

ABSTRACTS

Béla Bacsó

■ ***On the Scope of the Concept of Art: Edgar Wind's Debate with Schleiermacher***

Keywords: *art, philosophy, Besinnung, Edgar Wind, F. D. E. Schleiermacher*

Art is inherently suspicious within modern theory, so it is all the more interesting that Edgar Wind relies on one of Schleiermacher's late lectures, in which the German philosopher discussed the scope, possibility and conditions of art. This study interprets their debate and is aimed at presenting the common and the different elements in the theories of the two thinkers. The concept of "Besinnung" is at the center of the discussion, as it is able to open the ways for taking measure, awakening and disillusionment, while also questioning the feeling of superiority toward the artwork. If we truly understand the work, the measure it imposes becomes imperative.

Gábor Csikós – Illés Áron Kovács

■ ***"If They've Hung Innocent People, Why Shouldn't I Also Be Hanged": Psychiatric Documentation as a Possible Source for Social History***

Keywords: *psychiatric documentation, social traumas, anamneses (1959-1961)*

The study attempts to present the experiences of social traumas based on a hitherto unused group of sources, i.e. psychiatric files. In its current state, this research is rather an attempt to offer a selection from the materials of the National Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology, while also taking account of its strengths (personal character, the representation of an often invisible social group) and weaknesses (data protection, generalizability). The traumas of 20th century Hungarian history appear in the anamneses dated between 1959 and 1961, often representing the triggering cause of the disease. These archival sources may be discussed not only from the perspective of the experiences of the patients, but offer the

possibility to capture the dictatorial discourses from an interdisciplinary point of view (social history, clinical psychology, anthropology).

Veronika Darida

■ ***Collections of Images: Giorgio Agamben and the Question of Painting***

Keywords: *Giorgio Agamben, Aby Warburg, painting, aesthetics, history of art*

This paper discusses Giorgio Agamben's writings on the theory of images. Among his early topics, we can rarely find problems of aesthetics or the history of art (Agamben even speaks about the destruction of aesthetics). Nevertheless, his descriptions of classical paintings (like his ekphrasis of Dürer's *Melancholy* or Tiziano's *Nymph and Shepherd*) are an important part of his books. Furthermore, images have recently occupied a central position in his philosophical writings and thoughts. His latest publications could be mentioned here, namely *Self-portrait in the Studio* or *Pulcinnella*, and foremost, *Studiolo*. In this essay, I intend to analyse Agamben's approach to the history of images (by the mediation of Aby Warburg and his *Atlas Mnemosyne*). Subsequently, following the traces of the Warburgian figure (*Pathosformel*) of the "Nymph", I try to outline Agamben's own method concerning the analysis of images. It is apparent that his most personal writings can be found among these enigmatic descriptions of images, which speak about the pictures as well as the philosopher.

Tamás Demeter

■ ***A "Geistesgeschichtliche" Sociology of "the New Music"***

Keywords: *Antal Molnár, sociology, music, aesthetics, history of ideas*

This essay introduces Antal Molnár's sociology of „the New Music”. Molnár combines philosophical and sociological ideas to give an introduction and aesthetic evaluation of the new projects and aspirations that characterized composition in the early decades of the 20th century. Molnár's work represents a

distinctive and original voice in Hungarian music aesthetics that relies on concepts such as “style”, “*Geist*” and “*Weltanschauung*”, and introduces a set of “ideal types” for the analysis of musical works. Molnár’s work is still a valuable contribution to the understanding of musical works and movements, even if the subsequent development of music sociology and aesthetics relegating its significance from theoretical debates to the context of history of ideas.

László F. Földényi

■ ***Museum Walks (excerpts)***

Keywords: *museum, art, painting, sculpture, hermeneutics, wonder*

László F. Földényi has been writing journal entries about his museum visits since 1992. His travels have taken him to numerous museums from Europe and the United States, leading to several hundred longer and shorter notes on various artworks. Földényi’s selection was not based on art historical criteria, nor did the author focus on the best-known pieces, but stopped in front of the paintings based on personal, sometimes arbitrary and random choices. He initiated dialogues with these artworks, resulting in a volume of art hermeneutics. When we look at a painting, there are two mysteries engaged in a dialogue: the painting, which, as an object hung on the wall, is as strange and unapproachable as a distant planet, and the secret self of the viewer, the mysterious and ineffable net of his instinctual structure, crystallized in a specific manner for those few minutes. Born from these journal entries, Földényi’s next book will document the meeting between these two sides. The intention of the author has been all along to preserve the vitality of the paintings and to be able to look at even the oldest pieces of art as still-living contemporaries. Similarly to the way in which philosophy was originally rooted in wonder, before ossifying as a professional discipline, paintings and sculptures also used to arouse wonder and

have only later become objects of art history and aesthetics.

Adrienne Gálosi

■ ***Human, Still All Too Human***

Keywords: *posthumanism, transhumanism, contemporary art, digitality, technologies*

The article shortly summarizes the conceptual difference between post- and transhumanism, and argues that this distinction is hard to make in the works of contemporary art, although certain trans- or posthuman stances can definitely be discerned. To make a tentative typology, the paper differentiates three basic conceptual dualisms based on Haraway’s *Manifesto* – nature – culture, man/organic – machine, and mind – body – and lists some of the characteristic topics within each. Eco-art and bio-art, artworks using living animals, others inspired by OOO philosophies, artworks using “parallel life”, androids or the different layers of digitally constructed realities. The article gives examples of the latest artworks that typically illustrate these topics. As a conclusion regarding both the media and technological possibilities of contemporary art and its involvement in social problems as characteristic of today’s art, the article emphasizes that Kant’s four fundamental questions still seem to orient contemporary art.

Cecília Hausmann

■ ***Familiar and Strange Spaces in Architecture and the Theory of Modern Art***

Keywords: *modern art, contemporary art, art theory, architecture, familiarity, strangeness, space, spatiality*

Modern and contemporary artworks are thematically or effectively interwoven with a dynamic range specified by the concurrent experiences of familiarity and strangeness. Moreover, this quest for relating these two had a ubiquitous impact on the contemporary discourse on visuality. The representations of familiarity and the scarcity thereof are

not just occasionally or regularly used thematic vehicles. They represent some of the key forces behind the emergence of modern art and aesthetics. Hence, the way we appreciate artistic achievements is conditioned by the dynamics of these basic experiences often deemed overwhelming, harsh, or contradictory. According to my claim, the enhancement of the spatial factor in modern art was eminently related to the emerging importance of a dynamic relation between familiarity and strangeness. Walter Benjamin, Gaston Bachelard, and Friedrich Bollnow remain key figures in accounting for the relation maintained by spatial understanding to the experiences of familiarity and strangeness in art and architecture. This paper aims to initiate a dialogue between theories that discuss spatiality in the reception of art, respectively the familiar and strange aspects of having an experience of space.

Gizella Horváth

■ *Less is More – Before and After Bauhaus*

Keywords: *contemporary art, Mies van der Rohe, Bauhaus, Clement Greenberg, A. C. Danto*

The “less is more” motto is one of the most successful cultural memes related to Bauhaus. This famous dictum, widely attributed to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, has first become popular within the discourse of architecture, and originally referred to a clean, functional and ornament-free approach. This study analyzes the antecedents and the afterlife of the motto, from its first written occurrence (in a line in a Robert Browning poem) until its interpretations which have come to define the 20th century (Clement Greenberg’s formalism, in which “less” points toward the autonomy of art, and A. C. Danto’s contextualism, where it cleans up the space of conceptual art). While the art historical consequences of the motto can hardly be overstated, the social effects of “less is more” also reveal the downsides of simplicity: “less”, as un-

derstood in Bauhaus, does not mean cheaper or more accessible. Hence, the question arises whether our aestheticized world, ultimately rooted in Bauhaus, is sustainable without endangering the environment.

Béatrice Nicoriuc

■ *Approaches to the Experience of Writing and Space in Herta Müller’s Essays*

Keywords: *literary fiction, the semantisation of space, transit status*

This paper is dedicated to the volumes of essays *Der Teufel sitzt im Spiegel. Wie Wahrnehmung sich erfindet* and *Der König verneigt sich und tötet*, which treat Müller’s reflections on her own style of writing. The paper analyses the author’s inspirations drawn from the stages of her real life, which she has turned into literary fiction by her special perception of the world. The essays that treat her writing offer a reader’s guide to the prose works, and deal with the aspects of the semantisation of space, spatialisation of time, and the transit status.

Sándor Radnóti

■ *The Scorched Landscape*

Keywords: *Anselm Kiefer, “working through the past” (Vergangenheitsbewältigung), Nazism, Caspar David Friedrich*
The art of Anselm Kiefer (*1945) can be considered an attempt at the renewal of the landscape and the historical painting. Throughout several of his periods, his work centered around the German tradition. However, it would be wrong to interpret his early works within the framework of the positive process of “working through the past” (Vergangenheitsbewältigung). The virtual occupation of Europe with the Nazi salute is a much more of a cynical provocation, and the painter has confessed that through the work, he was seeking an answer to the question of whether he could have been a fascist. It is a provocation of the silence about the recent past, a provocation of the state which banned the salute by law, a provocation of his parents’ generation’s

willing or unwilling commitment to Nazism, and a provocation against his own generation's New Left activism. The 1970 *Heroic Symbols III* stands out among these early works, the quality of which is generally not comparable to his later art. *Heroic Symbols III* is related to Caspar David Friedrich's famous painting *Monk by the Sea*. Kiefer's painting also features a tiny figure at the center of a landscape. We must distinguish between the possible intention of the painter and the realized work. In the latter sense, the gesture displayed is not provocative but meaningless. There is no dialogue between society (history) and the nature that is its condition. Xerxes whipped the sea – and that was as pointless as a lone Nazi salute on the beach. The landscape does not respond to the historical challenge.

Deodáth Zuh

The Advent of Visual Culture: A Definition, and the History of a Definition

Keywords: *visual culture, representation, knowledge, theory of art, film theory*

The present paper is divided in two. First, a definition of the term “visual culture”: it should be earmarked for the cases of understanding through visual means – therefore, a culture centred on the visual is not only opting for an increasing expressive role of visual representation, but envisages the transfer of knowledge which is not completely accessible to human interaction through words, concepts, and written texts. This means that visual culture is based on more compact and coherent forms to convey information in order to expressly elicit the contribution of the

receiver. Therefore, visual culture is not a final stage of stepping into the age of “popular art” and “mass entertainment”. It is worth this name only if it stands for forwarding a general overhaul of information transfer and, consequently, propagates new ways of building communities. Second, the paper offers a brief history of the major attempts to coin this term as central to the theory of art; this second part is also a venue for testing my initial attempt for a definition: how my statement complies to or disapproves of the most eminent histories that wanted to locate the place of visuality in the history of Western civilization. I will illustrate my case through one major example. The early history of film, and the seminal film theorists' plea for the legitimacy of film as an autonomous art form has often been claimed as the first typical example of spreading “visual culture”. These attempts predominantly proved to be just multiplied instances of a history that follows Western man's quest to engender the rule of images, and how visual vehicles of information supplanted traditional but still highly functional means of communication. This opens a rich field for cultural criticism, and for a discourse on the clash of value based, value-skeptical, and value-relativist societies. But, some other early theories of culture that heavily rely on the analysis of film could be also consulted for a more balanced analysis. Hereby the process of cultivating our natural assets (i.e. culture) should be based on visuality only if the actually dominant forms to forward interpersonal communication and information exchange are not able to bear on certain contents.

SZÁMUNK SZERZŐI

A lapszámot szerkesztette: **Rigán Lóránd**

- Bacsó Béla** (1952) – esztéta, egyetemi tanár, ELTE, Budapest
Bakk Antal Pál (1986) – doktorandus, BBTE, Kolozsvár
Bartos-Elekes Imre (1998) – egyetemi hallgató, BBTE, Kolozsvár
Csikós Gábor (1985) – pszichológus, történész, PhD, egyetemi adjunktus, Károli Gáspár Református Egyetem Pszichológia Intézet, az MTA BTK Lendület Tíz Generáció Kutatócsoport tagja, Budapest
Darida Veronika (1978) – esztéta, habilitált egyetemi docens, ELTE Művészetelméleti és Médiakutatási Intézet, Budapest
Demeter Tamás (1975) – MTA Lendület kutatócsoport-vezető, egyetemi tanár, Budapest–Pécs
Demény Péter (1972) – író, szerkesztő, Látó, Marosvásárhely
Földényi F. László (1952) – esztéta, az MTA doktora, egyetemi tanár, Színház- és Filmművészeti Egyetem, Budapest
Gálosi Adrienne – esztéta, egyetemi docens, PTE, Pécs
Hausmann Cecília (1988) – képzőművész, doktorandus, BBTE, Kolozsvár
Horváth Gizella (1962) – filozófianár, egyetemi tanár, PKE, Nagyvárad
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Kovács Illés Áron (1993) – pszichológus, rezidens, SOTE Klinikai Pszichológia Tanszék, Budapest
Lakatos Artur (1980) – történész, PhD, közgazdász, Kolozsvár
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Nicoriuc Béatrice (1981) – germanista, PhD, Kolozsvár
Perenyi Monika (1971) – művészet-történész, BTK Művészettörténeti Intézet, MTA Pszichiátriai Művészeti Gyűjtemény, Budapest
Radnóti Sándor (1946) – művészet-filozófus, kritikus, az MTA levelező tagja, professor emeritus, Budapest
Sipos Sándor (1957) – képzőművész, Montréal
Széplaky Gerda (1973) – filozófus, esztéta, egyetemi docens, Eszterházy Károly Egyetem, Eger
Zuh Deodáth (1982) – posztdoktori kutató, ELKH BTK Filozófiai Intézet, az MTA Lendület Morál és Tudomány kutatócsoport tagja, a Magyar Művészeti Akadémia ösztöndíjasa

TÁMOGATÓK



nka
Nemzeti Kulturális Alap



„Este a kihalt Szent Márk téren a sötétben megnéztem a *Tetrarchák* szoborcsoportot. Megtapogattam a sima gránitfelületüket, és rájöttem, hogy ezek a szobrok nem a sok tapogatástól lettek ilyen fényesek – noha 1600 év alatt millióan és millióan simogatták őket, ugyanúgy, mint én: Petrarca is, aki a közelben lakott, Ruskin is, Tiziano is, Brodskij is, és még rengetegen; és nem is a sok esőtől, hótól, melegtől, napsütéstől és sötétségtől. Hanem attól a sok pillantástól, ami rájuk irányult. Mert a tekintet egyáltalán nem ártatlan, és a mű és a rá irányuló tekintet viszonya sem semleges. Mindegyik hat a másikra, és a tekintet is tud sütni, ahogyan a mű is képes lángra lobbantani a tekintetet.”

(Földényi F. László)

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