

ARTWORKS AS ABSTRACT OBJECTS

By

LORI CALLAGHAN

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Master of Arts

Department of Philosophy
University of Manitoba
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The Faculty of Graduate Studies
500 University Centre, University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2

Phone: (204) 474 9377
Fax: (204) 474 7553
graduate_studies@umanitoba.ca

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Artworks as Abstract Objects

Lori Callaghan

What is the nature of artworks, and how do they exist? These are the kinds of questions that the ontology of artworks is concerned with, and it is these questions that this thesis will address. This thesis will not address questions about the definition of art; rather, it will assume that there are artworks and explore the ways in which these artworks exist.

It seems that artworks of some art forms admit of multiple instances while artworks of others do not. It is generally accepted that there are numerous instances of a work of literature to be found in the world but only one instance of any given painting. Chapter 2 will argue that all art forms admit of multiple instances by defending Gregory Currie's (1989) *Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis*. While Currie derives it from his *Action Type Hypothesis*, I will defend it on independent grounds. Currie's arguments include the *Appreciation Argument* and the *Twin Earth Argument*, which defend the Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis by appealing to our ability to appreciate multiple instances in the same way we appreciate originals and by appealing to different artists following the same heuristic path in producing an artwork, respectively. Both of these arguments are inadequate, but a suggestion made in the Twin Earth Argument leads to the development of the *Properties Argument*. The Properties Argument says that correct copies and originals have the same aesthetic properties and thus correct

copies and originals are instances of the same artwork. From this, I will establish the Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis.

In chapter 3, I will argue that, given the Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis, artworks are abstract objects. I will examine John Dilworth's (2001) arguments for the non-identity of artefacts and their associated artworks. It will be shown that his arguments fails. I will use his style of argument, however, to show that hunks of materials are not identical with their associated artefacts. Having established this, I will examine some potential ways to maintain that artworks are concrete, but these will fail. We will then turn our attention to theories of artworks as abstract objects. These will include Jerrold Levinson's (1990a) indicated structures and Currie's action types. After rejecting both of these theories, I will present the Fusion-Structure Type Theory. This theory is similar to both Levinson and Currie's in that it takes artworks to be an abstract type, but on this theory artworks have different constitutive elements.

One intuition that many people have about artworks is that they are created. However, many people do not believe that abstract objects can be created and, if artworks are abstract objects, then artworks cannot be created. Some, like Levinson, argue that any theory of artworks must maintain that artworks are creatable, and I am sympathetic to this view. I will examine a recent debate in the literature between Julian Dodd (2000; 2002) and Ben Caplan and Carl Matheson (2004). While Dodd argues that abstract objects are not creatable, Caplan and Matheson argue that Dodd fails to show this.

Caplan and Matheson go on to raise a problem for artworks as abstract objects. The problem is persistence. If an artwork cannot persist, then we have no reason to believe that artworks that were created hundreds of years ago continue to exist now. Since we do think that a great number of those artworks exist now, we cannot accept a theory of artworks as abstract objects that does not allow artworks to persist. Both Levinson and Currie's theories fail on this account. On their theories, artworks can either (a) be creatable and not persist or (b) persist and not be creatable. The Fusion-Structure Type Theory, however, is a theory on which artworks can both be creatable and persist.

Throughout this thesis I will consider different forms of art, especially painting and music. The Fusion-Structure Type Theory of artworks applies to all art forms, but I will focus on specific art forms when giving examples or when discussing other theories that focus on specific art forms.

Chapter 2 – The Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis (IMH)

In this chapter, I will argue that all artworks are multiply instantiable. Specifically, I want to establish Gregory Currie's Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis (IMH). I will present Currie's arguments in favour of the position, but they will prove inadequate. Currie's IMH is a consequence of his Action Type Hypothesis (ATH), which says that an artwork is an action type that is performed by the artist. The action type is an event type possessing three *constitutive elements* and two *identifying elements*.¹ An event token of an artwork is denoted by

$$[x, S, H, \mathbf{D}, t]$$

where x is the artist; S is the structure of the artwork; H is the heuristic employed; \mathbf{D} is the three-place relation x discovers y via heuristic path z ; and t is the time of the event. S , H , and \mathbf{D} are the three constitutive elements; x and t are the identifying elements. Since Currie thinks that people discover the structure, x and t can be filled by multiple people and multiple times. Thus artworks can have multiple instances. In this chapter, however, I want to give independent reasons for holding the IMH. I will start by setting up the theory. Then I will examine Currie's main argument, the Appreciation Argument, which says that we can appreciate any correct copy of an artwork in the same way in which we appreciate the original. Next, we will examine Currie's other argument, the Twin Earth Argument, which is supposed to illustrate a case where multiple

¹ Currie 1989, p. 70

instantiation occurs. Finally, we will examine the Properties Argument, which is loosely based on a suggestion of Currie's but is one he does not present explicitly.

THE INSTANCE MULTIPLICITY HYPOTHESIS

Currie's IMH is the view that all art forms are multiple. Art forms, such as painting, music, etc., are said to be single or multiple depending on whether artworks in the given art form can be multiply instantiated or not. Art forms like painting and sculpture are typically considered single, because there can be only single instances of any given artwork, e.g. there can be only *one* instance of the *Mona Lisa*; all other instances are not genuine instances. Art forms like literature and music are typically considered multiple, because there can be multiple instances of any given artwork, e.g. there are multiple instances of Martin Amis's *London Fields*, which are all instances of the same artwork. Currie's hypothesis is "that any correct copy of the original is an instance of the work that the original is an instance of."² He maintains that everything we value aesthetically in the original instance of an artwork is available in any correct copy of the original.

Nonetheless, Currie thinks that we will always value the original more than any copy, not for aesthetic reasons but for historical reasons. Currie argues that historical reasons do not necessarily provide aesthetic value. Currie says,

² Ibid., p. 85

I may want to see the boots worn by Napoleon at Waterloo; I would be disappointed to learn that the boots on display in the museum are merely perfect replicas of Napoleon's boots. They would not satisfy me; the vital link to the past would be broken. But this concern is a purely historical one. The boots have, let us suppose, no aesthetic interest; they are not beautiful boots. So it seems that while it may be of interest to me that the canvas I am looking at be painted by the artist's hand, that interest is of a kind that arises in paradigmatically non-aesthetic situations. In that case there is no reason to think that the interest is genuinely aesthetic in kind.³

Currie puts the onus on those who would disagree with him to come up with an argument that shows why the historical link differs in importance, as an aesthetic feature in one case and not in the other, when it seems to function in the same way in both cases.

A correct copy of an artwork must be perceptively (pictorially, orthographically, aurally ...) indistinguishable from the original. This is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for being a correct copy of the original. It must also be the case that the copy has a causal connection to the original. Currie says, "All correct instances of the work must be such that their appearance counterfactually depends upon the appearance of the original, and that is not true of pictures that just happen to look the same."⁴ Two paintings, say, that look the same but have isolated causal histories are not instances of the same artwork. Currie employs the following example from literature⁵: Let Q_1 be Cervantes's *Don Quixote* and let Q_2 be twentieth-century author Pierre Menard's *Don*

³ Ibid., p. 102

⁴ Ibid., p. 122

⁵ Ibid., p. 122

*Quixote**. Q_1 and Q_2 are spelt the same but they are not causally connected. That is, Menard did not copy Cervantes's *Don Quixote* in any way; he wrote *Don Quixote** without any knowledge of *Don Quixote*. Q_2 is not an instance of *Don Quixote* because Q_1 could have been different while Q_2 remained the same. And likewise Q_1 is not an instance of Q_2 since Menard could have written *Don Quixote** differently and this would not have affected Cervantes' text.

The IMH says that multiple instances of an artwork are possible and that these instances must perceptually indistinguishable the original artwork and bear the appropriate causal relation to the original.

THE APPRECIATION ARGUMENT

According to Currie, what we appreciate in an artwork is the artist's achievement. Appreciating the artist's achievement involves understanding the artist's heuristic path, which is the place the given artwork holds in relation to other artworks of its kind and the problems the artist had to resolve in order achieve the end result.^{6,7} Of literary works, Currie says,

To appreciate the work fully we have to appreciate its history; we have to know things about the work that cannot be read off from the text. But if we have the relevant information about the work's history, and any correctly spelt copy of the text, then we are in a position to appreciate it.⁸

⁶ Ibid., p. 68

⁷ Some (*aesthetic empiricists* as Currie calls them) deny the need for information regarding an artwork's history in order to appreciate it. I will not here argue against the view; instead, I direct the reader to Currie's (1989) and Dave Davies's (2004) refutations.

⁸ Currie 1989, p. 94

And he says of the visual arts,

Now appreciation in the visual arts requires access to two things: to the pattern of the work (its visual structure) and to its history (heuristic). But if a copy looks exactly like the original there is nothing about the pattern of the work that one can learn by looking at the original that one cannot learn by looking at the copy.⁹

There is nothing important to appreciating an artwork that can be found in the original artwork that cannot be found in a correct copy of the artwork.

Currie's argument is that, if we can appreciate copies in the same way in which we appreciate the original, then copies are instances of the same artwork as the original. The argument is the following:

(P1) Appreciation claim: What is important to appreciating artworks is having access to the structure and the heuristic information.

(P2) Any correct copy of an artwork will give access to the same structure that the original does.

(P3) Access to the heuristic information is independent of the original or any correct copy.

(C1) So there is nothing that we can appreciate in the original that we cannot appreciate in a correct copy. (From (P1) - (P3))

(C2) Therefore, correct copies are instances of the same artwork as the original. (From (C1))

(C3) So artworks are multiply instantiable. (From (C2))

⁹ Ibid., p. 94

(C1) does not entail (C2). (C1) says that we can appreciate an artwork if we have access to an original or a correct copy (and have access to the heuristic). The original, then, has no aesthetic privilege; it does not have anything in virtue of being an original that adds something to the aesthetic experience that a copy will not also have. So copies and originals have the same aesthetic status. But having the same aesthetic status does not automatically get us the multiple instantiability of artworks. There is a bridging principle that is missing. What is needed is something like,

The Bridge Principle

If art objects x and y have the same structure and yield the same aesthetic experience, then x and y are instances of the same artwork.

This principle, however, allows too many works to count as instances of the same artwork. Say we have an original artwork, a correct copy of that original, and an artwork that looks exactly the same as both the original artwork and the copy of that original artwork but is causally independent of either of them. Let us name them 'Original,' 'Copy,' and 'Lookalike,' respectively. We want it to be the case that Original and Copy count as instances of the same artwork, but that Lookalike does not. The above principle fails to make this distinction. Lookalike has the same structure and, since there is nothing that bars us from attaching the same heuristic information to Lookalike that is attached to Original, we can say that it has the same aesthetic status as Original and Copy. Thus we have three instances of the same artwork.

The principle, then, must include guidance about what heuristic information can be attached to which works. Let us revise.

The Bridge Principle'

If art objects x and y have the same structure, yield the same aesthetic experience, and have the same heuristic path, then x and y are instances of the same artwork.

The problem with this principle is that Original and Copy will have different heuristic paths, because they have different manufacturing histories; they were produced at different times, with different intentions, and possibly by different means. Now it is the case that neither Lookalike nor Copy are instances of the same work as Original. Thus we do not get any instance multiplicity.

The principle must maintain the correct causal link between works. If the causal link is absent, we have no reason to believe that the works are instances of the same artwork; it could just be a coincidence that they have the same structure. Let us revise again.

The Bridge Principle''

If art objects x and y have the same structure, yield the same aesthetic experience, and bear the appropriate causal link to one another, then x and y are instances of the same artwork.

The appropriate causal link would mean that the structure of correct copies must be dependent on the structure of the original artwork as we saw above in the *Don Quixote* example. Even when x and y are both correct copies of some original artwork, they both depend on the original for their structure. If the structure of the original artwork had been different, then the structures of the correct copies would have been different in the same way.

Correct copies must be attached to the same heuristic information as the original artwork in order to ensure that they both yield the same aesthetic experience. The heuristic information is what fixes many of the aesthetic properties of an artwork. For example, it tells us if a given artwork is original in virtue of telling us what place the artwork holds in relation to other artworks. Correct copies will have different heuristics than that of the original; they will have different histories of production. While Leonardo painted the *Mona Lisa*, any correct copy made today will be produced by someone else.

The heuristic, however, is what allows us to understand the artist's achievement. The achievement is the structure that the artist produced. An artist might produce an object when she produces an artwork, but she is primarily concerned with producing a structure. We do not often think that, had an artist chosen a different can of red paint #241, the artist would have produced a different artwork. On a certain level it is arbitrary what individual materials an artist uses.¹⁰ The materials are a means of generating a structure. The same materials in a different arrangement would be a different artwork. It is the structure of the materials that determines the artwork. So, according to Currie, if the heuristic is attached to that structure, then that heuristic will be attached to any correct copy of that structure. The manufacturing history of a correct copy is not aesthetically relevant, only the information regarding the original production of the structure is relevant.

¹⁰ Dilworth (2001) also makes this point.

You might think that the artist's relation to the work is important in some cases, e.g. painting, while it is not important in other cases, e.g. literature. In literature we do not care about how the words look. Whether the author used Book Antiqua or Garamond for his font is unimportant. What is important is the way he chooses his words and constructs his sentences. Thus it does not matter what our copy of a work of literature looks like so long as we can read it. When it comes to painting, how it looks is important. The skill with which the paint was applied matters, because that skill is part of what we appreciate in an artwork.

Currie says,

we can appreciate the artist's skill or technique on the basis of an examination of a correct copy just as much as on the basis of an examination of the original. Of course, skill or technique is not something that is directly perceptible in the canvas: to appreciate it one must know something about, say, the means at the artist's disposal for putting on paint. But if, given that knowledge and exposure to the original canvas, one can appreciate, to whatever extent, the artist's skill, then one can surely appreciate that skill if a perfect copy is substituted for the original.¹¹

If the heuristic is a tool of appreciating the skill of the artist, then having a correct copy and access to the heuristic is all we need to appreciate the artist's skill.

The above principle makes a distinct claim: if two objects have the same structure, the same aesthetic status, and have the appropriate causal link, then they are both instances of the same artwork. Being instances of the same artwork entails that they are both instances of artworks. You could agree that one can appreciate the correct copy in the same way as the original but argue that this

¹¹ Currie 1989, p. 98

does not make the correct copy an instance of the same artwork or even an instance of an artwork. If an object has the same structure as an artwork, that does not make it an artwork. If I make a sculpture of my cat that looks exactly like my cat (say I even use hair that my cat has shed), that does not make my cat an artwork just because she happens to look like an artwork. Our ability to appreciate things aesthetically does not make them art, because we appreciate many things aesthetically that we do not think are artworks, e.g. sunsets. Having the appropriate causal link only means that the structure of a correct copy would have been different if the structure of the original on which the correct copy is dependent had been different. But sameness in structure is not enough to achieve arthood status. So, while Original is an instance of an artwork, there seems to be no reason to believe that Copy is also an instance of the same artwork or even that Copy is an instance of an artwork; it might just be a *copy* of an artwork.

The Appreciation Argument does not entirely convince us, because we have doubts as to the aesthetic status of correct copies. What remains to be shown is that correct copies possess *all* the same aesthetic properties as the original artwork to ensure that they have the same aesthetic status. If two artworks have all the same aesthetic properties, then there is no way to distinguish them as artworks; they are both instances of the same artwork. Before pursuing this matter let us turn to another argument Currie offers in support of the IMH.

THE TWIN EARTH ARGUMENT

Imagine that there is a planet out in the universe that is qualitatively like our own. Let us call it 'Twin Earth.' The history, the environment, and the cultural development are exactly the same as ours. Everyone on Earth, including Beethoven, has a doppelganger on Twin Earth who performs the same actions as them. Twin Beethoven, like Beethoven, composes a sonata having the structure of the Hammerklavier Sonata and in doing so solves the same musical problems in the same way under the same influences. Currie says,

There is no aesthetic feature of the one that is not an aesthetic feature of the other. Every judgement we would make about the one, *qua* art work, we would make about the other. Therefore, I claim, they each independently produce the same work.¹²

Currie thinks that we should believe that this is a case where the same artwork has been instantiated twice, once on Earth and once on Twin Earth. He thinks that these are instances of the same work, because they have the same structure and the same heuristic path was followed, thus ensuring that the constitutive properties of the artwork are the same.

If this argument does illustrate the possibility of multiple instantiability, it does it for only a limited number of artworks. The method of instantiation requires that one must follow the same heuristic path, which in this case seems to mean that one must live the *exact* same life as another artist in order to produce instances of that artist's artworks. But this seems to be too strict. It is unlikely that

¹² Currie 1989, p. 62

every single event in an artist's life leading up to the production of a given artwork will have some bearing on that artwork. As Dave Davies points out, "the buzzing sound emitted by the fly that sported unnoticed in the corner of the artist's studio while she painted the canvas" seems to be irrelevant to the constitutive properties of an artwork.¹³ This notion of a heuristic path includes too much. The heuristic path should include only the information that is relevant to the artwork; otherwise why should it be constitutive of the artwork?

Currie's Twin Earth Argument indicates that there is a second method of instantiation that is different from the method we saw in the Appreciation Argument. In the Appreciation Argument, correct copies have the same structure, yield the same aesthetic experience, and have the appropriate causal link. The multiply instantiation of pieces of canvas is what multiply instantiates the artwork. These pieces of canvas are the correct copies and they are attached to the same heuristic information as the original. In the Twin Earth Argument, the instances have no causal link. They are generated by the same type of heuristic path, so it is actually the action type that is being multiply instantiated.

These instantiation methods have different consequences for the ontology of artworks. For example, the Twin Earth Argument shows the possibility of the IMH only if you believe that artworks can be discovered. If you understand 'create' to mean 'bring into existence,' then the artwork produced on Twin Earth can be said only to be discovered, since Twin Beethoven does not bring into

¹³ David Davies 2004, p. 134

existence a new artwork, only a new instance of an artwork. We would not be able to say for sure that artworks are created on Earth either, since it might be the case that they were first created on Twin Earth. By contrast, the Appreciation Argument remains neutral on the subject of creation versus discovery.

The Twin Earth Argument allows only a very small number of instances to be produced, since it is doubtful that there is a large number of Twin Earths out there, if there are any at all, or that people on Earth often live the exact same lives. The Appreciation Argument, with its less stringent method of instantiation, allows for a large number of instances of artworks to be produced. Given that the Appreciation Argument is Currie's main argument for the IMH, it would seem that he would reject the small return that the Twin Earth Argument yields for instances. Currie argues for the IMH, because he thinks we can appreciate correct copies in the same way in which we appreciate artworks. This indicates that a large number of instances are possible, even in this world.

Currie offers the Twin Earth Argument as an intuition pump to show that artworks are not created at all but are discovered. On this count, he admits that he has not entirely succeeded.¹⁴ As we saw above, you could hold that artworks are created once and discovered thereafter. We could never know for sure that any artworks are actually created on Earth, and there would not have to be any causal connection between instances, but the Twin Earth case does not preclude the creatability of artworks. It is no less counterintuitive to say that artworks are

¹⁴ Currie 1989, p. 64

created and thereafter discovered than to say that artworks are never created and can be multiply instantiated without having any causal connection to one another. Our intuitions do not seem to be pulled more in one direction than the other.

The Twin Earth Argument requires people to live the exact same lives in order to produce instances of the same artworks, and that it is too strict; it will include things in the heuristic that are irrelevant to the production of the artwork. The Twin Earth Argument offers a second method of instantiation that will inform our ontology of artworks in different ways than does the Appreciation Argument. This method should be rejected, since it does not offer much intuitive force and allows for only a small number of possible instances, a consequence that Currie would likely reject.

THE PROPERTY ARGUMENT

Above, Currie says in the Twin Earth case that "there is no aesthetic feature of the one that is not an aesthetic feature of the other." Every aesthetic feature that the Hammerklavier Sonata has on Earth, it also has on Twin Earth. This says that instances of the same artwork will possess the same aesthetic properties. If we can show that correct copies have all the same aesthetic properties as the original, then there is nothing that distinguishes them as artworks. If there is nothing that distinguishes them as artworks, then they are instances of the same artwork. Let us formulate a new claim:

The Transparency of Aesthetic Properties Claim

If x is a correct copy of an artwork y, then x will have all the aesthetic properties that y does.

Correct copies will possess all the aesthetic attributes that the original does.

Correct copies will be vibrant or sombre if the original is; they will be well or poorly composed like the original; they will be Liszt-influenced if the original is; and they will be about the same thing that the original is about.

As we saw above, we might be able to grant that we can get the same aesthetic experience from correct copies that we do from originals and nonetheless be unconvinced that correct copies are instances of the same artwork as the original or even that they are instances of an artwork at all. One reason to doubt this is the difference in artistic intentions. While an artist intends to create an artwork, a copyist merely wants to generate a copy of an artwork. These conflicting intentions, you might think, constitute a difference in aesthetic properties between correct copies and originals. You might also think that there is a difference in artistic skill, since originals are the result of solving certain artistic problems whereas correct copies are the result of duplicating those solutions.¹⁵ This, again, brings up the fact that correct copies will have different histories of manufacturing.

To avoid these problems, we need to restrict the method of generating correct copies to machines.¹⁶ Machines have no intentions, so they cannot have

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 106

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 107

ones that will conflict with those of the artist. They do not exercise any artistic skills; they just make copies. It is true that machine-copying counts as a different history of manufacturing, but Currie argues that it still preserves the identity of an artwork. He says,

Anyone who wants to argue that a copy produced in this way [by a machine] is not an instance of the work would seem to be forced to the unwelcome conclusion that printing does not preserve identity within the literary work.¹⁷

He does not go into detail on this point, but we can flesh out what the argument might look like. When a machine produces a copy of a literary work, it produces a perfect structure. Suppose we have a super photocopier that can produce perfect copies of the paintings. In the first case, we think that the perfect copy of the structure and, perhaps, the absence of any conflicting intentions or skills is what preserves the identity of the artwork across its copies. In the second case, it seems, we should say the same thing. If the different history of manufacturing does not play an aesthetically relevant role in the first case, then an argument for why it would play an aesthetic role in the second is required.

You could object that in the case of painting the way that the structure is produced is important. Paintings are technically virtuosic in virtue of being skilfully produced by the hand of an artist. The machine possesses no such skill, so correct copies lack the aesthetic property of being technically virtuosic. But literary works are also technically virtuosic. Like the skilful application of brush

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 107

strokes, authors will skilfully apply metaphors, carefully select prose, and so on. It is true that the appearance of an instance of a literary work allows for some amount of variation without affecting the identity of the literary work, e.g. a change in font type, but the photocopier preserves the structure across copies in the same way it does for paintings: in both cases the appropriate structure has been copied exactly. In both cases the copies are not the direct result of skillful actions.

It is not the case that the artwork loses all sense of technical virtuosity. The property of being technically virtuosic is attributed to works after considering two things: the information about the problems that had to be solved and the end result (structure). Copy has the same structure as Original, so we have access to the end result. And Copy is also attached to the same heuristic information as Original, so we have access to the information about the problems that had to be solved. For example, in painting the *Mona Lisa*, Leonardo employed the sfumato style of painting. Sfumato is "the blurring and softening of sharp outlines in painting by subtle and gradual blending of one tone into another."¹⁸ The *Mona Lisa* is considered to be a remarkable achievement in the sfumato style. The structure of the *Mona Lisa* would be available in any correct copy of the *Mona Lisa*. You cannot readily discern just from looking at the *Mona Lisa* all the problems that had to be solved (and any ones that you can could also be

¹⁸ "Sfumato" 2003

discerned just from looking at correct copies). You need access to the heuristic information to find out about the sfumato style of painting and how the *Mona Lisa* compared to other paintings of this style in order to judge how remarkable the *Mona Lisa* is. Accessing this information is independent of any instance of the painting. Thus to make judgements of technical virtuosity all you need is the structure and the heuristic.

If the identity of a literary work is preserved across correct copies that result from a machine, then the same thing should apply to paintings. Thus we get the Transparency of Aesthetic Properties Claim: a correct copy of an artwork will possess all the same aesthetic properties that the original artwork possesses.

Let us now look at the new argument for the IMH. Suppose x is an original artwork and y is a correct copy of x .

(P1) If x and y have the same structure, the same aesthetic status, and bear the correct causal link to one another, then x and y are instances of the same artwork.

(P2) Correct copies have the exact same structure as the original artwork of which they are instances.

(P3) Correct copies have the same aesthetic status as the original artwork of which they are instances because of the Transparency of Aesthetic Properties Claim (if x is a correct copy of an artwork y , then x will have all the aesthetic properties that y does).

(P4) Correct copies will bear the appropriate causal link to the original artwork of which they are instances, because their structure is dependent on the structure of

the original artwork (if the structure of the original artwork had been different, then the structures of the correct copies would have been different).

(C1) Therefore, if y is a correct copy of x , then x and y are instances of the same artwork. (From (P1) – (P4))

One might want to argue that the artist never intended for his artwork to be reproduced, so any reproductions are not genuine instances of the artwork. There are, however, many things that an artist does not intend for his artworks. He does not intend for the canvas to deteriorate and need replacing, but it happens and we do not think that this strips the artwork of its identity. Beethoven did not intend for his music to be played on modern pianos, but it is and we still think that his compositions are art (we even think that they are still Beethoven's artworks). That an artist did not intend for his artworks to be multiply instantiated is not an adequate argument against the position.

CONCLUSION

Currie's Appreciation Argument fails, because it cannot properly demarcate originals and their copies from works that just happen to look the same. Works that just happen to look the same do not possess the correct causal link to originals and therefore should be considered different artworks. Efforts to add and revise a bridging principle for this argument failed to convince us entirely that Copy and Original are instances of the same artwork. Currie's Twin Earth Argument attempts to show the plausibility of the IMH, but it suggests

hypotheses that include irrelevant features of an artist's life in the constitutive elements of the artwork. The arguments for the Transparency of Aesthetic Properties Claim showed that Copy and Original possess all the same aesthetic properties. This, in addition to having the same structure and the appropriate causal link, gives us good reason for believing that Copy and Original are instances of the same artwork. Thus we have established the Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis.

Chapter 3 – Artworks as Abstract Objects

In this chapter, I will argue that the IMH entails that artworks are abstract objects. An abstract object is, roughly, something that is not located in space or in time. So far, it has been argued that there can be more than one genuine instance of an artwork. These multiple instances of, say, the *Mona Lisa* are the physical things we call ‘paintings.’ But these “paintings” are merely instances of the *Mona Lisa*; they are not *the Mona Lisa*. The *Mona Lisa* is an abstract object. Before examining theories of artworks as abstract objects, we will examine why artworks are not simply physical objects. First we will look at John Dilworth’s arguments or the claim that artefacts cannot be identified with their associated artwork. Then we will consider several ways in which artworks can be concrete objects. Having refuted these, we will turn to theories of artworks as abstract objects, including Levinson’s theory of Indicated Structures and Currie’s Action Type Hypothesis. Finally, we will examine a new theory of artworks: the Fusion-Structure Type Theory.

ARTEFACTS AS ARTWORKS

Dilworth wants to refute the claim that artefacts (he focuses on the allegedly singular art form of painting) are identical to their corresponding artworks. Call this the *Artefact-Artwork Identity Claim*. He proceeds by refuting two related claims:

The Necessary Artefact Claim

A necessary condition of the identity of a given painting is the inclusion (in some sense) in it of a given particular associated artefact.¹⁹

The Contingent Artefact Claim

A necessary condition of the identity of a given painting is the inclusion (in some sense) in it of *some* particular associated artefact.²⁰

The falsity of these two claims would entail that artefacts are not identical with their corresponding artworks. Dilworth employs Stephen Davies's (1991) definition of *(a)-type artefacts*. "In its primary (a) sense 'artifact' means that which is modified by work, by contrast with that which occurs in its natural state."²¹ Artefacts are the things we make. The wood lying on the ground is not an artefact; the chair I fashion out of the wood is an artefact.

It is not clear what the difference in scope is between the above claims. That a painting must be associated with *a* particular artefact or *some* particular artefact could be taken to be the same thing; they could be taken to have the same scope. The Necessary Artefact Claim does not identify any specific artefact, so it could be about the same thing that the Contingent Artefact Claim is about. It would not be clear, then, that the two claims are distinct claims. Let us disambiguate the claims by re-stating them in terms that specify better what Dilworth is trying to capture given the examples he uses (as we will see below).

¹⁹ Dilworth 2001, p. 355

²⁰ Ibid., p. 356 Original emphasis.

²¹ Stephen Davies 1991, p. 123-24, and Dilworth 2001, p. 354

The Necessary Artefact Claim'

A necessary condition of the identity of a given painting is the inclusion (in some sense) in it of the original associated artefact.

The Contingent Artefact Claim'

A necessary condition of the identity of a given painting is the inclusion (in some sense) in it of one associated artefact or another.

The Necessary Artefact Claim' restricts its scope to a specific artefact, the original artefact, while the scope of the Contingent Artefact Claim is wider; it can range over any artefact.

The Necessary Artefact Claim' implies that no given artwork that has an associated artefact can have another artefact substituted for the first artefact and maintain its identity as the given artwork.²² Numerically distinct artefacts guarantee distinct artworks. To refute this claim, Dilworth uses two types of examples: examples of type (A) point to the somewhat arbitrary nature of what materials are used to produce paintings, and examples of type (B) point to the practice of art restoration. To illustrate (A), he says that in painting the *Mona Lisa* Leonardo could have chosen different cans of paint of the same colours, and he could have chosen a different canvas on which to paint. In this case we would have an artefact made of completely different parts, but it would still be the same painting.²³ Thus we could have had the same artwork associated with a completely different artefact.

²² Dilworth 2001, p. 355

²³ Ibid., p. 355

To illustrate (B), Dilworth talks of an artist who restores her own painting when she discovers that the cheap paint she bought is peeling off and, later, that the canvas has significantly deteriorated.²⁴ The artist carefully removes the old paint and repaints each section exactly as it was and later peels the painting from its canvas and attaches it to a new one. In this case, again, we would have an artefact made of completely different parts, but it would still be the same painting. So the artwork would be associated with a completely different artefact.

The Contingent Artefact Claim' is less strict and allows for there to be some changes made to the artefact without affecting the identity of the artwork, but there would still be a specific artefact associated with the artwork. There are, again, two types of examples that Dilworth uses to refute this claim: examples of type (C) point to the reproduction of artworks, and examples of type (D) point to the simultaneous production of artworks. To illustrate (C), he talks of an artist who believes that a painting of hers has been destroyed and so she reproduces the painting exactly.²⁵ It turns out, however, that her first painting was not destroyed. So we have two paintings that are associated with the same artwork.

To illustrate (D), Dilworth talks of an artist who has a clear idea of what he intends to paint but cannot remember his actions of the previous day.²⁶ His assistant devises a way for the artist to concurrently create two paintings of the

²⁴ Ibid., p. 356

²⁵ Ibid., p. 357

²⁶ Ibid., p. 357

same artwork by swapping between two canvases. One day the assistant gives the artist the first canvas and the artist paints a section of it. The following day, the assistant gives the artist the second canvas and, since the artist does not remember his actions of the previous day but still has a clear idea of what he intends to paint, paints a section on the second canvas identical to what he painted on the first. The assistant repeats this swapping procedure until the paintings are finished. Both artworks were painted with the same intentions at relatively the same time. Dilworth says, “for each artefact ... , it is true that the painter intended *it* to be the first realization of artwork X, and neither has more or less claim to be a realization of artwork X than the other.”²⁷ Since there is no obvious way to distinguish the two artworks, they are both instances of the same artwork. So, again, we have two paintings that are associated with the same artefact.

Examples (A) and (B) make a certain assumption: the hunk of materials from which an artefact is made is essential to any given artefact. But is this true? Let us suppose that we have a hunk of wood. If we were to destroy part of this hunk, we would change the identity of the hunk, because it would be missing a part. The new hunk of wood would not be identical to the old hunk of wood. Similarly, if we were to replace a part of the hunk with another part, we would also change the identity of the hunk, because it would have new parts. Suppose we make a chair out of the hunk of wood. Let us also suppose that to be a chair is

²⁷ Ibid., p. 358 Original emphasis.

to fill a functional criterion: an object designed for sitting. If one of the bars that makes up the back of the chair were to fall off and be destroyed, the chair would persist, because it can still serve its functional role. The hunk of wood, however, has changed; it is no longer the hunk that it was before, because it is missing a part. The chair is therefore not identical with the hunk of wood. The chair is associated with the hunk of wood from which it is made, but the chair and the hunk of wood have different persistence conditions.

Since changes in the materials of an artefact can be made without affecting the identity of the artefact, Dilworth's arguments fail to show that the identity of the artefact associated with a given artwork would be different if changes are made to the associated hunk of materials. The hunk of materials associated with the artefact would be different, but the artefact's functional role remains intact (let us suppose that the artefact's functional role in this case is to be a painting). The identity of an artefact can survive a change in its materials, so the Necessary Artefact Claim' stands unrefuted, since it has not been shown that an artwork can be associated with different artefacts.

The Contingent Artefact Claim' can be refuted by the IMH, and this is what (C) illustrates. There is reason to believe that (D) fails, since you could argue that the artist has actually produced two different artworks. There is no causal link between the two paintings. The structures of these two paintings are dependent on the artist's conception, not on each other. The artist could have just as easily not produced one of the paintings without affecting the other. He could

have changed the structure of one painting without affecting the structure of the other. This absence of a causal link is good reason to believe that these two artworks are distinct.

There is a tripartite distinction to be made between an artwork, an artefact, and a hunk of materials (hereinafter called 'hunk'). Dilworth conflates artefacts with their associated hunks and argues that the persistence conditions of the latter differ from the persistence conditions of its associated artwork, so artworks are not identical with their associated artefacts. But the persistence conditions of the hunk are different from those of the associated artefact, so the argument fails. We can use the above Dilworthian arguments to refute the following two claims:

The Necessary Hunk Claim: a necessary condition of the identity of a given painting is the inclusion (in some sense) in it of the original associated hunk of materials.

The Contingent Hunk Claim: a necessary condition of the identity of a given painting is the inclusion (in some sense) in it of some particular associated hunk of materials.

The practices of art restoration show that a hunk that is distinct from the original hunk associated with a given artwork can be associated with that artwork without affecting the identity of the artwork. The IMH shows that there can be numerous hunks associated with a given artwork at one time. The falsity of the above claims entails the falsity of the following claim:

The Hunk-Artwork Identity Claim

Hunks of materials are identical to their corresponding artworks.

So artworks are not identical with hunks.

No argument has been given that shows that artefacts are not identical with their associated artworks. But how do artworks exist if they are both identical with their associated artefact (which is not identical with its associated hunk) and multiply instantiable? This is the question to which we now turn.

MANY OBJECTS AS THE ARTWORK

It is a common pre-theoretical intuition that artworks are physical, or concrete, objects. We will begin by trying to find a theory that maintains that artworks are concrete. One position you might take is that many artefacts are the artwork. If I were to put two paintings of the *Mona Lisa* in front of you and ask which one is the *Mona Lisa*, you would say that they both are the *Mona Lisa*. On this view you would not be saying that they are both instances of the *Mona Lisa*; you would really mean that they are each individually the artwork. Thus there are two distinct *Mona Lisas*. Let us call them 'ML1' and 'ML2.' If we have distinct *Mona Lisas*, then $ML1 \neq ML2$. But each of these artworks is supposed to be the *Mona Lisa*, or 'ML' for short. The problem with this is the following:

(P1) $ML1 = ML$.

(P2) $ML2 = ML$.

(P3) $ML1 \neq ML2$.

(C1) $ML1 = ML2$. (Transitivity and symmetry of identity, (P1), (P2))

(C2) $(ML1 \neq ML2) \ \& \ (ML1 = ML2)$. (Conjunction, (P3), (C1))

We have generated a contradiction in (C2), so one of the premises must be rejected. The argument from (P3) and (C1) to (C2) is valid, and the soundness of the argument rests on (P3) and (C1). The argument from (P1) and (P2) to (C1) is also valid, and the soundness of the argument rests on (P1) and (P2). We need it to be the case that ML1 and ML2 are both the *Mona Lisa* if we want to establish that many objects are the artwork, so we need (P1) and (P2). That leaves (P3) as the candidate for rejection.

The rejection of (P3) affirms that ML1 and ML2 are identical and, hence, not distinct artworks, which goes against the thesis we wanted to establish. If you do not want to reject (P3), you have to reject either (P1) or (P2). Rejecting either of these premises would mean that one of them is not the *Mona Lisa*, and this also goes against the thesis we wanted to establish. It seems we cannot establish the thesis that each painting is the *Mona Lisa* without violating a rule of identity.

A SCATTERED COLLECTION AS THE ARTWORK

Maybe you want to say that the *Mona Lisa* is the collection of all its instances scattered around space and time. To ensure the appropriate causal connection between these scattered instances we would say that the collection is governed by the following:

The Copy Relation

Any instance *c* of an artwork *a* must be such that its appearance counterfactually depends on the original instance *o* of *a*.

Only instances that are causally linked to the original instance can enter into the collection.

The scattered collection greatly resembles a *class*: “a collection of things defined by a common characteristic.”²⁸ The common characteristic would be the structure that the members of the class all have. Classes, however, are abstract objects, so a concrete theorist of artworks would deny that the scattered collection is a class.

Suppose we accept that the scattered collection is not a class. The Copy Relation says that instances must depend on the original instance for their appearance. Suppose further that there are currently two instances of the *Mona Lisa*: Original and Copy. Let us say that Copy was made about a year after Original and that, throughout the years, Copy was well preserved but Original was not. Original has fallen victim to poor environmental conditions and lots of direct sunlight, and thus a considerable amount of the canvas has faded away. If Fritz were to make a new instance of the *Mona Lisa*, then, according to the Copy Relation, the instance would resemble Original in its faded appearance. If an instance that looked like Copy had been produced after Original had faded considerably, we would have reason to deny it admittance into the collection. It is not, after all, a correct copy of Original. Now we have a case where an instance

²⁸ Martin 2002, p. 277

that greatly resembles the artwork when it was originally produced does not count as an instance of that artwork.

One could object that an instance that looks like Copy, whether produced a year after Original or after Original had faded, still counterfactually depends on Original, since it depends on how Original originally looked. This is to say that all instances depend upon the original instance at the time it was first produced. Our revised relation would be

The Copy Relation'

Any instance c of an artwork a must be such that its appearance counterfactually depends on the original instance o of a at the time t that o was first produced.

The scattered-collection theorist is fixing a specific structure that the instances are supposed to adhere to; the scattered-collection is fixing a common characteristic. At this point, even if you maintained that the scattered collection is not a class, you would have to allow that there is at least one abstract object – the structure of Original at the time it was first produced – that is included in your theory of what an artwork is. So, an artwork is not a completely concrete thing.

ABSTRACT OBJECTS

Since artworks cannot be identified with concrete objects and, yet, we think they exist, they must exist as abstract objects. The basic characterization of abstract objects, or *abstracta*, is that they are objects that are not located in space or time, and they cannot enter into causal relations. Putative examples of

abstracta are numbers, sets, and properties. The number two, for example, is not something we can find in the world. We cannot see it or kick it. We can find various instances of the symbol '2' or inscriptions such as the French word 'deux' out in the world, but these are not the number two. The number two is that to which these symbols refer. There is a sense in which no one created the number two; people only created the symbols that refer to the number two. So one might say that the number two was discovered and that it is something that has always existed and will always exist. The number two also does not enter into causal relations. It does not, for instance, throw rocks at windows and cannot be thrown out of a moving car.

By contrast, concrete objects, or *concreta*, are located in space and time, and they can enter into causal relations. Putative examples of concreta are things like tables and chairs. Chairs, for example, are things we can see and kick; they are locatable in the world. People create chairs, so they exist in time; they come into existence and will likely go out of existence, thus existing only for a finite period of time. Chairs can also enter into causal relations. I can, for example, trip over a chair, in which case you might think that the chair caused me to fall, and I can throw a chair from a moving car.

Now we will survey two of the main theories of artworks as abstract objects. We will begin by examining Levinson's theory of Indicated Structures and follow with Currie's Action Type Hypothesis. Both of these theories will be found unsatisfactory. I want to survey these theories for two reasons: (i) to give

the reader an idea of how artworks have been construed as abstract objects in the literature and (ii) to begin developing a characterization of the nature of artworks that will guide us in determining what sort of abstract object artworks are.

LEVINSON AND INDICATED STRUCTURES

Levinson focuses on musical works. His account of musical works is shaped by three principles: (1) musical works is created, (2) the identification of a musical work is dependent on its history, and (3) musical works include performance means.²⁹

Levinson takes the intuitive position on the creatability of artworks. He says that “there is probably no idea more central to thought about art than that it is an activity in which participants create things – these things being artworks.”³⁰ That a claim is central to our belief is no reason to think it is true, although its certainty might reflect its intuitive appeal. I do not think that we should ignore our intuitions, but our intuitions can be wrong. When exploring the nature of artworks, it seems important to remain flexible concerning questions of existence, especially when you do not believe that an integral part of musical works, the structure, is created.³¹

²⁹ We will not examine Levinson’s reasons for holding (3), since they do not greatly affect the shape of his indicated structures, the abstract objects with which we are concerned.

³⁰ Levinson 1990a, p. 66

³¹ Ibid., p. 65

Levinson's second, and even less compelling, reason for believing in the creatability of artworks is that it would take away prestige from the composers if they were not creators. Levinson says,

If we conceive of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony as existing sempiternally, before Beethoven's compositional act, a small part of the glory that surrounds Beethoven's composition of the piece is removed.³²

While I do not believe that it is the duty of the ontology of art to maintain or ordain esteem of artists, I am also not convinced that composers lose esteem if we assume that their works have been discovered. We esteem archaeologists and scientists for discovering things. It does not seem to be the case that we say of Einstein that, while he did do some smart work and discovered some nifty physical relations, we would respect him more if he had *created* something. Perhaps it is the case that the type of prestige we give to composers will have to change, but it is not clear that composers would lose esteem if it turns out that they are discoverers.

Levinson's argues for (2), that the identification of a musical work is dependent on its history, and concludes with the principle of *fine individuation*:

Musical works must be such that composers in different musico-historical contexts who determine identical sound structures invariably compose distinct musical works.³³

A musico-historical context is, roughly, all of social, cultural, political history, and musical history (let this include the milieu in which the composer finds

³² Ibid., p. 67

³³ Ibid., p. 73

himself, i.e. influences, styles, contemporaries, etc.).³⁴ The reason different musico-historical contexts yield different musical works is that aesthetic attributes are partly determined by the musico-historical context. Levinson gives the following examples. Had Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture (1826) been composed in 1900, it would not have been *original*.³⁵ If Beethoven had written Brahms's Piano Sonata op. 2 instead of Brahms, then it could not have been *Liszt-influenced* and would have been *visionary*.³⁶ If you take a possible world *Q* in which a given sound structure is composed in two distinct musico-historical contexts, then, "in *Q*, the works diverge aesthetically and hence are non-identical."³⁷

Levinson has a very strict notion of what counts as a difference between musico-historical contexts.

Even small differences in musico-historical context — e.g., an extra work in *P*'s oeuvre, a slight change in style dominant in *P*'s milieu, some musical influence deleted from *P*'s development as a composer — seem certain to induce some change in kind or degree in some aesthetic or artistic quality, however difficult it might be in such cases to pinpoint this change verbally.³⁸

His strict notion of a difference between musico-historical contexts is supposed to serve as means of individuating one musical work from another.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 69

³⁵ Ibid., p. 70

³⁶ Ibid., p. 71

³⁷ Ibid., p. 70, note 17

³⁸ Ibid., p. 71

Suppose that we accept Levinson's principles. From these he generates a theory of musical works as *indicated structures*:

$$\text{MW} = \text{S/PM structure-as-indicated-by-X-at-t},^{39}$$

where the musical work (MW) is a sound and performance means structure (S/PM) indicated by the composer (X) at a time (t). The act of indication is typically bound up in the creation of the score. The composer does not create the S/PM, for that is a pre-existing structure.⁴⁰ What the composer does create is the indicated structure that includes himself, the S/PM, and the time of composition. He discovers the S/PM and writes that down, and thus creates the indicated structure. Currie (1989) questions the metaphysical nature of this new entity that the composer has created. What happens when, say, Fleming discovered penicillin?⁴¹ Did he bring into existence the entity penicillin-as-indicated-by-Fleming? Is that a different entity from penicillin? Currie says,

It is hard to resist the conclusion that Levinson has merely postulated a kind of entity in order to solve his problem, without being able to tell us anything informative about that entity's nature.⁴²

It is not clear what this entity, the indicated structure, is, and it is not clear that these entities are purely art entities. They might not be meant to be restricted to the arts; but, if that is the case, then we seem to have a whole slew of entities that are created when people discover things. In fact, we could not have discovery

³⁹ Ibid., p. 78

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 81

⁴¹ Currie 1989, p. 58

⁴² Ibid., p. 58

without simultaneously having creation, but that is not what we think happens when we discover things in other disciplines. Given that we have no clear conception of what these indicated structures are, and the only benefit they seem to have is that we get the creatability of musical works, a principle that Levinson does not establish, we should not accept indicated structures as a theory of what musical works are.

CURRIE AND THE ACTION TYPE HYPOTHESIS

As we saw in the previous chapter, Currie's Action Type Hypothesis (ATH) is the view that a work of art is an action type that is performed by the artist. An artwork is an event token denoted by

$$[x, S, H, \mathbf{D}, t],$$

where x is the artist; S is the structure of the artwork; H is the heuristic employed; \mathbf{D} is the three-place relation x *discovers* y *via heuristic path* z ; and t is the time of the event.

Currie arrives at his theory by imposing five constraints derived from the inadequacies of other theories: (i) a pattern or structure is partly constitutive of the artwork; (ii) distinct works can have the same structure; (iii) multiple composition is possible; (iv) the composer's identity and the time of composition

are inessential elements of a work; and (v) appreciating art is appreciating a certain kind of performance.⁴³

Many charge that the biggest problem with the ATH is that it identifies works with the process of making the artwork rather than the objects that result from this process.⁴⁴ Currie says,

The work is the action type that [the artist] performs in discovering the structure of the work. So rather than create or discover the work, the artist performs it.⁴⁵

Artworks are not to be identified with, say, the sculptures found in museums; rather, they are to be identified with the performance of the artist that is instantiated by the event type: *x* discovering *S* via *H*. But that means that we rarely, if ever, have access to an artwork; we have access only to the structure that is a part of the artwork. Even if we attend a musical performance, we do not witness a token of the action type that is the work of art, because the activity of composition involved in the action type is not the sort of thing that is heard. On this account of artworks, musical works are never performed.⁴⁶ However, any theory of artworks as abstract objects is going to take us, at least a little bit, further away from what we pre-theoretically think artworks are. The real problem with Currie's position lies in constraint (v).

⁴³ Ibid., p. 65

⁴⁴ Budd 1990, Shields 1995, and Wolterstorff 1991 all make this point.

⁴⁵ Currie 1989, p. 75

⁴⁶ Shields 1995, p. 296 and Wolterstorff 1991, p. 80

Constraint (v), that appreciating art is appreciating a certain kind of performance, is where Currie gets his action types. If aesthetic appreciation is the appreciation of a certain kind of performance, then artworks are these performances. Currie holds that it is important to appreciating artworks that we know the means by which an artist arrived at a given artwork. This includes knowing what inspirations were employed and how they were executed, how original the conception of the artwork is, and the problems the artist had to solve.⁴⁷ This is the heuristic path. Currie says,

When we specify a composer's heuristic path to a sound structure we specify the aesthetically relevant facts about his actions in coming to that sound structure.⁴⁸

It is via the heuristic path that we come to understand the artist's achievement and that, according to Currie, is how we appreciate artworks.

Davies (2004) notes that there are serious problems with building heuristics into the individuation and identity of artworks. Are we supposed to be heuristic interpretationists or heuristic realists? If we are heuristic interpretationists, then we could interpret the heuristic path as "assessable in terms of various criteria for rational reconstruction," which would include only the relevant features of an artist's history.⁴⁹ This will pose problems when we have equally acceptable but different rational reconstructions of a given heuristic path. This would then mean that

⁴⁷ Currie 1989, p. 68

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 68

⁴⁹ David Davies 2004, p. 134

the creative activities of artists routinely issue in multiple works – for example, that Leonardo produced a number of different works in generating the arrangement of pigment on canvas exhibited by the *Mona Lisa*.⁵⁰

I do not think that Currie would accept this interpretation, given that he refers to an artist following only one heuristic path. Currie says,

[The critic's] job ... is to trace, as closely as he can, the artist's heuristic path to the final product.⁵¹

The heuristic path is constitutive of the work itself.⁵²

Never does Currie refer to the heuristic *paths* of an artist with regard to a single work of art. Rational reconstruction will generate several heuristic paths, but Currie should say that only one (or perhaps none) of these paths is correct.

However, if Currie were to use rational reconstruction, then he would not have a choice; there is not just one approach to art criticism. Gill says,

At a fundamental level, your definition of art is really your approach to art and how you evaluate art.⁵³

Rational reconstruction would almost always generate multiple heuristic paths, since there are numerous definitions of art (e.g. realism, formalism, etc.).

Even if Currie wants to be a heuristic realist – one who believes that there is a fact of the matter as to what the heuristic path is – there are some critics (e.g. the New Critics) who reject the importance of the heuristic path altogether. He cannot simply choose to ignore those critics that disavow the importance of the

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 134

⁵¹ Currie 1989, p. 68

⁵² Ibid., p. 69

⁵³ Gill 1993, p. 7

heuristic path because he thinks that the critical and appreciative practices of the art world should guide our theories of artworks.⁵⁴

Currie's ATH also faces problems of modality in its current form. The heuristic contains all the information that is relevant to appreciating an artwork (known to the artist or not). It is constitutive of the artwork, so the properties the heuristic possesses are ones it possesses in every possible world where it exists; they are essential properties of the work.⁵⁵ But Currie wants to deny this.

the theory I propose allows us to explain our intuition that certain modal claims like 'the *Mona Lisa* could have looked a bit different from the way it does look' are true. For on this theory there will be worlds in which the referent of 'The *Mona Lisa*' does look a little bit different from the way it actually looks. And this is not because the action types that I identify with works do not have their structures essentially – they do – but because names of art works are non-rigid.⁵⁶

Rigid designators are names that designate the same thing in all possible worlds where they designate anything at all. Names of artworks, Currie claims, are non-rigid and can denote different action types in different possible worlds. How much deviation is possible between action types is "globally determined," which is some sort of balancing of deviations and the role that the artwork plays in a given possible world.⁵⁷ Currie accepts that this makes all the properties of an artwork non-essential. For every property P that an artwork actually possesses in

⁵⁴ Currie 1989, p. 11

⁵⁵ David Davies 2004, p. 139

⁵⁶ Currie 1989, p. 84

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 83

this world, there is a possible world where it lacks P,⁵⁸ and it can possess properties in other possible worlds that it does not possess here. This does, however, commit Currie to the following:

Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* could exist in a world in which there are no paintings like those of Cézanne, and Nyman could have created his music to *Drowning by Numbers* in the absence of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante*.⁵⁹

If you believe that Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* was a response to the paintings of Cézanne, then you might want to deny that *Les Femmes d'Alger* could exist in a world where Cézanne's paintings do not. Michael Nyman admits that *Drowning by Numbers* is "a series of variations on the melody that closes the slow movement of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* for violin, viola, and orchestra."⁶⁰ You might not believe that the music to *Drowning by Numbers* could exist in a world where Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* does not. You might believe that it is essential to the production of these artworks that they have these influences. If so, if you believe that an artwork has some properties essentially, you should reject Currie's position.

There are also some ontological consequences of the ATH that you might want to resist. If you are a realist about action types – if you believe that action types exist independently of their tokens – then you are committed to the

⁵⁸ David Davies 2004, p. 140

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 140

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 111

existence of an indefinite number of undiscovered artworks.⁶¹ If you believe that artworks are the sorts of things that are created (a topic we will get into in the next chapter), then you will want to resist this consequence.

Currie fails to establish constraint (v) that says that appreciating art is appreciating a certain kind of performance. Some people believe that the heuristic path is unimportant to appreciating artworks. For those who think it is important, there are problems specifying the heuristic path that lead to the multiple generation of artworks when we think only one artwork has been produced, or there are epistemic problems with establishing the correct heuristic path that will lead to problems in identifying and individuating artworks. Since (v) is what was supposed to push us towards the ATH, and there are also modal and ontological consequences of the ATH that we might want to avoid, we should reject the ATH.

ARTWORKS AS FUSION-STRUCTURE TYPES

So what sort of abstract object are artworks? Let us start by identifying the essential elements of an artwork. In the previous chapter, it was argued that structures are what artists are primarily concerned with producing. Most theories, including both of the above, say that the structure is essential. So we will start by assuming that the structure is an essential element of an artwork.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 136

It is also essential that the artwork has instances. If it is inessential that an artwork has instances, then we have no reason to ignore artworks that are never instantiated. Hypothetical artworks would then have the same status as actual artworks, and this is simply not the case. So we will say that the instances of an artwork are an essential element of it.

We will begin constructing our theory with these two elements. I do not think that they exhaust all the features that are important to appreciating an artwork, but I think that they do exhaust the features that are important to the existence of an artwork. Unlike Currie and Levinson, I do not think that everything we appreciate in an artwork is what the artwork is. This thesis is concerned with how artworks exist, not with how they are to be appreciated.

Thus far, an artwork is to be understood as essentially being a structure and having a number of instances. According to the IMH, there is no maximum number of instances that an artwork can have. We do not want to build into the identity of an artwork a specific number of instances, so we will assume that an artwork has as one of its essential elements a *fusion* of instances. A fusion is “an object that contains every member of [a] class as a part and is such that each of its parts overlaps some member of the class.”⁶² Every instance of an artwork is a part of the fusion.

An artwork cannot just be the fusion of its instances. There must be something that governs what can be parts of the fusion. Anything can be a part

⁶² Sider 2001, p. 58

of a fusion, but only instances of the *Mona Lisa* can be parts of the fusion of the *Mona Lisa*. The structure will govern the fusion by admitting only those instances that adhere to the Copy Relation'. This relation ensures that every part of a fusion will have the appropriate causal link to the original instance of the artwork.

We will likely need to revise the Copy Relation' for different art forms to cater to the variety of things that can be associated with an artwork. For example, in music there are scores, performances, and recordings, which can all be associated with a given musical work. The score is not identical to any recording, and recordings will differ from performances in a number of ways. But all of these share the same structure. There is no reason to leave any of these out of the fusion of a musical work, so we might need, in the case of music, to revise the Copy Relation' in the following way:

The Copy Relation for Music

Any instance c of a musical work a that is a score must be such that its appearance counterfactually depends on the original score o of a at the time t that o was first produced and any instance p of a that is a performance or a recording of a must be such that it is played in accordance with the instructions that o dictates.

Granted, this relation might need revision if it is to serve as the Copy Relation for music, but it can be seen how we can tailor the Copy Relation' to suit our needs in the different art forms. Instances will nonetheless be governed by some form of the Copy Relation', which will preserve the causal link between correct copies

and originals so that copies that just happen to look, or sound, the same are not counted as instances of the same artwork.

An artwork, then, is a type that has as its essential entities the structure and the fusion of its instances that is governed by the Copy Relation'. Call this the *Fusion-Structure Type Theory* of artworks (or 'FST' for short). Notice that this is similar to the Scattered Collection theory we saw above. The Scattered Collection theory said that an artwork is the collection of all its instances, but we saw that it had to admit one abstract object, a structure, as an essential element of any given artwork. But an essential element is not always a constitutive element.

Essential Properties

The essential properties of an entity are properties it must possess in every counterfactual situation in which it exists.⁶³

Constitutive Properties

The constitutive properties of an entity are an ordered pair comprising its individuating conditions and the sortal under which it is properly individuated.⁶⁴

It might be an essential property of me that I have blood, skin, and bones, but this does not serve as an individuating property; it cannot tell me apart from other entities made of blood, skin, and bones. Constitutive properties are what serve to identify an entity of a given type. So, a Scattered Collection theorist could grant that the structure of an artwork is an essential property of an artwork but argue that it is not a constitutive property. If the structure is not a

⁶³ David Davies 2004, p. 122

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 123

constitutive property of an artwork, then it is not fundamentally part of what an artwork is.

Davies argues that all and only the essential properties of an artwork are its constitutive properties.⁶⁵ If you take the names of artworks to be rigid designators – names that designate the same object in every possible world in which it exists – then, when we ask about the modal properties of a work, we are asking for those properties that the work must have in all possible worlds. The constitutive properties of a work are what distinguish it as, say, a painting and are what individuate it from other paintings. Davies says, “however, they are presumably the very properties that allow us to make sense of talking counterfactually about one work ... rather than another work that differs from this in some constitutive property.”⁶⁶ So, if the names of artworks are rigid designators, then the essential properties of an artwork are the constitutive properties of the entity that is the work in the actual world. So, if the structure and the instance(s) of an artwork are essential to it, then the structure and the instance(s) are constitutive of it.

If names of artwork are not rigid designators and are definite descriptions, then we can give either a *de re* or a *de dicto* reading to modal claims such as “S could have been Θ .”⁶⁷ On a *de re* reading, we treat the definite description as a rigid designator, since what we want to know is what modal properties S has in

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 123

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 124

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 124

the actual world, so the same thing as the above applies. On a *de dicto* reading, we want to know what the necessary or contingent properties are of entities in different possible worlds that fit the descriptions associated with *S*. In this case, there are no constitutive properties, other than its being a type of thing, because no property must be shared by all the entities that fit the descriptions associated with *S*. So, if artworks have constitutive properties, then artworks are denoted by rigid designators.

If the above is true, then there is never a separation between the essential and constitutive properties of an entity denoted by a rigid designator. But this seems false. Suppose that 'water' is a rigid designator. In the actual world, it is an essential property of water that its chemical composition is H_2O , but in some possible world water's chemical composition could be XYZ. According to the above argument, since 'water' is a rigid designator and its chemical composition at the actual world of H_2O is an essential property, then it is a constitutive property of water that its chemical composition is H_2O ; part of what it is to be water is to have that chemical composition. This means that "water" at the possible world is not actually water, because it has a different chemical composition, even though it resembles water in every other possible way. It is just not the case that every essential property is a constitutive property.

Even though Davies's argument fails, I still think that in art the essential properties of an artwork are its constitutive properties. The structure, for instance, of an artwork is an essential property, because all instances must have

the same structure; and it is a constitutive property, because it helps to individuate one artwork from another. I am not sure what the guiding principle of the relation between essential properties and constitutive properties should be, but it seems that there is some connection between those properties an entity must have and those properties that serve to individuate the entity from other entities. Can there be constitutive properties that are not essential properties? If constitutive properties are the identifying properties, then it seems that at least some of them will be essential properties.

Another objection to this theory is that fusions lack the right modal properties. Suppose that at the actual world the fusion that is the *Mona Lisa*, call it 'ML,' has eight parts and that at another possible world the fusion that is the *Mona Lisa*, call it 'ML'', has nine parts. Since fusions have their parts essentially, and ML has a different number of parts than ML', it is not the case that ML is identical with ML'. The argument is the following:

(P1) ML is a fusion with nine parts.

(P2) ML' is a fusion with eight parts.

(P3) $ML = ML'$.

(P4) Fusions have their parts essentially.

(C1) $ML \neq ML'$. (From (P1), (P2), (P4))

(C2) Therefore, $(ML = ML') \ \& \ (ML \neq ML')$. (Conjunction of (P3), (C1))

We have generated a contradiction in (C2), so one of the premises must be rejected. Given that (P1) and (P2) are true by stipulation in the example, and that (P4) is true by definition, (P3) is the most likely candidate for rejection.

This means that, on a fusion theory of artworks, a difference in the number of artefacts is sufficient to change the identity of an artwork. If the *Mona Lisa* had a different number of instances than it actually does, it would have been a different artwork. This is not a feature of artworks that usually has any bearing on their identity conditions. The IMH does not set limits on the number of instances that can be made of a given artwork. It preserves the identity of an artwork across its instances in virtue of preserving the aesthetic properties of the artwork, and the number of instances is not one of these properties. The fusion theory of artworks fails, because it allows a non-essential feature of artworks, the number of instances, to change the identity of the artwork.

The above is common objection raised against fusions, but it relies on an erroneous assumption. There is nothing in the definition of a fusion that says that a fusion has its parts essentially.⁶⁸ Recall that the definition of a fusion is “an object that contains every member of [a] class as a part and is such that each of its parts overlaps some member of the class.”⁶⁹ Classes and sets have their members essentially by definition, but a fusion does not. You can make a fusion out of a class or a set by taking their members to be the parts of a fusion, but this does not

⁶⁸ In conversation, Ben Caplan made me aware of this point.

⁶⁹ Sider 2001, p. 58

make the fusion a class or a set. A fusion, then, can lose and gain parts without affecting its identity. So a fusion can have a different number of parts in another possible world and still be identical with the fusion at the actual world.

CONCLUSION

It would seem, then, that, whatever artworks are, they are not identical with concrete objects. The view that many objects are the artwork violates a rule of identity. A scattered collection is either a class or at least must maintain that there is an abstract structure that is part of the artwork. We surveyed two of the major positions currently in the literature and found them both unacceptable. Levinson's Indicated Structures are mysterious entities whose only apparent benefit lies in their creatability, the desirability of which he never establishes. Currie fails to establish the constraint that appreciating art is appreciating a certain kind of performance, the constraint that motivates his ATH, so we have no reason to accept his theory. The FST maintains that an artwork has a structure and that it has instances. It is also compatible with the IMH, since the number of instances, or parts, will not affect the identity of the fusion. In the next chapter we will see how well the FST fits with other intuitions that we have about artworks.

Chapter 4 – Creatability, Persistence, and Fusion-Structure Types

In this chapter I want to establish the creatability of artworks. As Levinson puts it,

The Creatability Requirement

Musical works must be such that they do *not* exist prior to the composer's compositional activity, but are *brought into existence by* that activity.⁷⁰

I agree with Levinson that it is a strong intuition about art that artworks are created. Much of the resistance to the creatability of artworks is rooted in a general resistance to the creatability of abstract objects. In this chapter, we will examine a recent dispute in the literature between Julian Dodd, who holds that abstract objects cannot be created, and Ben Caplan and Carl Matheson, who hold Dodd has not shown this to be the case. Even though Caplan and Matheson make a good case for the creatability of abstract objects, and, hence, artworks, they raise doubts regarding the ability of artworks as abstract objects to persist. While some types will fall short of satisfying both the Creatability Requirement and the Persistence Requirement, it will be argued that at least one type, fusion-structure types, can meet both.

CREATABILITY

Julian Dodd takes the position that abstract objects cannot be created. He says,

⁷⁰ Levinson 1990a, p. 68 Original emphasis.

the creation of an abstract object would have to be a kind of causal interaction between a person and an abstract object or objects; and abstracta cannot enter into such interactions.⁷¹

The inability of abstract objects to enter into causal relations prevents them from being created as the product of some such interaction. Since we have established that artworks are abstract objects, this means that artworks are not the sort of thing that can be created. The argument is the following:

(P1) To be created, one must be able to enter into causal relations.

(P2) Abstract objects cannot enter into causal relations.

(P3) Artworks are abstract objects.

(C1) Therefore artworks cannot be created. (From (P1), (P2), and (P3))

The argument is valid, so we must reject one of the premises in order to reject the conclusion. (P1) is a widely accepted claim,⁷² and we will not take issue with it here. (P3) was established in the previous chapter, so we are left with (P2) as a candidate for rejection.

There are purported to be at least some abstract objects that violate (P2): namely, events. Some philosophers take events to be abstract objects⁷³ and most take events to be the relata of causal relations.⁷⁴ So, while it might not be the case that (P2) is true of all abstract objects, you could argue that events are the only

⁷¹ Dodd 2000, p. 431

⁷² Caplan and Matheson 2004, p. 116

⁷³ Kim 1976; Lewis 1986

⁷⁴ Caplan and Matheson 2004, p. 119

abstract objects that can enter into causal relations. Our new argument looks like this:

(P1) To be created, one must be able to enter into causal relations.

(P2') Abstract objects, other than events, cannot enter into causal relations.

(P3') Artworks are abstract objects, but are not events.

(C1) Therefore artworks cannot be created. (From (P1), (P2'), and (P3'))

Again, the argument is valid. We will maintain (P1) for the same reasons as before, but now we have two candidates for rejection: (P2') and (P3').

(P2') indicates that events are a special sort of abstract object, but why can one abstract object enter into causal relations when others cannot? First we need to have a clear idea of what it is for something to be in a causal relation. If a rock flies through a window pane, we would say that the rock broke the window.

But, if strictly speaking events are the causal relata of the causal relation, then this rock and that window can enter into causal relations only derivatively, in virtue of somehow participating in events ... that are themselves causally related.⁷⁵

And, as Caplan and Matheson go on to point out, there is no robust theory of what it is for an object to participate in an event and be causally relevant in the same way that the event is.⁷⁶ They say, "in the absence of such a theory, we have no reason to deny that, in virtue of participating in events that enter into causal relations, abstract objects can also enter into causal relations."⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 120

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 120

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 120

At this point, you might, as a means of avoiding the above consequence, want to say that only events enter into causal relations. If, however, you say that, then you are committed to saying that concrete objects, other than events, do not enter into causal relations. By (P1), then, concrete objects cannot be created (if events are abstract). Since this is false, it does not seem that we can avoid the aforementioned consequence.

Some philosophers take artworks to be events, so there might be reason to doubt (P3'), that artworks are not events. According to Currie, artworks are event types that are performed by artists.⁷⁸ According to Davies, artworks are event tokens, or *doings*, that are performed by artists.⁷⁹ So artworks might be the sort of thing that can enter into causal relations.

So what abstract objects are candidates for creation? So far we have talked about events, sets, types, and properties, but can these abstract objects meet the Creatability Requirement? Events are creatable insofar as one can cause an event to happen. If one can cause, or bring into existence, an event, then events meet the Creatability Requirement.

A set is a collection, and things that are in a set are called its members. For example, the natural numbers are a set, and each number is a member of that set. If a set exists only when its members do, then the singleton set whose sole member is the Eiffel Tower was brought into existence when it was built. If, as

⁷⁸ Currie 1989, p. 71

⁷⁹ David Davies 2004, p. 169-76

mentioned above, we understand 'create' to mean 'bring into existence,' then the singleton set of the Eiffel Tower was created when it was built. So sets are creatable.

Dodd tries to resist the above by stating that such sets are not actually created but only brought into existence.

Of course, once the Eiffel Tower was built, the singleton containing the Eiffel Tower thereby came into existence, but the fact that such sets can come in and go out of existence does not violate the principle of the causal inertness of abstracta: the causal process in this case involved people and bits of metal, the coming to being of the set being an ontological free lunch.⁸⁰

Dodd admits that there is a causal process involved in bringing the singleton set containing the Eiffel Tower into existence, but he denies that this entails that it was created. The difference seems to be that, if an object is created, it is causally active (or acted upon); and, if it is brought into existence, it is causally inert. Why this is so is not clear; but, even if we grant Dodd's distinction between being created and being brought into existence, Caplan and Matheson argue that being brought into existence might be enough to satisfy the Creatability Requirement.

As Levinson states it, for example, the requirement is not that a musical work be such that a composer can *cause* it to come into existence; rather, it is that a musical work be such that it can be *brought* into existence by a composer's compositional activity.⁸¹

So, even on Dodd's view, sets can satisfy the Creatability Requirement.

⁸⁰ Dodd 2002, p. 397

⁸¹ Caplan and Matheson 2004, p. 123 Original emphasis.

A type is a category, and things that are members of the category are tokens of the type. For example, a cat is a certain type of animal, and all animals that are cats are tokens of the type cat. Dodd argues against the creatability of types with the following argument:⁸²

(P1) The type *K* exists if and only if the property *being a k* exists.

(P2) The property *being a k* exists if and only if it is instantiated now, was instantiated in the past, or will be instantiated in the future.

(C1) So, if type *K* exists at all, it exists at all times. (From (P1) and (P2))

(P3) For any type *K*, if *K* exists at all times, then no type *K* can come into existence.

(C2) Therefore types cannot come into existence. (From (C1) and (P3))

The argument from (P1) and (P2) to (C1) and the argument from (C1) and (P3) to (C2) are both valid. I will follow Caplan and Matheson in assuming (P1),⁸³ which is derived from Wolterstorff's theory of types.⁸⁴ (P3) is true, since nothing can come into existence unless it did not exist at some prior point. That leaves (P2) as a candidate for rejection.

(P2) says that properties exist eternally. It is sometimes called

The Principle of Instantiation

A property *F* exists at a time *t* if and only if there is a time *t*^{*} such that *t*^{*} is either before, after, or identical to *t* and *F* is instantiated at *t*^{*}.⁸⁵

⁸² Dodd 2000, pp. 435-36 in Caplan and Matheson 2004, p. 125

⁸³ Caplan and Matheson 2004, p. 125-26

⁸⁴ Wolterstorff 1980, p. 51 in Caplan and Matheson 2004, p. 126

⁸⁵ Armstrong 1989, pp. 75-76 in Caplan and Matheson 2004, p. 126

If a certain property will never be instantiated, then it does not exist. We might be able to talk of such properties, for example, *being a round square*, but the property is not an actually existing property and never will be.

Dodd thinks that properties are *immanent* – found in the ordinary world of space and time – as opposed to *transcendent* – found outside the ordinary world of space and time.⁸⁶ If you hold that properties are immanent, then you are subject to the following question: where are properties located?

Normally, philosophers who think that properties are immanent say that properties are located where their instances are. But *F* is not instantiated now, so it has no instances now. Philosophers who think that properties are immanent should thus deny that *F* can exist now, even though it is not instantiated now.⁸⁷

The argument is the following:

(P1) Properties are immanent; they are found in the ordinary world.

(P2) If properties are found in the ordinary world, then they are located in their instances.

(P3) For any property *F* at time *t*, if *F* has no instance at *t* then *F* is not found in the ordinary world at *t*.

(P4) If *F* is not located in the ordinary world at *t*, then *F* does not exist at *t*.

(C1) If *F* has no instance at *t*, then *F* does not exist at *t*. (From (P1) – (P4))

The argument is valid and has as a consequence that properties only exist when they are instantiated; so they can come into existence. If Dodd wants to resist this

⁸⁶ Caplan and Matheson 2004, p. 127

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 127

consequence, he must reject one of the premises. (P1) is the position that Dodd takes on properties, so it stays. (P3) is a consequence of (P2); so, if you accept (P2), then you should accept (P3). (P4) is true, because (P1) says that properties are found in the ordinary world; so, if properties are not found in the ordinary world, they do not exist. That leaves (P2) as a candidate for rejection.

If Dodd wants to reject (P2), then he has to tell us where else properties are located. He could adopt *ante rem* realism – properties can exist even if they do not have any instances – and *conceptualism* – properties exist in the mind.⁸⁸ This would be consistent with immanent properties, since the properties would be found in the minds of people who are in the ordinary world. *Ante rem* realism, however, has the consequence that properties that will never be instantiated also exist. The property *being red all over and green all over* would exist, even though it is impossible for the property to be instantiated. This is a consequence that Dodd rejects. If properties “are not intrinsically of particulars ... it thus becomes hard to conceive of how a particular could come to have a property.”⁸⁹ So he cannot be an *ante rem* realist, because he will not accept properties that will never be instantiated; and he cannot be a conceptualist about properties, because he thinks that properties are things that are of particulars.

At this point, Caplan and Matheson suggest that Dodd should abandon the Principle of Instantiation and accept the following:

⁸⁸ Bealer 1999, p. 752

⁸⁹ Dodd 2000, p. 436

The Strengthened Principle of Instantiation

A property F exists at t if and only if F is instantiated at t .⁹⁰

This principle allows properties to come into existence; and, given that types exist when their corresponding properties exist, it also allows types to come into existence.⁹¹

To avoid this consequence, Dodd could abandon the view that properties are immanent. If he held the transcendent view of properties, he could argue that properties exist uninstantiated, thereby avoiding the Strengthened Principle of Instantiation and maintaining that properties exist eternally. He would, however, also have to accept that there are properties that exist that will never be instantiated and that all of these properties exist in some Platonic-heaven-like other realm. It seems to be a lower metaphysical cost to accept the creatability of abstract objects and hold that properties exist in the real world than to deny the creatability of abstract objects and posit a new realm for properties to live in, including properties that can never be instantiated.

So it would seem that it is possible for some abstract objects to be created. Events, sets, types, and properties all meet the Creatability Requirement. A natural question to ask now is: if they can be created, how long do they last?

⁹⁰ Caplan and Matheson 2004, p. 128

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 128

PERSISTENCE

Even though some abstract objects can satisfy the Creatability Requirement, Caplan and Matheson argue that a musical work as an abstract object might not satisfy the following:

The Persistence Requirement

Musical works must be such that they can exist uninterruptedly for a good stretch of time *after* the composer's compositional activity.⁹²

If musical works cannot persist, then we have no reason to believe that, say, any of Beethoven's musical works have continued to exist. But just how quickly do musical works go out of existence? That seems to depend on what sort of abstract object you take musical works to be.

Levinson and Currie both have theories that take artworks to be types. As we saw above, types exist when their constitutive elements exist. So, on Levinson's account, the type *sound-structure-as-indicated-by-Beethoven-in-1804-1808* exists when Beethoven, the sound structure, and the time 1804-1808 exist. This suggests the following principle:

The Universal Principle

For any type K that essentially involves entities x_1, \dots, x_n , K exists at t if and if *every* x_i (where $1 \leq i \leq n$) exists at t .⁹³

A type exists when all its essential entities exist. According to the Universal Principle, none of Beethoven's musical works exist now. Beethoven is dead and it

⁹² Ibid., p. 128 Original emphasis.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 130 Original emphasis.

is no longer 1804-1808. Two of the entities that, for Levinson are constitutive, do not exist, so the type no longer exists.

Levinson could appeal to a different principle that requires the existence of only some of the essential entities to establish the existence of the type.

The Existential Principle

For any type K that essentially involves entities x_1, \dots, x_n , K exists at t if and if some x_i (where $1 \leq i \leq n$) exists at t .⁹⁴

What would make it true that Beethoven's musical works exist now is the fact that the structure exists now. But Levinson thinks that the structures of musical works exist eternally, so that would mean that the type exists eternally. We get persistence, but we lose creatability. Thus, indicated structure types cannot meet both the Creatability Requirement and the Persistence Requirement.

On Currie's account, as we have seen, the artist and the time are not constitutive elements of the artwork. So, for him, the type *Beethoven-discovers-sound-structure-via-the-heuristic-path-in-1804-1808* has as its essential entities the sound structure and the heuristic path. Recall that the heuristic path includes the inspirations that were employed and how they were executed, how original the conception of the artwork is, and the problems the artist had to solve. We could interpret the heuristic path to be a set of properties attributed to the artwork. An artwork has the properties *being influenced by x* , *of being executed by method m* , *of being the result of an amount of original conception*, and so on.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 130 Original emphasis.

Sets, as we saw above, can come into existence, and they persist as long as their members exist.⁹⁵ If we accept the Strengthened Principle of Instantiation, then the properties exist only if they are instantiated. The property *being executed by method m*, has an instance if something, an artwork in our case, is executed by the method. The property continues to exist, because it is still true that the artwork was executed by the method. The set comes into existence when the structure is produced, and it persists because all of its members persist. Thus the type persists.

The problem with this view is that, unless an artwork instantiates a new property, the set of properties that make up the heuristic path existed before the production of the structure. Suppose that there is a work by Brahms whose heuristic path contains only two properties: *being influenced by Liszt* and *being of the staccato style*. The property *being influenced by Liszt* comes into existence when Liszt does and influences something. The property *being of the staccato style* comes into existence when the staccato style of music comes into existence (and maybe even earlier than that). The set, then, of *being influenced by Liszt* and *being of the staccato style* exists before Brahms ever produces the work. If the set exists prior to the production of the work, then the type exists prior to the production of the work. So we lose the sense of creatability that we wanted. Thus, action types cannot all meet the Persistence Requirement.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 133

The fusion-structure types take the essential entities to be the structure and the fusion of its instances. The fusion comes into existence when the first, or original, instance is produced. So the type is created when the first instance is produced. The fusion persists so long as it has parts. This means that, if you destroy all of the instances associated with an artwork, you have destroyed all of the parts of the fusion. By destroying the fusion, you have destroyed the type. So, according to the FST, artworks can be created, and they can be destroyed. Thus, fusion-structure types meet both the Creatability Requirement and the Persistence Requirement.

CONCLUSION

While Dodd argues that it is not possible for there to be creatable abstract objects, he has failed to establish this position. Caplan and Matheson show that there is no "handbook of universally accepted metaphysical truths"⁹⁶ that can establish the position. Events, sets, types, and properties all meet the Creatability Requirement. Caplan and Matheson, however, raise doubts as to the ability of artworks to persist as abstract objects. Both Levinson and Currie's types fail to meet the Persistence Requirement, or they meet it at the loss of satisfying the Creatability Requirement. Fusion-structure types, however, do meet both of the requirements. So it is possible for artworks to exist as abstract objects and be creatable and to persist.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 113

Chapter 5 - Conclusion

Let us recap what we have done so far. In the second chapter, we established the IMH, which says that any artwork can have multiple instances. We examined Currie's Appreciation Argument and found that it did not fully convince us that correct copies were anything more than copies, i.e. not instances of artworks. His Twin Earth Argument lead us to believe that there was a second method of instantiation, but it yielded a small return on the number of instances that were possible and it carried very little intuitive force. The Properties Argument says that any correct copy of an artwork will have the same aesthetic properties as the original. It appealed to the practice of copying works of literature and how it maintains the identity of the literary work across its instances. You could deny that copying machines actually preserve the identity of works across their instances, but then you end up in a position where works of literature cannot have multiple instances, and we do not think that this is the case.

In the third chapter, we saw that artworks are not identical with any concrete objects. Hunks of materials have different persistence conditions than their associated artefacts, so they are not identical. It cannot be the case that many objects are the artwork, because that would violate a rule of identity. A scattered collection turns out to be either a class or must admit at least one abstract object, the structure. Next, we turned to the theories of Levinson and Currie to see how others have construed artworks as abstract objects. Levinson's

indicated structure turned out to be mysterious objects that also had unsavoury metaphysical consequences, since we could never have discovery without having simultaneous creation. Currie's action types are unmotivated, since he fails to establish the constraint that appreciating art is appreciating a certain performance. The FST says that an artwork is a fusion-structure type composed of a structure and a fusion of the instances. The fusion is governed by the structure and the Copy Relation'. This theory is compatible with the IMH and is able to pick out all the concreta we want to be associated with a given artwork.

Finally, in the fourth chapter, we saw that it is possible for abstract objects, and therefore artworks, to be created. However, Caplan and Matheson bring up a new problem for artworks as abstract objects by arguing that many of these abstract objects will not have the right persistence conditions. Both Levinson and Currie's theories of artworks fail to get the right persistence conditions. The FST, on the other hand, meets the Creatability Requirement and the Persistence Requirement. I consider it a virtue of the FST that it allows artworks to be created, to persist, and to be destroyed. I think that it fits well with our intuitions on this subject.

So artworks are abstract types that consist of a structure and a fusion of instances. The structure is an abstract object, and the fusion is a concrete object governed by the Copy Relation'. The instances are not themselves the artwork, so we might consider that a loss as far as matching our theory up with our intuitions, but we were able to preserve some other important intuitions that we

have regarding the creatability and persistence of artworks. No theory has been proposed that captures all of our intuitions about artworks, and that was not the aim of this thesis, but it turns out that the FST captures many of them. So, unless there are serious costs associated with this theory that are not also associated with other theories, it is as strong a competitor as any other theory in the ontology of artworks.

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