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Beauty, Style: Complicating Ethics and Aesthetics With Corporeality

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by

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Abstract of the Thesis

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Merleau-Ponty is interested in the artist at work, too busy in his lively and creative experiencing and communicating with the world to notice the birth of his style. In this way, style designates the tacit and invisible gift. With the help of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty indirectly speaks of the essence of truth and the ever-concealed actual world revealing *the gift of beauty, always wrapped in style*. Both of these philosophers work within a Hegelian legacy of dialectical art, yet they stretch *beauty's expression* to its tacit phenomenological limits. It is a *body ever expressing and moving with beautiful 'style'* that morality and ethics encounter their impotence and dismissal of corporeality. I move towards Nietzsche as a place for encountering corporeality, wherein Agnus Heller accompanies this paper to navigate Nietzsche's turbulent philosophy. In more subtle ways, Edward S. Casey, Eduardo Mendieta and Marcia Morgan offer more tangible glimpses of corporeality within this thesis. With these diverse thinkers, I complicate Hegel's ideal beauty with Merleau-Ponty's reappropriated *style*, which traverses diverse thinkers and artists in an endless tracing of a beauty somewhere in the mix.

Frontispiece



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Chapter 1

Beauty's Expression: The Dying Virgin and the Tacit Gift

Merleau-Ponty's (1993) expression "Hegel is the museum" (p. 119), runs chills through the corpus of Hegel's works and especially the *Aesthetic Lectures on Fine Art*, the latter considered by Heidegger (1971) "the most comprehensive reflection on the nature [essence, Wesen] of art that the West possesses" (p. 79). For Hegel everything fully returns to the Concept. In the particular dialectic in his *Aesthetic*, at the center of making a museum out of world-history, "beauty is...[the sensuous] specific way of expressing and representing the true...*the Concept*" (Hegel 1975, p. 91-92). Placing Merleau-Ponty in conversation with Hegel unsettles the Concept's spell over beauty. Merleau-Ponty's critical reappropriation of *style* complicates a direct and unmediated presence of the 'Concept', thus opening up space for beauty's expression. Moreover, Merleau-Ponty's shift to art's tacit and implicit language stretches the phenomenological tracing of *beauty's expression* to its limit. My Hegelian inspired coupling of 'beauty' with 'expression' is highly suspicious, yet it opens up a possibility to get beyond art and beauty's familiar objective v. subjective dichotomy. Merleau-Ponty's conversation with Hegel, Saussure, and Malraux in *Indirect Language and The Voices of Silence* opens up an all too direct, structural, and closed account of art to the actual world of the artist at work. Merleau-Ponty's account of art's *in-itself-for-us* disconcerts Hegel's closed dialectic and rejects *aufhebung's* (sublation) art-killing for the museum. Merleau-Ponty accounts for the audience contributing to and having a claim on an artwork alongside the artist. Yet, he does not stop with everyday language, which is still too direct and echoes the museum. Merleau-Ponty takes phenomenology and expression to its tacit and implicit

limits, to the silent language of the artist at work. Beauty emerges in transcendent immanence wrapped in the artists' invisible and unintended style.

As a Platonic Form, *beauty* acquires a status enjoyed by justice and truth in Western philosophy. Indeed the Greek word for 'form' (εἶδος and ἰδέα) comes from the root 'see', related to 'shape' (*morphē*), is synonymous with 'appearances' (phainomena, φαινόμενα) and 'shine' (*phainō*, φαίνω). From this perspective of a *shining* 'form' that *appears* to sight concerns beauty more directly than justice and truth. In any case, Nietzsche's (2002) criticism of "all philosophers [with]...grotesque seriousness of their approach towards the truth and the clumsy advances they have made so far are unsuitable ways of pressing their suit with a woman" (p. 3), holds true for beauty. Aristotle defined beauty under orderly criteria of symmetry and proportionality, while Plotinus deemed beauty as chiefly concerned with sight. However, these orderly and ocular-centric definitions reduce beauty's *formal* association with truth, the Good, justice, and other categories essential to our being, perspectives, and relations in the world. Furthermore, such orderly and ocular-centric (clear and well-proportioned) definitions can work to misuse beauty in ideological projects of political and ethical devastations.

Moving away from objectifying beauty, Kant proposes an inter-subjective appreciation. He considered the mental and felt aspects of beauty and more profoundly placed beauty in relation with the sublime. The latter move by Kant is of outmost interest to my project, however it falls beyond this paper. Instead, I mention Kant in contrast and preparation to Hegel, who criticizes Kant for diminishing beauty into mental categories of subjectivity, matters of taste, and judgments of a connoisseur. Instead, Hegel moves to restore beauty's independence, enjoyed differently from a Platonic Form, by setting up

his approach against pure objectivism or subjectivism. Beauty finds *expression* in Hegel (1975), “beauty is...[the sensuous] specific way of expressing and representing the true” (p. 91). Unfortunately, beauty’s expression is suffocated under the Concept expressing itself to itself in sensuous concreteness. However, Hegel’s closed and self-expressing system also gives rise to my search for beauty’s expression, by revealing how it has been suppressed.

Hegel attempts to reconcile the extremes of universal vs. particular as well as objective vs. subjective modes of treating beauty. Hegel finds beauty’s expression in the work of art, not by reducing it to the details of the artwork (object) nor by engaging in abstract (subjective) concepts. Instead, the *meaning* of beauty arises from all these elements dialectically working to reveal the Concept:

An appearance that means something does not present *itself* to our minds, or what is *as* external...[A]ny word hints at a meaning and counts for nothing in itself. Similarly the spirit and the soul shine through the human eye, through a man’s face, flesh, skin, through his whole figure, and here the meaning is always something wider than what shows itself in the immediate appearance. It is in this way that the work of art is to be significant and not appear exhausted by these lines, curves, surfaces, carvings, hollowings in the stone, these colours, notes, world-sounds, or whatever other material is used; on the contrary, it should disclose an inner life, feeling, soul, a content and spirit, which is just what we call the significance of a work of art. (Hegel 1975, p. 19-20)

This rich passage reveals multiple junctures in Hegel’s project of attempting to get beauty beyond mere extremes. The boundaries between language and art disappear as the meaning of beauty expresses something that goes beyond the particular words, lines, notes, curves, sounds, and material used. Though, meaning arises not as a formless abstraction, but by the very material it shines thorough. Beauty is both the object of its particular material as well as its metaphysical and universal form shining through and

beyond. However, Hegel's merger of extremes recedes into an estranged form of beauty. In this passage, Hegel's initial concern for grasping the essence of beauty and giving voice to beauty's expression is turned on its head in favor of the Concept's expression. It is not the world's beauty that shines through our eyes into our souls, on the contrary our soul shines through onto the world. Similarly, it is not the work of art that expresses beauty, but the content and spirit that shine through the artwork with significance. The latter point remains subtle in this juncture, yet Hegel fully establishes this relation by subverting beauty to the Concept expressing itself to itself. Beauty becomes a settled definition as the freedom of the Concept expressing itself to itself in sensuous certainty. Thereby mollifying beauty's expression under the Concept's self-expression.

Another lasting impact of Hegel is the *subordinating entanglement* of beauty under art. Hegel does not deny beauty in nature, however, nature's beauty occupies the lowest and most barren position within the *hierarchy of the Concept's freedom*. Art is of a higher, purer, and more concrete level of the Concept's freedom expressing itself in its sensuous manifestation. Even within the history of art, Persian, Indian, Chinese, and Egyptian cultures are only able to symbolically express the Concept's sensuous freedom. The Greeks produce the purest expression of art and Romanticism expresses the Concept in the highest sensuous concreteness, while non-European cultures merely gesture towards "true art". Thus, Hegel's initial concern for beauty turns into a hierarchical philosophy of art, of things long-past for the Concept to find rational and settled places in an encyclopedia. Hegel's concern turns into how the Concept becomes more 'developed' through an orderly and dead museum of world-art and the quest for beauty turns into a hierarchy of dismissing nature's beauty as untrue and non-Western art as pre-art.

On the other hand, Hegel subordinates beauty to art as a way to get beyond the extremes of objectivity and subjectivity. In this way, artworks express essential dimensions of beauty. It would be futile for me to pursue beauty as detached from art, which would be a return to the Platonic Form. Instead I search for clues to unsettle beauty's subordinate entanglement under art. For Hegel (1975), art arises out of the "fact that man is a *thinking* consciousness...[through art] Man as spirit *duplicates* himself, in that (i) he *is* as things in nature are, but (ii) he is just as much *for* himself" (p. 35). Beauty's expression in artworks thus moves us beyond merely taking beauty as a separate object or a subjective imposition. Art is both an object *in-itself* and an expression of man *for-himself*: art is *in-itself-for-himself*. Hegel (1975) claims that through the practical and sensuous activity of art, man actively places himself before himself, sees himself, represents himself to himself, and only by this ability "is he spirit" (p. 35).

From the beginning of this paper, I interpreted Hegel with Merleau-Ponty lurking in between the lines. However, the formulation of art as *in-itself-for-himself* bares such a visible trace of Merleau-Ponty's *in-itself-for-us* that it forces out a more explicit conversation between these two philosophers. Merleau-Ponty helps to unsettle beauty's subordinated entanglement under art in two ways: (I) by revealing Hegel as the museum, (II) by taking (beauty's) expression in art to its (tacit) limit. Admittedly, beauty remains eerily unmentioned in Merleau-Ponty, perhaps a testament to the success of Hegel's subordinating entanglement. However, Merleau-Ponty unsettles Hegel's closed system by opening his Concept's internal monologue to the contingent, restless, chatty, and tacit world, where beauty radiates and moves with liveliness and force.

I. The Dying Virgin

In *Direct and Indirect Language*, Merleau-Ponty draws on Hegel to thicken Saussure's semiology. For Saussure's (1983) semiology, "everything depends on relations" (p.121), signs only make sense in relation (difference and opposition) to the entire sign system. Meaning for Saussure arises not by referring or designating an actual thing, but through purely structural and relational signification. Merleau-Ponty (1993) respects (but ultimately moves away from) Saussure's project by taking it to its limit: in Saussure's horizontal and diacritical system, "meaning arises at the edge of signs" (p. 78). Hegel (1975) moves beyond the particular signs, lines, and words to "disclose an inner life, feeling, soul, a content and spirit, which is just what we call the significance of a work of art" (p. 20). Hegel seemingly thickens semiology by referring to something beyond horizontal relations of differences. Yet, Hegel's Concept intensifies and diversifies throughout his system under a process of negation. In this way both Hegel's and Saussure's systems has the immanence of the whole in the parts (moments). On the other hand, Hegel's Concept is revealed *in-itself-for-himself*: independent, beyond, and *transcending* the particular parts, moments, and differences. In this way, Merleau-Ponty's association between Saussure and Hegel also reveals the former's transcendentalism, or as Derrida (1982) puts it: in the opposition signifier/signified, Saussure leaves open "the possibility of thinking a concept signified in and of itself...a 'transcendental signified' " (p. 19). Thus, Merleau-Ponty's criticism of Hegel applies just as well to Saussure.

Merleau-Ponty's *in-itself-for-us* opens the Hegelian Concept's *in-itself-for-himself* to the world and us within it. Each of us is unique and experiences artworks through different perceptions and perspectives. Merleau-Ponty's *in-itself-for-us* transforms

Hegel's dialectic in at least two ways. First, it opposes the Concept 'shining through the world' or 'the soul shining through the human eye', by reversing the relation: "We must understand the eye as the 'window of the soul'. 'The eye...through which the beauty of the universe is revealed to our contemplation'" (Merleau-Ponty 2007, p. 374) (a rare place where Merleau-Ponty actually refers to *beauty*). Also, opposite to Hegel's Concept diversifying and intensifying from its higher, absolute, and complete status, Merleau-Ponty's (1993) movement is reversed: "the Christian God wants nothing to do with a vertical relation of subordination...we do not find Him as a suprasensible idea, but as another ourselves, who dwells in and authenticates our darkness. Transcendence no longer hangs over humanity: we become, strangely, its privileged bearer" (p. 108). In this way, Merleau-Ponty (1993) "teaches us about that immanent transcending of one's situation" (p. 108): from the point of view of the artist, the painter, the writer, where any transcending art-history from comparing motifs and styles emerges out of the artists' immanent response to the given world of his body, life, individual, and particular place. This *in-itself-for-us* moves "to live in painting...to breathe the air of this world – above all for man who sees in the world something to paint. And there is a little of him in every human being" (p. 108).

Second, *in-itself-for-us* denies the Hegelian dialectic the fulfillment and completion of sublation (*aufhebung*). By sublating art as *in-itself-for-himself*, the Concept expresses itself absolutely and completely by presenting himself to himself in the sensuous certainty of art. Merleau-Ponty's (1993) *in-itself-for-us* prevents such a fulfillment for "The accomplished work is thus not the work which exists in itself like a thing...[but] it is in an other that expression takes on its relief and really becomes

signification. For the writer or painter, there is only the allusion of self to self” (p. 88-89). Art is as much for the painter as it is for us, the audience. The artwork is never complete, each of us contributes to the artwork from our own perspectives and unique perceptions. Each of our perspectives opens “a world to express and think about that envelops and exceeds those perspectives, a world that announces itself in lightning signs as a spoken word or an arabesque” (Merleau-Ponty 1993, p. 89). The museum offers a false completeness by detaching art from its work. Hegel classifies and positions each artwork and civilization in the graveyard of the museum, where the Concept most freely expresses itself in sensuous certainty. Yet, Merleau-Ponty (1993) is interested in the artist at work, the making and creating of art, “in the sense that they are all finite and like so many futile gestures” (p. 100) always incomplete, contingent, and chance occurrences.

The public speech and expression surrounding art opens *in-itself-for-himself* to us, yet this public chatter still echoes within the museum. It concerns finished artworks brought to the public, settled in a place, detached from its place of creation, and situated alongside other artworks in an orderly way. This expression and direct language cannot get us beyond the confinements of the museum. Although, this is a welcome step that appreciates how art opens to the world.

To transgress the museum from within, we need art that reveals the museum for what it is: beauty’s dying expression showcased in a graveyard of artworks. Merleau-Ponty turns to Cézanne’s and Paul Klee’s paintings for such inspiring force, an appreciation that deeply resonates with me. In particular, Paul Klee’s *Virgin in the Tree* speaks to beauty’s suffocating and dying expression in the museum.

Only the museum pursues complete collections, with an imaginary beginning and

a totalizing end. Heidegger (1971) shares Hegel's concern for an *end of art* as "a modern predicament" (p. 80), yet Heidegger hopes that distinctive truth manifested in art could once again attain the kind of history-transforming importance that Hegel and Heidegger agree it had for the ancient Greeks. Heidegger does not seek Hegel's highest expression of the Concept or some perfect correspondence between the Concept and its sensuous manifestation in art. Instead, for Heidegger (1971) art's highest "Truth is the unconcealedness of that which is as something is. Truth is the truth of Being. Beauty does not occur alongside and apart from this truth. When truth sets itself into the work, it appears. Appearance – as this being of truth in the work and as work – is beauty" (p. 81).

Heidegger's account opens up a place between appearing truth and the artwork, for beauty to shine with the encountering of a great work of art that forcefully teaches us how to transcend modernity and modern aesthetics from *within* and to open another historical beginning. An opening of a genuine aporia, a *Holzweg* (a path through the woods reaching a dead-end), seen differently as a "*Lichtung* (clearing) in the woods" (Heidegger 1972, p. 65), thus turning a dead-end into a moment of ontological epiphany. The clearing creates an occasion to encounter *nothing* (no trees), but makes us notice the lightness against the heaviness of the forest and reveals the shining rays of light, directing our attention from entities to being. Through Paul Klee's *Virgin in the Tree* I reveal Hegel's museum for graveyard that it is, thus, hoping to transcend Hegel's closed system and dead end from within.

Hegel's (1975) Spirit expresses itself most freely and fully in the Romantic paintings of the Virgin Mary by Raphael, van Eyck, Titan, and the Dutch masters (p. 599-600). While Greek statues embody the character of their gods with their dynamic

stillness, which Hegel (1975) regards as beauty's *purest* expression of the Concept, Romantic paintings of the Virgin are imbued with an "eternal love" and "soulfulness" that the cold Greek statues do not exhibit (p. 142-184). The Concept expresses itself in its fullest sensuous freedom within Romantic painting, which according to Hegel, it is suited to showing human beings in their *relations* to each other and their environment, prominently the love between the Virgin Mary and the Christ child. Yet, the Virgin has long been dead and her child sacrificed. Hegel's (1975) Concept places the Virgin in the slumber of the museum and "attempts to grasp the beautiful in thought, and by dissecting and assessing these attempts" (p. 142) make the Concept freely express itself in sensuous certainty.



Figure 1: Paul Klee's *Virgin in a Tree* (Bern, 1903)

By uncovering and revealing the Virgin herself, Klee's *Virgin in the Tree* disrupts the Concept's free dissecting and assessing of sleeping beauty. Instead of an always already dead Virgin and sacrificed child, Klee's Virgin is not *dead*, but *dying*, has no child and can never bear one. No loving doves or fruits on the tree, the two beast-birds lurk behind her awaiting the inevitable. The birds may have been doves, but they shall fly as the Owl of Minerva to dissect the dead Virgin. Klee paints symbols and language in the Virgin's arms stretched into a swastika, the thin branches weaving a Star of David, and the disfigured Virgin with legs sharply crossed into an alpha triangle posing for impregnation. Each symbol and figure as dry and barren as the other, indeed the painting expressing not the Concept in its highest freedom of sensuousness, but as barren and dry as the Virgin and dead tree. Forcing the Concept to express itself in its dryness and barrenness, Klee *unconceals (a-lêtheia)* the truth of beauty's expression in the *work* of art and museum, not by opening beauty's expression to teem with life in the world, but as an artful expression not yet dead. Beauty expresses its final breath and sigh, its final shine, before the museum suffocates her into the eternal Virgin, and the Concept dissects her in thought.

As Heidegger experienced, "Klee's works 'are not paintings, but feelings Klee was capable of making moods 'visible' in pictures...The less we think of Klee's paintings as presenting objects, the more they 'appear' (in the sense of the Greek *phainestai*)" (Johnson 2010, p. 126). Klee makes the pathway created in modern (Western) aesthetics *appear* in another light: art expressing the Concept, not in its free movement in sensuous certainty but in its barrenness, opens our attention to beauty's dying expression in art as the truth of modern aesthetics. Klee makes us see the path

(*Holzweg*) traversed in Hegel's *dead-end of art* from a different light, as a clearing and opening (*Lichtung*) to notice beauty, albeit beauty's dying expression. In this way, we transcend modern aesthetics from within: the always already 'dead' Virgin of Hegel's museum is transcended from within through Klee's 'dying' *Virgin in the Tree*. Through Klee's painting, Hegel's *dead-end of art* opens an occasion for an *ontological epiphany*: beauty's dying expression finally suffocates under the Concept's complete sensuous certainty, as moving towards the finished *artwork* only gets us to Hegel's museum and *dead-end of art*. We already traversed this path. Instead of going ahead with Hegel's move towards a fully dead expression of beauty, Klee helps us search for beauty's expression in the actual world's radiating beauty – in tacit and lively activity, experiencing, expressing, and thinking.

II. The Silent and Invisible Gift of Beauty

Opening the artwork and the museum to public chatter speaks all too directly of *in-itself-for-us*. However, this is only one side of opening art to an actual world. Art is also *in-itself-for-each-of-us*: the silent pause and space for activity (thinking, painting, writing, singing, dancing...). Art's tacit language does not reject the direct public language of the museum or a structural account of art, rather it precedes and allows for these other expressions. Indeed, to reveal art's tacit language, Merleau-Ponty subtly unravels Malraux's structural account.

Initially, Merleau-Ponty (1993) agrees with Malraux in "the fact that the painting observes the system of equivalences...a structure, a style, and a meaning" (p. 98), which an artwork's elements and deviations point, mark, and speak to the language of a

particular artist, in this case Vermeer. This is a highly instructive point, which speaks to the particularities and limits of beauty's figural expression within the artwork. However, Malraux's account of style remains concerned with the finished artwork, within the chambers of the museum: "For him [Malraux], reconciliation takes place only in death, and it is always in retrospect" (Merleau-Ponty 1993, p. 97). Malraux's structural and retrospective account forms a unity among paintings by each new painting affirming the entire history of painting. This adds a systematic and structural layer to the speech around the museum. However Malraux's retrospection and reconciliation of paintings-*in-death*, gives only a direct, clear, and all too intentional account of style.

Instead, Merleau-Ponty is interested in the painter, the artist, and the writer at work. Style is not only a recognizable structure and a system of equivalences. For Merleau-Ponty (1993), "style is not a manner, a certain number of procedures or tics that he can inventory, but a mode of formulation that is just as recognizable for others and just as little visible to him [the painter] as his silhouette or his everyday gestures" (p. 90). The *painter* "revives, recaptures, and renews the entire undertaking of painting in each new work" (Merleau-Ponty 1993, p. 97), yet he does so unaware of such troubles. The artist at work "is far too busy expressing his communication with the world to become proud [yet alone cognizant] of a style which is born almost as if he were unaware of it" (Merleau-Ponty 1993, p. 91). This style transgresses beauty's subordinated entanglement by taking beauty's expression in art to its unnoticed, unexpressed, and tacit limit. Here expression is silent to reveal the artists' style in creating, acting, thinking, and painting.

Merleau-Ponty takes us beneath direct language, even below a system of equivalences' subtle language, where beauty's expression emerges as tacit, unnoticed,

and unintended style. A place of acting, painting, and thinking. Neither concerned about the audience nor directly speaking to the history of dead paintings, but busy expressing and communicating with the world. Style emerges unaccounted for and unintended, invisible to the artist at work. In this way style designates the ever-tacit gift. According to Derrida (1989), even a simple utterance of ‘thank you’ annuls this gift, by proposing equivalence with this gift and too directly speaks to its presence (p. 149). Heidegger (1968) writes:

Beauty is a fateful gift of the essence of truth, and here truth means the disclosure of what keeps itself concealed. The beautiful is not what pleases, but what falls within that fateful gift of truth which comes to be when that which is eternally non-apparent and therefore invisible attains its most radiantly apparent appearance. (p. 19)

The gift of beauty is always wrapped in style. Beauty is never presented directly and unmediated. Merleau-Ponty complicates and qualifies Heidegger by insisting on our corporeality and perception. Style is born as an unintended and invisible gift of beauty to the artist at work to reveal the essence of truth and express his communication with the world. Even nature’s *gift of beauty is always wrapped in style*. Each of us lives, sees, and expresses in our own style. The artist learns to become comfortable in his style, and in an unintended and felt way, master his style. The artist learns to sharpen his eyes and gaze at the world in a revealing fashion, which does not mean that the eye ever sees itself or that the artist has become aware of his eyes in order to gaze sharply. Each of us lives in our own style, albeit less comfortably and masterfully than artists. The invisible essence of truth and the non-apparent actual world radiantly appear as the gift of beauty, for each one of us always wrapped in our own style.

“The beautiful is not what pleases” (Heidegger 1968, p. 19), at least not beauty settled in judgment and dead beauty in history and the museum. Live beauty, beauty capturing us in the actual world, as an event, *this beauty disconcerts*. Each of us is moved and received by the gift of beauty in his own style: the painful agony from the sight of the beloved, the surprise of a scent, or the lightning grab of a verse. Each of our styles moves us in our own way, each time uniquely and differently. Simply *expressing thanks* or affirming beauty’s pleasure with tasteful judgments, or even calmly tracing systems of equivalences won’t do. The supreme thanks for this endowment, the tacit gift of beauty wrapped in style, “Real thanks, then, never consists in that we ourselves come bearing gifts, and merely repay gift with gift. Pure thanks is rather that we simply think – think what is really and solely given, what is there to be thought” (Heidegger 1968, p. 143). Thinking, acting, moving, crying, laughing, dreaming and (if we can and are so moved) paint, write, and sing. The supreme thanks to the gift of beauty, to art’s implicit and tacit language, is working and acting out of how beauty’s gift moved each of us in our own style. This is another reversal of Hegel’s (1975) aesthetics: “The universal and absolute need from which art (on its formal side) springs has its origin in the fact that man is a *thinking consciousness*” (p. 30-31). Yet, to Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, thinking and creating ensues precisely from the unconscious, unacknowledged, tacit, and invisible emergence of *the gift of beauty, wrapped in style*.

Final Remarks

Merleau-Ponty does not directly get to *the gift of beauty*. However, he takes us there indirectly with style. Admittedly, Merleau-Ponty (1993) also takes *Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence* in another direction— giving primacy to language and speech: “the arts of language go much farther toward true creation...[while] The Spirit of Painting appears only in the museum, because it is a Spirit external to itself...[instead] the spirit of language wants to depend upon nothing but itself” (p. 116-117). Merleau-Ponty’s prioritizing of speech and language in part stems from the limits of the phenomenological approach, although his initial grounding in Saussure’s semiology may equally be at fault. However, Merleau-Ponty’s appreciation (or prioritizing) of speech does not eliminate an avenue towards art’s tacit language. Merleau-Ponty (1993) explores both “the ductility of speech...and the voices of painting [which] are the voices of silence” (p. 117). On the one hand, Merleau-Ponty criticizes language for reducing “the other expressive operations to the rank of ‘mute’ and subordinate ones” (p. 119), on the other, he reveals art’s tacit and silent language by drawing attention to the emergence of the working artist’s unintended and invisible style.

Thereby, Merleau-Ponty moves away from the direct dangers of phenomenology by critically distancing himself from structural and all too direct expressions of art and beauty. Merleau-Ponty stretches phenomenology to its limit. Indeed, the highly suspect Hegelian origin of *beauty’s expression* demands critical attention. Derrida (1982) attempted to indicate “the consequences that link all of phenomenology to this privilege of *expression*, to the exclusion of ‘indication’...and to the privilege necessarily accorded to the voice, etc.” (p. 32). Phenomenology’s privileging of *expression* and ‘the voice’

inevitably encounters its ethnocentric and logocentric limits. One such ethnocentric symptom of Hegel's phenomenological pursuit of *beauty's expression* is revealed in the formal qualities he has for beauty. For Hegel (1975), the Greek profile is beautiful in contrast to the Roman profile's sharper angles between the forehead and nose: "The [Greek] profile depends on a specific connection between forehead and nose...almost straight or only gently curved line on which the forehead is continued to the nose without interruption...[as] In ideal and beautiful sculpture" (p. 728).

Merleau-Ponty moves away from such formal qualities of beauty or even systems of equivalences. He takes his consideration of art initially to the direct language surrounding artworks (the speech of audiences), but as Derrida (1977) cautions: " 'everyday language' is not innocent or neutral" (p. 19). Everyday language still entails the logocentric and ethnocentric consequences of expression. Yet, Merleau-Ponty (1993) understands the chatter and direct language echoed in the museum as "an acquired voice" (p. 89). He takes phenomenology and its primacy of expression to their limit by revealing the tacit and invisible language of art as style. While Malraux's structural account of style and its system of equivalence are highly instructive, it is ultimately concerned with dead paintings within the museum. Merleau-Ponty is interested in the artist at work, too busy in his lively and creative experiencing and communicating with the world to notice the birth of his style. In this way, style designates the tacit and invisible gift. With the help of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty indirectly speaks of the essence of truth and the ever-concealed actual world revealing *the gift of beauty, always wrapped in style*.

Chapter 2

Style's Eternal Tracing of Beauty

Merleau-Ponty stretches the phenomenology of beauty to its limits by uncovering the dead-end of Hegel's Concept as the museum, a graveyard for suffocating *beauty's expression*. Paul Klee's *Virgin in the Tree* forces us to recognize the museum as a place of systematic death, a place where beauty is recognized as unrecognizable. Merleau-Ponty and Klee bring forth a moment of epiphany and reorientation: the museum is an end of beauty's trace and the beginning of a new journey. Merleau-Ponty undertakes this journey by exploring at least three avenues: tracing beauty back in time to the artist at work, gesturing towards a painting's primordial and immemorial beauty, and moving ahead with tacit language's plasticity for clues of beauty. Exploring these multiple avenues is not Concept-oriented nor abstractly contained under an autonomous rationality. Instead, Merleau-Ponty reappropriates *style* in a corporeal fashion to trace beauty. Nietzsche, Lyotard, Nancy, Levinas, and Derrida, among others, are trustworthy companions in this corporeal reorientation of style's tracing of beauty.

First off, grounding this journey requires attention to a few gaps in my previous chapter. The trajectory I took ended on the note that Merleau-Ponty's invocation of tacit language works against Hegel's self-contained and explicit expression of beauty as the Concept expressing itself to itself in sensuous certainty. Klee's *Virgin in the Tree* uncovers the logocentricism of Hegel's celebration of the Virgin Mary as well as his explicit favoring of the 'Greek profile' over the Roman. Moving towards a tacit language and aesthetics means resisting such fixation and explicit expressions/judgments on details. As Jean-Luc Nancy says about the *aesthetic body*: "we'll never get past racism

unless we stop saying generic human brotherhood is its contrary instead of linking it to the dis-location, affirmed and confirmed, of our races and characteristics, black, yellow, white, thick-lipped, snub-nosed, frizzy, thick, shaggy, oily, braided, flat-nosed, coarse, fine, prognathous, hook-nosed, creased, musky...” (Corpus p. 35). For ethical sensitivity as well as for a deeper appreciation of beauty for beauty’s sake, I endorse moving towards beauty which does not suffocate under the details of explicit and simplistic comparisons and concepts. However, moving beyond simplistic fixations on details runs the danger of falling back onto an abstract notion of beauty as platonic Form.

Indeed, in the previous chapter I moved beyond the subject-object opposition through Hegel’s dialectics of beauty’s expression, which in turn was complicated with the help of Heidegger uncovering beauty as the gift of truth. I criticized Heidegger for espousing an all too direct relation between truth and beauty, for which Merleau-Ponty’s reappropriation of style became indispensable. Nonetheless, I largely brushed aside the platonic remnants of Heidegger when he gives priority and supremacy to truth over beauty. Heidegger’s contributes by *not taking pleasure of the gift* that is beauty, which must be decoupled from his abstract and platonic undercurrents by uncovering it. In *The Origin of the Work of Art*, Heidegger devotes a revealing page-long passage to the relation between truth and beauty:

Truth is the unconcealedness of that which is as something that is. Truth is the truth of being. Beauty does not occur alongside and apart from this truth. When truth sets itself into the work, it appears...the beautiful belongs to the adventure of truth, truth’s taking of its place. It does not exist merely relative to pleasure and purely as its object. The beautiful does lie in form, but only because the *forma* once took its light from Being as the isness of what is. Being at that time made its advent as *eidōs*. The *idea* fits itself into the *morphe*...for the world determined by the West, that which is, is as the real, there is concealed a peculiar confluence of beauty with truth... (p. 81)

This highly revealing passage speaks to my own setting up of the significance of beauty to philosophy since Plato, enjoying the status of *Form*. As with my undertaking, Heidegger is concerned with the end of art as declared by Hegel, which leading up to the passage quoted above Heidegger shares his concern and verdict: “is art still an essential and necessary way in which that truth happens which is decisive for our historical existence....The truth of Hegel’s judgment has not yet been decided” (p. 80). In a way, Heidegger’s giving primacy to truth over beauty stems from his efforts to work within a Hegelian framework while bending and reorienting it. Through this exercise and dialogue, Heidegger explicitly calls forth the Platonic legacy of beauty as a *Form* of *The Good* (truth). Although for Heidegger, truth has been complicated by Nietzsche’s multi-perspectival transgression. This is not a *Truth* accessible through the powers of reason alone, rather in the words of Lyotard (2011): “one encounters it in its unruliness, as an event...[t]ruth presents itself like a fall, like a slippage and an error” (p. 129). In this way, Heidegger’s invocation of *truth* corresponds to the *tacit language* of Merleau-Ponty and *aesthetic body* of Nancy tracing an ever-evasive beauty with style.

While this explanation harmonizes some issues, it does not settle this shift from Hegel to Plato, with persistent undercurrents of them both. For one, in the long quoted passage above, Heidegger takes a jab at Kant’s identifying of beauty with pleasure, which is another move by Heidegger I admire. However, a more explicit summoning of Kant reveals the troubles befalling Heidegger’s Platonism. For Kant, beauty produces pleasure out of a complex interplay of diverse elements and processes. Through the senses and an array of categories and procedures laid down by Kant, a beautiful object becomes the focus of *imagination*, which presents it to *understanding* with a demand to make sense of

this *beauty* with categories. The interplay between an unavailing *understanding* and a persistent *imagination* produces *pleasure* and the need for *judgment* based on *taste*. Even this simplified recalling of Kantian aesthetics offers a highly interesting and complex appreciation of beauty involving *imagination, understanding, judgment, taste, and pleasure*. A move back to platonic *Form* conceals beauty in an uncomplicated and abstract relation to truth, which takes us further away from the actual and corporeal world.

Of course this is not what Heidegger is doing. My juxtaposing of Kant and Plato hopes to reveal two areas of inquiry into beauty: beauty's appearing and beauty's dynamics. The previous chapter focused on the former while this chapter shifts to include the latter. Heidegger takes the first bold steps in transgressing and reorienting the beauty's appearance and its relation to the world, the object, and subject, which *appears* as *unified*. Heidegger goes back to find an original appearing of beauty that shakes Kant's untroubled pleasure. Recalling the image Nietzsche depicts in *Beyond Good and Evil*, Heidegger's move pushes back our notions of beauty to re-energize the tension in the string of philosophy's bow. Heidegger takes a step back into Platonism as the first step towards the intermediary target of Merleau-Ponty's reappropriated and corporeal *style*.

The gap has widened, the bow is tense, and our journey has its horizon, which is not *style* but its displacement. With Heidegger's reappropriation of truth and beauty I undertake an open-ended quest towards the actual and corporeal world advocated by Merleau-Ponty, which passes through some of the elements and processes highlighted by Kant. This is an impossible task with infinite trajectories to transgress, which I explore from three perspectives. First, complementing Heidegger's tracing of beauty within

Western philosophy as a platonic Form with an alternative emphasis of the etymology of beauty itself. Second, bringing our inquiry back to the actual world of multiplicity by intensifying sensuous perception against the abstract totalizing maneuvers of autonomous reason. Third, venturing into the dynamic complexities at work for a corporeal tracing of beauty. This journey's initial step moves beyond fixating on details to venture deeper into the spaces between art and truth, towards a place of more ethical and livelier traces of beauty, which encounters *form* as one of the most pressing problems: if to get over racism means resisting the details, as Nancy advocates, than what becomes of the material and texture for which to trace beauty? What other recourse is there other than transcending into the platonic realm of abstract and purely intellectual *Form*?

Within these three avenues of inquiry, I make some strides into beauty's relation with imagination, the senses, arts, and technology, which come together within the fleeting corporeality of style. A final section is devoted to a more particular consideration of style within modernity through Charles Baudelaire, a *stylus* tracing beauty within our modern and post-modern worlds.

I. The Multiplicity and Unity of Beauty

Pulling back the Nietzschean bow to its metaphysical and ontological roots encounters the flesh and blood of the actual world (diverse, contingent, corporeal...). Nancy's ethical-aesthetics of getting past racism by refusing to affirm or confirm the color, shape, and texture of our different bodies, is a simultaneous move away from and towards our materiality. Beauty cannot be bogged down into a particular detail (curve, line, color...), yet it cannot emanate without its material and textural details. Thus far my emphasis has been placed on stretching beauty to its tacit and invisible phenomenological limits with the help of Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, Derrida, and Nancy. Yet, this tacit and invisible stretching is always intertwined with the activity and diversity of actual life, which demands further exploration. Within this exploration, an underlying formulation of these extremes (explicit versus tacit, detail versus unity...) is often articulated as art versus beauty: art aims at beauty, yet beauty cannot 'exist' without a material manifestation in the form of art or otherwise. The conversation between art and beauty is an instructive one, however from the onset it presupposes a separateness that I resist to endorse. Art and beauty are intertwined, which is not conflate one into the other, but trace the barring each has within the other.

Nancy's (1996) ethical-aesthetic resistance to categories and details meets its other extreme by inciting the multiplicity of art: "plurality is a given of the arts. To tell the truth, one does not even affirm it; one observes it...the *singular plural* of art, of the arts" (p. 2). In other words, there are always several *arts*, always plural, as Adorno (1997) insightfully says: "the arts as such do not disappear tracelessly in the general concept of

art” (p. 199). Hegel’s dialectic of the Concept tries to force the disappearance of ‘the arts’ by negating it under the general concept of art. This vanishing act on the part of Hegel was a reaction to Kant’s subjective account of beauty, for the former to situate beauty back into the object, into the artwork, albeit via a complex self-expressing of the Concept in sensuous certainty. Yet Nancy overturns this Hegelian turn, not simply by returning to Kantian (psychological) subjectivism, but by ‘tracing’ Hegel’s disappearing act with keen insight from Adorno (1997): “For him who has a genuine relation to art, in which he himself vanishes, art is not an object” (p. 13). For Nancy and Adorno, it is not the arts that vanish, but man and his imposing concepts and projects to settle the *arts* into *the art museum*. The artwork is not an object to possess or consume, or even to subjectively take pleasure from.

Getting back to the *singular plural* of art and the arts, Nancy proposes a few avenues to explore. On the singular dimension, one can appropriate the general category of “art” to denote the plurality of the arts without reconciling the fundamental mismatches under a disappearing act. Indeed, my project has been devoted to *tracing* the *substituted entanglement* of ‘art’ over beauty, for which this parallel *substituted entanglement* of ‘art’ over the *arts* shares an affinity demanding recognition of this violent rational conjuring. ‘Art’ became the place to trace an ever-fleeting beauty. In this way, the singular push towards ‘art’ (mentioned frequently in the previous chapter) points to the *essence of art*, however not as an essentialist or foundationalist account, rather an essence of tacit and ever-fleeting beauty. This was the Heideggerian pulling back of the bow to reorient our trajectory. This difficult and *essential* task yet only opens avenues for our journeys to traverse. This reorientation appropriates ‘art’ as ever entangled with the

arts, for which its plurality stems from the diversity and multiplicity of actual and corporeal life. Nancy brings our attention to the multiplicity and unity (*singular plural*) of our senses as a preliminary consideration towards a more elaborate attention to *tekhnē* (*techniques* as developed in Nancy).

Nancy contributes to the opening of art to the arts by revisiting Heidegger's original juxtaposition and conversation between *poiēsis* and *tekhnē*, which goes back to the Greeks. Heidegger (1977) is troubled by modern technology's inability to reveal its essence as "a bringing-forth in the sense of *poiēsis*" (p. 14), as an original revealing and reorientation of being and the world (being-in-the-world). Instead, modern technology is ruled by a *challenging* (*Herausfordern*) that grasps nature as a mere means to fulfill modern projects, as an energy supply for extraction and storage: "Everything everywhere is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand...the standing-reserve [*Bestand*]" (Heidegger 1977, p. 17). This anti-*poiēsis* 'essence' (thus not in the sense of a genus and *essentia*) of modern technology is an *Enframing* (*Gestell*): a *challenging claim* that orders and assembles according to a destining by blocking and concealing *poiēsis*. The destining of *Enframing* gathers together "that setting-upon which sets upon man...to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as standing reserve" (Heidegger 1977, p. 20). *Enframing* 'reveals the real' as standing-reserve, which only by destroying nature and man can modern technology tap into this ordering and destining mode of the 'real': The *challenging claim* of *Enframing* "demands that nature be orderable as standing-reserve" (Heidegger 1977, p. 23) with the "supreme danger...[that] what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but does so, rather, exclusively as standing-reserve...[then

man] comes to the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing-reserve” (Heidegger 1977, p. 27).

The museum is an *Enframing*. It is modern technology taking the *institutional form* to showcase art ‘in the mode of *ordering*’. An ordering of the ‘real’ passing from nature to man, from the ‘symbolic pre-art’ of the East to the Greek and Romantic pictorial representations of the West, culminating in Hegel’s Concept. The museum’s institutional *Enframing* takes art as standing-reserve, a reserve that stands endlessly. Institutional *Enframing* does devour art, rather the museum mummifies art. Art’s essence is concealed, its activity dormant in the ‘real’ fulfillment of the finished artwork, the pain and contingencies suffered by the artist overshadowed by destining. Merleau-Ponty unsettles this order and disperses institutional *Enframing*’s destining by tracing art’s beauty within the ever changing and evasive *artist at work*.

On the other hand, the museum is not all about business and prestige, its institution is not solely driven by the mode of ordering art as standing-reserve. Museum directors have more recently emphasized the *art of curating* with an (implicit) opening and embracing of *the curator’s style*. As Jens Hoffmann (2014) expressed at a speech given at Stony Brook Manhattan: “Curating has become a creative act in its own right”. In such a reading, the museum’s ordering of art becomes less of a ‘real’, ‘natural’, or ‘neutral’ set-up and more so recognizing and revealing the art and *poiēsis* within curating’s *tekhnē*. It is this bringing-forth of *the curator’s style* that Merleau-Ponty pushes us towards by unsettling the institutional *Enframing* of the museum. This is also Heidegger’s project of reorienting modern technology to unconceal *poiēsis* within (as) *tekhnē*, while Nancy reemphasizes *tekhnē* within (as) *poiēsis*.

Heidegger (1977) tackles the dangers of modern technology's *Enframing* by taking us to a lost and primordial "[Greek] time when the bringing-forth of the true into the beautiful was called *technē*. And *poiēsis* of the fine arts also was called *technē*" (p. 34). Once again, Heidegger pulls back the bow to Greek origins as a reorienting of history from Plato onwards. Admittedly, such a move entails greater abstractions, where every revealing "yielding to the holding-sway and the safekeeping of truth...obtained *poiēsis* as its proper name" (Heidegger 1977, p. 34). Yet Heidegger's giving primacy to *truth* is entangled with both *poiēsis* and *technē*, with art and technology, with 'bringing-forth into the beautiful' within the corporeality and diversity of actual life. For Heidegger the essential truth of both art and technology as *technē* is revealing as *poiēsis* to bring-forth into the beautiful. This 'bringing forth into the beautiful' unsettles and opens modern technology's *Enframing* towards the essential *poiēsis* within *technē*, which brakes away from ordering and destining by revealing the essential entanglement between art and technology in Greek society for the 'safekeeping of truth'. Instead ordering nature and man as standing-reserve, Heidegger advocates a 'safekeeping' responsibility for the *poiēsis* entangling that is immanent to both art and technology.

Neither art nor technology should be treated separate from each other, nor these two separate from *poiēsis* within religious, political, social and other dimensions of life. Heidegger's calling of *technē* and *poiēsis* as a 'bringing-forth of the true into the beautiful' resonates with his discussion of "Beauty is a fateful gift of the essence of truth, and here truth means the disclosure of what keeps itself concealed" (Heidegger 1968, p. 19). To unsettle *Enframing*'s concealing of truth Heidegger unconceals *technē* and *poiēsis* as a 'bringing-forth of the true into the beautiful', which the *gift of beauty*

refuses any simple acknowledgement so as to activate all our will, thought, and gut to see pass the ordered and destined ‘real’ of *Enframing’s* standing-reserve. Against *Enframing’s* drive to destroy nature and man to extract the ‘real’, the *gift of beauty’s* ever evasive and tacit call reorients us to *care* for man and nature. *Poiesis* immanent to art and technology, as ‘bringing-forth of the true into the beautiful’, even refuses the pleasure of taking up this tacit call for ‘safekeeping’ since “The beautiful is not what pleases” (Heidegger 1971, p. 19). The *gift of beauty* reinstalls a different relation and orientation of being in the world, neither as standing-reserve nor for pleasure, instead *the gift of beauty’s poiesis* entangles art and beauty, for its tacit language finds expression in Merleau-Ponty to undermine the *institutional Enframing* of Hegel’s museum.

This negative and critical reorientation pulls us back into the abstractions of *truth*, in a fruitful way, which anticipates the *gift of beauty as always wrapped in style*, with a forceful tension and energy to journey towards the diversity and corporeality of an actual world. Indeed to talk of style at this juncture is a matter of recognizing that which is unrecognizable. The insightful and revealing discussions of Heidegger and Nancy already tacitly and implicitly express *style*, yet they oscillate between focusing on art or the arts not as within as an artwork and as the artist at work. To that side that focuses on the *artwork* (even as the unfinished finished), Nancy and Heidegger cannot recognize the immanence of *style* within their discussions by getting sidetracked in at least two ways: first, while *techne* and *poiesis* is a revealing and reorienting move, it is a move that pulls back to reveal an epiphenomenal challenge to Plato. Only *techne* and *poiesis* in activity does *this artist’s style* radiate in invisibility and silence, the corporeal and fragmented incognito non-present present of the artist at work. On the other hand, Merleau-Ponty

resonates with the active rupture connecting Heidegger and Nancy to the invisible and tacit *gift of beauty*.

Fortunately, Nancy (1996) ventures out from the meticulous and tense epiphenomenal Heideggerian metaphysics of *beauty* into the corporeality and diversity of the actual world, for as soon as the life of the artist at work “takes place, ‘art’ vanishes; it is *an art*, the latter is *a work*, which is *a style*, a manner, a mode of resonance with other sensuous registers, a rhythmic reference back through indefinite networks” (p. 36). Nancy articulates what Heidegger is on the verge of saying in so many beautiful ways, and what Merleau-Ponty *appropriately* expressed with *Indirect Language: techne* troubled with beauty is *a style* that ‘brings forth into the beautiful’ as *poiesis*. Heidegger’s appropriation of *techne* and Nancy’s reorientation of *technique* no longer fall within a mechanistic or purely ‘technical’ (rational and efficient extraction of reality as standing-reserve) framing. *Style* is this *techne (technique)* radiating *poiesis*, and vice versa, *style* is ‘art’ that suffers the pain, contingency, corporeality, materiality, and multiplicity of *techne (techniques)*. *Style* intertwines *poiesis* and *techne* to wrap the *gift of beauty*. This is not a *style* captured and settled by any rational account (Hegel, and in a different reconciliatory way Malraux). Rather it is *a gift*, tacit and incognito *style* of the artist at work who “is far too busy expressing his communication with the world to become proud of a style which is born almost as if he were unaware of it” (Merleau-Ponty 1993, p. 91). The communication of artist at work with the world is a tacit, incognito, corporeal, primordial, and transgressing expression – an expression that unsettles the general category of ‘art’, communicating in fragmented unity with nature (within and without, mixing the two) by resisting the imposing grasp of categories. Within the frenzy of the

Dionysian revel, Nietzsche transgresses conceptions of ‘art’ to submerge us in corporeal ‘union’ with each other and nature.

II. Style’s Emerging Place: Intersecting Ethics and Aesthetics.

Heidegger’s intermingling of *poiesis* and *techne* for the ‘bringing-forth into the beautiful’ lends itself to Merleau-Ponty’s and Nancy’s invisible and tacit *gift of beauty wrapped in style*: style is technique troubled with beauty transgressing ordering and destining, also, style is the beauty of ‘art’ suffering the multiplicity and corporeality of techniques for its emergence within the *actual* world. Here marks the ‘purist’ expression of *style* nestled in Heidegger’s isolated ontology. Yet, style is here marked by abstraction, and in this formulaic markability it is still all too explicit and conceptual. Although, it is an instructive pulling back into metaphysical clarity, which grounds a venturing into the complexity of corporeal and actual life. Nietzsche riddles with clues for a corporeal, primordial, and relational journey, which also stretches back to an epiphenomenal and appropriated Greek past.

Every clue of *the gift of beauty wrapped in style* I trace within *The Birth of Tragedy* is imbued with Nietzsche’s admiration of *Attic Tragedy*. This is not a shortcoming, it is beauty and style active within their element, where Nietzsche (2000) is immersed in dance with Apollo and Dionysus, “through this coupling ultimately generate an equally Dionysian and Apollonian form of art – Attic tragedy” (*The Birth of Tragedy*, §1). Granted, this dancing with the Greek gods is a *pulling back*, yet this pulling back is the sort I yearn for – a pulling back that ushers a corporeal reunion by a sudden and

eventful snap of the bow: “[W]ith such a tension in our bow we can now shoot at the furthest goals” (Nietzsche 2002, p.4), indeed, the Persian hero, *Arash*, shoots an arrow to a mythical distance, yet it cuts through space and time by striking dead the bow-man himself. In light of Nietzsche’s appropriation of *Zarathustra*, this ‘Persian’ mythical past pulls back the Greeks: to truly ‘shoot at the furthest goals’, corporeality and temporality *eventfully* break the bow and man. Nietzsche recovers, uncovers, and reanimates corporeality within a frenzy of the primordial artistic energies, “in the language of that Dionysian monster who bares the name Zarathustra: ‘Rise up your hearts...Rise up your legs, too, good dancers; and still better: stand on your heads! ‘This crown of laughter...I myself pronounced holy my laughter...Zarathustra, the dancer; Zarathustra, the light one...Zarathustra, the soothsayer; Zarathustra, the sooth-laughter...you higher men, *learn* – to laugh!’” (Nietzsche, *Attempt at Self-Criticism*, 2000, p. 27).

Dancing with Apollo and Dionysus *pulls back* within Greece, yet with a tension on the verge of a corporeal and temporal rupturing event. Resonating with the project of unsettling *the subordination and substitution of beauty and the arts under ‘art’*, Nietzsche (2000) uncovers an epiphenomenal, co-original, and entwined dynamics between the Apollonian and Dionysian artistic energies, ever in-tension and in-dance, “only superficially reconciled by the common term ‘art’” (*The Birth of Tragedy*, §1). Nietzsche (2000) transgresses the categorization and conceptualization of ‘art’ with a ‘Zarathustrian dancing on the head’, which openly sends Aristotle’s *Poetics* into a topsy-turvy frenzy. Such a disordered corporeal dance and laughing shakes off the clutches of any intellectual, moral, or cultural subsumtion:

Thus far we have considered the Apollonian and its opposite, the Dionysian, as artistic energies which burst forth from nature herself, *without the mediation of the human artist* – energies in which nature’s art impulses are satisfied in the most immediate and direct way – first in the image world of dreams, whose completeness is not dependent upon the intellectual attitude of the artistic culture of any single being; and then as intoxicated reality, which likewise does not heed the single unit, but even seeks to destroy the individual and redeem him by a mystic feeling of oneness. (The Birth of Tragedy, §2, p. 38)

In an intertwined and non-sequential fashion, I explore two avenues from within the numerous perspectives of this rich passage: *primordial ‘aesthetics’* and *primordial ‘ethics’*. Nietzsche uncovers a *primordial ‘aesthetics’* bursting from nature’s dual Apollonian and Dionysian *artistic energies*, which precedes and make possible the settled categories of ‘art’ and traditional ‘aesthetics’. This *primordial aesthetics* precedes ‘*the mediation of the human artist*’, for it evades the isolated solipsism of any singleton’s ‘intellectual attitude of the artistic culture’ (From a legacy at least traceable to Hegel’s *Phenomenology*, *singleton* or the translation *single unit* more forcefully denotes isolation and solipsism in the German *des Einzelnen* as used by Nietzsche than the alternate translation of *individual* for which *des Individuum* would be a more nuanced correspondent). Nietzsche is not against the individual; rather he displaces the *singleton* who divorces ‘art’ from nature and imposes abstract culture and subjective categories of law and morality to settle and subvert the *primordial artistic energies*. Undermining the mediation of the *singleton ‘human artist’* may seem to step towards a ‘*direct*’ or *unmediated* grasping of nature’s dual artistic energies. Yet, Nietzsche (2000) brings forth a *primordial aesthetics* with an ability of the “truly aesthetic listener to bring to mind the tragic artist...the primordial home or the fraternal union of the two art-deities” (p. 127).

This is not a direct grasping of nature, rather Nietzsche's *primordial aesthetics* dances with nature's two artistic energies in fraternal union.

Nietzsche turns Aristotle's *Poetics* on its head by subverting the hierarchy of his *Tragedy*, which are the following of most to least importance: *mythos* (plot), *ethos* (character – the moral qualities and purpose), *dianoia* (thought), *lexis* (diction – the expression of the meaning of words), *melos* (melody), *opsis* (spectacle). While Aristotle (2013) admits that “in fact, every play contains Spectacular elements as well as Character, Plot, Diction, Song, and Thought” (1450a, p. 10), yet Song and Spectacle are at the shallow end of Aristotle's (2013) *Tragedy* hierarchy: “Song holds the chief place among the embellishments. The Spectacle...is the least artistic...for the power of *Tragedy*, we may be sure, is felt even apart from representation and actors” (1450b, p. 12). Aristotle (2013) imposes strict moral laws on tragedy, both in terms of a strict hierarchy starting with “the proper structure of the Plot” (VII, p. 12) as well as the primacy of *ethos* for “Character is that which reveals moral purpose” (VII, p. 12). Nietzsche pays homage to Aristotle on the one hand by using his categories against themselves, on the other by reenergizing (through a dance with nature's artistic energies) Aristotle's (2013) dynamic insight: “For *Tragedy* is an imitation, not of men, but of action and life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality” (1450a, p. 11). However, Nietzsche (2000) rejects the ‘critic’ and their moral imposition onto tragedy, who “react merely as moral beings when listening to a tragedy...feel elevated and inspired by the triumph of good and noble principles, at the sacrifice of the hero in the interest of a moral vision of the universe” (p. 127).

Nietzsche undermines this moral imposition on tragedy through a double move. First, Nietzsche (2000) opposes Aristotle's tragic hierarchy by reversing its order: "the relation of music to drama is precisely the reverse: music is the real ideal of the world, drama is but the reflection of this idea, a single silhouette of it" (p. 125). For Nietzsche (2000) music speaks out of the heart and immerses our being and every one of our senses within a Dionysian flood of intoxication: "*Melody is therefore primary and universal*" (p. 61). By swaying to music's magical energy, Nietzsche (2000) reverts Aristotle's penultimate base category, for other elements of a play and its "countless phenomena of the kind were to accompany this music, they could never exhaust its essence" (p. 125) under moral considerations. Music already sways the heart and entices our senses, so what about Aristotle's ultimate base category, the Spectacle, which most overtly gets down to corporeality? This brings forth Nietzsche's second move, wherein Aristotle's *Poetics* is not reversed but reworked. Indeed, Nietzsche (2000) seems to agree with Aristotle in some sense that when it comes to the Spectacle, even if we "enliven the figure in the most visible manner, and illuminate it from within, it still remains merely a phenomenon from which no bridge leads us to true reality, into the heart of the world" (p. 125). Here Nietzsche won't reverse Aristotle's hierarchy when it comes to the merely visible figure or the Spectacle because such an isolated mere Spectacle is an Aristotelian fallacy, it is an *Apollonian illusion*. Nietzsche doesn't just reverse Aristotle, rather he meshes and mixes the categories for a corporeal *primary aesthetics* and *ethics*. Corporeality is not the mere visible corpus, it is the body infused with music, it is the body as always in rhythm and activity, and in *play* – dancing with nature's artistic energies. There is no mere Spectacle, the actors are immersed in musical dance and music

becomes a spectacle. The Apollonian emerges from within the Dionysian “with the aid of music, [the Apollonian illusion] unfolds before us with such inwardly illuminated distinctness in all its movements and figures...[that it] attains as a whole an effect that transcends *all Apollonian effects*” (Nietzsche 2000, p. 125). This Dionysian moment of transcending the Apollonian happens not despite the Apollonian but through its figures and movements, ‘with the aid of music’. This is no longer a mere Spectacle of figures and movements, rather it is a *primordial ethics and aesthetics* of an immanent transcendence of figures and movements dancing to the music of nature’s artistic energies – uniting man and nature through music and dance.

Nietzsche’s first move reversed Aristotle’s strict hierarchy in favor of a music that simultaneously speaks out of the heart and transcends from within nature’s artistic energies. His second move unsettles Aristotle’s morality through an entwining of figures in music and corporeality in dance, bringing forth nature’s ever dynamic and co-original artistic energies according to a dissonant ‘law of eternal justice’: “this dissonance, to be able to live, would need a splendid illusion that would cover dissonance with a veil of beauty. This is the true artistic aim of Apollo in whose name we comprehended all those countless illusions of the beauty of mere appearance that at every moment make life worth living at all and prompt the desire to *live* on in order to experience the next moment...[where] the two art drives must unfold their powers in a strict proportion, according to the law of eternal justice” (Nietzsche 2000, p. 136-7). Two senses of *beauty* move within these lines, a ‘*comprehended...beauty of mere appearance*’ and a ‘*splendid illusion of a dissonant veil of beauty*’. The former appears to comprehension under an Apollonian subversion and substitution of the Dionysian, where beauty’s illusion does

away with Dionysus. The latter is a ‘splendid illusion’ for which dissonance needs the cover of a veil of beauty ‘to be able to live’. This is a *primordial beauty*: Dionysus cannot live without Apollo’s veil of beauty, just as Apollo is always emerging out of Dionysus – Dionysus and Apollo are always entwined, never purely isolated: “Where the Dionysian powers rise up as impetuously as we experience them now, Apollo, too, must already have descended among us, wrapped in a cloud...behold his most ample beautiful effect [of this intertwined beauty]” (Nietzsche 2000, p. 137). Primordial beauty is “this continual influx of beauty” (Nietzsch 2000, p. 137), somewhere in the mix, in between, tacit and active, which makes the ‘*comprehended...beauty of mere appearance*’ possible.

This primordial beauty is corporeal, not of ‘mere appearance’, rather it is the dissonant veil of figures and movements in continual flux dancing with the help of music. This is a beauty that feels beautiful (also look, sounds, tastes...), dances and moves beautiful. This is *style*, neither abstract nor isolated beauty, nor ‘mere appearance’, it is the body as always already in dance, in flux, expressing, and appearing in its own uniqueness. It is Zarathustra’s dancing on his head, Zarathustra the soothsayer, Zarathustra the sooth-laugher, as Agnus Heller (2012) puts it: “The metaphysical concept of truth has to be replaced by the active concept or action of *Wahrsagen* (soothsaying)” (p. 176). Beauty’s dynamic and dissonant veil breaths life into the ‘Dionysian monster who bares the name Zarathustra’ by joining “Apollo, the god of all plastic energies, [who now] is at the same time the soothsaying god...ruler over the [dissonant] beautiful illusion of the inner world of fantasy” (Nietzsche 2000, §1, p. 46). This soothsaying, sooth-laughing, and head-dancing Zarathustra, who is the barer of both the ‘Dionysian monster’ and Apollo, is corporeal (not mere appearance), is musical (not disembodies

energy), is ever tracing the immanent-transcendent *primordial beauty* with his *style*. *This [beautiful] body is always wrapped in style*, it is ‘*The Reappearance of Place*’ ‘*By Way of Body*’ in Casey:

It follows that space as experienced by our bodies is neither a collection of points nor a conglomeration of sheer relations; nor is it to be conceived as a matter of containment, for example, by an ethereal medium or by contiguity with the inner surface of a strict surround. None of these traditional notions of space adequately addresses two of its essential features: its expressiveness and its orientedness. The lived-moving body underlies both features. Just as the body continually exhibits "expressive movement" is never not expressive, not even when it is engaged in the most abstruse geometric operation - so the space in which it moves becomes an expressive space, having its own physiognomy and moods, its affectivity and style. (P. 230)

The body is this place of a *style* in ever ‘expressive movement’, the body always already expressing and orienting in style. Style is not taken in isolation, either here or in Nancy. Even when style is explicitly mentioned in such places, and not just in passing reference or denoting some established manner, it intermingles with ‘physiognomy’, ‘moods’, ‘affectivity’, and in Nancy (1996) with “*a style, a manner, a mode of resonance with other sensuous registers, a rhythmic reference back through indefinite networks*” (p. 36). Trying to isolate *style* out of our obsession with purity of definitions and original meanings, contrasts to *this style* ever entwined with ‘manner’, ‘mode’, ‘physiognomy’, ‘moods’, and many other dimensions. At stake here is the body, never mere flesh nor abstract collection of points and relations, it is a body always in *style*, expressively moving in *space* with a *style* of its own, entwined with affectivity, moods, physiognomy, rhythm, and manners. Yet, one thing that distinguishes *style*, albeit always in an entwined fashion, with these other inseparable dimensions is its unique plasticity. ‘Mood’ or

‘affectivity’ cannot *express* and *orient* the body as fluidly as *style*: moods and affectivities require some psychological digging out; *style* confronts every encounter with eventful *expressiveness* and ‘appropriate’ (auto-adjustable/adaptable) *orientedness* to diverse contexts and places. Also, *style* expresses and orients encounters with a *fluid intertwining* to things more than mere relations and collections, *ever tracing beauty’s gift*. Not that moods, affectivity, and physiognomy do not express and orient with fluidity, especially as they always intermingle with style, yet *style* expresses and orients with a profound mystery, while those other intermingling dimensions exude (albeit perhaps deceptively) a seeming rigidity or settle-ness, which their intermingling with *style* works to undermine.

So it is *style*, not representing these diverse dimensions but always entwined with them, that carries forth. Zarathustra’s style, ever tracing beauty somewhere in the mix between the Apollonian and Dionysian. Primordial beauty flows between the visible and invisible, wrapped in a corporeal style: “In song and in dance man expresses himself as a member of a higher community...His very gestures express enchantment...He is no longer an artist, he has become a work of art” (Nietzsche 2000, p. 48). Man as a work of art is Casey’s always *expressing* and *orienting* body within *style*. Man has become a work of art, art as *poiesis* and *techne* – *style* as a *poiesis* suffering the anguish and materiality of *techne*, and *techne* troubled by *poiesis*. Man has become a work of art with *style*’s ever ‘expressive movement’, tracing the *infinite* primordial beauty in continual flux. So man’s becoming of a work of art is never complete, his is always becoming art in his own style.

This body always in style (expressively moving and entwined with diverse dimensions of corporeality) ever traces the dissonant veil of primordial beauty. This style

troubles the conceptual free-flowing of imposing morality, for corporeality confronts the transcendence of ethics that can only cut across illusory and self-made 'worlds'. Zarathustra the soothsayer, that 'Dionysian monster who bares the name Zarathustra', joins "Apollo...[who] is at the same time the soothsaying god...ruler over the [dissonant] beautiful illusion of the inner world of fantasy. This higher truth...this deep consciousness of nature, healing and helping in sleep and dreams is at the same time the symbolical analogue of the soothsaying faculty and of the arts generally, which make life possible and work living" (Nietzsche 2000, §1, p. 46). Heller (2012) colorfully speaks to Nietzsche's '*Concept of the Beautiful*' having "a healing and redemptive power as an analogue to the truth telling capacities of all arts...it is beauty that makes horror endurable. Not beauty as essence, nor beauty as certainty, make dread tolerable, but beauty as the veil or cover, beauty as semblance and sublimation...Beauty alone can heal; reason cannot" (p. 177). Here Heller uses *sublimation* in the most un-sublime way for this '*sublimation*' is immersed in Apollo always emerging out of the Dionysus, and Dionysus living in the veil of a *dissonant* Apollonian beauty. There is no *sublimation* of doing away with Dionysian intoxication, violence, chaos, and 'ugliness' – for Heller "The sublime is ugly" (p. 177). The 'ugly' is not the barbaric, nor intoxication, rather it is the 'ugly truths' of priestly knowledge that adore themselves with pride to criticize everything with its imposing morality.

Trying to mediate the 'concept of the beautiful' with corporeal dissonance, Agnus Heller ambivalently straddles between Nietzsche's Dionysian surge and Plato's Apollonian dialectic. Sharing with my own project, Heller's concept of the beautiful is as much about aesthetics as it is about ethics, as Morgan (2012) puts it in the introduction to

The Concept of the Beautiful: “the systematization of the arts – fitting the experience of the beautiful in to a system...divorced beauty from truth and morality. Heller strives for the reintegration of the experience of the beautiful with truth and morality” (p. 17), which bring us back to Adorno’s resistance of arts to the category of ‘art’. Nietzsche also strives for a reorientation of the experience of beauty with regard to truth and morality, through a double move reversing and reorienting Aristotle’s moral imposition on tragedy. Yet Heller *pulls back* to Kant against “Hegel’s answer to Kant [which] was for me a non-answer...Here Kierkegaard steps in, returning us to Kant in a most un-Kantian way” (Morgan 2012, p. 19; Heller 2009, p. 245). Kierkegaard helps Heller undermine the Absolute grip of Hegel’s Concept. What concerns me more with Heller is her return to Kant, which despite the asymmetrical force of Kierkegaard, *pulls back* to a somewhat vague integration of the body and beauty as *sensus communis*. By its name, Kant’s *sensus communis* seems to at least incorporate the *sensus* as sensed and felt corporeality. The combination of the *sensus* with the universality of *communis* is a peculiar one. According to Kant, our subjective judgments of taste involve validity for everyone. The experience of beauty for Kant is undeniably subjective, it refutes any social imposition of ‘common sense’, ‘ordinary good sense’, ‘common belief’, or any intellectual opinion. On the contrary, Kant (1987) constructs *sensus communis* as a mental reflexivity against our socially indoctrinated prejudices, by comparing “our own judgment with human reason in general” (p. 40). So while *sensus communis* incorporates the felt body, it’s construction is a mental exercise out of which the free-play between imagination and understanding produces pleasure. The body is a mere means and all too easily dismissed by Kant.

Nietzsche's corporeality works against such a dismissal. However, even Heller's earlier insights on Nietzsche emphasized Apollo's revelation as the 'soothsayer god', failing to mention the 'Dionysian monster who bares the name Zarathustra'. While there is no denying that Heller meticulously moved within Nietzsche's intertwining of Apollo and Dionysus, her deemphasizing of Zarathustra's corporeal style (as a dancer, dancing on his head, as well as sooth-laughter, and soothsayer) reveals morality and ethics all too common sidetracking of corporeality, space, and the place – in turn neglecting a body that always expressively moves in *style* tracing *primordial beauty*. Although Heller's ambivalence opens up to places that more intensely encounters the body, especially when it comes to Nietzsche.

Yet, Heller (2012) *pulls back* to Kant's *sensus communis* (in an un-Kantian way) and in a (slight) misreading of Adorno ends with a "concept of the beautiful [that] is open for determinations" (p. 203). As once again Morgan (2012) point out: "Heller misses in her interpretation of Adorno is that for him the invisible index finger points at something that *by necessity* never can be reached" (p. 27). One of Heller's missed opportunities, which Morgan possibly had in mind, is the materiality and corporeality of Adorno's invisible index finger. In my attempt, with the help of a mythical Persian past, I *pulled back* the Nietzschean *bow to its breaking point*, encountering temporality and materiality. Adorno's (2004) *Negative Dialectics* is sensitive to such corporeality: "A new categorical imperative has been imposed by Hitler upon unfree mankind...Dealing discursively with it would be an outrage, for the new imperative gives us a bodily sensation of the moral addendum...It is in the unvarnished materialistic motive only that morality survives" (p.

365). If morality is to survive, we cannot dismiss or downplay the body. The invisible dimension of Adorno's (1997) 'invisible index finger' has more to do with

What is beautiful in nature is what appears to be more than what is literally there...natural beauty point to the primacy of the object in subjective experience. Natural beauty is perceived both as authoritatively binding and as something incomprehensible that questioningly awaits its solution. Above all else it is this double character of natural beauty that has been conferred on art. (p. 71)

Here the invisible is pointing to 'what appears to be more than what is literally there', which ties back to Nietzsche's move beyond the *mere appearance* of Aristotle's Spectacle. The invisible is natural beauty's 'authoritative incomprehensibility', where nature can only be reunited with man by dancing with its artistic-energies. Against the mere visible veil of Apollo's beautiful illusion, Adorno's invisible index resonates with Nietzsche's dissonant veil of an entwined Apollonian-Dionysian beauty, which *style* ever traces it somewhere in the mix, dancing, laughing, and soothsaying. Despite her misreading of Adorno, Heller's Nietzschean ambivalence shakes Kant's *sensus communis* by uncovering its contradictory imposition of categories onto *The Concept of The Beautiful*: "the promise of happiness of the Kantian anthropological turn. In my mind, it is a false promise...For without tension between sensuality and spirituality, without suffering and pain, without barbarian instincts there is no beauty. Nietzsche was wise. For in the absence of all, there exists not even the need for beauty. But because the promise is a promise against hope, beauty can remain with us" (Heller, p. 202). Beauty remains with us, invisible and in continual flux somewhere in between the Apollonian and Dionysian. This is a primordial beauty suffering the pain of corporeality, intertwining sensuality with spirituality, and dissonantly veiling (and unveiling) our instincts. By intertwining the

bestly with the human and animal, Mendieta (2003) tangibly moves between the ‘barbarian instincts’ and ‘beauty’ toward our *corporeal world*: “The beast is the human/animal on the brink of the abyss carved by logos, nomos, polemos” (p. 85). Apollo has an established dominion over logos and nomos, as to polemos: “In ancient Greek terms a ‘sacred war’ (*hieros polemos*) was a war fought over the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi” (Mari 2012). Thus according to Mendieta, Apollo’s illusions of the beautiful categorical distinctions between human, animal, and human/animal are always emerging from the Dionysian abyss of ‘the beast’, where ‘the beast’ can only live intertwined within the human and animal – Mendieta’s human/animal is an Apollonian veil that radiates with *dissonant beauty*. Further, Mendieta (2003) makes this point with a *negative* ethical claim of resisting the abstractions of categorical distinction: “whoever wins, we loose” (p. 95). We must delicately trace an ever fleeting beauty that never fully manifests the beast in either the human or the animal, but always in flux between the human/animal. The ethical move lies in the plural, ‘*We*’ – we as this corporeal world of complex intermingling, of the human/animal, where Mendieta finds Donna Haraway’s *Chicken*. The chicken is not a beastly animal, but a result of the tangible intermingling of humans and animals. Chickens depend on us for nourishment and shelter, while we feed off chickens within our complex world of fast-food chains and massive industrial poultry farms. It is not just the beastly birds that have transformed into chickens, we too have been transformed in this process: our population, economy, culture, even our bodies have changed by developing susceptibility and immunity to diseases such as the avian flu.

I have thus far resisted any explicitly positive formulation of the body within ethical temporality or moral transcendence. A *stylish* body’s expressive movement of

space cannot and should not be dismissed or downplayed for the sake of moral transcendence or ethical temporality, if anything there should be a *negative ethics* against any such morality and ethics. However, I end this brief journey with Heller (2012), insightful strides into the problem of temporality. The gravity of a *body in style* straddles

a fragile balance between the old deities, between sight and sound, light and darkness, freedom and beauty, suffering and healing: All of them, together with their balance, are also transient. But the works of beauty that spring from this momentary and transient balance are eternal. They are not the promise of happiness, but the promise of totality. Totality here does not stand for the absolute, nor does it stand for reconciliation. It stands for the fullness of life, for life-as-a-whole, for the life that encompasses in its extreme intensity both intoxication and dream, suffering and healing, instinct and reason, eros and death. This is why one needs courage to think it and to risk it. (p. 179)

This irreconcilable step towards an ethics of courage that is troubled by the body, not undermined by the abstract concept of a *mere appearance*, but a body entwined in sight, sound, suffering and healing. It is also ethical for it brings us together, not under any ‘absolute or reconciliatory’ transcending promise, but the ‘totality of the fullness of life’. Instead of broad categories of time, or even temporality, ‘The work of beauty’ brings forth a ‘momentary and transient balance’, which is always eternally in flow, expressing, moving, *in style* within ‘the fullness of life’. In this way, a body in style ever tracing beauty somewhere in the flow of life, troubles ethics and morality once again with *the here and now*, which is also always eternally beyond the *merely apparent*.

III. Baudelaire: The Stylus of Modern Life

Baudelaire bravely resists the multiplicity and contingency of modernity, which unleashes a chaotic amalgamation of unworthy imitators, public-appeasing tricksters, and technical laborers, to mention a few. Much of my focus is devoted to the ‘traditionalists’ who resist modernity with outright rejection. Baudelaire on the other hand embraces modernity, neither by mere imitation of the public nor by succumbing to any technological surges of ‘positivism’, rather by courageously suffering the displacements, bifurcations, and contingencies of modernity through a reorientation and reappropriation of every artistic concept and tradition. Baudelaire’s particular reappropriation of *temperament* entwined with *naïveté* catches my attention as subtle yet highly insightful expressions that reveal Baudelaire’s criteria for a true artist as well as the conditions of modern life. Baudelaire’s evocation of *temperament* takes a free and fluid fashion within his writings, sometimes denoting very contradictory meanings, other times used as a seemingly arbitrary adjective, but more delicately and forcefully used in the case of Delacroix and Ingres. While *temperament* appears to be a major concern of its own when Baudelaire writes about Delacroix and Ingres, it is difficult to follow through with Baudelaire’s ironic, sarcastic, and diverse use of such concepts. To make things even more complicated, Baudelaire wields *temperament* entwined with other intriguing concepts such as *naïveté*, *color*, *system*, *modernity*, and *style*. It is through a mixing and entangling of these concepts with *temperament* that I hope to uncover Baudelaire’s unique perspectives on modernity. In particular, I trace Baudelaire’s reappropriation of *style* to construct a fluid interweaving of *temperament*, *color*, *modernity* and other concepts. A curious creature emerges in this chaos claiming to entwine the modern and

primordial in a parallel fashion to Baudelaire. He is the Philosophic Artist, in the person of Baudelaire's friend M. Paul Chenavard, who was chosen in 1848 for decorating the Pantheon in Paris. The significance of starting off with Chenavard, as opposed to Delacroix or Ingres, stems from the clear and all too precise ways of 'philosophic art', which in turn encourages Baudelaire's clear and precise criticism. Thus, rather than jump straight into a juxtaposition between the *style* and *temperament* of Delacroix and Ingres, I equip myself with a clearer sense of what to be on the look for, albeit in a negative sense, from Baudelaire's brutally clear refutation of philosophic art.

The decoration of the Pantheon was Chenavard's life project, unfortunately an ultimately a barren one partially due to the turbulent times between the Second Empire and the Republic. Nonetheless, Chenavard's *Social Palingenesie (The Philosophy of History)* holds an impressive place under the roof of the Museum of Fine Arts of Lyon, which combined with Chenavard's mystical philosophy, leave a provocative legacy in 19th century art. From its name, to its purpose, even to its method and style, Chenavard's *Philosophy of History* bares a striking mark of Hegelian philosophy. Indeed he claimed to have met Hegel in 1827 and discussed his life project: "Chenavard wanted to create a timeless piece, an art work that would be directly dictated by reason—or, in Hegelian terms, by the absolute Spirit" (Crawford 2008, p. 6). To accomplish such a feat within the grandiose Pantheon in Paris (a work of seventy scenes evoking Renaissance frescos and Antiquity's bas-reliefs), Chenavard depended on collaboration with other artists, unfortunately only mediocre artists gathered to his flock. Its purpose was to represent the evolution of mankind through the triumphs of history's greatest men, who struggled for emancipation: "Under Hegel's influence, he would have shown the blooming of

Logos/Reason in the history of Mankind. For that purpose, the artist was to create pure art, without style or color” (Crawford 2008, p. 8).

Such an absurdity met Honore de Balzac’s wrath, who responded against *humanitarian art* in the form of Chenavard’s philosophic and German paintings, which advocated art’s civilizing purpose. In a more subtle way, Eugene Delacroix wrote in his *Journal* “ ‘The artist who seeks perfection in everything, achieves nothing’...[likely] thinking of his friend, Chenavard” (Crawford, p. 9). Indeed, Chenavard’s unfulfilled life project may had more to do with his personal impotence out of obsessive perfection, than turbulent times. On the other hand even this “psychological impotence was supported by...several art theorist, like Charles Blanc...[who] thought that genius of an artist could be measured by his ability to translate absolute beauty into a piece of art” (Crawford 2008, p. 10). Blanc’s conservative art theory combined with Hegel’s idealism, abstracted Chenavard’s activiy from its creative process: he abandoned style and color to his disciples out of disdain for superficial decorations, while he preserved absolute beauty only within the emptiness of his psychological impotence. As Baudelaire (1964) expresses in *Philosophic Art*:

What puts the finishing touch to the essentially utopian and decadent quality of Chenavard himself is the fact that he wanted to enroll artists, like workmen, to execute his cartoons on a large scale under his direction, and to colour them barbarously. Chenavard is a great mind of the decadence, and he will remain as a monstrous sign of times. (p. 209)

Although, Baudelaire (1964) is delicate to balance such harsh criticism with positive statements: “that Chenavard has an enormous superiority over all other artists; for if he is not sufficiently animal, they are far too lacking in spirituality. Chenavard...made himself the friend of all who love reasoning; he is a remarkable scholar, and is experienced in the

art of meditation [but not creation]” (p. 208). Even Baudelaire’s soothing remarks are loaded with his unwavering sarcasm. To Baudelaire (1964), Chenavard failed to balance his utopian side with his artistic ability within the chaos and instability of modernity, for when it came to actual life, Chenavard “wishes to be praised for his utopias, and is sometimes an artist *in spite of* his utopias” (p. 211).

Baudelaire resists the utopias of impotent meditation that fixate on absolute beauty in order ‘to create pure art, without style or color’. If anything Baudelaire (1965) embraces modern art for the essentiality of style and color: “To say the word Romanticism is to say modern art – that is, intimacy, spirituality, colour, aspiration towards the infinite, expressed by every means available to the arts” (p. 47). Modern style is this expressing the intermingling of color, intimacy, spirituality, and infinity by every artistic means available. Rather than abstractly isolating color and style from each other or from beauty and drafting, Baudelaire (1965) makes all these elements correspond, where color becomes musical infusing the artists’ style with flow and feeling: “Melody is unity within colour [which] leaves a deep and lasting impression on the mind” (p.51). Against dissecting art with orderly and narrow dialectics, Baudelaire (1965) teaches us the “right way to know if a picture is melodious is to look at it from far enough away to make it impossible to understand its subject or to distinguish its lines. If it is melodious, it already has a meaning and has already taken its place in your store of memories. Style and feeling in colour come from choice, and choice comes from temperament” (p. 51). Art is not a means to civilize the masses by representing alpha-subjects of human evolution. All lines blur in modern art and the only thing distinguishable is the impossibility to understand its subject. Color’s melody infuses style and feeling within

art, the artist, and the audience, not according to absolute Reason, but from choices rooted in temperament.

Indeed temperament is against Absolute Reasons' dictums and established rules, which defines the foundation of tradition and the art Schools imitate. Instead, temperament is about *naïveté*: "to require of the artist the quality of *naïveté* and the sincere expression of his temperament, aided by every means which his technique provides" (Baudelaire 1965, p. 45). The quality of *naïveté* undermines strict adherence to the fallen aristocratic prejudice of gallery judges, for *naïveté* requires the sincere expression of an artists' temperament. A 'style and feeling in colour [that] come from...temperament', a style infused with color's melody, is this expression 'aided by every means available to the arts' 'which his technique provides'. Absolute Reason takes a back seat to *naïveté*'s colorful style of sincerely expressing temperament: "By the *naïveté* of the genius you must understand a complete knowledge of technique combined with *γνώθι σεαυτόν* of the Greek, but with knowledge modestly surrendering the leading role to temperament" (Baudelaire 1965, p. 56). For Baudelaire, Delacroix's colorful and melodic style is the most sincere and *naïve* expression of temperament, which is in stark contrast to the systematic and traditional style of Ingre, who is devoid of temperament. While Baudelaire often mentions style in passing or for denoting a particular manner (such as *brash style*, *classic style*, etc.), yet when it comes to these two polemic artists, *style* takes center stage.

Baudelaire sees in Delacroix the genius of Romanticism's *naïve* expression of temperament infused with melody and poetry. As an art critic and poet, Baudelaire (1965) admires Delacroix's work as "poems – and great poems, naively conceived and

executed with the usual insolence of genius...Delacroix, always respectful of his ideal, is often, without knowing it, a poet in painting” (p. 57). Delacroix’s melodic and poetic fusing of color and style within his paintings makes him a true modern artist, yet Baudelaire (1965) singles out “one last quality in Delacroix – but the most remarkable quality of all, and that which makes him the true [modern] painter of the nineteenth century; it is the unique and persistent melancholy with which all his works are imbued, and which is revealed in his choice of subject, in the expression of his faces, in gesture and in style of colour” (p. 65). When it comes to Delacroix’s *style*, Baudelaire describes it entwined with gesture, color, expression, and choice, of which the intermingling of the latter three had already work in Baudelaire’s understanding of temperament. What makes Delacroix modern is his uniquely and persistently melancholic temperament. I further explore as to why modern style is imbued with a melancholic temperament, yet even from this passage Baudelaire gives clues as to what modern melancholy entails: persistence and uniqueness. Persistence in resisting utopias’ meditative impotence, in creating art without ideal or pure beauty, in not abandoning color and style, and in embracing the transitory times of modernity. The uniqueness of modernity’s beauty is “*The Beautiful [that] is always strange...this touch of strangeness that gives it its particular quality as Beauty...[it is impossible to] try to imagine a commonplace Beauty!* Now how could...the temperament of the [modern] artist...ever be controlled, amended and corrected by Utopian rules” (Baudelaire 1964, p. 124). Also uniqueness as the *naïveté* of the genius and modern temperament’s unique style, such as “for M. Decamps colour was the great thing...His splendid and radiant colour had, what is more, a style very much of its own” (Baudelaire 1965, p. 74). And this uniqueness of *an artists’ style*

of its own is melancholic, for it is estranged in its infinite pursuit of ‘*the beautiful that is always strange*’. Uniqueness is also to be rejected by the commonplace. Baudelaire (1965) comes to the defense of an artist who worked “in such a way as to give a rare unity of style...[to which the criticisms of a public] thinker must have meant that he did not like a painter who treated all his subjects in the same style. But Good Heavens! It is his own style! Do you want him to change it, then?” (pp. 187-8). To Baudelaire it is absurd for an artist to change his own style, because an artist does not own his style, does not know how to own it, it is not the Greek know thyself, rather ‘knowledge modestly surrenders the leading role to temperament’ – a temperament ever tracing ‘*the beautiful that is always strange*’, ‘how could it ever be controlled’, how could it ever be mine. And yet it is, for there is something of nature within temperament and we are of nature, thus this *modern style* is primordial, as Baudelaire (1965) gives a word of advice: “The critic should arm himself from the start with a sure criterion, a criterion drawn from nature...for a critic does not cease to be a man, and passion draws similar temperaments together and exalts the reason to fresh heights” (p. 45). This resonates with Merleau-Ponty’s tacit and invisible *style*, against Malraux’s retrospective and systematic *style*. For Merleau-Ponty (1993), “style is not a manner, a certain number of procedures or tics that he can inventory, but a mode of formulation that is just as recognizable for others and just as little visible to him [the painter] as his silhouette or his everyday gestures...[The artist at work] is far too busy expressing his communication with the world to become proud of a style which is born almost as if he were unaware of it” (Merleau-Ponty 1993, p. 91).

This artist at work is naïve, indifferent to the rules of tradition and dismissive of public appeasement. Instead, ‘passion draws similar temperaments together and exalts the

reason to fresh heights': It is not Absolute Reason that carries-forth human evolution, but the temperaments and passions that 'exalt reason to fresh heights'. Reason cannot do without nature, just as modern *style* is infused with color and melody, modern reason exalts to fresh heights only immersed in temperaments.

Ingres is devoid of such a *modern* temperament. To be sure, Baudelaire may on occasion admit to the existence of an Ingresian temperament, and indeed he italicizes Ingres' obsession with *style*, yet Ingres temperament is barren and his style is isolated. As with Chenavard, Baudelaire uses almost every occasion to balance his sarcastic and harsh criticism with a well-deserved admiration of Ingres' draftsmanship, which Baudelaire unapologetically admits to surpass almost every other contemporary artist including Delacroix. More importantly, when invoking Ingres, Baudelaire delves into a more serious admiration for draftsmanship, the contour, the line, and the composition. However, Baudelaire's care for drafting and the line only increases his yearning for a line and drafting infused with the melody of color and a reason taken to fresh new heights with temperament. However, Ingres is obsessed with a *systematic style*, by abstracting style with the perfection of a School's tradition, and by subjugating nature:

Ingres's drawing? Is it of a superior order? Is it absolutely intelligent? Anyone who has made a comparison of the graphic styles of the leading masters will understand me when I say that M. Ingres's drawing is the drawing of a man with a system. He holds that nature ought to be corrected, improved...one that can always be easily traced to his immoderate appetite for *style*...this almost morbid preoccupation with *style*, our painter often does away with his modeling, or reduces it to the point of invisibility, hoping thus to give more importance to the contour...it is not M. Ingres who has been seeking nature, but Nature that has *ravished* M. Ingres...Ingres may be considered as a man endowed with lofty qualities, an eloquent amateur of beauty, but quite devoid of that energy of temperament which constitutes the fatality of genius. His dominant preoccupations are his taste for the antique and his respect for the School (Baudelaire 1965, p. 132-3).

Ingres' *style* is a *traditional* one that subverts everything to his respect for the School. It is a *systematic style*, divorced of all life, color, melody, and feeling. Ingres' style obsesses over the details and fixates on the line and contour. It immoderately devours the model and dreams of a nature broken into correctness. Ingres profanes with the love he has for his women-models. How painful is his eloquence, how ugly his beauty, which sap out 'that energy of temperament' from his model and nature. So too is it with his disciples, the "style, especially, that [of] M. Millet...he makes a show and glory of it. But part of the ridicule which I directed against M. Ingres's pupils sticks to him. For 'style' has been his disaster. His peasants are pedants who have too high an opinion of They display a kind of dark and fatal boorishness which makes me wants to hate them." (Baudelaire 1965, p. 195). This *traditional and systematic style*, obsesses, devours, and gloats with show and glory, while in contrast *modern style* sways with melody, embraces nature's always strange beauty, and modestly surrenders knowledge to temperament's leading role. *Systematic and traditional style* is not only the obsession of Ingres, his disciples, and M. Millet, but also "Others, more philosophic and more dialectical, concentrated chiefly on style – that is to say, on the harmony of the principal lines, and on the architecture of nature" (Baudelaire 1965, p. 104). These principal lines and architecture are philosophic abstractions imposed onto nature in a *systematic style*. Such a philosophic and dialectical *style* abstracts style from nature's excess, color, and continual flow. Baudelaire's *modern style* takes embraces exactly these latter elements and resists the imposing certitude of philosophic systems.

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