Joshua Decter *Art Is* a Problem

Joshua Decter Preface as Future Anterior



The paradox of sovereignty consists in the fact (that) the sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the juridical order. —Giorgio Agamben, Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life, 1998

Oh, make me wanna holler And throw up both my hands Yea, it makes me wanna holler And throw up both my hands —Marvin Gaye, "Inner City Blues (Make Me Wanna Holler)," 1071, written by Gaye and James Nyx, Jr.

If art is a problem, this book does not claim to be the solution. And if this book creates problems, art may claim to offer remedies. Why title this selection of writings on art, curatorial practice, architecture, cities, and other cultural matters, "Art Is a Problem?? Doesn't this risk marginalizing the book? Or, engendering varying degrees of uncase, confusion, fear, and loathing among the very communities and publics that would constitute

Joshua Decter

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An anthology of essays

In this volume of selected essays, interviews, curatorial texts, and reviews, spanning 1986–2012, Joshua Decter examines contemporary art in relation to its various ideological, public, discursive, and social contexts. The book encompasses seven chapters: Institutional Critique® and its Discontents; Aporia (Art as Politics, the Politics of Art); Everything Is Social; Convoluted Cities; The (Un)De-definition of Art; What Do We Want from Exhibitions?; On the Curatorial Road.

The author unpacks art's paradoxical condition: art problematizes, and is intrinsically a problem. From this standpoint, he analyzes art's definitions, functions, ethical entanglements, societal aspirations, and cultural contradictions.

Joshua Decter is a writer, curator, critic, theorist, and art historian who has taught at Bard College's Center for Curatorial Studies, The School of Visual Arts, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, New York University, and the University of Southern California, where he founded the Art and Curatorial Practices in the Public Sphere MA program.

The book is part of the Documents series, co-published with Les presses du réel and dedicated to critical writings.