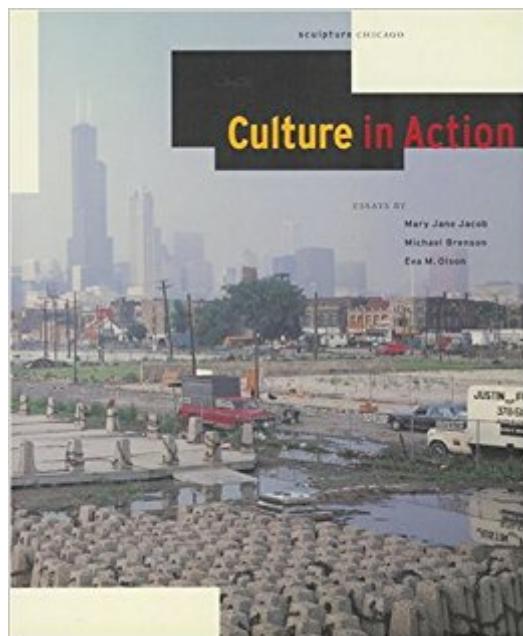


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Culture In Action: A Public Art Program Of Sculpture Chicago



Synopsis

Book by Brenson, Michael, Olson, Eva M., Jacob, Mary Jane, Sculpture Chicago (Organization)

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Organized by Jacob (director of Sculpture Chicago), *Culture in Action* was a community-based art project that took place in Chicago in 1992-1993. Aimed at bringing art to urban communities not considered part of the museum- and gallery-going public, each of the eight component projects involved the collaboration of an artist and a particular community with whom the artist chose to work. A former New York Times critic, Brenson delves into each project, highlighting its importance as a teaching tool, as a creative solution to urban problems and as a means of engendering communication between communities. "Encountering the artistic collaborations in neighborhoods, members of the gallery and museum worlds were the outsiders," says Brenson. Unfortunately, the question of museum-exhibitions programming is never raised. While Olson is versed in artspeak, her writing is impressively straightforward on the value of public art; she cites previous examples of art in the public sphere and answers her own question: "How can the arts become a meaningful part of everyday existence?" The answer: "Public art accepts and claims an unbounded infinite audience simply by being in public view." Together, these essays and subsequent chapters describing each project are thoughtful, smart reflections on the concepts and the power of art beyond the walls of our institutions. Illustrations. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Since the early 1980s, Sculpture Chicago has fostered plenty of good public art, but, more recently,

an offshoot called Culture in Action has ventured directly into the neighborhoods. Appropriately named, this program encourages work that not only addresses social issues but simply cannot exist without human interaction. This volume describes eight separate projects that are both site- and audience-specific. On the surface, a video block party, a parade, and a hydroponic garden may not seem much like art, but in the spirit of Joseph Beuys, the elements making up these events resonate with multilayered significance. Each project proves to be overwhelmingly positive and constructive for the participants, exemplifying the maxim "out of the museum and into the streets." While some of the text here reads like a grant proposal, ultimately, this book resurrects the power of shamanism in a modern context. For general art collections in all libraries. *?Susan M. Olcott, Columbus Metropolitan Lib., Ohio*Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This book was not at all as described. It is poorly written and does not capture the essence of public art in Chicago. I wish I had immediately returned it. However, given the price and postage, it simply wasn't worth bothering. I will donate it to a local library. The book arrived with a torn dust jacket, was in poorer condition than listed, and was simply a waste of money. The seller was slow in processing the order. If you're looking for a definitive review of public art in Chicago (sculpture focused or otherwise) AVOID buying this volume and in my opinion AVOID purchasing from this seller. A loser to be avoided.

This is an important look into what was happening in Chicago in 1992-1993 via Sculpture Chicago's Culture in Action Project by curator Mary Jane Jacob. It shares the details of creating/seeing/understanding the community-based projects which sought to blur the line between artists and audience. This is a must read for those interested in the current social practice movement and a book that I have shared with many young artists.

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