PEIRCE'S SUSPENDED SECOND, AND ART'S 'ETHICAL PHENOMENOLOGY'

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Thus every kind of proposition is either meaningless or has a real Secondness as its object.[1]

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ABSTRACT: The fundamental problem for theoretical aesthetics is its inability to account for art's meaning-value (Trimarchi, 2022). As previously argued, Art's higher meaning is *only* found emerging from the artwork's tacit dimensions, where empirical-historical intentionality is almost completely inconsequential (Trimarchi, 2024b). The latter's interpretable 'phenomenology of sequence' produces a false theorising tendency, disconnecting art from the history of ideas and severing aesthetics from ethics and logic. Art appears 'infinitely interpretable', hence entirely subjective. Adapting Arnold's (2011) actantial processual approach, I show how Peircian semiotics, via 'real Secondness', uncovers art's higher meaning. Peirce's 'diagrammatic thinking' exposes art's unique role of 'objectifying' *the Person* (in *any* subject, via appropriate propositions), without de-valuing this bearer of moral values. His 'semiotic realism' helps unveil Scheler's anthropological (also termed 'ethical') phenomenology emerging from Merleau-Ponty's 'obscure zone', to discern *poetic* from other speculation. Art's 'subject-objectivation' (or, ethical *intentionality*) is thus able to be mapped *phenomenologically* to reveal any artwork's meaning-value orientation. This paper combines Peirce's 'phenomenology of reason' with Scheler's hierarchy of values and Schelling's 'mythological categories' (Trimarchi 2024b) to suggest a methodology for moving beyond neo-Kantian theoretical aesthetics (and analytical philosophy's grip on the anti-art of 'modernity'). That is, moving from the realm of perception to *knowing*, reviving art's ontological connection to normative aesthetics. In conclusion, Peirce's 'science of ideals' is thus revealed as *Complexity Science*, which – via his 'suspended second' (or, Ricoeur's 'second ontology') - vindicates Schelling's claim for how 'aesthetics becomes objective' (Trimarchi, 2024a).

KEYWORDS: Art; Ethical Phenomenology; Peirce; Scheler; Schelling; Secondness

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[1] Peirce in Søren Brier, "Can biosemiotics be a 'science' if its purpose is to be a bridge between the natural, social and human sciences?" *Progress in Biophysics and Molecular Biology* 119 (2015): 576-587 p. 584.

INTRODUCTION

This paper applies what Peirce means by 'real Secondness' to understanding the higher meaning of art. Such efforts have in the past been made to some extent (eg., Markus Arnold 2011). However, to progress these requires a combination of philosophical anthropology and hermeneutic phenomenology; which I will provide via the insights of Max Scheler, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Paul Ricoeur. When situated in context with F. W. Schelling's *Principle* of art (Trimarchi, 2024a), they reveal Peirce's most important contributions to the philosophy of art (though, like Schelling's and Scheler's in particular, largely overlooked).

My hope, via such examination, is to confirm why art can only, as Peirce and others have claimed, be studied phenomenologically. And why an artwork's higher meaning can indeed be 'mapped' - not by neuroscience (Trimarchi, 2024c) - but by tracing its 'ethical intentionality' in the work. Though this appears controversial, I aim to dispel doubts about the theoretical means of achieving this, by shedding light on a practical method for making meaning-value assessments of any genuine art object ('for all time', according to Schelling's *Principle*).[2] The significance of this would be at least to lend support to arguments for mostly abandoning theoretical aesthetics, due to its 'un-scientific', subjectivising, and ultimately destructive fragmenting influences (Trimarchi, 2022). And at best provide realistic means for instead realistically reconnecting art to normative aesthetics.

To support my arguments for employing the above philosophical perspectives to this end, I will in §1 show the relevance of Scheler's 'ethical' phenomenology and Merleau-Ponty's 'obscure zone' to Peirce's semiotic realism. Then in §2 outline why the latter, via Peirce's 'diagrammatic thinking', can logically map speculation. Examining how to move beyond the hermeneutics of interpretation, toward the phenomenology of *Reason* in *poetic* discourses (§3), will then elucidate on the emergence of higher meaning from art's tacit dimensions (Polanyi 1966, Trimarchi, 2024c). In §4, the *actantial* significations surrounding Peirce's 'suspended object' (Ricoeur's 'second ontology') are revealed as the key to

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[2] Trimarchi 2024a (footnoted hereafter as Trimarchi, 2024a). This and associated arguments, including related reviews of field research, are contained in the similarly referenced Trimarchi, 2022, Trimarchi, 2023, Trimarchi, 2024b, and Trimarchi, 2024c.

determining 'ethical intentionality' in any artwork. And hence the foundation of an 'aesthetics of meaning' model for methodological examination, outlined in the *Appendices*. My conclusion then returns briefly to the wider implications of this.[3]

What are the main problems any such model would need to address? In short: How intentionality and meaning appear in phenomenal character. How to navigate between our assessments of these in background or implicit meaning, and explicit experience. And therefore, how a wide range of content carried by 'an experience' including that which is not consciously felt, *phenomenally*, can be assessed.

Each of these difficulties can be addressed by distinguishing what differentiates the '*phenomenological* experience' of art from *ordinary* experience, which I have previously touched on in Trimarchi, 2024c. How the 'intellectual intuition' combines feeling and thinking, via the 'tacit dimension' afforded by genuine art compared with non-art, is key to this. Schelling's main argument against Fichte's characterisation of intellectual intuition originates in Kant's rejection of a 'telos' in nature. Via the *later* Hegel, Kant's equivocation eventually manifested in art's modern utilitarian re-conception, via those even like Heidegger who ultimately disavowed 'metaphysical' explanations of art (Trimarchi, 2024a). Returning to Schelling's 'process metaphysics' of art, I will in §3 briefly show why Merleau-Ponty's insights on 'the origin of the artwork' overtakes Heidegger's.

Combining such developments with Peirce's insights can better build a bridge between the 'two cultures' separating Art from science, than that presumed in modernity's *false* merger of it with techno-science. As previously argued, the merely subjectivist 'experientialist' account of art's empathic 'purposiveness' - which has little bearing on its greater purpose/use to humanity – has created a combined illusory 'phantasy' and sense of security in the private world (Trimarchi, 2022, Trimarchi, 2024c). The public sphere deteriorated along with the human telos, as 'artist' and 'aesthete' sleep-walked in mutual self-reflection into what Pierre Bourdieu called *industrialised* arts' bad faith economy – bootstrapped now to our self-legitimating imaginaries (Trimarchi, 2023). But Art's true (*Ideal*) identity is reborn in Peirce and Scheler's phenomenological

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[3] See Trimarchi, 2022 for what is meant by an 'aesthetics of meaning'.

investigations. They open a way to reinvent it once again; to liberate it from symbolic idealism; to engage meaningfully with the full complexity of experience, through an embodied aspiration for discerning 'the real' in Art.

As Gare (2018) argues, the twentieth century revival of phenomenology 'freed philosophers (most notably, Merleau-Ponty) to appreciate the original global experience of the world that is the background to discriminating and identifying any item of experience... to see these in their various contexts and in relation to each other', revealing their *essences*.[4] The essence of Humanism - and any inquiry into *human* experience - which art *embodies* but the modern mythology obscures, lies in the very fact scientism denies: that 'the object of investigation and the subject *coincide*'. Art reveals this, as I will show, not as any *delusory* 'virtual reality', but as *sapienta* and *eloquentia*; as 'the wisdom of the whole achieved through self-knowledge' made *intuitively* intelligible. Uniquely, it achieves this by moving *beyond* language and interpretation, via the tacit dimension. Only, however, when 'naturalised' – ie., re-associated with *normative* aesthetics.

These fundamental concepts of human intelligibility are what Giambattista Vico claimed to be the basis for *practical* knowledge about how to live and what proper human action entails. Which, of course, is now more urgently implicated in humanity's quest for survival.[5] His so-called 'counter-enlightenment' was in fact the radical enlightenment, following in the tradition of thought from Aristotle through to Schelling, Peirce, Scheler, and Merleau-Ponty's complementary approaches to phenomenology, enabling us to realise *why* such discriminations above are needed. These philosophers force us to recognise the temporality and complexity of all experience, giving a place to both subjects *and* objects. Which allows us to discern, for instance, why it is that no 'replicant' mechanism, however sophisticated, can make *original* art (Trimarchi, 2024c).

Our primordial access to 'the obscure zone', which is *required* (though this may seem odd) to identify art's *ethical* value, is explained in the following section. Why its 'unknowable differentiation' yields Art's subject-objectivation of *the Person* is

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[4] Arran Gare, "Natural Philosophy and the Sciences: Challenging Science's Tunnel Vision." *Philosophies* 3, 4, (2018), p.20.

[5] Arran Gare, "The Centrality of Philosophical Anthropology to (A Future) Environmental Ethics." *Cuadernos de bioetica: revista oficial de la Asociacion Espanola de Bioetica y Etica Medica* 27, 91, September (2016): 299-317, p.310-11, p.306 and p.309.

elucidated by Scheler's 'anthropological phenomenology'. In turn revealing why we can identify Art's Principle in the *qualities* of its exemplars (artworks – as long as they are 'intelligible'), in any artform, epoch, or culture. And why an artwork's *ethical* meaning-value stands quite apart from its 'empirical contents', enabling us to distinguish ethics from morals in artistic intentionality. Showing how Peirce's *real Secondness* then moves us beyond aesthetics as theory, to more objective assessments of art's meaningfulness, will follow.

I. ETHICAL PHENOMENOLOGY

Peirce's radical empirical 'semiotic realism', as Vincent Colapietro argues, avoids subjectivism while constructing 'a social and semiotic theory of the self consistent with science and commonsense'.[6] He achieves this in part by defining 'the person as a species of sign', a form of semiosis in its innermost being. With the development of philosophical anthropology, Peirce's demolition of the 'private world' myth is confirmed by Scheler's refined re-conception of *the Person* (surpassing Hegel's). Merleau-Ponty's later development of hermeneutic phenomenology, which proposed an 'ontology of the flesh' that posited a *primordial realm* 'more fundamental than, and the condition for, the subject-object opposition contained within it', thus returns us to Schelling's ontological conception of art, with its inherent connection to 'unprethinkable being'. As Kauffman & Gare argue, with the insights these and other radical enlightenment philosophers we move beyond Descartes and Newton.[7]

At the same time, why humans only generate *higher* meaning metaphorically by *redirecting* Nature's autopoietic self-structuring semiotic vehemence, becomes apparent. As Aristotle shows in the *Ethics*, only with *the Person* (humanity) so conceived, *embodying* the inherent normative interrelation between aesthetics, ethics, and logic, can we produce sustainable individual *or* collective self-actualising narratives of life (MacIntyre 2007). Their relationship cannot be mediated by symbol, hence distinguishing symbol from metaphor is key (Trimarchi, 2024c). But Peirce, returning to Aristotle, also realised phenomena are meaningless in the absence of an imagination *capable of connecting them*

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[6] Vincent Colapietro, *Peirce's Approach to the Self: Semiotic Perspective on Human Subjectivity.* (State University of New York Press, 1988), p.37.

[7] Stuart A. Kauffman, and Arran E. Gare, "Beyond Descartes and Newton: Recovering life and humanity." *Progress in Biophysics and Molecular Biology* 119, (2015): 219-244, p.223.

rationally.[8]

The most powerful way of mythologising (*ideal*-ising) life's meaning, as Schelling realised, is via the imagination expanding metaphoric morphogenesis afforded *only* through genuine naturalised Art (Trimarchi, 2024a). Art's real 'ethical' value (and ultimately '*purposeful*' purposelessness, contra Kant) is therefore revealed in the 'movement' of affordances emerging from this *tacit* dimension.[9] And it is in how the Person's *primordial* relation to the Nature-History nexus surfaces here, via Art's subject-objectivation process, that the *real* significance of art's ethical phenomenology to human flourishing is elucidated.

The Art-Person Perfect Sign

As Scheler (1973) argues, 'the person' (and 'act-being') are bearers of ethical value and in any artwork where ethical values occur, these must be 'given' as real even though they are contained within a 'vehicle of appearances'. If not, there is no value-meaning as such. But bearers of *ethical* values can never be thought of as 'objects' because 'as soon as we tend to "objectify" a human being in any way, the bearer of moral values disappears *of necessity*'.[10] The *purpose* of Art ('as principle') is to offer us a way to 'objectify' these bearers via the subject-object interface in artworks. But we can only distinguish their *ethical* value by how this occurs as 'real'. That is, as *given*, phenomenologically. Ethics and morals must therefore be distinguished; the latter consist in habituated *perceptions* of the former intuitions.

Ethics are hence identified in the artwork's *meaning*-value, according to its *posited* reality, irrespective of appearance. Irrespective of the artist's moral intentions (Trimarchi, 2022). Because any ethical values attached to bearers intuited in *thought* (ie., not 'pictorially'), are obtained by way of their embedded propositional *directionality toward the real*. To have any *real* meaning or *ethical* value, this propositional link between *the Person* and artwork ('in-formed' by this *unifying* principle of Art) must carry this tacit *purpose* (Trimarchi, 2024a).

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[8] In Arran Gare, "*Was Gunter Grass's Rat right? Should Terrestrial Life Welcome the End of Humans*" *(Working paper, Melbourne, Australia, 2023), pp1-32*; (also in particular: Gare 2007/08; and 2013), p.17.

[9] See also Trimarchi, 2024b. As shown in Trimarchi, 2024c utilizing neuroscientific evidence, it is not *meaning* that moves (as in the Descartian/Newtonian paradigm), but its *affordances*.

[10] Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, trans. Manfred S. Frings and Richard L. Funk, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p.86.

The general aesthetic, fake art, or anti-art, have no ethical value because they necessarily lack this. Therefore, any "moral" presupposition posited on the pretext of *their* 'sacredness' consists in self-deceptions concerning their 'material' value. A diversion from what *is* really sacred to humanity (the 'immaterial'). Artefacts then, being always *mediated by symbol*, possess no *ethically intuitable* contents; only morally *associated* intentions.

Art, however, stakes a deeper claim. As complexity theorist Wendy Wheeler argues, our reproductive imagination draws upon 'partially occluded and "disattended" to' ontologically prior tacit knowledges 'as ancient as life itself'.[11] Art re-identified with normative aesthetics - as the science of admiring/understanding the beauty-truth merger - offers access to *this* History. But only by being again integrally linked to ethics via natural *meaning* productivity ('natural' value-logic). Schelling's system of art hence archetypally models *the indifference* between the ideals and reals of this Nature-History nexus, reaching its highest value in 'the absolute' (Schelling's 'empirical object', Trimarchi, 2024a). Correlating artworks with an intentionality directed toward *that* reality – not *'realism'*, but an *Ideal* 'more real than reality itself' – underscoring the integral link between ethical and aesthetic value-ception, renders them 'naturalised' (Appendix A, *Figure 1*).

The harmonious human nature/Nature 'double-unity' is thus at the foundation of morality, via a natural relation between meaning, ethics, and morals. This explains why Art, not philosophy, may be the best, most practical route to correcting the modern disjuncture between ethics and morals. And ameliorating the ongoing dehumanising fragmentation of *the Self* at the core of all of humanity's 'political' problems. Reconceiving it as a 'research program' in Complexity Science (as *Wissenschaft*), returning it to the centre of the Humanities, could prevent genuine art's disappearance entirely (besides in museums/private collections).

As previously shown (Trimarchi, 2024c), the Art-Person perfect sign relation also reveals the reasons it is impossible for any 'replicant' intelligence to make original art. Because it cannot *independently* produce an artwork in whose

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[11] Wendy Wheeler, *The Whole Creature Complexity, biosemiotics and the evolution of culture*. (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2006), p. 137.

phenomenology we might identify any *real Secondness* (§3 & 4). Firstly, pre-programming accidentality merely imitates Nature; whereas Art moves us *beyond* this 'reflection' of reality.[12] Secondly, any *realistic* proposition has an historicity *in its making*, which only humans can generate (since only we embody the Nature-History nexus via the *historia* of *the Person*).[13] Even if one *could* pre-program artistic intentionality 'mechanically' (ie., sequentially/historically), to direct a propositional search for the indifference between the real and ideal, it would still lack the *embodied* primordial connection humans *are born with* which *originates* it (ie., Mind).

All *AI* can therefore do is make copies of behaviours ('technologies of action') and produce artefacts (via symbolic "breeding"). It has no basis upon which to generate original experience and hence genuine artistic propositions. The primordial past where human sentience originates cannot be artificially regenerated, only abstracted/copied. There is no algorithm for Art because ethical value is *essential* to it. And *AI* simply cannot reproduce our intuitive ability to recognise its ethical phenomenology. Lacking the 'un-prethinkable being' of a *Person*, it is reduced to the same limitations as a camera.[14] And as far as *meaning*-value is concerned, separating 'fake' from 'real' *products* in this context is as pointless as trying to forensically distinguish a real Rembrandt from a perfect copy.[15] Comparing the 'absolute' *Objects* of two 'identical' works is, as we will see,

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[12] Art doesn't imitate nature, but re-creates it in new realities (via our reproductive imagination). Confusion here accounts for the often misconstrued meanings of 'naturalism'/'realism' in theoretical aesthetics (Trimarchi, 2024a).

[13] Trimarchi, 2024c: '[A]rtistic intentionality directing any propositional search for the indifference between the real and ideal must come from an actively engaged human source, to be a genuine search for beauty/truth.'

[14] Trimarchi, 2024c: A camera has '*precision* advantages', as Rudolph Arnheim (2004) points out, but depth of understanding (which *Gestalt* psychology reveals) requires a particular kind of structuring via *both* perception *and* logic that only humans possess. *AI* can likewise be a 'tool' but fears about it stealing jobs in today's Cultural and Creative Industries reveal why these are fundamentally divorced from producing art; instead predominantly concerned with technicism and market-targeted mass-producing/recycling cultural artefacts.

[15] See Trimarchi, 2024a. The modern notion of 'originality' – unlike the ancients', which is pro-social - is entirely materialistic, symbolic, and asocial. Modern 'originality' has no bearing on the meaningfulness *of the work itself*; via copyrights, it mainly functions to increase materialist symbolic capital/idealism. Today's visual arts market is flooded with Rembrandt copies. His 'boutique industry' began the trend of employing copyists, dealers, managers, and others specialised in asserting and encouraging ownership/Trimarchiity

a meaningless proposition revealing the materialist fixation on accretion of 'symbolic capital'.

In summary, the *ethical* significance of the relation between *the Person*, the artwork, and the *Principle* of art is apparent in a work's higher immaterial *meaning*-value, not material *symbolic* value. The only thing lending *real* meaningfulness to any artwork, then, is the human intentionality it embodies. Its 'material' manifestation becomes *arte-factual*, or merely copies something inhabiting 'the general aesthetic' of Nature, when the *'object'* (Peirce's second) *is not suspended* by virtue of the tacit Art-Person double-unity.[16] Their immateriality deteriorates, becoming fixed in the way a cliché does (or 'dead metaphor').

Shadowing the Movement of Unknowable Differentiation

It was this particular human ('ethical') intentionality in ancient Greek mythology, rediscovered in the Florentine Renaissance, which directed artists' attention toward realistic *humanist* subject-object relationships (Trimarchi, 2024a). Material innovation and new 'technologies of action' (techniques) necessarily then emerged, in response to this need; in the imperative for balancing detail in *perceived* reality with an *intangible* knowledge that lay beyond this, accessible only via intellectual intuition. Paintings like *The Last Supper* display a rediscovery of the laws of geometry and perspective (derived from first principles and redeployed with Leonardo's own innovations, eg., *sfumato*), to produce another level of realistic worlding. This painting seamlessly integrates these features with metaphors of truth, betrayal, and illusion. And, by contrasting flat and three-dimensional space in the painting's 'topology' (see §4), Leonardo juxtaposes chaos and order in the states of mind of his characters.[17]

Hence this painting does not simply depict a biblical narrative. Such 'empirical-historical comprehensibility', as Schelling noted, is never the essential element of any great work, often masking other intents.[18] Though superficially

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(ie., 'self-legitimating' over 'self-actualising' concerns), which ultimately corrupted the visual arts field – causing its 'closure', according to Bourdieu – and fuelled modern art and culture's hyper-industrialisation.

[16] See Trimarchi, 2024b for what makes the painting of a sunset art, or what distinguishes architecture as art (etc.,).

[17] Why art is not 'techno-science' is elucidated in Capra (2007).

[18] Art was effectively banished from the public sphere except as a tool of the Church. Hence Michelangelo's *Universal Judgement* shows poetic licence is not simply freedom to express ourselves as we please, but the Trimarchiity to apply metaphor with correct reason.

religious-historical, many such artworks were concerned with the relation between obvious and hidden counter-propositions offering another deeper content or 'reality' (cf. the Roman 'two-faced Janus'). A hidden intent for *directed* universalizability, in *counterpoint*, is one key to achieving higher meaning. Not to be confused, however, with the professed 'dissembling' nature of art, such propositions can in fact *resolve* incoherences to obtain what Schelling calls 'the feeling of an infinite harmony'.

Such harmony – and not, ultimately, *dis*agreement, *dis*interest, or *dis*tanciation - is what actually *extends* the artist's 'Person-al' relation with the artwork to the public.[19] It reconciles 'the contradiction between the real and the ideal, between the conscious and unconscious processes... to feel "an infinite tranquillity" which is then passed into the art product itself'.[20] Thus, an *uninterrupted* perfect-sign relation - between artist and aesthete, as between artwork and observer - is essential for the *completion* of artworks. Their *disclosure*, or as Schelling says, their 'infinite finitely displayed' (metaphor defined).

Our tacit *knowledge* of this metaphoric reception, being primordial, goes beyond empathy; it defines Peirce's *Firstness*, our initial intuitive encounter with the whole artwork (*Object*). But it may be *disrupted* by our mode of *attendance*; which brings us to the significance of Peirce's *Thirdness* (the 'interpretant'). My examination of it here, in a painting, will briefly introduce the difference between Peirce's *second* ('object' – O1) and *real Secondness* ('Object' – O2) in any prospective "artwork", expanded upon later.

In *The Last Supper* there is no hidden content, yet Leonardo leaves room for interpretation and intrigue. Even so, strictly confined. With only what is absolutely necessary given to us, we are not conscious of this painting's deliberate geometrical design (until we focus on it). It consists, self-evidently, in not merely visual chicanery intended to achieve fleeting conceits; but in furthering the *interrelated* purpose of each character's intentionality, made transparently *present* in the pared back communication of these indifferences. This very *purpose* simultaneously reaches into an 'obscure zone' to obtain an implicit *purposelessness*

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[19] See Trimarchi, 2022, 2024a, and 2024b, for my arguments disputing neo-Kantian promotion of these reflective standpoints, which have produced an un-scientific *theoretical* aesthetics.

[20] Miroslav Orel, "F. W. J. Schelling's and M. M. Bakhtin's Process Thinking," *Concrescence: the Australasian journal of process thought*, Vol. 3, no.1, Jun 2002, p.2.

overall (conveyed in the space-time nexus). It stimulates recognition of the interplay between empirical-historical and vague meanings; together allowing the imagination to construct the possibility of *the Other* in *new* meanings - which is what *really* renders the painting 'timeless'.

Attending to the 'empirical-historical' meanings alone, we might presume any number of hidden intentions, or interpretations of what is *given*. But this quickly becomes an act of subjectively theorising value into the work (ie., artificially *historicising* it).[21] While any subjective association may be explored, we must acknowledge it is now 'infected' by Peirce's *Third* (the 'interpretant'). This sign, which has been *conditioned* – both by our learned understanding of the painting's intentions and our habits of attendance – immediately re-constitutes our 'common experience' of its 'object' (O1). As later shown, only when this object (Peirce's 'second') is suspended does our awareness open up a passage to the immanent *real* 'Second' (O2). This is Schelling's *empirical* 'ideal' *Object*, rendering *the subject* 'more real than reality itself', revealed in various indifferences. In Mikhail Bakhtin's words, the artwork's 'once-occurrent Being in its concrete actuality'; offering us its tacit meaning prior to our conscious awareness of its interpretability.[22]

Nevertheless, Peirce's *Third* tells us something important about habit. What I have elsewhere labelled habitual 'attendance deficits' – eg., artificially historicising the artwork (and Principle) by 'lexicalising' *the implicit* - corresponds with the phenomenology of what Iain McGilchrist (2010) describes in left hemisphere dominance (Trimarchi, 2023). Art becomes conceptual. Visual art lacks depth or perspective 'provided largely by the right hemisphere'; music is reduced to 'little more than rhythm, since… [normally]… this is all the left hemisphere provides, melody and harmony being heavily dependent on the right hemisphere in most people'; and language becomes 'diffuse, excessive and lacking in concrete referents' (eg., Joyce's *Ulysses*).[23] Art, being essentially 'organic', as Schelling claims, 'self-structures' according to how we attend to it. And our

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[21] As in Lakoff & Johnson's theorising of 'Macbeth' (see Trimarchi, 2024c).

[22] Orel, "Schelling's and Bakhtin's Process Thinking", p.5.

[23] All features of artwork in schizophrenic patients. See also McGilchrist (2021a, 2021b). This argument, which maps art's historical decline, has received widespread support. See Trimarchi, 2022 and Trimarchi, 2024c for applying these 'pathological' tendencies to arts assessments suggested in the Appendices, which invites further examination.

attendance, as McGilchrist shows, has increasingly become 'lateralized' in modernity.[24] Hence our *conditioned* Third's power, particularly in transforming how we attend to art.

It will later become clear why such attendance is identifiable in the intuitable self-structuring of meaning-values that we can map using Peirce's triadic thinking (§4). Which emanate from what Merleau-Ponty calls the artwork's 'obscure zone'. The metamorphic suspension of the object can be *valued*, tracing the passage of 'possibles' via intentional significations arising from it. In Schelling's terms, this is where the transition towards an absolute indifference between the ideal and real occurs. Or, in Peirce's, toward 'concrete reasonableness' (*Figure 1*). Why an artwork's emergent meaning is however 'disclosed' only as a *temporal stage* of 'being' via these 'absolutes' is key.

In *Art and Institution,* Rajiv Kaushik examines Husserl and Merleau-Ponty's notions of obscurity and vagueness which are fundamentally important to the 'entelechy' of art's phenomenology (Trimarchi, 2024c).[25] This 'obscure zone' is defined as one of unknowable differentiation 'from out of which differentiation takes place – embedded within the field of appearing'. It makes the unknown 'not simply delimited from phenomenality... [but]... included in phenomenology as that which is excluded'. As Kaushik says, this meaning 'refers to me as that which may presently escape me but still has the power to exert its own overwhelming character over me in order to catch my attention'.[26]

This recalls Kauffman and Gare's (2015) term 'poised realm', which (invoking Whitehouse) provides an explanation in physics for the transitional emergence of phenomena where 'adjacent possibles' are turned into 'actuals'.[27] Merleau-Ponty's 'middle zone' or 'obscure zone' (also referred to as an 'opaque zone' within the 'clear zone'), like this 'poised realm', is that inaccessible 'place' between reality and 'irreality'.

Nevertheless, art unveils *its* truth here without necessity of proof; in the

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[24] Jonathan Rowson and Iain McGilchrist, "Divided Brain, Divided World: Why the Best Part of Us Struggles to be Heard." *RSA Action and Research Centre.* (blog) accessed 1ˢᵗ October 2022. https://www.thersa.org/reports/divided-brain-divided-world

[25] Rajiv Kaushik, *Art and Institution: Aesthetics in the Late Works of Merleau-Ponty.* (London, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011).

[26] Ibid, p.136.

[27] See Kauffman & Gare 2015.

meaningfulness of an artwork's emerging disclosure, via the Art-Person double-unity. Which arises in clearly present phenomenological 'meaning-markers' shadowing its progress through the 'obscure zone'.[28] This as we will see defines the artwork's *ethical* intentionality, allowing discernment between deliberative and accidental opacity in any 'vague' meaning. Its own immateriality, 'materialised' in disclosure, 'in-forms' the *intentional act* directed at the 'object' (irrespective of an *artist's* motives). By '*interrogating the origins of the work of art*', says Merleau-Ponty, we can retrieve the 'obscurity, which is included in one's ownmost being'. That is, in both our and art's self-actualisation.

Merleau-Ponty's 'rediscovery of... obscurity within the clearing', says Kaushick, 'forces him to problematize... the notion of a transcendental structure' rendering the obscure lucid. Thus, the work 'emerges from out of itself in order to present an obscure zone'. But, as noted, it does not produce 'an otherwise obscure contradiction' for reconciliation in positive terms. Rather, it metaphorically articulates 'its own being as the opaque'. It 'autofigures its own structures for me and usurps the place of an eidetic doctrine of pure mental processes', becoming 'precisely... that which is unclear'.[29] This idea of Art's *Object* hidden in obscurity before being made available to reason confirms why, as Bradley (2009) suggests, we must move beyond interpretation. To be both unpredictable and predictable enough to remain *in possession* of ourselves - is the essence of civic humanism.

Peirce's 'realist and social practice' theory of meaning thus grounds our shadowing of this passage of 'ethical movement' in art's phenomenology. As Bradley says, 'it is the use of signs... that never allows the ethical surrender of the individual interpretant'.[30] Ricoeur (2003) similarly reminds us that we must distinguish art's most powerful *metaphoric* semantic aim, from the 'logical signification' operative in interpretation at the perceptual or imaginative level that only plays a *supportive* role to higher meaning acquisition. This means distinguishing between apprehension and comprehension since, as Merleau-Ponty says, art's phenomenology is not reflective but *pre-reflective*. It discloses *the*

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[28] See also in Trimarchi, 2024b, Trimarchi, 2024c.

[29] Kaushik, *AI*, p.137.

[30] James Bradley, "Beyond Hermeneutics: Peirce's Semiology as a Trinitarian Metaphysics of Communication." *Analecta Hermeneutica*, S.l., n.1, May. 2009. 56-72. p.69.

logic of phenomenality itself 'from its own inside out... from out of the auspices of its own disclosure'. 'Here', he says, 'the work is that with which I am not immediately identical, not immediately simultaneous. It is prior to me, and prior to my ability to consume it'.[31]

How we can track this tacit ethical 'movement-logic', via the artwork's meaning-value affordances, is revealed in Peirce's 'diagrammatic thinking'

2. PEIRCE'S DIAGRAMMATIC THINKING

How does Peirce's semiotic realism explain the unique logic of Art's phenomenology awaiting activation in Merleau-Ponty's 'obscure zone'? To answer this, following a brief synopsis below of how logical thought evolves (individually/collectively), I will outline Peirce's processual model for 'cognition as semiosis' and how his 'diagrammatic thinking' elucidates different modes of speculative inquiry. Then, further examining how to move 'beyond interpretation' in the following section, will pave the way for demonstrating how to track an artwork's tacit ethical intentionality in §4.

In the evolution of reality and mind Peirce points to two important understandings which relate directly to the nature of art: that mechanism 'is simply the presence of law in the cosmos' though itself is 'an exaggeration'; and that 'absolute chance' (tychastic evolution) is an ingredient in all things, 'but a denial of law amid the chance is equally an exaggeration'.[32] Thus Peirce arrived at the position that only agapasticism ('love') 'satisfactorily accounts for all the various sorts of development going on in the universe by admitting both chance and law, but uniting them in and through habit'.[33] This adds another layer to both Schelling and Aristotle's *normative* conceptions of Art.

Firstly, *Tychastic development* (Firstness) is how new ideas are obtained purposelessly by 'purely spontaneous departures from habitual ideas'. Secondly, in *Anancastic development* (Secondness) new ideas are adopted from anywhere and determined either by 'external causes such as environmental changes' (=genuine), or by 'internal causes such as logical development' (=degenerate). Logical development is a 'degeneration' because this formation reflects the 'brute force'

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[31] Kaushik, *AI*, p.137.

[32] Vincent Potter, *Charles S Peirce: On Norms and Ideals* (Fordham University Press, 1997), p.182.

[33] Ibid, p.185.

blind interaction of objects as mind turns to matter, whereas environmental changes constitute genuine firstness. Finally, in *Agapastic development* (Thirdness), the mode in which what we admire develops, new ideas are 'adopted neither heedlessly nor blindly, but by an immediate attraction for the idea itself, divined even before the mind consciously possesses the idea by the power of sympathy or affinity (continuity of mind)'.

An *Idea* enters public consciousness by either a) the community possessing it 'in its collective personality', and passing it on 'to individuals otherwise incapable of attaining it', or b) an individual discovering it for himself but only through experiencing its attractiveness by being 'in sympathy with a community', or c) individually discovering it independently 'simply by virtue of the attractiveness of the idea itself'.[34] Both (a) and (b) are 'degenerate' because they involve an element of 'brute force' (ie., ideas are under some form of manipulation), but (c) is genuine since it corresponds with a degree of Firstness in one's mode of discovery. (Hence Aristotle's highest virtue, Contemplation, is placed *above* 'political community' – see Trimarchi, 2022, Trimarchi, 2024c).

It is obvious why art ('esthetics'), being thus fully dependent on Thirdness for processing our *collective* reality, became the *agapistic* means by which 'what we admire' would govern both our ethics and logic. As Potter writes, Peirce's 'cosmological speculations' led to a closer study of the relation between 'logic, practices, and esthetics'. And when he wrote *Evolutionary Love* (ca. 1893) 'he became convinced that ethics is connected in some important way with logic'.[35]

My argument elsewhere and below for how this reasoning can be developed into a logical method of meaning-value assessment builds on this conviction. The *Ideal* intentionality present in art's higher meaning clearly relates to 'agapism' in more than a generally empathic sense. This highest form of *habitual* 'admiration' ultimately governs our entire epistemology because of its *active* subjectivity. In art, as Wheeler says, it is to 'the other *in relating to me*' that I am responding, and if I succeed in responding adequately, a meaningful relationship appears.[36] Bakhtin calls this the 'ethical answerability' of an artwork. And as Max Scheler's insights on 'sacrifice' reveal, there is an inherent *totalising* connection here which

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[34] Ibid, p.186. See also Esposito (2005).

[35] Ibid, p.187.

[36] Wheeler, *WC*, p.134, citing D. Attridge.

is unselfconsciously life affirming. That is, in the *obligation* to act: the 'ought', binding aesthetics to ethics.

Thus, the ethical intentionalities of poetic discourses can be mapped back to their origins, as Merleau-Ponty discovered, by interrogating how the artwork emerges out of itself.

Mapping Speculation

We cultivate habits of art appreciation before we even know there is such a thing as art. Only later can we learn to distinguish it from the general aesthetic. But, since here lies *the source* of our ethics and logic, actively cultivating the associated thought processes is essential for our entire *habitus* (*all* human endeavours). Peirce's insights reveal that we can map some thoughts better phenomenologically, than we can using an *fMRI* scanner (Trimarchi, 2024c).

As Arnold (2011) says, 'reasoning is the art of cultivating habits of thought'; and our entire aesthetic is governed by the habitual thought processes we bring to it. Peirce understood that all abstraction, all pre-reflection, as important as it is in the *formulation* of ideas must ultimately either *become* reason or not. '[I]t is by icons only that we really reason', according to Peirce, 'and abstract statements are valueless in reasoning except so far as they aid us to construct diagrams'.[37]

Arnold presents an exemplary application of Peirce's semiotic realism to understanding the phenomenology of art. His paper in fact uses Peirce's epistemological theory of mental diagrams combined with A. J. Greima's theory of narrative to track diagrammatic reasoning, in *both* speculative (scientific/philosophical) and poetic discourses. Though we are mostly concerned with the latter here, outlining how it occurs in the former is first necessary.[38]

Recognising there are many 'epistemological fields that are rarely considered in discussions of Peirce's existential graphs', Arnold deliberately places his diagrammatic reasoning in a wider disciplinary context. Peirce's key presupposition is that all thought processes operate with the aid of 'mental

[37] Markus Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives: Charles S. Peirce's epistemological theory of mental diagrams," *Semiotica* 186 1-4 (2011), p.5.
[38] See Trimarchi, 2024c for fuller examination of 'poetic' vs 'speculative' discourse, and why the former involves Ricoeur's (2003) definition of *proper* metaphor.

diagrams'. However, at the outset, we must distinguish this as neither a *representational* nor *descriptive* model - unlike the quasi-representationalism of Lakoff & Johnson (Trimarchi, 2024c). As noted, reducing meaning productivity to neuroimaging sensorimotor brain activations involves inherent limitations, which Peirce's model overcomes. Not least, the subjectivity of experimental observation itself, and the presumed interdependency of brains and psychic processes disputed by Scheler.[39]

By contrast, Peirce's theory is based on a model of chemical analysis which focuses on *processes* that are directly comparable and *qualitatively* measurable. What led him to view this as a means for viable 'scientific explanation of phenomena' was how chemical analysis could be used to 'translate perceptible qualities into diagrammatic representations' depicting 'relations and the transformation of relations'.[40] His 'mental imaging' is thus based on signs evident in the cognitive processes of the natural sciences (ie., speculative reasoning). In all speculation, signs operate systematically while 'the knowledge of the signified object itself undergoes progressive change'. This *process of changing relations* thus becomes the subject of investigations, under his triadic system of semiosis.

All speculative discourse relies on translations of interpretations of propositions. There are not exceptions to the *law*, says Peirce, 'that every thought-sign is translated or interpreted in a subsequent one'.[41] Therefore *doubt* is part of the very nature of propositional thinking that, in Peirce's systemic reasoning on chemical analysis, becomes a 'translation for future time' in which habituation occurs. Arnold argues this ability to relate to signs through habituation also helps us 'gain distance from the special circumstances' where subjectivity comes to the fore.[42] For instance, precisely what is usefully studied in textbooks where 'prospective scientists must first learn the meaning of new signs', he argues, is according to Peirce 'translations for future time':[43]

> Because the rational meaning of every proposition is a translation of the proposition

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[39] Lakoff & Johnson's 'experientialist' neuroscientific defence of metaphor is shown in Trimarchi, 2024c to essentially follow the neo-Kantian 'reflective' standpoint, failing to properly explain metaphor's primacy in art-making.

[40] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.6.

[41] Peirce in Ibid, p.7.

[42] See artform/work examples of this in Trimarchi, 2024b.

[43] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.6.

of which it is the meaning, one must still learn to choose from among the possible translations.

Hence Peirce's model may be applied, says Arnold, in 'the use of paintings as historical arguments in debates concerning the interpretation of history'. Or examining the propositional nature of *any* artwork (see Appendices). What's more, by attending to Schelling's *essences*, *potences*, and *polarities*, or Scheler's transformation of *ethical* values evident in any artform/work, our attention is now drawn toward understandings produced by *their relations* mapped by Firsts, Seconds, and Thirds.[44]

To demonstrate Peirce's cognition as semiosis model, Arnold uses the process of photosynthesis. He firstly describes how the textbook-style translation of images into diagrams and chemical formulas becomes 'automatized' in speculative reasoning. All acts of reasoning, he says, 'must involve a transition from images to diagrams and finally to metaphors' through which we ultimately understand *all* phenomena. The diagrammatic model proceeds to explain photosynthesis with the 'immediate Object' (represented by corresponding images, diagrams, and chemical formulas) transforming into the 'epistemological object'. This replicates the natural ordered translation of signs incrementally as a relational process, with the 'immediate object' becoming a 'dynamical' object.[45]

Arnold repeats the same process as a series of photos in isolation, illustrating why this merely results in 'external system comparisons' (producing the same picture yet a completely different visualisation of the subject). The point is clear: reasoning obtained from embodied meaning is far more real than that from dis-embodied meaning. In absorbing the meaning of a metaphor, *we do not merely recognise an image*; we relive *a process of transformation* which embodies reasoning itself.[46] Understanding something like photosynthesis *diagrammatically* like this - by subsequently adding to pictorial depictions the *specific chemical knowledge* we already have about *dynamic relations* - a *temporal dimension* is added to the other changing dimensions of space, colours, and shapes.

We thus add 'possible futures and pasts' to our knowledge of the structures.

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[44] See Trimarchi, 2024b, 2024c, and *Appendices*. *Appendix C* correlates Scheler's value-ception with Peirce's semiotics.

[45] Ricoeur's terms describing the transition to his 'second ontology' (Trimarchi, 2024c).

[46] Trimarchi, 2024c.

'Knowing the structure means knowing out of which the substance probably emerged', says Arnold, 'and into which it will probably dissolve'. This *temporal* aspect of 'the language of chemical formulas' models how we represent and interpret everyday reasoning 'as mental diagrams'. And how thinking 'is capable of comprehending reality as a process'.[47]

Peirce's relations between *indexical* and *iconic* signs now comes into play, associating subjects with predicates and forcing us to distinguish between all the 'mixed signs' presented to us (*likenesses*, *indices*, and *symbols*). The diagrammatic features of 'mental signs' form reasoned 'mental diagrams' which are obtained in our reception of any 'icon'. Hence, as Arnold says, this 'is the foundation for the operation of reason and central significance is conferred upon perception together with esthetics, as the basis for both other normative sciences'.[48] Aesthetics is, as Peirce then realised, therefore *the* science upon which 'as a foundation the doctrine of ethics must be reared to be surmounted in its turn by the doctrine of logic'.[49]

Arnold shows why verification for *the operation of Reason* may be discovered in the phenomenological study of *any* speculative discourse depicting what occurs in the world. So too, it should now be self-evident, in the phenomenology of *poetic* discourse.

3. BEYOND INTERPRETATION: ART'S PHENOMENOLOGY OF REASON

Scheler's anthropological (or 'ethical') phenomenology is situated among the influences of German Romantics like Fichte whose conception of the self, as Andrew Bowie argues, underscored 'a philosophy of praxis which prefigures aspects of pragmatism' ("We do not act because we know, rather we know because our vocation is to act; practical reason is the root of all reason").[50] The development of hermeneutic phenomenology by Merleau-Ponty, Ricoeur and others has since opened a way for applying Schelling and Peirce's 'radical empiricism' to Art. Until Peirce's pragmatic maxim appears, the primacy of the

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[47] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.10.

[48] Trimarchi, 2022.

[49] Peirce in Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.10.

[50] Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: from Kant to Nietzsche*. (Manchester University Press,2003), p,75. See also Bowie 1993 viz Schelling.

study of experience in general lacked a means of moving beyond interpretation. On one hand Dewey's view of experience (elevating art to 'science', by associating it with the general aesthetic) came to hold a central role in philosophy. On the other, the problems experience posed, via experimental science, persisted. As Victorio Tejera notes: [51]

> Dewey sought to dissolve the standard misleading discontinuity between "art" and "science", posited by empiricism and positivism, by articulating the observable connections between art and religion, art and survival, art and everyday life.

Peirce however chided Dewey for incorrectly associating the normative sciences with the natural sciences.[52] He clearly distinguishes the higher order meaning pursuit of art from this 'vulgar pragmatism' which has dominated modern interpretations of aesthetics (Trimarchi, 2022). As argued elsewhere, a misplaced belief in art's 'infinite interpretability' was undergirded by the 'modern epic' usurping an 'ancient epic' sensibility; fuelling the tendency toward experientialist fantasy over reality in our imaginaries (Trimarchi, 2024a, Trimarchi, 2024b). Moving beyond 'empirical comprehensibility' (interpretation) thus means being able to re-identify, and elevate, *ethical value* in the substrate of an artwork which lies in the connection between its origins and the futurising logic of the *Human telos* (the Person, which the *ancient* 'epic' promotes). As elaborated in this section, the higher meaning-value of poetic discourse hence rests on the implicit conviction afforded in the movement-action-logic of metaphor's propositional phenomenality (Trimarchi, 2024c).

Before proceeding to demonstrate this, the main phenomenological problems for developing a method for assessing the 'aesthetics of meaning' listed at the outset, need to be addressed. Peirce's approach to the phenomenology of Reason surpasses the early Dewey's and James' because it, essentially, promotes metaphor over symbol. *Biosemiotics,* which Peirce's 'semiotic realism' inspired, explains why the part-whole phenomenon in nature helps us understand the temporal parts of a melody being experienced as parts of one and the same thing. But under a different conception of 'naturalism' (which Dewey ultimately returned to,

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[51] Victorio Tejera, "The Primacy of the Aesthetic in Peirce and Classic American Philosophy." in *Peirce and Value Theory: On Peircian Ethics and Aesthetics.* Edited by Herman Parret. *Semiotic Crossroads* 6, (1984): 85-98, p.94. See also Trimarchi, 2024c.

[52] Potter, *NI*, p.6.

favouring Peirce's pragmatism over James' nominalism – Trimarchi, 2023). The artwork produces *higher* meaning by leading us *beyond* the senses with implicit *propositional* movement.   Ricoeur's 'referential fields' help to explain this "movement" (Trimarchi, 2024c). Merleau-Ponty's hermeneutic phenomenology, which inspired Ricoeur, thus builds an important bridge between Scheler's 'ethical phenomenology' and Peirce's semiotic realism. Here is why.

William James' doctrine of 'the specious present' described how a moving 'object' can be experienced as being at more than one place at the same time, revealing the reality of 'becoming'.[53] However, James' early *Functionalism* led to the instrumentalist notion humans are 'creatures of interest first and intellect second', equating 'interest' with 'truth' (a left hemisphere tendency), which Peirce rejected. As Prawat (2003) says, 'Viewing relations between mind and world through a functional, coordinated-action lens can dissolve hard and fast distinctions like the self and other, or stimulus and response, which many philosophers assume as givens'.[54] James considered experience the *end*, while Peirce argued propositions could remain open without preventing movement toward reason. James' phenomenology thus directed attention from individual experiences to general conceptualisations (drawing 'particulars' into 'universals' – the *symbolic*), which as previously argued is the opposite action of Metaphor (Trimarchi, 2024c).

Nevertheless, the essential, immanently encountered, *'immateriality'* of art is shown by such examples to arise from our *continual* experiential awareness of a span of time that includes the present, past, and future; because those phases of the temporal object occurring at times other than at the present instant are not materially present.[55] Husserl's three 'phases' of experience ('primal impression', 'retention' and 'protention') are phases of *intentional awareness* directed towards what Scheler later calls our 'past-being', 'present-being' and 'future-being'. They

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[53] James (2012). The 'specious present' was coined by E. Robert Kelly and later developed by James.

[54] Richard Prawat, "The Nominalism Versus Realism Debate: Towards a Philosophical Rather than a Political Resolution," *Educational Theory*, Vol. 53, no.3, Summer 2003, 275-311, p.288-289, p.282. See also Trimarchi, 2023.

[55] For examination of this phenomenon in artforms/works, see Trimarchi, 2024b.

are (effectively) temporal dimensions of Peirce's *Firsts*, *Seconds*, and *Thirds*.[56]

Thus, it is the '*how*-ness' of phenomena - being more important than the '*what*-ness' of them, in interpreting intentionalities in art - that leads to the *phenomenology of Reason*. The idea that an object does not simply strike the senses, to be interpreted or misinterpreted by a cognitive process; that it has in fact already been selected, 'grasped', Scheler realised is fundamental to not only our understanding of experience but of *values* themselves.[57] And Peirce's 'abductive' and 'retroductive' reasoning, combined with this, further renders redundant Kant's symbolic form of 'universalising' (adopted by James) and hence his belief that the imagination cannot move us to understanding (Trimarchi, 2024a). Yet to the *reproductive* imagination, it is the *relation* of 'becoming' to 'being' which is key.

Since *the fullness* of an experience is not *experienced* sequentially, 'being' cannot realistically be expressed in this way. The illusion that our determinations of it are '*in themselves*' sequential - instead of just being 'coordinated to different, successively appearing lived-body states', as Scheler argues – at the same time conditions *us*. We hence develop a store of lived-body experiences from both truthful and persistent illusory understandings of meaning. These experiences, being pre-felt, are what through habitual *preferring* govern how we associate meaning with value (see Trimarchi, 2024c).

How intentionality and meaning then appear in phenomenal character, and how we navigate between implicit meaning and explicit experience becomes apparent. Particularly in the morphogenesis which occurs in the artwork itself, as it models the stages of consciousness. Neuroscientists refer to the 'truth' of being as the 'edge detection' culminating from the 'focal emergence of objects within a horizon of possible experience'; while bio-semioticians call it the 'is, is-not' boundary conditions of any organism interacting with its *Umwelt*.[58] Ricoeur believed a 'third language' was needed between phenomenological and

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[56] Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893–1917) Vol. 4,* Trans. John Barnett Brough. Vol. 4. Springer Science & Business Media, 1991, p.117. Note Husserl's 'protention' effectively accounts for Peirce's *suspended second* (see Trimarchi, 2024c, also *Appendix A Tables 1 &2*).

[57] Scheler, *FE*, p.414.

[58] Mark Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding. (*University of Chicago Press, 2008), p.76-77: Consciousness is 'a wilful creator of experience not a mere window to the objective, mind-independent reality'. Cf. Schelling's three stages of consciousness described in Trimarchi, 2024a.

neuroscientific accounts of experience, invoking the possibility of philosophical anthropology to fill this role, given its centrality to ethics.

Art and the Person are a perfect match as studies in 'becoming'; of natural self-structuring, self-actualisation. The *praxis* of Art is *the science* of 'determining' the Person, though we are 'neither mirror, nor carbon paper, nor Kodak fixation. We are systems of mediations of immediacy, fusions of actions, feeling, and meaning'.[59] The meaning of prior experienced logic is only brought into *being* via art, as Merleau-Ponty says, by the *process* of its expression which makes it effective. Aesthetic expression 'does not merely translate it', it recreates it.[60] Hence, active subjectivity, via our reproductive imagination, offers us the means to determine what passes through 'the gates of reason' producing logical thought here (Peirce 1977).[61] Which is either sharpened or dulled by habit-taking.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

Despite the resurgence of Peirce's phenomenology of Reason in Complexity Science, the influences of analytical philosophy and logical positivism have persisted in focusing the philosophy of mind on the neural substrate of experience, blending materialism and functionalism to produce various explanations on how conscious experience and mental representation or intentionality are grounded in brain activity. But these founder on what Bill Solomon argues is in fact 'less an issue of cognitive comprehension… than it is a matter of sensori-motor habituation'.[62] Meaning is not produced in the brain alone, though it coordinates it. Eugene Gendlin (influenced by Husserl, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty) points to how we are thus often 'seduced into mistaking the forms for that which they inform', but abstracting form merely conceptualises some aspect of our experience, eluding us into thinking we have captured the full

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[59] Robert Innes in Ibid, p.77.

[60] Merleau-Ponty in Ibid, p.79 n3.

[61] Peirce (in Potter 1977): *"The elements of every concept enter into logical thought at the gate of perception and make their exit at the gate of purposive action; and whatever cannot show its passports at both those two gates is to be arrested as unTrimarchiized by reason."* See Trimarchi, 2024b for how this 'subject-objectivation' occurs in Art, from conceptual *correspondence* of 'objects' to their intuited reality.

[62] Bill Solomon, *The Ethics and Aesthetics of Formalism: Shklovsky and Agee. Literature Interpretation Theory*, 23:89-112, 2012. Copyright Taylor and Francis Group, LLC ISSN: 1043-6928 print/1545-5866 online, p.101. Note reference to the phenomenon of familiarity (and habituation to high velocity travel) - adding more insights relevant to my argument here and in Trimarchi, 2024c.

meaning.[63]

Biosemioticians, like Brian Goodwin, Wendy Wheeler, Arran Gare, Stuart Kauffman, Søren Brier, and others have instead looked to anthropological phenomenology to explain both cognition *and* habituation. Gare argues Scheler made the question 'What are humans?', and how we conceive ourselves in relation to others, central for rethinking the whole history of philosophy.[64] Self-understanding became a function of dynamic relationships - difficult to grasp logically but emulated by complexity in nature - that have thus (for instance in Robert Rosen's mathematical modelling) sparked new reasons to question and revise the stratification of historically embedded human self-conceptions.

It was perhaps inevitable that persistent doubts about the empirical legitimacy of phenomenology would dog its development into the twentieth century. That Dewey's discussion on art in *Experience and Nature* (1929) would be criticised by some as a departure from his naturalistic instrumentalism. That Derrida's critiques of Husserl would spark an attack on phenomenology leading to its partial eclipse. Husserlian and post-Husserlian phenomenology stands in contrast to empiricism, and post-Kantian or French existentialism, yet failed to withstand methodological scrutiny.

Schelling's claim 'aesthetics becomes objective', via a *naturalised* Art, however, is vindicated by Peirce and Scheler. Merleau-Ponty clarified why we learn to *know* through our experience rather than intellect; but that the understanding of truth is *embodied* in us beyond a way in which conscious experience takes stock, bringing us to a new threshold. Using Scheler's system of valuing, we can therefore approach art and the problem of describing the 'life-world' together in such a way that accommodates experience but avoids difficulties with a purely *experientialist* phenomenology. We move beyond phenomenology defined as the science of phenomena, as *distinct* from being (ontology); to an ontological conception which can account for the relation between *becoming* and being. Re-situating Art as a 'science of Mind' (*Wissenschaft*, see Trimarchi, 2024a).

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[63] Johnson, *MB*, p.80.

[64] Arran Gare, "Life Processes as Proto-Narratives: Integrating Theoretical Biology and Biosemiotics through Biohermeneutics," *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy, 18(*1), (2022): 210–251.

From this standpoint – the 'standpoint of *production*', as Schelling called it – we can now account for the *ontological properties* of meaning productivity in Art's tacit dimension.

The 'Obscure Zone' (and the Efficacy of Absence)

As noted, it is not just the artwork's *obvious* 'empirical-comprehensibility' that belies its higher meaning-value. But unless we are attuned to the reception of *non*-formal values, we tend to focus on the 'being' qualities of the artwork (as 'form') rather than the 'becoming' value-aspects *that organically relate* the principle of art as a perfect sign *of the person*. In other words, we tend to disregard the phenomenological significance of the part-whole and becoming-being relations to meaning-*fulness* (the ancient idea of *wholeness*, from which 'Holy' originates).

Changing this habitual 'symbolic' orientation requires taking 'practical account' of things - as we often do unconsciously of what is in fact *absent* in our experience. 'For not only can we experience changes in our environment without knowing what it is that has changed in the perceived but we also frequently experience the *effectiveness* of *something* that we do *not* perceive… Throughout all comprehensions of objects… we possess the ability to "take practical account" of things, which implies an experience of their efficacy and of changes in it that is *independent* of the *perceptual* sphere'.[65]   Since sensible appearances do not in themselves create meaning *or* value, we can distinguish intents of 'general welfare' from 'basic value' in the latter, via *phenomenological reasoning*; recognising any *affection*s as merely incomplete statements of being.[66]

Artists – far from merely trading in illusions – in fact need to be skilled in deciphering truth *from* illusion. But this requires *prudent* 'deliberation' and an understanding of how the 'being' of the artwork (disclosure) and the 'being' of humanity as a whole (the Self *actualised*) in-dwell in a correlated temporal becoming.[67] Aristotle (in *Metaphysics*) like Schelling (in *The Philosophy of Art*) use

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[65] Scheler, *FE*, p.140.

[66] As Scheler says, we cannot substitute any technology of actions producing effects and affects for any ethical value-experience, and thereby presuppose this attribute as the basic value. Eg., use of sfumato in painting.

[67] Even though it is in *being* ('disclosure') that we register the intentional meaning of the artwork, this 'stage' is only *completed* in our thoughts. Such is art's powerful *claim* on us that our double-unity self-actuality is *only* realised here. As Merleau-Ponty says, because in art we *indwell* in tacit reason, it must be that 'things are

the words 'potency' and 'actuality' analogously because it is *meaning's affordances* - in the movement-action-logic nexus, in the artwork's *becoming* - where *any* search for an artwork's merger of truth and beauty must begin. Because the fundamental *propositional enabling condition* of all genuine artmaking follows from Peirce's claim that 'of the myriads of forms into which a proposition may be translated', the one that defines its meaning is 'that form in which the proposition becomes applicable to human conduct'. Specifically, 'that form which is most directly applicable to self-control under every situation, and to every purpose'.[68] This 'truth' of art, as Merleau-Ponty suggests, lies in the origin of the artwork; therefore, comparing Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology is instructive.

Investigating the artwork's '*Origin*', Heidegger's (1971) famous description of Van Gogh's painting of a pair of shoes tries to find what lies beyond our perception. But he relies on a notion of truth as revealed by 'the agreement of conformity of knowledge with fact'. And proceeds then to discern two distinctly different kinds of 'fact', real and illusory, evident in the shoes.[69] Leibniz's (1982) principle of the 'identity of indiscernibles' explains why truth is more than the conformity of knowledge with facts about being. It is not governed by a *history* (ie., of 'thingliness') in the way Heidegger or Hegel conceived it. Time and place distinguish for us things otherwise indistinguishable by reference to themselves alone, but these things are still distinguishable *in themselves*. And they help us distinguish one time or place from another.[70]

The indifference between the real and the ideal ('identity') is however *not* reliant on time and space, but vice versa. If the artwork's 'materiality' is supposed to determine its true identity, then its *essential* truth disclosure *cannot* be historicisable except after the event of interpretation, occuring *after intuition*.[71] (In other words, it loses 'possibility'; but Art as we know *is about possibility*). Therefore, it is truer to say that an artwork possesses an integrity *directly related* to its

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said and are thought by a Speech and by a Thought which we do not have but which has us' (Johnson, *MB*, p.37).

[68] Peirce in Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.6.

[69] See Sassen (2001).

[70] G. W. Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*. Abridged edition. Editors Peter Remnant and Jonathon Bennett. (Cambridge University Press,1982).

[71] In other words, by being *mediated by symbol*. Of course, the artwork *is necessarily historicisable in its making*.

'materiality'; but which we must take to mean its *Truth*-'materialised'. That is, as *identity emerging from the obscure zone* rather than from an historically fixed identity (as Heidegger would have it). Since this is more salient in *apprehending* its real truth, its real *Identity*.

The real 'origin of the artwork', then, lies in an *unprethinkable* truth (returning to Vico's 'genetic' approach to knowledge).[72] Putting art's 'materiality' *on a par* with its 'immateriality' as I have suggested here is consistent with Leibniz's monadism, which sees them as essentially the same. Or, rather, as equally a '*striving*' toward Peirce's 'concrete reasonableness'. We must then redefine the 'artwork as product'; not in the commonplace commercial sense as a consumable, nor even as *an event 'finality'*. But rather by its 'materialisation' as an entity – more precisely, a *striving* - whose 'being' must be understood *by Reason of its origin* (ie., 'purpose').

This is confirmed by Scheler, who argues we cannot simply add up all the different 'value-aspects' of Art as the 'realm of goods' and arrive at a sum of 'value-qualities'. These are codetermined by the concrete nature of an artwork 'as a good and by the inner structure of its value… [which]… comes to the *fore* when, in a certain act of our emotive attitude, we pay special attention to *what* is "given" to us in terms of this aspect of the value-totality of this work of art'.[73] The *artwork's* 'phenomenology of truth' *is* its *meaning*-value; above and beyond its interpreted or relative social value. And we should regard Art's *Principle* as an Historic immaterial asset of the highest order. Its *true* exemplars, by never being finalised, make the principle itself unhistoricisable.[74]

Yet, as Merleau-Ponty says of the history of painting: 'We are so fascinated by the classical idea of intellectual adequation that [a painting's] mute "thinking" sometimes leaves us with the impression of a vein swirl of significations, a paralyzed or miscarried utterance'. In such reductionism of Art's truth, he asks: 'Is this the highest point of reason… to pompously name "interrogation" what is

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[72] Vico argued true knowledge could only be validated by retracing its genesis, showing how it was created via narratology (as does, essentially, the method I propose for assessing an artwork's meaning-value directionality and 'ethical intentionality' emerging from the 'obscure zone').

[73] Scheler, *FE*, p.20.

[74] It is critical to understand that the artwork 'as product', and artforms themselves, are *degraded by historicism* even though as earlier noted any *realistic* proposition and hence art*work* has 'an historicity *in its making*' (see Trimarchi, 2022, Trimarchi, 2024a, Trimarchi, 2024b).

only a persistent state of stupor, to call "research" or "quest" what is only trudging in a circle, to call "Being" that which never fully is?'[75] No, art's true meaning and *real Identity* is objective; and made so by an organic, morphogenic, deliberatively suspended process of 'subject-objectification', in which real *possibility* emerges via a *propositional* 'teleology'.

<p align="center">*   *   *</p>

Peirce's reference to 'self-control', echoed in Schelling's explanation that all meaning in art approaches greater height in the indifference between necessity and limitation, applies to the 'practical reason' inherent in all genuinely artistic intentionality. It produces forward motion by placing human conduct and art in *Time*. The pragmatist locates meaning in future time, since only future conduct is subject to self-control.[76] Thus, identifying what we can call this *propositional enabling condition*, and being able to judge to what extent it opens the road of inquiry to reason, is the phenomenological question answered in the intentionality of the work itself. But how do we evaluate it?

As Scheler says, it is 'indeed possible to find a non-formal series of values, with its order, which is totally independent of the world of goods and its changing forms, and which is *a priori* to such a world of goods'. These are 'laws of experiencing specific *facts and contents* that give unity to ethics and aesthetics and the conviction of this experience'.[77] Scheler's anthropological- and Ricoeur's Merleau-Ponty inspired hermeneutic- phenomenology grounds psychology and ethics *simultaneously*, revealing the flaw in all theories of ethical/aesthetic values 'based in *assessments according to norms*' (ie., *theoretical* aesthetics). Believing that only a '*formal* lawfulness' exists, among either moral *or* aesthetic values, is as Scheler says '*unmistakably erroneous'*.

These informal 'laws of experience' are evidenced in what is occurring in the forward motion-producing tensions and meaning-value transitions in the relativities of form and non-form (Trimarchi, 2024b). Above all, as noted, in their *propositional* orientation to the *Person*. The unique act of self-actualisation in this

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[75] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception.* trans. by Colin Smith, (Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005), p.189-190.

[76] Peirce in Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.6.

[77] Scheler, *FE*, p.188.

double-unity, which as Kaushik says *defines* Merleau-Ponty's aesthetics, manifests in the indwelling hermeneutic back and forth of propositions between the active subject and the art object's *Other*. It is '*the obscure presenting itself as obscure, thereby calling me into question by catching me up into its obscurity*.[78] But precisely the fact that no formal laws exist for this process, vindicates Art's original association with *the normative sciences* – via its unified Principle - in the immanent truth-beauty merger that *proper* metaphor affords.

Heidegger's conviction unravels because of its orientation to truth as a value of 'being' (as permanence), when in fact truth is *not* a value. Rather it makes more sense to 'attribute a value to acts of *searching*, the investigations into truth'. Thus, *any* search for an artwork's truth-beauty nexus must begin in the origins of the artwork itself (as *becoming*). In the 'actantial structure' of propositions proceeding to enter and exit from the 'gates of perception', as purposive action holding passports stamped by *Reason*. For it is the suspension of 'being' in the obscure zone that offers humanity Art's *optimum* usefulness, not its 'symbolic capital'. The *re*-productive imagination's transformation of meaning, from lower- to higher-order values, from the schematic and allegoric through to the metaphoric (defining Art 'as principle') is thus what produces great art in any artform-artwork relation 'for all time' (Trimarchi, 2024b).

By tracking what *enters* and *exits* the 'obscure zone', we can attribute value to such propositions via the *implicit* intentionality generated in the transitional activity of signs. Irrespective of an artist's explicit *or* implicit intentions. Which brings us to 'Firstness'.

Firstness: The Semiotic Realism of Imagined Experience

Artistic 'worlding' can be defined as the intentional trajectory from subject to object in a mode of time (since temporality defines this act), which *in its disclosure* returns to the subject as a finitude. This disclosure expresses an existential finitude of 'world' witnessed in the passage of signs. There is no such temporality or trajectory from subject to object in the craft object; it has no 'life' as such, no 'existence' - hence reflects only *factual* 'semiotic realism'. Heidegger quite rightly reserves the word 'existence', as Emmanuel Levinas explains, for that

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[78] Kaushik, *AI*, p.138. Trimarchi's emphasis.

fundamental type of being in man; and the word 'presence' for the being of 'brute, inert things'.[79]   Thus Art's finitude is not a *determination* of the subject, it rather defines the subject's subjectivity - in relation to *the Person*.   This is its *Real Firstness*.

The finality of an artwork's subject-object trajectory, then, circles back to the meaning of the subject whose own 'existence' - whose own *subjectivity* - is at stake. (It is not the subject's *meaning* at stake, but the subject's subjectivity).[80]   In Peirce's phenomenology, this 'finitude', its real Firstness, is only obtained *after* an object's Thirdness returns to its real Secondness.   Art embodies the *existential* nature of meaning – but only as *becoming*.   This intentionality ('to mean') sets the observer involuntarily on a trajectory of searching 'for the phenomenon of the world... ["our world"] …which will appear thus as *ontological structure*'.   It will appear as the nature of 'the being of the world'.   But not the 'be-ing' of the world as concrete 'fact'; rather as Bakhtin calls it the 'Being-in-process' of the world.

Therefore, Art's real Object defines its own 'process metaphysics'; governed by a set of relations, bound by space and time.   Which – in *Intention* - can only be considered 'truthful' or 'real' by virtue of the fact these are relations constrained by the meaning rendered in this convergence.   The comparative constraints any Design/Craft object (ie., cultural artefact) faces in conveying meaning that is *truly* 'worlding', as Art's is, quickly become apparent.   When confronted by *any* object, we are either (a) beckoned by a *phenomenological* experience to distinguish its *immaterial* phenomenology (the 'Object', in the subject-object-interpretant trajectory of signs).   Or (b) forced to remain bound to speculation; to theorising (*interpreting*) the comparative meaning-value of various 'icons' present in the object.   A. N. Whitehead, like Schelling, understood the reason genuine art could draw our attention to the 'intrinsic reality of an event' was because of *value*:[81]

> Remembering the poetic rendering of our concrete experience, we see at once that the element of value… of being an end in itself… must not be omitted in any account of an event as the most concrete actual of something…   Value is an element which permeates through and through the poetic view of nature.

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[79] Emmanuel Levinas, "Martin Heidegger and Ontology," *Diacritics* Vol 26, No 1, (Spring 1996):11-32, p.16-17. In this paper the similarities between Heidegger's phenomenology and Sartre's existentialism are evident, revealing deficiencies in both.

[80] For this reason, as Merleau-Ponty argues, artworks can have several 'lives' or meanings – and be *legitimately* historicised (Trimarchi, 2024c).

[81] Whitehead, in ibid, p.18-19.

The habitual modern *phenomenological* confusion between Art and non-Art becomes clear. In Firstness, Schelling's *cosmological* conception of art immediately seeks unforeseen meaning in *the between-ness* of any assembly of symbols (eg., a string of words). Whereas Kant's transcendental conception seeks it in the 'icon' and the 'idol'. That is, as Matthew Segall says, in Plato's placement of *eikasia* ('imagination', from *eikon*) 'below the divided line… which has fallen into duality' and is only accessible through 'reflective understanding, perceptually isolated from reality and so only able to relate to abstract concepts and finite sensory particulars'.[82] When such fragmented 'sense-bound conceptuality' becomes an end in itself, he argues, an 'intellectual sickness' takes hold in which imagination can only contemplate the lifeless 'merely ideal concepts of the reflective understanding'.[83]

In this prevailing manufactured orientation to meaning, *Reason* is circuitously separated from the emotions. *Time*, which is as critical to Art as to its pro-social orientation toward *the Person*, because of each of their relations to *ends*, becomes fixed in the present. And *Space* loses all meaningful referents.[84] By contrast, indwelling in metaphor (or attending to *its possible emergence* from an artwork's allegoric or schematic features) affords a deeper understanding of its end-in-itself reality. Our Firstness here is immediately summoned to the higher values, since *proper* metaphor's forward movement toward ends produces natural coherences in meaning. According to Schelling, modern historical painting, due to its chiefly *allegorical* nature, probably influenced the favouring of an *analytical* hermeneutics in art. Whereas *depth* of meaning really emerges in *synthesis*, as *morphogenic* reality (eg., David's *Marat Sade*, §4; see also Trimarchi, 2024c).

As Gare explains, depth of understanding is obtained when, in any proposition, 'what had previously appeared as anomalous now becomes intelligible, and the way the world is now seen' shows how it was previously understood 'was relatively superficial'.[85]

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[82] Matthew D. Segall, "Poetic Imagination in the Speculative Philosophies of Plato, Schelling, and Whitehead." *(Academia.edu. 5/10/2012):1-23, p.6.
[83] Ibid, p.9. This, as Schelling (1989) claims, consumed the 'modern mythology' produced by Christianity's upturning of ancient Greek mythology (Trimarchi, 2024a). See later: "topological" interpretation (§4).
[84] For examples, see Trimarchi, 2024b, Trimarchi, 2023 respectively.
[85] Arran Gare, "Science, process philosophy and the image of man: the metaphysical foundations for a critical social science." PhD thesis, Murdoch University, (1981) Libraries Australia ID 2512950, p.231.

> What provides the unity of this understanding is the underlying metaphor which gives coherence to the conceptual framework, the paradigm and to each particular experience which is successfully explained.

In genuine art, there are two kinds of understanding - 'empirical' (*factual*) and 'vague' (*valuable*) – summoned by its ontological, purposefully purposeless, *Intent*. The important relativity for *depth* of understanding involves three key factors: metaphoric *coherence* in *propositional* and *contextual* qualities. First, if a metaphor's *proposition* does not correspond (weak case) or *cohere* in complexity (strong case) with reality, this factor's value is lowered. Similarly with *context*. Secondly, both then impact upon metaphoric *coherence* (ie., worlding quality). Hence a metaphor's *proposition* is made weaker or stronger by its *meaning-value* - measured as 'depth of understanding' – dependent upon *cohesion* of the empirical contents (*context*) with the idea (*proposition*). Note *value* here as a 'measure', does *not* depend on *correspondence* (ie., the 'literal'). Rather on *coherence* of the relationship between parts and wholes yielding 'disclosure'. A metaphor increases meaningfulness in the right context if *this* coherence is strong. And this will be stronger if the *vague* coherences (of essences, potences, and polarities) are transparent (ie., *timeless*, see Trimarchi, 2024b).

Choices made regarding *propositional Reason* ('sense') and *Import*, determine the value of artistic intention. (see Appendix A, *Figure 2*).[86]

Levinas aptly describes this intentionality as 'the subject of man' taking leave of itself to try to attain 'the object of man'. And recognising such intention requires, not merely observation, but *synthetic thinking* (combining synopsis with analysis). That is, capacity to attend to and synthesise 'fact' relative to 'value' in any objectification of 'Being-in-process'.

Meaning is not a *necessity* for the 'object' of craft (though of course it is present in a lower form); hence, as Aristotle showed, artefact does not require the same *kind* of *prudence* as Art.[87] But because *technologies of action* are necessary for *both*, they *share* in this *other* prudence (ie., of precision). Put another way, Art uses the intentionality of 'crafting' for the artwork's *material* coming into being (*Reality*). But

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[86] Holy and Spiritual 'values' are converted to phenomenological meaning markers of *transparency* of Reason (as opposed to 'empirical comprehensibility') - eg., via intrinsic propositional worth or Import, and Intent toward higher purpose.

[87] See Trimarchi, 2022

Art's *Principled* intentionality (its 'Object') must always point, via Peirce's activity of signs, toward an artwork's *immateriality* (its *Ideality*).

Therefore, *Real Firstness* is art's 'final' *Object*. However, its meaning is *never* finalised ('fixed'). Though art is *not* 'infinitely interpretable', interpretation plays a role. Because inventing and comparing realities is fundamentally how we think and reason. It is our means of testing any disagreement of perception or dialectical relativity, hence the basis of all *higher* meaning-making. Since Art doesn't *represent* reality but *reinvents* it, its Object-ive 'ulterior motive' is *to seek truth and meaning* in the mergers of various realities. And 'reality-shifting' may engage all manner of technologies of action in its objects (eg., in Impressionist painting, Monet's 'double line method' eliciting 'fuzziness').

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

In one respect, discovering the generative meaningfulness of a genuine artwork is like stumbling on a newly found *Gestalt*. But on closer inspection, our 'First' reception of it both gives up an immanent disclosure and opens a gap (a proposition). We then go through a process of rehearsing meanings, testing out their felt sense of appropriateness (Subject->object->Interpretant->Object) until we return to a consolidated filling-in of the blank that earlier existed (*real* Secondness->the *Object*). This object, compared with our original First, *in-forms* the reality our reason has chosen. We *feel* the sense (ie., reason) of the situation, and judge its potential fulfilment via our rehearsals.[88]

But all such *non*-formal intuitions we make are (like all *kinesthetic* intuitions) very precise in rejecting any inappropriate candidate expressions of Form. In Firstness, implicit meaning and explicit experience are *both* bound by meaning and value-ception occurring *below the level of consciousness*. Because we all experience *Gestalts* in the same way, we *all* share in common an *individually* habituated intuition regarding how an artwork's meaning *is completed* (ie., rendered powerful or weak, as described above). We share the *fundamental processes* of meaning-making with *all* humanity (albeit *contextually* differently in different cultures). This sums up Peirce's 'semiotic realism'.

However, *Gestalts* alone do not make art. As Scheler shows, our *intentions* are

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[88] See Appendix A. *Table 1* replicates this process as an 'assessment'.

also subject to conditioning. Some of which is *not* formed from our 'empirical' store of lived-body experience as such. 'Kinematic intention', for example, 'is an *intuitive phenomenon* (where)… we process an *immediate insight* into the connection of factors which lead from a seen (most simple) Gestalt-unit given in tactile sensation to a depiction… of the *same* Gestalt in a movement'.[89] In other words, our *conditioned* response here intuitively translates into intentional action, in a way common to all humans *irrespective* of our personal experience store or culture. There is however no connection between kinematic *intention* and kinematic *sensations*. As Scheler says, 'the basic Gestalt of a person's handwriting is unchanged even if he loses his hands and learns to write with his feet'. Like all 'habit-taking' originating in natural semiosis, this felt-body intuitive 'truth experience' extends to action that has not even occurred yet:[90]

> [S]omeone shooting at a target knows before seeing the target (after shooting), and even before feeling the movement of the finger that triggers the shot, whether or not he hit the centre of the target (and if he did not, by how much he missed it).

Thus, some *values*, while *uncovered* in lived body experience, need not be *present* in our personal experience. They still arrive in our intuition '*reflexively*', via habituation stretching back to primordial time. That is, *unprocessed* - precisely as all lower values emerge in Nature. As Merleau-Ponty says, the 'spectacle perceived' partakes of 'pure being' which differentiates it from 'sensible feeling' value-ception. 'Since sensation is a reconstitution', he says, 'it pre-supposes in me sediments left behind by some previous constitution, so that I am… a repository stocked with natural powers'.[91] However, a Pop song may employ *Gestalts*, as art does, without taking us to *Reason* (beyond 'common experience'). How we intuitively *reach* for deeper understanding in Art's obscure zone can be described in an allegory of how this prefelt/preferred conditioning arises from our '*empirical*' store of lived-body experience - to produce metaphoric meaning.

Consider the common experience of a large seed pod floating in a stream. Our first image of it (in Lakoff & Johnson's terms, an 'image schema') may be 'pod as boat' floating precariously; a familiar recollection immediately intuited from our store of experience. Imagined thoughts of a second schema (a selected

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[89] Scheler, *FE*, p.130-131.

[90] Ibid, p.131-132 n18.

[91] Merleau-Ponty, *PP*, p.192. Hence why music, for instance, is claimed to be neurologically 'hard wired'.

recollection eg., of, say, shipwreck survivors clinging for life) transcend the first, while it remains in mind. Clinging to its familiar attributes, but now (purposelessly) seeking a 'reality shift', our focus is stuck to the original object yet travelling somewhere in between it and the second '*propositional*' image. (Had the second schema been different, a correlation between them may be stronger or weaker, governing the direction in which the meaning is produced). Moving from one perspective to the next, we may call up other memories fitting the 'story' being produced, morphing fragmented intuitions into a larger whole. The floating pod *becomes* a shipwreck through our stored recognition of 'living precariously'. Yet the 'hanging proposition' of it either frolicking freely or in imminent danger, heightens the 'fuzziness' of the emerging thoughts ('possibles'). As new elements enter 'the scene' in our reproductive imagination, more complexity may emerge; but at some point, its vagueness becomes more defined ('actual'), even if its experience remains 'fuzzy'.

If this were a poem, a painting, or any other 'phenomenological experience' afforded by art-making, the transformation of meaning-value (from lower to higher order) might follow the same course. But it would not be the same experience. Yet, in either, in the moment of more decidedly *moving* from the pod to shipwreck image (for which we need a *Reason*), we experience a negation, a letting go of the first image. We *de-materialise* it, changing it from a physical object to an intentional 'object'. That intention leads us to the second image which is also immaterial, partly because it originates in memory. But partly also because, as it transforms into new schematic/allegorical meaning, it obtains new affordances and additional non-formal values (qualities) which enhance its meaningfulness. In this transformation of the familiar almost meaningless (schematic) first image to its new metaphoric 'place' in our imagination, we obtain the higher meaning value 'phenomenological' experience. With the addition of "*the Person*" relativity (though this doesn't necessarily physically involve *people*), we move from Scheler's lower ('material') values toward 'spiritual'/'holy' values in his hierarchy (ie., the '*immaterial*').[92]

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[92] See Trimarchi, 2024b for how a landscape painting, or architecture can become art; yet a 'portrait' of a dog or flower cannot. Van Gogh's sunflower does not approximate the appearance of an actual sunflower. It is in *departing* from this that he enables a closer approximation to 'the idea' of human self-actualisation (ontology).

If the second schema lacked any binding reason, we might end up with an inappropriate metaphor, and remain unmoved. (We can of course confer any meanings on experiences). But as long as *Reason* is involved, its original trajectory (its First), together with the metaphoric threshold it approaches, is always purposelessly in our sights. And reached immanently, immediately, and with conviction.

In this example, metaphoric reasoning is fed by *both* our preferred intentionality *and* prefelt experiences of the world. But, of course, imagination is not limited to 'lived experience'. All metaphors are really micro-narratives. And the 'narrative' meaning above is simply a metamorphosis with few directional options (or 'plot-points'); whereas in more complex narratives, though the same kind of transformative movement occurs, it can be directed more sequentially or linearly (ie., in literary fiction). Thus narrative 'reality shifting' is like that in metaphor; but what stories may gain in nimbleness (with the aid of more characters, plots etc.,), they can easily lose in depth if one loses sight of their 'Firsts' (*ends*). Stronger narratives have more affirming transitions; weaker ones tend to remain in a familiar territory, with transparent mechanism. *Polyphonic* narratives more readily lend themselves to proper metaphoric utterances. It is no surprise then why the strongest literature has always married narrative and metaphor in intricate combination. So too the best examples of art in music or any artform (see Appendix B).

Peirce's *Firstness* explains why the *primordial* collective nature of our 'intellectual intuition' means art-making is an essentially 'communal' act, and why ethics is implicated. Uncovering higher meaning relies on this relation. Thus, a *phenomenological* experience (making/contemplating art) always involves formulating questions in terms of a paradigm which we individually have already accepted. But which extends to our collective understanding. And it is in attending to possible *ends* (and their boundary conditions), rather than solely questions of means, or 'the familiar', that this experience is made more objectively *Real*.

The Futurising Directedness of Cosmological Worlding

    If creations are not possession, it is not only that, like all things, they pass away; it

is also that they have almost all their life still before them.[93]

The modern mythologising of reality has served to disorientate our value-ception of art, tearing it from its origin in *the Person*, and neutralising its potential to remediate a defective cultural habitus. Its market-driven commodified cultural overdetermination manifest in 'Cultural and Creative Industries' in recent decades, overtaking the already utilitarian *"arts"* industrialisation of the past, stems from an attendance dominance of means over ends, and facts over values. Merleau-Ponty calls modernity's historicizing and theorizing of Art a 'spurious fantasy which claims for itself a positivity capable of making up for its own emptiness' by accumulating art as 'a stable treasure'. Aristotle's claim that ultimately it is individual contemplation that rules over any 'political community's' judgement of art, thus sits uncomfortably with the modern mythology's de-futurising subjectification and falsification of it (Trimarchi, 2022, Trimarchi, 2023).

Whereas Art's timeless potentiality, and *true* meaning-value to humanity, instead resides as Merleau-Ponty above suggests, not in any fixed meaning or symbolic cultural capital, but in the continual *becoming* of the artwork itself. It abides in the realm of embodied experience, wherein the *conviction* of experience, as Scheler says, is '*given*'. But the 'general connectivity' *given* in 'experientialism', while at its *source* encouraging vital empathic reasoning, tends toward *undervaluing* the purpose of seeking higher meaning. Unless this is cultivated and habituated. Genuine art encourages contemplation and understanding that can resist the tendency to reduce empathy to psychologism, and submit to our natural affinity with the 'general aesthetic'. The latter falsely unifying tendencies persist because lower-order values are more powerful and prevalent than higher ones in our environment.

But Art upturns the lower-higher order value polarity via its uniquely *futurising* form of 'worlding'. And, as McGilchrist (2010) argues, given how it activates the right hemisphere to restore a brain's balance, its 'usefulness' for reducing modernity's socially aesthetic and ethical disorientations is self-evidently superior to cultural artefacts.[94] In the next section, I will demonstrate how Peirce's key *propositional enabling conditions* are apparent in *intentional* acts directed at *ends* –

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[93] Merleau-Ponty, *PP*, p.190.

[94] Psychiatrist Theodore Dalrymple (2005) is among many linking the crisis of art with severe social problems.

distinguishing, as Aristotle proposed, between art and artefact (and hence Art/non-Art etc.,). It will be helpful firstly, however, to summarise the key features of Art's phenomenology of Reason and its significance to *meaningfully* collectivising and re-orienting the 'human telos'.

Like the *intuited* valuing of unfilled space in musical melody or rhythm, tracking the transformation of lower to higher order meaning-values even in ephemeral artworks becomes possible using Peirce's diagrammatic thinking. As does identifying ethical intentionality. Combining this with Scheler and Schelling's insights shows how to make '*normative* aesthetic' judgements, by attending to the generative potence of non-formal values and the efficacy of absences their interaction with form creates. Distinguishing meaningful *directedness*, as noted, requires an active subject cultivating the kind of synthetic thinking which can connect meaning with valuing.[95] Active subjectivity produces meaning by 'the situation as it is presently formed [being able to be] carried forward by our pursuing one or more… possibilities'.[96]

Any genuine artwork may thus be identified as follows (see Appendix B *Task 1*). By classifying 1) our *Object* of art as a 'phenomenological' object/experience; 2) its *proposition* as directionally existential (ie., a 'bringing to life', by which human conduct and self-control are implicated); and 3) its *purpose* as ontologically purposefully purposeless. All of which contribute to discovering *ethical* intentionality in any artwork's *origins.*

Applying Schelling's dialectical polarities, the "art" *Object's* signs either lead toward multi-dimensional meanings/realities (universality drawn into the particular), or to uni-/two-dimensional ones (symbols, see Trimarchi, 2024b). The former triadic activity orients us toward the dynamic action of referential field 'tensions' (Ricoeur 2003) and relations involved in 'reality-shifting'. The latter toward the reflectively representational, drawing the particular into the universal. (See *Tables 1 & 2*).

In *genuine* art's form of worlding, we attend to generative meaning in an upward indwelling 'hermeneutic spiral', alternating between question and answer, toward *Reason*. Its multidimensional metamorphosis elicits the kind of

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[95] That is, Peirce's 'abductive' and 'retroductive' reasoning, utilising all three key forms of thinking: synoptic, analytic, and synthetic (see Trimarchi, 2024c).

[96] Johnson, *MB*, p.83. Brackets added.

'logic of inquiry' developed by R. G. Collingwood. It is *dialogical*, hence 'dialectical' in the Schellingian, not Kantian, sense (Trimarchi, 2024a). With this perspective, hermeneutics moves beyond a purely reflective, interpretational capability, by accounting for 'the active nature of the subject both in relation to the world and in the process of arriving at a common understanding'.[97] Like Peirce, Collingwood argued a proposition must be seen as 'true' or 'false' *according to* the 'either explicit or implicit' *question being answered*. This reasoning underlies the processual nature of art's 'reality shifting' ulterior motive (or *implied* intentionality).

A proper 'metaphoric utterance', defining poetic discourse, is thus a *purposeless* act *warranted by* a vehement semantic aim. Like the muscles around our lungs, it is involuntary yet driven by a singular intentionality and purpose *built into* its existence (its reason for being, or 'internal good'). The *purpose* of re-creating 'life'/reality in an artwork is therefore to enact – or "materialise" - this 'good-ness', via the reproductive imagination, in disclosure/s. Its '*vital*' purpose *in itself* is purely functional. But its *ulterior* cosmological - '*spiritual*' - purpose is the universalising *elevation* of existence, whose value represents movement towards the 'Holy' (or 'whole') in Scheler's hierarchy (see *Figures 1&2*). As Levinas says, the fact that 'I live' at all is evidence that 'I live with intention'; but Art's *purposeless Intent* is of a higher order than 'life' (Trimarchi, 2024c).

How this higher-purpose intentionality is *evident* in the artwork can only be explained fully by example.[98] Firstly, refocusing *our attention* to ends over means and values over facts moves us beyond interpretation. For instance, an actor's 'craft' (techniques, materials, lighting etc.,) projects her character's presence on a stage. But the meaning generated by her intentions emerge via signs of propositional and contextual *quality-values* creating the character's 'whole' metaphoric coherence - that is already prefelt. This immanent meaning reaches us in mutual recognition of 'the person' via 'act-being'. Hence, we distinguish her *crafting* from *making* intentions by bearing witness to the directionality of this meaning. If her technologies of action (means) become the focus of our *sensual*

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[97] Gare, "Science, process philosophy", p.242-243.
[98] Such very detailed examination is beyond my scope here. The *Appendices* however aim to give an indication of the kind of special descriptive hermeneutics needed for such assessments (see also Trimarchi, 2024b).

reception, rather than the propositional *merger* of beauty and truth (ends), this warrants intentional directionality toward her *craft.[99]*

With *materiality* being more highly valued in modernity, our attention to *means* (lower values) is necessarily artificially heightened. It therefore takes conviction to make the chief self-innervating forces driving her work's *meaning*-productivity *directed immanently* through the 'obscure zone' from the work's origins.

As noted, we can assess the *value* of this 'immateriality' by mapping the intentions embedded in the artwork's activity of signs. But - assuming a properly habituated Firstness - no 'forensic' examination is needed to determine whether an immaterial 'mark' is hit (more so, naturally, for example in sculpture than literature).[100] We would *implicitly* recognise the *phenomenological* patterns of purposefully purposeless, propositional 'objectification' of the Art-Person perfect sign. Given '*intelligiblity*' (eg., no need to 'de-code' cultural information), it's *meaning-seeking* will be understood personally/collectively because *we* too (actor and audience) are 'be-ings' whose 'essence is *simultaneously... existence'.*[101] What we register is 'forward movement' begging the question: 'Toward what?' Which we understand, even in the best Still Life paintings, as an inherent feature corresponding with Peirce's claim that the pragmatist's intentional inquiry is always directed to *future conduct*. For only this is subject to self-control.

Because the 'reason *for*' human existence relates directly to the question of 'how to live reasonably' (the converging ground of theology, philosophy, and science), the relation of *normative* aesthetics to Art is grounded propositionally. Its phenomenological study cannot therefore be restricted in purview to the artwork's *materiality*, nor merely the *experience* of art, as is modern aesthetics; it must necessarily extend across ethics, metaphysics, ontology, and epistemology. An art assessment moving beyond the phenomenology of interpretative experientialism, towards the *phenomenology of meaning*, possesses these *naturalising* characteristics.

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[99] This, in Aristotles terms, reflects orientation toward (lower) 'external' vs (higher) 'internal' Goods.

[100] Trimarchi, 2024b explains why this occurs differently in different artforms

[101] The 'study of man's existence', says Levinas, Heidegger calls "analytic Dasein"; hence the study of the understanding of being is '*ipso facto* a study of man's mode of being (not only a preparation for ontology but already an ontology). But such a relation 'is possible only at the price of a new type of being which characterizes the fact of man… precisely the fundamental mark of being in man.' So, art too – as an implicit (immanent) study of man's mode of being, of man's existence – is *also* 'already an ontology' (and this 'fact' of man's existence suggests that any study of his 'mode of being' is also a 'factual' study). Normative Aesthetics is thus not merely a phenomenological study of appearances, but of seeking truth and knowledge about man.

They arise from a given conviction, self-evident in Peirce's revelation that because each sign inhabits a dialogic relation, it is the *processual relations* that create meaning, *not* the assemblage of significations.

<div align="center">*   *   *</div>

The idea of a teleology of causal entailments in Nature, fundamental to Peircian semiotics, combined with Schelling's idea of 'immanent causation', is crystallised in Merleau-Ponty's 'ontology of the flesh'. All human meaning comes from the body, which in turn comes from Nature in a seamless intersubjective relation. The artist redirects this meaning propositionally. Taking practical account of it returns us to Schelling's ancient mythological archetypes with some confidence that – far from merely harking to the past – they offer the definitive phenomenological framework for tracking processes of the elevation of meaning in 'semiotic freedom'.

As such Art is reconnected with the *scientific* aesthetics Schelling claimed to be the '*first* philosophy', because it combines 'what is' (ontology) with 'what we know' (epistemology) in our 'experience of meaning' (phenomenology). Any genuine exemplar of this principle will exhibit such a search phenomenologically, via the ontological properties of metaphor and narrative (and associated modalities) with transparent intentionality.[102] With these foundations, the essence of Brentano's 'intentional directedness' thus shines a path forward via an alternative hermeneutics for assessing the phenomenology of genuinely *humanist* art. Which is *cosmological* because of the myriad ways it can reveal the logic of the Cosmos in humanity's own self-actualisation.

Art's *materiality* hereby regains meaningful coherence with its *immateriality*. We are thus able to move beyond interpretation methodologically under the following guidance. Scheler's hierarchy of values is our means of knowing *what* "mark" (recalling Aristotle) *to aim at* (ie., the 'felt absolute' beauty/truth merger). Peirce's concrete reasonableness manifests its cosmological directedness in the interaction of signs, determining *how* to approach it. And Schelling's indifference between the real and the ideal provides a way for us to judge how closely we have *reached* the mark (*Figure 1*).

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[102] This is irrespective of its *comprehensibility* (a completely different question).

We can now return to how Peirce's triadic thinking points us to the artwork's ethical intentionality.

4. ETHICAL INTENTIONALITY

[T]he idea does not belong to the soul; it is the soul that belongs to the idea.[103]

If we were to truly believe there was no *real* ideal to aim for in Art's production or appreciation, our intentionality would not waiver from the purely reflective and representational (ie., from craft).[104] When an object's 'empirical' comprehensibility (its *purposefulness*) has risen symbolically in our estimation above an artwork's *purposeless* immanent disclosure, we should know we have allowed our valuation to *veer away* from ethical intentionality. The art object's person/public 'statement' will have come to emphasise fragmentation: the *separation* of truth from beauty, art from nature, and *the Self* from any primordial belonging to the world.

This leads to 'moralising' or 'philosophising' a false theoretical sense of value normativity, via misjudged notions of 'freedom' and 'necessity'. Hence a dual privation in both Art and Humanity manifests in modernity's ideological severing of the natural link between aesthetics, ethics, and logic. As I will now show, this is reparable by re-attending to the 'actantial' dynamics which reconnect meaning with valuing.

Peirce's summation above represents the defining intentional purpose of the very principle of art itself; suggesting how an artwork's meaning-value may be more objectively understood. To explain why, let us first return to how intentions – distinguished by Scheler as 'willing' and 'willing-to-do' – influence our *striving* in attention, perception, and judgement. And why it is intuiting *essences* that directly produces intentions, defining a 'phenomenological experience' as quite different to *mediated* experiences of 'the idea'.[105]

Intentional Fallacies

A *phenomenological object/experience* manifests as 'directed' attention to the world,

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[103] Peirce in Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p,17.

[104] I suggest we have already arrived at this juncture in the tragic counter-utopian presupposition underlying deconstructive 'postmodernism' (Trimarchi, 2024b).

[105] See Trimarchi, 2024c for how 'phenomenological experience' is differentiated from 'ordinary experience'.

which Art's higher-meaning claim demands, because it is *unmediated*. It is distinguishable from all other experience like 'that of the natural world view or… of science, by *two* criteria'. First, only this experience yields the *relativity* and *immediacy* of facts themselves. 'Facts' mediated by symbols, signs, or any kind of instruction are not cognised like this. Second, in such experience, 'the totality' of signs, instructions, or other kinds of determination, 'find their *basic* fulfillment' in its 'fact of intuition' (as a *whole*).[106]

A '*non*-phenomenological experience' is then, by contrast 'in principle an experience through or by means of *symbols*'; it is 'mediated experience' that never produces the 'given' of things. As Scheler says, a *phenomenological* experience 'honors, as it were, all the bills of exchange on which other "experiences" draw', because only this is 'in principle *non*-symbolic and, hence, able to fulfill *all* possible symbols'. This makes it, above all else, an '*immanent*' experience contained in a '*present*' reality. Even if our intuition points us to contents *beyond* this - for instance, to extraneous 'empirical' meanings of an artwork – these intentions cannot be confused. Nothing can *belong* to a phenomenological experience if it is simply 'meant' as content *outside of* or *abstracted* from it.[107]

Hence it is an *a priori* fact that all '*ideal* units of meaning and… presuppositions that are self-given by way of an *immediate intuitive* content' determine how we *most* meaningfully attend to the world. Whether our *positing* is genuine or not, has nothing to do with appearance or illusion if it or its contents constitute an unmediated 'phenomenon'. Even in *self-deception* the intuited essence of *this* is given, in all of its constituent elements. The 'essential intuiting' of a phenomenological experience is thus *factual* and precise; because the "what" which is given in it 'cannot be given to a lesser or greater degree, comparable to a more or less exact *observation* of an object and its traits'. Either it is intuited and 'self-given' totally and without subtraction (and *not* as a 'picture' or symbol); or it *is not* intuited, hence, 'not given'.[108]

Now, this *immediate feeling of relativity* is 'a *confirmation*, but not a *proof*'. It simply

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[106] Peirce in Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.50-51.

[107] A portrait of a dog or flower cannot *suggest* human-ness (as an abstraction).

[108] Scheler, *FE*, p.48. Hence human portraiture must *depart from* both Nature and any 'iconic' (symbolic) person-ality, by rendering 'the idea' of human-ness (the 'given' of *the Person*) as the soul (*Spirit*) of the individual being portrayed. We cannot intuit this from *any* portrait of a dog, no matter how precisely executed (ie., it always remains as caricature - artefact). See Trimarchi, 2024b, Trimarchi, 2024c.

points to the contents of values. All *values* are relative, but there is also a relativity between the 'being' of *kinds of values* that has nothing to do with that of the *kinds of goods* bearing them. Thus, there is an *essential* interconnection - not by way of deliberation - between values *immediately intuited as higher* and values given as '*nearer to absolute* values *in* feeling and preferring'.[109] This basically defines the *truth of relativity* between the artwork's 'empirical object' and *any intentionality* regarding our phenomenological experience of it. As long as it *can be practically accounted for.*

No *assessment* of art can ever, of course, hope to be set in concrete, given the 'unfinalised' nature of any genuine artwork's meaning. But judgements about the *value-experience* or *value-ception* of such objects *are* truthful. The 'value of the cognition of truth', says Scheler, like that of 'the silent beauty of a work of art', provides a '*phenomenal detachment* from the concomitant feeling of our life' rising above sensible feeling-states. Neither deliberative nor accidentally opaque/illusory intentionality, constituting an artwork's *ends*, can afford the particular *conviction* required for producing this higher meaning-value relativity:[110]

> Whenever the given surpasses what is meant, or whenever what is meant is not given "*itself*" and is therefore incomplete, there is no pure phenomenological experience.

The ultimate principle of phenomenology is that 'there is an interconnection between the essence of an object and the essence of intentional experience'.[111] Denying such a link in artworks or their search for truth, runs counter to Art's *essential* ontological 'collectivising intent'. And cultivating a *habitus* nurturing this, inevitably devalues art both as principle and in the particular. Furthermore, detaching *an artist* from their work – eg., by at the same time *legitimately* questioning their consciousness of its full significance or 'Trimarchiship' (invoking 'the divine') - is a hallmark of the dis-embodying deconstructive postmodern attempts to dispute Art's *necessary* meaningfulness. Attributions of mysticism/miracle, though indispensable in raising a work/artist's *mythology* (and symbolic capital), merely misrepresents reality (Trimarchi, 2024a).

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[109] Ibid, p.98-99.
[110] Ibid, p.51. See Trimarchi, 2024b regarding why 'accidentality' works against Art's 'collectivising intent'. As Henri Poincare argues, any 'novel hypotheses are developed through an imaginative perceptual process'; reducing this to mere accidentality simply emphasises the act in the action-outcome relation (Prawat 2003).
[111] Ibid, p.265.

In their influential essay *The Intentional Fallacy* (1946) and later work, William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley claim 'the design or intention of the artist is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art'.[112]   While partly true, suggesting that this *means* a work is not answerable to criteria of truth, accuracy of representation, or questions of morality, is a misleading conflation.   An artist may well be unaware of the full meaning of their work, given art's self-structuring autopoiesis (a key ingredient in *any* creativity; their 'Trimarchiship' being *naturally* reliant on Nature's semiotic freedom).   But this does not remove their responsibility to meaning.   Quite the opposite.[113]

As noted, artistic intentionality is more complex than a correspondence theory of truth can explain, yet eminently more discernibly real.   To begin to examine how it can be revealed truthfully *in the subject-object relation*, consider the application of C. S. Peirce's epistemological theory of diagrammatic reasoning to the understanding of an artwork.

Aesthetic Value Orientation

Peirce's phenomenological approach dovetails well with Schelling's archetypal system of art and Scheler's value theory, together offering arguably our best means of understanding and assessing art's higher meaning value.   Arnold's excellent exposition of it illuminates how to determine aesthetic value orientation by how the activity of signs direct the production of ideas.   Negotiating the indifference between the ideal and the real requires an active subject.   And 'a subject that subscribes to an idea', as Arnold says, 'must create a mental diagram of its relation to the general idea before it is able to conceive of its own relationship with its ideas'.   This is how *Reason* manifests and is bestowed upon humanity via the natural process of semiosis, which art harnesses to reveal our individual and collective relativity.   Reason is thus *directional*, and we cannot simply interpret 'ideas' psychologically 'but rather semiotically as independent entities' to which we relate ourselves.[114]

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[112] W. K. Wimsatt and M. C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy." *The Sewanee Review* 54 3 (July- Sep. 1946):468-488.

[113] Why else did Leonardo keep the *Monal Lisa* close until his death?   Because he was as intrigued by its 'unfinalised' meaning as anyone.   A maker's responsibility to contemplate this 'possibility' is *heightened*.

[114] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.17.

Arnold uses Jacques-Louis David's painting *The Death of Marat* to show how narrative and metaphor combine in this historical painting to reveal different layers of meaning. Just like the 'speculative process' of cognition demonstrated in the earlier example of photosynthesis, where chemical analysis was moved diagrammatically through different levels of representations to unveil relational reasoning, a similar process is applicable in poetic reasoning (§2). Except that there are now *a series of interpretants* which, as in this painting, translate the artwork 'into different levels of meaning, so that finally more than the depiction of a male corpse lying in water may be perceived'.[115]

Arnold chooses this example because the processual similarity is easily demonstrated, as in any artforms where empirical-historical information supplements the narrative. But the very same approach may be taken with more figurative work.[116] As Arnold explains, in an historical painting '[w]hatever might in reality be a mere chance becomes at the moment of being included in the painting a significant element of that which is represented'. Thus, relationships are created between what is actually depicted and what elements did not exist before they were depicted. Also, between what is thereby constructed interactively between these and the known narrative informing the painting.

To unpack these relationships Arnold firstly points to Peirce's criteria for 'an image' (notably different to Lakoff & Johnson's - see Trimarchi, 2024c) present in the realism of this painting's depiction (Marat's physical form etc.,). Then our attention is drawn to the next layer of meaning. This is produced by 'formal' meaning drivers evident in any good painting composition, yielding the *present* relations: eg., centre/periphery, left/right, and up/down symmetries; Marat's sunken body creating space in the centre; the tip of his nose placed exactly in line with the horizontal axis while the right forefinger and quill-pen touch at exactly the vertical mid-axis; the geometrical positioning of the body, and so on.

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[115] Ibid, p.12.

[116] Note this presents the 'easy' case for determining intentionality in art. Space prevents full explanation of 'hard' case examples however the *Appendices* suggest how these may be approached.

Jacques-Louis David [117]

The Death of Marat (1793)

All these, as any competently executed work should, essentially provide the *topographic* content which governs the main perceptible intentionality. That is, they produce the visibly unmistakable *schematic* and *allegorical* lower-order meanings conveyed by features 'in-forming' the metaphors. The complementary positioning of the knife and quill follow the above compositional framework to add yet another layer of 'empirical-comprehensibility'. As Arnold explains:[118]

> This creates a relationship between the knife as the weapon of the murderess and the quill-pen as the weapon of the political journalist… [L]ight falls upon this figure from above, as though God wishes to protect him... [T]he quill-pen – contrary to all realistic possibilities – is still upright and higher than the knife. Even in his death, Marat's pen still appears victorious.

Note the 'un-reality' of the quill's position makes us lean into the metaphoric forward-movement of meaning transformation being created. Like other cues.

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[117] From: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Death_of_Marat, accessed 14/01/2022, 12:16 pm. *La Mort de Marat or Marat Assassiné* is a painting by Jacques-Louis David (1793) of the radical journalist lying dead in his bath after his murder by Charlotte Corday; described by T. J. Clark as the first modernist painting for 'the way it took the stuff of politics as its material, and did not transmute it'.

[118] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.12-13.

The pleading letter from the murderess, positioned as it is prominently upright in Marat's left hand, conveys the clear intention of reminding us of 'Marat's noble disposition, which led him to receive Charlotte Corday with the aim of helping her… [revealing]… the perfidy of the woman who had appealed… to Marat's sense of justice only to assassinate him at their meeting'.[119] Marat holds on to his principles 'to the bitter end'. And so on.

All these elements are contained within the painting's structure, composition, and object relativities which are essentially 'technologies of actions' (created by colour, shape, line etc.,). Each goes some way in establishing metaphoric meanings which we can reason directly from the essences, potences, and polarities of these qualities and their relations. They still however provide only 'empirical-historical' phenomenological understanding.

Arnold then points to another layer, the first 'introduced meaning' layer, adding another *relational* metaphoric dimension. The painting can be read, by its formal similarities, as a reference to Michelangelo's *Pieta*. But we need to surrender to non-formal meaning values, and begin to move beyond interpretation, to arrive at this perspective.[120]

> [T]o discover the formal similarities between the representation of the French revolutionary and the crucified Christ – the observer must free himself from an interpretation of the painting as a mere "image," the mode of representation which primarily utilizes the similarity between colors and forms on the canvas and the colors and forms of the depicted objects. The observer has to consider the relations between the constituent parts of the picture as well as assigning meaning to the different positions on the pictorial surface; that is, he also has to interpret the surface of the picture as a type of diagram. Just as on a map, the position of a particular point has meaning, so the positions of a head and a knife on a canvas add additional meaning to the depicted objects. It is only when these diagrammatic features have been recognized that similarities with other pictures become clear allowing one to perceive in the representation of one picture the metaphorical allusion to other pictures of works of art.

In Peirce's terminology, as Arnold says, this makes a picture readable firstly as 'an "image" and then as a "diagram" thereafter [becoming] a "metaphor"'.[121]

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[119] Ibid, 12.

[120] Ibid, 13. Of course such 'patterning' is identifiable in any artform.

[121] This is also an example of Peirce's suspended second: *the object* (Marat's body) *is now suspended* as the implication of Christ's body becomes metaphorically possible.

Intentionality is thus revealed gradually, but this form of appraisal is not new. It is the method known as '"topological" interpretation and meaning-making' that any art historian or critic normally uses, originating in Christianity:[122]

> Topology is first of all a Christian form of biblical interpretation based on the assumption that there are anticipations of the New Testament in the events described in the Old Testament.

As Arnold goes on to explain, painters like David have long since extracted the method from their theological origins. And, recalling Schelling's characterisation of Christianity being the starting point of historicising 'modern art', it is clear why we have become habituated to 'reading' meanings in this way, since topology has a collectivising narrative function.[123] Here, it connects Marat's assignation with Christ's crucifixion. Schelling's description of how meaning in art is universalised, which as noted Peirce refers to as 'generalising', thus points to the difference between the (speculative) Object in Arnold's first example and the (poetic) Object in any artwork.

In the first case the Object (photosynthesis) infers no generality as such because the diagrammatic reasoning leads us to its *specificity* (as is the main purpose of speculative discourse). But the *painting's* Object consists of what Peirce calls 'the real presence of general principles in the world'. All genuine artworks augment our diagrammatic reasoning with other layers of meaning, to create a dialectical discourse directing us instead toward a *generality* (ie., *different* reality). The action of the *Principle* of art is thus demonstrably differentiated from that of *non-phenomenological* speculative reasoning. Moreover, it is "the ideas 'justice' and 'truth' notwithstanding the iniquity of the world [key *potence polarities* in David's painting]", says Peirce, which are "the mightiest of the forces that move it. Generality is, indeed, an indispensable ingredient of reality".[124]

What is the difference between the 'reality' of photosynthesis and the 'reality' of Marat's death? Clearly: *higher meaning*. The difference between meaning

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[122] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.13.

[123] Public life, via the 'congregation', was for centuries controlled by the Church. Thus, Christianity instilled the modern mythology's particular way of symbolic worlding (from particular to universal), which all such 'revealed religions' do as a means of individualising one's relation to the divine (with the 'mystery' being 'revealed' *only* by the institution maintaining control over its flock). See Trimarchi, 2023.

[124] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.14. Brackets added.

generated by attending to specificity alone compared with that required to understand the deeper significance of *generalities.*[125] For if poetic discourse were about the former – a mistaken assumption of many aspiring modern artists (eg., cinematic realists) – then David would have simply depicted Marat's dead body, a bathtub, and a blood-stained knife, as though one would an empirical reality.[126] And this, of course, would reveal nothing of the *real* truth of this scene.

Because David's purpose, as Arnold argues, is to depict the *character* of Marat in which individual actions are generalised (reasonably) to be about 'truthful purpose', his intention is the very same as the *scientist's* intention to find the truth about photosynthesis. Except that the *Object* of the artist's truth is an *ethical* one, changing the nature of this search (hence: '*ethical intentionality*'). Clearly, since a scientist's intention can be called 'ethical' on some level, the point is that the artist's proposition relates specifically to '*human conduct*' and '*self-control under every situation*' (unlike the scientist's). Following Aristotle, this is Peirce's prescription for the only applicable form in which *a proposition may be said to have (ethical) meaning.*

This painting's symbology also certainly contains empirical-historical *narrative* 'ethical' contents. For instance, as Arnold points out, David's aim to 'define the revolutionary… through his desire to help the people obtain their rights'. Other 'ethically' intentional meaning is afforded *allegorically* by virtue of the inquiry's subject being revolution itself, and hence 'the entire "natural class" of the "revolutionaries"'.[127] However, it is *not* this content which renders *the artist's* intentionality 'ethical'. It is that the painting's morphogenic properties make it a genuine poetic discourse, producing a *phenomenological* experience (which, by

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[125] Cf. McGilchrist (2010): The left hemisphere's characteristic narrow focus versus the right hemisphere's 'big picture' attention.

[126] Cinematic realists (eg., Ken Loach, Mike Leigh) argue they tell 'real stories' when in fact they are often merely re-presenting 'social realism', which lacks the implicit vibrancy and expansive possibility of metaphoric reality. Such films, lacking any real 'ends' (ie., internal purpose) tend to feel lifeless compared with eg., Vittorio De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves* (claimed as the great modernist example of 'cinematic realism'). In fact, De Sica does not employ the same limp 'realism' at all. He uses metaphor. Contemporary cinematic 'realists' follow the modern misconception of Tragedy, while the latter adheres to the (truly realistic) ancient conception (Trimarchi, 2024b). The confused naturalism/realism relation in theoretical aesthetics accounts for this (Trimarchi, 2024a). What Loach or Leigh's so-called 'realism' elevates instead is the mundane (mimicking human 'nature'), thus mistaking the real 'torn world' of otherness with infractions of the personal ego.

[127] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.14.

definition, possesses ethical intentional *essences and potences*).[128] Searching for truth/beauty in *this form* is what Peirce refers to as seeking 'the *soul*' which belongs to 'the idea'.

That this particular artwork is historical naturally adds a sense of realism to its internal narratives, making it more poignant. However, the purely 'empirical' indices – the relational, referential information forming *uni-vocal narrative* meaning, using various contents and technologies of action – as Arnold rightly suggests, are 'nothing more than aids: circumstantial evidence'. It is up to the active subject to *reason* the real meaning, by taking 'practical account' of what is absent:[129]

> The actual classification of Marat as a revolutionary hero and martyr can only be completed by the observer on the basis of the historical narrative accompanying each history painting, a necessary part of the semiotic process required to turn the depiction into a depiction of an historical event. It is the narrative only that composes the depicted indices in the painting to form a whole, which gives them their meaning as indices.

Narrative (a key *ontological* property of the principle of art) here produces a schematic and allegorical push toward metaphor. But it is only how it generates the *metamorphosis* in which the body of Marat transforms into an expanding inquiry, that renders it significant. By the action of several metaphoric meaning 'drivers', the formation of a *whole* intentionality ('striving') emerges from the movement of icons to predicates (resolved in Ricoeur's 'tensions'). These make the artist's proposition an *elevated* subject-object relationality, as the act of predication 'in-forms' the value of ideas present in the artwork in an *actantially* self-structuring process.

Actantial Structure: Acts Toward Ends

Arnold shows 'the idea' in any poetic discourse is in no uncertain terms thus infused with intentionality, which is phenomenologically self-evident. Algirdas J.

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[128] See Trimarchi, 2024a, 2024b, 2024c. A phenomenological experience is the *1st Primary Determinant of Poetic Discourse* (space precludes fully detailing all determinants, however the *Appendices* give an indication). As noted, via metaphor we automatically seek truth/beauty *relative to the Person* (marrying ethics with aesthetics in logic). This does not mean the *subject* depicted must be 'a person' (hence we take 'practical account' of this). Any other empirical ethical content is 'on top' (topological), and therefore *interpretational*.
[129] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.14.

Greimas' 'actantial' theory of narratives is used to augment Peirce's semiotics, revealing why the above intentionalities are subject to both intellect and habit-taking. Griemas' model systemically complements Peirce, applying similar referential indices. Peirce's *Sign -> Object -> Interpretant* relationship translates as Greimas' *Subject -> Sender -> Object-of-value* designation for meaning directionality (navigating Ricoeur's referential fields). Essentially, the latter functions like this (again using David's painting):[130]

> [T]he Subject acquires via the Sender 'a desire for an Object, and this desire manifests itself as a "quest" … The way the Subject attempts to attain the Object forms the content of the narrative. The relationship between Object and those who stand to gain from it, in this case the people or the petitioner at his bathroom door (*Receiver*), provides the explanation for the Object's value. However, *because* Marat fights for the rights of people, all enemies of the people are necessarily against him (*Opponents*), just as all friends of the people are his potential supporters (*Helpers*).

Whereas Greimas' system is dyadic, as Arnold argues, it could just as easily be modelled triadically as Peirce's is. Both equally lead us in one direction, each synthesis describing the same meaning-value possibilities. In this painting's evidential ethical intentionality, these 'signs' reveal the essential constitution of an ancient epic narrative (Trimarchi, 2024b). David's metaphoric potences present a unified striving to produce feeling-complexes (eg., 'an unfulfilled sense of longing'), pushing meaning-value upward in Scheler's hierarchy toward *Reason* (see *Figure 2*, also Appendix C correlating 'feeling-complexes' with Peircian semiotics).

Just like chemical formulas, says Arnold, 'narratives show to reason a before and an after, as well as the particular transformation of the one into the other state'.[131] Reason *relates* to form, but is mostly *governed* by non-formal value productivity, as all the relations of 'objects' he describes in the painting demonstrate.[132]

> Telling a story means bringing words together in a particular, narrative form that can be observed and judged by reason according to its correct form. Reason may however also compare this form with other narratives and place them in

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[130] Ibid, p.15.
[131] Ibid, p.16-17.
[132] Ibid, p.16.

metaphorical relation to one another.

Thus, *relational* 'diagrammatic' qualities phenomenologically directing us to intentional meaning are not necessarily *literal*, nor allegorically interpretative, but Metaphoric. Yet they lack no precision. They are, like metaphor in any language, in at least some sense 'mathematically' accurate.[133] As Arnold says: 'Such a method of forming a diagram is called algebra', with repeated signs creating relations 'by virtue of the meanings associated with them'.[134] And, like Schelling's mythological categories, these relations are identifiable emerging from the obscures zone even in ephemeral artforms like music or dance.[135] This returns us to the significance of Peirce's claim about the soul, and Scheler's concept of 'Spirit' (Trimarchi, 2024c).

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

The three key factors undergirding the above outlined method for determining ethical intentionality in the 'phenomenological experience' can now be summarised. Firstly, we can only interpret ideas *semiotically*. Secondly, psychic meaning generated in the obscure zone is only *in process* of becoming reason (though not preventing recognition of its *directionality*). And thirdly, our *intellectual intuition* determines this directionality of reason, even in the absence of correlative lived experience. Associated with this last factor is the reason it is 'the *soul* that belongs to the idea' and not vice versa. As Arnold explains, *subjectivity is effectively eliminated in this generalising process*. The 'separation of the subject from its ideas' is required to allow their relationship 'to be depicted diagrammatically' (in either speculative or poetic discourse).[136]

Hence Peirce's semiotic realism reconfirms Schelling's dialectical aesthetics, and belief that through art the absolute 'becomes *objective*'. With Greimas'

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[133] E.g., isotopic labelling in chemical reactions, or radio isotopes.

[134] Peirce in Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.17.

[135] As explained in Trimarchi, 2024b and 2024c, ephemeral artforms express 'ways of feeling' directionally.

[136] Arnold, "Images, diagrams, and narratives", p.17. However, in Art alone is this separation critical to its *purpose* of offering a way to legitimately – *ethically* - 'objectify' the Person (the highest bearer of ethical value) via the subject-object interface in artworks, allowing this split to occur as *'real'* (cf. Polak's 'split-mind' analogy, Trimarchi, 2023; and Ricoeur's 'second ontology', Trimarchi, 2024c supporting my proposal regarding Peirce's 'suspended Second'. This separation germinates meaning *unmediated by symbol*. The power of art lies in producing this 'split' in consciousness, via what Schelling called the 'reproductive imagination', moving us beyond reflection).

actantial model, moreover, it becomes clearer why Scheler's view of 'Spirit' (as a 'solidarity of interests') too is critical. This lies in what Arnold argues is the completed 'ethical division of phenomena into good and evil that Peirce saw as of central importance' to orienting our 'admiration':[137]

> Ethical judgements appear through this narrative structure, which the mind creates as mental diagram, as if they are perceivable in the phenomena itself. Thus, it seems that, completely in accordance with Peirce's "maxim of pragmatism," we are immediately forced by the phenomena to adopt an ethical position ourselves. For the world of phenomena, to which the observer also belongs, is divided into Helpers and Opponents on the basis of the Subject-Object-Relation. Each person must decide which group they feel themselves to belong to.

The dialectical tension embedded in the painting is transparent (once we decode its logic). We might choose to view Marat as a tragic hero and martyr, or this painting as revolutionary propaganda. But David's unambiguous portrayal draws the more universal necessary questioning of all the human conduct surrounding this tension into a particularity. This judgement is not an interpretation, since all interpretants have been resolved in the actantial structure of meaning we have already absorbed in the phenomenological experience.[138] The *pre-felt* claim the painting makes on our collective selfhood and telos (*Spirit*), accepted or not, is due to undeniable laws of semiotic realism:

> The actantial structure allows the connection of Peirce's three normative sciences Logic, ethics, and esthetics, which investigate "the universal and necessary laws of the relation of Phenomena to *Ends*, that is… to Truth, Right, and Beauty" … with one another in narratives. The relational structure of the actants may certainly be counted among these universal laws.

We can therefore define this 'relation of phenomena to ends', *given* as the fundamental, determining, ontological property of Art, as *ethical* intentionality. And its study - in the actantial structure of an artwork's meaning - as Art's 'ethical phenomenology'.

The Suspended Second, and the Aesthetics of Higher Meaning

According to Max Scheler, the ethics of any ethos may be defined by 'principles

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[137] Ibid, p.18.
[138] Ibid, p.18.

of assessment and norm-giving founded on values and their relations of rank'. And, via 'processes of logical deduction' we can derive 'the content of individual acts of assessment and norm-giving'.[139] The Appendices sketch a suggested methodological process for applying this 'normative aesthetic' reasoning to assessments of art. I will in closing summarise its main considerations, drawn from my examination above.

This proposed method applies Scheler's logic to judgements based on what I have called an 'aesthetics of meaning' (Trimarchi, 2022). It promotes both Schelling and Kant's view of the civic humanist value of art, combining Schelling's natural archetypes, Peirce and Ricoeur's 'actantial' relativities, and Scheler's hierarchy of values (depicted in *Figure 1*), to elevate Art's essentially *symbolic idealist* meaning-value normalised in modernity. I have elsewhere argued why re-establishing the unified principle of Art like this could potentially arrest art's deterioration, and set a course for *naturalising* it in contemporary practices, traditions, and institutions (Trimarchi, 2024a).

Artistic *practices* are, as Scheler says, 'the basic and essential genre for the characterization of human action', because the interrelationships of the 'intentional, the social, and the historical' *always* consist in a *co*-Trimarchied further writing of an artwork's narrative into the evolving human project. Any genuine artist/aesthete is therefore, like it or not, *in the business of* setting the terms for intentional admiring (meaning and valuing) between any art object and a 'self'. We are not involved in simply interpreting an artwork, but writing it into the collective human narrative.[140] We can thus distinguish the artist from artisan, via *purpose*, as Aristotle did in the *Ethics* (Trimarchi, 2022, Trimarchi, 2024b). Art-work assessments then need to actively separate *these* 'typical basic forms of... artistic representative penetration into the world of intuition'. That is, differences associated with 'changing abilities and levels of artistic technique and available materials'; from what our 'ethos' determines should be 'glorified in art'; as well as 'from consciously "applied" aesthetic and technical laws' (ie., art from artefact;

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[139] Scheler, *FE*, p.307.
[140] MacIntyre (2007). Art's importance to the Human telos is clear: 'we ourselves write a further part' of human history by virtue of how our 'short-term intentions succeeded or failed to be constitutive of long-term intentions' (p.208).

guided by Art's *Principle*).[141]

We may firstly then, in any *attempt* at art, identify which of an artist's intentions are primary or secondary by following the signs (Trimarchi, 2004c). By further categorising these intentions, as noted, we distinguish what *content* is intelligible from what is not.[142] Irrespective of explicit/implicit meaning, all intentions are intuitively registered and ordered (causally/temporally) by reference to their 'settings'. As Merleau-Ponty says, we are thus involved, by invitation of the art object itself, in a process of writing a narrative history which *it* embodies – *as end in itself*. This 'internal good' obtains *depth* of meaning, according to how we individually and collectively make these classifications.

To separate art from non-art (as Aristotle does), we then need to shift our attention from the 'what' to the 'how' of valuing (ie., 'fact' to 'value'). By in this way further linking any possible 'artwork' to the *Principle* of art, using the (is/is-not) 'ethical intentionality' criteria examined above, we can begin to then make comparative assessments (Appendix B: *Tasks 1 & 2*). Because art is equivalent to 'organism', the 'whole' or metaphoric 'absolute' in which truth and beauty merge must be assessed as the indifference between the real and the ideal *contents* of the propositional 'object'. In Schelling's terms, this 'affirmed *reality*' of its *content* - compared to its 'affirming *ideality*' - leads us to its true *identity* (indifference) or 'absolute' meaning; via the *drivers* of that transition. These affordances mark the *action* of Art's ontological properties (metaphor/narrative/etc.,) progressing meaning-value along his three 'mythological categories (Trimarchi, 2024b).

Assessments of the semiotic productivity of these *drivers* and *markers* are made by gauging how the meaning of the propositional object pushes toward higher or lower order meaning-value. Since this arises from the *qualities* and *relations* producing the dynamic tensions Ricoeur defines in his 'referential fields' (between subject and predicate, literal and metaphorical interpretation, and identity and difference), they register 'ethical' intentionality *directionally*. They reveal the coinciding key affordances of higher meaning in the movement-logic-action

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[141] Scheler, *FE*, p.303. Previously examined in Trimarchi, 2022, Trimarchi, 2023, Trimarchi, 2024a, Trimarchi, 2024b, Trimarchi, 2024c.

[142] See Trimarchi, 2024c. As Scheler says, the concept of an action is secondary to the more fundamental concept of 'intelligible action'. Thus, 'intelligibility' – in artworks too - relies upon the fundamental distinction that: 'Human beings can be made to account for that of which they are the Trimarchis; other beings cannot'.

nexus, as we track the internal referential 'movement logic' of these drivers.

In this 'morphogenic' activity we will either distinguish a self-*legitimating* (speculative: symbolic -> artefact) or self-*actualising* (poetic: metaphoric -> art) discourse. The *poetically* defining features of meaning drivers and markers are first sought in the triadic activity of signs leading us to real secondness (the Object). If we cannot track this activity in the phenomenology of the work, its meaning remains a mystery (ie., opaque). Only via the *suspended Second* of this actantial self-structuring can we access the indifference between the real secondness and immanent firstness of the object – it's real First. And we can do this by applying a qualitative measure to each of Schelling's *meaning* modality indifferences, guided by Scheler's *value* modalities (*Figure 2*).

Hence identifying the 'propositional object' in question as a 'phenomenological object' (as Scheler defined it) immediately distinguishes between whether it is an 'object' of speculative or poetic discourse. This automatically places the 'object' in the realm of art's *Principle* because its *fundamental* purpose is now clearly defined as oriented toward 'the person'. Hence *Phenomenological Object/Experience* classification is our first criterion (*Task 1*). If met, ethical phenomenology evident in the artwork can be further evaluated.

Next, to distinguish good from bad art, we can subsequently compare *quality*-value by examining their *Meaning-value Drivers and Markers* (*Task 2*). That is, the fundamental ontological properties of the principle of art lending its exemplars morphogenic qualities. These only drive *higher* meaning-value if they are constituted and used in particular ways (see Trimarchi, 2024b, Trimarchi, 2024c). Schelling's archetypal assessments of the *immaterial productivity* indifferences (of ideas or 'gods') are found in the transition of these modalities moving between truth and goodness, and freedom and necessity, to arrive at the *Ideal* indifference of beauty and truth. But both Peirce's triadic activity of signs and Scheler's hierarchy of values are our means of situating that indifference.

In summary, via these two tasks, Schelling's order of 'meaning' system merged with Scheler's order of 'ethical' values determines: (a) poetic discourse/ethical intentionality status; (b) the 'objective' propositional metamorphosis, and (c) the directional purpose of disclosure ('be-ing') which the artwork is oriented toward.

This distinguishes Art from non-Art (and anti-Art).[143] Via Ricoeur's tensions and Peirce's activity of signs, tracking the 'actantial structure' of (b) and (c), we then gauge the effectiveness of the poetic discourse and integrity of the ethical intentionality. Thus, identifying what special characteristics *drive* meaning-value in the construction of any genuine artwork proceeds based on a 'warrant' verifying its transformation *toward Reason*. This may be hermeneutically expressed as a synthesis of Peirce's triadic semiosis, Griema's actantial relations, or Ricoeur's tensions; but *whatever* descriptive language is used must identify the warranted subject-object polarities.

Finally, once a meaning-value orientation is deciphered, how effectively the dynamic logic of the artwork both corresponds to and aids its directional intentionality can be assessed. It is here that discernments between 'good' and 'great' art can be proposed (*Task 3*). This requires – particularly in very good art-*works* (and art-*forms* like literature, for example) – considerable contemplation of the dynamics of counterpoint, the interrelatedness of temporal and spatial movement, and the effects of all technologies of action which are the *productive* elements of Ricoeur's 'metaphorical utterance'. Since I propose such phenomenological hermeneutics is more objective, and could replace much fraught structuralist and post-structuralist speculation, let me briefly elaborate.

As noted, examining these 'dynamical objects' alongside Schelling's essence/potence indifferences should reveal the work's real 'identity' (the 'empirical object'). *Real* meaningfulness is obtained in the *indifference* between 'the ideal' (Object 2) and 'the real' (Object 1), uncovering *genuine Firstness* after suspension of Peirce's *second* (see *Tables*). Our immanent intuition of the object's First should, in integration with Object 2, reveal a higher meaning. The merger of Schelling's 'absolute' identity with Scheler's 'absolute' value and Peirce's 'absolute' concrete reasonableness is completed. (See *Task 3* and *Table 2*, outlining a comparative assessment in cinema).

The greater the work the more *operative* is its 'obscure zone'. We can only know what is occurring here by reaching the point at which our understanding of the key indifferences is realised. That is, once the real Secondness (Object 2) of the

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[143] 'Bad' art may still be categorised as being *in pursuit* of the genuine art *'object'*; hence is distinguishable from 'anti-Art' which represents a *deliberative* privation of meaning-value prevalent in 'postmodernism'.

artwork has been reached, after the interpretants return (ie., after interpretation), and this is compared with our First (our immanent intuition of the Subject's meaning), then our estimation of the absolute indifference (between necessity and limitation, beauty and truth, form and non-form etc.,) must point to the higher meaning *becoming* in the obscure zone. We can therefore identify and compare this in various artwork categories (making more realistic cross-artform assessments possible).

Though not a 'fixed' meaning – it is only the meaning of 'possibles' becoming 'actuals' – this higher meaning is evident in the triadic relationship of all signs rendering the Object 'real'. Thus, the intentionality intuited in our *prefelt* estimation of the First sign or meaning of the artwork, while it may be only slightly different, is still an ideal based upon our prefeeling. And only by comparing *this* 'ideal' with the real of the artwork (Object 2) – in which, as noted, *the subject is eliminated* – can we obtain '*the Ideal*' which we must call 'the real' artwork's meaning.

Our method of gauging the value of *this* real Firstness meaning, lies in assessing the merger between all indifferences (informing Truth/Beauty) by tracking backwards along the actantial indices phenomenologically evident in the work (from O2 back to the Interpretant/s, from here back to O1, then back to the Subject).[144] From these relative meaning-values we can determine more than a *directional* intentionality toward reason. Comparing them allows identification of the actual reason intended in the art object's origins. Then by applying our method (in *Tasks 1* and *2*) to obtain an actantial meaning value, an assessment distinguishing 'good' from 'great' art can be made.

However, it is important to note why Scheler's highest values can only be approached by seeking *real Firstness* emerging from the obscure zone. The usefulness of distinguishing 'good' from 'great' art - solely for the purpose of contemplation regarding 'the absolute' or 'mark' to aim for in poetic discourse – then becomes apparent too.[145] In Peircian terms, the difference between a good and great artwork is the difference between arriving at real secondness, and then

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[144] Note that we do not *begin* in the 'obscure zone', between real secondness and firstness, because *this* indifference depends upon the values in the actantial structure *leading us to it.*

[145] Besides the *aspirational* purpose of this contemplative virtue, discerning 'good' from 'great' art is arguably only of symbolic value (since good art already reactivates the reproductive imagination/right hemisphere).

progressing or not to real firstness. In the *good* artwork, the first object (O1) remains in suspension while we witness what returns from the interpretant. Real secondness (O2) is 'the Other' object which we find from realising the end point of that suspension in the metamorphosis of the *real* First.

This Firstness *is* 'absolute firstness'; what we *can* if attentive first intuit in the great artwork – and it is precognised.[146] Irrespective of this possibility, we are *always* nevertheless directed by empirical or non-empirical contents to an object (O1) in the first stage of consciousness, whether we arrive at *real* Firstness in our precognition of O2 or not. We normally process every First, because sentience demands it. Consciousness is ever in search of itself, and cognition is our natural first step or 'controlled movement' toward every Second and then its Third.

Thirdness has to do with the rationality of things: what the artwork is concerned with (its 'contents'), and what forces us to admire and why. Since, on a grand scale, this movement toward reason via the interpretant is, by virtue of traversing *humanity's* constraints and freedoms, a progress of Peircian 'agapastic development'; Thirdness remains important for obtaining new ideas to be habituated via the good *or* great artwork. Art's built-in 'collectivising intent' makes 'the idea' both an individual and collective realisation, as Potter (2022) says, by the community possessing it 'in its collective personality', and the individual re-discovering it 'in sympathy with a community'.[147]

In the merger of its disclosure of truth and beauty, via all other indifferences bringing together the real and the ideal to arrive at the *real* Ideal, the great artwork 'becomes objective'. The more *immanent* the disclosure, the greater the artwork. But it is only after the 'thing-ness' of something becomes known for its *'reason* for being' that we can claim to understand something. Art's 'materiality' is thus *Ideally* superseded by its 'immateriality'. The reality of the soul belonging to the idea is realised here. Our 'creations' are, then, really *discoveries* that *cannot be* possessed: they possess *us,* giving *our* lives meaning. The measure of which is in the ancient idea of 'whole-ness' (Trimarchi, 2024a).

As Peirce argued, we only account for regularity in the universe, and distinguish order from chaos, by (after Thirdness) achieving a 'higher order

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[146] This is an 'intellectual intuitive' skill that must be habituated.

[147] Potter, *NI,* p. 186.

generality'. In art, this means a higher order of relationality between form/non-form and lower/higher order values, which is the essence of continuity – or, *meaning*. Even if higher values are the clear 'empirical' intention of a work, but markers are not ideal or are insufficient, and the actantial structure lacks integrity (reason), then higher meaning may not be reached in this instance. An example of this might be an artwork whose disclosure, though *driven* by proper metaphor, remains fragmented or not properly resolved.[148] It may be a worthy inquiry and employ appropriate markers, but if these do not coalesce to render a meaningful whole - due to offering a poor relationship with lower order values that are crucial to the inquiry - it may fail to reach its *real* possibility.

CONCLUSION

Peirce named 'esthetics' the 'science of ideals' (or 'admiring') because it governs how we conceive and approach *ideal ends*. Unlike Kant, he took pursuit of 'the good' not as 'duty' but as 'admirable end', based on Reason. *Esthetics* determines 'the ends that are worthy of pursuit'. Logic is therefore grounded in how we intellectually intuit 'the admirable'. As Bernardo Andrade explains, 'we pursue logic because it leads to truth; truth because it is good; and goodness because it is an admirable end'.[149] The 'end' (*Object*) of art is however not Beauty's *perfection*, but the *condition* of beauty inherently linked to higher Truth (hence, *meaning*-value). In this paper I have tried to show how Peirce's *suspended Second phenomenologically* leads us back to an aesthetics capable of restoring the salutary benefits of Art to humanity, via this Beauty-Truth merger.[150] Artefacts, while certainly admirable, cannot bind individuals with a totality in anything but a merely symbolic way. Only genuine art produces the metaphoric way of 'worlding' capable of returning a natural ('normative') aesthetic orientation bound logically to ethics. Given the role habit-taking here, it is arguably only Art then which can cultivate *virtue ethics* in humanity.

Peircian semiotics, through which complexity theory and Biosemiotics

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[148] As in the film *Roma* – Appendix B, *Task 3*.

[149] Bernardo Andrade, "Peirce's Imaginative Community: On the Esthetic Grounds of Inquiry," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society, (*Tilburg University,2022), p.4.

[150] *Figure 1* reveals this merger embodies, via movement toward 'the metaphoric', all merging polarities defining Art's Principle, eg., real/ideal, freedom/necessity, part/whole, knowledge/action, being/becoming.

emerged, thus offers a means for arguing Art is – rather than consigned to theoretical aesthetics, merely as a 'theory of beauty' – in fact a Complexity Science. A 'science of Mind' more suited than neuroscience or psychology, or even philosophy or theology, via this 'naturalised' conception, to *objectively* reveal the emergence of consciousness. Via Peirce's 'real Secondness', as the key to understanding art's passage to higher meaning, we find that *in praxis* the object of artistic inquiry needs to be suspended. It cannot be simply mediated by symbol. As both Ricoeur and Merleau-Ponty also realised, it is this 'second ontology' which provides Art's principle with the power to extend an idea's possibility. And, as Schelling claimed, by stimulating the reproductive imagination, hence the ability to realign Art with the Nature-History nexus to re-harmonise human reality.

I have shown above how the artwork itself tacitly points us to its ethical phenomenology. Building upon Arnold's astute application of Peirce's 'diagrammatic thinking', however requires combining it with hermeneutic phenomenology and philosophical anthropology. This provides a verifiable way of reuniting *the Person* with Art in the perfect sign relation, which Peirce had realised (following Aristotle) moved aesthetics beyond the realm of perception to *knowing* (countering Kant's redefinition of aesthetics). Art and Humanity's mutual meaningfulness *only* emerges from the artwork's 'obscure zone', where empirical-historical intentionality is almost completely inconsequential.

Classical empiricism's interpretable 'phenomenology of sequence' produced an art history attached only symbolically to the history of ideas. Art was enmeshed with, and made indistinguishable from, cultural artefacts and their symbolic idealist meaning. This made art appear 'infinitely interpretable', and entirely subjective. Confining the meaning of artworks to 'being' - fixed in their historical context (instead of as 'becoming') - our understanding of the particular ethos in which they were made also turned to fantasy. Whereas in fact the genuine artwork's *inner* tacit value-aspects are accessible to us, relative to the principle of art, 'for all time' - if we can open ourselves up to their reception. Unleashing this possibility is required to revive imaginations able to envisage a realistic utopian ideal: Human ecology.

Via Peirce's radical empiricist 'diagrammatic thinking', art's unique role of 'objectifying' the Person (through appropriate propositions), without de-valuing

this bearer of moral values in any way, is unveiled. This rests upon learning to identify 'givens' in an artwork as real even though they are contained within a 'vehicle of appearances'. Thus, Max Scheler's philosophical anthropology vindicates Peirce's 'phenomenology of Reason'. Arnold indirectly illustrates why Schelling's 'process metaphysics' (examined in Trimarchi, 2024a and Trimarchi, 2024b) is the best paradigm for discerning *the poetic* from other forms of speculation. And by combining these philosophical perspectives, we move beyond the hermeneutics of experientialism, to the *actantial* significance of Peirce's phenomenology of the 'suspended object', enabling us to track an artwork's aspiring absoluteness.

This has suggested a method for restoring meaningfulness to our contemplation of Art; redefined as a way of valuing – and indeed 're-worlding' - the world. Refining this methodology and developing appropriate descriptive language *in practice* would enhance the viability of assessments outlined in the Appendices. It could offer a realistic alternative to the purely subjective approach to art's meaning-value prevailing in the global "arts" ecology, and restore aesthetics to normativity. With ethical intentionality definable and identifiable *in* Art, morals can be meaningfully reconnected to ethics – not *just* in art – but in all human endeavours. Reorienting aesthetic thinking like this, transforming the artist into Aristotle's 'geometer' of higher meaning and *ethical* value, could begin the process of cultivating 'moral character' more widely and mending the historicised disjuncture we have created between Art and society, nature, and *the Person*.

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APPENDICES

A: *THE CONVERGENCE OF SCHELLING, SCHELER, AND PEIRCE'S 'ABSOLUTES'*

B: *ASSESSMENT TASKS (1, 2, & 3) - ART/NON-ART, GOOD/BAD, AND GOOD/GREAT ART*

C: *ALIGNING SCHELER'S PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY WITH PEIRCE'S SEMIOTICS*

APPENDIX A: THE CONVERGENCE OF SCHELLING, SCHELER, AND PEIRCE'S 'ABSOLUTES'

Letting go of the limitations of Kant's 'standpoint of reflection' is key to recognising meaning emerging from 'the obscure zone'. Here, our common tacit understanding of the logic of dynamism and tensions (in Schelling's 'mythological categories' and Ricoeur's 'metaphoric utterance') transcends common experience. The former *phenomenological experience* presents itself in the predicative *potences* (intentionality) of the artwork, revealing all the dialogical evidence (linking aesthetics logically with ethics) necessary to uncover the direction of its meaning-value. Not necessarily in any 'empirical' ethical/moral contents; rather in its *ethical phenomenology*, via the semiosis of intentionality and 'spirit' present in the artmaking itself.

FIGURE 1 below depicts its emergence from the suspension of Peirce's second (*object 1 -> Object -> real Firstness*). Schelling, Peirce, and Scheler's 'absolutes' converge in the intellectual intuition of 'ethical' propositions, which Peirce's triadic activity of signs directs us to. Thus, Art's *Principle* is revealed, via its exemplars, as a way of entering the world of fiction whose standpoint is not reflective but meaningfully re-productive.

FIGURE 2 depicts the transition between meaning drivers and markers toward 'measures', integrating Peirce's indicators for the merger of Schelling's meaning modalities with Scheler's value modalities.
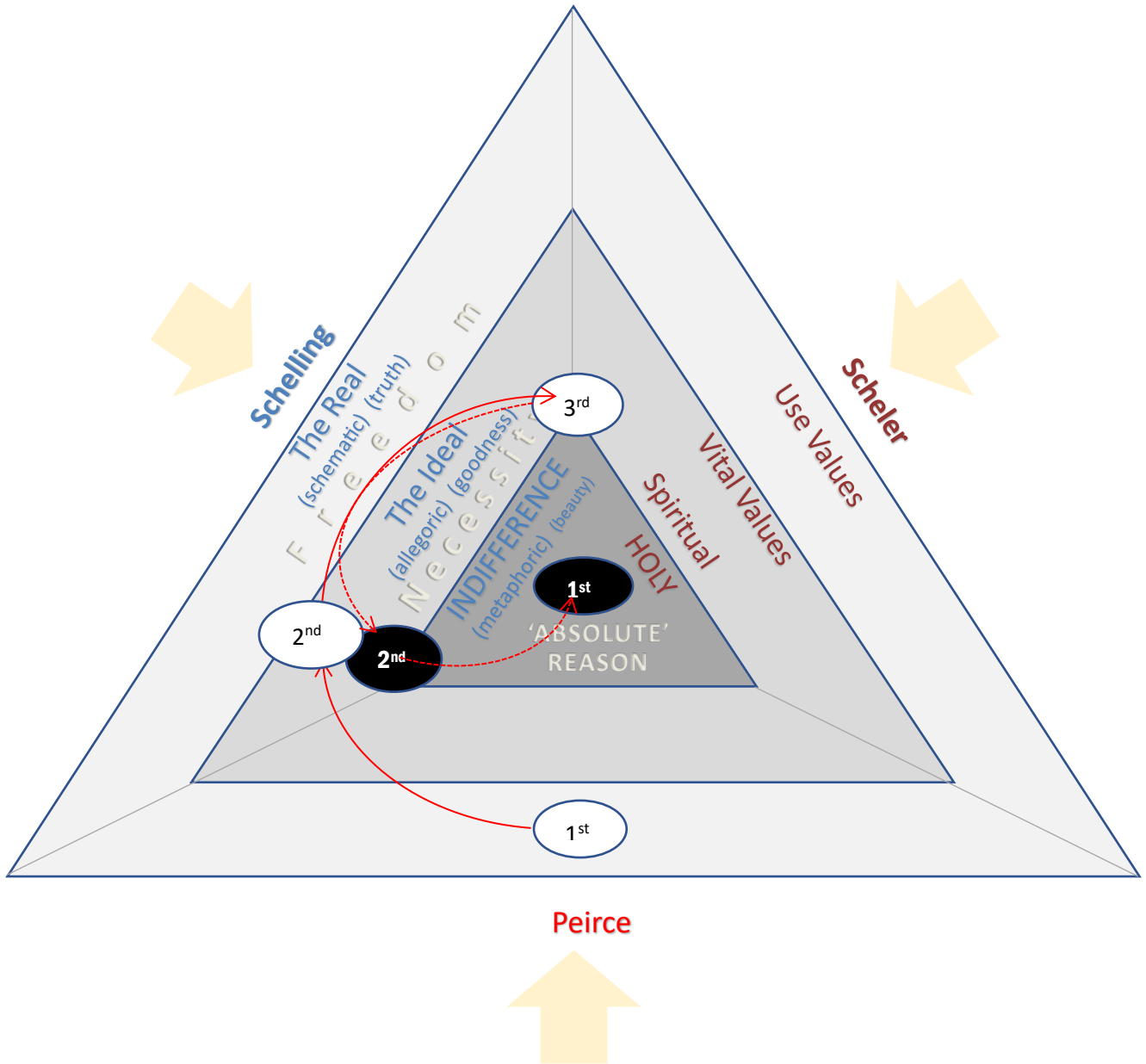
Figure 1- Schematic depiction of movement toward higher meaning-value in the realistic artwork

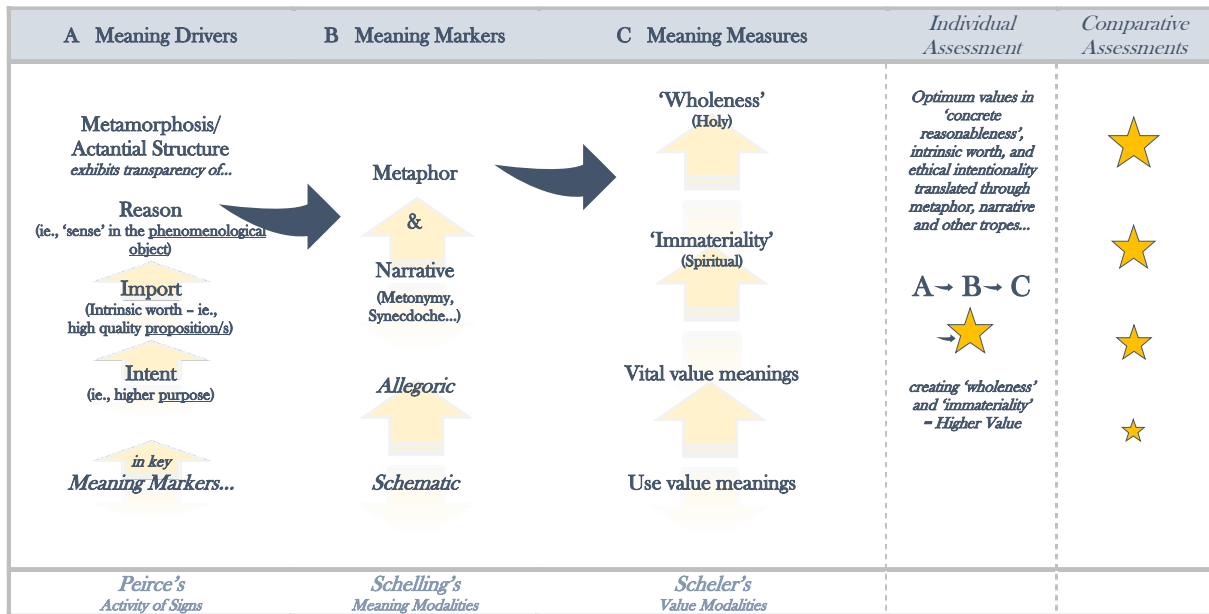| A Meaning Drivers	B Meaning Markers	C Meaning Measures	Individual Assessment	Comparative Assessments
Metamorphosis/ Actantial Structure *exhibits transparency of...*	Metaphor & Narrative (Metonymy, Synecdoche...)	'Wholeness' (Holy)	*Optimum values in 'concrete reasonableness', intrinsic worth, and ethical intentionality translated through metaphor, narrative and other tropes...*	
Reason (ie., 'sense' in the phenomenological object)		'Immateriality' (Spiritual)		
Import (Intrinsic worth – ie., high quality proposition/s)	*Allegoric*	Vital value meanings	A → B → C →	
Intent (ie., higher purpose)			*creating 'wholeness' and 'immateriality' ~ Higher Value*	
in key Meaning Markers...	*Schematic*	Use value meanings		
Peirce's Activity of Signs	*Schelling's Meaning Modalities*	*Scheler's Value Modalities*		

Figure 2 - Depiction of the merger of Schelling's meaning modalities with Scheler's value modalities

The higher value manifest in Schelling's phenomenological meaning markers, measured against and in co-emergence with Scheler's value measures, delivering sense, import, and intent in a cohesive and coherent disclosure (registered by Peirce's activity of signs and Ricoeur's 'tensions'), renders any artwork more objectively assessable. This offers a more useful realistic standard of judgement than current processes, centred – not on industrial 'viability' criteria - but on meaning-value.[151]

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[151] With 'arts industry' now completely subsumed by 'culture industries', institutionally and politically coercive economic justifications for what was never conceived to be an essentially economic endeavour prevail. Most assessment processes thus prioritise *anything but* 'artistic merit' criteria, often eliminating this altogether (since under this 'peer assessment' system it can only be

The degree to which higher order meaning is achieved is not easily "measured", but the presence of it and its intentional direction is readily identifiable. 'Holy' and 'Spiritual' values (as defined in the artwork, Trimarchi, 2024c) are 'materialised' via meaning markers conveying 'Wholeness' and 'Immateriality'. Thus, while values and meanings are different things, relating Scheler's values to meaning phenomena (Schelling's 'mythological categories', Trimarchi, 2024a) makes their coinciding processual nature apparent.

All values in Scheler's hierarchy can be converted to meaning marker phenomena by undertaking various Tasks for deciphering Art/non-art, good/bad, and good/great art, outlined in Appendix B.

This shows how comparative assessments are made using qualitative measures, whose directionality is obtained from Peircian semiotics combined with Gremias' 'actantial' indicators and Ricoeur's referential field 'tensions'.

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defined subjectively). Sacrificing the meaningfulness of *artistic* merit should normally signal a crisis - not just in art, but ethics and logic too - in our modern ethos.

APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT TASKS - ART/NON-ART, GOOD/BAD, AND GOOD/GREAT ART

Recognising the phenomenological presence of higher values (using Peirce's diagrammatic thinking), reveals more than empirical-historical 'topology' can. Though each artform makes such affordances available differently, the same process can be used to assess this in any. In literary works, for instance, more detailed examination is needed to identify their 'obscure zone' emanations of higher value, whereas in the visual arts this is naturally more readily accessible. The ethical phenomenology of the greatest works, via assessment of meaning drivers and markers, can always be subjected to deeper scrutiny because of their 'unfinished' nature. Thus 'self-replenishing possibility' is itself a measure of greatness (though, of course, *only* if that possibility is directed at the higher values). The sure sign of non-Art/anti-Art is fixed possibility (exhibited by symbol/concept/cliché/'dead metaphor – Trimarchi, 2024c).

The clearly qualitative 'measures' of phenomenologically present 'drivers' and 'markers' of meaning-value themselves reveal why it is not *meaning* that 'moves' but its *affordances* (Trimarchi, 2024c). Hence Peircian phenomenology surpasses any neuro-aesthetic or neuro-phenomenological method of tracking 'image schema'. What primarily drives a poetic discourse is intentionality, which, as Levinas says, is 'the very essence of consciousness'. Striving *towards* something is the essence of life itself; and *revealing* the meaning of this is how art solves the riddle of the becoming-being problem. The *genuine* art object, like life itself, does not *transcend* itself in a single act of reflection. This occurs instead *throughout its existence*. Thus, its propositional and purposeful phenomenology *can never be exhausted*. It is meaningfully reproductive.

Art as principle, via its *ontological* properties, meaning drivers and markers, bestows the very same demands upon its exemplars (albeit differently in different artforms – see Trimarchi, 2024b). In *Task 1* They define the *Principle* as: 1) a Phenomenological 'object'/experience, via 2) Propositions, and 3) Purpose. As noted, proper metaphor is the primary meaning driver of any great art. Schelling's system (Trimarchi, 2024a, Trimarchi, 2024b) needs to be studied to understand how to precisely execute assessments of its optimal deployment. *Task 2* assesses the quality of morphogenesis occurring, via the activity of signs ('actantially'). What is fundamental is witnessing the transition from schematic to allegorical to metaphoric meaning (different in each artform) marking the

passage of meaning-value upward (from lower to higher order) in any art object. Schelling's assessments of the *immaterial productivity* indifferences (of ideas or 'gods') are found in the transition of these modalities. That is, between truth and goodness, and freedom and necessity, to arrive at the *Ideal* indifference of beauty. Peirce's triadic activity of signs and Scheler's hierarchy of values are our means of situating that indifference.

Task 1: Primary determinations of poetic discourse.

The first task is to determine the general characteristics making the work an exemplar of Art's principle. This involves determination of general characteristics pointing to 'poetic discourse' via specific questions (not included here) related to determining 'ethical intentionality' as indicated here.

Task 1: General Characteristics	*Specifications*
POETIC DISCOURSE	*ETHICAL INTENTIONALITY*
1. Phenomenological 'object'/experience	*(Scheler) - Ethics and aesthetics are logically bound together in the phenomenological object or experience, defined by Scheler as 'essential intuiting', unmediated by symbols, in which the totality of signs find their fulfilment. We turn away from the sensory world and 'bracket off' what is accidental in order to seek reason.*[152]
2. Proposition *(not interpretational or reflective, but re-productive: 'absolute' real/ideal indifference)*	*(Peirce) - That form of proposition 'applicable to human conduct… (in any circumstance) …which is most directly applicable to self-control under every situation, and to every purpose'.* *(Ricoeur) - having the semantic aim of 'bringing being as actuality and as potentiality into play' (placing 'man in discourse and discourse in being')*[153] *producing tensions exhibited between*

[152] See earlier discussion on 'accidentality' above (also in Trimarchi, 2024b, Trimarchi, 2024c) - one of Schelling's key distinctions governing Art's Principle.

[153] Even landscape/still life paintings, at their best, involve propositions of 'human conduct' (French painter Jean-Batiste Chardin provides good examples of latter); hence why this specification applies to all artforms.

	subject/predicate, literal/metaphorical interpretation, and identity/difference.
3. Purpose	*(Schelling) The 'absolute' indifference between beauty and truth, and necessity and freedom form the directional propositional basis of the purpose of poetic discourse, drawing the universal into the particular, ensuring the relational structure of actants executing this purpose separate the subject from its ideas, allowing their relationship to be obtained objectively. (This purpose is different from that of artefacts – see Trimarchi, 2022).*

Task 2: Meaning-value drivers and markers.

This task determines what special characteristics *drive* meaning-value in an exemplary artwork. Art's fundamental ontological properties (eg., intersubjectivity, morphogenesis, transparency etc., - see Trimarchi, 2024a) drive markers of *higher* meaning-value (*Figure 2*).

Task 2: *Exemplar* *Characteristics* *(Meaning Drivers)*	*Specifications* *(Meaning Markers)*
1. Metamorphosis	*Metaphor[154] - Art's primary meaning marker (defined as the highest indifference between the allegorical and the metaphorical morphogenesis; or a proper 'metaphorical utterance' as defined by Ricoeur, leaving the 'object' in suspension 'while its reference continues to have no direct representation'). Combined with narrative, metonymy, synecdoche etc., to produce variation in actantial structure (as explained in Trimarchi, 2024c).*
2. Activity of signs	*The actantial structure is revealed in the activity of signs' higher/lower meaning value directionality gauged by key relational factors:* *1. Order of signs [Different in the craft vs art object. In the former there is no suspension of the object; instead, we move directly from object 1 to the interpretant (the Third, which must then return to this second (O1)].* *2. Relation between the 'object' and 'Object' (real Second, Object 2) in reference to the subject (First) distinguishes proper improper metaphor.*

[154] Specifically, the deployment of *proper* metaphors combined with narrative and other tropes (Trimarchi, 2024c).

	3. Quality of all key indifferences (real and ideal contents, and tensions) and the values of qualities rendered (ie., the degree/quality of universality drawn into the particular).
	4. Progress toward reasonable concreteness ('the whole' disclosure as a part-whole relation in actuality or reason) directed at human conduct.
	5. Degree of ethical intentionality present (ie., movement to Scheler's higher values; degree to which key determinants of Art's principle are met)

Task 3: Determinations of higher value.

Task 3 essentially converts *Tasks 1 & 2* specifications into more detailed examinations of 'good' and 'great' exemplars using Schelling's system. This requires closer attention to purpose inherent in artform specificity (ie., formal characteristics), or in the *qualities of features* they employ (ie., non-formal characteristics associated with distinguishing 'proper' and 'improper' metaphor, narrative coherence, etc.,).

Task 3: Exemplar Characteristics	*Specifications (from lower to higher order meaning- values)*
1. Phenomenology	*Schelling's meaning modalities must evidence the highest possible progression toward 'the metaphoric' (in different artforms). Lower artforms (eg., bas relief) tend toward the schematic, higher forms (eg., sculpture) naturally exhibit features tending toward the proper metaphoric (evident using Task 2). 'Good' art must reveal higher meaning (as a prerequisite), but 'great' art must reveal higher meaning with the highest propensity for self-actualising the value of Spirit toward the 'Holy'.[155]* *Peirce's actantial phenomenology is operative equally as a means of determining intentionality in both 'good' and 'great' art.*
2. Proposition	*The propositional nature of 'good' versus 'great' art is not easily distinguishable. This is because the definition of 'possibility', as all art's fundamental activity in search of reason, must remain undefined. But we can take from the propositional differences between 'good' and 'bad' art at least some aspirational guide in direction. (Eg., as Schelling shows, not just any object is suitable for artistic inquiry).*

[155] See Trimarchi, 2024a and Trimarchi, 2024b for Schelling's archetypal references revealing a complete categorical qualitative paradigm applicable to any artform.

		An ethos may be judged both by the predominance of certain higher or lower order artforms as well as by the prevalence of higher or lower order propositions evident in its art. Such determination can only be made, using Task 1 & 2 considerations, by applying Scheler's hierarchy to Schelling's system. 'Good' art must evidence ethical intentionality in its propositions; but as well as this, 'great' art must clearly evidence the optimum approach toward 'the absolute' reason for being.
3.	*Purpose*	*There is no essential difference between the purpose of 'good' or 'great' art; only a difference in the extent of its achievement. Because 'the sublime', as Schelling argues, is contained within humanity in the world no supernatural forces dictate its presence. Thus 'genius' is simply the discovery of value in the relation between the person and the 'other' which, as A. N. Whitehouse says, 'permeates through and through the poetic view of nature'.* *The difference between 'good' and 'great' art therefore cannot be found in its singular purpose (meaningfulness), but only in the increase of penetration into 'what we can never fully understand' (ie., 'the absolute'). Similarly, there is no difference between the purposelessness of either (which rests in the 'automatic' self-actualising value of that penetration).*

TABLES 1 AND 2 – *Indicative Assessments* [156]

Table 1 below shows an example of Good/Bad Art assessment of Artwork 1 and Artwork 2 (a generic assessment based on two unspecified poems). Table 2 provides a Good/Great Assessment of two films (*Roma* and *Bicycle Thieves*).

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[156] Full hermeneutic descriptions involving the selected artworks in question and the qualitative descriptions (eg., drawn from Schelling, Trimarchi, 2024b) guiding the determination of these scores are omitted (see eg., §4).

TABLE 1 Good/Bad Art assessment of Artwork 1 and Artwork 2 (generic example)

Task 2 Steps	Activity of signs	Artwork 1 (A1)	Artwork 2 (A2)	->Higher Meaning-value
2(a)	1. First (1st)	Poetic Discourse (all Task 1 criteria) confirmed in (artform 1) by the presence of metaphorical movement – evident in the complete complex trajectory of signs: 1->2->3->**2->1**	Poetic Discourse (all Task 1 criteria) confirmed in (artform 2) by the presence of metaphorical movement – evident in the complete complex trajectory of signs: 1->2->3->**2->1**	A1:✓ A2:✓
	2. object 1 (second) (2nd)	An object is present (that is, A1's Subject (....) desires an Object (...) which is identified by the interpretant as the Sender's intention (...) A1's 'whole' existence lies in its statement of (.... How the Subject attempts to attain the *final* Object) – ie., the object of the proper metaphor. We immediately intuit A1's real Object lies elsewhere	An object is present (that is, A2's Subject (....) desires an Object (...) which is identified by the interpretant as the Sender's intention (...) A2's 'whole' existence lies in its statement of (.... How the Subject attempts to attain the *final* Object) – ie., the object of the proper metaphor. We immediately intuit A2's real Object lies elsewhere.	A1:✓ A2:✓
2(b)	3. Interpretant (3rd)	The interpretant now determines that the real Object (Object 2) is .... The relationship between the Object and the Receiver ('those who stand to gain from it') is...	The interpretant now determines that the real Object (Object 2) is .... (ie., inappropriate metaphor) The relationship between the Object and the Receiver is ... (ie., of a low grade)	A1:✓ A2:✗
	3. Object 2 (real second) (2nd)	A1's Object 2 contains the proposition ('applicable to human conduct') which is.... Via the Receiver, we assess Object 2's: • Intentional value: ... • Effective expression: ...	A2's Object 2 contains the proposition ('applicable to human conduct') which is... (ie., not reasonable) Via the Receiver, we assess Object 2's: • Intentional value: ... • Effective expression: ...	A1:✓ A2:✗
2(c)	1. *real* First (1st)	A1's indifferences consist in: 1. Ricoeur's tensions [1] • Object 1 'opponents' vs 'helpers': [2] .... 2. Schelling's system of indifferences (specific to this artform of .... which A1 is a member of): • Allegory and metaphor -> the highest indifference of metaphor • Truth and goodness -> beauty • Freedom and necessity -> 'absolute' indifference The indifference between the ideal and the real of A1 can be expressed as .... (qualitative description of its 'absolute' identity)	A2's indifferences consist in: 1. Ricoeur's tensions • Object 1 'opponents' vs 'helpers': ... 2. Schelling's system of indifferences (specific to this artform of .... which A2 is a member of): • Allegory and metaphor -> the highest indifference of metaphor • Truth and goodness -> beauty • Freedom and necessity -> 'absolute' indifference The indifference between the ideal and the real of A2 can be expressed as .... (qualitative description of its 'absolute' identity)	A1:✓ A2:✗ A1:✓ A2:✗
	Scheler's Hierarchy [3]	The ethical intentionality of A1 is evidenced in a conversion of (eg., ... 'vital values' to 'spiritual/holy' values) by ... (qualitative description), giving it a notional value of ... (bad/good/great)	The ethical intentionality of A2 is evidenced in a conversion of (eg., ... 'use-values' to ... 'vital values') by .... (qualitative description), giving it a notional value of ... (bad/good/great)	A1:✓ A2:✗
	TOTAL Meaning Marker 'score':	Artwork 1 (qualitative assessment): Overall descriptive assessment ('good') Overall descriptive assessment: ★★★★	Artwork 2 (qualitative assessment): Overall descriptive assessment: ('bad') Overall descriptive assessment: ★★	

[1] Though Ricoeur's 'tensions' are also reflected in Schelling's indifferences the latter is more useful for making assessments within and between artform categories. Nevertheless, Ricoeur's tensions and referential system (described in Trimarchi, 2024c) can be applied here to complement the latter.

[2] This is a generic qualitative assessment of how well the following tensions are resolved by the work (in this example): subject-predicate (score: …); literal-metaphoric (score: …); identity-difference (score: …).

[3] See *Figure 2* and *Table 2* demonstrating the process of assessment for 'good vs great' art. Note that both 'good/bad' and good/great' assessments intersect here, though they can be done separately.

TABLE 2 Good/Great Assessment comparing the films *Roma* and *Bicycle Thieves*[1]

	1st Artwork's proposition/s	2nd Activity of signs	3rd Person/Public Statement	2nd Metamorphic content	1st Final Receiver (object/Object) Value
Step 1 *Assessing Meaning Drivers:*	Subject's desire: for an Object which we identify *after* the interpretant (Third)	Sender's intention: object 1	Receiver's interpretation (the way the Subject attempts to attain the first object) - relationship between the object 'and those who stand to gain from it'	Topological (empirical-historical)/ Metaphorical	*The relation between the 'object' and 'Object' (real Second) in reference to the subject (First) – ie., this relation distinguishes further between proper and improper metaphor):* ROMA: not present ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: bicycle search – self-sufficiency ✓
Intent (toward higher purpose)	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	Receiver's intuitive receipt of the person/public statement: ROMA: un-symbolic but confused/conflicted ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: human conduct ✓
Import (propositional worth)	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	Proposition which is '*applicable to human conduct*' - Object 2 value: ROMA: confused or conflicted ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: human telos (sacrifice) ✓
Reason (transparency)	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	ROMA: ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: ✓	*The presence of an ethical intentionality (ie., movement toward Scheler's higher values) and the degree to which all three key determinants of the principle of art are met (see Task 1)*: ROMA: not present ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: present and met ✓
Step 2 *Value of Meaning Markers*	ROMA: ★★★ BICYCLE THIEVES: ★★★★★	ROMA: -object 1 and related particulars worlded (to some extent) ✓ BICYCLE THIEVES: -worlding complete ✓	ROMA: -unclear passage from interpretant ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: -suspended object via proper metaphor ✓	ROMA: -technologies of action dominate meaning markers ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: -higher value✓	*The gaps between all other indifferences (real and ideal contents, and tensions) and the values of qualities rendered by these relative to the subject, ie., the greater value of universality drawn into the particular):* ROMA: ★★★ BICYCLE THIEVES: ★★★★★
Step 3 *Meaning-value Measures*	ROMA: ★★★ BICYCLE THIEVES: ★★★★★	ROMA: -points beyond lower order values ✓ BICYCLE THIEVES: -points to holy ✓	ROMA: -minor elevation to 'spiritual' value ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: -elevation to 'holy' value ✓	ROMA: -not present ✗ BICYCLE THIEVES: -higher value ✓	Metamorphosis toward 'wholeness' and 'immateriality': ROMA: (not achieved) ★★★ BICYCLE THIEVES: (fulfilled) ★★★★★
ROMA: BICYCLE THIEVES:	★★★ ★★★★★	★★★ ★★★★★	★★★ ★★★★★	★★★ ★★★★★	★★★ ★★★★★

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[1] Essentially, this comparison reveals De Sica's film is 'greater' on account of its metaphoric, 'collectivising' elevation (descriptive detail omitted).

APPENDIX C: ALIGNING SCHELER'S PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY WITH PEIRCE'S SEMIOTICS

Scheler's hierarchy of values underpins an 'aesthetics of meaning', where truth and beauty merge and the conviction of experience is '*given*'. There is substantial phenomenological evidence (including in neuroscience, see Trimarchi, 2024c) for its *objective* application to a conception of Art as a *way of valuing*. Summarised below are the key features making this possible, indicating relevant intersections with Peircian semiotics.

1) Feeling-states and feelings are different. The first belongs to 'contents and appearances', the second to 'functions of reception' (at face value, Peirce's *Seconds* and *Thirds* respectively). *Intentional feelings* (further distinguishable into sub-categories unnecessary to concern ourselves with here) are different to feelings *mediated in experience and thinking by a symbolic relationship.*

2) Intentional feelings represent original, *prefelt* relatedness and directedness toward objectivity. They embody '*laws of understanding*' resulting from 'the interconnections of meaning between value-complexes and emotional reactions [constituting] the *presupposition* of *all* empirical understanding'.[1] They direct us to *all* understanding including, most importantly for art, 'the Other'; without which we cannot understand the psychic life of others or ourselves. They simultaneously bridge reason and sensibility since they form unique meaning-complexes *not* contingent on empirical causality in either 'inner-perception' or 'outer-perception'. (They are, in Peirce's terms: *Firsts*).

3) All variations of associated intentional feelings receiving values (eg., 'reflective' feeling), are classed as *intentional functions of feeling*. They don't register as 'representational' objectifications, arising independently in consciousness only *as values* (ie., non-pictorially/linguistically). Yet these 'units' of feeling/value form the basis of 'language' (as one form of objective 'representation' among non-verbal/literal forms). They are possible *constituents* of 'proper metaphor' (ie., pre-cognised, pre-processed 'metaphoric meaning' as in Johnson's

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[1] Scheler, *FE*, p. 258, f 25.

directional metaphors; consisting of symbol, allegory, conceptual fragments etc., progressing up Schelling's mythological categories).

4) We distinguish intentional feelings and any such directed emotional functions from acts of 'preferring' and 'placing after', which constitute *a higher stage* of emotional and intentional life belonging to 'the sphere of *value-cognition, not* to the sphere of striving'. Scheler thus, for instance, explicitly denies the centrality of empathy as a 'field of meaning creation' because though such emotions are in the strict sense intentional – they are '"directed" and sense-giving, but we classify them with loving and hating as "*emotional acts*," in contrast to intentional functions of feeling'.[2] (*Such* higher stage 'Loving' and 'Hating' relates to Peirce's '*final*' *Second*, the *real* Object; Ricoeur's 'second ontology'; or Schelling's 'empirical object').

Thus, 'loving and hating constitute the highest level of our intentional emotive life'.[3] They are spontaneous acts that do not presuppose the acts of preferring and placing after (choosing) even though they have features in common with these (ie., both belong to the value-realm of 'being'). They relate, in different ways, to both feeling and preferring and the various modes of 'striving'. They are not 'reactive' to felt values and value heights (ie., after the event of preferring). Instead, they are the *only* acts that have a '*disclosing* role in our value-comprehension' and as such they can *move* us to '*new* and *higher*' values (ie., apprehending Reason). Because they come *before* preferring, Scheler attributes to them a '*creative*' role. They go beyond all other acts and corresponding value-qualities in absoluteness, apriority, and originality.

Intentional feeling is the *original prefelt* conditioned response to any artwork (Peirce's *First* in 'the real' world) signifying one's habituated *preferring*. To approach 'the Ideal', this must become *habitually reconditioned* 'loving and hating' so that the real First (reality) can be reached. Peirce's *real* First, also 'unprocessed', is thus Schelling's 'absolute' *reality* (immanent meaning; the

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[2] Ibid., 260.
[3] Ibid., 260.

indifference between the ideal and the real, approaching the 'absolute' *Ideal*:
Empirical Object). And also, Scheler's 'absolute': the Holy (highest value).[1]

All 'Firsts' are the result of habit-taking. But *this* real First requires engagement
of the *intellect* via habit-taking to approach Reason. It takes a 'process
metaphysics' explanation of art to track its passage and distinguish why only
metaphoric rather than *allegoric* mythologising can consistently produce it.

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[1] Note the etymological origin of 'holy' is Whole. Hence all these 'absolutes' – as the Object
of art – represent a resolution of the part-whole and becoming-being problems.