

Edited by Meiqin Wang

Socially Engaged Public Art in East Asia

Space, Place, and Community in Action

SERIES IN ART

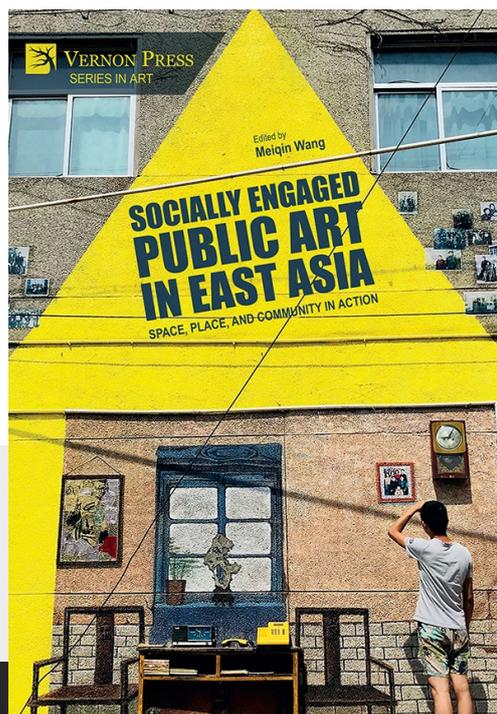
About the editor

Meiqin Wang received a doctorate degree in Art History from the State University of New York at Binghamton and currently is a professor of Art Department at California State University Northridge teaching Asian art history courses. She researches contemporary art from China in the context of commercialization, globalization, and urbanization of the Chinese world and has written on topics such as artist villages and cultural industries, art and urbanization, and socially engaged art. Her major publications include two research monographs 'Urbanization and Contemporary Chinese Art' (2015) and 'Socially Engaged Art in Contemporary China: Voices from Below' (2019), as well as a co-edited volume entitled 'Visual Arts, Representations and Interventions in Contemporary China' (2018).

Summary

This anthology elucidates the historical, global, and regional connections, as well as current manifestations, of socially engaged public art (SEPA) in East Asia. It covers case studies and theoretical inquiries on artistic practices from Hong Kong, Japan, mainland China, South Korea, and Taiwan with a focus on the period since the 2000s. It examines how public art has been employed by artists, curators, ordinary citizens, and grassroots organizations in the region to raise awareness of prevailing social problems, foster collaborations among people of varying backgrounds, establish alternative value systems and social relations, and stimulate action to advance changes in real life situations. It argues that through the endeavors of critically-minded art professionals, public art has become activism as it ventures into an expanded field of transdisciplinary practices, a site of new possibilities where disparate domains such as aesthetics, sustainability, placemaking, social justice, and politics interact and where people work together to activate space, place, and community in a way that impacts the everyday lives of ordinary people.

As the first book-length anthology on the thriving yet disparate scenes of SEPA in East Asia, it consists of eight chapters by eight authors who have well-grounded knowledge of a specific locality or localities in East Asia. In their analyses of ideas and actions, emerging from varying geographical, sociopolitical, and cultural circumstances in the region, most authors also engage with concepts and key publications from scholars which examine artistic practices striving for social intervention and public participation in different parts of the world. Although grounded in the realities of SEPA from East Asia, this book contributes to global conversations and debates concerning the evolving relationship between public art, civic politics, and society at large.



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