

# « The “‘Artisanal’ Aesthetics of Creation”: Robert Klein and the Deus Artifex »

Auteur

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**Florian MÉTRAL**

Chercheur CNRS

Professeur junior

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For Klein, art—understood in its practical and theoretical features—was a crucial field of investigation; it offers material for discourse and displays, according to André Chastel, the “épaisseur de l’histoire” (thickness of history). With the topos of deus artifex—God as a craftsman—Klein devoted himself to an intellectual task that he particularly liked: the confrontation with a well-known commonplace of thought situated at the edge of diachrony and synchrony, particular and universal, form and meaning. Klein’s thought on this topos is, for the most part, contained in two other substantial works, both forgotten following his death in 1967. The first, *Ars et technè de Platon à Giordano Bruno* (1953–1954), is his dissertation in aesthetics and the sciences of art under the guidance of Étienne Souriau, which has remained unpublished to this day. The second, *L’esthétique de la technè* (1960–1962), is his thesis in art history under the supervision of André Chastel. Linked both by their field of investigation and their method, these two essays contain the core of Klein’s reflections on the topos of deus artifex in Western thought, which, as I will argue, stands out for its resolutely new approach to the phenomenon through Aristotelian artificialism and still-relevant conclusions.

Thème(s) de recherche

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