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## Settled-there:

### Heidegger on the work of art as the cultivation of place

Simon Glendinning

1. With the publication of *Being and Time* in 1927 Heidegger rapidly rose to the centre of the philosophical stage in continental Europe, and, as Derrida later recalled, contributed, “if you will,” to a “translation” on a “new basis” of philosophical interest, especially in France, concerning “the meaning of man, the humanity of man” (Derrida 1982b, 115). Heidegger was not content with the reception of his thinking involved in that translation, which was, he thought, too caught up in an anthropological horizon, and insufficiently attentive to the horizon of the forgetting of the question of Being: “Philosophy could hardly have given a clearer demonstration of the power of this oblivion of Being than it has furnished us by the somnambulistic assurance with which it has passed by the real and only question of *Being and Time*” (Kaufmann 1956, 35).

However, despite Heidegger’s avowed frustration, the “translation” is surely understandable. A good deal of the Heideggerian text comprises an analytic of Dasein which can be readily read without keeping the Being question constantly in view. Moreover, as Derrida acknowledges, even if Dasein “is *not* man” it “is not, however, *other* than man” (Derrida 1969, 48). This equivocality in *Being and Time* invites even if it does not authorise the “anthropological deviations” Heidegger found so objectionable (Derrida 1969, 48). In my view, Heidegger’s later writings will try to reduce the

somnambulistic risk. Interestingly, however, the new efforts do not seem to revise or reject the earlier one so much as develop and underline a trajectory already underway.

To make a start with this claim I want to begin with a passage from *Being and Time* where a theme is broached which, if it is noted at all, is likely to be noted as a passing reference even more forgettable than the Being question. It is a reference to poetry. We do not typically think of poetry when we think of art-works, but insofar as we do, we could also say that this passing reference to poetry is also the only reference to art in *Being and Time*:

In talking Dasein expresses itself [spricht sich...aus] not because it has, in the first instance, been encapsulated as something “internal” over against something outside, but because as Being-in-the-world it is already “outside” when it understands. What is expressed is precisely this Being-outside – that is to say, the way in which one currently has a state-of-mind (mood), which we have shown to pertain to the full disclosedness of Being-in. Being-in and its state-of-mind are made known in discourse and indicated in language by intonation, modulation, the tempo of talk, “the way of speaking”. In “poetical” discourse, the communication of the existential possibilities of one’s state-of-mind can become an aim in itself, and this amounts to a disclosing of existence. (Heidegger 1962, 205)

This passage makes a transition from everyday language at one end to poetic discourse at the other. Let me quickly note three points about this. First, the transition to poetry is invited by the text itself through the very way it speaks about everyday language: the way it picks up on expressive dimensions of the everyday use of words – intonation,

modulation, tempo and way – that are the usual hallmarks of the poetic-character of poetry. Second, when Heidegger refers to poetical discourse he does so with the mediation of inverted commas: referring to it by way of referring first of all to *what we call* “poetical” discourse, highlighting again that the passage had just pointed out a poetic character to everyday language, and so had marked a continuity where, in that everyday way of talking, we often draw a contrast. Third, that everyday contrast is not annulled by Heidegger but re-inscribed into the context of the analytic of Dasein’s existence, and hence, if you retain the frame, to “the real and only question of *Being and Time*”.

I said that we do not typically think first of poetry when we think of art-works. That is, one may well think that poetry would be an odd example to take if one is, more or less casually, giving an example of an art-work. But what if one thought that *all art* is, in some way, essentially “poetry”? And what if, moreover, one thought that *our actual language*, the everyday language through which, for the most part, “Dasein expresses itself,” is also, in some way, essentially “poetry”? These two thoughts are, as I intend to show in this essay, central to Heidegger’s later reflections on art. With these two thoughts in view we can then also begin to see that the transition within the fundamentally poetized space of Dasein’s expression outlined in the passage from *Being and Time* I have just quoted would effectively belong to an investigation of art in terms of what happens when what is brought forth is a work of art: it “amounts to a disclosing of existence”.

This is precisely the investigation that Heidegger pursues in his later writings on art. And although, as we shall see, this new focus will serve to intensify the distance of an understanding of ourselves grounded on the “existential ontological structure” of Dasein from its “anthropological deviations”, Heidegger’s turn towards art does not simply turn away from “man” or towards “something *other* than man” either. Remarkably, Heidegger’s thought on the art-work does not develop a new discourse on aesthetics but, rather, a discourse that re-visions our self-understanding by elaborating an essential tie – already stressed in *Being and Time* – between our Being and dwelling (Heidegger 1962, 80). The discourse on art becomes, as Derrida notes, “a great discourse on *place*” (Derrida 1987, 266). Indeed, overall and more and more we will come to see that “Heidegger’s philosophy is a philosophy of *settlement*” (Scruton 2012, 232).

2. I suggested that the one and only reference to art in *Being and Time* is apparently restricted to poetry. That this is restriction really is only an appearance will become clearer as we proceed, but on the basis of that book one could be forgiven for thinking that art plays a very minor role in Heidegger’s thinking. On the other hand, that thought could hardly arise from even a cursory glance at his later essays, and as a result it would not be unnatural to see this as part of a general shift in his philosophy; a shift that might even warrant drawing a distinction between “early” and “late” Heidegger, much as we still do with Wittgenstein. That may well be misleading even for Wittgenstein, but it is certainly misleading in the case of Heidegger. A central aim of this essay is to show that Heidegger’s later writings on art profoundly enrich but never overturn or supplant the analysis of Dasein of his earlier writings.

3. I want to bring out something of the abiding and deep significance of art in Heidegger's thinking by first considering its extraordinary appearance at the end of his essay "The Question Concerning Technology".

In "The Question Concerning Technology", a text first presented in lectures given between 1949 and 1953, Heidegger takes up a topic which was widely seen as involving a "disturbing" and "incomparably different" kind of presence in the contemporary world: modern machine technology (Heidegger 1993b, 319). In what we will come to see as a characteristic "gear-shifting" gesture, Heidegger regards contemporary opinion on this matter as fundamentally inadequate. Not that he supposes the growing concern to be entirely misplaced. If anything, Heidegger thinks that those disturbed by modern technology don't go far enough. However, he does think that their criticisms miss the real threat posed by modern technology, and do so because they are pitched at the wrong *level*: what is at stake with the rise of modern technology is not, he argues, the growing presence in our midst of a distinctive and dangerous kind of *thing*, but, and this is the characteristically Heideggerian shift of gear, the holding sway of a distinctive and dangerous clearing of the *midst* within which, in our time, things show themselves. In this age we find ourselves always already "ordered" into a way of being together that participates in what Heidegger conceives as an "ordering" way of revealing everything that shows itself (Heidegger 1993b, 323). "The work of modern technology", Heidegger famously suggests, "reveals the actual as standing reserve" (Heidegger 1993b, 326). This is not just one way of revealing among others and for Heidegger it certainly isn't a neutral

way. On the contrary, it is a way of revealing which discloses everything everywhere as measurable, calculable and orderable (available at our command and at our convenience). Heidegger introduces this idea through a contrast to another distinctively Heideggerian motif to which we shall return, the way of revealing that characterizes the work of the old peasant farming technologies:

The earth now reveals itself as a coal mining district, the soil as a mineral deposit.

The field that the peasant formerly cultivated and set in order appears differently than it did when to set it in order still meant to take care of and maintain. The work of the peasant does not challenge the soil of the field. In sowing grain it places seed in the keeping of the forces of growth and watches over its increases.

But meanwhile even the cultivation of the field has come under the grip of another kind of setting-in-order, which sets upon nature. It sets upon it in the sense of challenging it. Agriculture is now the mechanized food industry. Air is now set upon to yield nitrogen, the earth to yield ore, ore to yield uranium, for example; uranium is set upon to yield atomic energy, which can be unleashed either for destructive or for peaceful purposes. (Heidegger 1993b, 320)

Heidegger too wants to identify modern technology with something “monstrous” and, indeed, as heralding “the supreme danger” (Heidegger 1993b, 332). Not, however, because it can give rise to deadly weapons, an “ontic” danger to use the language of *Being and Time*, but because the essence of modern technology is a way of revealing which blocks off the possibility for “a more original revealing” (Heidegger 1993b, 333): an “ontological” danger that he regards as posing an order of threat far more destructive than the most powerful atom bomb.

According to Heidegger, then, in the present age, under the sway of the way of revealing that belongs to modern technology, nature has come to show itself almost exclusively as standing reserve. And man is disclosed in a corresponding light too: in our time we are inclined more and more to see ourselves as commanders of nature, and we elevate ourselves to the position of “lord of the earth” (Heidegger 1993b, 332). This elevation is not what Heidegger conceives as our “highest dignity” (Heidegger 1993b, 337).

Moreover, for Heidegger, when the dominant way of revealing is the work of modern technology, then what is most distinctive about us threatens to become so deeply eclipsed that “man himself” – the supposed master of the forces and energies of nature – can come to the point where “he himself will have to be taken as standing reserve”; something whose presence is grasped only in terms of something to be measured, controlled and ordered (Heidegger 1993b, 332). This, in Heidegger’s view, is the real threat, the supreme danger, of modern technology. Yet since what threatens here is not a *thing* that we might try planning to limit in its effects or do away with altogether (the destructive or peaceful use of atomic technology, for example), but the fabric of “unconcealment itself” (Heidegger 1993b, 323) – the *midst* in which we find ourselves – no such “ontic” planning or activity of elimination can directly counter the “ontological” threat either. Nevertheless, and here is where art makes its extraordinary appearance in Heidegger’s questioning concerning technology, there is still hope: a “decisive confrontation” with modern technology is possible because there is a “saving power” in a realm akin to it yet also fundamentally different. “Such a realm,” Heidegger enigmatically asserts, “is art” (Heidegger 1993b, 340).

4. While he supposed it had a future, Hegel had famously asserted that art had forever lost the possibility of having a central role in human existence. Art, for the “we” that we are now, is a thing of the past. For Heidegger, on the other hand, our having a future at all – in the distinctive sense of having a potential to “have a history”, and not to become, to use J.S. Mill’s expression, “stationary” (Mill 1982, 202) – will be threatened if the “realm” of art does not achieve some kind of renewal. In what follows I will outline how Heidegger justifies seeing art as this “saving power”, and how, in doing so, he offers a fundamentally new way of conceiving “the highest dignity of man”: re-visioning “man” not as the *animal rationale* or even as *homo faber*, but (and to stay with Heidegger here we are going to have to drop the Latin, and should really drop the English too) as a being that is “actual” at all only insofar as it “dwells poetically” (Heidegger 1993b, 344).

5. In order to understand the importance of Heidegger’s thinking about art, and to see in particular why it is not simply (even if it is at times also) mixed up with the poetics and politics of land and blood, we first need to appreciate that the same kind of gear-shift evident in his discussion of modern technology is at the heart of his account of the essence of art and works of art. Against the prevailing tendency to conceive modern technology in terms of devices made for human use, Heidegger wants to think about the work of modern technology as a distinctive way of revealing. In a parallel fashion, as we shall see, Heidegger resists conceiving art in terms of objects made for human aesthetic enjoyment, and attempts instead to think about the work of art in terms of the occurring of

“an open place” (Heidegger 1993a, 178), a happening of “unconcealment” that “opens up a world” (Heidegger 1993a, 169).

The traditional view of the kind of actuality that belongs to modern technology and to works of art is so familiar as to pass without question in most accounts. In the case of modern technology we have a matter-of-course understanding of it as that man-made thing or equipment which both builds and is built by scientifically advanced modern societies. In the case of art, even if its presence is less pervasive in the modern world, its products too are often thought of as part of a distinctive sector of human activity, the “art-world” or “culture-industry,” which collects, exhibits and, of course, buys and sells these man-made-things.

Opening a brief parenthesis, that art-works are also *curated* is not considered by Heidegger, and given that he conceives Dasein as essentially “care” one might have thought that he should have been especially interested in a relation governed, at least in name, by “*cura*”. I will come back to this, but it can perhaps be conceded to Heidegger that the dominant public idea of this relation is, today, of “connoisseurs” who, it will be said, know all about and can appreciate the subtle qualities, charms and provenance of the objects of the art-industry which they select for viewing. They are experts, in other words, no different in essence from the experts of the technology industries, the technicians and scientists, who know their objects inside and out and can predict and control their effects. And, of course, there is something right here: such people do know better than others that the objects of their concern are fundamentally more and other than mere things. But, then

again, who would think of these things as mere things? Perhaps, Heidegger suggests, the removal men involved in shifting works of art from one gallery to another, “shipped like coal from the Ruhr and logs from the Blackforest” (Heidegger 1993a, 145), relate (at that moment) to the art-work as a mere thing. Perhaps also the cleaners in the museum, who will dust a sculpture and a donation-box alike. But those who know anything about the thing involved here know that this is a crude and external view of the work. The actuality of the work of art *as* work of art cannot be reduced to the presence of a thing.

So what is the kind of actuality involved here? Or, to put this in other words, what takes place or what occurs when there is a work of art? This is the question which is in focus in Heidegger’s 1936 essay, again first presented in lecture form, “The Origin of the Work of Art”. And the basic proposal of his text is a fundamental rejection not only of the idea that the actuality of an art-work can be grasped in terms of its “thingly” character but, quite generally, a rejection of the idea that it might be grasped *on the basis* of the presence of some thing in the world at all – even a special kind of thing which is the object of a distinctively “aesthetic experience”. Again, Heidegger shifts gear: what is essential to art, the *work* of the art-work, is, like the work of modern technology for its part, not a (no doubt distinctive) kind of presence in our midst, but the opening up and holding sway of a midst within what is actual shows itself. Of course, the art-work, like a piece of technological equipment, is something that appears *in* the world. But for Heidegger this “thingly” character of the work must be understood *on the basis* of what is at work in the work and not the reverse. Heidegger calls this work a “happening of truth” (Heidegger, 1993a, 162). The idea here is not that the art-work achieves an adequate

*representation of beings* (truth conceived as the correspondence between image and thing), but that it brings about a *revealing of beings* (truth conceived as the unveiling of what is in its being). As such a happening of truth, the essence of art, like the essence of modern technology, is an event of unconcealment: the opening up of a world.

6. In Heidegger's view, then, the work of the work of art accomplishes an unconcealment or disclosure of beings, the work "opens up a world" (Heidegger 1993a, 168). Thus, for Heidegger, when there is a work of art then there is not only a new thing present in the world, but first and foremost something like a new world in which things presence. This is the central theme of Heidegger's thinking about art, and as the preceding discussion should serve to indicate, the last thing we should expect from it is a new account of "aesthetic properties". For Heidegger the question of the work of art is not a question that concerns the essence of a certain kind of thing or being, but – and here we return right back to the question of the frame for the reading of Heidegger's thinking – a question that "moves on the path of the question of the essence of Being" (Heidegger 1993a, 210).

7. *Being and Time* is driven by questions concerning the meaning of Being, and thus the relation of Being to ourselves as an entity that exists in an understanding of Being. These questions are not left behind in his so-called "later" writings. Heidegger does not begin anew after *Being and Time*, but undertakes a *thinking on* which effects a dramatic and retrospective underlining of a direction of thinking already underway in the "early" work. At issue with this direction of thinking is something I will call the critique of philosophical anthropology.

*Being and Time* is an unfinished book, an interrupted project. This is another reason for thinking we might contrast an early to a later Heidegger: he had to give up because he had taken the wrong path. Heidegger himself writes of a “*Kehre*” or “turning” in his thinking. But, and this is Heidegger’s own way of putting things, the so-called later Heidegger is “already contained in” the earlier one (Krell, 1993, 33). In my view this takes the form of a new and newly emphatic and unmissable emphasis on the implications of the critique of philosophical anthropology inaugurated in *Being and Time* (see especially section 4 and section 10). The elaboration of just such a critique is clearly evident in his 1947 essay “Letter on Humanism”, where traditional philosophical conceptions of “man” are interpreted in terms of a classical tradition of “humanist” anthropology. But that essay takes up a theme that was already broached in *Being and Time*, where it had been asserted that what “stands in the way” of achieving an adequate conception of Dasein’s Being “is an orientation thoroughly coloured by the anthropology of Christianity and the ancient world” (Heidegger 1962, 74). And it is not only “Letter on Humanism” that continues this critique. In both “The Origin of the Work of Art” and “The Question Concerning Technology” what, in *Being and Time*, Heidegger had called “anthropological tendencies” is not just a theme but a *central* target. This brings the earlier more oblique critique of philosophical anthropology into sharper focus, and thus also helps combat the “translation” of the analytic of Dasein into an anthropological horizon. However, as I have indicated, it also deepens and underlines the earlier insistence on the profound tie between our Being and dwelling.

Heidegger's analytic of Dasein calls for a striking deviation from the Husserlian legacy in phenomenology as a philosophy of the cogito: 'if the "cogito sum" is to serve as the point of departure for the existential analytic of Dasein, then it needs to be turned around [Umkehrung]... The "sum" is then asserted first, and indeed in the sense that "I am in a world"' (Heidegger 1962, 254). While this makes *Being and Time* particularly resistant, as Derrida remarks, to "skepticism and everything that is systematic with it" (Derrida 1982a, 38), the later essays highlight that Heidegger's turned around deviation is not to be thought of as one in which our "actuality" is now conceived in terms of an undeniable outer-worldly presence rather than a indubitable inner-worldly presence. As Heidegger had already set out in *Being and Time*, "Being-present-at-hand [is] a kind of Being which is *essentially inappropriate* to entities of Dasein's character. To avoid getting bewildered...the term "existence", as a designation of Being, will be allotted solely to Dasein" (Heidegger 1962, 42). And, he continues, "Dasein is never to be defined ontologically by regarding it as life plus something else" (Heidegger 1962, 50).

As I say, this idea is emphatically underlined in later writings, most obviously in the "Letter on Humanism". But if we follow the clue of the reference to "poetic" discourse in *Being and Time* then I think we can see that it is in "The Origin of the Work of Art" that it receives its most radical elaboration. In that essay above all, Heidegger proposes an understanding of the work of art as fundamental to the structure of what, in *Being and Time*, he called "existence". Ultimately for Heidegger we are the being that "exists" only as the one who "dwells poetically" or (to use Nietzsche's words) as "an artistically creative subject" (Nietzsche 2010, 36). However, that conception can be understood only

if we shift gear: we are not, according to Heidegger, simply “ontically” creative (makers of things in the world) but “ontologically” creative (world forming). This is probably a still too misleading way of putting it. Heidegger’s thought is certainly not that a particular being (“man”) “creates Being”, but rather that “only as long as Dasein *is* (that is, only as long as an understanding of Being is ontically possible), ‘is there’ Being” (Heidegger 1962, 255); it is the idea that “Being” (not entities) is in this way “dependent upon the understanding of Being”, and hence more generally that Being “is not” without Dasein (Heidegger 1993a, 211). This may be a less misleading formulation – but it is still fairly baffling. I will do what I can to explain it.

8. I want to begin an engagement with Heidegger’s approach to the question of what occurs when “Dasein *is*” by identifying a remarkable structural parallel between Heidegger’s critique of traditional anthropology and his critique of traditional aesthetics. First, let us look at the question of “man”. Perhaps the crudest interpretation is the biologism of what John McDowell has called “bald naturalism” (McDowell 1994, 67). On this interpretation, as Heidegger puts it, “the essence of man consists in being an animal organism” (Heidegger 1993c, 229). Naturalism is rife today in philosophy, but it is a position which is rejected not only by Heidegger (massively and comprehensively) but also by most traditional philosophical anthropology. For the traditional philosopher, however, the naturalistic definition is typically regarded as merely “insufficient,” and can be “overcome or offset” by attributing the human animal with a unique and distinctive trait: “man” is part of creation but is also unique in that he is “created in the image of God”, or is the animal which has the power of “reason”, the character of a “person”, the

possessor of “language” or “consciousness” or “mind” or ‘soul” or whatever. “Man” is, in short, “life plus”. That is, “metaphysics thinks of man *on the basis* of animalitas” even if he is then “not equated with beasts” (Heidegger 1993c, 227).

Heidegger’s critique of traditional philosophical anthropology involves a certain reversal of it. Crudely put: we are not to understand the humanity of the human on the basis of its animality – on the basis, that is, of the presence in the world of a certain kind of (living) thing – but, rather, the animality of the human on the basis of its humanity. In a crucial respect Heidegger agrees with the traditional anthropology: yes, says Heidegger, the entity that we are, what we have called “man”, is unique. But: not because we are an entity in the world which has some special property. We *are* at all, Heidegger will say, only in virtue of our Being-understanding. But this does not mean there is an animal in the world with a certain feature or property. Rather it is a way of elucidating what takes place when there is the *phenomenological event* that one can call “openness to entities *as* entities”. According to Heidegger, this is not to be thought on the basis of a human-animal presence (*homo animalis*). Animals – living beings – certainly have something like “access to entities within the world”. But such access is, he argues, always circumscribed by the Being of the animal such that it has no access to them “as such”; no access to entities in their Being. The old idea of the difference of “man” is then newly expressed with the thought that Dasein “is” only in an understanding of Being, and hence that “the essence of man consists in his being more than merely human” (Heidegger 1993c, 245).

This is not the idea of “human-animal plus”, in an additive sense. Indeed, going beyond traditional philosophical anthropology, Heidegger draws the old contrast between “man” and “living creatures” in a way which fundamentally rules out understanding the former on the basis of the latter. For living things “are as they are without standing outside their Being as such and within the truth of Being” (Heidegger 1993c, 229), and the existence-character of our Being (this “standing outside its Being”) is *not* a standing outside its essence. On the contrary, Dasein “preserves in such standing the essential nature of its Being” (Heidegger 1993c, 229). In short, since Dasein is actual only in an understanding of Being, to be other than simply the human animal is of the essence of the human. On this conception, animals, including *human-animals* qua *animals*, have an exclusively life-interest-relational “openness” to the world. By contrast, even while, as Wittgenstein puts it (and I think there is no doubt that Heidegger would accept this), our concepts really are “the expression of *our* interest” (Wittgenstein 1958, §570), the openness characteristic that belongs to *human-animals* qua *Dasein* is openness to entities *as* entities. On this view, our being-actual is irreducible to an animal presence in the world. Indeed, in so far as we can be said to be present in the world this must be grasped on the basis of our distinctive existence character – on the basis of our standing outside our human-animal Being and within “the clearing” or the “openness of Being” (Heidegger 1993c, 252).

Let us now turn from the question of man to the question of art. I shall do so in a way that brings out the structural parallels in Heidegger’s accounts, but, it should be noted that I am also giving an outline of the first crucial stages in the development of Heidegger’s essay “The Origin of the Work of Art”.

Perhaps the crudest interpretation of art is, as we have noted, a kind of brutal physicalism: “works of art are as naturally present as are things. The picture hangs on the wall like a rifle or a hat... Beethoven’s quartets lie in the storerooms of the publishing house like potatoes in a cellar.” On this interpretation the essence of art consists in being a special kind of thing: “all works have this thingly character” (Heidegger 1993a, 145). This conception is rejected not only by Heidegger (massively and comprehensively) but by pretty much everyone, including by traditional philosophical aesthetics. For the traditional philosopher the brutal physicalist definition is regarded as “crude and external”. Nevertheless, it is only regarded as “insufficient”, and can be satisfactorily “overcome or offset” by attributing the art-work-thing with the right kind of trait: a work of art *is* a thing, but it is also unique in that it is “a thing to which something else adheres” or “a piece of equipment that is fitted out in addition with an aesthetic value that adheres to it”: the work of art attains its art status because it is, in short, a “thing plus”, it is, for example, “a symbol” (Heidegger 1993a, 146).

This conception is, Heidegger suggest, “the formulation native to aesthetics” (Heidegger 1993a, 146). Aesthetics thus thinks of art-works on the basis of their thingly character even if it they are not then simply equated with things. “The way in which aesthetics views the artwork from the outset is dominated by the traditional interpretation of all beings”: namely, in terms of their presence-at-hand (Heidegger 1993a, 164).

Heidegger's critique of traditional aesthetics involves a certain reversal of it: we are not to understand what is at work in a work of art, the work's workly character, on the basis of its presence in the world – on the basis, that is, of its (formed) thingly character – rather while “the thingly feature in the work should not be denied... it must be conceived by way of the work's workly nature” (Heidegger 1993a, 165). What then, according to Heidegger, is the kind of “actuality” that belongs to the work of art if it is not presence-at-hand? Or, to ask our question again: what occurs when there is a work of art if not a new presence in the world? Heidegger's answer is as clear as it is extraordinary. Yes, the work of art is not a mere thing, but it is not a thing with a special (aesthetic) property either. The “being actual” of a work of art simply cannot be understood in terms of the presence of some thing in the world, whatever properties we attribute to it. Rather, according to Heidegger, the work of the work of art is precisely that which makes possible a world within which things with such-and-such properties can *be*, and be present at all: “the work belongs, as work, uniquely within the realm that is opened up by itself” (Heidegger 1993a, 167), that is, “the work as work *sets up a world*” (Heidegger 1993a, 170).

9. We can see here a clear parallel between Heidegger's treatment of the question of man and the question of art. The parallel is this. Just as human-animality is not the basis for understanding the distinctive manner of human “being there” (which is its unique dignity) but rather the reverse, so also the thingly character of the work of art is not the basis for understanding the work's “actuality” (which is what occurs when there is art) but rather the reverse. Indeed, “as long as we supposed that the actuality of the work lay primarily in its thingly structure we were going astray” (Heidegger 1993a, 164). Moreover, when the

“actuality” of both is understood adequately they are not first of all presences in the world at all, but, to use the language of *Being and Time*, “worldhood” itself belongs to them.

10. According to Heidegger, then, the crucial and crucially distorting preconceptions of traditional philosophical aesthetics are ontological: “the way in which aesthetics views the artwork from the outset is dominated by the traditional interpretation of all beings” (Heidegger 1993a, 164). Beginning in this way with the thingly character of the work, traditional theories have conceived the distinctive features of the art-work by way of features produced by an artist who makes the work. The art-work is thought of as a subset of man-made things or equipment in a broad sense, where the latter are themselves thought on the model of “formed matter.” For Heidegger, however, not only does this tradition give us a distorted conception of the art-work but also of equipment in general. In a formulation resonant of Wittgenstein, Heidegger urges that to get rid of these thought-shackles we must “simply describe some equipment without any philosophical theory” (Heidegger 1993a, 158). To assist in this demonstration, Heidegger plumps for, and apparently stumbles on by chance, “a common sort of equipment – a pair of peasant shoes” (Heidegger 1993a, 158). He then adds, equally nonchalantly, that since we do not have to have a real pair of peasant shoes in front of us we can even describe them by way of a pictorial representation, “a well-known painting by Van Gogh,” for example (Heidegger 1993a, 158). What, then, will this well-known equipment-picture (see Wikipaintings 2013) show us? Will it do to say something to the effect that it shows us that shoes are commonly made of leather soles and uppers joined by thread so as to make “gear to clothe feet”? But surely that’s not enough. Faithful as it may be to the *look* of the

gear, Van Gogh's picture seems not up to the job of disclosing the equipment-character of the equipment, since for that we really need to see the equipment *in use*: "only [in use] are they what they are" (Heidegger 1993a, 159).

At this point, and drawing freely on the analysis of equipment in *Being and Time*, Heidegger seeks to disclose the equipment-character of the equipment in terms of its "readiness-to-hand" for its user. In the language of *Being and Time*, the equipment is most "primordially disclosed" as what it is not when their wearer just looks at shoe-Things with their various properties, on the contrary "the less the peasant woman thinks about the shoes while she is at work, or looks at them at all, or is even aware of them" the more unveiledly does she encounter them (Heidegger 1993a, 159). On this account, looking at a pair of shoes, empty and unused, can offer nothing to our understanding of the equipmental character of this equipment. Van Gogh's (no doubt highly valued) picture of the look of shoes, then, to echo Plato, is at several removes from the truth of the equipment, and is *no help at all*.

At this point, famously, Heidegger's text takes a backward step: "And yet."

And yet. From the dark opening of the worn insides of the shoes the toilsome tread of the worker stares forth. In the stiffly rugged heaviness of the shoes there is the accumulated tenacity of her slow trudge through the far-spreading and ever-uniform furrows of the field swept by a raw wind. On the leather lie the dampness and richness of the soil. Under the soles stretches the loneliness of the field-path as evening falls. In the shoes vibrates the silent call of the earth, its quiet gift of

the ripening grain and its unexplained self-refusal in the fallow desolation of the wintry field. This equipment is pervaded by uncomplaining worry as to the certainty of bread, the wordless joy of having once more withstood want, the trembling before the impending childbed and shivering at the surrounding menace of death. This equipment belongs to the earth, and it is protected in the world of the peasant woman. From out of the protected belonging the equipment itself arises to its resting-within-itself.

Heidegger wonders (apparently without a hint of irony) whether he is reading too much into the picture here. The peasant woman “simply wears them.” And, indeed, the equipmental character of the shoes was bound up with that fundamentally practical relation. But Heidegger rejects the view that in use the user’s relation to the gear is simply “blind”. As he put it in *Being and Time*, and challenging the ancient connection of “theory” with “sight” (“*theorein*” meaning “to look at”, “to see”) he insists that “practical behaviour is not ‘atheoretical’ in the sense of sightlessness” (Heidegger 1962, 99). So the simple wearing of the shoes is not so simple, and according to Heidegger “when she takes off her shoes late in the evening, in deep but healthy fatigue, and reaches out for them again in the still dim dawn, or passes them by on the day of rest” the content made manifest by Van Gogh in Heidegger’s description of it is not alien to her: “*she knows all this* without noticing or reflecting” (Heidegger 1993a, 160).

At once astonishing and embarrassing this reading of Van Gogh’s picture of shoes and the invocation of the peasant woman’s world effects a remarkable confluence of two strands in Heidegger’s analysis of art, a coming together of two contextual chains, one

wider, one narrower, which are suddenly laced together in the backward step: on the one hand, the removal of the distorting shackles of traditional philosophical aesthetics regarding the being of equipment (narrow context), and, on the other hand, what Derrida calls “the poetics of the soil” (Derrida 1987, 345) that Heidegger constantly invokes in his engagement with the question concerning modern technology (wider context). Let’s follow this interlacing.

11. Derrida worries that Heidegger’s choice of the Van Gogh picture is fundamentally bound up with “pathetic-fantasmatic-ideological-political investments” that are not worthy of serious attention (Derrida 1987, 312). Perhaps, then, the wider context should be disentangled from the narrow one, which could get along equally well without Van Gogh’s picture. However, I am not sure such disentangling is either wise or necessary. As Derrida himself acknowledges, Heidegger’s reflections on art belongs to “a great discourse on place” (Derrida 1987, 266) with respect to which questions of rootedness and autochthony, and the completely undeniable sense that the *old* rootedness is being *lost* in this age, are fundamental. Moreover, even if Heidegger *looks back* at the old rootedness (which he surely does), there really is no call from him for a *return* to the old ways, nor any kind of nostalgic puritanism concerning the use of new technologies. Surely, the example is a good one for Heidegger.

But wait. Even if the picture can do a remarkable double service for Heidegger it is not so clear that it works as a good Heideggerian example of “great art”. For according to Heidegger the work of the great work must go beyond a mere phenomenological *recalling*

of a world, and must belong to *the cultivation of place* – the forging of a new “open relational context” (Heidegger 1993a, 167) or “world” wherein Dasein may dwell (Heidegger 1993a, 170). The great work of art must therefore open up the very world in which it emerges “as a thing which has been brought forth” (Heidegger 1993a, 185): “the bringing forth places this being [viz. the work of art] in the open region in such a way that what is to be brought forth first clears the openness of the open region into which it comes forth.” (Heidegger 1993a, 187). Patently, the well-known picture by Van Gogh only invokes a world of rootedness that once was, and is now being lost. It does nothing to contribute to a new ground in which humans’ nature and all their works may flourish in the technological age. The world of the peasant woman had its time, but that time is now over and new technologies, “incomparably different from all earlier technologies” (Heidegger 1993b, 319), increasingly hold sway. Van Gogh’s painting belongs to the past not the future. So it is a bad example. And yet.

And yet, the fact that the picture attests to a world that is, in this age, being lost simply does not mean that its capacity to set up a world is simply negated or denied. Indeed, what Derrida himself recalls as the most abiding impression of the shoes in the Van Gogh painting should be integrated into the interlacing of the shoes beyond (but not contradicting) Heidegger’s attribution of their peasantliness: “they might be made in order to remain-there” (Derrida 1987, 260). Derrida immediately asks “But what does *remain* mean in this case?” a question which takes him towards what he considers to be the “strong necessity of Heidegger’s questioning” (Derrida 1987, 262); namely, its elaboration of “a great discourse on place.” That *remaining-there* belongs to the

impression or experience made by the shoes recalls to us that the rootedness that is being lost *still lasts*, remains in us, *still haunts* our “contemporary” being-here. In a remarkable commentary on Heidegger’s philosophy as a philosophy of place, as “a philosophy of settlement” (Scruton 2012, 232), Roger Scruton summarizes the temporal “present” of every settlement as one in which “the dead and the unborn are also present” (Scruton 2012, 234). The time of settlement is one which thus “connects us to worlds before and after us” (Scruton 2012, 234). It is in terms of its capacity to *set up the remaining-there* of the old world as still haunting settlement in this age that Van Gogh’s picture of shoes contributes to repairing the loss of the old rootedness. The affective “spirit” of such a work, Scruton suggests,

leans naturally in the direction of history and the conservation of the past: not from nostalgia, but from a desire to live as an enduring consciousness among things that endure. The true spirit of conservation sees the past not as a commercialized “heritage”, but as a living inheritance, something that lasts because it lives in me. To exist fully in time is to be aware of loss and to be working always to repair it. (Scruton 2012, 234)

If one comes to see that the past does not belong to the dead but *remains-there* “in me” then the work of the work of art, even when its work is the remembrance of things past, can still contribute to the cultivation of place or the setting up of settlement: it can still do work of repairing, building and rebuilding the openness of the open region as something which gathers together an “us”, an intergenerational “us” that includes the dead and the yet to be born, setting up the place where this “we” dwells. Setting up a world brings forth such a settlement for us.

13. So here is Heidegger's counter-traditional and rather paradoxical position on the work of art. The work does not appear as a thing among things in a given setting of human ones. Rather, it is the work that first gathers an "us" together, and gathers this "us" along with an "earthly" ground so that Dasein's being-there is settled-there. Here we have a second, and equally extraordinary, reversal of tradition. It is not that we first have an entity "man" that creates "art objects", but a happening which lets humans (and all their works) dwell there, settled in the overtness of beings.

Before developing Heidegger's conception of the work of the work of art further, it is worth remarking that the paradoxical position we have just reached – namely that *the work of art clears the clearing* which "grants and guarantees to us humans a passage to those beings that we ourselves are not, and access to the being that we ourselves are" (Heidegger 1993a, 178) – seems to mark a profound shift from the thinking of *Being and Time*, thus contradicting the claim I made at the start that there is no significant turn in Heidegger's thinking. For, it could be argued, in the earlier work Heidegger had very clearly *retained*, albeit in a distinctive way, the anthropological conception of the "*lumen naturale* in man", asserting that it belongs to "the existential ontological structure of this entity, that it *is* in such a way as to be its 'there'. To say that it is 'illuminated' [*erleuchtet*'] means that as Being-in-the-world it is cleared [*gelichtet*] in itself, *not through any other entity*, but in such a way that it *is* itself the clearing" (Heidegger 1962, 171, penultimate emphasis mine). Thus for the early Heidegger it is, as it were, still "man" (*qua* Dasein) that is the origin of the disclosed clearing in which we dwell, and in

the later essay “The Origin of the Work of Art”, by contrast, the work of “opening the open region” is, it seems, the work of *another entity* – the art-work. Is this a shift in Heidegger’s view? Or is it a sharpening of his account of “the structure of this entity” that has Being-in-the-world as its basic state? A sharpening which seeks to achieve a gear shift with respect to the thought that “man” is an “artistically creative subject”? Such is the suggestion I will defend in the rest of this essay.

14. In the course of the early stages of the essay “The Origin of the Work of Art” Heidegger develops an account which attributes an autonomy and effect to the work of art far beyond anything one might attribute to a mere thing and, indeed, even beyond a thing to which aesthetic properties adhere. On “the usual view” (Heidegger 1993a, 143), the art-work arises out of the activity of an artist and any effects of the work are really effects produced by the artist by means of the work. The artist brings into being a being which otherwise would not be – it is an act of creation made by the “handicraft” of the artist (Heidegger 1993a, 146).

As we have seen, however, according to Heidegger, the “actuality” of a work of art cannot be reduced to the presence of a thing, not even the presence of a thing of beauty (whether in the sense of being a thing with the property of being beautiful, or as a thing with beautiful properties). Indeed, for Heidegger, the whole idea of conceiving the “actuality” of the work as “an object created by a subject” belongs to traditional metaphysics, a tradition in which Being is interpreted, in the first instance, in terms of presence. But this conception – the conception which thus belongs to traditional

aesthetics and the “art industry” (Heidegger 1993a, 166) – does not, according to Heidegger, capture, or do justice to, the real “work-being” of the work (Heidegger 1993a, 166) which, even if it does not have no object-being cannot be understood on the basis of its object-being. The work, Heidegger insists, opens up a world and it presences within the realm that is opened up by the work of the work itself: “the work opens up a world and keeps it abidingly in force” (Heidegger 1993a, 169).

This role seems completely mysterious and magical. How could such a power be attributed to a work of art, however its actuality is conceived, however great it may be? The work is somehow to set up a world without which even the artist who made it could not *be* what he or she is. Re-iterating the basic dualism of *Being and Time* between entities which do and entities which do not have Dasein’s character of Being, Heidegger states that “a stone is worldless. Plant and animal likewise have no world... The peasant woman, on the other hand, has a world because she dwells in the overtness of beings (Heidegger 1993a, 170). Yet this existence as dwelling is possible, it seems, only because of the extraordinary work of what Heidegger is calling a “work of art”. And the artist himself or herself does not escape this. The artist too is only insofar as he or she is in a world. And that presupposes that there is a world opened up by the work of the art-work, something which the art-work alone can “establish it in its structure” (Heidegger 1993a, 170).

Heidegger’s claim is, in fact, quite general. The work of art, as an origin of a world, clears the open region in which “what is” appears as itself. That is, the environment “comes

forth” as itself “for the very first time” by the work of the work: “the rock or stone first becomes rock or stone”, and similarly, the work of the work allows “colours to glow, tones to sing, the word to say” (Heidegger 1993a, 171). Picking up on the word invited by the peasant’s plodding and weary ways, Heidegger calls what thus appears as itself “the earth”: “in setting up a world, the work sets forth the earth. The work lets the earth be an earth” (Heidegger 1993a, 172). Again, what happens when there is an art-work is not the coming into presence of a new thing. Rather, “an open place occurs”, “there is a clearing” (Heidegger 1993a, 178): “beings can be as beings only if they stand within and stand out within what is cleared in this clearing. Only this clearing grants and guarantees to us humans a passage to those beings that we ourselves are not, and access to the being that we ourselves are” (Heidegger 1993a, 178). And the work of clearing the open region is the work of the work of art, not the work of an artist. This is strikingly paradoxical. How should it be understood?

For Heidegger, there is a radical autonomy of the work of art vis-à-vis the artist. The human being, *qua* artist, is, he suggests, “like a passageway that destroys itself in the creative process” (Heidegger 1993a, 166). The work is made to do without the presence of the artist. That is, the work of the work must be capable of happening in the radical absence of the artist as the producer of an object. However, although the artist is in this sense “inconsequential” with respect to the work of the art-work, there is still the event of bringing forth (or creating) the work. Clearly, we need to say something about this.

15. Heidegger does not think that the actuality of the work as the “happening of truth” floats free of the art-work in its object-being. As we have seen, Heidegger’s point is only that the kind of thingly character that we have in view here has to be understood on the basis of the art character of the work and not the reverse. Nevertheless, we can still have regard to the activity of bringing forth of the work: the work involved in the activity of the artist. And, of course, Heidegger does not deny this at all. What he does deny, however, is that this kind of bringing forth can ever be of the same kind as the bringing forth that is involved in the making of a thing. And that is so even if what is brought forth is, in each case, by all appearances, “the same sort of thing” (Heidegger 1993a, 184). To understand this it will be helpful to attend to one more Heideggerian gear-shifting example, an example that is, conceptually speaking, the very opposite of the *opening up* of a world that belongs to the work of art. We need to attend to the gear shift in view in Heidegger’s account of the kind of *closing down* of a world that belongs to Dasein’s death.

Imagine a scene in which an old man is walking with his old dog. Both are alive. And thus both lives can naturally come to an end. Suppose that, on this walk, this happens. Both man and dog, for some reason, cease to live. Now, going by first appearances the end of the life that here occurs to both would seem “the same.” But, for Heidegger, while the movement towards the end of a dog’s life is essentially an event, a sequence of alterations or changes within the world, what he calls “perishing” [*Verenden*] (Heidegger 1962, 284), the movement towards the end of the man’s life is, in an important sense, a time-of-life that takes the man towards the end of any kind of being-in-a-world within

which such events or alterations take place. For the man who dies, as Wittgenstein puts it too, “death is not an event in life: we do not live to experience death” (Wittgenstein 1961, 6.4311), and ‘so too at death the world does not alter, but comes to an end” (Wittgenstein 1961, 6.431). In order to mark this contrast between the coming to an end of life in the case of an animal and of a man “*qua* Dasein” (Heidegger 1962, 291), the “living out” of one’s time-of-life in the man’s case is given a different name by Heidegger: it is the man’s “demise” [*Ableben*, literally: “living out”] (Heidegger 1962, 291). “Dasein never perishes,” says Heidegger (1962, 291). But as an *event*, a man’s demise also contrasts with his death. Death, for Heidegger, is not the event of demise but the *possibility* of no-longer-being-in-the-world that, as a possibility, faces every Dasein as long as it *is*. Heidegger calls “demise” the “intermediate phenomenon” between, on the one hand, the movement towards the end of life in an animal (“perishing”) and, on the other hand, the being-towards-death (“dying”) that every Dasein *qua* Dasein is. Dasein, whose *actuality* Heidegger defines in terms of its *possibilities* of Being, cannot but be *towards* this possibility of no-longer-having-possibilities. Dasein is “actual”, that is to say, only as long as its “lived out” being-there is being-towards-this-possibility (even if only in a derivative mode of evading it). Hence, “Dasein...can only demise as long as it is dying” (Heidegger 1962, 291).

Now, the case of the creation of the work of art can be seen to have a strikingly similar structure. We are trying to grasp the distinction between bringing forth as the creation of a work of art and bringing forth in the mode of making a thing, for example in artisanal handicraft. Again, going by first appearances, “we find the same procedure in the activity

of the potter and sculptor, of joiner and painter” (Heidegger 1993a, 184). Heidegger’s analysis of the difference here has deep parallels with his analysis of the difference between the perishing and the demise of an animal and a man. While the artisan brings forth the presence of something present within the world, makes a change or alteration to the world, “what looks like craft in the creation of a work is of a different sort” (Heidegger 1993a, 184). Here we do not simply have a new thing there but a coming into presence of a thing whose coming into presence “first clears the openness of the open region into which it comes forth” (Heidegger 1993a, 187). This is the kind of creation that occurs when there is a work of art. The “working on materials” that is involved here “looks like the employment of matter in handicraft” but, Heidegger insists, “it never is” (Heidegger 1993a, 189). In both cases, of course, something is produced. But while the product-thing retains an essential connection to its human producer in the world in which it came to be, the work of art “seems to cut all ties to human beings” and, like the shoes in Van Gogh’s picture, “stands on its own” (Heidegger 1993a, 191). And it is in this *remaining-there* that its “thrust” which opens the openness of beings occurs, a thrust that “transports us into this openness and thus at the same time transports us out” of our former “accustomed” and “long-familiar” “ties to world and earth” (Heidegger 1993a, 191). In short, just as death relates to the *end* of the world, so the work of art relates to the *beginning* of one, the beginning of a *new* settlement for humans and all their works.

16. Heidegger’s early work gives a central place to death, but it seems to have very little to say about birth. The latter term is typically only invoked when Heidegger delimits Dasein – and hence delimits what might be called the “living out” [*Ableben*] of Dasein’s

“everydayness” – as the “between” of “birth” and “death” (Heidegger 1962, 276, 427). But “death” in these contexts is always in inverted commas, and signifies death in the sense of an event of coming to an end of a life that lived (“demise” [*Ableben*]). And so “birth” here – also always in inverted commas – signifies the event-in-the-world at the other end: the event of child-birth, the beginning of a non-uterine existence. No, the question is whether there is a missing piece in the analytic of Dasein in *Being and Time* that would correspond to the clarification of the “existential-ontological” meaning of Dasein’s death: the meaning of Dasein’s birth.

I am making a case for supposing it is not missing, or not altogether missing. However, if Dasein’s birth unlike Dasein’s death is not obviously addressed in *Being and Time*, then, if the existential-ontological sense of Dasein’s birth is in question, this is more than made up for in “The Origin of the Work of Art”. If *Being and Time* shows that a human being can *demise* only in virtue of “dwelling mortally” as Dasein, so “The Origin of the Work of Art” shows in addition that a human being can *create* only in virtue of “dwelling poetically”.

To clarify this final thought it needs to be stressed that the being-actual of a work of art does not *only* require a creator but, recalling the notion of the curator I introduced earlier, also “those who preserve it”, those, that is, who let what is created “be the work it is” (Heidegger 1993a, 191). Of course, on Heidegger’s gear-shifted conception, preservers cannot be thought of as mere “appreciators”, those who know how to judge and award a work, those who possess an “aesthetisizing connoisseurship of the works qualities and

charms” (Heidegger 1993a, 191). Rather, the kind of “knowing” that belongs to “preservers” involves what in *Being and Time* Heidegger had called that “resoluteness” which is the condition for authentic existence: “knowing” which is preserving is “a sober standing within the awesomeness of the truth that is happening in the work” (Heidegger 1993a, 192). At issue here is not a sensitive appreciation of an object’s merits or interest – the kind of “viewing” of the work cultivated by the art-industry – rather it is a resolute remaining-there within the world-forming thrust of the work. This kind of remaining-there, settled in the work’s settlement, contrasts with the homelessness or lostness in what, in *Being and Time*, Heidegger had called the tranquil familiarity of the they. Thus Heidegger counters the contemporary clamour for “the new” in the art-market with an art-work which could bring about the irruption of a new settlement: a change not *in* beings but “*of* Being” (Heidegger 1993a, 197).

17. Heidegger has been talking about art, indeed, apparently about “great art”. However, at the end of the essay, drawing on the Greek conception of “*poiesis*” as a bringing forth out of unconcealment, Heidegger gathers his account together with the affirmation that “*all art is, in essence, poetry*” (Heidegger 1993a, 197). “Poetic” works are thus *very* broadly conceived by Heidegger, and not confined to the sort of linguistic creations that, in everyday language, we would call “poetical.” Nevertheless, works of art are conceived as primordially *discursive* in the sense that the “open region” is, as it were, a space of significance or a horizon of intelligibility within which there is “truth” in the propositional sense. However, and now following in reverse the transition in the passage from *Being and Time* with which this essay began, when we take our orientation in

thinking from this discursive horizon itself then even the greatest works of acknowledged art history pale by comparison to what must stand as *the* unsurpassably great discursive event: the happening of “actual language” (Heidegger 1993a, 198). Language, everyday language, is, ultimately, that created/preserved happening which, through a “founding leap” (Heidegger 1993a, 202), is “primal poesy” – it is the happening of Dasein’s “birth”: the “origin of man” as the *Da-sein* whose *Ab-leben* is *Da-Bleiben*.

There is no fundamental shift or turn in Heidegger’s thought, and in particular no serious modification to the idea, central to *Being and Time*, that “Dasein is ‘cleared’ in itself.” It had seemed that he later came to suggest that it is really cleared by art, or, rather, by the work of the work of art. But a closer examination shows no such shift: Dasein exists as the entity that is only in so far as there is openness of beings (Heidegger 1993a, 198), and it can be so only in virtue of being, in a gear-shifted sense, artistically creative.

It is with this, finally, that we can understand Heidegger’s enigmatic suggestion that art can effect a “decisive confrontation” with modern technology. This is possible because, with the work of art, we cannot but be concerned with a “realm” akin to modern technology. Heidegger’s point here is that a certain “*poiesis*” is internal to *all* mortal dwelling, even in the technological age. Indeed, Heidegger finds a sort of attestation for this in the fact that, for the Greeks, *technē* too names a kind of “bringing forth”, and in that sense is already understood as “something poetic” (Heidegger 1993b, 318). However, the contrast between the old and modern ways of revealing remains a deep one, and the latter a distinctive *threat*. As we have seen, “the revealing that rules throughout modern

technology has the character of a *setting upon* in the sense of a challenging forth” (Heidegger 1993b, 321), a revealing which thus “orders the actual as standing reserve” (Heidegger 1993b, 324). Settlement in the age of technology – indistinguishable here, there and everywhere – is thus becoming little more than the frenzied stationariness of life plus a convenience store and 24-hour petrol station.

As Scruton notes, Heidegger’s work constitutes an implicit effort at *resettlement*, exhorting us “to rediscover the path that leads to dwelling and building” (Scruton 2012, 233). Unfortunately, however, there seems precious little we can *do* to change our situation. In particular, as David Farrell Krell observes, “even our efforts to predict and control the hazards of technology...conform to the calculating, manipulative mode of technicised thought, hence contributing to the closure” (Krell 1986, 96). Nevertheless, as I have indicated, Heidegger’s questioning concerning technology opens onto a hope. It is not a matter of returning nostalgically to an old world now being lost, but the chance for creative resettlement within the modern: “*Thus we ask now: even if the old rootedness is being lost in this age, may not a new ground be created out of which humans’ nature and all their works may flourish even in the technological age?*”<sup>1</sup> For this to occur the “decisive confrontation” with technological enframing must come anew from “art”. This is not a call for an interminable arrival of new-but-is-it-art art-objects. For a world that is increasingly hardly a world at all – a becoming-stationary world – what Heidegger hangs on to is the possibility of new creators/preservers: those through whom what makes its way contributes to the forging, in this age, of a new settlement with technology.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the somewhat free but also rather wonderful translation of one of Heidegger's "Memorial Address" questions (Heidegger 2003, 93) proposed by Tino Sehgal and Asad Raza. The translation was sung by the participants in Sehgal's art-work "These associations" at Tate Modern in London, 2012. I dedicate this essay to Tino Sehgal and Asad Raza.