

“How Important is art as a form of protest?” *frieze*, April 2017, pp. 90, 91, 101

How
important
is art as
a form
of protest?

Given the current political climate, we here at *frieze* have been reflecting on the role of art in responding to conflict. With this in mind, we invited a cross-section of artists, curators and writers to answer two deceptively simple questions: ‘How important is art as a form of protest?’ and ‘How effective is it as a conduit of change?’ Responses could take the form of a statement, an image, a film or a combination of all three. The submissions, by more than 50 respondents from over 30 countries are provocative and enlightening. Visit frieze.com to see further contributions from around the world.

Vernon Ah Kee
Jonathas de Andrade
Daniel G. Andújar
Andreas Angelidakis
Leonor Antunes
Kader Attia
Walead Beshty
David Birkin
Daniel Boyd
Broomberg & Chanarin
Tania Bruguera
Kudzanai Chiurai
Adam Chodzko
Abraham Cruzvillegas
Minerva Cuevas
Michael Dean
Jeremy Deller
Jimmie Durham
Ibrahim El-Salahi
John Gerrard
Mariam Ghani
Núria Güell

Khaled Hafez
Hands Off Our Revolution
Lubaina Himid
Adelita Husni-Bey
Khaled Jarrar
Bouchra Khalili
Bose Krishnamachari
Fred Lonidier
Helen Marten
Eva and Franco Mattes
Naeem Mohaiemen
Shahryar Nashat
Brian O’Doherty
Ahmet Ögüt
Uriel Orlow
Trevor Paglen
Doris Salcedo
Dread Scott
Marinella Senatore
Amy Sillman
Superflex

**100 YEARS OF
ART AND PROTEST**

1917

Anarchic anti-war movement publishes its first magazine, *DADA*, in Zurich

1918

Arbeitsrat für Kunst (Workers Council for Art) founded in Berlin in order to disseminate avant-garde ideas to the greater populace

1919

Bauhaus – a radical art, architecture and design school – established in Weimar by Walter Gropius with Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee

1921

Artists’ group Estridentismo (stridentism) launched in Mexico City in order to explore avant-garde ideas and social action

1922

Birth of Mexican muralism by artists including José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera and David Siquieros

Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia founded in Moscow in order to depict the daily life of workers

1923

Anarchic art movement MAVO founded in Tokyo to protest the conservative Japanese art world

1930s

Anti-colonial cultural and political movement négritude founded in Paris by a group of African and Caribbean students

1933

Black Mountain College founded in US to explore the principals of the progressive education movement

Shahryar Nashat

It's 4 February at the Getty Center in Los Angeles. I'm here to attend a tribute to David Antin, who passed away three months ago. Family and friends are gathered to pay homage to his poetry and his brilliant mind. His voice is omnipresent – talk-poems. He will be missed, I think, because though his written words will survive him, his argumentative voice was just as important a conduit for his stance on art, literature and politics.

A day later, at a movie theatre in Hollywood, I hear the voice of James Baldwin. He stands gamely at Cambridge University, debating civil rights with a conservative stiff. His dissident eloquence is a disarming weapon. The voice of the artist, again.

Art is a unique witness. It is a repository for observation. It is a mirror of the unrest and the struggle of a troubled, sometimes desperate, society. It is important for the conversations it will inspire and the conversations that inspired its making. It is a subjective time capsule. It is effective and yet, often, its greater impact will be recognized in retrospect, when political activism and organized dissidence will have paved the way for change.

SHAHRYAR NASHAT lives in Los Angeles, USA. This year, his work will be on show the ICA, Philadelphia; Kunsthalle Basel, and David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles. Earlier this year, he had a solo show at Rodeo Gallery, London.
