



# Artwords: A Glossary of Contemporary Art Theory

*Jennifer McLerran, Thomas Patin*

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Defining over 400 terms and phrases that have recently entered discourse on the visual arts, this is the first reference book specializing in explaining and applying theoretical terminology in contemporary art. Since the early 1970s, the vocabulary used to discuss visual art has expanded radically, leaving many teachers, students, artists, and critics without the accurate definitions necessary for fruitful discourse on contemporary culture. This glossary not only serves as a dictionary but as a guide to current theory and criticism of visual art and culture. Terms can be accessed alphabetically or thematically; the significant cross referencing makes this an easy dictionary to use.

Many contemporary art terms have been borrowed from other disciplines or are traditionally employed in the visual arts but have been adapted for use in the contemporary art world and have therefore been assigned specific or specialized applications. These loan terms have increased the likelihood for confusion between old and new definitions, so where possible the authors have applied the terms to works of art or some aspect of visual culture. Most art glossaries and dictionaries concentrate primarily on artistic production in the visual arts?movements, styles, and names. As a complement to these types of works, this glossary of theoretical terms is essential for anyone studying contemporary visual arts and visual culture in general.

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