

able to solve. He had stored his personal library at the place of Cordula Frowein, an academic assistant at the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt am Main. When she had moved, he had packed a hundred boxes with his books and was now looking for somewhere to place them. On a whim, I offered to make room for his library in our newly rented space at *Lörracher Straße*.

When the boxes arrived at the end of November, I was in the hospital (the *Loretto Krankenhaus*), for the first time down with pneumonia. Luckily, my friend Herbert Maier, whose works the foundation had just started to collect, took charge of the move and the intended set-up of the books. Gifted not only creatively but also technically, Maier was just starting to build up Metzger's library when the artist interrupted him by virtually throwing himself in front of him saying: "Young man, have you really thought this thing through?" After a while, Maier, having actually arrived with the sole purpose of seeing this thing through, realized that Metzger was entirely serious about not unpacking the boxes. He kept the contents of each box ready in his mind, Metzger assured, proving his statement by reciting all titles contained in one of the boxes packed according to their order in the erstwhile bookshelves. Thus, the boxes remained unopened in the foundation's basement for years.

In addition to the brochures and news paper clippings to be found in the boxes, Metzger also left some memorable every-day pottery and an abstract oil painting behind. This seemed important to him despite the fact that he had highlighted his actionist works in our conversations. On several occasions, this had even gotten him into conflict with the police and led to considerable fines.

When I came back from the hospital shortly before Christmas (without having been back ever since), Metzger was gone; he had lodged at the inn "Zur Tanne" in Opfingen for a very good price, but now he had virtually vanished and would stay so for years.

17 years later, in the year 2006, Herbert Maier and I used the opportunity to meet Metzger again during his exhibition at the *Kunsthalle Basel*. By now, another six years have passed since our talks at the opening dinner in Basel, which lasted well into the night.

Gustav Metzger

Artists engaged in political struggle act in two key areas: the use of their art for direct social change; and actions to change the structures of the art world. It needs to be understood that this activity is necessarily of a reformist, rather than revolutionary, character. Indeed this political activity often serves to consolidate the existing order, in the West, as well as in the East.

The use of art for social change is bedevilled by the close integration of art and society. The state supports art, it needs art as a cosmetic cloak to its horrifying reality, and uses art to confuse, divert and entertain large numbers of people. Even when deployed against the interests of the state, art cannot cut loose from the umbilical cord of the state. Art in the service of revolution is unsatisfactory and mistrusted because of the numerous links of art with the state and capitalism. Despite these problems, artists will go on using art to change society.

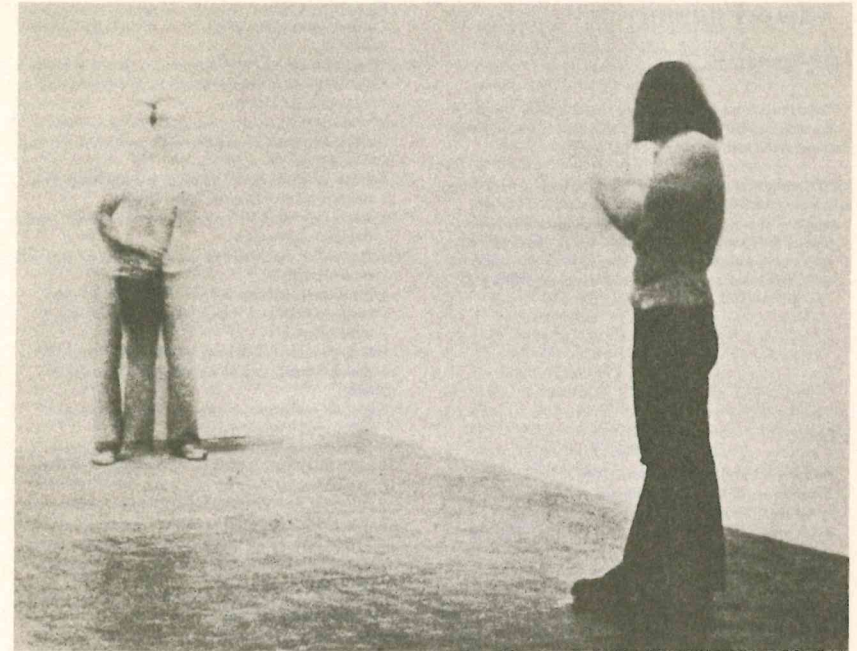
Throughout the century, artists have attacked the prevailing methods of production, distribution and consumption of art. These attacks on the organisation of the art world have gained momentum in recent years. This struggle, aimed at the destruction of existing commercial and public marketing and patronage systems, can be brought to a successful conclusion in the course of the present decade.

The refusal to labour is the chief weapon of workers fighting the system; artists can use the same weapon. To bring down the art system it is necessary to call for years without art, a period of three years – 1977 to 1980 – when artists will not produce work, sell work, permit work to go on exhibition, and refuse collaboration with any part of the publicity machinery of the art world. This total withdrawal of labour is the most extreme collective challenge that artists can make to the state.

The years without art will see the collapse of many private galleries. Museums and cultural institutions handling contemporary art will be severely hit, suffer loss of funds, and will have to reduce their staff. National and local government institutions for the financing and administration of contemporary art will be in serious trouble. Art magazines will fold. The international ramifications of the dealer/museum/publicity complex make for vulnerability; it is a system that is keyed to a continuous juggling of artists, finance, works and information – damage one part, and the effect is felt world-wide.

Three years is the minimum period required to cripple the system, whilst a longer period of time would create difficulties for artists. The very small number of artists who live from the practice of art are sufficiently wealthy to live on their capital for three years. The vast majority of people who produce art have to subsidize this work by other means: they will, in fact, be saving money and time. Most people who practice art never sell their work at a profit, do not get the chance to exhibit their work under proper conditions, and are unmentioned by the publicity organs. Some artists may find it difficult to restrain themselves from producing art. These artists will be invited to enter camps, where the making of art works is forbidden, and where any work produced is destroyed at regular intervals.

In place of the practice of art, people can spend time on the numerous historical, aesthetic and social issues facing art. It will be necessary to construct more equitable forms for marketing, exhibiting and publicising art in the future. As the twentieth century has progressed, capitalism has smothered art – the deep surgery of the years without art will give art a new chance.



absolutely no feeling. In *Shoot* I was supposed to have a grazed wound. We didn't even have any band-aids—the power of positive thinking. It's not that I consciously decided *not* to think about what might happen . . . I had no plans of going to the hospital; I was going to get drunk or stoned afterwards.

WS: You didn't think it was dangerous?

CB: I knew it was dangerous, but I figured it would work out perfectly, the bullet would just nick the side of my arm. It didn't work out that way, but it wasn't a bad wound.

WS: So it doesn't matter much to you whether it's a nick or it goes through your arm.

CB: No. It's the idea of being shot at to be hit.

WS: Mmmmm. Why is that interesting?

CB: Well, it's something to experience. How can you know what it feels like to be shot if you don't get shot? It seems interesting enough to be worth doing it.

WS: Most people don't want to be shot.

CB: Yeah, but everybody watches it on TV every day. America is the big shoot-out country. About fifty per cent of American folklore is about people getting shot.

HOW LONG . . .

BEFORE ARTISTS CEASE TO MULTILATE THEMSELVES IN THE INTERESTS OF THE ART TRADE?

Van Gogh, *Portrait of the Artist with a Multilated Ear*. Arles Period, January, 1889.

Chris Burden, *SHOOT*, November 19, 1971, F Space, Santa Ana, California. At 7.45 pm I was shot in the left arm by a friend. The bullet was from a copper jacketed 22 long rifle. My friend was standing about 12 ft away.

The art dealer

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"What better place for a gallery than halfway between Bond Street and the city? Isn't that where art is after all? Between taste and money." (154)

"The dramatic expansion of public interest in art for both esthetic and investment reasons must affect relations between artists and dealers. Does the dealer continue as counselor moral and financial supporter, guide and friend of the artist? Will his present functions be seriously affected by the rapidly changing values in the art world?" (59)

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When is political art political?
 Why is political art political?
 When is political art not political?
 Which art is not political?
 Is the art in the Royal Academy political?
 Who is the most political artist in this political art exhibition?
 Who is the most political artist of all time?
 Was Hitler a political artist?
 Is the atom bomb political art?

If you had to choose between official German political art c. 1937, and official Russian political art of the same period, which would you prefer? And why?

Is Graham Sutherland a political artist?

Why has the political art of Disney had more effect on world history than the political art of Eisenstein?

Why is there so little political art in England?

The political art of the Weimar Republik maintains a far stronger position in the international art market than the political art of the Third Reich. Give reasons for this.

Between now and 1984, artists acting individually or in para-military units will shoot art dealers, museum officers and art critics as part of a new art direction. Draw up a detailed scenario with art-historical background, hinging on South American artists taking the lead.

At some point in time the Mona Lisa shed its political potency. When was that?

Footnote:

ah well . . . back to the drawing board.

land- and sub-based missiles, it made no mention of other strategic weapons (such as bombers) or of any halt in missile improvements. As a result, both sides have been rushing to upgrade already devastating nuclear arsenals with an array of new devices. The task for the Geneva talks, then, is to frame a pact that will slow the current pace of arms development. And the question is, how.

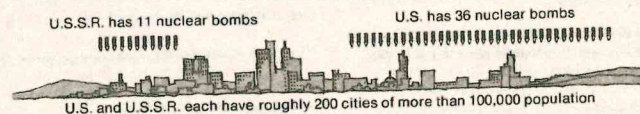
From Washington's point of view, Moscow is doing little to help things along. Under terms of the interim pact, the Soviets were allowed a numerical ad-

SALT agreement based on throw-weight—the basic measure of strategic capability—because he is convinced that the Soviets will not accept it," one Schlesinger supporter complains. Kissingerians respond that the Defense Department has a vested interest in continuing the arms race. "The only explanation for Schlesinger's insistence on a comprehensive pact," says one, "is that he wants to torpedo the whole thing."

Torpedo or no, a number of arms-

One thing the Geneva talks may have going for them is the patent absurdity of an untrammelled arms race. As things now stand, the two superpowers between them can deliver 8,400 megatons of explosives by missile—420,000 times the destructive power of America's 1945 attack on Hiroshima. In more comprehensible terms, the U.S. now has 36 nuclear bombs for each Soviet city with a population of 100,000; for its part, the Russians can hit each major U.S. city with eleven H-bombs. And by any standard, that is more than enough.

FOR EACH MAJOR CITY:



Bildlegende II.

Reproduktion des Beitrags von Gustav Metzger im Ausstellungskatalog.
 „Art into Society—Society into Art.
 Seven German Artists.“
 Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA),
 Nasch House, London 30.10.–24.11.1974,
 Hrsg. ICA, Christos M. Joachimides und
 Norman Rosenthal, Layout und Design
 Hanspeter Heidrich, London 1974,
 S. 79–86.

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