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Sommario/riassunto

Although there is widespread belief that some artists attract the attention of muses more than others, this topic has, so far, not been taken up seriously in art history or sociology of culture. In his fascinating book, Vjeran Katunari starts out by presenting many artworks, from literature and visual arts to performing arts and architecture, as examples that demonstrate the transcendental potential of art. The key concept explaining this capability concerns the crossing of three time frames, i.e. past, present, and future in the

historical present. An inspirational source for such an approach is to be found in the aesthetic sociology and philosophy of Georg Simmel and in the philosophical hermeneutics of history by Walter Benjamin. The selected artworks and periods, respectively, span from early Renaissance and the beginning of the Industrial Revolution to postmodernity and neoliberalism – with a glimpse to a possible future as the opening of the cosmic era of humanity that is anticipated in early vanguard and some contemporary paintings.
