

group should have is a sense of the integrity of its activity. One thing of the several I have against the Art Workers Coalition is that they were using art for all sorts of things. An activity shouldn't be used for a foreign purpose except when the purpose is extremely important and when nothing else can be done. I thought the suggestion of the Art Workers that a separate section of the Modern be permanently given to black artists and another to artists without galleries to be useless corruptions of the nature of the activity, one aspect of which is that art is good, middling and bad. Neither, as they think, are all artists equal; citizens are equal, not workers, not doctors, not anything. I'm also unimpressed by SoHo (I hope the name disappears); it's too narrow an interest group. Unlike the Art Workers, an artists' organization should decide what it wants and go after it practically and politically. If museum boards should be one third money and otherwise, one third staff and one third artists, as I think they should be, state that and talk to the museums. Allow some for differences in the museums, and those who refuse without reasons can be struck. Why is the Modern so interesting? Why be so eager to demonstrate, to use a tactic that was originally used for a much more serious purpose? [...]

DON JUDD

The artist does not have to *will* a response to the 'deepening political crisis in America.' Sooner or later the artist is implicated or devoured by politics without even trying. My 'position' is one of sinking into an awareness of global squalor and futility. The rat of politics always gnaws at the cheese of art. The trap is set. If there's an original curse, then politics has something to do with it. Direct political action becomes a matter of trying to pick poison out of boiling stew. The pain of this experience accelerates a need for more and more actions. 'Actions speak louder than words.' Such loud actions pour in on one like quicksand – one doesn't have to start one's own action. Actions swirl around one so fast they appear inactive. From a deeper level of 'the deepening political crisis,' the best and the worst actions run together and surround one in the inertia of a whirlpool. The bottom is never reached, but one keeps dropping into a kind of political centrifugal force that throws the blood of atrocities onto those working for peace. The horror becomes so intense, so imprisoning that one is overwhelmed by a sense of *disgust*. [...]

ROBERT SMITHSON

May the immediate political response be that as a human being all I can comment upon is what action an Artist *could* take and to even imply what action Artists *should* take would constitute a fascism as abhorrent if not more repugnant as that which has brought the sorry situation to bear originally.

The major problem still remains the same: the old esthetic workhorse of content and intent. Art as it becomes useful, even to the extent of entering the culture, becomes for me no longer Art but History. History being perhaps the most viable tool of Politics. All Art as it becomes known becomes Political regardless of the intent of the Artist.

All Art then is capable of becoming political by its own or by the volition of the culture, changing via this process from Art to History.

So-called Art whose original intent and most often content is political or social does not concern me as an Artist. They are for me only varied forms of sociological propaganda; albeit sometimes extremely creative advertising.

I accept fully the responsibility for the position of my Art in Culture Politics – but hold firmly that my actions as a man constitute only that. The political and sociological actions of one man with no vocational trimmings as props.

Artists are but one vocational unit in a sociological system and if I believed that their political and social opinions or needs were either above or below any other vocational unit, I should cease my activities.

Be there hopefully a day when men no longer need any other title than man to function politically. Then perhaps there shall be no political function for them.

LAWRENCE WEINER

3 Art Workers' Coalition: Statement of Demands

The Art Workers' Coalition was born of a specifically art-world controversy. On 3 January 1969 the kinetic artist Takis unilaterally withdrew a work from an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. This action instigated a protest concerning the rights of artists to maintain control over their work, which rapidly mushroomed in the form of demonstrations by artists. In February '13 Demands' were issued to the Museum. Though remaining rooted in questions of artists' rights and museum reform, the AWC quickly broadened its remit to take in questions of the representation of women and black artists, and to protest against the continuation of the war in Vietnam. Robert Morris, Carl Andre and Lucy Lippard were among the leading art-world figures involved. The original list of 'Demands' was revised throughout 1969 and was published in definitive form in March 1970. It was reprinted in Lucy Lippard, 'The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history', in *Studio International*, London, November 1970, pp. 171–2, from which the present text is taken.

A. WITH REGARD TO ART MUSEUMS IN GENERAL THE ART WORKERS' COALITION MAKES THE FOLLOWING DEMANDS:

- 1 The Board of Trustees of all museums should be made up of one-third museum staff, one-third patrons and one-third artists, if it is to continue to act as the policy-making body of the museum. All means should be explored in the interest of a more open-minded and democratic museum. Art works are a cultural heritage that belong to the people. No minority has the right to control them; therefore, a board of trustees chosen on a financial basis must be eliminated.
- 2 Admission to all museums should be free at all times and they should be open evenings to accommodate working people.
- 3 All museums should decentralize to the extent that their activities and services enter Black, Puerto Rican and all other communities. They should support events with which these communities can identify and control. They should convert existing structures all over the city into relatively cheap,

- flexible branch-museums or cultural centres that could not carry the stigma of catering only to the wealthier sections of society.
- 4 A section of all museums under the direction of Black and Puerto Rican artists should be devoted to showing the accomplishments of Black and Puerto Rican artists, particularly in those cities where these (or other) minorities are well represented.
 - 5 Museums should encourage female artists to overcome centuries of damage done to the image of the female as an artist by establishing equal representation of the sexes in exhibitions, museum purchases and on selection committees.
 - 6 At least one museum in each city should maintain an up-to-date registry of all artists in their area, that is available to the public.
 - 7 Museum staffs should take positions publicly and use their political influence in matters concerning the welfare of artists, such as rent control for artists' housing, legislation for artists' rights and whatever else may apply specifically to artists in their area. In particular, museums, as central institutions, should be aroused by the crisis threatening man's survival and should make their own demands to the government that ecological problems be put on a par with war and space efforts.
 - 8 Exhibition programs should give special attention to works by artists not represented by a commercial gallery. Museums should also sponsor the production and exhibition of such works outside their own premises.
 - 9 Artists should retain a disposition over the destiny of their work, whether or not it is owned by them, to ensure that it cannot be altered, destroyed, or exhibited without their consent.

B. UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A MINIMUM INCOME IS GUARANTEED FOR ALL PEOPLE, THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF ARTISTS SHOULD BE IMPROVED IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

- 1 Rental fees should be paid to artists or their heirs for all work exhibited where admissions are charged, whether or not the work is owned by the artist.
- 2 A percentage of the profit realized on the re-sale of an artist's work should revert to the artist or his heirs.
- 3 A trust fund should be set up from a tax levied on the sales of the work of dead artists. This fund would provide stipends, health insurance, help for artists' dependants and other social benefits.

4 Joseph Beuys (1921–1986) 'I Am Searching for Field Character'

Beuys invokes a concept of 'direct democracy' in an essentially hierarchy-less social organism. To this end his concept of a 'Fifth International', assuming the priority of Consciousness over Being (or at least, of 'energy' over 'matter'), is advanced as a riposte to the philosophical materialism of the Communist (Third), and Trotskyist (Fourth)

Internationals. Dated 1973, Beuys's statement was published in English translation by Caroline Tisdall in the exhibition catalogue *Art into Society, Society into Art*, London (Institute of Contemporary Arts), 1974, p. 48, from which the present text is taken.

Only on condition of a radical widening of definition will it be possible for art and activities related to art to provide evidence that art is now the only evolutionary-revolutionary power. Only art is capable of dismantling the repressive effects of a senile social system that continues to totter along the deadline: to dismantle in order to build A SOCIAL ORGANISM AS A WORK OF ART.

This most modern art discipline – Social Sculpture/Social Architecture – will only reach fruition when every living person becomes a creator, a sculptor, or architect of the social organism. Only then would the insistence on participation of the action art of FLUXUS and Happening be fulfilled; only then would democracy be fully realized. Only a conception of art revolutionized to this degree can turn into a politically productive force, coursing through each person, and shaping history.

But all this, and much that is as yet unexplored, has first to form part of our consciousness: insight is needed into objective connections. We must probe (theory of knowledge) the moment of origin of free individual productive potency (creativity). We then reach the threshold where the human being experiences himself primarily as a spiritual being, where his supreme achievements (work of art), his active thinking, his active feeling, his active will, and their higher forms, can be apprehended as sculptural generative means, corresponding to the exploded concepts of sculpture divided into its elements – indefinite – movement – definite (see theory of sculpture), and are then recognized as flowing in the direction that is shaping the content of the world right through into the future.

This is the concept of art that carries within itself not only the revolutionizing of the historic bourgeois concept of knowledge (materialism, positivism), but also of religious activity.

EVERY HUMAN BEING IS AN ARTIST who from his state of freedom – the position of freedom that he experiences at first-hand – learns to determine the other positions in the TOTAL ART WORK OF THE FUTURE SOCIAL ORDER. Self-determination and participation in the cultural sphere (freedom); in the structuring of laws (democracy); and in the sphere of economics (socialism). Self-administration and decentralization (three-fold structure) occurs: FREE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM.

THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL is born.

Communication occurs in reciprocity: it must never be a one-way flow from the teacher to the taught. The teacher takes equally from the taught. So oscillates – at all times and everywhere, in any conceivable internal and external circumstance, between all degrees of ability, in the work place, institutions, the street, work circles, research groups, schools – the master/pupil, transmitter/receiver, relationship. The ways of achieving this are manifold, corresponding to the

varying gifts of individuals and groups. THE ORGANIZATION FOR DIRECT DEMOCRACY THROUGH REFERENDUM is one such group. It seeks to launch many similar work groups or information centres, and strives towards world-wide cooperation.

5 Hans Haacke (b. 1936) Statement

Haacke's early work involved the production of self-contained systems, such as the process of condensation within a glass box, as part of the international series of breaks from conventional Modernism which occurred in the mid-1960s. As the 1960s progressed, however, his art became politicized and his attention turned from natural to social systems. Increasingly he has devoted his work to the exposure of those systems wherein conservative political and economic interests may be seen to use cultural sponsorship as a legitimating screen for their other activities. The art of the museum has been a recurring focus for him. Originally published in *Art into Society, Society into Art* (op. cit.), p. 63, from which the present text is taken.

Products which are considered 'works of art' have been singled out as culturally significant objects by those who at any given time and social stratum wield the power to confer the predicate 'work of art' unto them; they cannot elevate themselves from the host of man-made objects simply on the basis of some inherent qualities.

Today museums and comparable art institutions, like e.g. the ICA in London, belong to that group of agents in a society who have a sizable, although not an exclusive, share, in this cultural power on the level of so-called 'high-art'.

Irrespective of the 'avant-garde' or 'conservative', 'rightist' or 'leftist' stance a museum might take, it is, among other things, a carrier of socio-political connotations. By the very structure of its existence, it is a political institution. This is as true for museums in Moscow or Peking as for a museum in Cologne or the Guggenheim Museum. The question of private or public funding of the institution does not affect this axiom. The policies of publicly financed institutions are obviously subject to the approval of the supervising governmental agency. In turn, privately funded institutions naturally reflect the predilections and interests of their supporters. Any public museum receiving private donations may find itself in a conflict of interests. On the other hand the indirect subsidy of many private institutions through exemption from taxes and partial funding of their programs could equally create problems. Often, however, there exists in fact if not by design a tolerance or even a congruence of the respective ideological persuasions.

In principle the decisions of museum officials, ideologically highly determined or receptive to deviations from the norm, follow the boundaries set by their employers. These boundaries need not be expressly stated in order to be operative. Frequently museum officials have internalized the thinking of their superiors to a degree that it becomes natural for them to make the 'right' decisions and a congenial atmosphere reigns between employee and employer. Nevertheless it would be simplistic to assume that in each case museum officials

are faithfully translating the interests of their superiors into museum policy, particularly since new cultural manifestations are not always recognizable as to their suitability or opposition to the parties concerned. The potential for confusion is increased by the fact that the convictions of an 'artist' are not necessarily reflected in the objective position his/her work takes on the socio-political scale and that this position could change over the years to the point of reversal.

Still, in order to gain some insight into the forces that elevate certain products to the level of 'works of art' it is helpful – among other investigations – to look into the economic and political underpinnings of the institutions, individuals and groups who share in the control of cultural power.

Strategies might be developed for performing this task in ways that its manifestations are liable to be considered 'works of art' in their own right. Not surprisingly some museums do not think they have sufficient independence to exhibit such a portrait of their own structure and try to dissuade or even censor works of this nature, as has been demonstrated. Fortunately art institutions and other cultural power agents do not form a monolithic block, so that the public's access to such works might be limited but not totally prevented.

Bertolt Brecht's 1934 appraisal of the 'Five Difficulties in Writing the Truth' is still valid today. They are the need for 'the courage to write the truth, although it is being suppressed; the intelligence to recognize it, although it is being covered up; the judgement to choose those in whose hands it becomes effective; the cunning to spread it among them.'

There are no 'artists', however, who are immune to being affected and influenced by the socio-political value-system of the society in which they live and of which all cultural agencies are a part, no matter if they are ignorant of these constraints or not ('artist' like 'work of art' are put in quotation marks because they are predicates with evaluative connotations deriving their currency from the relative ideological frame of a given cultural power group). So-called 'avant-garde art' is at best working close to the limitations set by its cultural/political environment, but it always operates within that allowance.

'Artists' as much as their supporters and their enemies, no matter of what ideological coloration, are unwitting partners in the art-syndrome and relate to each other dialectically. They participate jointly in the maintenance and/or development of the ideological make-up of their society. They work within that frame, set the frame and are being framed.

6 Mel Ramsden (b. 1944) from 'On Practice'

Ramsden and Ian Burn merged their collaborative practice with Art & Language in 1970. By 1975 some thirty people were associated with the name, equally divided between England and New York. Three issues of *The Fox* were published by an Art & Language Foundation in New York, with an editorial board which included Ramsden and Joseph Kosuth. The declared aim of the journal was to establish a basis for community practice through critical address to the contingent conditions of the New York art world. *The Fox* was instrumental in the Artists' Meeting for Cultural Change, which formed as a kind of revival of the Art Workers' Coalition. The title of Ramsden's essay makes ironic