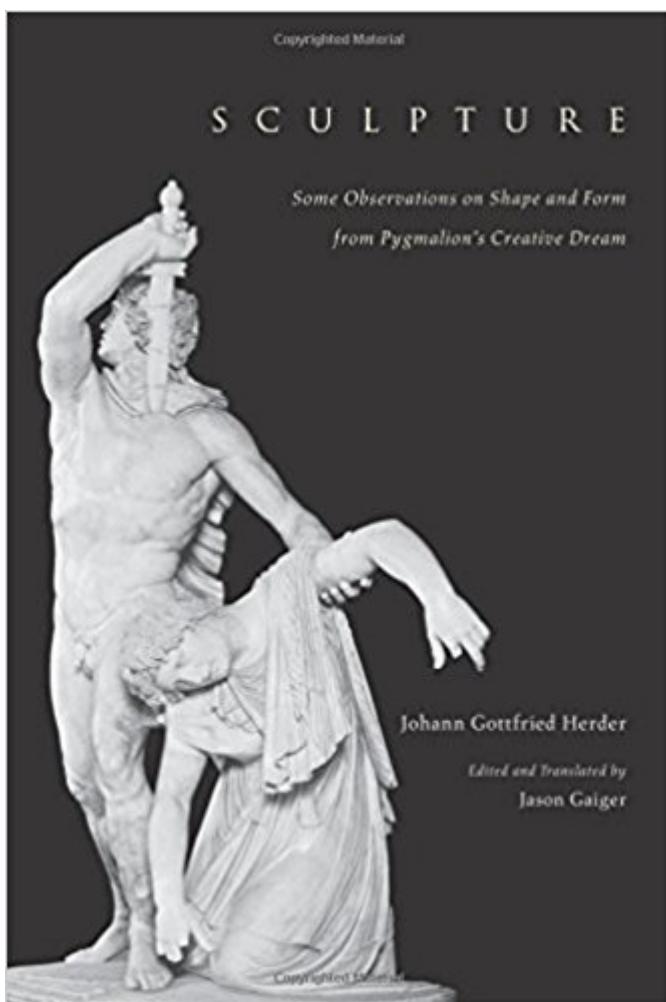


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# Sculpture: Some Observations On Shape And Form From Pygmalion's Creative Dream



## Synopsis

"The eye that gathers impressions is no longer the eye that sees a depiction on a surface; it becomes a hand, the ray of light becomes a finger, and the imagination becomes a form of immediate touching." Johann Gottfried Herder Long recognized as one of the most important eighteenth-century works on aesthetics and the visual arts, Johann Gottfried Herder's *Plastik* (Sculpture, 1778) has never before appeared in a complete English translation. In this landmark essay, Herder combines rationalist and empiricist thought with a wide range of sources "from the classics to Norse legend, Shakespeare to the Bible" to illuminate the ways we experience sculpture. Standing on the fault line between classicism and romanticism, Herder draws most of his examples from classical sculpture, while nevertheless insisting on the historicity of art and of the senses themselves. Through a detailed analysis of the differences between painting and sculpture, he develops a powerful critique of the dominance of vision both in the appreciation of art and in our everyday apprehension of the world around us. One of the key articulations of the aesthetics of *Sturm und Drang*, Sculpture is also important as an anticipation of subsequent developments in art theory. Jason Gaiger's translation of Sculpture includes an extensive introduction to Herder's thought, explanatory notes, and illustrations of all the sculptures discussed in the text.

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