

THE CROSSROADS OF CONTEMPORARY ART AND BUDDHISM

Mindfulness and selflessness

Key words: mindfulness; selflessness; Buddhism; contemporary art; cultural translation; history of ideas; relational aesthetics

The work is investigating the crossroads between art and Buddhism and the cultural innovations that appear in the area of connection.

Theoretically I used the history of ideas, case studies and concepts belonging to the Buddhist philosophy: mindfulness and selflessness. In practice I did two artistic projects : one based on photograms and free associations, *Nothing Special*; the other is a biographical intervention in a cultural institution, *John Murphy Prefers White Wine to Black Pepper*. Both projects include mindfulness practices.

The first chapter, *Why Contemporary Art and Buddhism*, is establishing and discussing the context where the theme and thesis of my work are relevant: actual historical situations, theoretical issues (belonging both to East and West, the existence of the Asian Studies departments, the boom of the Chinese art on the international art market, significant exhibitions, but also the spread of Buddhism in the West. This section includes short descriptions of the practices of Chogyam Trungpa and John Daido Looi.

The work follows the connections, and singles out the connections, distortions and cultural innovations, discussing and analyzing case studies: *John Cage* - zen influence and the concept of indeterminacy; *The Everydayness in Kim Sooja's Works*- the concept of stillness; *Nam June Paik* - questions that come up from the work *Zen for Film* interpreted through the concept of iconoclasm, but also from the point of view of selflessness; *Rirkrit Tiravanija* - public participation and selflessness; and *Meredith Monk* - impermanence, mindfulness and the flexibility of the works' structure.

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