



Preface

The Humanities through the Arts offers an exploratory approach to the humanities, focusing on the special role of the arts. Examining the relation of the humanities to values, objects and events important to people, is central to this book. We also make a distinction between the role of artists and that of other humanists: Artists reveal values, while other humanists examine or reflect upon values. The goal of this book is to provide a basic program for studying values as revealed in the arts, all while keeping in mind the important question “What Is Art?” As an introduction to the humanities, this book provides the tools necessary to think critically when exploring the arts and the other humanities.

Established Features

Our examples are taken almost entirely from the Western tradition. This does not mean that other traditions are less worthy. Rather, we simply chose to concentrate on our heritage—and mainly close to our own time—because this is where we are. However, the media, elements, principles of composition, and purposes of art in the Western tradition can often be applied to other traditions. Understanding the humanities in the Western tradition is a good starting point for understanding other traditions. Our many examples are based on the standard that they best illustrate the issues discussed.

Perception Keys are included throughout the text. Concentrating on specific works of art, these boxes include questions and suggestions designed to elicit a more thoughtful analysis. The Perception Keys allow students to immediately determine the extent of their understanding and encourage a critical thinking approach to works they see on their own.

This edition continues to be closely coordinated with the Telecourse “Humanities through the Arts,” based on this book. The course—produced by KOCE-TV and the Coast Community College District and distributed through Coast Telecourses—consists of thirty half-hour programs hosted by Maya Angelou. The Telecourse Student Guide to accompany *The Humanities through the Arts* (New York: The McGraw Hill Companies, 2004) was written by Richard T. Searles and revised by Joseph Rust for the Coast Community College District. This study guide continues to help students master material in the text and in the video programs by providing lesson overviews, learning objectives, assignments, additional readings, review quizzes, and suggestions for further study.

New Organization

The sixth edition has been organized into three parts.

- *Part I: Fundamentals* is the foundation for the rest of the text. In this section, we distinguish the humanities from the sciences and the arts from the other humanities. We introduce the question “What Is Art?” and discuss ways of responding to art and the vital role that criticism plays in art appreciation.
- *Part II: The Arts* includes chapters covering all of the major arts. This section has been designed for instructors to choose the order in which to cover chapters and even to skip certain chapters if necessary.
- *Part III: Interrelationships* studies the way the arts are related and, in turn, their relation to the other humanities. Chapter 13 explores how the arts relate to one another. Chapter 14 addresses what may be “artlike” and how to distinguish the arts from the artlike. Chapter 15 examines how the arts interrelate with the other humanities, particularly history, philosophy, and theology.

New Design

More color is incorporated throughout the text in an effort to be both pedagogically effective and aesthetically pleasing. In addition, many figures have been updated in order for students to experience these artworks as closely as possible without actually viewing them in person.

Additions and Updates

- In Chapter 4, “Painting,” we have added a new section on media, elements, and the principles of composition. This section can also serve as a model for the other art forms. A new Chapter 14, “Is It Art or

Something Like It?,” is closely tied to Chapter 2 and could be covered immediately after Part I for those that have a special interest in the philosophy of art.

- A timeline is included on the inside cover of the text to give students historical perspective. In the interests of space this timeline is not a comprehensive art history resource; it is meant to provide context for the artworks and people that are discussed in the text.
- In addition to relevant updates throughout, we have taken special care to include updated Web sites at the end of each chapter. The Internet is an incredible research tool for students and we have offered some of the best sites as recommendations for further exploration.
- Slide sets are available to all adopters of the book. Please call your local McGraw-Hill sales representative for details.

The reception of this book, since its first edition in 1975, has been enormously warming, reassuring us that the humanities thrive. We dedicate this book to the students and teachers who use it to examine their values through a lifetime of contact with the humanities.

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