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KANT AND THE POWER OF IMAGINATION

In this book Jane Kneller focusses on the role of imagination as a creative power in Kant's aesthetics and in his overall philosophical enterprise. She analyzes Kant's account of imaginative freedom and the relation between imaginative free play and human social and moral development, showing various ways in which his aesthetics of disinterested reflection explains moral interests. She situates these aspects of Kant's aesthetic theory within the context of German aesthetics of the eighteenth century, arguing that his contribution is a bridge between early theories of aesthetic moral education and the early Romanticism of the last decade of that century. In so doing, her book brings the two most important German philosophers of Enlightenment and Romanticism, Kant and Novalis, into dialog. The book will be of interest to a wide range of readers in both Kant studies and German philosophy of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

JANE KNELLER is Professor of Philosophy at Colorado State University. She is editor and translator of *Novalis: Fichte Studies* (2003) in the Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy series.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521121859

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First published 2007
Reprinted 2008
This digitally printed version 2009

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-85143-5 Hardback
ISBN 978-0-521-12185-9 Paperback

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Preface and acknowledgments

This book contains work that has been in process for over fifteen years, and during that time I was greatly aided by the encouragement and advice of wonderful colleagues and students in many places: philosophers and scholars too numerous to mention here, but some of whom will perhaps recognize their influence in parts of the book that follow. Let this serve as a gesture of my thanks and deep appreciation for their time and thoughtful discussions. Three constellations of scholars deserve mention in connection with this book, all tied in one way or another to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH): The NEH Summer Seminar “What is Enlightenment?” conducted by James Schmidt at Boston University during the bicentenary of the French Revolution, the NEH Workshop “Figuring the Self” conducted by David Klemm and Günter Zöller at the University of Iowa over the Spring semester of 1992, and the NEH Summer Institute for College Teachers on “Nature, Art and Politics after Kant: Reevaluating Early German Idealism” directed by Karl Ameriks and myself at Colorado State University in 2001. The participants at these NEH venues were truly inspired and inspiring, and without them much of this book would have remained unwritten, even unconceived.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to the faculty at the University of Cincinnati’s Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures for the very formative time I spent there doing MA studies in German literature and aesthetics. They were amazingly tolerant of an *Ausländerin* from Philosophy, a new PhD in Kantian aesthetics who insisted on turning every term paper into another philosophy essay. I want to thank especially Richard Schade for introducing me to the beauty of the German Baroque, and the humor of the German Enlightenment, and for entrusting me with a stint on the *Lessing Yearbook* as assistant editor. I hope he has forgiven me for returning to the philosophical fold. The romanticism of this book was profoundly influenced by the instruction of

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Preface and acknowledgments

Hans-Georg Richert and Helga Slessarev, and (since they were not particularly fond of Kant) I dedicate the Novalis sections of this work to their memory.

Several of the chapters in this book contain material published earlier. I would like to thank the following publishers for granting permission to reprint parts of the following: “Imaginative Freedom and the German Enlightenment,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 51, 1990; Marquette University Press, for “The Interests of Disinterest,” from *Proceedings of the Eighth International Kant Congress*, ed. Hoke Robinson, Marquette University Press, © 1995, Marquette University Press Reprinted with permission of Marquette University Press; “The Failure of Kant’s Imagination,” in *“What is Enlightenment?”: Texts and Interpretations*, ed. James Schmidt, The Regents of the University of California, University of California Press, 1996 © 1996, University of California Press, 1996; “Romantic Conceptions of the Self in Hölderlin and Novalis,” reprinted by permission from *Figuring the Self: Subject, Individual, and Spirit in Classical German Philosophy*, ed. by David E. Klemm and Günter Zöllner, The State University of New York Press, © 1997, State University of New York, all rights reserved; “Aesthetic Value and the Primacy of the Practical in Kant’s Philosophy,” *Journal of Value Inquiry*, 36, 2002 and “Novalis’ Other Way Out,” in *Philosophical Romanticism*, ed. Nikolas Kompridis, Routledge, 2006.

I owe a special debt of gratitude once again to Hilary Gaskin at Cambridge University Press for her ever-helpful advice and guidance throughout the publishing process, and to Jackie Warren for her able handling of the final stages of production. Barbara Docherty’s keen eye for detail was absolutely invaluable in the copy-editing of the book and I want to thank her in particular for the time and care she took with it.

Finally, to the three philosophers closest to me – Michael, Miroslav, and Rosavera: thank you, respectively, for your healthy skepticism about claims to objectivity, your critical attitude towards all established doctrine, and your ability to make ordinary things magical. I hope I’ve captured some of that, at least in theory, here.