Dirk Westerkamp

Ästhetisches Verweilen

[Aesthetic Contemplation.]



2019. IX, 173 pages. PhU 48

ISBN 978-3-16-157050-6
DOI 10.1628/978-3-16-157050-6
eBook PDF 69,00 €

ISBN 978-3-16-156922-7
cloth 69,00 €

Published in German.
What do we experience when contemplating art? Interesting objects, things that move us, or inspiring works of art all invite us to spend time dwelling on and contemplating them. And even though such lingering allows us to escape from time for a time, we are nevertheless still able to immerse ourselves in the temporality of art. So aesthetic contemplation gives us time to experience and muse over art – but to what extent does this depend not only on turning away from time, but also towards it? Pictorial art uses a variety of techniques to let us experience the temporal. In this volume, Dirk Westerkamp develops a theory of artistic abstraction and offers a model of images for discussion. He then places his concept in the wider historical perspective of aesthetic modernity to reveal aesthetic contemplation as a kind of symbolic imagination that has been transformed by modernity.

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