

Hans Haacke



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Born in Cologne in 1936 and based in New York since 1965, Haacke's strong political, cultural and social concerns are reflected in his installations, texts and sculptures. Throughout his fifty-year career Haacke has frequently changed the presentation of his art to get his message across. Often borrowing from non-art sources such as corporate

advertising, questionnaires or scientific experimentation, Haacke is probably the most successful and best-known late twentieth-century artist to create a political art that manages to hit its mark with succinct elegance. Haacke sometimes works almost as a sleuth-like reporter, uncovering museum politics in his art. This practice has famously led on occasion to museum officials cancelling his exhibitions. For example, his 1971 one-person show at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, was cancelled in response to his proposal to present the questionable real estate dealings of several New York companies. Though he began as a painter in the late 1950s, Hans Haacke soon began to make works such as Raintower (1962) which drew on natural energies and forces. Subsequent works, for example the opinion-based MOMA-Poll (1970), encouraged active audience participation. The artist is particularly admired for his research into the art world's hidden economies and politics, as well as into repressed histories of places and people. The resulting artworks (such as his project for the Reichstag in Berlin, Der Bevolkerung [To The Population, 1999]) have often drawn immense controversy. Haacke is a unique figure in post-war art, and his work has touched on such diverse movements as Conceptual, Pop, Minimal and Land art. His integrity as well as the formal innovations of his art have proven hugely influential for many generations of contemporary artists. Haacke has presented solo exhibitions in such museums as the Tate Gallery, London (1984); the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, and tour (1986); and the Musee nationale d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1989), among others. Haacke has participated in such landmark group exhibitions as 'When Attitudes Become Form', Kunsthalle Bern, and tour (1969), and 'Information' at The Museum of Modern Art, New York (1970). He has been featured in four Documentas, Kassel (1972, 1982, 1987 and 1997), both 'Skulptur. Projekte in Munster' exhibitions (1987 and 1997), and three Venice Biennales (1976, 1978 and 1993).

作者介绍:

目录:

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