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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 extracted from information provided by the publishers. These notices do not necessarily represent the views or judgment of this journal. Readers are invited to send us such information about books they think will interest other readers of *CA*.

### New Journal

*Aesthetic Pathways*, eds. Gerald Cipriani and Arto Haapala (Airiti Press, Winter 2010).

The purpose of the journal is to encourage and promote research in the type of aesthetics that draws inspiration from the phenomenological tradition broadly understood, that is, in the sense of reflection on, or within the relationship between meaning and experience. Importantly, more than a narrowly defined theoretical framework, the field of *Aesthetic Pathways* is here defined in its close connections with the arts and culture as a whole, including the reality of human experience. Besides philosophical rigor, the journal puts emphasis on both creativity of ideas and precision of language. To this effect, a balance in the types of publications is sought between analyses of phenomenological works (e.g. academic studies on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *The Eye and the Mind*) and experimental phenomenological writing (e.g. Merleau-Ponty's *The Eye and the Mind*).

The language of the journal is English, but submissions in French and German might be considered for Special Issues with Guest Editors. The Editorial Board is composed of world authorities, academics, and younger scholars specializing in the fields of philosophy, aesthetics, cultural and art studies. Members of the Board come from Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania.

The first issue by invited contributors will be launched in Winter 2010. Subsequent issues will follow public calls for papers. Submissions are encouraged from all areas of philosophical aesthetics that discuss topics in the various artistic and cultural spheres, as well as issues concerning the natural environment.

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Crispin Sartwell, *Political Aesthetics* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2010), 270 pp.  
ISBN 9780801448904

Juxtaposing and connecting the art of states and the art of art historians with vernacular or popular arts such as reggae and hip hop, Crispin Sartwell examines the reach and claims of

political aesthetics. Most analysts focus on politics as discursive systems, privileging text and reducing other forms of expression to the merely illustrative. He suggests that we need to take much more seriously the aesthetic environment of political thought and action. Sartwell argues that graphic style, music, and architecture are more than the propaganda arm of political systems; they are its constituents.

Sartwell brings together the disciplines of political science and political philosophy, philosophy of art and art history, in a new way, clarifying basic notions of aesthetics—beauty, sublimity, and representation—and applying them in a political context. A general argument about the fundamental importance of political aesthetics is interspersed with a group of stimulating case studies as disparate as Leni Riefenstahl's films and Black Nationalist aesthetics, the Dead Kennedys and Jeffersonian architecture.

*Philosophers on Art from Kant to the Postmodernists*, edited by Christopher Kul-Want (Columbia University Press, 2010), 376 pp. ISBN: 978-0-231-14095-9 ISBN: 978-0-231-14094-2

This collection brings together twenty-five texts on art written by twenty philosophers. Covering the Enlightenment to postmodernism, these essays draw on Continental philosophy and aesthetics, the Marxist intellectual tradition, and psychoanalytic theory, and each is accompanied by an overview and interpretation. The volume includes Martin Heidegger on Van Gogh's shoes and the meaning of the Greek temple; Georges Bataille on Salvador Dalí's *The Lugubrious Game*; Theodor W. Adorno on capitalism and collage; Walter Benjamin and Roland Barthes on the uncanny nature of photography; Sigmund Freud on Leonardo Da Vinci and his interpreters; Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva on the paintings of Holbein; Freud's postmodern critic, Gilles Deleuze on the visceral paintings of Francis Bacon; and Giorgio Agamben on the twin traditions of the Duchampian ready-made and Pop Art. Kul-Want elucidates these texts with essays on aesthetics, from Hegel and Nietzsche to Badiou and Rancière, demonstrating how philosophy adopted a new orientation toward aesthetic experience and subjectivity in the wake of Kant's powerful legacy.

Chan-fai Cheung, *Kairos: Phenomenology and Photography* (Zeta Books, 2010), 200 pp.  
ISBN: 978-988-18777-1-0 (paperback)  
ISBN: 978-976-1997-54-4 (ebook)

If photography is considered as art, then the clicking of the shutter by the conscientious photographer for a particular phenomenon through his photographic seeing is what Cartier-Bresson called "the decisive moment", i.e., *kairos*. Chan-fai Cheung presents the results of his application of phenomenology to photography in this collection, with essays by Hans Rainer Sepp and Kwok-ying Lau and over 200 creative photographic works—his products of *kairos*.

Galen A. Johnson, *Retrieval of the Beautiful, The Thinking Through Merleau-Ponty's Aesthetics* (NU Press, 2010), 300 pp.  
ISBN 0-8101-2566-8

Galen Johnson retrieves the concept of the beautiful through the framework of Merleau-Ponty's aesthetics. Although Merleau-Ponty seldom spoke directly of beauty, his philosophy is essentially about the beautiful. Flesh is the term at which Merleau-Ponty arrived to replace Substance, Matter, or Life as the name of Being. In Johnson's formulation, the ontology of Flesh as element and the ontology of the Beautiful as elemental are folded together, for Desire, Love, and Beauty are part of the fabric of the world's element, Flesh itself. Merleau-Ponty's "Eye and Mind" is at the core of the book, so Johnson engages, as Merleau-Ponty did, the writings and visual work of Paul Cézanne, Auguste Rodin, and Paul Klee, as well as Rilke's commentary on Cézanne and Rodin. From these widely varying aesthetics emerge the fundamental themes of the retrieval of the beautiful: desire, repetition, difference, rhythm, and the sublime. The third part of Johnson's book takes each of these up in turn, bringing Merleau-Ponty's aesthetic thinking into dialogue with classical philosophy as well as Sartre, Heidegger, Nietzsche, and Deleuze. Johnson concludes with a direct dialogue with Kant, Merleau-Ponty, and Lyotard on the subject of the beautiful and the sublime.

*Invitation to ArchiPhen, Some Approaches and Interpretations of Phenomenology in Architecture*, eds. Iris Aravot & Eran Neuman (Bucharest, Romania: Zeta Books, March 2010), 60 pp.

ISBN: 978-973-1997-36-0 (paperback)

ISBN: 978-973-1997-37-7 (ebook)

ArchiPhen is simultaneously architecture and phenomenology, architecture's phenomenology, phenomenology in architecture. Phenomenology is rooted in the first person perspective and seeks inter-subjectivity, the shared cognition that shapes our ideas and relationships with the world surrounding us. The study of phenomenology may inform architectural discourse by borrowing from phenomenological philosophers, by implementing phenomenological thought in architectural making, analysis, and interpretation, and by applying phenomenology, as radical empiricism, to the realm of architecture. This publication is of short, illustrated essays by participants in the Architecture and Phenomenology Conference, held at the Technion, Israel Institute of Technology in May 2007. It intends to provide an accessible entrance into the field of architecture and phenomenology.

*Asian Aesthetics*, ed. Ken-ichi Sasaki (Singapore: Kyoto University Press, 2010), 309 pp.  
ISBN 78-4-87698793-1

While the artistic traditions of the various countries of East, Southeast and South Asia display distinctive aesthetic features, this volume examines the qualities of each area and

seeks commonalities that define the aesthetics of a broader Asian civilization. Contributors include specialists in philosophy, literature, art history, religion and the comparative study of cultures. Some are writing from within their own cultural traditions while others approach their subjects as outside observers.

The book is divided into five sections, dealing with Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Indian, and Southeast Asian aesthetics. Individual chapters provide in-depth investigations of specific traditions, embracing both classical as well as modern aesthetic forms. The authors suggest that Japanese culture is characterized by an openness to diverse cultural influences, Korean culture by "peninsularity," Chinese culture by parallels with the West, Indian culture by "rasa" (a kind of "cosmic" feeling that is distinct from the one who feels), and Southeast Asian culture by dilemmas of modernization. The volume as a whole integrates these studies, clarifying essential elements of each aesthetic culture and drawing on this material to characterize an Asian civilization that transcends individual countries and cultures.

*Art and Social Change*, ed. Curtis L. Carter (International Yearbook of Aesthetics, 2009), Volume 13, 212 pp.  
ISBN 978-1-61658-398-9

Philosophers from ancient times to the present have commented on the role of the arts in society. However, a gap remains in the discussion of art and social change in recent contemporary philosophical aesthetics. This volume, *Art and Social Change*, represents an effort to address the gap by considering both historical and contemporary aspects of the question of art's role in social change for the twenty-first century. The authors have provided original essays that reflect diverse views of scholars in aesthetics both East and West. The essays address the influence of artists and art on social change and also reflect the effects of shifts in ideology, politics, and technology on changes in the practices and understanding of the arts. The subjects include art as a catalyst for social action, reciprocal relations between aesthetics and politics, changes brought about by globalization of the art world, the impact of changing technologies such as digital communications, feminist aesthetics, and arts and education.

### **Science Exhibitions: Curation & Design: Communication & Evaluation**

January 2010 saw the launching of two major new publications that examine how best to disseminate science to the public through a variety of new and traditional media. Together, the more than forty essays they contain provide a stimulating overview of new, innovative and successful initiatives in this field, written by many of the museum community's most experienced and thoughtful practitioners. The essays draw on cutting-edge experience throughout the world, with contributions from Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Japan, Mexico, Portugal, Singapore, and New Zealand,

as well as from the UK and USA. The book is edited by Dr. Anastasia Filippoupoliti, Lecturer in Museum Education at the Democritus University of Thrace, Greece. She writes, "In this book, I wanted to examine the narratives generated in science exhibitions and tackle some of the challenges museums experience in transforming scientific concepts or events into three-dimensional exhibits."

The two publications, *Science Exhibitions: Curation & Design* and *Science Exhibitions: Communication & Evaluation*, are available either separately or together. For full details please visit: [www.museumsetc.com/?p=2175](http://www.museumsetc.com/?p=2175)

Scharfstein, Ben-Ami. *Art without Borders: A Philosophical Exploration of Art and Humanity* (Chicago University Press, 2009). Extensive notes and index.

The first chapter of *Art without Borders* opens with a discussion of why there is art, and then uses an analysis of awareness, sight, memory, and preference to establish an aesthetic theory open enough to apply to the world's various art traditions. The second chapter is devoted to an analytic description of "Selfless Tradition" especially in "tribal," Chinese, and European art. This is followed by a chapter on "Egocentric Innovation" in Islam, Europe, China, India, and Africa. The next chapter, "Intersecting Worlds and Identities," takes up the mutual influence and conflict among the different art traditions, the weakening and recrudescence of these traditions, and the creation of art among modern "primitives." The final chapter, on "The Common Universe of Aesthetic Discourse," deals with the likeness of perception and emotion among humans, with the techniques for the relatively objective judgment of art, and with the criteria for distinguishing between local and universal art. Then comes a brief exposition and comparison of the basic aesthetic theories of the West, Africa, India, China, and Africa. The final reflections take up speculations on the unity of world art. These are essential to grasp art as a whole, but they can never be quite adequate because they have to be tempered by the realization of the irreducible uniqueness of the examples on which they are based. Key terms include art, world art, open aesthetics, anthropology of art, neuroaesthetics, awareness, tradition, egocentricity, Aboriginal art, Western Art, African art, Indian art, Chinese art, Japanese art, objective judgment, unity of art, abstract generalization, and individual uniqueness.

Berleant, Arnold. *Sensibility and Sense The Aesthetic Transformation of the Human World* (Imprint Academic, 2010), 232 pp.  
ISBN 9781845400767  
ISBN 9781845401733.

Aesthetic sensibility rests on perceptual experience and characterizes not only our experience of the arts but our experience of the world. *Sensibility and Sense* offers a philosophically comprehensive account of humans' social and cultural embeddedness encountered, recognized, and fulfilled

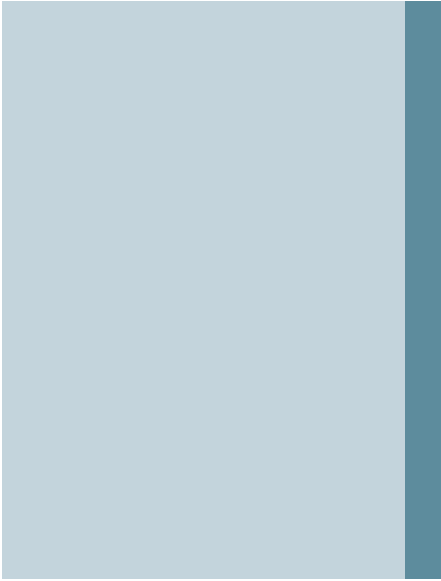
as an aesthetic mode of experience. Extending the range of aesthetic experience from the stone of the earth's surface to the celestial sphere, the book focuses on the aesthetic as a dimension of social experience. The guiding idea of pervasive interconnectedness, both social and environmental, leads to an aesthetic critique of the urban environment, the environment of daily life, and of terrorism, and has profound implications for grounding social and political values. The aesthetic emerges as a powerful critical tool for appraising urban culture and political practice.

Snævarr, Stéfan. *Metaphors, Narratives, Emotions: Their Interplay and Impact*, (Amsterdam- New York, NY: Rodopi, 2010), 398pp. ISBN 978-420-2779-4.

This book argues that there is a complex epistemological interplay between the concepts of metaphor, narrative, and emotions. First, all three are constituted by aspect-seeing, the seeing-as or perception of Gestalts. Second, all three are meaning-endowing devices, helping us to furnish our world with meaning. Third, the threesome constitutes a trinity. Emotions have both a narrative and metaphoric structure, and we can analyze of metaphors and narratives partly in each other's terms. Fourth, the threesome has an impact on our rationality. Their cognitive roles suggest a richer notion of rationality than has traditionally been held, a rationality enlivened with metaphoric, narrative, and emotive qualities.

*Handbook of Phenomenological Aesthetics*, (Springer, 2010). Contributions to Phenomenology, Vol. 59, eds. Sepp, Hans Rainer; Embree, L. 383 pp. ISBN: 978-90-481-2470-1

Phenomenology and aesthetics are intimately related, giving great potential to the pursuit of phenomenological aesthetics. This is the first work thoroughly to show its breadth, depth, and continuing fecundity. It is comprised of essays on individuals, almost exclusively European, who have made important contributions in this area, as well as on many topics central in aesthetics and phenomenology. The principal figures receive substantial treatment and include Moritz Geiger, Roman Ingarden, Fritz Kaufmann, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Mikel Dufrenne. There also are entries for over a score of other influential scholars, including Antonio Banfi, Simone de Beauvoir, Oskar Becker, Jacques Derrida, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Martin Heidegger, Michel Henry, Dietrich von Hildebrand, Maurice Natanson, Nishida Kitaro, Jose Ortega y Gasset, Jan Patocka, Paul Ricoeur, Heinrich Rombach, Max Scheler, Alfred Schutz, Gustav Spet, and France Veber. In addition, over two dozen essays treat such topics such as dream, empathy, enjoyment, imagination, sensation; style, ecology, gender, and interculturality; and also arts, including architecture, film, and theater. The introduction provides an extensive sketch of the history of phenomenological investigation in aesthetics. All entries have bibliographies and the volume includes a selected bibliography for the whole. This handbook is a foundational contribution to continued investigation in aesthetics from a phenomenological perspective. It is a unique reference work and an invaluable



resource for the field.

Van den Braembussche , A . *Thinking Art* (Free University of Brussels: 2009), 326 pp.

In the twentieth century, avant-garde movements pushed the concept of art far beyond its traditional boundaries, and thinking about art as a legitimizing practice has become prominent. However, most books on aesthetics do not join systematic philosophical discourse with an exploration of art practice. *Thinking Art* attempts to do this by combining an accessible, systematic account of classical, modern and postmodern theories of art with the work of artists that illustrate the relevance of the theory. Each chapter ends with a discussion of relevant literature. *Thinking Art* shows how to create fruitful cross-fertilization between theory and practice.