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A Rose by Any Other Name¹

What's in a name? That which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet.

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It has sometimes been said that aesthetics is a secondary discipline, peripheral to philosophy or, like the arts, themselves, peripheral to the study of human society. I do not think that this is the case; moreover, I believe that such an appraisal distorts both sides of the comparison. The history of philosophical aesthetics shows a gradual and growing development from particular questions to concerns that have greater scope and that confer increasing identity on aesthetics as a distinctive field of inquiry. This development has gained increasing momentum, apart from some brief intervals when, with supreme arrogance, the intellectual respectability of aesthetics was questioned. We are now, in fact, witnessing a vast expansion of the scope of aesthetic inquiry. It is possible to consider aesthetic value, not only in nature and the arts but in technology, popular culture, environment, social relationships, and political theory. And we recognize that aesthetic values and ideas have implications for a whole range of human concerns, including those that lie at the center of human community.

Identifying these wide-ranging aesthetic interests can also promote their further expansion and application. Yet the field of aesthetics has long labored under handicaps, cognitive as well as professional, that have kept its focus limited and narrow. I believe that broadening the scope and application of aesthetics as both a recognized dimension of experience and as a field of study offers the possibility of transforming the human world, not by physical or material change but by altering the kind and quality of our experience and so the ways we live in our world. Examining the facets and dimensions of experiences we call aesthetic can be expansive and revelatory. It can also help us see how aesthetics relates to other areas of knowledge, such as social and cultural studies, and conversely, how different disciplines bear on our aesthetic understanding.

Let me consider here how aesthetic inquiry can take a clearer and more productive direction, beginning with the name of the discipline. I commented earlier on the historical origin of aesthetics and used this as a springboard to argue for its greater breadth. Yet aesthetics has often been used to restrict appreciative experience and, in fact, the term itself may be a liability. But what we label aesthetic is not significant: appreciative experience is. Aesthetic theory is easily caught up in secondary, unproductive, and even possibly false issues, such as the definition of art, the boundaries of art, and the proper designation of beauty. It is in avoiding this danger that this chapter receives its title. What is important, I want to argue, is not what we call beautiful or designate as art but where we find the kind of value experiences traditionally associated with appreciating beauty, natural and artistic, and how we can enhance and develop such experiences. However, this also requires recognizing the converse of these values in the loss, the negation, the desecration of this mode of experience.³

The scope of aesthetic experience

Aesthetics is unlike any other field in the central place it gives perceptual experience, experience that is never surpassed or transcended. Since this is where any inquiry must start, I consider aesthetics a foundational discipline, perhaps *the* foundational discipline, not logically or ontologically but temporally and heuristically. This is a powerful claim, but I assert it to recognize how important are those normative experiences we call aesthetic.

It is useful to recall that aesthetic experience has been a subject of discussion since Shaftesbury and Hutcheson inquired into the experience of beauty early in the eighteenth century and regarded aesthetic appreciation as largely disinterested. This view was institutionalized by Kant at the beginning of the nineteenth century and since then has become axiomatic. I have challenged its hegemony, arguing that, among other liabilities, disinterestedness confines appreciation to a state of mind, that is, to a psychological attitude, and unduly excludes the somatic and social dimensions of experience, thus directing aesthetic appreciation improperly.⁴

Aesthetic experience became increasingly important during the nineteenth century and even more in the mid-twentieth, the principal figure in this re-focusing of aesthetic inquiry being John Dewey.⁵ Somewhat in eclipse during the latter part of the last century, interest in aesthetic experience has returned in recent years, both in artistic practice and aesthetic theory, with renewed vitality and a broader scope. Following the groundwork laid by Dewey in centering discussion on the active human organism, recent interpretations of aesthetic

experience stress its sensory character and interpret sensory perception far more widely than before. In contrast to a tradition originating in Classical Greece that confines the perception of beauty to sight and hearing, it is now often acknowledged that all the senses, including proprioceptive and kinesthetic sensation, are involved to varying degrees, and that the senses do not demarcate discrete and separate perceptual channels but rather are experienced synaesthetically.

Yet another expansion of aesthetic experience in the late twentieth century has been to reject disinterestedness entirely, not because of its psychological cast but because it is unduly restrictive in excluding objects and activities that may be functional or have a practical purpose but that one can still appreciate aesthetically in ways similar to the traditional fine arts. Intrinsic perception must therefore be understood more broadly. It may occur alongside practical interests, as in architecture, automobile design, or an English cottage garden, or it may be inseparable from functional uses, as in the appreciation of a smoothly running machine or a well-designed article of furniture. Social, cultural, and technological influences are also important factors in aesthetic experience. Because the range of aesthetic value has become vastly greater, so also has its significance as a cultural phenomenon.⁶

Thus with the expansion of perceptual experience to include all the senses and to extend beyond a merely psychological attitude or mental state to the aware, sensing body, the meaning and characterization of aesthetic experience have undergone major changes. What remains of critical importance, however, is the strong emphasis on sensory perception and on the intrinsic character of such perception. The active participation of the appreciator, indeed the appreciator's contribution to the art work as well as to the experience, has become widely

recognized in the contemporary arts. Artistic practices, such as including the reader's response and the multiple forms of interactive art, call on the overt and active contribution of the appreciator for their completion. Indeed, we recognize that absorption in aesthetic appreciation may at times be so complete that the viewer, reader, or listener abandons entirely the consciousness of a separate self and enters totally into the aesthetic world. This is familiar to many people in the experience of being caught up in a novel or in the virtual world of cinema. When we are not misdirected by contrary expectations, we can cultivate the ability to become appreciatively engaged on many different artistic occasions. I call such appreciation "aesthetic engagement," and when it is achieved most intensely and completely, it fulfills the possibilities of aesthetic experience.

An enlarged domain of aesthetic value

At the same time as such experience achieves intensity and completeness, its scope becomes correspondingly greater. Appreciation then is not confined to the art museum or concert hall but extends in all directions. Not only can any object be appreciated aesthetically but so can every situation. Consequently, aesthetics has generated a proliferation of sub-disciplines such as environmental aesthetics, the aesthetics of everyday life, the aesthetics of popular culture, the aesthetics of sport, and the politics of aesthetics. The theoretical scope of aesthetics has also grown, developing new relations with other disciplines and new regions to explore. Comparative aesthetics is one such development, and it extends our understanding of the aesthetic by introducing other cultural and historical traditions to the classic Western one. Social aesthetics is another, looking into ways in which aesthetic experience and value enter human relationships and institutions.

There is yet another direction in which aesthetic experience has enlarged its scope. In giving primacy to intrinsic sensory perception and to meanings and ideas grasped through such experience, we must acknowledge that this condition is not always positive simply but may be normatively complex. The very inclusiveness of aesthetic experience demands that we take account of experiences that are similar in kind but different in value. Intrinsic sensory awareness perceived through cultural meanings and influences may intensify those objects and situations that range from the unfulfilled to the demeaning and destructive.

In short, we may speak of a negative range of aesthetic experience, of negative aesthetics. This can not only reflect lost or frustrated possibilities for enrichment, as in the design of a banal building or martial music that evokes loyalty to false or destructive myths of national or cultural superiority. Aesthetic experience can also produce outright pain, as we may experience on entering a favela or urban slum, of dismay in witnessing the clear-cutting of an old growth forest, or of revulsion when encountering kitsch in literature or art. These experiences can produce not only aesthetic pain but moral suffering, both of which are, at times, inseparable. Its capability of identifying negative aesthetic values gives the aesthetic the possibility of becoming an incisive force in social criticism, a largely untried region of aesthetic activity but a potentially powerful one. Thus aesthetic theory and experience are intimately bound up with the moral, negatively as well as positively.⁷ Recognizing the dark side of aesthetic experience is another reason for exceeding traditional constraints.

The aesthetic has not only a history but also a future. It is unwise to attempt to predict the aesthetic capacities of experiences as yet unknown. We can nonetheless see, at our present stage, some of the revealing possibilities offered by new directions of inquiry. Negative

aesthetics is a hidden region of perceptual experience that is closely bound up with ethical issues. We might indeed argue that ethical criticism often harbors an aesthetic dimension. Every decrease in human good may entail a beauty unrealized, and moral transgressions always bring with them a diminution of aesthetic capabilities. It is even possible to say that an aesthetic affront is embedded in every immoral act. This is clearly a complex interrelationship; it identifies a direction in which aesthetic inquiry can move into new ground and enlarge our moral as well as our aesthetic understanding. We shall develop this at some length in Chapters Nine and Ten.

Then there are perennial issues that can acquire new meaning. One of these concerns the interrelationships among the various arts, always an intriguing question and even more so now with new arts and new artistic technologies. Some relationships that were challenging not so long ago have become more or less settled as the presumed conflict has dissipated or at least become less interesting. Obvious examples are the relation of photography to painting, of film to the novel and to video art, and of assemblages and environments to sculpture. It is a task for aesthetic theory to help us understand how these historically related art forms can engage us in different ways and what is distinctive about our experiences with them.

We have already noted new perspectives in experience that can be identified in different historical periods, and how or whether such historically qualified experiences can be grasped clearly enough to establish an identity. Is there, for example, a Victorian sensibility that moves across pre-Raphaelite painting, didactic poetry, gothic novels, and the dark romanticism of nineteenth century symphonic music? What of the baroque in music and architecture or, more recently, dada and surrealist art, and pop art and mass culture? Thus our appreciation also

requires examination, and a rich and complex range of aesthetic experiences lies open to inquiry. Does appreciating seventeenth century Dutch landscape painting entail experientially entering the world of van Ruysdael and Hobbema, and, if it does, how authentic is that world to us and to the world of those painters?

A somewhat parallel issue concerns the comparative understanding of the characteristic aesthetic sensibilities found in different cultural traditions. Can we discern, for example, a tangential connection between the experience of the x-ray paintings in aboriginal art with, say, cubist art of the early twentieth century, or between medieval Indian erotic temple sculpture and the sensual sculptures of Rodin or Maillol?

Other related and underlying issues need to be exposed and clarified. Where is aesthetic value located and how is it identified in different cultures? Some obvious complications reside in the frequent fusion of aesthetic with religious and other cultural forms of experience and meaning. Can they be distinguished and, if they can, how much do they resemble one another? To consider a familiar, puzzling case, how can we best understand the interrelations of Christian history and beliefs with the aesthetic experience of the masses of Bach, Mozart, or Schubert? I suspect that a somewhat different understanding will emerge in each instance and, perhaps, in each individual work. What is the aesthetic dimension in the statuary of Hindu deities, of Western medieval and Renaissance religious art, of the carved wood crucifixions and altarpieces of Riemenschneider from the late Middle Ages, for example? Perhaps this cognitive complexity can be seen most directly and generally in the names different cultures use to identify what we may call beauty: the Hebrew *yapha*, the Greek *to kalon*, the Japanese *wabi-sabi*, the Indian *rasa*.⁸ While a beginning has been made in

comparative aesthetics, fascinating issues remain. Comparative aesthetics, historical aesthetics, the multi-dimensional richness of aesthetic experience in different arts -- these are some of the productive directions in which aesthetic inquiry can move.

Obstacles to expanding aesthetic theory

Such promising possibilities may augur an optimistic future for aesthetic theory. Unfortunately, however, aesthetics is burdened with many so-called "problems" that are either contrived or misdirected. Here grows the rose referred to in my title. Indeed, such problems often rest on theoretical assumptions originating in cultural belief systems, or on premises that derive from quite different philosophical sources. We may therefore want to regard some of these problems as false issues in aesthetics, all the more unfortunate in their tendency to deflect us from larger concerns and more productive directions. This is not a vague and general criticism; it rests on specific assumptions and practices.

One of these is the widespread practice of centering discussion on the object, the art object, alone. The question is often asked, "But is it art?", rather than inquiring into the experiential situation in which alone that question is meaningful. This object orientation leads to many minor issues that have produced major efforts at conceptual identification, such as locating aesthetic qualities, determining the meaning and boundaries of beauty or the definition of 'art.' It is the distortion that results from taking aesthetic inquiry to be about art objects that produced the controversy between formalism and representation in the visual arts, the conundrum over the difference between art and real things, and the persistent puzzle over the aesthetic significance of artistic representation, as well as uncharitable responses to new

materials, styles, and subject-matter. What we should ask instead is "Are we experiencing this situation aesthetically or how can we develop the capacity to so appreciate it?" One consequence of making aesthetic experience central is that it demands the recognition that art is not an object at all but a situation, an aesthetic field, and that every art object functions and can be understood only as part of a experiential situation involving appreciative, creative, and performative dimensions, as well as one that focuses on an object.⁹ It does not matter whether we call something art or not; what is important is how the object works in appreciative experience. It is such experience that lies at the heart of the aesthetic.

In considering obstacles to the expansion of aesthetics, it is useful to recall the distinction between the different modes of inquiry I called critical and substantive aesthetics.¹⁰ Clarifying key concepts, considering the boundaries of art, puzzling over whether and how we can characterize the objects that function in appreciative experience for their aesthetic properties, specifying the precise nature of the relation these objects have to aspects of the world independent of art -- all these are forms that critical aesthetics may take. So, too, is the concern with the logic of those concepts and the structure of aesthetic theory. Substantive aesthetics, on the other hand, is not directed so much toward objects and their corresponding ideas as toward understanding the content and conditions of appreciative experience. Like the integrative endeavors of philosophical and methodological synthesis discussed in Chapter One, substantive aesthetics attends to the conditions, content, and effects of such experience rather than with the second-order activity of defining and characterizing that experience.

In their extremes, these represent two different and incompatible intellectual cultures, but happily they are not often carried to exaggerated lengths. Most aestheticians employ

procedures and goals that are both critical and substantive. The differences among them result from the degree of importance or emphasis given one or the other. Still, even when not extreme, these differences may be significant, indeed fundamental.¹¹

Another obstruction to progress in aesthetic thought results from hierarchical thinking, which leads to invidious distinctions as, for example, between the “higher” arts and the popular arts.¹² Instead of making normative distinctions, we can gain greater understanding from investigating differences in appreciative experience that occur in the artistic modes, materials, and styles associated with such classifications. Here we should also include the folk arts, arts that have histories, styles, and experiences of significant value in their own right. Weaving, basket making, quilting, sculpture using recycled materials, and folk sculptures and environments constructed out of discarded objects can offer deep satisfactions to a perceiver and rich insights into the worlds of people who may be too modest or naïve to claim the title of artist.

Moreover, it would be misleading to consider the popular arts as a homogeneous group. Significant differences exist among them, and subtle yet important discriminations can be made of appreciative experience between arts in the same modality. Popular music encompasses an enormous range of sub-genres that differ significantly from one another. What makes swing, ballad, blues, jazz, rock, hip hop, and rap distinctive and different from one another? This, moreover, is not to deny the qualitative difference between Bartók and be-bop. It is rather to recognize that each kind (not level) of music is the occasion for distinctive appreciative experiences. Differences in quality, in refinement, complexity, and subtlety do not tendentiously demarcate degrees of aesthetic value but rather differences in normative experience.

Investigation into those differences is an important but largely unexamined field for aesthetic research.

Related to this traditional hierarchical assumption is the distinction between the fine arts and the practical arts or crafts. This, of course, has cultural and historical roots in the superiority that the Classical Greeks attributed to theoretical over practical knowledge. Its modern form appears in the assumption that objects of fine art must be regarded for their own qualities and not for any practical interest. I have noted how the doctrine of the disinterestedness of aesthetic appreciation has been an axiom of modern aesthetics. While it served to identify the distinctiveness of the aesthetic, at the same time it excluded from aesthetic significance and even legitimacy those arts that are inseparable from practical interests, such as the design arts, and it led to such anomalies as considering architecture a fine art and furniture design a practical one.¹³ Resting aesthetic value on appreciative experience undermines these false oppositions and makes possible the illuminating study of finely discriminated qualities of appreciation.

The future of aesthetics

Finally, a word about the implications of the aesthetic vision I have outlined here. Some of these are fairly obvious from what has already been said. Others may not be immediately apparent. Let me indicate several possible directions.

Once we extend the range of the place and the experience of art and the aesthetic, we can appreciate their critical position in human society. Every design decision affects people's experience, and the aesthetic is a critical part of that experience. Instead of being thought of as

a "frill," we begin to grasp the pervasiveness and importance of aesthetic factors. These, then, must be assigned greater importance, and decisions about the design of human environments and institutions and of the activities that are part of their functional processes come to take on a broader significance. Social decisions, such as those implemented through architecture and city planning in residential development and urban design all have aesthetic consequences. Once their importance is acknowledged, all social decisions would have to consider aesthetic effects in addition to economic constraints and technological requirements. Before any major construction project is begun, communities should require an "aesthetic impact study" as many now require an environmental impact study. Money can no longer rule as an autocratic god, for economic values are never the only values at stake. Such forethought is necessary not only for design decisions in the physical environment but for designing institutions, political processes, and other forms of social organization.

The aesthetic also has an important place in human relationships, both personal and social, and it affects people's daily activities. I call the aesthetic here "social aesthetics," an area that will be explored at greater length in Part Three. A social aesthetic is present not only in friendship, family, and love, but even in education and employment. Aesthetic decisions and experiences are also embedded in the design and use of factors and features in the everyday environment that have social ramifications. These extend from the choice of clothing, the use of appliances, the packaging of articles, the care and management of one's home, and the other objects and aspects that constitute daily life, to personnel policies and the structuring of employer-employee relations, i.e., the social organization of production and commerce. This is not to overlook the major importance of the ethical factor in these last cases for, indeed, ethical

values lie at the heart of social aesthetics. We should also not overlook the influence of aesthetic decisions on political life and on social institutions. Aesthetic distinctions are easily transmuted into class distinctions, and class distinctions are quickly institutionalized in political distinctions and discriminatory social practices. Influences *on* the quality of aesthetic experience and influences *of* such experience pervade the human environment.¹⁴

The assumption that there are universal aesthetic standards and the quest for them have colored the history of aesthetic thought, but such standards have never been established successfully.¹⁵ The individual human factor in aesthetic judgment is ineradicable, and with it come the other contextual factors that influence appreciative experience. Yet while specific aesthetic judgments may not be universal, the aesthetic in experience is valued everywhere, and more research needed in exploring this. Not only do all peoples seem to consider aesthetic satisfactions important; there is a similar breadth in the occurrence of the aesthetic in every corner of experience in different cultures. The boundaries that have circumscribed art and the aesthetic have been forever breached.¹⁶

One of the consequences of such a renewal of aesthetics as I have projected here cannot be categorized easily. This is a vastly enlarged vision of human understanding. Here artists can be our guides and philosophers our cartographers. Experiential understanding is a legitimate mode of knowing the human world. Our awareness deepens from the revelations novelists give us into human conditions, both historically and culturally different.¹⁷ Poets reveal the nuances of particular occurrences and sensibilities and playwrights the peculiarities of an unending range of social situations. As fine artists bring to light new sights and new ways of seeing, composers lead us into the experience of an inarticulable realm of being.¹⁸ So with

every art and every original artist.¹⁹ Not only are the range and subtlety of human experience vastly enlarged through our aesthetic understanding. Artists are also able to penetrate beneath the protective layers with which we shield ourselves. For aesthetic appreciation is not sensory delectation but an entrance into domains of understanding that lie outside the boundaries of empirically verifiable scientific knowledge, of linear rationality, as it were.

It is possible, however, to discover intimations of such "poetic understanding." Heidegger, for example, found the meaning of an artwork's "coming-to-presence" in poetry, for poetry uses language to reach toward what words cannot say directly and literally. Thinking, he wrote, "must think against itself," and poetry discloses being by offering a presence that touches us. Poetry thus becomes the language of being.²⁰

Merleau-Ponty approached aesthetic understanding by another route, through vision rather than language, painting rather than poetry. His problem was somewhat different: how to grasp "our mute contact with the things, when they are not yet things said." How can we make the "transition from the mute world to the speaking world." To do this we must confront "brute vision" and recognize the ineradicable influences both of our corporeal body and of the world of human encounters, culture, and history. What we are seeking, he stated, is being, neither in itself or for itself but at the intersection of both, before the chasm between them that reflection interposes.²¹ In pursuing this, Merleau-Ponty invoked original and powerful ideas. One of them is the concept of reversibility, the kind of interdependency that holds between touching and the touched, between the visible and the invisible. This leads him to speak of more than interdependency but of a joining together into what he calls "the flesh of the world," the "indivision of this sensible Being that I am and all the rest which feels itself in me, pleasure-

reality indivision..." 22 His fascinating investigation of this led him to the idea of a 'chiasm' or intertwining. This rich concept, whose full elaboration he left unfinished, points to yet another direction by which we attempt to grasp the non-reflective human world where words cannot take us. 23

These brief accounts cite only a few of the important efforts to achieve a kind of understanding that is, by its very nature, non-conceptual. Indeed, this sense of understanding is especially apposite to the experience of the arts, which is the paradigmatically non-conceptual.²⁴ Yet the inarticulability of the end point is hardly a new discovery. One cannot help but be reminded of Plato's recognition of it in the incommunicability of the vision of the forms.²⁵ A comparable case is Kant's projection of a noumenal realm of things-in-themselves that lies beyond the capabilities of human knowledge but at the same time functions as the ground of its possibility.

In these times when it is widely claimed that scientific knowledge is exclusive and exhaustive while, on the other side, gross irrationality runs madly amok on an international scale, it remains a challenge for philosophers to recognize this realm of the inarticulable and determine its significance. This is something to pursue, not in the manner of an investigation into an objective, universal structure and not by following the artist's intuitive path, but as a cognitive exploration of the pre-cognitive and the non-cognitive, an elusive region of experience, a domain that may be grasped even though not known.

Here aesthetics has much to offer, for the ultimate inarticulability of the aesthetic provides a model as well as an occasion for acknowledging and clarifying the character and

range of a region of human awareness insufficiently acknowledged. To recognize it as terrain that is contiguous and perhaps co-extensive with aesthetic experience is to concede that aesthetic inquiry possesses wide philosophical importance. But while the ultimate inarticulability of experience is a challenge, its place in inquiry, like the arts themselves, is substantive rather than critical. It is substantive in offering a beginning, if not a grounding, as we grope toward an understanding that is authentic in its directness and not constrained by external specifications. Aesthetics, both as experience and as theory, has a central place in this process, but to succeed in making its distinctive contribution to the process, aesthetics must enlarge its scope and become ready to move in new directions.

Conclusion

In sum, it is clear that a revival of aesthetics has begun. The place of the arts and aesthetic experience in human society has expanded and become increasingly prominent. Aesthetic values are discovered, from their presence in the objects and situations of daily life to the various forms of social relationships. This enlargement offers a basis for social and environmental criticism, thus giving aesthetic judgment an important social role. Aesthetic experience also has had to grapple with the challenges presented by new arts and artistic technologies. All these have enlarged the range of experience, which then must be understood in ways that can account for these changes. Part of this expanded experience is a growing appreciation of the value of differences among cultures, something an aesthetic sensibility is particularly capable of recognizing and valuing. We can think of this variety in aesthetic perception as part of the culture pool of humankind, as a resource comparable to the human

gene pool, a rich fund from which ever-new possibilities of perceptual experience can be brought to experience. And as the value we find in cultural perception increases, our appreciation of the importance of these differences grows accordingly. And finally, the greater breadth of human cognitive and perceptual awareness in knowing leads to a recognition of its limits and a more balanced vision of its range.

There is clearly much room for expanding aesthetic inquiry and it faces many possibilities. New and different theoretical questions emerge, from re-examining aesthetic appreciation to disclosing the shape of aesthetic understanding. Moreover, aesthetic theory has a whole other side, and applied aesthetics is becoming increasingly important both theoretically and practically. Indeed, both of these must go hand in hand, for they are different faces of the same coin. In the process of its expansion, some traditional issues may be abandoned and, with them, the comfort of familiar ground. But this is all to the good, for it reaffirms the freshness of this inquiry and the continuing importance of aesthetic value in the global cultures of a post-industrial world. While we may have to relinquish the rose, we can detect whiffs of its fragrance everywhere. So let us proceed.

ENDNOTES

¹ This article will appear in my book, *Sensibility and Sense: The Aesthetic Transformation of the Human World* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, forthcoming 2010).

² "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as

sweet." William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene II.

³ The negative and critical capabilities of experiencing aesthetic value are the subject of Ch. 9.

⁴ Cf. Jerome Stolnitz, "On the Origins of 'Aesthetic Disinterestedness,'" *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 20 (1961): 131-44; Ronald Hepburn and Arnold Berleant, "An Exchange on Disinterestedness," *Contemporary Aesthetics*, 1 (2003) (www.contempaesthetics.org); Arnold Berleant, *Re-thinking Aesthetics, Rogue Essays on Aesthetics and the Arts* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2004), Chs. 2 and 3.

⁵ John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Minton, Balch, & Co., 1934).

⁶ There is a large and growing literature here, some of it coming from sources in the phenomenological movement and some from the pragmatic. Among the more notable contributors to the enlargement of our understanding of aesthetic experience are Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Mikel Dufrenne, and Wolfgang Iser.

⁷ The meaning and forms of negative aesthetic value Chapter 8.

⁸ Cf. Crispin Sartwell, *Six Names of Beauty* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004).

⁹ I term this "the aesthetic field" and it has been the guiding idea throughout my work in aesthetics. It was first developed in my book, *The Aesthetic Field, A Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience* (Springfield: C.C. Thomas, 1970) and has been extended and refined in subsequent publications.

¹⁰ See the contrast between critical and substantive aesthetics developed in Chapter

One.

¹¹ A fuller discussion of this distinction occurs in A. Berleant, *The Aesthetics of Environment* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), pp. 25-26.

¹² Cultivating the "higher arts" is seen as an important source of creative inquiry in European culture. See the program of The European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) and the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)

¹³ I have developed an extensive critique of aesthetic disinterestedness in several places. See *Art and Engagement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991) and especially *Re-thinking Aesthetics*, cited above.

¹⁴ The key study here is Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990). See also Arnold Berleant and Allen Carlson, eds., *The Aesthetics of Human Environments* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2007).

¹⁵ The question of whether it is possible to establish such standards has been a preoccupation of philosophers from Hume and Kant to the present day.

¹⁶ For a revealing account of this, see David Novitz, *The Boundaries of Art* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992).

¹⁷ In her analysis of literary works, Nussbaum probes into the kind of understanding that literature offers. See Martha Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

¹⁸ Vladimir Jankélévitch draws a penetrating distinction between the ineffable and the untellable, and assigns the former to music. The ineffable cannot be explained but "acts like a form of enchantment," dealing with mystery and provoking bewilderment. *Music and the Ineffable* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, (1961) 2003), p. 72. Also see Ben-Ami Scharfstein, *Ineffability: The Failure of Words in Philosophy and Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993).

¹⁹ Cf. Derek Whitehead, "Artist's Labor," *Contemporary Aesthetics* (www.contempaesthetics.org), Vol. 5 (2007).

²⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1975), pp. 8, 93. Cf. also pp. 137, 216.

²¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), pp. 36, 38, 63-64, 95, 154.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 254-257.

²³ See Ben-Ami Scharfstein, *Ineffability, The Failure of Words in Philosophy and Religion*.

²⁴ This is a debatable claim, of course, but the theory of aesthetic experience that underlies this book makes the case that such experience, as direct and unmediated, precedes cognition. This bears a close relation to what Jacques Rancière called "the aesthetic regime of the arts" that he characterized as "the regime of the sensible," finding it anticipated by Vico, Kant, Schiller, Schelling, Proust, and Surrealism. See

Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2000) (London & New York: Continuum),
pp. 22 ff.

²⁵ *Republic*, VII, 540A.