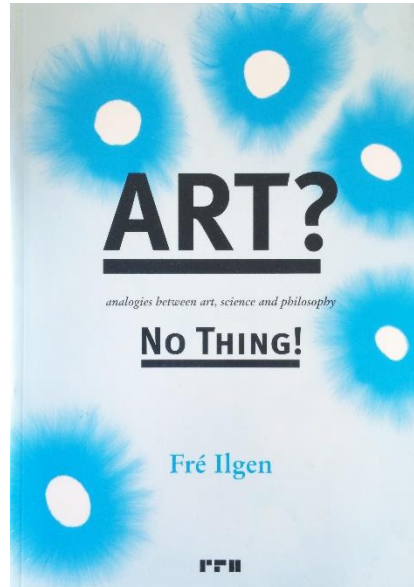


**FACTSHEET**



**Fré Ilgen** (1956), artist/theorist, born in the Netherlands, lives and works in Berlin, Germany; exhibits regularly in various countries in Europe, USA, East Asia, Australia, sometimes Middle East and South America; travels extensively and frequently lectures.

**“ART? No Thing! Analogies between art, science and philosophy”**

All essays by Fré Ilgen MA.

Edited by Megan Craig, NH, USA;

Designed by Fré Ilgen in cooperation with Studio SiMa, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands

Published by PRO Foundation, the Netherlands, in November/December 2004.

Distribution by Artists Bookworks, UK.

Description: English, 432 pages, ca 50 full colour reproductions, 20 black/white pictures.

ISBN 9 0901 8543 7

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**“ART? No Thing! Analogies between art, science and philosophy”**

An examination of the timeless meaning of the experience of art, Fré Ilgen’s first extensive theory book “ART? No Thing! Analogies between art, science and philosophy” was published by PRO Foundation, the Netherlands, in November/December 2004. “ART? No Thing!” is an extensive study of the analogies between art, science, and philosophy on experiencing art as an intermediary to understanding reality. Topics as diverse as essence and perception, both in context to the functioning of our brains and bodies in the continuously changing complexities of the world and the universe.

Artist and theorist Fré Ilgen shows how the development in art, science and philosophy are more closely linked and related than generally is assumed. One part of Ilgen’s hypothesis concerns the meaning of art going well beyond a means for decorating, being a fashionable commodity, or even exemplifying a culture within a certain time frame. While not denying these important features, Ilgen describes that the universal desire for art – both the desire to create art and the desire to enjoy and appreciate art – is strictly a natural result of being human. This he backs up with an extraordinary range of concepts from various fields of science, always providing links to art and philosophy, and occasionally to religion and psychology. Ilgen illustrates how interrelationships between Occidental and Oriental cultures are more substantially linked than often is acknowledged.

Another substantial part of Ilgen's hypothesis is that these very different fields of knowledge teach us that we do have a concept of a free will. We are all unique individuals, but are nevertheless not entirely free and not only unique. Many natural and highly complex processes around and within us have an impact on our existence, on our whole being, on our perception, and on art.

This complex book deals with a great variety of subjects that are incorporated in the experience of art, including the search for essence, beauty and the sublime. Ilgen describes a process of following our intuition that is defined by the functioning of the brain and our immersion in the continuous fluctuating play of nature's forces in infinite space/time. This process is so basic and crucial in our existence that in art it should not be ignored.

"ART? No Thing!", while enjoyable to read, also has an almost encyclopedic character, providing a wealth of links, references and other information for anyone interested in cross-disciplinary study, the phenomenon of being and art.

#### **Including pictures of artworks by:**

Max Beckmann, Michael Bette, Natvar Bhavsar, Charles Biederman, Paul Cézanne, Megan Craig, Paul Dacey, Richard DeVore, Ernest Edmonds, Otto Freundlich, Naum Gabo, Franz Gertsch, Claus Goedicke, El Greco, Gotthard Graubner, Hans Hinterreiter, Yu-Ichi, Fré Ilgen, Heinrich Rüdiger Ilgen, Philippe Jahanguir, James Juszczyk, Kida Kado, Vasily Kandinsky, Joseph Keller, Michael Kidner, Emily Kngwarreye, Frantisek Kupka, Hunchung Lee, localStyle, Richard Paul Lohse, André Masson, Jean-Pierre Maury, Manfred Mohr, Piet Mondrian, Claude-Oscar Monet, Megan Olson, Victor Pasmore, Jackson Pollock, Richard Purdy, David Reed, Peter Paul Rubens, Senju Hiroshi, Sasaki Shoraku, Frank Stella, Paul Suter, Mark di Suvero, Philip Taaffe, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, Christoph Wedding, Edward Quigley, Wen Zhengming.

#### **BOOK REVIEW BY DONALD KUSPIT**

"Not Just Another Manifesto" by Donald Kuspit, a book review about "ART? No Thing! Analogies Between Art, Science and Philosophy" (by Fré Ilgen, see on this site: "THEORY"), published as main feature review p. 3-5 of the The Art Book, Volume 12 Issue 4, November 2005, ISSN 1368 6267

The Art Book is published in the UK and the USA by Blackwell Publishing Ltd, and the Association of Art Historians with Sue Ward, Executive Editor;

#### ***Kuspit:***

*"Fré Ilgen's Art? No Thing! Is the most important publication by an artist since Kandinsky's On The Spiritual In Art (1912). As its enormous length and encyclopaedic scope make clear, Ilgen's book is not just another manifesto - yet another self-legitimizing text by an artist staking a claim to revolutionary uniqueness (such manifestos proliferated ad nauseam in the twentieth century, to the extent that they have become an expected staple of the artist's career kit). Rather, it is a comprehensive, systematic, in depth rethinking of the concept and significance of art. Art? No Thing! is a magnum opus, carefully considered in all its details, and forcefully written, with no sacrifice of clarity and accessibility, however difficult and unfamiliar many of the ideas may be to artists. With magisterial sweep, Ilgen moves from theory to theory, re-evaluating and re-thinking virtually every existing view of art, to make his case: art is not a thing - it does not exist in the thing conventionally called a work of art - but is rather the result and expression of an interaction. In other words, art is a 'no-thing' - and as such related - as Ilgen convincingly argues, to mystical (and mythical) ideas of 'nothingness'. It is a stunning argument, .."*

**note: the complete article can be separately down-loaded from the web-site**