

Beauty Restored: An Essay in Aesthetic Theory

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Mary Mothersill

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5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. jdocBy jdocA landmark in modern analytic aesthetics. Eschewing the twentieth century neglect of the concept of beauty, stemming from Wittgenstein, Austin and others, more than anyone Mothersill took issue with this. She changed the debate, and thanks to her the tide is now going the other way. But it was she who first made the big difference. It's also clearly written and well argued, though not everyone will completely agree with her. Nor should they.

In this book the author assesses the main trends of recent aesthetics and makes two important philosophical claims: one, that there are genuine (that is, true and demonstrable) judgments of taste, and two, that there are no principles or laws of taste. In a penetrating and insightful defense of these theses, Mothersill addresses the question of their compatibility and develops the contrast between aesthetic and ethical reasoning and between beauty and the sublime.