

## ABSTRACTS

### 'A VIEW OF THE SEINE THROUGH THE WINDOWS BEHIND THEM' •

#### MARY CASSATT'S *IN THE OMNIBUS*

Pamela A. Ivinski

In April of 1891, the American-born artist Mary Cassatt exhibited a set of recently created colour prints at Galeries Durand-Ruel in Paris. The series comprised ten scenes of women involved in everyday activities: caring for an infant, performing the toilette, fitting a dress, writing a letter, taking tea, and in one image, *In the Omnibus*, travelling through Paris. While this representation of a bourgeois woman, her baby, and the baby's nursemaid belongs to the nineteenth-century French and British genre of portrayals of public transportation, it also draws heavily upon Japanese ukiyo-e prints while employing elements from Northern Renaissance Virgin and Child paintings. By exploring these aesthetic strategies in combination with recent literary studies of late nineteenth-century writings by women about the female omnibus rider, we see how Cassatt recuperated restrictively gendered artistic tropes regarding the woman at the window to claim her place as a female artist within a culture in which modernity was increasingly associated with a transient, mobile vision.

### BETWEEN SPECTATOR AND SPECTACLE • DAN GRAHAM'S *TWO ADJECENT PAVILIONS*

Milena Behnke

Today it is no longer architecture that marks the boundaries of the private and the public. Our view onto the world is not necessarily shaped by the windows of our houses but more often by the windows of our computer screens. The latter confront us with new configurations of windows. However, in order to understand exactly what the entity of the window these days entails, it is important to return to the

'analogue' window. This article presents a look into and out of the window(s) of Dan Graham's *Two Adjacent Pavilions*, an artwork that, although constructed in the late 1970s, has not forfeited its validity today, but succeeds in interrelating the viewer and the viewed.

### NAKED • DRAWING THE CURTAINS IN EARLY TO LATE MODERNISM

Michel Pierre Laffite

Laffite argues that in Early Modernist literature windows are presented as threatening voids: at once a dark screen that reflects our fears and desires, and the unknown from which outside dangers can at any moment emerge. Laffite traces this representation back to the rise of cities and the resulting urban alienation, and argues that we employed curtains in order to cope with the menacing mass. Making the transition to Late Modernism and the ideology of transparency upheld by many early- to midcentury architects and city planners, and eventually to the present day situation, Laffite concludes that the continuing struggle between the public and the private, which used to be played out on both sides of the living room window, now takes place on the street: devoid of curtains to protect ourselves, we stand at the mercy of our observers.

### THE WORD WINDOW WILL VANISH FROM THE DICTIONARIES, TOO • PAUL SCHEERBART'S VISION OF TRANSLUCENT ARCHITECTURE

Mareike Spendel

In 1914, the German writer, draughtsman and inventor Paul Scheerbart published a collection of utopian essays under the title *Glasarchitektur* (Glass Architecture). In the form of 111 short chapters, Scheerbart proposed that in the future, architecture built from brick stone should be replaced with a

new architecture built from cast iron skeletons and coloured glass panes. Drawing on a myriad of concepts and ideas, Scheerbart's architectural utopia has inspired architects and writers alike, including Bruno Taut and Walter Benjamin. In part the result of an intense one-year collaboration and exchange of ideas between Paul Scheerbart and the architect Bruno Taut, Taut's *Glashaus* (Glass Pavilion), a lost architectural icon of the twentieth century, arguably embodies most of the Scheerbartian ideals - one of the central ideas in *Glasmarchitektur* being glass used as building material for the quality of translucency. By contrast, other, posthumous interpretations of *Glasmarchitektur*, such as Benjamin's reading, have aligned Scheerbart with the ideal of transparent architecture, and thus with architects such as Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus. The analysis of Scheerbart's vision of a translucent architecture without windows shows that *Glasmarchitektur* as a valuable resource in the history of architecture and architectural theory remains suspended between and resists the attribution to any of the Modernist movements.

**WINDOWS FOR ABSTRACT AND REPRESENTATIONAL DEVOTION • GLASS IN RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS OF THE UNITED STATES CA. 1945-1980**  
Carol Herselle Krinsky

This article offers an overview of tendencies in the design of glass in religious buildings in the United States during the first post-war generation, ca. 1945-80. It presents reasons for including artistically innovative or artistically conservative glass art, as well as the spiritual advantages or disadvantages of literal or abstract imagery. European Modernism and European émigrés helped to alter the more conservative American tendencies of the pre-war era. The

innovations included geometric abstraction, the use of pictographs, expressionist-inspired formal distortion, and faceted or fragmented forms. The reformist tendencies within the Roman Catholic Church that culminated in the edicts of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council gave impetus to modernism for churches of that faith. The accelerated assimilation of Jews led them to embrace innovative art forms to complement innovative synagogues. Protestants of specific denominations, inter-faith chapels, and secular buildings also adopted new forms. There were no inexorable or universal movements, and some groups remained loyal to the literal or sentimental imagery of the earlier part of the century.

**LOOKING INSIDE • THE WINDOWS OF SUFI SAINT SHRINES IN ISTANBUL**  
Esther Voswinckel Filiz

In this article, Voswinckel Filiz examines the salutation windows (*niyaz penceresi*) of Muslim saint shrines (*türbe*) in Istanbul. The rite of visiting saintly shrines at their windows represents an example of 'looking through' (*perspective*) where the gaze is not directed at the 'world out there' as was common in Renaissance painting. On the contrary, the attention of the beholder is directed *inwards*, from the public sphere of the street towards a semi-hidden, almost intimate, interior realm located inside the shrine. After comparing the windows of saint shrines with the ornamental window grids of houses in Muslim settings, Voswinckel Filiz sheds light on the synaesthetic features of the ritual practices of pilgrimage centred around Istanbul's saint shrines and their windows. The ethnographic material presented in this article shows that in the case of saint veneration, the modern understanding of the subject, i.e. the division between a perceiving subject situated in the interior of the body, and the object perceived, is turned upside down.