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978-1-107-11511-8 - Beauty and Sublimity: A Cognitive Aesthetics of Literature and the Arts

Patrick Colm Hogan

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Beauty and Sublimity

Recent decades have witnessed an explosion in neuroscientific and related research treating aesthetic response. This book integrates this research with insights from philosophical aesthetics to propose new answers to long-standing questions about beauty and sublimity. Hogan begins by distinguishing what we respond to as beautiful from what we count socially as beautiful. He goes on to examine the former in terms of information processing (specifically, prototype approximation and non-habitual pattern recognition) and emotional involvement (especially of the endogenous reward and attachment systems). In the course of the book, Hogan examines such issues as how universal principles of aesthetic response may be reconciled with individual idiosyncrasy, how it is possible to argue rationally over aesthetic response, and what role personal beauty and sublimity might play in the definition of art. To treat these issues, the book considers works by Woolf, Wharton, Shakespeare, Arthur Miller, Beethoven, Matisse, and Kiran Rao, among others.

PATRICK COLM HOGAN is a professor in the Department of English, the Program in Cognitive Science, and the Program in Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of Connecticut. He is the author of seventeen scholarly books, including *What Literature Teaches Us About Emotion* (Cambridge, 2011), and *How Authors' Minds Make Stories* (Cambridge, 2013).

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Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	page viii
Introduction: why beauty?	1
1 Literary aesthetics: beauty, the brain, and <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	19
2 The idiosyncrasy of beauty: aesthetic universals and the diversity of taste	46
3 Unspoken beauty: problems and possibilities of absence	76
4 Aesthetic response revisited: quandaries about beauty and sublimity	107
5 My <i>Othello</i> problem: prestige status, evaluation, and aesthetic response	162
6 What is aesthetic argument?	178
7 Art and beauty	215
Afterword: a brief recapitulation, with a coda on anti-aesthetic art	245
<i>Works cited</i>	257
<i>Index</i>	277

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