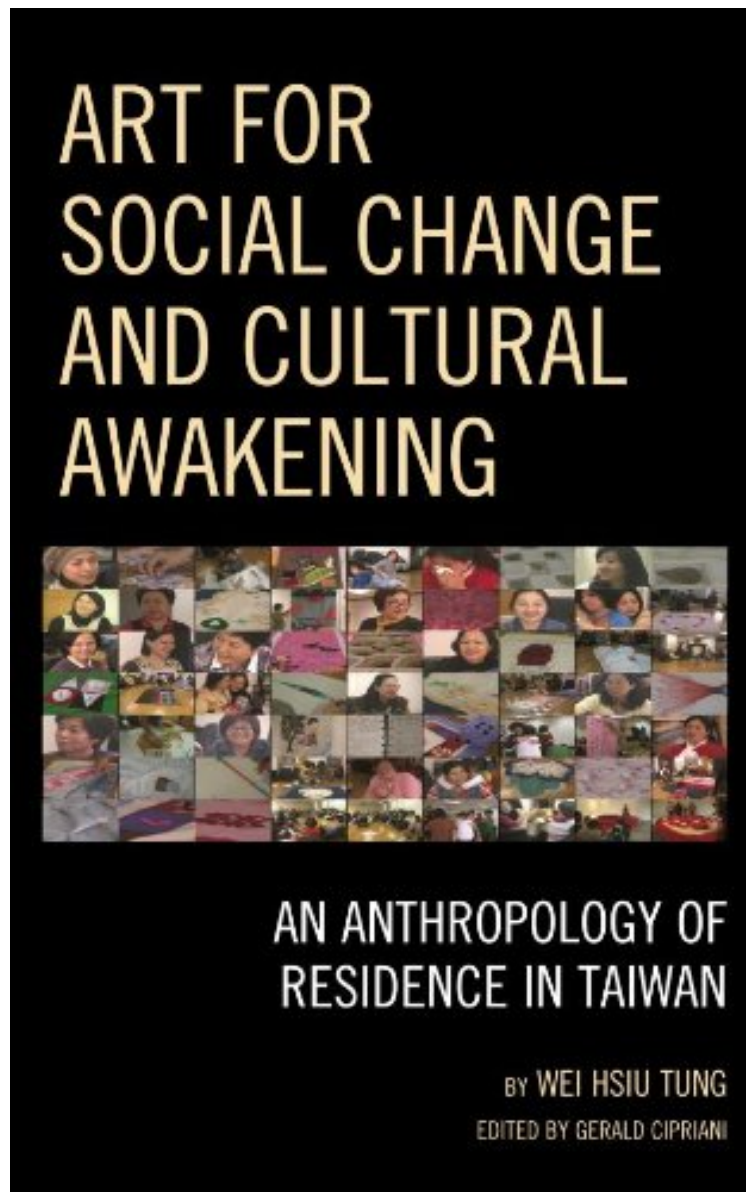


Art for Social Change and Cultural Awakening: An Anthropology of Residence in Taiwan

Wei Hsiu Tung

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Art for Social Change and Cultural Awakening: An Anthropology of Residence in Taiwan:

Artistic residency has become widely adopted in Western countries while only recently having become popular and well-supported within Taiwan. This book explores the challenges that this form of art practice faced in contemporary Taiwan from the revocation of Martial Law in 1987 to the 2000s—arguably one of the most exciting periods in the sociocultural history of the island. Case studies show what is at stake politically, historically, and socially in artists’ endeavours to give shape to a sense of Taiwanese identity. Despite the prevalence of artists engaged in social issues in today’s world and the undeniable contributions of artistic residency to contemporary art practice, little literature or scholarly research has been conducted on the practical, conceptual, and ideological aspects of artist residency. Very often, it is perceived in very narrow terms, overlooking explicit or hidden issues of localism, nationalism and globalization. If artistic residence did indeed emerge from the radical movements of the 1960s and 70s in the Western world—and especially Britain—then this book argues that the contemporary sociocultural context of Taiwan calls for redefined, culturally-specific models of residency. The precarious geo-political situation of Taiwan has made issues of cultural identity—tackled by artists and successive governments alike—very sensitive. A new genre of artistic residence in Taiwan would mean that artists involved from whatever cultural background operate as engaging interpreters; their roles would not be confined to mirroring culture and society. These artists-in-residence would contribute to cultural awakening by offering ways of negotiating creatively with otherness, and this for the sake of a better social life and shared identity.

Wei Hsiu Tung’s *Art for Social Change and Cultural Awakening: An Anthropology of Residence in Taiwan* offers insightful perspectives on Taiwan’s democratization and globalization through the lens of the visual arts, specifically artists’ engagement with society through artistic residences. ... *Art for Social Change and Cultural Awakening* is both fascinating and well worth reading. (Taiwan) Wei Hsiu Tung’s innovative new tome deftly explores how the “artistic residence” or “artist-in-residence” in Taiwan is no longer confined in large part to reflecting on Taiwanese culture and society but instead serves as a key contributor to cultural interpretation, awakening, and change. Employing a vital cross-cultural perspective, comparing the artistic residence in Taiwan with that in Britain, Tung adds important perspectives to this global phenomenon. Interviews with painters, photographers, sculptors, and other artists who have created art not for museums or galleries but instead to “speak to mass audiences,” add significantly to the depth and breadth of this study. Examining as well the concrete implications for artists-in-residence endeavors in Taiwan, especially as concerns how artists integrate the pulls of the local and the global, *Art for Social Change and Cultural Awakening* represents an important contribution to Asian studies. (Karen L. Thornber, Professor of Comparative Literature, Harvard University) This book examines the practice of artists-in-residence in Taiwan, via an engaging treatment of art and artists as seen from the perspective of the embodied eye of anthropology and through juxtaposition with Britain. The volume sheds new light on Taiwan since the lifting of martial law, exploring not only governmental support for art and artists but also processes of democracy and identity as they have unfolded in a cultural and aesthetic history that is both Asian and European, indigenous and Chinese, modern and post-modern. The book is accessible and original, and should be essential reading for all those interested in Taiwanese culture and society since the transition to democracy. Particularly striking is the way the author weaves together identity and art as the unfinished, mutable, and invented productions of relational rather than egoistic complexes. (Fang-long Shih, Co-Director, LSE Taiwan Research Programme) Wei-Hsui Tung’s *Art for Social Change and Cultural Awakening* marks a significant advance in East-Asian cultural studies. While much has been said about relational and interventionist art in Western and trans-national contexts, this is the first major book-length study to address similar forms of artistic practice in Taiwan. Tung’s extended anthropological meditation on artistic residency is indispensable reading not only for those with a specific interest in contemporary Taiwanese art, but also anyone concerned with the wider implications of the relationship between culture and globalization. (Paul Gladston, Professor of Contemporary Visual Cultures and Critical Theory, University of Nottingham) This is an atypical study in art; it focuses on artists in residence as a community engaged in the shaping of currents and values reflective of changing times. The author emphasizes in particular the ongoing importance of cultural identity in these deeper introspections and debates. By invoking an anthropological approach, the emphasis is really on the experiential aspects of artistic production. The practice of residential communities is perhaps not unlike the seminal role that Jürgen Habermas attributed to salons in the structural transformation of the public sphere. For all these reasons, this monograph should be of interest to scholars not only in art but also cultural studies in general and critically minded students of all kinds working on contemporary Asia and elsewhere. (Allen Chun, Research Fellow, Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan) About the Author About the Author Wei Hsiu Tung was born and brought up in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. She studied art education at Warwick University and social anthropology of art at the Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, United Kingdom. She has been teaching the theory of art at National University of Tainan, Taiwan, and was in 2010-2011 Visiting Research Fellow in public art in the Sir John Cass Department of Art, Media and Design at London Metropolitan University. Her publications include “The Return of the Real”: Art and Identity in Taiwan’s Public Sphere (2012). About the Editor Gerald Cipriani is professor at Kyushu University, Japan. He studied Western aesthetics in

Leeds (LMU) and East Asian philosophy in London (SOAS). He has taught both in Europe and East Asia and was a British Academy Fellow at Kyoto University. His current writing focuses on dialogical aesthetics. He is the Chief Editor of Culture and Dialogue (Cambridge Scholars Publishing).