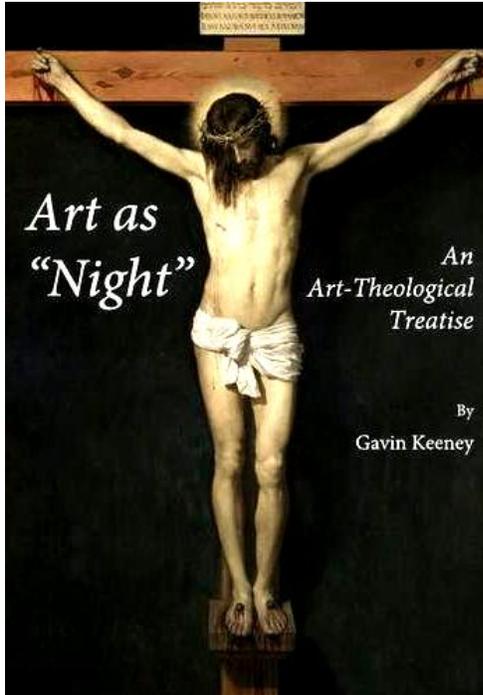


AGENCE 'X'

PRESS RELEASE
29 September 2010



Written over the course of two months in early 2008, *Art as "Night"* is a series of essays in part inspired by a January 2007 visit to the Velázquez exhibition at the National Gallery of Art, London, with subsequent forays into related themes and art-historical judgments for and against theories of meta-painting. Published in October 2010 by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, I am pleased to announce the arrival of this intentionally untimely work.

Gavin Keeney, *Art as "Night": An Art-Theological Treatise* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010) – Cloth, 228 pages – ISBN: 978-1-4438-2401-9 – ISBN: 1-4438-2401-1

Image – Diego Velázquez, *Cristo crucificado* (1631-32) – Courtesy of Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, Spain

DESCRIPTION

Art as "Night" proposes a type of a-historical dark knowledge (a-theology and theology, at once) crossing painting since Velázquez, but reaching back to the Renaissance, especially Titian and Caravaggio. As a form of formalism, this "night" is also closely allied with forms of intellection that come to reside in art as pure

visual agency or material knowledge while invoking moral agency, a function of art more or less bracketed in modern art for ethical and/or political agency.

Not a theory of meta-painting, *Art as "Night"* restores coordinates arguably lost in painting since the separation of natural and moral philosophy in the Baroque era. It is with Velázquez that we see a turning point, an emphasis on the specific resources of painting as a form of speculative intellect, while it is with contemporary works by Gerhard Richter and Anselm Kiefer that we see the return of the same after the collapse of modernism, and after subsequent postmodern maneuvers to make art discursive yet without the austerities of the formal means present in Art as Art. *Art as "Night"* argues for a non-discursive form of intellection fully embodied in the work of art – and, foremost, painting.

A synoptic and intentionally elusive and allusive survey of painting, through the collapse of the art market in late 2007, *Art as "Night"* suggests by way of this critique of an elective "night" crossing painting that the art world is an endlessly deferred version of *pleroma* (Hegel's Absolute Knowledge), a fully synthetic world given to an exploration and appropriation of the given through classical mimesis and epistemology and its complete incorporation and transfiguration in a theory of knowledge and art as pure speculative agency. In effect, *Art as "Night"* is an incarnational theory of art as absolute knowledge.

AUTHOR BIO

Gavin Keeney is a writer, editor, and critic based in New York, New York. He has taught in the architecture programs at the University of Pennsylvania, City College, New York, and the University of Adelaide, Australia. His critical, editorial, and scholarly activities cross back and forth between art and architecture. He founded Agence 'X' in late 2007, an artists' re-representation bureau providing critical texts and contexts for emerging artists.

GK/AGENCE 'X'