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The Aesthetics of Contemporary Sport

Andrew Edgar
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The art historian Terry Smith (2011) has argued that a distinction must be made between contemporary art and modern art. This presentation will suggest that a similar distinction can be made for sport, and that this has implications for how sport is understood and how an aesthetics of sport might be constructed.

Sport may be understood as a product of nineteenth century European and American culture (and is represented by such processes as the founding of the English football league in 1888, and culminates in the first modern Olympiad of 1896). As such, it coincides with the emergence of modern art (represented, for example, by Impressionism and post-Impressionism). If modern art can be characterised in terms of a new self-consciousness of the artistic process, so too might modern sport (manifest in activities such as association and rugby football, cricket and tennis) be understood in terms of a self-conscious creation and manipulation of the rules of play. Modern sport, like modern art, stands in an uneasy relationship to the Enlightenment, ultimately each grounding themselves in their own traditions and grand-narratives. Further, the aesthetics of modern sport, it may be argued (Edgar 2013), moves away from a classical concern with beauty, and thus the grace and elegance of the athlete, and towards a deeper concern with the meaning of the agon and the attendant ugliness of suffering and defeat.

Contemporary art is characterised, by Smith (2011, 8-13), through three currents: remodernisation that continues to establish links between the contemporary and the modern; the transnational turn that engages with post-colonialism, challenging the centrality of the West in art history and art practice; and a diverse and elusive final strand, grounded in the mass participation that characterises the contemporary. Beneath this diversity lies a commitment of the contemporary to the present and the ephemeral. It is, in part, an art of fashion, if also of political immediacy. To suggest that there is such a thing as a parallel contemporary sport is to suggest a sport that strives to shed the constraints of modernity, and thus the hegemony of the West (e.g. the development of T20 cricket in India). It is ephemeral and fashionable (X-sports, snow boarding). It lacks the history or record keeping of modern sport, and even relinquishes fandom in favour of something akin to the worship of celebrity (of its most illustrious players). Rules are more fluid (and referees may be done away with, as in ultimate Frisbee). It engages with the urban and natural environment (parkour, surfing). It may also be suggested that it throws into question our aesthetic assumptions about sport. As spectacle (in the 'tricks' of the skateboarder and snowboarder, the inherent ungainliness of moguls) it does away with classical beauty and perhaps also with the profound significance of the modernist agon.

This presentation will thus outline the existing debates within the aesthetics of sport before setting them against the distinction between the modern and the contemporary. It will be argued that contemporary sport, like contemporary art, poses fundamental challenges as to both our grasp of aesthetic judgement and our interpretation of cultural phenomena.

Edgar A. (2013), "The modernism of sport", *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 7 (1): 121-139.
Smith, T. (2011), *Contemporary Art: World Currents*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Andrew Edgar is Reader at the School of English, Communication and Philosophy at Cardiff University. His research interests are in German Critical Theory, principally the work of Theodor Adorno and Jürgen Habermas. He has published work on Adorno (and especially Adorno's musicology), and has written a monograph and an introductory book of "Key Concepts" on Habermas. In addition to this interest in German philosophy, during his time at Cardiff, he has been involved in a number of European Commission funded research projects that have looked at various problems in the field of bioethics, including issues of health care resource allocation, dignity of older patients, and the problems of living with chronic illness. His main area of interest is now the philosophy of sport, and he has written a monograph on the relationship between sport and art. He is currently the editor of the journal *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*.

Panel 1.1 Political Aesthetics

North Korea's Arirang Mass Games: The Aesthetic Materialization, Embodiment, and Enactment of North Korean Culture, Ideology, and Identity

Marc Kosciejew
University of Malta

Although North Korea's Arirang Mass Games is unparalleled political propaganda, there is more going on than only ideology and politics. The Mass Games materialize North Korean culture, ideology, and identity. The Mass Games further constitute North Korean culture, ideology, and identity through each performer's enacting, and by extension embodiment, of this epic show.

This presentation of North Korea's Arirang Mass Games presents a primary account and analysis of a performance unlike anything and unseen anywhere else in the contemporary world. It contributes to the beginning of a conversation about this performance that has been nearly inaccessible and unavailable to most people, including most other scholars, outside of North Korea. It analyses the Mass Games through a discussion of the materialization, enactment, and embodiment of the regime's ethnocentric Communist ideology and culture. This analysis draws upon the work of performance philosophers and the work of other scholars and journalists, who have either analyzed and/or also attended the games, to start connecting the ways in which this performance can be regarded as the material embodiment of North Korean culture, ideology, and identity, or at least the regime's construction and fantasy of these aspects of the country.

This presentation does not aim to provide justifications for or intend to give support to the North Korean government. It instead illuminates a spectacular performance that few people outside of North Korea have experienced in such a little known or little understood country; further, it presents a personal perspective on such an isolated and mysterious place, at least compared to the relative openness of most other countries, that few other individuals have personally experienced.

Dr Marc Kosciejew is a Lecturer and previous Head of Department of Library, Information, and Archive Sciences at the University of Malta. He toured North Korea in 2007 and published original research on the reclusive country's library system, becoming one of the first English-speakers to publish and present on this specific topic. He has further been published in peer-reviewed scholarly and professional journals, magazines, newspapers, and blogs. He has lectured in Europe and North America and presented worldwide at diverse conferences, workshops, and events. He was appointed by Malta's Minister for Education and Employment as Chairperson of the Malta Libraries Council, a government-appointed national council stipulated in the Malta Libraries Act, 2011, to provide strategic advice on libraries, learning, and literacy to senior cultural and political figures including the National Librarian of Malta and the Minister responsible for libraries.

Nothing to See Here: Protest Under the Guise of Art

Margerita Pulè
Independent Scholar

“It is not the office of art to spotlight alternatives, but to resist by its form alone the course of the world, which permanently puts a pistol to men’s heads.” (Adorno, 2003) In this paper I would like to investigate how my practice and that of other contemporary artists working in Malta (eg Kristina Borg, Elise Billiard, Bettina Hutschek) exist within the boundaries of the Rancièrian definition of political art as an aesthetic experience that does not produce “rhetoric persuasion about what has to be done” (Rancière, 2008). I would like to contrast this assertion within the context of Shannon Jackson’s caution that social art which strives towards a harmonious encounter or conclusion, risks “neutralizing the capacity of critical reflection”, and becoming “overly instrumentalised, banalizing the formal complexities and interrogative possibilities of art under the homogenizing umbrella of a social goal.” (Shannon Jackson, 2011) My research practice uses walking art, photography, documentation, drawing and non-object-based art to protest a current context of pitting steroidal economic over-development against social and urban well-being. Creating work has become an act of indirect resistance, and an attempt to protect our environment (by which I mean the urban environment which is home to most of us in this country) from its over-commodification and economic exploitation. My practice has come to fall somewhere between conflict-tourism and a visual search for stability in an increasingly unstable environment. My work attempts to exist outside the conventional structure and aesthetic of the exhibition space; its seeks to interact and gain meaning through other modes of existence. Walking and performance art provides a space for direct resistance while remaining within the boundaries of an artistic act; the artistic element of the act removes it from an exclusively political and combative act and allow it to exist aesthetically and non-combatively. Likewise, an act of graffiti framed within an artistic practice is allowed to exist within an aesthetic discourse, rather than an act of vandalism. In his book *Walking Art Practice*, Ernesto Pujol claims that a locality in which an artist ‘walks’ has the right to demand something from the artist. (Pujol, 2018) My practice acknowledges this demand and offers that something in the form of a rationalisation of what’s happening to the locality; taking note, counting, mapping, counting, recording, and trying to quantify it, and acknowledging that urban environment which we inhabit deserves to be documented and listened to. If art should “resist by its form alone” (Adorno, 2003) the current Maltese hegemony which provides a narrative of economic and cultural success of the nation, I would like to examine how politically and socially engaged art manoeuvres in this contemporary Maltese context, and how, if at all, it manages to challenge this narrative.

I was responsible for programming the Cultural Programme of Valletta’s title of European Capital of Culture 2018, and am currently Outreach Manager at Malta’s national centre for creativity, Fondazzjoni Kreattività. With a Masters Degree in Fine Art in Digital Art with the University of Malta, my parallel artistic practice is concerned with the contradictions of political and social realities. My work can be seen on www.projectdisintegration.org.

Maltese Art and its Lack of Subversive Power

Francois Zammit
University of Malta

This paper claims that Maltese art lacks a subversive voice and that Valletta 2018 has led to the ultimate dissolution of this possibility. With a focus on the plastic and visual arts, this paper will attempt to illustrate how Maltese artworks lack the power to create subversion and political dissension. Although there are artists and individual works of art that attempt or have attempted to materialise the subversive, the general positioning of Maltese art places it in a lacuna that effectively negates the possibility of subversion and dissent. As stated by Rancière, “An artist can be committed, but what does it mean to say that his art is committed? Commitment is not a category of art.” (2004, p.56) Due to this, there is a general lack of political debate within the contemporary artistic discourse which succeeds in removing any sense of rupture from the dominant socio-political status quo. Contemporary Maltese art lacks a sense of meaning and reference to the world to such a degree that the same work of art can be repurposed to mean whatever the State institutions want it to mean. The sculpture, ‘Flame that Never Dies’, designed by Valerio Schembri and inaugurated in 2017 was originally intended to represent a memorial flame for the late prime minister of Malta, Dominic Mintoff. In a sleight of hand the title of work was changed and a new meaning given, therefore showing that this specific sculpture has no reference to the world and thus no real meaning. When meaning and reference are removed all possibilities of subversion are also removed. For art to be subversive and oppositional it requires a target, and the current liberal capitalist and libertarian socio-political paradigm with its ability to accept everything has removed the possibility for art to be oppositional and to have a subversive dimension. The removal of censorship laws and constant waving of the freedom of expression for all has removed the ability for art to be considered as radical or subversive, thus removing their power to force the institutions to respond to them in a contesting manner. Furthermore, the designation of Valletta as European City of Culture for 2018 has allowed for the final elimination of the power of art. Baudrillard argues that art as a powerful and moving activity has gone; since art is everywhere and art is everything, then art has become nothing. Through Valletta 2018, the State institutions have successfully coalesced even mundane activities under the definition of art; and by also utilising the contractual control provided by financing artistic works, most contemporary art has been reduced to being meaningless and powerless because ‘there is nothing to see.’ (Baudrillard, 2009, p.18) Contemporary Maltese Art has no teeth to bite with and has lost its power of discourse by allowing all meaning and reference to be taken away from it. If the art world still wants to be relevant and meaningful it has to reinvent itself by creating a meaningful metaphorical language that can be communicated and understood by the public.

Francois Zammit taught philosophy at post-secondary level for over eight years. He has worked on transhumanism, terrorism, Bataille, and education. Over the years he has presented papers on; ‘Bataille’s Interpretation of Mauss’ The Gift’, ‘The Concept of the Self in Contemporary Maltese Literature’, and ‘A Colonial Reading of Agamben’s Homo Sacer’ in *Engaging the Contemporary* 2017. In 2015, he presented a discussion on foreign fighters for ISIS in the Middle East in terms of theories of social disassociation (Camus and Wilson) and of excess (Bataille) and he is a regular contributor on *Isles of the Left*.

Panel 1.2 Art, Aesthetics, and Reason

Aesthetic reasons for aesthetics actions

Adam Andrzejewski & Marta Zareba
University of Warsaw

The primary goals of our presentation are threefold: (a) to analyze the concept of aesthetic reason, (b) to develop an account of the ontological nature of it and (c) to sketch a new philosophical perspective connecting philosophy of action and aesthetic. When we think about reasons in philosophical aesthetics we tend to think about reasons for aesthetic judgements (epistemic aesthetic reasons). During our talk, however, the topic of reasons for aesthetic judgements will not be explored. We will focus exclusively on much underdeveloped issues, namely, aesthetic reasons for artistic action and provide an answer to the following questions: What are aesthetic reasons for aesthetic action? Are the aesthetic reasons mental or non-mental in nature? In order to answer these questions we will use the main concepts and theoretical framework developed in the contemporary analytic philosophy of action. Our presentation will be structured as follows: Firstly, we will briefly introduce a distinction between two notions of reasons: normative and motivating ones. Secondly, we will present and discuss two different approaches to ontology of motivating reasons; internalism and externalism, according to which: [Internalism] All motivating reasons are mostly facts about psychological things. [Externalism] Motivating reasons are mostly facts about non-psychological things. Thirdly, we will reconstruct a simple approach to what aesthetic reasons are according to which a reason for creating *x* with a property of being beautiful is a non-obtaining state of affairs (e.g. “*x* would be beautiful”). We will raise some objections against this view, showing that the claim that reasons for action are non-obtaining states of affairs is incoherent with broadly shared intuitions about what these reasons really are. Fourthly, we formulate several objections against the opposite view, according to which aesthetic reasons as actually obtaining states of affairs in the world, facts about some past events. This we will suggest that aesthetic reasons might be interpreted as a special kind of reasons that are not easily framed by the dominating views on reasons for acting in general. Because of that, at the end of our talk we will propose and analyze another two possible interpretations of what aesthetic reasons are. We label them as Modal Externalism and Modal Psychologism. According to the first view, in the sculpture case the aesthetic reason for creating the artwork is not non-obtaining state of affairs but a specific fact (a modal one) about the actual world. In other words, the reason for creating the artwork is the psychological fact about the mental states of the artists, who considers facts about some possibilities (i.e. that such-and-such sculpture would be beautiful). Bibliography Alvarez, Maria. *Kinds of Reasons: An Essay in the Philosophy of Action*, Oxford University Press, 2010. Alvarez, Maria, and Aaron Ridley. *Acting for Aesthetic Reasons*, *Estetika* 54 (2017): 65-87. Bratman, Michael. *Structures of Agency: Essays*, Oxford University Press, 2007. Dammann, Guy, and Elisabeth Schellekens. *On Moral Psychology and Normative Force of Aesthetic Reasons*, *Estetika* 54 (2017): 20-39.

Adam Andrzejewski is Assistant Professor at the University of Warsaw. His research is focused on everyday aesthetics, the ontology of art, and popular art. He authored several articles in English and

Polish academic journals. Most recent works include e.g.: “Framing Artification” (Estetika, 2015), “Authenticity Manifested: Street Art and Artification” (Rivista di estetica, 2017) or “How to Frame Edible Art” (The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics, in press).

Marta Zaręba is a PhD researcher at the University of Warsaw. Her research is focused on philosophy of action and philosophy of mind (PhD thesis concerning the concept of intention in contemporary philosophy of action). She authored several articles in English and Polish academic journals.

Aesthetics at the Limits of Reason – and Beyond

Thierry Tremblay

University of Malta

If, as a premise, aesthetics does not deal with definitions, but fundamentally with experiences, following its paradoxical definition as “*epistêmê aïsthetikê*”, then aesthetics must conform itself to the axiom “what is absolutely singular is ineffable”, since the experience of perceived sensations or immanent objects of imagination cannot be extensively described or repeated. This paper will deal with the discursive limits of the aesthetic paradigm, and attempt to go beyond. It will highlight the fact that the development of aesthetics as a discipline, is an effect, or consequence, of a radical separation operated by the “tribunal of reason”.

Prof. Thierry Tremblay is the Head of the Department of French at the University of Malta. His research interests include aesthetics, literary theory and the links between literature and philosophy. He is the author of *Anamnèses: Essai sur Pierre Klossowski* (Hermann, 2012) and *Frontières du sujet: Une Esthétique du déclin* (L’Harmattan, 2015). He is the editor of the special issue on Pierre Klossowski for the journal *Europe* (2015).

Art, Evolution, and Rational Self-Consciousness: Three Stories on Display in Human Art and the Aesthetic Lives of Animals

Mathew Abbott

Federation University Australia

Engaging influential work in evolutionary aesthetics, this paper contends that narrowly naturalistic approaches in the philosophy of art cannot account for the normative structure of human aesthetic practices because they cannot account for the role played in them by rational self-consciousness. It argues that while inferences from animal behaviours can shed light on human art, getting a grip on central features of it requires philosophical attention to how animality is transformed by entry into the space of reasons. Endorsing this claim about reason in human life does not mean endorsing a chauvinistic picture of rationality as a special endowment that raises us above the rest of nature. Nor does it mean denying the affective character of aesthetic experience. As John McDowell, Terry Pinkard, and Matthew Boyle have argued, rationality should be conceived not as a property that separates us from animality but as a constitutive aspect of our being animal. On this ‘transformative’ account of rationality, it is a mistake to think of reason as something grafted onto animal life, setting rational beings apart from nature. The transformative conception can help us make sense not only of the continuities and differences between the aesthetic lives of animals and humans but of how differences emerge out of those very continuities. On this basis the paper gives a new interpretation of the significance of display in art, a problem fundamental to modernism that also appears to be crucial in the aesthetic lives of non-human animals. It invokes three stories on the role of display in human art and the aesthetic lives of animals: a passage from Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* about a nightingale song faked by a landlord for his unwitting guests; a passage from Darwin’s *Descent of Man* about the delight peacocks take in their displays; and a passage from Michael Fried’s *Absorption and Theatricality* on the problem of display in eighteenth century French painting. The stories bring out profound differences in our aesthetic responses to nature and to human art, highlighting difficulties introduced by rational agency. Display is central to the aesthetic lives of animals, but only for rationally self-conscious ones does that very fact become problematic, such that it can present to artists as something to be neutralised (and such that we can ask after its origins in our biology). Art is not “beyond the reach of evolution” (Denis Dutton, *The Art Instinct*, 2) but part of how we negotiate our problematic status as rational animals, part of how we make sense of being instinctual creatures who live in the space of reasons (and of what can be deranging about that). Modernism brings this to light in instructive ways. It transforms art in the way rationality transforms animality: by bringing it to self-consciousness.

Mathew Abbott is Lecturer in Philosophy at Federation University Australia, and Fellow in Residence at Das Forschungskolleg Analytic German Idealism at the University of Leipzig in Wintersemester 2018. Drawing on modern European and ordinary language philosophy, his research is concerned with clarifying the philosophical significance of the forms of rational inquiry that go on in art. He is the author of *The Figure of This World: Agamben and the Question of Political Ontology* and *Abbas Kiarostami and Film-Philosophy*, both published with Edinburgh University Press. His edited collection *Michael Fried and Philosophy: Modernism, Intention, and Theatricality* was published by Routledge in February.

Schiller Revisited – Aesthetic Play as the Solution to *Halbbildung* and Instrumental Rationalism

Lisbet Rosenfeldt Svanøe
Independent Scholar

In the 5th and 6th letter of Schiller's *On the aesthetic Education of Man*, Schiller displays a critique of his contemporary society. He describes how the organization of a state based on rationality alone does not develop but rather alienates man in a society in which "the dead letter succeeds the living intellect and a trained memory leads more securely than genius and sensibility. In other words: a society based on scientific knowledge, habit and rote learning that doesn't leave room for judgment, imagination and sensibility and hereby neither development nor innovation.

It is striking how Schiller's critique and analysis could just as well have been written by the 1st generation of the Frankfurt School, and it seems that Schiller in his 4th letter foresaw and described the instrumental rationalism, Adorno describes in his article "Theory of Half-bildung" as consequences of the dominant focus of Enlightenment on rationality. Consequences that still have relevance today since we seem to struggle with similar issues as both Schiller and Adorno addressed.

Public education in public schools has turned into quantitative measurement of student achievement and the idea of formation (*Bildung*) has become subordinate to scientific knowledge. This dominant, rational focus stakes to educate a generation that will create and live in a society that resembles the societies Schiller and Adorno described.

Therefore, it is worth taking a renewed look at their writings especially since Schiller believed he had the solution to devouring rationality. Accordingly, the *Bildung* of man has to be balanced between sensibility and reason in order to give man the possibility to unfold his "humanity". This possibility is to be found in aesthetics understood as an extended concept implying an Aristotelian understanding of art "as primarily a form of communication" with the task of "bringing about harmony in society".

My idea is to unfold some of the main points in Adorno's article in interplay with Kant as a representative of Enlightenment-thinking in order to subsequently involve general thoughts about instrumental society. Hereafter follows a description of how Schiller seemed to have foreseen the consequences of rationalism and how morality would suffer from them. It proceeds with selected picks from the letters to display the *modus operandi* and possible effects of aesthetics. It seeks to illustrate how Schiller's letters move on from Kant and have a divergent view on the implications of reason and the freedom of man. The freedom to determine one's will to moral actions occurs, according to Schiller, through man's aesthetic mood and experience, and hence aesthetics and aesthetic play are preconditions for ethics.

Lisbet Rosenfeldt Svanøe obtained a Bachelor of Education at University College Copenhagen in 2009 and a Master of Arts (Education) in Philosophy of Education at Aarhus University (DPU) in 2017.

Panel 1.3 Aesthetics and the City

Whose Streets? A Rancièrian Analysis of Google Street View

Roberta Buhagiar
University of Malta

In the contemporary moment, Google’s photographic software project “Google Street View” has reached quotidian status. With an aim to capture every single streetscape worldwide and reproduce the ensuing images in a web-accessible, panoramic format, what roles does a maximalist project like “Google Street View” play in the politico-aesthetic sensibilities of a place? And what are the ensuing implications for the spectator? In order to chart potential answers to such questions, this presentation anchors itself within a Rancièrian understanding of politico-aesthetics and complements the ensuing observations by imbuing them with commentaries from seminal media-cultural theorists who deal with the ontology of photography. Through an expository and critical analysis, my method applies Jacques Rancière’s frameworks, with a sustained focus on his conceptualisation of the “aesthetic regime of art” and the “aesthetic image”, to “Google Street View”. The ensuing inquiry is an inquisitive foray into charting an understanding of “Google Street View” as a topical and ubiquitous piece of geo-spatial software in light of a contemporary aesthetic inquiry. Ultimately, it is revealed that “Google Street View” maintains a Janus-faced nature which asserts the rhizomatic nature of the photographic image as well as the essentially zoetic productivity that arises from the exertion of politics by its very spectators.

Roberta Buhagiar is a final year postgraduate student currently reading for a Master of Arts in English, Culture and the Media at the University of Malta. Her current dissertation project centres on the interdisciplinary connections between media-cultural theory, photographic studies and the philosophical thought of Jacques Rancière as applied to the quotidian phenomenon of Google Street View. She maintains an academic interest in topics pertaining to media theory, visual culture and image studies with a current focus on photography as well as the politico-aesthetic impact of geospatial data projects on the Humanities. Additionally, Roberta has actively participated in a number of academic projects and conferences including a course by Mark Fisher titled “How to Write about the Arts” (2016) and a postgraduate unit titled “Mediterranean Imaginaries: Literature, Arts, Culture” (2017); the latter being a collaborative, Erasmus+ funded initiative that brought students together from a varied number of universities. Roberta was also part of the organising committee of “Spacing, Placing, Displacing Postgraduate Symposium” (2017) organised by the Department of English at the University of Malta and has travelled to London to attend a conference titled “Endgame(s)” (2017), coordinated by Goldsmiths University.

Maps and Art

Ondřej Dadejčík, *Charles University, Prague*

Štěpán Kubalík, *Charles University, Prague*

In contemporary debates concerning the definition of art a recent book by an American philosopher, Alva Noë, has attracted wide attention. The title of this book reads *Strange Tools. Art and Human Nature* (2015). In this volume Noë argues that works of art are “strange tools”, i.e. artefacts, which stand to usual, ordinary tools and technologies in very peculiar relation. That is to say, art is, according to Noë, a “philosophical practice”, whose sole function is to resist and reverse negative, numbing results of application of ordinary technologies. Hence, it is possible to properly understand the purpose of art-making and experiencing works of art only within wider context encompassing various usual practices, skills, tools or technologies. Against this background art turns out to be something extraordinary and strange and as such it enables us to critically reflect and reorganize ourselves. According to Noë, art is like mapmaking. As we do not make maps just for the heck of it, but because we get lost without them, similarly we create and seek for artworks not to get lost in our ordinary practices and technologies. At the same time, a work of art is an implement or instrument that has been denuded of its function, art is thus “the enemy of function”, or “the perversion of technology”. We consider the basic intention of Noë’s theory of art, that is, his effort to account for continuity between usual, everyday practices on the one hand and creating and appreciating artworks on the other, as desirable and to a certain extent successful. We do believe that the analogy between works of art and maps, as far as it works, reveals something important about true nature of artworks. Nevertheless, this comparison, since it is not completely acceptable, as we would like to argue, also shows what artworks are not. As the first step in proving our point we propose to re-examine one of the main inspirations of Noë’s thesis, namely Ludwig Wittgenstein’s notion of “perspicuous representation” and his usage of the so called “cartographic metaphor”. The analogy between the function of artworks and the function of maps that Noë proposes together with his – at first glance – antithetical suggestion that we should understand artworks to be “strange tools” turns our attention to the phenomenon of the so called “unsurveyable maps”, which are to be met both in philosophical writings and works of art. As the second step of our argument, we would like to show that a reflection on several selected instances of these “strange maps” can result both into confirmation of Noë’s basic insight into the nature of art, i.e. of his conviction about the continuity between art and life, but, on the other hand, into a substantial revision of one of his main claims.

Ondřej Dadejčík is Associate Professor at the Department of Aesthetics, Charles University, Prague. He is co-editor of *Aesthetic Dimension of Visual Culture* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2010; with Jakub Stejskal). His recent publications include ‘Distance and Immersion: Phenomenological Aesthetics and the Question of a “Paradigm Shift”’, *AUC: Philosophica et Historica* 1/2014, *Second Nature* (Prague, 2015, co-authored with P. Sterec, J. Brož and J. Horčík). He is the President of the Czech Society of Aesthetics (since 2011).

Štěpán Kubalík is Associate Professor at the Department of Aesthetics, Charles University, Prague. His recent publications include ‘Theory of Metaphor and Aspect Seeing’, *World Literature Studies* (forthcoming) or ‘Some Remarks on Descriptive and Negative Aesthetic Concepts: A Critical Note’, *Estetika: The Central European Journal of Aesthetics* 2/2013 (together with O. Dadejčík). He serves as an Associate Editor of *Estetika: The Central European Journal of Aesthetics*.

Panel 2.1 Gender and Aesthetics

Divine Beauty and the Photography of Women in the 21st Century

Narelle Delle Baite
James Cook University

This paper is an exploration of divine beauty through studio photographic portraits that have been digitally manipulated to include composite image layering. During the 21st century few examples of photographic images have integrated divine beauty in portraiture although photography has a long relationship with beauty. While key photography theorists such as Barthes challenge the capacity of the photograph to provide a realistic depiction of a religious aesthetic, the ubiquity of the contemporary photograph means that there is a need to continue to explore creative avenues for the realisation of divine beauty. The author's planned photographic series titled *Essences of Divine Beauty*, challenges the current western perception of feminine beauty through a series of photographic portraits. Objects from nature such as flowers and butterflies will be used to represent an interpretation of divine beauty through the incorporation of such symbols. Feminine beauty has always held an important place in society. Recent research proposes that the majority of women are dissatisfied with their appearance, and view themselves negatively as a result of the constant bombardment of unrealistic beauty ideals from media and society. This unhealthy attitude has resulted in, for example, the dramatic rise in cosmetic surgeries performed on women. The feminine beauty 'ideal' is ever-changing and the appeal for a new direction for feminine beauty has been acknowledged in the literature. The concept of Divine Beauty is experiencing a revival as a response to the increasing pressure and unachievable expectations placed on women. Divine beauty is linked to God and aesthetics, goodness, nature and is beyond the physical. The aim of this series is to depict a concept of beauty as divine and offer an understanding of where feminine aesthetics are positioned in 21st century.

Narelle Delle Baite is an Australian based Photographic Artist and Student at the James Cook University School of Creative Arts with a fascination in beauty and photomedia. She is interested in Feminine Aesthetics, Divine Beauty and photography. More specifically, her current work examines divine beauty of women in the 21st Century. Narelle recently completed a Bachelor in New Media Arts (Photomedia) in 2017 and is currently participating in the Honours program at James Cook University, Australia. Narelle has exhibited works in both Australia and Germany. Some of the recent exhibitions she has been apart of include the Percival Photographic Portrait Prize 2018 Townsville Australia, Open Cities 2017 Wurzburg Germany, Study Abroad 2017 Cairns Australia and Blue Print 2017 Townsville where she received the Photography Excellence Award. Narelle has worked in a range of photographic genres including commercial portraiture, event and fashion. And was the Head of Photography for Townsville Fashion Festival in 2017.

Outlining Aesthetic (Clothing) Interactions

Swantje Martach

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Until today, the discipline of aesthetics spans around four concepts: the aesthetic object, attitude, experience, and judgement. Yet, these four are only partially covering the phenomenon of the aesthetic. Whilst objects cannot be perceived outside our human attitude towards, experience, and judgement of them; the notion of aesthetics as an attitude seems to promise a certain human autonomy from our surroundings which imposes us with the upstream obligation to experience everything in an aesthetic manner. Likewise, an experience seems to be a meta-phenomenon somehow detached from inter/actions, implying the dichotomy between cooking vs. experiencing the cooking as aesthetic. And judgements are resulting from experiences of objects that are only possible when owning a certain attitude. As the hitherto denoted phenomena cannot be disentangled from one another and therefore state insufficient attempts to understand the aesthetic, a new notion of aesthetics shall be introduced: the aesthetic interaction. To outline this new concept, we shall not dismiss the tradition and history of this field, it is just that the primary phenomena understood as aesthetic (in the form of “the aesthetic x”) are found unsatisfying. An aesthetic interaction shall be defined as a human-non/human interaction which is happening aside from all practical matters. What is meant by “practical matters” are any further purposes in addition to the mere completion of the primary interaction. The human engaged in such an interaction is not interested in any other issues than completing her interaction with that non/human, and her counterpart is equally not leading her astray. This idea shall be illustrated alongside the engagement with clothes; an interaction that, opposed to the fine arts, is accessible and relevant for everyone. Until today, discussions were lead about the aesthetics of the garment, the aesthetic attitude with which we confront the garment (e.g. muse, contemplation, or even mindfulness) that might allow for an aesthetic experience of the garment, through which we than can possibly judge it as being more or less aesthetic. But why do philosophers not talk about clothing aesthetically? Outlining an aesthetic clothing interaction, on the one hand it is provoked by the cloth as thing-agent allowing all sub-actions to flow uninhibitedly (the attiring, combining, enacting, wearing, changing). On the other hand, it is enhanced by a human who is focusing merely on her current, and is not comparing it to any other remembered or wished-for human-cloth interaction. Neither is the human aiming at using her clothing for any human-human interactions, such as pleasing, persuading, or impressing others. When all agents participating in the clothing allow for an interaction exclusively focused on itself, the interaction becomes intensified, and can then be a source of pleasure for the human (reversing the classic order of aesthetics). Thus, only when a cloth uninhibitedly completes the clothing-interaction it is designed to enhance (e.g. sport clothes) and which the human wishes to complete (doing sports), can the clothing be aesthetic. This is why it might be best to describe the aesthetics of (clothing) interactions as subjective correspondences i.e. clothes and human respond to one another by exchanging experiences.

Swantje Martach is a PhD-Candidate at the philosophy department of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, where she conducts research about clothing as a human-thing interaction shaping all other interactions the human becomes engaged in (self-experiment: think of cooking whilst wearing your new white blouse vs. an old saggy hoody) under the supervision of Prof. Jessica Jaques Pi and Prof. David Casacuberta. In autumn, she is going to realize a research stay abroad at the University of the Arts London, especially, but not only, at the London College of Fashion, with the help of Prof. Ian King.

Queer Aesthetics: Drag, Existential Aesthetics and the Opening of Gender

Oliver Norman
Université de Poitiers

For the last decade Drag has become a more visible practice. From the ballrooms of Harlem to RuPaul's Drag Race, the end of the 20th century and especially the beginning of the 21st seem to be the history of drag's elevation to mainstream recognition if not acceptance. But whilst the mainstream seems to have accepted Drag as an art form, philosophy hasn't. Drag is confined to the domain of gender studies and has never been emancipated as a proper object of philosophical contemplation. This presentation will attempt to show how Drag is of use to philosophy once it is considered a legitimate practice. Drag is not just what we see: lip-sync and choreography performed by a man dressed in women's clothing. But if Drag is not what we perceive of it then it becomes philosophical and adheres to Bachelard's but also Jankélévitch's definition of the aim of philosophy: "to transcend immediacy" (Bachelard, *Le nouvel esprit scientifique*). If Drag is not just what we perceive then it becomes more than a minority art-form, more than an LGBT+ oriented performance, it becomes a philosophical problem. At the heart of Drag is a relation to what it is to perform and the implications of this performance on both the self and gender. By performing as a woman, drag queens are not trying to be women. By performing as men, drag kings are not trying to be men. There is something other in drag than a desire to change gender. To comprehend this properly, drag must be understood in the same way Philippe Grosos understands all art and especially music. In his *L'existence musicale* he posits that music transforms our relation to ourselves. There is a paradigm shift at work: talking becomes singing, walking becomes dancing... If drag is art and art is the realm of a revolution in our relation to ourselves, then Drag must also participate in this revolution. Drag therefore becomes a performance, which, like all performances structurally modifies our relationship to what it means to be a self. Drag becomes an existential aesthetic. But what is this existential aesthetic? What does it mean? For drag it means that gender is transcended or rather opened up, transformed into a blank canvas, through a performance which cuts all ties to the everyday world. Menial laborers can become queens, singers, actors in one performance. We become more than the mere societal function we occupy day to day. Aesthetics is the world of freedom as Lev Shestov puts it. Our existence is empowered through performance. In Drag we are just like Chaplin who escapes the reification of the factory and accomplishes himself in song in *Modern Times*. By considering drag an existential aesthetic we question the very nature of aesthetics itself: does art solicit a theoretical exposition or does it ask us to change ourselves? Is existence and art self-exclusive or are they not profoundly intertwined as French phenomenologist Henri Maldiney professes in *L'art et l'existence*?

Oliver Norman is currently a graduate student at the Université de Poitiers specializing in the philosophies of Søren Kierkegaard, Vladimir Jankélévitch, Max Picard and post-heideggerian phenomenology. His theses submitted for the completion of his Master's degree concern the nature of silence in Kierkegaard's writings and the possibility of a philosophical study of seriousness and its implication for thanatology. This passion was rewarded with the publication of his first article "Stillness in Kierkegaard's confessional discourse" in the *Hong Kierkegaard Library Newsletter* in April 2016 and a conference giving at St Olaf College, Minnesota entitled "The ethics of communicational silence in Kierkegaard's authorship" in July 2017. Whilst specializing in the two aforementioned philosophers, Oliver is also vividly interested in gender studies and the problem of drag and has presented a paper entitled "Can Drag Become a Philosophical Object" at the 2017 Florida State University "Minorities and Philosophy" conference. Moreover, Oliver has begun periodical work as a translator, notably translating Jeffrey R. Wilson's "To be or not to be?: Shakespeare against philosophy" / « Etre ou ne pas être ? : Shakespeare contre la philosophie » /, published in *Shakespeare au risque de la philosophie*.

Panel 2.2 Foucault/Deleuze

Recognizing an Aesthetics of Existence

Katharine McIntyre
Columbia University

In a marked departure from the familiar reading, I link Foucault's aesthetics of existence to a Hegelian tradition of recognition and social freedom rather than to a Nietzschean self-fashioning. Though both Hegel and Nietzsche are heirs to the Kantian legacy that Foucault explicitly seeks to take up and transform, the Hegelian tradition better captures the merits of an aesthetics of existence while avoiding some of the more common criticisms leveled against it. I read Foucault's account of domination as itself an heir to the Hegelian tradition; modern, Western forms of domination increase homogeneity and deny opportunities for recognition of our particularity – a form of recognition required for the realization of social freedom. If, as I suggest, the aesthetics of existence refigures our identities with the patchwork quality of collage and the flexibility of improvisation, it undermines the rigidity of the social categories we are thrown into as well as any faith we may have that they are natural or necessary. Such self-transformation calls for recognition of what I call 'dynamic particularity' as a step toward the realization of social freedom. Tying an aesthetics of existence to a project of social freedom undercuts the common criticism that it is nothing more than superficial self-styling in an overly individualistic or even narcissistic fashion. Methodologically, this project of reconstructing Foucault's aesthetics of existence will proceed as follows: The positive account will be developed through examination of Foucault's most explicit discussions of the concept in his later works and interviews. These works address the aesthetics of existence as an integral part of the ancient Greek ethics of the care of the self. Such an ethics, Foucault claims, gives a style to one's life by which one will be recognized by others. I argue that this sense of recognition is closer to the technical Hegelian sense of affirmation than it is to a colloquial sense of identification. This reading is supported by Foucault's remarks about ethics more generally, in which being a part of an ethical system requires recognizing oneself as an ethical subject with particular obligations to oneself and others. I argue that such self-recognition ontologically presupposes recognition by others as the very foundation of subject-formation. The second part of the project engages with existing literature on Foucault's aesthetics of existence. In particular, Johanna Oksala's work *Foucault on Freedom* provides an overview of the most influential interpretations of the concept and offers an interpretation that utilizes the best of what has come before. Rather than reproduce this insightful effort, I will focus on what Oksala adds that others have overlooked: the role of art and the artist in Foucault's early works. Oksala notes that art, and writing in particular, have always played an important role in self-transformation and resistance in Foucault's works and argues on that basis for a continuity in his thought. I argue instead that the early works render visible by contrast the decidedly Hegelian shift in Foucault's concept of an aesthetics of existence, thereby reinforcing my positive account.

Katharine McIntyre received her Ph.D. in Philosophy from Columbia University in 2016. Her research is in social and political philosophy, primarily in the Continental tradition, especially Hegel, Nietzsche, Foucault and the contemporary critical theorists. Her philosophical work is also heavily influenced by aesthetics, in particular the interaction between literature and social, political, and ethical philosophy. Before starting at Columbia, she received her BA from Dartmouth College with a major in Philosophy and a minor in English. She is currently a lecturer at Columbia where she teaches Literature Humanities, introducing students to philosophical concepts through canonical works in the Western tradition.

The Aesthetics of Existence and the Art of Philosophy: Critical reflections on Michel Foucault's and Peter Sloterdijk's thoughts on philosophy as a way of life

Erik Sporon Fiedler
University of Copenhagen

This paper seeks out to engage with the idea of the critical philosopher as a distinct type with a distinct ethos. This is done through a reading and an analysis of three examples taken from the works of Michel Foucault and Peter Sloterdijk. There philosophy and the practice of critique are seen as distinct ways of life and is being presented through the construction of different aestheticized types and attitudes. The first example I will present is found in the lectures, interviews and writings of Michel Foucault's last decade, especially in the period from 1978-1984. Here I will focus on Foucault's ideas of an aesthetics of existence and of the ethical imagination as well as on his attempt "to construct a genealogy of the critical attitude in Western philosophy" as he says in the lecture-series published with the title *Fearless speech* (2001). My reading of Foucault is followed by two examples from the works of the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk. Sloterdijk's philosophical works presents both a criticism and a continuation of some of the ideas found in the works of the late Foucault. I begin my analysis of Sloterdijk by presenting his idea of kynicism, first introduced in his book *Critique of Cynical Reason* from 1983, as a mode of resistance that is grounded in distinct attitudes and in distinct practices. Following this I go on to discuss Sloterdijk's idea of philosophy as a way of life as it is being developed and elaborated in the two more recent books *You Must Change Your Life* (2009) and *The Art of Philosophy: Wisdom as a practice* (2012). Together these three examples are being put to use as different ways of formulating and understanding the relation between philosophical ideals and intellectual praxis. Further they comprise different ways of understanding and giving descriptions of what philosophy as a critical enterprise is, how it should be practiced and what purposes it should be made to serve. Finally, I compare their positions and argue that – despite their differences - to both the late Foucault and to Sloterdijk philosophy and critique are bound to certain ways of living.

I am a PhD Fellow at the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. Before beginning as a PhD Fellow I worked for two years as Part-time Lecturer at the University of Copenhagen teaching various courses in the History of Religions section. I have a Master's degree in the History of Religions from the University of Copenhagen and have been a visiting student at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Freie Universität Berlin. The title of my PhD-project is: *Where Do We Go From Here? An Inquiry into the Role of Religion in Peter Sloterdijk's and Giorgio Agamben's Affirmative Critiques of the Present*. The project's primary aim is to undertake a comparison of religio-philosophical motives in the works of Sloterdijk and Agamben. This is done in order to investigate how the role of religion influences the political aspects of their thinking and more generally to investigate how religion influences politics in times dominated by narratives and moods of crisis. The project is supervised by Associate Professor Peter Kurt Westergaard.

Becoming Weak: Resistance, Inoperativity and Weak Signs

Karl Baldacchino

University of Malta

In a consumer culture dominated by pervasive commercial signs and discourses, contemporary art is a praxis that frequently engages in acts of resistance. Accordingly resistance often takes the form of critique, which engages in the reproduction of signs to criticise the same flux of signs. The repetition of strong signs, such as signs of authority or those of a commercial nature, as well as signs that directly engage in criticising them, albeit in an abstract or allegorical manner at times, suggest an inextricable subjection to a power dynamic that is fuelled by an aestheticized reality. What I'm interested in is to first of all understand better what is an act of resistance, and to seek if it is possible to resist by way of actively repeating a gesture that disrupts rather than reinforce the cycle of simulation. Following Deleuze's notion of the creative act as an act of resistance, this paper suggests that the aim of an effective act of resistance is not to criticise pervasive signs and discourses, but to disrupt, deactivate and render them to what Agamben calls a state of inoperativity. The concept of inoperativity proves very useful in terms of illustrating how the early 20th century avant-garde, as well as the post-war avant-garde artists of the 1950-1960s, undertook the radical reduction of the signs that they created. Groys borrows a term from Agamben to refer to such signs as weak signs. Weak signs are deemed as poor when compared to strong and easily recognisable signs attributed to classical art or mass culture. Weak signs are signs of inoperativity, in that they deactivate and render inoperative powerful signs and open them to new possibilities. It can be argued that weak signs resist from engaging in critique and resist from seducing viewers. Instead, new constructive possibilities are actualised to ultimately show difference in itself. Of utmost importance is the permanent repetition and adaptation of weak gestures. The repetition of weak, inoperative gestures escapes the status quo of the never-ending cycle of strong signs, which in other words refers to permanent representation. As an example of how different, affective and pragmatic possibilities are actualised in art, in this paper I discuss the work of a selection of contemporary artists including Antony Gormley's sculptures and Dirk Braekman's photography. Subsequently, what in my view becomes crucial is to explore the possibility of repeating the weak, inoperative gesture ethically. Therefore the simultaneous aim of this paper is that of proposing the application of the better-grasped concept of resistance from aesthetics to ethics and the sphere of corporeality.

Karl graduated with a B.A. in Sociology and Psychology in November 2015. In 2018 he completed an M.A. degree (by research) in Sociology with a dissertation titled "Understanding the construction of the body in a postmodern consumer culture: a multimodal critical discourse analysis".

Panel 2.3 Music and Aesthetics

Reconsidering the Methodology of Ontology of Music: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue between Ontology and Musicology

Kentaro Tanabe

Ritsumeikan University

Ontology of music is one of the most flourishing topics in analytic aesthetics. The ontology of music elucidates the ontological nature of music and provides feedback to the new metaphysical framework of general metaphysics. However, arguments and debates in this area have tended to ignore the musicological research. In this presentation, I will elaborate upon the methodological issues of recent musicological outcomes. The ontology of music usually begins with intuitions. For example, we have an intuition about a musical work as “composers create musical works,” “musical works are repeatable through performance or playing.” Philosophers build ontological theory using an analysis of intuitions. For example, one of the reasons Jerrold Levinson proposes that musical work is an “indicated type” is partially because we have a strong intuition that musical works are created and not discovered. Although there are disagreements about which intuitions should be used primarily in building ontological theory, there is certainty that ontology is built on intuitions. Philosophers implicitly confine the intuitions on which they build ontological theory to “our present” intuitions of contemporary listeners familiar with classical music. On the other hand, musicological research into the status and role of the concept of “musical work” suggests that there are different intuitions about musical work. For example, Lydia Goehr revealed that before 1800 the concept of musical work did not regulate musical practice. Thus, Composers, performers, and listeners of that era did not have such intuition as (for instance) “musical work is repeatable,” but they were only concerned with musical performances specific to certain occasions. However, few researchers have considered whether and how musicological research can contribute to ontology. Is the limitation to “our present” intuition unwarranted in the development of an ontology of music? Do different intuitions and practices suggest that “ontological pluralism” (for example, “ontology for musical works before 1800,” or “ontology for Romantic classical music”) is preferable? In this presentation, I will consider two possibilities of how musicological research contributes to ontology. First, according to John Dyck, we can criticize and adjust some ontological arguments by drawing on musicological literature. He observes that one of the reasons musical Platonists endorse their argument is because of the sonic similarity among the performances of certain work. However, musicological researchers report that there was a tradition before 1800 in which performers did not perfectly comply with the score, which means that sonic differences did exist among performances. Second and more radically, musicological research seems to encourage the abandonment of the reliance on analysis of concepts and intuitions in building an ontological theory of music. Michel-Antoine Xhignesse argues that such analysis does not help to guide the ontological investigation of music because, as the concept “musical work” and intuitions about it change over time and space, they do not reflect the bare ontological status of musical work, and instead demonstrates the historically situated, conventionally reinforced preference of users for musical terms. By examining these arguments, I consider how, and to what extent, musicological research contributes to ontology.

I am an advisory fellow at Ritsumeikan University, Japan and I received my Ph.D. in aesthetics from Ritsumeikan University (2014). I am the editor of the journal *Kansai Journal of Aesthetics and Musicology*. My main areas of research are aesthetics and philosophy of music. I work primarily on the

ontology of music and music perception. I am especially interested in methodological questions on the ontology of music, issues concerning the relationships between ontology and musicology, and introspection and verbal reports in music perception. My articles on the philosophy of music have appeared in journals including “Bigaku” (Aesthetics, The Japanese Society for Aesthetics) and “Popular Music Studies” (The Japanese Association for the Studies of Popular Music). I have presented papers at “Art, Aesthetics and Beyond: 3rd British Society of Aesthetics Postgraduate Conference” at the University of Kent, England, and “Workshop: Videogames and Creativity (featuring Prof. Aaron Meskin as a keynote speaker)” at Ritsumeikan University, Japan, and the “International Workshop with Prof. Jos de MUL “Play, Media and Identity” at Ritsumeikan University.

Noise Not Music! The (Anti?) Aesthetic of Hardcore Punk

Lasse Ullvén
University of Malta

What is music to one listener may be noise to another, and where some would prefer music, others opt for noise. Shortly after the punk explosion which by late 1970s could be said to have fallen victim to commodification, hardcore punk emerged as a reaction to the complacency of punk rock in a move not unlike punk rock's challenge to the rock establishment a few years earlier. Although within punk rock noise played a significant role – John Lydon who was chosen by the press as the poster boy of punk has even referred to himself as a 'noise structuralist' – the level of noise in punk rock was still low enough for mainstream consumption. Hardcore punk amplified it, taking the noise to hitherto unknown levels, creating a counter-aesthetic that continues to thrive today despite – or perhaps because of – its unmarketable character. British music critic Andy Hamilton has aptly described the difference between music, which consists of 'regular, stable, periodic vibrations', and noise which is characterized by 'irregular, unstable, non-periodic vibrations'. Where 77 punk rock could still be considered music under this characterization, hardcore punk, at least in its more extreme expressions, departed in the direction of pure noise through its use of 'irregular and unstable, non-periodic vibrations' to the point where the question 'can you call this music?' arises. In fact, hardcore punks at times have rejected music altogether, stating that the sound they produce and admire is in fact 'noise – not music'. For French social theorist Jacques Attali music has become a tool of power, making people forget the general violence, making them believe in the harmony of the world and silencing them by mass-producing syncretic music and censoring all other human noises. In the Attalian point-of-view noise signifies 'dirt' and 'disorder', 'a signal that interferes with the reception of a message by a receiver', something that 'destroys orders to structure a new order'. Hardcore punk then is 'anti-music' in the sense that it wants to reverse the process of codification of noises into music that silences, to interfere when music is being used as a tool of oppressive power. Through noise hardcore punk questions the established conventions of aesthetics of music, opening up new aesthetic horizons. Japanese philosopher Yuriko Saito argues that aesthetics of imperfection can often be preferable to aesthetics of perfection and that denying the aesthetic quality of imperfection 'impoverishes our aesthetic lives'. Saito argues that there is also a moral dimension to aesthetics of imperfection: 'developing such aesthetic capacity encourages open-mindedness and receptivity in appreciating something on its own terms while enhancing the power of imagination'. This capacity to appreciate incompleteness, defect or imperfection instead of imposing our ideas of perfection on others 'shares the same humility and respect required in our moral life'. Does the counter-aesthetic of hardcore punk merely reject beauty and the aesthetics of perfection – unapologetically embracing the non-beautiful – or does it rather offer an alternative meaning of beauty through its own unconventional aesthetic standards?

Lasse Ullvén, a Finnish national residing in Malta for the past seven years, is currently pursuing a doctoral degree within the framework of "Literary Tradition and Popular Culture" at the Faculty of Arts at the University of Malta. His research is focused on hardcore punk and its unconventional take on aesthetics. In addition to ethnographic fieldwork within the global punk scene, Lasse's involvement in a number of bands as a guitar player / singer provides him with plenty of personal experience on the subject of punk.

The Technical according to Bruno Latour and its Implications on the Notion of “Digital” in Digital Arts

Dominik Schlienger

University of the Arts, Helsinki

In a Latourian understanding of technology, the technical, despite being everything, once we have habitually adopted it, is mostly experienced through its failure. From this raises the question what, if we take Latour by his word, is it then that we experience when we speak of “digital arts”? How can we then experience “digital culture”? I argue, using Latour’s approach, that what we experience as “digital” is not the technical itself, but something fictional. Descriptions of experiences of the digital thus either refer to qualities which, essentially, are connected to shortcomings of the technology, or the glorious overcoming of them. These qualities form a notion of the digital, which is then used to describe the technology as digital. It follows that the aesthetics of the digital must have a similarly convoluted relation to the technical. Following Latour in reference to aesthetics by its “etymological sense, [...] of making oneself sensitive to alterity”, the question arises to what, exactly are we making ourselves sensitive then, when we experience digital aesthetics, if it, as we assert, is not the digital itself? - In a short analysis of a few anecdotal examples, I’d like to disentangle the technical from its amalgamation with the fictional to show how badly constructed, in a Latourian sense, the aesthetics of the digital are to serve as a description of the digital, leading to a misleading ontology of the digital and a broad misconception of the technical in general. The consequences of not disentangling this amalgamation can lead to a feeling of disenfranchisement from technology for vast sections of society, as I intend to show with more, albeit no less anecdotal examples, observed in my work in technology development for the sonic arts.

I am a Composer Researcher at the University of the Arts Helsinki, Sibelius Academy Centre for Music & Technology. I research technologies for spatial interaction in music. (Doctoral Project) As part of my approach, I apply free interdisciplinary improvisation for prototyping of situations for technical development. Besides articles on technical aspects of this project, artistic outcomes are, for example, the Leluhelikvartetti, (Finnish for “toy helicopter quartet”) - a situation, rather than a composition, for string quartet and four toy helicopters and their pilots. More information on the project can be found here: <http://alps.fi/> A list of publications here: <http://creativemusictechnology.org/publications.html> And some of my musical output here: <http://fisq.fi/> And here: <http://www.hipbone-prod.com/>

Do our Visual Expectations of Opera matter as much as our Auditory Expectations of Opera? A Study of Breeches Roles as Lesbian form of Address on Stage

Elisabeth Swartling
Uppsala University

How we experience music is surrounded by cultural expectations which makes us able to listen to the music instead of merely listening through it. According to Meyer the musical language we learn predetermines us to certain modes of observation and interpretation. These modes of observation and interpretation are necessary for us in order to understand the piece music that we are currently listening to. We will refer to these culturally predetermined modes of observation and interpretation regarding the way we listen to music as auditory expectations. Most research we encountered concerning our musical expectations seemed to disregard the visual expectations of our musical experiences. We will examine how our visual expectations of what we are seeing on stage affects our perception of the music. What happens when there is a dissonance between our auditory and our visual expectations of an opera? Do our visual expectations of opera matter as much as our auditory expectations? We will argue that our visual expectations of opera are just as important as our auditory expectations. Because our visual expectations can change the way we see the music.

Panel 3.1 Disability Aesthetics

Painting with Wheelchairs – A Platform for the Voice and Emancipation of Disabled Children

Elvira Psaila

University of Malta

This paper aims to discuss how painting can serve as a medium for creating spaces where disabled children make their voice heard. The need for this paper stemmed from an activity where disabled children created works of art by rolling their wheelchairs over splodges of paint to create intricate and colourful designs. By applying the work of Jacques Rancière to a retrospective analysis of this painting activity, the author explores how painting with wheelchairs can help challenge the vulnerable and passive social position traditionally ascribed to disabled children. The paper discusses how painting provided a space for role reversal, a space that challenged the hierarchical positions of society whereby the disabled children themselves, not the parents or professionals, were in control of what was created. The author links the disabled children's ability to embrace an assertive, leading and empowered role to two main concepts of Rancière's work. The first idea brought forward is the role of the adult in the emancipation of children – the need for the adult to act as a simple guide – to acknowledge oneself as the ignorant schoolmaster and to acknowledge the disabled child as a being, with innate, equal intelligence and move away from situations that stultify children. The second notion, confirms the concepts brought forward by Rancière in 'The Philosopher and his Poor', by attempting to show how ingrained the ascribed positions we are given in society still are today. Painting, however seems to facilitate the transgression of the expected hierarchical positions in society, by enabling spaces where the disabled child is free to pass on any message they themselves feel is important at that given time. The paper concludes by presenting the idea that painting with wheelchairs not only provided an a verbal means for the projection of self-identity for disabled children, but also served as a means of transforming a symbol historically linked to dependence and restriction (the wheelchair) into a tool of creative expression and possibly self-liberation.

Elvira Psaila graduated as a physiotherapist in 2008 and has worked as in both inpatient and outpatient settings within the Public Health Service, and has been practising at the Child Development and Assessment Unit (C.D.A.U.) since 2011. In 2015, Elvira completed a Master of Arts in Disability Studies, where her study focused on bringing to light the experience of disability as lived by a young, physically-disabled child and has now applied to further her studies at Ph.D. level, with her area of study again focusing on the role of active agency and voice in disabled children.

The Aesthetics and Ethics of Representing Deafblindness through Film: A Focus on the Documentary “Planet of Snail”

Anne-Marie Callus
University of Malta

Planet of Snail is a 2011 documentary by Yi Seungjun that represents a year in the life of Young-Chan, a South Korean deafblind man. We follow his life as he engages in various activities, mostly with assistance from his wife Soon-ho (who has a physical disability). Seungjun was faced with a unique challenge when making this documentary as he had to project living with deafblindness through film which, as an exclusively audiovisual medium, relies on an audience that has access to the very two senses that his subject cannot use. Not only that but, touch – the sense that Young-Chan primarily uses to communicate and orient himself with – cannot be conveyed through film. Thus, the aesthetic experience of watching the documentary is inaccessible to Young-Chan himself, while the lived experience of being deafblind in a predominantly audiovisual world remains alien to the audience. This paper will first explore the techniques that Seungjun employs to convey the world as it is perceived by Young-Chan. These techniques will be discussed with reference to Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception*, where he engages with the notion of the ‘body-subject’ and with the crucially important and complex role that our body plays in our perceptions. If for the sighted and hearing person the body is a *sine qua non* of being-in-the-world, for the deafblind person it takes on an extraordinary significance. Merleau-Ponty’s discussion of spatiality is also relevant for this analysis of Planet of Snail. He argues that we situate ourselves in the world through our body, the figures around us and the background in which they are placed, stating that the body is ‘always tacitly understood, in the figure-background structure’ (p. 115). In Planet of Snail, it is often the background that has to be tacitly understood as Seungjun blocks distal stimuli, and keeps only proximal stimuli in order to mediate Young-Chan’s proximal world through foregrounding his body and the figures he comes into contact with. The paper will then focus on the ethical issues raised by creating the representation of the life of a person using a medium which that person cannot access. To a certain extent, Seung-Jun’s representation of Young-Chan’s life re-inscribes existing power relations in society where disabled people are mostly spoken about by non-disabled people rather than speaking for themselves. However, the documentary also gives sighted and hearing people the opportunity to appreciate more how deafblind people negotiate their way in the world. These issues will be discussed with reference to Alcoff’s (1991) paper ‘The problem of speaking for others’. I will argue that Seungjun’s aesthetic treatment of deafblindness is a compromise worth making since, despite its inaccessibility to deafblind persons, the documentary raises awareness about their lived experience while keeping itself at a distance, both literally and figuratively, from any claims that it offers direct unmediated access to that experience. References: Alcoff, L. (1991) The problem of speaking for others. *Cultural Critique*, 20, 5-32. Merleau-Ponty, M. (2002) *Phenomenology of Perception*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge).

Anne-Marie Callus is Senior Lecturer at the Department of Disability Studies, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta. She has been working in the disability sector for almost 25 years and her main research interests are empowerment of people with intellectual disability, and cultural representations of disability. She also on these subjects as well as inclusive education, disability rights and policies and services for disabled people. She is a member of the Executive Editors Board of *Disability & Society*.

The representation of disabled body in art of Frida Kahlo during the decade of 1940: Visual analysis through the social model of disability

Stella Christofi, *University of Athens*
Antonios Kanellos, *University of Athens*

Creativity through art is the antidote to pain. Frida Kahlo's accident when she was eighteen provoked many problems to her body in combination with the polio that had affected her at the age of six which lead her to the disability during her life. She became an artist through her disability. Her biographical work carries her psychological and physical pain. The purpose of the current study is to research the representation of the disabled body, its pain and suffering in art of Frida Kahlo under the contemporary interpretive approaches of disability. The ultimate goal of the research is to develop a dialogue between the artistic creation, especially the visual imagination of the artist and the theory disability studies. The research questions were formed to investigate the representation of the disabled body and the expression of pain in Frida Kahlo's artwork that meet the contemporary interpretive approaches of disability and to answer the issues that accrue: The way of the representation of disability, the identified contemporary interpretive approaches of disability, the social experience of pain, the visual elements with the artistic influences that constitute the subject of the representation of disability are explored in this research. The qualitative approach of the research was chosen to serve the purpose of the particular study. The research method is qualitative analysis of data research (visual material), because it is based on qualitative visual analysis and interpretation. The findings of Kahlo's artistic work are numbered in 200 paintings, drawings, sketches and engravings. From the overall Kahlo's work, the artworks that hint her personal experience of disability were selected which represent the disabled body, its pain and its suffering. The method of purposeful sampling was used for this research. So, fourteen artworks were selected to investigate and research the sample during the decade of 1940. Kahlo started painting during her lifetime, beginning from her disability and deployed art as a mean of reinforcement. Pain became a collective experience through her artwork. In her painting she documents her own efforts to survive from pain through images of imagination, stoicism and allegory. Through the power of image, she cancels prejudices and shapes social behaviors in relation to the disability approach. Using the image of her body she raised awareness to the public and dismissed its negative attitude to disability. By attributing her ruined body, her expression remains stoic without drama and treats bravely the pain, the agony thought of death. She creates her own surrealism replacing dream with her own experience. Kahlo's pain even if ignored or misinterpreted continues to exist. Never before in art history, there was no other artist who represented his/her own personal trauma and pain. Kahlo's unique artwork comes back at the vanguard of the 20th century to converse with the exploration of the human body, exerting significant influences on the movement of modernism.

Stella Christofi received a BA-Postgraduate degree in Athens School of Fine Art (2006-2011) and a Master Degree in Special Education in National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (2015-2017). She has a solo exhibition in Cyprus and she has participated in many group exhibitions in several countries. She has participated with presentations at international conferences.

Antonios Kanellos is an MA student in Special Education in National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. He studied Art Conservation (1999-2001), Byzantine Icons (2001-2003) and holds a BA-Postgraduate degree in Athens School of Fine Art (2003-2008). He has participated in many group exhibitions in Greece, and has participated with presentations at international conferences.

Panel 3.2 Aesthetics and Postmodern Culture

Mode-2 Art: From Modern to Postmodern and Beyond

Ernest Ženko

University of Primorska

Postmodern debates, which were à la mode a couple of decades ago, became démodé, and mostly disappeared. Instead of postmodern, today we mainly discuss contemporary art, but the question that is posed largely remains the same: Are we able to understand art that came after modernism? In the paper its author claims that Mode-2 approach shows some promising results and could be used in this context in order to shed some light on the topic of contemporary art. In 1994 an international group of social scientists published a book entitled *The New Production of Knowledge*, in which they put forth a new theory of knowledge production named Mode-2. The concept has attracted a considerable interest, and in 2001 they extended their analysis to the implications of Mode-2 knowledge production for society at large, and proposed the emergence of Mode-2 society. Authors argued that a new form of knowledge production started emerging in the mid-twentieth century, and that it should be distinguished from traditional form, which they accordingly labelled Mode-1. The most important difference between Mode-1 and Mode-2 concerns the context in which problems are set and solved. Knowledge produced under Mode-1 implies a form of pure science, detached from all the needs, demands, and concerns in the world out there; Mode-1 science is science for science's sake. By contrast, Mode-2 knowledge is carried out in the context of a particular application; it is always produced under an aspect of continuous negotiation and it will not be produced until the interests of various actors are included. In this sense science can no longer be regarded as an autonomous space, clearly demarcated from other spheres of society. Furthermore, while problems in Mode-1 were set and solved within the field of a specific discipline, in Mode-2 a transdisciplinary approach is needed, since problems originate in a context so complex and heterogeneous that it exceeds the possibilities of any particular discipline to set, let alone solve, given problems. Mode-2 approach is consequently heterogeneous, hybrid, fluid, but also reflexive. Structural changes that started to emerge from the mid-twentieth century on, within the field of science and technology, resemble modifications in art. If one changes the word science for art and rereads the attributes that separate Mode-2 from Mode-1, it is not difficult to see how similar those fields behave. However, this approach also opens a few interesting and important questions. If Mode-1 represents a modern institutionalized concept of science or art, does Mode-2 characterise its postmodern form? Is there a symmetry between science and art in this regard? It is important to note that Mode-2 does not represent either a break with or a continuation of Mode-1, and also that Mode-2 is not an *Aufhebung* of Mode-1 in a Hegelian sense. Mode-1 is a construct, built in order to justify autonomy, and in the case of art, the role of autonomy was raised to a higher power, and became an inevitable constituent part of art. With the end of modernism, however, the sphere of art went through major structural changes that are still waiting to be properly conceptualised.

Prof. dr. Ernest Ženko studied physics and philosophy, and graduated in 1997 at Department of philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Between 1999 and 2001 Dr. Ženko was employed at the Institute of Philosophy of Scientific research center of Slovenian academy of arts and sciences as young researcher and later research assistant. In 2003 he moved to Faculty of humanities, University of Primorska, and in 2014 he was elected Full Professor for philosophy of culture. During his doctoral studies he received a scholarship from German Ministry (DAAD) for study and research visit at

Friedrich-Schiller University in Jena. After finishing his PhD, Dr. Ženko held the position of a Fellow in Residence at Kolleg Friedrich Nietzsche in Weimar, Germany. In 2005 he received the title Research Professor from University of Kaifeng, China. In 2010 he received Bartol Award for a university teacher. He currently holds a position of Professor at Media studies, Anthropology and Culture Studies, and Biopsychology at University of Primorska. From March 2008 until May 2011 he took an active part as a senior researcher in a research project from 6th EU Framework Program entitled Social Sciences and European Research Capacities. His research interests include: philosophy, aesthetics, critical theory, film theory, photography, social psychology, theoretical psychoanalysis and philosophy of science.

Aesthetics and Cultural Turns

Giuseppe Patella

University of Rome Tor Vergata

The presentation explores the relationship between aesthetics and cultural studies. It argues that the perspective of cultural studies, despite the many defects of this field of studies (their eclecticism, their lack of scientific rigor, their methodological impurity...), has opened new opportunities for aesthetics by adopting a more pluralistic and inclusive approach that overcomes any form of ethnocentricity, rethinks values, topics and ways of being and takes account of marginal or alternative experiences coming from contemporary society. It is then necessary to face the challenges of today's multicultural society without avoiding the experience of dialogue and difference. This includes incorporating new topical horizons, whether economic, political or social as well as rethinking the very nature of aesthetics.

Giuseppe Patella is associate professor of Aesthetics at University of Rome Tor Vergata, Director of IRCA (International Research Center for Aesthetics and Art Theory), member of IAA (International Association of Aesthetics) and member of SIE (Società Italiana d'Estetica). Last books: *L'estetica mediterranea di George Santayana* (Milano 2001); *Estetica culturale* (Roma 2005); *Giambattista Vico tra Barocco e Postmoderno* (Milano, 2005); *Belleza, Arte y Vida* (Valencia, 2010); *Articolazioni. Saggi di filosofia e teoria dell'arte* (Pisa, 2010); *George Santayana at 150: International Interpretations*, edited with M. Flamm and J. Rea, (Lexington Books, 2014). *Eyes and Gazes in Philosophy and Arts*, edited with A. Okada (Rome 2015); He has been invited speaker and gave lectures in many universities in Italy and abroad (France, Germany, Spain, Mexico, Canada, Poland, Venezuela, Turkey, Japan, China, Korea, Norway).

Panel 3.3 Engaging Aesthetics in the History of Philosophy

Aristotle's Conception of the Politically Beautiful and its Contemporary Relevance

Andrew Hull

Northwestern University

“Beauty is realized in number and magnitude, and the state which combines magnitude with good order must necessarily be the most beautiful,” (Politics 1326a33-34). This is how Aristotle describes the layout of the ideal polis. The layout itself is intriguing: irregular, densely packed residences on the periphery with grid-like boulevards in the civic center. It is with this design that “security and beauty will be combined,” using the word ‘kalon’ to denote beauty. I argue Aristotle possesses a “political aesthetics” which makes connections with his more theoretical work - particularly on mathematical beauty in the *Metaphysics* (1078a6-36) - that sheds light on the virtuous life Aristotle envisions for citizens. But Aristotle’s political aesthetics are more nuanced than just some desire to replicate the eternal for intellectual pleasure, and this is where his thinking becomes most relevant to us. His political analysis can be very materialist in character, and this has an advantage of providing a naturalistic understanding of the state and society. For Aristotle, a politics that does not take a practical understanding of the material needs of humanity is dangerous. If so, then his ideal of a “political kalon,” while influenced by an admiration of pure geometric form, is ultimately informed by the other most prominent use of ‘kalon’ in Greek: Fitting. This sense is strongly tied to practical ethics in ancient philosophy, but in Aristotle I argue the beautiful polis is also meant to an especially fitting one for us. This fittingness is shown in two regards. 1) The embrace of geometry and order attends to our political nature just as much as to our rationality. He recommends regular streets for how physically “convenient” they are to get to the agora and the assembly as these are the places where politics, deliberation, and creative performance are found. These boulevards are designed to allow maximum access to the political process, encouraging the one thing all citizens in the polis have in common: their ability to deliberate and act together as equals. 2) But, unlike Plato, he embraces an element of disorder and spontaneity in his city as demonstrated by his acceptance of housing developing in irregular, densely packed regions. This fits our animal, organic nature as well. While in the *Metaphysics* he lists “symmetry” as an element of beauty, such a requirement is absent from his recommendations for the polis. This is because the density and irregularity of housing is reflective of the asymmetrical nature of human social bonds and connections. Such recommendations anticipate Jane Jacobs and her own observations in *Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Aristotle provides a powerful theoretical foundation for her observations on the benefits of maintaining a level of disorder and density in the city, pushing against the deleterious “renewing” of cities of post-WWII America that ignored such aspects of human socializing. Aristotle’s aesthetics thus has a link to that most public form of art, urban design, providing a reminder that between the political and the aesthetic lies the human.

Andrew Hull is a PhD student in Ancient Philosophy at Northwestern University, completing a dissertation on ‘exactness’ in Aristotle’s political philosophy under the supervision of Richard Kraut. He received his BA at Emory University with a thesis on Plato’s 7th Letter and an MSt from the University of Oxford with a thesis on Atomism.

Matters of Taste and Cognitive Aesthetics

Iris Vidmar

University of Rijeka

Most discussions regarding the aesthetic judgments, or judgments of taste, focus on the question of whether such judgments are manifestations of subjective preferences, or whether they depict features that the objects objectively possess. Quite often, these discussions take a turn into a debate regarding the proper role of critics and critical judgments, and the question of whether one should modify one's own taste if one finds oneself disagreeing with others, most notably, the critics. In that sense, a theoretical framework within which the problem of aesthetic judgments is discussed consists of debates regarding realism vs. anti-realism of aesthetic properties, and regarding one's entitlement to one's aesthetic judgments and their subsequent justifiability. As I argue in this paper, contemporary findings of cognitive aesthetics offer valuable and much needed solutions to both of these debates. To show that, I position the problem of aesthetic judgments against a slightly different framework, the one provided by the empirical approaches to aesthetic issues, most notably cognitive and evolutionary theories about development of human aesthetic preferences. More specifically, I show that traditional philosophical armchair theories of taste, particularly those advanced by Hume and Kant, were in fact anticipatory of some of the most contemporary conclusions advanced by cognitive aesthetics. I am primarily concerned with showing how some of Kant's most contentious claims get corroborated by contemporary findings of cognitive aesthetics, emphasizing four in particular: his notion of autonomous judgments, his idea about the empirical interest in the beauty and its connectedness to sociability, his notion of *sensus communis*, and his notion of the ideal of beauty. At the core of my proposal is the notion of aesthetic agency, which I define as one's innate capacity to notice and react to the aesthetic features of the world and one's own experience of it, and to make judgments about these features that are grounded solely in one's being conscious of such experience, where it is rightly assumed that one is not mistaken about it. Theories developed by evolutionary scientists give convincing reasons to claim that such consciousness is hard-wired into our brains, and cognitive psychologists working on 'aesthetic' responses to art and environment suggest that aesthetic preferences are widely shared. This gives empirical force to Kant's view on *sensus communis*, but it raises two problems: that of explaining wide disagreements in aesthetic judgments, and the one concerning the sense that our aesthetic judgments are expressions of our most personal, inner, subjective selves, rather than our shared human nature. To solve these, I look at some of the factors that cognitive scientists underline as affecting our aesthetic preferences, and I use their insights to provide a more coherent account of aesthetic agency, which sees it as mediating between our personal, private selves, and our social interactions. An addendum to my paper is a discussion on the methodological and theoretical value of introducing scientific research into philosophical debates, which, on some views, threaten to put philosophers out of business.

Iris Vidmar is an assistant professor currently employed at the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka, Croatia. Her area of specialization includes philosophy of art and aesthetics, with particular interest at philosophy of literature, poetry and Kant's aesthetics. Iris Vidmar defended her PhD after completing a doctorate program at the University of Rijeka in 2013, on the topic of literary cognitivism. She continued to explore the topic ever since, with particular interest in literary forms and genres, ranging from realism to science fiction and from poetry to mystery novels. Working at the intersection of philosophy and literature, she has written on various aspects of literary experience, exploring it from ontological, epistemological and ethical perspectives. As an

associate at the research project Identity, funded by the University of Rijeka, she was concerned with fictional characters, and the ways in which literary and art experiences relate to one's notion of self. As a member of the research center dedicated to the exploration of language, she is concerned with poetry and poetic use of language. Her most recent interests extend to cognitive aesthetics, where she is exploring connections between philosophical and scientific ways of discussing art and our cognitive faculties that enable us to create it and respond to it. In her writings, she unites philosophy with literature and literary criticism, arguing for the importance of humanistic disciplines more generally. She also works in Metaphilosophy, where she is mostly interested at accounting for the particular value, role and function that philosophy has for our practical lives, and in the overall educational system. She published in Croatian Journal of Philosophy, Prolegoma, Synthesis Philosophica, The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Philosophy in Review, Kultura, The European Legacy, Philosophy and Literature. She was a coeditor of a special issue of the Belgrade-based Journal Culture on the topic of literature and truth, and is currently co-editing a collection of papers on the literary connections to reality. She presented her work at more than 60 national and international conferences. The list of her publications, conferences presentations, and her other professional engagements can be accessed at <https://portal.uniri.hr/portfelj/795>. She is one of the directors of Philosophy of Art conference, held annually in Dubrovnik. She is currently a secretary of Croatian Society for Analytic Philosophy. In addition to her academic career, she is a prominent translator of philosophy. She can be reached at ividmar@ffri.hr

The Sublime Object in Tragedy: Psychoanalysis, Desire and Sublimation

Francesco Frendo
Independent Scholar

This paper will elaborate on the conceptual relationship between sublimation, object representation (Das Ding) and desire in psychoanalytic theory and argues that such a topology could be understood through the aesthetics of the sublime epitomized by the tragic figure of Antigone. As a point of initiation this paper will examine Lacan's 7th seminar, 'The Ethics of Psychoanalysis', and his re-examination of the notion of sublimation. Lacan reorients the notion of sublimation in an attempt to amalgamate the origin of object relations together with the pleasure principle, death and the ethical demand of desire. In effect, this task of this paper is twofold: Firstly, an in-depth analysis will demonstrate the way Lacan links such concepts to in order to outline the fundamental task and ethics of psychoanalysis. In this respect, rejecting the Eudamonic telos of Aristotelian ethics, Lacan sustains that the primal function of psychoanalysis is an ethics towards sublimation. Psychoanalysis strives to reorient desire from its fundamental archaic object of relation. Extracted from its Kantian reference, the original object of desire is referred to as Das Ding which is characterised by the id's drives but inhibited by the prohibitions of social laws. It will be shown how Lacan argues that the dialectics of desire is therefore ubiquitously characterised by a cavity within the psyche of the subject; Social laws distance the subject from Das Ding itself in which the subject circles round the satisfaction of desire but is prevented from self-fulfilment. Das Ding is thus universally represented by a void and is an absolute other of the subject. It is in this vein that Lacan reiterates the Freudian description of sublimation as a certain kind of modification of the excess in libidinal drives into an object of desire that holds elements of social value and recognition. Yet, as it will be argued, Lacanian sublimation is a process wherein desire attempts to reorient its original object of desire while simultaneously affirming the void at its core.

Secondly, this paper will subsequently argue that such a position represents the inevitable tragic experience of the subject which offers both a creative and a destructive dimension through one's realization of desire. In the former, a creative element represents the reorientation offered through sublimation. However, the inaccessibility of Das Ding reflects the 'sublime' nature of the object which exerts a power of fascination, death and destruction. It is to this effect that the realisation of desire and the fundamental tragedy of psychoanalytic experience is epitomized by the figure of Antigone. Revisiting the implications of the Kantian Das Ding, Antigone presents what can be defined the 'sublime object' for it demonstrates that dynamic cavity between the necessity and freedom. Das Ding, the Kantian sublime, is represented in the very figure of Antigone who held the forbidden object of desire over familial and incestuous love. While the prohibitive law denies access to the original object of desire, if the subject transgresses the pleasures of desire, then there is the inevitable lure of death and destruction for which she falls victim to. It is in this vein, I argue, that Antigone can be understood, as Lacan insists, as the figure of 'sublime splendour and beauty' due to the aesthetic significance of her self-willed-victimization. The work of sublimation is thus an adjunction of the Kantian Sublime. It is the transformation and transgression of passion which could not fully unveil itself but attempts to demonstrate how the subject can achieve intimation through a certain aesthetic experiences and glimpses of accessibility.

From 2010 to 2013, Francesco read Philosophy and Anthropological Sciences at the University of Malta with an interim spell at Durham University (UK). After obtaining his B.A (Hons) in Philosophy, Francesco read for a Masters programme in Philosophy at the University of Sussex (Uk) and graduated in 2015 with a dissertation entitled "Hegel and Lacan's Dialectics of the Self". His preferred line of philosophical interests deal with continental philosophy, specifically with the intersection between German Idealism, psychoanalysis and post-structuralism.

Panel 4.1 Philosophy of Aesthetics

Expressive Properties and the Challenge of the Separable Experiences

Marta Benenti

FINO Consortium

1. Properties of the world and properties of the experience. Expressive experience is the experience of objects as expressing affective states (Tormey 1971, Arnheim 1974). Music is the most studied object of expressive experience, but a wide range of objects can be experienced as expressive, from natural landscapes (Wollheim 1993), to figurative and abstract paintings (Stecker 2010, Walton, 1999), from chords (Peacocke 2009, Kivy 2002) to colours (Kandinsky 1912, Lindauer 2013). Philosophical curiosity arises when it comes to the question of what we refer to when we describe artworks in expressive terms. One plausible answer is that expressive descriptions refer to “expressive properties” that belong to artworks. Admittedly, the relationship between perceptual and expressive properties is such that the former can be used to justify the latter. However, being properties that standardly apply to animate beings, expressive properties cannot belong to objects as perceptual properties do. On the basis of this intuition, most of the available theories take expressive properties to be properties of the experience, rather than features of the world. These theories include arousalism, projectivism, resemblance theories.

2. Causal triggers. I contend that all the mentioned solutions agree on two points. First, they admit that expressive experience is perceptual in character. Second, they recognize that expressive experience is somehow grounded in perceptual properties of objects, such a grounding consisting in a causal trigger. Perceptual properties are taken to causally generate expressive responses – be they affective, imaginative or associative. This capacity that perceptual properties have to generate expressive responses is conceived in terms of brute factuality (Noordhof 2008:345; Wollheim 1993, Currie 2011): certain perceptual properties of artworks trigger expressive responses; these expressive responses consist in the experience of those objects as having expressive properties.

3. The heresy of the separable experience. Admittedly, the experience we must account for consists in the ascription of expressive properties to artworks in virtue of their perceptual properties. If this relation is exhausted by the causal power of perceptual properties, however, the fact that we appeal to those properties in order to justify our expressive attributions is not adequately explained. On one hand, we have perceptual properties that cause a response; on the other hand, we have expressive properties that are constitutive of such a response, but no rationale between the two kinds of properties can be provided. Malcolm Budd named this fracture the “heresy of the separable experience” (Budd 1985).

4. Dealing with the heresy. Two paths are available. First, one can claim oneself heretical, denying that any rationale for the relation between perceptual properties and expressive properties can ever be provided (Matravers 2007: 96-99). Second, one can accept the challenge of the heresy. I will put forward three reasons to insist that perceptual properties are not (only) causal triggers, but rather they are constitutive of expressive properties. (i) The phenomenal character of expressive experience is perceptual; (ii) perceptual properties can account for the intersubjective agreement about the expressive character of artworks; (iii) manipulation of perceptual properties that determines the expressive aspect of things can be thought and learned. The claim that expressive properties are determined by perceptual properties is not ipso facto the claim that the former consist in the subjective response to the causal triggering provided by

the latter. A systematic study of the relation between dynamic perceptual patterns and expressive properties suggests that the rationale between the two is not doomed to remain mysterious.

Marta Benenti is PhD candidate at the FINO consortium (University of Turin and Eastern Piedmont). She works at the intersection between aesthetics and philosophy of perception. During her PhD she has been visiting student at the Glasgow Centre for the Study of Perceptual Experience, the Bochum Center for Mind, Brain and Cognitive Evolution and the Antwerp Centre for Philosophical Psychology. In 2018 she was DAAD Fellow at the Berlin School of Mind and Brain. Her main focus are expressive qualities of objects and of artworks, and she is currently extending her research to theories of mind-reading and to emotions broadly conceived.

Preserving the “Authentic” Object: a Philosophical Exploration in Art Conservation Theory

Lisa Giombini

Roma Tre University, Freie Universität Berlin

When seeing a painting that has been newly cleaned, freed of the gloomy look conveyed by the patina, some viewers may feel surprised and even shocked. Others, conversely, are just pleased by the freshness of the colors and the improved visibility of details. This conflict of opinion is usual when it comes to issues concerning restoration. In fact, there has never been a time in which restoration wasn't the stuff of heated debate. Though controversy in restoration may be explained by the complex nature of the conservation profession, the discipline's main problem is probably not the plentitude of data it has to account for, but lack of rigorous self-analysis; lack, that is, of an understanding of why the activity is performed in the first place. At a time when preservation of cultural heritage is promoted as a universal cult, Aestheticians are urged to re-examine the conceptual presuppositions that guide conservation practice. Restorers make choices in the light of implicit assumptions concerning the identity, value and meaning of artworks, assumptions that often go unnoticed. In this paper, I will put some of these ideas under the spotlight to probe their conceptual consistency. It argue that a nineteenth-century notion of restoration as a 'truth-based' activity grounds many professional charters around the world and is widespread in much common-sense discourse. From this perspective, the main purpose of restoration is to maintain, enhance or reveal an object's true or authentic nature. However familiar these expressions may sound, they are nonetheless philosophically puzzling. What does it mean to say that the purpose of restoration is to bring back the object's 'truth'? What truth are we referring to? And how can an object exist in a state of 'non-true' condition? It seems that what we call the 'true' or 'authentic' condition of an art-object is often just the preferred condition we have in our mind, imagination, or taste. Restorations and de-restorations executed in the name of authenticity result from the social expectations determined by the cultural conceptions that are predominant at one time in a society. After restoration, an ancient sculpture may or may not look closer to its 'original' state (which we do not know), but it surely looks as today people would expect it to look. Despite the alleged objectivity of the language used to describe it, restoration is thus always driven by subjective considerations, decisions and values. As Cesare Brandi (1963) used to put it, restorers have primarily a critical rather than technical mission. Choosing one or another solution during conservation treatments depends upon interpreting which meaning of an artwork should prevail, often at the expense of the others (the historical over the aesthetical, the functional over the archeological, etc). Restorers who aim at saving objects in their 'original, authentic, true state', thus, fight a losing battle: even appreciating an artwork is to transform or to re-invent it. Rather than imprisoning conservation within the ideological cage of 'authenticity', thus, we should then recognize the artifice no less than the social relevance that is inherent in it.

I am currently a recipient of a DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Post-Doctoral Fellowship at the Institut für Philosophie of the Freie Universität Berlin for the project “Preserving. Restoring. Conserving. An investigation in the philosophy of art conservation”. In July 2015 I was awarded in Philosophy by the University of Lorraine (France) and the University of Roma Tre (Italy), in an English-based joint-supervision program, my research areas being analytic aesthetics and art metaphysics in particular. In 2016 I was granted a post-doctoral scholarship at the Philosophy Department of Stuttgart State Academy of Art. This resulted in the publication of a monograph ‘Musical Ontology. A guide for the Perplexed’ (2017). Currently, my research interest brings together historic, aesthetic and moral perspectives to explore the ethics of conservation/restoration from a philosophical point of view. I give

particular emphasis to the ontological presuppositions guiding heritage preservation practices in different cultures and social contexts. More specifically, my project examines how notions of identity, authenticity and value ground many of our most highly controversial beliefs such as the ‘myth’ of the original and the idea of restoration as a ‘truth-enforcement operation’. At a time when the conservation profession seems increasingly characterized by a preoccupation with its own methods, philosophical work on its conceptual foundations is, I think, especially needed to take into account the multiple dynamics, interests, and identities that fashion today’s concept of ‘world cultural heritage’. This year, I have been selected to present the provisional outcomes of this research at a number of international conferences, including, among the others, the American Society of Aesthetic Pacific Meeting, the European Society of Aesthetics Conference and the International Association of Aesthetic Congress.

The Normativity of Aesthetic Experience as a Principle for Aesthetics

Giovanna Caruso

University Koblenz-Landau

The current Western aesthetic debate is controversial. Its complexity results above all from the fact that the differences between the various approaches do not only concern methodological aspects, but the determination of the object of aesthetic research itself. Suffice is to think of all the attempts – not only different but often even irreconcilable – to find an appropriate definition for the work in the field of art that has taken place since the 1950s both in the United States and in Europe. It seems to me that this indeterminacy of the aesthetic object and, consequently, of the discipline “aesthetics” has two main reasons: On the one hand, the new forms of artistic expression emerging in recent years have demonstrated the inadequacy of classical categories and demanded new theoretical tools for its possible definition; on the other hand, an aestheticisation process of the human lifeworld has been diagnosed, which has extended the research interest of aesthetics far beyond classical art to all areas of human life. Given these circumstances, today’s Western aesthetics is faced with the task of redefining its own objects, methods, and goals. Based on the aesthetic experience of a work of art, I aim in my paper to accept this challenge faced by aesthetics. In this sense, I want to propose a new principle for aesthetic research that is based on aesthetic experience. My aim is to show that every distinct aesthetic experience has an immanent normativity that can constitute the principle for an aesthetic theory and thus contribute to the determination of the aesthetic in general and therefore of the aesthetic discipline. In order to clarify what I mean with the expression “immanent normativity of aesthetic experience” and how it can become a useful principle for aesthetic research I will proceed in three steps: Initially, starting with the statement that artworks escape any definitional formula and nevertheless require conceptual articulation, I would like to show that the only way to correctly define an artwork is to define it as an autonomous experience-form. But an experience is something subjective. That is why the question about its objectivity and the possibility of basing a systematic theory on the experience at all arises. The aim of the second step, therefore, will be to develop an understanding of experience, that on the one hand satisfies the demand of an aesthetic theory for theoretical foundation and universality and, on the other hand, considers the particularity and the uniqueness of each object and each experience. This becomes possible due to the normativity inherent in each individual experience. In a third step, it is finally possible to show that the disclosed normativity of the aesthetic experience has manifold theoretical potential for the determination of the aesthetic in general and thus also of the aesthetic discipline.

Giovanna Caruso (Cosenza 1985) studied Philosophy at the University of Roma “Tor Vergata” (Italy) and at the Humboldt University in Berlin (Germany). From 2013 to 2015, she was doctoral fellow at the University of Koblenz-Landau, Campus Landau (Germany). In January 2018, she defended her doctoral thesis “Die Bedeutung der Kunst für das Leben. Eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit Adorno, Benjamin und Heidegger.” From October 2017 to March 2018, she worked as a research associate at the Institute of Philosophy of the University of Koblenz-Landau, Campus Landau, where she currently holds a postdoctoral scholarship. Her principal research interests lie in the following fields: Aesthetics, Theoretical Philosophy, Phenomenology, Hermeneutics, Critical Theory, and Philosophical Anthropology.

Cosmological Creativity: An Aesthetical World Perspective

Luca Siniscalco

Università degli Studi di Milano

Cosmological creativity: an aesthetical world perspective The contemporary philosophical debate is disrupted by a rigid and fruitless opposition between analytic philosophy, in which the empiricist and positivist tradition converge, and postmodern philosophy, characterized by a prevalent *pars destruens*, in which genealogical analysis and critical perspectives summarize the history of the Western philosophy annihilating its main truthful contents. The first paradigm, destined to fall into naturalism – as Edmund Husserl denounced in his studies –, forgets the criticist perspective and the need for deeply philosophical questioning of the gnoseological requirements; this theoretical paradigm is opposed to the second one, that is linked to a relativistic and subjectivist view, which denies the objective pole of reality and the notion of truth itself, inevitably falling back in a solipsism that precludes any genuine philosophical speculation. Because of this unsatisfying opposition, I would like to investigate an alternative to the currently dominant paradigms, a counter-philosophical perspective that is at the same time intrinsic to Western speculation. I would like to do it concentrating my paper on the topic of creativity. In the field of Aesthetics the concept of genius has deeply been influenced by the tradition that goes from Kant through Goethe, Sturm und Drang, German Romanticism (i.e. Novalis, Schlegel) and Schelling. Therefore the idea of genius itself has often assumed a strong subjectivist perspective, reproducing a kind of idealistic representation of the individual effectiveness on world creation gnoseological and metaphysical process. The aim of our panel is to show a less known but deep perspective on aesthetical creativity, based on the mythical and symbolical Hermeneutics we have been studying in our academical researches, especially devoted to the German magazine «Antaios» (1959-1971). Through this conception, that proceeds in the Western culture as a *fil rouge* going from traditional culture and esoteric knowledge to modern authors such as Martin Heidegger, Ernst Jünger and Mircea Eliade, creativity can be conceived as a cosmological process where subject and object are no more considered static ontological structures, but active poles of an eternal dynamic pattern developing in energetical and proactive constructions. Recalling Heidegger *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* (The Origin of the Work of Art), we want to show how creativity can be understood as an ontological and cosmological process in which the artist can be considered no more as the only voluntarist subject of the aesthetical process, but as a mediation figure in the eternal exchange between Earth, Sky, Mortal and Divinities (as explained in the “Fourfold” [Das Geviert]). References to other sources, as the already quoted Jünger and Eliade, will help the exposition of this “cosmological creativity”.

Born in Milan (1991), Luca Siniscalco studied philosophy at the University of his city and at the Universität Carl von Ossietzky in Oldenburg (Germany). He graduated in Philosophical Sciences with a thesis on the magazine «Antaios», supported by Giancarlo Lacchin (Chair of Aesthetics - Unimi), with whom he is currently collaborating. He is editor of «Antarès - Prospettive Antimoderne» (Edizioni Bietti) and contributor to various publications, including «Barbadillo», «Intellettuale Dissidente» and «la Biblioteca di via Senato». His publications have been published in many magazines, newspapers and anthologies. He also works as freelance editor and proofreader. Major publications Translation from German of: Chapter VII – Chi ha paura dei sentimenti? – Romanticismo e idealismo, in *Più cose in cielo e in terra. I sogni della filosofia e i pensieri del teatro*, ed. by F.F. Fagotto, La Tigre di Carta, Milano 2017 Ernst Jünger “luogotenente del nulla” in «Filosofia e nuovi sentieri/ISSN 2282-5711», 13/12/2015 Maschera e volto del postmodernismo contemporaneo, in «Filosofia e nuovi sentieri/ISSN 2282-5711»,

26 febbraio 2017 Ernst Jünger: Un'ontologia delle forme mitiche, in AA.VV., Octagon. La ricerca della totalità, vol. III, ed. by Hans Thomas Hakl, scientia nova, Gaggenau 2017 Heidegger contra Nihilismus: una soluzione estetica?, in «In Circolo. Rivista di filosofia e culture», n. 4, 2017 La frattura originaria. Il Diavolo nell'opera di Guido De Giorgio, in «La Rosa di Paracelso», ed. by Claudio Bonvecchio, Christian Giudice, Michele Olzi, Mimesis Edizioni, n. 02/2017 (ISSN: 2532-2028)

Panel 4.2 Narrative Aesthetics

Entering the Burrow: Enigmatic Readings of Kafka

Kenneth Wain
University of Malta

If there is one adjective to describe Franz Kafka that would probably meet with the approval of most analysts and commentators on his work, it must surely be the word ‘enigmatic’. This description as enigmatic must also be, partly at least, what has created fascination not just with his work but with Kafka himself, its creator, since not long after his death in 1924. A fascination I fell victim to myself in my early twenties and by which I have been held captive since – in the company I might add of some of the key philosophers, writers, and critics of the 20th century. The enigmatic, whether expressed in a statement or declaration, a narrative, in speech or writing generally, or in sound or image, is what raises the question of meaning – in Kafka’s case, what do his stories mean; his three unfinished novels, short stories, novellas, vignettes, prose poems? The question of meaning, in turn, is one about how to read an author; in this case Kafka, and the question of reading that interests me is one of how to enter the text that is Kafka? A question, of course, which is central for anyone who wants to read him seriously and, even more so write about him, like myself. A question which has, of course, already taxed others such as his friend and literary executor Max Brod, Benjamin, Barthes, Blanchot, Deleuze and Guattari, Derrida, and so on. This paper constitutes some of my preliminary reflections on how it may be answered.

Kenneth Wain is a full professor at the University of Malta. He has served as Head of Department and Dean of the Faculty of Education, sitting on the University Senate and MATSEC Board. He currently teaches political and moral philosophy, beside philosophy of education, at the University of Malta. He is the author of several books, chapters in books, academic articles in international peer-reviewed journals, poems and short stories. Some of his publications include *Philosophy of Lifelong Education* (1987), *Theories of Teaching* (1992), *Value Crisis* (1995), *The Learning Society in a Postmodern World* (2004), *On Rousseau* (2011), *Democracy without Confession* (2013, with John Baldacchino), *Does it matter who speaks?* (2014) and, most recently, *Between Truth and Freedom: Rousseau and Our Contemporary Political and Educational Culture* (2015).

Works, Texts, and the Anti-Intentionalist Fallacy

Simon Walgenbach

University of Manchester

One of the major points of contention in the analytic philosophy of literature is the relevance of authors' intentions to the interpretation of their works. As interpretation is widely construed as the attribution of meanings to works of literature, this amounts to the question of the extent to which such intentions determine these meanings. While anti-intentionalists take literary meaning to be independent of authorial intentions, intentionalists hold that they should play at least some role in literary interpretation. The most influential formulation of anti-intentionalism has been put forward by Monroe Beardsley (1970), who argues that what a text means is independent from what its author meant with it and that literary interpretation should only be concerned with the former. I begin by showing that Beardsley's arguments presuppose textualism about literary works, i.e. the thesis that they are identical to the texts that constitute them. I then argue that textualism is false. I concede that a prominent argument put forward by Arthur Danto (1981) and Gregory Currie (1991) cannot be used to refute textualism in the context of the debate about intentionalism without begging the question, as both authors appeal to intuitions about admissible interpretations to establish their ontological claim. Instead, I present an original argument that can be sketched as follows: (B1.1) If textualism is true, then it is not possible that some but not other copies of one text are copies of a work; (B1.2) however, it is possible that some but not other copies of one text are copies of a work; (B1.3) therefore, textualism is false. As the textualist is likely to deny (B1.2), I present a thought experiment to show that it is possible for different copies of one text to constitute a work of literature in some but not other cases. I consider three possible textualist objections, arguing that they all fail. The most plausible conclusion, I claim, is that textualism is false. As Beardsley needs to assume textualism and textualism is false, I conclude that Beardsley's arguments against intentionalism fail. Furthermore, it turns out that the interpretation of texts and the interpretation of works are two issues that need to be treated separately. The interesting question for the philosopher of literature will then be how a work's meaning is determined and how it relates to its text's meaning. It remains open whether or not authorial intentions are another determinant. Bibliography: Beardsley, Monroe (1970): *The Possibility of Criticism*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press. Currie, Gregory (1991): *Work and Text*. *Mind* 100, 325-340. Danto, Arthur (1981): *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Born in Bonn in 1992, Simon began his academic career by studying music theory and musicology at the Folkwang University of the Arts before committing himself fully to philosophy. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Duisburg-Essen in 2016 and his Master of Letters from the University of St Andrews in 2017. The latter also conferred upon him a distinction in coursework as well as the Dean's List Award for Academic Excellence. Currently, Simon is working towards a PhD in philosophy at the University of Manchester under the supervision of Dr Catharine Abell and Prof Julian Dodd. In his thesis, he aims at developing a unified theory of artistic meaning by applying pragmatic theories of language to the arts. Simon is an alumnus of the German Academic Scholarship foundation and currently funded by the North Western Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership; furthermore, he holds the University of Manchester's President's Doctoral Scholar Award. He is the winner of the German Society for Analytic Philosophy's essay prize 2015 and has consequently been published in *Grazer Philosophische Studien*. His research interests include aesthetics, the philosophy of language, epistemology, and the philosophy of mind.

The Contemporary Aesthetics of Sincerity

Mario Aquilina
University of Malta

The rise of an Aesthetics of ‘New Sincerity’ over the last two decades, as exemplified in the writing of David Foster Wallace and Dave Eggers, among several other – mainly American – writers and artists, has recently returned the concept of sincerity to a prominent role in critical discourse about art and literature. ‘New Sincerity’ is often understood in terms of its affinities with Post-Postmodernism or Metamodernism, that is to say, with the idea that we are now living in a time marked by political realities in which Postmodern irony is seen as not to suffice and is thus problematised and punctuated by a concern with a quasi-utopian concern with ‘sincerity’ as a more desirable mode of relating to the world (See Luke Turner, *Metamodernist // Manifesto*). In this paper, I argue that a reconsideration of sincerity as an aesthetic quality (or virtue) and of the aesthetics of sincerity is fundamental, especially in the context of a rise in political discourse – often of the populist kind – which makes of ‘sincerity’ a key rhetorical manoeuvre in the establishment of trust in and affective identification with political leaders. Such discourse, which presents sincerity as intrinsically valuable because, for example, it says aloud ‘what everybody thinks’ irrespective of the argument or feeling expressed by it, often depends on a suppression of its own rhetoricity and the adoption of seemingly non-ironic modes of communication. To do so, I look back at some key moments in the history of the literary genre of the essay and confessional memoirs (Montaigne, Rousseau, Hazlitt, and others), in order to show how the aesthetics of ‘sincerity’ depends on specific stylistic and rhetorical manoeuvres, and how ‘sincerity’, in being a rhetorical effect dependent on performance and execution, is always already divided from itself and hence never wholly ‘sincere’. Sincerity, when conscious of itself, is never sincere. It connotes an intrinsic otherness of the self, and, in this context, irony – from which new sincerity is sometimes described as departing – is not antithetical but crucially implicated in the rhetoric of sincerity. In a final move, I argue that sincerity’s ironic otherness to itself is not necessarily a bad thing since pure ‘sincerity’ on its own, even if it were theoretically possible, does not suffice. What we need instead is an aesthetic, not of sincerity, but of ironic and empathic sincerity.

Mario Aquilina is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English at the University of Malta, where he teaches and researches literary theory; style rhetoric; the essay; electronic literature; and cultural studies. Aquilina was awarded a PhD in English Studies by the University of Durham, UK, in 2013. His first monograph, *The Event of Style in Literature*, was published by Palgrave Macmillan in September 2014. Among other projects, he has co-edited a special issue of *CounterText* (Edinburgh University Press) on ‘Electronic Literature’, published in August 2016, and he has published in journals like *The Oxford Literary Review*, *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* and *Cahiers Elisabethains*.

Panel 4.3 Film and Media

Consuming the Death of a Star

Jodie Bonnici
University of Malta

This paper shall analyse the emergence of a participatory aesthetics throughout hybrid-communities (de Souza e Silva, 2004) in the age of ubiquity (Weiser, 1991, 1996, 1999). It will commence by setting the argument that contemporary cybercultures are an example of hybrid-communities where the offline and online co-exist, and the real and the virtual are intertwined to form the hybrid-spaces we inhabit (de Souza e Silva, 2004). In so doing, ubiquitous computing will be defined and determined to be the means by which such hybrid-communities may take root and flourish, identifying the current age as the age of ubiquity as predicted by computer scientist Mark Weiser (Weiser, 1991, 1996, 1999; Weiser and Brown, 1995, 1997). This shall lead to a more detailed examination of contemporary cybercultures as participatory cultures with a varied manifestation of aesthetic appreciation to prior offline cultures, pointing to what I will define and refer to as the cultures of virality. Upon outlining the significance of this term and illustrating it through examples, the focus shall then shift onto the production, distribution and reception of entertainment and information in these contemporary cultures of virality. I shall then posit the argument that entertainment and information in the cultures of virality are confluent and at times interchangeable, leading to an emergent participatory aesthetics, wherein the production and dissemination of knowledge within information societies allows for this same knowledge to become a consumable commodity in the overarching culture industry (Adorno and Bernstein, 2001; Adorno and Horkheimer, 2002, 2011). This will open a debate on massive-scale emotional contagion on social networking sites, particularly on Facebook (Kramer et al., 2014), and the concept of the Global Village (McLuhan, 1962, 1995) will be discussed in relation to projective identification and grievability (Klein, 1952, 1989; Butler, 2016). These reflections will lead to the argument that performers or entertainers, that is celebrities, in making their private lives a public drama, cease to be conceptualised as either a private individual or a public figure, and become rather a consumable commodity. Social networking sites turn society and human interactions into a spectacle, and all users become thus simultaneously players and spectators (Agamben, 1993). It is through this duality that the participatory aesthetics may emerge. The paper will then move on to discuss the passing of a celebrity as an object of aesthetics, a consumable which can and may be sensationalised and capitalised upon, turning grief and the expression of mourning into a trend to be picked up and brandished throughout the brief aftermath and on anniversaries. I shall analyse this fascination with the passing of a celebrity as a form of sentimental expression and artistic appreciation, noting both the creative and destructive tendencies displayed by ‘mourners’ in what I shall term the morbid aesthetic. The use of case studies will facilitate this examination and ground it in contemporary examples of the loss and grieving of a performer or entertainer, comparing and contrasting it to historical examples and traditions surrounding death.

Jodie Bonnici is a graduate student of the University of Malta. Her work focuses on the socio-political and cognitive implications of the advent of the Internet and social media, with particular interest in ubiquitous computing and contemporary trends in media-usage. Her current research projects centre on the intersection of video games and media theory as a means to propagate and experiment with philosophical queries through digital creations and the experiences of their users.

Fictional Emotions Revisited: Yes, We Do Fear the (Fictional) Shark

Abel B. Franco

California State University, Northridge

The old problem about how to explain the so-called fictional emotions could benefit from an exploration of the intentionality of these emotions, that is, what these emotions are really about. Most of the discussions on these emotions so far have mainly focused on the differences between our experience of responding emotionally to the content of a movie (while we watch it) and our normal emotional responses to real-life objects. This comparative view has, however, been constrained by the limitations of two unjustified assumptions: (1) that the fictionality of the objects of our emotions is itself a central aspect of our perception of the objects in the screen; and (2) that these emotions cannot be about the significance of the (fictional) object for us. The analysis of the intentionality of these emotions serves to discard these assumptions and, by doing this, clear the way to provide a different, and probably better, explanation of the main anomalies these emotions present us with, namely, the apparent lack in the movie viewer (a) of the proper first-person perspective in relation to the apparent emotional object, (b) of a belief in the reality of the fictional object, and (c) of a disposition to act according to the aroused emotion. I am proposing to accept what almost everybody that has entered the debate on fictional emotions has rejected: that our fear as we watch the shark coming out of the water in the screen is indeed a fear of the shark. And it is a fear that does not require any belief about the reality of the shark in order to be aroused and that, on the other hand, generates a disposition to act. It is a fear of the shark, not insofar as we see ourselves as the direct target of the shark's fury but insofar as the target of that fury is part of our emotional world, understanding by this the world of all the objects to which we are somehow (and in different degrees) emotionally attached. As in other real-life emotions, thus, as we watch movies, (a) the evaluative perception of objects is what triggers our emotions (in movies, we directly perceive, not imagine), (b) the evaluation of the object of our emotional response carries—as in cases of our emotional responses to objects that do not affect us directly, but affect objects to which we are attached emotionally—an evaluation regarding the significance of the object for us (insofar as our emotional world is at stake), and (c) such an emotion results in a disposition to act. In the case of fictional objects—as in the case of other non-existent imagined objects or objects whose physical existence is completely inaccessible to us—an action does not follow because the possibility of action is usually removed by our very awareness of the inaccessibility of the world in which the fictional objects appear. The awareness of accessibility/inaccessibility, however, is not—against common belief—immediately dependent on an ontological judgment but it is rather a question of degrees based on the strength of our emotional attachment to certain objects. This explains why, for example, the emotional effect of a movie can last well after finishing watching it and in a quite noticeable way, that is, as if the feel of that impact might not be distinguishable from the way strong real-life experiences may affect us. (Similarly, it can account for the cases of our emotional response to a story once we learn it is fiction after having originally believed that it was real. The new information does not—against a usual assumption—completely extinguish our emotional response).

Abel B. Franco holds a Litentiate Degree in Philosophy (1992) and a Litentiate Degree in French Philology (1997) from the University of Salamanca, Spain; a M.A. in History (1998) from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY); a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Salamanca (1999) and a Ph.D. in History and Philosophy of Science (2006) from the University of Pittsburgh (EE.UU). He has taught in different CUNY campuses (Brooklyn College, Lehman College and

Borough of Manhattan Community College), at the University of Pittsburgh and, since 2006, at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) where he is currently an Associate Professor of the Philosophy Department. He has written, given talks and published, mainly on the History of Natural Philosophy (especially Middle Ages and 17th century), on the History of Philosophy (especially the 17th century and, in particular, Descartes), on the History and Philosophy of Mind (especially emotions), and on Aesthetics (especially the relation between emotions and art in the Baroque and in contemporary philosophy of architecture and philosophy of fiction).

Panel 5.1 Body Aesthetics

Somaesthetics as praxis in Tino Sehgal's Situations

Evy Varsamopoulou
University of Cyprus

The constructed situations that Tino Sehgal teaches to professionals of the arts and ordinary people selected to enact them in museums and galleries or specific other public spaces, typically raise the question “What is happening?” in the often surprised visitors. This mixture of surprise, uncertainty and fascination with what’s going on seemed to be most succinctly captured by what J. F. Lyotard called the sublime and an art of immateriality. Sehgal’s performed situations can also be described as a kind of *dérive* adapted to the spaces that the contemporary “consumer” of art traverses, often retaining the habitual attitude of *flânerie* in commercial districts. Basing my reflections on Sehgal works: “Instead of allowing some thing to rise up to your face dancing bruce and dan and other things, 2000” (Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2011-12), “These Associations, 2012” (Tate Modern, London 2012), “Yet Untitled, 2013” (Amsterdam 2016 and Fondation Beyeler, Basel 2017) and “This You, 2006” (Fondation Beyeler, Basel 2017), I consider the relevance of Lyotard’s thought and the Situationists for describing the impact and significance of Sehgal’s work. I then conclude by arguing that Richard Shusterman’s reorientation of philosophical aesthetics into somaesthetics may offer the clearest and fullest theoretical appreciation of the experience and significance of Tino Sehgal’s work.

Evy Varsamopoulou is an associate professor in the Department of English Studies at the University of Cyprus. Her research interests, conference papers and publications are in the areas of Anglophone and European literature from the 18th century to the present, philosophical aesthetics, ethical and political philosophy, gender studies, film and visual studies.

Facial Attractiveness – an Example of Objective and Evolutionary Based Character of Beauty

Slavka Démuthová, *University of Ss. Cyril*

Andrej Demuth, *Trnava University*

Beauty is often considered as very subjective, multi-causally influenced, and variable aspect of perceived objects. “De gustibus non disputandum est” or “Beauty is in the eye of beholder” are commonly used phrases that aptly reflect this attitude in natural language. On the other hand, a large number of cases (e.g., worldwide admired nature sceneries, pieces of art, or smile of a baby) shows that there is some consensus in beauty evaluation standards or – at least – in attributes of beautiful objects. Detection and revelation of such attributes brings an answer to the question “What do beautiful things have in common?” and point to the possibility that beauty may also have its objective part. Using an example of the human face, the study brings an evidence for the roots of the existence of objective attributes of beautiful objects and explains the presence of these attributes from (predominantly) the evolutionary point of view. Attractive faces are those with present symmetry, averageness, apparent sexually dimorphic traits, intelligence... Results of numerous correlational studies show that all these characteristics significantly relate to important evolutionary characteristics of organisms such as fertility, overall and actual health, gene and immune system quality etc. From this point of view, beauty serves as an “honest signal” for the quality of organism. Moreover, mechanisms of beauty evaluation activate brain reward systems and areas involved in emotional responses. This causes a high appreciation of the perception of beautiful objects, their preference, and also major changes in subject’s behaviour. The study discusses the influence of described mechanisms also on beauty perception and evaluation of other (non-facial) types of beautiful objects. It questions the possibility of the generalization of the idea that beauty is a value of objects that has a deeper meaning for subject’s survival.

Slávka Démuthová is an Associate Professor of Psychology and the Head of the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia. Her professional orientation focuses on the biological/evolutionary explanations of human behavior and on thanatology. She is an author of several monographs, scientific articles and regularly gives invited lectures at universities abroad (University of Edinburgh, Scotland; Masaryk University in Brno and Prague College of Psychosocial Studies, Czech Republic; Cardinal St. Wyszynski University in Warsaw, Poland; University of Ljubljana, Slovenia).

Andrej Démuth studied philosophy and psychology. He is a Professor of philosophy and the Head of the Department of Philosophy at the Trnava University. He is the author of many books (Cognitive Aspects of Aesthetic Experience – Introduction - Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag 2017; Introduction to the Study of the History of Epistemology - Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag 2016; Prolegomena to the Study of Modern Philosophy - Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag 2016) and articles on cognition and the relationship between reflected and non-reflected knowledge and he regularly gives invited lectures at universities in Slovakia and abroad. His research focuses on modern philosophy, epistemology, and cognitive studies.

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Walking Between Art and Aesthetics

Luca Vargiu

University of Cagliari

Walking has been dealt with from various points of view and by various disciplines and practices, including art and aesthetics. In order to encompass such phenomenon in an adequate way, an ad hoc terminology has been often coined. Among the terms that have been appositely created, at least four are worth mentioning: “odology” (John Brinckerhoff Jackson), “hodological space” (Kurt Lewin, Jean-Paul Sartre and Otto Friedrich Bollnow), “strollology” (Lucius and Annemarie Burckhardt), “walkscapes” (Francesco Careri). However distinct and somehow divergent they can be, the four approaches labeled with such four terms all focus their attention to the relationship between body and space, considering moving as a fundamental moment of the bodily experience of space. For this reason, they can be fruitfully put in relation with the artistic practice of the so-called “walking artists”, such as Richard Long, Hamish Fulton, and Michael Höpfer. For on the part of the theoreticians as well as on the part of the artists, it is possible to maintain that walking “triggers thought about new forms of individual freedom, but also about the possible re-establishment of lost relationships between subject and surroundings, between places, time periods and cultures” (H. Eipeldauer on Höpfer).

Luca Vargiu (Cagliari, 1970) is researcher (“ricercatore confermato”) of Aesthetics at the University of Cagliari. He studied at the University of Cagliari, where he graduated in Philosophy (1995) and specialized in Art History (2001). Later he studied at the University of Palermo, where he acquired a PhD (“dottorato di ricerca”) in Aesthetics and Art Theories (2006). His research interests comprise the medieval and contemporary theories of images, the relationship between Aesthetics and Hermeneutics, the theories of Art History, and the philosophy of Landscape. He is a member of SIE (Società Italiana d’Estetica) and of the Scientific Committee of ISEB (Istituto “Emilio Betti” di Scienza e Teoria del Diritto nella storia e nella società). In 2009 he won the Premio Nuova Estetica (New Aesthetics Prize). Among his publications are the book: *Hermeneutik und Kunstwissenschaft. Ein Dialog auf Distanz – Emilio Betti und Hans Sedlmayr* (Logos Verlag, Berlin 2017), *Figure e bilanci. Saggi sparsi di filosofia dell’arte* (Mimesis, Milano-Udine 2016), *Storia dell’arte contemporanea in Sardegna. Introduzione allo studio* (Cuec, Cagliari 2009); and the long essays: *Prima dell’età dell’arte. Hans Belting e l’immagine medievale* («Aesthetica Preprint: Supplementa», n. 20, 2007, pp. 1-208), *Incroci ermeneutici. Betti, Sedlmayr e l’interpretazione dell’opera d’arte* («Aesthetica Preprint», n. 82, 2008, pp. 1-80). He has edited the volumes: *Esplorare nel passato indagare sul contemporaneo. Dare senso al paesaggio vol. I* (Mimesis, Milano-Udine 2015), *Sguardi sul paesaggio, sguardi sul mondo. Mediterranei a confronto* (with S. Aru, F. Parascandolo and M. Tanca, Franco Angeli, Milano 2012); and the monographic issues: *Crisis of Landscapes, Landscapes of the Crisis. What are the Solutions?* (with S. Aru, F. Parascandolo and M. Tanca, «J-Reading. Journal of Research and Didactics in Geography», 5, n. 1, 2016), *Paesaggio e democrazia* (with S. Aru, F. Parascandolo and M. Tanca, «Rivista Geografica Italiana», CXX, n. 4, 2013).

Panel 5.2 Phenomenology and Aesthetics

Adorno and Husserl: A Tentative Proposal

Alessandro Cazzola
Independent Scholar

This talk portrays a comparison between Theodor W. Adorno and Edmund Husserl according to a mended dialogue in the aesthetic field. The common lecture deals with the critical assessment committed to husserlian methods as it is shown in Adorno's *Metacritique of Epistemology*. Thus, it is compulsory to proceed beyond the customary critiques on the so-called idealistic charge of phenomenology, embodied by *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology* and to a *Phenomenological Philosophy*, and to cope with the genetic stage of husserlian thought, shown in *Formal and Transcendental Logic* and *Cartesian Meditations*. In these oeuvres Husserl provides a detour from the overwhelming power of rationality on the noematic senses of intentional acts and detects objective manifestations together with act moods suited for them. Here subjectivity is recognized as detached from its inheritance with psychological bounds, a topic which Husserl is devoted to, and revealed as concrete linchpin regarded in its transcendental roots, scrutinized also under the improved condition of the object, judged as source of sense. The relationship between the static target of act and the dynamic conception of constitution and stratification of objectivity conveys the settlement of history concealed in subjective activities. These shift as they are renewed by the variety of appearing modes related to objects. The first outcome of this framework results from the recovery of appearances conceived not as outstanding ideas but as sense settling: it is worth noting that "appearance" is understood not as deceiving but as revealing the essence of things. For Husserl, this means the evolution of the experience of individual from a subjection of datum into the actuality of reason to the intertwinement between the objective value and its meaning as a sway into consciousness. On Adorno's point this results in the disclosure of the subjective effort to break into the muteness of the artwork and to reveal the composition, the being-so of the image, which settles both the coherence and the genesis of its material. The image arranges the ensemble of conceptual knowledge due to the experience of the objective essence in the context of the never-ending apprehension of significance experienced by the subject. From this framework the second feature among aesthetic theory and phenomenology arises, i. e. the constitutive likeness of subjective instances and objective image: in the form of artwork and even in the experience of it, the subject is aware of what is compelled by the empirical material that takes part to the unity – involved also in the conception of meaning of the artwork as contrast amidst reality and image – and of what go beyond the singleness of image reaching the details that overwhelm the rough *intentio recta*. Overall, a comprehension of universal knowledge undergoes in the depths of an all-embracing perspective entrenched in empirical bounds. Where noesis needs to take place, it is compulsory for it to reveal itself in the appearance and to disclose objective essence in the domain of singularity, which can be conceived only if universality does not put constraints on the detail.

I was born in Ferrara, Emilia-Romagna, Italy, on 02/04/1993. I obtained in 2012 a secondary school diploma in Classical Studies in Ferrara. I graduated in second cycle degree (Master) Philosophical Sciences (School of Arts, Humanities and Cultural Heritage) at Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna, discussing the final thesis on 21.03.2018, and I was awarded with degree 110/110 with honours. The dissertation was concerned with the relationship between Adorno's dialectic and aesthetic thought and Husserl's phenomenology. I graduated in first cycle degree (Bachelor) Philosophy (School of Arts, Humanities and Cultural Heritage) at Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna, discussing the final thesis on 13.11.2015, and I was awarded with degree 108/110. The dissertation was concerned with Plato's philosophy, regarding the dialogues *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*. My other interest is analytic philosophy, even in its relation with aesthetics. I have acquired language skills in English (C1), French (B1+) and German (B1).

The “Expression” of the Perceived World: The Spatiality and the Motricity in Merleau-Ponty’s Phenomenology of Perception

Qihui Shao

École Normale Supérieure Ulm

Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* deals with a number of diverse subjects in its first chapter entitled “the body”, as the “perceptive synthesis” and the “the body as expression”, which appear at first sight too dispersed for us to find out their internal connection. While it should be noted that the spatiality (or the space and depth) and the motricity (or the movement) are discussed so at length in this critical chapter that the discussion continues as an essential part of his later work. My general proposition is that, Merleau-Ponty’s elaboration of these two notions motivates a transformation for the frame of the interpretation of the perception, precisely, from a frame based on “one’s own body” (*corps propre*) to one based on the “expression” of the body and the world. The aim of this paper is to reveal how this transformation towards the “expression” (at first mainly perceptive but later also cultural) is possible in the *Phenomenology of Perception*, by means of a thorough inquiry into the spatiality and the motricity of the perception. First, I will explain why “one’s own body” that Merleau-Ponty has adopted to criticize the classical dualism is rather problematic in the sense that it requires ultimately an absolute unity and identity of the incarnated subject in the perceptive synthesis, which synthesis can operate only at the cost of a new dualism and dichotomy between “one’s own body” and the world. However, it is also in the discussion of “one’s own body” that the problem of spatiality and motricity is approached, which brings us to the thematization of the Expression, that is, the body as expression and the perceived world as already having “the expressive function” in its relation with the cultural and esthetic dimension. To be specific, 1) Merleau-Ponty, by examining the “corporal schema” (*schema corporel*), elaborates an intentionality of the body, not intellectual but corporeal and affective; it brings a new unity of the signification, a lateral unity hollowed by the lacunes. The structure of the corporal schema initiates a primordial connection between the subject and the exterior, which constitutes a fundamental characteristic of the spatiality of “one’s own body”. 2) The spatiality of “one’s own body” proposes a new meaning of the signification, and a new mode of the signifying act, expressive rather than synthesis. The meaning-unity organized by the corporal schema is lateral and perspective, and therefore always in diverse modes, which in return requires a spatiality capable of integrating and enveloping the heterogeneous dimensions of significations, in contrast with the intellectual power of unity which unfolds and evens out diverse dimensions in geometrical space. This mutual relation of integrating-integrated and concealing-concealed constitutes within the corporal space an obscurity, a “zone of non-being (non-etre)”, while serving as the ground for the manifestation of meaning. 3) This change of the way how the meaning/signification can be understood appears mainly in the analysis of the “habit” and “body as being sexual”. The body generates new meanings when it works as “expressive space” and as “movement of expression”, a dynamic of the expression which is structured by the depth and the movement. 4) The wrapping (*enveloppement*) and implication relationship establishes not only a corporal space which integrates the parts of “one’s own body”, but also a relation which makes the body in an implication and involvement with the world, and indicates thus a connection of “co-naissance” between the body and the world. This connection leads to a deeper study on the space and movement of the perceived world with an aim to reveal its expressive function.

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Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, FDU 2014 (summer) TA, “Occidental Philosophy” Professor Claude Imbert (ENS, Paris), Fudan Intensive Summer Teaching Program IV. Honors, Awards, Scholarships 2009 (October, Nanjing), National Scholarship for Undergraduate Academic Achievement, Ministry of Education PRC 2011 (autumn, Paris), Full Scholarship for 6-month exchange to Sciences Po (Paris) by Lotus Project in the Erasmus Mundus Project, European Union 2012 (October, Shanghai), 1st Award For Graduate Academic Achievement in Fudan University, FDU 2013 (October, Shanghai), National Scholarship for Graduate Academic Achievement, Ministry of Education, PRC 2014 (October, Shanghai), 1st Award For Graduate Academic Achievement in Fudan University; LIAO Kaiyuan Scholarship for Graduate Student.

Michel Henry's Phenomenology of Life and World: Encountering the Invisible through Art

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Throughout Michel Henry's oeuvres lies a consistent mission: to disentangle interiority from exteriority in an absolutist way. For him these poles are two radically different modes of manifestation which should not intersect; denoting the former as the invisible and the latter as the visible, or, the 'Truth of Life' and the 'Truth of the World', respectively. Henry's claim is that whilst that which manifests (the visible/ exterior) is transcendent, the essence of that manifestation does not arise in transcendence but within the sphere of radical immanence (the invisible/ interior). These two separate modes of manifestation form Henry's ontological dualism. In his essay 'Seeing the Invisible' (originally published in French as *Voir l'invisible* in 1988) Henry praises Kandinsky, the Russian painter and art theorist, for his innovative formulation of abstract art; an art which seeks to turn the artist and the spectator radically inward. Henry here argues that after Kandinsky art no longer seeks to represent the world and its objects, and thus ceases to focus on the visible. Rather, it shifts its focus on the invisible, or what Kandinsky and Henry call the 'internal'. Henry's claim is that the purpose of art becomes a way that allows us to see what is not seen and cannot be seen. The means are only resources for this showing, used in order to give access to that which is invisible. In relation to this inward turn in abstract art, Henry asks the following questions: 1) "Does our world—the world of European nihilism in which all values are undone and self-destruct—provide the most appropriate site for disclosing the source of all values, especially aesthetic values?" and 2) "Should we affirm that, in spite of its revolutionary character, abstract painting leads us back to the source of all paintings, and moreover, that it alone discloses the possibility of painting and allows us to understand it?" (2009, p.2, 3) Henry's predominant aim is to ultimately take phenomenology into uncharted terrain, into the depths of pre-reflective, non-intentional self-experience. He tries to challenge phenomenology, as it is traditionally conceived, and redefine its boundaries, limits and possibilities. The World, for Henry, turns out to be empty of the real substance of Life. To find its essence, the self must dive completely inward within itself away from the exterior movements of intentionality and the world. The real, the truth and the substance of Life, for Henry, lies in non-intentional immanent auto-affection of self-experience. This dichotomy is what this paper will examine and unpack, arguing that the dialectical tension between interiority and exteriority - psyche and its grounding in events and relations to others – can be traced within interiority itself.

Robert has read for a Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) Degree in Philosophy and a Master of Arts in Contemporary Western Philosophy. His main areas of research are Phenomenology, Metaphysics and Mystical Theology. Robert has attended the summer school in Phenomenology and Philosophy of Mind at the Centre for Subjectivity Research (University of Copenhagen) in 2015 and is currently researching on contemporary French Phenomenology and the Theological Turn, mainly focusing on the works of Michel Henry.

Revelation of Beauty: Theological Aesthetics

Oleg B. Davydov

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Beauty as a question of systematical theological reflection returned in the center of thought of recent decades after a long period of oblivion. The same process was detected in the philosophy and cultural studies where beauty no more understands as additional, decorative or inoffensively pleasant phenomena. In my report I will discuss Beauty as the shining of Divine Glory in the way of theological aesthetics of prominent Swiss theologian of XX century - Hans Urs von Balthazar. For him Beauty is not additional of variative subject of theological speculation and rhetoric, but the first of appearing and the major task of reflection. The goal of theologian according Balthasar is the explaining of connection of worldly beauty with the Divine Glory. Appealing for the great theological and metaphysical tradition of Christianity, especially High scholastics, Balthasar describes the Beauty as well as the Truth and the Good as the transcendentals or most common properties of being. Thus, Balthasar understands beauty not as subjective impression as in the Modern philosophy, but as the objective shining of the Being. Theoretical frame for understanding of worldly beauty as the presence of God for Balthasar was so called principle of analogia entis. This fundamental theological tool presupposed that existed similarities between world and God therefore overcome by ever greater dissimilarities. In such a frame analogical beauty of creation is the expression of infinite Glory of God. Theoaesthetical project of Balthazar was unexpectedly influential and fruitful among theologians of the first decades of our millennia. In my report I will discuss of the theoasthetical project of one of the most creative theologians of today's Anglophone academia – David Bentley Hart. In his book titled «The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth» Hart proposes not only deep tour de force in the today's systematical theological debates, but also a criticism both for Modern and Postmodern types of narratives of being. He describes them as the immanentist, violent and alien for Beauty regimes of being. As the alternative, Hart as the follower of Balthasar, proposes Christian «story of being» as the non-violent ontology of peace, in which identities and differences are not in conflict because all of creation is the Image of triune life of God. Central line of argumentation of Hart is about mutual conversion in Christian tradition of beauty and infinite, which overcomes any dialectics between finite and infinite. In this way, Hart develops narrative of non-violent story of being as beauty which is analogously expression of infinite Glory of Triune Creator. This way of thinking about beauty as the deepest and somehow mysterious characteristics of being as creation seems actual and noteworthy.

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Panel 6.1 Modern and Contemporary Aesthetics

The Importance of Beauty to an Individual

Andrej Demuth, *Trnava University*

Slavka Démuthová, *University of Ss. Cyril*

Classic neo-Darwinian concepts of aesthetics presuppose that our sense of beauty perception has its sexual selection basis in sexual and also in non-sexual areas. Denis Dutton is convinced that “Beauty is an adaptive effect, which we extend and intensify in the creation and enjoyment of works of art and entertainment.” (Dutton) This effect is based on natural selection. “Natural selection also explains pleasures — sexual pleasure, our liking for sweets, fat, and proteins, which in turn explains a lot of popular foods, from ripe fruits through to chocolate malts and barbecued ribs (Dutton). In the translated article, I will try to discuss the question of the purpose of existence of beauty and aesthetic experience in an individual’s life, as well as from the animalistic point of view of evolutionary psychology, neuroaesthetics with a possible neurophenomenological result. Based on the neuroaesthetic findings (Zeki, Rolls, Chatterjee), I will point out, that beauty is not only an important element supporting the natural selection, which we use to choose the most suitable partners, the most valuable, and processes, and the evolutionarily gained, relatively reliable predictor of successfulness and future rewards (all of that from the animalistic point of view), but also that beauty plays an important role in the life of an individual who experiences it. Beauty not only impacts our understanding of the best things (conditions, elements) in the life of an individual, it also draws the attention to being and the experience of being as such. A positive aesthetic experience is connected to pleasure or to the appreciation of a value (similarly like moral or cognitive experience). It protects us by this. Beauty lets us see the meaning of being (of a species or of an individual), it emphasizes the value of being. That is the reason why we protect beautiful things, memories or sceneries, but also why we prefer beautiful to atrocious. The study will focus on the purpose of beauty’s existence from the point of view of a neuroaesthetic research and on the position of this specific type of experience in an individual’s life, even exclusively of the neo-Darwinian interpretations – from the viewpoint of an individual.

Andrej Démuth studied philosophy and psychology. He is a Professor of philosophy and the Head of the Department of Philosophy at the Trnava University. He is the author of many books (*Cognitive Aspects of Aesthetic Experience – Introduction* - Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag 2017; *Introduction to the Study of the History of Epistemology* - Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag 2016; *Prolegomena to the Study of Modern Philosophy* - Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag 2016) and articles on cognition and the relationship between reflected and non-reflected knowledge and he regularly gives invited lectures at universities in Slovakia and abroad. His research focuses on modern philosophy, epistemology, and cognitive studies.

Slávka Démuthová is an Associate Professor of Psychology and the Head of the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia. Her professional orientation focuses on the biological/evolutionary explanations of human behavior and on thanatology. She is an author of several monographs, scientific articles and regularly gives invited lectures at universities abroad (University of Edinburgh, Scotland; Masaryk University in Brno and Prague College of Psychosocial Studies, Czech Republic; Cardinal St. Wyszynski University in Warsaw, Poland; University of Ljubljana, Slovenia).

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Did Kandinsky's Abstractionism bring us closer to Kant's free aesthetics judgements?

Rômulo Eisinger Guimarães

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With Wassily Kandinsky Western Abstractionism has not only its precursor – since the first abstract artwork in the Western art history is attributed to the Russian painter –, but also one of its main heralds. It stems from the fact that, with “On the Spiritual in Art”, published in 1911, Kandinsky provides a theoretical basis for the then still crawling abstract art. Convinced that the even successful imitation of Nature phenomena [Naturerscheinungen] cannot be the purpose of art, he argues there for a certain autonomy of Painting towards figurative representation. Therefore, just as Music – “the most non-material of the arts” at his time – uses only the tools of its own (i.e., notes and pauses, sounds and silences) to reverberate directly across enjoyer’s soul, without resorting to a cognitive recognition of what it could or should mean, Painting would also be allowed to do the same, by means of colours and forms. In defence of a certain “borrowing of methods” by one art from another, Kandinsky pleads that “the comparison of various means with which each single art expresses itself, by learning from each other, can only be successful and conclusive if the lesson is not only superficial but truly fundamental”. Sustaining a kind of interchange between languages, he claims, then, that an art not only can, but rather “must learn from another how to use its common principle and how to apply it to the fundamentals of its own medium”. Thereby, Painting moves towards a supposed autonomy only to the extent that tests “its power and means of counterpoint”, and learns to know them, “as Music did in the attempt to apply these means for the purpose of creation”, i.e., for purely pictorial ends. Metaphorically, Kandinsky asserts that “colour is the keyboard [and] the eye is the hammer, while the soul is a piano of many strings”, so that “colour harmony [must] [or, at least, should] rest only on the principle of the corresponding vibration of the human soul [Seele]”. This paper aims to verify to what extent Kandinsky’s Abstractionism approximates us to free aesthetic judgments, sustained by Immanuel Kant in his Critique of Judgment. For if, according to Kant, “in order to decide whether or not something is beautiful, we [...] relate the representation [i.e., what is being judged] to the subject and its feeling of pleasure or displeasure [...], by means of which nothing at all in the object is designated, but in which the subject feels itself as it is affected by the representation”, in judgments like “this is beautiful!” we don’t take into account anything that involves a conceptual (re)cognition of the object-of-judgment, nor its mere sensory charm; rather, these are judgments in which we pay attention to what happens to our state of mind/mood [Gemützustand], i.e., to the way in which the object-of-judgment vivifies our mood, arising from this vivification a feeling of pleasure.

Bachelor in Visual Arts (2012) at Federal University of Santa Maria, UFSM, Brazil (Advisor: Prof. M.A. Alphonsus Benetti), with Sandwich Period (2012-I) at University of the Republic, UdelaR, Montevideo, Uruguay (Advisors: Prof. Javier Alonso; Prof. Hector Laborde); Master in Philosophy (2015), at UFSM (Advisor: Christian Hamm). Currently, PhD-Student in Philosophy (2016-), at UFSM (Advisor: Prof. Dr. Christian Hamm); Sandwich PhD (2018-2019) at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Uni-Jena, Germany (Advisor: Prof. Dr. Andrea Esser), with the research project: About the concept “aesthetic experience”: concerning Kant’s theory of aesthetic judgment and its possible updating by the Constance School.

In the Eye of the Beholder: A Heideggerian reading of Marcel Duchamp's Readymades

Manuel Vella
University of Malta

The first part of the title of this presentation is reminiscent of a phrase that stands for a common understanding of what 'beauty' is: 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder'. What the latter conveys is the wisdom that beauty is a matter of taste and therefore a personal and subjective affair. After briefly outlining the main sources and causes of this view, I shall, through a Heideggerian reading of Marcel Duchamp's artwork, offer a radically new meaning to this phrase. By turning to Roger Fry's 1921 seminal paper 'The Baroque' which argued that since the Baroque era, art has progressively been driven by and aimed at the senses, I shall illustrate and elaborate on Duchamp's claim that art has been primarily 'retinal'. Through engaging with some of Duchamp's readymades I shall then outline how art, after Duchamp, must regain a new understanding of sight and of the function of the eye so as to engender a new kind of spectator, one that can truly behold the object. I shall put forward the thesis that Duchamp's work is an attempt to re-introduce the 'object' as what seeks and confronts a beholder. This new spectator is best described as Dasein, namely a space for a new emergence of things. The spectator thus becomes a space for truth. My presentation will show that, through Marcel Duchamp, the ancient relation between truth, the aesthetic and Beauty is re-established and redefined.

Manuel Vella Rago was born in Malta in 1982. He obtained his Ph.D. in Philosophy with a thesis on the philosophies of Martin Heidegger and Ludwig Wittgenstein from the University of Malta in 2014. He is a visiting lecturer in the Department of International Relations and course co-ordinator and lecturer at the Centre for Liberal Arts and Sciences both at the University of Malta. He is also casual lecturer with the Department of Public Policy of the University of Malta. His latest publication is an article entitled 'Marcel Duchamp, Art and the Ethical Significance of a Renewed Relationship with Object' published in *Melita Theologica* 65/2 (2015), 91-105. Manuel's research interests include: metaphysics, post-metaphysics, object-oriented philosophy, Speculative Realism and contemporary aesthetics. He is Head of Quality Assurance at Malta's National Commission for Further and Higher Education. He can be contacted via Academia.edu and various social media. Manuel is married to Anne Marie Vincenti; they have a son and live in Mosta, Malta.

“Deception” in Contemporary Art and its Genealogy in the XXth Century Avant-Gardes

Laura Partin
Paris 8 University

Social psychologists use “deception” as a method that implies misinforming the participants about the nature of a study in order to obtain quantifiable results when other methods are not feasible. In a text from 2004, *Conceptual art, social psychology and deception*, the British philosopher Peter Goldie, who had a particular interest in ethics and aesthetics, highlighted a possible link between this method and the strategy of some contemporary artists (like Santiago Sierra). Another art theorist who analyzed a similar strategy in contemporary art is Anne Cauquelin. She uses the French term “*décept*” as a generic term for a variety of approaches that deliberately subvert the audience’s expectations. In Cauquelin’s terms, the “*doxa*” is a filter between vague belief and opinion constantly seeking art that meets its guidelines. When the aesthetic experience doesn’t meet its precepts, the “*décept*” occurs: the expectations are betrayed. Maxence Alcalde associates the terms “*ruse*” and “*mètis*” (concepts originating from the ancient Greece) to artistic practices like Gianni Motti’s *Pathfinders*, going from artifice to fraud, from distortion to deception, with the consistent aim of confusing the opponent. In the same order of ideas, regarding participatory art, Claire Bishop notes in her text, *Artificial Hells* that discomfort, contradiction have their role in the aesthetic experience. In this article the concept of “deception” used in social psychology experiments will be clarified. Its pertinency in contemporary art in order to reveal certain privileges or injustices will be debated afterwards. The aim of this article is to observe how the phenomena of “deception”, “*décept*”, “*ruse*”, “*mètis*” can paradoxically increase participation while deluding the public’s expectations at the same time and how this aesthetic paradox became increasingly methodical over time. Starting with the futurist serate in 1911 when the public was encouraged to express discontent regarding the works presented in the exhibitions and finishing with contemporary art practices like Santiago Sierra, Libia Castro and Olafur Olafsson and Gianni Motti who deliberately vex or enrage the audiences in order to stimulate autonomous reflections on certain political topics, the aesthetics of “deception” have dramatically changed, since the paradigm of expectation and consuetude assimilated it. By exploring certain key works and events from the XXth century avant-gardes, like futurist serate, dada, surrealist and Fluxus performances, we’ll trace the genealogy of “deceptive” strategies, of this antagonistic dependency between artists and audiences, from the perspective of the aesthetic experiences (depicted by artists themselves or their contemporaries) and their evolution from 1909 until now.

My bachelor specialization is in the graphics field. Following the courses of an interdisciplinary research master I consolidated my knowledge in the field of art theory (semiotics, hermeneutics of the artistic image, postmodern aesthetics, politics of identity in contemporary eastern European art etc.), I became more coherent and more transdisciplinary in my own artistic practice and started to learn how to curate my own projects. During this master I was involved for the first time in the production of a participatory performance. Its documentation can be found in my portfolio (<https://www.be.net/laurapartin>). I also started a research project, on a topic both stimulating and complex in its interdisciplinarity. The research is called “*The Aesthetics of Deception*” and it involves a parallel between certain participatory art projects and experiments of social psychology. The text’s starting point was an article written by the British philosopher Peter Goldie, entitled “*Conceptual art, social psychology and deception*”. The term “deception” refers to the defiance of the contemporary art public’s expectations in certain contexts. Some participatory art events have in common with social psychology experiments this necessary “deceit” of the public’s expectations, respectively of the participants in the experiment. The similarity consists of the event’s impact on the public and the reactions which reveal with high accuracy some social realities or

psychological mechanisms. After my master studies, I extended this project during a scholarship in the visual arts field at the Romanian Institute of Culture and Humanistic Research in Venice, between 2012 and 2014. My artistic practice followed its course towards the participatory area and the research became an adjacent part of it. I explored, in two art projects, two concepts of social psychology: cognitive dissonance and the terror management theory (Locust (Dissonance) and Taking Off). Since October 2016 I am a PhD student exploring the same topic of “deception” in contemporary art at Paris 8 University, École Doctorale Esthétique, Sciences et Technologies des Arts, under the guidance of Prof. JÉRÔME GLICENSTEIN.

Panel 6.2 Media Aesthetics

Deconstruction of Official Culture in the Framework of Media Aesthetics

Vasilii Federov

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The materials were prepared with the support of the Russian Science Foundation (project No. 18-18-00007) Social networks on the Internet today are a “collective space” that not only gives the individual freedom of expression, the total freedom of “speaking”, but also connects to social practices games with the norm in the broadest sense, reversing and travestizing all official, and even consciously stressing aggression. There is a formation of media aesthetics, that is, a value-semantic paradigm of the era of media domination. One way to destroy the existing type of culture is the deconstruction of the principles and norms of culture-rival, its symbols and aesthetic values. The term “deconstruction” was developed by J. Derrida, implying that the binary opposition, organizing the system, hierarchy is being destroyed. There arises the relativity of the principles of the existing type of culture, since normative ideas are abolished, the opposition of the value “top” and “bottom” is removed. Deconstruction can pass through laughter, grotesque. The well-known role of laughter and grotesque, which can act as a means of purification, the removal of fear (Aristotle). But it is important to note that this will not be an individual laugh, but a collective representation of users of the network, the group, the community about the ridiculous, about the alien, so the specificity of media aesthetics manifests itself. But the very nature of deconstruction, carried out through mockery, will be different: from political satire and humor to mocking, joking. We can distinguish three thematic types of deconstruction through laughter: political, national-cultural, everyday.

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Poetry meets Mediaesthetics and Transmediality: Is a Cognitive Conflict Inevitable?

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This research, supported by RSF, 18-18-00007, is devoted to the mediaesthetic component of communication. International experimentalism in poetry related to the media-forms of its representation and consumption is well explored today (reviews: MacDonalds 2007, Alghadeer 2014, Jewitt 2008). But a number of research questions about the modern process of multimediatisation of poetry is still waiting proper answers. It is important to understand if a viewer can perceive transmedial (Hepp 2013) forms of poetry (as video-poetry, for example) more deeply than poetry in its classical form (written version and its oral declamation). This question can help to understand cognitive patterns and mechanisms of perception of poems and videopoems (as triggers of emotions and imagination). We suppose that videopoetry (and other transmedial forms of poetry) generates a different way of perceiving poetry. Mediaesthetic components can dominate and replace the poetic intention of the author. This contribution aims to investigate how transmedial and mediaesthetic elements influence the aesthetic perception of poetry in non-expert readers. For this purpose, an experiment will be arranged (according to research plan, in September 2018): two small groups of participants will interpret modern poems (one group will firstly read a poem, while another group will watch a video or audio multimediational versions of the poem, then the two groups will switch roles). Interpretations can show a cognitive difference between the perception of a poem as a text and as a video-version of the same text. In-depth interviews with participants provide explanations of their reactions. All interpretations (both the “classic” forms of poems and the “transmedial” forms) will be evaluated by the author of the poems, Vitaly Kalpidi, a well-known Russian poet and theoretic of literature who began his experiments with transmedial forms of poetry in 1980’s. The following forms of transmedial poetry are included in the experiment: (1) audiofiles (declamation by the author + music); (2) songs (on Kalpidi’s poems); (3) video-clips. Comparing the different transmedial forms of poetry representation as stimuli to participants’ emotions and understanding, we suppose that poetry as a “verbal art” will be driven to a “silent” form, where emotions of the participants are generated by mediaesthetic components rather than by the poem’s verbal (semantic) richness. This study combines art-based research principles (Barone, Eisner 2012), a cognitive approach and mediaesthetic studies. The significance of this study relates to the actual trend toward a multimodality of communication (Kress 2010). References Alghadeer, H.A. (2014). Digital Landscapes: Rethinking Poetry Interpretation in Multimodal Texts. *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 3(2), 87–96. Barone, T. & Eisner, E.W. (2012). *Arts based research*. London: Sage Publications. Hepp A. (2013). The communicative figurations of mediatized worlds: Mediatization research in times of the ‘mediation of everything’ // *European Journal of Communication*, 28(6), 615–629. Jewitt, C. (2008). *The Visual in Learning and Creativity: A review of the literature*. London: Arts Council England, Creative Partnerships. Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality. A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. London: Routledge. MacDonald, Scott. (2007). *Poetry and Avant-Garde Film: Three Recent Contributions*. *Poetics Today* 28 (1), 1–17.

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An Aesthetic Analysis of Infographics: An Emotional Shift

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Modern journalism offers many forms of visualization, depending on the topic, tasks, purpose of the material, peculiarities of the target audience, etc. Infographics plays a significant role in this aspect of communication because its unique characteristics: the ability to realize a complex description of any information, arrange big data in a proper format, clearly identify content of data, conceptualize the topic, and give the audience the choice of using variable infographic messages, including interactive forms. We believe that infographic is today one of the most interesting media-phenomena that expects and deserves multi-aspect intense research. Now, when emotional perception in communication becomes a priority, we propose to emphasize the research interest in the aesthetic component of infographics (supported by RSF, 18-18-00007). Using the method of continuous sampling, we analyzed publications of an Internet version of one of the leading Russian media - the website of the newspaper “Argumenty i fakty” (“Arguments and facts”, March 2017). We selected 35 different materials containing infographic. The analysis of the media-aesthetic component of these materials was carried out by the method of data classification and subsequent application of the interpretative method. As a result, we can provide following conclusions. (1) The polythematic of the infographics is aimed at the widest coverage of the audience. Choosing a topic for infographic, journalists are guided by the principles of “general public interest”, preferring emotionally colored subjects (space, history, actual social problems). (2) Pictography in modern infographics drives from margins toward a center: one can see a combination of graphic elements with art, for example, portrait (see http://www.aif.ru/dontknows/infographics/velikoe_posolstvo_petra_i_infografika) or animation (<http://planet.aif.ru>). Portrait aesthetics in infographics can be considered as a subject of special investigation, simultaneously representing an emotional “hook” for users and at the same time forming empathy (infographics can be compared with artistic creations). (3) “Atmosphere” in infographics, created due to color and light (2D-solutions, see: Zettl, 2011), see, for example, a series of infographic materials related to the space, stars, planets etc. (4) Some cases of emotionally-colored solutions in infographics: aesthetics of cultural references which provide additional symbolic meanings to the infographic material. Thus, the image of Peter’s the First travelling along Europe, is arranged through the aesthetics of the “tsar’s Odyssey”, and users, looking at the travel infographic map, can see the symbolic link to Homer. We fully agree that the emotional component in modern communication becomes stronger than before. Thus, we suppose that further studies of infographics in terms of aesthetic theory through the prism of the emotional impact on users can be perspective.

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Laughter and Anger: Citation and Graphication as Media Aesthetic Tools of “Bad Movie Review”

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This research, supporting by RSF, 18-18-00007, is devoted to the mediaesthetic analysis of the video in the “bad movie review” genre by the BadComedian channel “Move Up (Plagiarism or the Great Truth?)”. Blogger Yevgeniy Bazhenov gave an extremely negative assessment to the film “Move Up” (movie “Dvizhenie vverh”, 2017, directed by Anton Megerdichev). After that, the film rating at the Russian special platform “Kinopoisk” fell down. In our study, we suggest that such a negative reaction of the audience could be explained by aesthetic effects used in this review. Research methods in this study are aesthetically-applied analysis, qualitative and quantitative content analysis. We provide an algorithm for media-aesthetic analysis of a video content on YouTube. The algorithm consists of five steps: (1) collecting general information, (2) analysis of the video’s structure, (3) aesthetically-applied analysis, (4) content analysis, (5) analysis of the user’s response. Using this algorithm, we analyzed the general information about the channel and the video, its structure, the tools of aesthetic impact, the audience’s reaction in the comments section. Also we developed the classification of aesthetics tools used in video on YouTube. This classification based on the research works by Herbert Zettl and Thomas Mitchell. Through this classification our findings are: (1) in the first aesthetic field we discovered the symbolism of used color and lighting in the video, (2) in the two-dimensional aesthetic field we found out how exactly through the portrait aesthetics and location of the image in the frame of screen blogger catches attention of the audience, (3) in the three-dimensional aesthetic field we explored a graphication (term by Zettl) and filters, used by blogger to increase audience’s confidence and the strength of his arguments. Also, these methods lead to an anger and laugh in the audience, (4) in the four-dimensional aesthetic field we concluded that by timing and motion blogger creates an atmosphere of “serious analytics” leading to video’s reliability, (5) in the five-dimensional aesthetic field we suggested that by sound and music blogger creates the aesthetics of laughter leading to an emotion of anger, (6) very important strategy of communication with the audience is citation-conversation. Citations of movies, other videos and music create an unique art-video with its own independent aesthetics. This study classifies the aesthetic tools used by the blogger in the video, the functional interpretation of these tools, the analysis of recipient’s response to the video. We suggest that in “bad movie review” bloggers’ communication is efficient if they build an emotional contact with their audience. Thus we concluded that the most important emotion in such type of video is laughter, not anger. Using laughter, the blogger makes his audience to pay more attention to the subject of the video.

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