

Contemporary Aesthetics (Journal Archive)

Volume 0 Special Volume 1 (2005)
AESTHETICS AND MOBILITY

Article 3

2005

Aesthetics and Mobility - A Short Introduction into a Moving Field

Ossi Naukkarinen

University of Helsinki, ossi.naukkarinen@uiah.fi

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/liberalarts_contempaesthetics



Part of the [Aesthetics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Naukkarinen, Ossi (2005) "Aesthetics and Mobility - A Short Introduction into a Moving Field," *Contemporary Aesthetics (Journal Archive)*: Vol. 0 , Article 3.

Available at: https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/liberalarts_contempaesthetics/vol0/iss1/3

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Liberal Arts Division at DigitalCommons@RISD. It has been accepted for inclusion in Contemporary Aesthetics (Journal Archive) by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@RISD. For more information, please contact mpompeli@risd.edu.

[About CA](#)

[Journal](#)

[Contact CA](#)

[Links](#)

[Submissions](#)

[Search Journal](#)

[Editorial Board](#)

[Permission to Reprint](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Publisher](#)

[Webmaster](#)

Aesthetics and Mobility - A Short Introduction into a Moving Field

Ossi Naukkarinen

Abstract

Aesthetics cannot by any means be defined only as philosophy of art. Everything can be approached from an aesthetic standpoint. Aesthetically interesting ways to move about can be found in most everyday situations. Our everyday mobility consists of various ways of getting about, and sometimes our approach to them is aesthetically colored. That we move in different ways and link them with aesthetic considerations of some sort is deeply rooted in our thinking. Our bodily experiences of the world are typically movement experiences, and our conceptual thinking is also built on them: We simply cannot make sense of the world without making use of conceptions of bodily movement.

Key Words

aesthetics, mobility, bodily experiences, phenomenology, theory of mobility

1. An Aesthetic Approach to Mobility

It is widely accepted that aesthetics is a discipline or a point of view that is relevant to almost every aspect of human activity and cognition. In principle, everything can be approached from an aesthetic standpoint, even in the face of certain ethical or other restrictions. Thus, there are studies in the aesthetics of painting, theatre, film, music, mathematics, chess, science, advertising, sports, cooking, fashion, wine, law, nature, architecture and even violence, to mention just some examples. They deal with such questions as What is art? What makes a landscape beautiful and why? How do people use aesthetic concepts in mathematics and law?

In fact, it seems that at the moment most phenomena or fields which, for some reason or another, are important in our cultures, be it American, British, Canadian, Dutch, Estonian, Finnish or some other culture, are being analyzed from the aesthetic point of view. Thus, aesthetics cannot by any means be defined as, say, philosophy of art only. This ubiquity of aesthetics can be compared to that of politics, ethics and many other aspects of human life.

The situation can be simplified schematically as follows:

	Art	Science	Fashion	Cooking	Mobility	etc.
	- Painting					
	- Music					
	- etc.					
Aesthetics						
- Analytic						
- Phenome-						
nological						
- Feminist						
- etc.						
Ethics						
Social						
Sciences						
Economics						
History						
etc.						

This chart reflects the idea that several different traditions in aesthetics, as well as ethics, social sciences, economics, history, etc., can be used in analyzing or studying such areas of human endeavor as art (with a number of sub-categories), science and fashion. Of course, in reality the borders of such categories are not tight, and individual scholars do not necessarily respect any institutionalized boundaries between academic disciplines. In addition, these categories are not quite comparable to each other: some are larger and some smaller; some can be described with the help of objects important to them, while others are characterized by their attitude towards various sorts of objects; some titles refer rather clearly to research traditions and others to targets of research; and some can be situated in both the horizontal and the vertical columns and others not.

In any case, if we talk about aesthetics only, related but still different questions and answers are relevant in different areas and applications. Analytic aesthetics of art is different from phenomenological aesthetics of cooking. It is not possible to systematically analyze these differences here. In fact, that would mean writing a series of very thick books on different uses and fields of aesthetics, a task that would be very interesting but probably quite impossible for any single individual, unless that individual was a Frederick Copleston of aesthetics! All in all, there are plenty of possible combinations. There could even be aesthetics of aesthetics.

It is obvious that aesthetics is now used in a wide variety of contexts, probably wider and more varied than ever before, and many approaches to aesthetic analysis are applied depending on the occasion or the circumstances. This is one meaning of the phenomenon often called "aestheticization." It is possible that this simply reveals how eager philosophers, social scientists and other scholars are to use this theoretical point of view in numerous contexts, perhaps whether or not these contexts otherwise actually encourage this eagerness. If not, the use of this theoretical point of view is not very well justified. But on the other hand, this may show the ubiquity of the aesthetic attitude outside of academic circles: that a non-academic, non-scholarly aesthetic

approach is deliberately used in many contexts that also makes academic aesthetic analyses of these areas relevant and useful. From this standpoint, aestheticization might be both a scholarly and a non-scholarly phenomenon.^[1]

It seems obvious that mobility in its numerous variations is culturally a very important field that is naturally connected with many, if not most, other important fields of culture. Today, more people, objects, images, vehicles, pollution, information, capital and other things move more often, faster and farther than ever before.

This is easily shown by comparing the volume of mobility of the contemporary world to the situation some 50 years back. In 1950 there were 53 million cars in the world; now there are more than 500 million, and according to some estimates, over 700 million. And people do use them. In Finland, which is fairly typical in this respect, the average of private car is driven more than 10 000 kilometers per year, which is over ten times more than in 1950. The growth of air traffic is even more astonishing. In 1950, 28 billion passenger kilometers were flown by the world's airplanes. Today, the figure is almost 3000 billion -- over a hundred times more! International business has also grown, which means greater numbers of objects are transported from one place to another and more currency transactions conducted. Furthermore, information flows are much more efficient now than they were in the 1950s; the Internet did not exist back then, and other modes of communication technology were less effective in their ability to transmit information. The details of this development are somewhat different in different countries, but all in all the direction has been the same. The volume of mobility has increased enormously and nobody can avoid the effects of the trend.

The future seems to be headed in the same direction. In some publications, world car travel is predicted to triple between 1990 and 2050, and by 2030 there may be one billion cars worldwide. The European Union's publication *European Energy and Transport. Trends to 2030*, which maps not only the future of Europe but of the world, clearly states that energy consumption, much of which is devoted to mobility, will increase strongly in the coming decades. For example, the rapid globalization of business and science will mean more and more traveling and transport of goods. The rapid expansion of the global computer network is also likely to continue, and there is no sign that this growth will reduce the need for people and objects to move and be moved, as some would hope. Quite the contrary.^[2]

As already stated, everything can, in principle, be approached aesthetically, and this goes for mobility as well. But is it wise or relevant to do so? Is there anything in the intersection of the columns of aesthetics and mobility in the diagram above?

2. Where Is Mobile Aesthetics?

To begin with, aesthetically interesting ways to move about can be found in most everyday situations. Walking is probably the most fundamental way human beings move about, but nowadays it is normally combined with traveling by car, bus, tram, subway or airplane. Our every-day mobility consists of various ways of getting about, and sometimes our approach to them is aesthetically colored: we pay attention to how beautiful, ugly, fascinating or entrancing a walk, a drive, a car, or a route is. This may affect our choice, consciously or not, of the route to our office or of a jogging path.

What is even more important, the fact that we move in different ways

and link them with aesthetic considerations of some sort is deeply rooted in our thinking, in our very being. Our bodily experiences of the world are typically movement experiences, and our conceptual thinking is also built on them. We simply cannot make sense of the world without making use of conceptions of bodily movement. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, for example, have shown that many of our very basic concepts, such as "up" and "down," "forward" and "backwards" and "fast" and "slow" are built on this foundation.^[3] We are bodily, moving beings who categorize mobile experiences and characterize our being in the world with concepts derived from mobility in many ways. One important way is the aesthetic approach, indicated by our aesthetic choices as well as by our aesthetic comments and analyses. What this actually means is clarified in more detail in this volume, most directly by Jos de Mul and Pentti Määtänen. In "From Mobile Ontologies to Mobile Aesthetics," de Mul discusses the changes in mobility and immobility in our cultural traditions in pre-modern, modern and post-modern contexts, paying special attention to the role of information and communication technologies, technologies that strongly transform our daily lives and aesthetic traditions and relate to our bodily mobility in many interesting ways. Määtänen deals with the role of mobility and action in aesthetic experiences from the point of view of pragmatism.

However, both our ways of moving and our aesthetic approaches to them develop culturally and are connected with our physical, bodily being, as well as with each other. As this makes the issue very complicated and opens up several possibilities of how to deal with it, it is useful to mention a few more specific areas where mobile aesthetics can be detected.

First, even expressly stated aesthetic approaches to mobility are not unusual in our every-day life, as is clearly indicated, for example, by car advertisements. They are relevant here because they tend to epitomize what is rather generally expected of cars. In advertisements, cars do not get into accidents or traffic jams and they are driven in beautiful surroundings by handsome drivers. What is typically emphasized is how to drive a car, how it looks and how it feels. It is clear that advertisements often make use of language and visual representations that indicate that everyday traffic and the vehicles we use are seen as aesthetically rich phenomena. It is hoped, at least, that cars, motorcycles and other vehicles provide aesthetically rewarding experiences.

Real driving is not quite the same thing as the vision that advertisements offer us, but driving may also have its aesthetic aspects. To take a somewhat dubious and extreme example that also advertisements sometimes refer to, we might want to drive fast, take curves and pass other drivers aggressively, or "burn rubber" when accelerating from a dead stop. Such acts, whether acceptable or not to others, offer strong kinetic, visual and auditory experiences that can be seen as aesthetically interesting. Everyday driving need not be as extreme as this to be aesthetically rewarding, of course, but on such occasions an aesthetic attitude is often accentuated. In any event, it is obvious that the aesthetics of driving fast or aggressively is very different from, say, "cruising" slowly or taking a tram. This large area of aesthetic experience with its positive and negative aspects has been touched upon by many writers, including Wolfgang Sachs, Mimi Sheller and, as early as the 1950s, by Roland Barthes briefly in his *Mythologies*.^[4] In this volume, Yrjö Sepänmaa deals with this area in his article, "The Aesthetics of the Road, Road Art, and Road Traffic," and on the aesthetics of actual driving or "being on the road," and on the aesthetics of road environments and road art.

It is noteworthy that imaginary and real traffic live side by side, especially in urban settings. There we drive cars and other vehicles and see ads selling cars and other products that are meant for car drivers' eyes and are often even pasted or painted on moving cars. The whole is an ever-moving traffic system where different aesthetic objects and approaches mingle. Elsewhere in this special issue, Pasi Kolhonen's article, "Moving Pictures - Advertising, Traffic and Cityscape," deals with contemporary, often mobile advertising techniques and their "economist's aesthetics" in urban surroundings.

For some, using a car in a certain way may be a leisure-time hobby, not only a way to get from one place to another. However, a number of other mobile and every-day hobbies, sports especially, are also often aesthetically structured. In these, the sensuous aspects of moving about are often very important. For example, the way one uses one's own body to overcome physical limits one has not encountered before, for example in mountain biking, snowboarding or dancing, can be extremely rewarding. Physically it may feel very special, and one way to categorize this physical experience is by means of aesthetic concepts. Of course, this can be done with less demanding or less extreme athletic or dance experiences as well; even with normal walking. Additionally, equipment used in such hobbies has its own aesthetics, often connected with fashion and the taste preferences of subcultures. Sneakers, sweaters, sticks and rackets are collector's items for some. Joseph H. Kupfer and Richard Shusterman have made use of John Dewey's philosophy in analyzing issues that are relevant for this area.[\[5\]](#)

Our daily lives, however, consist of more than just moving ourselves from place to place. We also move other things around. One important aspect of this is using ICT (information and communication technologies). Fast, reliable and simple solutions are typically highly valued here, and some aspects of this value are aesthetic. The latest mobile computer and cellular phone systems, which are able to handle large amounts of data that can be converted to sounds, texts and (moving) images, appear to have some kind of aesthetic appeal in themselves. Because they are small, we can carry them around with us all the time, and they also create new (aesthetic) ways to interact with other people and with(in) cars, houses and whole cities. Moving information is inseparable from other types of mobility.

In ICT, what is new, effective and fast is fascinating and beautiful, much like in early Futurist manifestos. In addition, the artificial or virtual worlds set up in cyberspace that are made possible by these efficient communication technologies are often approached aesthetically. . In some cases, the aesthetics of the speed of transferring data is even combined with possibilities to create entirely new, aesthetically interesting or pleasing ways to make virtual objects and characters move. Somewhat paradoxically, these artificial worlds are often considered aesthetically more enjoyable if their characters seem to move much in the same way as human beings do in the real world. This is the case, for example, in sports games that imitate ice-hockey or skateboarding. The aesthetics of information technologies, as well as of cyberspace and virtual travel linked with it, have been analyzed by Wolfgang Welsch, in a more polemic manner by David Gelernter and by numerous contributors of the journal *Leonardo*.[\[6\]](#) In this volume of *Contemporary Aesthetics*, Jos De Mul's above-mentioned article is relevant for this discussion as well.

We do not always stick to the every-day, however. Sometimes we unstick ourselves, and then aesthetic approaches to mobility are

perhaps even clearer. One such area where an aesthetic approach and mobility often appear to go hand-in-hand is tourism. Even mere travel advertisements are full of aesthetic notions about spectacular panoramas, beautiful beaches, gorgeous trekking routes and picturesque old cities. Such notions may only be promises that prove to be empty in actuality, but it is important to see that this is nevertheless partly what tourists are after: aesthetically rewarding surroundings and experiences. The search for aesthetic experiences and environments is obviously one reason to travel, even if not the only one, and this has been the case since the heyday of the classical *Grand tours* or even longer, as Orvar Löfgren's, John Urry's and Georges Van Den Abbeele's studies indicate.^[7] Actually, even if only a small part of the massive tourist streams are on the move because of aesthetic reasons, the importance of aesthetic mobility in this context calls for further study. In this volume, the article by Max Ryyänen, "Entering Through the Back Door - or Learning from Venice," deals with this area by analyzing the aesthetics of arriving in Venice from the point of view of mobility.

All of the above-mentioned topics have been covered accurately and lively in numerous novels, movies, songs, magazines, websites and other works of art and popular culture - much more often and, one must admit, many times in a more attractive style than in scholarly texts. There, aesthetic notions of beauty, comicalness, elegance or ugliness of driving a car, sailing, traveling abroad, using the latest communications technologies or skateboarding come up all the time and are often even dominant. One just has to recall classics like Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, J.G. Ballard's *Crash*, Jacques Tati's *Traffic*, Ant Farm's *Cadillac Ranch* and William Gibson's *Neuromancer*; countless pop-songs where the car culture is praised,; and TV shows where sport heroes' most imposing achievements are commented on using clearly aesthetic terminology. All these, in turn, undoubtedly affect our thinking and behavior in everyday life, too. They set up examples of eligible as well as of avoidable mobile aesthetics, sometimes tempting us to see mobility in some particular way, some verbally, some by other means. This field is touched upon here by Johanna Hällsten and Gerd-Helge Vogel in their articles "Movement and Participation: Journeys within Everyday Environments" and "Mobility: The Fourth Dimension in the Fine Arts and Architecture," respectively. Hällsten describes her own art works and their relationship to mobility, especially walking, and Vogel makes a journey through art history and presents works that have dealt with mobility in one way or another.

At the same time, these activities and their artistic descriptions give rise to metaphorical expressions, which are also used in other contexts that are not literally mobile. For example, to speak of "channel surfing" or of "surfing the net" is to use a metaphor - an expression transferred from its original context to a new one^[8] - which easily evokes aesthetic aspects of the actual water sport. This aesthetics has been built up for decades by surfers themselves as well as by surfing magazines, movies, songs and the like. In studying such metaphors and more direct aesthetic notions, the task of the aesthetician is close to the kind of meta-criticism already described by Monroe C. Beardsley in his *Aesthetics, Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*. It also approaches more contemporary versions of discourse analysis and other contexts where one analyzes how aesthetic expressions are used. This, however, is hardly a separate field but rather a part of all studies in philosophical aesthetics and thus also entirely appropriate for this special volume of *Contemporary Aesthetics*.

3. Further Questions

Giving hints about where mobile aesthetics can be found is a good way to get started and suggests a number of interesting problems. . To go further, however, one has to formulate these problems better. Of course, this has already been done to a certain extent in the literature mentioned above. Here I have to settle for asking some crucial questions and leave it to the rest of the articles to offer some answers.

Some of the problems concerning the aesthetics of mobility are very theoretical (discussed in academic contexts mostly), while others are more practical (more likely to come up also in concrete decision-making situations , such as city planning). They include the following, among others[9]:

a) Where and how can aesthetics actually be detected in these contexts? In everyday-life mobility or in art that has to do with motion? In tourism? How is it possible to pinpoint the aesthetic aspects of traffic or information flow? In order to answer such questions, one has to have a well-formulated philosophical conception of aesthetics or "the aesthetic," so nicely referred to in German as *das Ästhetische*. And of course, one needs to know what is meant by mobility or movement, as well. However, this conception does not have to be a rigorous definition.

This is one point where various traditions of aesthetics differ from each other, and because there are several possibilities in proceeding, I did not actually define aesthetics at the outset of the article and will not do that now, either. One may describe aesthetics with the help of such concepts as experience, sensuousness, art and creativity, or through several other candidates, and the whole problem might be seen as a linguistic one or as some other type. There are many ways to skin the aesthetic cat. What is clear is that the aesthetics of aggressive car driving, to take one example, is rather different from the aesthetics of walking in the forest, and the aesthetician must find the best possible conceptual tools for making sense of both. The result, however, will probably differ depending on whether one writes in a Marxist, phenomenological, feminist or analytic tradition, or is from Brazil, Japan, Slovenia or Sweden. The aesthetics of mobility, like the rest of aesthetics, inevitably exists in the plural, as Karl Dahlhaus so perceptively observed in his *Musikästhetik* in 1967[10]. This is the case even within a single publication, such as issue of *Contemporary Aesthetics*.

b) Another, slightly different question is how to deal with different versions of mobile aesthetics in different traditions? Should we do so with words? What kind of words? With pictures? Moving or still pictures? With second-order movements?

This methodological question does not have a single answer, either, but it is nevertheless extremely important. It is quite obvious that conceptual and physical tools have a great impact on what we notice in the first place. A microscope shows us different things than a telescope, and pictures can convey different messages than words. They cannot replace each other. Traditionally, the majority of philosophers of aesthetics have been rather satisfied with the possibilities provided by words, and they have been suspicious, sometimes even hostile, *vis-à-vis* other ways of formulating ideas and dealing with things. Of course, this has been questioned - with words mainly! - by such thinkers as Maurice Merleau-Ponty and John Dewey, lately by Joseph Lakoff and Mark Johnson, and, in a way, initially by the founders of modern aesthetics, Alexander Baumgarten, Immanuel Kant, and by many Romantic thinkers. They have emphasized that verbally unarticulated bodily feelings, emotions and sensations do have

a role in thinking and dealing with the world in general.[\[11\]](#)

Still, the basic question remains: What is the best way, and in which context, to deal with aesthetics of mobility both in theory and in the actual experience of mobility itself, and what should the relationship between philosophy and other practices be? This is something every aesthetician of mobility has to reconsider in each case, as this issue of *Contemporary Aesthetics* demonstrates quite clearly.

c) The third question has to do with aesthetic valuations. What kind of mobility is aesthetically rewarding? Why? To whom? When? Where? And what kind is unrewarding? An aggressive car driver surely has different aesthetic valuations from a person who prefers to walk in the forest. In both cases, it is interesting to analyze what makes a way of moving aesthetically attractive. Is it the bodily feeling or something else? Moreover, it is worth pondering where and how this person, or a group of people, has learned to appreciate this particular way of moving about and what larger world view or life style his or her valuations are related to. For example, what role does individuality or aiming at harmony with nature play in one's life in general, not only in mobility or in aesthetics? And what actually causes this? One's education, the political system one has lived in or something else? What is the role of aesthetic issues in a given cultural situation? This, of course, takes aesthetics closer to the field of the muchdebated "cultural studies" than many might find tolerable.[\[12\]](#)

Here, as in previous questions, one also has to be careful to heed the difference between observing movement or mobility from outside and moving by oneself. What is aesthetically interesting for the person who is moving - a swimmer, a runner, a skater - might not be anything special for an onlooker. But an aesthetician should be able to handle both aspects of mobility.

This, and the other questions mentioned above, seem fairly theoretical, but to my mind, they should be dealt with in close connection with real-life practices and examples. I think this becomes understandable right away when one thinks about what consequences aesthetic valuations concerning mobility can have in everyday life. This leads us to the following issues.

d) How do aesthetic conceptions and valuations about, say, traffic affect our behavior? Do they, along with other factors, make us move or, in some cases, prevent us from moving? If they do, what consequences does that have? For example, if one is excited about driving a car it is evident that this aesthetic preference is destined to increase all the negative aspects of car traffic, as well: pollution, traffic accidents, rough treatment of landscapes in road building and all the various mishaps and catastrophes sometimes connected with the oil business.

On a more general level, many have been worried about the consequences of increased mobility for our very basic conceptions of the world. Especially, do we lose our sense of place by being enthralled by fast ways of moving about? And, as a consequence, do we lose the whole idea of home? Do we become blind to our physical, local environments, even if we are ultimately dependent on them? Thus, if we are enchanted by the aesthetics of speed or by the possibilities of communicating with people on the other side of the planet in real time, does this lead us to some sort of placelessness? And what happens then to our very identity? Such questions have been asked by Paul Virilio, Christian Norberg-Schulz, Miwon Kwon and Edward S. Casey.[\[13\]](#)

e) Yet another question: If our aesthetic valuations do have very concrete consequences, can and should they also be actively and strategically used in city planning, for example? If aesthetic considerations motivate us to move in a certain way, should that be steered so that, for example, the aesthetics of ecologically less harmful ways to move about are supported rather than some others? If yes, how should that be done in practice? And if that is done, would and should aesthetics be subordinated to ecology or not? Of course, here one faces the old problem of the autonomy and non-autonomy of aesthetics, now in the context of mobility combined with ecology, a problem that comes up when aesthetics approaches cultural studies, as mentioned above. Such questions pertaining to environmental and so-called applied aesthetics have been addressed by such writers as Arnold Berleant, Allen Carlson, J. Douglas Porteous and Yrjö Sepänmaa.[\[14\]](#)

f) A separate project would be to map broadly the history of aesthetics, paying special attention to mobility. How and by whom has the aesthetics of mobility been dealt with in the past, whether in academic philosophy of aesthetics, in art criticism, architecture studies or in texts written by artists? What can be used from that tradition in analyzing present day mobile aesthetics?

I have already referred to Roland Barthes, John Dewey and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who have written with insights on these matters. Many others, writing within a variety of academic traditions and of different positions of time, can only be mentioned here. Some of them have dealt with various, quite physical modes of moving about (as have many of those mentioned above) in a way that could be of interest to aesthetics. This is also why most aspects of kinetics or the branch of mechanics that deals with motion of objects and masses, for example, are not relevant in this context. Other work that is relevant can be found in such different writers as Walter Benjamin and his *Passagen-Werk* with its notes on *flâneurs*, the studies of Henri Lefebvre, Camillo Sitte and Kevin Lynch on living and moving in the city; Henry David Thoreau's and Richard Long's thoughts on walking; the reflections on dance of Jean-Georges Noverre and of more recent writers; as well as Wolfgang Schivelbusch's writings on the railway and perhaps even the more recent publications by Tim Cresswell on tramps and Howard Rheingold on the internet and mobile phones.[\[15\]](#)

Second, if one thinks especially of the relations between mobility and philosophy itself -between physical movement and ways of thinking - the works of thinkers who emphasize, more or less metaphorically, the changing, fluid or nomadic aspects of thinking and ideas are relevant. They even set the concept of aesthetics itself into motion. Here it is possible to mention two different sub-groups by which the flexible or mobile interpretations of truth, reality and other philosophically interesting concepts are opposed to idea(l)s where such concepts are seen as fixed, universal and stable. On the one hand, there are the classical and more recent (American) pragmatists, such as William James, Charles Sanders Peirce and John Dewey, as well as Richard Rorty and Richard Shusterman, whose roots go back to Charles Darwin and Ralph Waldo Emerson.[\[16\]](#) On the other, there are (European) post-structuralists or post-modernists such as Jacques Derrida and Jean-François Lyotard, as well as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, whose background lies in thinkers such as Friedrich Nietzsche and even Michel de Montaigne.[\[17\]](#) Some of these thinkers, and of others not directly pragmatist or post-modern, are dealt with in the articles that follow, while others await future treatment from the point of view of mobility.

All in all, it cannot be said that the area of mobile aesthetics is totally *terra incognita*. However, if one compares this area to many other traditional core areas of aesthetics, such as philosophy of art, it is quite evident that the discussion has not been even remotely as active and productive. There is much less material, and the discussion is often much less systematic and penetrating.

But perhaps that is a good thing. It may guarantee that the field will keep on living and moving for a long time. The fact that we live in a culture of mobility undoubtedly shapes our aesthetic culture, and aesthetic ideas and valuations have an impact on what kind of mobility culture we have. The job of philosophers and other scholars in aesthetics is to find out what to make of all this. This special volume of *Contemporary Aesthetics* shows some ways to proceed in doing that; ways that inevitably remain unelaborated in a general introduction like this.

The articles of this volume are not classified in groups. Many of the above-mentioned themes, such as traveling, roads, mobile art, walking, mobile technology and urban environments, are dealt with in several articles, and any classification would be highly arbitrary. There is a certain order for the texts, however. The first texts by Jos de Mul and Pentti Määttänen deal with rather large philosophical issues, while the questions become more specific towards the end. After the first articles, Max Ryyänen and Pasi Kolhonen's articles both deal with urban environments and Kolhonen's and Sepänmaa's texts deal with cars; these texts can be seen to form two pairs. Gerd-Helge Vogel's and Johanna Hällsten's papers, the last ones of this volume, both deal directly with art and mobility.

But now, let the articles speak for themselves.

Endnotes

[1] About aestheticization, see, e.g., Wolfgang Iser, *Ästhetisches Denken* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 1990); Wolfgang Iser, *Grenzgänge der Ästhetik* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 1996); Gerhard Schulze, *Die Erlebnisgesellschaft. Kultursoziologie der Gegenwart* (Frankfurt, New York: Campus Verlag, 1992); Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics. An Overview of Work in Progress," in *Michael Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, eds. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, second edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 229-252; Michel Foucault, *L'usage des plaisirs. Histoire de sexualité 2* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984); Michel Foucault, *Le souci de soi. Histoire de sexualité 3* (Paris, Gallimard, 1984); Luc Ferry, *Homo aestheticus. L'invention du goût à l'âge démocratique* (Paris: Grasset, 1990); Mike Featherstone, *Consumer Culture & Postmodernism* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 1994/1991); Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class, And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (Basic Books, 2002); *Die Aktualität des Ästhetischen*, ed. Wolfgang Iser (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1993); Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Scott Lasch, *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, tradition and aesthetics in the modern social order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994); and Ossi Naukkarinen, *Aesthetics of the Unavoidable. Aesthetic variations in human appearance* (Lahti: International Institute of Applied Aesthetics, 1998).

[2] Relevant statistics and other figures and facts can be found, e.g., in the following sources: Manuel Castells, *The Information Age. Economy, Society and Culture*, Vols 1-3 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996-1998); *The Rise*

of the Network Society, 1996; *The Power of Identity*, 1997; *End of Millennium*, 1998); Manuel Castells, *The Internet Galaxy. Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Peter Dicken, *Global Shift. Reshaping the Global Economic Map in the 21st Century*, fourth edition (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2003); *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 21. No. 4-5 (2004); Scott Lash & John Urry, *Economies of Signs and Space* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 1994); John Urry, *Sociology Beyond Societies. Mobilities for the Twenty-First Century* (London & New York: Routledge, 2000); John Urry, "Mobile sociology," *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 51, No.1 (2000), 185-203.

Because statistical facts go become obsolete rather quickly, several continuously updated web pages such as those of Eurostat (epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/) and Center for Mobility Research (CeMoRe) of Lancaster University (www.lancs.ac.uk/fss/sociology/cemore/index.htm) are useful.

The causes of this change form a separate topic that cannot be addressed here. The reasons must be sought in the history of technology, politics, economy, law and philosophy. I say more about this in my book *Kulkurin kaleidoskooppi [The Kaleidoscope of the tramp]*, which will appear in 2006 (Helsinki: SKS).

[3] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh. The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).

[4] Wolfgang Sachs, *For Love of the Automobile. Looking Back into the History of Our Desires* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Mimi Sheller, "Automatic Emotions. Feeling the Car," *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 21, No. 4/5 (2004), pp. 221-242; Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1957). I have dealt with tram use in Ossi Naukkarinen, "Mobile Cities. The Tram and the Uses of Urban Space," in *Place and Location III*, eds. Virve Sarapik and Kadri Tüür (Tallinn: Estonian Academy of Arts, 2003), pp. 249-261.

[5] Joseph H. Kupfer, *Experience as art. Aesthetics in everyday life* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1983); Joseph H. Kupfer, "Engaging Nature Aesthetically," *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 37, No.1, (Spring 2003), pp. 77-89; Richard Shusterman, *Practicing Philosophy. Pragmatism and the Philosophical Life* (especially chapter 6) (New York and London: Routledge, 1997). See also the double issue of *Kunstforum International* titled "Kunst und Sport" (Bds 169 and 170, März-April 2004 and Mai-Juni 2004).

[6] Wolfgang Iser, *Undoing Aesthetics*, (London: Sage, 1997); David Gelernter, *The Aesthetics of Computing* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998).

[7] Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday. A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1999); John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze. Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London, Newbury Park, New Delhi: SAGE Publications 1991/1990); Georges Van Den Abbeele, *Travel as Metaphor. From Montaigne to Rousseau* (Minneapolis, Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1992). See also the double issue of *Kunstforum International* entitled "Ästhetik des Reisens" (Bd. 136, Mai 1997) and "Atlas der Künstlerreisen" (Bd. 137, August 1997).

[8] The conception of metaphor I have in mind here is best described by Lakoff and Johnson 1999. On several other interpretations see Claes

Entzenberg, *Metaphor as a Mode of Interpretation. An Essay on Interactional and Contextual Sense-Making, Processes, Metaphorology, and Verbal Arts*. (Uppsala: Uppsala University, Department of Aesthetics, 1998).

[9] I presented a somewhat different list in my article "Aesthetics and Homo Mobilis," *Dialogue and Universalism*, Vol. XIII, No.11-12 (2003), pp. 163-176.

[10] Musikverlag Hans Gerig, Köln.

[11] John Dewey, *Experience and Nature. The Later Works, Vol. 1: 1925*. Edited by Jo Ann Boydston, with an introduction by Sidney Hook (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press 1981/1925); John Dewey, *Art as Experience. The Later Works, Vol. 10: 1934*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, with an introduction by Abraham Kaplan (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987/1934); Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945); Lakoff and Johnson 1999; Alexander Baumgarten, *Reflections on Poetry. Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus*, translated, with the original text, an introduction, and notes, by Karl Aschenbrenner and William B. Holther (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1954/1735); Hans Rudolf Schweizer, *Ästhetik als Philosophie der sinnlichen Erkenntnis. Eine Interpretation der Aesthetica A.G. Baumgartens mit teilweiser Wiedergabe des lateinischen Textes und deutscher Übersetzung* (Basel/Stuttgart: Schwabe & Co Verlag, 1973); Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Stuttgart: Philip Reclam jun., 1991/1790); Jos De Mul, *Romantic Desire in (Post)modern Art & Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999/1990); Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: from Kant to Nietzsche* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993/1990).

[12] On the somewhat tense relations between aesthetics and cultural studies, in the US especially, see *The Aesthetics of Cultural Studies*, ed. Michael Bérubé (Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

[13] Paul Virilio, *La Vitesse de libération* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1995); Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place. Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993); Miwon Kwon, "The Wrong Place" (26.5.2005: www.findarticles.com; *Art Journal*, Spring 2000); Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci. Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1980/1979).

[14] Arnold Berleant, *The Aesthetics of Environment* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), *Living in the Landscape* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), and *Aesthetics and Environment, Theme and Variations* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2005); Allen Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000); J. Douglas Porteous, *Environmental Aesthetics. Ideas, Politics and Planning* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996); Yrjö Sepänmaa, *The Beauty of Environment* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1986); Yrjö Sepänmaa, "Applied Aesthetics," in *Art and Beyond. Finnish Approaches to Aesthetics*, ed. Ossi Naukkarinen and Olli Immonen (Lahti: International Institute of Applied Aesthetics, 1995), pp. 226-248.

[15] Walter Benjamin, *Das Passagen-Werk*, hrsg. von Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983/1929-1940); Henri Lefebvre, *Production de l'espace* (Paris, Anthropos, 2000/1974) ; Kevin Lynch, *What Time is this Place?* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1972);

Camillo Sitte, *Die Städte-Bau nach seinem künstlerischen Grundsätzen* (Wien: Verlag von Carl Graeser, 1889); Henry David Thoreau, "Walking," *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 1862; Richard Long, *Walking in Circles* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991); Jean-Georges Noverre, *Letters on Dancing and Ballets* (Alton: Dance Books, translated by Cyril W. Beaumont, 2004/1760); Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Geschichte der Eisenbahnreise. Zur Industrialisierung von Raum und Zeit im 19. Jahrhundert* (München, Wien: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1977); Tim Cresswell, *The Tramp in America* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001); Howard Rheingold, *Smart Mobs. The Next Social Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Perseus Publishing, 2002).

[16] The works of James, Peirce and Dewey have been edited as collected works: *The Works of William James*, ed. Frederick H. Burkhardt (Cambridge, Mass.; Harvard University Press, 1975-1988) consists of 19 volumes; *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne et al. (Cambridge, Mass.; Harvard University Press 1931-1966) has 8 volumes; and Dewey's *The Early Works* (1882-1898), *The Middle Works* (1899-1924) and *The Later Works* (1925-1953), ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967-1983) includes 37 volumes. Richard Rorty's pragmatism is best known for his books *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980) and *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980) and Richard Shusterman has contributed in his *Pragmatist Aesthetics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992) and in the book mentioned above in endnote 5. Of many overviews on the field, one could mention the following: *Pragmatism*, ed. Russell B. Goodman (London and New York, Routledge, 1995); Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club* (London: Flamingo 2002/2001) and H.O.Mounce, *The Two Pragmatisms. From Peirce to Rorty* (London and New York, Routledge, 1997).

[17] For example: Jacques Derrida, *La vérité en peinture* (Paris: Flammarion, 1978); Jean-François Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1979); Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie* (Paris: Éditions de minuit, 2 vols. 1972 and 1980). Of the innumerable overviews published since the late 1970's and early 1980's on post-structuralist and/or postmodern and/or deconstructionist thinkers one can mention Steven Connor's *Postmodernist Culture: an introduction to theories of the contemporary* (Oxford, Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1997) and Wolfgang Iser's *Unsere postmoderne Moderne, Dritte Auflage* (Weinheim: VCH, Acta Humaniora, 1991).

Ossi Naukkarinen

School of Visual Culture

University of Art and Design Helsinki

Hämeentie 135 C

00560 Helsinki

Finland

ossi.naukkarinen@uiah.fi

Published December 21, 2005