

# One hundred and fifty, not out

**A**niversaries can be anxious times, as the past piles high – and not only in the form of wreckage. As the revisitings of May '68 running up to its fortieth birthday last month showed, the recent past retains its currency as a weapon in the present, constantly in danger of being turned back upon itself. (How many more suicides of the 1960s will we have to witness before the Right is done with its corpse?)

Anniversaries of journals have their own peculiarities. Here, in particular, it is a matter of measuring a distance from the past, as much as finding its thread. It is the future that counts in defining the present, since it is the only tense in which it is possible to act. If the 'radical' in our title is to extend beyond its commodified form, it will be by renewing a qualitative sense of the new. The dialectics of this process are, however, more devilish than some may care to know.

*Radical Philosophy* has its origin in the intellectual and political energies of the 1960s, overflowing into the 1970s (the first issue appeared in 1972). It was refashioned by the movement politics of the 1980s – feminism and ecology in particular – and the debates over the fate of the communist tradition. It reflected upon the booms of 'postmodernism' and 'continental philosophy' in the 1990s. And in the early years of this century it has broadened its horizons geopolitically, expanded its contributions to cultural and art theory, and tracked European philosophy as it once again declares itself 'French'. Each wave an accumulation, an archive; and each through the prism of the aspiration to a more vibrant, and more critical, philosophical culture of the Left.

One hundred and fifty issues is a cause for celebration for a self-published – and still largely self-produced – journal, adrift in the intellectual desert of a crushingly corporate publishing world.

In this issue, we begin a new series of interviews with artists and cultural figures whose work has intersected with the history of the Left, focusing on critical and theoretical aspects of their practices. When the *RP* interviews from the early 1990s were collected into a book (*A Critical Sense: Interviews with Intellectuals*, edited by Peter Osborne, Routledge, 1996), the cover carried the image of *The Thinker* (1986) by the Canadian artist Jeff Wall. We are therefore especially pleased to be able to kick off the current series with an interview with Wall, whose photographic practice and writings have been at the forefront of critical debates in the artworld for thirty years – nearly as long, in fact, as the history of *Radical Philosophy* itself. The second in the series, in which David Cunningham interviews the Dutch architect and urban theorist Rem Koolhaas, will appear in the autumn.

Peter Osborne

