



Art, Expression, Perception and Intentionality

Dale Jacquette

To cite this article: Dale Jacquette (2014) Art, Expression, Perception and Intentionality, Journal of Aesthetics and Phenomenology, 1:1, 63-90, DOI: [10.2752/20539339XX14005942183973](https://doi.org/10.2752/20539339XX14005942183973)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.2752/20539339XX14005942183973>



Published online: 28 Apr 2015.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 17858



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Citing articles: 3 View citing articles [↗](#)

ART, EXPRESSION, PERCEPTION AND INTENTIONALITY

Dale Jacquette

University of Bern

ABSTRACT The ideological and methodological oppositions that divide philosophy generally into realisms and idealisms, objectivisms and subjectivisms, also pervade aesthetic theory. The question arises whether there was beauty in the world prior to the emergence of intelligent perceivers like ourselves, or whether beauty itself comes into existence only through the perceptual idiosyncrasies with which we happen to encounter the objects we happen to consider beautiful. The experience of beauty and its opposites under this description can easily seem to be an altogether subjective phenomenon, available at most only to those psychological subjects conditioned or predisposed to recognize certain features as possessing specific aesthetic properties. The article examines topics related to the intentionality of expression in art. Intention is often rejected as a basis for aesthetic judgment. The present discussion, by focusing on the role of perception in art production and appreciation, considers ways of addressing those objections to restore an intuitive sense of the intentional expressiveness of art. The proposed solution also helps uphold an approach toward answering the question of whether aesthetic value generally is only subjective or also has a distinctively objective element.

Keywords: aesthetics, intentionality, Wittgenstein, Heidegger

AESTHETIC OBJECT AND SUBJECT

A frequent topic of philosophical discussion is whether beauty and other aesthetic values are objective or subjective. There are dilemmas in aesthetics that duplicate the arguments on both sides of this perennial dispute in other areas of philosophy, in theory of knowledge and metaphysics, and in ethics as another branch of value theory.¹

The ideological and methodological oppositions that divide philosophy generally into realisms and idealisms, objectivisms and subjectivisms, also pervade aesthetic theory. We may wonder whether there was beauty in the world prior to the emergence of intelligent perceivers like ourselves, or whether beauty

comes into existence only through the perceptual idiosyncrasies of subjective aesthetic appreciation. It is a cliché, but not for that reason objectionable, to say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. If the statement is true at all, it holds not of just any beholder, but only of beings gifted with perception, value recognition, value appreciation and related judgments, as well as interpretation, understanding, inference and other cognitive operations, together with a wide range of sophisticated emotional responses.

The experience of beauty and its opposites under this description can easily seem to be an altogether subjective phenomenon, available at most only to a select subset of psychological subjects, for whom it resides, ontically speaking, exclusively within their thoughts—as subjectivists in philosophical aesthetics maintain. Objectivists at the other extreme in the ideological spectrum insist, on the contrary, that beauty exists already in nature independently of thought, waiting, so to speak, to be perceived if only an observer of the appropriate kind should happen to arrive on the scene. Aesthetic value supervenes on the natural properties of an object, on that view of things, whether or not the object is observed or appreciated. Evidence for similar discrepancies is found even in such mundane facts as that the same artwork can be equally observed but differently appreciated, differently valued, by two different perceivers who are also aesthetic judges and appreciators, however theoretical or visceral.

If beauty is even partly experiential, then it is also at least partly subjective. But is it then entirely subjective? To refer to the experience *of* beauty does not yet decide the question whether there is something to beauty beyond a beautiful experience. If a physical object, natural or artifactual, is experienced as beautiful, even if it is only the expression of a passing beautiful thought, as poets talk, then the object, in this case, the spoken word at a particular place and time, is the supervenience base for an experience of beauty. Since the objective supervenience bases of many experiences of beauty presumably exist independently of thought, including their being experienced as beautiful, it would seem that the necessary supervenience base for all experiences of beauty can exist outside of all consciousness, and hence of all experienced beauty. The subjective side of aesthetics from such a perspective is only half of the story. The mind takes subjective notice of a preexistent objective beauty, whatever constitutes the beautiful experience's objective, mind-independent supervenience base, as proponents can insist, that is not totally constituted or conditioned by the circumstances of the receptive perceiver.²

The dispute about the ontology of beauty is an inexhaustible source of opposing philosophically fruitful arguments. The solution might finally consist of joining objective and subjective aspects of experiences of beauty, in an *a priori* synthesis that explains aesthetic experience more generally as a convergence of the right subjective perceiver with the right beauty (sublime, grotesque, aesthetic etc.) objective supervenience base. What should not be in doubt is the manifest

dependence of the existence of art on intelligent thinkers as makers of art. Art, beautiful or not, does not exist in nature, unless we suppose that the universe at large is the handiwork of a divine designer with a flair for the artistic. An artwork is something artificial and artifactual, as the etymology of these related terminologies unmistakably implies. Even if aesthetic objectivists are right to hold that beauty exists independently of thinking subjects, works of art are quite another thing. Although the point is obvious enough upon reflection, it bears frequent repeating that without intelligent artists exercising judgment, taste and skill, there can be no such thing as art. Nor, from an empirical standpoint, as a matter of philosophical anthropology, can we attribute art as opposed to other kinds of artifacts, however this preanalytically understood distinction is finally clarified, to any humanlike animals we know of other than our own very recently evolved species, *Homo sapiens sapiens*.³

PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AS A WINDOW ON OBJECTIVE OR SUBJECTIVE BEAUTY

The strategy in the argument to follow involves examining the objectivity or subjectivity of beauty from the standpoint of its origins and meaning in human life. The proposal is implemented by evaluating the basis for a reductively objective anthropological interpretation as articulated by some of the most influential thinkers in the history of recent philosophical aesthetics and philosophy of art.

The assumption is that if beauty is objective rather than subjective, if beauty is among the objective facts of the world, then its objectivity ought to be most explicitly discernible in the experience of natural and artistic beauty to be found in a scientifically grounded philosophical anthropology. When these explanatory expectations are shown to disappoint, the contrary suggestion that beauty is instead subjective rather than objective is proportionately reinforced. The missing ingredient in an objective aesthetics of value to be emphasized is the indispensable objectively irreducible intentionality of the experience of beauty. Without this element, the phenomenology of aesthetic value appears incapable of adequate explication. If the essential intentionality of aesthetic value is objectively irreducible, then there results a significant shifting of the burden of proof from the objective to the subjective side in the account of beauty.

Discussion accordingly focuses on the problem of whether some form of aesthetic objectivism rather than subjectivism is correct, theoretically defensible by argument and sustainable in light of challenging criticisms. If and when these more basic metaphysical and epistemic matters can be decided, then inquiry can proceed toward favoring a particular version alternatively of aesthetic objectivism or subjectivism over competitors, and exploring the account's explanatory implications and applications, as a further test of the favored theory's acceptability.

The inquiry brings the aesthetic objectivism and subjectivism dispute one step further in this direction, by offering a philosophical anthropological account of beauty as a frequently contested aesthetic value.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* 2.1, says something relevant for these purposes about the nature of humankind in relation to art and to language use as an art. Wittgenstein's picture theory of meaning makes every meaningful use of language, with tautology and contradiction along for the ride, a picture of an existent or nonexistent fact, where pictures themselves are facts. With remarkable insight and typical aplomb, Wittgenstein flatly declares:

2.1 We make to ourselves pictures of facts.⁴

We do indeed make to ourselves pictures of facts, and we have done so, as far as archaeology testifies, throughout a long recorded history. Modern human beings, dating from the time of the evolution of Cro-Magnon man and woman, have engaged in the production, use and enjoyment of art as a permanent form of symbolic expression, ever since their emergence and dissemination between the last two great ice ages. The historical record supports the anthropological claim that without art, whatever else we are, we are not modern humans. If we go back only as far as the Neandertals, with whom our ancestors coexisted for at least 10,000 years, we recognize a hominid species that was remarkably intelligent, social, and well adapted to its environment, whose members made tools, perhaps buried their dead ceremonially, made boats and navigated inland waters, as has recently been discovered, and were probably capable of some kind of speech, although, it is believed by some specialists, with only two of the six vowel sounds which we modern humans command.⁵

Whether Neandertals are our progenitors or merely an evolutionary side-branch of the main hominid line, they were extraordinarily successful for many more years thus far than modern human beings, and they exhibited many of the traits we associate with our own species. Whatever Neandertal humans accomplished, they did not, to the best of our knowledge, decorate their tools or dwellings, or make painted or carved images, icons or representations of things in their world, nor, as Wittgenstein puts it, did they try to make to themselves pictures of facts. The assumption among many anthropologists, in a very dynamic field of study with frequent new discoveries, is that Neandertals had at best limited symbolic expressive capabilities compared with our own. The very moment modern human beings appeared, somewhere about 60,000 years ago, there, anthropologists tell us, we immediately find an abundance of art, decoration, images, totems, likenesses of animals and human beings, and in general pictures of facts. Unlike Neandertals, these people, our closest ancestors, genetically indistinguishable from ourselves, could not make a stone hammer, bone scraper or flint knife, without carving images on the handle. They could not make use

of a cave without painting the walls with bison, aurochs and mammoths, their own handprints, and even more metaphorical or ceremonial mythological images. We marvel even today at the artistic quality of what our Ice Age progenitors accomplished whenever a new rock painting or anthropomorphic antler tool is unearthed.⁶

Among other conclusions to be drawn from the data of a scientific anthropology, accordingly, we may argue that Martin Heidegger in his influential study of existential phenomenological ontology, *Being and Time*, has gotten things seriously wrong.⁷ *Da-sein* or human being-in-the-world is not a matter of technology, of *Zuhandenheit*, or grasping of things, taking them to hand. Not, at least, if we mean modern human beings, our own species, Cro-Magnon men and women like ourselves, rather than hominids generally. For, even Neandertals had a crude technology and grasped things and put them to use, and therefore must have taken care of themselves and the artifacts available to them. In that sense, they must have also seen the world as a repository of raw materials for their use. What distinguishes modern human beings, as contemporary archaeology and anthropology indicates, is not technology, but art. We are not merely (generically) man the knower or man the tool-maker, but man the artist. Wittgenstein has it right where Heidegger goes astray (unless Heidegger is talking about hominids generally): we are not just grabby tool users, but primarily and more essentially picture makers—we who, as Wittgenstein says, make to ourselves pictures of facts.⁸

If so, then philosophy ineluctably confronts the question of precisely how art is related to art-makers. What is required of a person in order to become an artist, or, better, to exercise the innate artistic potential that seems to be our human genetic birthright? The answer presumably involves something that is immediately before us, something to which we need only pay proper attention in order to recognize it as the key to the problem of the philosophy of art. It must be there for us to grasp, given what we have already said, if it is true that compulsively we as human beings by nature are all artists, to a greater or lesser degree, actively and competently, or potentially and less competently, professionally or unprofessionally. Who, after all, has not at least as a child made pictures? Who does not take pride in making photographs, entertaining oneself with singing or whistling, arranging flowers or furniture in a room in a pleasing way, decorating an object with respect to form and color according to a personally satisfying aesthetic? If we are all artists in one way or another, then we should be able to determine on reflection what is needed for art and what is needed in order to become an artist. In that case, on the present assumption, making art is something that we cannot prevent ourselves from doing, if we only follow what is deeply ingrained in our species heritage.

ART AND LANGUAGE AS THE EXPRESSION OF IDEAS

When we consider the unprofessional art that most people make at some point or other during their lives, what do we learn? When we think of arts and crafts historically as they must have developed from an anthropological point of view, beginning with what seems to be an innate drive in human beings to make art and to make to ourselves pictures of facts, or other kinds of pictures or melodies or poems, leading by degrees to the most valued treasures of the fine arts among ancient civilizations to the present day, what can we say about the nature of art in relation to what it is that every person does in making an artwork?

Taking our cue from Wittgenstein's opening remark in introducing the *Tractatus* picture theory of meaning, it seems reasonable to begin at least with the hypothesis that art is somehow akin to language. It may be worthwhile first to review some of the positive analogies between linguistic and artistic practices. Both are apparently distinctively human activities, and in their developed forms more particularly are activities unique to modern human beings. Although written languages do not appear in the cultural record until about 9,000 years ago, we have grounds to believe that some forms of spoken languages were well established even before our species evolved, and hence, like art, characterized modern human life from its very inception. Like language, art is something requiring a certain amount of skill, that can be exercised more or less proficiently, and that permits in principle a wide range of individual expression. As Wittgenstein is aware, if language is a kind of picturing, then in a certain sense even our precursor hominid ancestors, insofar as they were capable of expressing themselves in language, were also in effect practicing art by making verbal pictures of facts. If this application seems too far-fetched, we should nevertheless acknowledge the sense in which language can be poetic or prosaic, and in which written language can be as ornate in its calligraphy or pictographic and hieroglyphic styles as many other art forms. Until relatively recently, when reading and writing became democratized in literate societies, the ability to read and write was the jealously protected prerogative of a specially trained priesthood, as much involved in the ritual articulation of visual images as in inscribing court records, taxes, stores, and historical and religious events.

The concept is fueled by an obvious analogy. If we think of language as expressive, a public way of expressing ideas, and if we think of language as sufficiently like art in certain ways, then it may be natural also to think of art as expressive. At the very least, we can entertain the hypothesis to see where it leads. In language we use a conventional sign system to express our ideas in an almost endless variety of ways for as many kinds of ideas as thought is capable of considering. We can talk and write about the beliefs we accept and doubts we have, about our feelings and hopes and dreams and aspirations. We can preserve memories and advance hypotheses, issue commands, keep track

of questions and problems, consider philosophical problems, and unlimitedly many other things besides, such as recording thought as a relatively permanent *aide-memoire*. To a certain extent we can do the same kinds of things in artworks, although not always with the same degree of communicative success. By painting an auroch on a stretched skin we can express our desire for a bountiful hunt. By painting the so-called *Nightwatch* (*The Company of Frans Banning Cocq and Willem van Ruytenburgh*), Rembrandt van Rijn, among other things, can express the prestige of a class of Amsterdam militia, the authority of office, implicit protection of the citizenry, the individual attitudes of the musketeers and possibly the ever presence of his beloved wife Saskia, if the woman dressed in white in a corner pool of illumination is her cameo portrait in the work. By painting *Guernica*, Picasso can express his horror of war, disillusionment about the future of mankind, outrage at the first use of air warfare against civilians, and many other things besides. If all art expresses ideas, even if we must often guess and imperfectly try to interpret what those ideas might be, then it seems reasonable to define art as a kind of nonlinguistic, sometimes idiosyncratic symbolic expression, to understand different styles, genres and schools of art as different ways of expressing ideas, or as concerned with different particular kinds of ideas, devoted to religious ideas or to an ideal of harmony with nature, or to an existential outlook about the human condition.

The theory of art as expression has a well-established pedigree. It exists in a variety of guises that do not always expressly refer to themselves as expressivistic. The most conspicuous sources for this kind of aesthetic theory are John Dewey's *Art as Experience* and Arthur Berndtson's *Art, Expression, and Beauty*.⁹ The same kind of theory is nevertheless to be found in any philosophical attempt to define art in terms of an artist's intentions in producing an artwork, such as Stephen Davies's more recent attempt in his recent book *Definitions of Art* to defend such a concept against William K. Wimsatt, Jr and Monroe C. Beardsley's assault against expressivism in their landmark essay, "The Intentional Fallacy."¹⁰ Even Clive Bell's formalist theory of *Art*, justly famous and influential in Susanne K. Langer's formalist aesthetics in *Feeling and Form*, appears to only superficially characterize art exclusively in terms of its forms entirely at the expense of content, but defines the uniquely aesthetic quality of artworks more precisely as *significant* form.¹¹ An intentionalist philosopher of language such as Roderick M. Chisholm, Joseph Margolis, or John R. Searle, could hardly ask for a more suggestive parallel in the philosophy of art, depending, of course, on how significance is understood and what is packed into the concept.¹² The significantly formal aspects of language, from ordinary languages to symbolic logics and computer programming codes, testify in any case to the continuity rather than sharp division between art and language.

If we turn to Berndtson as a central figure in expressivist aesthetics, we find that he implausibly limits the expressive dimension of art exclusively to

the expression of emotions. There is no reason to doubt that much of art is expressive in precisely this way, and, whereas Bell and Langer emphasize the formal aspects of art in the concept of significant form, Berndtson pays homage to Schopenhauer, Santayana, Benedetto Croce, C.J. Ducasse, as well as Antonio Caso, Theodore M. Greene, Bell and Langer, the latter of whom speak especially of expressive form. Oddly, in this context, Berndtson nowhere mentions Dewey's pragmatic theory of the emotively expressive act and emotively expressive object.¹³

Berndtson writes:

It is not sufficient ... to think of expression as a relation of form and emotion, by virtue of which emotion or the self is clarified and made free and beauty is brought into being. It is necessary, among other matters, to consider how emotion is related to the expressing form, how clarity and freedom arise among other changes in emotion, and how beauty enters the expressive act. The appropriate analysis may well start with a consideration of the unstudied range of meaning of the word *expression*. In the simplest context, the term can be applied to the act of squeezing water out of a sponge: the water literally is expressed from the sponge. An angry animal is said to express its emotion by growling and snapping. Concepts are expressed in words and sentences. And in the most complex context, emotion is expressed in a work of art.¹⁴

What we must wonder is whether art is always and only *emotionally* expressive, or whether there are other ways in which art expresses and things other than emotions it can also express. The problem becomes acute when, to borrow just enough of Wimsatt and Beardsley's evidence without lapsing into their draconian anti-intentionalist conclusion, neither an artist nor critic can confidently identify an emotion as underlying the production of an artwork. Must we even then say that the art object nevertheless must express an emotion, but one that is perhaps in Freudian terms sublimated or subconscious, or that the artist in self-deception has hidden away behind a punishing superego? In any other field of inquiry, such desperate moves would rightly be regarded as unconscionable theory-saving. Berndtson is well aware of the need to support his concentration on the use of art to express emotion, when he later adds:

The theory of art as expression accords to emotion the primary place in art, and devotes the greater part of its energy as theory to the description and understanding of the relations, transformation, and consequences of emotion in art. Here it stands in clear contrast to the theories of art as representation and as form, which find a secondary or incidental place for emotion in art, or deny it altogether. / The emphasis on emotion requires justification ... Apart from any theory of the essence of art, it was stated [in a previous chapter] that emotion has important relations to value, experience, and thought, which justify and even require its entry into the aesthetic experience. It was shown that aesthetic

form implies emotion, whether in sensation, the choice and methods of representation, or in the diverse types of aesthetic structure.¹⁵

Part of the answer lies in Berndtson's definition of the concept of emotion, which he understands in this way:

Emotion is the immediate awareness of value, and in expression that awareness achieves its most satisfying fulfillment. Emotion supplies to art an imposing matter and problem, and expression supplies a solution equal to the task. In this solution lies the only balance between life and art that aesthetic theory can discover: through emotion art draws without limit on life, and through expression it achieves a unique status and value that sets it apart from the rest of life.¹⁶

A similar commitment to art as a specifically emotional expression by way of a necessary connection between emotion and expression, and the view that all expression is emotional, is found in Dewey's *Art as Experience*, when he argues:

Emotional discharge is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of expression. / There is no expression without excitement, without turmoil.¹⁷

It does not take a master of the counterexample method as subtle as Socrates to see that Dewey's or Berndtson's concept of emotion will hardly do on its own or in the context of his application in the theory of art as emotive expression. Without going so far as to accuse Berndtson of adjusting data to fit theory, it may still be cautioning to recall Wittgenstein's remark in *Philosophical Investigations* §593, where he refers to "A main cause of philosophical disease—a one-sided diet: one nourishes one's thinking with only one kind of example."¹⁸

The value of which emotion stands in "immediate awareness" according to Berndtson requires further clarification. It appears more consistent with the facts revealed by introspection that the immediate awareness of value is generally one thing, and the emotional overlay that sometimes accompanies such recognition is something else. I perceive the (negative) value of an insult or gross act of moral misconduct, and my anger about it, if I happen to experience any such emotion, is something else again that may not occur until later. If I am angry about paying my income taxes when I sign my check to the IRS with a violent sweep of the pen in recognition of the value of the money I am sending away, have I created a work of art? If I work for the Treasury Department and it is my daily job to sort through currency to distinguish legal tender from counterfeits, then I might immediately recognize the monetary value of a bill as I place it on one pile, without feeling any particular emotion or feeling whatsoever, let alone an aesthetically relevant emotion, beyond the desire to do my work correctly or take an early lunch. On other occasions I may experience a flood of emotion, say, of anxiety, without even knowing why. What if I am a production potter, engaged in a repetitious routine I have mastered and executed many times as I make

what is in fact an extraordinarily beautiful and valuable piece of pottery? In such circumstances, I may happen to experience no other emotion than boredom, or something quite aesthetically irrelevant, such as a feeling of regret for saying something impolite to a stranger many years ago.

Suppose that in answering a telephone call from the police I feel an intense emotion before I know whether the news is good, bad or indifferent, possibly the result of nothing more portentous than a wrongly dialed number. If defending Berndtson in such cases requires us to say that any contact with the police is portentous with some value, then the thesis is threatened with triviality. In that case, whenever we are conscious we are constantly experiencing an aesthetically significant immediate recognition of value of stronger or weaker degree, at least of relief. If there is never a moment when we are not experiencing an emotion, then there is no contrast to be drawn between recognizing value and not recognizing value. In a related case, it appears that I can perceive the aesthetic value of a child's drawing, without experiencing any particular emotion, until I realize that the drawing is something I made as a child, and I am suddenly transported back to a kindergarten classroom or a sunny patch of carpet at grandma's house. Berndtson should agree that recognizing the value of the drawing by definition is itself an emotion, regardless of whether it is experienced with anything even remotely resembling the phenomenology of emotions as the concept of emotion is usually understood. As a final counterexample, consider the following dilemma. If I wake up with an unaccountable feeling of joy on a workday, must we say in order to accept Berndtson's thesis that this is my recognition of the positive value of work, even if at the time I refuse to assent to any such explanation? If, on the other hand, I wake up on such a day with an otherwise unaccountable feeling of depression or dark despair, must we say in order to accept Berndtson's thesis that this is my recognition of the negative value of having to work for a living, even if at the time I refuse to assent to any such explanation?

If we are obligated to extend Berndtson's analysis to cover situations in which an artist immediately values something enough to choose it as a subject for an artwork as an emotion, then the same should be true of any choice of anything anyone does as an immediate recognition of the value of the thing as worth doing. Then whatever anyone does in any walk of life must qualify as the expression of emotion and hence as art. It might be reasonable to treat absolutely everything a person does as an artwork, but Berndtson does not want to collapse the distinction between artistic and nonartistic practices into art, and neither do most philosophers of art. The point is to identify what is distinctive about art and the making of art. Otherwise, we can simply avoid talk of emotions altogether as epiphenomenal to aesthetics, and define art more directly as whatever people do. This, interestingly, emphasizing the evolutionary approach to pragmatism that characterizes his thought, is more or less what Dewey bravely argues. His concept of the "impulses" to which all animals are subject and to

which the motivation of human action is reduced suggests an unbroken line of continuity between animals and certainly in all actions of human agents as emotively expressive. The failure of a definition of art as the expression of emotion nevertheless need not entail the failure of a more general definition of art as a particular way of expressing ideas, among which emotions can be included as one category of thoughts among others.¹⁹

PERCEPTION AND INTENTIONALITY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF ART

The thesis that art is the expression of ideas seems right enough as far as it goes. Even if art is expression or if expression is indispensable to the concept of art, it remains equally true that art cannot adequately be explained as expression. The reason goes to the heart of an important division in art theory and aesthetic philosophy, between two ways of thinking about the nature of art, from the standpoint of production and consumption, and the complementary perspectives of artist and appreciator or audience. There is a synergy that exists between these two poles, involving both what goes into the making of art and the experience of art by perceivers other than the artist, without an adequate account of which the nature, meaning and value of art cannot be fully understood.

We can divide many aesthetic theories into those that mistakenly focus exclusively or excessively on the manufacture of art from the artist's standpoint to the neglect of the audience or spectator standpoint, and those that mistakenly focus exclusively or excessively on the experience of art from the audience or spectator standpoint to the neglect of the artist's standpoint. Art in its entirety is nevertheless a cooperation between both its producers and consumers. This is true not only in the most abstract sense. Important moments in the making, use and enjoyment of art need to be included in a complete account simply because they are elements in the process by which art is made and the purpose for which it is made. They are essential considerations in assessing an artwork's success or failure, both for and from the perspective of those who produce and those who consume artworks. Artists themselves judge their effects on patrons in a kind of feedback loop that includes criticisms of many different kinds. These include spontaneous positive or negative reactions on the part of those who experience and interact with an artwork, and involves their own exercise of these distinct internalized critical roles during the creative process.²⁰

If we reconsider the analogy between expression in language and art, we discover remarkable continuities and even more significant disanalogies. We ordinarily expect that discursive language, verbal or written, is the expression of a thinker's ideas that are relatively easy for a listener or reader to correctly decipher. If I utter a simple declarative sentence, such as "Paris is the capital of France," I have expressed an idea, and might even do so with an accompanying

state of emotion in recognition of the value of that fact or at least the truth value of the proposition. Whoever is linguistically competent in English will clearly understand what I have said and be able to gather from the sentence at least the denotation of the state of affairs I have expressed, if not absolutely all of the deeper subtleties, connotations and psychological associations that the sentence might have for me in making the pronouncement. There is enough transparent communication of the idea I have expressed to make it possible for someone else to proceed with confidence, other things being equal, in knowing what I intend to say without confusion or misunderstanding.

As we move from the expression of categorical propositions or belief in simple states of affairs, things begin to get progressively more complicated and progressively more philosophically interesting. If I try to express an emotion or a state of mind more opaque to another person than a straightforward statement of fact, then my use of language is equally expressive, but more difficult for another person to accurately interpret. The reason is that where first-person psychological occurrences are concerned, it can be challenging in the extreme to articulate the exact content of mental state even for one's own purposes, let alone in such a way that another person can take away from the linguistic expression a clear idea of what is being said. As we continue along the spectrum of expressive uses of language from beliefs in states of affairs to expressions of emotion and other psychological states toward more artistic uses of language in poetry, song lyrics and librettos, and the like, we encounter linguistic expressions whose exact meaning can be increasingly difficult for persons other than the author to fully grasp.²¹

We can think of poetry as an activity or product of an activity involving the use of words and sentences that is equally both language and art. Poetry is undoubtedly expressive, but importantly for present purposes, the more artistic or art-like the use of language is in poetry, the more typically opaque its meanings and elusive its exact interpretation. If the standard of accuracy for understanding the content of poetry is supposed to be the recovery of the ideas an author intends and attempts to express in linguistic art or artistic language, then poetry is more like other kinds of art precisely in the obstacles it presents to the easy recovery of meaning when compared with descriptive scientific prose. It is a commonplace that the most intriguing poetry and the sort most often thought to succeed as art involves a kind of writing whose meaning does not immediately and univocally reveal itself, but that suggests multiple meanings and, unlike "Paris is the capital of France," may support an entirely different kind of interpretation every time we reflect on its content. Such poetry has depth and rewards frequent contemplation and rethinking, and captures in a word image a moment or scene that we appreciate more or less depending on the extent of our own personal experience to which we can relate in different ways at different times in our lives.

The Elizabethan theater was an artificial linguistic environment as well as a scene of plot and spectacle, action and humor. Its standard of taste demanded an artful use of language, in which patrons delighted just as we do today in an author's poetic use of language as a pleasing exercise in linguistically crafting comic and dramatic dialogue for its own sake as well as for the story and its moral and the play of emotions it occasions. The language of the Elizabethan theater was very much a product of art catering to a desire for poetic fabrications interwoven with comic and dramatic effects. The audience in Shakespeare's time on the whole would have needed to puzzle over many passages of his beautiful and captivatingly dense verse, rhymed and blank, much as we still do, that was and still remains a great part of its charm. Shakespeare undoubtedly expresses ideas, including emotions, his own and those of the characters whose situations he represents, in his writings and through the agency of the actors' voices and gestures when the plays are performed. The artistic purpose to which his language is put, in contrast with ordinary prose in the expression of belief in ordinary states of affairs, makes its artistic expression of ideas less accessible and easy to discern, more profound and resonant, and more variably recoverable, with greater potential for inaccuracy, and also for that reason more absorbing and stimulating of the imagination, than the use of language for the expression of belief in the existence of simple states of affairs.

Turning now from language in prosaic and poetic applications to nonlinguistic art, to drawing, etching, printmaking, painting, sculpture, music, architecture, flower arranging and other fine and decorative arts, we proceed along an extended continuum that begins with the expression of facts in language to emotions and then to poetry and finally to the other arts. All are expressive, justifying the formula by which art is said to be the expression of ideas in media other than language. Even personal styles of dress are expressive in this sense, if not always of an identifiable proposition or attitude, then of individual taste. To an even greater degree than is demonstrated in the distinction between statements of fact and the most artistic uses of language in poetry, expression in the nonlinguistic arts may be as exact as or even more exact than ordinary language from the artist's standpoint, whose meaning or intention expressed in art may be difficult if not sometimes impossible for an audience to discover.

What, exactly, did Picasso mean to express by painting *Guernica*? What does Marcel Duchamp mean to express by exhibiting *Fountain*, a porcelain urinal, as a ready-made artwork? What does Vermeer mean to express by painting *de Keukenmeid*? Virtue? Domesticity? Loneliness? Social rank? Why not just the morning reverie of a pretty Dutch girl? In some cases, we may think we know what an artist intends, just as if the artist were to write out a series of simple declarative statements in ordinary language as a linguistic expression of easily discernible meaning. In other cases, we may find the meaning of an artwork endlessly ponderous, difficult or even impossible to decide. It is a familiar experience

among persons who study an artwork whose meaning at first seems obvious, that with time and greater maturity or different enhanced experiences, supports the discovery of new things that previously were concealed, and sometimes to reverse one's judgment and appreciation of its meaning altogether, or at least to add to one's sense of what an artist might be trying to express, in what has otherwise seemed to be an easily decipherable art object.

The opacity of expression in nonlinguistic art from an audience point of view is so pronounced that philosophers have described the effort to interpret art in terms of an artist's intentions as a kind of *fallacy*. The "intentional fallacy" is a term coined by Wimsatt and Beardsley in their much-discussed essay in the philosophy of art, by which they despair of being able to judge an artwork's meaning or value from the perspective of what an artist intends to express. They are so dissatisfied with reference to an artist's intentions in interpreting the meaning of an artwork that they not only recommend abandoning the effort to understand art from the standpoint of the artist's intentions, but argue that it is always a mistake to try to bring an artist's intentions to bear on the interpretation of art.²² This is a problem of perception, a problem for consumers of art who must try to interpret, assess and evaluate an artwork's meaning and merits. Insofar as artists in the complex interplay of roles, in which they engage as both producers and critics of their own work, are also perceivers of their own work, and insofar as artists may sometimes be unclear about their own intentions and exactly what it is they mean to express, insofar as the act of making art can be understood in turn as a method of clarifying what an artist wants to say, of physically thinking through a problem of expression in concrete terms as a process taking place over time, to the extent that problems of perceiving intention and discerning what is being expressed in art blur the theoretical distinction between artist and audience, producer and consumer, active maker and passive perceiver of art.

There is a balanced commonsense point of view about interpreting art in relation to what an artist intends to express in a given artwork. We should not expect to have access to an artist's intentions in every case, and therefore we should not suppose that we can only understand an artwork when we can be sure that an artist means thereby to express a certain set of ideas. In those instances where we happen to have insight into what an artist intends, such as a reliable verbal description in a letter or diary, or that can be inferred circumstantially, it seems only reasonable to take advantage of the information in building up a reasonable hypothesis of how an artwork might best be interpreted. Why should we deliberately overlook such facts if they contribute to understanding what an artist means to express in producing a certain artwork merely in order to avoid what is supposed to be the intentional fallacy? If we agree that art is an expression of ideas, how can we afford to ignore whatever facts might be relevant in trying to uncover an artist's intentions and the particular ideas an artist may have wanted to express?

If we agree with Wimsatt and Beardsley that it is always a logical mistake to consult an artist's intentions in order to interpret and understand an artwork, then, given the continuity between linguistic and artistic expression mediated by poetry, it should follow that we must also adopt the same attitude toward understanding meaning in language, refusing on every occasion to consider an author's intentions as irrelevant to his or her meaning in linguistic expression. If that kind of limitation does not seem reasonable in the task of understanding expression in language, then it should be equally inappropriate to renounce information about an artist's intentions in interpreting and trying to understand the meaning of art, beginning with linguistic art forms like poetry and literature, the novels, plays and librettos, that grade off insensibly into nonlinguistic painting, drawing, etching, printmaking, sculpture, music and architecture.

ONTOLOGY OF ART AND SALIENCE OF PERCEPTION IN THE METAPHYSICS OF CULTURE

When a sentence is uttered or written, whether with pen and ink, chiseled into stone or inscribed by means of a pattern of magnetic traces on the surface of a plastic computer diskette, it is in some obvious sense a physical entity. It might also be said at the same time to represent an abstract meaning, which in turn might concern beliefs, hypotheses and emotions, among other thoughts and ideas. Much the same can be said of cave painting as of the greatest works of fine art, or of any artifact, such as a hammer, computer or the International Space Station.

These entities too in different ways can be thought of as embodying abstract relations, particularly in the case of the cave painting and the computer, but even by extension, if we stretch things far enough, for the hammer and the computer-assisted design and operation of the space station. Artworks and other artifacts are not themselves abstract entities, since all of these things are undeniably here with us in real space-time in the actual world, whereas abstract entities are supposed to be non-spatiotemporal. We might nevertheless try to skate by with the two most venerable established categories of physical and abstract entities by classifying cultural entities of all kinds as physical entities embodying or manifesting certain special types of abstract properties, ideas, concepts, formal relations or the like, and thus dispense with the need to go beyond the ontology of physical and abstract things, in order to account for the metaphysics of culture. Would such an analysis of the ontology of language, art and artifacts be satisfactory?

There is an argument to suggest that cultural entities cannot simply be subsumed by the pure traditional categories of physical and abstract entities, no matter what other explanatory advantages they afford. The objection for good reason is parallel to that offered in attempts to solve the mind-body problem,

of which the question of the ontic status of cultural entities can be seen as a particular related instance. The claim is that we cannot fully understand language, art and artifacts, cultural entities generally, except as perceivable public or external expressions of the qualia and intentionality of thought. This is perhaps most clear in the case of language used as a vehicle for recording and communicating sensations, emotions and ideas, but equally so in all of art, even the most modern abstract or supposedly nonrepresentational art.

Although artifacts other than language and artworks in the narrow sense are not more obviously expressions of propositional meaning, they are nevertheless, as Heidegger among others rightly recognizes, thoroughly *intentional*. Their design, manufacture and use are alike directed toward and imbued with human purpose. If I fashion a stone hammer by selecting a particular river-smoothed stone and fastening it with leather thongs to a wooden heft, I am choosing, shaping, assembling and finally using physical objects in my immediate environment with a certain end in mind. A boulder will not do if the hammer is supposed to be used as a practical tool; that would make it too big and heavy, whereas I must be able to lift it up and swing it down to drive in stakes or smash oyster shells. A chunk of sandstone will also probably not serve, although I might experiment with any variety of substances until I identify appropriate materials for my purposes, because it will too easily shatter if I use the hammer as I am likely to want to do in striking harder objects. When the hammer is made, no matter how ineptly, imperfectly or incompletely, it represents, as much as any speech act or artwork, a mind's intentions and the attempt to fulfill those intentions by acting in and locally manipulating aspects of the physical world in the service of an idea, in the partial fulfillment of an intention.

Minds and their concrete expressions in language, art and artifacts can be classified, accordingly, not as purely physical or purely abstract entities, but as qualia-expressive intentional entities, being in every instance about something or directed toward an intended object. The intended object of a use of language, or the production or display of an artwork or other artifact, is often to express the qualia of a thinker's thought. To paint a canvas or write a letter or sing the blues is to clarify for oneself and make available to others a record of the content of one's psychological states. Cultural entities are not themselves minds, and if they embody or otherwise manifest thoughts they are not themselves mental occurrences. Here an important division between two kinds of intentional entities can be adduced in the applied scientific ontology of cultural entities, based on a distinction first drawn by John R. Searle in his book, *Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind*, between *intrinsic* and *derivative* intentionality.²³

It is obvious enough, but bears reminding, that were it not for the existence of minds there would and could be no culture. Language, art and artifacts are products of thought. In all instances, they are the direct expression of thought in physical perceivable form. The same is true whether we are referring to a single

sentence uttered by an early hominid or all of world literature, a cave painting or the oeuvre of Michelangelo or Salvador Dalí, a stone hammer used to crack oyster shells, or the International Space Station. An intentionalist philosophy implies that cultural entities, like the minds that through physical agency produce them, are intentional entities, and as such require a special category of the preferred existence domain that is beyond and distinct from physical and abstract entities. Cultural entities have physical and abstract properties, just as physical entities have abstract properties and enter into abstract relations, such as the abstract property of being divisible or atomic. We may accordingly consider a three-part philosophical ontology that includes physical, abstract and minds as qualia-bearing intentional entities, to be sufficient also for cultural entities, without interposing yet another, fourth, category of existent things. The explanation of thought in language, art and artifacts is intentional in the correct sense of the word insofar as these cultural entities are about something or directed toward an intended object, and perceptually expressive of the content of a state of mind. Artworks and other artifacts and cultural entities can be included in the three-part ontology of the physical, abstract and intentional, if we consider them in every case to be the perceivable derivatively intentional expressions of intrinsically intentional mental states, including, perhaps prominently, but not limited to, emotions.

The sentence, "It is raining," is about a meteorological state of affairs, and ordinarily expresses a belief that the state of affairs obtains. It is true or false, moreover, depending on the actual state of the world, the existence or nonexistence of the corresponding state of affairs the sentence is intended to represent and the belief it is meant to express. The cave painting is about the bison depicted, real or imaginary, and the state of affairs, existent or otherwise, of its being struck by an arrow. It may represent the fears of the artist, the hope for a successful hunt or something of more metaphorical or religious significance as a cult object. The possibilities, thanks to conventional symbolism and psychological association, and the logical detachment of the content of thought from its intended objects, are potentially limitless. The same analysis explains the collective intentionality that stands behind social institutions such as customs, etiquettes, religious and secular observances, mating and marriage, the use of money as a medium of exchange, and all other aspects of culture.

An artifact like a hammer, computer or space station is likewise the expression of purpose, of varying degrees of complexity, but equally a product of thought and concrete embodiment of the idea or ideas of a mind or many minds acting in concert intentionally and for the sake of realizing an intention. We can often grasp shared or imaginable purposes directly from the object, and even when we are wrong in our assumptions, it is significant that we find it irresistible in such cases to see the work of mind in the creation of artifacts. Thus, a hammer is about hammering, about the things its makers and users intend to do with

it. Similarly for much more complicated and sophisticated instruments like a digital computer or the space station.

To such an extent is intentionality inherent in art and all purposeful artifacts that even when a tool or like object, a hammer or a cup or bowl, becomes so damaged that it is no longer able to fulfill its function, the entity does not simply return to nature, at least not immediately, but, as Heidegger charmingly puts it in *Being and Time*, even on the rubbish heap, it “bids farewell” to we thinkers and makers. Heidegger’s remarks on the evidence of purpose, design and care in broken implements establish his ontology of culture as intentionalist:

Beings nearest at hand can be met up with in taking care of things as unusable, as improperly adapted for their specific use. Tools turn out to be damaged, their material unsuitable. In any case, *a useful thing* of some sort is at hand here. But we discover the unusability not by looking and ascertaining properties, but rather by paying attention to the associations in which we use it. When we discover its unusability, the thing becomes conspicuous. *Conspicuousness* presents the thing at hand in a certain unhandiness ... In its conspicuousness, obtrusiveness, and obstinacy, what is at hand loses its character of handiness in a certain sense. But this handiness is itself understood, although not thematically, in associating with what is at hand. It does not just disappear, but bids farewell, so to speak, in the conspicuousness of what is unusable. Handiness shows itself once again, and precisely in doing so the worldly character of what is at hand also shows itself, too.²⁴

The cup, broken in falling from the table, unable to hold tea, still “says” that it was once something useful, something intended for a specific use, capable in its glory days of fulfilling a practical purpose. We can read intentionality even into a ruined artifact, as when we visit the sites of abandoned ancient cities like Machu Picchu or Aphrodisias. Here we see clearly a large-scale object that is not merely a work of nature, the result of natural forces acting at random, but an artifact first shaped in thought and then fashioned by hand or with the help of other tools or machines by many persons in a relatively advanced state of technology.

We might also reflect in this connection on how the trained archaeologist and anthropologist is able (fallibly) to distinguish between natural objects and human-made artifacts that to the layperson’s unskilled eye seem indistinguishable. A good example is the flint scraping tools that are hard to discern from the flakes of flint that may have splintered from a block through entirely natural processes without the hand of a human tool-maker deliberately guided by intention and purpose, with a certain end and a certain standard in mind. It is not an occult practice, but a rather exact science, to distinguish such tools and tool fragments from naturally occurring shards of identical stone. The tricks of the trade can be taught to virtually any patient novice, so that it becomes possible

also to see as the experts do the subtle distinctions between such kinds of natural and early human cultural entities.

We discriminate between multiple subcategories of physical objects. There are physical forces, fields, and micro- and macrophysical entities, particles and complexes, molecules and atoms, and the like. We similarly distinguish between multiple subcategories of abstract entities, particulars like numbers and sets, and universals such as properties, qualities and relations. In the third main ontological category of intrinsically qualia-bearing intentional entities, we may similarly find it expedient, following Searle's distinction, to acknowledge separate subcategories for intrinsically intentional entities, minds as originating sources of qualia and intentionality, and perceivable derivatively intentional and qualia-expressive entities, including all cultural entities, all speech acts in language, art and artifacts. Perceivable derivatively intentional cultural entities are about something or expressive of qualia only by virtue of having been chosen by thought as a medium for the derivatively intentional expression of intrinsically intentional meaning, thought and purpose, idea, sensation, emotion, desire and will.

Even the broken teacup speaks to sensitive eyes as having another, special, kind of property, a former purpose, a former use, ministering to an intention that cannot in turn be adequately understood in terms of its physical or abstract qualities and relations alone. It partakes derivatively of the intrinsic intentionality of thought to which it owes its existence, and as such is not purely and not merely a physical entity. It is for the same reason that the mind itself on the property dualist conception is not purely and not merely the body, the neurophysiology of brain and nervous system integrated into the somatic matrix of a living psychological subject. If cultural artifacts are as much dual aspect entities as the minds that create them, then, like the mind, they require special provision in a third main category of a preferred existence domain. The world of culture, as Karl R. Popper, in *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*, for quite different reasons, has also maintained, is a third distinct ontological realm, a World 3.²⁵ The sub-domain of cultural entities constitutes a third world as a distinct classification within applied scientific ontology. Physical, abstract and intentional entities exist in the combinatorial analysis of the concept of being as maximally consistent property combinations, including physically and abstractly irreducible derivatively intentional and qualia-expressive properties.

It might be thought that while the plastic arts like painting and sculpture are readily absorbed into the category of physical entities in the existence domain, other so to speak more formal or mathematical arts like music, and even poetry and literature, might be taken without residue into the category of abstract entities in the preferred existence domain of an ontology of culture. In considering only music, as offering perhaps the strongest argument for this type of ontological reduction, it is clear that music is not only the abstract relations that it exemplifies, but tone qualities, rhythm and tempo in real time, and,

more importantly, expression and expressiveness that is evidently an intentional property originating with the intrinsically intentional qualia-bearing thoughts of composers, conductors and performers, intended to be received and to elicit certain qualia and intentional psychological responses in an audience, which cannot be adequately reduced to or explained in terms of the music's abstract mathematical forms. It is an art that speaks expressively from and to the human soul in a way that is not simply a matter of abstract relations of melody and harmony, essential though these are to the ontology of music.

The same can be said, it should be emphasized, of any art form and of any expressive use of language or purposeful design, manufacture or use of any artifact. An extreme example that makes an important point about the comparative insignificance of the physical substance chosen for artistic purposes is in so-called found-object art, in which an artist selects and exhibits a ready-made entity of no special aesthetic quality, such as a porcelain bathroom fixture, as an expression of choice within the conventions of an artistic community. We cannot begin to understand the ontology of any of these cultural entities except as expressions of the qualia and intentionality of thought, as creations of mind and attempts to satisfy an intended purpose. When we recognize the expression of mental content and intention in language, art and artifacts, then we appreciate the need to include cultural entities in a third category of psychological or psychology-related existents distinct from the purely physical and abstract things in which cultural entities are embodied and whose properties they exemplify.²⁶

PERCEPTION, INTENTIONALITY AND EXPRESSION IN THE AESTHETICS OF ART AND NATURE

We have identified several ways in which perception is involved in the creative act of making and appreciating art. Without paying due attention to both the producer and consumer ends of art, we cannot hope to fully understand the dynamics of artworks. When we consider what is involved in producing and enjoying art, we find the concepts of perception, intentionality and expression tightly intertwined.

Art, like other forms of expression, begins with perception. We are inspired by the things we experience in sensation. We recognize beauty or we are otherwise moved to express what we perceive or how we feel about what we perceive. We can express such ideas in a variety of ways, in language, art and in other ways, including such simple acts as smiling or frowning, hugging or fleeing the presence of another person. These latter modes of expressing our thoughts are neither linguistic nor artistic, but are continuous with speech acts and art-making as outlets for the need we have to make our thoughts perceptible to ourselves and others in communication. We use language and make art as we engage in other activities in order to express ourselves, to produce something tangible and

hence perceivable for the sake of leaving a more or less permanent record of our ideas, of sharing them with others, or interacting with them at a number of perceptual and cognitive levels and testing their reactions to what we think, of helping to clarify for our own purposes what it is we believe and how we feel.

Aesthetic experience is not limited to art, because beauty and ugliness and everything in between goes beyond the works of mind and hand by which thoughts are expressed in or outside of language, and in the overlap between art and language. Perception is essential to aesthetics generally, and in the original meaning of the word “*Ästhetik*,” as it was introduced to the philosophical vocabulary in eighteenth-century German, first designated any sense experience (*Empfindung*) or “intuition” (*Anschauung*).

If we are hoping to extend what we have concluded here about the inter-related factors of perception, intention and expression in art to aesthetics, what can we say to bridge the gap between beauty in art and beauty in nature? There are several possibilities. If we think that the world is the artwork of a divine supernatural artisan, then the application is immediate and straightforward. God in a creative act intends to express something that might be inscrutable to us but that we experience as a kind of beauty. The objectivist in art in that case, to return to our beginning theme, is correct to regard beauty and aesthetic value generally as independent at least of individual finite human minds rather than subjective in the usual sense, serving as God’s beauty-expressive objective supervenience base.

Theism and belief in the supernatural aside, what can the skeptical aesthetic philosopher maintain about the concept of natural beauty? If a beautiful field of flowers does not express a divine artist’s ideas, or if, on independent metaphysical grounds, a transcendent being cannot causally intervene in the physical universe, what other explanations can there be for aesthetic qualities outside of art? A potentially revolutionary suggestion that reverses the usual order of expectation is that we first learn about beauty from art, and then apply the aesthetics of made things to the unmade world of nature, rather than the other way around. If what we have said above is right, then there may be no better account of the appreciation for beauty and other aesthetic qualities in nature. Such an explanation for the perception in and attribution of aesthetic qualities to the natural world fits neatly with a parallel account of the concept of causation that has frequently been said to originate with reflection on the human agent’s capacity for action projected into the impersonal forces of nature in the form of physical laws.²⁷

We often assume that the first Neolithic artists were moved by the appreciation of the aesthetics of the natural world to try to imitate such qualities on a lesser scale in representational art. From such a perspective the idea that the beauty of art comes first, and then we learn to see the world as a kind of artwork, seems to have things upside down. The impression, while compelling in its way,

need not be correct. We can resist the overly simplistic picture of natural beauty taking priority over artistic beauty if we recognize that an artwork of something nonbeautiful can itself be beautiful, brilliantly executed and demonstrating skillful control and attention to detail. The expressive object of art as a derivatively intentional expression of an artist's ideas can be beautiful, even when what it represents has no special aesthetic qualities of its own. We do not know, nor do we have any special reason to think, that early modern human artists thought that bison were beautiful as opposed to totemic, powerful or nourishing, and even if they found their paintings and carvings of them on cave interiors or spear handles beautiful. It is perfectly possible from everything we currently know about early art making that the first artists developed the concept of beauty and related aesthetic values from their own standards of pleasure in the work of their own hands, and only afterward applied them by analogy to some but not all of the things around them in the world of nature.

Does this conclusion also answer our first question, whether beauty is objective or subjective? The right solution might be to refine and requalify the question. All the elements that enter into judgments of beauty exist objectively in nature, for all that this approach to the problem has to say. If the concept of beauty originates with a human appreciation for the qualities of human art carried over thereafter into the perception of the natural world, then beauty in one sense is undoubtedly subjective. If what we mean by an aesthetic quality is a property first and foremost of artworks, then there may be an objective answer to the question whether this or that object in art or nature is beautiful, depending on whether or not it conforms to the standards set by an appreciation for the beauty in art with which the concept originates. This is slender consolation, unfortunately, since these standards are not only lost in time, but most probably incorporated from the very beginning a wide range of differing opinions about what constitutes positive aesthetic value in art. The category of beauty and aesthetic appreciation might have begun historically and from the standpoint of philosophical anthropology with human-made art and was only later extended or projected onto nature. If our species originally came to appreciate a sunset because it is like a watercolor, we are by no means prevented from admiring a watercolor because it is so like a sunset.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to an anonymous journal referee for useful comments and suggestions for improvement of a previous version of this article.

Dale Jacquette is Senior Professorial Chair in Logic and Theoretical Philosophy, at the University of Bern, Switzerland. He is author of numerous articles on logic, metaphysics and philosophy of mind, and has recently published *Symbolic Logic, Philosophy of Mind:*

The Metaphysics of Consciousness, Ontology, Wittgenstein's Thought in Transition, David Hume's Critique of Infinity, and Logic and How it Gets That Way. dale.jacquette@phil.unibe.ch

Notes

1. I.C. Jarvie, 1967, "The Objectivity of Criticism of the Arts," *Ratio*, 9: 67–83; D.W. Crawford, 1971, "Causes, Reasons, and Aesthetic Objectivity," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 8: 266–74.
2. M. Scriven, 1966, "The Objectivity of Aesthetic Evaluation," *The Monist*, 50: 159–87; A.G. Pleydell-Pearce, 1970, "Objectivity and Value in Judgments of Aesthetics," *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 10: 25–38; M.A. Slote, 1971, "Rationality of Aesthetic Judgements," *The Journal of Philosophy*, 68: 821–39.
3. E. Trinkhaus and P. Shipman, *The Neandertals: Of Skeletons, Scientists, and Scandal* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), pp. 8–45, 384–410, 411–19.
4. L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, C.K. Ogden (ed.) (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1922).
5. A scientifically accurate portrayal of interaction between Neandertals and modern Cro-Magnon humans in the ice age is given in Kurtén, *Dance of the Tiger: A Novel of the Ice Age*. On the limited vocal abilities of Neandertals, see Lieberman, *The Biology and Evolution of Language*. Gould, in his Introduction to Kurtén, indicates that he does not accept Lieberman's hypothesis, see B. Kurtén, *Dance of the Tiger: A Novel of the Ice Age* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), p. xvi.
6. An excellent account of Ice Age artworks and the thought processes of Cro-Magnon humans that they reflect is found in D. Lewis-Williams, *The Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003). See also the 2010 film of Chauvet cave paintings in southern France by Werner Herzog, *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*.
7. M. Heidegger, *Being and Time, A Translation of Sein und Zeit*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996 [1953]), pp. 132–7, 141–86, on disclosedness (*Erschlossenheit*); and pp. 121–7, 171–230 and *passim*, on care (*Sorge*).
8. An insightful discussion of Heidegger's ontology in relation to Schopenhauer's theory of art is offered in J. Young, "Schopenhauer, Heidegger, Art, and the Will." In D. Jacquette (ed.) *Schopenhauer, Philosophy, and the Arts*, pp. 162–80 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
9. J. Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958 [1934]), pp. 58–105; A. Berndtson, *Art, Expression, and Beauty* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969), pp. 59–84, 144–92.
10. S. Davies, *Definitions of Art* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 181–221; W.K. Wimsatt, Jr and M.C. Beardsley, 1946, "The Intentional Fallacy," *The Sewanee Review*, 54: 468–88.
11. C. Bell, *Art* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1981 [1913]); S.K. Langer, *Feeling and Form* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953).

12. R.M. Chisholm, 1984, "The Primacy of the Intentional," *Synthese*, 61: 89–110; J. Margolis, *Art and Philosophy* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1980), Ch. 8; J.R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969); D. Jacquette, "Evolutionary Emergence of Intentionality and Imagination," In C. Taliaferro and J. Evans (eds) *A New Book of Nature: Philosophical Essays on the Imagination, Nature and God*, pp. 67–90 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
13. Berndtson, *Art, Expression, and Beauty*, p. 147, n. 1.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 150–1.
16. *Ibid.*, 151.
17. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 61.
18. L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 3rd edn. Trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1968[1953]).
19. V. Thomas, "The Concept of Expression in Art," In *Science, Language and Human Rights, Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association*, pp. 127–44 (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952).
20. Dewey is more sensitive than some emotive expressivists to the interrelation between the artist's expressive act and expressive object. See Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 82–105. On p. 82, Dewey writes: "Expression, like construction, signifies both an action and its result. The last chapter considered it as an act. We are now concerned with the product, the object that is expressive, that says something to us." The problem in understanding art as emotional expression from the viewer or audience standpoint is that such meaning is often irrecoverable from a third-person perspective. A similar difficulty impedes intentionalist theories of expression in philosophical semantics and the philosophy of language. See D. Jacquette, 2006, "Intention, Meaning, and Substance in the Phenomenology of Abstract Painting," *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 46: 38–58.
21. The distinction between speaker meaning and hearer meaning is widely recognized in philosophical semantics and philosophy of language. Among the most discussed and nuanced treatments of the subject beyond those mentioned above in note 12 include: H.P. Grice, 1957, "Meaning," *The Philosophical Review*, 66: 377–88; S.A. Kripke, 1977, "Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, 2: 255–76.
22. To take just one example of a relatively recent, widely discussed and well-documented controversial artwork, consider Picasso's *Guernica*. Here are three reasonably authoritative interpretations of Picasso's large-scale 1937 canvas. Blunt summarizes the meaning of the painting in this way: "[Picasso's] aim in painting *Guernica* was the same as that of his predecessors: to give expression in visible form to his abhorrence of the evil which he saw in the world around him, and thereby, perhaps, to influence man, however slightly, toward better ways." See A. Blunt, *Picasso's Guernica* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969). Gertrude Stein, in contrast, who knew Picasso personally and had many opportunities to discuss his art with him, finds the main theme of the painting not to be as universal or its purpose one of the reform of mankind, but more momentary, nationalistic and nostalgic. In *Picasso*,

- Stein writes: “It was not the events themselves that were happening in Spain which awoke Picasso but the fact that they were happening in Spain, he had lost Spain and here was Spain not lost, she existed, the existence of Spain awakened Picasso, he too existed, everything that had been imposed upon him no longer existed, he and Spain, both of them existed, of course they existed, they exist, they are alive, Picasso commenced to work, he commenced to speak as he has spoken all his life, speaking with drawings and color, speaking with writing, the writing of Picasso.” See G. Stein, *Picasso* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1959), pp. 47–8. Picasso, himself, as quoted in de la Puente’s *Guernica*, has this to say: “This bull is a bull, this horse is a horse. There is also a sort of bird, a chicken or pigeon, I can’t remember which, on the table. This chicken is a chicken. Yes, of course, the *symbols* ... *But the painter does not need to create those symbols*. Otherwise, it would be better to write once and for all what one wants to write instead of painting it. *The public, the spectators, must see in the horse or in the bull symbols* (then the painter had created them!) ...” See J. de la Puente, *Guernica: The Making of a Painting* (Monterreina: Silex, 1985), p. 122.
23. J.R. Searle, *Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 5, 22, 27–8, 167–8, 175–6.
 24. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 68–9.
 25. The original statement of Popper’s concept of World 3 appears in K.R. Popper, *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 31, 74–5, 106–28.
 26. A nonreductivist metaphysics of culture is offered by J. Margolis, 1959, “The Identity of a Work of Art,” *Mind*, 68, 34–50. For critical reaction, see Jacquette, “Intention, Meaning, and Substance,” pp. 38–58. See also Searle’s account of interpersonal intentionality: J.R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: The Free Press, 1995).
 27. Reid: “... the conception of an efficient cause may very probably be derived from the experience we have had ... of our own power to produce certain effects.” T. Reid, “Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind.” In William Hamilton (ed.) *The Works of Thomas Reid, D.D.*, pp. 511–677 (Edinburgh: Maclachlan & Stewart, 1854), p. 524; R.M. Chisholm, “Freedom and Action.” In Keith Lehrer (ed.) *Freedom and Determinism*, pp. 11–44 (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 22.

References and Recommended Reading

- Aiken, H. 1955. “The Aesthetic Relevance of Artists’ Intentions,” *The Journal of Philosophy*, 52: 742–53.
- Bell, C. 1981[1913]. *Art*. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons.
- Berndtson, A. 1969. *Art, Expression, and Beauty*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Blunt, A. 1969. *Picasso’s Guernica*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Chisholm, R.M. 1966. “Freedom and Action.” In Keith Lehrer (ed.) *Freedom and Determinism*, pp. 11–44. New York: Random House.
- Chisholm, R.M. 1984. “The Primacy of the Intentional,” *Synthese*, 61: 89–110.

- Cioffi, F. 1963–4. “Intention and Interpretation in Criticism,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 64: 85–106.
- Crawford, D.W. 1971. “Causes, Reasons, and Aesthetic Objectivity,” *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 8: 266–74.
- Davies, S. 1991. *Definitions of Art*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- de la Puente, J. 1985. *Guernica: The Making of a Painting*. Monterreina: Silex.
- Dewey, J. 1958[1934]. *Art as Experience*. New York: Capricorn Books.
- Grice, H.P. 1957. “Meaning,” *The Philosophical Review*, 66: 377–88.
- Heidegger, M. 1996 [1953]. *Being and Time, A Translation of Sein und Zeit*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press (originally published by Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen).
- Hungerland, I. 1955. “The Concept of Intention in Art Criticism,” *The Journal of Philosophy*, 52: 733–42.
- Jacquette, D. 1986. “Margolis on Emergence and Embodiment,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 44: 257–61.
- Jacquette, D. (ed.). 1996. *Schopenhauer, Philosophy, and the Arts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jacquette, D. 2006. “Intention, Meaning, and Substance in the Phenomenology of Abstract Painting,” *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 46: 38–58.
- Jacquette, D. 2011a. “Evolutionary Emergence of Intentionality and Imagination,” In C. Taliaferro and J. Evans (eds) *A New Book of Nature: Philosophical Essays on the Imagination, Nature and God*, pp. 67–90. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jacquette, D. 2011b. “Intentionality as a Conceptually Primitive Relation,” *Acta Analytica*, 26: 15–35.
- Jarvie, I.C. 1967. “The Objectivity of Criticism of the Arts,” *Ratio*, 9: 67–83.
- Kemp, J. 1964. “The Work of Art and the Artist’s Intentions,” *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 4: 146–54.
- Krausz, M. and Shusterman, R. (eds). 1999. *Interpretation, Relativism, and the Metaphysics of Culture: Themes in the Philosophy of Joseph Margolis*. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books (Prometheus).
- Kripke, S.A. 1977. “Speaker’s Reference and Semantic Reference,” *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, 2: 255–76.
- Kuhns, R. 1960. “Criticism and the Problem of Intention,” *The Journal of Philosophy*, 57: 5–23.
- Kurtén, B. 1995. *Dance of the Tiger: A Novel of the Ice Age*. Introduction by Stephen Jay Gould. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Lang, B. 1974. “The Intentional Fallacy Revisited,” *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 14: 306–14.
- Langer, S.K. 1953. *Feeling and Form*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Lewis-Williams, D. 2003. *The Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Lieberman, P. 1984. *The Biology and Evolution of Language*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Margolis, J. 1959. "The Identity of a Work of Art," *Mind*, 68, 34–50.
- Margolis, J. 1980. *Art and Philosophy*. Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press.
- Margolis, J. 1984a. *Culture and Cultural Entities: Toward a New Unity of Science*. Dordrecht and Boston, MA: D. Reidel Publishing Co.
- Margolis, J. 1984b. "Artworks and the History of Production," *Communication and Cognition*, 17: 89–106.
- Margolis, J. 1986. "Constraints on the Metaphysics of Culture," *The Review of Metaphysics*, 39: 653–73.
- Margolis, J. 1999. *What, After All, Is a Work of Art? Lectures in the Philosophy of Art*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State Press.
- Pleydell-Pearce, A.G. 1970. "Objectivity and Value in Judgments of Aesthetics," *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 10: 25–38.
- Popper, K.R. 1972. *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Reid, T. 1854. "Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind." In William Hamilton (ed.) *The Works of Thomas Reid, D.D.*, pp. 511–677. Edinburgh: Maclachlan & Stewart.
- Savile, A. 1968–9. "The Place of Intention in the Concept of Art," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 69: 101–24.
- Scriven, M. 1966. "The Objectivity of Aesthetic Evaluation," *The Monist*, 50: 159–87.
- Searle, J.R. 1969. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, J.R. 1979. *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, J.R. 1983. *Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, J.R. 1995. *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York: The Free Press.
- Sibley, F.N. 1968. "Objectivity and Aesthetics," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplement*, 42: 31–54.
- Sircello, G. 1972. *Mind and Art: An Essay on the Varieties of Expression*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Slote, M.A. 1971. "Rationality of Aesthetic Judgements," *The Journal of Philosophy*, 68: 821–39.
- Stein, G. 1959 [French 1938]. *Picasso*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Taliaferro, C. and Evans, J. (eds). 2011. *A New Book of Nature: Philosophical Essays on the Imagination, Nature and God*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Thomas, V. 1952. "The Concept of Expression in Art," In *Science, Language and Human Rights, Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association*, pp. 127–44. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Tormey, A. 1971. *The Concept of Expression: A Study in Philosophical Psychology and Aesthetics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Trinkhaus, E. and Shipman, P. 1994. *The Neandertals: Of Skeletons, Scientists, and Scandal*. New York: Vintage Books.

- Wimsatt, Jr, W.K. and Beardsley, M.C. 1946. "The Intentional Fallacy," *The Sewanee Review*, 54: 468–88.
- Wittgenstein, L. 1922. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, C.K. Ogden (ed.). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Wittgenstein, L. 1968 [1953]. *Philosophical Investigations*, 3rd edn. Trans. G.E.M. Anscombe. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.
- Young, J. 1996. "Schopenhauer, Heidegger, Art, and the Will." In D. Jacquette (ed.) *Schopenhauer, Philosophy, and the Arts*, pp. 162–80. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.