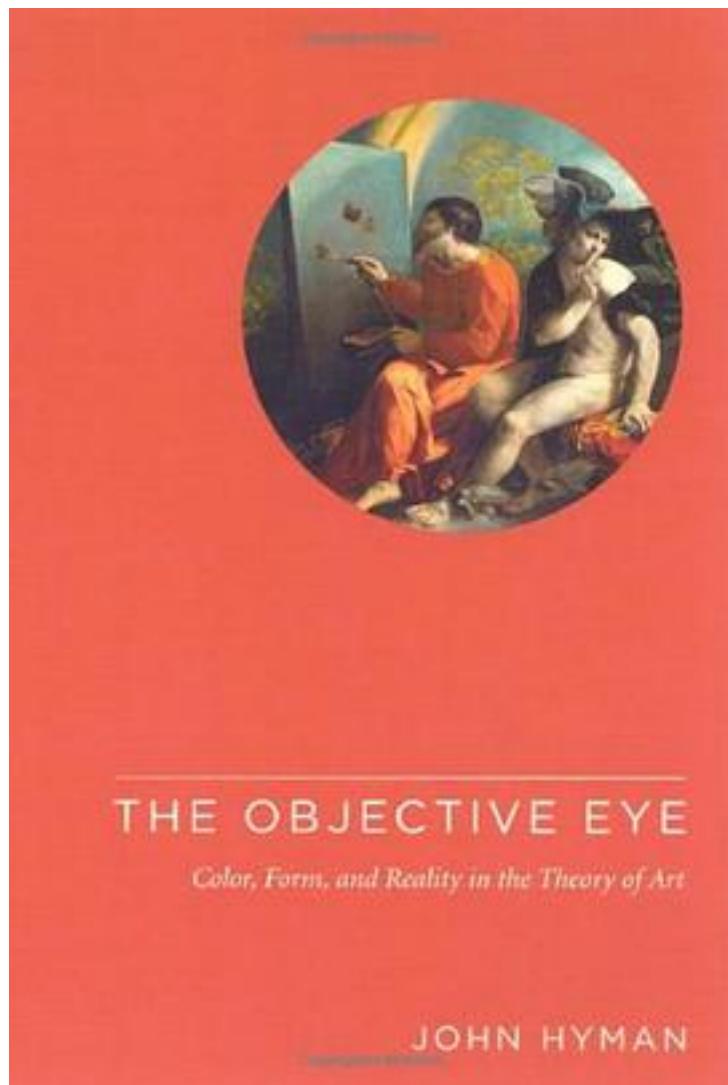


The Objective Eye



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This, in a nutshell, is the central problem in the theory of art. It has fascinated philosophers from Plato to Wittgenstein. And it fascinates artists and art historians, who have always drawn extensively on philosophical ideas about language and representation, and on ideas about vision and the visible world that have deep philosophical roots. John Hyman's "The Objective Eye" is a radical treatment of this problem, deeply informed by the history of philosophy and science, but entirely fresh. The questions tackled here are fundamental ones: Is our experience of color an illusion? How does the metaphysical status of colors differ from that of shapes? With great agility, Hyman considers what is different between a picture and a written text - and whether absolutely anything can be represented in a picture. For example, can a picture represent a thought or a feeling, or a sound or a smell, or must the things it represents have shapes and colors? Why are some pictures said to be more realistic than others? Is it because they are especially truthful or, on the contrary, because they deceive the eye? "The Objective Eye" explores the fundamental concepts we use constantly in our most innocent thoughts and conversations about art, as well as in the most sophisticated art theory. The book progresses from pure philosophy to applied philosophy and ranges from the metaphysics of color to Renaissance perspective, from anatomy in ancient Greece to impressionism in nineteenth-century France. Philosophers, art historians, and students of the arts will find "The Objective Eye" challenging and absorbing.

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