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Ontic versus Ontological: Toward a Heideggerian Everyday Aesthetics

SUMMARY OF PH.D. THESIS

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Key words: aesthetics, the everyday, everyday life, philosophical hermeneutics, philosophical proceduralism, aesthetic experience, everyday aesthetics, ontic, ontological, environmental aesthetics, Dasein, live creature, consummatory experience, world, fourfold, thing, object, *pragma*, dwelling, limited-scope aesthetics, historicity, desubstantialization, aesthetic compartmentalization, pragmatism, defining art, defining the everyday, anthropocentrism, aestheticism, aesthetic perception, status conferral, taxonomies, aesthetic elitism, ontic (derogatory) experience, non-derogatory (ontological) experience.

Summary

The doctoral thesis *Ontic versus Ontological: Toward a Heideggerian Everyday Aesthetics* argues in favor of the idea that Heidegger's ontology of art and of the everyday can enrich the current movement of everyday aesthetics. It does so by presenting an ontological alternative to the already abundant ontic examples of how everyday objects and events are considered aesthetically. The dissertation complements the ontic approaches by reinterpreting aesthetics and aesthetic experience in Heideggerian terms.

The working hypotheses of the doctoral thesis are:

- (1) Aesthetics is presently broadening its reach and scope beyond the artworld, toward the realm of the everyday;
- (2) By means of its ontic/ontological differentiation, Heidegger's philosophy can contribute to broadening the horizons of aesthetics;
- (3) Both the notion of "aesthetics" and of "aesthetic experience" can be reinterpreted so that they gain a non-derogatory meaning in Heideggerian terms.

The specific objectives of the doctoral thesis are:

- (Chapter 1:) To identify the conditions under which Heidegger is relevant to aesthetics and under which Heidegger's association with aesthetics is feasible;
- (Chapter 2:) To formulate a Heideggerian alternative to the already existing – but incomplete and unsatisfactory, according to some aestheticians – definition of everyday aesthetics;
- (Chapter 3:) To outline the main characteristics of a notion of aesthetic experience that is ontological in Heideggerian terms;
- (Chapter 4:) To provide a framework (i.e., a basic conceptual structure) within which the notion of aesthetic experience just obtained takes effect.

To reach its general and specific objectives, the doctoral dissertation uses conceptual and comparative analysis, systematic criticism, descriptions, and reinterpretations of fundamental statements and ideas, as follows:

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 (*Beyond the Definition of Art: Aesthetics from a Hermeneutical Viewpoint*) describes the broader context of expanding the scope of aesthetics, within which Heidegger and Dewey were to be deemed two of the philosophical sources of everyday aesthetics. I then identify Heidegger's potential contributions to the movement of everyday aesthetics. These

are related to the historicity of art, a desubstantialized conception of the human being, and an orientation of aesthetic analysis toward the way in which beings provide the nature of the “subject,” as opposed to an immanent conception of the latter. Thirdly, I clarify two common misunderstandings that stem from Heidegger’s contribution to the field of everyday aesthetics. Section 1.3.1 formulates the difference between pragmatism and Heidegger’s account of art, while section 1.3.2. clarifies the association of Heidegger to aesthetics in the title of the present doctoral dissertation.

Section 1.1 (*Toward the Everyday: A Review of the Expanded Scope of Aesthetics*) takes interest in the conditions that made possible the development of everyday aesthetics in contemporary philosophy. I explain why certain positions in the aesthetics of the 20th century need counteraction in order to satisfactorily take into account contemporary art, and I conclude that the two main traits of aesthetics that have to be overcome are a specific form of aestheticism and anthropocentrism. After providing several examples of how the latter task may be accomplished, I argue that in doing so, focus on art has to be abandoned in the favor of all perceivable things that can form a complete experience. Demonstration focuses mainly on Anglo-American aesthetics and the section ends by highlighting the complementary role of hermeneutics within the extension of aesthetics’ scope.

Section 1.2 (*The Hermeneutic Roots of Everyday Aesthetics*) takes up the idea of “pragmatist aesthetics” described in the previous section and relates it to another equally important line of thought for the (re)thinking of the everyday, which is Heidegger’s corpus. I argue that the latter is all the more important because Heidegger was the first philosopher to claim that elemental philosophical inquiry pertains to a hermeneutics of phenomena, or to hermeneutical phenomenology. I claim that aestheticians of the everyday were apt to see the potential of applying hermeneutics to aesthetics and quickly regarded Heidegger, alongside John Dewey, as one of the forerunners of everyday aesthetics.¹ Therefore, section 1.2 conducts a twofold analysis: firstly, it shows why Heidegger can be considered a forerunner of the aesthetics of everyday, and, in the same time, it compares Heidegger’s conception of the everyday to Dewey’s. Additionally, I reformulate Bell’s idea of art taking off from lived life and history as the question of whether art is immanent (standing for a remote “world of ecstasy” unattainable by any other means) or transcendent (standing for a contexture of relations with our actual world and history). On a Heideggerian basis, I then submit that art is definitely historical and, according to some interpreters, transcendent in one way or another.

¹ Crispin Sartwell, “Aesthetics of the Everyday,” in Jerrold Levinson (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 761-70.

But while we may agree that accepting art's historicity is somewhat natural in the context of expanding the scope of aesthetics, the section still poses the problem of what remains of art, that is, how do we define it now that what was supposed to define it (aesthetics) expands its scope beyond art, toward literally all things, or at least "anything viewed" (Ziff).

Drawing upon Heidegger's idea of hearkening (or paying heed to) everyday things, the section concludes that due to the fundamental characteristic of Dasein which is historicity, a desubstantialization of Dasein occurs in the first instance, and of beings themselves in the second. The idea behind the investigations in this section is to bridge art and everyday life under one common purpose, which is to account ontologically for human life. In this section research concludes that the latter has a pre-scientific nature, and albeit its lack of formality, it bears a holistic or consummatory characteristic capable of invigorating both the bodily and intellectual dimensions of human beings.

Section 1.3 (*Two Clarifications regarding Heidegger's Criticism of Aesthetics*) points out that it would be out of place to assume, as some authors have, that Heidegger's focus on phenomena as opposed to the human ideal projection of those phenomena renders the German philosopher a pragmatist. I outline the need of reconciliation between Heidegger and aesthetics by clarifying what is it exactly that the German philosopher rejects in aesthetics. I focus on how his manner of doing so differs from his pragmatic counterpart, to which he has been increasingly associated over the last years in the Anglo-American environment. Here, the thesis indicates that a pragmatic understanding of experience misses Heidegger's point by postulating an equivalence between "understanding" and practical ability. A secondary result of the section is ruling out any doubts in what regards the acknowledgement of Heidegger's complementarity in relation to philosophical pragmatism when spurring aesthetics toward the analysis of the everyday.

Secondly, the I clarify that if certain conditions are abode to by aesthetics, the association of Heidegger with aesthetics will be less paradoxical. I identify two main reasons for the alienation of art from everyday life, present in both Heidegger's and Dewey's accounts of art, these being museumification of art and transforming art into an international commodity. Then I derive three bases upon which aesthetics is rejected by Heidegger: its scientism (studying art as present-at-hand), its non-holistic approach (studying art as ahistorical), and its compartmentalization (bordering aesthetics as a discipline). But by identifying the reasons for which aesthetics is rejected by Heidegger, research in this section also provides a simple answer to how aesthetics can be reconciled with the German philosopher: by a type of aesthetics that renounces scientism, holistically approaches art, and

does not border its scope as a discipline. A further secondary result achieved here is clarifying the title of this doctoral dissertation, which associates Heidegger to aesthetics.

Chapter 2

Once chapter 1 outlined the broader context of the expansion of aesthetic analysis toward the everyday, Chapter 2 (*Toward a Heideggerian Understanding of "Everyday Aesthetics"*) attempts to see if the movement is legitimized by current debates over its coherence and consistency among today's everyday aestheticians. The chapter thus firstly presents several such attempts from today's talks in some of the world's leading periodicals in aesthetics and argues they fit in the general quest of defining everyday aesthetics, or at least its object of study, from within the movement itself. I preliminarily conclude that, although quite helpful for an overall image of everyday aesthetics, the debate is still left unsolved on three accounts. First, it fails to argue for its chosen limitation of what to consider as pertaining to the everyday. Second, it only considers the everyday ontically (as opposed to ontologically). Third, the ontic means of defining the realm of the everyday themselves are not considered to their full length. Consequently, research results in this chapter provide a Heideggerian alternative that addresses all these three issues. The alternative is based upon converting the procedural ontic definition of art in Dickie's institutional theory to a procedural ontological account of everyday objects and events in Heidegger's hermeneutics. The result consists of an ontological definition of everyday aesthetics.

Section 2.1 (*A Recent Debate on the Status of Everyday Aesthetics*) conducts a review of one of the latest debates on aesthetic experience and argues that, silently but noticeably enough, from its beginning to its end, the debate regards the status of everyday aesthetics, that is to say, its legitimacy and validity as a movement in contemporary philosophy. Furthermore, I insert some pieces of criticism when presenting most of the views involved in the debate, thus paving the way for an alternative definition of the experience of the everyday. The section concludes that the first definition (offered by Irvin) is too restrictive, in that it only concerns the impact of everyday aesthetics on morality. Furthermore, the impact itself is referred to in terms of interpretation and context, which need further explanation if they are to shed any light on the necessity of an aesthetics of the everyday. Nonetheless, lax as it may be, the definition suffices for drawing our attention beyond the artworld. I then criticize a second definition (Melchionne's), in that it is not actually a definition, but rather an incomplete description which limits the scope of everyday aesthetics. I finally argue that even if

Melchionne highlights the pervasiveness of everyday activities in our life (which is absent or totally different in the case of work of art), this still does not justify for his limitation of aesthetic scope to a number of 5 human activities (food, wardrobe, dwelling, conviviality, and going out).

In section 2.2 (*Procedure and Ontology: A Heideggerian Definition of Everyday Aesthetics*) I hold that, even though it is totally legitimate to support that the aesthetics of the everyday surpasses the reach of the artworld, this does not mean that some of the methods and perspectives used in the aesthetics of the arts cannot be applied to the aesthetic study of the realm of the everyday. In a word, aesthetics must not necessarily be *one* aesthetics on the one side (within the artworld) and *another* aesthetics on the other (within the everyday). The same is the case with a procedural view on things, of which the I hold that it can also be expanded so that it would account for entities beyond the artworld. Thus research in this section bases a Heideggerian account of the everyday upon this expansion. Investigation counters the apparent incompatibility between how art is approached procedurally in analytic philosophy and how it is tackled in (Heidegger's) hermeneutic philosophy. The point argued is that we can speak of a procedural conferral of aesthetically relevant status on objects and events in the latter case, given certain conditions. Specifically, I hold that the most important condition is to abandon the view that one or more subjects forming an institution bestow the status of art upon an object, in favor of the possibility that, as ready-to-hand, the object recommends itself as aesthetically relevant to its public. To prove this point, Dickie's institutional theory of art and Davies's additions to it are firstly reviewed. Then, a comparative analysis between the conditions set by Davies and Dickie for a procedural conferral of art status and Heidegger's own account is conducted. Investigation concludes that the latter meets the requirements of procedural conferral of status and, finally, I formulate a corresponding statement applicable to everyday (non-art) entities. The statement is: an everyday object or event is (1) a thing (2) which confers meaning on the world and which may or may not lend itself to being experienced.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 (*Reconciling Heidegger with Aesthetics: The Notion of "Aesthetic Experience"*) takes interest in the last part of the statement formulated in section 2.2 and is therefore concerned with how we experience things in Heideggerian terms. The questions it addresses are whether experience in Heideggerian terms is possible and, if yes, what are the conditions

under which we may call that experience “aesthetic.” As in the case of aesthetics as a discipline, I submit that aesthetic experience, too, can *gain* a positive meaning, provided that we manage to firstly identify the precise negative meaning Heidegger associates it with and strip it of that respective sense. The manner in which my research does so is by identifying the characteristics that Heidegger considers negative in aesthetic experience, and then finally formulate a notion of aesthetic experience that would be far less objectionable in Heideggerian terms. The structure of this chapter unwinds according to the following route: I firstly provide an overview of how aesthetic experience is understood in post-Deweyan Anglo-American philosophy, but unlike the discussion on chapter 2, where the dissertation has researched what *amendments* have been brought to Dewey’s consummatory experience, here it researches what *alternatives* there are to it. Afterwards, the investigation identifies the reasons why aesthetic experience has a precise negative meaning in Heidegger. Once that meaning is identified, we can attempt to rule it out and then finally formulate its positive meaning, which should be satisfactory for most Heideggerians. As a caveat to non-Heideggerians, the chapter also provides a succinct explanation of the difference between ontic and ontological, of which the dissertation makes extensive use.

Section 3.1 (*Outline of Current Views on Aesthetic Experience*) points to the heterogeneous manner in which aesthetic experience is approached today. I firstly take interest in those philosophers who explicitly acknowledge the efforts for an aesthetic account of the everyday, while nevertheless holding that the notion of aesthetic experience also needs further clarification in the realm of the artworld. As such, I investigate Carroll’s attempt to provide an overview and a solution to how the aesthetic experience of art should be regarded. I agree that in art aesthetic experience may be embodiment of content, but further ask how could one extend the application of Carroll’s view outside the sphere of artworks. There are two types of additional approaches to aesthetic experience identified here: one pertaining to philosophers decrying the compartmentalization of aesthetic experience and its limiting to the academic discipline of aesthetics as the study of art, and another to philosophers who attempt to actually reconsider the scope of aesthetic experience and its possible applications. The section analyzes the second type of approach and concludes that Seel’s identification of aesthetic experience with aesthetic perception as that which brings forth new possibilities is quite close to the dissertation’s own view on aesthetic experience. Nevertheless, it fails to explicitly refer to things’ readiness as that source of possibilities.

In section 3.2 (*Art and Truth: The Derogatory Sense of Aesthetic Experience*) the dissertation identifies the derogatory sense of aesthetic experience in Heidegger’s philosophy.

This is (1) an experience accessible only to the few, and (2) an experience that calls for height, breadth, and rigor of form. Nonetheless, I argue that Heidegger attempted not to eradicate the notion from our vocabulary, but to identify its negative meaning throughout the history of art, just as he did with the term “object.” A reading of his first volume on Nietzsche, *The Will to Power as Art*, backs up this thesis by showing that Heidegger regards aesthetic experience exactly how Nietzsche regards the supersensuous truth: in a pejorative sense. But just as Heidegger reinterpreted truth as non-supersensuous at that time, the section submits we can interpret aesthetic experience as not pertaining to that supersensuous truth, as well.

Section 3.3 (*Experience as One of Heidegger’s Primary Interests*) provides an evident proof that Heidegger has taken a genuine interest in experience. It focuses on his earliest 1919 lecture at the University of Freiburg, included in volumes 56-7 of the *Complete Works*, under the title *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie*. The dissertation makes extensive use of it in this section to outline experience as one of Heidegger’s main interests. The section synthesizes the whole of the work under the question “what does it mean to experience something?,” from which all questions concerning reality and all epistemological questions are then derived. But by merely presenting Heidegger’s interest in what experience means and how do we “have” that experience, I actually sketch a non-derogatory meaning that “aesthetic experience” may take on if it is to survive in Heideggerian terms. In such an aesthetic experience subjective substance is replaced by relation and comportment toward things in an attempt to appropriate them in their readiness-to-hand. The section finally argues that this experience is also aesthetic if we understand “aesthetic” in the sense outlined in chapter 1, where the dissertation argued for an aesthetics that would accommodate an ontological view of reality.

In section 3.4 (*On the Proposal of Non-derogatory Aesthetic Experience*) I investigate whether the non-derogatory concept of aesthetic experience just enunciated in section 3.3 may play a role in contemporary debates over Heidegger’s notion of “art.” I study the notion of aesthetic experience with resort to some contemporary comments made on Heidegger’s understanding of art. Firstly, I attempt to see if there are any more traits of aesthetic experience in positive Heideggerian terms that could be brought to light. Secondly, I introduce the importance of a conception of readiness-to-hand as nothing. The latter is important not only for “overcoming aesthetics from within” and thus obtain a clarified version of non-derogatory aesthetic experience, but also for the framework of experiencing *per se*, thus constituting an introductory discussion for the framework I propose in chapter 4.

What I then propose here is a *destruction* of aesthetic experience, in the sense of the term presented in the first chapter of the dissertation. Drawing upon *Nietzsche I*, if destruction of aesthetics has any negative connotations, then here I hold that these are directed by Heidegger towards the present understanding of things, rather than the ancient one. In the same time, my dissertation acknowledges the necessity of an alternative to Bernasconi's view, in that the alternative should focus on an ontological overcoming of modern aesthetics, instead of simply switching focus from art to political engagement and creating links between the two, which is basically Bernasconi's interpretation of Heidegger. The preliminary results of this section consist in the following further refinements of non-derogatory aesthetic experience: (1) its being non-intentional and pre-reflexive and (2) its existing not only in relation to art, but as an ontological layer subtending all ontic experience.

Chapter 4

Overall, the fourth chapter (*An Ontological Framework for Everyday Experience*) addresses the question of *how* do we experience a thing's readiness-to-hand. It reinforces the view that, ontologically speaking, everyday life and art are not to be strictly separated, since, in what regards the reliability of things, the everyday and art differ in that in the everyday a thing's readiness is better hidden *to us* than in works of art. But the essential strife between hiddenness and unhiddenness is equally present in both spheres of interest. Therefore, aesthetic experience as non-compartmentalized, non-intentional, and pre-reflexive experience of the event of reliability is equally possible in both the context of everyday life and that of art. This chapter reaches its aim by providing an ontological framework of interpretation which can be applied simultaneously to our experience of things in their Heideggerian sense. Since the framework is not based upon ontic approaches neither to art, nor to objects as *pragmata* and afterwards "things," the chapter firstly provides a rebuttal to critics that have initiated debates with Heidegger on these terms. Then, I reject several ontic interpretations of the notion of "fourfold" in order to derive a framework for experience which may be afterwards taken up by aestheticians interested in the everyday and in the notion of aesthetic experience in ontological terms.

Section 4.1 (*Ontic Critiques of Heidegger's Ontology*) takes interest in the authors in philosophy, philosophical aesthetics, art history, and art criticism who are dissatisfied with Heidegger's manner of overcoming the theory of truth as correspondence. I focus on two critiques: the first is Schapiro's understanding of Heidegger's interpretation of Van Gogh's

painting and the second is part of Wrathall's presentation of Heidegger's rejection of truth as correspondence. The investigation provides a rejection of Schapiro's critique on the grounds that it falls into ontic historical positivism by continuously trying to check Heidegger's assertions against a factual background. In this respect, the section agrees with several commentators who argue that Schapiro's ontic identification of the work misses Heidegger's point. Then, I consider Wrathall's attempt to parallel Heidegger to analytic philosophy, and I mostly endorse it by determining how it may contribute to a rejection of ontic interpretations to Heidegger such as that of Schapiro.

Section 4.2 (*On Heidegger's Pragmata and Their Consequences*) takes interest in the notion of "object," which "evolves" in Heidegger's thinking from its derogatory meaning to the Greek *pragma* (in *Being and Time*) and then reaches its full extent as "thing." In this section I attempt to show that the word is intrinsically connected to the notion of "world," to such an extent that in Heidegger's later philosophy world is actually that which is gathered by things. This I do by conducting an investigation into Patočka's most influential work in the English-speaking world, in which he raises certain aspects on Heidegger's view of the world that other works not inscribed in the tradition of continental phenomenology do not. Patočka questions whether Heidegger takes interest in the world as such, or rather only in a special kind of world, i.e., the world of human work. This enquiry is based on two main ideas that Heidegger puts forth: (1) that being cannot be predicated of, but only "understood practically," and (2) that things should not be conceived of as objects, as opposed to subjects, but as *pragmata*, so as to better account for the intimate ontological relation between them and the life of human beings. While agreeing with Patočka's hypothesis that the world as manipulative practice (the "world of work") is itself underlain by a primordial "harmony" between human beings and world, I demonstrate that the latter is not only in accordance with Heidegger's phenomenology, but also supported by it in many instances, the difference being that Patočka sees it as a perceptual and corporeal harmony, while Heidegger as an ontological one. The dissertation concludes at this point that reducing the consequences of *pragmata* to a "world of work" is, thus, the result of an inaccurate interpretation which does not fully take into account man's attunement to the world in Heidegger's philosophy.

In section 4.3 (*Dwelling among Things: How Do we Experience Everyday Objects and Events?*) the dissertation offers an ontological framework applicable to the analyses conducted by Heidegger in both the spheres of art *and* of the everyday. The framework stems from the manner in which things constitute Dasein's (or, later on, mortals') world by means of gathering the fourfold. First, I argue that a series of clarifications is still required in what

concerns the interpretation of Heidegger's fourfold in Anglo-American literature. Specifically, it is submitted that the equivalence between the fourfold and ontic zones of reality is to be refined into an ontological account of dwelling in order to remain true to Heidegger's purpose. After first providing an outline of the use of the term "fourfold" in Heidegger's philosophy, I review two recent cases of how the notion was interpreted ontically in English literature. Then, I counterargue these interpretations and provide several guidelines to refine the explanation of the fourfold in accordance with Heidegger's ontology of dwelling. By doing that, the dissertation also explains here the manner in which things constitute the world and how they are, thus, to be experienced in any everyday aesthetics concerned with both their ontic and their ontological apprehension.

In detail, section 4.3 presents Heidegger's basic trajectory in thinking the fourfold, after which it reviews two such mainstream interpretations, that of Young and that of Dreyfus and Spinoza. Afterwards, it provides several reasons to refine the interpretations. Those reasons relate to the fact that an ontological account of the fourfold does not presuppose rendering the latter measurable or categorical (saying what beings stand under each of the four names), but rather investigating the spheres through which things structure reality. On the basis of Heidegger's own distinction between hidden pre-worldly things and worldly things, on the one hand, and present formally objective things and object-like things, on the other, I then show that the fourfold can indeed be seen as an ontological configuration of reality, rather than a taxonomy of beings that reality presents. When claiming to show what reality is, pointing at beings presented by reality is less important than pointing at reality itself and how its configuration is retrievable in things. Under the belief that Heidegger introduced the fourfold with the second purpose, the section provisionally accepts Harman's attribution of "earth," "sky," "mortals," and "divinities" to the double bifurcation of readiness-to and presence-at-hand. As a result, I manage to outline a manner in which we can think the four notions of the fourfold ontologically, as opposed to considering them ontic taxonomies of beings.

Conclusions

The dissertation's main finding is that we experience everyday objects and events through a framework whose elements are the simultaneous instantiations of how things structure reality. In other words, the aesthetic experience of a thing as ready-to-hand is possible only in virtue of (and limited by) that thing's reliability providing us the aspects to do so. This comes to

rectify not only how modern and a good part of contemporary aesthetics conceives approaching artworks, but also how today's movement of everyday aesthetics conceives extending aesthetic analysis into the everyday.

Additionally, two characteristics of all limited-scope aesthetic approaches have been identified. Firstly, these approaches are anthropocentric, that is, heavily impregnated by subjectivism or, worse, by an enframing worldview. Secondly, limited-scope aesthetics is fond of narrow aestheticism, which is defined in chapter 1 as the belief that aesthetic qualities of art have a greater effect on people than aesthetic qualities of any other objects (if any). This view leads to aesthetic compartmentalization and to the false impression that art has nothing to do with other aspects of life. However, as the dissertation notices in the first part of its third chapter, the attempts to secure a safe place for aesthetics are what actually brought art's occlusion as that which we take interest in as a pastime activity or that in which we take no interest at all.

There are two solutions that the dissertation has proposed in this sense. First, a return to the historical condition of our understanding of things. The main problem that we faced (which was also the reason why "ideal" notions of art prevail continuously) was that Dasein's own historicity may actually be concealed to Dasein. But by pointing out that our interpretation of a work is an interpretation "in its time," Heidegger opened the path to studying a work of art as that being which recedes from vision and our provisional interpretation, i.e., the work of art as *Zuhanden*. Another solution considered to these problems is broadening the sphere of aesthetics beyond the strict realm of art and toward everyday life. In this regard, the dissertation concludes with regard to pragmatist aesthetics that it is comparable in many instances to Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology (but not to be identified with it). The main finding brought to light is that, indeed, in what conceiving the human being is concerned, Heidegger's Dasein and Dewey's "live creature" are similarly useful for expanding the scope of aesthetics beyond the applications of the artworld. However, chapter 2 has shown that fundamental amendments can be brought to Dewey's experiential definition of art and of the everyday. Moreover, chapter 3 has indicated that totally different theories on aesthetic experience can be proposed as alternatives to Dewey's consummatory experience. In contrast to this, a subsequent aim in the dissertation was to show that such amendments or alternatives to Heidegger's ontological notion of aesthetic experience are yet to be thought, as the latter basically subsumes all ontic notions currently debated in the movement of everyday aesthetics (but also in the sphere of art-related discussions).

What the Heideggerian ontological alternative to aesthetic experience tells us is that the reliability of beings is always and already decisive for the general framework in which our actions in life take place and in which we turn to beings as present-at-hand entities. My dissertation has provided an understanding of aesthetic experience able to accommodate beings' reliability. It consists of the pre-reflexive attitude towards things in which the "I" is formed. Thus, a non-derogatory notion of aesthetic experience is provided.