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DEAR READER,

It has been nearly 20 years since I first sat down to write this book, and now, with the publication of this fourth edition, I’d like to take the opportunity to reflect a moment on the humanistic enterprise as, in its new Revel edition, this book fully enters the digital age.

But first, you might well ask, what is the humanistic enterprise exactly? At the most superficial level, a Humanities course is designed to help you identify the significant works of art, architecture, music, theater, philosophy, and literature of distinct cultures and times, and to recognize how these different expressions of the human spirit respond to and reflect their historical contexts. More broadly, you should arrive at some understanding of the creative process and how what we—and others—have made and continue to value reflects what we all think it means to be human. But in studying other cultures—entering into what the British-born, Ghanaian-American philosopher and novelist Kwame Anthony Appiah has described as a “conversation between people from different ways of life”—we learn even more. We turn to other cultures because to empathize with others, to willingly engage in discourse with ideas strange to ourselves, is perhaps the fundamental goal of the humanities. The humanities are, above all, disciplines of openness, inclusion, and respectful interaction. What we see reflected in other cultures is usually something of ourselves, the objects of beauty that delight us, the sometimes troubling but often harmonies that soothe us, the things that engage in discourse with ideas strange to ourselves, is perhaps the fundamental goal of the humanities. The humanities are, above all, disciplines of openness, inclusion, and respectful interaction. What we see reflected in other cultures is usually something of ourselves, the objects of beauty that delight us, the sometimes troubling but often harmonies that soothe us, the weapons and the wars that threaten us, the melodies and harmonies that soothe us, the sometimes troubling but often penetrating thoughts that we encounter in the ever-increasingly digital globe. Through the humanities we learn to seek common ground.

Today, digital media—epitomized by Revel—give us the means to open this world to you in ever-increasingly interactive ways. Architectural panoramas of major monuments such as Chartres Cathedral, or Angkor Wat in Cambodia, or Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater allow you to stand at multiple points in the spaces and turn around a full 360 degrees, as if you were actually there. And in these spaces, you can zoom in to see details, as in fact you can with nearly every image in the book. Videos take you on detailed tours of great works of art. Recordings of the music discussed in the book are embedded in the text, usually with listening guides for those of you less than musically literate. If you’d like, you can listen to an audio of the entire text (a helpful guide to pronunciation of words and terms in the text, usually with listening guides for those of you less than musically literate. If you’d like, you can listen to an audio of the entire text (a helpful guide to pronunciation of foreign-language names), even as you study the images. 

About the Author

Henry M. Shreve is Distinguished Professor of Art History Emeritus at Oregon State University. He earned his Ph.D. in American Literature from the University of Washington. He is producer and creator of the ten-part television series, A World of Art: Works in Progress, aired on PBS in the Fall of 1997; and author of seven books, including A World of Art, The Visual Text of William Carlos Williams, The Object of Performance: The American Avant-Garde since 1970; and an art history book for children, Cave Paintings to Picasso.
What’s New

THIS NEW EDITION ENHANCES THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS:

To facilitate student learning and understanding of the humanities, this fourth edition is centered on Learning Objectives that introduce each chapter. These learning objectives are tailored to the subject matter of the key chapter topics so that the student will be continually reminded of the goals and objectives of study as they progress through each chapter.

The chapter learning objectives are repeated in a Chapter Review that poses critical-thinking questions as well as reviewing the material covered in the chapter.

NEW TO THE PRINT EDITION OF THE HUMANITIES

• Continuing Presence of the Past, a feature designed to underscore the book’s emphasis on continuity and change by connecting an artwork in each chapter to a contemporary artwork, helps students understand how the art of the past remains relevant today. Included only in the digital version of the last edition, the Continuing Presence of the Past is now featured in each chapter on its own page in close proximity to the artwork to which it refers. New additions to the feature include works by Paul Kos, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Carrie Mae Weems, Daniel Buren, Arthur Amiott, and Roy Lichtenstein.

• More than 100 images have been updated whenever new and improved images were available or works of art have been cleaned or restored.

• Whenever new scholarship has provided us with new insights and understandings, that scholarship has been included in the text. Examples include discussion of the earliest musical instruments—from prehistoric flutes to the development of the organ in Greece and Rome—continuing research at Stonehenge, medical scans of Akhenaten’s mummy, new archaeological findings at Teotihuacan, and the workings of the organ in Greece and Rome—continuing research at Stonehenge, medical scans of Akhenaten’s mummy, new archaeological findings at Teotihuacan, and the workings of the organ in Greece and Rome—continuing research at Stonehenge, medical scans of Akhenaten’s mummy, new archaeological findings at Teotihuacan, and the workings of the organ in Greece and Rome—continuing research at Stonehenge, medical scans of Akhenaten’s mummy, new archaeological findings at Teotihuacan, and the workings of the organ in Greece and Rome.

• In Chapter 10, the discussion of feudalism has been refined, and the Closer Look on Krak des Chevaliers has been restored.

• In Chapter 26, the discussion of Alexander Hamilton and the Federalist papers has been greatly expanded in order to provide perspective on the current popularity of Lin-Manuel Miranda’s Hamilton: An American Musical.

• In response to readers’ requests, many new works of art have been added, including the Gobekli Tepe archaeological site, a Tong tomb figure of a horse, the Inca Twelve-Angle Stone in Cusco, the Piazzam Flight into Egypt from Saint-Denis, Michelangelo’s design for the facade of St. Peter’s, Raphael’s Sistine Madonna, Bronzino’s Saint Sebastian, Degas’s Little Dancer Aged Fourteen, Picasso’s Guitar Player of summer 1910, and Bulla’s Speeding Automobile.

• The last half of Chapter 40 on contemporary art has been thoroughly reconceived, with many new images, to address issues of postcolonialism, the global marketplace and the commodification of culture, and the plural self in the Americas—Latino, African American, and Native American—as well as the impact of new media.

All of the new material cited in “What’s New” on page xiii is included in the Revel edition as well, but Revel’s cross-platform digital environment allows us to offer many more aids to student learning in an interactive, engaging way.

Revel™ Education technology designed for the way today’s students read, think, and learn

When students are engaged deeply, they learn more effectively and perform better in their courses. This simple fact inspired the creation of Revel: an interactive learning experience designed for the way today’s students read, think, and learn. Built in collaboration with educators and students nationwide, Revel is a fully digital and highly engaging way to deliver respected Pearson content.

Revel enlivens course content with media interactives and assessments—integrated directly within the authors’ narrative that provide opportunities for students to read, practice, and study in one continuous experience. This interactive educational technology boosts student engagement, which leads to better understanding of concepts and improved performance throughout the course.

Pan/zooms appear with a simple click for almost all of the figures, allowing students to zoom in and examine details with stunning clarity and resolution, and then return to the overall view of the work of art, so they can relate these details to the whole.

The pan/zooms’ scale feature opens a window where works of art appear next to a scaled human figure (or for small works, a scaled human hand), giving students an instant sense of the size of what they are studying.

3D animations of architectural and art-historical techniques depict and explain processes and methods that are difficult for students to grasp simply through narrative text.

Panoramas from global sites have been integrated into the design, bringing students into the setting, both inside and out, of major buildings and monuments such as the Taj Mahal, Great Zimbabwe, the Paris Opera House, and Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater.

• Each and every Closer Look and Continuing Presence of the Past has been transformed into a Revel video presentation, where students are guided through a detailed examination of the work.

• Listening Guides with Streaming Audio for most of the music selections in the book are embedded in the platform, which allows students to follow along as they listen to the selection.

• The entire text is available on streaming audio, much of it read by the author himself.

In addition, a variety of self-tests, review features, and writing opportunities have been built into the platform. These are all designed to ensure the student’s mastery of the material.

• Multiple-choice self-tests, at the conclusion of each major section of a chapter, allow the student to assess quickly how well they have absorbed the material at hand.

• Interactive learning tools, in a variety of formats, review key terms and ideas, help the student in analyzing literary works, and make use of flashcards to test student retention.

• Each chapter contains three kinds of writing prompts. All are keyed to specific works of visual art, literature, or music and appear in conjunction with figures that illustrate the works. Journaling prompts focus on building skills of visual analysis; Shared Writing responses relate the material in the chapter to today’s world; and Writing Space prompts encourage students to engage in cross-cultural thinking, often across chapters.

Learn more about Revel www.pearsonhighered.com/revel
Developing The Humanities

The Humanities: Continuity & Change is the result of an extensive development process involving the contributions of over 110 instructors and their students. We are grateful to all who participated in shaping the content, clarity, and design of this text. Manuscript reviewers and focus group participants include:

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