UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

Art in Public Places:
A Phenomenological Investigation into the Relation between
Art and the *Place-World*

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ABSTRACT

The Place of Art

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The aim of this these is to gain a deeper understanding of the relation between art and place. The principal difficulty we confront in attempting to engage with this problem is the broad usage of each of these two terms. Indeed, “art” could refer to almost any kind of thing, action or event, while “place” might denote a similarly expansive field of referents, from the “hereness” of my body, to the room, building, town or city where it is placed. What is interesting about the apparent relation of these two terms, however, is how closely we tend to associate specific kinds of art with certain sorts of places. Painting and sculpture are closely associated with the museum or gallery, for instance, while graffiti is very much of the street. There is a sense in which these different kinds of artworks reflect something of the varying styles of *accommodation* that those places offer up, therefore, which raises questions as to what these places might reveal to us about the kinds of artworks they *accommodate* and our relationship with them. This thesis takes the form of an extended phenomenological investigation and is inspired by the work of four key figures in particular: Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Martin Heidegger, Edward S. Casey and Jeff Malpas. A variety of art-place relations are analysed along the way, although especially close attention is paid to the following case studies: Pablo Picasso’s *Guernica,* John Cage’s *4’33”,* London’s Tate Modern museum, and Janet Cardiff’s celebrated sound walk *The Missing Voice (case study b).* The overarching question guiding these discussions is the following: How and to what extent does the audience’s relationship with the place in which the artwork is encountered shape the meaning of that encounter?

Keywords: [Place, Phenomenology, Art, Implacement, Museums]

Contents

Declaration and Copyright Statement 1

Acknowledgements 2

Abstract 3

List of Contents 4 - 6

Introduction 7

1. Literature Review: The History of the Art-Place Relation 13

1.1. Origins of the Classical Museum Model 13

1.2. The Intellectualist Conception of Art and the Encounter 15

1.3. The Museum of Modern Art, New York: The Original "White Cube" 20

1.4. The Role of the Curator 24

1.5. The Gallery as Site: from Minimalism to Museum Critique 27

1.6. Public Art and Site Specificity 30

1.7. Social Participation 34

1.8. Phenomenology 36

1.9. Conclusion 40

2. Picasso's Guernica 42

2.1. *Aboutness* and *The Principal Theme* 44

2.1.1. The Representationalist Account 46

2.1.2. The Expressivist Account 49

2.1.3. The *Principal Theme* as both *Sedimented* and *Embodied* 50

2.1.4. The *Principal Theme* in its Materiality and Specificity 55

2.2. Scale, Form, *Style* and *Historical Depth* 56

2.2.1. Scale and Form 57

2.2.2. *Historical Depth* 66

2.2.3. *Style* 68

2.3. Conclusion 70

3. The Work in Place 71
3.1. The Spanish Pavilion 71
3.1.1. *Accommodation* 73
3.1.2. The work contributes to place 78
3.1.3. The work is *of* a specific *Place-World* 83
3.2. From Paris to New York via Scandinavia and London 88
3.2.1. The Work and the *Place-World* 90
3.3. Guernica's Return to Spain 93

4. The Phenomenology of Art and Place 96
4.1. John Cage's *4'33"* 96
4.2. Place in its *Operative Intentionality* 98
4.3. *Implacement* 101
4.4. Silence in Cage and Merleau-Ponty 107
4.5. Site-Specificity 114
4.6. Social Participation 123
4.7. Musical Silence 125
4.8. Conceptual Art 128

5. The Museum 132
5.1. The Main Entrance 132
5.1.1. The Turbine Hall Commission 134
5.1.2. The *Flesh* of the Event 137
5.1.3. The Narcissistic Viewer 137
5.1.4. The Viewer through "Confusion" via the *"Separation-Difference"* 140
5.2. *Placedness* 144
5.2.1. Regionality 144
5.2.2. The *Placedness* and Singularity of a Life 147
5.3. Movement 150
5.2.1. Staying in Place 151
5.3.2. Moving within a Place 156

6. Beyond the Museum: Temporality in Janet Cardiff The Missing Voice (case study b) 164
6.1. The Missing Voice (case study b) 165
6.1.1. *The Preliminary Emotion* 165
6.1.2. "There are some things I need to show you" 168
6.2. "The city is infinite" 173
6.2.1. Temporality and *Implacement* 174
6.2.2. Temporality and Personal *Style* 181
6.2.3. *Institution* 192
6.3. "I have to leave now" 196

Conclusion 198

Bibliography 202

Introduction

This thesis is concerned with gaining insight into the relation between art and place. The first difficulty that stands out about this task is the broad usage of each of these two central terms. Indeed, "art" could refer to almost any kind of thing, action or event, while the term "place" might denote an equally broad range of fields, from the desk in front of me or the "hereness" of my body, to the rooms or buildings that hold them.[1] Place also encompasses much broader regions including towns, cities and countries, while under certain circumstances, we may even refer to some places as works of art and some works of art as places.

Another observation to be made is that different types of artworks are often very closely associated with particular kinds of places. Painting and sculpture are closely related with museums and galleries, for instance, while examples of sculptural works can also be found outside in public parks or plazas. What is more, many artistic works simply do not function within official places of art, as is the case with much urban art. Whilst it is not my intention to provide anything like a full definition of either "place" or "art" over the course of this thesis, it will nevertheless be useful to outline the kind of "relation" between them that I have in mind.

As Martin Heidegger draws to our attention in "The Origin of the Work of Art", artworks are often located in places where they are more present as "things" than as artworks.[2] When paintings or sculptures are being transported between museums, when they are being held in stores or auction houses, for instance, the art we consider to be held within them does not appear to be in effect, or at least not in the same way as when we encounter them in a gallery. While in some of these situations, art's apparent absence could be put down to its lack of accessibility, it is also the case that there are many instances in which artworks are accessible and yet their potential still does not seem to be realised.

A pianist might play jazz standards to a restaurant full of people at a very accomplished level, for instance, and yet their performance can take on more of a functional role in relation to that place. It becomes something more akin to decoration than art from within such a scene. The same could also be said of the paintings we find hanging on the walls of hotels, houses or businesses, or even some public artworks like statues or sculptures, which, when installed in busy urban environments, can be drowned out by all the noise and movement going on around them.

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[1] Edward Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009), 50.
[2] Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Ferrell Krell, (London: Routledge Classics, 2011), 145.

Just as some places, especially official art places like museums, galleries or concert halls, appear to actively *accommodate* certain types of artworks and their audiences, so there are many instances of places actively functioning against works of all varieties revealing themselves as art. The most obvious way to distinguish between places in circumstances like these would be on the basis of the conditions they offer up. By not offering up the conditions required by certain types of artworks to impose themselves effectively upon the *place-world* around them, not to mention the people present there alongside them, they do not *accommodate* what Mikel Dufrenne refers to as the artwork's "performance".[3]

Given place's diversity though, one has to wonder whether places can really be reduced to place "types" in this way. Does a street in London really offer up the same style of *accommodation* as one in Sydney? If not, then what would be the implications for artworks set up within them? What about museums or galleries? These types of places are usually considered to offer up inherently neutral spaces, blank backgrounds for art to be displayed upon. Yet, as places, they also have their own histories, audiences and significances relative to the broader *place-worlds* in which they are embedded. To what extent might such considerations shape the way we understand how their respective audiences' encounters with artworks unfold from within such places?

This investigation is primarily concerned with understanding how artworks stand in relation to public places, including city streets and neighbourhoods, public museums or concert halls. What is especially interesting about these kinds of settings is that, compared with private residences and places of work or study, they *accommodate* a far broader range of people and modes of dwelling. They make for more effective case studies for this reason, in so much as they better illustrate the variety of experiences different people can have from within a single place, which in turn enables us to assess how that experience might shape an audience's encounter with artworks from within. A principal objective of this thesis is to broaden understanding of what is referred to as "aesthetic experience" by describing the encounter in terms of its *placedness* and how the event of the encounter stands in relation to the broader *place-world* through which audiences live out their daily lives. Indeed, aesthetic experience is intimately intertwined with ordinary, everyday life in the sense that each informs and draws from the other. Due to that openness which is so intrinsic to their character, public places also allow us to recognise this relation all the more clearly due to the fact that their own relation with the broader *place-world* is laid bare. I will now outline the content of the chapters in order to show how these issues will be addressed.

The first chapter provides something of a literature review and broadly summarises the development of the art-place relation since the inauguration of the very first public art museums in the 1800s. Its focus is

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[3] Mikel Dufrenne, *Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, (Illinois: Northwestern University Press 1973), 6.

on western art exclusively and it draws from a range of predominantly non-philosophical sources in order to outline the parameters of this study. After reflecting on the origins of the classical museum model, our focus then turns to the intellectualist conceptions of art underpinning it. Next, the inauguration of the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York is to be discussed with close focus on the influence of its then director Alfred Barr. What concerns us here is how Barr's interpretation of modern art's evolution fundamentally altered how art came to be displayed and encountered thereafter. This is followed up by a brief analysis of the curator's role in setting the terms of the encounter and the emergence of minimalism and museum critique through modern gallery and museum contexts. Next, we move beyond the walls of the institution and into the *place-world* at large, with special attention being paid to public art, site-specificity, and the prominence of social participation in contemporary art. Finally, we consider why phenomenology in particular provides us with the conceptual tools to be able to confront the art-place relation effectively.

Having mapped out these general themes of interest, the purpose of chapters two and three is to provide broad insight into how the artwork might be understood to relate to place, and in turn, how place imposes itself upon the work's presentation and reception. Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* is taken as the leading case study in both of these chapters, a particularly useful artwork due to the complex relationship it harbours with a variety of different places. Chapter two is divided into two parts. The first reflects on the relation between the outward appearance of the work (its *"principal theme"*) and the meaning that can be drawn from it (its *"aboutness"*) through a critique of two "extension theories" referred to here as "representationalism" and "expressivism". The aim of this part is to distance this investigation from accounts of art that seek to derive meaning from the situations or circumstances considered to lie behind the artwork's creation. The second part then assesses more concretely the interplay between the work's scale, general form, *style* and the *historical depth* which can be perceived to manifest through it. This puts us in a much stronger position to reflect on the artwork's external relation with the place of its display.

The third chapter confronts the artwork more directly in this respect. The first step is to consider the style of *accommodation* that different places have offered *Guernica* over the course of its life, and how both audiences themselves and their manners of engagement with the paintings have also changed over that period. This leads to further discussion regarding how artworks contribute to places and how they can bring to expression something of the spirit of the *place-worlds* they emerge from. In addition to these, external factors including significant political events unfolding across the broader *place-world* also receive consideration here.

The leading case study in chapter four is John Cage's so-called "silent piece" *4'33"* (1952). In general, this thesis draws considerable insight from the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Edward S. Casey in particular,

whilst Martin Heidegger's concern with "dwelling", especially as that theme has been developed in the work of Jeff Malpas, also offers invaluable guidance. The benefit of adopting Cage's work as the case study here is that its performance actively subverts the way the concert hall is set up to function, which in turn allows for two key themes in Casey's work to be introduced that will prove vital to the development of chapters five and six.

The first of those themes is what Casey refers to as *"operative intentionality",* which is the way a place tends to function, move and present itself to the bodies that enter into it. The second theme is "implacement", a term that expresses how embodied subjects settle into a place, or, how the "corporeal intentionality" of the lived body responds to the *"operative intentionality"* of a given place. What the analysis of *4'33"* reveals is the capacity the artwork harbours to *re-implace* audiences in ways which do not necessarily conform with the *operative intentionality* of that place. Jeff Malpas's assessment of the distinction between the work in terms of its "objecthood" and "objectivity" through his reading of Heidegger's "The Origin of the Work of Art" is very useful for elaborating this potentiality inherent within all artworks. Similarly, a critical comparison between Cage's articulation of silence and Merleau-Ponty's allusions to silence in his later work enables us to consider how the body responds in kind. Finally, this chapter critically examines both Merleau-Ponty's and Heidegger's critiques of official art places like museums. The aim of this examination is to show how, by characterising official art places primarily in terms of how their *operative intentionality* is perceived to function, it is easy to lose sight of their intrinsic potential for being subverted and manipulated in new and interesting ways, as Cage's work illustrates. This brings into view how specialist art places relate with the broader *place-world* at large and enables us to confront two specific contexts in chapters five and six: the museum and the city.

Chapter five provides a phenomenological assessment of London's Tate Modern and is presented in three parts. The first part focuses on the Turbine Hall entrance exclusively, with a close focus on the different modes of *implacement* this place *accommodates* and the style of *operative intentionality* that tends to emerge there. Building on the analysis of Cage's *4'33"* carried out in the preceding chapter, Olafur Eliasson's *The Weather Project* (2003) is analysed to show how it *re-implaced* visitors in attendance by responding to and drawing directly from the *operative intentionality* of that place as it already tended to function. This particular work also brings into view an often-under-appreciated aspect of the art encounter, which is the "spontaneous community" that artworks displayed in public show a capacity for triggering. In order to understand how this occurs, Merleau-Ponty's notion of "intercorporeality" as outlined in his discussion of the "flesh" in the final chapter of *The Visible and the Invisible* is considered here. Considerable insight is also drawn from Casey's work on the glance and edges in this first part.

The second part examines this place in terms of what Malpas refers to in the essay "Place and Singularity" as its *"placedness"*, which is to say, how it stands in relation to the *place-world* in general and how its embeddedness within the local region of Southwark manifests a style of *accommodation* from within that is inherently regional in character. The case study adopted for this second part will be the series of artworks installed within the live art room known as "The Tanks" over the summer of 2018.

In the third part, the audience's "movement" through the main collection galleries becomes the principal focus by way of two movement modes that Casey underlines as essential to all places, that of "staying in" and "moving around" a place. Different exhibition situations are considered here with attention being drawn to how the kinds of the works exposed give rise to varying styles of collective movement. This not only comes to characterise how the building as a whole is experienced from within by the audience, but also how they experience the works themselves. I also argue that something of the character of the city in which the building is situated comes to be reflected in this movement.

Finally, chapter six confronts the issue of the encounter in its temporal unfolding, by way of a close analysis of Janet Cardiff's celebrated sound walk *The Missing Voice: case study b* (1999). Participants in this work listen to the recording through headphones and are guided by the artist around the Spitalfields area of East London, from Whitechapel Gallery to Liverpool Street Station a kilometre or so away. As is customary in all of Cardiff's walks, a narrative emerges through the artist's own observations and reflections as she makes her own way around this part of the city. This then allows us to consider the various ways in which the participant's *implacement* within the broader scene implicates itself in how the temporal sequence encoded within the work's *principal theme* comes to be experienced by participants.

The first part deals with the early stages of the encounter, a transition phase whereby the participant adjusts to the demands of the work and gradually comes to be *re-implaced* by it. Roman Ingarden's notion of the *"preliminary emotion"* proves useful here for articulating this early phase. However, it quickly becomes apparent that Ingarden's term cannot encompass the diverse range of media used by contemporary artists. With this in mind, the rest of the first part is dedicated to revealing the *principal theme* in terms of its *threshold capacity,* by which the audience's attention is drawn and maintained, thus enabling the encounter to develop.

In the second part, two important dimensions of the participant's *implacement* come under the spotlight in order to show how the body's own *corporeal style* effectively intones their experience of the temporal sequence embedded within the work's *principal theme*. The first aspect of *implacement* to be drawn attention to here is the participant's familiarity with the urban context that Cardiff guides them through. Previous experience encroaches upon the present and implicates itself in how able the participant is to

engage with the *principal theme.* There is a *stylistic* deviation between the artwork and the environment, both of which the participant must pay attention to in order to remain with the work. In turn, this impacts upon *how* the principal theme comes to be experienced. The second point is based upon the same premise of *stylistic* deviation as the first, but this time our focus is upon how the participant's own personal history. Past experiences through which their *corporeal style* has been cultivated come to the surface of perception and ultimately shape how the content of the work — especially our relationship with the principal speaker who guides us — comes to develop. Merleau-Ponty's allusions to time and the intertwining of past, present and future in the working notes of *The Visible and the Invisible* provide the conceptual foundations for this second part.

In the third part of chapter six, we consider the end of the encounter, that moment when the participant is no longer so deeply immersed in the sound walk and returns to a more average style of engagement with the immediate environment, without guidance from the work. This section provides the opportunity to reflect on what has been learned through the previous two sections, and to contrast how the world now presents itself without the work.

By placing emphasis on the audience's *implacement* in relation to the artwork through the event of its encounter, this thesis presents a novel approach to thinking about art and our relationship with it. Once we come to realise that the effectiveness of an artwork's encounter depends heavily upon the stability of the audience's *implacement* in relation to it, we come to see how a significant part of what the artwork does is *re-implace* us within its surrounding environment on the terms set by its own *principal theme*. The artwork always stands in close relation with its surrounding environment in this way, which also means that the surrounding environment holds sway when it comes to how that encounter comes to unfold. Indeed, in addition to the discovery that the artwork *re-implaces* us in relation to the *place-world*, another vital point that this thesis draws attention to is how different places, through their capacity to *accommodate*, ultimately bring aspects of the work to the fore which might have otherwise remained hidden.

Chapter One - Literature Review: The History of the Art-Place Relation

In this chapter I will provide a brief history of the art-place relation with close attention being paid to the museum context and urban spaces. Sections 1.1 - 1.3 of this chapter will be dedicated to outlining the evolution of the public art museum from its earliest manifestations in the 1800s through to the emergence of the modern museum in the late 1920s. Along the way, we will also examine how theoretical conceptions of art, and the role of the viewer in relation to it, have been heavily shaped by the layout and set-up of these places. Section 1.4 will then be concerned with the role of the curator in relation to the institution, before we move on to reflect on the way artists themselves have engaged with these official art places in section 1.5, first through minimalism and then by way of museum critique. For sections 1.6 and 1.7, we will then move beyond the museum walls and consider site-specificity as it relates to urban contexts, as well as social participation processes as they relate to the same environment. Finally, section 1.8 will consider why the phenomenology in particular provides the conceptual tools required to confront the art-place relation effectively.

1.1. Origins of the Classical Museum Model

> For over a century the museum has been the most prestigious and authoritative place for seeing original works of art. Today, for most people in Western society, the very notion of art itself is inconceivable without the museum.[4]

Museums have for a long time shaped the way we think about art. From the artists who create artworks to the audiences, critics, historians and theorists who go there to see them, the museum is the quintessential place of the art encounter. The public museum model that the majority of people are likely to be most familiar with is what Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach refer to as "The Universal Survey Museum". The Louvre in Paris, The National Gallery in London, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, are all examples of this type, their function being to provide the broadest possible overview of art history through their permanent collections.

This model evolved out of former royal art collections in the eighteenth century. Whilst the Louvre was famously declared a public museum during the French Revolution, others such as the Dresden Gallery (1743) and the Viennese Royal Collection (1770) did in fact precede it.[5] The transition of collections from royal houses into the public domain was a consequence of broader political developments across Europe at the time, during the period generally referred to as The Enlightenment.

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[4] Carol Duncan & Alan Wallach, "The Universal Survey Museum," in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*, ed. Bettina M. Carbonell, (Massachusetts, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell, 2004), 46-62. 51.
[5] Ibid., 54-55.

Immanuel Kant's 1774 essay "An Answer to the Question, What is Enlightenment?" represents an attempt to capture the mood amongst intellectuals of the time. Kant puts forth a vision of a future society that is free from despotic governments and monarchies, and in which, each person would have the "freedom to make public use of one's reason in all matters".[6] The public museum was to play a vital role in society's transformation, by promoting a sense of public ownership, which in turn would fundamentally alter the relationship between artworks and audiences.[7] Once these institutions had been set up, one no longer required a formal invitation to a palace in order to encounter great artworks, for in the context of the museum, the viewer was simply exercising their public right to education as a citizen of the state.[8]

Along with these changes came a notable shift in terms of display. Whereas previously, collections had been organised in accordance with the tastes of the families who owned them, and so were in-keeping with the decoration of their houses, the contents of the new museum collections were organised according to enlightenment principles. The Viennese Royal Collection in 1776 is one such example, where works were arranged by national school and art-historical period, with uniform frames and labels, combined with programmes of organised tours. A walk through the museum was a walk through the history of art. Art history quite literally took both shape and place in this way.[9] As early as 1776 then, many of the standard features of the modern museums we are familiar with today were already in place. However, it was not just from within that such ideology manifested itself, but also in the architectural features of these new buildings:

> The museum's physical prominence and monumental appearance signal its importance. (…) By employing such forms as the Greco-Roman temple front, the dome of the Pantheon, or coffered ceilings, the museum, along with other public buildings, asserts its descent from the ideological, historical and political reality of imperial Rome.[10]

Architectural form combined with the arrangement, display, and the sheer volume of works held within, to organise and dictate the audience's visit just as a script would a performance.[11] John Falks claims that the museum functions as a "behaviour setting" for this reason, according to which, all visitors tend to act in a similar way.[12] They perform what Duncan describes in *Civilising Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* as a kind

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[6] Kant, Immanuel, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?", In *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History and Morals.* Trans. Ted Humphrey. 41-49. (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett, 1984), 42.
[7] Duncan & Wallach,"The Universal Survey Museum", 59.
[8] Donald Preziozi. "Brain of the Earth's Body". In *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*, 82-92. 86.
[9] Duncan & Wallach,"The Universal Survey Museum", 57.
[10] Ibid., 52
[11] Ibid., 53
[12] Lynn D. Dierking & John Falks, *The Museum Experience,* (Washington: Whaleback Books, 1992), 65.

of ritual that reinforces the ideological norms of western society by encouraging us to marvel at its achievements, thus asserting its global power and influence.[13]

Emma Barker has challenged Duncan on this point, arguing that such a position assumes a passive subject rather than an intentional viewer who brings their own understanding and knowledge with them into the museum space.[14] According to Barker, whilst public museums do hold considerable influence over the selection of works and their display, the viewer still maintains some autonomy relative to them, i.e., they are still able to think critically. A tension arises here then, between how the museum guides and informs those people who enter into it and the autonomy of the audience in relation to the works they are guided towards.

This last point will be returned to toward the end of section 1.3. At this juncture, there are three main observations to be drawn from what we have looked at so far. To begin with, the transfer of artworks from private royal collections and into the public domain fundamentally altered the audience-artwork relation. Secondly, this, it has been argued, was considered to consolidate all the more firmly the viewer's own understanding of their relationship with that society as a whole. The museum was set up to cultivate citizenship in this way. Finally, the combination of architectural signification and systems of display orientated the viewer toward a specific style of encounter which in turn reflected the ideals of the period. In the following section, we will consider the influence that this understanding as fostered within the earliest manifestations of the museum still exerts today.

1.2. The Intellectualist Conception of Art and the Encounter

Along with these public art collections emerged a new citizen of the state, who was free to "make public use of [their] reason".[15] As Paula Findlen remarks, the museum created "an impermeable physical barrier" between the individual and the outside world, and opened a space through which they were encouraged to improve themselves through education.[16] The compulsion toward categorising artworks in historical or stylistic terms was a hallmark of the enlightenment period, but it is the way in which that approach to organising and appreciating works of art still influences the way we think about art today which concerns us here.

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[13] Carol Duncan, *Civilising Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*, (New York: Routledge. 1995), 114-115.
[14] Emma Barker, *Contemporary Cultures of Display,* (London: Open University, 1999), 14.
[15] Kant, "An Answer to the Question", 42.
[16] Paula Findlen, "Texts and Contexts: Defining Museal Space", in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts,* ed. Bettina Messias Carbonell, (Malden – US, Oxford – UK, Chichester – UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2012), 23-46. 39.

Ernst Gombrich, for instance, whose *The Story of Art* is by far the most widely read art history book there is, characterises the encounter as an intellectually informed act of observation, refined over time by learning. According to his view, "we must learn to see if we are to enjoy art", for the brain is a "marvellous sorting machine" with the capacity to process a vast range of impressions and which naturally establishes categories and subcategories, upon which judgements are made.[17] By learning about the works in museum collections and how "to see" them, museum visitors were able to become art connoisseurs. Benjamin Ives Gilman, secretary of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts from 1893 to 1925, describes connoisseurship in the following terms:

> Connoisseurship in its highest form implies an endowment and training capable of judging a work of art upon both internal and external evidence, both visually and by documents, both technically and scientifically, from the point of view of both maker and beholder, craftsman and historian.[18]

For Gombrich, a connoisseur is a person who has studied a sufficient range of both great and mediocre artworks from a variety of different schools and periods. What they seek to discover within these works is the "self-transcending value" which allows them to pass judgement.[19] In terms of what the artist is trying to achieve, Gombrich borrows from Plato his notion of the forms. The artist strives for unattainable perfection. Whether that be through representational or abstract projects is irrelevant for Gombrich because the problems that the artist attempts to solve are drawn from the art's own past. Art exists beyond subjective experience and objective fact, a third dimension according to his view, and an attempt to grasp the inherent nature of nature itself.[20] As problems are solved, new ones will inevitably emerge, therefore, just as within the sciences. Gombrich draws parallels between the arts and sciences for what he perceives to be their incessant searching for their own respective forms of truth.[21] To appreciate art is to understand this quest, which is another aspect it is considered to share in common with the sciences.

For Gombrich, the museum is a shrine to art and a visit there should be performed accordingly. The viewer should be in awe of their surroundings and enter with the expectation of seeing something of greatness achieved. Awe is derived from both one's knowledge of art history and the actual experience of its greatest achievements from within this context. Looking at art is an intellectual pastime — the viewer interprets and appreciates the visual data relative to the aesthetic problems posed by art history itself.[22] For example, Van

[17] Ibid., 199.
[18] Benjamin Ives Gilman. "Aims and Principles of the Construction and Management of Museums of Fine Art", in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts,* ed. Bettina Messias Carbonell, (Malden – US, Oxford – UK, Chichester – UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2012), 413-421. 415.
[19] Ernst. H. Gombrich, "Art and Self-Transcendance", in *Ideals and Idols,* (London: Phaidon Press, 1979), 130.
[20] Ibid., 125.
[21] Ibid., 126.
[22] Ibid., 125.

Gogh set himself the challenge of balancing the six essential colours of painting (red, blue, yellow, orange, lilac, green) on canvas. Whilst Van Gogh discovered this challenge (or aesthetic "problem") independently, he first of all needed to comprehend how paintings preceding his own had tended to function. This is what Gombrich means by art as a "third world" to be considered apart from subjective and objective reality, since the problems which arise are specific to the craft.[23] But what about those instances in which the work seems to do something other than simply address the craft? What about when the work is used to convey some sort of meaning?

> What counts for the artist, it may be argued, is not the acquisition of skill but the expression of the self. The theory of 'abstract expressionism' concentrated indeed on the artist's mark as graphological trace of his spontaneous and unique gesture, which thus became a means of 'self-discovery'. But as a historian I would reply that the problems and values of art - including even those of abstract expressionism - have emerged from the problems and values of the craft. It is a fact of history that most of the great artists of the Western tradition have felt involved with the solution of problems rather than with the expression of their personality.[24]

Gombrich believed that the approach adopted by the abstract expressionists was born of the realisation that beauty was a socially and historically dependent value and so was ultimately unattainable. In consequence, the "only value left to the artist was fidelity to himself".[25] The so-called "action painters" are characterised as historically conscious to the extent that they recognised the futility of trying to capture something that so many others had attempted and failed to capture before them. Their reaction was instead to focus on the only aspect of the craft that really stood firm through time, which was the act of painting itself.

By focusing on the craft exclusively in this way, Gombrich reduces a vast range of intentions, understandings and approaches to a single, homogenous project, and does so to undermine what he describes as "metaphysical" conceptions of art.[26] However, particularly with regard to the so-called "action painters", their influence extended far beyond their craft. For example, Allan Kaprow, the artist who invented "happenings", explains in his 1958 essay "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock", that whilst Pollock certainly "created some magnificent paintings", he also "destroyed painting".[27] The technique of dripping paint directly onto a canvas spread out before him on the floor meant a great deal of what was produced was left to chance. This, combined with the fact that he never really had a clear view of the work as it would eventually appear once hung on a gallery wall, meant that the overall arrangement by which we tend to judge paintings throughout history could not be attributed entirely to the artist himself. For Kaprow, Pollock's process

[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid., 125.
[25] Ibid., 124.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Allan Kaprow, Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1993), 2.

represented more of a "ritual" than painting in the traditional sense.[28] This is not to say that the artist did not recognise the difference between a good and bad drip. Rather, by physically entering the canvas in the way he did, and presenting to the audience the evidence of his presence upon it as opposed to a definite arrangement he had intended beforehand, the distinction between "the artist, the spectator, and the outer world" becomes blurred in a way that was not the case for any painting that preceded it.[29] It could be argued, therefore, that Gombrich's understanding of the abstract expressionism is itself a reflection of the museum's set-up.

Indeed, just as the so-called "universal survey museum" reflects the principles of the enlightenment, so art history itself is rooted in the same logic. It is no coincidence that art's history is discovered in and between different museums and that the structure of texts like *The Story of Art* mimic the layouts of these places so closely. As Donald Preziozi asserts, museums deploy "names, descriptions, objects, relationships, and metonymies of all kinds, in a grand montage of predication, thereby serving as models or paradigms of cause/effect relationships".[30] For Preziozi, the museum is "an optical instrument for the refracting of society and its history or histories into biography and narrative, into the prologue to our presentness".[31] The work of historians like Gombrich could also be described in such terms, their intention being to draw all works into one all-encompassing narrative, a lineal evolution of painting and sculpture through time.[32] That lineage is strengthened and held together by what Gombrich referred to earlier on as the "self-transcending values" as have been intuited within those works by the experienced and educated viewer. It is this value system that underpins one's conception of what art is. As such, it should come as no surprise that it is only according to those values that artworks come to be included in history books and museums to begin with.

In the essay "Art and Objecthood", Michael Fried described sculptures by Robert Morris and Donald Judd's "specific objects" as "non-art" due to what he perceived as their being too "theatrical".[33] For Fried, the value which all artworks must necessarily demonstrate to attain such status was self-referentiality, a characteristic he perceived as intrinsic to all previous artworks before these. Since Judd and Morris sought to incorporate the viewer into the work, and because the work depended upon the audience's presence in order to attain meaning, it was more theatrical than sculptural in the traditional sense according to Fried's view.

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[28] Ibid., 4.
[29] Ibid., 5.
[30] Donald Preziozi,. "Brain of the Earth's Body". In *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*, 82-92. 87.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid., 124.
* Gombrich refers to the work of artists such as Kandinsky, Mondrian and Klee, who attempted to represent their own metaphysics through their work as "not even intellectually respectable" since they deny their place within the context of art history. He is not disputing the quality of their work, but rather the argument that a work of art, or an artist, may stand alone, independently of the trajectory of artistic creation that came before them, and which inevitably moves forwards thereafter.
[33] Michael Fried. *Art and Objecthood,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998),153.

Nowadays, of course, a great many artworks are what Fried would have classified as "theatrical", and yet they are readily accepted into museums. Fried's argument would likely be that experts such as critics and historians like himself, or curators and museum directors, are those responsible for deciding what is and what is not art. They rely on their knowledge of what has come before in order to ascertain whether an object is worthy of that status. Just because works that exhibit this theatricality are so pervasively accepted as art nowadays does not constitute a solid argument to that effect. It merely goes to show that those responsible for admitting them into such places are mistaken. Indeed, the danger with allowing these absolute standards to slide, or relying upon consensus, particularly from an uneducated public, is that anything might potentially attain the status of art. This is why institution theorist George Dickie emphasised the important role played by the "artworld" (a term he borrowed from Arthur C. Danto) as a whole in extending this status to the objects relating to it. Dickie's approach treats the artwork as a social construct which manifests through an inherently hierarchical structure, at the top of which artists and experts most directly related with museums are located. Art is thus understood to be a product of the museum in this way, which is itself the embodiment of the artworld.[34] Whilst this kind of approach functions well in tracing the various interactions that go on prior to an artwork's incorporation into a museum collection, it is unable to explain why someone like Morris or Judd would feel justified in presenting these sorts of objects as artworks to begin with. Similarly, with reference to Fried's assertion regarding the autonomy of the artwork resulting from its inherent self-referentiality, a particularly interesting set of questions might take the following form: If Morris and Judd were mistaken in proposing these new sorts of objects as artworks, then what led to that mistake being made in the first place? What was it that they saw in their own approaches that they believed they shared in common with other kinds of artworks?

The problem with Fried's approach was that it could not account for works that made such a significant break from the past. Any history or theory of art needs to be elastic enough to incorporate the introduction of new values into it, which at the time that Fried was writing, was an overt emphasis on the role of the viewer in relation to the work. The same might also be said of the institutions that come to hold those works and put them on display, which also need to adjust and reconfigure themselves according to the demands of the works held within their care. The way in which places like museums incorporate and respond to the emergence of new kinds of art is of key importance to this investigation, just as it will be important to consider the way in which artists often develop their work in response to what is happening within official art places like these. Indeed, with reference to the history of art in general, Morris or Judd's emphasis upon the viewer, whilst novel at the time, was also a response to history's emphasis on the creator as opposed to the spectator, and a calling into question of the presumed passivity of the viewer in relation to the work.

[34] See chapter IV, "The Institutional Nature of Art", in George Dickie, *The Art Circle: A Theory of Art*, (New York: Haven Publishing, 1984).

What this second part has revealed to us is Gombrich's intellectualist conception of art reaching its limit. As soon as artists begin to incorporate the viewer's body into the artwork's encounter overtly, the idea that the artist's practice is in each instance a response to the challenges presented by the craft itself exclusively begins to unravel. His interpretation of the emergence of abstract expressionism is particularly revealing in this respect, for he prioritises the trace of the artist's presence left upon the painting's surface over its large scale, which is the aspect of that particular movement (combined with its predominantly non-representational content) that most obviously beckons its audience into the space it opens up. Gombrich's approach, particularly his characterisation of the mind as a "marvellous sorting machine", reflects the principles underpinning the very set up of these places and their cultivation of a detached style of encounter.

Fried's critique of minimalism should be read as an attempt protect the sanctity of this distinction, yet the idea that "theatricality" undermines artistic endeavours is ultimately unfounded. For, as even Gombrich himself highlights, "awe" has long been a vital component of art encounters of many kinds. Furthermore, religious art and portraits of powerful people have always been made to inspire just that sort of reaction. Such themes are inherently theatrical in this way. Finally, what both authors fail to consider is how the museum's set up, upon which their own approaches are essentially founded, encourages understanding by compelling visitors to move through the spaces it opens up physically by means of their bodies. The space they move through is precisely that with which minimalists like Judd and Morris came to engage with and incorporate into their practice, a vital consideration that will be returned to shortly. In the following section, we will turn to Alfred Barr's overhaul of the traditional museum set up and the questions this gave rise to, which in turn laid the ground for the emergence of such practices.

1.3. The Museum of Modern Art, New York (MOMA): The Original White Cube

> MOMA's adoption of the white cube model can be connected to Barr's conception of modern art as developing inevitably towards abstraction. In the modern museum, abstract art and the white cube have entered into a symbiotic relationship. In their apparent exclusion of all reference to the wider world beyond the domain of pure form, they reinforce the decontextualisation traditionally affected by the museum.[35]

The Museum of Modern Art in New York (MOMA) was established and directed by Alfred. H. Barr, Jr. in 1929 and is widely regarded as the original blueprint for what has become the standard modern art space. Instead of adopting the traditional approach to display and presenting artworks by national school and art-historical period, MOMA implemented Barr's own interpretation of the evolution of modern art, contextualising each artwork in terms of a "sequence of movements developing out of each other" and spurred on by individual genius.[36] These movements were defined in terms of the formal features which characterised them, with

[35] Barker, *Contemporary Cultures of Display,* 31.
[36] Ibid., 36.

particular significance attributed to Cubism and Surrealism. What is more, Barr also firmly believed that the public could benefit from being exposed to art. As Walter Hopps, founder and director of the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles (1957-1962), and later the Washington Museum of Modern Art (1967-1970), described Barr's ethos:

> There was a kind of moral imperative behind Barr. He preached that modern art was good for people, that the populace could somehow become inculcated with the new Modernism and it would improve their lives. It's very close to the Bauhaus idea.[37]

Barker describes MOMA as "an effective manifestation of its modernist principles and internationalist outlook", by which she is referring to the museum's focus on individual genius and transnational movements as well as Barr's motivation to educate the populace.[38] Meanwhile, the "decontextualisation" referred to in the citation at the beginning of this section alludes to the continued understanding of the museum building as a buffering mechanism to cut the space contained within it off from the outside world. The white cube design accentuated this effect all the more starkly. Brian O'Doherty argues that it subtracted "from the artwork all cues that interfere with the fact that it is art", thus transforming the museum into a sort of pure aesthetic field in which the connoisseur still enjoyed privileged access as a consequence of their learning and understanding of this "sequence of movements".[39] Whilst it did undoubtedly share a great deal in common with the more traditional models that preceded it, the combination of MOMA's more transnational outlook combined with a sparser approach to display meant that the white cube also served to heighten the audience's sense of each artwork's abstractness. As O'Doherty goes on to say, even an ashtray becomes "almost a sacred object" under such conditions, the firehose "an aesthetic conundrum".[40] Indeed, each work was now encountered as a unique aesthetic event. This is significant for two reasons.

Firstly, MOMA's emphasis on the abstract content of the work instigated a more general shift away from the traditional, art-historical view outlined in the previous part. Artists were now understood to express ideas rather than being immersed within, and aesthetic ideas arising from, the problems posed by any specific craft. This, in turn, enabled diverse approaches to art making to be exhibited alongside one another. Secondly, the audience's role had also changed in so much as they were now called upon to recognise the idea behind the work before them rather than analysing formal aspects of it as they related to the history of the craft. Their task had become to decipher the code hidden within the work that would reveal the genius behind it, rather than discover those "self-transcending values" by way of comparison with other works of a similar form. This is why the bigger gap between artworks on the wall represented such a significant shift,

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[37] Walter Hopps (interview), Hans U. Obrist. *A Brief History of Curating*, (Zurich: JRP, 2008), 17.
[38] Barker, *Contemporary Cultures,* 34.
[39] Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: the ideology of the gallery space,* (Santa Monica, San Francisco: The Lapis Press, 1986), 14.
[40] Ibid., 15.

because each artwork was now displayed apart from the rest of the artworks present, as opposed to, from within clusters of other artworks as had always tended to be the case up until that point.

In line with Carol Duncan's understanding of the museum as ritual, MOMA too was set up for a new kind of public - a modern, urban populace. In his seminal essay "The Metropolis and the Mental Life", Georg Simmel describes city dwellers as distinguished from the inhabitants of rural areas in that "Punctuality, calculability, exactness are forced upon life by the complexity and extension of metropolitan life".[41] Yet, given the huge population of a city like New York, this precision that had come to be impressed upon the everyday life of each individual caught up in it also fostered what Sartre described as "plurality of isolations", whereby the objective condition of mass cohabitation turned subjective consciousness all the more deeply inward and upon itself.[42] MOMA's innovative new approach to display pandered to this emerging urban individualism in so much as a subjective rather than objective interpretation of the artworks displayed was now called for. Subjective value came to be prioritised over self-transcending value. MOMA was set up to cultivate metropolitan consciousness in this way by eliciting that same dimension of its character as had already begun to blossom beyond its walls.

Barker also draws attention to how the building itself related to the city around it. Located on West 53rd Street, Manhattan, it was just a stone's throw away from some of the area's most exclusive shops. Architecturally, the building was a far cry from the more traditional models characterised by Duncan and Wallach. Visitors could enter at street level and MOMA's name was clearly marked on the building's facade. From inside, its smooth, clean surfaces were perfectly in-keeping with the area's slick commercial sheen, its brightly illuminated displays mirroring those of the boutiques nearby. The various floors were broken up into smaller white cubes that guided visitors through a compulsory presentation of modern art history according to Barr, rather than allowing them to explore different phases of it for themselves. It provided a kind of sanctuary from modern urban living, and this is precisely how it was sold to the American people:

> The introduction of modern art into the United States, it has been argued, happened from 'above' and was intricately linked to questions of class, taste, economics and politics. Modern art was elevated to the sphere of 'high culture', functioning as an indicator of social distinction.[43]

By marketing modern art in this way, the ritual of the national citizen had been transformed into that of the citizen-consumer.[44] What Barker's analysis highlights is, how, despite the white cube providing a neutral

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[41] Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and the Mental Life". In *The Sociology of Georg Simmel,* ed. trans, Kurt H. Hoff (New York: Free Press, 1950), 411.
[42] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason (Volume 1),* ed. Jonathan Rée / Trans. Alan Sheridan-Smith, (London, New York: Verso, 2004.), 257.
[43] Barker, *Contemporary Cultures*, 33.
[44] Ibid., 34.

background for the artwork to be seen upon, the whiteness of the space may be far from neutral in other respects. Her analysis appears to suggest that the viewer's mode of looking at the artworks contained within the museum came to be informed by the way in which people behold valuable objects in the boutiques nearby. This occurred as a consequence of the museum's channelling something of the aesthetics of those places through its design, which in turn fostered stronger connections between the museum and city life. Furthermore, MOMA's overhaul of the standardised approaches to display raised theoretical questions regarding the nature and influence of the display upon the art encounter. Mary Anne Staniszewski's *The Power of Display* builds upon Barker's observations by documenting the history of curatorial practice at MOMA since its inauguration.

> I founded this enquiry on the premise that all that we experience in the world is mediated by culture and is, in this sense, representation. As with everything we see as culture, exhibitions are history, ideology, politics - and aesthetics.[45]

Central to Staniszewski's understanding is the "and aesthetics" of the analysis. She acknowledges Barker's critique of Duncan earlier on by emphasising the viewer's familiarity with the outside world as informing their experience. The institution is inseparable from the everyday world it seeks to silence, and these "unconscious" aspects of the exhibition experience contribute to the audience's understanding of the work, whether that is intended or not.[46]

In the final chapter of *Civilising Rituals,* Duncan also explores the way in which the outside world may be understood to flood in. She pays close attention to the masculine tone of the modern gallery using MOMA as her principal case study, whilst simultaneously bringing the body and identity of the visitor to the fore. According to Duncan, not only is the museum dedicated predominantly to the work of men (which, despite more contemporary revisions of the display, continues to be the case), but the content of those works is also posited specifically for the male gaze in many instances. Starting with Pablo Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon (1907)*, and moving on to Willem de Krooning, *Woman I (1950-1952)*, and then Robert Heinecken's *Invitation to Metamorphosis (1975)*, Duncan highlights the extremity of these images, particularly the spread legs of many of the depicted figures, a typically pornographic pose directed at the viewer before the work, whom it was evidently assumed would be male. What is more, above the pornographic pose of some of the figures rest frightful mask faces that seem as if they might consume the person stood before them.

This obsession, not just with the female nude, but also with the monster-woman who could at any moment attack the viewer, is ubiquitous, and the body is objectified in a way neither the male nor female body is in

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[45] Mary Anne Staniszewski. *The Power of display: A Museum of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art*, (London - UK, Cambridge -US: MIT, 2001), XXIII.
[46] Ibid.

the works of the few female artists who get their foot in the door. Duncan notes how Picasso's original intention had even been to place a young sailor before the women in *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (as a symbol of male lust), but in the end chose to leave the arrangement of the figures oriented towards the intended male viewer's own body. According to Duncan's account then, the woman enacts the ritual of the museum visit from within an environment which, much like the society it is embedded within, is shaped by patriarchy. From her own point of view, even though she is able to perform the ritual effectively in that she has the knowledge and the training to appreciate the technical qualities of these artworks, she is nevertheless alienated from the display as a consequence of having a woman's body. Duncan overcomes Barker's criticism in this way by underlining the viewer's capacity to recognise the way in which their own point of view deviates from the museum script.[47]

What is revealing about MOMA's history is the sheer number of questions its complete overhaul of the traditional museum set-up gave rise to. The museum embraced its relationship with the city around it, and in so doing, fundamentally altered how its contents then came to be perceived. The aesthetics of the display was also considered to be instrumental in this respect, in that each work came to be regarded as a unique aesthetic event. Furthermore, and as Duncan's analysis underlines, by nurturing this connection, the museum also elicits questions with regard to our own relationship with the museum as a whole, who it is for and in what way. One aspect of this set-up which has only been alluded to so far is the role of the curator and their influence in setting the terms of the encounter, a consideration we will turn to in the next section.

1.4 The Role of the Curator

In an interview with Hans Ulrich Obrist for his book *A Brief History of Curating,* Johannes Cladder, director and curator of the Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach, Germany, from 1967 to 1985, sums up the broad view of all the interviewees featured in Obrist's text when he says "I have always considered myself to be a co-producer of art".[48] The curator's role is first of all to understand the aesthetic sentiments of the artist, and then to decide how best to transmit their work within the more socially and politically nuanced world of the institution. Since the artist shares the world with their audience, Cladder argues that how the audience then engages with it once it has been put on display plays a fundamental part in shaping how we come to think about the artist's work thereafter. He argues for this reason that we "have to stop defending art as only those objects that have been accepted as art by society. We have to concentrate on allowing art to evolve through how it is received".[49]

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[47] Duncan, *Civilising Rituals*, 102-132.
[48] Obrist, *Brief History of Curating,* 57. (Cladder interview)
[49] Ibid., 59.

According to Cladder's view then, and much like Anne Staniszewski in the previous section, our experience of art is mediated by culture, meaning that how an artwork is received depends on the situation of society in that moment. Furthermore, he goes on to argue that, whilst "it is the artist who creates a work, [it is the] society that turns it into a work of art".[50] The curator functions as a mediator in this way, and, through their practice, prepares the ground so as to enable the work to receive its confirmation in this way. For this reason, Harold Szeeman describes how curators must be flexible and willing to assist by contributing ideas and asking questions to individual artists whilst taking a more creative and authoritative role in relation to group or themed shows.[51]

The curator is in many respects a professional viewer, responsible for understanding how the work comes across from within a given context and to a particular community or audience. Their task is to interpret the artwork as objects in the very broadest sense then, which is to say, by relating it to the lives of the people who visit museums. Society enters into the museum along with the audience in this way. Much like Barker, Cladder recognises that the audience's encounter with an artwork is a lived event for the audience and cannot be considered in complete isolation from their everyday lives. Art is "consumed as culture", and as such, "becomes part of the cultural discourse" as he also remarks.[52] His hope is, therefore, that this experience can also be carried forward and implicate itself within the lives of audience members later on, beyond the gallery walls.

In *Relational Aesthetics*, curator Nicolaus Bourriaud describes what he perceived at the time to be art's contemporary shift towards a more relational aesthetic, whereby "human interaction and its social context" had come to be prioritised.[53] The type of artworks Bourriaud had in mind were generally installations or event-based practices that aimed to foster community from within art spaces.[54] As artists increasingly veered in that direction, so curators and institutions were also called upon to *accommodate* these new practices. To do so, however, they first needed to understand the situations that gave rise to these shifts to begin with.

Bourriaud highlights the acquisition of space by galleries and museums from within cramped and often expensive cities, where individual living space has become significantly reduced, as being of central

[50] Ibid., 57.
[51] Ibid., 100.
[52] Ibid., 64.
[53] Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods, (Dijon-Quetigny: Les Presses du Reel, 2002), 14.
[54] An obvious example of the time would have been Olafur Eliasson's *The Weather Project* (2003), which will be the principal case study in the first part of chapter five, although further examples of the "relational" approach will be provided in section 1.7 of this chapter.

significance.[55] After all, artists themselves are citizens who also often live in cities. This shift should, therefore, be read as a response to society's need for more dynamic and expressive public spaces than the ones offered up by more traditional museum models. The relational approach is thus subversive in that these practices (and the audience's own engagement with them) actively undermine the idea of art as a "luxury" and enable the public to reclaim the space.[56]

There are three main points to be drawn from this section. The first is that by setting up the display, the curator does not constitute the meaning of the artworks contained within it completely. Rather, their responsibility is to arrange the show so as to ensure the broadest possible engagement with those artworks by a particular audience or community from within a specific space. That being said, the orientation of the work towards an assumed audience is in and of itself an attempt to set the terms of the audience's engagement with that place and its contents, and as such, the assumption itself could harbour prejudices or biases to which even curators themselves are unaware. Curatorial practice has also provided fertile ground for artists whose works intervene in places, therefore, an example of which will be presented at the end of the following section.

Secondly, when Cladder makes the claim that we should allow the work to evolve through how it is received, parallels might certainly be drawn with Duncan's comments at the end of the previous section regarding the depiction of female bodies from within MOMA's collection. For when Duncan encounters those paintings, the misogyny that is clearly so intrinsic to their content is unavoidable from her point of view. Whilst this aspect of them might not be recognised immediately by every-body, Duncan's presence in front of these paintings brings this aspect to the fore. Seen in this way, an artwork's meaning emerges or evolves in accordance with the audience's capacity or readiness to unlock that meaning from it. This amounts to more than mere subjective projection for that meaning must actually be there to begin with – it must be present within the work itself.

Finally, Bourriaud's allusion to the issue of space within the city draws our attention to how the audience and institution are related through the broader *place-world* in which they are both entangled and to which they contribute. In this case, the community's relation with space beyond its walls comes to characterise that held within it. We will now move on to consider how artists themselves have engaged with this space before reflecting on the complex nature of their engagement with the urban environments beyond it.

[55] Ibid., 15.
[56] Ibid.

1.5. The Gallery as Site: from Minimalism to Museum Critique

As an approach to art making, *Institution critique* broadly refers to artworks which draw attention to how galleries and museums function as framing devices for the artworks they hold. As Miwon Kwon defines the such practice, it seeks to undermine the supposed "innocence" of institutional space and draw attention to how it is "constituted through social, economic, and political processes".[57] Kwon sees this critical trend as having emerged out of the minimalist sculpture of artists like Donald Judd, Robert Morris and Carl Andre. By incorporating the viewers' bodies into the same white space as their sculptures, these artists drew attention to the role that the room itself played in determining the work's appearance. This represented a significant shift away from how modern art had hitherto tended to function.[58] These new objects appealed to the body rather than the mind. Artists began to theorise art "not as a static object fixed through authoritative interpretation but as a process of intersubjective engagement among and between objects and subjects".[59] An alternative conception of the viewer emerged and the disinterested intellectual made way for the actively engaged participant.

Kwon observes that the minimalists were the first to confront the viewer as a universal, phenomenological subject. The blankness of the objects themselves provided for multiple encounters on what were presumed to be equal terms. In turn, site-specificity sought to undermine this presumed universality by highlighting features of that environment which manifested content of social, political or economic concern.[60] In contrast, Amelia Jones argues that what was so inspirational about the minimalist approach for the artists who emerged afterwards was how the viewer measured themselves against these works. By calling upon the audience to experiment with the artwork according to their own bodies, minimalism rendered difference rather than universality explicit by drawing attention to the body as the foundation from which each person's own individual and complex identity derives.[61] It was potentially revelatory in this regard, and greatly influenced institution critique in this way.

A clear example of this is Michael Asher's 1961 intervention in a MOMA gallery, where he fitted the walls with soundproofed cladding so as to silence the space. In so doing, he achieved "the sealed off quality" to

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[57] Kwon, Miwon. *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity,* (Cambridge - US, London - UK: MIT, 2002), 13-14.
[58] Ibid., 42 - 43.
[59] Amelia Jones, "The 1970s 'Situation' and Recent Installation: Joseph Santarromana's Intersubjective Engagements", in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art,* ed. Erika Suderburg, (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 335.
[60] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 13.
[61] Jones, "The 1970s Situation", 336.

which its set-up aspired.[62] By muting the sound of the viewer's own body within that space though, this installation also made the audience acutely aware of the significance of their bodies in shaping their engagement with the gallery, whose set up ultimately endeavoured to reduce their presence to that of a mere seeing mind.[63]

Later, Daniel Buren took a different approach to similar spaces at the John Weber Gallery in New York. For *Within and Beyond the Frame* (1973), Buren stripped back the gallery walls to reveal what was underneath and the "material fact of the gallery walls as framing".[64] He also meddled with the temperature and humidity of the rooms to highlight just how controlled these spaces were. In addition to these alterations, another work was hung around the room from the outside. Kwon remarks how this work underlined the "cultural confinement within which artists function".[65] Taking an alternative stance, James Meyer observes that although works like this one are critical in the sense that they seek to undermine the illusion of "innocence" and "neutrality" promoted by the institution, they nevertheless still work from within its analytic framework. As such, their work is intended to provoke the sort of reflection that Alfred Barr would have encouraged (i.e. the abstract revelation that the work is considered to provoke).

> In the work of Asher or Buren, the phenomenological site of Morris and Flavin was revealed as a discursive place grounded in socioeconomic relations. Yet, for all its radicality, its materialist commitment, this work still operated within a Kantian cognitive model of reflexivity: it still confined its analysis to the "frame". The criticality of such work was perspicuous only within the physical confines of, or in close proximity to, the gallery site.[66]

Miere Laderman Ukeles arguably pushed the limits even further in her extended performance piece *Hartford Wash: Washing Tracks, Maintenance Outside* (1973), for which she spent four hours outside Wadsworth Atheneum cleaning the steps, and another four hours inside scrubbing the floor of the entry plaza. Kwon argues that by undertaking this prolonged performance on the threshold of the museum, Ukeles:

> (…) forced the menial domestic tasks usually associated with women - cleaning, washing, dusting, and tidying - to the level of aesthetic contemplation, and revealed the extent to which the museum's pristine self-presentation, its perfectly immaculate white spaces as emblematic of its "neutrality", is structurally dependent on the hidden and devalued labor of the daily maintenance and upkeep.

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[62] Julie H. Reiss, *From the Margin to the Centre: The Spaces of Installation Art,* (Cambridge - US, London: MIT, 1999),121.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Kwon, *One Place After Another,* 14.
[65] Ibid.
[66] James Meyer, "The Functional Site; or, The Transformation of Site Specificity", in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. Erika Suderburg, (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 27.

Kwon takes this performance to have functioned in a very similarly way to those works previously described, the resultant revelation being of primary importance. Whilst this explanation undoubtedly makes sense, I would also like to put forth an alternative reading, which is that perhaps the most powerful element in Ukeles' performance was her making a nuisance of herself. Simply the awkwardness of having her there, performing menial tasks, taking up space, down on her hands and knees in the background of a painting, sculpture, performance or installation, would have shifted focus towards the museum as a functional site, but within the context of the broader city at large. For rather than maintaining the illusion of the museum as sacred site by keeping such tasks hidden, her performance gestured towards the everyday world as background rather than the blankness of the gallery space, all whilst remaining more or less within the limits of the gallery.

Critical practices like these came to be enthusiastically accepted by institutions as the 1960s drew to a close. They represented a cutting-edge approach and so needed to be incorporated so that the institutions would not appear out of touch. This was undoubtedly to the detriment of such practices' capacity to subvert.[67] The result was an expanded institutional framing from museums and galleries, which now recognised such intervention as legitimate practice. As suggested in the concluding remarks to the previous section, however, the practice of intervention can still have a powerful effect when that approach seeks to highlight biases or prejudices of which the institution remains unaware. Fred Wilson's appropriately titled *Mining the Museum* (1992-1993) represents a classic example of this.

This exhibition took place at the Maryland Historical Society, for which the artist reorganised the museum's collection and investigated its archive in order to draw attention to the "invisibility of African Americans in portrayals of American life".[68] Some the numerous interventions in the collection that the artist made for this show included the renaming of paintings in order to draw attention to the lives of the people depicted in them. For example, an oil painting entitled *Country Life,* which shows well-dressed white people at a picnic, is renamed "Frederick Serving Fruit" to underline the fact that it was an African-American man serving them.[69] In addition to this, empty plinths were set up which carried the names of important local African-American figures of the past on their labels that the museum did not possess the busts of, despite having many of prominent white figures.[70] This enormously effective display placed the lack of representation of entire communities within institutions like this one under the spotlight.

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[67] Kwon, *One Place After Another,* 47.
[68] Noralee Frankel, Review: Mining the Museum by Fred Wilson, *The Public Historian* 15, no. 3 (Summer, 1993): 106.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid., 105.

It is by no means accidental that the word "place" has come up with more frequency in this section. For as we move further away from more abstract conceptions of the museum or gallery, their supposed purposes and ideal set-ups, what artists have ultimately achieved through their critical engagement with these institutions over the course of half a century is a much more rounded view of how those institutions functioned as places within the broader *place-world* at large. A key distinction Edward S. Casey makes in his work is between "site" and "place". The former is ultimately fixed, not subject to change, and derives from "the Cartesian notion of a pure extensional space at once three-dimensional, infinite in extent, and identical with the totality of the material bodies that occupy it".[71] Site is "exsanguinated place" in that it is not lived in or through.[72] Whereas, "place" is that immediate environment around us, in which we are immersed by way of our bodies and in which culture is able to "take root".[73]

With regard to the official places of art that we have been concerned with up until this point, the significance of minimalism in revealing these places in their very placeness cannot be overestimated. For by actively drawing attention to the space between the viewer's body and the surface of the work, and in turn, to the viewer's own active role in enabling the encounter to unfold, important questions were raised as to precisely what that body brings to and draws from the work. This also leads us to consider the extent to which the environment around it imposes itself upon the event of the encounter. I agree with Amelia Jones' point in this way, that what minimalism's elicitation of active, embodied and conscious participation brought forth was the possibility of a much deeper grasp of the role played by the body in enabling the work to resonate in a meaningful way. We will now move beyond the gallery walls of the gallery, where place implicates itself in a range of interesting ways.

1.6. Public Art and Site-Specificity

In Kwon's survey of public art and site-specific practice in *One Place After Another*, the author describes how, from the mid-1960s to the early-1970s, there was a boom in funding for public art projects in the United States. However, the installations commissioned tend to be little more than larger versions of sculptures one would expect to find in art museums, dropped into public spaces sufficiently large to take them.[74] Works by invariably male artists such as Isamu Noguchi, Henry Moore, and Alexander Calder, although hugely popular within the gallery context, had extremely mixed receptions within urban settings. At best, communities and

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[71] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 141.
[72] Edward S. Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time", in *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World,* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009). 340.
[73] Ibid., 336.
[74] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another.* 60.

critics alike regarded them as a "pleasant visual contrast to the rationalised regularity of [their] surroundings, providing a nice decorative effect".[75] At worst, works were received with more suspicion, deemed to represent the "powers and riches of the dominant class—a corporate bauble or architectural jewellery".[76]

Despite these public spaces offering up the basic conditions deemed adequate for these works to be displayed then, the artworks installed were not received as artworks per se, but instead as either decorations, or otherwise, with a great deal of disdain. The style of close attention that modernist sculptures like these demanded, a keen eye and reflective attitude, is not the sort of attitude that urban places tend to *accommodate* particularly well. There are just too many distractions. The subtler details of works like these can recede back into them within an urban context compared with a gallery where those aspects are more easily drawn out by their audiences.

> In contrast to the 'White Cube' gallery's signification of emptiness, the urban landscape offers a profusion and complexity of signs and spaces where the 'condition of reception' Crimp first identifies with site specificity might be encountered by an excess of information.[77]

Site specific practice beyond the gallery, whether it be in urbanised environments or in rural settings, has taken artists in various directions and James Meyer has distinguished between two broad styles of approach - the "literal" and "functional" site. The former refers to works whose "formal outcome" is "determined by a physical place, by an understanding of the place as actual. By confronting the site in terms of its uniqueness, the work itself becomes 'unique'. In contrast, the "functional site" approach has more to do with process or intervention, such as when an artist makes a record of the site as it happens, or when they perform in relation to that site. It is often wilfully temporary, and as Meyer suggests, may even present an alternative conception of that site altogether.[78] What these two models share in common according to Meyer is their focus upon the audience as embodied participants who already inhabit the sites within which the works are to be set up or installed.

> The body of site specificity was a physicalised body, aware of its surroundings, a body of heightened critical acuity. The viewer of the modernist work, in contrast, was purportedly blind to its ideological nature.[79]

Let us now briefly consider an example of each approach before reflecting on a few limitations of Meyer's distinction. We begin with an example of the "literal site".

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[75] Ibid., 65.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation,* (London, New York: Routledge. 2000). 33.
[78] Meyer, "The Functional Site", 24-25.
[79] Ibid., 26.

Just a short walk away from London's Liverpool Street Station in Broadgate Circle stands American artist Richard Serra's *Fulcrum* (1987) sculpture. This highly commercial district caters for people working in the centre of the city and promotes itself as its only entirely pedestrianised neighbourhood. It is inundated with expensive shops, restaurants, cafes and bars, and its grounds are immaculately well maintained. There is often art on display across its numerous plazas and *Fulcrum* is a permanent fixture here. When preparing his most famous public installation, *Titled Arc* (1981), in Manhattan, New York, Serra said that once that work was complete, the space in which it was to be installed would be understood "primarily as a function of the sculpture" as opposed to the buildings lining it.[80] It is this kind of concern that makes much of Serra's work "literal" according to Meyer's distinction and the same could also be said of the space *Fulcrum* opens up in Broadgate Circle.

The structure consists of five strips of untreated steel installed in the ground and rising vertically, each at an angle. Their arrangement makes them appear as though they are leaning up against one another, creating a sort of elongated, asymmetrical, sixteen-and-a-half meter tall, pentagonal cone, with an opening on one of its sides. Whilst it does not quite arrive to the same height as the surrounding buildings, it is nevertheless almost equal to them, and in so being, functions to disrupt their symmetry relative to one another on either side of the plaza. This disruption is achieved through the space opened up between the exterior surface of each of *Fulcrum's* panels as they stand in relation to the curved facades of the buildings around the plaza. What is more, those facades are also clearly broken up into different stories with windows all the way down them and a grid-like claddings on the front. By comparison, Fulcrum's structure is strikingly singular and cohesive in form, which in turn makes the buildings on either side of it appear much smaller than they are in actual fact.

An example of the functional site would be Mona Hatoum's *Roadworks* (1985), a performance carried out in in Brixton for an exhibition of the same name organised by the Brixton Artists Collective. For this piece, Hatoum walked barefoot through the crowded streets of Brixton with Doc Marten boots attached to her ankles by their laces. Catherine Wood observes that because this style of footwear was so closely associated with police and skinheads who wore them, when combined with her "simple body actions invoking torture and endurance", the artist effectively brought "political stories into art's frame".[81] The artist was born to Palestinian parents and grew up in Lebanon and her work often draws attention to the protracted conflicts in this region.

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[80] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 110.

[81] Catherine Wood, *Performance in Contemporary Art*, (London: Tate Publishing, 2018), 51.

Of course, being temporary as it was, a hallmark of "functional" practice, the only way we can see this performance now is on film, and this particular piece was displayed as part of Hatoum's retrospective at Tate Modern in 2016. This format permits considerable distance between us and Hatoum's body as it trudges through Brixton's streets, which gives us time to reflect on aspects such as her heritage and the symbolic significance of the boots. It also allows us to see the somewhat startled and bemused faces of the people she passes by, and as a site-specific work, these are the reactions that must be prioritised in terms of this piece's engagement with the "functional" site. For apart from the few people who came out from the gallery where the exhibition was held and onto the street to see the performance, the majority of people who encountered the work would have been caught completely off-guard.

Compared with the predominantly modernist sculptures that Kwon refers to as failing to impose themselves upon the urban contexts in which they were installed, I would argue that both of these artworks do that rather successfully on their own terms. Whilst people may not like them, neither of these works can be reduced entirely to a symbolic significance in that way, nor can they be considered decorative in their appearance. However, what I wish to draw attention to here briefly is the way in which the "literal" aspects of these sites encroach upon the "functional" elements and vice-versa, an observation which ultimately unsettles Meyer's distinction.

For whilst *Fulcrum* does overtly engage with the surrounding architecture, it is not just those structures themselves that it disrupts or undermines, but also the meaning of those structures relative to the broader district in which they are embedded. The Broadgate development is pristine and exudes wealth. It is populated predominantly by city workers, and as such, manifests something of the sheer economic power concentrated within that area. Serra's work antagonises not just the immaculate aesthetic of this place then, but also unsettles its apparent stability. It looms there in the background as people sip cocktails in the adjacent plaza, its sheer scale imposing itself upon the broader site from afar. Furthermore, it also opens up a space within it and a gap at its peak meaning that we can physically enter into it and look up towards the sky. This produces an effect not unlike that of a James Turrell *Skyspace* or *Crater*, through which we are able to see the sky above us directly without the surrounding buildings entering into our peripheral view. Passers-by can use it in this way or not, but even if they ignore it, they still have to walk around it. It incorporates itself into the functionality of this site in this way, becoming what Heidegger would refer to as a "locale".[82] Similarly, Hatoum's performance, whilst it certainly drew considerable effect from Brixton ongoing functionality as a busy and densely populated place, the physicality and materiality of these streets were also incorporated into the performance quite overly. The faces of the buildings lining the street presented the

[82] Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking", in *Basic Writings*, 249.

limits of the artist's stage. The coarse texture of the pavement's surface imbued the barefooted aspect of its performance with added significance. "Literal" aspects of the site were thus incorporated in this way.

As Casey underlines, however, no place can ever be exclusively "literal".[83] For in so much as places hold people, so they hold the communities, cultures, memories, thoughts, beliefs and ideas which underpin them.[84] Whilst being in a place "is being in a configurative complex of things", it is the being in and amongst that configurative complexity as performed by bodies that enables that overall arrangement to stand forth with significance. With reference to Meyer's distinction, this tendency towards the labelling of artistic practices reflects an obsession with categorisation that is pervasive within the arts. Other such categories of site-specificity would include "context-specific, debate-specific, audience-specific, community-specific, project-based" as underlined by Kwon.[85] Is there not a sense, though, in which all art encounters are inherently place-specific in each of their own ways? For whilst an artwork may only draw from one aspect of a place, is it not also the case that the rest of that place comes to be reconfigured in turn?

1.7. Social Participation

When Bourriaud acknowledged a contemporary shift towards "human interaction and its social context" (section 1.4), the works we will consider in this section illustrate this relation very well.[86] Here I will provide a brief summary of two specific activities/performances as devised and carried out by The Providence Initiative for Psycho-Geographical Studies on the streets of Manhattan in 2003 and 2004, before moving on to consider the significance of this style of practice relative to this broader project as a whole.

One of these events consisted of a giant game of chess spanning an entire neighbourhood. Participants communicated via mobile telephone or text message and moved around on foot, bicycle or skateboard. Their movements were determined by the moves made on a real chess board by two players playing against one another at a central location. Another event was *Nomadic Cafe.* This consisted of a temporary, mobile coffee shop providing free coffee and French toast to anyone who wanted it. The setting up of the stall not only reconfigured the neighbourhood but also disrupted its functional flow.[87] Meanwhile, the free coffee and French toast drew a diverse cross-section of the local community together in one place.

[83] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 334.
[84] Ibid., 228.
[85] Kwon, *One Place after Another One*, 2.
[86] Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*,14.
[87] David Pinder. "Arts of Urban Exploration", *Cultural Geographies* 12 (2005): 391-395.

Claire Bishop claims that nearly all contemporary art is collectively produced, even if authorship often remains resolutely individual.[88] In this instance, the artists collective is responsible for setting up the event which entails the gathering of props and people. What actually happens, though (i.e., the performance itself), depends entirely upon the collaborative engagement of the participants. The meaning of the artwork emerges through their interaction in this way, which encompasses a great deal. The conversations two people might have over French toast, for example, are, in a way, part of the event of the work, or even a participant's leaning up against a wall whilst waiting for a phone call from the chess players. Cultural geographer Harriet Hawkins suggests that such methods present new ways of thinking about art:

> Art is thus less to be understood as the output of a teleological, singular, linear chain of production, distribution, and consumption, with creativity lying solely at the beginning of that chain (as if that was ever really the case). But rather, art practices are to be described as in process, always producing: worlds in progress, knowledge in the making, subjectivities to come. (…) art experiences and interpretation understood in terms of primary making and belated reading is replaced by a sense of an event of poesis in all parties involved: artwork, artist, audience.[89]

There is a clear emphasis here on the fluidity of the social as a significant and creative force. Events like these have their roots in 1960s practices like Alan Kaprow's *Happenings* or Fluxus. *Happenings* were events that took place in interactive environments planned and set up by the artist himself. They often happened in art galleries and were enacted by invited audiences, the intention being to make the gallery in terms of its presentation and usual function all but disappear. When these events occurred outside the gallery, the artist usually took his audience with him, thus quite immediately and significantly altering places beyond the gallery by introducing a new and motivated public into it.

Fluxus, on the other hand, often took the form of activities or games. These could be performed almost anywhere, but once again the audience was willing and aware from the outset. What distinguishes these sorts of activities from the sort of social participation previously described, however, was precisely that willingness and awareness. That they worked anywhere was only the case because a willing public enthusiastically attended those locations specifically in order to engage with the artworks present. That is certainly one way to manipulate a place to your will as an artist so to ensure artwork is effectively *accommodated*. Large public demonstrations, riots or raves function in precisely this way. Far more complex, however, is meeting place on its own terms and constructing a work that can occupy a place so as to independently seduce passers-by into taking its lead, which Nomadic Cafe achieved very effectively.

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[88] Claire Bishop, *Participation,* (New york, London: MIT Press, 2006), 12.
[89] Harriet Hawkins, *For Creative Geographies: Geography, Visual arts and the Making of Worlds*. (New York, London: Routledge. 2014), 10-11.

1.8. Phenomenology

The focus of this investigation is primarily upon the relation between artworks, the places where they are encountered, and the audience members who encounter them. The phenomenological approach is particularly well suited to an investigation of this kind due to the emphasis it places on direct description of the world as it appears to embodied consciousness. The movement was inaugurated by Edmund Husserl at the beginning of the twentieth century, whose expressed intention it was to found a rigorous science capable of describing the structure of experience as it appeared to transcendental consciousness. According to Husserl, such a task demands "a radical alteration of that same dispensation under which experience of the natural world runs its course", or, "the natural attitude" as it is also often referred to.[90] This is to be achieved by way of the "phenomenological reduction", or *epoché,* which requires whoever performs it to "bracket" all objects external to direct consciousness, "so that one can proceed to reflect on and systematically describe the contents of the conscious mind in terms of their essential structures".[91] Fundamental to understanding Husserl's approach is the idea that all consciousness is consciousness of something – it is inherently directed or intentional in this way. By suspending the natural attitude, Husserl argues that the phenomenological reduction holds the potential to reveal the structure of consciousness in its most basic, transcendental form. Phenomenology is the study of the "nature of appearance" in this way, a return to the "things themselves", which is to say that the adoption of its method constitutes not so much a focus on "*what* appears" as upon "*how* it appears".[92]

That being said, this thesis will draw predominantly from thinkers other than Husserl, and especially those inspired by Heidegger's reappraisal of phenomenology's fundamental purpose. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger instigates a shift away from the description of the structures of transcendental consciousness and towards those of our everyday *being-in-the-world*. Whereas for Husserl, it is "mental content" which "gives intelligibility to everything people encounter", for Heidegger, there is "a more basic form of intentionality than that of a self-sufficient individual subject directed at the world by means of its mental content".[93] What Heidegger draws to our attention is how "the shared everyday skills, discriminations, and practices into which we are socialised provide the conditions necessary for people to pick out objects, to understand themselves

[90] Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson, (New York, Oxford: Routledge Classics, 2012), xxxiv.
[91] Hubert L. Dreyfus & Mark A. Wrathall, *A Companion to Phenomenology and Existentialism*, (Maldon, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell, 2006), 2.
[92] Michael Lewis & Tanja Staehler, *Phenomenology: An Introduction*, (Continuum: London & New York, 2010), 1.
[93] Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*, (Cambridge – US, London -UK: The MIT Press, 1991), 3.

as subjects, and, generally, to make sense of the world and of their lives".[94] According to Heidegger, each person's capacity for reflection is thus underpinned by, and founded upon, a rich array of everyday, mundane activities and modes of engagement with the world around them that they share with other people, many of which "can function only if they remain in the background".[95]

Being-in-the-World is the term Heidegger uses to assert his claim that consciousness should not be thought of as distinct from the world through which it came to self-awareness. It is for this reason that he also chooses not to use the term "subject" to refer to an individual consciousness (which only perpetuates the myth of subject-object/world distinction), and instead opts for the term "Dasein". This term translates as "Being-here/there" and contains within itself something of consciousness's situatedness in, and relatedness with, its world. Dasein's "essence", he writes, "lies in its existence", which is to say, the "possible ways for it to be".[96] It becomes conscious of the world through its "concernful absorption" in it, that is, by engaging with the other Daseins that make up the world it was born into, or by putting things to use and actively participating in the various systems that those things collectively manifest.[97] For Heidegger, we do not discover the world, nor should we expect to gain any insight into our relationship with it, through the sort of detached reflection proposed by Husserl, for this style of reflection merely reveals one of the many possible ways for Dasein to be, i.e., reflective. Instead, we must pay closer attention to the more mundane aspects of our average everydayness, that which so often passes under the radar of reflective consciousness, and yet that which provides the foundation for a more reflective attitude to be adopted. His approach is more hermeneutic than transcendental in this way, since, as Dreyfus highlights, "background practices can only be pointed out to people who already share them – who, as [Heidegger] would say, dwell in them".[98] As such, Heidegger strives to interpret Dasein from within the purview of its own cultural-historical world

What is most useful for our current purposes about this shift that Heidegger instigates is that it enables us to confront more effectively the diverse range of experiences that people can have of artworks. It encourages us to consider how the viewer's background relationship with their own world might influence the way they come to engage with the concrete artwork, how it might draw their attention to certain aspects over others or give rise to revaluations of the same artwork over time. Furthermore, it also compels us to consider the significance of the viewer's relationship with the concrete environments they enter into in order to perform the encounter. We have already reflected briefly on how the supposed neutrality of the white cube gallery might be called into question, the primary insight being that the white walls of the gallery can never entirely

[94] Ibid., 4.
[95] Ibid., 4.
[96] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson, (Malden – US, Oxford – UK, Victoria – AUS: Blackwell Publishing, 1962), 67.
[97] Ibid., 102.
[98] Dreyfus, Being-in-the-World, 4.

succeed in isolating the artwork and audience from the ongoing world around them. In turn, this raises the question as to how a viewer's experience of an artwork might be altered as a consequence of its being moved between different places, countries or continents - between different cultural worlds. This is a question that will be confronted in chapter three. In chapter four, we will consider more directly Heidegger's own reflections on the relation between the artwork, its audience, and place, in the essay "The Origin of the Work of Art".

There is, however, a vital component missing in Heidegger's assessment of both Dasein and the artwork, which is the role of the perceiving body in enabling people to engage with their world and the artwork successfully to begin with. As Taylor Carman and Mark B. N. Hansen point out, "in all of Being and Time, Heidegger says virtually nothing about perception and mentions the body only to exclude it".[99] Edward Casey makes a similar observation with reference to "The Origin of the Work of Art".[100] Yet, if the argument is to be advanced effectively that the viewer's relationship with a place or the broader *place-world* will influence how they engage with works of art, then we need to understand how it is that their life as it has been lived in the background up until that point works through perception and informs the way that the viewer actually sees the world. Maurice Merleau-Ponty provides us with considerable insight in this regard, and his oeuvre will be turned to frequently over the course of this investigation.

Merleau-Ponty's work is heavily influenced by both Husserl and Heidegger. What he takes from Husserl is a steadfast commitment to the paramount importance of embodied perception for understanding consciousness and he very much considered himself to be continuing Husserl's project. However, unlike Husserl, he is not simply concerned with how human knowledge is acquired but, "in particular, the way we conceive consciousness, the world and their relation".[101] This broader concern is far more closely aligned with Heidegger than Husserl, and nowhere does this connection reveal itself more explicitly than in the preface of *Phenomenology of Perception* when he openly criticises the phenomenological reduction. There he writes: "The most important lesson which the reduction teaches us is the impossibility of a complete reduction".[102] For Merleau-Ponty, the reduction can never be completed because to do so would be to arrive to a state of pure, transcendental consciousness which has been relieved of both its body and its world.

In what follows, Merleau-Ponty develops a highly original theory of the body which cannot be distinguished from subjective consciousness because the body "is a subject" and a "form of consciousness", one that is

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[99] Ibid., 10.
[100] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 131.
[101] Ibid., 16.
[102] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception,* trans. Colin Smith, (New York, Oxford - UK: Routledge, 1962), xv.

intimately connected with its world.[103] He paints a portrait of an intelligent and attentive body that is always on the alert for opportunities to act, to take us through doorways without needing to size them up first, or to maintain our balance on rocky paths. At the same time, the opportunities to act that the body recognises are shown to be cultural in character. He describes how certain materials come to present themselves as available for cutting and sewing, and how tools and work surfaces are then called for to get the job done. At a dinner party, the "words, attitudes and tone which are fitting" are elicited from us quite immediately by that situation.[104] This draws the claim that it is our "being-in-the-world" (i.e., our world of customs, tasks, systems and communities) "which provides all our reflexes with their meaning".[105]

Explicit reference is made to Heidegger here in order to show how the embodied subject's perception is honed to those opportunities to act which are most culturally appropriate or relevant. We come to perceive the world according to the protocols and systems we have internalised, which in turn supports the idea that it is by way of our relation with the cultural world that we initially achieve awareness of ourselves as subjects. We are aware of our bodies through our engagement with the world around us as it has elicited our engagement up until this point. Our corporeal responsiveness is thus an expression of the world as it has been lived up until this moment. For Merleau-Ponty, the artist brings this basic corporeal relationship between body and world into view. His essays on painting will receive special attention over the course of this project, therefore, with careful consideration extended to how the artist is held to bring their own unique *style* of perception to expression in their work, and how this might help us to understand how the audience sees their work in turn.

In addition to Merleau-Ponty, this thesis draws heavily from the work of American phenomenologist Edward Casey. Casey draws considerable inspiration from the work of all three figures mentioned above. However, he also takes a far more localised approach in the sense that his concern is not so much with what it means to be "in-the-world" as what it means for us to dwell in a *"place-world"*. Casey's principal observation in his work on place is that in order to live in the world and become aware of ourselves through our relation with it, that world must first be encountered through different places. Indeed, our experience of the world by which we come to awareness of ourselves is inherently modulated in this way according to his view. What Casey takes from Heidegger is a keen sense of how the world is distributed in such a way that manifests culture – how it is already there in a meaningful way as a complex network of different places prior to our arrival in it. Meanwhile, what he maintains from Husserl and Merleau-Ponty is a sensitivity for the role played by the perceiving body in recognising and adjusting to the different worlds that these places offer up. Casey's

[103] Komarine Romdenh-Romluc, *Merleau-Ponty and Phenomenology of Perception,* (London, New York: Routledge, 2011), 62.
[104] Ibid., 122.
[105] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 100.

notion of "implacement" takes on central significance in chapter four. This term seeks to explain not just how the body adjusts to a particular setting (or a single *"place-world"* as Casey would say), but how this adjustment shapes our thinking and the way in which we engage with and interpret its contents. This has clear consequences for how we come to think through the art-place relation.

In chapter six, for instance, we reflect on Roman Ingarden's notion of the *"preliminary emotion",* the term he uses to refer to that moment when an artwork first attracts our attention or rouses our interest for the first time. What Casey encourages us to consider is the role played by place in making that moment possible. Mikel Dufrenne, whose text *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience* has been a major influence on the development of this thesis, also offers us many clues as to how we should interpret the way official art places function to support the encounter. In chapter four, Dufrenne's reflection on the concert hall provides us with something of a starting point from which to begin our analysis of David Tudor's very first performance of John Cage's *4'33"*.

Another central figure in discussions relating to the phenomenology of place is Jeff Malpas, whose expressed emphasis on place in terms of its "singularity" and *"placedness"* becomes prominent in chapters four and five. Whereas Casey's work aims to achieve "a certain density of phenomenological description", which is to say, that it focuses on the particular conditions of the body's "implacement" within specific places, Malpas's work is more closely concerned with the fundamental structure of place as a basic condition of possibility.[106] His work offers far more insight than Casey's when it comes to understanding the basic relation between places and the objects contained within them. Indeed, whereas for Casey, the removal of an object such as an artwork from a particular place fundamentally alters the conditions of a body's *implacement* there, Malpas provides us with the conceptual framework to understand why that place still presents itself as being the same place as before. This is especially important if we are to understand the way in which concert halls or museums function as places for art, the leading themes of chapters four and five.

1.9. Conclusion

Since the emergence of the universal survey museum's in the 1800s, the art-place relation has evolved significantly. No longer is the museum merely an archive for artworks to be stored and displayed in, and carefully examined by way of comparative analysis. Instead, they have emerged as places where we go to gain a better understanding of ourselves, to engage with other people in ways that our everyday, often urbanised environments *accommodate* less and less. As we have seen, these shifts could occur from above

[106] Jeff Malpas, "Comparing topographies: Across paths/around place: A reply to Casey", in Philosophy & Geography 4(2) 2001.231-238. 233.

as was the case with Barr at MOMA, or they could be influenced by the artist's themselves (minimalism/museum critique), or even the broader society at large (relational aesthetics). The actions of artists in particular have presented a potent capacity to re-orientate both our understandings of places and our conduct within them, a capacity that is particularly well demonstrated within urban contexts. This capacity of the work, to reveal aspects of places to us by guiding our attention from within it, will prove useful going forward. In the next two chapters we will reflect on Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* and its relationship with the various places it has passed through over the years. This will enable us to confront the structure of the art-place relation more directly.

Chapter Two - Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*

The aim of this chapter and the next is to broadly assess how the question of the art-place relation will be confronted over the course of this thesis. The conclusions drawn here will provide a general overview of the themes and questions to be dealt with in later chapters, whilst at the same time asserting my own case for this project as a whole. In order to achieve this, Pablo Picasso's painting *Guernica* will be taken as a case study, with a view to understanding first of all the relation between its *principal theme*, that is, the artwork's actual presentation from within the place where it is seen directly, and its *aboutness*, which is the term we will use to refer to the meaning that the painting is considered to hold, or what we perceive it as being *about*.

At three-and-a-half meters high and almost eight meters across, Picasso's painting is a truly imposing depiction of a brutal aerial attack as suffered by the Basque town of Guernica in the north of the artist's native Spain on Monday 26th April, 1937. As we shall see, however, the significance of its scale and the way it shapes our more general engagement with other formal elements of its *principal theme* is an aspect of its encounter that is often overlooked within the literature. In the first part of this chapter, we will therefore discuss the different kinds of *extension theories* that lead to features of the *principal theme* such as its scale being overlooked in this way. An *extension theory*, broadly defined, is any approach to critique or analysis which seeks to draw meaning from the artwork by way of reference to the situations, circumstances or presumed beliefs, thoughts or ideas that lie behind the work and led to its creation. What these approaches essentially overlook is not simply how meaning emerges as a direct consequence of the audience's encounter with the *principal theme*, but also the significance of the creative process for enabling meaning to emerge to begin with.

Guernica is currently on display at the Museo Nacional de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid and represents a perfect case study for our current purposes in that it harbours strong connections with a number of places, and its whereabouts, display and reception has already received considerable attention elsewhere. Gijs van Hensbergen's text *Guernica: The Biography of a Twentieth-Century Icon* provides considerable insight in this regard, as do Rudolf Arnheim's *Picasso's Guernica: The Genesis of a Painting,* Russell Martin's *Picasso's War,* Kathleen Brunner's *Picasso Rewriting Picasso,* Anthony Blunt's *Picasso's Guernica* and Gertje R. Utley's *Picasso: The Communist Years.*[107] Furthermore, lecture six entitled "Mural" from Timothy J. Clark's *Picasso and Truth* offers a seemingly phenomenologically-inspired analysis of the work, which does, therefore,

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[107] Rudolf Arnheim, *Picasso's Guernica: The Genesis of a Painting,* (London: Faber, 1964).
Russell Martin, *Picasso's War*, (London: Pocket Books, 2004)
Kathleen Brunner, *Picasso Rewriting Picasso,* (London: Black Dog, 2004).
Anthony Blunt, *Picasso's Guernica,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).
Gertje R. Utley, *Picasso: The Communist Years,* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000).

present us with a perfect starting point from which to find our way back into the work's place in the second section of this chapter.[108] In addition to these, Rosalind Krauss's essay "In the Name of Picasso" from her seminal text *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and other Modernist Myths* puts forth a forceful critique of the prevalent tendency of scholars in the 1970s towards analysing Picasso's oeuvre in predominantly autobiographical terms.[109] The "autobiographical account" is a clear example of the kind of extension theory we will attempt to dismiss in this chapter, and the autobiographical account specifically will be returned to in the third chapter with this in mind.

My focus throughout the thesis will be upon those places in which artworks are encountered by their audiences for it is only by remaining within the limits of that place that we can avoid losing sight of the artwork in terms of what Heidegger referred to as its "thingly character".[110] With this in mind, this investigation will concern itself with a broader range of art-places than merely those provided by galleries or museums. Indeed, an artist's studio, a street corner or a coastal path might just as effectively provide a place for an encounter with an artwork to occur as either of these more traditional settings. Before considering how it is that the place of the work's encounter should best be analysed though, it will be necessary to justify more clearly the claim that the place where the work is displayed is in fact the best of all possible starting points from and through which to learn more about the art-place relation in general. In addition to this, the significance of this relation to our understanding of art in the very broadest sense also needs to be assessed. *Guernica* offers up an interesting case study in this respect.

One aspect of the work which lends itself particularly well to this discussion, for instance, is the fact that *Guernica* clearly references a specific place at a concrete moment in its past. Although not all artworks relate to places directly in this way, discussion of this relation will allow us to consider more concretely what it means to say that an artwork is *about* something, and also to show how this *aboutness* presents itself most effectively only from within the place of its encounter. As I will attempt to show in the first part of this chapter, it is imperative that the work's *aboutness* be regarded as an aspect of the concrete work itself, as opposed to an idea, situation, or circumstance lying "behind" its creation. It must be a part of *how* the work presents itself to its audiences in this way. With this in mind, potential interpretations of the work's *aboutness,* with a close focus on *representationalist* and *expressivist* accounts in particular, will be discussed in this chapter, with a view to identifying how these *extension theories* divert our attention away from the actual *principal theme* and ultimately displace the work within our understanding. Let us begin by considering the relation between the work's *aboutness* and its *principal theme*, therefore.

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[108] Timothy J. *Clark, Picasso and Truth: from cubism to Guernica*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013).

[109] Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and other Modernist Myths.* (Cambridge - US, London - UK: MIT Press, 1987).

[110] Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", 91.

2.1. *Aboutness* and the *Principal Theme*

To say that an artwork is *about* something is to say that it draws our attention to a certain theme, or set of themes, which are considered to be its focus. As Arthur C. Danto writes, all artworks are fundamentally "about" something, and it is because they are *about* something "that works of art accordingly have meaning".[111] In the case of *Guernica*, it is undoubtedly the attack that the scene depicts which stands out most in this respect. This is what the artwork is *about,* and as such, it can be understood to draw meaning from that original event as it took place there.

However, there is much more to *Guernica* than simply the original event it depicts. In order to comprehend the painting in terms of its *aboutness* in the very broadest sense, there is a need to question, first of all, just *how* this artwork is supposed to be *about* that original event. Indeed, the term *aboutness* encompasses far more than simply the situation considered to lie "behind" it. Each artwork is just as much *about* its own formal construction, register, and overall *style*, as it is *about* a dominant or leading subject, theme, or motif. All aspects of it are interdependent in this way. Furthermore, by paying closer attention to the artwork's development through the creative process, it quickly becomes clear that something of the artist's own experience of creating the artwork becomes *sedimented* in it through their labour, and ultimately comes to be *embodied* by it as that which the artist leaves in their "wake" as Merleau-Ponty writes.[112] The artwork *embodies* a certain attitude toward the subject matter or theme in this way, and this in included in what we actually see when we encounter that artwork in a gallery.

As we shall see over the course of this chapter, it is precisely because the artwork's *aboutness* encompasses so much that individual artworks can be interpreted in diverse (and often contradictory) ways. Eugene Kaelin observes how truly great artworks in particular are never exhausted by extensive viewings and analyses over time, that they are positively open to them.[113] Indeed, there seems to be something intrinsic to the artworks we admire most which renders them all the more open to interpretation and reinterpretation over time. *Aboutness* is best understood as an umbrella term for all possible interpretations that a single artwork holds the potential within itself to give rise to, therefore. As such, even if we encounter a particular artwork as being *about* some thing or theme in particular, there is always some aspect of it that will also inevitably remain hidden from us. This is most evident in the way that works of art often come to be interpreted differently over time, whereby what was once considered to be true of the work is no longer thought to be the case. *Aboutness* is multi-faceted and reveals itself differently according to different circumstances in this

[111] Arthur C. Danto, *What Art Is*, (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2013), 37.
[112] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", in *Signs*, trans. Richard C McCleary, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 52.
[113] Eugene Kaelin, *Art and Existence,* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1970), 28.

way, which, as I will show, depends significantly on the way in which the artwork stands in relation to the place of its encounter.

It is interesting to reflect, for instance, on the difference between how *Guernica* was displayed by MOMA in New York where it was held for over forty years, and how it is currently displayed by Reina Sofia in Madrid. At MOMA, the label displayed next to the painting informed its audiences that it had no political significance and that the artwork simply expressed the artist's "abhorrence of war and brutality".[114] By universalising its meaning in this way, one might say the MOMA was sidestepping the issue of its politically significant content in favour of its formal appearance. Yet, this claim seems to ignore the fact that the work's title is also the name of an actual place. In contrast, the label accompanying the work as it is currently installed in Madrid makes it abundantly clear just how closely tied the work is to that country's own political past. In particular, it draws our attention to how *Guernica's* "return" to Spain was a direct consequence of the nation's democratisation following the death of its longstanding fascist dictator General Francisco Franco in 1975. With reference to MOMA's display, might it be that the sheer distance between that museum and the Basque town of Guernica was what enabled the painting's content to be universalised in this way?

This is an argument I intend to advance in the next chapter, but what needs to be made clear here from the outset is that the adoption of such a position, i.e., that different places unlock the potential for different *aboutness* claims to be made in relation to artworks, should not be taken to suggest that the potential for an artwork's interpretation is therefore limitless. For even though an artwork could quite reasonably be considered to draw our attention to a variety of different themes, those themes must already be contained within the artwork in order to be recognised as contributing to its *aboutness* to begin with. The themes that are brought to the fore through the encounter, and made more concrete thereafter by way of reflection, must essentially derive from one *principal theme* which is the total outward appearance of the work. The disparate claims made in the supplementary materials provided by MOMA and Reina Sofia respectively should not necessarily be regarded as contradictory, therefore, for they simply bring different themes contained within the *principal theme* of the work to the fore. Whilst MOMA's focus is upon the main scene which contains very little in the way of concrete references to the actual town of Guernica, thus enabling the violence contained within that scene to be universalised in this way, in the case of material provided to audiences at Reina Sofia, the emphasis is much more closely focused upon the relation between the scene and its title. As suggested above, however, this interaction between *Guernica's* title and content (the title also contributes to the *principal theme*), would be far more prominent for a Spanish audience than it would be for an international one. When we consider the artwork in terms of its *placedness* in this way, we begin to see how it is that places themselves might be understood to offer up the differing circumstances according

[114] Gertje, *Picasso: The Communist Years*, 24.

to which different aspects of the artwork's *principal theme* may be drawn out and brought to the fore.

In order to truly get to grips with the inherently ambiguous nature of artworks, however, we must first of all gain a clearer understanding of how this *principal theme* first comes to emerge, and how the relationship between it and the work's *aboutness* functions. As I will try to show in this section, because the artwork's development occurs gradually over time, so the *principal theme* also emerges gradually through a process of what will be referred to here as *sedimentation*. Recognising the work's *principal theme* in terms of its having become *sedimented* over the course of the artist's process in this way will allow us to understand more clearly how the themes which give rise to the work's perceived *aboutness* come to be *embodied* by the *principal theme* to begin with. In turn, this will then show us how it is that the *principal theme* harbours the potential to present itself in apparently contradictory ways. This will also present us with a clearer picture of precisely what sort of thing the artwork is which place is then called upon to *accommodate* through the event of its encounter. It will also be useful to introduce a few prominent extension theories at this point in order to show just how they draw attention away from the artist's labour as it has come to be *sedimented* within the *principal theme*.

2.1.1. The Representationalist Account

The work's *aboutness* is often interpreted as a mode of reference which alludes beyond the concrete artwork itself. In consequence, the subject matter, situation, or moment of inspiration "behind" the work come to be prioritised over the *principal theme* itself. By specifying external referents in the way these approaches do, it is assumed that concrete evidence might then be gathered by way of their investigation and that this process will provide clearer insight into the artwork in question than a direct encounter with its *principal theme* is able to. This kind of approach constitutes an "aesthetics of extension" to use Rosalind E. Krauss's terminology (from which the term "extension theory" is derived), whereby all manner of external evidence and case studies come to be offered up in order to support the artwork's analysis and critique.[115] These approaches also effectively conceal the significance of the art-place relation because the way the artwork's *"principal theme"* functions upon us from within that place comes to be regarded as less significant than the story behind the work.

The first and perhaps most obvious example of this kind of extension-theory is the representationalist account, which is when an artwork like *Guernica's principal theme* is considered to be a representation of the actual event its title refers to. According to this view, the panic-stricken figures scattered across the scene are held to be direct references to Guernica's actual victims, even if their presentation is clearly stylised and

[115] Rosalind E. Krauss, "In the name of Picasso", in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths,* (Cambridge (US), London: MIT Press, 1985), 28.

so does not constitute an accurate portrayal of that event. Proponents of this view might highlight the burning tower in the background of the scene and point out that this is in fact a reference to the actual tower famously left standing after the bombings had ceased, and clear evidence of the painting's representational value. In fact, this is just how the work is currently presented within the permanent collection of the Museo Nacional de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid. On the website, for instance, *Guernica* is described as an "accurate depiction of a cruel, dramatic situation".[116] Indeed, extension theories even enter into the place of the artwork's encounter in this manner, e.g., via the supplementary materials accompanying the painting's display such as the labels, programmes or catalogues.

However, it was not really the actual event itself that the artist was engaged with as he painted *Guernica*. For whilst Picasso's scene undoubtedly captures something of the brutality of the attack to powerful effect, we do not learn much about what happened there by looking at his painting. Picasso had never visited Guernica and so would not have known what it looked like. As such, he would have only been familiar with the image of the burning tower from the photographs circulated by the French press in the weeks following the attack.[117] Indeed, having lived in Paris since 1904, the artist was both culturally and geographically removed from this event when it occurred in his homeland. He would have found out about it in more or less the same way as his fellow Parisians did, therefore, and the representationalist account is tenuous in these respects.

Nevertheless, even if Picasso had been there to witness the attack on Guernica, and painted this scene directly, it is still not clear that an extension-theory of this kind would provide much genuine insight into how this enormous artwork functions upon us in the way it does from within the place of its encounter. Indeed, our interest in the subject matter only arises as a consequence of the impact that the actual work has upon us. Casey argues for this reason that when we enjoy a painting, "we savour the image it gives us far more than that which it represents (indicates, signifies, stands for). This is as true for 'representational' paintings as it is for frankly non-representational works".[118] Even the most faithful representations of things, people and places are somewhat removed from whatever might be thought to have inspired them.

At least prior to reflection, it is the *principal theme* itself that is prioritised from the viewer's point of view over that which it is considered to represent. For Casey, this happens because unlike things, people and places in the world, which appear as features of, and in relation to that world: "the picture draws attention

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[116] Paloma Esteban Leal, "Guernica". Accessed June 3, 2018, https://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica.

[117] Gijs van Hensbergen, *Guernica: The Biography of a Twentieth-Century Icon,* (Bloomsbury: London, New York, 2013), 31.

[118] Edward S. Casey, *The World at a Glance*, (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 2007), 410.

to itself as an image - to certain pictorial properties present in their own right and for their own sake".[119] The artwork distinguishes itself from the ongoing world around it by drawing attention to its *principal theme* in this way. It resists being overlooked as other things in the world around us are as a direct consequence of their being incorporated into our daily tasks as useful objects or tools. Merleau-Ponty also recognises this gap that is opened up between the subject matter, the work and the artist, through what he refers to as the "metamorphosis" that the artist's labour triggers.[120] It is by way of this process that the artwork ultimately becomes detached from the artist's own life and is transformed into a "universal means of understanding and of making something understood".[121]

Recognising the work in terms of this removal from the event returns to it a sense of autonomy, and indeed *placedness,* which extension theories like the representationalist view ultimately undermine. But this raises the question as to just how the relationship between the work and the original event it depicts should then be characterised. The representationalist view is tempting because it is grasped so intuitively. Even after we acknowledge the fact that the work is not a direct representation of that event, we would still feel justified in claiming that this painted scene is "of" that event, just as I would say that the photograph on my wall is "of" my father. For this reason, and as was already suggested at the beginning of this section, it is more useful to think of *aboutness* as a multiplicity of "themes", of which Guernica is one amongst many others. After all, when we say that *Guernica* is *about* this event, we are merely expressing the fact that the attack on Guernica the town was adopted by Picasso as a *theme* to be worked. It is only through the artist's labour that this theme ultimately comes to be *embodied* by the artwork as a prominent feature of its *principal theme,* therefore.

For Danto, any meaning that an artwork might be understood to harbour must be "internal" to it because it is the artwork itself that presents itself as meaningful to us to begin with.[122] In consequence, he argues that the artwork *"embodies"* its meaning and that this meaning should not be sought anywhere other than from within the work itself, neither by way of "denotation" nor "extension".[123] At first glance, Danto's position might appear to be in line with the position I have been developing in this section so far. After all, the work's *embodiment* of its *principal theme* is what allows those secondary themes opened up by it to stand out autonomously from whatever they are considered to make reference to, be it a person, place, or even an idea. That being said, simply acknowledging the *principal theme* in terms of its *embodiment* is not sufficient on its own to quash the prevalent tendency towards extension theories that Danto himself also clearly rejects. Let us consider another extension theory at this juncture in order to show this.

[119] Ibid., 392.
[120] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 53.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Danto, *What Art Is*, 38.
[123] Ibid.

2.1.2. The Expressivist Account

In John Berger's analysis of *Guernica,* he offers up an alternative, more expressivistic account, which could well be considered to overcome the limitations of the representationalist view. He describes it as "a painting *about* how Picasso imagines suffering".[124] According to this view, the scene we are presented with from within Room 206 of Madrid's most famous modern art museum might still be regarded as a representation of sorts, but this time of how the artist imagined the scene to have unfolded, and therefore, as an artistic interpretation of that event. Whereas the representationalist view suggests that the *principal theme* is simply the original event represented in Picasso's own style, Berger's expressivist account places emphasis instead upon on the artist's creative expression.

This also means that Picasso's removal from the actual event would not present such a problem for Berger.[125] After all, his claim that *Guernica* represents the "imaginative equivalent" of what happened to Guernica's victims "in sensation in the flesh" suggests that the artist does more than simply recreate the scene. Something of Picasso's own emotional response to this event is also considered to be contained within the painting for Berger. As he writes, Picasso makes us "feel [the victims'] pain with our eyes"[126] The painting draws our attention to what would have happened to the victims' bodies in graphic detail: "to the hands, the soles of the feet, the horse's tongue, the mother's breasts, the eyes in the head".[127] Yet, Berger is not suggesting that Picasso created the work in this way merely out of some morbid fascination with the death and suffering of Guernica's victims. Rather, what he appears to sense within the *principal theme* is something of the artist's empathic response to that event as it comes to emanate through the surface of the work.

Nevertheless, even an extension theory like this one ultimately undermines the autonomy of the artwork by locating its *aboutness* somewhere other than where the artwork actually is. Even from within the gallery, such an account ultimately encourages us to wonder what must have been going through the mind of the artist as he painted. Whilst for the representationalist, the work is considered to allegorise the original event, for expressivists like Berger, the work's *aboutness* is considered to be rooted in the creative imagination of the artist, who already invents the *principal theme* in their mind before their work even begins. Their work essentially consists of making the image in their mind exist in the form of an artwork, therefore.

The aim of this section is to return *aboutness* to the *principal theme*, as it reveals itself from within whatever place an audience's encounter with it occurs. Danto's embodiment thesis might appear to present us with

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[124] John Berger, *The Success and Failure of Picasso*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), 337.
[125] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 48.
[126] Berger, *Success and Failure,* 339.
[127] Ibid.

one way of achieving this in so much as the emphasis he places upon how the artwork *embodies* its meaning is intended to undermine those theories that lean too heavily on "denotation" or "extension". Nevertheless, when we take a closer look, we see that Danto's embodiment thesis does in fact leave itself open to being incorporated into an extension theory like Berger's. In order to illustrate this, let us consider the logic of Danto's approach once more, which would appear to be as follows: if the content of the artwork is *embodied* by the artwork itself, and the artwork's meaning is derived from that content through the event of the work's encounter, then that *embodied* content must be the origin of the artwork's meaning, as opposed to, whatever external subject it might be interpreted as making reference to. Yet, it is not entirely clear that Danto's observations are able to achieve his intended aim. For there is still more than enough room within Berger's expressivist account to accept that Picasso's "imagined equivalent" of that original event comes to be *embodied* by the work, and that its meaning is internal to it. Yet, this would not necessarily undermine Berger's claim that the work was first conceived in the mind of the artist. All he would need to argue is that the artist recreates the image held within their imagination in the form of the artwork's *principal theme*.

In order to overcome the expressivist account then, there is a need to question the presumption underpinning it more generally, e.g., that the *principal theme* ultimately exists prior to its manifestation in the mind of the artist. After all, a significant part of any artwork's *aboutness* derives from the fact that its *principal theme* has been worked upon by the artist, and that it has emerged through that process before being left by the artist to "exist expressly" as the autonomous work it is.[128] The embodiment thesis as it is presented by Danto is not sufficient to understand how *aboutness* derives from the work directly because it tells us nothing of how the work's *principal theme* (from which all *aboutness* claims necessarily derive) comes to be *embodied* by the work to begin with. It was for this reason that it was stated at the beginning of this first part that, before the *principal theme* can be considered to be *embodied* by the work, it must first become *sedimented* in it over time. By understanding how the work's *principal theme* becomes *sedimented*, therefore, we will then be able to see more clearly what the artwork before us is *as* its *principal theme*, which is to say, an artwork that has been brought into being.

2.1.3. The *Principal Theme* as both *Sedimented* and *Embodied*

Whilst it is tempting to think of the work's *principal theme* as the artist's starting point, something they intended to achieve for the outset, such as an idea that the artist had "in mind" for the artwork before their work began, in actual fact, the *principal theme* does not begin to manifest until after the artist's process has begun. To have merely an idea for a work "in mind" is to have no *principal theme* at all. Merleau-Ponty insists that painting "does not exist before painting [takes place]" for this very reason, for it is through the process

[128] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 54-55.

of painting that the *principal theme* comes to manifest.[129] Whereas the term *embodiment* expresses how the *principal theme* presents itself to the viewer as indistinguishable from the artwork once complete, to say that it must first have become *sedimented* in the work is to acknowledge both the fact that the *principal theme* does not manifest instantaneously and that the artist's process does not unfold in one fell swoop. Whilst the artist might well work on an idea they had in mind from the outset, just as Picasso clearly adopted the attack on Guernica as his leading theme, it is also the case that many of the gestures made by artist's caught up in their labour are retracted, revisited, repeated or gone over through "the process of [the work's] becoming" as Merleau-Ponty writes.[130] The *principal theme* manifests through those multiple layers and revisions and is negotiated and developed along the way. It is not, as extension theorists would claim, prior to the process, but rather it manifests through and as a consequence of that process. In a lecture he gave at The Bauhaus, and which Gombrich recounts in *The Story of Art,* Paul Klee describes his own process in similar terms:

> Klee tells us how he began by relating lines, shades and colours to each other, adding a stress here, removing a weight there, to achieve the feeling of balance or "rightness" after which every artist strives. He described how the forms emerging under his hands gradually suggested some real or fantastic subject to his imagination and how he followed these hints when he felt they would help and not hinder his harmonies by completing the image that he had 'found'.[131]

Here, the "real or fantastic subject" which suggests itself to Klee as a consequence of his direct engagement with his craft emerges as the work's *principal theme* only with time. It is "found" along the way, via what Singer describes as a "certain intentional spontaneity" of an inherently responsive gesture, as opposed to, an "activity of pure conquest".[132] It is by way of this intentional spontaneity on the artist's part that the marks of their labour become *sedimented* in the artwork and the *principal theme* is able to emerge. In this particular case, that the *principal theme* emerges through the artist's process is plain to see, since Klee does not know what he is going to paint until he has actually started painting. In *Guernica's* case though, this is not so clear, as we know that Picasso set out to paint this event specifically. But this needn't mean that we should equate the work's *principal theme* with that event directly in consequence. For as has already been underlined, when we talk about the work in terms of its *aboutness,* we are not just concerned to know what secondary theme most stands out from the work (e. g., the attack on Guernica or the suffering of its victims), but moreover, *how* it is *about* that theme.

In Clark's analysis of *Guernica's* development through its eight distinct phases as captured on camera by Dora

[129] Ibid., 54.
[130] Ibid, 46.
[131] Ernst H. Gombrich, *The Story of Art,* (London: Phaidon, 1995), 578.
[132] Linda Singer, "Merleau-Ponty on the Concept of Style", in The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting, ed. Galen A. Johnson & Michael B. Smith, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 238.

Maar, this process of *sedimentation* is clearly apparent and culminates in a far more empathic response to that event than would have been the case had Picasso been contented with any of the earlier versions. Clark draws our attention to an early preparatory sketch made by Picasso on 9th May that he considers to be particularly impressive for just how many elements of the painting's final version were already present. It includes not just "characters and incidents, but decisions about form" he writes.[133] However, as he then goes on to say, this early sketch contains "nothing of *Guernica's* effect".[134] By "effect", Clark is referring to the painting's overall *style* of appearance, or the overall impact of its *principal theme* — i.e., that which encapsulates everything that *Guernica* is, and not solely the suffering of its victims; brutal and tragic, yet also empathic, solemn and even tender. As the photographs show us though, this overall "effect" took time to manifest, and did so only as a consequence of the various alterations made to it along the way. It was clearly not an original idea then transmitted directly onto canvas.

Each phase shows a keen responsiveness on the artist's part to the work as it was developing before him in a manner not unlike that articulated by Klee. Indeed, there was clearly an attentiveness on Picasso's part to achieve a "rightness" of his own, a general tone that was befitting of the theme he was working on. Of the first full-scale outline of the main figures for the painting, drafted just two days after that original sketch, Clark observes that it had been made "too beautiful. Too male. Too Greek." [135] *Guernica's* hero is surrounded by women, who, it is claimed, are "still unavoidably registering as his partners in a sexualised dance." [136] This was how Picasso was accustomed to painting women, as predominantly sexual actors, and so these early female figures were very much still "Picasso's normal imaginings".[137] According to Clark's analysis, Picasso must have recognised the need to reverse those erotic signs, which, through his own intentional spontaneity, he had allowed to become *sedimented* in the surface of the canvas up until that point. According to Clark's analysis then, by stepping back and studying his own first attempt, Picasso came to realise that there was no room for eroticism here and that empathy must surely prevail.

What thinking through the work's development as a process of *sedimentation* enables us to do is explain the apparent representational value or expressive content of the work without the need to evoke extension theories. This brings us back into the presence of the work, and in so doing, brings us back into that place where it is. The representationalist recognises that the attack on Guernica manifests and is to a certain degree present within the work itself, but mistakenly constructs a direct link between the work and the original event. The problem with this view is that, once this link has been grasped intellectually, we end up looking at the work as if it were presenting us with the attack on Guernica directly. Whereas, by keeping this

[133] Clark, *Picasso and Truth,* 257.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid*.,* 264.
[136] Ibid*.,* 266.
[137] Ibid*.,* 264.

process of *sedimentation* in mind, we are able to see how an event like that which happened in Guernica might provide the artist with a theme to be worked and ultimately give direction to the development of the painting's *principal theme*. Its having been adopted and then worked by the artist is what triggers that "metamorphosis" by which this theme comes to be *sedimented* gradually, and eventually *embodied* completely, once the artwork is complete.

Any work which is received as a representation of a concrete person, place or event is never the same as that subject matter for this very reason, even if the artist is attempting to be as faithful as possible to that subject matter. The *principal theme* that emerges will always bear the hallmarks of the artist's *style*. That is why we say that in discussions of the work's *aboutness,* we are not just concerned with "what" the work is *about,* but moreover, "how" it is *about* it. This is important because it shows us that no single theme which contributes to the work's *aboutness* can ever be entirely isolated from all the others present. Each theme colludes with others, such is the nature of the *principal theme*, that final amalgamation from which all *aboutness* claims derive. When we say that *Guernica* is a work *about* an aerial attack on Guernica the town then, this *aboutness claim* is justified enough, but it does not tell us a great deal about the artwork itself. The question which then needs to be answered is just *how* that attack is confronted in the work and what aspects of it are brought to the fore.

At first sight, the expressivist account as presented by Berger appeared to provide an antidote to the gap which opens up and differentiates between the work's subject matter and its *principal theme*. Berger recognises that the subject matter is not transmitted directly but is mediated by the artist. Yet for him, the metamorphosis occurs in the artist's imagination rather than through their process. Once again, the problem with this approach is that it distracts us from the concrete work before us. But it also overlooks the importance of the creative process for allowing the *principal theme* to emerge gradually as it does. For Berger, the artwork is held to provide insight into the inner-world of the artist, their creative imagination which was capable of producing this image to be painted. In *The Principles of Art,* R.G.Collingwood observed how this kind of approach posed the difficulty that there was no way of checking if the *principal theme* does indeed match up with the image presumed to originate in the artist's imagination. For this reason, he preferred to argue that when we look at a painting, we recreate the "aesthetic experience" of the artist in the midst of the creative process.[138] Once again, though, even Collingwood's position overlooks the significance of that process and just how complex and revisionary it can be. For when we look at *Guernica,* we do not see the many stages that Picasso passed through in order to arrive at the *principal theme* before us, nor how the *principal theme* given rise to had come to be "found" (as Klee would say), or settled upon, along the way.

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[138] Robin G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), 300.

This is what we mean when we say that the artist's *style* is *embodied* by the *principal theme*. It is present within the *principal theme* as decisions made that we are not privy to, and directions that the process took which may since have been covered over. Indeed, the artist's decision to stop working and leave the artwork as it is also reflects the artist's *style* in so much as they needed to recognise when that "rightness" had been achieved. Expressivist accounts such as Berger's are rooted in a sense of the artist's presence within the work in this way, but they misinterpret what the artist has left in their wake as the trace of an original vision or idea. The concept of *style* will be returned to a little further on. For the time being, it will suffice to say that whilst the expressive character of the work does indeed stem from the artist in so much as it is they who are responsible for it, that which is expressed should not be interpreted as representative of their inner thoughts or feelings. As Klee's articulation of his own process shows us, and as the multiple stages of *Guernica* confirm, the expressions which manifest in the work emerge in the gap between the artist's body and the surface of the canvas. These expressions are the products of a collaboration of sorts, between the perceiving, gesturing artist and their elected craft. It is more appropriate to say that the work rather than the artist expresses empathy for the victims caught up in this scene, therefore, since the sense of empathy that we experience through our encounter with *Guernica* manifested through the process of the work's development — that is where Picasso discovered it.

Both the representationalist and the expressivist accounts as they have been presented so far distract us from the *principal theme* we encounter by reducing the artwork to something like its image. They each do so in the sense that the artist's actual labour, as it has become *sedimented* within the very substance of the canvas, is passed over by a distinctly speculative attitude intent on understanding the circumstances behind it. Since the *principal theme* is assumed to precede the actual work, this imbues it with the purity more characteristic of an idea than a thing of substance. In so doing, it is also ultimately relieved it of its materiality and scale. Indeed, it is of no consequence that *Guernica* is a very large painting as opposed to a digital image or collage. The media itself appears to have no bearing on the *aboutness* claims that can be made about it according to this logic. When we look at the work, however, we clearly see that the oil on the canvas and the reduced variation of tones gives rise to a certain starkness of scene which makes its chaos all the more immediate. Furthermore, the sheer scale of the work and how this chaos looms over us is instrumental in terms of how the scene orientates our view of it, how we move in relation to it (the issue of scale will be returned to in the second part). By reducing the painting to its image in this way, there is also a sense in which it is relieved of its specificity too, therefore. The image becomes abstracted from its *principal theme* as it hangs there in the gallery. Indeed, such approaches lose sight of exactly where the work is. With this in mind, let us consider the materiality and specificity of the artwork.

2.1.4. The *Principal Theme* in its Materiality and Specificity

It is intriguing that even Danto, who puts forth an embodiment thesis of his own, also distinguishes between the work's meaning and the material used to make it. For instance, the canvas "does not enter into the meaning" of the work for Danto, but merely "supports the painting".[139] As he goes on to say, it is "not at all part of the meaning, even if it is part of the object that *embodies* the meaning." [140] For Danto, only the image produced by the artist's hand is considered to be part of the work carried out by the artist because it is only that aspect which was intended specifically. As such, there is also a sense in which "meaning" is distinguished from the actual concrete artwork itself (the principal theme) according to Danto's approach too, in that it comes to be regarded as something to be extracted from the work by way of reflection.

His thesis is undermined, however, by some of the case studies he presents us with further on, notably Donald Judd's "specific object" series. Here Danto admits that some properties of the concrete work might well be considered "both part of the object and of the meaning".[141] In particular, he has in mind the sharp corners of these large wall sculptures made of sheet metal and coated in enamel. As he acknowledges, Judd wanted each of these untitled objects to be perceived as things in their own right, as "specific objects", as opposed to, "imitations of specific objects".[142] These corners were machine crafted because it was beyond the artist's own capacity to create them with such precision himself. In so much as this aspect of the material was intended by the artist then, they are also considered to have "entered into the meaning of the work" by "contributing to its specificity".[143] By distinguishing between "meaning" and "work" as Danto does, these sharp corners of the object are beheld as properties which contribute to the idea of specificity that the work is intended to express, as opposed to the actual specificity of the object itself. Danto considers the work's actual specificity to be secondary to the idea of specificity inherent within the artwork. The distinction he makes between the material which supports the work and the meaning which is to be drawn from it is problematic because it fundamentally undermines his own embodiment thesis. For if Judd's sharp corners are beheld not as features of the object itself, but instead as aspects of the work which contribute to, or accentuate, that object's specificity, then the meaning of each object that Judd produced in this fashion would be indistinguishable from the rest, which would in turn render each *specific object* made merely a manifestation of the same idea, or an inferior copy of the specific object's ideal form. Yet, the thing about these objects is, that because they are sometimes identical and often very similar, their specificity does not derive so much from their design as their *placedness*, i.e., the fact that one cannot be in the same place as another - that they are intrinsically specific.

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[139] Danto, *What Art Is*, 39.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid., 40.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.

This specificity is true of all artworks and is something that expressivist accounts under-appreciate. It is part of the artwork's *principal theme* that its reduction to a mere image undermines. It was suggested earlier on that the all *aboutness claims* relate to themes which necessarily derive from the work's *principal theme,* the *principal theme* being the outward appearance of the work and everything that the artwork *embodies* as a specific thing. *As such,* specificity should also be considered an important part of the work's *aboutness*, as should not just pictorial content in the case of a painting like *Guernica*, but also the materials used to make it, the medium itself, and even the work's title, all of which culminate so as to give rise to the work's meaning. In so much as *aboutness* derives from the *principal theme* then*,* it is an inherently open term in the sense that it encompasses all themes in relation to which *aboutness claims* might be made. Despite its inherent openness, however, *aboutness* should not be considered limitless precisely because the *principal theme* and all that it *embodies* constitutes the limit of the *aboutness* claims that can be made in reference to it.

Having focused predominantly on the pictorial content of the artwork so far, in the next section our first task will be to consider the formal appearance of the artwork in more detail. The emphasis in the second part will be on those aspects of its *principal theme* which can only be experienced directly through the event of the work's encounter, i.e., from within that place where it is, namely the scale as it functions in relation to the painting's overall structure. This is how the formal aspects of the artwork reveal themselves in terms of their specificity. Once we have achieved this, we will then move on to consider how these formal elements bring to appearance both an artistic "*style*" and a certain *"historical depth".* Along with those formal considerations we are about to confront, these terms denote other aspects of the work's *aboutness* as yet unconsidered. Indeed, in each and every instance, works of art are as much *about* their own form, *style* and their relationship with the history of their craft, as they are *about* the more immediately discernible and accessible themes on their surface.

2.2 - Scale, Form, *Style* and *Historical Depth*

The aim of the first part was to show how *Guernica's aboutness* encompasses far more than simply the subject matter and the event that its title refers to. This enabled us to dismiss two kinds of extension theories, those of representationalism and the expressivism, which, it was claimed, ultimately reduce the artwork to precisely this kind of content. In turn, we learned that *aboutness* could relate to any aspect of the *principal theme,* and also that the concept of *embodiment* was not on its own sufficient to convey the way in which this *aboutness* is held within it. In order to understand why it is so important that only the *principal theme* itself should be regarded as the source of the artwork's *aboutness,* it was also necessary to show that *aboutness* had been worked into the *principal theme* over time and had become *sedimented* through the artist's labour*.* That the *principal theme* becomes *sedimented* gradually in this way was important because it revealed to us the expressive nature of the process itself and how not all expressive content necessary

originates within the artist's imagination. In turn, this brought the artwork's materiality into view and the specificity of the artwork that this materiality manifests, i.e., the actual work as is encountered by its audience in terms of its *principal theme*.

In this second part we will consider the formal appearance of the work as it relates to its scale in order to show how these elements culminate as the *principal theme,* which in turn gives rise to the possibility of its *aboutness*. We will then reflect on how *principal theme* also manifests a certain *style* whilst simultaneously harbouring a distinctly *historical depth*. In so much as these various aspects are interdependent, they can only be grasped by way of direct confrontation with the *principal theme*, which is to say, from within that place where it is.

2.2.1. Scale and Form

If we begin with *Guernica's* general form then, we have already seen how the artist kept returning to the arrangement and configuration of the figures in order to achieve a sense of rightness that was befitting of the scene. In this way, we came to see how, as well as the suffering of *Guernica's* victims, the *principal theme* also conveys a certain empathy that emerged over the course of the creative process itself. But can it really be claimed that empathy is present in the work in the same way that the suffering of Guernica's victims is? And if it is, how can it be comprehended in any way other than as the artist's own emotional response to that original event? In order to answer this question, we will have to consider the formal features of the work in terms of how they guide us toward that empathic "effect".

First and foremost, we might say that empathy resonates in the work as a consequence of the acute focus the work dedicates to the suffering of Guernica's victims. Clark's analysis of the work's development provides us with clear insight into how this was achieved, namely by extracting all signs (especially "erotic" signs) from the work in its early stages that would have distracted the viewer from the plight of its victims. Although it is true that we are not privy to these alterations of arrangement when we are stood in front of the painting, Clark's analysis heightens our awareness of the interaction between the figures as they appear in the final scene. For example, apart from the figure falling from the burning tower on the right, all of the figures' eyes look towards the screaming woman holding her dead baby limply in her arms toward the upper-left of the canvas, behind whom the bull is stood looking down. In consequence, our vision is dragged across the work from right to left and we arrive to the same visual conclusion as those figures whose gazes are also fixed upon her; that there will be no escape, nor survival, for any of those caught up in the bombardment currently unfolding.

A second point to be underlined is that, despite this clear interaction between the figures, each individual is

also isolated in their own private terror.[144] Although they are outside in a public space and caught up in the midst of the same event, their fast approaching death is in each case their own. For death itself is also a prominent theme in *Guernica*, one that is treated with empathy by the artist who dedicates ample space to each figure's plight whilst also communicating the helplessness and hopelessness of their more general situation. It is not condensed into the body of the deceased child held in its mother's arm, nor should it be sought in any of the other figures which might all too easily become converted into symbols. "Death is not localised in Guernica" Clark writes, but rather it manifests across the entire scene as what he describes as "a kind of illumination".[145]

Clark cites Picasso's own reflections on the presence of death in Goya's painting *The Third of May 1808,* in which Picasso considers death to be both "everywhere and nowhere" at once. At the same time, however, he describes the lamp on the floor in that painting, which illuminates the space between the firing squad and the figure who is soon to be killed, to be that place in the scene where death manifests most strongly.[146] The lamp illuminates the space between the soon to be executed man and the firing squad before him, the space around which the entire scene is orientated. For the viewer then, all movements of their vision will always lead back to this well-lit clearing at the centre of the scene, where the truth of death manifests most strongly as a certain unavoidable imminence. Similarly, in *Guernica*, it could also be argued that death manifests most strongly in the mother and child figures not solely because the child's body lies limply in its mother's arms, but because the gazes of all the figures always return our own gaze back to that point where the worst has already occurred. Life has already been taken, the "human contract" broken, and death is precisely the fate which awaits all of the other figures present.[147] Their panic is plain for us to see, as is the futility of their frantic scrambling to escape.

Yet, it is also the case that these formal relations are just as clearly visible in photographs of the artwork, which is why scale itself is so important to our understanding of the impact these relations make and the range of the movements it elicits from us. As Clark points out, the work "suffers hugely (…) from being continually miniaturised and disembodied in the world of mechanical reproduction".[148] A great deal of *Guernica's* effect "depends on real size", *Guernica's* figures being "hugely bigger than oneself: that at most a viewer comes up to the horse's chest." [149] Furthermore, because the action is weighted down here alongside us, Clark also argues that *Guernica* "is a picture that makes its giant size (…) work to confirm a wholly

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[144] Clark, *Picasso and Truth,* 251.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid., 276.
[147] Ibid., 248.
[148] Ibid., 272.
[149] Ibid., 272.

earthbound, and essentially modest, view of life. Life, says the painting, is an ordinary, carnal, entirely un-negotiable value. It is what humans and animals share." [150] Clark's emphasis on the work's scale and general form puts four important considerations about the work under the spotlight. I will outline these briefly below before developing a more detailed discussion of them afterwards.

First of all, Clark's focus on scale draws our attention to that aspect of the work which eludes photographic reproduction more than any other, which in turn highlights a vital difference between the work's *aboutness* and its *principal theme*. It is often assumed that *aboutness* claims can be supported by photographic evidence due to the fact that photographic images reproduce certain aspects of paintings well, including their main pictorial features, general structure and arrangement, colour scheme, etc. They illustrate arguments very well in books for this reason. The problem with this assumption, however, is that the *principal theme* of the work is definitely not reproducible in this way. That is because this term denotes the total outward appearance of the work, which can only be experienced from within that place where it actually is, that is, as its scale. Since *aboutness* necessarily derives from the *principal theme,* so this also calls into question the validity of photographic evidence for *aboutness* claims in general. Whilst we can get a good idea of what formal details are present within a *principal theme* from photographs of it, their effect in relation to its overall scale is completely lost.

Indeed, just as the scale of the work cannot be captured by photography, so the appearance of those other elements in the work which is it presumed can be captured effectively, such as the figures themselves, or the work's general arrangement, will also be altered, precisely because their own scale has disappeared. They come to appear according to the scale of the page and text as opposed to that of the *principal theme* and the room in which it is set up. Furthermore, while we might assume that photography is able to capture the work's colour, as Merleau-Ponty observes, "colour is never merely a colour, but the colour of a certain object, and the blue of a carpet would never be the same blue were it not a woolly blue".[151] The perceived colour in a painting appears according to the texture it is brought to appearance through. The gloss or matt finish of the photograph cannot, therefore, capture how *Guernica's* colour reveals itself as the colour it is, since all colour is bound up in the texture through which it is made visible. *Guernica* is painted in oil and this material contributes significantly to the starkness of its scene, whose overall effect amplifies what Kathleen Brunner describes as the "mute cry" of the victims splayed across its surface.[152] This is also why it was necessary to refute Danto's distinction between the work and its supporting properties in the previous section, because the meaning of the work is *embodied* by it through its material form.

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[150] Ibid., 248.
[151] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception,* 365.
[152] Brunner, *Picasso Rewriting Picasso*, 63 - 71.

The second observation to be made from Clark's analysis is that the work's size and general formal structure are themselves shown to harbour expressive value. Unlike the dimensions customarily provided in the label beside a work in a museum or book, the actual size of the work as it is encountered is much more than a mere detail, for it sets the terms of the encounter by determining the scale of that event. Moreover, Picasso's extreme foregrounding of the figures strewn across its surface means that, for the audience, there is very little in the way of any background relief or depth for their vision to escape into. The scene we are presented with is startlingly immediate and urgent in consequence, and because of the relative size of these figures to our own bodies, also quite overwhelming. This is part of what Clark referred to as the work's "effect", which can only be experienced from within that place where we are confronted by it. The very moment it comes into view, we are alert to the sheer chaos and panic pervading it.

Thirdly, Clark is also clearly sensitive to the role played by the viewer's body when he underlines the relative height of the average viewer compared with the human and animal figures depicted in the scene. It is for this reason that I suggested in the introduction to this chapter that Clark's analysis was phenomenological in character. He is attentive to how the scene draws the viewer's body in and how the large scale of the work relative to their bodies implicates itself in the way that the work's contents are conveyed. Indeed, the sheer scale of the work generates considerable impact from the relative size of the human body in front of it. In *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty compares the way we perceive objects in the world around us with how we encounter paintings on gallery walls in a way that is useful here:

> For each object, as for each picture in an art gallery, there is an optimum distance from which it requires to be seen, a direction viewed from which it vouchsafes most of itself: at a shorter or greater distance we have merely a perception blurred through excess or deficiency. We therefore tend towards the maximum of visibility, and seek a better focus as with a microscope.[153]

This extract reminds us that before we become immersed in the painting, we must first of all navigate our bodies towards that "optimum distance" in the room as is demanded of us by the artwork, in order to see it clearly. Each individual must find that distance for themselves, therefore, from which the work "vouchsafes" most of itself relative to their own height, posture and capacities. Thereafter, the work draws us into the middle of everything that is going on with our bodies. The action is "here" as Clark says, "lower down, closer to us, in the weighted, grounded, bottom-heavy world of the giants".[154] Their space is simultaneously our space.

Whilst Merleau-Ponty's observation is useful for helping us to understand how scale elicits the body's active engagement with the space it opens up in front of it, the notion of "optimum distance" is not entirely

[153] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 352.
[154] Clark, *Picasso and Truth,* 273.

representative of our experience of *Guernica*. For in so much as it draws us into its midst, it also towers over us making it very difficult to achieve a complete and satisfactory view of the scene in its entirety. Even paintings which elicit prolonged gazing from audiences will also constantly call for bodily readjustments over the course of the encounter. Even when looking at a large Rothko painting, there is a sense in which my vision can take me in too deep and I need to adjust myself to gain perspective once more. This is a consideration that will be returned to shortly.

Finally, by bringing us back into the presence of the work in this way, it also brings that space where the encounter takes place into view. By encouraging us to consider the work in terms of its initial impact as it confronts us, and our own approach towards it as he does, it is inevitable that we will simultaneously have some form of place in mind, even if our conception of that place is only vaguely formed, and even if it is not acknowledged explicitly. For when reading through Clark's account whilst also paying attention to the abundant and useful images included within it, he does extremely well to evoke a scene in our imaginations of a viewer stood before the painting whose head is roughly level with the horse's chest. Place is implied in this scene in so much as the imagined encounter must be happening in a place of some description rather than a from within a void.

In so doing, Clark brings the *principal theme* of the work out into the open by drawing our attention to aspects of it whose impact cannot be appreciated without actually being there in that place where it is. The representationalist and expressivist accounts outlined in the previous section reduce the *principal theme* to its image. In consequence, they fail to appreciate the impact made by the artwork through its scale, or how this influences the manner in which other aspects of the work confront us. It is only by being in the presence of the work and by beholding it in terms of its *placedness*, and as it relates to one's own body *implaced* there alongside it, that much of the overall "effect" of the work can truly be appreciated.

As we have already seen in the case of Danto's distinction between the work and its supporting properties, a property like scale might easily be misinterpreted as irrelevant to its *aboutness*, a mere aspect of the materials used to produce the work. Yet in truth, because the *principal theme embodies* its scale, and *aboutness* is drawn from the *principal theme* directly, then scale can be understood to contribute positively to the artwork's *aboutness*. Remember that *aboutness* claims depend as much on "how the work is *about* what it is *about*" as "what it is *about*" questions. The scale of the work falls within *aboutness's* domain, therefore, because it contributes to, and helps bring to expression, themes which contribute positively to the work's overall effect.

Consider, for instance, the role played by scale in shaping our initial impressions of a work like *Guernica.* When we enter the room where it is currently installed in Madrid, at three and a half metres high and almost

eight metres across, *Guernica* dominates the space that room makes available. The back wall of this relatively compact, dedicated gallery space is almost completely taken up by it, apart from a few meters of blank white wall on either side, and the slight spatial relief offered by the upward curve of the long, white barrel-ceiling above. Given that *Guernica's principal theme* imposes itself so dominantly upon the room in this way, the audience held within that space is offered very little in the way of visual relief from the painting itself. The artwork is utterly dominant and there is little choice but to pay attention to the tragedy it brings to expression.

Traditionally, this scale of work was typically reserved for biblical and historical subject matter exclusively. Its function was to underline the significance of that subject matter, which tended to revolve around a recognised (and often heroic) figure. Much as Théodore Géricault did when he painted *Raft of the Medusa* (1818–19), Picasso subverts this tradition in order to highlight the plight of Guernica's victims.[155] The scale of a work expresses its insistence that its subject matter should not be ignored. In contrast, smaller works draw meaning from their inconspicuousness within the context of a large gallery such as that which *Guernica* is installed within. Part of their effect derives from their having been come across without having elicited the audience's gaze so explicitly, their needing to be studied closely by their audiences, and how they form an intimate space around them. It implicates itself in the encounter it elicits in this way.

As suggested above, however, when Merleau-Ponty claims that there is in each case an "optimum distance" in the room from which the work "vouchsafes most of itself", it would be better to say that there are multiple such distances and that the *principal theme* never entirely reveals itself. *Guernica* illustrates this very well. The initial distance the viewer is required to locate would be that from which the complete work is beheld for the first time. This is the distance the viewer locates as their initial impression of the painting takes shape. As they get to grips with the chaotic complexity of the principal scene, though, it becomes clear that the *principal theme* will not reveal itself clearly from this vantage point. The viewer is called upon to move in for a closer look. In *Guernica*'s case, this movement that the viewer performs, stepping back and forth, towards the work and then beholding it again from a distance, is complicated by the complexity of its overall structure and imagery.

In terms of structure, Ingo F. Walther observes that the tripartite structure of *Guernica* echoes "the exalted triptych, the classical form of Christian altar paintings".[156] The triangular form at the centre dominates the scene whilst Clark writes that "the rhyming agonies on either side — the woman falling from the burning

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[155] Norman Rosenthal & Xa Sturgis, *Jeff Koons: at the Ashmolean*, (Oxford, UK: Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford Press, 2019), 71.
[156] Carsten-Peter Warncke & Ingo F. Walther. *Pablo Picasso: 1881-1973 - Volume II,* (Cologne: Benedikt Taschen 993, 1992), 390.

building, the mother shrieking under the bull's chin — are subordinate".[157] We can clearly see this structure that Walther and Clark refer to in photographic reproductions of the work as it is laid out before us on a page. Yet, through the event of the painting's actual encounter, the *principal theme* functions entirely differently. Whilst the triptych is undoubtedly the principal structure according to which the scene is organised, there is so much else going on across its three parts that the broader scene constantly undermines it.

Due both to the large scale of the work and the complexity of its imagery, it is difficult to take in the *principal theme* all at once. In consequence, when approaching the work for the first time and attempting to find the best distance from which to behold it in its entirety, one quickly realises that the main pyramid structure at the centre of the *principal theme* certainly does not vouchsafe most of itself from that position we have taken up. We are then required to move in for a closer look. Yet, by the time one arrives to a point from which all that is going on within that central structure can be grasped, the *principal theme* has already stretched beyond our peripheral view. By beckoning us towards this world of giants in order to disentangle them from one another, to distinguish limb from shadow, beam of light from reflection, this is how the *principal theme* gathers us into its midst and plants us in the scene it presents us with.

Once we have distinguished the various elements of the scene from one another, the triptych itself loses some of its capacity to distinguish each of the spaces it opens up and hold them in place. Indeed, apart from our initial impression of the work, our very first view of it, the triptych never entirely achieves the solidity it finds in the kinds of traditional altar paintings that Walther compares *Guernica* with. For even through that initial stage of the encounter, the triptych presents itself as somewhat lopsided. The candle at the top of the central pyramid, for instance, marks the centre of the triptych, and is, therefore, that element in relation to which we position ourselves in order to get a decent grip on the *principal theme* as a whole. However, the bulb just above it and to its left immediately draws our attention across and towards the left-hand sphere, where the bull, mother and child hold their place.

In consequence, when Clark observes that the spaces on either side of the main pyramid structure, these "rhyming agonies", are equally "subordinate", this is a little misleading. The left-hand sphere is prioritised over the left in the sense that the principal elements of the scene usher us towards it. That does not mean, however, that the space to the right, which shows a female figure falling from a burning tower, is neglected entirely either. For it too is encompassed by the central pyramid along the dragging foot of the larger female figure that crosses into it, and whose leaning body helps to define that side of the central pyramid. When we follow the trajectory of the falling figure's body downward from the tower, therefore, our gaze is immediately met by the dragging foot of the next figure. This then redirects our gaze upward, along her back and towards

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[157] Clark, *Picasso and Truth,* 244.

her own face gazing upward and towards the tip of the pyramid. Just above her head and to the right, we are also met by the face of a third female figure who is leaning out of the window of a burning building in the background, clutching the candle which illuminates the central pyramid. In contrast with that of the figure below her, the gaze of this third figure is directed across at the mother and child. At the pyramid's peak, we are then met by the head of the writhing and panicked horse, whose body fills out the other side of the central pyramid structure and leads us back down and towards the body of the fallen soldier spread across its base. The heads of both the horse and the soldier are positioned in such a way so as to focus our own attention on the mother, child, and the bull behind them once more, which ultimately completes the total movement of the scene from right to left. But of course, this "movement" is not actually contained within the *principal theme* itself but is rather enacted by the viewer who sees according to it. This highlights a certain perceptual shift which occurs through that transition between the initial stage of the encounter and our becoming immersed within the scene, whereby the gaze makes way for the glance. This period of transition, from initial impressions of the *principal theme* to a more complete immersion in it, will be revisited in chapter six.

This collaboration between the painting and the viewer amounts to something like what Mikel Dufrenne refers to in *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience* as the artwork's "performance". There he remarks that paintings and statues are "only signs waiting to blossom into a performance".[158] What emerges from it, according to Dufrenne, is the "aesthetic object", which is "primarily, although not exclusively, the work of art as grasped in aesthetic experience".[159] We allow the artwork to perform through the attention we invest in it according to this view.

Even though the aesthetic object is considered to be rooted in or founded upon the *principal theme* itself, we must proceed with caution when it comes to any theory that detaches the meaning of the artwork from its *principal theme*. Indeed, for Dufrenne, the aesthetic object emerges from the work as a consequence of an aesthetic attitude being adopted in relation to it. The problem with this approach, however, is that it risks reducing all possible meanings that the work could potentially offer up to a single one. In the preface to that text, for example, Dufrenne describes aesthetic experience as "perception at its purest".[160] By succumbing to the artwork, he writes, it transports us "into a world where all is play and where that which is represented is unreal".[161] Once perception has achieved its "purest" state , therefore, this would suggest that all experiences of it were then equal in a way. Yet, what *Guernica* reveals to us is an incredibly complex artwork that offers numerous possible roots through itself, and numerous possible meanings in consequence.

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[158] Mikel Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, trans. Edward S. Casey, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press 1973), 15.
[159] Ibid., 3.
[160] Ibid., lxiv.
[161] Ibid.

As Merleau-Ponty's observation suggests, the artwork shares something in common with the objects of the world and our initial engagement with the artwork amounts to something like an attempt to get the best grip on it. As *Guernica's* encounter shows us, however, we quickly come to realise that the entire work is beyond our immediate capacity and we must move in for a closer look. At this point, the glance takes the lead. Casey observes that when we encounter paintings, our manner of looking is "rarely sustained or systematic in character".[162] As he goes on to say, it is perhaps only historians, critics, and restorers who look at them with "concerted scrutiny, and even then mainly because they are searching for something in particular — some theme on which they are writing, some development in the history of the genre, or else some damage to the work that calls for repair".[163] Otherwise, "looking at a painting consists largely in discontinuous glances that dart to different portions of its image".[164] There is "no apparent order" to its movement — the glance exhibits a "distinctive freedom" in this way.[165] Perception is not stable enough for anything like a pure aesthetic object to emerge according to either of these views.

Casey is quick to clarify that his observations should not be taken to suggest that the glance is therefore chaotic in character, simply that it is not guided by a method or task of any kind. It is guided by the work in terms of how it reveals itself, and yet it is free in so much as it is able to "accept or refuse" the possible pathways that the painting makes available for it to follow.[166] The terms upon which the glance accepts or refuses aspects of the work will be elaborated over the course of this thesis. At this particular juncture, however, it will be useful for us to consider one last observation that Casey makes with regard to what the glancing nature of the encounter and what it reveals to us about the work.

The glance reveals a geographical dimension to the work's surface for Casey. A work like *Guernica* is "filled with differently qualified and situated *topoi* or places, each of which elicits my glance without demanding it".[167] Considered in this way, the work is not simply a landmark within the landscape of the place it is held by, but also a landscape of sorts in its own right — a place "nested" within another, amidst other nested places.[168] We must be careful not to isolate the artwork from its place, therefore. After all, what *Guernica's* scale ultimately reveals to us is that total movement elicited from audiences by all artworks, which is then magnified in the case of larger scale artworks like this one. The audience congregates before the painting, but they do not stay put. They move in for a closer look, back and forth across its surface, linger and eventually

[162] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 418.
[163] Ibid.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid
[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Malpas, *Place and Experience*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 101.

they leave. They collectively produce what David Seamon refers to as the "place-ballet" unfolding within the museum, all of these bodies immersed in the ritual of the encounter over the course of a day.[169] We do not escape the world through our engagement with art, but on the contrary, our sense of *implacement* within it becomes heightened.

The theme of movement within gallery spaces will be confronted more directly in the fifth chapter. What we can take from these observations here though is that regardless of the format, one thing that all artworks share in common is that they impose themselves on the people and spaces around them. *Guernica* elicits movement and induces moments of stillness in equal measure. We might also add that it brings people into its place from afar. It quite literally "moves" us in these ways. But as Merleau-Ponty reminds us, this movement only occurs precisely because "vision is attached to movement", which means that movement itself should not be conceived as a "decision made by the mind", but instead, as "the natural consequence of the maturation of my vision".[170] The audience's movement within place should thus also be regarded as an expression of the artwork itself, the manifestation of its performance, or a consequence of its *implacing* us.

2.2.2. *Historical Depth*

Thinking through the encounter in terms of the movement it triggers presents us with a different way in which to engage with another aspect of the *principal theme* that the general form of the work brings to expression — which is the work in terms of its *"historical depth".* To a certain extent, this theme has already been introduced. When Walther comments on the triptych for instance, he assimilates *Guernica* with a longstanding tradition of works organised according to that structure. Similarly, when it was noted earlier on that the scale of this work was traditionally reserved for heroes and deities, *Guernica* was being compared with other large-scale works of the past and their content. For historians, there is a great deal to be discovered in *Guernica* which provides evidence of its intimate relation with the history of the craft. Nevertheless, we should remain on guard in terms of how we think through the artwork in its historicity, and not become distracted from its *principal theme*.

To say that the work presents itself as having *historical depth* is to say not just that the work's *principal theme* appears to manifest certain characteristics that evoke works from the past, but also that part of its way of being in relation to place is historical in character. We might say that a work is influenced by, or that it references the work of other artists, for instance. Yet, in so much as these references are perceived as manifesting through the work's *principal theme*, so then they also contribute to the work's *aboutness*. Each

[169] David Seamon, *A Geography of the Lifeworld*, (London: Routledge, 2015), 56.
[170] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind", in The Primacy of Perception, trans. William Cobb, ed. James Edie, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 294.

work is *about* art history in its own way, something which museums bring to the fore. Once again though, we are called upon to ask "how" the work is *about* history. As we have already seen in relation to the interpretations of the work's *aboutness* in the previous part, this means more than simply saying how it "relates to" or "references" history, for all allusions to relation or reference inevitably lead us towards an extension theory of some kind. If we recall from that first part, an extension theory is any approach that seeks to draw the artwork's meaning by way of reference to situations or circumstances perceived to lie behind it. The historical view does this in so much as it seeks out influences and investigates whether the artist would have been exposed to a specific artwork by another artist or not, in order to substantiate an argument they have perceived the opportunity to mount from within the *principal theme* itself.

Clark hints at a way in which this historical dimension of the work might be conceived without abandoning the *principal theme* when he claims that a "full account" of *Guernica* in its initial stages "would have to reflect on the depth of Picasso's dreaming in front of *Romulus and Acron*".[171] The painting he is referring to here is Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres's *Romulus' Victory Over Acron* (1812), and the comparison is clearly justified. The main pyramid structure at the centre of *Guernica* might have been lifted directly from Ingres' work, which also happens to be in the permanent collection at the Musée du Louvre in Paris, somewhere Picasso would undoubtedly have frequented. Furthermore, the "fallen warrior, the upraised fist, and even the dialogue of the hero and horse" is also already there in Ingres's painting, as is the extreme foregrounding of those figures which has such a significant impact in *Guernica's* case.[172] For the trained eye of the historian then, *Guernica* appears to elicit its own comparison with Ingres' work. Yet what Clark draws our attention to in particular is how, in order to make the claim that Picasso was influenced by Ingres to begin with, we must first acknowledge that inspiration can only have stemmed from Picasso's own encounter with it. Indeed, Clark's observation is telling in so much as it brings to our attention a necessary placial dimension of art history: its having taken place from within places like museums and galleries, where artworks are made available for the public and artists to study and reflect upon.

This is important because when we compare works like these in order to recognise more clearly what they share in common, there is a danger that these features become detached from the overall effect produced by the scene they help to form. Even when works are perceived alongside one another directly and their respective *principal themes* are taken into account, there remains a sense in which the very process of comparison itself undermines the overall effect produced by the *principal theme* of any individual work, in so much as, each work comes to be considered only in terms of those features which they are held to share in common. Whilst *Guernica* shares its foregrounding, its figures and its scale, there is a great deal more to distinguish it from Ingres' painting. For this reason, neither will it suffice to say that in producing *Guernica*,

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[171] Clark, *Picasso and Truth,* 262.
[172] Ibid.

Picasso incorporated similar devices or procedures into his work as Ingres, since the significance they give rise to before the viewer's eyes becomes reduced to an abstract conception of whatever technical processes lie behind the work in this way. Foregrounding, for instance, becomes a foregrounding in general as opposed to the manner in which it manifests these distinctly foregrounded scenes.

Indeed, such devices only exist to the extent that they are *embodied* by the artwork's *principal theme* and contribute to the expression of other, secondary themes contained within it (of which it is also one). Once again, we are compelled to consider the interplay between the "what" and "how" dimensions of *aboutness*, since allusion to a procedure such as the foregrounding of the principal figures tells us only *how* the work was made and nothing about *what* is actually brought to the fore. What we will endeavour to avoid here is any attempt to analyse the relation between these works through the lens of what Merleau-Ponty refers to as "empirical history".[173] This is the conception of art history that the museum functions to bring to our attention according to his view, whereby only those aspects that appear on the surface of the work are taken into account (i.e., only those features of the work which present themselves to direct empirical enquiry). In consequence, each artist's own distinctive *"style"* becomes reduced to something like a formula, configuration or arrangement.

The question should be "what" Picasso saw in Ingres' work that he then incorporated into his own development of *Guernica*. For this would suggest merely that Picasso lifted the part of its general form and created likenesses of Ingres' figures in his own, as though *Guernica* amounted to something like a partial copy of *Romulus and Acron,* or otherwise some kind of tribute. But instead, we need to ask "how" Picasso beheld the work and what possibilities he perceived within it, which brings us to the issue of *style*.

2.2.3. *Style*

According to Merleau-Ponty, artists have privileged access to the artworks of other artists because they are more attuned to their distinctive *style*.[174] As Singer highlights, an artist's "style emerges from and appears as an expressive gesture, which is an extension of the body's basic capacities to intentionally intertwine with the world".[175] Thus, in order to understand *style*, we first of all need to grasp the fact that it manifests through the artist's labour, which means that the distinctive *style* of presentation we perceive on the surface of the canvas reflects something of the way in which the artist's process has been gone about. As we have seen in the case of Klee's search for "rightness", though, and also in Picasso's reversal of the eroticism of *Guernica's* earliest versions, this sense of rightness is not exclusively artistic, but stems as much from how the artist

[173] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 62.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Linda Singer, "Merleau-Ponty on the Concept of Style", 238.

already perceives the world around them as it does from their engagement with their craft. Indeed, artistic and everyday perception overlap and intertwine in this way, and are so intimately bound in fact that distinguishing between supposed "modes" of seeing is futile. This is why Merleau-Ponty insists that *style* precedes the work and must already be "diffused" throughout all that the artist sees.[176]

Since *style* is not, as Singer points out, "simply a veneer over things which can be extracted and investigated on its own", we must be careful not to conceive of *Guernica* as simply a formal arrangement with Picasso's *style* applied to it.[177] For as Merleau-Ponty makes clear, it is that work's "mode of formulation", and in so much as that work's formulation occurs from the "world of perception and gesture", it is brought to appearance through a lived event and in the gap between the artist's body and the surface of the work. Merleau-Ponty's advice for us is, therefore, to "go to the Museum as the painters go there, in the sober joy of work; and not as we go there, with a somewhat spurious reverence." [178] For the accomplished artist is so caught up in the development of their own practice, that they demonstrate a heightened capacity to "recognise every effort which differed from [their] own".[179]

What Ingres' painting would have presented Picasso with would have been a way of confronting a canvas and constructing a scene of considerable scale, something Picasso had never done previously. It provided a foundation from which to begin, and an opportunity to develop Ingres' general form in a different way. This is why the two artworks resemble each other most obviously in the early stages. In *Guernica's* case, it is only after that initial stage was complete that Picasso's own work truly began and *Guernica* as we now know it began to take on its overall effect. Clement Greenberg famously claimed that he found the work as it was captured in its first phase to be a "far more successful" version than any of its later manifestations.[180] Yet it is interesting just how much of the way in which the work leads the viewer occurs as a consequence of the changes that were made thereafter.

The way in which the viewer is beckoned towards the work in order to achieve a clear view of the principal pyramid form has already been commented upon. But this would not have been the case had the work remained in the same state that Greenberg claims was its most successful. Clark's allusion to the eroticism which characterised the painting during its early stages has a great deal to do with the bare skin of the bodies on display, for instance. Yet, this very bareness would have imbued the scene with a clarity which would not have required so much effort on the viewer's part — they would not have been drawn into the scene in order to untangle the figures. For the rough textures of the clothing and blemished and scorched skin of *Guernica*'s

[176] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 53.
[177] Linda Singer, "Merleau-Ponty on the Concept of Style", 234.
[178] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 62.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Clement Greenberg cited in Clark, *Picasso and Truth,* 260.

victims, as well, as the shocks of light from all angles, make the viewer have to work in order to achieve a grip on the scene that is never entirely achieved. Once settled in this way, it is the total movement of that scene from right to left which then functions to destabilise one's view of everything that is going on. There is very little that one is left enough time or space to linger upon, other than the mother and child to the left.

2.3. Conclusion

In this chapter we have considered what the artwork is. In the first part, we began by discussing it in terms of its *aboutness,* which was any theme or significance which might be derived from the artwork through the event of its encounter. In turn, this presented us with the opportunity to consider other ways of drawing significance from the work according to what were referred to as "extension theories". In particular, we considered representationalist and expressivist accounts. These, it was argued, do more to distract us from the actual artwork than they do to bring us closer to it in that they seek to draw meaning from the circumstances behind the artwork rather than from the artwork's *principal theme.* The *principal theme* is the complete outward appearance of the artwork as it is encountered from within a place, and that from which all secondary themes that give rise to *aboutness* claims derive. In the second part, we considered characteristics of the *principal theme* which either disappear completely, or otherwise become obscured through photographic representations. The first was the scale of *principal theme's* general form and features such as its texture or hue. Secondly, its *historical depth* was analysed in terms of how it manifested through the *principal theme* as the foundation upon which the artist had developed the broader scene. Finally, *style* was revealed as the manner in which those foundations came to be developed. We are now ready to reflect on *Guernica* in terms of its whereabouts.

Chapter Three - The Artwork in Place

In this chapter, we will confront the *principal theme's* relation with place more directly. This will enable us to consider how different *aboutness* claims themselves come to be drawn out through this relation, and our analysis will be divided into three parts, each representing a different phase in *Guernica's* life. The first part will be dedicated to "The Spanish Pavilion" at the International Exposition of Art and Technology in Paris, 1937, for which the painting was originally commissioned. This will allow us to reflect on three key place-relations that are representative of all artworks. *"Accommodation"* refers to how place lends itself to the display of the artwork and encounter, whilst the following two sections will consider the way in which artworks both contribute to a place and how they can also reflect or bring to expression a general public mood or view. In the second part, *Guernica's* trajectory from Paris, through Scandinavia and London, before eventually arriving to New York in the late 1930s will be analysed to consider the way in which the artwork relates with the broader *place-world* at large. Finally, we will then reflect on Guernica's return to Spain in the 1980s to consider what it means for a work to have a supposed home and how this influences the way it comes to be seen by the public.

3.1. The Spanish Pavilion

The Spanish Pavilion was designed by Catalan architect Josep Lluís Sert and erected just a short distance away from the Eiffel Tower and the bank of the River Seine in the Champ de Mars Park and Gardens. Sert's design was modest compared with the large and imposing structures erected by other nations, notably those of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany just a short distance away. This reflected something of the Republican Government's situation at the time, whose resources were being poured into its war efforts back home. Artworks by several prominent Spanish artists based in Paris at the time were exhibited throughout the small three-storey building alongside *Guernica*, including the likes of Julio González and Joan Miró. It was Sert's wish that *Guernica* should take centre stage, which led to its being displayed on the main wall of the open-plan lower level, clearly visible from the very moment visitors passed the threshold. Due to the pavilion's layout, visitors would have encountered *Guernica* twice in fact, both on the way in and the way out.

Whilst the pavilion contained a range of artworks by some of the most influential artists and writers of the day, it is important to highlight that it was far from a standard art-place set-up such as the one within which *Guernica* is currently held at El Museo Nacional de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid. The pavilion, along with the various displays it also held within it, very much *embodied* the Republican Government's cause and plight. As visitors approached the building, for instance, they were met by a number of works, the majority of which alluded quite explicitly to the ongoing civil war with a strong focus on the ordinary people caught up in the violence. Among them was Julio Gonzalez's *Montserrat,* for example*,* a life-size figure made from iron, of a

Catalan peasant carrying a child wrapped in a blanket in one arm and a sickle in the other. There was also a huge photomural of Republican soldiers at the entrance with a supporting statement written beneath:

> We are fighting for the essential unity of Spain. We are fighting for the integrity of Spanish territory. We are fighting for the independence of our country and for the right of the Spanish people to determine their own destiny.[181]

Once inside, *Guernica* was hung on the wall to the left. On the right was a large-scale photograph of poet Federico García Lorca, reading "FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA, POET KILLED AT GRANADA". Beyond the portico lay a large patio in which three films were projected in constant succession: *Spanish Earth* by Joris Evans and Ernest Hemingway, *Madrid '36* by Luis Buñuel, and *The Heart of Spain* by Paul Strand - each one a documentary depicting the devastation being caused by the war. A large ramp adjacent to the stage where the films were showing led the visitors up to the top of the building. Along the way, visitors encountered photographs of the destruction left in the wake of the attacks on Guernica, accompanied by Paul Eluard's poem *La Victorie de Guernica,* in which Eluard assures its victims that "your deaths will serve as a warning" (to the world of Hitler's capabilities). For the stairwell connecting the portico with the two galleries upstairs, Miró created a 5-metre-high mural entitled *El Segador* after the solemn Catalan anthem "Els Segadors". Contained within the work were various symbols linked with the resistance, notably a sickle, a red star, a raised fist and the red cap of liberty. The middle floor was devoted to an exhibition of photographs and information detailing the Republic's fight for educational and social reform. Copies of Picasso's own *Dream and Lie of Franco* were on sale in the pavilion shop, as was a poster by Miró depicting a Spanish worker with a defiant fist held high. The worker shouts "*Aidez L'Espagne*" ("Save Spain!" in Catalan), and the proceeds from the sales of these works went towards funding the resistance.[182]

The general display was partisan to say the very least, so much so in fact, that Picasso's great work was considered by some of the officials responsible for its commission not to be partisan enough.[183] After all, whilst the entire pavilion was itself an expression of the Spanish people's suffering and the republican plight, Picasso's *work* distinguished itself from the others present by making no explicit reference to Spain's situation at the time, other than by way of its title. Whilst the painting's title did quite obviously make that reference to a concrete event of which everyone would have been aware at the time, there was a sense that the image itself might also have been more direct in that respect too. From within the pavilion, however, small and feeble by comparison to those of other nations around it, *Guernica's* focus on the violence and suffering of that town's people did transmit something of the chaos and terror being suffered by many of Spain's people at the time, a theme which very few of the other artworks present engaged with quite so directly. The other

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[181] Russell, *Picasso's War*, 114.
[182] Martin, *Picasso's War*, 104-115.
[183] Utley, *Picasso: The Communist Years*, 24.

artworks present were invariably concerned with conveying the spirit of resistance fighters and their communities, the people caught up in the war. In *Guernica's* case, only chaos, terror and empathy prevail. This had consequences for the way in which the painting sat in relation to that place in general once the pavilion itself had eventually been opened.

3.1.1. *Accommodation*

To say that a place like Sert's pavilion *accommodated Guernica* is to draw attention to *how* that place functioned to support its display and encounter. The first and most obvious way in which it did so was through the space and conditions it offered up. *Guernica* requires a sufficiently large wall and ample light and space in front of it so that its *principal theme* can be seen effectively. As was already suggested in the previous chapter, the size of the room also implicates itself in the painting's presentation in that the artwork's scale appears not just in terms of its relationship with the bodies present, but also relative to the size of the room as a whole. Place sets the basic terms of the encounter in these ways.

It is also the case that *Guernica* was made for this place specifically, and as such, its *principal theme* can be understood to reflect certain aspects of that place. According to Hensebergen, the notes Picasso took during a visit he made whilst the pavilion was still under construction suggested that he wanted his work to echo the "open, airy, almost classical feel of a Mediterranean villa" that the pavilion's design evoked.[184] Having seen the plans and then the site, Picasso would have had a feel for how a canvas of this size would impact upon the room. Of course, *Guernica* was not unique in that regard, for although not all artworks are made for a specific place in this way, they are nevertheless developed with certain assumptions as to the kind of environment they will end up in.

In *Getting Back into Place,* Casey observes how to exist at all "as a (material or mental) object or as (an experienced or observed) event is to have a place — to be *implaced,* however minimally or imperfectly or temporarily." [185] The artwork is always encountered from within a place and given the circumstances in which *Guernica* was unveiled to the public for the first time, its *placedness* was by no means incidental to its display and reception. For as we shall soon see, the audience's encounter with the painting reflected something of the *principal theme's* relation with the pavilion and the multiple themes it also *embodied*. When Casey remarks above that even "mental" objects have their place, therefore, he hints at a way in which we might come to think of the interpretations and reflections that people had during their encounters with *Guernica* as also being *implaced*. After all, they emerged through, and as a direct consequence of, the audience's

[184] Hensbergen, *Guernica: The Biography,* 30.
[185] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 13.

implacement within that more general scene. Just as places *accommodate* the physical placement of artworks then, so they also *accommodate* the style of reflective thought we associate with their encounters.

These observations bring us to a second and arguably even more vital dimension of *accommodation,* which relates to how place functions to bring certain aspects of the work's *principal theme* to the fore, thus rendering its *aboutness* visible. Whereas in the previous section we were concerned with the work through its "generative phase", and, therefore, that process by which its principal theme becomes *sedimented* in the substance of the work, here we are concerned with the work as it appears outwardly through its ongoing "affective phase", which is to say, how the *principal theme* reveals itself in terms of the *aboutness* it *embodies*.[186]

Indeed, merely focusing on the conditions that a place offers up will not suffice to convey the *accommodating* function place holds in relation to the artwork. There are plenty of places with sufficient space and facilities for a work like *Guernica* to be seen adequately after all. Yet the extent to which they lend themselves to the audience's encounter with it is a different matter entirely. We only need to consider the role that works of art play in settings such as hotel lobbies, restaurants or other public spaces like these, in which they often come to present themselves more as adornments contributing to the broader aesthetic of that place than they do as artworks. Whereas, a place which lends itself to a work's encounter is one which allows that work's *principal theme* to stand forth as independent from the rest.

There is a scene in Alfonso Cuarón's dystopian thriller *Children of Men* in which the protagonist Theo visits his cousin Nigel to ask for a favour. Nigel is a government official who rescues valuable artworks in his spare time from the collapsing world around him. When Theo enters what appears to be Nigel's residence high up in Battersea Power Station, he walks past Michelangelo's *Statue of David* and into a large dining area where Picasso's *Guernica* has been installed. The painting has been hung directly behind the long table they sit down at to eat, which is positioned no more than two or three metres away from the painting's surface and stretches across its entire scene. Nigel makes reference to a catastrophic event that has occurred in Madrid, and how only a few of Goya's paintings could be saved. Meanwhile, we assume that *Guernica* was rescued at the same time as those other works and that this is what triggered Nigel's remark. It rests there in the background but is not the subject of their conversation.

The table itself is positioned directly in the middle of that vital space before the work which, if we recall the description of the audience's movement in relation to the *principal theme* from in the previous chapter, is required by the audience for them to be able to take in the entire scene. This space is what enables the

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[186] Singer, "Merleau-Ponty on the Concept of Style", 237.

painting to perform and the table obstructs the painting's capacity to perform within its *scope* in this way. In addition to this, that place has been set up for them to eat specifically, and more importantly, Theo has a favour to ask. Whilst the painting does provide for interesting conversation between the two cousins and holds significance in relation to the scene, its encounter is never really achieved. Their interest is certainly sparked by the *principal theme,* which is clearly visible and does give rise to the conversation about Madrid. However, their engagement with it did not develop into a proper encounter in that they did not come to take the painting's lead. In this particular moment, this place is functioning not as a place *for* the work, but instead as a place *for* eating and *for* discussing the pressing issue that Theo wishes to raise with Nigel. Even if the dining table had been placed further away from the painting's surface, therefore, it is by no means certain that the encounter would have developed.

That is not to say that Victor could not have engaged with the painting's *principal theme* once Theo had left. Since it offers up adequate conditions for the encounter to take place, Nigel's residence also holds the potential to be an effective place *for* art. The point is rather that the place as it was unfolding for that period when the cousins were immersed in conversation functioned against the artwork's performance because the urgency of the situation that Victor introduced into it effectively stifled the presence of its *principal theme* and its capacity to perform. Place reflected the interaction between the two cousins in this way, the table laid in front of them presenting itself as more available or prominent relative to the general scene and the situation it was helping to *accommodate* at that particular moment. In consequence, *Guernica* remained within itself, as the potential for a performance only.

When Casey makes the claim that the sort of place that any given place is considered to be depends on "the kinds of things, as well as the actual things, that make them up", that is only partially true, therefore.[187] Indeed, places may contain artworks without functioning *for* them. For this reason, we must be careful not to reduce place to an inventory of its constituting features, just as the artwork itself cannot be reduced to a sum of its parts. For to do so would be conceive of place as a mere "site", as Casey refers to it, or as "exsanguinated place", whereby it is relieved of its general functionality as a consequence of the withdrawal of its inhabitants in our thinking.[188] It is with this in mind that Casey insists that any place "is more of an event than a thing", and as underlined in the previous section, it is by way of the movement of bodies (human or animal) that this event is able to occur.[189] Bodies make places happen in the way they do — they discover and participate in their potential. In so doing, place comes to be reoriented, its presentation reconfigured in response to that potential realised or what is now required of it. This is why places tend to be "at least several

[187] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 330.
[188] Ibid., 340.
[189] Ibid., 329.

kinds of things" at once.[190] Victor was able to dine with Theo alongside *Guernica* and potentially redirect his attention towards its *principal theme* after Theo had left only because that place *accommodated* both possibilities. What Theo's presence shows us, however, is how situations can also be introduced into places which then obstruct the work's capacity to perform. That is because the place where the work is held is not isolated from the *place-world* around it and is not beyond its influence.

Places "provide the scene for action and thought, feeling and expression" Casey says, and they do so by "gathering" things and people within their midst.[191] It is important to recognise, however, that they only gather towards a limited range of possibilities because the physical environment itself, whether it be a building or a more open landscape, only lends itself to a limited range of activities. A place is not simply what we make of it. No place can be any sort of place. Moreover, not all places can *accommodate* all works of art, even if all places do hold the potential to become art-places of some kind. This leaves one other important consideration that also imposes limitations upon the way a place unfolds, which is that places are ultimately "cultural in character" and it is only "by bodies" that they become so.[192] Indeed, their being present for the expression of culture is also part of the *accommodation* that place offers — its being there, where it is, in that region, where the culture expresses itself in a particular way.

Traditional art-places such as galleries and museums are the most obvious examples of places in which their functioning *for* the art they contain is prioritised most directly. Their style of *accommodation* is specialised in so much as these places actively function, by way of both design and their everyday upkeep by the staff who work there, to limit all potential for action for those who enter beyond that of looking at and engaging with the artworks on display. Audiences are called upon to adhere to the rules of these places, and in so doing, they allow such places to prioritise the encounter in the way they do. Broad cultural understandings of what art is and how it should be engaged with help considerably in this respect, and the collaboration between such places and their publics tends to unfold in relative harmony because the institutions themselves are set up in such a way as to reflect that culture's values.

The pavilion presents us with a peculiar example of an art-place in that it was not an art-place exclusively *per se*. On the one hand, what it does appear to share in common with traditional places of art such as galleries and museum is that it provides space for the display of and encounter with the artworks it holds. As such, it too offered up dedicated space for those works contained within it to reveal themselves in terms of their respective *principal themes*. On the other hand, the pavilion was also designed, set up and curated in such a way that it came to *embody* the plight of the Spanish people caught up in the violence of the civil war back

[190] Ibid., 330.
[191] Ibid., 341.
[192] Ibid., 337.

home. As we shall see in the next section, this general emphasis made by the pavilion as a whole upon this theme in particular inevitably functioned to bring certain aspects of the works held therein to the fore, by setting the terms according to which the *aboutness* of those artworks was to be revealed. In consequence, it might well be argued that each work present relinquished some of its autonomy to the republican cause through the event of their display in so much as the works contained within the pavilion functioned collectively to bring the republican plight to expression, much as *Guernica* did that of the town's people.

The Spanish Pavilion at the International Exposition in Paris clearly amounted to a state-funded exercise in propaganda. Nevertheless, to distinguish it too readily from other, more traditional art-places like galleries and museums upon that basis alone is perhaps to fall into the trap of presuming that what these more traditional environments offer up is a neutral space in which to encounter artworks. In her book *Contemporary Cultures of Display*, Emma Barker observes for this reason how, for "contemporary museum critique, the particular significance of the aesthetic approach lies in the way that it seeks to bracket off or 'neutralise' the wider world beyond the museum." [193] As many artists engaged in this area have brought to light time and time again through their work, this is very far from being the case. For official art-places like museums and galleries also inevitably come to embody certain principles and ideologies relating to what constitutes an artwork and how the works they hold are most effectively displayed and engaged with. In so doing, their construction, set up, their acquisition of works and their general openness to the publics they serve, should also be understood to bring those ideas (or indeed, themes) underpinning them to expression. The pavilion makes for an enlightening case study in this respect then, because it draws attention to this aspect of itself in a way that official art-places endeavour to conceal from their publics. By situating it within a display that is so explicitly oriented towards the expression of a particular theme, the work also comes to be encountered on those terms. This does not mean then that the work is entirely relieved of its autonomy. It is simply that the manner in which the work reveals itself from within a place reflects something of the style of *accommodation* that place offers up.

The fifth chapter will be concerned with understanding more concretely how the work relates to museums in particular. For now, it will suffice to acknowledge that a place *accommodates* artworks not simply by providing space and adequate conditions for art encounters to occur, but also by functioning in such a way so as to nurture the audience's engagement with them from within. The style of *accommodation* which is offered up by a place ultimately means that the work ends up presenting itself in a certain light, which is to say, in accordance with those terms set for its encounter by that place. Casey claims that "place serves as the *condition* of all existing things", by which he means that, "far from being merely locatory or situational, place

[193] Barker, Contemporary Cultures of Display, 14.

belongs to the very concept of existence".[194] This statement is relevant to the artwork precisely because place holds sway with regard to how works contained within it reveal themselves to their publics.

One potentially serious problem with the characterisation of the relation between *Guernica* and the pavilion as it has been laid out so far is that it could be deemed overly deterministic. The *accommodation* it offers up might be interpreted as guiding audiences towards a specific interpretation that was in line with the view of whoever set up the exhibition. As was already highlighted above, within the context of somewhere like the pavilion, the work might be considered to relinquish some of its autonomy because the way it presents itself is shaped in this way. We should remember, however, that *aboutness* claims are only justified to the extent that they draw from the *principal theme,* wherein its autonomy lies. As such, a place does not impose the meaning upon the work but rather it allows for certain aspects of its *aboutness* already lying latent within the *principal theme* to present themselves more prominently. An important aspect of this is the space a place provides for the artwork to function within its *scope,* and the way in which its guides audiences into that space. How this occurs will receive more attention in the following chapter.

3.1.2. The work contributes to place

In this section, I present two ways in which the artwork contributes to a place. The first is concerned with how artworks draw audiences into places, whilst the second way relates to how they contribute to the overall configuration of a place both in terms of the immediate space they open up around them and how that influences the arrangement of that place as a whole.

Guernica took pride of place within the pavilion, installed as it was on the main wall of the lower level at the request of the architect Josep Lluis Sért. The significance of having one of the world's most celebrated artists contributing an original commission to the pavilion should not be underestimated. By adding Picasso's name to the roster of other widely respected figures from the art and literary worlds, maximum attendance would be assured, meaning that more people would bear witness to the injustices that the pavilion sought to convey.

Artists and artworks carry significances in relation to the world in general. This is part of their *placedness,* a point which the scene from *Children of Men* outlined in the previous section illustrated in so much *Guernica* was considered a painting that was worthy of being rescued along with the few remaining artworks by Goya. As either the work itself or the name of the artist responsible for making it becomes known to the public, as they gain reputations for themselves either by word of mouth, publicity or publication, so the work itself can

[194] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 15.

take on a gathering potential of its own. Just as places gather people towards and within them, so artworks do the same.

This point becomes clearer when we consider how *Guernica* stands in relation to its current home. The work is undoubtedly El Museo Nacional de Arte Reina Sofía's most prized possession, and many people from all over the world visit the museum in order to see it. For this reason, it can also be understood to contribute to the city beyond the limits of the institution in that it has become one of the city's main attractions. Furthermore, this has implications not just for the regional network of places within which the institution itself is situated, but also the global place network beyond that, which encompasses all of those places from which *Guernica's* many visitors arrive.

As a consequence of its gathering potential, celebrated works like *Guernica* can also bring a level of prestige to these places, affirming their importance by way of their presence. In the pavilion's case, *Guernica's* introduction transformed it into that place where the world's most famous artist's most recent creation was to be unveiled for the first time. Similarly, Reina Sofía is widely known as the home of arguably the twentieth century's greatest artwork, just as the Louvre in Paris is closely associated with the presence of Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*. The prestige that such works are able harness as a consequence of their *placedness* there has two important implications for those places.

Firstly, the introduction of such works into them helps to consolidate the history of that place. Casey observes how places gather "experiences and histories, even languages and thoughts", and even though the pavilion contained a broad range of works by other internationally respected figures, one wonders if its legacy would have been quite so assured had Picasso not provided the commission.[195] Furthermore, in so much as the work has passed through a number of different places over the course of its life, it has also contributed to the history of those places along the way. In the next section, for instance, we will consider *Guernica's* brief stint in London when Whitechapel Gallery in east London displayed the painting for two weeks in January 1939. When the gallery reopened to the public following its renovation in 2009, a life-size tapestry replica of *Guernica*, commissioned from two Parisian weavers by Picasso in the 1950s, was secured by the gallery for display in order to commemorate seventy years since the original painting was exhibited. In 1939, Whitechapel Gallery was relatively unknown and securing Picasso's masterpiece was considered something of a coup – it very much put the gallery on the map.[196] In consequence, there is a sense in which *Guernica* echoes through that place - it has become *sedimented* in its fabric.

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[195] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 327.
[196] Alistair Sooke, "Whitechapel Gallery reopens: Guernica returns to its first British home", *The Telegraph*, April 1, 2009, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/alastair-sooke/5061519/Whitechapel-Gallery-reopens-Guernica-returns-to-its-first-British-home.html.

Secondly, by bringing prestige to a place, so the display of a work like *Guernica* can also contribute to the *accommodation* that place is then able to offer up. Art institutions' reputations are cultivated and consolidated by the standard of work they are able to acquire, either for their permanent collections or for the temporary exhibitions they put on. Pontus Holten observes for this reason that a museum director's first job is "to create a public - not just to do great shows, but to create an audience that trust the institution." [197] Once somewhere like a museum or gallery has gained a reputation for presenting work by either well-established or exciting, upcoming artists, this gives rise to a heightened capacity on its part to elicit a degree of respect, openness and patience from its public, toward new and perhaps lesser known works that are introduced.

At the pavilion, *Guernica's* presence functioned as something like the artist's endorsement of the exhibition's content and the political message it sought to convey. Similarly, its presence at Reina Sofia in Madrid enables other works installed nearby to stand forth more boldly for having been set up in its presence. However, as the previous point has already gone some way towards highlighting, the work need not necessarily even be present any longer for it contribute to the ongoing *accommodation* that a place offers up. Its having been there and having contributed to the history of that place means that when it moves elsewhere, and new artworks take its place, those new artworks enter into a place which has already been altered as a consequence of its having been there in the past. As Fred Wilson's *Mining the Museum* (1992-1993) showed us in the first chapter, however, past displays do not always have a positive impact on that place's *accommodative* capacity going forward. By drawing attention to the racist undertones of Maryland Historical Society's past displays, Wilson effectively presented that past in much darker light than might otherwise have been realised.

If we now turn to the contribution that the work makes to the broader configuration of place, there are two aspects of its impact that I intend to outline here. The first is concerned with how the work configures the space around it, and in so doing, re-configures the space already opened up by that place prior to the work's arrival. To a certain extent, the configuring potential of *Guernica* has already been considered through our discussions of the work's *principal theme*. To see "according to" or "with" the work as Merleau-Ponty says is to adjust oneself to the demands it makes upon us, by positioning oneself at that "optimum distance" from which it demands to be seen, and also potentially manoeuvring oneself in such a way so as to achieve the encounter it elicits.[198] To be within that space where we are able to actively engage with the work's *principal theme* in this way is to be held within its *scope*, that area within which the *principal theme* is clearly visible and where it can guide us.

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[197] Obrist, *A Brief History,* 37.
[198] Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind", 164.

As has already been suggested, however, in configuring space as it does, the work also reconfigures that place within which it is held. We can say this because the space provided by the pavilion for the exhibition was not simply empty space awaiting configuration. To describe the space it made available in such a way would be to fall into the trap of characterising emptiness as a "deficiency" according to Heidegger, rather than as a place which has been "freed" and which holds the potential for "gathering" or "bringing-forth".[199] As Casey observes, to move around a place such as a room, or in this case the open lower level of the pavilion, is to move within "circumscribed space" which is "defined by the walls of the room".[200] In so much as that place was already laid out or set up in a particular way, so it offered up a specific style of *accommodation*, which is to say a limited range of possibilities for how that circumscribed space might then be used. Had the main wall on the lower level not had a work installed upon it, then that wall would have maintained its function as a wall all the same. Perhaps visitors would have passed straight by it on their way out into the patio area beyond it where the films were showing, or leant against it in that shaded section of the lower level. Indeed, the wall would have offered up its own possibilities had the painting not been present and configured that space before it as those possibilities were realised. However, that the work was introduced means that the space before the wall was altered in consequence. Furthermore, because that work was a painting by Picasso, it would have drawn more people to linger there than if it had been a work by a lesser known artist, meaning that space would have been more densely populated than if the wall had remained bare.

The second point relates to how *Guernica* then sat in relation to other artworks it was presented alongside. As already noted above, *Guernica* played a key role relative to the exhibition as a whole. Located immediately next to the main entrance as it was, any visitor who made their way around the entire display would have seen it twice. As such, it functioned as both an introduction to and a closing statement on the broader display. The French painter Armadée Ozenfant describes his own experience of it in the following terms:

> The huge *Guernica* by the great Spanish painter is before me…. *Guernica* makes one feel the frightful drama of a great people abandoned to medieval tyrants, and makes one think about that drama. The master has used only those means that properly belong to the visual arts, and yet he had made the whole world understand the immense Spanish tragedy - if people have eyes to see.[201]

In the same passage, he describes the reaction of a woman who has come down from the second floor and is about to leave the building. Whilst looking at the painting she says out loud that whilst she does not understand what is going on, the painting makes her feel terrible, and that "War is a terrible thing!".[202] What both of these statements share in common is that they are as relevant to the entire exhibition as they are to

[199] Martin Heidegger, "Art and Space", trans. Charles H Seibert. In *Man and World* 6, no. 1 (1973): 3-8. 7.
[200] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 326.
[201] Martin, *Picasso's War*, 116.
[202] Ibid., 117.

the concrete work itself. In Ozenfant's description in particular, the suffering that the painting conveys is clearly contextualised, his feeling being that the painting made him "think about" the "Spanish tragedy" and that country's "great people abandoned to medieval tyrants". In order to allow us to think through how the work related to the pavilion in general though, it is useful to consider just how much else there was on display around Ozenfant in that moment which would have functioned to contextualise the suffering of *Guernica's* victims and encourage such a reading.

Whereas the approach to the pavilion and the open lower-level of the pavilion predominantly featured works of art and literary references, the outdoor space to the rear and the upper level contained a great deal of documentation relating to the republican war efforts specifically. The documentary films showing at the back and the photographic exhibition upstairs would have provided clear evidence of the injustices suffered just south of the French border, yet it was only *Guernica* in which the suffering of the Spanish people was foregrounded so starkly. This would have imbued the exhibition as a whole with a sense of urgency and given rise to expressions of empathy that the more explicitly partisan exhibits (including the artworks) might not have been capable of achieving on their own. After all, the pavilion's audience would have been made up of a predominantly French public who had already been exposed to photographs and commentaries on the civil war via newspaper and radio reports. Yet the human suffering at the heart of such a conflict is easily lost in media coverage of this kind. What *Guernica* offered up was something like direct access to that suffering as it had been brought to expression by the artist, and an opportunity to bypass all the facts and figures underpinning much of what was on display. The account of the woman who descended the stairs and exclaimed in front of Ozenfant that "War is a terrible thing!" reveals to us how *Guernica* punctuated the broader scene, bearing down on visitors as they entered into the principal structure, whilst simultaneously serving as a point for reflection at the end, before visitors moved on elsewhere.

From within the pavilion, the documentation referred to a conflict happening elsewhere. Whereas, *Guernica* made the horror of that conflict very much present for those people in attendance. By considering how the exhibits sat together in the display, a broader configuration of the exhibition space then comes into view. *Guernica* was visible across the entire lower level. This maximised the *reach* of its *principal theme* so as to enable it to penetrate the entirety of the circumscribed space as defined by the *accommodating* structure. Wherever visitors went, *Guernica* was there in the background, and when they descended from the upper-level, it was immediately visible from both the internal stairwell and the slope rising up from the patio outside. For Casey, one of place's principal powers is its capacity to "gather", by which he means "holding [things] together in a particular configuration".[203] This configuration "reflects the layout of the local

[203] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 328.

landscape", which in this instance would be the structure of the pavilion itself, the form of which "joins up with the things in it".[204]

In turn, this gives rise to a general scene of the exhibition. Artworks, documents, signs, films and architecture and furniture merge together and inter-animate one another, giving rise to something like a *principal theme* of the exhibition as a whole, that is, its general scene as experienced through the event of its unfolding. In order to unfold in the way it does, however, and in order for these formal features of place (including its architectural features) to inter-animate one another as they do, this requires bodies to immerse themselves and participate within that scene, within this "configurative complex of things", which are simultaneously held together (and inter-animated) only by way of the active participation of those bodies present within it.[205] It is only through place's "arrangement" and how that arrangement is lived through that ideas emerge and culture is able to take place.[206] This has implications for how the artwork then reveals itself in terms of its *aboutness* because this arrangement helps set the terms of the audience's encounter with it.

3.1.3. The Work is *of* a *Place-World*

In order to understand how *Guernica*'s *aboutness* emerged for its audiences at the pavilion, it will be useful to bring into focus their broader relationship with that place. The "arrangement" referred to in the previous section can only give rise to ideas and support culture in terms of the part it plays in the *accommodation* offered up by that place as a whole. Indeed, a*boutness* does not emerge in a predetermined and strictly formal way, which is to say, it is not solely a consequence of the exhibition's set up and how the curator intended its contents to be seen. It also depends on the people who enter into the exhibition and how they engage with the display, for the work's *aboutness* only manifests through the event of the encounter as performed by the audience.

What is particularly interesting about the pavilion example is that Picasso was very much *of* the same *place-world* as those people who came to see it. Casey uses this term "place-world" as a variation on the term "world" as introduced by Heidegger in *Being and Time* and later appropriated by Merleau-Ponty in *Phenomenology of Perception.* It expresses how, as embodied beings, our being is not simply "being-in-the-world", but first and foremost "being-in-place", through which we are able to discover the world thereafter. Our being is essentially *being-in-the-place-world*, therefore, but *"place-world"* can encompass various dimensions. Firstly, and in the very broadest sense, the term reflects the entire world as being made up of places, a global place network beyond that we are presently situated within. Secondly, it also alludes to more

[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.

concentrated places such as streets, neighbourhoods, towns or cities, in that these reduced networks of places manifest a collective character which distinguishes them from other, similar networks around them. Finally, a single place, be it a single room or a tight configuration of spaces such as the Spanish pavilion, museum, or even a home, might also be described in such terms, especially when they are highly cultivated and intensely differentiated from surrounding places.

What we mean when we say that Picasso was from the same *place-world* as much of the audience in attendance at the pavilion in 1937 is that the work emerged from similar circumstances to those shaping the lives of the audience at the time. Parisians in particular would have been more alert than somebody seeing the painting for the first time today to the significance of the burning tower in the background of *Guernica's* scene, having read the same newspaper reports as the artist himself. Furthermore, that so much coverage had been devoted to the attack meant that the title would have resonated far more strongly with the pavilion's audience than it would have for New Yorkers encountering the work at MOMA a few years later. Carsten-Peter Warncke describes how, as the public became aware of the attack on Guernica, it manifested itself as a "symbol of modern total warfare" in France and "synonymous with the horrors of the civil war" still very much ongoing in Spain.[207] It was within this context of such widespread media coverage that Picasso adopted Guernica as the theme to lead his work. The title would have functioned like an exclamation mark above the scene during its original display. It was the title that announced the violence and suffering depicted.

As Clark observes, to talk of Guernica at all "is inevitably to broach the issue of Picasso's contact as a citizen with the events of the twentieth century." [208] As a Parisian resident of more than three decades, Picasso would have been acutely aware of the growing public concern regarding the prospect of further war breaking out. To say that the artwork is very clearly *of* this *place-world*, and that the work retains this *ofness* even today, is not to say that *Guernica* bears any resemblance to works by other artists in Paris at that time, therefore. Rather, *ofness* brings to our attention the fact that the work emerged from a particular *place-world*, something of which was also brought to expression through its *principal theme*. The tower in the background or even the vagueness of the scene might be interpreted as an expression of Picasso's removal from the actual event, for instance. But what I am more interested in bringing into view here is how *Guernica* emphasises certain aspects of that event that would have brought to expression the collective fears of the Parisian people in attendance. Indeed, people would have intuited in the news reports coming from Spain something resembling their own potential fate. The isolation of each figure living through their own personal ordeal, combined with the ensuing panic and chaos of the overall scene, would have brought these fears to expression.

[207] Walther & Warncke, *Pablo Picasso*, 388.
[208] Clark, *Picasso and Truth,* 237.

As Clark points out, *Guernica* was created in the space of just five weeks from start to finish. In consequence, "all its politics — all its response to Fascism and Communism and the new face of war — were in the picture." [209] Indeed, the threat of Fascism in particular would have been keenly felt in France, surrounded as it was by Italy, Germany and Spain. As such, the French people were perhaps more empathetic to the Republican plight than the populations of other countries may have been at the time. This is also why the general tone of the work was so important to Picasso through the work's development, and why empathy needed to banish eroticism by the time the work came to be displayed.

We must be careful, however, not to interpret this *ofness* by way of extension, for then we no longer remain with the *principal theme*. This is our only true point of access with regard to determining what the artwork brings to expression, and its inherent ambiguity can inspire all manner of fanciful conclusions to be drawn about the feelings, ideas or circumstances behind the work. According to the Basque painter José Maria Ucelay's account, for instance, Picasso would have first received news of the attack on Tuesday 27th April, just one day after the attack occurred. The news is said to have first become public knowledge in Paris via a radio broadcast transmitted by a Basque station picked up in Paris during the demonstration, the news of which spread rapidly through the crowds of people who had turned out. Ucelay explains how, after overhearing the news himself, he bumped into the Spanish poet and close friend of Picasso's Juan Larrea by chance as he was exiting the Champs-Elysées Metro, with whom he then shared the news. Larrea immediately caught a taxi in the direction of Café de Flore in order to find his friend. What is more, Ucelay also claims that it was Larrea who suggested that Guernica became the central theme for Picasso's upcoming commission.[210] Initially, Picasso is said to have been dubious with regard to Larrea's suggestion because he did not know what the town of Guernica itself looked like. Nevertheless, Larrea, keen to transmit a sense of the devastation reported, described the events as being like a "bull in a china shop, run amok".[211]

The insinuation of this report is clearly that the oft-referred to bull figure towards the upper left-hand-corner of the canvas originated in Larrea's description, which was then adopted by Picasso as he worked. As even van Hensbergen who reports it concedes though, this story is a little too neat, and we should certainly be dubious of its value. Furthermore, the bull was a common theme throughout Picasso's oeuvre and it is unlikely, therefore, that this conversation specifically would have sparked the artist's decision to include it.

[209] Ibid., 243-244.
[210] Hensbergen, *Guernica: The Biography*, 32-33.
[211] Ibid.

That being said, stories like this are rife, and collectively give rise to an impression of what Rosalind Krauss referred to as the "Autobiographical Picasso", whereby each work in his oeuvre is interpreted as representing some event in the artist's life, or otherwise, some emotion or opinion held. Krauss questions the "aesthetic relevance" of such interpretations. [212] R.G. Collingwood referred to this approach as "aesthetic individualism", which, he argued, reduces criticism to the level of "personal gossip".[213] Anthony Blunt argues that by studying the evolution of the figures present within the scene and comparing them with what was going on in the artist's life at that time, we come to understand more precisely what the intentions behind *Guernica* were. He contrasts the use of some of these figures by Picasso in the early twenties to express what he considers to be the "personal distress" at the breakdown of his marriage, with the more "mature" and "universal" symbols of *Guernica*.[214] It is noteworthy that approaches like this reflect the configuration of retrospective exhibition displays, whereby an artist's oeuvre is presented in its entirely — as a life's work. Especially after an artist has died, theories like these can proliferate wildly, as Krauss observes following the 1980 Picasso retrospective at MOMA.[215]

Both van Hensbergen's and Blunt's respective accounts seek to draw meaning from the work by way of its presumed relation with a particular period in the artist's life, and in so doing, appear to adopt this notion of the artistic process as autobiographical expression. Kathleen Brunner takes an even more direct view when she claims that the "impassive" expression of the bull represents "fate", whilst the writhing horse is said to symbolise the suffering of the Spanish people.[216] What problematic about these accounts is precisely the way in which they try to find anchorage in what are presumed to be the artist's intended aims. By condensing fate into the figure of the bull and suffering into the body of the horse, however, it is easy to lose sight of the part they play in triggering *Guernica's* overall effect. Regardless of whether or not we convert these figures into symbols, the bull retains its solemnity and the horse's twisted neck and torso still emanates the same sense of sheer panic and torment as before. Such conclusions are to the detriment of the encounter, therefore. This is why Clark criticises all critics "who go on looking for death specifically in the lamp-bulb sun or the bull's head or the fallen warrior" because, in so doing, "they are forgetting the impact — the overload of stimuli".[217] An interview with Picasso cited in Gombrich's *The Story of Art* also appears to warn us against this model:

> Picasso himself denied that he was making experiments. He said that he did not search, he found. He mocked at those who wanted to understand his art. 'Everyone wants to understand art. Why not try to understand the song of a bird?' [218]

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[212] Krauss, "In the name of Picasso", 28.
[213] Collingwood, *The Principles of Art*, 315-316.
[214] Blunt, *Picasso's Guernica*, 17.
[215] Krauss, "In the Name of Picasso", 25.
[216] Brunner, *Picasso Rewriting Picasso*, 62.
[217] Clark, *Picasso and Truth,* 250.
[218] Gombrich. *The Story of Art,* 577.

Picasso's claim that he did not search for, but instead that he found his *principal theme*, would appear to be at odds with the claim that these figures act as symbols that were intended from the start, and also to support the claim that *principal themes* become *sedimented* over time. Whilst *searching* implies an objective that the artist had in mind from the outset, Picasso's emphasis on *finding* underlines instead the more intuitive nature of the process by which *sedimentation* occurs. He *finds* that the arrangement of the scene he has been developing up until a certain point presents itself as needing more work and his labour continues until a different effect emerges that is grasped as being more successful. As with Klee's description, Picasso felt his way towards the painting's completion. Understood in this way, it makes sense that any artist would find it difficult to explain why something looked "right" or how they decided when an artwork they were working on appeared to be complete. Just as the bird sings the song that is most natural to it, so the artist judges their work according to a perceptual *style* that is most natural for them.

As Merleau-Ponty draws to our attention, and as was discussed in the previous chapter, these conclusions drawn are pre-reflective because they occur on the very surface of perception itself. The work's *ofness* manifests as a consequence of the metamorphosis that the artist's process gives rise to, whereby this perceptual *style* comes to be *embodied* by the artwork and is detached from the artist's life as a consequence of the artwork's completion and display. It is through this gap that is opened up between the work and the artist's life that the work's *ofness* comes to manifest. It announces itself as a certain alienness inherent in all *principal themes* relative to the places where they have been set up - their having arrived from elsewhere. This also means that *ofness* is an aspect of *aboutness*, therefore, in so much as it is a condition of the *principal theme's* own *style* of appearance from within a place and contributes to how its content is brought to expression.

There is a sense in which the work's *ofness* might be characterised in a similar way to how Walter Benjamin describes the work in terms of its "aura". According to Benjamin, to experience anything in terms of its aura is to experience it in terms of its unique existence and from within the here and now of the actual place where it is in fact.[219] Its uniqueness in the present is recognised as stemming "from a primal past that is removed from the present" as Casey writes.[220] The same might be said of the work's *ofness* to the extent that it also stems from the situation and circumstances that gave rise to its creation, which are themselves removed from the present.

[219] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn, (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 221.
[220] Casey, The World at a Glance, 230.

However, the problem a place-based analysis of the work comes up against with the concept of aura is that it stands out temporally first and foremost by showing how “the past can haunt the present yet reside there precisely in its temporal remoteness”.[221] It is not a visible element of a thing, therefore, but “something that surrounds a thing”.[222] While it is supposed to be part of the artwork’s manner of being present in place, it is not clear just how it is to be discerned. It must be recognisable as stemming from a past in order to stand out in this way, and this is especially the case if we are to be able to take Casey’s claim seriously that it is recognisable at a glance. Indeed, its temporal remoteness must reveal itself to perception through that place in which it is encountered.

As Casey underlines in his assessment of Benjamin, we must be careful not to mistake an artwork’s aura for a mere trace of the past within it, and so the same should also be said of its *ofness*. The trace is a physical mark by which we are able to interpret the past.[223] It is that by which we take possession of the past by way of empirical enquiry. *Ofness,* however*,* is clearly visible in that which is brought to expression in the work. It is contained within the work’s *style*. In *Guernica’s* case, it might be considered to derive from the sense of panic, suffering and empathy that the work emits, in that these elements have their origin in that *place-world* through which the work emerged to begin with. It manifests through the artwork’s performance, and this should be regarded as an aspect of that work’s manner of presenting itself, its having been brought in from elsewhere. When we say that the work was *of* the same *place-world* as the audience in attendance, therefore, this has consequences for how we should conceive of the audience's encounter with it and also how its *aboutness* comes to manifest. The themes that the work is perceived to bring to expression make present something of the general atmosphere of that period, which the artist shared in common with the audience in attendance.

3.2. From Paris to New York, via Scandinavia and London

When the exposition in Paris was dismantled in January 1938, Guernica was exhibited in various locations across Europe before eventually being moved to the United States in 1939. With regard to its time at the pavilion, Guernica drew increasingly large crowds as word of the painting’s harrowing imagery spread amongst attendees. For all intents and purposes, the exhibition had been a success from the Republican government’s point of view, and their prized commission had undoubtedly played a key role.

From Paris, the work was then taken on tour across northern Europe, through Oslo, Copenhagen, Stockholm and Göteborg, before returning to Paris in April of the same year. It travelled with 118 other works by Picasso

[221] Ibid., 250.
[222] Ibid., 232.
[223] Benjamin, “The Work of Art”, 220.

and three other French artists - George Braque, Henri Laurens and Henri Matisse. However, amongst so many other exciting and challenging works of the day, *Guernica* was not singled out for any particular acclaim. While it was certainly exhibited as a significant new work by Picasso, Russell Martin suggests that its reception may have reflected the relatively subdued concern amongst Scandinavians at the time regarding the spread of fascism in Europe, which lay in stark contrast with the French public's own anguish.[224] What is more, much of what had been written about the work following its unveiling in Paris had emphasised its political content in particular. Martin argues for this reason that the painting was received more as a work of propaganda than a serious work of art.[225] What prior to its unveiling in Paris had been considered a painting that was not partisan enough for the Republican government's purposes was now being written off by audiences elsewhere for being too political. Christophe Cherix observes in the preface to Hans Ulrich Obrist's *A Brief History of Curating* how closely works of art tend to be associated with their original display:

> If the context of an artwork's presentation has always mattered, the second part of the 20th Century has shown that artworks are so systematically associated with their first exhibition that a lack of documentation of the latter puts the artists' original intentions at risk of being misunderstood.[226]

One of the key factors in this systematic association would undoubtedly be the discourse which begins to emerge as a consequence of the work's being unveiled for the first time. We must be clear that discourse emerges first and foremost as a result of the artwork's placement within the public sphere. The role of the art critic becomes particularly significant thereafter in so much as their assessments of works function to consolidate views of the work which it then carries into its next showing.

This acutely politicised view of the work was consolidated all the more when the painting was later shipped to London for display at the prestigious Regent Street Gallery, where it was accompanied by two dozen preparatory sketches. The show's patrons included prominent writers E.M. Forster and Virginia Wolff as well as ministers of the Labour Party led by Clement Attlee. Attlee himself had begun to express a sense of moral obligation to aid the Spanish republic and it was at his request that the painting was later transported across the city to the Whitechapel Gallery in the East End and seen by more than twelve thousand visitors. He used the Whitechapel exhibition to talk to a predominantly working-class audience about the significance of the painting as a representation of the fascist nations' capabilities and to emphasise the shared plight of workers worldwide. *Guernica* drew both acclaim and condemnation from a range of critics. The tone, however, was acutely political in character, often in spite of the aesthetic sensibilities of those writing. This reflects not only the tense political atmosphere in the UK at that time, which had begun to sense the inevitability of war just

[224] Martin, Picasso's War, 133.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Obrist, *A Brief History,* 8.

around the corner, but also the fact that everything anyone had read about *Guernica* beforehand had generally related to its display at the Paris Exposition.[227]

Guernica initially travelled to New York in December 1939 for Picasso's first retrospective in the United States to celebrate forty years of his work, which was organised by MOMA's founder Alfred Barr. After war broke out in 1939, however, and following France's invasion by Nazis Germany in 1940, Picasso granted permission for the work to remain in MOMA's care indefinitely. He refused to sell it despite Barr's best efforts, adamant that the Spanish Republic had paid for the work and that it should one day be returned to Spain and displayed in El Prado. His condition was that Spain must first become a free and democratic republic for this to occur. *Guernica* remained under MOMA's care until September 1981, and was not once exhibited in Spain prior to this, despite making several visits to Europe in that time. Once it had been decided that *Guernica* would remain in the United States, it was clearly felt that a significant shift in how the work was to be displayed was required in order to liberate the painting from the intensely politicised discourse surrounding it. This explains why the label referred to in the previous chapter sought to distance the work from any immediate political significance.

Although the artwork's original reception undoubtedly influenced the way it was received later on, we begin to see changes in the way it comes to be displayed and interpreted as consequence of its moving between places. We must question the validity of Christophe Cherix's observation outlined above, therefore, that sufficient documentation of the artwork's original display maintains something of the artist's original intentions within our view. After all, no amount of documentation would be able to transport us back to the pavilion in order to experience the work for the first time, amidst all the tension and anxiety of the day. What is more, that the artwork presents itself differently over time seems inevitable given that the *place-world* around it also changes. This is the case even when the artwork remains in the same place as its original display, a point that is vital for understanding the artwork in terms of its *aboutness.* Indeed, these shifts in the broader *place-world* in which the artwork is placed are ultimately what allow different aspects of the work which had previously lain dormant within its *principal theme* to come to the fore and reveal new dimensions of its *aboutness*. MOMA makes for the perfect case study in this regard.

3.2.1. The Work and the *Place-World*

In this section I wish to present two concrete examples of how situations affecting the *place-world* in the very broadest sense of the term can be understood to trigger a shift in how the work then came to be presented and received. The first is concerned with the emergence of the United States as the economic and cultural

[227] Martin, *Picasso's War*, 135 -138.

capital of the world as a direct consequence of the second world war and the altered circumstances in which *Guernica* would have been encountered in New York. The second point to be considered is how, despite MOMA's overt foregrounding of the work's formal brilliance, the suffering and violence it brings to expression (i.e., the more human element of the *principal theme*) came to be foregrounded once more with quite urgent prominence as a consequence of the American involvement in Vietnam in the 1970s. These global "situations" shaped the way in which the painting came to be received.

In the essay "Place and Situation", Casey observes how easy it is to think of "situations" in overly abstract terms because their influence can be observed across numerous places simultaneously. As Casey points out though, in order to exert their influence in the way they do, it must also be the case that they "fold into" individual places.[228] This is what enables concrete situations to reveal themselves in diverse and distinct ways across different places. A situation like the Second World War illustrates this dynamic folding function in that the violence suffered in Europe manifested in the rapid development of the art world in the United States, and New York in particular. Indeed, many prominent critics and artists moved to the city during that period and museum collections were also transformed. In the essay "American Type Painting", Clement Greenberg underlines the Guggenheim Museum's first acquisitions of paintings by Kandinsky as particularly significant to the development of American art. All of a sudden, American artists and critics no longer had to wait to read the French press for the latest news but were at the centre of the art world for the very first time. *Guernica's* presence at MOMA would no doubt have contributed significantly to this sense of shift that was occurring.[229]

In MOMA's museum bulletin of 1943, Barr wrote to the museum's members that the collection was a "symbol of one of the four freedoms for which we are fighting - *the freedom of expression"*.[230] He argued that the reason Hitler hated such work was precisely because it was "modern, progressive, challenging; because it is *international,* leading to understanding and tolerance among nations; because it is *free*, the free expression of free men."[231] America had come to perceive itself as the centre of not just the art world, but of the free world in general. The dangers of tyranny were clearly elsewhere in the minds of its people, and this represented a notable psychological shift in terms of how a work like *Guernica* would then come to be received.

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[228] Edward S. Casey, "Place and Situation", in *Situatedness and Place*, *Contributions to Phenomenology* 95 (2018): *22.*

[229] Clement Greenberg, "'American Type' Painting", in *Art and Culture,* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 211.

[230] Martin, *Picasso's War*, 172.

[231] Ibid.

As noted in the first chapter, and as the above reference to Barr's bulletin shows, a visit to a modern art museum was being marketed as an expression of individual liberty, an opportunity to observe, interpret, exercise and explore one's own point of view through art. As such, the museum visit was not simply an encounter with objects of cultural interest, but rather the active participation in the museum's cultivation of that society, its tastes and collective ambitions. As Duncan asserts: "To control a museum means precisely to control the representation of a community and its highest values and truths." [232]

Guernica arrived at a pivotal moment in America's history and, in line with Barr's comments, was the pinnacle of "modern, progressive [and] challenging" art. In line with the rest of the collection, this re-presentation of the painting was intended to encourage a truly subjective encounter, without allusion to the external world, whereby the viewer confronts not so much a concrete scene as a general form. *Guernica* was incorporated into Barr's broader social project to cultivate a more rationally balanced and grounded society, filled with learned individuals of elevated tastes. What the museum's de-politicisation of the painting through its display effectively achieved was a formalisation or aestheticisation of the work in terms of how it was to be encountered thereafter. It did so by actively reducing the significance of its title by placing emphasis primarily upon the painting's general form, thereby undermining the contribution made by the title to the *principal theme*. Something of the horror transmitted by the *principal theme* would have inevitably been lost in the process.

These conditions were reflective of a stable society that was on the up. When the *place-world* situation shifted, however, so did the audience's manner of engagement with *Guernica*. When the United States became involved in its own gruesome campaign against Vietnam, it was precisely the content which the institution had sought to suppress within Guernica's *principal theme* that suddenly became foregrounded. In 1970, a group of prominent New York artists from the Art Workers' Coalition sent a package containing two hundred and sixty-five letters to Picasso's home in Paris demanding that *Guernica* either be removed from the country altogether, or if not, at least from its display at MOMA. The artists described how they had once been proud that the work had found refuge in the country's leading museum, but that since the United States government had committed similar atrocities against the Vietnamese people as those committed against Guernica's population, so the United States itself had become a tyrant comparable to the fascist forces of the 1930s. The presence of the painting suggested that the United States had the "moral right to be indignant about the crimes of others - and ignore our own crimes".[233]

People who had previously enjoyed the painting at MOMA had come to feel uneasy about its presence in New York. It would be easy to write these protests off as being of little aesthetic significance since the fact

[232] Duncan, *Civilising Rituals,* 8-9.
[233] Martin, Picasso's War, 199-200.

that the work was converted into a symbol of American state hypocrisy changes nothing within the *principal theme* itself. That being said, perhaps it might also reveal something about how we perceive works of art in terms of their relation with the *place-world* in general. After all, it was not the hypocrisy of the American government that these people came to see in the image, but rather the immense suffering of its figures. Once again, the plight of *Guernica's* victims came to the fore over the pure general form that the label attached to the work had sought to foreground. Indeed, the museum's interpretation of the work came to be contested as a consequence of the situation in Vietnam. That "situation" manifested itself in that place and consequently offered up new ways for the work to be received.

My claim here is not simply that the painting came to be "reinterpreted" as a consequence of the violence unfolding in Vietnam, but instead that the painting actually came to be seen differently as a result. This is only possible because we look "not only at given artworks but also within the settings in which these same artworks are exhibited" - these places that are intimately intertwined with the much broader *place-world* beyond their walls.[234] Casey underlines the intimate relation between placement and history:

> To be here in this room — to be "herein" — is not only to be in the room down the hall or in a room in the next building. It is to be *somewhere in particular*: a peculiar somewhere in space that situates the "somewhen" in time. Whereabouts pin down the whenabouts.[235]

To be in a place is to participate in that place through a particular moment in its history. Just as situations are held to fold into places, so the histories they give rise to should also be conceived in such terms. It is not so much that the concrete place itself gave rise to this perceptual shift, therefore, as if its *aboutness* came to reveal itself differently as the consequence of some sort of environing effect. Rather, the work's being seen in a particular way stems in part at least from the relation between those bodies and the broader *place-world* in general. Aesthetic experience can never entirely become detached from the everyday world in this way.

3.3. Guernica's "Return" to Spain

Picasso died on 8th April, 1973, and as he was coming to the end of his life he became increasingly concerned about where *Guernica* would end up. He passed the responsibility of deciding when would be appropriate for the work to be returned to Spain to his lawyer and good friend Roland Dumas. Shortly after Franco's death, on 20th November, 1975, and following the inauguration of Spain's new King, Juan Carlos, the country was declared a free and democratic state against Franco's own wishes and Dumas decided that the moment had come for the work to be returned.[236] After complex negotiations with MOMA (who felt that the return

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[234] Casey, *The world at a Glance*, 421.
[235] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 23.
[236] Martin, Picasso's War, 194-195.

was still against the wishes of the artist since Spain was still not yet a republic), and various disputes with the Picasso family, Guernica was transported to Museo del Prado's Casón del Buen Retiro for public display on 10th September, 1981.

Douglas Cooper, the British historian and critic, and lifelong friend of Picasso, had seen the painting many times and in various different places. When he saw the work in Madrid for the first time, however, he describes how he was "more overwhelmed and convinced than ever before by its extraordinary invention, the absence of any sort of anecdote or sentimentality and its strictly pictorial imagery".[237] This observation is intriguing since it appears to acknowledge both some sort of significance to the work's being unveiled in the country of the artist's birth, whilst simultaneously proposing a distinctly formal reading of it. Cooper's claim was no doubt a consequence of his training. As an experienced and sophisticated connoisseur, he was capable of recognising historical references within the work's *principal theme* without difficulty and understanding acutely the enormity of Picasso's accomplishment. Given what our observations regarding the way in which the artwork's transition between different places had come to shape its reception in the past, it is doubtful that Cooper's encounter would have been universally representative.

In terms of how the work is currently displayed at Reina Sofía, the politics remains complex. To begin with, it is presented in a way that commemorates those who were killed in the attacks at Guernica, whilst clearly drawing a line between the present and the past. Indeed, for many people in Spain, the fact that *Guernica* was returned carries with it a symbolic significance and functions to remind people of how far the country has come since Franco's death. As journalist Borja Hermoso remarked in a recent article for the Spanish newspaper *El Pais*, the painting's return was "emotional" for the Spanish people because it functioned as a "metaphor for [the country's] reconciliation".[238] That being said, Spain's peaceful transition to democracy required considerable compromise on the part of the country's traditionally republican regions in particular. When King Juan Carlos announced that the transition was to be made, it was widely celebrated. Yet, members of Franco's regime were never formally held to account for their part not just in the regime itself, but also in the civil war. Many families have still not recovered the bodies of those they lost during the war and Guernica's people have never received justice. Furthermore, Spain remains a monarchy to this day, which was Franco's own expressed desire. In consequence, there is a sense in regions like the Basque Country and Catalunya, both of which maintain significant separatist movements, that the old days have not entirely disappeared. In consequence, the violence and suffering brought to expression by *Guernica* maintains some of the urgency that its original audience would also have picked up on. The work has never been exhibited in

[237] Ibid., 232.

[238] Borja Hermoso, "Así volvió a España el 'Guernica' de Picasso: 35 años ya" ("How Picasso's 'Guernica' was returned to Spain: 35 years on" - own translation), in *El Pais*, October 24, 2016, https://elpais.com/cultura/2016/10/02/actualidad/1475366141_729636.html.

the Basque region either, and as such, there is ample reason to question whether the work has yet been returned to its rightful "home" at all.

The historical view expressed by Cooper above does not leave room for different ways of encountering artworks, nor does it appreciate the extent to which the audience's own experience will inevitably shape their reception. This consideration is particularly pressing when assessing the relation between a work like *Guernica* and the place of its display. Indeed, the historical approach gives rise to a certain detachment on the viewer's part from the work's content and induces a state of close focus, according to which, only what appears on the work's surface is brought to prominence by the gaze. It "kills the vehemence of painting" as Merleau-Ponty writes, in so much as the formal qualities of the work come to be prioritised over that which they bring to expression, which in Guernica's case was the desperation, violence and tragedy of its scene.[239]

What chapter two revealed to us was how the meaning of the artwork manifests through its placement. Its scale combines with its form and imposes itself on place in a way that manifests both its expressive *style* and *historical depth* through that space it opens up around it - its *scope.* In the third chapter, we have gained a clearer understanding of how that *scope* imposes itself upon the place of its display. It contributes to the configuration and arrangement of that place, to its meaning, and it influences the way that place stands in relation to the broader *place-world* it is embedded within. However, since the artwork is also embedded within the configuration of place, so its presentation also draws from it. We have seen, for instance, how the pavilion's set-up drew certain aspects of *Guernica's principal theme* to the fore and how this also occurred in other places it passed through later on. Finally, we have also considered how events unconnected with the artwork's immediate display have also implicated themselves in how the work came to be engaged with later on. Indeed, the Vietnam War and Spain's transition to democracy underlined the *principal theme's* relation with the broader *place-world* all the more strongly. We will now consider more directly why a phenomenological approach is particularly well-suited to understanding this relational dimension of the artwork.

[239] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 63.

Chapter Four – The Phenomenology of Art and Place

In this fourth chapter, an analysis of John Cage's *4'33"* will be undertaken with close reference to the work of Merleau-Ponty, Casey, Heidegger and Malpas in particular, although Mikel Dufrenne's characterisation of the art-place relation will also receive close attention. Casey's notion of *implacement* will become much more prominent in this chapter, especially in terms of how it relates with another of Casey's terms, that of place's *operative intentionality*. While the former expresses our manner or *style* of being-in-place, the latter refers to the way in which places tend to unfold as a consequence of our being *implaced* within them. In turn, these concepts will be used to assess the insights and limitations of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty's own reflections on the art-place relation, whilst simultaneously drawing parallels between John Cage's conception of silence and the significance of silence or "wild being" within Merleau-Ponty's later work.

4.1. John Cage's *4'33"*

On 29th August, 1952, at the Maverick Concert Hall just outside of Woodstock, New York, composer and concert pianist David Tudor performed John Cage's so-called "silent piece" *4'33"* for the first time. The title denotes the duration of the work which Tudor kept track of using a stopwatch. He read from a score consisting of three movements, but which was void of any musical notation or direction, apart, that is, from the word "TACET" marked on each page. This is the term deployed by western composers to instruct the musicians on stage that they should remain silent for the duration of a single movement.[240] In spite of the composition's lack of any musical sound, many of the hallmarks of the traditional musical performance remained.

Tudor came onto the stage to a round of applause. Once he had taken his place at the piano, he lifted the fallboard to signal the beginning of each movement before closing it again to bring each one to a close. In terms of the audience's reaction to this peculiar performance, their frustration manifested gradually, imbuing the overall scene with a palpable sense of discord. Cage's own interpretation of that event was as follows:

> You could hear the wind stirring during the first movement. During the second, raindrops began pattering on the roof, and during the third the people themselves made all kinds of interesting sounds as they talked or walked out.[241]

From the composer's own perspective, what came to the fore over the course of that original performance were first of all the sounds of the immediate environment itself, most notably those entering into the

[240] Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge - UK, 1974/1999), 3.
[241] John Cage quote taken from an interview with John Kobler (1968), found in: Richard Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage*, (Routledge: London, New York, 1982/2003), 69-70.

circumscribed space of the concert hall from outside, followed by the sound of the audience making their own frustrations be heard by talking, openly protesting and slamming doors as they walked out. The place of the performance was brought to life in a way that it would otherwise not have been. The silence we customarily associate with such environments was dissolved, and along with it, something of the social contract to which audiences and performers customarily adhere under such circumstances. According to Cage, the audience was not able to experience the performance properly because they didn't know how.

> They [the audience] missed the point. There's no such thing as silence. What they thought was silence, because they didn't know how to listen, was full of accidental sounds.[242]

The ritual of the musical performance was intended to set up a situation in which the audience would become alert to the sounds around them in a way that the hustle and bustle of everyday life tends not to support. As Salomé Voegelin observes, the performance presented the audience with "the silence of the musical work" as opposed to "a sonic silence".[243] By "emptying the score of its musical sounds", *4'33"* "invites new sounds" whilst simultaneously confining them to "the tight space of musical conventions and expectations." [244] As such, it does not "invite a listening to sound as sound but to all sound as music", and it is the "framework of the concert hall [that] guides the listener towards that aim", a position that Cage himself would appear to have agreed with.[245]

> I had felt and hoped to have led other people to feel that the sounds of their environment constitute a music which is more interesting than the music which they would hear if they went into a concert hall.[246]

4'33" is a complex work to pin down. On the one hand, it is clearly *about* music in that it retains many of the conventions of traditional musical performances, and in the majority of instances, it has also been performed in concert halls. Furthermore, Voegelin's claim that the theme of "silence" with which the work is so often associated derives from the "musical silence" performed by Tudor (much like the pauses between notes or phrases in a standard composition), attests to the work's musicality all the more. On the other hand, there are a great many elements which do at least appear to be extra-musical in their presentation. The most notable of these are those sounds which occur in and around the hall during the performance, to which Cage refers in his own assessment. Indeed, it is due to the occurrence of these sounds that Voegelin declares *4'33"* not to constitute a "sonic silence". For even if we accept that the "stirring" of the wind or the "pattering" of the rain can be appreciated for their aesthetic or musical quality, these sounds nevertheless retain their everyday significance in relation to that place and the people held within it. In addition to those real-world

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[242] Ibid.
[243] Salomé Voegelin, *Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art*, (New York, London: Continuum, 2010), 80-81.
[244] Ibid., 81.
[245] Ibid., 80.
[246] John Cage quote in Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage*, 70.

sounds penetrating the hall from outside (not to mention the sounds of protest and doors slamming as the audience walked out), it was the audience's own frustration which came to define the third movement. Their reaction appears to have stemmed as much from a collective sense or suspicion that they had been duped, or that they were being ridiculed by the composer, than it did from any deeply held feelings regarding the musical quality of those everyday sounds.

Of course, it is difficult for us to appreciate fully quite how *4'33"* would have been received by its original audience, especially given how influential the work has been and how much it continues to be discussed. We are also by now fully accustomed to the use of sampling and the incorporation of everyday sounds into musical works. Furthermore, *4'33"* has been performed around the world and on numerous occasions, during which, audiences have generally remained silent, seated and engaged.

While it is not my intention here to present an argument as to whether *4'33"* does or does not constitute music, I will nevertheless argue that just because an audience remains quiet and attentive for the duration of a *4'33"* performance, that does not mean that the audience was listening in the same they would have to other, more standard musical performances. Whereas the reflections of both Voegelin and Cage suggest that *4'33"* aspires to become music and should be taken seriously as such, in actual fact, the work shares much more in common with site-specific works or participatory practices such as happenings than it does with the kinds of performances we would usually encounter in concert halls. Indeed, *4'33"* draws attention to the place of its performance in a way that more standard musical performances tend not to. The style of listening is emphatically *implaced* in this way and presents us with a useful case study to lead this chapter for that reason. Before we consider the audience's *implacement* within the concert hall, however, let us first consider the *operative intentionality* of such places.

4.2. Place in its *Operative Intentionality*

Brandon Labelle observes that *4'33"* demarcates a time and a space in such a way as to underscore the meeting or gathering of assurances as a locus, as a situational event with real bodies and real effects".[247] In so doing, he opens up the possibility of a less rigid interpretation of that event than the exclusively musical reading put forth by Voegelin and Cage above. Whilst music is undoubtedly a significant theme in the work, contributing to its *principal theme*, and also, therefore, to its *aboutness,* so it also draws considerable attention to the musical situation itself.

[247] Brandon Labelle, *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art* (Continuum: New York, London, 2010), 15.

> It seems important here to underline the contextual situation of *4’33”*, for the work was self-consciously “written” so as to *converse* with music through its performance in a concert setting. That is to say, the work *aims* for music, as cultural practice and as context. It is from this perspective that *4’33”* finds its operative power: by producing a musical situation in which silence and noise, music and the social, may intersect and destabilise each other.[248]

Labelle’s emphasis upon the performance’s “operative power” encourages us to consider all the different aspects of the event which are activated by it, as a consequence of which “silence and noise” or “music and the social” come to “intersect and destabilise” one another. As he comments elsewhere, *4’33”* encourages “expanded listening” which lets in “what usually lies outside musical experience or expression”, and opens up new musical possibilities by expanding the pool of sounds that can be appreciated for their potential aesthetic value.[249] For Labelle, it is important to understand that Cage had come to conceive of silence (or, “musical silence”) as being made up of “non-intentional sound”, and also as a “vital space for expanded listening”.[250]

To say that the performed silence of *4’33”* holds the potential to open up a “space for expanded listening” is intriguing, for it draws our attention to how *4’33”* is able to trigger a shift in what Casey refers to as the “operative intentionality” of the concert hall.[251] What Casey means by this term is that while place must be “amenable” to people for them to inhabit it effectively (to become *implaced*), so it can also be understood to extend “its own influence back onto” those people held within its midst.[252] Place’s *operative intentionality* “elicits and responds to the corporeal intentionality of the perceiving subject” in this way, and as such, place can be understood to integrate “with body as much as body with place”.[253]

This process of elicitation and response is ongoing: its form and directionality undergo constant, subtle changes as a consequence of place’s being inhabited, but also more significant evolutions and revolutions over time. What *operative intentionality* brings to our attention is how places are inherently open to change, be that over the course of just one evening or an entire year. In contrast with other public places such as town squares or parks, which present themselves as open to a vast range of routines, whims and moods, the *operative intentionality* of highly controlled environments like concert halls is more acutely honed. This is because they are directed almost exclusively toward the ritual of listening to musical performances, an aspect Dufrenne draws our attention to:

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[248] Ibid.
[249] Brandon Labelle, *Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life*, (Continuum: New York, London, 2011), 54.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Casey, “How to Get from Space to Place”, 325.
[252] Ibid.
[253] Ibid.

> The hall, for example, is a part, for it is not irrelevant that the performance unfolds in this sumptuous place where marble, gold, and velvet look down upon the solemnity of the production, drown out daily care, and, by an effect akin to that of incense, prepare us for the magic of art. The spectators too are part of the production, for it is no more irrelevant that thousands of gazes converge and that a human intercommunication is knit in silence.[254]

In Dufrenne's passage we see how the physical configuration and set-up of the concert hall directs the audience's attention towards the stage, and by taking place's lead in this way, they become instrumental in allowing the performance to unfold effectively. They are part of "the production" in this way and it is this directionality to which the audience adheres that *4'33"* effectively reverses or subverts. For Dufrenne, one of the ways in which the audience's presence is most keenly felt is in the "knit" silence that their ardent attention gives rise to, which envelops both the room and the performance while also permeating through it.[255] The pauses between phrases or movements within a musical performance are not part of the work exclusively according to this view, for they derive as much from the audience's respective contributions to the performance's production as they do from the performance itself.[256] Parallels can certainly be drawn with Voegelin's analysis of *4'33"* here, in that what the audience is presented with is a "musical silence" that the framework of the concert hall leads the audience towards recognising and maintaining.

Voegelin also claims that, by introducing "new, everyday, material into the realm of art", *4'33"* "broadened the artistic process [by] proposing new aesthetic possibilities".[257] In so doing, it "defied conventions [in order] to contest what was artistically doable".[258] This was achieved through the work's presentation in a traditional "aesthetic framework, contesting and criticising its conventions but remaining within and confirming even its domain".[259] It is important to underline the critical dimension of *4'33"* that Voegelin draws our attention to here: how it both contests and criticises whilst also confirming "its domain", thereby expanding our understanding of what was "artistically doable" from within such a place. In this respect, Voegelin's own assertions fall in line with the claim I have already made above, that *4'33"* initiated a reversal of the *operative intentionality* of Maverick Concert Hall as it would otherwise tend to function, thus expanding the possibilities of what might occur there. In order to gain a deeper understanding of what this would have actually meant in practice, it will be useful to turn to Casey's concept of *implacement* for guidance.

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[254] Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, 7.
[255] Ibid., 152.
[256] Ibid., 152.
[257] Salomé Voegelin, Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art, 80.
[258] Ibid.
[259] Ibid.

4.3. ***Implacement***

The term "implacement" is best understood as that which is *implicit to* or *implied by* the body's being-in-place. Because we navigate places with our bodies, places themselves appear (and are also built) according to our own "imminent bodily dimensions of up/down, front/back, left/right".[260] In turn, our capacity to manoeuvre ourselves within them depends upon "various kinesthesias and synesthesias—as well as sonesthesias", meaning that we collaborate with the environment as it reveals itself and happens around us.[261] Furthermore, in its "concreteness, its density and mass, [the body] answers to the thick concreteness of a given place".[262] The "porosity of the skin of an organic body rejoins, even as it mimics, the openness of the boundaries of places; there is a resilient, pneumatic structure shared in common".[263] The relation between an embodied subject and its place cannot be reduced to a container-contained dichotomy outright, therefore. For this only serves to separate them in our understanding, and does so all too clinically. Whereas, what the term *implacement* helps us to grasp is that the body's being-in-place is always characterised by a persistent and primal responsiveness to that place on the body's part. Even at this most basic level, a body's *implacement* should be comprehended as an innately expressive mode of being within, whereby the body's own openness to the openness of place gives rise to this imminent and organically charged "pneumatic structure" they share in common.[264] The body holds sway in place for this very reason. It contributes to how place presents itself and how it unfolds as the ongoing event it is.

Casey's concept can help us to make sense of Dufrenne's suggestion that by entering into a place like a concert hall, our behaviour is channelled in specific ways. However, it should also be pointed out that Dufrenne's position is overly deterministic in this respect. For whilst concert halls are certainly set up in specific ways so as to *accommodate* audiences and performances, it is inevitably the case that the potential for other activities lies latent within them. Indeed, whilst audiences may well tend to take place's lead, there is always the possibility that those prescribed rituals that official art places encourage can be undermined by either the performers on stage or the audience in their seats, *4'33"* being a clear-cut case in point. By paying close attention to how the work sits in relation to the concert hall and how the audience's conduct is shaped through their *implacement*, we will be able to understand how *4'33"* managed to reverse the directionality of place through its performance. What we will be left with is a much broader understanding of the work's relation to place than that presented in Dufrenne's account, which will in turn enable us to move on and discuss how the art-place relation has been characterised by Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger.

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[260] Edward Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 325.
[261] (Steven Feld quote) Ibid., 325.
[262] Ibid.
[263] Ibid., 326.
[264] Ibid.

Our first task is to consider how the concert hall "prepares" the audience for the performance. In order to initiate this discussion, it will be useful to consider the perceptual shifts that occur when we enter the main auditorium before the performance has even begun. For the space held within the principal hall often contrasts quite starkly with the space immediately outside or around it. I am thinking in particular of the experience of entering the main rooms from the long corridors that so often stretch around them. The transition from that relatively reduced and tight space to the expansiveness of the main hall elicits an alertness on the part of our bodies to this change of situation that is announced by the more expansive space which opens up around us. Indeed, our bodies are called upon to assess this space for the sake of its own orientation.

This task is undertaken with impressive efficiency, "at a glance" as Casey writes, that most rapid of eye movements that plays such "a crucial role in orientation, that of *probing the environment for orientational cues*".[265] The audience becomes *implaced* "*through* perception" in this way.[266] Depending upon what level we enter into the main auditorium at within larger concert halls, we immediately begin to scan across our own tier and then up toward the ceiling above us or down to the lower stalls and stage below. Within seconds, the glance has taken in the room and enabled us to re-establish ourselves within it, at which point, we are ready to find our seats. There are also certain processes that these places go through in order to support the production. When the moment arrives for the lights of the auditorium to be dimmed and darkness envelops the audience held therein, only then is the stage illuminated, for instance. There is no mistaking where the spectacle is thereafter, as all "gazes converge" upon it. Anticipation grows as a direct consequence of these stages that the concert hall goes through. The gradual dimming of lights, the closing of the surrounding doors, the reduction of movement of people's bodies, and the eventual illumination of the stage, culminate as a sort of countdown to the performance. These gradual shifts in the appearance of the surroundings count us in. As such, the production begins before any performer has even entered the auditorium.

In taking to our seats and waiting patiently for the performance to unfold, however, we are by no means passive in our *implacement*. As Collingwood highlights, our presence at a concert amounts to more than that of the "licensed eavesdropper".[267] Without the audience present, without their expectation and the thickening of the atmosphere that their presence gives rise to (including the smell of alcohol on their collective breath or the warmth of their tightly configured bodies), this occasion would be unrealisable. The audience's being *implaced* there - directly in front the stage - their facing it - draws that performance back into the room where the audience is. The audience is not merely made up of witnesses to a performance that would otherwise have occurred without them, but is a vital component of that occasion in general.

[265] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 91.
[266] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 325.
[267] Collingwood, *The Principles of Art*, 322.

It is not only visual cues which guide us in our *implacement* and prepare us for the performance though, for the materials used to construct the concert hall will influence the quality of the sound as it is heard from within. In the case of Maverick Concert Hall, it is a large, wooden, barn-like structure with a high gambrel roof and a heavy timber frame. These materials also make their presence felt through the performance by way of the luminous acoustics they give rise to. For example, the "stirring" of the wind and the "pattering" of rain would certainly have been more apparent in Maverick Concert Hall than from within a more elaborately furnished and sound-proofed auditorium.

The soft furnishings Dufrenne refers to are not merely decorative features either, therefore, because they also function to absorb the sounds emitted both in and around that same space they adorn. The carpeted floors, the upholstered partitions and walls, the soft and comfortable seating, the drapes and curtains, all dampen the soundscape of such places, and in so doing, they alter how an audience experiences their own bodies from within it. Indeed, we tend to respond to this dampening of the soundscape by adjusting our own behaviour in accordance with it, by manoeuvring our bodies more carefully and lowering our voices. The environment reduces our capacity to impact upon it through the sonic repercussions of our *implacement,* and in so doing, it incorporates us into its set-up. Even by simply by taking to our seats, our bodies become part of the sound-reducing apparatus of that place, the organic materiality of our *implaced* bodies providing an additional layer of sound absorption to the room. Not only does the audience collaborate with the work through the event of its performance then, by confirming the occasion and cultivating a space in which "musical silences" can be performed, for its members are also incorporated into the technology of that place by way of their *implacement*.

Dufrenne is quite right to draw our attention to how the concert hall directs, prepares and ultimately *accommodates* audiences and performances alike then. What the term *implacement* has enabled us to understand though, is just how profoundly the audience anchors itself within that place simply by taking its lead. As Casey writes, "we are not only *in* places but *of* them", which is to say that we are not merely contained by them, for we also get caught up in their *operative intentionality* in whatever way it comes to manifest.[268] In consequence, we come to perceive and even think in accordance with places, while simultaneously merging with their materiality through the organic materiality of our bodies. In the case of *4'33"*, what was particularly impressive about its original performance is just how comprehensively not just this set-up, but also its ongoing functionality and the directionality that characterised it, came to be undermined. This represents a problem for Dufrenne's understanding of the art-place relation.

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[268] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 322.

The principal difficulty that Dufrenne's approach comes up against in the case of *4'33"* is that the concert hall found its influence to be lacking. While the audience was relatively stable during the first two movements, by the end of the third, both the audience and concert hall had descended into complete disarray. Of course, Dufrenne might respond here by underlining the fact that the musical performance did not actually take place, and as such, the expectations of the audience remained unfulfilled. It was inevitable, therefore, that their frustrations would eventually come to the surface. Even if we were to accept this response though, when we consider Dufrenne's broader understanding of how artworks in general tend to present themselves, it becomes clear that he would find it very difficult to accept *4'33"* as an artwork all. In order for it to be recognised in such terms according to his approach, we would first of all need to consider that aspect of it which all works of art share in common, which is their potential for presenting themselves as "aesthetic objects". In the case of *4'33"*, this is complicated by the fact that a vital component of the work is precisely the performer's withholding of the musical sounds from which we would expect the aesthetic object to emerge. Were Dufrenne's approach able to overcome this, then this particular audience's reaction could be written off as something of an anomaly: as their lacking the understanding to appreciate the work to its full potential. Subsequent performances of *4'33",* through which audiences have remained silent, could then be held up as clear evidence to support this.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to say just what aspect of *4'33"* might be considered stable enough to harbour such potential. With this in mind, it is worth returning to the comments made by Voegelin and Cage considered earlier, both of whom emphasise *4'33's* inherent musicality. For instance, when Voegelin describes Tudor's performance as that of a "musical silence", she presents silence as a legitimate musical element in its own right. She compares it to the gap between musical phases or movements, and as such, could be interpreted as legitimising our focusing upon it in this way. One of the problems that this alternative reading comes up against, however, is that the silent gaps between notes in musical performances are not all of the same character and are not necessarily comparable to the extended silence of *4'33"*. As Cage himself observes, within musical discourse, silences tend to "provide pause or punctuation".[269] Their meaning derives from the sounds either side of them in this way: imbuing the complete piece with a sense of suspense, intrigue or relief. The second problem with this characterisation is that it would be difficult to say just how a purely musical silence could possibly reveal itself as an aesthetic object, for there would be quite literally nothing for the audience to succumb to.

One possible solution to this problem might be if the audience turned toward what Cage referred to as the "accidental sounds" of the environment directly. Cage himself would appear to have endorsed this approach when he made the claim that he wanted the audience to experience the musicality of the "environmental

[269] John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, (Wesleyan University Press: Connecticut, 2001), 22.

sounds" around them. As was already discussed in the two preceding chapters though, the opinion of the artist, which is to say their own interpretation of their work, need not be taken as gospel. For by being brought into being through the event of its performance, the artwork's *metamorphosis* occurs. In consequence, the work's having become *embodied* through the performance functions to detach it from the life of its creator and open it up to the world. Indeed, the limitation of Cage's position is that by directing our attention toward the sounds of the environment directly in this way, the significance of the performance occurring on stage comes to be overlooked, which is the clearest and most concrete aspect of the work's *principal theme* available to us. The performance is that which makes *4'33" what* it is, i.e., an artwork. Thus, were this most concrete aspect of that work to be bypassed in our reflections upon it, then there would be no distinguishing between the ritual of listening to the soundscape of the world around us in general for its aesthetic value, and an actual encounter with *4'33"* when it is performed in a concert hall. We must turn instead toward the work's *principal theme* for guidance, therefore, which is to say Tudor's actual performance, or "non-performance" as it might also be described.

If we permit ourselves to refer back to the previous chapters on *Guernica* once more, then we will also recall that the *principal theme* does not tend to reveal itself in its entirety all at once. Different aspects of it appear as more or less prominent relative not only to the situation in which it is presented, but also those people in attendance. *Aboutness* claims stem from precisely this ambiguity that is so intrinsic to the work as it presents itself. One thing that stands out quite immediately about this performance is what Labelle refers to above as the "musical situation" in which it took place. *4'33"* manipulated this situation toward its own ends so effectively that it cannot be ignored. It is vital to our understanding of the performance in that it was only brought to the audience's attention (and the reader's later on) because no music was played.

If we try and put ourselves in the place of the audience during that original performance for a moment, it seems reasonable to claim that they neither heard nor listened to any sound that they considered to be worthy of their close aesthetic attention. As Tudor turned the pages of the scoresheet and opened and closed the lid of the piano, it became increasingly obvious that no music was going to be played. Although we do not have access to the audience's thoughts at the time, we can imagine that during the first two movements, and before this situation unravelled completely, that the "musical silence" would have been engaged with on some level, if only as a distinctive lack or absence. The silence would have become "deafening" as we sometimes say, that is, obvious, unavoidable, or very much in the foreground of people's thoughts. This expression seems appropriate here, for when Tudor opened the piano for a third time, it is the continuation of this musical silence which appears to have triggered the revolt. There are no recordings of the performance so we have no way of knowing exactly whether this happened gradually or all of a sudden. However, the environmental sounds occurring within the concert hall are certainly likely to have played their part. Another common expression, "you could hear a pin drop", also proves insightful here, for this expression conveys the

prominence or weight of a perceived silence by drawing attention to the fact that even the slightest movement of an object as tiny as a pin is able to become audible through a perceived silence. As such, the sound of the pin dropping would not be considered to extinguish the silence, but instead to amplify or magnify it, which in turn suggests the presence of two concurrent sonic fields within the soundscape (at least as it is perceived), the musical silence upon which we are focused and then the incidental sounds that continue to occur in spite of it.

For the original audience of *4'33"*, as those sounds around them (not to mention the sounds produced by their own bodies) became increasingly conspicuous within the soundscape, so the musical silence being performed on stage would have become all the more deafening. To a certain degree then, Cage was justified in claiming that the audience didn't listen "because they didn't know how", for it probably would not have occurred to them to do so.[270] Of course, we should most certainly treat Cage's comments with some suspicion, for it would have been extremely naive of him to have imagined that the situation could have turned out any other way. After all, what those in attendance would have had to overcome in order to engage in this style of "expanded listening" of the environmental sounds around them (at least in terms of their purely aesthetic quality) would have been the meaning of those sounds relative to the audience's own *implacement* there within the concert hall. Without any guidance whatsoever other than Tudor's non-performance happening on stage, this would have represented no small feat. It is more probable, therefore, that Cage anticipated a rebellion of some kind, just as Marcel Duchamp would have when he presented *Fountain* under the pseudonym "R. Mutt" to the Society of Independent Artists in New York in 1917.

Problems remain for Dufrenne's account then, for even if these environmental sounds had been listened to attentively by the audience, then it is still difficult to see how they would come to be engaged with in purely aesthetic terms. Due to the fact that they were drawn from that place directly, they would have inevitably retained their meaning as a consequence of the audience's *implacement* amidst them, which would in turn have stifled their potential for being recognised in purely aesthetic terms. This observation does in fact make explicit a more fundamental problem with how Dufrenne conceives of the aesthetic experience in general.

As discussed in the second chapter, when Dufrenne insists that aesthetic perception should be understood as "perception at its purest", he effectively reduces the diversity of lived experiences that each work elicits from its audiences to the single experience of a universalised body-subject.[271] In consequence, official places of art like concert halls come to be characterised purely in terms of their capacity to *accommodate* the reduction of each lived body present to this universal form (e.g., by drowning out "daily care").[272] In turn, a

[270] Cage quote in Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage*, 69-70.
[271] Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, lxiv.
[272] Ibid., 7.

conception of an ideal viewer is also implied here, which is whoever is able to achieve this reduced state of engagement in a manner not dissimilar to the Kantian state of aesthetic disinterest. The problem with this approach is that the artwork (and the aesthetic object which is considered to emerge from it) would present itself identically for anyone engaging with it. As *Guernica* has already drawn to our attention in the previous chapters though, the work's *principal theme* is positively open to different styles of encounter and the *aboutness* claims which stem from them are inherently nuanced, therefore.

A second problem that *4'33"* raises for Dufrenne's approach is that it is an example of a work which calls upon the active participation of audience members in order to complete it. In Dufrenne's account, the audience is almost entirely passive. This is what enables the work's performance to unfold and the audience members to open themselves up to the work in such a way as to enable the aesthetic object to emerge. Whereas, in the case of *4'33",* audience members are called upon to draw meaning from this situation for themselves. It represents a challenge or confrontation of sorts, in that it pushes them toward active listening, or a mode of "listening out for" those sounds occurring around them. In consequence, Dufrenne's claim that the aesthetic object is "the work of art as grasped in aesthetic experience" is ultimately undermined because the distinction between the work and the audience itself has become blurred.[273]

The third problem for Dufrenne's account is that because his conception of aesthetic experience is so narrow, he comes to view place purely in terms of what Casey would call its *operative intentionality.* However, by reversing the directionality of place and turning the audience's attention back towards their own *implacement* there as *4'33"* does, the work reveals place in terms of its everydayness, that is, a place amongst others in the world. Indeed, the manner in which the event that the performance gives rise to unfolds attests to a more average or everyday dimension of the concert hall than Dufrenne's emphasis on its "sumptuous" surroundings would have us believe. What is more, this more average dimension is significantly more abundant in terms of potential for manipulation by artists. In the next section, we will examine this more modest aspect of the concert hall in order to gain a deeper understanding of the relation between art and place in general.

4.4. Silence in Cage and Merleau-Ponty

In a working note from *The Visible and the Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty remarks that "perception is cultural-historical" and that "everything is natural in us", in so far as, "even the cultural rests on the polymorphism of

[273] Ibid.*,* 3.

the wild being".[274] The term "wild" is often used interchangeably with the term "brute" being. For example, he describes philosophy's task as the "reconquest of brute or wild being".[275] Furthermore, it is also interesting to note that these terms are held to characterise "a world of silence", or otherwise, "the perceived world", which Merleau-Ponty defines as "an order where there are non-language significations".[276] This brute, wild, perceived world of silence is the world which precedes language and positive signification, and is that which, in its complex totality or inherent "polymorphism", provides a ground for "the cultural" world.

Casey states for this reason that even "the most culturally saturated place retains a factor of wildness, that is, of the radically amorphous and unaccounted for, something that is not so much immune to culture as alien to it in its very midst, disparate from it from within".[277] As we have already seen, much of our *implacement* is not perceived directly, but rather we become attuned to it and are guided by it without reflection. Our active engagement with place is thus underpinned by wild being in this way, but our only access to this world of silence is by way of the "pre-reflective" or "tacit cogito" as Merleau-Ponty describes it, which is the intelligent and cultured body by way of which we are situated, or *implaced,* in our world.[278] Richard Shusterman describes this underlying layer of embodied consciousness in the following terms:

> (…) our basic unreflective intentionality that silently and spontaneously organises our world of perception without the need for distinct perceptual representations and without any explicitly conscious deliberation. (…) Although this basic level of intentionality is ubiquitous, its very pervasiveness and unobtrusive silence conceal its prevailing presence. In the same way, its elemental, common, spontaneous character obscures its extraordinary effectiveness.[279]

By drawing attention to this "silence", particularly in terms of how art is considered by Merleau-Ponty to engage with that silence and bring it to expression, my intention here is to illuminate our understanding of Cage's work by drawing parallels between the respective projects of these two figures. This will also provide us with the opportunity to consider Merleau-Ponty's critique of the museum in terms of how it *accommodates* painting in particular, both in terms of that critique's own inherent limitations and also what it reveals about *4'33"* and its relation with Maverick Concert Hall during its original performance.

In "Eye and Mind", Merleau-Ponty's third and final essay on painting, he expresses his suspicion of the writer or philosopher who "cannot waive the responsibilities of [people] who speak", and whom we as readers

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[274] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, ed. Claude Lefort, trans. Alphonso Lingis, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 253.
[275] Ibid., 102-103.
[276] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 171.
[277] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 337.
[278] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 347 / *The Visible and the Invisible*, 175.
[279] Richard Shusterman, "The Silent, Limping Body of Philosophy", in *The Cambridge Companion to Merleau-Ponty*, ed. Taylor Carman & Mark Wrathall, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 161.

demand “take a stand”.[280] That philosophers speak “is an inexplicable weakness” and their work “absurd” in that they write in order to “state [their] contact with Being”, but ultimately cannot, “since it is silence”.[281] The problem is that because philosophers try to represent their relation with Being through language, they “misconstrue the basic experience or behaviour they seek to explain by describing it from the start in terms of their own products of reflective analysis”.[282] Merleau-Ponty’s advice to the philosopher, then, is to “keep silent, coincide in silence, and rejoin in Being a philosophy that is there ready-made”.[283]

The painter is exemplary for Merleau-Ponty in this respect, for only the painter “draws upon this fabric of brute meaning” directly and “is entitled to look at everything without being obliged to appraise what [they see]”.[284] Whilst “language speaks” he writes, “the voices of paintings are the voices of silence”.[285] That does not mean, however, that the painter’s process coincides with Being directly. For the artist’s own perspective on the world is inherently limited by their embodied *implacement* within it. As Glen Mazis observes, there “is never a chance for a kind of stillness of dwelling in the body’s feelings and perceptions to occur: one that discloses another kind of silence than the mere lack of sound.”[286] Indeed, because perception is “cultural-historical”, that is, lived, its situation is such that it is always geared towards the world in particular ways. Its learning, habits and cultural-historical background become *sedimented* into the body-subject’s “corporeal schema“, and are expressed through the intentional grip it maintains upon its world. It cultivates a *style* according to which the world appears as “clearly articulated”.[287] This perceptual *style* is that which the artist observes, cultivates and develops through their practice. When the work is then put on display, those who engage with it come to be guided according to that *style,* as it has become *sedimented* and *embodied* within it. As Merleau-Ponty puts it:

> Precisely because it dwells and makes us dwell in a world we do not have the key to, the work of art teaches us to see and ultimately gives us something to think about as no analytical work can; because when we analyse an object, we find only what we have put into it.[288]

The use of the term “dwell” is intriguing here, for not only is it claimed that the artwork “teaches us to see” according to the *style* that it presents us with, but in so doing it also “makes us dwell” in the “world” according to that *style*. Interestingly, Heidegger makes a comparable observation with regard to sculpture in the “Art

[280] Merleau-Ponty, “Eye and Mind”, 161.
[281] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 125.
[282] Richard Shusterman, “The Silent, Limping Body of Philosophy”, 160.
[283] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 125.
[284] Merleau-Ponty, “Eye and Mind”, 161.
[285] Merleau-Ponty, “Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence”, 81.
[286] Glen A. Mazis, *Merleau-Ponty and the Face of the World: Silence, Ethics, Imagination, and Poetic Ontology,* (SUNY Press: New York, 2016), 9.
[287] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 292.
[288] Merleau-Ponty, “Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence”, 77.

and Space" essay, when he remarks that sculpture is the "embodiment of places". [289] In

[290] We might also say then, that from within its *scope*, the work orientates our dwelling *in place*, or, that it *implaces* us. Furthermore, it does so in silence. Art surpasses philosophy in this respect, and achieves Merleau-Ponty's principal aim in his later work, which, in Mazis's words, was to explore "the silent dimension of the body (…) as a reverberation of the silence of the world interwoven with the body in the depths of perception".[291] The work is a feature of the world, but in such a way that it "inscribes its own metamorphosis" upon the field which it opens up (this "field" is what was referred to in the previous chapters as the work's *"scope"*).[292] To use Merleau-Ponty's later terminology, the work and the audience are of the same "flesh" in the sense that they are both interwoven with and within that "fabric of brute meaning" to which Merleau-Ponty makes reference above.[293] With this in mind, we must now consider what Merleau-Ponty's reflections on painting might reveal about *4'33"*.

There is certainly a sense in which Tudor's performance *re-implaces* the audience by reversing the *operative intentionality* of the concert hall, thereby altering the audience's relationship to the place they are currently dwelling in. But what are the "voices of silence" that Cage's work draws upon in order to achieve this? The difficulty that we must confront when dealing with a work like this compared with a painting, sculpture or a more traditional musical performance is that it is harder to identify precisely what should actually be considered part of the work and what not, that is, what constitutes its *principal theme*. I have already suggested above that the performance itself is the clearest indication we have of the work's *principal theme.* On the other hand, I have also made the claim that the work is *about* music and the musical situation in that these themes contribute to its *principal theme.*

The problem with these claims, however, is that no music is in fact played during the performance, and furthermore, the "musical situation" would seem to have more to do with the concert hall itself than the actual performance as it is carried out. Indeed, whilst it might well be argued that the performance interferes with or manipulates that situation, that would still posit the performance as distinct from that situation it is held to interfere with. Even the presence of the piano on stage would not necessarily make the performance

[289] Heidegger, "Art and Space", 7.
[290] Ibid.
[291] Glen A. Mazis, *Merleau-Ponty and the Face of the World: Silence, Ethics, Imagination, and Poetic Ontology,* (SUNY Press: New York, 2016), 9-10.
[292] Véronique M. Fóti, *Tracing Expression in Merleau-Ponty: Aesthetics, Philosophy of Biology, and Ontology,* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2013), 50.
[293] Juhani Pallasmaa, "Place and Atmosphere", in Jeff Malpas (ed.), *The Intelligence of Place: Topographies and Poetics*, (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2015), 147.

musical, just as we would probably not feel compelled to claim that Man Ray's photograph *Ingres's Violin* (1924) is *about* music simply because the f-holes of a violin have been superimposed upon a woman's back.

That being said, it is also the case that problems like these only arise when the work itself is considered as something concrete, be it a painting or a performance, to which there is an alternative. Malpas, for instance, echoes Andrew Benjamin when he says that what is important is not what the work *is* concretely, but rather "the way that it is art".[294] Malpas goes on to assert that any discussion relating to what art is would be more productive if we focused upon the work more in terms of its "objectivity" than its presumed "objecthood".[295] Here, Malpas shifts the discussion away from the constituting features of the work, and instead towards "how artworks work, and the role of their material objectivity in that working".[296]

There is certainly room within Merleau-Ponty's thought for a shift of this kind too. For what intrigues him about painting, and figurative painting in particular, is how it "awakens" vision to its own functionality and processes, in that it "gives visible existence to what profane vision believes to be invisible".[297] By "profane vision", Merleau-Ponty has in mind the kind of detached, scientific view of things, whereby objects are identified first and foremost as what they are and then inventoried in terms of their principal and constituting features. A mountain in the landscape is a mass of rock of a certain altitude and width, for instance. In contradistinction to this, the painter's gaze asks of the things "what they do to suddenly cause something to be and to be *this* thing".[298] Thus, "lighting, shadows, reflections, [and] colour" are the kinds of themes taken up by the painter, which as Merleau-Ponty points out, "are not altogether real objects" for they only have a "visual existence".[299] Nevertheless, they do give the things their character, the mountain its spectacular appearance, and these are the themes with which the artist deals. For this very reason, art is exemplary for Merleau-Ponty in his own, perhaps futile, quest to find a language that is adequate to describe, and which coincides with, wild being in its silence. There is an absurdity to Merleau-Ponty's endeavour to express the inexpressible, therefore, and yet the work of the painter provides him with something of an opening.

Jonathan Gilmore argues that Merleau-Ponty's "deep commentaries on the arts illustrate and extend his general philosophical views but generate no philosophy of art in themselves".[300] Robert Crowther also

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[294] Andrew Benjamin cited in Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger and the thinking of Place: Explorations in the Topology of Being*, (Cambridge - US, London - UK: MIT Press, 2012), 239.
[295] Ibid.
[296] Malpas, *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place,* 240.
[297] Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind", 166.
[298] Ibid.
[299] Ibid.
[300] Jonothan Gilmore, "Between Philosophy and Art", in *The Cambridge Companion to Merleau-Ponty*, ed. Taylor Carman & Mark Wrathall, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2005), 292.

appears to echo this position when he writes that the philosophical significance of art for Merleau-Ponty — that it brings our embodied relation with the world to expression — only reveals itself to us when works are viewed through “philosophical spectacles”.[301] Yet, what the positions of both commentators fail to understand is that by bringing to the fore art’s capacity to reveal non-linguistic meanings, Merleau-Ponty is in fact putting forward an account of what art *does*. Whether or not audiences recognise the philosophical significance of art’s capacity to reveal “wild being” is not necessarily as important for Merleau-Ponty as the fact that they allow themselves to look at and be guided by it. For to open oneself up in such a way as to see in accordance with an artwork is to engross oneself in this silence: to have one’s attention drawn to that meaning through the encounter.

Thus, when Merleau-Ponty describes a medium like music as “too far beyond the world and the designatable to depict anything but certain outlines of Being — its ebb and flow, its growth, its upheavals, its turbulence”, he is not disregarding its aesthetic import.[302] Rather, he cannot see how it might aid his own project because the musician does not confront the world directly as the painter of figurative works does, sound being so inherently elusive. The musical work is “too self-contained” to be “proto-phenomenological” in this way.[303] Nevertheless, he still maintains that, much like language, “music can sustain a sense by virtue of its own arrangement”, by which he is referring not to the notes themselves (nor the words in a sentence), but to the differences between them relative to their overall arrangement.[304]

If, as Malpas invites us to do, we consider how *4’33” works* through its “objectivity”, then we come to see that the work’s *principal theme* encompasses more than its performance on stage, in that the concert hall falls within its *scope*. As has already been shown in the case of *Guernica* though, this is not at all unusual for artworks. Just as the viewer’s gaze becomes “anchored” within a painting in order to “open” it up, as Merleau-Ponty says, there is a sense in which a painting, through its *placedness* (i.e., its having been set up for display within and in relation to a particular place), also finds its own anchorage not simply upon the wall behind it, but also within that space in front of it.[305] For this is where its performance unfolds: within that place in which it beckons the audience forward, pushes them back, draws them across its face, or otherwise by simply holding them there on the spot and maintaining their gaze, much as when we enter into that space within the gallery commanded by one of Rothko’s *Seagram Murals*.

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[301] Paul Crowther, *Art and Embodiment: from Aesthetics to Self-Consciousness*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993),115.
[302] Merleau-Ponty, “Eye and Mind”, 161.
[303] Véronique M. Fóti, *Tracing Expression in Merleau-Ponty*, 50.
[304] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 153.
[305] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception,* 79.

The difference between a painting and a work like *4'33"* is that the latter commands that space explicitly by eliciting the audience's active participation. In so doing, it helps to dispel the myth of the audience's supposed passivity relative to works of all kinds. It also highlights how there is never such a thing as a mere empty space in front of a work, even within a white-washed gallery, for that which does not fall within the work's *scope* is still shaped and characterised by the other things around it: in this case the apparatus of the concert hall itself. As Heidegger observes during his reflections on the relation between a bridge and the banks of a river in "Building Dwelling Thinking":

> Space is in essence that for which room has been made, that which is let into its bounds. That for which room is made is always granted and hence is joined, that is, gathered, by virtue of a locale, that is, by such a thing as a bridge. *Accordingly, spaces receive their essential being from locales and not from "space".*[306]

The concrete set-up of the concert hall, including its distribution, furniture and interior design, characterises the space it opens up by containing and reducing the sound occurring within it, whilst also distributing its inhabitants in such a way that it directs the *operative intentionality* inherent within it towards the stage. Once the performance begins, and once its *scope* has been opened up, the concert hall receives the work into the space it makes available for the performance. Whereas before, the place had been oriented toward the stage, now the performance re-orientates that place upon which it opens by entering or leaning into it, and effectively pushing back. As discussed above, the audience also helps to draw the performance out and towards them in that it joins up with their collective and expectant gaze.

However, the work is only able to maintain the audience's attention so long as it actually performs, which is why *4'33"* unsettles the audience/stage dynamic, and along with it, the *operative intentionality* of that place also breaks down. In so much as this withholding of the performance is what most clearly characterises the work's *principal theme,* this is what we must keep in mind if we are to understand adequately how *4'33"* objectively functions through its *implacement* there. This apparent non-performance constitutes what Merleau-Ponty refers to in his reflection on the audience's encounter with paintings within museum as an artistic "gesture".

> The accomplished work is thus not the work which exists in itself like a thing, but the work which reaches its viewer and invites [them] to take up the gesture which created it and, skipping the intermediaries, to rejoin, without any guide other than a movement of the invented line (an almost incorporeal trace), the silent world of the painter.[307]

There are two aspects of this passage that are of interest to us here. The first is this notion of the creative gesture which ultimately leads its audience "to rejoin" with the "silent world" of the artist, which, in the case

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[306] Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking", 250. (Emphasis in original text)
[307] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 51.

of *4'33"*, would be Tudor's non-performance. The second point for us to consider is the meaning of the "intermediaries" to which Merleau-Ponty refers. For, according to Merleau-Ponty's position in "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", a tension emerges between the presentation of the artist's creative gesture as it manifests through the work and the manner of its presentation from within somewhere like the museum. For the museum ultimately mediates the audience's encounter with the artwork by presenting it in a particular light. The situation of its display can obscure the intrinsic meaning of the work for Merleau-Ponty because the trace of the creative gesture through which the work emerges recedes into the background. *4'33"* was consciously written as a musical performance for concert halls. As such, this context is essential to our understanding of it. In terms of its very first performance, Maverick Concert Hall was vital to its presentation in that this place specifically prepared the ground for its first performance. In what follows, I will outline four potential ways in which *4'33"* might be considered to function through place, and how it coincides with different aspects of that place's own functionality and the mediating effect it gives rise to.

4.5. Site-Specificity

First of all, I would like to consider how 4'33" presents itself as an early example of site-specific practice. We have already seen in the previous section how the concert hall's set-up *accommodates* the performance by incorporating the audience as part of its own apparatus, whilst also functioning according to certain processes (e.g., the dimming of lights and the closing of doors). In turn, it *accommodates* and gives rise to ritual-like responses from those held therein, who quieten down and turn their focus towards the stage. Through the event of Tudor's original performance of *4'33",* we might say that the concert hall's set-up also *set* the audience *up*, in that, as a consequence of how that place presented itself, the audience came to expect a performance that never arrived. Their reaction in the third movement was a direct response to this.

This only really makes sense if we refer back to Merleau-Ponty's claim at the beginning of this section that perception is "cultural-historical" in character, for as Casey also highlighted in the previous section, we become *implaced* through perception. Because the body enters into place already "enculturated", the lived body is "as intelligent about the cultural specificities of a place as it is aesthesiologically sensitive to the perceptual particularities of that place".[308] It is at once "encultured and implaced and enculturing and implacing" in this way, because it is only "by bodies that culture takes root".[309] Casey summarises his position in the following terms:

[308] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 336-337.
[309] Ibid., 337.

> To be cultural, to have a culture, is to inhabit a place sufficiently intensely to cultivate it — to be responsible for it, to respond to it, to attend to it caringly. Where else but in particular places can culture take root? [310]

With regard to Merleau-Ponty's critique of the museum, his main charge against it is that it presents us with what he refers to as a "historicity of death".[311] The lived perspective of the artist "who works" to bring their perceptual *style* to expression, and which is "there" in each work "in a pure state", comes to be overshadowed, or even passed over entirely, by museums which prioritise instead "the sombre pleasures of retrospection".[312] It encourages audiences to adopt an empirical attitude in relation to the works held therein, which concerns itself only with the work's surface and draws meaning more from the perceived relation between them, as well as, each individual work's position in relation to art history as a whole. The empirical approach inhibits our capacity to "get inside the functionality of style" because it reduces it to something akin to a formula or method.[313] Whereas, according to Merleau-Ponty, *style* is much more than a "feeble flutter on [the work's] surface" due to the fact that it emerges from a life dedicated to its discipline, and as such, is an example of that life brought to expression.[314] For Merleau-Ponty, we are often guided more by the historical narrative that the museum is founded upon than the respective *styles* of the works themselves, which makes the history of painting seem as if there were a "spirit of painting already in possession of itself on the other side of the world that it is gradually manifested in".[315] As already highlighted in the previous chapter, Merleau-Ponty considers artists better placed than the average museum visitor to recognise the work's *style* because they understand the generative process, and thus are able to recognise the mode of vision that has become *sedimented* within it.

What is particularly useful in Merleau-Ponty's account is how art history is closely related with the museum's internal configuration and the information it gathers and presents its public with. This also has implications for the sort of atmosphere produced within such places. A walk through the corridors and gallery spaces of the museum is a walk through the history of art. This "enables us to see dead productions scattered about the world and engulfed in cults or civilisations they sought to ornament as unified aspects of a single effort", and because of this, "our consciousness of painting as painting is based upon the Museum".[316] By presenting art in this way, however, the museum effectively opens a gap between audiences and that which paintings

[310] Ibid., 336.
[311] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 63.
[312] Ibid.
[313] Ibid.
[314] Ibid., 53.
[315] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 68.
[316] Ibid., 62.

bring to expression, namely, vision itself. Works come to be converted into wonders to be marvelled at and the cult of artistic genius emerges because museum makes painters "divine".[317]

> The Museum makes the painters as mysterious for us as octopi or lobsters. It transforms these works created in the fever of a life into marvels from another world, and in its pensive atmosphere and under its protective glass, the breath which sustained them is no more than a feeble flutter on their surface.[318]

The reference to the museum's "pensive atmosphere" is particularly insightful here. The values of the museum manifest through the style of conduct it elicits from within. Culture takes place here, but it is channelled in a way that does not do justice to art's origins in the passionate life of the artist.

In "The Origin of the Work of Art", Heidegger's criticism of the "aestheticising connoisseurship" promoted by the museum is comparable to Merleau-Ponty's stance in terms of the empirical view upon which it is considered to be founded.[319] However, Heidegger also draws our attention to how such places function at an institution level. He observes, for instance, how the presentation of works in "collections and exhibitions", the energy invested in their "care and maintenance", the involvement of "art-dealers" who "supply the market", or the art historians who convert works into the "objects of a science", render them mere "objects of the art industry".[320] In consequence, these set-ups do not allow us to encounter "the work itself" because "placing them in a collection has withdrawn them from their own world".[321] In contrast with Merleau-Ponty's position, for Heidegger, the work is considered to be inaccessible from within the museum context. This is not because these places conceal the individual *style* that the work brings to expression, but because it has been removed from that world through and for which it emerged. In consequence, that truth which is so intrinsic to its being is concealed. The museum is not considered to be the rightful place of art, therefore, a consideration we will return to shortly.

In the case of the concert hall, parallels can certainly be drawn with the museum in these respects. We may, for instance, consider the way in which the distribution of the concert hall marks a clear distinction between the audience and the stage, along with the performance that unfolds upon it. It places the musician and the work they interpret on a pedestal in this way, as something to be admired, but only from a respectful distance. Furthermore, the classical music "industry" is also very clearly active within such environments. The high cost of the best seats, the special programmes, previews and presentations for members, the strict

[317] Ibid., 58.
[318] Ibid., 63.
[319] Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", 125.
[320] Ibid., 105.
[321] Ibid., 106.

protocols regarding arrival, personal conduct and dress code from within, combined with the immaculate presentation of these spaces in general, cultivates an acute sense of a highly specialised field.

Janet Cardiff's sound installation *The Forty Part Motet* (2001) is one example of a work that reveals, confronts, and ultimately dissolves the distinction between the audience and the performance that a specialist venue like the concert hall puts in place. It does this by allowing audiences to listen to Thomas Tallis's *Spem in Alium Nunquam Habui* (performed by the Salisbury Cathedral Choir) as if they were walking amongst the choristers as the piece is being performed. Cardiff achieves this by arranging forty speakers in a large oval shape, each positioned at roughly head height, thus creating a space into which the audience is able to enter and walk around. Each speaker emits the voice of a single chorister. Before the performance begins, we hear them chatting amongst themselves, coughing and laughing. There is a relaxedness to the occasion, almost as if we were caught in the midst of an invisible rehearsal taking place in that same room. When the performance does get underway, it begins with just a few voices dispersed across the space, followed by different sections of the choir gradually emerging in blocks of five. In consequence, different zones within the space around us are activated intermittently, and sometimes all at once. One way to navigate the work is by walking around the space from the inside. This enables you to hear the grain of each voice as the emerging piece is performed in real time.

By *re-implacing* us amidst the voices of the choristers as it does, *Forty Part Motet* relieves the performance of its "solemnity" as Dufrenne describes it.[322] Furthermore, the sense of "magic" that the production gives rise to, and to which he makes frequent reference, is equally undermined by the fact that we become privy to the internal functionality of the work whilst the full force of this truly moving piece is preserved. From within the concert hall, it can sometimes seem as though the works we encounter there communicate a sort of "spirit" of music from beyond this world, much as Merleau-Ponty observed with regard to paintings in the museum.[323] This spirit manifests itself through the ingenuity of the arrangements presented for us and by understanding or recognising those arrangements we come to feel closer to the work. This occurs by way of the intellect as opposed to the perceiving body. The concert hall positions us at a critical distance in this way. In Cardiff's work, however, this distance is removed, and we become immersed in a very human space as a consequence. We feel the presence of the choristers around us and, as Cardiff remarks, we hear the piece "from the viewpoint of a performer" in that it allows us to "climb inside" the piece.[324] In turn, this draws attention to the "physicality of sound" and "how our bodies are affected by" it.[325] Interestingly, Christov-

[322] Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, 7.
[323] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 68.
[324] Janet Cardiff cited in Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works Including Collaborations with George Bures Miller*, (Long Island City: P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, 2003), 142.
[325] Ibid.

Bakargiev highlights how, after the performance has ended, a "deep, thick silence you could cut with a knife" ensues.[326] It is "resounding and full, and the audience is acutely aware of any movement or sound in the room".[327] Once again then, everyday sounds appear through the musical silence, thus underlining the ongoingness of that place underpinning it — the audience becomes acutely alert to their own *implacement.*

4'33" achieves something comparable to this. Just because its original audience did not listen attentively to the sound occurring within that space "as music", that does not mean that they did not engage with the work in terms of its *objective functionality*. After all, they too became acutely aware of their *implacement* there within Maverick Concert Hall as Tudor's performance shifted the focus back upon them and they reacted to this. That their frustration came quickly to the surface and was so emphatically expressed by many in attendance was entirely understandable given that the work was overtly antagonistic. Just as the museum exudes art's historicity through its set-up and the style of *implacement* it elicits, so the concert hall cultivates a sense of how music should best be presented and engaged with. This occurs through the work that goes into its upkeep and organisation, as Heidegger stresses. Furthermore, this dynamic between the performer on stage and the audience in front of it has a long history, having been cultivated by generations of performers and audiences before this performance took place. The original performance of *4'33"* would have represented an unprecedented attack upon that set-up.

It could certainly be argued that the members of Maverick Concert Hall's audience were simply expressing their anger at the lack of respect being shown by Cage to this long tradition. The work is subversive in this way. That is part of what it is *about.* What is more, this style of subversion it manifests was only so effective because it coincided with that tradition and history as it was *embodied* by that place. Thus, whilst Cage may have been justified in claiming that the audience did not know "how to listen", that does not mean that they did not contribute to that performance in a meaningful way. For their reaction stemmed from the site-specificity of the work and the intervention that its performance constituted. *4'33"* was very much *of* the same world as the concert hall in this regard then, in so far as it comments upon its traditional aesthetic framework, whilst also subverting it. But how does this latter claim stand with Heidegger's conception of the work-world relation?

The main example Heidegger offers to illustrate this relation is the Greek temple. Whilst it "portrays nothing" and "simply stands there in the middle of the rock-cleft valley", it is, nevertheless, only by "means of the temple" that God's presence is secured.[328] There are two principal aspects of the "temple-work" (and the work in general) that Heidegger draws to our attention, "world" and "earth", and the relationship between

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[326] Ibid., 141-142.
[327] Ibid., 142.
[328] Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", 106.

these two dimensions of the work is what enables this. To begin with, the temple configures its surrounding environment by drawing in and gathering that which is present around itself, which is not to say that it is simply "added to" what just so happens to be a "fitting environment" for it: an environment that was "already there".[329] Instead, Heidegger requires us to think in "reverse", by which he means that we must consider "how differently everything then faces us" as a consequence of the temple's having been set up in what Malpas refers to as its "singular locatedness".[330] The environment as it once stood there is fundamentally altered or reconfigured in this way, which is to say, that the "temple-work, in its standing there, opens up a world" by freeing up, shaping and directing the space around it.[331] In turn, this "open relational context" that the setting up of the temple-work sets about is the world of a "historical people".[332] The temple first "gives things their look", then to the people whose world it opens up "their outlook on themselves", meaning that it reflects something of that cultural world back upon itself. A contradiction would appear to present itself here though.[333] After all, how can the work be understood to open up the world of this "historical people" when those people were already there?

In "Building Dwelling Thinking", Heidegger puts forward the claim that we do not "dwell because we have built, but we build and have built because we dwell, that is, because we are *dwellers.*" [334] The buildings we construct for dwelling bring into being, along with their construction, a culture of dwelling which is expressed through the style of dwelling which they *accommodate* and give rise to. This line does, therefore, transmit something of what Heidegger means above when he observes that the temple is not simply "added" to a landscape that is suitable for its placement. For although it is indeed set up both in and in relation to a society or community that existed prior to its actual construction, its construction was, nevertheless, already native to that world. It was that cultural world that it brings forth "to clear and commanding salience".[335] We might say that the temple brings that culture to expression in such a way that it both confirms and affirms it. Unlike the buildings that we construct for dwelling, which rest in the background of people's lives and remain relatively unreflected upon, the temple stands out, and in so doing, it is able to underline or bring forth certain truths inherent to that cultural world it brings to expression, which for those people, would be God itself.

The temple-work is thus also held to fulfil a function for that community, in that it serves to reconnect them with their world, and in so doing, brings them together as a "people". As Young writes, the work of art "makes

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[329] Ibid.
[330] Ibid. / Malpas, *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place,* 242.
[331] Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", 107.
[332] Ibid., 106.
[333] Ibid., 107.
[334] Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking", 246.
[335] Julian Young, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 57.

authentic community, makes a 'people' possible".[336] By "authentic community", Young is referring here to a community that is conscious of its heritage, which is what the work helps bring to the fore. Art, Heidegger claims, "is truth setting itself to work" in this way.[337] Yet, in order to set itself to work, truth must reveal itself to those people whose world the work brings to expression. They, in turn, must engage with it in terms of that truth working through it, thus enabling that truth to stand out. It is these people who "preserve" the work, which means "standing within the openness of beings that happens in the work", i.e., that which it reveals.[338] As such, the work is dependent on its preservers in this way. Furthermore, he also remarks that preserving "occurs at different levels of knowledge" and that "sheer artistic enjoyment" does not prove that the work "stands in preservation".[339]

Heidegger's account of the work in terms of its capacity for worlding is pertinent to site-specific practices like *4'33".* By anchoring themselves in the ongoing functionality of the places they intervene in, they reveal something of the character of those places in terms of their background function. *4'33"* subverts the concert hall. However, this subversion is best understood as its specific manner of making itself stand out upon that background it functions to draw the audience's attention toward. It brings that world to the fore in that manner. As such, it can also be understood to draw strength from the fact that it does not conform with what is expected of it. Indeed, the problem with official art places for both Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger is that they are set up specifically in order to homogenise diverse works and practices, and do so by foregrounding their aesthetic quality. This is considered to be to the detriment of those works in that it limits their capacity to manifest a *style* or foreground a world. What site-specificity presents the artist with, therefore, is a way of overcoming the homogenising effect of official art places by drawing attention to those aspects of them which give rise to those effects. In order to understand how this occurs, we must now turn to the second aspect of the work, i.e., the "earth" which underpins the world that the work opens up.

When Heidegger claims that in "setting up a world, the work sets forth the earth", he is drawing our attention to the work in terms of its material concreteness.[340] What he means by this is that in its setting up of a world, the temple-work "does not cause the material [it is made from] to disappear" – unlike tools or even normal, functional buildings, in which the materials are used up in terms of their usefulness.[341] With the temple-work, we get a sense of the "massiveness and heaviness of the stone", whilst the "metals come to glitter and shimmer", and colours "glow".[342] In turn, this gives rise to certain environing effects. For example, Heidegger

[336] Young, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, 55.
[337] Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", 107.
[338] Ibid., 124.
[339] Ibid.
[340] Ibid., 109.
[341] Ibid.
[342] Ibid.

draws the reader's attention to how, by holding "its ground against the storm", the temple "makes the storm itself manifest in its violence".[343]

The "world" that the work opens up and the "earth" it brings forth are related through their opposition in what Heidegger refers to as their "strife".[344] For, "in resting upon the earth", the world "strives to surmount it", whilst the earth "tends always to draw the world into itself and keep it there", that is, maintain it in its place or keep it grounded.[345] This opposition should not be regarded as "discordant or destructive", however, "but rather [as] an opposition in which the two elements come into their own".[346] The truth that is set to work in the temple is announced through the material objectivity of its structure, both in terms of its presentation and the environing effect it gives rise to. Similarly, the work only comes to stand out in terms of its materiality because of the truth that has been set to work through it.

There are parallels to be drawn between what Merleau-Ponty describes as brute, wild or silent being and Heidegger's conception of earth in this regard, in that the work's materiality is brought to prominence through how it functions. This appears to take place through the work's worlding capacity according to Heidegger and its *style* according to Merleau-Ponty.

What Heidegger's understanding of the work's *objective functionality* reveals to us is the manner in which the work asserts itself in relation to its environment in a way that fundamentally reconfigures that environment. In turn, it also alludes to the work's "singular locatedness" as Malpas asserts above. Malpas also highlights how its capacity to assert itself in this way draws directly from a "tension" that its standing out in terms of its materiality gives rise to. In standing out, it necessarily "conflicts with" its surroundings that its having been set up "already brings it into a minimal relatedness with".[347] It "resists and at the same time invokes its own setting in this way", which is as much the case even if the artwork has been removed from its world or when it is not being preserved for Malpas.[348]

At the same time, it simultaneously harbours the potential to foreground an aspect of that world in a manner which fosters authentic engagement with the world it opens up on the part of those people who preserve it. Indeed, it both opens up and onto a world, which means that the world the artwork opens up is always "more than just the artwork".[349] There are various dimensions to this. To begin with, because "the setting of the

[343] Ibid., 107.
[344] Ibid., 111.
[345] Ibid.
[346] Malpas, *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place,* 243.
[347] Ibid., 245.
[348] Ibid., 246.
[349] Ibid., 244.

artwork in its locatedness, its standing forth in its material objectivity, already places the artwork in relation to a context", so the "manner of the setting of the artwork into place may [also] change".[350] The work is both "open" and "constrained" in this way, in that by standing in relation to a particular setting, it draws attention to itself not only in terms of its material objectivity but also to its manner of relatedness with that environment in which it has been set up, and which is inherently open to change.[351]

The work, in its material objectivity, thus always "transcends itself", which is not to say that it "transcends itself in the direction of something other than itself", but instead it transcends itself "in the direction of the possibilities that the artwork itself enables and that belong to it".[352] Two aspects of this world-relatedness, which might be considered to undergo fairly consistent change over time and yet which also stem from the "possibilities that the artwork itself enables", are the history of materials out of which the work is produced and that of the craft itself.[353] The artwork contributes to these histories and, in so doing, is incorporated into them in such a way that renders it vulnerable to their evolution as a consequence of the emergence of more contemporary artworks. Furthermore, in so much as it comes into the world at a particular moment in history, it opens up upon that world in such a way that its relatedness with its surroundings is characterised by the social-cultural background of that world. Merleau-Ponty's terminology is useful in this respect: while the work *brings to expression* an aspect of that world in terms of its *silent* ongoingness, it is, therefore, simultaneously enveloped by that same *silence* into which it delves in order to retrieve the truth that it sets to work. This is why Malpas is justified in claiming that an artwork's objectivity "will always support multiple readings", and furthermore, that the "artist's own *post facto* explanations of the work — has no privileged status in determining the character of the work".[354]

With reference to *4'33"* and its original performance, Malpas's reading of Heidegger enables us to understand how, by bringing the *operative intentionality* of the concert hall itself to the fore and presenting it through an ultimately empty but traditional musical performance, the work might still be considered to bring that aspect of that particular *place-world* to expression in a way that sets truth to work. This is true even though the performance was not listened to or engaged with in the way the artist had originally intended. Indeed, the expressed frustration of the audience might still be regarded as preserving the performance in the sense that what the audience was ultimately expressing was resistance to the truth that had been set to work in it. In the final part of this chapter dedicated to the theme of conceptual art, we will consider more closely what *4'33"* could be considered to reveal about musicality in the very broadest sense. For the time being, however, it is sufficient to underline the fact that by subverting the musical situation in

[350] Ibid., 245.
[351] Ibid.
[352] Ibid., 246.
[353] Ibid.
[354] Ibid., 249/247.

the way it did, *4'33"* was simply drawing attention to the fact that a great deal of how we respond to and think about music stems from the protocol and set-up of the concert hall. Just as Merleau-Ponty says with regard to painting above, Cage might be interpreted as alluding to the fact that our "consciousness of" music is "based on" the concert hall.

If we now turn to Merleau-Ponty's notion of *style* that is intrinsic to the work, it complements Heidegger's characterisation of the work in terms of its relatedness to the world, in that it helps us to explain how the work comes to stand out from the world to begin with. Indeed, this is the aspect of the work that gets overlooked as a consequence of Heidegger's emphasis on truth. His position sets out to work through the artwork's material objectivity, as is clearly apparent in his analysis of Van Gogh's painting of the peasant shoes. In this analysis, this work is regarded solely in terms of the world of the peasant woman that the work is considered to reveal, with no mention of Van Gogh's own characteristic *style*. What Merleau-Ponty reveals to us, however, is how the work's *style* is significantly more than a formula or inventory of techniques and effects, and, furthermore, it is more than simply a means of conveying truth. For *style* also manifests the artist's expressed coincidence with wild being, which in turn reveals something of the way in which that truth came to be expressed though the artistic process. For this reason, it is that *style* which articulates the work's material presentation, and in turn, orientates our engagement with it, thus enabling audiences to stand within "the openness of beings that happens in the work" as Heidegger writes. In the case of *4'33",* we might say that there are potentially many ways of drawing the audience's attention to the way in which the concert hall functions and how this shapes our outlook on music. However, that Cage elected to do so by way of a performed musical silence is characteristic of his broader practice. Moreover, it alludes to the world of silence underpinning music, or the "accidental sounds" which might also be confronted in terms of their musicality, which in turn stems from his own research into the nature of silence more generally.

4.6. Social Participation

This brings us to a second aspect of how *4'33"* can be understood to work through its objectivity, which is how it gives rise to an acute sense of the audience's communal *implacement* there within the hall. This can certainly be drawn from the example outlined above. However, what I am more concerned with here is how each individual body develops a heightened awareness of its own *implacement* specifically in terms of their being alongside the other people in attendance. It is useful to turn to a later performance by the BBC Symphony Orchestra at London's Barbican in 2004 for the BBC's annual *Composer's Weekend* in order to understand this potential that the work harbours more directly. In contrast with its first performance, this one was far more in-keeping with the kind of event that Cage had claimed was his original intention. The audience remained in their seats throughout the performance and listened attentively. There was even a moment when Lawrence Foster the conductor wiped his forehead with a handkerchief between movements

and the audience laughed at his comical gesture, thus demonstrating a general atmosphere far removed from that of Maverick.

What is particularly intriguing about this performance (which was also broadcast live on national television) is that the pauses between the different movements came to mean a great deal more when the audience cooperated in the way they did. Indeed, the most noticeable sounds occurring through it (at least as they can be heard on the televised transmission) were those made by the audience themselves as opposed to those coming from the surrounding environment. For whenever the conductor lifted his baton to signal the end of a movement, the audience appeared to cough en masse, as if they had been holding themselves back from doing so for the duration of the preceding movement. This suggests something rather interesting about how the individual audience members came to understand their own situation relative to that ongoing performance.

On the one hand, we might simply say that the audience adhered to the conventions of the concert hall through each movement by keeping themselves as quiet as possible during each movement, which is why they held themselves back in this way and then clapped at the end of the performance. On the other hand, their expressed self-restraint in only allowing themselves to cough during the pauses might also be interpreted as revealing a heightened sense of their *implacement* in relation to the other people present alongside them. For when musical performances are played by full orchestras within a setting like this, whilst we do tend to refrain from making too much noise, especially during the pauses and the more delicate parts of the score, it is doubtful that this would result in the kind of communal release as it did here. The sound of the musical performance allows audiences the opportunity to relax into it, to succumb. Whereas, because the silence shifts the directionality of the *operative intentionality* of that place back upon them, the audience become even more alert as to the impact of their own bodies as sound-makers upon that space, as well as, the experience of other people around them. This reveals a limitation with regard to Merleau-Ponty's characterisation of the creative gesture as it is received by its audience.

We have already considered how for Merleau-Ponty the "accomplished" painting invites the viewer to take up the "gesture" which created it and "rejoin" with "the silent world of the painter".[355] What he appears to suggest here is that, through the encounter, the audience actually comes to see in the artist's own *style*. The implication of this with reference to *4'33"* as it was performed at the Barbican would be that the audience, by cooperating with the performance and listening attentively and according to the etiquette of the musical event, would come to listen to those sounds ongoing around them in the same manner as Cage himself would have. The problem with this way of articulating the situation is twofold.

[355] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 51.

First of all, it assumes that by looking at the work or listening to a piece of music, we are not simply guided by the work in terms of its unique *style*, but also that we adopt the perceptual *style* of its creator in so doing. Here, Merleau-Ponty fails to take into account that unique perceptual *style* that each individual audience member cultivates within themselves and which is intrinsic to their own manner of engaging with artworks. By suggesting that the audience simply surrenders to the work's *style*, he effectively commits the same error as Dufrenne, which is to assume that the encounter holds the potential to induce a manner of "perception at its purest".

The second point is that because the encounter is *implaced,* it is always mediated — there is no "skipping the intermediaries" as Merleau-Ponty writes. That is not to say that place determines the meaning of the encounter entirely. Rather, because places like concert halls carry their own significances and direct the audience's *implacement,* the artwork's capacity to *re-implace* its audiences can only ever be realised from within and in relation to that context. The artwork's performance cannot simply override or make obsolete those significances that places like concert halls or museums already carry within them.

After all, the score that Cage wrote was developed from his own revelation as to the musicality of everyday sounds. The concert hall presented him with an appropriate venue for its performance due to the fact that this idea he sought to bring to expression through this performance represented a direct challenge to the relatively narrow understanding of what constitutes musical sound that the concert hall *embodies* and maintains from within. Yet, through its performance, which is also to say its *metamorphosis*, that revelation came to manifest itself objectively within a public space, through which the intersubjective and embodied communication and participation of the audience within that space also came into play. Its actual performance imbued the concept underpinning it with a public dimension that the original revelation as it was experienced by the artist did not harbour. We are now ready to move on to the third reflection.

4.7. Musical Silence

For the third assessment of 4'33" and its performance, I will consider the extent to which the quiet and self-restrained participation of the audience at the Barbican constituted musical listening, which is to ask the question as to whether or not the "expanded listening" referred to by Labelle earlier on is musical in character. After all, the audience did listen attentively in this instance, and as mentioned above, they even acknowledged the three distinct movements. Furthermore, the performance took place at the end of an evening of music by other modern American composers, which it could be argued helped to prepare the audience by making them musically attentive and so more attuned to the musicality of the everyday sounds around them.

Dufrenne claims that, through its performance, the artwork "aestheticises its surroundings and integrates them into its own world".[356] One way to interpret this claim would be to say that the *style* of the work takes on a spatial dimension through its performance. In the case of a painting, we might observe how the spectacle of the work imposes itself upon the room in such a way that the room comes to appear as if orientated towards or around the work. In the case of a musical work, this idea is more easily grasped in terms of how the music played quite literally fills the room, thus entangling itself with the atmosphere of that place. Another way to understand this claim would be to focus instead upon how the work's performance elicits a manner of engagement from the audience by which their attention is directed towards the phenomena in terms of its aesthetic quality. Might it be that the musical performances which preceded *4'33"* on this particular occasion "aestheticised" the environment of the concert hall to such an extent so as to imbue the everyday sounds produced there with musicality?

We certainly feel such an effect when wandering around a gallery or museum, when aspects of the building or the surrounding environment can come to appear more interesting as a consequence of the attention we have been extending to the artworks held within them. In this sense, we might equally say that this particular occasion lent itself to *4'33"* being appreciated musically in that the previous performances elicited a style of listening that was then carried into that final performance.

Of course, there are also other considerations to be taken into account here. As Cherix has already highlighted, artworks tend to be very closely associated with their first exhibition.[357] This is the moment, after all, from which the discourse surrounding the work emerges and begins to proliferate, and why, in confronting a work of any kind, we should attend "not only to our experience of individual artworks, but also to the wider critical and interpretive reception of those works".[358] Indeed, the discourse surrounding artworks also helps to prepare audiences for their encounters with them and enters the place where that occurs through the audience's embodied engagement with the works. The Barbican audience would undoubtedly have been much better prepared for their encounter with *4'33"* than Maverick's audience in 1952 as a consequence of this.

If we now return to Labelle's comment regarding the "expanded listening" that *4'33's* performance is held to open up the possibility for, this raises the question as to whether such a style of engagement with everyday sounds really amounts to their being listened to "as music". It is interesting to consider, for example, how movements that were directly inspired by Cage, notably Pierre Schafer's development of Musique Concrète

[356] Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, 152.
[357] Hans Ulrich Obrist, *A Brief History of Curating,* 8.
[358] Malpas, *Heidegger and the thinking of Place,* 240.

in France, and Murray Schafer's initiation of the *World Soundscape Project* in Canada, promote the use of recording technology in order to engage with everyday sounds in terms of their aesthetic quality. For both Pierre and Murray Schafer, the tape recorder presented the opportunity for "reduced listening". In Murray Schafer's own words, reduced listening heightens the listener's capacity for "aural discrimination" in a way that is impossible for the kind of "direct listening" we engage with normally.[359] By removing sounds from their everyday contexts, it is presumed that the listener becomes more sensitive to the intricacies of those sounds because they no longer relate to a more general scene.[360] While the premise that what is heard through the recording is anything like a "pure" sound object is itself dubious, what these approaches both underline is the relation between the meaning of the soundscape and the listener's *implacement* within it. Indeed, the listener is implicated within the soundscape they inhabit, which is why those in attendance at the Barbican held back their coughs so as not to disturb the other people around them.

There seems to be something inherently unmusical about this situation, though, and Cage himself perhaps pointed us in the right direction for understanding why when he said that he had wanted to show the audience "that the sounds of their environment constitute a music which is more interesting than the music which they would hear if they went into a concert hall." [361] What is interesting about this claim is that he chose the concert hall in the first place when his expressed intention was to underline the musicality of environmental sounds beyond it. As I have already suggested in the previous section, what Cage appears not to have considered is how the publicness of the concert hall would fundamentally alter the nature of the listening he sought to induce. Cage's expressed intentions would arguably be more easily realised in solitude. From this desk in the library where I am currently sat, I can hear the continuous and rhythmic dirge of the air conditioning unit above my head. The clicking of a computer mouse at the far end of the room combines with the tapping of keyboards around this desk and the scratching of pens on paper closer to me. These sounds collectively produce a soundscape which could be described as musical in character. Whilst I cannot bring myself to call it music *per se*, possibly due to its ongoingness (this is why Cage insisted that the work should have a duration), and perhaps also the fact that these sounds fit in with these surroundings and thus cannot be detached from my *implacement* here, there is no doubt that the soundscape of this library presents me with many musical qualities.

In the concert hall, however, I am not isolated in the same way that the library allows me to be. Although I do maintain a communal silence with those around me in much the same way I would at the concert hall,

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[359] Murray R. Schafer, *Our Sonic Environment and The Soundscape: The Tuning of our World*, (Destiny Books: Vermont, 1994), 154.
[360] Brandon Labelle, *Background Noise*, 25.
[361] John Cage quote taken from an interview with John Kobler (1968), found in: Richard Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage*, (Routledge: London, New York, 1982/2003), 70.

this communal silence of the library offers myself and others around me the opportunity to pursue our own individual projects. Whereas, in the concert hall we are placed very much alongside one another — we are caught up in the same event — we listen together. For this reason, Labelle insists that *4’33”* constitutes a “conceptual framework in which the social and silence are brought into dialogic relation”, through which they “intersect and destabilise each other”.[362] Audience members restrain themselves from coughing in order to ensure the enjoyment of others, but in so doing, their own capacity to focus on the sounds of that environment exclusively become reduced. Indeed, as Labelle also observes, *4’33”* operates in such a way that it undermines the understanding of music and the social as “autonomous and fixed” by shifting focus onto their interaction and mutual dependence.[363] Whilst the style of listening that *4’33”* gives rise to may not be strictly musical then, there is a clear sense in which the performance is clearly *about* music in that its “operations rely upon notions embedded in Western art music” in a way that “conceptually frames and questions them”.[364] This brings us to the fourth and final reflection on the work.

4.8. Conceptual Art

The final way in which I will consider how *4’33”* might be confronted is as an example of conceptual-art practice “in that music is both the thing and a reflection on the thing”.[365] Indeed, Cage’s work gives us a great deal to think about with regard to the nature of music and it is perhaps in this sense that his project most closely aligns with that of Merleau-Ponty. In *Phenomenology of Perception,* Merleau-Ponty appears to adopt a similar position to Cage when he remarks that silence is not “an auditory nothingness” but the “absence of sounds”.[366] What he means by “absence of sounds” here is not that there is no sound at all, for such a claim would equate to the “auditory nothingness” he had just refuted. Instead, this absence is only an apparent absence for the perceiving subject relative to their current situation. So far, Merleau-Ponty’s seems closely aligned with Cage. However, it is what he says next that is revealing within the context of the current discussion:

> If, during the process of reflection, I cease to hear sounds, and then suddenly become receptive to them again, they appear to me to be already there, and I pick up a thread which I had dropped but which is unbroken.[367]

What Merleau-Ponty says here about the “process of reflection” might just as easily refer to any situation in which someone becomes intensely focused on something. As Ingarden observes with reference to the

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[362] Brandon Labelle, *Background Noise*, 15.
[363] Ibid.
[364] Ibid.
[365] Ibid., 4.
[366] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 382.
[367] Ibid., 382-383.

aesthetic encounter, the viewer's engagement with an artwork such as a statue can give rise to the apparent "quasi-oblivion" of the everyday world, a sensation which is akin to that of getting lost in an "abstract problem".[368] In *4'33"*, the fact that the silence is performed draws the audience's attention towards it and ultimately anchors them within it just as a piece of music or a painting would. However, because the anticipated musical sound is withheld, the environmental sounds occurring within that place are gradually drawn back into the foreground in a similar way to how the soundscape reappears when a process of reflection has come to an end in Merleau-Ponty's description above. These environmental sounds do not come as a surprise, therefore, because "the thread" (i.e., the concert hall in the background) remains "unbroken".

What Merleau-Ponty's reflection alludes to is the way in which the tacit or pre-reflective cogito maintains its grip upon the surrounding environment while the embodied subject engages in the process of reflection. In fact, this is a vital component of reflective activity of any kind in the sense that it enables the thinker to proceed with some assurance that they are secure to do so. For this reason, we are immediately alert to any sound that occurs in the background that is *out of place* according to the circumstances of our *implacement*, e.g., the buzzing of a mobile phone in the concert hall.

In order for the conceptual aspect of *4'33"* to come to the fore, for that dimension of its *aboutness* to be recognised as prominent, it very much depends upon how the environmental sounds occurring within that place are engaged with by the audience, which is to say, how their *implacement* there is orientated. In Merleau-Ponty's description of this background "thread", the significance of that sound for the writer who is immersed in thought remains unclear to the reader. That he "suddenly becomes receptive" to the soundscape again raises the question as to precisely how he was receptive to that sound. The reason this is significant is because there is clear evidence that the audiences at both Maverick concert Hall and Barbican years later were receptive to the soundscape occurring around them. Whereas at Maverick the sound remained in the background, at the Barbican it came to the fore.

Merleau-Ponty's example seems more representative of what happened during the first performance than the second in that the general background situation, or that "thread" which had carried on in the background in spite of the performance, was picked up again by those who had come to realise that no musical sound would be played, without any significant change to its meaning. Indeed, the frustration expressed by that original audience stemmed from the precisely that observation: that nothing had happened or changed. One way to interpret this would be to claim, as Cage did, that the audience didn't hear the sound because they didn't know how to listen. However, the point I have made already is that they did engage with that sound,

[368] Ingarden, "Aesthetic Experience and Aesthetic Object", trans. Janina Makota, in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 21, no. 3 (March 1961), pp. 289-313. 298.

but as background as opposed to content for reflection. It was this potential in the work, to draw attention to the more mundane aspects of that place, which ultimately infuriated them, and thus also that which characterised their engagement with the work as an intervention or in terms of its site-specificity.

With regard to the Barbican performance, however, the soundscape was brought to the fore by a cooperative audience willing to take up and be guided by the composer's performative gesture. What is particularly interesting in this instance is the aforementioned complete reversal of the *operative intentionality* of place. Whereas during a traditional musical performance, that area where the audience is situated provides stability for the audience so that they may become firmly *implaced,* and therefore, able to focus upon the performance on stage; in this instance, it is the non-performance of the orchestra on stage which comes to provide that stability. For as long as the orchestra withholds musical sound, then the background which would otherwise present itself as relatively stable then comes to reveal itself as being in a state of continuous flux. It is through the musical silence of the orchestra that the directionality of the *operative intentionality* of place comes to be tipped back upon itself.

By redirecting the concert hall in this way, *4'33"* instigates a shift of attention away from what would tend to be recognised as traditional cultural practice, and toward what can only be described as the otherwise concealed "wild being" or "world of silence" that underpins it, upon which "the cultural rests".[369] For when Casey remarks that even "the most culturally saturated place retains a factor of wildness", nowhere would it be more apparent than the stalls in which people sit, where the warmth of their bodies is generated and all the coughing and shifting on seats occurs.[370] Indeed, that is where the flesh of bodies becomes one with that of the concert hall and the sound that the performance draws attention to, and this is why Labelle is justified in claiming that:

> Context and audience act as musical material: the incidental noise of the audience, and the random, acoustic occurrences of the given environment, mingle and invade the compositional framework, at the instant of performance. (…) Sound is thus heard imbued with the given characteristics of a found architecture, from bodies and their specificity (and the slamming of doors as people walk out).[371]

But what of the conceptual content that this work gives rise to? What does this work give us "to think about as no analytical work can" in Merleau-Ponty's words? [372] The most obvious consideration that Cage presents us with is undoubtedly about the origins of music. For if we can recognise musicality in the soundscape itself, then what distinguishes it from the soundscape of the world? This is why it was important that *4'33"* was consciously written, because its having been written by someone was essential to its being a work of art —

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[369] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 253.
[370] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 337.
[371] Brandon Labelle, *Background Noise*, 14.
[372] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 77.

the reflections it elicits on the audience's part works through the work in terms of its objectivity in this way, in so much as, through its presentation, it also proposes itself as music. It provides us with a framework through which the soundscape of the world can be received in terms of its musicality. It directs our attention in this way, and although the content is not produced by the composer himself, he was nevertheless responsible for the framing of the phenomena it then incorporates as content, which is why Voegelin described it as a sort of "ready-made".[373] Just as James Turrel's Lightboxes frame and direct our attention towards the sky through the gap in the ceiling of those structures, so Cage directs our attention toward the world's soundscape. As such, we should not think that a perceived relationship between music and the natural world undermines the creativity of the artist. In fact, as Cage showed throughout his own career, if anything, it expands the range of materials and modes of listening which might be appropriated and adopted for musical purposes. The point is that the composer necessarily draws from the world as it presents itself sonically. What Merleau-Ponty says of the painter is equally true of the composer in this respect;

> It makes no difference if [the painter] paints from "nature"; [the painter] paints, in any case, because [the painter] has seen, because the world has at least once emblazoned in [them] the ciphers of the visible.[374]

What differentiates the work of the painter and the composer of music, however, is that the "ciphers" that the composer draws from the world are rather its "ebb and flow, its growth, its upheavals, its turbulence", and what Cage initiates is a return of sorts to that source itself, i.e., the soundscape.[375] In turn, this raises interesting questions as to the relationship between music and place, and also art and place in general given that *4'33"* oscillates between these two domains. For what it shows us is that certain musical practices are embedded within the *operative intentionality* of such places as they have come to function over time. By meddling in these places in terms of their ongoing functionality, however, the opportunity presents itself for the broadening of what we consider art or music to be.

[373] Salomé Voegelin, *Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art*, 80.
[374] Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind", 166.
[375] Ibid., 161.

Chapter Five - The Museum: A Visit to the Tate Modern

Tate Modern is the most visited modern and contemporary art museum in the world. Opened to the public in May 2000 and located in the old Bankside Power Station on London's Southbank, the original building was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and later developed into a gallery by Swiss architects Herzog and De Meuron. The same architects were also responsible for the recent Blavatnik Building extension that was unveiled in June 2016. In this chapter, we will consider the style of *accommodation* that this particular museum offers up to its diverse publics and how their experience of artworks is shaped by it from within. This will require not only that the relation between their *implacement* and place's own *operative intentionality* be kept in mind, but also that the museum itself be brought into view in terms of what Malpas refers to as its "placedness", i.e., where it is situated in relation to the *place-world* in general.

With this in mind, the first part of the chapter will be dedicated to assessing how the museum's main Turbine Hall entrance *accommodates* and encourages various styles of *implacement* from within. Next, some time will be dedicated to examining how one artist in particular, Olafur Eliasson, incorporated the *operative intentionality* of that place into his installation *The Weather Project* (2003) in such a way so as to give rise to an overtly communal style of encounter. In the second part, the relation between the building itself and the broader region of Southwark in south London will be reflected upon, with close attention being paid to how the regional style that the museum manifests shapes the experience of visitors from within. Finally, the third part will be concerned with how the movement of visitors through the museum's permanent displays contributes to the ongoing event of the museum as a whole and the style of *accommodation* it is able to offer up. The broad focus here will be upon how this place is *cultivated* from within through the style of *implacement* that the audience adopts in response to the way this place makes itself available for them. As Casey asserts, we "cultivate the concrete forms in which we dwell" in places, that is, by way of our *implacement*.[376] In order to get things underway, let us first of all consider our arrival at this place.

5.1. The Main Entrance

There are a number of different ways to enter the Tate Modern, but we will begin from the museum's main entrance, which ushers visitors into the museum's world famous Turbine Hall. As was observed of the concert hall in the previous chapter, one's entry into places of this kind has a significant impact on how we come to engage with that place thereafter. Much like Frank Lloyd-Wright's Guggenheim Museum in New York or Frank Gehry's in Bilbao, we approach the building from street level and enter through relatively modest glass doors. Once over the threshold, the sheer magnitude of the space that is opened up around us becomes

[376] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 173.

immediately apparent. In contrast with the foyers of the two Guggenheim buildings, however, which draw vision up and toward a central point of light high above our heads, the Turbine Hall presents itself first and foremost as an immense corridor stretching back over 150 metres. We begin our descent into the building from outside at street level and continue along a slope which takes us deep into the hall. Our glance, in its predisposition to "sizing up a situation", is pushed into overdrive once we pass through the doors. Casey outlines three modes of the glance by which we become orientated in place.[377]

The first is the "free glance", which assesses the situation by way of its "dartings and dashings amid surfaces — [or,] glancing around."[378] Not yet stabilised, this is the mode that is most intimately intertwined with the movement of the lived body, as it looks and moves "among the flowing surfaces of [its] spontaneous existence", finding out "where it goes as it moves".[379] At once "haptic and muscular" in this way, visitors entering into the Turbine Hall by way of the slope must negotiate the glance in its restlessness to take in the entire hall at once, whilst simultaneously maintaining balance and a steady stride towards the bottom.

The second mode, referred to as the "bound glance", complements the first in that whilst the free glance darts "around" us, the glance in its bound mode directs itself "at" determinate objects and people held within this same place as us.[380] It takes note and seeks out amongst its co-inhabitants "a certain consistency that allows them to act as orientational markers".[381] Due to what can sometimes amount to the bewildering overload of the entrance experience (especially when the gallery is busy, and even more so for visitors who may have just navigated the London transport system for the first time), many people prefer to sit down as soon as they arrive, often on the slope itself, and take in the view from there. Sitting down offers the opportunity for more rapid *implacement* in that the stationary body liberates the glance in both its free and bound mode. The more firmly *implaced* we become, "the more my glance is able to travel without undue constraints".[382]

This enables the "sweeping" movement of the third mode, or, the "geographic glance", to establish itself.[383] More general in its concerns, this mode directs itself towards "the full layout of things and places in a region".[384] As such, it surveys a "spatial spread" that ultimately reaches beyond this immediate place.[385] It is implicitly aware of the fact that the slope upon which we are presently sat submerges us lower than street

[377] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 6.
[378] Ibid., 107.
[379] Ibid., 108.
[380] Ibid.
[381] Ibid.
[382] Ibid., 127.
[383] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 111.
[384] Ibid., 109.
[385] Ibid., 110.

level. In just a few seconds, it will recognise that the walls lining the turbine hall are broken up into different levels and that there are bridges between them and exits on either side.

The *operative intentionality* of the turbine hall draws both from its concrete set-up and the diverse intentions and priorities of the visitors *implaced* within it. The fact that visitors perch on the slope in the way they do (much as crowds do at a music festival or a park in the summer) testifies to this fact by showing that people do not simply follow the pathways laid out for them by the museum, but often stifle and block its intended flow. People bring lunch with them and staircases *accommodate* its consumption just as well as the tables, chairs, sofas or stools present throughout the building do. Parents meet up and bring their young children here during the week because it is covered, free to enter, and the turbine hall provides a large and safe space for them to run around in. Some visitors come here regularly and feel relaxed enough simply to wander around the place. Meanwhile, others who come from further afield might arrive with a more meticulously planned itinerary. Tate Modern offers itself up as a public space in which these diverse modes of *implacement* can occur, and the turbine hall is undoubtedly the best representative of this. For this reason, it is interesting to consider how artists themselves have confronted this space in the past, in all its intentional complexity.

5.1.1. The Turbine Hall Commissions

Since it opened, Tate has commissioned artists to produce artworks specifically for the Turbine Hall. One that generated considerable media attention was Olafur Eliasson's *The Weather Project* (2003). For that piece, Eliasson installed a large a semi-circle made of hundreds of mono-frequency lamps high up in the upper-arris of the back wall. The ceiling itself had been fitted with a flat, mirror-like surface that reflected the semi-circle below it and created the illusion of a burning sphere hovering over the space below — a giant sun bathing the hall in a "hazy and acrid yellow light".[386] The mirrored ceiling also doubled the apparent height of the room, blocked out natural light during the day, and contained the fine mist permeating across it.[387]

Claire Bishop observes that while there is undoubtedly a strong critical dimension to Eliasson's practice, what came to the fore most prominently in this piece was the sensuous and awe-inspiring nature of its spectacle. Eliasson's installations are generally set up so as to "deliberately reveal their staging".[388] The lamps and mirror were clearly visible as the illusion's source, which reflects Eliasson's expressed intention to inspire audiences to question how artworks are presented and their own relationships with the museums that hold them. Museum space should encourage critical thought as much as aesthetic reflection for Eliasson, for this

[386] Claire Bishop, *Installation Art: A Critical History*, (London: Tate Publishing, 2005), 77.
[387] Ibid.
[388] Ibid., 76.

is what distinguishes the museum from other, for-profit places of leisure and entertainment such as shopping malls and multiplex cinemas. With this in mind, Bishop remarks on how "curious" it was "to see visitors stretched out on the floor bathing beneath Eliasson's artificial sun", utterly engrossed but seemingly not in a critical way.[389]

To understand this reaction, it is important to recognise that the work was clearly orientated toward the hall, both in terms of its set-up and the style of communal *implacement* the space already invited. The burning sphere was clearly visible from the opposite end of the hall, which in turn gave rise to a prolonging of the lingering mode of *implacement* already *accommodated* by the slope. Furthermore, positioned as it was at the furthest point in the room from the entrance, *The Weather Project* activated that space beneath the sun that would otherwise have remained dormant. This meant that people were now drawn through the entire hall, under the bridge and into that space at the end of it, which is where people began "bathing". Moreover, due to the fact that it could be seen from everywhere, this brought the spaces either side of the bridge (which otherwise tend to present themselves as two distinct sections) together.

The Turbine Hall is both immense in scale and a place of transition relative to the museum as a whole. As such, any artist commissioned to set up an installation there must take both of these aspects into account as intrinsic features of the *accommodation* it offers up. Since *The Weather Project* coincided so effectively with the Turbine Hall in terms of how it already tended to function, it was immediately able to engage a broad range of visitors, from those who had only just arrived and were still getting their bearings, to those taking a break from the galleries above. Other aspects of this space that this installation maximized the potential of were the many vantage points from which one is able to look into the hall, including the mezzanine floors, balconies and the bridge across it. Visitors situated throughout the building had the opportunity to observe the work as it functioned within its *scope* from various altitudes and angles. A more proximal encounter with a painting would not permit this because its *scope* would be significantly reduced by comparison. As such, this particular work reveals an aspect that all artworks displayed within such contexts share in common, which is their capacity to cultivate community from within their *scope.* In turn, it also opens up a critical dimension to the audience's encounter with Eliasson's installation that is inherently placial in character.

When we observe the photographs of the installation, what we see is a playful mass of people in congregation, couples huddled together, lying on the floor and gazing up at their reflections through the mist above them, children running around, groups of friends sat in circles chatting, and of course, contemplative individuals. This allows us to return to what was referred to above as the "intentional complexity" of this situation, because what Eliasson's work achieved here was a considerable level of control over the *operative*

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[389] Ibid., 77.

intentionality of the hall. This was channelled in a way that enabled audience members to carry on with their social engagements and personal itineraries whilst simultaneously engaging with and contributing to the spectacle of the artwork. This challenges the expressed intentions of the artist as outlined in Bishop's text.

Bishop observes how Eliasson's titles often reflect his "emphasis on the non-prescriptive individuality" or "uniqueness" of "our responses" by addressing each audience member directly.[390] The artist considers his work to be a "self-portrait of the viewer".[391] Interestingly, she cites Merleau-Ponty in order to characterise the kind of viewer that Eliasson has in mind. Unlike the reductive and universal phenomenological body elicited by minimalist sculpture of the 1960s and 1970s, it is claimed that Eliasson's viewer is "not simply an embodied presence in the present tense", but a "psychological entity" that exists through what Merleau-Ponty describes as "confusion, narcissism ... a self, therefore, that is caught up in things, that has a front and a back, a past and a future" — truly lived, which is also to say, an *implaced* body.[392] Nevertheless, there seems to be a great deal missing here with regard to how effectively this work managed to *re-implace* such a diverse public alongside one another, which, as I will attempt to show here, would have had consequences for the way in which the work came to be perceived.

From the bridge on level one, there was as much people-watching going on as there was direct observation of the sun itself. Beneath the sun and in front of the bridge, bodies were strewn across the flat ground, whilst behind it, bodies lined the slope. Yet, those observers looking down from the bridge were not simply giving in to distraction. Rather, they were observing the work unfold in terms of its *objective functionality*, that is, how its *principal theme* opened up a space for people to congregate beneath it. The people present were incorporated into the work's spectacle as a consequence of this: their congregating bodies taking on a general sculptural form that was continuous with the work and which filled the entire hall.

This was achieved in part through the provision of what Casey refers to as a "locus for common understanding".[393] The spectacle of the sun was universally recognisable, which in turn opened the space commanded by the work's *principal theme* up to diverse forms of *implacement* in relation to it.[394] It fostered a "spontaneous community" and elicited "the convergence of inhabitants across and despite their manifest differences".[395] The position of the sun at the end of the room and the reflective surface and permeating mist across the ceiling were also vital in this respect. For by effecting the reduction of this space already mentioned

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[390] Claire Bishop, *Installation Art,* 76.
[391] Ibid.
[392] (Merleau-Ponty cited in) Ibid., 76.
[393] Casey, *The World on Edge*, 194.
[394] Ibid.
[395] Ibid.

above, the walls, ceiling and floor, not to mention the burning sphere itself (these various “edges” as Casey would say), converged to create an “intimate scale of scene”.[396]

5.1.2. The Flesh of the Event

To focus on *The Weather Project’s* congregating effect and the communal intimacy it achieved does not undervalue the subjective experience of each person present. My point is rather that each person encountered the work amongst others, and the complete passage from Merleau-Ponty’s essay “Eye and Mind” from which Bishop takes the line cited above is revealing in this respect:

> The enigma is that my body simultaneously sees and is seen. That which looks at all things can also look at itself and recognise, in what it sees, the "other side" of its power of looking. It sees itself seeing; it touches itself touching; it is visible and sensitive for itself. It is not a self through transparence, like thought, which only thinks its object by assimilating it, by constituting it, by transforming it into thought. It is a self through confusion, narcissism, through inherence of the one who sees in that which he sees, and through inherence of sensing in the sensed—a self, therefore, that is caught up in things, that has a front and a back, a past and a future. . . .[397]

The “self” Merleau-Ponty characterises here is more complex and less isolated than the “psychic entity” that Bishop draws from those last few lines. There is room around it (including behind its “back”) for what is referred to in *The Visible and the Invisible* as “intercorporeality”, which is to say, that the subject experiences the world from within a general field that is also “open for other Narcissuses”.[398] In order to understand how the individual relates to the work from within that more general field, let us begin from the subject’s own (“narcissistic”) point of view and, via an analysis of the *“separation-difference”* by which their perspective upon the work is made possible, work our way out of that narcissistic enclosure so as to bring the audience and their place in general into view (the surroundings that give rise to its “confusion”).

5.1.3. The Narcissistic Viewer

The subject’s inherent “narcissism” stems from the fact that it is “visible and sensitive for itself”. Everything is experienced from the hereness of its body: from within and through the thickness of its flesh. My perception of artworks gives rise to their “internal equivalent in me; they arouse in me a carnal formula of their presence”, yet always from “the corner of my own landscape”.[399] Through the event of the encounter it can seem from the subject’s perspective as though they are the principal instigator of that event. The work presents itself for them, and it is experienced by them directly. It is they who react to it and interpret it

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[396] Ibid., 195.
[397] Merleau-Ponty, “Eye and Mind”, 162-163.
[398] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 141.
[399] Merleau-Ponty, “Eye and Mind”, 164/162.

according to the curiosity that is aroused within them, or the memories and thoughts that their own consciousness brings to the fore. In turn, these derive from their own past experiences and immediate or distant future projects. The same could also be said of their own past experiences of this place, or even other places like it. For even if the viewer had not visited Tate Modern itself before, but had visited other large museums like it, they may come to feel more firmly *implaced* than those who had not. They might feel better prepared to engage with the work before them. Furthermore, those already familiar with this place would have encountered it as having been fundamentally altered by the installation compared with their previous visits. Its reconfiguration would then have called upon them to reconfigure their own relation with it.

The encounter with a work like *The Weather Project* could have brought a whole host of thoughts and reflections to mind. Bishop explains how, from the artist's own perspective, all "allusions to 'nature' in his work are not designed to form an environmentalist critique".[400] Nevertheless, the audience's own environmental concerns will inevitably be foregrounded as they engage with his work. The artwork's meaning emerges from within its *scope*, into which the audience enters as part of that more general lived event of the museum visit. In so much as that visit (and by extension, this encounter) constitutes an occasion in their lives, there is no clear and defining moment when their vision suddenly shifts from an everyday to an exclusively aesthetic mode. That is not to say that certain analytic modes of looking do not become active through the encounter. As already considered in the section on *"style"* in chapter two, Merleau-Ponty was right to observe that the artist beholds the work in terms of their own experience of art making in this way. Similarly, the historian's learning will imbue their encounter with a historical dimension, just as the philosopher will always be philosophically inclined in their engagement with artworks. Yet, that still does not mean that the subject's own personal history and current situation simply dissolves as a consequence of their entering into that event.

When Merleau-Ponty remarks that a red dress is a "punctuation in the field of red things" and other "red garments", he is drawing attention to the fact that all vision is simultaneously an association.[401] Having experienced other things which present themselves in that colour (or variations thereof), the viewing subject has internalised those things in terms of their carnal presence. Yet, in so much as colour itself does not exist as a pure quality due to its always being caught up with a texture, density, scale, or function, ("a variant in another dimension of variation" as he writes), so the colour cannot simply be disassociated from those past experiences and made pure.[402] In turn, this suggests that Eliasson's sun did not just stand out in relation to

[400] Bishop, *Installation Art,* 77.
[401] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 132.
[402] Ibid.

its immediate surroundings — the grey walls and reflective surface above it — but rather that it was also set it up in relation to "the world as whole" as an "inexhaustible depth" as Renaud Barbaras writes.[403]

The viewer inevitably draws upon their own experience of the *place-world* beyond the gallery during the event of the encounter, but that is not necessarily to say that their interpretations do not draw from the actual work itself in terms of its *principal theme*. The work's *aboutness* is constituted by way of its audience's communal presence. So long as the themes or reflections drawn from the work are actually present within either the *principal theme* itself, or observed in the way the work *objectively functions* within its *scope,* then the "metaphorical readings" that Malpas warns us against, whereby "the viewer looks to find in the artwork a metaphor for an aspect of the viewer's life or experience, [thereby importing] into the work something that may not properly belong to it", can be avoided.[404] To claim, for instance, that this work manifested something of society's growing anxiety regarding the rapid escalation of global warming would be entirely reasonable without constituting an "environmental critique" as such. For there is no escaping the fact that Eliasson's artwork presented a sun in relation to a diverse congregation of people. It elicits reflections regarding the nature of our collective relation with the actual sun, therefore, which is not the same as imposing a concrete meaning upon the artwork.

As Merleau-Ponty observes, "the silent persuasion of the sensible is Being's unique way of manifesting itself without becoming positivity, without ceasing to be ambiguous and transcendent".[405] Indeed, things in the world tend to be encountered as inherently "ambiguous" through transcendence, both theirs and ours. What distinguishes the work from the world in general in this sense is simply the fact that we are invited to consider its meaning directly. This is what enables the work's meaning to evolve, a point Merleau-Ponty also underlines:

> As for the history of art works, if they are great, the sense we give to them later on has issued from them. It is the work itself that has opened the field from which it appears in another light. It changes itself and becomes what follows; the interminable reinterpretations to which it is legitimately susceptible change it only in itself. And if the historian unearths beneath its manifest content the surplus and thickness of meaning, the texture which held the promise of a long history, this active manner of being, then, this possibility he unveils in the work, this monogram he finds there—all are grounds for a philosophical meditation.[406]

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403 Renaud Barbaras, "A Phenomenology of Life", in *The Cambridge Companion to Merleau-Ponty*, ed. Taylor Carman & Mark Wrathall, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 228.
404 Malpas, *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place*, 247.
405 Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 214.
406 Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind", 179.

Veronique Fotí observes that Merleau-Ponty does in fact appear to contradict his own claims in "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence" here, in which the historical view is considered to obscure the work's meaning by inhibiting the viewer's direct engagement with the artist's *style* (this limitation was also considered previously in section "4.6" on "Social Participation").[407] What appears to have shifted by the time he wrote "Eye and Mind" is his appreciation for the complex intentionality given rise to as a consequence of the viewer's stepping into the "field" that the work "has opened". By opening up this field (or "scope"), the artwork also opens itself up to interpretation, and, as Fóti observes, comes to be "possessed of an active and self-renewing identity, and thus exhibits a differential fecundity".[408] Merleau-Ponty also adds that "there is nothing wrong with letting a layman, speaking from his memory of a few paintings and books, tell us how painting enters into his reflections", because even the layman, in drawing from past learning, imbues the painting with a meaning that is both theirs and simultaneously its own.[409]

5.1.4 The Viewer through "Confusion" via the *"Separation-Difference"*

So far, we have only considered one side of the viewer's being in relation to the work. Yet, due to the fact that the subject "simultaneously sees and [can also be] seen" from the outside, Merleau-Ponty argues that there is also a "coiling over of the visible upon the visible" to be taken into account, which constitutes the viewer's perception from beyond the edges of its own body.[410] Our body, he writes, "is a being of two leaves", and so whatever the perceiving body directs itself towards also imposes itself upon it from without.[411] Through this "return of the visible upon itself", there is simultaneously a "carnal adherence of the sentient to the sensed and of the sensed to the sentient", or a relation of both "reversibility" and "intertwining" at play.[412] In consequence, I am inescapably caught up in a "circle which I do not form", and which, nevertheless, "traverses", "constitutes" and "forms me" "as a seer" from without.[413]

The viewer is a subject through "confusion", therefore, in so much as while it may appear as though they constitute the world by directing themselves towards it and reflecting upon it according to their own experience and learning, there is equally a sense in which it always eludes their understanding. Embodied experience is inherently ambiguous and unpredictable precisely because it is amidst and exposed to the things, people, places and events it perceives. Relative to these, it is limited by its own point of view, directionality, position, physique and perceptual range, providing consciousness with only a partial view of

[407] Veronique M. Fóti, "Painterly and Phenomenological Interrogation in Eye and Mind", 50.
[408] Ibid.
[409] Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind", 179.
[410] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 140.
[411] Ibid., 137.
[412] Ibid., 142/138.
[413] Ibid., 140.

the world that is never entirely resolved. This is what Merleau-Ponty means in the passage cited at the beginning of this section by the "other side" of the subject's "power of looking".[414] Due to having been constituted from the outside – from across the gap between its own body and the things held within the surrounding environment – Merleau-Ponty can say that "my body simultaneously sees and is seen", presenting itself as an "enigma" due to our experience of it being so one-sided. Indeed, the claim that it "sees itself seeing; it touches itself touching" should also be interpreted as alluding to perception's inherently limited nature: the subject thus perceives the world in terms of, or according to, its own limitations.

With this in mind, it is important that we do not to allow this enigmatic aspect of experience to be interpreted as evidence that the world stands in opposition to us, as though the world and the things within it are obstacles that get in the way of our understanding. For this intrinsic obscurity which permeates through perception is reflective of its own embodied nature, which is its *style* of being in relation to the world. Whilst we perceive the world in a way that appears to sharply distinguish "us" from "it" (the origin of our narcissism), this point of view obscures the fact that we are simultaneously a part of it, caught up in its "flesh". Lawrence Haas stresses this point and calls upon us to interpret this gap between our body and the things of this world as manifesting a "difference" (as opposed to "opposition") through "separation". This would be a *"separation-difference",* whereby "the self is not divorced from the world, but rather is a part of the world that opens to it".[415] As Merleau-Ponty himself writes, this gap is a matter of "overlapping and fission, identity and difference", according to which the possibility of meaningful perception and the life it makes possible emerge.[416] This gap is the very condition of perceptual and reflective experience: "ontologically essential" according to Haas, and "an ultimate notion" in Merleau-Ponty's own word.[417] It is a "flesh" that all things in the world share in common, which brings us to a point where the *intercorporeality* of this particular situation can be brought into view.

Just as this *"separation-difference"* "traverses" and "forms" me from without, so "this relation of the visible with itself" is able to "traverse [and] animate other bodies as well as my own".[418] Only by recognising this gap in terms of its constituting capacity, therefore – that is, in the process of its articulating itself from within us – can we come to understand that "the visible which is yonder is simultaneously my landscape", and by extension, "that elsewhere it also closes over upon itself and that there are other landscapes besides my own." [419] From the perspective of other people around me, I actively contribute to the "other side" of their "power of looking" through my *implacement* alongside them. There is incessant overlapping at play here,

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[414] Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind", 162-163.
[415] Lawrence Hass, *Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy*, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2008),130.
[416] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 142.
[417] Lawrence Haas, *Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy*, 130. / Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 140.
[418] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 140.
[419] Ibid., 140-141.

this "intertwining" of all things, places and subjective points of view, occurs through this "coiling over" and the "reversibility" which characterises this *"separation-difference"*, or, this communal *"flesh".*

Flesh is that by which this place, the artwork installed within it, and the audience present during that installation, were all bound and ultimately caught up in the ongoing event of the artwork's display and encounter. As we have already seen though, it would be overly simplistic to conceive of this complex theory of *separation-difference* as merely the contingent co-presence of these various elements in terms of their perceived contribution to that event - this would be to reduce that event to a mere inventory of its parts. Merleau-Ponty is clear that *flesh* "is not contingency, chaos, but a texture that returns to itself and conforms to itself".[420] If we are not able to understand this relation in those terms, therefore, we must consider more closely the nature of this relation as that "dehiscence or fission" that constitutes the *flesh's* "own mass".[421] Renaud Barbaras observes how the "relation between the visible and the invisible" aspects of perception is such that, because the invisible "is constitutive of visibility", it is also "synonymous with meaning, or condition or possibility".[422] With this in mind, let us now consider what meanings, conditions and possibilities might be drawn from that gap through the event of *The Weather Project's* display, between all those bodies present, that place itself and the work. Returning to Casey's analysis of the glance provides us with some insight into how we might go about this:

> The eyes are telling. Instead of saying that the eyes are merely the 'mirrors of the soul', that is, their passive reflection, we should rather say the person comes to expression there, shows himself or herself in them in a uniquely revealing way. When a person glances with his or her eyes, then, that person looks out in a most expressive manner, one that brings the entirety of the person to bear on the circumstance.[423]

What Casey's remarks allow us to see is how this spectacle, as it is grasped by the viewer from within, is simultaneously expressed outwardly. This means that they contribute to that event in which they are immersed at the same time as taking it in. This is not, however, the only way in which the entirety of each person present would have been brought "to bear on the circumstance". In *The World on Edge*, Casey also draws our attention to how the "edges" of the body, be that the visible contours of the face or the more general movements and reflexes of the body, present a similar level of expressiveness. He writes that "bodily edges of every sort possess a unique vibrancy and responsivity that express themselves in a decisive malleability of modes, shapes, and contours".[424] Furthermore, these edges "enter into the domain of intersubjectively shared life at a meaningful level", by entering into "an arc of articulation that extends from

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[420] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 146.
[421] Ibid., 146.
[422] Renaud Barbaras, "A Phenomenology of Life", 228.
[423] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 56.
[424] Ibid., 225.

myself to others, and back again".[425] It is across that gap – not just between the viewer and the literal edges of the work and the hall, but also between the bodies of audience members that are littered all around them – that the *flesh* of this event manifests as a "texture that returns to itself and conforms to itself".[426]

> These semiotically charged edges are the critical purveyors of messages that are intended to influence other members of the species by letting them know what we think or want, particularly as it bears upon our relationship with them. The edges of these parts constitute a virtual cat's cradle of communication, outlining the direction of intended actions and the content of closely held thoughts. They act to specify these actions and thoughts — literally to express them — so as to bring them effectively into shared public domains.[427]

With regard to *The Weather Project's* congregating effect then, there was a communal "vibrancy" at play: a reverberation of that event as it emerged through that "spontaneous community" as it had come to *implacement* within the work's *scope*. It constituted what Casey refers to as an "always imperfect but necessary communicative matrix, a conjoint semiosis".[428] In this particular instance, this general communication would have been "imperfect" precisely because it was not reducible to purely aesthetic engagement on the audience's part. In so much as the work opened up a place for the audience to congregate within and did so by incorporating those bodies into its own spectacle, so their own style of *implacement* within it would have been incorporated into the spectacle that the artwork's installation had initiated.

To see this in action, we might consider how the interactions between all the different people present would have contributed to the overall soundscape of that event, imbuing it with a tone that might have been tranquil or joyful depending on the time of day or the day of the week. For anyone looking up at either the sphere or the ceiling above whilst lying down on the ground, they would have also been alert to the movement of people around them as those people made their own way through to the crowd, stepping between the clusters of bodies dispersed throughout the hall. The couple whispering and laughing quietly to one another would have been aware of the parents next to them trying to keep an eye on their children, who were desperate to run around. Even though these bodies were not engaged in verbal communication, they were nevertheless engaged in corporeal communication: their respective modes of *implacement* giving rise to this "conjoint semiosis", which in turn revealed the general meaning of that event. From the individual viewer's perspective, the work's *principal theme* was experienced through the event it sparked, which would then have come to underpin their sense of the work's *aboutness*. What comes to the fore as a consequence of this analysis is the place-specificity of this event: what Malpas calls its *"placedness"*.

[425] Ibid., 228.
[426] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 146.
[427] Ibid., 227.
[428] Casey, *The World on Edge*, 228.

5.2. *Placedness*

In the essay "Place and Singularity", Malpas argues against purely visual representations of places. He does so on the basis that such approaches mislead us as to what distinguishes them from one another. They give rise to a "postcard idea" of place whereby only those features of places considered visually extraordinary are deemed worthy of our attention.[429] Yet, something of the "interiority" of place remains hidden from view when place is confronted in this way, which comes to present itself as something more akin to a "site" according to Casey's conceptual framework. Malpas argues that our tendency is to focus too closely on the "generic and the instrumental" aspects of places, or to look "outwards to what appears before us rather than to ourselves or to that in which both we and what appears are held together".[430] In so doing, something of our own situation in relation to that place and its contents also remains concealed from us, and the question of who we are in relation to that place remains open.[431] As Malpas remarks, however, "interiority of place does not exist as a pure interiority apart from any exteriority".[432] Our aim in this section will be, therefore, to reflect on Tate Modern in terms of its interior configuration and the way it *accommodates* people and works of art from within, whilst also remaining attentive to how it stands in relation to the *place-world* in general. The first point up for discussion is how place, in its singularity, manifests a "regional" style according to Malpas, which is a significant feature of what has been referred to so far as the *"accommodation"* it offers up. We will then move on to consider how that regionality is lived by the embodied subjects present within that place and how it implicates itself through the event of the encounter.

5.2.1. Regionality

To begin with, Malpas argues that by focusing closely upon how place holds us within its midst, we become more acutely aware of how we are "orientated by its currents and directions".[433] In turn, this allows us to "gain a feeling for the patterns and rhythms of place, of its own movements, of the density of the places within it, of the possibilities that it enables and the demands it imposes".[434] So far, this all sounds very much like Casey's notion of *implacement* as it occurs in response to the *operative intentionality* of that place. However, Malpas goes further than Casey by claiming that the way in which place imposes itself upon us from within also manifests something of the style of that broader region in which it is embedded. Whereas for Casey, regionality is given rise to by way of the movement of bodies between places, for Malpas, regionality is observable in the concreteness of the environment itself.

[429] Malpas, "Place and Singularity", 68.
[430] Ibid., 78.
[431] Ibid.
[432] Ibid., 84.
[433] Ibid., 79.
[434] Ibid.

In order to illustrate this point, Malpas analyses a poem by C. K. Stead entitled *After the Wedding*. In this poem, the author recounts his memories of a farm he used to holiday at as a child and the pathways he navigated around the grounds. What is interesting about this poem for Malpas is that, through its first reading, it appears to describe that place only in terms of the sort of "generic features" he has already warned us against adopting. Allusions to the "wooden veranda" or the "hot dry garden" with "dogs panting" in it and various "gum trees" overhead, for instance, could refer to many places apart from this one.[435] Yet, there is something in the slow and careful pace of the poem, the author's route through that place — the "stillness" of the water and the "shafts of light" striking down through the "gum trees" — the several turns of phrase more common in that part of the world than elsewhere — which brings to expression "a certain Australasian mode of place".[436] The features in and of themselves are not unique and so Malpas claims that place does not derive its singularity from them directly either. Nevertheless, there is something "in the very placedness of those features" which means that "the singularity of place also extends to the singularity of what appears within that place".[437]

Whilst place derives its singularity from the *placedness* of its features, those features are in turn here considered to derive their own singularity from that place. There is a reversibility at play here too, therefore. However, in so much as place both "draws us inwards, into its own singularity and interiority" and simultaneously "projects us outwards to the other places with which it is necessarily entangled", this means that place should not be reduced to its internal configuration since it only attains its distinctive cohesion through its embeddedness within the configurative complexity of the *place-world* beyond it. What is more, the fact that many works of art do move between different places means that it would be short-sighted to characterise somewhere like Tate Modern purely on the basis of its contents. Portability is an important aspect of many artworks as we saw earlier on in the case of *Guernica*, yet just because they move between places, that is not to say that their singularity does not stem from place, for they are always somewhere, and can never hold the same place as another person or thing. The same could also be said of the human body then, which moves between different places all the time, and yet is only aware of itself through its *implacement*.

Malpas's observations allow us to understand how, despite the fact that the museum's contents change over time, the museum nevertheless maintains its identity because much of that place's more general set up will remain the same. Even if it undergoes a complete renovation, it will retain much of its cohesion as long as its external and internal configurative-relations remain similar. From inside Tate Modern, the Turbine Hall

[435] Ibid., 74.
[436] Ibid., 77.
[437] Ibid., 76.

exemplifies this: its having been stripped back and exposed reflecting the architects' practice of trying to "to reinforce what the site offers before trying to introduce new things".[438] From outside, de Meuron observes how the original building's "placement" was "a deliberate answer to St Paul's Cathedral on the opposite side of the Thames", and how the "two landmarks are aligned and have a plainly visible vertical presence in the cityscape of London".[439] The spectacular views from the balconies on level three of the original building, or the viewing platform on level ten of the new one, actively accentuate this relation from within. Furthermore, as part of Tania Bruguera's recent Turbine Hall commission, the original Boiler House building has been renamed in honour of local activist Natalie Bell. Tate Exchange on level five of the new building also runs programmes involving local schools, universities, research and activist groups, in order to build relationships with the local community through creative practices.

In terms of the immediately surrounding area, there are also many traces of this side of the river's not so distant industrial past that tie in with the old power station's appearance. The discolouration through years of pollution of the brick houses and railway arches that stretch across the Southwark neighbourhood allude to this past, as do many of the old warehouse buildings long since renovated there. That the area maintains aspects of its past in this way, even in spite of its development, means that it is much more than what Tim Cresswell describes as a "meaningful location", i.e., "spaces" that people have become "attached to" and projected meaning onto afterwards.[440] Places are encountered as already meaningful prior to our arrival in them. Regardless of whether we appreciate the industrial edges still so evident on this side of the river, there is no getting away from them, just as there is no avoiding the cold, grey skies and reduced hours of daylight in the winter, or the crowds in the summer months. These elements are representative of this region of the city's own *"style"* or "significance" (as Merleau-Ponty writes of Paris).[441] They impose themselves upon us from without, impressing their discolouration, texture, temperature, humidity and smell upon the surfaces of our bodies from all around.

Places also tend to inter-animate one another through these configurative relations. Southwark was not originally designed to be visited by significant numbers of people as it is now, so when Tate Modern's development was announced, the area was flooded with funding and an "ambitious programme of improvements" commenced.[442] These included "signage strategies and paving, as well as little squares and

[438] Jacques Herzog quoted from "Jaques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron in conversation with Chris Dercon", in *Tate Modern Building: A Museum for the 21st Century*, ed. Chris Dercon & Nicholas Serota, (London: Tate Publishing, 2016), 93-123. 94.
[439] Pierre de Meuron quoted in "Jaques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron in conversation", 97.
[440] Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction*, (Malden, London, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 7.
[441] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 328.
[442] Oliver Wainwright, "Lofts and Caves", in *Tate Modern Building: A Museum for the 21st Century*, ed. Chris Dercon & Nicholas Serota, (Tate Publishing: London, 2016), 27-47. 34.

pocket parks".[443] The first phase in Tate Modern's development thus triggered what is often referred to as the "Bilbao Effect", the term adopted by Beatriz Plaza to describe the rapid urban revival that occurred as a consequence of Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum's construction on the riverside of post-industrial Bilbao.[444] However, our intention here is to consider how this place in terms of its *placedness* might be understood to contribute to our experience of artworks from within the building. With this in mind, we had better go back inside. This will also allow us to consider Malpas's second point concerning the "singularity of the place as it stands in relation to the singularity of life."[445]

5.2.2. The *Placedness* and Singularity of a Life

Having spent some time already observing the Turbine Hall and the way in which at least one artist has engaged with it in the past, let us now go even deeper into the "labyrinthine underworld that lurks beneath" it: otherwise known as The Tanks.[446] Whilst undoubtedly an extraordinary feature of Tate's extension, this part of the building also makes its *placedness* quite explicit. Much like the turbine hall before it, the tanks of the old power station have been stripped back and cleaned out so as to expose the huge blocks of impenetrable concrete that surround these subterranean rooms. Many other original fixtures, including steps, ladders and steel support pillars, have also been left.

As we descend, the sounds our bodies make as we walk becomes noticeably reduced compared to the more open and expansive soundscape of the Turbine Hall. We are led not just deeper underground but also into tighter and darker spaces. Jacques Herzog remarks how new art "often requires dark rooms", and the tanks are very much a response to how art has developed over the past few decades, showing predominantly video installations, sound works and live performances.[447] Yet, this reduced space and light does not only serve such practical purposes, for it also marks a shift in terms of our broader relationship with the museum as a whole. Its materiality becomes even more prominent here than it is within the Turbine Hall. Due to the fact that all three of these rooms are effectively dead ends, the impenetrability of these walls imposes itself upon us more directly. The lack of natural light magnifies this all the more in that we become acutely aware of our situatedness within the subterranean foundations of the museum's gigantic structure. We feel enclosed in a way we do not in the exhibition spaces upstairs, where the walls are noticeably much thinner and often temporary. In contrast, in the tanks we have no idea if there even is anything on the other side these walls.

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[443] Ibid.,
[444] See: Beatriz Plaza, "The Bilbao Effect (Guggenheim Museum Bilbao)", *Museum News* 86, no.5, (Sep-Oct, 2007).
[445] Malpas, "Place and Singularity", 76.
[446] Oliver Wainwright, "Lofts and Caves", 31.
[447] Jacques Herzog quoted in "Jaques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron in Conversation", 97.

In the summer of 2018, the tanks were reinstalled with a series of works that brought the enclosedness of these spaces to the fore in interesting ways. In the first room to the left as visitors begin their descent was Philippe Parreno and Pierre Huyghe's *No Ghost Just a Shell* (1999). This collective display consisted of various artworks by a group of invited artists that included Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Anna Lena Vaney and Liam Gillick – incorporating video, sound, neon, print and sculpture. Parreno and Huyghe invited these artists to develop projects around a manga character called Annlee whom they had purchased from a Japanese agency that develops figures for cartoon films, comics, advertising and video games.

One of the cheaper characters from the catalogue, we are told that the artists did in fact rescue her from a short life in a cartoon.[448] They then went about redesigning her so as to improve her appearance and also set up a video animation facility so that her character could then be developed. When the project ended, a certificate was created that gave Annlee back to herself. The legally binding document transferred her copyright to a foundation which belonged only to her, thus simultaneously constituting her "freedom", and yet, as "a character without agency within the real-world legal arena", also "her death".[449]

Due to the fact that Parreno and Huyghe "lent" the avatar out to other artists to use after having felt the need to "improve her appearance", Catherine Wood has highlighted the unsavoury tone of this project and likened its process to Annlee's being "pimped out".[450] By involving Annlee in different projects and activities (including video monologues, a poster of her, and a piece of music recorded by her), the intention had been to expose her to experiences that would otherwise not have been possible — the artists were bringing her to life in this way. Yet, it is also quite clearly the case that Annlee is trapped within these artworks which collectively constitute her character. Moreover, in so much as she exists at the collective will of the artists, she is effectively enslaved by them – this is especially true of her relationship with Parreno and Huyghe.

In theory, the works are all independent of one another, and yet there is a clear cohesiveness to them as a collective which, as Hans Ulrich Obrist points out, stems from the fact that this "community" of artists constitutes itself on "the basis of the same sign".[451] He also draws our attention to the fact that these distinct works were sold together as a unit, an event described as being of "considerable historical significance, being a very rare instance of the collecting of an exhibition rather than the separate sale of its component artworks".[452] More importantly, however, at least with regard to our current concerns, is how the project's unity is felt in the way these works draw this space together. This first exhibition space in the tanks is

[448] Catherine Wood, *Performance in Contemporary Art*, (London: Tate Publishing, 2018), 104.
[449] Ibid. 105.
[450] Ibid., 104.
[451] Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Pierre Huyghe and Phillipe Parreno: No Ghost in a Shell", in Daniel Birnbaum et al., *Defining Contemporary Art: 25 Years in 200 Pivotal Artworks,* (London, New York: Phaidon, 2011), 257.
[452] Ibid.

effectively divided into three distinct sections, and whenever works by multiple artists are presented here, they do usually tend to feel distinct. Yet, in this display, their apparent distinction is dissolved by the common thread of Annlee. It is as though, by walking around the works dispersed throughout the space, we are walking through Annlee's own psyche, the physical depths of the room coming to reflect the depths of Annlee's consciousness.

What is more, having seen photographs of these works exhibited in more traditional white-cube gallery spaces, I would also argue that the impenetrability of these dead-end rooms actively accentuated our sense of Annlee's containment or imprisonment within the works, thus bringing specific aspects of this project's *aboutness* to the fore. Herzog remarks that, as architects, both he and de Meuron had a responsibility to consider the people who enter into the building, who "do not want to be exposed to unvarying conditions".[453] It would also appear, however, that this variation functions to draw out different aspects of the work's *principal theme,* and in turn, of its *aboutness.*

There was particularly strong evidence to support this claim within the second room, where audiences had the opportunity to witness Jordan Wolfson's *Coloured Sculpture,* a moving robotic figure consisting of a Huckleberry Finn/Pinocchio-like puppet operated by chains. These chains yanked and pulled the puppet around the square mount it is suspended from, almost as if the puppet was being forced to dance for us. Meanwhile, motion sensors in its eyes enabled it to register and follow audience members around the room whilst simultaneously having its body and skull slammed against the ground at regular intervals throughout the performance. It is what Wood describes as a "cycle of abuse and entertainment" and is very much representative of Wolfson's practice of creating "extreme images of performance detached from human agency".[454]

The square in which the puppet was suspended had been fenced around, meaning that the audience could lean on it whilst watching the performance, much like an old-fashioned freak show. It was set up towards the middle of the room and all lighting was directed upon it. One could choose to watch from close up or further back in the shadows, therefore, and people could also see one another from the other side of the performance. Being Tate Modern, there were families present, some of whom left quite quickly whilst others found it all rather amusing. The figure was clearly a puppet and we did not have to be concerned for his safety, therefore. Yet, just like Annlee next door, there was something sinister about seeing this boy-like puppet being presented down there in The Tanks, in what came to seem a dungeon-like space as a consequence of the shackled puppet's display. Furthermore, the fact that it looked like a child and that we

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[453] Jacques Herzog quoted in "Jaques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron in conversation with Chris Dercon", 102.
[454] Catherine Wood, *Performance in Contemporary Art*, 107.

watched it being smashed against the ground alongside actual children and their families accentuated this aspect of the work all the more forcefully.

While it can seem that we have been totally removed from the ongoing world outside by the time we arrive in the tanks, the city beyond the museum's walls still implicates itself in our *implacement* through the materials the museum is constructed from. Furthermore, because we have arrived here from there — because we have already felt the immensity of this metropolis and the sheer numbers of bodies inhabiting it alongside our own — I would argue that this functions to heighten our sense of these characters' own vulnerability from within. Indeed, the abusive dimension of these artworks is felt all the more keenly from within a city that is so immense that people could easily get lost or go missing within it. The presence of so many children and families alongside us also adds something to our experience that the pristine presentation of a private gallery would not. The vulnerability of these characters is made all the more explicit as a consequence of their *placedness*. Alongside the artwork, we also witness children being exposed to this event and their parents being called upon to decide whether or not it is appropriate for them to stay. After all, whilst all art is in its own way fiction, its significance emerges only through its relationship with the real world. To be exposed to its extremities is also to be exposed to the potential for the same within the world itself. Here, that potentiality is felt as a potential possibility of this place. It is now time to make our way upstairs to the main collection, in which natural light is ample and a more leisurely atmosphere awaits.

5.3. Movement

Having considered where we are in relation to the broader *place-world* and how the museum's *placedness* can influence our experience of the artworks held herein, in this third and final part we will consider the theme of "movement". In the essay "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time", Casey characterises movement as fundamental to place, and that aspect which most clearly distinguishes it from "site". In the same essay, he outlines three modes of movement that will prove useful for our discussion of how this event unfolds and how the style of cultivation that the audience performs in relation to this place manifests: staying in place, moving within a place, and moving between places.[455] However, considering that "moving between" is already so clearly implied by the overall structure of this chapter and has already received some attention in the assessment just made of the regional dimension of this museum's own style of *accommodation*, I will only focus on the first two modes here, that of "staying in place" and "moving around place". In this part, we will focus on the galleries in which the museum's permanent collection is held, and once again, our movement "between" different rooms and artworks they hold will be covered along the way. It is also important that we keep in mind the insights we have gained from the previous two parts, i.e., that this movement is performed alongside others, and in so being, is also shaped by its *placedness*.

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[455] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 326-327.

5.3.1. Staying in Place

By "staying in place", Casey has in mind the body's capacity to remain still within a place, the most obvious example in this context being the sort of lingering we do in front of artworks when we look at them. When someone is engrossed in a work like a painting, for example, we generally consider them to be stationary. Indeed, in photographs of museums, the people presented generally appear to be standing still. Yet, as Casey observes, the body inevitably moves even if it remains in the same place.[456]

Let us consider the experience of being in a quiet gallery space. The furthest reaches of the "Media Networks" display can be a good place to find some peace within the Tate Modern, especially during the week. This is because it is found right at the very top of the Natalie Bell building, meaning that fewer people tend to reach this location. Now let us imagine that there is another person there alongside us. In a situation like this, we hear the sounds of their movements in an otherwise silent room and, similarly, our sense of our own sonic impact upon this space is heightened. Our relative stillness can bring a whole host of sounds to the fore in fact, which then accompany our encounters with the artworks in front of us. On top of these shuffling body movements, our companion's sniffing, or perhaps even the vibration of a phone in their pocket, we might also hear the whirring of the air conditioning unit from above or other sounds entering in from elsewhere. As the artwork draws us in, so place closes in upon us.

Situations like this one also underline the intercommunication going on between ourselves and our fellow audience members, even though we do not tend to speak. We protect these conditions for one another through our relative silence and stillness, and even the slightest movement from them can contribute to the presentation of the room from our point of view. This other person becomes a part of its scene, and should they remain in front of a particular painting for some time, we might wait for them to have finished looking at it before going over to look ourselves, so as not to encroach upon their personal space. In this way, they also implicate themselves within our own future movements.

Through this process, there will inevitably be the odd glance between ourselves and the other person. This is usually little more than us sizing up this place and display whilst taking our companion's own movement (and experience) into account. Nevertheless, as Janet Cardiff draws her audience's attention to in the sound walk she produced for MOMA, *MOMA Walk* (1999), these glances can also penetrate much deeper. In these walks, Cardiff speaks to her audiences through headphones and directs them through places, often whilst developing narratives from the landscapes she passes through. Here she directs the listener to a painting by

[456] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place", 326.

Frida Kahlo, "the self-portrait with her sitting on a chair in a man's suit".[457] Once participants arrive in front of the painting, Cardiff remarks on the man standing beside her at the same time as she observes the painting with us.

> There's a man next to me looking at the painting. Little white hairs on his neck, and at his temples, wrinkles around his eyes. Now he's looking at me. Let's go into the next room.[458]

This interaction is left open to our interpretation. However, it does show how the slightest of glances from another person can alter our engagement with the gallery space entirely. Whilst the glance of another might at times be welcomed, we might also wish to deflect it, and the quickest way of doing so being to move on ourselves. As Casey remarks, it is often by way of the glance that we acknowledge other human beings in their humanity, which, in a situation like this one, compels us to be respectful of their space and the atmosphere in general so as to allow them to enjoy the display.[459] As was highlighted at the end of the first section, however, the eyes can also be what give us away, which is to say that it is also by way of the glance that our prejudices and desires are brought to the surface of our interaction with others. If these are not kept in check, they can be detrimental to the experience of the other people close by. Let us now consider some other examples of "staying in place" occurring simultaneously with our own.

Security guards often remain at specific posts in the gallery, as do gallery attendants, and a very strange intercommunication can arise between the viewer and these people, which can be quite distinct from those described above. For, whilst my fellow audience members are caught up in the same activity as me (which means we often have our backs to one another), in the case of these members of staff, their task is precisely to watch over the room in which we are standing. One can get a sense of being watched under such circumstances, which can easily distract us from the display by not allowing us to settle — we might perhaps feel rushed — or even self-conscious that we are not spending as much time in front of a particular piece as we should. What is intriguing about this situation is that almost any kind of recognition from either party — the briefest of smiles, a nod of the head, or a subdued hello — alleviates this tension considerably. Inter-acknowledgement of each other's presence and activity is vital to the encounter in this way. We build community, be it with the staff or fellow audience members, which in turn enables the artworks on display to *re-emplace* us all the more effectively.

In addition to these other bodies within our immediate vicinity, there are also other people in other parts of the museum caught up in a similar lingering mode of *implacement,* albeit for different reasons. They are

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[457] Mirjam Schaub, Janet Cardiff: the walk book, (Vienna: Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, 2005), 276.
[458] Ibid.
[459] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 340.

sitting down on the slope of the turbine hall or on the comfortable chairs of the balconies or bars: chatting, charging their phones and people watching. Furthermore, staff across the building are standing or sitting at tills, bars and information desks, and there are school children lining the stairs. It is easy to think of these stationary bodies as if they are not contributing to place through their non-movements, yet the truth is that their collective stillness sets the tempo of this place-event as it unfolds. For, in so much as we tend to get caught up in the *operative intentionality* of places, so if everyone was moving at the same time (especially on a busy day) my body would find it difficult on its own to find the sort of corporeal equilibrium that so many artworks demand. In truth, Tate Modern swings between extremes in this respect.

Due to the large crowds of people that flood these galleries at the weekends and during holiday periods, the architecture critic and journalist Jonathan Glancey once described Tate Modern as “a cross between a brutalist mall and the Seven Circles of Hell”: little more than “corridors for crowds to tramp through in search of novelty, rarely stopping to look at the art on display”.[460] Glancey clearly interprets the mass movement of people through the galleries as being detrimental to the artworks held within this space in terms of their capacity to elicit encounters effectively. It is interesting that in this case the movement itself becomes the focus over and above the collection on display — and mass movement specifically — as though movement itself were detrimental to, or not in keeping with, the experience of art.

On the one hand, we can certainly understand Glancey’s point. Crowded galleries set up what Merleau-Ponty would call a complex “perceptual syntax” between ourselves and the artworks installed there.[461] Our visit is complicated by the abundance of other bodies in the place, our navigation through it becoming something we have to think about. There are crowds to be overcome, which also makes it difficult to remain in one place for too long. Furthermore, there is also a sense in which the overcrowded gallery actively reduces the building’s own *accommodating* capacity: too much activity undermining the solidarity of its structure and the sense of permanence it exudes.

Kirsten McShine observes how the fact that the permanent works in a museum’s collection have fixed places is comforting while also cultivating a sense of shared memory within that place.[462] Furthermore, Michaela Giebelhausen underlines the importance of Tate Modern's presentation in this regard, how it draws from its “industrial past” and yet is “conscious of the ‘white cube’ aesthetic”, thus blending old and new in interesting

[460] Jonathan Glancey quoted in: Oliver Wainwright, “Lofts and Caves”, 33.
[461] Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, 42.
[462] Kirsten McShine, “Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect”, in Bettina Messias Carbonell, ed., *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts,* 491-503.

ways.[463] This imbues the contemporary feel of the galleries with a sense of the building's history, and ultimately, a sense of permanence.[464]

> The raw oak floors, slightly soiled from use, and the heavy iron floor grills, invest the otherwise pristine white interiors with the semblance of industrial roughness. Apart from obvious differences in size, the "feel" of the galleries is homogeneous and permanent. Partitions are conceived as movable walls rather than temporary structures. This gives every layout the appearance of permanence. Despite regular changes to the permanent displays and to the layouts of temporary exhibitions, the interiors of Tate Modern seem to configure the museum as monument.[465]

This is a sense in which the large and often very noisy crowds at weekends as alluded to by Glancey, combined with the busy shops and bustling bars and cafes, might be considered to undermine this monumental dimension of the museum by allowing transience to overwhelm it. His claim that these crowds "seek" novelty reflects something of the festive atmosphere that can sometimes dominate, especially when there are special events and performances going on. Particularly the modernist works and others that call for a contemplative attitude from their audiences suffer under such circumstances, as do any artworks which are not novel in the sense of being "eye-catching".

Indeed, anyone who has visited Tate Modern during the Christmas period or during the summer holidays will be aware not just of the significant levels of noise that can be generated there, but also of the number of people taking photographs and videos of works held in the collection, not to mention selfies and group shots in front of the more famous artworks. Lists of "Must See" works and "Collection Highlights" available via the website, app, or museum programme, mean that the collection's most prominent artworks are often surrounded by clusters of people having a quick look simply in order to tick that artist off their list. This has two significant implications for how we come to see the works themselves.

Firstly, even for those of us not taking photographs, the rows of cameras held out in front of the bodies of other people can create barriers between the surface of the work and our own bodies. This occurs either because those people and their cameras get in our way and obstruct our direct view, or otherwise, it is simply that their screens enter into our peripheral view and distract us. We become distanced from the artworks in the sense that we are no longer engaged with the work's surface directly, but rather we are trying to engage with the surface from the other side of this fence of cameras that has been erected.

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[463] Michaela Giebelhausen, "Museum Architecture: A Brief History", Sharon MacDonald, ed., *A Companion to Museum Studies,* (Malden, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 239.
[464] Ibid.
[465] Ibid.

Secondly, for those people who are actually taking photos of artworks such as paintings or sculptures on camera phones, this could be interpreted as an extreme form of the kind of superficial viewing that was shown to be so Merleau-Ponty critical of in chapter four. That which the artist leaves in their wake, i.e., the traces of their presence in the slightest of brush marks and minutest of automatic decisions that gave rise to the work's overall *style*, are rendered invisible by such technology: the artwork becomes reduced to its mere image. By always having our phones with us, the extraordinary features of the world we encounter come to present themselves as photos to be taken, and our vision is redirected towards them on those terms. In consequence, the thickness of the paint, through which the work's *style* came to be *sedimented* and its *principal theme embodied*, comes to present itself as a mere surface as opposed to the *embodiment* of a lived event.

This effect on vision is undoubtedly amplified by the sheer volume of advertising scattered throughout the building in the form of posters, flyers and wall designs, which often carry the images of more famous artworks from the collection. Should you choose to enter a shop before the galleries, then it is impossible to miss the shelves full of postcards or museum guides carrying the very same popular images. At Tate Modern especially, by the time we arrive to a work like Picasso's *Weeping Woman* (1937), it is likely that we will have already passed by its image multiple times. In consequence, its general form will have impressed itself upon us against our will many times over before the artwork's true carnal formula (i.e., its actual *principal theme*) has had the opportunity to create its equivalent in us. In turn, we become desensitised to the internal functionality of artworks like paintings because their inherent *style* is de-activated through overexposure.

Glancey is not merely criticising the popularity of the museum, but more specifically, the mall-like environment cultivated by the museum and the general tone of the *implacement* it gives rise to. In terms of the different styles of *implacement* that are *accommodated* (and also actively *cultivated*) by the museum, Tate Modern offers a great deal more to its visitors than simply the artworks on display. Aside from the cafes, bars and restaurants scattered throughout the building and up to six shops open at any one time, there is also a cinema and a programme of special events running throughout the year. These include early-morning and late-night openings, book fairs and launches, workshops, concerts and DJ sets. All of this combined gives rise to a great deal of movement from within.

Yet, it is necessary to keep in mind that much of this activity does enable the museum to generate the revenue that allows the majority of the building to remain open and free of charge all year round. Programmes of events like these also allow the museum to reach a much wider public than might otherwise be possible, which boosts membership subscriptions and fulfils many of the criteria set for it by public funding bodies, which compel it to nurture public engagement with the arts. By not taking these real-world necessities into account, by insisting the museum should be both pure and free to enter, we inevitably run

into the danger of misunderstanding the artworks themselves. For the truth is that a great deal of art emerges as a response to what is happening in museums, which also means that art evolves relative to these conditions as offered up from within. As Kinston McShine remarks in the essay "Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect", the "fascinating thing about the relationship between artists and museums is that artists have studied every aspect of the museum, as if anatomising an organism".[466]

One of the features of this busy environment that Glancey draws our attention to is the number of queues there are dotted around the building.[467] Yet, even this most mundane aspect of the museum's ongoing functionality is open to manipulation and interrogation by the artist, as Roman Ondak's *Good Feelings in Good Times* (2003) shows us. Ondak's work consists of an artificially created queue made up of actors or volunteers, and whilst it is intended for museum environments, it can also be performed elsewhere. It is deliberately placed where it would make sense for a queue to be but it does not lead anywhere in particular. People often end up joining the queue which, after an allotted amount of time, is dispersed suddenly and to the confusion of those who did. For those who recognise the artwork from afar, it functions as something like a social sculpture to be observed through the crowds of people or from the next room.

Wood characterises Ondak's practice as investigating "social codes, conventions, rituals and forms of exchange".[468] It brings something of our collective cultivation of this place to the fore: how we abide by these basic social structures that underpin it and allow it to function, thus revealing just one of the many "intentional threads" that bind bodies to this place as a "common complex of relations".[469] In line with Merleau-Ponty's observations on reflection itself in the preface to *Phenomenology of Perception*, the performance ultimately "slackens the intentional threads which attach us to the world and thus brings them to our notice".[470] This artwork has been performed in various places throughout the building over the years and positively thrives on busy gallery spaces.

5.3.2 Moving within a Place

In the essay "The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum", Rosalind Krauss also expresses a concern for how older artworks within modern museum collections have come to be engaged with by audiences, but this time in terms of what she interprets as a consequence of the presence of minimalist objects alongside them. She refers specifically to Dan Flavin's neon sculptures and describes how these artworks – by explicitly

[466] Kirsten McShine, "Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect", 491.
[467] Jonathan Glancey quoted in: Oliver Wainwright, "Lofts and Caves", 32.
[468] Catherine Wood, *Performance in Contemporary Art*, 152.
[469] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time", 325.
[470] Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, xv.

drawing us into the space around them – draw our attention towards the gallery space itself and its condition. These artworks function best against pristine white walls and clean surfaces to such a degree that it is almost as if the building itself becomes "the object" she writes.[471] In turn, this has implications for the other artworks on display.

> Compared to the scale of the Minimalist works, the earlier paintings and sculpture look impossibly tiny and inconsequential, like postcards, and the galleries take on a fussy, crowded, culturally irrelevant look, like so many curio shops.[472]

In addition, Krauss also remarks how Flavin's sculptures announce themselves to us prior to our actually setting eyes upon their *principal theme* due to the intense glow of the light emanating from them. We see their effect before we turn into the room where they are installed. In turn, this renders the various interconnected rooms themselves as more akin to parts of a landscape than simply blank and empty containers for encounters to occur from within. Relative to the large-scale presence of these objects then, that is, from within the landscape(s) they open up, the significance or impact of the earlier paintings and sculptures present is considered here to be reduced.

However, it is not so much that these artworks appear as "tiny and inconsequential" by way of empirical comparison, but rather, in much the same way Eliasson's installation did in the Turbine Hall, Flavin's sculptures, through the *objective functionality* that is characteristic of them, bring the blank, sparse gallery spaces together and turn them into a unified landscape. In consequence, the other artworks present no longer appear as distinct, self-contained artworks totally in command of themselves, but instead in terms of their contribution to that landscape in general. The most significant thing about minimalism (and abstract expressionism before it) was, as Kwon suggests in her own reflection, that it fundamentally altered the way gallery spaces came to be seen.[473] Krauss's statement above could be interpreted as alluding to such an effect.

In the second chapter, we considered Merleau-Ponty's reference to the "optimum distance", that distance from which each painting on a gallery wall demands to be seen, as evidence of the artwork's *scope*. What minimalist works effectively did was draw attention to this space and distance, this "separation-difference", and activate the viewer's own sense of their corporeal engagement with the artwork. This, it could be argued, ultimately functioned to dissolve the distinction between the artwork and its audience in a way which raised important questions as to the nature of the audience's relationship with these artworks and those places in

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[471] Rosalind Krauss, "The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum", *October* 54 (Autumn, 1990), 3-17. 4.
[472] Ibid.
[473] Kwon, *One Place after Another*, 13.

a much broader sense. In line with Malpas's allusion to the *placedness* of the artworks on display and of our own in relationship with them, the situation becomes as much about what "binds" us to a museum or gallery and its contents as about the artworks' objective presentation as such. As described in the first chapter (1.5), Museum critique emerged from precisely these sorts of concerns, and the encounters were rendered more placial than spatial in character as a result.

This landscape effect that Krauss draws our attention to is illustrated in Casey's reflections on how we move both within the galleries and the building in general. In *The World at a Glance,* Casey observes how we glance "not only at given artworks but also within the settings in which these same works are exhibited", by which he means to include the "space between paintings", as well as "the particular rooms or halls in which they are hung, and finally the entire building that houses them".[474] His observations draw from his own experience of walking through the Künstlermuseum in Düsseldorf, Germany, in which the permanent collection just so happens to be arranged in a similar way to Tate Modern's. That is, by themes rather than according to art-historical period or movement. For any visitor who is used to the more "traditional criteria of presentation, the effect is at first confusing, even bewildering" he says.[475]

Casey describes different modes of the body's self-navigation in relation to such a set-up. Firstly, "going through" refers to the viewer's passage through a room, potentially without even stopping to consider any particular work in detail. The glance is relatively stable and considered in this mode, and takes in all works "in succession and as part of a definite plan" — what it is looking out for is content of "special interest".[476] His own glance was caught by "three smaller side rooms that lead off from the larger room and, more particularly, by individual works held therein".[477] This mode of moving through raises three important considerations about somewhere like Tate Modern.

The first is concerned with the thematic display itself. Due to there being no fixed script to follow, it can sometimes feel as though we have been left to our own devices, to seek out content of "special interest" and make sense of these themes for ourselves. In many instances, the juxtaposition of such a diverse range of artworks can be overwhelming, particularly within the much larger galleries of the original building. By the end of our long walk through these displays, the themes themselves can come to seem irrelevant to the artworks actually on display alongside one another.

[474] Casey, The World at a Glance, 421.
[475] Ibid.
[476] Ibid., 424.
[477] Ibid.

Secondly, Casey's observations also raise the question as to precisely how our attention is alerted "at a glance". If the glancer's quick sweeps of the gallery merely seek out content of "special interest", then upon what grounds is that interest roused? Do they, for instance, simply seek out what is already familiar? Does the lack of an exhibition script cultivate a more superficial engagement with the displays? As Glancey suggests, do visitors merely come to seek out novelty?

Finally, it is not just the curatorial approach which opens up the possibility for roaming, but also the floorplan of the building itself. Bill Hillier and Kali Tzortzi have observed, for instance, how there are "much greater constraints on exploration and choice of routes", according to Tate Modern's layout (at least in the original building), than there are at Tate Britain, due to the fact that there are not so many side rooms to escape into.[478] According to this view, our movement through the long corridors at Tate Modern can quickly become monotonous and our attentiveness to the works on display there are potentially more subdued in consequence.

These concerns are partially alleviated by the second mode of roaming that Casey highlights, that of "going around", which describes the sort of movement that occurs within a space once the viewer's interest has been roused. In this section, Casey notes how, once his eye had been caught by a specific work, he "was immediately lured away by other works on either side of it".[479] In this instance, it would appear that the artwork that caught his eye also offered up something like access to the other works. One explanation for this might be that by homing in on a specific work, the viewer then becomes more attentive to the other objects held within its vicinity. The "In the Studio" display on the second floor of the Natalie Bell building (the original collection galleries) provides us with a good case study to illustrate this point.

This part of the collection feels a little like a place for important works that did not fit in anywhere else. In the majority of cases, the artworks appear to hold very little relevance to the main theme apart from a few depictions of artist's studios. Generally speaking, the display appears to be made up of predominantly abstract and surrealist paintings, objects and sculptures, with the occasional still life and installation piece. Many of these works are undoubtedly *accommodated* much more effectively during the museum's quieter periods, such as weekday mornings. It is a joy to walk between them at these times: to hear our footsteps snap against the hard floors and echo through the rooms, to move more softly and be more selective before we settle on an artwork and invest some time in allowing it to fill out its *scope*. Whilst the theme that these works have been installed under does not tie the works together particularly effectively, this does not leave

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[478] Bill Hillier and Kali Tzortzi, "Space Syntax", in Sharon MacDonald, *A Companion to Museum Studies,* (Malden, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 299.
[479] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 425.

their arrangement in complete disarray either. If anything, the landscape effect that Krauss observed as long ago as the late-eighties has come into full effect.

Indeed, if we stand back and simply assess the relationship between the works from an objective point of view, then perhaps it can seem that some works, particularly the smaller paintings and objects, do get lost in the mix and appear "inconsequential" by way of empirical comparison. Yet, once we find our feet in relation to the display, we come to see that the works announce themselves in terms of their *placedness* relative to the broader arrangement as it is navigated. The potential of the smaller, less eye-catching works to engage us from amidst this arrangement is by no means reduced here.

When I exit the dimply-lit room dedicated to Marc Rothko's *Seagram Murals* (1958-1959), for example, Claude Monet's immense and glistening *Water-Lilies* (1916) directly opposite the doorway offers welcome relief. After immersing myself in such large-scale canvasses, however, my vision is drawn to more concrete works such as an Anthony Gormley body cast or a Giorgio Morandi still-life. I would certainly avoid the room containing Gerard Richter's *Cage* paintings at this juncture, at least for the time being. This is not me seeking out "novelty", as Glancey would say, but rather I am responding to my senses and allowing my body to make the selections for me. As such, neither do I seem to be seeking out the already familiar. It is more that my body welcomes variety in this way. This also means I avoid the museum fatigue that sometimes comes from following an overly sequential script. Moreover, there is also a sense in which, just as Klee sought a balance or "rightness" when painting, I endeavour to achieve a certain balance or rightness through my own *implacement*.

Whilst these works each *re-implace* me in their own respective ways, each encounter is not entirely isolated from the next. They stand in relation to the room as a whole and their *scopes* overlap in this way, my encounter with one work ushering me onto the next, whilst the next need not be the one to its side. As Casey remarks, this configurative complex of artworks is "more like an entire region than a particular place" in that a variety of different places are opened up from within each artwork's *scope*, which in turn open up onto one another.[480] I am immersed in an entire *"place-world"*, a relation that Casey summarises neatly when he writes:

> Visual artworks are absolute presences in their own right; they have their own way of being self-sufficient and freestanding; indeed, they have their own worlds. At the same time, however, they configurate with each other in a shared spatial scene, for example, a place-of-exhibition; when this latter happens, the animating agent is the glance, which weaves them together spontaneously in a common tissue.[481]

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[480] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 426.
[481] Ibid., 423.

As for the floor plan of these galleries, Bill Hillier and Kali Tzortzi's observations regarding the monotony of the passage through and between the rooms does not really appear to hold true when there is a lack of variety of media within the space they offer up. Yet, there are also moments, especially considering how long the route through this display is, when a room full only of paintings, with a bench in the middle to sit down on, can offer some relief. That is not to say, however, that the room space is irrelevant to the display. When we make our way over to the Blavatnik Building, for example, the rooms are much more varied in terms of size, shape, height and lighting, and the selected themes are more effective in bringing the objects together within the more tightly contained spaces. "Living Cities" on the fourth floor provides a good example of this.

This display holds diverse media dispersed across the walls and floor, of which two artworks in particular stand out in terms of their contrast and relation. Kader Attia's *Untitled: Ghardaïa* (2009) consists of a scale-model of the ancient city of Ghardaïa in Algeria and is made out of cooked couscous. This artwork is presented on a round table in the corner. On the shorter wall behind it is Mark Bradford's large-scale collage *Los Moscos* (2004). Made from small scraps of materials found on the street around his Los Angeles gallery which have been stuck onto a large black canvas, this work looks very much like a large map of an urban sprawl, or an arial view of one at night-time. The majority of other works on display are photographs taken from all over the world, although the majority of these are from Stephen Shores' *American Surfaces,* which were taken from 1972-1973 when the artist made a road trip through the United States. These are a mix of casual portraits and landscapes, including a great many signs and shopfronts. Overall, this display contains works from China, Algeria, Egypt and the United States.

Compared with the "In the Studio" display, these works tie in with the leading theme more effectively. Yet, what interests me here is not so much this fact in and of itself, but instead, how the configuration of this media and its collective expression of the scale, style and diversity of urban living also seems to be at its most effective when they gallery itself is busy and functioning very much like one of the actual public spaces outside the building. Unlike many of the works we encounter when we walk through "In the Studio", these works do not seem to be overwhelmed by the large crowds that pass through this place, but positively thrive on the audience's bringing the energy of the street in with them.

The busy movement of bodies in all directions and chatter of large numbers of people positively complements this display. It creates quick links between the artworks in much the same way as they connect the various throughways and landmarks in the large, busy, public spaces outside. Attia's round table display, for instance, draws people into the corner — past those immersed in the *scope* of Bradford's large-scale collage and around itself — before catapulting them back into the room and towards whatever else might have caught their eye. These more contemporary works are far more instantaneous in their impact, meaning they can be moved quickly between or seen over the heads of people. They seem to give themselves up to the room far

more willingly. Even Bradford's collage, which is incredibly complex in its presentation, sends the glance off in all directions, giving rise to a busy style of looking.

Both in terms of their content and formats, these works seem to better reflect the way places like the Tate Modern have come to be used by their publics. When planning the extension, Tate surveyed its visitors to ascertain their principal motivations for visiting. Aside from the obvious responses regarding the free collection, regular shows and events, it transpired that the museum was widely regarded as a comfortable place for people to relax in, roam through, and an optimum spot in the city for "people watching and incidental meeting".[482] The Turbine Hall came to be seen as an exemplary model in these respects. In stark contrast with the solemnity that characterises Merleau-Ponty's description of the museum in "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", Tate Modern has come to share far more in common with what Callum Storrie describes as "The Delirious Museum". According to Storrie, the ideal museum would be a "continuation of the street" with "ease of access to both building and collection that in effect integrates [it] into the life of the city." [483] A museum that would aspire "to the condition of the city." [484]

What the three parts of this chapter have sought to draw out is the communal nature of our engagement with artworks in places like this. In the first part, Merleau-Ponty's notion of *intercorporeality* as described through the terminology of *flesh* helped us to understand how the large *spontaneous community* that works like Eliasson's installation harbour the capacity to generate manifests. However, its large scale merely revealed something that all artworks share in common, which is how they contribute to a more general scene by gathering bodies around them, which in turn characterises the style of movement that occurs from within that place. This was most clearly illustrated in the analysis of movement in this third part, in which the mass movement of bodies through the galleries was considered to lend itself more effectively to the encounter of some works that others. That being said, Ondak's queue demonstrated how these more dynamic modes of *implacement* that artworks like Eliasson's help to cultivate also offer up new opportunities for artists to engage with audiences in original and interesting ways, by responding to these new modes as they emerge. The inter-animation of audience, collection, and the museum ensures that an institution like this one continues to adapt and evolve as a result.

By turning to Malpas in the second part and drawing out the regional style of the *accommodation* offered up by this place, however, we also came to see that *accommodation* amounts to far more than merely the provision of effective conditions for encounters to take place within. The "where" is significant to "how" we

[482] Oliver Wainwright, "Lofts and Caves", 38.
[483] Callum Storrie, *The Delirious Museum: A Journey from The Louvre to Las Vegas*, (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 2.
[484] Ibid.

see the "what", in that the occasion of the visit brings with it a situational relation between the audience and the place that sets the terms of the encounter just as much as the *principal themes of* artworks do. The Tate Modern is brimming with people of all ages and from all over the world, and a significant part of its success in that regard undoubtedly stems from where it is. Malpas's focus on the interaction between the interior and exterior — between the internal configuration of the museum and that of the *place-world* beyond it — was particularly apparent in the "Living Cities" display described above. However, perhaps the most revealing insight he provides us with is the observation that the singularity of each artwork manifests through its *placedness*. Each place the artwork passes through helps to cultivate its meaning in this way.

Chapter Six - Beyond the Museum: Temporality in Janet Cardiff The Missing Voice (case study b)

In this final chapter, we move beyond the limits of official art places such as museums and concert halls and into the city streets beyond them. Our focus will be upon the encounter in terms of its temporal unfolding, but this will also allow us to reflect on the style of *accommodation* that urban environments offer up. As discussed in chapter one, the most complicated question for artists working within such environments is undoubtedly that of how to engage their audiences to begin with. When Roman Ondak describes his performance *Good Feelings in Good Times,* he describes a transition that occurs between the "real time" of the subject going about their daily lives and "work time" whereby their immediate future comes to be shaped by the work itself.[485] This is the transition that all artists endeavour to achieve. However, given the complex and chaotic nature of urban contexts, this is more easily described than achieved.

The principal case study of this chapter will be Janet Cardiff's *The Missing Voice (case study b)*, a sound walk produced in 1999 that leads participants around the Spitalfield neighbourhood of East London. After providing a brief summary of this artwork below, our discussion will properly get underway with a critical analysis of Roman Ingarden's notion of the *"preliminary emotion".* This term describes the moment when our interest is roused by an artwork within a gallery context, which in turn enables the encounter to unfold. As we shall see, this concept is essentially limited to the kinds of artworks we tend to find in museums specifically. Nevertheless, by considering the impact that the *preliminary emotion* has upon the viewer from within that context, this will allow us to uncover what will be referred to here as a *threshold capacity* contained within all varieties of *principal themes.* These *threshold capacities* enable the process of *re-implacement* that *principal themes* make possible to begin, along with the transition from *real time* to *work time* that ensues.

In the second part of the chapter, we will consider the temporal experience of the participant once they are fully engaged with the work. Towards that end, we will turn to Merleau-Ponty's reflections on time in the working notes of *The Visible and the Invisible* and reflect on how the participant's past experience is brought to the fore through the event of the encounter. In particular, our focus will be upon how the *stylistic* divergences that manifest across the *separation-differences* opened up between the participant's body, the *principal theme* and the surrounding environment, culminate in such a way so as to intonate the temporal sequence encoded within the principal theme itself.

Having achieved this, the end of the chapter will be dedicated to a discussion on the *principal theme's* own relationship with time, which is relatively independent of its encounter, and how its meaning evolves as a consequence of the world changing around it. This potentiality has already been hinted at in the third chapter

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[485] Wood, *Performance in Contemporary Art*, 153.

on *Guernica* but will receive closer consideration here. The chapter will then be brought to a close by considering the transition that the participant has to make at the end of the encounter, from *work time* back to the *real time* of the everyday world. This third part will also provide an opportunity for some concluding remarks to be made.

6.1. The Missing Voice (case study b)

The Missing Voice: Case Study B is a sound walk set in the Whitechapel and Spitalfields neighbourhoods of East London by Canadian artist Janet Cardiff. It consists of an audio recording for headphones of approximately forty minutes which leads participants from Whitechapel Gallery above Aldgate East Tube Station to Liverpool Street Station a kilometre or so away. The artist's voice is prominent throughout, addressing participants directly for the most part: giving directions, highlighting landmarks, and describing events happening around her as she leads us through this part of the city. Two other voices can also be heard intermittently. One of them is Cardiff's own, but this time heard through a tape recorder that cuts into the main recording. She refers to this second speaker in the third person and claims not to remember the scenes it describes. For participants following the work, it is unclear whether the contents of these secondary recordings allude to dreams or if they detail the experiences of a different person entirely. Whilst the paths of each speaker do sometimes cross, the scenes they describe allude to very different circumstances. According to the second speaker, the surroundings are riddled with potential violence and catastrophe, with numerous allusions to a dystopian future yet to come. Meanwhile, the third voice is that of a male detective who is trying to track the other two people down. He refers to these recordings directly and appears to be looking for clues, at one point stating: "As far as I can tell, she's mapping different paths through the city. I can't seem to find a reason for the things she notices or records".[486] Another male voice occasionally interjects, apparently addressing the speaker directly. A strange and ambiguous narrative develops between all these speakers, and we the listeners find ourselves in the midst of this plot as it unfolds. It is as if we have been thrown into the middle of a film or play. The addition of music and sound effects in the background reinforces our sense of the cinematic, a common trait across Cardiff's oeuvre.

6.1.1. The *Preliminary Emotion*

In order to confront the work in terms of its temporality, we must first consider more closely how the audience's encounter with it begins, that is, how the work rouses our interest and re-*implaces* us within the immediate environment in which it is set up. In the essay "Aesthetic Experience and Aesthetic Object",

[486] Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works Including Collaborations with George Bures Miller*, (P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center: Long Island City - US, 2003), 118.

Roman Ingarden refers to this moment when our attention is first drawn to the artwork as the *"preliminary emotion"*.[487] This term represents the feeling we experience when an artwork stands out as worthy of our attention: the moment when what he refers to as an "emotional connection" between the audience and the artwork begins to ferment. At this point, there is simply a desire on the audience's part to satiate themselves with whatever aspect of the work has stood out for them. As this change is registered, Ingarden describes how time itself feels as if it has become suspended, and how only a vague connection between the immediate present, past and future remains.[488] The viewer's conviction as to the reality of the situation ongoing around them thus becomes "neutralised" and what is referred to as the "quasi-oblivion" of the real world ensues, which, Ingarden argues, should be understood as a similar feeling to that of getting caught up in an "abstract problem".[489] Ingarden insists that this response is not merely passive, but also reflects something of the active and inherently "creative" inner life of the individual — the subject supplements the work, he says, through their imaginative engagement with it.[490] Although the *preliminary emotion* appears to be thrust upon us then, it reflects something of our own tastes, interests and prior experience all the same.

There are various aspects of this term which are of use to us here. First, it calls upon us to consider how the artwork stands out, not just in relation to other works potentially present alongside it, but also in relation to that place in general within which it is presented. At the same time, it also underlines how vital this moment is to the overall development of the encounter while the proposed suspension of time and the "quasi-oblivion" of the "real world" alludes to a shift in terms of the audience's own relationship with that place. As well as announcing the emergence of an emotional connection between the artwork and viewer, the *preliminary emotion* might equally be interpreted as announcing a specific style of *re-implacement* that is generated by the intrinsic style of the work under consideration. Finally, when Ingarden underlines the creative contribution made by the viewer in recognising whatever aspect of the work it is that has stood out for them, the active participation and contribution of the audience, from within and to that place where the work is installed, is also implicitly acknowledged. That being said, there are also various limitations to Ingarden's concept that I wish to address here.

To begin with, Ingarden's essay concerns itself only with a specific artwork as it appears within a particular museum setting (Alexandros of Antioch's *Venus de Milo*, 100 BC, at The Louvre Museum in Paris). As such, the observations he makes do not hold true for all kinds of artworks and the varying styles of engagement they elicit from their audiences. He could not have foreseen the immense and rapid expansion of materials and media that artists came to work with, particularly over the second part of the twentieth century, nor

[487] Ingarden, "Aesthetic Experience and Aesthetic Object", 295.
[488] Ibid., 298.
[489] Ibid.
[490] Ibid., 300.

how artists sought out new environments within which to present their work and how approaches to art making evolved as a consequence. With reference to Cardiff's sound walk, for instance, it is unclear from Ingarden's description how it could trigger the *preliminary emotion* due to the fact that one engages with the work voluntarily from the outset: either by requesting a device and headphones from the reception of Whitechapel Gallery or by downloading it onto a personal device directly. It does not draw our attention from across a room in the same way that a statue or painting does, and so there is nothing within it for the audience to be struck by in this way.

Nevertheless, in *The Missing Voice's* case, once we have started to engage with the recording, an important aspect of its structure and presentation is that it leads us through various introductory phases which function both to rouse our interest and recalibrate our perception so as to ensure our effective *re-implacement* for its duration. As such, the fundamental concerns underpinning the *preliminary emotion* hold true, i.e., that in order for the encounter to get underway, the artwork must first of all rouse our interest, and that what it elicits in so doing is ultimately the *re-implacement* of its audience. Urban environments undoubtedly present artists with more complex challenges in this regard than the sort of official art places that Ingarden's account draws from. First of all, they are not set up specifically towards the *accommodation* of artworks and their encounter. Thus, art is not generally what people are in these places for to begin with. Secondly, because there is so much else going on within an urban environment as busy as Spitalfields, the work must elicit people's attention, engagement, and foster their *re-implacement*, over and above everything else that is going on. In many instances, this might even mean redirecting the trajectory they are already on, and it is as a consequence of this that the sort of art we tend to come across within urban environments is so distinct from that found in official art places. In the following section, I will show how the *principal themes* of artworks harbour what will be referred to here as "threshold capacities" which allow viewers to become anchored within the work. The manner in which these capacities present themselves depends greatly upon the medium that the artist works in and, furthermore, the sort of environment that the work is intended for.

The second aspect of Ingarden's concept that I wish to call into question here is the idea that the audience's connection with the "real world" becomes more subdued as a consequence of the *preliminary emotion*, and, in consequence, that time itself comes to appear as if suspended. With regard to the audience's awareness of the real world, however, far from its receding into a "quasi-oblivion", a firm grasp of the surrounding environment and what is occurring within it is vital to the encounter's development, a point which urban contexts make us acutely aware of. Indeed, we can only engage with a work effectively if we are firmly *implaced* enough within that place where it is installed so as to respond to it effectively on the terms set by its *principal theme*. When an audience becomes deeply engaged with a work, their perception of the surrounding world is reconfigured in such a way as to allow the artwork to be foregrounded in relation to those surroundings. In turn, it is not so much that time itself comes to be suspended, but rather that the

temporal unfolding of the audience's *implacement* within that immediate environment undergoes a transition from "real time" to "work time" as Ondak puts it.

Our *implacement* there comes to be anchored within and orientated by the work itself rather than the broader landscape. Place comes to be experienced by way of the artwork in this way and something of the ebb and flow of our *implacement* thus alters in parallel with the *preliminary emotion's* emergence. From the outside, this would also constitute an alteration to the *operative intentionality* of that place, or those places, in that the people *implaced* there come to engage and navigate their way through it in new ways as a consequence of the artwork's presence. Let us now return to Cardiff's sound walk in order to consider more closely how it functions to *implace* us during its initial stages, before moving on to consider the manner in which this is achieved by other artworks set up within similar environments.

6.1.2. "There are some things I need to show you": the *principal theme* in its threshold capacity

The Missing Voice begins in the crime section of what was the Whitechapel Library (now the basement of Whitechapel Gallery). When we put on the headphones and the recording begins, we hear a member of staff answering the phone and people around us moving in their seats, whispering quietly between themselves, taking books from shelves and walking past us. These environmental sounds were recorded using highly sensitive binaural microphones placed in the ears of a mannequin that the artist held out in front of her own body at roughly head height, thus mimicking the aural perspective of the body. This process gives rise to what Toby Butler describes as a "startling surround sound", whereby the people presented to us through the recording actually feel as though they are physically present in the room alongside us.[491] So rapidly do the motor responses of our bodies become heightened to everything that appears to be going on around us that *The Missing Voice* is a powerful reminder of the orientating power that sound harbours. By introducing the work from indoors, this opening scene makes a vital contribution in terms of the work's capacity to *re-implace* us effectively later on. It gets us accustomed to the disorientation that can be triggered when listening to a recording of this kind on headphones.

Indeed, most of the walk will take place outside on the streets. The difficulty with staging a work of this kind, which requires extended focus and engagement in an area as busy as Spitalfields, is that these surroundings are so unpredictable and do not easily lend themselves to the sort of deep immersion or reflective thought that Cardiff's piece demands. As Brandon Labelle observes, a busy city's pavement is a "volatile stage" where we are called upon to "negotiate the movements of others" — "a rhythmic intensity weaving together the

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[491] Toby Butler, "A walk of art: the potential of the sound walk as practice in cultural geography", in *Social & Cultural Geography* 7, no. 6 (December 2006), 903.

fleeting occurrences defining an essential aspect of public life".[492] Since artworks function to *re-implace* their audiences relative to their immediate surroundings, places must be found in and through which the work's own rhythmic intensity might be revealed, over and above everything else that is going on. Whitechapel Library offered Cardiff an ideal place to start in this way.

One way for the artist to elicit the audience's *re-implacement* is by working with the city, by treating it as what Meyer refers to as a "functional site" (outlined in the first chapter), whereby the artist intervenes, records, or attempts to coincide with a place or broader region in terms of the way it already tends to operate.[493] In this instance, that means that the rhythm and pace of a recording such as this one is of paramount importance. For were the pace of the recording too slow or reflective, participants would quickly become distracted by everything else that was going on around them, to which they must remain alert for their own safety. Artists who work in this way must pay close attention to the modes of *implacement* already *accommodated* by the places they select, therefore, and Cardiff's process exemplifies this.

When Art Angel commissioned the sound walk, Cardiff came to the UK to live in the Spitalfields area of East London for extended periods between the winter of 1998 and June of the following year. The artist recounts the hours spent in libraries reading up on London's history and walking the streets: taking note of newspaper headlines at newsstands, eavesdropping on conversations, making field recordings and taking voice notes on a handheld recorder.[494] Extremely close attention was paid to how this area already functioned over weeks and seasons, and the complexity of the narrative, as well as the recording's seamless fusion with the surrounding neighbourhood, is the fruit of that labour. However, the artist also clearly understood that, given the unpredictability of these surroundings, participants could not simply be thrown into the midst of the narrative and be expected to meet its demands without some form of preparation.

By introducing the walk from inside the library, Cardiff allows us time to adjust to the recording in terms of the demands it places upon our bodies to navigate these surroundings, with the additional sonic stimulus of the headphones and the dense soundscape they project in tow. After all, when we do exit the building and come out onto the street, we are presented with two sonic versions of the same environment: one heard through the headphones and the other heard over them as emanating from the actual surroundings. This means that it is often unclear whether the event a sound announces is actually occurring or not, which can be incredibly disorientating. By providing us with time to adjust to this sonic duplicity from within the less chaotic environment of the library beforehand, the artist ensures that we do not become too confused later

[492] Brandon Labelle, *Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life*, (London, New York: Continuum, 2011). 88-89.
[493] Meyer, "The Functional Site", 24-25.
[494] Janet Cardiff, *The Missing Voice: (case study b)*, (London: Art Angel, 1999), 66.

on. Furthermore, *The Missing Voice's* opening scene also introduces us to the various other modes of engagement that will be required of us. The excerpt from the novel that Cardiff reads aloud introduces the overall tone of the piece, for instance, and gets us used to hearing her voice. We are directed around the building and encouraged to maintain the pace set by the artist's own stride. Finally, our attention is directed towards features of the building's interior and the other two voices are introduced just before we get outside.

It could be argued that this opening scene functions much as the thresholds of places do. As Casey observes of the threshold, our "movement from one place to another is effected" by it, and as such, it represents "the concrete inter-place of an important transition".[495] In *The World on Edge*, he also describes the way in which thresholds "bear on and refer to what lies on their other side", thus functioning to "bring out what occurs on the other side, reaching from here to what is over there and prefiguring it".[496] In so much as thresholds "prefigure" and "bring out what occurs" beyond them, so they present a temporal dimension in that they offer a glimpse of what is yet to come. In so doing, they provide us with an opportunity to adjust ourselves to those places that are opened up beyond them prior to our immersing ourselves within those places entirely. Our *implacement* already begins at the threshold, and only develops further when we permit ourselves to enter fully into that place's midst. In terms of how our ongoing experience of the world in general is affected by them, thresholds mark the "important transitions" that occur over the course of our trajectories through it. Indeed, as we pass through them, the character of our *implacement* undergoes shifts and the temporal nature of our experience alters accordingly. By setting the general tone and allowing our bodies time to adjust to the demands of the artwork, the early scene in Cardiff's work operates in a comparable way to a threshold in so much as it "brings out" what will occur later on as Casey says, and in so doing, constitutes something like that "inter-place" he describes in the line cited above.

What Ingarden's concept of the *"preliminary emotion"* reminds us is that there is a brief period of transition at the beginning of our encounters with artworks. The viewer of art works in a gallery must take time to look more closely at whatever aspect of the work has stood out to them and readjust themselves to it accordingly. What they are ultimately engaging with through this initial phase is the work's *principal theme* as it has revealed itself to them up until that point. In the case of *The Missing Voice,* the recording is the work's *principal theme*. However, being a work of fixed duration — much as all performances, films or musical recordings are — its *principal theme* reveals itself gradually over time. In consequence, it cannot offer itself up to its audiences all at once and, as already observed, the fact that it requires headphones also means that the audience cannot be struck by it. Nevertheless, the point to be underlined here is that it is the *principal theme* itself in which the audience's attention and ensuing curiosity become anchored, and which triggers the *preliminary emotion* that enables the encounter to unfold and evolve thereafter. Just as this gradual self-

[495] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 342.
[496] Casey, *The World on Edge*, 326.

revealing is intrinsic to *The Missing Voice's principal theme,* so its being open to catching the attention of the visitor within the museum is an intrinsic feature of *Venus de Milo,* without that being a definitive characteristic of all *principal themes*. Furthermore, as Cardiff's work has shown, far from triggering a suspension of our connectedness with the real world — and in turn, with real world time itself — the recording instead redirects, re-channels and even heightens our engagement with that world by *re-implacing* us within it. Let us now consider how an entirely different kind of artwork initiates such *re-implacements* from within an urban context in order to observe this *threshold capacity* as it functions elsewhere.

Due to the unpredictable and distracting nature of densely populated urban environments, many artists create works which elicit more fleeting encounters than Cardiff's does. Martin Creed's neon light texts are good examples of this. His *Work No. 203: EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE ALRIGHT* (1999) has been installed in various locations over the years, including indoors, and has often been set up in such a way so as to catch people's attention whilst they are on the move. This particular slogan stretches thirteen meters across, and whilst undoubtedly optimistic in tone, it also suggests that reassurance is called for in some way. It is the kind of phrase that a parent might say to a child, or one partner to another, when they are feeling anxious about something. The work plays upon this universal need for reassurance which surely everyone experiences from time to time. This is the chord the work strikes, and self-reflection is called for on our part.

When it was installed above the entrance of Tate Britain in 1999, its *principal theme* was clearly visible from a considerable distance and for diverse publics caught up in a range of activities and travelling in multiple directions. No doubt many of the office workers in the buildings opposite would have had a clear view of the artwork and it would have entered into their thoughts and conversations over the course of its display. What is interesting about this case study as it was set up here is that its *principal theme* was graspable "at a glance" as Casey would say, and pandered to what he describes as the public's openness to "surprise" and "discovery" as they went about their daily lives.[497] So far, the *preliminary emotion* Creed's work would have given rise to might appear as though it would have manifested in a similar way as articulated by Ingarden in the case of *Venus de Milo*. The truth is, however, that Creed's artwork shares more in common with an advertising banner than a statue. It drew the public's attention and revealed itself all at once, whilst conveying its message via a slogan that was both memorable and of universal significance. Compared with *The Missing Voice,* which is complex and multi-layered in its presentation and elicits an encounter of considerable duration and commitment, the power of Creed's work lies in its brevity and the ease with which people are able to engage with it.

[497] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 467.

In contrast with Kwon's description of the unwanted imposition of public art projects upon communities in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s as outlined in the first chapter, in the case of Creed's work, the "welcome reprieve from the flow of everyday life" to which public art should aspire according to Kwon, is precisely what his work achieved.[498] Its placement on the front of the museum meant that it was presented mainly to people who were passing through that area, by way of what Casey refers to as the numerous "by-places" so prevalent within it.[499] These included the various bridges, roads, pavements, riverbank pathways, or even the river itself and the boats that travelled along it. It coincided with that area's *operative-intentional* flow in this way, whilst also responding to the universal need for reassurance of the people making those journeys. In turn, this offered the public something of a counterbalance to the sense of "alienation and disaffection engendered by the inhuman urban landscape".[500] That it did not demand a great deal of its audience was befitting of the scene into which it had been placed, and in so much as it caught people's attention as they passed by it, its true import drew from the fact that it was able to influence or impress itself upon their trajectories thereafter. Just as a familiar song, when it is played on the radio or appears on a playlist, can alter our mood significantly in an instant, so Creed's work was able to implicate itself in the onward trajectory of the walkers who caught sight of it.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the artwork rouses its carnal equivalent in the viewer's body. The work is taken on or incorporated by the body in this way, reconfiguring itself in response to the situation before it. When that body is on the move, when it is walking, running, driving, cycling, or riding on a bus or train, so this reconfiguration is incorporated into the flow of that movement which has already been established. When a cyclist swerves suddenly to avoid somebody who has stepped out into the road in front of them, for instance, they must reconfigure their body and the bike beneath them in response to that obstacle. Provided that the cyclist does manage to avoid the pedestrian successfully, they should then be able to get back on track and continue along their trajectory. However, in a situation like this, the cyclist does not return to exactly the same style of onward movement or the same stable flow as before, for the experience of having needed to make that emergency adjustment will inevitably remain with them thereafter. The rush of adrenaline will heighten their perceptual awareness of the potential hazards around them and they will no longer navigate the environment with the same assurance as before. This near-accident so narrowly avoided by the cyclist will inevitably implicate itself in the rest of their journey. It will linger as a sort of attitudinal shift on their part in relation to the surrounding environment. Comparisons can be drawn between this situation and that of Creed's work.

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[498] Kwon, *One Place after Another*, 65.
[499] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 117
[500] Kwon, *One Place after Another*, 64.

By eliciting attention and conveying its *principal theme* with the rapidity of a glance, Creed's slogan triggered an attitudinal shift in those who passed by. In the midst of their ongoing trajectory, their attention was drawn towards, and they were confronted by, a slogan which brought to expression this universal need. Creed's work illustrates this threshold capacity of the *principal theme* of artworks quite neatly, therefore, in that it implicates itself in the immediate future (i.e., that of the journey itself, or even that person's entire day) even though whatever the passer-by goes on to do may be entirely unrelated with the *principal theme* of the work itself. It is not simply that the *principal theme* harbours threshold capacities in this case, but rather that it is a threshold, and this is its entire function. This also illustrates an important aspect of the *preliminary emotion* that is not foregrounded within Ingarden's account, which is that in rousing our interest, the work also impresses itself upon us in such a way that it becomes implicated in the future by priming us towards certain activities and attitudes that we then carry with us. In the case of the Cardiff's work, this is most clearly perceived in terms of how effectively listeners manage to engage with the recording once they have made their way outside, the second and principal phase of that work to which we will now return. In contrast, we might say that something of the *style* of Creed's work, something of its nostalgia, succinctness and glow was carried forward as the attitudinal shift it gave rise to. It is in terms of these impressions which manifest across the *separation-differences* opened up between our bodies and artworks that the temporality of the work will be uncovered.

6.2. "The City is Infinite"

In order to understand the temporality of the encounter, there is first a need to understand the style of *implacement* that has become established by the *principal theme* in its threshold capacity. We have already seen how the artwork's *principal theme* gives rise to an attitudinal shift on the viewer's part, which in turn implicates itself in how both the work and its surroundings come to be engaged with thereafter. The *principal theme* aspires to dictate or direct our *implacement* and does so from across the *separation-difference* opened up between the viewer's body and the artwork as established by the *preliminary emotion.* Since the encounter is founded upon this gap, so it is from across that gap that its temporal structure is to be uncovered. In *The Rhythm of Thought: Art, Literature and Music after Merleau-Ponty*, Jessica Wiskus draws attention to Merleau-Ponty's own remarks regarding the "the cohesion of space and time" in *The Visible and the Invisible* and points to the terminology of the *"flesh"* as the best route for understanding this "cohesion".[501] Terms like "intertwining", "reversibility", "overlapping", or "coiling over", for instance, all implicate movement and are inherently "active" in this way, thus alluding not simply to a spatial dimension but also to the *flesh* as it happens or unfolds.[502] We will return to Jessica Wiskus's reading of Merleau-Ponty

[501] Jessica Wiskus, *The Rhythm of Thought: Art, Literature and Music after Merleau-Ponty*, (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 35.
[502] Ibid., 37.

in due course. For now, let us return to Cardiff's work and consider more closely this principal *separation-difference* as has been opened up by the *preliminary emotion*, before moving on to consider the various spatiotemporal dimensions of it that the encounter brings to the fore.

6.2.1. Temporality and *Implacement*

Due to the fact that we hear the audio guide through headphones, so that the recording is effectively heard from inside our own heads, it is tempting to think when analysing this particular work that, as participants, we adopt the artist's point of view directly. Kitty Scott appears to suggest this when she describes the experience as "like dreaming another's dreams".[503] Yet the experience never feels as direct as this. We are always being led and there is always a gap despite this proximity: voices and sounds that do not come from me. Carol Peaker describes how, when directed to walk in time with the artist's own footsteps, she was unable to match Cardiff's gait because the artist's legs were clearly longer than her own. She also came to realise that her own stride was irregular by comparison.[504] Indeed, we neither dream the artist's dreams nor think her thoughts, but instead, as Cardiff reminds us at various points along the way, we walk "with" her, albeit at extremely close (and virtual) proximity. The recording cultivates a potent sense of intimacy between the participant and the artist. That we hear her voice within our heads and that she addresses us directly produces a relation, proximity or intertwining of our *flesh*. Nevertheless, the narcissist within us does inevitably prevail, and what ensues is more collaboration than possession, therefore. Cardiff acknowledges this when she writes:

> I think the walking pieces break down the barriers of what the listeners think of as their singular self. My surrogate body starts to infiltrate their consciousness while in reverse their remembered dreams, triggered by phrases and sounds, invade and add to the artwork. A melding of sorts.[505]

Here, Cardiff clearly senses the reversibility that underpins Merleau-Ponty's notion of *flesh*. The participant is not "singular" in the sense of a detached, interpretive, or merely reactionary subject, for they also "invade and add to the artwork". There is a coiling over of the artwork upon the participant, who in turn endeavours to follow, keep focus on and keep up with the recording as it directs them through the streets. However, what Peaker's account highlights, and what is missing in Cardiff's observation above, is that despite our being led, we still need to navigate the streets for ourselves — our own legs must do the walking. As David Pinder writes, whilst *The Missing Voice* does indeed foster "an inward awareness", it also "sharpens attention to

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[503] Kitty Scott, "I want you to walk with me", in *The Missing Voice (case study b)*, eds. Janet Cardiff & Kitty Scott, (London - UK: Art Angel, 1999), 15.
[504] Carol Peaker, "The Missing Voice (Case Study B) 1999", in *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works*, ed. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, (Long Island City: P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, 2003), 110.
[505] Janet Cardiff quoted in Kitty Scott, "I want you to walk with me", 15.

outward surroundings".[506] This heightened attention to our surroundings points towards a secondary dimension of the principal *separation-difference* highlighted above, which is precisely that opened up between our own bodies and the city itself. There is a deviation at play here in that the recording never entirely matches up with what is going on around our bodies. Consider the very first sounds we hear when we exit onto the street, for instance:

> *[Audio sounds: Beginning of sounds, cars, people, etc.]* Cardiff: "Turn to the left. I'm going to go outside. Try to follow the sound of my footsteps so that we can stay together." *[Audio sounds: Voice echoes in your head and space around.]* Cardiff: "I'm going to turn right onto Whitechapel High Street. Turn to the right, past the Whitechapel Art Gallery, past the news-stand. Killer waited an hour. Kentucky Fried Chicken."[507]

The opening scene in the library has prepared us to follow Cardiff through this more complex and chaotic environment beyond it. Nevertheless, we are still called upon to watch out for other people, ongoing maintenance works, traffic, etc. Furthermore, whilst Cardiff's footsteps set the pace and her directions tell us where to go, many of the features of the environment she draws our attention to will have long since disappeared. The newsstand has gone, for instance, whilst Kentucky Fried Chicken is still there. It is in terms of *how* we discover these deviations that we will begin to see the true rhythm or movement of the piece emerge. Let us now consider the sequences that emerge as a consequence of the directions given.

Taking Cardiff's lead, I turn right out of what was the old library door, past the main gallery entrance, I glance around me for a newsstand that is no longer there, before recognising that KFC still is. This, in turn, enables me to synchronise myself with the recording once more. A sequence emerges between my body and the landscape that is founded upon the deviation that is opened up between the recording and landscape it compels me to scour. The recording presents itself as something like a series of coincidences and non-coincidences in this way, which might be illustrated as follows: 1 - 1 - 0 - 1, the 1s representing the coincidences and the 0s the non-coincidences. As such, were KFC to disappear, the sequence would look more like this: 1 - 1 - 0 - 0. In addition to these directions, we should also consider the different environmental sounds heard in the background that also elicit our attention: the traffic sounds, the conversations, the buskers, etc. Then there are the various people mentioned as they walk in or out of buildings, the colours of items on display in shop windows, the discarded litter on the floor and the newspaper headlines. This complicates the sequential structure outlined above considerably. Furthermore, it also goes to show that even if the principal features of the landscape had remained more or less the same as the recording, there would still be significant deviation between the recording and the landscape due to the temporary nature of many of the features highlighted. As Cardiff highlights:

[506] David Pinder, "Ghostly footsteps: voices, memories and walks in the city", *Ecumene* 8, no. 1 (2001): 5.
[507] Christov-Bakargiev, *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works*, 116.

> The city is infinite. No one has ever found an end to the patterns of the streets. Eventually buildings reproduce themselves, a cornice that mimics another, a door that is the same colour as hundreds of others, every possible permutation, unlimited but cyclical.[508]

This series of coincidences and non-coincidences which are constantly changing help constitute what Merleau-Ponty refers to as a "temporal gestalt", whereby all elements of the sequence contribute to a more general unity and implicate themselves within one another as opposed to their existing as separate and distinct parts.[509] Within the landscape as it is normally perceived, the principal and fixed features of the landscape link up most obviously as the configurative features that constitute the overall distribution of that landscape. When I am out walking in a part of the city that is familiar to me, I recognise when such features have disappeared, but, more often than not, I do so in terms of that more general place's having fundamentally altered, as spaces opened up or extended that were not there before. Merleau-Ponty alludes this effect when he writes:

> The idea we have of the world would be overturned if we could succeed in seeing the intervals between things (for example, the space between the trees on the boulevard) as objects and, inversely, if we saw the things themselves—the trees—as the ground.[510]

What Merleau-Ponty is drawing attention to here is how, because we tend to think of the world as objects distributed in universal space, the space itself inevitably comes to be regarded as the logical ground against which the things themselves are placed - an empty expanse or container. The limitation of this view, however, is that it misses how space itself comes to be shaped by that distribution. The street's permanent features, by configuring the landscape, also embed certain patterns or potential sequences within it. Heidegger remarks in "Building Dwelling Thinking" are also illuminating in this respect:

> The spaces through which we go daily are provided for by locales; their essence is grounded in things of the type of buildings. If we pay heed to these relations between locales and spaces, between spaces and space, we get a clue to help us thinking of the relation between man and space.[511]

As we make our way through a neighbourhood like Spitalfields, these configurative features present themselves to us either as obstacles or as opening up throughways, places to linger at or in, or places to proceed through or over with caution. We speed up and slow down, stop, look around us and ponder. We size up a crowd or situation and either make our way through or around it, or otherwise go back the way we came. In short, there is an intertwining between bodies and the landscape that occurs on the terms set by the landscape's own configuration, and our responsiveness to it sets up for the possibility of rhythm. This

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[508] Christov-Bakargiev, *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works*, 118.
[509] Merleau-Ponty, "The Film and the New Psychology", in *Sense and Non-Sense,* trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus & Patricia Allen Dreyfus, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 54.
[510] Ibid., 48-49.
[511] Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking", 251.

rhythm would derive from the movement of bodies and objects through the landscape and might be conceived in two ways.

Firstly, we might consider it in general terms, the way in which a particular place moves and presents itself overall. As we have seen in the previous chapter, by inhabiting places we also cultivate them by lending ourselves to their ongoingness. Heidegger highlights how we "sustain" the spaces opened up in and between the locales distributed across an environment like this one through our proximal engagement with them.[512] This might occur directly by actually passing through those spaces, but it would also be possible through avoidance. To avoid a darkly lit and sparsely populated alleyway or a tunnel is to sustain its character as the foreboding place it is, and in turn helps to sustain the comparatively reduced movement that characterises it. There are also certain times of the day when more people are actively present than others. Business hours and people's sleeping patterns do a great deal to determine the patterns of movement which emerge over the course of a day. The point is that this movement and the various rhythms it gives rise to are produced by the collective who engage in all the different activities and follow the different routes that occur there.

The second way in which we can characterise this movement is from the viewer's own point of view. These two perspectives are closely related in so much as the communal nature of the latter contributes to the former, whilst the former simultaneously imposes certain conditions or limitations upon the environment through which the individual moves. Nevertheless, it is this second form that is of most immediate interest to us here in our attempt to understand the rhythm of the encounter. If the work functions to *implace* us and I engage with place through the work, then my *implacement* within the surrounding environment is mediated by the work, and as such, so is my movement. There are two ways in which *The Missing Voice* does this.

In contrast with the way in which I would usually tend to navigate a neighbourhood like this, I have no final destination in mind here. As Labelle observes, "as a participant, one has no sense of destination, no sense of ultimate aim; instead, listening, we surrender to the voice".[513] It is interesting that Labelle links the lack of destination with a closer attention or "surrender" to Cardiff's voice. For what the withholding of the destination ultimately does is slacken what Casey refers to as the "tensional arc" which often characterises the "here-there" relation.[514] One of the examples of this that he provides is that of deciding at the last minute to drive to a human rights demonstration in a different city and being concerned that he will not be able to arrive there on time. His concern that he will end up missing the event means that he drives with more

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512 Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking", 252.

513 Brandon LaBelle, *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art*, (New York, London: Continuum, 2010), 226.

514 Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 55.

urgency, is constantly watching the clock, and never feels relaxed until his arrival within the city's limits in good time.

In the case of *The Missing Voice*, however, a future destination does not shape our journey in quite the same way. We are certainly curious as to the direction we will be taken in, but as LaBelle highlights, there is a clear sense in which we are more attentively focused on the details of each moment than where we will end up next. Nevertheless, there is a need to proceed with caution here so as not to fall into the trap of characterising this sense of presentness as a suspension of time, as Ingarden was criticised for claiming earlier on. The majority of art encounters share this lack of an objective or destination in common. As we saw with Ondak's *Good Feelings in Good Time* in the previous chapter, the emphasis was upon our being in the queue as opposed to the place it led us towards. Similarly, when we look at a painting or sculpture, there is nothing to be achieved as such: the emphasis is upon the internal details of the work rather than an end result. Yet, time does not simply dissolve as a consequence of this, but, rather, it reveals itself from the inside in terms of its inner functioning, as opposed to, where we end up or what we achieve. Indeed, the walk is almost forty minutes long. It has a fixed duration just as it has a vague narrative and a great many moments of insight and intrigue. Yet, reducing it to an inventory of these moments and presenting them in linear fashion will not bring us any closer to the experience of moving between those moments as they link up with all the rest, that is, as they contribute to the unity of the "temporal gestalt". In this particular instance, the extended duration of the work is the temporal equivalent of physical scale in so much as this duration holds the potential to *implace* our bodies all the more profoundly.

This brings us to the second point, which is more directly concerned with our immediate experience of the work and how its *principal theme* reveals itself temporally. The artwork does not only relieve me of a plan, objective or task at hand, it also implements a structure or template upon my engagement with the immediate world according to which the artwork then comes to be perceived. It *implaces* me according to the terms set by its *principal theme*. Much as the *principal theme* of a painting like *Guernica* contains certain forms, structures and imagery that culminate to guide my vision and movement within the *scope* it opens up, so the observations, directions and reflections of *The Missing Voice* also function to guide my perception and movement within its own *scope*. Nevertheless, just as with a painting, the *principal theme* does not entirely determine that experience for me either, for despite the recording unfolding in my head, there is still a gap between myself and the work, and so I am still called upon to be attentive to my own *implacement*. As for the artwork's *scope*, because I carry its *principal theme* along with my body, because it directs my view from within, so its *scope* is interwoven with the limits of my own perceptual range. In so being, there also remains considerable a degree of agency on my part, and the temporal unfolding of the artwork through the event of the encounter is, therefore, as much an expression of my own perceptual *style* in this regard as it is of the *principal theme* itself.

Indeed, whilst in its threshold capacity the *principal theme* has been able to prepare me to a limited extent for the different modes of engagement I am called upon to perform now I am outside on the street, it did not hold the power to make the environment that I am called upon to navigate any more familiar to me than it already happened to be. The *placedness* of the different features of the landscape become key here, which is to say, how they stand in relation to this broader region. The glance is central both to the emerging structure and rhythm of the work and the extent to which I am able to keep up and in time with it. Much of the content of the work emerges as a consequence of the artist noting down whatever features of the environment her own glance draws to her attention, and *The Missing Voice* is expressive of her own *implacement* within the city in this way. From my perspective as a participant, however, I find myself caught up in the double task of attempting to *implace* myself within the immediate landscape in accordance with the audio-guide while simultaneously suppressing the wanderings of my own glance in relation to the scene.

When I am presented with a non-coincidence, for instance, that feature's non-presence is registered not so much as a reflectively acknowledged anomaly, but rather as an unfulfilled casting out of the glance. I keep glancing around me, trying to locate the pub on the corner I have been directed towards, but to no avail, at which point the cafe referred to appears to me instead, enabling me to realign myself once more with the script. It is a similar feeling to that of falling out of time or losing one's place when playing music or reading in a group, whereby a brief but significant rush of disorientation, or indeed, displacement, ensues. Yet, whilst everyone will experience this sense of dissonance along the way, it will be more or less pronounced according to one's own familiarity with the environment. Casey highlights two distinct dimensions of the glance that are brought into tension here. On the one hand, he describes how the glance forms a "repertoire of lookings, a vocabulary of seen surfaces, a syntax of visual configurations".[515] The glance becomes *sedimented* into the perceiving subject's corporeal schema, which in turn contributes to a broader perceptual *style*. Ted Todavine describes Merleau-Ponty's notion of *style* as "a pattern of resonance between myself and the thing, allowing my body to feel within itself the divergence from the norm that the thing introduces".[516] This "norm" is precisely my corporeal knowledge of the world as has become *sedimented* in my perceiving body through living in the world. On the other hand, Casey also remarks that, whilst the glance will seek out orientational cues (which are inevitably founded upon this "norm"), it is also the case that the glance skips over the surfaces of the world in such a way that such intentions "exhibit themselves in the face of actual or imminent surprise".[517] The glance, as the means of discovery it is, is inherently open to surprise. Yet, the degree to which the unexpected is registered in turn brings to expression the derivation of that unexpected event from what is considered normal or familiar for the participant. The implications of this are hugely significant for

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[515] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 146.
[516] Ted Todavine, "Singing the World in a New Key: Merleau-Ponty and the ontology of Sense", *Janus Head* 7, no. 2, (2004), 277.
[517] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 56.

understanding how encounters with artworks unfold, precisely because the "temporal gestalt" the work's arrangement gives rise to, in so much as it experienced as a unifying form, is intrinsically *stylised* in terms of its intonation.

So far, we have only considered the relation between the recording and the surrounding landscape specifically, and a few summarising remarks are called for before we move on to consider the participant's engagement with the narrative that is developed through it. The position I have been working towards in the previous paragraphs is that for those participants less accustomed to urban environments as taxing as this one, the non-coincidences that arise within the recording will be felt more acutely. The gaps into which the glance is cast in search of the reference will take longer to return because the background into which they stray will be experienced as that much more confusing or destabilising. In her catalogue essay, Kitty Scott notes how participants do often get lost and need to retrace their steps in order to find their way back onto the route set for them.[518] Furthermore, they also "often remove the headphones in an attempt to discern between their sonic reality and Cardiff's fiction.[519] One has to wonder, therefore, to what extent these tendencies that emerge arise as a consequence of their own lack of familiarity with this kind of environment. In a case like this, we can begin to see how the "temporal gestalt" encoded within the work's *principal theme* comes to be articulated according to the divergences between itself and the landscape, through which dissonance emerges. At the same time, the sequence as it is experienced from the participant's perspective comes to find intonation by way of its entanglement with the perceptual *style* of each participant.

Indeed, past experience, as it has become incorporated into the corporeal schema of the participant, is that upon which the encounter is founded and according to which the work's own *style* comes to resonate for them. This also has implications for the manner in which the narrative itself, as it develops over the course of the walk, comes to resonate. In what follows, I will continue to analyse the encounter primarily in terms of the relationship that evolves between ourselves and the Cardiff's voice as it guides us. The discussion as it has developed so far has set us up well for this next phase in so much as the link between divergence, dissonance and intonation of the temporal gestalt encoded within the work remains vital. In this next case, however, we are concerned less with the stability of the participant's *implacement* within the immediate environment directly (although this will continue to influence discussion) and more with their relation to the broader narrative as is developed over the course of the walk. With this in mind, I will now return to Merleau-Ponty's allusions to time in *The Visible and the Invisible* in order to consider how the participant's own *style* becomes intertwined with the work.

[518] Scott, "I want you to walk with me", 16.
[519] Ibid.

6.2.2. Temporality and Personal *Style*

In *The Visible and the Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty remarks that if we are to "render explicit" the "cohesion of space and time", then we must recognise these dimensions in terms of the "simultaneity" of their respective parts.[520] With regard to space, he writes that there is a "literal simultaneity", whilst with time, its simultaneity (past, present and future as they implicate each other) is to be understood in "figurative" terms, and that there is an "intertwining" of the two.[521] The *place-world* presents us with a good model for interpreting these simultaneities. If we consider, for instance, the cohesion of a region like Southwark, as outlined in the previous chapter, the different places contained within that region are literally simultaneous in their presence. Furthermore, we also observed how its past retained its own presence in the form of distinctive traces, i.e., materials, architectural features, distribution, etc. Moreover, the industrial decline of that area left a gap in its wake which made future regeneration possible, which in turn allowed for the ensuing "Bilbao Effect" to take hold. In parallel with regeneration then, the possibility of a different future for the area was simultaneously being made possible: past, present and future were "figuratively" simultaneous in this way. Malpas's notion of *placedness* also calls upon us to consider how the different parts of time are also locally grounded.

The reason Merleau-Ponty underlines these simultaneities, particularly that of space (the "literal" simultaneity of which would seem fairly obvious), is due to the fact that ordinary experience tends to confuse the ordering (or lack thereof) of these parts in terms of how they interrelate.[522] For example, if we consider the area covered by Cardiff's walk, the most obvious way to conceive of the route according to ordinary experience would be to think of Whitechapel Gallery as the starting point and Liverpool Street Station as the end. However, this is simply what Merleau-Ponty refers to as the "order of the 'consciousness' of significations, and in this order there is no past-present 'simultaneity,' [but only] evidence of their divergence".[523]

Indeed, Liverpool Street Station would not be understood in terms of its literal simultaneity with Whitechapel Gallery, but instead as a future relation. We could capture this relation by videoing the participant's journey, which would allow us to fast-forward or rewind their journey, thus rendering these two places the furthest apart according to that route. This would, however, be to overlook the way in which different moments become entangled over the course of the walk. From the outside, the video could never capture the way in which the opening library scene retains its presence as a threshold for the duration of the walk, for instance,

[520] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 117.
[521] Ibid.
[522] Jessica Wiskus, *The Rhythm of Thought*, 36.
[523] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 243.

as it is expressed through the sharpness of our participants' attention to the recording and surrounding environment. Neither would it convey the suspense as to what will happen next as the narrative unfolds.

Due to the fact that we are only able to be in one place at a time, space is not experienced in terms of the simultaneity of its parts, at least in what Merleau-Ponty calls the "empirical present".[524] In turn, we come to interpret time as separate moments extended in linear form on the same grounds. The significance of the "temporal gestalt", however, is precisely that it undermines such an interpretation, in so much as the removal of any single element within its sequence (which in this case are clearly spatially distributed) alters the entire arrangement. The movement that characterises it works beyond the "empirical present" in this way.

Wiskus remarks how, according to Merleau-Ponty's approach, just as "the depth of space would exceed the linear dimension of width and breadth (…), the depth of time would be that through which the separate realms of past, present, and future might 'take' as one whole, transformative dimension".[525] As such, time "would not be removed from space or the body, [and] the past would not be forgotten, dead, or nonpresent but would maintain efficacy in the world".[526] Just as *flesh* understood in spatial terms can be illustrated by terminology like "coiling over" or "reversibility", so Wiskus remarks that Merleau-Ponty's conception of time is to be understood "as a sort of coiling up of the past and future into the present", which would not merely "produce layers" but "inaugurate depth".[527] As such, past, present and future would not lie "beyond the boundary of the present" according to Merleau-Ponty's view, but instead would stand as "one sole gesture" with it.[528] The past is characterised as the "obverse or unseen side of the present".[529] However, it only "comes to be known through encroachment on the present" specifically, whereby past events come to emerge as implicating themselves through our present engagement with the world.[530]

From the perspective of embodied consciousness, as we have already seen, the stability of one's *implacement* within different sorts of environments can be interpreted as a something like an upsurge of past experience as it comes to infiltrate our presence (both spatial and temporal), a consideration that the artist brings to expression quite explicitly through the work itself. Cardiff spent considerable time in this part of the city conducting research for the work and, having initially arrived from a small town in rural Canada, the artist describes how "the London experience enhanced the paranoia" that comes with adjusting to a strange city.[531]

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[524] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 244.
[525] Jessica Wiskus*, The Rhythm of Thought*, 36.
[526] Ibid., 35.
[527] Ibid., 36.
[528] Ibid.
[529] Ibid.
[530] Ibid., 37.
[531] Janet Cardiff, *The Missing Voice (case study b)*, (London - UK: Art Angel, 1999), 66-67.

She encountered the environment as unsettling in this way. Upon reflection, she remarks that she considers this feeling to shape the experience of women "especially" and that the sound walk she produced was partly a response to that.[532] Indeed, Cardiff often conveys her own sense of vulnerability in such a way that her gender is implied, one example coming very early on in the walk when she observes how intimidating the city can be at night:

> I sometimes follow men late at night when I'm coming home from the tube station. I pick a man that's going my way and then stay behind him. It makes me feel safer, going through the dark tunnels, to have someone near me.[533]

There are numerous moments within the recording where our relationship with artist flows in relative harmony. We become familiar with her voice, her pace and her stride, and we may even come to manage the dissonances that emerge between the directions she gives and the missing elements of the landscape itself. Yet in moments like this one, when the artist's vulnerability is laid bare, at least from my own perspective, so the dissonance between my own understanding of the landscape and the artist's experience is exposed. Just as a missing feature of the landscape can send the glance awry, so here the participant is summoned to consider this particular feature of the landscape before them in terms of how it has been presented by the artist, as opposed to, how it would otherwise have been encountered. This intones the temporal gestalt from the participant's perspective in that this element within the sequence of thoughts and reflections becomes more prominent relative to the degree of divergence between the participant's own *style* and that of the *principal theme*. This divergence characterises the harshness of the dissonance that ensues.

In *Place and Experience,* Malpas argues that the ordering of the subject's mental states and attitudes mirrors the ordering of subjective space in that our sense of mental unity derives from, and is organised and reconfigured in relation to, our actions, and by extension, the objects, events and other people we are engaged with. Our situatedness in relation to the particular places impresses itself upon us and brings certain elements of our background (or, our "personal history" when memories are triggered) to the fore. He puts forth the analogy of a fly caught in a spider's web to illustrate this point, a situation in which "all threads have a pressure exerted on them from a single point", and yet the web itself remains intact.[534] This model is useful because it allows us to consider how the attitude, mood or memory which a certain place, object, person or experience draws from us is never entirely detached from the other aspects of a person's more general character and projects. This is as true for the artist herself, who brings her implacement to expression, as it is for the participant engaging with it.

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[532] Ibid.
[533] Christov-Bakargiev, *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works*, 116.
[534] Malpas, *Place and Experience*, 96.

It also underlines the fact that, although the walk does bring to expression Cardiff's experience of the city as a woman, it does not represent the experience of all women, the problem with such an interpretation being twofold. To begin with, it would represent too narrow an understanding of that which the walk brings to our attention. As Sonia Kruks remarks, women "are situated also as members of a social class, a race, an ethnic grouping, a sexual orientation, an age-grade, and so on" and it is ultimately "dangerous" to reduce their diverse experiences to a common gender label.[535] This is not to say that the association that Cardiff makes should not be taken into account, but rather we should be concerned as much with how her sense of uneasiness or paranoia is brought to expression as the content of her observations themselves directly. This brings us to the second problem such a reductive reading would come up against, namely that it would constitute the same kind of expressivist account that was already rejected in the first chapter. Indeed, the work would be reduced to an idea presumed to lie behind the work, which would in turn lead us to overlook that broader *style* that the work manifests.

Cardiff explains how the city functioned as something like a Rorschach test for her to interpret as she walked.[536] Much of the narrative emerges as a consequence of "stream of consciousness scenarios" that she often invents even when out walking on her own, and which she claims are more than likely "the result of reading too many detective novels or watching too many movies".[537] The situation, general tone, samples, and music are all reminiscent of film noir and the work of directors like Orson Welles, Fritz Lang, Billy Wilder, or even Alfred Hitchcock. Yet these elements rarely communicate much to us directly. They serve to punctuate and move between different moments, reflections or voices, and as many of the speakers in the samples have north-American accents, their inclusion alludes to the work's *ofness*. Even the artist claims that she does not always know what the stories that emerge through her walks are *about*, and in so doing, she echoes Picasso's comments cited in the third chapter, in which the painter asserted the futility of all attempts to attach concrete meanings to his paintings. In much the same way as *Guernica's* development through its many phases was characterised as Picasso's own confrontation with, and response to, his own perceptual *style* that his work in development reflected, so Cardiff's work reflects a sustained attempt on her part to bring her own *style* of *implacement* within the scene to the fore.

Malpas introduces the term "nesting" shortly after the web analogy outlined above to describe the way in which feelings, emotions, memories and ideas appear to interrelate, how they sit within and between one

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[535] Sonia Kruks, "Merleau-Ponty and the Problem of Difference in Feminism", in ed. D. Olowski and G. Weiss, *Feminist Interpretations of Maurice Merleau-Ponty*, (Pennsylvania - US: The Pennsylvania University Press, 2006), 26.
[536] Janet Cardiff, *The Missing Voice*, 66-67.
[537] Cardiff quoted in: Christov-Bakargiev, *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works*, 111.

another, and how one thought or reflection often seems to trigger or release another. He also claims that this entanglement structure reflects how actions and events sit within the broader narratives of our lives, and moreover, how places themselves are inter-connected within our lives.[538] There is ample evidence of this nesting structure in Cardiff's artwork as she moves between places and the thoughts and reflections that come to her along the way are released.

Nevertheless, the close association Cardiff expresses, as she approaches the tunnel, between this place and her own sense of being in danger, does not appear as the sort of fluid release of ideas as Malpas's description of nesting might imply. The environment reveals itself to the artist as a scene in which bodies like hers are at risk. It impresses itself upon her and ultimately oppresses her in this way. In the introduction to *Cultural Politics of Emotion,* Sara Ahmed underlines the importance of understanding emotion as a "feeling of bodily change" and how the world makes impressions upon us which in turn give rise to emotional states.[539] As she goes on to say, there is a "*need to remember the 'press' in impression*. It allows us to associate the experience of having an emotion with the very affect of one surface upon another, an affect that leaves its mark or trace." [540]

Ahmed's observation draws our attention to how Cardiff's reaction to the tunnel in her recording must ultimately have been learned. Indeed, in order to see the bridge as intimidating, that feeling must already have been impressed upon her beforehand. An example of how this might occur comes further on in Ahmed's text when she cites Audre Lorde's account of her first encounter with overt racism on a subway train to Harlem. Still only a little girl at the time, Lorde recounts the look of disgust and hatred on the face of a white woman who was sat on the train beside Lorde and her mother and who did not want her own coat to touch the little girl's. At first, Lorde the little girl thought that there must have been a cockroach between their seats such was the contempt in the eyes of the woman. She then came to realise that the woman's disgust was directed toward her, an experience which remained with her for the rest of her life.[541]

Ahmed observes the way in which hatred comes to seem "detached from bodies, surrounding the scene with its violence", and yet at root, it is only "on the surfaces of bodies" that hatred works.[542] The white woman preferred to move away and lose her seat than to remain sat beside the little girl. In so doing, Ahmed explains how this brief interaction also gave rise to a "reconstitution of bodily space", whereby the bodies each

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[538] Malpas, *Place and Experience*, 101-107.
[539] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 5.
[540] Ibid., 6.
[541] Audre Lorde cited in Sara Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 53.
[542] Ibid.

became relieved in their apartness.[543] As she goes on to observe, the "organisation of bodily space creates a border that is transformed into an object".[544] The young Lorde learned in that moment, even at this very young age, how she was seen by many white people. She did not learn this simply by registering the contempt on their faces, but by sensing the tension in the space between their bodies, that which emerged across the *separation-difference* between them.

Of course, with regard to the tunnel in *The Missing Voice*, it is not another person directly but the physical structure of the tunnel itself that creates something like this "border" as described by Ahmed above. It presents itself to Cardiff as a space to be wary of, to proceed through with caution, and one through which any woman would achieve much safer passage if accompanied by a man. Cardiff does not evoke an original event where she learned this about herself in the same way Lorde did. Nevertheless, she is drawing from past learning of what a woman should and should not do under such circumstances. But that is not to say the danger is simply in the orator's head. For the lessons she has learned about what it means to be a female body are founded upon a long history of violence against women, many instances of which will have unfolded from within places much like this one. Indeed, the tunnel-structure *accommodates* violence you might say, and especially at night, in so much as it opens up a dimly-lit space that is relatively hidden from view. It implies the presence of people in terms of what we know them to be capable of. Whereas in Ahmed's account, the space between bodies is turned into an object that manifests the hatred between them, here the structure itself seems to manifest certain sorts of violence in a way that is "sustained", as Heidegger would say, by a society in which violence against women remains rife. This violence loiters within it as a sort of potentiality, one which becomes particularly heightened at night, and which taints the space it opens up from within. In the essay "Urban Flesh", Gail Weiss shows how terrorist attacks "provide vivid contemporary examples of the powerful role the city plays in our very sense of our own corporeality".[545] What Cardiff's situation shows us is how this shaping occurs on a far smaller scale than the large-scale spectacles to which Weiss refers. For what Cardiff reveals to the walk's participants as she guides them through this part of the city is how these different features of the landscape curtail, interrupt or compromise the free flow of her movement.

This interruption to one's bodily movement from within public spaces is something Frantz Fanon illustrates very effectively in *Black Skin, White Masks,* when, in response to the racism he encountered when he first moved to Paris, he describes experiencing "difficulties in the development of [the] bodily schema".[546] There

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[543] Ibid.
[544] Ibid.
[545] Gail Weiss, "Urban Flesh", in Ed. D. Olowski and G. Weiss, Feminist Interpretations of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, (Pennsylvania - US: The Pennsylvania University Press, 2006), 151.
[546] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 83.

was a hesitancy or interruption in the way he moved his body which he first became aware of when out walking in the city and experiencing the following from passers-by:

> "Look, a Negro!" It was an external stimulus that flicked over me as I passed by. I made a tight smile.
> "Look, a Negro!" It was true. It amused me.
> "Look, a Negro!" The circle was drawing a bit tighter. I made no secret of my amusement.
> "Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened!" Frightened! Frightened! Now they were beginning to be afraid of me. I made up my mind to laugh myself to tears, but laughter had become impossible.[547]

Fanon writes of how the corporeal schema "crumbled" thereafter, as if his body had been dispossessed of its familiar manner of expressing itself in relation to the world, and replaced by a "racial epidural schema".[548] This is presented as a consequence of his having been worn down by the looks and comments of people in the street over time. Indeed, it is the repetition in this example that eventually breaks Fanon's spirit. He distinguishes between the corporeal schema as it is developed freely in relation to the world and that which can be imposed on the body from the outside by others, not just through their words and actions on the street, but also through "legends, stories, history, and above all historicity".[549] What this atmosphere of oppression does to consciousness according to Fanon's view is to insert a degree of doubt with regard to one's own standing in the world. Robbed of his own people's history and only exposed to a version of it as written by white men, the corporeal schema of black consciousness is destined to crumble under such circumstances because its foundations are so unstable.

What these accounts share in common with Cardiff's work is their underlining of the fact that smooth and uninhibited movement between places and through the city is a privilege not enjoyed by all (a point Weiss articulates very well in relation to the home in "Urban Flesh").[550] The history of some lives implicates itself in their futures in such a way that renders their passage through places like cities more complicated than others. Whilst Ahmed's reading of Lorde shows us how the space between bodies becomes objectified and tainted through *intercorporeality*, Cardiff's walk shows us how the places themselves can also become tainted in this way. In turn, Fanon's articulation of the interruption or the "difficulties in the development of the corporeal schema" shows us just how the subject's own movement is complicated.

That being said, there is also another, more hidden, historical dimension to Fanon's account which stretches beyond the subject's own point of view and points toward a historicity of racism in general as it has become *sedimented* within the culture in general over many years. This occurs through the various "legends, stories, [and] history" that the individual cannot simply overcome through pure determination alone. Understood in

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[547] Ibid., 84.
[548] Ibid.
[549] Ibid.
[550] Gail Weiss, "Urban Flesh", in *Feminist Interpretations of Maurice Merleau-Ponty*, ed. D. Olowski and G. Weiss, (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania University Press, 2006), 161.

this way, each encounter with hatred, racism, or gender-based violence both manifests and contributes to a much broader and more complex world history in which we are all caught up. By leading us through the city and revealing to us how violence can linger within the very structures which *accommodate* that violence, the artwork reveals itself as harbouring the potential to trigger an experience from the participant's point of view whereby they are called upon to confront their own relation with that history. This occurs through the divergence between the artwork in terms of the *style* that it manifests and the *stylistic* "norm" which characterises the participant's own *implacement* within the places that the artist guides them through. Singer's observations regarding painting's capacity to take hold of the viewer's perception goes some way towards communicating this idea:

> It is precisely because the painter's world is continuous with that of his audience that his work can take hold of their vision. It is through the basic human capacities for perception that an exchange of meaning between the artist and his work, and the work and its audience can take place.[551]

In the case of Cardiff's artwork, the *stylistic* divergence is perceived directly in the dissonance between the artist's and the participant's respective styles of approaching the tunnel. The less of a threat that such a space presents to the participant, the more keenly the dissonance is felt and the more affected the intonation of the temporal gestalt will be. Yet, as Singer brings to our attention above, it is only because the artist's world is continuous with that of the audience that its *principal theme* is able to take hold of their perception. Meanwhile, what Ahmed's and Fanon's accounts reveal to us is the transformative dimension of their own encounters with racism. When, as outlined above, Wiskus describes the coiling up of the past and the future through the present as only coming to be recognised in terms of its "encroachment" on the present and as holding the potential to "inaugurate depth", these are precisely the kinds of instances she has in mind.
Wiskus draws our attention to what Merleau-Ponty refers to in *The Visible and the Invisible* as "mythical time", which highlights the way in which we often tend to find meaning in the past by way of its relation to the present. In both of these instances, Lorde's encounter as a little girl on the bus and Fanon's with people on the street in Paris stand out to them as what is referred to by Merleau-Ponty as a "beginning", which is not to say the literal beginning or origin of the racism they were exposed to, but rather the moment in which they became aware of its impression, and so the origin of the feeling that they have carried within their bodies ever since. The future ferments and occurs as "a deepening of the past" in this way.[552]

This holds implications for the way in which the encounter itself should then be understood, for it also harbours its own transformative dimension that these events can provide models for. The artwork *implaces* participants in a situation that "opens up" what Pinder describes as "the idea of the city through its attention

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[551] Linda Singer, "Merleau-Ponty on the Concept of Style", 237.
[552] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Institution and Passivity: Course Notes from the College de France (1954-1955)*, trans. Leonard Lawlor & Heath Massey, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2010), 22.

to historical layers and multiple narratives and identities".[553] Apart from the moment when Cardiff expresses her feelings regarding the tunnel, there are various others that arise over the course of the walk which underline the potential thoughts and experiences of other people inhabiting the same landscape as ourselves. I will now outline some of the ways in which the walk does this before moving on to consider how the participant's own personal past encroaches upon the present in such a way so as to allow this.

In addition to her confrontation with the tunnel, Cardiff also makes reference to construction work happening along the route when she says: "I wonder if the workers ever think about themselves as the changers of the city; the men that cover up the old stories, making way for new ones".[554] Indeed, whilst the noise of heavy machinery and tools might normally alert us to the presence of developers in the area, the artwork makes us consider the impact this has on the lives of local people, those who are moved on so that other people can be moved in. It is easy to think of the city purely in terms of the streets we walk along, but people live behind the facades of many of the buildings that line them. They represent thresholds between the public and private sphere in this way.

Meanwhile, the voice of the detective and that of the second woman who he is tracking down hint at the potential diversity of narratives unfolding around us. This is particularly interesting in the case of the recorded voice in that the woman appears to be describing the city as it appears in a dystopian version of either the present or future. There are helicopters overhead, soldiers dressed in black, and even gunshots and bombings happening around her. We also hear her speaking in moments when she has temporarily escaped all of this, when she is up on a roof and enjoying the skyline, for instance. This raises questions as to what will become of this part of the city in the future or how it might otherwise have been. Our tendency is often to think of cities as entities of permanence, as though their fundamental structures will never change, and this sense of stability underpins our own sense of security in the way we go about our daily lives from within them. This part of the recording calls our presumptions into question by proposing an alternate version.

Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly the artist herself (the principal voice) with whom our relationship develops most fully. In addition to the situation outlined previously, we also get a keen sense of her isolation and low mood along the way. The artist remarks that part of what *The Missing Voice* brings to expression is the experience of "being a lone person getting lost amongst the masses".[555] In consequence, she describes an increasing sense of her own invisibility and questions at times whether or not she has already become invisible to the world around her.[556] Cardiff also asks us if we have ever wanted to disappear ourselves. By

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[553] Pinder, "Ghostly Footsteps", 8.
[554] Christov-Bakargiev, *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works*, 118.
[555] Janet Cardiff, *The Missing Voice*, 66.
[556] Christov-Bakargiev, *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works*, 117.

making herself vulnerable to us in this way, as a person far from home and alone in the city, and yet alongside us, the work demonstrates a potential to heighten our awareness of other people's lives caught up in the city alongside us.

This potentiality inherent within the work should be regarded as transformative in the sense that it renews our understanding of places like this, thus enabling us to confront them anew. This possibility depends on precisely the kind of simultaneity between past, present and future outlined earlier on. Understood in this way, the reversibility of the *separation-difference* upon which the divergence between the participant's own *stylistic* "norm" and that of the artwork is founded does not merely concern the immediate world beyond the edges of the body. For it must also return back upon oneself in so much as the world is perceived equally in terms of its divergence from our past experiences of it. The *separation-difference* is intrinsically spatial-temporal in this way.

That being said, a degree of caution is called for here. For, as Merleau-Ponty observes, we must be careful not to fall into the trap of presuming that the past (and how it implicates itself in the present or future) is made entirely transparent and accessible for consciousness simply by way of reflection.[557] There is no direct intentional relation that is open to being traced in this way. The simultaneity under consideration is "metaintentional" he writes, and consciousness is not limited to its "perspectives", therefore.[558] As such, when he describes corporeity as the "guardian of the past", the implication is twofold.[559] On the one hand, the past is preserved and expressed through the lived *flesh* of embodied consciousness. On the other hand, that which is preserved and expressed is not then automatically rendered transparent. In turn, when Wiskus claims that the past and future "coil up" through the present and "inaugurate depth", that depth also exceeds the limitations of reflective consciousness. There are two aspects of this inherent ambiguity that are vital to our understanding of the past in terms of its lack of transparency. The first relates to direct experience itself whilst the second stems from the institutional background from which all experience inevitably draws.

To begin with, in so much as embodied consciousness is inherently narcissistic — because it has an inside and an outside, directionality and perspective — this means that much of the other side of its power of perceiving always remains hidden from its own point of view according to Merleau-Ponty. As such, at no point were its past experiences ever entirely transparent for it since the experiences and processes through which the *corporeal schema* came to be sculpted gradually over the course of that life (and along with it, the perceptual and corporeal *style* that became *sedimented* within it) also remained obscure. Just because aspects of our

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[557] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 243.
[558] Ibid.
[559] Ibid.

experience remain obscure though, that is not to say that they are entirely forgotten. In this instance, it is not just the situations alluded to by the voices themselves that bring these situations to the fore.

This artwork cannot be reduced to its transcript because these feelings of uneasiness, loneliness, paranoia and fear are all equally apparent in the general movement of the work (i.e., in the interjections of musical and films samples, the environmental sounds only present as ghosts, the quick changes of pace and rhythm affected by the artist when she no longer feels comfortable within a particular location or simply wishes to move on, the urgency with which she guides us) as they are in the words themselves. These aspects convey something of Cardiff's own *style* of *implacement* more directly. It is not, therefore, as if we are called upon to recognise and contrast in a reflective way our own past experiences with what is being expressed by the speakers in order that the artwork's *stylistic* divergence can be intuited. It is simply enough that we open ourselves up to the *principal theme's* guidance. This is the problem with the "empirical" approach to analysing artworks from Merleau-Ponty's perspective, since that approach requires a conscious positing of one's own past experience of other artworks in order to interpret the work in front of us effectively.

One danger of my own account as it has been developed so far is that it could be interpreted as suggesting that the participant's own *stylistic* norm must diverge significantly from that of the work for the encounter to take on this transformative potential. This is undoubtedly in no small part due to my already being relatively familiar with this part of the city that Cardiff's sound walk guides us through, and moreover, that I inhabit a male's body for whom the city does not present itself as threatening in quite the same way. Significant divergence is not necessary though.

As we have seen in previous chapters, part of what artworks often do is reveal aspects of the world which have otherwise remained obscure only because they are so deeply ingrained in the way we already see the world. Ondak's *Good Feelings in Good Time* is a good example of the way a performance can reveal the intentional threads running through public places and how we often simply abide by such rituals once they have formed. When Sontag writes of photography that it is a "potent means for turning the tables on reality—for turning it into a shadow", the same might also be said of many artworks in that they harbour the potential to draw our attention to aspects of our experience that otherwise tend to remain obscure when experienced directly.[560] Or, as Audre Lorde writes of poetry, it is the "revelation or distillation of experience".[561] Poetry is "not a luxury" for people whose experiences have been ignored, overlooked or suppressed, therefore, but "is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought".[562] There is a poetry to our experience

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[560] Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, (New York: Rosetta Books, 2005), 141.
[561] Audre Lorde, *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle The Master's House*, (London: Penguin Classics, 2018), 2.
[562] Ibid.

of the city that *The Missing Voice* renders explicit which is potentially transformative in so much as it reconfigures or reconfirms elements or aspects of our past experience as it encroaches upon the present and according to which the artwork's *stylistic* divergence from our own "norm" is gauged. Many people would undoubtedly identify much more directly with Cardiff's interpretation of the city than I did myself, in which case those aspects of the experience which they perceive as held in common are rendered explicit through the event of the encounter in such a way so that they "can be thought".

There is a backward movement of the present to the past in this way, which it is to say, present experience *re-institutes* that which has become *sedimented* previously, that which we already carry within ourselves. The past is "instituted only in retrospect" as Wiskus writes, and the narrative of our lives is also constructed backwards in this way.[563] The second point I wish to consider here is how, even when a past experience can be identified in the way Lorde and Fanon identify their own first encounters with racism, an element of obscurity still remains in that the event itself is embedded within a much broader history to which it contributes and from which it draws. In the case of an artwork's encounter, we must consider then not just the manner in which we draw from or engage with our own personal history, but furthermore, the history of art and its encounter broadly speaking, and even that of whatever aspect of the world the work brings to expression. However, this does raise the question as to how a past can be drawn from that is not entirely available and transparent to consciousness. The link that Merleau-Ponty draws between "mythical time" and Husserl's term *"Stiftung"* (often translated as "institution") is informative here in that the "inaugurated depth" to which Wiskus refers is founded upon an *institutional* background that underpins all *flesh*.[564]

6.2.3 Institution

Darian Meacham defines "institution" (*Stiftung*) as "an actual sense development that opens a horizon of other future sense developments, which can be said to have a form of latent existence in the horizon of the first development".[565] An *institution* always has both an "actual" and "potential" dimension, therefore, the "actual" referring to that sense development as it has been grasped or understood, which in turn opens up the "potential" for a future, according to which it might come to be (either partially or entirely) echoed later on. When Merleau-Ponty argues that the earliest cave paintings turned the world into a world "to be painted" and inaugurated an "indefinite future of painting", he is evoking the *institutional* character of those events.[566] These paintings not only gave rise to an "actual sense development" through the images they manifested,

[563] Jessica Wiskus, *The Rhythm of Thought*, 37.
[564] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 243.
[565] Darian Meacham, "What Goes Without Saying: Husserl's Concept of Style", *Research in Phenomenology* 43, no.1 (2013): 7.
[566] Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence", 60/67.

but also altered the world in terms of how it then came to be engaged with thereafter through creative *implacement*.

When an *institution* is echoed, this represents a "re-institution" (*Nachstiftung*) of an original *institution* (*Urstiftung)*, which alters the original *institution* by activating that potential latent within its horizon.[567] Meacham describes this movement back as a "passive referencing back *(zurückgewiesen)*".[568] There are two important aspects of the *re-institution* and the passive referral back which characterises it to be considered here. Firstly, an "original institution" (*Urstiftung)* is never truly original since it is always made up of other re-*institutions*. Although we may interpret an event in history or in our lives as a "beginning", which is extremely important for the way in which we interpret the past in general and how the narratives of our lives develop, these events or situations will also have emerged from the *institutional* background or mesh to which they contribute. Secondly, therefore, it is also important to understand that this "referral-back" which characterises the *re-institution* never involves a simple one-to-one correspondence between the present act, event or situation, and the *institution* embedded in the *institutional* background that the present presupposes.[569] Just as all original *institutions* are also *re-institutions*, so they also manifest as clusters of re-*institutions* that have become entangled with one another.

For Merleau-Ponty, all paintings *re-institute* those early cave paintings in that they come to realise more completely the potential future opened up by those original artworks. We might even say that all artists do, to varying degrees, *re-institute* early cave paintings through their own creative practices in that they confront the world as a world to be brought to expression. Of course, if we are to accept this claim, then we must do so on the grounds that they do this indirectly, via the artworks of other artists which triggered their own compulsion to bring the world to expression. We would also need to understand the formation of these clusters according to which new media and an ever-expanding subject matter come to be incorporated into artistic practices. What is particularly interesting about the development of art history, considered from a contemporary standpoint and for our current purposes, is that the artist could create artworks without any prior knowledge of the existence of primitive art, and yet, nevertheless, be actively "re-instituting" those original artistic events by way of non-reflective engagement with the original "sense" they opened up. Their own work has a hidden depth in this respect. But it is the manner in which art's development occurs not in isolation from the world, but rather with it. This is why Singer asserts that no painting can be "purely self-referential" and that "a private painting is as unintelligible as a private language", because it is the world we share that allows artworks to convey meaning.[570]

[567] Darian Meacham, "What Goes Without Saying", 10.
[568] Ibid.
[569] Ibid.
[570] Linda Singer, "Merleau-Ponty on the Concept of Style", 239.

Cardiff's process emerged from her experiments with the museum audio-guide format, and as such, she *re-institutes* that practice in its original form. Furthermore, we might also consider how the artist comes to realise the potential inherent within certain musical fragments and film clips for enabling her to develop an entirely distinct narrative. Sampling is a fascinating example of *re-institution* in so much as previous clips are lifted from originals and used to diverse effects. This is why it is important to keep in mind the "actual sense development" aspect of the *institution*. For even when an artist draws from the past in a conscious and reflective way, by studying the work of another artist and producing work based on their research, for example, then the artist does not simply collocate the aesthetic ideas or effects discovered in that oeuvre toward a new arrangement. Rather, they recognise in the creative gesture of another a certain accentuation in terms of how it brings about an "actual sense development".

As a further example of this, we saw in the second chapter how Picasso clearly recognised the impact of the foregrounding in Ingres' *Romulus' Victory Over Acron,* yet its incorporation into *Guernica* serves to bring about an entirely different effect relative to the entire scene into which it is incorporated. Similarly, here, we could say that Cardiff clearly recognised the creative potential of the audio guide's capacity to move people around a space and direct their attention, or the dramatic potential of film and musical samples to punctuate the narrative in the way they do.

In consequence, we can see how the respective works of both Picasso and Cardiff triggered retrospective shifts (*re-institutions*) within the previous artworks and formats from which they drew in that the potential horizons they opened up became more completely realised (or even expanded) through their development. However, we might also consider how certain secondary themes running through each of these artworks (such as the attack on Guernica in Picasso's work or the anonymity of the city life in Cardiff's), in so much as they are themselves open to *re-institution* by means of their expression in other works, texts and other cultural activities such as discussions and debates, might themselves come to alter the meaning of the artwork indirectly and retrospectively in turn.

Consider, for instance, how the emergence of more detailed historical analyses or discoveries relating to how the actual attack on Guernica the town occurred might not just alter the "actual sense development" as it emerged from that original event, but also potentially deepen our sense of the suffering that the work brings to expression. Or, in the case of Cardiff's work, because the work draws from that region in which it is set directly, the changes that occur within that region will proliferate the dissonances which emerge through its encounter as it is perceived from the participant's perspective as they are being guided through that region.

As we have now seen, however, the participant's *implacement* within the scene draws from a depth that is much deeper than merely that of our familiarity with an urbanised environment such as this one. As stated above, Cardiff herself considers the work to be an expression of what it means to be *implaced* in this scene as a woman, a claim which manifests itself clearly in the script itself. Before we consider the implications of this, it is important to underline the fact that just as artworks both *institute* and are *instituted*, so the same can be said of both the artist and participant. Indeed, the body itself as well as the key stages in its development are themselves *institutions* whose implications often remain hidden from consciousness as a consequence of the narcissism its limited perspective gives rise to. In *The Visible and the Invisible,* Merleau-Ponty refers to the *separation-difference* (*écart*) as a "first institution" that is "always already there".[571] Furthermore, in the *Institution and Passivity Course Notes,* puberty is also presented in such terms, as not solely a biological process of the body, but one that is lived according to certain "social tracks", and which gives rise to an "elaboration of one's life".[572]

Casey's work on "the glance" and the "edges" of the body has already proved extremely useful for enabling us to mine the depths of consciousness in terms of how it responds to environments and the artworks held within them. One of the initial observations he makes in the introduction to *The World at a Glance* is how, within a matter of "milliseconds", an "enormous amount of complicated data" can be internalised by it and even very complicated situations can be grasped.[573] At a mere glance, we are able to spot the intricacies of an argument between two people as it unfolds in public, for instance, how "she is angry at how he treats her friend, who, however, has in certain ways provoked him".[574] Our perception is not "naive" — the look is always a "knowing look" in this way.[575] In order to be as articulate as it is, a mode of vision as rapid as the glance must clearly be based upon the formative of process of our ongoing *implacement* within the *place-world* in general. Indeed, it forms from the "exemplary actions of others, religious injunctions, the cultivation of conscience, and so on" as Casey says.[576] That being said, in so much as the "knowing" of the glance is founded upon experience, so its foundations are inherently ambiguous, which means that situations such as those referred to by Casey are never entirely transparent for it. Just as Cardiff's work cannot be reduced to an inventory of the various experiences that it draws to our attention, so situations such as this one must be interpreted as much in terms of how they are seen, which is to say, in terms of their divergence, as what the concrete contents of those situations are. All perception is interpretive in this way in the sense that it all appears as a divergence which in turn intones the unfolding of that event.

[571] Merleau-Ponty, The Visible and the Invisible, 216.
[572] Merleau-Ponty, *Institution and Passivity*, 22.
[573] Casey, *The World at a Glance*, 7.
[574] Ibid., 6.
[575] Ibid, 355.
[576] Ibid, 355.

6.3. "I have to leave now"

> I have to leave now. I wanted to walk you back to the library but there's not enough time. Please return the Discman as soon as possible. Goodbye. *[Sound of footsteps walking away]* [577]

When we arrive to Liverpool Street Station, and after observing the crowds with Cardiff and hearing the broader story draw to a conclusion of kind, Cardiff suddenly announces that it is time for her to leave and she does so. We are left in the middle of the station with no guidance whatsoever and in a completely different place to where we started. The change of place is itself significant because it underlines the fact that what we have just experienced is very far from the quasi-oblivion of the real world as described by Ingarden. Instead, we have had our relationship with the city fundamentally reoriented, and in turn, various aspects of our own personal history *re-instituted*. In short, we have been *re-implaced* in the world in such a way that clears a path for a different style of engagement with it in the future.

Of course, when Cardiff walks away from us it is not as though we are instantaneously *re-implaced* by our surroundings or that we return directly to our customary manner of being there. To begin with, many viewers who have followed the route will not have known where they were going to end up. When this is the case, we are quite literally stranded, and even though we can easily travel in any direction from here, part of our transition back into the everyday world is that we must compose ourselves and consider what direction we need to go in from that point. In parallel with this, we also experience the sort of heightened awareness of our surroundings as described as resulting from Cardiff's *Forty-Part Motet* in chapter four. Indeed, here the station itself presents itself in its *threshold* capacity in so much as we must adjust ourselves to its own *style* of presentation, and in so doing, it reveals something of what will be required of us from hereon in. Yet, the work does also linger in a way, primarily in terms of the style of *implacement* it has settled us into, whereby it is difficult to free ourselves of the voyeur's perspective. As I enter the tube and make my way south, I feel myself more intrigued by what other people are up to than I usually would be. People appear almost as actors in a film or play, each with a potential story to tell, and my inquisitive disposition in relation to the lives of these strangers around me, my glancing between them whilst listening in on the conversation between two people beside me, is what ultimately constitutes the rhythm of the unfolding of my *implacement* in the present moment. The world's *style* stands forth emphatically.

Cardiff's sound walk provides us with various insights. First, our analysis of Ingarden's *preliminary emotion* allowed us to uncover the *principal theme* in terms of its threshold capacity. It is no surprise that it was more recognisable within the urban context than the museum, since the complexity of this kind of environment

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[577] Christov-Bakargiev, *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works*, 119.

requires this aspect of the *principal theme* to be particularly effective. This provided a foundation upon which to analyse how our *implacement* within that scene that Cardiff's sound walk guides us through contributed to the encounter as it unfolded. Two dimensions which proved useful in analysing the work revealed themselves to us. The first was how our familiarity with the environment from previous experiences influenced the stability of the encounter and ultimately intoned the *temporal gestalt* that emerged. This also drew our attention to the significance of the *stylistic* deviation between the *principal theme* and the environment itself. Secondly, the participant's own personal history was also shown to encroach upon the encounter in a range of interesting ways from across the *separation-difference* as manifested between their own body and the principal theme. This added further intonation to that event. Finally, the meaning underpinning this intonation that the encounter gave rise to was shown to stem from a much deeper and more complex *institutional* background that our experience of all artworks inevitably draws from.

Conclusion

Since the inauguration of the earliest museums in the 1800s, the relation between art, its audience and place has evolved considerably. Having considered a broad range of approaches, not just to art making but also to place making on the part of official places of art, and indeed, the encounter by audiences themselves, the significance of those early models should not be underestimated. Indeed, what those early models presented were the basic components of the art-place relation as it has been described throughout this thesis. They *accommodated* the audience's engagement with those collections by offering up both dedicated space(s) and controlled conditions through which the encounter was able to occur. Furthermore, their general set-up, that is, how they distributed and displayed artworks from within, gave rise to an *operative intentionality* which guided people towards a specific style of encounter.

Gombrich's intellectualist account of art showed just how deeply entrenched the principles underpinning those original models remain. Just as the those early public museums cultivated an intellectualist style of engagement with their collections, so Gombrich insists upon empirical analysis and the discovery of self-transcending values. By following this approach, he argues, we become more familiar with, and attentive to, the inherent challenges and limitations of the craft. In that first chapter, I underlined how the principles underpinning Gombrich's position mirrored the set-up of the museum itself. In chapter four, we considered both Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's respective critiques of the museum set-up on precisely these grounds. Both thinkers consider the empiricism that is so intrinsic to this set-up to cover over the true meaning of artworks. For Merleau-Ponty, the museum cultivates a superficial reading of the work which ultimately conceals the work's *style*. For Heidegger, on the other hand, the museum removes the artwork from its world and superfluously transforms its encounter into something very much like a science.

What each of these points of view fails to appreciate, however, is how the inauguration of those early public museums did not simply alter the public's engagement with the collections they held, by making them available for empirical reflection and arranging them as they did, but also fundamentally altered how the artworks themselves came to present themselves thereafter. Indeed, removed from their worlds and those places in which they would otherwise have been displayed, the artworks held within the collections of these museums were also relieved of their previous roles and functions. While the museum did allot each work a specific place in relation to its display, and, therefore, to the building as a whole, it did so primarily in terms of the formal appearance of those works as opposed to their perceived meaning or content. One could argue that their *principal themes* emerged for the first time here, the classical museum model functioning as something like an *original institution* in this way.

When Alfred Barr re-presented the evolution of modern art at MOMA, this new set-up and approach to display functioned as something like the *principal theme's* official confirmation. Each work came to be displayed as a unique aesthetic event in itself, and as this re-evaluation of the display was undertaken in order to reflect art's own perceived turn towards abstraction, so it was not entirely of Barr's own doing. Indeed, the turn towards abstraction and the expression of the subject reflects a gradual recognition on the part of artists during the modern period of the artwork as *principal theme*, which is to say, as an autonomous thing that is ultimately self-contained.

Dufrenne expresses this realisation effectively when he asserts that the artwork "does not announce the signification", but rather "it is the signification".[578] The limitation of this idea, however, is that it fails to recognise the essential *placedness* of the *principal theme*, and by extension, the *implacement* of the audience in relation to it. This presents a difficulty for Dufrenne, whose phenomenological approach compels him to recognise both the prominence of the formal dimension of the *principal theme* and its *embodiment,* a difference he is unable to reconcile. With this in mind, he claims that, as a consequence of its inherently formal signification, the artwork "transcends its thinghood by opposing its world to the world".[579] Furthermore, through its emergence as aesthetic object by way of its performance, he also claims that the artwork is "nontemporal", even if, through its *embodiment,* "it is consecrated to the world and to time".[580] Despite being firmly placed as an object, for Dufrenne, the artwork harbours a capacity to reveal a truth that is seemingly not *of the world*.

What Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the *style* of the work enables us to see, however, is the superfluity of Dufrenne's distinction between the work of art and the aesthetic object. When Merleau-Ponty highlights the artwork's capacity to reach out and guide its audience according to its own intrinsic *style*, he simultaneously reveals its capacity to *re-implace* its audience relative to that more general scene. It does not, as Dufrenne insists, function to distinguish itself form the world, but rather it objectively functions upon the world and holds sway in relation that place in which it has been set up.

This was minimalism's important discovery, that the artwork orientates people in relation to that place around it, which in turn brings the *placedness* of other works around it into view, as Krauss so adeptly describes. What Cage's *4'33"* enables us to consider is the extent of the artwork's capacity to *re-implace* audiences in this way: to antagonise and subvert the *operative intentionality* of a place and ultimately change the way it functions. Museum critique seeks to bring this potentiality to expression by revealing aspects of a place which usually function through their concealment. Meanwhile, social participation activates its

[578] Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, 148.
[579] Ibid., 166.
[580] Ibid., 166.

transformative potential by instigating new styles of collective *implacement*. But it is Malpas's reading of Heidegger which allows us to understand the manner in which the work imposes itself upon its surroundings most effectively. The *principal theme* does not *re-implace* simply through its concrete *placedness* within the broader configuration of a place, but rather, by way of its relation with that broader configuration, it comes to function on the terms set by its relation with that place. However, this does not mean that we should disregard the *principal theme* entirely, which Malpas's priority of objectivity over objecthood could be taken to imply, for this *objective functionality* derives precisely from the artwork's appearance, which is to say, its *style* as *sedimented* within, and *embodied* by, the work.

Nor should we think that the interaction between the artwork and its place is entirely one way. For *4'33"* also brought into view how different styles of encounter can be drawn from the *principal theme*, meaning that its *aboutness* can manifest differently according to different situations. In addition, what the example of Picasso's *Guernica* in chapters two and three brought into view was how the broader *place-world* happening around the event of the artwork's display also implicates itself in how that potentiality for *aboutness* held within the *principal theme* emerges. As the world changes, so different aspects of the *principal theme* come to be foregrounded in ways that would not necessarily have been possible prior to that. This demonstrates the embeddedness of the place of the exhibition within the broader *place-world* at large, which, as Casey underlines, is interwoven by the movement of bodies between different places.

It is audiences who navigate the tension between artwork and place, and their experience of the everyday world implicates itself in how they go about this. What Tate Modern discovered by surveying its audiences prior to the opening of its recent extension was enlightening in this regard. For the building had come to mean much more than merely a place in which they might arrive in order to encounter artworks. It had come to present itself as a place of significance relative to the city as a whole. When we came to analyse the audience's engagement with some of the artworks and displays held there, we saw how a great deal of what was considered to characterise the event unfolding around the *principal theme* of a work like Eliasson's *The Weather Project* was as much an expression of how that place stood in relation to the broader *place-world* as it was of the immediate situation of the encounter itself. The style of *accommodation* that the museum offers up is inherently regional in this way. Furthermore, Merleau-Ponty's notion of *intercorporeality* was also particularly useful for revealing to us how the meaning of the encounter emerges as much through our being caught up in the *principal theme* in terms of its *objective functionality*, from within place and amongst other people, as it does from the *principal theme* itself directly. In turn, this allowed us to consider the broader movement of audiences in relation to that place as a whole, and how those movements reflected the movement of the city in many ways, while simultaneously shaping the presentation of those displays from within.

In the final chapter, the *re-placement* of art within an urban context confirmed many of the observations made earlier on in the thesis. In particular, it showed how art adjusts in relation to its environment in order to *re-implace* audiences effectively. However, this capacity for *re-implacement* also came to implicate itself in the temporal unfolding of the artwork, whose rhythm came to articulate itself according to the *stylistic* divergences between the artwork, the surrounding environment, and the body of the audience member caught in the midst of the encounter. As such, aspects of the audience's own identity which may not immediately stand out as temporal in character were brought to expression in such a way that they implicated themselves in how these divergences were experienced. The temporal sequence encoded within the *principal theme* itself found intonation through the body of the participant caught up in it.

This thesis has revealed something of the intimate relation that exists between the artwork and the place or network of places through which an audience's encounter with it unfolds. In so doing, it offers up a novel approach to how we might come to analyse artworks, that is, in terms of their capacity to *re-implace* us. What is more, in so much artworks depend on effective *accommodation* from places in order reveal themselves in terms of their *threshold* capacities, so they reveal something to us about those places themselves. The *principal theme's* capacity to reconfigure and re-orientate a place shows that place in terms of its otherwise hidden potential. The artwork's capacity for *re-implacement* is potentially transformative in this way, in that it reveals new ways of engaging with the world to its audiences. Furthermore, in so much as the artwork also harbours the potential to trigger *spontaneous community* by way of its audiences' collective *re-implacement,* so it can show us new ways of becoming *implaced* alongside others. Indeed, when Malpas draws attention to how the singularly of a life or a thing stems from its *placedness*, and furthermore, how the singularity of a place derives from the things and the lives it holds within it, the art encounter harbours within itself the potential to reveal the relational complexity which characterises that underpinning structure. Place and art illuminate one another in these ways.

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