

Arts in the Age of Posthumanism: Reflections on Stefan Lorenz Sorgner’s *Philosophy of Posthuman Art*

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Abstract

What constitutes art has been debated for centuries and Sorgner’s book adds a different dimension to the debate as it discusses many subjects on arts and aesthetics. What is art in posthumanism? Can one speak of posthuman aesthetics? Some of the intriguing parts of the book deal with the recent forms of art that are infused with technology as in metaformance, bioart and cryptoart; additionally, there is a renewed discussion of total artwork and an examination of the possibility of non-totalitarian artworks, as the author draws examples from contemporary, posthumanist artists. The book also engages, directly or indirectly, with previous aesthetic ideas and theories, most notably Adorno’s. Moreover, the book lists ten aesthetic concepts that reflect posthuman art, as it analyzes one specific posthuman artwork for each concept to illustrate it. I do not think these concepts have any claim to completeness, but are rather suggested as some aspects of what we may call “posthuman art”. Another interesting subject is the discussion of leisure; what exactly constitutes leisure, what type of activity is considered leisure and why is leisure crucial for arts and the creative deed? These are some questions addressed by the author. This article critically surveys many of the points raised in this book regarding art and aesthetics in the age of posthumanism.

Keywords: metaformance, bioart, cryptoart, total artwork, posthuman art, leisure, twist, and overcoming

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1. Reflections on Stefan Lorenz Sorgner's *Philosophy of Posthuman Art*

Philosophy of Posthuman Art by Stefan Lorenz Sorgner is a timely book on arts and aesthetics in posthumanism. What is art? What are the aesthetic conditions and the aesthetic sensibilities of our posthumanist times? These questions, though not exactly the same, have been debated by philosophers and in artistic and intellectual circles for decades. Despite the many aesthetic formulations and many ideas as to what art is, we are faced with a plethora of ideas. Philosophers attempt to capture those moments of artistic creativity and aesthetic experience and explain dominant aesthetic attitudes in their times. However, art, as Sorgner observes, is about almost always becoming; therefore, there cannot be one fixed definition of art and aesthetics; it is rather an open-ended matrix in the vast space of creative activities of human beings. What follows below is my reflection on some of the high points of this book by Sorgner.

Before my reflections, I would like to make a few comments that are central to this book. My main preliminary point has to do with the term 'twist', translation of the German *Verwindung*, a play on *Überwindung*. The latter appears frequently in Nietzsche's works. Although I understand Sorgner's intention with the use of this word, where he likes to see the inclusion of the past, overcoming does not exclude what is overcome, as he suggests: "Overcoming leaves behind and separates itself categorically from the past, whereas a twist develops the past further in an inclusive manner" (Sorgner, 2022, p. 52). First of all, in overcoming we do not leave our past entirely behind. Nietzsche's Zarathustra is connected to his overcomings; what we have overcome is always with us. If we have truly overcome them, we create a pathos of distance to that which we have overcome. Overcoming or overhumanism does not dismiss relationality that metahumanism brings to the foreground. One difference may lie in the 'über' which connotes hierarchy; metahumanists and posthumanists dismiss hierarchy. However, this is duplicitous, as I argued in my review of Ferrando's *Philosophical Posthumanism* (2019), because the moment we posit values, we have created a hierarchy. In short, while *Verwindung* adds a different dimension to how we understand 'becoming', or transformation, it cannot replace *Überwindung*. And I do not agree with Sorgner's conclusion that overcoming is somehow stuck in the humanistic dualistic paradigm. He makes this claim but does not show how and why this may be the case. Overcoming does not assume any dualism but rather pluralism both in what is to be overcome and how to overcome it. All the things Sorgner writes regarding 'twisting' are already in 'overcoming' Other than Zarathustra's overcomings as stated above, we can consider Nietzsche's ideas on transformation in the second *Untimely Meditations II* (1997) and his conception of the eternal return of the same. The past is present along with the present; the hierarchical ordering of things may change. What we overcome is always with us. Therefore, his conclusion that

“overcoming leaves behind and separates itself categorically from the past...” (Sorgner, 2022, pp. 120-121) is not correct, at least not from a Nietzschean perspective.

As Sorgner observes, one difference that stands out between posthumanism/metahumanism and postmodern philosophy is the former’s engagement with technology. I must note here that the latter is not entirely absent from this engagement, albeit it may not be as comprehensive as that of posthumanism. Consistent with this point, Sorgner discusses bioart and cryptoart. Bioart is art that includes living organisms (Sorgner, 2022, p. 33). As examples, he lists many art works from Eduardo Kac, Damien Hirst, Stelarc, the group Magenta, and Patricia Piccinini. Although they are different types of art works, one common element is the use of organic beings and living organisms and interaction between organic and digital beings (AIs, Cyborgs, etc.) in the art work. Genetic modification has been a part of advanced technology for some time now and artists use it in their work. Sorgner explains it by way of *Prometheus Complex* whereby humans become autonomous and become in charge of their ship; they become gods. This is a far complicated subject and Sorgner does not pursue it all the way. Not every human being can be a god or should be a god. Ancient Greeks and other ancients elevated only those humans who had special, overhumanly qualities to godly status, and there was wisdom in that.

The other posthumanist art form Sorgner discusses is cryptoart. In cryptoart, the digital and the physical beings fuse into one another, as new forms of being emerge, while cryptoart is possible only in digital medium; artists, patrons, exchanges, currencies, and artistic standards are established digitally. New forms could be AIs or super AIs with autonomous capabilities, which include those that have to do with creativity. In cryptoart, user, consumer, and producer blend into one, creating a new type of digital forum. Different than phygital works, cryptoart provides a new medium for many digital artists who can remain anonymous if they wish. Because of anonymity, openness and collectivity, cryptoart provides many opportunities for creativity in the digital world.

Another interesting area in Sorgner’s book is the presentation of non-totalitarian total art work. While the idea is as old as its occurrence in German romantic literature, it was Wagner who implemented it artistically for the first time. As Sorgner observes, Wagner’s art and worldview included totalitarian structures, and this is one difference between Wagner’s art and posthuman artworks: “What is characteristic for all of them [posthuman artworks] is that they neither stress their own superiority, nor do they claim universal validity...” (Sorgner, 2022, p. 39). It would have helped readers, if Sorgner clarified what he meant by ‘totalitarian’ especially from the standpoint of a philosophy of power. In conjunction with his observation on total artworks, Sorgner criticizes Adorno’s aesthetics for perpetuating intellectual snobbery and for not being inclusive. Despite his critical

remarks about Wagner's worldview, Sorgner sees posthumanistic elements in his works: "Wagner affirmed an immanent, naturalistic and evolutionary thinking..." (Sorgner, 2022, p. 92), but he fell short in overcoming or twisting "the paternalistic structure" (Sorgner, 2022) he inherited from his culture and society. Recent artists like Helbig, however, pushed the project of total art work in a different direction, as Sorgner argues. Helbig's musical works are inclusive and are related to our life world, as they present musical interpretations that can be perceived differently. They do not claim universal validity or strive for a utopian world.

Although I agree with Sorgner's interest in the revival of total artworks and in its move towards a more Dionysian, all-inclusive direction, I also see that he misses a few important aspects of the total artwork. One aspect of the total artwork, which is present in ancient Greek drama, is the unity of all arts, all arts as they exist in their time. This was what was appealing in Greek drama to Wagner and also Nietzsche; all arts, visual, dramatic, performative, and musical, were agonistically and ecstatically sustained in their union in the height of ancient Greek tragedy. For Nietzsche this height was represented by Aeschylus; Wagner attempted to revive it as "music drama". Myth was the binding element, as it was interpreted in different artistic media and as they fit with each other syncretically. While individual arts and their growth according to their own rules are necessary for the life of a culture, so are the total artworks that show how unity in diversity can be established, unity of diverse forces that are at odds with one another and yet can coexist with each other (there is much to learn from this wisdom). Arts do not teach or educate directly, but rather provide exemplary models for creativity, not only for "artists" but also for creative ways of existing individually and socially.

The points Sorgner makes on total artworks, especially by way of Helbig's works, are well noted: bridging the gap between feeling, thinking and acting; relevance of arts to society; presenting wisdom or philosophical insights through an artistic (musical in Helbig's case) medium; subversion of obsolete divisions between passive spectator and active spectacle, or other types of divisions as live vs. recorded music, serious vs. popular music, etc. (Sorgner, 2022, pp. 93-94). However, Helbig's works remain mostly in the realm of music. The question remains as to what those types of artwork are that fill the space of total artwork in the age of posthumanism, total artworks that bring all forms of arts together, old and new, in a matrix of artistic becoming, and consider the role of Dionysian functions both in total artworks and in culture in general.

In *The Birth of Tragedy* (1967), Nietzsche announces: "excess revealed itself as truth". This is and must be a remarkable turning point in human history (not only in the West but in the entire world). "Excess" here refers to the Dionysian. The reason for it is that humanity, in its civilizing process, has pushed Dionysian functions into oblivion. Although the context of this book is ancient Greek culture and its continuation in Occidental civilization, those familiar with Nietzsche's later

works may accept that Nietzsche's critique does apply to human civilization in general, especially to those "advanced" civilizations. Since the publication of this book, the Dionysian has been widely interpreted and applied to arts and culture. While Nietzsche traces the origin of Greek theater to the cult of Dionysus and Dionysian functions and activities, he understands its role in creativity and aesthetics. The Dionysian, in contrast to the Apollonian, has to do with the end of individuation, the loss of the self, losing one's self in the other, and becoming one with nature; as applied to arts, it is when all arts (from visual, plastic, and architectural arts to dramatic and musical arts) get connected to each other in a syncretic way, as in the total artwork of Greek drama. Moreover, through the Dionysian, the entire artistic community is connected, becomes one. Nietzsche contends that this Dionysian "unity" has been shattered with the rise of rationalism and its introduction of dualisms.

Regarding Sorgner's critique of humanism's mind/body dualism, I cannot agree more with his conclusions widely accepted in posthumanist circles. What has been called 'mind' and 'body' are more inter-dependent than hitherto believed. We have to move towards new psycho-physiologies and mind/body integration as Nietzsche, psychoanalysis and postmodern thought have projected. For language to be apprehensive of these new interpretations, its metaphoric origin needs to be understood and made a living reality. Language too is in flux as all beings are. Concepts are nothing but names given singularly to singular beings but have forgotten their singular nature, that is, their metaphoric origin. In poetry, literature, and arts we return to that playful, metaphoric state where all things are still in flux. Posthumanism recognizes this linguistic shift towards metaphoric language and accepts the renewed relationship between words and things that are always becoming. What has been missing in culture for so long are plastic powers and playfulness, which can enable us to remold ourselves in the flow of becoming.

Another topic that stood out for me in Sorgner's book is the discussion of leisure and its context in arts. What exactly is leisure? Leisure is typically opposed to work; to have time and wealth and "...to be able to devote oneself to a useless but intrinsically valuable activity..." (Sorgner, 2022, p. 102). In ancient times, aristocrats had leisure; they had time for "useless" activities, useless in relation to the functions of self-preservation such as work and production. Having leisure was a sign of prestige, wealth, and power. However, social hierarchies have been declining and there is no leisurely aristocratic class; and yet, humanity needs "work" and "leisurely" activities. If we agree with the post-Marxist analysis of Debord (1995), capitalism has permeated all walks of life and everything, including our time off and recreational activities, is subsumed under the production of capitalism, as mass media plays a significant role in that subsumption. Therefore, recreation is no true leisurely activity; our vacations and hobbies are commodities. Sorgner makes a remark about schooling that it is a field of leisurely activity; most

schooling, however, is geared towards production and work and, therefore, does not promote leisure, even if schooling and learning in themselves may be leisurely. If we follow this old paradigm, the conclusion is that one needs leisurely time to do all those “useless” things like arts, religion, and philosophy and for “aesthetic contemplation”. Creativity can happen in the leisurely space; so does the aesthetic contemplation. There is, however, another way to tackle this problem and it lies in reconsidering this dualism between work and leisure.

Whether it is work or leisure, they are both human activities, typically, of different kinds but not always so. If a sport person plays a game with neighbors, that is leisurely, but if she does it for a professional team where she is paid, it is work. The same activity can be work or leisure, depending on its context. Therefore, the dualism that has been established to designate class position and privilege is no longer valid. On the other hand, there is a thin line that separates functions of production and preservation (work) from those that are “useless” like arts. First, we need those life-preserving functions to survive; artists and thinkers need drinks, food, etc. to live and to be able to do their “work”. There is an inevitable dependency here. And society needs artists and thinkers for “cultural” reasons, if not for strictly life-preserving reasons. After all, these leisurely activities and their end-results or sign posts (artworks, books, etc.) are not useless. Societies prosper with artworks and the wisdom philosophers bring to them. Since aristocracies have declined and all forms of dualisms are becoming outdated, at least for posthumanists, the so-called leisurely activity no longer belongs to a special, privileged class and we need to rethink the nature of human activity, as Sorgner suggests, and here we can benefit from Arendt’s (1958) and Bataille’s writings (1985) (specifically from *The human condition* and *Visions of excess*, respectively), and its relation to aesthetics:

In the posthuman world, however, such categorical dualities are dissolved: master/slave, otium/labor. Different processes happen at the same time...Through automation and digitalization more and more people are becoming aristocrats...This is accompanied by the possibility of changing the meaning of leisure, whereby leisure is in fact the activity of intellectually or sensually dealing with the fundamental philosophical challenges. (Sorgner, 2022, p. 112)

Although the current circumstances cannot make me as hopeful as Sorgner—automation is one of the leading causes of unemployment in many parts of the world and, therefore, the cause of people’s misery especially where there is no social network to support them, I agree with his conclusion that the meaning of leisure is changing and, therefore, in some circles the relationship to it. Here is how he continues explaining this change:

The posthuman paradigm shift is thus needed accompanied by an upgrading of the relevance of leisure as intellectual and sensual reflection on philosophical challenges. On the other hand, a non-dualistically practiced leisure is a constant dialectic between *otium* and *labor* or between *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. (Sorgner, 2022, p. 112)

This is a fine conclusion and we can hope that new technologies help promote this renewed non-dualistic understanding of leisure parallel to the new posthuman aesthetics. We cannot, however, underestimate the power of older forms that persist, forms which posthumanism aims to overcome or twist, to be specific, reactive forms of power, which Nietzsche presents in his *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1969) and elsewhere.

In the next part of my critical reflections of Sorgner's book, I will focus on the ten aesthetic concepts he introduces into posthuman aesthetics. I will refrain from discussing in-depth the artworks mentioned for each concept since many other artworks can fit under each of these ten concepts. The first three are borrowed from critical posthumanism. The first one is "monstrosity". By 'monstrosity' Sorgner means anything that which does not fit classical definitions of beauty or formfulness and monsters are misfits. "Monsters are different from the norm". (Sorgner, 2022, p. 65). One can find many examples of monstrosity in the history of art, even during the Middle Ages as in Gothic art, and more recently in artists like Egon Schiele. The more recent aesthetics of ugliness is the impact of the Dionysian in visual arts. Nietzsche's writings on the Dionysian and others were read widely by artists in the 20th century (most notably by Kandinsky who is the originator of abstract art). More often than not, what is typically called beautiful is blended with what is ugly; in this way, artists of monstrosity play with the traditional norms of beauty to which much of humanity is still beholden. Sorgner gives many examples and monstrous figures and characters permeate popular culture today. Artists use their wildest imagination to come up with such figures. Imagination does not have to limit itself to that which is formful, as Kant claimed in his aesthetics of the beautiful (where he associates the sublime with formlessness). There can be aesthetics of the ugly, the non-beautiful without the sublime experience.

The next concept is hybridity; we have been hybrids, all beings are hybrids in one way or another, as Sorgner observes (2022, pp. 66-67). Hybrid means blending; one could perhaps argue that the basic chemical elements are pure and not hybrids. Even this, however, may not be true; since they consist of other constituent parts, parts that are of the same nature. But what does 'hybrid' mean for arts and aesthetics? When one sees the word for the first time in this context, one may think of hybrid art forms, blending of multiple media or their co-existence as in total artworks. This, however, is not what is in Sorgner's mind. What he means is the blending of different organic beings through genetic modification, as his example, Eduardo Kac's "Edunia", illustrates (2022, p. 67). As Sorgner observes, once

hybrid forms were looked down upon, the way monstrosity was, but now both are accepted in the posthuman art world.

Amorphousness means formlessness. As Sorgner explains, we have come to believe in eternal forms and spirits as a result of the civilizing process and Plato's philosophy may be one of its best expressions. Existence is singular; what are called 'forms' attempt to explain them, but once made fixed and permanent, they become removed from singular nature of existence. Posthumanist artists like Jaime del Val challenge and resist this type of formalism and idealism, as they present or implement artistically the concept of amorphousness. In Sorgner's words, in Del Val's "Microdanzas", there is no rest, only permanent becoming. Words are not sufficient to relate to Del Val's works; one must be connected to them at multiple levels and psychosomatic registers. One needs to "move" with the movement of these works. Everyone experiences the spectacle in their own way, as the divide between spectacle and spectator melts in an orgiastic reunion and the spectator becomes part of the collective unconscious of images and symbols, as discussed in *Towards a Genealogy of Spectacle* (Tuncel, 2013). Del Val's works, which use advanced digital technologies, are total artworks in the renewed or twisted becoming of ancient Greek theater in its Dionysian origin.

The next four concepts are from metahumanism. Becoming is central to posthumanist ontologies and aesthetics. All beings come to being, live, and die; these cycles are all one and all beings and becomings are interwoven with each other as in meshes or matrixes. We are more connected to one another in these becomings than we are currently aware, as Sorgner notes. Artists are confronted with these processes of becoming, despite all the abstractions philosophers make about permanence and ontologies based on permanence. Sorgner discusses Damien Hirst's "A Thousand Years" where a deceased cow's head lies on the ground and where maggots and flies eat off it. The death of one being enters into the life cycle of other beings, but these other beings do not have much longevity. They die in a day. And the cycle of becoming continues. What is present in this work is the aesthetics of becoming, as the artwork shows its processes. Becoming is hard to accept; human-beings need comfort, security, and permanence. In this way they avoid change, new things, the unexpected, and the eventual death. All of these phenomena have their emotive burden, and most humans would rather avoid them than deal with this emotive burden. Philosophers have created ontologies and metaphysics based on such beliefs in permanence and religions used these metaphysical frameworks. All of these provided comfort to humans. But at bottom all existence is becoming and life hangs on a thin thread. Posthumanist artists accept this painful "fact" of life and portray it in their works.

Sorgner presents the next concept, 'twisting', by way of Stelarc' artwork. Although I do not see how overcoming creates dualism, a point I explained above, Sorgner shows, in the posthuman art of Stelarc, how "...several strands of yarn are

spun into a thread. The material and the immaterial come together into a psychophysiological unity” (Sorgner, 2022, p. 74). In Stelarc’s “Second Life”, different avatars from different parts of the world interact with one another via internet, while Stelarc is connected to a computer. All dualities have disappeared; what remains is twisting. Separation has dissolved and many different aspects come together. Overcoming would have dismissed the old, but twisting does not, as Sorgner claims. Here the old and the new, the organic and the digital, the mind and the body come together in a digital medium. Separations are blurred and new posthuman artwork is born.

We are not split into subjects and objects, as the metaphysics of humanism suggests; there are only relationalities. This is what the concept ‘relationality’ emphasizes. Relationality not only acknowledges psychosomatic and unconscious forces that are at work in human relations but also deals with the problem of modern subjectivity that splits the world into subjects and objects. All beings are in an intermeshed web of relations, not primarily a causal one, as metaphysics claims, but rather a correlational one. All beings are more connected with one another than anthropocentric humans think. Sorgner gives Random International’s “Rain Room” as an example and many artworks in which the boundaries between spectacle and spectator dissolves would also serve as good examples. This is a central concern in Jaime del Val’s metaformance; del Val is also interested in the genealogical origins of ancient Greek theater in the cult of Dionysus. As per Nietzsche’s insights in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1967), no such division between spectacle and spectator existed in the earliest phase of Greek theater. The Dionysian is the enfolding of all existing artistic forces in the flux of time.

In the next concept, “bodily plurality” Sorgner discusses Orlan’s performance in “Omniprésence. Sourire de Plaisir” where plastic surgeries become artistic performances. The already present bodily plurality can be enhanced through plastic surgeries, as these can be construed as artistic performances. While acknowledging the limitations of such identity changes, Sorgner rightly remarks that there are limits to “culturally accepted self-ascriptions” (2022, p. 78). Although Sorgner focuses on race and gender changes in physiopsychologies, there is a wide range of bodily plurality, including genetic make-up (possibilities of genetic transformation through such bio-technologies as CRISPR), agility and physical fitness and exercise (enhancement through training and PEDs), sexual being and activities (and their enhancement through various technologies from silicon breast to penis enlargement), and many other somatic fields. One can approach all of these fields from an aesthetic standpoint and conceive and practice them in creative ways.

The last three concepts are taken from transhumanism: ‘superheroism’, ‘smoothness’, and ‘kawaii’. Many of the ‘superisms’ have been associated with transhumanism; Nietzsche presented his concept of the ‘Übermensch’ in his works,

which was popularized through Bernard Shaw's use of the term as 'superman'. In transhumanism one comes across such terms as 'super-intelligence', 'super-longevity', and 'super-happiness'; the subject of super- or overhumanism in Nietzsche and transhumanism has been explored in several articles, journals, and in an anthology entitled *Nietzsche and Transhumanism* (Tuncel, 2017a). Super implies higher powers, like those of gods. Humans are becoming gods or are having godly features, including creative powers. Humans creating humans, as in the case of Frankstein, or intelligent beings like AI or robots, is a central theme in transhumanism. All of these super-beings have become part of popular culture and art, and the dualism between pop and high culture, like the subject/object dualism, no longer holds. Sorgner discusses Koon's "Hulk Elvis" and sees an inverted mimesis here; instead of imitating eternal, perfect forms, artists create dynamic fictions which can be imitated in the lifeworld (2022, p. 84). Similarly, superheroism is also inverted, perhaps in a parodic way.

In the next aesthetic concept, 'smoothness', Sorgner focuses on how in today's digital and technological world, humans or posthumans can give shape to their own bodies. Smoothness stands for several things for Sorgner, such as being hairless, minimalism, skin without scars, spots or scratches. This trend looks like a move towards classical beauty, the perfect form, which would be inconsistent with the acceptance of monstrosity and ugliness in posthuman art; however, the tendency to smoothness is not driven by already established norms but rather individual preferences. Therefore, there can be smooth artworks that are also ugly and monstrous. It is the individual attempt to give new shapes to the body in one's own way, or to the body of an artwork, which is at stake here. There is no one standard established for what could be smooth.

"Kawaii" means "cute, lovable, or adorable" in Japanese (Sorgner, 2022, p. 87). What typifies "kawaii" aesthetics is the smallness of figures and childlike qualities. However, these do not stand for being weak; on the contrary, "kawaii" figures are powerful and symbolize the empowerment of seemingly powerless figures. It appeals to and promotes playfulness and lightness of being and becoming, which are essential in human existence but often fall into oblivion in the "seriousness" of everyday living, typified by "the spirit of gravity" in Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* (2005). While 'kawaii' rejects traditional dominant forms and practices, it is also an attempt to twist high vs. pop culture dualism. These aspects of 'kawaii' are present in such Japanese artworks as "Hello Kitty" and in desk robots and social companion robots who comfort the elderly with their cuteness and effortless help.

These ten concepts of posthuman aesthetics do not complete the entire aesthetic field of posthumanism, as Sorgner confirms, they are not meant to give a comprehensive picture (2022, p. 89), but are rather traits and trends that exist in posthuman artworks. They also overlap with one another to a large extent, although

they are not exactly the same. To be monstrous, for instance, one needs to accept amorphousness, the melting of boundaries of forms. Formalists would argue that monstrosity is a new form; it still has a form. But posthumanists, unlike formalists, do not claim that there are fixed, eternal forms; forms change in the flux of amourphousness. What we call ‘forms’ are simply names we give to things that do not necessarily fit with those forms or names. It is analogous to metaphor-concept relationship in the field of language. All beings are in flux, in perpetual becoming, and posthuman aesthetics attempt to capture these ontologies of becoming, as hybrid artworks, monstrosities are created. Moreover, all beings are perspectively positioned vis-a-vis one another, constituting matrixes of relationality in the vast of ocean of many bodies.

2. Final Remarks

To conclude my reflection on Sorgner’s book without any concrete conclusions—and I could not reflect on every part of this book however significant it may be, it presents many concepts and ideas that reflect the arts of the last 50-60 years, especially new art forms like bioart, cryptoart and metaformance that are in close touch with advanced, digital and AI technologies. Despite its comprehensiveness, there are several things missing in the book. Although Sorgner does not have any claim to completeness, the book could have presented the broader postmodern, post-classical context of posthuman aesthetics. There is much discussion in postmodern literature as to what is replacing or twisting representational theories in aesthetics; for instance, Klossowski’s (2007) introduction of simulacrum and Foucault’s continuation of this idea as similitude in *This is Not A Pipe* (1982), which I discussed in an essay (Tuncel, 2017b). How does posthuman aesthetics differ from previous aesthetics, even if it arises out of twisting, if not overcoming? What are those new elements in it? In what ways is posthuman aesthetics post-representational? Although it discusses the subject of autonomy in arts by way of Adorno, how does posthuman aesthetics relate to, or twist, Kantian and post-Kantian aesthetics? Does posthuman aesthetics construe the role of imagination in the same way as Kant? Where do arts stand in relation to the beautiful and the sublime? There is discussion of beauty in the book but not of the sublime. There are references to Nietzsche, but no in-depth discussion of Nietzsche’s broad view of art and aesthetics. In many ways, Nietzsche’s ideas foreshadow and permeate posthuman thought and aesthetics, as Sorgner acknowledges in different parts of his book. There could have been more space for these other aesthetic positions, more than what is already presented, so that the reader could see how “twisted” posthuman aesthetics is in relation to them. These shortcomings notwithstanding, I find the book relevant, thought-provoking and

helpful in understanding posthuman aesthetics especially by way of examples Sorgner presents.

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