

When Attitude becomes Action: unrealised project proposal

Referencing a series of articles where Flash Art International *invites* writers and curators to discuss landmark exhibitions from the past, I propose to amend historical exhibitions in relation to recollected criticism.

The review of *'Live in your head; when attitude becomes form'* by Harald Szeemann 1969¹ (the exemplar of Olbrist's notion of the unrealised) is re-reviewed by Barry Barker in 2010. In it he identifies the exhibition as a prime example of a curator responding to the work of contemporary artists, letting the artists provide the initiative rather than the curator imposing their personal theories or worldview. The exhibition bought together the ability to inspire the formation of a material presence and open up the concept of art to change human perception of contemporary art as it was then. Citing the self referential nature of practice, the show exposed an inappropriateness or irrelevance to critically refer to an artwork's context or its authorship.

It was the time of the "death of the author," when any understanding of the work of art was to come solely from its own presence, without reference to metaphor, biography or any other outside circumstances. Barker identifies many problems with the exhibition that had larger social and economic ramifications:

'As soon as I saw the exhibition laid out before me I felt the mixed emotions of being captivated and disappointed at the same time..... As for the disappointments, there were many².'

By critiquing criticism, memory and hindsight, the exhibition in heed of Barker's comments would involve the following amendments:

- Establish new instructions for installing Eva Hesse's work
- 'Install' Lawrence Weiner's 'wall removal' [A 36 x 36 Removal to the Lathing or Support Wall of Plaster, 1968]
- Source funding for transportation and display of Joseph Beuys [*Das Rudel* (The Pack)], 1969.
- In the sourcing of funding and sponsors, draw upon national funders avoiding a predominate American bias
- Translate the title for Swiss exhibition
- Remove all dung from the countries involved

By readjusting this seminal exhibition to one person's critique, I expose a constant readjustment and emphasis on perception. I therefore propose for all reviewed exhibitions to be re-exhibited in line with criticism, and call into play Jean Luc Nancy's 'Hegel; The restlessness of the negative':

*"Negativity constitutes the turning point of the movement of the concept and the ceaseless movement that leaves nothing at rest"*³

Reinforcing the cyclical entity and broader contextual position of contemporary practice today.

¹ 'When attitudes become form 'live in your head. Works-concepts-processes-situations-information' Kunsthalle Berne and the Institute of contemporary arts, London, 1969. Curator Harald Szeeman

² When attitudes become form by Barry Barker. Flash Art n 275 November-December 2010. Amarcord. Live in your head.

³ Jean Luc Nancy's 'Hegel; The restlessness of the negative' University of Minnesota Press , 2002