

# The New Criterion

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## Schiller's "Aesthetic Education"

by Roger Kimball

*On Friedrich Schiller's On the Aesthetic Education of Man.*

*It is now about twenty years since the whole race of Germans began to "transcend."  
Should they ever wake up to this fact, they will look very odd to themselves.*

—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1826

*It is still the question whether the philosophy of art has anything to say to the artist.  
[I myself] applied the metaphysic of art too directly to objects and handled it as a  
practical tool for which it is not quite suitable.*

—Friedrich Schiller, 1798

*Why does the Aesthetik of every German philosopher seem to the artist like the  
abomination of desolation?*

—William James

**I**t is a difficult problem to say why many of the simplest questions are the hardest to answer. Philosophy, of course, is littered with such difficult simplicities: What is truth? What is knowledge? Can virtue be taught? Is

there such a thing as free will? What is the good life? Many people, including many philosophers, have dismissed such questions as illegitimate and unanswerable.

Unanswerable they may be, but the human heart can be counted on to dismiss those dismissals. Very few people actively devote themselves to pondering such simple imponderables. That is doubtless a good thing all around, not least for the business of everyday life. But even fewer people, I suspect, are entirely untroubled by such questions. That, too, is a good thing, not least because, as Socrates famously put it, the unexamined life is not worth living. Is that an overstatement? Perhaps. But if it errs, it does so in the right direction. What Socrates did not say—but what Plato's dialogues may show in the dramas they enact—is that there is more than one way to lead an examined life. It may be hard to come up with a satisfactory answer to the question "What is knowledge?" But we all answer that question daily in a currency other than words.

It is the same in other departments of life. "What is justice?" is a question whose answer we *live* even if we cannot put it into adequate words. We know that virtue can be taught because it *is* taught, putative demonstrations of its impossibility notwithstanding.

Among other things, such reflections should inculcate a healthy scepticism—including scepticism about doctrinaire scepticism. Our cleverness, like our language, often fails to produce the unarguable answers we desire. Which doesn't mean that we stop asking, only that we typically find ourselves in that arguable realm where deeds come to the aid of dicta and felt truths illuminate the obscurities left over when reason has done its work. "*La coeur*," as Pascal

put it, “*a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas.*” And the heart’s reasons have their own axioms and arguments, their palpable QEDs that are in their way as persuasive as Euclid’s. Intelligence, that is to say, is more than intellection. Can it be purely fortuitous that *sapientia*—wisdom—has its root in *sapor*, taste: a faculty of feeling, intuition, sensibility? What deep truth does that etymology suggest?

Well, the question of taste can be counted on to generate many of those simple questions we cannot definitively answer but also cannot help asking. Consider the question, inevitable when we ponder the operation of taste, of why we care so much about art. *That* we care is graven in the stones of our museums, theaters, and concert halls, embossed on the pages of novels and volumes of poetry, enshrined in the deference—financial, social, spiritual—that the institutions of art command in our society. But why? Art satisfies no practical need; it is not useful in the sense in which a law court or a hospital, a farm or a machinist’s shop is useful. And yet we invest art and the institutions that represent it with enormous privilege and prestige. Why? Why is something apparently useless accorded such honor?

One reason, of course, is that utility is not our only criterion of value. We care about many things that are not in any normal sense useful. Indeed for many of the things we care about most, the whole question of use seems peculiarly out of place, a kind of existential category mistake. But we still can ask: what is it about art, about aesthetic experience, that recommends itself so powerfully to our regard?

A lot of ink has been spilled trying to answer that question. The word “aesthetics” was not coined (and the discipline it names was not born) until the middle of the eighteenth century, but a fascination with beauty is perennial. From Plato on down, philosophers and artists—and philosopher-artists—have eulogized beauty as providing intimations of spiritual wholeness and lost unity.

This is one reason that, of all branches of philosophy, aesthetics tends to be the most oleaginous. Especially in times when traditional religious commitments are in retreat, many people look to art for spiritual dividends previously sought elsewhere. This burdens art, and intellectual talk about art, with intoxicating expectations. The expectations are consistently disappointed, but the intoxication remains. The result is the hothouse rhetoric of romanticism, full of infinite longings, sublime impatience, impetuous raids on an ever retreating, capital-A Absolute.

One problem with this tendency to invest art with unanchored religious sentiment is that it makes it difficult to keep art’s native satisfactions in focus. The difficulty is compounded because aesthetic delight involves a feeling of wholeness that is easy to mistake for religious exaltation. Art does offer balm for the spirit, but it is not a religious balm. Exactly what sort of balm is it? One of the most impassioned attempts to answer this question was made at the end of the eighteenth century by the German poet, playwright, and philosophical essayist Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805).

I hasten to add that Schiller did not entirely avoid the confusion of art and religious sentiment. He made an heroic effort to understand and explain why aesthetic experience on its own terms is important. But Erich Heller was

right when he observed, in his excellent essay “In Two Minds About Schiller,” that Schiller presented

a striking instance of a European catastrophe of the spirit: the invasion and partial disruption of the aesthetic faculty by unemployed religious impulses. He is one of the most conspicuous and most impressive figures among the host of theologically displaced persons who found a precarious refuge in the emergency camp of Art.

It is a telling biographical detail that as a child Schiller liked to play-act at being a minister. He practiced giving sermons, bestowing benedictions and pronouncing anathemas as the occasion demanded. When it came time for school, he wanted passionately to go to a theological seminary. But his father, a low-level army officer in the employ of Duke Karl Eugen of Württemberg, was obliged by the duke to send the thirteen-year old to his newly established military school in Stuttgart. In his biography of Schiller—published in 1825—Thomas Carlyle noted that the six years Schiller spent there were “the most harassing and comfortless of his life.” The duke’s idea of education was extremely rigid, formed, Carlyle wrote, on the principle “not of cherishing and correcting nature, but rooting it out, and supplying its place with something better.”

Schiller studied law and medicine, qualifying in 1780 to become a regimental doctor. But he also threw himself into poetry. His first poem was published in 1777 when he was in his late teens. His first play, *Die Räuber* (“The Robbers”), was printed at Schiller’s own expense in 1781 and performed the following year in Mannheim. It was a sensation. A wild *Sturm und Drang* affair, *The Robbers* embodied all of Schiller’s frustration at the narrow, regimented life he was forced to lead in the duke’s employ. It tells the story of

Karl Moor who, falsely accused of criminal activity by his younger brother, flees home and becomes the leader of a vicious band of robbers, his noble nature irreparably tainted by an uncaring society. Things end badly for everyone. Schiller's portrayal of blighted passion and an individual's doomed struggle with recalcitrant authority encapsulated the explosive, antinomian mood of the moment. Coleridge spoke for many when, reading the play in 1794, he wrote to Robert Southey, "My God! Southey! Who is this Schiller? This Convulser of the Heart?"

Duke Eugen, however, was not at all pleased by the spectacle of one of his minions making such a rebellious display. He insisted that Schiller attend to his medical duties and submit any poetry he contemplated publishing to him for approval. Forced to choose between a career with the duke and poetry, Schiller fled Württemberg and took up a post as resident playwright in Mannheim.

The succeeding years saw Schiller struggling to make a living. Indeed, struggle of various sorts was a leitmotif of Schiller's life: a fact of life that became an existential principle. Things tended not to come easily to him. He was undoubtedly a genius, but he lacked the effervescent facility that often attends the character of genius. His was a divided, introspective nature. In this he differed markedly from Goethe, whom he met in 1788, cordially envied, and, at first, disliked. Goethe returned the wariness, if not the envy. But in time the two became friends, literary collaborators, and joint representatives of cultural earnestness—two species of romantic who had mutated into the maturity of classicism.

Schiller later enshrined the difference between Goethe and himself in his essay *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry* (1795), one of his best known works. (Thomas Mann called it “the greatest of German essays.”) In his view, he and Goethe between them divided the world. “Poets,” he wrote, “will either *be* nature, or they will *seek* lost nature. From this arises two entirely different modes of poetry which, between them, exhaust and divide the whole range of poetry.” Naïve poets—Homer was the great model and, in his own day, Goethe—were at one with nature and the world: their poetry was realistic, affirmative. Poets he called “sentimental”—by which Schiller meant self-reflective, not cloyingly emotional—were metaphysical latecomers. For them all poetry was a form of elegy: a rehearsal of loss, rupture, distance. Schiller’s entire literary output—his critical essays as well as his poetry and drama—forms an illustration of what he meant by *sentimentalische*.

**I**n 1789 Schiller went to Jena to become a professor of history: an appointment that gave him a position but meager financial support. He embarked on a popular history of the Thirty Years War and, in 1790, married Charlotte von Lengefeld. Like many others, he watched with enthusiasm and then horror as the French Revolution unfolded and the Terror took hold. Although delicate, Schiller always drove himself mercilessly. In 1791, his health collapsed, apparently from pneumonia exacerbated by overwork. He never fully recovered. It is interesting to consider whether, had he enjoyed Goethe’s robust health, he might have enjoyed Goethe’s ease of temperament. Bodily vigor may not always yield what Schiller described as a “naïve” sensibility, but its lack certainly renders such simplicity difficult. Goethe once observed that “If a man is to write poetry, he must have a certain good-natured love for the Real.” But a good-natured love for the real is considerably aided when the real in its turn appears good-natured.

When Schiller became ill, salvation arrived in the form of a pension from two admirers of his work, Prince Friedrich Christian and Count Ernst von Schimmelfmann. Schiller used the freedom his new sinecure provided to throw himself into the study of Kant. The *Critique of Pure Reason* had appeared in 1781—by a nice coincidence, the same year that *The Robbers* was printed— followed by Kant’s treatise on ethics, the *Critique of Practical Reason*, and, in 1790, the *Critique of Judgment*, his book on aesthetics and teleology. It was a fateful intellectual encounter, the effects of which Schiller himself, like many of his commentators, came to regard with a deep ambivalence.

At the end of 1799, Schiller moved to Weimar. For the remaining five years of his life he was enormously productive. New plays followed in quick succession—*Maria Stuart*, *The Maid of Orleans*, *The Bride of Messina*, *William Tell*, and, at the end, the fragmentary *Demetrius*. In 1802, he received a patent of nobility, and could henceforth style himself von Schiller. By the time of his death, in 1805 at the age of forty-five, his literary reputation in Germany was second only to that of Goethe’s. During his final illness, someone asked Schiller how he felt: “calmer and calmer” was the reply. It was a quietus he richly deserved.

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In Germany, Schiller, like Goethe, is still a cultural institution, a living presence. In the English-speaking world he has receded to being little more than an occasion for academic lucubration. Many people know he wrote the “Ode to Joy” that Beethoven set as the finale of his Ninth Symphony, but few have actually read his poems. Some of his plays—*The Robbers*, *Don Carlos*, the trilogy *Wallenstein* (for many readers, his masterpiece)—are occasionally read; every now and then one is performed, but far better known is the plot of his late play *William Tell* because it formed the literary basis for Rossini’s opera. Philip Toynbee was not quite right when he remarked that “the English have never . . . been very much interested in Schiller. . . . We know that he *must* be a great writer, but we find it hard to respond to his fervent sublimities.” At one time, the English responded heartily indeed to those fervent sublimities. Largely through the mediation of Coleridge, Schiller became an important source for English Romanticism. It has been shown, for example, that Wordsworth’s famous definition of poetry as “emotion recollected in tranquillity” has its source, via Coleridge, in a phrase from Schiller.

**S**chiller was a strange hybrid, half-poet, half-philosopher, total idealist, a sort of Germanic Shelley with less money and more fastidious morals. (Schiller once spoke of himself in a letter as an intellectual *Zwitterart*, a hermaphrodite, a remark that doubtless will form the basis of some Ph.D. thesis in “queer theory” before long.) Schiller described himself as an amateur when it came to philosophy. But it was part of his *sentimentalische* nature to crave for his poetry the imprimatur of philosophical authority. What effect this had on his art is a matter of contention. A common reaction is Erich

Heller's: "Friedrich Schiller is the name of a poetical disaster in the history of German literature, a disaster, however, of great splendour." Schiller's addiction to the ideal opened up a gulf that no art could adequately fill.

At the same time, his meditations on the importance of art and the aesthetic dimension of experience are among the most evocative and influential ever penned. It is perhaps a dubious honor, but René Wellek was right that Schiller's writings about art "proved to be the fountainhead of all later German critical theory." Although the essay *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry* is probably his most admired single piece, his short book *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* is undoubtedly his most influential critical work.<sup>1</sup> Its influence has been both broad and deep. Hegel's whole notion of dialectical progress owes an immense amount to Schiller's treatise. (It was Schiller, for example, who first used the fateful term *aufgehoben* in the paradoxical Hegelian sense of "simultaneously cancelled yet preserved.") And later thinkers, from Nietzsche and Karl Marx to Herbert Read, Georg Lukács, and Herbert Marcuse were in their various ways deeply indebted to the conception of aesthetic freedom that Schiller articulates in *Aesthetic Education*. Marx's fantasy about "unalienated labor" owes a great deal to Schiller's warning about man becoming "merely the imprint of his occupation," while, in *Eros and Civilization*, Marcuse explicitly invokes Schiller's book when he sets forth his extravagant scenario in which art "invokes a tabooed logic—the logic of gratification as against that of repression." Would Schiller have liked serving as a prop for a radical reading of Freud? I doubt it, but intellectual influence exercises no control over its beneficiaries. Not that Schiller's influence has been confined to the Left (though it is perhaps most conspicuous there). On the contrary, his insistence on the irreducible nature of aesthetic experience, his linking of aesthetic with

moral freedom, and his celebration of ornament and the free play of the imagination have deeply impressed thinkers from the other side of the ideological spectrum.

**S**chiller published *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* in 1795, shortly before *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*. Both first appeared in installments in Schiller's short-lived magazine *Die Horen* ("The Graces"). The book—an extended essay, really—is in the form of a series of letters addressed to Schiller's patron Friedrich Christian. Like Schiller himself, *Aesthetic Education* is an exotic hybrid: part philosophical reflection, part moral exhortation, part poetic effusion. Written during the Terror, as Schiller was revising his opinions about the French Revolution, it has a deliberate political dimension. (Schiller called the letters his "profession of political faith.") In part, Schiller hoped that the success of aesthetic education would help establish the freedom that political revolution had conspicuously failed to achieve.

The essay bears the stamp of many influences. From the art historian Johann Winckelmann came an idealized portrait of classical Greece as the embodiment of human and aesthetic perfection. From the philosopher Johann Fichte came some characteristic muddiness about the ideal man expressing itself in the state. From Rousseau come some back-to-nature comments about the dangers that civilization poses to spontaneity. From Goethe, Schiller fashioned his image of the ideal artist. ("You will find in these letters," he wrote to Goethe in 1794 when he was finishing the essay, "a portrait of yourself.") There are traces of Lord Shaftesbury's ideas about the universal nature of social feeling and of Schiller's friend Johann Herder's ideas about art. But far and away the greatest intellectual influence on the

book was the philosophy of Kant. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* is at once a digest, an homage, and a response to Kant's theories about the nature of aesthetic experience and its relation to moral freedom.

“Tantalizing” is not a word most people associate with the work of Immanuel Kant. But the first half of the *Critique of Judgment*, which deals with the nature of aesthetic judgment, is full of tantalizing observations. Kant saw that the appeal of aesthetic experience was strikingly different from the appeal of sensory pleasure, on the one hand, and the satisfaction we take in the good, moral or practical, on the other. For one thing, with both sensory pleasure and the good, our satisfaction is inextricably bound up with *interest*, which is to say with the existence of whatever it is that is causing the pleasure. When we are hungry, a virtual dinner will not do: we want the meat and potatoes. It is the same with the good: a virtual morality is not moral. But things are different with aesthetic pleasure. There is something peculiarly disengaged about aesthetic pleasure. When it comes to our moral and sensory life, we are constantly reminded that we are creatures of lack: we are hungry and wish to eat, we see the good and know that we fall short. But when we judge something to be beautiful, Kant says, the pleasure we take in that judgment is ideally an “entirely disinterested satisfaction.”

The great oddity about aesthetic judgment is that it provides satisfaction without the penalty exacted by desire. This accounts both for its power and for its limitation. The power comes from the feeling of wholeness and integrity that a disinterested satisfaction involves. Pleasure without desire is pleasure unburdened by lack. The limitation comes from the fact that, unburdened by lack, aesthetic pleasure is also unmoored from reality.

Precisely because it is disinterested, there is something deeply subjective about aesthetic pleasure: what we enjoy is not an object but our state of mind. Kant spoke in this context of “the free play of the imagination and the understanding”—it is “free” because it is unconstrained by interest or desire.

It is a curious fact that in his reflections on the nature of aesthetic judgment Kant is only incidentally interested in art. The examples of “pure beauty” he provides are notoriously trivial: sea shells, wallpaper, musical fantasies, architectural ornamentation. But Kant was not attempting to provide lessons in art appreciation. He was attempting to explain the mechanics of taste. It is not surprising that the *Critique of Judgment* became an important theoretical document for those interested in abstract art: in Kant’s view, the purest beauty was also the most formal.

There is, however, another side to Kant’s discussion of beauty. This has to do with the moral dimension of aesthetic judgment. If the pleasure we take in the beautiful is subjective, Kant argues, it is nonetheless not subjective in the same way that sensory pleasure is subjective. You like your steak well-done, I like mine rare: that is a mere subjective preference. But when it comes to the beautiful, Kant observes, we expect broad agreement. And this is because we have faith that the operation of taste—that free play of the imagination and understanding—provides a common ground of judgment. We cannot *prove* that a given object is beautiful because the point at issue is not the object but the state of mind it occasions. Nevertheless, Kant says, “we woo the agreement of everyone else, because we have for it a ground that is common to all.” Judgments about the beautiful are in one sense subjective, but in another sense they exhibit our common humanity. The feeling of freedom and wholeness that aesthetic experience imparts is thus not merely private

but reminds us of our vocation as moral beings. In this context, Kant famously spoke of beauty as being “the symbol of morality” because in aesthetic pleasure “the mind is made conscious of a certain ennoblement and elevation.” Thus it is that although taste is “the faculty of judging an object . . . by an entirely disinterested satisfaction” it is also “at bottom a faculty for judging the sensible illustration of moral ideas.”

**I**t would be paltering with the truth to say that Kant’s discussion in the *Critique of Judgment* is crystal clear. But it is certainly suggestive. It is rather like what he calls “aesthetical ideas,” i.e., products of the imagination “which occasion much thought, but to which no definite concept is adequate.” Schiller found Kant’s discussion electrifying. In *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, he endeavored to develop Kant’s hints about the link between beauty and freedom, between aesthetic experience and moral fulfillment, into an educational program.

Schiller’s basic idea is that, rightly understood, aesthetic experience is not a matter of merely private delectation but has a civilizing function as well. It is part of the human condition that we find ourselves torn between conflicting impulses, between reason and desire, duty and inclination, our purposes as individuals and as members of a community. There is much about the modern world, Schiller thought, that exacerbates those conflicts. The progress of science has yielded rich dividends for our understanding of the world, but it has also encouraged our analytical powers at the expense of our sensuous powers. The demands of specialization make it increasingly difficult to achieve a sense of wholeness in life. This is where the aesthetic comes in. By encouraging the “enlarged mode of thought” that Kant spoke of, aesthetic experience promises to heal these rifts and provide a vision of wholeness.

Schiller places much more emphasis on “the fine arts”—especially the “immortal examples” of classical art—than did Kant, who looked first of all to nature for examples of pure beauty. But like Kant, Schiller dilates on the curious duality of aesthetic experience. He noted that

beauty gives no individual result whatever, either for the intellect or for the will; it realizes no individual purpose, either intellectual or moral; it discovers no individual truth, helps us perform no individual duty, and is, in a word, equally incapable of establishing the character and enlightening the mind.

For anyone who places an explicit moral burden on art, Schiller’s view will be unacceptable. John Ruskin, for example, castigated this passage as “that gross and inconceivable falsehood.”

Ruskin might have been somewhat mollified had he read on. For Schiller argues that although in one sense beauty yields nothing definite, in another sense “it is to be looked upon as a condition of the *highest reality*.” Only the aesthetic, Schiller wrote, “is a whole in itself”: “Here alone do we feel ourselves snatched outside time, and our humanity expresses itself with a purity and integrity as though it had not yet experienced any detriment from the influence of external forces.” Of course that heady experience carries with it dangers of its own. If Schiller champions the humanizing power of aesthetic experience, he also warns us against aestheticism: against using the “soul-captivating power” of beauty in the “interest of error and injustice.” Precisely because aesthetic experience is disinterested experience, he notes, it involves “a dangerous tendency to neglect all reality entirely and to sacrifice truth and morality to an attractive façade.”

Schiller's book is a very rich stew. As he acknowledges, when he waxes philosophical he often presents a path that is "not very exhilarating." Nor is it an entirely consistent path. On the one hand, Schiller speaks of the aesthetic as that which leads us from the life of sensuous appetite to the life of moral freedom. In this sense aesthetic education is a step on the road toward moral self-realization. On the other hand, he speaks of the aesthetic as a realm of experience that mediates between the moral and the physical, resolving the tension between them in a higher unity that is both physical and moral, sensuous and intellectual. In this sense, aesthetic education is an end in itself: an experience of freedom that relates "to the totality of our various functions without being a definite object for any single one of them."

Schiller does not really resolve this tension. Yet in one sense the tension underscores Schiller's point: that the aesthetic both points the way towards freedom and is itself an instance of freedom. These elements come together in his description of the aesthetic attitude as a playful attitude, an attitude that delights in appearance for its own sake. Schiller notes that "extreme stupidity and extreme intelligence have a certain affinity with each other, that both seek only the real and are wholly insensible to mere appearance." The serious things in life call for our commitment and intervention; beauty calls us to play. But this play is not frivolous. On the contrary, aesthetic play betokens "a real enlargement of humanity and a decisive step toward culture" because it affirms our humanity in its totality.

"What sort of phenomenon is it," Schiller asks, "that proclaims the approach of a savage to humanity? . . . [I]t is the same in all races who have escaped from the slavery of the animal state: a delight in *appearance*, a disposition toward *ornament* and *play*." The aesthetic simultaneously elevates the



sensuous man and softens or cultivates the intellectual. “The reality of things is the work of nature, the appearance of things is the work of man, and a nature that delights in appearance is no longer taking pleasure in what it receives, but in what it does.” By cultivating a “disinterested free appreciation of pure appearance”—of seeing and hearing for their own sakes—we not only distance ourselves from the pressures of everyday reality but also affirm ourselves as creatures of freedom: creatures who play.

As the critic Lesley Sharpe observed, Schiller’s book on aesthetic education “can be regarded as the supreme statement of faith in the power of human creativity to heal and to restore to wholeness.” It is a faith that history has sorely challenged. One thinks, for example, of those Nazi commandants who relaxed from their labors in the camps by listening to Haydn and Mozart. Or think of the preposterous spectacle afforded by contemporary culture, for which art is more often an excuse for pathology or political activism than aesthetic cultivation.

Nevertheless, the nobility of Schiller’s vision remains. It challenges us to affirm ourselves in our totality, which means in our incapacity and weakness as well as in our strength. Schiller was everywhere at pains to stress the limits as well as the advantages of the aesthetic. “Man shall *only play* with Beauty,” he wrote, “and he shall play *only with Beauty*.” If, as Schiller puts it, we are only fully human when we are playing, we are only truly playing when we understand the limits of aesthetic play. The ideal of the beautiful is “the most perfect possible equilibrium of reality and form.” One of the chief lessons of aesthetic education is that this ideal must remain always only an ideal,

something we approximate, never achieve. Another way of putting this is to say that for man, an inextricably finite creature, wholeness is always partial and beauty is always imperfect.

One of the ironies of Schiller's career is that he understood but refused to embrace this truth. Toward the end of 1795, he wrote to Wilhelm von Humboldt about his vision of the ideal. "Everything that is mortal is dissolved, nothing but light, nothing but freedom . . . no shadow, no barrier. . . . It makes me giddy to think of this task: . . . to compose a scene on Olympus. . . . I may do it one day when my mind is wholly free and cleansed from the pollution of the real world." Of course, that day will never come. That, indeed, was one of the main lessons of Schiller's letters on aesthetic education.

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<sup>1</sup> The most readily available English translation of *Aesthetic Education* is the somewhat daunting scholarly edition by Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby, published in 1967 by Oxford University Press under their Clarendon Press imprint. Wilkinson and Willoughby were nothing if not thorough. Their edition begins with an introduction of some one hundred and fifty pages, about half again as long as Schiller's text. They print their translation with Schiller's German on facing pages, and follow up with a seventy-page commentary, a thirty-page glossary, and four appendices: one about the history and original publication of the book, one about previous translations, one devoted to schematic illustrations of Schiller's argument ("visual aids"), and the last "On the Impulse to Introduce Redundant Negatives Into Letter XXVI" (an impulse they bravely resist). The editors also provide a twelve-page bibliography and two indices (names and key concepts). The Wilkinson-Willoughby edition is a monument to scholarly industry: erudite, informative, supererogatory. Anyone interested in *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, will want to consult it. Most people wishing simply to read the book will be happy to find a copy of Reginald Snell's translation, published by Frederick Ungar in 1954, but now out of print.

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