

Varieties of Sublime Experience: A Workshop

Thinking about sublime experiences offers numerous starting points for the critical study of a wide range of topics ranging from philosophical work on the experiential bases of aesthetic meaning to inquiry into the socio-political value of various states of affect. We propose to explore the cultural history of the sublime in ways that illuminate ways people can and do respond to encounters with phenomena that are felt to be overwhelming, grandly alluring, extraordinarily complex, and even incomprehensible. At the same time, we wish to consider how the meaning of such experiences connects with changing social, historical, and political contexts.

Our workshop brings together a small group of musicologists, philosophers, and cultural historians. An interdisciplinary approach is especially fruitful in thinking about this topic. Scholars in different disciplines, as well as artists, all think about the sublime in their own terms, sometimes drawing on each other's work, but only rarely talking to one another. Yet approaches to this topic area that engage cultural history, social aesthetics, music and media histories, criticism and reception history, as well as traditional approaches to the discourses of the sublime hold great promise. We believe that our interdisciplinary dialogue will enable each of us to bring crucial information and insight to the discussion. And we hope to lay the ground for future collaboration.

Meeting at CEFOS is ideal for a workshop such as this. It provides a focused and intimate context as we get to know each other and discuss each other's work. We plan to meet in plenum, with participants delivering informal papers or thought pieces and to build from that into active group discussion.

OUTLINE OF THE SCHEDULE

Day one: June 18

10:00-10:30 Welcome!

10:45-11:45 Kathleen Harbin, Kant and Addison

12:00-1:00 Sandra Shapshay, The Sublime, the Picturesque and Environmental Aesthetics

1:00-2:30 Lunch

2:30-3:30 Young-Jin Hur, "The visual aesthetics of the sublime and the beautiful"

3:30-4:15 Coffee break

4:15-5:15 Wiebke Deimling, "Kant on the Emotions of Sublime Persons"

Day two: June 19

9:30-10:30 Uygur Abaci, "Reflections on the Possibility of a Kantian Artistic Sublime"

10:45-11:45 Nicholas Chong, Beethoven and the Sublime

12:00-1:00 Kiene Brillenburg Wurth, "Finding a Re-Entry to the Sublime through Taoism and Zen Buddhism"

1:00-2:30 Lunch

2:30-3:30 Ben Korstvedt, "Varieties of Sublime Experience in Symphonic Music (in Bruckner, for example)"

3:30-4:15 Coffee break

4:15-5:30 Wrapping up & looking ahead