The Bloomsbury Handbook of Susanne K. Langer

Edited by Lona Gaikis

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Contributing authors: Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin, Donald Dryden, Giulia Felappi, Lona Gaikis, Christian Grüny, Robert Innis, Rolf Lachmann, Thomas Leddy, Eva Kit Wah Man, Brian Massumi, Adam Nocek, Anne Pollok, Eldritch Priest, Martina Sauer, Helen Thaventhiran, Christophe Van Eecke, Iris van der Tuin and Sander Verhaegh.

With a Foreword by Randall E. Auxier.

Epilogue by Carolyn Bergonzo.
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ABSTRACT
Logician and philosopher of art Susanne K. Langer (1895-1985) is a remarkable figure of twentieth century thought. She devoted her philosophical commitment to mathematical and linguistic questions, and had a deeply ingrained curiosity for the meaning of forms of art, and the variety of cultural expressions. Although she worked energetically for more than fifty years, traces of Langer’s philosophical legacy are rather scarce. This proverbially 'unsung' philosopher, whose books attracted a wide readership in popular, as well as academic circles, remains surprisingly understudied.

The essays presented in this book excavate Susanne K. Langer’s work from various angles in philosophy and interdisciplinary research, and reveal the multifaceted nature of her thinking. Langer’s philosophy emerged from a web of key movements in twentieth century philosophy. Part I of this book situates Langer within the intellectual influences and the philosophical atmosphere of her time. It presents conceptual, structural, and material aspects of her work, and highlights several instances in which her unique and visionary approach to philosophy shines through. Part II expands upon central ideas in Langer’s work, and showcases her transdisciplinary reach and insights. Readers will find central themes and questions spanning transversally across chapters that stimulate further discussions on Langer’s philosophy.

Keywords: Susanne Langer, History of Philosophy, Logic, Female Voices, Psychology, New Materialism(s), Philosophy of Art, New Media
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Intellectual Context: Abstract Forms and the Method of Logical Analysis

Sander Verhaegh, Tilburg University (NL)

Susanne Langer was a student at Radcliffe College between 1916 and 1926—a highly transitional period in the history of American philosophy. Intellectual generalists such as William James, John Dewey, and Josiah Royce had dominated philosophical debates at the turn of the century but the academic landscape gradually started to shift in the years after World War I. Many scholars of the new generation adopted a more piecemeal approach to philosophy—solving clearly delineated, technical puzzles using the so-called “method of logical analysis”. Especially at Harvard, the intellectual climate rapidly changed. The department hired several philosophers who had contributed to the development of symbolic logic—H. M. Sheffer, C. I. Lewis, and A. N. Whitehead—and Harvard quickly began to be viewed as a central hub for analytic philosophy in the United States.

This chapter contextualizes Langer’s earliest work by reading it through the lens of this shifting academic environment. Though Harvard did not allow women to take its courses until 1943, Langer is one of the most significant fruits of this period. Her dissertation “A Logical Analysis of Meaning” and her first publications are all illustrations of the approach that came to dictate the American philosophical conversation. By exploring the increased focus on the logical-analytic method and Langer’s attempts to expand the new approach to what she later called “non-discursive” symbolisms, I situate her publications in the intellectual context of the 1920s.

Keywords: History of Philosophy, Development of Analytic Philosophy, Wiener Kreis, Moritz Schlick, Non-Discursive Symbolism
From Scientific Models to Artistic Images: Susanne Langer and the early Wittgenstein

Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin, King’s College London (UK)

Langer’s enthusiasm for the early Wittgenstein has often been considered an obstacle in her reception. After all, did Wittgenstein himself not denounce the picture-theory of his *Tractatus*? This chapter argues that not only was Wittgenstein’s picture-theory not, as is often assumed, a copy or mirror theory of representation, Langer was the first American philosopher to have understood Wittgenstein as part of a broader linguistic or, as she would call it, *symbolic* turn in philosophy. In this ‘turn’ it is recognised that the world can be presented and re-presented through different angles of refraction, each highlighting different aspects or dimensions of reality according to perceived value, purpose or need. The chapter also shows how Langer went beyond Wittgenstein by extending the range of types of forms in which those representations could occur, from (discursive) language and logic to (non-discursive) works of art. Drawing on her notions of expression, analogy and intuition, the chapter shows how Langer saw both scientific models and artistic images as different but equally valid symbolic forms for humans to make sense of the world.

**Keywords:** Logic, Symbolic Turn, Early Wittgenstein, The Ineffable, Intuition, Image
‘He was so poor that he did not even have a name’: Fairy Tales for Langer and Wittgenstein

Helen Thaventhiran, University of Cambridge (UK)

Susanne Langer was one of the first American expositors of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Her discussions of what she termed Wittgenstein’s “extraordinary prophetic gospel” began in Harvard seminars, under the direction of Alfred North Whitehead, and were eventually published in The Practice of Philosophy (1930). This book has had the opposite fate to her best-selling Philosophy in a New Key: it has been long been out of print and absent from arguments for the Tractarian basis for Langer’s picture theory of language. This chapter aims to investigate the force and complexity of Langer’s early responses to Wittgenstein. What can we make of Langer’s assertion that passages from the Tractatus, “show, more completely than any other in the literature of logic, the importance of configuration for any sort of meaning relation, from the simple denotation of names or suggestiveness of natural signs, to the most intricate symbolic expression, in literal notation or poetic metaphor”?

To address this, I explore a shared preoccupation for Wittgenstein and Langer: märchen. Fairytales matter particularly for measuring their contributions to the philosophy of feeling’s relation to form. I consider Philosophy in a New Key alongside Wittgenstein’s Remarks on Frazer’s Golden Bough and one of Langer’s own fairy tales, ‘The Cruise of the Little Dipper’. These readings take place within a broader framework of texts that include, for example, Ananda Coomaraswamy’s unpublished letter to Langer about Philosophy in a New Key, with its concentration on fairy tales, and Wittgenstein’s other nominative writing, his Wörterbuch of 1925 for the school children he taught, which also replays in another key these vital concerns with order, illustration, child language, and naming. “The weakness of classical logic is not its formalism, but the paucity of its forms”, writes Langer. What, then, if we consider fairy tales as a significant form for reading the philosophy of both Wittgenstein and Langer?
Keywords: Children's Book, Fairy Tales, Meaning in Fiction, Mythic Symbols, Wittgenstein
Susanne K. Langer on Logic as the Study of Forms and Patterns of Any Sort

Giulia Felappi, University of Southampton

In the 1920s and 1930s, logic, as the study of forms and patterns, is for Langer both an indispensable tool for philosophy and itself a domain of philosophical investigation, as for Langer logic gives rise to challenging philosophical problems. By being conversant with different logical traditions, Langer’s reflections in logic and on the philosophical problems logic gives rise to famously led her to endorse two claims: first, logic should be concerned not only with propositions and propositional forms, as it was then orthodox, but rather with forms for anything that follows a pattern of any sort; second, there is nothing like the logical form of any thing, as any matter can be analysed as exemplifying radically different forms. The aim of this paper is to unfold Langer’s main reasons toward these two claims and to show how they stem from considering logic both as a tool for philosophy and as itself a subject of study and philosophical investigation.
The Triple Mechanics of Susanne K. Langer's Card-Index System:
Horizontal, Vertical, and Transversal Aspects

Prof. Iris van der Tuin, Utrecht University (NL)

This chapter is based on archival research on Susanne K. Langer's card-index system conducted in January 2020 in the Houghton Library at Harvard University, where the system is currently being preserved. The personal card-index system, kept ever since Langer's undergraduate days and used for the entire duration of her lifelong career as a professional philosopher, has many layers of storage architecture and mechanics. The chapter asks how to do theoretical justice to this hybrid system in an attempt to unravel the ways it was used by the 20th-century female philosopher remembering, thinking, and writing with it. Horizontal, vertical, and transversal paradigms and practices in knowledge, information, and data management can each be found in Langer's intricate, yet understudied card-index system. These paradigms and practices reveal in their combination the systematicity of the card-index system as well as they reveal what happens within and between drawers, on and behind tabs, amongst sets of cards in manila folders or tied together with elastic bands, and on the very cards themselves. Horizontal systematicity functions in Euclidean space in 2D (length, width) and chronologically. Verticality functions in a Euclidean/Cartesian space in 3D, a space established by the length, width, and height of a container organized as a grid or as per thematic subject-headings. The mode of transversality functions in Riemannian/Einsteinian spacetime in 4D, thus transgressing both historical (i.e., chronological) and systematic (i.e., thematically subject-driven) ways of doing philosophy and allowing for the “flow” of thought to proceed through the possibility of recombination.

**Keywords:** Langer Papers, Filing Systems, Transversal Practice, Knowledge Production, Geometry, Diffraction Method
A Foray into Art as a “Phenomenology of Feeling”

Dr. Rolf Lachmann, Independent Researcher, Cologne (D)

This chapter departs from Susanne K. Langer’s almost casual formulation of art as a “phenomenology of feeling” in *Feeling and Form* (1953). In reconstructing where this reference comes from, and why there is no further note on the source of its sudden appearance, Langer’s relationship to phenomenology will be examined in further detail. This analysis will take into account the various direct and indirect references to phenomenology scattered throughout Langer’s writings. A close look at Langer’s major work *Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling* (1967–1982), will outline the importance of how art articulates the phenomenal character of feeling. Its discussion will show that Langer had seen a more suitable alternative in conceptualizing artistic expression as a symbolic form than to follow a phenomenological method, and why she did so. It will conclude with a critical reflection of the scope and usefulness of Langer’s approach.

**Keywords:** Phenomenology, Husserl, (Re-)Presentification, Symbolization in Art, Living Form, Act
Expanding Cassirer: The Process of Self-Liberation Through Culture

Anne Pollok, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (D)

This chapter considers the development of Susanne K. Langer’s theory of symbolic expression in regards to its roots in Ernst Cassirer’s philosophy of culture, in particular his assumption that our understanding of the function of the symbol represents an act of ‘self-liberation.’ I argue that Langer establishes symbolic formation as a key element of self-formation that rests on both individual and communal aspects, concentrating on the structure of aesthetic appreciation and its influence of culture-formation.

Keywords: Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Freedom Concept, Neo-Kantianism, Art, Culture, Civilization
The System and the New Key: The Role of Art and Music in Ernst Cassirer and Susanne K. Langer

Christian Grüny, Max-Planck-Institute for Empirical Aesthetics, Frankfurt a.M. (D)

The chapter systematically compares Ernst Cassirer's Philosophy of Symbolic Forms and Langer's Theory of Forms. Langer was influenced by Cassirer in many ways but there are fundamental differences between the two philosophies. While Cassirer always acknowledged art as one of the major symbolic forms, he never elaborated a philosophy of art. In the multiple attempts of systematizing the various symbolic forms, art never really found its place. In contrast to this, art and especially music are at the center of Langer's thinking, motivated her shift from logic to a more elaborate philosophy of symbols and decisively informed her philosophy of the human mind. Unlike Cassirer, she never attempts to fuse all of these efforts into a grand idealistic system. Rather, she pursues a more naturalistic philosophy where the musical metaphor of the new key points to an internal refiguration of concepts that eludes an encompassing system.

**Keywords:** Symbolic Turn, Music Meaning, System Idea, Cassirer, Language, Art
The Meaning of ‘Feeling’ in Susanne K. Langer’s Project of *Mind*

Donald Dryden, Duke University, Durham (USA)

A review of Langer’s writings shows that her understanding of the term ‘feeling’ remained sketchy and undeveloped until *Feeling and Form* (1953), where she arrived at a largely implicit definition of ‘feeling’ that was effectively equivalent to ‘thought’ as William James had used it in *The Principles of Psychology* (1892)—as a generic term for conscious experiences, which later defined the subject of *Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling*. In adopting such a broad definition, however, she was working against the common understanding of ‘feeling’ as a *generic term comprising sensation, desire, and emotion, but excluding perception and thought*. But there is no place in Langer’s writings where she discussed this problem as James had done. Furthermore, she had used ‘feeling’ in connection with the meaning of art in all of her earlier writings, and often interspersed it with references to “emotions,” “moods,” and similar terms for affective experiences. This only reinforced a widespread misunderstanding of her theory of art that carried over to the *Essay on Human Feeling*.

To clear up this misunderstanding, I will focus on a footnote in the first volume of *Mind*, where Langer states that “William James […] used ‘thinking’ in the sense in which I use ‘feeling’,” a reference that will take us to James’s discussion, in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), of the difficulties he had deciding on a generic term for conscious experiences. I will then trace the development of Langer’s understanding of art and feeling, through *Feeling and Form* (1953), where she presented each of the major orders of art as expressing a unique dimension of lived experience, which, when taken together, provide us with insight into “what is verbally ineffable—the logic of consciousness itself.” It was this understanding of feeling that prepared the way for the project of *Mind*.

**Keywords:** Psychology, Concept of Feeling, William James, Meaning in Music, Meaning in Literature, Consciousness, Experience
The Symbolic Mind and its Breakings: Psychological Dimensions and Cultural Consequences

Robert E. Innis, University of Massachusetts, Lowell (USA)

This chapter has two purposes: (a) to sketch the heuristic value of the different range of psychological resources Langer utilized to trace the pivotal transitions to specifically human symbolic minding and (b) to highlight the tensions between symbolization and its forms as an achievement of a kind of semiotic freedom. The transitions to human minding and forms of action occur in the body-based polysensory domain of affectively charged perceptual and image-schematic orderings and configurations of symbolic pregnancies immanent in the flux of experience. Langer shows how following the advent of language symbolic structures were created with unique semiotic logics, powers, and functions: ritual, myth, visual art, music, dance, and so forth with their presentations of the morphology of feeling.

In her great trilogy, *Mind*, Langer traces the contours of a model of mind grounded in a scientifically precise and philosophically and semiotically rich generalized notion of feeling that culminates in the analysis of the clash and breaking of cultural forms and world views. She shows how the varieties of felt significances embodied in these symbolic structures entail deep affective commitments, effects, and consequences. Human symbol systems are mediating devices for processes of *individuation* as well as for interactive *involvement* with others. The psychological outcomes of these processes, effected by symbolic activities, are not easily reconcilable. They are marked by forms of felt imbalance, experiences of ‘breakings’ of their experiential contexts by encounters with other contexts, leading to consequential intra-psychic and intra-social conflicts. Such a breaking is exemplified in the drive to higher forms of scientific and formal rationality and abstraction that mark modernity. Could Langer’s concepts of feeling tones, experiential rhythms, balance, and sense of livingness and a concomitant normative concept of *aesthetic rationality* and *affective semiosis* offer a way of understanding the socio-cultural effects of these ‘breakings’ as a permanent feature of the symbolic mind?
Keywords: Psychology, Biology, Individuation Concept, Involvement Concept, Society, Nature-Culture
Music as the DNA of Feeling – Speculations on the Whiteheadian Influence in Susanne K. Langer’s Philosophy

Lona Gaikis, Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna (AT)

This chapter focuses on Susanne K. Langer’s emphasis of a tonal, “new key” in philosophy that grounds meaning making in musical form, conceived by her as a matrix of dynamic sound-patterns. By tracing back Langer’s theory of the art symbol to its very early germination in the Practice of Philosophy (1930), and by looking into her notes from Whitehead’s course on the philosophy of nature, which she attended as a graduate student in 1928-1929, I conjecture the possible influence—the speculative import—of his process metaphysics on her concept of ‘feeling’. This investigation follows the evolution of Langer’s concept of music and gives a deeper analysis of her functional understanding of symbols. It highlights in which ways Langer—devoted to understanding the intricate weaving of internal and external sensations that induce symbolization in humans—resonates with process philosophy, but also diverts from Whitehead’s metaphysical speculation. It addresses Langer’s inclination towards empirical research.

Keywords: Process Philosophy, Theory of Mind, Music Idea, Whitehead, Feeling
A Feeling for Biological Concepts: Countering the "Idols of the Laboratory" in the Thought of Susanne K. Langer

Adam Nocek, Arizona State University, Tempe (USA)

Susanne K. Langer’s work on the philosophy of science has received precious little attention. This is not to say that her work on aesthetics and symbolism, for which she is better known, has gained the recognition it deserves either, though she has a modest following in American pragmatism, the philosophy of art and aesthetics, and to a lesser extent process philosophy. Nevertheless, her contribution to the philosophy of science, and the philosophy of biology in particular, has been met with little to no recognition. This chapter aims to find those elements in Langer’s “philosophical biology” set out in her first volume of the Mind trilogy that are relevant to the biological sciences today. To do so, the piece examines Langer’s attempt to develop a concept of mind that can be understood in terms of the “highest physiological processes,” and thus fully “rooted” in organic activities, without resorting to reductive materialism or metaphysical dualism. To avoid these dead ends, which have plagued the history of philosophy and modern science for centuries, the chapter pays special attention to Langer’s use of art to construct an organic theory of mind, and in particular, examine how the symbolic function of art is essential to building concepts of biochemically rooted feeling/mind that do depend on psychic additions or theories of mechanism. And while this may seem like a far cry from the data-intensive landscape of theoretical biology in the twenty-first century, the chapter concludes by showing how Langer’s arts-based method of biological research responds to problems in the conceptualization of organismic development that theoretical biologists are just beginning to grapple with.

Keywords: Philosophical Biology, Process Philosophy, Theoretical Biology, Concept of Art, Bio-Art, Science Critique
Thinking Non/Humanly

Eldritch Priest, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby (CA)

Whenever Langer’s name is invoked it’s often with respect to her theory of symbolism and philosophy of art. And not without good reason. Philosophy in a New Key (1942) and Feeling and Form (1953) are impressive works. They show an erudite and original thinker carrying out an assault on logocentrism in a way that not only presages the concerns that would preoccupy post-structuralist thinkers during the second half of the twentieth century, but also anticipates certain feminist interests in the importance of experience, the polyvocality of meaning, and the centrality of feeling in thought and life. But Langer’s philosophy has always been a philosophy of mind. In fact, she herself made this clear when she undertook her decades-long project to write the multi-volume Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling. In this brief essay I want to consider Langer’s characterization as crucial to our understanding of her work, but not for the reasons one might think. As typically understood, Langer’s concern for the status of mind is a concern for the status of human being. For her, “mind” is the exclusive remit of homo sapiens. But to arrive at this position Langer has to conscript the nonhuman animal in a way that makes the latter integral to her thinking about mind. In other words, animals are foundational to Langer’s philosophy of mind, and in this respect, there is something to be said about her untold contribution to thinking nonhuman mentality. However, her contribution has its limits and it is in the way Langer construes animal mentality as largely the feeling of actionable lures with practical effects that she overlooks the way non-human animals might be said to think when they play, when they exhibit an “impractical enthusiasm.” But to grasp this it’s first necessary to lay out Langer’s reasoning that shows mind as an aspect of feeling to which human beings have developed a species defining attitude.

Keywords: Animal Mentality, Philosophy of Mind, Whitehead, Deleuzian Thought, Paradox of Play, Minding
Aesthetic Frights and the Politics of Unspeakable Thought

Brian Massumi, University of Montreal (CAN)

Susanne Langer's philosophy hinges on the analysis of the relation between discursive and nondiscursive expression, language-borne and non-verbal thought. This essay works transversally across her three major philosophical statements, *Philosophy in a New Key, Feeling and Form*, and *Mind* (vol. 1), to investigate the imbrication of these two dimensions of expression. It examines Langer's distinction between "vital import" and signification as it plays out between sensuous and nonsensuous modes of perception. This interplay raises the question of the literal and the figurative, reworked by Langer in counterintuitive, but importantly suggestive, ways. It is in the passage from nondiscursive thought to discursive expression, conditioned by the interplay of the literal and the figurative, that error arises. Expanding upon Langer's theory of error, and extrapolating from it, the essay ends with a brief speculative foray into the contemporary reign of error inaugurated by the politics of Trumpism and the concomitant rise of conspiracy thinking.

**Keywords:** Animal Mentality, Modes of Feeling, Function of Language, Sense Perception, Discursive and Non-Discursive Symbolism, Activist Art
Vitality Semiotics: A New Understanding of the *Conditio Humana*

Martina Sauer, Institute of Image and Cultural Philosophy, Bühl (D)

Following Cassirer and Whitehead and adhering to empirical research, Langer elaborated a *functional conception of aesthetic experience* and, more generally, of *world experience*, both of which are based in feeling. Art’s significance is as a symbol capable of articulating forms of feeling. Art, therefore, is an image of *feeling*, which depends upon extra-organic structures that convey the movement of emotive and perceptive processes. The analogy of ‘experiences with art’ to ‘experiences with the world’ becomes Langer’s main theme in the first volume of *Mind* (1967). In summary, she states that art “presents a form which is subtly but entirely congruent with forms of mentality and vital experience”. Accordingly, all three forms of experience—that of art, mentality, and world—are comparable since they are based on intricate dynamic acts until some of their elements attain the phase of being felt. The theory of Vitality Semiotics ties in with the basic (image-)act-theory developed by Langer and builds upon cultural, anthropological, semiotic and empirical research still relevant up to the present time. In contrast to Langer, however, this theory is interested not only in epistemological but also in *communicative* terms—whether in encounters with others and the world, or engaging artifacts. Although Langer does emphasize both epistemology and communication, she does not discuss the social aspects in further detail. She even seems to dismiss the social function of art completely, though it is inherent to her approach. Langer places herself in an aesthetic tradition that declares art to be epistemologically relevant but non-functional in communicative terms, and therefore without influence on decisions and actions, in contrast to design. This is surprising, since both, art and design, use similar means of expression. A possible responsibility of artists for what it is they subtly evoke in our feelings, and what they intend in terms of their own goal, or—as is especially true up to the beginning of avant-garde art—a client or patron’s goal, is irrelevant to her theory of art. This limitation, however, does not diminish Langer’s profound contribution to a new empirical-psychological understanding of the *conditio humana*, which is pursued with the conception of Vitality Semiotics.
Keywords: Aesthetics, Psychology, Semiotics, Theory of Perception, Theory of Action, Developmental Psychology, Accountability, Act
Virtual Powers: Dance in Post-Colonial Hong Kong

Prof. Eva Kit Wah Man, Hong Kong Baptist University (CN)

In *Feeling and Form*, Langer suggests that dance “can harbor no raw material, no things or facts, in its illusory world. The virtual form must be organic and autonomous and divorced from actuality. Whatever enters into it does so in radical artistic transformation: its space is plastic, its time is musical, its themes are fantasy, its actions symbolic.” In this way, what can the virtual space in dance be read besides contemplation? Do we need to put aside the content and only apprehend the form? What else can a dance critic do if a social reality or cultural study proposal puts forward? This article will study *Soledad*, a recent representative choreographic work of Helen Lai, the most influential contemporary dance choreographer in post-colonial Hong Kong to expand the reading of Langer’s understanding of dance. Lai builds her choreography and develops it along the historical passage in her social reality in Hong Kong, and one can apprehend the heavy emotional responses and interactivity in the form. The piece illustrates fully of Langer’s suggestion of layers of illusion, the second level of which are devices that support the total creation or enhance its expressiveness. I argue that the artistic effects in the piece are rich in meaning and are revealing to their relation to Langer’s notion of the primary illusion. She suggests that the two radically distinct orders of illusions never merge, yet the distinct appearance of a simpler illusion, e. g. pure space or pure time, is in the context of the more complex illusion of dance. *Soledad* illustrates what Langer refers to a sudden revelation of emotive import (by stressing a formal aspect and abstracting it). The case study in post-colonial space involves a further reflection on the issue of contextualizing Langer’s notion of “virtual form of dance”.

**Keywords:** Dance, Choreography, Phenomenology of Perception, Myth, Virtuality, Activism, Primary and Secondary Illusion
Virtual Acts: A Langerian Approach to Performance Art

Christophe Van Eecke, LUCA School of Arts, Genk (BE)

This chapter proposes a consideration of performance art developed from Susanne K. Langer's theory of art in *Feeling and Form* (1953). Langer did not discuss performance art in her book because it was yet to establish itself as a distinct category within art discourse. However, I will show that a concept of performance art as 'virtual acts' can be organically developed from principles that are already available in her work, especially if combined with Hannah Arendt's notion of action. A selection of well-known examples of performance art will be briefly discussed to test the viability of the proposed concept and demonstrate that the all-important aspect of virtuality (or fictionality) in Langer's theory of art should also be key in a theory of performance art. Furthermore, a Langerian framework that focuses on virtuality can also help to strengthen judgements about why certain performances may seem more successful or more accomplished than others, providing a framework for practical criticism.

**Keywords:** Performance Art, Theatre, Fictionality, Art Critique, Primary Illusions
Susanne K. Langer, Everyday Aesthetics and Virtual Worlds

Prof. Thomas Leddy, San Jose State University

Despite her tendencies towards dualism and towards treating art as autonomous, I argue that Langer provides some resources towards the construction of an aesthetics of everyday life. My approach to the aesthetics of everyday life is essentially Deweyan, and thus, in opposition to many others working in the field, I stress continuities over discontinuities between art and life. Langer’s avowed opposition to Dewey as a pragmatist who reduces everything to animality, as well as her art as autonomous stance, might predict failure in this. However, there are several points in her analysis of the virtual (virtual worlds, virtual objects, virtual scenes, virtual space, virtual time, and so forth) that soften the separations between the two realms. These include (1) her expansion of the concept of art to include objects like pots and textiles, items of everyday life, as images, (2) her understanding of art in terms of the creative process where she recognizes that the artist must take certain objects in the actual world as virtual, (3) her recognition that the artist needs to find symbolism (and emotional meaning) in the world he or she seeks to portray, (4) her understanding of sculpture as expanding virtual reality into the surrounding space, and (5) her understanding of architecture as setting up an overlay between the actual and the virtual worlds. With the rise of “virtual reality,” inspired in part by Langer’s notion of “virtual world” we live increasingly in a world that offers its own bifurcation, i.e., between screen world and actual world, the world in which we do all the things we did before the rise of the screen and virtual reality. This bifurcation too needs to be overcome as that between art and life, so that the virtual worlds so important to us are not drained of their significance.

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