



Practical Aesthetics: Events, Affect and Art after 9/11 (Radical Aesthetics Radical Art Series)

Jill Bennett

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Practical Aesthetics brings a pursuit, long seen as rarefied and indulgent, out of the ivory tower and down to Ground Zero. Theoretically ambitious, fiercely original, it is a radical new account of art's foundation in the social world and of the value of aesthetics to contemporary society.

Beginning with the cultural watershed of 9/11, internationally-renowned scholar Jill Bennett explores artistic developments in relation to current events to argue that understanding aesthetics is as vital to social and political theory as it is to the arts.

Taking as its starting-point a definition of art as the critical, self-conscious manipulation of media, Bennett examines a wide range of events from the "War on Terror" to the football World Cup to elucidate how aesthetic perception works in a social field, a process that begins with the rich emotional content of the visual imagery with which we are constantly bombarded. Now more than ever, Bennett argues, understanding how what we see informs what we do is not merely an artistic endeavor but one which is fundamental to our very being.

Part of the Radical Aesthetics, Radical Art series, this book challenges the notion that art and "real life" are somehow opposed. Practical Aesthetics proposes a new way of reading contemporary artworks – and a new understanding of how fundamental art is to our social survival.

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