**Immanent Transcendence in the Work of Art:**

**Jaspers and Heidegger on Van Gogh**

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Vincent Van Gogh’s paintings exemplify modernism and its significance as not only the birth of a new art movement but also a new way of seeing the world. Wilhelm Dilthey’s description of the radical transformation of art during this time, i.e. the rise of modernism, helps us to understand the philosophical import of Van Gogh’s work.[[1]](#endnote-1) Dilthey saw the art at the end of the nineteenth century as such a radical shift in expression and style that it required an entirely new approach to aesthetic theory, which he outlined in *The Imagination of the Poet: Elements for a Poetics* (1887) and *The Three Epochs of Modern Aesthetics and Its Present Task* (1892). In observing this shift in the visual arts, literature, and theater, Dilthey describes these new styles as an effort to “express the oppressive feeling that the structures of life in society have become old, senile, and untenable.”[[2]](#endnote-2) Modern art, in contrast to Classical or Romantic art, emphasizes the mundane and commonplace in an attempt to overthrow these worn-out structures and rediscover the world in a genuine sense, or as Dilthey describes it, “to manifest reality, as it actually is.” Dilthey diagnoses this impulse to rediscover the world as rooted in “a new feeling of reality” that “has shattered the existing forms and rules.”[[3]](#endnote-3) He describes one of the defining characteristics of modern art as an attempt to “ground each art more firmly and solidly in reality and in the nature of its particular medium.”[[4]](#endnote-4) Modern art expresses not only a return to the mundane, but also a loving immersion in the material medium of the work of art. We see this tendency especially in the history of painting. Not only did French impressionist and post-impressionist painters defy the traditional standards of art maintained by the Académie des Beaux-Arts with their innovative techniques, but they also painted common life and reality with new intensity and emphasized the basic elements and medium of painting rather than symbolic meaning or ideals. As Dilthey describes, “Painting has returned to color as its fundamental means of expression. It is seeking to do away with all traditional schemata of perception and composition, and to look at the world as though with new eyes.”[[5]](#endnote-5) Van Gogh’s paintings in particular present the world in this way, i.e. as a return to the material of painting in order to see the world with new eyes.

In a letter from 1888, van Gogh wrote, “The imagination is certainly a faculty which we must develop, one which alone can lead us to the creation of a more exalting and consoling nature than the single brief glance at reality—which in our sight is ever changing, passing like a flash of lightning—can let us perceive.” [[6]](#endnote-6) This letter captures not only his intent as an artist, but also expresses the power of his paintings. Van Gogh’s paintings embody this imaginative capacity—the ability to present the everyday object or scene in a way that goes beyond the limitations of our ordinary sight. Van Gogh makes us feel the heat of the sun, the motion of a living landscape, the growth and death of cut flowers, and the desolation of a worn-out pair of shoes. What is present to sight becomes more. Van Gogh transforms how we see the world. His paintings draw out the transcendence of the immanent, or the extraordinary in the ordinary, which Dilthey identifies as the impulse at the heart of modernism.

The following will explore Van Gogh’s art in light of immanent transcendence—which I take to be one of the characteristics that define modernism. Immanent transcendence describes a way of thinking that breaks from dualisms and distinctions that denigrate the material world. ‘Immanence’ pertains to what is closest to us, what is given in experience, what is concrete. The Latin roots of the term mean to remain (*manere*) within (*in*). By contrast, ‘transcendence’ pertains to what is beyond us, what cannot be experienced. Patrice Haynes notes that within a dualistic framework immanence and transcendence form a hierarchy where the immanent is associated with “that which is limited or constrained, closed off from the beyond (transcendence), thus in some way fallen, incomplete.”[[7]](#endnote-7) Immanent transcendence, however, breaks from this dualism by rethinking the immanent in a way that does not denigrate it and instead sees its openness and possibilities, particularly in terms of its concrete materiality. As a trend within twentieth-century Continental thought, immanent transcendence presents a new concept of our reality by resuscitating the material world. As Haynes explains, “immanence no longer signifies limitedness and confinement but a site of movement, excess and creative transformations.”[[8]](#endnote-8) This concept of the immanent is at work in the new feeling of reality that Dilthey describes in the rise of modernism.

Along similar lines, Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei has used immanent transcendence to describe the particular kind of modernism found in the poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke and Wallace Stevens. Gosetti-Ferencei introduces a distinction between two separate concepts of transcendence to account for the radical innovation of modernist immanent transcendence: *vertical* transcendence, which situates the transcendent in a separate higher world, and *horizontal* or *horizonal* transcendence, which describes the non-hierarchical configuration of immanent transcendence. According to Gosetti-Ferencei, horizontal immanence must be understood phenomenologically, “to indicate the intentionality of consciousness which is always beyond itself (Husserl), as a surpassing of the given, through the imaginary, in order to make a world of it (Sartre), as the structure of *in-der-Welt-sein*, or as that of poetic language itself bringing forth from concealment to appearance in disclosure (Heidegger).”[[9]](#endnote-9) Regina Schwartz makes a similar distinction between *other-worldly* and *this-worldly* transcendence, which Gosetti-Ferencei calls “a transcendence immanent to a world we can experience or imagine.”[[10]](#endnote-10) Immanent transcendence thus redefines this world in a way that is significant for understanding not only modern art, but also phenomenology. This means that phenomenology becomes particularly relevant in investigating the relation between immanence and transcendence in modern art, especially with works of art like Van Gogh’s paintings, which present us with such an intense experience of the material world.

To explore Van Gogh’s paintings as embodiments of immanent transcendence, the following will turn to Karl Jaspers’ and Martin Heidegger’s separate accounts of transcendence in relation to their descriptions of Van Gogh’s art. I will contrast Jaspers’ more vertical account of immanent transcendence to Heidegger’s horizontal one, to borrow Gosetti-Ferencei’s distinction. This difference between their separate understandings of transcendence manifests itself in their estimations of the significance of Van Gogh’s art. Using phenomenology to understand Van Gogh’s art in light of immanent transcendence, moreover, illuminates a new understanding of transcendence as the ‘beyond’ that is always already here in the immanent and reveals the ability of an object to point beyond itself. Both of these concepts are at work in Van Gogh’s art as well as modern art in general as the expansion of reality through new sight. Immanent transcendence and Van Gogh’s art are different but interconnected ways of rethinking experience beyond the limits of positivism and the myth of the given. Van Gogh’s art thus embodies a sensible world transformed. In particular, Van Gogh’s landscapes and still life series suggest the inexhaustibility of the things we so often overlook in our everyday experience.

1. Immanent Transcendence in Jaspers and Heidegger

Transcendence is central to Jaspers’ *Existenzphilosophie*. For Jaspers, existence is always incomplete and contradictory and thus points toward something that can complete and unify its paradoxes, i.e. the transcendent. The transcendent is the unknowable and ineffable unconditioned that forms the conditions for existence. Human existence cannot come to understand itself until it confronts the transcendent as its conditions. For this reason, the transcendent is necessary for thought and for self-realization. In *Philosophy of Existence*, Jaspers states, “If there is unity, it is only in transcendence. From the standpoint of transcendence, unity can be apprehended in the world; we can feel the one God in the unconditioned, exclusive unity of our self-realization.”[[11]](#endnote-11) The transcendent forms the unconditioned conditions for existence, the unity that forms the foundation for all existence. Yet the path to this underlying unity is a *via negativa*.[[12]](#endnote-12) As unconditioned, transcendence outstrips all concepts and all forms of determinant thought that would provide a positive account. Instead, we can only point toward the transcendent as the unknowable and ineffable, which in Jaspers’ philosophy is the role of ciphers. Ciphers bridge the immanent and transcendent. This bridge, however, is not between an absolute divide. Jaspers does not place the transcendent in a sphere or realm completely separate from the immanent. As Jaspers explains, transcendence is not absolute separation: “A pure beyond is empty; it is as if it were not. Hence the possibility of experiencing being proper requires an *immanent transcendence.*”[[13]](#endnote-13) The transcendent cannot be completely separate from the immanent but must be in relation to it. Thus ciphers do not join the immanent to some transcendent beyond, but instead draw out the transcendence of immanence.

In *Truth and Symbol*, Jaspers explains the role that ciphers play in immanent transcendence. A cipher is a transformed and suspended object that illuminates being. Instead of simply standing as an individual object, the cipher suspends its specificity and manifests its *being* as an object. Jaspers explains, “The cypher is the object which is least of all only object, but rather in its being-an-object is already no longer an object like all other specific objects. As a cypher the object is, as it were, in suspension.”[[14]](#endnote-14) *Being-an-object* is transcendent because being is neither objective nor subjective, but rather the deeper relation prior to subjects and objects. A cipher overcomes the objective-subjective divide to illuminate what encompasses all subjects and objects: being as such.[[15]](#endnote-15) The cipher is thus an object that transcends itself to express the transcendence of existence. But since this transcendence is not something to be grasped and understood, interpreting a cipher is always an infinite task.

The cypher is the inexhaustible signification with which no definite interpretation is commensurate, but which rather demands in the interpretation itself an endless movement of interpreting. Interpreting is not a form of cognition of the meaning of the cypher, but is itself a metaphorical act, a game. To interpret is impossible; Being itself, Transcendence, is present. It is nameless. If we speak of it, then we use an infinite number of names and cancel them all again. That which has significance is itself Being.[[16]](#endnote-16)

The cipher is a sign that signifies inexhaustibility and there is no definitive way of interpreting or understanding it. A cipher’s meaning is inexhaustibility because it manifests what cannot be signified: transcendence. Yet this transcendence is immanent because it is presented by the cipher, which as an object is immanent. Moreover, for Jaspers any object can be a cipher insofar as it can manifest this transcendence.[[17]](#endnote-17)

Jaspers explicitly discusses ciphers and immanent transcendence in terms of art.For Jaspers, particular works of art and certain artists[[18]](#endnote-18) can bring out this transcendence of objects: “the art of immanent transcendence turns the empirical world itself into a cipher. It seems to imitate things that occur in the world, but it makes them transparent.”[[19]](#endnote-19) Art acts as a cipher by revealing the deeper reality of things. It makes “the infinite space of all things, all being and nonbeing, accessible with playful ease” at the same time that it “manifest[s] the wealth of the real world.”[[20]](#endnote-20) The work of art draws together transcendence and immanence. In this way “the artist of immanent transcendence teaches how to read existence anew, as a cipher.”[[21]](#endnote-21) Van Gogh is such an artist. Jaspers names Van Gogh as an artist of immanent transcendence who teaches us to read existence.

Yet we must note Jaspers considers the transcendence of Van Gogh’s painting to be limited in comparison to other artists. When Jaspers discusses Van Gogh, he contrasts him with the great artists who “gave reality a share in powers we can no longer conceive in the language of reality alone.”[[22]](#endnote-22) Jaspers lists Aeschylus, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, and Rembrandt among these great artists that effectively unite myth and reality to form an “enhanced reality” and casts Van Gogh apart from them by stating that he “dropped all myths, confined himself totally to reality, and thus lent transcendence a voice which of necessity is infinitely poorer, but is true for our time.”[[23]](#endnote-23) For Jaspers, Van Gogh might reveal the transcendence of immanence to some degree, but this revelation is limited due to his emphasis on reality, on the concrete world around him. Jaspers’ account of immanent transcendence might have some sense of verticality and have more in common with otherworldly transcendence given that he sees Van Gogh’s emphasis on the immanent as a deficiency rather than a strength.

By contrast, Van Gogh’s immersion in concrete reality makes his painting significant for Heidegger’s attempt to overcome modern aesthetics by rethinking art in terms of the thing. Heidegger’s account of Van Gogh in “The Origin of the Work of Art” focuses on the artist’s ability to reveal reality in a way that draws our attention to things as things. This discrepancy between Jaspers’ and Heidegger’s accounts of Van Gogh parallels their different approaches to immanent transcendence. Jaspers sees the immanent as pointing beyond itself to a greater, more divine reality, which is contained by the immanent and yet bears some resemblance to the more traditional, hierarchical concept of transcendence. Heidegger’s approach to immanent transcendence, however, treats the thing as inexhaustible *as a thing*, which makes the ‘beyond’ of its transcendence more immanent. Heidegger’s immanent transcendence is more clearly horizontal.[[24]](#endnote-24)

To arrive at a concept of immanent transcendence in “The Origin of the Work of Art” is more difficult and relies upon the similarities in Heidegger’s account of the world of the work of art and the transcendence of the world in his writings just after *Being and Time*. In “The Origin of the Work of Art” Heidegger describes the work of art as opening up a world. Heidegger tells us that “To be a work means to set up a world.”[[25]](#endnote-25) ‘World’ means something very specific here. Heidegger wants to avoid definitions that determine it as (1) an empirical reality that is simply there for us, i.e. as an object or a set of objects correlated to us as subjects, or (2) the subjective a priori conditions for the possibility of experience. Both descriptions of the world are reductive and overly subjective. Instead Heidegger describes the world as “the ever-nonobjective to which we are subjects.”[[26]](#endnote-26) We are subjected to the world, which is a happening, a “self-disclosing openness.”[[27]](#endnote-27) The world discloses things to us, it is the opening of things, the bringing of something to light. That is to say, things are revealed to us in the world, not in some hypothetical, pure space of subjectivity. For this reason, Heidegger often uses world as a verb, rather than a noun: the *world worlds*. The world is not an object or conditions determined by the subject; the world is the open relation that allows the possibility of an object or subject.

This account of world in “The Origin of the Work of Art” is similar to the world in *Being and Time* and *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (1928), yet these earlier texts emphasize the transcendence of the world. In *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*,Heidegger uses world as a verb (*welten*) to express that the world is a *mode* of being.[[28]](#endnote-28) As a mode of being, the world is a *how*, not a *what*. The world is “the how of beings.”[[29]](#endnote-29) It is this sense of the world that expresses its transcendence, since the disclosure of being is transcendence for Heidegger. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger explains that “Being and its structure transcend every being and every possible existent determination of a being. *Being is the transcendens pure and simple*. The transcendence of the being of Dasein is a distinctive one since in it lies the possibility and necessity of the most radical *individuation*.”[[30]](#endnote-30) For Heidegger as for Jaspers, the being of beings is transcendent. The existence of something is more than simply *what* it is. Moreover, as the being for whom being is a question, Dasein opens up this transcendence in a radical way.

For Heidegger, transcendence is “the primordial constitution” of Dasein as being-in-the-world. We must be careful, however, in how we think about this transcendence. Heidegger emphasizes that this transcendence is not breaking away from the subject to reach an external world, which is how transcendence is often formulated in theological and epistemological accounts that define the transcendent in a hierarchical opposition to the immanent. In traditional metaphysics, the transcendent is the unconditioned conditions that determine contingent beings. The transcendent is what is beyond the subject. For Heidegger, this concept of transcendence treats the self like a box that must overcome its limits to reach the exterior world.[[31]](#endnote-31) Heidegger’s notion of transcendence as being-in-the-world contradicts this model by insisting that

transcendence is not a relation between interior and exterior realms such that a barrier belonging to the subject would be crossed over, a barrier that would separate the subject from the outer realm. But neither is transcendence primarily the cognitive relationship a subject has to an object, one belonging to the subject in addition to its subjectivity. Nor is transcendence simply the term for what exceeds and is inaccessible to finite knowledge.[[32]](#endnote-32)

The transcendence of being-in-the-world breaks down the distinction between interior and exterior, between subject and object, between contingency and conditions, and between the immanent and the transcendent. The subject and object already transcend themselves in a more originary relation. The transcendence of the world breaks down the subject-object framework by addressing the very possibility of being. “If the ‘subject’ is conceived ontologically as existing Da-sein, whose being is grounded in temporality, we must say then that the world is ‘subjective.’ But this ‘subjective’ world, as one that is temporally transcendent, is then ‘more objective’ than any possible ‘object.”[[33]](#endnote-33) For this reason, “[t]he world is, so to speak, already ‘further outside’ than any object could ever be.”[[34]](#endnote-34) For Heidegger transcendence is neither a type of separation nor an indication of hierarchy. For Heidegger, existence is already outside itself because “existence originally means to cross over. Dasein is itself the passage across.”[[35]](#endnote-35) Dasein is always “out there” with beings as being-in-the-world. Dasein is not first an interior that needs to go beyond itself, Dasein is always transcending, always beyond itself within the world.[[36]](#endnote-36) In this way, the immanent is always already transcendent.

While Heidegger does not use this description of transcendence in “The Origin of the Work of Art,” the dynamic between earth and world suggests immanent transcendence insofar as there is always more to the given than what is revealed on the surface. Heidegger’s account of the thing especially indicates an immanent transcendence at work insofar as it demonstrates a radical rethinking of materiality as ecstatic. In Heidegger’s thought, as Andrew J. Mitchell explains, things are ecstatically open. Things are an intersection of complex relations and dynamics, not static objects. Mitchell distinguishes between the thing as ecstatic and the concept of an object as the correlative of a Cartesian subject: “things unfold themselves ecstatically, opening relations with the world beyond them. Unlike the self-enclosed object of modern metaphysics, the thing is utterly worldly, its essence lying in the relations it maintains throughout the world around it, the world to which it is inextricably bound. The world becomes the medium of the thing’s relations.”[[37]](#endnote-37) The thing is always beyond itself and not contained within itself. Yet this ‘beyond’ is of this world and thus is immanent.

Things are ecstatic in “The Origin of the Work of Art” due to the conflict between the world that discloses and the earth that withdraws. The worlding of the world discloses being to us at the same time that it rests on the earth. That is, the world’s unconcealment relies upon a more original concealment, i.e. the earth. The world reveals, while the earth conceals. In this conflict, the world allows the earth to rise and “stand forth as that which bears all, as that which is sheltered in its own law and always wrapped up in itself.”[[38]](#endnote-38) Yet the earth struggles to keep itself concealed and closed. The earth is a ground, however, it is a “groundless ground” and not a firm and unchanging foundation.[[39]](#endnote-39) Heidegger describes this conflict not as a rift that separates, but as “the intimacy with which opponents belong to each other.”[[40]](#endnote-40) The conflict between world and earth allows truth to be set into work: “Truth is present only as the conflict between lighting and concealing in the opposition of world and earth.”[[41]](#endnote-41) The work of art is an event that reveals truth in this dynamic between earth and world, i.e. the tension between disclosure and unconcealment, which necessarily relies upon a deeper concealment. This deeper concealment is what makes things inexhaustible. A thing is never completely accessible—it never fully belongs to us and our purposes but has its own mysterious depths.

This inexhaustibility belongs to things as *thingly*, however, which emphasizes the immanent in a way that Jaspers’ idea of transcendence does not. Unlike Jaspers, Heidegger’s concept of transcendence has no hints of a vertical hierarchy. Instead Heidegger tries to break away from this more traditional concept of transcendence developed in theological metaphysics.[[42]](#endnote-42) Heidegger’s emphasis on the work of art as a thing differs from Jaspers’ account of ciphers as suspended objects that point beyond themselves because the sense of ‘beyond’ is not the same. For Heidegger, things are always beyond themselves because they are groundless. This difference might explain why Jaspers sees Van Gogh’s art as limited in its significance, whereas Heidegger does not.

Yet, despite the differences in Jaspers’ and Heidegger’s accounts of transcendence, both present a similar idea of art. Namely, art is not simply representational or mimetic. A work of art is not a re-presentation of a reality that is set apart from us as subjects, but the opening up of a world that reveals things in a new way. In art we recognize the deeper relations that form our world. The concept of art as a cipher or event not only challenges the distinctions between transcendence and immanence between subjectivity and objectivity—this approach to art also signals a reworking of sensible-intelligible distinction in which concrete, perceptual experience takes on greater significance. Van Gogh’s paintings of everyday objects reveal a transformed sense of both the immanent and experience, which we see in Jaspers and Heidegger descriptions of his art.

**2. Van Gogh’s Urge for Reality**

Jaspers discusses Van Gogh first in his 1922 book *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, then a decade later in the third volume of his *Philosophy* (1932). The former is an “attempt at a pathographic analysis” and belongs to his larger project, the *Psychology of Worldviews (Weltanschauungen)*, while the latter is a treatise on metaphysics that focuses on transcendence. The purpose of *Strindberg and Van Gogh* is to explore the relation between schizophrenia and creativity. To this end Jaspers analyzes Van Gogh’s style of painting and its evolution in relation to his unraveling mental condition. Yet the book also has philosophical significance as well. In “On My Philosophy” (1941), Jaspers retrospectively describes his psychology of world-views as a “hidden philosophy” that “misunderstood itself as objectively descriptive psychology.”[[43]](#endnote-43) This self-reflection on his intellectual development sees his psychology as an attempt to systematically present all the possibilities for human existence as “a synthesis of polarities” that “everywhere demonstrated the stream of lapses, voids, inversions.”[[44]](#endnote-44) He considers his *Philosophy* as a more systematic approach to analyzing the complexity of human existence that he observed in his psychology of world-views.[[45]](#endnote-45) For this reason, I will analyze *Strindberg and Van Gogh* through the lens of his *Philosophy* and treat the two accounts of Van Gogh together. Despite the differences between descriptive psychology and metaphysics, his separate treatments of Van Gogh both deal with the artist’s intense engagement with the world and draw out the same tension between the sensuousness of his art works and the intangible meanings they present. This tension between the sensible and intangible in Van Gogh’s works illuminates the possibilities of art and exemplifies the philosophical questions that concern Jaspers, especially those that point toward the ineffable.[[46]](#endnote-46) Jaspers describes Van Gogh’s paintings as a study of objects that renders them mythical and transcendent. His psychological and philosophical examinations of Van Gogh draw out this paradoxical tension in his art.

In *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, Jaspers writes that Van Gogh possesses “an urge for reality” that is expressed in the objects and scenes he chooses to paint.[[47]](#endnote-47) Van Gogh frequently painted the objects and landscapes around him, familiar sights that formed his everyday reality. He not only painted ordinary objects, but also painted the same object or type of object several times. His oeuvre is full of series of the same objects: sunflowers, olive trees, cottages, shoes, a blue vase, etc. Jaspers describes this repetition in Van Gogh’s paintings as an ongoing search, rather than a complete project: “All his works are of a tense searching... His are not so much works but work studies, not completed totalities but single analyses and syntheses.”[[48]](#endnote-48) Each work of art presents itself not as a whole, but as an incomplete picture that captures some aspects of the object while other aspects elude direct representation. His art expresses an impulse to connect to the real objects in front of him, but always in a way that does not grasp them fully. Van Gogh paints the thing in a way that suggests there is more to it.

Van Gogh’s style of painting expands our concept of the object before us. Observing the floral paintings from 1887-1888, Jaspers describes Van Gogh’s depiction of flowers as an expression of their *infinite abundance*.[[49]](#endnote-49) < Figure 1 near here > Examining one of his sunflower paintings illustrates this description. The intense stylized lines and colors focus on the object without making it static or timeless; rather, the vitality and movement of the flowers, their growth and possibility, bodies forth. The sunflowers twist away from each other, their petals tousled and wild as if dancing in the vase. The flowers are so vibrant and alive that this work can hardly be called a still life. In this painting, life is energy, movement, and passion—anything but still. The same emphasis on movement and vitality characterize his landscape paintings. As Jaspers describes, “The ground of the landscape appears to be alive, waves seem to rise and ebb everywhere, the trees are like flames, everything twists and seems tormented, the sky flickers.”[[50]](#endnote-50) <Figure 2 near here > His thick, exaggerated paint strokes make grass, trees, clouds, mountains, and sky appear as one rhythm, like the ebb and flow of the ocean or the rippling of a fire. In viewing his paintings, we experience the same primal draw as a roaring bonfire or churning sea, chthonic powers that affect us at our core. Through this technique, his still life and landscape paintings bring the object to life in a way that reveals its deeper reality. As Jaspers describes the effect of Van Gogh’s style, “One does not ask what specific kind of an object that might be, and yet one seems aware of looking into the deepest meaning of reality.”[[51]](#endnote-51) In other words, Van Gogh’s paintings draw our attention not to the concept of *what something is*, but rather to the idea *that it is*—its very existence and reality. Van Gogh’s paintings do not replicate the real, but draw out the meaning of reality, which creates a dramatic tension in his art.

Jaspers notes the contrast between Van Gogh’s ordinary subject matters and the uncanny vibrancy with which he paints them. Van Gogh’s paintings present a realism that is not realistic. His paintings demonstrate an *urge for reality* in his attention to ordinary objects, and yet he paints them as though they were fantastic—more colorful, more energetic, more alive than the objects he observes. Jaspers describes the intensity of his style and its mysterious effects. “The colors are aflame. [Van Gogh] succeeds, through mysterious complicated combinations, to bring about glaring and intense results which one hardly would have considered possible. He paints no shading, knows no air, but merely linear-perspective depth.”[[52]](#endnote-52) The result is that “[e]verything is sensually present; the blazing noon sun is his *métier.*”[[53]](#endnote-53) The intensity of Van Gogh’s colors and lines are unrealistic, yet he makes the blazing heat of the sun tangible. The unrealistic features of his works makes the landscape *more* present to us, *more* evocative of what it is like to stand in a field under the midday sun than if he observed the rules of perspective and composition. < Figure 3 near here > As Jaspers points out, “what is so strange about all this is the fact that this compelling reality is fantastically effective.”[[54]](#endnote-54) Though stylized, the scene appears more tangible and becomes more real to us as viewers.

For Jaspers, the combination of Van Gogh’s urge for reality and his highly stylized technique presents the object as a *mythos*. As Jaspers explains, Van Gogh “wants to paint present actuality; in return he conceives of this presence as a mythos.”[[55]](#endnote-55) In this sense, Van Gogh reconceptualizes the reality and presence of things. The object is not simply given or there for us. The object transcends what can be grasped—it is ecstatic. Van Gogh’s urge for reality draws out the transcendence of the object. These two contrasting qualities—the presence or attention to the actuality of the object and its depiction as transcendent or mythical—present the world in a new light. In volume III of *Philosophy* Jaspers describes this effect of Van Gogh’s paintings as “mythical realities.”[[56]](#endnote-56) With *mythos*, reality “is seen as such” and at the same time is seen as transcendent.[[57]](#endnote-57) Van Gogh’s paintings expose the transcendence of the world. His urge for reality opens up the mysteriousness of things. There is more to the object than what presents itself in a simple glance. Heidegger’s account of Van Gogh also emphasizes the artist’s ability to reveal the extraordinary in the ordinary things around him.

3. Van Gogh’s Shoes and the Reality of Things

Heidegger’s discussion of Van Gogh’s painting of shoes in “The Origin of the Work of Art” illustrates the power of art to reveal the reality of things. While his treatment of Van Gogh’s painting is controversial and some scholars have overlooked its significance,[[58]](#endnote-58) Iain Thomson argues that this interpretation of Van Gogh’s painting is “the most important part of his essay” because it allows us to “learn how to transcend modern aesthetics from within.”[[59]](#endnote-59) Thomson emphasizes how the painting’s interplay between emerging and withdrawing reveals the strife between earth and world and opens up the groundless ground of things, a revelation that makes the subject-object distinction of modern aesthetics thoroughly inadequate for explaining the work of art. Thomson focuses on how the painting of shoes reveals the “nothing,” i.e. the groundless ground of things, in order to explain how Heidegger’s philosophy of art overcomes the problem of ontotheology in modern metaphysics.[[60]](#endnote-60) Like Thomson, I see Heidegger taking up Van Gogh’s painting of shoes as an ontological task, but I will focus on its specific significance for rethinking the thing.

Heidegger begins “The Origin of the Work of Art” by emphasizing that works are *thingly*. That is, works of art are things just like other things in the world. We hang up a painting on the wall, just as we might hang up a hat. Works of art are “shipped like coal” and stored “like potatoes in a cellar.”[[61]](#endnote-61) This observation might seem obvious. Clearly works of art are things. Yet in emphasizing this idea, Heidegger breaks from the tradition of aesthetics that tends to focus on the subjective experience of the spectator, the creative process of the artist, or the intellectual content of the work of art, all of which ignore the thingly aspect of the work of art. Aesthetics tends to intellectualize art immediately and treat its materiality as subordinate to content rather than significant in itself. Heidegger does not want to approach the work as a physical vehicle for the expression of an idea, but as a thing. Yet Heidegger quickly establishes that we do not really know what the thing is. The thing evades philosophical thought because all our attempts to define the thing reduce its essence to utility, i.e. to our purposes rather than the thing as it is. To reorient thinking about the thing, Heidegger looks to Van Gogh’s painting of shoes, a rhetorical move that not only sets up the work of art as a way to mediate our thinking of things but also gestures toward the insights that Van Gogh has into things as they are. Heidegger’s discussion of the need to re-examine the thing rests on his visual analysis of Van Gogh’s painting of shoes. Van Gogh’s paintings are sensitive to the thingliness of things, which is why Heidegger chooses one of his paintings[[62]](#endnote-62) to illustrate a central point in his reorientation of philosophy and aesthetic theory. < Figure 4 near here >

Van Gogh’s painting of shoes situate them in a nondescript, shadowy space removed from other objects—an “undefined space” to use Heidegger’s words.[[63]](#endnote-63) The shoes lay as if cast aside at the end of a long day. Heidegger describes these shoes—which he interprets as a peasant woman’s shoes—in the following way:

From the dark opening of the worn insides of the shoes the toilsome tread of the worker stares forth. In the stiffly rugged heaviness of the shoes there is the accumulated tenacity of her slow trudge through the far-spreading and ever-uniform furrows of the field swept by a raw wind. On the leather lie the dampness and richness of the soil. Under the soles slides the loneliness of the field-path as evening falls. In the shoes vibrates the silent call of the earth, its quiet gift of the ripening grain and its unexplained self-refusal in the fallow desolation of the wintry field. This equipment is pervaded by uncomplaining anxiety as to the certainty of bread, the wordless joy of having once more withstood want, and trembling before the impending childbed and shivering at the surrounding menace of death. This equipment belongs to the *earth,* and is protected in the *world* of the peasant woman.[[64]](#endnote-64)

This poetic description of the painting suggests the many aspects of the shoes that Van Gogh captures in paint. The shoes are worn—they show that someone has toiled in them, as conveyed by Van Gogh’s dark colors, twisted outlines, and rough brushstrokes. The shoes are stiff and heavy, which gives us a sense of their use as well as how the person walked in them and where she walked. They are weatherworn from rough wind and wet soil. The soil connects the shoes to the fields that give the woman grain to sustain her life. The shoes are tied not only to the cycle of life and death in the field, i.e. growth and harvest, but also the human lives that are sustained by the field, lives that are stretched between birth and death. In this way, Heidegger describes the shoes in relation to the peasant woman’s world and to the world in an even larger sense. The painting is an event that illuminates truth. Heidegger tells us that this painting “lets us know what shoes are in truth.”[[65]](#endnote-65) The painting reveals the shoes as they are.

For Heidegger, Van Gogh’s painting of shoes expresses a different approach to the thing than one that focuses on simply what the shoes are or how they are used. Van Gogh allows the shoes to shine or appear without limiting it to a simple conceptual framework. Van Gogh’s study of the shoes approaches them in a way that counteracts the way we usually approach things. Namely, we usually reduce the concept of the thing to its use or a definition that can easily be grasped. But for Van Gogh and Heidegger, rather than limiting and defining the thing, we ought to understand it in terms of the many dynamic relations and events that intersect in it and complicate our attempt to grasp it fully. This is what a work of art can do, and what Van Gogh achieves so beautifully in paint. Works of art preserve the complexity of things, their refusal to submit to our ideas and uses. Heidegger explains “the sculptor uses stone just as the mason uses it, in his own way. But he does not use it up… the painter also uses pigment, but in such a way that color is not used up but rather only now comes to shine forth.”[[66]](#endnote-66) The work of art—and Van Gogh’s painting in particular—recognizes that the thing cannot be exhausted. The thing is more than what is present to us, more than what we think about it. Heidegger tells us: “Color shines and wants only to shine. When we analyze it in rational terms by measuring its wavelengths, it is gone. It shows itself only when it remains undisclosed and unexplained.”[[67]](#endnote-67) The work of art recognizes the inexhaustibility of the thing qua thing and preserves its thingliness. Art lets the thing rest in itself. Van Gogh’s painting illustrates this letting be. He paints the shoes with an intensity that draws our attention to them as things—not as an idea or a symbol of a higher reality. If anything, the ambiguity and mysteriousness of the shoes are revealed, rather than a firm and determinate idea of them. Thomson describes the resistance of things to our vision and understanding, or “the subtle but dynamic tension between what shows itself and what recedes in Van Gogh’s paintings,” as what drew Heidegger to his works: “Heidegger seems to have been deeply moved by the way half-formed figures seem to struggle to take shape in the background of Van Gogh’s paintings, less in clear lines than in the thick texture of the paint, brush strokes, and deep fields of color.”[[68]](#endnote-68) Van Gogh does not treat things as allegories that represent some other reality or as objects to be grasped by a subject. His paintings allow us to approach things as they are.

Both Jaspers’ and Heidegger’s descriptions of Van Gogh emphasize the artist’s ability to paint in a way that focuses intensely on the thing while gesturing at more than what is simply there. Van Gogh’s intensity suggests instead that the thing exceeds itself, or *transcend* itself. That is, the thing presents more than simple presence, or what is revealed with a simple glance. Immanent transcendence and its embodiment in Van Gogh’s works thus present a rethinking of experience that has implications beyond aesthetic experience.

**4. Van Gogh, Modern Art, and the Transformation of Experience**

Immanent transcendence requires a broader and more complex notion of perceptual experience. Immanent transcendence means that experience is neither just empirical data received by the senses nor a subjective projection. Instead, for Jaspers and Heidegger, experience is a meaningful relation between self and world that cannot be exhausted by simple correlation.[[69]](#endnote-69) Immanent transcendence means recognizing that subjectivity is grounded by something deeper and that experience is not a self-enclosed given.

Heidegger’s preface to his 1973 seminar in Zähringen describes experience in this way. Perceptual experience implies a space of relations in which perception and the perceivable are open to one another. Heidegger claims that “[f]or perception to be able to be encountered at all by the perceivable, it must hold itself open… Both perception as well as presencing require for their own possibility—and this means at the same time for their ‘to one another’—a free and open dimension, within which they encounter one another.”[[70]](#endnote-70) That is, perception is not determined by the unconditioned conditions of consciousness nor by the perceived object itself, but by their open and mutual relation to one another. Sensation is responsive, creative, plastic, alive, and dynamic. This notion of sensation allows for the possibility of transformative experience, or the experience of immanent transcendence. Experience involves a necessary openness that is neither purely receptive nor simply a projection. To properly address experience and its transformative possibilities, the immanent must be seen as transcendent.[[71]](#endnote-71)

Heidegger discusses transformative experience earlier in “The Nature of Language” (1957 – 1958). Here Heidegger rejects the notion of experience defined in terms of Cartesian subjectivity to discuss experience as a happening that transforms us. Heidegger emphasizes experience as an *event* that we *undergo*, not as a product of a priori conditions of subjectivity that we project as exterior to us. He explains, “When we talk of ‘undergoing’ an experience, we mean specifically that the experience is not of our own making; to undergo here means that we endure it, suffer it, receive it as it strikes us and submit to it.”[[72]](#endnote-72) Here Heidegger wants to discuss the experience of language, an experience that “touch[es] the innermost nexus of our existence” to transform us. It is this sense of experience that we might apply to the transformed world of the work of art.

Art transforms the way in which we ordinarily sense and participate in the world. Art displaces or frees sensation from utility and presupposition. The world is not set apart from us as something to be used, but as something that moves us as we move within it. Art allows us to see things as they are because it transforms our accustomed ways of thinking, perceiving, and relating to things. For Heidegger art “thrusts the extraordinary to the surface” and “thrusts down the long-familiar.”[[73]](#endnote-73) Art transforms by *displacing* us and the world in which we live. “To submit to this displacement means: to transform our accustomed ties to world and to earth and henceforth to restrain all usual doing and prizing, knowing and looking, in order to stay within the truth that is happening in the world.” [[74]](#endnote-74) Art thus embodies a particular way of thinking and comporting oneself within the world that does not treat the world as a collection of mere objects apart from us as subjects, but instead reveals the meaningful relations within the world to which we belong and in which we partake. Art is the destabilization of our normal relations and ways of thinking—subject and object, sense and sensation, real and ideal, immanent and transcendent—that allows us to understand the more originary dynamism from which these relations emerge. Art thus describes a way of being, an existence that is grounded in the immanent without reducing the immanent to sensory data. In this sense, immanent transcendence in art presents us with a re-enchantment of the world.

Given this sense of art and aesthetic experience, the immanent transcendence of Van Gogh’s paintings presents us with the need to think beyond the limits of modern aesthetics and its Cartesian framework that separates us from the world. Immanent transcendence overturns modern subjectivism and complicates its assumed dichotomies and divisions by making the ‘beyond’ always already there in the things around us. Van Gogh’s paintings make the world more present in terms of *how* they present, rather than being fully visible and clear, which avoids confining things to our vision and our uses. Through his work, we overcome the limits of our ordinary way of seeing the world and arrive at a more authentic relation to things. Van Gogh’s art shows us how a world comes into being and the significance of that event.

Figure 1 Sunflowers

Figure 2 Olive Trees 1

Figure 3 Olive Trees 2

Figure 4 Pair of Shoes

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**Notes**

1. Dilthey does not reference Van Gogh specifically in the following texts, but he addresses trends in the art world that are relevant to the artist and gives us one of the earliest philosophical accounts of the rise of modernism, which gives us an interesting historical perspective. It is worth noting, however, that many of the art history categories we apply to this period, e.g. modernism, were coined after the publication of these texts. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Wilhelm Dilthey, *The Three Epochs of Modern Aesthetics and Its Present Task*, trans. Michael Neville, in *Poetry and Experience*, *Wilhelm Dilthey Selected Works*, vol. V, edited by Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, 2nd printing, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 175 – 222, 176. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Wilhelm Dilthey, *The Imagination of the Poet: Elements for a Poetics,* trans. Louis Agosta and Rudolf A. Makkreel, in *Poetry and Experience*, *Wilhelm Dilthey Selected Works*, vol. V, edited by Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, 2nd printing, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 29 – 173, 31. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Dilthey, *Three Epochs*, 177. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Dilthey, *Three Epochs*, 178 [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Vincent Van Gogh, *Letter to Emile Bernard, Arles, April 1888*, in *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics*, ed. Herschel B. Chipp (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 31. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Patrice Haynes, *Immanent Transcendence: Reconfiguring Materialism in Continental Philosophy* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Haynes, *Immanent Transcendence*, 4 – 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei, “Immanent Transcendence in Rilke and Stevens,” *The German Quarterly* 83, 3 (2010): 275 – 296, 275, 276. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Schwartz, Regina M. “Transcendence Beyond…” Introduction. *Transcendence: Philosophy, Literature, and Theology Approach the Beyond*, edited by Regina M. Schwartz, vii-xii. New York: Routledge, 2004. Gosetti-Ferencei, “Immanent Transcendence,” 275. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy of Existence*, trans. Richard F. Grabau (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 76. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. See Charles F. Wallraff, *Karl Jaspers: An Introduction to His Philosophy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 38. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy*, vol. 3, trans. E.B. Ashton (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 119 [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Karl Jaspers, *Truth and Symbol*, trans. Jean T. Wilde, William Kluback, William Kimmel, (Albany: New College and University Press, 1959), 38. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. “For [the cypher] is itself not a definable object but that which encompasses both the subject and the object in what is objective. For this reason the cyphers are not still another new objective domain. They are not an objective conclusion. They are rather hidden in all objectivity” (Jaspers, *Truth and Symbol*, 38 – 39). “Every mode of objectivity becomes a shackle if it is simply regarded as Being itself; the lack of objectivity, however, becomes emptiness also in subjectivity. Only in the polarity of subject and object is our life. In this polarity the object can attain that suspension which at the same time allows it to exist and elevates it. From this depth of Being the object obtains an irreplaceable meaning” (Jaspers, *Truth and Symbol*, 39). [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Jaspers, *Truth and Symbol*, 42. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Jaspers, *Truth and Symbol*, 39. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Unlike Heidegger, Jaspers connects immanent transcendence directly to “the *independence of the individual artist*” (Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 172), whereas Heidegger emphasizes the significance of the work of art apart from the artist. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 172. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 174. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 172. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 172. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 172. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Rudolf Makkreel describes Heidegger’s concept of transcendence as “sideways” in contrast to a vertical concept of transcendence that creates a hierarchical relation between the immanent and transcendent. Makkreel points out that in *What is a Thing?* Heidegger poses transcendence as our relation to objects, not an upward relation to a different realm of ideas. Rudolf A. Makkreel, “Heidegger’s Non-Idealistic Reading of Kant’s Transcendental Philosophy,” in *Examining Heidegger’s Question of Being: Dasein, Truth, and History*, ed. Holger Zaborowski, (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, Forthcoming). [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Martin Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Perennial Classics, 2001), 15 – 86, 43. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 43. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 47. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Martin Heidegger, *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, trans. Michael Heim (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 170. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Heidegger, *Metaphysical Foundations,* 172. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996), 33 - 34. SZ 38. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Heidegger, *Metaphysical Foundations,* 161. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Heidegger, *Metaphysical Foundations,* 165. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 335, SZ 366. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 335, SZ 366. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Heidegger, *Metaphysical Foundations,* 165. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. For a more thorough discussion see Ingtraud Görland, *Transzendenz und Selbst. Eine Phase in Heideggers Denken* (Frankfurt: M.: Vittorio Klostermann Verlag, 1981). [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Andrew J. Mitchell, *The Fourfold: Reading the Late Heidegger* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2015), 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 61. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. See Chapter 2 of Mitchell, *The Fourfold*, 71 – 115*.*  [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 61. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 60. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. It should be noted that even though Jaspers situates transcendence in relation to God, his approach to the divine is similar to negative theology, which makes his philosophy more akin to Heidegger’s finite transcendence than other theological accounts. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. See Karl Jaspers, “On My Philosophy” in *Existentialism from Dostoyevsky to Sartre*, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin, 1975), 158 – 184. 183. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. Jaspers, “On My Philosophy,” 183. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. In his 1949 foreword to *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, Jaspers writes that the motivation for writing on this topic “stems from the quest for the limits of comprehensibility of human life and creativity.” Karl Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, trans. Oskar Grunow and David Woloshin (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1977), ix. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. This concern with the limits of comprehensibility characterizes Jaspers’ descriptions of Van Gogh’s art and his approach to philosophy in general. Wallraff points out that Jaspers has a tendency to focus on “those ingredients in human experience that could be described as obscure, impalpable, ineffable, imponderable, immaterial on diaphanous” (Walraff 29). [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, 176. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, 175. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, 180. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, 176. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, 180. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, 176. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, 176. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, 176. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh*, 176. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 115. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. Jaspers, *Philosophy*, 116. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Julian Young sees Heidegger’s treatment of van Gogh as “anomalous,” and Hubert Dreyfus sees it as irrelevant. Julian Young, *Heidegger’s Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 22. Hubert L. Dreyfus, “ Heidegger’s Ontology of Art,” in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. H.L. Dreyfus and M.A. Wrathall, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 409. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Iain Thomson, *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 71, 72. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. “In other words, the encounter with nothing in the work of art ‘shatters’ the taken-for-granted obviousness of the modern theoretical framework in which subjects seek to master external objects, a framework implicit in the basic aesthetic view according to which subjects undergo extensive experiences of art objects. For Heidegger, the phenomenological encounter with Van Gogh’s painting undermines the obviousness of the modern worldview by returning us directly to the primordial level of engaged existence in which subject and object have not yet been differentiated” (Thomson, *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity*, 97). [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 19. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. Part of Schapiro’s infamous critique of Heidegger is the ambiguity around which painting of shoes he referenced, since Van Gogh painted multiple paintings of shoes, so the exact painting is unknown. This version is the one most frequently used by scholars. See Meyer Schapiro, *Theory and Philosophy of Art: Style, Artist, and Society* (New York: George Braziller, 1994). See Derrida’s response to Schapiro and defense of Heidegger in Jacques Derrida, “Restitutions of the truth in pointing” in *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 255 – 382. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 33. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 33. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 35. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 46. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 45. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 106, 105. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Dermot Moran argues that Heidegger adopts Jaspers’ concept of immanent transcendence to transform the concept of intentionality in Husserl’s phenomenology. Moran sees Heidegger’s use of transcendence in the 1920’s as an attempt to reorient phenomenology away from Cartesian subjectivism and ground it in concrete human existence. See Dermot Moran, “What Does Heidegger Mean by the Transcendence of Dasein?” *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 22, 4 (2014): 491 – 514. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. Martin Heidegger, “The Provenance of Thinking” in *Four Seminars*, trans. Andrew Mitchell and Francois Raffoul (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 93 – 97, 93. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. For a longer discussion of the relation between transcendence and immanence in phenomenology, see Dermot Moran, “Immanence, Self-Experience, and Transcendence in Edmund Husserl, Edith Stein, and Karl Jaspers,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 82, 2 (2008): 265 – 291. Moran explains that transcendence is necessary for phenomenological method to deal with the given without falling into positivism or simplistic concepts of experience. He explains the role of transcendence in Husserl’s phenomenological method, which remains rooted to immanence, and Edith Stein’s critique of Husserl’s concept of “pure immanence.” Moran uses Jaspers’ conception of transcendence and its necessary relation to existence as an illustration of the significant place transcendence must hold in phenomenology’s attempt to address the immanent. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. Martin Heidegger, “The Nature of Language” in *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 57 -108, 57. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 64. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. Heidegger, “Origin of the Work,” 64. For a longer discussion of art as displacement, see the preface to John Sallis, *Transfigurements: On the True Sense of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). [↑](#endnote-ref-74)