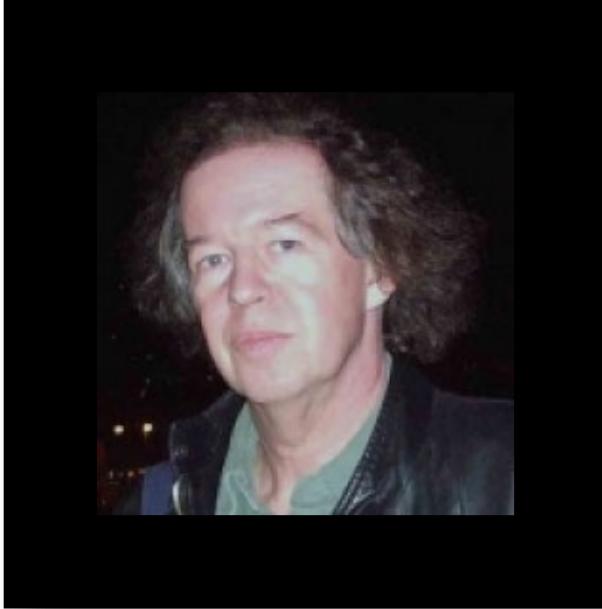


The 2024 Beardsley Lecture

Temple University



David Davies, McGill
University

Barnes Foundation
Friday, April 12, 2024 5:15 pm
Reception to follow.

Collingwood on 'Painting Imaginatively' and the Expressive Nature of the Artwork.

Over the past quarter-century, a number of writers (e.g. Ridley 1997; Davies 2008) have tried to breathe new life into Collingwood's views about art. They have done so by (a) disputing the 'standard' reading of Collingwood (e.g. Wollheim 1978) as one who holds an Idealistically grounded expression theory of art, and (b) offering alternative readings of those passages in the *Principles* that have fueled such interpretations of his views. In this paper, I begin by arguing that the Wollheimian reading of Collingwood rests on a more fundamental misunderstanding of the dialectical structure of the *Principles*. Even when this is corrected, however, there are residual difficulties confronting the Collingwood revivalist. In particular, it is unclear how it is possible for the receiver to appreciate the expressive content of an artwork given the most obvious reading of certain of his remarks in Book III. I attempt to resolve these difficulties by developing the idea, proposed in my 2008, that we take at face value Collingwood's (neglected) claim that the work of art is identical to the expressive *activity* of the artist rather than being identical to the expressive *product* of that activity as both critics and defenders of Collingwood assume. We can, I argue, understand how artistic appreciation is possible on the Collingwood account presented in Book III of the *Principles* by understanding what Collingwood means when he talks about the painter as one who 'paints imaginatively'.