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Abstracts

Para-Art and Para-Criticism at 25 O'clock

Toshiaki MINEMURA

Each genre of art, including the fine arts, is an “organic system” that has its own structure and ecology and stays independent, even when intersecting with other genres. From this parallelist perspective, I highlight that the art system is linguistic in nature and offer criticism on the current art scene. Most of the works highly acclaimed for being at the cutting-edge of contemporary art tend to suffer from serious loss of language. Therefore, they not only present ideas or phenomena in the raw but also show blind adulation and worship of a “star” artist, which epitomizes, unfortunately, our hyper-consumerist society. Criticism, which is a fundamentally linguistic activity, cannot engage in direct conversation with those works whose originality lie in the loss of language. Can we resume a close, direct dialogue again? I search for a clue to this question by analyzing On Kawara’s “Today” series, with particular focus on decisive moments of utterance in the work as well as how it expresses ideas.

The Prison-house of Language on the Postmodern Art Criticism

Ryo SAWAYAMA

Rosalind E. Krauss and Yve-Alain Bois have led post-modern art criticism with their critical ‘method’. In their text, they introduce Structuralism and Post-structuralism as methods of art criticism. Krauss insists that their method deconstructs modernist myths, and she criticises the non-structural art critics who have blindly accepted the ideas of representation, subject matter, content, and so on. Conversely, they provide a new formalism. Bois explains himself as a ‘formalist’, being influenced by Structuralism and Russian formalism rather than the writings of Clement Greenberg. Frederic Jameson explains that both Structuralism and Russian formalism are modelled on the Linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure. Bois and Krauss often

refer to the Linguistics of Saussure and Roman Jakobson to analyse the circulation of the sign in their study of Cubism. However, Jameson criticised language-modelled formalism as being 'the prison-house of language' on account of its lack of historical and political dimensions. In this essay, I try to demonstrate an alternative approach to art criticism, providing an analysis of the forms and materials of the works of art on the level of their reality and inner politics, beyond 'the prison-house of language'.

Charles Baudelaire as a Critic **— His Consciousness of the Receiver**

Koichi TOYAMA

Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867), the nineteenth century French poet and author of *Fleur du Mal*, is also a well-known critic. Here the author discusses Charles Baudelaire's understanding of the process of critical consciousness by an art receiver (i.e., reader, spectator, or listener). According to him, a painter must use his/her imagination to translate or transform nature into a painting, whereas a critic as a spectator of the art may translate the painting into a critique. In this sense, it is considered that the imagination plays an essential role in the creative process, linking object with artist and receiver or object with art and critique.

Conceptual Art Generated **Lawrence Weiner's *Statements***

Chieko HIRANO

Lawrence Weiner (1942-) is regarded as a central figure in conceptual art, and his *Statements*, published in 1968, is a work frequently referred to in the history of conceptual art. In this article, I am looking into how conceptual art arose within the process in Weiner's works of the 1960s. By way of a comparison of Weiner's *Statements* with Minimalism, I argue that the removal of the subject of the maker as being the source of the work was a key aspect of Weiner's project. The fact that the role of the viewer in its stead has never been fully appreciated may be clarified by comparing *Statements* with scores in Fluxus. Closing with an analysis of *Statements*, I

indicate anonymous powers common to both post-minimalist sculpture and *Statements*. *Statements*, after all, contains even the movement of receding from the actions of making sculpture.

On Kawara's *The Bathroom*

Yusuke MINAMI

This essay offers an analysis of On Kawara's one of the major works during his Tokyo period (1951-59), *The Bathroom* (1953-54; the National Museum of Modern Art Tokyo), with special emphasis on its style and structure. *The Bathroom* series, which consists of 28 pencil drawings, has been partially released to the public several times during 1953-54. Although we can find a shift in styles and motifs in this serial work, the exact dates and order of its creation and showing remains unknown. Through a comparison with his other works, *The Bathroom* reveals an important phase of Kawara's artistic development: the phase of the collapse of linear perspective in a three-dimensional space. By examining its distorted representation of space and its oblique framework, I reveal that its spatial representation has much in common with cinematography and photography. That is to say, when creating *The Bathroom*, Kawara made the best use of the materials and methods available at that time and effectively changed his artistic style. The immediacy and efficiency demonstrated in his creation of *The Bathroom* amounts to a radically new style of both artist and art.