The Event of Art

MarcLafia, MathieuBorysevicz, DanielCoffeen

Published by Punctum Books

MarcLafia, et al.
The Event of Art.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/80764

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=2762932
Whatever I Do Comes from Doing and That’s That
Whatever I do comes from doing and only relates to what’s done.
Art is always the event that puts on the now.
The close reading that may provide simultaneously a map to the future and the past. No doubt this will accelerate.
To read and perform the technology, the texture, the media of the moment.
The death of art is trying to be art.
Can there be in Reinhardt’s terms a pure art? I don’t think so. Can there be a probing of possibility spaces and patterns yet unfinished, à la Kubler? Yes indeed.

I have made contact with matter.

This is the “primary process” of “making contact with matter,” a process which Smithson feels is often overlooked in favour of the “finished” piece.

(Simon Sullivan)

But how to consider the tragic through forms and why? Or perhaps more poignantly the form of living life as in how to live and why live as an artist, and what is that work, and what is that being, that being art.
If much of my earlier works concerned various formats, opening them up,
repurposing them, cultural practices being reformatted by the network, its social protocols, its knowledge and work flows, its conversations, the speed and spread of information and misinformation, etc..

I've wanted to take a step back to considered forms and objects, a very new encounter for me.

In many ways my life is rather monk-like,

the singular life immanent to a man who no longer has a name, though he can be mistaken for no other.

(Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*)

A monk’s life has a great deal of quietude. And I enjoy this. I need this.

Perhaps art is a giving shape to life, to our experience of being in the world and making that world, to shape and unshape forms, formats and representations. It is a way of going, a way bodies go, language goes, materials go, I go. I want to give shape to a becoming form, to forms that can take on multiple appearances, that can fold into themselves, hide within themselves, reveal themselves, this way and that. I am that shape, I am that form, that form begetting form, sensing it happening to me, through me. To some the “abyss” fills them with fear. I will not say that I am not afraid. But I have certainly known what it is not to know, and knowing that knowing will come, a knowing I don’t have to think about.

I continually reimagine, rethink, reposition my work, my place in it, what it’s about, what it wants to be…

how i want to go with it, and the very going of things. how goes this work? how goes this life? work and life, the work of life, a working life, life works us, me and you, us, me extended into you, you and everything, life is work, and yes, work can be play, whatever it is, it’s a going, it goes at us, it is us going - so why art or what is this art that goes, or going with art, or art takes me, a way towards life, into life, with life, living, where do i want to go, an expression of going, a going that expresses, a going that knowingly expresses, let going go, a going of going, letting it go, letting go go. go as it may, go where it will, i go with it, it goes and i go, we go together, a body, a body in space and time, a body that does not go forever, a body of bodies, amongst bodies, of speeds and attributes, of encounters. art as encounter, as as event, eventful.

Art practice might then, like philosophy, involve intuition. An intuition incarnated in materials which takes us “beyond” the actual, plunges us deep into the virtual, before returning with new actualisations. Indeed art practice can be positioned
at that “seeping edge” between the existing state of affairs and a world “yet-to-come.” Again, this is not to position art as transcendent, for as we have seen the ontological coordinates of the actual and the virtual operate “within” immanence (within this world). The virtual does not lack a reality, but is merely that which has yet to be actualised.

(Simon Sullivan)

I find this incredibly beautiful.

For brief moments flying butterflies were reflected; they seemed to fly through a sky of gravel.

Here from “The Third Mirror Displacement”:

In the side of a heap of crushed limestone the twelve mirrors were cantilevered in the midst of large clusters of butterflies that had landed on the limestone. For brief moments flying butterflies were reflected; they seemed to fly through a sky of gravel. Shadows cast by the mirrors contrasted with those seconds of colour. A scale in terms of “time” rather than “space” took place. The mirror itself is not subject to duration, because it is an ongoing abstraction that is always available and timeless. The reflections on the other hand, are fleeting instances that evade measure.

(Robert Smithson, “The Third Mirror Displacement”)

In each of the displacements Smithson “inserts” the mirrors into the earth. The mirrors then become a part of the landscape placed as they are in the geological ground zero of the desert. And yet the mirrors are also apart from the earth inasmuch as they reflect the sky (and other flora and fauna) and in so doing actualise other durations of organic and inorganic life.

(Simon Sullivan)

Perhaps art is the experience of those most uncertain, inchoate and unsettling intuitions, just before the brief flying of butterflies caught in a momentary reflection, a sky of gravel, a form becoming, coming undone, becoming other (however long or short).