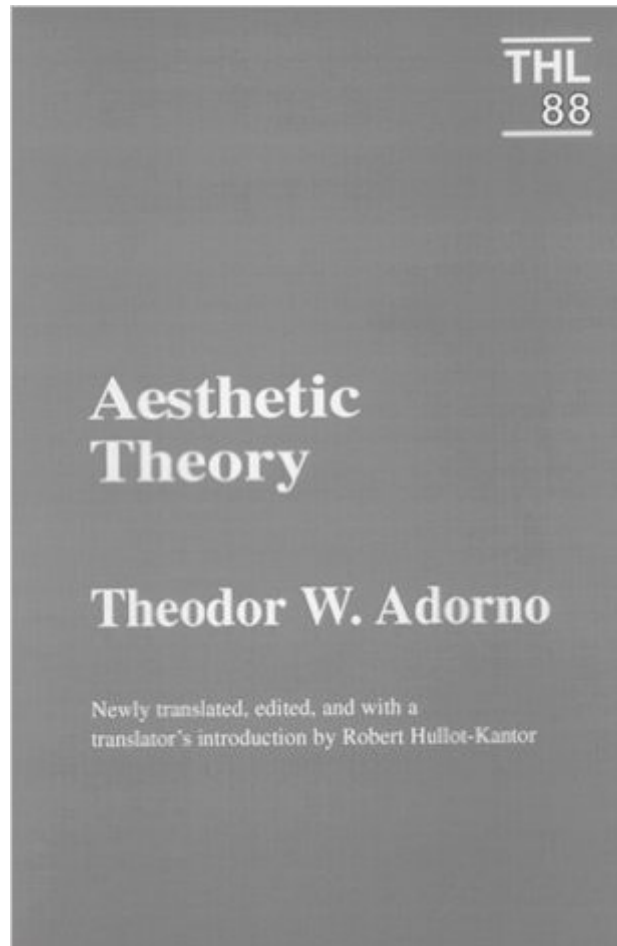


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Aesthetic Theory (Theory And History Of Literature)



Synopsis

Perhaps the most important aesthetics of the twentieth century appears here newly translated, in English that is for the first time faithful to the intricately demanding language of the original German. The culmination of a lifetime of aesthetic investigation, *Aesthetic Theory* is Theodor W. Adorno's magnum opus, the clarifying lens through which the whole of his work is best viewed, providing a framework within which his other major writings cohere.

Book Information

Series: Theory and History of Literature (Book 88)

Paperback: 416 pages

Publisher: Univ Of Minnesota Press; 1 edition (August 12, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0816618003

ISBN-13: 978-0816618002

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Humanities > Philosophy > Aesthetics #16 in Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Aesthetics

Customer Reviews

Theodor Adorno's "Aesthetic Theory" is in one respect about the end of art; it was written partially in response to his friend Walter Benjamin. Benjamin's views on the ends of art and the potentialities, the encrusted meanings waiting to be unleashed in mass produced art. Benjamin had thought there was an emancipatory moment in art in now the age of mechanical production. Since Adorno had outlived Benjamin until 1969, Adorno's task was to furnish us with the conception of art now as a pennyless child gazing into the candy store, an art in exile, an art where the disintegration of cultural pillars have long eroded away. Schoenberg's variegated orchestral scores was the ultimate rebellion in a private world, the subject at last trying to find truth and resemblance within the aesthetic crumbs leftover from the 19th century. Adorno's "Aesthetic Theory" is not only a treatise, a counterflow, a tone-poem of fragments, symphonic forms exploded into motives and cells of thought, it is a bridge between all arts, although the relatively new form of film is neglected. Adorno had thought this fragmentary style of writing as satisfying with the collapse of system-building within philosophic

thought. The aesthetic strategy of Adorno's thought then is one which interfaces, interrelates, crosses itself in its various readings of art. And the reader expects this complexity to be apparent. Robert Hullot-Kentor's translation is indeed something which encourages this reading of Adorno. He allows us to enter Adorno's thought in its full complexity. So, graphically he allows the undivision of paragraphs to remain as Adorno had originally composed in draft form. Adorno's thought continually overflows, continually creates layers, multilayers of references.

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