Photography: The Visual as an Existential

In the heated debates over the significance and value of photography that swirled around the medium in its first few decades of life, it was already clear to both enthusiasts and detractors that the new image-making process was poised to radically alter human vision. Today, 180 years after its inception, photography has established itself as the regulating standard for seeing and picturing, remembering and imagining and, significantly, mediating relations between ourselves, the world and others. It is now so intimately intertwined within our ordinary routines that we cannot begin to imagine our everyday lives without it. Photography has become an intrinsic condition of the human, an existential. But, its rootedness in human life is so deep that photography also hides from us, challenging us to find a philosophical language for describing its pervasive presence.

In this lecture, I suggest we think of photography as a modality (a machine, in Deleuzian terms) of welcoming and bidding farewell and, more generally, of negotiating transience and finitude. With this in mind, I explore the senses in which the emergence of photography had radically and irreversibly transformed our human being-in-the visual and, correspondingly, our relation to the moment. I argue that this transformation is a key for rethinking the status of the photographic in the twenty first century.

Art, otherwise than art

In this lecture, I will assume that there are four historical modes of receiving art: art received as art; non-art received as art; art received otherwise than art; and non-art received otherwise than art… I will develop mostly the category of « art received otherwise than art » with two series of examples: cases of artists working in the frame of the contemporary art (Thomas Hirschhorn, specially his Eternal flame at Palais de Tokyo; Anish Kapoor at Versailles) and new dispositifs in some recent exhibitions of modern or classic art (Niki de St Phalle at The Grand Palais; Eternal Tresors of Kasugataisha Shrine, at Tokyo National Museum).
Artistic Differences: Disliking and Disagreeing about Art

What can lead people to reject a work of art? Do we feel and have a responsibility to defend artistic ‘dislikes’ more than ‘likes’? Can we be better and worse at disliking art? Negative judgement of art raises various difficult questions. Is disliking a work the same as assigning it low artistic value? How can disliking a work combine with experiencing it as successful in its aims? Scholars in the Kantian tradition puzzle about what it is to find something ugly, assuming that is an aesthetic response – can a ‘free play of the faculties’ issue in displeasure, for instance? I will touch on some issues concerning the nature and grounds of negative response to art, with the further goal of thinking about the ‘dislike response’ as a form of disagreement. In rejecting a work of art we are, perhaps very implicitly, disagreeing with choices and judgements made by the maker(s) and displayer(s) of the work. What is the importance of such disagreement? With ideas about the value of sharing tastes in the argumentative background, I will consider the positive value of disliking, and disagreeing about, art.

The Ineffability of Musical Content: Is Verbalization in Principle Impossible?

In contemporary aesthetics, and as John Gibson remarks in his introduction to The Philosophy of Poetry, poetry can be considered as ‘the last great unexplored frontier’. Most theories attempt either to specify some essential characteristics of poetic language or to define poetry as a genre. My aim in this paper differs from these attempts as I aim to conceptualise what happens in poetry and what we can learn from it. If we agree that poetic language works somehow differently from ordinary speech, what can we learn from the experience of poetic language? The etymology of poetry, poiesis, brings to the fore the idea that poetry involves a making or a creating. Following ideas from Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, I understand poetry as involving the idea of a perspectival poetics: poetry involves a creation of perspectives that reveal new viewpoints on the world. I focus especially on Wittgenstein’s idea of ‘seeing as’ which can be relevant to poetry by transposing it into ‘reading as’ and on Nietzsche’s perspectivism in which one must not only follow one or another perspective but also and above all create new ones in order to experience all the possible perspectives.
Lebenswelt, Everydayness and Aesthetic Experience in the Age of Experiential Design

Drawing from the interpretation of Lebenswelt provided by Hans Blumenberg in his *Lebenswelt und Technisierung unter Aspekten der Phänomenologie* (1963; 1981), where he counters the dichotomy between nature and technology, this paper aims to provide an updated version of the notion of lifeworld as follows:

1) by contrasting an aprioristic conception of it;
2) by comparing it with the notion of *everydayness* provided by Everyday Aesthetics;
3) by contextualizing it in the age of experiential design.

Through this analysis this paper also aims to clarify certain issues that concern fundamental aspects developed in the field of Everyday Aesthetics and to provide a more comprehensive understanding of what the current nature of design is.

Painting and Perception of Nature: Merleau-Ponty’s aesthetical contribution to the contemporary debate on nature

The issue of aesthetic experience arises in the *Phenomenology of Perception*, where such an experience is intended mainly as perceptual experience, but this topic remains at the core of Merleau-Ponty’s later works. Starting from the relevance of the relationship between perception, body and perceptual field, Merleau-Ponty often connects an investigation of the perceptual dimension with the reflection of painting activity. This signals the necessity to consider artistic practice in order to unveil a fundamental pre-categorical experience intended as nature.

In the *Notes de Course 1959-1961* Merleau-Ponty starts with a consideration of our problematic understanding of nature and then develops an investigation of artistic experience. This is because his idea of pre-categorical experience allows for a deeper understanding of nature. The relationship between philosophy and art also highlights the necessity to analyze phenomenologically the relationship between philosophy and what he labels ‘non philosophy’. The importance of this connection is fundamental for two reasons: first, this links philosophy directly with art. To do/make art is to directly investigate the pre-categorical level that Merleau-Ponty is aiming to unveil with his phenomenology. Second, so-called ‘non philosophy’ refers to the idea of otherness that characterizes nature; otherness should be investigated phenomenologically in a proper manner. Accordingly, phenomenology should take art and nature into careful consideration.

I shall investigate the relevance of the connection between perceptual experience, on the one hand, and painting activities, on the other. I argue that this intimate connection provides interesting and useful elements for the contemporary aesthetical debate concerning the experience of nature.
In this paper, I look at Kant's third Critique and the persona of a poet that is at the heart of his account of beautiful art. By analyzing "the faculties of the mind that constitute genius" and accommodating them within Kant's theory of fine arts, I offer an interpretation of his account of poetic creation and aesthetic experience of poetry.

To understand better what goes into poetic creation and reception, I focus on two patterns of interaction that poet inspires with his creation. The first one is concerned with the way in which his poetry influences the artistic creation in another poet. This 'poet-to-poet' interactive pattern is primarily defined in terms of 'exemplarity', whereby one poet's poem serves "as a model not for copying but for imitation" as it triggers one's own talent, provided the nature had "equipped him with a similar proportion of mental powers" (KU 47, 5:309). Chasing these traces of inspiration throughout our poetic practice is relevant for shedding some theoretical light on our conceptions of poetry, as well as for the way we think of originality and creativity.

The second interactive pattern concerns 'poet-to-audience' relation. Mediated via poet's artistic creations, this pattern is characterized by ways in which poetry animates the minds of its readers. I refer to this pattern as 'communicative pattern' and trace it back to its origin, namely, to the poetic creation as it takes place in the poet's mind, whereby a poem first comes into being. Analyses along this line, focused primarily on the representative and cognitive aspects of aesthetic ideas, show that we have to modify some of the traditional interpretations of Kant. On my reading, despite his commitment to formalism, Kant sees poetry as intimately concerned with what contemporary views classify as cognitivism. Against this background, we have to explain why poets, ignorant as they are about the origins of their art, can nevertheless assist us, through their poetry, in our systematic attempts to organize and explain our experience. I offer such an explanation by clarifying the functions Kant awards to the taste, understanding and imagination in poetic creation.

In my talk I want to focus on the critical potential of a particular kind of bodily practices, namely artistic practices. Habitualization through repeated practice and training plays a crucial role in acquiring artistic know-how. However, artistic practices also explicitly require one to criticize established ways and generating new ways of doing something. Artistic practices thus implement a know-how that is slightly different from habitual ways of doing something. Drawing on theories of practice in Merleau-Ponty and Ryle, I will claim that artistic practices form a specific class of bodily practices that is different from "mere" habits, but that they at the same time depend on habitualized actions, since they have to be "incorporated" in a process of practice and training. Herein, they constitute a crucial possibility of becoming critical in the course of repeatedly engaging with established ways of doing something, e.g. with existing practices of seeing. Artistic practices can thus be regarded as a corrective to the repetitive nature of habitual practices and serve as an example to found intelligent practices on a pre-reflective, bodily level.
Participatory Public Art

The function of art in public space has changed during the last half century from monuments that commemorate the past towards artworks that address a variety of issues, often critically or playfully. Public art no longer tries to speak for everyone. Yet in this paper, I assume that there still might be a need for art that articulates space precisely as public and shared among different groups and individuals. Moreover, I suggest that being able to imagine the future is as important as realizing the connections to the past, and that past and future are best seen as consisting of several, sometimes conflicting narratives. A principle for what we might call critical public art is then to recognise plurality and heterogeneity, and offer strategies for questioning existing interpretations and visions. This is however challenging because public art, in its constitution as a cultural entity, is co-dependent with public space, meaning both physical surroundings and the political public sphere.

I develop my reflections in dialogue with works of Jochen Gerz, an artist who has addressed political issues related to particular sites, and invited people to participate by giving promises, thoughts or their names in commitment to ideas that are or become part of the work. Tensions between visibility and invisibility, matter and meaning, public and secret, individual and community then invite the audience to imagine and reflect on past, present and future. I look in particular at amaptocare in Dublin, where local residents were invited to donate a tree to the community and write a text, expressing what the tree would say on behalf of the donor if it could speak. The work in its present condition is both touching and troubling, as it clearly demonstrates how the meaning of public art depends on its political, social and economic framing.

All about Janez Janza

In 2007, Emil Hrvatin, Davide Grassi and Žiga Kariž changed their names in Janez Janša. Janez Janša and Janez Janša. In 2009, Žiga Kariž changed his name again, from Janez Janša back to Žiga Kariž. When this change occurred, the most well-known and prominent of five previous Janez Janšas in Slovenian census was Janez Janša - the head of government from 2004 to 2008. At a time when they took (t)this name president Janez Janša figured as the political enemy of alternative culture and its artivist engagement. But three new-born Janez Janšas announced that their change of names is an intimate decision and not a public statement or even an act of artivism. The most interesting part of their collective projects is the use of names as ready-mades: Name Readymade, Signature, and All about Us. The first one (2008) turned their valid personal documents into works of art. The second one (2010) exhibited their signatures portrayed by another artist and authorized by all three Janšas, thus getting in touch with Derrida’s deconstruction of identity and identification. The third, most recent one (2016) presented their identity cards constructed of their personalized credit and debit cards. All three projects deal with identity, with means of identification, and with exposed metaphysics and fetishism of personal documents as a special kind of »ordinary thing«, at the same time confirming and denying that »individuals are systems of representation«. (Danto, 1999, 12) In this presentation, I will concentrate on two of most interesting topics this project triggered: name as ready-mades; and explanation of alternative culture’s/artivist artworld’s anxiety, discomfort and aversion to this project.

Keywords: Janez Janša, Janez Janša and Janez Janša; name as ready-made; document as artwork; artivism; end of art; artistic cause
Stefan Schmidt

**Time and Narrative in the cinematographic work of Andrei Tarkovsky**

Our experience and understanding of time is varied. In *Time and Narrative* Paul Ricoeur points out the inherent aporicty of time. Our comprehension of time is inevitably interwoven with three main aporias. The first one concerns the incompatible relationship between subjective and objective time or, what he also refers to as phenomenological and cosmological time. The second aporia describes the problem that we always think of time in the way of a singular collective—time breaks into different perspectives (past, present, future), even in different times and yet we presuppose its oneness. The third one points to the impossibility of grounding time. There is no way to argue consistently for an origin of time.

Ricoeur finds a “solution” for all three aporias or, rather, a constructive way to accept them and use them in a productive way. For my presentation, I’ll focus on Ricoeur’s solution for the first aporia: human time and narrated identity. What this means is narration, according to Ricoeur, reconciles phenomenological time, i.e., our experience of time, with cosmological time, the time of the world. I’ll use his concept of narrated time to analyse Andrei Tarkovsky’s movie Zerkalo (The Mirror), which focuses on exactly this problem. The main character’s recollections (phenomenological time), which are also mixed with dream-like sequences, are embedded in the broader context of historical events (cosmological time). So, on the one hand Tarkovsky gives history a human face. On the other hand the actions of the protagonist gain their specific meaning; they become understandable through their historical embeddedness. Time plays a key role in all of Tarkovsky’s movies, but in Zerkalo it is thematized particularly through narration. We tell stories, and we tell stories about ourselves, i.e., autobiographical stories. Here, the subject and object of our story fall together, we tell who we are, we create ourselves narratively, and at the same time we reflect on who we are. The truth about who we are becomes accessible only through narrated time.

The notion of narrated time is not just important for Zerkalo but is probably suited to understand Tarkovsky’s whole cinematic work. “[T]he virtue of cinema is that it appropriates time, complete with that material reality to which it is indissolubly bound, and which surrounds us day by day and hour by hour” (Tarkovsky, Sculpting in Time, 63).

Dana Grabelsky

**The Fittingness of Emotional Responses to Narrative Film**

It seems uncontroversial to claim that we can be genuinely emotionally moved by artwork. Given that the emotions we experience are in response to artwork we know to be fictional, it seems that the cognitive content of the emotion conflicts with the belief that the intentional object of the emotion is not real. Consequently, these emotions might be evaluated as irrational or unfitting, which signals a sort of recalcitrance. This apparent irrationality or unfittingness of emotional response to art gives rise to what is known as the paradox of fiction. Because a proper engagement with fictional art involves a recognition that the artwork is, in fact, fiction, it seems that emotional responses would contradict the audience’s belief in the fictional status of the work. In order to resolve this paradox, I argue that the emotions that we experience can be evaluated as rational or fitting, but because they are not identical with their real-life counterparts, they are evaluated by different standards of fittingness. But the rationality or fittingness of emotional responses to art raises another, perhaps more serious concern: given that such emotional responses to artwork are rational or fitting, this suggests that we might be morally implicated in some way when we experience rational or fitting emotions towards immoral characters. There is usually a certain level of discomfort, or resistance, we face when we realize that we are positively emotionally responding to an immoral fictional character, a phenomenon that Tamar Gendler calls the puzzle of imaginative resistance. I will look at this phenomenon specifically within the context of the gangster genre, with an eye towards two paradigmatic examples—Michael and Vito Corelone in The Godfather and Tony Soprano in The Sopranos—and argue that we are not morally implicated in our positive emotional responses towards such characters.
The Dialectics of Consciousness and Unconsciousness in the Spontaneity of Chinese Art

This paper explores the elusive and interesting dialectic between concentration and forgetfulness, consciousness and unconsciousness in the spontaneous artistic creation favoured by artists and advocated by critics in Chinese art history. I examine texts written by Chinese artists and critics (mainly in the Song Dynasty), and refer back to ancient Daoist philosophical ideas in a comparison with German idealistic aesthetics. The interesting dialectic was noted by several Chinese artists and critics and was applied by many gifted artists throughout Chinese history. For instance, as the Qing painter Wang Yuanqi (1642–1715) claimed when confessing his failure to copy the Yuan master Ni Zan (1301–1374) that Ni Zan’s success in natural and untrammelled expression lies ‘in between having an intention and not having one’. A similar idea about the dialectic of consciousness and unconsciousness in artistic spontaneity appears to be suggested by German artist Heinrich von Kleist’s On the Marionette Theatre (1880). By telling three stories, Kleist appears to suggest that self-consciousness might disturb and hinder the naturalness of artistic expression and thus encourage affectation; self-consciousness is better forgotten, but it does not mean that there is no role for consciousness; if extreme self-consciousness appears on the one side of a point and while unconsciousness appears on the other side of a point, they may meet and complete a circle. Although in both cultural contexts artists and critics talk about the same elusive relation, they seem to resort to different philosophical explanations. Chinese artists mainly resorted to the Pre-Qin Daoist philosopher Zhuangzi’s ideas in explaining the dialectic of spontaneity in art. Additionally, the Daoist idea of ‘Wu Wei’ (inaction) advocated by Laozi and Zhuangzi appears to explain why without consciously doing anything, everything has been done. The aesthetic freedom and spontaneity advocated by Zhuangzi and inherited by Chinese artists and critics seems to share some similarity with Kant’s account of freedom and spontaneity in the art of genius, as well as Schiller’s idea of aesthetic autonomy. It is worth further exploring whether any differences are merely due to a distinct cultural tradition in each case or whether they embody an essentially distinct philosophical understanding of the elusive notion of spontaneity in artistic creation.

Appreciation and metacognition

This paper examines a prevalent feature of accounts of aesthetic appreciation, of positing some metacognitive component as either necessary or sufficient for appreciation. I suggest that accounts of this sort could do more to engage with current work on metacognition in philosophical psychology. Irvin (2014) and Dokic (2016) make welcome forays into such territory. I review their contributions and, incorporating some lessons from them, develop an alternative account of the role of metacognition in appreciation. Its role does not reside in the verbally reportable, reflective introspective judgements about the aetiology of our own aesthetic responses that Irvin’s paper focusses on. Nor is its role hostage to contentious questions about the metacognitive status of the epistemic emotions, as Dokic’s view makes it. Rather, its role lies in the active metarepresentational monitoring and guided modulation of how appreciative episodes unfold over time.
Do we Imagine Expressive Properties?

On one hand, Paul Noordhof (2008) has argued against “contour theorists” that the kind of experience that we undergo when we experience expressive works of art is imaginative in nature. According to his view, expressive properties cannot be – so to speak – out there, like merely perceptual properties, so that he claims that the experience of expressive properties amounts to imagine a process that is capable of making expressive certain merely perceptual features. On the other hand, imaginative accounts as the one put forward by the so-called “persona theory” are mislead in their postulating an imaginative character who would express emotions through music (and works of art more generally). Noordhof’s view appeals to a notion of sensuous imagination that makes it particularly suitable to explain expressive experience.

In the paper I first try to provide further arguments that may enhance Noordhof’s view. However, I also claim that it presents some problematic aspects. Namely, it relies on the assumption that works of art can only be derivatively expressive of emotions and of psychological states, and I argue that this notion of expressiveness does not capture some important features of expressive experience.

As an alternative, I try to show that the one of expressive works of art can be accounted for as a basically perceptual experience, although imaginative interventions may enrich it. Moreover, this view does justice to the intuition that certain inanimate objects such as works of art can be expressive of affective states in a non-derivative way.

Hacia una estética del desfase. Notas sobre el modelo estructural de la conciencia estética de Husserl

El propósito de este trabajo es ampliar la comprensión de la experiencia estética desde la fenomenología de Edmund Husserl. En términos generales, describo el modelo estratificado de la conciencia estética que Husserl presenta en Phäntasie und Bildbewusstsein (1905). A partir de la convergencia y dinámica de los estratos –que son, la cosa física (physisches Ding), el tema de la representación (Bildsujet) y lo representado (Bildobjekt)– surge la relación problemática entre la cosa física y lo representado, y consiste en que la materialidad específica de la obra de arte difiere de la imagen (Bildobjekt) en que se intuye el tema de la representación (Bildsujet). En este lugar la propuesta de Husserl atañe problemas al operar desde la percepción de la materialidad de la obra de arte a su captación inmanente, surgiendo la cuestión de cómo se articulan ambas partes en este modelo estructural si, en principio, como en sus obras principales afirma el autor (Logische Untersuchungen, 1900/01; Ideen I, 1913), a la percepción de lo físico no es posible atribuir características de imagen porque nos da el objeto en su presencia corporal (Leibhaftigkeit). De este modo, sugiero analizar esta relación desde la doctrina de modificación figurativa de Ideen I, que pone límite al aparente conflicto entre percepción y conciencia de imagen. Esta doctrina permite vislumbrar como se efectúa la presentación (Gegenwärtigung) y re-presentación (Vergegenwärtigung) de un mismo objeto desde la posibilidad que tienen las intencionalidades de entretenerse y compartir sus correlatos. Desde esta perspectiva, al ser la imagen estética (Bildobjekt) lo que meramente aparece, podemos afirmar que su afirmación, negación o duda están remitidos a los estratos perceptivos y/o representativos que conforman el modelo total de la conciencia estética expuesto en detalle en Phäntasie und Bildbewusstsein (1905). La relevancia de este estudio yace en rescatar la propuesta estética de Husserl, la cual denomino estética del desfase en la medida en que establece una relación no unívoca entre los tres diferentes estratos de la conciencia estética; a saber, la cosa física, lo representado y el tema de la representación.
Consensus and its Role in Aesthetic Evaluation. The Case of Judging Nature

The talk will investigate into the importance of consensus for our understanding of aesthetic value judgments. In any society, so I claim, there exist certain consensuses of aesthetic evaluation of landscapes and other natural environments. They are, for example, present in advertisements, where the same motifs and depictions of landscapes and the same photographs are used again and again. My central thesis is that these consensuses are essential to our understanding of aesthetic value judgments. To defend this thesis I will analyze examples of aesthetic value judgments taken from the realm of environmental aesthetics.

If two persons dispute on a value judgment, the discussion is often not balanced. One person might feel the urgent need to defend herself why her opponent seems to be in a comfortable discursive position (One has to give good reasons for calling an old coloured oak tree in the autumn sun “disgusting”, while no one needs a further explanation if one says that it is “beautiful”). The assumption of the existence of evaluative consensuses explains this imbalance: The person who feels the need of defense is arguing against the existent evaluative consensuses and, consequently and just for this reason, has to accept to carry the burdens of proof. Every aesthetic value judgment therefore should be interpreted as being not only a personal stament, but as well as being an attempt to maintain or shift existing societal consensuses.

In the conclusive part of the talk the developed theory will be defended further by contrasting it with two leading theories of environmental aesthetics, i.e. Berleant’s aesthetic of engagement and Carlson’s natural environmental model. It will be shown that the presented theory of aesthetic value judgments is prepared to deal with some classical difficulties presented to these two theories.

When Apprehension and Appreciation Come Apart – A Novel Account of Personal Taste

According to classical views of taste, the ultimate standard of taste is the ideal critic, who appreciates every aesthetically relevant properties of the artwork and her affections are in perfect harmony with her aesthetic judgment. In this paper we argue that classical views cannot incorporate a common aesthetic experience, i.e., when our aesthetic judgments and affective reactions about a given artwork come apart. This experience, we argue, is not a failure or shortcoming on the agent’s part, but a constitutive feature of her personal taste. We also present the outlines of a quasi-conventionalist account of aesthetic value, which can handle the challenges the conception of ideal critic and the corollary thesis of aesthetic empiricism notoriously face.
Analytic aesthetics has had relatively little (or positive) to say about the various schools of academic literary criticism, such as psychoanalytic, Marxist, reader-response, New Historicism, postcolonial, feminist, and cognitive approaches. Instead, debates in philosophy have focused on two contrasting positions. According to historicism, the history of a work fixes or constrains the work’s ‘meaning’. According to non-historicism, other factors, including developments after the work’s creation, also play a role. For different reasons, these strategies treat the interpretations of different critical schools as on a par. I argue that this is a mistake, because the theories that ground these interpretations differ in the claims they make about the world. Some of these claims are true (or epistemically meritorious), and some of them are false (or epistemically defective). Despite scepticism about the relevance of ordinary truth to academic criticism, I contend that an interpretation that relies on the former sort of theory is better than one that relies on the latter sort of theory. I show that this poses a challenge to both historicist and non-historicist strategies, and conclude by sketching the implications for evaluating different critical perspectives.

If, as Richard Wollheim says, the Acquaintance Principle is “a well-entrenched principle in aesthetics,” it would be surprising if there were not some interpretation of it on which it is true. I argue that the Acquaintance Principle cannot be true on any traditional epistemic interpretation, nor on any usability interpretation of the sort Robert Hopkins has recently suggested. I then argue for an interpretation of the principle distinguished by three features: first, it treats acquaintance as something that admits of degrees rather than as something you have either in full or not at all; second, it prescribes acquaintance merely of things having aesthetic value; third, it treats acquaintance as the end to which judgments of aesthetic value are the means as opposed to the other way around.
The Failure of Judgment: Disgust and Beauty in Hannah Arendt’s Theory of Political Judgment

Hannah Arendt, the 20th century great theorist of political judgment, became infamous for her own political judgments. “Reflections on Little Rock” sparked massive criticisms, accusing Arendt of holding racist views. Kathryn T. Gines, in her recent book *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, argues that Arendt’s judgment in “Reflections on Little Rock” were not accidental to her writing, but expressive of an underlying current of anti blackness informing her work. Although I will argue that Arendt’s political judgment did not spring from her model of political judgment, I want to take Gines’ challenge seriously. There is something deeply unsettling when a thinker of political judgment, whose theory rests on a concept of impartiality, fails to take the perspective of specific others into account. In this paper, I will analyze this moment of failure of judgment through the concept of disgust. In her *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, Arendt claims that the true opposite of the beautiful is not the ugly, but that which arouses disgust. In forming a political judgment we say what and who belongs in the world; that we want to live in a world that is constituted in this way. This affective moment of judgment, through the attraction of beauty or the abjection of disgust, is the basis on which we include someone, or on which we draw borders and exclude others. Beauty might open us to specific others, but also draw us away from them, by refusing to see them as persons. I will argue that there are two moments of judgment: on the one hand, the moment of appearance and the spontaneous judgment of sense, and, on the other hand, the moment of reflection and the reflective judgment of taste. There is a spontaneous judgment of beauty or disgust at the level of sense, and this immediate approbation or disapprobation is itself subject to another approbation or disapprobation on the level of reflection. This is then the possibility of qualifying the immediate judgment, although this qualification does not necessarily follow. Theorizing social prejudices through the notion of disgust thus enables us to see how disgust is operating even at the level of sense—that there are historically determined distributions of who are seen as beautiful and disgusting that determine or influence our immediate sensuous judgments of others. Developing these two moments of judgment we can account for the immanent possibility of the “failure” of judgment: the fact that judgment might be informed by prejudices even after the operation of reflection. Such failure of judgment, I argue, is not a failure of the model of judgment, but an ever-present possibility of failure of political judgment itself.

Mocking Nature: Hegel on Painting

In this paper I consider the role of negativity and contingency in Hegel’s account of romantic art, and more specifically in his praise of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch painting. I argue that it is through these external elements of painting – both in the artwork itself and outside of it – through which Hegel expresses a way of understanding nature both as essentially and contingently related to the individual. Thus, while many have emphasized that, for Hegel, the content of Dutch painting expresses the inner reconciliation of subjectivity, I focus particularly on how it is not only the content but the form of painting that accomplishes this same task. In other words, I argue that Hegel’s understanding of genuine subjectivity is expressed not merely because the individuals painted in these Dutch works are absorbed in their world, but because the form of painting makes this absorption possible. I examine two aspects of this form: the “negative space” opened up by the painting’s frame, and the flatness of the artwork. By having a frame, the painting immediately and necessarily presents something external to the figure(s) being expressed in the painting, providing the possibility for immersion within an environment. At the same time, the form of painting also distances itself from nature and what exists by presenting itself not as something natural, but as something produced for spectators. This is why the painting as two-dimension is so important for Hegel. The painting is flat, but this announces the depth of the inner life, not in spite of its flatness, but through its flatness. Although a statue may seem more life-like than a painting because of its three-dimensional form, Hegel argues that in fact it is in the flatness of the painting that we come to grasp the depth and liveliness of subjectivity.
Embodied Meaning and Art as Sense-Making: A Critique of Beiser’s Interpretation of the ‘End of Art Thesis’

The aim of this paper is to challenge Fred Beiser’s interpretation of Hegel’s meta-aesthetical position on the future of art. According to Beiser, Hegel’s comments about the ‘pastness’ of art commit Hegel to viewing postromantic art as merely a form of individual self-expression. I both defend and extend to other territory Robert Pippin’s interpretation of Hegel as a proto-modernist, where such modernism involves (i) his rejection of both classicism and Kantian aesthetics, and (ii) his espousal of what one may call reflective aesthetics. By ‘reflective aesthetics’, I mean an aesthetic framework which sees art as a form of enquiry, one whose aim is to not merely excite the imagination but to principally focus attention on social and cultural norms. The meta-aesthetical consequences of reflective aesthetics and their Hegelian heritage have both an interpretive and philosophic value: under my account, Beiser’s reading of Hegel is challenged, and my interpretation of how Hegel envisaged the future of art offers a new and engaging way of understanding one of the most notorious claims in the philosophy of art, namely that art has ended.

Hegel’s last lectures on the aesthetics in Berlin 1828/29 and the contemporary debates on the end of art

La présente communication s’appuie sur les résultats d’une recherche concernant le dernier cours sur l’esthétique donné par G. W. F. Hegel à l’université de Berlin pendant le semestre d’hiver 1828/29. Ce cours demeuré inédit jusqu’à présent nous permet de jeter un nouveau regard sur l’une des œuvres les plus significatives de la philosophie de l’art. En effet, nous ne connaissions la philosophie de l’art de Hegel jusqu’à présent qu’à travers l’édition posthume des Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik réalisée par H. G. Hotho entre 1835 et 1842. Or, la recherche contemporaine a montré qu’elle opérait une grande distorsion à l’égard de l’œuvre originale du philosophe. Cela peut entraîner des affirmations contradictoires. Ainsi, l’une des thèses les plus débattues concernant l’esthétique de Hegel hier comme aujourd’hui au plan à la fois historique et systématique est la thèse dite de la « mort de l’art » ou de la « fin de l’art » (Ende der Kunst). 1) L’origine de la « rumeur » d’une « mort de l’art » revient au compositeur compositeur Felix Mendelssohn Bartholy, lequel était auditeur du cours d’esthétique de 1828/29 à l’université de Berlin, et qui aurait affirmé que, pour Hegel, « l’art allemand est mort » (« die deutsche Kunst sei mausetot »). Or, nous montrerons que Mendelssohn ne faisait pas référence à Hegel dans son propos. 2) Il s’agit alors de déterminer si la thèse de la « fin de l’art » trouve effectivement une expression différente dans le cours d’esthétique de 1828/29, si Hegel en a abandonné la formulation, ce qui justifierait des positions contradictoires dans l’édition posthume. Ou s’il en aurait, au contraire, accentué la formulation dans sa dernière philosophie. Dieter Henrich parle ainsi de la thèse de la « fin de l’art » comme d’un « théorème » ; mais il a émis l’hypothèse que Hegel aurait sinon renoncé à l’affirmation de cette thèse du moins amoindri sa portée. C’est ce qui rendrait possible la valorisation de l’art contemporain à travers la catégorie de « l’humour objectif », une catégorie esthétique qui permet à Hegel d’intégrer dans l’esthétique une œuvre contemporaine comme le West-Öslicher Divan de Goethe. L’étude des sources manuscrites concernant le cours de 1828/29 permet alors d’apercouvoir comment Hegel peut intégrer la discussion sur les œuvres d’art de son temps et ses propres expériences esthétiques, comment il fait évoluer la structure de son système philosophique, sans pour autant en remettre en question la proposition fondamentale de la « fin de l’art », qui non seulement n’exclut pas mais rend même possible une théorie de l’art moderne et contemporain. Il s’agit de rendre compte de ce paradoxe philosophique.
Critical Generalism and the Appeal to Genres

One of the classic debates in aesthetics concerns the claim that general arguments for evaluative conclusions play an important role in critical persuasion. A standard objection to this claim is that it is hard to find suitable major premises. Many possible major premises are false, like the claim that an artwork that is in the key of B-flat major is always to some extent good. Others, like the claim that any artwork that is truthful and serious is to some extent good, may well be true, but will usually be dialectically useless, since someone who accepts that a work is truthful and serious will typically already agree that it is to some extent good. One strategy pursued by recent defenders of general argument in criticism is to suggest that the general premises in question can be qualified by including a reference to the work’s genre, giving us claims with the form ‘All artworks of genre $G$ with F are to some extent good’. Such claims, it is suggested, are often both true and dialectically useful, unlike their unqualified variants. I argue that this strategy is unsuccessful. In particular, I argue that such arguments are able to avoid dialectical uselessness only through implausible presuppositions about the values of art.

Artworks, Materials and Arts

The talk is concerned with a specific relationship between the general and the particular in the realm of art: the relationship of singular artworks and general categories, such as the art forms, genres, materials and media. It shall be discussed if these categories (still) play an essential role in the production and in the reception of art, and if so, which role this is. Relevant points of reference for this discussion are the theories of Theodor W. Adorno, John Dewey, Kendall Walton and W.J.T. Mitchell. In art theory the corresponding debate takes place between the two poles of an essentialist conception of the art forms on the one hand and an atomistic conception of art works on the other. It is a long-standing tradition in art theory to draw clear demarcation lines between the different arts and define them with respect to specific functional and formal features. The arts are distinguished with regard to their respective medium, and from an analysis of the medium different (im-)possibilities of content, technique and experience are deduced. This usually goes along with a normative claim: Works of art that conform to the specificity of their medium are better than those, which meddle with forms or contents distinctive for other media. The other tendency stresses the phenomena of ‘Verfransung’, innovation and transgression. At least since the beginning of the 20th century the artworks themselves seem to have revolted against the demarcation lines – against those between the different arts as well as those between art and life. Thus many new art forms have emerged and many works cannot be assigned to a specific art form easily anymore. According to this position we are in a state of ‘nominalism’. The general labels under which we subsume artworks have no essential significance anymore – artworks are to be understood in their individuality. Both accounts get something right, but both are one-sided. It is on the one hand indeed important, to acknowledge the singularity of an artwork. Artworks cannot be understood as tokens of the general type of their art form. But on the other hand an atomistic, nominalistic view of the artwork is also misleading. Because the particular artworks deal with or work on the generalities of the art forms, media and materials. Generality and particularity are to be seen as involved in a dynamic relationship with each other. A particular artwork can only be understood against the backdrop of the general categories. But every artwork realizes these generalities in a new way. Because works of art are individual, the categories of art stand in a process of continuous change.
The Symbolic Language of Art: Notes on Cassirer’s Theory of Aesthetic Experience.

Aim of my contribution is to discuss the symbolical meaning of art as it is developed in these three unpublished texts by Cassirer: Language and Art I (1942), Language and Art II (1942) and The Educational Value of Art (1943). It is my intention to consider the genesis of art from both language and myth, since they represent the first articulations of human experience. The world of art is intrinsically linked to that of language but, nonetheless, it presents an internal logic that is independent of that of language. The core of these thesis lies in the intuitive value that Cassirer assigns to art. In fact, art counterweights the abstraction of scientific language. Given these distinctions, I would discuss (as a second topic) the symmetries Cassirer recognizes between art and language. They are both productive reproductions. Cassirer refers to a meaning of mimesis which does not limit to mere passivity. By mimesis, he means the activity of recognizing and highlighting the formal structures of a given perception. Once we assign a symbol to this perception (a name, a picture), we are responsible of a reproduction of its form and, therefore, of the production of a new form. It is through this re-production that both language and art belong to the general symbolic function of knowledge. In a third and last section, I would briefly address the echoes of Vico and Schiller in Cassirer’s approach. Cassirer claims that it is not possible to live in the world of artistic forms without producing them. In enjoying these forms, we are actively producing them: we learn how to speak the language of art. If language (properly conceived) is chronologically first, nonetheless art is exemplarily first.

Ideas Pertaining to a Phenomenological Aesthetics of Fashion and/as Play: The Contribution of Eugen Fink

There has been until recent times a general tendency to ignore clothing and fashion in the domain of the human sciences, in general, and in philosophy, in particular. However, clothing, understood as a basic human phenomenon, and fashion, understood as one of those basic phenomena that really form the “Zeitgeist” of the present age, have proven to be far too important for philosophy to simply keep on ignoring them – at least as far as their influence on our everyday lives and, on a specifically aesthetic level, as far as their role in shaping our “sensus communis aestheticus” are concerned. Now, inasmuch as dresses immediately cover the surface of our body and thus present it to the world as never-naked but always-dressed, clothing and fashion are clearly connected in the very first place to the bodily dimension of life. The philosophical tradition that has probably paid the greatest attention in our age to the rehabilitation of the embodied constitution of the human world-experience as such is phenomenology. In my contribution I will precisely focus on the contribution of Eugen Fink, a great phenomenologist who, in his remarkable short book “Mode: ein verführerisches Spiel” (1969), investigated fashion with great interest and accuracy, understanding it as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. I will first contextualize Fink’s contribution to an aesthetics of fashion within his more general conception of the philosophical significance of play, presented in his essay “Oase des Glücks. Gedanken zu einer Ontologie des Spiels” (1957) and his book “Spiel als Weltsymbol” (1960). Then I will provide an in-depth analysis and interpretation of “Mode: ein verführerisches Spiel”, thus promoting a re-evaluation of Fink’s important (but for various reasons relatively unknown, little studied, seldom or never been mentioned in articles, books or anthologies on fashion) contribution to a strictly-speaking philosophical investigation of the significance of dress, and outlining the key elements of a sort of phenomenological aesthetics and anthropology of fashion, according to which the human being is not only the rational and language-using animal (as has been traditionally claimed) but even the animal that dresses itself – and quite often, indeed, in a fashionable way!
Aesthetics and Ontology of Landscapes

The aim of our presentation is to draft an aesthetics of landscape which is an alternative to the dominant approaches, namely, Scenic Theory and Reductionist Theory. The former claims that landscapes are subjective entities, whereas the latter reject the term „landscape“ and prefers instead objective environment. Our theory which we call Experience Theory is based on particular premises concerning the ontological status of landscapes for we claim that there is a strong connection between proper understanding of aesthetic appreciation of landscapes and that of the ontology of landscapes. In the paper we analyze and underline certain limitations faced by the dominant theories and argue that landscapes are neither purely subjective, nor purely objective entities. We suggest as well that landscapes are pieces of reality (world, surroundings) as experienced or lived by people with all their senses and thus becoming meaningful to them. Our theory enjoys several advantages such as framing suitable ontology of landscapes which brings a new understanding of landscape existence and finding a balance between aesthetic and non-aesthetic dimensions of landscapes.

'Atmosphere‘ as a core concept of Aesth-voltolinietics of Weather

Currently, some scholars try to integrate scientific knowledge into the aesthetic research on weather events and highlight their objective-oriented aesthetic properties. However, such research ignores the fact that our relationship with weather in a certain place, at a certain time primarily exists in an immediate sensual experience which is essentially atmospheric. In this presentation, I try to demonstrate how the aesthetic concept “atmosphere” contributes to the development of the meteorological aesthetics. As the primarily perceived object, atmosphere refers to the sphere in which human situation and external conditions are corporeally brought together and are pervaded by a specific emotional quality. In this connection, particular attention should be given to the following aspects: a. Atmosphere is the first object that is perceived. b. As sensuous reality, atmosphere can only be corporeally experienced. c. A certain atmosphere radiates a single emotional quality pervading the whole space. The prerequisite for experiencing atmosphere is the full-body immersion into the whole situation. The body embeds man, together with his multifarious ways of perception and sense experiences, into weather situations so that subject and object are interrelated with each other and merged into a unified whole. Correspondingly, an infinite range of perceptual possibilities will be at the forefront of aesthetic experience. In this sense, the research of atmosphere offers a multidimensional approach towards the aesthetic research on the human-meteorology relationship.

With the concept of atmosphere, the aesthetic study of weather phenomena contributes to the transformation of the traditional approach based on the thing-ontology which has dominated the European philosophy since ancient Greek times. The thing-ontology led to a situation in which little attention was paid to the interaction between perceptions and weather factors. However, the manifestation of weather patterns is connected with the wholeness of what is being experienced at this moment, at this location. In this sense, a decisive factor is not what we perceive, but how we perceive something. In this sense, the complexity of atmospheric characteristics of weather events and the corresponding perceptual properties, deserve further investigation.
The Aesthetic Dimension of Moral Faith

Aim of my contribution is to discuss the symbolical meaning of art as it is developed in these three unpublished texts by Cassirer: Language and Art I (1942), Language and Art II (1942) and The Educational Value of Art (1943). It is my intention to consider the genesis of art from both language and myth, since they represent the first articulations of human experience. The world of art is intrinsically linked to that of language but, nonetheless, it presents an internal logic that is independent of that of language. The core of these thesis lies in the intuitive value that Cassirer assigns to art. In fact, art counterweights the abstraction of scientific language. Given these distinctions, I would discuss (as a second topic) the symmetries Cassirer recognizes between art and language. They are both productive reproductions. Cassirer refers to a meaning of mimesis which does not limit to mere passivity. By mimesis, he means the activity of recognizing and highlighting the formal structures of a given perception. Once we assign a symbol to this perception (a name, a picture), we are responsible of a reproduction of its form and, therefore, of the production of a new form. It is through this re-production that both language and art belong to the general symbolic function of knowledge. In a third and last section, I would briefly address the echoes of Vico and Schiller in Cassirer’s approach. Cassirer claims that it is not possible to live in the world of artistic forms without producing them. In enjoying these forms, we are actively producing them: we learn how to speak the language of art. If language (properly conceived) is chronologically first, nonetheless art is exemplarily first.

A Call to Freedom
Schiller’s Aesthetic Dimension and the Objectivation of Aesthetics

This paper will return to historical aesthetic theory, particularly Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller’s reading of Kant, in order to argue that the experience of the work of art opens an aesthetic dimension that incites ethical action and love. This paper will provide a close analysis of Schiller’s Kallias letters and his Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man to argue that one of Schiller’s most important contributions is that he conceives of an aesthetic dimension that prioritizes the freedom of the object over that of the subject and locates the subject’s recognition of her freedom in the encounter with the beautiful object. This makes the work of art crucial to our understand of ethics and politics and rebukes claims concerning art’s frivolity or superficiality.
Few philosophical treatises focus on human beauty. Schiller’s “On Grace and Dignity” is one of the exceptions. Like many of Schiller’s philosophical attempts, his theory of human beauty is strongly influenced by Kant. Large parts of his essay read like a response to the § 17 of the Critique of the Power of Judgement which is about the ideal of (human) beauty. Despite Kant’s influence, Schiller presents an autonomous theory. He defends a characterological theory of human beauty according to which human beauty is physical-expressive beauty. More precisely, Schiller distinguishes two kinds of human beauty. Fixed or architectonic beauty refers to the physical side of a person’s appearance; changeable beauty or grace covers its expressive side. Grace is found in sympathetic movements—unintentional movements accompanying a wilful movement. They are graceful if they express a beautiful soul, that is moral virtuousness. This paper asks whether Schiller’s theory of human beauty can be successfully justified based on his own theoretical assumptions and examines three justification attempts. The first builds on Schiller’s claim that expressions of moral virtuousness have to please aesthetically because they please morally. The second relates to the experience evoked by human beauty, namely love. The third refers to the objective principle of beauty presented in the Kallias letters: “Beauty is freedom in the appearance” and tries to deduce Schiller’s view on human beauty from this principle. This paper argues that although Schiller presents an inspiring view on human beauty, none of these justification attempts succeeds in the end.

In the Critique of Judgement, the key terms through which Kant describes the state and process of aesthetic judgement are Stimmung and Stimme. The free play of sensibility and understanding produces an enlivening accord (Zusammenstimmung) between the individual representation and the conditions for the universal, composing the Gemütsstimmung of aesthetic judgement which postulates nothing but the ideal existence of the universal voice (allgemeine Stimme).

A frequent feature of accounts of the Western philosophical tradition has been the description and the critique of sight centered interpretations of truth and knowledge. The Enlightenment is often pointed out as zenith for this perceptual and epistemological grid. The history of the ear however, has mostly been placed in the background. This could be one reason why the sonorous concepts presenting aesthetic judgement has not gained much attention. The question that sets the tone for this paper joins otherwise separated levels within discourse, such as Kant’s discussions of tone and the form of sensations in music (harmony, melody) and the explication of the form of aesthetic judgement.

What unites Stimmung as a pitch of an instrument and as a philosophical concept denoting sensitiveness and the transcendental disposition of the Gemüt? Thematised in its duplicity as both a formal dynamic that decide our feeling of the beautiful and as a sensuous phenomenon related to the materiality of sensation, the figure of Stimmung opens for a renegotiation of Kant’s systematizing separations of feeling/reflection and sensibility/understanding. The aim of this paper is, by attending to the complexity of Stimmung, to flesh out a less explored facet of the Kantian subject, rooting it not just in thinking and reason but also in sensibility and the body.
Conserving the Original: Authenticity and Art Restoration

Over the past two decades, debates in the field of conservation have probed the presuppositions that have guided contemporary restoration theory and practice. Yet, a rigorous philosophical analysis of restoration is still lacking. However, restorers seem to make choices in the light of implicit ideas concerning the identity of a work of art, its nature and value, ideas they often take for granted. Thus, restoration is not only a matter of technical skills.

Part one. I focus on the distinction between what I call the historical and the objective material-based view of authenticity. Is authenticity fully established in the process of the act of creation, namely, at its initial point of existence? If we answer yes (1), we are committed to the idea that authenticity is determined by its creator. In this sense, the authenticity of the artwork is thought as a given, exempt from historical flux. If we answer no (2), we take authenticity as something that ties the initial creation and temporal changes together; for this is what defines an artwork as a historical being. These two conceptions have ontological implications.

Part two. I argue that these two conceptions give us insights into how different conservation narratives and ethics could be considered and configured in conceptual terms. Opposed interpretations of the significance of authenticity impinge on the actions taken by social communities with regard to artworks. When the work authenticity is seen as defined at the point of creation, effort is made to restore what is perceived to be the original, preserving the material object as it was at the time of creation. When authenticity is understood as extending throughout the whole “life” of the work, then actions are aimed at preserving what remains, limiting intervention to avoid deterioration.

Architecture as Performance: Sigurd Lewerentz’s Uncut Bricks

In this paper, I test David Davies’s performance theory, as set out in his 2004 book *Art as Performance*, against a type of artwork he does not explicitly consider: namely, architecture. Davies’s claim is that artworks should be considered not as *products* made by artists through generative performances, but rather as the *performances* themselves. I use an extended consideration of a work by Swedish architect Sigurd Lewerentz to claim that architecture - considered, ontologically, as a work of art - might likewise be thought of as a ‘performance’ or ‘doing’: i.e. an ‘event-like’ rather than ‘product-like’ entity. This runs counter to much architectural history, where buildings, as physical/spatial entities, are taken as the primary focus of appreciation. Lewerentz’s Church of St. Peter, Klippan (1962-66), completed when he was in his eighties, is an austere monochromatic design that employs idiosyncratic rules, such that ‘no brick be cut’ despite the material being used for walls, floors and vaulted ceilings. Emblematic of architecture conceived as a performance-event, it is in meeting this requirement that Lewerentz’s design is distinguished from the many buildings that do not ‘mean’ beyond their functional imperatives. Here, the exemplification that Goodman identifies as the primary way architectural works ‘mean’ is reconceived not as a property of the work-product but in terms of the ‘executory performance’, offering a viable condition under which a practice of architecture might legitimately count as a practice of artistic making. The illustrated paper will demonstrate how Lewerentz fuses literal and metaphorical signification through the very processes of construction. Architectural plans and sections are thus considered as key components in the articulation of an artistic statement. Lewerentz’s detailed drawings reveal the extraordinary lengths necessitated by his imperative not to cut any bricks, and therefore go far beyond any constructional necessity, articulating an artwork every bit as radical as contemporaneous works by conceptual artists.
Photographic Indexicality and Referentiality in the Digital Age

This paper attempts to understand the fate of conventional notions of photographic indexicality and referentiality in the digital era where digital images have replaced analog images almost completely. Following a brief critical overview of relevant literature on digital photography, the author makes a conceptual distinction between referentiality and indexicality with respect to their implications for the notion of photographic realism. With a particular focus on the concept of indexicality, defined herein as an element that radically determines the definition of photography, the author argues that the image becomes a “thing” in digital images in the absence of indexicality by using Jean-Paul Sartre’s notion of “illusion of immanence”, a claim that would strongly challenge the view that digital images can still be regarded as photographs that themselves presuppose a particular relationship between an image and its object.

What is Abstraction in Photography?

On the default view, photography is an automatic process centred on a mechanical recording apparatus, producing images that are causally and counterfactually dependent on their sources. Given this view, abstraction is sometimes thought to present a particular challenge for photography: how could images that are causally and counterfactually dependent on real objects be abstract?

I take issue with the perceived difficulty by: 1) disambiguating the idea of “abstraction” as applied to photography, and 2) bringing together resources for a better conception of photography. The paper proceeds by asking three questions:

1. What is abstraction?
2. What is photography?
3. What is abstraction in photography?

Under the first, I consider the views of Clement Greenberg, Richard Wollheim and Michael Newall on pictorial abstraction. Under the second I contrast two conceptions of photography, for only one of which abstraction constitutes a problem. Under the third, I provide a typology of kinds of abstraction (and non-abstraction) in photography (proto³, faux³, weak² and strong²) that are often run together. The talk makes extensive use of examples throughout.
The Ontological Distinction between Analog and Digital Photography: Replacing Indexicality with Bazinian Identity

After the initial wave of claims that digital photographs are not indexical, a number of scholars have recently argued that indexicality was never the privilege of analog photographs. This presentation expands on the claim by arguing not only that indexicality does not distinguish between photographs but that it cannot differentiate between photographs and figurative paintings either. This does not mean that digital and analog photographs are not ontologically distinct, however, but that the difference does not lie in indexicality. Instead, the distinction is a matter of the relation of identity as initially articulated by Bazin.
‘Afropolitanism’ as a paradigm of contemporary aesthetics

‘Afropolitanism is a stylistics and a politics, an aesthetics and a certain poetics of the world. It is a manner of being in the world which refuses, on principle, any form of victim identity – which does not mean that it is not conscious of the injustices and the violence which the law of the world inflicted on this continent and its people’.

Achille Mbembe endeavours to identify Afropolitanism as a paradigm not only of personal modes of existence under globalised conditions, but also of contemporary aesthetics, and not only those originating from Africa. In his texts Critique of Black Reason (2014) and We Must Get Out of the Great Night (2016), which have recently been translated into English and German, he envisions the “conditio nigra” expanding to become the deracialised outset situation of all those who are not participants in economic and symbolic value creation chains. Their migratory existence produces not only composite-cultural identities, but also corresponding artistic and cultural articulations that he, in summary, characterises as an “an interlocking of here and somewhere else”, a “presence of elsewhere in here”. He links this to statements on contemporary aesthetics by Okwui Enwezor, and to still earlier statements by Edouard Glissant.

Whilst Edouard Glissant tries to extract a relational model for a new poesy from the “cultures composites” of the Caribbean, Okwui Enwezor sees intermedial (re)mixes and samplings as an excellent solution to the required post-ethnic constitution for contemporary art. Today, these composite-culture settings generally make use of moving-images, of installations and generally intermediate arrangements, in order to activate the mutual encounter of the culturally diverse. For instance, Jean-Pierre Bekolo’s film Le complot d’Aristote (1995) parodies standardised Western film dramaturgy and the state of cinema in Africa alike, playing on film genres from other cultures. As his essay film 1958 shows, Ghassan Salhan’s cinematography of Pierre Bekolo’s film Le complot d’Aristote (1995) parodies standardised Western film dramaturgy and the state of cinema in Africa alike, playing on film genres from other cultures.

Musical authenticity as being true to the moment. The artistic value of improvisation

There’s no opposition between improvisation and authenticity in music. As coincidence of invention and realization, improvisation is ontologically authentic. As the talent of musically expressing the performer’s self here and now, expressive authenticity is a key-value of musical improvisation (MI).

Hence, the belief that MI impedes performance’s authenticity and that ‘being musical authentic’ is tantamount as ‘being true to a musical work’ (MW) is false. For not only intentional MI may be sometimes required for performing a MW and unintentional MI is to some degrees unavoidable in interpretation, but, more importantly, the Werktraue imperative (WTI) is misleading.

The idea (fostered by WTI) that musical performance is/should be merely reproductive is mistaken, because it depends on the wrong assumption that MWs are ‘repeatable’ in musical performances without undergoing any transformation. The assumption is wrong, because a MW is a norm (better: a complex of norms) and, as defended by hermeneutical and ‘wittgensteinian’ pragmatic normative theories, the normative force of the norm depends on each performing practice and situation: the application of the norm (trans)forms the norm. Hence, performances, as application of the norm (=MW), cannot be true to the MW in a reproductive sense. Indeed, norms have force (and are real) only if applied – and (trans)formed by their applications; independently of their applications they are fictions. The same goes for MWs as abstracted from their performances. MWs become real only in performances that, while realizing them, (trans)form them. Consequently, the alteration of the MW is implied in the normative link between MWs and performances and does not imply per se an artistic/aesthetic failure, but can result in an artistic success. Hence, as highlighted by distinguished musicologists (like R. Taruskin and N. Cook), the performance is the focus of musical experience.

Consequently, improvisation is paradigmatic for musical experience. The improvisational process is autopoietic and follows a self-transforming live-normativity. Accordingly to the unrepeatable situation of the actual happening of a MI, ‘improvisational normativity’ develops ‘on the spot’, in a retroactive way: meaning and value of what is played are articulated in virtue of what happens later. This retroactive and transforming ‘logic’ of improvisation applies also to the relation between MWs and performances: MWs live in and through their performances that transform them in a kind of large-scale improvisational performance. So, the relevant sense of authenticity in music is improvisational authenticity: being (artistically, aesthetically, and expressively) true to the moment.
A common way of characterising improvisation, and even more specifically free improvisation, is to point out its unrepeatability. Such characterisation risks missing the point. If we consider improvisation as a product, the above characterisation is plainly false, as it is possible for a performer, who has never been acquainted with a previously improvised performance, to improvise the same sound structure a second time. If we consider improvisation as an overall performance, then unrepeatability becomes a trivial characterisation, as it doesn’t help at all to distinguish an improvised performance from any other live musical performance.

Another possibility is to characterise free improvisation as a musical performance that is not intended to instantiate a normative sound structure. Following this characterisation, however, the risk of cataloguing as free improvisations performances of standard jazz is unavoidable, as many of them do not intend to instantiate the normative structure provided by the standard, but take it only as inspiration for improvisation. In order to provide a plausible characterisation of free improvisation, I will develop my argument in three different steps. In a first step, I will characterise free improvisation as a non-interpretive musical performance. This does not exclude that in free improvisations existing musical material can be used, as it is often the case. But, differently from a standard jazz performance, the performer does not commit in advance to any specific musical material to be used (as normative sound-structure or as simple inspiration) for his performance. In a second step, I will make use of Niklas Luhmann’s notions of code and program, and thereby characterise free improvisation as a self-programming musical performance. Finally, in a third step, free improvisation will be characterised as an autonomous musical performance, a characterisation that seems to render justice to the employment of the adjective free.
What makes a work of art manipulative? Is manipulativeness an aesthetic defect? Recent literature in ethics, political philosophy, and philosophy of language discusses manipulation. But it has not been a prominent topic in contemporary aesthetics. My talk asks whether we can develop a concept of aesthetically problematic manipulation that is independent from morally problematic manipulation. I suggest that a manipulative work of art fails to be honest about what grounds our emotional response to it. I might think approvingly about the drama I saw in the movie theater: I found it profoundly moving. But when thinking about the movie more closely, I notice that the plot is uninteresting and that the characters are shallow. I realize that the only reasons I felt so moved are simple motifs in the musical score and a few well placed shots making the protagonist’s conversations and actions seem meaningful. I feel cheated and revise my positive evaluation of the movie. I judge it to be manipulative. Unlike other accounts of aesthetic manipulation my account lets us distinguish between kitsch and aesthetically manipulative works.

This paper interprets Kant’s theory of the mathematical sublime in the third Critique and investigates the aesthetic estimation of extensive magnitudes. Against prevailing readings, I argue that the aesthetic estimation compares not magnitudes themselves but degrees of mere feelings of pleasure and displeasure in our representations of them. Further, I ground such feelings in the imagination’s aesthetic comprehension, where this cognitive faculty undergoes a tension between two temporal conditions. Since this tension hampers cognition but also signifies cognitive achievement, we feel both displeasure and pleasure. When the imagination is inadequate to overcome the tension and comprehend more units, the feeling is absolutely great in degree and we experience the mathematical sublime. The stakes involved in this discussion are high indeed, amounting to Kant’s introduction of temporal tension into the imagination’s reproduction and tacit development of his account of threefold synthesis that is found in the Transcendental Deduction in the first Critique. Meanwhile, against Kant, I argue that the imagination’s inadequacy is neither necessary nor universal.
Kant’s Ideal of Beauty as the Symbol of the Morally Good and as a Source of Aesthetic Normativity

Kant claims in §59 of his *Critique of Judgement* that beauty is the symbol of the morally good. Contrary to common interpretation that largely neglects relevant differentiations between kinds of purposiveness, I argue that the beauty Kant has in mind here is the ideal of beauty (§17) rather than free beauty. This also shows how the normative validity of moral judgements and of judgements of beauty can be grounded on internal objective purposiveness employed as a constitutive and as a mere regulative principle of reflection, respectively – without compromising the free play of the cognitive faculties.

Dancing Metaphors; Imaginary Rationality within Bodily Movements

This presentation suggests that processes of realizing new bodily movements in dance are metaphorically constructed and will propose the term “Dancing Metaphors” in order to follow embodied cognitive processes of realization within dancing. Following Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of perception the presentation will demonstrate the lack of a situated reason within dancing, and therefore its perceptual complexity. The term “Dancing metaphors” relates physical movements that their processes of designing are enacted in terms of other physical experiences in order to define their motor-intentionality. This term considers the act of dancing as a case of imaginative rationality, which is embodied. Moreover, within the act of dancing metaphors there is another layer of embodiment; the metaphoric act is physically incorporated within the design of bodily movements.
Abstract: Many philosophers argue that when we appraise the epistemic value of images, we must accord a special status to photographs, since photographs bear an indexical relation to the perceptible properties of the objects that they depict. In this paper, I shall argue that this does not do justice to all the ways in which pictorial representations can be epistemically valuable. Images do not only have derivative value as harbingers of perception. They can also have intrinsic value as an independent source of understanding by providing insightful ways of modelling the world and the relations we bear to it. In particular, I shall argue that when image-making is sufficiently reality-oriented, it can provide an indirect means of exploring the depicted object even if that object does not have any particular counterpart in the world. This way, an image may allow us grasp general truths about what kind of thing the depicted object is even if the image does not possess the indexical quality which makes photographs epistemically valuable.

The paper starts from the presumption, argued elsewhere, that exemplary creative people are curious, courageous and resilient i.e. possess creative virtues. Yet there is reason to suppose creative people often tend toward vanity and narcissism. How can this be on a virtue like picture? This paper will examine evidence for thinking that some highly creative people tend toward vanity. The paper then moves on to develop a new account of what vanity is that helps to explain why this might be so. With this in place, the paper will then outline and explore vanity’s alleged benefits for creativity, before moving on to outline more fundamental costs. In light of this, the argument will go on to suggest that vanity is a particularly interesting creative vice (i.e. failing) that bears a close relation to creative virtue.
Creativity is a category that concerns several fields: from the logic of scientific discovery to the technique of economical production. Nevertheless, it deserves to be reconsidered today in its specifically aesthetic connotation since, as such, it has become a crucial concept for the description of the spreading of the aesthetic as the matrix of our current social and cultural situation (as shown also by recent researches carried out by Reckwitz and Lipovetsky & Serroy). Our critical re-examination will aim to stress how the aesthetic experience consists, in its being creative, of an articulation of constraints internal to aisthesis, that is not identifiable through the schemes provided by cognitivism. The analysis of aesthetic creativity’s “field constraints” (contra Elster) will be useful to make emerge the connotations of the aesthetic competence meant as praxis, which follows the model of the “know-how” instead of the “know-that” (according to Ryle). Exemplary case will be that of musical experience related to improvisation and to the determination of a piece’s conclusion. The approach that we propose must be understood as “radically aesthetic” inasmuch as it refers the aesthetic competence, precisely in its creative components, to forms and modalities of sense configuration that emerge within aisthesis and that thus have the ability to spread way beyond the boundaries of the Fine Arts, as is the case of the current age of aestheticization.

The central question of the essay is how Arthur Danto’s concepts of art and criticism can be understood in relation to a social struggle for recognition. The argument develops in three steps. First I reconstruct Danto’s concept of art developed in The Transfiguration of the Commonplace, and show how he arrives at the definition of art as embodied meaning. In doing so, I emphasise his analogy between the style of an artwork and the style of a person and point to its ethical implication. Then, I discuss Danto’s concept of criticism developed in Art Criticism after the End of Art, raising the question if it can be understood as a praxis related to social recognition. Finally, I give a brief introduction to the main ideas of Axel Honneth’s recognition theory as outlined in The Struggle for Recognition, and suggest possibilities of linking the two theories together. Unfolding my argument throughout these steps, I try to, furthermore, work out Danto’s and Honneth’s common basis in an underlying Hegelian model.
Zwei Kapitel zur Ästhetik des Rechtsintellektualismus

Doppelvortrag bei der ESA-Konferenz in Berlin im Mai 2017 Es sollen zwei separate, aber aufeinander bezogene Überlegungen zur Diskussion gestellt werden, die sich mit den Lebens- und Denkhaltungen jener neuen intellektuellen Szene beschäftigen, die man dem „Rechtspopulismus“ zuordnet.

Teil I: Radical Chic: Über den Umzug des Salons auf's Land

Teil II: Substanz, Immanenz und Präsenz: die Ästhetik des „Realen“ im rechtspopulistischen Diskurs

Relation Between Education and Beauty in Plato’s Philosophy

Analyses of Plato’s philosophy and his paideia from the aesthetical perspective usually focus on his critique of poetry and other arts. In this study, we will investigate Plato’s concept of education from the perspective of aesthetics without taking the arts into account, all the while bearing his notion of beauty from his middle dialogues such as Phaedrus and Symposium in mind. We will question it with regard to two key aspects - 1) the role of the idea of beauty in the cognitive process and 2) the transformation of one’s soul in ascending to beauty. The results will present how the idea of beauty has a great importance for knowledge of ideas and also it’s role for reaching a life filled with virtue.
This presentation considers the approach to the arts developed by Jean Baptiste Du Bos, which is particularly notable for its atypical starting point: the importance of avoiding boredom. This emphasis leads directly to two related ideas, which contrast markedly from the tradition of rationalist criticism that came before, and also from the nascent tradition of aesthetics that developed soon after. Firstly, emphasizing boredom means recognizing that our fundamental desire to engage with the arts is grounded in a desire to be stimulated, activated and enlivened. Secondly, since avoiding boredom can only take place through experiences that elicit our interest, these interests cannot be justifiably excluded from our reflections on the arts. The essay takes these ideas in turn, developing Du Bos’s account of “artificial passions” and his concepts of specific and general interests. Clearly such ideas are anathema to the tradition of universal and disinterested aesthetics that developed with Kant and that continues to play a role in philosophical aesthetics today. Nevertheless, I defend Du Bos’s general approach, and conclude by discussing three areas in which his work can contribute to contemporary conversation: Firstly, Du Bos helps focus attention on the question of what we mean when we talk about ‘the public’; secondly, through his distinction between genuine and artificial experiences he provides a vocabulary for thinking productively about contemporary problems in so-called ‘everyday aesthetics’; and finally, because artifice operates principally through our interested passions, he reminds us of the enormous power it has in shaping belief and contributing to human flourishing.

It has been claimed that Edmund Husserl’s image consciousness is nothing but a sign function of pictorial experience, that although Husserl contemplates on the possibility of looking at images without semiotic usage, it remains an unusual and perfectly abnormal situation for him. I disagree with this interpretation and will show that, according to Husserl, there is a fundamental distinction between the imaging and symbolic function of a picture. First of all, in a certain sense, both an image and a sign point beyond themselves, but the pointing beyond is different in character. As Husserl says, the symbol points beyond to an object foreign to what appears internally but the image points to a similarly formed object in the image. What follows is that we can talk about the experience of ‘seeing-in’ [in das Bild hineinschauen] (Husserl 2005, 37) only in the case of images and not in the case of signs. Husserl also claims that if a picture can have both imaging and symbolic function, the imaging function comes first. Husserl’s examples are of small advertising reproductions of artworks whose purpose is to remind us of the original artworks in some art museum (Husserl 2005, 185). When we experience them as signs for the originals we have seen earlier, then the symbolic meaning is “a second meaning-consciousness grounded on the image consciousness” (ibid). As Husserl writes in another passage: “the two functions are built on one another in succession” (Husserl 2005, 57).
Mixed and cross-literary genres have become usual suspects of contemporary literary creation. Appreciating a work that is both science fiction and drama, or biography and comedy, involves normative questions as to what kind of inferences, assumptions and interpretations can be valid or warranted by the work. Although these cases might require a complex appreciative task they seem to be unproblematic. However, among these cases there is one that might be more problematic and that typically involves presenting something as both fiction and non-fiction; that is, as requiring simultaneously that the reader—or appreciators—engages with the work as a work of fiction but also as a work of non-fiction. Autofiction will clearly illustrate this case. In order to clarify what can be considered problematic about these cases, I will focus upon the appreciative task and whether it can be successfully accomplished. Most conceptions about the nature of fiction concede that a work’s appreciation is partly constrained by the fictional (or non-fictional) status we attribute to it. Since different attitudes and expectations are involved in addressing a particular work as fiction or as non-fiction, we should expect that the kind of inferences might be different too. In this sense, when we consider what the reader is supposed to do while engaging with a work which is presented both as fiction and as non-fiction, it is possible that adopting two different stances might generate inconsistencies when it comes to interpreting the work. Hence, there might be some confusion about what inferences are the ones that the work actually allows or requires—and, finally, which interpretation is the correct one. Finally, issues concerning imaginative resistance as contrasted to resistance to belief might also generate different interpretative outputs that might leave the reader in a no man’s land with respect to the interpretative route to follow.

Can we both see the duck and the rabbit?
A philosophical perplexity regarding creative non-fiction and auto-fiction

There are two views of the nature of fictive utterances in the existing literature. According to Searle and others, fictive utterances involve the overt pretense of performing ordinary illocutionary acts, such as assertions. According to Currie, Stock and Davies, they consist in a distinctive kind of illocutionary act, characterised by a communicative intention to elicit imaginings in an audience. I argue against both these views on epistemological grounds. Neither, I argue, is able to explain the fact that readers are, by and large, able to identify the contents of authors’ fictive utterances because both views are unable to accommodate the role of context in interpretation. I defend an alternative view according to which fictive utterances are declarations, illocutionary acts which are distinctive in effecting changes to the status of their objects simply in virtue of their successful performance. I argue that it follows from this view that we should be anti-intentionalists about the contents of fictive utterances. Although authors may competently and intentionally exploit them, conventions, rather than authors’ intentions, determine the contents of the utterances by which works of fiction are produced.
In this paper, I undermine the assumption – endorsed by recent contributors to the revival of the philosophical anthropology of art – that appreciating the appearance of an artefact from a distant past or remote culture is a fairly reliable indicator of its having been intended to invite appreciation. I claim that while these philosophers’ heuristic optimism is not completely misguided, they are optimistic about the wrong thing. I sketch their shared position and its promise for the problem of ‘first art’, show how it fails to live up to the promise, and present a much more modest version of the argument.

How Appreciation Fails Us: Against Optimism about Artistic Instincts

The cutting effect appears when the expressive power of a visual or a sound fragment (a scream or a bloodied face, for example) shown in an assumed representational medium (such as the radio, TV or movies) becomes isolated (or extracted) from the normal context that modulates its particular meaning and then the audience experience a momentary feeling of strangeness and distress due of the fleeting lack of context of reference. I am convinced that there are some interesting consequences to learn from these kinds of situations concerning the aesthetics of expressive and perceptive phenomena in representation. My hypothesis is that if I feel the distressing momentary impression after the scream of the cutting effect, it is not only (or not mainly) a cause of the lack of a context, but a cause of a primary expressive power of the scream that comes to touch me (to hurt me). This primary expressive power is normally (that is, out of the cutting effect situations) modulated by the context conditions, but emerges extraordinarily in the cutting effect cases. If my hypothesis is right, there is a coming back consequence, or I would prefer to speak better of a new way of explanation for some kind of ordinary (that is, no cutting) cases of reception. (1) We could refer to some particular cases as “resistance to the anaesthesia of context”. For example: a lot of people are unable to watch some scenes from violent or horror movies even being aware of the representational conditions. Moreover, (2) it would reinforce the idea that the scream or the bloodied face are not a property, a monopoly or a free tool of the actor nor the filmmaker, but rather they have an expressive power which leaks and exceeds the intention of the actor (or the emitter). Finally, (3) it would help us to support the idea of the perceptive character of the expression in aesthetic understanding. It means that there is for the audience a perceptive element which, even though it is not natural (to the extent that it comes from culture and education), it has to be not just understood but rather (at the same time) perceived.

The cutting effect: a contribution to moderate contextualism in aesthetics

The cutting effect appears when the expressive power of a visual or a sound fragment (a scream or a bloodied face, for example) shown in an assumed representational medium (such as the radio, TV or movies) becomes isolated (or extracted) from the normal context that modulates its particular meaning and then the audience experience a momentary feeling of strangeness and distress due of the fleeting lack of context of reference. I am convinced that there are some interesting consequences to learn from these kinds of situations concerning the aesthetics of expressive and perceptive phenomena in representation. My hypothesis is that if I feel the distressing momentary impression after the scream of the cutting effect, it is not only (or not mainly) a cause of the lack of a context, but a cause of a primary expressive power of the scream that comes to touch me (to hurt me). This primary expressive power is normally (that is, out of the cutting effect situations) modulated by the context conditions, but emerges extraordinarily in the cutting effect cases. If my hypothesis is right, there is a coming back consequence, or I would prefer to speak better of a new way of explanation for some kind of ordinary (that is, no cutting) cases of reception. (1) We could refer to some particular cases as “resistance to the anaesthesia of context”. For example: a lot of people are unable to watch some scenes from violent or horror movies even being aware of the representational conditions. Moreover, (2) it would reinforce the idea that the scream or the bloodied face are not a property, a monopoly or a free tool of the actor nor the filmmaker, but rather they have an expressive power which leaks and exceeds the intention of the actor (or the emitter). Finally, (3) it would help us to support the idea of the perceptive character of the expression in aesthetic understanding. It means that there is for the audience a perceptive element which, even though it is not natural (to the extent that it comes from culture and education), it has to be not just understood but rather (at the same time) perceived.
Dissonance and subjective dissent in Leibniz’s aesthetics

According to the classical view, beauty is grounded on the universe’s objective harmony, defined by the formula of unity in variety. Concurrently, nature’s beauty is univocal and independent of subjective judgment. In this presentation I will argue that, despite Leibniz’s complete adherence to this formula, his interpretation explains and justifies subjective dissent in aesthetic judgments about nature. I will show that divergences on aesthetic value are the result of a conception of harmony that includes dissonance. For Leibniz, nature’s beauty is objectively characterised by unity in variety. Variety depends on the qualitative difference between two or more elements. Since our world is a series of mostly consonant elements, the presence of dissonances brings variety and makes the universe beautiful when dissonances are resolved harmonically. Afterwards, I will claim that Leibniz’s concept of aggregate introduces subjective harmonies that may diverge from the described objectively united variety of the world. Aggregates are formed when the mind gives unity to many things through an idea. Since ideas are subjectively grounded, they enjoy a certain level of freedom regarding the way in which they select the multiple elements they unite. At this point, I will argue that the presence of dissonances in the world allows ideas to form aggregates with different combinations of consonant and dissonant elements. As a result, aggregates can resolve dissonances harmonically with different degrees of success, thus generating different aesthetic judgments about nature. I will conclude that for Leibniz divergent judgments are to be expected from ideas generated by finite minds that are susceptible to limited apprehensions of the world. Nonetheless, for Leibniz these cases would still be judgments of incomplete series of elements, grounded on ideas that do not reach the unity in variety offered by an objectively beautiful world.

The Missed Encounter: Spinoza’s Affective Aesthetics

There is an aesthetic undercurrent traversing Baruch Spinoza’s philosophy, harboring untapped potentials and far-reaching consequences for discussions of artistic and architectural production. The relationship between Spinoza’s philosophy and aesthetics, however, has been nothing but a huge missed encounter, resulting in the publication of only a few books and articles. For more than three and a half centuries now, philosophers, scholars, and commentators have pointed out that Spinoza does not pay attention to conventional aesthetics from the viewpoint of subjects or objects. And they are largely right. But what they have overlooked are latent seeds of a different kind of aesthetic theory, an aesthetic theory that moves beyond readymade mental faculties of a subject or essential qualities of an object, an aesthetic theory that emerges from immanent interactions of a relational field via a tripartite aesthetic process; an implication of substantial affectivities (substantiae affectiones), a complication of modal affections (affectio), and an explication of expressive affects (affectus). Once Spinoza’s philosophy as a whole, ranging from his philosophical and political treatises to his private letters and unpublished manuscripts, is read between the lines with a directed attention on aesthetic problems, latent seeds of this peculiar aesthetic theory become visible. A compact synthesis of Spinoza’s affective aesthetics constitutes the subject matter of this paper, a synthesis that interweaves subtle aesthetic hints buried deep within his philosophical archive, and unfolds the ramifications of this aesthetic theory from the viewpoint of neither subjects nor objects, but from the viewpoint of life (sub specie aeternitatis).
This paper offers an outline of an idea - the “Artwork Spectrum”, described as all the stages in the process from an artwork’s initial manufacture to its experience as an artwork by an audience. It’s suggested that this idea can be used to test the potential sufficiency of any offered definition of “artwork”. Broadly, there are three main phases to this spectrum, (i) the artwork’s process of manufacture, (ii) the artwork standing as a completed object and (iii) it being experienced by an audience as an artwork. The paper then looks at various definitions or characterisations of ‘artwork’ offered within philosophies of art, and suggests that they share the common trait of locating artwork ontology at some definite place on this artwork spectrum. This results in a common structure of objection to these accounts in which counter examples are generated from elsewhere on the artwork spectrum. This also results in common structures of how proposed definitions deal with these objections: by identifying these problems as epistemological rather than ontological. The paper concludes by suggesting that a definition of ‘artwork’ can only hope to be free from these structures of argumentation in respect to its sufficiency and/or necessity if it includes within its compass the whole artwork spectrum. This explains the attraction of contextualist approaches, either complex disjunctive definitions or cluster accounts of art since they can draw an account of ‘artwork’ that includes all parts of the spectrum. Finally, it’s suggested that a ‘manifested performance theory’ is a plausible candidate for a theory that can meet the challenges thrown up by the artwork spectrum.

The presentation recounts recent pejorative uses of the term “theatricality” and shows that even though these uses are different and have differing implications they have a common source, namely, a commitment to a common understanding of the nature of acting. The view rests not only on intuitions that are widely shared but also on some important empirical work in cognitive psychology. Nevertheless, this same empirical work, together with some interesting empirical work in ethology and ethnography as well as work in the philosophy of language, leads naturally to another account of acting that is not committed to the form of theatricality we should abjure. That account is provided and it is shown why it is not committed to that invidious form.
As 20th century musical developments can be characterised as increase in noise in the prevailing musical idiom, the situation leads one to question of the relation between noise and music. Since Stravinsky, Russolo and Varèse modern art music’s expanded tonalities – achieved both compositionally and instrumentally – have been received as “noisy.” The same applies to altogether new musical effects in experimental and popular music, such as the possibility of distortion and feedback introduced by electrically amplified sound, the use of synthesized or computer-generated sounds, as well as recordings or samples of any kind of acoustic phenomena. Thus, it would seem that noise – as a concept taken in a musical context – would align itself as opposite to music “proper” and evaluated as undesirable element against the pleasurable presence of music. However, it is clear to see that the noise–music dichotomy is, at least to certain degree, a historical and cultural state of affairs, susceptible to change over time. It could be argued fairly convincingly that after all the artistic and technological developments of the 20th century, it has become difficult to evaluate any sound as intrinsically “non-musical” and noisy. Is the perception of noise a completely relative matter, then? This is the question that I wish to consider in my presentation and shall approach the problem via three approaches and claims: ontological (“all sound is noise”), communicational (“noise is degradation of form”) and, finally, aesthetic (“noise considered as noise – as an aesthetic category”). What I shall suggest is that for noise to be noise, it must contain a remainder of aesthetic (dis)pleasure that cannot be soothed by historical progression or reduced to the ontological grounding of sound or the question of deformation.

In my paper I compare musical content with linguistic and pictorial meaning, and I examine what aspects of these different types of content might be considered ineffable. I suggest that only some aspects of musical ineffability are adequately analogous to the former two, while other aspects must be explicated without any reference to other types of contents. Linguistic meaning consists of words that are the building blocks of more complex meanings. Musical structures might be considered analogous to linguistic ones in terms of syntactical structure but without semantic content. The content of pictorial representations is not organized in syntactic structures. The ineffability of pictorial content, however, might be considered similar in some respects to musical ineffability, for the perceptual content is not propositional in either case. The ineffability in both cases is strongly connected to the lack of linguistic types of meaning units.

I distinguish two possible claims regarding the ineffability of musical content. First, one may argue that it is in principle impossible to express all aspects of musical content by linguistic means. Second, it is also possible to argue that such an attempt for verbalization is not theoretically impossible, but it is not practical. I defend the latter position, arguing that all musical (or pictorial) properties might be expressed in language; however, the differences in the processing of linguistic and perceptual contents and structures prevent us from forming practically useful linguistic descriptions for all musical (or pictorial) properties that we are able to perceive.
Musical works and aesthetic properties: realism or anti-realism?

Realism about musical works is the view that there are entities different from performances to which we call musical works. Jerrold Levinson endorses this realist view, taking musical works to be initiated types, a kind of universals “brought down to earth.” In addition, Levinson also maintains a realist position concerning aesthetic properties. He maintains that aesthetic terms are descriptive—i.e., the aesthetic function of a term is to refer to some aesthetic property—and takes the nature of aesthetic properties to be higher-order ways of appearing. The thesis defended in this paper is that there is an incompatibility in Levinson’s account between his realism about musical works and his realism about aesthetic properties. To defend this thesis, we will closely analyze the variety of aesthetic attributions relatively to the art kind of instrumental music. Both musical works and their instances are objects of our artistic appreciation. We can aesthetically say, for instance, that Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony is very rhythmical and brilliant. But we can also claim, after a concert in which this work has been performed, that the listened performance was very rhythmical and brilliant. Therefore, we can aesthetically judge either a work or an instance of it, in this case, a performance. Regarding this phenomenon, we argue that three kinds of aesthetic attributions can be distinguished. Our contention is that Levinson’s approach cannot account for such variety of aesthetic attributions in a compatible way with his view of musical works as initiated types.

Aesthetic opacity

Are we really sure to correctly know what do we feel in front of an artwork and to correctly verbalize it? And do we know what do we appreciate and why do we appreciate it? This paper deals with the issue of introspective opacity in aesthetics (that is, the unreliability of self-knowledge) in the light of recent psychological insights, according to which there are many instances of misleading intuition about one’s own mental processes, affective states or preferences. Usually it is assumed that aesthetic statements are intuitively clear and self-evident. However, a long tradition in psychology has called the idea of introspective transparency and the infallibility of self-knowledge into question (Wilson, 2002). This is a well-investigated topic in psychology but has only recently been recognized as an interesting problem in aesthetics (Melchionne 2011). In the paper I will present a typology of the main shortcomings in introspective self-knowledge, referring to the main psychological research on these topics. This would finally speak for the development of a “folk psychological” account of aesthetic experience, that is, the investigation of how people develop intuitive and naive theories about their aesthetic reactions, taste and feelings, separated from a more objective and empirically grounded account of how actually judgment and preferences are formed in ourselves, even on a neurobiological level. However, it will also be argued that it would also not be an innocent step to bypass the individual judgment and his expressed choices in favor of the allegedly more objective preferences that are manifested on a neuronal level.
Intentional Misrepresentation in Depiction

This paper is on intentional pictorial misrepresentation. By intentional misrepresentation, I mean that the picture maker is making a picture with the goal of misrepresenting the picture's subject. Specifically, I engage the question of how a picture may misrepresent a subject when, for the picture to pictorially reference that subject in the first place, the picture must in some way resemble or otherwise “look like” its subject. I will give an account of intentional pictorial misrepresentation that has two components: a basic account of intentional misrepresentation modeled on speech act theory, and an account of how misrepresentation must be sensitive to the mode of depiction. The basic account of intentional misrepresentation that I will give is the following:

1. There is some subject to which an utterer is referring.
2. The utterer is representing this subject as having certain properties.
3. The utterer intends that some of these properties are not actually possessed by the subject.
4. None of the previous steps are taken by mistake.

This will be drawn out of my account of how misrepresentation must be sensitive to the mode of depiction. The account of mode sensitivity will be given in four sections. First will be a section setting up the problem of intentional misrepresentation as particular to depiction, the problem of style. This section will establish that misrepresentation cannot be contrasted to standard representation simply by looking less, rather than more, like the picture’s subject. Second will be a section on the appropriate experience of pictures, where I will take up the idea that the content of pictures is accessed through a particular pictorial experience. Third will be a section on reflexive intentions, and pictorial reference, with a specific focus on how a picture maker articulates the pictorial content of a picture. Fourth will be a section on how to account for pictorial style.

Aesthetics as Politics: Kant’s heuristic insights beyond Rancière’s ambivalences.

If we take into account H.Arendt’s freedom-based conception of Politics and her political reading of the Kantian aesthetic judgment, we may understand ‘Aesthetics as Politics’ as a universal access to a freedom-based conception of Politics expanded to the cosmopolitan scale of the world citizen. My first claim is that the regrettable temptation to reduce Aesthetics to the sole domain of Art appears all the more prejudicial when the question of ‘Aesthetics as Politics’ is at stake. When he coined the phrase ‘Aesthetics as Politics’ in his essay *Aesthetics and its discontents*, Rancière bypassed the pitfall of ‘aestheticization of politics’ but he failed to grasp the specificity of the intrinsically political dimension of aesthetics insofar as it is irreducible to art. I shall analyze the cost of Rancière’s choice of addressing the subject of ‘Aesthetics as Politics’ on the grounds of the question of the ‘artistic regime of art’. I shall analyze, secondly, why the focus on the Sublime at the expense of the Beautiful has been prejudicial to the understanding of Kant’s contributions to a freedom-based conception of Aesthetics as Cosmopolitics. In the *Third Critique*, there is a cosmopolitical scope which is based on the universal validity of the Beautiful (a contrario to the limited universal validity of the Sublime) whereas in Rancière’s view there is a political local scope based on his own interpretation of universality. For Rancière, it is the Police which is worldwide as opposed to the interstitial dimension of Politics. Rancière doesn’t help to pave the way to the necessary difference between a cosmopoliticization of aesthetics and the damages of globalization. His dissensual and interstitial bias fails to give even the possibility for a freedom-based cosmopolitan ‘Aesthetics as Politics’ to offer an alternative as opposed to the worldwide unequalitarian reign of the Police. Finally, I shall examine the cost of pessimism in Rancière’s dissensual and interstitial bias. But it does not mean that any conception based on the discontinuity of intervals as opposed to the homogeneous consensus is bound to deprive us of the promise of emancipation. If Rancière fails to give positive prospects to ‘Aesthetics as Politics’, it is not because of its interstitial view but because he overlooks the necessary value of Hope, which was a political value, according to Kant, and an aesthetical one, in Benjamin’s view. Hence I shall examine, in conclusion, to what extent a freedom-based conception of ‘Aesthetics as Politics’ requires the hopeful dimension of the Possible.
In the 3rd Critique, Kant presents and resolves an antimony of taste. Kant’s resolution notes that the term ‘concept’ can refer either to a determinate concept or to an indeterminate concept. While judgments of taste are not based on determinate concepts, they are based on an indeterminate concept – namely, an indeterminate concept of the supersensible. Commentators have found this appeal to the indeterminate concept of the supersensible puzzling. In particular, commentators have noted that the indeterminate concept of the supersensible does not seem to play a major role in §38’s official deduction of taste. In response, I argue that the indeterminate concept of the supersensible substratum is essential to Kant’s theory of taste. For Kant, the pleasure of beauty relies on a contingent satisfaction of the requirements of judgment. I argue that Kant’s appeal to the supersensible status of nature’s substrate serves to guarantee that we lack insight into whether a natural object’s agreement with the requirements of judgment is or is not necessary. Thus, a natural object’s agreement with the requirements of judgment is, so far as we can know, contingent. Moreover, I will argue that Kant’s reference to the supersensible does not aim to ground judgments of taste on any particular metaphysical conception of what the supersensible is (or may be) like. Rather, Kant’s reference to the indeterminate concept of the supersensible constitutes a criticism of early modern attempts to ground judgments of taste on God’s design. For Kant’s own account of the pleasure of beauty relies on the claim that, so far as we can know, beautiful objects may not be products of intentional design or any other principle that would guarantee nature’s agreement with the requirements of judgment.
In this paper I will argue that it is implausible to hold artistic agency as a set value based on a sharp divide between mechanistic and manugraphic processes. Based on this conception, it has been argued that works with a mechanical etiology preclude the artistic input of the maker, and so cannot be worthy of proper aesthetic interest. Given the recent work of Walden, it seems clear that many do hold a belief-set that typifies images based on this standard. To tackle this, I shall show that there are many instances of works, both historical and contemporary, which have a conflation of mechanistic and manugraphic processes in their etiologies, which affect the aesthetic and epistemic significance of these works to varying degrees. In doing so, I shall examine different philosophical approaches to a wide range of imagistic generating processes, with a particular focus on photography, and conclude that artistic agency should be characterized as a relative quality. Given the recent changes in aesthetic approaches to the ontology of photography in response to the digitalization of the medium, it is time to reconsider why holding such rigid image types in relation to artistic agency is unrealistic.

It is commonly believed by art historians and tourists alike that the aesthetic value of paintings is closely linked with being in the presence of a highly particular artefact. This paper considers how this particularity might be understood, arguing that paintings, as handmade pictures, are characterized by a kind of particularity differing from that of mechanical depictions such as photographs. It begins by briefly reviewing and rejecting several obvious ways that the particularity of pictures (qua pictures) may be approached generally in terms of either form or content alone, or a systematic covariation of the two. It then focuses on two aspects that constitute the particularity of paintings. First, it argues that the marks making up paintings are complex traces resulting from a multifactorial process depending on the painter’s embodied agency, material constraints of the medium, and the temporally extended process in which compositional intentions are realized and developed in interaction with the nascent work. Such marks are contrasted with the simple traces that characterize mechanical depiction, i.e. marks that stand in a projective or correlative relation to the depicted subject-matter. Whereas the latter are determinate, representationally independent and pervasively referential, the former complex traces are indeterminate, mutually dependent in their representational function and not always referential. The second aspect considered is the relation between painted artefacts, especially the patterns of generality and particularity defined over the domain of such artefacts. Drawing on Kant’s ‘aesthetic ideas’ and Merleau-Ponty’s ‘sensible ideas’, it is argued that the meaning or sense of these patterns is governed by non-identity, such that paintings’ particularity contrasts with both the identity-based logic of conceptual/propositional content and, again, with the case of mechanical depiction.
Does Fiction Express Truth? Paul Ricoeur’s Novel Contribution to Literary Cognitivism

Do we learn something about the world from reading fictional literature? As philosophers choose to put it, does fiction have cognitive or epistemic value? Following this question could lead us to many puzzles in metaphysics and the philosophy of language. In this paper, I focus on one puzzle: how does language that is apparently about things that do not exist tell us about things that do exist? How can the human desire to understand reality sometimes be fulfilled in the practice of telling stories about things that aren’t real?

Some philosophers have claimed that fiction’s cognitive value lies in its ability to occasion ethical insight, or to deepen our understanding of things like honor and suffering by presenting them in lived situations. But these philosophers’ accounts fail to identify cognitive value that is proper to fiction as fiction. In order to gain the kinds of understanding these philosophers identify, we have to turn away from the novel and the literary appreciation of it for the sake of engaging in ethical or philosophical reflection. Further, these kinds of insight are paraphrasable; we can fully put them into words apart from the fictional form that the author gave them.

In this paper, I offer an account of the cognitive value that belongs to fiction as fiction, where that value cannot be fully captured in paraphrase. Fictional utterance should be understood on the model of metaphors. This account has important ramifications for the philosophy of language, since it uncovers a kind of utterance that is about the world, but whose meaning cannot be explained in terms of its truth-conditions and thus does not consist in propositions.

Empathy for the Depicted

The role of empathy in our experience of art and literature has recently received new attention spurred by state-of-the-art neuropsychological research that empirically tests psychological and philosophical intuitions about affective responses to the other’s emotions.

Fiction and film have been widely discussed regarding the emotional responses of readers and viewers; however, the idea that depictive artworks arouse empathic responses has not been extensively studied. The present paper discusses whether in seeing a depictive artwork we experience genuine affective states that resonate or match the emotions of the depicted figure or the depicted scene’s expressed emotions. It is pointed that the majority of neuropsychological studies on empathy use pictorial depictions as objects purporting to trigger affective sharing, resting on the tacit assumption that our response to the others’ emotional or mental state is not differentiated either in seeing others face-to-face or in seeing their depiction; thus it is safe to conclude that what the studies examine in the first place is the role of pictorial depictions in the generation of resonance or empathy.

The assumption that all empathic responses are simulative in nature is questioned, suggesting a classification of the distinct types of empathic responses to depictive artworks that draws both on simulation-based approaches to empathy and phenomenological or direct-perception models of empathy. It is argued that there are various forms of empathic responses to pictures that can be either volitional or non-volitional; the latter involve plain physiological responses such as mirror reflexes and the former refer to the effortful sharing of the other’s emotional state as perspective-taking or projection. A strong notion of perspective-taking or imagining being the other and taking-in all their thoughts and feelings is criticized on the grounds that it is based on a distorted conception of what it amounts for one to access one’s own mind.
Distant reading, often times seen as a scientific endeavor, is one of many academic programs used to organize human aesthetic behavior. If anything, distant reading partakes in aesthetic experience. It certainly allows for different kinds of experiences and renders procedures in which we have engaged for many centuries explicit. Distant reading is neither anti-hermeneutic nor particularly scientific. That is – much against what it has to say about itself – what makes it important. Close reading has emerged as the number one authorization of aesthetic approaches to texts. A whole semester devoted to one hymn of Hölderlin, to Wittgenstein’s Tractatus or to a text like Kant’s Groundworks does not appear particularly weird. This closeness itself is, however, a highly mediated relationship. It needs a lot of cultural effort, a vast set of linguistic and pragmatic, logistical and logical preconditions that ensure our being near to these texts. In fact, these implexions go so far that although we take close reading to be the most natural thing, we in fact don’t quite know what it is. Distant Reading stands pars pro toto for a change in our aesthetic, every-day and professional reading habits. We cannot afford to be mistaken about them.A large part of the resistance against change in the humanities has little to do with scientific disagreement or epistemological doubts. Affirmation and disapproval seem to rely on group politics of inclusion and exclusion. Nothing makes a group feel more endangered than when it fears that their lifestyle is threatened. We can’t think about research neutrally when we feel that understanding it could put an end to seminars delved in one great book by Anscombe or Jelinek.

The Experience of Distant Reading. Hermeneutics, Aesthetics, and the University

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The transformative temporality of aesthetic experience: an interdisciplinary approach to Gadamer’s concept of tarrying

The aim of this paper is to defend that a particular feature of aesthetic experience is its potential to affect the subject’s time-consciousness by expanding the reach of the usual field of presence, which could lead to a dialogical openness between the artwork and the viewer. I hold this change in temporality as one of the major responsibilities for the transformative capacity often attributed to aesthetic experiences. The novelty of this paper resides in the integration of a phenomenological approach to the question based on Hans-Georg Gadamer’s concepts of ‘tarrying’ and the ‘while’—being the former the temporal disposition by which one attunes himself to an artwork and the latter the temporal span in which the diverse senses and meanings emerging from the artwork occur— with some recent insights gathered through neuroscientific research on temporality and aesthetic experience. Namely the existence of two brain’s major networks, the central executive network (CEN) and the default mode network (DMN), which are implicated in antagonist processes and opposed temporal activities. Some particularly intense aesthetic experiences would be able to alter this neuronal equilibrium triggering an activation of the DMN, therefore affecting us intimately and changing us in profound and not always predictable ways.
Notes on a Thicket in Herder’s Fourth Grove

One methodological problem of philosophical aesthetics, pursued quite self-consciously by Johann Gottfried Herder, is how to theorize a variety and particularity of human experiences under general concepts. The aesthetics ‘from below’ which Herder outlines in the fourth of his 1769 *Critical Groves* addresses this problem, yet its commitments remain opaque or, according to some, inconsistent in its historicist approach to variation in taste. The worry is well focused in a surprising claim that diversity of taste across cultures and history proves the unity of beauty (I.6). By untangling a thicket of ideas in this dense passage, I would like to show, we may gain a clearer view of Herder’s methodology and its potential insight for contemporary aesthetics. Aesthetic inquiry for Herder, I argue, prioritizes rigorous analysis of historically- and culturally-specific practices while aiming toward an empty or thin concept of beauty as a regulative ideal. I suggest that this methodology embodies for Herder an ethical aim of recognizing diverse realizations of one shared humanity. For us, it represents a challenge to pursue the historical concretion of aesthetic concepts. Only this way can aesthetics hope, as did Herder and others, to recover or to emancipate richer forms of feeling, thinking, and living.

Nietzsche and Analytic Aesthetics

What makes certain images paradigmatic? Why are there images which strike us to the extent that they can transform our world view? In my talk, using images from both photojournalism and art history, I demonstrate how the force ascribed to the image can neither be attributed to what the image shows, nor to the material way in which it shows it. Instead, I argue that the effect of the image stems from the act of imaging, which cannot be subsumed by the distinction between conceptual content and materiality. In order to understand how the image defies this distinction, I offer an image of a limit: the littoral. This is a limit between land and sea which is perceived as such only from a bird’s eye view. This is a curious limit as it is not stable. The sea constantly shifts, occupies areas of the shore and retreats back, creating small inlets in which the land now occupies parts of the sea. The two areas in between which the littoral separates are so distinctly different, that there is not even a reciprocal relation between them. This means that the littoral does not depict or symbolize a division that had occurred prior to its appearance; rather, it creates a division through its delineation. Although it does not lend itself to a depiction in maps, due to its instability, it is, nevertheless, seen clearly from the sky. Yet the image of the littoral neither shows a boundary nor marks materially the presence of a frontier-line; it is an image of separation rather than a representation thereof. This act of separation is an outcome of the fact that the two areas are touching. Jean-Luc Nancy’s understands “Touching” (*La touché*) as what happens at the place of division between the one touching and the touched and yet is comprised of a series of mutual changes that occur simultaneously in both participants. Similarly to the littoral, it functions as a domain of a division, which is an outcome of the mutual delineations of the areas touching one another. Based on Nancy’s reading of the painting “Death of the Virgin” by Caravaggio, I intend to show how this fundamental concept in Nancy’s thinking about the image places the source of the image’s effectivity in its ability to touch its own limits. When created, the image delineates a limit between what is visible in it and what is invisible. Hence, the image’s effect, rather than being an outcome of what it depicts or of how it is depicted, is an outcome of the image’s own singular and independent delineation of a limit, its littorality.
The Limit as an Image and the Image as a Limit

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Contours, Attention and Illusion

In this talk, I want to hold the following two theses. First, in a pictorial perception, the emergence of the picture’s subject is basically due to the ways – endogenous and exogenous – attention holistically operates by means of the figure/ground segmentation it applies by means of the contours, either objective or subjective, that are related to the picture’s vehicle, the two-dimensional physical basis of a picture. Second, this attentional operation produces an illusory perception of the picture’s vehicle as a three-dimensional item, whose illusory character is both recognized as such and yields a difference in the perceptual phenomenal character of that perception by means of such a recognition. In order for a two-dimensional item to become the vehicle of a picture, its elements must undergo a certain grouping operation, in particular a figure/ground segmentation in the third dimension of such elements. Thus, contours that delimit what is seen to lie in front and what is seen to stand behind are elements that such a grouping operation makes perceptually salient. Yet it is neither necessary nor sufficient that such contours materially belong to the vehicle, i.e., are actually traced marks on the picture’s surface. Such objective contours are indeed not sufficient, for sometimes marked 2D lines just divide a certain 2D figure from the remaining elements of the 2D item one faces, without that any pictorial organization emerges out of it. They are also not necessary, for sometimes such contours are subjective: they are not actually traced and yet a pictorial organization arises. This means that something other from objective contours must enact the grouping segmentation operation. This factor is attention, in particular when it works in a holistic way, by operating on the relevant 2D item as a whole and producing a certain reorganization of it. Now, as is well known, attention may work either exogenously, i.e., as prompted by external environmental factors, or endogenously, i.e., as prompted by cognitive internal factors. This holds also in a pictorial case. Clearly enough, the perception of a certain 3D organization that arises once the relevant grouping operation has occurred is illusory: the perceiver actually faces a mere 2D, not a 3D item. Yet to begin with, I hold that such a perception is more than that: it is a knowingly illusory perception. For the perception’s bearer is definitely not deluded by its perceptual experience: she well knows that the item she faces is merely two-dimensional. Moreover, I also want to say that unlike the cases of other perceptual illusions known as such, such as e.g. the cases of optical illusions, that knowledge has a perceptual import.