



What is a Picture?: Depiction, Realism, Abstraction

Michael, Dr Newall

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What is a picture? Is it a symbol, a likeness, a trigger of certain visual experiences or cognitive states?

Each of these ideas, wrongly placed in competition by earlier theorists, gives some insight into what a picture is. This book draws together, criticises and refines these ideas to develop a new theory of pictures, that understands pictures to be an intrinsically visual form of representation. Using an approach deeply informed by art history and perceptual psychology, it explores the ramifications such a theory has for the visual arts, developing a new theory of pictorial realism, reconsidering the special status often granted to perspective-based realism in art, and giving a powerful new analysis of abstraction in modern painting.

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