After Auschwitz: responses to the holocaust in contemporary art


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Abstract

Book synopsis: The senseless horror of the Holocaust continues to send shockwaves through history. Few would question its profound influence on post-war philosophy, morality, theological and political thinking. Yet the impact of the Holocaust on the Fine Arts, and in particular on contemporary art, has still not received the attention it deserves. This new publication accompanies a pioneering touring exhibition. It comprises a series of illustrated essays by leading experts, addressing: the art produced by victims of the Holocaust during the Holocaust; the influence of the Holocaust on artists who were not camp inmates, working during the war and in the post-war period; Holocaust memorials and their significance; and the work of a younger generation of artists, many of them non-Jews, whose relationship to the Holocaust is more oblique. Among the artists included are R. B. Kitaj, Picasso, Francis Bacon, Magdalena Abakanowicz, Christian Boltanski, Melvin Charney, Shimon Attie, Zoran Music, Susanna Pieratzki, Mick Rooney and Nancy Spero. The works selected have in common a determination not to rely on over-used visual stereotypes, nor to indulge in nostalgia, morbidity or sentimentality. Aesthetically compelling, they force us to reassess a subject all too often dismissed as overworked, and to reconsider the nature and potential of artistic activity 'after Auschwitz', as the century nears its end.

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movement in the art of the holocaust. Usually are located in places of the holocaust events so the artist needs the help of communities or nations to make the monument and always send a clear message to not forget the past and remember the victims. People taken to this camp usually were transfer to Auschwitz and killed in the gas chambers. Over 6000 cildres jewih from France were tranferred from here. Building After Auschwitz confines itself to Jewish American (and Canadian) architects and thereby to the particular socio-material conditions of the North American diaspora. Hardly any mention is made of Jewish architects in other parts of the diaspora; the large communities in Britain, France, Russia, Argentina. Nor does Israeli architecture figure, apart from what amounts to an apology in the conclusion. But couldn’t one argue that it equally represents his response to the failures of the Enlightenment project and his alienation from mainstream architectural culture? Building After Auschwitz includes two late chapters on Holocaust museums and German and American synagogues whose designs are consciously impacted by the destruction of European Jewry. Their inclusion confuses me. Main article: The Holocaust in art and literature. Theodor Adorno commented that “writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric,”[19] and the Holocaust has indeed had a profound impact on art and literature, for both Jews and non-Jews. Some of the more famous works are by Holocaust survivors or victims, such as Elie Wiesel, Primo Levi, Viktor Frankl and Anne Frank, but there is a substantial body of literature and art in many languages. Indeed, Paul Celan wrote his poem Todesfuge[20] as a direct response to Adorno’s dictum. The Holocaust has also been the subject of many films, including Oscar winners Schindler’s List, The Pia