



Dada Culture: Critical Texts on the Avant-Garde (Avant-Garde Critical Studies 18)

By Dafydd Jones (Ed.)

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How Dada is to break its cultural accommodation and containment today necessitates thinking the historical instances through revised application of critical and theoretical models. The volume *Dada Culture: Critical Texts on the Avant-Garde* moves precisely by this motive, bringing together writings which insist upon the continuity of the early twentieth-century moment now at the start of the twenty-first. Engaging the complex and contradictory nature of Dada strategies, instanced in the linguistic gaming and performativity of the movement's initial formation, and subsequently isolating the specific from the general with essays focusing on Ball, Tzara, Serner, Hausmann, Dix, Heartfield, Schwitters, Baader, Cravan and the exemplary Duchamp, the political philosophy of the avant-garde is brought to bear upon our own contemporary struggle through critical theory to comprehend the cultural usefulness, relevance, validity and effective (or otherwise) oppositionality of Dada's infamous anti-stance. The volume is presented in sections that progressively point towards the expanding complexity of the contemporary engagement with Dada, as what is often exhaustive historical data is forced to rethink, realign and reconfigure itself in response to the analytical rigour and exercise of later twentieth-century animal anarchic thought, the testing and cultural placement of thoughts upon the virtual, and the eventual implications for the once blissfully unproblematic idea of expression. From the opening, provocative proposition that historically Dada may have been *the falsest of all false paths*, the volume rounds to dispute such condemnation as demarcation continues not only of Dada's embeddedness in western culture, but more precisely of *the location of Dada culture*. Ten critical essays - by Cornelius Partsch, John Wall, T. J. Demos, Anna Schaffner, Martin I. Gaughan, Curt Germundson, Stephen C. Foster, Dafydd Jones, Joel Freeman and David Cunningham - are supplemented by the critical bibliography prepared by Timothy Shipe, which documents the past decade of Dada scholarship, and in so doing provides a valuable resource for all those engaged in Dada studies today.

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About the Author

Dafydd Jones has written and published on Dada within the *Crisis and the Arts: The History of Dada* series, presenting work on the avant-garde in the field of critical theory, most recently to the Avant-Garde Project s *Mapping the Neo-Avantgarde* conference at the University of Edinburgh (2005). He lectures in twentieth century and contemporary art practice at Cardiff School of Art, working in text broadcast, and is the editor of the University of Wales Press."

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