

Confronting Universalities: Aesthetics and Politics under the Sign of Globalisation (ACTA JUTLANDICA)

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The universe is expanding, the world has gone global, and the US has launched a crusade to export the universal right to democracy to every part of the world. Under the circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the concept of universality is making a remarkable comeback in aesthetic and political theory. The meaning of the world, however, seems more contested than ever. Some denounce it as the ideological guise of particular interests, others as the conceptual equivalent of totalitarianism. But a growing number maintain that universality is an indispensable notion for any genuinely critical aesthetics and politics. Confronting Universalites consists of 12 contributors that examine how contemporary works of art in different media and genres influence, shape, or confront the political realm in both theory and practice by way of the universal. The topics of the essays include depictions of German unification, identity politics of aesthetic taste, contemporary uses of van Gogh, globalized photography, the infamous Danish cartoons, iconic architecture, cinematic representations of migration, the speeches of Nicolas Sarkozy and the interventions of contemporary art in the war in Afghanistan. From various theoretical points of departure, they all demonstrate the importance of the universal in the description of political aesthetic practice in a globalising world.

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