Seven Ways of Thinking About Art

Art as Curated: Juan Muñoz

Marko Daniel
What is a curator?

Curators (sometimes referred to as archivists in libraries) collect, exhibit, interpret, maintain, and protect objects of historical and aesthetic importance primarily in museums, libraries, and private collections. Curators are responsible for the safety and proper presentation of the works.

Princeton Review: Career Profiles

http://www.princetonreview.com/cte/profiles/dayInLife.asp?careerID=48
What is a curator?

In contemporary art, the title curator is given to a person who organizes an exhibition. In this context, to curate means to pick objects and arrange them to achieve a desired effect. Usually, this means finding a theme to link a set of works, or finding works to fit a desired theme. In addition to selecting works, the curator is responsible for writing labels, catalog essays, and other supporting content for the exhibition.

Wikipedia: Curator

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curator
Curating different types of displays

- permanent collections
- temporary exhibitions
- group shows
- solo shows
- retrospectives that cover a long career
- retrospectives that cover a shorter life
- exhibitions that show a single work or group of works
Soft hypothesis

• Curator deals with objects.
• The curator looks after these objects.
• Their status is determined by reference to objective criteria.

Hard hypothesis

• The curator, not the artist, makes art.

Related to the institutional theory of art:
Curators and Artists

Working with an artist or artists

Working with the works of (absent/dead) artists

Making art works the raw material of the curator’s creation
Who or what makes the exhibition?

What evidence is there of the rôle of the curator, or of curating?
Curating Objects, Curating Ideas

Jens Hoffman

The Next Documenta Should Be Curated by an Artist

Lawrence Weiner
Documenta, The Next Documenta Should Be Curated By An Artist & the Next Omelet Should Be Made By A Carpenter

The purpose of art is to question the material relationships to their world in relation to human beings.

The purpose of curating is to agglomerate those questions (in effect to present them).

Why should an artist curate the next WHATEVER show WHENEVER.

Curators seemingly want to be artists. Architects want to be artists. I don’t know if this is an unhealthy trend or not. What disturbs me is a growing tendency for artists to be used as art materials, like paint, canvas, etc. I am uneasy about being used as an ingredient for an exhibition recipe, i.e., to illustrate a curator’s thesis. A logical extreme of this point of view would be for me to be included in an exhibition entitled “Artists Over 6 Feet 6 Inches”, since I am 6’7”. Does this have anything to do with the work I do? It’s sandpapering the edges off of art to make it fit a recipe.

So I suppose quid pro quo — yes! Let’s do a Documenta led by a team of artists. Here’s an idea — let Documenta be an exhibition using curators as raw materials.

As we visit the exhibition on Level 4 ...
What stories does this exhibition tell?

Who tells these stories?

How are they told?
Sheena Wagstaff, curator of Juan Muñoz: A Retrospective, concludes her essay with a quote from Muñoz's notebooks, a stanza taken from T. S. Eliot's East Coker
Here or there does not matter
...
In my end is my beginning
**Group One** will explore the exhibition in sequence, from room one to room fourteen.

**Group Two** will explore the exhibition in reverse order, from the final room to the first.

**Group Three** will explore the exhibition by roaming at will from the centre, starting in room six.
Meet on the landing on Level 4.
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