

**WHAT IS A
PICTURE?**

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What is a Picture? by Various

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CHICAGO
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1909

PREFACE

THE following is an attempt to explain to the uninitiated what a picture is. The task is a peculiar one, and though the writer hopes that he may not fail in his endeavour, he is not too sanguine of success. He consoles himself, however, with the belief that if he has not accomplished what he has tried, his explanations, comparisons, and theories may put the novice on the road to Art comprehension in the widest signification of the word. Though he uses the word "Art" in various senses, the reader might kindly bear in mind that it is generally employed as meaning pictorial art.



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WHAT IS A PICTURE?

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS ART?

IN writing for the novice in pictorial art criticism it may be well to give a slight sketch of the history of art. The earliest evidence of mankind's interest in art is to be found in some of the rude productions of primitive man. His weapons and implements are discovered decorated with drawings of wild animals, and his cooking and other utensils are ornamented in a crude fashion. Among all savage nations this same elementary spirit of the artistic is found. When prehistoric man decorated any of his possessions, he reproduced the mental impression of what he saw, and it is invariably found that all his carvings or drawings of animals convey life and motion to a wonderful extent. He was, in fact, a true impressionist.