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Editorial

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Editorial

The editorial for a new volume of a scholarly journal can serve many different purposes, as ours have done. Typically, we have reviewed the accomplishments of the past year, changes in the operation and policies of the journal, and plans for the future. What is probably unique in our case is that we cannot predict the contents of the next volume. One of the many advantages of electronic publication is that we have no delays because of printing and mailing schedules. For that reason we do not need lead time of a year or two. From the start we have published continuously throughout the year, not being hampered by volume size or printing deadlines. Once a paper is accepted, it undergoes an editing process and may appear on line in a matter of weeks or even days. Thus in character with the expectation of timeliness that a journal intends in name if not in practice, what you read in *Contemporary Aesthetics* is as current as high publication standards allow. This means that the final appearance of a volume may be as much a surprise to the editors as to the readers. What *CA* offers, then, is the result of opportunity, not design. Our contents are as varied as scholarly interests and editorial policy allow. Except for our special volumes, we have issued no themed volumes.

As we look back on the past year, we are surprised to discover that not only have we published more papers than in any previous single volume, but that we have produced a heavily international volume containing a preponderance of work by authors whose native language is not English. This many make us unique among English-language aesthetics journals.

Of our twenty-two authors, thirteen represent work being done in twelve different countries: Austria, Canada, China, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey, in addition to the United States. Most of this work would not be easily accessible if not for *Contemporary Aesthetics*. At the same time, publishing such work places a heavy burden on our editorial process, for as admirable as it is that so many scholars are multi-lingual, it is rare for scholars to write idiomatically in a language that is not their native tongue. This means that every paper by a non-native English speaker published in *CA* must undergo multiple editorial revisions and reviews, often well beyond the usual two or three. As you might gather, this is an extremely time-consuming process. We consider such an effort eminently worthwhile, the importance of offering this work far outweighing the labor of preparing it for publication. But it is nonetheless a heavy load.

We are also pleased to have completed a volume of *Contemporary Aesthetics* as wide in range as it is in authorship. The papers' focus ranges from knitting to wind, from music to photography. It is worth noting the decided attention to political and social aesthetics. Volume 11 also hosts one of our infrequent symposia, this one on aesthetic engagement.

We are, as always, especially grateful to the scholars who have contributed to our review process for Vol. 11. These

include Riva Berleant-Schiller, Allen Carlson, John Carvalho, Xiangzhan Cheng, Angela Curran, Mădălina Diaconu, Jale Erzen, Dan Flory, Ivan Gaskell, Stan Godlovitch, James R. Hamilton, Barry Hammer, Espen Hammer, Andrew Kania, Carolyn Korsmeyer, Estella Lauter, Yuedi Liu, Eva Kit Wah Man, Katya Mandoki, Glenn Parsons, William Rothman, Maryvonne Saison, Yuriko Saito, Greg Scott, Larry Shiner, Julie Van Camp, Renée van de Vall, Keping Wang, and Mary Wiseman. Many thanks to all!

With Vol. 11 we initiated a subscription process at no charge so that we could identify regular readers of *Contemporary Aesthetics* and send them occasional announcements of new additions to the current volume. These notices are generally sent quarterly, and remind readers about what has newly appeared in *CA* and what will soon be published. This feature has had a good response, our original list doubling in size during the year. Our current subscription list is close to 300 and increases daily. We also distributed a request for contributions to help offset our editorial and publication costs this has been moderately successful. We are grateful to those readers who recognize the hard realities of producing this journal and responded with their contributions.

Our usage continues to increase each year and, while it will likely level off at some point, we haven't yet reached our maximum! There are three sources for our statistical data and, as might be expected, they do not always agree. Two general sources (Google Analytics and Webalizer) reflect gross usage, while Michigan Publishing, which archives *Contemporary Aesthetics*, reflects mainly scholarly usage. Each year has shown a significant gain in readers over the preceding one. For 2013 *CA* had an overall total of about 117,000 visits, as compared to about 90,000 in 2012. Scholarly access for 2013 was about 15,000 compared with about 8,000 for 2012. These figures should please our authors! What is also interesting is that readers are taking advantage of the ease with which earlier volumes can be accessed from our Journal page by a single key stroke. We have discovered that the articles that are most frequently read may come from any of the previous volumes, not just the current one. It is gratifying to know, too, that we regularly have requests for reprinting articles originally appearing in *CA*. Some of our articles have been translated into other languages for journals and anthologies, and many are used in college courses.

Our mission is to make current scholarship in aesthetics easily accessible, work that for various reasons – political or ideological or the vagaries of fashion – might never see the light in an English language publication. We thank our authors for their confidence in *Contemporary Aesthetics* and our readers for their interest in the work we offer, and we encourage your continued support.

Arnold Berleant, Editor

January 2014

