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## *Aesthetic Theory for the Working Musician*

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During my college years I played jazz and rock gigs with bands in New York City: juggling academic requirements with the demands of musicianship, musicians, club owners and audiences. It was not easy: both the music side and the academic side suffered from the divided allegiances. In those early years artistic developmental crises and unavoidable questions loomed: about correct responses to musical works, creativity, audience acceptance, artistic quality and value, self-expression, and artistic legitimacy.

I needed to know, e.g., where to draw the line between artistic innovation and fraudulence. Remarkable things were happening in jazz in the 60's – the avant garde movement sustained by John Coltrane, Pharoah Saunders, Ornette Coleman, Albert Ayler, Cecil Taylor, Don Cherry, Archie Shepp, Sun Ra, and others was in full bloom – and it was not clear how much of this work should be treated with musical seriousness and how much should be denounced as musically vacuous artifacts of culturally troubled times. A musician did not know whether to jump on the bandwagon, if presented with the opportunity.

I took a Philosophy of Art course – hoping it would provide systematic exploration of the issues so urgent to me as an aspiring guitarist. It did no such thing. Nothing in Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Bell, Tolstoy, Croce, Langer, and others seemed plugged into the issues that weighed upon me (Collingwood was the sole exception). Surely these writers were skilled theorists; but despite the aura of scholarly significance, their questions seemed not to be my own. I found myself wishing they had spent time on the road with funk bands, thereby sensitizing them to aspects of the artworld that so puzzled me.

Later I found work by Danto and Walton closer to the mark; and still later I revisited some of the classic writers and found elements relevant to my earlier concerns. It became clear, e.g., that my own anguished questions about the status of avant garde music found echo everywhere, and were hardly the unique province of working players: Duchamp's *Fountain*, Rauschenberg's *Erased de Kooning*, Christo's *Running Fence*, and any other shockingly new work tested the limits of extant artistic norms, thereby placing a viewer in a similar state of anxiety and uncertainty: How to engage such a work? What artistic category to place it in? How to determine what features are, or are not, relevant to its interpretation and/or evaluation? A struggling musician had no special purchase on such crises.

There were other issues. Any player seeking success needed to know whether audience rejection provided evidence of poor musicianship, or merely a lack of appropriate musical sensibility on the part of the listener. But again, any theorist could access such a question about comprehension of an artform, and about the criteria for treating a critic as reliable: active participation as a player was no prerequisite for engaging it. And there were questions about the very idea of thinking in music (rather than about music): questions concerning the phenomenology of music performance and its relation to other forms of thought. But psychologists, philosophers of mind, and even neuroscientists offered useful insights about thinking in tones and metric structures, despite their not spending eve-



Robert Kraut, live at Mike's Barn, Cleveland, OH

nings and weekends in the recording studio. Here too, the working player was in no privileged position with respect to the questions that demanded attention.

So perhaps the issues that taunted me were equally accessible to those with little or no experience on the bandstand; perhaps nothing in my life as a musician significantly impacted my theoretical reflections. Just so, perhaps Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* would be pretty much the same had he not been a poet; perhaps Peter Eisenman's architectural theories are unaffected by his work as an architect; perhaps Stravinsky's forays into theory show no marks of his work as a composer. But such claims are doubtful. Theorists theorize about the data available to them. Surely not all aesthetic theorists work with the same data—or even have access to the same data—and seek to solve the same problems. When I began reading aesthetic theory it struck me that some theorists were so removed from the realities of artworld production that they ignored information I regarded as critical; thus their theories provided no explanation of the phenomena that weighed heavily upon me.

An obvious analogy: a working mathematician—caught up in the phenomenology of discovery and proof—is unlikely to endorse those philosophies of mathematics proffered by theorists who have only a casual grasp of mathematics; working mathematicians see more, and thus demand more from a philosophical account of what they are up to. Perhaps it is not impossible for a non-mathematician to accommodate the relevant data; but it is unlikely. And similarly, a working musician—struggling in the trenches of artistic productivity—will likely confront data unavailable (or insignificant) to those on the sidelines.

This, at any rate, is the theme I wish to explore here. I do not claim that working musicians are, as a matter of analytic necessity, better suited to provide aesthetic theories about music. Many brilliant performers are woefully lacking in reflective theoretical skills; and even reflective participants in a practice frequently make errors about their own practices. Nor do I claim that adequate theorizing is essentially impossible for non-musicians; non-participants in music production are—at least in principle—surely capable of providing interesting accounts of the aesthetics of music.

Still, the connection between actual participation and effective theorizing demands attention. Interfaces between theory and practice—artistic, linguistic, athletic, or any other normatively constrained institutional behavior—are tremendously complex. It would, e.g.,

admittedly be unreasonable to insist that only competent speakers of English are qualified to provide a holistically adequate semantic theory for that language. But it cannot be denied that competent speakers have something that outside observers often lack: viz., a thorough knowledge of the relevant inferential connections sustained within the language. Insofar as a goal of an adequate linguistic theory is to illuminate such connections, one might expect a competent speaker to do a better job than a non-speaker, *ceteris paribus*, when it comes to formulating an adequate semantic theory.

Clive Bell tells us that “[t]he starting-point for all systems of aesthetics must be the personal experience of a peculiar emotion.”<sup>1</sup> He is wrong about the “emotion” part; but his observation serves as a valuable reminder that “systems of aesthetics” are ultimately grounded in one’s personal experience. My own efforts in aesthetic theory rest upon attempts to make sense of music as I experience it. These experiences frequently put me out of phase with others in the field. I do not, for example, experience music as expressing emotion; this puts me at loggerheads with theorists who regard the emotional expressiveness of music as so patently obvious as not even to require argument. For them it is a datum to be theorized about; for me, in contrast, the existence of emotional-expressive properties in music is a semantic phenomenon that must, like other semantic phenomena, be established and not assumed. I am hardly alone in denying the emotional expressiveness of music: Stravinsky, Hanslick, and others stand against the tide of musical expressionism. But such anti-expressionism is idiosyncratic, and tends to generate a peculiar incommensurability at otherwise pleasant gatherings.

Similarly, I experience music—at least, when performing—as a linguistic phenomenon. Playing feels like talking; collaborative improvisation feels like conversation. This, for me, is a starting point: a datum to be theorized about, not the conclusion of an argument. Music presents itself to me as a linguistic phenomenon; I am thus led to theorize about the relation(s) between art and language, and to seek theories that address the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of musical genres. But once again I am put at loggerheads with aesthetic theorists—this time those who dispute the applicability of linguistic models to music production and comprehension. In what follows I explore this issue at greater length.

There is, among working musicians, a conspicuous uniformity in perspective regarding this matter; it is worth noting how it diverges from the stated views of those who spend more time theorizing than playing. Here are some examples.

Pat Martino ranks among the outstanding jazz guitarists of the last few decades: a gifted player with a keen grasp of mainstream jazz. He offers a trenchant observation about music education and language:

I find that certain students have trouble perceiving music only because of the language. If they were shown that music is a language, like any other language, they'd realize it's only couched in different symbols. Then possibly they would understand that they knew things already, inherently.<sup>2</sup>

Martino's view that “music is a language, like any other language” is widespread among jazz musicians. Here, for example, is a description of guitarist Jim Hall:

“His concept of time is a model to emulate,” says drummer Joey Baron. “Jim plays but a few notes, leaving space for conversations with me.” According to Jim, “listening is still the key.”<sup>3</sup>

Such “conversational” imagery dominates the genre: from the “inside,”

jazz performance feels like dialogue. A particularly vivid description is provided by drummer Max Roach:

After you initiate the solo, one phrase determines what the next is going to be. From the first note that you hear, you are responding to what you've just played: you just said this on your instrument, and now that's a constant. What follows from that?...It's like language: you're talking, you're speaking, you're responding to yourself.<sup>4</sup>

Note that no *arguments* are involved here: Martino's claims – and related remarks throughout the jazz world – are based upon immediate acquaintance with a range of performance and composition experiences.

Victor Wooten – an influential jazz and funk bassist – offers his students the following advice:

I think that we can all agree on the fact that music is a language.... When I get confused while trying to answer a musical question, I immediately think back to the fact that music is a language....The next step is to then turn the music question into an English language question. If I can do that, the answer is usually obvious...<sup>5</sup>

Wayne Krantz, a brilliantly innovative guitarist extending traditional harmonic and rhythmic boundaries, offers a reflection upon his stylistic approach:

...I call myself a jazz musician still because I improvise, and I associate improvisation with jazz. But the language of jazz, the vocabulary of it, I find myself less and less drawn to...I kind of rely on the spirit of what created that language to determine what I play...<sup>6</sup>

The “music as language” paradigm is ubiquitous among working jazz players; it is an artifact of participation in the genre. Yet theorist Saam Trivedi offers the following dismissal:

I am continually puzzled by the insistence of many that seeing art as involving communication involves seeing it as some sort of language, a view which I deny. Taking music, for example, even if music is language-like in involving meaning, understanding, conventions, rules, communication...there are significant differences between music and language concerning truth, reference, predication, description, syntax, translatability, and so on, as pointed out by many...<sup>7</sup>

Malcolm Budd provides a similar dismissal: “Now it is in fact clear that music lacks the essential features of language...”<sup>8</sup> In similar spirit, Stephen Davies tells us

Where music fails so many necessary conditions for something's being a language, there is no explanatory value to be gained from talk of music as an impoverished language, or as a syntactic system, or as possessing a vocabulary of terms and phrases....The differences between music and natural languages suggest that extreme caution should be used in applying such concepts to music, for they carry misleading associations when transferred from the familiar to the new context.<sup>9</sup>

The problem is that such dismissals ignore key psychological realities of artistic practice: from the “inside” jazz performance feels like dialogue. The image of performance-as-conversation dominates the genre – both among musicians and knowledgeable critics. The lin-

guistic model of performance is so central to regions of the artworld that it is a datum to be explained, not a theory to be criticized.

And musicians aren't the only ones who lapse into this “linguistic” ways of talking about music. Psychologist P.N. Johnson-Laird, writing on the computational mechanisms underlying jazz performance, offers the following:

If you are not an improvising musician, then the best analogy to improvisation is your spontaneous speech. If you ask yourself how you are able to speak a sequence of English sentences that make sense, then you will find that you are consciously aware of only the tip of the process. That is why the discipline of psycholinguistics exists: psychologists need to answer this question too.<sup>10</sup>

Jazz improvisation is said to be “analogous” to spontaneous speech. It is not clear how far the analogy can be pushed: whether it can be generalized to other modes of music production, for example, or perhaps even to other artistic media.

Work in other areas prompts similar speculation. Aniruddh Patel, a neuroscientist concerned with relationships between music and speech, uses neuroimaging data to locate convergence points between syntactic processing in language and music. Here is a clear statement by Patel describing some of his work:

Two new empirical studies address the relationship between music and language. The first focuses on melody and uses research in phonetics to investigate the long-held notion that instrumental music reflects speech patterns in a composer's native language. The second focuses on syntax and addresses the relationship between musical and linguistic syntactic processing via the study of aphasia, an approach that has been explored very little. The results of these two studies add to a growing body of evidence linking music and language with regard to structural patterns and brain processing.<sup>11</sup>

Such results hardly confirm the bold hypothesis that “music is language” (Patel makes no such claims), but they surely encourage continued speculation along such lines.

Why does it matter? What is to be gained from the “jazz as language” hypothesis? Jazz is jazz; language is language. Doubtless there are points of similarity and points of divergence; why not leave it at that?

We cannot leave it at that because the goal of aesthetic theory is to accommodate as much artworld data as possible: this includes the customary ways artworld practitioners think and talk about their own practices and products. There is an overwhelming conviction among working jazz players that music is a linguistic form: such conviction rests primarily upon the phenomenology of music production. Playing music feels strikingly similar to speaking; ensemble performance feels strikingly similar to conversation; such phenomenological similarities demand explanation. Construing music as language is one possible explanation. It is an explanation I find plausible. Thus my work as a musician impacts my aesthetic theorizing, in part, by foregrounding this issue as urgently worthy of attention.<sup>12</sup>



*Editor's Note: This essay is part of our ongoing series in which aestheticians write about their ongoing artistic activities and the connections between these and their philosophical work.*

## Endnotes

1. Clive Bell, *Art* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958): 16-17.
2. Quoted in Julie Coryell and Laura Friedman, *Jazz-Rock Fusion* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 1978): 171.
3. Cited in *Europe Jazz Network Musicians: Jim Hall* (E\_J\_N\_JIM HALL.mht).
4. Quoted in Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994): 192.
5. Victor Lemonte Wooten, *The Official Website* (at <<http://www.victorwooten.com>>); Lesson #3: "Music As A Language."
6. Transcribed from a film by Frank Cassenti recorded for French TV broadcast; not commercially released. Posted on YouTube as "Wayne Krantz, Keith Carlock, Tim Lefebvre – Marciac 1999 part 1."
7. Saam Trivedi, "Artist-Audience Communication: Tolstoy Reclaimed," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* Vol. 38, No. 2 (Summer 2004): fn.12.
8. Malcolm Budd, *Music and the Emotions* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985): 23.
9. Stephen Davies, *Musical Meaning and Expression* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994): 24.
10. P.N. Johnson-Laird, "How Jazz Musicians Improvise," *Music Perception* 19 (Spring 2002): 415-42.
11. Aniruddh D. Patel, "The Relationship of Music to the Melody of Speech and to Syntactic Processing Disorders in Aphasia," *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.* 1060 (2005): 1-12.
12. These issues are explored in greater detail in my *Artworld Metaphysics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

# Art's Abject Other or the "New Cool"? Should Philosophy Rethink the Art/Craft Dichotomy?

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Few philosophers of art today concern themselves much with craft. For some it may be because "craft" is associated with amateurism and craft fairs. Others may believe that Collingwood put craft in its place long ago as a narrow means-end process. Of course, many art critics, theorists, and historians also continue to view craft as art's lowly other. And even some craft institutions have come to treat studio craft as "the art form that dare not say its name," e.g., the American

Craft Museum dropping "craft" from its name in 2002 to become a Museum of Arts and Design.<sup>1</sup>

But "craft" won't stay put. In the last few years, there have been signs some of the stigma is wearing off. In 2003 Britain's prestigious Turner Prize, went to Grayson Perry for his quirky narrative pottery and in 2007, Tracey Emin, who uses appliqué and quilting techniques in her work, was Britain's representative to the Venice Biennale. Just last year, a score of art critics and theorists writing in *Extra/Ordinary: Craft in Contemporary Art*, testified to the changing perception of craft, one of them even calling craft "the new cool."<sup>2</sup> Ironically, a major factor in this change has been the emergence of an amateur craft movement called "Indie" or "DIY" crafts, whose young makers market their irreverent and funky works over the internet. But the most impressive aspect of DIY are the "craftivists" (craft+activism) who do things like knitting "cozys" to put over everything from public statues to tanks, a guerrilla activity known as "yarn bombing." This upending of the image of craft has even infected art history, as shown by Elisa Auther's brilliant study of how the fiber arts overcame decades of art world prejudice based on a highly gendered "hierarchy of art and craft."<sup>3</sup>

But does it really matter philosophically whether a few critics, curators and historians are now ready to view craft more positively? I believe it does in the sense that the current revisionist views are symptoms of deeper conceptual issues.

Obviously, the central issue is the identity of craft itself. To begin with, we need to distinguish "craft" as the name of a *process*, from "craft" as the name of a *set of disciplines*. The two concepts are not only radically divergent in function, but have very different histories. As the name of a process, "craft" is roughly synonymous with "skill" or "cunning," meanings that go back to the Middle Ages. "Craft" as the name of a category of disciplines only goes back to the late nineteenth century when it emerged partly in reaction to machine production, and partly in reaction to the fine art academies' exclusion of the "minor," "decorative," or "applied" arts. The use of the term "crafts" for handmade decorative or applied arts only became widespread after 1888 when a group of London designers and craftspeople, committed to restoring the "unity" of the arts, created the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society to counter the Royal Academy's annual show of painting and sculpture. The frontispiece of the Society's first catalogue showed personifications of "Handicraft" and "Design" holding hands, whereas the back cover graphically illustrated the desired "unity of the arts" by showing the fine arts of painting, sculpture and architecture allied with pottery, metal work, glass painting, and design.

This early moment of Arts and Crafts Arts history illustrates three philosophically relevant characteristics of craft as a category of disciplines. First, "craft" was *relational* from the beginning; in this case, craft and design formed a partnership vis-à-vis the fine arts. The importance of design in this equation suggests that the philosophy of art might profit from rethinking craft as part of a tripartite relation rather than as part of an art/craft dualism. This remains true, despite the fact that by the 1930s, craft and design had gone their separate ways, the design profession steadily rising in status, while handicraft production was increasingly viewed as stuck in terminal nostalgia.

A second philosophically relevant characteristic of "craft" as a set of disciplines is that it is *institutional*. By linking the term "craft" to a separate exhibition organization, the Exhibition Society took a first step toward institutionalizing the very division between the fine arts and crafts that they aimed at overcoming. By the mid-twentieth century, the institutionalization of the professional studio crafts had become so pronounced that there were separate craft journals, craft schools, craft galleries, and even craft museums. This situation might tempt

some philosophers to take an institutional approach to defining craft, but that would be subject to the same objections usually made to the institutional definition of art.

A third philosophically relevant characteristic of craft as a set of disciplines is that it is *extensional*. Just as fine art had its extensional aspect (lists that included painting, sculpture, architecture, etc.), craft as a category of disciplines has also been defined through lists. The criteria for such lists have been drawn from materials (clay, fibers, wood, glass, metal), techniques (throwing, weaving, turning, blowing), and the names of functional products (pottery, furniture, jewelry, tableware), although most lists mix items from each area. As a result, such lists aren't consistent enough for one to transform them into a compelling disjunctive definition. In fact, the art historian Peter Greenhalgh has called "the crafts" a mere "consortium of genres" with no unifying principle.<sup>4</sup>

But Greenhalgh is perhaps over hasty. Two possible unifying principles come to mind, one concerned with *function*, the other with *production*. The typical craft or design object has a practical or decorative purpose, whereas practical function is almost never part of the defining characteristics of what makes artworks art. Something like this seems to have been assumed by the so-called "craft-as-art" movement that began in the late 1950s, when some studio craftspeople, in quest of fine art status, not only began to imitate then-current artworld styles, but made their works blatantly non-functional, e.g., pots with holes in them, cups you couldn't drink out of, chairs you couldn't sit on, books you couldn't open. Apart from the faulty logic of affirming the consequent, these anti-function efforts failed to convince most mainstream artists, art critics, and curators that studio craft was art. Although some of the resistance to art-aspiring craft works may have reflected a prejudice against "craft" materials or techniques, there were more substantive objections, having to do with the crafts' perceived emphasis on technique, materials, or beauty over ideas and expression. As the artist Judy Chicago put it in a 1987 interview: "in art, the technique or the material is in the service of meaning . . . in craft, the technique or the material or the process is an end in itself."<sup>5</sup> Chicago's comment leads us back to consider whether the other type of craft concept—craft as a process of skilled making—can provide a unifying principle for the craft disciplines.

But defining craft simply as skill may not take us very far toward identifying the specificity of the craft process common to craft dis-

ciplines. In fact, "craft" in the generic sense of skill is often used interchangeably with "art" in such phrases as the "art of motorcycle maintenance," the "art of the deal," the "art of cooking," the "art of medicine." Although "art" in these expressions seems vaguely more complementary than "craft," to sort out the semantic nuances would require an extended exercise in ordinary language analysis. Lacking time for that, I think we can say with confidence that the general idea of craft as skilled making or performing can be found as much in teaching, bricklaying, surgery, cooking, parenting, or governing, as in the traditional craft disciplines of pottery, weaving, or furniture making. Thus, if we were to define the craft process simply as skill, we would likely miss the more specific understanding of the craft process common to the craft disciplines.

For this reason I believe we should consider incorporating the idea of a "process" into the concept of a "practice," drawing on Wittgenstein's notion of a practice as constituted by a set of shared assumptions that inform a habitual way of doing. Such an idea of practice could operate on several levels. Thinking of a practice on the broadest level, one could consider craft, design, and art as each forming general domains of practice. At this level, just as "design" designates a set of assumptions common to the more specific practices of product, graphic and fashion design, or "art" designates a set of assumptions common to the more specific practices of sculpture, installation or performance art, so "craft" at the most general level, could be seen as designating a set of assumptions common to the more specific practices of studio craft (pottery), trade craft (carpentry) ethnic craft (mask carving,) amateur craft (quilting), and DIY (yarn bombing). At the level of these more specific practices, each practice has its own additional assumptions, conventions and histories. Thus, by using the idea of a process embedded in various levels of practice, we might be able to bring together the concept of craft as a process with aspects of the concept of craft as a category of disciplines or practices.

Unfortunately, anyone who has followed even a bit of the history of the craft disciplines, especially the internal dissensions within the studio crafts, knows that at one time or another almost every putative feature of the craft process has been questioned. Thus, the studio craft movement has been deeply divided between those still pursuing the older ideal of uniting utility with beauty and the now dominant "craft-as-art" tendency that seeks art status by throwing over function and traditional forms, or at most merely alluding to them. Given this conflicted history it might seem unlikely that we could come up with

## 2012 Annual Meeting Information

The 70th annual meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics will be held at the Millennium St. Louis Hotel. The dates are Wednesday, 24 October 2012 through Saturday, 27 October 2012.

Hotel reservations must be made directly with the Millennium Hotel. We have a \$109/night rate at the hotel. Our room block will be held until 1 October, after which the hotel releases it and the rate cannot be guaranteed. There is a link on the ASA web site at <[www.aesthetics-online.org](http://www.aesthetics-online.org)>. Student members of the ASA are eligible for a \$25/room/night subsidy if they stay at the Millennium. This subsidy is provided by the ASA, not the hotel, however. It will be paid on submission of receipts after the meeting.

Registration and a preliminary copy of the program is now up on the ASA web site. On-site registration adds an additional \$25 to the registration fee.

a set of assumptions shared by all the studio crafts, let alone across the broader range of craft disciplines that include the trade, ethnic, amateur and DIY crafts. And the prospect of identifying necessary and sufficient conditions for something to be craft would seem even dimmer. Even so, there are clearly many commonalities of process across the craft disciplines or practices. Therefore, I suggest we think of the assumptions common to the different craft practices as *shared points of contestation*. From many such flash points of craft practice, I have selected three elements that show up repeatedly in the writings of critics and practitioners of the crafts: hand, material, and skill.

The contrast of the *hand*-made with the machine-made is surely one of the most familiar characteristics associated with craft practices, yet “hand” is highly ambiguous, especially with respect to the question of tools. Apart from a few purists, most craftspeople have always used the best tools available and that now includes digital tools such as CNC milling machines and computer guided looms. Although any tool puts some distance between body and material, in some digital craft practices nearly all the handwork goes into the design phase so that digital craft makers would seem to have become primarily designers, although they retain the freedom to intervene by hand at various stages. Conversely, although the *design* process implies that the designer’s task ends with drawing up plans for others to execute, design practice has often involved hand making prototypes or even producing small batch runs – something now made easier by digital fabrication.

A second contested aspect of the specificity of the craft process concerns “materials.” As we have seen, certain materials like clay, fibers, wood, glass, have historically been used as one means of identifying a set of craft disciplines. But the craft process is not defined by the *type* of material used, but the way materials are approached, namely, through an intensive engagement. The extent of this engagement varies from one kind of craft practice to another. We expect a thorough understanding of materials in trade crafts like masonry or carpentry, whereas, within the studio crafts of pottery or weaving, there are sharply divergent attitudes toward material. In small batch production, such as making furniture or ceramic ware, engagement with materials requires a long acquaintance that often leads to a respect for intrinsic properties. But many people from the “craft-as-art” spectrum of the studio crafts have delighted in distorting or otherwise working against the nature of materials, an attitude more typical of art practices.

I think we can get a better grasp of what is at stake in the controversies over materials in craft practice by applying the contrast between material and medium often used in discussions of the fine arts, e.g., the medium of painting is not just the material, paint, but things like brush strokes or pours along with various conventions. Similarly, it may be helpful to view craft materials as distinct from craft media, e.g., a particular kind of fiber can become part of a variety of craft media such as weaving, knotting, knitting, crocheting, quilting, embroidering, or sewing, each of which has its own techniques, expressive possibilities and formal histories. This may not be true of every form of craft practice, but it certainly applies to most studio craft and to many cases of DIY craft making. Thus, the politically oriented “craftivists” who knit “cozies” to put over statues and tanks, are articulating a statement in a historical craft medium realized in a particular fiber material.

Finally we come to *skill* and *technique*, surely at the core of any understanding of the craft process. But here again there are ambiguities and controversies. Although “skill” and “technique” are often used interchangeably, strictly speaking, technique concerns a *type* of procedure and skill the ability to handle it effectively. Moreover, both

terms often suggest a narrow focus on manual dexterity or technical proficiency, so that it might be better to find another term, such as “mastery,” to describe skill and technique when they rise above dexterity and proficiency to become integrated with intellect and imagination. Mastery results from a long experience of mind and body working together in a medium, culminating in what is often called “tacit knowledge.” Moreover, contrary to Collingwood’s depiction of craft as the execution of a preconceived plan, the craft process at its best involves continuous feedback between initial ideas and their embodiment. And in those cases where the maker is also the designer, the craftspeople’s tacit knowledge may become the basis of spontaneous discovery and expression, since one whose mastery of technique has become second nature can more freely modify means in the service of creation, something apparent to anyone who has watched a glassblower at work. This is similar to what David Pye has called “the workmanship of risk,” which depends on the continuous use of judgment and care, in contrast to the “workmanship of certainty,” in which “the result is predetermined.”<sup>6</sup> Pye’s analysis shows that Collingwood’s description of the craft process is not so much wrong, as narrowly one sided since it tends to treat most craft practices as the “workmanship of certainty.”

By keeping in mind these revisions to the concept of craft as a set of disciplines and to the concept of craft as a process, we should be in a better position to reconsider the art/craft dichotomy, the idea that art and craft form mutually exclusive categories. Obviously, the exact nature of any version of a strict art/craft division will also vary according to one’s definition of art, but we need to set aside such definitional differences for the moment in order to focus on the implications of the two types of craft concept we have just examined.

Thus, the first question we should ask about any art/craft division is whether we are considering it with respect to craft as a *set of disciplines* or craft as a *process*. In the case of craft as a set of disciplines defined by materials, techniques, and object types, a once supposedly firm division between art and craft has all but disappeared. Art practice long ago opened itself up to any material, including clay and fibers, despite their strong craft associations, although it has only been since the 1980s that a few art institutions began to take in some contemporary works in craft techniques and object types. One could say that in the past decade the British art world symbolically acknowledged the final disappearance of a fixed line between art forms and craft disciplines when it awarded the Turner prize to Grayson Perry and sent Tracey Emin to the Venice Biennale. But the acceptance of “craft” materials, techniques and object types by a post-disciplinary art world does not automatically entail that the division between art and craft with respect to either *function* or *process* has also been eliminated.

Since the trade, ethnic, amateur/DIY, and some studio crafts typically make objects that serve practical functions, whereas most high art forms do not, practical function might seem a possible criterion of division. But even though practical function may not be a condition for being high art, function is not excluded from art or we would have to deny art status to most Renaissance painting or to most non-Western art as well as to things like contemporary commemorative sculpture. Thus practical function per se cannot be the basis of an art/craft dichotomy. Yet someone might argue that there is a principled difference between art and craft based the priority of ideas or of aesthetic form over function in art as compared to craft. For example, Stephen Davies claims that despite non-Western art’s ritual and practical functions, it “remains distinct from *mere craft*” (*italics his*) since “*mere craftworks* lack aesthetic properties, or are not made to have them, or are made to have them in a manner that is incidental or trivial with respect to their intended function.”<sup>7</sup> But what Davies describes is only a difference of degree concerning aesthetic



properties *vis-à-vis* function and does not establish a categorical division between art and craft. Moreover, a distinction of degree between (functional) crafts and (non-functional) high arts would only apply to the art-craft relational axis, whereas functional craft has an equally important relation to design—especially since design provides most of the practical objects that make up our everyday environment.

Having failed to find a basis for a hierarchical art/craft dichotomy in function, we turn to the question of whether the craft *process* provides the basis for such a division. At first glance the craft process looks like a more promising way to establish a sharp art/craft polarity, given the absence of the three contested elements of the craft process in a good deal of contemporary art practice. In the case of the hand, artists are no longer required to make an object of any kind, and if they do, they need not use their own hands, but can hire outside fabricators. As for materials, artists have long been free to embody their ideas in any material or no material at all, and if they do use materials they need no close knowledge of them or respect for their properties. Finally, *skill or mastery of technique* is clearly an optional aspect of artistic practice in our “post studio” era when some art schools have even embraced “deskilling,” the idea that most skills can be picked up as needed.

Yet, if none of the three contested characteristics of craft practice is a condition for being art today, it is equally true that none are excluded from art practice. Even so, I suspect that the acceptance of Grayson Perry’s and Tracey Emin’s work by high art institutions may have been helped by the fact that his technique in pottery and hers in appliqué is somewhat faulty, thereby underlining the fact that their craft techniques are merely vehicles for the expression of ideas. Of course, artists like Jeff Koons, who often seek high production values in their works, can avoid any risk of the craft label by having their pieces fabricated by others. But even artists who display superb technique need not jeopardize their art status, as illustrated by the work of Martin Puryear, who has been able to get away with devoting much of his career to masterfully hand making beautiful wooden forms that sometimes allude to function. Arthur Danto has argued that what keeps Puryear’s works from being instances of “(mere) craftsmanship” instead of sculpture, is that “the craft . . . is subordinated to the production of spirit” rather than an end in itself.<sup>8</sup> Danto’s point may look the same as Judy Chicago’s claim that in craft, technique and materials are ends in themselves; but by adding the qualifier “mere,” Danto, like Davies, implies that there may be craft disciplines or practices in which the craft is not an end in itself. In fact we have already described such a version of the craft process in which the mastery of technique and materials rises to the level of tacit knowledge, affording the craftsman the freedom for spontaneous creation and expression. Moreover, this kind of mastery or “workmanship of risk” is far more widespread among most types of craft practice than the virtuosic demonstration of process as an end in itself. Since the subordination of the craft process to meaning in both the high arts and the crafts is a matter of degree, here again, there can be no sharp division between art and craft but only a continuum. Danto suggests something similar when he says that art’s post-disciplinary pluralism has in effect erased the line between art and craft so that there is no longer any basis for an “invidious distinction.”<sup>9</sup>

Thus, the notion of a continuum in the subordination of process to meaning suggests that there could be a relative and non-invidious distinction between art and craft practices. For example, there are modes of trade and studio craft practice that seek a balance between technique and meaning, practical function and aesthetics, just as at the other end of the spectrum there are art practices that ignore, downplay, or aggressively deny technique or aesthetic pleasure. Yet the craft practices that combine a concern for mastery of materials with

a dedication to serving ordinary needs do not subordinate meaning to technique and function, but embody such everyday meanings as comfort, support, nourishment, care in furnishings and adornments for daily life. Such craft practices parallel the practices of those contemporary designers who engage in small batch production, and both craft and design works of this kind are sometimes appropriately grouped together under the label “applied art.”

Taken together, the preceding analyses suggest that it may be time to abandon the art/craft dichotomy and begin to think of the terms craft, design, and (high) art as designating three kinds of overlapping practices within the broad spectrum of all the arts. Obviously, the various proposals outlined here require a great deal more development and justification. In any case, I believe that what Adorno says of art in the opening line of *Aesthetic Theory*, applies to craft today: “It is self-evident that nothing concerning [craft] is self-evident anymore, not its inner life, nor its relation to the world, not even its right to exist.”<sup>10</sup>

#### Endnotes

1. Carol Kino, “The Art Form That Dare Not Speak its Name,” *The New York Times*, March 30, 2005, G8.
2. Janis Jeffries, “Loving Attention: An Outburst of Craft in Contemporary Art.” *Extra/Ordinary: Craft in Contemporary Art*. Ed. Maria Elena Buszek. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011. 222-242.
3. Elisa Auther, *String, Felt, Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in American Art*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.
4. Peter Greenhalgh, *The Persistence of Craft: The Applied Arts Today*. London: Victoria and Albert Museum. 2002. 1.
5. Cited in Auther, *String, Felt, Thread*, p. 152.
6. David Pye, *The Nature and Art of Workmanship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968, 7-8.
7. Stephen Davies, “Non-Western Art and Art’s Definition.” *Theories of Art Today*. Ed. Noël Carroll. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000. 207-08.
8. Arthur Danto, *Embodied Meanings: Critical Essays & Aesthetic Meditations*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994. 293-94.
9. Arthur Danto, “Philosophizing with a Hammer: Gary Knox Bennett and Contemporary Art.” *Gary Knox-Bennett in Oakland, GKB*. Ed. Ursula Ilse-Neuman. New York: American Craft Museum, 2001. 10.
10. Theodore W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, The present essay is a condensed and altered form of a much longer article, “‘Blurred Boundaries?’ Rethinking the Concept of Craft and its Relation to Art and Design,” which includes a comprehensive bibliography, and will appear in Wiley-Blackwell’s on-line journal *Philosophy Compass* sometime this year.

# On Ambition in Art, Craft, and Concept

Patricia Emison

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Conceptual art and the Renaissance were born together. When Alberti advised in 1434 that the invention of a work of art was pleasing even before its realization, he rendered Sol LeWitt and all his confreres rear-guard. Severing art from craft, he dubbed the artist an intellectual and urged him to develop a literary as well as a Biblical imagination. He also inserted botulism into a can of worms, one that took a long time to ferment but that led eventually to the flagrant disregard for the object that currently reigns quasi-absolutely.

Disregard for the object was *de rigueur* during the medieval period. It might be supposed that conceptual art owes more to the theory of the medieval icon than to Alberti. In both cases the object is not the locus of value, but a sign that directs the viewer to immaterial value—in Alberti's case, to the artist; and in the icon's case, to a saint or divine personage. And that is why Alberti trumps the icon: now, as in the Renaissance, the referent is the artist. And as in the Renaissance an artist wanted to be richly rewarded rather than merely paid, most conceptual artists (and let us define them broadly from Duchamp and Warhol through Tracey Emin) have somehow contrived to make large amounts of money despite ostentatiously disdaining the art market. They have profited qua celebrities rather than as makers of precious objects. They are performers, even if they are not performance artists, and objects, if they are sold, are sold as the detritus of such performances, sometimes for relic-like prices.

The Renaissance idea of pictorial invention was imbued with modesty: the artist attempted to realize what was in the mind, but the sticky material world would impede his efforts and so perfection was impossible. Just as Pliny reported of the painter Apelles in ancient times, so, too, many Renaissance painters would sign their works, "Faciebat," in the imperfect, to acknowledge that their effort was incomplete. Completion would have implied perfection. Such is the back-story of the sketch: the more modest one became about works that had a high degree of finish, the more allowance there was in the theory for highly unfinished works. All the while, artistic pride versus modesty tended to shift back and forth as unstably as wave and particle. Michelangelo, for instance, tormented himself with his failings yet snapped at anyone around him who wasn't sufficiently respectful; he faulted his predecessor Donatello for lack of finish and then left his own work even rougher.

Ambition in the Renaissance was not hard to define. It was, however, complex, and entailed competition with the antique, with nature, power of expression, monumentality, a vision of humans as godlike in their beauty and strength, the ability to suck the spectator into a credible space and allow him or her the new thoughts and emotions removal to some other time-space might foster. Renaissance artists tried to position figures of ideal beauty within startlingly real spaces in which real-time actions transpired. No previous artists had set themselves that goal. Their ambition was to do this not for the sake of its newness, but simply for the sake of its being worthwhile. Some

of those real-time actions were remarkably mundane, so the ideal sponsored by Renaissance art was sometimes quasi-familiar.

The uninitiated might well wonder what shared ambitions there might be among today's artists. Some galleries, playgrounds for the leisured rather than commercial establishments in any recognizable sense, show installations clearly not meant for sale even to the wealthy. These galleries are static theatres. Alternatively, they mimic museums, and they echo (with Alberti) Pliny's accolade of being beyond price. Even to wonder about dollars and cents would be crass. Like major musical compositions, these are the creatures of commissions or grants rather than freelance experiments. They are not offered to the public but rather, the public is allowed to witness them. They aspire to be thought of as formalizing some synecdochical identity for our time, one made out of pure ether, as a cathedral seems to us the emanation of a society, rather than merely the fallible product of one rich man's taste like Blenheim or Frederick the Great's Sanssouci. No name but the artist's is to be attached to these strange conglomerations, often sculptural, in gallery spaces, as no name but the Virgin Mary's to the cathedrals. Such works of contemporary art move from gallery to museum with never a tarnishing passage as a privately owned object, or alternatively from gallery to gallery to warehouse. Who bothers to remember the contemporary art of five or ten years ago? The rich who matter in this realm have their own gallery or museum, or they have a curator they treat as their spaniel. Sometimes the spaniel's rich master is the artist himself.

This "public" art is sometimes suggested to be appropriate to a government of the people; it doesn't assume huge initial investment to get it going or learning to respond to it. Nevertheless, it is fundamentally oligarchical. Art does sometimes reflect society, after all. This art that mocks consumerism mocks consumers as well. The bad art of our time (the decorative paintings and photographs of pleasant sights, the generous swathes of oil paint) wallows in its derivative, fetid stew of mediocrity; the "good" art has a new kind of stark monumentality. It is framed only by its exhibition halls, patrolled by the supercilious young women like some science fiction police force. They dare you to defy their stylish authority. The spaces, as poor cousins of corporate headquarters that assert their oversize yet glass inviolability, dwarf the viewer into submission.

Conceptual art assumes the impermanence of the object. No ancient painting had come down to Alberti, but only verbal descriptions thereof. No wonder he thought words sufficed. Much contemporary art is made as if it were fated to destruction as predictably as a Buddhist sand painting. Craftsmen build for permanence; today's artists work in the most unpretentious of materials, often found materials, the better to assert the primacy of the concept. If technical skill is needed, like a CEO they hire anonymous courtiers to take care of it. What is a digital age but a time that has rarefied impermanence into a cultural trope? The future, should there be one, is likely to conclude we were anticipating apocalypse. Canny future—though in the Middle Ages, when they were also anticipating apocalypse, they still cared to make things well. But theirs was a respectful society, as ours is not. It's hard being an artist in an age of disrespect. Perhaps more than by anything, we are divided from our past by layers of cynicism, so it is not so surprising that much of our art taunts us, cynically, to fail to do obeisance.

Alberti said that history or narrative painting was the most ambitious: up to nine figures in a unified, significant action. History painting, larger and larger, more and more populated, became thereafter the staple of Academic agendas for four hundred years. Governments would subsidize such art, for it fed patriotism. When history painting ended, with the terrors of World War I and John Singer Sargent's



Gassed, modernism unmistakably had begun. Whistler and Kandinsky wrote the theory that displaced Alberti and his successors, Reynolds not least; for them modern art vied with music more than with the written word. But the problem of ambition, once Cézanne and his large scale nudes in a landscape were over, was a question without a unified answer. Attention was the objective; ambition was reduced to strategies for gaining attention. Painting became, for a time, interior decoration for modernist machines for living, or set design to go with the ballets whose scores seemed to displace the symphony as locus of musical ambition. Painting shrank in scale, and with Marcel Duchamp and then Jean Arp's paper collages, it became the record of whim or chance. As with all celebrity, much of the attention garnered sank to the level of gossip: Picasso and his mistresses; Warhol and his hangers on; Carl Andre and his wife; prices; openings. Picasso, whose merest scribble on a napkin he knew to be worth untold amounts, fascinated as much as he impressed anyone. He was a celebrity, whereas Cézanne had been a proud recluse. When Jackson Pollock was filmed and appeared on the cover of Life Magazine, the avant-garde had evolved into a sub-species of high fashion.

Artists either aspire to be quintessentially of their time or to be timeless. Classical art took the latter way; modern art the former. Renaissance artists didn't realize they needed to make a choice, as they also were blissfully unaware of the divide between art of the establishment and art of the avant-garde. Donatello was at once a rogue artist and the pet of the de facto ruler. He came from the troublesome bottom of society, the wool-carders, and he and his colleagues made images of pain, of pride, of modesty, of humor—some images that seemed to recall the distant past and some images that seemed to come from nowhere. Theirs was an innocent art, and how their successors have envied them that unretrievable innocence! They possessed a simple sense of ambition: they wanted an art of ideas. Not conceptual art, not art that prided itself inordinately on its manual ineptitude, but art that debated whether Christ should look a peasant or a hero, whether St. Louis of Toulouse should appear a meek man or a king, whether religious subjects could be made to fit into scenes of the natural world, whether we could with a good conscience enjoy looking at representations immense suffering, whether subjects we knew well could be

made fresh again? To portray ideal beauty in real time and space was a new behest, one that afforded a range of artists an engrossing project and ultimately yielded, arguably, the first society for which art was more than an accessory. The subjects mattered less than they had in medieval times, the materials were typically much less costly, yet the objects—the images—had more valence. The Renaissance gave us imaginations, and then we got all too used to having them.

Currently we have art that aims to be of its own time but also to assert that only the concept matters, an idea inherited from Alberti who was advocating an art like Antiquity's, an art so naturalistic that it wouldn't be inflected by historical period. In other words, the highly-publicized high-end art of today pursues a conundrum: to be as pure as the classical, and as topical as the ultra-realistic. It should be made by artists with working class accents or of otherwise intriguing ethnicity; exhibited at the behest of the oligarchy; and milked for petty cash in the museum and gallery shops, in the form of jewelry, mugs, t-shirts and scarves sold to the middle class. Often it mistakes the merely clever for the conceptual—and at worst, the merely cheeky, a project becoming ever more problematic in a world in which uncongenial cultures each jostle for mutual respect. Seldom is there any sign of good hard work or extraordinary skill, as though either of these would degrade the high-flyer status of the artist, and love of one's materials would constitute a sort of prostitution. Lady Disdain rules the art world. Furthermore, the sycophantic attention of art historians and the mass media have combined to exacerbate what may already have been a tendency toward narcissism among artists. Every utterance by those deemed the prophets of today is recorded and disseminated; such a degree of attentiveness requires a narrow focus on the chosen few.

We need to find the artists who aren't locked into narcissism. For when artists can see only themselves, what have they to show us? Narcissus, according to one legend, originated painting, but I prefer the other version, according to which a young girl of Corinth drew her lover's silhouette on the wall before he went to war. Now that was an idea.

*The American Society for Aesthetics Graduate E-Journal (ASAGE)* is now soliciting submissions for the Fall 2012/Winter 2013 issue. The submission deadline is 1 December 2012. ASAGE accepts papers on any topic in aesthetics written by graduate students who have not yet completed final requirements for the doctoral degree. Submissions should be under 3000 words (although exceptions may be made at the editor's discretion, to a maximum of 5000 words, particularly in the case of historical papers). They must be accompanied by an abstract of no more than 250 words and a word count.

Submissions should be written according to the specifications of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th ed. (University of Chicago Press Staff, 2010). Please see *The Chicago Manual of Style Online's Quick Citation Guide* for examples. Authors must attest that material submitted is original, and free from plagiarism. Any necessary permissions should be obtained by the author prior to submission.

Linking to authorized online images of art works and audio or video files referred to in the paper is encouraged.

For more information, see the ASAGE website at <<http://asage.org/>>.

# News from the National Office

**Membership matters:** This is a reminder that ASA membership is on a calendar-year basis; that is, your membership runs from 1 January to 31 December of the year that you join, regardless of the date that you join or renew your membership. You begin receiving *JAAC* and the *Newsletter* with the next available issue. The way it works is that I send an updated membership/labels list to our publisher, Wiley/Blackwell, about six weeks before the next issue of *JAAC* is to come out. Everyone who is an active member is on that list. Before the end of the year, I will send out a membership renewal reminder. To be sure that everyone has an opportunity to respond, no one is dropped from the membership list until after the first issue of *JAAC* for the next year has been mailed. After that, I delete anyone who has not paid from the labels list.

Changes of address should be sent directly to me at PO Box 915, Pooler, GA 31322, not to Wiley. They apply to all ASA information. It is important that you also update your email address. Most communications from the National Office are by email. I am careful not to share email addresses, even when we occasionally sell our mailing list to publishers and other non-profit organizations that may be of interest to members.

In the past, we have published a membership directory. Increasingly, this seems like a rather out-of-date procedure. It is costly, time consuming, and does not fit the way that most members now work. I propose, therefore, to assemble the membership directory electronically and make it available to any member who requests it on demand that way. Only members would be able to receive the directory. Any member could "opt out" altogether of being included or request that some information such as an email address not be made available. Everyone would be asked not to share the directory with non-members. If necessary, I can go through the process of copyrighting the directory to keep it from being shared or reproduced. For the increasingly small number of individuals who do not have email, I would be glad to print and mail a copy of the directory on request.

I should also note that my current policy is not to try to send back issues of *JAAC* or the *Newsletter* when someone joins the ASA during the course of the year. The reasons are

both logistical and practical. I receive about 40 extra copies of the *Journal* each issue. Some of those must be retained for archival purposes. We also sell back issues for \$35 a copy for research purposes and need to retain copies for that purpose. This policy should not cause any hardship. One of the benefits of ASA membership is access to the Wiley On-line Library, which gives you pdfs of whatever appears in *JAAC*. It is searchable. Even if you have your own library of back issues of *JAAC*, you should take advantage of this resource. You will need a password, which can be obtained directly from Wiley. (They prefer to issue the passwords and instructions directly, so I do not have the ability to do so.) To get a password, send an email to Rhonda Riccardi at Wiley <rriccardi@wiley.com>, or you can email me, and I will forward it to verify that you are a member.

Increasingly, electronic publication is becoming the norm in scholarly publishing. We have not reached that point yet, and at present there are no plans to cease mailing print copies. I anticipate that in the near future the possibility of electronic distribution as the default method will come up for discussion, however. Mailing and printing costs are escalating. As it is, the ASA loses money on student memberships and international memberships because of the mailing costs. I would be interested in feedback on the issue of receiving either *JAAC* or the *Newsletter* or both electronically as the default method of distribution, with print copies available only at an extra charge. I emphasize that there are no plans for this at present.

**Annual Meetings:** The next annual meeting will be held in St. Louis on 24-27 October, 2012 at the Millennium Hotel next to the Arch. Information is posted on the web site and I send it by email as well. Rachel Zuckert, the program chair, and her committee have completed work on the program. Stephanie Ross is local arrangements chair and has arranged for a performance of the Arianna Quartet and for architectural walking tours. Please mark the dates on your calendar and plan to attend. We have an excellent hotel rate of \$109/night. In addition, student members are eligible for a room subsidy of \$25/room/night provided that they stay at the Millennium Hotel. (This is a rebate that will come directly from the National Office upon presentation of a receipt. It does not come from the hotel. One rebate per room; share the room and share the rebate!)

We now have contracts for the 2013 and 2014 meetings. 2013 will be in San Diego, and 2014 in San Antonio. I would welcome

suggestions and invitations for the 2015 and 2016 meetings. I will be working on meeting sites for those dates in the near future. An invitation need not involve a great commitment of time or money. I try to keep the burden on the local arrangements chair as small as possible, but local knowledge is essential, and it helps to have students to work at registration. Jennifer Judkins, with assistance from Mary Devereaux, will be working on local arrangements in San Diego. Andrew Kania is local arrangements chair for San Antonio. Institutional support is always welcome. Trinity University in San Antonio is hosting the 2014 meeting and providing support, but in these economic times, do not hesitate to volunteer even if your institution is unable to contribute.

**Announcements:** Special thanks to Aili Brenahan and Zach Johnson who have been editing *ASAGE*. Their terms have ended and they are beginning their professional careers. Congratulations to them. Michael Gutierrez is now the editor and Robert Kubala is the review editor. If you have not looked at the *ASAGE* web site recently, please do so. Our graduate journal publishes interesting material and deserves our support.

A committee consisting of President Paul Guyer, Vice President Dom Lopes, Stephanie Ross, Alexander Nehamas, Susan Feagin, and myself was established to review applications for the editorship of *JAAC*. The committee met in Philadelphia and has recommended that Ted Gracyk and Robert Stecker be appointed as co-editors. Memoranda of Understanding have been prepared for the working arrangements with their respective universities, Central Michigan University and Minnesota State University Moorhead. Their terms will begin 1 February, 2013. The ASA owes special thanks to Susan Feagin for her superlative work as editor of *JAAC* and to Temple University for its long association with the *Journal*.

Curtis Carter continues as the President of the International Aesthetics Association. Mary Wiseman Goldstein will represent the ASA at a planning conference in Bologna, and Eva Dadlez is our delegate for the next IAA congress to be held in Poland. Further information will be posted on the ASA web site.

The ASA continues to make grants in support of conferences and projects that advance the mission of the ASA and promote aesthetics to a larger public. John Dyck organized a graduate conference in conjunction with the Eastern Division meeting in Philadelphia, and Christy Mag Uidhir is at work on a conference

on photography. The ASA is supporting a new edition of the *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* to be published by Oxford University Press and edited by Michael Kelly. Grant applications are welcome at any time. At least six months lead time is needed for consideration, however. Note that grants are for projects that address a wider audience and are enhanced if support is also sought from other sources. Grants are not available for individual research projects. Guidelines are available on request.

The ASA also has established a committee to promote diversity and international involvement in the profession. Under Phil Alperson, the committee supported workshops on the study of aesthetics by ethnic minorities. The committee is now chaired by Mary Wiseman Goldstein and welcomes suggestions and projects, which may be eligible for financial support.

Report: The ASA is a member of the American Council of Learned Societies and the National Humanities Alliance. The ACLS supports all activities of its member societies and offers fellowships both in its own name and as the administering agency for foundations such as the Mellon Foundation. The NHA supports the humanities primarily by lobbying activities in Washington on behalf of the humanities, especially the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The ACLS holds an annual meeting of the chief administrative officers and the society delegates from the member societies. Paul Guyer is our voting delegate, and he and I attended the meeting of the ACLS in Philadelphia in May. The meeting included extensive discussions of the state of the humanities, scholarly publishing, and reports on the fellowship activities of the ACLS, including presentations by recent fellowship recipients. The Charles Homer Haskins Prize Lecture was presented by Joyce Appleby at the American Philosophical Society Library, and James Leach, NEH chairman, presented the luncheon speech on the activities of the NEH and the current state of support in Washington for the humanities (not very encouraging, unfortunately). Leach is an exceptionally frank and open representative of the interests of the humanities. A detailed report of the meeting can be found at the ACLS web site, <[www.acls.org](http://www.acls.org)>.

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## Aesthetics News

### ASA Pacific Division History

Donald Crawford and Russell Quacchia, as longtime participants in the ASA Pacific Division meetings each spring, have been trying to put together a history of those meetings. Between them and help from others, they have obtained the programs of most of the meetings, which began in 1971 and then started meeting at Asilomar in 1975, where they have met ever since. However there are still a few programs that are missing, namely 1978, 1979, 1984, and 1996. If you have one of these they would very much appreciate a copy sent either by email to <[crawford@philosophy.ucsb.edu](mailto:crawford@philosophy.ucsb.edu)> or by snail mail to Don Crawford at 300 Travis Drive, Los Osos, CA 93402.

### ASAGE

The *American Society for Aesthetics Graduate E-journal* (ISSN: 1946-1879) has just published its current issue at <<http://www.asage.org/>>. We invite you to review the Table of Contents and to view the full text of all articles on our website.

### Scandinavian Journal of Comic Art

The first issue of *Scandinavian Journal of Comic Art* (*SJoCA*) has been published. *SJoCA* is an online, open-access, peer-reviewed journal for comics research. The scope of the journal is interdisciplinary, encouraging a wide range of theoretical and methodological perspectives. The journal publishes articles and book reviews in English.

Although global in its scope, publishing high quality research regardless of national or regional boundaries, the journal is rooted in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) and has the ambition to reflect and incite discussion in the field of comics studies in these countries. The second issue will be published in fall 2012. *SJoCA* (including information on how to submit material to the journal) is located here: <<http://sjoca.com/>>.

### National Humanities Center

The advertisement of our fellowship competition for 2013-14 is posted at: <<http://national-humanitiescenter.org/fellowships/fellshipap-info.htm>>. For further information about the Center and a list of our Fellows for 2012-13, see: <[nationalhumanitiescenter.org](http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org)>.

### Evental Aesthetics

The Editors of *Evental Aesthetics* are delighted to announce the publication of our second issue for 2012. A diverse collection of philosophical and aesthetic reflections on failure and missed opportunity, this issue is now available for free download at <<http://eventalaesthetics.net/the-missed-vol-1-no-2-2012/>>.

### Estetika: The Central European Journal of Aesthetics

*Estetika* announces the transfer of duties of Editor-in-Chief from Tomáš Hlobil to Fabian Dorsch.

Fabian Dorsch (PhD, University College London) will be Research Professor in Philosophy at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, starting from 2013. In the past, he served as an assistant editor with *Dialectica* (Wiley-Blackwell). He is the co-founder and secretary of the European Society for Aesthetics ([www.eurosa.org](http://www.eurosa.org)). To learn more about the editorial committee, visit <<http://aesthetics.ff.cuni.cz/editorial-committee>>.

Under the new Editor-in-Chief, *Estetika* has adjusted its submission process. *Estetika* is now open to submissions all year round (submission deadlines have been abandoned). We aim at informing the authors whether their paper has been accepted for peer-reviewing within two weeks' time and keep the evaluation period under four months.

Submission guidelines are available at <<http://aesthetics.ff.cuni.cz/guidelines/>>.

### European Journal of Philosophy

The *European Journal of Philosophy* is pleased to publish a virtual issue on the theme of 'Kant.' View the full introduction and access the articles at: <<http://bit.ly/EJP-kant>>.



## Philosophy in Review

This year's June issue of *Philosophy in Review* (PIR) is now online. This issue is vol. 32 (2012), no. 3, and it can be viewed at the following web address: <<http://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/pir/index>>.

With the publication of this issue comes the end of my tenure as editor of *Philosophy in Review*. I've been editing this journal since 2006, and it has been an immensely rewarding experience. I would like to thank the many readers and contributors who have helped improve and develop this journal over the last six years. I am extremely pleased to hand over editorship to Taneli Kukkonen (University of Otago). The editorial staff and I have every confidence that *Philosophy in Review* will continue to flourish under his editorship. Best of luck, Taneli.

If you have any colleagues who you think would be especially suited to review any of the books you see on our website, please let them know about our "Books for Review" page and/or encourage them to contact us at <[pir@uvic.ca](mailto:pir@uvic.ca)>.

David Scott (outgoing editor)

# Conference Reports

## Graduate Conference in Aesthetics

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
22 April 2012

*Editors' Note: In our last issue, we omitted the main text of this report. We regret the error; here it is in its entirety.*

The conference was sponsored by the Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium and the American Society for Aesthetics. Five papers were accepted from twenty-five submissions: presenters included Andrea Baldini (Temple), Nick Oschman (Marquette), Chris Drain (Villanova), Nils-Hennes Stear (Michigan), and Simon Fokt (St. Andrews). Topics ranged from Levinas on environmental aesthetics to Kantian aesthetics to the cluster account of art. The commentators were Hetty Blades (King's College London), John Carvalho (Villanova), Kristin Gjesdal (Temple), Margaret Moore (Leeds), and David Clowney (Rowan). Many of the commentators are faculty members, and provided insightful critiques from an experienced point of view. Sherri Irvin (Oklahoma) delivered the

keynote lecture, an exciting paper entitled "Sexy Subjects and Sex Objects: A Critique of Sexiness."

Each graduate student paper was well-received, due in part to the fact that submissions for the conference went through a careful blind-review process of two to three referees each. Each referee was an experienced philosopher with a good deal of familiarity in the subdiscipline of the paper they were reviewing; the list of referees was an impressive list of many familiar names in aesthetics and philosophy of art.

Attendance was fairly good. Aside from the eleven names mentioned above, there were over twenty attendees throughout the duration of the conference; some individuals from the ASA Eastern Division conference were able to stay for the graduate conference. In addition, the tone of the conference was friendly and positive.

The main goal of the graduate conference was to foster and encourage graduate work in aesthetics. There were multiple ways that the conference realized this goal: (a) through encouraging presenters to continue their work in aesthetics, (b) through providing commentary on the presenters' work from experienced philosophers at the conference, (c) through the interaction between graduate students working in aesthetics that this conference facilitates, and (d) through the keynote lecture. Given its success, it is anticipated that this conference will become a yearly event.

The organizer would like to thank Temple graduate students for their willingness to serve as session chairs. Many thanks are also due to Susan Feagin, who provided a great deal of advice and assistance in the organization of the conference.

Respectfully Submitted,  
John Dyck (Temple University)

## ASA Rocky Mountain Division Meeting

Santa Fe, New Mexico  
13-15 July 2012

The Rocky Mountain Division held its 29th annual meeting in the Hotel Santa Fe in downtown Santa Fe. The longed-for monsoons arrived in New Mexico slightly early this year (after two years of non-soons), and so we enjoyed clear Apollonian mornings followed by Dionysian thunderstorms in the afternoons. The Saturday evening reception was well attended, and folks seemed to thoroughly enjoy the new venue and surrounding

railroad district. The dropping away of those whose papers were accepted but whose travel funds were cut remains a problem. However, we are up from last year's count of 18 presented papers to 27 (not including the two keynotes) this year, which is an increase of 50%.

This summer marked the first year in the three-year terms of Division President James W. Mock and Division Vice-President Allison Hagerman. This year's business meeting was brief. We had a unanimous vote to establish a five-year contract with our new conference venue, Hotel Santa Fe, and another unanimous vote to invite students and faculty from local colleges and universities to attend the keynote speaker addresses. The spacious conference rooms and amenities at the Hotel Santa Fe allow room for an increase in participants in the coming years.

The twenty-seven presentations reflect the long-standing interdisciplinary focus of the division: "Persons and Collingwood's Account Revisited," by Spencer K. Wertz; "Wit as an Aesthetic Property," by Eva M. Dadlez; "Ploughing the Same Field": The Friendship of Robert Coles and Walker Percy," by Lawrence Rhu; "Is British Romanticism Alive and Well and Living in Taos? John Nichols Writes on the Environment," by Michael Manson; "Fugue & Sonata: Heidegger, Nietzsche, & Hölderlin," by Gabrielle Saurage; "Entertainment is not Art: A Pragmatist Defense of an Aesthetic Distinction," by David Hildebrand; "Aesthetic Defenses of Civil Liberties in Philosophical Accounts of Three Historical Novels," by Norman Arthur Fischer; "Fascism and Ecology: From Nazi Ecology to Environmentalism in Contemporary Literature," by George Moore; "Jane Ellen Harrison's *Critique of Spirit*: A Cultural Phenomenology," by Sarah Woolwine; "Figure, painting, and Integrity in Merleau-Ponty," by Daniel Guentchev; "Gadamer's Play and Seriousness in the *Aesthetic of Braid*," by Tad Bratkowski; "The Territoriality of Art: Gilles Deleuze, Hakim Bey, and Herman Melville," by John Samson; "Elegance in Japan," by B. Sandrisser; "Framing the Digital: Revisiting Perennial Issues," by Raphael Sassower; "Sports and Religious Images in American Culture," by Jeffrey Scholes; "The Unlikeliest Sublime: Unbounded Male and Female Light in Still Life Paintings," by Patrick McKee; "A Defense of the Picturesque," by Roger Paden; "Propaganda Power of Protest Songs," by Sheryl Tuttle Ross; "The Ugly Americans: Gestures and Social Practice in the Work of Allora & Calzadilla," by Emily Putnam; "Retablos and Folk Icons: An Aesthetic Study of Native Universals," by Cornelia A. Tsakiridou; "Some Ideas about ideas and the Idea Idea,"

by Wesley D. Cray; "Atlantic Shorelines and the 'Sea-sounding Speech,'" by Tammy Armstrong; "The Question Concerning Photography: Heidegger and Cavell," by Piotr Shmugliakov; "Affirming the Rational and Irrational Dimensions of the Judgment of Taste: Towards the Incorporation of the Cognitivist Theory into the Aesthetics Discourse," by Arthur Bravo; "Danto, Hegel and Kant on Beauty and the Sublime," by Jon M. Mikkelsen; "David Hume and Limitations on the Association of ideas in 'Of the Standard of Taste,'" by James W. Mock; and "Artworlds, False Theories, and Shakespeare's Julius Caesar," by David Conter.

To see the program, please visit <<http://asarmd.com>>.

The session chairs managed the timing of presentations and discussions with uniform excellence and grace. We offer sincere thanks to all of them: James W. Mock, Elizabeth Graham, Jon M. Mikkelsen, Lawrence Rhu, Pamela Washington, Patrick McKee, Spencer K. Wertz, Eva M. Dadlez, Raphael Sassower, and Gabrelle Saurage. Special thanks is owed to Robin Jones, Executive Director of Cornerstones Community Partnerships in Santa Fe, and to the University of Central Oklahoma Office of Information Technology, for the loan of their digital projectors.

The Friday afternoon Manuel Davenport Keynote Address, "On Being Stereo-blind in an Era of 3D Movies," was presented by Dr. Cynthia Freeland of the University of Houston. The Saturday afternoon Artist at Work presentation was by McCreery Jordan, McCreery Jordan Studio, Santa Fe.

The 2013 meeting arrangements and the call for papers will be announced within the normal schedule on both the ASA and division websites.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Allison Hagerman

## Calls for Papers

**ASA Pacific Division Meeting**  
Pacific Grove, California  
3-5 April 2013

Paper and panel submissions from persons in all arts-related disciplines, including graduate students, are welcome. Papers and panels may treat any area of interest within aesthetics and the philosophy of art. Suggested topics include (but are not limited to) the philosophy of literature and/or poetry, philosophical discussions of nature and environment, the philosophy of photography, issues in the performing arts, the philosophy of architecture, the moral rights of artworks, the relevance of scientific theory to aesthetic theory, and reflections on the history of aesthetics (with a special emphasis on Kantian aesthetics and/or accounts of tragedy). Paper submissions must not exceed 3,000 words in length (20 minutes in presentation time), and should be accompanied by 100-word abstracts. Panel proposals should include a general description of the topic or theme, along with the names and affiliations of all proposed participants and brief abstracts of all papers. Essays written by graduate students will be considered for a \$200 award, and all graduate student submissions should be clearly marked as such. Volunteers to serve as commentators and/or chairs are welcome. All papers or proposals must be submitted electronically to both Renee Conroy at <[rmconroy@comcast.net](mailto:rmconroy@comcast.net)> and to Graham McFee at <[gmcfee@graham-mcfee.co.uk](mailto:gmcfee@graham-mcfee.co.uk)>.

Deadline: 15 November 2012

### **Contemporary Aesthetics**

*Contemporary Aesthetics* (CA) is an international, interdisciplinary, peer-and blind-reviewed online journal of contemporary theory, research, and application in aesthetics. Contemporary Aesthetics has begun its tenth annual volume and invites submissions of articles that bear directly on contemporary aesthetic theory and concerns, as well as current reassessments of traditional issues. Articles that are primarily historical or that focus on particular art works or individual artists are not appropriate to the mission of this journal. The discussion should be accessible to an audience across disciplines and promote conversation across fields and practices. We welcome the use of visual images, auditory, or video clips to illustrate the text. The length of articles is normally no greater than 5,000

words but should not exceed 7,000 words, including an abstract and notes. Please go to <<http://www.contempaesthetics.org/pages/guidelines.html>> for more information about requirements, formatting, and guidelines for submission. Contact: Arnold Berleant, Editor at <[editor@contempaesthetics.org](mailto:editor@contempaesthetics.org)>.

### **Challenging Musical Ontologies: An RMA Study Day**

University of Nottingham  
23 November 2012

This Royal Musical Association (RMA) Study Day seeks to engage with conflicting yet complementary dialogues regarding the possibility (or even non-possibility) of an ontology of music. In recent years there has been lively debate between diverse positions rooted in musicology and both continental and analytical philosophy; the purpose of this Study Day is to highlight these differences, whilst emphasizing shared ground and suggesting ways forward. To this end, the Study Day – which is supported by the RMA Music and Philosophy Study Group – will provide a platform for postgraduate students to present their research and to discuss challenges posed to, and possibilities inherent in, commonly held assumptions regarding musical ontology from an array of interdisciplinary viewpoints.

We welcome proposals of up to 250 words for 20 minute papers on any of these topics (interpreted broadly), or on any other topic relating to the theme of the study day (you should also allow for at least 10 minutes of questions). We also welcome proposals for entire themed sessions if applicants can provide three suitable papers and enough points for discussion. They should be sent to conference organizer, Alex Kolassa, at <[challengingontologies@gmail.com](mailto:challengingontologies@gmail.com)> and include the following: name, institution, email address and any particular audio/visual requirements.

Deadline: 30 August 2012.

### **Philosophy of Perception and Aesthetics Conference**

University of Antwerp  
5-6 December 2012

The conference is about possible interactions between (analytic) philosophy of perception and (analytic) aesthetics: ways in which recent work in philosophy of perception may change the way we think about some problems in aesthetics (and maybe vice versa).

There are some slots reserved for contributed papers (no parallel sections). Length: 3000 words. Single spaced! More info: <<http://webh01.ua.ac.be/bence.nanay/paw.htm>>. Papers should be sent to <[nanay@berkeley.edu](mailto:nanay@berkeley.edu)>.

Deadline: 1 September 2012

### **Somaesthetics Essay Prize**

The Center for Body, Mind, and Culture at Florida Atlantic University is pleased to announce its first annual Somaesthetics Essay Prize competition. The award for the 2012 prize will be \$500. Essays should be academic in style and focus on the interdisciplinary field of somaesthetics from such perspectives as philosophy, aesthetics, art history and theory, literary and cultural studies, dance, design, music, theatre, cognitive science, gender and sexuality studies, sports, movement, and health studies. The prize essay will be recommended for publication in an upcoming special issue of the philosophical journal *Pragmatism Today* on somaesthetics.

Submissions should be between 6,000 and 9,000 words in length, including notes and references, and should be e-mailed in Word format to <[bodymindculture@fau.edu](mailto:bodymindculture@fau.edu)>. Essays will be evaluated by an interdisciplinary panel of judges appointed by the Center for Body, Mind, and Culture. Essays should follow the guidelines specified in the Chicago Manual of Style.

Deadline: 1 September 2012

### **SPSCVA at the APA Pacific Division Meeting**

San Francisco, California  
27-31 March 2013

The Society for the Philosophic Study of the Contemporary Visual Arts (SPSCVA) invites papers to be presented at its divisional meetings held in conjunction with the Central and Pacific Division Meetings of the American Philosophical Association. Papers may address any topic that involves the connection between philosophy and the visual arts: film, photography, video games, or other aesthetic media.

Presentations should be 20-25 minutes (10-12 pages in length). Participants must be currently paid members of the SPSCVA. (You do not need to be a member of the SPSCVA to submit a paper for consideration.) Please

submit full papers only (not abstracts). The Society also welcomes proposals for panels, author-meets-critics, or other special sessions, as well as volunteers to serve as panel chairs and commentators.

Please submit papers or panel proposals as e-mail attachments, with 'SPSCVA' initiating the subject line in your email to Richard Nunan at <[nunanr@cofc.edu](mailto:nunanr@cofc.edu)>.

Deadline: 15 September 2012

### **Philosophy & Technology's Special Issue on Philosophy of Computer Games**

Following the Sixth International Conference on the Philosophy of Computer Games in Madrid, Spain from 29-31 January 2012 (see <<http://2012.gamephilosophy.org/>>), organized by ArsGames, a special issue of Springer's *Philosophy & Technology* journal is now being planned. It will contain a selection of recently revised, peer reviewed articles from the Philosophy of Computer Games international conference series. Authors who have presented a paper at a Philosophy of Computer Games conference are invited to submit an original, recently revised, version of their paper. Other interested authors are invited to submit original papers related to the topics mentioned below. All submissions will be double-blind, peer reviewed according to usual standards. Papers submitted for this Call must not have been published previously in academic journals or article collections, including proceedings of the 2008 and 2009 Philosophy of Computer Games conferences online or in print with ISSN/ISBN codes. However, submissions may be new elaborations of ideas previously developed in such publications, as long as they represent new, original papers.

Computer games and conceptions of reality; ontological status of game objects and events; computer game entities, metaphysical issues; epistemological foundations of game studies; player identity, perceptual experience; ethical and political issues in game design and consumption; experiential, interactional, cognitive dimensions of gameplay; ethical responsibilities of game-makers; ethical norms in gaming contexts; the "magic circle" of games and actions/interactions transcending it; fictionality and interaction; defining computer games; player-avatar identity; player identity and conceptions of self; identity and immersion; imagination and interpretation; world, space and experience; technology, process, experience; time experience in gameplay; embodiment, emotion and

player experience; aesthetics, ethics and player experience, "gamification".

To submit a paper for this special issue, authors should go to the journal's Editorial Manager (EM) at <<http://www.editorialmanager.com/phte/>>. For any further information please contact: Patrick Coppock at <[patrick.coppock@unimore.it](mailto:patrick.coppock@unimore.it)>, Anita Leirfall at <[anita.leirfall@umb.no](mailto:anita.leirfall@umb.no)> or Olli Leino at <[otleino@cityu.edu.hk](mailto:otleino@cityu.edu.hk)>.

Deadline: 15 September 2012

### **Contemporary Aesthetic Education in the UK**

University of York  
10 December 2012

The purpose of this inter-disciplinary workshop is to explore the role of aesthetic education in the UK today. The presence of the concept of aesthetic education in the thinking of British cultural critics can be traced to the profound influence of Matthew Arnold, who inherits the notion from its German Enlightenment proponents – Schiller, Herder, and Winckelmann. The tradition holds that instruction in art and literature can bring about real changes in society. In the UK today, however, education in literature and the arts is being increasingly threatened by social change rather than facilitating those changes. In *Culture and Anarchy*, Arnold prescribed culture as the antidote to a looming threat of 'anarchy' which lay chiefly, he suggested, in vulgar monetary concerns. In the fear of the neoliberalization of the university driving the contemporary proliferation of neohumanist apologies for the arts and humanities, we hear the echoes of Arnold's fear of vulgar monetarism. Another, contemporary inheritance of this tradition of aesthetic education is a rapidly expanding field of 'therapeutic' reading. Here, aesthetic education is not so much a politically decisive aspect of academic activity as a project of popular empowerment carried out at the level of public libraries, charitable education projects and health provision. These are just two of many lines of inheritance in the contemporary UK cultural situation of the Enlightenment tradition of aesthetic education.

The inter-disciplinary workshop will take place at the University of York on the afternoon of 10 December 2012, where discussion will be led by Professor Philip Davis (English, Liverpool) and Dr Nick Jones (Philosophy, York). Two postgraduate speakers will be selected from submissions. We welcome abstracts from postgraduates and early



career researchers working in all disciplines across the arts and humanities.

Submissions should consist of an abstract of up to 300 words for a paper of 30 minutes in length, and be emailed as an attachment to Mildrid Bjerke at <mhab500@york.ac.uk>. Please direct any queries to Rafe McGregor at <rdm503@york.ac.uk>.

Deadline: 15 September 2012

### **International Society for Philosophy of Music Education, The Ninth International Symposium on the Philosophy of Music Education**

New York, New York  
5-9 June 2013

Submissions are invited for the Ninth International Symposium on the Philosophy of Music Education in New York City at Teachers College Columbia University, 5-9 June 2013. This symposium will bring together a diverse array of international philosophers, scholars, teachers, teacher educators, and performers interested in engaging in philosophical research concerning music education. The symposium seeks to encourage and stimulate discussion on a wide range of topics relating to the philosophy of music education from international and interdisciplinary perspectives.

We are very pleased to announce that Estelle Jorgensen will be our featured keynote speaker. Jorgensen is founder and editor of *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, general editor for the *Counterpoints: Music and Education* series at Indiana University Press, founder of the Philosophy Special Research Interest Group for the US National Association of Music Education (NAfME) and co-founder of the International Society for the Philosophy of Music Education.

Papers must be in English, not exceeding 6000 words, and formatted using Microsoft Word. An abstract of no more than 250 words must accompany the text. Authors will certify that their papers have not been published elsewhere and are not under review for other conferences or publications. All submissions will be blind peer-reviewed by a panel of international scholars.

Paper submissions should be sent to Cathy Benedict, co-conference chair, at the following email address: <cathy.benedict@fiu.edu>. More information about the International Society for Philosophy of Music Education (ISPME) and submission procedures can be found at: <<http://ispme.net/>>.

Deadline: 1 October 2012

### **Estetika Essay Competition**

We are pleased to announce the second year of an essay competition held by *Estetika: The Central European Journal of Aesthetics*. The competition is open to graduate students and junior scholars who are now officially affiliated with a Polish, Czech, Slovak or Hungarian university or were during their graduate studies. For the purposes of this contest, a junior scholar is someone who obtained a PhD not earlier than 2007 (with extensions for those who took parental leave or had to leave academia for medical or similar reasons). Please get in touch with in case of questions about eligibility.

The essays, of no more than 5,000 words, must focus on topics related to the theory or history of aesthetics and the philosophy of art, and comply with the standards of academic writing, including the citation rules followed by *Estetika* (see <<http://aesthetics.ff.cuni.cz>>). The essay must be entirely the work of the contestant and must not have been previously published. Essays may be submitted in Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Polish, English, or German.

A competition committee composed of members of *Estetika*'s editorial staff will select the best essay by 31 January 2013. The winning essay will, if necessary, be translated into English and published in *Estetika*, and its author will receive a free two-year subscription to *Estetika* and €300.

Please address all correspondence to Jakub Stejskal at <[aesthetics@ff.cuni.cz](mailto:aesthetics@ff.cuni.cz)>.

Deadline: 31 October 2012

### **The Philosophical Quarterly: Philosophy and the Expressive Arts**

Would you like to win £1,500? The *Philosophical Quarterly* invites submissions for its 2012 international prize essay competition, the topic of which is 'Philosophy and the Expressive Arts'. From Plato on, philosophy has had an uneasy relationship with expressive arts such as narrative, poetry, drama, music, painting, and now film. If philosophy today can learn from science, can it learn from the arts as well—or even instead? If so, what can it learn? Does expressive art access truths, particularly ethical truths, that cannot be expressed any other way? If it does, what can ethicists and other philosophers say about

these truths? If it does not, what differentiates expressive from merely decorative art? Some philosophers insist with Wittgenstein that "whatever can be said at all can be said clearly". In that case, are artistic uses of language such as metaphor and imagery just "color", as Frege called it - just ways of dressing up thoughts that philosophers, by contrast, should consider in their plainest possible form?

We welcome submissions of 8,000 words or fewer addressing these or other questions about philosophy and the expressive arts. Electronic submission is preferred and contributions may be sent as email attachments to <[pq@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:pq@st-andrews.ac.uk)>. Essays should be typed in double spacing. Most formats are acceptable, but PDF is preferred. Alternatively, non-electronic submissions may be sent to the address below. Three copies of each essay are required and these will not be returned. All entries will be regarded as submissions for publication in the *Philosophical Quarterly*, and both winning and non-winning entries judged to be of sufficient quality will be published. All submissions should be headed 'The Expressive Arts' Prize Essay Competition (with the author's name and address given in a covering letter, but NOT in the essay itself) and sent to: The Journal Manager, *The Philosophical Quarterly* University of St Andrews KY16 9AR Scotland, UK

Deadline: 1 November 2012

### **The Liveliest Medium: Television's Aesthetic Relationships with Other Arts**

This special issue of *Critical Studies in Television* explores the aesthetic meetings, counterpoints and clashes between television and other art forms. While considerable attention has recently been given to questions of media convergence in the age of 'TV3', little sustained work has focused on the distinct topic of aesthetic relationships between television and, for example, poetry, painting, music, dance, sculpture, or architecture. The issue also seeks to extend more prevalent comparative analysis of television and film, theatre, or the novel, developing a more precise vocabulary around terms such as 'cinematic television' and opening up adaptation studies in terms of aesthetic overlaps in style, structure, tone, and attitude.

Contributions are sought on the above matters and that may comprise, variously: Conceptual examinations of television aesthetics in terms of internal dynamics and/or external relationships with other arts; Sustained critiques of the links between specific series,

episodes, or television moments, and other arts; Appraisals of television works that engage with artists or the arts in documentary or fictional form; Explorations of criteria, categorisations and instances of 'cinematic television', 'television poetics', and 'the television novel'; Interpretative work on television as poetry, television as dance (or similar); Genre and aesthetic connections.

For peer-reviewed articles of 6000 words, please send proposals of no more than 250 words to <s.peacock@herts.ac.uk> and <j.jacobs@uq.edu.au>.

Deadline: 1 December 2012

### **Special Issue of *Art and Philosophy (Sztuka i Filozofia)* on Art, Judgment and Criticism**

Papers are invited on all aspects of art, judgment and criticism. Various concerns and disagreements among philosophers and art critics about the correctness of artistic judgment, the extreme pluralism of the contemporary art world, and the nature of artistic properties (largely response-dependent and seen as culturally embedded), prompt a broad range of philosophical questions. Philosophical interest in art, judgment and criticism has often highlighted the importance of objectivity of artistic judgment and the role of criticism that implements evaluation. In addition, some aspects of the artworld indicate the hierarchical nature of art. However, equally often, the idea of objective art judgment has been challenged and attempts have been made to replace it by various subjective approaches. *Art and Philosophy (Sztuka i Filozofia)*, the biannual academic journal offers a forum for discussion about whether, at least, a moderate version of objectivism of critical judgment is still well founded or, are we just limited to one's own personal perspective. The issue will contain invited essays as well as papers selected from an open call for papers. This issue of *Art and Philosophy* is scheduled to be published just before the Nineteenth International Congress of Aesthetics in Krakow in 2013. Guidelines for contributions: Abstract of paper – approx. 200-300 words; Length of paper – not exceeding 6000 words. All submitted articles must be formatted for blind review. Please send your submissions to Ewa Bogusz-Boltuc, <ebogu01s@uis.edu>.

Deadline: 31 December 2012

### ***Rivista di Estetica: The Aesthetic Experience in the Evolutionary Perspective***

Aesthetic experience (AE) has enjoyed an increase of interest over the last several years, even in cognitive sciences and evolutionary psychology. This special issue will focus on the topic of AE in an evolutionary perspective. The aim is to approach the most intense controversies afflicting the recent and multidisciplinary debates. What is AE for? Is AE an adaptation or a by-product? What is the relationship between AE and the goal of knowing? Has AE a mental distinctiveness? What mental processes (perception, cognition, imagination, affect, emotion) are involved (exalted) in AE? What is the relationship between AE and evaluation? What is the articulation of the natural and cultural bases of AE? Has AE the same properties occurring with natural phenomena, cultural artifacts, works of art? How old is art? Is an animal (non-human) AE possible? Could a machine simulate mental processes usually correlated with AE?

Deadline: 30 January 2013

### ***The Monist Special Issue: The Philosophy of Robert Musil***

Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* is one of the most important novels of the 20th century. But Musil was also a philosopher, and after completion of his dissertation on Ernst Mach in 1908 he used his literary writings as a medium for the expression of philosophical ideas. His views on a wide range of philosophical topics are highly original and in many cases surprisingly relevant in the context of contemporary philosophy. Some examples: the relation between perception and action, the anatomy of (sexual) passion, the connection between aesthetic and moral value, the embodiment of cognition, the futility and absurdity of looking for the meaning of life, the thin line between sanity and insanity, and the importance and limitations of scientific reasoning. Contributions are invited on Musil's ideas in philosophy, especially those which attempt to develop Musil's often sketchy thoughts into carefully argued and coherent analyses.

Contact Advisory Editor Bence Nanay at <nanay@syr.edu> for more information.

Deadline: 31 January 2013

### **Canadian Society for Aesthetics Annual Meeting**

Victoria, British Columbia, Canada  
1–3 June 2013

The 2013 annual meeting of the Canadian Society for Aesthetics will take place in company with meetings of other Canadian associations, including the Canadian Philosophical Association, as part of the 82nd Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences. Submissions on any topic in aesthetics are invited. But special interest is expressed for papers in the following areas: 1) Environmental arts and aesthetics; 2) The logic of fiction and/or narrative; 3) Ethical issues in any of the arts. In the initial stage of consideration, preference will be given to completed papers of 10-12 standard pages, accompanied by a 150-word abstract and suitable for presentation in fewer than 25 minutes. Abstracts, if submitted alone, will be assessed later and only if vacancies occur in the program. Proposals for panels on special topics or recent publications are also invited, and should include names and affiliations of all participants plus an abstract of the subject matter. Participants selected for inclusion on the program are required to pay CSA membership and conference registration fees. For graduate submissions included on the program, there is the possibility of some funding to help support travel.

Submissions must be sent as e-mail attachments (MS Word or .RTF files). Inquiries or submissions in English may be sent to Ira Newman; Department of Philosophy; Mansfield University; Mansfield PA 16933 (USA) at <inewman@mansfield.edu>. Those in French to: François Chalifour; Département des arts, Cégep de l'Outaouais, Campus Félix-Leclerc, 820 boul. De la Gappe, Gatineau, (Québec) CANADA J8T 717, <fchalifour@cegepoutaouais.qc.ca>

Deadline: 18 February 2013

## ***Upcoming Events***

### **ASA Annual Meeting**

St. Louis, Missouri  
25-27 October 2012

The 70th annual meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics will be held at the Millennium St. Louis Hotel.

Hotel reservations must be made directly with the Millennium Hotel. We have a \$109/night

rate at the hotel. Our room block will be held until 1 October after which the hotel releases it and the rate cannot be guaranteed. There is a link on the ASA web site at <[www.aesthetics-online.org](http://www.aesthetics-online.org)>. Student members of the ASA are eligible for a \$25/room/night subsidy if they stay at the Millennium. This subsidy is provided by the ASA, not the hotel, however. It will be paid on submission of receipts after the meeting.

Registration and a preliminary copy of the program is now up on the ASA web site. On-site registration adds an additional \$25 to the registration fee. St. Louis, Missouri is the home of one of the earliest American philosophical movements, the St. Louis Hegelians. In honor of this history, the program committee has emphasized the following, broadly Hegelian topics: the Ontology of Art, The Nature and Value of Artistic Symbolism, Art, History, and Art History or the End of Art, Arthur Danto's Philosophy of Art, Art and Religion or Politics, Aesthetic Cognitivism, Method in Aesthetics, The Aesthetics of a Non-Western Art, The Aesthetics of Nature vs. the Aesthetics of Art, and Expression.

Please see <[http://www.aesthetics-online.org/events/index.php?events\\_id=410](http://www.aesthetics-online.org/events/index.php?events_id=410)> for details on registration and travel.

### **The British Society of Aesthetics 2012 Annual Conference**

Oxford, England  
21-23 September 2012

Registration and the full program are available at <[www.british-aesthetics.org/conference2012](http://www.british-aesthetics.org/conference2012)>.

The BSA provides a subsidized rate for students enrolled in masters and doctoral programs.

Kendall Walton (University of Michigan) will give the Wollheim Memorial Lecture; Jancis Robinson ([www.jancisrobinson.com](http://www.jancisrobinson.com)) will give the Empson Lecture. For more information, see <<http://www.british-aesthetics.org>>.

### **International Conference "Rethinking Pragmatist Aesthetics"**

31 August-2 September 2012  
Wrocław, Poland

The aim of this conference is to reflect on pragmatist aesthetics' history and current condition, but also on its potential to address the most pressing problems of contemporary philosophical aesthetics, and to project the future avenues for its progress. In particu-

lar, we welcome submissions that: provide historical accounts of pragmatist aesthetics' development; address aesthetic themes in the work of classical pragmatists (Peirce, James, Dewey, F.C.S. Schiller, etc.) and/or neopragmatists (Rorty, Goodman, Margolis, Shusterman, Putnam, et al.); deploy a (neo-) pragmatist perspective in addressing a given aesthetic problem or in interpreting concrete works of art; provide a comparative analysis of pragmatist aesthetics and aesthetic theories developed in other philosophical traditions or in different disciplines – for instance in analytic philosophy, continental and post-continental thought, evolutionary psychology, psychoanalysis, etc. For more information, contact Prof. Leszek Koczanowicz <[leszek@post.pl](mailto:leszek@post.pl)> or Dr. Wojciech Malecki <[wojciech.malecki@wp.pl](mailto:wojciech.malecki@wp.pl)>.

### **Perspectives on Musical Improvisation**

University of Oxford  
10-13 September 2012

The conference brings together a rich set of perspectives on musical improvisation with papers approaching the subject from musicological, cognitive, psycho-social, philosophical, anthropological and pedagogical lenses representing a range of improvisatory genres. In addition to papers, there will be practical workshops and performances.

The conference website is live at <<http://www.music.ox.ac.uk/pomi/>> and provides full information about the conference, how to register and book your accommodation (the registration and accommodation pages both link to the conference online booking system), and travel. We advise delegates to pay registration fees and accommodation in one booking—this is simpler than doing this separately. Further, we would encourage you to book your Christ Church conference accommodation sooner rather than later as their full board rates are very reasonable and it can be difficult to find accommodation in Oxford during September.

For further information about registration or accommodation, contact the Conference Administrator, Emily Payne: <[infopomi@music.ox.ac.uk](mailto:infopomi@music.ox.ac.uk)>. For any enquiries about presentations etc, contact Mark Doffman: <[mark.doffman@music.ox.ac.uk](mailto:mark.doffman@music.ox.ac.uk)>.

### **Film-Philosophy Conference 2012**

London, England  
12-14 September 2012

Film-philosophy continues to grow as an important discipline within the fields of both Film

Studies and Philosophy. The Film-Philosophy Conference brings together scholars from all over the world to present their research on a broad range of topics within the subject area. For more information, see the conference website: <<http://www.film-philosophy.com/conference/index.php/conf/2012/about/>>.

### **Aesthetics in the 21st Century**

University of Basel  
13-15 September 2012

Ever since the turn of the century aesthetics has steadily gained momentum as a central field of study across the disciplines. No longer sidelined, aesthetics has grown in confidence as evidenced by recent works by major contemporary thinkers such as Jean-Luc Nancy (*Muses II*), Jacques Rancière (*Dissensus; Aesthetics and its Discontents*) and Alain Badiou (*Handbook of Inaesthetics*). In this vein, aesthetics does not merely designate a discipline concerned with theories of art, but more fundamentally the primacy of sensation and sensual encounter itself. Even though these recent developments return to the work of the canonical authors, some contemporary scholars reject the traditional focus on epistemology (Baumgarten, Kant) and theorize sensation and the sensual encounter in terms of ontology instead (Harman, Shaviro). It is according to this shift that speculative realists have proclaimed aesthetics as 'first philosophy' and as speculative in nature. With speculative realism sensual encounter becomes an event that even no longer necessarily implies human agents. This is in alignment with the general speculative realist framework for thinking all kinds of entities and objects as free from our all-pervasive anthropocentrism which states, always, that everything is "for us." In this speculative realism has several important twentieth-century precursors, most notably Heidegger, Whitehead, Deleuze and Badiou with their respective concepts of event, (aesthetic) experience and encounter. This conference explores the resonances between these twentieth-century thinkers and their concepts and the recently reawakened interest in aesthetics, especially in its speculative realist guise. Hosted by the University of Basel's Department of English the conference is particularly interested in the possible implications of what could be termed the new speculative aesthetics for literary and cultural studies. Thus, the conference aims at staging a three-fold encounter: between aesthetics and speculation, between speculative realism and its (possible) precursors, and between speculative realism and art and literature.



See <<http://aesthetics.englsem.unibas.ch/conference/>> for further information.

### **Celebrating the Work of Peter Goldie**

The University of Manchester, UK  
14-15 September 2012

This international conference celebrates the wide-ranging and influential work of Peter Goldie, Samuel Hall Professor of Philosophy at the University of Manchester from 2005 until his death in 2011. Confirmed plenary speakers are Robert Hopkins (Sheffield), Matthew Kieran (Leeds), Dominic McIvor Lopes (UBC), Derek Matravers (OU), David Papineau (KCL), Joel Smith (Manchester), Ronnie de Sousa (Toronto), Kathleen Stock (Sussex), Kathleen Higgins (Texas, Austin) and Stephen Davies (Auckland).

For more information, see <<http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/disciplines/philosophy/events/goldie/>>.

### **Conference on the Image**

Poznan, Poland  
14-16 September 2012

The Image Conference is a forum at which participants interrogate the nature and functions of image-making and images. The conference has a cross-disciplinary focus, bringing together researchers, teachers and practitioners from areas of interest related to The Image. Organized in collaboration with the 2012 Mediations Biennale, The Image Conference will address The Thread to the Unknown - shedding light on the boundaries of language, culture, scientific research, artistic production, and visual communication in relation to the Unknown. The conference encompasses participation in Biennale Special Events including the opening reception, a Biennale Day featuring curators Tomasz Wendland, Fumio Nanjo, Denise Carvalho, and Friedhelm Mennekes, as well as the opportunity to submit artistic work for consideration in a Special Exhibition at the Polish Mediations Biennale.

For updates on the conference and journal and The Image Community, visit our webpage at <<http://www.OntheImage.com/the-conference>>.

### **Symposium on the Moral Psychology of Fiction**

Trondheim, Norway  
20-21 September

The Department of Art and Media Stud-

ies at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim are hosting a symposium on the moral psychology of fiction. Confirmed speakers are Noël Carroll, Gregory Currie, Anne Gjelsvik, Carl Plantinga, Arthur A. Raney, Rikke Schubart, Murray Smith, Ed S. Tan and Margrethe Bruun Vaage. For more information, see <[www.ntnu.edu/ikm/mpf](http://www.ntnu.edu/ikm/mpf)>.

### **Seeing-as and Novelty**

The University of York, UK  
24 September 2012

Seeing-as is a phenomenon of deep importance for several major areas of academic philosophy. It is of clear relevance to central issues concerning aesthetics, philosophy of language, philosophy of perception, and epistemology. As well as figuring in Wittgenstein's work in particular - and analytic philosophy more generally - seeing-as is of central importance to phenomenological philosophy following in the traditions inaugurated by figures such as Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty. The purpose of this conference is to explore how we should understand the relationship between our capacity for seeing-as, the determination of new concepts, and our capacity for using and extending the use of concepts in hitherto novel situations.

If you have any questions at all, or wish to register, please contact us at <[seeing.as.and.novelty@gmail.com](mailto:seeing.as.and.novelty@gmail.com)>.

### **The Art of Morality: Developing Moral Sensitivity Across the Curriculum**

Grand Rapids, Michigan  
4-6 October 2012

This year's theme is chosen in part because the dates of the conference correspond to the ARTPRIZE event in Grand Rapids, an international art competition that brings 1200+ pieces of art to the city. The streets and parks are alive with performances, paintings, photography, and art sculptures, and museums offer free admission to indoor and outdoor exhibits. Because different fields such as medicine, business, law, social work, journalism, and so on vary in the kinds of social relations and engagements between professionals and their clients, developing moral sensitivity within each field may be something unique and akin to learning an art form. Being perceptive and empathetic to the needs of others and the moral demands of a situation are important skills for moral action and essential for personal development. How we are to teach students to engage in moral actions and to develop necessary sympathies,

perceptual abilities, and reasoning skills are pressing questions. In terms of content and theory, what are we to teach our students across the curriculum? What content in our classrooms serves to develop moral sensitivity as a personal matter, and what is the relationship between moral sensitivity and reasoning? In terms of practice, how do we teach them? What specific exercises, strategies, service learning projects, or artistic media develop moral sensitivity, and are the practices akin to an art form or easily applicable across the curriculum?

For more information, see <<http://www.rit.edu/cla/ethics/seac/conferences.html>>.

### **The Biennial Conference in Philosophy, Religion and Culture**

Sydney, Australia  
5-7 October 2012

Theme: The Expressible and the Inexpressible. The theme is to be interpreted broadly and from the disciplines of philosophy, theology, social science, literature and the arts. Topics that might be investigated include: ways of knowing in science, ethics, aesthetics and religion; the unconscious and the subconscious; art and expression; the ineffable in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism; mystery and mediation; the meaning of art; language and the emotions. Keynote Speaker: Timothy Chappell, Open University UK.

Full details are available on the website: <<http://www.cis.catholic.edu.au/news-events/biennial-conference>>.

### **Arts and Ethics**

Langley, British Columbia  
18-19 October 2012

There is long history surrounding the relationship between the arts and ethics. The arts affect individual identities, communities, and relationships between people and their environments. The arts can contribute to the ethical life of a community, as exemplified by public art and theatre. Some people have been suspicious of the role of the arts on individual ethical outlooks, as reflected by censorship and ratings labels. The arts can also affect relational ethics, either positively – as in the case of a caregiver singing to a child – or negatively – as in the use of music to encourage violence. Another strand of thought argues that the arts do not mean anything outside of themselves and are therefore isolated from ethics. Each theory of the relation between arts and ethics leads to different

views of the ways the arts are experienced and gives rise to different responsibilities for producers and experiencers of the arts. For more information, visit our website at <<http://www.twu.ca/vergeconference>>.

**Philosophy and Literature Conference**  
Purdue University  
19-20 October 2012

Theme: "Truth, Thought, and Technology." Philosophers from ancient Greece to the present have explored technology's relation to truth. Whether that exploration has been undertaken as part of a broader investigation of mimesis or causality, or whether it has been couched in terms of a questioning of Being, technology is never far from the concerns of philosophers. Similarly, writers of fiction have thematized technology and its cultural consequences. Writers ranging from Samuel Butler to Aldous Huxley to David Foster Wallace have reacted to technological change with varying degrees of alarm. As technology continues to proliferate and impact private, social, and political life across the world, philosophical and literary attempts to clarify the relation between truth, thought, and technology are as pressing as ever.

Any questions should be directed to our email address at <[truthandtechnology2012@gmail.com](mailto:truthandtechnology2012@gmail.com)>.

**Architecture and its Image**  
Boston University, Department of Philosophy  
19-20 October 2012

The 2nd PhilArch conference calls for a return to, or continuation of, explicitly philosophical inquiry into the character of architecture. In particular the conference seeks papers

on the theme of architecture and its 'image,' broadly construed. Topics may address questions such as: Is architecture constituted by its history or by an atemporal, formal structure? Is a pure architectural object possible? What role should marginal practices play in the conceptualization of architecture? What is architectural representation? What is the relationship between models, drawings, and images and built architecture? Is architecture always the re-presentation of other content, or does it create its own meanings?

For more information visit <<http://philarch.wordpress.com>>.

**SPSCVA at the APA Eastern Division Meeting**  
27-30 December 2012  
Atlanta, Georgia

The Society for the Philosophic Study of the Contemporary Visual Arts (SPSCVA) will hold its divisional meeting in conjunction with the Eastern divisional meeting of the American Philosophical Association. Please contact the Eastern Division coordinator Christopher Grau at <[grau@clemson.edu](mailto:grau@clemson.edu)> for more information.

**SPSCVA at the APA Central Division Meeting**  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
20-23 February 2013

The Society for the Philosophic Study of the Contemporary Visual Arts (SPSCVA) will hold its divisional meeting held in conjunction with the Central Division Meetings of the American Philosophical Association. For more information, contact Dan Flory at <[dflory@montana.edu](mailto:dflory@montana.edu)>.

## Active Aestheticians

**MONTY ADKINS and PIP DICKENS** edited *Shibusa - Extracting Beauty*, published by University Huddersfield Press.

**CURTIS CARTER** gave a lecture on role of philosophy and the arts in the Olympics to the International Olympics Committee and VIP guests on 2 August in London, at an award ceremony hosted by the International Olympic Truce Center, an organization that promotes the Olympic ideals of peace, friendship and international understanding. He spoke at the same awards program during the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

**CAROL GOULD** is a 2012 scholar for the NEH-funded Aquila Theatre (NYC) project "Ancient Greeks/Modern Lives."

**XAVIER MÁRQUEZ** has published *A Stranger's Knowledge: Statesmanship, Philosophy, and Law in Plato's Statesman* with Parmenides Publishing.

Columbia University Press is pleased to announce the publication of *The Philosopher's Touch: Sartre, Nietzsche, and Barthes at the Piano* by **FRANÇOIS NOUDELMAAN**.

**KATE THOMSON-JONES** has been awarded a Fellowship by the American Council of Learned Societies to work on a monograph about the digital arts.

Would you like to be featured in "Active Aestheticians" in the next issue of the *American Society for Aesthetics Newsletter*?

Please share information about your professional achievements with the editors at either:

<[goldblatt@denison.edu](mailto:goldblatt@denison.edu)> or <[henry.pratt@marist.edu](mailto:henry.pratt@marist.edu)>.

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**Deadlines: 1 November, 15 April, 1 August**