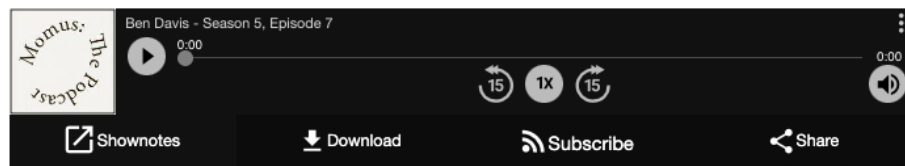


<https://momus.ca/podcast/ben-davis/>



In the introduction to [Ben Davis's](#) new book, a bracing and perspectival collection of essays titled *Art in the After-Culture* (Haymarket Books), he reflects that “the only thing that has grown faster than the demands on art has been doubt that art can respond adequately to those demands.” In a generous and thoughtful conversation with Sky Goodden, Davis expands on those cultural tensions that exacerbate an already fraught cultural dialogue, and touches on other central themes to this collection of writing, including the economic structures that inform contemporary art and its technologies, the roots of cultural appropriation, the context collapse of our critical reception, and the ambient shifts in contemporary art’s ‘connoisseurship’.

Of course, this is also a conversation about writing. In discussing a book that has taken the better part of a decade to come out, and has required significant rewriting as Davis responded to a shape-shifting present, he reflects, “It’s a process that resembles depression in the psychoanalytic sense. You feel, for a long period of time, that you have this giant object, a presence in your life that can’t be expressed, that hangs over you like a dark cloud. I don’t have a life hack around that except to say that I think it really helps to believe in what you’re doing.”

Ben Davis is the National Art Critic at [artnet News](#), where he’s also a senior editor. His first book, *9.5 Theses on Art and Class*, came out in 2013 (Haymarket Books) and, as one artist put it, delivered “a truth-bomb of a book.”

Deepest thanks to Jacob Irish (Editor) and Chris Andrews (Assistant Producer), and thanks especially to Ben Davis for his contribution to this season. Thanks as well to [SFU Galleries](#) for their all-important support of this episode.