



**European
Society for
Aesthetics**



*University of Jyväskylä, Main building C
(Päärakennus), designed by Alvar Aalto,
Seminaarinmäki Campus, Jyväskylä, Finland, 2026.
Photo: Ancuta Mortu.*

**Newsletter
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ADDRESS

Pauline von Bonsdorff,

President of the European Society of Aesthetics

Dear members of the European Society for Aesthetics, dear friends and colleagues,

We now have the 17th ESA conference behind us, and the summer break is either approaching or already here, as in the Nordic countries where people want to enjoy the magic, long light around summer solstice (Midsummer) and the warmth that usually follows. It was a great JOY to host the conference in Jyväskylä, all the way from pre-conference sauna over the excellent academic programme to relaxing post-conference activities, such as aesthetics quiz at legendary bar Vakiopaine and the Aalto excursion the following day. The large number of young scholars was significant in the programme and contributed to the vibrant atmosphere. Thanks to all participants: you made it! Thanks to all organisers and assistants: you made it possible!

Some notes from the well-attended General Assembly. The Committee informed that the Sponsor a Young Scholar (SYS) programme, wisely initiated and excellently organised by our treasurer Maria Josefa Alcaraz León (thank you!), could sponsor three young scholars with 400 € each (with some help from the Kone Foundation -project *Aesthetic Practices in the Transformation of Self and World*). You can contribute to the SYS programme, which has a separate fund within ESA, through the ESA homepage at any time. No contribution is too small to count. We are very grateful to all donors.

Another important issue at the Assembly was the finances. ESA has no membership fee, our fixed expenses amount to nearly 3 000 € per year, and in recent years there has been no income from the conferences. The Assembly discussed these options: introducing a membership fee, raising the conference fee, or seeking outside sponsors. It was suggested the membership fee might be for tenured members only, and/or voluntary. The conference fee was not considered high, but then this varies depending on where you come from. Outside sponsors could be sought. Finally, different ways to strengthen the ESA economy are not mutually exclusive. The Committee will discuss the issue and act – but if you have thoughts or ideas, please contact us.

From joyful and practical matters to sorrow: while June was cool in the Northern parts of Europe,

Central and Southern Europe were afflicted by a heat wave that according to the WHO caused 1 300 human deaths. Because green areas and forests have significant cooling effects on the urban micro-climate, trees are now planted in many places. This is good, but it raises the worry that non-human nature is (again) reduced to commodity and instrumental value when we need something entirely different to break the current course of exploitation and extraction.

We need respect, admiration and love of nature as large, diverse, self-organizing systems that may not always be pleasant but are bigger than we and, moreover, conditions of all life, ours included. Aesthetic experiences of nature can be a path towards realising such dimensions. At their most engaging moments, they affect us in an unlimited way, where aesthetics comes with cognitive and moral awareness without stopping at some verdict. The point is the experience. The arising sense of harmony is not about control but about being drawn out from one's limited self into the world and confirmed in the world. That kind of experience is the opposite of the greed that drives current capitalists to praise beautiful areas for future revenue (e.g. the Gaza coastline or the Zvërnec peninsula and Sazan island in Albania).

Aesthetics is not just about particular experiences, qualities, or works of art, but also about what kind of subjects we are. Today, and especially as learned citizens, we cannot not know about the major challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss, wars and corporate capitalism, at least if we do not deliberately turn away from these. Other conditions of contemporary culture affect us as well, such as the growth of scientific knowledge and the sharing, streamlining and production of experiences online. These changes in the general cultural landscape make it interesting to reflect on the aims of the ESA, defined in our statutes as promoting “philosophical and other academic research and teaching in aesthetics and the theory of art” and encouraging exchange between European countries and their diverse traditions of aesthetics. Traditions change: in aesthetics, environmental and everyday aesthetics have been established recently, and the Eurocentric bias of classical traditions have come under attack. Such debates show that aesthetics matter. If it was an invention back in the 18th century, it was a fruitful one. But perhaps it was rather a conceptual discovery.

ADDRESS

Out of curiosity, I looked at how some central journals of aesthetics define their scope today. On the one hand, this is about suitable subject matter of research in aesthetics. On the other hand, it is about what fields of inquiry are seen as relevant. However, the one seems to lead to the other. The *JAAC (Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism)* describes the range of suitable topics broadly, including in the arts “contemporary digital innovations, and other cultural practices” and stating that aesthetics “includes work on aesthetic experiences and values wherever they are found both in and beyond the arts.” This point is reiterated as the journal welcomes “interdisciplinary research and exploration of non-traditional aesthetic issues”.

The Italian *Aisthesis. Pratiche, linguaggi e saperi dell'estetico* goes even further by establishing “the notion of ‘aesthetic’ as a pervasive component of human cultures and life forms”, which leads the journal to promote “interdisciplinary and transcultural research and debate in Aesthetics and the arts”. These journals invite a broadening of topics in aesthetics.

Another way of signalling openness is to point to the diversity of relevant perspectives on and in aesthetics, whether stemming from groups in society or philosophical traditions. In this vein, *BJA (British Journal of Aesthetics)* mentions that current editors “have made the journal more inclusive and representative of an increasingly global field [...] encouraging work by women, other under-represented groups, and authors whose first

language is not English”, while *Estetika. The European Journal of Aesthetics* welcomes “high-quality research representing the diverse and rich traditions in aesthetics.”

When it comes to disciplines, *BJA* wants to “reflect the changing academic landscape” and *Estetika* “build bridges [...] between aesthetics and other fields of philosophy and academic research in general”. *JAAC* explicitly welcomes contributions from many fields, expectedly enumerating humanities disciplines but also “psychology, law, and related disciplines”. *Aisthesis* highlights “the intersection between aesthetics and the contemporary sciences (biology, psychology, neurosciences)” alongside an interest in the history of aesthetics.

This brief excursion may show that turning to aesthetics need not be a turn inwards but can as well be a turn outwards, to realities that condition our lives and to other disciplines; to finding out where we are, and perhaps to change. If aesthetics is a field prone to re-interpret and recreate itself, this is a sign of health.

For our health – and wishing you an invigorating time ahead!

Pauline von Bonsdorff
ESA President

ESA NEWS: ESSAY PRIZE WINNER 2026

The 2026 Fabian Dorsch ESA Essay Prize was awarded to **Keegan Nichols** (Indiana University, Bloomington), for his essay 'How Feeling Obligates: On the *Sensus Communis* and Aesthetic Normativity in Kant'.

Nichols' essay addresses a central puzzle of Immanuel Kant's aesthetics: what grounds the demand that others share our aesthetic responses? The author offers a novel interpretation of the concept of *sensus communis* as immediate normative perception. The jury was impressed by the high degree of clarity with which the argument is developed and by the compelling connections

drawn between 18th-century aesthetics and other domains of contemporary philosophy. The author's fresh perspectives are directly relevant not only to those interested in the history of European aesthetics but also to those working on the many live puzzles of aesthetic value.

Nichols' paper was presented and discussed in a special session at the [ESA Conference 2026](#) (8-10 June, Jyväskylä), and it will also be considered for publication in *Estetika: The European Journal of Aesthetics*.

SYS PROGRAM

The European Society for Aesthetics has recently initiated the **Sponsor a Young Scholar** program, which aims to support the participation of an early-career researcher in aesthetics who has been accepted to present at the ESA conference but lacks sufficient funding to attend.

More information about supporting this initiative or applying to Young Scholar funding can be found here : <https://www.eurosa.org/product/sponsor-a-young-scholar/>.

The ESA is committed to funding at least one early career scholar with a grant of €400. If donations allow, additional grants will be awarded to selected applicants.

Thank you for supporting this initiative. Even a small contribution can make a significant difference to a young researcher in aesthetics.

THE UPCOMING ESA CONFERENCE

We are happy to announce that the 18th annual conference of the European Society for Aesthetics (ESA 2027) will take place in Paris, at Université Paris Cité.

More information will be posted in due course on our website.

<https://www.eurosa.org/conferences/#upcoming-conference>.

ESA 2026 Conference

Thoughts from the keynote speakers

Diarmuid Costello (University of Warwick)

I was honoured to be invited to give one of the 2026 ESA keynotes. The paper I presented, “Self-Presentation and External Validation: Trust and Vulnerability in Rineke Dijkstra’s Self-Portraiture” is a draft chapter from my current book in progress, provisionally titled *Spurs to Thought: Philosophical Criticism and Contemporary Art*. The book argues for a way of engaging with works of contemporary art philosophically that departs from what I take to be more common methodologies in philosophy of art, whether analytic or continental. It comprises a series of chapters on individual works of art by particular contemporary artists, each of which looks at the work or two in question through the optic of some concept of philosophical interest and associated debates in philosophy. I regard these case studies as a kind of “proof of concept” of the proposed method; they are book-ended by a methodological frame that sets out the stakes of the broader project and its relation to recent work in the field. The first requirement of the proposed method is *critical*: it is work out what concepts a given work of art calls for. This need not be obvious and typically calls for sustained critical attention. The second requirement is *philosophical*: it is to treat the concepts appealed to, and their relation to the work, with the seriousness that philosophy requires. The hope is not only that philosophy will shed light on the relevant works, but that the curious test cases provided by works of art may point up blind spots in the philosophical theories mobilised to make sense of them. While the proposed method has affinities to analogous work in the philosophy of film and literature, it tries to make the case for *non-narrative* work, which is arguably more difficult.

Giving the paper at the conference engendered a lively Q&A, probably one of the best I have had when previewing material from the project. There was considerable, if good-humoured push-back, with much of it if focusing on what distinguished the proposed method from theoretically self-conscious art criticism more generally and who I envisaged to be the ideal reader for the resulting book. These are very helpful questions for me to think about. As ever the ESA conference distinguished itself for its good humoured and constructive atmosphere, and especially the breadth of approaches and traditions it caters for. Beyond the conference itself, Finland’s sauna culture was for me personally a significant draw and allowed me to begin and end every day with a lake swim and a sauna. Indeed, my visit began with being ferried to a sauna right off the plane — not your typical conference experience; would that it were more common! It ended, similarly uniquely, with a tour of Alvar Aalto’s experimental house and a local town hall. I was also able to visit the Aalto museum and several of his other buildings on campus. Prior to doing so I had no idea of the scale of his output. Altogether this made for a much more interesting and varied trip than your average academic conference experience.



Diarmuid Costello's study, 2026.

ESA 2026 Conference

Thoughts from the keynote speakers

Monique Roelofs (University of Amsterdam)

This is my desk at the University of Amsterdam. My office is in a labyrinthine group of old canal houses in the center of the city that are internally connected through hallways. Behind the many doors, one finds the roughly fifty philosophers that make up the department, which one wouldn't guess just from merely walking through and getting lost. Some colleagues' windows look out onto canals, imposing architecture, and throngs of people. My own windows look out onto a quiet interior patio that you see if you look down. When looking up, you see a patch of sky bordered by the rims of the building.

I'm interested in tracing how modes of address, such as solicitations, strategies of disruption, and creative curatorial endeavors, reverberate as collective practices. This interest takes me to the work of decolonial feminist philosophers, such as María Lugones, who highlights the capacities of modes of address to create coalitions across lines of difference. My specific concern is with the aesthetic potentialities of address, which haven't received as much attention as address's other aspects. I started analyzing the aesthetics of address in previous work but I'm currently delving more deeply into its intricate and subtle windings.

My second main research project considers cases of strangeness in art and literature. In this way I want to gain a

better grip on the aesthetic category of the strange. While writing on strange tastes, I discovered really puzzling instances of this quality that I had to leave for later. So I'm currently running with that, as I began to do in my talk at the ESA conference in Jyväskylä.

In this photo, I'm actually sitting at my desk. Perhaps I'm musing on one of my topics; on the next thing on my to-do list as a department head; or on the lovely pluralist, companionable ESA conference that I just attended in Finland, recalling the glow and smell of the smoke sauna we enjoyed on the eve of the events, or reminiscing about the exquisite Alvar and Elissa Aalto Muuratsalo Experimental House and Säynätsalo Town Hall that we visited at the end. The town hall moved me very much for it is a material celebration of democracy, a design intent on fostering deliberation and equity. Aalto was always playing in his work. One crucial thing he played with was the light—like experimental author Diamela Eltit in her novels written under the Chilean dictatorship, which look through the light toward democracy (as I argue in *Strange Tastes*). This quiet, human-scale architecture moved me tremendously at this moment where autocratic movements are having a heyday in many countries. And discussing aesthetics together at our intellectually pluralist conference in (or near) Aalto's buildings at the university, for me, absorbed and exuded some of that democratizing spirit. We keep talking.



Monique Roelofs' study, 2026.



ESA 2026 Conference

Thoughts from the keynote speakers

Max Rynänen (Aalto University)

For someone like me, who has lately been interested in the diversity of approaches/methods in aesthetics and the relationship of aesthetics and other disciplines, it was great to meet new people and hear new voices in the ESA conference in Jyväskylä - as it seems that the international societies of aesthetics are built very differently.

ESA has for sure its own atmosphere too. I heard many great talks, and I talked myself about the way aesthetics is and could (according to me) be even more playing the second violin in a variety of existing and possible future collaborations with other disciplines.

With Zoltán Somhegyi I edited 2023 the book *Aesthetics Across the Disciplines* (Rowman) and in 2026, late fall, a 'sequel' with the title

Accompanying Aesthetics (Bloomsbury/Rowman) will come out, and my talk was based on the findings of these two projects.

My other research interests have lately included, for instance, Gianni Vattimo's lifework, aesthetics of martial arts, and the art scenes.

In ESA I learned a lot about heritage and sauna - and their philosophies - but also about ESA itself, which is useful for me as the chair of the Society of Dialogical Aesthetics and the Vice President of the International Association for Aesthetics. Hopefully we can collaborate even in the future, as these societies are relatively small, and our 'business' really marginal. I felt honored to be keynote, and for sure: I aim to return one day!



Max Rynänen's study, 2026.

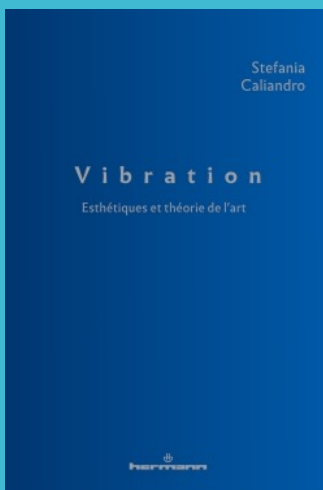
RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Special Issues & Books



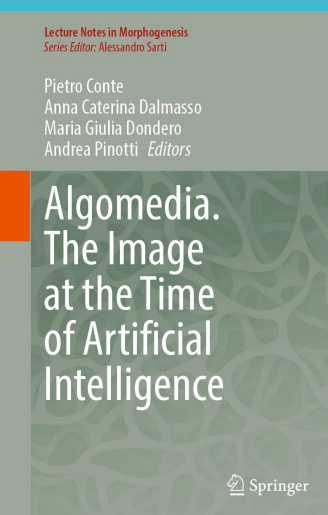
Special Issue: “Aesthetics, Care, and Action”, guest edited by Michael Garbutt (UNSW Sydney) and Soheil Ashrafi (University of Central Asia), *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Volume 60, Number 1, Spring 2026.
<https://muse.jhu.edu/issue/56355/>

The issue features papers on “the double helix of aesthetics”; “aesthetic education in everyday life”; “aesthetics of school care”; “posthuman ethical aesthetics in theatre”; “an urban aesthetics of care”; and “a quantum perspective on aesthetic education”.



Stefania Caliandro. 2026. *Vibration. Esthétiques et théorie de l'art*. Paris: Hermann.
<https://www.editions-hermann.fr/livre/vibration-stefania-caliandro>

The aim of this book is to explore the idea of aesthetic vibration, to outline its origins, to analyze its historical development in the arts and aesthetics from the turn of the 20th century to the present day, and finally to theorize and understand the function and functioning of vibration in relation to aesthesia and meaning. To this end, it combines research in aesthetics and philosophy of art, in theory and history of art, and in semiotics, addressing topics that also intersect with current issues (Sound Art in creation, the Material Turn in art history, and neurobiological contributions to the semiocognitive understanding of sensory data).



Pietro Conte, Anna Caterina Dalmaso, Maria Giulia Dondero, Andrea Pinotti (eds.). 2026. *Algomedia. The Image at the Time of Artificial Intelligence*. Cham: Springer.
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-032-08726-3>

Contemporary media ecosystems are deeply entangled with algorithms, which play an increasingly pervasive role in

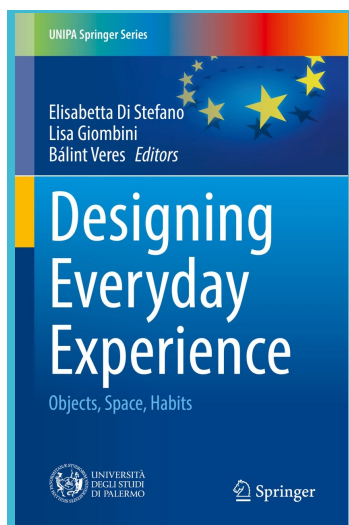
shaping our environment and mediating our perception of reality. This book aims to provide a critical map of a rapidly evolving mediascape in which humans, machines, and data negotiate forms of agency, cultural imaginaries, and scopic regimes.

In particular, the volume addresses the multiple challenges posed by algorithmic media within the domain of visual culture, and identifies a paradigmatic shift: in the age of artificial intelligence, images are no longer merely captured or represented—they are synthesized, inferred, and predicted by probabilistic models. As active agents shaping creativity and meaning-making, AI systems carry far-reaching epistemological, aesthetic, and political implications. They open new possibilities for content accessibility and participatory engagement, yet they also encode existing asymmetries. Trained on massive datasets, machine learning models often reproduce structural biases, amplify cultural and social exclusions, and perpetuate inequalities. At the same time, algorithmic systems are being subverted and reappropriated by artists and curators, transforming them into sites of resistance and experimentation for imagining alternative futures.

Bringing together perspectives from computer science, semiotics, philosophy, critical theory, aesthetics, art theory, visual culture, and film and media studies, this book sets out an interdisciplinary exploration to make key concepts—such as algorithm, latent space, neural networks, generative models, and NFTs—accessible to a humanities audience, while providing a set of critical tools to interrogate both the ruptures and continuities that define this ongoing transformation.

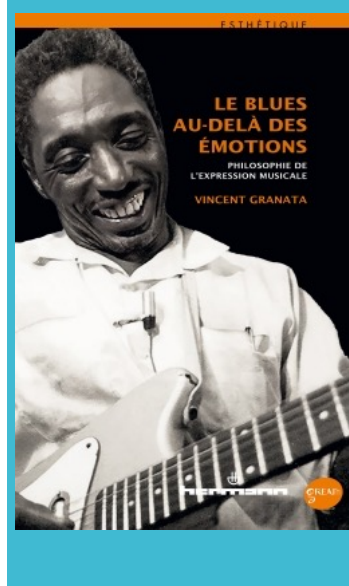
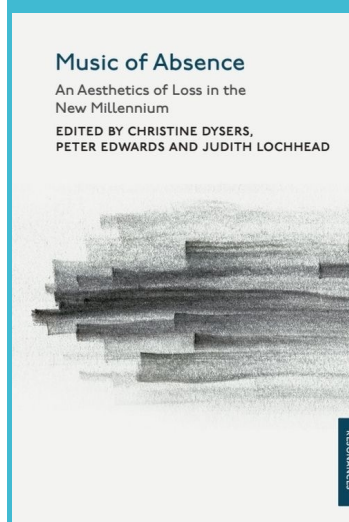
RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Books



Elisabetta Di Stefano, Lisa Giombini, Bálint Veres. 2026. *Designing Everyday Experience: Objects, Space, Habits*. Cham: Springer.
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-032-17427-7>

Designing Everyday Experience: Objects, Space, Habits, edited by Elisabetta Di Stefano, Lisa Giombini, and Bálint Veres, has recently been published by Springer. The volume explores the relationship between design and everyday aesthetics through an interdisciplinary dialogue. Bringing together contributions by leading international scholars, the book investigates how objects, spaces, and habits shape everyday experience and influence ways of living, perceiving, and interacting with the world. Particular attention is devoted to themes such as sustainability, care practices, urban experience, embodied knowledge, tourism, and the aesthetic dimensions of ordinary life. Some contributions also address the aesthetic and affective dimensions of spatial experience, including the role of atmospheres in tourism and urban contexts. The volume originated from the international conference "Designing Everyday Experience" (Budapest 2023), organized by the Doctoral School of the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME) in collaboration with the Everyday Aesthetics Network (EVA.net). While not conceived as conference proceedings, the collection developed out of the intellectual exchange fostered by the event and was later enriched with additional invited contributions from international scholars active in the field of Everyday Aesthetics. The book also reflects the growing international interest in Everyday Aesthetics and in the role of design in shaping contemporary forms of living.



Christine Dysers, Peter Edwards, and Judith Lochhead (eds.). 2026. *Music of Absence: An Aesthetics of Loss in the New Millennium*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
<https://edinburghuniversitypress.com/book-music-of-absence.html>

This collection, consisting of an introduction and seventeen essays, studies how music of the twenty-first century resonates with sentiments of despondency and loss in the context of the multiple existential crises of our time: climate change, political violence, financial crises, racial inequities and technological acceleration.

Investigating musical expressions of absence across a wide variety of genres and philosophical approaches, the collection aims to stimulate an interdisciplinary conversation about music as an alternative mode of thinking

at a time when established frames of reasoning are called into question. In the introduction, the editors present a generative approach to absence, demonstrating how it functions as a real and expressive 'nonbeing' through music and sound. They demonstrate that aesthetic experience of music entails an embodied, sensuous form of sense-making—a 'music thinking.'

Music of Absence is structured around five themed sections: Residual Energies, Erasures, Precarities, Overload and Negative Space. The essays of each theme engage with the multiplicity of emergent meanings that absence alludes to, opening new lines of inquiry into how music enacts new forms of being in the world and creates pathways to better futures.

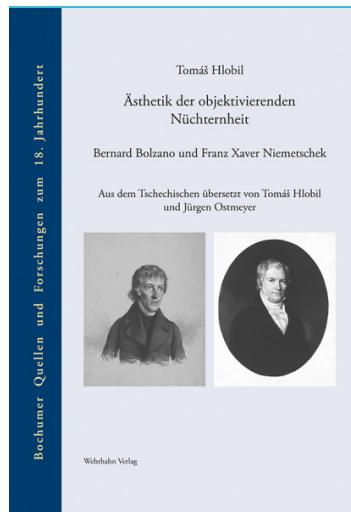
Vincent Granata. 2025. *Le blues au-delà des émotions : philosophie de l'expression musicale*. Paris: Hermann, coll. GREAM: Esthétique.
<https://www.editions-hermann.fr/livre/le-blues-au-dela-des-emotions-vincent-granata>

Lorsqu'on parle du blues, musique et émotions sont présentées comme les deux faces d'une même pièce : rarement perçu comme simple forme sonore, le blues est surtout appréhendé comme expression émotionnelle, mettant au centre les souffrances et les peines de l'individu. Néanmoins, cette manière de concevoir la musique, centrée sur l'émotion et la sensibilité, est pour le moins stéréotypée : l'expressivité du blues va, en réalité, bien au-delà de phénomènes subjectifs et d'expériences privées.

Le but de ce livre est de faire la part belle aux mécanismes rationnels qui gouvernent l'appréciation du blues et aux bénéfices intellectuels que cette musique peut apporter. D'une part, l'expressivité du blues dépend moins d'émotions ressenties que de compétences classificatoires et de processus de catégorisation réfléchis qui émanent de l'auditeur. D'autre part, le blues n'est pas seulement un objet de plaisir : il est également un outil de compréhension du monde qui permet d'éclairer certains aspects de notre vie émotionnelle et psychologique.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Books



Tomáš Hlobil. 2026. *Ästhetik der objektivierenden Nüchternheit: Bernard Bolzano und Franz Xaver Niemetschek*. Wehrhahn Verlag. https://wehrhahn-verlag.de/public/index.php?ID_Section=2&ID_Product=1710

Bernard Bolzano is primarily recognized as a precursor of analytic philosophy; however, aesthetics also occupied a significant place in his thought. Evidence of his lifelong engagement with the nature of beauty and art can be found in his sermons, philosophical diaries, and later aesthetic treatises. Alongside Franz Xaver Niemetschek (author of the first monograph on Mozart and an influential historian of Bohemian art who assumed the chair of aesthetics at Prague University in 1811/12) Bolzano represents an object-centered Bohemian aesthetic tradition. This school of thought deliberately distanced itself from Kantian transcendental idealism, choosing instead to locate aesthetic qualities within the object itself. This volume analyzes the core concepts of these theories—beauty, art, genius, and the sublime—within the broader context of eighteenth-century German aesthetics. In doing so, it makes a vital contribution to the history of early Bohemian aesthetics, the regional reception of Wolffian and anthropological theories of beauty, and the influence of Kant's *Critique of Judgment* in Bohemia and Austria during the first half of the nineteenth century.

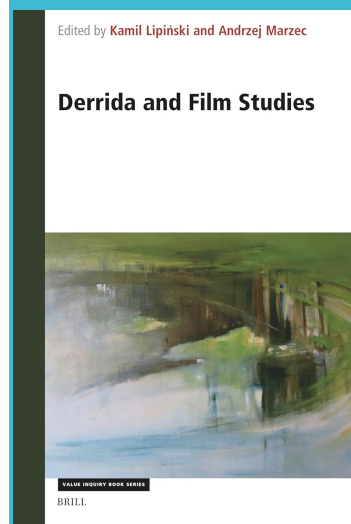
Kamil Lipinski, Andrzej Marzec (eds.). 2025. *Derrida and Film Studies*. Brill, Value Inquiry Book Series, Volume: 411 and Philosophy of Film, Volume: 411. https://brill.com/display/title/72113?srs_lid=AfmBOoq4OMTSH1_evziqtW8X_o67gsZ3D4SnS93CPmpUKo_qvWW_WDB91y.

Derrida and Film Studies views Jacques Derrida's in-depth and meandering ideas within the realm of film. Bringing together audiovisual culture and deconstruction, the book explores the spectral turn of cinema. Seeing the phenomenon of film as impacted by deconstruction and poststructuralism, the essays offer a wide spectrum of perspectives and illustrate the reception of Derrida's thought for a new generation of philosophers of film. Using both well-known and pioneering methodologies, this rich volume is an essential guide for understanding the importance of spectrality, hieroglyphics, writing and difference, and alterity in film.

François Rastier. 2026. *Opera e creazione. Immagine, linguaggio, Intelligenza Artificiale*. Pisa: ETS.

https://www.edizioniets.com/scheda.asp?n=9788846773241&from=&fk_s=

Opera e creazione sono concetti cruciali di un millenario discorso sull'arte. E, al pari di ogni altra prassi, l'arte si intreccia con l'etica. Questioni di nuovo sul tappeto, sotto vesti che paiono nuove e sono talvolta molto antiche, come qui si ricorda. Oggi, l'irruzione estetica dell'Intelligenza Artificiale sembra gettare l'arte nel gorgo di un gioco post-umano. Torna perciò indispensabile parlare di opera e di creazione nell'arte da una prospettiva umana, cioè semiologica. Questo libro dotto, appassionato, consapevole e punteggiato, per chi li sa cogliere, da secchi e memorabili aforismi contribuisce al dibattito, proponendo in chiusura alcune basi per una futura scienza delle opere.



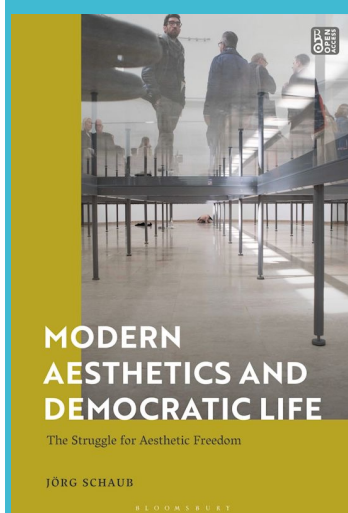
RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Books



Monique Roelofs. 2026. *Strange Tastes: Aesthetics and the Public in Latin American and Latinx Feminisms*. Durham: Duke University Press. <https://www.dukeupress.edu/strange-tastes>

Strange Tastes is a philosophical excursion into aesthetic experience and the public through the works of contemporary Latin American and Latinx women writers and artists. In a careful study of this revelatory archive, Monique Roelofs shows how life lived aesthetically can embrace public space instead of surrendering it to the constrictive forces of gendering and racial capital. Joining notions of sensibility grounded in Enlightenment aesthetics with the creative capabilities of a decolonial aesthetics, Roelofs looks to practices that animate the public through intimate, social, and political registers, particularly by engaging the historical and critical potentialities of disinterested play and what she calls “strange tastes,” or the unusual, uncanny, and nonnormative desires and sensations of marginalized individuals. Through sustained attention to materiality and lived experience, Roelofs offers a feminist philosophy of aesthetics that takes seriously the role of the public, where strange tastes turn aesthetic imaginaries into powerful possibilities to remake self, city, nation, and world.



Jörg Schaub. 2026. *Modern Aesthetics and Democratic Life: The Struggle for Aesthetic Freedom*. London: Bloomsbury Academic. <https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/modern-aesthetics-and-democratic-life-9781350586727/>

In the open-access study *Modern Aesthetics and Democratic Life: The Struggle for Aesthetic Freedom*, Jörg Schaub demonstrates that the aesthetic is essential to democratic societies' aspiration to realize a life of equal freedom for all.

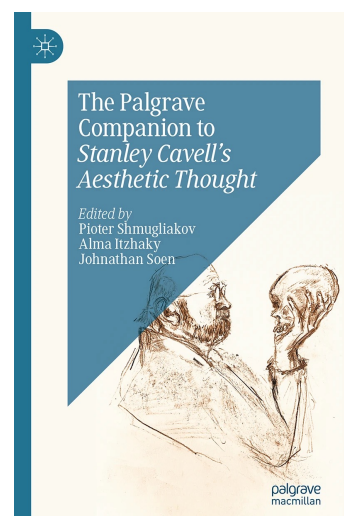
Revisiting seminal eighteenth-century aesthetic treatises, Schaub advances a new interpretation of modern aesthetics and, in doing so, lays the groundwork for his original account of Hegel's post-ideal conception of aesthetics. He argues that what lies at the core of these accounts-and gives them their cultural significance-is the value they accord to free perceptual, emotional, and imaginative exploration of the world, and he shows how this orientation transforms our understanding of the values of freedom and equality.

Schaub develops a novel conception of aesthetic recognition by bringing into view the consideration we owe one another as perceiving, feeling, and imaginative beings. Through a range of case studies, he shows that many conflicts in democratic life are also struggles for aesthetic recognition.

This perspective yields a critical theory of aesthetics capable of diagnosing forms of aesthetic misrecognition. Schaub's study constitutes a significant intervention in the long-standing debate about aesthetics and politics, reshaping how we think about freedom in democratic life.

Pioter Shmugliakov, Alma Itzhaky, Johnathan Soen (eds.). 2026. *The Palgrave Companion to Stanley Cavell's Aesthetic Thought*. Cham: Springer. <https://link.springer.com/book/9783032277237>.

The Palgrave Companion to Stanley Cavell's Aesthetic Thought is a collection dedicated to the intersections between Stanley Cavell's aesthetic thought and an array of major philosophical figures: Kant, Nietzsche, Schelling, Wittgenstein, Austin, Heidegger, Benjamin, Arendt, Derrida, Diamond, Bugbee, and others. It offers a comprehensive account of Cavell's aesthetic legacy by exploring its indebtedness and relevance to these philosophical interlocutors. The volume's premise is that Cavell's conversational mode of philosophizing is intimately connected to his original understanding of art and film and to their centrality in his work. The featured essays elucidate different aspects of this connection, as each chapter reconstructs Cavell's dialogue with another thinker on a subject chosen from the vast gamut of Cavell's work: aesthetic experience, philosophical style, perfectionism, reading, literary form, modernism, film genres, and more. *The Palgrave Companion to Stanley Cavell's Aesthetic Thought* offers cutting-edge perspectives on traditional Cavellian themes while also opening unexpected avenues of “doing things with Cavell.” It addresses scholars and students interested in Cavell, aesthetics and the arts, dialogical thinking, and their significance for modern philosophy at large.



RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Conference Proceedings

The Hellenic Society for Aesthetics (HSA) announces the publication of Volume 49 of the *Annals for Aesthetics* (April 2026), published by the Panayotis and Effie Michelis Foundation. This volume comprises the Proceedings of the 8th Mediterranean Congress of Aesthetics, titled "Aesthetics of Everyday Life in Contemporary Cities", organized by our Society as a webinar in Athens on September 9–11, 2021. The volume features selected papers which explore diverse facets of contemporary aesthetics, map connections between life as art and art as life, and examine aesthetics, art, and architecture in daily activities. Contributions also address critical environmental and aesthetic issues, developments in somaesthetics,

changes in artistic practices, and aesthetic experience in the digital world and the media. Furthermore, the volume discusses the aesthetics of violence, of revolution, and of the uncanny in public life, among other topics. Additionally, the Hellenic Society for Aesthetics has launched a monthly digital Newsletter, since January 2026. It regularly features the HSA's news, international updates on conferences and workshops, calls for papers and proposals, recent publications, and announcements regarding upcoming exhibitions and cultural events.

NEWS ABOUT ESA MEMBERS

João Lemos' two-year research project *Kant's Theory of Art in Context*, carried out at the University of Turin and funded by the Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, has now reached its midpoint. Among the forthcoming outputs of the project are an article on Kant and Bad Art (accepted for publication in the JAAC) and an edited volume on Kant and the Arts, Artists and Artworks (under contract with Bloomsbury). Thanks to Max Rynänen and Zoltán Somhegyi, a podcast dialogue will also soon be available on the Society of Dialogical Aesthetics' website.

Leyson Orlando Ponce Flores is the Principal Investigator of the Contemporary Creation Transversal Studies Research Group (ETCC) at Nebrija University, where he leads research projects focused on contemporary creation, arts-based pedagogy, and the transformative role of artistic practices in society.

Ming Yang, Assistant Professor at Beijing Foreign Studies University and currently an IAS-FMSH fellow, is developing a project on contemporary Kunqu, a classical Chinese theatre form and UNESCO-recognized intangible cultural heritage, as a living heritage reimagined, remodeled, and re-enacted. Bringing theatre studies, performance analysis, heritage studies, and philosophical aesthetics together, the project asks how inherited forms continue to generate aesthetic norms under contemporary cultural conditions. The project aims to bring non-Western performance heritage into conversation with aesthetics by showing how artistic agency, normativity, and the social life of form are negotiated through living performance traditions.



EDITORS

This issue was edited by Michalle Gal and Ancuța Mortu.

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Deadlines: December 1, 2026; May 25, 2027