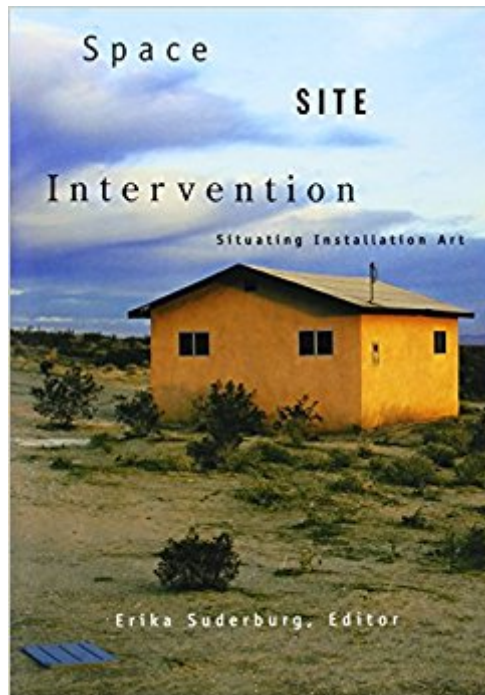


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# Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art



## Synopsis

Originally published in 1970, *The Urban Revolution* marked Henri Lefebvre's first sustained critique of urban society, a work in which he pioneered the use of semiotic, structuralist, and poststructuralist methodologies in analyzing the development of the urban environment. Although it is widely considered a foundational book in contemporary thinking about the city, *The Urban Revolution* has never been translated into English until now. This first English edition, deftly translated by Robert Bononno, makes available to a broad audience Lefebvre's sophisticated insights into the urban dimensions of modern life. Lefebvre begins with the premise that the total urbanization of society is an inevitable process that demands of its critics new interpretive and perceptual approaches that recognize the urban as a complex field of inquiry. Dismissive of cold, modernist visions of the city, particularly those embodied by rationalist architects and urban planners like Le Corbusier, Lefebvre instead articulates the lived experiences of individual inhabitants of the city. In contrast to the ideology of urbanism and its reliance on commodification and bureaucratization—the capitalist logic of market and state—Lefebvre conceives of an urban utopia characterized by self-determination, individual creativity, and authentic social relationships. A brilliantly conceived and theoretically rigorous investigation into the realities and possibilities of urban space, *The Urban Revolution* remains an essential analysis of and guide to the nature of the city. Henri Lefebvre (d. 1991) was one of the most significant European thinkers of the twentieth century. His many books include *The Production of Space* (1991), *Everyday Life in the Modern World* (1994), *Introduction to Modernity* (1995), and *Writings on Cities* (1995). Robert Bononno is a full-time translator who lives in New York. His recent translations include *The Singular Objects of Architecture* by Jean Baudrillard and Jean Nouvel (Minnesota, 2002) and *Cyberculture* by Pierre Lévy (Minnesota, 2001).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This wonderful book is a treat to read. It is so sensitive to the reader and to so many cultural and political issues." -- Bomb Magazine, Spring 2000

I have been an artist all my life, and always worked at the scale of smaller, portable art: drawing, a painting, a small sculpture. However, I was always intrigued with the installation art I have seen at museums, even if I did not always understand it...it "felt" intriguing...-wow.. art you could actually walk into and interact with- and wanted to know more...ultimately I wanted to try my hand at it someday. So I bought a couple different books on site-specific and installation art to learn more on how they were done, how artists conceptualized them and came up with their ideas...this was one of those books. So this is really just a step in my self-education as a newbie to such things. This book is a collection of essays from artists, educators, critics, curators, professors, and other art specialists. The book is pretty much an insider's book writing for other insiders. The tone is quite postmodern, academic and theoretical. Since this book doesn't have the Look-Inside feature, here's a list of the essays: Introduction: On Installation and Site Specificity (Erika Suderburg)1. The Functional Site; or, The Transformation of Site Specificity (James Meyer)2. One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity (Miwon Kwon)3. "Illiterate Monuments": The Ruin as Dialect or Broken Classic (Barbara Maria Stafford)4. Fountains and Grottos: Installation and the Neobaroque (Sean Cubitt)5. Garden Agon (Susan Stewart)6. Written on the West: How the Land Gained Site (Erika Suderburg)7. Hidden Economies in Los Angeles: An Emerging Latino Metropolis (Alessandra Moctezuma and Leda Ramos)8. Landscape(s) of the Mind: Psychic Space and Narrative Specificity (Notes from a Work in Progress) (John Coleman)9. Ordinary Gestures of Resistance (Ernest Larsen)10. Internal Exiles: The Interventionist Public and Performance Art of Asco (C. Ondine Chavoya)11. Scream IV (Laurence A. Rickels)12. Displacements, Furnishings, Houses, and Museums: Six Motifs and Three terms of Connoisseurship (Kevin McMahon)13. Public Art and the Spectacle of Money: An Assisted Commentary on Art Rebate/Arte Reembolso (John C. Welchman)14. Video and Film Space (Chrissie Iles)15. The Machine in the Museum; or, The Seventh Art in Search of Authorization (Bruce Jenkins)16. "No Guarantees, They're Wolves": Structure, Movement, and the Dystopic in Diana Thater's *\_China\_* (Colin Gardner)17. The Space of

Electronic Time: The Memory Machines of Jim Campbell (Marita Sturken)<sup>18</sup>. The Anthropologist's Shadow: The Closet, the Warehouse, the Lesbian as Artifact (Catherine Lord)<sup>19</sup>. Imaging Community: Video in the Installation Work of Pepon Osorio (Tiffany Ana Lopez)<sup>20</sup>. The 1970s "Situation" and Recent Installation: Joseph Santarromana's Intersubjective Engagements (Amelia Jones) For the person new to such subjects, I found Suderburg's "Introduction" (1) to be an excellent contextual piece for the history and theory of this genre; without it, I would not have gotten as much out of this book. As a newbie, I also particularly enjoyed reading about Osorio's work (19), the piece on "Illiterate Monuments" (3), and the essays on video (14) and machine in the museum (15). If you are an artist or other insider, into the theoretical and aesthetic, if you are an art student in college or an art professional, if you are a patron who likes MOMA and SITE Santa Fe, you can get a lot out of this book. I am still making some connections for myself after reading this book. It deserves a review by someone who works with such art; but as an interested reader, I can say there is meat here for both the novice and the specialist.

Publisher Comments: From Ferdinand Cheval's Palais Ideal (1879-1905) and Simon Rodia's Watts Towers (1921-1954) to Ant Farm's Cadillac Ranch (1974) and Richard Serra's Tilted Arc (1981), installation art has continually crossed boundaries, encompassing sculpture, architecture, performance, and visual art. Although unique in its power to transform both the site in which a work is constructed and the viewer's experience of being in a place, installation art has not received the critical attention accorded other art forms. In *Space, Site, Intervention*, some of today's most prominent art critics, curators, and artists view installation art as a diverse, multifaceted, and international art form that challenges institutional assumptions and narrow conceptual frameworks. The contributors discuss installation in relation to the genealogy of modern art, community and corporate space, multimedia cyberspace, public and private ritual, the gallery and the museum, public and private patronage, and political action. This ambitious volume focuses on issues of class, sexuality, cultural identity, race, and gender, and highlights a wide range of artists whose work is often marginalized by mainstream art history and criticism. Together, the essays in *Space, Site, Intervention* investigate how installation resonates within modern culture and society, as well as its ongoing influence on contemporary visual culture. Lucy R. Lippard (author of *The Lure of the Local* and *On The Beaten Track*): This book is a varied and fascinating labyrinth of sophisticated writing that opens up the notions of site and space to a grand panoply of new ideas. It should be required reading for anyone making or confronting installation art in the 21st century.

A Must Read, I bought 2!

I have just opened the FOURTH copy of this book and still has not gotten it right. They are shipping this heavy paperback book in a paper padded envelope and they are getting destroyed. I told customer service each time that they needed to send it in a box, but no such luck. Not only has this wasted time and money - mine and 's - I STILL don't have a usable copy of the book, and it is not very green of to waste so much paper. Why? To save a few cents on shipping? Come on .com - you can do better than this.

Prior to the book's publication one could not find any significant texts about this, the most dominant approach to making art, post 1975. Realizing the gap in the field, Suderberg invited a number of distinguished art writers to parse this new medium and produced its first critical compendium of note and usefulness. For artists and faculty exploring work outside of painting and sculpture, SPACE, SITE, INTERVENTION: SITUATING INSTALLATION ART, is required reading. It raises the most pertinent issues that one must address to produce meaningful, important site pieces.

This book is filled with writers who are first and foremost trying to prove their own intelligence rather than discuss the topic at hand; installation artists. At times the writing is completely incomprehensible. Filled with big words and tricky grammar, this collection of essays says a whole-lotta nuthin. Don't buy this one unless you're forced to.

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