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WELCOME

Dear participants,

The organizing group and the AIAS give you our warmest welcome, and we wish you a very pleasant and thought-stimulating 'Aesthetics, Contemporaneity, Art' Conference.

Enjoy your days in Aarhus!

Conference description

Recent theoretical developments claim that the general condition of our everyday life and artistic production today is one of contemporaneity, where the urgent question of being with time, or being genuinely 'contemporary', is a matter of understanding a coexistence of different temporalities and various 'ways of being in relation to time'. Thus, in recent decades we have seen a worldwide shift from modernity and postmodernity to contemporaneity, perhaps most evident in the fact that "contemporary art" has substituted "modern art" as descriptor of the art of our historical present. Advances in communication technologies - in short, the internet - in particular have produced an extreme spatial and temporal compression, which alters the ways in which we experience places, events, and time as everything happens as if contemporaneously.

With this conference we want to explore the aesthetics of our contemporary time, this condition of contemporaneity, and its relations to art and aesthetics more generally. We propose to analyze and discuss how contemporaneity affects our experience of time, aesthetic sensibility, the everyday, and our conception of contemporary art.

DAY 1: THURSDAY 28 MAY

12.00 – 13.00 Registration and sandwiches in the AIAS Hall

13.00 – 13.15 Welcome by Morten Kyndrup

13.15 – 14.30 **KEYNOTE: THIERRY DE DUVE: 'ON TIME' | CHAIR: MORTEN KYNDRUP**

14.30 – 15.00 Break

	SESSION 1 (Auditorium) Chair: Jacob Lund	SESSION 2 (Room 203) Chair: Birgitte Stougaard	SESSION 3 (Hall) Chair: Karl Axelsson
15.00 – 15.30	Piotr Schollenberger: 'Pictorial and Other Nominalisms. On the Contemporaneity of a Certain Old Idea.'	Ossi Naukkarinen: 'Contemporaneity of and in Aesthetics'	Kimmo Sarje: 'Sigurd Frosterus as a Contemporary Nordic Philosopher of Culture'
15.35 – 16.05	Anna De Filippi: 'Whose Narrative of the 'Contemporary'?': Bouchra Khalili's The Mapping Journey Project'	Brit Strandhagen: 'Becoming 'Now': Sublimity and Contemporaneity'	H. K. Riikonen: 'Aesthetics, Aestheticism and Futurism in the Writings of Olavi Paavolainen in the 1920s and Early 1930s'
16.10 – 16.40	Alex Fletcher: 'Operative Fictions: Constructing and Narrating the Contemporary in the Video-Essay'	Solveig Bøe: 'The persistence of the past in the present. The eternal return'	Jan-Ivar Lindén: 'Lived and Grasped Experience. The Ambiguity of Presence in the Aesthetics of Lars-Ivar Ringbom'

16.40 – 17.10 Break

	SESSION 4 (Auditorium) Chair: Cecilia Sjöholm	SESSION 5 (Room 203) Chair: Henrik Kaare Nielsen
17.10 – 17.40	Katrine Bolt Rasmussen: 'Can the Contemporary Art Institution be Transformed into an Agent of Political Action?'	Ole Martin Skilleås: 'Aesthetic Competence and Expertise'
17.45 – 18.15	Peter Williams: 'Aesthetics of the Everyday'property disputes.'	Dagmar Mirbach: 'Perceiving Nature – Perspectives of an Aesthetic Education for Sustainable Development'
18.15 – 21.00	Welcome reception, the AIAS Hall	

DAY 2: FRIDAY 29 MAY

09.30 – 10.45 **KEYNOTE: DAVID JOSELIT: 'HERITAGE AND DEBT'** | CHAIR: JACOB LUND

10.45 – 11.15 Break

SESSION 6 (Auditorium)

Chair: Lotte Philipsen

SESSION 7 (Room 203)

Chair: Birgitte Stougaard

11.15 – 11.45

Jan Bäcklund:

'Visibility and Contemporaneity.
The Case of Hilma af Klint'

Åsa Arketeg:

'Poetics and Contemporaneity'

11.50 – 12.20

Cecilia Sjöholm:

'The Art of Listening: The Ear of
Critical Thought.'

Martta Heikkilä:

'Deconstructing the Work of Art
– French Contemporary Philo-
sophy and Critique of Art'

12.20 – 13.20 Lunch

13.20 – 14.30 **KEYNOTE: DAN KARLHOLM: 'AFTER CONTEMPORARY ART: ACTUALIZATION AND ANACHRONY'** | CHAIR: JACOB LUND

14.30 – 15.00 Break

	SESSION 8 (Auditorium) Chair: Bente Larsen	SESSION 9 (Room 203) Chair: Knut Ove Eliassen	SESSION 10 (Hall) Chair: Karl Axelsson
15.00 – 15.30	Cristina Moraru: 'The Critical Inquiry of Contemporary Art – From the Post-Critical Theory to the Neo-Left Ontology'	Gioia Laura Iannilli: 'Wearable Technologies or Biodesign? Considerations on Everyday Life and Aesthetics'	Christian Ulrik Andersen: 'Vector Space - The aesthetics of contemporary interface culture'
15.35 – 16.05	Cătălin Gheorghe: 'Antinomies in decisive moments'	Andreas Helles Pedersen: 'How are you today? Reflections on the relationship between digital media and human being as sensual becoming'	Hege Charlotte Faber: 'Eight blue puppies on a bench, and a Mondrian cake: Some perspectives on image-circulation in the light of some cases of appropriation art and intellectual property disputes.'
16.05 – 16.35	Break		
	SESSION 11 (Auditorium) Chair: Thomas Bjørnsten	SESSION 9 - continued (Room 203) Chair: Knut Ove Eliassen	
16.35 – 17.05	Joanne Couch: 'Transient Installation Art: A Return to the Pilgrimage'	Bente Larsen: 'The contemporaneity of the skin: An Aesthetics of pictorial surface'	
17.10 – 17.40	Marie Christine Skammelsen: 'The city as crime scene'	Barbora Kundračíková: 'Updated Photograph of the 21st century: Modernist Photography and the Problem of the Rebirth of the Iconic Image'	
17.45 – 18.45	Annual meeting of The Nordic Society of Aesthetics (Auditorium)		

DAY 3: SATURDAY 30 MAY

09.30 – 10.45 **KEYNOTE: ELISABETH SCHELLEKENS DAMMANN: 'ON SENSIBLE AND INTELLIGIBLE BEAUTY'**

CHAIR: MORTEN KYNDRUP

10.45 – 11.15 Break

SESSION 12 (Auditorium)

Chair: Jacob Lund

SESSION 13 (Room 203)

Chair: Bente Larsen

11.15 – 11.45

Wolfram Bergande: 'Transcendentalism. Towards a new philosophy of art history'

Charlotte Blanche Myrvold:
'Displacements in site. New publics in Katie Paterson's Future Library.'

11.50 – 12.20

Knut Ove Eliassen:
'The contemporary; Agamben reading Foucault'

Rebecka Molin:
'Specific Art Practices'

12.20 – 13.20 Lunch

	SESSION 14 (Auditorium) Chair: Elisabeth Schellekens Dammann	SESSION 15 (Room 203) Chair: Thomas Bjørnsten
13.20 – 13.50	Frank Darwiche: 'Overcoming the Weight of Time: Cézanne and Klee through Heideggerian Ground-attunement and Beyond'	Rebecka Ahvenniemi: 'Composition in Essay Form'
13.55 – 14.25	Harri Mäcklin: 'Approaching the Ontology of Art After Metaphysics: Heideggerian Deliberations'	Janne Vanhanen: 'Something or Nothing? On Listening to Silent and Silenced Sounds'
14.30 – 15.00	Lotte Philipson: 'It's (a)live! Real time and contemporaneity in new art'	Anette Vandsø: 'Ears in the mesh: The expansion of time in sonic excavations of ecological hyper-objects'
18.30 – 23.00	Conference Dinner at the AIAS	

KEYNOTE LECTURES

Thierry de Duve, New York

On Time

In trying to find an adequate way to address the theme of the conference, Aesthetics, Contemporaneity, Art, I came across a text (never published in English) I had written in 1985 on the then fashionable modern/postmodern divide. Though it is dated, as it should be, I found it uncannily timely. This made me curious to share it with my contemporaries gathered around contemporaneity, and eager to receive their response.

Dan Karlholm, Södertörn University, Sweden

After Contemporary Art: Actualization and Anachrony

Departing from a critical assessment of the most widespread and initiated definitions of Contemporary Art from the last decade and a half, sustaining a world-wide discourse on contemporary art and contemporaneity, I will concentrate this talk on two aspects of an immodest proposal captured by the keywords actualization and anachrony. While current discussions on contemporary art are arguably reproducing modernist assumptions on the primacy of novelty and innovation, bolstered by a veiled avant-garde logic, the proposal to regard contemporary art as actualized art upsets not only ideas on what art after post-modernism might mean, but the whole edifice of historicist historiography. An anachronic perspective, a bi- or polychronic situatedness of the work of art, could be used to liberate art from being defined according to its unique descent, and to embrace, instead, a chronologic open to art's continuous "life" through its successive aesthetic accessions and actualizations in time.

David Joselit, The Graduate Center, CUNY, USA

Heritage and Debt

Around 1989, several major international exhibitions including “China/Avant-Garde” in Beijing, “Magiciens de la Terre” in Paris, and the 3rd Havana Biennial, sought to reconcile in different ways indigenous artistic traditions and internationally prominent, though Western derived modernist styles. I will argue that debt as both a financial and a moral force in global relations, finds strong aesthetic expression in the play between a nation’s long-term aesthetic traditions—its heritage—and its relation within a fairly unified “global” art market still dominated by Western forms and institutions. Interestingly, especially outside the historical “birthplace” of modern art in Euro-America, heritage, via markers of national or ethnic specificity which can be quite ancient, are deeply imbricated in contemporary art: indeed it is typically the means by which generic global art practices are localized. Hence, heritage and contemporaneity are far from opposing terms, but rather qualities that must be reconciled within individual works of art in order for them to qualify as global.

Elisabeth Schellekens Dammann, Uppsala University, Sweden

On Sensible and Intelligible Beauty

In this paper I examine in what sense, if any, it might be meaningful to suggest that we can attribute aesthetic qualities to thought-processes and ideas. I will draw on some of my earlier work on the aesthetic value of ideas in conceptual art, and explore what it means to say that non-perceptual art can be experienced aesthetically. I will then explore the further, related, question of whether apparently non-perceptual entities such as mathematical proofs also permit of aesthetic experience in this sense. Underlying my argument is a re-examination of three closely related issues: first, the notion of aesthetic testimony; second, the possible extension of aesthetic concepts in non-artistic contexts; third, the possibility of a non-sensory kind of aesthetic value.

ABSTRACTS

Alex Fletcher, Kingston University, London

Operative Fictions: Constructing and Narrating the Contemporary in the Video-Essay

Contemporaneity, as both a historical and spatial concept, is inherently problematic. As the totality of coeval times, it remains socially disjunctive – there is no socially actual subject-position of, or within, our present, however fragmentary, which it could be experienced as a whole. The idea of the contemporary also poses the problem of the disjunctive unity of social space, or the geopolitical. My paper will investigate how recent essayistic art practices – with a specific focus on the video-essay – have attempted to performatively project or render present this non-existent unity onto the disjunctive relations between coeval times and trans-national spaces, in order to critically narrate (as well as speculatively experience and effectively grasp) our fragmentary experience of contemporary global capitalism. As Peter Osborne has argued, 'all constructions of the contemporary are fictional, in the sense of fiction as a narrative mode'. My paper will critically explore how artists and filmmakers, such as Alexander Kluge, Harun Farocki, Hito Steyerl, and Ursula Biemann deploy such narrative fictions in order to historically, spatially and aesthetically map the times and spaces of contemporary capitalism. This will be read alongside Adorno's theories of the 'essay form', montage, and 'construction', connecting this up to Ricouer's ideas on 'narrative'.

Andreas Helles Pedersen, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

How are you today? Reflections on the relationship between digital media and human being as sensual becoming

Digital media are everywhere. In our everyday life we interact with computers, smartphones etc., to a degree that makes us forget distinctions between different kinds of logic, between subject and object, between human and technology. The components of digital media, hardware and software, permeates the human body, as well as the human body permeates the media, in a way that queries our presence in the present. The aim of this paper is to throw out suggestions of how to contemplate being in a world of non- being. Using Marshall McLuhan and Friedrich Kittler as stepping stones this paper wants to engage in a somewhat deleuzian idiom (inspired by the American media theorist

Alexander Galloway) and confront a specific case with a way of 'thinking differently'. The object for scrutiny is Spotify as an application for smartphones. How does the appearance of this specific medium crystallize and in which way is it constitutive for our being? Is it in a world of computational language possible to speak of subjectivity at all? Our world is a world of apparatuses (dispositifs), of control and freedom – a virtual world of both not being there and always already being there.

Anette Vandsø, Aarhus University, Denmark

Ears in the mesh: The expansion of time in sonic excavations of ecological hyper-objects

When looking at the field of contemporary sound art one cannot fail to notice the explosion of art works that focus on ecological large-scale phenomenon (the weather', 'electromagnetic waves', 'the landscape', etc). Such art seems very 'contemporary' because they relate to a key concern in contemporary society namely the climate-change debates and the many questions concerning our relation to 'the earth' or to 'nature' that these debates have brought about. However, in my presentation I wish argue that such artworks are also 'contemporary' in another sense because they deal with the fundamental matter of 'contemporaneity' of being with time or in a coexistence of different temporalities.

Where typical critical investigations of 'man and nature' focus on our agency (how we pollute for instance) these art works seem to attune us to the vibrating agency of the non-human world (Bennet), as they attempt to let us experience the way in which these extremely large scaled ecological hyperobjects (Morton 2010) transcends the human spatio-temporal specificity, simply because they are so massive that they contest the notion that spacetime is stationary, solid and unswerving. Thus what comprises time is not that the earth is made smaller due to globalization and new media, but that we are forced to realize that magnitude of the earth and the agency of the non-human.

Anna De Filippi, Kingston University, London

Whose Narrative of the 'Contemporary'? Bouchra Khalili's The Mapping Journey Project

'The contemporary,' best philosophically understood as a mode of historical temporalization (Osborne:2013 NJA 44), does not break from the social relations constitutive of the capitalist and colonial 'modern' but rather intensifies them in a global, transnational context. (Abstract continues ->)

This paper unpacks the above through analysis of a specific contemporary artwork: Bouchra Khalili's mixed-media installation *The Mapping Journey Project* (2008-2011). Produced over a crucial period in recent history — from the global financial crisis' beginnings to the 'Arab spring' — Khalili traveled to major migration zones (Marseilles, Ramallah, Rome) speaking to people of their migratory experiences. Eight numbered films, often installed together on separate hanging screens, each capture a person's hand drawing their journey on a map.

The voiceover stories both fold into wider historical narratives — such as the globalization of the labor market — and, through their singularity, necessarily resist pure subsumption under them. We will argue that by making visible this narrative tension of social experience under global capitalism, *The Mapping Project* works the dual concept of 'the contemporary' as an at once fictive temporal unity and an increasingly enforced material reality.

What does it say of 'the contemporary' that these stories are found in art? What does it say of 'art'?

Barbora Kundračíková, Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic

Updated Photograph of the 21st century: Modernist Photography and the Problem of the Rebirth of the Iconic Image

During thirties, Jiří Jeníček, Czech modernist and amateur photographer, tried to redefine the role of photography within modern society and for this purpose introduced new term: so called updated photograph – the photograph which is not only strictly current by its content but also deeply intellectual by its message. Such photograph is united with the certain space-time, its existence is possible only within the specific context and its core is centered on the mediation of ideas. Nevertheless, Jeníček was fascinated by Eugène Atget photographs which were only recently presented to the Czech photographic society – and this fascination had led him straight into the arms of the specific kind of surrealist labyrinth. This interesting dichotomy of time, rather dichotomy of dealing with time, is crucial in its aesthetic consequences. In the last few decades, photography has gained the status of the principal image, the image as such – in the first place iconic (presence), but also indexical (past) and even symbolic (transcendent). Its living contemporaneity is suspiciously obvious. The question is simple: What if this is only a mere replacement of assumptions and conclusions? Or rather, what if the intuition and the psychological persuasiveness only obscure the true nature of the matter?

Bente Larsen, Oslo University, Norway

The contemporaneity of the skin: An Aesthetics of pictorial surface

In 2006 Jean-Luc Nancy published together with Federico Ferrari a short book on skin, NUS SOMMES. (La Peau des images). In the book the two writers explore the relationship between truth and the skin, focusing on both the motive of the naked or the nude in different images and on the image itself as skin, as a place in which the truth "right at the skin is only true in being exposed, in being offered without reserve but also without revelation." What the nude reveals, according to the two writers, is that there is nothing to be revealed other than revelation itself. In my talk I shall discuss this concept of skin (Schein?) from the point of departure of the late paintings by Monet focusing on the immediacy of texture as revelation.

Brit Strandhagen, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim

Becoming 'Now': Sublimity and Contemporaneity

Ever since Barnett Newman published his 1948 article 'The Sublime is Now', the concept of the sublime has gradually become free of its obsolete overtones and is nowadays widely used to describe and evaluate contemporary art. There is, however, more to this 'Now' than just the labelling of contemporary art. Experiencing the sublime may, as I hope to show in my presentation, be described as the presence of a Now, the moment in which eternity and time merge – what Kierkegaard referred to as the instant (øyeblikket) – making the aesthetic experience of the sublime itself an experience of contemporaneity.

To Kierkegaard religious belief demands contemporaneity with the incarnation, meaning that God's accession in time becomes as contemporary as if we had actually been there ourselves. Faith involves believing in something as paradoxical as the eternal becoming temporal, which is to believe in the impossible. Thus, achieving contemporaneity with the paradoxical requires willingness to move beyond the realm of the comprehensible.

Confronted with the sublime, as well as in the moment of faith, cognition is stretched beyond its limits, making the parallels between religious belief and the aesthetic experience of the sublime even more evident.

Cătălin Gheorghe, University of Arts "George Enescu", Romania

Antinomies in decisive moments

Starting from the premise that time could be understood as an agency that produces multiple contemporaneities in relation with various forms of artistic discourses as they are displayed in exhibitions or edited in publications, the paper will analyse the temporization of the aesthetic experience (including the juridical disposition and the political attitude) facing what Smith, Enwezor and Condee are calling "a simultaneity of antinomies."

For a juridical grasp of co-existent differences in the actual formations of contradictory artworlds, from the world of the globalized art market to the world of the resistant critical art, or from the world of industrialized creativity to the world of laboratorial artistic research, the paper will temporize oppositional testimonies of each of these selected contemporary artworlds with the intention to argue in the relativistic end for the agonistic condition against the hegemonic tendencies to counter the differences.

In this respect, various advocates of simultaneous artworlds, from Thierry Ehrmann (the CEO and founder of Artprice.com) or Noah Horowitz (the Managing Director of The Armory Show and the author of Art of the Deal) to Julian Stallabrass (author of Art Incorporated) or Gerald Raunig (author of Art and Revolution), or from Richard Florida (author of The Rise of the Creative Class) to Henk Slager (author of Experimental Aesthetics), will shortly plead for the time of their supported artworld unaware that, in the end of the fictional trial, the author of this paper will decide upon a verdict according to a momentary reactionary aesthetic experience, but unaware, at his/her turn, that, in the continuous contemporaneity, time is a decisive agency.

Cecilia Sjöholm, Södertörn University, Sweden

The Art of Listening: The Ear of Critical Thought.

In times when shortsighted economism and individualism plague contemporary democracy, finding new models for collectivity and solidarity is one of the greatest challenges for critical thought. How are we to find ways to act, think or feel "in concert" and yet maintain a legacy of critical reflection and freedom?

Charlotte Blanche Myrvold, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Norway

Displacements in site. New publics in Katie Paterson's Future Library.

Artist Katie Paterson's new public artwork for Oslo, Future Library, expands the temporal frame of contemporary art, by extending the production time of the project to 100 years. While the project's unfolding in time bear promise of a duration exceeding the reception of it in our lifetime, the physical sites are situated in Oslo and consists of a newly planted forest and a room in the new, yet to be built, Deichman Library. Every year from the 2014 until 2114 one selected author will write a text which will be stored unread in the specially conceived room of the library. In one hundred years from now, the 100 texts are to be published in an anthology on paper produced from the trees of the newly planted forest. The project has so far received global attention and has circulated worldwide, despite the scarcity of the material available to the audience. The Future Library emanates from a public art program curated by Claire Doherty and Situations, and can be read in relation to contemporary art theoretical critiques of site specific public art. The durational frame of the project and the remoteness of the site of the growing forest, contrast the immediate attention it has received and its global circulation through the internet. This presentation aims at discussing Future Library in relation to mediation and communication of public art. More specifically, it addresses the relation between site specificity and mediation to secondary audiences, by exploring participation and site through the dislocations in time and reception in Future Library.

Christian Ulrik Andersen, AIAS, Aarhus University, Denmark

Vector Space - The aesthetics of contemporary interface culture

This paper addresses a current shift in computing popularly exemplified by "big data" and in the businesses of Apple, Amazon, Facebook and Google, and this shift's inherent influence on aesthetics. In other words, it presents a critique of contemporary interface culture, with a deeper reflection on how our media ecology is intertwined with our being in the world (our wider ecology). It will describe how computational processes are over-layered by, and influence aesthetics – how they are not only extensions of human agency but affect what can be sensed and perceived, and as such, also our cultural forms and behaviors. This can also be labeled processes of "transcoding". Furthermore, it will suggest the notion of a "vector space" as denominator of contemporary processes of transcoding. Vectors

are used in computing and apply a special spatial logic where any kind of data contributes to generalizable models of anticipation that deeply affect out interface culture. The paper will discuss the inherent problems for critique to work within this paradigm (or “regime”) of anticipation, and how potential strategies of critique evolve within software art.

Cristina Moraru, University of Arts “George Enescu”, Romania

The Critical Inquiry of Contemporary Art – From the Post-Critical Theory to the Neo-Left Ontology

This paper problematizes the possibilities of a post-critical approach to aesthetics, investigating its relevance in the recent contemporary art discourses, analyzing the conditions of post-criticality and generating possibilities of applying specific methodologies of critical theory to the visual art field. Because a post-critical view indicates a certain positioning related with the past – which is not dominant, but implacably determined by a present whose past continues to structure him –, an analysis over the postcritical turn in aesthetics will sustain a necessary concern over the dominant vectors of critical theory.

Analyzing the post-critical theory, Jeff Pruchnic endeavours to identify the current state of critical theory assuming that its problem does not reside in a lack of skeptical attitude, resistance force, or power to create categories of oppositionality, but in the overpower that eludes its reflexivity from its own claims of truth. This is the reason why critics like Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek propose a neo-ontology as both critique of, as well as substitute for critical theory.

This neo-(left) ontology will represent an incipient, but possibly expansive inquiry of the contemporary art, attempting to re-establish the generic objectives of critical theory in order to construct a post-critical condition that could release us from our historical, theoretical, and political conventionalism, as Hal Foster points out in the article Post-critical.

Dagmar Mirbach, University of Tübingen, Germany

Perceiving Nature – Perspectives of an Aesthetic Education for Sustainable Development

The term “to perceive nature” is twofold: We “perceive” nature in the sense of sensual perception, as e.g. landscape on a nature hike. But we also “perceive” nature in the way(s) in which we think nature, according to the intellectual concept we have of nature – in our time, in our cultural sphere and individually.

Perceiving nature sensually and perceiving nature conceptually interdepend in a reciprocal relationship. This gives way to the specific and prolif role that can be claimed for an Aesthetic Education for Sustainable development: The question of how we sensually perceive nature leads to the question of its (pre-formed) conceptualization, but conversely, the productive examination of (different) conceptualizations of nature can in its turn re-shape our sensual perception – leading to enlarged conductive patterns in our actual attainment to nature.

Linked to the twofold question of how we “perceive nature”, Aesthetic Education for Sustainable Development is not only an important item of contemporary aesthetics, but also a possible contribution in answering to one of the most urgent requirements of our contemporary life. Authors in focus: A. G. Baumgarten (sensual cognition), Gernot Böhme (aesthetics of nature), Peter Bieri (education).

Frank Darwiche, University of Balamand, Lebanon

Overcoming the Weight of Time: Cézanne and Klee through Heideggerian Ground-attunement and Beyond

This paper takes on the meaning and ways of dealing with the “weight of time”, through Heidegger’s ground-attunements (*Grundstimmungen*) as they are rhythmically, and in different ways, at work in both Cézanne and Klee’s works. Cézanne is identified as occupying two ground-attunements, one – boredom – authentically and the other – sorrow – defectively. This places him in a rhythm whose poles go from Nothing to the Whole, from total absence to total presence, in a negation of values that gives a temporal experience of the Whole through Nothing. He then moves to the *Grundstimmung* of mourning, in which he effects a recoiling and a sounding of depth, where he meets the earthly as permanence beyond the long-duration-expressing rhythm of boredom. He is, however stuck in the telluric forces, and the “point” at which he effects his movement toward such forces remains unproductive, for geometric. That is precisely where Klee distinguishes himself, not limiting his work to going toward depths, recoil, recollection, i.e. the earth-as-permanence, but moving from and through the “dynamic” point of chaos, upward through *φύσις*, and thus reaching the second pole of the ground-attunement of sorrow, i.e. “joy”, something he is able to do only after entering that of melancholy, which Heidegger, following Aristotle, identifies as philosophy’s own. Moreover, this paper will show that Klee does not only learn to bear the weight of time by anchoring himself in permanence and openness; he goes beyond Heidegger’s *Grundstimmungen* by taking the direction of cosmic time as the very experience of a man in his time-bound presence, his finitude.

Gioia Laura Iannilli, University of Bologna, Italy

Wearable Technologies or Biodesign? Considerations on Everyday Life and Aesthetics

Over recent years, the traditional boundaries of aesthetics have been increasingly challenged by practices and devices embedded in the everyday. These have brought back the etymological poignancy of the term *aisthesis*, by generating a widespread sensitive experiential texture, no longer limited to the artworld. Particularly, that whole range of technological devices with mobile internet connections is the leading force in the production of such unprecedented aesthetic experiences, and is ever more decisive in shaping the dynamics and relations of our everyday lives. Specifically, the devices most closely integrated with the user's body, i.e. Wearable Technologies, are progressively gaining ground in both contemporary industrial and artistic production, from wellbeing and wellness practices to those oriented towards performance and creativity. The other side of this technological/industrial coin, which while it produces benefits, also raises further issues, not only concerning the nature of contemporary art and aesthetic experience, but also of an environmental kind, is Biodesign. It too, however, operates in the fields of wellbeing, wellness and artistic/design production, which are intrinsic parts of our everyday lives. What are the dialectics between these promising fields of interdisciplinary cultural production, so far apart, yet sharing similar goals aimed at the qualitative enhancement of our daily lives, in a strongly aesthetic sense?

H. K. Riiikonen, University of Helsinki, Finland

Aesthetics, Aestheticism and Futurism in the Writings of Olavi Paavolainen in the 1920s and Early 1930s

Olavi Paavolainen (1903-1964) was an influential Finnish cultural critic who in the 1920s and 1930s presented several new artistic movements, e.g. Cubism, Dada and Futurism, as well as other modernist trends, such as jazz, the new woman and German nudity culture. Visual culture was always very important for him. He wrote also about cinema, dance and theatre. Paavolainen was in many respects a contradictory personality. He was an admirer of late nineteenth French poetry, Symbolism and Oscar Wilde's aestheticism. On the other hand, he was very interested in Futurism, and presented both Italian and Russian Futurism in his book *Nykyäikää etsimässä* (1929; *In Search of the Modern Age*). He wrote also some poems, e.g. 'Punainen Fiat' (the Red Fiat) ja 'Terässinfonia' (Steel Symphony), which were among the most important Futurist poems written in Finland. My paper will illuminate

Paavolainen's aesthetic principles as well as his way of presenting Futurism and applying it in his own poetry and other writings. He views will also be related to Finnish culture in the 1920s and early 1930s.

Harri Mäcklin, University of Helsinki, Finland

Approaching the Ontology of Art After Metaphysics: Heideggerian Deliberations

Many trends in contemporary continental philosophy regard the tradition of Western philosophy – that is, roughly, the tradition of metaphysics – as having reached its completion in turn of the 20th century. Thinkers like Heidegger and his followers, for whom the contemporary era is a transitional phase between “the end of metaphysics” and “the other beginning”, have called for a radical deconstruction of the Western tradition and for a mapping out of new, “post-metaphysical” ways of thinking. This challenge has severe consequences also for the tradition of aesthetics, especially for our ways of approaching the ontology of art.

In my paper I propose to explicate the main challenges of contemporary ontology of art from a Heideggerian perspective. By applying recent readings of Heideggerian ontology I attempt to analyze the implications which the shift from metaphysics to post-metaphysical Ereignis-ontology imposes upon aesthetics. That is, I propose to expound the mode and direction of questioning to which the post-metaphysical turn guides aesthetics, and elucidate the basic starting points of a post-metaphysical way of approaching the ontology of art.

Hege Charlotte Faber, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim

Eight blue puppies on a bench, and a Mondrian cake: Some perspectives on image-circulation in the light of some cases of appropriation art and intellectual property disputes.

Throughout the history of art, we have seen artistic strategies of appropriation, remix and reuse of images. With emerging digital technologies and programmes allowing people to share and/ or manipulate files, images, artworks, music and texts, some of those works subject to copyright, such borrowing or appropriation practices is even easier to perform. From time to time, appropriation practices have resulted in a lawsuit (Dennis Oppenheim, Jeff

Koons, Barbara Kruger, Richard Prince and Damien Hirst, to mention a few), which makes it interesting to discuss appropriation art in relation to copyright issues.

Jan Bäcklund, The Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen, Denmark

Visibility and Contemporaneity. The Case of Hilma af Klint

In a foreseeable and living future, Hilma af Klint will be the most influential contemporary artist, replacing Duchamp, Warhol, or Cézanne as the point of reference. On the basis of this I will argue that "contemporary art" is radically different to the system of fine art as we know it, exists parallel to it, and serves as an medieval and occulting device screening off this art. If "contemporary art" was identical to art, then not only would Michael Thompson (Rubbish Theory, 1978) be wrong in his theory of how "durables" are produced out of rubbish, but Krzysztof Pomian's theory of the nature of collectibles as semiophores (Collectionneurs, amateurs et curieux, 1986) would be severely deficient as well. They are not, but the antinomy between contemporaneity and artistic value reveals two incompatible value-systems which one the one hand demonstrates the extreme visibility, medievality, and authenticity of an art à la mode, and an on the other the invisibility, documentability, and forgeability of an art that will be contemporary with us in the future. The recent reception of Hilma af Klint (and others) will serve as case in point.

Jan-Ivar Lindén, University of Helsinki, Finland

Lived and Grasped Experience. The Ambiguity of Presence in the Aesthetics of Lars-Ivar Ringbom

Lars-Ivar Ringbom (1901-1971), professor at the Swedish university in Turku (Åbo Akademi) and well known for his works on the iconography of paradise, also worked on fundamental questions of aesthetics and theory of perception. This tendency is especially strong in his early work *Kampen om illusionen i måleriet. Studier i måleriets väsen och utveckling* (1931, 2. edition 2014). Starting from German Lebensphilosophie and phenomenology Ringbom develops the heterogenous character of experience and studies its various artistic expressions in the context of a general tension between expressive and intentional aspects. The talk will focus on the two central concepts lived experience (upplevelse) and grasped experience (uppfattande) in relation to similar concerns in the philosophical tradition, especially in phenomenology, philosophical psychology and the ontology of time.

Janne Vanhanen, University of Helsinki, Finland

Something or Nothing? On Listening to Silent and Silenced Sounds

In my presentation I shall explore the role of silence in contemporary music, especially in the context of its technologically mediated reception. Typically, in playing a piece of music on a recording, we do not want to hear the sound of the recording itself or of the reproduction apparatus. The medium must not intervene but stay silent, transparent. Rather, in listening to music our intention seems to be to extract the properly musical content out of our auditory perception, and the “high fidelity” ideal of audio technology would help the extraction process by providing as little distraction as possible.

Yet, I wish to consider cases in contemporary music and sound art when the medium itself is brought to the fore. Most notably this takes place in so-called Noise music, where sounds that normally would be silenced as errors are utilized primarily. I want to ask whether silence can be considered as analogous to noise in this schema, as both would seem to constitute the silenced “other” side of music. The question of what is form (or the lack of it) in music becomes central in this enquiry.

Joanne Couch, National University of Ireland, Galway

Transient Installation Art: A Return to the Pilgrimage

This paper proposes to explore the relation between transient Installation art and time, and the effect that this has on aesthetic experience. In his paper, *Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Walter Benjamin reflects on the loss of the ‘aura’ in Modern art. By this he meant the ‘distance’ between the viewer and the artwork, something that photography, in its own way, destroyed. With the introduction of film and photography, traditional artworks were being viewed in a new way, and by a much larger audience. Without the specific need of a site visit, art appreciation, once an elitist pursuit, was being brought to the masses. The rise of Installation art, however, has brought about the return of a pilgrimage to the site of the work. The ephemeral nature of many Installation pieces mean that they become an exclusive event, with a limited time frame in which to experience them. The encounter with these works bring about a different aesthetic experience, due, in part, to the time limitations imposed. It is the intention of this paper to explore this phenomenon, using examples of Contemporary works.

Katrine Bolt Rasmussen, University of Southern Denmark

Can the Contemporary Art Institution be Transformed into an Agent of Political Action?

In our current time of crisis and disorientation, where a common horizon according to many critics is out of sight, this paper will examine what role contemporary art institutions might play in creating alternatives to the status quo. According to Claire Bishop politicized art museums that work with the contemporary as a method or practice rather than the contemporary as a category of periodization have a potential to transform the present conditions (Cf. *Radical Museology, or, What's 'Contemporary' in Museums of Contemporary Art?*). Following Bishop the paper will focus on art institutions that act instead of just represent and that apply a working method that resembles art activist practices that act here and now. The paper will ask how it is possible for art institutions to act critically, to use what Gerald Raunig calls "an instituent practice", and to do so in a more collective and democratic way. One way of conceptualising this shift from representing to instituting could be through Stefano Harney and Fred Moten's concept of "undercommons" that enables a shift from a focus on ends to means with a view to moving beyond both an uncritical pluralist 'post-critical' stance as well as beyond an avant-gardist negation.

Kimmo Sarje, University of Helsinki, Finland

Sigurd Frosterus as a Contemporary Nordic Philosopher of Culture

The Finnish architect, philosopher and critic Sigurd Frosterus (1876–1956) was an influential actor in the theory and critique of modern architecture, design and painting. He was also a radical rationalist and Nietzschean and a colleague and friend of Henry van de Velde. Frosterus's books *Olikartade skönhetsvärden* (Different Aesthetic Values, 1915), *Regnbågsfärgernas segertåg* (The Triumph of the Colours of the Rainbow, 1917), *Färgproblemet i måleriet* (The Problem of Colour in Painting, 1920) and also *Nordiskt i dur och moll* (Nordic in a Major and Minor Key, 1947) were well received in the Nordic countries. Also his other books such as *Moderna vapen* (Modern Weapons, 1915), his architectural manifesto *Arkitektur en stridskrift* (Architecture. A Challenge) written jointly with Gustaf Strengell and his prominent career in architecture were widely known.

Leading critics such as Gregor Paulsson (1889–1977) and August Brunius (1879–1926) praised Frosterus's achievements and considered his books to be unique and the best of what was published in their field in the Scandinavian languages. "This recently published book consisting of five essays is the deepest analysis and the work most aptly to the point

that has been written about modern painting in the Nordic languages. [...] Young art in the Nordic countries cannot be served better than by this book [...]", wrote Paulsson in his review of *Regnbågsfärgernas segertåg*. The Danish art historian Rudolf Broby-Johansen (1900–1987) confessed to being a pupil of Frosterus.

Scholarly interest in the history of modernism and the avant-garde in the Nordic countries has grown over the past few years. The question of whether Frosterus was the leading rational modernist of the first decades of the 20th century in Scandinavia is a challenging topic for discussion by Nordic art historians and philosophers.

[Knut Ove Eliassen, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim](#)

"The contemporary; Agamben reading Foucault"

A recurring issue in the late Foucault is the problem of the contemporary. Not only focusing on what kind of experiences it expresses and how "the contemporary" became a philosophical issue, notably with Kant's history of philosophy (in particular in "What is Enlightenment?"), Foucault discusses how the concept can be employed to thematize his own position. Briefly put, the concept of the contemporary becomes a methodological touchstone in his genealogy of the Western subject. In "What is the Contemporary?" Giorgio Agamben returns to Foucault's question, addressing it with the framework of his historical ontology. Agamben articulates the idea that the contemporary is an ontological marker, "a singular relationship with one's own time, which adheres to it and, at the same time, keeps a distance from it". While such a formula might certainly have an affinity to Foucault's position, this paper will, in a first movement discuss some of the theoretical implications of Agamben's reading of Foucault, and in a second step investigate whether Foucault's reading of Kant can be used to identify a few blind spots in Agamben's position.

[Lotte Philipson, AIAS, Aarhus University, Denmark](#)

It's (a)live! Real time and contemporaneity in new art

With the entrance of new technology and media in art the concept of live-ness in art has taken on new dimensions. Whereas traditionally only the performing arts were live, today direct live feed from computers executing programmes or online conversations and file sharing is increasingly common in the visual arts (e.g. Pirate Cinema, Listening Post, Endless War). In addition, works of bio-art make use of cells, tissue, or even creatures that are quite

literally alive (e.g. Sterile, Edunia, Pancreas). The aesthetic value of these new art practices often arises from of the works' (a)liveness.

This paper investigates how the live dimensions of such new artistic practices relate to the notion of contemporaneity. In particular, the idea of 'real time' seems relativized and split between different chronological stages in such works of art: the real time of the live or living artistic material seems to be different from the real time audience appreciation of the work of art that makes use of live material. By evoking Peter Osborne's ideas of contemporary art's generic and post-conceptual character, the paper analyses the contemporaneity of live-ness in new kinds of live art.

Marie Christine Skammelsen, Copenhagen University, Denmark

The city as crime scene

This paper sets out to examine the characteristics of the urban crime scene as described by the German modernist philosopher Walter Benjamin, but doing so within the framework of contemporaneity. In his essay *The Flâneur* as well as in *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* what seems to fascinate Benjamin about the crime scene is not the criminal act in itself, but rather the traces it leaves behind and what we imagine to see when there is no longer any crime to be seen. With the crime scene in mind the paper turns to the artwork *Intercourses* (2012) by the Danish artist Jesper Just. The artwork, a five channel video projection, follows three Algerian men as they move around and about in the deserted streets of a Chinese replica-city replicating Paris. In analyzing how traces of different places, cultures and temporalities intertwine the paper discusses the global and contemporary metropolis as a left-behind crime scene in which we look for traces of crimes we do not see, but only imagine.

Martta Heikkilä, University of Helsinki, Finland

Deconstructing the Work of Art – French Contemporary Philosophy and Critique of Art

In my paper I shall reflect upon the accounts of visual arts written by French deconstructionist philosophers: Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe. These thinkers, being part of the postmodern tradition, have written extensively of works of art, both modern and contemporary. I shall take a critical look at these analyses: which are the art philosophical notions that they aim to deconstruct? How is their choice of artworks composed, and how can we describe the notion of art that results from the reading of

these analyses, extending from the 1970's to the present?

As a rule, art criticism focuses on particular works of art, whereas philosophers tend to make more general theoretical claims about art. When writing about particular works of art, philosophers take the position of a critic, having the concrete existence of artworks as their point of reference. I shall inquire what kind of notion of the "work of art" is revealed when deconstructionist philosophers write about artworks, what are the critical concepts they bring up in their interpretations, and how is their thinking on art applicable to contemporary art criticism.

Ole Martin Skilleås, University of Bergen, Norway

Aesthetic Competence and Expertise

That aesthetic judgement may rely on competence and even expertise has been recognised by (at least some) philosophers since Hume. Hume provided criteria of how aesthetic expertise was acquired and who would possess it. However, it is by no means clear what such competence may consist in, how it is deployed, and what it would mean to have competence to the degree of expertise. Moreover, competence and expertise acquired must necessarily have been tested against art phenomena from the past – so how can anyone claim competence and expertise in aesthetics when art is contemporary?

Ossi Naukkarinen, Aalto University, Finland

Contemporaneity of and in Aesthetics

In my recent essay "Contemporary Aesthetics: Perspectives on Time, Space and Contents" (Contemporary Aesthetics, Vol. 12, 2014) I address the question of how to understand what contemporary aesthetics is – both as a concept and as an academic field. I suggest that it is useful to consider three themes: the time, space, and content of aesthetics, i.e., the questions of when, where, and what contemporary aesthetics is. Through this, it is possible to construe a conceptual space of contemporary aesthetics and to compare different instantiations of it with each other. Con-temporaneity should not be dealt with without paying attention to con-spatiality and con-tents.

In my presentation I will develop the theme further and present some new tools for analyzing various aspects of contemporaneity. I will also problematize the often presented claim that the contemporary period would be clearly different from the supposedly preceding

periods of modernity and postmodernity, in the arts and elsewhere. I suggest that such periods or eras, rather, overlap and can have parallel existence.

Peter Williams, University of Balamand, Lebanon

Aesthetics of the Everyday

Historicism, as a framework or rubric for thinking about art and literature and as an horizon upon which the possibilities of the 'new' in art and literature are only barely realized, has been a crucial lens through which important twentieth century critics of art, particularly of the Marxist or materialist bent such as Peter Burger and Clement Greenberg, have both perceived, understood and placed art. In his *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, for example, Burger claims that the primary modes of modernist aesthetics, especially those related to abstraction, signify "art's detachment from the context of practical life," and that the aim of the avant-garde should be to re-integrate art back into the praxis of everyday life. Modernism's failure, according to Burger was, rather, to reify the art object as an autonomous entity, so continuing 19th Century Aestheticism.

Burger's implication of a heroic past against a failed present, not uncommon amongst critics, is, this paper will argue, not sustainable. Whilst art and the 'everyday' is assigned little value by other theorists like Theodor Adorno and Martin Heidegger, who viewed the everyday and the objects in it as a "hazy indefiniteness" in which "that which is ontically closest and well-known" is "ontologically the furthest and not known at all; ...", this paper will argue that art objects of the "neo avant-garde" (generally considered the minimalist and pop art movements of the 1960s and 70s), in their direct engagement with the 'everyday real,' defy the negative valencies of "kitsch" to instead re-orient our engagements with them in such a way as to reinforce art's integration with the complexities of practical life.

Piotr Schollenberger, University of Warsaw, Poland

Pictorial and Other Nominalisms. On the Contemporaneity of a Certain Old Idea.

Whether "pictorial" (Duchamp, Thierry de Duve), "magical" (Martin Jay), or purely constructivist (Nelson Goodman), nominalism is often evoked as one of the main characteristics of contemporary art and artistic practice. What is more important, Hans Blumenberg has shown (*Die Legitimität der Neuzeit*), that appearance of nominalism in debates of the Middle Ages, had laid grounds for the modernity. Nominalism assumes that only individual, concrete objects exist and that common properties are not grounded in any kind of supra-

individual properties or relations that would exist independently of what is singular. In Thierry de Duve's interpretation, "pictorial nominalism" of Duchamp puts stress on a particular or a singular name, stops the process of reference and shows its "plastic being". This aesthetic idea opens up a new field that we contemporarily call "art", where art becomes a "proper name". However, art is not what is merely accepted as being called "art" (institutional theory), but what is named as art. And this puts a quasi-moral obligation to the name-giver (Kant's *sensus communis*, de Duve's *l'adresse*). I want to carefully examine the consequences of de Duve's interpretation of aesthetic nominalism within the broader historical framework and to ask how to confront an old problem of voluntarism mentioned by Blumenberg. Are there certain rules of naming art? Do they abide to some kind of consensus? Or maybe one should also speak of some sort of con-sensuousness that makes us contemporary to each other being the only way to "activate the differences and save the honor of the name" (Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*).

Rebecka Ahvenniemi, University of Bergen, Norway

Composition in Essay Form

A musical composition can sometimes be full of "loud meaning", emerging through an affirmative and style-fixated musical language. Other times music vaguely seeks to make us let go of the interpreting distance, to meet unestablished, new paths, giving in to something "unknown". The latter approach I will call "Composition in Essay Form", applying the concept of "essay" presented by Theodor W. Adorno. An essayist composition is necessarily vulnerable, lacking an affirmative voice, not agreeing to find peace within an institutionalized, well-polished musical syntax. Throughout the presentation I will reflect on the "musical essay": a vulnerable and honest music which suggests the dangerous and incomprehensible "Other".

Rebecka Molin, Uppsala University, Sweden

Specific Art Practices

The concept of site-specificity has been given a fair amount of attention in the field of art history but little in aesthetics. My aim in this paper is to consider how the concept of site-specificity could be important in relation to some of the ontological notions in aesthetics, such as the notion of autonomy. The argument holds that the concept of site-specificity is

more readily applicable to works of a more permanent nature and that site-specificity concerns the notion of emplacement, to use Edward Casey's concept, as a type of transformation of space by the work of art. If we understand the "site specific" not as something potentially re-locatable or discursive as Miwon Kwon suggests, but as indicative of a transformation of space, this opens up issues that in aesthetics usually have been related to the ontology of architecture. Further, I would like to emphasize the kind of space site-specific art creates or recreates, and how it might differ from architectural space.

[Solveig Bøe, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim](#)

The persistence of the past in the present. The eternal return

The aesthetic of our contemporary time owes a great deal to the conception of time that developed in the works of Nietzsche and Heidegger. While inanimate objects typically last for a very long time, we do not, but we experience time in a manner where the past persists in the present and what is to come is projected in its infinite (but not unlimited) possibilities. In each moment all of time is unfolding, in the moment itself the ecstatic unity of time takes place. The moment is time, not in time. I will in my paper look at some examples from contemporary art from this perspective, utilizing Nietzsche's concept of The Eternal Return to highlight time in art and everyday life, not as the eternal play of repetition and then eventually death, but as something that keeps metamorphosing (in a tension between synthesis and release). Of special interest for me is works where the passage and metamorphosing of time is visible and framed, and the past persists in remains and fragments, duration in shapes and rhythms.

[Wolfram Bergande, Bauhaus University Weimar, Germany](#)

Transcendentalism. Towards a new philosophy of art history

Despite Postmodernism's farewell to meta-narratives, there do exist until today philosophies of history (e.g. neo-Hegelian or modernist versions of it), just like historiography does exist until today. Can the same be said about philosophies of history of art? Do they exist, just like historiographies of art do exist? As a matter of fact, the decade-long theoretical stalemate between Modernism and Postmodernism has ended. It is reflected from the viewpoint of the so-called Contemporary. Admittedly, it remains unclear so far whether The Contemporary can be more than a mere placeholder concept, i.e. a concept indicating that there is after all a – yet undefined – development beyond this stalemate.

At this point, a number of questions may arise: Are Modernism, Postmodernism and the Contemporary concepts which can be inserted into a logical or chronological structure, to the effect that a philosophical account of such a structure is possible? Or do these concepts instead designate radically contingent discursive formations which defy any philosophical meta theory? And which kind of rule-constitutive necessities could possibly be opposed to such contingencies? And to which scientific discipline would these necessities belong? Could they be idealistic-philosophical, like Hegel's three art forms? Could they be in a wider sense cultural, like Max Weber's economic ethics of the world religions? Or would they be in turn aesthetic, for example in the sense in which Hayden White's *Metahistory* claimed that ultimately the parameters of historiography are based themselves on aesthetic, namely rhetoric choices? Starting off with these questions, my contribution undertakes to discuss whether and how a philosophy of art history is possible today.

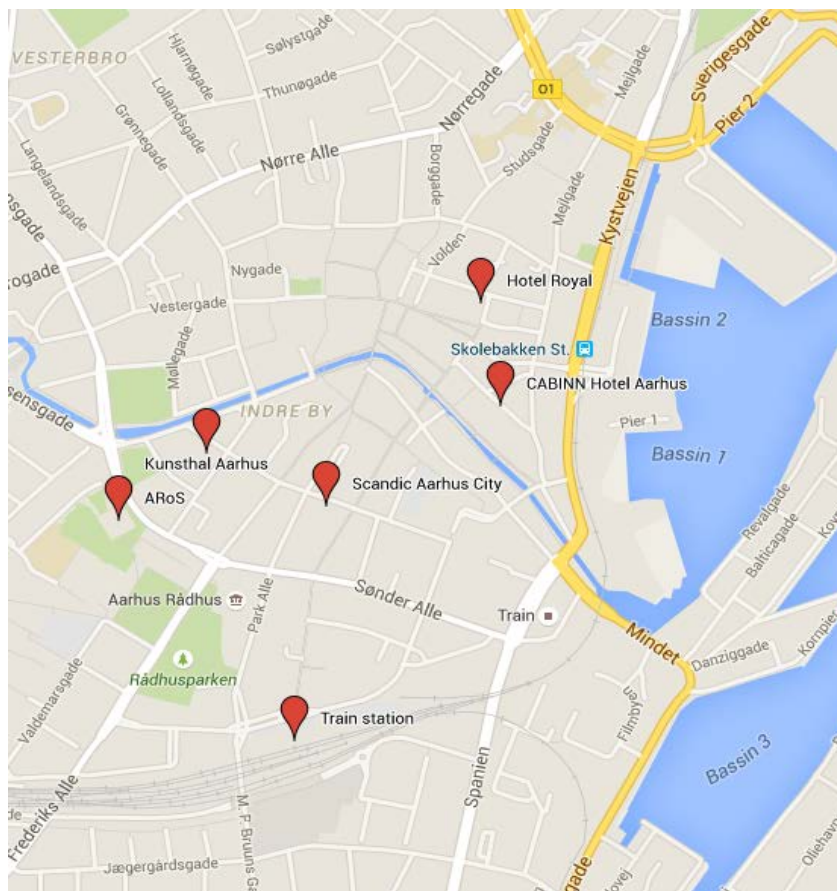
Åsa Arketeg, Södertörn University, Sweden

Poetics and Contemporaneity

In this talk, I will address aspects of temporality in poetics. I will argue, that temporality characterizes a certain use of poetics that seems to be the opposite of poetics as it appears for example in literary theory. I will argue, however, that while feminist criticism sometimes use poetics as a means to oppose encompassing theoretical frameworks, it nevertheless integrates the traditional use of poetics since self-reflexivity is an important aspect here. In this regard, poetics rather emerges as a framework for thinking than a framework that defines thinking. In this sense poetics takes place in the contemporary, that is, in the making of theoretical and artistic practices. In the first part of the talk, I will discuss how the self-reflexive aspect unfolds in relation to the rejection of encompassing theoretical frameworks in feminist criticism. In the second part of the talk, I will address the American poet Lyn Hejinian's notion of a poetics that is characterized as "a thinking on". This characterization is based on the stress on form in poetic language that Hejinian traces back to Russian formalism. I will claim, that this is another example of the temporal aspect of poetics, as this "thinking on" takes place in the contemporary.

NOTES

CONFERENCE MAP



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