



THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR AESTHETICS:
AN ASSOCIATION FOR AESTHETICS,
CRITICISM, AND THEORY OF THE ARTS

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Aesthetics from the Closet

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This article originated as an unasked question during a conference presentation of Jeremy Fried's "Ally Aesthetics."¹ As his title suggests, Fried discusses how we should approach the norms of *ally aesthetics*—that is, artistic contributions toward the causes of marginalized groups from artists who are not themselves members of those groups. Fried motivates certain important distinctions between the creation and evaluation of artworks by group members and that of relevant works of allies. Beyond familiar considerations of appropriation and authenticity, there is also the (likely defeasible) prescription that allies yield potentially scarce or otherwise limited platforms and positions of influence to marginalized artists themselves. Allies and their works of allyship, that is, ought to remain in supporting roles, rather than taking over center stage.²

I agree with these aspects of Fried's discussion and conclusions. I refrained from asking my question, though, in part because I was not publicly "out" at the time, and was worried that in asking it, I would indeed "out" myself. Speaking within the framework offered by Robin Dembroff and Catharine Saint-Croix, I self-identified as a transgender person and was a member of the social group *transgender persons*, but I did not yet have an *agential identity* as a transgender person.³ To say that I lacked such an agential identity is to say, roughly, that I had not yet publicly signaled the unity of my self-identification and social group membership, a signaling that would contribute to (or constitute) movement through public spaces in accordance with a particular, identity-relevant social "blueprint."⁴ In less technical terms: I was in the closet, still socially operating as a cisgender person, and was worried that my question would invariably lead to all of the perils associated with "coming out," of which there are many. In this way, my unasked question ended up embodying the question itself.

The content of the question can be unpacked as follows. Fried's discussion focuses mostly, though not entirely, on issues of race. One important difference between racial identities and gender or sexual identities, however, is that it is much less common and potentially more difficult to remain "closeted" about the former. For a variety of reasons—perhaps chief among them being frequent transphobic social contexts, including those involving senses of internalized transphobia—trans persons might invest a good deal of effort in being publicly read instead as cisgender persons. A trans artist who has not adopted an agential identity as a trans person might, then, choose to retain an agential identity as a cisgender person and, accordingly, create trans-liberatory artworks within the confines of ally aesthetics. Despite their social group membership and self-identity, they would thereby take on a normative commitment to avoiding (seemingly) noxious appropriation, eschewing a false projection of authenticity, and, again, yielding potentially scarce or otherwise limited platforms and positions of influence to those with marginalized agential identities.

Such artists—not just trans artists, but LGBTQIA+ artists across various spectra—face an unfortunate dilemma. On the first horn, they can carefully constrain or otherwise withhold the full expres-

sive and politically liberatory potential of their work while publicly presenting as a mere ally, which would result in their work being engaged with and evaluated under the banner of ally aesthetics. On the other, they can “out” themselves publicly so as to fully express themselves as a self-identified member of their community, and thereby circumvent the need for such constraint. The first horn requires artistic (and perhaps political) compromise while the second requires a shift in agential identity. Acknowledging this dilemma, then, results in acknowledging further that LGBTQIA+ artists might have to put themselves in danger in order to earn their full artistic voice.

This dilemma extends beyond artists. Following Fried, an allied artist—*qua* ally—ought to be particularly sensitive and responsive to criticism by members of the communities they take themselves to be supporting through their work. This isn’t to say that such artists are licensed to ignore the criticism of members outside of the relevant communities, but instead that the criticisms offered by community members take on special significance. Without being able to safely assume certain agential identities, community members are left to choose between sacrificing their voices as community members or potentially jeopardizing their well-being in any number of ways.

As an extension of the above consideration, consider the account of cultural appropriation recently offered by Thi Nguyen and Matt Strohl, according to which an act of appropriation is morally problematic to the extent that it violates the intimacy of the group within which the appropriated practice originates.⁵ One form of such appropriation is as follows: when presented with an in-group dispute about which among the group’s practices ought not be appropriated by non-members, a non-group member takes it upon themselves to either “settle” the dispute or to lend decisive weight to one side or the other. Either way, the non-group member is appropriating the authority of group members to set their own group’s boundaries. In speaking for the group, that is, the non-group member appropriates the group’s agency and voice.

The situation is complicated further when we remember, as Dembroff and Saint-Croix emphasize, that group membership and agential identity can and often do come apart, especially in the case of “closeted” members of LGBTQIA+ communities.⁶ A group member lacking the corresponding agential identity would, in many instances, be socially indistinguishable from a non-group member and, hence, appear equally culpable for illicitly appropriating a group’s agency when, in actuality, they are legitimately and non-appropriately contributing to the discourse as a group member. In this, LGBTQIA+ group members who lack LGBTQIA+ agential identities would be left to choose between sacrificing their ability to contribute to socially significant in-group discourse as a group member, or, again, potentially jeopardizing their well-being in any number of ways.

What is to be done in response to this dilemma? Considering potential solutions leads us into a second dilemma: we either accept the aforementioned unfortunate consequences or we instead proceed with hopeful caution and relax norms for allies of the LGBTQIA+ community under the assumption that they might actually be closeted members of that very community. The first option leaves LGBTQIA+ artists and critics with often unduly difficult decisions, and the second effectively eliminates Fried’s valuable distinctions between in-group works and works of allyship, at least in this context. Clearly, neither is ideal: either LGBTQIA+ artists have to incur the risk of personal harm to speak and create authentically or we compromise the primacy of LGBTQIA+ artists in the very context of LGBTQIA+ art.

To borrow some technical, ethico-aesthetic vocabulary from Nick Riggle, these dilemmas both *suck*. On Riggle’s analysis, something *sucks* when it prohibits or otherwise frustrates individuals from healthily pursuing their own individuality.⁷ Insofar as our artistic institutions (along with our philosophical institutions and others) operate within a strongly cisheteronormative atmosphere (one conducive to the development of internalized cisheteronormativity even among LGBTQIA+ persons), they complicate the lives of LGBTQIA+ persons by prompting them to choose between either sacrificing full expressive agency or facing cisheteronormative censure and pushback, which all too often turns violent. An *awesome* institution, on the other hand, is one which encourages and facilitates individuals pursuing their own individuality. Such an institution would encourage and facilitate the formation and expression of agential identities, excepting those which cause harm (such as that of the “noble white supremacist,” to borrow Dembroff and Saint-Croix’s example).⁸ Insofar as it would not stigmatize LGBTQIA+ agential identities and would reject cisheteronormativity, an awesome institution would work toward the dissolution of both of the aforementioned dilemmas through creating social contexts in which their formation is resisted in the first place.

Some artistic (and philosophical and other) institutions are indeed awesome in just this way. But many still suck, in Riggle’s sense, and especially for LGBTQIA+ persons. And this institutional suckiness can persist even despite institutions being populated by awesome individuals (such as Fried and others at Fried’s aforementioned presentation). How, then, do we rehabilitate our currently sucky artistic (and philosophical and other) institutions? First and foremost, we collectively commit to collectively finding answers to that very question, with an intentionally cultivated and sustained atmosphere that not only trusts and embraces those who bravely venture out of the closet, but also pre-emptively normalizes—and recognizes the inherent dignity of—the many agential identities of those who, for now or always, remain inside.⁹

¹ Fried, Jeremy. 2019. “Ally Aesthetics.” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 77(4): 447-459. The presentation was at the 2019 meeting of the American Society of Aesthetics in Phoenix, Arizona, with comments by Anne Eaton.

²For further discussion of the norms of allyship, with a particular focus on allies of transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming persons, see McKinnon, Rachel (2017), “Allies Behaving Badly: Gaslighting as Epistemic Injustice,” in James Kidd, José Medina, and Gaile Pohlhaus, Jr. (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice*. Routledge. pp. 167-74.

³ Dembroff, Robin and Saint-Croix, Catharine. 2019. “Yep, I’m Gay: Understanding Agential Identity.” *Ergo* 6(2): 571-599.

⁴ Ibid, 572-584.

⁵ Nguyen, C. Thi and Strohl, Matthew. 2019. “Cultural Appropriation and the Intimacy of Groups.” *Philosophical Studies* 176: 981-1002.

⁶ Dembroff and Saint-Croix 2019: 582.

⁷ Riggle, Nick. 2017. *On Being Awesome: A Unified Theory of How Not to Suck*. Penguin.

⁸ Dembroff and Saint-Croix 2019: 589-592.

⁹ Thanks to Anne Eaton for encouraging me to write this article, as well as to Sam Cowling and Jeremy Fried for helpful feedback.

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News from the National Office

As we enter our second year of the pandemic and look toward its eventual end, it seems a good time to take stock of what the American Society for Aesthetics has been doing to address the often-difficult situation of so many of our members. We are acutely aware that many of you are suffering from furloughs, layoffs, pay freezes, a shrunken job market, and cancelled research/travel support.

What the ASA is doing:

- **New Unemployed Membership Category:** In June 2020, the Board of Trustees approved a new membership category for Unemployed members, defined as anyone who does not have a full-time professional or academic appointment. The rate is \$25/year-GREEN, the same as the green student membership rate. All other green rates were reduced by \$7/year and there are no plans to increase these.
- **Summer Virtual Aesthetics Festival:** In the summer of 2020, the ASA sponsored a ten-session Festival, where ASA members could present their work and receive important feedback to carry on their scholarly projects in the absence of other meetings during the pandemic. The programs were open to all at no cost. Many were papers and panels from the Eastern and Pacific meetings, which were cancelled abruptly in March and April as the pandemic first hit.
- **Annual Meetings:** For the virtual annual meeting in November 2020, the Trustees decided to require only current ASA membership and a nominal registration fee (\$10/\$5 for students/unemployed). In setting registration rates for the Annual

Meeting in Montréal, anyone in the Unemployed category can register at the same rate as students. Most attendees will be eligible for substantial rebates on their registration if they stay at the conference hotel.

- **Division Meetings:** The virtual meetings of the Eastern and Pacific Divisions in March and April 2021 were free to all who wanted to attend, including non-members. The extensive participation of people from around the planet was a bonus of the Zoom format. The Pacific meeting enjoyed 95 registered participants including 30 students, representing 11 countries on 4 continents (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Romania, Spain, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States).
- **Mentoring Program:** A major effort to establish the Mentoring Program got underway last summer, with special thanks to Keren Gorodeisky and James Harold for their Herculean efforts to match over 50 people who responded to our survey.
- **Travel Funds to the Annual Meeting:** The Trustees recognized that many members lost their institutional travel funding to attend the November 2021 Annual Meeting. In January of this year, 100% of the officers and trustees contributed to the Friends of ASA, raising \$7825. This year those funds will be used for seven \$1000 travel grants to Montréal for persons with papers accepted for the program who do not have institutional travel support. These are in addition to eight \$1000 Irene H. Chayes Travel grants, also for presenters without institutional travel support, and \$1000 travel grants for all full-time students with papers accepted for the meeting.

What you can do to help:

We ask all of our members to seriously consider how you can help other ASA members, especially those with limited financial support. Everyone, no matter the experience or seniority or stature, is exhausted from the stress of switching their teaching to zoom or hybrid models, taking on additional responsibilities at home and work, and absorbing the stress of pandemic conditions on all of our lives. No matter how stressed or ex-

hausted you have become, we can assure you it is worse for many of our members, especially junior members. Please consider how you can help!

- **Organizers for the divisional meetings:** For too many years, these tasks have fallen on very junior members and students who should be concentrating on their own teaching and research programs to obtain and retain full-time positions. This has reached a crisis level in the Pacific and Eastern divisions. We are very pleased that an ad hoc group of senior members of the Pacific division is now working to provide on-going stability and guidance in conducting future meetings and we are hopeful that the Eastern division senior members will follow suit this month. At the national office, we handle financial management, publicity, and registration, thanks to the capabilities of our current web site. The main responsibilities of the organizers center on writing the CFP, reviewing the papers submitted, and organizing the program. For those who organized meetings in the 90s and earlier (as I did!), we think you will find the responsibilities are far more reasonable. If you have enjoyed attending and especially if you have presented your own work at these divisional meetings in recent years, please step forward to help, even if you took a turn many years ago. This is one of the most important things mid-career and senior members of the ASA can do to help during this crisis.
- **Leadership of the Feminist Caucus Committee and the Diversity Committee:** These are volunteer positions that also have fallen on too many junior people in recent years. Please consider stepping forward to take a turn in these leadership roles yourself, even if you have done it before.
- **Review committees:** The ASA has numerous prizes and opportunities that are especially attractive for the more junior members of the society, not only for the token cash prizes and travel to the annual meeting, but much more importantly for the stature that comes from winning one of these prizes for their work. As current and recent ASA officers can attest, it has become very difficult

to recruit qualified senior people to review these many submissions. We know everybody is swamped. We know everybody is stressed. But we need your continuing help in providing well-qualified review for these many prizes and opportunities.

• **Friends of the ASA:** We do understand that many members have endured pay freezes, pay cuts, layoffs, partial furloughs, and cancellation of research accounts. For those who can afford it, any amount is welcome as a donation. The Trustees will decide next year what to do with the funds raised, with priority for travel support to present papers at the Annual Meeting by those who lack institutional support next year. Donations can be made on the ASA website. Look for the big red ASA button in the upper-right and the drop-down menu for Donations. All persons donating at least \$100 will be listed alphabetically (without amounts) in the August Newsletter, with our gratitude.

Where do we go next?

We hope that we will be able to resume in-person meetings. The Rocky Mountain Division is going ahead with plans to meet in Santa Fe, NM, in July, working with the hotel to comply with all state and local requirements. The Southern Division is hopeful that it can meet at Auburn in October. And we are very hopeful that our Annual Meeting will happen in Montréal in November.

We are learning from evaluations of several virtual meetings that many of you hope we can continue to have some virtual meetings in the future, no matter the state of the pandemic. We will explore options with our Trustees this November, perhaps another Virtual Summer Aesthetics Festival in 2022. If you have ideas we should consider, please send them to <secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.edu>.

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Aesthetics News

JAAC Published by Oxford University Press

The *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* is now published by Oxford University, under a new contract which commenced January 1, 2021. All current ASA members have access to the current issue and the entire ASA archives on the OUP website.

To access:

1. Log in to your ASA account: <<https://aesthetics-online.org>>
2. Look for the big red *Members* button on the far right
3. Click the drop-down menu for Oxford University Press
4. There you will find instructions for logging onto the JAAC site at OUP

If you have problems logging in, contact <secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org> for help.

Print copies are sent by international bulk mail to regular ASA members. Due to delays in mail services due to COVID, your patience is appreciated. JAAC is available on JSTOR, but with a three-year delay.

Elizabeth Scarbrough and Julianne Chung Named Aesthetics Speakers at Summer Diversity Institutes

The American Society for Aesthetics is pleased to announce that Elizabeth Scarbrough, Florida International University, will be the ASA-sponsored speaker at the Summer Program for Women in Philosophy at UC San Diego in July 2021. Julianne Chung, York University, will be the ASA-sponsored speaker at the Rutgers Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy. This is the seventh year that the ASA has sponsored aesthetics speakers at SPWP and the Rutgers Institute.

Scarbrough will speak on “Aesthetics’ Role in Monument Removal and Construction.” She received her BA in history from Oberlin College, her MA in philosophy from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and the Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Washington, where she completed a dissertation on “The Aesthetic Appreciation

of Ruins,” under the direction of Ronald Moore.

Chung will speak on “Creativity without Originality,” drawing on classical Chinese concepts of creativity. Chung received her BA and MA from the University of Calgary and her PhD in philosophy from Yale University. She was an Assistant Professor at the University of Louisville before taking up her current position at York University.

All ASA members were eligible to apply for this appointment. The speakers at the summer institutes are selected by institute directors from recommendations made by a review committee of senior ASA members. In previous years, many ASA members have been sponsored by ASA to make presentations on aesthetics at several summer institutes: Sondra Bacharach, Julianne Chung, A.W. Eaton, Jane Forsey, James B. Haile, III, Alexandra King, Shen-Li Liao, Christy Mag Uidhir, Anna Ribeiro, Mary Beth Willard, Sarah Worth.

Bloomsbury Handbook of Dance and Philosophy

In 2016, the ASA provided funding to support humanities scholars at a major conference on philosophy and dance at Texas State University. Major funding was also provided by two deans at the University and the conference evolved into a major conference. The authors of papers presented were invited to submit them for possible publication in an anthology and most did.

It has taken years, but the anthology has now been published: *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Dance and Philosophy* (2021), co-edited by Julie Van Camp and Rebecca Farinas. The anthology includes numerous essays by ASA members and many others. The Handbook is available with a discount on the Bloomsbury site:

<<https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/the-bloomsbury-handbook-of-dance-and-philosophy-9781350103474/>>.

Contemporary Aesthetics

The open-access online journal *Contemporary Aesthetics* has just published a new special volume, *Aesthetic Engagement and Sensibility: Reflections on Arnold Berleant’s Work*. Special Volume 9 (2021) is an English-language edition of the special issue of the Polish journal *Sztuka y Filozofia* (Art and Philosophy), Vol. 37/2010, with contributions

The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism

EDITOR SEARCH

The American Society for Aesthetics is soliciting applications and nominations for the position of editor of the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, the official journal of the Society, to begin February 1, 2023. (The second term of Theodore Gracyk and Robert Stecker, the current editors, ends January 31, 2023, and they have announced their intention to step down at that time.) The term of the editor is five (5) years, with a possible 5-year renewal, subject to review and approval by the ASA Board of Trustees. The editor must be a member of the Society and receives a monthly stipend and travel support from the Society. The ASA welcomes applications either from individuals or from more than one individual applying jointly. It particularly welcomes applications from members of under-represented groups in our profession.

The editor is responsible for the content of the journal. The editor is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Society and serves on the Executive Committee and all standing Board committees. The editor makes an annual report to the Board of Trustees on the operations of the Journal. The book review editor is selected by the Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the editor, and reports to the editor. The editor is advised by an Editorial Board appointed by the ASA Board of Trustees, on the recommendation of the editor.

The *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* is published four times a year by Oxford University Press for the Society. It includes articles, book reviews, and occasional symposia. From time to time a special issue may be devoted to a single topic. Both symposia and special issues must be approved by the Editorial Board. The Journal is indexed in *The Philosopher's Index* and other sources and is electronically accessible through JSTOR and through the online platforms of Oxford University press.

The position of editor requires infrastructure and support, such as office space, student assistance, and release time. If available, the nature and extent of support that the candidate's own institution could provide, and a commitment from the institution, should be included in the candidate's application. If it is not available, an itemized list of the amount of support needed from the Society should be included. Applications or nominations should be submitted to Julie Van Camp, ASA Secretary-Treasurer, electronically at <secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org> by June 10, 2021. The application or nomination should include a brief CV (no more than 5 pages) and a cover letter noting qualifications. A search committee of officers and members of the Society will review applications, conduct interviews, and recommend a candidate to the Board of Trustees, which makes the final decision on the appointment. It is expected that the successful candidate will be notified in early fall 2021 and formally approved at the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees in November 2021.

For further information or questions, contact <EditorSearch@aesthetics-online.org>.

(in Polish) by Bogna J. Gladden-Obizińska, Cheryl Foster, Krystyna Wilkoszewska, Cheng Xiangzhan, Crispin Sartwell, Yuriko Saito, Alicja Kuczyńska, Anna Wolińska, Lilianna Bieszczad, Mara Miller, and Arnold Berleant. This new publication contains revised and up-dated versions of some of the original essays as well as new material. It can be accessed at <<https://contempaesthetics.org/the-journal/#specialvolumes>>. Click on: The Journal, Special Volumes.

This publication joins another special number of the journal *Espes*, Vol 6, No 2 (2017), edited by Aleksandra Lukaszewicz Alcaraz. Originally published in English, it contains contributions by Aleksandra Lukaszewicz Alcaraz, Arnold Berleant, Yuriko Saito, Madalina Diaconu, Katarzyna Nawrocka, Benno Hinkes, and Thomas Leddy and can be accessed at <<https://espes.ff.unipo.sk/>> or <<http://www.casopisespes.sk>>.

Jenny Judge Awarded ASA Dissertation Fellowship for 2021-22



Jenny Judge

The American Society for Aesthetics is pleased to announce that Jenny Judge (New York University) has won the ASA Dissertation Fellowship for 2021-2022. She was selected from among a very competitive group of twelve applicants by a review committee of senior ASA members.

Her dissertation, "Music, meaning and social life," is directed by Robert Hopkins, with Ned Block and Anja Jauernig. The abstract:

My dissertation defends a novel view of musical meaning, according to which music represents feelings by showing how they feel. Music thus works in the same sort of way as figurative pictures (which represent objects and scenes by showing how they look) and can be analyzed alongside them. A consideration of music thus promises to augment our understanding of the nature of representation, and the varieties of it that

exist.

She received a BMus CIT from the Cork School of Music, an MA in Philosophy from University College, Cork, and a PhD in Music from University of Cambridge before entering the philosophy program at New York University.

This is the seventh year for the ASA Dissertation Fellowship. Previous winners:

- 2020-21: David Collins, McGill University
- 2019-20: Kathryn Wojtkiewicz, Graduate Center-City University of New York
- 2018-19: Caitlin Dolan, University of California, Berkeley
- 2017-18: Madeleine Ransom, University of British Columbia
- 2016-17: Marilyn Johnson, Graduate Center-City University of New York
- 2015-16: David Johnson, Northwestern University

The deadline for application for the 2022-2023 Fellowship will be January 1, 2022.

Guidelines: <<https://aesthetics-online.org/page/dissfellowships>>

Applications Invited for Scholarships to DSA Workshop

Deadline: May 1, 2021

Applications are invited for four scholarships sponsored by the ASA to attend the Pre-Conference Workshop at the Dance Studies Association Annual Meeting, Thursday, October 14 with A14Africa. The application deadline is May 1, 2021.

The American Society for Aesthetics Board of Trustees is providing a \$2,000 grant in partial support of the Dance Philosophy and Aesthetics events at the International Dance Studies Association annual meeting, to be held at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ October 14-17, 2021.

ASA funds are providing partial support for travel and lodging for representatives of A14Africa, an internationally-renowned arts, philosophy, and STEM fields organiza-

tion. The ASA grant also is supporting four scholarships to attend the pre-conference workshop on Thursday, October 14 with A14Africa.

- 1 Dance Studies graduate student, terminal degree (MFA/PhD)
- 1 Philosophy/Aesthetics graduate student (terminal PhD degree)
- 1 Emerging Dance Studies scholar (within 7 years of graduation)
- 1 Emerging Philosophy/Aesthetics scholar (within 7 years of graduation)

Complete information on the workshop and application guidelines:

<https://aesthetics-online.org/resource/resmgr/conferences/DSA_Pre-Conference_Workshop.docx>.

The project is directed by Jeff Friedman, Associate Professor of Dance Studies, Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University. For more information on the Dance Studies Association meeting:

<<https://dancestudiesassociation.org/conferences/galvanizing-dance-studies-building-antiracist-praxis-transformative-connections-and-movements-of-radical-care>>.

Logos Collective Video Now Available

The American Society for Aesthetics is pleased to announce the availability on YouTube of a new program "If There Were Time: Past, Present, Future," by the Logos Dance Collective. This video is the outgrowth of a project co-sponsored by ASA in March 2019 at The Tank in New York City. Barbara Montero is the project director.

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFwth8txoEM>>

ASA supported the Post-Performance Panel Discussion in 2019 on the Physics, Aesthetics, and Metaphysics of Time. The evening began with a pre-performance reception with an introduction to Nietzsche and Woolf, followed by a one-hour performance by the Logos Dance Collective and a panel discussion on physics, aesthetics, and the metaphysics of time.

The project was organized by:

- Barbara Gail Montero, Professor of Philosophy, CUNY and Founder and member of the Logos Dance Collective
- Jonathan Gilmore, Professor of Philosophy, CUNY
- Maxine Flasher-Duzgunes, a BFA student in Dance at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and member of the Logos Dance Collective
- Cliff Mak, Assistant Professor of English, Queens College, CUNY

Panelists for the after-performance discussion:

- Jeff Friedman, Associate Professor of Dance Rutgers University
- Kathleen Higgins, Professor of Philosophy, University of Texas at Austin
- Timothy Maudlin, Professor of Philosophy, New York University

Welcoming Lunch at Annual ASA

In recent years, a number of people have remarked, and in some instances even written about, the problem of cliqueness at the annual meetings of the ASA. One difficulty with combating this problem is that its existence doesn't rely on bad actors who can be disciplined or cajoled into mending their ways. Even warm-hearted, gregarious types such as we find populating the ASA may inadvertently bring about cliqueness in virtue of the ubiquitous human tendency to seek out those whom we like and with whom we are more familiar. The leadership of the ASA's Diversity Committee decided, therefore, to see whether anything can be done to gently disrupt this social dynamic.

Why us, you ask? It's worth noting first that we all have an interest in fostering a conference and a society that is less cliquey. But beyond this, the problem of cliqueness is just one facet of a broader problem concerning how welcoming the society is. And much of what has been said and written about the annual meeting's cliqueness is really a remark about how welcoming it is. The anecdotal evidence, at least, suggests that shortcomings in welcomingness have disproportionately impacted individuals to whose needs the

Diversity Committee is meant to be most responsive. Therefore, if any extra reason for the Diversity Committee's attention to cliqueness is needed, this is it.

Among the planned interventions, probably the most significant is the organizing of a "Welcoming Luncheon" at this year's annual meeting of the ASA. Anyone interested in getting to know other conference attendees that they might not otherwise get to know in an atmosphere of conviviality and respect—by which I mean, hopefully, more or less everyone—is invited. There are 80 slots available at this lunch and so those interested should register for the lunch when registering for the annual conference. For ASA members who are either students or unemployed, the lunch is free. For other ASA members, it costs \$15.

Calls for Papers

Salish Sea Aesthetics Workshop
Marriott Hotel, Victoria
British Columbia
November 12-14, 2021

Deadline: August 1, 2021

The second Salish Sea Aesthetics Workshop will be held in conjunction with the 57th Western Canadian Philosophical Association Conference, November 12-14, 2021 at the Marriot Hotel, Victoria, British Columbia. Papers of up to 4000 words accompanied by a 150-word abstract, prepared for anonymous review, may be submitted via easychair:

<https://easychair.org/my/conference?conf=wcpa2021#>>.

Submissions in all areas of aesthetics are welcome.

Keynote speaker: Paul C. Taylor.

Southern Aesthetics Workshop
Auburn University (Pandemic permitting)
Auburn, Alabama
October 15-16, 2021.

Deadline: August 2, 2021

The ASA Southern Division announces a two-day workshop, October 15-16, 2021. Pandemic permitting, the workshop will be held in-person at Auburn University; otherwise it will be conducted online (via Zoom).

The workshop will be pre-read in format, featuring a total of ten presenters including one keynote speaker. Two senior and two junior presenters will be invited. Submitted papers will fill the remaining slots, with at least two of those five open slots reserved for junior scholars.

Work in any area of aesthetics & the philosophy of art is welcome, though we encourage submissions that explore issues of special concern in the South, broadly construed. Scholars are welcome to submit no matter where they live or work. The deadline for extended abstracts (no more than 500 words) is 8/2/2021 and decisions will be made by 8/20/2021. Completed papers (no longer than 3500 words) must be sent to commentators by 9/20/2021.

Submissions should be sent to [<SouthernAestheticsWorkshop@gmail.com>](mailto:SouthernAestheticsWorkshop@gmail.com).

The SASA organizing committee will announce whether the workshop will be held in-person no later than 7/15/2021. Submitters should indicate whether they would be able to attend the workshop should it be held in-person.

Submissions will be reviewed by members of the SASA organizing committee and the 2021 conference committee. Commentators and chairs of the pre-read sessions will be drawn from the active members of the Southern Division of the ASA.

All persons on the program other than the invited keynote speaker—including presenters, commentators, and chairs—will be required to be ASA members in 2021 before their names will be announced on the public program. Registration will be \$30 if the workshop is held in person; otherwise registration will be free. The workshop will be open to anyone registered. If held virtually, the meeting will follow the practices of the Virtual Summer Aesthetics Festival and other virtual aesthetics events in requiring pre-registration and the use of individual links.

Queries can be sent to [<SouthernAestheticsWorkshop@gmail.com>](mailto:SouthernAestheticsWorkshop@gmail.com).

The 2021 Conference Committee is:

- John Gibson (University of Louisville)
- Madeline Martin-Seaver (Auburn University)
- Aaron Meskin (University of Georgia)

Top 25 Downloads of JAAC Articles from JSTOR in 2020

The American Society for Aesthetics is pleased to announce the top 25 downloads of articles from the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* from JSTOR in 2020. (Please note that there is a delay in JSTOR publication. The most recent articles available for this list are from 2016).

1. *The Nature of Horror*, Noël Carroll, 46.1 (1987)
2. *Profound Offense and Cultural Appropriation*, James O. Young, 63.2 (2005)
3. *The Role of Theory in Aesthetics*, Morris Weitz, 15.1 (1956)
4. *Horror and Humor*, Noël Carroll 57.2, (1999)
5. *Street Art: The Transfiguration of the Commonplaces*, Nicholas Alden Riggle, 68.3 (2010)
6. *Video Games as Self-Involving Interactive Fictions*, Jon Robson, Aaron Meskin, 74.2 (2016)
7. *The Image of Women in Film: A Defense of a Paradigm*, Noël Carroll, 48.4 (1990)
8. *What a Documentary Is, After All*, Carl Plantinga, 63.2 (200)
9. *Hume's Standard of Taste*, Noel Carroll, 43.2 (1984)
10. *The Paradox of Horror: Fear as a Positive Emotion*, Katerina Bantinaki, 70.4 (2012)
11. *What Is Literary Realism?* Mary Francis Slattery, 31.1 (1972)
12. *Panofsky, Iconography, and Semiotics*, Christine Hasenmueller, 36.3 (1978)
13. *The Aesthetic Idea of Impressionism*, Lionello Venturi, 1.1 (1941)
14. *Political Music and the Politics of Music*, Lydia Goehr, 52.1 (1994)
15. *Satire, Analogy, and Moral Philosophy*, Nicholas Diehl, 71.4 (2013)
16. *Aristotle on Comedy*, Leon Golden, 42.3 (1984)
17. *Hume's Standard of Taste: The Real Problem*, Jerrold Levinson, 60.3 (2002)
18. *Race, Ethnicity, Expressive Authenticity: Can White People Sing the Blues?* Joel Rudinow, 52.1 (1994)
19. *"Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" and the Morality of Memory*, Christopher Grau, 64.1 (2006)
20. *What Is Wrong with a Forgery?* Alfred Lessing, 23.4 (1965)
21. *Defining Comics?* Aaron Meskin, 65.4 (2007)
22. *Art and Audience*, Nick Zangwill, 57.3 (1999)
23. *"The Effects of Blackness": Gender, Race, and the Sublime in Aesthetic Theories of Burke and Kant*, Meg Armstrong, 54.3 (1996)
24. *Beauty Matters*, Peg Zeglin Brand, 57.1 (1999)
25. *The Readymades of Marcel Duchamp: The Ambiguities of an Aesthetic Revolution*, Steven Goldsmith, 42.2 (1983)

Top 10 JAAC Downloads in 2020 from the Wiley Online Library

The American Society for Aesthetics is pleased to announce the top ten downloads in 2020 of articles in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* from the Wiley Online Library:

1. SIMONITI, V., *Assessing Socially Engaged Art* 76.1
2. BROZZO, C., *Are Some Perfumes Works of Art?* 78.1
3. COSTELLO, D., *What's So New about the "New" Theory of Photography?* 75.4
4. MESKIN, A., *Defining Comics?* 65.4
5. HIGGINS, K., *Aesthetics and the Containment of Grief* 78.1
6. DURO, P., *What Is a Parergon?* 77.1
7. TERRONE, E., *Documentaries, Docudramas, and Perceptual Beliefs* 78.1
8. WALTON, K., *Aesthetic Properties: Context Dependent and Perceptual* 78.1
9. DODD, J., *Blurred Lines: Ravasio on "Historically Informed Performance"* 78.1
10. AL-SAJI, A., *Glued to the Image: A Critical Phenomenology of Racialization through Works of Art* 77.4

- Jonathan Neufeld (The College of Charleston)
- Elizabeth Scarbrough (Florida International University)
- James Shelley (Auburn University)

Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics (JCLA)

Special Issue

Immaterial and Material Discourse
Guest Editor: Ikea M. Johnson, Louisiana State University, USA

George Berkeley is considered a great innovator of immaterial discourse. He is best known for his early works on vision like *An Essay towards a New Theory of Vision* (1709) and metaphysics in *A Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710); and, *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* (1713). Berkeley furthermore asserted that the root of all intellectual perplexity and delusion is abstract ideas. He insisted in his *Introduction to the Principles of Human Knowledge* that: (a) abstract ideas could not be produced, (b) they were not necessary for the transmission of knowledge, and (c) they were contradictory and unpredictable and therefore incomprehensible. However, Berkeley also defends two metaphysical ideas: namely, idealism and immaterialism. He believed to be is to be perceived.

More recent methodologies of material culture have primarily focused on the use and historical meaning of artifacts populating a story or analyzing the book itself as a commercial product circulated on the market. The study of comparative literature and aesthetics, and more extensively, cultural spaces, is strengthened by recent studies on materiality. For instance, MacArthur Fellow Fred Moten's discourse on Marxism, dialectical materialism, and Kant's philosophies of freedom and nature employ an (im)material approach to understanding cosmopolitanism, a priori customs, and being. His disjunction of material /immaterial conditions is opposed to traditional philosophy, which maintains an uprising in the intangible portion of thinking, evidence, and tendencies as disaffected from the actual domain of practical life and methods. For instance, numerous movements towards subjectivity have explored embodiment and the materiality of thought.

On the other hand, some may define the dynamics of our spatial conception explored through fictitious spaces as immaterial. As a result, the distinction in materiality/immateriality is progressively leading to possible reconfigurations of everyday relations, traces, and the interplay between these three subjects: cosmopolitanism, dialectics, and the climate. How do we understand that the immateriality of literature conveys the vital clash between tangible and immaterial-psychological, mental, and spiritual?

Some topics to consider: Aesthetics and material/immaterial traditions; Poetics and (im)materialism; Philosophy and material limitations; Speculative/Sci-Fi fiction and metaphysical junctures; Cosmopolitanism and the material/immaterial concerns of literature; Religion and metaphysical practices; Anthropogenic and material activities; Dialectics and materialism/immaterialism; Migration and (im)material climates; Race and materialism/immaterialism; Philological material/immaterial affects; Linguistics and esoteric circumstances; Ritual and (im)material practices, etc.

[<jclaindia@gmail.com>](mailto:jclaindia@gmail.com)

Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft

Two Special Issues

Issue 67/1 · 2022 Moral Art: Is Art Allowed to be Moral?

Deadline: December 31, 2021

Is art allowed to be moral? Or must art be evil: immoral, shocking, offensive?

The first issue will lay a special focus on the relationship between art and morality with regard to the production of art.

What would it mean for art to be moral? That in itself is an unanswered question. But as difficult as it is to answer, it seems to be clear to many of the art world's stakeholders that art has the right to be immoral. Ever since Baude-laire's *Les Fleurs du Mal*, it even seems as if art must be evil and immoral if it does not want to appear affirmative, boring, unattractive, or embarrassingly moralistic.

Can art only fulfil its mission if it provokes the moral feel-ings of many people? Or does the demand that art should not bow to the prevailing morality, but should disturb and devalue it, fail to recognise the nature of art

and the way it affects people? Does it possibly even underestimate the potential impact of moral art and the contribution it can make to improving social conditions?

If art is allowed to be moral: What does this mean for artists and for art production? Is it possible to produce art that deserves to be called “moral” –and if so, how? Are there criteria to which artists can orient themselves if they want to produce moral art? Or does the moral character of art depend above all on how it is commented on and situated by those who produce it?

Issue 67/2 · 2022 ART MORALITY: Does Art Have to be Moral?

Deadline: June 30, 2022

Does art have to be moral? Or is it allowed to be reprehensible from a moral point of view?

The second issue will focus on the relationship between art and morality with regard to the reception of art. Should we tolerate immoral art? Or do we need a moral censorship of art?

Should we renounce the reception of art that is reprehensible from a moral point of view? Should we ban it from museums and public spaces? Should it be provided with warnings? Or should the reception of fascist art, for example, be possible without restriction? What determines whether art is immoral or not? Who makes this decision based which kind of standard? Is it even possible to qualify art as immoral in a sense that goes beyond a mere subjective opinion? Or does art, due to its essential ambiguity, not allow for such classifications?

Is it justified to toxify or even prevent the reception of works of art because the views or behaviour of their creators are morally reprehensible? Is art liable for the behaviour and the views of those who have created it? What kind of concept of art and artistic freedom lies at the bottom of views that attribute a harmful influence to works of art? In what way can and how should we deal with or react to art that appears racist or sexist to some recipients?

Original contributions in German, English, or French that discuss questions such as these in a profound and thorough way – whether in a purely theoretical manner or using art of any kind as an example – are requested by 31.12.2021 (Issue 1) or 30.6.2022 (Issue 2) by email to the editorial office of the ZÄK: <zaek@ds.uzh.ch>.

The length of the sub-mitted contributions should not exceed 45,000 characters (including spaces and footnotes).

The Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft (ZÄK), founded in 1906 by Max Dessoir and re-founded in 1966, is one of the oldest peer-reviewed journals for aesthetics and the theory of art. In its 67th year, it addresses the relationship between art and morality. We welcome original contributions on two complementary topics that analyse the relationship between art and morality: from the perspective of artistic production and from the perspective of the reception of art.

Upcoming Events

ASA Rocky Mountain Division

Drury Plaza Hotel
Santa Fe, NM
July 16-18, 2021

ASA Annual Meeting

Doubletree by Hilton
Montréal
November 17-20, 2021

The Reality of Aesthetic Injustice

Aesthetics Research Centre (ARC)
May 12, 2021

Aesthetics Research Seminar with Dr. Daisy Dixon (Cambridge University). Abstract and more details TBC.

Wednesday May 12, 3-5 PM BST.

Please see <<http://aesthetics-research.org/>> for updates.

Book Symposium on Before Sunrise, Before Sunset, Before Midnight: A Philosophical Exploration

Aesthetics Research Centre (ARC)
June 10, 2021

Book Symposium on *Before Sunrise, Before Sunset, Before Midnight: A Philosophical Exploration*, edited by Hans Maes (University of Kent) and Katrien Schaubroeck (University of Antwerp).

This new book, published by Routledge in their Philosophers on Film series, focuses on Richard Linklater’s celebrated *Before* trilogy. The trilogy chronicles the love of Jesse (Ethan Hawke) and Céline (Julie Delpy) who

first meet up in *Before Sunrise*, later reconnect in *Before Sunset* and finally experience a fall-out in *Before Midnight*. Not only do these films present storylines and dilemmas that invite philosophical discussion, but philosophical discussion itself is at the very heart of the trilogy. The book explores the many philosophical themes that feature so vividly in the interactions between Céline and Jesse, including: the nature of love, romanticism and marriage, sex and gender, the passage and experience of time, the meaning of life and death, the art of conversation, the narrative self.

The symposium will take place online and will feature contributions by:

- Laura di Summa (Assistant Professor of Philosophy, William Paterson University)
- Diane Jeske (Professor of Philosophy, Iowa)
- Pilar Lopez-Cantero (Assistant Professor, Tilburg)
- James MacDowell (Associate Professor in Film & Television Studies, Warwick)
- Hans Maes (Senior Lecturer in History and Philosophy of Art, Kent)
- Anna Christina Ribeiro (Associate Professor of Philosophy, Texas Tech)
- Katrien Schaubroeck (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Antwerp)
- Marya Schechtman (Professor of Philosophy, Illinois)
- Michael Smith (Professor of Philosophy, Princeton)
- Murray Smith (Professor of Film, Kent)

Thursday June 10, 2-6 PM BST.

Please contact the organiser (H.Maes@kent.ac.uk) for the Zoom link.

Active Aestheticians

SANDRA SHAPSHAY (Hunter College & the Graduate Center, CUNY) has been awarded an NEH Summer Stipend for her book project, "Bodies in Stone and Steel: An Aesthetics and Ethics of Commemorative Art." Building on the important edited collection by Bicknell, Judkins and Korsmeyer (2020), the project aims to shed light squarely on foundational conceptual and normative questions about the aesthetics and politics of monuments and memorials such as: Why should we have public monuments at all? What are the characteristic aesthetic effects of monuments and memorials? How have aesthetic codes of commemorative art developed historically and how might they fruitfully evolve further in response to current controversies? The ultimate aim of the project is to offer a "moderate defense" of monuments against iconoclastic arguments as well as a values-based balancing framework for thinking through whether controversial monuments should be removed or remain.

NILS-HENNES STEAR (Auburn University and Uppsala Universitet) received the *Australian Journal of Philosophy's* 2019 Best Paper Award for 'Meriting a response: The paradox of seductive artworks'.

Since 2007, the AAP, in connection with Taylor and Francis (Routledge Imprint), awards an annual prize for the best paper published in the *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* in the previous year.

Planning Ahead? ASA Meetings and Co-Sponsored Conferences

The American Society for Aesthetics is pleased to welcome submissions and participation in ASA meetings and cosponsored workshops in 2021.

Although we still hope we can meet in person, the worsening of the pandemic means we must plan for alternatives. Please let us know in your email submission if you could only participate virtually or if you think you could also attend in person (as best you can ascertain).

ASA Divisional Meetings

ASA Rocky Mountain Division: Drury Plaza Hotel, Santa Fe, NM, July 16-18, 2021

<<https://aesthetics-online.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1173361&group=>>

Southern Aesthetics Workshop III: Auburn University (Pandemic-permitting) Auburn, Alabama, October 15-16, 2021.

Submission Deadline: August 2, 2021

ASA Annual Meetings

2021: Doubletree by Hilton, Montréal, November 17-20, 2021

<<https://aesthetics-online.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1067550&group=>>

2022: Embassy Suites by Hilton, Portland, OR, November 16-19, 2022

2023: Hilton Crystal City, Washington, DC, November 15-18, 2023

ASA Co-Sponsored Conferences and Workshops

(All are open to the public)

Dance Philosophy and Aesthetics with A14Africa:

Rutgers University, October 14, 2021

<<https://aesthetics-online.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1450909>>

Salish Sea Aesthetics Workshop II: Victoria, BC, November 12-14, 2021

<<https://aesthetics-online.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1338147&group=>>

Submission Deadline: August 1, 2021

For the complete list of future ASA meetings and conferences: look for MEETINGS near the bottom of any page on our website and click 'more'.

Thinking of joining ASA? Now would be a good time! Brand-new members joining in the last three months of the year are extended to 12/31/2021.

<<http://aesthetics-online.org>>

ASA Opportunities in 2021-22

The American Society for Aesthetics is pleased to welcome submissions for ASA opportunities for 2021 & 2022.

Selma Jeanne Cohen Prize in Dance Aesthetics

Deadline: May 1, 2021

<<https://aesthetics-online.org/page/CohenPrize>>

Somaesthetics Research Prize

Deadline: May 1, 2021

<https://aesthetics-online.org/resource/resmgr/files/calls/SomaestheticsAnnouncement_a.pdf>

Dissertation Fellowship for 2022-2023

<<https://aesthetics-online.org/page/dissfellowships>>

Deadline: January 1, 2022

Social Justice and the Arts Prize

Deadline: January 15, 2022

<<https://aesthetics-online.org/page/socialjusticeprize>>

Outstanding Monograph Prize

<<https://aesthetics-online.org/page/MonographPrize>>

Deadline: February 1, 2022

Irene H. Chayes New Voices Award

<<https://aesthetics-online.org/page/chayesprize>>

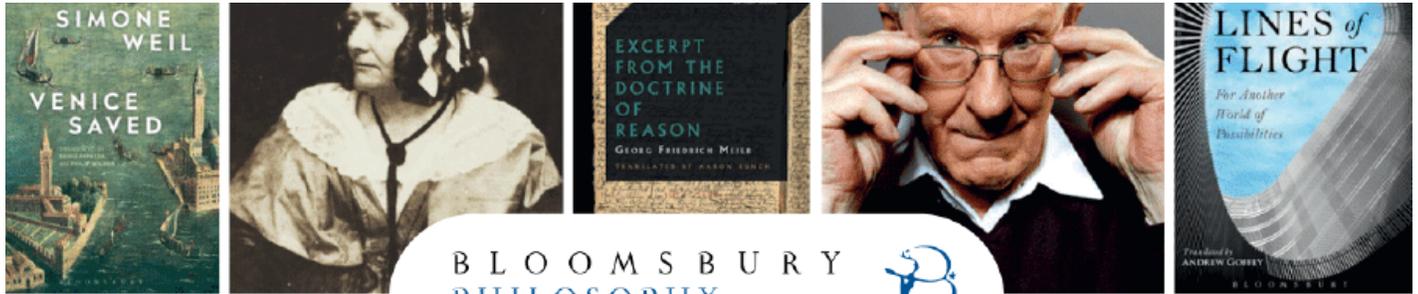
Deadline: March 1, 2022

Selma Jeanne Cohen Prize in Dance Aesthetics

<<http://aesthetics-online.org/?page=CohenPrize>>

Deadline: May 1, 2022

ASA Members:



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Or visit www.bloomsburyphilosophylibrary.com



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Other images courtesy of Getty Images.

You can visit the Bloomsbury Philosophy site as a guest of Bloomsbury commencing in May 2021.

Log in to the ASA site, look for *Members* and the *Bloomsbury* sub-header.

ASA Newsletter

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&
Michel-Antoine Xhignesse
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Send calls for papers, event announcements, conference reports, and other items of interest to:

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or

Michel-Antoine Xhignesse, Department of Philosophy, Capilano University, 2055 Purcell Way, FIR 404, North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V7J 3H5. <michelxhignesse@capilano.ca>

Deadlines: December 1, April 15, August 1