

# Affective Essence & The Aesthetic Object

“Art bespeaks the real because both art and reality are subordinate to being. Instead of being a flight from the real - as it becomes when it is conceived as strictly imaginary in character - art illuminates the real. But it does so only through feeling, which delivers the real's 'affective essence.'”

Thus art attains truth not through representation or imitation of the real, but by eliciting and expressing the real's affective essence *within* itself and in its own terms. It is through its intrinsic quality and from within itself that the aesthetic object relates to the real and displays its truth there.”

Mikel Dufrenne  
*The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*  
1953 (translated 1973)  
Northwestern University Studies  
in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy