

Report on the second Art and Imagination Workshop, Adelaide July 3-6 2017

The workshop Art and Imagination held in Adelaide was the second in a series, funded primarily by the Australian Research Council (ARC), with additional funding and sponsorship from the American Society for Aesthetics. The first ran in April 2016 over three days in San Francisco as a Symposium within, and post-conference of, the American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division. The 2017 workshop in Adelaide was embedded as a stream within the Australasian Association of Philosophy (AAP) Conference, and involved speakers whose affiliations spanned six countries. The speakers were comprised of invited speakers, others who registered in the stream as attendees of the AAP conference, and three speakers who were shortlisted from a CFPs for the ASA travel grant. The three Post-graduate scholars who made up this latter group were Joseph Kassman-Todd from Berkeley who provided an account of the Philosophy of Art Criticism, Eelen M. Deprez from Kent (UK) who developed a Philosophy of Curating and Matteo Ravasio from Auckland (NZ) who argued for the role of Heuristic Devices in Music. If the excellence and originality of the papers by these three scholars are anything to go by, Philosophical Aesthetics has a very promising future indeed. The winner of the ASA Travel Grant this time was Eelen M. Deprez.

The workshop began with an outreach session, run as a three hour Symposium at the Art Gallery of SA (AGSA), and partly sponsored by them. This was a joint session with the *J.M.Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice* which is based at the University of Adelaide where Coetzee is Adjunct Professor. The speakers in this Symposium were Michael Newall (Kent) who spoke on the role of critique in art school studio practice; the visual artist collaborators Claire Healy and Sean Cordeiro who spoke on the source of their ideas; and Daniel von Sturmer (Monash) who spoke on the role of critique in the studio practice of his students in the Fine Arts Department at Monash University.

The AAP stream Arts and Imagination began the next day at the University of Adelaide located next door to the AGSA, and ran for three days. The other Post-graduate students who participated included Nanda Jarosz (Sydney) who spoke on the Kantian Sublime, Alessio Tacca (UNSW) on Definitions of Art after Duchamp, and Riccardo Carli (Queensland) on Nietzsche on Symbols. Other speakers in order of appearance were Melvin Chen (Nanyang Tech. Uni, Singapore) who critiqued the cognitive theory of imagination, Fred Kroon (Auckland) on Fiction and Assertion, Gavin Smith (W.Sydney) on Poetry and John Dewey, Elizabeth B. Coleman (Monash) on Cross-cultural Aesthetics, Mohan Matthen (Toronto) on Aesthetic Hedonism, while Cynthia Freeland (Houston) spoke on Colour Perception and Art. Nancy Sherman gave a keynote at the AAP conference on Dancers and Soldiers' stylised expression of emotion and this served nicely as the first paper in our Thursday of papers on the imagination. Paul Guyer (Brown) followed next with a discussion of Eighteenth Century Ideas on Imagination, James Phillips (UNSW) critiqued many historical concepts of imagination through his account of Heidegger's theory of art, Robert Sinnerbrink (Macquarie) discussed ethical insight through film appreciation, Nicolas Bullot (Charles

Darwin, NT) expanded on Bullock-Reber's (2013) Psycho-historical model of Art Appreciation, David Macarthur (Sydney) discussed the role and importance of imaginative "pictures" in Wittgenstein's conception of thinking while Jennifer McMahon argued that art does not provide knowledge (as this would constitute delusion) but can nonetheless be insightful due to the peculiar exercise of the imagination occasioned by art. A few of the papers presented were further developed versions of the papers given in San Francisco in 2016. Papers by Coleman, Freeland, Guyer, Matthen, McMahon, Sherman and Sinnerbrink will be published as part of an anthology forthcoming with Routledge in 2018, and edited by McMahon, entitled: *Social Aesthetics and Moral Judgment: Pleasure, Reflection and Accountability*.

The papers in total continued the aims and objectives of the ARC funded project ArtSense, to explore diverse perspectives on pleasure, appreciation and imagination for the purposes of understanding the conditions of communication and community. Members of this project joined other philosophers and art historians in Melbourne and Sydney in the following week for further workshops designed to create the context for genuine exchange and sharing of perspectives across the disciplines of art history/practising artists and philosophy. The venues were the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) at the University of Melbourne and the Art Gallery of NSW (AGNSW) in Sydney.

As with last year, the Workshops provided excellent opportunities for communication between practising artists, art historians, curators, and philosophers, an achievement in itself. We hope to develop the format used at the VCA and the AGNSW further. We are planning to edit an issue of the foremost journal for art historians in Australasia, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, including the participating philosophers, art curators and art theorists as authors, to demonstrate the challenges and successes of these latter events.

In addition to the publications, we will have recordings of our talks on the AGNSW website and our ArtSense website, available to all. A web-based APP in very early development but which has been trialled in a gallery by University students is also available to anyone who is interested. Just contact: jenny.mcmahon@adelaide.edu.au

I would like to thank all speakers, commentators and audience, in particular Alexandra Gregg and Josephine Tuma (AGNSW) and Sean Lowry (VCA Head of Critical and Theoretical Studies) for their sterling work in making the AGNSW and VCA events happen effectively and efficiently.

Finally, I give special thanks to the ARC, and the ASA for supporting our endeavours.

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