

The three artists/poets brought together by this thesis are radically different from one another not only in their vocations but also in their ways of writing and making. It is hard, and perhaps impossible, to unite them on a single plane. John Ashbery is a poet and his poetry as it is here presented in terms of its relation to Abstract Expressionism and Pop Art is one of disjunction, disorientation and dislocation, a space where relationships and orders are subjected to destruction and erasure. Carl Andre is a sculptor but also a poet whose works are characterized by repetition of basic materials and words in simple patterns, seemingly renouncing any creative role of the artist, and instead foregrounding the textures and shapes of things and words. Cy Twombly is a painter whose paintings and drawings employ writing and texts visually as shapes that carry meaning by their arrangement on paper or canvas. Unlike Andre and Ashbery, whose poetry is characteristic for materialism and impersonality, for being located in the present, Twombly's works distinguish themselves by classicism, romanticism and symbolism. Nevertheless, as I have tried to show, all three of these artists and poets take words and writing into close proximity of art, they re-conceive the process of writing poetry by analogizing it with painting, collage and sculpture. In so doing, they succeed in finding new effects of which language and poetry are capable and show that words can be freed from their referential function and made to work visually on the page. Together they represent an avant-garde movement in contemporary poetry and visual arts which seeks to redefine the role of words and the relationship between the individual arts. They show that words and writing can be freed from their representational roles and plugged into new structures, constellations and arrangements where meaning is produced in different ways and where reading is no longer "a boring movement of the eyes," as Saroyan has said.