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От съставителя

Editorial

Тематичният вектор на новия брой на списанието е насочен към „Естетика и съвременно изкуство“. Дали в единство и хармония се вплитат проблемите на древната наука за красивото и творческата същност на изкуството като човешката дейност, в която са втъкани изконни ценностни параметри като: подражание / мимезис/ и въображение, активност и креативност, фантазия и реалност, категориални експликации, обвързани с концептуалния каркас на естетиката – красиво, възвишено, критика и оценки, време и пространство, потвърждение и отрицание, традиция и съвременност, или съвременните опорни модули, обвързани с вариантите на изкуството, решително отхвърлят правилата и нормите на традиционната естетика – това са въпросите, фокусирани интереса на авторите.

Подбраните статии, разглеждащи естетиката като средоточие на художествената дейност в различните ѝ прояви, в неочакваните ѝ ценностни ракурси, в интерпретативен аспект изследват проблемите на естетиката: овехтяла и архаична ли е класическата естетика и как новото авангардно изкуство запълва творческия вакуум (Ив. Стефанов), актуална ли е в наше време традиционната категория мимезис и по какъв начин тя функционира в авангардното изкуство (В. Ангелов), променил ли се е смисълът на времето и пространството в изкуството след Кант (С. Борисова), валидна ли е категорията възвишено в европейския модернизъм (Ю. Хичева), има ли значение големият формат във визуалните изкуства (Ив. Св. Стефанов). В. Марков представя идеята за транскриптивен разказ като модалност на разказа в съвременното дигитално изкуство, Н. Делева анализира състоянието на критиката в изкуството в силно комерсиализирана среда, М. Кънева запознава читателя с творчеството на художника Сергей Петров като ярко присъствие в българското изобразително изкуство, а Вяра Попова прави поетичен коментар и анализ на книга-албум за островите като форми на битието.

Включените в списанието статии обхващат постоянно актуални проблеми на естетиката и различните видове изкуства. От визуалните, които говорят с шепот или оглушителен звук, през словесните, за които гумите рисуват смисъл и картини, дигиталните и категориалните ракурси, които моделират нови позиции, интерпретации и гледни точки за естетиката и нейния основен предмет – красотата и изкуството. Проблемите в естетиката и съвременното изкуство представят мнения и съмнения, гледни точки и интерпретации и оставят нови пространства и възможности за поредно тълкуване и решение. Подборката от статии показва многоликостта на проблемите и качествата на авторите, сред които има както доайени в естетиката, така също талантливи млади хора с бъдеще в науката, и това е комплимент за редколегията на списанието.



The thematic vector of the new issue of Art Studies Quarterly is aimed at Aesthetics and contemporary art. Among the topics the authors have focused on is whether the problems of the ancient science of the beautiful and creative essence of art, such as human activity, are intertwined in unity and harmony. In them, intrinsic value parameters are woven; these cover imitation (mimesis) and imagination, activity and creativity, fantasy and reality, categorical explications tied to the conceptual carcass of aesthetics – beautiful, sublime, criticism and evaluations, time and space, confirmation and denial, tradition and modernity. The authors comment whether modern support modules tied to the variants of art, decisively reject the rules and norms of traditional aesthetics.

The selected articles examine aesthetics as the focus of artistic activity in its various manifestations, in its unexpected value perspectives. In an interpretative aspect, they explore the problems of aesthetics: is classical aesthetics obsolete and archaic, and how the new avant-garde art fills the creative vacuum (Iv. Stefanov), is the traditional category mimesis relevant in our time, and how it functions in avant-garde art (V. Angelov), has the meaning of time and space changed in art after Kant (S. Borissova), is the category sublime in European modernism (J. Hicheva), does the large format in the visual arts matter (Iv. Sv. Stefanov)? V. Markov presents the idea of a transcriptive narrative as a modality of the narrative in contemporary digital art, N. Deleva analyses the state of criticism in art in a highly commercialized environment, M. Kuneva introduces the reader to the work of the artist Sergey Petrov as a bright presence in Bulgarian fine art, and Vyara Popova presents a poetic commentary and analysis of a book-album about the islands as modes of being.

The articles published in the journal deal with current issues in aesthetics and the various arts. The visual ones that speak with a whisper or a deafening sound, while the verbal ones for which words paint meaning and images. At the same time, the digital and categorical perspectives that model new positions, interpretations and views on aesthetics and its main subject – beauty and art. Problems in aesthetics and contemporary art present opinions and doubts, points of view and interpretations, and leave new spaces and possibilities for further exegesis and resolution. The collection of articles shows the diversity of the topics and the qualities of the authors, among whom there are doyens of aesthetics as well as talented and promising young scholars, which is a compliment to the editorial board of the journal.

Summaries

AESTHETICS – GETTING CLOSER OR DISTANCING FROM ART?

Ivan Stefanov

The new avant-garde art of the mid-nineteenth century and beyond firmly rejected the old normative aesthetics as inadequate. It effectively addressed the theoretical gap by introducing manifestos and other public creative programs. Suddenly the obsolete aesthetics fell into a deep crisis and was forced to seek – through various new paradigms – a close, immediate contact with avant-garde artistic achievements. The work of art is not a structure frozen in time, but a dynamic process of becoming, of continuous transformation into an artistic fact; this process of becoming has its own autonomous dialectic. The basic question of today's aesthetics is "How is art made, how does it happen now within time?" Hence the principle consequence is that today the general concept of art is an open concept, it is a concept that is in a permanent process of everyday historical concretization. On this path of theoretical renewal, aesthetic has been moving faster or slower ever since. It cannot exist outside the world of art.

MIMESIS – YESTERDAY AND TODAY. THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF MIMESIS (ART AS IMITATION OF NATURE)

Valentin Angelov

What are the incarnations of mimesis yesterday and today? Why do today's aestheticians and art historians avoid commenting on contemporary mimesis and its specific possibilities? Although modern art is against tradition, mimesis as an artistic device is not forgotten today, best manifested in hyperrealism. In other modernist art movements, it plays a simulative role; it does not provide information about reality, but leads to the world of the unconscious or to the subjective world of the artist. The new forms in art introduced by the avant-garde (installation, assemblage, environmental art) admit mimesis, but often with antimimetic application. Mimesis as a creative effect, not as a way of knowing the world, is what particularly excites the avant-garde artist. Unlike the traditional painter, the modern painter programmatically creates works whose meaning is obscured (if there is any meaning embedded in them at all). This changes the aesthetic reception. The spectator is aware that he is in front of a mysterious work, a work that has been deliberately designed to defy decipherment. For him, a game with

meanings and meaninglessness begins, with incorporated ideas and lack of ideas. And just as gambling fascinates the player and makes him addicted, so it is with these works. Their enigmatic nature fascinates the beholder, who at first sight is unable to break free and ignore them.

BEYOND THE CANON OF KANTIAN TRANSCENDENTAL AESTHETICS: NEW USES OF TIME AND SPACE IN THE 20TH–21ST-CENTURY ARTS

Sylvia Borissova

In his transcendental aesthetics (*Critique of Pure Reason*, 1781), Kant posits space and time as its primary and only elements as *a priori* conditions of sensibility; grounded solely in the subject, they are our pure intuitions of both external and internal phenomena. With this formulation, Kant's transcendental aesthetics fatefully binds sensibility and art to their ultimate limits: beyond time and space, there is no sensory perception, and no creative capture of what is perceived in works of art – except only in an apophatic way. However, with the discovery of the four-dimensional "Minkowski time-space", already verified empirically in physics, and accordingly after rethinking the idea of time, qualitatively new aesthetic theories about sensibility, movement and the body emerged in the 20th and 21st centuries; new uses of time in various temporal and synthetic arts have been observed; moreover, all these presuppositions lead to the need to rethink the classical classification of the arts.

THE SUBLIME AS A PHENOMENON OF THE VISUAL ARTS IN EUROPEAN MODERNISM (19TH–20TH CENTURIES)

Juliana Hicheva

Art in history has gone through many transitions and metamorphoses. The most saturated moment of transformations that gave impetus to its modern versions was experienced in the modernity of the twentieth century. The concentrated beginnings in its concepts developed into new autonomous arts. In this context, painting, photography, and cinema, along the way of their genealogy and development, are considered in the article as main points of reference towards one goal – that of the new sensibility. Photography, with its mechanical copying, diverts the focus from the mimesis in painting. The painter arrives at the motive for creating a work of art when he or she is attracted by the transcendental and empirical knowledge in the sensible world, but later it is the movement that reflects this longer process. The article traces the key forms on the path of striving for the sublime. It follows the philosophical premises from the Kant's idea about the

sublime which leads to the abstractionism in art conceived in Kandinsky's theories, until it reaches the point where timeline is added to the picture space, seen through the eyes of Wim Wenders and his attitude. The analysis juxtaposes the figurative language and the game as aesthetic phenomena in the three media.

THE LARGE FORMAT IN THE VISUAL ARTS – BETWEEN THE LEGITIMATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL AND THE AVANT-GARDE

Ivan Svilenov Stefanov

The problem of large-scale format in art is multi-layered – apart from being comprised of numerous technological, spatial, and financial conventions, it is also a consequence of various legitimation aspirations. Large-format works are not attached to a certain era or style but must be understood phenomenologically because they appear at different moments in the history of art, under different circumstances, and with different purposes. Although it seems like a formal decision, the choice of format has repeatedly caused significant artistic transformations in the history of painting. Such a key example is the work of Gustave Courbet, who was at the heart of one of the first revolutions of modernism in the mid-19th century, expressed in an over-scaling of everyday subjects and ordinary people – a gesture against the thematic hierarchy of neoclassicism. The extent to which modernism has realized the legitimizing qualities of large formats can be judged by the development of American Abstract Expressionism, which probably would not have had the fortune of being a dominant style in mid-20th-century art if it had appeared in a pocket format. What we can certainly say is that photography and graphics could not have been transformed as media for contemporary art without the active use of large formats in the 1980s. These examples clearly show how large formats have influenced the institutional processes in the history of art – beyond the specific image, the artistic impulse is intertwined with certain legitimation aspirations.

TRANSCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE IN VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS

Vasil Markov

While interactive art has emerged as a prominent field within contemporary art, its narrative potential has often been overlooked. In the collaborative interactive project T_Visionarium, which forms the basis of this article, narrative plays a central role, but its emergence stems from processes that deviate from those employed in traditional film, whether

narrative or experimental. The narrative in T_Visionarium is performative and interactive, as it is constructed through the physical interactions of the viewer. Furthermore, the narrative is transcriptive, incorporating and repurposing elements from mass media sources, a feature that is characteristic of the project. This transcriptive approach to narrative foregrounds the viewer's temporal experiences, as they actively construct and shape the narrative's unfolding. Finally, interactive transcriptive narrative offers a highly applicable methodology with the potential to be utilized to address various forms of audiovisual archives in the digital age. This highlights the intersection of practical and ethical considerations within the realm of aesthetic experience.

POLITICIZATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF AESTHETIC DISCOURSE – CHALLENGES FOR CONTEMPORARY ART CRITICISM

Nikolina Deleva

This article is an attempt to point out the challenges faced by contemporary art criticism in the field of visual arts that take place in an exhibition hall, regardless of whether they are defined as painting, conceptual art, installation, performance, etc. The examined facts and phenomena are mostly part of the practices in art in the context of Western Europe and America. The article analyses various discourses that influence art criticism.

Aesthetic relativism and the loss of autonomy of art lead to substitution of the missing aesthetic norms with political, ideological, and market factors. The world is polarized and the aesthetic debate is displaced by the political one – art is instrumentalized and begins to be seen only as propaganda, a political symbol, or a sign of belonging to a certain power mechanism, and its aesthetic essence is not discussed at all. Art can be both propaganda of an ideology and a form of resistance against it. The very existence of art as a territory of free expression makes it political – it has the power to question the status quo, pushing viewers to problematize the familiar, taken-for-granted world governed by media and representations. This quality will become increasingly necessary in the future world of simulated realities.

THE ARTIST SERGEY PETROV – A BRIGHT PRESENCE IN BULGARIAN VISUAL ARTS

Mariana Kuneva

The artistic work of Russian-born Bulgarian painter Sergey Petrov (1918–2006) is not known well enough in Bulgaria – his second homeland, where he grew as a painter and worked till the end of his life. Moving to Bulgaria in 1932, he graduated from the Academy of art in Sofia in 1944 in the class of Prof. Nikola Ganushev. Sergey Petrov worked in different genres (landscape, portrait, still life) and techniques (oil, watercolor, monotype), being an outstanding

portraitist, landscape artist, master of still life, one of the best watercolorists. His painting style is easily recognized mainly due to the expressive, bright, but well-contained colourfulness, the mastering of colours, the daring and skilful application of clear, seemingly sparkling tones. For his contribution to Bulgarian culture, Sergey Petrov was awarded the Order of Cyril and Methodius – II degree (1968) and I degree (1978). He left an enormous art heritage, sharing a rich spiritual world and evoking inspiration, respect, gratitude and enjoyment.