

**THE MEANING OF PICTURES: SIX  
LECTURES GIVEN FOR  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY AT THE  
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF  
ART; PP.1-160**

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**JOHN C. VAN DYKE**

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# THE MEANING OF PICTURES

*SIX LECTURES GIVEN FOR COLUMBIA UNI-  
VERSITY AT THE METROPOLITAN  
MUSEUM OF ART*

BY

JOHN C. VAN DYKE

AUTHOR OF "ART FOR ART'S SAKE," "NATURE FOR  
ITS OWN SAKE," ETC.

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS*

NEW YORK  
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to

WILLIAM CARY BROWNELL

6198

## PREFACE

JUST how we should look at pictures, just how we should judge of them, is not for any one person to say. We all have our different ways of estimating art; and art is capable of being estimated in different ways. In these lectures I have endeavored to set forth the various points of view. The painter's conception has received perhaps the primary attention, but I have given the public's conception of the picture also. Nor do I mean to apologize for arguing both sides of the case. Art might be better understood, if there were less special pleading and theorizing about it. It is so largely dependent upon the individual make-up of the artist, that any precise theory about it must fall short of the mark. Instead of quarrelling over terms and trying to put the opposition in the wrong, it would be better frankly to examine the product in the light of the producer's intention and draw our conclusions from that. We should not always agree, but that is all the more reason for tolerance and liberality.

J. C. V. D.

RUTGERS COLLEGE,  
November, 1903.

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