



unctures
The Journal for Thematic Dialogue

24: network

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Junctures encourages discussion across boundaries, whether these are disciplinary, geographic, cultural, social or economic. *Junctures* embraces the long established fields of the humanities, arts, science, law, medicine and philosophy, as well as engaging with the challenges of more recent disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields. Each issue of *Junctures* is organised as a site of encounter around a theme. This allows us to highlight the resonances and disturbances of dialogue. With New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific region as a backdrop, but not its only stage, *Junctures* seeks to address the matters which concern us all as we negotiate the contemporary environment.

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Scarlet MacDonald, *Conscious Field*, 2024. Oil on canvas, 1270x1600 mm.

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Scarlet MacDonald, *Conscious Field*, 2024. Oil on canvas, 1270x1600 mm.

Sometimes I step back from my work as if I were you and ask "What is this about, this seemingly incomprehensible flat painted surface?" The answer to me appears vividly clear, but that is because I have been the ever-conscious presence at the end of my brush that has evolved the painting into being. I cannot take you along a simple route, a road toward an answer; no simple sentence would encapsulate the interests that I embody in my paintings. I attempt to capture the unseen world with the movement of one hand through the visual absorption of life through my eyes. We are surrounded by unseen things that are too fast, too slow or too small to notice yet are right in front of our eyes. I am interested in the delicate balance between the mechanical and biological; invisible yet essential systems that bind us to earth; grounding abstract ideas in the physical world; creating figurative hybrids that embody our shared existence. By the time of its completion, the image looks entirely purposeful. Because it always was.

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CALL FOR PAPERS: JUDGEMENT

Junctures: The Journal for Thematic Dialogue invites submissions on the theme of “judgement.”

In the contemporary moment we regularly see both forthright judgements and a recoiling from the violence of such judgements. On the one hand, there has been a widespread (re)turn to the political right, bringing with it a gleeful dismantling not only of the gains made for marginalised identities and communities in the post-1960s period but an undisguised reimplementing of forms of discrimination and oppression. Meanwhile on the left there is a staunch refusal to allow space for anything that carries the whiff of, or bears some resemblance to, discredited attitudes, particularly with regard to cultural or gender identity. On the other hand, there is a growing view that critique, criticism, critical theory and critical thinking, rather than furthering progressive thought and countering unreasonable and entrenched beliefs, can be damaging. Judgement can perpetuate combative, competitive modes of being—affirming a state of opposition between competing ideologies. Judgement can tend to represent and reaffirm existing paradigms and conventions—that which already exists—rather than being conducive to generating unexpected and imaginative insights, spaces and relationships—that which might happen. Judgement can appear arbitrary and groundless in contexts (contemporary art, for example) where the criteria for value are unclear or unstable. Judgement, no matter how rigorously supported, can be stultifying, imposing the illusion of resolution, closure or an end-point rather than opening up more discussion. And judgement can be culturally blind, based on ignorance or disregard for world views different to one's own, or harmful to mental health or wellbeing, a repercussion more conspicuous than ever in today's culture of candour and diagnosis. Yet the refusal to judge could be regarded as allowing reprehensible or unsupportable views to go unchallenged, or as a pusillanimous acceptance of the prevailing state of affairs. To refrain from explicit judgement might be a failure to recognise that, as Barbara Herrnstein Smith has written, “We evaluate all the time. It's not a matter of should or shouldn't. We can't stop ... We continuously orient ourselves different toward things that seem better or worse, more or less desirable.” Smith's position, simultaneously challenging entrenched values and socio-political power relationships while acknowledging the inevitability of judgement, constitutes a sophisticated form of post-modern relativism. Recent critical theory that advocates for less judgemental forms of discourse is more aligned with the ontological turn, as with Rita Felski's 2015 book *The Limits of Critique*, a critique (for want of a better word) of what she calls (using Paul Ricoeur's words) “the hermeneutics of suspicion.” The editors welcome proposals for articles in any field or discipline and from diverse perspectives on the current status of critical judgement.

Please submit a title and abstract of between 500 and 750 words for a finished paper of between 4,000 and 6,000 words accompanied by a short biography including your institutional affiliation by 31 March 2025. We will let you know if your abstract has been accepted by 14 April 2025. Final draft of submissions due by 2 June, 2025 with envisioned publication October 2025.

Please enquire about submission guidelines for other formats from editors:

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