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This inaugurates a new feature of *Contemporary Aesthetics*, a forum in which specific issues or themes in aesthetics can be discussed, debated, and developed. The first of these, Science in Aesthetics?, comes from an interest that emerged at the XVIth International Congress of Aesthetics held in Rio de Janeiro during July 2004.

Science in Aesthetics?

At various times in the history of modern aesthetics, efforts have been made to bring science to bear on the theoretical and speculative assertions of philosophers, from Darwin's observations on aesthetic behavior to Fechner's experimental psychological research and Munro's programmatic proposals. From the scientific side such work has continued, as can be seen in the journal, *Empirical Studies of the Arts* and the International Association for Empirical Aesthetics. Philosophical aesthetics has mostly ignored this work. For all its cognitive conundrums, aesthetics deals with indelibly empirical experience and behavior. Is aesthetics a study, then, that requires empirical scientific methods to process its data? Would philosophical aesthetics be incomplete and ungrounded without them?

Is there a place, then, for science in aesthetic inquiry? Can science contribute to research in aesthetics? Which sciences? What questions in aesthetics? For examples, can a Darwinian aesthetics help explain the origin or function of aesthetic responses? Does experimental research in psychology offer data important for understanding and describing aesthetic experience? Can philosophical aesthetics make a critical as well as constitutive contribution to the assumptions underlying research in the psychology of art? What is the bearing of sociological and anthropological research on the place of art and the aesthetic in different cultures and social groups? This just begins a list of possible questions and relationships between aesthetic and the sciences.

Such questions were raised by a number of participants in the congress. At the conclusion of the congress, a group of interested scholars gathered for an informal discussion on how to explore and facilitate communication on this issue. There was general agreement that *Contemporary Aesthetics* could offer a useful forum for exchanging ideas. The plan that was suggested is to begin by publishing papers dealing with some issue in this area and to ask interested scholars to contribute comments on them. This process will undoubtedly evolve as it takes place, and the editors of *CA* invite all interested readers to submit their contributions to this forum in the form of papers or commentaries. To facilitate the publication process, we ask that all submissions be made using the procedure on the *CA* website (www.contempaesthetics.org). Contributions will receive the usual editorial review.
