

Title: Art criticism as a productive adjustment to tendencies towards political correctness and the reduction of nuances in critical political contemporary art

Art criticism tends to hold progressive views and tends to respond to art works containing active criticality with blind pre-approval rather than scrutinizing these art works properly with intellectual detachment, as we do with more neutral artistic articulations. There's a tendency that we do not sufficiently question how deep, well argued, aesthetically nuanced and factually based these form of art works are.

But by not conducting critical and investigational analysis into the criticism *at all times*, we fail our task as art critics that means both the artists and the audience. We may even become spokespeople for new prejudices and presumably also preachers to the converted instead of reaching out to wider constituencies, which will get enlightened at a higher level. Many political oppositional works of art subscribe to prejudices that are contraproductive to the complexity of issues regarding politics and only confirm the left-wing's fixed perceptions of a world divided into black and white, good and evil. How can art generate greater, more varied and complex critical insight into the scourges of our times? How can art solve the problems of oppression, popularism/populism or nationalism or at least build them into their mode of addressing the audience in a reflexive manner? How can art criticism on one level embrace and on another level impart criticality into the art as an intelligent team player? And how can art combine both aesthetical appeal and moral influence?

It's a fact that the democratic Western institutions founded in the postwar period are being questioned by many people today, and that we are witnessing an increasing nationalist radicalization in many societies, including Denmark where the right wing nationalist party "Dansk Folkeparti" (Danish People's Party) has 20 % of the mandates in our parliament. The artist group Superflex responded to this party's increasing power back in 2002 in their poster with the wording:

"Foreigners, please don't leave us alone with the Danes!"

In my opinion this work of art fulfills in a simple and witty, but precise way, some of the necessary qualities that one hopes for an effective political art work.



My lecture will introduce examples of international contemporary artworks produced by Danish or Danish based artists.

Lisbeth Bonde
President of AICA Denmark

Lisbeth Bonde's cv:

Lisbeth Bonde has been president of AICA Denmark since 2014. She was also elected vice president of AICA International in 2018. She has a MA in Nordic Literature and Art History from Copenhagen University, 1992.

She's been practicing art criticism since the beginning of the 1990es and has contributed to a variety of Danish broad sheet daily newspapers as art critic and art editor from 1994 onwards. Today she's contributing on a regular basis to the broadsheet daily newspaper

Kristeligt Dagblad, to the online art magazine www.kunsten.nu and to the monthly design magazine Bo Bedre.

She has published 8 books on Danish contemporary and modern art – the latest being "Feeling is Everything – Art and Life of the Painter Preben Fjederholt" (Gyldendal, 2016), and "Danish Contemporary Art in the 2010'es (Gyldendal 2017). 40 Artist Portraits" (2017). She's publishing a new coffee table book in 2019 about the Faroese conceptual artist Edward Fuglø (in three editions - English, Faroese and Danish)

She's continuously giving lectures on contemporary art and has contributed to a great number of catalogues on mainly Danish contemporary artists.