



## The Pictorial Turn

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In 1992 W. J. T. Mitchell argued for a "pictorial turn" in the humanities, registering a renewed interest in and prevalence of pictures and images in what had been understood as an age of simulation, or an increasingly extensive and diverse visual culture. However, in what is often characterized as a society of the "spectacle" we still do not know exactly what pictures or images are, what their relation to language is, how they operate on observers and the world, how their history is to be understood, and what is to be done with or about them.

In this seminal collection of essays, the first to be devoted to the "pictorial turn", theorists from across the humanities and social sciences, representing the disciplines of art history, philosophy, geography, media studies, visual studies and anthropology, are brought together with a paleontologist and practising artists to consider amongst other things the relation between pictures and images, the power of landscape, the nature of political images, the status of images in the natural sciences, the "life" of images, and the pictorial uncanny. With these topics in mind, picture theory and iconology exceed in scope the objects of visual culture conventionally understood.

This book was published as a special issue of *Culture, Theory and Critique*.

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