

Sotirios Bahtsetzis
**The Time That
Remains, Part
One: On
Contemporary
Nihilism**

Art is the distinctive countermovement to nihilism.

– Martin Heidegger¹

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In the late 1970s Aldo Rossi wrote: “Now it seems to me that everything has already been seen; when I design I repeat, and in the observation of things there is also the observation of memory.”² If, for Rossi, architecture that comes from the typological reorganization of forms can only produce memories, then these memories are associated with the condition of a continuous awareness of the unavailability of the present time. They cannot be romanticized or historicized and consequently cannot be further functionalized. But Rossi’s memories are not nostalgic, rather they are inscribed within a new kind of temporality. To see Rossi’s work as a symptom of *thanatophilia*, an adoration of death, means to not to be able to acknowledge the truly late-modernist aspect of his endeavor, which objectifies the “patina of time” and the functionalist appropriation of “beautiful ruins” in contemporary built utopias. Equally, Peter Eisenman, referring to architecture, has described the late avant-garde’s intrinsic condition of dislocation and split as a condition of “presentness.”³ This “presentness” shouldn’t refer to the notion of a happy, ahistorical postmodernist pastiche directed solely by instrumental commodification – a temptation that Eisenman’s built architecture has often succumbed to – but should be seen instead within a new understanding of temporality: the perception of lack or deficiency of time in which we live.

It is significant that architectural theory’s struggle against the loss of meaning in the late avant-garde has often focused both on the aspects of temporal exhaustion and on relentless repetition. This essay invites you to rethink the avant-garde gesture through the concept of temporality as revealed in Giorgio Agamben’s meditations. Drawing both on the Pauline Epistles and Walter Benjamin’s philosophy of history, in *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans* (2000), Agamben proposes a new type of temporality, one that cuts through notions of linear evolution and of history as a “stubborn faith in progress.”⁴ This “messianic” time, that is, time in the moment of a significant rupture, is understood not as the end of time, but as the “time that contracts itself and begins to end.”⁵ Messianic time is “the time that time takes to come to an end” and is thus a suspension both of the chronological (or sequential, historical time) and the ordinary order of things.⁶ It is a

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Aldo Rossi, San Cataldo Cemetery, Modena, Italy, 1971.

disruption of the apocalyptic anticipation of a utopian future, yet it remains inaccessible.

Agamben's position is obviously inspired by Martin Heidegger's caesura in philosophical thinking and the attack against representational thinking that was initiated by the influential German philosopher. Heidegger declares in his *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* that the main problematic in his seminal book, *Being and Time*, is the negotiation of neither "being" nor "time," but the negotiation of the "and" in the title, meaning the timely condition of being. Being is understood as a way to be – a *Zu-sein*, meaning the being that we ought to be, as a future being. However, this understanding refers to an instant, momentous future that must be constantly realized, at any time. In Heidegger's conception of time, the "now" in conventional occidental philosophy from Plato to Hegel is always considered as a "not-anymore-now" or a "not-yet-now," and is reduced to the general notion of an unchangeable eternity.⁷ Heidegger's critique of the concept of temporality in Western thought can also be found in his book on Nietzsche: "Eternity, not a static 'now,' nor as a sequence of 'nows' rolling of into the infinite, but as the 'now' that bends back into itself."⁸

Most significantly, the recurrent suspension of linear temporality and its chronological-historical representation produces new subjects. Interestingly enough, in his book Agamben endorses Benjamin's claim that the idea of messianic time has found its secularized counterpart in Marx's concept of a "classless society,"⁹ thereby opening up the question of "revolution" that goes hand-in-hand with the notion of modernity.¹⁰ The thesis of "remaining time" is obviously pertinent to us, because it functions as the common denominator of "ekklesia" (the messianic community of the early church), Marx's proletariat, and, in the view of Boris Groys, which I partially endorse, the avant-garde artists' community, which has claimed in modernity the role of the subject/object of history.¹¹

As Agamben has pointed out, the debate on modernity has mistaken "messianism for eschatology, the time of the end for the end of time."¹² This perverted view has influenced conceptions of history and linear time as part of a Christian eschatological salvation, thus perpetuating modernity's drive toward a future utopia, a state of things yet to come that infinitely postpones the end – thus creating the repetition of accumulation in view of a future redemption. This is the perverted mirror image of the messianic claim for a now-time once proposed by the avant-gardes, which has been identified by Derrida as a "messianicity without messianism" and a "messianicity, stripped of

everything." Such a notion of messianicity is understood as an "opening to the future or the coming of the other as the advent of justice, but without horizon of expectation and without prophetic prefiguration."¹³ It is important, however, to point out that Agamben's concept of messianic temporality does not have an ontological foundation regarding any kind of "permanent revolution" that has been so often identified as the essential attribute of modernity, but it signifies the right or opportune moment, the "kairoic" time within the sequential development of the already existing.¹⁴

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Matthias Grünewald, *Resurrection*, 1506-1515. Oil on wood.

Such an expansive temporality is in my view a dialectical mirror image of another type of repetition that addresses nihilism as the sign of time. Drawing on Heidegger's *Nietzsche* in his book, *The Man without Content* (1994), Agamben points toward the rise of nihilism, both as the prevailing condition of "the fundamental

movement of the history of the West” and within the rise of the modern art system.¹⁵ Agamben’s book clearly shows that nihilism may indeed be symptomatic of the modern, narcissistic “artistic subjectivity without content.”¹⁶ The mega-artist, as a corporate business player of culture, is just such an opportunistic-nihilistic figure. And Agamben draws an exact genealogy of this figure of modern nihilism, which seems to dominate our contemporary art world.

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Lady Gaga performing at the L.A. MOCA's 30th anniversary, on a grand piano painted by Damien Hirst.

According to Agamben, the nature of this emblematic figure is linked to the aesthetic notion of bad taste. Through the exemplary case of Madame de Sevigné, a mid-seventeenth-century French aristocrat noted for her letter-writing and her famous literary salons, *The Man without Content* proves how the “inexplicable inclination of good taste toward its opposite has become so familiar to us moderns.”¹⁷ The seductive power that bad literature had on cultivated and enlightened souls such as that of Madame de Sevigné is characteristic of a refined elite. However, Agamben claims it is precisely this paradoxical condition (vulgar objects that challenge the sensibility of the man of taste) that establishes modernity’s claim for

absolute and purified aesthetic judgment. And, let us not forget that Mallarmé’s female alter-ego, Madame Marguerite de Ponty, acts as the editor of a fashion magazine, elegantly addressing matters of taste and dealing exclusively with issues of what we often call “low culture.” Obviously Mallarmé’s own double taste, which is equally expressed as a schism of personality, describes this highly modernist attitude. Beyond the claim for aesthetic absolutism, which draws on early Romanticism’s foundation of “art as religion” – a notion that brings together what we value in aesthetic terms and what we perceive to be truth – Agamben emphasizes that “a phenomenon takes place for the man of taste that is similar to the one Proust describes for the intelligent man, to whom ‘having become more intelligent gives the right to be less so’.”¹⁸ Ever since the neo-avant-garde assumed a position of dominance in the 1960s – a period that eventually coincides with the canonization of modernism and the entrenchment of mass culture – art doesn’t necessarily have to appreciate “good” taste. However, it should be able to fully embrace its perverted double: that is, bad taste. Surrealism, Pop art, and diverse schools of painting from the Fauves up to today endorse this view.

A critical application of taste against the grain thus becomes the conceptual tool of the modernist artist. In other words, artists have internalized Madame de Sevigné’s over-sophisticated attraction toward bad taste. Let us think of Dada as delivering the epiphany of such a constitutional change. That change is exposed nowadays not only as the self-reflective appropriation of low culture in art, but also as the appreciation of tasteless advertising, pop songs, and banal decorative items within appropriation art. The blasé, eccentric, post-Warholian man of taste is actually an artist of deliberately bad taste, precisely because his or her officially acquired and publicly acclaimed tastefulness functions, primarily, to assert taste in a negative manner. In this case, it is the work of the artist as someone who applies his or her taste criteria in order to make art – in reality, a critic or the critic as an artist – that is charged with identifying bad taste, thus creating a canon of good taste by way of its absence. This is a canon that can never be openly presented or argued as such; it is not a normative canon but rather its hidden negative and often deliberately ambiguous counterpart. And, since the 1960s, the conceptual training offered to artists in art-world academia is synonymous with the professionalization of this coy and self-reflective attitude of self-promotion as a tastemaker within this particular set of rules concerning aesthetic judgment within negativity.



Dash Snow, *Hamster Nest*, 2009. Performance.

For art audiences, the almost schizophrenic dichotomy of being presented with both art films and commercial, mass-produced blockbusters of bad taste – this “most painful split” – is reflective of the predicament of the contemporary man of taste who is exposed to modernism’s alienating forces, even as he is nurtured by them. Marx himself was similarly exposed to these forces while he was in the process of demonstrating the vulgar and superstitious nature of modernism’s fetishes.¹⁹ The radicalism of the 1960s has attacked the effects of culture industry and the neoliberal worlds of consumption and spectacle, while the postmodern appropriation of the 1980s has embedded their terms into the jargons and protocols of recent art. If bad taste is the recurring double of good taste, then it is there in order to somehow purify art to a mere Kantian aesthetic enjoyment. Within the fragmented, playful and incoherent flux of aesthetic modernity, it is exactly the exposure to the trivialities of the commodity that secures the purity of our aesthetic norms. After the Hegelian declaration of art as a thing of the past, art exists only as aesthetic judgment, such that any work of art functions as an occasion that urges us continually to distinguish between art and non-art, and thus allows for a continuous scrutiny of the status and definitions of art. Pop art and its variants assert this condition, and aesthetic production consequently becomes the reproduction of an aesthetic canon that is simply another opportunity to exercise judgment, “a privileged occasion to exercise critical taste.”²⁰ Contemporary art’s various conceptualisms bear witness to this fact.



Dan Colen and Nate Lowman, *Wet Pain*, 2008. Installation.

But in doing so, they also establish another understanding of both value and history. Modern art finds its true ratification in negative

determinations, either in its aesthetic norm or in its cult of form and early modern traditions (such as the dogma of radicalism and its fetish for novelty). Modernism constantly demands that the maker resituate the work in a historic line while declaring such a historically situated culture to be insignificant – at least for his or her own work! Over time, the constant introduction of aesthetic-political utopias and ruptures resulted in a decoupling of art from any direct and real-world consequences, and served to turn every instance of artistic production into yet another chapter in the history of art. In this respect, the contemporary role of the artist as a historiographer is an indicator of what Agamben, drawing on Hegel, has identified as “the dialectic of honest and cowardly consciousness – which is in its essence the opposite of itself, so that the first side of the split is permanently destined to succumb to the second’s frankness.” And he concludes:

but what is interesting to us here is that Hegel, wanting to personify the absolute power of perversion, chose a figure such as Rameau’s nephew, as though the purest form of the man of taste, for whom art is the only form of self-certainty as well as the most painful split, would necessarily accompany the dissolution of social values and religious faith.²¹

The fetishization of taste as the absolute ontological horizon of the modern liberal bourgeois subject has enormous consequences for the psychology of contemporary artists and viewers. Such a culture of not making a choice, the culture of “everlasting discussion of cultural and philosophical-historical commonplaces” that perpetuates the cultural status quo could be easily aligned with Carl Schmitt’s conservative political vocabulary as a state of “radical indecisionism.”²² For the political theorist, it is because the bourgeoisie is unable to cope with social conflict that it always defers to the rule of the proper sovereign, who, in Schmitt’s definition, “is he who decides on the exception.”²³ The relation between the individual and the common (or subjective and objective – the main problem in Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*) is significant as it touches on the question of the transition from aesthetics to politics and vice versa. The Kantian criteria for the beautiful and the sublime in fine art come from a reference to a constantly presupposed “sensus communis,” a community of taste, which as Derrida observes, Kant refrains from ever analyzing.²⁴ The argumentative horizon of Kantian aesthetics remains the persona of the “genius,” the talent to generate aesthetic ideas. The community of

taste is thus the outcome derived from the decisive figure of the man of taste – paraphrasing Schmitt: the one who decides the exception. The initial conflict between reason and nature seen by Kant is similarly resolved through the synthetic activities of the man of taste as the representative of aesthetic objectivity in general: a magnificent edifice of political decision-making! The perverted, late capitalist version of such an engagement with art – the disinterested attitude, Kant’s definition of aesthetic experience – always demands its pre-validation not by the historical Other (for Kant the ahistorical, subjective-universal judgments posed by the genius), but by contemporary society’s proper neosovereign rule: that is, the globalized and institutionalized managers of taste, the individuals nurtured by a depoliticized and fiscalized society.

It is through this perversion that the contemporary “homo aestheticus” is born. The new non-Promethean artist, a mixture of Faust and the clown Falstaff, is an artist of absolute “open-mindedness, endless appropriation, and flexible Witz.”²⁵ He exists hand-in-hand with a narcissistic viewer of self-indulgent and smart cynicism. Both figures obviously represent the most common strategy for survival in the

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present. This is a fundamentally modern technique in which life is reduced to a novel claim to a mode of subjectivity distinct from that of Romanticism and totally alien to the ancient world. The homo aestheticus must continuously examine a subject matter that is mundane, and exercise – not exorcize – bad taste. Duchamp and Warhol are, for different reasons, the major precursors for this mode of being. The privileged material and content offered for artistic treatment in this case is simply the artist’s own presence, a value-generating presence, or – in the vocabulary of the late-twentieth century – the artist’s own “performance.” The formal conceptualization of performance contained in the notion of artist as persona – understood both in aesthetic and, most importantly, in economical terms as both self-presentation and economic efficiency – inevitably insinuates art into the commercial discourse of self-promotion. Artists as different as Warhol and Beuys concur on this point. The persona of the professionalized artist of endless reinvention, the bureaucratic corporate artist who renders himself an institution, is in this way completely immune to any form of institutional critique applied to him. And this is precisely the “conspiracy of art,” that Jean Baudrillard



Reena Spauling's website image.

questioned: the privilege of the art world to not critique itself as established during the twentieth century by its own practitioners.²⁶

Interestingly enough, the only possible critique within the contemporary art world is often a subtle type of self-censorship, silently established by the rules of the market. The reason is simple: the figure of the contemporary artist offers an extremely direct means of translating personal performance to both monetary and symbolic value. Warhol's statement, "I want to be a machine," is a statement that has been internalized by the self-assertive persona of the corporate artist (itself an image of bad taste) who has shed modernism's concern with the manufactured status of the work of art in the industrial era. Instead, this statement lays bare a kind of indifferent subjectivity derived from the instrumental rationality that produces artworks, which are now understood primarily as monetary assets. In this regard, the financial credibility of an artist is pivotal in the era of "casino-capitalism," because the symbolic and even the ethical value of a work of art is triggered and sustained mainly by financial speculation. In Warhol's jargon: "Making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art."²⁷ Warhol's machine statement is thus best understood as, "I want to be an ATM."²⁸ Nihilism is another name for society's drive to repeat itself and perpetuate its structure and ideology.²⁹ The tendency to historicize is the emblematic symptom of this condition. Stock markets attuned to contemporary art, the explosion of contemporary museums and their satellite branches, corporatized displays of private art collections and the growth of art fairs since the 1990s all fixate symbolically and financially on the aesthetic conditions of "now" while simultaneously historicizing them.

Historicization is most significantly evident in architectural postmodernism's tendency toward stylistic eclecticism and replication. If we look at architecture in the endless metropolitan sprawls around us, we see only reiterations of the heroic age of modern architecture. Historicizing modernism means conspiring against its own existence while creating a consumable "cultural heritage" that serves only corporate clients of the "neo-International Style of the type of Sir Norman Foster."³⁰ (How symptomatic it is that examples of early modernist architecture, such as power plants, industrial complexes, and so forth turn into the most advantageous and accommodating containers for the public exhibition of contemporary art once they are deprived of their original function.) Yet, beyond the highlights of star architects, architecture in our everyday

streets consists of boring, prefabricated, not-really-functional but functionalist, high-tech blocks of concrete, iron, and glass! These blocks make visible what is somehow concealed in our museums: that we already live with "future ruins!" The only way to survive within this condition of vulgarized architectural modernism is to continue romanticizing these future ruins, to speak with a tone of sentimentality about the "patina of time" engraved in the concrete modernist blocks of the streets of Manhattan or any Western European city and its global replicas! This type of architecture is exactly the symptom of this forced and inauthentic historical memory.

And it is precisely the repetition, the figure of the undead, that, as Agamben observes, describes the actual ontological condition of contemporary architecture and art:

Art does not die, but, having become a self-annihilating nothing, eternally survives itself. Limitless, lacking content, doubled in its principle, it wanders in the nothingness of the "terra aesthetica," in a desert of forms and contents that continually point it beyond its own image and which it evokes and immediately abolishes in the impossible attempt to found its own certainty. Its twilight can last more than the totality of its day, because its death is precisely its inability to die, its inability to measure itself to the essential origin of the work.³¹

Is this passage not only a succinct account of contemporary art, but also an ideal description of the very essence of the ideological system of our times, that is, a description of capital? It seems that contemporary art and late capitalism derive from the same ontological conditions: accumulation, consumption, and continuous repetition, which come together to create the promising phantasmagoria of an ahistorical present.

Modern nihilism operates on a specific dimension of temporality: the absolute way to accumulate is to promote a constant renewal, a repetition that preserves only those parts of the past that serve the transient needs of the market, while simultaneously conceiving that past as a causal sequence of events mechanically leading up to an oblivious present. Historicizing a lifeless past goes hand-in-hand with prolonging the present into the future. Contemporary art, the trans-conceptual and trans-historic artistic idiom of our time, thus manages the replication and variation of an immediate past, preserving only the ruins of modernism. Historicizing then becomes the

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mirror image of an atemporal historical condition. However, it is important not to confuse the messianic temporality, as understood by Agamben, with the atemporal clutter of the abolished present: in other words, the theology of capital. (The abolished present refers always to an atemporal fetish: in political Islamism it is God; in tectonic fascism it is Race; in Gnosticism it is Evil; and for neoliberal capitalism it is capital. Contemporary credit rating agencies [CRA] are the only remaining theological instances of modernity that measure our credos in the form of credit: the act of belief is only possible as an act of trust understood in financial terms – fiat currency turning to *acheiropoieton* gloss?)

We can twist the argument even tighter by finding the historical moment at which this kind of temporality was initiated, at the dawn of modernity: Hasn't this circle between the modern and ruin already happened? Indeed, Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, which describes life in the mummified Paris of the nineteenth century, is the perfect setting for such a reading of history.³² Benjamin's concept of history – as an angel that always looks backward while being pushed on the wind of progress – perfectly captures the condition of our own nostalgic cultures. But we should also add that the movement of the Benjaminian angel is not linear, but circular: a constant, repetitive revisiting of the same through different periods. Benjamin's concept of historicism runs parallel to his concept of a compulsion for historicizing and repetition that seems to derive from aesthetic considerations.

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To be continued in "The Time That Remains, Part Two: How to Repeat the Avant-Garde"

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1
Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*,
Volumes One and Two, trans.
David Farrell Krell (New York:
HarperCollins, 1991), 73.

2
Also Rossi, "Introduction," Aldo
Rossi in America: 1976 to 1979,
ed. Kenneth Frampton (New
York: Columbia University Press,
1991), 38–39.

3
Peter Eisenman, "Presentness
and the Being-Only-Once of
Architecture": Written into the
Void (New Haven, CT: Yale
University Press, 2007), 46.

4
Walter Benjamin, "On the
Concept of History," Walter
Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, Vol.
4, 1938–1940, ed. Michael
Jennings (Cambridge, MA,
London: Harvard University
Press, 2003), 393.

5
Giorgio Agamben, *The Time That
Remains: A Commentary on the
Letter to the Romans*, trans.
Patricia Dailey (Stanford, CA:
Stanford University Press, 2005),
62.

6
Agamben, *ibid*, 67.

7
Martin Heidegger, *On
Being and Time* trans. Joan
Stambaugh (Chicago: University
of Chicago Press 2002) ; Giorgos
Xeropaides, *O Heidegger kai to
problema tes ontologias* (Athens:
Kritike, 1995) 86–88.

8
Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, 20.

9
Agamben, *ibid*, 30.

10
Recently, Gerald Raunig has
written an alternative art history
depicting the revolutionary
transgressions and tragic
failures of the "long twentieth
century," from the Paris
Commune of 1871 and the
beginning of *modernité* to the
turbulent counter-globalization
protests in Genoa in 2001. See
Gerald Raunig, *Art and
Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: MIT
Press, 2007).

11
Boris Groys, "The Weak
Universalism" *e-flux journal* no.
19 (October 2010). Here Groys
tends to identify messianic time
with a Christological concept of
a new spiritualism that is
actually against Agamben's own
thesis.

See →

12
Agamben, *ibid*, 63.

13
Jacques Derrida, "Faith and
Knowledge: the Two Sources of
'Religion' at the Limits of Reason
Alone" in *Religion*, : ed. Jacques
Derrida, Gianni Vattimo

(Stanford, CA: Stanford
University Press, 1998) 13–14.

14
While *chronos* in ancient Greek
refers to chronological or
sequential time, *kairos* signifies
a time in between, a moment of
indeterminate time in which
something special happens.

15
Giorgio Agamben, *The Man
without Content*, trans. Georgia
Albert (Stanford, CA: Stanford
University Press, 1999), 27; see:
Martin Heidegger, 'The World of
Nietzsche: 'God is Dead,' *The
Question Concerning Technology
and Other Essays*, trans. William
Lovitt (New York: Harper and
Row, 1977), 62.

16
Agamben, *ibid*, 39.

17
Agamben, *ibid*, 19.

18
Agamben, *ibid*, 19.

19
We can also argue that, rather
than simply denying
commercialism and the industry
of the spectacle, the
'conceptualism of bad taste'
engaged – at least in the best-
case scenario – with them in an
attempt to avoid the alienation
of working within a rotten
system by actively occupying a
place of negativity within the
same system. To embrace the
fascination that the commodity
engenders doesn't necessarily
mean simply to be uncritically
fascinated by this absolute
fetish, 'the idol of the
marketplace,' but rather to
mirror the previously described
dualism or polarity that roots
modernity's formative schism
between bad and good taste: art
as commodity versus art as
critique of that commodity.
Actually it was Karl Marx himself
who claimed that commodity is
something very like a work of
art, contemplating on its
mystical, enigmatic character
and its transcendent being. Bad
taste can expose the triviality
and alienating nature of
commodities, only if it takes
seriously its mysterious life and
aura. Bad taste has an
investigative, almost
hermeneutical character. Marx
himself is a 'man of taste,' which
claims for him the right to
uncover the scintillating
nuances of commodity between
alienating fetishism and truth.
See Karl Marx, *Collected Works*
(New York: International
Publishers, 1975), I:71.

20
Agamben, *ibid*, 41.

21
Agamben refers to *Rameau's
Nephew*, an imaginary
philosophical conversation
written by Denis Diderot, in
which the figure of the
protagonist functions as a man
of extraordinary taste and at the
same time "a despicable rascal."

Agamben, *ibid*, 26.

22
Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology:
Four Chapters on the Concept of
Sovereignty*, trans. George
Schwab (Cambridge Mass: MIT
Press, 1988), 65; Stathis
Gourgouris, *Dream Nation.
Enlightenment, Colonization and
the Institution of Modern Greece*
(Stanford, California: Stanford
University Press, 1996), 21.

23
Schmitt, *ibid.*, 5, 12.

24
Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in
Painting*, trans. Geoffrey
Bennington and Ian McLeod
(Chicago and London: The
University of Chicago Press,
1987), 35. Talking with Derrida,
within the entirety of the
surrounds of the work of art
(frame, title, signature, museum,
archive, reproduction, discourse,
market) the most significant
one, the predominant
"parergon," remains the
aesthetic judgment.

25
Agamben, *ibid*, 19.

26
Jean Baudrillard, *The Conspiracy
of Art. Manifestos, Texts,
Interviews*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer
(Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press,
2005).

27
Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of
Andy Warhol (From A to B and
Back Again)*, (New York: Harvest,
1975), 92.

28
Indeed, it seems that
Nietzsche's take on composer
Richard Wagner can be seen as a
crucial critique of art's condition
today that links conceptually
Wagner's profile to the one of
Warhol: "In his art all that the
modern world requires most
urgently is mixed in the most
seductive manner: the three
great 'stimulantia' of the
exhausted – the brutal, the
artificial, and the innocent
(idiotic)." Friedrich Nietzsche,
"The Case of Wagner," in *Basic
Writings of Nietzsche*, ed. and
trans. Walter Kaufmann (New
York: Modern Library, 1968), 622.

29
The advent of nihilism with the
man without content should be
associated with what Jacques
Lacan has called the
fundamental tendency of the
symbolic order to produce
repetition, which has been
terminologically fixated as
modern society's "death drive."
The death drive for Lacan
doesn't mean the same as it
does for Sigmund Freud. It
means the prolongation of the
already existent and monetary
accumulation is its symptom.

30
See <http://nastybrutalistandshort.blogspot.com>.

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