

Aristotelic Learning Through the Arts

Marini, G. (2014). Aristotelic Learning Through the Arts. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 33, pp. 171–184. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-013-9371-6>

Abstract

The field of Philosophy and Education seems to be experiencing a renewed interest in the work of Aristotle. As recently reviewed by Curren (*Oxf Rev Educ* 36(5):543–559, 2010), most of this attention aligns with the virtue ethics movement where themes like moral development in education, and the inquiry on human flourishing as the aim of education are prevalent. For sources, this scholarship relies heavily and extensively on the *Nicomachean Ethics and Politics*' Book VIII where Aristotle develops his single, clearly defined account of education. Among the short list of scholars who include *Poetics* in their research, their work seems to return to issues of morality and education (Carr in *J Aesthet Educ* 44(3):1–15, 2010; Gupta in *J Aesthet Educ* 44(4):60–80, 2010). This paper is an attempt to rediscover Aristotle's insights on the peculiar type of learning that the arts seem to favor. In order to carry on this investigation, I will first guide my argument towards Aristotle's remarks on *poiesis*. Then, I will focus on what constitutes the heart of *poiesis*, that is, *mimesis*. I will pay special attention to Aristotle's consideration of both *poiesis* and *mimesis* as ultimately dealing with what he calls "possibility." I will argue that learning in the arts entails the coming together of these three qualities. This would be a way of learning characterized by seeing human likenesses emerge as such in our interactions with artworks.

Keywords

Aristotle; *Poetics*; Learning; *Poiesis*; *Mimesis*; Possible.