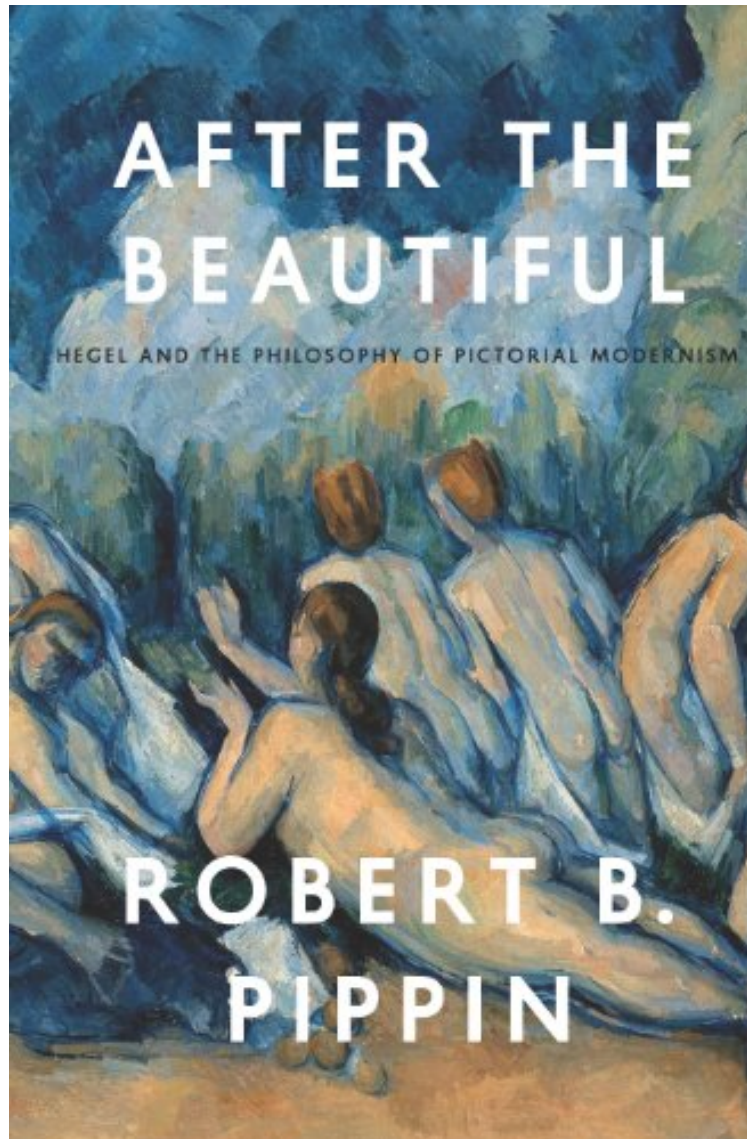


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# After the Beautiful: Hegel and the Philosophy of Pictorial Modernism

*Robert B. Pippin*

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**Robert B. Pippin : After the Beautiful: Hegel and the Philosophy of Pictorial Modernism** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised After the Beautiful: Hegel and the Philosophy of Pictorial Modernism:

In his Berlin lectures on fine art, Hegel argued that art involves a unique form of aesthetic intelligibilitymdash;the

expression of a distinct collective self-understanding that develops through historical time. Hegel's approach to art has been influential in a number of different contexts, but in a twist of historical irony Hegel would die just before the most radical artistic revolution in history: modernism. In *After the Beautiful*, Robert B. Pippin, looking at modernist paintings by artists such as Édouard Manet and Paul Cézanne through Hegel's lens, does what Hegel never had the chance to do. While Hegel could never engage modernist painting, he did have an understanding of modernity, and in it, he famously asserted "was 'a thing of the past,' no longer an important vehicle of self-understanding and no longer an indispensable expression of human meaning. Pippin offers a sophisticated exploration of Hegel's position and its implications. He also shows that had Hegel known how the social institutions of his day would ultimately fail to achieve his own version of genuine equality, a mutuality of recognition, he would have had to explore a different, new role for art in modernity. After laying this groundwork, Pippin goes on to illuminate the dimensions of Hegel's aesthetic approach in the path-breaking works of Manet, the "grandfather of modernism," drawing on art historians T. J. Clark and Michael Fried to do so. He concludes with a look at Cézanne, the "father of modernism," this time as his works illuminate the relationship between Hegel and the philosopher who would challenge Hegel's account of both modernity and Martin Heidegger.