There exists a series of contemporary artists who continually defy the traditional role of the artist/author, including Art & Language, Guerrilla Girls, Bob and Roberta Smith, Maryln Gaye Chetwynd and LuckyPDF.

In Death of the Artist, Nicola McCartney explores their work and uses previously unpublished interviews to provoke a vital and nuanced discussion about contemporary artistic authorship. How do emerging artists navigate intellectual property or work collectively and share the recognition? How might a pseudonym aid ‘artivism’? Most strikingly, she demonstrates how an alternative identity can challenge the art market and is symptomatic of greater cultural and political rebellion.

As such, this book exposes the art world’s financially incentivised infrastructures, but also examines how they might be reshaped from within, in an age of cuts to arts funding and forced self-promotion, this offers an important analysis of the pressing need for the artistic community to construct new ways to reinvent itself and incite fresh responses to its work.

‘McCartney charts the careers of artists who question the role of the artist and who seek to subvert the notion that art is produced only by artists. McCartney asks: who do these artists think they are?’

Bob and Roberta Smith

‘Nicola McCartney gets it: anonymous groups subvert the Western convention of the artist as a lone genius (usually a white male).’

Guerrilla Girls

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