More than Make-Believe:
on the uses of imagination in experiencing fictional artworks

The idea that imagination is the mark of fiction has for some decades, and partly inspired by KendalWalton *Mimesis as Make-Believe*(1990), been the converging point of a number of theories about fiction[1]. Roughly, what these theories have in common is that they conceive of fiction as something that is (proposed) to be imagined rather than believed, whereimagining or make-believe (in Walton's words) is usually conceived of as a propositional attitude similar to belief in some respects such as inferential reasoning or emotional response[2] while quarantining motivational force and lacking the commitments of assertion.

In this chapter, I would like to pay attention, firstly, to the way(s) in which imagination has been thought to be involved in fictional works' understanding. And, secondly, I would like to focus upon the question of the possible cognitive value that fictional works *qua* fictions might have;that is, on the idea that fiction's cognitive value lies precisely in the imaginative activities invited by fictional artefacts. Thus, the two questions I will try to answer are: i) what kind of imaginative activities are required for properly engaging with fictional works? And ii) is there a specific cognitive value that fictions *qua* fictions possess? If so, how is this cognitive value related to the alleged imaginative activities involved in fictional works' appreciation?

The roles of imagination in fiction appreciation: make-believe and perspectival /organizational imagination

Maybe the most prominent sense in which imagination has been thought to play a role in fiction appreciation and engagement is make-believe. As mentioned above this notion has been central to many accounts of fiction and has lent its cognitive virtues to fictional artefacts. Although there is still some scepticism concerning the capacity of make-believe to provide knowledge[3], the idea that at least some form of knowledge – modal, conceptual, experiential, emotional, knowledge of other minds, etc. – can be obtained through engaging in make-believe activities has received ample support. Fictions would henceforth be conceived of as cognitively valuable at least to the extent that they typically involve make-believe. In fact, many defenders of the cognitive value of fiction appeal to this connection between fiction and make-believe to support their

claim.Besides, although make-believe is mostly understood in contrast to belief and, hence, as propositional, there are some instances of make-believe activity that can be characterized in non-propositional terms and that also make possible the acquisition of non-propositional knowledge. Visualizing and other forms of experiential imagining may provide examples of this kind.[4]Thus, both experientialknowledge (e.g., about what something looks like) and practical knowledge or know-how are frequently mentioned with respect to the cognitive value that fictions may afford.

The characterization of imagination in terms of make-believe focuses on the kind of content (propositional, perceptual, experiential, etc.) that make-believe can covey and on how make-believe determines the way we process that content –for example, the ways in which that content interactswith other mental contents such as beliefs or desires[5].But as Elizabeth Camp (2006a-b, 2009, 2017) has noticed, one important consequence of cashing out the notion of imagination exclusively in terms of make-believe impedes paying attention to other roles imagination plays that are not easily captured within a content-oriented account. It overlooks ways in which imagination structures and guides us through our experiences rather than on the imagined content as such. This notion of imagination does not necessarily involve make-believe attitudes, but it plays a crucial role in metaphor, the formation of perspectives, and in seeing-as experiences.

Interestingly, and without denying that make-believe can afford knowledge of these kinds, when we look at some of the reasons invoked in favour ofthe cognitive value of literary or artistic fiction in general, we find an appeal to aspects –such as formal, organizational, or perspectival aspects of the representational vehicle– that do not bear any significant relationship to make-believe. For example, Nussbaum's defence of some works of literature as essential milestones of moral reflection focuses upon those novels' form and on the way in which they engage both our emotional responses and moral reflection (Nussbaum, 1990). She considers the kind of moral insight they offer asbeing intimately attached to that form and, so, she claims this kind of insight to be exclusively conveyed through (some) great novels.

This idea invitesthinking of a different notion of imagination –a notion which captures the activity of imagination in terms ofform, organization or perspective[6]– as key for explainingthe cognitive value of fictional works.This notion of imagination is invoked when there seems to be an agential, creative, or active aspect in the way we organize the

perceptual features that are presented to us and that seem required in order to explain certain features of our perceptual experiences.[7]

This use of the imagination seems also to be the kind of imagination that Camp has in mind in her extensive work on metaphor and perspectives as tools for thinking. As she has pointed out in several publications, perspectives and characterizations are necessary guides for organizing information and navigating through our environment.[8]Camp emphasizes the cognitive dimension of perspectives and the way they help us organize, prioritize, and structure perceptual contents. For her, knowledge would not be possible unless we had a particular perspective upon our environment in the first place.

However, the type of imaginative activity involved in perspectival organization, metaphors' understanding, and seeing-as cuts across the fiction/non-fiction distinction. So, it cannot be appealed to in order to clarify the cognitive value that fictions *qua* fictions are supposed to have.Its organizational or configurational role is more pervasive and encompasses many different kinds of representations – some of which, like metaphors, are not even subject to the fiction/non-fiction distinction. Given that this imaginative activity has more to do with a feature of representation (its perspectival or organizational nature), its scope goes beyond fictionality. Therefore, it cannot be invoked to explain the kind of cognitive value that we senseis exclusive of fictional works, artefacts or activities. Some outstanding biographies[9]or historical writings that can afford the kind of cognitive insight that Nussbaum explores in some literary masterpieces.

Furthermore, even if we explored the cognitive virtues of this organizational or perspectival imagination, some scepticismhaunts the possibility of grounding literary fiction's cognitive value in terms of the cognitive value of particular perspectives. Lamarque& Olsen (1994) have questioned the cognitive value that these perspectives may have because they are not presented to us in a way that allows epistemic assessment. Although literary or fictional perspectives can be assessed in terms of coherence or consistency, there are no tools for assessing whether a particular fictional perspective is true or false. And, maybe, what that means is that the very notion of perspective is cut off from the notion of truth.[10]

So, after this brief examination of the possible uses of imagination that fictional works involve, there seems to be no sufficient support to the idea of a unique or special cognitive value that fictions may have. On the one hand, make-believe is, as much of the literature on this topic shows, widely present in many activities such as scientific

thought experiments or hypothetical reasoning, so we should be able to say something more about the way it is exercised within literary fiction in order to give some substance to the idea that literary fiction possesses some unique cognitive value not affordable by other means.

On the other hand, perspectival imagination is so pervasive that it cannot explain why experiencing certain contents through a fictional work can provide some cognitive insight that merely confronting these contents would lack.

If make-believe and perspectival imagination are the two main ways in which imagination is involved in appreciating and understanding fiction, and if these two modes can only partially answer the question about the cognitive value that fictions qua fictions are supposed to have, should we refrain from the claim that there is some kind of cognitive value that fictions can possess qua fictions? Maybe we should endorse a more modest version of the cognitive claim:Insofar as imagination (both as make-believe and as perspectival imagination) is normally involved in appreciating fictional artworks,fictions can possess the kinds of cognitive values often associated with these imaginative activities, while rejecting that these cognitive values are uniquely rendered or exclusive of these experiences.Surely fictional artworks are unique and irreplaceable in some important respects, but maybe none of these respects directly bear on the issue of their possible cognitive value.

Although I think that this may be the sensible position to endorse –and maybe it is the true one if we consider most of our experiences with fictional works–, I would like to examine whether there is something more that can be said in relation to the roles that imagination plays in understanding fictional works that could provide some support to the strong claim.[11]

Defending the strong claim: The experience of fictional works and the roles of imagination

In the rest of this chapter, I will try to motivate the idea that there is something cognitively valuable about the appreciation and engagement with fictional works that is specific to fictional appreciation and thatit is intimately connected with the kind of experience artworksare meant to produce.

In order to do so, Ithink we shouldpay more attention to the kind of *experience* that fictional works provide rather than focusing solely on the cognitive virtues that

imagination as such could afford. Still, since the characteristic experience that fictional works elicit significantly involves imaginative activities, we will need to speak about the ways in which imagination –in its different uses– can contribute to this experience.
However, I would like to defend the view that the source of the special cognitive value often attached to fictional works is primarily caused by the special sort of experiences and responses they can produce.[12]I think that it is in these experiences and responses – which in turn are intimately connected with the kind of artefact fictional works are – that the so-called special cognitive value of fictional works ultimately resides.Just focusing on the imagination's contribution cannot be sufficient. Fictional works do not simply open up new scenarios or possibilities for reconsidering the world, but are a source for experiencing things in a way that, given the inseparable nature of this experience to the work, makes it unique.
I will begin by exploring how the two notions of imagination just spelled out – imagination as make-believe and perspectival imagination – can work together within the experience of a fictional work.

Make-Believe & Perspectival Imagination in Fiction Appreciation

Given the characterization of the two kinds of imagination involved in appreciating fictional works, it seems that the two are quite independent from each other,functioning in quite different ways within our psychological economy and, therefore, affording different sorts of cognitive value.
While acknowledging these differences, I would like to introduce a way, inspired by Roger Fry (1920) and StanleyCavell (1976), to consider the relationship between these two forms of imagining. In some of their remarks about art we may find some support for this relationship and for the peculiarity of the experience it engenders. As I hope to show, both share the idea that the fictionality of the representation together with the distinctive experiential content that each particular artistic medium affords, allow us to experience its content, and to pay attention to it, in a way that is unique and that can find no correspondence in real life experience.

I will look first atFry's notion of imaginary life and his characterization of the particular experience afforded by art. For him, the fact that the world of the representation is cut off from any practical, real-life, liability allows experiencing it in a pure contemplative

way or as pure appearance. This experience, in turn, allows the viewer to become aware of certain aspects that could not have been noticed or experienced had they not been available within this detached, purely contemplative experience.[13]

In this sense, Fry's view about the experience that is characteristic of art appeals to both notions of imagination we have referred so far. On the one hand, the pure contemplative stance is made possible by our awareness of the detached nature of the representation - that is, of its fictional character. On the other, through the pure contemplative stance that the work's imaginary nature affords, the spectator undergoes an experiencewhere she can become aware of the very structure of that experience –borrowing Wittgenstein's terminology we could say that she becomes aware of the grammatical aspects[14] of the situation presented. The experience is, thus, reflective.[15] It is not only that a certain perspective or way of organizing the contents represented is being made possible through the representation, but, rather, that an awareness of that organization as something that has an internal necessity or as something that establishes its own internal necessity becomes possible. This is, for Fry, the actual content of the experience of the work –and not merely the seeing or the experiencing of the work's representational content from a particular perspective.

Cavell's remarks on tragedy and on the characteristic experience it affords share, I think, some of the elements we find in Fry's view about art as fostering our imaginative life. For Cavell, the very conditions of dramatic theatre, and the way in which those conditions determine the relationship of the spectators to the dramatic events happening on stage, are essential for the kind of the experience that theatre affords. Following Cavell, theatreliteralizes the conditions of contemplating the world when we adopt the attitude of mere spectatorship.[16] Those conditions, when effective in real life situations, impose an artificial detachment that affects the way we relate to the events and people contemplated. In adopting in real-life a mere contemplative attitude, we are refraining from the possibility of interaction and, hence, from the possibility of being part of those events. Cavell often puts this relation in terms of refraining from acknowledging others and others' condition. But in theatre the conditions that in real life we artificially impose to ourselves when we adopt a mere contemplative attitude, i.e., hiddenness, silence and isolation, are plain, literal,and thus allow us experiencing the dramatic events in a way that could not be possible in real life.

For Cavell, the uniqueness of the experience of theatre is illuminated by this contrast between the conditions of experiencing an event in real life and the conditions that

constitute the theatrical medium. Adoptinga mere contemplative attitude in real life contextsinvolves actively refraining from acknowledging our practical liability to the things contemplated. This affects our experience. But, in theatre, since there is no way in which we could interact with the dramatic events, the experience of these characters and eventsis different. We experientially engage with the events in a way that could not be possible in real life. In fact, as a result of this kind of engagement that the fictionality of the representation affords, and precisely because our position with respect to the events taking place in front of our eyes is one of necessary isolation, we can become aware of the necessity governing the events.[17]We are in a position to grasp the whole thing as utterly autonomous and as possessing its own necessary thrives. In this sense, the conditions of theatre are precisely what makes possible perceiving a sense or order and necessity among the events, that could not be possible otherwise. The sense or orientation we perceive the dramatic action as having, and the awareness of the necessary linksamong the actions performed and that unavoidably result from the characters' words and deeds that we perceive would not be available if we could be part of the drama. So being separated from the drama in the way the spectator of theatre is from what happens on stage is necessary for the tragic effect to occur.

Cavell compares this discovery concerning dramatic language to the discovery of perspective in pictorial representation and of tonality in music (1976: 352). What these so different discoveries have in common is that they endow the work with a grammatical structure which in turn constitutes each work – if successful – as an autonomous self-sufficient or self-ruled, visual, sonic or dramatic space.Directionality, as a quality intrinsic to perceiving organized movement, is characteristic of our experience of drama, music, and pictorial space. This feature emphasizes the sense of organizational necessity that emerges from the way in which the characters and their actions related to each other.

So, in Cavell's remarks about tragedy[18], fictionality – understood as separateness between the spectator and the work – and formal autonomy – and what this formal autonomy reveals in terms of the necessities that arise from a particular grammar – are intimately intermingled. Without separateness, i.e., fictionality, the characteristic experience of dramatic necessity will not be possible and, hence, the kind of insight that experiencing these sets of dramatic necessities affords would not be available.

These thoughts about tragedy as a dramatic medium and of the importance of the unique experience that it affords echoes the modernist view of art defended by Michael Fried and whose roots can also be found in Fry's view of art and art's characteristic experience in terms of imaginary life. A common theme found in these thinkers is that formal unity, understood as a unity which partly derives from the very conditions of the medium in which it is produced, is what guarantees separation from the viewer and, hence, what guarantees that the experience afforded is an autonomous one. Separation, in a sense not far from the transcendental separation made possible by the conditions of theatre,is required for formal unity; and unity of form is what prevents the work from mixing up with our world[19]. Separation and formal unity are, in this view, the two sides of the same coin.[20]

I take this formulation to be the closest one to the kind of relationship that the two forms of imagination introduced above can exemplify in art and art appreciation. Still, although it seems that the two senses of imagination introduced at the beginning, imagination as make-believe and organizational imagination, are intertwined in the accounts offered by R. Fry and S. Cavell, it is still unclear how exactly these two roles of the imagination cooperate in the production of an artistic experience. Both the content and the waysin which we relate to that content are different from any possible real-life encounter with similar events, objects, or people. Perspectives as operating in ordinary perception and understanding differ from how they are experienced in art precisely because they are partially endowed with features that can possess only as artefacts produced within a medium.[21]

Now, granting this, we need to clarify what the kind of cognitive content is that fictional works are supposed to afford in a particular way and that makes them irreplaceable in this sense.At least from what has been suggested so far,it is not only that fictional works make available an experience that we could have had we been born in another time and place and within a different perspective than the one we currently have or if we lived in another possible world; artistic worlds are not justrichly imagined possible worlds. Albeit many defenders of the idea that fiction can afford knowledge often appeal to this kind of experience I think that the distinctive experiential content that both Fry and Cavell point to is of a different kind. For them, no matter how rich our set of experiences could be there is still something in the kind of experience that fiction affords that could not be obtained otherwise. The question now is:How is that kind of

experience cognitively valuable? What does it reveal that ordinary experience cannot show?

Medium Specificity and Experience

What is the point of having this sort of experiences at all? is it that they allow us to see or to hear that may be considered as cognitively valuable? Why do we need drama or fiction so that certain things become salient or perceivable, and why is not enough to discuss or to reflect on certain aspects or relations for this kind of cognitive value to obtain? My tentative answer to these questions is that there are aspects of our experience of the world that couldn't be made salient or thematised unless this sort of artefacts provided them. Expanding on the ideas introduced at the end of the last section, I think we can make better sense of the peculiarity of the experience afforded by fictional works and see whether this experience can possess some cognitive value over and above its capacity to present imagined worlds or allow us to entertain possible state of affairs.

Focusing on fictional works in terms of artefacts meant to produce an experience which typically results from the possibilities, and thematization, of a particular medium allows us to clarify the idea I have been discussing concerning the cognitive value of fictional works. The gist of Fry's appeal to our experience with artworks through what he calls the imaginary life and Cavell's insistence on the distinctiveness of the tragic experience is, I think, that fictional artworks provide not a duplicate of real-life experiences but, through the peculiar grammar of each artistic medium, a thematization of the conditions governing different kinds of experiences. Thus, for example, photographs and films, to the extent that they share a similar mechanism of producing images through a causal mechanism,thematise, and not merely replicate,certain aspects of visual experiences. Furthermore, in doing so, they allow us to have visual experiences we could never have had just by looking at the world, but that, to the extent that they are also about the world, can show us aspects about it or about the ways we perceive it.[22]

As pointed by Fry and Cavell, and also by art historians and critics like Fried (1998, 1980, 2008), the reflective nature of artistic experience is grounded upon the ways in which works thematize the conditions of the medium they belong to. The gist of artistic experience is, thus, not merely the imagined content they can afford, but the possibilities of experiencing visual, temporal, kinaesthetic, etc., aspects in relation to a

medium; that is, as showing us –or as making us aware of– the grammar of that medium.

One could argue that, given that this experience is so medium-specific, its cognitive value becomes problematic. How can these peculiar and medium-dependent experiences be significant with respect to understanding real-life experience, broadly understood? How does artistic experience relate to ordinary experience? One way to answer is to point to the fact that each artistic medium thematizes or reflectively concerns an aspect of ordinary experience. As we have seen in Cavell's remarks about tragedy, theatre makes our possible condition of spectatorship the gist of our relationship with the events taking place in front of us. Similarly, each medium would thematize or literalize one or another possible condition of real-life experience and, then it will explore what follows from it, how it relates to other aspects and so on.[23]

Still, as I hope to have shown, we can find some cognitive value in the reflective character of the experience that at least some fictional works can afford. The reason for describing this experience as cognitive is that it allows experiencing -or at least becoming aware of-certain aspects of the conditions under which we experience and represent the world.[24]That one can become aware, for example, of the corrupting effects of asking for a proof of love to the loved ones, instead of acknowledging them and one's own vulnerability –and that these effects can be triggered by one's words- is an experience facilitated by the very conditions of theatre. Similarly, that one can become aware of the variety of things happening in front of our eyes but of which we cannot we cannot be simultaneously attending except through a still image is an experience possible only under the conditions of still photograph. By thematising and exploring some of the conditions of ordinary experience through the particular grammar of each medium, the spectator becomes experientially aware of those conditions themselves and upon their impact or role in our broader ordinary experience. Furthermore, since, following Fry and Cavell, I have described this experience as essentially reflective there is a way to ground the cognitive value that many aestheticians and art appreciators have been willing to defend; or, at least, to locate it in the right place.

Notes

[1] See, for example, Currie (1990), Lamarque & Olsen (1994), Stock (2011, 2017), Davies (2012, 2015), or García-Carpintero (2007, 2013, 2019a-b).

[2] Although there are some problems and paradoxes long discussed in the literature that qualify the continuity between emotional responses to actual events and people on the one hand and to fictional events and characters on the other, such as the phenomenon of discrepant affect or contrary feelings, it seems that the evaluative standards involved in emotional responses are held more or less constant across the fiction/non-fiction distinction. For a recent take on the issue of discrepant affect see Camp (2018) and Gilmore (2019).

[3] Sceptics divide among those who think that the kind of knowledge that could be possibly obtained is too weak or trivial and those who think imagining lacks the justificatory means required for epistemic validity. For an exhaustive review of the different arguments against the cognitive value of fictional literature see Mikkonen (2013, 2015).

[4]See, for example, Dorsch (2012), Kind (2018), Hopkins (forthcoming).

[5]See, for example, Currie & Ravencroft (2002) and Nichols (2004).

[6] A subject of further discussion is whether what I am calling here 'perspectival imagination' really involves imagination in a significant sense or is just a feature of perceptual activity. Camp (2017), for example, characterizes perspectives as involving imagination.

[7] Musical perception, for example, or aesthetic perception in general have been often conceived in this way. Aspect perception or seeing-as, as we will see, has been also understood as implying to some extent this imaginative capacity. This suggests that the notion of imagination involved in this case is one that contributes to perception and, hence, partly constitutes perceptual content, rather than as a capacity for merely entertaining contents without endorsing a belief attitude.

[8]A simple but illustrative example of how metaphors and characterizations play this orientational role is the representation of time in terms of spatial relations. Across different cultures, different spatial relationships get translated into the ways in which concepts such as 'past', 'present' or 'future' are used. For example, in some cultures the past is located as being located behind our current position, while future events are located in front of our current position; but others do locate them just in the opposite manner. Also, it seems there are some correlations between the direction of writing (from left to right or vice versa) and the ways in which different cultures locate past and future events to the right or to left depending on their respective writing direction.

[9] One could think, for example, of Primo Levi's trilogy of Auswitsch as a good example. For a defense of the idea that biography can afford the same kind of moral insight as some literary fictions see Skilleas (2006) and Willemsen (2006).

[10] Perspectives epistemic status seem to be better grasped in terms such as consistency or soundness. See Camp (2017).

[11] Some authors, notably Gibson (2007), have tried to articulate this idea with respect to literature focusing on the dramatic and literary form that is characteristic of literary works. He distinguishes between knowing and understanding and relates the kind of activity the reader engages with when appreciating a literary work to the enhancing of our understanding broadly understood.

[12] One caveat that should be done before continuing is that the cognitive value that I will try to capture and that I believe is specific of fictional works is not systematically

present in all fictions. Still, when the experience which affords it is caused by a work of fiction, the fictionality of the representation is key.

[13] "The whole of animal life, and a great part of human life, is made up of these instinctive reactions to sensible objects, and their accompanying emotions. But man has the peculiar faculty of calling up again in his mind the echo of past experience of this kind, of going over it again, "in imagination" as we say. He has, therefore, the possibility of a double life; one the actual life, the other the imaginative life. Between these two lives there is this great distinction, that in the actual life the processes of natural selection have brought it about that the instinctive reaction, such, for instance, as flight from danger, shall be the important part of the whole process, and it is towards this that the man bends his whole conscious endeavour. But in the imaginative life no such action is necessary, and, therefore, the whole consciousness may be focussed upon the perceptive and the emotional aspects of the experience. In this way *we get, in the imaginative life, a different set of values, and a different kind of perception*. (…) we become *true spectators*, not selecting what we will see, but *seeing everything equally*, and thereby we come to notice *a number of appearances and relations of appearances*, which would have escaped our vision before" (1920:12-13, emphasis mine)

[14]Wittgenstein's notion of grammar allows us, in this context, to capture the idea that at least in some artworks it is possible to recognize a thematization of the normative relationships that govern the spectator's understanding of the object as a painting, as a sculpture, as a piece of music, etc. In these cases, the spectator becomes aware not only of what the painting, sculpture, or film represents, but of some of the rules governing the specific medium the work is produced within.

[15] "[Emotions in real life] are in a sense unintelligible. In the imaginative life, on the contrary, we can both feel the emotion and watch." (Fry, 1920: 18). Or "art as created by the artist is in violent revolt against the instinctive life, is an expression of the reflective and fully conscious life." (Fry, 1920: 47).

[16] "The conditions of theatre literalize the conditions we exact for existence outside -hiddenness, silence, isolation- hence make that existence plain" (Cavell, 1976: 333).

[17] Some authors think this condition of separateness is not exclusive of fictional context as it is instantiated, for example, in our relationship with past events or in our relationship to current events but very distant spatially (See, for example, Matravers, 2014). However, I take Cavell's notion of separateness involved here not as a matter of contingent separateness but as a transcendental condition of theatre. While if our space and time coordinates were different, we could experience past or spatially distant events; there is no change in our spatial and temporal coordinates that could make us being co-existent with the events and characters of fictional events.

[18] Albeit each artistic form -music, drama, painting, film or photography- has its own grammatical structure and, therefore, makes possible different forms of experience, the idea that the kind of experiential access to what is represented is partly constituted by the conditions that each particular medium imposes on the viewer or spectator is central in Cavell. For him, paying attention to these conditions and to the ways in which certain works explore them or thematize them can answer to the question about what constitutes the peculiarity of artistic experience.

[19] In Fried's jargon (1980), lack of formal unity -or autonomy- may amount to theatricality.

[20] A related issue that these authors have prominently pay attention to is the relationship -or internal connection- between the unity of form they think constitutes artistic value and the emergence of that unity from the reflection on the conditions of each artistic

medium. Artistic unity is, in this sense, not just any experienced formal unity or organization -such as, for example, one perceives in fractal relationships- but a kind of unity that emerges from the very conditions -or grammatical structure- of a particular medium. This is why each medium, and the way in which the medium's grammar evolves, has its own autonomous standard of formal unity. This, I think, is another reason for considering that the experience that is characteristic of fictional artworks cannot be simply reduced to any of the senses of imagining that I have introduced at the beginning.

[21] As stated above this notion of the grammar of a medium should be understood in a historically flexible way. The very possibilities that at a particular time determine the kind of experience possibly produced within a medium can be subject to future refinement, reflection, and change as the very artistic practice within that medium takes place. I thanks X for pushing me on this point.

[22] Putting the issue in this way may seem too broad for one could think microscopes or telescopes, radiography and other mechanism for analogic representation would share with share with art this very condition. But I think this thought can be resisted by noticing the importance of the medium and how each one offers a range of experiential possibilities within its own grammatical structure.

[23]This raises the question of the extent to which a particular medium is alive or active. With respect to theatre, Cavell also remarks that its significance for us may wane once the condition of spectatorship becomes our normal or default condition -partly due to the expansion of mass media. (1976, 350-351)

[24] In relation to the experiential picture of the cognitive value of fictional works that I am trying to defend, it may be worth considering Kind's defense (2020) of the transformative capacity of imaginative experiences and, consequently, of the possibility of becoming aware of how we would react or feel to certain possible situations.

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