

Sandra Frimmel

# Art Judgements

*Art on Trial in Russia after Perestroika*

VERNON SERIES ON THE HISTORY OF ART

## Summary

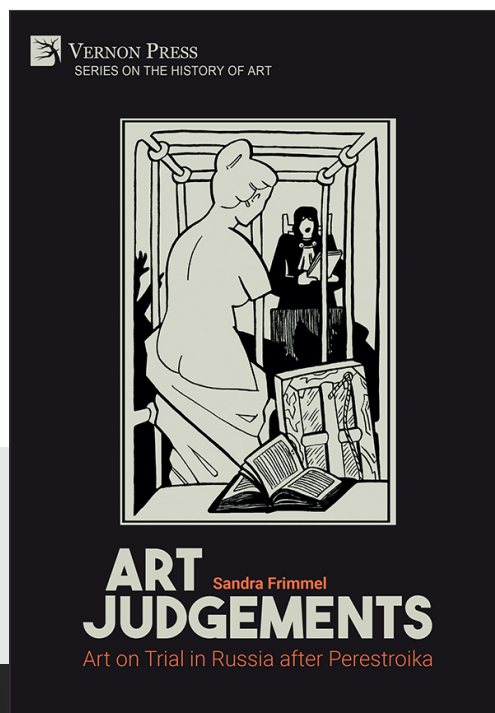
An unusually large number of court cases against art, artists, and curators have taken place in Russia since the turn of the century. In reference to two of the most prominent, against the organizers of the exhibitions 'Caution, Religion!' and 'Forbidden Art 2006', the author examines the ways in which the meaning of art and its socio-political effects are argued in court: How do these trials attempt to establish a normative concept of art, and furthermore a binding juridical understanding of art? How is the discussion of what is permissible in art being framed in Russia today?

Research into the post-Soviet art trials has been mainly journal-driven until today. Only the fairly recent trials of the Pussy Riot activists and Pyotr Pavlensky provoked lengthy publications, but these are mostly concerned with explicitly political and activist art rather than its particular discourse when on trial. This book, however, takes a scholarly approach towards (Russian) art on trial. It puts the cases in a national-historical context, which is compared from international perspectives, and particularly focuses on the way in which these proceedings have intensified juridical power over artistic freedom (of speech) in the production of art in Russia.

This book will appeal to academics and students in the areas of art history, cultural science, sociology, and Slavic studies, as well as jurists, curators and museum specialists, researchers and employees in cultural institutions.

## About the author

**Sandra Frimmel** (\*1977), PhD, studied art history and comparative literature in Berlin and Saint Petersburg. She obtained her doctorate with "Judging Art. Juridical Trials Against Art, Artists, and Curators in Russia After Perestroika" at the Humboldt University in Berlin. She has worked as a freelance curator and art critic, co-run a non-profit exhibition space in Berlin, and collaborated with the National Centre for Contemporary Arts (NCCA) in Moscow, Yekaterinburg, and Nizhny Novgorod. She was a curatorial assistant at the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz, from 2008–2010. Between 2011 and 2019 she worked as an academic researcher on two major projects: the Swiss National Science Foundation survey of "Literature and Art on Trial" (2011–2016) and "Performance Art in Eastern Europe (1950–1990): History and Theory" (2016–2019) at the Department of Slavic Studies of the University of Zurich. She is currently the academic coordinator of the Centre of Arts and Cultural Theory (ZKK) at the University of Zurich. Her research interests include Russian art of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries, as well as concepts of art, law and justice, power, and society.



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SUBJECTS Art History, Art, Law

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