

Truth and the Comedic Art

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ART

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Traditional philosophy places a singular emphasis on tragedy, acting under the assumption that tragedy is more profound than comedy.

Gelven argues that comedy deserves equal if not greater attention from philosophy. Through the interpretative readings and concrete analysis of three classical works, Gelven shows that comedy provides an access to truth unavailable by any other means.

Silvius in Shakespeares's As You Like It, Cherubino in Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro, and Lord Goring in Wilde's An Ideal Husband are examined in terms of why and how they are comic, along with how and why they are seen both as fools and yet as graced. Gelven finds that in revealing the spirit of graced folly, comedy teaches us about our own essence, the fundamental nature of our finitude. This will undoubtedly be of considerable importance not only to philosophical aestheticians or literary critics, but also for those seeking to understand the nature of truth itself.