# Writings on Wade Guyton

New Forms of Modernism; Ambivalence and Ambiguity; 'An Act of Processing' Kirily Bell



"Tradition ... involves, in the first place, the historical sense ... a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence." --T.S. Eliot, Tradition and the Individual Talent, 1922

With its citations from the history of Modernism, the pastness of the past is as much apparent in Wade Guyton's work as the past's continued presence rearticulated with an awareness of the critical strategies of Postmodernism. Guyton's Unitide Athor Sculpture (Preure) (2004) could be seen as an emblematic sculpture. The tubular steel frame of a Marcel Breuer chair is partially un-bent and stretched out to form a tall freestanding abstract sculpture. Enough of its distinctive original shape remains for it to still be recognizable, but its new form implies a random indeterminacy at odds with the structural utilitarianism of its origins. The Modernist fetish object is translated into an essentially useless art object that

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## A critical perspective on Guyton's work

Few figures have had as important an impact on our understanding of artistic production after the turn of the millennium as Wade Guyton, whose practice has widely prompted reconsiderations of longstanding models of medium-specificity, appropriation, and critical engagement—and, perhaps more provocatively, performativity and readymade gesture—in art.

This volume takes stock of critical perspectives on Guyton's work over the course of the artist's career, assembling both expansive, scholarly essays and more concise, journalistic assessments by an international array of authors—Daniel Baumann, Kirsty Bell, Johanna Burton, Catherine Chevalier, Bettina Funcke, John Kelsey, Scott Rothkopf, and Peter Schjeldahl among them—offering an invaluable reference for any reader coming to terms with this unique practice.

Just as significantly, the volume holds up a mirror to the rapidly changing context for Guyton's work, which in a few short years shifted from discussions of the widespread use of modernist motifs in art during the early 2000s to others revolving around the artwork, anticipating its continuous circulation as digital media became ubiquitous in art and culture alike.

A foreword by editor Tim Griffin examines Guyton's production and reception, underlining the continual dialogue between the artist's work and cultural setting, shedding light on the different times, and Guyton's contrapuntal mode of engagement throughout.

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