

# Introduction

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## Introduction

*The present issue of the Croatian Journal of Philosophy is dedicated to the conference Fact, Fiction and Narration, held in September 2021 and organized as part of the research project Aesthetic Education through Narrative Art and Its Value for the Humanities, funded by the Croatian Science Foundation (<https://aetna.uniri.hr/>). As a principal investigator, let me express my gratitude to the keynotes of the conference, Derek Matravers (The Open University), Jonathan Gilmore (The Graduate Center, CUNY), Mareike Jenner (Anglia Ruskin University) and Rafe McGregor (Edge Hill University), and all the participants. I am also grateful to my co-organizers, Mario Sluga and Joerg Fingerhut. In particular, I thank the Croatian Journal of Philosophy for dedicating this issue to the conference and to Tvrtko Jolić and Nenad Mišević, whose help, support and assistance were fundamental in putting this together. My co-editor, David Grčki and I would like to thank all the authors who submitted their papers and to all the reviewers whose critical comments were helpful for polishing up the final version of the papers. It is the third time that the Croatian Journal of Philosophy is featuring papers primarily dedicated to art, and for the first time, it focuses solely on narrative arts. We hope this collection of papers will inspire further debates on these issues.*

*Our main interest at the conference was to explore the cognitive, emotional and aesthetic modes of engagement with narratives and to probe their ontological, epistemic, moral and artistic status. This interest is evident in the papers gathered here. Derek Matravers reopens a decades-long debate on the nature of fiction, nonfiction and fictional truths. Beginning with Hayden White's claim that history is a form of fiction, Matravers sets out to re-examine this claim from the perspective of contemporary work on fiction and narratives. As he argues, traditional accounts of nonfiction oversimplified its nature, primarily in failing to see that all narratives, including nonfictional, are perspectival.*

*Wolfgang Huemer works within the framework of fiction in order to explore how fictional narratives enable us to engage with, and understand, the perspectives of others. Huemer uses his insights to offer additional support to the theory of aesthetic cognitivism, i.e. the view that art is cognitively valuable. He examines two ways we can understand the conception of perspective, i.e., focusing on what the world looks like from a subjective point of view, and as a method of representing. Both of these conceptions are examined in the paper, and particularly incit-*

ing part is Huemer's analysis of the invention of linear perspective in the Renaissance.

The issue of narrativity is further explored from the perspectives of literary scholar Margaret Holda and film scholar Enrico Terrone. Holda proposes a hermeneutic investigation of the interactions between the art of narration and the categories of space, presence/absence, and belongingness evoked by Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. Working against the background of Martin Heidegger's hermeneutics of facticity, Holda analyzes narratives as means of exploration of the way we understand our lives.

Terrone focuses on explaining our engagement with fiction films by analyzing two of the most commonly formulated explanations of viewers' engagement with films: the thesis that the viewer of a fiction film imagines observing fictional events and the thesis that these events are imagined to be presented by a narrator. As he argues, the second thesis entails the first, but there is no entailment the other way around. Endorsing the first thesis is thus compatible with two options: endorsing the second thesis or giving it up. However, the paper argues that if we endorse the first thesis, endorsing the second provides a more compelling explanation of our engagement with and appreciation of fiction films.

In her contribution, Caterina Piccione explores the art of theater and its similarities and dissimilarities from literature. Piccione is primarily interested in examining the potential of theatrical experience for development of personal identity, cognitive abilities, and emotions. At the core of her research is the notion of *mimēis* as developed by Walton, i.e. the problem of our imaginative engagement with the world.

The issue of imaginative engagements is further explored by Daniele Molinari, who discusses the uses of thought experiments in generating knowledge. As he argues, thought experiments, understood as props in games of make-believe, prompt social uses of imaginings. However, what is particularly interesting but almost never acknowledged by scholars working on this, are instances in which the imaginers do not endorse the conclusion proposed by the author of a thought experiment. As Molinari argues, such instances should not be dismissed; rather, they can be used for the cognitive advancement achievable through thought experiments.

Washington Morales sets out to examine the notion of literature, and he does so by looking at the institutional accounts of literature that focus on the notion of practice. As he argues, such an approach diminishes the role of semantics in philosophical inquiry. Taking Peter Lamarque's work as a starting point, Morales analyzes his notion of opacity and argues for the distinction between two kinds of opacity, ultimately defending textual opacity as a necessary condition for literary opacity. In this sense, Morales claims, examples in literary criticism adequately illustrate not a peripheral role of meaning in literary appreciation but the arbitrariness in interpretation, which involves semantic concerns.

*Carola Barbero is interested in the reading experience, seeking to understand it at the level of phenomenology (including also insights from neuroscience) and by examining one's reasons to read. Analyzing the act of reading, Barbero works against Peter Kivy's analogy between reading texts and reading scores. Her primary interest, however, is in the reader and her role in understanding what is read. This understanding begins with the perceptual experience of observing black spots on paper, which develops into a multilayered imaginative experience through readers' activities.*

*In addition to these papers, the current issue also features David Grčki's review of Rafe McGregor's Critical Criminology and Literary Criticism. We hope that the papers presented will be an enjoyable and thought-provoking read!*

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