Vanessa Brassey

**EDUCATION & WORK**

**British Society of Aesthetics Postdoctoral Fellow September 2022- August 2023**

* Project title ‘Time for Beauty’

**Visiting Researcher, King’s College London, since September 2021**

* Areas of Specialization: Philosophy of Art (Visual Arts), Aesthetics, Emotion
* Areas of Competence: Ethics, Philosophy of Perception, Political Philosophy.

**Director Centre for Philosophy & Art, King’s College London, since September 2021**

* Lead for ‘Art & Emotion’, a collaboration with The National Gallery films and events
* Co-Investigator and Curator for ‘Wakeful Consciousness’ a major interdisciplinary project involving philosophy of mind, psychology, law, art residency, conference (June 2022) and curation at The Freud Museum (planned 2023-4).

**Lecturer in Philosophy, King’s College London. Fixed term contract Sept’ 2020 – 2021**

2020-1 Philosophy of Art (MA Seminars covering historical thinkers and contemporary puzzles), Ethics II (UG Lectures & Seminars including topics such as ‘Are there Moral Emotions?’, ‘Can we speak coherently of Animal Rights?’ and ‘A Right to Euthanasia?’ ), Political Philosophy (UG Seminars covering historical thinkers and topics such as ‘Justice’ and ‘Race’), Philosophy of Health (module consisting of 5 lectures, 5 seminars and an essay assignment for 1st year Medical Students. Topics include concepts of health and disease, the nature of causation, the epistemology of evidence-based medicine.)

**PhD: King’s College London, Faculty of Philosophy, awarded September 2020.**

Dissertation Title: What makes a painting sad?

Supervisors: Dr. Sacha Golob, Professor Matt Soteriou, Professor Derek Matravers

This thesis makes two claims: first, that whenever we see pictorial content what we see is mediated by an imagined perspective, and second, that adequately seeing expressive content in paintings mandates imagining a persona. I develop an argument to show how these two claims weave together to explain what makes a painting sad. Against the prevailing view, I show that a proper account of the phenomenon of expression mandates a persona-theory. My alternative constitutive view is grounded on a theorization of the role perspectives play in our experience of seeing paintings. I say that viewers do or must see the emotion as a hypothetical persona’s expression. Briefly, I argue that the viewer has to shift out of their immediate (or their actual) perspective and into a surrogate mediating perspective in order to see the emotion in the paint. This surrogate experiential perspective qualifies as a ‘persona’. I then offer a precise analysis in respect of (i) what constitutes this persona and (ii) why it is a substantial and productive discovery and one that is friendly to art criticism, and (iii) how it yields novel explanations for the interaction, interplay and interconnection between what the picture expresses and the viewer’s response. I successfully defended my dissertation in July 2020.

Examiners: Dominic McIver Lopes (UBC), Robert Hopkins (NYU)

**MA Philosophy (part-time): King’s College London, September 2011 to September 2013**

I completed a Master’s degree in Philosophy at King’s College London. Modules included ethics, epistemology, philosophy of language, aesthetics and general philosophy. My dissertation explored the concept of the artist’s authority over the meaning of their artworks. I graduated with distinction.

**Global Head: Brand and Creative Production: Coats plc, Stockley Park, London, 2006-2015**

In between completing my undergraduate degree and returning to education twenty years later, I worked for a number of national and international companies. In my last role as Head of Brand and Creative Production at Coats plc, I was in charge of group wide branding and marketing activities (in over 40 countries).

**PUBLICATIONS – All Sole Author, All Peer Reviewed**

2022. ‘The Pictorial Narrator.’ (*Under Review*)

2021. *‘*The Expression of Emotion in Pictures’ *Philosopy Compass, Volume 16, 9, e1276* [*https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12767*](https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12767)

2020. ‘Still.Moving*.’* *Debates in Aesthetics, Volume 15,1, pp. 35-50*.

2019. *‘*The Implied Painter’. *Debates in Aesthetics, Volume 14,1, pp. 15-29.*

**PUBLICATIONS – co-author/editor. All Peer Reviewed**

‘The Expression of Emotion in Visual Art’’ *Eds Brassey, V. and Matravers, D. Edited collection (Under Review)*

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**AEP Lecturer in Philosophy, King’s College London. Fixed term contract Sept’ 2020 - 2021**

**Teaching**

2020-1 Philosophy of Art (MA Seminars covering historical thinkers and contemporary puzzles), Ethics II (UG Lectures & Seminars including topics such as ‘Are there Moral Emotions?’, ‘Can we speak coherently of Animal Rights?’ and ‘A Right to Euthanasia?’ ), Political Philosophy (UG Seminars covering historical thinkers and topics such as ‘Justice’ and ‘Race’), Philosophy of Health (module consisting of 5 lectures, 5 seminars and an essay assignment for 1st year Medical Students. Topics include concepts of health and disease, the nature of causation, the epistemology of evidence-based medicine.)

**Supervision**

2020-1 Dissertation Clinics (UG series), Dissertation supervision (MA Philosophy of Art).

**Graduate Teaching Assistant: King’s College London, September 2015 to present**Aesthetics, Sacha Golob (Senior Lecturer), Autumn 2016 - 2019.

This module introduces and examines a number of the key thinkers and the central debates within Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art. During the first half of the course we look in detail at four influential, historical analyses of art - by Hume, Kant, Hegel, and Heidegger. The second half of the course focuses on contemporary treatments of some of the core questions in aesthetics.

Guest lecture: ‘Does the artist really control the meaning of their work?’ (2015), Aesthetics KCL

Guest Lecturer: ‘Fakes, Forgeries and TimeBombs’ (2018) Florida State University, Summer School: 99 Great Russell St, Bloomsbury, London WC1B 3LH

Guest lecture: ‘Art, emotion and the Missing Person Inquiry’. (2019), Aesthetics KCL

Guest Lecturer: ‘Whodunit? Expression in Art’ (2021) MA Lectures Series, King’s College London.

Organiser & Seminar Series Leader ‘Human all too Human’: Tate Britain, Summer 2018.

Level 6 UG Examination Marking : King’s College, London (2019)

**SELECTED PRESENTATIONS: INVITED/REFEREED**

Symposia: **The Expression of Emotion in the Visual Arts**, BSA Annual Conference 2022

This panel reopens an area of debate in Anglo-American Philosophy of Art: namely, the expression of emotion in the visual arts.

Chair: Gregory Currie (York)

Panelist 1: Derek Matravers (OU/Churchill, Cambridge)

Panelist 2: Mitch Green (UCONN)

Panelist 3: Anonymous (King’s College London) ‘**A new Persona theory of expression’**

‘Time for Beauty’, National Gallery, London, July 2022

‘Time for Beauty’, Heong Gallery, Downing College Cambridge, June 2022

‘The Pictorial Narrator’, Faculty Research Seminar, King’s College London, March 2021

‘The Pictorial Narrator’, LOGOS Barcelona Workshop 12 "Fiction, Narrative and Art Beyond Literature", Universitat de Barcelona on 28–30 April 2020 (paper presentation - postponed)

‘The Pictorial Narrator’, ESA Conference Tallinn June 2020 (paper presentation - postponed)

‘Perceiving Emotions’ King’s College London, September 2019. [paper]

‘Imagining emotional expression’ UCL, Philosophy Society, London, April 2019. [invited speaker]

‘Personal Perspectives’ Institute of Philosophy Graduate conference, Senate House, November 2018 London [paper]

‘Still | Moving: seeing dynamic objects in still life paintings’ British Society of Aesthetics, Graduate Conference, Durham, April 2018 [paper]

‘In your [Resting-B\*tch] face’ King’s College London, November 2017 [paper]

‘Should we get excited about arousal (or can we adequately appreciate artworks dry-eyed)?’ Göttingen, Spring School, April 2017 [paper]

**PUBLIC FACING PHILOSOPHY**

**2024 Curator for ‘Dream and Wakeful Consciousness’ at The Freud Museum**

**2023 ‘Pictorial Consciousness’, Rubinoff Foundation, Hornby Island (May 15th -17th)**

**2022 What makes a painting regretful? (Monet’s Waterlilies)**

Short article discussing how we find emotions in pictures, published in The Philosophers Magazine

**2022 The Hockey Thesis examined**

A filmed interview with Martin Gayford discussing the philosophy of The Hockney Thesis in the light of the academic debate on depiction and expressiveness in painting. Broadcast date tbc.

**2022 A First Brush with Philosophy – installation at Bush House (October)**

**2022-3 ‘Time for Beauty’ –** a 40 minute workshop film sponsored by a BSA Small Grant Award (broadcast expected 2023).

**2022 Art and Emotion,** **at The National Gallery (throughout the year)**

A series of public facing film + panel + Q&A events hosted by The National Gallery London. I am the organiser (along with the Gallery team), and writer - director - presenter for three out of the five films in the series

1. 2022 [‘The Pleasures of Regret’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73ZjTXv8FXY) Art and Emotion series at The National Gallery (February)
2. 2022 [‘The Sublime’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bc1AOwY-kxg) Art and Emotion series at The National Gallery (March)
3. 2022 ‘United States of Euphoria’ Art and Emotion series at The National Gallery (October)
4. 2022 ‘But, is Love Moral?’ Art and Emotion series at The National Gallery (November)
5. 2023 ‘Dreaming emotions’Art and Emotion series at The National Gallery (tbc)

**‘In a Nutshell’ – interview with artist that link to a philosophical puzzle (philosophyarts.co.uk/nutshells).**

1. N**PHILOSOPHY FILMS AND PODCASTS**

Pre-2020 I produced several filmed interviews with leading artists which are now used as part of the King’s philosophy curriculum. See https://philosophyandvisualarts.com/welcome/films/

1. ([In production) ‘A First Brush with Philosophy’ – Got a problem? Bring it to the analytic philosopher, instead of the analyst, and get some conceptual clarification. The Socratic vibe revived via zoom (5 pilot episodes)](https://philosophyandvisualarts.com/a-first-brush-with-philosophy/)
2. [Art.Pray.Love. – 10- minute video about Philosophy, Painting and Prayer.](https://philosophyandvisualarts.com/art-pray-love/)
3. Kenny Hunter interview
4. Hester Reeve interview
5. Neomi Lakmaier interview

2020-1 generated a series of filmed interviews with Philosopher-Artists invite conversation about the value of working across two such different skill and knowledge sets.

1. [Claire Anscomb](file:///C:\Users\vanessabrassey\Library\Mobile%20Documents\com~apple~CloudDocs\2%202020%20Publication%20Adventure\Funding%20Proposals\1.%09https:\philosophyandvisualarts.com\philosopher-artist-claire-anscomb) – Philosophy, Photography and Pencils
2. [Ken Wilder](file:///C:\Users\vanessabrassey\Library\Mobile%20Documents\com~apple~CloudDocs\2%202020%20Publication%20Adventure\Funding%20Proposals\1.%09https:\philosophyandvisualarts.com\philosopher-artist-ken-wilder) – Philosophy, Architectural Space and Perspectives.

2020 -1 I produced a new “Φ-Critic” review format. The reviews of art shows from a philosophical perspective and in the Socratic mood can be found here

1. [RA summer exhibition](https://philosophyandvisualarts.com/ra-summer-exhibition-2020/)
2. [TJ boulting & ‘the other side of paradise’](https://philosophyandvisualarts.com/tj-boulting-the-other-side-of-paradise/)
3. [Hambling – shedding more heat than light?](https://philosophyandvisualarts.com/maggis-mary/)
4. [Bonnard’s binocular experience](https://philosophyandvisualarts.com/bonnards-binocular-experience/)
5. [Readymade 2.0](https://philosophyandvisualarts.com/readymade-2-0/)

**FUNDING & AWARDS**

**The Jeffrey Rubinoff Conference Award (2022-3)**

**HollyBush Emerging Women’s Artist Award (2022)**

**Royal Institute of Watercolour Painters Shortlist (2022)**

**Jackson Painting Prize Shortlist** **(2022)**

**Beep! Painting Prize, Elysium Gallery (2022)**

**King’s Culture Award (2022) ‘A First Brush with Philosophy’.**

**The Jeffrey Rubinoff Covid Award (2021) for ‘Art and Emotion’**

**AHRI Small Grant Award (2021) ‘A First Brush with Philosophy’.**

**AHRI Small Grant Award (2021) ‘Art.Pray.Love. Treasures at the National Gallery’ video**

**AHRI Small Grant Award (2020) ‘Philosopher Artists’ filmed and edited interview series**

**King’s Group Event Award (2019) and BSA Small Event Award (2019) for Sound Pictures.**

**BSA Small Event Award (2019) for ‘Narratives Now: The Stories We Tell Ourselves**