



## Design and the Enigma of the World

William McNeill

To cite this article: William McNeill (2006) Design and the Enigma of the World, Design Philosophy Papers, 4:2, 93-116

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/144871306X13966268131550>



Published online: 29 Apr 2015.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 8



View related articles [↗](#)

# Design and the Enigma of the World

## William McNeill

**William McNeill specialises in the work of Heidegger, and has research interests in modern French and German philosophy and in Ancient Greek thought. He is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at De Paul University, Chicago; an editor and translator of a number of Heidegger texts, including *Pathmarks* and *The Concept of Time*; and the author of several books including *The Glance of the Eye: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the Ends of Theory* and most recently, *The Time of Life: Heidegger and Êthos*.**

In the opening up of a world, all things gain their lingering and urgency, their remoteness and nearness, their scope and their limits.

Heidegger *The Origin of the Work of Art*

## Introduction: The Design of the World

The following remarks are concerned with the origin of the world. More carefully and more modestly formulated, I am interested in the question of how historical worlds come into Being<sup>1</sup>, and how that question is addressed in the thought of the German philosopher, Martin Heidegger. What exactly is meant by a world? What gives a particular historical world its determinacy and uniqueness? And how does one world become another? What makes the world of the Greeks different from that of the medievals, or, for that matter, the world of the 1960s different from that of the 1980s? What do we mean when we speak of “the world of the sixties”? Evidently, not any one particular or determinate thing, not this or that fact, event, or circumstance, but something more like a tone, an

attunement, a certain gathering whereby certain possibilities are opened up, or suggest themselves, while others remain closed off and never occur to us. A certain mood or tone pervades every epoch, infusing the dominant *ethos* or way of doing things, the hopes and fears of human beings, their outlook upon themselves. It is the resonance of such attunement, this ever-approaching gathering of possibility, I shall try to indicate, that Heidegger attempts to think in his thought of the epochal destining of Being; and such destining is what is “at work” in the shifting of worlds, in the transition from one world to another. Yet such destining, I shall try to show, is also the enigma of art or *technē*, and as such the enigma of design.

What has precedence in the origination of world is, on Heidegger’s account, neither human subjectivity nor thought, but the work itself, the designed. It has precedence inasmuch as the origination of possibility, the repeated and ongoing emergence into Being of possible worlds, comes toward us (or is “destined”) only from out of the work that has already happened. The work, in this sense, is not simply or primarily an entity that already exists, but an event that is already at work, the happening of unconcealment that is the Being-at-work of the work, a projection of Being itself that is accomplished by this very Being-at-work.

The Being-at-work of the work, the designing of the designed, is in this sense accomplished not by human agency in the first instance, nor by any explicit projection or planning, any conscious designing, on the part of human beings. This designing of the designed, conceived as a destining, is, I shall try to argue, on Heidegger’s account at once something prehuman *and yet* something – an event – that does not occur somewhere without or beyond the human either. It is the accomplishment of art, or *technē* conceived as an origin, as an event of origination that precedes and exceeds the human, and yet, as this very precedence, itself first designs the human, first calls us into Being. Not only is the work of art, on this reading, not to be conceived as an entity or hypostatized thing: it is also not to be conceived in the narrow sense of an aesthetic object. It encompasses and extends to all human work and action – and indeed, beyond that, to the emergence of nature itself, of what the Greeks called *phusis* and what Heidegger, following Hölderlin, will call the Earth.

If we speak of the Being-at-work of the work as the designing of the designed, furthermore, then “the designed” does not refer only to that which already exists “in actuality,” as an already produced, tangible entity or object; it encompasses, rather, all that has already come into Being, including and even exceeding (and this exceedence is the event of art as origin) every determinate possibility. In designing the human, the work of art, as Heidegger paints it, first brings human beings onto a path of revealing, first gives them their *thos*, their way of dwelling in a world. It first opens up a world that calls human beings into a historically destined way

of dwelling. And yet this opening up or “setting up” of a world will also necessarily have been a setting forth of the Earth, of the self-secluding, self-concealing abyss that constitutes the ground of our Being. The originary work of art, design itself in its essence, I shall try to show, is the designing of the enigma.

### **The Enigma of the World and the Epoch of Technicity**

Our epoch, one might readily assert, is without doubt the epoch of technicity: an epoch that is still only in its incipient stages, its unfolding now seemingly as inevitable as the rising and setting of the sun, its scope no less all-encompassing with respect to the Earth (or, as we now say, with respect to “planet Earth”), the duration of its reign presumably a long one – longer, Heidegger suggests, than the history of metaphysics hitherto<sup>2</sup> – the spectre of its end the increasing unsustainability of life on Earth. We, children of the Earth, did not choose to be born into this epoch: it was our destiny. Cast into such a destiny, we have been abandoned in advance, delivered over to an epochal unfolding of Being in a thrownness we can never master, whose time we cannot choose, but at most catch sight of so as to be, momentarily for “our” time<sup>3</sup> – for the time that is ours only because, already and fundamentally, it is never simply our own. To be born is already to be expropriated – is already to have been abandoned. In an epoch such as ours, is there any place for experiencing the enigma of the world?

Yet what is meant by “the enigma of the world” here? By this title, I do not mean something enigmatic or puzzling about the world, but, echoing Heidegger, nothing more and nothing less than the enigma that the world itself is. In speaking of “the world,” moreover, I do not mean to suggest that there is only one world; quite to the contrary, as we have already noted: a world is neither singular nor stable, but temporalised historically in such a way as to enable multiple possible worlds (as Heidegger already indicates in *Being and Time*). In *Being and Time*, as is well known, Heidegger emphasises that the phenomenon of world – as a structural moment of our Being – is that which has been repeatedly “passed over” or “leapt over” (*übersprungen*) in the history of philosophy.<sup>4</sup> More importantly, he asks why this occurred “at the beginning (*Anfang*) of the ontological tradition that is decisive for us, in Parmenides explicitly,” and why it continues to occur. World, the phenomenology of *Being and Time* shows, is reducible neither to the totality of entities within the world, nor to “nature,” nor is it accessible via an ontology of those entities (as entities that are present-to-hand or ready-to-hand).

World, rather, is to be understood as a referential totality of significance, or a horizon of meaning, as a phenomenon to which Dasein is always already exposed in advance, that to which Dasein can only inevitably return in whatever degree of explicitness.<sup>5</sup> In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger repeats these

claims: “Elucidating the concept of world is one of the most central tasks of philosophy. The concept of world and the phenomenon designated thereby is what has never yet been recognised at all in philosophy.”<sup>6</sup> World is not nature, nor the sum-total of entities within the world, for both of these presuppose that we already understand something like world. World is not something consequent upon our understanding, but that which is always already unveiled in advance, the horizon within which we already dwell and from out of which we return in our dealings with individual entities. World, Heidegger insists, does not have the mode of Being of either the present-at-hand or the ready-to-hand; rather, it is there in the same way as Dasein is there: it has the mode of Being of Dasein itself.<sup>7</sup> As such, world is nothing less than the enigma. Heidegger asks: “What is this enigma, the world, and above all, in what way does it exist?”<sup>8</sup>

What I would like to suggest here is that not only does Heidegger never solve this enigma; he also increasingly comes to see that the enigma of the world is nothing more and nothing less than the enigma of art – or of what the Greeks called *technē*. In his Postscript to the 1936 essay “The Origin of the Work of Art,” Heidegger indeed opens his remarks by referring to art itself as the enigma:

The foregoing reflections are concerned with the enigma [*Rätself*] of art, the enigma that art itself is. We are far from claiming to solve the enigma. The task is to see the enigma.<sup>9</sup>

Yet what justification can there be for claiming that the enigma of the world is none other than the enigma of art, beyond the circumstantial fact that Heidegger happens to use the same term to refer to both phenomena? There are at least two possible ways, I would suggest, that one might make such a case.

One way would be to trace the development of Heidegger’s concept of world throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s, highlighting the increasing emphasis on the poetic<sup>10</sup> dimension of world. This poetic dimension was not simply absent in *Being and Time*. Yet if Heidegger there could write: “World is neither present-at-hand nor ready-to-hand, but temporalises itself within temporality. It ‘is there’ along with the [being]-outside-themselves of the ekstases”<sup>11</sup>, nevertheless a certain tension remained between the *already* “being there” of world and the poetic or productive moment implicit within the German *sich zeitigen* (meaning “to temporalise,” but also “to come about,” “come into being,” “bring [oneself] into [full] being,” thus: to flourish, to flower, to mature, as in the Greek *phusis*). In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* too (1927), the emphasis was still on the prior givenness of world, though Dasein – problematically enough – was now said to “cast its world before it.”<sup>12</sup> Yet by the 1928 course *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, the problem of the temporality of world had led Heidegger to highlight increasingly (though still in horizontal

and transcendental terms) precisely the productive dimension of ekstastic temporality:

And yet the [ekstastic] displacement [*Entrückung*] as such gives itself something in advance: precisely the futural as such, futurity in general, i.e., possibility pure and simple. The ekstase produces from itself, not a determinate possibility, but the horizon of possibility in general....<sup>13</sup>

And by the end of the following semester Heidegger had indeed abandoned all transcendental language and embraced the concept of “world-formation” (*Weltbildung*) as constituting the antecedent event on whose grounds the human being could first come to exist. In *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (1929-30) he writes: “For it is not the case that the human being first exists and then also one day decides amongst other things to form a world. Rather worldformation is something that occurs, and only on this ground can a human being exist in the first place.”<sup>14</sup> “World” is here understood not simply as a phenomenon that already exists, but as an “event” that occurs, an event that itself is a coming into being: it forms itself, it is intrinsically poietic, transformative. And yet this event does not happen without or somewhere beyond human beings either: it occurs in and through human beings, who partake in the happening of this event, although they do not originate it as “subjects.” The formation and happening of world, as the manifestation of beings as a whole in their being, is itself a poietic event: that of an originary *poi sis* of which we are not the origin, yet which, happening in and through us, first enables our dwelling. From here, I would suggest, it is but a short step to “The Origin of the Work of Art,” where the work of art is said to open up a world, or the “worlding” of a world, which, as Heidegger puts it,

is more fully in being than the tangible and perceptible realm in which we believe ourselves to be at home. World is never an object that stands before us and can be seen. World is the ever-nonobjective to which we are subject, as long as the paths of birth and death, blessing and curse, keep us transported [*entrückt*] into Being. Where the essential decisions of our history are made, are taken up or abandoned by us, go unrecognised and are rediscovered by new inquiry – there the world worlds.<sup>15</sup>

The paths of birth and death, it seems, maintain us in a fundamental subjection – a subjection, one might argue, that we of today, we of the epoch of technicity, are altogether unable to acknowledge. I shall come back to “The Origin of the Work of Art” later. Yet this subjection, a testament to our absolute inability to master our thrownness, was emphasised already by Heidegger in *Being*

*and Time*, together with the possibility of acknowledging and explicitly assuming this very finitude as the ground of our Being. This suggests a second possible path, one that would seek to approach the enigma of the world starting, once again, from *Being and Time*, but this time from another angle, namely, that of the fundamental thrownness and expropriation to which our Being is subject, a thrownness that we can never master.

Existing as thrown, *Being and Time* emphasises, Dasein has not brought itself into Being. Although it potentially belongs to itself as an ability to be, Dasein itself, as Being-in-the-world, has nevertheless not given itself to itself: it has not given its own Being to itself (*sich zu eigen gegeben*), and in this sense can never be the source of its own Being. In existing, it can “never get back behind its thrownness,” as Heidegger puts it, even though its task in existing – the task of Being – is precisely to appropriate, and thus to be, in one way or another, this ground that it is not:

And in what way *is* it this thrown ground? Solely in such a way that it projects itself upon [understands itself from out of] possibilities *into which it is thrown* [emphasis added]. The self that as such has the task of laying the ground of itself can *never* [Heidegger’s emphasis] gain power over that ground, and yet in existing has to take over being a ground. [...] Being a ground therefore means, *never* [Heidegger’s emphasis] gaining power over one’s ownmost Being from the ground up.<sup>16</sup>

Dasein’s power, its ability to be, is such only on the basis and grounds of a fundamental impotence; not just its *ability* to appropriate its own Being (and thus to be the nonoriginary [thrown] ground of itself [qua potentiality]), but the absolute *necessity* for it to do so (inexplicitly, yet at every moment – through interpretation as the “appropriation” of possibilities of Being projected in understanding) is a constant testament to the more fundamental expropriation that its thrownness is. Thrownness, Heidegger insists, does not refer to the ontic fact of our birth, conceived as a one-off event that has happened and now lies in our past, but to the ongoing fact of our continually being thrown (*im Wurf*), thus exposed to the throes of something greater than ourselves.

The movement (or rather the “movedness,” the being-moved or displacement) of this originary expropriation or abandonment that grounds our Being is, in *Being and Time*, understood initially in terms of the paths of death and birth, which is to say, of the finitude of time, just as Dasein’s nonoriginary appropriation of its Being is understood in terms of its finite freedom. Death and birth, neither of which are mine, fundamentally,<sup>17</sup> are understood ontologically in terms of the temporality of Dasein’s Being: Dasein is constantly and continually being born, just as it is constantly dying;

the unfolding of its Being-in-the-world is first, if not foremost, a relentless subjection to this force of expropriation: “Factual Dasein exists in being born [*existiert gebürtig*], and in being born it is also already dying in the sense of Being-toward-death.”<sup>18</sup> It is important to note here that birth is not to be identified with appropriation or coming into one’s own: birth, no less than death, is expropriative; coming into Being is no less a tearing us away from where we once were. Appropriation is possible only in and as the “between” of birth and death, in which Dasein exists as Care: “As Care, Dasein is the ‘between’.”<sup>19</sup> If Heidegger writes, in this context, of a superlative power that characterises Dasein, it is, nevertheless, a strange power, an uncanny power, a power that Dasein fundamentally does not own, or that it *can* own only by assuming – or by affirming in advance – its fundamental impotence:

If Dasein, by way of anticipation, lets death assume power within it, it understands itself, free for such death, in the *superlative power* belonging to its finite freedom, so as, in this freedom – which only ever exists [*ist*] in having made a choice – to assume the *impotence* of its having been abandoned to itself....<sup>20</sup>

Dasein lets death assume power, it assumes its fundamental impotence, and in so doing is granted in return and finds its freedom, its own power. Dasein’s power is its freedom, yet this freedom is not a formal property of the self, but a freedom of existence, a freedom that is itself temporally determined – that is of temporality itself – and thus a freedom that must first be attained, and attained ever anew, by Dasein in its running ahead or anticipation of its own death, by its saying “Yes, for this – for this – I agree to die.” (In this sense, Dasein’s authenticity is not a state of affairs or mode of Being that it could attain once and for all, by way of a one-off conversion experience, but rather a task of the moment, a task for the moment.) To let death be – such is Dasein’s agreement: an agreement that, in the epoch of technicity, we seem increasingly unable to acknowledge, let alone to honor.<sup>21</sup>

Freedom here, in *Being and Time*, is, quite simply, the power of death – or, as appropriated, the power of that very power, the power to let death be. In itself, it is not, however, the power of life: the latter, Heidegger here seems to suggest, is a matter of destiny. For Dasein’s impotence is not just that of the essential finitude of time, of this double expropriation (of birth and death) that, proffering the possibility of our freedom, no less certainly condemns us to exist in the discontinuity of the moment. Such impotence is implicated from the beginning in the historicity of a world and of a community to which it cannot but belong. In freeing itself for its death, Dasein simultaneously delivers itself over to itself, yet only within a possibility that it has at once chosen *and* inherited:

freedom only “is” *in* having made a choice, Heidegger emphasises, and this delivering itself over to itself, or abandoning itself knowingly (with resolute openness) and in advance to the necessity of its own having been, Heidegger calls “fate” (*Schicksal*). As fateful, Dasein remains directed toward a horizon of possibilities that it itself has not chosen, but assumed as its heritage – a heritage that precedes it, not in the sense of lying in its past, but of approaching it from – or better, as – the horizon of its future, of its world. And this means that Dasein’s fate is bound to, and participates in, a greater destiny: that of a people and of a historical world.

By the term “destiny” (*Geschick*), Heidegger in *Being and Time* designates “the happening of a community, of a people.” Destiny is not something like the cumulative effect of individual fates; rather, Heidegger insists, in being with one another in the same world, individual fates “are already guided in advance.” Yet our destiny, as this antecedent delineation of a world-horizon, is not something already decided, even though we shall not be able to escape it; it is not the antithesis of freedom conceived as autonomy of the individual – and this, I think, is something quite radical about Heidegger’s understanding of destiny, already in *Being and Time*. Our destiny, rather, is a concealed power that has yet to be freed (or manifested): it is the unfolding of a power that vastly exceeds our individual existence, yet in whose very unfolding we as finite individuals participate, at best fatefully, at worst, blind and docile. Heidegger writes: “In communication and struggle the power of destiny first becomes free. The fateful destiny of Dasein in and with its ‘generation’ constitutes the full, authentic happening of Dasein.”<sup>22</sup> The fate of an individual and the destiny of a common world, neither reducible to the other, are nevertheless so tightly bound together here that we have to think them as inseparable.

If I have dwelt at some length on this account of thrownness in *Being and Time* it is because I think that there is much more continuity than is generally realised between the account of destiny given there and Heidegger’s later thinking of destiny, even though, by the time of the later work on the essence of technicity, Heidegger will prefer to speak of a destiny of Being, or of revealing, rather than of the destiny of a people. “The Question Concerning Technology,” as is well known, understands the essence of technicity as *Ge-stell*, as a claim that challenges and orders human beings everywhere to reveal whatever is real only by setting it to order and making it available to order. Being, in the epoch of technicity, is orderability. Thus claimed – called upon in advance (and the essence of technicity is nothing other than this claim or *Anspruch*) – we humans of the epoch of technicity have already been brought into a certain horizon of possibility and so brought onto a certain path. This very process, Heidegger elucidates, is destiny:

To bring onto a path – in our language this is called *schicken*, to send. We name that sending that gathers, that first brings the human being onto a path of revealing, *das Geschick*, a destiny. From here the essence of all history is determined.<sup>23</sup>

The human being, Heidegger goes on to explain, is always subject to a destiny of revealing, yet such destiny is never a fate that hangs over us beyond our power. Rather, it first opens up and thus enables human freedom: “For the human being first becomes free insofar as he belongs to the realm of destiny... Freedom is the realm of destiny, which in each case brings a mode of revealing onto its path.”<sup>24</sup> Freedom is here not thought as a property of the human will or in terms of the causality of the will; it is conceived, rather, as an event – as the granting and revealing of possibility, yet also, therefore, as the withholding and concealment of possibility – and as such is nothing human. Earlier than the human, it belongs to the dawn of time, to the dawning of the world. It is the happening of what Heidegger here calls “the mystery,” *das Geheimnis*, which is presumably nothing other than the enigma.<sup>25</sup> Freedom, as Heidegger puts it, stands in “the most intimate relationship” with destiny, as the antecedent happening or event of revealing. “All revealing belongs to a sheltering and concealing. Yet what is concealed, and ever self-concealing, is that which frees, the mystery.”<sup>26</sup> The supreme dignity (*Würde*) of the human being, says Heidegger, indeed consists in nothing other than protecting or being the custodian of this very concealment – of a concealment that is of the Earth, and to which every being accordingly belongs: “It rests on protecting the unconcealment, and together with it and before it in every case the concealment of all that prevails upon this Earth.”<sup>27</sup>

Yet how exactly does destining, or the event of freeing, happen? That which grants, Heidegger writes, is “that which endures from out of the dawn in the manner of beginning” (*das anfänglich aus der Frühe Währende*).<sup>28</sup> The destining of every revealing, not just that of the epoch of technicity, occurs in and as such a granting. “The Question Concerning Technology” contrasts the revealing that occurs as a challenging-forth of all beings upon the Earth – a destiny in which our inability to let concealment be could scarcely be more manifest – with a more originary revealing, that of *poi sis* understood as a bringing-forth. Revealing, writes Heidegger,

is that destiny that disseminates itself on occasion and suddenly, and inexplicably to all thinking, into the revealing that is a bringing-forth and that which challenges forth, apportioning itself to humans. The revealing that challenges forth has its destinal provenance in that which brings forth. But at the same time, the Ge-stell disassembles in a destinal manner *poi sis*.<sup>29</sup>

This dissembling or distortion brought about by the epoch of *Gestell* is, Heidegger elsewhere suggests, nothing other than a dissembling of the nearness of world that approaches us from out of each thing.<sup>30</sup> But what I want to underline here is the suddenness or non-mediated character by which one destining turns into another, and by which all destining withdraws from any thinking that would attempt to give an explanatory or causal account, or understand the essence of history in terms of dialectical mediation.<sup>31</sup> It remains an enigma. In the contemporary essay “The Turning” (a term itself reminiscent of *metabol*) Heidegger underlines precisely this suddenness or abruptness as determinative of the way in which the destining of the Being of a world happens:

If a turning happens amidst the danger [the danger that is the essence of technicity], this can occur only in an unmediated way. For Being has no equal alongside it. ... Being never runs its course within a nexus of cause and effect. The way in which it, Being itself, sends itself is not preceded by any Being that effects it, nor does any Being follow it as an effect. Abruptly, out of its own essence of concealment, Being comes to pass into its epoch.<sup>32</sup>

This enigma, the unmediated coming to pass of a world epoch from out of concealment, this event whereby a world begins – is freed or released to come into its own – this enigma is, however, what Heidegger had earlier identified as the essence and enigma of art. If the essence of art is *Dichtung*, a distinctive *poi sis* or bringing into Being (distinctive in that it needs/uses us) that occurs through the human being, such *poi sis* is an instituting of Being itself in a threefold sense, as Heidegger writes in “The Origin of the Work of Art”: It is, first, the bestowal of a gift, inasmuch as the opening of unconcealment in the work is a sudden opening up of the extraordinary, one that overturns the ordinary and the customary order of the day. The extraordinary can never be derived from the ordinary; it is, as Heidegger writes, an excess. Second, art as the instituting of Being is an opening up of “that into which Dasein, as historical, has already been thrown. This is the Earth... the self-concealing ground, upon which a people resides, together with all that that people already is, though as yet concealed from itself.”<sup>33</sup> This opening up of the Earth occurs only in and through the simultaneous emergence of a world, in and through which the Earth, as concealed ground, is itself first grounded historically, brought into unconcealment as such. (Note that, by contrast with *Being and Time*, it is now art that is said to lay the ground, to appropriate the thrown ground.) Third, however, Heidegger writes, both bestowal and grounding:

have in themselves the unmediated character of what we call a beginning. Yet this unmediated character of a beginning, the peculiarity of a leap from out of what cannot be mediated, does not exclude but rather precisely entails the fact that the beginning prepares itself for the longest time and wholly inconspicuously. A genuine beginning, as a leap, is always a leap ahead in which all that is to come is already leapt over [*übersprungen*], albeit as something veiled. The beginning already contains the end in a concealed manner.<sup>34</sup>

If the phenomenon of world was indeed that which was already leapt over, in and as the decisive beginning of our tradition, this was no doubt due in part to the fact that the world is not, strictly speaking, a phenomenon at all – or is at best an exceptional, distinctive phenomenon in the same way that Being itself, as Heidegger indicated in *Being and Time*, is a distinctive phenomenon. What is it, he there asked, that phenomenology must let be seen?

Obviously [manifestly] that which most proximately and for the most part precisely does *not* show itself, that which, by contrast with that which most proximately and for the most part shows itself, is *concealed*, yet at the same time is something that essentially belongs to that which shows itself most proximately and for the most part, and in such a way that it constitutes its meaning and ground.

Yet what remains *concealed* in a distinctive sense, or falls back into *hiddenness* again, or shows itself in a merely “*distorted*” [or dissembled: *verstellt*] way, is not this or that being, but ... the *Being* of beings.<sup>35</sup>

If the phenomenon of world was leapt over, this was no doubt due in part to it being the nearest of the near, the nearness that approaches us from out of the thing, yet has already withdrawn into concealment, sheltering its essence from a thinking or *the ría* that, ascendant from Parmenides on, has eyes only for what shows itself most visibly in its standing before us. Yet this leaping over, Heidegger shows us, is itself the beginning that leaps over two and a half thousand years, the beginning that is not yet at an end, whose end still approaches us in a concealed manner, stealthily, as it were, as nothing less than the essence of technicity.

When, toward the end of “The Question Concerning Technology,” Heidegger invokes the arts as that which once “brought the presence of the gods, brought to radiance the dialogue between human and divine destiny,” he remains sceptical that art in the sense of the fine arts will save us. Yet, he writes,

We may be astonished. At what? At the other possibility, namely, that everywhere the frenzy of technicity will install itself, until one day the essence of technicity, throughout everything technical, comes to prevail in the event of truth [i.e., in the happening of unconcealment].<sup>36</sup>

Such a day would be “an exceptional moment” in which the epoch of technicity as a destining of revealing would pass into another, as yet concealed destining, yet without disappearing or vanishing.<sup>37</sup> The saving power, to which the oft-cited word of Hölderlin alludes, grows together with the danger that the essence of technicity itself is as a destining of revealing. “Where something grows,” Heidegger comments, “there it is rooted, from there it flourishes. Both occur in concealment and quietly and in their own time.”<sup>38</sup> The possibility that Heidegger here says may provoke our astonishment – and presumably, by extension, our thoughtfulness, if wonder is indeed the beginning of all thoughtfulness – is presumably the possibility that, just as the great work of art opens up a world, so too it is out of the things themselves (now left to themselves by phenomenology) that the increasing dissembling or veiling of world may come to the fore, and thereby also the enigma of the world as such. It is the enigma of the world that is at stake, I would submit, nothing more, nothing less, when Heidegger in the closing sentences of his essay remarks: “The more questioningly we ponder the essence of technicity, however, the more mysterious becomes the essence of art.”

### **Designing the Enigma**

The presencing of the gods that was once accomplished by Greek art may be understood as the illumination of the Earth as holy or sacred, an illumination that can come to pass only through the opening up, in the work, of the world as enigma. Yet just as the absence or refusal of the gods in the ascendant epoch of technicity is not the disappearance of the gods, but the presencing of the gods in and as their very self-refusal so too the dissembling or veiling of world in the works and workings of technicity is not the obliteration of the enigma of world, but a way in which the enigma itself comes to presence. “Even this plight of the absence of the god is a way in which world worlds.”<sup>39</sup> I shall not be able here to address more directly the issue of what implications might follow from Heidegger’s analyses for the concrete practice of design. What I would like to do in the remainder of this essay is examine, albeit briefly, how precisely the enigma of the world emerges from out of the work, and how Heidegger conceives of this very emergence or “setting to work of unconcealment” explicitly as a designing. Here, I would like to turn back once more to the 1936 essay “The Origin of the Work of Art.”

In what way does a world come to presence from out of a great work of art? In what way is it opened up in and through such a work? In “The Origin of the Work of Art,” having noted the way in which the Greek temple shelters and encloses the figure of the god, thereby letting the god himself come to presence, Heidegger writes of how the work itself lets a world prevail, shaping the destiny of a historical people:

The temple and its precinct, however, do not fade away into the indefinite. It is the temple-work that first fits together and at the same time gathers around itself the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire the shape of destiny for human being. The all-governing expanse of this open relational context is the world of this historical people. From out of and within this expanse the people first comes back to itself for the fulfillment of its vocation.<sup>40</sup>

What is at work in the work itself, as a happening of unconcealment, is thus the opening projection of a certain configuration of possibility, the antecedent delineation of a world as the horizon from out of which human beings first come to themselves, first approach and see themselves in terms of certain possibilities that already call or beckon them, configuring their calling or vocation. It is important to note here in passing that this first coming of humans to themselves is already a second coming, a coming back or return, a retrieval of having-been. This, as we shall see later, is precisely the temporality of the work of art as origin. The work itself accomplishes the gathering of paths and relations, thus of possible ways of Being, a gathering within which the shaping of a destiny takes place – a gathering that is a destining of Being. Yet what is at work in the work is thus not, fundamentally or in the first instance, a particular event within the world, but the very opening up or “worlding” of world as such: the coming to pass of the enigma of world, of which the presence of the work in its uniqueness is but a resonance or a trace. The work as a setting-into-work or designing of presencing or un-concealment first makes visible the Being or presence of all things, configuring them in their very emergence. The temple is not a thing or entity, but the designing of an enigma. What is striking in Heidegger’s meditation on *technē* is that this opening up of a world does not happen merely subsequently, on the basis of an already existent nature. It is not the taking up and reworking of entities or materials that are already present at hand or independently there. *Phusis* does not precede *technē*, nor is *technē* merely the *mimēsis* of *phusis*. Rather, Heidegger suggests, *phusis*, as the emergent presencing of all things from out of concealment, occurs only in and as *technē*:

Standing there, the building rests on the rocky ground. This resting of the work draws up out of the rock the obscurity of that rock’s bulky yet spontaneous support. Standing there, the building holds its ground against the storm raging above it and so first makes the storm itself manifest in its violence. The luster and gleam of the stone, though itself apparently glowing only by the grace of the sun, first brings to radiance the light of the day, the breadth of the sky, the darkness of

the night. The temple's firm towering makes visible the invisible space of the air. The steadfastness of the work contrasts with the surge of the surf, and its own repose brings out the raging of the sea. Tree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are. The Greeks early called this emerging and rising in itself and in all things *phusis*. It illuminates also that on which and in which man bases his dwelling. We call this ground the *Earth*.<sup>41</sup>

The opening up of a world that first lets beings appear and come to the fore as this or that, in terms of certain possibilities, is thus in itself the presencing of the Earth. The world can be opened up as *this* world, it can prevail as this horizon of presencing, only if it is at once set back upon or inscribed in the Earth:

The temple-work, standing there, opens up a world and at the same time sets this world back again on Earth, which itself only thus emerges as native ground. But men and animals, plants and things, are never present and familiar as unchangeable objects, only to represent incidentally also a fitting environment for the temple, which one fine day is added to what is already there. ... The temple-work, standing there, first gives to things their look and to humans their outlook upon themselves....<sup>42</sup>

The designed, here the temple-work, not only designs the historically configured coming to appear of things as such, first giving to things their look; it also, and no less importantly, configures the *ēthos* of human beings, first giving to humans their outlook upon themselves. The opening up of a world in and through the work is in itself the conveying of a measure for human dwelling, not in the sense of a particular ethical command, but precisely as configuring the antecedent paths of possibility that gather, point, and orient us in a certain direction from the outset. Not everything is possible, not everything is conceivable, and above all, not everything is right or fitting or called for in a certain place at a certain time, in a given world.

Thus Heidegger, writing of the erecting of the Greek temple in honor and praise of the god, notes that this "erecting" (*Er-richten*) is to be taken literally, in the sense of a delineation, of "opening up what is right [*das Rechte*] in the sense of a guiding measure, as the manner in which what is essential gives directives."<sup>43</sup> The world opened up by a work, as he later puts it, is not simply a horizon or realm of openness, within which anything would be possible: "Rather, world is the clearing of the paths of those essential guiding directions with which all decision complies."<sup>44</sup> World is not simply the opening up, or protoethical configuring, of horizons of

possibility within which decision first becomes possible. Rather, this very opening up, this inaugural moment, must in turn (and that is to say, in the metabolic turn that is *metabol* itself) ground itself upon something decided, upon decision and that which calls for decision: the Earth. “World cannot take leave of the Earth, if, as the governing expanse and path of all essential destiny, it is to ground itself upon something decided.”<sup>45</sup> If Earth is that which essentially closes itself off, it nevertheless demands to be brought into the open as that which closes itself off or withdraws, in its very self-closing. It first needs to be “freed” and set forth as such: “To set forth the Earth means: to bring it into the open as the self-secluding.”<sup>46</sup>

The work of art first thrusts the Earth into the openness of world and maintains it there. “*The work lets the Earth be an Earth.*”<sup>47</sup> In this sense, the Earth itself is that which calls for decision: “Every decision, however, is grounded upon something not mastered, something concealed, confusing; else it would never be decision. The Earth is not simply that which is closed off, but rather that which emerges as self-concealing.”<sup>48</sup> In opening up a world and setting forth the Earth, the work of art as an event of origination thus also brings to the fore, or opens up a glimmer of (*zum Vorschein bringt*) this more primordial concealment that calls for decision: “The dawning world brings out [*zum Vorschein bringt*] what is as yet undecided and measureless, and thus discloses the hidden necessity of measure and decisiveness.”<sup>49</sup> It lets resonate what Heidegger elsewhere in the essay names “the silent call of the Earth.”<sup>50</sup> Yet is this not to imply that the work of art, as event of origination, designates and designs itself as this very event, that is, as the enigma? The work of art, as enigma, is thus at once the designing and the designed: it is self-referential in the sense of designating, albeit obliquely or in a veiled manner, the temporality of this very event of origination. And this is, quite simply, appearing, *phainesthai*: the appearing of this entity here and now, of an entity whose “thisness” or self-identity is never fully constituted once and for all, but which can appear only in and through the event of displacement and repetition, of repetition that is possible only on the grounds – or abyss – of an antecedent leap, a temporal displacement or *Entrückung* in which all that is to come is already leapt over in advance.

The leap is a leap from out of the Earth, as that which cannot be mediated, back onto the Earth as emergent, as that which calls for measure and decision. Yet this opening up of a world that sets itself back upon, or inscribes itself into, the Earth, implies the occurrence of a fissure or rift that, quite literally, draws world and Earth into a productive tension or strife with one another. Heidegger writes of the occurrence of this rift explicitly as a designing or drawing:

World demands its decisiveness and its measure and lets beings attain to the open region of its paths. Earth, bearing and jutting, endeavors to keep itself closed and to entrust everything to its law. The strife is not a rift [*Riß*] in the sense of the mere ripping open [*Aufreißen*] of a cleft. The strife, rather, is the intimacy in which the opponents belong together. This rift [*Riß*] tears the opponents that turn against and toward one another together [*reißt... zusammen*] into the provenance of their unity from out of their unitary ground. It is a foundational design [*Grundriß*]. It is the tearing open that designs the fundamental traits in which the clearing of beings emerges. [*Er ist Auf-riß, der die Grundzüge des Aufgehens der Lichtung des Seienden zeichnet.*] This rift does not let the opponents burst apart; it brings the counter-turning aspects of measure and limit into their unitary outline [*Umriß*].

...The rift is the drawing together of tearing open and foundational design, traversal and outline. [*Der Riß ist das einheitliche Gefüge von Aufriß und Grundriß, Durch- und Umriß.*]<sup>51</sup>

The designing of the rift draws Earth and World – and thus all that appears and comes into the open – into the intimacy of their belonging together. The rift itself, as this event of designing, is the unitary ground that first lets beings emerge into the open in their belonging together. Yet it can do so only by de-limiting beings as such, by establishing and stabilizing their figure. The Earth itself, ever self-concealing and self-secluding, is that which continually calls for measure; and yet, this call can emerge and resonate as such only through its being delimited – only in a limited manner, by being set forth in and through this or that work. This setting-forth that is at work in the work is thus the configuring of the outline (*Umriß*) of things as the delimiting that first sets one thing off against another; it is the “designing of the fundamental [or foundational] traits in which the clearing of beings emerges.” The designing of the rift that traverses all beings, bringing them into an intimate belonging together, Heidegger had earlier described as the flow of a delimiting stream that at once lets things appear in the uniqueness of their Being and shelters their own self-secluding, Earth-like character:

All things of the Earth, and the Earth itself as a whole, flow together into a reciprocal accord [*Einklang*]. But this confluence is not a blurring of their outlines. Here there flows the bordering stream, restful within itself, that delimits everything present in its presencing. Thus in each of the self-secluding things there is the same not-knowing-of-one-another.<sup>52</sup>

That the work opens up a world thus implies that this very event of opening up, of origination, is at work in the work, bringing us – that is, those who belong to that world – into a historically determined or destined belonging to the Earth. This belonging has its time: the emergence of new works that claim human beings in new ways, reconfiguring their *thos*, changes the world. Yet even then the opening up of a bygone world remains at work in the historical work itself. The work belongs to its own history, to “that realm that is opened up by the work itself,”<sup>53</sup> even where that world can manifest itself only as the trace or resonance of an erstwhile community. Yet what thus becomes manifest from such a consideration of any historical artifact or relic must also already be the case for any work whatsoever: The opening up of a world is accomplished not by human subjectivity or agency, nor by a conscious designing on our part, but solely by what is at work in the work itself: the designing of the designed as the designing of the enigma. What is crucial here, we shall now try to show, is the temporality of what is at work in the work: the claim of a historical world that emerges from the work comes toward us or approaches us only as having already been, as having already happened.

This enigmatic temporality of the work, on Heidegger’s reading, emerges or announces itself most prominently in the work of art. It manifests itself, not directly or explicitly, let alone thematically, but as a trace or resonance of the enigma. Heidegger writes of the way in which, unlike the item of utility or piece of equipment, the character of whose very Being as something produced or brought forth disappears into usefulness, this very fact of having been brought forth or “created” itself emerges as the enigmatic Being of the work of art. What distinguishes the work from equipmental Being is that “createdness, the having-been-created of the work is expressly created into the created work, so that it looms forth from the work itself.”<sup>54</sup> Thus, we can “experience” this having-been-created in the work itself. We must be able to experience “the emergence of createdness,” that is, the *coming* to the fore of *its having been created* (*das Hervorkommen des Geschaffenseins*) from out of the work itself: the coming forth of the “simple *factum est*” or event of its having come forth.<sup>55</sup> The temporality of disclosure at work in the work is thus that of a futural having-been, of a coming – of an approach and a claim upon us – that can come toward us and thus happen only as already having been.

Heidegger writes of the temporality of this “simple fact” thus: What is to be held into the open is: “this, that unconcealment of a being has happened here and first happens as this having happened [*und als dieses Geschehene erst geschieht*]... the unceasing character of this improbable thrust [*Stoss*]....,” the “that” of the “that it is” rather than is not.<sup>56</sup> *It first happens as already having happened*: Yet this temporality of the work as an

event also precedes and constitutes the work's self-manifestation: It is not an after-effect of the work as already manifest, but rather that which carries and bears the work in its very Being, in its presencing:

The event [*Ereignis*] of its having been created is not simply a subsequent resonance in the work; rather, the work casts this event-like fact [*das Ereignishafte*] – that the work is as this work – forth before itself [*vor sich her*] and has constantly cast it about itself [*um sich*].<sup>57</sup>

And yet, one might insist, it may indeed be true that a work, once created or produced, in itself opens up a world and does so only by way of this enigmatic temporality. But after all, such a work is produced in the first instance by human beings: It is human beings as designers, in the end, who create worlds in and through their works. Every work has its origin, ultimately, in the human subject. Surely it is simply erroneous to claim that the opening up of worlds is accomplished not by human subjectivity or agency, nor by any conscious designing on our part, but solely by what is at work in the work itself? And yet, it is Heidegger's opening claim in "The Origin of the Work of Art" that it is art itself, as the enigma, that is the origin of both the work and the artist. In what way does art, as event of origination, first originate the artist?

In what way is the human designer first designed by the event of designing itself?

It is significant that when Heidegger turns his attention to the question of the role of *technē* in the creation of the work – and he does so only late in the essay – he characterises *technē* itself in terms of the same temporality that is at work in the work itself. *Technē*, he writes, is a knowing and as such a *having-seen*. It is a "bringing-forth of beings out of concealment forth into the unconcealment of their look."<sup>58</sup> This bringing-forth is not only a bringing to the fore of something that was formerly concealed, but a bringing that *lets* the work come to the fore in advance:

*Technē*, Heidegger writes, is "that bringing-forth which lets the being come to the fore [*vor-kommen*] in advance [im vorhinein] into its presencing in terms of its look."<sup>59</sup> *Technē*, as design, is in this sense a bringing that is in the first instance a letting: it never means, Heidegger insists, "the activity of a making." As this bringing, it is an accompaniment: it lets the being come forth in what it potentially already was. This art was already concealed in nature; it need only – as Heidegger affirms in citing Albrecht Dürer – be drawn out in the designing of the rift.<sup>60</sup> As creating, bringing-forth, precisely as this bringing, "is more a receiving and taking within the relation to unconcealment."<sup>61</sup>

What of the temporality of such *technē*? There is a *precedence* in terms of the arrival of the being or work itself: it comes in advance

of its own presence; its coming into presencing is always this coming, this advent that is a non-arrival, that remains only in the steadfastness of its coming. But equally, this implies that *technē* always comes “too late”: the work in its coming always comes before us, before *technē*, and in such a way that it has always already bypassed *technē*, leapt over the Being of the artist or designer. It implies that in its coming, it has always (each time) already receded in advance into an absolute distance: that an unbridgeable *rift* has already come to pass, in and as the designing of the work, an abyss in the midst of beings themselves.<sup>62</sup> Thus, *technē* can only ever be a *having*-seen, it is always retrospective. And in coming before us, the work has already designed us: we first find ourselves only in and through, only in response to, this designing arrival of the design: we have always already been designed: “It is the work that enables the creators in their essence... lets them spring forth in their essence.”<sup>63</sup> We are, on this account, nothing other than the receptive-responsive clearing where this designing happens as the destinal opening up, or antecedent configuring of possibilities, an event from out of which we first approach ourselves as those who have in each case always already been. This designing, the designing of the enigma, precedes the human. As *homo technicus*, we always come too late – too late to be the origin: we are always the latecomers.<sup>64</sup>

As the designing of the rift, art is thus the origin of both artist and work, designer and designed. Toward the end of the essay, Heidegger describes this designing of the enigma as follows:

Art lets truth [unconcealment – presence] spring forth [entspringen]. Art ... originates the truth of beings in the work by way of a leap. To originate something by a leap [Etwas erspringen], to bring it into Being from out of its essential provenance in a founding leap [*im stiftenden Sprung*]...this is what the word *Ursprung* means.<sup>65</sup>

Art as origin is essentially a letting-emerge, a letting-arrive that lets that which is to come – the work itself – come into Being only as something that, at the very moment of its coming, of its arrival, has always already been. The work that is to come has thus already leapt over, in advance, the Being – which is to say, the time – of the artist as that which cannot be mediated, because, presumably, it is of the Earth herself, of primordial concealment. Yet it has also thereby leapt over in advance its own presence: as a leap ahead – as this very event of the designing of presencing – it has already leapt over its own Being, thus to preserve itself as that which remains always yet to come. This it can do, however, only in and through poetic founding or instituting, only in being set back upon, or inscribed into the Earth.

The project or design that is set to work in this or that particular work is always an openness or unconcealment of beings that “casts itself toward us,” an unfolding that “is cast ahead into the rift of the figure.”<sup>66</sup> This clearing of the unconcealment of beings, “happens only when the openness arriving within thrownness is in turn projected.”<sup>67</sup> Yet this arrival is not accomplished by human thought, nor by human agency or subjectivity: it is the antecedent claim of a destining or designing that first calls upon us to think, or to respond to the historical claim of a world along the lines of a certain path, of a gathering of possibility. The enigmatic suddenness of the arrival of another destining, another designing of the enigma, at once related to and different from a preceding one, is something for which thought can only prepare itself – something that can happen, presumably, only through such thoughtful preparation. The enigma (*Rättsel*) in its designing, in the very event of its appearing, of its advent, is that before which we must pause, must stop to take counsel (*Rat*) with ourselves.<sup>68</sup> It first brings us to ourselves – first gives rise to thoughtfulness.

## Notes

1. The word “Being,” where capitalised, translates the German *Sein* and is understood by Heidegger as an event or happening, and not as an entity or a “being” (lowercase), or as an established or permanent state of affairs. It refers to the presencing or coming into presence of something – of what can thus only subsequently be recognized as a “being” or entity (in German: *Seiendes*) – and is not to be understood as the already existent quality or attribute of an entity, which is how it has tended to be understood in the metaphysical tradition, according to Heidegger.
2. “Überwindung der Metaphysik.” *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1985), 67. An English translation of the essay “Overcoming Metaphysics” appears in *The End of Philosophy*, translated by Joan Stambaugh (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).
3. *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1993), 385. Henceforth: SZ. Translated as *Being and Time* by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987). Page numbers cited refer to the German edition.
4. SZ, 65; 95.
5. *Ibid.*, 76.
6. *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1975), 234. Henceforth: GA 24. Translated as *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* by Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982). Page numbers cited refer to the German edition.
7. *Ibid.*, 237.

8. Ibid., 236: “Was ist dieses Rätselhafte, die Welt, und vor allem: wie ist sie?”
9. *Holzwege* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1950), 66. Henceforth: H. An English translation of “The Origin of the Work of Art” by Albert Hofstadter appears in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 139–212. Page numbers cited refer to the German edition.
10. I use the term “poietic” here in the sense of the Greek *poi sis* to mean the emergent coming into Being of something, or the bringing-forth into presence of something. In more conventional language, it thus refers to the “forming” or “producing” of something new. Yet – as we shall later try to show – the language we use is not a matter of arbitrariness here: Heidegger’s essential interest here concerns the point that the “forming” or “producing” of a world – but also, as we shall see, of a work of art or design – is not simply or primarily the result of human agency conceived as subjectivity. *Poi sis* in this sense is found, as Heidegger elsewhere explains (see, for example, “The Question Concerning Technology”), in both “nature” (the Greek *phusis*) – the blossoming of a flower – and “art” or artisanship (in Greek, *technē*). The word “poietic,” as used in this essay, thus does not refer to poetry or to the “poetic” in the first instance, even though, as Heidegger will later develop in “The Origin of the Work of Art,” it cannot be separated from the emergent possibility of language.
11. SZ, 365.
12. GA 24, 239.
13. *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1978), 269. Henceforth: GA 26. Translated as *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* by Michael Heim (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984). Page numbers cited refer to the German edition.
14. *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik: Welt – Endlichkeit – Einsamkeit* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983), 414. Translated as *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude* by William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indian Universty Press, 1995). Page numbers cited refer to the German edition.
15. H, 33.
16. SZ, 284.
17. When Heidegger writes that death is “in each case mine,” this means, more precisely, that it is Being-toward-death that is in each case mine: it is the relation to death that is (and has been, necessarily) appropriated as mine. *Dasein* has been “thrown into death” (SZ, 251); “Death is a way of Being that *Dasein* takes over, as soon as it is.” Again, death here means Being-toward-death, or dying, understood as the essential movedness of one’s Being; *Dasein* must assume or

- “take over” this possibility into which it has been thrown, the (exceptional) possibility (of impossibility) that is not its own. It is death *as possibility* that is “in each case mine.” Cf. Heidegger’s emendation to SZ, 240.
18. SZ, 374. Existing English translations do not adequately render the sense of the German *gebürtig*, which conveys not just or primarily having been born, but an ongoing “birthing” or giving birth.
  19. Ibid.
  20. Ibid, 384.
  21. Without this acknowledgement, Dasein is not really free at all; everyday Dasein, in the mode of *das Man*, is not free. Cf. Heidegger: “...only seldom do we exist freely” (GA 26, 257-58); “We are free only in coming to be free” (*Nietzsche* [Pfullingen: Neske, 1961], Bd. I, 400).
  22. SZ, 384–85.
  23. *Die Technik und die Kehre* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1991), 24. Henceforth: TK. Both “The Question Concerning Technology” and the essay “The Turning,” referred to below, are translated in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* by William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977). Page numbers cited refer to the German edition.
  24. Ibid., 24–25.
  25. One might recall here Heidegger’s insistence, in the *Discourse on Thinking* (*Gelassenheit*), on the need for an “openness to the mystery [*Geheimnis*]” as intrinsic to cultivating an *thos* that would be appropriate to the epoch of technicity.
  26. Ibid., 25.
  27. Ibid., 32.
  28. Ibid., 31.
  29. Ibid., 30.
  30. Ibid., 44.
  31. The suddenness or abruptness of such turning is suggested by the Greek *metabol*, which articulates the fundamental “ekstatic” characteristic of time for Aristotle in Book IV of the *Physics*, and which Heidegger in his Marburg lectures translates as the German *Umschlag*, suggesting a sudden turning or folding over. For a discussion of Heidegger’s increasing attentiveness to the abruptness of such transition as rupture and as “leap” in the work of the 1930s, see chapter 5 of my recent study *The Time of Life: Heidegger and thos* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).
  32. TK, 43.
  33. H, 62.
  34. Ibid., 63.
  35. SZ, 35.
  36. TK, 35.
  37. Ibid., 37–38.

38. Ibid., 28
39. H, 34.
40. Ibid., 31.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., 32.
43. Ibid., 33.
44. Ibid., 43.
45. Ibid., 38.
46. Ibid., 36.
47. Ibid., 35.
48. Ibid., 44.
49. Ibid., 51.
50. Ibid., 23.
51. Ibid., 51.
52. Ibid., 36. This reference to the bordering stream or river is not only suggestive of Hölderlin's river hymns, but anticipates Heidegger's subsequent analysis of the Nietzschean "stream of chaos" in his 1939 course on Nietzsche's will to power as knowledge. For a reading, see my essay "A Wave in the Stream of Chaos: Life Beyond the Body in Heidegger's *Nietzsche*." Forthcoming in *Philosophy Today*, 2006.
53. Ibid., 30.
54. Ibid., 53.
55. Ibid., emphasis added.
56. Ibid. It should be noted that the English translation by Albert Hofstadter fails to convey the decisive temporality at stake here. Among commentators, only Christopher Fynsk, so far as I am aware, has seen the significance of this point. See the nuanced reading of "The Origin of the Work of Art" in his masterful study *Heidegger: Thought and Historicity* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1986).
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid., 48. In the later Reclam edition of *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, Heidegger emphasised the "out of... forth... into..." (*aus... her... in... vor...*), further highlighting the movement at work here as the crucial issue. (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1960; 1995).
59. Ibid., emphasis added. The Reclam edition hyphenates *vor-kommen*; The original *Holzwege* edition has *vor kommen* as separate words.
60. See H, 58.
61. Ibid., 51.
62. This theme of the rift, of the tearing (*Reißen*) of the rift, Heidegger appears to take from Hölderlin, from whom *die reißende Zeit*, "the time that tears" is a central theme in both his poetic and theoretical work. In his 1936 essay "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry," contemporaneous with "The Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger reads this tearing of time

as the opening of time itself in the temporality of its ekstases. See my commentary in *The Time of Life: Heidegger and thos* (op. cit.), chapter 6. Yet Heidegger also finds a reference to the “tearing out” or extraction of an art concealed in nature in Albrecht Dürer, whom he explicitly cites in “The Origin of the Work of Art” (H, 58).

63. Ibid., 58.
64. This point has been well understood by Bernard Stiegler who, however, fails to take into account the importance of “The Origin of the Work of Art” in his critique of Heidegger. See *Time and Technics*, vol. I (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).
65. Ibid., 64.
66. Ibid., 59–60.
67. Ibid., 59.
68. Heidegger discusses this “taking counsel with oneself” (*mit-sich-zu-Rate-gehen*) as the process of deliberation in Aristotle’s *phron sis* in his 1924–25 course on Plato’s *Sophist*. He explicitly relates this taking counsel (*Rat*) to enigma or *Rätsel* with reference to Hölderlin’s hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine” in his 1942 course on Hölderlin’s hymn “The Ister.” According to the word of “The Rhine”: “Enigma is that which has purely sprung forth....” This “springing forth” (*Entspringen*) of the river from its origin (*Ursprung*), this event of origination that is the origination of the work of poetizing itself, as work of art, is, as we have seen, already the dominant discourse in “The Origin of the Work of Art,” which itself concludes with a word of Hölderlin’s concerning our relation to the *Ursprung*. (The terms *Entspringen* and *Ursprung*, it should be noted, are already very prominent in *Being and Time*, especially in the analyses of ekstastic temporality.) In the 1942 course, Heidegger insists that *Rat*, properly understood, means as much as “Care,” *Sorge*; and he remarks on how the poet must “pause” before the very first appearing of the enigma, a pause that inaugurates poetic mindfulness. See *Hölderlin’s Hymn “The Ister”* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), §§4, 7.