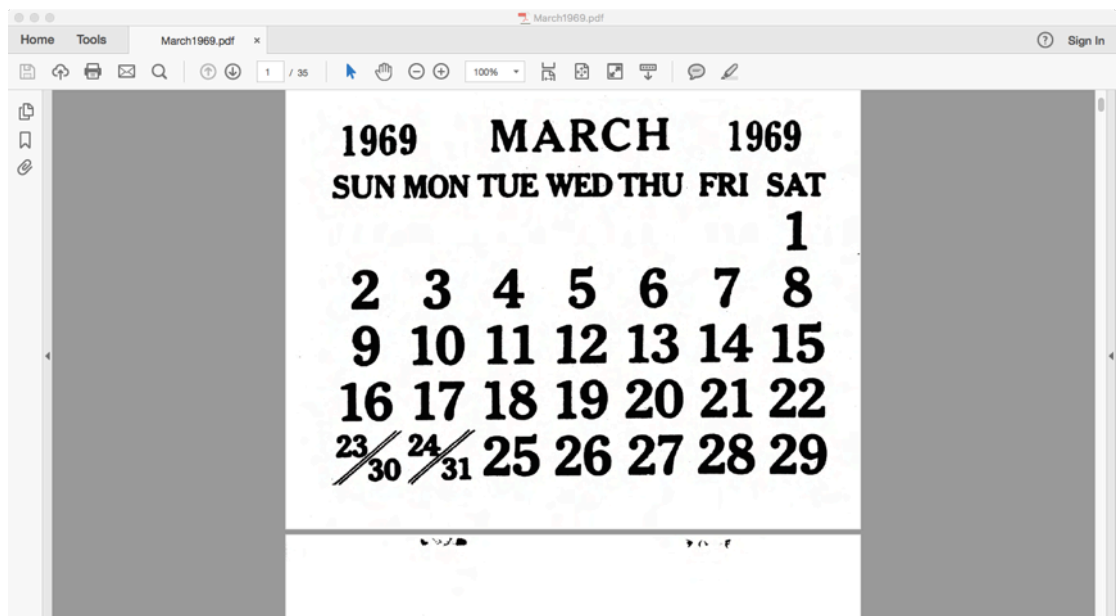


Fig. 12: Screenshot of *One Month: March 1969* (1969) exhibition catalogue viewed as a PDF, downloaded from the Primary Information website at: <http://www.primaryinformation.org/files/March1969.pdf> (accessed 16-04-2018)

## Historical, Geographical and Political Contexts

Siegelaub has faulted recent research for neglecting the political climate of the conceptual era. He was critical of Benjamin Buchloh's essay 'Conceptual Art 1962 – 1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions'<sup>116</sup> for not mentioning the events of May '68 or the Vietnam War 'even in a passing footnote' and stressed the need for art historians to understand the 'spirit, ideas and practices' linked to the context of the specific period<sup>117</sup>. To explain the rift between the political activism of the 1960s and 70s and 'seemingly apolitical' work that young, radical artists were producing, Lippard has rationalised, 'However, it was usually the form rather than the content of Conceptual art that carried a political message. The frame was there to be broken out of'<sup>118</sup>. She added how there was a 'need for an independent (or 'alternative') art that could not be bought and sold by the sector that owned everything that was exploiting the world and promoting the Vietnam war'<sup>119</sup>. This is crucial for understanding how the page operated as a radical medium to subvert the traditional systems of exhibiting and collecting art<sup>120</sup>. The majority of artists' pages examined in the current research appear to bypass political issues, in content at least, however, the form of the page exemplifies artists' evasion for creating permanent, commodity-status art objects that could only be owned by only a privileged few. Rather, artists used political strategies and everyday channels of communication to ensure their ideas reached a wider, international audience. McLuhan's statement, 'Societies have always been shaped more by the nature of the media by which men communicate than the content of the communication'<sup>121</sup> provides an apt summary of the dichotomy of medium and message witnessed in these artists' pages.

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<sup>116</sup> Siegelaub, S., 'Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelaub Reply to Benjamin Buchloh on Conceptual Art', *October*, vol. 57 (summer 1991), p.155. Siegelaub discussed his criticism of Buchloh in 'The Playmaker: Seth Siegelaub interviewed by John Slyce', *Art Monthly*, no. 327 (June 2009), p. 3; 'Seth Siegelaub in conversation with Jo Melvin', 28 October 2008. *From Conceptualism to Feminism: Lucy Lippard's numbers shows 1969 – 74*, 2012, p. 251

<sup>117</sup> Siegelaub (1991) op cit., p. 155

<sup>118</sup> Lippard, 'Escape Attempts', op cit., pp. xiii-xiv

<sup>119</sup> Ibid

<sup>120</sup> Claura, M., and Siegelaub, S., 'l'art conceptuel', *XXe siècle*, no. 41 December 1973) translated into English and published in Alberro, A., and Stimson, B.,(eds.) (1999) *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT press, p. 289; Contradictions regarding the elimination of salable objects are highlighted in Borden, L., 'Three Modes of Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 10, no. 10 (June 1972), p. 71

<sup>121</sup> McLuhan, M., and Fiore, Q., *The Medium is the Massage*, Penguin, p. 1

The artists whose work is considered in this research were born in the late 1930s and 1940s. They grew up in the aftermath of World War Two<sup>122</sup>. Artists, particularly those in the US, actively opposed the war in Vietnam, and some individuals, including Peter Townsend, the editor of *Studio International*, identified with pacifism<sup>123</sup>. At the 34th Venice Biennale in 1968, Argentinian artist David Lamelas (b. 1946) presented the installation titled *Office of Information about the Vietnam War at Three Levels: The Visual Image, Text and Audio*, which amassed news reports about the Vietnam War as it unfolded<sup>124</sup> (Fig. 13). The work reflected the speed with which information was transmitted via various channels, and read aloud in three languages, Italian, French and Spanish it signalled the global impact of the American presence in Vietnam. The proliferation of information in the news also provided the stimulus for Hans Haacke's (b. 1936) installation *News at Prospect 68* (1968)<sup>125</sup>, where a telex machine churned out continuous reports on global events, thus turning the gallery space into a live newsroom<sup>126</sup>.

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<sup>122</sup> Douglas Huebler (1928 – 1997) was slightly older than most of the artists discussed in this research, he served in the US Marine Corps in World War II. Sol LeWitt, born in 1928 served in the Korean War, first in California, then Japan, and finally Korea.

<sup>123</sup> Melvin, J., (2013) *Studio International magazine: Tales from Peter Townsend's editorial papers 1965 – 1975*. PhD thesis, University of the Arts London pp. 19 - 23

<sup>124</sup> Lamelas, D., *Office of Information about the Vietnam War at Three Levels: The Visual Image, text and audio*, (1968), mixed media, dimensions variable. Holt, J., 'David Lamelas', available at: [http://www.luxonline.org.uk/artists/david\\_lamelas/essay\(2\).html](http://www.luxonline.org.uk/artists/david_lamelas/essay(2).html) (accessed 06-06-2018)

<sup>125</sup> *Prospect 68*, 20 September - 29 September 1968, Kunsthalle, Dusseldorf, organised by Konrad Fischer and Hans Strelow

<sup>126</sup> Haacke's work utilising news reports is discussed in Bryan-Wilson, J., (2009) *Art Workers: Radical Practice in the Vietnam Era*. Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 173 - 175



Fig 13: David Lamelas, *Office of Information about the Vietnam War at Three Levels: The Visual Image, Text and Audio* (1968), Venice Biennale. Available at: <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/159776> (accessed 17-10-2017)



Fig. 14: 'Demonstrations at St. Mark's Square during the Venice Biennale 1968: 'The police are sometimes to be found at the frontiers of culture' (Photo: Andre Morain)', published in Clay, J., 'Art tamed and wild', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no. 912 (June 1969), p. 264

The highly charged atmosphere precipitated by events in Vietnam, but also the wider distaste for authoritarianism and the violence associated with it<sup>127</sup> caused disruption and demonstrations at the opening of the Venice Biennale from 18 to 21 June 1968 (Fig. 14). Brutal clashes between riot police and artists, journalists and demonstrators, led to some artists going on strike and withdrawing their work from the so-called 'police biennale'<sup>128</sup>. Further uprisings followed the events in Venice at the opening of *Documenta 4* in Kassel on 27 June 1968. In 1968, and continuing throughout the period covered by this research, demonstrations broke out across six continents<sup>129</sup>. The motives for these were varied; students demonstrated against conservatism and poor living conditions, workers revolted against trade unions as much as the government, Civil Rights marches took place across America, and women demanded liberation and equal rights. Anti-Vietnam protests were widespread as soldiers and civilians alike showed solidarity for the Vietnamese. Some of the largest and most famous events include the Prague Spring<sup>130</sup>, March on Washington<sup>131</sup>, demonstrations at Grosvenor Square<sup>132</sup> and the events in Paris in May '68. The universities were a hotbed for action; students staged sit-ins, and people gathered to express themselves in debates that ran throughout the night. Demonstrations and assemblies held in the late 1960s and early 70s called for people from all backgrounds to unite in force and contributed to the public diffusion of ideas.

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<sup>127</sup> For example, hundreds were killed by police in the approach to the summer 1968 Olympics in Mexico where John Carlos' and Tommie's Smith Black Power salute brought global awareness to the poverty of the black man in America. The events of 1968 are discussed in Kurlansky, M., (2005) *1968: The Year that Rocked the World*, London: Vintage Books

<sup>128</sup> An account of the demonstrations at the opening of the 1968 Venice Biennale is given in Di Stefano, C., 'The 1968 Biennale. Boycotting the exhibition: An account of three extraordinary days' available at: [https://www.academia.edu/5708781/The\\_1968\\_Biennale\\_Boycotting\\_the\\_exhibition\\_An\\_account\\_of\\_three\\_extraordinary\\_days](https://www.academia.edu/5708781/The_1968_Biennale_Boycotting_the_exhibition_An_account_of_three_extraordinary_days) (accessed 09-11-2017)

<sup>129</sup> A detailed, illustrated account of the global extent of these protests is provided in Ali, T., and Watkins, S., (1998) *1968: Marching in the Streets*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

<sup>130</sup> The Prague Spring described four months in 1968 when Czechoslovakia broke free from Soviet rule, allowing freedom of speech and removing some state controls.

<sup>131</sup> Numerous marches were held on Washington. One of the largest was organised by the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam on 15 November 1969. An estimated crowd of 500,000 marched against death in Vietnam.

<sup>132</sup> The largest demonstration in London was held at Grosvenor Square, home to the US ambassador for Britain. An estimated 100,000 demonstrated against American action in Vietnam and British support for the United States. Mick Jagger (b.1943) of the Rolling Stones was in the crowd, and he wrote the song 'Street Fighting Man' inspired by the demonstration. Another large anti-Vietnam demonstration was held at Grosvenor Square on 26 – 27 October 1968.



Although there is no evidence of direct links between pages by conceptual artists in the exhibition catalogues considered in this research and the fliers and posters of 1968, the effect, in both instances, in powerfully reaching a wide audience using printed statements and visuals is significant. At the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris art students and demonstrators met to produce silk-screen posters *en masse* (Fig. 15). Pasted across the Parisian Left Bank, these posters dispersed the demonstrators' anti-authority and anti-war messages amongst a wider public. During May '68, the French government shut down television channels and eventually free radio, meaning that posters, flyers and photographs became essential for expeditious communication amongst demonstrators. Reports of police brutality and photographs such as those by Bruno Barbey chronicling barricades and violence were printed in the pages of magazines and newspapers, helping to stimulate further uprising nationally and internationally (Fig. 16). Following the events of May, the iconic posters quickly became collectors' items, with the Museum of Modern Art and the Jewish Museum in New York presenting exhibitions only months later that promoted the posters as 'documents' of history<sup>133</sup>. The press release for *Paris: May 1968. Posters of the Student Revolt*, which opened on 23 November 1968 at MoMA read 'Mass media's controlled silencers have forced the poster to be heard again'<sup>134</sup>. Students could remain anonymous behind the shields of their posters, but their voice was heard loud and clear, not just in Paris, but also across the international art world<sup>135</sup>.

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<sup>133</sup> *Paris: May 1968. Posters of the Student Revolt*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 23 November 1968 – 24 February 1969, selected by Emilio Ambasz, Associate Curator of Design; *Up Against the Wall: Protest Posters*, The Jewish Museum, New York, start date unknown – 19 January 1969. The exhibition at the Jewish Museum included large-scale photographs taken during the uprisings in Paris and Czechoslovakia and tapes of the street sounds in Paris.

<sup>134</sup> *Paris: May 1968. Posters of the Student Revolt*, press release, 23 November 1968, Museum of Modern Art, available at: [https://www.moma.org/documents/moma\\_press-release\\_326593.pdf](https://www.moma.org/documents/moma_press-release_326593.pdf) (accessed 10-06-2018)

<sup>135</sup> On 22 October 1968, Paula Cooper Gallery opened with the *Benefit For The Student Mobilization Committee To End The War in Vietnam*, this presented major works from fourteen artists to make the 'most forceful statement for peace'. *Benefit For The Student Mobilization Committee To End The War in Vietnam*, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, 22 October – 31 October 1968, organised by Robert Huot, Lucy Lippard and Ron Wolin.



Fig. 15: Bruno Barbey (Magnum Photos), 'France, Paris. 6th arrondissement. Studio at the School of Fine Art. May 68'. Available at: <https://pro.magnumphotos.com/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult&ALID=2TYRYDK9HZ15> (accessed 17-10-2017)



Fig. 16: Bruno Barbey (Magnum Photos), 'France, Paris. 5th arrondissement. Occupation of the Courtyard of Honor of the Sorbonne University, by the statue of Louis Pasteur. May 14th, 1968'. Available at: <https://pro.magnumphotos.com/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult&ALID=2TYRYDK9HZ15> (accessed 17-10-2017)

The critic and organiser Lucy Lippard who co-organised the anti-war exhibition *Benefit For The Student Mobilization Committee To End The War in Vietnam* (1968)<sup>136</sup> also became one of the few prominent voices for women artists in the early conceptual era. She pointed out that the 'inexpensive, ephemeral, unintimidating' mediums of conceptual art such as video, performance, photography, narrative, text and actions encouraged women to participate<sup>137</sup>. The page is arguably a further medium to be added to this list. As the Women's Liberation Movement found its voice through demonstrations<sup>138</sup>, the Ad Hoc Women Artists Committee founded in 1970, also demonstrated against the fact that of the 151 artists in the 1969 *Whitney Annual Exhibition*<sup>139</sup>, only eight of these were women. Women artists including Lee Lozano (1930 – 1999), Yoko Ono (b. 1933), Yvonne Rainer (b. 1935), Eleanor Antin (b. 1935), Christine Kozlov (1945 - 2005), Martha Wilson (b. 1947) and Adrian Piper (b. 1948) participated in a number of group exhibitions, but infrequently and inconsistently compared to their male peers. In 1973, Lippard, who was a founding member of the Ad Hoc Women Artists Committee<sup>140</sup>, organised *c.7,500* 'by way of an exasperated reply on my own part to those who say, "there are no women making conceptual art"'<sup>141</sup>. A catalogue comprising loose index cards, one designed by each of the twenty-six participating female conceptual artists accompanied this touring exhibition (Fig. 17) to which Lippard added, 'for the record, there are a great many more than could be exhibited here'<sup>142</sup>. Exhibitions in the early conceptual era were dominated by white male artists and

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid

<sup>137</sup>, Lucy Lippard, 'Escape Attempts', *op cit.*, p. xi

<sup>138</sup> One of the largest gatherings was the Women's Strike for Equality organised by NOW in New York on 26 August 1970. Key texts of the Womens' Liberation Movement include Friedan, B. (1963) *The Feminine Mystique*, W. W. Norton and Co.; Morgan, R., (1970) *Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings From The Women's Liberation Movement*, Random House USA Inc. and Linda Nochlin's 1971 essay 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?' in Gornick, V. and Moran, B., (1971) *Woman in Sexist Society: Studies in Power and Powerlessness*, New York: Basic

<sup>139</sup> *1969 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, 16 December 1969 – 1 February 1970, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

<sup>140</sup> Lucy Lippard's involvement with feminist politics is examined in Butler, C., 'Women – Concept – Art: Lucy R. Lippard's Numbers Shows' in (2012) *From Conceptualism to Feminism: Lucy Lippard's Numbers Shows 1969 – 1974*. London: Afterall Books, pp. 50 - 69

<sup>141</sup> *c.7,500*, 14 – 18 May 1973, Gallery A-402, California Institute of the Arts, organised by Lucy Lippard, the exhibition subsequently toured to nine more locations.

<sup>142</sup> Lippard, Ibid, n.p. The most comprehensive studies on women conceptual artists are Lucy Lippard (1976) *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art*. Studio; Bowles, J.P. (2011) *Adrian Piper: Race, Gender, and Embodiment*, Durham: Duke University Press Books

organisers<sup>143</sup>. The current research ends in 1973, at just the moment the Womens' Liberation Movement gathered momentum and women artists were gaining more exposure<sup>144</sup>. Symptomatic of this inequality in the art world, pages by only three female conceptual artists have been included in this thesis, Hanne Darboven, (1941 – 2009), Eleanor Antin and Adrian Piper.

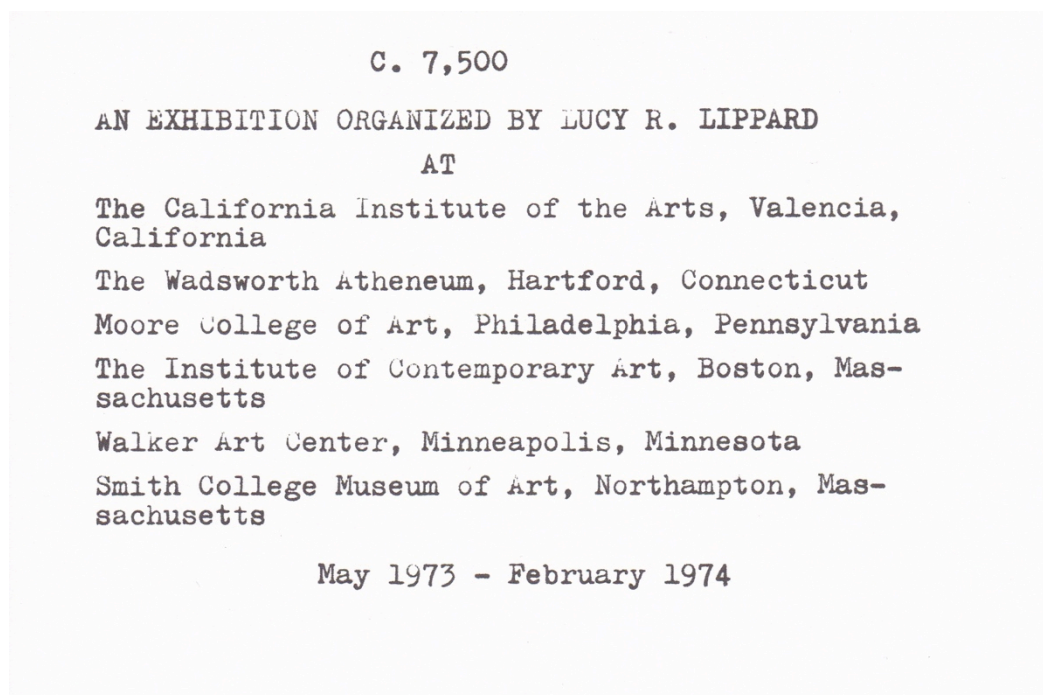


Fig 17: c.7500 (1973) exhibition catalogue reproduced in the facsimile, Khonsary, J., (ed) (2012) 4,492,040, Vancouver and Los Angeles: New Documents, Vancouver Art Gallery and the Seattle Art Museum, n.p.

Conceptual artists were not immune from the increasing recognition of the need to enhance the rights that artists might expect from their practices. Inspired by the Civil Rights and student movements of the 1960s, the Art Workers' Coalition became the most well-known political group of artists operating in New York<sup>145</sup>. They staged art strikes and demonstrated against racism, war and repression at

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<sup>143</sup> Notable exceptions include Lucy Lippard, one of the few women prominent female exhibition organisers and critics and Kynaston McShine, the Trinidad and Tobago-born curator

<sup>144</sup> Rafael Krasilovsky, A., 'Feminism in the Arts: An Interim Bibliography', *Artforum*, volume 10, number 10 (June 1970), pp. 72 – 75 compiles a list of articles concerning womens' art and feminism. This concludes with a list of only four exhibition catalogues including *Old Mistresses: Women Artists of the Past* (1972); *Women Artists. New York Annual Exhibitions* (1932 – 1949); *26 Contemporary Women Artists* (1971); *Womanhouse: A Catalog* (forthcoming)

<sup>145</sup> The Art Workers' Coalition formed on 3 January 1969 and comprised about 300 members, including artists Carl Andre, Hans Haacke, Robert Barry, Rosemarie Castoro, Richard Serra and writers Lucy Lippard and Lil Picard

the city's major museums. One of their most effective activities was a picket in front of Picasso's painting *Guernica* (1937) on 8 January 1970 where the group distributed a protest poster featuring a harrowing colour photograph of the My Lai Massacre lifted from *Life* magazine<sup>146</sup> (Fig. 18). The poster was overprinted with the words 'Q. And babies? / A. And Babies.' taken from an interview on CBS news television with Paul Meadlo who participated in the attack<sup>147</sup>. The AWC pressed a number of demands on art museums which included equal representation of the sexes in 'exhibitions, museum purchases and on selection committees' and for a section of all museums to 'be devoted to showing the accomplishments of Black and Puerto Rican artists'<sup>148</sup>. The role of the artist, Lippard explained was to 'exert his [sic] influence on those institutions which depend on him for their life'<sup>149</sup>, meaning that through making demands or by withholding one's work, artists were able to influence institutions, which in turn, influenced the public.

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<sup>146</sup> My Lai Massacre, 16 March 1968. Photograph taken by Ronald I. Haeberle showing the dead and partly naked bodies of South Vietnamese women and children who were killed by US forces. The quotation 'Q. And Babies? / A. And Babies' is from a CBS news television interview with Paul Meadlo who participated in the massacre as he describes the extent of the atrocity.

<sup>147</sup> Discussed in Lippard, L., 'The Dilemma', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 45, no. 2 (November 1970), pp. 27 – 29; Frascina, F., (1999) *Art, Politics and Dissent: Aspects of the Art Left in Sixties America*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 182 – 183; Melvin, J., (2013) *Studio International magazine: Tales from Peter Townsend's editorial papers 1965 – 1975*. PhD thesis, University of the Arts London, pp. 259 – 261; Israel, M., (2013), *Kill for Peace: American Artists Against the Vietnam War*. Austin: University of Texas Press

<sup>148</sup> Lippard, L., 'The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history', *Studio International*, vol. 180, no. 927 (November 1970), pp. 171 – 174

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid*



Fig 18: 'Members of the Art Workers' Coalition protesting in front of Picasso's *Guernica* in New York (Photo: Jan van Raay)', the front cover of *Studio International*, vol. 180, no. 927 (November 1970).

Despite the volatility and richness of politics in the period identified for this research, only a small number of artists' pages appear to make overt political comment. *Information* (1970)<sup>150</sup> organised by Trinidad and Tobago-born curator, Kynaston McShine (b. 1935 - 2018)<sup>151</sup> at the Museum of Modern Art, New York was one of the few exhibitions to openly critique the political and social issues of the time. Included was Haacke's notorious *MoMA Poll*, which asked visitors to respond to a yes / no ballot based on whether they would vote for Governor Rockefeller (who was a prominent member of the MoMA board of trustees) on

<sup>150</sup> *Information*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2 July – 20 September 1970, organised by Kynaston McShine

<sup>151</sup> McShine had previously organised *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*, 27 April - 12 June 1966, Jewish Museum, New York

the basis that he had not denounced President Nixon's Indochina policy. The AWC was also due to present their *And Babies* poster before museum authorities vetoed its display, however, a black and white version was still included in the catalogue. Erik Thygesen (1941 - 1999), a Danish beat culture journalist presented a Whitehouse publicity photograph of President Nixon signed 'To Erik Thygesen, with every good wish from Richard Nixon' on his catalogue page. Contextualised amongst other works and the wider political climate of anti-Vietnam protests and the recent Kent State shootings<sup>152</sup>, the President's optimistic message would undoubtedly trigger a strong emotional response amongst readers. In his essay at the back of the catalogue, McShine reflected on the how the social, political and economic crises of the period had influenced artists,

If you are an artist in Brazil, you know of at least one friend who is being tortured; if you are one in Argentina, you probably have had a neighbor [sic] who has been in jail for having long hair, or for not being 'dressed' properly; and if you are living in the United States, you may fear that you will be shot at, either in the universities, in your bed, or more formally in Indochina. It may seem too inappropriate, if not absurd, to get up in the morning, walk into a room, and apply dabs of paint from a little tube to a square of canvas. What can you as a young artist do that seems relevant and meaningful?<sup>153</sup>

*Information* presented work by over 90 artists from nineteen different countries, including Argentina, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Iran, Yugoslavia, Japan and Australia. McShine's statement unites these artists, along with the reader, signifying that regardless of where one lived and worked, everyone felt the trepidation of authoritarianism. His essay is followed by almost fifty pages presenting a diverse montage of images from the mass media<sup>154</sup>. The seemingly haphazard sequence of images including photographs of the Black Panther Group, Marcel Duchamp playing chess, performances by Yves Klein, posters promoting a Jean-Luc Godard film, magazine advertisements, hippies, happenings and

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<sup>152</sup> The Kent State Shootings, also known as the Kent State massacre were the shootings of unarmed students by the Ohio State National Guard during a protest against the Vietnam War at Kent State University, Ohio on 4 May 1970

<sup>153</sup> McShine, K., *Information* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 138

<sup>154</sup> A selection of the photographs presented in the catalogue were also included in the exhibition

demonstrations reflected how the public were 'constantly bombarded with strong visual imagery'<sup>155</sup> in the pages of newspapers and periodicals, on TV and in the cinema (Fig 19). The events depicted in these uncaptioned images serve to locate the artworks featured in the exhibition in the specific time frame of 1970 as well as embedding the works amongst the effects everyday communication systems.



Fig 19: *Information* (1970) exhibition catalogue pp. 174 – 175. The photograph on the right-hand page of the student demonstrator poking flowers into the ends of rifles held by riot police is credited as being taken by Bernie Boston, published in the Washington Evening Star.

The global impact of events in the late 1960s and early 1970s and the ways these were vividly and rapidly communicated through print and electronic media serve to contextualise the claim made by some organisers and critics that conceptual art, unlike previous art movements, did not have a geographical centre<sup>156</sup>. The exhibition and accompanying publication *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s – 1980s* (1999)<sup>157</sup> advances the view that conceptual art

<sup>155</sup> McShine, *Information* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 139

<sup>156</sup> The perceived origins of conceptual art are debated in Burnham, J., 'Alice's Head: Reflections on Conceptual Art', *Artforum* (February 1970), p. 80; Claura, M., and Siegelau, S., (1973) 'L'art conceptuel' translated in Alberro, A., and Stimson, B., (eds.) (1999) *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, pp. 286 – 290

<sup>157</sup> *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin 1950s – 1980s*, Queens Museum of Art, New York, 28 April – 29 August 1999, project directors Luis Camnitzer, Jane Farver, Rachel Weiss. The exhibition toured to the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 19 December 1999 – 5 March 2000 and Miami Art Museum, Miami, 15 September – 26 November 2000.



had a number of different points of origin including Japan, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, North America, Australia and New Zealand, with each setting giving rise to an individual set of conditions. The catalogue introduction suggests that whilst these nations shared a period of remarkable social change, 'localities are linked in crucial ways but not subsumed into a homogenized set of circumstances and responses to them'<sup>158</sup>. This understanding helps to account for the marked differences in work that was produced in the conceptual era, including language, photography, seriality, performance, systems, land art and anti-form. The striking differences are evidenced in the pages of exhibition catalogues where the close and bound proximity of various contributions cause readers to reassess the message of each new page and its relation to other pages continually.

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<sup>158</sup> Camnitzer, Farver and Weiss, *op cit.*, p. vii

## Methodology and Structure

### Materials and Methods

Pages contributed by artists to almost 100 exhibition catalogues produced in Western Europe, Eastern Europe, North America and South America between 1966 and 1973 have been the primary source material for this research<sup>159</sup>. These have provided the foundation for visual and textual analysis of artworks and have been used to investigate the ways in which ideas and information were presented to wider audiences. Additionally, catalogue essays and reviews of exhibitions have helped to give these pages context. Statements, interviews, essays and documentation by artists, organisers and critics, as well as advertisements published in art magazines<sup>160</sup> and compendia during the period have enabled the researcher to gauge the scope of international debates concerning the production, presentation and reception of conceptual art.

Reproductions published in magazines played a crucial role in promoting conceptual art and increasing its potential audience<sup>161</sup>. Interviews with artists were also increasingly printed – these having the advantage of conveying speech, with associations of the living voice, as distinct from second or third-hand interpretation. Conceptual artists readily engaged with the format of the art magazine. From as early as 1966, artists were frequently writing for magazines including *O-9*, *Arts Magazine*, *Artforum*, *Art-Language*, *Avalanche* and *Studio International*; either by reviewing the work of others, publishing theoretical

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<sup>159</sup> I have consulted this material in publically accessible institutional libraries including The Tate Library, London; The National Art Library, London; The Henry Moore Institute, Leeds as well as academic libraries including Norwich University of the Arts; The University of East Anglia, Norwich; Chelsea College of Art, London; University of Leeds. I was also fortunate to access a number of now-rare publications in the private collections of Professor Lynda Morris (Norwich, UK) and the Herbert Foundation (Ghent, Belgium).

<sup>160</sup> The main magazines consulted include *O-9* (New York); *Artforum* (Los Angeles 1965 – 1967, New York, 1967 - present); *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art* (Coventry); *Art International* (Lugano); *Arts Magazine* (New York); *Aspen* (New York); *Avalanche* (New York); *Control* (London); *Interfunktionen* (Cologne); *Studio International* (London); *VH 101* (Zurich and Paris)

<sup>161</sup> Seth Siegelaub's awareness of the importance of good press coverage for promoting the work of artists that he collaborated with is examined in Alberro, A., (2003) *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press

essays or by contributing experimental works conceived specifically for the page<sup>162</sup>.

Gwen Allen has examined the subject of artists' magazines produced in the 1960s and 1970s in her comprehensive book *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art* (2011)<sup>163</sup> and Jo Melvin's doctoral thesis and curatorial projects focusing on *Studio International* during Peter Townsend's editorship between 1965 and 1975 have brought academic attention to this British magazine<sup>164</sup>. Allen described artists' magazines as 'volatile' and 'mutable', living at, and arguably expanding the margins of artistic production and display. She notes how in addition to documenting work, in the 1960s and 1970s, the magazine was explored as a medium in its own right, with a particular insistence on the time and place in which it was encountered<sup>165</sup>. As a source, magazines complement the study of artists' pages in exhibition catalogues, as both exist as multiple, published formats (opposed to individual documents held in archives). Using material that has been made widely accessible is in line with the democratic attitudes of the era since publishing work circumvented individual and private ownership. Publishing, according to writer Lewis Hyde, makes an idea 'non-rivalrous' and 'non-excludable' thus giving scope for multiple interpretations<sup>166</sup>. Artists, organisers and critics alike advocated a direct encounter with conceptual art. Lippard advised, 'Let the readers make their own distinctions about the extent to which the artist is slinging it. That way they have to look at his or her work too, and they're getting first-hand rather than second-

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<sup>162</sup> Artists including Art & Language, Bochner, Buren, Burgin, Graham, Kosuth, LeWitt, McLean and Smithson contributed numerous essays and reviews to art magazines during the period of study. These are detailed in the bibliography for this thesis under the heading 'Magazine Articles, 1966 – 1973'

<sup>163</sup> Allen, G., (2011) *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press. Allen has also written on the topic of the exhibition catalogue *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) in 'The Catalogue as an Exhibition Space in the 1960s and 1970s', Celant, G., (ed.) (2013), *When Attitudes Become Form - Bern 1969/Venice 2013*, Fondazione Prada, pp. 505 - 510

<sup>164</sup> Melvin, J., (2013) *Studio International magazine: Tales from Peter Townsend's editorial papers 1965 – 1975* [PhD thesis], University College London. *Five Issues of Studio International*, Raven Row, London, 26 February – 3 May 2015, curated by Jo Melvin. Additionally, the following projects were based on the subject of artists' magazines produced in the conceptual era; *Behind The Facts: Interfunktionen 1968-1975* (2004); *Avalanche 1970 -1976*, curated by Lisa Le Feuvre in 2005 at the Chelsea Space; *In Numbers: Serial Publications by Artists Since 1955* (2012), 25 January – 25 March 2012, ICA London

<sup>165</sup> Allen, *op cit.*, pp. 1 - 2

<sup>166</sup> Hyde, L., (2012) *Common as Air: Revolution, Art and Ownership*, London: Union Books, pp. 48 - 49

hand information'<sup>167</sup>. For Lippard, this meant reproducing factual data and 'anthological material' such as 'excerpts, statements, artworks [and] symposia'<sup>168</sup> without mediation, as reflected in the fragmented approach to her seminal compendium *Six Years* (1973). However, it is crucial to note that this and all other publications are implicitly shaped by editorial decisions taken over the inclusion, exclusion and sequence of material<sup>169</sup>, meaning that any reproduction is to some degree 'second-hand information'.

This project is largely defined by material that is available in the UK, and although including catalogues from Western and Eastern Europe, North America and South America, the research does not include paginated material or catalogues produced in Asia or Australia<sup>170</sup>. Catalogues produced to accompany *Between Man and Matter: 10<sup>th</sup> Tokyo Biennale* (1970)<sup>171</sup>, *The Situation now: object or post-object art?* (1971)<sup>172</sup> held in Japan and Australia respectively are not available in UK libraries, and draw attention to the limitations of the claim that catalogues extended the geographical reach of exhibitions. The majority of material included in this project has been published in English, which undoubtedly dictates the scope of the research conducted<sup>173</sup>. Nevertheless, it has been imperative to represent the work of European and US artists equally in

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<sup>167</sup> Lippard, (1973) *op cit.*, p. 7

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3

<sup>169</sup> To this vein, Mel Bochner criticised 'the insertion of editorial comments' and 'chronological preferences' in *Six Years*, Bochner, M., 'Books: Six Years: The Dematerialization of Art', *Artforum*, vol. 11, no. 10 (summer 1973), pp. 74 – 75; and Lynda Morris faulted the 'selection of material' as being 'biased and haphazard', Morris, L., 'Lucy Lippard Six Years: The Dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972', *Art and Artists* (September 1973), reproduced in *Genuine Conceptualism* (2014) exhibition catalogue, Herbert Foundation, Ghent, p. 107

<sup>170</sup> Due to lack of availability in the UK, I have been unable to access a copy of the following exhibition catalogues; *Experiencias 68*, Instituto di Tella, Argentina, 1968; *Investigation on the Nature, Meaning, and Function of Works of Art*, Galeria IBEU, Rio de Janeiro, 1970, organised by Frederico Morais, *Between Man and Matter: 10<sup>th</sup> Tokyo Biennale*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Gallery, May 10 - May 30, 1970; Kyoto Municipal Art Museum, Kyoto, June 6 - June 28, 1970; Aichi Prefectural Art Gallery, Nagoya, July 15 - July 26, 1970; and Fukuoka Prefectural Culture House, Fukuoka, August 11 - August 16, 197; *The Situation Now: Object or post-object art?*, The Contemporary Art Society, Sydney, 1971, organised by Terry Smith. A full chronology of exhibitions and events held in Asia, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, North America, Australia and New Zealand is provided in Camnitzer, Farver and Weiss (1999) *op cit.*, pp. 223 - 239

<sup>171</sup> *Between Man and Matter: 10th Tokyo Biennale*, 10 May - 30 May 1970, Kyoto Municipal Art Museum, Kyoto, Japan, organised by Yusuke Nakahara and Toshiaki Minemura

<sup>172</sup> *The Situation now : object or post-object art?*, 16 July - 6 August 1971, Contemporary Art Society Gallery, Sydney, Australia, organised by Terry Smith

<sup>173</sup> A number of English translations of texts have been published in Alexander, A., and Stimson, B., (eds.)(1999) *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, MIT Press

the current research in order to redress the balance of how conceptual art from both sides of the Atlantic is presented to contemporary audiences<sup>174</sup>. A comparable proportion of group exhibitions of conceptual art were staged in both continents, and at variance with selected accounts from the time<sup>175</sup>, it should be pointed out that a number of early exemplary exhibitions such as *Serielle Formationen* (1967), *Prospect 68* (1968), *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) and *Op Losse Schroeven* (1969) were held in European institutions prior to conceptual art becoming more widely accepted in the US.

This research is made distinctive by the decision taken early in the project to primarily work with material in catalogues, magazines and compendia published during the research period 1966 – 1973. Whilst the current researcher is aware and informed of historical and critical material relating to the period published in recent years, this has not outwardly determined the main focus of the project, or been consciously used to inform the analysis of selected pages. References to recently published information and debates concerning issues covered in the thesis are provided in footnotes. It is necessary to recognise that is not possible for contemporary readers/viewers to be entirely divorced from what has been said about this work previously and that this will, perhaps subconsciously impact on subsequent interpretations of conceptual art. However, this research aims to promote the approach of 'turning back' to the artists' pages that were contributed to exhibition catalogues in the early conceptual era, with the view that this, in line with the intentions of artists, organisers and critics, fosters a more direct and immediate encounter with conceptual art.

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<sup>174</sup> Alexander Alberro's research on Seth Siegelau focuses on the relationship between Siegelau and US artists, namely Barry, Huebler, LeWitt, Kosuth and Weiner who participated in the 'Xerox Book' and *January 5 – 31, 1969* (1969). There is scant discussion of European artists' participation in exhibitions including *One Month: March 1969* (1969) and *July August September* (1969). Alberro's omission of the July / August 1970 special issue of *Studio International* from *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity* (2001) is discussed by Lynda Morris in 'Unconcealment', *Tate Papers: Landmark Exhibitions Issue*, 12, Autumn 2009. Of the eight chapters in Allen, G., (2011) *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*, six are dedicated to magazines that were produced in the United States, one in Canada (*File*) and one in Europe (*Interfunktionen*).

<sup>175</sup> Siegelau, op cit, p. 202 - 203; Jan Dibbets, 'Letters', *Artforum*, vol. 9, no. 9 (May 1971), p. 10; Siegelau, S., and Claura, M., op cit., p. 288 - 289; Castelli, L., interviewed in *Documenta 5*, Jef Cornelis (1972) Paris: Bureau des Videos; Siegelau, S., 'Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelau Reply to Benjamin Buchloh on Conceptual Art', *October*, vol. 57 (summer 1991), p. 155. Buchloh responds to this in 'Benjamin Buchloh Replies to Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelau', *October*, vol. 57 (summer 1991).

The emphasis on working chiefly with published material from the period is consistent with the researcher's decision not to conduct interviews with selected artists, organisers and critics about the material featured in this project. In the fifty years between the research period and the present day, memories fade<sup>176</sup>, details become distorted and personal and professional alliances are not what they once were<sup>177</sup>. These factors could divert the interpretation of the material presented from what was intended at the point of production and reception. Interviews would place the current researcher in a privileged position and possibly afford insights that other readers would not have access from studying the page alone. Instead, an emphasis is put upon materials that were published – pages, documents, interviews, statements, reviews and so forth, which remain fixed and available in the public domain. Furthermore, the public persona of the artist that came through his or her work will always be different to the private one, which itself is subject to change over time. Fred Orton explored similar tensions in his approach to *Figuring Jasper Johns* (1994),

I wanted to hang on to the distinction between Jasper Johns and 'Jasper Johns', in the knowledge that for me Jasper Johns would always be my 'Jasper Johns'. There was – and is – much to be going on with. We have hardly begun to look at the art. To have met with Jasper Johns as part of my research and writing would have complicated a project that was already complex and would have diverted me from what I was looking at, and how I was seeing it.<sup>178</sup>

Additionally, a number of the artists and organisers featured in this project are deceased. The absence of key figures including Robert Smithson, Hanne Darboven, Douglas Huebler, Robert Barry, Konrad Fischer, Harald Szeemann and Seth SiegelauB would in any case only serve to make the interviews inconclusive and the research inconsistent. Instead, this project aims to reveal how due to the fixity of print, artists' pages can continue to be consulted in the present day, long after the artworks, and the artists are gone. This project emphasises the shared time of the *reader* – whether they encounter the page in

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<sup>176</sup> Evidence of this is given in Pichler, M., (2016) *Books and Ideas After Seth SiegelauB*, New York and Berlin: The Center for Book Arts, Sternberg Press, p. 119

<sup>177</sup> In this respect, Lucy Lippard refers to 'cultural amnesia - imposed less by memory loss than by deliberate political strategy'. Lippard, L., 'Curating by Numbers', *Tate Papers: Landmark Exhibitions* Autumn 2009, issue 12.

<sup>178</sup> Orton, F., (1994) *Figuring Jasper Johns*. Reaktion Books, p. 15

1969 or 2018, yet it strives to indicate what these differences may be according to changing contexts and formats. Mieke Bal endorses the present moment of interpretation itself asserting, 'it is to be taken as an absolutely inevitable proof of the presence of the cultural position of the analyst and his or her 'visual community' within the analysis' as this brings the subject up to date, ensuring that it 'still matters'<sup>179</sup>. Future readers will always encounter the artists' pages discussed in different contexts, for example, the pages may become more fragile or increasingly valued as objects; alternatively, they may be reproduced in different, currently unimaginable formats, causing readers' analysis to evolve from the one presented here.

### **Outline of thesis structure**

Presented as two distinct volumes the current research promotes two possible perspectives for examining artists' pages. The first volume, which, beyond this introduction is, comprised of detailed close readings of selected pages, compares a diverse range of textual and graphic approaches. These address common issues of the period such as the challenge of representing process and change on the static medium of the page, or the contradiction of documenting an otherwise dematerialised work for inclusion in a catalogue. The second volume of this thesis comprises reproductions of selected pages discussed in volume one as well as a chronological reference list of exhibition catalogues produced between 1966 and 1973<sup>180</sup> [v.2 Appendix A]. Just as the pages considered in this project challenged the traditionally accepted logic that catalogues functioned in a subsidiary role to exhibitions, the appendices in the current research are held up to promote a direct *quasi*-primary encounter with artists' ideas, as opposed to secondary information *about* those ideas.

Following the introduction, volume one is organised into five main chapters and a conclusion. The focus of the chapters is an examination of the distinct ways in which artists engaged with the page, with particular attention drawn to the effect

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<sup>179</sup> Bal, M., (1999) *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History*, London: University of Chicago Press, p. 15

<sup>180</sup> As much as is possible, full-size reproductions of selected pages are presented in volume two. However, the diverse nature of pages produced during the research period has posed some practical difficulties. For example, Daniel Buren's double page in the *Prospect 68* (1968) catalogue and Robert Smithson's contribution to *Artists and Photographs* (1970) exceed the size of the current thesis and have instead been represented by reduced-scale photographs of their selected pages.

of these on accessibility. Accessibility in this context may refer to the understanding of a conceptual work, or physical access to work located outside the gallery, or to the mind. On the page, artists opened up their thinking and working processes to readers and invited them to play an active role in tracing the progress of these, thus enabling them to reach their own conclusions about the ideas presented.

The first of the thematic chapters, 'The Role of the Page in Challenging the Conceptual: Artists and Readers', is centred on what some artists and critics have labelled as 'pure', 'ultra' or 'radical' conceptual art<sup>181</sup>. This explores the suitability of language for the communication of conceptual art and analyses a selection of artists' pages that present single words, statements, descriptions and longer theoretical essays that came to replace or question the presentation of an object. This chapter looks at the way in which we read and interpret language when it is carried forward by the page and considers how handwriting, type and typography, as well as layout and the relationship between word and graphics are crucial to how ideas are captured, presented and internalised. The relationship between reading and thinking is brought into focus through these pages as a number of the examples explored require the reader to bring significant prior knowledge to the work, sometimes drawing upon other disciplines such as philosophy or logic. Although a number of these pages appear to present straightforward statements or positions, they ultimately aim to challenge what we already know concerning how a work may be presented and received.

The examples analysed in 'Process, Repetition and Sequence' are more graphic in nature and call upon the geometry of the page to facilitate readers in tracing the underlying system or progression of an artwork. The sequential ordering of pages which feature schema, plans and calculations invite a haptic engagement from inception through to resolution as the reader follows the progress of an idea paralleling the role-play set out by the artist. These pages provide readers with the necessary time to pause, work through, return and even build on the successive steps presented. In this sense, the page can be thought of as a unit

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<sup>181</sup> Other terms used include 'Information Art' and 'Concept Art', Lippard, L., and Chandler, J., op cit., p. 31; Kosuth, J., 'Art After Philosophy, part II', *Studio International* (November 1969), vol. 178, no. 916, pp. 160; Spear, A.T., *Art in the Mind* (1970), n.p.



of conceptual art, and it should be considered as one small part of a larger whole that can be multiplied and combined with others.

In 'Marking the Spot: the Page as Location and Time Frame' the page grounds the work and becomes the resting place of an external event or experience. Many of the pages in this chapter are by artists associated with Land Art, for whom the page can transport readers to a place beyond the present moment. These works call into question the physical and temporal parameters of an art exhibition; some works lasted for only a passing moment, whilst others endure to this day. Readers of these examples are encouraged to take the pages on their own journey and use their imaginations to reach their own destinations.

In 'Exchange and Correspondence' what were once private and incidental thoughts are transformed via the page into fixed and public expressions. These pages are both floating and static; in one sense they are tethered to the context of the catalogue, but at the same time, evidence manoeuvrability as they are passed between individuals. The pages reveal not only the conversations between artists and their peers but also seek to involve organisers and audiences in the realisation of works through the publication of proposals and instructions. The portability of the page and its existence across multiple contexts elicit multiple interpretations of these exchanges and the works resulting from them. The letters, telegrams, postcards and notes featured within this chapter are subjective and relatable and sit more at ease in the home or office than in the art gallery, thus promoting the democratic nature of conceptual art.

The final thematic chapter, 'Dematerialisation: The Silence of an Empty Page' is arguably the most challenging as in order to explore this term, we must turn to the page – itself a material, albeit a modest, lightweight and thin one. This is a fitting place to pause and reflect; in replacing an object, or documenting an experience, the page reveals itself to be as 'material' as any other medium, and this becomes only more pertinent in the present day. When the page serves as an allusion to or substitute for a dematerialised artwork, does the page inherit the status of artwork in its place? The page itself may contain nothing on its surface but its very presence in a catalogue, even as a blank or ripped page marks an intention and signals this to the reader. The examples considered here speak less about doing and more about states of being; resistance, absence,

avoidance, infinity, dropping out and spirituality. With little content to focus on, readers may find themselves reflecting inwardly on the meaning of such pages, and in lieu of any explanation are forced to draw their own conclusions of how the page reflects or refers to dematerialised artworks.

As one of the few tangible remnants of exhibitions and artworks, the page takes on an increasingly significant status and value for contemporary audiences. The concluding chapter of volume one reframes artists' pages that were produced in the conceptual era in the present day and considers how contemporary readers may come to encounter them in a variety of new contexts. It will reflect on the way in which the page can be moved across different contexts in the present day including libraries, archives, exhibitions and the Internet and the extent to which these affect the way contemporary audiences engage with artists' ideas and works. It will reflect on the experience of accessing and interpreting artists' pages in their original format and compare this to the experience of working with facsimile and digital editions to explore how conceptual artworks and information adapt to continuous re-contextualisation.

Conceptual art is inextricably bound up with the move towards dematerialisation and move away from Modernism that developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1968, when Lippard and Chandler first coined this term, it was to describe the prioritisation of idea and process over an object, which motivated so much artistic activity in the political, social and theoretical circumstances of the 1960s and 70s. However, these 'concepts', the ones we know about today at least, inevitably became 'worldly things' even in those instances in which the work was intangible, such as in the 'spoken word' contributions of artist Ian Wilson<sup>182</sup>. Hannah Arendt explains how action, thought and speech must first be 'seen, heard and remembered and then transformed, reified as it were, into things – into sayings of poetry, the written page or the printed book, into paintings or sculpture, into all sorts of records, documents and monuments'<sup>183</sup>.

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<sup>182</sup> Since 1968 Ian Wilson (b. 1940) has been interested in spoken language as an art form. To a certain extent, his work resists materialisation more than many other artists working at the time. He continued to participate in exhibitions of conceptual art, and although did not have a physical presence in many of these, was represented in the accompanying catalogues by written statements such as 'oral communication', on occasions, the exhibition organiser submitted Wilson's catalogue entry on his behalf, for example, *955,000* (1970), *18 Paris IV* (1970), *In Another Moment* (1971).

<sup>183</sup> Arendt, H., (1958) *The Human Condition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London: University of Chicago Press, p. 95

Regardless of how 'dematerialised' this work was at the time of conception it ultimately found tangible form, and none more unassuming than the page.

Publishing makes something concrete; it affirms an idea by putting it into the public realm and makes it endlessly accessible for further interpretation and application. Michel Foucault uses the term 'archive' to designate the collection of all material traces left behind by a particular historical period and culture. An exhibition catalogue or a collection of catalogues could, therefore, be likened to an 'archive' of artistic activity, providing possibly the only material residue of intentionally ephemeral, site-specific or idea-based works that have been destroyed over the course of time. In the introduction to *The Birth of the Clinic* (1963), he asserts that,

What counts in the things said by men is not so much what they may have thought or the extent to which these things represent their thoughts, as that which systematizes [sic] them from the outset, thus making them thereafter endlessly accessible to new discourses and open to the task of transforming them<sup>184</sup>.

The page endures beyond the scope of the exhibition and offers contemporary audiences a tangible, accessible and private involvement with artists' working practices from the early conceptual era. The audience is an active participant in making meaning. How we choose to re-materialise artworks, whether in the mind, in a publication, on the internet or in physical reality, reflects not only the context in which the work was initially conceived but moreover, the continually shifting context in which it is received.

A page is part of a larger structure; likewise, this thesis presents only one aspect of the wide-ranging conceptual practices that took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s. There is much scope for further study that focuses on the relationship between the page and particular aspects of visual art of the late 1960s and 70s. Future investigations could explore how minimal art translated to the sequential and standardised medium of the page, or how contemporary audiences can locate examples of land art or earth art in the landscape using

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<sup>184</sup> Foucault, M., (1963) *The Birth of the Clinic: an archaeology of medical perception / 1997 transl. from the French by A.M. Sheridan Smith*, London: Tavistock Publications, p. xix

exhibition catalogues as a guide. The page as a medium accessible to conceptual artists from minorities, such as women artists working in the 1970s, also warrants further investigation. This research offers, I would argue, for the first time a starting point for readers to consider how the pages that artists contributed towards exhibition catalogues supported, extended, and on occasions replaced the presence or absence of conceptual artworks. It explores how these pages made ideas and artworks that were idea-based, located outside of galleries or constructed from ephemeral materials accessible to wider audiences beyond the transience of exhibitions. Finally, it seeks to evaluate how the page extends beyond time frame it was initially published in and is transformed into new formats and contexts, including bootleg, facsimile and digital editions, as well as being reappraised in exhibitions and archives. In this sense, artists' pages in exhibition catalogues ensure that conceptual art, despite the emphasis on dematerialisation, remains open to new interpretations and configurations in the present day.

## CHAPTER 1:

### THE ROLE OF THE PAGE IN CHALLENGING THE CONCEPTUAL:

#### ARTISTS AND READERS

Concept art' is first of all an art of which the material is 'concepts'...  
Since 'concepts' are closely bound up with language, concept art is a  
kind of art of which the material is language.<sup>1</sup>

In 1961, the American philosopher, musician, mathematician and anti-art activist Henry Flynt coined the term 'concept art'. Flynt's essay titled 'Concept Art' was first published in *An Anthology of Chance Operations* (1963) edited by La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low. Also included were seminal works by Fluxus artists such as indeterminacy compositions by George Brecht, *Poem no. 18* (1961) by Yoko Ono (Fig. 1.1), a handwritten poem largely obscured by a covering of black ink, and musical scores by John Cage, Earle Brown, Toshi Ichiyanagi and Terry Riley (Fig. 1.2). Flynt argued that if the material of concept art is language, it is necessary to explore how one encounters and cognitively works through language, similar to how one would work through a math problem, thus prompting readers to consider the nature of the information provided and to determine how they are expected to engage with it. Although Flynt's essay and the works it referred to predated the emergence of conceptual art by four years, yet they indicated an increased level of participation required from readers to construct the works set down on the page as is demonstrated in a number of the examples investigated in this chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> Flynt, H., 'Concept Art (provisional version)', Young, L.M. and Mac Low, J. (eds) (1963), *An Anthology of Chance Operations*, New York: La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low n.p.

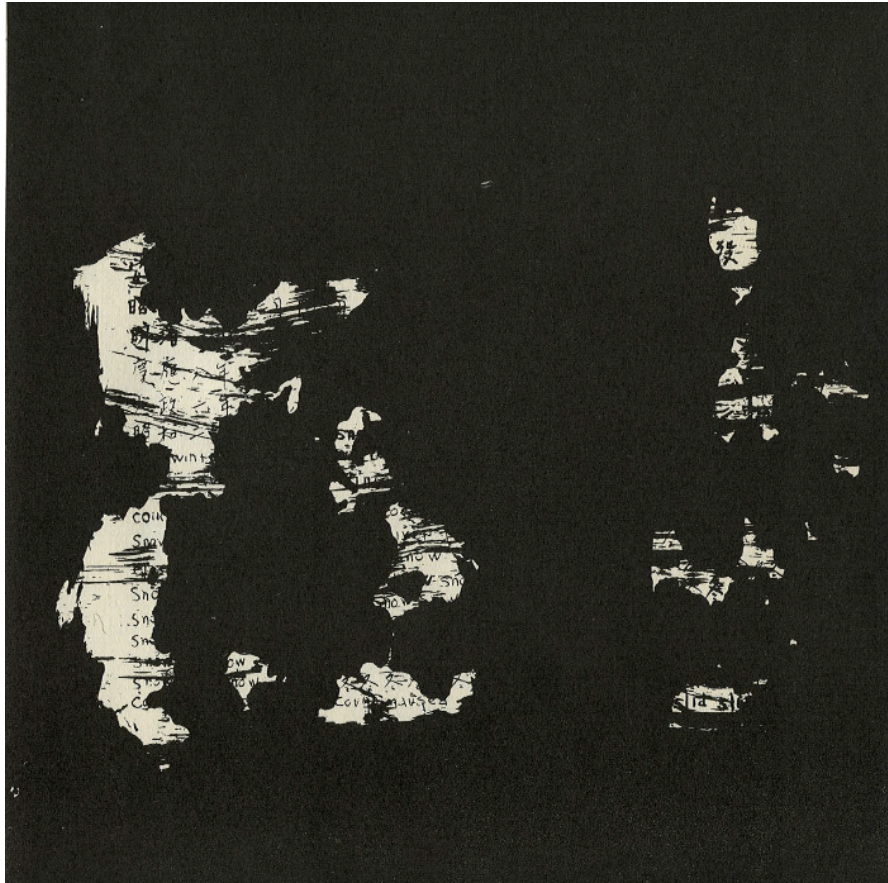


Fig. 1.1: Yoko Ono, *Poem no. 18*, October 29, 1961 in *An Anthology of Chance Operations* (1963), n.p.

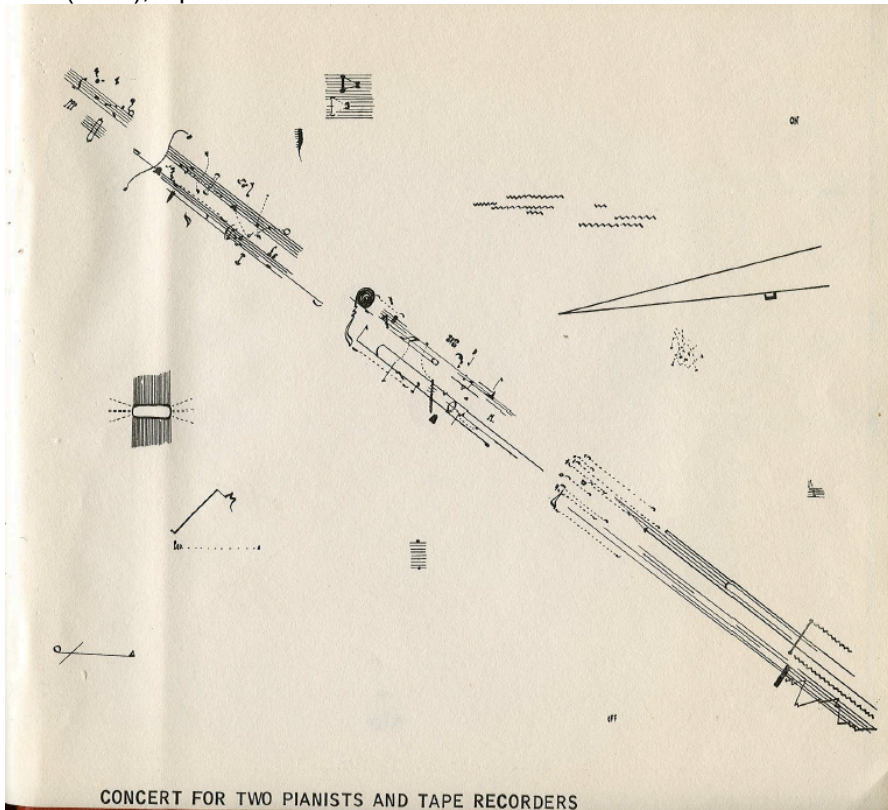


Fig 1.2: Terry Riley, *Concert for two pianists and tape recorders* [excerpt] in *An Anthology of Chance Operations* (1963), n.p.

The pages examined in this chapter depend upon the participation of readers to determine artists' communication of theoretical concepts, abstract intentions and ephemeral experiences. Several examples verge on other disciplines of art criticism, philosophy and logic, thus challenging the way in which readers approached and engaged with conceptual art via the page. According to the curator and writer Germano Celant<sup>2</sup>, Flynt's early essay 'anticipates the theory of conceptual art by several years' through its 'use of the philosophy of language as the subject of art'. He added,

The written medium reduces the 'visual publicity' element, which involves the sensory and emotional participation of a spectator, and leads this art towards a system of cold participation, concerned only with mental and conceptual processes.<sup>3</sup>

Celant posited the phrase *informale freddo*<sup>4</sup> to describe work that crucially demanded 'a high degree of participation and contemplation from the spectator'<sup>5</sup>. In *The Book as Artwork 1960 – 1972* (1972), Celant notes how from the early 1960s, artists had been using communications media as an end in itself. Celant identified the year 1966 as the turning point for artists' use of language and signalled ways in which the written word had become necessary to such artists:

The recognition of language as the ultimate artistic abstraction, begun in 1966, was carried out by artists such as Ramsden, Kozlov, Bainbridge, Hurrell, Kosuth, Atkinson, Baldwin and Kawara. It made artistic consciousness consider the written or spoken word as a necessary part

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<sup>2</sup> Italian critic, Germano Celant was best known for his work promoting Arte Povera ('poor art'). In 1967 he organised the first survey exhibition of Arte Povera; *Arte Povera e IM Spazio*, 27 September - October 1967, Galleria La Bertesca, Genoa. This was followed by the publication his manifesto, 'Arte Povera: Appunti per una guerriglia', *Flash Art*, no. 5 (November/December 1967), p. 3. He also organised the exhibition *Conceptual Art, Arte Povera, Land Art*, June – July 1970, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Turin.

<sup>3</sup> Celant, C., (1972) *The Book as Artwork 1960 – 1972*, London: Nigel Greenwood Inc., p. 22

<sup>4</sup> Celant distinguished this from the 'emotionally-charged' Abstract Expressionist leaning *informale caldo*, crudely meaning 'warm informal'. Celant identified the years 1956 – 1963 as being characterised by 'the dialectic between *informale caldo* and *informale freddo*' during which 'attention was transferred from the human and material elements to the relationship between man and his media'. Ibid, pp. 9 - 12

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 9

of work in art. This meant that attention was transferred to the idea from the objective and the physical, to the exploration of the idea and to written language, which uses words knowing that they have no intrinsic importance but that important information is derived from their function<sup>6</sup>

These artists cited the writings of philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889 - 1951) as a major influence on their practice<sup>7</sup>. Wittgenstein was a key figure of Ordinary Language Philosophy, which had been the dominant mode of British philosophy since the 1930s. Ordinary Language Philosophy was a radical critique of philosophy as a discipline, stating that ambiguity in our use of words caused most philosophical problems and that these problems would disappear if only we could understand and use language more rigorously. In the introduction to *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921)<sup>8</sup>, Wittgenstein explained, 'This book deals with the problems of philosophy and shows, I believe, that the reason why these problems are posed is that the logic of our language is misunderstood'<sup>9</sup>.

Wittgenstein also stated his debt to the work of Gottlob Frege (1848 - 1925), who in 1884 published *The Foundations of Arithmetic*<sup>10</sup>, a book that despite being primarily concerned with mathematics, laid the foundations for Ordinary Language Philosophy. In paragraph 62 of *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, Frege said we should not seek to answer a question such as 'what is number' directly, rather we should seek to replace this with another question that we stand some hope of answering which would be 'what is the meaning of a sentence that contains a number in it?' He continued,

Without complete and final definitions, we have no firm ground underfoot, we are not sure about the validity of our theorems, and we

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, pp. 27 - 28

<sup>7</sup> Discussed in Kosuth, J., 'Art after Philosophy', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 195 (October 1969), p. 134; Burnham, J., 'Alice's Head, Reflections on Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 10, no. 6 (February 1970), p. 43; Burgin, V., *Publication* (1970) exhibition catalogue, pp. 10 – 12; Seymour, A., 'Art-Language', *The New Art* (1972) exhibition catalogue, p. 70; interviews with Mel Ramsden, Charles Harrison, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner in *documenta 5* (1972) [DVD], directed by Jef Cornelis, JRP Ringier; Morris, L., 'Interview with Terry Atkinson', Leamington Spa, February 2016, unpublished recording lent by Lynda Morris

<sup>8</sup> Wittgenstein, L., (1921) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, translated by D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness, 1961, London: Routledge

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 3

<sup>10</sup> Frege, G., (1884), *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, trans. and ed. P. Geach and M. Black (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952)



cannot confidently apply the laws of logic, which certainly presuppose that concepts, and relations too, have sharp boundaries<sup>11</sup>.

Rigorous questioning of language, as proposed by Frege and Wittgenstein, was central to Art and Language. In the 'Introduction' to the first issue of *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*<sup>12</sup>, the editors asked readers to consider the hypothesis 'that this editorial, in itself an attempt to evince some outlines as to what 'conceptual art' is, is held out as a 'conceptual art' work'<sup>13</sup>. The authors suppose that much recent work that employed language has been mistakenly described as 'art theory' or 'art criticism'. As Frege and Wittgenstein before them, Art & Language reformulate the initial question set out at the beginning of the text several times to ascertain the precise meaning of words used to aid a more specific enquiry. The authors describe the presentation of an essay in an art exhibition where 'the pages are simply laid out flat in reading order behind glass within a frame'<sup>14</sup>. This visual-art presentation creates confusion for the spectator. The essay referred to by the authors then itself forms the content of the essay presently being read, contrasting with the notion that it was originally encountered in an 'art ambience'. In terms of the aesthetic appearance of the essay, the authors assert, 'the prime requirement in regard of this essay's appearance is that it is reasonably legible'<sup>15</sup>.

Roland Barthes stressed that words work in the way they do because of the place they have in the structure of language<sup>16</sup>, accordingly, the way in which words are arranged on the page may influence the meaning derived from them. In the first section of this chapter 'The abstract and theoretical space of the page: anticipating the conditions for conceptual art', pages by Daniel Buren, Mario Merz and Carl Andre communicate to readers the personal, social and political forces that affect their work. The artists interrogate not only their own processes for creating work but the wider framework in which conceptual art was presented. The pages by Bruce McLean, Robert Barry and Gilbert &

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 146

<sup>12</sup> 'Introduction', *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1, no. 1 (May 1969), pp. 1 - 10

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 1

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 3

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> Barthes, R., (1977) 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives', translated by Heath, S., in *Image, Music, Text*, London: Fontana Press, pp. 79 - 124

George discussed in the second section, 'Translating concepts into words and objects', appear to be more playful or 'light' in their tone, but ultimately, expose the difficulties of translating ideas, experiences and emotions into something tangible on the page. In the final section, 'Language games: setting down a challenge on the page', Victor Burgin, Joseph Kosuth and Art & Language appeal for readers to join them in working through complex theoretical propositions. The specific language used and the way in which these texts are arranged on the page make significant intellectual demands on readers as they are required to call on prior knowledge and experiences that are external to the page. In the examples analysed in this chapter, readers find their understanding of conceptual art challenged as they are encouraged to define and clarify their own reading of language more rigorously.

### **The abstract and theoretical space of the page: challenging the conditions for conceptual art**

The publication of theoretical texts by artists in magazines, compendia, and specifically, exhibition catalogues, contributed to the blurring of boundaries between information *about* conceptual art and information that constituted a work of conceptual art in its own right. Traditionally, magazines included commentary or reviews regarded as 'secondary information'<sup>17</sup>, but a number of examples, including 'Documentation in Conceptual Art' edited by Gregory Battcock challenged this premise<sup>18</sup>. Of the text pieces that formed this article by Weiner, Buren, Bochner and LeWitt, Battcock affirmed, '[t]he texts themselves have become the art... in this instance, the artworks are not reproductions; the pages that follow are the works of art'<sup>19</sup>. Buren used his piece, 'It Rains, It Snows, It Paints' to contend that art was 'nevertheless an inquiry, precise and rigorous, that can be carried out only within a work, *a work of which nothing can be said, except that it is*<sup>20</sup> [Buren's emphasis]. Accordingly, artists' pages in exhibition catalogues, such as those by Buren, Andre and Merz examined in this

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<sup>17</sup> Siegalau, S., and Harrison, C., 'On exhibitions and the world at large', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 917 (December 1969), pp. 202 - 203

<sup>18</sup> Battcock, G., 'Documentation in Conceptual Art', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 44, no. 6 (April 1970), pp. 42 - 45

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, p. 42

<sup>20</sup> Buren, D., 'It Rains, It Snows, It Paints', 'Documentation in Conceptual Art', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 44, no. 6 (April 1970), p. 43

first section of the chapter provided a suitable space for such inquiry as they crossed the lines between theory and practice.

Adhering to the view that artists were often the best spokesperson for their work<sup>21</sup>, the catalogue for *Konzeption / Conception: Dokumentation einer Heutigen Kunstrichtung / Documentation of Today's Art Tendency* (1969)<sup>22</sup> organised Konrad Fischer and Rolf Wedewer presented, in place of an organiser's introduction, the first German translation of 'Sentences on Conceptual Art' by Sol LeWitt. As a result of the publication of this text in English earlier in 1969<sup>23</sup>, along with the artist's previous text, 'Paragraphs on Conceptual Art' (1967)<sup>24</sup> and 'The Dematerialisation of Conceptual Art' by Lippard and Chandler, the term 'conceptual art' had become familiar to audiences. *Konzeption Conception* was the first major exhibition to include this term in its title. The exhibition comprised the same content as the catalogue. Daniel Buren's contribution was a text titled 'Mise en Garde' ('Beware'), which, as indicated by the title, is intended to be a warning for approaching his work and that of his peers that had automatically been categorised under this title. Through the placement of his recognisable 8.7cm stripes in exhibitions, in situ (Fig. 1.3) and within the pages of exhibition catalogues (Fig. 1.4), Buren had already begun to draw audiences' attention to the conventions and limitations that the art establishment placed upon artists.

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<sup>21</sup> Lippard, L., (1973) *Six Years*, London: Studio Vista, p. 7; Reise, B., 'Aspects of art called "minimal"', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no. 907 (April 1969), p. 166; Siegalaub, S., and Harrison, C., 'On exhibitions and the world at large', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 917 (December 1969), p. 203

<sup>22</sup> *Konzeption Conception: Dokumentation einer Heutigen Kunstrichtung / Documentation of Today's Art Tendency*, 24 October - 23 November 1969, Städtisches Museum, Leverkusen, organised by Konrad Fischer and Rolf Wedewer

<sup>23</sup> LeWitt, S., 'Sentences on Conceptual Art', *O-9*, no. 5 (January 1969), pp. 3 - 5; LeWitt, S., 'Sentences on Conceptual Art', *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1, no. 1 (May 1969), pp. 11 - 13

<sup>24</sup> LeWitt, S., 'Paragraphs on Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 5, no. 10 (summer 1967), pp. 79 - 83



Fig. 1.3: Daniel Buren, *Exposition personnelle sur les limites de la liberté de l'artiste vis à vis de la société (Personal Exhibition on the Limits of the Freedom of the Artist vis à vis Society, 1969)*. Unauthorised installation of white and rose striped paper made around Buren during the night preceding the opening of *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969). Image reproduced in Rattemeyer, C., et al (2010) *Exhibiting the New Art 'Op Losse Schroeven' and 'When Attitudes Become Form' 1969*, London: Afterall Books, p. 170

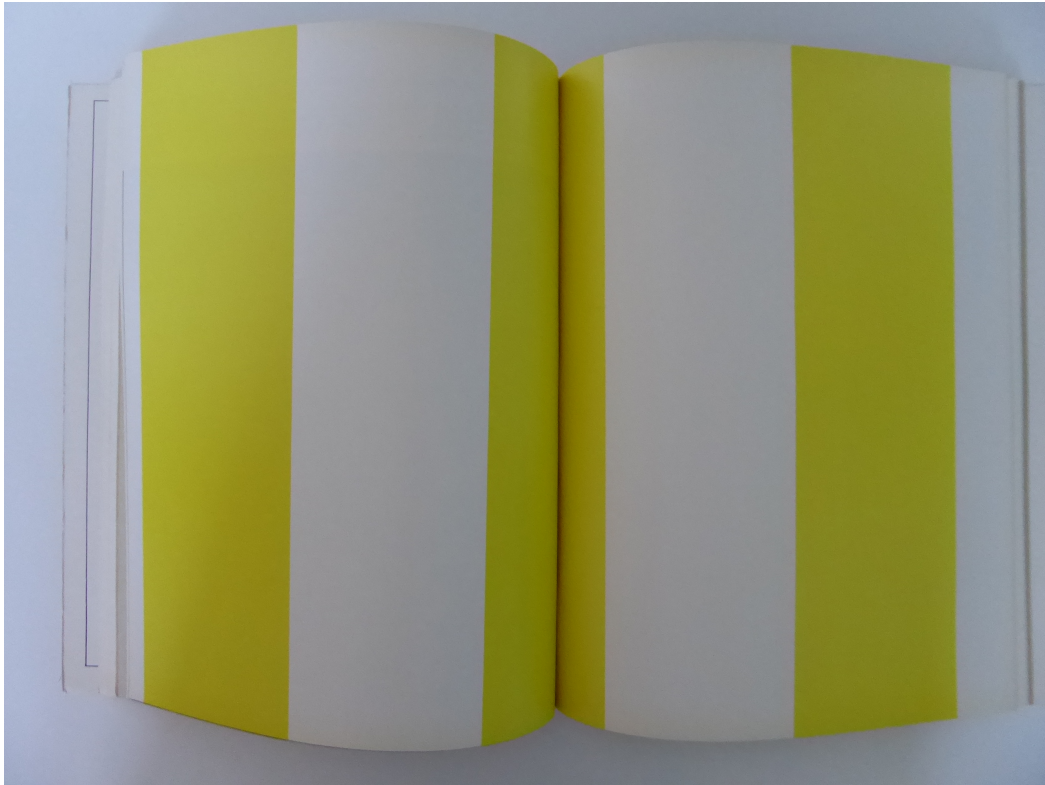


Fig 1.4: Daniel Buren, artist's pages, *Studio International*, vol. 180, no. 924 (July/August 1970) pp. 18 – 19



Fig. 1.5: Daniel Buren, 'Mise en Garde' ('Beware'), *Konzeption / Conception, Dokumentation einer Heutigen Kunstrichtung / Documentation of Today's Art Tendency* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

Buren's text in the *Konzeption / Conception* catalogue was published in his native French language only across nine pages in the catalogue (Fig. 1.5) [v.2, pp. 8 - 16]. Most artists' contributions comprised only four or five pages, with written content being translated into English and German. The length and complexity of Buren's text may account for why it was not translated for the catalogue. The following year, Buren revised the text, and it was published in English in *Studio International*, thus extending the readership of the work<sup>25</sup>. Buren described the updated text as 'a reflection upon work in progress', justifying his changing of certain words, deletions, rephrasing and elaborations to 'go more thoroughly into certain particular points with respect to the original text'<sup>26</sup>. The alternations and additions were printed in Italics, making it possible for readers to trace the development of the artist's thinking over this critical six-month period.

The text is arranged into three main sections. In the first section, Buren outlines three (later four) categories of work which could be labelled as 'conceptual', these are; '1) Concept = Project' where 'rough outlines or drawings for works to be executed on another scale' are raised to the rank of 'concepts'<sup>27</sup>. This would include the presentation of proposals, plans, diagrams and maps etc. taking the place of full-scale artworks due to lack of 'technical or financial means'. With the second consideration, '2) Concept = Manièrisme', Buren warns that the 'anecdotal is going to flourish'. He states that art is no longer concerned with 'representing to the nearest one the number of gilt buttons on a soldier's tunic, nor of picturing the rustling of the undergrowth', instead the artist 'display[s] his talents as a conjurer' as he takes up a number of roles ('sociologist, philosopher, storyteller'), none of which he is a specialist in<sup>28</sup>. Buren's sceptical tone here warns against the subjectivity of such anecdotes. Finally, '3) Concept = Idée = Art' is described by Buren as being the most 'dangerous' form as it is very attractive. He goes on to explain that 'to exhibit' a 'concept,' or to use the word concept to signify art, comes to the same thing as putting the concept itself on a level with the 'object', warning that concept and object are contradictory, rather than interchangeable terms. Buren sets out the danger that nine-tenths of the works on show in *Konzeption / Conception* relied on one or more of the above

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<sup>25</sup> Buren, D., 'Beware!', *Studio International*, vol. 179, no. 920, (March 1970), pp. 100 - 105

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p.100

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

points, spelling out his concern how, with that being the case, people may too quickly impose the term 'conceptual' on all the works shown.

In the second section titled II. 'Quel est ce Travail?' ('What is this work?'), Buren uses the example of his own work from the previous four years 'to try to understand / to recognize the problems which arise' when using the word 'concept'. This section of the text is divided into clearly defined paragraphs labelled a – g which each identify a certain problem with this term. The paragraphs focus on object, form (neutrality), colour, repetition, difference anonymity and location (the paragraphs are given headings in the updated text).

In paragraph 'a', Buren asks 'can we pose a question rather than replying always in terms of hallucinations?' He warns how artists may be tempted to 'believe the problem solved, because it was raised'<sup>29</sup>. This statement appears to be angled towards the number of extended essay-style texts that posed a problem about the nature and presentation of conceptual art, in the process claiming to be work of conceptual art themselves. These texts, according to Buren seem to bypass a rigorous questioning of the problem and immediately provide a solution. 'They avoid the issue' and 'accru[e] successive layers of concealment'. Although not stated, it is likely that Buren is indirectly referring to the complex and layered propositions of his contemporaries. Buren continues,

Moreover, it can be affirmed, with reasonable confidence, that as soon as a concept is announced, and especially when it is 'exhibited as art' under the desire to do away with the object, *one merely replaces it in fact*. The exhibited 'concept' becomes ideal-object, which brings us once again to art as it is, i.e. the illusion of something and not the thing itself.<sup>30</sup>

The issue at the heart of this statement is how artists replaced exhibited objects with their inquiries into 'concepts', these manifested as typed or handwritten texts displayed as information in a museum or gallery context or as publications. In section g), Buren adds, 'A considerable number of works of art 'exist' only because the location in which they are seen is taken for granted as a matter of course'<sup>31</sup>. Buren's main frame of reference here is how museum and galleries

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid

<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 104

gave status to the objects presented within them. Taken one step further and applied to how exhibition catalogues began to replace exhibitions as 'containers' for artworks in the late 1960's, this could also serve as a warning not to jump to the conclusion that all catalogue content (such as the content of the *Konzeption / Conception* catalogue) should be understood as 'conceptual art'.

The impetus of Buren's work was to provide readers with a critical assessment of the art world, equipping them to form judgments about the works presented and the ways in which these were contextualised. At times, Buren's methods were considered 'intrusive', causing his large hanging blue and white striped painting to famously being removed from the *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971)<sup>32</sup> before it opened<sup>33</sup>. Most of the works in the *Guggenheim International* were 'conceived and executed in consonance with the eccentric and difficult space of the Guggenheim Museum'<sup>34</sup>, and many posed a political threat to the gallery and museum system by subverting traditional modes of distribution and consumption. Mario Merz's work in the exhibition was typical of this assessment, his installation of neon Fibonacci numbers spiralled the central atrium of the building, but it was his page in the catalogue that challenged the politics of this space.

The *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* catalogue was presented in a deluxe silver box, inside was a stapled booklet containing essays by Diane Waldman and Edward Fry, illustrated with photographs of previously installed works by the artists. Also included was a multi-page contribution from each of the twenty-one participating artists, these were folded and presented as loose 8½ x 11 inch leaflets. Unlike the majority of artists represented, Merz's page omitted an artist's biography and photographic portrait. Instead, Merz's

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<sup>32</sup> *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition*, 12 February - 25 April 1971, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, organised by Diane Waldman

<sup>33</sup> Buren's work, which measured 20m x 10m was installed in the central dome of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Due to pressure from three participating artists (Donald Judd, Dan Flavin and Michael Heizer), the piece was taken down prior to the opening of the exhibition. Several artists including Sol LeWitt, Carl Andre, Robert Morris, Lawrence Weiner, Mario Merz, Jan Dibbets, Hanne Darboven opposed the museum's decision to remove the work, and Andre resigned from the exhibition in protest. The incident was discussed in several articles published in *Studio International* in 1971 including Waldman, D., 'Gurgles around the Guggenheim / Statement by Diane Waldman', *Studio International*, vol. 181, no. 934, (June 1971) p. 246 – 248; Messer, T., and Reise, B., 'Which is in fact what happened', *Studio International*, vol. 182, no. 935, (July / August 1971), pp. 36 - 37

<sup>34</sup> 'Sixth Guggenheim International', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 45, no. 6 (April 1971), p. 78



contribution filled the entire space of the leaflet (four pages printed on the recto and verso, creating eight pages in total) [v.2, pp. 18 - 25]. Seven of Merz's pages were dominated by detailed drawings of various expressions of the Fibonacci Series printed in red and black ink, annotated with handwritten numbers to help display the progression of the sequence<sup>35</sup>. The drawings, although abstract, provide plans from different perspectives of how Merz intended the neon Fibonacci numbers to be installed around the geometric curved ramp of the Guggenheim Museum (Fig. 1.6).

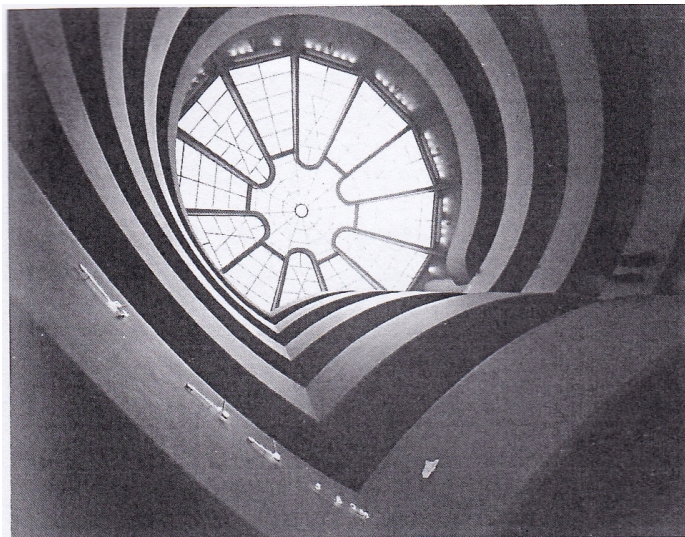


Fig. 1.6: 'Mario Merz, *Fibonacci's Progression*, fluorescent numbers, 1971' in Monte, J., 'Looking at the Guggenheim International', *Artforum*, vol. 9, no. 7 (March 1971), p. 31

The front and back pages of Merz's leaflet present one continuous drawing made in red ink. A diagonal line links the two drawings, and the continuation of the tally marks used to record the increasing Fibonacci numbers confirms this. The tally marks are intersected with short handwritten statements, all but the last beginning with 'the freedom to...' followed by different actions. These include 'freedom to draw', 'read', and 'leave', progressing to 'freedom to bear a declaration of hostility' and 'to hold three conflicting ideas'. Alongside the spiralling drawings, the artist's statements become increasingly politically charged, culminating in the statement 'freedom to believe oneself accused without being accused' and the penultimate line, 'freedom not to believe oneself prisoner of economy'. Some of the statements at the edges of the page are cut

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<sup>35</sup> Merz discussed his interest in using Fibonacci numbers in Koshalek, R., 'Interview with Mario Merz, 1971', *Mario Merz*, exhibition catalogue, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1972, n.p., and a statement published in Waldman, D., *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971) exhibition catalogue, p.17

off, serving to illustrate the physical limitations of the pages as a carrier for Merz's protests, which are rooted in continuous and lived experience.

The first inside page that the reader encounters when opening the leaflet presents a longer statement by Merz, this appears to be originally handwritten using a pencil. Here, Merz draws a distinction between the qualities of practical space and abstract, theoretical space. He describes the practical space in which we live as 'saturated' and 'decomposed', using visceral adjectives that allude to the limitations and deterioration of the physical world. In his description of 'architectural and aesthetic interpretations', Merz indirectly refers to the unnatural and imposing structure of the Guggenheim Museum. It is possible the hand-drawn plans on the adjacent pages actually illustrate the boundaries imposed by this architecture, rather than providing a framework upon which the numbers can unfurl. Merz offers the solution 'to think of the space as abstract is to free the space of the unavoidability of decomposition'<sup>36</sup>. Merz played an active part in the struggle against the Fascists in Italy during World War 2. He was arrested in 1945 whilst distributing flyers and took up painting during his time in prison. This experience may account for Merz's suggestion of how 'the abstract space is a defence of his imprisonment in the practical space'<sup>37</sup>. It is through abstract thinking that man is able to set himself free from the non-progressive saturated and decomposing physical space. In an interview published in *Data* magazine<sup>38</sup>, Merz described architecture as a 'closed space' and when asked about the installation of the neon Fibonacci series in the Guggenheim exhibition and other indoor spaces, he said the 'very fast 'growth' of the Fibonacci numbers' violently expanded these spaces, adding,

...there is an enormous volume of mental, and therefore physical, space at our disposal. This is the 'political' value of the application of proliferating numbers to the areas which we make use of.<sup>39</sup>

The page, although itself a restricted area limited by its own surface and edges, provides a space for Merz to work out his theoretical position. Since paper and pages are portable, this allows for Merz's assertions to be disseminated beyond

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<sup>36</sup> Merz, M., *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Barilli, R., 'Mario Merz: La Serie di Fibonacci', *Data*, no. 1 (September 1971), reproduced in Lippard, L., (1973) *Six Years*, London: Studio Vista, pp. 247 - 248

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p. 247

the confines of the museum, gaining currency and momentum as they are passed between individuals. The same is also true of the flyers Merz was arrested for distributing, and although he was physically confined, the ideas on these pieces of paper continued to disperse.

Like Merz, Carl Andre also used the space of the page to sketch out and offer readers insight into his moral and political motivations. On several occasions in the early 1970s, Andre presented on his catalogue pages an illustration referred to as 'The Three Vector Model'. This was a hand-drawn diagram consisting of three intersecting lines that were arranged to form a triangle on the page. The end points of each line were labelled  $x^1$  and  $x^2$ ,  $y^1$  and  $y^2$ , and  $z^1$  and  $z^2$ . A description that accompanied the diagram explained how each line represented a different, intersecting force that impacted upon the artist's ability to make art. Andre elaborated on the significance of these lines, which he referred to as 'vectors'<sup>40</sup> in an interview with Jeanne Siegel. The artist explained how the first, subjective vector referred to 'one's personal history, one's talents, and one's skills, the accidents of one's life'; the second line was the objective vector, meaning the 'properties and qualities of the materials of the world', and finally, the economic vector, which signaled 'the availability of the materials of the world at one time to do a work'<sup>41</sup>. When the three lines intersected with one another, as they do in the diagram, this indicated the possibility of artwork.

Andre presented the Three Vector Model upon his pages in the *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971) [v.2, p. 27] and *Sonsbeek 71* (1971) [v.2, p. 29] catalogues; it was also reproduced in magazines and used as a poster for solo exhibitions by the artist<sup>42</sup>. Although the graphic diagram lent itself to reproduction, Andre created different versions of it for various publications and dated these accordingly. For example, the version reproduced in the *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* catalogue, dated 8<sup>th</sup> December 1970 is drawn using a thick marker pen, and the triangle formed by the three

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<sup>40</sup> The term 'vector' is more commonly used in mathematics and physics, it refers to 'a quantity having direction as well as magnitude, especially as determining the position of one point in space relative to another'. The drawing rendered by Andre looks like an aerial view of an airfield, and the term vector can also refer to the course flown by aircraft.

<sup>41</sup> Siegel, J., 'Carl Andre: Artworker', *Studio International*, vol. 180, no. 927 (November 1970), p. 177

<sup>42</sup> The Three Vector Model was used on a poster for Andre's one-man exhibition at the Kunsthalle Bern, 24 April – 8 June 1975 and as an inlay for *Audio Arts* Volume 2 No 2 cassette, published in 1975

lines is shaded with horizontal lines. The version published in the *Sonsbeek 71* catalogue, however, is drawn using a finer pen with the triangle remaining unshaded. Furthermore, the shape of the triangle formed varies between the two versions as the lines have been drawn at different angles.

The purpose of the diagram is to indicate that without one of these three forces, it would be impossible to create an artwork, as this must function on a personal, factual and economic scale. Further scrutiny of these diagrams shows how one vector may be a greater force than the others, as not all sides of the triangle are equal in length. One might argue how the different lengths and angles at which the lines have been drawn indicate the possibility that each work is unique according to the situation it is created in, for example, the amount of skill exercised by the artist, the materials, or the funds available. In the interview with Siegel, Andre explained how the vector that had been most 'vexing' to him was the 'economic' one since in his early career he did not have the funds to make works to complete gallery shows. The artist reflected how in 1970, this was no longer an issue in his work but explains how he had recently made works with a 'zero-zero' vector by way of confronting the problem, using found materials such as wire and rusting steel with zero economic worth<sup>43</sup>.

Encountered on the page, sometimes without any further information about the artist's work, the Three Vector Model provides readers with scant information about the artist's contribution to an exhibition. Instead, the diagram anticipates the conditions necessary for the artist to create a new work, accounting for it being reproduced across several catalogues in this time period. It is also possible that the diagram offers justification should a work not be materialised by indicating that one of the necessary forces is absent. Instead, readers learn about the nature of the artist's participation in an exhibition and are free to imagine the internal and external forces negotiated by the artist.

The pages by Buren, Merz and Andre examined in the first section of this chapter are each driven by the artists' motivations to understand and communicate the personal, social and political motivations behind their art. Moreover, the artists are united in their recognition of the conventions and limitations put upon their work as a result of the art establishment. Buren warns

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<sup>43</sup> Siegel, op cit., p.178

his readers not to jump to conclusions too quickly when they are confronted with an exhibition of 'conceptual art' since the work exhibited under this banner differed widely in definition and nature. Merz likens his experience of the built environment to the imprisonment he faced during World War Two. Although Merz is free to express himself upon the page and disseminate his ideas further, we are shown how the boundary of the page ultimately restricts and prevents the continuation of his writing and drawings. Andre appears to take the most holistic view of the conditions that affect the creation of art, recognising the equivalent influence of personal, social and economic factors upon the possibility of creating work. Upon the page, Buren, Merz and Andre encourage readers to join them in reflecting on their intellectual and moral positions before committing to conceiving an exhibitable work. The pages analysed in the next section of this chapter illustrate the difficulty of translating intentions, ideas and feelings about art into tangible objects. These expose the limitations of using words to perform such a task and indicate the inadequacy of language in these situations.

### **Translating concepts into words and objects**

The apparent 'fixity' of print sat uneasily with conceptual artworks that shared indeterminate, unmade and performative qualities, such as Bruce McLean's *Half Hour Stand and Walk About Piece* (1969) and *There were two young men who did laugh* (1971)<sup>44</sup> by Gilbert & George. Catalogue contributions by these artists exposed the contradiction of committing changeable or allusive works into definitive statements and used irony and humour to explore how written language, contained within the space of the page determined, but could also be used to allude to the unrealised potential of a work. Without such representations, this art would be unknown or go undetected by audiences, as it took inspiration from, and was often integrated into ordinary life.

Bruce McLean began developing his major work, *King for a Day* in 1969. The full title of the piece was *King for a Day and 999 other pieces/works/things etc.*, which the artist stated was a proposal for a retrospective exhibition to be held at the Hayward Gallery, London. *King for a Day* was first shown at the Nova Scotia

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<sup>44</sup> Gilbert & George, *There Were Two Young Men*, reproduced in *Studio International*, vol. 181, no. 933 (May 1971), pp. 220 - 211

College of Art and Design in October 1970<sup>45</sup>, and was not exhibited again until Michael Crompton invited McLean to participate in *Seven Exhibitions* in February 1972<sup>46</sup>, which was the first exhibition of conceptual art to be staged by the Tate Gallery. McLean's participation in the exhibition comprised an installation of 1000 copies of the catalogue *King for a Day*, published by Situation, London. These were arranged as a grid on the floor, and throughout the course of the one-day 'retrospective', copies of the catalogue were removed as members of the public purchased them for the price of £1. Between 1970 and 1972, *King for a Day* gained an audience amongst the pages of exhibition catalogues and magazines including *Information* (1970) [v.2, p. 30], *Art in the Mind* (1970), and a special feature in *Avalanche* magazine<sup>47</sup>. As the extended title suggests, the work comprised 1000 individual pieces, which, when listed as enumerated titles lent themselves to concise reproduction upon the page.

*King for the Day* provided readers with an ironic and sometimes humorous comment on the fate of the art world and those who operated within it. For McLean, who had graduated from the progressive sculpture course at Saint Martins School of Art, London<sup>48</sup>, the text served as both a parody of outdated art-establishment ideals and a tongue-in-cheek critique of the work of his contemporaries. Many of the works listed in *King for the Day* were ridiculous, referring to occurrences so unremarkable as to not warrant a second thought, unless, of course, they formed part of an artwork. Others sought to capture short-lived experiences, such as '133) Puddle piece. Wet and dry. Work', whilst some verged on youthful tomfoolery.

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<sup>45</sup> Bruce McLean, 'King for a Day' Plus 999 other pieces-works-stuff, etc. incorporating:- 'The Piece a Minute show' and 'The World's Fastest Piece in the World piece-work-thing' [sic], October 1970, The Mezzanine, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Discussed by Charlotte Townsend in Kennedy, G.N., *The Last Art College: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1968 – 1978*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, p. 57. It appears that McLean altered the title of the work after this initial presentation at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.

<sup>46</sup> *Seven Exhibitions*, 24 February – 23 March 1972, Tate Gallery, London, organised by Michael Crompton.

<sup>47</sup> McLean, B., 'King for a Day and 999 other pieces / works / things etc. (proposal for a retrospective at the Hayward Gallery, London, incorporating the 'Piece a minute show' and the 'World's fastest speed sculpture piece in the world piece')', *Avalanche*, (winter 1971), pp. 44 - 53

<sup>48</sup> McLean attended the Glasgow School of Art between 1961 and 1963. He studied at Saint Martins School of Art, London from 1963 until 1966, where he was taught by Sir Anthony Caro, Phillip King, Bill Tucker, Isaac Witkin and Peter Atkins. Richard Long, Hamish Fulton, Roelof Louw and Gilbert & George also attended Saint Martins during this period.

One of the most striking characteristics of *King for the Day* is the artist's insistence that the titles listed constitute 'works', 'pieces', or more vaguely, 'things', for example, '13) Leg work', '21) Face piece (smiling)' and '28) run, jump, stand piece'<sup>49</sup>. By labelling each incidental or transient action or occurrence as such, McLean translates these into 'art objects', and indicates that the propositions have a life beyond the word and the page. On occasions, some presentations of the work included photographs of the artist performing selected titles, thus confirming their occurrence (Fig. 1.7). Like the works that they referred to, these images showed the artist in unremarkable scenarios or poses and served to emphasise the satirical message of the work.



Fig. 1.7: Bruce McLean, 'King for a Day and 999 other pieces/works/things etc. (proposal for a retrospective at the Hayward Gallery, London, incorporating the 'Piece a minute show' and the 'World's fastest speed sculpture piece in the world piece')' (detail), *Avalanche* (winter 1971), p. 47

<sup>49</sup> McLean, B., *Information* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 84

McLean's playful approach to language was also exercised in his review of 'British Sculpture out of the Sixties' at the ICA, published in *Studio International*<sup>50</sup>. McLean's 'trendy' text titled, 'Commentary: Not even crumble crumble' sought to describe an 'attitude, ease, panache, that some people have and some people haven't'<sup>51</sup>. His use of a made-up phrase in the formal, critical context of a review indicates the limitations of using language to communicate experiences of making and viewing art. Similarly, Robert Barry, who had previously used unperceivable carrier waves, inert gas and unconscious thoughts, turned to language to illuminate the intangible and indefinite qualities of his work.

Barry presented the statement, *Art Work* (1970), which comprised a printed text of eleven lines in the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition *Projections: Anti-Materialism* (1970)<sup>52</sup> [v.2, p.31]. Each distinct line of the text describes a different characteristic of Barry's work, starting with the thing itself (quite what this is remains unknown), the artist then goes on to describe parts of it, and finally, our knowledge of it.

It is necessary for readers of the text to imagine what 'it' (the artwork) is since Barry provides no description of materials or form. This is likely to differ for every reader. The first line 'It is always changing' immediately plants uncertainty in the reader's mind; suggesting that whatever they once thought 'it' was is likely to be (or become) obsolete. The speed or extent of this change is not specified, but the use of the word 'always' implies that this is a continuing occurrence. In an interview with Ursula Meyer, Barry remarked, 'Nothing keeps renewing itself the way art does'<sup>53</sup>. Secondly, it is described as having order; this could refer to internal rules or to external appearance.

Lines three and four refer to the space in which 'it' exists. The statement that 'its boundaries are not fixed' is evocative of Barry's previous works, for example, the

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<sup>50</sup> McLean, B., 'Commentary: Not even crumble crumble', *Studio International*, vol. 180, no. 926 (October 1970), pp. 156 – 159

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, p. 156

<sup>52</sup> *Projections: Anti-Materialism*, 15 May – 5 July 1970, La Jolla Museum of Art, San Diego, organised by Lawrence Urrutia.

<sup>53</sup> Barry, R., 'October, 12, 1969', conversation with the editor, Meyer, U., (1972) *Conceptual Art*, New York: Dutton, p. 35



*Inert Gas Series* (1969) where gasses were released and expanded infinitely outwards into the atmosphere. Equally, this statement might also refer to the page-based text in which the reading and subsequent interpretation might be considered as unfixed. Barry explained, 'I use the unknown because it's the occasion for possibilities, and because it's more real than anything else. Some of my works consist of forgotten thoughts or things in my unconscious. I also use things which are not communicable, are unknown or are not yet known. The pieces are actual but not concrete...' <sup>54</sup>. Line five, 'it affects other things' implies that it is going to cross paths and interact with other objects or organisms. This is true of Barry's carrier wave and radiation pieces, these operated on an unperceivable frequency and would intersect with other works and spaces <sup>55</sup>. Likewise, the pages it is bound alongside affect the interpretation of a printed text, and objects or organisms that are within close proximity, as well as external elements, could affect an artwork installed in a gallery. These factors may affect qualities such as the form, material construct, or distribution and placement of the work.

As the text progresses, the characteristics described become more difficult to pinpoint as readers are urged to consider that 'part of it may also be part of something else'. This calls into question whether we would be able to recognise 'it', or distinguish it from what it was part of. These questions cannot be answered, they only open up more possibilities about what 'it' – the artwork – has the potential of being. The final sentence addresses the audience's awareness of the piece. Despite the elusive qualities that make the work difficult to identify, Barry states that 'knowing of it changes it'. Barry could be implying that the audience 'know of it' through reading this description. The change referred to in the final sentence brings the reader full-circle to the beginning of the text. In this sense, the artwork is constantly changing and renewing itself according to our increased knowledge of it.

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<sup>54</sup> Barry, R., *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 41

<sup>55</sup> Barry presented a number of 'Carrier Wave' pieces, along with an ultrasonic sound wave installation and Microcurie Radiation piece in *January 5 – 31, 1969* (1969). His contribution to *Software. Information Technology: its new meaning for art* (1970) was 'Ultrasonic Wave Piece' (1968) described in the catalogue as 'Ultrasonic waves (40KHz) reflected off interior surfaces, filling the selected area with invisible, changing patterns and forms. (Space chosen at time of installation)', *Software* (1970) exhibition catalogue, pp. 36 – 37.

Barry invites the possibility that this statement could be presented in multiple contexts in the final sentences, stating 'it does not have a specific place' and that 'its boundaries are not fixed'. It is therefore appropriate that the statement is published in a number of catalogues around this time, and that the texts and presentations of these alter slightly on each occasion.

On the one hand, Barry uses language to conjure up infinite interpretations of his work in the minds of his readers. This could be seen as liberating and inclusive as there appears to be no correct or final interpretation. Considered from a different perspective, Barry's statement illustrates the inadequacy of language for representing an object or experience. This poses the possibility that the artwork alluded to is, in fact, the very process of working through the paradoxes of the text.

In their essays and self-published books, Gilbert & George also exposed the apparent inadequacy of language for conveying their relentless search for art. In the catalogue accompanying the exhibition *Situation Concepts* (1971)<sup>56</sup>, Gilbert & George presented a version of their text-based work *To be with art is all we ask* (1970) adapted from an earlier self-published booklet<sup>57</sup> [v.2, pp. 32 - 39].

Following a title page adapted from the front cover of the original booklet, a brief introduction on the second page states, 'This booklet illustrates with words and one plate our feelings as sculptors of the subject of art. When we did it we felt very light and we hope that you read it in the same light'. (The plate referred to is excluded from this reproduction). This sets the tone for the forthcoming text and is characteristic of Gilbert & George's frolicsome approach, which appears to be in stark contrast to the serious mode of enquiry used by artists such as Art & Language, Buren, Burgin and Kosuth.

The text that forms the main body of the following pages is addressed to the deity of 'Art', and comments on Art's ability to incite love and hate, thirst and fear. Gilbert & George ask after Art's origin, 'are you a branch of nature's fantastic network or are you an invention of some ambitious man?' They recall

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<sup>56</sup> *Situation Concepts*, 9 February – 4 March 1971, Galerie ImTaxis Palais, Innsbruck, organised by Peter Weiermair.

<sup>57</sup> Gilbert & George (1970) *To Be With Art is All We Ask*, Art for All: London. Edition of 300

an instance where they thought they had glimpsed Art, taking the form of an ordinary man wearing clothes much like their own, 'dressed in a light brown suit, white shirt and a curious blue tie... there was about your dress a curious wornness and dryness'. They describe how they tried to approach Art but that it went out of sight as they neared.

Throughout the text, Art remains mysterious and unreachable to the artists. To conclude, the artists explain how they intend to paint 'a large set of narrative views descriptive of our looking for you'. The exhibition of *To be with Art is all we ask* was presented at Nigel Greenwood Gallery, London in autumn 1970<sup>58</sup>. This consisted of a series of large charcoal panels in which the artists were depicted suited and smoking, surrounded by nature as they seemingly 'look for Art'. The text and the proposal for these large paintings reinforce the artists' relentless and unquenchable search for Art. These both dwell on the act of looking and present the possibility that 'Art' continues to resist direct depiction. We learnt about how the sculptors' time is fully occupied with the quest of trying to find Art, which remains an enigma. But in actual fact through their drawings, sculptures, living pieces, photo-messages, and written and spoken pieces – indeed, this very text – Gilbert & George are creating art. The text gives Art the pretence of being something mysterious and unattainable. Yet in the process of their searching, Gilbert & George show us that art exists, overlooked in everyday life.

In the pages discussed in this second section of the chapter, McLean, Barry and Gilbert & George demonstrate that art is continually present in everyday life. As Gilbert & George show in their unquenchable search for Art, it is perhaps due to the apparent ordinariness of Art (for example, clothed in a suit, shirt and tie, similar to the artists' own attire) that makes it so difficult to discern and describe. In *Art Work*, Barry struggles to define precisely what art is, but in doing so conjures up the qualities that it embodies. With each subsequent line of his statement, Barry adds to the mystery of art, opening up this definition rather than offering clarity. Speaking of his work, Barry explained how he used language 'as a sign to indicate that there is art... and to prepare someone for the art'<sup>59</sup>, indicating that the words on the page function in alerting audiences to

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<sup>58</sup> Gilbert & George, *To Be With Art is All We Ask* (1970), Nigel Greenwood Gallery, London.

<sup>59</sup> Barry, R., 'Art Without Space', transcript from symposium held on 2 November 1969, WBAI-FM, reproduced in Lippard, L., (1973), *Six Years*, London: Studio Vista, p. 131

the presence of his work, which was otherwise unperceivable. For Gilbert & George and McLean however, the texts offer up one manifestation of their work, whilst alluding to further materialisations beyond the page. The pages by McLean, Barry and Gilbert & George considered here expose the difficulty and limitations of using language to convey lived experiences, feelings and processes. These artists take a lighthearted or playful approach and invite readers to join them in the challenge of evincing art upon the page. The pages by Burgin, Kosuth and Art & Language discussed in the final section of this chapter also appeal for readers to participate in the task of defining art. However, to these pages, readers are required to bring substantial prior knowledge, experience and persistence to equip them in working through the investigations set out before them.

### **Language games: working through propositions on the page**

In the artist book, *Publication* (1970)<sup>60</sup>, David Lamelas invited fourteen international artists to consider three statements; 'use of oral and written language as an Art Form'; 'Language can be considered as an Art Form'; and 'Language cannot be considered an Art Form'. Responses, which were confined to written language, ranged from single words and sentences to extended theoretical essays that ruminated on the diverse role of language in art. Victor Burgin's response considered how language could be used in a manner akin to the sciences, as a tool to form and progress hypotheses that could be empirically observed, concluded and used to extrapolate further theories. For Burgin, the most urgent qualification of how language was used in art was in setting out the 'internal structure' of a piece, as this determined the way in which content was perceived and understood<sup>61</sup>.

Between 1970 and 1973, Burgin presented variations of enumerated statements within exhibition catalogues. His contribution to *Idea Structures* (1970)<sup>62</sup> consisted of one such piece in which fourteen statements occupied four pages of the catalogue [v.2, pp. 41 - 47]. The statements were generously spaced out

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<sup>60</sup> Lamelas, D., (1970) *Publication*, London: Nigel Greenwood Inc. An exhibition of the same title was held at Nigel Greenwood's gallery in September 1970.

<sup>61</sup> Burgin, V., untitled text, *Publication* (1970), exhibition catalogue, p. 10

<sup>62</sup> *Idea Structures*, 24 June - 19 July 1970, Camden Arts Centre, London, organised by Charles Harrison

across the pages, thus inviting readers to pause and take time to consider their response to each statement before moving on to the next. Burgin addressed the statements directly to the reader, first of all asking them to consider 'All criteria by which you might decide that any series of bodily acts, directly known to you at any moment previous to the present moment constitutes a discrete event'. The phrasing of the statement calls readers to envisage the present and past moment simultaneously and assess the nature of bodily acts experienced during these. Burgin specifies no distinction such as a time frame in order for readers to distinguish these two moments, meaning that past and present moment would at some point converge in our reading of the entire piece. As the statements progress, they become increasingly difficult to decipher, requiring readers to cross-reference and move between individual statements before considering their reaction. In addition to being asked to recall experiences, objects and individuals located in either the past or present moment, the spacing of the statements upon the page requires readers to turn back and forth, thus replicating this movement. The final two sentences call for the substitution of two numbered sentences for another one, causing readers to, first of all, recall their original reaction to these statements, and then discard these in place of another.

In his text for *Publication*, Burgin cited the influence of philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, who stated, 'that if a sentence is to assert a fact then there must be something in common between the structure of the sentence and the structure of the fact'<sup>63</sup>. This is evidenced in Burgin's catalogue contributions as there is a direct correlation between how readers engage with the structure of the text, and the events or moments that they are invited to recall and move between. The motion of moving between the four pages makes this experience more palpable for the engaged reader.

Joseph Kosuth's investigations, begun in 1969, also employed an enumerated structure whereby statements were categorised and sequenced. This meant that in order to progress onto the next statement, it was necessary to understand the present statement. Failure to do so would generate a tangle of confusion, resulting in the reader giving up on their interpretation altogether. In several works and catalogue entries, Kosuth appears to appropriate Wittgenstein's method of formatting (Fig. 1.8 and 1.9), which used numbers to group

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid

categories and denotes the importance of propositions. Enumeration of this kind helps to organise longer, complex texts into a coherent structure that is easier for the reader to follow and keep track of. This technique allows the author/artist to stress priority or the sequence that it is necessary in order for the careful reader to progress through a certain proposition.

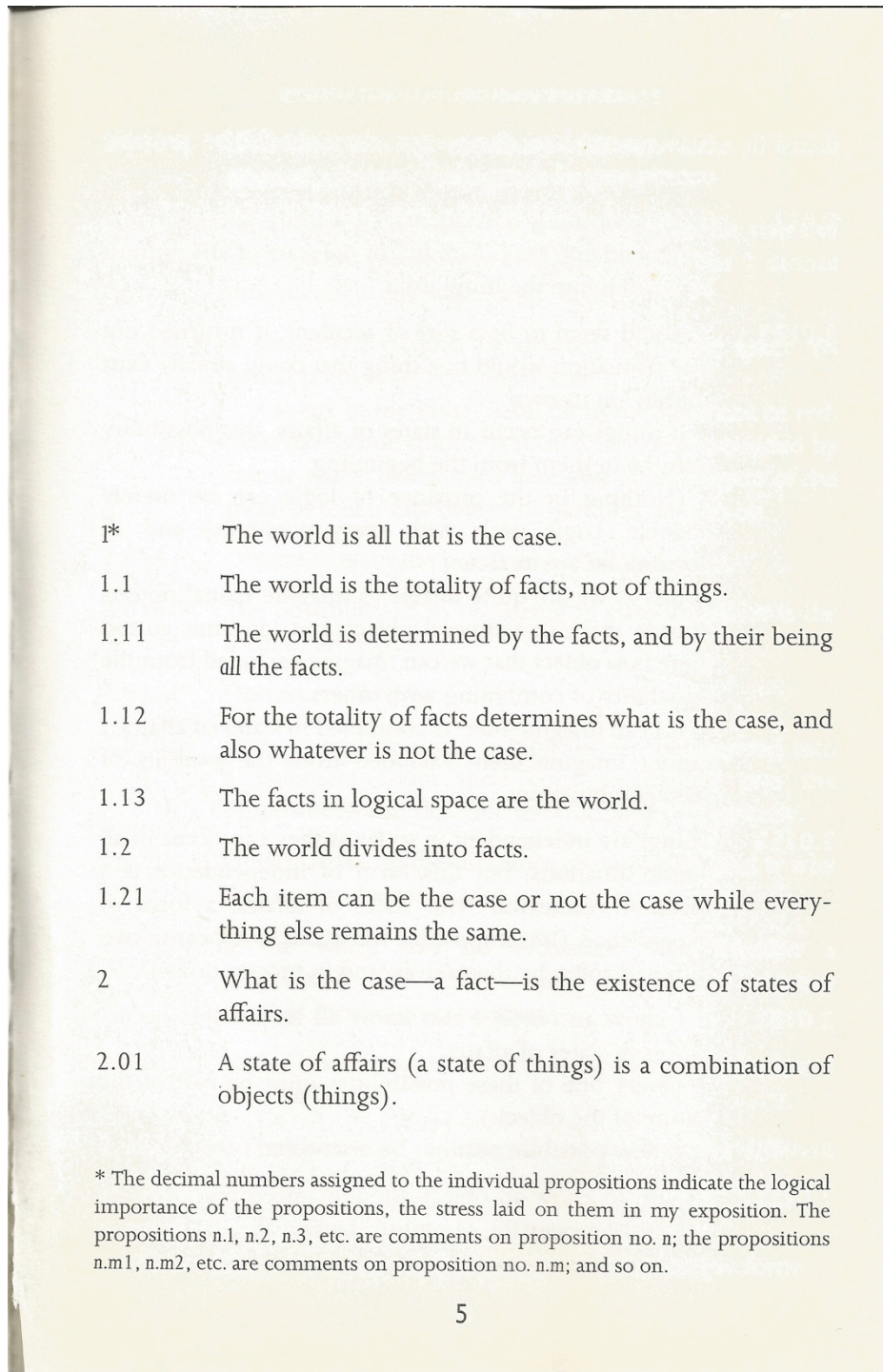


Fig. 1.8: Wittgenstein, L., (1921) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. 2004 edition, translated by D.F Pears and B.F. McGuinness. Routledge: New York, p. 5

JOSEPH KOSUTH

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I. Matter in General (Art as Idea as Idea) 1968  
Collection: Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico  
I. Matière en général (l'art comme idée comme idée) 1968  
Collection: Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico  
I. Materie in Allegemeinen (Kunst als Idee als Idee) 1968  
Sammlung: Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico



Presentation / Presentation / Präsentation

Fig. 1.9: Joseph Kosuth, *Matter in General (Art as Idea as Idea)* (1968), artist's page in *July August September* (1969) exhibition catalogue, p. 11

Kosuth's pages in *Konzeption / Conception* (1969) present his work, *The Fifth Investigation, 1969*, this relates to a series begun in 1965 subtitled 'art as idea as idea' [v.2, pp. 49 - 57]. His contribution to the catalogue consists of a series of enumerated propositions, formatted into two columns (one English and one German translation) presented across seven pages.

The first three pages present a selection of scenarios, most of which are based around different groups of people. The texts propose arbitrary everyday activities or relationships between named fictional characters and are phrased in a similar style to math problems that require logical interpretation and arithmetic in order for the reader to reach an answer. Each proposition ends with 'what is the question?', which causes the reader to re-read the text to decipher the outcome. The convoluted phrasings of these scenarios make it apparent that these are fictional math problems, and have in fact been fabricated by the artist to prompt the reader to consider the information which is presented (or not presented) and for them to fill in the remainder. The first scenario lures the reader into a false sense of security since sufficient information has been provided in order to easily attain an answer. However, on the whole, the scenarios are not only difficult to decipher, but also impossible to solve with the information presented. They require the reader to try and assume the mind of the author in second-guessing what the questions could be.

The solutions to these scenarios are provided on the next page in the catalogue (page 4) [v.2, p.54]. Reading through these, and working back through the questions reveal that the solutions were actually much more straightforward than the scenarios implied they might be. For example, number 4 gives the scenario of three men with three different positions at a leading department store; clerk, cashier and accountant. Part A takes the reader through a range of possibilities of who might hold which position and Part B adds, 'If Lewis is the clerk, Miller is the cashier, and Nelson is the accountant. What is the question?' The 'Solutions' reveal that in fact, the question was 'what is each man's job?'

The next adjacent page presents another untitled piece that begins with the phrase, 'Opening question: What is the quantity of contexts?' It provides a list of seven different 'Levels'. These can be understood as a range of different contexts ranging from 'specifics' at 1 to the context of the Leverkusen exhibition at level 5A, then Joseph Kosuth's art at 5B, and finally the larger categories of 'art', 'logic/math' [sic] and 'philosophy' in level 6.

Level 7 is designated a '2<sup>nd</sup> question' and has not been assigned a context like the previous six levels. Instead, this addresses the reader's own cognitive abilities. It has twenty-six questions associated with it, these are listed A – Z and span Kosuth's final three pages of the *Konzeption / Conception* catalogue. The



first five of these questions (A – E) begin generally and ask about how the reader considers different contexts, but as with the previous piece the questions are ambiguous and become increasingly difficult to answer.

The remaining questions (F – Z) become increasingly convoluted. They refer back to previous questions causing the reader to dart between the various questions. For example, question M asks ‘If section ‘K’ of the 7<sup>th</sup> level was the 8<sup>th</sup> level, would that eliminate the possibility of sections G, H, I, J, K, L and M being the 8<sup>th</sup> level?’ The questions need to be worked through systematically in order to consider which ones can be eliminated or applied elsewhere. Questions D and E on the previous page are a precursor to the nature of this exercise, asking ‘How experimental is thinking, and is it relevant to this art?’ and whether the reader would be capable of ‘considering more than one Level at a time?’ To seriously work through the text, it would be necessary for the reader to dedicate a substantial amount of time to it and to keep track of their thinking in notes or annotations. If the reader were to lose their patience or concentration on one question, this is likely to hinder their progress through the remainder of the text, leading to further frustration. The questions take on the appearance of ‘sameness’ by posing similar questions in which different levels and numbers are positioned.

The final question, ‘Z’ is the only one not to end with a question mark, nor does it refer to any other question. It states ‘Is not the real question in section ‘Z’ not about ‘sameness’ but about ‘realness’’. This extricates the reader from the task of deciphering the questions posed. However, since Kosuth provides no suggestion of what ‘realness’ might be, the reader is then left reflecting on his or her own experience of the cognitive processes undergone.

Writing in part three of ‘Art After Philosophy’ at the end of 1969, Kosuth described how he was currently ‘working on new investigations which deals with “games”<sup>64</sup>. These games addressed how language could be used to form understanding between artist and reader and highlighted how misunderstandings occur through the improper use of language. Kosuth employs language unfamiliar in the discipline of visual art. This introduced the reader to new words and terminology, which through their repeated use accrue

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<sup>64</sup> Kosuth, J., ‘Art After Philosophy: Part 3’, *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 917, (December 1969), p. 212

meaning in an art context. This is demonstrated by how the reader comes to understand the word 'Level' as a 'Context', specifically one that becomes increasingly abstract with each additional numeration.

Wittgenstein proposed the idea of 'language games' in *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). These games relied on our understanding of how others used words as a tool to communicate private intentions to a public audience. Wittgenstein saw language as fluid, meaning that our understanding of it can constantly be modified and changed depending on use. Through repeated use, Kosuth encourages the reader to become familiar with the language used in his own games. Having spent time working through Kosuth's investigations, the reader would be better equipped to decipher subsequent 'investigations' presented by the artist. The term 'to investigate' has its roots in the Latin word, *investigat-*, meaning 'traced-out', thus signifying that the 'investigations' posed by conceptual artists concerned the *process* of conducting an examination or study, similar to Floyd's remarks in *An Anthology* and the disciplines of philosophy or science, rather than presupposing outcomes. In the introductory text for *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* (1970)<sup>65</sup>, organiser Donald Karshan identified,

The idea of art has expanded beyond the object or visual experience to an area of serious art 'investigations'. That is, to a philosophical-like inquiry into the nature of the concept 'art' so that the working procedure of the artist not only encompasses the formulation of works but also annexes the traditional one of the critic.<sup>66</sup>

The *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* catalogue consists of exclusively text-based entries. It is divided into three sections, 'Information 1' (extended essays and articles), 'Information 2' (shorter 'reference quotes' by artists, randomly arranged) and 'Information 3' ('biographies, bibliographies and contribution list of participants'). A large proportion of the 'Information 1' section consists of extended texts by members of Art & Language and associates

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<sup>65</sup> *Conceptual Art & Conceptual Aspects* (10 April – 25 August 1970), The New York Cultural Center, New York, an exhibition organised and catalogue compiled by Donald Karshan.

<sup>66</sup> Karshan, D., 'The seventies post-object art', *Studio International*, vol.180, no.925 (September 1970), p. 69

including Joseph Kosuth and The Society for Theoretical Art and Analyses (Ian Burn, Roger Cutforth and Mel Ramsden)<sup>67</sup>.

The Art & Language Press are represented by four texts spanning eleven pages, these are; 1. Notes on Substance Concepts (Art Objects), 2. 368 Year Old Spectator, 3. Sunnybank (text only), 4. Notes: Harold Hurrell [v.2, pp. 58 - 68]. The texts are not assigned to specific authors.

'Notes on Substance Concepts (Art Objects)' is a densely written text which seeks to distinguish between a range of classifications (signified by their capitalisation); 'SCULPTURE', 'OBJECT', 'ART OBJECT' and 'OBJECT OF ESTHETIC APPRAISAL' (which differs from an 'art object') and later 'PAINTING', 'RELIEF' and 'THE SPECIES'. It deals with what would usually be physical and tactile objects in purely theoretical terms to deduce whether these could qualify as 'art objects', and if so on what basis. In trying to draw specific categorisations, these terms become increasingly intermingled and vague.

'The 368 Year Spectator' is a critique of how we use language to describe our experiences of 'seeing'. The text begins with different examples such as seeing a football match, seeing an exhibition of gymnastics and seeing an exhibition of paintings as a demonstration of how the verb 'to see' relates to both spatial and temporal characteristics. The authors call on two 'philosophic constructs' to assist in clarifying the differences between these various scenarios. The 'substance sortal' relates to materials or objects (such as seeing a painting), whilst the 'phase sortal' relates to temporal to events (such as watching a football match). After asking a series of questions to demonstrate the applications and complications of these constructs, the authors then go on to direct their questioning towards 'an art object'. First, the authors ask whether or not we can 'discriminate between' a material art object (for example a sculpture or painting) and an 'event named 'art object'?'<sup>68</sup>. Through conducting this examination, the authors raise the argument that the word 'object' already contains the necessary criteria (albeit, concealed) to distinguish between a

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<sup>67</sup> Burn, I., 'Dialogue' and Ramsden, M., 'Notes on Genealogies', *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1, no. 2 (February 1970), p. 22 and p. 84. Burn and Ramsden became members of Art-Language in 1970-71.

<sup>68</sup> Art & Language Press, 'The 368 Year Spectator', *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* (1970), exhibition catalogue, p. 12

'substance sortal' and a 'phase sortal' (since the definition of an object is 'a material thing that can be seen and touched').

The text concludes with an impossible scenario of a 368-year-old spectator describing his experience of seeing a Rembrandt painting. This spectator is able to recall both a material and temporal experience in one sentence, 'On this painting I see in front of me now the colour on the area representing the man's hat has changed during the time I have intermittently observed it over the past 300 years'<sup>69</sup>. From this claim, the authors then examine the spectator's use of the word 'change', stating that such a change would not be directly perceivable, but instead, observed through deeper, accumulated experience. This distinction adds a further level of complication to our understanding of a 'phase sortal' and is used by the authors to find fault with 'the ancient procedure of 'shallow' context object making'<sup>70</sup>.

With each subsequent example used by the authors to interrogate the distinction between a substance sortal and a phase sortal, the scenario becomes more obtuse. This is due to the attention given to individual words such as 'object' or 'change', which have been used casually, but in fact, connote a vast range of possibilities for 'seeing'. The authors' emphasis on the use of specific words detracts from the subject matter under discussion.

The sequencing of 'Sunnybank (Text only)' and 'Notes: Harold Hurrell' has been switched in the actual presentation of the texts. 'Notes: Harold Hurrell' refers to a quotation taken from Terry Atkinson's preliminary notes for the article 'Concerning the interpretation of the Bainbridge / Hurrell models' which was published in *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art* in February 1970<sup>71</sup>. Later in the text, the author also refers to 'Notes on M1' which was published in the first issue of *Art-Language* (May 1969), an article by Mike Thompson in the second issue and an extract from 'Linguistics and Toys at the ICA' by Jonathan Benthall previously published in *Studio International* (January 1970). This referencing assumes readers are familiar with these texts and the ideas contained within them. The focus of 'Notes: Harold Hurrell' is a cybernetic

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid

<sup>70</sup> Ibid

<sup>71</sup> Atkinson, T., 'Concerning the interpretation of the Bainbridge / Hurrell models', *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1, no. 2 (February 1970), pp. 61 - 71

artwork, *Fluid Device I* carried out with the aid of the Computer Department at the University of Hull. The authors sought to assess the prime function of the work, taking into account the importance of the engineering of the piece and its 'visual-tactile properties'.

The densely complex text 'Sunnybank' spans the final five pages of Art & Language's contribution to the catalogue. It begins by taking the subject of a wall between two houses for establishing whether something (an assertion or a substance) has the characteristics of an art object. The image of a boundary wall is at first relatable for the reader. The author calls on recent and contemporaneous writings by philosophers of logic (P. T. Geach, A.N. Prior, Adolf Grünbaum and P. F. Strawson) and presupposes the reader is familiar with these theories. Due to the brisk introduction of these propositions, the reader quickly loses track of the purpose of the argument and it is necessary for them to re-read sections and consult external sources to progress through the text, albeit at a disrupted and staggered pace.

The four texts by Art & Language presented in the *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* catalogue share a common enquiry into the definition, characteristics and function of 'art objects'. The repetition of key terms throughout the texts and references to artworks, notes and articles by Art & Language members demonstrate the group's internal relations, and for this reason, it is necessary that a group of texts are presented rather than just a single contribution. If the reader is to engage with these essays in any meaningful way it is essential that they are presented in a published form such as a journal or catalogue, rather than a gallery presentation. The reader is easily displaced during the process of working through the texts, an experience that would be further intensified as a result of physically navigating the texts in a gallery environment. It can take hours to interpret or come close to the meaning of just one text, possibly requiring multiple visits, pauses for thought, and a movement back and forth between definitions and external references from disciplines of philosophy and logic.

The pages by Burgin, Kosuth and Art & Language analysed in this final section of the chapter are united by their use of complex, and on occasions, obtuse language borrowed from other disciplines including philosophy, logic and mathematics. Like Wittgenstein's 'language games', the artists presuppose that

readers are already familiar with how they use language and specialist terminology to communicate their intentions, and briskly move on to the task of defining conceptual art. To readers unfamiliar with the language and terminology used, these texts at first appear frustrating, even nonsensical, particularly when there is no decisive conclusion on offer. Yet fundamentally, through these investigations, the artists seek to clarify their positions; they structure their work and use enumeration to guide readers' progress through the texts presented on the page by setting out the logical steps or 'levels' of a problem. It is necessary for readers to understand one statement before progressing onto the next; failure to do so amplifies the confusion and frustration felt by readers, causing them to become lost and ultimately abandon the text. The movement back and forth between past, present a future tense, or between memories and prior knowledge resonates through all the pages discussed here. Art & Language require readers to refer to external texts and theories in order to trace the development of their argument, and Burgin and Kosuth invite readers to not only move from one statement to another but to physically turn from one page to another and back again, thus entrenching the artists' preoccupation with process. The more time that readers are able to spend working through the texts, the fuller their understanding and clarity of the terms and devices used.

Through language, artists were able to unravel, trace and reflect upon the influences and ideas behind their work. One of the main objectives of the pages analysed in this chapter was to redefine and investigate the nature of conceptual art, and through reproduction, readers are invited to actively participate in this process. In the first section of this chapter, Buren, Merz and Andre use handwritten and printed language, as well as diagrams to communicate the personal, social and political motivations behind their participation in an exhibition. They draw readers' attention to how specific factors such as an artist's history, the work of others' and the institutional and architectural conditions of a museum can impact upon the development and reception of their work. In contrast, the pages by McLean, Barry and Gilbert & George are concerned with unperceivable experiences and feelings. Their pages expose the inadequacy of language for defining work that exists in another context; however, the very existence of these pages and the thoughts they evoke in the mind enables these expressions to gain currency via the page. Finally, the language games set out by Burgin, Kosuth and Art & Language borrow terminology and structure from other disciplines causing these works to initially

appear obtuse and difficult to follow. By engaging with the words as they are set down on the page, readers are led through a series of investigations that cause them to reflect upon the very process of reading and thinking through a text, thus questioning what they thought they already knew in order to find clarity.

In his essay for *The British Avant-Garde* (1971), Charles Harrison asked 'Must a work have stable and material and formal characteristics in order to be acceptable as art?'<sup>72</sup>, a question which when applied to the artists' pages discussed in this chapter offers up two contradictory answers. In one sense, the pages do have a stable material and formal characteristics in that each copy is the same and unchangeable, opposed to how, for example, Robert Barry's inert gas would change as it diffused throughout the atmosphere. However, it is noteworthy that a number of the pages discussed in this chapter were not only reproduced, but also revised by the artists. With each subsequent presentation, Bruce McLean's work *King for a Day* took on a new format, Victor Burgin presented a number of subtly different versions of his propositions and Gilbert & George's pages in *Situation Concepts* were adapted from a book published by the artists the previous year. Robert Barry's statement *Art Work* was published in six exhibition catalogues between 1970 and 1973<sup>73</sup>; with each version, the precise wording, formatting and sequence of the text differed as if to indicate the 'changeable' nature of the work the artist was attempting to evince on the page. However, it is the English translation of Daniel Buren's text 'Beware' in *Studio International*, made six months after it was first published in the *Konzeption / Conception* exhibition catalogue that most effectively indicates the fluidity of the printed word. The English translation not only extended the readership of Buren's text but also served as an opportunity for the artist to reflect on the developments that had occurred in the art world since it was originally written. In the new preface, Buren outlines the necessity of such revisions and indicates these to the reader with the use of italics and square brackets to highlight alternations and additions<sup>74</sup>. This means that readers can trace the

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<sup>72</sup> Harrison, C., 'Virgin soils and old land' *The British Avant-Garde* (1971) exhibition catalogue, pp. 1 - 5

<sup>73</sup> Variations of Barry's text *Art Work* were published in *Projections: Anti-Materialism* (1970) exhibition catalogue, n.p.; *Information* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 18; *Conceptual Art, Arte Povera, Land Art* (1970) exhibition catalogue, n.p.; *Prospect 71: Projection* (1971) exhibition catalogue, n.p.; *Konzept Kunst* (1972) exhibition catalogue, n.p.; *Documenta 5* (1972) exhibition catalogue, p. 17.22

<sup>74</sup> Buren, op cit., p. 100

development of Buren's ideas, whilst the history of the original text stays intact on the page.

The terminology and formatting of a text prepare readers for how they should approach it. Andre and Merz, both sculptors concerned with the placement of individual 'units' within an environment, produce pages in which graphic elements accompany their handwritten notes. The handwritten quality of these pages means that they come across as being more authentic and immediate, as if the artists have just noted their ideas, without the editing or revisions that usually precede printed texts.

How artists frame their texts to readers has a significant impact on how these are to be approached and interpreted. The preface to Gilbert & George's text instructs readers to approach their work with lightness, replicated in their use of colloquial language and story-telling. From the outset, Art & Language make it apparent that their contribution to *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* is concerned with seeking clarity in the language we use to describe art. The artists introduce a set of terms or ideas that would be familiar to readers of 'Notes on Substance Concepts (Art Objects)' and '368 Year Old Spectator', yet as the terms are systematically examined, readers' understanding of these are challenged in order for a more precise definition to be formed.

In 'From Work to Text' (1971), Roland Barthes wrote that words function in a particular way because of the place they have in the structure of language, each different word contributed to a particular pattern of a text<sup>75</sup>. These patterns are made more apparent when a text follows a set structure, for example, Buren, McLean, Burgin and Kosuth all use enumeration in their pages to set out their argument and guide readers in logically progressing through this. These stress clarity, sequence and priority, and reading the artists' pages in such a way ultimately influences our interpretation and experience of them. This engagement becomes haptic in the examples of Burgin, Kosuth's and Art & Language's contributions, which require readers to turn the pages back and forth physically, thus entrenching the notion of moving between past and present tense, or solving and working through problems.

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<sup>75</sup> Barthes referred to the etymological meaning of text as a 'tissue, a woven fabric', Barthes, R., (1971), 'From Work to Text', translated by Heath, S., (1977) *Image, Music, Text*, London: Fontana Press, p. 159



In 'Beware', Buren announced, 'we believe the problem solved because it was raised'<sup>76</sup>. Buren's statement can be read as a critique of his contemporaries who posed problems or investigations concerned with the nature of art, and in doing so, considered these to be addressed. Critic James Collins added,

Its true to say that a characteristic of recent art has been its questioning aspect, conceptual art has taken this position to a reduction ad absurdum – the questioning process itself attempts to replace what is questioned<sup>77</sup>

It could be argued that this is true in the respect that some of the problems or investigations set out by Burgin, Kosuth and Art & Language, whilst even the pages by Barry and Gilbert & George appear to have no definitive conclusion. But in setting out their propositions as such, the artists are inviting readers to join them in solving their problems in a way that would not be possible in an exhibition. Reading is an internal process, and many of the works discussed in this chapter require a significant expenditure time and concentration from readers. The page enables artists' texts to be read and lingered over, for readers to consult external references (as is necessary for the work of Art & Language), and return once they are better equipped. Unlike exhibited objects, these are not the kind of works that can be glanced and immediately understood, and for this reason, they often come across as frustrating or obtuse. As Flynt said in his 1961 essay, it is necessary for us to explore how one cognitively works through language to determine how we are required to engage with it. In doing so, the reader finds himself or herself in the middle of a work.

The process of cognitively working through a problem is rendered in graphic form in the pages discussed in the next chapter, 'Process, Sequence and Repetition'. These pages are concerned with how information is visually organised and structured on a single page or sequence of pages in such a way as to involve the reader in tracing the progression of a work. On occasions, such pages negated the physical rendering of the works they depicted, as a plan or drawing was sufficient to materialise the concept both on the page and in the mind.

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<sup>76</sup> Buren, op cit., p. 100 - 101

<sup>77</sup> Collins, J., 'Things and Theories', *Artforum*, vol. 11, no. 9 (May 1973), p. 32

## CHAPTER 2:

### PROCESS, SEQUENCE AND REPETITION

‘At one time or another, almost everything passes through a sheet of paper, the page of a notebook, or of a diary, or some other chance support.’<sup>1</sup>

– Georges Perec, ‘The Page’

Often the sheets of paper that Perec was referring to when he wrote about the activities of scribbling, scrawling, drafting and roughing out plans remain in the private space of the author or artist, for whom these words and drawings served a function, perhaps helping them to work through ideas, note important information, or materialise abstract concepts. When these sheets of paper are no longer needed, they might be discarded and replaced with a more refined or developed version. But for the artists whose work is considered in this chapter, these pieces of paper and the notations that they record when transformed into pages of an exhibition catalogue, reveal the genealogy of a work and allow readers to trace an idea back to its conceptual root. In ‘The Dematerialization of Art’, Lippard and Chandler explained, ‘Much recent conceptual art is illustration in a sense, in the form of drawings or models for nearly impossible projects that will probably never be realized, or in many cases, *need* no further development’<sup>2</sup>, indicating that some of the plans, schema and workings out that artists contributed towards exhibition catalogues may be a sufficient expression of a conceptual artwork. Alongside, or sometimes instead of, a gallery presentation, catalogues also offered readers an alternative context for exploring the evolution and progression of an idea through the viewing of successive pages from left to right, one after another, unlike an artwork which is often seen with a single look.

A number of artists whose work is discussed in the first part of this chapter began their careers as minimal painters or sculptors. In her text for the *Minimal Art* (1968) exhibition catalogue titled ‘10 Structurists in 20 Paragraphs’, Lippard

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<sup>1</sup> Perec, G., (1974) ‘The Page’ in *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, London: Penguin Classics, p.12

<sup>2</sup> Lippard, L., and Chandler, J., ‘The Dematerialization of Art’, *Art International*, vol. XII/2 (February 1968), p. 34

forged the link between art that was broadly identified as minimal<sup>3</sup>, and a more conceptual approach, observing,

A number of still younger artists than those represented here are losing interest in the physical aspect of the work of art. Such a trend is provoking a profound dematerialization of art, especially of art as object. If it continues to prevail it may result in the object's becoming wholly obsolete.<sup>4</sup>

Much of the art presented in exhibitions held between 1966 and 1968 including *Minimal Art* was made from mass-produced and commercial materials and displayed repetitions, variations and permutations of regular or standardised forms. The underlying logic of these pieces emphasised 'the artist's mind rather than the artist's hand'<sup>5</sup> meaning that so long as the artist's preconceived plan was followed, any person could fabricate the work. In 'The New Sculpture and Technology', John Coplans explained how artists would use 'whatever aspect of technology is required'<sup>6</sup>, and would often call on the skill of technicians or have their work made in a factory according to a set of specifications. Coplans continued,

What is important about technique and material is that it can be used for the purpose of making the work in the simplest and most direct way that is possible. Thus the new techniques and materials are no more or less than a convenient mechanical extension of the human eye and hand, and the artists' employment of them becomes almost as habitual.<sup>7</sup>

The idea that technology could function as an extension of the human eye and hand was foregrounded several years earlier in Marshall McLuhan's influential book *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964)<sup>8</sup>. Especially relevant

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<sup>3</sup> Other terms that were used included rejective art [sic], ABC art, primary structures, cool art and serial art. Develing, E., 'Introduction', *Minimal Art* (1968) exhibition catalogue, p. 11

<sup>4</sup> Lippard, L., '10 Structurists in 20 Paragraphs', *Minimal Art* (1968) exhibition catalogue, p. 29

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Coplans, J., 'The New Sculpture and Technology', *American Sculpture of the Sixties* (1967) exhibition catalogue, p. 22

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> McLuhan, M., (1964) *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul

to this chapter is McLuhan's announcement that '[t]he message of print and of typography is primarily that of repeatability'<sup>9</sup> and his concern with *how* information was relayed and the effects of this. For conceptual artists working in the late 1960s, print meant that ideas and works could be reproduced and distributed outside of the usual parameters of the art world, and understood or possessed by multiple readers<sup>10</sup>. McLuhan stressed his point further in *The Medium is the Message* (1967), repeating the statement 'Printing, a ditto device' across several places in this visually innovative publication. Repetition of a short, memorable statement such as this gives it more resonance and causes the message to become entrenched in the mind of the reader.

In few places was the status of mechanical reproduction more assertively held up as equivalent to that of that of one-off artwork than in *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, Lawrence Weiner* (1968). This catalogue project organised by Seth Siegelauab and Jack Wendler was more commonly referred to as the 'Xerox Book' due to its intended form of production and publication. A number of participating artists directly used or made reference to the Xerox machine as a means for production and duplication in their projects for it to explore concepts of process, sequence and repetition. The projects were unrelated to an exhibition and existed solely as pages, Siegelauab explained, 'I've just made pages of a book comparable to space (art situational space)<sup>11</sup>. Although Siegelauab was recognised for giving artists significant freedom in the nature of their participation in a project<sup>12</sup>, the 'Xerox Book' nevertheless followed a 'standardised' format. The only prerequisite set by the organisers was that projects conformed to a twenty-five-page sequence of standard 8½' x 11' sheets of thin copier paper, to be printed on the recto of each page only. The use of a specified number of standardised pages bore resemblance to minimal sculpture and painting, which a number of

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 160

<sup>10</sup> For example, Lawrence Weiner explained how information in books gave any interested person access to his works, stating, 'In a sense, once you know about a work of mine, you own it. There's no way I can climb into somebody's head and remove it'. Weiner, L. and Sharp, W., 'Lawrence Weiner: At Amsterdam', *Avalanche*, spring 1972, p. 67.

<sup>11</sup> Siegelauab quoted in Collins, J., 'Alice's Head: Reflections on Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 8, no. 6 (February 1970), p. 43

<sup>12</sup> Weiner, L., and Sharp, W., 'Lawrence Weiner: At Amsterdam', *Avalanche*, (spring 1972), p. 73

participating artists were still heavily involved with towards the end of 1968<sup>13</sup>. The Xerox Book arguably played a crucial role in transferring this work from gallery to page.

The contributions that artists made to exhibition catalogues analysed in this chapter are sequenced to reflect how the page was a logical starting point for many pieces of conceptual art, from here works could extend into the minds of readers and unravel in the wider environment. The first page examined presents a plan made in advance of constructing a piece, the catalogue contribution shows the artist's initial intentions and stresses the similarities between the space of the gallery and the space of the page. Following this, the chapter moves on to examine how the sequential and reproducible nature of the page elicited discrete forms of production and encounter that would not be possible in an exhibition. The final two examples discussed in this chapter suggest the possibility that although an artist's work may begin on the page, it can continue beyond this space, thus prompting reflection on how print technology ensures the continuation and expansion of conceptual art beyond the moment it was originally committed to paper.

Opening on 27 April 1966 at the Jewish Museum in New York, *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*<sup>14</sup> was the first major museum exhibition of minimal art. The exhibition brought together artists who made large-scale, 'architectonic' sculptures using simple forms, with specific attention paid to placement, surface and colour<sup>15</sup>. Carl Andre's piece in the exhibition was a floor sculpture constructed from regular firebricks titled *Lever* (1966), illustrated in the exhibition catalogue by a technical drawing outlining the artist's intentions for installing the piece in the Jewish Museum [v.2, pp. 74 - 75]. Artists' contributions to the catalogue were sequenced alphabetically;

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<sup>13</sup> Andre, LeWitt and Morris were strongly associated with minimalism and participated in a number of related exhibitions including *Primary Structures: Younger British and American Sculptors* (1966) and *Minimal Art* (1968). Barry and Weiner were producing minimal paintings in 1968, evidenced in *Seth Siegelaub: Beyond Conceptual Art*, 12 December 2015 – 17 April 2016, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, curated by Leontine Coelewijn and Sara Martinetti

<sup>14</sup> *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*, 27 April – 12 June, Jewish Museum, New York, organised by Kynaston McShine.

<sup>15</sup> McShine's selection of artists was influenced by two exhibitions in particular; *New Generation: 1965*, 11 March – 11 April 1965, Whitechapel Gallery, London and *Seven Sculptors*, 1 December 1965 – 17 January 1966, Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania. *Seven Sculptors* was held in tribute to sculptor David Smith (1906 – 1965) who had passed away earlier that year.

accordingly, Andre was the first artist to be represented. Each page was divided into two sections by a thick vertical line, separating graphic representations, which occupied the main part of each page from a narrow column of text-based information including artist biographies and statements. As the alphabetical sequencing of the artists' pages progresses, the visuals and biography sections fall out of synchronisation. Andre's contribution is significant in the context of how the page or pages are considered as extensions of the work itself. His pages provide an early demonstration of how artists began to consider catalogue pages as a site for displaying intentions for exhibition spaces and thought processes for works besides, or instead of, documentary information relating to installed pieces.

Andre's pages in the catalogue include a reproduction of a drawing made on isometric graph paper (8 ½ x 11 inches) completed in preparation for the exhibition, captioned 'LEVER – 100 FIREBRICK – PROPOSAL FOR THE JEWISH MUSEUM – 2/2/66 @'<sup>16</sup>. The drawing, which was not exhibited shows the work 'cut' across the threshold of two rooms labelled A and B'<sup>17</sup>. Andre has only drawn the first 20 or so bricks individually, the others are suggested through the continuation of the line into room B and a handwritten annotation, 'bricks flush to end wall' with the direction of an arrow. It is possible that Andre did not know the precise area that his work had been allocated in the exhibition, in which case this drawing demonstrates a hypothetical idea.

Andre's drawing is accompanied by a brief artist biography in the text-based section on the facing page [**v.2, p. 75**]. This details how the artist 'worked at Boston Gear Works, 1954... served in the United States Army as an intelligence analyst, 1955-1957', 'met Frank Stella' and 'worked as a railroad freight brakeman and conductor, 1960 – 1964'. The fact that Andre had worked in this industrial setting arguably influenced how he approached and arranged material and information as an artist, both in the gallery and on the page'<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Andre occasionally signed his hand-drawn work with the @ symbol as a combination of his initials 'C' and 'A', for example, 'Three Vector Model', *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971) catalogue, n.p.

<sup>17</sup> Andre referred to his floor sculptures as 'cuts', 'Up to a certain time I was cutting into things. Then I realized that the thing I was cutting was the cut. Rather than cut into the material, I now use the material as the cut in space' quoted in Bourdon, D., 'The Razed Sites of Carl Andre: A Sculptor Laid Low by the Brancusi Syndrome', *Artforum*, vol. 5, no. 2 (October 1966) p. 15

<sup>18</sup> Andre discussed the impact of his experience working as a railway worker in Siegel, J., 'Carl Andre: Artworker' *Studio International*, vol. 180, no. 927 (November) 1970, p.

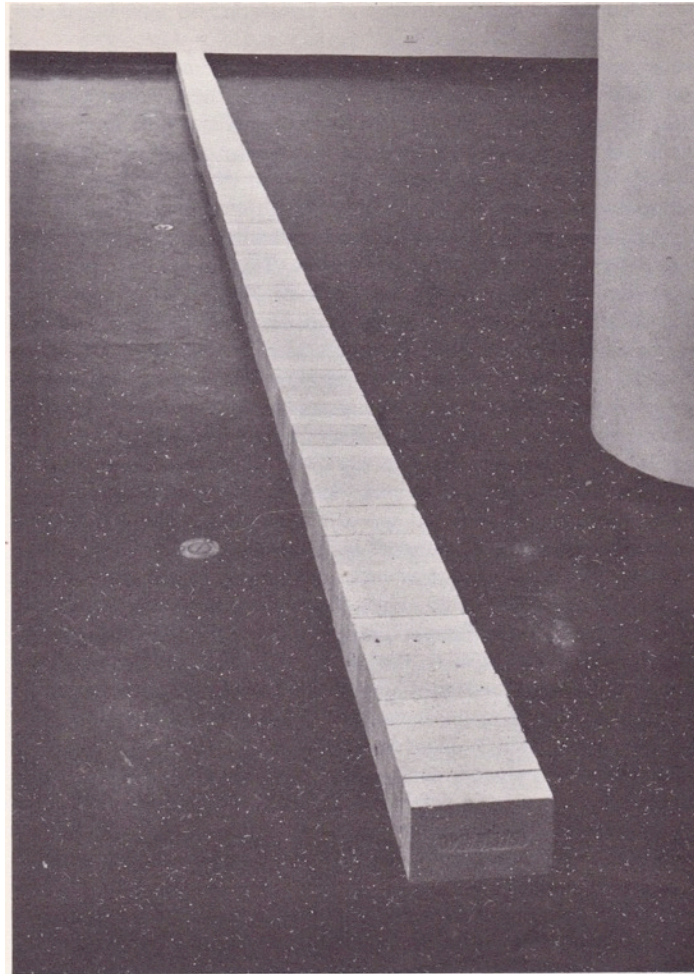
Andre also attributed influence to his grandfather who was a bricklayer<sup>19</sup>. This is not only evidenced by the artist's choice of material of the exhibited work but the ways in which he presented verbal information on the page. Beneath Andre's biography is a poem constructed from four triangular stanzas [v.2, p. 75]. The poem is constructed from a selection of four lettered words such as such as beam, clay, edge, grid, slab, reef, cell and bond, which progressively jut into the space of the page, demonstrating the artist's interest in the sculptural quality and arrangement of words. The words have connotations to masonry and construction, and their uniformity on the page reflects how Andre stacked and arranged individual bricks or slabs of metal in his floor sculptures.

The sketch and the text in Andre's pages of the *Primary Structures* catalogue form a graphic equivalent of his sculptures as if the page functions as a kind of floor or planar surface onto which he arranges material equivalents. Throughout the period covered by this research, Andre hand wrote poems on graph paper in a manner similar to the way in which he sketched out plans for sculptures. In this sense, the text functions as another kind of drawing made before the artist entered the exhibition space to set down his work. Andre's drawing in the catalogue exposes the difference between intention and outcome. And whilst the experience of the work would differ to the reader's concept of it, these two forms of presentation prompt consideration of whether one form may supersede the other. The drawing in the *Primary Structures* catalogue therefore represents or suggests an idea or sketch of a work that is transient rather than fixed in perpetuity.

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178; Reise, B., 'Untitled 1969: a footnote on art and minimal stylehood' *Studio International*, vol. 177, no. 910 (April 1969), p. 169

<sup>19</sup> Siegel, J., op cit, p. 178; Reise, B., op cit. p. 169



Carl Andre: *Lever*. 1966. Firebrick. 400". In the collection of the artist. Photograph courtesy of The Jewish Museum, New York, "Primary Structures" exhibition.

Fig. 2.1: A photograph of 'Lever' installed at the Jewish Museum, 1966. Published in Bourdon, D., 'The Razed Sites of Carl Andre', *Artforum* (October 1966), reprinted in Battcock, G., (1968) *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*. London: Studio Vista, p. 105

Reviews of Andre's work installed in *Primary Structures* suggest that the piece was finally made from 137 firebricks, not 100 as the diagram in the catalogue suggests<sup>20</sup>. Barbara Reise has explained how in Andre's work 'The actual number of material units used in any given 'piece' or 'place' is related to the size of both the chosen material and the place area which Andre wishes to affect'<sup>21</sup>, suggesting that upon installation, the scale of the room in the Jewish Museum called for there to be more units added. Nevertheless, the underlying concept for *Lever* as visualised through the drawing remained, with firebricks laid side to side in a row that extended outwards and cut into the exhibition space (Fig. 2.1).

<sup>20</sup> It appears from Dan Graham's article in *Arts Magazine* that the final installation of 'Lever' at the Jewish Museum comprised 137 firebricks rather than the 100 stated in Andre's drawing. Graham, D., 'Carl Andre', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 42, no. 3 (December 1967 / January 1968), pp. 34 - 35

<sup>21</sup> Reise, B., 'Aspects of art called 'minimal'', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no. 910 (April 1969), p. 169



The work was not affected by there being more or less units in the eventual realisation since the concept has already been set out in the plan<sup>22</sup>.

Writing in 'Paragraphs on Conceptual Art' (1967), Sol LeWitt, another artist who began his career as a minimal sculptor advised working with a pre-set plan meaning that, 'all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair'<sup>23</sup>. He explained,

...the artist would select the basic form and rules that would govern the solution of the problem. After that the fewer decisions made in the course of completing the work, the better. This eliminates the arbitrary, the capricious, and the subjective as much as possible. That is the reason for using this method.<sup>24</sup>

As the work plausibly existed as a concept, as set out in the artist's plan or instructions, it arguably already had a material form (albeit pencil or pen on paper) prior to being installed in the exhibition. Such plans lessened the need for the physical execution of works and raised the status of the page as an alternative site for the materialisation of artists' ideas<sup>25</sup>.

Andre extended the exploration of his sculptural works to the page elsewhere in the late 1960s. In contrast to the precisely arranged units of many of his floor pieces, the artist also created a number of 'scatter pieces' in which he dropped from a height a bag of loose particles that would scatter across the floor. Andre's contribution to *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol*

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<sup>22</sup> I participated in a Masterclass hosted by the Herbert Foundation, Ghent in conjunction with the exhibition *Accelerazione*, 2 – 6 November 2015, in which Andre's 1985 sculpture 'Voie d'acier' was shown. The work is described in the visitor guide as consisting of '83 hot-rolled steel units that form a straight line approximately 25 metres long and 2 centimetres high'. It is certified on a documentation sheet supplied by the artist at the time of purchase and remade for each new exhibition. Installation manager Arno Bergmans explained that additional steel units are also kept in reserve.

<sup>23</sup> LeWitt, S., 'Paragraphs on Conceptual Art', *Artforum*, vol. 5, no. 10 (summer 1967), p. 80

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>25</sup> For example, Lucy Lippard and John Chandler rationalised, 'Much recent conceptual art is illustration in a sense, in the form of drawings or models for nearly impossible projects that will probably never be realized, or in many cases, *need* no further development', Lippard, L., and Chandler, J., 'The Dematerialization of Art', *Art International*, vol. XII/2, p. 34

*LeWitt, Robert Morris, Lawrence Weiner* (1968)<sup>26</sup> (the 'Xerox Book') was created in a similar vein whereby small squares of card were dropped from a height incrementally, beginning with one on the first page and 25 on the last onto the bed of a photocopier machine<sup>27</sup>.

For his project in the Xerox Book, Joseph Kosuth drew attention to the constituent parts of the overall publication by itemising these as short descriptions presented across each of his twenty-five pages [v.2, pp. 77 - 81]. The descriptions, which are written in capital letters using a bold sans serif font, similar to the one selected by Siegelaub for the title page of the project are positioned in the centre of each page. These begin on page one with 'TITLE OF PROJECT', followed by 'PHOTOGRAPH OF XEROX MACHINE USED' and 'XEROX MACHINE'S SPECIFICATIONS', thus implying that photographs and information pertaining to the precise details of the project are to be collated and possibly inserted in place of the descriptions. By breaking down all stages of the project, Kosuth's contribution draws attention to the fact that this publication was finally produced using offset lithography rather than the Xerox machine. Additionally, the artist makes reference to the collating and binding machines used to prepare the publication, as well as paper, ink and glue, thus making readers aware of material qualities of the publication as they handle and consult it. The first fifteen pages of Kosuth's project refer to the technical specifications of the publication, positioning the publication as an object of manufacture, followed by an acknowledgement of each artist's project, concluding in the culmination of the finished publication. Kosuth's contribution to the Xerox Book combines an interest in the constituent parts that make up a whole, characteristic of a number of works emerging from American minimalism in the late 1960s with a systematic and conceptual framework that encouraged the context of a piece to come to the fore.

For his project in the Xerox Book, Robert Barry also explored the mechanical processes of the photocopier machine, this time making reference to its

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<sup>26</sup> *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, and Lawrence Weiner*, December 1968, New York, published by Seth Siegelaub and Jack Wendler. Edition of 1000.

<sup>27</sup> Jack Wendler recalls the process of creating Andre's page on the artist's behalf in; Kadist Art Foundation (2013) *Jack Wendler speaks about the XEROX BOOK*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85wsUOaqCN8> (accessed 17-07-2018)

duplicating function. Barry's project consisted of twenty-five pages of pin-prick sized dots which were arranged as a close and precise grid, inset slightly from the overall edge of the page [v.2, pp. 82 - 87]. Due to the close spacing of the individual dots, when viewed from afar, they appear to merge to form one continuous monochrome surface, not dissimilar to the monochrome paintings that the artist was producing at this time<sup>28</sup>. There does not seem to be any mistakes or irregularity in the size, shape or position of the dots, which one would expect if they were drawn by hand, causing readers to question how the dots were originally made. Due to the overall premise of the publication, and contextualisation amongst other works, readers will assume that the original page of dots (hand-drawn or not) has been photocopied to produce the full twenty-five-page contribution. The final page of Barry's project is the only one to feature a caption, this reads 'ONE MILLION DOTS', typewritten in capital letters and centralised at the bottom of the page. As one million is such a great number, and the number of dots presented appears substantial, the majority of readers are likely to accept the artist's claim. However, those readers wishing to verify this statement will need to commit considerable time and concentration to the task of counting the individual dots and making the necessary calculations to arrive at the final sum. The task reveals that each page contains 40,000 individual dots, which when multiplied across twenty-five pages, equates to one million dots, thus proving the caption for the piece to be true<sup>29</sup>. Although the production of the single, original page of dots would take significant time to complete, in this project Barry calls attention to the fact that a machine can make relatively light work of a manual job, particularly when the task in question would undoubtedly be mundane but also laborious and time-consuming. The Xerox machine arguably addresses wider issues of deskilling in the late 1960s as it meant that administrators, and evidently, artists could perform tasks with greater efficiency, thus enabling the production of more work in less time<sup>30</sup>. Barry did not make any comments on deskilling himself, but as a minimal painter up until 1968, he was associated with artists including Judd, Flavin, LeWitt and

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<sup>28</sup> For example, Barry exhibited a series of monochrome paintings in *Andre, Barry, Weiner*, 4 February - 2 March 1968, Laura Knott Gallery, Bradford Junior College, Bradford, Massachusetts, organised by Seth Siegelau.

<sup>29</sup> This calculation was made by scaling up one of Barry's pages on a photocopier machine and counting the individual dots along the top (160 dots) and along the right-hand edge (250 dots),  $160 \times 250 = 40,000$  dots per page. Multiplied by 25 pages = 1,000,000 dots overall.

<sup>30</sup> The first automatic office copier, the Xerox 914 could produce seven copies per minute

Morris who proposed that the artist could conceive works and have them fabricated by skilled technicians according to a set of specifications. The Xerox machine takes this proposition a degree further since human skill became redundant with the touch of a button<sup>31</sup>.

Sol LeWitt's pages in the 'Xerox Book' also had the appearance of regularity and machine-like precision but were, in fact, all drawn by hand [v.2, pp. 89 - 139]. On the 'sensuously neutral medium of the printed page'<sup>32</sup>, LeWitt presented a sequence of twenty-four drawings, ending on page twenty-five with a plan outlining the pattern followed. The drawings are contained within a neat, but clearly hand-drawn border and comprise four large squares in the centre; these squares are then sub-divided into four 1-inch squares, thus creating sixteen individual squares per page. Within the 1-inch squares, lines of one of four possible directions are drawn; vertical, horizontal, diagonal left, diagonal right. Each 1-inch square contains about 36 lines, neatly hand-drawn using a pen and ruler, however of slightly varying widths and weights. When leafing through the 24 drawings, it is difficult, initially, to pick out the differences between each drawing, since the lines are densely drawn and follow a repetitive pattern.

The drawings form part of LeWitt's 'Fours' series, which the artist presented in an illustrated text in the April 1969 issue of *Studio International*<sup>33</sup>. Crucially, in the text, LeWitt advanced, '[t]he entire work will be done as a book. The page of a book is an absolute, two-dimensional space. A book is complete and intimate. The whole set would be at hand'<sup>34</sup>. LeWitt considered publications as a germane space for the presentation of his projects<sup>35</sup>. This afforded the viewer with a different experience to encountering the same work as wall-sized drawings in an exhibition. Barbara Reise noted how there was 'no preordained hierarchy' among LeWitt's 'working drawings' and the drawings presented on walls or the

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<sup>31</sup> John Roberts categorises one form of deskilling as 'the replacement of skilled workers by machines or machine operatives', Roberts, J., (2007) *The Intangibilities of Form: Skill and Deskilling on Art After the Readymade*, London: Verso, p. 85

<sup>32</sup> Reise, B., 'Aspects of art called 'minimal'', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no, 910 (April 1969), p. 170

<sup>33</sup> LeWitt, S., 'Drawing Series 1968 (Fours)', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no, 910 (April 1969), p. 189

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p. 189

<sup>35</sup> LeWitt, S., (1969) *Four basic kinds of straight lines: 1. Vertical. 2. Horizontal. 3. Diagonal l. to r. 4. Diagonal r. to l. and their combinations*, London: Studio International; LeWitt, S., (1971) *Four Basic Colours and their Combinations*, London: Lisson Gallery

pages of catalogues and magazines<sup>36</sup>. Furthermore, the publication affects the scale and affords the individual viewer a more intimate, arguably more direct experience with the work. That 'the whole set would be at hand'<sup>37</sup> is also of importance, as this would entrench the sequence of the work and aid the viewers' interpretation.

LeWitt's pages in the Xerox Book are numbered 1 – 24 in the bottom right-hand corner of the page (LeWitt's pages have been presented in a landscape orientation, whereas all other contributions to the publication are in portrait orientation). The pages follow a predetermined sequence; this is set out on the twenty-fifth page in a plan where the drawn lines are substituted for numbers 1 – 4. Although LeWitt often concluded his complex drawn or sculptural series with plans aimed to make it easier for the reader to trace the progression of the work<sup>38</sup>, Reise admitted,

Even with one of his clearly articulate 'keys', one gets lost. For the more one follows his logic, the more abstracted is one's experience from everyday perceptions; and the experience of losing oneself in such an irrationally followed logical system is essentially mystic<sup>39</sup>.

LeWitt's plan in the Xerox Book shows that in the first drawing, squares labelled 1 remain on the outside corner, and squares labelled 4 remain on the inside corner, the group of four numbered squares rotates from the central axis, alternating numbers 2 and 3 to form a different relationship between each individual square. The plan shows how the set of twenty-four drawings can be divided into four groups of six drawings, in each group the number in the outer corner remains the same. There are six different arrangements in which the remaining numbers, 2, 3 and 4 can be positioned. The plan, in particular, serves as an illustration of LeWitt's interest in following a mechanical process to create work.

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<sup>36</sup> Reise, B., 'Sol LeWitt drawings 1968 – 1969', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 917 (December 1969), p.222

<sup>37</sup> LeWitt, S., 'Drawing Series 1968 (Fours)', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no. 910 (April 1969), p. 189

<sup>38</sup> A similar plan was included in LeWitt's early work 'Serial Project no. 1' (1966) presented in *Aspen 5+6* (fall/winter 1967), section 17

<sup>39</sup> Reise, B., 'Aspects of art called 'minimal'', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no. 910 (April 1969), p. 171

LeWitt used letters and numbers within his drawings to indicate sequence. At the same time that LeWitt was preparing content for the Xerox Book, he was also finalising his text 'Sentences on Conceptual Art' (1969)<sup>40</sup>. These were a more concise development of 'Paragraphs', set out in 35 numbered sentences which began with general comments such as the opening line which stated 'conceptual artists are mystics rather than rationalists'<sup>41</sup> that became more precise as the text progressed, concluding 'these sentences comment on art but are not art'<sup>42</sup>. Both the sentences and LeWitt's diagram in the Xerox Book show the artist striving to set down his process and present his ideas in the most concise and clear package possible, LeWitt stated,

28. Once the idea of the piece is established in the artist's mind and the final form is decided, the process is carried out blindly. There are many side effects that the artist cannot imagine. These may be used as ideas for new works.

29. The process is mechanical and should not be tampered with. It should run its course<sup>43</sup>.

Another artist who sought to explore all the permutations of a given system was Hanne Darboven; of her drawings she wrote, 'a system became necessary... in my work I try to expand and contract as far as possible between limits known and unknown'<sup>44</sup>. Darboven's drawings were often grouped with LeWitt's and Andre's work, all of which seemed to 'saturate their outwardly sane and didactic premises with a poetic and condensatory intensity that almost amounts to insanity'<sup>45</sup>. Through the plans and drawings that these artists produced for inclusion in exhibition catalogues, readers were able to get inside of these artists' systems to follow the evolution of an idea.

Like LeWitt's drawings, Darboven's work, which consisted of extensive sets of handwritten equations and cross sums is best understood when viewed in sequence and in its entirety, either as framed panels on a wall or in books.

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<sup>40</sup> LeWitt, S., 'Sentences on Conceptual Art', 0-9, number 5, (January 1969) pp. 3 – 5; Sol LeWitt, 'Sentences on Conceptual Art', *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1, no. 1 (May 1969), pp. 11 - 13

<sup>41</sup> LeWitt, S., 'Sentences on Conceptual Art', 0-9, number 5, (January 1969), p. 3

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 4 - 5

<sup>44</sup> Darboven, H., Statement, Hamburg, February 1968, *Art International*, vol. XII / 4 (April 1968), p. 55

<sup>45</sup> Lippard and Chandler, *op cit*, p. 35

Darboven contributed five pages to the *Konzeption / Conception: Dokumentation einer Heutigen Kunstrichtung / Documentation of Today's Art Tendency*<sup>46</sup> exhibition catalogue, which the organisers Konrad Fischer and Rolf Wedewer conceived to present the same information as the exhibition itself [v.2, pp. 141 - 145]. This approach differs to the 'Xerox Book', as here the 'documentation' provided by artists was presented in both the catalogue and the exhibition at the Städtisches Museum Leverkusen, with equal weighting. Two different modes of encounter were therefore facilitated; exhibition visitors were able to consult the pieces of paper presented on a wall, or laid out in a vitrine. There would be a greater spatial distance between the viewer and the work in this situation, compared to a more focused and private – and arguably, more thorough - reading afforded by the exhibition catalogue.

Darboven begins the sequence with a handwritten statement explaining how the calculations (indicated using the letter 'K') take the dates of the year 1969 as their point of departure. The digits of the year 69 subsequently appear in the same position of all the sums across the next four pages, offering a starting point for the reader to interpret the equations. The equations are arranged across four facing pages of the catalogue, each page is divided into five columns, separated by a narrow margin.

On the second page the calculations begin with the equation  $17k = \text{No } 1$ , followed by a single sum. Darboven omits the plus and equals symbols from the handwritten columns of numbers which make up these sums, therefore requiring the reader to interpret the individual digits presented to arrive at a meaning for the calculation. Through this process, it becomes apparent that the sum comprises the first day of the first month of the year 1969;  $1 + 1 + 6 + 9 = 17k$ . This is followed by a second statement:  $18k = \text{No.2}$ , beneath which are two sums  $2 + 1 + 6 + 9 = 18k$  and  $1 + 2 + 6 + 9 = 18k$ ; as the piece progresses, sequences accumulate into a dense mass of cross-sums of days, months, and numerals of the year 1969. The end of the piece is marked by a calculation using the digits of the last day of the year,  $31 + 12 + 6 + 9 = 58k$ ; this is followed by a brief summary:  $17k$  to  $58k$  (the total sums of the digits used in the sequence of sums), No. 1–No. 42 (the number of sets), 365 (the number of

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<sup>46</sup> *Konzeption / Conception, Dokumentation einer Heutigen Kunstrichtung / Documentation of Today's Art Tendency*, Städtisches Museum, Leverkusen, 24 October – 23 November 1969, organised by Konrad Fischer and Rolf Wedewer.

individual sums, and the number of days in one year) and 69 (the year of the work).

To find clarity amongst the digits, the reader is required to spend time with the piece, perhaps by tracing columns with their forefinger, counting, adding, and scribbling notes as they would for a math equation in order to record the inner workings of Darboven's system. The logic of the piece does not reveal itself in one moment but unfolds across the sequence of pages. This encourages the reader to spend time studying the individual elements to make cross-references and draw connections between the sums. For Darboven, whether or not the reader understands the work is unimportant, for this work is about the experience of time—the time taken to write and the time taken to read. Lippard explained, 'Darboven creates her own time. This time, or timelessness, is what one experiences when experiencing her art. It is a time in which she lives, a time to 'write,' as she calls her activity'<sup>47</sup>.

Darboven's equations are written by hand, this contrasts with the underlying structure of the page, and the preexisting logic of dates and formulas used within her equations<sup>48</sup>. The use of handwriting imparts a greater sense of the labour undergone by the artist to create her pages, which is lacking in typed, or to a lesser extent, capitalised handwritten texts (as used by Andre in his page for *Primary Structures*). On a few occasions during the research period, such as in the exhibition *Documenta 5* (1972)<sup>49</sup>, Darboven did present typewritten books of sums. Conversely, her page in the accompanying *Documenta 5* catalogue was a reproduction of a dense hand-rendered sequence, completed in black, blue and red ink that preceded the exhibited typewritten version of the work. Writing about Darboven's process of turning her work into typewritten books, Lippard explained,

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<sup>47</sup> Lippard, L., 'Hanne Darboven: Deep in Numbers' *Artforum*, vol. 12, no. 2 (October 1973), p. 35.

<sup>48</sup> Darboven used graph paper or the lined paper of textbooks, index cards or calendars as the basis for her drawings, for example, 'Untitled' (1966-67)

<sup>49</sup> *Documenta 5*, 30 June - 8 October 1972, Museum Fridericianum, Friedrichsplatz, Neue Galerie, Kassel, organised by Harald Szeemann. Darboven was included in *Section 17: Idee+Idee Licht* organised by Konrad Fischer and Klaus Honnef



This 'real' book has to be typed, partly because it is a real book rather than drawings and must, therefore, be printed, and partly because the number of pages if handwritten would be still more astronomical than the typed version. Nevertheless, Darboven wrote out the entire first book for typists, and the rest of the books by shorthand ('1-10' instead of writing out all the intermediate ciphers; she typed the first pieces like this herself, but since this one is a book 'it would be perverse to type it myself'). Then she writes out all the corrections when the typing of any part is finished...<sup>50</sup>

Darboven's handwritten sums such as those in the *Konzeption / Conception* catalogue invite the reader to engage with the page with a greater subjectivity as they envisage the time and effort required to produce such a work. These effects are less present in LeWitt's pages for the Xerox Book, which although rendered by hand, employ additional apparatus to ensure greater control over the marks produced. The format of the handheld catalogue lends itself to this experience, allowing the reader to become absorbed in Darboven's activity within a private and focused period of time. Darboven's presentation enables the reader to re-experience the artist's own thinking and making processes. Poised over the pages in a fashion like that of the artist, they retrace and relive Darboven's own actions to discover the meaning of her calculations for themselves.

Darboven's drawings are finite and have a definitive beginning and end. These are marked by brief summaries outlining and restating the equations used. These denote a pause, but also declare the beginning of the next set of equations. Mario Merz, on the other hand, used the accumulating and infinite sequence of Fibonacci numbers as a basis for his sculptural objects and installations that progressively expanded beyond the internal setting of the gallery towards the outdoor environment. His ideas, however, are containable on the page. Merz's published drawings of the Fibonacci Series demonstrate the rapidly increasing, often spiralling effect of the sequence that is evidenced throughout nature, demonstrated in the structure of pineapples and pinecones, the reproduction rabbits and male bees, and also human social behaviour<sup>51</sup>.

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<sup>50</sup> Lippard, op cit., 1973, p. 36

<sup>51</sup> Waldman, D., *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971) exhibition catalogue, p.17

Likening the production of art to the sequence of numbers, the artist explained, 'I did not understand why a work of art had to be a certain length when it could be infinite. The Fibonacci series is a different concept from the Roman idea of space... In the Fibonacci series, there are no spatial limitations because space becomes infinite – not abstract infinity but biological infinity.'<sup>52</sup>

For the exhibition *Sonsbeek 71* (1971)<sup>53</sup>, which addressed the theme of 'spatial relationships'<sup>54</sup> Merz proposed to place neon Fibonacci numbers in the Dutch countryside with the possibility of reaching 'relative infinity'. Merz's first page in the main exhibition catalogue is a statement outlining his intentions<sup>55</sup> [v.2, pp. 146 - 147]. This is referred to as a 'paper project' and can, therefore be understood as not only a plan or illustration for the artist's concept prior to arriving in Arnhem but as an outcome in its own right. Merz's second page in the catalogue is a graphical demonstration of the Fibonacci Series [v2, p. 147]. The typewritten numbers begin in the top left-hand corner of the page. The first character presented is the number '1' followed by a full stop, and then a second number '1'. Then follow two full stops, and the number '2' and so on, providing the first 15 numbers of the Fibonacci Series, each preceded by the same number of full stops. The full stops are a physical illustration of the rapidly accumulating space between each number and mimic the physical space that would separate Merz's presentation of the numbers in the Dutch landscape. Traditionally, full stops denote a pause, to take a breath or gather one's thoughts. The full stops between the Fibonacci numbers may allow the reader to complete the calculation in their own minds, each subsequent calculation becoming more burdensome and time-consuming and therefore requiring more time and space to complete.

Centred at the end of the sequence, is the statement '(the page is infinite)'.

Although the illustration provided for us by Merz does not reach the bottom of

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<sup>52</sup> Koshalek, R., 'Interview with Mario Merz, 1971', *Mario Merz*, exhibition catalogue, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1972, n.p.

<sup>53</sup> *Sonsbeek 71*, Sonsbeek Park, Arnhem and site-specific works installed at various locations across the Netherlands 19 June – 15 August 1971, organised by Wim Beeren and Geert van Beijeren.

<sup>54</sup> Kurtz, B., 'Reports: Sonsbeek', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 46, no. 1 (September - October 1971), p. 50

<sup>55</sup> The *Sonsbeek 71* catalogue was produced as two volumes. Volume One, the larger of the two consisted of artists' proposals, plans and descriptions of works. Volume Two, which was smaller and produced after the exhibition had opened, presented documentary photographs of works installed on site in Arnhem Park and the surrounding area

the page, this statement implies the continuation of the sequence nonetheless. The statement poses the question of whether it is necessary to write out any further characters once the logic of the sequence is understood. Yet, the assertion that the page is infinite is at odds with the physicality of this space. The individual page has a defined boundary and is not an unlimited space, whilst it is the Fibonacci numbers and the way in which the imagination can read into the page that are infinite. Pages are rarely singular items and are contained amongst others within a publication, lending themselves to the sequential presentation of information, although ultimately with an endpoint. Should the artist have wished, the sequence offered the potential to continue over several pages<sup>56</sup>.

Despite his reference to the external landscape, Merz's work for *Sonsbeek 71* is described as being 'in the catalogue', along with contributions by Huebler, On Kawara, Yutaka Matsuzawa, Buren and Weiner<sup>57</sup>. Since his work was not featured in the second part of the catalogue, which presented installation photographs and descriptions of works once they were installed on site, it is, therefore, reasonable to assume that Merz's proposal was only realised as a concept outlined on the catalogue page.

Merz's page in the *Sonsbeek 71* exhibition catalogue stands out amongst the artist's earlier catalogue contributions that presented hand-drawn, spiralling illustrations of the Fibonacci series<sup>58</sup>. His use of the typewriter as a mechanical instrument to type the numbers and accumulating sequence of dots here and in a similar demonstration in the later *Documenta 5* (1972)<sup>59</sup> catalogue bear

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<sup>56</sup> For example, In 1973, Merz utilised the publication format in conjunction with an exhibition titled *is it as possible to have a space with tables for 88 people as it is possible to have a space with tables for no one*, 10 November – 5 December 1975, John Weber Gallery, New York and Jack Wendler Gallery, London. The publication is comprised of black and white photographs depicting increasingly larger tables to accommodate "an ever-growing number of people" according to the sequence of the Fibonacci Series. The publication concludes with a photograph showing an installation view of the exhibition in which the tables are arranged in a spiral formation, beginning with the smallest in the centre, spiralling outwards as the sequence accumulates.

<sup>57</sup> *Sonsbeek 71* (1971) exhibition catalogue, volume one, p. 139

<sup>58</sup> For example, Merz's contributions to the special July/August 1970 edition of *Studio International*, p. 12; *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971) exhibition catalogue, n.p.; and drawings reproduced in Meyer, U., (1972) *Concept Art*, New York: Dutton, pp. 180 - 183

<sup>59</sup> Merz had four pages in Section 16 of the *Documenta 5* (1972) exhibition catalogue, included was a type written page similar to his contribution to the *Sonsbeek 71* catalogue. This included a type written text in German and Italian translations, it read, 'und weil Menschen, Zahlen, Dinge, Tage danach trachten unendlich zu sein, ist die

comparison to Benjamin's claim that 'what man has made, man has always been able to make again'<sup>60</sup>. In 1968, Daniel Buren, who began his career as a painter, similarly turned to print technology to aid the large-scale and continuous reproduction of his recognisable 8.7cms wide stripes. Printed and mass-produced as 'vertically stripped sheets of paper', Buren's work could extend beyond the scope of exhibitions as it was 'stuck over internal and external surfaces: walls, fences, display windows, etc.'<sup>61</sup> as well as being included in exhibition catalogues. In the exhibition *Prospect 68* (1968)<sup>62</sup>, Buren pasted green and white stripes in a designated room of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (Fig 2.2). *Prospect 68* was termed as an 'international preview of avant-garde art'<sup>63</sup>, it was organised by Konrad Fischer and Hans Strelow as an alternative to the Cologne Art Fair. A selection committee invited sixteen galleries (fifteen European galleries and Dwan Gallery from New York) to choose the artists whom they wished to present. Buren was invited to participate in the exhibition by Guido Le Noci, director of the Galleria Apollinaire (Milan, Italy).

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erste aller Summen, eins + eins = zwei, noch nicht gestorben' ('and because humans, numbers, things, days strive to be infinite, the first of all sums, one + one = two, has not died yet'), pp. 16-150

<sup>60</sup> Benjamin, W., (1936) *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, London: Penguin Books - Great Ideas, 2008 edition, p. 3

<sup>61</sup> Buren, D., untitled statement, *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* (1970), exhibition catalogue, p.41

<sup>62</sup> *Prospect 68*, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, 20 September – 29 September 1968, organised by Konrad Fischer and Hans Strelow.

<sup>63</sup> Back page of *Prospect 68* (1968) exhibition catalogue; advertisement for *Prospect 68* in *Artforum*, vol. 7, no. 1 (September 1968), p. 75

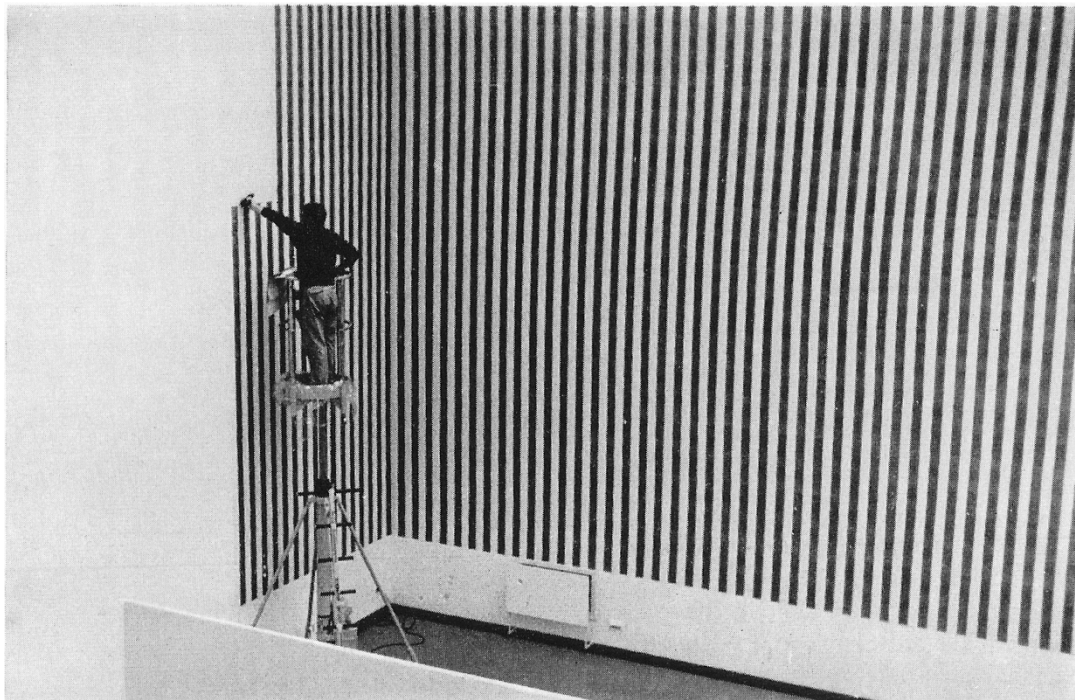


Fig. 2.2: Daniel Buren at *Prospect 68*, Düsseldorf, September 1968. Published in Clauro, M., 'Paris Commentary', *Studio International*, vol. 177. No. 907 (January 1969), p. 47

# PROSPECT 68

Katalog-Zeitung zur Internationalen Vorschau auf die Kunst in den Galerien der Avantgarde 20.—29. 9. 1968  
 Herausgeber Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf Organisation der Ausstellung Konrad Fischer Hans Strelow

**KUNSTHALLE** 1. ETAGE  
2. ETAGE

## Galerien

Kunsthalle Galerie	Kunsthalle Raum
h Apollinaire, Milano	20
a Axiom, London	26
e Bischofberger, Zürich	28
b Iris Clert, Paris	12
m Dwan, New York	22
q Mathias Fols & Cie, Paris	18
g Robert Fraser, London	6
d Kasmin Limited, London	52
n Yvon Lambert, Paris	10
i Del Naviglio, Milano Venezia	16
k Ileana Sonnabend, Paris	24
i Sperone, Torino	4
o Swart, Amsterdam	2
c M. E. Thelen, Essen	50
p Wide White Space, Antwerpen	14
f Renée Ziegler, Zürich	8

### Auswahlkomitee

Alan Bowness, London  
 Enno Develing, Den Haag  
 Karl G. Hultén, Stockholm  
 Kurt Meyer, Zürich  
 Dr. Hubert Peeters, Brügge  
 Martin Visser, Bergeljk  
 Dr. Paul Wember, Krefeld

Dieser Katalog gilt als Tageskarte

Fig. 2.3: The front cover of *Prospect 68* (1968) exhibition catalogue. Available at: <http://www.macba.cat/en/a01403> (Accessed 21-04-2017)

A newspaper-style catalogue was produced after the exhibition, consisting 'primarily of articles and reviews of the exhibition' as well as advertisements for represented galleries<sup>64</sup>. Buren's presence in the *Prospect 68* exhibition catalogue consisted of a double-page of alternating green and white vertical stripes, like those pasted on two walls of his allocated room in the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf during the exhibition [v.2, pp. 148 - 149]. The front cover of the catalogue provides a plan of the exhibition layout and a list of participating galleries (Fig. 2.3). Galleria Apollinaire is indicated as occupying 'room h' and page 20 of the catalogue. The selected artists' names were not given on the front cover, but they were credited on their respective pages within the catalogue. Buren's pages did not include his name or any information about his work. Due to the unbound nature of the *Prospect 68* catalogue, the double-page lent itself to being extracted, positioned, and retained according to the inclination of the reader/viewer. Since the work in the gallery space was destroyed after the exhibition, these pages are the only material remnants of Buren's work for *Prospect 68*. It is not clear whether Buren considered the multiple-publication format as another form of the work or a representation of the work, yet he clearly saw such publication as a valid context (and form) of exposure, different from other contexts yet a significant context in its own right.

A year later for *Prospect 69* (1969)<sup>65</sup>, this time represented by Yvon Lambert (Paris and Milan), Buren repeated the work in the same room of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf and made the same contribution to the exhibition catalogue, on this occasion replacing green with blue stripes. For Buren, repetition exposed the fact that although the external context changed with each new presentation of the work, the internal form remained neutral and fixed. Michel Claura described Buren's repetition of stripes as 'a critique' of repetition and difference displayed by exhibitions of conceptual art 'in which Buren's proposition is itself involved'<sup>66</sup>. Buren presented variations of the 8.7cm stripes in several exhibition catalogues from 1968 onwards. What is significant about these pages is that Buren is

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<sup>64</sup> Lippard, L., (1973) *Six Years*, London: Studio Vista, p. 50

<sup>65</sup> *Prospect 69*, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf 30 September – 12 October 1969, organised by Konrad Fischer and Hans Strelow. Participating galleries: Ace, Los Angeles; Art & Project, Amsterdam; L'Attico, Rome, Eugenia Butler, Los Angeles; Bykert, New York; Dwan, New York; Fischbach, New York; Toni Gerber, Bern; Yvon Lambert, Paris and Milan; Mickery, Loenersloot; Seiquer, Madrid; Ileana Sonnabend, Paris; Sperone, Turin; Wide White Space, Antwerp; Howard Wise, New York; Seth Siegelau, New York.

<sup>66</sup> Claura, M., 'Comment (on Buren's text)', *Studio International*, vol. 179, no. 920 (March 1970), p. 105

exploring pages as a format in their own right, exemplified by the variations in the number of pages or colour.

Buren saw repetition as a method rather than an end in itself. The repetition of the coloured and white stripes in a variety of contexts encourages the reader to examine the situations in which they encounter the work. This prompts consideration of how a presentation in an exhibition space differs from the same work appearing on a billboard or as a publication or mailing. The work itself becomes of little interest, especially over time as audiences become more familiar with its form. Instead, attention shifts to the placement of the stripes, which concerns external considerations such as the geographical or political context of the institution presenting it or the works that it is shown alongside. These factors are particularly relevant to how readers/viewers encounter artists' pages, as a page never exists in isolation, it is always part of a larger structure (even gatherings of loose-leaf pages), and is thus required to conform to a certain format and boundaries. Yet, Buren's stripes were one of the few catalogue contributions produced in the early conceptual era that necessitated printing in colour ink when the majority of catalogues were produced in black and white. This caused the work to stand out from other artists' contributions and indicates further grounds for suggesting that Buren's pages functioned as works in their own right.

The perceivable difference between Buren's green stripes in *Prospect 68* and the blue stripes in the same position, both in the gallery and catalogue one year later, prompts readers/viewers to recall the previous presentation and draw comparisons between past and present, noting not only the change in colour of stripes but also circumstantial differences. When certain elements remain fixed, for example, the width and placement of the stripes, it invites readers/viewers to turn their focus to the details that have changed. Although the content of the work may appear the same, the situation it is encountered in and the thoughts arising from it in the minds of individual readers/viewers will undoubtedly differ. Moreover, as Buren's unbound double-pages in the *Prospect* catalogues demonstrate, the portability of the page means that the work can extend beyond its initial presentation into new contexts.

The artists' pages analysed in this chapter have shown how ideas can modestly begin and unfurl on the space of the page. In reproduction, readers/viewers are

able to trace the process of developing artworks as these extend to form works of a much larger scale, both in physical and conceptual terms. Buren covers a whole room in the Kunsthalle with 8.7cm width stripes, Andre makes a plan for a floor sculpture that cuts through the space of two rooms at the Jewish Museum, LeWitt's 'Fours' series were also realised as a wall drawing, Merz imagines the infinite Fibonacci sequence unraveling across the Dutch landscape, and Darboven's equations form part of a much larger endeavor. Consequently, the experience of viewing the external works would differ considerably to the way in which audiences encounter the page. To view the former, the audience must stand back so as to visually take in the whole, but in doing this, lose sight of the detail and intricacy of the work, being less inclined to consider the system and more likely to focus on the overall effect. Writing about Darboven's first solo show in New York, which consisted of expansive panels of framed pages displayed on the walls at Leo Castelli Gallery, James Collins observed 'what's private and obsessive about her drawing is lost by spreading it so bombastically round the walls'<sup>67</sup>. The installation photograph that accompanies the article confirms the distanced engagement with the work, described by Collins when it is viewed as wall-mounted panels (Fig. 2.4).

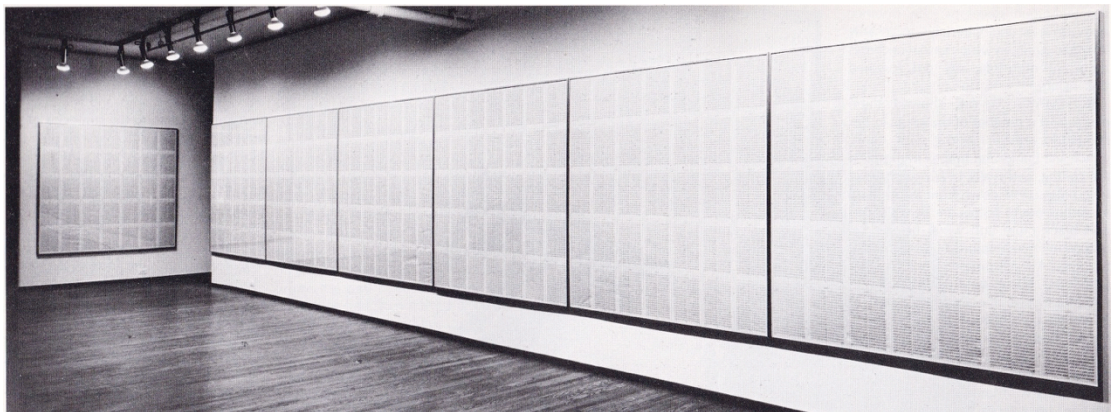


Fig. 2.4: Hanne Darboven, installation view, Leo Castelli Gallery, downtown New York, 1973. Published in Collins, J., 'Reviews', *Artforum*, vol. 12, no. 1 (September 1973), p. 84

A sequence of pages serves to entrench the notion of process and helps the work to unfold over time, also eliciting a physical engagement with it as the reader is required to turn the page to reveal the next part. It is significant that the scale of the page does not necessarily compromise the qualities of specific conceptual artworks; it can even enhance the experience of accessing it.

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<sup>67</sup> Collins, J., 'Reviews', *Artforum*, vol. 12, no. 1 (September 1973), p. 86



When Andre spoke about the decisions he made when selecting material for his sculpture, he said, 'I like to be personally involved. Part of the reason why I make things in elements is because they come in sizes I can handle. I can actually put down a piece myself'<sup>68</sup>. Like the bricks, steel plates, rocks and other 'units' of materials used by minimalist sculptors, the page is a modest, manageable, repeatable and replaceable unit. A single page, like the industrial materials used by these artists, takes on meaning when it is placed beside, or 'bound' alongside others. Yet pages differ from many of the materials used by these sculptors, as the primary function of the page is to bear and carry meaning through inscriptions such as words and signs, often to the extent where the materiality of the page becomes invisible. Darboven reflected,

The most simple means for setting down my ideas and conceptions, numbers and words are paper and pencil. I like the least pretentious and most humble means, for my ideas depend on themselves and not upon material; it is the very nature of ideas to be non-materialistic.<sup>69</sup>

The artist has chosen the least pretentious means to present her equations, yet the pencil and paper that she refers to are so common-place that we fail to recognise their essential role in enabling the artist, and in turn her readers to progress through the ideas recorded. Without these, Darboven's equations would be confined to her own mind and could not unfold so obsessively or extensively as they do on the page. Like the singular components of sculpture, the pages *per se* bear no significance until they are utilised by an artist as a means to fulfil their intentions.

Like the bricks used by Andre or Buren's recognisable printed stripes, the page is mass-produced and replaceable, lending itself to manoeuvrability between various contexts. This is significant for contemporary readers as a number of the catalogues discussed in this chapter, including *Primary Structures*, *Konzeption Conception* and most notably, the 'Xerox Book' have been reproduced in recent years as bootleg or facsimile editions as well as artists' projects. In 2010, Rollo

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<sup>68</sup> Andre, C., and Sharp, W., 'Carl Andre' *Avalanche*, number 1 (fall 1970), p. 23

<sup>69</sup> Darboven, *op cit*.

Press produced an unauthorised 'bootleg' edition of the 1968 'Xerox Book'<sup>70</sup> (Fig. 2.5). In the same year, Eric Doeringer of Copycat Publications, New York published *The Xeroxed Book* by photocopying the original publication<sup>71</sup>, as a second generation copy, this includes dust, page edges, distortions and grain that further entrench the process of reproduction (Fig. 2.6). In 2012, the 'Xerox Book' and six other publications by Siegelau were digitalised and made available as freely downloadable PDFs on the website of non-profit organisation Primary Information<sup>72</sup>, and in 2013 artist Arnaud Desjardin used contemporary print technology to produce the *Laser Xerox* and *Inkjet Xerox*<sup>73</sup> as 'print on demand' editions. These contemporary publications<sup>74</sup> show how once artists' ideas are committed to print they continue to be transferable between the mind of the artist and readers, but also across a variety of contexts and formats, validating Merz's claim that 'the page is infinite'. The contemporary publications mentioned here and the pages examined throughout this chapter offer more than simply reproductions of artworks, rather, they provide readers with an alternative version of the work that has its own discrete qualities in relation to the character of the page. These variants enable new interpretations as each new configuration causes us to think not only about the ideas behind the work but its relationship to its wider context and environment differently. The next chapter 'Marking the Spot: the page as location and time frame', takes this notion further by exploring how as a portable unit, the page could be taken into

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<sup>70</sup> Rollo Press (ed), (2010) *Xerox Book*, Birmingham: Eastside Projects, Zurich: Rollo Press, unauthorized bootleg facsimile, edition of 1000. Only available through swapping based on the parameters of: books published in 1968 (the publication year of the original Xerox Book), or books that feature one of the seven artists included in Xerox Book: Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, Lawrence Weiner

<sup>71</sup> Doeringer, E., (2010), *The Xeroxed Book*, New York: Copycat Publications, edition of 250

<sup>72</sup> A downloadable PDF copy of the 'Xerox Book' is available under the 'online projects' section of the Primary Information website, available at: <http://www.primaryinformation.org/product/siegelau-carl-andre-robert-barry-douglas-huebler-joseph-kosuth-sol-lewitt-robert-morris-lawrence-weiner/> (accessed 14-05-2018). The other catalogues made available as PDF downloads were *January 5 – 31, 1969* (1969); *One Month: March 1969* (1969); *Untitled Exhibition at Simon Fraser University* (1969); *July August September* (1969); *18 Paris IV.70* (1970) and *The United States Servicemen's Fund Art Collection* (1971). In 2017, a PDF download of the special July / August 1969 issue of *Studio International* was also added to the Primary Information website.

<sup>73</sup> Desjardin, A., (2013) *Laser Xerox*, London: The Everyday Press, print on demand; Desjardin, A., (2013) *Inkjet Xerox*, London: The Everyday Press, print on demand.

<sup>74</sup> Additional examples of facsimiles and projects made 'after' Seth Siegelau are detailed in Pichler, M., (ed) (2016) *Books and Ideas After Seth Siegelau*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, New York: The Center for Book Arts

contexts beyond the exhibition to help physically or mentally transport readers to another place or moment in time.



Fig. 2.5: Rollo Press (ed), (2010) *Xerox Book*, presented in Book Show, 3 July – 4 September 2010, Eastside Projects, Birmingham. Image available at: <https://eastsideprojects.org/projects/book-show/> (accessed 14-05-2018)

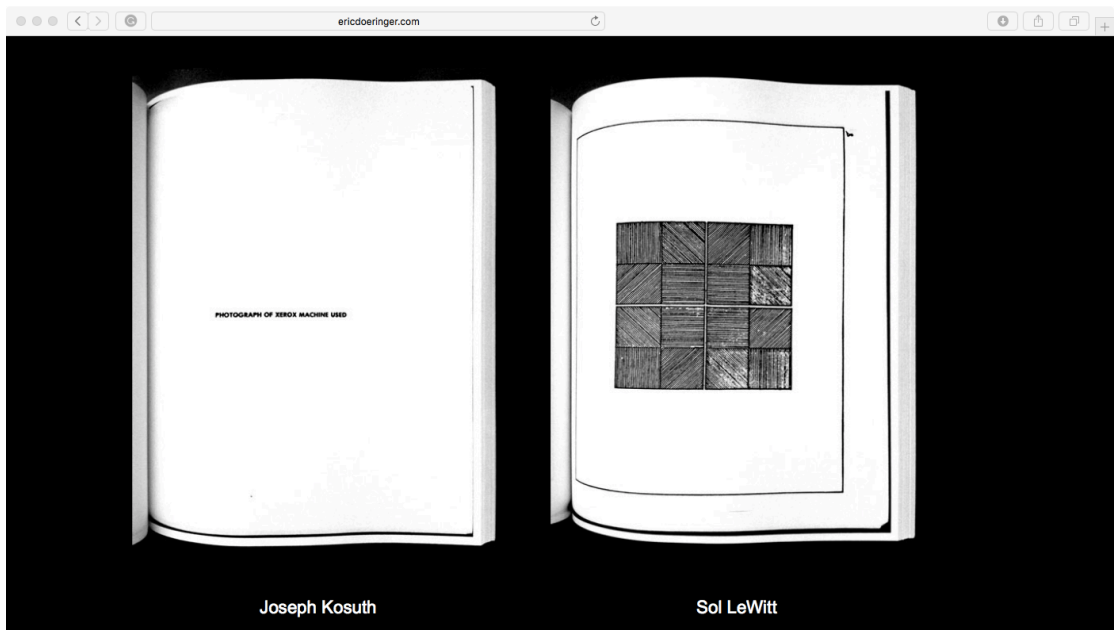


Fig. 2.6: Screenshot from Eric Doeringer's website advertising *The Xeroxed Book* (2010), available at: <http://www.ericdoeringer.com/ConArtRec/Xeroxed%20Book/XeroxedBook.html> (accessed 14-05-2018)

## CHAPTER 3:

### MARKING THE SPOT: THE PAGE AS LOCATION AND TIME FRAME

For the exhibition *19:45 - 21:55, September 9 1967, Frankfurt, Germany - Dies alles Herzchen wird einmal Dir gehören* (1967)<sup>1</sup>, eight young and relatively unknown European artists were invited to create 'artworks with an impermanent character' that could not be owned or traded<sup>2</sup>. Jan Dibbets covered the paving of a courtyard outside the gallery with sawdust, leaving an oval in the centre in which the cobblestones beneath remained visible, throughout the duration of the opening the sawdust became dispersed with people's footsteps, diffusing the distinction between the two surfaces. To complement his gallery installation of sticks placed around the edge of a room, Richard Long made a work of the same dimensions in an outdoor environment in Bristol without the interference of 'architecture, people or other objects'<sup>3</sup>. As the title of the accompanying catalogue indicates, the exhibition, held at Galerie Dorothea Loehr, Frankfurt only lasted for the duration of two hours and ten minutes. The exhibition is remembered through scant documentary photographs and a thin catalogue that was produced in a numbered edition of 500 copies. This comprised large pages that were folded and then stapled together, meaning that potential readers/viewers were required to unfasten the staples or tear along the folds to view its full content, thus damaging the catalogue in much the same way that exhibited works were eventually destroyed through audiences' interaction with them.

In the context of exhibitions such as *19:45 – 21:55*, where works were only visible for a matter of hours, or surrendered to the effects of time and change, how artists' represented their work upon the pages of exhibition catalogues

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<sup>1</sup> *19:45 - 21:55, September 9 1967, Frankfurt, Germany - Dies alles Herzchen wird einmal Dir gehören*, 9 September 1967, Galerie Dorothea Loehr, Frankfurt, organised by Paul Maenz. The subtitle of this exhibition translates to translates to 'Someday, Sweetheart, All this Will be Yours'. Through participating in this exhibition, Konrad Fischer, who was then working as an artist using his mother's maiden name, Lueg, met Richard Long. Fischer went on to give Richard Long his first solo exhibition in September 1968.

<sup>2</sup> Gilbert and George were also invited but were unable to take part. Maenz, P., 'Serielle Formationen and Dies alles Herzchen wird einmal Dir gehören', Wiehager, R., (ed.) (2017), *Serielle Formationen 1967/2017: The Re-staging of the First German Exhibition of International Tendencies in Minimalism*, Cologne: Snoeck, p. 128

<sup>3</sup> Long, R., *19:45 - 21:55, September 9 1967, Frankfurt, Germany - Dies alles Herzchen wird einmal Dir gehören* (1967) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

became a significant element in determining the way in which their participation became known and remembered by the public after the close of the exhibition. This chapter explores how works of a temporary or remote nature were brought into the hands of international audiences via the page. All of the pages analysed in this chapter transport readers/viewers to situations in which artists interacted with the outside environment, as for example in journeying through it, recording natural phenomenon or conceiving and constructing pieces situated in the wider landscape. Speaking in 1969, at a symposium before the opening of the exhibition *Earth Art*<sup>4</sup>, organiser Willoughby Sharp (1936 - 2008) cautioned, 'some of them are very far away and you probably wouldn't want to go there because it would require maybe, well, a forty-minute walk through the woods and back...'<sup>5</sup>. Sharp may have been referring to Dibbets' piece *A Trace in the Wood in the Form of an Angle of 30° crossing the Path*, for which the artist considered the walk to the site as part of the work (Fig. 3.1). Such works would remain largely unseen by the public and only known through photographs and descriptions in the catalogue, which in this case was not published until the following year. For viewers wishing to experience such works first-hand, a concerted effort was necessary to be in the right place at the right time, but the likelihood is that most audiences came to know about them through catalogues.

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<sup>4</sup> *Earth Art*, Andrew Dickenson White Museum, New York, 11 February – 16 March 1969, organised by Willoughby Sharp. The accompanying symposium was held at Cornell University on 6 February 1969, participants were Robert Smithson, Neil Jenney, Günther Uecker, Hans Haacke and Richard Long. The moderator was Thomas W. Leavitt, director at the Andrew Dickenson White Museum of Art at Cornell. Excerpts from the symposium were published in the exhibition catalogue.

<sup>5</sup> Sharp, W., *op. cit.*, n.p



Fig. 3.1: Jan Dibbets, *A Trace in the Wood in the Form of an Angle of 30° Crossing the Path*, in *Earth Art* (1969) exhibition catalogue. Image from a digitalised copy of the catalogue available at: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924020514380;view=2up;seq=32> (accessed 06-01-2018)

Photographs were considered one of the most direct and accessible forms of documentation available to conceptual artists. For artists whose work were located in remote environments or comprised a journey or experience, photographs offered an immediate snapshot of a precise moment in time and space that may be impossible for audiences to directly experience. These also offered perspectives that might not be possible even if the site of an artwork was accessible, serving to capture a view exactly as the artist intended it to be seen. However, not all artists believed that photographs should come to substitute the experience of viewing a work, when asked about the relationship between the photograph and his sculpture, Carl Andre described the photograph as a 'lie', he added,

I'm afraid we get a great deal of exposure to art through magazines and through slides and I think this is dreadful, this is anti-art because art is a

direct experience with something in the world and photography is just a rumor, a kind of pornography of art.<sup>6</sup>

Andre's statement was included in the first issue of *Avalanche* magazine<sup>7</sup>, which was dedicated to Land art, this was a richly illustrated publication in which several pages were given over to glossy full-bleed photographs of artists and their work. Andre's comments sit uneasily in this context and serve to illustrate the contested status of photography as documentation, information and art form. The candid and factual appearance of photography used in the conceptual era disguises the ways in which this medium guided, and on occasions, distorted readers'/viewers perception of artworks in print reproduction.

This chapter follows a passage of time in order to explore how past, present and future tenses are juxtaposed upon the page. It begins with a distanced, aerial perspective from which viewers can gain an overview of artists' works in the wider context of the landscape. This view both extends and distorts our perception of the work and invites the possibility of new associations between time and place when documentation is rearranged on the page. As the page invites readers/viewers to step into the landscape, the influence of natural rhythms and cycles can be felt in the works presented by Long and Dibbets. Upon the page, these artists address the inevitability of change in their work and explore how this can be documented or indicated with the fixity of print. The latter half of this chapter is concerned with how via the page works are encountered in the present moment. The pages by David Lamelas and Douglas Huebler are perhaps most challenging as these attempt to pinpoint a precise moment upon the page and require readers/viewers to have confidence in the information, however limited or ambiguous that is provided for them. Finally, pages by Stanley Broun and Hamish Fulton offer readers/viewers, as well as themselves, the possibility to return to past works and reconfigure these in new circumstances, either in the mind or in physical reality. The portability of the

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<sup>6</sup> Andre, C., 'Interview with Carl Andre', *Avalanche*, no. 1 (fall 1970), p. 24

<sup>7</sup> The first issue of *Avalanche* magazine was published in fall 1970, edited by Willoughby Sharp and Liza Béar, based in New York. The previous year, Sharp had organised the *Earth Art* (1969) exhibition at Cornell University, and several photographs of artists making work for this exhibition were published in *Avalanche*. The first issue, dedicated to Land Art included interviews with Carl Andre and Jan Dibbets, a photographic 'retrospective' of Richard Long and a discussion between Robert Smithson, Dennis Oppenheim and Michael Heizer.



page is essential in providing readers/viewers with access to works that were so remote or ephemeral that they would have no other way of knowing about it. This chapter will show how readers/viewers are invited to take the pages on their own journey to reimagine the pieces discussed in circumstances beyond which the works were originally conceived.

In the late 1960s, audiences were exposed to 'mind blowing'<sup>8</sup> images of the earth on television and in aerial photographs published in books, magazines and newspapers. The inaugural *Whole Earth Catalog*<sup>9</sup> published in fall 1968 featured on its front cover the first colour photograph of Earth, imaged in 1967 by the ATS-3 satellite. Inside, organiser Stuart Brand wrote of how new micro and macro photographs of the earth would cause 'your mind and you to advance in and out through the universe... It quickly becomes hard to breathe and you realize [sic] how magnitude-bound we've been'<sup>10</sup> (Fig. 3.2). The production of small-scale aerial photography enabled people to encounter ancient cultures for the first time and transported mass audiences across previously uncharted millennia. In the visual arts, aerial photography meant that audiences were given perspectives of artists' work that they would have no other way of attaining. On the page, these views enabled readers/viewers to glance at a work in its entirety and situate it in relation to the wider environment.

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<sup>8</sup> Brand, S., (1968) *Whole Earth Catalog: Access to Tools*. Menlo Park, California: Portola Institute. p. 5

<sup>9</sup> The *Whole Earth Catalog: Access to Tools* (1968) is available as a PDF download at [https://monoskop.org/images/0/09/Brand\\_Stewart\\_Whole\\_Earth\\_Catalog\\_Fall\\_1968.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/0/09/Brand_Stewart_Whole_Earth_Catalog_Fall_1968.pdf) (accessed 08-01-2018)

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5



Fig. 3.2: Front cover and page 6 of the *Whole Earth Catalog: Access to Tools* (1968) Screenshot of a digitalised copy available as a PDF at [https://monoskop.org/images/0/09/Brand\\_Stewart\\_Whole\\_Earth\\_Catalog\\_Fall\\_1968.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/0/09/Brand_Stewart_Whole_Earth_Catalog_Fall_1968.pdf) (accessed 08-01-2018)

Writing in 1968, in the catalogue of *Minimal Art*<sup>11</sup>, Robert Smithson suggested, 'Just as our satellites explore and chart the moon and the planets, so might the artist explore the unknown sites that surround our airports'<sup>12</sup>. Smithson had begun working as an 'artist consultant' on the development of an airport between Fort Worth and Dallas<sup>13</sup> in July 1966 and this may have cemented his ambition to provide aerial perspectives of his work, a habit which continued through to his death, which resulted from an aviation accident, in 1973. In the *Minimal Art* catalogue, Smithson also presented the proposal that 'earthworks', which explored 'drastic changes of scale, as one ascends and descends' could be placed along airport taxiways and runways, thus taking 'one from the dazzling to the monotonous in a short space of time'<sup>14</sup>. This experience, when compressed onto the pages of a catalogue, called upon maps, aerial photographs and the illusion of vanishing points to evoke a sense of distance between the reader/viewer and the work.

<sup>11</sup> *Minimal Art*, 23 March – 26 May 1968, Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, organised by E. Develing

<sup>12</sup> Smithson, *Minimal Art* (1968) exhibition catalogue, p. 72

<sup>13</sup> Smithson, S., 'Towards the Development of an Air Terminal Site', *Artforum*, vol. 5, no. 10 (summer 1967), pp. 36 - 40

<sup>14</sup> *Minimal Art*, op cit., p. 72

In 1968, Smithson made the distinction between a 'site' and 'non-site' within his practice<sup>15</sup>. For Smithson, a site in an outside environment had hazy boundaries, which he described by saying 'there's nothing to grasp onto except the cinders and there's no way of focusing on one particular place'<sup>16</sup>. Without any real edges, the distinction between the work and the environment it is situated within is fluid. However, the documentation brought into an exhibition, and I would argue, by extension, the catalogue, was identified as a 'non-site' with clear edges. For Smithson,

Site and non-site constitute a collection of relationships among variables. The site is identified by information supplied by the artist in the form of maps, photographs, analogical objects (bins and trays cued by the original lay of the land), rock samples and verbal captions. The non-site, by this accumulation of references, acts as the signifier of the absent site<sup>17</sup>.

Of all his catalogue contributions, Smithson's pages in *Artists and Photographs* (1970)<sup>18</sup> calls into question edges of sites and non-sites most astutely [v.2, p. 155]. *Artists and Photographs* comprised a gallery presentation at Multiples Gallery, New York and a limited-edition collection of books and multiples contained in a large 33.5 x 33.5cm box. Organiser Lawrence Alloway (1926 – 1990)<sup>19</sup> referred to *Artists and Photographs* as an 'exhibition/catalogue' indicating that artists' contributions across the two formats were 'variants' of the same work, rather than reproductions (Fig. 3.3). He added, 'Both the exhibited

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<sup>15</sup> Smithson first used the term 'Non-site' in titling his indoor works in 1968, for example, 'A Nonsite (an indoor earth-work)', later retitled 'A Nonsite, Pine Barrens, New Jersey', 1968.

<sup>16</sup> Smithson, R., in 'Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson', *Avalanche*, number 1 (fall 1970), p. 67

<sup>17</sup> Alloway, L., 'Robert Smithson's Development' *Artforum*, vol. 11, no. 3 (November 1972) p. 55

<sup>18</sup> *Artists and Photographs*, 28 March – 5 April 1970, Multiples Gallery, New York, organised by Lawrence Alloway and Marian Goodman

<sup>19</sup> Beatrice Von Bismarck examines the complex nature of Alloway's involvement in *Artists and Photographs* in Von Bismarck, B., (2015) 'The Art World as Multiple: Lawrence Alloway and *Artists and Photographs*' in Bradnock, L., Martin, C.J., Peabody, R., (eds.) *Lawrence Alloway: Critic and Curator*, Los Angeles: Getty Publications, pp. 148 - 165

'object' and the catalogue 'entry' are permutations made possible by the repeatability of the photographic process'<sup>20</sup>.



Fig 3.3: *Artists and Photographs* (1970) exhibition catalogue. Henry Moore Institute, special collection, 25-11-2017

Smithson's contribution to the project comprised a colour photograph taken at close range showing discarded materials such as rubble, bricks, soil and stones, captioned on the reverse as 'torn photograph from the second stop (rubble). Second mountain of 6 stops on a section'. In discussing the relationship between earthworks and photography, Alloway concluded that when so much of the work was inaccessible due to its location or use of ephemeral materials: 'the documentary photograph is grounds for believing that something happened'<sup>21</sup>. Quite what that 'something' is in regards to Smithson's project remains elusive; whilst the reader/viewer can ascertain that Smithson took a trip to a designated site, neither the photograph or the caption are focused enough to assist the reader/viewer in ascertaining the site visited. The scope of the photograph,

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<sup>20</sup> Alloway, L. 'Artists and Photographs', *Artists and Photographs* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 4

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 3

which is dictated by the aim of the lens, therefore, provides a further example of a non-site.

Smithson began taking trips to specific sites, particularly around New Jersey in 1965, he explained how 'certain sites would appeal to me more – sites that had been in some way disrupted or pulverized. I was really looking for a denaturalization rather than built up scenic beauty'<sup>22</sup>. Consequently, the photograph included in *Artists and Photographs* depicts one such site where 'machines munch[ed] steadily' away at a quarry<sup>23</sup>. Alloway accompanied Smithson on several trips<sup>24</sup> and wrote the only feature-length article on Smithson that would be published in his lifetime, in which he observed how the artist was 'attending to a landscape not only in terms of natural process but in terms of human intervention as well'<sup>25</sup> causing the artist to develop a concern with 'fragmentation, corrosion, decomposition, disintegration, rock creep, debris slides, mud flow [and] avalanche'<sup>26</sup>.

Smithson's fascination with fragmentation extended beyond the content of the photograph to the form of the image itself. According to the caption on the reverse of Smithson's work, the original photograph measured 55cm x 55cm. What the reader/viewer encountered in the box was this photograph torn into four roughly even-sized square pieces. The photograph has been torn by hand; firstly as one continuous vertical tear, followed by a horizontal tear to each of the two halves to create four evenly sized pieces. Upon first encountering the torn photograph, it may take readers/viewers a little while to configure the full image, a process rendered more difficult due to the similarity of the pieces of rubble and stone depicted and for the image appearing to have no definitive top or bottom. Readers/viewers are invited to shuffle through the four fragments of the photograph, changing the orientation of these to encounter different views and relationships between the pieces of rubble before arriving at the intended

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<sup>22</sup> Smithson, R., in 'Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson', *Avalanche* (fall 1970), pp. 52 - 53

<sup>23</sup> Alloway, L., 'Robert Smithson's Development' *Artforum*, vol. 11, no. 3 (November 1972) p. 57

<sup>24</sup> Joy Sleeman has traced the development of Alloway and Smithson's friendship and the impact this had on their careers. She explains how they met in 1966, and although not explicitly stated in his writing at the time, Alloway accompanied Smithson on trips to *Spiral Jetty* and the Passaic in 1972. Sleeman, J., (2015) 'Lawrence Alloway, Robert Smithson and Earthworks' in Bradnock, L., Martin, C.J., Peabody, R., (eds.) *Lawrence Alloway: Critic and Curator*, Los Angeles: Getty Publications, pp. 107 - 127

<sup>25</sup> Smithson (1970) op cit., p. 54

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 55

arrangement (Fig. 3.4). This invites a haptic and even performative engagement with the work, evocative of how Smithson may have encountered the original site where the photograph was taken, overturning rocks and rubble<sup>27</sup> as well as later the tearing of the image itself. The photograph is an example of a non-site as it is portable (the torn element enforces this), it extends the location in which the photograph was taken into another time and place, thus blurring these boundaries even more.

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<sup>27</sup> Smithson provided a description of this process in his contribution to the *One Month: March 1969* (1969) exhibition catalogue, stating, 'I will select a site or network of sites, I don't know where yet, and photograph what is under the rocks. Next I will trace the trail on a map, and show the points where I overturned rocks', n.p.



Fig. 3.4: Two views of Robert Smithson's piece, 'torn photograph from the second stop (rubble). Second mountain of 6 stops on a section' in *Artists and Photographs* (1970). Henry Moore Institute, special collection, 25-11-2017

The image itself is suggestive of how a rough and uneven landscape is experienced as it is traversed on foot. Although there is little distinction between the various pieces of rubble, the centre of the photograph is sharply focused on the debris directly in front of the artist (and by extension, the readers/viewers), this becomes darker and softer towards the edge of the image, much like the perception at the edge of one's visual field when moving across an expansive environment. Although readers/viewers are not aware of what exists beyond the frame of the image, it is reasonable to assume that conditions underfoot remain much the same due to the loosely and widely dispersed nature of the rubble. This raises questions of why the artist should have chosen this precise location to focus the lens of his camera and contributes to the notion that Smithson had a concern for the geological characteristics of a landscape, rather than specific destinations.

Smithson's contribution to *Artists and Photographs* is atypical of most photographs of land art that were in circulation in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Many outdoor works were large-scale and inseparable from the surrounding landscape, thus requiring photographs to be taken from a long-range perspective. Furthermore, the only way to view the full extent of larger works such as *Rift* (1968) by Michael Heizer or *Spiral Jetty* (1970) by Smithson was from the air, or, for most viewers via reproductions of photographs benefitting from this birds-eye perspective. Such views were not always possible, and to accompany the magazine feature 'Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim and Smithson' published in *Avalanche*<sup>28</sup>, John Weber's photograph of *Spiral Jetty* presented the work from the foreshortened view of the shore of the Great Salt Lake (Fig. 3.5). In contrast to the more familiar aerial photograph, the spiral of Smithson's work is less recognisable, and consequently, this view was rarely published.

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<sup>28</sup> 'Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson', *Avalanche*, number 1, fall 1970, pp. 48 - 49



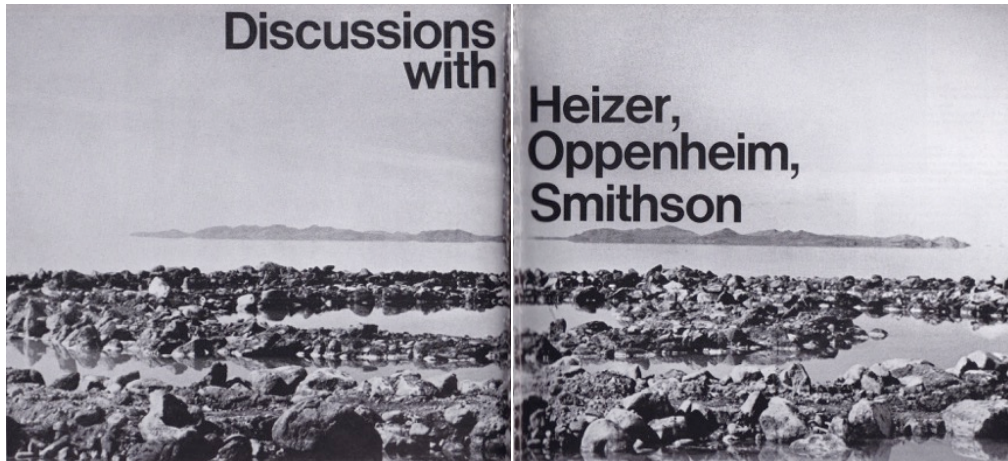


Fig. 3.5: Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, Great Salt Lake, Boy Elder County, Utah (1970). Photograph by John Weber, reproduced in 'Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson', *Avalanche*, number 1 (fall 1970), pp. 48 - 49

To take photographs of his outdoor works, Richard Long more modestly took to higher ground to capture the full extent of his interventions into the landscape. To photograph *Stones on Isle of Skye* (1970), which is featured in *The New British Avant Garde* (1971)<sup>29</sup> catalogue, the artist makes the short walk across to another vantage point, resulting in a photograph that is closer to how we might approach the work ourselves. In addition to the famous straight-on view of *A Line Made by Walking, England* (1967) (Fig. 3.6), Long took a second photograph of the work (Fig. 3.7)<sup>30</sup>. To achieve this elevated view, it is possible the artist took to higher ground or climbed a nearby tree to appreciate the effect of the trodden line from another angle. Like the foreshortened view of Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, this image was rarely published, with the exceptions of illustrating an article, 'Some recent sculpture in Britain' (1969)<sup>31</sup> in *Studio International* and being published in the *Roadshow* (1971) catalogue<sup>32</sup>. These examples show how artists used photography to carefully effect viewers' approach to their work in print.

<sup>29</sup> *The New British Avant Garde*, 19 May – 21 August 1971, New York Cultural Center, New York, organised by Charles Harrison, pp. 24 - 25

<sup>30</sup> The title of this work also varies across different publications; in the *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971) catalogue it is titled *England 1967*, but when published in *Studio International*, it is titled *Sculpture, March 1967*.

<sup>31</sup> Harrison, C., 'Some recent sculpture in Britain', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no. 907 (January 1969), p. 33

<sup>32</sup> Richard Long, 'Walking sculpture, England 1967', reproduced in *Roadshow* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 31. The view discussed was also included in a montage of images included in Long's pages of *Land Art* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p



Fig. 3.6: Richard Long, *England 1967*, published in the *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition (1971)* exhibition catalogue, n.p.



Fig. 3.7: Richard Long, *Sculpture, March 1967*, published in Harrison, C., 'Some recent sculpture in Britain', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no. 907 (January 1969) p. 33

Works by artists including Smithson and Long often adopted recognisable forms including spirals, circles and straight lines that in some instances found contextualization in symbols found in pre-historic cultures<sup>33</sup>, for example, the Nazca Lines in southern Peru and stone circles in south-west England. Artists and commentators alike have often pointed out the correlation between land art and ancient inscriptions on the earth's surface<sup>34</sup>. 'We are accustomed to seeing aerial photographs of earth mounds and of earth drawings without remembering that they were never seen in this way by their makers'<sup>35</sup>, writes Virginia Gunter in the catalogue introduction to *Earth, Air, Fire, Water: Elements of Art* (1971)<sup>36</sup>, as she explains how such photographs are interspersed throughout the exhibition.

In the 'Information section' of *The New Art* (1972)<sup>37</sup> exhibition catalogue, a photograph captioned 'Hill figure, England 600'<sup>38</sup> is positioned next to a photograph of Richard Long climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa in 1969 (Fig. 3.8). Coincidentally, the hill figure is usually referred to as the 'Long Man of Wilmington', but besides sharing a namesake, the two figures appear to have little in common in terms of location or age. Long adopts a similar stance to the chalk figure which is etched into the English landscape, the artist stands bearing a large rucksack, with his hands on his hips, elbows pointing outwards and looking straight toward the camera. The hill figure too is pictured straight on, arms extended to hold two staves and elbows held at an opposite, although similar angle to Long's. The layout of these two photographs on the page calls readers/viewers to consider the likeness between the two figures, perhaps likening the artist's journeys to the timelessness of the hill figure, albeit in another place and time. The two photographs have been reproduced beside one

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<sup>33</sup> Richard Long replicated in the landscape and in simple line drawings ancient Inca symbols including a puma, sun, spiral, moon, condor, falcon and rain as part of his artist book, *South America* (1972) Dusseldorf: Konrad Fischer

<sup>34</sup> Bourdon, D., 'What on Earth!', *Life*, 25 April 1969, pp. 80 – 86. Bourdon's article included aerial photographs of Earth Art and prehistoric and medieval sites including the Uffington White Horse. A special double issue of *Life*, 26 December 1969, p. 95.

<sup>35</sup> Gunter, V., 'Introduction', *Earth, Air, Fire, Water: Elements of Earth*, exhibition catalogue (volume 1), pp. 7 - 8

<sup>36</sup> *Earth, Air, Fire, Water: Elements of Art*, 4 February – 4 April 1971, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, organised by Virginia Gunter.

<sup>37</sup> *The New Art*, 17 August – 24 September 1972, Hayward Gallery, London, organised by Anne Seymour.

<sup>38</sup> The carved hill figure depicted is The Long Man of Wilmington, East Sussex. It measures 72m in height and is estimated to date back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. Long also incorporated another hill figure known as the Cerne Abbas Giant, located north of Dorchester in 'Crene Abbas Walk' (1972), a work resulting from a six-day walk in Dorset.

another on occasions since this publication, indicating that their adjacency in the *The New Art* catalogue is intentional<sup>39</sup>.

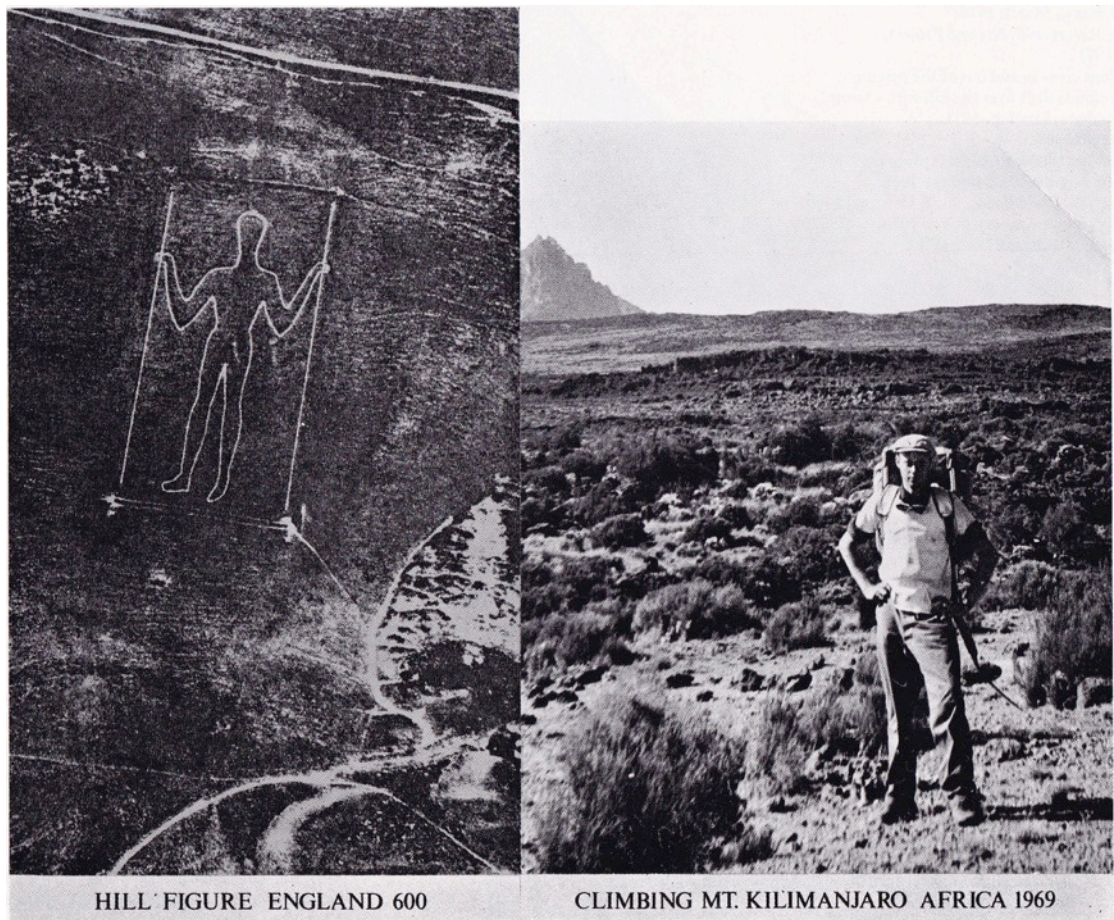


Fig. 3.8: Richard Long, 'Information section', *The New Art* (1972), exhibition catalogue, p. 101

In *18 Paris IV.70* (1970)<sup>40</sup>, Long once again juxtaposed photographs of an ancient hill figure with his own, less permanent interventions into the landscape [v.2, p. 157]. To illustrate the work *A journey through rain and through a circle on Dartmoor / Richard Long, England 1969*, the artist presented three photographs; one of a sequence of concentric triangles etched into the dirt or grass, the second depicting the Uffington White Horse<sup>41</sup>, located in Oxfordshire, and finally, a photograph of a turf circle<sup>42</sup>. The placement of these three images

<sup>39</sup> More recently, the two photographs discussed here have been placed together in Fuchs, R.H., (1986) *Richard Long*, London: Thames and Hudson, pp. 22 – 23

<sup>40</sup> *18 Paris IV.70*, 4 April - 25 April 1970, 66 rue Mouffetard, Paris, organised by Michel Claura, catalogue organised and distributed by Seth Siegelau

<sup>41</sup> The Uffington White Horse is a stylised hill figure, located on Whitehorse Hill, Oxfordshire. It measures 110m in length and is thought to be over 3000 years old.

<sup>42</sup> Long made several turf circles early in his career including, *Turf Circle, England* (1966), *County Cork, Ireland* (1967), *Turf Circle, Krefeld, Germany* (1969)

directly beneath each other, accompanied by the handwritten title of the work suggests that the sites depicted were encountered on Long's walk through Dartmoor. However, despite the caption banner that links the three images, none of these photographs represents the artist's journey through Dartmoor. The concentric triangle sculpture was made on a dusty plain near Lake Turkana, Africa during the same visit that Long climbed Mount Kilimanjaro<sup>43</sup>, the Uffington White Horse is located over 100 miles away from Dartmoor, and the third photograph shows Long's large *Turf Circle* created in Krefeld in 1969. Given the versatility of the page, Long was able to draw comparisons between landscapes and landmarks that were otherwise distant, both in time and space. Long's pairings or grouping of photographs on the page collapses the distance between otherwise unrelated landmarks and time periods, evoking relationships in the mind that may not be apparent when visiting the site or viewing a singular image. The addition of a handwritten or typeset caption that runs across or beneath the photographs cements this link further, as such readers/viewers are inclined to make the connections set out before them.

Through the pages of exhibition catalogues, works by various artists that were scattered across different environments could be brought together into a single site. Such juxtapositions might also suggest a form of exhibition, in this vein, Seth Siegelaub conceived a number of exhibitions from 1969 onwards, including *July August September* (1969)<sup>44</sup> that did not have a gallery presence. Instead, works spanned eleven international locations, alluded to by a map of the world that extended across the front and back cover of the catalogue. The only place that all eleven projects could be seen collectively was in the exhibition catalogue<sup>45</sup>. Here, artists' contributions provided information about the content of the work, followed by 'specific information' at the back of the catalogue pertaining to the exact locations and dates of the works.

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<sup>43</sup> Long made this work during his first visit to Africa in July 1969, documentation of the piece is now in the Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach. Tufnell, B., 'Foot Steps / Full Circle' in Wallis, C., (ed) (2017) *Richard Long: A Reader*, London: Ridinghouse, p. 248

<sup>44</sup> *July August September*, eleven locations worldwide, 1 July – 30 September 1969, organised by Seth Siegelaub.

<sup>45</sup> In 2013 Michalis Pichler asked Siegelaub whether he knew of anyone who physically saw all the pieces in *July August September*. Siegelaub replied that he did not think that anyone had, adding 'But I don't know anybody who actually went around visiting, you know the book in hand and visiting'. Pichler, P., 'Interview with Seth Siegelaub, April 11, 2013', (2016) *Books and Ideas After Seth Siegelaub*, Berlin and New York: Sternberg Press and The Center for Book Arts, p. 120

Richard Long's piece in the catalogue was titled *Thee's gotten where thee's cassn't back'n 'assent?*, a colloquial west-country saying meaning 'You've got it where you can't reverse it, haven't you?'<sup>46</sup>, possibly referring to the flow of the river where his work was placed [v.2, pp. 158 – 159]. The local dialect used by Long here resists translation in what is otherwise a tri-lingual catalogue<sup>47</sup>. The site for Long's piece was the bed of the River Avon by Clifton Down, between the Clifton Suspension Bridge and the dramatic landscape of Avon Gorge where the river runs along a limestone ridge. The River Avon has been a reoccurring feature in walks, sculptures and text-based works by the artist, who was brought up in nearby Bristol and it features on the artist's invitation card to his first solo exhibition held at Konrad Fischer's in 1968 (Fig. 3.9)<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> The saying is also the title of a 1968 song by British Scrumpy and Western band, The Wurzles. Long also used lyrics from singer-songwriter Johnny Cash's song 'I Walk the Line', recorded in Tennessee in 1956 in the caption which accompanied his work 'Reflections in the Little Pigeon River, Great Smokey Mountains, Tennessee, 1970'

<sup>47</sup> All texts within the catalogue were translated into English, French and German.

<sup>48</sup> Long's announcement card for his first solo exhibition with Konrad Fischer, 21 September – 18 October 1968 consisted of a commercially-produced postcard depicting the River Avon gorge with the iconic bridge in the background. Long bulk-purchased the postcards and sent them to Fischer for overprinting with the artist's name. Richard Long, 'Announcement Card', 1968, Düsseldorf: Galerie Konrad Fischer, 1968. Discussed in Wilson, A., 'From Page to Page', in Claire Wallis (ed.) (2009) *Heaven and Earth*, London: Tate Publishing, p. 195 and Morris, L., 'Idea + Idea', (2016) *Time Extended / 1964–1978. Works and Documents from the Herbert Foundation*, Ghent: Herbert Foundation, pp. 24– 25

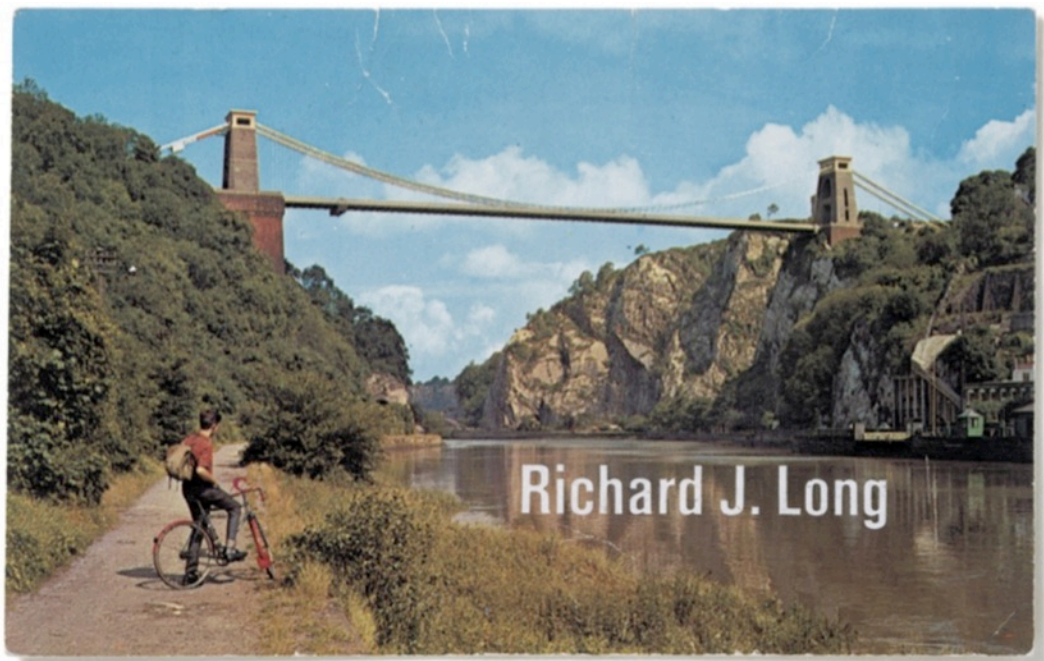


Fig. 3.9: Richard Long, 'Announcement Card', 1968, Düsseldorf: Galerie Konrad Fischer, 1968. A copy of the announcement card is held in the Herbert Collection, Ghent. Image available at: <http://www.herbertfoundation.org/en/collection/35/richard-long> (accessed 04-12-2017)

Long often used photographs to depict the landscapes that he journeyed through and the interventions he created using materials from the site, including stones, rocks, twigs, and leaves. The artist creates these pieces and then looks on through the lens of the camera; in print, the reader/viewer is invited to do the same. The photographs supplied by Long for the *July August September* catalogue do not provide sufficient detail to identify the sculpture that he has positioned on the riverbank, despite showing the site at both high tide and low tide. This is caused by the long range from which the photographs were taken from the steep cliffs behind the A4 road. Long had previously made sculptures that were indentations etched into sand, grass, or river banks<sup>49</sup>; it is plausible that a similar piece has been made here which is not picked up by the lens of the camera, or that the piece had been eroded by the tide and time. Due to the nature of the documentation used here, the reader/viewer must trust that there was something on the bank to warrant the taking of these photographs and the excursion they are invited to undertake.

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<sup>49</sup> For example, *River Avon Rainbow* (1969), Long made a rainbow across a mudbank of the River Avon using powder-paint colours, reproduced in Long, R., (2007) *Richard Long. Walking and Marking*, Edinburgh National Galleries of Scotland, p. 50

The map on the second page provides an aerial view of the site, pinpointing the exact location of the sculpture on an Ordnance Survey (OS) map. The map provides a precise grid-reference should the reader/viewer wish to locate the sculpture and make the journey personally. To accompany this information Long advises,

The sculpture can be seen 2 times each day at low tide. The exact time of the low tide can be gotten from a copy of 'Bristol and Channel Ports Timetable, 1969', or a local newspaper 'The Western Daily Press' (times quoted for either Avonmouth or Hotwells are suitable)<sup>50</sup>.

Such specificity (of the text, but also the implied specificity of the photograph) suggests that Long anticipates that readers/viewers might make the effort to revisit this site, at least mentally, if not physically. Furthermore, since the piece was dated 1 May 1969 (two months before the exhibition began), the finds of such a journey would be difficult to predict or even recognise. It is possible that the work was eroded soon after it was made, but also that remnants of the piece may have outlasted the duration of the exhibition, albeit in a different formation and position along the riverbank. Long's instructions, map and photographs provide the only lasting evidence of the sculpture the artist claimed to place upon the riverbank. Yet at the same time, the catalogue presentation highlights the limitations of using two-dimensional documentation to represent his physical, changeable and ephemeral interventions into the landscape. Photographs are used to communicate to Long's audience how his sculptures looked upon completion and presented the inevitability of change due to the materials used and the landscape pictured. Readers/viewers know that when they view a photograph of one of Long's sculptures the piece itself is likely to have a different status and form, or may have disappeared entirely.

Demonstrating continuous change becomes problematic when one is limited to the fixed medium of the page. In *July August September*, Long supplies readers/viewers with two images, one of the work submerged at high tide, and another, when it is supposedly visible at low tide. In *One Month: March 1969*

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<sup>50</sup> Long, R., 'Specific Information', *July August September* (1969) exhibition catalogue, p. 25



(1969)<sup>51</sup>, published earlier the same year, Long also made a proposal to take two sets of photographs of the River Avon. In this calendar exhibition organised by Siegelaub, each artist was allocated a day of the month and was invited to submit written information regarding the nature of the work they intended to contribute. Long was allocated 21 March, the date of the spring equinox, which marked the beginning of the astrological year. Following the equinox, tides are at their highest, accordingly, Long proposed to document this annually occurring phenomena by photographing the level of the tide at midnight on March 20/21, and again at midnight on March 21/22. In this proposed pairing of photographs, Long intends to capture the ending of one astronomical year, and the beginning of the next, inviting readers/viewers to complete the absent transitions in their minds.

Rhythmic transitions such as those from day to night, the change of the seasons or the ebb and flow of the tide provided the structure for several works associated with Land Art in the late 1960s and early 1970s<sup>52</sup>. In the *Documenta 5* (1972)<sup>53</sup> exhibition catalogue, Hamish Fulton tells the story of the Native American, Iron Shell (1816–1896)<sup>54</sup> who counted the passing of the moon by making a nick on a long pole that was kept for that very purpose. When the moon disappeared at the end of each lunar cycle, Iron Shell marked a single nick on the other side of the pole to show the passing of one month, and each year at the Birth of Calves (April) he began a new stick. Just like Iron Shell, Fulton, along with several of his peers, was captivated by the experience of the hourly, daily, monthly and yearly cycles<sup>55</sup>.

Fulton's tale and Long's approach in *One Month* might be compared to work by Dibbets in which photographs of similar phenomena recorded slight, sometimes

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<sup>51</sup> *One Month: March 1969*, 1 – 31 March 1969, calendar exhibition, organised by Seth Siegelaub

<sup>52</sup> Examples included *Moon set and sun rise* (1969) by Fulton, *Twelve Hours Tide Object with Perspective Correction* (1969) by Dibbets and *On midsummer's day / A westward walk / From Stonehenge at sunrise / To Glastonbury by sunset / Forty five miles following the day* (1972) by Long

<sup>53</sup> *Documenta 5*, 30 June - 8 October 1972, Museum Fridericianum, Friedrichsplatz, Neue Galerie, Kassel, organised by Harald Szeemann (Secretary-General)

<sup>54</sup> Iron Shell (Tukiha Maza) was a chief of the Oglala Sioux tribe located in South Dakota in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>55</sup> Additionally, in a similar fashion to Iron Shell, Fulton used a stick to record the progress of one journey. In *100 Mile Walking Stick, Summer 1971* (1971), Fulton records a walk at Bourne Park near Canterbury that spanned the duration of ten days (ten miles travelled each day) upon a stick and attaches four lapwing feathers to the end of the handle. Hamish Fulton (1972) *Hollow Lane*, London: Situation Publications, n.p.

barely perceivable changes as they happened. As one of several contributions<sup>56</sup> to the catalogue for *Konzeption / Conception: Dokumentation einer Heutigen Kunstrichtung / Documentation of Today's Art Tendency* (1969)<sup>57</sup>, Dibbets presented a double-paged sequence of photographs that recorded the path of the sun throughout the course of one day [v.2, pp. 160 - 161]. To show how the path of the sun impacts upon the internal space of the gallery, Dibbets arranges nineteen square photographs as a grid, six across, and three down in length across the double page without any caption. The final photograph, number 19 continues onto a fourth line alone. Readers/viewers might be expected to begin viewing the photographs from the top left-hand corner of the grid, their gaze running across the page before dropping to the next line of images, as it would if reading a text. The small handwritten labels indicating the ten-minute intervals at which each photograph was taken confirm this sequence. The double page in the catalogue provides a polished version of Dibbets' preparation and layout of the original nineteen photographs as presented in the exhibition, minus the artist's handwritten notes and calculations (Fig. 3.10)<sup>58</sup>.

The photographs have been taken from the back of an enclosed, narrow space, looking outwards into the street through the glass doors which had turned a disused alley at Neubrückestraße 12, Düsseldorf into Konrad Fischer's first exhibition space. Taken through the course of one afternoon during an interim period between exhibitions, the images record the changing slant of shadows at ten-minute intervals as the sun passes across the sky between 13:00 and 16:00 hours. This piece is one of a series of explorations by the artist in which the camera is used to document the passing of time over the course of one day, condensing this experience into a sequence of photographs presented as a line or a grid<sup>59</sup>. In the photographs presented in *Konzeption / Conception*, there

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<sup>56</sup> Also included was a reproduction of the front and back of a postcard project developed with Seth Siegelau titled 'On May 9 (Friday), May 12 (Monday) and May 30 (Friday) 1969 at 3:00 Greenwich Mean Time (9:00 EST) Jan Dibbets will make the gesture indicated on the overside at the place marked 'X' in Amsterdam, Holland' and a typed statement presented in Dutch, German and French and dated 25 April 1969, certifying the triangular formation of cars, trains, and ships as a work of art.

<sup>57</sup> *Konzeption Conception: Dokumentation einer Heutigen Kunstrichtung / Documentation of Today's Art Tendency*, Städtisches Museum, Leverkusen, 24 October – 23 November 1969, organised by Konrad Fischer and Rolf Wedewer.

<sup>58</sup> The original layout is now part of the Herbert Collection, Ghent

<sup>59</sup> Dibbets presented similar works, *The Shadows in my Studio*, 1969 in *Conceptual Art, Arte Povera, Land Art* (June – July 1970) and *The Shortest Day of 1970 Photographed from Sunrise to Sunset*, *The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of New York*. The latter consisted of twelve photographs taken at fifty-minute intervals, the first taken at sunrise,

appears to be little difference between each frame; the reader/viewer can only fully appreciate the sense of sequence upon viewing the complete set of images. Sunlight bleeds into the narrow passage of Fischer's gallery, illuminating the street, cars, pedestrians, and daily routines of the outside world. A sense of the everyday prevails throughout Dibbets' work; any person working in a given space (studio, office, domestic space) for a period of an afternoon or a day can note how the windows in that space frame the changing strength and orientation of the sun, creating a natural marker of passing time.

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7:17am through to sunset, 4:32pm. These were displayed as a horizontal line across four pages in the catalogue.



Fig. 3.10: Jan Dibbets, *Shadows in Konrad Fischer Gallery, Photographed Every Ten Minutes between 13:00 and 16:00, 1969*. The original layout sheet is part of the Herbert Collection, Ghent. Image available at <http://www.herbertfoundation.org/en/collection/30/jan-dibbets> (accessed 28-11-2017)

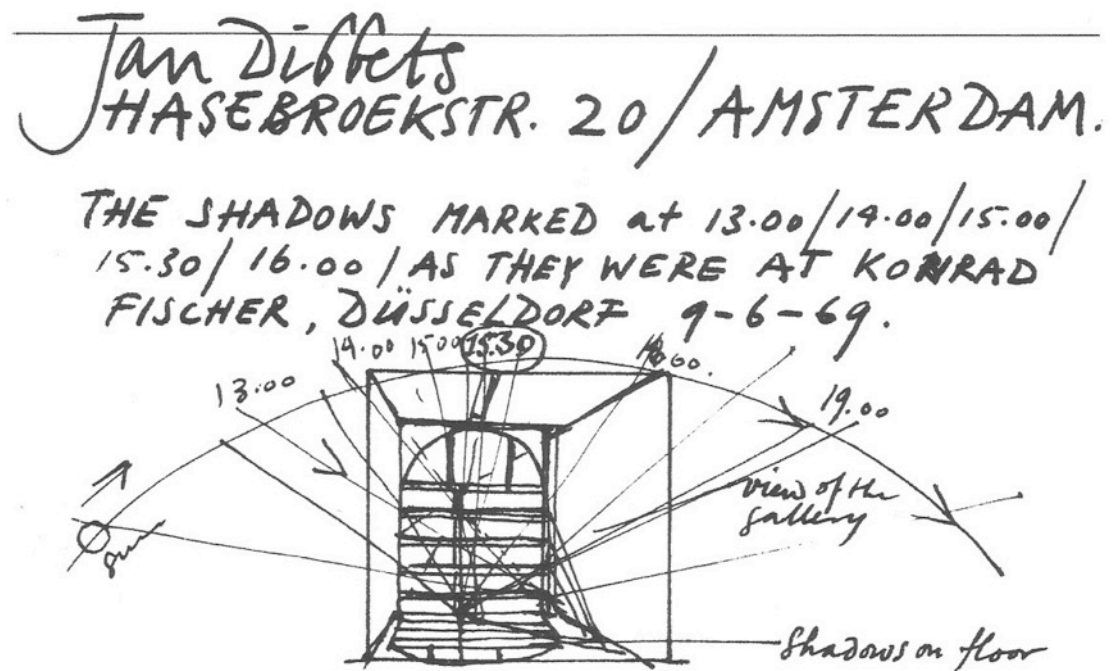


Fig. 3.11: Jan Dibbets, 557,087 (1969) exhibition catalogue, reproduced in the facsimile, Khonsary, J., (ed) (2012) 4,492,040, Vancouver and Los Angeles: New Documents Vancouver Art Gallery and the Seattle Art Museum, n.p.

The shadows cast by the mullions of the door and windows are clearest and most defined within the narrow frame of the gallery at 15:30 hours (photograph 16 of the sequence). The arched top of the window is a prominent feature in each image and is reminiscent of the curved shape of the earth, or the daily path of the sun between dawn and dusk as captured by Dibbets' photographs. The curvature of the sun's path is better emphasised in Dibbets' drawing of the piece, submitted for the catalogue *557,087* (1969)<sup>60</sup> (Fig. 3.11). Here, a large curve is drawn above the space to mimic the journey of the sun, arrows indicate the direction of travel, notations of time punctuate the line, and the point at which the shadow falls squarely into the gallery, indicated, as though it is anticipated, by bolder writing and the circling of 15:30 hours.

Both Long and Dibbets are astutely aware of the capabilities and limitations of using photography to record the changes present in naturally occurring phenomena. The information provided on these pages requires readers/viewers to peer in closer to discern the underlying concepts of the works. Furthermore, the sequencing and layout of images on the page can also affect our viewing, helping to impose a sense of 'before' and 'after' in Long's project, and in Dibbets' pages, the rhythm of the rising and falling sun through the course of one day. One might also speculate on Dibbets' decision to present nineteen images as this is neither a round number, nor does it fit the schema of the page. In astrology, the 19<sup>th</sup> card of the Major Arcana of the Tarot is the Sun, the very subject matter of Dibbets' photographic sequence. Moreover, in numerology, the number 19 is significant as it is formed of the root numbers 1, which signifies beginnings, and the number 9, which signifies endings, this could be interpreted in relation to the rising and falling of the sun each day.

In contrast to Long and Dibbets' framing a period of time on the page, David Lamelas was more precise in directing viewers to a 'present moment' experienced in his film and photography-based works produced in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Much of the detail of Lamelas' durational films, such as the movement of pedestrians and vehicles were lost on the page, but by juxtaposing and re-presenting moving images as film stills, Lamelas created new associations on the page. This elicited different modes of viewing, as, on the page, shots from several films could be seen at the same time, helping to

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<sup>60</sup> *557,087*, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, 5 September – 5 October 1969, organised by Lucy Lippard.

draw out parallels between them. In the *Prospect 69* (1969)<sup>61</sup> newspaper-style catalogue, Lamelas presented three stills from the same film, *Time As Activity – Düsseldorf* (1969), each shot using a static camera at different locations around the city of Düsseldorf (Fig. 3.12). Before each shot of the film, Lamelas provided a written caption to inform viewers of the exact duration of the sequence, positing time as both the subject and medium of the film. This information was omitted from the catalogue presentation causing readers/viewers to be uncertain of the relationship between the three images. Moreover, the fluidity of the daily rhythms captured in the film and the specificity of time, and to a lesser extent, place, were lost when this work was reproduced in the catalogue.

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<sup>61</sup> *Prospect 69*, 30 September - 12 October 1969, Kunsthalle, Düsseldorf, organised by Konrad Fischer and Hans Strelow

DAVID LAMELAS



**WIDE WHITE SPACE** GALLERY  
ANTWERPEN

Fig. 3.12: David Lamelas, 'Time As Activity – Düsseldorf', *Prospect 69* (1969) exhibition catalogue, p. 34. Image courtesy of Lynda Morris, Norwich

Throughout the period covered by this research, Lamelas began to incorporate additional information including place names, times and durations in his catalogue contributions, thus translating his interest in time and activity more explicitly to the page. The catalogue *18 Paris IV.70* (1970)<sup>62</sup> was particularly

<sup>62</sup> *18 Paris IV. 70*, 66 rue Mouffetard, Paris, 4 – 25 April 1970, organised by Michel Claura, publication and distribution of the catalogue by Seth Siegelau (International General, New York).

relevant for Lamelas, as the structure of the exhibition served to highlight changes that can occur over time. Organiser Michel Claura wrote to the selected artists asking them to submit proposals for a project that would be distributed amongst all other participating artists<sup>63</sup>. After reviewing the other projects, artists were then able to make amendments to their own projects, with both versions finally being published in the exhibition catalogue. The inclusion of both projects demonstrates the changes that took place between conception and completion, and in some cases evidence the project being carried out.

Lamelas' initial proposal in *18 Paris IV.70* gives instructions for a sequence of three-minute films to be made in twenty-five different cities spanning Amsterdam, London, Sydney, Moscow, Caracas and Delhi [v.2, pp. 163 - 166]. The precision and short duration of the films contrast with the widely dispersed locations of the various cities listed, rendering the project logistically impossible. Lamelas's second project on page 17 of the catalogue [v.2, p. 164] shows a change from the first, more conceptual proposal in terms of geography and duration, and is more achievable. In the three new films proposed by Lamelas, each three minutes in length, a static film camera 'anywhere in Paris city' individually films Daniel Buren, Raul Escari (Argentine artist and journalist) and Pierre Grimberg (the cinematographer of the film). They tell the cameraman the time after three minutes of being filmed. This second proposal is followed by three film stills, showing Buren, Escari and Grimberg at different locations in Paris, thus confirming the realisation of the project. Buren appears to have the most deliberate stance of the three men, he stands on a balcony with traditional Parisian architecture in the backdrop, poised to read his wrist-watch as if to emphasise the intention behind the project. Due to the proposed medium of film, Lamelas' project implies that it is concerned with duration. Aside from Buren who appears to study his watch, and thus suggest the durational framework of the piece, the static images provide readers/viewers with only a snapshot of the entire work.

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<sup>63</sup> In the catalogue introduction, Claura writes that of the 22 invited artists, four artists were finally not included the exhibition; Joseph Beuys, who never answered; Terry Atkinson and Michael Baldwin 'who expressed their refusal in a long explanation which, being published, would certainly have been considered as an actual participation'; Carl Andre who also refused via private correspondence to participate and Hanne Darboven who responded with a first project and then requested her work to be withdrawn from the exhibition. Claura, 'Introduction', *18 Paris IV.70* (1970) exhibition catalogue, n.p.



Lamelas appears to have an equivocal relationship with the static image, he stated 'descriptive images are themselves meaningless in content: they 'mean' only in the film structure as parts of the vocabulary in use'<sup>64</sup>. In this sense, the photographs presented on Lamelas' pages in *Prospect 69* and *18 Paris IV.70* are futile when viewed in isolation and only mean something in relation to the entire sequence, each other and the description provided. In the *Documenta 5* (1972)<sup>65</sup> exhibition catalogue, Lamelas presented a photograph titled 'BRUSSEL, 11:30UHR, 1969' showing cars paused at a busy junction to allow pedestrians to cross the road (Fig. 3.13). Due to the long exposure of the image, the figures of the pedestrians, and to a lesser extent, the cars, are blurred in contrast to the static architecture of the surrounding city. A large white clock face protruding from the exterior of a building occupies the centre of the image, confirming the time of day the photograph was taken and entrenching the artist's preoccupation with time. The long exposure of this photograph is arguably more effective in recording duration for the purposes of reproduction upon the page, since this visibly captures and distils the movement of pedestrians and vehicles against the backdrop of the static city.

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<sup>64</sup> Lamelas, D., *Beyond Painting and Sculpture* (1973) exhibition catalogue, p. 20

<sup>65</sup> *Documenta 5*, 30 June - 8 October 1972, Museum Fridericianum, Friedrichsplatz, Neue Galerie, Kassel, organised by Harald Szeemann (Secretary-General), p. 17.52. Lamelas was included in *Section 17: Idee+Idee Licht* organised by Konrad Fischer and Klaus Honnef



Fig. 3.13: David Lamelas, 'BRÜSSEL, 11.30 UHR, 1969', section 17 of *Documenta 5* (1972) exhibition catalogue, p. 17.52

Presented in the pages of catalogues, Lamelas' film stills, although apparently meaningless when viewed in isolation, provide a form of time capsule for readers/viewers in the near and distant future. There is a precision to the images and the accompanying captions, which serves to locate the view in an exact time and location. This helps to orientate the readers'/viewers' mind with the context as it was intended or experienced by the artist. In contrast to this approach, Douglas Huebler often 'scrambled' the arrangement of photographs and corresponding documentation thus obliging the viewer to 'to make his or her own associations'<sup>66</sup> with the information provided. Accordingly, the documents including proposals, maps, photographs and descriptions that readers/viewers encountered on Huebler's catalogue pages serve only as a prompt to the mental processes the artist seeks to engage us in.

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<sup>66</sup> Lippard, L., 'Douglas Huebler: everything about everything', *Art News*, vol. 71, no. 8 (December 1972), p. 29

Huebler was one of twenty artists who participated in *Deurle 11/7/73* (1973)<sup>67</sup>. This began as a congress held on 1 – 3 July 1973 in Brussels to which a number of artists were invited to participate in a discussion on the theme of ‘art and its cultural context’<sup>68</sup>. *Deurle 11/7/73* was organised by a group of dealers working in related spaces around Brussels, these were Fernand Spillemaeckers (MTL, Brussels) and Anny De Decker (Wide White Space, Antwerp), Paul Maenz (Cologne) and Marc Poirier dit Caulier (X-One gallery, Antwerp)<sup>69</sup>. Following this discussion, a larger selection of artists sent works and texts to be exhibited and published in the accompanying catalogue<sup>70</sup>.

The modest white catalogue was the size of a paperback book; it was published in a small edition of 250 copies and presented entirely text-based contributions by artists such as proposals or descriptions of works. Due to organisational problems, the exhibition was never realised in its intended form, causing the catalogue to arguably become the primary site in which all artists’ works were gathered<sup>71</sup>. The absence of visual information in the form of an exhibition and in the catalogue forces readers/viewers to ruminate on the conceptual and speculative qualities of the works presented. From the end of 1968, with the publication *November 1968* (1968), Huebler began presenting proposals for works. He stated in the catalogue that ‘(t)he proposed pieces do not differ from the other pieces as idea, but do differ to the extent of their material substance’<sup>72</sup>. In this regard, the page has autonomy and alludes to the vast scope of the

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<sup>67</sup> *Deurle 11/7/73*, 11 July – 8 August 1973, Museum Dhont-Dhaenens, Deurle, organised by Fernand Spillemaeckers (MTL) and Anny De Decker, Paul Maenz and Marc Poirier dit Caulier.

<sup>68</sup> The following artists participated in the discussion; Carl Andre, Art & Language, Marcel Broodthaers, Daniel Buren, Cadere, Hans Haacke, Sol LeWitt, Niele Toroni and Lawrence Weiner.

<sup>69</sup> *Location Piece no. 14, Global, Proposal\** was also published in *Konzept-Kunst* (1972) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>70</sup> The following artists sent works and texts to be exhibited at the museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle and for publication in the catalogue; Carl Andre, John Baldessari, Robert Barry, Macel Broodthaers, Daniel Buren, Victor Burin, Ian Burn and Mel Ramsden, Cadere, Dan Graham, Douglas Huebler, William Insley, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Giulio Paolini, AR Penck, Robert Ryman, Joost A. Romeu, Phillippe Van Snick, Lawrence Weiner and Ian Wilson

<sup>71</sup> Sophie Richard explained how due to organisational problems, the exhibition was cancelled just before the opening and Spillemaeckers decided to present documentation, texts and artworks in black folders presented on tables and arranged for the publication of texts in the catalogue discussed here. Richard also conducted an interview with Anton and Annick Herbert who attended the opening of the exhibition, not realising that it had been cancelled. Sophie Richard (2009) *Unconcealed: The International Network of Conceptual Artists 1967 – 77. Dealers, Exhibitions and Public Collections*, London: Ridinghouse, p. 148 and pp. 437 - 438

<sup>72</sup> Huebler, D., (1968) *November 1968*, n.p.

proposed pieces that are contained in the modest site of the catalogue. For the *Deurle 11/7/73* catalogue, Huebler presented *Location Piece no. 14, Global, Proposal\**, this spanned one page and was typeset according to the conventions of the publication [v.2, p. 167].

In the proposal, Huebler asks for 24 photographs to be taken of an imagined point in space at 24 different geographic locations at intervals of 15 longitudinal degrees along the 45 degrees Parallel of the North Equator over a period of 24 hours. Huebler distances himself from the realisation of the project by stating that the project is to be carried out by the owner of the piece. The 'owner' of the piece could be anyone reading the proposal, given the near-impossibility of the work being physically realised. The proposal conveys a concept for a work that tests the margins of the possible. Huebler goes on to instruct that the photographs should all be taken at 12:00 noon, beginning near Coutras, France and continue 15 degrees east. The proposal is for the photographs to capture the same moment in time, 12:00 noon, experienced 24 times at 24 different locations, documenting 'the same natural phenomenon' across '8,800 miles of linear distance'.

For Huebler, the camera is used 'as a 'dumb' copying device that serves only to document whatever phenomena appear before it through conditions set by a system'<sup>73</sup>, thus not requiring the person taking the photograph to make any 'aesthetic decisions'<sup>74</sup>. Despite this, each of the 24 photographs would share a similar, indistinct image, as suggested by a 'model' photograph for the work published in *Conceptual Art* (1972) (Fig. 3.14). Together, the 24 proposed photographs could potentially, but not necessarily display differences in the clarity of the sky, cloud cover and precipitation and so forth. For this reason, it would also be possible for the owner of the work to present 24 photographs depicting the sky, which were not necessarily taken as the proposal instructs. Since the sky is always changing, and one person would not be able to witness the appearance of the sky at all 24 points prescribed, it would be impossible to verify whether the 24 photographs were authentic.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid, p. 42

<sup>74</sup> Meyer, U., (1972) *Conceptual Art*, New York: Dutton, p. 137

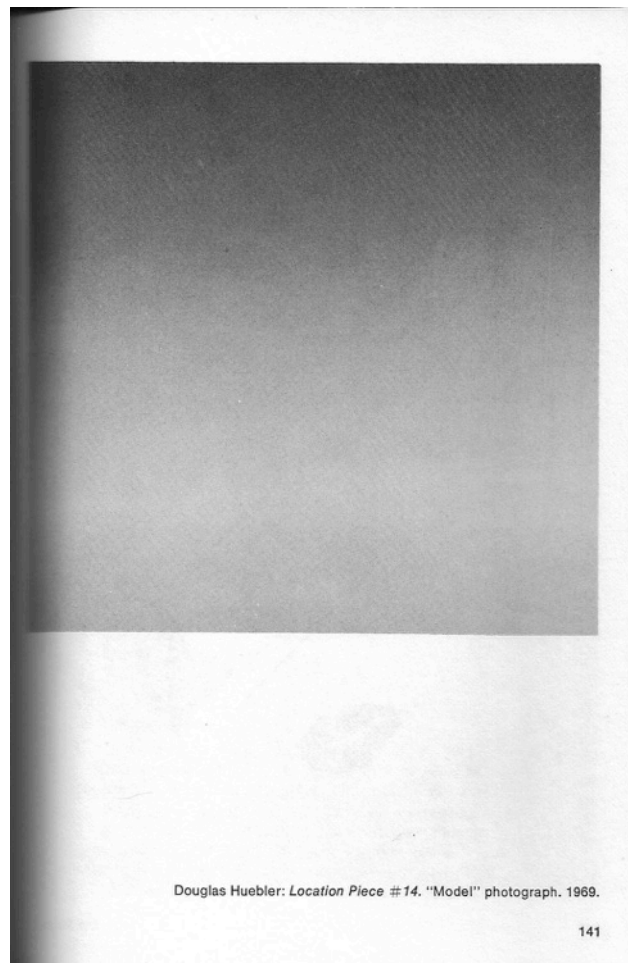


Fig. 3.14: Douglas Huebler, a 'model' photograph for *Location Piece #14* in Meyer, U., (1972) *Conceptual Art*. New York: Dutton, p. 141

Huebler and Lamelas both highlight the paradoxical nature of identifying and isolating a precise moment of sequential time upon the page. Both artists' projects require a large degree of trust from readers/viewers, this is most significant when the proposed projects are not known to be realised as is the case for Lamelas's initial project in *18 Paris IV.70* and *Location Piece no. 14* by Huebler. The limitations of media have been exploited, thus requiring readers/viewers to go beyond written descriptions or proposals and the presentation of still images to imagine the practicalities of carrying out such projects. Given that these proposals, it is presumed were never completed, the reader/viewer takes on responsibility for realising the works in their mind, and in doing so, assumes not only the role of participant or collaborator but owner. Whereas Lamelas' and Huebler's pages require readers/viewers to cognitively work through their proposed works, Stanley Brouwn and Hamish Fulton, whose pages are considered in the final part of this chapter, invite readers/viewer to actively trace an idea in physical space.

The exhibition catalogue accompanying 2,972,453 (1970)<sup>75</sup> comprised twenty-seven loose index cards, including one by each participating artist, presented in an envelope<sup>76</sup>. The cards being easily detachable can themselves be taken on a walk, their lightness and manoeuvrability helping to emphasise the performative nature of a number of works. On his index card for the 2,972,453 catalogue, Brouwn instructed readers to 'Walk in the same direction as you did during the last ten seconds'. This requires readers to recall their movements from the immediate past, considering the direction they were facing, the steps they took and whether or not these took place within the previous ten seconds, by which point it is probable that another ten seconds would have lapsed. Brouwn then adds, 'walk in the direction of 10 march 1998' [sic], compelling readers of the catalogue that was originally published in 1970 to consider their orientation in 28 years time and walk towards their future. For readers encountering this catalogue several decades later, they will be prompted to reverse their minds and bodily positions accordingly (supposing they will be/were alive in 1998)<sup>77</sup>, meaning that Brouwn's commands can be experienced across past, present and future tenses.

Brouwn continued to use his catalogue contributions to prompt readers to consider a time and place beyond which they were currently experiencing. The *Sonsbeek 71* (1971)<sup>78</sup> exhibition and accompanying catalogue was well suited to this aim, as for the first time, the continuing series of sculpture exhibitions usually held in Arnhem Park in the Netherlands<sup>79</sup> extended beyond the boundary of the park into surrounding rural and urban environments<sup>80</sup>. The expanded geography of the exhibition is illustrated on the catalogue front cover that presents a map of Arnhem and the surrounding area, covered with what

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<sup>75</sup> 2, 972,453, 4 – 23 December 1970, Centro de Arte y Comunicación, organised by Lucy Lippard.

<sup>76</sup> In addition to the artists' cards, 16 other cards bearing information about the exhibition and statements by Lippard and Jorge Glusberg were included

<sup>77</sup> For example, as I encountered this card in 2018, I was prompted to recall what I might have been doing on 10 March 1998, aged 13. This encouraged me to recall memories of high school and to think about how I might orientate my body in my current position in relation to the geographical location of my high school.

<sup>78</sup> *Sonsbeek 71*, 19 June – 15 August 1971, Sonsbeek Park, Arnhem, organised by Wim Beeren and Geert van Beijeren.

<sup>79</sup> *Sonsbeek 71* was the sixth exhibition to be held in Arnhem Park. 'International sculpture exhibitions' had been held in the park at irregular intervals; 1949, 1952, 1955, 1958 and 1966

<sup>80</sup> Reviews have noted that this edition was perhaps overly ambitious due to the large number of participating artists and the addition of works outside of Arnhem Park. Linville, K., 'Sonsbeek 71: Speculations, Impressions', *Artforum*, vol. 10, no. 2 (October 1971), pp. 54 - 61

appear to be the static lines of a television image, which served to stress the 'audio-visual aspect'<sup>81</sup> of the exhibition. In his catalogue introduction, organiser Wim Beeren (1928 – 2000)<sup>82</sup> wrote about the different, overlapping stages of the project, confirming the organisers' interest in 'process'. The entire exhibition was realised in a sequence of stages; stage one was the plan for the exhibition, stage two, the programming, and stage three, which started in June 1970 was the 'practical realization of the plans'<sup>83</sup>. Stage four was the closure of the exhibition, marked by a second instalment to the exhibition catalogue. In his catalogue foreword, Prof. P. Sanders, Chairman on *Sonsbeek 71* confirmed,

Another reason why *Sonsbeek 71* is not an exhibition in the usual sense is that once it is opened, it cannot yet be considered complete. It is not a static exhibition. *Sonsbeek 71* is a dynamic manifestation. The catalogue too is not complete; those who buy it will in due course receive a supplement containing a report of the events that will take place during the manifestation<sup>84</sup>

Within the section titled 'Sonsbeek videos' of part 1 of the catalogue<sup>85</sup>, Broun presented a set of statements, which in keeping with the overall catalogue, were provided in Dutch and English translations and typeset in a small generic typewriter font<sup>86</sup> [v.2, pp. 168 - 171]. His catalogue contribution spanned four pages, the first of which gave only the artist's name, followed by three pages, each providing a variation on a single, brief statement. Each of the statements is addressed directly to the reader, 'While you are reading this sentence A pedestrians take B steps in the Kalverstraat (Amsterdam)'. The statement, therefore, occupies two spaces, firstly the space of the reader with the catalogue – who could be located at any point in the world, and secondly the precise location of the Kalverstraat. The statements automatically prompt readers to

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<sup>81</sup> Beeren, W.A.L., 'From exhibition to activity', *Sonsbeek 71*, exhibition catalogue, part 1, p. 13

<sup>82</sup> Wim Beeren organised the first large-scale exhibition of conceptual art in the Netherlands, *Op Losse Schroeven*, 15 March – 27 April 1969, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

<sup>83</sup> Beeren, W., 'From exhibition to activity', *Sonsbeek 71*, volume 1 (1971) exhibition catalogue, p. 13

<sup>84</sup> Sanders, Prof. P., *Sonsbeek 71*, volume 1 (1971) exhibition catalogue, p. 6

<sup>85</sup> Projects by the following artists were also listed under the heading of 'Sonsbeek videos'; Joep van Beek, Nam June Paik, Eric Siegel and Shinkichi Tajiri

<sup>86</sup> The font used is similar to generic fonts produced by corporations such as IBM or Xerox in the 1970s. The catalogue was designed by Magda Tsfaty and Jolijn van de Wouw (Total Design, Amsterdam) and was typeset by Bureauthespa, Amsterdam.

think of Amsterdam, even if they are not familiar with the street, and to imagine people's activities there at that moment. Brouwn's focus is on pedestrians walking along the street, and the number of steps they take. Depending on the time of day, the number of pedestrians would differ – people may be walking to work, taking children to school, shopping during the day, or at nighttime, the street could be almost empty.

The time frame dealt with in the statement is the duration it takes to read the sentence, around 10 seconds. This would only allow time for a pedestrian to take a few steps, depending on the speed they walked. But the reader may then, in their mind, multiply the number of imagined steps by the number of imagined pedestrians to come up with a much larger figure. In Brouwn's statements, aspects of time and space take turns in being both precise and ambiguous. In terms of locations, the position of the reader was unknown and unstated, whilst the pedestrians' location was specified - but the time taken to read the sentence could be measured, and the number of steps taken by the pedestrians cannot be known.

The third and fourth pages in the sequence present a variation on the statement given on the second page. The wording of the first sentence is repeated in each, substituting letters A and B with C and D, and then E and F in the final version. The locations and actions referred to remain the same. Upon reading these next two sentences, the reader is again asked to consider the number of steps taken by a number of pedestrians in the Kalverstraat. Due to pauses taken between considering the three statements and turning the pages, the number of pedestrians on the street at that precise time and the speed of their walking would no doubt differ in real life.

In his review of the exhibition, Bruce Kurtz was prompted to ask questions relating to the time frame of works by participating artists, 'When was the piece begun? ... And questions of space: Where does the sculpture end and the landscape begin?' and 'When does (did) the piece end?'<sup>87</sup>. These questions are also relevant to the statements provided by Brouwn as he states no definitive start and end point for the number of steps taken by pedestrians in Kalverstraat. Since the time frame offered by the piece refers only to the moment the

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<sup>87</sup> Kurtz, B., 'Reports: Sonsbeek', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 46, no. 1 (September – October 1971), p. 52



sentences are read, the work is as applicable to later readers as it was in 1971 when it was printed.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Brouwn's work followed similar characteristics, often referring to precise locations such as streets within a city<sup>88</sup>, and later, to the number of steps taken<sup>89</sup>, either by the artist in a given place, or by unnamed pedestrians. All the time, these works provoke, for the static reader, consideration of another's movement in a different place. From 1970 onwards, Brouwn's catalogue pages were characterised by an absence of visual information, such as photographs or drawings, and in 1972 he made the decision to omit biographical details in exhibition catalogues and refrained from giving interviews to explain his work<sup>90</sup>. Brouwn's contribution to the *Documenta 5* (1972)<sup>91</sup> exhibition catalogue is his most equivocal of the research period (Fig. 3.15). This omits any biographical information, besides the artist's name, place and year of birth and current location. In place of this are two pages formatted into four columns containing 25 lines of text each, the second page is a repetition of the first. Each line begins with the phrase 'one step' followed sequentially by numbers ranging from 1 to 100, followed by an 'X'. Unlike the artists' earlier pages, this piece does not refer to a specific location, nor does it indicate whether the steps described are those of the artist, other pedestrians or of the reader's mental or physical construction. With the elimination of visual and biographical information and lack of specificity in his later pages, readers may come to imagine the artist as an unrestrained and elusive wayfarer.

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<sup>88</sup> In the *Konzeption Conception* (24 October – 23 November 1969) exhibition catalogue, Brouwn presented five photographs, labeled A, B, C, D and E. The brief text, which accompanies these photographs states "Each of the 5 fotos (A, B, C, D, E) of streets in Haarlem-Holland was shot exactly at the moment a passer-by told me the name of the street on my request". The five street names are then listed, making it possible for the reader to retrace the artist's journey around the city.

<sup>89</sup> In *Konzept Kunst* (18 March – 23 April 1972), Brouwn lists the total number of steps taken in three countries, Spain, Algeria and Morocco. A similar piece spanning a double page in *Avalanche* (spring 1972) records the number of steps the artist took per day from 18 March to 18 April 1971, pp. 32 - 33

<sup>90</sup> *Sonsbeek 71* included a scant biography of Brouwn at the back of the catalogue

<sup>91</sup> *Documenta 5* (1972), 30 June - 8 October 1972, Museum Fridericianum, Friedrichsplatz, Neue Galerie, Kassel, organised by Harald Szeemann, Brouwn was included in *Section 17: Idee+Idee Licht* organised by Konrad Fischer and Klaus Honnef, p 17.27

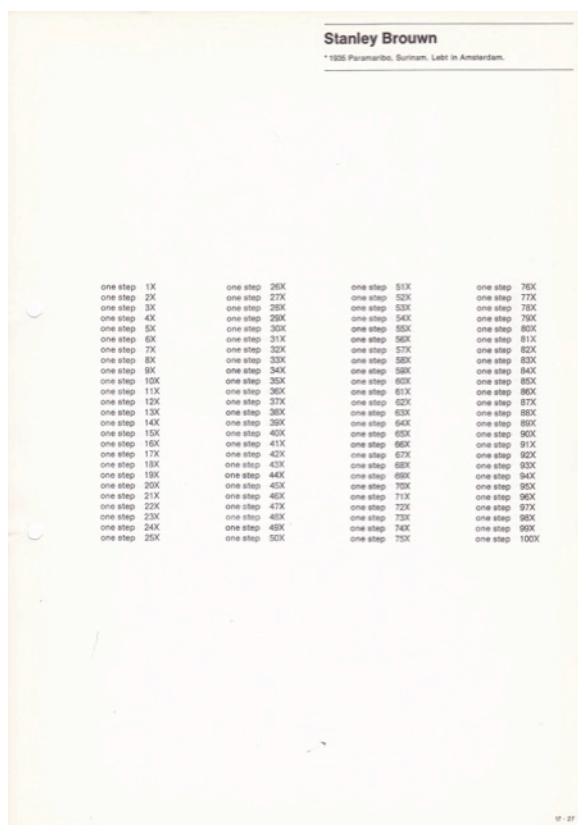


Fig. 3.15: Stanley Brouwn, artist page in section 17 of *Documenta 5* (1972), exhibition catalogue, p. 17. 27

Hamish Fulton, himself an artist engaged in walking, also withheld biographic or explanatory information from works and catalogue pages produced during the period covered by this research, which serves to focus readers'/viewers' attention on the precise details contained within the works themselves. Similar to Lamelas's factual film stills and photographs discussed earlier in this chapter and Brouwn's pared-down texts, Fulton's photographs from his journeys, explained Rudi Fuchs, were 'pointedly neutral, even uninteresting'<sup>92</sup>. Instead, Fuchs encouraged viewers to accept the sculptural and spatial quality of measurement and distance felt in Fulton's photographs as 'something *on its own*'<sup>93</sup> [Fuchs's emphasis], thus advocating the experiences of walking, and moreover viewing a landscape from the vistas presented.

A selection of Fulton's journeys is presented as photographs and texts across five pages in the *De Europa* (1972)<sup>94</sup> catalogue [v.2, pp. 172 – 176]. Organised

<sup>92</sup> Fuchs, R.H., 'Photography as Sculpture on Hamish Fulton', *Studio International*, vol. 186, no. 959 (October 1973), p. 129

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>94</sup> *De Europa*, John Weber, New York, 29 April – 24 May 1972, organised by Konrad Fischer and Gian Enzo Sperone.

by dealers Konrad Fischer and Gian Enzo Sperone in collaboration with John Weber Gallery, *De Europa* gave European artists exposure in New York. Following a minimal biography on page one of his contribution to the catalogue, Fulton's second page presents a text piece describing the artist's visit to the Isle of Arran, and the half mile swim he took from there to Holy Island off the west coast of Scotland [v.2, p. 173]. The text, contained within a border, is printed in a serif font in capital letters and justified across the centre of the page. The story has a coincidental ending; Fulton tells of seeing two people walking across the rocks on the shore, and upon them giving the artist a hand to clamber out of the water, he realised the man was his school geography teacher who now works as the lighthouse keeper. This personal anecdote is evocative of a diary entry, or a letter or postcard that one might write recounting to the reader narratives from a trip.

The next two works shown, *A bicycle journey from Canterbury, England to Delémont, Switzerland* (1971) [v.2, p. 174] and *Hode Lane* (1971) [v.2, p. 175] have been reproduced in several exhibition catalogues from this period<sup>95</sup>. On each occasion, the precise wording and format are altered slightly – sometimes in keeping with the overall appearance of the catalogue they are presented in. *A bicycle journey...* gives a description of the route that Fulton followed from Canterbury to Delémont, Switzerland by bicycle, then hitchhiking to Oberalppass (a mountain pass in the Swiss Alps) followed by a walk to the top of Pix Maler. Fulton describes the conditions as being a bright, clear day in July 1970. He repeats the walk almost a year later through rain and thunderstorm, this time unable to reach the summit, prompting consideration of how although landscapes remain the same, external factors such as the weather alter experience and navigation of them.

*Hode Lane* comprises a photograph of a narrow sunken lane near Canterbury paired with a description of a seven-mile, non-stop run, presumably along this lane, repeated over a seven-day period during December 1971. In addition to being included in the *De Europa* catalogue, Fulton also presented *Hode Lane* in

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<sup>95</sup> In addition to the inclusion of these works in the *De Europa* (1972) exhibition catalogue, 'A bicycle journey from Canterbury, England to Delemont, Switzerland' and 'Hode Land' were also presented in the catalogues accompanying *Documenta 5* (7 June – 6 October 1972) and *The New Art* (17 August – 24 September 1972).

the *Documenta 5*<sup>96</sup> and *The New Art*<sup>97</sup> catalogues, which were published only a few months apart. There are subtle differences between each version, including the wording of the description, and the typeface and photograph used. The version in *The New Art* catalogue is almost identical to the one in *De Europa*, with the only difference being the typeface used for the caption to match Fulton's other works in the respective catalogues. However, the presentation of *Hode Lane* in *Documenta 5* employs slightly different phrasing and an alternative photograph, possibly taken from another point along the lane, evocative of how the experience of each subsequent visit to the same site would alter slightly. Like the previous work, *A bicycle journey...*, it is presumed that Fulton returned to this site for seven continuous days to undergo the run. It would also be possible for another person to follow these guidelines to make their own version of the work, or for Fulton to return to the site and remake the work as he did in the previous example described. These variations in presentation suggest that Fulton not only physically returned to the site to repeat the work over the time span of one week, but also revisited the piece after it was completed to refine its presentation.

Fulton's final page in the *De Europa* catalogue is an uncaptioned photograph of an unusual old turnstile gate within an archway in a rural landscape (perhaps the entrance to a churchyard), likely to be encountered on one of the artist's journeys [v. 2, p. 176]. A lantern hangs in the archway of the gate, which appears to lead to enclosed parkland with a pond or lake straight ahead. It is not clear whether Fulton is approaching the gate, or has passed through it and looks back to photograph it. The gate is left ajar and rotates on its central axis every time it is pushed open. The worn gate might evoke thought of the number of people who passed through it during its history.

Readers/viewers encountering Fulton's photographs within the pages of a catalogue will be able to draw the images closer and observe the exactness of Fulton's views. In a review of Fulton's work in an exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Barbara Reise wrote of her viewing experience, 'Getting

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<sup>96</sup> *Documenta 5*, 30 June - 8 October 1972, Museum Fridericianum, Friedrichsplatz, Neue Galerie, Kassel, organised by Harald Szeemann (Secretary-General), p. 17.42. Fulton was included in *Section 17: Idee+Idee Licht* organised by Konrad Fischer and Klaus Honnef

<sup>97</sup> *The New Art*, 17 August - 24 September 1972, The Hayward Gallery, London, organised by Anne Seymour, n.p.

into this work means getting your head *out* of this room and into that path, that place, that time: into *Fulton's* trip<sup>98</sup> [Reise's emphasis]. The inclusion of place names and routes amongst Fulton's 'extremely sparing' words and pictures<sup>99</sup> makes it possible for the reader/viewer to embark on their own pilgrimage to the sites should they choose. Mountain peaks and passes change very little, ancient roads, such as Hode Lane endure, and the turnstile gate, although with the appearance of another time, continues to turn on its axis. These sites will all demonstrate signs of weathering from the elements and the people who pass through them, but even so, a reader/viewer today could still piece together a journey based on Fulton's descriptions with reasonable accuracy.

When Bruce Katz asked, 'Where does the sculpture end and the landscape begin?'<sup>100</sup> of the works installed at *Sonsbeek 71*, his ruminations could be extended to consider, 'where does the page end and the sculpture begin?' As shown by both Brouwn and Fulton, the page extends the work into the future tense. By providing concise descriptions of his journeys, Fulton equips himself and his readers/viewers with the coordinates to retrace his works in another time. However, as shown in *A bicycle journey...*, the experience of these works continues to differ due to changeable external conditions such as the seasons and weather, ultimately leading to wholly different experiences. It would appear that the changes undergone between each of Brouwn's propositions for readers to imagine the number of steps taken by pedestrians in the Kalverstraat would be less severe, as the time taken to read these sentences is seconds, rather than hours or days. However, as Brouwn's work is not situated in a specified time, but rather the present time of the reader, the changes encountered between the moment the sentences were written and the moment they are read could be much wider than is initially apparent. It is therefore inaccurate to suggest either Fulton's or Brouwn's works have reached their final conclusion, rather they are in a continual state of process and could be revisited and indeed progressed at any moment should the artist or reader/viewer have the inclination to do so. Despite the materiality of the page, in this sense, the points marked represent ephemeral and passing moments.

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<sup>98</sup> Reise, B., 'Two exhibitions in retrospect: Hamish Fulton in the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Patrick Caulfield prints', *Studio International*, vol. 186, no. 961 (December 1973), p. 226

<sup>99</sup> Ibid

<sup>100</sup> Kurtz, B., 'Reports: Sonsbeek', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 46, no. 1 (September – October 1971), p.52

The artworks presented in this chapter far exceed the boundaries of an exhibition, yet within the pages of the modest exhibition catalogues discussed here, vast times scales are given for space to unfold. A single step, repeated, amounts to a journey ranging across different landscapes, for which the ground underfoot, the weather and landmarks encountered along the way create a unique narrative. The placement of the two photographs, 'Hill Figure, England 600BC' and the portrait of Long climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in 1969 in *The New Art* (1972) catalogue condense over 2000 years of time into a single field of vision, helping readers/viewers to grasp the universality of these artworks with relative ease. Unlike human time, which we might imagine to be linear, projecting us into the future, geological time is constructed from a succession of layers. Smithson's torn photograph shows how man adds to this process of construction and destruction, shifting rubble from one site to another. The shifting sands of the river bank that move with the ebb and flow of the tide, as well as the rise and fall of the sun, and the way in which we orientate ourselves on the planet encourage readers/viewers to consider the scale of our presence, and the small page held in the hands, in relation to celestial phenomena.

The page becomes a resting place or a pause along a larger journey, one that has a past, present, and future tense. Referring to Fulton's photographs, Barbara Reise explained 'But getting into this work also means looking and thinking right here and now in very precise ways'<sup>101</sup>, thus calling on readers/viewers to consider their own current situation as they view the photograph. The artworks examined in this chapter have no single view, as shown: *A Line Made By Walking* (1967) could be approached from different angles, and through the reproduction of aerial photographs, readers/viewers are afforded a perspective of works located in the environment that they would have no other way of attaining. Over time, that view may change. Lamelas has continued to produce his *Time as Activity* series across a period of four decades in locations spanning the globe (Fig. 3.16). Continuing his systematic approach, each film represents a precise moment in place and time and is titled and dated accordingly, in addition to this, the technology used and urban scenes depicted help to trace the evolution of the work. Exactly forty years after readers/viewers were first invited to glimpse Long's sculpture *Thee's gotten where thee's cassn't back'n 'assent?* (1969), placed on the bed of the River Avon with the

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<sup>101</sup> Reise, B., op cit., p. 226

consultation of a map, photographs and information pertaining to tide times, the artist released a second photograph of the work in the catalogue to his Tate Retrospective, *Heaven and Earth* (2009) (Fig. 3.17). This is the only subsequent information about this work to be disseminated in the public domain since the original publication of the piece in *July August September* (1969). It shows what appears to be a small cylinder placed closed to the low tide, the inevitability of the piece soon being washed away with the force of the flow tide is enhanced by this view which follows the path of the river. The release of this photograph, which offers readers/viewers a closer view of the sculpture serves as a reminder of the extent to which our awareness of artworks is mediated through the views that artists choose to reveal to us.



Fig. 3.16: David Lamelas, *Time As Activity London*, 2011, (Film still) 16mm film, 16:46min. Available at: <https://ocula.com/art-galleries/spruth-magers-la/exhibitions/time-as-activity/> (accessed 23-04-2018)

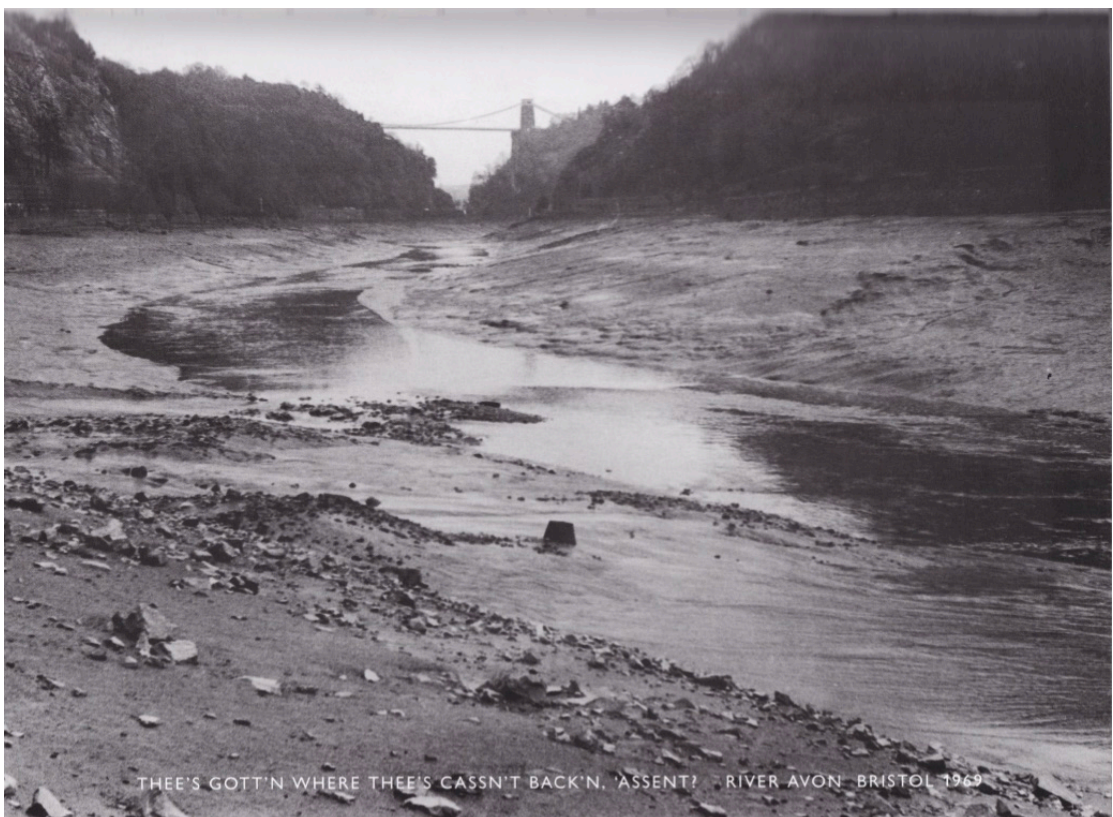


Fig. 3.17: Richard Long, *Thee's Gott'n Where Thee's Cassn't Back'n 'Assent?*, River Avon, Bristol, *Heaven and Earth* (2009), exhibition catalogue, Tate Britain, London, p. 73



The page is like a guidebook, it provides readers/viewers with the coordinates of a work (with varying degrees of precision and detail); descriptions, times, locations and snapshots that enable works to be reconfigured either in physical reality or in the mind. Furthermore, the portability of the page means that it can be taken outside of the gallery and consulted in the landscape to which it refers. Readers/viewers are thus able to compare the information given to them on the page with their own experience in the present moment. What should happen if readers/viewers attempt to physically revisit these works at a later date? Dibbets suggests that it would be 'stupid for other people to do it' in terms of retracing his works as 'the work of art is the feeling'<sup>102</sup>, and the feelings that others would get from following these works would undoubtedly differ to the artist's.

For the exhibition *Sonsbeek 72* (1972)<sup>103</sup>, organisers Paul Bonger and Rick Vermeulen traced back what had happened to previous projects and objects from earlier manifestations of the exhibition at Arnhem Park. The resulting catalogue, designed to mimic a set of index cards, presented factual photographs and descriptions of past works as they existed in the present moment. Some works left only a very slight trace, the organisers explained, '[m]ost of the projects and objects we also found back in totally different state: at rubbish dumps, on heaps of scrap – iron, dismantled [sic] and packed in boxes, in peoples [sic] homes on the cupboard. In some cases nothing was to be found back'<sup>104</sup>. Revisiting Brouwn's proposition 'While you are reading this sentence A pedestrians take B steps in the Kalverstraat (Amsterdam)' from *Sonsbeek 71*, it is clear that the work only ever existed in the catalogue (and by extension, in the mind of the reader/viewer), consequently, these pages were simply reproduced in the *Sonsbeek 72* catalogue (Fig. 3.18). In one sense, it is disappointing that the organisers did not visit the location referred to in Brouwn's project as they did with other works, to observe and count the steps of pedestrians on the Kalverstraat, but in actuality, this work never existed there. It was conceived for the page and realised only in the imagination of its readers/viewers. The reproduction of these pages in the *Sonsbeek 72* catalogue entrenches both the conceptual and transient nature of Brouwn's original proposition. The fixity of

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<sup>102</sup> Dibbets, J., 'Jan Dibbets' *Avalanche*, number 1, fall 1970, p. 38

<sup>103</sup> *Sonsbeek 72*, revisiting sites from previous manifestations of the exhibition in Arnhem Park and the surrounding area, December 1972, organised by Paul Bonger and Rick Vermeulen. The catalogue was presented in three volumes labeled A – H, I – R and S – Z.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*, n.p.

print and the permanent nature of the catalogues that accompanied exhibitions ensure that ephemeral experiences or journeys, in all their potential configurations continue to exist in the present moment.

The pages analysed in this chapter have encouraged readers/viewers to trace artworks from their own perspective relative to the moment in which they encounter the page. The next chapter, 'Exchange and Correspondence' builds on the suggestion that readers/viewers could utilise the page to configure their own, individual experience of the works presented, as artists actively solicit readers/viewers to participate in the physical realisation of their work. This is evidenced in letters, telegrams and proposals, which would usually remain private, being multiplied and published as artists' pages in exhibition catalogues. Consequently, readers/viewers are equipped with not only the knowledge but also the permission to remake the pieces should they choose to do so.

BROWN, STANLEY

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onderwerp: projekt catalogus 1 pagina 77/78/79

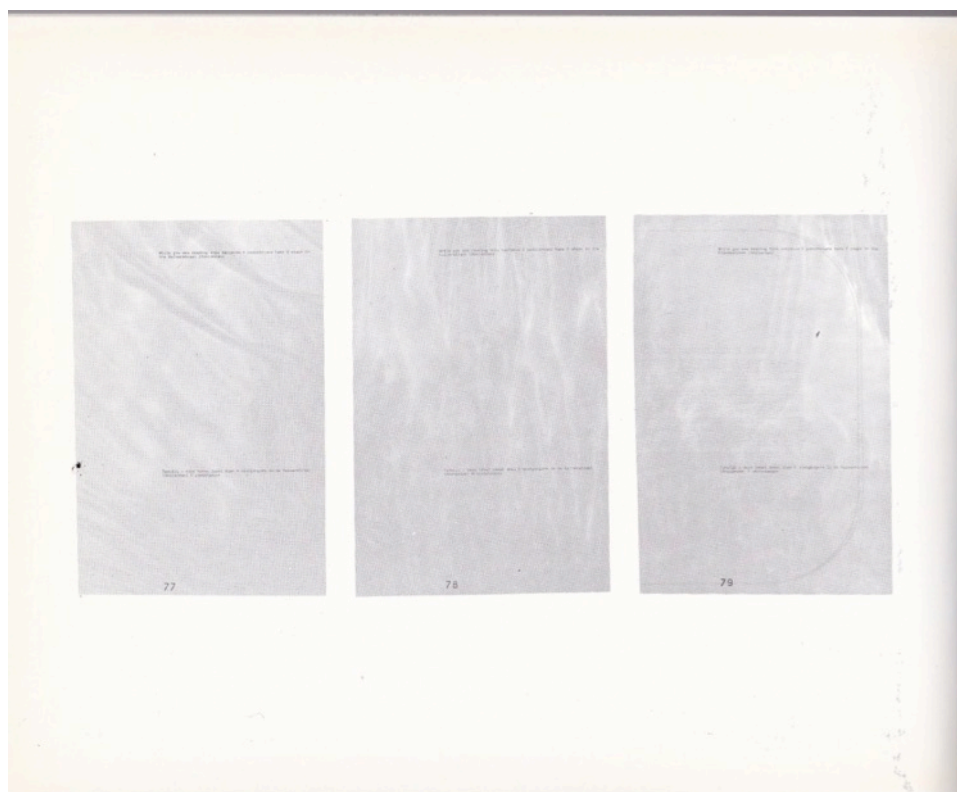


Fig. 3.18: Documentation of Stanley Broun's project for *Sonsbeek 71* (1971) presented on the recto and verso of one page in the *Sonsbeek 72* (1972) exhibition catalogue, n.p. Image courtesy of Henry Moore Institute, special collection, 26-11-2017

## CHAPTER 4:

### EXCHANGE AND CORRESPONDENCE

If we can use the telephone, I'd like you to be able to clamp it between your thighs.

*Uh huh*

So that you don't break the connection, you'll have to be careful of the dial... Clamp it between your thighs and cross your ankles.

*Mhmm Ok*

Then put the receiver down or let it dangle and hold your arms straight up from your shoulders, with your palms up, fingers tight together, looking straight ahead.

*Shall I go try that now?*

...If you want to try it and tell me if it works out alright...

After you get yourself in that position the project is to try and jump up and down on a cadence that I will give to you and you can continue that cadence, and then I can hang up or continue to stay on the line, it doesn't matter...

From California, Bruce Nauman relayed instructions to Roger Ander at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, forming his contribution for the exhibition *Art by Telephone* (1969)<sup>1</sup>. Due to technical difficulties, it was not possible for artists to install their own works, so the organisers telephoned all 36 participating artists asking to them describe their proposals 'with enough detail so that the museum could create the actual piece in Chicago while the artist remained at home'<sup>2</sup>. The catalogue for the exhibition was an LP recording<sup>3</sup> comprising excerpts of the artists explaining their instructions over crackling

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<sup>1</sup> *Art by Telephone*, 1 November – 14 December 1969, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, organised by Jan van der Marck.

<sup>2</sup> van der Marck, J., *Art by Telephone* (1969), exhibition catalogue (LP jacket), n.p. Reproduced, 'Art by Telephone (Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1969)', *Specific Object*, available at: [http://www.specificobject.com/projects/art\\_by\\_telephone/#.WnidkbZ0e9Y](http://www.specificobject.com/projects/art_by_telephone/#.WnidkbZ0e9Y) (accessed 05-02-2018)

<sup>3</sup> Sound recording available via Ubuweb [https://ubusound.memoryoftheworld.org/art\\_by\\_telephone/Various-Artists\\_Art\\_By\\_Telephone\\_1969.mp3](https://ubusound.memoryoftheworld.org/art_by_telephone/Various-Artists_Art_By_Telephone_1969.mp3). A partial transcript of the recording, made in 2008 by Charity Coleman is available as a PDF available at [http://www.ubu.com/sound/images/art\\_by\\_telephone.pdf](http://www.ubu.com/sound/images/art_by_telephone.pdf) (accessed 05-02-2018)

international telephone lines. Artists discussed the ideas behind their works as much as the practicalities of fabricating these. The LP, complete with long pauses, interjections and inaudible sounds [sic] exposes listeners to the ways in which artists thought about and communicated their ideas, enabling others to fabricate the work on the artist's behalf.

This chapter will investigate how pages in exhibition catalogues democratised conceptual art and made it accessible to wider audiences by specifically examining how via the page, artists communicated their intentions as preparation for, or as part of, their involvement in an exhibition. It will demonstrate how the page in conceptual art functioned to invite readers to participate in the conversations that artists had with each other, exhibition organisers and the general public, thus decentralising the artist from the making process and opening up possibilities for alternative interpretations and collaboration.

Audience members were invited to play an active role in a number of exhibitions staged throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s. Whole exhibitions, such as *Art by Telephone* and individual artists including David Lamelas<sup>4</sup>, Hans Haacke<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 4.1), Douglas Huebler<sup>6</sup>, Walter de Maria<sup>7</sup> (Fig. 4.2) and Iain and Ingrid Baxter (N.E. Thing Co.) made use of existing communication systems to transmit information between remote places or from person to person. In their work *Trans VSI Connection NSCAD-NETCO* (1970)<sup>8</sup>, N.E. Thing Co. used telex<sup>9</sup>, telecopier<sup>10</sup> and telephone as an active means of exchange by sending

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<sup>4</sup> David Lamelas, 'Office of Information about the Vietnam War at Three Levels: The Visual Image, Text and Audio' (1968) presented at the Venice Biennale in 1968

<sup>5</sup> Hans Haacke, 'News' (1969), installed at *Prospect 69* (1969). A detailed discussion of this work is provided in Bryan-Wilson, J., (2009) 'Hans Haacke's Paperwork' in *Art Workers: Radical Practice in the Vietnam War Era*, Berkley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, pp. 173 – 213.

<sup>6</sup> Douglas Huebler, 'Variable Piece No. 4' in *Software: Information Technology / Its new meaning for art* (1970). This asked participants to disclose a secret in exchange for a photocopied secret provided by another person, the work is detailed in the exhibition catalogue, p. 35

<sup>7</sup> Walter de Maria, 'Art by Telephone' installed at *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969). The artist's proposal for this project was detailed on his pages in the exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>8</sup> VSI stands for 'Visual Sensory Information'

<sup>9</sup> Telex was an international message-transfer service

<sup>10</sup> A Xerox branded machine fax machine that could send and receive exact copies of anything written, drawn, typed or photographed.

students at Nova Scotia College of Art & Design propositions to respond to<sup>11</sup>. Without engagement from the college community, the transmission of ideas would never have materialised into finalised works. This notion of active participation extended to the form and content of exhibition catalogues in some cases, for example, in *Software: Information Technology / Its new meaning for art* (1970)<sup>12</sup>, visitors could push a button in the exhibition to receive a print out of information and were able to request additional, specialised information which they could then add to a special section of the catalogue, thus 'making each catalogue an individualized [sic] copy'<sup>13</sup> representative of a person's unique experience of the work shown.

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<sup>11</sup> An account of the exchange is provided by Charlotte Townsend in Kennedy, G.N., (2012) *The Last Art College: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1968 – 1978*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, p. 111

<sup>12</sup> *Software: Information Technology / Its new meaning for art*, 16 September – 8 November 1970, Jewish Museum, New York, organised by Jack Burnham.

<sup>13</sup> Vinklers, B., 'Art and Information, 'Software' at the Jewish Museum', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 45, no. 1 (September – October 1970), p. 47



Fig. 4.1: Visitors peruse *News* (1969) by Hans Haacke, *Software: Information Technology: its new meaning for art* (1970), exhibition catalogue, n.p.

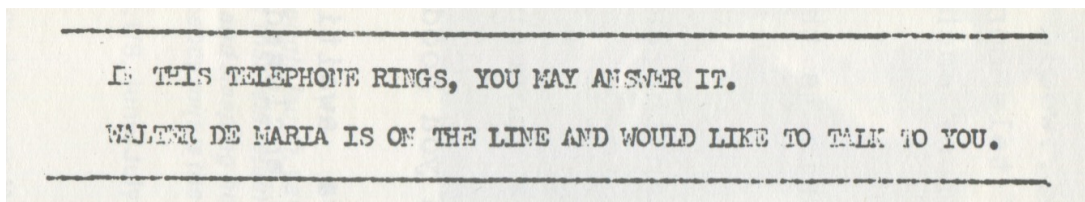


Fig. 4.2: Walter de Maria, proposal for *Art by Telephone* [detail], *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

From the late 1960s, exhibitions of conceptual art such as *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969)<sup>14</sup> and *Konzeption / Conception* (1969)<sup>15</sup> were characterised by their 'extreme internationalism'<sup>16</sup>. Transatlantic communication enabled a network of international artists and organisers to work together without necessarily convening in the same place. Lucy Lippard summarised, 'Much art is now transported by the artist, or in the artist himself ... or by existing networks such as mail, books, telex, video, radio, etc.'<sup>17</sup> Portable mediums in their own right, telegrams, postcards, index cards, telex print-outs, and letters, proposals and instructions sent via the mail lent themselves to reproduction as artists' pages in exhibition catalogues. I would argue that the portability of exhibition catalogues played a significant role in the decentralisation of conceptual art as they enabled both artists and audiences to engage in international exhibitions regardless of geographical location. Seth Siegelau, despite being based in New York, organised exhibitions in Massachusetts, Putney, British Columbia and eventually, worldwide. In reflecting that, 'I think New York is beginning to break down as a centre. Not that there will be another city to replace it, but rather that where any artist is will be the centre'<sup>18</sup>, he anticipated the shift that many artists made from installing physical objects in a gallery to mailing proposals, instructions and projects in lieu of these.

In the *Art Without Space* (1969) symposium, aired on the radio station WBAI-FM, New York, Siegelau explained, 'One becomes very much aware of the speed with which this art travels, of the way it is rapidly transferred from continent to continent or city to city, by virtue of its portability, more quickly than other art'<sup>19</sup>. In this chapter, dates on letters, telegrams and questionnaires that were exchanged between artists and organisers in preparation for exhibitions and subsequently reproduced in catalogues, reveal that major exhibitions were

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<sup>14</sup> *When Attitudes Become Form*, 22 March - 27 April 1969, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, organised by Harald Szeemann

<sup>15</sup> *Konzeption / Conception, Dokumentation einer Heutigen Kunstrichtung / Documentation of Today's Art Tendency*, 24 October - 23 November 1969, Städtisches Museum, Leverkusen, organised by Konrad Fischer and Rolf Wedewer.

<sup>16</sup> Harrison, C., 'Against Precedents', *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) exhibition catalogue [ICA version only], n.p. Reproduced in *Studio International*, vol. 178 no. 914 (September 1969), p. 91

<sup>17</sup> Lucy Lippard interviewed by Ursula Meyer, December 1969, 'Preface', *Six Years*, p. 8

<sup>18</sup> Siegelau, S., and Harrison, C., 'On exhibitions and the world at large', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 917, p. 203

<sup>19</sup> *Art Without Space* symposium, held on 2 November 1969 and broadcast on WBAI-FM New York. Moderated by Siegelau with Weiner, Barry, Huebler and Kosuth. Excerpts from the symposium were published in Lippard, L., (1973) *Six Years*, London: Studio Vista, pp. 127 - 133



arranged over a matter of two to four months<sup>20</sup>. Siegelaub's observation is perhaps best exemplified, however, among the pages of a special July / August 1970 edition of *Studio International*<sup>21</sup>. Siegelaub, who was taking an increasingly anonymous role in his projects, invited six international critics to coordinate content for eight pages of the magazine, evidencing the decentralisation of the organiser. For Lippard's section, eight artists were invited 'to provide a situation within which the next artist on this list is to work; he [sic] in turn will do a piece within the situation provided him by the artist before him on the list'<sup>22</sup>. At the top of the pages in Lippard's edited section, the situation provided by the previous artist was published in English, French and German, followed by the artist's response. The overlapping situations across each page and the dialogue the artists were invited to partake in caused Lippard to consider the project as 'a kind of 'carrier piece' in itself'<sup>23</sup>.

This chapter will examine how via the page, artists engaged in dialogue with organisers, collaborators and especially with audience members, involving them as an integral part of the process of realising the work. The chapter is organised in such a way as to extend outwards from fixed expressions of ideas on the page towards a more open and inclusive approach thus enabling the reader to consider accessibility from a variety of perspectives. It will begin by examining how artists used their pages in exhibition catalogues to announce and confirm the nature of their participation in an exhibition: these pages share an element of transparency as artists and organisers communicated their intentions frankly with one another, thus making their private communication publicly accessible. It will then move on to assess the extent to which artists relinquished control over the interpretation of their ideas and artworks by assessing the amount of

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<sup>20</sup> Lawrence Weiner's letter in the *Art in the Mind* catalogue is dated 25 February 1970, the exhibition opened on 17 April 1970. Jan Dibbets' returned questionnaire printed in the *Information* catalogue is dated 6 April, the exhibition opened on 2 July 1970. On Kawara's telegrams to Yvon Lambert prior to *Actualite d'un Bilan* are dated 31 July – 15 September, the exhibition opened on 29 October 1972.

<sup>21</sup> *Studio International*, vol. 180, no. 924 (July / August 1970). Organised by Seth Siegelaub with the Editor Peter Townsend and Assistant Editor Charles Harrison in London. David Antin (San Diego, California), Germano Celant (Genoa), Michel Claura (Paris), Charles Harrison (London), Lucy R. Lippard (New York) and Hans Strelow (Düsseldorf) were each invited to coordinate an eight-page section of the magazine.

<sup>22</sup> Lippard, L., *Ibid*, p. 33. In her edited section, Lippard presented the following artists: Robert Barry (New York), Stephen Kaltenbach (born in Michigan, then based in New York), Lawrence Weiner (lived between New York and Amsterdam), On Kawara (Japanese artist based in New York), Sol LeWitt (New York), Douglas Huebler (Michigan), N.E. Thing Co. (Vancouver) and Frederick Barthelme (lived between Houston and New York), across pages 33 to 40.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*

guidance offered by artists to assist others in completing the work. Finally, the chapter will examine a selection of pages in which artists encouraged readers to respond to and add to their ideas set out on the page, whether this could be in the minds of readers as they mentally worked through the questions they were posed, or via the page or in their navigation of the exhibition itself. Aside from broad (casual) art audiences, audiences for conceptual art were often other artists or art cognoscenti – thus they were participants in or followers of the language games, philosophical positions and communication strategies. Exchange and correspondence between artists and their collaborators constituted a creative aspect of exhibition making and consequently shaped the nature of artists' participation.

Some of the most personal, and seemingly private exchanges between artists and, at times, their unwitting collaborators can be found in the small index-card catalogue produced for the touring exhibition *c.7,500* (1973)<sup>24</sup>. This was the fourth show<sup>25</sup> in a series of exhibitions organised by Lucy Lippard that took their titles from the population of the cities where the exhibitions took place<sup>26</sup>. *c.7,500* is significant as it was the only exhibition of conceptual art staged between 1966 and 1973 to comprise the work exclusively of female artists. In her introduction to the catalogue, Lippard thanked individuals at The California Institute of the Arts (Cal Arts) for 'taking on a show including 'very few "known names"'<sup>27</sup>, (Fig. 4.3) with some participants, such as Athena Tacha<sup>28</sup> and Bernadette Mayer, being better-known for their curatorial work or writing.

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<sup>24</sup> *c. 7,500*, 14 – 18 May 1973, Gallery A-402, California Institute of the Arts, organised by Lucy Lippard, the exhibition subsequently toured to nine more locations.

<sup>25</sup> The previous shows were; *557,087*, 5 September - 5 October 1969, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle; *955,000*, 31 January - 8 February 1970, Vancouver Art Gallery; and *2,972,453*, 4 December - 23 December 1970, Centro de Arte y Comunicacion, Buenos Aires

<sup>26</sup> Discussed in Lippard, L.R. (2009) 'Curating by Numbers', *Tate Papers: Landmark Exhibitions Issue*, (12, 2009). Available at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/12/curating-by-numbers> (Accessed: 19/04/2011)

<sup>27</sup> Lippard, L., *c.7,500* (1973) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>28</sup> Athena Tacha's written and curatorial work, including organisation of the exhibition *Art in the Mind* (1970), was done using the surname of her husband, Richard E. Spear

Participating Artists

Renate Altenrath	Suzanne Kuffler
Laurie Anderson	Pat Lasch
Eleanor Antin	Bernadette Mayer
Jacki Apple	Christiane Möbus
Alice Aycock	Rita Myers
Jennifer Bartlett	Renee Nahum
Hanne Darboven	N.E.ThingCo. Ltd.
Agnes Denes	Ulrike Nolden
Doree Dunlap	Adrian Piper
Nancy Holt	Judith Stein
Poppy Johnson	Athena Tacha
Nancy Kitchel	Mierle Ukeles
Christine Kozlov	Martha Wilson

Fig. 4.3: *c.7500* (1973) exhibition catalogue reproduced in the facsimile, Khonsary, J., (ed) (2012) 4,492,040, Vancouver and Los Angeles: New Documents, Vancouver Art Gallery and the Seattle Art Museum, n.p.

Upon reviewing the cards that formed the catalogue, Lippard remarked that a number of works dealt with the artists' biographies and the overlapping theme of 'transformation, primarily of the self'<sup>29</sup>. Eleanor Antin's contribution was one such example, her type-written text covering both sides of the single 6 x 4 inch index card read like a transcript of the artist's inner dialogue as she prepared to appropriately present herself during a 17-day trip to New York to stay with her mother [v.2, p. 183]. Of the proposed arrangements, Antin soberly explained, 'it would serve our economic and domestic convenience (i.e. baby-sitting, meals, other services) but was also an opportunity for me to discharge familial obligations'<sup>30</sup>.

Antin's work is titled *Domestic Peace* (1971), proposing a wordplay on the informational and succinct titles that accompanied many conceptual artworks produced at this time<sup>31</sup>. The title offers a clue to the artist's underlying motivations for the piece, but also hinted at, and perhaps triggered comparison, albeit on a more personal and smaller scale, with the global conflicts that

<sup>29</sup> Lippard, L., *c.7,500* (1973) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>30</sup> Antin, E., *c.7,500* (1973) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>31</sup> For example, *Cremation Piece* (1969) by John Baldessari and various 'location', 'duration' and 'variable' pieces by Douglas Huebler

dominated the news during the early 1970s. Antin discloses to the reader the lack of interest that her mother has in her 'actual life' and the need to produce an image of 'appropriateness' that would satisfy her mother's expectations. In contrast to the majority of artists' pages examined in this research that presented an objective, rational, and at times, a cold take on their work, Antin's card is highly subjective and may elicit feelings of empathy in her readers, particularly amongst young women and mothers, who find they can relate to the artist's situation. Antin refers to a "feeling of closeness" that exists between mother and daughter but exposes this to be feigned and the result of being carefully manipulated by the information the artist chooses to share and suppress. This account continues onto the reverse of Antin's index card where she reveals the logistics of mediating daily exchanges with her mother, referred to as 'stories'. Readers gain a sense of the strategic approach that Antin took to maintain familial 'peace' and, in the process, create the art piece, through her explanation of how '[f]or those hectic times I would be forced to remain in the apartment for fairly long periods, I kept a set of reserves [conversations] I could throw in to hold the line'<sup>32</sup>. Further suggestion of the fraught atmosphere in her mother's apartment is illustrated by a series of expressive hand-drawn lines that are used in the exhibited work to denote the artist's state of mind through the period of the 17-day stay. While these are mixed and reflect the varied emotions felt by the artist, most, such as 'boredom', 'agitation' and 'hysteria' present negative connotations.

It is not clear from the catalogue whether the explanation offered on Antin's card was presented beside her gallery installation of documentation from the piece, which included maps, graphic notations and verbal material. This confessional and personal text, I would suggest, is aptly suited to the more private and concealed nature of the catalogue which is in keeping with Antin's private scheming to orchestrate the work in a domestic setting. Yet the 'feeling of closeness' referred to is undermined by Antin's publishing of this information and analysis of the data yielded from the piece, presumably without her mother's knowledge or consent, transforming familial relationships and difficulties into a subject of public examination.

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<sup>32</sup> Antin, op cit., n.p.

The publication of what would usually be deemed highly personal information was a feature across a few artists' works in the early conceptual era<sup>33</sup>. For example, included on one of Hans Haacke's pages in the *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969)<sup>34</sup> catalogue was a copy of the newborn identification document issued at his son's birth in January 1969, with an additional imprint from a rubber stamp declaring the newborn's arrival as being a 'collaboration [between] Linda and Hans Haacke'<sup>35</sup>. The matter-of-fact explanations or documentation of relationships and 'collaborations' put forward by Antin and Haacke extended to the ways in which exhibition organisers also chose to expose the personal exchanges and conversations that took with place with artists as part of arranging and installing exhibitions in the 1960s and 70s.

In the early conceptual era, discursive forewords and contextual essays that were traditionally used to introduce exhibition catalogues were replaced with brief, factual accounts by organisers detailing the logistics of how exhibitions were put together. On occasions, catalogues included reproductions of letters that organisers sent to artists inviting them to participate in an exhibition thus allowing readers to trace the full evolution of exhibition making from concept to realisation<sup>36</sup>. The catalogue produced for *Actualite d'un Bilan*<sup>37</sup> (1972) (which translates as 'Current Assessment') includes a copy of the text that organiser Yvon Lambert sent to the 31 artists who he had asked to participate in a retrospective survey of the first five years of Galerie Yvon Lambert. A copy of the text sent to each invited artist was included as part of Michael Claura's<sup>38</sup> introduction to the catalogue, it read;

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<sup>33</sup> In the *c.7,500* (1973) exhibition catalogue, Jenifer Bartlett listed the personal hygiene products that she used, including her preferred brands of shampoo and toothpaste, the razor she uses to shave her legs and armpits, and her taking of the contraceptive pill for six years and the effects this had on her; John Baldessari's paged in the *Konzeption / Conception* (1969) included a reproduction of semen and feces analysis cards in exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>34</sup> *When Attitudes Become Form*, 22 March - 27 April 1969, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, organised by Harald Szeemann.

<sup>35</sup> Hans Haacke, *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>36</sup> For example, the letter that Siegelauub sent to all 31 artists who were invited to participate in *One Month: March 1969* (1969) is reproduced in full at the front of the catalogue. In his introduction to the *18 Paris IV.70* (1970) exhibition catalogue, organiser Michel Claura explained the process of coordinating the exhibition.

<sup>37</sup> *Actualite d'un Bilan*, 29 October – 5 December 1972, Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, organised by Yvon Lambert.

<sup>38</sup> Michel Claura was Yvon Lambert's brother

Yvon Lambert is asking you to participate in an exhibition.

- This exhibition presents the activities of the gallery during the past five years.
- But is also an exhibition of art in October 1972
- In what way do you wish to participate in this exhibition?<sup>39</sup>

On Kawara's response to the invitation to participate consists of a series of international telegrams addressed to Lambert at 15 rue de Lechaude, 6eme, Paris, sent between 31 July and 15 September 1972 [v.2, pp. 184 - 188]. From 1970 until his death in 2014, On Kawara sent a succession of telegrams to friends, artists, gallerists and collectors stating 'I am still alive'. These were sent as responses to invitations to participate in exhibitions, and consequently, form the majority of the artist's catalogue contributions from this point onwards<sup>40</sup>.

The brevity and telegraphic medium of On Kawara's telegram messages are characteristic of the concise and direct ways in which information was communicated in the early conceptual era. In his *I Got Up* series (1968–79), On Kawara sent a series of postcards bearing this statement along with a time and date stamp, and in the 'Today' series (1966–2013), packaged his date paintings in boxes lined with newspapers published on the date the paintings were made. The statements and paintings are contextualised by the additional information that surrounds them; the pictures and stamps on the postcards, the content of newspapers, and in the pages of *Actualite d'un Bilan*, by the formatting of the telegram received by Lambert. Amongst the largely impersonal flow of words and digits on the telegrams, corrections and annotations have been added by hand, probably made by personnel working at the telecommunications branch through which the telegrams were sent or received. Annotations and smudges on the thin paper used to transmit the telegram, along with a narrow ribbon along the edge of the telegram bearing the logo of Voie Tele France<sup>41</sup> remind readers of the channels through which the message passed in order to reach its intended destination.

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<sup>39</sup> Claura, M., *Actualite d'un Bilan* (1972), exhibition catalogue, p. 10

<sup>40</sup> On Kawara submitted telegrams bearing the statement 'I am still alive. On Kawara' for the following publications; *18 Paris IV.70* (1970); special issue of *Studio International* (July / August 1970), p. 36; *Art in the Mind* (1970); *Conceptual Art, Art Povera, Land Art* (1970); *Sonsbeek 71* (volumes 1 and 2) (1971).

<sup>41</sup> French television channel

Telegrams offered a direct and fast means of communication that effectively collapsed the spatial distance between international locations. Consequently, On Kawara was able to participate in the exhibition held in Paris whilst remaining in New York. His statement is written in the present tense, which serves to enforce this arrangement. However, there is the possibility of the content being inaccurate by the time it was received as well as for the reader encountering this work at a later date. The reproduction of the full telegrams meant that readers of the catalogue were made aware of the distance the artist's message had travelled, however this effect was less apparent on other occasions when the artist's text had been extracted from the telegram and reformatted according to the catalogue layout<sup>42</sup>. In the *Actualite d'un Bilan* catalogue, a French translation of the telegram was printed on the last of On Kawara's four pages, preceded by three full-page reproductions of telegrams bearing the same message that were sent at different dates and times. Although all of On Kawara's telegrams carried the same message, each one was highly specific to the context in which it was sent and received and the exhibition that it formed part of.

Telegrams and messages sent by international mail were also widely reproduced in the catalogue accompanying *Information* (1970) held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York<sup>43</sup>. Exhibition organiser, Kynaston McShine wrote of how 'with a sense of mobility and change that pervades their time', the artists in the exhibition 'were interested in ways of rapidly exchanging ideas'<sup>44</sup>, and in few places was this more apparent than in the pages by N.E. Thing Co. Ltd [sic]<sup>45</sup>, which included documentation of a telex transmission titled '50,000 mile transmission within 3 minutes, December 1969'. This included a photograph of Iain Baxter, seated at a telex machine sending a message from

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<sup>42</sup> The final page of On Kawara's contribution to *Actualite d'un Bilan* includes such a page, this gives a French translation of the artist's message and states the dates the telegrams were received. On this occasion, the typeset page serves as a translation of the original telegrams, rather than a substitute for them.

<sup>43</sup> Additional examples not discussed in this chapter include Bulletin 21 by Art & Project, a gallery based in Amsterdam (p. 14), Stanley Brouwn simply provided his postal address on his page (p. 27), Christine Kozlov sent organiser McShine a telegram (p. 70) as did Richard Sladden (p. 121), and numerous other artists sent in plans and proposals for works that were reproduced as pages in the catalogue.

<sup>44</sup> McShine, K., 'Essay', *Information* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 139

<sup>45</sup> Accounting for variations in the company's name, Adam Lauder explains that N.E. Thing Co. was 'created by Iain Baxter in 1966 but rebranded and registered as the name N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. In 1967 and legally incorporated in 1969, with Ingrid Baxter acting as co-president from 1970', Lauder, A. (2013) 'N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. and the Institutional Politics of Information 1966–71', *TOPIA*, number 29 (Spring 2013), p. 10

Vancouver on the west coast of Canada to Joy Manufacturing, Newfoundland, on the east coast (Fig. 4.4). The actual distance between these two points is slightly less than 3000 miles, but the exaggerated title provided on the page alerts readers to the process of transmitting messages via a satellite in space in order for them to be received at another point on the earth only minutes later. McShine was alert to the way in which networks including the mail, telegrams and telex machines made it 'possible for artists to be truly international', remarking 'The art historian's problem of who did what first is almost getting to the point of having to date by the hour'<sup>46</sup> as if to suggest that the rapid exchange of information accelerated the development of ideas, or at least the rate audiences came to know about them.



Fig. 4.4: N.E. Thing Co. Ltd, artist's page (detail), *Information* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 91

McShine described the catalogue produced to accompany *Information* as 'an anthology' of artists' contributions, which may or may not relate to works included in the show, recommending that it should be 'considered a necessary adjunct to the exhibition'<sup>47</sup>. The 91 participating artists were invited to make a contribution of one page to the accompanying catalogue. Jan Dibbets' page presents a copy of the questionnaire that McShine sent to all participating artists

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p. 140

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p. 138



to ask how they would like to be represented in the catalogue [v.2, p. 189]. The letter demonstrates that catalogue content was decided upon by the artist and not the curator/dealer.

McShine uses the piece of paper sent to all artists as an indication of how much space they will have in the catalogue, 'a page is the size of this sheet and each artist will have one page'<sup>48</sup>. The questionnaire shows how McShine offered the participating artists a number of possibilities for how they could be represented in the catalogue. The first option is that photographs of the piece in the show can be used, the second option is by photographs of a previous piece, or thirdly, other photographs. These first three options place emphasis on the visual documentation of artists' works and ideas, whilst the fourth option invited the artist to nominate a statement, followed finally by the suggestion of 'any other way' and a space into which the artist can express their intentions.

Dibbets chooses the final option and in the space provided he handwrites 'by this paper'. The questionnaire is signed and dated at the appropriate points to confirm the artist's preference. Upon receiving the returned questionnaire, McShine has followed the artist's intentions and included a reproduction of the completed form in the catalogue. The page appears to be overprinted with the artist's name and brief biography details in the top right-hand corner, as per all the other pages in the catalogue. The page is numbered '43' in the lower right-hand corner; thus turning the private correspondence between organiser and artist into a page of a larger structure.

The sparse content of Dibbets' returned questionnaire lays bare the logistics behind compiling the catalogue to accompany the *Information* exhibition. This approach is unsurprising given Barbara Reise's assessment of Dibbets' character,

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<sup>48</sup> Jan Dibbets, artist page, *Information* (1970), exhibition catalogue, p. 43. This is true for the majority of artists in the catalogue, however the following artists had more than one page; Bernhard [sic] and Hilla Becher (2 pages), Joseph Beuys (2 pages), Victor Burgin (2 pages), Ian Burn and Mel Ramsden (4 pages), Hanne Darboven (2 pages), Group Frontera (3 pages), Fulton (2 pages), Gilbert & George (2 pages), Giorno Poetry Systems (2 pages), Michael Heizer (2 pages), Lucy Lippard (8 pages), Richard Long (2 pages), N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. (4 pages), Newspaper (4 pages), Group Oho (5 pages), Dennis Oppenheim (2 pages), Yvonne Rainer (2 pages), Robert Smithson (2 pages), Jeffrey Wall (4 pages).

Dibbets has a down-to-earth quality which is evident in his pragmatic efficiency in his dealings with the art world and his exhibition requirements, in his delight in plain-spoken straightforwardness and openness, in his disgust at social pretentiousness and crowded 'openings' ...<sup>49</sup>

By converting what would usually be a private correspondence between organiser and artist into a page published in the exhibition catalogue, Dibbets playfully opens up the practicalities of exhibition making for public consumption. The questionnaire uncovers the restrictions that artists were faced with by confining representation of their work to a single piece of paper, revealing to audiences the extent to which their participation was required to adhere to institutional guidelines.

The questions posed by McShine demonstrate an expectation that most artists would wish to be represented by photographs and written statements, but also a willingness to be open to alternative ideas. That McShine did follow Dibbets' request shows that openness to be authentic. From this, the reader can deduce that all other contributions in the catalogue are likely to be as the artists requested.

*Information* was 'organized on the basis of selecting the artists without knowing in advance what they would do in the show'<sup>50</sup>. Audiences catch evidence of this risky curatorial method with the inclusion of Hans Haacke's contentious work *MoMA Poll* (1970) (Fig. 4.5), anticipated by his proposal, which was reproduced in the catalogue under the title 'Proposal: Poll of MoMA Visitors' [v.2, p. 191]. Haacke does not disclose the specific question posed by the poll, only that it will be in response to an either/or question referring to a current social-political issue.

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<sup>49</sup> Reise, B., 'Notes on Jan Dibbets's contemporary nature of realistic classicism in the Dutch tradition', *Studio International*, vol. 183, no. 945 (June 1972), p. 248

<sup>50</sup> Vinklers, B., 'Art and Information: 'Software' at the Jewish Museum', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 45, no. 1 (September – October 1970), p. 48

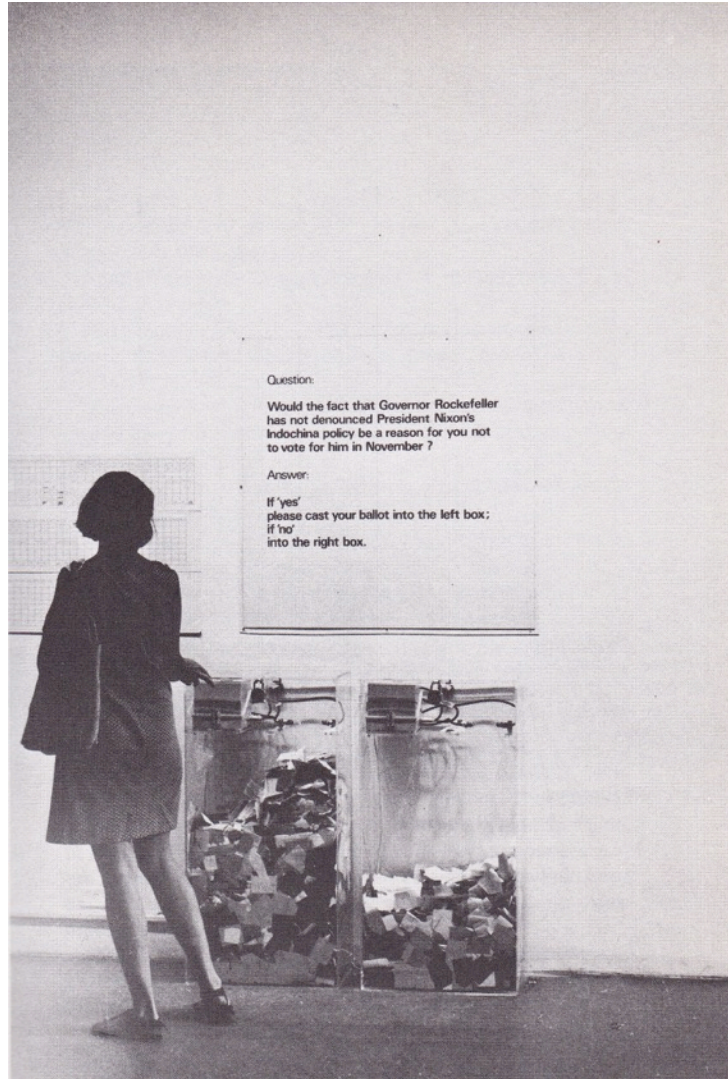


Fig. 4.5: Hans Haacke, *Proposal: Poll of MoMA visitors* installed in *Information* (1970). Photograph reproduced in Meyer, U., (1972) *Conceptual Art*, New York: Dutton, p. 135

The proposal places emphasis on the bureaucracy and fairness of the voting system. The final paragraph is about how the museum personnel have been instructed to make sure there is no interference with the polling process to ensure the voting process is entirely fair and transparent, followed by the instruction that any irregularities should be reported back to the artist. The second half of the catalogue page provides a sample of the chart displayed beside the box to record the number of tickets sold, and the number of ballots counted in each box. The final line requires a signature from MoMA personnel to certify the accuracy of the figures recorded.

The reproduction of Haacke's proposal in the catalogue may have revealed the processes undergone by artists to participate and contribute work for the *Information* exhibition. It is striking how in the proposal the artist refers to a

social-political issue but does not offer up any further information on what this might be. Due to the nature of the document presented, the reader can assume they are being given the same information as the exhibition staff, and are made aware of how rhetoric can mask one's real intentions. Since the early 1960s, Haacke had been working in terms of 'physical, biological or social' systems, describing his interest as 'the production of systems, the interference with and the exposure of existing systems'<sup>51</sup>. The artist's apparent attention to detail to ensure that democratic values are upheld in the voting process only aided him in accentuating the lack of transparency in the very issue raised by his poll.

The pages by On Kawara, Dibbets and Haacke examined so far plainly illustrate artists' responses to invitations to submit material for an exhibition or the accompanying catalogue. The means of correspondence used appear to be an integral part of the artists' approach and serve to highlight the distance across which these ideas have been exchanged. This indicates the international scope of conceptual art exhibitions held in the late 1960s and 1970s and shows how artists were able to participate in an exhibition in a multitude of forms. It is significant that the means of communication used has not been masked through it being transformed into a page. On Kawara's telegrams, Dibbets' returned questionnaire and Haacke's proposal for a poll of MoMA visitors are reproduced as they were received by the exhibition organisers to whom they were originally sent. Consequently, readers received the same information as gallery staff, thus indicating the transparency with which artists and organisers operated. That audiences were exposed to artists' decision making puts them in a privileged position and afforded them insights into the artists' work that they may not ordinarily have access to when viewing an exhibition.

Similarly to the way in which the pages by Antin, On Kawara, Dibbets and Haacke documented an exchange between artist and collaborator, interviews published in exhibition catalogues also had potential to invite readers into a space of conversation. In the *Prospect 69* (1969)<sup>52</sup> catalogue, four artists Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner were represented by short interviews in which they discussed the nature of their work

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<sup>51</sup> Haacke, H., *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* (1970), exhibition catalogue, p. 32

<sup>52</sup> *Prospect 69*, 30 September - 12 October 1969, Kunsthalle, Düsseldorf, organised by Konrad Fischer and Hans Strelow

shown in the exhibition<sup>53</sup>. When asked, 'What is your piece for Prospect 69?' Barry responded, 'The piece consists of the ideas that people will have from reading this interview'<sup>54</sup>. It is significant that these contributions take the form of interviews rather than artist statements, despite appearing primarily as devices for enabling articulation of the distinctive ideas of the artist. The interview format suggests a form of engagement and gives a sense of collaboration between artist, organiser and audience. Barry indicated that he wanted his piece for the show to be 'a natural result of the interview' that occurred in the minds of his readers, adding, it exists 'if you have ideas about it, and that part is yours. The rest you can only imagine'<sup>55</sup>. Given the intimate experience of reading, it is unlikely that individual readers would be aware of each other's responses; even so, Barry's contribution suggests that a form of conversation between readers might continue beyond the printed text.

In the *Art in the Mind* (1970)<sup>56</sup> catalogue, Dan Graham also provided the possibility of a conversation arising between various audience members across the page by asking a group of students to record their ideas in response to his piece *March 31, 1966* (1967)<sup>57</sup> in a questionnaire that he had prepared and distributed [v.2, pp. 192 - 197]. The piece, *March 31, 1966* consists of eleven lines of text, each stating the relative miles between the artist and a given point, ranging from the edge of the known universe to the artist's apartment and finally the cornea from the retinal wall of the eye. This is followed by five pages comprising reproductions of the questionnaires, which have been completed by participating students, all of whom have read the *March 31, 1966* text. It appears from the responses that the students were all in their early 20s and most had viewed the piece in a classroom or 'learning room' at the School of Visual Arts [New York]<sup>58</sup>. The recipients of the questionnaire are asked to complete the

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<sup>53</sup> The four artists were represented in *Prospect 69* (1969) by Seth Siegelau. They also took part in short interviews published in *Arts Magazine* following the presentation of their work in *January 5 – 31, 1969* earlier in the year. Rose, A.R., 'Four interviews with Arthur Rose', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 43, no. 4 (February 1969), pp. 22 - 23

<sup>54</sup> Barry, R., *Prospect 69*, exhibition catalogue, p. 26

<sup>55</sup> Barry, *op cit.*

<sup>56</sup> *Art in the Mind*, 17 April - 12 May 1970, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, organised by Athena Tacha Spear

<sup>57</sup> 'March 31, 1966' was first shown at Finch College, New York in November 1967. The work was also reproduced in the *Information* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 56, omitting the participants' responses.

<sup>58</sup> When asked to state the exact place in which they first read the work, a number of respondents stated they were in a classroom or 'learning room' at the School of Visual Arts. The final question asks respondents to give the time, date and place of their birth,

exact time and place at which they first read the work – mimicking the nature of the original text. The questionnaire then asks for the time taken in seconds, for the participant to read the piece (one response was left blank, the others ranged from 15 to 100 seconds) and the distance from which the page was read (most responses ranged from 9 – 12 inches). Ordinarily, the reader of the text would not consider these criteria; the questionnaires require the participant to recall their experience of reading the text and contemplate their interaction with it.

The following seven questions ask for readers' 'specific thoughts on the motive of the author' and to give their reaction to the text. The questions ask for 'his [sic][the artists's] point' as well as 'his [sic] point of view', 'what it [the text] was directed at' and whether it had 'any social motivation or content'. Responses to the 'point of view' question included the 'relativity of himself [the artist] to environments (and its meaninglessness)', to 'stimulate your mind to feel the withdrawing process – getting deeper and deeper into yourself/+/surrounding environment' and 'distances from large to small'. Many of the responses are colloquial in their tone, some even quoted lyrics from popular songs when asked if there is anything else they wished to say, which perhaps indicates the informality of the relationship between the artist and participants<sup>59</sup>. The main conclusions to be drawn from the questionnaire responses (although several are not legible) is that reading the piece provoked consideration of the relative distance between oneself and one's environment and made readers consider the time and distance from which they read the page – their proximity to the work. The information recorded then prompts us (the new reader) to consider how our own responses to this text and questionnaire may differ based on our precise situations.

Similar to the varied readings formed in response to Graham's piece, *March 31, 1966*, in his letter to the organiser of *Art in the Mind*, Athena T. Spear, Lawrence Weiner offered reassurance that there was no single correct interpretation for his work. His page in the catalogue was a reproduction of a typed letter the artist sent to Spear, dated 25 February 1970 [v.2, p. 199]. The brief letter does not provide any visual information, or a description of the final form of Weiner's

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the year of birth for all ranged between 1947 and 1951, indicating that all were in their early 20s, thus confirming the likelihood that they were students at the time.

<sup>59</sup> For example, one participant wrote the lyrics of the newly released Beatles song 'Let it Be' (1970) when asked if there was anything else they wished to say, other's responded in this section with comments including 'Heavy stuff!! Heavy stuff!!' and 'good luck'.

contribution to the exhibition, causing the reader to be free to imagine the varied manifestations of the allusive title provided by the artist. In the letter, Weiner states that the piece for inclusion in the exhibition is titled *OBSTRUCTED (collection – Public Freehold)*. As no further details are given, this may cause readers to imagine how the word 'obstructed' could be interpreted in the context of the exhibition. Many of Weiner's works comprised titles of single words or ambiguous statements that although precise in their wording, were open-ended in terms of the ideas signified. In stating that the work was 'public freehold'<sup>60</sup>, this indicated that the piece existed in the public domain and that alternative versions could plausibly be conceived in other contexts. Similar to the way in which Barry suggested in his interview in *Prospect 69* that readers could only know the part of the work that was in their own mind, Weiner's proposal presents the possibility that there were multiple manifestations of the work that would be unique to the person reading the letter.

Following the title of the piece, Weiner has inserted, from a different source, a copy of his 'Statement of Intent', which accompanied all works by the artist from January 1969 onwards<sup>61</sup>. The inserted text is formatted as two columns, the column on the left-hand side gives the three possible conditions for the work, which is followed on the right-hand side of the page by the explanation that each condition is equal and consistent with the intent of the artist, and the final decision rests upon the receiver. The typesetting of this statement indicates that the artist has perhaps copied or cut the text from another published catalogue or magazine and stuck it onto the page upon which the letter is typed. For this reason, the language used by Weiner in the statement is generic and impersonal in contrast to the privately addressed letter concerning the construction of the work for *Art in the Mind*.

Following the typeset statement, Weiner continues with his typed letter. It is clear from this that Spear or a student/technician will be installing the work and

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<sup>60</sup> For Weiner, works designated 'public freehold' were part of the public domain, whilst all other works were for sale. Weiner, L., interview with Lebeer, I., 'Red as well as Green as well as Yellow as well as Blue', reproduced in Fietzek, G., and Stemrich, G., (eds) (2004) *Having been Said: Writings and Interviews of Lawrence Weiner 1968 – 2003*, Hatje Cantz, p. 70

<sup>61</sup> Weiner, L., 'Statement of Intent', *January 5 – 31, 1969* (1969) exhibition catalogue. Weiner explained the differences between the three conditions set out in his Statement of Intent in Weiner, L., and Sharp, W., 'Lawrence Weiner: At Amsterdam', *Avalanche*, (spring 1972), pp. 66 - 67

that Weiner will not be present at the exhibition. Weiner writes to reassure Spear that 'there is no correct way to install the piece as there is no incorrect way to construct it'. He gives no indication of how the word 'obstructed' is to be interpreted or the materials that one might use to fabricate this work (if they choose to do so). Finally, the letter is hand-signed by the artist. Usually, Weiner's works were not signed upon completion – in this instance, the use of the signature seems to be purely for the purpose of correspondence. This is the only occasion during the research period that Weiner presented the Statement of Intent in the form of a letter. Most often it would accompany a description or title of a work and be typeset according to the format of the catalogue it was presented in. Although the letter itself is relatively short and brief in the information offered, it provides readers with a rich insight into the artist's thought processes concerning the communication and materialisation of his propositions. The personal quality of the typed letter together with the artist's signature confirms for readers the authenticity of the ideas and works presented.

In contrast to Weiner's use of singular words and brief statements that were open to numerous manifestations, Art & Language's catalogue contributions at this time were lengthy, convoluted essays that had precisely stated motivations. Over time, and with the addition of more members and the generation of more texts, the group's output became increasingly difficult for readers who were external to the group to navigate.

For the ninety-day event *Documenta 5* (1972)<sup>62</sup>, held in Kassel, members of The Art & Language Institute<sup>63</sup> presented *Index 01* (1972), the first version of their large indexing system which cross-referenced texts by individual authors 'to try and find out what are the basic common denominators of each individual in the group'<sup>64</sup>. The installation comprised eight slim filing cabinets positioned in the centre of a square room. The drawers of filing cabinets contained copies of texts written by various members of the Art-Language Institute: these were filed

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<sup>62</sup> *Documenta 5*, 30 June - 8 October 1972, Museum Fridericianum, Friedrichsplatz, Neue Galerie, Kassel, organised by Harald Szeemann. Art & Language were included in *Section 17: Idee / Idee Licht* of the exhibition, organised by Konrad Fischer and Hans Strelow.

<sup>63</sup> The individual members of Art & Language participating in *Documenta 5* were; Terry Atkinson, David Bainbridge, Michael Baldwin, Ian Burn, Charles Harrison, Harold Hurrell, Joseph Kosuth and Mel Ramsden. Within their catalogue text, Art & Language referred to themselves collectively as 'The Art & Language Institute'.

<sup>64</sup> *Documenta 5*, 1972 [DVD] Directed by Jef Cornelis. JRP Ringier



alphabetically according to subject. A scheme was displayed around the walls of the room; this specified the relationships between the individual texts using a system devised by the Art-Language Institute.

The extensive *Documenta 5*<sup>65</sup> exhibition catalogue presented a text entitled *The Art-Language Institute: Suggestions for a map*, spanning three pages in German and English translations [v.2, pp. 201 - 206]. This explains how many of the group's priorities involve internally talking to each other, in the belief that a number of the problems and prospects faced are not unique to the individual but may relate to existing theories or a common ground between its members. The text is concerned with the social aspects of how the group is structured and functions, with one issue being the ability to identify the 'top' value of shared influence – i.e. the theories with the greatest influence on most members. In the gallery installation, this is signified in the wall text which lists all the texts arranged in the eight cabinets, and accredits each of these with a plus (+) symbol (it can be added to another specified text) or a minus (-) symbol (it cannot be combined with a specified text) or a 'T' (meaning it has a different perspective in relation to other texts).

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<sup>65</sup> This was contained in a large orange lever arch file, meaning that individual pages could be removed. The cover of the catalogue, designed by Ed Ruscha, featured a formation of ants in the shape of the number '5'. The majority of texts in the catalogue, including introductions to each section were published in German with some translations given in English.

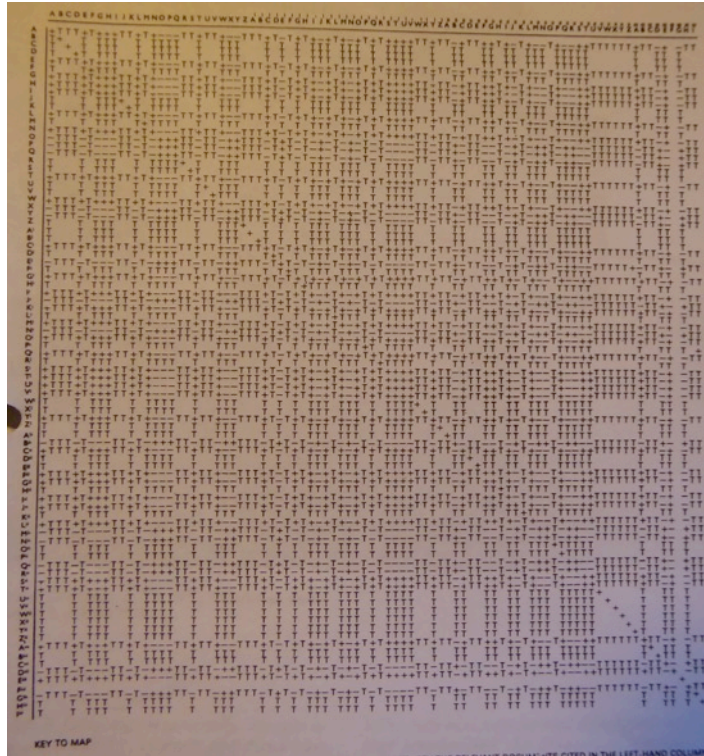


Fig. 4.6: The Art-Language Institute, 'Key to Map', in 1970 – 1975 Paul Maenz, Koln. Image courtesy Lynda Morris, Norwich

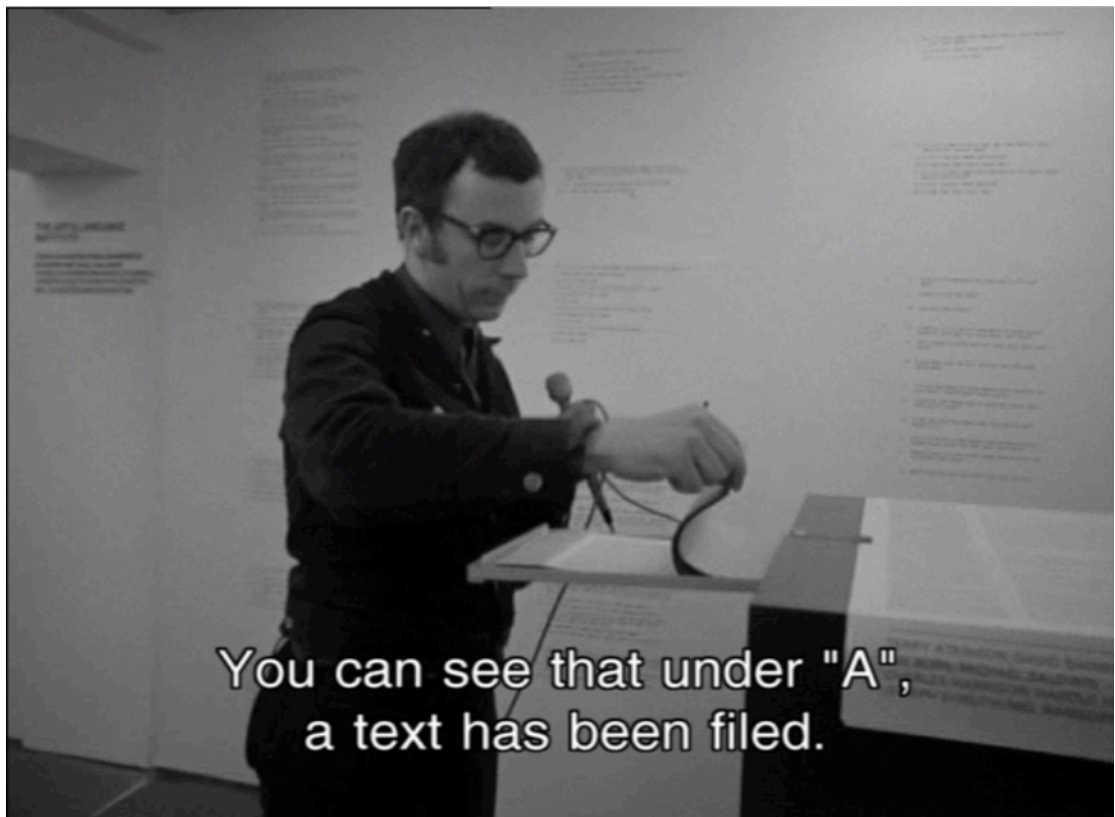


Fig. 4.7: Georges Ade views *Index 01* by Art & Language at *Documenta 5* (1972). Screenshot from *Documenta 5*, 1972 [DVD] Directed by Jef Cornelis. JRP Ringier

One of the functions of the *Documenta 5* catalogue entry is to explain how the textbook (in this instance an 'indexical map' given to visitors) can be used to help map individual contributions and shared influences (Fig. 4.6 and 4.7). The method used for positioning texts within the index is explained in the *Suggestions for a map* through a 'procedural sequence' consisting of five points. The first indicates that an intuitive or informal understanding of the 'field' has been systematised and summarised, adequately for purposes of communication. Secondly, a 'provisional formulation' of the explicit content is attempted, after which, thirdly, it is tested against other theories. The 'theoretical consequences' are then developed and cross-checked against the authors' or readers' intuitive standpoints. Here, the authors refer to the concept of a 'lattice', a three-dimensional cross-hatched structure which is referred to throughout the catalogue entry as a metaphor for the structure of the Art-Language Institute. Finally, if the theory is suitable to go forward, it can be scrutinised against some of the main problems of its larger 'domain' (area/territory) to generate a series of questions or issues. This system explains how all works by the individual members of Art & Language fit together as a whole. Later, the authors refer to the Institute as a 'corpus of ideological commitments comprising a field' meaning that the collection of written texts can be thought of as being a collection of entire works on a particular subject.

The text then outlines seven key features of the collected Institute writings; the third point here explains how the purpose of the work conducted by the Art & Language Institute is instructive, 'it teaches to learn' and how this differs to the purpose of much contemporary art. When interviewed about the work, Charles Harrison explained, 'It teaches us about our relationships with each other, intellectual, ideological, whatever', and Mel Ramsden added, 'The problem is to learn, in a very simple sense, about talking between ourselves'<sup>66</sup>. These explanations and the recognition that many of the group's 'more problematic priorities are 'internal' in that they concern the prospect of talking to each other'<sup>67</sup> indicate that despite the stated need to communicate outwards beyond the group, *Index 01* is ultimately an internal exercise.

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<sup>66</sup> Harrison, C., and Ramsden, M., speaking to Georges Ade in *Documenta 5*, 1972 [DVD] Directed by Jef Cornelis. JRP Ringier

<sup>67</sup> 'The Art-Language Institute: Suggestions for a map', *Documenta 5* (1972) exhibition catalogue, p. 17.16

For readers to fully interpret the catalogue text (and by extension, the texts presented in the exhibition installation) it is necessary for them to consult external references to help decipher the terminology used and build their own transcription. This takes time and commitment to achieve (not least due to the length of the text), and readers may find themselves exhausted and disengaged by the process. Only those readers who choose to engage in 'serious' study of *Index 01* and the associated texts will be able to understand what it is the group hoped to achieve by presenting this work<sup>68</sup>. Kosuth likened the group's inquiries into the nature of art to the serious disciplines of science and philosophy, which 'don't have 'audiences' either'<sup>69</sup>, causing Ursula Meyer to conclude, 'In the same sense that science is for scientists, and philosophy is for philosophers, art is for artists'<sup>70</sup>.

Even the community of conceptual artists may be a too broad an audience for Art & Language. Recalling his experience of encountering the work, Hans Haacke complained,

Always, when I tried to read Art & Language literature, I was running against a wall – languagewise [sic]. And I don't know if this is because I'm simply stupid or if what is written there is written in a deliberately mystifying way<sup>71</sup>

When the *Index* was shown at *The New Art* (1972)<sup>72</sup> at the Hayward Gallery, London two months later, Harrison wrote in the catalogue 'we want to be careful who we talk to and who we can be made to talk to', thus indicating that the work of Art & Language was quite separate to other strands of conceptual art. He stated that although 'the maximum likely gain' of participating in the exhibition was 'to be seen in terms of contact with people who may realise that they're standing in the same ground and thus in a position to help with the mapping', that the group could do without 'amateur/volunteer help'. He went on to

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<sup>68</sup> Kosuth, J., speaking in Cornelis, Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Kosuth, J., 'Introductory Note by the American Editor', *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1 no. 2, (February 1970), pp. 1 - 5

<sup>70</sup> Meyer, U., 'Introduction', (1972) *Conceptual Art*, New York: Dutton, p. xx

<sup>71</sup> Haacke, H., 'Art and its Cultural Context – A Congress in Brussels'. Transcript reproduced in Fietzek, G., and Stemrich, G., (eds) (2004) *Having been Said: Writings and Interviews of Lawrence Weiner 1968 – 2003*, Hatje Cantz, p. 60

<sup>72</sup> *The New Art*, 17 August - 24 September 1972, Hayward Gallery, London, organised by Anne Seymour

recognise that the work of 'viz. Stezaker *et al*' constituted 'interference'<sup>73</sup>, which rather than extending the lattice would simply disorder its inner system.

On the other hand, Adrian Piper invited open-ended contributions and reactions from readers in her catalogue pages for *Art in the Mind* (1970) [v.2, pp. 208 - 213]. In a series of works made in 1970, Piper involved the actions of the public to form the content of work. For example in *Information* (1970)<sup>74</sup> she displayed *Context #7* (Fig. 4.8), which comprised seven notebooks filled with solicited contributions from the public and in *Context #8: Written Information Voluntarily Supplied to Me during the Period April 30 to May 30, 1970*, Piper exhibited handbills given to her by activists during the period stated and presented these without commentary in a binder.

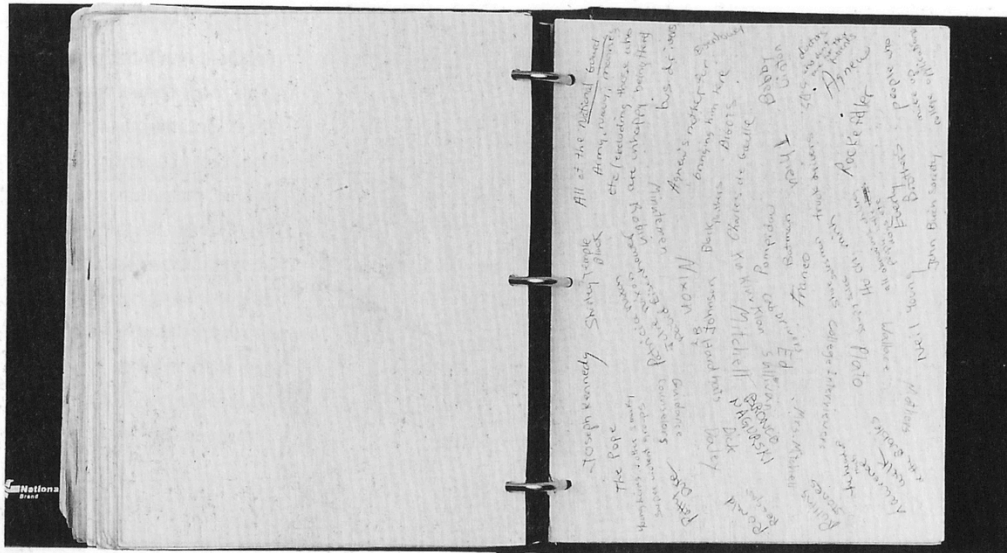


Fig. 4.8: Adrian Piper, *Context #7* (1970), seven three-ring binders filled with blank pages written and drawn on by visitors to the *Information* (1970) exhibition, Museum of Modern Art, New York. Image reproduced in Goldstein, A., Rorimer, A., (eds.), (1995) *Reconsidering the Object of Art 1965 - 1975*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, p. 34

Instead of presenting documentation alluding to a project already underway or complete in *Art in the Mind*, Piper indicated her intention to draw out readers' responses to an open-ended proposition in her work titled *Context #6 (elicited)*. Although not stated, it is possible that the contributions made by the public to

<sup>73</sup> Harrison, C., 'Mapping and Filing', *The New Art* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 15

<sup>74</sup> *Information*, 2 July - 20 September 1970, Museum of Modern Art, New York, organised by Kynsaton McShine

*Context #6 (elicited)* followed on to create Piper's exhibit at *Information*; this is plausible based on the sequential numbers of the two works and the fact that *Information* opened six weeks after the close of *Art in the Mind*. Piper's full contribution to the *Art in the Mind* catalogue comprised four pages; upon the first of these she requested readers to 'write, draw, or otherwise indicate any information suggested by the above statement...' that read, 'I AM COLLECTING INFORMATION'. This was followed by three blank pages that were scored with a line of dashes, drawn close to the spine of the catalogue, inviting readers to make their mark, detach the page and mail it to the artist at the address provided. It is significant that Piper provided three pages upon which readers could make their response; this presents the possibility that a reader might have several responses to the statement offered or that multiple readers of the same copy of the catalogue could each participate, detach and send their completed page to the artist. Readers encountering these pages, later on, may become aware of others' prior engagement with the work as a result of marks on the page or the remaining stub of a removed page, which would confirm for them the exchange elicited by Piper's piece.

The pages analysed in this chapter reveal to readers the logistical as well as conceptual processes undergone by artists to participate in exhibitions in the 1960s and 1970s. They have shown how transatlantic communications via the mail, telegrams, telex and telephone enabled artists to contribute works without leaving their hometowns as well the ways in which these systems shaped how ideas and information were received. Traditionally, correspondence and proposals exchanged between artists and organisers would usually remain private, but reproduction of these as pages in exhibition catalogues invited audiences to witness the conversations that took place and on occasions, such in as Barry's published interview in the *Prospect 69* catalogue, become participants in these. At times, for example in the confessional text produced by Antin for *Domestic Peace*, the page exposes readers to highly personal and private exchanges, which may elicit a feeling of empathy and promote a 'feeling of closeness' between reader and artist, if not with the subject of the work. Such pages, I would argue, contributed to the collapsing of hierarchies and boundaries between artists, organisers, collectors, critics and audiences in the early conceptual era, as everyone was exposed to the same information and

invited to form their own responses to it<sup>75</sup>. When Weiner reassured Athena T. Spear that there was no incorrect way to realise his work *Obstructed* in preparation for *Art in the Mind*, by extension of the page, he also reassured the readers of this fact.

Today, Haacke's *MoMA Poll* is recognised as one of the most radical and political artworks produced in the early conceptual era. It may seem surprising to contemporary audiences that the artist appeared so frank and open about his intentions for exhibiting a ballot that posed a socio-political question to audience members, and that this work was not censored by the museum as it was later in the artist's career<sup>76</sup>. The proposal titled *Poll of MoMA visitors* demonstrates a level of trust between artist, organiser and audiences and exposes how the nuances of stating one's idea were integral to the realisation of these. *Index 01* shown at *Documenta 5* has also become an iconic work of the early 1970s, and contemporary audiences with an interest in conceptual art are likely to be familiar with images of the eight filing cabinets that constituted this installation. They are less likely, however, to be aware of the specific content of these cabinets and the precise ways in which the individual texts interrelated with each other and operated as a whole work. Without being able to consult the individual texts that formed the *Index 01*, contemporary readers are unable to engage with and contribute to the work as the artists supposedly intended. The catalogue text offers some insight into the motivations behind this work and invites readers to appreciate that The Art-Language Institute saw a necessity in sharing their ideas and to map the common denominators of it. Yet, making this work accessible to wider audiences seems to be less of a concern for the group; as a result of the technical language and systems used, this presentation ultimately emerges to be an internal conversation between existing members of the group. In a review of *The New Art* in *Studio International*, Rudi Fuchs described the presentation of *Index* as 'almost the grand allegory of art's contemporary privateness', indicating that even specialist art critics could not penetrate the

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<sup>75</sup> Discussed in Battcock, G., 'Documentation in Conceptual Art', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 44, no. 6 (April 1970), p. 42; Lippard, L., (1973) *Six Years*, London: Studio Vista p. 7; Kosuth, J., 'Introductory Note by the American Editor', *Art-Language: The Journal of Conceptual Art*, vol. 1, no. 2 (February 1970), pp. 1 - 5

<sup>76</sup> Haacke's scheduled solo show at the Guggenheim Museum planned to open on 30 April 1971 was cancelled due to reservations of the organisers about the 'social systems' exposed in the proposed work. Discussed in Burnham, J. 'Hans Haacke's cancelled show at the Guggenheim', *Artforum*, vol. 9, no. 10 (June 1971), pp. 67 – 71 and Fry, E. 'Hans Haacke, the Guggenheim: The Issues', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 45, no. 7 (May 1971), p. 17

group's 'internal code of communication'<sup>77</sup>. In the almost five decades since the *Index* was first shown, the 'lattice' referred to in the text will have undoubtedly changed and grown to accommodate new texts or ways of thinking and will reflect the additions and departures of individuals to the Art-Language Institute<sup>78</sup>.

The telegrams that On Kawara sent to Yvon Lambert and the questionnaires completed in response to Dan Graham's piece *March 31, 1966*, locate the recipients of these works in the precise context of the early 1970s. The publication of this correspondence in exhibition catalogues highlights the disparity between the moment of exchange between artist and recipient, the point that documentation of this was published, and the time frame in which readers come to encounter it. The effect of this is heightened several decades after the works were published, for example, some of the expressions used by the students completing Graham's questionnaires are no longer current, and the telegram has become a defunct mode of communication. Most striking is the way in which On Kawara's statement written in the present tense 'I am still alive. On Kawara' is no longer accurate following the artist's death in 2014. As both the technology used and more significantly, the artists themselves cease to exist, contemporary audiences are likely to increasingly view these pages as documents of art history rather than the 'live' exchanges intended.

It is however potentially feasible for contemporary audiences to still participate in the dialogues set out on the page, albeit with unexpected or alternative outcomes to those anticipated. For example, a copy of the *Art in the Mind* catalogue consulted for this research still has intact the three blank pages that Piper had offered up to readers to 'write, draw or otherwise indicate any information' in response to her statement 'I AM COLLECTING INFORMATION'. Only 100 copies of this catalogue were initially published, followed by a further 200 the following year, making this catalogue one of the most rare and valuable from the period. Consequently, readers encountering this catalogue in public or private collections are likely to be unwilling or unable to draw on the page and

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<sup>77</sup> Fuchs, R.H., 'More on The New Art', *Studio International*, vol. 184, no. 949 (November 1972), pp. 194 - 195

<sup>78</sup> Terry Atkinson, who was a founding member of Art & Language left the group in 1974 and has since exhibited under his own name. In the early 1970s, individuals including Joseph Kosuth, Charles Harrison, Ian Burn, Mel Ramsden joined and the group was estimated to have between 30 and 50 members at times. After the mid-1970s, the group fragmented. In 2018, Michael Baldwin and Mel Ramsden are the principal members.



detach it from the publication to mail it to the artist, but this possibility is still offered, conceptually, at least. A further complication is that in 2005, Piper moved from New York to Germany, making the address provided in the catalogue inaccurate for contemporary readers. Piper sought to draw attention to the immediate context and used the term the 'indexical present' to direct focus on the here and now of the moment the work was encountered, Graham achieves a similar effect when he asks recipients of his questionnaire, and by extension, readers of the catalogue to recall the 'exact time' and place they first read his text. Readers encountering Piper's pages and the others discussed in this chapter are likely to approach the work in a wholly different context today; proposals have since become iconic artworks, technologies once used have become obsolete and the relationship between artists and their peers has evolved. Despite this, the pages examined here continue to offer the potential of dialogue and exchange, in the mind, if nowhere else. The artists' pages analysed in the final thematic chapter of this thesis, 'Dematerialisation: The Silence of an Empty Page' ask readers to stretch their imaginations further as the page comes to signify otherwise unperceivable works and ideas. The examples considered in this final chapter invite readers to reassess the function of the page as an alternative or substitute for dematerialised artworks, thus requiring the status of the page to be re-evaluated.

## CHAPTER 5:

### DEMATERIALIZATION: THE SILENCE OF AN EMPTY PAGE

If one is making something which is to be nothing, the one making must love and be patient with the material he chooses. Otherwise he calls attention to the material, which is precisely something, whereas it was nothing that was being made.<sup>1</sup>

In 'Lecture on Nothing', first printed in 1959 and published in his influential book *Silence* (1961), John Cage reminds artists and readers alike of the inextricable relationship between a concept and the materials through which it is made known. When works concern ephemeral or unperceivable forces, the materials used to convey these take on greater significance and will determine the reception of these for whoever comes to encounter them. The pages examined in this final thematic chapter are all concerned with silent or invisible actions and on occasions become the only way in which audiences may come to learn about otherwise 'dematerialised' artworks. Rather than provide a representation of an object, these pages convey a sense of being, for example, presence, absence, emptiness, resistance and withdrawal. The pages speak of artists' moral and political attitudes towards the nature of their involvement in exhibitions and the art world at large.

In the seminal essay 'The Dematerialization of Art'<sup>2</sup>, Lippard and Chandler identified how 'the 'thinness' both literal and allusive, of such themes as water, steam, dust, flatness, legibility, temporality, continues the process of ridding art of its object quality' but went on to observe how 'very little of their work is really conceptual to the point of excluding the concrete altogether'<sup>3</sup>. The authors signalled that although a shift in emphasis from object to idea was prevalent in the works discussed, there was nevertheless something present. Terry Atkinson criticised how most of the artworks referred to in the article were indeed art-objects, albeit different to traditional ones. Concerning the inclusion of *Map not to Indicate* (1967) (Fig. 5.1) and other paper-based works by Art & Language,

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<sup>1</sup> Cage, J., 'Lecture on Nothing' (1959), reproduced in John Cage (1961) *Silence: Lectures and Writings by John Cage*, 1966 edition, Massachusetts: MIT Press, p. 114

<sup>2</sup> Lippard, L.R., and Chandler, J., 'The Dematerialization of Art', *Art International*, vol. XII/2 (February 1968), pp. 31 - 36

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid* p. 34

Atkinson rationalised, 'The map is just as much a solid-state object (i.e., paper with ink upon it) as is any Rubens (stretcher-canvas with paint upon it) and as such comes up for the count as being just as physically-visually perusable as the Rubens'<sup>4</sup>. Although Atkinson's primary concern was with art ideas, he made readers aware of how these could not be separated from materials, but rather, the materials used were just changing, and had secondary significance to ideas. John Baldessari's *Cremation Project* (1970) was one example in which traditional art objects were transformed into 'lightweight' or dematerialised mediums. For this Baldessari burnt all the paintings he had produced between May 1953 and March 1966 in an industrial scale furnace, placed announcements of the event in newspapers, documented it extensively in catalogues and presented the ashes in exhibitions<sup>5</sup>. This work, and others such as LeWitt's *Buried Cube Containing an Object of Importance but Little Value* (1968) and Arnatt's photographic work, *Self Burial* (1969)<sup>6</sup>, which suggested the disappearance of the art object, and even the artist, pose a critique of dematerialisation, and was summed up by Lawrence Weiner when he pointed out,

When artists are dealing with so-called 'dematerialization of the object', and they present large sheafs [sic] of papers, photos, objects, all signed, sealed, delivered, insured, they haven't dematerialized anything, they've just substituted six reams of papers and six reams of photos for a large stone sculpture. There's no material difference<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Atkinson, T., 'Concerning the article 'The Dematerialization of Art', 23 March 1968, published in Lucy Lippard (1973) *Six Years*, Studio Vista: London, p. 43

<sup>5</sup> *Cremation Project* (1970) is documented in the *Konzeption / Conception* (1969), *Software* (1970) and *Recorded Activities* (1971) exhibition catalogues

<sup>6</sup> Included in *Land Art*, Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum, broadcast on SFB at 22.40 on 15 April, 1969, organised by Gerry Schum

<sup>7</sup> Weiner, L., and Sharp, W., 'Lawrence Weiner: At Amsterdam', *Avalanche* (Spring 1972), p. 71

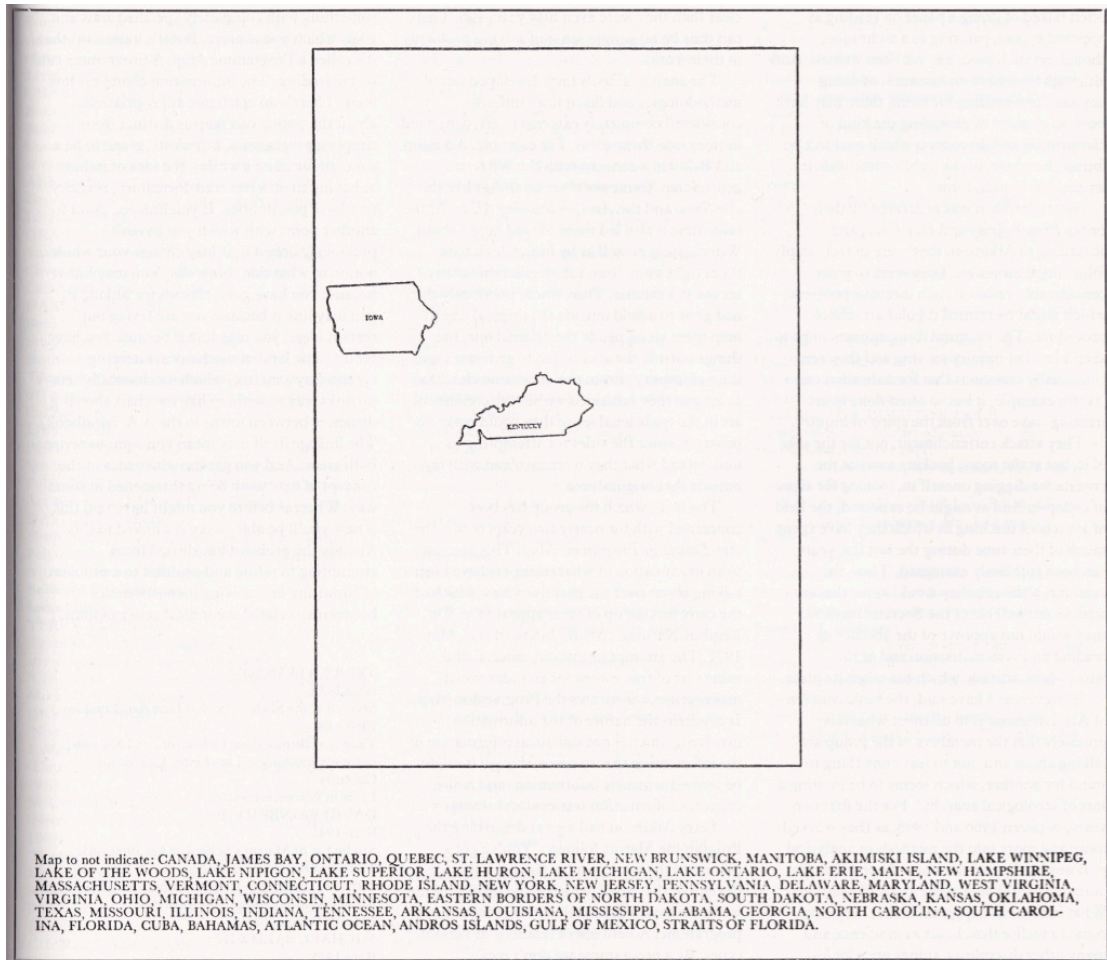


Fig. 5.1: Terry Atkinson and Michael Baldwin, *Map not to indicate...* (1967), letterpress, reproduced in *The New Art* (1972), exhibition catalogue, p. 71

Dematerialisation, not coincidentally, came at a time of global political and cultural unrest. By 1969, resistance against the US government's involvement in the Vietnam War was widespread, with tens of thousands of people marching to protest against the war. Strikes and demonstrations against violence, racism, sexism, and repression were commonplace in the art world as well. Throughout the period covered by this research, several notable figures withdrew from the art world. Artists, particularly those involved with Land Art stepped outside the gallery to create large-scale works that resisted institutional boundaries and treatment, whilst individuals including Charlotte Posenenske (1930 – 1985), Lee Lozano (1930 – 1999), Christine Kozlov (1945 – 2005), Stephen Kaltenbach (b. 1940), Agnes Martin (1912 – 2004) and Seth Siegelaub departed the official art world to pursue alternative personal and political interests<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Charlotte Posenenske stopped making conceptual art to become a social worker in 1968; Lee Lozano is known for acts of refusal leading to her dropping out of the art world altogether, her important work *Dropout Piece* is explored in Lehrer-Graiwier, S., (2014) *Lee Lozano, Dropout Piece*, London: Afterall Books; Christine Kozlov withdrew

However silent, absent or dematerialised an action or artwork, as John Cage indicated, something must exist in order for us to know about it, and the materials used to communicate such artworks come under even greater scrutiny. The pages analysed in this final thematic chapter approach the notion of dematerialisation from two different perspectives. The first part of the chapter concerns contributions in which attention was displaced from the tangible art object towards the material status of the page. Conventionally, the page is used as a carrier of verbal or visual information, but as shown, the way in which artists intervened with the form and matter of the page may also point towards their wider attitudes concerning the nature of participation. The second part of the chapter examines various blank pages that were included in exhibition catalogues to ask whether the inclusion of these should still be understood as a form of participation, and if so, on what grounds.

### **Reconsidering the material status of the page: cutting, tearing and removing**

Ad Reinhardt (1913 – 1967), a progenitor of minimal and conceptual art arrived at his black paintings of 1960 through a process of elimination. For Reinhardt, whose extensive critical writing was often cited by conceptual artists and critics as a source of influence<sup>9</sup>, the only way to say what his art was meant to say what it was not<sup>10</sup>. He advised, 'If you want to be left with nothing, you can't have nothing to begin with'<sup>11</sup>. The artists' pages analysed in this first section of the chapter follow Reinhardt's dictum; they all begin with something physical, a piece of paper, which through being bound alongside others in a publication

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from making art in the mid-1970s; in 1967, Agnes Martin moved to Mexico where she put her painting aside to take up writing; Seth Siegelaub left the New York art world in 1972 to pursue political interests in Europe.

<sup>9</sup> For example, Joseph Kosuth quoted Reinhardt in parts one and two of 'Art after philosophy', Kosuth, J., 'Art after philosophy', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 915 (October 1969), p. 134; Kosuth, J., 'Art after philosophy part II', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 916 (November 1969), p. 160; Harrison, C., 'Notes towards art work', *Studio International*, vol. 179, no. 919 (February 1970), p. 42; quotations by Reinhardt were also included in the *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* (1970) exhibition catalogue

<sup>10</sup> Reinhardt, A., (1953) 'Twelve Rules for a New Academy', *ArtNews* vol. 56. No. 3 (May 1957), pp. 37-38. 56; reprinted in Rose, B. (ed.) (1975) *Art-as-Art: The Selected Writings of Ad Reinhardt*, New York: Viking, pp. 203-207

<sup>11</sup> Lippard, L., 'Top to Bottom, Left to Right', in *Grids Grids Grids...* (1972) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

becomes a page. The blank piece of paper offers a starting point, and through artists' interaction with it, shows itself to be a malleable material. In this sense, the page becomes an object, one that can be encountered from a variety of perspectives, using both the hands and the mind. On occasions, the page may become the only trace of an artist's involvement in an exhibition. This raises the question of the extent to which the page can be seen as an abstraction or extension of the exhibited artwork, especially when the objects encountered in exhibitions were becoming increasingly 'dematerialised'.

Lawrence Weiner was still working as a minimal painter when in February 1968 he was invited to take part in the exhibition *Andre, Barry, Weiner*, organised by Seth Siegelau at Bradford Junior College<sup>12</sup>. In the Laura Knott Gallery where the exhibition was held, Weiner presented *Removal Painting* (1968) this was a monochrome rectangular canvas with a square section removed from the lower right-hand corner. Weiner explained how he made these early works in an interview with Willoughby Sharp,

All I had to do to a canvas to make a painting was to take a rectangle, remove a rectangle from it, preferably from the corner, because that seemed the easiest way to do it, spray it for a certain period of time with paint, and then put a stripe on the top and a stripe on the bottom. And that sort of covered painting for myself. [I] would ask the person who was receiving it what colour he wanted, what size he wanted, and how big a removal, as it didn't really matter. When the paintings were placed in an exhibition they were never insured for anything more than the value of the materials themselves.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Andre, Barry, Weiner*, 4 February – 2 March 1968, Laura Knott Gallery, Bradford Junior College, Massachusetts, organised by Seth Siegelau.

<sup>13</sup> Weiner, L., and Sharp, W., op cit., p. 67



Fig. 5.2: Photograph of *Andre, Barry, Weiner* (1968) installed at the Laura Knott gallery, Bradford College. Image published Alberro, A., (2003) *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, p. 17

The artists' contributions to the accompanying catalogue replicated their use of flat materials in the exhibition (in which Weiner and Barry presented canvases, and Andre presented a floor sculpture *144 Pieces of Zinc* (1967)) (Fig. 5.2). The catalogue took the form of a plain square envelope (20 x 20cm), inside were four loose sheets of the same dimensions; one page by each of the three participating artists and an announcement for the accompanying symposium taking place on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1968. It is significant that the pages are loose as this enables viewers to encounter each contribution from a range of perspectives and physically interact with the pages in their hands, in a manner similar to how the works exhibited had no set vantage point or preferred orientation. Although the artists' names are not given on the individual pages, it is possible to identify which artist is responsible for each contribution by

assessing these in relation to the work exhibited. Andre's page was a square of gridded paper that resembled the arrangement of his floor sculpture, Barry was represented by a plain square sheet of red paper, which complemented his work *Untitled* (1967) comprising four small monochrome yellow paintings that were arranged in a square in the gallery. Weiner's piece in the catalogue consisted of a sheet of brown paper, with a square removed from one corner [v.2, p. 217].

Weiner's page appeared to have no obvious top or bottom, back or front. This means that the 'removal' can be encountered in numerous positions in relation to the overall page, reflecting the artist's statement that the formal qualities of his painting were unimportant in relation to the concept of a removal. Furthermore, various copies of the catalogue show that each removal differs slightly in terms of size and proportion, illustrating that there were many manifestations of the single idea. It is conceivable that the artist cut each catalogue page himself, although this is not stated.

In order to make the removal tangible for viewers, it was first necessary for Weiner, along with the other two artists, to contribute a page to the catalogue accompanying the Bradford Junior College exhibition. Although the paper used to form the basis of Weiner's pages was industrially produced, each sheet underwent a physical change. Viewers become conscious of Weiner's intervention to the page due to its irregular shape and through comparison with the other two full sheets. Weiner's page in the Bradford Junior College catalogue presents a tangible demonstration of the effect of removal. In an interview published in *Arts Magazine*, Arthur Rose asked Weiner whether what was of interest was 'removing as an art process'? Weiner responded, 'I'm not interested in the process. Whereas the idea of removal is just as – if not more – interesting than the intrusion of a fabricated object into a space, as sculpture is.'<sup>14</sup> Consequently, this was the only page the artist cut. Later in the 1960s and 1970s, several of Weiner's catalogue pages comprised verbal descriptions that made references to artworks in which the 'removal' of an existing substance was an essential component of the artwork described, for example, *A 2' wide 1' deep trench cut across a standard one car driveway* (1968) (Fig. 5.3) and *A 36 x 36 removal to the lathing or support wall of plaster or wallboard from a wall* (1968), thus indicating the transition made from object, to process and finally, idea.

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<sup>14</sup> Weiner, L., in Rose, A., 'Four Interviews with Barry, Huebler, Kosuth, Weiner', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 43, no. 4 (March 1969), p. 23





Fig. 5.3: Lawrence Weiner, *A 2' wide 1' deep trench cut across a standard one car driveway* (1968), published in January 5 – 31, 1969 (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p. Image from PDF copy of the catalogue available at: <http://www.primaryinformation.org/product/siegelaub-january-5-31-1969/> (accessed 29-04-2018)

The uniform, yet individual artists' pages in the Bradford Junior College catalogue indicate that this was considered an extension to the exhibition and was a result of collaboration between the artists and organiser. During the conceptual era, a number of pages were created specifically for certain catalogues. These reflected the particular context of an exhibition or adhered to pre-determined formats in a similar way to how exhibited works were often created in-situ during the early conceptual era.

The catalogue produced for the exhibition *Op Losse Schroeven* ('*Square Pegs in Round Holes: Situations and Cryptostructures*')<sup>15</sup> held in March 1969<sup>16</sup> was

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<sup>15</sup> *Op Losse Schroeven*, 15 March - 27 April 1969, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, organised by Wim Beeren and Ank Marcar

also significant in the use of specific, standardised sheets of Stedelijk Museum graph paper to form the basis of artists' pages. The title of the exhibition implies the artists' work was difficult to categorise. This is confirmed by the varied nature of the pages contributed to the catalogue and the ways in which artists responded to this task. Organiser, Wim Breen explained,

So the title, 'op losse schroeven', literally 'on loose screws', presupposes a construction that, with proper connections and tight relations between the parts, would make a unified whole. Loosening the screws a bit does not break those relations but only disrupts them. The connections suddenly become a difficulty, no longer leading towards unity and harmony. But there are not only parts, not only independent entities. One still sees them irrevocably connected to one another.<sup>17</sup>

The accompanying catalogue comprised a cardboard file in which two sets of pages were bound. Stapled on the left-hand side of the inside cover was an assortment of essays by the organisers, and on the right, a collection of individual pages by selected artists fastened in place by three metallic screws (Fig. 5.4). In addition to the 34 artists who participated in the exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum, thirteen additional artists were invited to make a contribution to the catalogue<sup>18</sup>, thus suggesting that the catalogue had become a recognised place of exhibition. All of the artists' pages on the right-hand side of the catalogue were made using institutional Stedelijk Museum graph paper featuring the 'SM' logo in the bottom right-hand corner of the page and a caption box requesting the name of the artist, title, description and date of the work. This establishes that each contribution was conceived (or at least rendered) exclusively for the *Op Losse Schroeven* catalogue.

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<sup>16</sup> Many of the artists included in *Op Losse Schroeven* also participated in *When Attitudes Become Form*, 2 March - 27 April 1969, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, organised by Harald Szeemann

<sup>17</sup> Breen, W., 'The Exhibition', *Op Losse Schroeven* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p. Translated into English in Rattemeyer, C., et al (2010) *Exhibiting the New Art, 'Op Losse Schroeven' and 'When Attitudes Become Form' 1969*, London: Afterall Books p. 118

<sup>18</sup> The following artists provided 'information' in the catalogue only; Jared Bark, Ted Glass, Hans Haacke, Paolo Icaro, Jo Ann Kaplan, Bernd Lohaus, Roelof Louw, Bruce McLean, David Medalla, Denis Oppenheim, Paul Pechter, Michelangelo Pistoletto, William Wegman

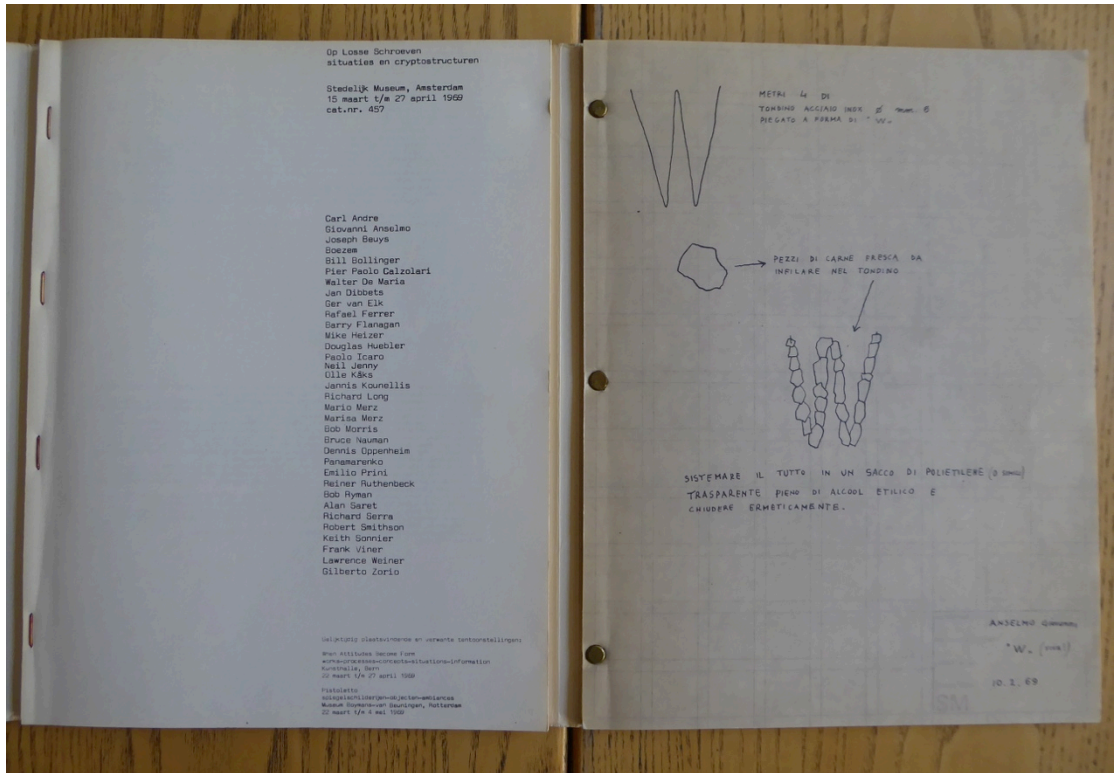


Fig. 5.4: Inside the cover of *Op Losse Schroeven* (1969) exhibition catalogue. Image courtesy of Henry Moore Institute, special collection 25-11-2017

Robert Barry was one of the thirteen artists invited to make a contribution to the catalogue without participating in the exhibition itself. He returned his sheet of the graph paper blank, other than providing hand-written details of his work in the caption box, where the title is given as *Inert Gas Series, 1969: Argon (Ar)*, the dimensions are given as 1 cu. ft. to indefinite expansion and the date as 15 March 1969 [v.2, p. 219]. These drew attention to the fact that the substance that Barry was working with, inert gas, was unperceivable. When interviewed by Arthur Rose, Barry explained how he ‘discarded the idea that art is necessarily something to look at’<sup>19</sup>. The empty content of Barry’s page highlights the difficulties in making the artist’s work perceptually recognisable. Argon, the substance referred to in Barry’s catalogue page is a colourless, odourless gas that is totally inert to other substances, and therefore could not be perceived using the senses. Where the 1 cu. ft. of this gas was initially released is unknown, but the nature of the piece would nevertheless quickly change as the gas expanded outwards into the atmosphere.

<sup>19</sup> Barry, R., in Rose, A., ‘Four Interviews with Barry, Huebler, Kosuth, Weiner’, *Arts Magazine*, vol. 43, no. 4 (February 1969), p. 22

There are two elements to Barry's project for the *Op Losse Schroeven* catalogue. The first is the release of 1 cu. Ft. of Argon into the atmosphere on 15 March 1969, presumably performed by Barry himself. The reader/viewer is not able to experience this, or at least, they would not know if they did due to the unperceivable nature of the substance used. The second element is the empty page encountered in the catalogue. The page can be held and handled by the reader/viewer. Its very inclusion signifies Barry's participation in the catalogue project, whilst at the same time demonstrates how the proposed work could not be known in a gallery setting. Furthermore, the descriptive caption enables the reader/viewer to imagine the work of the artist in their own mind and to consider the contradictions of representing this on the two-dimensional surface of the page.

Bruce McLean was also invited to make a contribution to the catalogue without participating in the exhibition. His work was titled *Project for a Catalogue* and dated Feb 5<sup>th</sup> 1969 [sic]. The page shows a broad feathered line running roughly diagonally from the top left-hand corner to the lower right-hand corner, avoiding all but the top right-hand corner of the caption box [v.2, p. 221]. Upon receiving the branded Stedelijk graph paper on which to make his contribution, McLean tore the paper and returned one half back to the organisers. (He returned the lower left-hand side - enabling it to be bound into the spine of the catalogue). The diagonal line depicts the tear of the paper, although in the catalogue it resembles a hand-drawn line. A subtle difference between the two halves becomes apparent; the lower left-hand side of the page includes the printed grid of the branded graph paper, whilst the upper right-hand side of the page has a plain background. The act of tearing the page and returning one half of it to the organisers could indicate McLean's disillusion in contributing a page-based project as prescribed by the Stedelijk Museum. However, if this were the case, McLean could refuse to participate in the project altogether. The fact that he returned a torn half-page arguably suggests that he was interested in having a presence in the catalogue.

The sheet of torn paper, presented as a full page in the catalogue draws attention to the processes undergone as it is exchanged between organiser and artist, from whole page to torn apart, and finally, restored to a whole page again. The page is an agent of exchange between the artist and exhibition organiser, with each party having in their possession one half of the torn sheet of paper.

The effect of this is lessened with the torn sheet being reformed as a whole for reproduction in the catalogue. Only in witnessing the hardly-noticeable difference between the two backgrounds of each half of the page is the reader/viewer made aware of the nature of McLean's participation.

For the artist to tear in half the invitation to participate in an exhibition could be read as an insolent or rebellious act. The fact that McLean's page is reformed (likely by the organisers) into a full page arguably reverses or undermines this statement. Should the page have remained as only one half, this would send a bolder message about the artist's participation in the exhibition, perhaps signalling that he was only involved in one half of the exhibition as his work was not included in the Stedelijk Museum. The act of tearing can sometimes invalidate a document, for example, torn bus tickets, contracts, or in the context of the late 1960s, draft cards<sup>20</sup>.

Taking McLean's torn page a step further, Daniel Buren's pages in the catalogue that accompanied the retrospective exhibition *Actualité d'un Bilan* (1972)<sup>21</sup> at Galerie Yvon Lambert make a more assertive statement about the artist's response to the invitation to participate in an exhibition. In his text at the beginning of the *Actualité d'un Bilan* catalogue, Michel Claura<sup>22</sup> was critical of how the 'very large majority of producers of art... seem totally unconcerned by any kind of questioning', resulting in an exhibition showcasing a 'comfortable' and 'expected result'<sup>23</sup>. Buren, like many artists involved in the exhibition, utilised work he had previously shown at the gallery, but he is possibly one of 'the very few' who reacted in such a way as to 'unmask' the history of his art and his relationship with the gallery<sup>24</sup>. For his contribution, Buren represented documentation of earlier exhibitions, but gestured towards the irrelevance of these in the present moment by performing tears on the pages, thus rendering the documentation useless or invalid (Fig. 5.5). Both of Buren's pages in the catalogue were torn vertically, but remain bound into the catalogue [v.2, pp. 222 - 226]. The full content of the first page, a letter sent to Buren, cannot be ascertained since over half of the information is missing [v.2, p. 223]. It appears

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<sup>20</sup> 'National Turn in Your Draft Card Day', *The New York Times*, 16 November 1968, p.15

<sup>21</sup> *Actualité d'un Bilan*, 29 October - 5 December 1972, Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris.

<sup>22</sup> The critic Michel Claura was Yvon Lambert's brother

<sup>23</sup> Claura, M., *Actualité d'un Bilan* (1972) exhibition catalogue, pp. 11 - 12

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p. 12

to be a letter addressed to Buren, similar to the one that would have been sent to all artists inviting them to take part in the exhibition. The fifth paragraph of the letter refers to the proposed catalogue and invites artists to make a contribution of no more than three black and white pages. At the bottom of the letter is a list of all invited artists who were represented by Yvon Lambert.

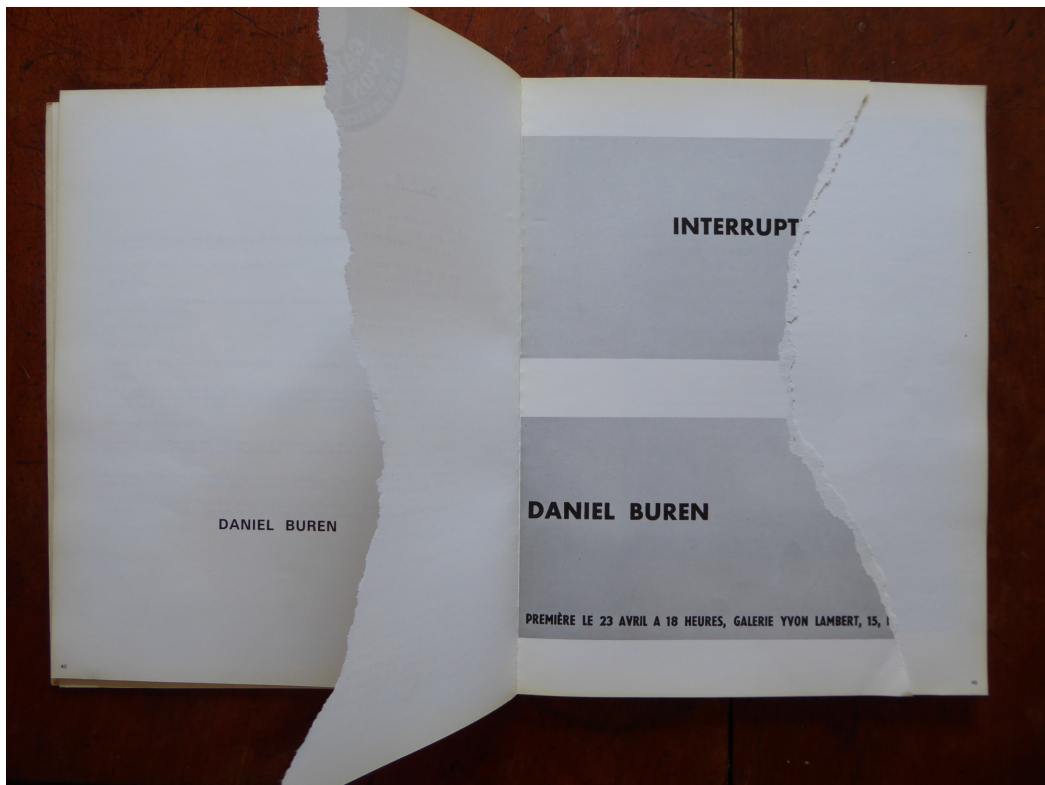
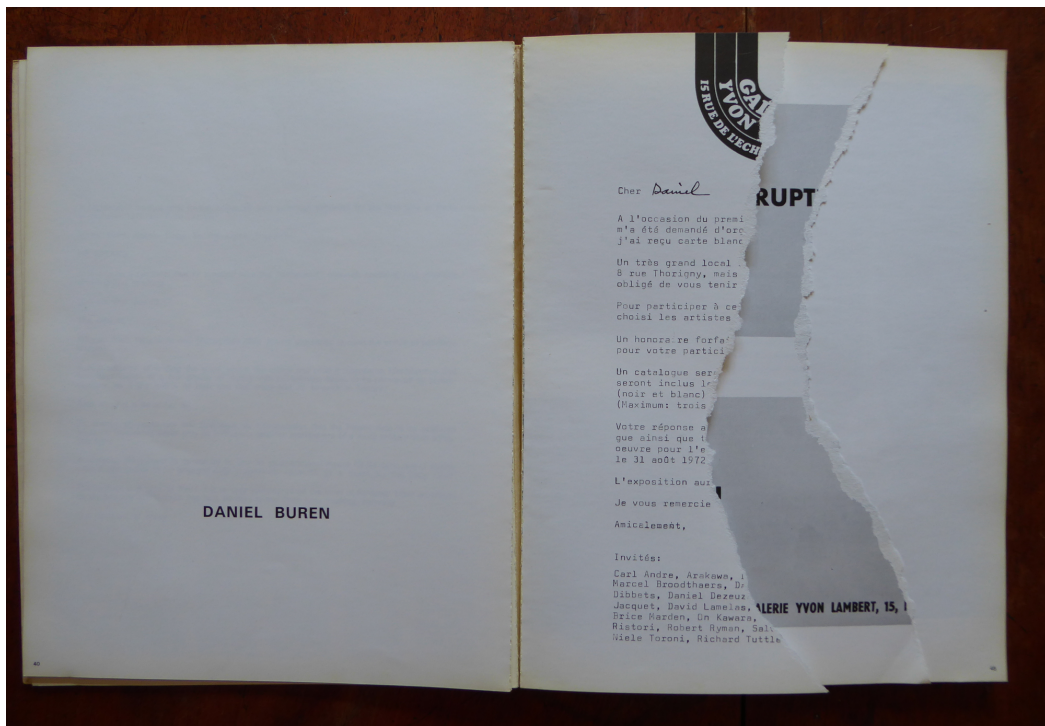


Fig 5.5: Daniel Buren, *Actualite d'un Bilan* (1972) exhibition catalogue. Photographs courtesy of Lynda Morris, Norwich.

The second page appears to be a poster advertising an exhibition held previously at Galerie Yvon Lambert [v.2, p. 225]. Once again, the full content of this page cannot be determined as approximately one-third of the original page is missing. The grey-scale poster features light grey bands running horizontally across the page, printed on top of these are exhibition title, Buren's name and gallery details. Due to the vertical tear performed on the page, the exhibition title can only partially be known; 'INTERRUPT'. The text at the bottom of the poster advertises the private view as taking place on 23 April at 18:00hrs, however, a year is not provided making this exhibition more difficult to place in the five-year history of the gallery. As a result of the tear, the reader/viewer is not able to ascertain the full details of the exhibition advertised, causing the poster to be useless (as well as expired)<sup>25</sup>.

On the verso of the 'INTERRUPT' poster is a reproduction of a smaller announcement for Buren's second exhibition at Galerie Yvon Lambert, held between 2 December 1970 and 5 January 1971 [v.2, p. 226]. As with the previous two pages, the text is presented in French only and is partially obscured by the tear of the page. The title given is 'INDICATIONS' and the text beneath appears to describe the white and coloured bands that characterised Buren's work from 1966 onwards.

The torn appearance of these pages disrupts the overall presentation of the *Actualité d'un Bilan* exhibition catalogue. They prompt the reader/viewer to question whether the catalogue has been intentionally or accidentally damaged, and if so, by whom? A torn piece of paper may usually indicate that the information printed upon it has been disregarded or rejected, or perhaps extracted by a reader/viewer to serve as a reminder of the event. It is not clear from the exhibition catalogue what the nature of Buren's participation was in the exhibition itself. Taking into account previous works at Galleria Apollinaire, Milan in 1968 and *Interruption* at Yvon Lambert in April 1969, it would be reasonable to assume that Buren's work called into question the function of the gallery and/or exhibition, and sought to make viewers aware of their own habits of perceiving art.

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<sup>25</sup> The exhibition referred to was *Interruption*, held at Galerie Yvon Lambert in April 1969. The exhibition is discussed in Claura, M., 'Comment (on Buren's text)', *Studio International*, vol. 179, no. 920 (March 1970), pp. 104 - 105



Aesthetically, the pages mimic how Buren's work was removed and destroyed after an exhibition, be it in museum/gallery space or outdoors where the vertical coloured and white stripes were pasted onto billboards. The artist could perform these tears, as could museum staff or members of the public (depending on where the work was shown), or they could simply be a result of wear and tear over time. The torn pages in the catalogue suggest that Buren's work, installed several years earlier was no longer relevant to the present moment of the retrospective exhibition, suggesting that all art has a shelf-life. The torn pages both reveal and partially obscure the subsequent page underneath, making these unreadable. These draw attention to the materiality of the page and demonstrate how paper can conceal what lies beneath it (Fig. 5.6). Interacting with the catalogue, readers/viewers become attuned to the back and front of the pages, and may experiment with viewing what is visible and what is not. This effect is less apparent in McLean's page as the torn sheet is returned to a full sheet.



Fig. 5.6: 'Stripes by Buren posted up in Paris in April 1968 (Photo: Michel Delluc)' published in Clay, J., 'Art tamed and wild', *Studio International*, vol. 177, no. 912 (June 1969), p. 262

The cuts, tears and apparently empty pages analysed in the first part of this chapter require a heightening of the senses in order for readers/viewers to discern meaning. For example, the subtle differences between the two halves of McLean's torn page only reveal themselves after careful looking, and the square removal to Weiner's loose page invites readers/viewers to turn and view the

page from alternative angles. Buren advanced that '[e]very act is political, and whether one is conscious of it or not, the presentation of one's work is no exception'<sup>26</sup>. This can be applied to the inclusion of pages in catalogues as there is evidence to suggest that organisers and artists alike considered this to be an extension of the exhibition. Buren and Weiner's pages each have parts removed, the presence of a torn page or square cut from the corner interrupts the otherwise standard format of the catalogue, raising readers'/viewers' attention to something being at odds to what we expect from an exhibition catalogue. The responses to the page in this part of the chapter have been gestural, an outward and physical engagement that invites interaction with the page, however, the pages examined in the next section of this chapter may appear emptier still, as they elicit an intellectual engagement from the reader/viewer.

### **Blank pages: declining, withdrawing and holding back**

In a similar vein to his earlier exhibition, *Andre, Barry, Weiner*, but taking the notion of the catalogue as exhibition one stage further, Siegelau organised *One Month: March 1969* (1969)<sup>27</sup>. The catalogue took the form of a calendar; each artist was invited to make a contribution to one day (page) of the calendar. Consequently, some works only lasted for a brief period of time – the time that was allotted to them on the calendar, meaning that through the course of the exhibition the content of the exhibition changed on a daily basis. Maintaining the 'neutrality' of his earlier projects, artists were presented in alphabetical order across the 31 pages (Iain Baxter complained and asked to swap, this was denied). The pages that artists were given dictated the works made, as some artists made works about the specific numbers or dates they were allocated<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> Buren, D., 'Beware!', *Studio International*, vol. 179, no. 920 (March 1970), p. 100

<sup>27</sup> *One Month: March 1969*, 1 – 31 March 1969, New York, organised by Seth Siegelau. Produced in an edition of 1000, distributed free worldwide using Siegelau's mailing list

<sup>28</sup> Robert Barry (5 March), Alex Hay (13 March), Robert Huot (15 March), Christine Kozlov (19 March), Richard Long (21 March), Dennis Oppenheim (25 March) and Alan Ruppersberg (26 March) proposed to create or perform works on their allotted days; N.E. Thing Co. were assigned 7 March and accordingly proposed seven works that included the number seven in the description.

The first page of the catalogue includes a reproduction of the letter, dated 21 January 1969, which Siegelaub sent to his selected artists [v.2, p. 229]. In contrast to Siegelaub's sentiments about not wishing to prejudice the viewing situation, the inclusion of this letter could be read as a preface to the pages that followed. In the letter, Siegelaub proposed three scenarios in which the invited artists could participate; the first option was to have their name listed and to submit a description of their proposed work and/or relevant information. The second option was to have their name listed with no other information, and the third possibility was for artists not to have their name listed at all. There are seven pages in the catalogue that appear to fit into this third category of declined participation, the pages having been left blank with only the number (date) of the day that had been allocated remaining. It is possible to identify these artists by consulting the reproduction of the letter which Siegelaub sent to invited artists, the letter includes a list of the 31 invited artists, sequenced in alphabetical order beside a number 1 – 31. The seven artists who did not wish their name to be printed, and thus were represented by only a blank page were; 1 Carl Andre; 2 Mike Asher; 12 Dan Flavin; 17 On Kawara; 20 Sol LeWitt; 23 Bruce Nauman and 27 Ed Ruscha [v. 2, p. 231]. Whilst these artists' names were still made known to readers/viewers through the inclusion of Siegelaub's letter at the front of the catalogue, they were omitted from their respective pages. It is not possible to tell whether these artists actively declined the offer of participation, or whether they simply did not send their reply in time for the 15th February cut-off date, of which Siegelaub stated: 'If you do not reply by that time, your name will not be listed at all'. Siegelaub describes the pages as 'replies' and 'non replies', suggesting that the blank pages are such because a reply was not received in time or at all. This cut-off date gave the artists just under one month to respond to Siegelaub's invitation and it is quite possible that several artists were simply not able to respond in time.

Ian Wilson (number 31) was the only artist to respond with a preference for the second option. His name was given at the top of page 31 with no further description or information about his work [v.2, p. 233]. Since 1969, Wilson's participation in exhibitions comprised of 'oral communication', which, for example, in *18 Paris IV.70* (1970)<sup>29</sup>, saw him visit the organiser Michel Claura to

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<sup>29</sup> *18 Paris IV.70*, 4 April - 25 April 1970, 6 rue Mouffetard, Paris, organised by Michel Claura, catalogue organised and distributed by Seth Siegelaub

'make clear the idea of oral communication as an artform'<sup>30</sup>. Wilson explained how he came to think of oral communication in such a way after looking at a sculpture by Robert Morris and finding that he could describe it quite easily. He added, 'I went away thinking that it was not necessary for me to see that sculpture again, I could just say it – not even say it – but think it'<sup>31</sup>. Consequently, Wilson's participation in exhibitions was not always easy for audiences to detect. Sometimes Wilson presented the phrase 'oral communication' upon his pages in exhibition catalogues (although the artist never discloses the specific content of this), sometimes organisers prepared pages on the artist's behalf (as Lucy Lippard did in *955,000* (1970)<sup>32</sup>), and on other occasions, Wilson's pages were left entirely blank as if to emphasise his point further (Fig. 5.7). Since Wilson's page in *One Month* is blank apart from the artist's name, it is reasonable to suggest that unlike the other seven artists who are represented by blank pages omitting their names, that Wilson had made communication with Siegeluab to express his intention to be involved in the exhibition. In the initial letter that Siegeluab sent to all 31 invited artists, he asks that replies are confined to 'verbal information', whilst it seems that all other participating artists have interpreted this as meaning written language, Wilson's implied yet undocumented exchange with the organiser expands this definition beyond what is traceable on the page.

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<sup>30</sup> Wilson, I, *18 Paris IV.70* (1970) exhibition catalogue, p. 1

<sup>31</sup> Meyer, U., 'Ian Wilson, November 12, 1969', *Concept Art*, New York: Dutton, p. 220

<sup>32</sup> *955,000*, 31 January - 8 February 1970, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, organised by Lucy Lippard

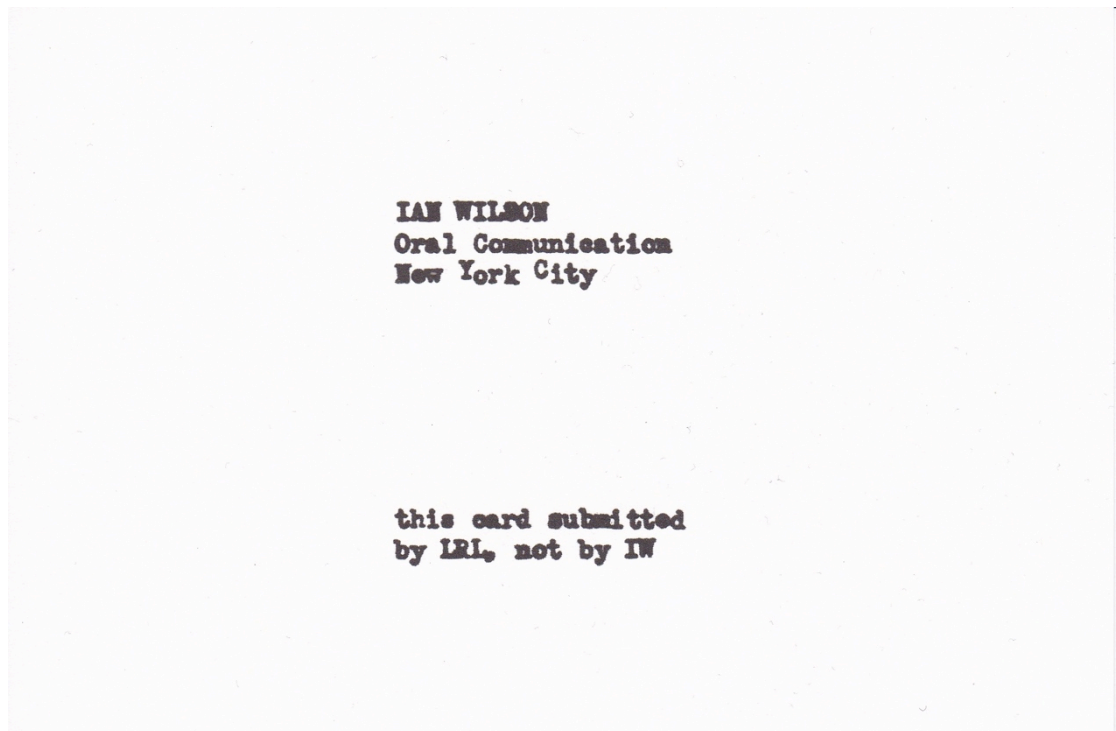


Fig. 5.7: Ian Wilson, 'Oral Communication', 955,000 (1970), exhibition catalogue, reproduced in the facsimile, Khonsary, J., (ed) (2012) 4,492,040, Vancouver and Los Angeles: New Documents Vancouver Art Gallery and the Seattle Art Museum, n.p.

With the inclusion of these pages, the seven 'non replies' still constitute a form of association with the project even if the artists did not intend this. The project exposes the logistics of organising an international project via the mail, as it is plausible that errors could have occurred whilst using this system, for example, invites never reached the intended participants, or replies were not received in a timely manner. In lieu of any explanation on behalf of the organiser or artists, readers/viewers are free to draw their own conclusions about the reasons that may cause a blank page to substitute a 'work'. Moreover, Wilson's participation demonstrates that a blank page did not necessarily indicate lack of interest or response from the artist, but that it could be used as a device to communicate broader ideas and attitudes regarding the nature and dissemination of art.

*One Month* may have favoured 'verbal information', i.e. written responses from those invited to participate, but this was not always germane to the intentions of artists. Although Richard Long responded to Siegeluab's invitation with a brief proposal for a photographic work to be carried out during his allotted day, more often, Long withheld from offering written explanations of his work and declined to give interviews. Long's work was extensively featured in magazines including

*Studio International* and *Avalanche*, but on each of these occasions, verbal information was kept to a minimum. For example, photographs and documentation of various outdoor pieces by the artist were presented across six pages of *Studio* under the title, 'Nineteen stills from the work of Richard Long'<sup>33</sup>, the only text upon these pages was the artist's name and brief titles accompanying photographs, when handwritten or typed titles were not already included. It is interesting to note that these pages were designed on a landscape orientation, in contrast to the usual format of the magazine, thus causing readers/viewers to change their orientation in relation to the pages, and in turn their expectations about what they were to encounter. Unlike editorials or reviews, these pages did not offer further commentary or insight into the artist's work, rather they function as simply another, alternative space in which the artist could exhibit his work<sup>34</sup>.

The catalogue produced for *The New Art* (1972)<sup>35</sup> presented at the Hayward Gallery, London, also appeared to make the distinction between an artist's work and a 'secondary' explanation of it. This was organised into two sections, first, the 'Artists' section', which included reproductions of photographs and drawings by participating artists, as well as statements and essays. A second, 'Information section', presenting additional materials such as interviews, explanatory texts, documentation and a short artist biography compiled by the organiser, Anne Seymour, followed this. Hamish Fulton has just one page in this section, it is blank apart from his name and a short biography, giving his education and place of work, selected publications and selected literature<sup>36</sup> [v.2, p. 235]. Fulton's biography does not provide any information about solo or group exhibitions, making it difficult for readers to trace his career. Moreover, this means that his work, as it is encountered in *The New Art* is not affected by the

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<sup>33</sup> Long, R., 'Nineteen stills from the work of Richard Long', *Studio International*, vol. 179, no. 920 (March 1970), pp. 106 - 111

<sup>34</sup> Similar examples of artists' pages contributed to magazines include Gilbert & George 'Magazine Sculpture', *Studio International*, vol. 179, no. 922 (May 1970), pp. 220-221, discussed in Melvin, J. (2013) *Studio International magazine: Tales from Peter Townsend's editorial papers 1965 – 1975* [PhD thesis], University College London, p. 188; artists including Vito Acconci, Hanne Darboven, Dan Graham, Stephen Kalenbach and Douglas Heubler also produced works specifically for the magazine page, these are discussed at length in Allen, G., (2011) *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

<sup>35</sup> *The New Art*, 17 August – 24 September 1972, Hayward Gallery, London, organised by Anne Seymour

<sup>36</sup> Hamish Fulton, information section, *The New Art* (1972), exhibition catalogue, p. 91

artist's inclusion in previous exhibitions or associations with other artists and organisers; a strategy that is in keeping with the solitary nature of Fulton's work.

Richard Long has three pages in the Information section of the catalogue [v.2, pp. 236 - 238]. The first page presents four photographs showing works by the artist, these were also published in other exhibition catalogues around the same time; *Walking 1967* (1967), *England 1968* (1968) and *Ireland 1967* (1967). Also included was a photograph captioned, 'The Pill Ferry crossing the Avon from the Somerset side, 1969', this photograph was used as Long's portrait in the *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971) catalogue, although the figure is so distant, it is difficult to make out the identity. The second page also presents a portrait of the artist, this time he is pictured climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro, Africa in 1969, this is positioned beside a photograph of an ancient hill figure<sup>37</sup>. Long's third page gives his biography including his education, three selected publications and four articles in which his work is featured (pages 100 – 102).

In her catalogue introduction, Seymour describes Long's work as 'a quiet connection, private, a philosophical dialogue between artist and earth', justifying that 'it is symptomatic of this situation that neither Long nor Fulton have permitted explanatory material to be published about their work in this context... Long and Fulton continue to work in peace – at their express request'<sup>38</sup>. The absence of commentary on these artists echo the situations they put themselves in to create works, solitary walks across desolate landscapes for periods of days without any communication. This voluntary isolation is alluded to in Fulton's photographs of empty stretches of road in England and North America, and Long's sculptures along uninhabited coastlines.

The scarcity of information about Long and Fulton in the section edited by Seymour in *The New Art* encourages the reader/viewer to return to the Artists' section sooner than they might for those artists where a commentary or interview is provided. A comparison of the two sections, particularly in the case of Long prompts consideration of how these two components function differently. There are aesthetic similarities between the works *England* (1968) in the Information section and *Reflections in the Little Pigeon River, Great Smokey*

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<sup>37</sup> Discussed in this thesis, Chapter 3, *Marking the Spot: The Page as Location and Time Frame*, pp. 134 - 135

<sup>38</sup> Seymour, *ibid*, p.6

*Mountains, Tennessee* (1970) and *Half-Tide. Bertraghboy Bay, Ireland* (1971) in the Artists' section. All three works present a large, albeit temporary 'X' created by Long in the landscapes pictured. The three 'X's have been created by the artist treading a path through a field of daisies, and for the latter works, placing stones or etching a mark on a bed of shallow water. The Artists' section includes works made between 1970 and 1972, whilst the information section presents photographs dating from 1967 to 1969. The early photographs provide retrospective information about Long's career, which the audience may already be familiar with, whilst the photographs in the Artists' section presented the artist's most recent work. The artist's continuing practice hence contributed to his ongoing biography. The absence of verbal information in Long and Fulton's pages in the 'information section' of *The New Art* encourages readers/viewers to construct their own narratives in place of the organiser's elucidations.

On occasions, this space for contemplation was more formally offered to readers/viewers, within which they were invited to put pen to paper and materialise their own ideas upon the empty page. One such example can be found following Kynaston McShine's essay in the *Information* exhibition (1970)<sup>39</sup> catalogue [v.2, pp. 240 - 241]. The essay itself was unusually placed in comparison to most catalogues dealt with in this research as rather than being prior to the artists' pages it followed them. If readers/viewers chose to encounter the publication in a sequential manner, this meant they would be exposed to the artists' ideas first and an explanation of the wider context in which this work was produced secondly. McShine's essay appears to occupy only four pages towards the end of the catalogue, however, it is listed in the contents pages as spanning 54 pages. Following the essay is an extensive montage of images taken from the mass media, but prior to this, the organiser offers two pages for the reader/viewer to make their own contribution. Page 142, which immediately follows McShine's essay is blank apart from a caption in the top left-hand corner, 'Blank pages for the reader / please provide your own text or images'. Inspired by the pages that precede it, or perhaps those which follow, readers/viewers may write, doodle, or stick in found images, thus making a unique addition to their copy of the catalogue. If readers/viewers chose to take up this invitation, their action would transform a mass-produced publication into a highly personal

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<sup>39</sup> *Information*, 2 July - 20 September 1970, Museum of Modern Art, New York, organised by Kynaston McShine



edition. The adjacent page (page 143) is also blank, apart from a quotation by Andy Warhol (1928 – 1987), which is printed along the bottom edge, 'In the future everybody in the world will be famous for fifteen minutes'. The reader/viewer is thus invited to join 'everybody' else and enjoy the limelight, with the sceptical view that this will be short-lived. Warhol's statement is in tune with the democratic and accessible attitude of conceptual art, in which audiences were invited to play an active role in configuring meaning. The blank spaces in the *Information* catalogue take this a degree further as they outwardly encourage readers/viewer to join artists and share the space of the catalogue with them.

The space for readers'/viewers' contemplation or contribution was not confined to exhibition catalogues. Paul Maenz, Cologne bought a double advertising space in the front of the In the fall 1971 issue of *Avalanche*, these remained blank apart from the caption 'This advertising space has been paid for by Paul Maenz, Cologne, to support the work of *Avalanche*'<sup>40</sup>. The starkness of the blank double page amongst vivid advertisements and information would stand out to the reader/viewer. Similarly, in the winter/spring 1973 issue of *Avalanche*, The Electric Gallery, Toronto placed a blank advertisement, captioned 'Three hundred Canadian Dollars worth of white space to doodle on'<sup>41</sup>. These empty pages both emphasise the commercial worth of advertisement space in art magazines but also illustrate the gallery's ethos for supporting art magazines and inviting participation from audiences, thus positioning themselves as progressive and in tune with current ideas.

The blank pages and spaces analysed in this second part of the chapter on dematerialisation tend not to signify an artist's specific contribution to an exhibition, rather they speak of the nature of their participation. Minimal outside information reduces the 'noise' that surrounds an artist's work and promotes an open mind as readers/viewers encounter this, in a manner akin to the solitary walks of Long and Fulton as they traversed expansive landscapes in silence. As readers/viewers, we become more attuned to what is there, as well as what is not. This subtle difference is apparent in the *One Month* catalogue, in which Wilson's page, with the inclusion of his name, is a markedly different response

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<sup>40</sup> 'Advertisement placed by Paul Maenz' (1971), *Avalanche*, (fall 1971), n.p.

<sup>41</sup> 'Advertisement placed by The Electric Gallery' (1973), *Avalanche*, (winter/spring 1973), n.p.

to those seven pages that omitted artists' names altogether. Wilson's page subtly demonstrates that a lack of visible content does not equate to a lack of intention, as we are encouraged to consider how communication could manifest in non-visual ways. It could occur in the mind of the reader/viewer, and the blank pages provided by McShine and the advertisements in *Avalanche* magazine provide an outlet for these, raising the reader/viewer up to the same platform as the artist whose work would typically occupy such pages.

In her essay 'The Aesthetics of Silence' published in *Aspen* 5+6, Susan Sontag wrote, 'Silence exists as a decision' and 'there can be no such thing as having no response at all'<sup>42</sup>. These sentiments are true for the artists' pages discussed in this chapter. In each of the examples, the artists have made a decision; for some, that was the decision not to participate, or to participate in a limited or alternative way to what was anticipated. The reader/viewer is left considering why this might be the case, taking into account practical restraints as well as creative and political considerations. By highlighting what is not on the page, we become attuned to what is. When scant visual information is provided on the page, the reader/viewer is required to look for other clues to assess the meaning of artists' contributions, this might include written captions, material qualities of the page or a relationship with exhibited works. This makes readers/viewers more alert to the qualities of the page and subtle differences between individual contributions. Sontag continued, 'The notions of silence, emptiness, reduction sketch out new prescriptions for looking, hearing etc. – specifically – either for having a more immediate, sensuous experience of art or for confronting the artwork in a more conscious, conceptual way'<sup>43</sup>. Despite some of these pages presenting very little visual or verbal information, they require prolonged concentration from readers/viewers to engage with the concepts presented. In their writing on dematerialised art, Lippard and Chandler observed,

They demand more participation by the viewer, despite their apparent hostility (which is not hostility so much as aloofness and self-containment). More time must be spent in immediate experience of a detail-less work, for the viewer is used to focusing on details and absorbing an impression of the piece with the help of these details.

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<sup>42</sup> Sontag, S., 'The Aesthetics of Silence', *Aspen*, number 5+6 (fall 1967), n.p., available at: <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen5and6/threeEssays.html#sontag> (accessed 08-07-2018)

<sup>43</sup> Ibid

Secondly, the time spent looking at an 'empty' work, or one with a minimum of action, seems infinitely longer than action-and-detail-filled time.<sup>44</sup>

Blank pages or empty spaces offer readers/viewers a pause to search for meaning and internalise the clues they are given. For the lack of 'information' about Fulton and Long's work in *The New Art* catalogue, readers/viewers must create their own interpretations of the work rather than relying on elucidation from the exhibition organiser. These interpretations cannot be verified to be true or false since the artists do not elaborate on their ideas here or elsewhere during the research period. This leaves the interpretation of their work open to change over a period of time. Sontag suggested, 'Still another use for silence: providing time for the continuing or exploring of thought. Notably, speech closes off thought ... silence keeps things 'open''<sup>45</sup>.

In contrast, Daniel Buren published writings frequently throughout the research period<sup>46</sup>. This spoke directly of his own work and provided analysis of the effects of institutions on artists, and subsequently viewers. The extent of Buren's verbal criticisms is indicated in a review by Roberta Smith, 'Having seen a few Buren's there is no question of what one looks like, nor is there a need to see another', concluding, 'Buren is interesting and important for the criticism he makes, for the discussion he precipitates, but... it is a discussion precipitated more by reading than by looking'<sup>47</sup>. Buren's torn pages in the *Actualite d'un Bilan* catalogue extend such a questioning. The torn pages prompt readers/viewers to realise how many artists 'comfortably' submitted content according to a prescribed format, and the extent to which they, as readers/viewers, habitually accepted this. The torn pages contributed by Buren and McLean, and the removed square from the corner of Weiner's page in the *Andre, Barry, Weiner* catalogue prompt a reconsideration of the material status of the page. These examples challenge what readers/viewers come to expect

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<sup>44</sup> Lippard, L.R., and Chandler, J., 'The Dematerialization of Art', *Art International*, vol. XII/2 (February 1968), p.31

<sup>45</sup> Sontag, op cit. n.p

<sup>46</sup> Buren, D., 'Beware!', *Studio International*, vol. 179, no. 920 (March 1970), pp. 100-104; Buren, D., 'It Rains, It Snows, It Paints' in Battcock, G., 'Documentation in Conceptual Art', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 44, no. 6, (April 1970), p. 43; Buren, D., 'Function of the Museum', *Artforum*, vol. 12, no. 1 (September 1973), p. 68; Buren, D., (1973) *Five Texts*, New York: John Walker Gallery, London: Jack Wendler Gallery

<sup>47</sup> Smith, R., 'On Daniel Buren', *Artforum*, vol. 12, no. 1 (September 1973), p. 67

from exhibition catalogues; no longer only the site for transmitting information about an artist's work, the pages become a site on their own discrete terms. Similarly, the 'blank pages' by Barry, 'non-replies' in *One Month: March 1969* and Long and Fulton's withholding of information in *The New Art* cause readers/viewers to stop in their tracks and confront their own expectations of the function of an exhibition catalogue.

The pages and artworks referred to in this final thematic chapter examine the complexities of how an artist made their audience aware of their contribution to an exhibition or catalogue. Despite the 'thin' and 'lightweight' materials used by several of the artists, verbal discussion of these ideas in statements, interviews and editorials far exceeded the presentation of the work itself. Robert Barry used statements and interviews to make audiences aware of his contribution, he stated, '[b]y just being in the show, I'm making known the existence of the work. I am presenting these things in an artistic situation using the space and the catalogue'<sup>48</sup>. Even by simply having their name published in a catalogue, intentionally or not, artists signalled to readers/viewers the nature of their participation in an exhibition, thus confirming Sontag's observation, 'One recognizes [sic] the imperative of silence, but goes on speaking anyway. Discovering that one has nothing to say, one seeks a way to say that'.

The fact that these artists did find a way to express dematerialised works on the page means that fifty years after their ideas were first manifest contemporary audiences can continue to access and form their own interpretations of these. In the pages examined in this chapter, the intentional or inadvertent omission of content allows the 'thin', 'lightweight' and 'allusive' medium of the page to come into focus. Aware that many of the works referred to, such as Barry's release of helium into the atmosphere, or a path trodden across a field by Long are no longer in physical, or at least, perceivable existence. The page, held in the hands of readers/viewers creates a tangible trace of these, and in some circumstances, may become a proxy for the work. The process of conducting this research fifty years after the pages investigated were initially produced prompts reflection on the longevity of the page for preserving and transmitting idea-based and dematerialised artworks. This experience will be drawn on in the concluding remarks of this thesis to consider how the page functions today in

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<sup>48</sup> Rose, A., 'Four Interviews with Barry, Huebler, Kosuth, Weiner', *Arts Magazine*, vol. 43, no. 4 (February 1969), p. 22

making conceptual art accessible to wider audiences and to examine how it can be used as a tool to understand and come closer to works produced in the early conceptual era.

## CONCLUSION:

### SO HOW DOES THE PAGE MAKE CONCEPTUAL ART ACCESSIBLE TO CONTEMPORARY AUDIENCES?

When I embarked on this research, I anticipated, to some extent, that the pages artists contributed to exhibition catalogues would provide a direct, tangible, and 'authentic' link back to works produced in the early conceptual era. The process of researching and of writing-up this research in the thesis has revealed that the page is not as static, fixed or finite as one might have expected at the outset of the investigation. Subtle differences including presentational issues in different contexts or those of alternative formats offered up some unexpected challenges. Not least of these was the culturally and financially elevated status of exhibition catalogues fifty years after they were first produced seen against a backdrop of 'democratisation'. Such phenomenon show that the page is constantly changing along with our time-limited and culturally informed perceptions of it.

The artists' pages analysed in this research demonstrate a variety of intentions and functions in relation to conceptual art. Some, such as Lamelas' project for *18 Paris IV. 70* (1970)<sup>1</sup> or *Suggestions for a map* by the Art-Language Institute in the *Documenta 5* (1972)<sup>2</sup> catalogue were produced to accompany or support exhibited artworks, documenting these or helping to furnish audiences with a fuller understanding of the ideas and processes undergone. Other pages, such as Weiner's cut page in the catalogue for the exhibition at Bradford Junior College (1968)<sup>3</sup> or LeWitt's project for the 'Xerox Book' (1968)<sup>4</sup> proposed an alternative manifestation of ideas that could not have been achieved or delivered in a gallery environment. A few pages, like McLean's torn page in the *Op Losse Schroeven* (1969)<sup>5</sup> catalogue or Brouwn's project for *Sonsbeek 71* (1971)<sup>6</sup> replaced the display of physical objects altogether. Despite their discrete functions in relation to artworks and ideas, all of the pages scrutinised and

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<sup>1</sup> Lamelas, D., *18 Paris IV.70* (1970) exhibition catalogue, pp. 15 - 20

<sup>2</sup> Art & Language, 'The Art-Language Institute: Suggestions for a map', *Documenta 5* (1972) exhibition catalogue, pp. 17.13 - 18

<sup>3</sup> Weiner, L., *Andre, Barry, Weiner* (1968) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>4</sup> LeWitt, S., *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, Lawrence Weiner* (1968) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>5</sup> McLean, B., *Op Losse Schroeven* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>6</sup> Brouwn, S., *Sonsbeek 71 (volume 1)* (1971) exhibition catalogue, pp. 76 - 79

traced through this research have had a part to play in helping to redefine how audiences engage with conceptual art.

One of the themes to emerge from my analysis, especially of the examples considered in the first three thematic chapters was that a number of artists' pages were published on subsequent occasions in different contexts, and sometimes with revisions or differences in format. This is consistent with Benjamin's claim that '[w]hat man has made, man has always been able to make again'<sup>7</sup>, but, interestingly, some artists' pages have made a point of highlighting that due to circumstantial differences in how the work is presented and received, no two reproductions can ever be completely the same<sup>8</sup>. Robert Barry's statement, which described his work as 'always changing', without fixed boundaries, and as being 'affected by other things'<sup>9</sup> illustrates how during the course of reading one page, our ideas about conceptual art can continue to evolve. In this sense the page is, as Mario Merz declares, 'infinite'<sup>10</sup>.

The repeatable quality of the page and the portability of the catalogues in which these were presented have been critical to this study of international conceptual art in the present day. The thesis has investigated how artists' pages exceeded the temporal and physical boundaries of exhibitions; this was essential for works located in the wider environment such as Smithson's 'sites' and the journeys undertaken by Long and Fulton, as, without such a trace, knowledge of these works would be confined to those able to be in the right place at the right time. However, the pages included in this research still speak of the instant in which they were produced, as in the immediate context of On Kawara's maxim 'I am still alive', where the technology used to communicate such messages and the dates that accompany them, locate the works in a historical moment. Fifty years after this work was initially produced, the pages come to take on new significance. In the light of the research undertaken for this thesis it is clear that the conceptual and material status of the artists' pages produced within the

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<sup>7</sup> Benjamin, W., (1936) *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (2008 edition), London: Penguin Books, p. 3

<sup>8</sup> For example, Buren, D., *Beware in Konzeption / Conception* (1969) exhibition catalogue, n.p.; Andre, C., 'Three Vector Model' in *Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition* (1971) catalogue, n.p. and *Sonsbeek 71* (1971) exhibition catalogue, volume 1, p. 35; Fulton, H., variations of *A Bicycle Journey...* and *Hode Lane* in the *De Europa* (1972), *Documenta 5* (1972) and *The New Art* (1972) exhibition catalogues.

<sup>9</sup> Barry, R., *Projections: Anti-Materialism* (1970) exhibition catalogue, n.p.

<sup>10</sup> Merz, M., *Sonsbeek 71* (1971) exhibition catalogue, volume 1, p. 155

context of Conceptual Art (1966 - 1973) is significant, not only within the context of its historical moment but also in its transformation across time. This research has shown that accessibility to conceptual art has benefitted substantially through the agency of the artist's page, and that what was ephemeral in its time is increasingly active as a cornerstone of knowledge for the historical period in question. When works were idea-based, left little trace or constructed from ephemeral materials the page becomes a proxy for dematerialised art and continues to be one of the most 'direct' and 'immediate'<sup>11</sup> ways that audiences can access conceptual art.

### **The experience of accessing artists' pages**

The overwhelming majority of artists' pages investigated through the course of this research were accessed at first-hand in exhibition catalogues held in private and institutional collections with an interest in the designated period, or to other organisations with a specific focus on artists' books and ephemera. Despite the inexpensive production methods used and widespread availability of paginated catalogues relative to traditional art objects, the often frangible exhibition catalogues produced in the early conceptual era, like all limited print-run editions, are, or have become, commodity items, as well as vehicles for sharing knowledge and ideas. In this sense, the catalogues *per se* are no longer public property, instead they have become fetishised as objects for elite ownership and perusal. Benjamin describes this kind of ownership as 'the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects'<sup>12</sup>, meaning that the catalogues typically evidenced in this study have in effect become irrevocably tethered to their custodians.

Over the past fifty years the real and perceived status and value of exhibition catalogues produced in the early conceptual era has risen significantly, causing a number of titles that would once have resided on the open loan shelves of libraries, to be moved to special collections. Such special collections, inevitably and for the sake of preservation, impose restrictions on how such tomes can be perused or handled. Although special collections at universities and institutions

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<sup>11</sup> Siegelau, S., and Harrison C., 'On exhibitions and the world at large', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 917 (December 1969), pp. 202 - 203

<sup>12</sup> Benjamin, W., (1931) 'Unpacking My Library: A Talk about Book Collecting', translated by Zohn, H., published in Arendt, H., (ed) (1970) *Illuminations: edited and with introduction by Hannah Arendt*, London: Cape p. 67



are in principle accessible to any person with a stated interest in an item, they do require users to register their details, identify and request titles and adhere to viewing these within institutional guidelines. As a condition of access, many of the catalogues cannot be mechanically reproduced, meaning that the reader/viewer must glean all the information they require from the page at the moment they consult it. This re-defined researcher experience effectively transforms once prosaic exhibition catalogues from non-precious multiples into rarified rather than reified artefacts.

Inexpensive glue bindings and paper stock, which at the time of production suggested the democratic intentions of facilitators and catalogue producers have since caused a number of the pages consulted in this project to become too fragile to handle. Some catalogues have been re-bound, which although preserves the content and secures their continued utility, diminishes the artefact<sup>13</sup> and detracts from the authenticity of original aesthetic and kinesthetically compromises how readers/viewers interact with and interpret the page. One example that has been particularly problematic in this respect is the loose cardboard binder catalogue produced to accompany *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969). At the Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) library, the London ICA version of the catalogue has been rebound using a hardback buckram cover, in this instance, the artists' pages, which were originally individual sheets that could be added and removed with each subsequent tour of the exhibition, have been secured into the spine of the publication (Fig. 6.1). Additionally, the original cardboard file has been discarded, meaning that this edition of the catalogue can less readily be identified as accompanying the ICA version of the exhibition. At the Henry Moore Institute, the individual pages of the same catalogue are contained in clear archival envelopes, along with the cardboard file, and are secured in an archival lever arch file (Fig. 6.2). While this last presentation is arguably closer to the form of the original publication; it has transformed the relatively modest, DIY aesthetic of the catalogue into an object of archival stature. While these are only two examples of how one catalogue has been adapted in response to contemporary demands, it illustrates how the form

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<sup>13</sup> Tanselle, T.G. 'The Future of Primary Records', *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*. Vol. 58 (May 1996), p. 502

of catalogues can continually be reinvented, potentially leading to varied, even contradictory interpretations<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> A related example of the 'Xerox Book' (1968) being conserved as a teaching aid at the UAL Chelsea Library is discussed in Montero, G. G., Tanaka, A.P.H., and Foden-Lenahan, E., 'Defending the aesthetic: the conservation of an artists' book', *Art Libraries Journal*, vol. 38, no. 1 (2013), pp. 32 - 37

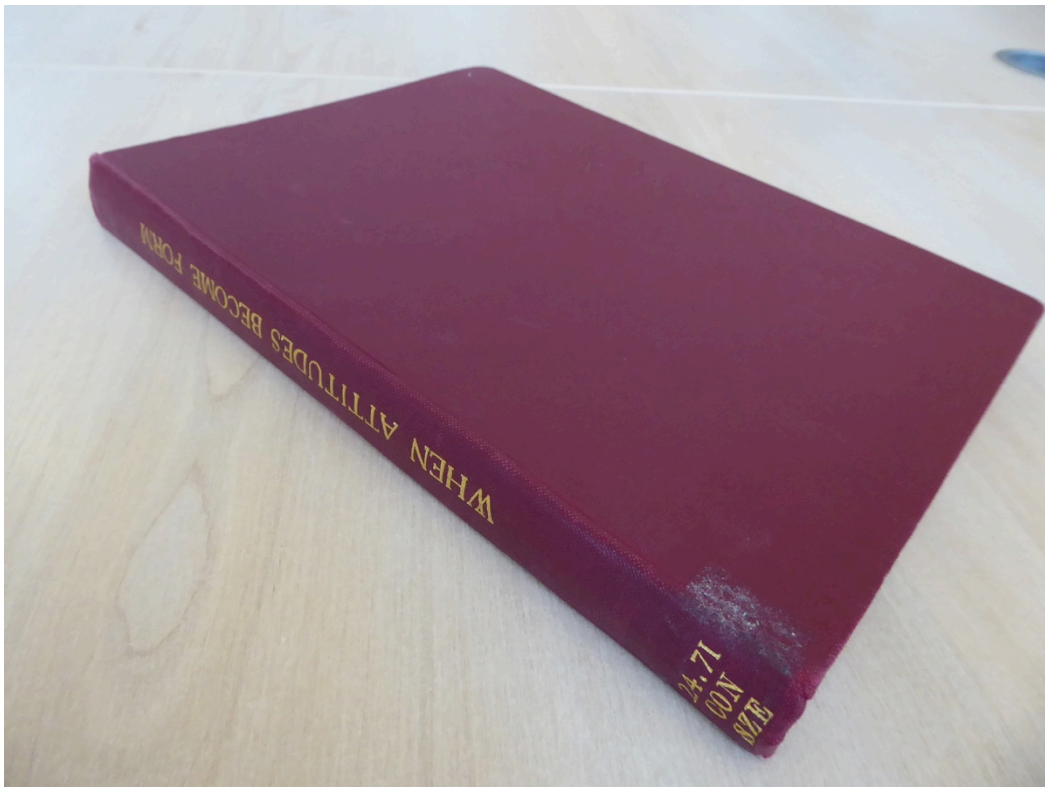


Fig. 6.1: A copy of the *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) exhibition catalogue, which has been rebound using a hard buckram cover. Held at the Norwich University of the Arts Library

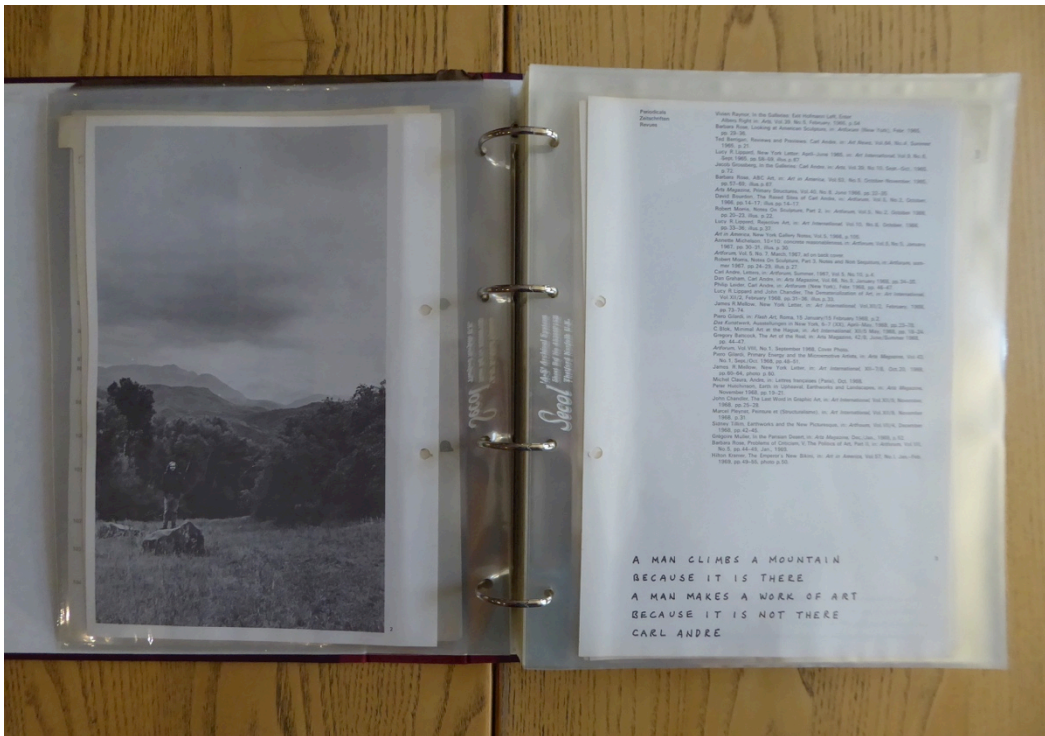


Fig. 6.2: A copy of the *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969) exhibition catalogue presented in an archival file and protective sleeves at the Henry Moore Institute Library, Leeds.

On occasions, several of the catalogues included in this research have been included in historic exhibitions of conceptual art, thus contributing to the blurring of boundaries between artwork and page, or the differentiation and distance between primary and secondary information becoming less distinct. Such inclusions raise public awareness and interest in the catalogues, but when presented as artefacts in glass-topped vitrines, tantalisingly, the pages cannot be handled and the full content cannot be known. Measures have been taken to expose the full content of publications in an exhibition environment: For example, in *Five Issues of Studio International* (2015)<sup>15</sup> at Raven Row, London, a film of the curator, Jo Melvin, leafing through selected issues of the magazine was shown on a large screen, thus exposing gallery audiences to the full content of the issues in a way that was not possible with the static presentation of these. In *Seth Siegelaub: Beyond Conceptual Art* (2015)<sup>16</sup>, facsimiles of catalogues that audiences could handle were presented besides original catalogues that were inaccessible to touch (Fig. 6.3). While these devices do allow for audiences to witness and explore the full scope of pages contributed to publications, it remains an experience to be had in the public space of the gallery environment, and thus, the work cannot be encountered as it was intended to be at the of production.

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<sup>15</sup> *Five Issues of Studio International*, 26 February to 3 May 2015, Raven Row, London, curated by Jo Melvin

<sup>16</sup> *Seth Siegelaub: Beyond Conceptual Art* (2015), 12 December 2015 – 17 April 2016, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, curated by Leontine Coelewij and Sara Martinetti

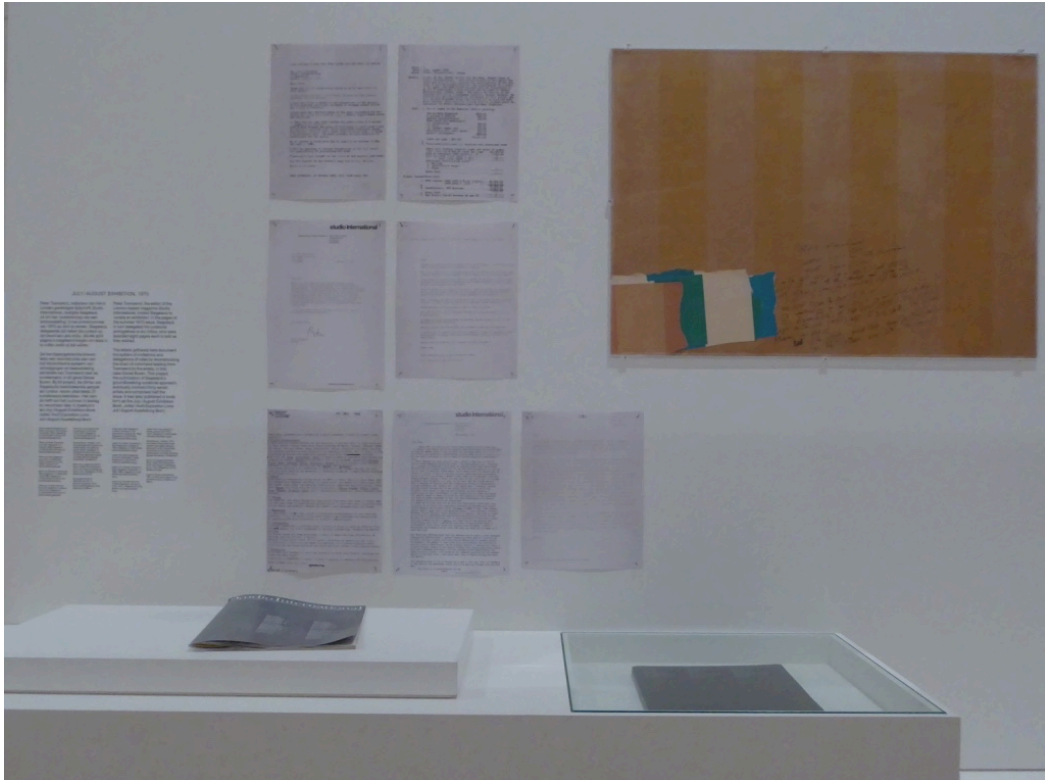


Fig. 6.3: A facsimile edition of the special July / August 1970 edition of *Studio International* for audiences to handle presented next to the original publication (under glass) in *Seth Siegelaub: Beyond Conceptual Art* (2015), Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

Despite the apparent changing status of exhibition catalogues and the ways these are accordingly treated by institutions, individuals and the public, reproduction of catalogues as bootlegs, facsimiles and online editions has ensured some continued accessibility of artists' pages for contemporary audiences. In these formats, readers/viewers, at least in principle, have greater choice over how they can interact with the page and the preciousness of the originals ceases to be an issue. It can be argued that these new formats, as well as the way in which catalogues are deployed in archives and exhibitions, show that the page is amenable to change and reflects the moment in which it is used as much as (in some instances more than) the moment in which it was published. Speaking in 1969, Weiner points to the fluidity of conceptual art and its capacity to transcend different time periods:

If art has a general aspect to it and if someone receives a work in 1968 and chooses to have it built, then either tires of looking at it or needs the space for a new television set, he can erase it. If – in 1975 – he chooses to have it built again – he has a piece of 1975 art. As materials change,

the person who may think about the art, as well as the person who has it built, approach the material itself in a contemporary sense and help to negate the preciousness of 1968 materials.<sup>17</sup>

The digital environment is imbued with terminology borrowed from print technology<sup>18</sup>, complicating how we think of and engage with the page. Lev Manovich notes, 'the World Wide Web of the 1990s foregrounded the page as a basic unit of data organization'<sup>19</sup>, yet Lisa Gitelman rationalises, 'these pages are not tangible, three-dimensional objects: rather, they are the formal, visual conventions of one "standard interface" or another'<sup>20</sup>. The most common format of digital facsimiles encountered during this research has been the PDF, which has the 'look of printedness'<sup>21</sup>, and crucially, can be moved across different devices, including desktop computers, laptops, notebooks, tablets and smartphones, which themselves are becoming increasingly portable. Across these 'window styled' devices, it is the page, rather than the catalogue that comes to the fore as the technology that mediates it displaces the object nature of the catalogue. In these circumstances, the conceptual rather than material qualities of the digital page are stressed, just as the use of 'lightweight, ephemeral, cheap [and] unpretentious'<sup>22</sup> materials in the conceptual era were regarded as secondary to the ideas they transmitted. In 1973, Lippard, who with Chandler, coined the term 'dematerialisation', acknowledged that 'a piece of paper... is as much an object, or as "material" as a ton of lead'<sup>23</sup>. The relationship between conceptual art and the digital devices through which audiences access it should not be overlooked.

As catalogues and the pages they contain become more fragile, rare and valuable, contemporary audiences and researchers are likely to increasingly use

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<sup>17</sup> Weiner, L., in conversation with Meyer, U., 'Lawrence Weiner, October 12, 1969', (1972), *Conceptual Art*, New York: Dutton, p. 217 – 218

<sup>18</sup> For example, contemporary audiences are increasingly reading books and texts on 'tablets' by scrolling between a linear arrangement of digital pages, websites comprise of individual web pages, and the word processing software on Macintosh computers is called 'Pages'

<sup>19</sup> Manovich, L., (2001) *The Language of New Media*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, p. 16

<sup>20</sup> Gitelman, L., (2014) *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, p. 119

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 115

<sup>22</sup> Lippard, L., (1973) 'Escape Attempts' in *Six Years, 1997 edition*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, p. vii

<sup>23</sup> Lippard, 'Preface', *ibid*, p. 5

reprints and digital technology to access this material<sup>24</sup>. Nicholson Baker has challenged the premise of using inferior copies as surrogates for printed material<sup>25</sup> whilst Thomas Tanselle posits, ‘every textual artifact, however it may be classed in terms of originals or “reproductions” is potentially worthy of future study as a primary record’<sup>26</sup>. Each materialisation of the page causes us to read it differently; marginalia, signs of past owners and users, new bindings and digital formats contribute to the cultural and social history of the publication. Although the future of the exhibition catalogues consulted in this research cannot be known, the fact that artists’ pages produced in the early conceptual era have been remediated in new forms contributes to this historical contingency and offers future readers evidence of the currency of this work fifty years after it was initially produced.

### **The page as a tool for further research**

Artists’ pages, I would surmise, provide testimony of artists’ participation in exhibitions and intention to provoke a re-examination of the ways in which artists, organisers and audiences participated in the construct of conceptual art and its works. For exhibitions of dematerialised art staged fifty years ago, especially those held in small galleries, universities or independent spaces, relatively little documentation exists in the public domain<sup>27</sup>. Reviews in magazines, published with photographs, offer some evidence of exhibitions’ existence, but are often only partial or written from the perspective of a critic. Catalogues on the other hand, containing pages created and conceived by artists, take audiences directly to the work and information about it as the artist intended. The catalogues consulted in this research stress to readers/viewers the internationalism of exhibitions held in the early conceptual era, with pages

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<sup>24</sup> Bornstein, G., (2001) *Material Modernism: The Politics of the Page*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 5

<sup>25</sup> Baker, N., (2001) *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper*, New York and Toronto: Random House

<sup>26</sup> Tanselle, T., in Basbanes, N.A. (2003) *A Splendor of Letters: The Permanence of Books in an Impermanent World*, New York: HarperCollins, p. 239

<sup>27</sup> Exceptions include the large publication that accompanied the 2013 restaging of *When Attitudes Become Form* at the Venice Biennale, Celent, G., (2013) *When Attitudes Become Form Bern 1969/Venice 2013*, Milan: Fondazione Prada; and Altshuler, B., (2013) *Biennials and Beyond: Exhibitions that Made Art History: 1962-2002*. Phaidon, which includes documentation of landmark exhibitions, *Primary Structures: Younger British and American Sculptors* (1966), *January 5 – 31, 1969* (1969), *557, 087* (1969), *Information* (1970) and *Sonsbeek 71* (1971)

by artists of various nationalities and backgrounds being presented in close proximity to one another. Furthermore, catalogues provide readers/viewers with a more complete documentary picture of exhibitions, since the work of all artists, not just the well-known ones, are often presented with equal weighting (for example, all artists being given the same number of pages regardless of the size of their work or their reputation). A book project by Marion Fricke and Roswitha Fricke with Seth Siegelaub, *The Context of Art / The Art of Context* (2004)<sup>28</sup> supports this hypothesis. The organisers contacted all of the 105 artists of 123 artists who were still alive who had participated in one or more of five key exhibitions staged in 1969<sup>29</sup>. Of this process Siegelaub posited that '[s]omeday, perhaps it would be interesting to trace the history of this generation of artists before they are all dead',

not just the successful, well-known ones [artists], whose history has become part of the history of the art world – but especially the other artists who did not succeed, and thus whose histories are much less documented and collected. No need to mention here that art history, like other histories, is written by the winners, conquerors or ruling powers. Perhaps an understanding of all these histories and their inter-relationships would give us a better idea of how art history is really made.<sup>30</sup>

Siegelaub's recommendations for developing knowledge of all artists' who were active in the early conceptual era through the exhibitions they participated in has not been fully realised in the current thesis. It has been necessary to draw boundaries around the material consulted, and as a consequence work by well-known artists has been the primary focus. This research does, however, show that exhibition catalogues provide a starting point for further research into historic exhibitions as well as a way to explore the work of lesser-known artists using the democratic medium of the page. The appendices in volume two of this thesis provides details of over 130 group exhibitions and accompanying catalogues produced between 1966 and 1973 intended as a tool for future

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<sup>28</sup> Siegelaub, S., Fricke, M., Fricke, R. (eds.) (2004) *The Context of Art / The Art of Context*, Trieste: Navado Press

<sup>29</sup> The five exhibitions were *One Month: March 1969* (1969), *Op Losse Schroeven* (1969), *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969), *Prospect 69* (1969) and *Konzeption Conception* (1969)

<sup>30</sup> Siegelaub, Fricke and Fricke, op cit., p. 28



researchers wishing to trace specific catalogues and pages by individual artists [v.2, Appendix A]. Also included is a table of bootleg, facsimile and digital editions, as in some circumstances, these are acknowledged as being more accessible to contemporary audiences than original catalogues<sup>31</sup> [v.2, Appendix B]. The number of titles available as facsimile editions is likely to rise in the coming years, in particular marking the fifty-year anniversary of seminal exhibitions. Instead of being considered a supplement to these exhibitions, I would argue that catalogues and later facsimile editions give the opportunity for a more thorough appraisal of how exhibitions were organised, how artists, organisers and audiences communicated with one another, and attitudes towards the production and dissemination of material. There is much work to be done by myself and others on exhibition catalogues that are currently less familiar to western audiences. Exhibition catalogues that were produced in Asia and Australia are yet to be reproduced or digitalised but would facilitate further analysis and help to more fully demonstrate the global scope of early conceptual art.

Benjamin cautioned 'even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be'<sup>32</sup>. It is, therefore, necessary for contemporary audiences to be aware of how information is mediated through reproductions of the page as differences in layout, scale and format may engender an alternative interaction with the ideas in the present day. Benjamin continues, 'to an ever greater degree the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility'<sup>33</sup>, and the pages encountered in exhibition catalogues were produced for public consumption. Barthes wrote that the unity of a text 'is in its destination'<sup>34</sup>, accordingly, this research has taken me from wishing to historicise exhibition catalogues produced in the early conceptual era, to rethinking how the page is relevant and accessible in the ever-changing present

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<sup>31</sup> Logie, J., 1967: The Birth of "The Death of the Author", *College English*, Vol. 75, No. 5 (May 2013), pp. 493-512; Baker, N., (2001) *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper*, New York: Random House; Bornstein, G., (2006) *Material Modernism: The Politics of the Page*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

<sup>32</sup> Benjamin, W. 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1933), translated into English in 1968 by Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., reproduced in Benjamin, W. (1970) *Illuminations, edited and with an Introduction by Hannah Arendt*, London: Jonathan Cape, p. 222

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 226

<sup>34</sup> Barthes, R., 'The Death of the Author', *Aspen 5+6* (fall/winter 1967), available at: <http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen5and6/index.html> (accessed 19-03-2018)

moment. My conclusion, from dealing with the page as both, and often paradoxically, a material and conceptual object, one that is mass-produced, but at the same time distinct to the individual taking it in, has shown that the 'time and space' in which the page happens to be is in fact, the 'here and now' of the reader.

## POSTSCRIPT

The pages consulted in this research have a life beyond that which their producers could imagine fifty years ago. Presentation in exhibition catalogues and reproduction in new formats enables continued access to artworks, that if were not recorded on the page, audiences may be unaware of. One such work that intrigued me from the outset of this project was *Thee's gotten where thee's cassn't back'n 'assent?* by Richard Long included in the *July August September* (1969) catalogue [v.2, pp. 158 – 159]. Due to the alleged sculpture not being perceivable in the documentation provided, this example exposed the limitations of the page for representing the experience of viewing art and nudges the reader/viewer to undergo their own exploration of the site.

Using the page as a guide, in May 2018, I made the trip to the site of *Thee's gotten* for myself. In the catalogue, Long stated '[t]he sculpture can be seen 2 times each day'<sup>35</sup>, advising readers/viewers to check the exact times of low tide in the local press. I found the tide times for Avonmouth published online, and in consultation with the photographs and map offered by Long's pages, used Google Earth<sup>36</sup> technology to plan my visit to the site of the work [v.2 Appendix D, pp. 299 - 301]. This helped me to understand how Long had placed the sculpture on the river bed at low tide and quickly made the ascent via a steep gully to the Sea Walls vantage point at Clifton Down, allowing him to photograph the work and its wider surroundings from a distanced perspective.

I arrived at Clifton Down shortly before the low tide at 11:04am on 25 May 2018. It was a damp weekday morning, meaning the Sea Walls vantage point was relatively quiet apart from a couple of tourists and dog walkers who momentarily stopped to take in the dramatic view. The rising mist and sound of rain made the River Avon look and sound more atmospheric than was possible to imagine from the documentation that I had consulted. Peering through the railings and aware that the tide would again be coming in, I used the photographs provided on Long's catalogue page to determine where his sculpture had once been

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<sup>35</sup> Long, R., 'Specific Information', *July August September* (1969) exhibition catalogue, p. 25

<sup>36</sup> Google Earth is a computer program that renders a three-dimensional representation of Earth based on high-resolution graphics and satellite imagery

placed. Trees and shrubs (although now greatly matured), lampposts, a small hut at the edge of his first photograph and the natural features of the river helped me to identify the likely position of the sculpture (Fig. 7.1). From the vantage point at Clifton Down, the scale of the site struck me and explained how – perhaps intentionally so – the documentation on the page could not fully convey the experience of being there.

Long, as the maker of this work, would have been operating on an even more limited timeframe than I was as a viewer. To better understand this, I made the journey down to the edge of the riverbed via the steep gully, which, on this day was made more treacherous by the driving rain and loose scree. Standing on the side of the Portway road, which was busier than it appeared to be in 1969, I could pick out a route near to a man-made outlet that Long may have perilously traversed to reach the water's edge. From the perspective of the roadside, the scale of the site became more apparent as I could now pick out debris, including shopping trolleys, stuck in the mud banks, which, like Long's sculpture placed in the same spot in 1969, had not been perceivable from Clifton Down [v.2

**Appendix D, p. 303].**



Fig. 7.1 and 7.2. Visit to Clifton Down, Bristol at low tide, 25 May 2018 to view Richard Long's sculpture on the bed of the River Avon using printouts of the *July August September* (1969) exhibition catalogue made available on the Primary Information website

The deteriorating weather made me thankful that I had used a digital printout of Long's page from the Primary Information website to navigate my visit (Fig. 7.2). If I had been using the original catalogue in this environment, watermarks from the rain would have irrevocably damaged the catalogue, even if one could argue they contributed to the social history of the page and evidencing its use in the environment for which it was intended. I continued to explore the site for about one hour, during this time I observed frequent buses pass just as they had in Long's photograph taken forty-nine years ago. The rising tide indicated that this brief window of time had quickly passed. I never saw Long's sculpture (and nor did I ever expect to); indeed, the experience of being guided to the site of this work has helped me to appreciate how the page cannot take readers back to the 1960s and 1970s, but, instead, carries ideas and artworks from this time forward.

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- Art in Europe after '68* (2014) [Exhibition]. S.M.A.K., Ghent, 13 September 2014  
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- EARTH SKY Richard Long at Houghton* (2017) [Exhibition]. Houghton Hall,  
Kings Lynn, 30th April – 26th October 2017
- Five Issues of Studio International* (2015) [Exhibition]. Raven Row, London, 26  
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- For Charles Harrison: When Attitudes Became Form* (2011) [Exhibition] Karsten  
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- Less is More. Pictures, Objects, Concepts from the collection and the archives  
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- Lynda Morris: Dear Lynda...* (2013) [Exhibition]. NUA Gallery, Norwich, 30 April  
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- Seth Siegelaub: Beyond Conceptual Art* (2015) [Exhibition]. Stedelijk Museum,  
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- The Stuff That Matters. Textiles collected by Seth Siegelaub for the CSROT*  
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### **Personal communications**

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