## ART FORMS EMERGING: AN APPROACH TO EVALUATIVE DIVERSITY IN ART

Beethoven’s string quartets are masterpieces of European classical music. Not everybody agrees, but those who do can (ideally) say why, and similarly those who don’t. It is not just a matter of personal attitude. Consider a very superficial evaluation. In a top-ten-of-all-time ranking of classical music composers, Anthony Tommasini writes in the *New York Times* (January 21, 2011): “Beethoven’s works are so audacious and indestructible that they survive even poor performances.” Even this casual assessment is objective, at least in the sense that it can be rationally discussed. Is Beethoven really that audacious? And if so, is this really a merit? Though such questions cannot finally be settled (as can narrowly descriptive questions concerning, say, the speed, length, and dynamic range of a performance), they can ideally be discussed in descriptively as well as normatively probative ways.

Tommasini’s judgement is culturally specific, though. Beethoven’s works cannot be evaluated in the context defined by Hindustani music; this evaluative framework simply blanks on them. Of course, some Hindustani musicians are more “audacious” than others, but only relative to the norms of their art. And even such descriptively loaded, and therefore presumptively cross-cultural, descriptors as ‘majestic’ and ‘playful’ apply differently in the two traditions.

How then could a nineteenth century Indian music-lover evaluate Beethoven? She might, rather superficially, “like” his work (or not), or find it exciting (or overly dense). But these reactions *would* be a matter of personal response. It’s not just that she lacks the necessary knowledge. She is simply out of her artistic métier and has no fitting basis for rational discussion. And coming at it from the opposite direction, Beethoven would been equally lost in Hindustani music. Though he was a musical genius, his response to the foreign idiom would *not* be probative.

Similar things can be said about the different art-forms within a unified social-historical setting (though here there is more cross-talk). Which works of rock n’ roll are truly great, and which just go through the motions? The evaluative parameters relevant to Beethoven’s string quartets offer very little guidance and are sometimes just wrong. Rock n’ roll rhythms and chord progressions would be simplistic (or worse) if replicated in Beethoven’s genre, but if (like Alan Bloom) you thought this a deficiency, you would be missing the point. There is perhaps a little comparability here, but not in the main.

What accounts for this conjunction of objectivity *within* and subjectivity *across* forms? Why is evaluation *local* in this manner? And why are there so many art-forms?

In this paper, I sketch an approach to understanding evaluative diversity in art. After a synoptic preview in section I, my discussion falls into two parts.

*Psychology* In sections II and III, I will develop original conceptions of aesthetic pleasure and cultural learning designed to explain how we respond to art. The goal here is to account for the basis for objectivity of evaluation within forms.

This part of the proposal does not, however, explain the multiplicity of art-forms. This task falls to the second part.

*Cultural Evolution* In section IV, I attempt to explain divergence and diversity by adapting the Darwinian “Principle of Divergence” (Mayr 1992) to cultural change. Darwin explained the diversity of species by multiple origin events that result in populations becoming (reproductively and ecologically, but not necessarily geographically) isolated from one another and thus capable of evolving independently. I account for the diversity of artforms similarly: by positing distinct origins that lead to isolated cultural-learning regimes that develop independently. (I should say immediately that this application of evolutionary theory is completely non-biological. It relies on a purely formal analogy between biological and cultural processes; I am not pushing for gene-culture co-evolution or anything else in the biological realm.)

In Section V, I’ll conclude by reflecting on the model’s minimalism with respect to value posits.

My aim in this paper is to delineate an approach to a conceptual problem that has certainly been noticed and accommodated, but has not been tackled head-on. It is surely obvious that aesthetic values manifest differently in different cultures and art-forms. The question I want to ask is: What it is about these values that allows them to be variably manifested? And why are art-forms the pivots of these differences?

###  Two Approaches to the Value of Art

Very broadly speaking, there are two ways to understand how artworks have value.

The *first* is an approach based on transcendent qualities. On this view, artistic value is grounded in certain intensive qualities (i.e., qualities that admit of a more and a less) that inhere in certain objects prior to being cognized by any subject.[[1]](#endnote-1) The qualities in question—beauty, grace, complexity, etc.—are thought to be valuable because they express or promote human good, but they are not constituted by this relationship. They subsist independently of it, even in worlds uninhabited by sentient beings.[[2]](#endnote-2)

Now, if beauty etc. are transcendent qualities, one would expect them to be comparable across art-forms. For if such qualities were the grounds of artistic value, then although it might be difficult to recognize them in an alien medium, there would be nothing to make them genuinely local. So, there is *prima facie* reason to doubt that this approach can adequately address a diversity of actual value (as opposed to a divergence of subjective evaluations). However, it would take me too far afield to pursue the point here. The purpose here is to develop a proposal based on the other approach. I’ll leave it to others to explore the feasibility of treatments of evaluative diversity (such as those of Eddy Zemach 1997 and Gorodeisky forthcoming) that are based on transcendent qualities.

The *second* approach, the one that I will explore, is response-based—artistically valuable objects are those that elicit a certain kind of intensive response (i.e., a response that can be stronger or weaker). Historically, this was always thought to be the most intuitive view at first glance, whether or not it was thought ultimately to survive close examination. Plato floated yearning or love (*eros*)as a candidate, though ultimately, he opted for a transcendent approach. The 9th century Indian thinker, Bharata, taught that art was the evocation of *rasa* or emotional expression (Pollock 2016). Hume thought that it was a “feeling” guided by “taste” and Kant that it was connected to “disinterested pleasure” and the free play of the imagination. Whether or not these authors end up taking the response-based path, these are all ways of basing the value of art on human response.

For the project of explaining evaluative diversity, response-based approaches have an obvious advantage—different human beings respond positively to descriptively different things. In this paper, I attempt to exploit this advantage. I will essay a form of *hedonism*: the central idea is that the value of art derives from the pleasure that it elicits when a subject mentally engages with it.[[3]](#endnote-3)

Now, the appeal to pleasure is a handy way to account for diversity, since it can vary inter-personally. But this advantage is also potentially a liability, since inter-personal variability makes it difficult to account for the within-art-form objectivity that is my other main explanandum. I will attempt to account for this objectivity by making the pleasure-response depend on a form of cultural learning that is assumed by artists when they create works for audiences.

Now, the literature is rife with powerful arguments against a foundational role for pleasure. (See Levinson 1992, Shelley 2010, Lopes 2018, Shelley 2019, and Van der Berg 2019 for representative examples.) So, it is crucial to emphasize at the very outset that my version is different from most because my conception of aesthetic pleasure is different. I take a view of aesthetic pleasure as a psychological state that motivates, releases, and eases—in short, facilitates—a learned, cognitively difficult, *manner* of engagement with an art-object. In my conception, aesthetic pleasure helps shape how we read or listen, and is, in this way, a cause of these activities— an integral component of our agency when we do these things, not just a consequence. This does much to immunize the view from standard criticisms.

Here, in summary, is the view that I will defend.

1. *Aesthetic* pleasure is functionally defined as a psychological *reward* state that facilitates mental engagement with many kinds of object, including natural objects (Section II). (To say that it is *functionally defined* in this way, is to allow that phenomenally diverse conscious reward states can play the role—pleasure is not a specific feeling or sensation, on this conception.)
2. (a) *Qua* reward state, aesthetic pleasure is a focus for learning: we learn to engage aesthetically with things in ways that maximize the pleasure of engaging with them.

(b) *Art* is something created in order to give aesthetic pleasure *to an audience that engages with it in a certain manner*. Artists and audiences converge on a specific manner of engagement by means of culture-based coordination.

(c) Within-art-form objectivity arises from this coordination (Section III). This sets art aside from nature and from other objects that do not assume culturally established coordination.

1. There are multiple culturally-learned manners of appreciation. Different art-forms are constituted by these. Darwin’s Principle of Divergence offers us a model for understanding how multiple art-forms emerge (Section IV).

###  Aesthetic Pleasure

Now, let me characterize the kind of pleasure-response that I want to rely on—facilitating pleasure. To this end, I will first introduce a unit of action that I will call an *assembled routine*.As I’ll explain in sub-section, II.2, facilitating pleasure is a component of the psychological complex by which we execute these routines. *Aesthetic* pleasure is facilitating pleasure associated with the execution of a particular kind of mental routine: open-ended cognitive engagement with an object. Pleasure in *art* is a form of aesthetic pleasure, distinguished from the genus by its dependence on a culturally learned manner of appreciation.

### II.1 Assembled Routines

Assembled routines are acts that consist of sequences of component acts, but which are willed as a whole. To illustrate the ubiquity of assembled routines, here’s a simple example: *standing still*. One tends, naively, to think that standing still is a homogeneous activity, not an assemblage of heterogeneous components. But this is wrong. For there are many forces, internal and external, that act on one’s body when one is attempting to stand still, each of which has to be counter-balanced by muscular effort. Standing still is thus an assemblage of separate muscular efforts, each of which precisely counteracts a force that pushes the body away from equipoise. However, these individual responses are not separately willed; indeed, one is not aware of them separately and individually. Standing still is the exercise of an internalized ability to execute a coordinated assemblage as a whole. Its seeming homogeneity is a result of unitary volition.

More complex examples are walking, dancing, etc. One dances the tango by executing many fine movements in sequence. A good dancer doesn’t attend to, and may not fully be aware of, each step she takes. Rather, she releases a coordinating control mechanism learnt by practice, saving her attentional and conative resources for the music, her partner, her surroundings, and, of course, the dance. The more practiced she is, the more the control mechanism is hidden from her conscious awareness. She simply responds to the beat without counting it out in her head.

Importantly, the assembled routine of dancing the tango is, unlike walking or standing (which are developmentally acquired), *learned*. It is only when it is well learned that it can be executed as a unit without willing each component separately. Learning is an important factor in the assembled routines I am concerned with here.

Some learned assembled routines are composed of mental acts. Reading is an example. A child learning to read must recognize each individual letter and its sound, put strings of these together, and sound them out to form words. She must also perform the linguistic operation of comprehending what the words mean. She does this painstakingly, letter by letter. The practised reader wills the act at a more assembled level; she simply reads without separately willing, or being separately aware of, each component act that she performs. Like a practised dancer, she has learned to execute an assembled routine as a unit.

Finally, assembled routines can be goal-directed or manner-oriented (or both). A goal-directed routine is one that is assembled in a certain way in order to achieve a particular result. A tennis player hitting a backhand must rotate her body, position the racket-head, swing, and follow-through in a well-timed sequence. This sequence of actions is precisely constructed to achieve a particular goal—a well-hit ball to the right place. It is an example of a goal-directed routine. By contrast, dancing is manner-oriented. The point of the steps, the turns, the holds, etc. lies in the character of the routine itself, not its effectiveness in achieving an extraneous result—the steps are not aimed at getting from A to B, for example. In such routines, the manner of doing something has significance over and above any goal or result that ensues.

The assembled routines I am interested in are *learned*, *mental*,and (at least partially) *manner-oriented*. Take recreational reading. This is a learned mental routine. It has a goal-directed component: the writing on the page must be absorbed and comprehended, and many of the component acts of reading are designed to achieve this goal efficiently and quickly. Additionally, however, there are manner-oriented aspects of recreational reading—that is, aspects shaped by something other than the culminating goal. As you read, you may, for instance, inwardly recite the words to bring out the prosody, or open yourself up to the emotional resonance of the passage by dwelling on the text for longer than needed for mere comprehension. When you read in these ways, you still aim to achieve the culminating goal of comprehension. But the manner of reading has an additional purpose that may or may not be an *outcome*. For example, you may read prosodically simply to enjoy the metrical structure of the text.

Recreational reading is an example of the kind of activity that is involved in the appreciation of art. I’ll argue that art appreciation is learned manner-oriented cognitive focus on an object. Every art object is, in my view, created for a specific manner of cognitive focus. For example, poetry is written under the assumption that it will be enjoyed in a particular manner.

### II.2 Facilitating Pleasure

Assembled routines are *released* and *facilitated* by pleasure. Consider reading again. Clearly, it is an activity that taxes brain resources and competes with other resource-intensive activities. It is difficult to concentrate on a book when other cognitive and bodily demands compete. However, when reading gives pleasure, it is easier to do it in challenging circumstances. Even when tired and hungry and cramped in your airline seat, you can keep your mind on a good book. Though the bodily demands of airline-induced immobility are exigent, it’s relatively easy to ignore them and to keep your mind on the book. On the other hand, it is very hard in these circumstances to keep your mind on a poorly written student essay. This difference does not mean that the book is intellectually less demanding than the essay—the opposite might well be true. What it shows, rather, is that the pleasure *derived from* reading the book releases the reading routine and facilitates your ability to conduct it as a unitary act, while displeasure disrupts the routine and ultimately holds it back. And the same is true of other assembled routines; they are self-reinforced by pleasure-in-doing (Figure 1).[[4]](#endnote-4) Facilitating pleasure can function in this way as a part of the psychological complex by which one executes difficult assembled routines.[[5]](#endnote-5) It is *agential*.



Figure 1: Facilitating Pleasure

Facilitating pleasure is very different from the kind of pleasure that most philosophers talk about—consequential pleasure. The latter is pleasure that simply welcomes a fact. Thinking again about that long uncomfortable flight, consider the pleasure you experience when you finally get to your destination. This pleasure *follows* the desired event; it plays no role in bringing it about. Or think of the pleasure of soaking in a hot bath. This is just an effect; it is not part of any agential complex. These consequential pleasures are effects separate from the events that give rise to them. You can soak in a hot bath and get no pleasure from it; the mad neuroscientist of philosophical fantasies can neurologically simulate the same pleasure without your actually sitting in a tub. Facilitating pleasure, by contrast, is tied up with *performing* the activity. It’s a component of the psychological complex by which it is performed.[[6]](#endnote-6)

### II.3 Contemplation

Now, I want to introduce an assembled routine that will serve as a broad template for aesthetic engagement. Imagine being mentally engaged with something in a manner that enables you to be aware of and focus in on (some of) its properties. Suppose further that your cognitive focus on this object is manner-oriented—in the sense that what matters to you here is the character of your awareness of the object, not what you discover about it. For example, you might:

* look at a tree and be aware of its colour and shape over a period of time (and by visual recollection after you stop looking), or
* listen to a lecture and be absorbed by the compact unfolding of its argument, or
* hear a bird sing, and be aware of its articulation, attack, and rhythm.

These are acts of awareness that maintain focus on an object without regard to any cognitive achievement that might accrue as a consequence of this focus.[[7]](#endnote-7)

I’ll call these acts of *contemplation*, though the word has a connotation of passivity that I do not intend.They are assembled routines—they consist of coordinated component acts of perceptual or conceptual search, attention, and receptivity. For example, looking at a tree requires you to focus your eyes, saccade from one point to another, register and remember colour contrasts, etc. Finally, looking at a tree because it is pleasurable is manner-oriented. It is a different way of looking at it than when you are trying to identify what kind of tree it is or trying to measure its height.

Here’s an example that illustrates what I have in mind. Consider examining a “Where’s Waldo?” puzzle—a detailed crowd scene that portrays hundreds of vivid characters, including a target character, Waldo, who you are supposed to find in the crush. You can (a) examine the picture and mentally engage with its detail and skill. You can also (b) examine it to find Waldo. These are compatible modes of examination and may well happen side-by-side.[[8]](#endnote-8) The first is an act of contemplation in my sense; the second is a goal-directed search. These are both complex mental assembled routines involving multiple component acts of scanning, examination, comparison, etc. However, (a) is unconstrained by any goal. It is manner-oriented.

Note, however—and this is important—that unconstrained acts of contemplation are unstable. Something is needed to maintain the focus; so far, nothing has been specified that fits the bill. Your mental engagement is just as apt to wander off the object as to stay on it. When you visually examine a tree in order to identify its species, or listen to a lecture to learn something, you have a reason to stay focussed. But if you are just looking, or just listening, there’s no external constraint that motivates you to prevent your mind from wandering. This is where facilitating pleasure plays a role. It keeps your mind on the task. It is sustaining.[[9]](#endnote-9)

### II.4 Aesthetic Pleasure

Now think of an act of contemplation that produces facilitating pleasure. That is, suppose that your manner-oriented cognitive focus on an object’s characteristics produces pleasure in a way that sustains and reinforces the act of cognitive focus from which it emerged. Watching at a beautifully patterned bird is an example: the pleasure you get from looking at the bird keeps your gaze fixed on it. Reading the book on the airplane is another example. Facilitating pleasure stabilizes your focus on the object of contemplation. If you enjoy looking at the bird, you’ll focus on it more; you’ll even take in more of its visual characteristics. Note, here, that the reinforcing role of pleasure is manner-oriented—it is the activity itself, not any goal-state, that shapes how you contemplate the object. This open-ended pleasure-reinforced contemplative engagement with an object (Figure 2) is my model for aesthetic enjoyment.



Figure 2: The Aesthetic Loop

To pull these threads together:

*Aesthetic pleasure* is facilitating pleasure that (a) arises from contemplating something in a manner-oriented way, and which (b) self-reinforces the act of contemplation.

Note that this definition of aesthetic pleasure is *functional*, in the sense that it is defined in terms of its agential role. Certain negative emotions—fear, disgust, sadness—can play a role in self-reinforcing an act of contemplation in accordance with the above definition. Aesthetic pleasure need not be *pleasant* in a narrow sense of the term.

### II. 5 The Aesthetic and the Sensual

Let me return briefly to the pleasurable feelings I mentioned earlier: feelings of suspense, humming along with a catchy tune, appreciation of flavour balance, liking the look of a particular fabric, appreciating the elegance of a mathematical proof. Each of these arises from contemplating an object; each gives rise to aesthetic pleasure in the above sense. You might, for instance, begin to engage with a mathematical proof in a goal-directed way—i.e., in order to understand the result that it demonstrates. If you find the proof elegant, your engagement is reinforced simply by contemplating it in a manner that focusses your attention on its simplicity, directness, etc.—your mind lingers on it for different reasons than those that motivate your attention to an equivalent “brute force” demonstration; the latter loses its interest once you have verified the result. This is why we say you have an *aesthetic* interest in the first proof, and that you value it for more than what it demonstrates.

But think of the examples mentioned in section I.2: enjoyment of a warm bath, the taste of sugar, drifting off to sleep, and sexual arousal. Aside from the last of these, they arise not from contemplation, but from simple contact of the right sort. You sit in a warm bath and it gives you pleasure. The pleasure is no part of how you perform the act (though it may motivate your continuing to sit in the tub); it is a passive effect of the water on your body.

Sexual arousal is a little different. In the first place, it clearly motivates and facilitates sexual activity; it is agential in this sense. The question is: does contemplation of a sexually desirable body self-facilitate, and is it therefore aesthetic (by my definition)? And the answer is yes: the pleasure one gets from such contemplation may sometimes be a component of an aesthetic act. Indeed, this is how it functions in erotic art. But normally, sexual pleasure facilitates actual sexual acts, and this is not aesthetic, though it may have an aesthetic component. This is closely related to how a goal-directed act can also be, at the same time, manner-oriented.

###  Culture-Learning and the Pleasure of Art

Pleasure, whether of the consequential or the facilitating kind, varies a great deal among individuals. This is best illustrated by the *non*-aesthetic pleasures discussed above: some people enjoy eating sugar; others don’t. There’s nothing to evaluate in this difference.The appreciation of art is, to those who have no experience, equally variable. (Think of Beethoven and Hindustani music.) And yet it is, to those familiar with an art-form, evaluatively less capricious: *Anna Karenina* gives more aesthetic pleasure than a mediocre Harlequin Romance. Why? I’ll argue that *culture-learning* is responsible.

In my conception, culture-learning establishes a communicative context between artist and audience and *standards* for art-forms. When Tolstoy wrote *Anna*, he expected his reader to focus on it in a certain way: to interpret it in ways that are informed not only by its content, but also by its social-historical context, its form, and its language. The cultural context entitles him to assume, in short, that you have learned an appropriate way to read his novel, and that you are willing to read it in this way. When you read it in this manner, it produces more aesthetic pleasure than the Harlequin—and this includes not just the pleasure of the bare act of reading, but also that of reflecting on it then and later.

I’ll introduce culture-learning by first characterizing generic reinforcement-learning and then noticing the specific features that distinguish culture-learning as a kind thereof.

### III. 1 Reinforcement-Learning

Pleasure is a learning mechanism. Here is one way this works.

*Reinforcement Learning* If *X* performs action *A1* in circumstances *C* and *A2* in another occurrence of the same circumstances *C*, and if *A1* gives *more* pleasure than *A2*, then *X*’stendency to perform *A1* in *C* is reinforced relative to her tendency to perform *A2* in *C.*

Reinforcement learning is standardly used by animal trainers. Normally, they utilize consequential pleasure-rewards following spontaneous occurrences of the action they seek to establish. For example, they might train a dog to jump through a fiery hoop by giving it a reward every time it comes uncomfortably close to the hoop, ultimately inducing it to jump through (and rewarding it for so doing). In this pattern, a new action is learned by the subsequent pleasure-carrying reward that it elicits. The action is performed because it has provided consequential pleasure in the past, and is lastingly associated with the pleasure as a result. (I’ll qualify the last statement in a moment.)

In reinforcement learning, an animal learns a *new* action—jumping through a fiery hoop (when commanded). The action is performed for the pleasure-linked “value” that has come to be associated with it. (I am not saying that an animal possesses a value-concept, just that its preference for one action over another is an implicit value.) In a moment, I’ll say more about the representational content of this value.

### III.2 Manner-Reinforcement

I am interested in a related, but somewhat different, reinforcement pattern—learning to perform an already familiar action in a new *manner* by the *facilitating* pleasure that accompanies it when performed in that manner.

*Manner-Reinforcement* If assembled routine *A* is *more* facilitated by pleasure when *X* performs it in manner *M1* than when she performs it in manner *M2*, then *X*’s tendency to perform *A* in manner *M1* is reinforced relative to her tendency to perform it in manner *M2*.

Note that *X*’s tendency to perform *A* may not be reinforced as such. The act itself may not rise in her preference-ordering. What is reinforced is a certain manner of performing the act: when she performs it, she does so in this way. Note also that doing something in a certain manner can be learned in other ways—you can be given a consequential pleasure-reward for doing something in a certain manner, or you can be taught that a certain manner of doing it leads to a result you want. But these are not the cases I want to focus on here.

Dancing is an example of a manner learned routine. When one struggles with a step or a move, the routine is forced—“*one–*two–three, *one–*two–three—follow the beat”—and easily falls apart. But when one has mastered the timing of a step, dancing gives self-reinforcing pleasure—it just feels good to do it this way. This pleasure helps one learn the right manner of dancing. Dancing is manner-oriented, and the pleasure that it creates when performed in a certain manner facilitates dancing in this manner (as in Figure 1). And the value of dancing *may* be adjusted upwards because there is a learned manner of dancing that affords greater pleasure than dancing in the old manner. As I said earlier, this does not necessarily lead to an enjoyment of dancing *per se*. One may still prefer to go to the bowling alley or to the movies. But if one is going to dance, this is the way one prefers to do it. And doing it this way *may* just make it more attractive than bowling.

Now, it is sometimes suggested that reward-learned actions are performed in order to secure the rewards by which they were learned. Say the dog, in the previous section, is rewarded by a treat. Then, it is sometimes said, it associates jumping through the hoop with the treat and performs the action for the treat that it brings. But this doesn’t seem necessary. There is no reason to think that when the dog jumps through a fiery hoop, it anticipates a specific reward, or that its motivational state is focussed on this reward. For the effect of reinforcement learning could simply be to increase the subjective value of the action that has been rewarded (in the circumstance in which it was rewarded) without an explicit association with the reward that was its causal source. If so, the dog’s action would not be instrumental, but based on the value associated with the action as a result of the learning process.[[10]](#endnote-10) In short, manner learning enhances the perceived value of a routine performed a certain way.

### III.3 An Aesthetic Example

*Mental* assembled routines can be manner-learned. You read in a particular manner and find that this way of reading gives you more *facilitating* pleasure than other ways of performing it. This manner of reading is thereby reinforced. This is how we learn to enjoy the products of art. When we engage with an artwork in a certain manner, engaging with it is its own reward.

As a toy example, consider how you might learn to read poetry. Let’s say you start by reading it in the way you read journalistic prose—by paying attention primarily to content. Now you encounter this:

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate.

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer’s lease hath all too short a date.

Reading it like journalism, the words seem stilted and lacking in informative content; the figures of speech and transitions are bizarre. But now you remember what your high-school literature teacher taught you about iambs, AB rhyming, and figures of speech. The reading becomes a lot more enjoyable when you read the lines as you were taught and (especially) when you follow the figures of speech to their indirectly expressed conclusion. Unlike a summer’s day, the person being addressed does not unpredictably hurt those around him . . . , That’s a thought that one enjoys thinking, and the metrical structure of the lines makes it easier to return to and dwell on the thought. And even more so if you can assemble it all into an automated routine. Thus, a self-reinforcing way of reading poetry—a specialized mental assembled routine—is established and learned. If you are going to read Shakespearean sonnets, this is a better way to read them.

You enjoy these lines when you read them in a certain manner-learned way. And Shakespeare wrote them for you to enjoy when you read them this way. What’s great about him is that he *succeeded*. There are many inferior writers of sonnets. You just don’t get as much aesthetic pleasure from reading them: your mind skitters away from reading them in this way.

### III.4 Culture Learning

Here is the important point that arises from the toy example of Shakespeare’s sonnet 18. The appreciation of the poem arises out of coordination between artist and audience. The artist creates the sonnet in the expectation that it will give aesthetic pleasure if the audience engages with it in a specific manner-learned way. The audience, for its part, gets aesthetic pleasure from it because it does as the poet expects it will.

This coordination is secured by culture, i.e., by assumptions that propagate by teaching and learning among people who participate in a shared activity. The coordination is not contractual, or transactional, among individuals; rather, it is a matter of individuals acting in ways that they have manner-learned simply by being members of a certain community (or by dint of instruction by members of that community). The actual expectations on which the coordination is based are not explicit. They can be explicitly described, and in art-schools, they are, but “the rules” originate from observation and induction and are in no way enjoined.

Culturally learned routines for contemplating art are art-form-specific. Knowing how to read a Shakespearean sonnet doesn’t guarantee comprehension of the products of a different cultural practice. But culture-learning *does* tend to produce agreement about objects made for a certain way of contemplation. That is, arguments about the merits of a work are premised on its being consumed in a certain manner. My view that sonnet 18 is a great poem rests on the expectation that if anybody were to engage with it in a certain culturally determined manner, it would produce a great deal of self-facilitating pleasure.

I can now articulate a general thesis. Just as the comprehension of language rests on conventions of speaking and listening learned by those who know a language, so also the enjoyment of art rests on coordinated expectations of production and appreciation learned by those who know the culture. (Note that in language too, the “rules” are not transactional, but rather descriptions of culture-based practices on which communication rests.) In short, creators of art rely on the audience’s employment of a particular manner-oriented consumption routine. A Japanese sumi-e painter assumes that his audience is looking for execution of fine detail in subdued colours; an Ottoman miniaturist assumes that fine brushwork will be used to display saturated colour. This is why they paint in different ways.

### III.5 Art as a Special Kind of Aesthetic Object

I am now able to characterize art in terms of its relationship to cultural learning.

1. Works of art are created in accordance with the expectation that they will be engaged with in a specific culturally learned manner.

2. Consuming a work of art in the culturally learned manner assumed by the artist maximizes aesthetic pleasure (i.e., normally, non-accidentally).

3. The coordination between creator and audience implied by 1 and 2 is enabled by a set of culturally specific expectations.

We can extend the above by subordinating the evaluation of art to the terms of coordination between artist and audience:

4. Artworks are evaluated relative to the culturally specific terms of coordination implied by 1 and 2. Specifically, their value depends on how successfully they are able to generate pleasure that facilitates the cognitive focus of an audience. (See Matthen 2017 a and b, and 2018.)

As I said in section I, above, there are two ways to approach the question of how artworks have value. The above propositions display hallmarks of the response-based approach that I have been developing. They show how evaluations based on aesthetic-pleasure can be objective within an artform, but simultaneously be subjective across artforms. (As I said earlier, it goes beyond the scope of what is being attempted here to examine the efficacy of approaches based on transcendent qualities.)

It still remains to examine why there are multiple artforms with divergent standards of evaluation. This is the question addressed in the remainder of the paper.

###  The Origin of Art-forms

The view of aesthetic pleasure that I have been outlining implies that artforms co-depend on methods of consumption. Artworks are appreciated by audiences that consume them in a specific way; art-form specific, manner-learned capacities for enjoyable engagement arise from cultural learning focused upon exemplars of the form. This suggests that the conventions of individual artforms are not dictated by any universal human need or aspiration. Rather, they emerge and survive in tandem with local value-creating processes of coordination. And this implies that the expectations that define an art-form are contingent; they are not dictated by some transcendent quality. This is the heart of the explanation why there are diverse artforms .

### IV. 1 Darwin’s Principle of Divergence

The emergence of artforms recalls Darwin’s approach to a parallel problem—the biodiversity that we find on Earth. This was something that creationists had struggled with for many millennia. How, on the assumption that God creates the best possible world, can one explain the existence of *many* descriptively diverse species? True, all God’s creatures are well-adapted, and this can be seen as a manifestation of Its beneficence—but what accounts for *this* particular set of well-adapted organisms? What purpose does Earth’s actual variety serve that could not have been as well or better served by some other range of species? And how does one compare levels of adaptedness? Are crows better adapted than cockroaches?

Darwin solved the problem by introducing (a) an element of historical randomness in natural selection, and (b) a tree-like historical pattern of species-lineages that branch out from singular events. Here’s one way to look at this.

On creationism, God created two sets of things: organisms, which can be understood as consumers, and the Earthly environment, which constitutes a fixed store of consumables. On this conception, each species is adapted to exploiting some part of the consumables. If cockroaches are different from crows, it is because they consume different parts of the fixed store.

In Darwin’s theory, however, there is no such fixity of consumables. Darwin proposed that, new species comes into existence when members of a pre-existing species become able, by dint of a chance event (such as migration, or, in contemporary genetics, mutation) to exploit resources that were unavailable to their ancestors given how the latter are biologically constituted. The opportunism of these organisms should not be regarded as adaptation to previously neglected resources. Rather it is the creation of a new resource by the innovation of a new form of behaviour. This is Darwin’s Principle of Divergence—see the discussion in Mayr (1992)—also known as the Principle of Divergence of Character.

Divergence depends on variation: the more a species admits variation of character, the more likely it is to spawn a variant that exploits hitherto neglected parts of its surroundings.[[11]](#endnote-11) When this happens, the newly outfitted organisms occupy new turf, and thus compete *less* with members of the ancestral population. (Of course, they may still compete for some resources—for example, space or water or air.) Ultimately, they come to form a new evolutionary unit—a new species. The emergence of new evolutionary units is *macro-evolution*, which, for our purposes, can be conceptualized as the joint outcome of two processes: the creation of a new population by morphological change or migration, and simultaneously, the creation of a new ecological niche by the creation of new resources that the offshoot is able to consume. Of course, Darwin hypothesized *micro-evolution* as well: the morphological change of a population by dint of competition among its members more effectively to exploit the species-niche. This is the Principle of Natural Selection, which maintains stability in the distribution of variants in a population. But (as the title of his most famous book indicates) Darwin aimed to explain biodiversity, which he does by the Principle of Divergence.

On Darwin’s theory, the generation of species happens by chance, and so the question of adaptation can only be answered historically. Why are there both crows and cockroaches? On creationism, it is because they exploit different subsets of the same pre-existent set of resources—the answer, in other words, rests on the Earth’s capacity to accommodate both. On the evolutionary theory of speciation, they are the products of divergent histories of speciation events that created new ecological niches. Darwin does not think of the air as a timeless transportational resource for which God created birds. His theory is rather that it was not a transportational resource until certain evolutionary changes created organisms that were able to exploit it for this purpose, thus avoiding competition with their earth-bound erstwhile conspecifics. Birds are the ultimate product of this change. Cockroaches are the products of different changes, and they exploit different resources.

Darwin’s historical thinking runs contrary to the idea that the prior-established nature of the Earth explains the existence of the very set of species we happen to find here, and that the variety of species is explained simply by the complexity and richness of the resources available to living things. In this conception, all species embody a single overarching value: Exploit the resources God provides. According to Darwin, by contrast, the fact that a particular species is found on Earth is explained, at least in part, by local and contingent features of the historical situation in which a species comes into existence—i.e., by events that created new ways of resource-exploitation. Speciation is resource-creation; adaptation to the created resource is a *new* value that applies to the new species, and not to the ancestral one.

I want to propose a parallel theory as the foundation of aesthetic diversity. My idea is that artforms emerge and are preserved by normatively non-conforming, historically unpredictable, origin events that trace to human creativity and human preference. (More about this in the following section.) I want to suggest that value emerges from these chance random events and does not pre-exist.

### IV. 2 The Creation of Art-Forms

Here, then, is a theoretical parallel between biological and cultural evolution. (Let me emphasize, again, that I do not think of cultural evolution as a biological process; the parallel is at a more abstract level.) My proposal is based on the ideas of aesthetic pleasure and cultural learning outlined earlier.

### IV.2.1. Micro-Evolution (Selection)

First, let’s consider change *within* a biological population and compare it to change within an art-form.

(a) *Biology*

(i) Organisms form populations—temporally extended groups of interacting organisms that compete for a share of a fixed store of resources, or niche.

(ii) *Natural Selection* Within a population, organisms vary according to their capacity to reproduce, or fitness. Mutation creates new types randomly (i.e., not purposively, with the goal of being more fit). Over time, the fitter types of organisms tend to increase proportionately. Though mutation creates variation, selection eliminates the less fit types, and thus it stabilizes the distribution of interacting types within a population. (For example, it stabilizes the sex ratio in human populations.)

(iii) Fitness is explained by adaptation, as well as by other factors such as reproductive efficiency.

(b) *Art*

(i) Artworks belong to art-forms—groups of productions that compete for consumption by people who possess specific skills or competencies of consumption—a society of similarly-skilled people constitute an artistic niche for the art-form. The greater the aesthetic pleasure these consumers derive from a work consumed in accordance with these skills, the deeper their cognitive engagement with it. As a consequence, works that give greater aesthetic pleasure are in greater demand. This competitive niche exists within a wider *market*: artworks compete for resources against food, defence, housing, mating opportunities, etc. The art-market is shaped by aesthetic pleasure, as well as by other factors such as the existence of supporting productive entities, such as technology, wealth, and cultural institutions. (Lopes 2017 emphasizes these supporting institutions.)

(ii) *Cultural Selection* Within an artform, artworks differ with respect to their capacity to produce enjoyment when skilfully consumed in a manner-learned way. Artists create new artworks, and sometimes they do so in a way that challenges an audience by requiring it to adjust existing skills of consumption. This kind of innovation enriches the competencies of consumption that prevail in the artform. Over time, the artworks for which there is more demand are imitated more, and thus their characteristics tend to be promulgated proportionately more within a culture. This is a homogenizing influence that creates and preserves norms and expectations even within a gradually evolving artform.

(iii) The gradual evolution of artforms is explained by the varying success that innovations enjoy in capturing the aesthetic pleasure of skilled consumers in a local market. A work in an artform attracts the focus of skilled consumers. When it does this, the manner of cognitive engagement employed by these consumers is reinforced. This encourages the production of more works that cater to this manner of consumption.

In brief, artworks that call for the same culture-learned method of consumption directly compete with one another for skilled consumption producing aesthetic pleasure. This results in a process that is comparable to micro-evolution due to natural selection. Demand, analogous to fitness, determines market share both of art-forms and of individual works in these art-forms. Innovation, analogous to mutation, produces new types of artworks; these create demand depending on how well adapted these are to existing skills. Micro-evolution in art is, thus, a process that operates against the background of a continuity in skills of consumption.

Theories of cultural evolution, such as those found in Dawkins (1976) and Lumsden and Wilson (1981) and their successors concentrate on micro-evolution. Their approach, very roughly, is that cultural transmission is determined by the suitability of what one may call *ideas* (“memes,” “culturgens”) to the mental characteristics of humans. (As Tim Lewens 2015, 11, writes: “the conditions required for natural selection to act are present in the realm of culture.”) As far as art is concerned, this approach assumes a homogeneous market.

### IV.2.2. Macro-Evolution (Divergence)

What, then, about the diversity of art-forms? To accommodate this, I propose a macro-evolutionary component of cultural evolution.

(a) *Biology* An organism or group of organisms may, by a random act of transformation, create a new niche by exploiting hitherto unused resources, and thereby form a new population whose members do not compete with its ancestors.

(b) *Culture* A new artwork may be created that demands new skills of consumption from an audience. Suppose that, for some reason, these skills propagate through some group of consumers—this might happen spontaneously, or by consumers experimenting with new ways of engaging with the work, or by consumers instructing each other—the means of propagation do not matter. If the artwork is successful, it encourages the creation of new artworks that demand the new skill. The new art-*form* is a new niche for culture-learned consumption; its expectations are different from those that enabled aesthetic pleasure before.[[12]](#endnote-12) Works in the new form do not compete directly against those of its predecessors—but given that art itself is competing against other needs such as food, defence, housing, mating opportunities, etc., there could be indirect competition for overlapping economic resources. (For example, opera could lose out to rap, not on standards based on shared ways of consumption—there is no substantial overlap with respect to these, we may suppose—but because the high price of concert tickets prohibits spending on both. The reasons why somebody might prefer to spend their money on rap are not objectively assessible in an aesthetic sense.)

Darwin was puzzled not just by the gradual improvement of species, but more fundamentally by the existence on Earth of many different species. The problem posed by the diversity of art-forms runs parallel to this: the question is not a comparison between Mozart and Beethoven, but why there is no direct evaluative transfer between Hindustani and European music, or (somewhat less radically) between European classical music and rock n’ roll.

In traditional aesthetics, the problem of value was originally conceived in ignorance of difference. For most philosophers, especially for those who grew up in the imperialist cultures of Europe and North America, the problem of aesthetic value is restricted to just one culture—their own. For them, the problem of diversity is simply a matter of appealing to different pre-existent mental or sensory capacities: music appeals to ear; literature to the linguistic mind. They conduct a dialectic in which there is only one set of aesthetic values, just as in creationist debates, there was only one environment. In this dialectic, the non-comparability of aesthetic values is simply denied. Or it is accommodated either by taking different art-forms to be exploiting different parts of a capacious environment. (This might be thought a plausible way to account for different art-media: for example, the differences between Shakespeare’s poetry and English renaissance music.) The macro-evolutionary model proposed above takes an entirely different path: it proposes to explain cultural divergence by positing founding events that create value-autonomous new markets.

### IV.2.3 Founding Events

Just as the emergence of a new species is at the same time the creation of a new niche, the emergence of a new art-form is the creation of a new method of consumption. This can happen in a number of ways, of which I’ll list three.

(i) Think first of originating events in human pre-history. In each cultural line of descent, there must have been a first song, a first painting, a first poem.[[13]](#endnote-13) (Think of these as analogous to mitochondrial Eve.) The individuals who created these must have done so more or less spontaneously, relying on pre-existing preferences as well as some form of communication to guide the audience. Perhaps they modified things that humans do instinctively, giving new form and structure, say, to primordial humming, doodling, and babbling. These primordial artworks might have appealed to some pre-existing human aesthetic preference, which might have been universal, but gradually there would have been modifications to the form—additional structure or ornamentation, for instance—that held interest to local folks because they depend on a particular form of engagement.[[14]](#endnote-14)

(ii) In a second kind of case, an existing form is transported by a migrating population to a new location where it is insulated from outside influences—the tribes who migrated from the Middle East to Europe took singing and story-telling with them. By micro-evolutionary processes that occur independently of the ancestral art-form, these forms accumulate changes of audience consumption that gradually render it utterly different from the ancestral form. (This is analogous to parapatric speciation in biological evolution.)

(iii) Finally imagine an artist or group of artists, who in an established market breaks the rules so radically that a drastic reconfiguring of appreciation skills is required. Their works would initially be in competition with ancestral forms, for the creation of a founder market depends on hiving off some group of interested consumers who initially use the skills they have learned in the culture. But gradually the new group develops its own methods of production and consumption independently. One can think of the development of recent culture in these terms. How did rock n’ roll come to be? How was restaurant cuisine created? (This is analogous to sympatric speciation.)

There is no reason to think that the descriptive characteristics either of the original works or of the subsequent modifications were governed by any historical law. They were, rather, the product of historical singularities. Historical singularities account for the diversity of current art-forms.

### IV. 3 Cross-Talk vs Mergers

Biologists generally assume that speciation creates irreversible divergences between gene-pools. Once different species of primates originated from a single ancestral population, there was no going back: the barriers to cross-fertilization keeps the species separate forever. Things are clearly different with regard to human cultural practices. There is cross-talk among different societies. Does this undermine the analogy that I am attempting to construct between speciation and emergence of art-forms? Does borrowing create at least a partial basis for evaluation across art-forms?

Though the point requires delicate treatment, the simple answer is that cross-talk does not make much difference. In the space available here, I let me simply compare the kind of innovation that results from importing a practice from one artform to another and the kind (discussed under the heading “Cultural Selection” in section IV.2.1 above) that results from innovation that demands something new of audiences within a single art-form.

When an artist challenges the limits of prevalent cultural expectations, she creates new expectations that result in a net modification of the art-form. Over time, these changes can make a big difference. Thus, a music-lover in the time of Bach might have been puzzled by the music of Brahms a century and a half later, and this puzzlement is not entirely unlike that of the music-lover in Akbar’s court being exposed to Beethoven. But there is a difference: Brahms’s music is part of a tradition that was gradually transformed in a manner that made sense at each stage. When Brahms employs a musical trope that was familiar in the baroque period, that trope still has something related to its original sense.

Now consider inter-culture transfer.Toulouse-Lautrec is said to have been influenced by Japanese woodblocks; Picasso by the planarity of African masks. Did the resulting works demand foreign manners of engagement? No: because when these artists imported features from their paragon cultures, they utterly changed their meaning. A Parisian viewing large areas of uniform colour depicting Parisian night life would hardly take the same meaning from them as a citizen of Edo would from the wood-block prints of Ukiyo-e (though the latter too were often depictions of night life). Each would enjoy these artistic devices against the background of their own prior art experience: the Parisian would contrast the expressive power of wood-block printing to that of impressionist brushwork and other contemporary style. Parisian art did not suddenly become Edo-esque; it stayed true to itself. The innovations of Toulouse-Lautrec and Picasso are micro-evolutionary in the sense of section IV.2.1; they do not rely on the adoption of entirely alien manners of engagement.

What about the globalized culture that we enjoy today, with folk art from Indonesia sitting next door to the latest new artists from Madrid and Chennai in New York art districts? I don’t think this changes the point much. Let’s concede that jet travel has created global sensibilities. The most that this implies is that there is a new global art-form. But this global art-form is still different from the many local art-forms that continue to thrive all over the world. Despite its inherent implausibility, let’s allow for the sake of argument the conjecture that hip-hop, Bollywood sangeet, and Gangnam Style are all parts of a single global pop music form. This wouldn’t mean that jazz, Hindustani music, and Chinese opera have somehow disappeared, or that they are now best appreciated as exemplars of a global style.

Transference is not continuity, then. As hybrid mating is different from starting a new species, so also borrowing is not merging.

###  Coda: Universalism vs Localism

Why do inter-personal standards in art vary across cultures? Universalists take one of two alternative views. According to one school of thought, beauty and other aesthetic value-makers are higher-order properties that are differently manifested in different art-forms—not only in music and in poetry, but also, for instance, in European classical music and rap. (See, for example, Mothersill 1984 and Higgins 2000.) According to subjectivists like Hume, consensus follows on the refinement of universal characteristics of human sensibility. On views like this, we all experience any work of art in the same way. However, some of us have had backgrounds that sensitize us to different aspects of this experience than others, and this leads us to appreciate different kinds of art. On both accounts, the model of Divergence that I have proposed could be accepted, but with the caveat that no art-form can thrive if it does not trade on true beauty—though with the caveat that many different refinements of experience can lead to the appreciation of many different qualities.

The question to ask of any such model is how well it stands up to the facts. The emerging discipline of “neuroaesthetics” posits aesthetic universals. For example, Branka Spehar et. al. (2003) claim that “humans display a consistent aesthetic preference across fractal images, regardless of whether these images are generated by nature's processes, by mathematics, or by the human hand.” And one can find many other such findings, or speculations, in the literature. Could it be that these universals are constraints on art everywhere—constraints that define beauty?

The question to ask here is not so much whether such generalizations are ever violated in art, but rather how well they help us understand the appeal of art. Spehar et. al. find, for example, that aesthetic preference for natural images and simulated coastlines peaks in a certain range of fractal dimensionality, and they show that Jackson Pollock’s paintings tend to fall within the same range. They conclude:

Given that fractals define our natural environment, identification of the fractal characteristic determining aesthetic preference could be of fundamental importance in understanding the way in which our perception in general and our appreciation of art in particular are shaped by the world around us.

But this raises another question: Granting the truth of this conclusion, how much do we learn about Jackson Pollock by finding these and other neuroaesthetic universals in this work? Is the appreciation of Pollock’s paintings just a matter of being responsive to neuroaesthetic universals?

This brings me to my final point. Some philosophers tend to explain inter-personal commensurability of evaluation in universalist terms, seemingly neglecting the possibility that the apparent objectivity they appeal to is merely local. Darwin’s Principle of Divergence gives us, at minimum, a reason to be sceptical of this. My model allows for aesthetic-evaluation concepts with thick objective content because it localizes this content.

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1. Gorodeisky and Marcus 2018 and Gorodeisky forthcoming articulate a novel version of this approach. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. There is a variety of strategies that seek to make a connection between qualities that subsist in art and human interest. Some suggest that aesthetic properties are objective qualities that happen to evoke a valuable psychological response—they are secondary qualities of a certain sort. Samantha Matherne has been working on Edith Landmann-Kalischer’s (1906) early version of this view. More recently, John McDowell (1985) has advanced a version. A different way is to establish an Aristotelian link between the aesthetic realm and human life-functions. Evolutionary accounts (Dutton 2009, Davies 2012) can be seen as providing the groundwork for such a link. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Shelley (2019) suggests that hedonism has an advantage over certain other response-based theories, namely that it endows art with absolute, or final, value. I believe that the value of art is merely instrumental, and so I do not avail myself of this. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Note that the prospect of future pleasure does not perform the same function. You may anticipate great pleasure from completing the task of reading a big pile of student exams, but this will not make the task any easier. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Reber, Schwartz, and Winkielman (2004) notice one half of the loop that I am describing. They propose that *fluency* in executing (what I call) an assembled routine is pleasurable. But they do not see the reciprocal influence—pleasure contributes to fluency and displeasure disrupts it. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. There is another view of pleasure that has been in the literature ever since Plato—that it is an quasi-perceptual apprehension of the good. Aesthetic pleasure is, on this view, purported apprehension of beauty, or of aesthetic merit. Gorodeisky (2019) and De Clercq (2019) adopt approaches like this. Such views are (a) committed to a consequentialist view of pleasure, since perception of *F* is a causal consequence of *F*, and (b)assume that beauty is a transcendent quality. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Here, I would include willed states of inattentive reverie with some object as their focus—dreamy engagement with the sound of water, for example. On the other hand, I want to exclude *unwilled* states of awareness, attentive or not—for example, extended awareness of a painful sore somewhere on your body. It would take me too far afield to discuss these cases, and I’ll set them aside for present purposes. The important point is that focus ≠ attention. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Waldo’s creator, Martin Handford, was a specialist in crowd scenes. “After seeing some of Handford's artwork, David Bennett, a business associate and an art director at Walker Books in England, contacted the artist about developing a children's book showcasing his singular talent. It was only then that the character Waldo was conceived. . . Handford explained in a 1990 interview that ‘a book full of crowd scenes has no central theme, but adding a wacky character for the reader to look for adds a purpose to each page. That's who Waldo is - an afterthought.’” (<https://waldo.fandom.com/wiki/Where%27s_Waldo%3F>, retrieved May 25th, 2019.) [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. This proposal dovetails with the attention theory of aesthetic enjoyment, Nanay (2015, 2016). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Here, I have learned much from the discussions of Kim Sterelny (2003, ch. 5) and David Papineau (2004), both of whom draw on the work of Tony Dickinson and colleagues (Dickinson and Balleine 1993). [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Darwin writes: “Where many species of a genus have been formed through variation, circumstances have been favourable for variation.” (*Origin*, chapter 2) [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. I employ the notion of a niche here that plays a different role than in the work of Richard Menary (2014) (who adapts Odling-Spee, Laland, and Feldman, 2003). Menary is trying to explain the emergence of art as such; his idea is that an art-filled environment aids in the development of human faculties such as intelligence. I am not dealing with the evolutionary origins of art, and I am not positing a single niche for art in all humans Rather, I am trying to explain the diversity of art-forms. As such, my niches are for specific art-forms: they are diverse milieux in which these art-forms thrive.. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. It may not be clear *which* vocalization was the first song. A woman warbled, somebody mimicked her, but more elaborately. One of these performances was the first song. It’s not important which. (I am grateful to an anonymous referee for raising the question.) [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Alva Noë (2015) has the closely related idea that art is a reorganization of spontaneous activity: for example a choreographer reorganizes spontaneous dance. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)