

Kendall L. Walton

Marvelous Images: On Values and the Arts.

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This book is the first of two volumes that bring together a selection of Kendall Walton's essays. Grouped under the general heading of 'Values and the Arts', this volume explores the concept of aesthetic value and it analyzes various ways in which value judgments are embedded in, and central to, Western artistic practice.

Beginning with an essay published in 1993, "'How Marvelous!': Toward a Theory of Aesthetic Value', Walton introduces the role played by evaluation in aesthetic experience. Significantly for the discussions that follow, the essay aims to identify a unified concept of aesthetic value that, although supervenient on various other kinds of value, remains distinct in its own right. An essay adapted from a review of Antony Savile's book, *The Test of Time*, considers what kind of features aesthetic value has to possess if such a test is even to be considered relevant. Showing how aesthetic value relates to, or subverts, a range of other values is a theme that is worked out throughout the essays that follow.

The remainder of Part 1 considers how aesthetic value is related to moral value and discusses various ways in which moral faults in a work of art may impede aesthetic appreciation of that work. Developing themes contained in *Mimesis as Make-Believe* and an essay (included in this volume) on 'Morals in Fiction and Fictional Morality', a new essay deals with questions that are typically placed under the rubric of 'imaginative resistance'. For Walton, the 'so-called' puzzle of imaginative resistance is not one, but (at least) three separate puzzles: imaginative, fictional and aesthetic. On Walton's account, failure to appreciate distinctions between these puzzles obscures the different ways in which moral failings in works of art impinge upon or impede aesthetic appreciation. More importantly, Walton argues that conflation of these puzzles ignores key differences between resistance to accepting something as fictional (true in the world of the fiction) and resistance to engaging in certain imaginings.

Untangling the difference between the fictional and imaginative puzzles emerges as fundamental to understanding the variety of reasons why individuals fail to imagine as expected. In 'Morals in Fiction' Walton described resistance to allowing fictional worlds to differ from the real world as an inability to imagine propositions that express supervenience relations rejected by the imager. In his later essay, Walton distinguishes this suggestion from Tamar Gendler's rejection of what she terms the 'impossibility hypothesis'. While accepting the link between the fictionality and imaginative puzzles, Walton presses the conceptual distinction between them in order to test the scope of

reasons why a person may be not just *unwilling*, but *unable* to accept certain invitations offered by a fiction.

Part 2 draws together the themes of make-believe, depiction, and transparency that have been key to Walton's aesthetics. Beginning with an essay on 'Pictures and Hobby Horses' that introduces the role of make-believe in *Mimesis*, the section focuses on differences between paintings and photographs. Several postscripts are added to the essay on 'Transparent Pictures' that clarify Walton's claim that we see through photographs to the depicted object and point to ways in which digital photography might challenge the transparency thesis. More easily manipulable than film, Walton suggests that digital images are more opaque than traditional photographs and that they frequently create an illusion of transparency. In what would be an interesting line of further enquiry, Walton tantalizingly suggests that our experience of digital images is, thereby, akin to our experience of painting.

Inclusion of Walton's essay 'On Pictures and Photographs' is helpful for its answers to a range of objections to the transparency thesis as applied to photography. Important for later arguments in the collection is the idea that photographs are not simply transparent, but are representations that also induce imagining seeing. That these processes occur simultaneously is relevant to a new essay on 'Experiencing Still Photographs' that discusses the imaginative experiences induced by photographs that depict motion or that juxtapose still and moving figures. At first, the depiction of change or the inclusion of temporal juxtapositions in such images appear difficult to reconcile with the way in which we perceive and imagine seeing. How, for example, would we imagine seeing the 'movement' of a box falling through mid air that is frozen on film in a moment of suspension? How does one observe such an image for an extended period, but simultaneously imagine seeing something that lasts only a moment? It is not possible to do justice to Walton's subtle analyses of the imaginative experiences provoked by such images in the current context. However, Walton's key distinction is between the duration of imagining an experience and the duration of the experience imagined. Analyses of stasis and temporal change help to illuminate what we imagine seeing when we observe motion depicting still images and how we organize our imaginative experience of such images.

The final section of the collection consists of two older essays on categories of art and style that, in different ways, raise questions about the role of intentionalism in aesthetic theory. Their inclusion rounds out the central theme of aesthetic value by foregrounding a broader range of issues relevant to the creation and appreciation of works of art. The final essay on style also provides a bridge to volume two, *In Other Shoes*, in its discussion of how works come into being and the ways in which externally acquired information can affect our perception of them.

The collection of these essays in a single volume provides insight not just into important questions in aesthetics over the past twenty years, but into the intellectual

development of one of the subject's key contributors. Together with its forthcoming companion volume, this book will be indispensable to specialists in aesthetics as well as to those seeking an overview of Walton's ideas.

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