

A Unified Account: Pictorial, Photographic and Sculptural Seeing as Spectral Seeing

by

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Abstract: I extend my account involving the notion of “spectral seeing” from representation in painting (and drawing, etching, etc.) to representation in photography and sculpture. The account is psychological, but it steers clear of the psychological complexity often found in Wollheim-derived accounts of pictorial representation; indeed no extra-ordinary special sensory capacity is involved. That the account extends so naturally to these other non-linguistic varieties of representation is a virtue of the account.

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THERE IS SOMETHING IMPORTANTLY in common between a picture, a sculpture and a photograph of a given subject, something lacked by a linguistic description of the same subject. Yet many accounts of pictorial representation cannot, or cannot easily, be extended to photographs, let alone to sculpture. I take it that this inability to extend across representational idioms is a *prima facie* mark against such views, and that it is a mark in favour of a view that it recognize such commonality.

I think that my account of pictorial representation – introduced in an earlier paper (Kemp, 2018) and outlined below – can be extended without difficulty from drawing and painting to photography and figurative sculpture. I maintain that the crucial factor common to these idioms lies not in the properties of the representing objects themselves, nor in the properties of the represented objects, nor in the relations between them such as their geometric relations – true as it may be that such properties and relations normally play a central causal role in the achievement of representation. The crucial common factor lies rather in the mental activity of the spectator. The account I will present is based upon the notion of “spectral seeing”, which aligns it roughly with Wollheim’s influential theory of pictorial representation in its emphasis on certain mental capacities of the spectator. But unlike Wollheim’s theory, the account copes easily with the *trompe-l’œil*, and indeed with any other painted, etched or drawn representational images to which Wollheim’s theory can extend only with strain. Further, what I call the “experiential basis” of the account – the common factor which

incorporates spectral seeing – copes equally and unchanged not only with photo-realism and hyper-realism, but with photography. And unlike Wollheim's theory – and unlike many other theories of pictorial representation – the account copes naturally with figurative sculpture, of both the relief and the in-the-round variety.

In section 1, after briefly explaining the principal shortcoming of Wollheim's view, I introduce the notion of spectral seeing and the corresponding notion of pictorial representation, and stress that even if it no longer figures in the very definition of pictorial representation, ample room remains for that deeply captivating but ultimately problematic feature of Wollheim's account, the notion of “two-folded seeing”. Otherwise, I will proceed with only brief remarks and a few comments in the notes comparing other views.¹ In section 2 I extend the account to photographs and figurative sculpture, commenting on points of conflict and points of agreement with certain other views of these subjects which have appeared in the recent literature. I shall call this more general outcome an account of “depiction” for short (“non-verbal depiction” for long; I am perhaps stretching the word from its use in the philosophical literature for “pictorial depiction”). I conclude with brief remarks on the possible extension of the view to film, video and drama.

1. Spectral Seeing and Pictorial Representation

An account of pictorial representation in terms of spectral seeing, like Wollheim's account, is a perceptual account, and in particular an experiential or psychological account which makes essential reference to human subjectivity. The view assumes that hand-made picturing cannot adequately be explained in terms of optics, perspective or the non-phenomenological sciences generally; it must be understood as a phenomenon which “passes through” the human psychology of artists and spectators, specifically through their experiential psychology or phenomenology.² And like Wollheim's theory it rejects the idea that the notion of subjective or experienced *resemblance* should bear the load in an analysis of pictorial representation.³

Wollheim (1987, pp. 43–59) built his notion of “two-folded seeing” into his mature account. According to Wollheim, a surface pictorially represents a given item if and only if the artist successfully intended that the item will be “seen-in” the surface by competent spectators. The notion of “seeing-in” is in turn

1 The interested reader can look at Kemp (2016a, 2016b).

2 For an “objective” alternative, see Hyman (2006).

3 For defences of subjective or experienced resemblance, see Hopkins (1998), Budd (1992) and Peacocke (1987). For reasons to resist it, see Wollheim (2003), Levinson (1998, p. 227) and Kemp (2016b, pp. 188–191).

explained in terms of the ability, which Wollheim maintains is phenomenologically basic, of two-folded seeing: it is a phenomenologically *sui generis* perceptual ability to see, for example, a canvas marked with patterns of paint – genuinely to *see* it, where “see” is a success-verb – while simultaneously seeing its represented content. Wollheim calls the two “folds” the “configurational” fold and the “recognitionnal” fold; they are not simultaneous visual experiences but two aspects of a single visual experience. The degree of dominance of one fold against the other is flexible up to a point. One can focus on one at the expense of the other, without the other’s quite disappearing: one can admire the way in which the black marks of paint are arranged in Van Gogh’s picture without quite losing the sense of crows against a blue sky; one can marvel at the liveliness of the eyes in a portrait by Hals while being marginally aware of the flecks of paint which give rise to them.

Wollheim’s mistake, as I see it, was to cash out seeing-in as two-folded seeing: he was right to insist upon the former, but wrong to think of the latter as explaining it. A well-known problem for Wollheim’s view is that for many pictures – especially those of the *trompe-l’œil* variety – it seems that one does not have a two-folded experience.⁴ In the *trompe-l’œil* case – for example, *Letter Rack* by Edward Collier – one cannot in any sense separate one’s awareness of the recognitionnal fold from one’s awareness of the configurational fold – the depicted content from the picture’s arrangement of paint or marks. Here I will assume without argument that these are representational pictures in which one can see, for example, a letter rack in the picture, yet which Wollheim’s view wrongly implies are not representational pictures (or “not in his sense”, but that presumably will not satisfy the reader who is not already sympathetic).

Here then is the positive account, beginning with two preliminary points. The first claims back from Wollheim a matter of terminology. Wollheim once held that an account of pictorial representation should incorporate the notion of seeing-*as*, referring to Wittgenstein’s famous discussion (Wollheim, 1963; Wittgenstein, 2009 [1953], §§203–240). He subsequently based his account on the nearby notion of seeing-*in* (Wittgenstein himself used the term but only occasionally, and did not obviously think of the two terms as indicating different phenomena).⁵ Wollheim (1980) preferred seeing-in for several reasons, the most compelling of which was that unlike seeing-*as*, the notion comprehends states-of-affairs as well as

4 For the problem of the *trompe-l’œil*, see Levinson (1998), Feagin (1998) and Kemp (2018).

5 In Wittgenstein (2009 [1953], Part II §193d); also in his *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* (Wittgenstein, 1980a, p. 1042) and *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology II*, (Wittgenstein, 1980b, pp. 552, 556).

individuals as suitable for representational seeing.⁶ For example, we might describe Leonardo's pupils as being encouraged to see scenes *in* a wall of cracked, discoloured plaster. He also thought, rather less persuasively, that seeing-in implies two-folded seeing, whereas seeing-as does not.⁷ But I am setting aside Wollheim's equation of seeing-in with two-folded seeing. I shall think of the difference between "seeing-as" and "seeing-in" simply as corresponding to the difference between individuals and states-of-affairs: of the notions as invoking types of perceptual activity of the same genus – for example, children looking at clouds, seeing this one as a sheep, that one as face, or seeing a dancing lady in the fire – and call them equally "aspect-perception" (any sentence describing a visible state-of-affairs has a nominalization – e.g., for "A lady is dancing" we have "a dancing lady"⁸). I will sometimes speak of the "primary object" – for example, the cloud or the fire – and the "secondary object" – for example, an object such as a sheep, or the (nominalized) state-of-affairs such as a dancing lady. It is a basic, commonplace and universal human capacity which irrupts early in life.⁹ It is not the phenomenon of hallucination, which typically involves a serious and unusual perceptual malfunction – in standard cases the seeming to see something when there is no corresponding object in the objective environment.

The second preliminary point is that I assume with Kant (1996), McDowell (1994), Mulhall (1990) and Searle (2015) that "all seeing is seeing-as", which means, for these purposes, that attentive visual perception, for example, of an approaching dog, normally involves aspect-perception – a certain conceptual organization of the visual field, or its organization according to what Kant termed a schema.¹⁰ Perceptual experience, then, is in general intentional (this is not the stronger thesis that there is *no* non-intentional perceptual experience). A more accurate formulation, but less one for rolling off the tongue, would be "All objectual, attentive seeing is seeing-as and all

6 A third is the freedom on the part of seeing-in from the "localisation requirement" of seeing-as – "[I]f one sees *x* as *y*, then there is always some part of *x* (up to the whole) that one sees as *y*" (Wollheim, 1980, p. 211; i.e., one may point to the parts of a drawing of a dog that one sees as the dog's ears); whereas no such requirement holds if one sees in a picture that the weather is bleak.

7 Wollheim (1980, p. 213) claimed that unlike seeing-as, seeing-in merely "permits" two-foldedness; but in the later "On Pictorial Representation" (Wollheim, 2001, pp. 19–20), he equates seeing-in and two-foldedness.

8 In a pinch we can always use "The fact that", as in writing "The fact that the stag is about to die" for "The stag is about to die". For details, see Kemp (2016b, pp. 185–187).

9 This is why I have held out against a reviewer's insistence that it is implausible to hold that when seeing a picture, one sees for example a region of paint as a woman. Although along with some others I do, as will emerge, think of the notion of seeing-in as involved in all normal perception, I continue to think of seeing-as as the right ordinary-language description of Leonardo's pupils' relation to the discolorations in the plaster, of children and their relation to clouds, and of one's relation to the blob of paint.

10 For a recent defence of this view, see Agam-Segal (2019). Burge (2010) might also be mentioned, although he does not see the objects of perception as permeated by concepts; his "objectified representations" have much of the structure of singular conceptual representations, but have only "veridicality conditions" rather than truth-conditions, properly speaking.

attentive seeing of states-of-affairs is seeing-in"; I will employ the simpler formulation in what follows, but it is the more complicated one that I mean officially.¹¹

As with seeing itself, the notion of spectral seeing has at its core this ordinary capacity for aspect-perception, for seeing-in or seeing-as. Suppose in mid-afternoon one sees, in the grass beside a rock face, what one takes initially for a sleeping fox. Upon reflection, however, one thinks it unlikely for a fox to be asleep in broad daylight. One tries seeing it as a stone, and succeeds; one tries again to see it as a fox, and succeeds; the thing can be seen in either way. After some thought, one concludes that it is not a fox but a stone. In fact, however, it was a fox, as one was surprised to learn a moment later when one saw it move. Now one is back to seeing the object as a fox.

The difference between that state, and the state when one was merely considering the hypothesis that what one was looking at was a fox, is evident. In the later state, but not in the previous state, one judged or believed something to be a fox (by "judgement" I mean the action of *coming to believe, to accept, to take things as thus-and-so*). This cognitive difference is not captured in terms of aspect-perception. One was seeing the self-same object as a fox in both cases; indeed one's perceptual state is relevantly the same in the two cases. The perceptual state where one is non-committal as regards judgement, I call "non-judgemental seeing-as"; the perceptual state plus the judgement, I call "judgemental seeing-as".

In the judgemental case one is not seeing a fox in some *further* object; the primary object is identical to the secondary object. To see a fox involves having part of one's visual field organized in a certain manner corresponding to a fox, the effect of which on the light stimulates one in a suitable way (what is suitable will depend partly on the context in which the perception occurs).¹²

11 Wollheim's reasoning on a related point (2003, p. 140) was well articulated by Levinson (1998, p. 227):

Though perception of resemblance, or more narrowly, structural isomorphism, between object aspects or visual fields, may be a concomitant, trigger, or consequence of seeing-in, it is not equivalent to seeing-in. Seeing-in can occur without such perceptions, and vice versa, and so there can be no identifying them. The experiences of perceiving resemblances and seeing-things-in-other-things are different, and irreducibly so; the former is inherently relational and comparative, the latter not.

I would add that aspect-perception occurs at a more basic psychological level than experienced resemblance, which presupposes the conceptual undergirding of the visual field.

12 In cases of non-judgemental seeing-as such as the fox/stone case, one tries out concepts for the role, as it were, of exclusively organizing the visual information (the "sensory manifold", in Kant's terms). In other cases of non-judgemental seeing-as such as seeing a cloud as a face, two concepts are involved, corresponding to the primary object and the secondary object. I have no account of how they combine or interact, but the presence of this difficulty is common to almost any account of aspect-perception, including Wittgenstein's.

Suppose further that one self-consciously and successfully undertakes to see what one now knows to be a fox as a stone (a change of story makes the case more likely: one could see the stone as a fox even if one knew the object had turned out to be a stone). A similar thing happens with Leonardo's pupils, or with children, playing at seeing clouds or distant hills as animals or faces. Now one can distinguish the primary object from the secondary object. It does not affect the point that in some cases, such as the fox/stone case, different concepts, operating on relevantly the same optical stimulus, are capable of issuing in the same appearance, whereas in others such as the duck/rabbit case, different concepts, operating on relevantly the same optical stimulus, issue in different appearances, owing to the relevant difference in schema or "gestalt".

The cloud-as-a-face, the scenes-in-the-plaster seen by Leonardo's pupils, are cases of *negative* judgemental aspect-perception: there is something that one sees as Φ , but one judges (or knows) the thing *not* to be Φ (where " Φ " takes the place of a noun; a singular term – "Henry VIII" – or a phrase involving a general term – "a man"). This is what I call "spectral" seeing (or more generally "spectral perception", as it is plausible that the notion can be extended at least to hearing and perhaps to touch). *Positive* judgemental aspect-perception is the normal case, whether or not it is veridical: there is something that one sees as Φ , and one judges (or knows) the thing to be Φ .¹³

Spectral seeing, observe, is *not* sufficient for two-folded perception: all two-folded seeing is spectral seeing, but some spectral seeing is not two-folded seeing, as in the fox/stone case (I will comment further at the end of this section).

Now with spectral seeing defined, one might expect a definition of pictorial representation as follows (using "item" throughout for "individual or state-of-affairs, or type of individual or state-of-affairs"): a hand-marked surface pictorially represents an item if and only if the artist successfully intended that the competent spectator will spectrally see the item when he or she views the surface. This delivers the result that one typically sees the region of paint as a woman but knows that the region of paint is not a woman. It also accords with the idea that although one is not wrong to say "A woman!" in response to "What is that?", the speech-act is more strictly one of reporting what one sees in the picture, not simply that of reporting what is literally before one.

But it does not quite bring the spectator into close enough contact with the artist. If, concerning a certain mark on the wall, an arachnophobe, well aware of her

13 The fact that the term for the secondary object occurs at a certain position within the scope of the attitude-verb "sees-as" or "sees-in" obviates any worry that the term may fail of reference. One can see something as a unicorn or as Pegasus as sure as one can believe that there are unicorns or that Pegasus exists. The latter has of course been explained in various ways by philosophers, most visibly by Frege and Russell.

tendency falsely to see spiders, assumed the spider-like appearance were not a spider but simply a mark on the wall – but in fact, unbeknownst to her, the mark had been put there by her mischievous younger brother using a marker – it would be a case of spectral seeing, with the brother playing the role of artist, but it would not qualify the case as one of pictorial representation. The spectator must be aware that what he or she is viewing was intended as a pictorial representation for the experience to count. Thus I add a certain Gricean reflexive belief: that the spectral seeing – negative judgemental seeing-as – occurs because one knows (however inarticulately) that one is viewing something that was intended to give rise to spectral seeing of the object.

Thus an initial definition:¹⁴

A hand-marked surface is a picture of an item if and only if:

- (1) competent spectators have an experience of spectral seeing of the item when viewing the hand-marked surface;
- (2) the hand-marked surface was produced with the intention that they should do so;
- (3) they are (at least implicitly) aware that they have the experience because they are viewing a hand-marked surface that satisfies (2).

The term “hand-marked surface” is rough but serviceable enough; drawing, painting, etching and the like are included but not photographs. By “competent spectator” I include among other things the requirement that he or she be viewing the object from an adequate angle.

Here is the promised further comment. The definition copes with Wollheim-friendly pictures – Titian (especially late Titian), Rubens, Hals, Manet, Van Gogh, Cézanne, Klee, Picasso, de Kooning, cartoons, children’s drawings and so on – but also copes with Wollheim-resistant pictures – not only pictures of the *trompe-l’œil* variety by Collier and de Barde which are often cited as counterexamples and which Wollheim (1987, p. 62) freely admits are not pictorial representations in his sense, but also pictures at the “realistic” end of the rough scale ranging from stick-figure

14 A referee points out that according to this definition, the Müller-Lyer diagram can be used as a picture of uneven lines. I accept the point, but I see it only as a non-central if mildly surprising implication. It is highly abstract, depicting not the lines – the lines are literally there – but only a single property of the lines. Perhaps the most similar to my view is the view of Voltolini (2013, 2015). The view is both compelling and complex; there are I think two especially pertinent differences, aside from Voltolini’s semiotic elements: (1) He does not accept that all normal, attentive seeing is seeing-as, and follows Wittgenstein in dividing cases of aspect-perception into the conceptual variety and what he calls “organizational” seeing-as (the latter is more or less what Wittgenstein calls “optical” seeing-as). (2) Voltolini accepts that all pictorial seeing is two-folded (but alters Wollheim’s account of two-foldedness: the configurational fold is itself one of organizational seeing-as, which grounds the representational fold as an experience of illusory seeing-as).

drawings to Cubism, to naturalistic pictures by Delacroix and Chardin, to photo-realism and hyper-realism, which in my view Wollheim's account struggles with. Knowing experience of a *trompe-l'œil* – where one looks at the picture knowing full well that one is seeing, for example, a painted rendition of a letter rack and not a real letter rack – is straightforwardly a case of spectral seeing of a letter rack, and therefore a straightforward case of pictorial experience.¹⁵ But Wollheim's idea of two-folded perception is by no means simply erased: it figures no more in the very definition of depiction, but it will be retained in a more articulate account of the experience of those pictures in which it is active, of Wollheim-friendly pictures. Of such pictures, two-folded seeing might be characterized as a form which spectral seeing takes, as a further elaboration of it in these cases. A picture's susceptibility to it is largely a matter of degree, one that roughly tracks the picture's location on the just-mentioned scale (see Kemp, 2018, pp. 440–447).

The experiential basis of pictorial representation is spectral seeing, which is defined as negative judgemental aspect-perception. Such an account is similar to but differs crucially from “Gombrichean” accounts (e.g., Lopes, 2005; Newall, 2011).¹⁶ According to such accounts, the experiential basis of seeing a normal picture as a picture involves two perceptual components: the visual experience of a painted, drawn or etched surface, and a concomitant visual experience “as-of” its subject, glossed as “seeming to see” it (this latter notion of “as-of” the object is said to align the accounts with Gombrich's “illusionist” view). In the more anomalous cases such as the *trompe-l'œil*, the first component is absent; thus one seems to see the subject and indeed is tempted to believe that the subject is before one (Gombricheans thus bifurcate the experience of pictures, somewhat as Wollheim does). But on my view, in a knowing experience of the *trompe-l'œil*, one is not usually tempted to believe the subject is really there, any more than that there is a real man in the rock formation the Old Man of Stoer. A related difference is that according to Gombrichean accounts, the visual experience as-of the subject does not explicitly involve the cognitive element that spectral seeing does. But the main difference is simply the presence of two perceptual

15 For cases where one is duped by the *trompe-l'œil* – where one fails to see the picture for what it is – see Feagin (1998).

16 My account does not involve the mistake which Wollheim finds in Gombrich, namely of holding it impossible to see the configurational properties of a picture while simultaneously seeing the represented objects. According to Wollheim, Gombrich wrongly inferred, from the impossibility of simultaneously seeing the duck and the rabbit, the impossibility of simultaneously seeing the duck and seeing the configurational properties. These later “Gombrichean” figures do not make this mistake either, so perversely Gombrich is not Gombrichean, according to Hopkins (2012b); see Hopkins for further criticism of Lopes, Newall and also of Kulvici (2009). Wilson (1982) argues that contra Wollheim, Gombrich made no such inference, that he did not think of the two states as mutually exclusive; for a detailed discussion, see Briscoe (2018).

components: as in the last paragraph many pictures may involve two components, but on my view that is logically quite immaterial to their status of being pictures, to the definition of picture-hood.¹⁷

2. Photography and Sculpture

2.1 Photographs

An obvious and relevant difference between drawings and photography is that unlike the former, the latter are mechanically produced (see Scruton, 1981). Indeed it perchance happens that a photograph is taken by sheer accident, as when a dog steps on a camera. I assume then that the following is roughly true: except in anomalous cases, what an image photographically produced is an image is whatever happened to be in front of the camera the moment the shutter was snapped, irrespective of any intentions that might have been had at that moment.¹⁸ But merely dropping the requirement in the above definition that the marked surface be produced by hand would still imply, absurdly, that photographs are not pictures, owing to clauses (2) and (3).

However, the definition can easily be modified to include them. Photographs are produced by *cameras*, devices designed to produce images of whatever interacts with them in a certain way. Cameras are artefacts, and the presence of a camera in a certain place in the causal chain terminating in the photograph shows that the process is quite different from the production of a purely natural image such as a footprint. The relation of design or function plays a role in photographs analogous to that of intention in drawing or painting. In particular, it plays the role at one remove: a photograph need not be produced with the intention to be an image of an item in order to be a photograph of the item, but it must be produced by a device made with the intention that it produce images of the items before its lens (at a certain distance before the lens, but this will be left tacit).

What has to change in the definition is not the experiential basis of the picturing relation, but, primarily, clause (2), what in Wollheim's terms is the "standard of correctness" (see Hopkins, 1998, pp. 72–77). Thus an emended definition (with the term "marked surface" replacing "hand-marked surface"):

A marked surface is a picture of an item if and only if:

¹⁷ Largely because I have consigned two-folded seeing to a mere contingent feature of pictorial representation, I will not discuss the phenomenon of "inflection", which is the apparent fact that the two folds may interact in such a way that content is generated which is not present in either of the two folds individually; as in Podro (1998), Kulvici (2009) and Hopkins (2010a). Nor will I discuss further elaborations of two-folded seeing such as that found in Nanay (2018).

¹⁸ Are there not straightforward exceptions to this – for example, isn't a photograph of a man dressed up as Santa Claus not one of Santa Claus? Here I will set aside such cases; see Atencia-Linares (2012).

(1) competent spectators have an experience of spectrally seeing the item when viewing the marked surface, and

either

(2a) the item was before a camera at the time its shutter was snapped, which resulted in the marked surface being produced;

or

(2b) the marked surface was produced by hand-marking with the intention that competent spectators should have an experience of spectrally seeing the item and (3b) they are (at least implicitly) aware that they have the experience because they are viewing a marked surface that satisfies (2b).

Condition (1) implies that a photograph may fail: if competent spectators cannot spectrally see the item that was before the camera when viewing the photograph, despite their having good eyes, viewing the photograph in adequate light and so on, then what would have been a picture of the item will not be – it can be a photograph but will not be a photograph of the item – perhaps because there was insufficient light for taking a photograph, because something stood between the camera and the item at the moment the shutter was snapped, or some outright malfunction of the camera took place, the item may not have “come out” in the photograph, despite satisfying condition (2a). This is the right result, for cameras are indeed made for certain human purposes; a strictly causal definition of photography would fail to pick out the intuitive extension of “x is a photograph of y”.

A photograph may also fail to be a picture of anything recognizable due to the deliberate interference of the photographer, as in the case of certain artistic photographs. Condition (1) is doing the experiential work: it does not matter how warped or otherwise anomalous the image is, if competent spectators can see the item in the image then it passes the experiential test for picturing the item.¹⁹

(2a) renders the view consistent with the distinctive epistemological value apparently possessed by photographs, for it requires that the object was recognizably before the camera at the crucial moment (e.g., Abell, 2010a; Hopkins, 2012a). And if one does not realize that what one is looking at is a photograph, one fails to exploit the epistemological value of the photograph. But if one does know that one is looking at a photograph, then one knows that the object spectrally seen was in fact before the lens at the moment the shutter was snapped.

However, (1) might seem to be in some tension with Walton’s celebrated thesis that photographs are “transparent”. It might be said that on the present view one

¹⁹ So there is no difficulty represented by fisheye lenses and the like considered in Kulvici (2010, pp. 28–32); for broad agreement, see Pettersson (2011, p. 187).

does not literally *see* the object, which Walton requires even if one sees the object only indirectly; rather, on the present view, one only spectrally sees the object, even in the case where the sensory content of spectrally seeing an object via the photograph coincides with that of directly seeing the object (Walton, 1984).²⁰ Walton may think of his point as somewhat explicative in character – as outstripping the precision of the ordinary verb “to see”, in which case any tension would be merely verbal.²¹ But in any case, on both views, the object of a photograph must exist; it must be possible to talk about the object by fully-fledged demonstrative means. Thus if one knows that what one is seeing is a photograph, then on my account there is no reason not to allow that one may speak literally of one’s “seeing” the subject of the photograph, if indirectly. Granted the relevant existential premise, one spectrally sees the object of a photograph, but this is just what it is to see indirectly the object of a photograph.

Although this is broadly speaking an “orthodox” view of what photographs are, it is not entirely, and the view makes room for the insights of the “New Theory of Photography” of Lopes (2016) and of Costello (2018) (see also Atencia-Linares, 2012). A straight orthodox theory is the view that what suffices for being a photograph of an item is simply the item’s having causally interacted with a camera in the normal way (the relation between a photograph and its subject is said to be a “belief-independent, feature-tracking causal relation”). In Gricean terms, whereas a drawing of an object is a case of non-natural meaning, a photograph of it is a case of natural meaning, like the fraying of an armchair meaning the cat’s having scratched it; this underwrites a photograph’s ability to encode information, just as the activity of the cat may be inferred from the frayed armchair (Grice, 1957). Now according to the present view, the natural basis of photography is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the item’s being *pictured* by the photograph, for it leaves out condition (1). But setting that aside, my view is consistent with the New Theory of Photography because my view is a narrow view of what determines the subject of a photograph, whereas the New Theory is a wider account of the full range of artistic content embodied in photographs. I shall explain.

Much the impetus behind the effort to undermine the orthodox view is to do justice to the evident truth that photography is a type of art – that Ansel Adams, Diane Arbus and so on are legitimately called artists. The beliefs and intentions of the

20 There is also a tension between my view and the main claim in Cavedon-Taylor (2015), that the phenomenology of the experience of photographs is explained by the viewer’s endorsement of the contents of such experiences in an immediate and non-inferential manner, while in the case of handmade pictures they are not. If Cavedon-Taylor is right, then I would reply that he is describing the typical phenomenology of the photographic experience, but it is non-inferential in experience only because the inference is habitual and readily learned.

21 For a fine-grained analysis, see Walden (2016).

artist may enter into the determination of what is to be seen in a photograph, via any of the various techniques such as burning and dodging areas to selectively affect the development of the print; choice of film and photographic paper; choice of lens, shutter-speed, ASA setting, f-stop; choice of lighting; various types of digital enhancement and more affect the look of a photograph in aesthetically relevant ways including the thoughts and feelings of the artist conveyed by the photograph. The artist may also intervene in more radical ways, from painting on the developed film or directly on the print, to various kinds of digital alteration including Photoshop and the like, to the many types of more imaginative and sometimes category-challenging interventions discussed by Lopes and by Costello. In the vast majority of these cases, most will agree that these are nonetheless photographs, or at least that it is not stretching the ordinary term “photographs” to call them such.

The explanation for the lack of conflict between my account and the New Theory is as follows. A preliminary point is that it seems obvious that the practice of photography is not intrinsically an art. Intrinsically it is just the use of a certain technology, and whether or not the technology is employed artistically depends on the intention behind its use. The vast majority of photographs are mere snapshots, selfies or photographic records, taken with minimal or null artistic aims. But the fundamental point of the explanation is just this. If we look within the province of artistic photography, almost all of the artistic interventions mentioned in the last paragraph do not typically affect the identity of the subject of the photograph, but rather influence the properties or the perceived properties of the subject or the surroundings. Therefore the artist may have relatively free rein in affecting the look of the photograph, including the expression of his or her thoughts and feelings concerning the subject, without disturbing the basic relation represented by the definition above. From the spectator’s side, it may be necessary, in order to capture the full content of a photograph, to think of the photograph in terms of the activity of the photographer – the activity of the artist – but normally that is something additional to the mere identification of the subject of the photograph. As it is for handmade pictures, then, the place to look for conceiving the transmission of such properties is a theory of expression or expressiveness in photography, rather than a theory of depiction or representation in photography; the New Theory is indeed such a theory.

I say “normally” rather than “always” in the penultimate sentence of the last paragraph because I cannot rule out that there are cases where the identity of the subject of a photograph may be altered. Thus I must concede that certain Photoshopped photographs and the like may simply be hybrid images, partly photographs and partly pictorial representations of the type discussed in the last section, with the role of the artist being performed by the person or persons applying the photo-manipulating techniques. The more extreme cases discussed

by Lopes, such as *Betty* by Gerhard Richter, might be a case in point, or at any rate might be imagined to be a case in point. *Betty* was produced by painting-in photographic images projected onto a canvas by a slide projector. Especially if there were no woman intended by Richter to be seen-in the finished image identical to the woman who in fact posed for the photo, then perhaps not only is the image neither quite a photograph nor quite a painting in the ordinary sense, it is neither a case of (2a) or (2b) exclusively. It is an image partaking of both means of production. A special combination of clause (2a) with (2b) is thus called for, with (3b) perhaps also having to be invoked.

But the basic architecture of the view is compatible with the insights of Lopes or Costello. There is no reason why the full account of the intricacies of the art of photography of the New Theory cannot be embraced while adhering to the narrower view of picturing that I am pushing. Many of the other examples they discuss call for more elaboration of the theory outlined here, as again perhaps they do not fall neatly under the one or the other. But my interest here is to articulate and emphasize the idea that at the centre of *all* pictorial seeing, and therefore of the items seen in such seeing, is the experiential basis (1), not to work out anything like a complete theory of the art of photography.

2.2 Sculpture

In contrast with the subjects of painting and photography, the subject of sculpture, especially the subject of depiction or representation in figurative sculpture, has not received a great deal of attention in the philosophical literature. Perhaps the central and long-standing question has been the question of how to integrate the role of the kinesthetic sense with the visual sense, in articulating the experience one has when viewing a sculpture (von Herder, 2002 [1778]; Read, 1961; Vance, 1995; Hall, 2013).²² Of course it must be involved, but it is not strictly relevant to my concerns. A normal figurative sculpture does not actually have to be touched in order to be fully appreciated. If the kinesthetic sense must be involved, it does so via the interaction of the spectator's "off-line" kinesthetic sense with his or her visual apparatus, perhaps via Gibson's (1979) "affordances", or some other mechanism by which visual experience may be imbued with "tactile values", to misappropriate slightly a phrase of Berenson's. The one piggy-backs on the other. It is certainly not necessary for identifying the object represented by a figurative sculpture that one feel the sculpture, make physical contact

22 How exactly to draw the boundary between figurative and non-figurative or abstract sculpture, and whether this aligns with the distinction between sculptures which have subject-matter and those that do not, are considered in Rogers (1984).

with it, and nor is such contact necessary for grasping its representational content, where this includes properties of the sculpture or the subject of the sculpture.

The notion of two-folded seeing does not extend to *trompe-l'œil* representational pictures, and it is a non-starter for a general account of representation or depiction in sculpture (as Wollheim recognizes): in viewing a normal figurative sculpture in the round, it is plain that one does not have a two-folded experience – certainly one does not have a special visual experience of one thing “receding” from another as Wollheim describes it, when one knows that it is not so (Wollheim, 1987, p. 46). Indeed in the typical case, one’s awareness of the spatial structure of such a sculpture is exactly the same as in everyday perception of physical objects (although not for the case of relief-sculpture, discussed later in this section).

The notion of spectral seeing fills the bill perfectly, for it pertains ultimately to one’s cognitive attitude towards the object of vision, not to the peculiar nature of the object of vision. As might have been anticipated from my use of the story of the fox and the stone to introduce the notion of spectral seeing or the example of the Old Man of Stoer, the further widening of the definition to embrace figurative sculpture is straightforward. With spectral seeing made central to the account, facts about the actual shape of the sculpted object are consigned to a subsidiary role in determining representational content, a causal role suitable for an explanation of how sculptures with certain shapes in fact give rise to spectral seeing.²³ Such explanations may be simple, in the case of realistic sculpture in the classical style, or complex, for example, in the case of the works of Giacometti or of Henry Moore – exquisitely so, for example, in the case of the works of Richard Dupont or of Paul Kaptein.

I take it that the distinction between two-dimensional representations of three-dimensional objects and three-dimensional representations of three-dimensional objects forms a continuum or scale, with a comparatively large head and a large tail, having ordinary pictures at the head, ordinary figurative sculptures in the round (including busts etc.) at the tail, and the region between them occupied by relief sculptures, with their precise location on the continuum being determined by their degree of relief. By the “degree of relief” I mean the ratio of one scale to another – the scale for recession (the representing object’s size measured front to back divided by the represented object’s size measured front to back), to the lateral scale (the representing object measured laterally divided by the represented object measured laterally). Of course actual relief sculptures are often more complicated – the space may exhibit variable degrees of relief, most conspicuously – but this captures the basic distinction.

23 For an alternative, see Hopkins (2010b).

Thus the final definition, now replacing “marked surface” with “object”, and “picture” with “depiction”:

An object is a depiction of an item if and only if:

(1) competent spectators have an experience of spectrally seeing the item when viewing the object, and

either

(2a) the item was before a camera at the time its shutter was snapped, which resulted in the object being produced;

or

(2b) the object was produced by hand-marking with the intention that competent spectators should have an experience of spectrally seeing the item and (3b) they are (at least implicitly) aware that they have the experience because they are viewing an object that satisfies (2b);

or

(2c) the object exhibits a non-zero degree of relief such that its maker intended that competent spectators should have the experience of spectrally seeing the item and (3c) they are (at least implicitly) aware that they have the experience because they are viewing an object that satisfies (2c).

(2a, 2b and 2c) are the varying standards of correctness; and (3b and 3c) together represent the reflexive condition, absent in case (a). Condition (1) is the common, experiential element of depiction, and I put it that its importance is such as to justify my advancing a single multiply disjunctive definition rather than three separate definitions, even though of course there is no logical reason for this, only a pragmatic one. That what is demanded of the spectator’s visual apparatus in all three cases is the activation of spectral seeing, the very same capacity that is active in children when they see animals in clouds and the like, is, I assume, a conspicuous virtue of the account.

Natural phenomena are not depictions. The Sleeping Lady – Mt. Tamalpais – of Marin County fails to satisfy clause (2c) and (3c) and is thus disqualified. The same goes for footprints, or fossilized impressions which provide likenesses of creatures or plants that lived long ago; they are images or traces, but not depictions. Even so the definition is by no means an extensionally sharp one. To say whether maps and diagrams, or one of Louise Nevelson’s works, or an image produced with an electron microscope, qualify as depictions, is not here decided. And difficult cases in various further dimensions might be adduced.

2.3 *Film, video and drama*

As suggested in the introduction, standard films or videos, whether digital or analogue, whether animated or live action, do seem to qualify as depictions in my sense, with some adjustment to conditions (2a), (2b) and (3b) (see Abell, 2010b).

I will not develop the account along these lines except to offer the following remarks. The “item” that is depicted, the reader will recall, can be either an object or a state-of-affairs – thus such examples as the memorial to Jan Hus in the Old Town Square of central Prague straightforwardly qualify as depictions, despite comprising several figures disparate from each other. Likewise, we can generalize the notions “item” and “state-of-affairs” from temporally static or three-dimensional ones to ones explicitly involving a temporal dimension – to “four-dimensional object” or to “state-of-affairs-as-extended-in-time” (or to “temporal sequence of states-of-affairs”). Thus, for example, ordinary news-footage or a film showing a football match would call only for a small adjustment to the photographic disjunct, (2a). (It might strike one as odd that a case of ordinary news-footage should be called a “depiction”, but again ordinary language is not sacrosanct.) An animated film in the hand-drawn style would call only for an analogous adjustment to the drawing/painting disjunct, the conjunction of (2b) with (3b). For live-action dramatic film the situation is more complicated, since even in the simplest cases there are two figures involved, the actor and the person or role played. If I am right that the relation between the film – as projected or as appears on screen – and the events actually taking place before the camera can be handled with a straightforward adjustment to (2a), then the problem in effect boils down to the relation of an actor playing a role in a dramatic stage presentation. The question is therefore of how best to conceive the relation between live actor and role. It is partly because of the subtlety, diversity and complexity of this matter, and partly because a theoretical treatment of modern digital animation and video would be comparatively fussy, that I will not enter further here into the general question of cinematic depiction except to say that as far as I can see, there would be no reason not to retain the experiential core of my account of depiction.

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