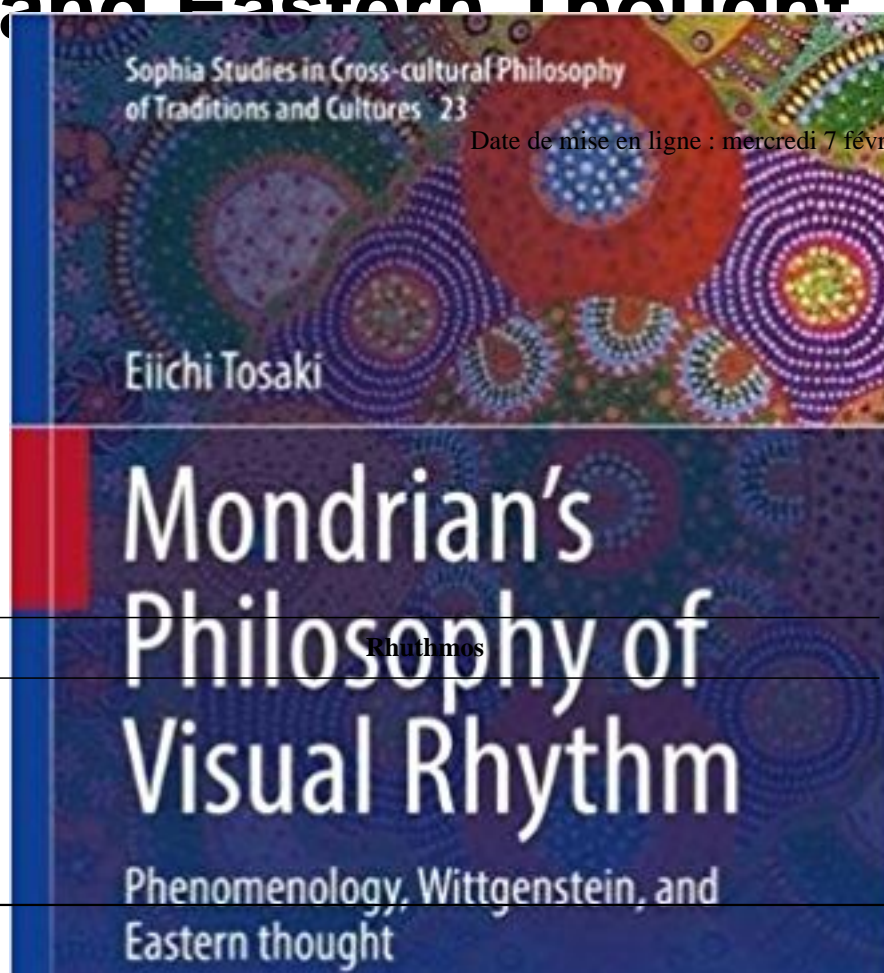


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E. Tosaki, Mondrian's Philosophy of Visual Rhythm : Phenomenology, Wittgenstein, and Eastern Thought



Sophia Studies in Cross-cultural Philosophy
of Traditions and Cultures 23

Date de mise en ligne : mercredi 7 février 2018

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Mondrian's Philosophy of Visual Rhythm

Phenomenology, Wittgenstein, and
Eastern thought

E. Tosaki, *Mondrian's Philosophy of Visual Rhythm : Phenomenology, Wittgenstein, and Eastern Thought*, Dordrecht, Springer, 2017, 260 p.

► This volume investigates the meaning of visual rhythm through Piet Mondrian's unique approach to understanding rhythm in the compositional structure of painting, drawing reference from philosophy, aesthetics, and Zen culture. Its innovation lies in its reappraisal of a forgotten definition of rhythm as 'stasis' or 'composition' which can be traced back to ancient Greek thought. This conception of rhythm, the book argues, can be demonstrated in terms of pictorial strategy, through analysis of East Asian painting and calligraphy with which Greek thought on rhythm has identifiable commonalities. The book demonstrates how these ideas about rhythm draw together various threads of intellectual development in the visual arts that cross disparate aesthetic cultural practices. As an icon of early 20th Century Modernism, Mondrian's neoplasticism is a serious painterly and philosophical achievement. In his painting, Mondrian was deeply influenced by Theosophy, which took its influence from Eastern aesthetics ; particularly East Asian and Indian thought. However, Mondrian's approach to visual rhythm was so ideosyncratic that his contribution to studies of visual rhythm is often under-recognized. This volume shows that a close inspection of Mondrian's own writing, thinking and painting has much to tell scholars about how to understand a long forgotten aspect of visual rhythm. Rodin's famous criticism of photography ("athlete-in-motion is forever frozen") can be applied to Muybridge's zoopraxiscope, the Futurists' rendition of stroboscopic images, and Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase." Through a comparative study between Mondrian's painting and these seminal works, this volume initiates a new convention for the cognition of the surface of painting as visual rhythm.

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