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- 1 In chapter I of her book, Else Marie Bukdahl, who's the former rector of The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, presents selected literature on the concept of the baroque and its echoes in our time. The French word baroque derives from the Portuguese noun "barroco" alternatively from the Spanish "barrueco". Both refer to pearl of irregular shape. Until today, the baroque has remained an irregular pearl, which can never be interpreted as a whole. In chapter II Else Marie Bukdahl analyses the distinguishing features and symbols in the baroque as a basis for her studies of the recurrent actuality of the baroque. Baroque art, which was on its zenith at the end of the XVIIth century, expresses the ideas of the counterreformation. The baroque art forms also embodied the new conceptions of the Earth's position in the universe. Astronomers had proved that the Sun, not the Earth, as previously assumed, was the center of our planetary system. New figurations and expressions carried by the baroque art occurred in order to visualize the dissolution of the old worldview. Else Marie Bukdahl puts forward that the significant baroque features are infinity, instability, fluidity, vanity, multiplicity, reflexivity, fragmentation, uncertain borders between dream and reality and a frequent use of dynamic diagonals. Labyrinths, folded robes and theater curtains are also frequently occurring in the baroque art. The author adds a new feature of the Baroque art: the open space, which for the first time really gives the active viewer the possibility to become an important part of the artistic totality. The baroque is also the first historical period in which the picture and the image are assigned a fairly prominent place. It was also the artists who first discovered that the new unpredictable world could not been seen from only one single angle as was the case in the Renaissance, but needed a multiplicity of viewpoints to make it intelligible. In chapter III Else Marie Bukdahl analyzes this concept by taking her starting point in five prominent philosophers from the XXth century: Walter Benjamin, Michel Foucault, Mario Perniola, Christine Buci-Glucksmann and Gilles Deleuze. Further Else Marie Bukdahl examines how and why modern and contemporary artists such as Paul Cézanne and Pablo Picasso, Anselm Kiefer, Richard Serra, Christo, Ernesto Neto and

Danish artists such as Hein Heinsen, Mogens Møller, Øyvind Nygård and Claus Ørntoft are transforming baroque art forms, personalizing them and integrating them to organic parts of their own works. Besides Else Marie Bukdahl analyses works by Jeff Koons, Joana Vasconcelos and Olafur Eliasson who all have “intervened” in the classicist Baroque castle Versailles in their exhibitions in 2008, 2012 and 2016 respectively. The book is adorned with a large number of work reproductions of high quality, both of the original baroque art works and of modern and contemporary experimentations with baroque art forms. It’s clearly worded, well-grounded with notes and a comprehensive literature list and is a significant contribution to our understanding of the complex and still very actual baroque art.