

## ART AND THE MARKET

### Abstracts

**Dorothy Barenscott:** “Sensationalising” Mapplethorpe a Decade Later: What *Dirty Pictures* can show us about the “Culture Wars” today

In Spring 2000, the North American cable television channel Showtime aired *Dirty Pictures*, the made-for-TV docudrama film centred on the scandalous and ill-fated 1990 Robert Mapplethorpe exhibition *The Perfect Moment*. Exploring the collapsing boundaries between art, political influence, economic interests, and popular culture, the essay examines how the formal and narrative elements of the film provide something of a visual roadmap or thinking-through exercise confronting the ugly underbelly and shifting contours of North America’s “culture wars” through the 1990s, exposing the increasingly permeable borders between art and economic interests, the commercialisation and connoisseurship of subculture, and the transparent and problematic processes of defending and policing artistic autonomy.

**Liam Dee:** Creative Accountancy: the Supposed Contradiction between Art and Commodification

Any analysis of the Art market must engage with the foundational contradiction that exists between Art and commodification. From its modern inception as a concept of spontaneous, unique subjective expression Art has based its identity in diametrical opposition to the processed uniformity of the economic. Yet the continued existence of Art as a commodity defies such an analysis. Indeed this article will put forward the argument that the very ontology of Art is one of commodification. Mapping this process of reification from the State to the entertainment business, it is argued that a multi-layered commodification is still commodification.

**Julian Haladyn:** An Artist’s Perspective on Visual Arts in Canadian Television Programming

This paper questions critically the inaccessible nature of Canadian television programming from the perspective of a practising artist, focusing on the irreparable damage that this act of exclusion is causing the artistic field of Canadian culture. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu provides a theoretical framework for resisting this hegemonic control, mapping out some of the key issues actively restricting the various fields of cultural production from participating in the future development of television as

a truly public medium. Discussing the conflict that exists between commercial profitability and the right of the public to access public airwaves, the essay highlights the apparent inability of television programming to make time for representing the culture being created by Canadian artists, and explores the possibility of using television as a medium of cultural exchange and experimentation.

**Jean-Paul Martinon:** Inside Werner's World

This review essay uses Paul Werner's *Museum Inc.: Inside the Global Art Market* as the springboard for a reflection on the philosophical and political dilemmas posed by the interventions of capital in the world of art, and specifically the world of the museum. It argues against an antagonistic stance involving the deferral of the ideal, calling instead for a creative response to the present reality, even in its corporate degeneracy, as such a questioning and focus on mediality is seen as the only route to change.

**Marc Schuster:** Escaping the Third Person Singular: Art and Semiotics in Don DeLillo's *Americana*

Don DeLillo's *Americana* examines the ways in which art interrogates what semiologist Roland Barthes refers to in *The Semiotic Challenge* as "the symbolic and semantic system of our entire culture." In so doing, the novel pre-emptively answers Barthes' call for a fissuring of the meaning system upon which that culture is based. According to Jean Baudrillard, this meaning system is rooted entirely in the concept of value, which renders everything and everyone within Western culture a commodity. By exploring the ways in which art can fissure the concept of value, *Americana* presents strategies for resisting commodification.