



THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR AESTHETICS:
AN ASSOCIATION FOR AESTHETICS,
CRITICISM, AND THEORY OF THE ARTS

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- 1 *Arts of the Impossible*, by Jason Leddington
- 5 *An Aesthetics of Games*, by C. Thi Nguyen
- 7 News from the National Office
- 8 Aesthetics News
- 11 Calls for Papers
- 14 Upcoming Events
- 15 Active Aestheticians

Arts of the Impossible

Jason Leddington
Bucknell University

Theatrical magic is one of the most popular forms of live entertainment of the last 200 years. In the 19th century, magicians such as Alexander Herrmann and Harry Kellar rose to become the first “global” entertainment superstars; and in the first two decades of the 20th century, when ‘Thurston’ and ‘Houdini’ were household names, magicians continued to reign as the kings of popular entertainment. Only with the rise of Hollywood in the 1920s and television in the 1940s did magic fade from public view – for a time. Though television has always regularly featured magic performances (especially on talk-shows such as *The Tonight Show*), it was in the late 1970s and the ‘80s that a new crop of magicians – especially Doug Henning and David Copperfield – ushered in a new “golden age” of magic by bringing mass audiences back into the theater and, most notably, by bringing large-scale magic shows to television. Magic became a “pop” phenomenon; thus, as pop culture changed, so too magic. In the ‘90s, when grunge, alternative, and hip-hop went mainstream, David Blaine singlehandedly made magic “cool” by ditching the sequins and taking magic to the streets in his 1997 TV special, *David Blaine: Street Magic*. In lieu of theatrically lush mega-illusions in modern theaters for paying audiences, Blaine, in jeans and signature black t-shirt, did simple but powerful close-up tricks with cards, coins, and everyday objects for ordinary people on the streets of New York. He became a superstar overnight, and in the nearly 20 years since, magic’s popularity has continued to grow. Here are some recent examples:

- In 2014, Mat Franco became the first magician to win *America’s Got Talent*.
- *The Illusionists*, a large-scale show featuring seven different magicians (none of them household names), recently started another national and international tour following a box-office record-breaking run on Broadway in 2015.
- Magic is regularly featured on television, perhaps most promi-

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nently in the hit show, *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*, now renewed for a third season on the cable network The CW.

- Internationally, magicians such as Dynamo (in the UK) and Lu Chen (in China) are A-List celebrities who regularly appear on TV and sell out arena shows.
- Magic is also making inroads in the theater scene, with shows such as *Nothing to Hide* – directed by Neil Patrick Harris and starring two young card magicians with a conceptual-artistic bent – breaking off-Broadway box-office records and receiving strong reviews from theater critics.
- A number of successful magic-themed Hollywood films have appeared in recent years, including *The Prestige* (2006), *The Illusionist* (2006), *Now You See Me* (2013), *The Incredible Burt Wonderstone* (2013), and *Now You See Me 2* (2016).
- Finally, independent film has gotten on board with documentaries such as *Make Believe* (2010), *Deceptive Practice: The Mysteries and Mentors of Ricky Jay* (2012), *Our Magic* (2014), and *Magicians: Life in the Impossible* (2016).

In light of all this, you'd expect that magic would have received some attention from art historians, art critics, and philosophers – but not so. Magic has been ignored as a sideshow “art” no more deserving of critical attention than juggling or circus acrobatics, and one of the main goals of my present research is to show that this is an unfortunate, if understandable, mistake.

My interest in magic is born of the experience of magic. So, it's fair to say that a card trick changed my life. Here's how I remember it: it's 2003 in a neighborhood bar on Chicago's north side; the magician asks me to choose a card and to sign the face of it in permanent ink; after doing so, I return the card to the deck, which he then shuffles and sets on the table; next, he takes his wallet from his back pocket and, showing his hands empty, opens the wallet to display a zippered compartment; finally, he unzips the compartment and cleanly, impossibly, withdraws from it the very card I just signed. I'm speechless. Of course, I know it's a trick. The problem is that I don't see how it could be. This haunts me.

In “The Experience of Magic” (forthcoming in JAAC), I argue that the goal of magic is to produce in the spectator a specific sort of aporetic experience. In a successful performance, the magician apparently presents you with something you know to be impossible. Of course, since the impossible is just that – impossible – you know it's a trick. But here's the rub: you don't see how it could be. All of your attempts to explain what you've witnessed run aground on the actual performance itself, which brooks no quarter. Like a good piece of Socratic inquiry, it leaves you speechless. It can't be “real” magic, but you have no other (non-trivial) explanation. Magician Whit Haydn puts it perfectly:

“I know there is no such thing as magic/There is no other explanation.” ...The job of the magician is to trap the spectator in this logical conundrum. The result of this is a peculiar mental excitation – a burr under the saddle of the mind. If the operation is performed correctly, the patient will not be able to ignore the problem, but will keep coming back to it again and again. (Haydn, 2009: 6)

Indeed, an effective magic performance can haunt you for years. It's not uncommon to hear someone recount – eagerly, and in great detail – a trick that still baffles them ten, twenty, or even fifty years later. (Good luck extracting from them as much detail – and as much excitement – about their decades past visit to the Louvre.) What explains this? Why does magic have this sort of power?

Another bar – this time in Revelstoke, British Columbia. The magician borrows four quarters and places them on Bryan's palm. All four coins are

clearly visible. Keeping his distance, sleeves rolled up, the magician holds out an empty hand and asks Bryan to imagine – and only imagine – giving him one of the coins. Bryan complies. The magician closes his fist and then opens it to reveal: a quarter. We look down at Bryan's palm, still in full view: only three coins. Stunned silence. Bryan: “What the hell?”

A well-executed magic trick offers an experience that, in a very particular way, resists intelligibility. We are ordinarily surrounded by things whose inner workings we can barely fathom. We have only a shallow understanding of our bodies or electronic devices, much less of “simple” material objects. But this rarely gives us pause – after all, we don't expect to understand them very deeply. On the other hand, we typically proceed on the assumption that we've mastered the “naïve” physics of everyday stuff. That is, we have deeply entrenched expectations for objects such as coins will behave, and, in everyday experience, those expectations are almost always met. In this respect, everyday experience exhibits a comfortable intelligibility. But since a successful magic performance presents an event that, despite our best efforts, we cannot square with our deeply held expectations about what is possible, magic disrupts the easy intelligibility of workaday experience. No wonder, then, that it can be so memorable – and so affecting.

In his 1997 TV special, David Blaine borrows a quarter from three women on a New York street-corner. [At the time of this writing, see: <https://youtu.be/aW5KYq475cA>].

Blaine: You know how people change the consistency of metals?

Women: No. What? How they change what?

Blaine (displaying the quarter): Consistency. Like if you squeeze something. If you squeeze a piece of metal, it heats up. That's obvious.

Women: Yeah.

Blaine: But look. Watch.

Blaine raises the quarter to his mouth and apparently bites a chunk out of it. The women scream, jump, turn away, cover their mouths, hide their eyes, laugh. Blaine, holding up the mutilated quarter, sounds as though he's got something in his mouth: “Mm. Mm. Watch. Watch. Look.” He blows on the quarter and the missing chunk seems to fly back into place, magically restoring the coin to its original condition. More screaming and paroxysmic laughter: “I'm going home, I'm going home. I'm going home.” “I think I'm going to have my baby right here.” “He bit the quarter off, and said ‘pfffft’ and then it went back together. In front of our face!”

Following a successful magic performance, it's not uncommon to hear someone say, “That makes no sense.” After all, we know it's a trick, but – if the magician has pulled it off properly – we don't see how it could be. “The result,” Whit Haydn notes, “is a feeling of cognitive dissonance” (Haydn, 2009: 6). One of the main goals of my essay, “The Experience of Magic,” is to give an account of this sort of cognitive dissonance and to show how it is harnessed in magical experience (Leddington, 2016). Still, you might ask (and I have been asked): is this really an *aesthetic* experience? Neither cognitive dissonance nor bafflement is, as such, aesthetic. Yet it can be. Certain canonical aesthetic experiences are, at root, experiences of unintelligibility. In the first, sensory, moment of the experience of the Kantian mathematically sublime, the object confounds the imagination's attempt to synthesize intuitions for empirical cognition; consequently, we encounter the object as, in a distinctive way, incomprehensible: the sublime object makes no sense to our senses; it baffles us by exceeding our grasp – at least empirically. Failures of intelligibility are also central to certain types of humor. Consider “The Skier,” a classic cartoon by the late, great Charles Addams:

Call for Papers: A Special Issue of the Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism

Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Issue:
Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?

As the American Society for Aesthetics and its official journal approach their seventy-fifth anniversary of their founding, it is fitting to dedicate an issue to this period in the history of aesthetics, as well as to its future. We invite articles for this special issue; submissions that develop applications of these broad themes are especially welcome:

- The Role of Its Own History in Aesthetics: Is philosophy of art governed by its history? Is ahistorical work credible?
- Aesthetics and the Sciences (e.g., aesthetics and psychology, aesthetics and brain science, aesthetic and evolution, experimental aesthetics)
- Art and Metaphysics (ontology of the arts, individuation of artworks, etc.)
- Conceptions of the Aesthetic (experience, properties, judgment, perception, appreciation, etc.)
- Aesthetic and Artistic Values
- Art and The Arts: What they are and how are they related?
- Criticism and Appreciation
- The relationship between Anglo-American and Continental Aesthetics
- Global Aesthetics

Articles submitted in the following areas must include a retrospective element, but they are strongly encouraged to articulate and defend a recommendation for a new research emphasis. Ideally, the retrospective element will examine the past seventy-five years.

- Art and Morality, Society, and Politics
- Representation and Meaning in the Arts
- Philosophy of the Arts: The Visual Arts, Music, Literature, Photography, Digital Art, etc.
- Neglected authors and ideas from the past the past seventy-five years
- Aesthetics and Contemporary Art

Submissions should not exceed 7,500 words and must comply with the general guidelines for submissions (see "Submissions" on the JAAC page on the American Society for Aesthetics website: <www.aesthetics-online.org>). Upload submissions to the JAAC online submission website, <<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jaac>>, making sure they are identified as submissions for the special issue.

If you have questions please contact: Robert Stecker at <jaac@cmich.edu> or Theodore Gracyk at <jaac@mnstate.edu>.

Deadline for Submissions: December 1, 2016

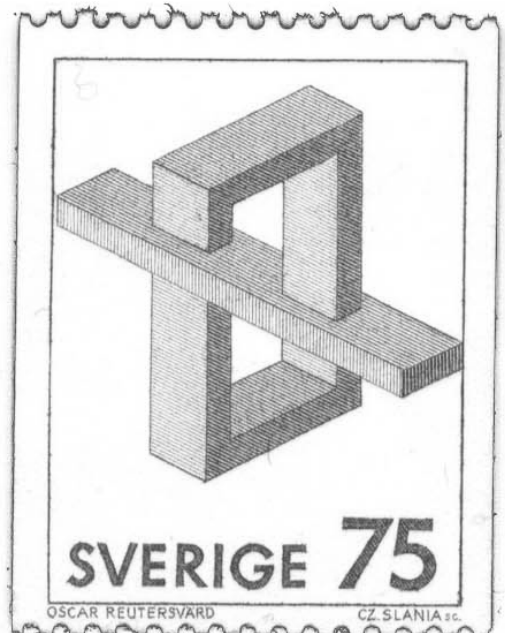


(c) 1940 Charles Addams, Renewed 1967. With permission Tee and Charles Addams Foundation.

In "Funny Ha-Ha, Funny Strange, and Other Reactions to Incongruity," John Morreall presents this as an example of a visual joke (1987: 198). No doubt, Morreall is right: it's funny; and what makes it so is a particular sort of unintelligibility – or, in Morreall's terms, the "absurdity" of an "unresolved [and apparently unresolvable] incongruity." In fact, "The Skier" is not just a great visual joke, it's also a terrific illustration of the connection between magic and comedy. Imagine the cartoon without the uphill skier looking over his shoulder: it's no longer quite so funny. Why not? The answer, I think, is that our effort to imagine what the uphill skier might have witnessed – an effort that ends in failure – is a big part of our amusement. And it's here that there's a close relationship to magic.

Imagine: David Blaine skis toward a large, isolated tree in untracked snow. Just as he reaches it, a curtain drops in front of the audience, obscuring his passage. A moment later, the curtain snaps back and Blaine, still skiing, appears to have left tracks that – impossibly – go around the tree.

This would be a great magic trick. Like Addams' cartoon, its performance would all but force you to (try to) imagine: *How? What would I*



Oscar Reutersvärd, "Swedish Stamp images." Image © 2016 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Reproduction, including downloading of ARS member works is prohibited by copyright laws and international conventions without the express written permission of Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

see if, like the uphill skier in the cartoon, I could look behind the curtain? In considering this question, the mind grinds to a halt. Thus, Addams' brilliant visual joke is also a single-frame picture of a complete magic trick. As illustrated by the reaction to Blaine's street magic performance (described above), laughter is one of the primary responses to good magic. Like Addams' cartoon, magic amuses us precisely because it leaves the mind in a distinctive sort of tailspin.

Magic is not the only "art of the impossible" that's been an object of critical neglect. Representations of impossible figures — such as those created by the Swedish artist Oscar Reutersvärd in the early 20th century — afford a distinctive sort of pleasure but are rarely discussed. The experience of looking at Reutersvärd's beautifully drawn impossibilities is qualitatively different from the experience of looking at similarly well-executed drawings of perfectly possible figures. His drawings engage us in a kind of active, exploratory looking that has no easy parallel in the ways we look at "possible" artworks. Our eyes travel over a figure, not simply to see what's there, but to "feel" the impossibility and, at the same time, to work it out. In this way, the drawings stimulate a curiosity that can find no satisfaction, and this is precisely what makes them compelling. After all, as Carolyn Korsmeyer writes: "It is the momentum of curiosity that seems especially affective and invites this phenomenon into the company of emotions. It arouses what one might call a cognitive itch..." (2014: 62). That this itch can be enjoyed — that we seek it out — is evident in the fact that the best-known artistic depictions of impossible figures are featured in some of M. C. Escher's most popular lithographs; and it's hard to resist the conclusion that their appeal is in no small part thanks to the fact that they depict the impossible.

Magic is an easy object of ridicule. Magic "tricks" are easy to trivialize, and the prevalence of bad costumes and bad scripting in magic can make parody redundant. That it is nevertheless perennially popular — and even seems to be undergoing a 21st century renaissance — strongly suggests that there's more to magic than meets the eye. As discussed above, magic can provoke remarkably powerful, memorable, and complex experiences. Seen in a certain light, this is surprising; after all, magic's characteristic aim is to produce an experience as of an impossible event, which makes it distinctively

cerebral, and so, apparently not the best candidate for generating a powerful emotional experience. As Teller of Penn & Teller puts it:

[Y]ou experience magic as real and unreal at the same time. It's a very, very odd form, compelling, uneasy, and rich in irony.... A romantic novel can make you cry. A horror movie can make you shiver. A symphony can carry you away on an emotional storm; it can go straight to the heart or the feet. But magic goes straight to the brain; its essence is intellectual. (Stromberg, n.d.)

That an art form whose essence is intellectual and that so often clothes itself in kitsch is terrifically popular *and* can provoke intense and memorable experiences is by itself worthy of note — and of further study. Moreover, it might be that studying it will bring to light a variety of intellectually-driven aesthetic experiences and even illuminate old terrain — such as humor and the sublime — in new ways. This, at any rate, is my hope.

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An Aesthetics of Games

C. Thi Nguyen

Utah Valley University

We are in an age of flourishing and innovation for games. Games are getting more creative, more biting, more innovative and just plain stranger. The aesthetic headliners these days are usually the independent, self-consciously arty wing of computer games. Take, for example, the intentionally queasy *Papers, Please*, a computer game in which you play a border security guard in a fictional Eastern European country, tasked with endlessly scrutinizing paperwork, looking for forgeries, incentivized by the game with promotions and rewards for shutting out desperate immigrants.

This explosion of game innovation in the digital sphere has been accompanied by perhaps an even more interesting set of design experiments in non-digital game development. Take, for example, the avant-garde wing of tabletop role-playing games—as in, you know, *Dungeons and Dragons*, with people sitting around the table, playing characters, rolling dice and killing orcs. Except now we have such experiments as *Dog Eat Dog*, the role-playing game where one player plays the colonists, and the others play the colonized, and the only starting rule is, “The colonizer is always right,” and only the colonizer is allowed to make new rules. Or: *The Quiet Year*, a strange and moody little game set sometime after the apocalypse where the players guide a small community, perched on the edge of survival, through a quiet year between catastrophes. The players don’t play individuals—they play values or thought patterns in the community, like “xenophobia” or “fraternity” and act through individuals. Or the truly cynical board game *Imperial*, a game where the players play shadowy bankers, trading war bonds during WWI, manipulating the sovereign powers into the most profitable wars.

So: are games a form of art? Are games capable of supporting aesthetic experiences? There’s already quite a bit written on these topics, much of it by members of the ASA. There are, to paint with a broad brush, two main approaches. The first is to view games as a descendent of some familiar aesthetic form; the second is to view games as a unique and new form. There are, of course, both extremists and diplomatic synthesizers of the two traditions. In the European game studies community, this took the form of a debate between the “narratologists” and the “ludologists.” The narratologists think that games can be read with the techniques developed for texts (Janet Murray, for example, famously read *Tetris*, the high-speed game of placing falling blocks, as a metaphor for over-busy working lives of Americans). The ludologists think that games are an entirely unique and new form, and must be studied with an entirely fresh set of tools.

One particular academic discipline, which calls itself “game studies”, is populated by many a ludologist, but elsewhere in the academy, games tend to be assimilated to more familiar forms. For example: Mary Flanagan, game designer and game academic, has spear-headed a movement for what she calls “critical play”—for games that are socially aware and critical. Her bid for the worthiness of games involves showing how they function in a way similar to much contemporary art, especially conceptual art and performance art. She’s interested in games as social disruption and political critique: like Frasca’s *September 2012: A Toy World*, where you play the US army, gunsights aimed at a Middle Eastern village, searching for terrorists, and discover, over the course of play, that your attempts to eliminate terrorists only result in destroyed property, slaughtered innocents, and more terrorists. Over in the analytic aesthetics scene, there’s

been excellent work showing that video games can work as fiction. Grant Tavinor has argued extensively that Walton’s theory of fiction applies to videogames. Ian Bogost has argued for games as a kind of rhetoric, that they can, by presenting models of economic and political systems, make a novel sort of argument.

These analyses all proceed by connecting games to some other aesthetic paradigm—texts, narratives, fictions. Lying underneath many of these approaches is a question about representation and communication. What, we ask, is it that a game *means*? And, accordingly, if we are to treat games as special in any way, how does particular nature give games a novel way to convey meanings? For some, the answer will be in interactivity. Tavinor treats the interactivity of videogames, in particular, as a tool to bring about greater imaginative immersiveness, especially in the first person character. For others, it is in the fact that games are an interactive simulation. Frasca has written here in a vein similar to Bogost’s: games offer simulations, and they offer simplified simulations, that allow for a phenomenological, internal “take” on some complex causal system.

Interestingly, there is another philosophical field that has studied games, using an entirely different set of conceptual frames, and been lead down a different path—the philosophy of sports. Philosophers of sports typically view games not as a kind of text, but as a designed context for actions. Philosophers of sport have, accordingly, developed their own set of aesthetic questions, which are very different from questions about meaning. For philosophers of sport, the aesthetics of sport has to do with performance: with the experience of skilled performance, with the feel of overcoming challenges, with the appreciation of extraordinary performance and competitive drama by the spectators. This has led philosophers of sport to an entirely different set of aesthetic questions. For example: is an aesthetic experience only available to those spectators with no particular sporting allegiance, or can a fan have an aesthetic experience? And: can playing a sport be an aesthetic experience, or does the essentially competitive, aggressive nature of skilled sport make aesthetic experiences impossible?

It seems to me clear that both tracks are on to something very important about games. Surely games are fictions, surely games can make arguments, but surely they also do something distinctive: they present challenges, provide opportunities for the use and display of skills. Bernard Suits’ account of games is quite useful here: Suits suggests that playing a game is voluntarily underrating unnecessary obstacles for the sake of the activity they make possible—for example, for the experience of overcoming challenges. Such an account unites sports, computer games, and board games, and opens the door for the possibility of a unified aesthetic of designed experiences of overcoming challenges. Dominic Lopes has suggested that any account of computer art must take seriously its interactivity; for Lopes, an account of computer art fails if it doesn’t successfully differentiate between the aesthetic experience of an interactive user and a mere spectator to interaction.

It seems to me that computer games are a subset of computer art; they meet Lopes’ definition of computer art, but add one more criterion: they are goal-oriented. We explore computer art, but we play computer games to win. If this is so, then an aesthetics of computer games must take into account the goal-orientation of game-play. That is, to parrot and amplify Lopes, an aesthetic of computer games must distinguish between the spectator of play, the interactive explorer and the goal-oriented player.

So: let me suggest the following questions that are addressed to the unique properties of computer games, and games in general. First: how do the interactivity *and* the goal orientation of games help build

the experience of game-play? How can goal-oriented play help the fictional experience, or the rhetorical experience, and vice versa? Second, what are the possible modes of game-appreciation? Since games are such richly complex interactive objects, I'd like to suggest that there are several ways we can appreciate a game. First, we can appreciate it, as Lopes suggests, from an exploratory standpoint. We can appreciate the way the work constructs the available space of interactions. Second, we can appreciate it in play—in the absorbed moment of skilled and active overcoming of a game's challenges.

This leads to, I think, a number of quite unique questions about the nature of the game object, and the nature of proper appreciation. Suppose we were actually convinced that games could offer aesthetic experiences. What is the nature of the work of a game, and what are the norms for proper experience? For example, if we are to follow out Lopes' view that interactive arts require an exploration of the possibility-space for proper appreciation, then we get a straightforward normative response: for proper appreciation of a computer game, one must play many times, and explore the possible outcomes. Furthermore: what is the relationship between skilled play and aesthetic appreciation? Does one have to be any good at a game to be an appropriate judge of its design qualities? I suspect so, and I suspect that this presents a significant difference between the appreciative kinds of museum computer art, which Lopes primarily focuses on,

and the appreciative kind of games. Games need to be played well to be brought fully into view.

There are hints, here and there, that are worth pursuing. Some people in the philosophy of sports have suggested that there is an aesthetic of experiencing one's bodily skills in deployment. There are moments scattered throughout the literature of games that make similar noises about the aesthetics of puzzles—the aesthetics of feeling one's mind confront, struggle with, and grasp, in an epiphanic moment, the solution. Similar words have been spoken about the beauty of a well-played game of chess. And then there are questions about how the aesthetics of challenge might integrate with the aesthetics of fiction, with the rhetorical capacity of games.

For those that are interested in these topics, there are a number of venues available. There is an annual European conference on the *Philosophy of Computer Games*, and, as of this year, a brand new *Journal of the Philosophy of Games* (the latest CFP's are at jpg.gamephilosophy.org). I and other members of the ASA are in the process of organizing a (hopefully annual) Stateside workshop on the philosophy of games (for more information on this, see <http://objectionable.net/philgames/>).

Call for Submissions

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the American Society for Aesthetics. In addition to the special issue of the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* (see p. 3 of this newsletter for more information), one of the planned commemorations of this event is a special issue of this newsletter.

To that end, the editors would like to solicit your contributions to be published in Fall 2016. We are interested in any stories you might have about the Society and its history, including anecdotes about meetings, talks, members, and more. Any length of submission is welcome (though we reserve the right to edit anything that is too long!), so please don't hesitate to share any reminiscences you have!

In particular, if you have any photographs of past ASA events you would like us to share with our readership, we would be excited to print them.

Please send any submissions to the *Newsletter* editors, David Goldblatt (at goldblatt@denison.edu) and Henry Pratts (at henry.pratt@marist.edu).

Deadline: November 1, 2016

News from the National Office

As the American Society for Aesthetics approaches our 75th anniversary in 2017, I am confident that our founding members and the thousands that joined ASA over the ensuing decades would be very proud of the direction the Society has taken. Our membership is increasing again, after a long slide. We are reaching multiple generations with this print newsletter, a much more powerful web site, an outstanding journal, a superb graduate student on-line journal, a Facebook group (now with over 600 members), and a Twitter account.

We are supporting dozens of exciting projects that show the academy and the art-loving public what aesthetics has to offer. In the last year, the Board has supported conferences and workshops on aesthetics and the environment, dance, games, Shakespeare, street art, and stand-up comedy. We supported another successful Graduate Conference on Aesthetics in Philadelphia. We just awarded our second dissertation fellowship in aesthetics (to Marilyn Johnson at the CUNY Graduate Center). We awarded funds for the fourth update of the Graduate Guide to Aesthetics in North America. We continue to provide support for the blog *Aesthetics for Birds*. Our three divisions (Eastern, Pacific, Rocky Mountain) hold successful annual meetings and are organizing more for the coming years.

We funded an ASA-sponsored faculty member (Sondra Bacharach) for the second year at the UCSD Summer Program for Women in Philosophy. We also funded an ASA-sponsored speaker (Anna Christina Ribeiro) for the second year at the Rutgers Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy. We are in the second year of a three-year commitment by ASA to support development of diversity curricula in aesthetics, with \$5,000 awards. We continue to look for more opportunities to improve diversity in the profession and to introduce promising undergraduate majors to aesthetics. Please contact me if you have ideas for additional activities.

The ASA is fortunate to have a substantial investment account and a very successful journal to finance these activities. We are committed to using much of this revenue to support grants of various kinds that will promote the ASA and aesthetics. The complete list of grants funded in 2011-2016 is available on the web site, along with the guidelines. I am always available to brainstorm with peo-

ple on project ideas and to review draft proposals with an eye to ASA priorities and issues that have been of concern to the Board. Funding decisions are made by the Trustees, and proposals are accepted throughout the year. We have several important priorities we are aiming to support with these grants and welcome ideas for future projects and initiatives.

Annual Meeting

Work is proceeding on organizing our Annual Meeting for 2016 at the Seattle Renaissance Hotel November 16-19. We expect that the program committee, led by Sherri Irvin, will have a draft program ready in June, which we will post on our web site, the Grupio app, and Facebook. On-line registration will be available on the web site about August 1, with hotel reservations at the conference rate available shortly after. Registration rates for ASA members will remain the same as in 2015 and we will again offer a substantial discount for Early-Bird Registration until thirty days before the meeting. For those who do not use the web site, forms for mail-in registration and membership renewal will be included in the August issue this newsletter, as they were last year.

We are again using Grupio, the meeting app which you can download for free at the Apple Store or Google Playstore. If you used it last year, go to the home menu to clear last year's program and search "aesthetics." Some basic information about the meeting is already available on Grupio and also on the ASA web site.

Jonathan Neufeld, Program Chair for the 2017 meeting in New Orleans, expects to have a Call for Papers ready this summer, with a submission deadline in February. We will post it on the web site and Facebook, as well as the next issue of this newsletter. Locations and dates have been set for annual meetings in 2018 (Toronto-October 10-13) and 2019 (Phoenix-October 9-12). We have a survey on the inside pages of the web site, "Where should ASA Meet?" Let us know your preferences for future meetings. At present, the most popular choices are Washington, DC, Montreal, and Chicago. Havana and Mexico City also have strong interest. It is increasingly difficult to find hotels with reasonable sleeping room rates in attractive locations of interest to our members, and we always welcome your suggestions. If you and your university would like to host a future meeting, please get in touch with me at your earliest opportunity.

Membership

Membership is moving in a positive direction again, but it will be a tough slog to reach the 1000 members we enjoyed in 1999. We are more systematically enforcing long-standing requirements for membership benefits and are always looking for more "perks" we could add to encourage people to join and renew their memberships. Suggestions are welcome. Our membership rates are very reasonable and you can save substantially by buying a two- or three-year membership.

Support for Students and Junior Scholars

Supporting future generations of persons in aesthetics is an important element of our efforts to recruit and retain membership. Our student memberships are still only \$35 a year and come with the full complement of membership benefits. We are extremely generous in supporting travel to our annual meeting. Full-time students with papers accepted for the program receive reimbursement up to \$1250 in travel costs to the meetings, and there is no upper limit on the number of these awards. In 2014, for the annual meeting in San Antonio, we supported seventeen students for a total of \$15,268.81. In 2015, for the annual meeting in Savannah, we supported twenty-one students for a total of \$20,075.03. We are acutely aware that many junior scholars who have completed PhDs, but do not have full-time employment, have great difficulty finding travel money to meetings, a gap we hope to address in the future.

Let me note our gratitude for a new student travel program at the British Society of Aesthetics. For BSA members who are pursuing graduate studies at a UK institution, travel funds are available to attend aesthetics programs elsewhere, including the three ASA divisional meetings. If you are eligible, please contact BSA for more information and consider submitting a paper for our divisional meetings in 2017. The dates and locations are included in our list of Meetings at the bottom of each page of the web site.

Several of our funded activities also provide good financial opportunities for students and junior scholars. We will award our third dissertation fellowship in 2017. Five will receive travel funds to Seattle to present their ideas on the future of aesthetics and the ASA. The curriculum diversity grants, while open to all ASA members, are especially attractive \$5,000 awards for junior scholars to create curriculum during the summer. Many of the conferences we fund include travel support for students and other junior scholars. Are there additional things we could do to sup-

port students and junior scholars? Send us your ideas.

Elections

Three trustees will complete their three-year terms on January 31, 2017 (Gary Iseminger, Peg Brand Weiser, and Rachel Zuckert). The trustees will draw up a slate of six candidates this fall so ASA members can elect their replacements. In addition, we will elect a new Vice-President who, after a two-year term, will succeed to the Presidency. Our by-laws provide that additional nominations can be made with signatures of eight ASA members; these must be submitted to the secretary-treasurer no later than two weeks after the annual meeting (December 3, 2016).

Bios of all nominees will be posted this fall on the "Trustee elections" submenu on the Members section of the new web site. That is also where the elections will be held in December. The new web site enables us to set up elections that are completely confidential and easy to submit, which we hope will increase the participation rate. Members who do not use the internet can request a printed ballot which can be returned by mail.

On-line Aesthetics Courses

I sometimes hear from people who love the arts and would enjoy taking an aesthetics course that they cannot find one at their local college or university. I am also dismayed to see how many colleges and universities offer no aesthetics courses for undergraduates. Despite the proliferation of accredited on-line courses, I have been disappointed that aesthetics is not typically available. While most of us think that in-person teaching is still preferable, on-line teaching is filling needs in many disciplines that cannot be met any other way. In response to my earlier request, I heard from two ASA members who teach on-line courses in philosophy and film in the summer. For more information on the courses, registration costs, and credit options, contact them directly:

(1) John Carvalho, Villanova University: john.carvalho@villanova.edu

(2) Dan Flory, Montana State University: dflory@montana.edu

If you or a colleague offer an on-line aesthetics course in the future, please let me know so we can publicize its availability.

Prizes and Other Opportunities

Prizes to be awarded in 2016 include the

Ted Cohen Prize, the Monograph Prize, the Outstanding Student Paper, and the Selma Jeanne Cohen Prize in Dance Aesthetics. In 2017, JAAC will again award the John Fisher prize for junior scholars. Guidelines and deadlines for all of these opportunities are available on our web site under "News-Grants and Prizes." We also post these on the Facebook-Group page. The prizes will be awarded at the November annual meeting and travel funds are provided to winners so they can accept their prize in person. Also on the new web site, there is now a "donations" section where anyone can easily make a tax-deductible donation to the Ted Cohen and John Fisher Prize funds.

I look forward to hearing from ASA members with your ideas on the future of ASA and aesthetics. I visit all of our divisional meetings and I'm always available by e-mail: secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org.

Julie Van Camp
Secretary-Treasurer
American Society for Aesthetics
1550 Larimer St. #644
Denver, CO 80202-1602
Telephone: 562-331-4424
e-mail: <asa@aesthetics-online.org> or <jvancamp5@gmail.com>

Aesthetics News

New ASA Trustees Elected

Congratulations to Eva Kit Wah Man and Katherine Thomson-Jones on their election to the American Society for Aesthetics Board of Trustees for three-year terms from February 1, 2016 - January 31, 2019.

And thanks again to James Harold and Sarah Worth, who stepped down as Trustees on January 31, 2016, for their service.

Meet our new trustees:

Eva Kit Wah Man was born and educated in Hong Kong. She is currently Executive Associate Dean of Graduate School and professor of the Department of Humanities and Creative Writing of Hong Kong Baptist University. Her research areas and publications cover comparative aesthetics, comparative philosophy, feminist aesthetics, cultural studies, gender studies, and art and culture. She published widely and her recent book *Issues of Contemporary Art and Aesthetics in*

Chinese Context was published by Springer. She was a board member of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council and the Museums Advisory Board of HKSAR. She writes art criticism and hosts cultural programme for local media. In 2004, she was a Fulbright scholar at University of California, Berkeley. In 2009, she was AMUW Woman Chair at Marquette University. Man joined ASA in 1992 and has since then attended ASA annual meetings almost every year from Hong Kong.

Katherine Thomson-Jones is an Associate Professor and Chair of Philosophy at Oberlin College, where she has taught aesthetics and value courses since receiving her PhD from the University of Toronto in 2003. She is the author of *Aesthetics and Film* (Continuum, 2008) as well as articles on ethical art criticism, imagination, formalism, film narration, and empathy in film. She is editor of *Current Controversies in Philosophy of Film* (Routledge, 2016) and co-editor with Kathleen Stock of *New Waves in Aesthetics* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). Her latest project, undertaken with the support of an ACLS grant, is a monograph on digital aesthetics. She has been an active member of the ASA since 1999 and served on the 2011 program committee. She is currently entering her second year as a trustee and program committee member for the British Society of Aesthetics.

ASA-sponsored Faculty at UCSD Summer Program for Women in Philosophy

Sondra Bacharach, a Senior Lecturer at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, will be the ASA-sponsored faculty member at the 2016 University of California, San Diego Summer Program for Women in Philosophy June 20-July 1. Bacharach, a long-time ASA member and former Trustee, will teach a course on "Street Art, Video Games, Comics, and Other Forms of Popular Art." She received her B.A. from Stanford University and her PhD from The Ohio State University.

This is the second year that the ASA has sponsored a faculty member at this Summer Program. The ASA-sponsored faculty member in 2015 was A.W. (Anne) Eaton of the University of Illinois-Chicago. All ASA members were eligible and six well-qualified members applied. Applicants were screened by an ASA committee, which recommended finalists to the SPWP steering committee, which made the final selection.

Time to Renew Your ASA Membership!

If your membership has expired, there's still time to renew! You'll save money by renewing

for two or three years. How to find out when your membership expires: Log into the new web site. Click Manage Profile in the upper right. On the next page you see, look on the left for Membership. Click that and it will tell you when your membership expires.

How to renew your membership on-line: Log into the new web site. Click Manage Profile in the upper right. Click on the left for Membership. You can renew up to three months before your expiration date. The new site accepts credit cards from MasterCard, Visa, Discover, and American Express. To use a check, you must mail in a membership form (see below).

How to renew your membership through the mail: Go to the new web site. You do not need to log in. Hover over the ASA button in the upper right and look for "Join ASA (mail-in)" on the sub-menus, near the bottom of the list. Click that and it will open a Word document which you can print out and mail in with a check. We are not able to accept credit cards with mail-in membership. Or look for the membership form in the blue paper insert in the August 2015 issue of this newsletter.

ASA's On-line Archives

We are very pleased to report that we now have extensive digitized archives of ASA's history on the new web site. As we approach our 75th anniversary in 2017, we hope these will be helpful to members preparing reports and papers for the special issue of *JAAC* and the 2017 meeting itself.

To see the collection, first log in as a member. Look for the Members tab in the upper-right and the various sub-menus. Here's what we have so far:

ASA Records: From the early years of the Society (through 1955), we have posted scans of minutes, annual meeting programs, proceedings, and other documents, including the ASA application to join the American Council of Learned Societies. We also have all annual meeting programs from 1967 to the present. We are missing programs from 1956 – 1966.

Newsletter Archives: We have a nearly complete set of the *ASA Newsletter*, which was begun in 1980 by Selma Jeanne Cohen. Many prominent members from ASA's past wrote original essays for the *Newsletter* over the years, which cannot be found anywhere else, making this a particularly valuable resource. We are still missing a few: Vol. 1 (all), 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 8.2, 22.2, 25.3.

Division Archives: We have Pacific programs from 1972 to the present, missing just a few (1978, 1979, 1984, 1996, and anything prior to 1972). We have Eastern programs from 2006-2015 (missing everything prior to 2006).

Our thanks to Sondra Bacharach, Arnold Berleant, Aili Bresnahan, Don Crawford, Tom Leddy, Dom Lopes, and Henry Pratt for loaning us materials to create these archives.

If you have any of the missing items and would be willing to loan them to ASA for scanning, please contact: secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org. We will reimburse you for your postage to ship them to us.

Print archives: ASA also has four boxes of materials from 1935 – 1995 in the Special Collection and University Archives, Malcolm A. Love Library, San Diego State University. An inventory of those materials is included in *ASA Records* (above).

David Davies Named to JAAC Editorial Board

After 32 years of service, Mary Wiseman Goldstein has stepped down from the editorial board of *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. Until her retirement, she taught philosophy and comparative literature at Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Her publications include *The Ecstasies of Roland Barthes* (Routledge 1989, reissued 2016) and co-edited *Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Art* (Brill 2011). She has lectured and taught in Paris, Beijing, and other cities in China. In addition to serving on the *JAAC* editorial board, she is a former trustee of St. John's College and the American Society for Aesthetics.

The editorial board has selected David Davies to succeed her. Davies is Professor and Chair of Philosophy at McGill University, where he has taught since 1987. He has a PhD in Philosophy from the University of Western Ontario (1987), following a BA in Politics, Philosophy and Economics (Wadham College, Oxford, 1970) and an MA in Philosophy (Manitoba 1979). His doctoral research and much of his research for the following few years was on the Realism/Anti-Realism debate in contemporary metaphysics, and on related issues in the Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Language. For the past 18 years his research has focused mainly on metaphysical and epistemological issues in the Philosophy of Art, where he has also published widely on topics relating to literature, film, photography, music,

performance, and the visual arts. He is the author of *Art as Performance* (Blackwell 2004), *Aesthetics and Literature* (Continuum 2007), and *Philosophy of the Performing Arts* (Wiley-Blackwell 2011), editor of *The Thin Red Line* (Routledge 2008), and co-editor of *Blade Runner* (Routledge 2015). He is founding director of the Philosophy of Art conference held at the Inter-University Centre in Dubrovnik, Croatia, since 2012.

Feminist Caucus News

Happy 2016 to all, with a big thanks to everyone who participated in the successful day of ASA Feminist Caucus Committee workshops in Savannah, Georgia, last November celebrating the 25th anniversary of the FCC (a summary will appear in an upcoming *ASA Newsletter*). Photos are posted on the ASA website, including our celebration at the end of the day: <http://aesthetics-online.org/?page=photogalleries>. (Feel free to send any additional photos you may have to me.) A special thanks to Carolyn Korsmeyer and Ivan Gaskell for organizing workshops, to Don Crawford, editor of the first issue of *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* to feature feminist research (1990), and to all speakers and attendees. Feminist scholarship has certainly expanded in the past 25 years, thanks to your efforts!

ASA Funds Workshop on Philosophy of Games

The Board of Trustees of the American Society for Aesthetics has approved funding up to \$5,000 in support of the Workshop on the Philosophy of Games, to be held October 14-15, 2016, in Salt Lake City. Conference Organizers are C. Thi Nguyen (Utah Valley University) and Brock Rough (University of Maryland).

The conference will explore a variety of issues: What are games? What is their value? Can games be artworks or possess aesthetic value? Are there ethical issues that arise with game play? As more information becomes available, including the Call for Papers, it will be posted on the ASA web site and ASA Facebook pages.

The conference will feature ten presentations, in a round-table workshop format. Travel funding reimbursement of \$500 will be offered for each paper, with one \$1000 travel grant for the best graduate student paper. There will be one commentator per session.

Additional funding is being provided by the

Utah Valley University Department of Philosophy, the UVU College of Humanities, the UVU College of Computing and Technology, the University of Utah Department of Philosophy, and the Westminster College Department of Philosophy.

For more information, contact the organizers at: cnguyen@uvu.edu or brough@umd.edu.

Book Review Editor Search for *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*

The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism invites applications for the position of Book Review Editor. The new editorial appointment begins February 1, 2018. The primary duty of the Book Review Editor is to commission book reviews for each of the quarterly issues of the *Journal*. The *Journal* publishes approximately 28-30 book reviews per year. The Book Review Editor has significant autonomy over the book review section of the *Journal*, selecting the books for review and then approving and editing the book reviews for each issue. The editor is expected to attend the annual meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics in order to attend the *Journal's* annual editorial board meeting.

The *Journal* is an official publication of the American Society for Aesthetics. The ASA provides an annual budget for hiring an editorial assistant, and travel support for attending the annual meeting. The editor must be a member of the Society and receives an annual honorarium from the Society.

Applicants must be a current member of the American Society for Aesthetics. There is no fixed term of office for the Book Review Editor, but there is a strong preference for applicants who will commit to a term of at least five years.

The ASA Board of Trustees is expected to select the new Book Review Editor at the annual meeting in November 2016. The current book review editor, James Harold, has kindly agreed to work with the new editor from approximately November 1, 2017, until the 2018 appointment date, taking the new editor through the work cycle of one issue.

Applications should consist of a letter addressing qualifications for the position and a current C.V., and may be submitted to either of the journal's co-editors: Robert Stecker at jaac@cmich.edu or Theodore Gracyk at jaac@mnstate.edu.

Deadline: October 1, 2016

Guide to Graduate Aesthetics in North America to Be Published

Preparation of the fourth edition of the *Guide to Graduate Aesthetics in North America* is underway, with publication on-line on the ASA web site expected in early summer. Publication was authorized by the ASA Board of Trustees last month.

Print surveys have been mailed to all department heads of departments offering an MA and/or PhD in North America, using lists provided by the Philosophy Documentation Center. The current guide is available for free on the ASA web site under the Resources tab: <http://aesthetics-online.org/resource/resmgr/Files/graduateguide.pdf>.

Over 1000 copies a year of the *Guide* are downloaded, making it a uniquely valuable promotional opportunity for departments and an important resource for students interested in aesthetics.

Call for Nominations: Ted Cohen Prize

To honor the enormous contributions of Ted Cohen to aesthetics and the American Society for Aesthetics, Andy Austin Cohen and the ASA established in 2014 a \$1000 annual prize "to recognize writing that is clear, graceful, and unencumbered by jargon or academic clichés. It should examine serious problems in aesthetics while also giving pleasure to the reader." In memory of Ted, his wife Andy Austin Cohen has generously funded this prize.

The 2016 prize winner will be selected by a committee of three members appointed by the President of the ASA and will be notified by August 1, 2016. The award will be announced publicly during the national meeting of the ASA in Seattle, WA, November 17-19, 2016. The winner will be encouraged but not required to attend the meeting, and travel expenses to the meeting will be provided. The prize may not be awarded if, in the opinion of the judges, no nomination of sufficient merit and appropriateness is received.

The ASA selection committee welcomes published work of distinction published between June 1, 2015 – May 31, 2016. Eligible works are articles or chapters/sections of books. Publication is understood to mean publication in venues with peer review recognized by the scholarly community and that are permanently available to the interested scholarly community of students and researchers. Eligible publication includes reputable on-line journals. Nominations will be judged based

on adherence to the standards of writing in the statement above. Self-nominations are welcome. Only one nomination per year should be submitted. Nominees must be ASA members at the time of nomination.

Submissions should be directed c/o Julie Van Camp, ASA Secretary-Treasurer, at 1550 Larimer St. #644, Denver, CO 80202-1602, or secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org. The nominated article or book chapter/section must be submitted in full. Electronic submissions are strongly preferred, in PDF format replicating the original publication. If PDF submission is not possible, then two copies of articles or book chapter/section must be submitted.

Deadline: June 1, 2016

Call for Nominations: Selma Jeanne Cohen Prize in Dance

In memory of Selma Jeanne Cohen, the American Society for Aesthetics established a \$1000 biennial prize in dance aesthetics, dance theory, or the history of dance. Begun in 2008, the prize was awarded for a critical article or book of distinction published in English; the prize was awarded in alternate years from 2008 through 2014.

Commencing in 2016, the prize will be awarded every year, alternating critical articles and books of distinction. In 2016, the Prize will be awarded for an outstanding article published from July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2016. In 2017, the Prize will be awarded for an outstanding book published from July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2017. Thereafter, the prize will be awarded for publications in the two-year period prior to the award. The prize winner will be selected by a committee of three members appointed by the President of the ASA and will be notified by August 1 of the prize year. The award will be announced publicly during the national meeting of the ASA that fall. The winner will be encouraged but not required to attend the meeting, and reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed for attendance. The prize may not be awarded if, in the opinion of the judges, no nomination of sufficient merit and appropriateness is received.

The ASA selection committee welcomes published work of distinction that contributes to dance aesthetics, dance theory, or the history of dance. Publication is understood to mean publication in venues with peer review recognized by the scholarly community and that are permanently available to the interested scholarly community of students and researchers. Nominations will be judged based

on significance of the topic or issue, quality of the research, quality of the writing, originality, and contribution to the dance literature.

Submissions should be directed to Julie Van Camp, ASA Secretary-Treasurer, 1550 Larimer St. #644, Denver, CO 80202-1602 or jvancamp5@gmail.com. The nominated article or book must be submitted in full. Electronic submissions are strongly preferred, in PDF format replicating the original publication. If electronic submissions are not available, two copies must be submitted, whether books or articles.

Deadline: July 1, 2016

ASA Dissertation Fellowships

The American Society for Aesthetics will award up to one Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship each academic year. This fellowship is intended to support original and significant research in aesthetics by enabling the recipient to complete his or her dissertation in a timely manner. For the purpose of this fellowship, aesthetics is understood to include the philosophical study of art, criticism, each of the arts, and related phenomena.

Fellowships are open to doctoral candidates at institutions located in North America who reasonably anticipate completion of their dissertations during the fellowship year. Applicants must be members of the American Society for Aesthetics. The fellowship year for applications made by the January 1 deadline is August 15 to August 14 the following year.

The fellowship tenure may be carried out in residence at the fellow's home institution or at another appropriate site for the research. The amount of the fellowship is \$25,000, in addition to fees and dissertation-level tuition not exceeding \$5000. The recipient shall not normally hold employment during the tenure of the fellowship and may not accept other awards that provide similar benefits, except that smaller local awards may be permitted at the discretion of the Society. These fellowships may not be held concurrently with any other fellowship or grant, unless express permission in advance is given by the ASA.

Application forms are available at aesthetics-online.org. Applications should be submitted as a PDF to secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org. A public announcement of the award will be made in early May. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. The successful applicant will have demonstrated that he or she will complete their dissertation according to plan and that this dissertation

has the potential to make an outstanding contribution to scholarship in aesthetics. Applications are adjudicated by the Society's Dissertation Fellowships Committee, which represents diverse traditions and approaches in the field.

Deadline: January 1, 2017

The 2017 John Fisher Memorial Prize

The American Society for Aesthetics is pleased to announce the guidelines for the 2017 John Fisher Memorial Prize, an award for an original essay in aesthetics, created in memory of the late John Fisher, editor of *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* from 1973 to 1988.

The amount of the Prize is \$1,000. The Prize is intended to foster the development of new talent in the field of aesthetics. The competition is limited to those persons who have completed the terminal degree in their field and are in the early stages of participation in their profession. Persons in doubt about their qualifications are encouraged to consult the editors of *JAAC* in advance (jaac@cmich.edu). Entrants should include with their entry a statement indicating how they qualify. Entrants must be members of the ASA.

The essay may be on any topic in aesthetics understood according to the characterization on the masthead of *JAAC*. The essay should be a maximum of 7,500 words including references (about thirty double-spaced pages). Entries will also be considered for publication in *JAAC*, unless the entrant requests otherwise. A decision on the Prize will be made by April 10, 2017. The winning essay will be published in *JAAC*. The author will also be invited to read the paper at the annual meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics in November 2017. Submissions may not have been previously published or under consideration for publication elsewhere. Upload submissions to the *JAAC* online submission website, <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jaac>. Submissions should include an abstract. Make sure the submission letter clearly identifies the paper as a submission for the John Fisher Memorial Prize, and include a statement of qualifications.

For questions, contact jaac@cmich.edu.

Deadline: January 15, 2017

Calls for Papers

Engagement: Symposium for Philosophy of Dance and Performance

San Marcos, Texas
September 8-10, 2016

We invite scholars to submit abstracts for an interdisciplinary symposium investigating philosophy and dance. Featuring live performances and keynote speakers from the fields of ballet, modern, and popular dance, aesthetics, philosophy of art, dance theory, choreography, and multi-media dance; the symposium will also include interdisciplinary panels for scholars, practitioners, and students, and will result in a book and two special issues of scholarly journals. Invited keynote speakers include, Julie Van Camp, Arnold Berleant, Richard Shusterman, Robert Crease, and Barbara Montero. The performing dance companies will be Mark Morris Dance Company (Brooklyn, New York), Erick Hawkins Dance Company (NYC, New York), and ARCOS (Austin, Texas).

We plan an exploration of aspects of dance that impact our understanding of what it means to be a human being, through discussion and dialogue as well as practice and performance. There will be workshops and master-class sessions held in conjunction with the symposium. We invite individual papers, as well as panels of professors and students.

Papers are to be limited to 20 minutes to allow time for discussion. Please submit a 250-300 word abstract, and a CV or professional bio. Panels will be scheduled for 1-hour, and can include 3-5 participants. Please submit a 500-600 word abstract of your topic and panel, along with the names and short bios or CVs of panel participants.

For more information on submissions, see www.txstate.edu/philosophy/SymposiumPhilosophyDancePerformance.html.

Deadline: June 1, 2016

The Cognitive Value of Literature: X Inter-University Workshop on Mind, Art and Morality

Valencia, Spain
October 26-28, 2016

The Inter-University Workshop on Mind, Art and Morality promotes the interconnections across different areas in philosophy and, in particular, the study of issues lying at the intersection of ethics, aesthetics and the

philosophy of mind. In previous editions, the Workshop has been devoted either to the production of a particular philosopher, including Richard Wollheim, Jonathan Dancy, Christine Korsgaard, Shaun Nichols, David Filkenstein, and Malcolm Budd; or to explore topics such as the Philosophy of Music (Peter Kivy, Noël Carroll or Derek Matravers), Self-Knowledge (David Filkenstein and Sarah Sawyer) and Art and Negative Emotions (Susan Feagin and Eileen John). On the 2016 edition, we intend to focus on the cognitive value of literature. Among others, we will consider issues concerning the fictional vs. non-fictional divide and how it conditions our ability to acquire knowledge from literature, the relevance of aesthetic values to the cognitive values associated with literature, the specific kind of knowledge or insight that could be derived from literature, and how literary works relate to philosophical treatises or essays.

We invite submissions on any aspect of the current debate on the cognitive value of literature. Authors should submit either a full paper (5000 words) or an extended abstract (2000 words). Submissions should be sent to mindartandmorality@gmail.com. The layout of the manuscript should accommodate anonymous refereeing (i.e. name and address on a separate sheet, and not repeated in the text). For more information, see mindartandmorality.wordpress.com.

Deadline: June 15, 2016

Inaugural Workshop on the Philosophy of Games

Salt Lake City, Utah
October 14-15, 2016

Games are growing in cultural weight and importance. There are many philosophical questions that can and have been raised about games: What are games? What is their value? Can games be artworks, or possess aesthetic value? Are there ethical issues that arise with gameplay?

In the philosophical world, discussion of these topics has been split over several communities, which rarely speak to each other, including computer game studies, the philosophy of sport, and digital aesthetics. It is the belief of the conference organizers that these various conversational threads have tremendous relevance to one another, but have remained isolated from each other for sociological reasons. Though there have been conferences specifically on the philosophy of sports, of play, and of computer games, there have been no conferences that seek to address these topics in a unified

manner. This workshop aims to unite the various strands of work on the philosophy of games. Furthermore, the workshop aims to unite the discussion of the many forms of games, including videogames, sports, board games, card games, role playing games, and more.

Possible topics to be addressed include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What is the ontological structure of a game? Is it to be identified with the rules of the game, the physical apparatus that supports it, or some larger social structure? In particular, are games such as sports ontologically similar to, or distinctive from, computer games?
- What is the definition of a "game", and how does it relate to other closely allied concepts, such as "artwork", "sport", "play", and "social contract"?
- What are the norms of game-play? Are there norms for good and bad play, above and beyond simply following the rules?
- Is there an aesthetic value to games? Is there a distinctive aesthetic value to the physical aspects of computer games? Is there an aesthetic value to the play experience? Is there an aesthetic experience to the spectators of game-play?
- Is there a moral value to games? Is there a particular moral problem to enacting fictional violence in a computer game which goes beyond the moral problem of seeing fictional violence in a film? Is there a moral problem to consenting to interfere with one another? Is competition, in itself, problematic or good?
- To what extent is game-play a part of normal life, and to what extent is it removed from normal life?

As this is a workshop, papers will be presented in a round-table format in a single stream. Thus attendees will be able to be present for all papers and presenters will be able to expect all attendees present.

Travel funding compensation will be available for presenters and commentators. We aim to provide at least \$500 of travel support for each presenter and commentator.

We invite scholars in any field of studies who take a professional interest in the philosophy of games to submit papers to the inaugural workshop on the philosophy of games. This includes, but is not limited to, scholars in the fields of analytic aesthetic, philosophy of sport, and philosophy of computer games, the philosophy of technology, and the philosophy of play.

Submissions should not exceed 3000 words and be prepared for blind review. Please send your submission and any inquiries for

further information to philosophyofgames-workshop@gmail.com.

Deadline: July 1, 2016

Coimbra Conference On the Virtual

Coimbra, Portugal
October 27-29, 2016

Recent technological innovations with huge consequences in media metamorphosis and incorporation of meaning through information storage and manipulation made explicit the use of "virtual reality". The concept is of everyday usage. Nonetheless, it is important the clarification of the motives of such semantic success taking into account the media evolution. The Coimbra Conference On the Virtual will deal with the conceptual trends and theories here mentioned. We encourage researchers to present the results of their work according to the following general thematic divisions.

1. The Semantics of Virtuality and the main conceptual trends in the contemporary meaning of the virtual in Philosophy and across the Humanities.
2. The Virtual in Perception and in Communication Systems. The use of simulation and its special structure of reflection. The reference to embodiment to translate physical-psychic virtualization in Cognitive Sciences and contemporary Philosophy.
3. Media Evolution, "Digital Convergence" and Remediation. Descriptions and conceptual evaluation of the contemporary media transformations, their virtual co-references and the overlapping of information, embodiment and meaning.
4. Technology, Memory and Imagination. The connection between memory and virtuality. The contemporary use of "techno-fantasies" and the new scenarios for the imagination.

In order to write your proposal of presentation we suggest that you carefully take into account these aforementioned items. Please, be aware that you need to inscribe your presentation in lines 1-4. You can select more than one line. Please, write your proposal within 2000 words in word format and send to virtual2016@fl.uc.pt.

Deadline: July 31, 2016

Ricœur Studies (ERRS)

Ricœur Studies Vol. 7, No. 2 (2016) will be dedicated to the issues of art and aesthetics

in Ricœur's philosophy. Even if Paul Ricœur does not place this question concerning art and aesthetics at the center of his philosophy, as he is able to do in the case of the questions of ethics and politics, it is still a question that he often raises and one that plays an important role in his work, something that really needs to be acknowledged. This is particularly apparent in the period that covers *The Rule of the Metaphor* and *Time and Narrative*.

We will try to examine the relationship between Ricœur's thought and the field of the arts and aesthetics, separating out three areas of study in particular: (a) Ricœur's problematization of the poetic and the aesthetic, (b) the relationships that Ricœur's thought maintains with the artistic object, aesthetic experience, and the world of the text or the work, (c) the links between this reflexive hermeneutics and a philosophical conception of art.

While the volume has a preference for contributions that discover a Ricœurian philosophy of art and aesthetics, it remains open to contributions that are interested in what could seem like blind spots in Ricœur's thinking in this area. For example, one might think of a type of privilege afforded to the link between aesthetics and poetics and ethics at the expense of the link between aesthetics and politics, something which lies at the heart of the discourse of the avant-gardes, or alternatively, one might think of the relation to the question of perception, which is of interest to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, Deleuze's transcendental empiricism, but also to every approach that maintains to a greater or lesser degree a link to cognitivism.

Articles may be written in either English or French. For more information, see the journal's website at <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/ricoeur>.

Deadline: September 15, 2016

Contemporary Aesthetics

Contemporary Aesthetics invites papers for its fourteenth annual volume. The purpose of *Contemporary Aesthetics* is to publish international, interdisciplinary, peer- and blind-reviewed articles on contemporary theory, research, and application in aesthetics. CA invites submissions of articles of 7,000 words or less (including abstract and notes). Discussions should be accessible to an audience across disciplines and promote conversation across fields and practices. We welcome the use of visual images and auditory and video clips to illustrate the text. For more information about submitting work to *Contemporary Aesthetics*, visit www.contempaesthetics.org, or contact: Arnold Berleant at editor@contempaesthetics.org.

Deadline: November 1, 2016

Conference on Ethics and Aesthetics of Stand-Up Comedy

The American Society for Aesthetics has awarded \$7,000 in partial support for the Conference on the Ethics and Aesthetics of Stand-Up Comedy at Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA, April 19-22, 2017. The conference was organized by Sheila Lintott, Associate Professor, and Jason Ledington,

Associate Professor, both of the Department of Philosophy. The interdisciplinary conference will explore the intersections of stand-up comedy with other art forms and its potential for dialogue with social and political critiques. In addition to academic papers and presentations, the conference will include a performance workshop, an "open-mic" night, roundtable discussions with comedians, and stand-up comedy performances. The Conference Organizing Committee includes faculty from English, Interdisciplinary Arts, and Women's and Gender Studies, representing several colleges in the region.

Confirmed speakers include: Luveell Anderson, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, University of Memphis; Noël Carroll, Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, CUNY Graduate Center; Eva Dadlez, Professor of Philosophy, University of Central Oklahoma; Oliver Double, Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of the School of Arts, University of Kent; Tanya Rodriguez, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Sacramento State University; Aaron Smuts, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Rhode Island College; Cynthia Willett, Professor of Philosophy, Emory University; Jason Zinoman, Comedy Critic for The New York Times.

Possible topics include:

Aesthetics of Stand-Up Comedy: theories of humor, satire, irony, style, theories of emotion and affect, self-conscious emotions (shame, embarrassment, guilt, pride), reflections on the state of the art, relations with other arts (e.g., poetry, spoken word, pantomime, music, improv), analyses of joke structure, boundaries of aesthetic taste, appropriation

Time to Renew Your ASA Membership!

If your membership has expired, there's still time to renew! You'll save money by renewing for two or three years.

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How to renew your membership on-line: Log into the new web site. Click Manage Profile in the upper right. Click on the left for Membership. You can renew up to three months before your expiration date. The new site accepts credit cards from MasterCard, Visa, Discover, and American Express. To use a check, you must mail in a membership form (see below).

How to renew your membership through the mail: Go to the new web site. You do not need to log in. Hover over the ASA button in the upper right and look for "Join ASA (mail-in)" on the sub-menus, near the bottom of the list. Click that and it will open a Word document which you can print out and mail in with a check. We are not able to accept credit cards with mail-in membership. Or look for the membership form in the blue paper insert in the August 2015 issue of this newsletter.

and originality, case studies of particular stand-up comedians, cross-cultural comparisons, historical reflections on the art form, public persona and comic identity.

Ethics/Social Political Issues of Stand-up Comedy: alternative stand-up comedy, political stand-up comedy, ethnic humor, identity (gender, race, age, etc.) and performance, racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, bigotry, feminism, anti-racism, censorship, law, political correctness, agency and subversion, nationalism, stereotypes and tropes, political efficacy and limitations, the politics of representation, the ethics of heckling, hostility, aspects of identity in stand-up comedy, such as race, ethnicity, ability, gender, sexuality, ability, age, and/or class, performance and appreciation, social movements/activism.

Please send either a 3000-word full paper draft or a 1000-word extended abstract outlining the paper, workshop, or panel via the conference website: <http://www.bustandup-comcon.com>. Include the paper/panel/workshop title, contact information and current affiliation (if any) of all participants. Please bear in mind that the papers should be suitable for a twenty-minute presentation; panels for less than 90 minutes; and workshops from 60-120 minutes. Submissions will be evaluated for their clarity of content, strength of central arguments, relevance to the conference themes, and potential interest and use of content.

Deadline: December 20, 2016

New ASA Trustees

Congratulations to Eva Kit Wah Man and Katherine Thomson-Jones on their election to the American Society for Aesthetics Board of Trustees for three-year terms from February 1, 2016 - January 31, 2019.

And thanks again to James Harold and Sarah Worth, who stepped down as Trustees on January 31, 2016, for their service.

Upcoming Events

ASA Rocky Mountain Division Meeting

Santa Fe, New Mexico
July 8-10, 2016

The Rocky Mountain Division of the American Society for Aesthetics is a relatively small, interdisciplinary group of scholars and artists devoted to the study of aesthetics, its theories, applications, history, and origins.

Founded in 1983, the division gathers each year in July in Santa Fe, New Mexico, to share research and hold discussions in several forums, including the presentation of scholarly papers, the keynote address, and the exhibition of work by a visiting artist. Interested faculty, graduate students, and independent scholars and artists are encouraged to join us at the annual conference.

For more information on the conference, including program, registration, and lodging, see <https://asarmd.com>, or contact Reuben J. Ellis, at reuben.ellis@woodbury.edu.

British Society of Aesthetics Annual Meeting

Oxford, UK
September 16-18, 2016

Our 56th annual conference takes place at St Anne's College, Oxford. Situated within five acres of tranquil leafy grounds, St Anne's enjoys a unique atmosphere and a tradition of intellectual generosity. Whilst dating from 1879, it is modern in its outlook and architecture and is one of Oxford's largest colleges, with some 700 students and staff. Program details will be available shortly.

Confirmed keynote speakers include Susan Feagin (Temple University), giving the 2016 Richard Wollheim Lecture; Tacita Dean will deliver the William Empson Lecture.

For more information, see <http://british-aesthetics.org/?portfolio=annual-conference>.

ASA Annual Meeting

Seattle, Washington
November 16-19, 2016

Program details and registration information will be forthcoming soon. For more information, including travel details and local attractions, see <http://aesthetics-online.org/?page=74thConf>.

Environmental Ethics and Aesthetics: At the Intersection

Bloomington, Indiana
May 12-14, 2016

More and more people today are concerned about the impact humans have on the natural environment. Therefore, of increasing philosophical concern is the question, what grounds our responsibility to protect the natural world, especially the non-sentient parts of it? A number of philosophers have suggested that we should justify protecting the environment partly for aesthetic reasons.

There have been several recent attempts to provide a theory of environmental aesthetics. Yet most of the attention in environmental aesthetics has been focused on whether the theories on offer are good accounts of our aesthetic experiences of nature. What has remained in the background is whether environmental aesthetic theories can ground, provide reasons for, or even justify protecting the environment.

We aim to foreground the relation between environmental aesthetics and environmental protection. Bringing together an array of international scholars, we will discuss why, if at all, we have a responsibility to protect non-sentient parts of the natural environment. Are such responsibilities best justified on aesthetic or moral grounds, or some combination of the two? This conference is open to the public. Registration is free but required. Visit <http://enviroethics.indiana.edu/> for further information.

11th Conference of the Association for Researching and Applying Metaphor: Metaphor in the Arts, in Media and Communication

Berlin, Germany
July 1-4, 2016

RaAM 11 is hosted by Hermann Kappelhoff (Cinepoetics – Center for Advanced Film Studies / Freie Universität Berlin) and Cornelia Müller (European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)) and will take place 1-4 July 2016 at Freie Universität Berlin.

RaAM is committed to the study of metaphor, metonymy and other forms of figurative expression in all domains of life and with a particular focus on the application of metaphor research to real-life issues. With the 2016 theme "Metaphor in the Arts, in Media and Communication", the conference RaAM 11 will embrace this central thought by putting the spotlight on ways of metaphorical communication – often beyond the scope of solely language-based discourse – in some of the

most prominent areas of metaphor usage: film and other audio-visual media, literature, poetry, architecture, theatre, painting, music and dance as well as product design, social media and face-to-face communication.

For further information, please visit: www.fu-berlin.de/raam2016. Or join us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/raam2016) or Twitter (@RaAM11Berlin). If you have any questions please contact us at raam2016@cinopoetics.fu-berlin.de.

Fourth Performance Studies Network International Conference

Bath, UK
July 14-17, 2016

The international Performance Studies Network comprises professional and amateur musicians, scholars working in a range of musicological disciplines (including music history, analysis, psychology, pedagogy, ethnomusicology and composition), and colleagues from the creative industries. The fourth international conference of the Performance Studies Network will be held at Bath Spa University, Newton Park campus, from 14 to 17 July 2016. The aim is to debate theories, methodologies and practices of performance, and to engage with increasingly diverse, interdisciplinary developments in the field in order to encourage a more global perspective on performance studies.

Professor Neil Heyde (Royal Academy of Music) will lead a keynote session with the Kreutzer Quartet on 'Inventing an ensemble identity'. This will explore the Quartet's long-term relationship with Professor Michael Finnissy (University of Southampton) in building a repertoire, and it will also detail the Quartet's experience in commissioning a new work from Dr Laurie Bamon which responds to textural ideas of presence and absence. A concert featuring these composers' works will be given on Saturday 16 July.

Professor Peter Wiegold (Brunel University) will lead a second keynote session 'Leadership and ownership' which will include a performance by his ensemble, Notes Inégales, featuring guest artists Hyelim Kim (Korean taegŭm flute) and Cheng Yu (Chinese pipa/Qu-chin). This session will investigate shared practice across boundaries, notions of leadership and layers of ownership. A special session on 'Performance pedagogies: cross-cultural approaches to learning', led by Dr Henry Stobart (Royal Holloway, University of London), will involve further investigation of global perspectives on music performance with contributions from these musicians and Chartwell Dutiro (Zimbabwean mbira).

For more information, see <https://psn2016.org>.

The 20th International Congress for Aesthetics

Seoul, Korea
July 24-29, 2016

The Korean Society for Aesthetics will hold the 20th International Congress for Aesthetics in Seoul, in 2016 under the theme of "Aesthetics and Mass Culture." The congress will be held on the campus of Seoul National University, the most prestigious university in the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and home to the only Department of Aesthetics in the country.

The congress will focus on the various aesthetic aspects of mass culture, which, due to the rapid development of information technology, has become one of the most prominent of contemporary cultural phenomena. Even so, the congress will be open to every traditional subject of aesthetics. This 20th congress will consist of several panels and round tables, along with dozens of sessions, including sessions for individual artistic genres.

The Organizing Committee will choose the topics for some events, but the rest will be open to the general members of the IAA. Any questions can be sent to the Korean Society of Aesthetics, e-mail aesthetics.kr@gmail.com.

Active Aestheticians

MARILYNN H. JOHNSON, a PhD Candidate at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, has been awarded the ASA Dissertation Fellowship for 2016-17. Her dissertation, "Meaning Through Things," examines the nature of interpretation across diverse practices and modes of inquiry, including art, literature, the law, and archeology.

ANNA CHRISTINA RIBEIRO will be the ASA-sponsored speaker at the 2016 Rutgers Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy. She is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX. She was selected by the Institute Director from an exceptionally strong field of candidates who applied to ASA for this appointment.

The editors welcome your submissions about your professional achievements: books published, grants, prizes, honors and accolades, and more. Please send your news to us at <goldblatt@denison.edu> and <henry.pratt@marist.edu>.

National Office Seeking Records for ASA On-Line Archives

We are seeking to complete our archive of materials that document the history of the ASA. While we have many of the documents, we are seeking for a few others. These include:

Annual meeting conference programs from 1956 – 1966.

ASA Newsletter issues: Vol. 1 (all), 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 8.2, 22.2, 25.3.

ASA Pacific meeting programs from 1978, 1979, 1984, 1996, and anything prior to 1972.

ASA Eastern meeting programs prior to 2006.

If you have any of the missing items and would be willing to loan them to ASA for scanning, please contact: secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org. We will reimburse you for your postage to ship them to us.

American Society for Aesthetics
c/o Julie Van Camp
1550 Larimer St. #644
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Send calls for papers, event announcements, conference reports, and other items of interest to:

David Goldblatt, Department of Philosophy, Denison University, Granville, OH 43023, <goldblatt@denison.edu>

or

Henry Pratt, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Marist College, 3399 North Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601, <henry.pratt@marist.edu>

Deadlines: December 1, April 15, August 1