



Ephemeral Monuments: History and Conservation of Installation Art

From Getty Conservation Institute

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Ephemeral Monuments: History and Conservation of Installation Art From Getty Conservation Institute

Installation art is an evolving, often ephemeral medium that defies rigid categorization. It has also radically transformed the concepts of space, time, and the experience of art. The conservation field is faced with unique challenges over how best to manage and preserve the essence of these works. How detailed can documentation get? When does the replacement of original components become acceptable? How does the field cope with the obsolescence of certain technologies? By exploring the questions and dilemmas facing those who care for art installations, this book intends to raise awareness and promote discussion about the various conservation approaches for these works.

This volume is the English edition of the first book published in Italy to address the history and conservation of installation art. With an introduction by noted art historian Germano Celant, it includes essays by museum director and art historian Marina Pugliese—tracing the evolution of this art form, beginning with the experimental exhibitions of the early twentieth century—and by contemporary art conservator Barbara Ferriani, who addresses the problems associated with the assembly and installation of these works as well as their representation and conservation. Other expert contributors address the specific nature of video installations, the role of interviews with living artists, and tools and techniques for documenting ephemeral works of art. The second part of the book is dedicated to specific installations by artists such as Mario Merz, Anselm Kiefer, and Bill Viola, whose works exemplify this unique art form.

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Editorial Review

Review

“In the past 20 years, fewer than 10 books have been published on this subject. . . . The documentation strategies introduced—and then applied to a series of installations described in terms of media, space, artist’s vision, and future—make a significant and unique contribution to the discipline.”—*Choice*

“Comprehensive.”—*Book News*

About the Author

Barbara Ferriani is a conservator and teaches conservation of contemporary art at the University of Ca’ Foscari in Venice and at the Università Statale in Milan. Marina Pugliese is an art historian specializing in contemporary art techniques and conservation and the director of the Museo del Novecento (Museum of Twentieth-Century Art) in Milan.

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