numbers below refer to this source. I would like to thank Brett Aldorf for discussing the relation of issues throughout this review to literary Symbolism.


4. For an example of analysis along these lines, see Gamboni’s remarks on art criticism, pp. 78–79.

5. For a sample of Pierre Bourdieu’s argument—an account of the relation of modernism’s rise to academic art with special attention to the matter of readability, which is crucial to the argument of all three books under consideration—see his “Manet and the Institution of Art,” in _The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature_, ed. Jandal Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 238–53.


7. Odilion Redon, "Dans mon rêve, je vais au Ciel VISAGE DE MYSTÈRE," 1885, lithograph, 11 × 9 ½ in. (28.1 × 23.8 cm), pl. 1 from _Homage to Goya_.

8. Gamboni here cites a letter from Redon to his early historian, André Mellière.


20. The _sile_ that ties the proverb “it of the last few sentences back to the concept of “Mallarmé’s endeavor” makes this clearer in the original French. See Paul Valéry, _Oeuvres_, ed. Jean Hytier (Paris: Pléiade, 1957), vol. 1, 628.

21. For more on this topic and its relation to modernism, see Todd Cronan, Against Affective Formalism: _Matisse, Bergson, Modernism_ (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013). I would like to thank Todd Cronan for helpful consultation here and elsewhere.

22. In her footnote, Arnar gives the original French in the _Oeuvres complètes_, 11, 122-124, 209.


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MARY JANE JACOB AND MICHAELE GRABNER, ED. _The Studio Reader: On the Space of Artists_ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010, 328 pp.; 69 b/w ills. $73.00; $35.00 (paper); $7.00-$21.00 (e-book)).

In "The Function of the Studio" (1971), conceptual artist Daniel Buren defined the artist’s studio in terms of "frames, enveloped, and limited," limits that, he, as a standard-bearer of institutional critique, saw as stifling and untenable. For Buren, this privileged space of artistic production had become nothing more than an "off-issuing custom." He aimed to demystify the studio by calling it a "commercial depot" for curators and dealers and then render it irrelevant through his commitment to site-specific art. Once a work leaves the studio to be installed in a museum or gallery, Buren argued, its meaning is irrevocably compro-

mised and "neutralized to the extreme." Unmoored from its site of inspiration and creation, it loses its intentionality and connection to its conditions of production. Un-

less artists have the authority to demand their work be preserved in their studios in perpetuity, like Constantin Brancusi (a hero of Buren’s), then it is better to shutter the studio and shift all art making outside its walls (pp. 156–62).

The model of the studio Buren critiques is a modern one, and its tropological fea-

tures were articulated 140 years earlier in Honoré de Balzac’s tale of artistic genius and failure, _The Unknown Masterpiece_ (1831). Balzac’s image of the atelier is a cramped, cluttered, and sky-light space—the dusty lair of a solitary male painter whose bric-a-brac emanates an aura of mystery and genius. The story ends with the master painter Frenhofer in a state of total despair, having just realized—through the eyes of his visitors—that his painting is illegible. The result of ten years of struggle, his depiction of a beautiful woman has amounted to “Nothing, nothing!”—a formless "wall of paint." Balzac dramatizes a central di-

lemma of the studio as a mental and physical space, where art emerges from a fusion of immaterial concept and material craft: Is genius to be found in the object, or is it located in the artist’s mind? If the former, does the work lose its luster outside the studio, without the trappings of genius? If the latter, how do viewers appreciate conceptual brilliance without, as Buren writes, “visible evidence . . . that allows an understanding of process”? How do they know whether Frenhofer’s woman or Buren’s stripes are not a scam?
The Studio Reader compiles texts from several of these sources and others, mixing in classic postmodern texts (like Buren's) and adding many previously unpublished essays, interviews, and artists' statements. Rather than investigating the studio from a strictly art historical or art practice standpoint, the volume has a strong postmodern slant, and that more than two-thirds of it focuses on North American art.

The book's postmodern focus is no surprise given the contemporary orientation of the editors: Mary Jane Jacob is a curator of contemporary art and Michelle Grabner is a practicing artist and critic. (Both are also professors of art at the same institution.) They have divided the anthology into five sections that aim to give their component texts a conceptual framework: "The Studio as Resource," "The Studio as Set and Setting," "The Studio as Stage," and "The Studio as Space and Non-Space." These categories alone demonstrate a demythologizing approach to the studio, replacing notions of interiority, seclusion, and alchemical transformation with notions of performativity, theatricality, and the banality of everyday life and work. Although I recognize how difficult it must have been to wrangle this diverse range of texts into a coherent structure, I applaud the editors for managing to curate such an eclectic collection, it is frustrating that they did not further define these categories by adding brief conceptual introductions to each section, especially since the rationale for choosing what went where is often opaque. Readers are left to wonder, for example, how exactly "The Studio as Set and Setting" differs from "The Studio as Stage," and why all three of the historical essays in the section "The Studio as Lived-In Space" focus on gender.

One of the volume's most insightful essays is Katy Siegel's "Live/Work," which seems a natural fit for the section "The Studio as Lived-In Space" that appears in the subsequent section. "The Studio as Space and Non-Space." What the editors mean by "non-space" is not at all clear from the selections, but Siegel's argument suggests that the evacuation of sociability from the studio may have something to do with it. Siegel points to a curious inversion of the working conditions surrounding the creation of art and other occupations: while it demonstrates a demythologizing approach to the studio, replacing notions of interiority, seclusion, and alchemical transformation with notions of performativity, theatricality, and the banality of everyday life and work. Although I recognize how difficult it must have been to wrangle this diverse range of texts into a coherent structure, I applaud the editors for managing to curate such an eclectic collection, it is frustrating that they did not further define these categories by adding brief conceptual introductions to each section, especially since the rationale for choosing what went where is often opaque. Readers are left to wonder, for example, how exactly "The Studio as Set and Setting" differs from "The Studio as Stage," and why all three of the historical essays in the section "The Studio as Lived-In Space" focus on gender.

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This is not the first time in the history of art that the interiority of the studio has driven artists to represent and redefine the social. To offer just one example, Henri Fantin-Latour's group portraits painted between 1864 and 1885 convey the same generative tension between atomization and sociable collectivity. As Howard Singerman asserts in his essay "A Possible Contradiction," "the problem of isolation and the problematic nature of interchange" have bedeviled artists and their studios for centuries, and artists' fascination with these problems endures (pp. 39–45). The historical view Singerman provides is brief, moving swiftly from Leonardo to the contemporary context, but helpful in a volume so trained on contemporary art. A more in-depth look at the studio's genealogy in European art is Svatlana Alpers's "A View from the Studio," the first chapter of her book The Vocation of Art: Velsáquez and Others, 2005. Alpers's subject is "the grip of studio practice and its internalization into the practice of painting" since the seventeenth century (p. 126). She counters "present antagonism" toward the studio and all its constraints by outlining a range of epistemological models generated by studio practice, including the studio as laboratory, as a space of heightened phenomenological experience, and as an experimental instrument of art. Alpers's thinking on the studio is so expansive that it is hard to see how the studio could seem so constrained to contemporary artists. Indeed, as Siegel aptly notes, such critiques of the studio have begun to sound old-fashioned (p. 311).

On a technical note, I am perplexed as to why essays like Alpers's were reprinted without their accompanying images, since the University of Chicago Press routinely produces art books with extensive and high-quality reproductions (such as the beautifully designed and lavishly illustrated book by Anna Sigridur Arnar reviewed in this issue). Alpers's argument is significantly handicapped without its illustrations (just one, of Jan Vermeer's Art of Painting, 1665/1666, is reproduced), since the substance of her text resides so much in analysis of pictures. Long paragraphs of description include phrases such as "See, for example . . ." that ask readers to hunt down the images themselves.
The Studio Reader also serves as a compendium of art that represents or otherwise engages with the studio topos, as well as documentary photographs of artists and their places of work. This is a particularly valuable feature of the book, and for this reason it is a shame that the reproductions are not in color and of higher quality. By introducing readers to a range of works that explore conceptual issues in and around the studio, the book provides a sampling of the discourse of the studio not only in academic and museum circles but in contemporary art as well.

For example, in "A Room of One's Own, a Mind of One's Own," artist and critic Robert Storr tries to dispel the enduring cult of the studio and refocus attention on works of art. Storr criticizes "a considerable constituency within the art world that fetishizes not only what artists have traditionally done but where they have traditionally done it. Hence the romanticizing photographs of artists in their lairs..." (p. 61). He insists (and one can hear the exasperated sigh) that "the mystery and marvel is in the work. The rest is contingent reality and real estate" (p. 62).

One of the works to which Storr draws our attention is Bruce Nauman's Mapping the Studio I (Fat Chance John Cage), 2001, an installation that deflates the myth of the studio as a space of heroic action and creation. Consisting of synchronized, time-lapse video footage from seven night-vision surveillance cameras, Mapping the Studio shows what happens, or does not happen, in the artist's studio after he has gone home. According to Storr, the work represents "the artist's environment absent the artist and his transformative presence," but Nauman has described the project in more angst-ridden terms, as a way of channeling the frustration and fear that can plague studio work into a state of passive observation and meditative calm. The drama that unfolds on-screen between Nauman's cat and a number of mice allegorizes (with tongue firmly in cheek) the mess that mystifies production, a space where the realities of social or mass production are supposedly held at bay in favor of an antiquated craft model that showcases the individual artist's creative genius (pp. 344-45). Instead, Relyea claims, studios are now understood as embedded in and generative of networks, understood in the Deleuzian sense as utopian in their potential for egalitarian exchange and collective agency. He credits artists like Isa Genzken and Rachel Harrison with creating works that overturn old notions of the studio as a private, ivory tower retreat. "The studio now integrates" (p. 349). This presentation of the "studio unbound" requires a mystifying and antiquated "bound" studio from which to push off, but at the same time it depends on modern (and even early modern) ideas of the studio as a space of sociability, bricolage, and ideological resistance, not to mention on many past depictions of the studio as a space that opens out, physically and metaphorically, onto the world.

Contemporary artists and critics too often view the modern studio in a one-sided way, as a space of hermetic enclosure that embodies stifling limits on art's conceptual, material, and sociopolitical potential. But this enclosure was often generative, allowing the artist to see and represent the world afresh, from a position apart. The artist David Reed articulates the tension between these ideas when he asks: "How can I justify making art that I hope is connected to the world if it requires a strategic, temporary disconnection from the world?" (p. 119). This is not a dilemma that postmodern artists introduced, and Reed's wish for a studio where he could feel "both inside and outside at the same time" is the same wish materialized in Courbet's painting, where the massive wall of his atelier seems to dissolve into an indeterminate natural space beyond, with the artist sitting in the center of the room painting a landscape. Barry Schwabsky recognizes this continu-
ity in his essay "The Symbolic Studio." Schwabksy invokes Courbet's painting as "the beginning of the modern myth of the studio," using it to establish a link between that modern myth and its postmodern critique. As its lengthy subtitle and crowded cast of characters suggest, Courbet's painting is evidence that "the studio activity of the painter has never been seen as essentially private but always somewhat performative" (pp. 92-93). Along similar lines, Jon Wood's essay on Brancusi's "white studio" (pp. 269-83) sees the sculptor's myth, all-white workspace as an elaborate and self-conscious construct, a performance of artistict identity and "an effective device" for controlling his work's reception. Modern artists like Courbet and Brancusi were well aware of the studio as a romanticized fiction and site of social performance, and they engaged this fiction both in their work and in their careers.

A place of practical labor and alchemical magic, material truth and the theurics of the pose, public display and private withdrawal, sociability and solitude, the studio has long been a space of irresolvable contradictions. And the "poststudio" condition is as tightly tethered to the modern studio poster as postmodernism is bound to modernism as its raison d'etre. Perhaps, as Joe Scanlan proposes, today's artists and critics are in fact "post-poststudio," reclaiming the studio as a site of production but with an ironic awareness that it is all performance and myth (p. 155). I am not convinced, however, that they sustain an ironic distance from that myth, nor that such self-awareness of the studio's problems is at all unique to contemporary art. The Studio Reader is valuable for many reasons, not least for its integration of perspectives, but perhaps most crucially for showing the need for more integrative historical thinking about the studio as a site—and an idea—that has not and will not go away.

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Notes
2. Balzac, The Unknown Masterpiece, 40, 43.
4. Storr's essay incorrectly dates this work to 2002.

DAVID T. DORIS
Vigilant Things: On Thieves, Yoruba Anti-Aesthetics, and the Fates of Ordinary Objects in Nigeria
$60.00

What began for David Doris as a graduate student "in a darkened lecture hall" in the autumn of 1995 has today culminated in one of the most rigorous and compelling studies on aale, that ubiquitous yet enigmatic object in the Yoruba visual and social landscape and the theoretical discourses that frame, define, and engage its critical articulation. Through this study, Doris has produced a very lucid and richly account, written in a refreshing first-person narrative. Succinctly put, "Aale makes permeable the boundaries of easy dichotomies: display and power, the visible and the invisible" (p. 16), and operates covertly as "allegorical emblems of what must not be done" (p. 358). Aale are cautious reminders and warnings as well as signposts intended to alert people to the devastating consequences of transgression of societal and ethical norms and values. Aale is the proverbial elephant in the room we cannot ignore. To place aale on a piece of property, space, or object is to draw attention to its symbolic import as signification of ownership, on the one hand, and as a site for the deployment of power," on the other (p. 115).

The book is divided into three parts. The first focuses on the processes of creating aale, the second on what the author categorizes as a call and response, underpinning the aesthetic notion of looking and remembering, the concept of the eye, and the meaning and symbolism of color. Part three presents aale as "portraits and punishments" and, by extension, as embodiment and paradigmatic representation of sufferings and uselessness, which are portrayed in combs and rags, tattered shoes and snail shells, corncobs and brooms, rusted iron and red peppers. In the conclusion, the author attempts to situate aale within an invented historical past that is mediated by grafting its meaning, use, and proliferation on the twelfth-century pushehd pavement from Ife, showing how these are of immediate relevance to modern military dictatorship and political adventurism during the draconian rule of the late General Sanni Abacha in the closing decades of twentieth-century Nigeria.

Although Doris makes a compelling argument throughout the book for classifying aale as an image of artistic contemplation, or aowaran, I will insist that aale does not qualify and cannot be regarded as aowaran. It is much more complex than that. Used generally with regard to two-dimensional images in drawing or photography, aowaran can be broken into its constituent morphemes: a-o-wa, the act of looking, seeing, encountering, or simply to behold, with i-rana, a spectacle, an apparition, a vision that elicits some level or degree of admiration, puzzlement, amusement, and fantasy in the beholder. Simply put, a-o-wa-iran literally implies: we-sea-a-spectacle. In the nominalization process, the i in i-rana has been dropped, and the word ran means "to send, to sew, to weave into, to spread or creep." This is why a-o-wa-iran is different from aowaran. One would have preferred that Doris had used the term aowaran as defining aale. In that respect, the operational word would have implied weaving together memories and visions of the past. It should be stated right away that aowaran in essence is very different from aowaran. What could be remembered may not necessarily stimulate instant delight or admiration. Because Yoruba is a tonal language, another inflection and modulation of the tones in the operational word aowaran transforms it into an adjectival noun becoming the spectator, or one who is watching some spectacle. It is for this reason that aale are not aowaran, although they could be construed as aowaran, which triggers memory. For practical purposes, aowaran pertains only to two-dimensional images on