Moving on and Seeing Strange. Thinking About Matter and Bodies in John Newling's Site Works


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Abstract / Summary

Opening with reference to Newling’s interest in UK lottery machines (reflected in work in the Yorkshire Sculpture Park exhibition), the essay proposes that for all the conceptual strength of Newling’s art, its meanings are ultimately inextricable from, and deeply engaged with, the processes of bodily experience of material forms in space, and that what renders this element of deep formalism so significant is the cultural and historical moment within which it is being sustained. Payne then discusses in detail three site works produced between 1995 and 2000, placing them within a context of Newling’s longstanding preoccupations and concerns. She suggests that the artist’s engagement with site/place as event is at the heart of his practice, which consistently addresses the embodied subject’s construction of meaning through negotiation of the world of material forms. Drawing in particular on the work of Edward S Casey, she concludes that Newling’s art can be characterised as an ongoing exploration of human beings’ interaction with the material environments through which their bodies move and how, moment by moment, the events of those interactions construct their understanding and experience of an endlessly proliferating array of places.

Item Type: Book Chapter

This essay draws on Payne's twenty years’ engagement with John Newling’s practice, through curation and writing. It was written in 2000 with limited, initial release as a component of a CD-Rom, John Newling: place (Future Factory Far Ahead Publications, 2000). From the outset, however, it was commissioned for widespread distribution through inclusion in a monograph to accompany Newling's Henry Moore Foundation-supported exhibition, Currency and Belief (Yorkshire Sculpture Park, 30/11/02-6/4/03 and Djanogly Art Gallery, Nottingham). Opening with reference to Newling’s interest in UK lottery machines (reflected in work in the Yorkshire Sculpture Park exhibition), the essay proposes that for all the conceptual strength of Newling’s art, its meanings are ultimately inextricable from, and deeply engaged with, the processes of bodily experience of material forms in space, and that what renders this element of deep formalism so significant is the cultural and historical moment within which it is being sustained. Payne then discusses in detail three site works produced between 1995 and 2000, placing them within a context of Newling’s longstanding preoccupations and concerns. She suggests that the artist’s engagement with site/place as event is at the heart of his practice, which consistently addresses the embodied subject’s construction of meaning through negotiation of the world of material forms. Drawing in particular on the work of Edward S Casey, she concludes that Newling’s art can be characterised as an ongoing exploration of human beings’ interaction with the material environments through which their bodies move and how, moment by moment, the events of those interactions construct their understanding and experience of an endlessly proliferating array of places.

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Then we will move on to discuss some of the most important interpretative controversies: does Aristotle believe in so-called prime matter? Does matter or form serve as the principle of individuation in his metaphysics? Do natural forms include a specification of the kind of matter that anything of that form has to have? Aristotle introduces his notions of matter and form in the first book of his Physics, his work on natural science. It is not a real body, because it is incapable of performing the functions normally associated with bodies, just as a statuette's eye, or an eye in a painting, is not a real eye, because it is made of stone or paint, and thus cannot serve the function that genuine eyes exist for; seeing (for further discussion, see the supplement to the). Yet, work is still one of the main reasons we force ourselves to rush through our daily lives. Career goals and daily workloads are key contributors to many people's stress levels. But consider this: We literally have the entire world's knowledge at our fingertips every day. Efficiently completing your next project isn't even a challenge anymore. I think IEd have to try harder to not finish a project by its deadline. Yet, we obsess over productivity advice and cannot get enough of apps and browser extensions that promise to help us get more done, faster. Think about the last time your were hurrying to or from work and saw a car broken down along the side of the road. Did you stop to help that person? Probably not. My point is that rushing kills our empathy for others. I don't think we'll see Simon before he goes to New York. (LIKELIHOOD). There's....Simon before he goes to New York. 'Do you want to go and see the new play at the Arts Centre?' Petra asked her friend. (INTERESTED). John thought it was very strange that Fred had no answered his letter. (FAILURE). John thought that...his letter was very strange. Fred's failure to answer. I think it was a mistake to lend your car to Joe.