

STATEMENTS

January 1970

Philip Pilkington and David Rushton (Editors)

From the Introduction:

This magazine is to be produced twice yearly to contain work by students at present in their first year of the Fine Art Course at this Faculty [of Art & Design, Lanchester Polytechnic]. These articles were written on topics set, or developed from work that was begun within the five areas of study covered by the course; Art Theory, Audio Visual, Epistemology, Romanticism and Technos.

It was thought necessary by a number of students to establish an outlet for work, primarily taking a written form, to an audience not directly concerned with the course, who might find interest in the work produced within such a framework.

The character of subsequent issues will be dependent upon the nature of the work undertaken by students.

STATEMENTS

November 1970

Philip Pilkington and David Rushton (Editors)

From the Editorial:

The achievements of *Statements* January 1970 remain fairly limited, apart from internal college feedback and some replies from Canada, there has been only small response. It is hoped that this issue will provoke a more varied reply and strengthen that already established.

If there is a purpose behind *Statements*, it is to provide an outlet for work to an audience not otherwise available. Participation from outside the Faculty in the form of comment, criticism, articles, artwork will be considered for inclusion in the early 1971 issue. As before, the nature of such work will determine the format of the publication.

ANALYTICAL ART No 1

July 1971

Kevin Lole, Philip Pilkington and David Rushton (Editors)

From the Introduction, 'Don Judd's Dictum and its Emptiness':

'Artist' is in some degree a professional distinction which we may hold out for as opposed to an ostensive definition. The simple nomination of an object as art appears sufficient qualification of that nominating agent as artist, the promiscuous use of this causality of art. The fact that 'artist' is not axiomatically defined is no reason for its not being (ought to be) axiomatically defined.

ANALYTICAL ART No 2

July 1972

Kevin Lole, Philip Pilkington and David Rushton (Editors)

From the Introduction:

This is the final issue of *Analytical Art*. The editors will subsequently be publishing in *Art-Language*.

ART & EDUCATION

1975

David Rushton and Paul Wood

Art & Education was a UK-wide research study on the feasibility of an art-microform art student magazine supported by the Welsh Arts Council.

The [post-student] undertaking still remains – to encourage some critical awareness of the debilitating social consequences of the isolated and trivial purpose behind current thinking in art education. The scope of such questions is not compatible with CNAA [Council for National Academic Awards] reviews. A review at CNAA level may go no further than reinforce the educational structure in order that production becomes more orthodox. It would be compatible with the present practice in fine art education that complementary studies consisted of some account of business difficulties of the self-employed.

The Report included the recommendation:

An art microfiche journal ... setting up of a microform 'archive', and a journal; both of which will, it is hoped, facilitate the generation and transfer of information in art education in a much more flexible and immediate manner than has hitherto been the case.

Several of the papers included in *Art & Education* also appeared in *The Fox*, published by Art & Language Foundation Inc (of New York) and these were later reprinted in *Noises within ...*

SCHOOL POSTERS

1975 and 1976

Malcolm Robinson and David Rushton (et al including Art & Language)

Charles Harrison suggests 'Art & Language produced and circulated a series of anonymous posters inviting support for a mythical organisation called 'School''. (*Essays on Art & Language*, Basil Blackwell, 1991, p113). The School initiative was undertaken from an Art & Language outpost in Galashiels. From here art education became the more tangible ongoing project throughout the middle half of the 1970s.

Three letterpress School posters were produced with Malcolm Robinson at Snag Mill Press in the Scottish Borders and circulated to stimulate art student publications and the critical exchange of views. Several of these student magazines were then printed at Snag Mill and articles later reprinted by School Press in *Noises within*

NOISES WITHIN ...

1979

**Dave Batchelor, Mike Fyles, Steve Lawton,
Alan Robinson, David Rushton and Paul Wood**

The *noises within* echo from a gimcrack, remote and ideologically hollow chamber of the education machine: Art School. They comprise a mixed bag of extracts from magazines which flourished only throughout the authors' confinement ... as students. The work drew its inspiration from that of the Art & Language group. If it is scurrilous, it obviously does not spring from any local or federal art school tradition of scurrilism. These magazines, by 1979, having run their course without having established, as it were, house roots, provide one reason for retrieving them, minus one or two grinning skeletons from the historical cupboard. Another is that SCARP [Student Community Action Resource Programme] have put up the money for reprinting.

It may be true that people can only learn from their mistakes – but we were very largely performing in the dark – and though we believe these activities to have been in a limited sense successful, an examination of the succeeding pages will reveal a considerable number of the little victories gained to have been Pyrrhic ones.

It has repeatedly been argued that the failure of one generation of students to secure the ear of the next has been a crippling one for student self-activity. However, this has seldom prevented its happening.

POLITICS OF ART EDUCATION

1979

David Rushton and Paul Wood (Editors)

From the Preface:

It is now over two years since Dave Rushton and Paul Wood suggested an issue on the politics of art education to Richard Cork – the editor of *Studio International*. The work was undertaken by people involved with School who had been helping to produce art student magazines critical of the received art education in colleges for the previous year or so.

Edited by David Rushton and Paul Wood this monograph was reluctantly published by Studio International as a *Special Report*. It is doubtful if *Politics of Art Education* reached Studio International's subscribers or its readers in the art schools.

BROKEN DRAWING

1978

David Rushton

Based on a lecture on Freud given to staff and students at Leeds Polytechnic, this drawing is split across the cover of *Politics of Art Education*. Included among those imagined to be present are Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, Christopher Cornford, Don Foster, Lynne Lemaster, Philip Pilkington and Jeff Wall.

NOISY CHANNEL (A 'MODEL' TRADE UNION JOURNAL)

1987

David Rushton

Noisy Channel evolved from a trade union newsletter, *TU/TV*, and a proposal to Channel 4 to produce a rank-and-file TV series to replace the long-running *Union World*.

Noisy Channel is a sympathetic if scurrilous journal that addresses trade union and labour movement 'modernisation' and echoes the approach proposed for the TV series.

PORTRAIT OF HARRIET SMITH

1970

POHS

1970

David Rushton

Portrait of Harriet Smith is a reproduction of pages from Jane Austen's novel *Emma* with additional text.

Portrait of Harriet Smith was offered in response to an essay topic from the art history course at Coventry in 1970: *What do you need to know about an art object in order to understand it properly?*

There are a few paragraphs in Jane Austen's *Emma* in which Harriet Smith paints a portrait of John Knightley. What could be known about *this* art object?

ARTIST AS IDEA

1970

David Rushton

Typed catalogue of work by fake artists Bill Blake, Ottore Oscura and R W Johnson

The January 1970 issue of *Statements* was of interest in Canada. Staff at Nova Scotia College of Art & Design expected several students to be working on Art Theory, Audio Visual, Epistemology, Romanticism and Technos at Coventry and sought further information on the work undertaken. Virtually all students at Coventry had rejected the course so to supplement work sent by the editors of *Statements* a catalogue of work by fake student-artists was forwarded to Nova Scotia (Artist as Idea, 1970). David Rushton and Philip Pilkington went to Nova Scotia to lecture on the course and the students working as the Analytical Art Group.

ADVERTISEMENT

1972 and 2002 (as reproduction)

Garry Neill Kennedy

In 1972 Nova Scotia College of Art & Design took out a full-page advertisement in North American and UK art magazines to promote their art course. Devised by Garry Neill Kennedy Advertisement, 1972 & 2002 lists College students, staff, visitors and artists including the fake artists at Coventry.

In 2002 Kennedy reprinted a copy of the advertisement to support the lithography workshop at NSCAD. In 2004 Kennedy's advertisement was exchanged for the School poster.

FORESHORTENED SHELVES FOR HARRY WEINBERGER

1970

David Rushton

Caught by lecturer Harry Weinberger stealing college shelves to build a hi-fi cabinet, David Rushton re-cut the shelf-ends and returned them to the college stockroom. A photo of the cascading shelves titled *Foreshortened Shelves for Harry Weinberger* 1970 was submitted as Bill Blake's contribution to the catalogue of work by fake artists sent to Nova Scotia.

The shelves appear again in the *Conceptual Art Museum from Memory 1966-1979*, currently on show at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, and have been reconstructed by Robert May for Lanchester Gallery Projects.

NOISY CHANNEL: CHAIR I

1970

David Rushton

Photographs of a chair and of the chair coated in its photograph

Noisy Channel: Canvases and *Noisy Channel: Chair I* were submitted as coursework to the Technos strand of the art course running at Coventry.

In broadcast engineering, a 'noisy channel' is the difference in quality between the original sound or picture transmitted and the sound or picture received by the audience. In *Noisy Channel: Chair I* a chair was coated with photographic emulsion. A photographic image of the same chair was then projected onto it, and the photographic emulsion was developed, fixed and washed. As a result, the chair was covered with its own image - but the image obscured the original detail of the chair. The difference between the original detail of the chair and the photographic image covering it was the 'noise'.

The chair itself was subsequently lost, so 'before and after' photographs are shown here. A version of *Noisy Channel: Chair II* from 2004 offering a different emphasis is also on display at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum.

ROBERT MORRIS PROJECT (Fabrication)

2004

David Rushton

Framed digital copies of texts written by Philip Pilkington and David Rushton for the *Robert Morris Project*, Faculty of Art & Design Gallery, Lanchester Polytechnic, 1970 (now the Lanchester Gallery)

In 1970 the art critic David Sylvester suggested that the aesthetic arrangement of felt comprising Robert Morris's soft-form felt sculpture was a little more pleasing arranged by Morris than by museum curators and cleaners at Tate Britain in London or by Morris's window cleaner in his studio in New York.

With Morris commissioning a large number of felt sculptures there seemed little constraint on others making these and none on arranging cut felt as if Morris's work.

However, Pilkington and Rushton's purpose in this project was not to make forgeries but rather to suggest Morris be acknowledged as the author of a *class of sculptures made of felt* and not as the architect of all members of this class.

Authorship, attribution and identification play a significant role in shaping the economic identity of the artist and subsequent history writing. Rushton addresses the theme of working in art at more length at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum.

ROBERT MORRIS MANQUE

2010

David Rushton

Slides of cutting felt for the Robert Morris Project with Philip Pilkington in 1970 juxtaposed with a reconstruction in April 2010 by Diana Hentulescu, Jake Watts, Bruce Fletcher, Georgia Bowser, Laura Caves and Ruth Hamblett

In documenting the cutting and hanging of felt, Pilkington and Rushton were addressing the conventional attribution of authorship and the claim of authenticity granted to the art work.

In 2010 students at CSAD were invited to consider whether authorship and authentication had become better reconciled to these changed relations of production - and in particular, verisimilitude and digital reproduction - or whether authorship and identification remained as ill fitting for contemporary art as they had seemed in 1970.

EXHIBITED PAINTING

1969, reconstructed 2010

David Rushton

Exhibited Painting was initially undertaken in the studio at Coventry School of Art in 1969 when students were asked to complete a painting in their work area.

How might someone know that a painting had been completed?

A photograph taken of an area of painted wall is fixed to the top left hand corner of the area photographed. A second photograph is taken of the area, which now includes the first photograph, and is fixed alongside it, and so on. The exercise is completed when the area is covered.

Here, an undistinguished painted surface from the gallery wall is singled out for attention and 'exhibited', but in being represented, the painted surface has been progressively hidden.

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NOISY CHANNEL: CHAIR II

2004

David Rushton

In broadcast engineering, a 'noisy channel' is the difference in quality between the original sound or picture transmitted and the sound or picture received by the audience.

This idea was picked up in a work called *Noisy Channel: Chair I* made by Rushton in 1970. A chair was coated with photographic emulsion. A photographic image of the same chair was then projected onto it, and the photographic emulsion was developed, fixed and washed. As a result, the chair was covered with its own image - but the image obscured the original detail of the chair. The difference between the original detail of the chair and the photographic image that covered it was the 'noise'.

In *Noisy Channel: Chair I*, the light source from behind the camera ensured that the chair was largely free of shadow. In the work shown here, *Noisy Channel: Chair II*, a similar process took place, but this time a heavy shadow appears across the chair seat as a permanent record of the light source at a particular moment and place in time.

ONE AND FOUR/FIVE CHAIRS

1973

David Rushton

Many versions of Joseph Kosuth's *One and three chairs* have been exhibited since 1965. In Kosuth's work, a chair (object), a full size photograph of the chair (representation) and a dictionary definition (description) appear together. Three chairs are shown side by side, signifying 'chair'. By 1973, the work had been repeated so many times that it had lost its original impact, and had come to signify 'Kosuth'.

Rushton's *One and four/five chairs* is a critical comment on how even a sign as simple as 'chair' is not free from ambiguous or misdirected readings. By extending the possible chair-signs from 'three' to 'four/five' he indicates the uncertainties of signification.

LEXICAL ITEMS

1973

Art & Language: Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, Philip Pilkington and David Rushton

Lexical Items is part of a body of work known as the *Indexes* that was made by Art & Language between 1972 and 1975. All of these works are text-based. This requires the viewer to actively engage with the work by reading it rather than passively viewing it.

Art & Language recognised that text was open to interpretation or misinterpretation by readers, and were concerned that any ambiguities should be addressed. *Lexical Items* was produced after *Index 01* and is preparatory work on an Art & Language dictionary to define the exact meaning of each word used in texts by Art & Language to avoid ambiguities and misreading.

Visitors are invited to open and read the text in *Lexical Items*.

More material relating to this work can be found in the Exhibition Archive under the title *Authorship and other enquiries*.

THE ART PARTICLE

2005 to present

David Rushton

The Art Particle reconstructs several workshops and studios occupied by Rushton from the 1960s to the present day.

Conceptual art by definition is concerned with ideas and concepts rather than physical pieces of work. Between 1966 and 1972, 'working in art' for some artists was more a conversational process than the artisan manufacture of works of art. *The Art Particle* explores some of the locations where conversation was the expression of working, and where physical outcomes were often fluid, ongoing or unresolved. With each change of location and personnel the thread of discussion moved on and mutated.

A catalogue identifying items reconstructed in the models can be found alongside *The Art Particle*.

MOTORSHOW MANQUE

2008

CAR FACTORY CANTEEN

1979

David Rushton

Motorshow Manqué reconstructs the *Motorshow* exhibition held in 1979 at the New 57 Gallery in Edinburgh, with its wallpapers, plaques, frieze of a car assembly line and model of a car factory canteen. The exhibition was produced by David Rushton and Paul Wood and was later shown at a socialist rally at Edinburgh's Playhouse Theatre.

Three of the New 57 Gallery wallpapers show a repeat pattern of car parts derived from workshop manuals, while the fourth is taken from an advertisement for work clothing. There are two viewing slots in *Motorshow Manqué* set at different heights, inviting the viewer to perform stooping and bending, which mimic the repetitive work of the production line.

Car Factory Canteen is a scale model of a building where eating, meeting, organisation and entertainment could take place away from the noisy routines of car assembly. It is modelled on the works' canteen at the Luton Vauxhall factory that was demolished while the model was stored at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum between 1986 and 2010. In representing the passage of time, the model has accrued dust over those 25 years.

The first of two *Motorshow* exhibition catalogues can be found alongside the model. A second catalogue, also from 1979, can be found in the Exhibition Archive.

CONCEPTUAL ART MUSEUM FROM MEMORY 1966-1979 2004

David Rushton

Conceptual Art Museum from Memory 1966-1979 is a scale model of an imagined scene at the Cultural Centre in Pripyat. The town of Pripyat was abandoned in 1986 following the release of radiation from nearby Chernobyl.

The model shows an exhibition of Conceptual art that is either being prepared for display or being taken down. The possibilities and interpretations of the exhibition are abandoned and trapped in time, with work-in-progress lying around the table and chair and in the filing cabinet. Faint and distorted echoes of a conversation can be heard discussing Joseph Kosuth's *Art after Philosophy*.

The work explores the idea that there are many truths and interpretations about working in art, and it is specifically a commentary on the authorisation of a version of the post-1975 history of Art & Language. At the centre of the museum is a 'negotiating table' while in the foreground a 'shadow cabinet' holds work that may be realised for exhibition in the course of conversation.

A catalogue identifying the items represented can be found alongside this model.

MODEL

1975

David Rushton

Model focuses on two works from 1966 – *Air Conditioning Show* by Terry Atkinson and Michael Baldwin, and *Soft Tape* by Ian Burn and Mel Ramsden. In the air conditioned room, the heat of a spectator's body would trigger the air conditioning equipment. *Soft Tape* required the spectator to be close enough to a speaker to hear words quietly spoken, though the sound was too soft to pick them out.

In 1975, two models were made to show how the proposed works might be displayed – one in a converted room in a Victorian villa and the other in a corner of a New York gallery.

For *Air Conditioning Show* the fluorescent tubes are stuck mid-flicker at the instant of being switched on. Meanwhile, the air conditioning itself responds to fluctuations in air temperature in the interior over time. Here a frozen moment and ongoing time occur side by side.

These models introduce an idea that was explored later – how to represent the passage of time in a scale replica. Should elapsed time be scaled up or down?

PRIPYAT: EARLY ONE MORNING

2004

David Rushton

The town of Pripyat was evacuated in April 1986 after the radiation leak from nearby Chernobyl. Photographs of Pripyat were subsequently used as symbols to represent the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ideals of Lenin. This scale model of a nursery classroom in Pripyat is based on one such photograph.

In the photograph of the nursery the dominant image of Lenin appears untouched by time, while the paint on the walls peels away. The portrait's undamaged state suggests that it was placed here deliberately, perhaps after being moved from another room. While the decaying classroom seems authentic, Rushton questions whether elements of it have been staged for the photograph and the political message it might then convey.

A catalogue for *Pripyat: early one morning* can be found alongside the model.