A Philosophy of the Art School

Winner of the American Society for Aesthetics 2019 Outstanding Monograph Prize Until now, research on art schools has been largely occupied with the facts of particular schools and teachers. This book presents a philosophical account of the underlying practices and ideas that have come to shape contemporary art school teaching in the UK, US and Europe. It analyses two models that, hidden beneath the diversity of contemporary artist training, have come to dominate art schools. The first of these is essentially an old approach: a training guided by the artistic values of a single artistteacher. The second dates from the 1960s, and is based around the group crit, in which diverse voices contribute to an artist's development. Understanding the underlying principles and possibilities of these two models, which sit together in an uneasy tension, gives new insights into the character of contemporary art school teaching, demonstrating how art schools shape art and artists, how they can be a potent engine of creativity in contemporary culture and how they contribute to artistic research. A Philosophy of the Art School draws on first-hand accounts of art school teaching, and is deeply informed by disciplines ranging from art history and art theory, to the philosophy of art, education and creativity.



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