

## "Minimalisms Now: Race, Affect, and Aesthetics"

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### Minimalisms Now: Race, Affect, and Aesthetics

Less is more. Unclutter the mind. Spark joy. More than a generation has passed since Columbia University's 1988 Summer Writers' Festival brought together a roundtable for "Throwing Dirt on the Grave of Minimalism," but it seems minimalisms are alive and well both in aesthetics and in lifestyles in the twenty-first century. What are the forms, styles, and genres of minimalism today? What is their relation to the heyday of minimalist sculpture, music, literature, and architecture in the 1960s through 1980s? Who are the practitioners of minimalism, and how are various minimalisms gendered, racialized, sexualized, and classed? And under what social, political, and economic conditions are these practitioners drawn to minimalism now?

Recent scholarship in queer of color critique has helped both to situate the whiteness and maleness of minimalism's historical allure and to theorize how a minimal performance of affect might be a counterhegemonic practice for people of color, whether in what Xine Yao has called "unfeeling," Tina Post has identified as "black inexpression," or Sunny Xiang has named "Asian inscrutability." How should we theorize the relation between stripped-down vocabularies and forms (such as flash fiction or the Tweet) and stripped-down emotional repertoires (such as deadpan and flat affect)? What are the racial and sexual affordances of the minimal today?

On behalf of Contemporaries at Post45, guest editors Connor Bennett (U Toronto) and Michael Dango (Beloit) invite papers for a cluster on contemporary minimalist stylistics. Contributors may reflect on topics such as, but not limited to, the following:

- intersections of the minimalist impulse with affect, class, gender, and race;
- the formal affordances of minimalism across media (sculpture, music, visual art, literature, cinema);
- flash fiction and autofiction, fragmentation, the institutionalization of minimalism in the modern MFA program;
- genres of critical, scholarly, or para-academic writing that embody a minimalist impulse;
- minimalism's lifestyle analogs in diet culture, "digital detoxes," and related practices; and
- the minimal's relation to forms of economic austerity and to the explosion of "affective labor" under neoliberalization.

We are committed to boosting the voices of emerging and contingent students and scholars. Please email a 250-word abstract/pitch to [connor.bennett@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:connor.bennett@mail.utoronto.ca) and [dangomt@beloit.edu](mailto:dangomt@beloit.edu). The priority deadline to pitch is July 24. Accepted contributors will be invited to write essays of no more than 3,000 words by October 15.

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