

# COGNITIVE SEMIOTICS

#5 (FALL 2009)

## AESTHETIC COGNITION

The keen interest in aesthetic objects, the investigation of the components of aesthetic experience, of how they make sense and what they teach us about their medium has right from the cradle characterized continental semiotics. This goes of course *par excellence* for Roman Jakobson who defined the relation between poetics and linguistics as one of mutual enlightenment, but it is also one of the salient tenets in the theory of meaning developed by A. J. Greimas and the whole so-called Paris School who devoted and still devote considerable amounts of time and space to show what import of a theory of aesthetic meaning can have on a general theory of meaning.

Similarly within the tradition of Cognitive Semantics, scholars have regularly addressed this issue concerning the relation between aesthetic meaning construction and the general cognitive processes and meaning structures it rests on. Epitomes of this type of investigation are, of course, George Lakoff and Mark Turner's *More Than Cool Reason* (1989), but one could also mention Leonard Talmy's 1995-article "A Cognitive Framework for Narrative Structure" as well as the wealth of studies outlining a field of research already dubbed "cognitive narratology" by David Herman. A very recent example of this wide embracing and transdisciplinary interest in aesthetic experience, aesthetic objects at large and the "artful mind" in general is Mark Turner (ed.), *The Artful Mind*, with contributions by, among others, Per Aage Brandt, Terrence Deacon, George Lakoff, Merlin Donald, and many more.

The 'Aesthetic Cognition' issue of *Cognitive Semiotics* has been conceived in the vein of these traditions. It aims at exploring the crossovers in the principles ruling and the mental models as well as the cognitive modes of processing recruited in the construction of both aesthetic and everyday meaning. However, since the cognition of visual artwork has been less dealt with than the cognition of literary artwork, particular emphasis will be placed on the former—be it only to pay tribute to one of our great predecessors in this field, the late Rudolf Arnheim. We therefore invite scholars in cognitive science, gestalt psychology, neuroscience, philosophy,

linguistics, theory of art and any other relevant field to submit papers which will allow us to propose an answer to our guiding question: how does a theory of aesthetic experience and aesthetic objects contribute to our understanding of everyday cognition and everyday meaning construction?; and, inversely: in what respect does insight into the principles governing visual and linguistic cognition further our understanding of aesthetic objects?

## THE EDITORS

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Special issue editors of *Cognitive Semiotics* (Issue 5, Fall 2009) is:

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Potential contributors are encouraged to contact the editors in advance of submission. Submitted publications should follow the style instructions for *Cognitive Semiotics* (<http://www.cognitivesemiotics.com>).

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**Deadline for submissions: December 1st 2008.**

## ABOUT COGNITIVE SEMIOTICS

The first of its kind, *Cognitive Semiotics* is a multidisciplinary journal devoted to high quality research, integrating methods and theories developed in the disciplines of cognitive science with methods and theories developed in semiotics and the humanities, with the ultimate aim of providing new insights into the realm of human signification and its manifestation in cultural practices. Accordingly, readers will have the opportunity to engage with ideas from the European and American traditions of cognitive science and semiotics, and to follow developments in the study of meaning – both in a cognitive and in a semiotic sense – as they unfold internationally.

The initiative to create a transatlantically based journal comes from the Center for Cognition and Culture at the department of Cognitive Science at Case Western Reserve University (Cleveland), and from a group of researchers, based in Aarhus and Copenhagen, trained in cognitive semiotics at the Center for Semiotics at the University of Aarhus, and in language and literature at the University of Copenhagen. By bringing together scholars from multiple disciplines, the editors hope to provide a revitalized perspective on the semiotic field.

Further details of the journal, including a free-to-download Issue 0, can be found at <http://www.cognitivesemiotics.com/>.

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