

## Issue "Pathos-Image" of "View. Theories and Practices of Visual Culture"

Deadline: May 20, 2014

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Call for Papers for the sixth issue of online peer-reviewed journal  
"View. Theories and Practices of Visual Culture"

Issue Theme: Pathos-Image

One of the first lessons Western civilization taught itself was the lesson of suffering, expressed in the abrupt formula of Greek tragedy—*pathei mathos*—the obligation to learn from suffering. This was also the first development of a specific form of expression: *pathos*, understood as the presentation of suffering, the field of unresolved tensions and enacting a confrontation with the magnitude of a hostile or indifferent destiny. The importance of this primary lesson is hardly evident in contemporary culture. On the one hand, artists and critics are not afraid of anything so much as getting too emotional, or displaying excessive engagement, often taken for a lack of criticality. Such a restrained emotional attitude toward a cultural artifact was—not without the influence of the otherwise meritorious and complex political thought of Brecht or Adorno—almost entirely identified with a more or less explicit iconoclasm, a fundamental suspicion towards every sign of illusion. Thus, today *pathos* is understood most often as a symptom of naivety and affectation, one which by all means should be avoided. On the other hand, contemporary mass culture—from cinema blockbusters to computer games—draws from the depths of pathetic discourse, directly derived from historical times, as if modernity was not only over or late, but had never even started.

The sixth issue of "View" (2/2014) is focused on a question concerning the possible existence of fully modern, creative and critical forms of *pathos*. A main point of reference—but in no way an obligatory framework for submitted texts—is the renewed interest in the writing of Aby Warburg, and his theory of culture based on the concept of "formulas of *pathos*" [*Pathosformeln*], understood as elements useful in analyzing not only intensities of visual representations, but also their historical wanderings. We would also like to analyze contemporary culture from the perspective of its expressive formulas of intensive affect, formulas

that even if modern and functioning in contemporary political, social and cultural contexts, can still respond to a lesson addressed to us by a remote past.

Deadline for submitted texts: May 20th, 2014.

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Reference:

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