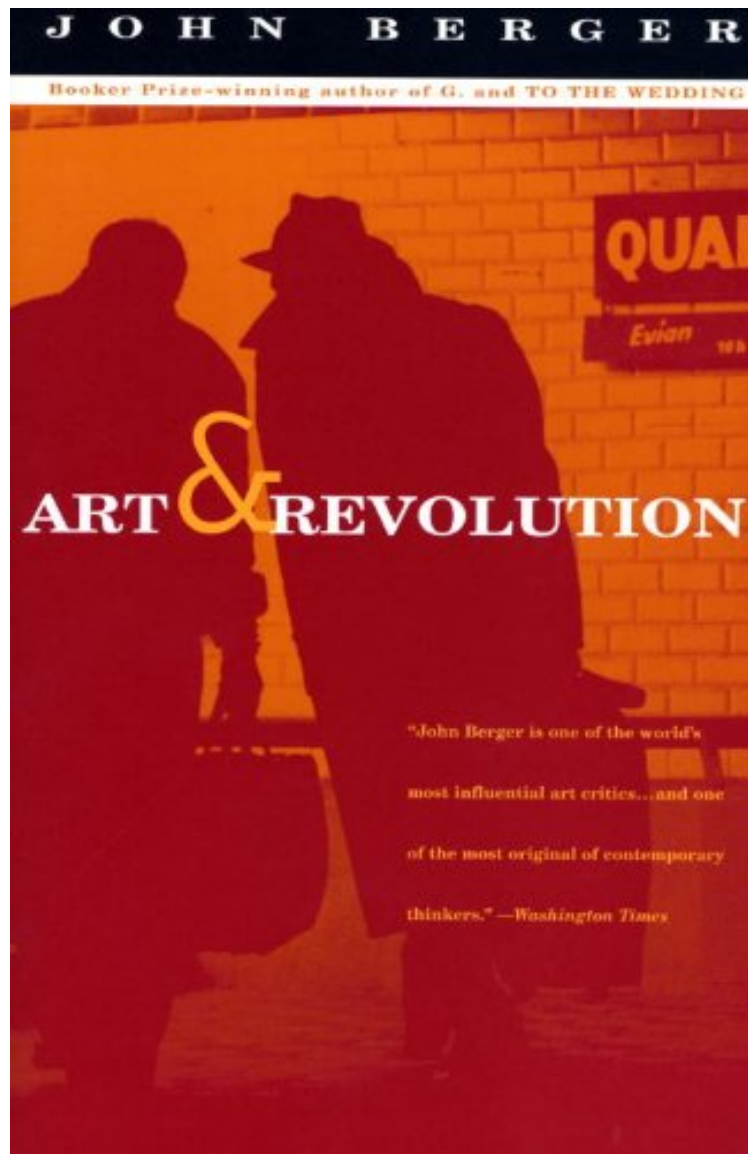


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Art and Revolution: Ernst Neizvestny, Endurance, and the Role of the Artist (Vintage International)

John Berger

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John Berger : Art and Revolution: Ernst Neizvestny, Endurance, and the Role of the Artist (Vintage International) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Art and Revolution: Ernst Neizvestny, Endurance, and the Role of the Artist (Vintage International):

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Berger's Insights on Russia via NeizvestnyBy J. G. H.This extended

essay brings to light the otherwise obscure artist Ernst Neizvestny. Berger's gaze intensifies on the particular circumstances of Neizvestny to draw out broader tendencies also being traced in the book, such as Russian iconic art, Soviet revolutionary art and politics, and aspirations of art more generally: "[Neizvestny] is concerned with neither viscera nor complexes. He is concerned with creating an image of man that celebrates his total nature." Berger's prose flashes with insight into both Russian art and Neizvestny's sculpture. He lays out his critique sensibly and presents the subject with enough balance between the social, biographical, and critical that the reader is consistently drawn forward along each of those perspectives. The prints - like Berger's words - are also well-chosen and provide a solid visual basis for the discussion at hand. Concerning the rant that closes the book: it is an anachronism largely because of its hopes for the Soviet Union. However, our discomfort at reading it may also betray our own cynicism about the truth that we face an "intolerable condition of inequality in the world". 4 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Criticism or Political Tract? By Stephen Quinn Well, the book's fairly interesting when it talks about the history of Russian Academic art, and also when it explores the work of Neizvestny. But the third section degenerates into a Marxist screed against "imperialism". The book was written in the late 60's, so I suppose I can understand the author's optimism (naivete?) about the prospects of Communism, but all the same, I finished the book feeling that Neizvestny had been used by the author to further his own viewpoint. The description of the book, read in retrospect, is more interesting than the contents.

In this prescient and beautifully written book, Booker Prize-winning author John Berger examines the life and work of Ernst Neizvestny, a Russian sculptor whose exclusion from the ranks of officially approved Soviet artists left him laboring in enforced obscurity to realize his monumental and very public vision of art. But Berger's impassioned account goes well beyond the specific dilemma of the pre-glasnost Russian artist to illuminate the very meaning of revolutionary art. In his struggle against official orthodoxy--which involved a face-to-face confrontation with Khrushchev himself--Neizvestny was fighting not for a merely personal or aesthetic vision, but for a recognition of the true social role of art. His sculptures earn a place in the world by reflecting the courage of a whole people, by commemorating, in an age of mass suffering, the resistance and endurance of millions. "Berger is probably our most perceptive commentator on art.... A civilized and stimulating companion no matter what subject happens to cross his mind."--Philadelphia Inquirer

From Library Journal This 1969 volume profiles Soviet sculptor Ernst Neizvestny, who, not being one of that government's officially endorsed artists, struggled in relative obscurity. Berger's analysis also chronicles how physical, emotional, and spiritual hardship can be transformed and expressed in art. The text is buttressed with numerous drawings and photos of Neizvestny's works. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From the Inside Flap In this prescient and beautifully written book, John Berger examines the life and work of Ernst Neizvestny, a Russian sculptor whose exclusion from the ranks of officially approved Soviet artists left him laboring in enforced obscurity to realize his monumental and very public vision of art. But Berger's impassioned account goes well beyond the specific dilemma of the pre-glasnost Russian artist to illuminate the very meaning of revolutionary art. In his struggle against official orthodoxy--which involved a face-to-face confrontation with Khrushchev himself--Neizvestny was fighting not for a merely personal or aesthetic vision, but for a recognition of the true social role of art. His sculptures earn a place in the world by reflecting the courage of a whole people, by commemorating, in an age of mass suffering, the resistance and endurance of millions. "Berger is probably our most perceptive commentator on art... A civilized and stimulating companion no matter what subject happens to cross his mind."--Philadelphia Inquirer From the Back Cover In this book, John Berger examines the life and work of Ernst Neizvestny, a Russian sculptor whose exclusion from the ranks of officially approved Soviet artists left him laboring in enforced obscurity to realize his monumental and very public vision of art. But Berger's account goes well beyond the specific dilemma of the pre-glasnost Russian artist to illuminate the very meaning of revolutionary art. In his struggle against official orthodoxy - which involved a face-to-face confrontation with Khrushchev himself - Neizvestny was fighting not for a merely personal or aesthetic vision, but for a recognition of the true social role of art. His sculptures earn a place in the world by reflecting the courage of a whole people, by commemorating, in an age of mass suffering, the resistance and endurance of millions.