

Sight and Sensibility



Dominic McIver Lopes

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EVALUATING PICTURES

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Looking at pictures, we see in them the scenes they depict, and any value they have springs from these experiences of seeing-in. "Sight and Sensibility" presents the first detailed and comprehensive theory of evaluating pictures. Dominic Lopes confronts the puzzle of how the value of seeing anything in a picture can exceed that of seeing it face to face - his solution pinpoints how seeing-in is like and unlike ordinary seeing. Moreover, since part of what we see in pictures is emotional expressions, his book also develops a theory of expression especially tailored to pictures. Not all evaluations of pictures as opportunities for seeing-in are aesthetic - others are cognitive or moral. Lopes argues that these evaluations interact, for some imply others. His argument entails novel conceptions of aesthetic and cognitive evaluation, such that aesthetic evaluation is distinguished from art evaluation as essentially tied to experience, and that cognitive evaluations assess cognitive capacities, including perceptual ones. Ultimately, Lopes defends images against the widespread criticism that they thwart serious thought, especially moral thought, because they merely replicate ordinary experience. He concludes by presenting detailed case studies of the contribution pictures can make to moral reflection. "Sight and Sensibility" will be essential reading for anyone working in aesthetics and art theory, and for all those intrigued by the power of images to affect our lives.

作者介绍:

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