Artworks are evaluated as extensions of their creators

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What are the psychological processes that drive the evaluation and appreciation of art? To date, the psychological study of art has largely focused on the perceptual aspects of viewing artwork—i.e., how certain colors, shapes, axes of symmetry, etc. give rise to perceptions of beauty and good form. More recently, however, a number of researchers have begun to examine the conceptual factors underlying the appreciation of art. The aim of this chapter is to synthesize these conceptual approaches under a common theoretical umbrella.

Specifically, we propose that people intuitively evaluate artwork as a physical extension of its creator—the extended-self hypothesis (see Belk 1988, James 1890, Newman 2013, Newman, Smith and Bartels 2014). Thus, art appreciation is not only influenced by the object’s aesthetic features, but also by key conceptual factors including beliefs about the artist’s mental state and the degree of physical connection to the work. In this chapter, we review a number of recent studies that support this framework. We also report the results of a new experimental study, which suggests that in certain cases, artwork itself may be intuitively viewed as a living entity.

1. Aesthetic Psychology

One natural approach to the study of art appreciation is to assume that there are particular aesthetic features that drive evaluations of art. For example, certain perceptual elements (e.g., composition, goodness of form, etc.) may lead one painting to be judged as more beautiful or aesthetically pleasing than another. Indeed, early research on the psychology of aesthetics was motivated by the notion that there are universal aesthetic principles that guide art appreciation.
Fechner (1876) is credited with being one of the first to propose that aesthetics should be studied with experimental methods and is considered the father of empirical aesthetics (Martindale 2007). He promoted a bottom-up approach to studying aesthetics via deconstructing visual images into various elements. Fechner conducted numerous studies that tested, for instance, the most appealing proportions of rectangle (the golden rectangle) (Fechner 1865), and what colors were most preferred (Fechner 1876). Other researchers adopted this approach and tested various perceptual properties with the ultimate goal of understanding a more complex aesthetic picture (Shimamura 2012).

Gestalt psychologists promoted a more holistic approach to empirically studying aesthetics. They theorized that it was the organization of visual elements (as a whole) and not the elements themselves that contributed primarily to aesthetic appreciation (Arnheim 1974). Thus, compositional factors like balance, harmony, and object placement were the more essential dimensions guiding aesthetic appreciation. In line with this attention to the entire image, other psychologists focused on how “collative features” (e.g., novelty, complexity, incongruity, etc.) come together in a piece of work to produce varying levels of arousal. For example, Berlyne (1971) proposed a U-shaped curve, wherein the collective features result in optimal aesthetic appreciation at mid-range levels of arousal.

Neuroaesthetics is perhaps the most recent movement within this tradition, where the aim is to identify the neural correlates of aesthetic appreciation (Chatterjee 2011, Cinzia and Vittorio 2009, Zeki 1999). The field was initially focused on identifying the brain regions that are activated when experiencing beauty (Cinzia and Vittorio 2009, Zeki 1999). For instance, Kawabata and Zeki (2004) found that the orbitofrontal cortex was more active when participants viewed a beautiful painting relative to a neutral or ugly painting. The field has since expanded to examine how visual experiences of an artwork link more broadly to sensorimotor areas, core emotional centers, and reward related centers in the brain (Cinzia and Vittorio 2009).
Taken together, empirical aesthetics has tended to focus on either distinguishing the specific aesthetic properties of an artwork that lead to positive evaluations or identifying regions of the brain associated with evaluating art.

However, the fields of empirical aesthetics and neuroaesthetics have been critiqued for their limitations in fully capturing the processes involved in art appreciation (Brown and Dissanayake 2009). Specifically, a limitation of the “bottom-up” approach is that it does not take into account the influence of the viewer’s knowledge and the specific historical context in which the artwork was created (Bullot and Reber 2013). For example, Andy Warhol’s *Brillo Box* can only be appreciated if the viewer knows that Warhol meant the object to be viewed as art; otherwise, the *Brillo Box* is visually indistinguishable from an everyday consumer product (Bullot and Reber 2013, Danto 1992). Brown and Dissanayake (2009) further suggest that even if art appreciation were solely derived from perceptions of beauty, the prior paradigms have no way of differentiating between how the mind processes beautiful art versus beautiful objects more generally. In other words, empirical aesthetics and neuroaesthetics have not developed a theory of how people come to appreciate a particular entity as “art.”

Art appreciation’s relationship with external knowledge has led some scholars to conclude that the attempt to construct universals or fundamental principles is a futile endeavor (Currie 2004, Gombrich 2000, Zeki 2002). While there have been efforts to marry the historical dependency of art with the aesthetic evaluation of art (Bullot and Reber 2013), we propose that art appreciation can still be understood through a psychological framework. In the following section, we first review how recent research in cognitive psychology, evolutionary psychology and experimental philosophy has empirically examined art appreciation via its conceptual (versus purely perceptual) factors.

2. Conceptual Approaches to the Psychology of Art
Increasingly, the psychological study of art has recognized that artworks are often not assessed for their surface properties alone, but in relation to a broader set of conceptual factors. Specifically, such “top-down” approaches have focused on the importance on viewers’ knowledge (e.g., about the artwork, its creation, the artist and their intentions, etc.) as well as considerations of the particular context in which beliefs about art appreciation are formed (Gombrich 2000, Shimamura 2012, Solso 1996). In contrast to the bottom-up approach of empirical aesthetics—where low-level sensory processing of visual elements leads to art appreciation—top-down approaches highlight how preexisting knowledge directs people to perceive and interpret sensory information. In other words, the concept or “schema” of art that people hold determines how art is evaluated, rather than the aesthetic elements themselves (e.g., colors, lines, shapes, etc.).

Within psychology, such conceptual approaches have not attempted to catalogue all relevant historical or contextual knowledge. Rather, researchers have sought to identify more general patterns—i.e., what are people’s lay theories of art? What conceptual heuristics guide evaluations of art? What concepts or kinds of information appear to be most relevant? Below we outline a number of key findings that have emerged from this literature.

2.1. Familiarity and Expectations-Based Art Assessments

One prominent line of research has investigated the role of familiarity in people’s assessment of art. For instance, to what extent can the value of Monet’s paintings be attributed to their “intrinsic” aesthetic properties versus their popularity? Indeed, Cutting (2003) found that for impressionist paintings, frequency of exposure increased liking. Interestingly, the effect of exposure on liking was distinct from other factors such as recognition, complexity, and prototypicality judgments, suggesting positive evaluations of art can be affected by frequency
of viewing per se. Such effects are consistent with a well-established “mere exposure effect” where a stimulus (e.g., a face, sound, etc.) is liked more simply because people have been exposed to it more often (Fechner 1876, Zajonc 1968).

More recent work, however, has added complexity to these findings. Meskin, Phelan, Moore, and Kieran (2013) varied whether or not participants were repeatedly exposed to art of high intrinsic value (John Everett Millais paintings) versus art commonly thought to be of low intrinsic value (Thomas Kinkade paintings). Instead of enhancing the appreciation of both kinds of paintings, the authors found that exposure made participant assessments more extreme: the high intrinsic value paintings were valued more with exposure, while the low intrinsic value paintings were valued less with exposure. Exposure thus seems to serve a reinforcing role in both positive and negative directions.

Other work has investigated how the reputation of the artist influences expectations and subsequent evaluations. For example, Bar-Hillel, Maharshak, Moshinsky, and Nofech (2012) found that participants rated a poem as higher quality when they were told that the poet was famous (versus unknown). This is consistent with broader range of work from consumer psychology that has been concerned with the effect of brand names and price on valuation (Lee, Frederick and Ariely 2006, Shiv, Carmon and Ariely 2005). For example, in the absence of labels, beer drinkers cannot differentiate their favorite beer from other brands (Allison and Uhl 1964); experienced violinists cannot distinguish sound of older violins versus newer ones (Fritz et al. 2012); and labeling can alter the experience of identical food products (e.g., beef labeled as “75% fat free” vs. “25% fat”) (de Araujo et al. 2005, Levin and Gaeth 1988).

The influence of expectations on consumption experiences has been further corroborated by work in neuroscience (McClure et al. 2004, Plassman, O’Doherty, Shiv, & Rangel, 2008). Specifically, original artworks are processed differently in the brain than visually identical artworks that are believed to be fake. Huang, Bridge, Kemp, and Parker (2011) found that
Rembrandt paintings believed to be authentic lit up areas associated with the reward centers of the brain, whereas identical “fakes” lit up other centers of the brain associated with planning. In some sense, art appreciation can operate in ways that are analogous to effects seen in branding, where expectations alone can alter appreciation and valuation. Importantly, however, these mechanisms (mere exposure and “branding” effects) seem to enhance the value of many different types of objects—not just art. Therefore, in the following sections we turn our attention to conceptual factors that appear to be particularly relevant to the evaluation of art.

2.2. Creative Performance

The philosopher Denis Dutton (2009) proposed that people do not assess artwork solely in terms of perceptual features, but instead, as the endpoint of a “creative performance.” In other words, features of the performance (e.g., who made it, how it was made, when it was made, etc.) play a key role in how people subsequently value art. Consistent with this perspective, Newman and Bloom (2012) have suggested that the reason why original artworks are valued significantly more than duplicates is because the original is a more substantial “creative performance.” In support of this explanation, Newman & Bloom asked participants to value very similar landscape paintings made by unknown artists. Half of the participants were told that one painting was an intentional copy of the other; the other half of participants were told that the paintings were coincidentally similar. Newman & Bloom (2012) found that even when the artists were completely unknown (and there was not an existing market for their work), an original painting was judged to be significantly more valuable than an intentional copy, whereas coincidentally similar paintings are judged to be equally valuable.

Past work has further supported this framework by varying other kinds of beliefs about the process behind how an artwork was made. For example, Kruger, Wirtz, Van Boven, and Altermatt (2004) found that people tend to apply a general “effort heuristic” when assessing the
quality of artworks. Participants rate the same painting as higher quality and worth more money when it took more (vs. less) time to create. Relatedly, artworks believed to be created by one person are perceived to be higher quality and more valuable than otherwise identical artworks thought to be made via collaborative effort (Smith and Newman 2014). Somewhat analogous to the effort heuristic, this was driven by a higher premium placed on the effort of one individual versus the same amount of effort distributed across multiple people.

However, beliefs about the role of effort are malleable particularly when pitted against lay conceptions of talent or potential. Cho and Schwartz (2008) manipulated whether participants were exposed to one of two lay theories of artistic creation: either “good-art-takes-effort” or “good-art-takes-talent.” When exposed to the former theory, the findings of the original effort heuristic were replicated; however, when participants were exposed to the talent theory, information about effort did not influence their assessments of a low versus high effort painting. In fact, the painting that took less time in the talent condition was valued more than the control condition where there was no information about effort, suggesting that talent can be associated with lower effort. In a similar vein, Poehlman and Newman (2014) found that an inferior painting was rated as higher in value when it was thought to have been made by a child versus an adult. This enhanced assessment was driven by beliefs in the younger artist’s potential and the anticipation of future achievements.

Evolutionary psychologists have speculated as to the fundamental motivation behind this attention to performance over the perceptual endpoint (Miller 2000, 2001, Dutton 2009). This “art instinct” is thought to be associated with the genetic fitness communicated by an exemplary artistic performance (Dutton 2009). By attending to performance, people can better gauge the creativity, virtuosity, and general reproductive fitness of another. A forged painting is not the product of a person’s originality and thus should not be given the same credence. However, this “Darwinian aesthetics” perspective has been critiqued by art historians who argue that the social
function of art is not often competitive, but rather in the service of social harmony (Brown and Dissanayake 2009). The ultimate reasons why people attend to “creative performances” is not well understood and is a promising avenue for future research.

2.3. The Role of Intentions

A second key dimension in the evaluation of artwork appears to be the artist’s mental state and intentions. Beliefs about the artist’s intentions have been found to influence art assessment in two general ways: categorization and valuation.

Indeed, beliefs about intentions play a key role in categorizing an object as a “work of art” in the first place. For example, consider the case of Andy Warhol’s sculpture, Brillo Box. What differentiates Warhol’s Brillo Box from a readily available commercial Brillo Box? According to a number of theorists (e.g., Danto, 1992), the former is seen as art because Warhol intended it to be seen as such, while the latter was intended to be mass-produced commercial product. This view has been supported by research in cognitive and developmental psychology, which has demonstrated that intentions seem to trump an object’s appearance or functional properties in categorizing the object as “art” (Barrett, Laurence and Margolis 2008, Bloom 1996, Dennett 1987, Levinson 1993). For example, Newman and Bloom (2012) demonstrated that changing whether participants believed a one-of-kind object was intended to be functional object (a chair) versus an artwork (a sculpture) altered how they valued identical duplicates of the very same item. This attention to intent over surface features is not just limited to Western adult populations. Young children categorize ambiguous drawings and artifacts based on the creator’s intent (Bloom and Markson 1998, Gelman and Bloom 2000, Gelman and Ebeling 1997, Olson and Shaw 2011, Preissler and Bloom 2008). Non-Western populations also favor original intent over current use as the defining criteria for an object (Barrett, Laurence and
Margolis, 2008), suggesting that the role of intention in the categorization of man-made objects is potentially universal.

Second, given that an object is seen as art, beliefs about the motivation behind the creation of the artwork (e.g., for self-expression versus profit motives) also influences the assessment of art, independent of the work’s aesthetic properties. Although there are many reasons why people create art, existing research has focused primarily on the assessment of artwork made for self-expressive purposes versus more extrinsic motives (e.g., commercial or profit goals). Bhattacharjee, Berman, Dana, and Mellers (2014) found that participants valued an artwork more if it was thought to be motivated by the artist’s desire for self-expression versus conforming to outside tastes; however, when the same item was framed a commercial product, participants preferred the product that was altered in service of extrinsic motives. Theoretical and qualitative work has supported similar associations between self-expression and other non-extrinsic motives (e.g., work made out of “love” or “passion”) and higher valuation of artworks particularly via higher beliefs in the artwork’s expressive authenticity (Becker 1978, Beverland and Farrelly, 2010, Dutton 2003, Hirschman 1983). It is not clear whether this association between individual expression, authenticity, and higher art value is universal or culturally reinforced; however, what appears to be consistent is that altering beliefs about why artwork was made tends to influence art assessment.

Interestingly, work in art theory has argued against the use of intention in art assessment. In their famous paper, “The Intentionalist Fallacy,” Wimsatt and Beardsley (1946) proposed that the artist’s intentions should play no role in judgments of value—the work should speak for itself. Several versions of this critique have cropped up in art theory (Barthes 1967, Foucault 1969/1979), with Roland Barthes even declaring “the death of the author.” While a useful way to think about how to normatively approach art, descriptively and empirically, the attention to
artistic intent has “stubbornly persisted” (Dutton 2009: 169) as an important way in which people intuitively assess art.

2.4. Physical Connection and Contagion

In addition to intentions or mental states, prior work has found that beliefs about an artwork’s physical connection to its creator often influence assessments of value, independent of perceptual features (Newman, Bartels and Smith 2014, Newman and Bloom 2012). These findings have been explained via the law of contagion (Frazer 1890/1959, Mauss 1902/1972, Rozin and Nemeroff 2002, Tylor 1897/1974), which is a form of magical thinking where people believe that an entity’s essence can be transferred to another object through physical contact (Belk 1988, Bloom 2004, 2010, Frazer 1890/1959, Nemeroff and Rozin 1994, Newman, Diesendruck and Bloom 2011). This is perhaps most clearly illustrated in the case of celebrity objects where mundane objects (e.g., JFK’s hairbrush, Britney Spears’ chewing gum) can be sold for exorbitantly high prices (Newman et al. 2011). Sterilizing such objects lowers valuation, suggesting that people indeed value the believed physical transmission of the individual’s essence as opposed to valuing the item’s mere association with the person (Nemeroff and Rozin 1994, Newman et al. 2011). In consumer contexts, contagion effects have been found to explain why people are more likely to purchase items that have been worn by attractive others (Argo, Dahl and Morales 2008).

While contagion effects can elevate the value of artifacts, considerations of physical contact appear to be especially salient in the domain art. For example, Newman, Bartels, and Smith (2014) found that an artwork physically made by the original creator was valued more highly than the same artwork made by an assistant carrying out the original creator’s intentions. Further, Newman and Bloom (2012) found that participants valued a sculpture more when they
thought it was made via a “hands-on” process versus a “hands-off” process. Unlike celebrity memorabilia, which derives value from its physical connection to certain well-regarded celebrities, the effects of contagion on artwork appear to exist independently of the fame of the artist. Thus, contagion effects are another instance in which art is not just assessed in terms of its observed aesthetic properties. Rather, original artworks are valued, in part, because they are believed to be imbued with an *essence* that otherwise identical duplicates do not possess.

3. Artworks are evaluated as extensions of their creators

One common mechanism linking these findings is that when evaluating artwork, observers appear to be highly sensitive to the artist’s intentions. In short, this “artistic design stance” (Bullot and Reber 2013) views artwork as the unique product of intentional action and therefore takes into account inferences about the intentions and mental state of the creator. Indeed, as reviewed above, there is considerable empirical support for the notion that evaluations of mental states play a key role in people’s naïve theories about artwork (Bloom and Markson 1998, Newman and Bloom 2012, Olson and Shaw 2011).

A second key principle, however, is that in addition to the role of intentions, people tend to place a special value on the degree of physical contact that an artist has with an artwork (Newman and Bloom 2012). Such patterns are consistent with a belief in contagion—the notion that through physical contact, objects can acquire a special quality or essence (e.g., Frazer 1890/1959, Mauss 1902/1972, Rozin and Nemeroff 2002).

One way to integrate both the importance of intentionality and the importance of physical contact is to suggest that people intuitively view artwork as an extension of the artist. This notion is consistent with an “extended-self hypothesis” (James 1890; Belk 1988), which suggests that people’s self-concept goes beyond their physical body and cognitive processes to
include all entities that they regard as “their own”—their friends and family, pets, and the objects that they own and use. While many entities may be thought of as part of the extended self, we suggest that art may be unique in that it is the epitome of an extended-self object. A work of art is a manmade entity that has no functional utility beyond its role as a work of art, and therefore, the belief that it is an extension of the self (in no small part) defines it as art. Put differently, observers may naturally assume that an object that reflects one’s self or experience and has no other utility, is Art.

A large body of research has documented intuitive notions of mind-body dualism and the fact that people tend to think of themselves and others as both an agentive soul and a physical body (see Bloom 2004). As such, the belief that art is an extension of the self would include evaluating artwork both as an extension of the artist’s mind (evaluations of the creator’s intentions and mental states), as well as an extension of the artist’s body (which includes evaluations of the degree of physical connection between the artist and the artwork). In other words, people are seen as possessing a soul or essence, which can spread to other objects, particularly those they create. In turn, artworks are evaluated as extensions of the artist, including both mental and physical characteristics.

Indeed, there is some empirical evidence that people tend to reason about art in a similar manner as they do about persons. For example, when reasoning about whether a particular work of art is “the same work of art” over time or transformation, people use the same criteria as when they reason about individual persons—and distinct criteria from those used to reason about ordinary artifacts (e.g., a hammer) (Newman et al. 2014). Thus, in terms of identity judgments, there are important ways in which judgments about art appear to be more similar to judgments about persons than judgments about other artifacts.

However, while there are important parallels between people and art, there are also obvious differences. This raises interesting questions about how people conceive of the aspect of the
person that is in the artwork. Do people literally assume a work of art is an extension of the person who created it? Is it the case that an original work of art is seem as in some way more “alive” because it contains the essence of the artist? We conducted an experiment to test this possibility.

4. Are Original Artworks “Alive”?

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first was to corroborate past work, which has shown artworks are not just evaluated for their perceptual properties but assessed in relation to beliefs about their histories (or the “creative performance”). A second aim was to test whether original artwork is valued in part, because it is seen as more “animate” or “alive” than perceptually similar artworks that are not original.

4.1. Method

A total of 398 participants (\(M_{\text{age}} = 32.27, 39.4\%\) women) were recruited from Amazon’s Mechanical Turk, an online platform. Using a previously established paradigm (Newman and Bloom 2012), all participants were presented with two similar looking landscape paintings (see Figure 5.1). Participants read that the paintings were created by two different artists who lived in the same town. They were then randomly assigned to one of two conditions (copy vs. coincidence). In the copy condition, participants read that one artist created the painting first, while the other artist created the painting after seeing the first one. In the coincidence condition, the two artists created the paintings independently from each other, thus the similarities between the paintings resulted by coincidence.

[Insert Figure 5.1 here]
Participants were then randomly assigned to rate one of the two paintings. Specifically, they rated the extent to which they agreed with the following statements: *It is high quality; It is valuable; It should be worth a lot of money; It is impressive; It is praiseworthy* (where 1 = Strongly Disagree; 9 = Strongly Agree). In order to test the “living entity” hypothesis, participants also rated the extent to which they perceived the painting to be animate using items adapted from an established anthropomorphism scale (Waytz, Cacioppo and Epley 2010). Specifically, they rated agreement with the following: *The painting has a soul; The painting seems “alive”; The painting is like a person; The painting takes on a life of its own; The painting expresses emotions.* (where 1 = Strongly Disagree; 9 = Strongly Agree).

We predicted that holding constant the surface features of the paintings, we should observe a difference in value based on the creator’s intentions: the painting thought to be an intentional copy would be rated as less valuable compared to the original, while the paintings thought to be coincidental duplicates would not show difference in value. We further predicted that this difference would be explained by variation in the extent to which the painting is subsequently seen as more “alive” or “human” — in other words, more of an extension of the creator.

### 4.2. Results

We performed a 2 (coincidence vs. intentional copy) x 2 (original vs. copy) between-subjects ANOVA on a composite measure of valuation ($\alpha = .92$). As predicted, we observed a significant interaction, $F(394) = 7.52$, $p = .006$ (see Figure 5.2). Analysis of simple slopes revealed that, in the coincidence condition, there was no difference in value between the two paintings, $t(192) = .67$, $p = .51$. However, in the intentional copy condition, the copy ($M = 5.31, SD = 1.54$) was rated as significantly less valuable than the original ($M = 6.23, SD = 1.41$), $t(202) = 4.45$, $p < .001$.  

To test the “living entity” hypothesis, we ran the same 2 x 2 analysis on the anthropomorphism items ($\alpha = .91$). There was a marginally significant interaction, $F(394) = 3.60, p = .056$. Analysis of simple slopes revealed that, in the coincidence condition, there was no difference in perceptions of animacy between the two paintings, $t(192) = .53, p = .60$. However, when the copy was an intentional duplicate ($M = 4.43, SD = 1.86$) it was rated as significantly less animate than the original ($M = 4.99, SD = 1.84$), $t(202) = -2.16, p = .032$.

[Insert Figure 5.2 here]
Further, a bootstrap mediation model (10,000 resamples) with the intentional copy versus original conditions as the independent variable, valuation as the dependent variable and the anthropomorphism scale as the mediator, revealed that perceptions of the paintings’ animacy significantly partially mediated the relationship [estimated indirect effect=-.35; 95% CI=-.73 to -.04] (See Figure 5.3).

[Insert Figure 5.3 here]

4.3. Discussion

These results provide support for the hypothesis that artworks are evaluated as extensions of people. Specifically, we found that two similar looking artworks were valued differently depending on participants’ beliefs about the intentions behind the works. When the two were thought to be coincidentally similar, people rated them as equally valuable. However, when participants believed that one creator intentionally copied another, the original was rated as significantly more valuable than the copy.

Moreover, we found that original artwork is valued in part because it is seen as more “human” or “alive” relative to unoriginal works. Such results are consistent with the extended-self hypothesis and the notion that artwork may be intuitively perceived as an extension of the artist.

5. Summary

The aim of this chapter was to review past research on the psychology of art and propose a framework underlying the conceptual aspects of aesthetic evaluations. The first section focused on the contributions of empirical aesthetics. This research has tended to focus on how the perceptual features of art influence aesthetic evaluations, but has been criticized for not
incorporating both the historically-dependent nature of art and the fact that many valued artworks deviate from traditional forms of beauty.

To speak to these issues, the second section reviewed psychological research, which has explored more conceptual, “top-down” approaches to art appreciation. We reviewed a growing body of research demonstrating (among other factors) the importance of the creator’s intentions and the degree of an artist’s physical connection to an artwork.

In the third section, we proposed these particular conceptual factors may arise because artworks are intuitively evaluated as physical extensions of their creators. As such, information regarding the artist’s mental state as well as the degree of physical connection to the artist play a central role in how observers assess an artwork’s quality and value.

Finally, to test this proposal, we conducted a new empirical study to explore whether original artworks are seen as “more human” than otherwise identical duplicates. Indeed, using an established paradigm, we found participants rated an intentional copy as less human than an original work or a coincidental copy. Further, lower ratings of anthropomorphism, in turn, explained lower valuations of the painting. This provided initial evidence that original artworks are valued, in part, because they are seen as more “alive”—an original contains the essence of the artist, while a duplicate does not. These preliminary results also help to contribute to existing work on anthropomorphism by demonstrating that an object can be perceived as human not solely by virtue of possessing a resemblance to a human, but also via beliefs about its connections to human entities.

Appendix: Wording for Experiment

Intentional Copy Condition (counterbalanced order of painting):
The painting on the **left** was created by an artist named, Daniels.

The painting on the **right** was created by an artist named, Stevens.

Both of these artists lived in the same town. Daniels **painted this scene first (left)**. A while later, Stevens saw Daniels’ painting and liked it very much. He **decided to make a copy (right)** by studying the original very closely.

Coincidental Condition (counterbalanced order of painting):

The painting on the **left** was created by an artist named, Daniels.

The painting on the **right** was created by an artist named, Stevens.

Both of these artists lived in the same town. As a **coincidence** they both happened to paint the exact same bridge from the same point of view. **Neither one knew that the other one had made a similar painting**—it was just a coincidence!

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Figure 5.1. Stimuli presented to participants.

![Stimuli](image1)

Figure 5.2. Results for valuation and anthropomorphism

![Graph](image2)

Figure 5.3. Mediation Results

![Diagram](image3)

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