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Editorial

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This project of editing an issue of *Diogenes* on the theme of new aesthetics is, for me, a continuation of the 15th International Congress for Aesthetics, held in 2001 in a suburb of Tokyo, for which I was responsible. Since it was the first year of the new century, the theme of that congress was, necessarily, the search for new possibilities in aesthetics. Moreover, it actually felt like a period of change. For the preceding two or three decades, the postmodern and the end of art had been enthusiastically discussed. These were the recognized star topics, so to speak, proposed by certain big names and echoed in the mouths of others. But there also existed an anonymous new aesthetics, latent in everyone's sensibility. The 15th International Congress was an attempt to let such aesthetics come to the surface, so that they might be shared. The participants presented the subjects they believed were the most interesting, and I, as the organizer, made a summary of them (cf. my report, 'Stirrings of a New Aesthetics—An Essay of a Collage of Papers', in *The Great Book of Aesthetics*, the CD of the Proceedings), drawing, in the process, a map of this new aesthetics.

This volume of *Diogenes* develops the plan of travel that map represented a decade ago: each author is following the itinerary they have chosen. When I invited them to join this project, I suggested several new subjects: (1) Senses, Sensibility and the Body, including such topics as matter vs. form; neuroscience and art/beauty; the range of the aesthetic; atmosphere; movement and speed. (2) Life and Environment (or Nature and City), including such topics as skyscrapers and private houses; art and economics; everydayness; landscape. (3) Technology and Communication, including technique and technology; matter and information; new technology; advertising. (4) Society and 'Tastes,' including elite and mass; pop art and pop; popularity and the perennial. (5) Historical Accumulation and the Production of the Future, including world heritage and tourism; Paris, New York and the history of art; art in history and history in art; art on record (museums, digital media, the Internet, etc.); ruins and scenic preservation. The list was based on my personal idea and, therefore, open to revision. Each author responded to my invitation according to their own interests, and this volume is the result.

Now, in order to introduce the result, I wish to classify the papers that follow into six basic groups. The grouping is mine and might deviate from the intentions of the respective authors. It goes without saying that every paper has several aspects and could fit into several different groups. Most papers discuss art, so 'art' cannot itself be a group. Besides, as the above list of possible topics shows, one of my basic ideas was to avoid the banal conception of aesthetics as the philosophy

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or theory of art. Therefore, the papers that do address art are considered here from the angle of their 'predicates'. I would, then, divide the papers here into the following six categories:

1. Body and Feeling
2. New Science and Technology
3. Landscape
4. New Horizons of Art
5. The Aesthetic and Life
6. The Historical Situation of Aesthetics.

The first category is a manifestation of contemporary interest in the philosophy of the body, which has become stronger since Merleau-Ponty, involving cognitive science and the theory of affordance. Richard Shusterman has recently advocated what he calls 'somaesthetics'. Here, with his paper on 'Body and the Arts: the Need for Somaesthetics', he invites the readers to this new field of aesthetics. Through the critique of the 'rationalistic' aesthetics such as Baumgarten's, Kant's and Hegel's, from the view point of the 'intelligent body' that 'soma' is, our author deploys different aspects of somaesthetics. Emphasizing its pragmatic or practical fields, Shusterman presents this new aesthetics as a way of 'perfecting our humanity and living better lives'.

Ken-ichi Sasaki's paper on feeling presents an analysis of the act and function of feeling, a faculty peculiar to that compound of spirit and body that is the human being. It is a trial in developing Baumgarten's original concept of *aesthetica*, which was focused on by Wolfgang Welsch in his critical philosophy of contemporary society, *Ästhetische Denken* (Aesthetic Thought, 1990). The author finds the peculiarity of feeling in a responsive resonance to perceptual stimuli, the activation of a deep layer of memory containing our past experiences.

The second category, 'New Science and Technology', concerns the field from which most people probably expect a new aesthetics to emerge. Originally art contains and is founded on a certain portion of scientific knowledge, and we can find a primitive form of scientifically-oriented aesthetic in the so-called 'industrial aesthetics' of Etienne Souriau. Science is closely related to the aesthetic in several ways. The possibilities offered by new technology for the reproduction or mass production of artworks has radically changed the being of art in society, to the extent that the modern distinction between high and popular art is losing its relevance. Digital technology has created new forms of art, and changed the horizon of telecommunication. It is probably not accidental, however, that the two papers here could be said to concern biology. For this is one of the most stimulating scientific fields at the present time.

Jos de Mul's paper, 'The (Bio)Technological sublime', discusses a new art form created by biotechnology. The author uses the example of the 'transgenic' bunny, to throw into relief the contemporary situation, in which nature, technology, and art so far interpenetrate each other that it is often impossible to differentiate them. Zdravko Radman's paper, 'Body, Brain, and Beauty', treats the aesthetic from the viewpoint of neuroscience; it could also be considered an essay on the philosophy of mind. The author criticizes the tendency to explain the human mind through computer metaphors, and insists on the importance of the mind's embodiment. This embodiment, he argues, is best represented by the aesthetic. Although neuroscience can contribute to aesthetics in many ways, beauty cannot be reduced to merely empiricist terms.

The third category, 'Landscape', might seem very concrete in comparison with the others. In fact it is, but the importance of the topic is also deeply rooted in the current situation of thought. As vision, landscape is characterized by its width and intuitive totality: characteristics that correspond to the period of change we are living through. As for the style of the experience, landscape requires

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bodily involvement, which links it to the above-mentioned interest in the body. Moreover, the concept of landscape, as it encompasses both natural landscape and cityscape, seems to suit a consciousness that exceeds the classical opposition between nature and art. The first author, Arnold Berleant, is well known as a champion of environmental aesthetics. His paper, 'The Art in Knowing a Landscape', seeks to renovate our understanding of art in reference to landscape. He focuses on the case of landscape in artworks, in order to show both that the appreciation of an artwork should be like the appreciation of landscape and that the appreciation of landscape is a kind of art.

Heinz Paetzold, in 'Aesthetics of Urban Design', claims that the city is a school *par excellence* for the aesthetic today. After post-modernity, and the collapse of classical aesthetic models, the basis of aesthetic training should today be found in everyday life (we should remember that environmental aesthetics is often related to the aesthetics of everyday life). Such aspects of urban space as the layout of streets and the atmosphere of a square will serve, according to Paetzold, to form our sensibility. Raffaele Milani's paper, 'The Meaning of Landscape in Europe', focuses on a still different aspect of landscapes, both natural and urban. Basing his analysis upon rich data, the author discusses changing aspects of landscape in Europe and raises the difficult problem of how to conserve the identity of landscape.

In the category 'New Horizons of Art', I would place only two papers. The reason is simple. As mentioned above, most papers in this volume deal with art, and categorizing them all as the philosophy of art would not contribute to a new aesthetics. Therefore, I would place in this category only those papers that particularly discuss the contemporary situation of art. Curtis Carter's paper, 'Philosophy and Art', develops, through reflections on the thought of four philosophers on this subject, a unique panoramic survey of contemporary art, including such diverse topics as globalization, the art market, social aspects of art, popular culture, new developments in the *avant-garde*, and so on. The author finds the future of aesthetics to be closely connected to the ever-changing face of contemporary art. Jianping Gao's paper, 'The Wheel of Fortune vs. the Mustard Seed: A Comparative Study of European and Chinese Painting', is, as its title shows, a study in comparative aesthetics. It represents in our volume a view from a non-Western culture. Although cultural difference constitutes a very popular subject among contemporary aestheticians, I was thinking of omitting this field, since it would need a full volume to develop the topic concretely. But, as Carter's paper claims that art from outside the Western world has acquired citizenship in the artworld, I decided to include just one paper on this subject. According to Gao, Chinese painting established its particular identity with the appearance of Literati Painting. This identity lies, says Gao, in its kinship with calligraphy, with which its shares a common method of brushwork, so that a painting can express the bodily movements of the painter, and through this even his character and spirituality.

The fifth category is 'The Aesthetic and Life'. This approach to the aesthetic is pragmatist in the non-technical sense of the word, and constitutes an influential trend in contemporary aesthetics, especially in Finland, where aestheticians are particularly interested in practical aesthetics. This is based upon the latent opposition to modernist purism in aesthetics, and seeks to emphasize the 'useful' aspect of the aesthetic in life. In more traditional aesthetics, this would correspond to an interest in the ethical meaning of the aesthetic. This is represented here by Peter McCormick's paper entitled 'Aesthetics Tomorrow'. To overcome the usual view of the relationship between ethics and aesthetics, the author sets out to 're-contextualize the aesthetic' in order to arrive at an important function in ethics. He takes his model from the sculpture of the ancient classical period just after the Persian War, which was deeply related to the new ethics of *sôphrosunê*. Next comes a pedagogical aesthetics. Pauline von Bonsdorff, from Finland, in her paper on 'Aesthetics and *Bildung*', finds in the aesthetic a pathway to value in general. Following the Kantian analysis of

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aesthetic judgment, our author wishes to defend both its autonomy and the social character of art. The key to this coalescence is found in the German concept of *Bild/Bildung*, which suggest the pedagogical power of the image. She refers to two examples that support her argument for this influential function of art.

I have also included the so-called 'aesthetics of everydayness' in this category. The everyday is acquiring increasing importance in the world of thought. Besides pragmatism, we can think of the surrealists, Henri Lefebvre, and Roland Barthes, among others. Katya Mandoki is known as a leading figure in this movement in aesthetics. Her paper here, 'The Sense of Earthiness', throws light on the aesthetic power of the utility goods we encounter and use in everyday life, and even discusses bread and soup, insisting on their elemental materiality. Distinguishing the aesthetic from the artistic, the author praises the generosity and joy of life.

The last category is 'The Situation of Aesthetics'. As the editor of this issue, I hope that it will encourage readers to draw their own maps of our historical situation. But some contributors are sensitive to the present state of aesthetics, and their papers imply a critique of certain contemporary views or theories. In his 'Art and Aesthetics', Aleš Erjavec wishes to describe the current situation of aesthetics. He focuses on the relationship between philosophy (or aesthetics) and contemporary art, because he finds this relationship most relevant to the newest aesthetics. Referring to three theories that have arisen since the nineties, the author insists that the link between art and philosophy should be kept, that it plays an important role, and that contemporary aesthetics is relevant to the understanding of contemporary art. Gerhard Seel's paper, 'The Role of Art in History and the Art of the Future', seeks to defend art from a long-term historical viewpoint. According to our author, historical progress consists in the increase of leisure time, and therefore, since we will have much more leisure in future, this should be filled up by art. He also distinguishes three fields of human activity: theory, praxis, and play. Art, which belongs to the last of these fields, yields us pleasure, hence its increasing role as our leisure increases.

Carole Talon-Hugon criticizes the recent insistence on the philosophical function of art, which supports the argument for the end of art. Our author looks at this relationship through the history of aesthetics and art (especially visual art), to point out that it is a very recent tendency. She then discusses whether this view can be founded on the nature of the visual arts, and arrives at a skeptical conclusion. A similar problem is treated by James Kirwan in his paper 'Aesthetics Without the Aesthetic?'. As is suggested in the survey of contributed papers above, the aesthetic is a key concept in contemporary aesthetics. However, it has radically changed its core meaning. Up to the sixties or even seventies, it kept its classical (i.e. dating from the nineteenth century) meaning of, roughly, 'related to art', or 'related to the experience of beauty'. Now, though this meaning is still alive, the use of the term in its etymological meaning is becoming more and more noticeable. This tendency can be particularly perceived in the refusal of some philosophers to use the general name 'aesthetics' because of its literal sense (recalling the dispute between aesthetics and the science of art in Germany a century ago). Kirwan finds that analytical philosophy is especially responsible for this tendency, and wishes to assert the importance of an understanding of the aesthetic itself for any understanding of aesthetics in general.

Despite the variety of the topics I have listed above, it is evident that there remain many other interesting subjects for a new aesthetics that are not touched on here. I believe, however, that this present volume will contribute to the renovation of aesthetics, the philosophical-hymn of life.

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