

Exhibition

Intersecting Memories / Exploring the Archives The Archives of Art Criticism

Institut national d'histoire de l'art (INHA), Paris, 13 May-18 July 2015



The Archives of Art Criticism were founded in 1989 by the French Section of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA), on the initiative of a number of critics and academics who were convinced of the need for such a project for researchers, professionals and the general public. The creation of the Archives, in Rennes, made it possible to

assemble an extraordinary collection of documents on art, criticism and some of the principal debates and institutions that have marked the art world since 1945, both in France and in the wider world. In April 2014, the association formerly in charge of managing the project decided to entrust it to a formally constituted research group (*Groupement d'intérêt scientifique*, or *GIS*) comprising AICA-France's international parent organisation, the National Institute of Art History (INHA) in Paris, and the University of Rennes 2. The Archives of Art Criticism have now thus been officially integrated into the collections of the INHA.

To mark this event, the INHA has commissioned Jean-Marc Poinot to curate an exhibition offering a glimpse of the wealth of documents preserved in the Archives and their diversity. Indeed, these archives, which have been assembled by the art critics themselves and by their professional interlocutors (artists, galleries, journals, art centres and other organisations devoted to contemporary art), bear witness to the world of creativity and to the cultural and artistic policies of the age.

The exhibition throws light on key moments in the history of art in the second half of the twentieth cen-

tury, such as 'Brazilian Neo-Concrete Art' and 'The Year 1964'; it revives debates surrounding subjects such as 'Supports/Surfaces' and 'The Role of Architectural Criticism'; it showcases different sensibilities and types of commitment, as in the case of Aline Dallier-Popper, Dany Bloch, Anne Tronche and Catherine Francblin, as well as the exhibition, *Soyez réalistes, demandez l'impossible* at the Galerie Jennifer Flay; and it gives some idea of the diversity of international meetings and exchanges through 'AICA and its Congresses, from 1948 to 2014' and 'The Biennale de Paris'. To this end, the exhibition presents a selection of documents from its holdings, including material from AICA, the Biennale de Paris, Dany Bloch, Aline Dallier-Popper, Marc Devade, Jennifer Flay, Don Foresta, Catherine Francblin, Roberto Pontual, Michel Ragon and Pierre Restany.

Visitors to the exhibition will discover documents revealing numerous and sometimes heated debates, as well as the day-to-day realities of art critics' work and details of their background reading and relations with individual artists. This exhibition, like the accompanying publication, testifies to the importance of preserving specialist archives such as these within the context of a programme that draws nourishment from the strong sense of solidarity between art professionals and all those with an interest in conducting some form of research into their significance.

While the exhibition focuses on the above-mentioned aspects, it nonetheless explores a number of byways suggested by the documents themselves, by various objects, by certain individuals and by the present circumstances. The different themes that have been selected resemble islands in the flow of history or stepping stones to something else. Their aim is to arouse the viewer's curiosity and whet their appetite rather than to mark out territory that has already been occupied or conquered.

Catalogue

Mémoires croisées / Dérives archivistiques

Jean-Marc Poinot (ed.)

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Exhibition Organisation :

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