

Philosophy report for July 2023

Our topic of study for this month's meeting was **The Philosophy of Art**.

Following an introduction on how to use Artificial Intelligence for a presentation in the Geology group, it was decided that we would try out a couple of examples on our philosophy topic.

We used Google Bard and ChatGPT, and entered the request for a 'Presentation on the philosophy of art to an intelligent audience'.

The results came up within 5 seconds. We transferred these to Powerpoint presentations and discussed the results, while also discussing the content.

We discussed the benefits (some) and drawbacks (many) of using AI for a presentation, but were much more interested in the content, and how we could pursue the questions we asked from both the artist's and the viewer's standpoint:

What is art?

What is the purpose of art?

What is the value of art?

This led us on to some of the major philosophical theories of art, including:

- Platonism: Plato believed that art is an imitation of reality, and that it is therefore inferior to reality itself.
- Aristotelianism: Aristotle believed that art is a mimesis or representation of reality, but that it is also a creative activity that can give us insights into reality that we would not otherwise have.
- Kantian aesthetics: Immanuel Kant believed that art is a form of disinterested pleasure, and that it is therefore valuable for its own sake.
- Hegelianism: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel believed that art is a form of cultural expression that reflects the values and beliefs of a particular society.

Consideration of culture, time and personal perceptions raised questions about how answers to these philosophical theories could be made.

As usual, few answers were forthcoming, but the consideration of them was stimulating! What do you think about the purpose and value of art?

Do come and join our small group on a 4th Tuesday morning at 10am at Enterprise House.

August 22nd – Art and the Brain, led by Pete Redgrave

September 26th – we may be moving on to new topics, or be asking further questions about the Philosophy of Art.

New members are always welcome – come and give it a try!

Ruth Sansom and Clare Tuddenham