

FOREWORD

The majority of the articles in this issue of the *Baltic Journal of Art History* were made as presentations at the Autumn School organised in October 2015 by the Department of Art History at the University of Tartu and University of Tartu Art Museum. The Autumn School was called MYTH. GENIUS. ART and the diverse writings published in the 11th issue of the journal are dedicated to these keywords.

In his article *Why does Laocoön Speak in Written Words and Not in Marble?*, professor Juhan Maiste, the head of the Department of Art History at the University of Tartu, discusses the connections between art and beauty, the differences and similarities in the expressive possibilities provided by words and pictures, and the role of genius in the creation of works of art. In his examples, relying on such prominent Enlightenment-era authors as Winckelmann, Lessing, Herder, Goethe and others, the author arrives at the opinion that there has always been an unbroken connection in art writing between the interpretation of art as an objective category with its normative language and art history as purely subjective phenomenon which emphasizes the poetical side of the artwork. One of the main ideas of the essay is to search the new in methods contemporary art writing, which enables us to define art not only in the context of critical narrative but as a direct part of the sublime experience and phenomenological approach.

In her article *Sea Motifs and the Image of the Sublime: Some Examples from Estonian Poetry and Art*, classical philologist Janika Päll analyses the connections to sublimity starting with Longinus, whose focused on its development in the tradition of antiquity. Thereafter the author shifts her focus to the 17th and 18th centuries, when Longinus's work is rediscovered. However, the final section of the article is dedicated to Estonian art, and sublimity is viewed through its manifestations in various art genres, paintings and poetry.

The article by the undersigned called *Two Geniuses. From Lomazzo to Diderot* focuses primarily on the developments related to the French art theory popular in the 17th and 18th centuries. At that time, the genius as a character possessing exceptional personality traits became increasingly important. The author provides an analysis based on the two distinguishable types of painter-geniuses – the “educated genius” and the “crazed genius”. These types succeeded each other, and over time, acquired an aggregate of personality traits that are still characteristic of the artist type today.

In her article *Michel Foucault's Philosophical Vision Based on the Example of Fine Art*, Mirjam Lepikult examines the means of seeing art espoused by famous philosophers, by dividing them into vertical, horizontal and spherical approaches. By juxtaposing various works (*Folie et déraison, L'Archéologie du savoir, Truth and Power*, et al.) in their temporal sequence, the author wishes to show us how the attitudes of French philosopher toward nature, origins and the function of art have gradually changed.

In the article titled *Art in the Epoch of the Completion of Modernity*, the well-known philosopher and translator Ülo Matjus unravels Martin Heidegger's position on art, in which the central role is played by metaphysics, as the constitutive dimension of art and is used by the latter to realize itself in the era of the implementation of occidental modern times. Matjus deals at length with the explanation of art as machination (*Machenschaft*) viewed through a linguistic prism, and thereafter, based on the metaphysical nature of loveliness and beauty, with the cognition of experiential aesthetics in the age when new technological possibilities, such as photography and cinematography, appear.

On Endel Kõks's Abstract Paintings is an article by art historian Reet Mark, which explores the creative path of the exceptional artist Endel Kõks, focusing on the artist's abstract period and his various forms of expression during the 1950s and 1960s.

Assyriologist and translator Amar Annus introduces the theory published by biologist Bernard Crespi and sociologist Christopher Badcock in 2008. The article is titled *Two Types of Talents – Mentalistic and Mechanistic* and deals with these geniuses (or *savants* in French) by focusing on the explanation of the mentalist genius or the psychotic savant.

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