

(Mobile ebook) Aesthetics: A Beginner's Guide (Beginner's Guides)

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Charles Taliaferro

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Charles Taliaferro : Aesthetics: A Beginner's Guide (Beginner's Guides) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Aesthetics: A Beginner's Guide (Beginner's Guides):

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The very best book of aesthetics I've come across By Glenn Russell This beginner's guide on Aesthetics by Charles Taliaferro is not only for beginners but also for all artists, writers, musician and students of philosophy interested in art and aesthetics. Why? Because the wealth of ideas, theories, examples and questions presented could keep anybody going, irrespective of their background and experience, for years and years (I say this having dedicated 40+ years to the arts, literature and the study of

philosophy). Indeed, I would go further — I've read a number of intro texts on aesthetics and judge Taliaferro's book the very best one I've come across. As a way of providing a taste of what a reader will find, I have listed some of the philosophers and artists/artworks examined as well as the types of questions posed from each of the 6 chapters:

- 1 — What is beauty? Plato, Aristotle, Homer's *Iliad*, Confucius, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Hume, Murdoch
- 2 — What do you consider beautiful and how does this beauty become part of your life? Is beauty by its very nature linked with goodness? Do you consider beauty to be a higher value than glory or victory?
- 3 — What is a work of art? Duchamp's *Fountain* (an upside down urinal), Picasso's *Guernica*, Hegel, Tolstoy, Collingwood, Danto
- 4 — Who gets to choose or judge what is a work of art? What place does expression and feeling have in creating a work of art? What does it mean to have an aesthetic experience?
- 5 — Art and meaning: Beardsley, Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, the Hindu tradition's Lord Shiva statue, Kant, Derrida
- 6 — Does the intent of an author/artist count in the way we consider the meaning of their creation? How does the meaning of a work change over time? How important is the context in which we experience a work of art?

What makes good art? Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, C.S. Lewis, Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*, Indian aesthetician B.N. Goswami, Edmond Burke

How does one define creativity and imagination? What is meant by 'the sublime'? What moral obligations does an author/artist have to their community and society?

The location, ownership, and dangers of art: Jerrold Levinson, Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs, Michelangelo's *David*, Daniel Shapiro, Andreacut; Malraux

Should modern artists borrow liberally from traditional and religious cultures? What roll does censorship have in relation to art/writing/films/performance? Should we be able to copy music freely via the internet?

Cross-cultural aesthetics: Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji*, Liu Xie's *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (a highly regarded Chinese aesthetics text), Japanese poets Saigyō, Hōshi and Matsuo Bashō

What links are there between aesthetics and the harmony of nature? How familiar must we be with the artist's culture to properly view the work of art? What can we learn from Japanese aesthetic and the value placed on spontaneity and sincerity in works of art?

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent and useful introduction to a complexity of ideas

By OxfordWillows

This is an excellent introduction to aesthetics --a very challenging task indeed. In addition to being very clear and as jargon-free as can be expected, I particularly found the early historical references to be very useful in clarifying what those early Greeks were thinking about. Often, references to ancient Greeks are just that; here, however, the author acknowledges how we think THEY thought, in their context. Recommended.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great intro to aesthetics. By David Burns

Good and concise intro into the philosophy of aesthetics. Covers a lot of topics in a relatively short span.

What is art? Why do we find some things beautiful but not others? Is it wrong to share mp3s? These are just some of the questions explored by aesthetics, the philosophy of art. In this sweeping introduction, Charles Taliaferro skilfully guides us through notions of art and beauty around the world, tackling lively debates such as who owns art and how art and morality collide. From Plato on poetry to Ringo Starr on the drums, this is a perfect introductory text for anyone interested in the intriguing questions art can raise. Charles Taliaferro is Professor of Philosophy at St. Olaf College, Minnesota. He is the author of over twenty books on philosophy and lectures on Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Religion.

"Accessible and assured. This brief account of a vast subject is entirely successful." --Daniel N. Robinson, Professor of Philosophy, University of Oxford, UK

"Beginners who read this excellent introduction will encounter a wide range of sources, dealing with the major questions in aesthetics and illustrated by many and varied artistic examples." --Gary Iseminger, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, Carleton College, "The best book on aesthetics of its kind. Engaging, comprehensive in scope, and rich with examples." --David Vessey, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Grand Valley State University, USA

"Reading *Aesthetics: A Beginner's Guide* feels like an invitation into a beautiful and intriguing palace... Taliaferro compels us to think more about certain puzzles in aesthetics and also teaches us how to see works of art in new ways." --Paul Reasoner, Bethel University

"This is simply the best introduction to aesthetics I know of... A delicious book." --David O'Hara, Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Classics, Augustana College

About the Author: Charles Taliaferro is Professor of Philosophy at St Olaf College, Minnesota.