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Dada Presentism: An Essay on Art and History

Maria Stavrinaki

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Maria Stavrinaki : Dada Presentism: An Essay on Art and History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dada Presentism: An Essay on Art and History:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Dada and the PresentBy Fiction FancierA good discussion of Dada's fascination and preoccupation with the present. Most of the Dada figures she discusses are German or German language people, which is theoretically a shortcoming, but her analysis is excellent.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Chris DanowskiChallenging work, I'll read anything by her.

Dada is often celebrated for its strategies of shock and opposition, but in *Dada Presentism*, Maria Stavrinaki provides a new picture of Dada art and writings as a lucid reflection on history and the role of art within it. The original (Berlin-based) Dadaists' acute historical consciousness and their modern experience of time, she contends, anticipated the formulations of major historians such as Reinhart Koselleck and, more recently, Franco Antonicelli and Hartog. The book explores Dada temporalities and concepts of history in works of art, artistic discourse, and in the photographs of the Berlin Dada movement. These photographs—including the famous one of the First International Dada Fair—are presented not as simple, transparent documents, but as formal deployments conforming to a very concrete theory of history. This approach allows Stavrinaki to link Dada to more contemporary artistic movements and practices interested in history and the archive. At the same time, she investigates what seems to be a real oxymoron of the movement: its simultaneous claim to the ephemeral and its compulsive writing of its own history. In this way, *Dada Presentism* also interrogates the limits between history and fiction.

"A remarkable meditation on the meta-historical significance of Dada." (Maria Gough Harvard University) "Elegantly written, thorough, and unlike any other study of Dada, this essay manages to succinctly point out the uniqueness and importance of the movement. It will become a key text in twentieth-century history of art." (Rudolf Kuenzli The University of Iowa) "According to a wise old saying, 'inside every fat book there is a thin article struggling to get out'. Its truth is confirmed by this remarkable and authoritative essay" (Richard Sheppard Journal of European Studies) "Stavrinaki presents a rather lucid reflection on Dada history and the role of art within it via the Berlin-based Dadaists' acute historical consciousness and their early modern experience of time...Insofar as the deliberate obtuseness of 'the present' is the whole point of the book, I was delighted to have uncovered some germane connective material here applicable to our present, our own now." (Joseph Nechvatal Hyperallergic) "Maria Stavrinaki's lively and subtle investigation recaptures the radicalism of the Dada movement: its championing of the present and presentism at a time when Europe was in utter disarray, buffeted between regret for the past and appeals to a revolutionary future. This incisive book further serves as a useful incitement to thought, for behind the presentism of the 1920s lies that of our societies today." (Franco Antonicelli author of *Regimes of Historicity*) "With the potential to nudge Dada studies in another direction altogether, this book prizes apart the philosophical and political dimensions of time and history precisely at the moment where they come radically into question. Offering a rich perspective from which to assess not only Dada, but also other modernist enterprises, it is a brisk, revivifying breath of fresh air." (Sabine Kriebel, University College Cork) About the Author Maria Stavrinaki is Associate Professor of Art History and Theory at the Pantheon-Sorbonne University.