



Autonomy in Art

Guest Editor:

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submissions:

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Message from the Guest Editor

Dear colleagues,

There have been substantial debates about the relationship of art to society over the last 200 years. The development of socially engaged arts practices in the 19th and 20th century from Arts and Crafts to Bauhaus to contemporary participatory arts has been central to notions of cultural value, engagement, participation and democratic inclusivity. Yet there are some problematic aspects to these debates and practices including the instrumentalisation of art to progressive and indeed totalitarian regimes, the privileging of process over product and a suspicion towards what we might call autonomous art. This Special Issue of *Arts* aims to explore this notion of autonomy across all art forms and politics and the ways that we might both reassert and critique the autonomy of art from social purpose; to paraphrase Adorno, perhaps the social function of art is not to have a social function. We welcome papers that address these key debates and critiques.





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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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