

with Artistic Standards?" *New York Times*, 27 January 1980, II 1, 27.

10 Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" 25–29.

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**Geneviève Monnier and Bernice Rose,** *Drawing: History of an Art*, introduction by Jean Leymarie, introduction and chapters 1 to 5 translated by Barbara Bray, New York, Skira/Rizzoli, 1979. Pp. 280; 265 ills., 100 color pls. \$85.

Nobody's fool, Sydney Freedberg advised, "Never write book reviews but if you must, only choose first rate books." Monnier and Rose's survey of drawings—through time, technique, and function—is such a work. An unalloyed delight, their's is the most beautiful book on drawings ever published. A ravishing selection, well reproduced, with superb color plates, this is a book that anyone interested in drawings would be pleased and lucky to own. Considering the high price of everything else, eighty-five dollars seems like a sensible figure for a work of this high caliber.

One of those inimitably French introductions, presenting the rise of Western civilization in fourteen well-chosen Malrauxian pages, is elegantly whisked together by Jean Leymarie with all requisite sonority and speed. But do bear in mind that the *naer het leven* drawings listed there as by Bruegel are now generally believed to be Roelant Savery's.

Monnier has the lion's share of the text, five massive chapters: "Codices, Model Books, Compilations"; "Drawing and Art Theory"; "The Basic Techniques of Drawing"; "Drawing and Its Purpose"; and "Drawing as a Record of Observation." She tackles her subject from the very start through the nineteenth century. Working at the Louvre's Cabinet de Dessins, Monnier is wonderfully well informed and writes wisely and well; B. Bray provides a fine translation. She takes her subject out of that endlessly tedious "masterdrawings" context, ever aware of the artist at work, of what the artist sees and does. Each chapter is filled with many important subdivisions, most in evidence in the major chapter "Drawing and Its Purpose" which has three subsections. The first, "The Working Out of Barocci's *Visitation*" (pp. 80-85), is one of the finest sections of her text. Architectural drawing—including pageantry, ornament, dream projects, and competition designs, among other topics—is given very careful attention (pp. 122-47).

Excellent color plates accompanying

the lengthy chapter "The Basic Techniques of Drawing" make almost all earlier treatments of this subject obsolete, but I did miss the enlarged details, the sense of the close-up that the very fine book by James Watrous on *The Craft of Old-Master Drawings* (Madison, Wisc., 1957) provided (omitted from the otherwise splendid bibliography). Monnier presents lots of new material with panache—she loves landscapes and treats this subject with rare sensitivity all the way through. Neglected topics like "Presentation Drawings," "Copying from the Masters," "A Momentary Gesture or Attitude," are all treated briefly yet trenchantly. Here is a scholar who manages to cover an amazingly large number of categories with equally amazing skill, knowledge, and grace.

Rose deals very well with the difficult task of providing what amounts to an extensive postscript, "A View of Drawing Today." Fifty-two pages long, with illustrations drawn from a great number of collections, this is a very rich pâté indeed. Inevitably "today" is already yesterday, as evidenced by the absence of any realistic or naturalistic study among the many works shown. Monnier and Rose see the history of the art of drawing as the rich, vital, personal, illuminating force that it is, sharing their vision with us in this effective and generous book. If there is to be but one work on drawings in your library, this ought to be it.

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**Yevgeny Basin, *Semantic Philosophy of Art***, translated by Christopher English, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1979. Pp. 248. \$7.20.

**Herbert Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics***, translated and revised by Herbert Marcuse and Erica Sherover, Boston, Beacon Press, 1978. Pp. 88. \$4.50 paper.

**Mikel Dufrenne, ed., *Main Trends in Aesthetics and the Sciences of Art***, New York and London, Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1979. Pp. 418. \$17.95 paper.

The three books under review deal with the nature of aesthetics as an intellectual inquiry into the phenomena of art, the social institutions they create, and the various methods one might adopt to best clarify these related issues. If, in the end, the reader is reminded of the distance to

be traveled from the theories of aestheticians and philosophers of art to the humble practices of creative artists, that would be not a loss, but a definite gain; indeed, even a most careful reading of the three texts will serve to recall the famous mot of Barnett Newman, no friend of alienating theory he, that aesthetics is for art what ornithology is—for the birds.

The wit of this literary figure reveals a taste for the cubistic image not apparent in Newman's art. However, the parallelism of the structure breaks down under a consideration that relates aesthetics and its usual object to its allegedly nugatory value as an intellectual discipline, which, stated in absolutistic terms via the analogy with ornithology, is something made by and for academic turkeys. The wit backfires, of course, since that science is not for but of the birds, turkeys and other. It is for ornithologists and for those readers who would like to know something of the birds, just as aesthetics should be for anyone wishing to know something of the arts. But in order for any of us to profit from its reading we shall have to learn its language and submit ourselves to the discipline of controlled inquiry to which it invites. For aesthetics, like ornithology, has its proper language and discipline; and anyone with enough interest in what it is about must be willing to submit to its discipline.

For the most part, such persons are other aestheticians: in the academy theory is pursued for theory's sake; and the separation between the products of art and their assimilation in the general society, on the one hand, and the purely intellectual comprehension of these artistic and social phenomena, on the other, becomes aggravated rather than diminished. And while it makes sense for an artist to claim that art should exist for the sake of art alone, it makes no sense at all for aestheticians to make the same claim for their theories. Moreover, they need only give the impression that theory like virtue is its own reward for artists and critics to retort that aesthetics is for the birds. That might very well be true in general, but intellectual honesty would seem to suggest that each case should be considered on its own merits.

Basin, Marcuse, and Dufrenne, each in his own way is trying to lay the foundations for judging what aesthetics is and does: Basin, by reviewing the history of the Anglo-American semantic philosophy of art and comparing its results to the socialist-realist doctrine of the Soviet Union; Marcuse, by showing the limitations of the official Marxist-Leninist doctrine; and Dufrenne, by examining the various ways the discipline is practiced both in the East and the West through a project undertaken under the aegis of UNESCO, with contributions from individ-

uals and organizations situated the world over. What all this has to do with art and with the various social institutions dedicated to the propagation of art and of aesthetic values in human lives will have to remain for the moment an open question.

*Semantic Philosophy of Art* is a monograph written by a Soviet aesthetician, translated into English in the U.S.S.R., and exported to this country for distribution to American scholars. Noting that a serious trend in English and American thought has recently concerned itself with the questions of the meaning of art, the art work itself as a sign or symbol, and the relationship between the language of aesthetics and art as a language, Yevgeny Basin sets out to show that in essence this trend is a symptom of the decline of bourgeois society. Stated this baldly, the purpose of the book makes one reflect on just whom it is intended for. Since Western philosophers would hardly view their own work as bourgeois propaganda, it would be difficult for the author to convince them of his thesis; and since scholars working within the confines of the Soviet Union, if they adhere to the orthodox position, are already convinced of the truth of the dogma by which any alternative doctrine is to be measured, there is little reason for anyone to attempt making the thesis clear. Thus, on the surface, the author seems to be writing for two audiences: one that is incapable of understanding his claims and another that already understands it, but that must be reminded that the theories under consideration are dangerous to accepted orthodoxy. Must we, like true bourgeois, pay our money and take our choice?

The solution of the dilemma is to slip through its horns. The bourgeois philosopher and artist can learn from this monograph just what in the current semantic philosophy of art is thought to be dangerous to a "socialist" society, while the socialist philosophers can profit greatly from learning how aesthetic theory has been developed in a different social setting. Oddly enough, the orthodoxy is expressed principally in the introduction and conclusion of the book, while the intervening chapters lay out an insightful account of recent and contemporary Anglo-American aesthetics which can serve as a succinct summary and review for American philosophers, as well as an introduction to the subject for Eastern theorists. As for artists both Eastern and Western, they may or may not be gratified to read, in the conclusion, that the semantic philosophy of art unites a decadent idealism with an interest in empty formalism to "nourish and uphold" various forms of modernist art. Whether or not that claim is true, it

seems to indicate that not everyone is convinced of the divorce between art and aesthetics. But at what price has their liaison been established?

The aim of the monograph is given a fourfold explanation: (1) to show how the idealistic and metaphysical presuppositions of the semanticists narrow the range of epistemological questions posed by the nature of art; (2) to show how the semantic analysis of art works relates to the mainstream of idealistic philosophy; (3) to relate semantic aesthetics to "modern scientific cognition"; and (4) to expose the class nature of semantic idealism, as evidenced in the hostility shown to "progressive" realistic art and in the theoretical "justification" of modernist art. Were he not writing for the censors, the author could be said to be writing for his Soviet colleagues. We may pass on to the exposition of the argument.

What Basin calls "the semantic philosophy of art" is developed in three sections and nine chapters. The sections concern art and language, art and symbol, and art and the sign. Within each section the aesthetic theories of the principal proponents of the semantic view are given careful exposition. Under "art and language," I.A. Richards's view of art as the highest form of emotive language is presented as a form of neo-positivism, followed by accounts of ordinary language analysis of aesthetic concepts by the disciples of the later Wittgenstein and by accounts of the "neo-Hegelian" linguistic concept of art developed in Italy by Benedetto Croce and in England by R.G. Collingwood. The theories of A.N. Whitehead, Ernst Cassirer, and Susanne K. Langer are analyzed under the rubric "art and symbol," while those of Charles S. Peirce and Charles Morris are discussed under that of "art and the sign."

Where in the main the exposition of these nine theories is reasonably accurate and admirably succinct, unfortunately the interpretations lent to them are universally tendentious: even Whitehead's "neo-realism" is treated as an attempt to convey his belief in a metaphysics of objective idealism inherited from the philosophical tradition. Thus, instead of conveying the truth about art, the semantic philosophies of art are said to reveal a covert metaphysical bias that gets expressed as a false dichotomy between content and form in art and between fact and value in experience. Thus, rather than being a presuppositionless form of inquiry, semantic idealism displays its weaknesses in the form of excessive subjectivism, eclecticism, and agnosticism that denies to art the function of truthfully "reflecting" the nature of reality.

As a twentieth-century phenomenon,

semantic idealism is further criticized as an attempt to justify the existence of modernism in general and abstract art in particular. But no art object is analyzed from any of the points of view mentioned, and no definition is offered for the contraries of the damning epithets employed throughout the thesis. What, for example, makes art realistic, objective, scientific, and gnostic? The author doesn't say, so he must be writing for those who already understand, i.e. his colleagues who are already true believers. For American readers, this book is more or less an introduction into how Soviet philosophers view one significant trend in Anglo-American aesthetics, but it also shows what is taken as axiomatically true in the prevailing Marxist-Leninist system of aesthetics.

In another age one would have looked for an *imprimi potest*, *imprimatur*, and *nihil obstat* on a covering page of such a book; that they do not appear is no sign that this scholarship is any less orthodox, any more of a true inquiry than if they had. Rather than an accurate sociological analysis of artistic phenomena, the book presents a datum for the sociological analysis of the conditions governing the publication of scholarship in a closed society.

*The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics* by Herbert Marcuse, translated by Marcuse and his wife, Erica Sherover, from his German text *Die Permanenz der Kunst: Wider eine bestimmte Marxistische Aesthetik* (Munich, 1977), is the attempt of an unorthodox Marxist imbued with the aesthetic theory of Theodore Adorno to purge what has come to be called "the traditional Marxist aesthetic" of its dogmatic doctrine: that only that art is good that serves the social polity, and that no art can serve the social polity unless it communicates easily with the least-developed members of society, by exhibiting the officially approved characteristics of "peopleness," "classiness," and "partyiness." This may be accepted Soviet doctrine, but it is not Marxist or Leninist. Oddly enough, the original German title of this essay is more revealing of the intent of the text than is its English translation. The original title indicates a discourse on the permanence of art (whatever one might do in order to bring it into conformity with a changing party policy), and the subtitle clearly contains a negative criticism: the work is written against the conception of a fixed Marxist aesthetics.

A truly Marxist aesthetics could not be fixed by the principles of dialectical historical materialism any more than a doctrine of bourgeois art could be fixed by bourgeois idealism. In whatever way one's

world view determines one's interpretation of the institutions of art, art and its free distribution among the people will suffer for that determination. In sum, then, according to Marcuse, the "aesthetic dimension" (i.e. what the pursuit of aesthetic values contributes to the attainment of a liberated society) must be considered on its own terms, and not as derivative from our basic economic relations, not as a "superstructure" or epiphenomenon developing from the economic "substructure" of our conscious social lives.

To the Germans the author declares this dimension to be permanent, not relative to a particular time and place, and openly declares his stance to be opposed to the orthodoxy of the kind found in the Basin book. Marxism is, among other things, a method for the interpretation of the significance of aesthetic facts. To his English reading audience Marcuse wishes to announce the multidimensionality of human experience that comes to light in view of life and society and art that allows each dimension of experience to be appreciated for what it is, even if in essence such liberating expression contributes to the overthrow of the society as we know it. Indeed, this liberating and "revolutionary" nature of the arts is precisely the social effect one should expect and cherish in the arts.

The essence of Marxism is to develop a method for changing the conditions of society, and as a result it can never be conceived of as anything so banal as to be fixed in perpetuity. To write a critique of such a view of aesthetic method is to evaluate the conditions that tend to liberate the revolutionary trends in art as well as those that tend to impede such a liberation. The English subtitle, then, is not so specifically negative as is the German.

The dispute between Marxist and non-Marxist aestheticians may be understood as an argument over the relative value of "form" and "content" in determining aesthetic value in works of art. Orthodox Marxists have reified content and promoted it as the only source of artistic value, while non-Marxist modernists have reified form and overvalued it. The middle ground is correct, not because like lucky Pierre it is always in the middle, but because it permits a more accurate description of the structural interrelations between content and form and, consequently, an appropriate evaluation of these structural interrelations. Form is good, i.e. appropriate, insofar as it allows the expression of a given content; when content is expressed in newer, more significant forms, the formed content or the content-laden form calls for adaptation to a "new reality principle" which did not exist prior to the expression. In this way,

in permitting the liberation of human drives, in achieving the autonomy of art among the other institutions of society, the aesthetic dimension of human existence becomes a revolutionary force animating the lives of the people.

The themes of this opusculum, anathema to the orthodox Marxist, are the autonomy of art (a doctrine necessary in order for art to break the grounds of the fixed reality of the moment) and the power of formed content to express the inner drives of the human subject at the same time as it presents an image of a more desirable counterreality. Indeed, the struggle between Thanatos and Eros in every individual psyche and between Dionysus and Apollo in the achievement of every successful work of art—these are the universal aspects of experience (at least according to Freud and Nietzsche) that have been denied a place in orthodox Marxism, that false or "naïve Marxism" which needs critical rethinking.

Marcuse, although speaking primarily of literary art, supplies another dimension than the purely aesthetic; and if we care to make the comparison, we may find the orthodox position he is combatting reduced to the six simple propositions on pages 1 and 2 of the essay. Can they be taken for granted as Basin took them for granted in his criticism of "semantic idealism"? Only a statement of them will allow us to judge:

1. Art is related to economics as superstructure to substructure of human social consciousness, but it may lag behind or anticipate changes in the substructure.
2. Art expresses the consciousness of the ascending class; the art that does not is inauthentic.
3. There is in consequence a direct correlation between the political and the aesthetic, the content and the artistic value of the art work.
4. The artist has a social obligation to promote the interests of the ascending class: in a bourgeois society, the proletariat.
5. A declining class (such as the bourgeoisie in capitalistic societies) can only produce "decadent" or "inauthentic" art (such as modernism or abstract art).
6. Realism is the art form most closely correspondent to the realities of the working class and thus is the "correct" art form for a socialist society.

Marcuse brings his battery of Freudian and Nietzschean convictions to modify each of these propositions in the direction indicated above. Neither orthodox Marxist nor libertarian democrat, he expresses his hope that art may yet achieve its ultimate telos: to permit the radicalization and the liberation of individual human consciousness, not in opposition to social or class consciousness but as determinative

of that consciousness. And in that, perhaps, his is not the voice of one crying in the wilderness.

As if in recognition of the need made apparent in the two earlier works, in the summer of 1967 UNESCO commissioned a study of the various approaches to the study of art. A year later, Mikel Dufrenne submitted a sketch of the areas to be reviewed to fifty-six national commissions concerned with cultural studies, as well as to some ninety-four scholars in twenty-six different countries for critical evaluations. Once approved, in the winter of 1968, the outline was sent to ninety specialists in twenty-nine countries who were to send their contributions for compilation into the report that now bears the title *Main Trends in Aesthetics and the Sciences of Art*. The editorial committee that drafted the report was headed by Mikel Dufrenne of Paris (Nanterre); his collaborators were T. Akiyama, University of Tokyo; Soheir Al Kalamawi, Cairo; Béla Köpeczi, Budapest; and Peter E. Lasko, Norwich, United Kingdom. Their work was massive, taking ten years to complete, and appearing as Part 2 of the larger UNESCO series *Main Trends in the Social and Human Sciences*.

The chief "rapporteur" indicates in the foreword to the study the fourfold structure of the report: (1) a description of the human, historical-social, and cultural *situations* of the various cooperating nations; (2) an account of the intellectual, philosophical, and scientific *approaches* to the subject; (3) a discussion of the *phases* in the artistic phenomenon; and (4) an evaluation of the *modes* of artistic expression. These four "planes of vision" are ultimately discussed under two main topics: art and the sciences of art today, and contemporary studies of the principal problems in aesthetics and the various arts.

Part One covers the first two aims of the study: to describe situations throughout the world, and to display the various methods commonly used to study the arts. Part Two, dedicated to problems, concerns the phases of creation and its reception and focuses on researches in the individual artistic genres: in particular, the visual arts (by Giulio Carlo Argan); literature (by Jean Starobinski); music (by Claude Palisca); the dramatic arts (by André Veinstein); cinema (by Gianfranco Bettini); architecture and town planning (by Françoise Choay); and, finally, the arts of information and the mass media (by Gillo Dorfles). The concluding sections of both parts were written by Dufrenne.

Where the first two volumes under review give a clear enough picture of the semantical philosophies of the Anglo-American aestheticians, as viewed by an ortho-

dox Marxist, and of the orthodox Marxist "aesthetics," as criticized by a sympathetic but dissident philosopher of the West, this study was meant to produce the larger picture in which it was calculated that the previously mentioned points of view would find a position of merely relative significance. Indeed, the *situations* described are both Western and "socialist," but to them is added a third sphere of influence: the culture of the non-Western countries that is neither capitalist nor socialist. As for the methods, they vary from the traditional philosophical (the demystifying, Marxistic, phenomenological, and neopositivistic) to the nine varieties of "scientific" inquiry exhibited in the responses to the original questionnaires: historical, comparative, sociological, experimental, psychological, psychoanalytical, anthropological, semiotic, and informational. Nothing is too trivial or too important; if someone has investigated the arts, a thumbnail sketch of the techniques employed in these investigations is supplied.

In Part Two, the problems studied are those associated with the idea of artistic creation: artists as creators and their creativity (studied from many psychological perspectives—philosophical psychology, positive psychology, information theory, and psychoanalysis), and the objects created (art works in various mediums); how these works are received by various publics in different social structures; and how artistic evaluations may be justified (the sociology of taste, the semantics of evaluative discourse, and aesthetic judgment as a part of philosophical axiology). Here too the bias is for inclusion, and not for the resolution of any conflicts that might arise in considering the differing points of view. Indeed, the work of the general editor is so objective that unless a reader knew it before reading this text he would not be able to guess that Dufrenne is himself a philosopher, and practicing phenomenologist of art. The report is brought to an end with a bibliography of sixty-five pages.

Given the encyclopedic scope of this work, it is destined to serve as a background reference for more particular studies in the arts. It is both a survey of theories concerned with the cultural situations in which such theories have developed and with the methods of inquiry used to perform the studies, and a survey of the problems created for society by the existence of art within its institutions, along with points of view taken on particular art mediums. Once more we are presented with a study of theory for theory's sake. Until a theory of art is developed that begins with and returns to the problems of art, it is much better to stay with a single theory that indicates that art

is best pursued for the sake of art. Otherwise everyone will be saying that aesthetics, like ornithology, is for the birds.

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**Jerome J. Hausman, ed., with Joyce Wright, *Arts and the Schools*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1980. Pp. 332; many ills. \$14.95.**

**Paul Avrich, *The Modern School Movement: Anarchism and Education in the United States*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1980. Pp. 447; 23 ills. \$30; paper \$12.50.**

Although the arts may be one of the glories of civilization, they are certainly not one of the glories of public education. For the most part, arts programs have been neglected wherever they exist. As a result of the back-to-basics movement, neglect has turned into rejection. It is therefore a pleasure to have *Arts and the Schools*, a book that clearly and forthrightly advocates all of the arts as a major educational and aesthetic force and insists on their presence in our schools. Two of the contributors, John I. Goodlad and Jack Morrison, go so far as to say that the "failure of concerned citizens to find K-12 arts programs in the schools to which they send their children probably constitutes more justifiable grounds for complaint than does the inadequate progress of their offspring in reading or mathematics. At least the latter subjects invariably are offered in schools" (p. 6).

*Arts and the Schools* contains chapters by Jerome Hausman, who also served as editor, and by Goodlad and Morrison, Dennie Wolf and Howard Gardner, Nancy R. Smith, Bennett Reimer, and Junius Eddy. The authors discuss the content, staffing, organization, and teaching of arts courses and spell out a rationale for the inclusion of all the arts. Among the topics covered are: the developmental stages of symbolic operations in the arts, the design and implementation of courses, and the means of expanding arts programs into the community. Appended to the book are excerpts from a series of position papers written by educators invited to assist in the planning of the book. In their conciseness, thoughtfulness and diversity, these excerpts have a force and pithiness that invite attention. Lillian K. Drag has compiled a brief, annotated bibliography. For students, teachers, and administrators these additions are of considerable value.

This book is one of a series commissioned by the Institute for the Develop-

ment of Educational Activities, Inc., which is under the direction of John Goodlad. The stated purpose of the book is to provide background information for "A Study of Schooling in the United States," a project that is supported by twelve private foundations. *Arts and the Schools* thus exemplifies part of a current sociological phenomenon: the proliferation of institutions and foundations investigating and supporting the arts. While I was writing this review, the National Research Center of the Arts, an affiliate of Louis Harris Associates, reported that "Americans are attending more art events . . . and [are] willing to pay higher taxes to support the arts" (*New York Times*, 4 December 1980). ABC and CBS have each announced plans to form a cable television network devoted to the performing and visual arts. And still further, Arts, Education, and Americans, Inc., headed by David Rockefeller, Jr., intends to cosponsor a series of public service announcements in support of art in the schools to be broadcast on national television and radio.

For a good number of years now there has been considerable controversy over the aim or aims of art/arts education. Until recently art education (speaking only of the visual arts) was either unstructured or was structured by having children work with those elements and concepts used by mature professionals. As so often happens in regard to children, education consisted of scaling down the adult concepts. Fortunately this situation is changing, and attempts are now being made to introduce schemata appropriate to each age level. Psychologists and educators find that there is no reason to withhold the social and aesthetic rules and codes of communication provided that the child's need to exercise his intelligence and emotions is respected. What matters is the generative capacity of the schemata introduced. This approach is, needless to say, considerably different from the old practice of actively demanding or passively hoping that children be creative.

Hausman, in the preface to *Arts and the Schools*, asks rhetorically, "Have we, in fact, succeeded in setting forth clear, concise, and unambiguous models of excellence for arts programs in our schools?" and he answers, "I think not!" He then suggests that the purpose of the book is "to lay out the broad framework within which excellence can be achieved" and to describe and suggest "alternative strategies for greater effectiveness" (p. xv). Standards and models are indeed necessary as heuristic devices, and Hausman is correct in pressing for such formulations. Yet I doubt whether this book—for all the authors' good intentions—fully achieves