One and Five Ideas

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On Conceptual Art and Conceptualism

TERRY SMITH

EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ROBERT BAILEY

DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Durham and London

2017

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Interior design by Barbara Wiedemann
Typeset in Chaparral Pro by Copperline

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Smith, Terry (Terry E.), author. | Bailey, Robert, [date] editor.
Title: One and five ideas : on Conceptual Art and conceptualism /
Terry Smith ; edited and with an introduction by Robert Bailey.
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2016. | Includes
bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers:
LCCN 2016016698
ISBN 9780822361121 (hardcover : alk. paper)
ISBN 9780822361312 (pbk. : alk. paper)
ISBN 9780822374329 (e-book)
Subjects: LCSH: Conceptual art. | Conceptualism. | Conceptual
art—Australia. | Conceptual art—New Zealand.
Classification: LCC N6494.C63 S585 2016 | DDC 700—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2016016698

Cover art: Joseph Kosuth, *Clock (One and Five)*, 1965. Clock and four works on paper, photograph, and printed paper. Tate Modern, London. Acquisition transferred from the Irish Museum of Modern Art 1997 © Tate, London 2015.

To Joseph

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Acknowledgments

While it is impossible to acknowledge all of the people across five decades who helped shape these essays at their times of writing, the author would like to specifically acknowledge his gratitude to Ian Burn, Mel Ramsden, Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, and Joseph Kosuth and to the other members of Art & Language with whom he worked in New York, as well as John Coplans, Max Kozloff, and Lawrence Alloway at *Artforum*; John Maynard, Ian Wedde, and Gregory Burke in New Zealand; Mary Kelly, Alexander Alberro, and Blake Stimson; Luis Camnitzer, Jane Farver, and Rachel Weiss in connection with the *Global Conceptualism* exhibition; and Barbara Fisher, Boris Groys, Sarah Wilson, and Anton Vidokle in connection with the genesis of chapter 5. Most of all, he would like to thank this book's editor, for the idea, his work on it, especially the introduction, and for the title.

Both author and editor would like to thank those who have proven essential in the book's coming to be. Joseph Kosuth, Mel Ramsden, Michael Baldwin, Avril Burn, Mary Kelly, and Ray Barrie provided permission to reproduce images. Mary Kelly gave permission to reproduce "A Conversation about Conceptual Art, Subjectivity and the *Post-Partum*

Document," the transcript of a conversation between herself and Terry Smith that took place in Chicago on March 10, 1995. Nadav Hochman provided invaluable assistance with images and permissions, and Ben Ogrodnik provided useful assistance with research. At Duke University Press, Ken Wissoker welcomed the project with great warmth, the outside readers provided crucial critical insight, and Jade Brooks expertly shepherded the book throughout the production process.

All of the texts are reprinted as originally published with only minor modifications, most of which involve the standardization of citations. Original publication information is as follows:

Terry Smith, "Art and Art and Language," *Artforum* 12, no. 6 (February 1974): 49–52.

Terry Smith, "The Tasks of Translation: Art & Language in Australia and New Zealand 1975–76," in Ian Wedde and Gregory Burke, eds., *Now See Hear! Art, Language and Translation* (Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press, 1990), 250–61.

Terry Smith with Mary Kelly, "A Conversation about Conceptual Art, Subjectivity and the *Post-Partum Document*," in Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, eds., *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 450–58.

Terry Smith, "Peripheries in Motion: Conceptualism and Conceptual Art in Australia and New Zealand," in Luis Camnitzer, Jane Farver, and Rachel Weiss, eds., *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s–1980s* (New York: Queens Museum of Art, 1999), 87–95.

Terry Smith, "One and Three Ideas: Conceptualism Before, During, and After Conceptual Art," *e-flux journal* 29 (November 2011), http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/267; subsequently reprinted in Boris Groys, ed., *Moscow Symposium: Conceptualism Revisited* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2012), 42–72.

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Introduction

A Theory of Conceptualism

ROBERT BAILEY

This book brings together Terry Smith's five most important texts about Conceptual Art as a movement and the broader conceptualist tendency in art. Written over five decades, the first in 1974, the most recent in 2012, they amount, in my view, to an important, and distinctive, theory of conceptualism. This theory transcends the contingencies of its occasional presentations to become a set of strong, generalizable claims about what conceptualism is and why it is of the utmost significance for the history of art since the middle of the twentieth century. By yoking its constituent parts together, this introduction aims both to define Smith's theory and to unpack its relationship to the now quite considerable historiography of Conceptual Art and conceptualism. My specific goals are threefold: first, to explicate Smith's theory by identifying its core concerns; second, to show how those concerns relate to the concerns of other scholars; and, finally, to consider the implications of the fact that the theory, in the course of its articulation, came to possess many of the very qualities that it ascribes to the conceptualism for which it accounts.

Smith's work on Conceptual Art and conceptualism is, I want to propose, a dispersed but consistent account that challenges conventional distinctions between artistic practice and scholarly theory. To make this case, I will argue three related claims about it by closely reading Smith's texts and locating them relative both to other scholarship and to the conditions in which they were written. First, I want to suggest that Smith's theory of conceptualism is coherent because it maintains a constant focus on the importance of concepts and, especially, concep-

tion for art (and not only for conceptual or conceptualist art). As well, it highlights the capacity for conceptualist art to reconceive the ways in which, at any particular time or in any particular place, art is conceptualized. My second claim is that the discontinuities between the times and places of these texts' authorship, the variety of situations in which they were written, their heterogeneity as to purpose, the ever-changing range of themes they treat, the diversity of formats in which they initially appeared, and the changes over time in Smith's identity as a writer actually assist rather than hinder efforts to comprehend the texts as a unity. In fact, elucidating these differences illuminates the very theory of conceptualism that they articulate, a theory that makes considerable room for the discontinuities that changes in conception inevitably bring about. Indeed, some kind of reconceptualization of Conceptual Art or conceptualism occurs in each of the individual texts and, perhaps even more importantly, in the intervals that elapse between them. Hence my third claim: that Smith's texts perform the very reconceiving of art that they posit as conceptualist art's main purpose, and they are thus, by their own criteria, conceptualist texts that have ramifications concerning what the concept of art is understood to be as well as how art and writing about art are both taken to conceive of that concept.

CONCEPTION AND RECONCEIVING

The five texts that Smith dedicates to Conceptual Art and conceptualism—four essays and one transcribed conversation—each appeared under circumstances that affect the accounts he gives. Each of them was also shaped to varying degrees by his direct involvement in the Conceptual Art collective Art & Language, an involvement that spanned 1972 to 1976. These are the years in which Smith developed the ideas about Conceptual Art that have, over time, gradually become his theory of conceptualism, and they arose in close rapport with that for which they account. Art & Language had coalesced during the mid-1960s at Coventry College of Art in England.[1] Taking as its impetus the idea of using language as a primary means for making visual art, in 1969, it added a like-minded New York contingent that Smith subsequently joined while living in the city as both a student of art history and an aspiring art critic.[2] Art & Language still exists today, despite a tumultuous history that culminated in 1976 with a major purge of membership, including the entirety of its New York section and Smith, by then returned to his native Australia, along with it. During his time with Art & Language,

Smith worked closely with a group of artists and critics who, under the collective's name, were among the earliest practitioners of Conceptual Art, and this provided him with valuable firsthand insight into Conceptual Art as a participant-observer.[3] He took part in making the collective's highly intellectual and conceptually rigorous work, which emerged from its discussions about art and, during the period of Smith's involvement, appeared mostly as texts published in journals or as installations called indexes that drew on linguistics, information theory, computing, and the philosophies of language and science to organize the work that Art & Language was doing into complex, recursive structures resembling library catalog systems and hypertext.

Smith became involved with Art & Language primarily because of his earlier work as an art critic. He had written in that capacity since 1968 for the national newspapers of Australia as well as a variety of national and international art magazines. He was also involved in founding the journal *Other Voices* in 1970, for which he wrote one of his first lengthy pieces, "Color-Form Painting: Sydney 1967–1970," which assayed the latest developments in modernist painting in Australia.[4] In 1972, he received the prestigious Harkness Fellowship, which enabled him to study at New York University and Columbia University in New York. Upon arrival, he connected with two participants in Art & Language: the artists Ian Burn (himself Australian) and Mel Ramsden (who had attended school in Australia along with Burn). Smith had previously included their work in an exhibition entitled *The Situation Now: Object or Post-Object Art?*, which he co-curated with Tony McGillick in 1971 at the Contemporary Art Society of Australia in Sydney.[5] This exhibition, which drew on the critic Donald Brook's concept of "post-object art," was among the very first exhibitions to feature Conceptual Art in Australia.

Smith's interest in Conceptual Art became more pronounced after his arrival in New York and his participation in Art & Language began. In tracking the development of his thinking about Conceptual Art and, later, conceptualism from these early origins to its culmination decades later, I want to begin by briefly outlining the basic circumstances in which each of Smith's texts was written so as to identify their major points of commonality. Following that, I will devote the main part of this introduction to a critical exposition of how his theory of conceptualism evolves and takes shape over the course of its development.

"Art and Art and Language," Smith's first substantial account of Conceptual Art, appeared in the February 1974 issue of *Artforum*.[6] This essay considers Art & Language's work in relation to the current state of

thinking about art. Ideas that become, and remain, central to his thinking on Conceptual Art appear in it for the first time, particularly his interest in what "conception" means in the context of the visual arts.[7] Specifically, Smith tries to show how certain widely held conceptions of art current in the art world at the time were unable to comprehend Art & Language's work. The essay was, like all work done by Art & Language at this time, circulated within the collective and commented on by it prior to publication, and it owes a considerable amount to the intellectual atmosphere then prevailing in the group, especially the collective's interest in the philosophy of science. As Smith notes in "Art and Art and Language," alluding to Thomas S. Kuhn and his influential theories of paradigms and paradigm shifts, "It became clear to me that the making of art entailed the holding of a set of theories about art (to which T. S. Kuhn's notion of paradigm seems only an approximate analogy), theory-sets constituted by notions of what the world is like."[8] Kuhn defined a paradigm as a consensus composed of intertwining theoretical commitments and professional practices collectively and conventionally adhered to by scientists in order to pursue the acquisition of knowledge.[9] Though Smith puts some distance between this concept and his own "theory-sets," the two notions partake of a basic idea that a body of theoretical commitments has fundamental entailments for practical activity in the world, and such an idea, tied to the concept of a conception, remains a part of Smith's theory across the entire course of its development.

Over a decade would pass before Smith again wrote about Conceptual Art in as substantive a way as he had in "Art and Art and Language." In 1990, he published an essay entitled "The Tasks of Translation: Art & Language in Australia & New Zealand 1975–6" for a catalog accompanying *Now See Hear! Art, Language and Translation*, an exhibition at the Wellington City Art Gallery in Wellington, New Zealand. This essay discusses the role of translation in a number of Art & Language exhibitions focused on provincialism and the geopolitics of art worlds that Smith organized in Melbourne, Adelaide, and Auckland during 1975 and 1976.[10] For each of these shows, a comprehensive selection of Art & Language's work, nearly all of it made in England and New York, was presented in Australia and New Zealand, and Smith, himself the only person involved in Art & Language who was present at the exhibitions, facilitated discussions modeled after Art & Language's own with invited guests and interested audiences. These conversations took as their points of departure the work being shown in the exhibitions and the implications of its

traveling from places perceived as centers to places perceived as peripheries with the aim of contesting provincial attitudes and their attendant conceptions of art.[11] In "The Tasks of Translation," Smith puts forward the ideas that conceptual artists such as himself pursued "the possibility of radically reconceiving art altogether" and that the role of translator that Smith assumed by mediating between Art & Language's work and its audiences might be one way of enacting such a reconceptualization of art.[12] Here, the idea of reconceiving, which was already implicit in the hostile way that Smith treated certain conceptions of art while advocating for Art & Language's own in "Art and Art and Language," becomes an explicit and forceful part of his thinking moving forward. Along with conception, reconceiving would become the other centerpiece of Smith's theory, which the subsequent essays would continue to extrapolate.

A 1995 conversation between Smith, speaking again as a former member of Art & Language, and the artist Mary Kelly appeared in 1999 under the title "A Conversation about Conceptual Art, Subjectivity and the *Post-Partum Document*."[13] This conversation, which includes Smith's next major statement about Conceptual Art, further unpacks how the intensely analytic "work on the concept of art" that Art & Language did in the early 1970s—the kind he wrote about in "Art and Art and Language"—occasioned a transformation in the collective's own conception of art that enabled the social and political work it did later on during his tenure with the group, including in the exhibitions he discusses in "The Tasks of Translation."[14] Smith's deepening recognition of a political turn in Conceptual Art that emerges from the art's capacity to reconceive art—an idea that gets developed largely through conversation with Kelly, who espouses her own important ideas about Conceptual Art's politics, which are tied largely to feminism—proves to be a key component of Smith's subsequent work on conceptualism. This new emphasis on politics also shows Smith's own thinking on Conceptual Art undergoing a reconceptualization as his understanding of the movement changes.

A similar reassessment, this time with respect to geography rather than politics, marks Smith's turn from thinking about Conceptual Art to thinking about conceptualism, which begins in 1999 with his curatorial contribution to *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin 1950s–1980s*. This exhibition transformed how Conceptual Art and conceptualism are discussed by making a case for the worldwide appearance of a broad and politically radical "attitudinal expression" in art called conceptualism that starts to emerge around the midpoint of the twentieth century.[15] Whether or not it includes the familiar and largely North American and

Western European Conceptual Art movement is a matter of debate, but not up for debate is any notion that conceptualism is reducible to the prerogatives of Conceptual Art. On the contrary, *Global Conceptualism* focused intensely on local concerns. The globe was divided into eleven regions, with a local curator responsible for each one. Smith's section showed his selection of artists from Australia and New Zealand. His accompanying catalog essay, "Peripheries in Motion: Conceptualism and Conceptual Art in Australia and New Zealand," puts forward an argument about the salience of geographical mobility to the emergence, development, and legacy of conceptualism in Australia and New Zealand, as artists and critics, including a few (such as himself) involved with Art & Language, relocated from what they perceived to be peripheral and provincial southern cities to the capitals of the northern hemisphere to pursue "a conceptual questioning of the nature of art."[16] Smith again makes much of conceptualism's capacity to reconceive the concept of art, and he places this idea at the forefront of his account of the geographies of conceptualism in (and out of) Australia and New Zealand as artists were exposed, through travel, to new ideas about art.

Smith's effort to develop his thinking about Conceptual Art into a more generally applicable theory of conceptualism finds its fullest expression in the latest and most comprehensive statement of his position, which derives from an art-historical perspective inflected by his deep interest in the contemporaneity of contemporary art.[17] This essay, entitled "One and Three Ideas: Conceptualism Before, During, and After Conceptual Art," first appeared in print in connection with a symposium organized in Moscow by Boris Groys during 2011 to reconsider the emergence of conceptualism in the Soviet Union by situating it relative to international contexts.[18] Smith's text puts forward the idea that conceptualisms, whether the Conceptual Art in which he was involved as a participant in Art & Language or the sort of art that Groys wrote about at an early date in Moscow, adhere to different "conceptions of conceptualism" that each partake, by reconceiving various local artistic traditions, in a more comprehensive pursuit of the mutual recognition that conceptual thinking affords.[19] Achieving this mutual recognition resulted in conceptualism playing a crucial role in the emergence of a global contemporary art. In this final iteration, Smith's theory provides a comprehensive assessment of conceptualism centered on its geopolitics of conception and reconceiving art and its historical importance for the emergence of contemporary art.

FROM THE CONCEPT OF ART TO CONCEPTUALISM

The broad spans of time separating these five very different occasions and the diverse roles—critic, theorist, artist, curator, and art historian—that Smith played while partaking of them have yielded a theory of conceptualism that is both wide in its implications for the understanding of conceptualism in art and yet also precise in its focus on how artists conceptualize and reconceive art's being and doing. My first pass through Smith's five texts prioritized the theoretical continuity within them. It is, however, just as important to explore the differences between these texts and between the occasions of their authorship, as these differences have a significant bearing on the theory that Smith articulates and the way he articulates it. They provide it with nuance, scope, and qualifications alike. Indeed, each time Smith writes or speaks of Conceptual Art or conceptualism, he is writing at a different time, in a different place, in a different role, with different collaborators and interlocutors, with different concerns, and in an altogether different genre of writing or mode of discourse. These differences demand at least as much attention as the theory's main argumentation concerning the geopolitics of reconceiving conceptions of art and their historical salience for subsequent art. Moreover, these differences also enable Smith's theory to be situated much more clearly vis-à-vis the contexts of Conceptual Art, conceptualism, their historiographies, and the wider histories within which all of these developments take place.

The history of writing about Conceptual Art begins during the late 1960s before Smith's involvement in it. The movement itself came of age during a period marked by political upheaval and activist politics as well as equally radical developments in intellectual history: structuralism and poststructuralism; new approaches to Marxist theory and psychoanalysis; major changes in the philosophy of language and the philosophy of science; and the consolidation of entirely new fields, including information theory, communication theory, systems theory, cybernetics, and computing.[20] In a sense, Conceptual Art was the artistic equivalent of these developments, equally radical in ambition and transformative in practice, and it drew much from interdisciplinary borrowings or parallels to other kinds of thought and activity. Widespread recognition of this new artistic movement coalescing in New York and elsewhere prompted a number of the artists, critics, and curators involved with it to propose theories about it. Each thinker en-

deavored to account for art that, at the time, appeared altogether new and strange in its rejection of any number of traditional artistic emphases. Three approaches—those of Lucy Lippard, Sol LeWitt, and Joseph Kosuth—proved to offer the most enduring and influential accounts of this art, despite deriving from radically diverse insights about the reason for calling it "Conceptual Art." Lippard elucidated what she and John Chandler, in a coauthored essay that appeared in *Art International* in February 1968, called "the dematerialization of art."[21] While discussing "ultra-conceptual" art, they raise the possibility of "the object's becoming wholly obsolete" as art becomes increasingly focused on conceptual matters.[22] LeWitt, meanwhile, in texts from 1967 and 1969, also pointed to the waning importance of the art object. For him, "the idea [or] concept is the most important aspect" of a conceptual artwork, and he reduced the actual making of the object to "a perfunctory affair."[23] Though LeWitt proposed that "ideas alone can be works of art" and "all ideas need not be made physical," his own ideas, like his concepts, still tended toward the object—that is, whether "made physical" or not, they were ideas or concepts that were meant to be realized as material objects, even if the bulk of an artist's effort was transposed toward the realm of ideating and conceptualizing.[24]

Operating at a remove from both Lippard's idealistic vision of concepts replacing objects and LeWitt's emphasis on the rather teleological role that concepts play in the making of objects, Kosuth aligned Conceptual Art closely with philosophy and considered it to be an "inquiry into the foundations of the concept 'art,' as it has come to mean."[25] Here, the focus of Conceptual Art is placed squarely on a concept—"art"—and on an artistic investigation of that concept.[26] Material, formal, and aesthetic concerns do not vanish so much as they come to serve conceptual considerations. Indeed, for Kosuth, the value of an artist "can be weighed according to how much they questioned the nature of art; which is another way of saying 'what they *added* to the conception of art' or what wasn't there before they started."[27] Kosuth even goes so far as to distinguish his own "'purest' definition of conceptual art" from "'conceptual art' . . . considered as a *tendency*," an idea later taken up and developed by those who have sought to identify and name internal differentiations within the category of Conceptual Art as well as by those who, even later, began distinguishing a geographically and chronologically specific Conceptual Art movement from a more open and diffuse conceptualist tendency.[28] In such accounts, the Art & Language group often figure as exemplary practitioners of Conceptual Art at its "purest,"

Art & Language, Comparative Models, *1972, installation view.*

much to the chagrin of those who prefer a less rigid understanding of these things.[29]

Smith's "Art and Art and Language" appeared at the tail end of this initial reception and had the benefit of some hindsight as a result. The movement's significance—and with it Art & Language's—had recently been assured through major exhibitions, including *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969), *Information* (1970), and *Documenta* 5 (1972), that provided Conceptual Art with mainstream institutional recognition from the museums and biennials that were increasingly its sources. This was consolidated by the appearance of the first books about the movement, anthologies edited by Ursula Meyer (1972), Lippard (1973), and Gregory Battcock (1973) that confirmed widespread interest in Conceptual Art.[30] Although each of these exhibitions and books configured Conceptual Art differently and staked different claims about it, they converge in a shared acknowledgment that this new kind of art was a phenomenon of major importance. Smith's essay responds to this emerging consensus by defending Art & Language's work against the way it was being received in venues such as these legitimating exhibitions and books. Believing, as the collective had come to do, that none of the available claims about Conceptual Art had much purchase on its work (excepting that of Kosuth, who was by this time himself a participant in Art & Language), Smith announces, "A&L is different not just in degree but in kind from its 'Conceptual art' origins."[31] Staking such a claim before 1972 would have been typical of early efforts like Lippard's, LeWitt's, and Kosuth's to identify more precisely what Conceptual Art is and is not, but after the initial wave of critical and curatorial interest in the move-

ment, this kind of claim indicates a shift in thinking about Conceptual Art toward an acknowledgment of its becoming a historical phenomenon that could now be contested as such. Smith's essay is thus an early manifestation of a turn in how Conceptual Art would subsequently be discussed, namely, as art history. As one of the first writings about Conceptual Art to encounter it as a phenomenon capable of being discussed not only through retrospection but also through a retrospection that could argue with other competing retrospections, it is also one of the first texts on Conceptual Art to pursue a deliberately heterodox take on the movement.

Revealing an inclination toward Kosuth's thinking about Conceptual Art, particularly his interest in the concept of art and the role conceptions of it come to play, in "Art and Art and Language," Smith laments the "fundamental conceptions of what it is to make art, to be an artist, and to understand art" within the art world as of 1974.[32] "It seemed imperative to determine what these conceptions were, how they related to one another, how they functioned in other contexts, and how they so thoroughly informed the making of art."[33] Conceptions receive their first definition here as that which positions the thinking and doing from which art emerges and is received.[34] The body of Smith's essay is devoted to spelling out what the available conceptions in the art world were at the time and how their limitations foreclose a sufficient reckoning with what Art & Language's "point of view" offers in their stead.[35] The idea that art is entangled with conceptions is not entirely new here—Kosuth stated that "all art is finally conceptual" as early as 1969—but Smith's definition of conceptions involves much more than the concept of art.[36] He includes under the heading of a conception not only the meaning of "art" but also an entire domain of activities conducted in the vicinity of art—producing artworks, socializing as an artist, interpreting works of art, comparing theories, and so on—that follow from how art is conceived. Art does not only add (or not add) something to the available ways of conceptualizing art by questioning the concept of art, as it does for Kosuth; it is now understood to operate fully in accordance with a conception of what art is that has come to be one of art's conditions of possibility. "The key cause of art's misfortune," Smith contends, speaking here about the available conceptions of art, "is that, through the past decade, each one of these theory-sets, having initially clustered together to form open concepts of art for those who employed them, have become progressively more closed, fixed, overdetermined through continual usage and ever more refined self-definition. They no longer

have the generative power of 'essentially contested concepts': all too clear criteria for their 'proper' use has been developed."[37] Speaking more directly to Art & Language's project, which "reveal[s] a critique of this sort," he suggests that its refusal of "the instincts and practices of mid-'60s Conceptual art" preceded the development of "a distinctively A&L set of intentions" that jettisoned an ossifying notion of Conceptual Art in pursuit of new ways to vivify artistic practice.[38]

This may seem like an exciting time for Conceptual Art, but it was actually flagging, and interest in it falls off after the mid-1970s. Such interest does not pick up again until the late 1980s when a flurry of activity—largely mediated through retrospective exhibitions at European (and, a few years later, American) museums—revived it at a time when a resurgent art market had prompted a conservative return to traditional mediums in art. In light of this, Conceptual Art appeared important again as an alternative to the glut of expressionist paintings and slick sculptures filling up art galleries because it was the major predecessor to the more critical practices then contesting these developments. In particular, Benjamin H. D. Buchloh's and Charles Harrison's contributions to the catalogs of the earliest Conceptual Art retrospectives, especially the 1989 exhibition *L'art conceptuel, une perspective* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, established the movement's enduring art-historical significance by emphasizing its challenges to the presumption, maintained in the West since the onset of modernity, of art's essentially visual nature and the related tendency to regard engagement with art entirely in terms of beholding.[39] Buchloh's equation of Conceptual Art with an "elimination of visuality and traditional definitions of representation" and Harrison's claim for its "suppression of the disinterested spectator" positioned Conceptual Art as a definitive rupture with artistic modernism and its preoccupation with the optical and the aesthetic, precisely what recent painting and sculpture were endeavoring to reclaim in spectacular fashion during the 1980s.[40] Buchloh's account also began to situate Conceptual Art more deeply within its social, political, and economic contexts, which he took to be "the operating logic of late capitalism."[41] This led to the idea that Conceptual Art begat a sequel of sorts in a movement called institutional critique, something much explored by scholars and artists since, which took a critical look at how museums, markets, and the social institution of art function and, in so doing, provided a leftist alternative to the neoliberalism then in rapid ascendency in the art world as elsewhere.[42]

While Smith was not involved directly in these exhibitions, his es-

Art & Language, Art & Language, *1975, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (Terry Smith and Lucy Lippard).*

say "The Tasks of Translation" is contemporaneous with them and partakes of their retrospective validation of Conceptual Art, including its contestation of institutional power, as an important part of recent art history, albeit in different ways. Following an introduction that asserts the thesis that "the demands of the mid-1970s moment created a new role for certain artists, and for newly empowered art audiences: that of *translator*," the essay includes theoretical considerations of translation that draw on the writings of Walter Benjamin and Jacques Derrida, an assessment of the salience of translation for Conceptual Art in general, and then one section each covering Smith's 1975 Australian exhibitions and 1976 New Zealand exhibition as a member of Art & Language, both of which are discussed as instances of translation. The second section on Conceptual Art announces that, in the 1960s and 1970s, "the concept of Art was up for grabs" and further shows how the linguistic and theoretical emphases of Conceptual Art enabled Art & Language to confront the geographical disparities of globalizing art worlds by making translation and communication into a means for reconceiving art.[43]

Smith's account of translation was not particularly impressive to its first respondent, who accused him of being forgetful on at least two counts. Ian Burn, himself a participant in Art & Language's work during

the period in question, also contributed a text to the volume in which "The Tasks of Translation" originally appeared. It includes a brief note in which Burn voices his dissatisfaction with the way Smith frames Art & Language's work of the mid-1970s. "For the record," he writes, "I take issue with much of Terry Smith's account (published elsewhere in this book) of the 1960s and 70s which he offers as a background to the Art & Language 'exhibitions' in Australia in 1975 and New Zealand in 1976."[44] Burn states that Smith "fails to refer" to the "considerable history" of interest in translation in both art and intellectual life prior to his involvement with Art & Language. He has in mind, among other things, his own work on translation, which drew on "a wide range of sources, from John Cage and Jasper Johns to Wittgenstein, Barthes and further."[45] Burn is correct that the work *Soft-Tape*, which he developed together with Mel Ramsden in 1966, predates Smith's exhibitions by roughly a decade, and he is also correct that many of the ideas about translation advanced in it provide highly germane background to the Art & Language work that Smith did in Australia and New Zealand.[46]

Smith would fully register the precedent of *Soft-Tape*, an audio piece in which a recorded voice gets played back at such low volume that the words it recites are nearly inaudible, by featuring it prominently in *Global Conceptualism* and discussing it in detail in his catalog essay for that exhibition.[47] However, his early glossing of it would not likely have met with Burn's ire had it not led, in his mind, to something else: a misconception. Burn's more enduring and open-ended criticism of "The Tasks of Translation" is his claim that, "in Terry's essay, the concerns of Art & Language are represented as narrow and singular, involved in 'obsessive self-examination.' This he 'proves' by suppressing reference to the disparate range of work being done. Violent disagreements and conflicts abounded about the priorities of various kinds of work and, at any one time, there were always competing streams of activity."[48] Burn is especially suspicious of Smith's claims that he functioned as a translator during Art & Language's 1975 exhibitions in Australia. "Regarding that show," he says, "the point—as Mel [Ramsden] and I saw it then—was never that a new role 'of translator' was being proposed for artists."[49] Instead, Burn suggests, the purpose of these exhibitions was, through Smith's mediation, to produce "noise" rather than the comprehension that a translator is tasked with producing.[50]

Although Burn's note is concerned only with this one text of Smith's, it has wider ramifications for the theory of conceptualism that developed in large part out of its declared interest in reconceiving art. By

accusing Smith of propagating a misconception about Art & Language, he raises a number of issues about conceptions and reconceiving, particularly where the matter of error arises. In 1974, Smith had lauded Art & Language for being "complex and many-sided" as well as "subject to change—constantly on surface levels, occasionally in radical depth."[51] He even goes as far as staking a claim to the effect that "part of the dynamic of the group depends on the diversity of outlook of its members" and thus that what Burn calls "disagreements and conflicts" are constitutive for its way of working.[52] Smith himself opposed this diversity of thought to the various "*mis*conceptions" of Art & Language work that he itemizes in "Art and Art and Language" under the headings "*A&L is visual art in the forms of writing/words/text/book*," "*The 'art' in A&L writings lies in the style in which they are written*," "*A&L in relation to philosophy*," and "*A&L as a form of Conceptual Art*," each of which he criticizes, among other things, for being overly reductive.[53]

Roughly a decade and a half later, Burn accuses Smith of making this same mistake and trafficking in an incomplete, reductive, or otherwise badly formulated conception of Art & Language's activity. The conception of the conceptual artist as a translator that he finds in Smith's text is one that leaves out the anarchic character of Art & Language's discussions and prioritizes translation's capacity to operate between incommensurable languages, ways of thinking, or localities over the difficulties thereof that Art & Language would have been prioritizing at the time in question.[54] All of this matters at the wider level of Smith's theory of conceptualism because it points to its lack of explicit criteria both for identifying what constitutes a well-formulated conception and for distinguishing between a beneficial and a detrimental reconceptualization.[55] These are, of course, complicated matters. No resolution to the problems they pose, easy or otherwise, is likely to be found by accounting for Conceptual Art, and it would be an understatement to say that there is no consensus among epistemologists or philosophers of mind where such things are concerned. Nevertheless, Burn suggests important and cautious provisos that are worth bearing in mind.

In making these criticisms, Burn also kept open the question of how Art & Language and, by extension, Conceptual Art are best understood and thus partook, along with Smith himself, in a revisionist movement that arose immediately antecedent to the earliest retrospectives of Conceptual Art.[56] Following the consensus-building efforts of these exhibitions, many other voices posed claims about the movement's historical significance by revising, rejecting, or displacing the positions about it

staked out by their curators and catalog essayists. This launched the first of what became several waves of revisionism in the 1990s and 2000s focused on a diverse range of topics.[57] Two in particular have unsettled some basic assumptions about Conceptual Art that have affected the way Art & Language and, with it, Smith's work on Conceptual Art get valued. A growing interest in conceptual artists' uses of photography has disproven the idea that Conceptual Art is necessarily hostile to the visual.[58] Similarly, an interest in what is sometimes called "romantic conceptualism" has drawn attention to emotional and affective elements in art that is usually taken to be cerebral and calculating.[59] In both cases, Art & Language proved to be beyond the pale of interest. This compounded reservations about its approach voiced earlier amid Conceptual Art's initial wave of retrospective attention. Buchloh, for instance, had lambasted what he perceived as Art & Language's "authoritarian quests for orthodoxy."[60] Even Harrison, himself a participant in Art & Language and a longtime editor of its journal *Art-Language*, lamented that "Art & Language could identify no *actual* alternative public which was not composed of the participants in its own projects and deliberations."[61]

Eventually, however, this retrospection and revisionism would begin to revise and rehabilitate Art & Language. Ten years after Buchloh's and Harrison's criticisms, "A Conversation about Conceptual Art, Subjectivity and the *Post-Partum Document*" first appeared alongside a number of other texts by or about Art & Language and its former members in Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson's influential anthology *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, which strongly reasserts the collective's value for understanding Conceptual Art. The conversation between Smith and Kelly took place in Chicago while Smith was both a visiting professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Chicago and the director of the Public Spheres and the Globalization of Media program, housed within the university's Humanities Institute (now the Franke Institute for the Humanities) and directed by the cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai at the time. It was in the latter capacity that Smith made plans to invite a number of key figures in the Conceptual Art movement, including Kelly, Kosuth, Allan Sekula, and Hans Haacke, to come to Chicago for discussions about their work and its ties to Conceptual Art. Only the Kelly discussion, which occurred over two days, has appeared in print to date.[62]

Ostensibly about Kelly's landmark work *Post-Partum Document*, an installation that documents her son's acquisition of language and that

Exhibition view, Mary Kelly. Post-Partum Document. The Complete Work (1973–79), *Generali Foundation, Vienna, 1998, showing* Documentation VI: Pre-Writing Alphabet, Exergue and Diary / Experimentum Mentis VI: (On the Insistence of the Letter), *1978–79. © Generali Foundation Collection. Photo: Werner Kaligofsky.*

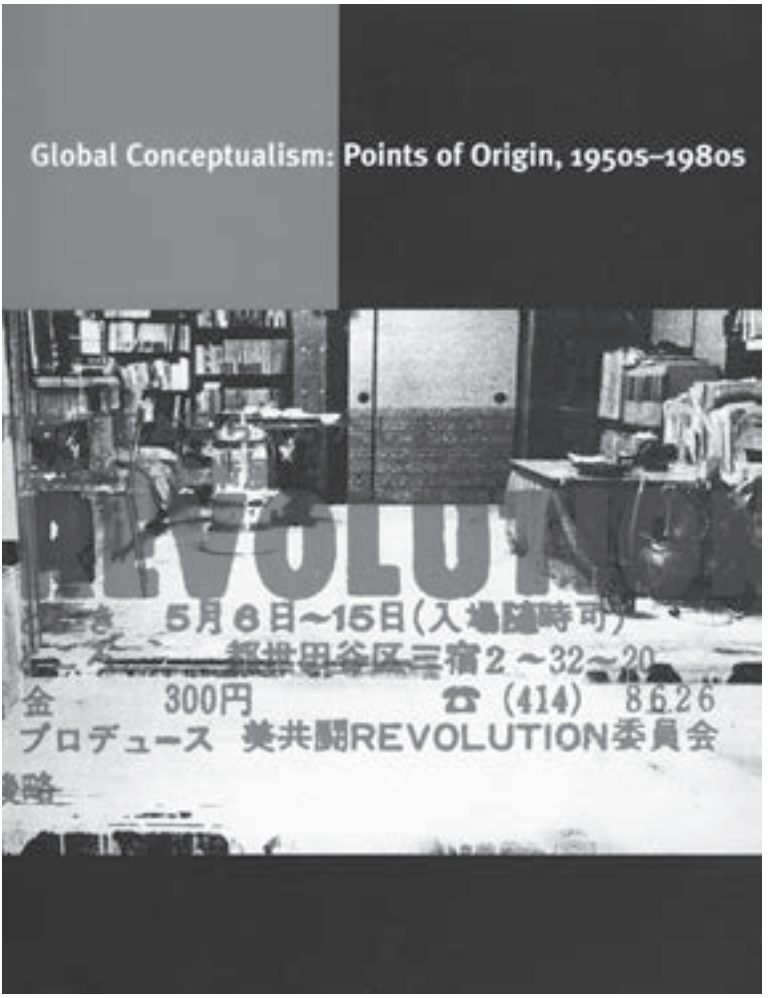
incorporates psychoanalytic and feminist themes into Conceptual Art, the first part of the discussion between Smith and Kelly ranges widely over topics including subjectivity, gender, power, politics, and their intersections with one another in Conceptual Art, further extrapolating the social, economic, and political contextualization of Conceptual Art begun in earnest by Buchloh.[63] Echoing "Art and Art and Language," Smith speaks about the earlier "propositional" practices of Art & Language, and he focuses on how the group's practice came to center on and develop "work on the concept of art."[64] For Art & Language, what had begun as analytic work became "synthetic" when it turned, around 1974 or 1975, toward "subjects and experiences which were much broader than art and its languages."[65] Indeed, Art & Language began collaborating with a number of far left activist collectives then assembling in New York to confront sexism and racism in the art world and in society more

generally, including Artists Meeting for Cultural Change and the Congress of Afrikan Peoples. Furthermore, Smith, having returned to Australia in 1975, had organized the Art & Language exhibitions both there and in New Zealand that he discusses in "The Tasks of Translation."[66] All of this work paralleled Kelly's own developing political interests, which were much wider in scope than those usually held within the Western Conceptual Art movement. Anticipating his subsequent work on conceptualism, Smith notes that art's turn toward the political occurred "all over the world . . . sometimes earlier, sometimes later."[67]

Throughout the conversation, Kelly's voice and *Post-Partum Document* provide a counterpoint to Smith's thinking about Art & Language's work as it moved from an intensely propositional and analytic practice toward a more broadly social and political endeavor. The conversation reiterates Smith's commitment to the idea, which he first broached in "Art and Art and Language," that the history of Conceptual Art involves phases or stages of development in which its conceptuality gets reconfigured. Both Kelly and Smith are in agreement that Conceptual Art includes within it a moment in which art took an important turn toward theoretically sophisticated politics, but she points to certain limitations in Art & Language's inadequate engagement with individual subjectivity, which she claims to emerge from its aversion to integrating psychoanalytic thinking about the personal with its Marxist outlook toward the social, something Kelly made a key part of her own work. Indeed, it was a psychoanalytic, specifically Lacanian, understanding of language's role in subject formation, coupled with a feminist interest in motherhood and women's labor, that motivated Kelly to produce *Post-Partum Document*, and Kelly and Smith discuss that work in part by comparing it to Art & Language's well-known *Index 01* of 1972. The latter work is the culminating statement of Art & Language's initial "propositional" period, and as such it provided Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* with a model to which it reacted by opening the intensity and meticulousness of conceptual investigation in art onto more political concerns, as Art & Language was itself doing around the same time.

FROM CONCEPTUALISM TO CONTEMPORARY ART

The most consequential pivot in the revision of Conceptual Art's history following the initial wave of retrospectives in the late 1980s and revisionism of the 1990s has gradually proven to be a curatorial effort led by Luis Camnitzer, Jane Farver, and Rachel Weiss, who organized the



Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s–1980s.
Catalog cover of exhibition at Queens Museum of Art, New York, 1999.
Courtesy of the Queens Museum Archives.

Global Conceptualism exhibition in 1999 that inaugurated a large-scale reconceptualization of what is at stake historically in art's turn to the conceptual. The exhibition involved curators from around the world, who together asserted a many-voiced claim that the Conceptual Art movement that Lippard, LeWitt, Kosuth, Buchloh, Harrison, and others discussed was perhaps but one component of a much more widely adopted tendency in postwar art called conceptualism. Ten years after the end of the Cold War and a subsequent rearrangement of world affairs, the consolidation of globalized art institutions such as biennial exhibitions, franchised museums, and international markets—themselves part of globalization's broader cultural, social, and economic impact—would seem to have necessitated a search for the origins of an art capable of contesting these institutions and historical forces at the global scale of their new reign. Conceptualism came together for these curators as an artistic tendency that itself arose globally at, as they proposed, distinct "points of origin," from which it contested local forms of these newly emergent modes of world power.

To recover the unity of this dispersed art, *Global Conceptualism*'s organizers demarcated a hard and fast difference between the by-then familiar Western Conceptual Art movement and a globally emergent conceptualism in their foreword to the exhibition catalog:

> It is important to delineate a clear distinction between *conceptual art* as a term used to denote an essentially formalist practice developed in the wake of minimalism, and *conceptualism*, which broke decisively from the historical dependence of art on physical form and its visual apperception. Conceptualism was a broader attitudinal expression that summarized a wide array of works and practices which, in radically reducing the role of the art object, reimagined the possibilities of art vis-à-vis the social, political, and economic realities within which it was being made.[68]

This is a blatant promotion of conceptualism at the expense of Conceptual Art, one that depends on characterizing it as "essentially formalist"—a reductive falsification, as Mary Kelly's work, for instance, demonstrates beyond any doubt. Nevertheless, *Global Conceptualism* has, over time, encouraged a wave of studies focused on conceptualisms from around the world, each situated relative to pertinent local histories, which in

turn reopened Conceptual Art to new kinds of revisionist inquiry attendant to its own geopolitics as well as its identity politics.[69] Now increasingly seen as a landmark exhibition and a turning point in thinking about Conceptual Art and conceptualism, initially *Global Conceptualism* received mixed reviews owing to its massiveness and exhaustive scope. Ken Johnson, writing for the *New York Times*, called *Global Conceptualism* "ambitious and groundbreaking" but also "tedious and confusing" because there was "no continuous narrative movement through the show."[70] Frazer Ward, for *Frieze*, concluded that the exhibition "overreached itself" but "was nonetheless compelling" even if the conceptualism on offer became "too baggy, temporally distended and leaky a category."[71]

Notably, both of these critics lamented the absence of a comprehensive understanding of conceptualism in *Global Conceptualism*. Indeed, this has been slow in coming, despite a scholarly literature on individual conceptualisms that is growing steadily.[72] Though Smith dealt entirely with art from Australia and New Zealand for *Global Conceptualism*, his take on conceptualism, particularly as he expounded it in the exhibition catalog, began a process of advancing, on the basis of his earlier work on Conceptual Art, a general theory of conceptualism of the sort that Johnson and Ward found wanting. "Peripheries in Motion" (also published, in a slightly different and longer version as "Conceptual Art in Transit" in the second volume of Smith's collected essays in *Transformations in Australian Art*) was Smith's contribution to the *Global Conceptualism* catalog.[73] It looks back on the histories of Conceptual Art and conceptualism in Australia and New Zealand (as well as art made by Australians and New Zealanders—himself one of them—living abroad) to propose the salience of travel and, again, translation to that art. Breaking somewhat with the exhibition's stated aim of identifying distinctive "points of origin" for conceptualisms around the world as well as with its proposal of a sharp difference between Conceptual Art and conceptualism, Smith shows how Australians, including Ian Burn, together with New Zealanders such as Billy Apple, shaped the development of Conceptual Art and conceptualism with international practices that drew on their personal movement from place to place, ranging from Sydney and Auckland to New York and London.

Smith's essay centers on accounting historically for "a conceptual questioning of the nature of art" enacted by artists caught up in this matrix.[74] As in his earlier writing on the subject of Conceptual Art, "conceptions of what it is to be an artist" figure prominently, in this case

those of a "Romantic, self-expressive" cast, which Smith identifies as prevalent in Australian and New Zealander art from colonization in the late eighteenth century right up to the advent of conceptual and conceptualist approaches in the 1960s.[75] He positions conceptualism within the broader context of colonial and postcolonial history as an art that traveled through empires or former empires and made considerable use of communications media that connected centers and peripheries within them. The exposure to other ways of thinking about art that this afforded, he argues, enabled artists to develop new conceptions of themselves, the activities in which they were partaking, and the results of those activities. Thus, Australians and New Zealanders could shed earlier Romantic commitments in favor of new conceptual ones, and the double consciousness that artists such as Burn and Apple developed as a result of doing so in the spaces between their home countries and their chosen places of expatriation enabled their own distinctive "conceptual work on the concept of art."[76]

In this essay, Smith also proposes a series of chronological stages through which art becomes conceptual that complements the explanatory power of colonialism's spatial logics with a temporal counterpart. These stages, three in number, require first that a culture of radical, experimental, and innovative art—an "avant-garde"—capable of challenging conceptions of art and artist prevail, though it need not be recognizably Conceptual Art.[77] Second, and most crucial for the development of a conceptualism, such a culture had to produce "objects—artworks—that threw perception into doubt" in order to interrogate vision and broach the domain of the conceptual.[78] Finally, subsequent artists had to seize upon this doubt and produce "strategic objects or events" that harnessed the possibility for new modes of perception to change social relations.[79] Smith gives over the majority of his essay to categorizing and examining how these three stages occurred within the local contexts of Australia and New Zealand as well as their consequences for post-conceptual contemporary artists in those countries who subsequently took up the challenges that conceptualism posed.

This three-part account of Conceptual Art's emergence, development, and impact, tied to the importance of questioning conception and perception, carries over into Smith's fullest account of conceptualism to date, the essay "One and Three Ideas," in which the conceptual, political, and geographical concerns of his earlier writings all come together to provide an account of contemporary art's origins. This latest shift in Smith's thinking occurred amid widespread and growing interest in

assessing the relationship between conceptualism, still so evidently influential on practicing artists, and contemporary art.[80] Groys's symposium, at which Smith presented the final version of this text, was largely devoted to Moscow Conceptualism, at the time undergoing a resurgence of interest from curators and historians as one of the more prominent conceptualisms to receive scholarly attention in the wake of *Global Conceptualism*. However, the symposium's original title (not retained in its proceedings), "Revisiting Conceptual Art: The Russian Case in an International Context," makes clear that, regardless of the fact that Moscow was isolated in certain respects from other conceptualisms and, therefore, possessed of its own conceptualist "point of origin," scholarship need not restrict discussion of Moscow Conceptualism to the context of the Soviet Union in the 1970s.[81] Indeed, Smith's essay makes significant headway toward a reassessment of the art-historical significance of Moscow Conceptualism by situating conceptualism in general relative to the emergence of contemporaneity as a core value for contemporary art, which he takes to be both global and post-conceptualist in character. The discursive shift proposed here is not only to stop thinking of conceptualism solely in terms of its rejection of a preceding modern (whether modernist, Romantic, or socialist realist) art and its encounters with evolving (capitalist, socialist, or postcolonial) social conditions, but also to insist on conceptualism's salience for the contemporary art that was to come after it. If the entire conceptualist episode, with all its reconceptualization, had one lasting effect, it is, according to Smith, this: to have replaced the modern conception of art, whereby a monolithic historical trajectory locates all art as either fully modern, lagging, or irrelevant, with a contemporary conception of art, according to which there is no one singular trajectory but a plurality of asymmetrical, overlapping, intersecting, or parallel trajectories that each exist contemporaneously with one another and all cohere as a whole by virtue of this contemporaneity.

Support for Smith's idea that conceptualism is intrinsic to the emergence of contemporary art's contemporaneity can be found in Groys's earliest use of the term "conceptualism" to identify something distinct from "Conceptual Art" in his 1979 essay "Moscow Romantic Conceptualism."[82] Against the idea that "'conceptualism' may be understood in the narrower sense as designating a specific artistic movement clearly limited to place, time and origin," Groys defined it "more broadly" as "any attempt to withdraw from the production of artworks as material objects intended for contemplation and aesthetic evaluation and,

instead, to thematicize and shape the conditions that determine the viewers' perception of the work of art, the process of its inception by the artist, its positioning in a certain context, and its historical status."[83] This definition has much in common with Smith's own claims from 1974 about Art & Language wanting to break from its Conceptual Art origins in favor of more open conceptions of art, despite the fact that conceptualism in Moscow had limited familiarity with the Conceptual Art in which Smith had participated in New York and elsewhere. Indeed, Groys's formulation contains the same three elements as Smith's definition: a questioning of norms for perceiving art, an effort to make a theme of those norms, and an attempt to actively transform the broader contexts in which they appear as normative.

That independent theories of conceptualism have found themselves staking similar claims is hardly coincidental. Indeed, this confirms the fact that conceptualism, despite its diverse local manifestations, possesses a broader character, and Smith's participation in Groys's symposium provided an opportunity to test precisely this idea.[84] Without dismissing the importance of local configurations of conceptualism, Smith advances an ambitious account of, as his title suggests, conceptualism before, during, and after Conceptual Art that approaches "'a theory of conceptualism.'"[85] The essay draws heavily on his previous three-stage account of art's relation to concepts in the context of Australia and New Zealand by arguing that there "were at least one, usually two, and sometimes three conceptions of conceptualism in play at each moment—and that these were in play, differently although connectedly, in various places, at each of these times."[86] The first—"before" Conceptual Art—corresponds to the "avant-garde" art of the earlier formulation:

> 1. At its various beginnings, conceptualism was a set of practices for interrogating what it was for perceiving subjects and perceived objects to be in the world (that is, it was an inquiry into the minimal situations in which art might be possible).[87]

The second—"during"—parallels his recognition, first made in 1974 and reiterated in 1995 and 1999, of a more radicalized and extreme kind of art such as that of Art & Language or certain work by Kosuth:

> 2. That, as well as being a set of practices for interrogating what it was for perceiving subjects and perceived

> objects to be in the world (that is, it was an inquiry into the minimal situations in which art might be possible), conceptualism was also a further integrated set of practices for interrogating the conditions under which the first interrogation becomes possible and necessary (that is, an inquiry into the maximal conditions for art to be thought).[88]

And the third—"after"—concerns art that investigates the societal contexts in which such practices are ongoing, echoing the political thrust of his earlier third stage:

> 3. The conditions—social, languaged, cultural, and political—of practices (1) and (2) were problematized, as was communicative exchange as such (that is, inquiry became an active engagement in the pragmatic conditions that might generate a defeasible sociality).[89]

These three ways of being conceptualist—one that, historically, precedes and results in Conceptual Art; one that embodies it at its most extreme; and one that suggests a direction forward for art in its wake—generalize the historical circumstances that Smith tracked in "Peripheries in Motion" to propose a broad theory of conceptualism untethered to the specificities of any single local history and centrally preoccupied with conception and reconceiving art and its role in the world. In each of their instantiations, the three propositions can manifest individually, in one of three possible pairs, or all at once—and not necessarily in the order that they did in the Conceptual Art of the 1960s and 1970s. The essay's title, a riff on Kosuth's *One and Three Chairs* and other similarly titled works of his from the 1960s, signifies that conceptualism is simultaneously one thing and three things—or three things that all realize the same process through diverse means and at different intensities: to reconceive what art is and does.

Smith then applies these ideas to the case of Moscow Conceptualism and concludes that (1) and (3) apply to art such as Ilya Kabakov's, which thwarts perceptual expectations and confronts the social conditions of Soviet life at the time, while (2) does not, owing to "a sense that adopting its modes would be irrelevant to local concerns and to local audiences."[90] The Soviet Union did not have an Art & Language

Ilya Kabakov, I Tell Him 'If You Want to Live with Me, Behave Yourself . . .', *1981. Oil on fiberboard, 44½ × 80¼ in. (113 × 203.6 cm). Collection Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers Norton and Nancy Dodge Collection of Nonconformist Art from the Soviet Union 1997.0596/08654. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. Photo: Jack Abraham.*

group because work like Art & Language's would not contribute to reconceiving what art could be and do in such a society. (Here, Smith's initial foray into thinking about Conceptual Art via a deep investment in Art & Language is rendered totally contingent, a measure of how much his thinking has changed since the 1970s.) The absence of (2) does not disqualify Soviet art from possessing a conceptualism, since (1) and (3) accomplished a shift away from the realist modes pervading the official Soviet art that preceded it toward the globally connected contemporary art produced by Russian and Eastern European artists since. Moscow Conceptualism, analogously to Conceptual Art in the West or comparable art in Japan, China, Africa, and so on, brought art into a new state of global contemporaneity with itself, thereby severing ties to preceding modern contexts for making art.

In the end, Smith concludes that whether or not art like Kabakov's is recognized as conceptual or conceptualist may ultimately be less relevant than whether it is recognized as contemporary:

> Given that Conceptual art was the most radical, avant-garde, innovative, and consequential-seeming art of the time and has retained much of that aura since, [artists outside North America and Western Europe] wanted to expand its definition to include themselves. On the most obvious level of simple fairness, they want to be seen to have been contemporary. This, I suggest, is actually more important to many of those involved than whether or not their art was, or may now be seen to be, conceptual.[91]

Here, conceptualism emerges as a cipher for contemporaneity, and Smith's theory of conceptualism reconceives itself as a history of contemporary art's origins. What might matter most from an art-historical standpoint (as well as for the artists who helped to make recent art history) is that the shift from late modern to contemporary art is recognized as a global one to which artists everywhere contributed and that these contributions themselves constituted the shift from a modern art dominated by European and North American modernisms to a contemporary art that comes to be through the contemporaneity of differences. Conceptualism's ultimate significance, then, in Smith's account, is its role in the shift from modern to contemporary art—this is where it effects its most widespread reconceptualization of art. The result is not a homogeneous and globally shared conception of art but rather a proliferation of different conceptions of art during the latter half of the twentieth century that, because of their conceptualist interest in conception, mutually recognize one another even as they differ. Art came to be contemporary, according to Smith's claim, because artists everywhere began to partake of a worldwide effort to rethink art. Such an effort was, of course, distinctive in each locality, but in its most basic ambition, it was the same: to find new conceptions of art.

A CONCEPTUALIST THEORY OF CONTEMPORARY ART

In its culminating articulation, Smith's theory of conceptualism frames its object as decisive for the historical transition from modern to contemporary art. In so doing, it emerges as a theory of contemporary art's origins. From the list of readily available and widely held accounts of this decisive phenomenon in late twentieth-century art, those such as Smith's that locate conceptualism as both a point of no return for modern art and a point of departure for contemporary art possess certain

advantages in that they are able to explain three things that such a theory ought to be able to explain in an interrelated way: first, what conditions modern art, contemporary art's historical predecessor, supplied for its emergence; second, how a worldwide transition from modern to contemporary art occurred; and, finally, what distinguishing features contemporary art possesses that modern art did not (and indeed could not). All of the other leading accounts of this transition struggle to integrate fully one or more of these points. Those positing an "anything-goes" post-historicity as the dominant framework for understanding contemporary art usually disregard the specificities of a distinctly contemporary art by advocating for a blanket pluralism that results from modernist imperatives, which, they theorize at length, had exhausted their historical purpose.[92] Inversely, accounts of contemporary art as the art of a post-1989 global culture tend to overemphasize its engagement with new historical developments while saying less about how it emerged out of modern predecessors with which it has come to differ.[93] Those accounts that insist on theorizing with equal robustness both sides of a divide between the modern and the contemporary usually posit a shift from modernism to postmodernism or from avant-gardes to neo-avant-gardes that is insufficiently global in scope.[94] Smith's theory differs from these for its ability to address the entirety of the transition from modern to contemporary art. Rather than figure conceptualism as a component of this shift, as other theories, where they speak of it, tend to do, Smith theorizes the transition from modern to contemporary art as an act of reconceiving. First, modern art consolidates monolithic and competing conceptions of art such as modernism and socialist realism that generate internal opposition in the form of avant-gardes and other kinds of unofficial culture. This tension drives a number of searches for new conceptions of art, and, finally, the realization of those new conceptions results in a condition of artistic contemporaneity that is incompatible with the universalizing aims of modern art.

This reconceptualization has certain consequences for the relationship between art and historiographical accounting for art. Smith's theory of conceptualism not only accounts for conceptualism theoretically; it also theorizes in a conceptualist manner, and this breaks down the usually clear distinction between art and writing about art. In its final form, the theory is the product of a repeatedly reconceived conception of what conceptualism is that has, over time, partaken of the major twists and turns in the histories and historiographies of both Conceptual Art and conceptualism. Ultimately, it reconceives itself as a theory

of contemporary art's origins and reconceives those very origins by refusing to align with other conceptions of them. That process began in 1974 when "Art and Art and Language" challenged the emerging consensus about Conceptual Art by asserting that the concept of conception could sustain further conceptual investigations into the concept of art. "The Tasks of Translation" returned to Conceptual Art during a moment of retrospective attention to propose further that Conceptual Art was not merely interested in conception but in reconceiving conceptions. "A Conversation on Conceptual Art, Subjectivity and the *Post-Partum Document*" uncovered the political stakes in such an endeavor amid a wider effort to revise understanding of Conceptual Art where its politics are concerned. Similarly, "Peripheries in Motion" identifies Conceptual Art's geographical stakes within a newly recognized and vast conceptualism in the art of the world after midcentury. And, finally, "One and Three Ideas" pulls all of this together to stake a powerful claim about the salience of conceptualism for contemporary art at a time when its ongoing relevance continues to be up for grabs. That the theory has persisted through each of these major changes in how Conceptual Art and conceptualism have been circumscribed demonstrates the ongoing relevance of its central claims for continuing efforts to understand (and thereby extend) important episodes in the recent history of art, especially an artistic tendency that has, from its beginnings, and in concert with a historiography that shares its predilections, been devoted to rethinking how art can be thought—and how thought can be art.

NOTES

1. The standard history of Art & Language remains Charles Harrison's *Essays on Art & Language* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001) and its companion volume, Charles Harrison, *Conceptual Art and Painting: Further Essays on Art & Language* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003).

2. On the New York section of the collective, see Michael Corris, "Inside a New York Art Gang: Selected Documents of Art & Language, New York" (1996), in Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, eds., *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 471–85; Christopher Gilbert, "Art & Language, New York, Discusses Its Social Relations in 'The Lumpen-Headache,'" in Michael Corris, ed., *Conceptual Art: Theory, Practice, and Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 326–41; and Chris Gilbert, "Art & Language and the Institutional Form in Anglo-American Collectivism," in Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette, eds., *Collectivism after Modernism:*

The Art of Social Imagination after 1945 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 77–93.

3. For Art & Language projects in which Smith played a substantial role, see Art & Language, *Blurting in A&L* (New York and Halifax: Art & Language Press and the Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art, 1973); Ian Burn, Mel Ramsden, and Terry Smith, "Draft for an Anti-Textbook," *Art-Language* 3, no. 1 (September 1974); and Terry Smith, ed., *Art & Language Australia* (Banbury, UK: Art & Language Press, 1976).

4. Terry Smith, "Color-Form Painting: Sydney 1967–1970," *Other Voices* 1, no. 1 (June–July 1970): 6–17.

5. For the catalog accompanying this exhibition, see Terry Smith and Tony McGillick, *The Situation Now: Object or Post-Object Art?* (Sydney: Contemporary Art Society of Australia, 1971).

6. Terry Smith, "Art and Art and Language," *Artforum* (February 1974): 49–52.

7. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 49.

8. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 49.

9. For the edition of Kuhn that Art & Language read, see Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

10. For Smith's earlier writings on provincialism, see especially Terry Smith, "The Provincialism Problem," *Artforum* (September 1974): 54–59, but also the earlier Terry Smith, "Provincialism in Art," *Quadrant* (April 1971): 67–71. Also worth reading is an essay, predating both of these texts, by Smith's colleague in Art & Language, Ian Burn, "Art Is What We Do, Culture Is What We Do to Other Artists," in *Dialogue: Writings in Art History* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1991), 131–39. On the historiography of provincialism, see Heather Barker and Charles Green, "The Provincialism Problem: Terry Smith and Center-Periphery Art History," *Journal of Art Historiography* 3 (December 2010): 1–17.

11. A number of transcripts from the discussions in Melbourne and Adelaide are collected in Smith, *Art & Language Australia*.

12. Terry Smith, "The Tasks of Translation: Art & Language in Australia & New Zealand 1975–6," in Ian Wedde and Gregory Burke, eds., *Now See Hear! Art, Language and Translation* (Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press, 1990), 253–54.

13. Mary Kelly and Terry Smith, "A Conversation about Conceptual Art, Subjectivity and the *Post-Partum Document*" (1995), in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, 450–58.

14. Kelly and Smith, "Conversation about Conceptual Art," 451.

15. Luis Camnitzer, Jane Farver, and Rachel Weiss, eds., "Foreword," in *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s–1980s* (New York: Queens Museum of Art, 1999), viii.

16. Terry Smith, "Peripheries in Motion: Conceptualism and Conceptual Art in Australia and New Zealand," in Camnitzer, Farver, and Weiss, *Global Conceptualism*, 87.

17. For Smith's work on contemporary art and contemporaneity to date, see especially Terry Smith, *What Is Contemporary Art?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Terry Smith, *Contemporary Art: World Currents* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson / Prentice Hall, 2011); and Terry Smith, *Thinking Contemporary Curating* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2012).

18. Terry Smith, "One and Three Ideas: Conceptualism Before, During, and After Conceptual Art," in Boris Groys, ed., *Moscow Symposium: Conceptualism Revisited* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2012), 42–72.

19. Smith, "One and Three Ideas," 46.

20. For ties between Conceptual Art and the radical politics of the 1960s, see Blake Stimson, "The Promise of Conceptual Art," in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, xxxviii–lii; and Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Art Workers: Radical Practice in the Vietnam War Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). For Conceptual Art's relationship to other intellectual currents in the 1960s and 1970s, see, on poststructuralism and psychoanalysis, Eve Meltzer, *Systems We Have Loved: Conceptual Art, Affect, and the Antihumanist Turn* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); on information theory, cybernetics, and computing, Edward A. Shanken, "Art in the Information Age: Technology and Conceptual Art," *Leonardo* 35, no. 4 (August 2002): 433–38; and, on systems theory, Luke Skrebowski, "All Systems Go: Recovering Hans Haacke's Systems Aesthetics," *Grey Room* 30 (August 2008): 54–83.

21. Lucy R. Lippard and John Chandler, "The Dematerialization of Art" (1968), in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, 46. Lippard's book *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object . . .* (New York: Praeger, 1973) is among the first book-length treatments of Conceptual Art, and it develops ideas first posed in the essay she wrote with Chandler while also looking back retrospectively at the fate of dematerialization.

22. Lippard and Chandler, "Dematerialization of Art," 46.

23. Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" (1967), in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, 12. (Alberro and Stimson mistakenly give "of" where LeWitt originally wrote "or.")

24. Sol LeWitt, "Sentences on Conceptual Art" (1969), in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, 107.

25. Joseph Kosuth, "Art after Philosophy" (1969), in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, 171.

26. The tautological quality of Kosuth's early writings about Conceptual Art has been much criticized. See, in particular, Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "Conceptual Art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions," *October* 55 (Winter 1990): 105–43. See also Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelaub, "Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelaub Reply to Ben-

jamin Buchloh on Conceptual Art," *October* 57 (Summer 1991): 152–57, as well as Benjamin Buchloh, "Buchloh Replies to Kosuth and Seth Siegelaub," *October* 57 (Summer 1991): 158–61.

27. Kosuth, "Art after Philosophy," 164.

28. Kosuth, "Art after Philosophy," 171. Emphasis in original.

29. Both Peter Osborne and Alexander Alberro follow Kosuth in drawing internal distinctions of kind within Conceptual Art. See Osborne's differentiation between "*inclusive* or *weak* Conceptualists" and "*exclusive* or *strong* Conceptualists" in Peter Osborne, "Conceptual Art and/as Philosophy," in Michael Newman and Jon Bird, eds., *Rewriting Conceptual Art* (London: Reaktion, 1999), 49. For Osborne on Conceptual Art more generally, see Peter Osborne, *Conceptual Art* (London: Phaidon, 2002). See also Alexander Alberro, "Reconsidering Conceptual Art, 1966–1977," in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, xvi–xxxvii, for a more finely grained set of distinctions.

30. On these exhibitions, see Alison M. Green, "*When Attitudes Become Form* and the Contest over Conceptual Art's History," in Corris, *Conceptual Art*, 123–43; Ken Allan, "Understanding *Information*," in Corris, *Conceptual Art*, 144–68; Florence Dereux, *Harald Szeemann: Individual Methodology* (Zürich: JRP | Ringier, 2007), 91–148; and Christian Rattemeyer and other authors, *Exhibiting the New Art: "Op Losse Schroeven" and "When Attitudes Become Form" 1969* (London: Afterall, 2010). For these anthologies, see Ursula Meyer, ed., *Conceptual Art* (New York: Dutton, 1972); Lippard, *Six Years*; and Gregory Battcock, ed., *Idea Art: A Critical Anthology* (New York: Dutton, 1973).

31. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 52.

32. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 49.

33. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 49.

34. In this regard, see especially Art & Language, *Comparative Models* (1972), in Art & Language, *Art & Language* (Eindhoven, Netherlands: Van Abbemuseum, 1980), 51–62.

35. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 49. Four years earlier, Terry Atkinson, also a participant in Art & Language, had similarly sought to distinguish Art & Language's "point of view" from that of other conceptual artists. See Terry Atkinson, "From an Art & Language Point of View," *Art-Language* 1, no. 2 (February 1970): 25–60.

36. Kosuth, "Art after Philosophy," 172.

37. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 50.

38. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 50.

39. See Claude Gintz, *L'art conceptuel, une perspective* (Paris: Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1989).

40. For Buchloh's formula, see Buchloh, "Conceptual Art 1962–1969," 107, which previously appeared, in an earlier version, in Gintz, *L'art conceptuel*. For Harrison's approach, see Charles Harrison, "Art Object and Art Work," in

Gintz, *L'art conceptuel*, 64. Harrison elaborates further on this idea in the second chapter of Harrison, *Essays on Art & Language*.

41. Buchloh, "Conceptual Art 1962–1969," 143. For further elaborations upon the historical contexts in which conceptual artists worked, see Alexander Alberro, *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), which considers the key role of the dealer Seth Siegelaub; and Sophie Richard, *Unconcealed: The International Network of Conceptual Artists 1967–77: Dealers, Exhibitions and Public Collections* (London: Ridinghouse, 2009), which reconstructs much of the original patronage for conceptual artists.

42. On institutional critique, see in particular John C. Welchmann, ed., *Institutional Critique and After* (Zürich: JRP | Ringier, 2006); Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, eds., *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009); and Gerald Raunig and Gene Ray, eds., *Art and Contemporary Critical Practice: Reinventing Institutional Critique* (London: MayFly, 2009). Incidentally, Mel Ramsden seems to have coined the term "institutional critique," albeit as a term of derision, writing in *The Fox* in 1975, "to dwell perennially on an institutional critique without addressing specific problems within the institutions is to generalize and sloganize." See Mel Ramsden, "On Practice," in Alberro and Stimson, *Institutional Critique*, 176. See Alexander Alberro's discussion of this in Alexander Alberro, "Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique," in Alberro and Stimson, *Institutional Critique*, 8.

43. Smith, "Tasks of Translation," 254.

44. Ian Burn, "Looking through a Piece of Glass: Some Early Conceptualist Concerns," in Wedde and Burke, *Now See Hear!*, 209.

45. Burn, "Looking through a Piece of Glass," 209.

46. For the textual portion of *Soft-Tape*, see Art & Language, *Art & Language*, 17–18.

47. Smith's essay is reproduced in this volume. On *Soft-Tape*, see also Michiel Dolk, "It's Only Art Conceptually: A Consideration of the Work of Ian Burn, 1965–1970," in *Ian Burn: Minimal-Conceptual Work* (Perth: Art Gallery of Western Australia, 1992), 17–44; and Ann Stephen, "Soft Talk/*Soft-Tape*: The Early Collaborations of Ian Burn and Mel Ramsden," in Corris, *Conceptual Art*, 80–97. Stephen is highly critical of Smith's claims about the relationship between *Soft-Tape* and his work in Art & Language, though her criticisms are not always well sourced or cited. See especially Stephen, "Soft Talk/*Soft-Tape*," 81 and 94n5.

48. Burn, "Looking through a Piece of Glass," 209.

49. Burn, "Looking through a Piece of Glass," 209.

50. Burn, "Looking through a Piece of Glass," 209.

51. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 50.

52. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 51.

53. Smith, "Art and Art and Language," 51–52.

54. Members of Art & Language were, during the early 1970s, avid readers of Paul Feyerabend's ideas about incommensurability and epistemological anarchy. See especially Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method* (London: Verso, 1975), which collects a number of earlier writings that Art & Language discussed as a group during the early 1970s. While in California during the spring of 1974, Smith took Feyerabend's graduate course on the pre-Socratic thinkers at the University of California, Berkeley, and he visited the Thomas S. Kuhn Archives housed there.

55. For an insightful account of how art might be possible in the absence of a well-formulated conception, see Richard Shiff, "Same Change," in Karen Painter and Thomas Crow, eds., *Late Thoughts: Reflections on Artists and Composers at Work* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2006), 37–53, which examines the case of the elderly Willem de Kooning, who may have suffered from Alzheimer's disease. See especially the section of Shiff's essay entitled "Studio without Concepts," in which he writes, "The hand remains; one loses the concept. But in de Kooning's view, concepts were absurd; he needed none (so he believed) and did everything to remove their influence. By his own conception of art, loss of his full capacity to conceptualize would have had little bearing on his practice" (40).

56. For a sampling of the diverse retrospective views taken by its current and former participants regarding this period in Art & Language's history, see, in addition to Charles Harrison's many writings, Art & Language, "We Aimed to Be Amateurs," *Art-Language* (new series) 2 (June 1997): 40–49; Terry Atkinson, *Indexing, the World War I Moves and the Ruins of Conceptualism* (Manchester, UK: Cornhouse, 1992); and Ian Burn, "The 'Sixties: Crisis and Aftermath (or the Memoirs of an Ex-Conceptual Artist)" (1981), in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, 392–408.

57. See, in particular, the final section of essays collected in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, 504–62, under the heading "Critical Histories of Conceptual Art," as well as anthologies of essays on Conceptual Art, including Bird and Newman, *Rewriting Conceptual Art*, and Corris, *Conceptual Art*.

58. Diarmuid Costello and Margaret Iversen, eds., *Photography after Conceptual Art* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), provides a number of perspectives on photography. John Roberts, ed., *The Impossible Document: Photography and Conceptual Art in Britain 1966–1976* (London: Camerawork, 1997), and Matthew S. Witkovsky, ed., *Light Years: Conceptual Art and the Photograph, 1964–1977* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 2012), include additional perspectives.

59. On romantic conceptualism, see Ellen Seifermann and Jörg Heiser, *Romantischer Konzeptualismus/Romantic Conceptualism* (Bielefeld, Germany: Kerber Verlag, 2007), and Peter Eleey, *The Quick and the Dead* (Minneapolis, MN: Walker Art Center, 2009). Boris Groys effectively coined the term in Boris Groys, "Moscow Romantic Conceptualism," in *History Becomes Form:*

Moscow Conceptualism (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), 35–56. For a more philosophical understanding of romanticism, see Peter Osborne, "An Image of Romanticism: Fragment and Project in Friedrich Schlegel's *Athenaeum Fragments* and Sol LeWitt's *Sentences on Conceptual Art*," in *Sol LeWitt's Sentences on Conceptual Art: Manuscript and Draft Materials 1968–69* (Oslo: Office for Contemporary Art Norway, 2009), 5–27.

60. Buchloh, "Conceptual Art 1962–1969," 107.

61. Harrison, "Art Object and Artwork," 63.

62. Another part of the discussion, which covers Kelly's 1992 work *Gloria Patri*, appears in Mary Kelly and Terry Smith, "*Gloria Patri*: A Conversation about Power, Sexuality and War," in Terry Smith, ed., *In Visible Touch: Modernism and Masculinity* (Sydney and Chicago: Power Institute and University of Chicago Press, 1997), 233–51.

63. On *Post-Partum Document*, see Mary Kelly, *Post-Partum Document* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

64. Kelly and Smith, "Conversation about Conceptual Art," 450, 451.

65. Kelly and Smith, "Conversation about Conceptual Art," 451.

66. On Art & Language's political collaborations, see Corris, "Inside a New York Art Gang."

67. Kelly and Smith, "Conversation about Conceptual Art," 452.

68. Camnitzer, Farver, and Weiss, "Foreword," viii.

69. On Conceptual Art's geographies, see Christophe Cherix, *In and Out of Amsterdam: Travels in Conceptual Art, 1960–1976* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), which examines the vital role Amsterdam played in Conceptual Art circles, largely for artists from outside the city; and Richard, *Unconcealed*, which shows how a cosmopolitan web of participants wove together a fabric that helped institutionalize Conceptual Art by connecting it to the art market. On Conceptual Art and identity politics, particularly concerning gender and race, see Jayne Wark, "Conceptual Art and Feminism: Martha Rosler, Adrian Piper, Eleanor Antin, and Martha Wilson," *Women's Art Journal* 22, no. 1 (Spring–Summer 2001), 44–50; Valerie Cassel Oliver, ed., *Double Consciousness: Black Conceptual Art since 1970* (Houston, TX: Contemporary Arts Museum, 2006); Kobena Mercer, "Adrian Piper, 1970–1975: Exiled on Main Street," and Amna Malik, "Conceptualising 'Black' British Art through the Lens of Exile," in Kobena Mercer, ed., *Exiles, Diasporas, and Strangers* (Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press and InIVA, 2008), 146–65, 166–89; John P. Bowles, *Adrian Piper: Race, Gender, and Embodiment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011); and Cornelia Butler and other authors, *From Conceptualism to Feminism: Lucy Lippard's Numbers Shows 1969–74* (London: Afterall, 2012).

70. Ken Johnson, "Conceptual but Verbal, Very Verbal," *New York Times*, May 7, 1999, 36.

71. Frazer Ward, "Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s–1980s,"

Frieze 48 (September–October 1999), http://www.frieze.com/issue/review/global_conceptualism_points_of_origin_1950s_1980s/.

72. A few highlights from the literatures on conceptualisms include Luis Camnitzer, *Conceptualism in Latin American Art: Didactics of Liberation* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007); Salah M. Hassan and Olu Oguibe, eds., *Authentic/Ex-Centric: Conceptualism in Contemporary African Art* (Ithaca, NY: Forum for African Arts, 2001); Miško Šuvaković, "Conceptual Art," in Dubravka Djurić and Miško Šuvaković, eds., *Impossible Histories: Historical Avant-Gardes, Neo-Avant-Gardes, and Post-Avant-Gardes in Yugoslavia, 1918–1991* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 210–45; and Groys, *History Becomes Form*.

73. For the longer version of the essay, see Terry Smith, "Conceptual Art in Transit," in *Transformations in Australian Art*, vol. 2: *The Twentieth Century—Modernism and Aboriginality* (Sydney: Craftsman House, 2002), 122–43.

74. Smith, "Peripheries in Motion," 87.

75. Smith, "Peripheries in Motion," 87.

76. Smith, "Peripheries in Motion," 88.

77. Smith, "Peripheries in Motion," 88. For Smith on the need for an avant-garde in Australia, see Terry Smith, "Propositions" (1971), in Alberro and Stimson, *Conceptual Art*, 258–61.

78. Smith, "Peripheries in Motion," 88.

79. Smith, "Peripheries in Motion," 89.

80. Peter Osborne's *Anywhere or Not at All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art* (London: Verso, 2013) includes a claim to the effect that "contemporary art *is* post-conceptual art" (19). For the origins of this claim in the idea that Conceptual Art is a "vanishing mediator" between the art that precedes and antecedes it, see Osborne, "Conceptual Art and/as Philosophy," 64–65. See also Alexander Alberro and Sabeth Buchmann, eds., *Art after Conceptual Art* (Cambridge, MA, and Vienna: MIT Press and Generali Foundation, 2006), and Camiel Van Winkel, *During the Exhibition the Gallery Will Be Closed: Contemporary Art and the Paradoxes of Conceptualism* (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2012).

81. On Moscow Conceptualism, see, in addition to the proceedings of Groys's symposium and Groys, *History Becomes Form*, Matthew Jesse Jackson, *The Experimental Group: Ilya Kabakov, Moscow Conceptualism, Soviet Avant-Garde* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), and Alla Rosenfeld, ed., *Moscow Conceptualism in Context* (New York: Prestel, 2011).

82. Of his use of the term "conceptualism," Groys has written, "It was said time and again that I had not used this term in its precise sense because the term 'conceptual art' designates primarily the practice of the group 'Art & Language' and of Joseph Kosuth—and Moscow conceptualist art production does not look like that of Kosuth. However, I myself said precisely that at the beginning of 'Moscow Romantic Conceptualism.'" See Groys, *History Becomes Form*, 7.

83. Groys, "Moscow Romantic Conceptualism," 35.

84. Smith presented earlier versions of this paper in Toronto in November 2010 and in London in March 2011. It first appeared in print in *e-flux journal* 29 (November 2011), http://www.e-flux.com/journal/one-and-three-ideas-conceptualism-before-during-and-after-conceptual-art/.

85. Smith, "One and Three Ideas," 51.

86. Smith, "One and Three Ideas," 46.

87. Smith, "One and Three Ideas," 51.

88. Smith, "One and Three Ideas," 57.

89. Smith, "One and Three Ideas," 58.

90. Smith, "One and Three Ideas," 63.

91. Smith, "One and Three Ideas," 66–67.

92. On the end of art, see Arthur Danto, *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).

93. On contemporary art as a global art, see the range of perspectives in Hans Belting and Andrea Buddensieg, eds., *The Global Contemporary and the Rise of New Art Worlds* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013).

94. For an account of a shift from modernism to postmodernism mediated by the emergence of a post-medium condition, see Rosalind Krauss, *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000). On the neo-avant-garde, see Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000); Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Formalism and Historicity: Models and Methods in Twentieth-Century Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015); and Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).