Brent A. Polk

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Plato’s - Art as Imitation

Plato’s Art as Imitation diatribe gives me the idea that his position lies more on what cannot be reproduced by men. While a human might see a thing or hear something that could spark an intellectual response, Plato relies on the concept that the human has no right to sway another’s opinion through any artistic attempt. He himself uses words to alter another’s perception, would not that make him just as guilty of imitation; by the use of what he was taught. I digress; it appears that Plato has some notion that God’s creations are incapable of being “re-expressed” by an artist. By the use of words through poetry or a painters brush, any expression of a thing is merely that and should not be considered as whole or as he said it, a first or original. It does seem that Plato has some level of despise or contempt for; in particular poets. I simply do not agree with his view.

I, if it can be said under these constraints, do not see art as such. An artist work might be viewed as imitation by a viewer or even themselves, but in my perception this is an illusion of logic. I believe that imitation is a method to learn or to recreate for posterity. To say that a poet is imitating reality through words or a sculpture is a direct reflection of something real is not quite truth. All living beings with the gift of sight and any other sense for this matter have an innate sense to remember what they have witnessed. It is the sounds of life that gives the musician guidance. It is the colors of the natural world which inspire the painter and the sense of touch that puppeteers the sculptor. Everything that can be witnessed can be imitated. This imitation is purely the efforts of the living entity to reach the nirvana of the first experience. We, as human beings all “think” back to moments of beauty that stirred our spirits. Moments of visceral terror which altered our opinions of reality. These periods can only be remembered; if never “imitated” in some form of art. Even the simple conversation between two persons could be considered artistic release. In concluding, I must restate something I have written earlier. *“An artist job is to, as masterfully as it is possible create a sensatory influence.”*