



Poetics and Politics in the Art of Rudolf Baranik

David Craven

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In this first book-length study of Baranik's now-legendary artwork, author David Craven shows how Baranik's use of "socialist formalism" since the 1950s forces us to reconsider the standard accounts of U.S. postwar art. In paintings such as those that make up the Napalm Elegy series (1967–1974), Baranik used a language at once evocatively poetic and provocatively critical. His paintings have increasingly come to be considered among the most significant works of the New York School painting of the 1960s and 1970s, exemplifying what Theodor Adorno called "committed art."

The second half of the book is an anthology of Baranik's aphoristic essays on art and politics, which appeared in various art world publications over the last four decades and have been written in conjunction with political involvements that led Lucy Lippard to call Baranik "an activist par excellence."



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