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## The Third Tear in Everyday Aesthetics

Katya Mandoki

### Abstract

Although totally overlooked by mainstream aesthetic theory, various paths were nevertheless left open for addressing everyday aesthetics, a natural yet surprisingly controversial topic. Why they were never taken until recently, when the theme of everyday aesthetics is now becoming fashionable, can be explained not only by the obvious fact of philosophical aesthetics' restrictive focal point on art but, among other reasons, by a kind of fetishism that demands an object of recognized value for legitimating an aesthetic inquiry. This new popularity entails, however, certain theoretical risks such as clinging to traditional art-centric and beauty-centric categories to explain the everyday and borrowing their concepts uncritically. In this paper I will examine some of these paths and risks with special emphasis on current events which exude aesthetics throughout their pores and require attention from this discipline.

### Key Words

advertisement, category mistakes, everyday aesthetics, kitsch, pragmatism, propaganda, prosaics, religious rituals, sensibility

### 1. Introduction [1]

Everyday aesthetics, as the array behaviors, values, and preferences related to human sensibility, has been practiced throughout the historical development of each and every culture. Already a million and a half years ago, *Homo erectus* or *Homo ergaster* manufactured Acheulean stone hand axes not for utility alone, leaving testimony of a feeling for symmetry, dexterity, and grace that still has a power to captivate us today. Material cultures in the most diverse social and natural settings testify to this absolutely intimate relation between the aesthetic and the everyday in body painting and ritual dances, in funerary and agrarian ceremonies, in carved and decorated utensils, in embroidered and colorful clothing, through vernacular clay, stone, and wood dwellings up to the most sophisticated and complex artworks. Artists have been constantly aware of this role of aesthetics in everyday life and expressed it eloquently through all artistic languages: incorporating acoustically nature's sounds and daily songs in music; verbally depicting everyday situations, feelings and tribulations in literature and theater, or visually enhancing the grace of animals, the grandeur of space or the sheer materiality of clothes and domestic items by painters like Vermeer, Van Eyck, Velazquez, among many others.

As an important field of interest, however, it is surprising how long it took aesthetics to seriously and theoretically address the everyday, despite of the fact that various paths had been open in this direction by important philosophical schools. To begin with, Socrates' deliberation on beauty began taking a chariot wheel, a vase, and a lady as cases in point when discussing with Hippias. David Hume considered problems of taste in quite general, not exclusively artistic, terms. The dramatic character of some landscapes was behind Kant's idea of the sublime. His pre-critical reflections on beauty and the sublime were dedicated not only to art but to an everyday if stereotyped and sometimes hilarious view of various ethnic groups. Already at the beginning of the twentieth century Max Dessoir and Emil Utitz marked a distinction between *Ästhetik* as a theory of beauty and *Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* a General Science of Art.[2] This division was not particularly helpful for an everyday aesthetic, but it certainly cooperated in making a distinction between aesthetics and art theory. It was John Dewey who, more directly, acknowledged the rhythms, energies, doings and undergoings of everyday life as the basis for more elaborate artistic

experience.[3] His view, from a pragmatist perspective, was very complex, also involving biological considerations.

Recent attention to everyday aesthetics mainly consists in selecting certain everyday items and categories for their contemplative suitability according to their conformity to the standards of beauty in traditional, mostly Western aesthetics. The novelty now consists in including for aesthetic discourse and official museum exhibits non-artistic items, such as chic design and fashion objects, mass-produced collectibles, settings and landscapes, vintage articles, and traditional exotic or popular vernacular crafts. Others include personal experiences in walking through a lane, musing, or enjoying a particular task. Everyday aesthetics, seen from this perspective, points at the pleasure potential these multiple objects and actions can offer, particularly to those best acquainted with the trends in the art world, and assesses their beauty and value accordingly. If aesthetics is now defined as a road for well being and a question of pleasure, why not consider it part of the discipline of hedonics, as Kahneman, Diener and Schwarz have named it?[4]

If aesthetics is to be confined to this single category of beauty, I often wondered, why not honor language, such an efficient tool for bridging minds, and give it its proper name? I suggest 'Beautology' or more elegantly, 'Omorphology' or 'Kallology.' In fact, nothing in the term 'aesthetic' itself implies the concept of beauty nor any particular value or act of judgment. This association of the aesthetic with beauty and the judgment of taste appears to have developed from a disloyal reading of Kant, who clearly distinguished two kinds of judgments: the teleological, which is an objective judgment, and the aesthetic, which is subjective. Kant dedicated a great part of his third *Critique* to discuss beauty, the arts, and the sublime. Even if it appears to be an oxymoron, he was looking for a standard to objective subjective judgments. He never defined aesthetics as a theory of beauty or of judgment but the other way round: he defined certain judgments as aesthetic *because* they are subjective.

"The judgment of taste is, therefore, not a judgment of knowledge; thus, it is not logical, but aesthetic, if we understand by this that the determining base of which cannot be but *subjective*. If in a judgment [...the representations ...] are only referred to the *subject* (his feeling), this judgment is always aesthetic." [5]

Moreover, aesthetics was never only about artworks, things, possessions, objects, artifacts, neither etymologically nor in its theoretical foundation. Even art does not consist solely of objects, as Berleant clearly emphasizes this "unquestioned and inviolable dogma." [6] It originally was about aisthesis: *scientia cognitionis sensitivae*. In his unfinished yet foundational Latin work *Aesthetica* (1750), Baumgarten clearly separated the first part, *Aesthetica Theoretica*, from the *Aesthetica Practica*, and partially developed only the former that was to consist of *Heuristica*, *Methodologia*, and *Semiotica*. [7] Its subject matter was not art or beauty but the faculty of sensibility as "inferior knowledge" derived from our corporeal senses. To some extent this mistaken synonymy of aesthetics and art may have developed from his best known work on poetry, *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* which, by the way, is more interesting from a semiotic than an aesthetic perspective. [8] It is regrettable that even a field which initially emerged around the inquiry of aisthesis dealing with processes involved in experiencing, sensing, perceiving (all occurring by definition only in subjects), has been seized by this widespread object-centrism.

## 2. The Best of All Possible Artworlds

Some scholars hold on fast and hard to their Panglossianism by assuming that aesthetics deals only with the best of all possible experiences in this best of all possible artworlds. They insist on the exclusive authority conveyed upon a select few for judging what should or should not be appreciated, approved, or censured for lack or for possession of a specific kind of value: the so-called "aesthetic

value" (a concept still missing an operative and clear definition). As I mentioned, such a view presupposes the aesthetic as an honorific title conferred upon objects for their gratification potential. As the discipline opens up a little to encompass discussion on non-artistic topics, we are now allowed to judge, enjoy, and confer such aesthetic title to these other artifacts as long as we leave the beauto-centric and object-centric foundation intact. At some point, we will have no other choice but to hire our own private aesthetician to instruct us on the appropriateness or impropriety of appreciating not only artworks but now also everyday objects. We all want to be aesthetically correct, don't we?

As part of this aesthetic Panglossianism one can say that there seems to be a consensus around a kind of "*categorical agreement with being*" in Milan Kundera's words. This means that "the aesthetic ideal of the *categorical agreement with being* is a world in which faeces are denied and everyone acts as if they do not exist. This aesthetic ideal is called kitsch." Kundera asserts that "kitsch is the absolute negation of faeces; in a literal and figurative sense, kitsch eliminates from its point of view everything that in human existence is essentially unacceptable." [9]

The new trend in everyday aesthetics appears to be going in a direction in which certain objects are selected by their potential for supplying contemplative, pleasing results. If they do, according to the art institution's criteria, they pass the discipline's test and are conferred the title of "aesthetic" in a peculiar combination of the hedonistic and judgmental view of this field. This practice of indexing, cataloging, and presenting certain objects as candidates for appreciation to a select group of experts and appraisers defines the artworld, as Danto and Dickie have extensively argued.[10]

It is reasonable that art, as an opportunity for a hard-to-please audience's recreation and as a juicy business for investors and speculators in the art market, demands experts for calculating the value of their assets, as well as estimating the artistic patrimony of museums and similar institutions. Marketing and design would also be significantly interested in aestheticians' contributions to a better understanding of likes and dislikes held by diverse sectors of a given society in order to secure investments and devise efficient baits for consumption. Yet aesthetics need not be confined to evaluating objects.

### **3. A Categorical Agreement with Being**

Aesthetics as a discipline has been committed to such a "*categorical agreement with being*" for 250 years by confining itself to highlight beauty (apart from a very few exceptions) despite the fact that artistic production has explored and expressed a much wider variety of categories, not precisely beauty: the monstrous, the ridiculous, the absurd, the bizarre, the uncanny, the pathetic, the glorious, the cute, the cool, the glossy. There is nothing wrong with enjoying the delights of beauty, but we must acknowledge that, in structuring experience, the aesthetic may be triggered also, and often much more intensively, by the bleakness in supermarkets, the sordid quality of cheap hotels and grimy bars, the revolting aspect of city slums, the starkness of public schools and hospitals, a sort of creepiness in parking lots, the oppressive storing and piling up of human beings in massive orthogonal multifamily modular compounds and other equally hostile environments so widespread in contemporary urban life.

There is no need to spoil the party for those who maintain aesthetics exclusively as the theory of beauty and of proper and correct judgments of taste. But to restrict aesthetics to this self-gratifying task may perhaps be comparable to reducing medical practice to plastic surgery.

Trying to understand how was it possible that a civilized, educated society that enabled such minds and sensibilities as Bach's, Kant's, Goethe's, Beethoven's and those of numerous outstanding artists and scholars and yet was capable of inconceivable atrocities (a question raised by George Steiner in *Bluebeard's*

*Castle*) took me to first come to terms with the key role non-artistic aesthetics acquired during the nazification of Germany.<sup>[11]</sup> Although Nazi art, specifically its leader's, excelled in kitsch, I am referring to the aesthetic display through the whole paraphernalia designed by Speer, Goebbels, Riefenstahl and their *Führer* which includes NASDAP ceremonies, swastikas, goose-step marches and stiff salutes, uniforms, enormous banners, songs, films, slogans, massive assemblies, flags, monumental architecture, theatricalizations, school rituals, weapon display, military and State-organized pageants and the like.<sup>[12]</sup> This reality necessarily forces us to recognize the crucial social role of both the aesthetics of violence (in war propaganda, videogames and in cinema) and the violence of aesthetics (in numbing sensibilities). Does it mean that aesthetics can heal? Definitely; but it can also harm.

Apart from its intimate relation with propaganda, aesthetics is also closely linked to the expression of social status. When in 1984 I was working on an assignment for a monumental artwork installation at a museum, I was planning to convey how social class differences all end up and are expressed by aesthetic differences. As Veblen sharply argued in his *Theory of the Leisure Class*, status is manifested by ostentatious consumption, which generally devolves into ostentatious aesthetics, as if the craving for status would necessarily be expressed by aesthetic excess.<sup>[13]</sup> More luxurious mansions, vintage and sports cars, stylish clothes, lavish gardens, opulent antiques and art collections, and sumptuous banquets are perpetual temptations for status cravers, displayers, and climbers. Even when I finally decided stripping the resulting piece to the basics and presenting a monstrously disproportional artwork reflecting the gruesome imbalance of income, (*Histogram* 1985, based on the census on distribution of income) my interest in the topic remained. By 1991, my Ph.D. dissertation *Aesthetics and Power (Estética y Poder)* dealt with this subject from a Foucaultian perspective of power resulting from strategies among which the aesthetic is most salient.<sup>[14]</sup> Today, after six published books on everyday aesthetics, from *Prosaica* (1994, an introduction to everyday aesthetics) to the more recent *Everyday Aesthetics* (2007) and tens of papers on the subject, I can not deny this has been, quite obsessively, my main topic of research and teaching for more than twenty years.<sup>[15]</sup> What, then, can I offer as a conclusion from this long path?

First of all, we must face the problem of dealing with such a complex and unframed subject matter. The main reaction one gets at the mere proposal of a non-artistic aesthetics is its disqualification for panestheticism, implying that if everything is aesthetic, the topic becomes trivial (many of my papers during the nineties were rejected by publishers for this reason). This problem was foreseen and addressed by Mukarovský, who recognized that any object and any action can become a vehicle for the aesthetic function but warned that "this does not imply a panaesthetic affirmation, since: 1) it does not affirm the necessity, but solely the general possibility of the aesthetic function; 2) it does not question the dominant position of the aesthetic function among the remaining functions of given phenomena; 3) one is not to conflate the aesthetic function with other functions, nor to conceive other functions as mere variants of the aesthetic function."<sup>[16]</sup> I would add that nothing is aesthetic; in fact no *thing* can be so, since aesthesis is the condition of subjectivity.

In this sense I would like to acknowledge a ground-breaking yet unpretentious book on everyday aesthetics. Written a quarter of a century ago it fully engages in the very risky, slippery field of an experience-based approach to the aesthetic, yet manages to come out unharmed. I am referring to Joseph Kupfer's *Experience as Art, Aesthetics in Everyday Life*.<sup>[17]</sup> I regret not having come across it before and giving it its proper place on my reflection upon the state of the art in my books. Kupfer insightfully goes to the core of what everyday aesthetics is about by stressing its educational, political, moral, and social implications from a firm pragmatist approach. He presents an eloquent case and dedicates a whole chapter to aesthetics' relation to violence in two instances: as

assertive violence and as ultraviolence, opening up a new and badly needed field for aesthetic inquiry upon negative aesthetics, a path left open by Theodor Adorno.[\[18\]](#)

#### 4. Category Mistakes

Among other results from my investigation, I was able to detect very frequent category mistakes in aesthetic studies that have hindered paying attention to everyday sensibility:

1. The most common is the oxymoron in the notion of "aesthetic objects," when no object, by definition, can be aesthetic, namely sensitive, capable of sensibility. When people in general speak of "aesthetic objects" what they really mean is "pretty objects" or the equivalent. The term is used as an approving, flattering remark and not in a descriptive, much less theoretical sense.
2. The second is the tautology of "aesthetic sensibility" which is a redundancy since these two terms are in fact synonyms: aesthetics denotes and involves sensibility by definition. Other terms such as "sensibility to penicillin" are derived from this original sense of sentience and sensitivity.
3. The conflation of "the aesthetic" and "the artistic." Subjects are, by definition, aesthetic since subjectivity equals sensibility. Objects are not aesthetic but they can be or not be artistic, depending on social categorization.
4. Conflating dimensions and institutions. Institutions (familial, governmental, religious, educational, sport, arts and entertainment, juridical, medical, etc.) constitute the cultural and professional topography by which a given social group organizes its creeds, activities, and division of work, status and labor. By contrast, dimensions (semiotic, technological, aesthetic, economic, political) cross through all these institutions and are dynamic, practical, material and constructive forces that shape and determine the matrices.[\[19\]](#) Basically, the artistic is an *institution* whereas the aesthetic is a *dimension* that traverses through the artistic as well as through other institutions and is in charge of providing perceptible elements to enhance and distinguish the various institutional identities.

For Kant, aisthesis broadly involves the interplay of imagination and understanding, and for pragmatists such as Dewey, there are rhythms and forms of sensibility, responsiveness, reciprocity, doings and undergoings, receptivity, awareness and attentiveness, sense and feeling, in short: vibrant, pulsating subjectivity. Aesthetics can focus on artistic experience or 'poetics' (Aristotle's term) or upon the non-artistic or everyday, for which I have selected the term 'prosaics.' In his *Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism*,[\[20\]](#) Charles Sanders Peirce defined Logic as a normative science in regard to representations of truth, Ethics in regard to efforts of will, and Esthetics in objects considered simply in their presentation.[\[21\]](#) Along this line, one can say that everyday life is a matter of presence, as prosaics is a matter of presentation, and poetics a matter of representation.[\[22\]](#)

#### 5. A Model for the Analysis of Everyday Aesthetics

In order to observe these structures of experience (artistic or not), I proposed in my book, *Everyday Aesthetics: Prosaics, the Play of Culture and Social Identities*,[\[23\]](#) a methodological device similar to the green and red lenses one wears to discern otherwise imperceptible visual effects, as in the 1954 stereoscopic film *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* or the recent *Avatar*, except that in this case we must wear 8 lenses instead of two. I am referring to an octadic model based on semiotics for aesthetic inquiry, consisting of the four registers of perception/communication and four modalities of dramaturgical display. These four registers are our normal means or channels of expression and communication with others in everyday life, consisting of the *lexic* or words, *acoustic* or sounds, *somatic* or body language, and the *scopic* or visual and

spatial manifestations. Naturally, we display the same registers of prosaics in poetics or art: lexic in literature and poetry, acoustic in music, somatic in dance and theater, and scopic in painting and sculpture. Since we usually communicate in hybrid registers simultaneously involving words, sound, body and the visual, this distinction is purely analytical. Each register enables structuring experience and impacting on recipients' sensibility in different ways. By "modalities" I denote various forms of attitudinal displays, such as distancing or proxemics, dynamics or kinetics, accent or emphatics, and open and closed fluidity or fluxion. Sixteen combinations are thus possible (which could become 32 if we consider two degrees of intensity: positive and negative).[24]

		LEXICS		ACOUSTICS		SOMATICS		SCOPICS	
PROXEMICS		Lexic Proxemics		Acoustic Proxemics		Somatic Proxemics		Scopic Proxemics	
Short	Long	S	L	S	L	S	L	S	L
KINETICS		Lexic Kinetics		Acoustic Kinetics		Somatic Kinetics		Scopic Kinetics	
Dynamic	Static	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S
EMPHATICS		Lexic Emphatics		Acoustic Emphatics		Somatic Emphatics		Scopic Emphatics	
Marked	Unmarked	M	U	M	U	M	U	M	U
FLUXION		Lexic Fluxion		Acoustic Fluxion		Somatic Fluxion		Scopic Fluxion	
Open	Closed	O	C	O	C	O	C	O	C

## 6. Aesthetic Displays in Social Institutions

As I have argued extensively in my books, we can explore the processes of aisthesis in various social contexts, specifically through all cultural institutions characterized by the manner or form in which they structure our experience. Thus we have specific and regulated aesthetic forms and practices through all institutions in a given society. Let us examine a few:

Family. The primeval context that configures our experience in a particular way is the family. A family is framed within the walls or fences of each home which constitutes its setting or staging. Decoration, props, clothing, gadgets, habitual intonation in verbal exchanges, the tone of voice and verbosity in communication among members, the particular types of music or its absence at home, the body proximity or distance among family members and types of interaction all affect the form and quality of experience within that family. How seasons and festivities are marked within the family cycles, as with Christmas trees, Passover celebrations, weekends, birthdays, meals, morning and evening rhythms, division of tasks, the place given to each person at the table, the clutter, frugality, the ambience at home, all configure the family members' everyday sensibility.

Religion. The most impressive non-artistic aesthetic displays have been performed within religious institutions. Religious aesthetics is related not only to paintings, sculptures, architecture, and music on religious topics usually considered "religious art." More importantly, it reflects the way our experience is configured to generate the belief in each religion's world view and to arouse devotion towards certain ideas, persons, objects, and places. The religious universe is thus experienced when attending temples and performing celebrations which engage and give form to our experience of the sacred. The grace and order of the choreography, the music, the intricate setting and carefully detailed clothing, the words rhythmically and solemnly pronounced, the scent of incense, paraffin and flowers appealing to the body, the elegance in the ritual, all endow our experience with a sense of harmony and the idea of holiness, or with fear and trembling. Religious aesthetics has been the main source for organized aesthetic nourishment in many people's lives for

millennia.[25]

Advertisement. By aesthetic strategies, marketing and commercial ads fabricate pleasant, intriguing or smart connotations for products attaching friendly, desirable or successful "identities" to the brands and commodities they promote. Witty commercials are able to trigger precise associations, as in Apple Macintosh computer's initial ad inspired by Orwell's *1984*, designed to appeal to young, intelligent, and well informed potential consumers, who would associate the experience created by the ad (thrill, surprise, dexterity, and wit) with the commodity marketed.[26] These ads may not be artworks but they undeniably display aesthetic strategies to structure the imaginary experience of possessing a certain object.

Sports. The aesthetics of sports is salient. Each Olympic opening ceremony is aesthetically designed for moving the global audience. In particular, sport aesthetics are irrefutable in the perfect grace and dexterity of so many athletes, like Nadia Comaneci's all tens 1976 Montreal performance and Yelena Isinbayeva's 2008 Beijing pole-vault jump puts this topic in the right perspective. Yet many fellow aestheticians, among them Welsch, still require an artistic justification to argue for the aesthetic character of sports.[27] Kupfer describes the rich experiential process involved in sports in his body-electric chapter. As he observes, there are qualitative or "formal" sports whose excellence is equivalent to beauty of movement.[28]

Military. The military institution strongly depends not only on the practical effectiveness of martial tactics but on implementing an aesthetic impact for various goals: intimidation, drafting, cohesion, discipline, legitimation, and so on. The astonishing imagination invested in the aesthetic production of weapons exhibited in museums, from masks and armor to decorated swords and shields for the military, expresses the vehemence dedicated to the aesthetics of war.

State. As with the military, government institutions also recruit and display great talent for aesthetic production, particularly during presidential campaigns, where aesthetics can be crucial in impacting potential voters' sensibilities and changing the tide of events. We can testify the bandwagon effect in full force during electoral periods, frequently triggered by aesthetic devices. TV campaign commercials attempt to target citizens aesthetically or emotionally rather than rationally, as the famous Hillary Clinton's ad, "It's 3 A.M." During the 2008 USA presidential elections, both parties included Mexican mariachi music to appeal to Latino voters, yet none was explicit on the illegal migrant population problems and suggested solutions.

## 7. Exuding Aesthetics

The masterpiece of electoral aesthetics is the *Yes We Can* video, seen at least about 24 million times in YouTube and Divedive. The lyrics were taken from Barack Obama's New Hampshire presidential primary speech, and the music and assemblage was performed by Will.i.am. Jesse Dylan made the black and white video.[29] It seems it was all voluntary, enthusiastic work, not commissioned by the candidate.

Applying the Octadic model very briefly to this video, we can clearly appreciate in the lexic register, the eloquence, rhythm and suggestive images evoked by the speech, with an effective religious flavor conveyed by the "yes we can" chorus (as the "I like Ike" Eisenhower slogan).

*It was a creed written into the founding documents that declared the destiny of a nation. Yes we can.*

*It was whispered by slaves and abolitionists as they blazed a trail towards freedom. Yes we can.*

*It was sung by immigrants as they struck out from distant shores and pioneers*

*who pushed westward against an unforgiving wilderness. Yes we can.*

*It was the call of workers who organized; women who reached for the ballots; a President who chose the moon as our new frontier; and a King who took us to the mountaintop and pointed the way to the Promised Land.*

*Yes we can to justice and equality. Yes we can. [...W]e are one people; we are one nation; and together, we will begin the next great chapter in the American story with three words that will ring from coast to coast; from sea to shining sea--*

*Yes We Can.*

By lexic kinetics and emphatics, Obama's speech is both the rhythmic background for people's words and, vice versa, people's words are the background for Obama's in euphony and polyphonic harmony, efficiently creating the sense that the candidate represents their ideas and dreams and is one with them. The acoustic proxemics and emphatics of Obama's voice in both tone and warm timbre produce a sense of proximity, and the candidate and performers' open and relaxed fluxion is convincing. The "Yes we can" slogan almost becomes an "amen" choir and a percussion drum accompaniment. Somaticly all performers appear receptive, content, and even joyful, with a relaxed attitude in both body language and facial expression. They unify, in the same rhythm and sound, a feeling that invites empathy, keeping consistency between both the acoustic and the somatic registers. On the scopic or visual, the video was prepared in black and white, which helps convey a sense of sincerity and frugality, but also creates a special atmosphere verging almost on the reverential. Visually attractive young celebrities of different ethnic backgrounds wear casual, simple, everyday clothes, shortening proxemics which helps identification by the audience. It is not presented as a spectacular show-off but almost as a random frame in the natural stream of events in everyday life. The "Yes we can" slogan associated to Luther King's "I have a dream" and a background crescendo of "We want change" voices, enhanced by patriotic resonances from the *America the Beautiful* stanza "from sea to shining sea" surges to a climactic effect, and blends the "hope" and "vote" words in red.

## **8. Conclusion**

To conclude, we crave aesthetically promising configurations for the pleasure or thrill we can derive from them. This craving explains how and why a baptism ceremony, a vacation trip or a football game, a birthday party or a community ritual, a political meeting with a charismatic leader or a school graduation contribute to captivate our feelings or capture our imagination in ways that we recognize, not always consciously, but that nonetheless guide our decisions and determine the kind of life we lead.

Being sensitive creatures, aesthetics is always involved in various spheres of our natural, cultural, and social activities, and it is important to be aware of it. Its efficacy for moving people's emotions is constantly squeezed out by politics' and marketing's aesthetic engineering. Millions of people are enjoying the deliberate production of an aesthetics of violence through the film and videogame industry, and other millions are undergoing violence against their sensibility in numbing routines, gender oppression, and inhospitable life conditions. The number of teens consuming addictive drugs keeps growing, pointing to a deterioration in the condition of their sensibility by the stimuli they are deprived of but urgently need. Yet some aestheticians seem to prefer the trivial task of going around the world authorizing or de-authorizing what should or should not be aesthetically appreciated, to the less pleasurable one of trying to cope, even if at least conceptually, with these other more complex and socially crucial issues.

Milan Kundera once wrote: *"Kitsch causes two tears to flow in quick succession. The first tear says: How nice to see children running on the grass! The second*

tear says: *How nice to be moved, together with all mankind, by children running on the grass. It is the second tear that makes kitsch kitsch.*"<sup>[30]</sup> Aestheticians have discovered a third tear that trickles down our professional cheeks in feeling *How nice to be moved, together with all aestheticians, by the correct things to appreciate!* I am convinced we can do much better than this aesthetic correctness.

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### Endnotes

[1] A previous version of this paper was originally presented at "Everyday Aesthetics," 8th International Summer School (2008), Institute of Applied Aesthetics, Lahti, Finland.

[2] Max Dessoir, *Aesthetics and Theory of art: Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* (Wayne State University Press, 1970). Emil Utitz, *Grundlegung der allgemeinen Kunstwissenschaft: Mit einen Vorwort, den...* (W. Fink, 1972). See also; Christopher S. Nwodo, "Philosophy of Art Versus Aesthetics," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 24, no. 3 (1984), 195-205; doi:10.1093/bjaesthetics/24.3.195.

[3] John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigee Books, 1980).

[4] Daniel Kahneman, Ed Diener, and Norbert Schwarz, *Well-being: the Foundations of Hedonic Psychology* (Russell Sage Foundation, 2003).

[5] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, §1e, trans. James Creed Meredith. (Electronic version, 1790), American Philosophical Association Gopher, October 3, 2003, emphasis mine.

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[7] Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Aesthetica scripsit Alexand. Gottlieb Bavmgarten...* (Hildesheim, Zurich; New York: Georg Olms Verlag).

[8] Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Reflections on Poetry: Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's Meditationes...* (University of California Press, 1954).

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[10] Arthur Danto, "The Artworld," *The Journal of Philosophy* 61, no. 19 (1964), 571-584. George Dickie, *Art and the Aesthetic: an Institutional Analysis* (Cornell University Press, 1974).

[11] George Steiner, *In Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes towards the Redefinition of Culture* (Yale University Press, 1974).

[12] Katya Mandoki, "Terror and Aesthetics: Nazi Strategies for Mass Organisation," in *Fascism: Critical Concepts in Political Science, vol. III, Fascism and Culture, Part 7: Fascism as the Negation or Revolution of Culture*, ed. Roger Griffin (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 21-38.

[13] Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Cosimo, Inc., 1899).

[14] Catalina Inés Mandoki Winkler, *Estética y poder*, 1991. México D.F. UNAM.

[15] Katya Mandoki, *Prosaica: introducción a la estética de lo cotidiano* (Mexico D.F.: Grijalbo, 1994); Katya Mandoki, *Everyday Aesthetics: Prosaics, the Play of Culture and Social Identities* (Aldershot UK: Ashgate Pub Co, 2007); Katya Mandoki, *Estética y comunicación: de acción, pasión y seducción* (Bogota: Editorial Norma, 2006); Katya Mandoki, *Estética cotidiana y juegos de la cultura: Prosaica 1* (México, DF: Siglo XXI Editores, 2006); Katya Mandoki, *Prácticas estéticas e identidades sociales ; Prosaica 2* (México D.F: Siglo XXI Editores, 2006); Katya Mandoki, *La construcción estética del estado y de la identidad nacional; Prosaica 3* (México, DF: Siglo XXI Editores, 2007).

[16] Jan. Mukarovsky, *Escritos de estética y semiótica del arte*, ed. Hanna Anthony-Visová (trad.) (Barcelona: Gustavo Gili., 1977), p. 47, translation mine.

[17] Joseph H. Kupfer, *Experience as Art: Aesthetics in Everyday Life* (New York: SUNY Press, 1983).

[18] I was surprised to find precisely this title in Berleant's simultaneous paper at "Everyday Aesthetics," 8th International Summer School (2008), Institute of Applied Aesthetics, Lahti, Finland.

[19] Katya Mandoki, *Everyday Aesthetics: Prosaics, the Play of Culture and Social Identities*, Part 6. Katya Mandoki, *Prácticas estéticas e identidades sociales; Prosaica 2*.

[20] Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 5.36, 1903.

[21] Charles Sanders Peirce and Patricia Ann Turrisi, *Pragmatism as a Principle and Method of Right Thinking: the 1903 Harvard...* (New York: SUNY Press, 1997).

[22] I developed these distinctions in my paper, "A Model for Aesthetic Analysis in Poetics and in Prosaics," in Lahti during the XIII International Congress of Aesthetics, "Aesthetics in Practice," (1995).

[23] Katya Mandoki, *Everyday Aesthetics: Prosaics, the Play of Culture and Social Identities* (Aldershot UK: Ashgate Pub Co, 2007).

[24] For a full explanation of each category and application see Katya Mandoki, *Everyday Aesthetics: Prosaics, the Play of Culture and Social Identities*. Katya Mandoki, *Prácticas estéticas e identidades sociales; Prosaica 2*.

[25] On the aesthetics of Christian, Judaic and Islamic religions see Katya Mandoki, *Everyday Aesthetics: Prosaics, the Play of Culture and Social Identities*, Chapter 28.

[26] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYecfV3ubP8&feature=Playlist&p=0A85A8EDA10085C8&playnext=1&index=5>.

[27] Wolfgang Iser, "Sport--Viewed Aesthetically, and Even as Art?" in *The Aesthetics of Everyday Life*, ed. Andrew Light and Jonathan M. Smith (Columbia University Press., 2005).

[28] Joseph H. Kupfer, *Experience as Art: Aesthetics in Everyday Life*, pp. 111-140.

[29] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjXyqcx-mYY>.

[30] Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, pp 251.