

# Editorial

This issue of *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics* emerged primarily from the annual conference of *The Nordic Society of Aesthetics* held at The Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, 11-14 June 2009. Observing that the field of aesthetics is under an increasing pressure from economic and political interests on the one hand, and that it on the other exhibits a greater variety of views, methods, and areas of interest than ever before, the purpose of the conference was to reflect upon “The Future of Aesthetics”.

Thus, the articles – all of which, except for Karlheinz Lüdeking’s, were presented at the conference – implicitly and explicitly meditates on reorientations and future possibilities of aesthetics. Morten Kyndrup addresses the topic head-on in his article “Aesthetics and Its Future – Problems and Perspectives” where he on the basis of a reconstruction of the history of aesthetics discusses the status of aesthetics as a scholarly discipline, the present need for such a discipline, and proposes some issues to be included on its future agenda of research. In the article “On Beauty” Gernot Böhme returns to the question of beauty, of what the beautiful is like. Asking the question anew, Böhme argues, discloses that our aesthetic experience has changed radically since the 18th century and this necessitates that the very concept of traditional beauty must also be changed. Christoph Menke examines in “Not Yet: The Philosophical Significance of Aesthetics” the preconditions and the consequences of the emergence of aesthetics in and for philosophy. Interpreting a short passage in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* against what he assumes to be Hegel’s own intention, Menke proposes that when philosophy engages the question of the aesthetic, it puts itself in question, and sketches the paradoxical place of aesthetics within philosophy.

Against both the traditional view that art has a timeless, ahistorical essence and the historicist view that there can be no ahistorical perspective for understanding art, and against Arthur C. Danto’s claim that the end of art’s history leads to a natural alliance between philosophers of art and art historians, Risto Pitkänen in “Art and Its History” argues that something is art only if it belongs to a special kind of internal history and needs to be understood and appreciated in the light of such history. In the article “Explorations of

Universal Order and Beauty in Paul Hindemith's Symphony *Die Harmonie der Welt*", more oriented to a specific work of art Siglind Bruhn analyses the coming into being of Paul Hindemith's symphony *Die Harmonie der Welt* which allegedly develops passages from his opera with the same title, completed six years later. Both pieces are highly inspired by the writings of the mathematician, astronomer, and philosopher Johannes Kepler. Bruhn regards it as a creative process that matures from a spiritual and aesthetic idea through a composition of musical material into components that would later serve both an instrumental and an operatic representation of the subject.

In the last article, "The Limits of Conceptual Analysis in Aesthetics", Lüdeking detects a crisis or a loss of intellectual stature of analytic aesthetics and seeks to explain this degradation by combining historical reconstruction with systematic consideration. In Lüdeking's analysis analytic philosophers in the middle of the 20th century came to the conclusion that essentialist theories of art were no longer tenable and therefore moved to the meta-level of conceptual analysis. They then wanted to show how a purely classificatory concept of art is used. Lüdeking argues that the presupposition of such a concept can only appear plausible at first sight, when scrutinised it turns out to be misinformed.

The review section comprises a review essay by Sven-Olov Wallenstein on Morten Kyndrup's *Den æstetiske relation* (The aesthetic relation) and reviews of Kristin Gjesdal: *Gadamer and the Legacy of German Idealism* and Ulrika Björk: *Poetics of Subjectivity: Existence and Expression in Simone de Beauvoir's Philosophy*.

I am delighted to be able to welcome Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen, University of Copenhagen, as review editor of Danish publications and Thomas Bjørnsten Kristensen as editorial assistant with particular responsibility for the electronic version of the journal to which there will be open access with one year delay as from the summer of 2010 (please visit [www.nsa.e.au.dk/journal](http://www.nsa.e.au.dk/journal)).

*Jacob Lund*