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# Performative Monuments: The Rematerialisation Of Public Art (Rethinking Arts Histories MUP)



## Synopsis

A man selling kebabs in the shadow of a papier mÃƒÂ¢chÃƒÂ© tree; a woman standing with a small stage built around her breasts while people wait their turn to touch them; another woman projecting snapshots of Belgrade with the official buildings painted out: what do these events have in common? All are works of public art. And all take a cue from the fugitive art of performance. The most forceful monuments of the last few decades, whether built to last on national malls or flashed as signs of protest, were in fact designed by performance artists. This book argues for the conceptual significance of performance, and of a performative model of art, to the revival of the public monument in the wake of the Second World War and the partition of Europe. Through detailed studies of artists working along these ideological fault lines, including Valie Export, GÃƒÂ¶nter Brus, Marina Abramovic, Sanja Ivekovic, Joseph Beuys, Jochen Gerz and Santiago Sierra, it argues that it is not the subjective, anti-authoritarian rhetoric of performance that makes it public art, but its power to build social bonds both personal and political. Readers interested in contemporary art, politics, photography and performance theory will find in this book new facts and arguments concerning their interrelation.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Mechtild Widrich's astonishing and original book connects performance histories, feminist theory and speech act theory to elucidate the "event character" of public art by contemporary artists. Widrich advances a powerful argument about the stakes of spectatorship, temporality and collective

memory.'" -- Julia Bryan-Wilson, Associate Professor of Contemporary Art, University of California, Berkeley Rigorously researched and argued, this important book will become required reading not only on the history and theory of performance art but also on the history of the "performative" itself as it has transformed public art and commemoration.' -- Kirk Savage, Professor, History of Art & Architecture, University of Pittsburgh

Mechtild Widrich is Assistant Professor of Contemporary Art History at the School of the Art Institute Chicago and editor of *Ugliness. The Non-Beautiful in Art and Theory*.

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