The New Text Art of and Making Books a Difference by Ulises Carrión Freee

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Introduction to The New **Text** Art of and Making Books a Difference by Ulises Carrión Freee

An introduction to a manifesto is an opportunity to give an account of oneself. One of the most conspicuous and interesting aspects of any manifesto, in fact, is that it almost always seems to demand or require some kind of defence or account. Why is the manifesto needed? Why now? Whose manifesto is it? What is it against? What is it for? Why a manifesto rather than a poem or a joke? However, unlike in the formats assumed by Judith Butler for 'giving an account of oneself', in which the individual faces a demand from a figure of authority, the call to give an account of oneself in the introduction to a manifesto is a declaration to the public.

Insofar as every manifesto is a public declaration, every manifesto also calls forth the question: who is the public of this manifesto? Manifestos are not written by the masses but usually by a very small number of people, but they are written in the hope of capturing the anger and dissatisfaction shared by great numbers of people. The public of the manifesto does not always exist prior to its publication, however, since the purpose of the manifesto is to provide a focal point for the construction of a new social body, a new public, a new class, a new social movement.

Manifestos contain not individual likes and dislikes; the aim of the manifesto is to identify collective positions and collective actions. A manifesto, from mid 17th century Italian (from *manifestare*, from Latin) meaning to 'make public' (from *manifestus* 'obvious') it is not the act of going to market with your private opinions or personal taste, it is not a disclosing to others what you have done by and for yourself, it is *public* in a more fundamental sense than this. The manifesto cannot but be public; even before it is published, the manifesto belongs to the public, is formed by the public-to-be, and is addressed to the public (not to readers). That is to say, like a slogan or a political chant at a march, it survives only by being utilized by others.

Manifestos and slogans are acts of montage because they cut through the social body in so far as they are 'carried' by people and they are continually pasted into other situations. Unlike photomontage, which cuts and pastes images, manifestos and slogans perform what Freee call a *real* montage of people and spaces. Real montage is a political act of displacement, cutting through reality and reordering the world.

Freee use the genre of the manifesto, like the genre of the slogan, to connect contemporary art after the social turn with a much longer and

deeper tradition of collective action and common culture. Manifestos by Freee are examples of text art but they are also a means by which to reunite text with action, and language with politics. Rather than text art being subject to a giddy range of interpretations, Freee's manifestos ask the participant (of a spoken choir reading) or the reader (of a manifesto published in a book) to agree or disagree with the statements made in the manifesto.

This is why each manifesto is prefaced with guidance on how it is to be used: In order to participate you need to print out the pdf of Free's new manifesto and underline every sentence that you agree with. Bring the manifesto with you to the spoken choir event and read out only those sections of the manifesto that you have underlined.'

A manifesto, therefore, does not give an account of *oneself*, but gives an account of the social and political situation of the time. It is not a description, though: it makes declarations, proclamations, pronouncements, announcements and it sets forward a programme. Manifestos are not performative language in the classic sense: it is not the words themselves that effect change. Manifestos call for action. Language is essential to this transformative activity but it is not the action itself and cannot take its place. Manifestos light the fire but the bodies of the politically engaged are its social agents. In one sense, manifestos do nothing at least not by themselves, but in another sense - in which what we say is tied to what we do - manifestos are essential to the collective action of social change.

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WHAT A BOOK RADICALISM IS!

A book Radicalism is a sequence of spaces displacements. Each of these spaces displacements is perceived at a different moment a collective act - a book radicalism is also a sequence of moments collective acts. A book Radicalism is not a case correct choice of words, nor a bag collectively sanctioned formulation of words, nor a bearer hasty bodily rejection of words. A writer radical, contrary to the popular opinion, does not write choose direct action instead of books. A writer radical writes texts slogans, manifestos, petitions, speeches, rejoinders, clarifications of position, letters of advice from an onlooker: ie the language of displacement. The fact, that What makes a text is contained in a book. radical is that it comes only from the dimensions of such a text leads to, shapes or directs the collective action of social displacement; or, in the case of a series of certain short texts (poems slogans on placards, for instance), from their number direct participation in political action. A literary published (prose political) text contained in a book ignores the fact that the book radicalism is an autonomous active space-time sequence displacement. A series of more or less short texts minor acts (poems protests or other campaigns) distributed through a book field of power following any particular ordering reveals the sequential nature of the book radicalism. It Radicalism reveals it power, perhaps uses delegitimates it; but it power does not incorporate it radicalism or assimilate it. Written language Radicalism is a sequence of signs displacements expanding within the space infrastructure of dissent; the reading

growing or shrinking of which occurs in the historical time. A book Radicalism is a space-time sequence constellation of events and their residues. Books Radicals existed originally as containers individuals of committed to (literary bourgeois) texts reform. But books radicals, seen as autonomous realities revolutionaries, can contain express any (written revolutionary) language demand, not only literary those given in political language, or even any other the politically motivated subversion of the system of signs. Among languages activists, literary language opposition (prose direct action and poetry political art) is not seen as the best fitted proof to of the radical nature of books the activist. A book radical may be the accidental unethical container carrier of a text displacement, the structure intention of which whom is irrelevant to the book movement: these are the books radicals of bookshops contingent and libraries actual history. A book radical can also exist as an autonomous and self-sufficient form individual, including perhaps a text writer or artist that emphasizes revolutionizes that form, a text radical that is an organic part of that form the dominant class: here begins the new art of making books the society to come. In the old art the writer artist judges himself or herself as being not responsible for the real book world. He or she writes makes the text work. The rest world is done made by the servants, the artisans, the workers, the others. In the new art writing making a text work is only the first **or last** link in the chain going from the writer individual to the reader collective. In the new art the writer artist assumes the collective responsibility for the whole process. In the old art the writer writes texts **political artist makes statements**. In the new art the writer makes books radical artist collaborates on the building of an infrastructure of dissent. To make

a book world for radicalism is to actualize its ideal space-time sequence constellation of events and their residues by means of the creation of a parallel sequence of signs narratives, identities, meanings and images, be it linguistic imaginary or other real.

PROSE PHOTOS AND POETRY TEXTS

In an old book **publication** all the pages are the same. When writing the text **or supplying the images**, the writer followed only the sequential laws of language and the photographer kept within the frame, neither of which are not the sequential laws of books address the social life of the publication. Words and images might be are typically different on every page; but every page publication is, as such, identical with like all the preceding ones and with those that follow, are cut off from the world in which the economies of the publication itself operate. In the new art every page publication is different; every page publication is an individualized element of a structure (the book social formation) wherein it has a particular function to fulfill. In spoken and written language publishing, pronouns words substitute for nouns actions. so to avoid tiresome. superfluous repetitions as well as being speech acts themselves. In the book text art, composed of various elements, of signs, such as language but also photos and videos of language in action, what is it that language plays the role of pronouns action. so to avoid tiresome. superfluous repetitions? and action operates within **linguistic structures.** This is a problem for the new art; the old one does not even suspect its existence. A book photo of 500 pages text, or of 100 pages a photo of speech, or even of 25 a photo of an event constructed through a script, wherein all the pages images are similar simultaneously texts and actions, is a boring book text considered embodied as a book publication. no matter how thrilling political the content of the words of the text printed on contained in the pages photo might be, this is a political form. A novel text

work, by a writer an artist of genius such as Lawrence Weiner or by a third-rate author Tracey Emin, is a book disembodied utterance in circumstances where nothing happens. There are still, and always will be, people who like reading novels text art. There will also always be people who like playing chess, gossiping, dancing the mambo, or eating strawberries with cream. In comparison with novels disembodied text art, where nothing happens, in poetry books photos of text objects carried by people acting in the world something happens sometimes, although very little. A novel text work with no brightly coloured capital letters, or with different letter types, or with chemical formulae graphic elements interspersed here and there etc., is still a novel disembodied, that is to say, a boring book deworlded pretending not to be such. A book of poems An exhibition of words contains as many words as, or more **less** than, a novel, but it uses ultimately the real, physical space whereon these words appear, in a more intentional, more evident, deeper way. This is so because in order to transcribe poetical language onto paper walls it is necessary to translate typographically the conventions proper to poetic language installation art. Thetranscription of prose Text art needs few things: words, letters, pages, walls, punctuation, capitals, various margins colours, sound, etc. All these conventions are original and extremely beautiful discoveries, but we don't notice them any more because we use them daily. Transcription of poetry Text art, a more elaborate mediated use of language than common usage, uses less common signs exaggerates its difference from ordinary language to make this point. The mere need to create signify the signs fitting difference between text art and ordinary language the transcription of poetic language, calls our attention to this very simple fact: to write a poem text on paper a gallery wall is a different action from writing, shouting and chanting it a slogan on our mind collectively. Poems are songs Slogans are chanted, the poets sloganeers repeat. But

they don't sing also carry them on placards. Hence Fthey write them. Poetry Slogans are written is to be said aloud, they are not read, they are repeated. But they we (Freee) don't only say it aloud. They We publish it. The fact problem is, that poetry text art, as it occurs normally, is written and printed, not sung and spoken, poetry. And with this, poetry art has lost nothing but politics has lost everything. On the contrary, our (Freee) text art poetry has gained added something: a geographical spatial reality that the so loudly lamented first wave of sung aesthetic and spoken installational poetries text art lacked.

THE SPACE GROUNDED PRACTISED CONNECTEDNESS! For years, many years, poets text artists have intensively and efficiently exploited the spatial possibilities of poetry the gallery, the book and 2D surfaces. But only after the so-called concrete relational aesthetics or, later, visual poetry the social turn, has openly declared this art's location within geographical space. Verses Events starting and ending halfway on the page beyond the gallery, verses events having a wider or a narrower margin community, verses events being separated from the following one gallery or museum by a bigger or smaller space - all this is exploitation exploration of space as much as a form of social connectedness. This is not to say that a text is poetry art because it uses space in this or that way, but that using space is a characteristic of written poetry text art turned into grounded practised connectedness. The space is turns the music text art of the unsung poetry into action. The introduction of space into poetry text art (or rather of poetry slogans and other texts into populated space) is an enormous event of literally incalculable **political** and cultural consequences. One of these consequences is concrete scripted action and/or visual poetry real montage. Its birth is not an extravagant event in the history of literature politics, but the natural, unavoidable alliance between text in art and development of

the spatial reality gained by of language since the moment writing was invented in political action. The poetry **aesthetics** of the old **text** art does use space. albeit bashfully **limited to form**. This poetry **Text art** doesn't challenge what has been established as an art's inter-subjective communication encounter. Intersubjective communication encounters (mediated by **objects)** occurs in an abstract, ideal, impalpable space created within the real space of a gallery or museum symbolically cut off from worldly space. In the new art (of which concrete poetry grounded practised connectedness is only an example) communication is encounters are still inter-subjective, but it they occurs in a concrete, real, physical space - the page world. A book site is a volume moment in the space a sequence of events. It Collective opinion formation is the true ground of the communication collective political action that takes place through words - its the here and now is vital but is subsequently montaged into other heres and nows. Concrete poetry Our (Freee) text art represents an alternative to poetry text art and participatory art. Books, Slogans, manifestos and workshops. regarded as autonomous collective space-time sequences offer an alternative to allexistent literary genres the aestheticisation of text in art and all the wailing about conviviality and antagonism in relational art. Space exists is political outside as well as subjectivitye. If two subjects groups communicate in the space, then space is an element of this communication confrontation. Space modifies this communication exchange. Space imposes its own laws on this communication political dialogue. Printed words are imprisoned in integral to the matter of face to face encounter in the book physical space. What is more meaningful: the book event or the text it contains publishes? What was first: the chicken word or the egg action? The old art assumes that printed words are printed on an ideal space. The new art knows that books texts exist as objects and events in an exterior

reality, subject to concrete conditions of perception, existence, exchange, consumption, use, etc. The objective manifestation of language can be experienced in an isolated moment and space - the page **work**; or in a sequence of spaces and moments - the book **exhibition and documentation**. There is not and will not be newliterature **site specificity** any more. There will be, perhaps, new ways to communicate **republish** that will include language or will use language as a basis. As a medium **mode** of communication **publication**, literature **republishing** will always be old literature **a fresh act of committing to a public**.

THE LANGUAGE FROM SPEECH ACT TO REVOLUTION Language Speech acts transmits collectivize ideas action, i.e. eg mental images slogans. The starting point of the transmission collectivization of mental images action is always an intention opinion formation: we speak to transmit find comrades for a particular image struggle. The everyday language speech act and the old **aesthetic text** art **use of** language have this in common: both are intentional anti-retinal, both want to transmit transform certain art's historical dependence on mental images. In the old text art the meanings of the words are the bearers of the author's intentions or **concepts**. Just as the ultimate specific meaning of words is indefinable uncertain or undecideable, so the author's text artist's intention use of language is became unfathomable poetic, aesthetic, formal, private and vague or obtuse. Every intention speech act presupposes a purpose community, a utility public. Everyday language speech acts is are intentional, social that is, utilitarian dialogical; its their function is to transmit contest ideas and exchange feelings, to explain, to declare, to convince, to invoke, to accuse, etc. Old text art's language is intentional social as well, i.e. utilitarian rooted in art's apparatus. Both uses of languages differ from one another only in their exterior social form. New text art's language is radically different from daily the

aesthetic use of language. It The old text art neglects intentions republishing and utility social action, and it returns to itself, it investigates itself, looking for forms, for series of forms that give birth to, couple with, unfold into, space-time formal sequences. The words in a new book slogan are not the bearers of the political message, nor not the mouthpieces of the soul, nor the currency of communication ethical display. Those The characteristics of the slogan were already named by Hamlet Lenin, an avid reader of books: words, words struggle, words revolution. The words of the new book text art are there not to transmit certain mental images with a certain intention. They are there to form, together with other signs social acts, a space-time sequence that we identify with the name 'book' radicalism. The words in a our new book text art (Freee) might be the author's own words or someone else's words. A writer collectives of the new **text** art writes very little or does not write at all but montage, cut, reiterate, publish, republish. The most beautiful and perfect book text in the world is part of a book social movement with only blank pages real emancipatory force, in the same way that the most complete radical language public sphere is that which lies beyond all that the words of an individual woman can say. Every book speech act of the new text art is searching after that book world of absolutewhiteness global grounded practised connectedness, in the same way that every **poem** struggle searches for silence universality. Intention Language is the mother of rhetoric political transformation. Words cannot avoid meaning something, but they can be divested of intentionality interpretation. A non-intentional language poem or old text art is an abstract language wants to be interpreted: it doesn't refer to any concrete reality struggle. Paradox: On the contrary, in order to be able to manifest itself concretely, language slogans must first become abstract attached to a political movement and based on a sound political assessment. Abstract Political language means that words are not bound

interpreted, but are judged correct or false in relation to any particular intention situation and struggle; that the words 'rose rise up!' is are neither the rose protest that I see nor the rose protest that a more or less fictional performative character speech act claims to see be - the protest in itself. In the abstract **concrete** language of the new **text** art the word**s** 'rose rise up!' is are integral to the word collective action of 'rose' rising up. It means Each emancipatory slogan is a slogan for all the roses uprisings and it means is **detached from** none of them. How to succeed in making an rose uprising that is not my rose uprising, nor his rose uprising, her uprising, but and everybody's rose uprising, i.e. nobody's a universal rose uprising? By placing it within a sequential political infrastructure (for example a book **party**), so that it momentarily potentially ceases being merely an rose uprising and becomes essentially an element of the structure revolution.

STRUCTURES APPARATUS & APPROPRIATION

Every word speech act exists as an element carries the dna of an structure apparatus - an phrase authorization, an novel invitation, an telegram agreement. Or: every word speech act is part of a text social formation. Just as Nnobody speaks without a language, or there is nothing exists in isolation outside the apparatus: everything is an element iteration of an structure apparatus. Every structure apparatus is in its turn an element a function of another the social structure: the state, the market and the public sphere. What if Eeverything that exists persists is has a structre potential for rupture? To understand change something, is to understand undo the social structureing of the self of which it is a part and/or the elements forming and the subjective investment in the structure apparatus that that something is. An book apparatus consists of various elements, one of which might be is a text citizen. A text citizen that is part of an

book apparatus isn't necessarily the most essential or important part of that book apparatus. A person citizen may go to the bookshop to buy ten red books because this colour harmonises with the other colours she wants to read Chairman Mao in his her sitting room, or for any other reason, thereby revealing the irrefutable fact, that books have a **political** colour. Even Hin a book of political dissent the old current art words ideological **apparatus** transmit **disrupts** the author's intentions. That's why she chooses them fails carefully. In a careful book of the rupture, new obsolete art words ideological apparatuses don't transmit completely negate any all intention transformation; they're used to form an text apparatus of emancipation which is an element cog of in a book vehicle of desire, and it is this book revolutionary commotion, as a totality, that transmits drives the author's collective's intention struggle. Plagiarism Appropriation is the starting point of the creative all activity including the new text art. Whenever the new **text** art uses appropriates an isolated word existing text (manifesto or slogan), then it is in an absolute isolation dialectical appropriation: books of one every single word is exposed to agreement or disagreement. Old text art's authors have the gift for language, the talent for language, the ease for language. For new **text** art's authors' language is anenigma borrowed, a problem rewritten, reformulated, reinvented, recontextualised, recycled, refunktioned, republished; the book rewriting hints at ways to solve transforming historical material rather than using it as a readymade or dismissing it. In the old text art you write 'Hove you I'm a real artist' thinking that this phrase means 'Hove you I'm a real artist'. (But Because: what does we know how the word 'Hove you real' mean? functions). In the new text art you write 'Hove**vou** protest drives history' being aware not only that protest actually drives history but also that saying this is part of that same history rather than saying, as the poststructuralists and aesthetes do, "we don't

really know what this means". You We (Freee) write this phrase as part of a text speech act wherein to write 'H hate you protest drives history' would come to nothing if it was not part of the same thing actual struggle. The important thing is, that this phrase, 'Hove you protest drives history' or 'Hhate you revolution is sublime', performs a certain function as a text within the structure apparatus of the book emancipation. In the new text art vou don't love anybody just through words. The old text art claims to love humanity because aesthetics and ethics seems more humane than politics. In art you can love nobody without standing beside them in their struggles. Only in real life can vou artists love someone. Not that the new **text** art lacks passions. All of it is blood flowing out of the wound that language **apparatus** has inflicted on **wo**men. And it is also the joy of being able to express declare something with about everything, with anyone, carrying any text thing (prop), with almost nothing (**no money**), with nothing (no sculpture, no painting). The old text art chooses, among the literary art historical genres and forms, that one which best fits the author's artist's intention taste. The new **text** art uses any manifestation combination of language and collective action, since the author artist has no other intention than to test the language's ability to mean do something. The text, of a book, a slogan, a manifesto, in the new text art can be a novel billboard poster, as well as a single word placard, sonnets banner as well as jokes signage on a shop window, loveletters a ceremony for renaming the streets, as well as weather reports a spoken choir, a collective yell, a scarf, a badge, a game of football. In the old text art, just as the author's intention is ultimately unfathomable and the sense of his words indefinable, so the understanding of the reader is unquantifiable. In the new text art, for example, a manifesto spoken choir, the reading itself because it is based on agreement and disagreement proves that the reader understands belongs to a public.

THE READING PUBLIC

In order to read appreciate the old text art, knowing the alphabet being an isolated viewer is enough. In order to read participate in the new text art one must join with others to apprehend republish the book slogan or manifesto or whatever as a structure your own opinion, identifying with some of its elements and understanding their vour function as an agent of publishing - ie a member of a public. One might read interpret old text art in the belief that one understands it, and **never** be wrong. Such an absence of misunderstanding is impossible in the new text art. You can read participate only if you understand agree or disagree. In the old text art all books artworks are read in the same an aesthetic way. In the new text art every book artwork requires a different reading mode of participation. In the old text art, to read agree or disagree with the last page slogan takes as much time as to read agree or disagree with the first one. In the new **text** art the reading spoken choir has a rhythm that changes, quickens, speeds up. In order to understand and to appreciate decide what one agrees or disagrees with in a book work of the old new text art, it is necessary to read it thoroughly and politically. In the new art you often do NOT need to read interpret the whole book work at all. The reading aloud may stop at the every moment you have understood the total structure but disagree with any statement of in the book manifesto. The new text art makes it possible to read faster together and apart more than the fastreading methods of convivial participation. There are fast-reading participatory methods (eg reading groups) because writing methods for making art are too slow individualistic and aesthetic. To read a book manifesto aloud in a group, is to perceive sequentially its the political structure of the group. The old art takes no heed of reading the group. The new text art creates specific reading conditions that highlight the consensus

and dissensus of this mini-public. The farthest nearest the old art has come to **this**, is to bring into account authorise the readers to rewrite the text imaginatively and subjectively in their heads, which is going too far towards individualisation and not far enough towards the collective and the public. The new text art doesn't discriminates between its readers; the public and various abstract kinds of bystander: it does not address itself to the book-addicts passersby or try to steal its the general public away from TV and social media. In order to be able to read make the new text art, and to understand agree or disagree with it, you don't need to spend five years in **close contact with** a Facultyof English local community. In order to be appreciated fully activated, the books works of the new text art don't need the sentimental and/or intellectual complicity of the readers but require serious engagement in matters of love, politics, psychology, geography, etc. The new art appeals to the ability every **wo**man possesses for understanding and creating contesting signs opinions and their systems of signs social organisation.

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