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Recent Publications

Contemporary Aesthetics does not publish book reviews. However, to inform our readers of new publications of interest, we do publish brief descriptions from information provided by the publishers. Readers are invited to send us such information about books they think will interest other readers of *CA*.

Hilde Hein, *Public Art: Thinking Museums Differently*, (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2006).

A museum is an agent, not a repository; and like public art, it interacts constructively with passing and transitory publics. *Public Art* acknowledges the trend among contemporary museums to promote participatory and processual exhibition strategies meant to elicit subjective experience, while it also valorizes the object-oriented tradition that has long differentiated museums from other institutions similarly committed to public service and the perpetuation of cultural values. Hein draws upon a movement towards ephemerality and impermanence in public art, and she proposes a new dynamic for the museum that is temporal and pluralistic, while retaining a grounding in material things. The book's six chapters include "The Experiential Museum," "Public Art: History and Meaning," "Fitting Old Museums to a New Paradigm."

Paul Locher, Colin Martindale, and Leonid Dorfman, editors, *New Directions in Aesthetics, Creativity and the Arts* (Amityville, NY: Baywood, 2006).

The contributing authors to this book discuss the processes that underlie creativity and aesthetic experience, including established theory and research, creative speculation on future problems for inquiry, and new approaches to conceptualizing and investigation. Part I covers the nature of the perceptual/cognitive and aesthetic processes that occur during encounters with visual art stimuli in everyday settings, in museums, and while watching films, as well as how cultural anthropological approaches contribute to our understanding of a culture's artistic canon. Part II presents new dimensions in the study of creativity. Part III deals with the application of concepts and models from cognitive psychology to the study of music, literary meaning, and the visual arts. Part IV focuses on the interactive contribution of observers' personalities and affect states to the creation and perception of art.

Allan Casebier, *A New Theory in the Philosophy and History of Three Twentieth-Century Styles in Art: Modernism, Postmodernism, and Surrealism* (Ceredigion, Wales: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006).

This book provides a comprehensive explanation of the much-used distinction between modernist and postmodernist art, laying out a conceptual map of the terrain in which the distinction functions. In addition, it explains how to identify surrealist art from its opposing styles, while providing many illustrations in explaining these three dominant artistic styles of the twentieth century. This work will be useful to academic

readers in history of the arts, cinema and art history; theorists and students of literature and film; and general readers in the history of the arts.

David B. Greene, *Music in Search of Itself: Essays on Music about Music* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006).

Many contemporary composers and music critics say that all music written in the past quarter century is music in search of an understanding of itself. This book tries to deepen the understanding of music about music, as well as music itself, in four ways. First, it puts music's own self-understanding onto an equal footing with philosophical aesthetics of music. Its subjects pieces of music about music to detailed analysis, and puts the statements about the nature of music that emerge from these analyses into conversation with philosophical statements about music. Second, it investigates whether and in what way the concept of reflexive music makes sense, and to what extent music about music is possible. Third, it inquires into the need for music to search for itself, and evaluates the connection between this need and the European fascination and then disillusion with the concept of aesthetic experience. Fourth, it brings to the surface a sense, embedded in music's self-understanding, that there are severe limits to the meaningfulness of music in general, thus it is impossible for music about music to be fully meaningful.

Caffyn Kelley, *Art and Survival: Patricia Johanson's Environmental Projects*

(Canada: [Islands Institute](#), 2006, distributed by [r.a.m. publications](#)). Introduction by Lucy Lippard.

Johanson works with engineers, city planners, scientists and citizens' groups to create her art as functioning infrastructure for modern cities. Johanson's graceful designs for sewers, highways, parks and other functional projects link fragmented ecosystems and create conditions that allow endangered species to thrive.

Art and Survival covers all of Johanson's major public projects and looks at some of their implications for art, architecture, landscape design and urban planning. In addition, it features Johanson's early, prophetic designs and large-scale Minimalist paintings and sculptures from the 1960s. Stories of Johanson's personal history and her creative development, together with drawings, reflections and ideas to inspire younger artists, make this book an informative creative resource.

180 pages with 160 illustrations; includes an introduction by Lucy R. Lippard.

Daniel Meyer-Dinkgrafe, editor, *The Future of Beauty in Theatre, Literature and the Arts*(Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, December 2005).

The twelve essays presented in this book provide a broad basis for a thorough reassessment of the European traditions of beauty in the fine arts, performing arts, media arts, literature and film. This is done not as a return to some distant and allegedly ideal past, but as a constructive means of realizing the potential of the arts for the twenty-first century. The book also provides an overview of the concept of

beauty as it has emerged in scholarly discourse, is written for those involved with the arts and does not presuppose prior knowledge of philosophical aesthetics.

Tim Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History* (Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity, 2005).

In this work the author suggests some different ways of accounting for literary modernism in cultural terms. It considers the experience of time and modernity; market culture; the discourse of reform across the areas ranging from sexology to politics; the study of sensation and consciousness; science, pseudo-science and technology; and cultural encounter. As a short study of a huge phenomenon, the explorations of the field are broad and selective, using suggestive examples over detail. The author attempts to place canonical modernism and its mythology into dialogue with the broader field of modernist writers in English.

Noël Carroll & Jinhee Choi, editors, *The Philosophy of Film: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).

This anthology presents key selections from contemporary work in philosophy of film and is designed for classroom use. The volume's eight sections are each introduced by the editors, and cover the nature of film; film as art; documentary cinema; narration and emotion in film; film criticism; and film's relation to knowledge and morality. Addressing assumptions including the objectivity of documentary film and questions surrounding the viewing of pornography, the text uses examples and discussion of moving pictures throughout.

Stephen Davies, *The Philosophy of Art* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).

This book provides a through account of the core topics in contemporary philosophy of art: the interpretation of art; the relation between art, culture and our evolutionary heritage; the expression and arousal of emotion through art; the nature of pictorial representation; traditional definitions and conceptions of art and aesthetics; the challenges posed by varieties of art across time and cultures; and puzzles about the value of art.

Paul Guyer, *Values of Beauty: Historical Essays in Aesthetics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Values of Beauty covers major ideas and figures in the history of aesthetics, from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the end of the twentieth century. The essays emphasize the complexity rather than isolation of our aesthetic experience of both nature and art. They reveal the interconnection of aesthetic values such as beauty and sublimity, as well as prudential and moral values.

Tom Turner, *Garden History: Philosophy and Design 2000 BC-2000 AD* (New York: Routledge, December 2004).

This book explores more than 150 gardens spanning 40 centuries of western garden design, beginning in Egypt and West Asia moving northward to Europe and ending in the Americas. *Garden History* takes on a tour of gardens, garden design, and the reasons for making gardens throughout the

centuries. Turner traces the evolution of garden design, addressing the ideas and historical conditions, while showing how differing social, artistic, philosophical, religious, geographical and historical factors have governed the creation of gardens for the past 40 centuries.

Ecological Aesthetics. Art in Environmental Design: Theory and Practice (Basel, Berlin, Boston: Birkhäuser Verlag für Architektur, 2004).

Ecological Aesthetics concentrates on the question: To what extent and in what way can artists today participate actively in mental, social and environmental-ecological questions and problems? The main focus of the book lies in the design of cultural landscapes. We are faced today with fundamental practical issues about creative work on the environment, the space around us, the landscape. What sort of landscape do we want? How do we want to shape our relationship with nature? Can there be sustainable landscape planning?

Ecological Aesthetics provides a comprehensive overview over the past 30 years of artistic environmental design. It presents the historical development of the theory and practice of ecological aesthetics, combining an extensive collection of essays with an art book. In some 20 essays, German and international artists, landscape architects, philosophers of art and culture, natural scientists and politicians elaborate, each from her or his perspective and discipline, on the theory of ecological aesthetics. Over 300 pictures provide a comprehensive overview over 35 years of works by European, American and Asian artists and landscape architects.

The book also documents the artistic oeuvre of the German artist Hermann Prigann, one of the pioneers of "Ecological Art." As his individual artistic development is at the same time characteristic of the general development of art in landscape, his different groups of works also provide the basic structure for the book. Together with more than 100 work examples of other European, American and Asian artists and landscape architects, the book shows new ways towards sustainable landscape design. It shows how seemingly contrary approaches like ecology and aesthetic can be combined.