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Languages Of Art



Synopsis

"Like Dewey, he has revolted against the empiricist dogma and the Kantian dualisms which have compartmentalized philosophical thought. . . . Unlike Dewey, he has provided detailed incisive argumentation, and has shown just where the dogmas and dualisms break down." --Richard Rorty, The Yale Review

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This is the best book in the philosophy of art in the last half century, at least. It presents a systematic, seriously-argued, soberly detailed account of the arts in terms of symbol (referring) systems, especially as they do or do not involve notational systems -music and dance, say, as opposed to painting and drawing. The book deploys many of Goodman's justly famous ideas from his previous work in the philosophy of language, of science, and epistemology. It is elegantly written and will, in the middle chapters, require sober work at following the more formal points on notation. But it is all worth it. Disregard the first review above, where its author misses the arguments against the resemblance view of depiction. This book is usefully read along with *Reconceptions in Philosophy* by Goodman and Elgin.

good reading material

Languages of Art enables a person to review the deep structure of aesthetics through symbolic diagram. Goodman presents/offers a model of aesthetic production based on a flow from microperceptions into the macroperception of affect. He allows one to review the product of aesthetic direction through symbolic structure based on folds.

very good

Languages of Art is one of the most influential books in the field of aesthetics to be published in the past fifty years. I only read it recently, and as I did so I became aware of how often I had come across resonances of this book in art reviews and essays in art history ever since I first began reading such things. This influence is unfortunate, because in his treatment of visual art, Goodman makes some sensational errors. Goodman claims, and attempts to prove, that resemblance is irrelevant to representational art. In other words, that portrait of your Aunt Maud is a good likeness not because it looks like her, but because the artist has effectively deployed a system of visual symbols, more or less equivalent to language, that both artist and viewer have been acculturated to accept as constituting a "likeness." Never mind the fact that the colors and shapes in the portrait are remarkably similar to those on Aunt Maud's face. Goodman assures the reader that perceived resemblance has nothing to do with even the most realistic painting or sculpture. Sometimes going against the grain of common sense yields astonishing insights. Other times, as in this book, it only makes the author look silly. Read this book if you are interested in the background to a kind of extreme cultural relativism that has taken the field of art history by storm in the past twenty years.

Excellent condition. Thank you so much.

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