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GEOFFREY PAYZANT

**HAPPENINGS.** See Performance Art; and Situationist Aesthetics.

HAPTIC AESTHETICS. The term "haptic" (from the Greek haptesthai, to come into contact with; to fasten: *OED*), means "pertaining to the sense of touch." Touch comprises a set of sense modalities, including those for perceptions of pressure, temperature, pain, and position or proprioception. Haptic aesthetics, an emergent field of inquiry, reflects the rise of an interest in touch and tactility in fields such as anthropology, art history, cinema studies, interactive media studies, psychology, neuroscience, and philosophy.

The organization of the sensorium varies greatly in history and across cultures, and in many of its variants touch has an important place. An example is Indian rasa aesthetics, an ancient theory of dramatic theater that models emotion on taste. Arts considered minor in the West, such as textiles, cultivate touch as a source of knowledge as well as pleasure, as do everyday and specialized practices to which touch is central, from lovemaking to medical diagnosis (Classen, 2005). However, like the other proximal senses, touch has been excluded by Western aesthetics insofar as it is deemed incapable of transcendent experience. Touch undermines the differentiation between subject and object, between perceiver and perceived, that is usually considered necessary for aesthetic judgment. Similarly, as the sense that responds to a direct contact with the thing sensed, touch is considered too close to its object to represent it objectively.

This essay will give a history of changing conceptions of touch; discuss models of tactile vision; and briefly discuss new tactile media.

Touch in Western Philosophy. Both Plato and Aristotle placed sight and hearing at the top of the sensory hierarchy for their capacity to serve intelligence. Yet because Aristotle argued that humans rely on the senses for knowledge of particulars, his theory of perception gives touch a central place. In De anima he identified touch as the fundamental set of sensations on which all living beings rely, and as the most discriminating of the human senses, with taste elevated as the highest part of touch. Aristotle's model of sense perception whereby the senses create in the mind "the sensible forms of things without their matter," like wax pressed into a mold, established a quasi-tactile relationship with the perceptible world as the foundation of all sense experience. Moreover, Aristotle recognized that even the most immediate sense, touch, must be mediated: the body mediates between the world of matter and the soul.

Similarly, the early Islamic *kalām* theologians, who developed a metaphysics from the Qur'an, included touch with sight as the senses that provided reliable knowledge of substances, while the other senses perceived only accidents. Arabic philosophers, including al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), and Ibn Rushd, refined concepts of the internal senses, so termed because, like the external senses, they deal with particulars: Ibn Sina concluded that these comprise the imaginative, cogitative, estimative, and memorative senses, all unified by the common sense. Ibn Sina's synthesis was further developed in the medieval European philosophy and psychology of Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, and others. Aquinas argued that intellectual acuity arises from acuity in the sense of touch, and that touch constitutes the common sense (Milbank and Pickstock, 2001).

The art historian David Summers (1987) points out that the medieval understanding of common sense informed modern aesthetics more than is usually acknowledged, in particular the problem of the judgment of taste: eighteenthcentury aesthetics retained the Aristotelian characterization of taste as the highest form of the discriminating sense of touch. Also in the eighteenth century, the meaning of tact as a "ready and delicate sense of what is fitting" (OED) arrived in the English language. Yet taste (and touch) were only metaphors for modern aesthetics, which continued to dismiss the aesthetic value of the proximal senses in themselves (Korsmeyer, 1999). Kant argued that the senses of touch, taste, and smell could not be disinterested; they could be vehicles of agreeable sensations but not of beauty. Similarly, Hegel argued that the proximal senses could yield pleasure but not the transcendence of art.

Later nineteenth-century thought, inspired by materialism, experiments in psychology, and certain non-Western thought systems, began to question dualist aesthetics that equate vision with transcendence, and to value touch as not

only a form of knowledge but also a model of subjectivity in which self and other are inextricable. Nietzsche's emphasis on "flair," or an olfactory form of knowledge, bears mention here. Such approaches contributed to the critique of ocular-centrism in modern Western thought, analyzed by Martin Jay, Jonathan Crary, and David Michael Kleinberg-Levin, among many others.

One source of haptic aesthetics is the twentieth-century revival of a minor conception of mimesis, understood not as imitation of an ideal but as an embodied, nonhierarchical alternative to representation. It was in part informed by anthropologists' observations of the varieties of embodiment, such as Marcel Mauss's 1934 ethnology of "techniques of the body" cultivated both culturally and individually, and by the surrealists' fascination with non-Western cultural practices. Mimesis is one of the ways the Frankfurt School theorists sought to deploy an embodied and tactile epistemology against abstract and instrumental reason: mimesis constituted a form of representation characterized not by subjugation but by a nonhierarchical assimilation of difference. Walter Benjamin (1978) argued that a "mimetic faculty," by which the human body recognizes and produces similarities to the world, binds meaning to history in quasitactile closeness, a far cry from the notion that the world consists of arbitrary signs. For Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, mimesis, the sensuous vestige of human expressivity, offered a resistance to the disastrous distance between humans and nature wrought by instrumental rationality. Deconstructive theorists, including Jacques Derrida, Luce Irigaray, and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, identified a critical potential in mimesis in its capacity to undermine any sense of an authentic original. Lacoue-Labarthe (1989) also celebrated the way mimesis, in quasi-tactile proximity to the thing imitated, breaks down the difference between subject and object.

The phenomenologies of Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty provided a major twentieth-century foundation to a nondualist haptic aesthetics in which subject and object intertwine. Merleau-Ponty (1968) wrote that while vision, with its capacity to extend over distance, allows us to "flatter ourselves that we constitute the world," tactile experience "adheres to the surface of our body; we cannot unfold it before us, and it never quite becomes an object. It is not I who touch, it is my body." Touch reminds us that we are inextricable from the world, that our boundaries do not end at the skin, and that our sense of self arises from our sensuous being in the world. Merleau-Ponty's concept of reversibility, exemplified by the reciprocal touching of hands, posits that one can only perceive insofar as one is perceived; being a subject inextricably involves being an object for others. Phenomenology's emphasis on mutual embodiment thus gave rise to a tactile ethics. Nevertheless, Irigaray (1993) criticized Merleau-Ponty for privileging vision as the model of all other perceptions and thereby missing the radically tactile implications of his own concept of "flesh" as the reversible medium of experience. Irigaray argued that touch, as the first sense experienced by the fetus and by the infant, provides the model of a mutually implicating relationship of self and world.

Deconstructionist thinkers put into question each of the terms in Aristotelian treatment of touch as the exemplar of sensuous mediators between matter and thought. Jean-Luc Nancy, radicalizing the ancient understanding of touch as the basis of all the other senses, argued that the senses do not constitute sensibility so much as carve it up or interrupt it: hence the arts do not respond to preexisting modes of sense perception but engender new sense experience. Nancy broke down the phenomenological understanding of a single body intertwined with the world in sense perception to a multitude of mutually constituting, touching bodies, whose relations are technically mediated more often than not-as Nancy's reflection on his own heart transplant in L'Intrus (2000) would confirm. Aquinas's transcendentalist equation between touch and intuition also yielded to Nancy's critique. Jacques Derrida (2005) traced numerous philosophical returns to the Aristotelian conception of touch as a mediation between sensibility and intelligibility, taking no prisoners but reserving especially firm criticism for phenomenology, which he argued engages in a "haptocentric metaphysics" insofar as it seeks in touch (and in the body in general) a guarantee of immediacy or presence.

Nevertheless, touch-centered thought has generated numerous productive ways to describe and value experience of many kinds. Anthropology led the recent "embodied turn" in humanities and social sciences. Michael Taussig (1993) connected tactile forms of knowledge among the Cuna Indians to the bodily mimesis valued by the Frankfurt School. Sensory anthropologists such as David Abram (1996), Constance Classen (1993), Thomas Csordas (1994), and David Howes (1991) examine cultural knowledges that develop epistemologies, cosmologies, and aesthetics from the proximal senses. Feminist thought in numerous domains, drawing on phenomenology, materialism, and other nondualist philosophies, proposes new valuations of embodied and specifically tactile knowledge. And Aristotle's double-edged characterization of touch as the epistemological sense shared by all animals has served philosophies that give accounts of nonhuman experience. Modern philosophers such as Henri Bergson (1944); Alfred North Whitehead (1978); Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987), adapting Jakob von Uexküll's study of the three-point sensorium of the tick (1987); and Elizabeth Grosz (2011) attend to acts of sensation as ways of knowing the world without in ways that do not necessarily privilege human experience.

**Theories of Tactile Vision.** Though vision has been considered by far the most important sense for the acquisition of knowledge, minor currents of tactile epistemology traverse the history of Western thought. Three of these are

atomism, mimesis and the complementary concept of indexicality, and haptic visuality.

Atomism. An atomist cosmology proposes that the universe consists of tactile interactions. The Greek and Arabic atomists proposed that the material shape of atoms produces sensations; thus all sensations are fundamentally tactile, and vision is a species of touch. The atomist theory of vision held that the eye received a thin layer of atoms (called by Lucretius the simulacrum) that detached itself from the object (Lindberg, 1976). Aristotle too, as we have seen, proposed that vision relied on contact between the object, a medium, and the eye. The extramission theory of vision of Euclid and Ptolemy also has a tactile quality, in that it assumed that a cone of rays, emanating from a viewer's eyes, illuminate objects. After the year 1000 the extramission theory gave way to the scientific optics of Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen), whose theory of vision relied on the internal senses to coordinate perceptual data, and thus resembles nineteenthcentury conceptions of vision as embodied and subjective. Nevertheless, the intromission theory of vision laid the basis for the European Renaissance theory of perspective, with its highly disembodied perceiver.

After a couple of millennia out of fashion, atomism has returned as a quasi-tactile theory of perception that does not discriminate among modalities. Whitehead's process philosophy (1978) is atomistic in that he proposes that the universe consists of interacting entities that constantly transform in their prehensions of one another. Whitehead's term "prehension" supplants the term "perception" with a "grasping" that does not distinguish modality and includes mental prehensions. In many ways neuroscience supports this neo-atomist view.

Mimesis and Index. A related current of tactile epistemology, possibly informed at the outset by the extramission theory of vision, argues that visual images are produced not through imitation but through contact. This understanding of mimesis arose in Byzantine theologians' argument that painting (graphe) is not imitation but imprint (typos, sphragis). The Byzantines adopted a tactile theory of vision to defend the idea that the religious icon was the imprint of Christ's features on matter, and therefore not idolatrous. In the ninth century, Theodore of Stoudios argued that the icon painter made no artifice but faithfully imprinted on the board the impression that was printed on his eyes.

The Byzantine theory of the tactile image fell out of favor in the West with the rise of perspectivism. So too did any idea that vision entails a bodily contact between the viewer and the thing viewed. Renaissance and Enlightenment beliefs that vision was objective and disembodied permitted an understanding of subjectivity in which perceiver and perceived, inside and outside, and self and other were clearly distinct. Painters deployed perspective, illusionistic space, and a clear separation of figure from ground to create works that accommodated a distanced and rational viewing subject. Not until the nineteenth century did the optical experiments

of Purkinje and others demonstrate that vision was embodied and unstable.

Late nineteenth-century art historians, influenced by developments in the psychology of perception, proposed quasi-mimetic theories of representation. Robert Vischer (1998), Wilhelm Worringer (1948), and others argued that a perceiver experiences an embodied similarity to the forms she perceives. Worringer proposed two competing artistic drives that invite corresponding bodily and psychic responses. Abstraction, characterized by geometric art, constituted an anxious, primitive human response to the life force of nature. Empathy, a naturalistic and figurative art, emphasized human harmony with nature. These drives spar in the untrammeled lines of the Gothic style, to which Worringer attributed an inorganic life force.

We can consider mimesis to inform one of the sign categories developed by Charles Sanders Peirce (1994) in his three trichotomies of signs, namely the index: a sign that indicates its object by necessity, "by being really affected by it." The concept of the index has been popularized (and somewhat distorted) as an image formed through tactile contact, with photography serving as a central example. Considered as indexes, then, lens-based media are arts of touch. (Recent thinkers have worried that digital media interrupt the indexical flow, but I would argue that digital lens-based media remain indexical.) And, of course, all marks are visible indexes of a tactile event.

A dark side of tactile aesthetics, namely the risk of self-loss, emerged from the modern revaluations of mimesis. F. T. Marinetti's manifestos of Futurism in 1909 and "Tactilism" in 1921 privileged an art of overwhelming, violent, multisensory contact. Such immediacy incapacitates rational responses, and Marinetti's allegiance to Fascism underscores the way totalitarian spectacles and mass media make it hard for spectators to take a critical distance. And in a 1935 essay, Roger Caillois demonstrated a parallel between mimicry in insects and schizophrenia and other conditions in which one loses a sense of the difference between oneself and the world: a case of over-closeness, of tactile suicide. These critiques brings us full circle to Plato's exclusion of poets from his Republic because their music would drive listeners mad in mimetic passion.

Haptic Visuality. In the late nineteenth century, a number of art historians drew on perceptual psychology to suggest that artworks could be characterized according to the way they treat visuality in space. Adolf Hildebrand (1907) distinguished the fashions in which distant and near vision apprehended their objects. Heinrich Wölfflin (1964) characterized Renaissance and Baroque art according to a set of binary terms—linear/painterly, plane/recession, closed form/open form, unity/multiplicity, clear form/unclear form—the latter of which privilege a relatively subjective and embodied form of perception. Bernard Berenson (1896, p. 5) argued that the quality most essential to painting was "the power to

stimulate the tactile consciousness." And Alois Riegl (1985) synthesized his German colleagues' concepts in his distinctions between haptic and optical vision and among close, normal, and distant vision. He adapted the term "haptic" from physiology, in order to emphasize the grasping manner of this kind of vision. Riegl argued that the history of art, from ancient Egyptian art through late Roman art to Renaissance painting, was characterized by a gradual shift from a haptic mode, appealing to close vision, in which figures clung to a non-illusionistic, material ground, to an optical mode, appealing to distant vision, in which the ground is abstract and figures populate illusionistic space. Influenced by Hegel's Aesthetics, Riegl interpreted these historical changes teleologically. He argued in The Dutch Group Portrait of 1902 that the increased disembodiment and opticality of painting supported the goal of a purely psychological intersubjectivity.

Yet Riegl upheld this teleology from haptic to optical at a time when Western painting was abandoning perspectivalism and experimenting with haptic space. It was also a time in which Europeans were becoming increasingly aware, through their nations' colonial adventures in North Africa, the Middle East, and the Indian subcontinent, of the haptic aesthetic traditions of other cultures. Riegl himself, a curator of textiles, developed a fluent vocabulary of ornament and exemplified the close vision that it invites.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) appropriated and altered Riegl's concept of haptic vision and Worringer's concept of Gothic line to describe a "nomad art"—the art of the peoples menacing the rising Roman and Byzantine states in which the representational arts were evolving. Deleuze and Guattari elevated haptic space and abstract line as nonfigurative and nonrepresentational forms that do not represent living forms but embody life itself. While Riegl termed "haptic" objects with firm contours that suggest one could touch them, Deleuze and Guattari identified haptic vision with a close vision that does not distinguish figure and ground. Haptic space and abstract line become subsets of Deleuze and Guattari's category of smooth space, a space that is contingent, close-up, short-term, inhabited intensively, and without an immobile outside point of reference. Later Deleuze (2002) would classify four modes of handeye relations in painting. Two remain subordinated to representation: "digital," which subordinates the hand to the eye, producing a relatively optical image; and "tactile," comparable to Riegl's "haptic," or the virtual references to touch in the optical image. The "manual" mode of painting privileges the hand over the eye and "dismantles the optical"; and the "haptic" mode allows the eye to discover its tactile function.

Walter Benjamin, in "On the Mimetic Faculty" of 1933 (1978), had earlier reversed Riegl's teleology of Western art from haptic to optical, arguing that modernity was characterized by a tactile form of perception. A haptic aesthetics is implicit in Benjamin's metaphors of tactile contiguity in the

"Artwork" essay of 1936, as in his argument that the demise of aura corresponded in part to "the masses' wish to bring things closer" and his description of Dada as a projectile art that "hit the spectator like a bullet, it happened to them, thus acquiring a tactile quality" (p. 238).

This reversal, as well as Deleuze and Guattari's interventions, informed the recent revival of Riegl's terms "haptic" and "optical," especially in film theory since the 1990s. Following Riegl, Noël Burch (1990) and Antonia Lant (1995) identified a haptic look of shallow relief in early and experimental cinema. Other cinema theorists argued that vision need not occupy the distance and mastery ascribed to it by the Lacanian-influenced "gaze theory," and can instead take a mimetic and haptic relationship to the cinema. These include Vivian Sobchack (1992, 2004), Steven Shaviro (1994), Laura Marks (2000), and many others since. Sobchack drew on Merleau-Ponty to argue that cinema appeals to an embodied and multisensory spectator. Marks argued, following Deleuze and Guattari and Merleau-Ponty, that haptic images in cinema, by closing the distance between image and viewer, encourage an embodied relationship to the image that involves the non-audiovisual senses and calls on bodily memory. In the more common optical images, cinema isolates the object of vision from the viewing subject, permitting the mental distance that allows a viewer to "identify with" a figure. Haptic images, by contrast, delay resolution, figuration, and meaning, insofar as all these require mental distance. But since such images are easy to ignore, they require some volition or interest on the part of the viewer; hence Marks proposed the term "haptic visuality," which emphasizes the viewer's inclination to perceive in a haptic way.

Cinema achieves haptic qualities through low resolution, soft focus, blur, a high degree of detail, shallow focal plane, close-ups, texture, or images of textured objects. Low-resolution and damaged media, such as scratches on film, analog and consumer-grade video, and digital "glitch," may produce a haptic effect. In this way haptic images can give rise to a feeling of shared embodiment with something that is damaged and mortal. This threat reminds us of the attraction of optical images, which reassure a viewer of her wholeness and the immortality of her soul, fictional though these may be.

Haptic aesthetics and the increasing appreciation of the proximal senses permit us to value traditions in art that have been deemed minor or decorative. These include crafts that demand manual execution and close vision (indeed, the craft–fine art distinction falters when we accord greater importance to the proximal senses), and world traditions of relatively nonfigurative arts. Haptic aesthetics emphasize the embodied quality of abstraction and put to rest uneasy arguments that twentieth-century and contemporary artworks that play with pattern and surface are merely ornamental.

**Technological Mediations of Touch.** Tactility has become newly valued in architecture, fashion, and design, fields that involve objects already tactile by nature. To some

degree this development can be understood as part of the increased commodification of all elements of sense experience, and as a renewal of an aesthetics of the sovereign subject to finally include touch. However, both phenomenologies of touch and their deconstructive critiques alert us-if Aristotle did not already—that touch, being mediated, is as amenable to creative refashioning (as well as straight-up manipulation) as any other sense. Thus, technologically mediated art forms that stimulate tactile responses have creative potential. Interface design, a contemporary extension of the ancient art of technological prosthetics, translates algorithmic information into tactile experience. Haptic technologies such as force feedback (which creates sensations of pressure, texture, vibration, etc.) may heighten the sense of touching simulated objects or being in a simulated space, in a tactile illusion of presence useful for games, tutorials for surgeons and pilots, and devices for vision-impaired people.

Such media that simply mimic tactile experience disappoint as art. We can also critique immersive environments based on the computer modeling of perceptual experience for augmenting the illusion of human perceptual mastery. But haptic interfaces can also produce sensations that do not mimic anything but rather refashion the senses, including by translating other sense inputs into tactile forms. Such artworks take the space of tactile mediation as their medium, potentially creating new forms of embodiment. When this occurs, "haptic" technologies constitute artistic media in a rich sense, insofar as art is what does not confirm the senses but creates them anew.

[See also Adorno, Theodor Wiesengrund: Adorno and Mimesis; Aquinas, Thomas; Arab Aesthetics; Aristotle; Benjamin, Walter; Byzantine Aesthetics; Craft; Deleuze, Gilles; Derrida, Jacques; Digital Media; Empathy; Guattari, Félix; Ibn Sina; Medieval Aesthetics; Mimesis; Nancy, Jean-Luc; Ornament; Peirce, Charles Sanders; Perception; Phenomenology; Rasa; Riegl, Alois; Sensation; Taste; Wölfflin, Heinrich; and Worringer, Wilhelm.]

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LAURA MARKS

HARDENBURG, FRIEDERICH FREIHERR VON. See Novalis.

**HARLEM RENAISSANCE.** The Harlem Renaissance, or Negro Renaissance, movement was a period of cultural production dating from the end of World War I through the

onset of the Great Depression. (Recent scholarship, though, is inclined to place the terminal date at the end of the 1930s, largely because one of the works best exemplifying the spirit of this era, Zora Neale Hurston's novel Their Eyes Were Watching God, did not appear until 1937.) In his 1940 autobiography, The Big Sea, the poet and novelist Langston Hughes uncharitably looked back on the Harlem Renaissance as a rather peculiar moment when a small cadre of black intellectuals shared a fantasy that "the race problem had at last been solved through Art." Chiding his fellow intellectuals for believing that poets, singers, dancers, bandleaders, and philosophers would lead the "New Negro" into "green pastures of tolerance," Hughes concluded both that this cultural movement had failed and that its failure could be attributed largely to the naive delusions of its chief proponents.

Whether or not one agrees with Hughes that the Harlem Renaissance failed, it is undeniable that many of the period's major figures—among them, Alain Locke, Jessie Fauset, W. E. B. Du Bois, Charles S. Johnson, and Claude McKay—conceived of their roles in terms that explicitly or implicitly addressed the relation of cultural production to political practice. In fact, among the reasons that the Harlem Renaissance continues to command our attention is the way that it foregrounds the claim that artists and writers, precisely by functioning as artists and writers rather than as propagandists for political programs, could constitute the advance guard of a progressive social movement.

The movement followed hard upon and further stimulated the first great migration of black Americans from the South to Northern urban centers. Motivated by a straitened Southern economy, a rising wave of Southern oppression, and the lure of more freedom and higher-paying jobs in the North, thousands upon thousands of Southern blacks made their way north to cities like New York and Chicago during and after World War I. Several factors gave this demographic shift its aesthetic character. First and foremost was the way that the music produced by black Americans, particularly blues and jazz, came to express the sensibilities of the modern era. The words and music of early blues performances spoke to the angst and alienation that often attended

urbanization while providing secular, often sexual or humorous, forms of solace and transcendence. In its turn, jazz, a dance music that thrived on improvisation and individual virtuosity, seemed the perfect form to express the sense of social and personal freedom that modern cities appeared to be making available in an unprecedented way. For black writers and artists, this period was the Harlem Renaissance; for a variety of Americans—black, white, straight, and gay—the decade of the 1920s was the Jazz Age.

Although black secular and popular music was not uniformly celebrated and embraced by black elites, cultural success of any sort had long been seized upon by black intellectuals as an effective weapon in their collective efforts to